



**City of St. Marys Urban Redevelopment Plan**

*adopted under OCGA 36-61-7  
for areas in distress*

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## Executive Summary

The City of St. Marys Urban Redevelopment Plan (URP) provides a general blueprint for the redevelopment of pockets of blight in the city. The plan was created in conformity with the guidelines prescribed in the Urban Redevelopment Law.

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## Urban Redevelopment Law

The Urban Redevelopment Law (URL) helps local governments facilitate and implement the rehabilitation, conservation, or redevelopment, or a combination thereof, of areas necessary in the interest of the public health, safety, morals, or welfare of the residents of the city. The City Council passed a resolution on September 21, 2020 finding that such pockets of blight exist within the City of St. Marys. The URL gives our city the ability to undertake redevelopment efforts financed through a variety of means allowed by the law.

The broad redevelopment goals are to:

- Arrest physical and social blight
- Improve economic and social conditions
- Improve physical infrastructure
- Create impetus for private investment

The City of St. Marys expects that the activities related to and stemming from the proposed redevelopment projects will work in conjunction with other initiatives to stimulate investment in the city.

This URP is written to allow the city acting under the URL to implement actions in accordance with this plan and the Urban Redevelopment Law.

### *Findings of Fact*

- (1) A feasible method exists for the relocation of families who will be displaced from the urban redevelopment area in decent, safe, and sanitary dwelling accommodations within their means and without undue hardship to such families;

This finding is entered because there will be no relocation of families from the urban redevelopment area.

- (2) The urban redevelopment plan conforms to the general plan of the municipality or county as a whole; and

This finding is entered because of the reasons listed in the subsection titled "Relation to City Master Plan."

- (3) The urban redevelopment plan will afford maximum opportunity, consistent with the sound needs of the municipality or county as a whole, for the rehabilitation or redevelopment of the urban redevelopment area by private enterprise.



This finding is entered because the city plans to prepare a Request for Proposals and enter into a development agreement with a responsible developer or group of developers who will undertake the rehabilitation of a portion or portions of the area by private enterprise combined with public investment.

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## Existing Conditions

### *Urban Redevelopment Project Area*

The area covered by this plan is the area with the following four block groups:

Block Group 1, Census Tract 106.01, Camden County, Georgia

Block Group 2, Census Tract 106.01, Camden County, Georgia

Block Group 3, Census Tract 106.01, Camden County, Georgia

Block Group 1, Census Tract 104.01, Camden County, Georgia

These four block groups have a population of 11,550 residents, of whom 40.17% are qualified as low to moderate income residents.

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## Vision and Goals

### *Relation to City Master Plan*

The City Master Plan (completed in 2017) contemplates different “character areas” for portions of the city. The former airport is identified on the character area as “multi-use development.”

This area includes the former airport site, the Mill Site, and adjacent industrial parks. A mix of commercial, public/institutional and clean industrial uses should be promoted in this area with appropriate consideration for the surrounding neighborhoods. This area provides the best opportunity for job creation within a range of employment sectors that would expand and diversify the economy of St. Marys. Protection of sensitive environmental resources, including the Rookery, and low impact on adjacent residential areas must be an essential element of any future redevelopment. (Master Plan, pg. 41)

Redevelopment of the former airport site along with other portions of the city is in conformance with the City Master Plan.

### *Relation to City/County Comprehensive Plan*

The Camden County Comprehensive Plan (completed in 2018) calls the former airport site an opportunity and sets a vision for Multi-Use Development (pg. 102). The plan also calls for the city to “Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community” (pg. 56.) The areas covered by this urban redevelopment plan are critical to maximizing the use of our existing infrastructure.

### *Joint Land Use Study*

In 2014 the City of St. Marys alongside Camden County, the City of Kingsland, the City of Woodbine, and NSB Kings Bay completed a Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) “to anticipate and mitigate existing and potential compatibility issues through improved coordination...” (JLUS, pg. I-1) One of the major focuses of the JLUS was on the St. Marys former Airport and the implications its operation has on NSB Kings Bay. Redevelopment of the former airport is in the best interest of the city according to this study.



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## Activation of Urban Redevelopment Powers

It is the desire of the City Council that the City of St. Marys staff oversee the implementation of this plan. The City Council shall be vested with the Urban Redevelopment Powers as allowed under the URL.

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## Method and Strategy for Redevelopment

### *Description of Land Parcels to be Acquired*

No properties are contemplated to be acquired to carry out this plan. Subsequently, this plan was approved subject to the restrictions and caveats regarding the use of this device in future acquisitions to condemn by Eminent Domain or by any other form or legal instrument of enforced adherence for the purpose of transferred real estate to development entities.

### *Structures to be Demolished or Rehabilitated*

The only structures identified to be demolished are some of the vacant buildings which supported the former airport.

### *Plan to Leverage Private Resources for Redevelopment*

The city has identified several resources to encourage private resources to invest the in area.

#### MILITARY ZONE

The entire Urban Redevelopment Area is within a Military Zone which allows for state tax credits for jobs created.

#### TAX ALLOCATION DISTRICT

A portion of the Urban Redevelopment Area is with the City of St. Marys Tax Allocation District (TAD). The TAD can be leveraged to provide financial resources for investments that serve a public benefit.

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The city is able to offer other ways to leverage private investment including, but not limited to:

- Enterprise Zone
- Planned Development Zoning

### *Strategy for Relocating Displaced Residents*

The city has no plans to acquire areas which will lead to the displacement of residents.

### *Covenants and Restrictions to be Placed on Properties*

It is the city's desire for current property owners to retain their property and to redevelop and revitalize the property in a manner that alleviates slum and blight condition. This includes adhering to all current and future covenants and restrictions placed upon the property by existing planning and zoning procedures. At this time no changes to the existing development regulations are proposed as a part of the URP.

### *Public Infrastructure to be Provided*

The proposed area is currently served by the city. Infrastructure improvements necessary within a site will be planned in conjunction with a private developer before construction. The city plans to accept any public infrastructure installed that is installed to city standards.



### *Strategy for Implementing the Plan*

The city intends to kickstart redevelopment within the area by implementing Redevelopment Project A, listed below. This project will begin the process to encourage private redevelopment within the area by partnering with a private developer or a group of private developers.

### **Redevelopment Project A – Former St. Marys Airport**

The city intends to begin with the redevelopment of the city owned former airport. The land, owned by the City of St. Marys, is to be used for redevelopment and improvement. In order to encourage private enterprise, the city plans on offering the property for sale and development by a Request for Proposals and subsequent Development Agreement as allowed by OCGA 36-61-10.

### *Proposed Uses*

The former airport is ready for redevelopment because it is a clean slate for development with necessary utilities and services at the site or nearby. The city is open to uses that match the community's vision including but not limited to commercial, residential, and light industrial. If commercial or residential uses are implemented, recreational areas should be provided. The city encourages mixed use development, whether integrated into the same structure or in close proximity. The city also encourages the development of residential types not typically being built to meet demand including but not limited to duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, townhomes, cottage courts, and similar housing types.

The city envisions that if residential is determined to be the highest and best use that the development is built as a neighborhood that contains the characteristics that make St. Marys a great place to call home, like walkability and traditional neighborhood design. Streets should incorporate traffic calming and complete streets elements. Ideally such a neighborhood would include light commercial activity and residents will be no more than a five- to ten-minute walk to a place they can pick up a couple of their essentials or recreate.

### EXPECTED NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTERISTICS

The following are characteristics the city envisions being necessary if the intended end use is/includes residential development.

- Traditional Neighborhood Development
- Neighborhood designed for independence of everyone between eight and eighty years old (8/80 design)
- Mixture of home sizes/prices that enable multiple generations of a family to live in the same neighborhood
- Homes oriented towards the street
- Robust sidewalk/multi-use trail network

### *Restrictions on Development*

The site may not be used for any purpose inconsistent with the Restrictive Use Easement granted to the United States of America on November 3, 2017. Such easement is available from the Camden County Clerk of Superior Court. (Book 1889, Pages 18-31)



## **Appendix**

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### *Exhibit A – Urban Redevelopment Area Boundary*

Block Group 1, Census Tract 106.01, Camden County, Georgia  
Block Group 2, Census Tract 106.01, Camden County, Georgia  
Block Group 3, Census Tract 106.01, Camden County, Georgia  
Block Group 1, Census Tract 104.01, Camden County, Georgia

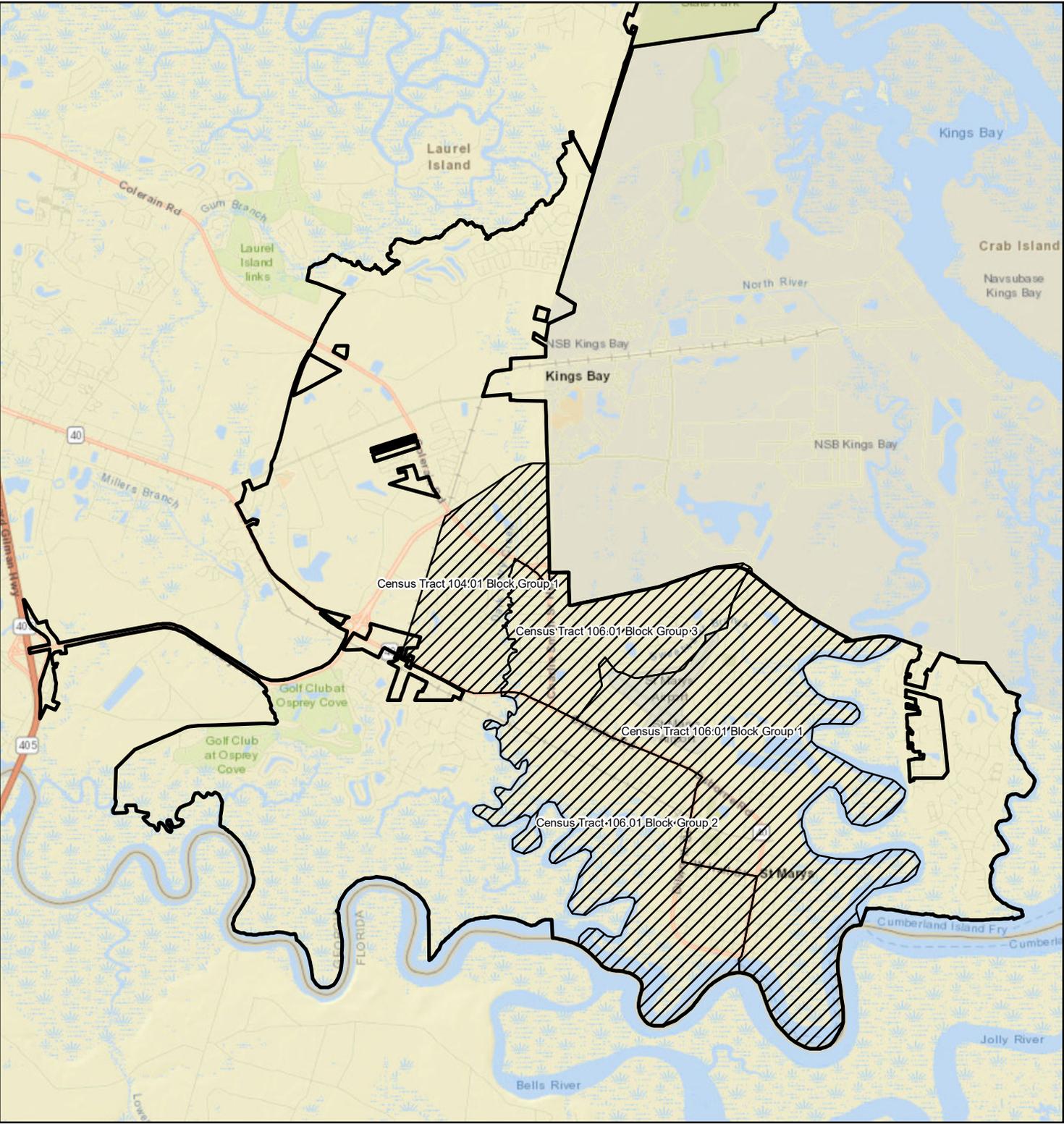
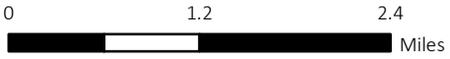
### *Exhibit B – Redevelopment Project A Site Boundary*

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN  
PLAN BOUNDARIES



LEGEND

-  Plan Boundary
-  St. Marys Boundary



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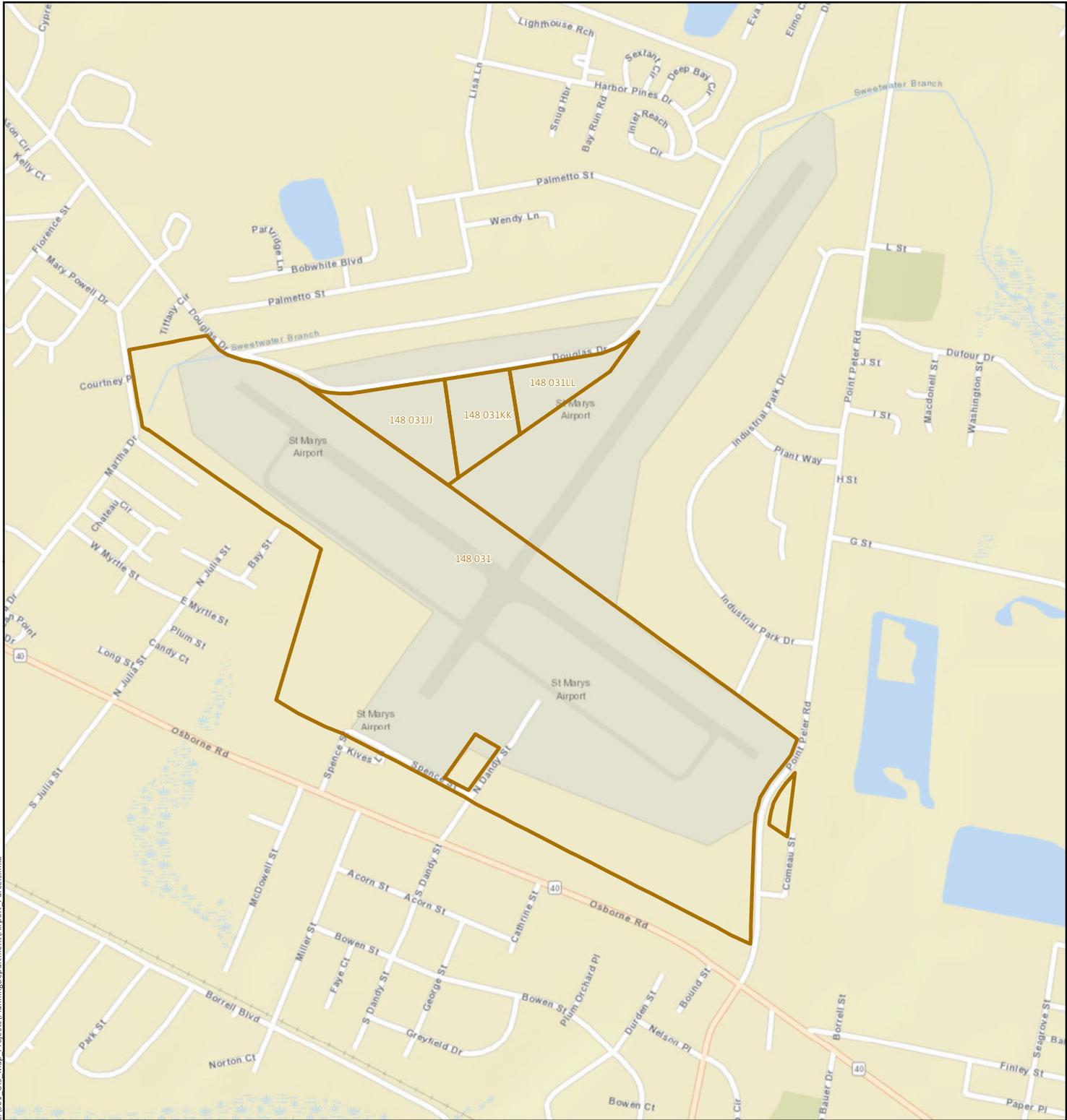
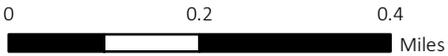
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# URBAN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT A ST. MARYS AIRPORT



**LEGEND**

 Project Boundary



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