

Mississippi Gulf Coast Metropolitan Planning Organization's

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

ADOPTED JUNE 8, 2023

Designing and building roads that meet the needs of all road users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, users of mass transit, people with disabilities, older adults and young children, motorists, freight providers, emergency responders, and adjacent land users.

MS GULF COAST MPO COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

VISION AND INTENT

The vision for the Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO Complete Streets Policy is to promote greater mobility along the public right-of-way, prioritize safety for all users, and encourage accessibility for all modes of transportation in the regional transportation network.

The MPO intends to develop a policy that establishes Complete Streets compliance for all federal and state-funded projects within the MPO region. With the respectful pursuit of Complete Streets compliance, the MPO will continue to consistently plan and fund well-designed projects that foster an equitable and context-sensitive approach to development that best serves its community.

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BACKGROUND

The metropolitan planning process has been implemented to increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users. This goal requires that the MPO prioritizes, promotes, and implements projects using the Complete Streets concept. This concept focuses on changing the design paradigm from “moving cars quickly” to “providing safe mobility for all transportation modes.”

On September 24, 2015 the Transportation Policy Committee of the Mississippi Gulf Coast MPO adopted an initial Complete Streets policy for the region.

In response to the new guidance and new safety data, the MPO has revised the regional Complete Streets policy in 2023 with updated design resources for making streets safer and more accessible for bicyclists and pedestrians, while also maintaining realistic and reasonable expectations for the implementation process.

The policy includes measures to make the roadways more suitable for vulnerable road users with the understanding that the final approval of the roadway designs lies with the traffic engineers, who are the licensed professionals charged with the safe and efficient operation of the transportation system. The MPO Complete Streets policy includes references for design guidance rather than detailed specifics regarding design. This policy’s intended application is to provide awareness and direction to engineers and local decision-makers and to equip them with a minimum standard of design to achieve safe mobility for all roadway users.

This policy contains firm, but reasonable, language that requires both new and reconstruction roadway projects utilizing federal transportation funds on the Mississippi Gulf Coast to include measures to accommodate bicycles, pedestrians, and transit riders to the fullest extent possible.

In support of the vision of making our streets more accessible and safe for all users, we present the MPO’s Complete Streets policy.

MS GULF COAST MPO COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

POLICY

APPLICABILITY

“Complete Streets” is defined as the policy and design approach to creating transportation infrastructure that requires safe, convenient, and comfortable travel and access for users of all ages and abilities, regardless of their mode of transportation.

The Complete Streets policy applies to all of the following:

New construction and reconstruction of roadways/bridges within the Mississippi Gulf Coast Metropolitan Planning Organization’s urban planning area that will use Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funds for any phase of project implementation, including planning, design, right-of-way acquisition, construction, or construction engineering. These development activities must include facilities for pedestrians and suitable bikeway facilities based on speed and volume as described on pages 7 through 11.

1. Local Public Agencies shall refer to GRPC’s Active Community Study’s Demand Analysis for the MS Gulf Coast to determine locations where demand for facilities is most prevalent in each locality. The Demand Analysis maps illustrate existing and potential pedestrian and bicycle activity along a roadway based on a mix and compactness of land uses. GRPC’s following website link will access the Active Community Study - <https://grpc.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Active-Transportation.pdf>
2. This policy assigns a higher priority level in the MPO’s project selection process to the transportation projects that are located in the designated Communities of Concern. Communities of Concern have a high concentration of minorities and low-income people. The maps are located in the Appendix.

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ARE THERE ANY EXEMPTIONS TO THE APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY?

Yes. If the costs of inclusion of amenities for bicycles and pedestrians are extremely disproportional to the total cost of the project, then the project could be exempt from the requirements. Jeff has re-wording in this location.

- The project consists of ordinary maintenance activities designed to keep assets in serviceable condition (e.g. mowing, cleaning, sweeping, spot repair, and regular or seasonal maintenance).
- The project involves a roadway that bicyclists and pedestrians are prohibited by law from using.
- There are extreme topographic or natural feature constraints.
- A reasonable and equivalent alternative already exists for certain users or is programmed in the TIP as a separate project.
- The costs of including accommodations for bicyclists and pedestrians can be demonstrated by the applicant agency to be greatly disproportional to the projected benefits from their inclusion or to result in disproportional harm from foregone infrastructure projects.
- Where the LPA's governing board issues a documented exception concluding that application of complete streets requirements presented here are inappropriate because it would be contrary to public benefits or safety.
- The project is on a roadway outside of the three weighted demand locations illustrated in the Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Demand Index Maps located in the Appendix.

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DESIGN GUIDELINES

Pedestrian and bicycle facilities shall be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so that all users, including people with disabilities, can travel safely and independently. The facility types and design elements are as follows:

Sidewalks, protected bike lanes, shared use paths, street crossings (including pedestrian overpasses and underpasses), highly-visible crosswalks, wide shoulders, pedestrian refuge islands or medians, bus pullouts, pedestrian-level lighting, audible pedestrian signals, pedestrian countdown signals, High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) crossing systems, sidewalk bulb-outs, transit stop accommodations, road diets, access management strategies, roundabouts and neighborhood traffic circles, traffic-calming strategies, street trees and landscaping, signage, street furniture, bike racks, and other pedestrian and bicycle amenities.

When using the MPO's federal transportation funding, the Local Public Agencies (LPA) that build the projects shall conform to design standards recommended in the MS Department of Transportation's Project Development Manual (PDM). The design geometrics used by the local government should conform to the criteria established by not only MDOT but FHWA, AASHTO, and the ACCESS Board. The following include references to design resources for adopted and approved design criteria:

MDOT: • Roadway Design Manual • Roadway Design Standard Drawings • Design Memos • Special Design Drawings • Landscaping Policy • Plan Title Sheet Template for LPA

FHWA: • Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices • NCHRP Report 672

AASHTO: • Roadside Design Guide • Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets (The Green Book) • Guide for the Planning, Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities • Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities

ACCESS BOARD: • Proposed Accessibility Guidelines for Pedestrian Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way (PROWAG) • Accessibility Guidelines for Buildings and Facilities

Source: Mississippi Department of Transportation Project Development Manual

[https://mdot.ms.gov/documents/LPA/PDM//Project%20Development%20Manual%20\(PDM\).pdf](https://mdot.ms.gov/documents/LPA/PDM//Project%20Development%20Manual%20(PDM).pdf)

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There are numerous resources employing accepted design guidance that are available for local officials and engineers to reference and use with approval from FHWA and MDOT. Refer to the sample list below:

Design Guidance Resources

1. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
2. Bikeway Selection Guide, Federal Highway Administration
3. The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Bicycle Design Guide
4. The National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Urban Street Design Guide
5. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Designing Walkable Urban Thoroughfares
6. Manual on Pedestrian and Bicycle Connections to Transit, Federal Transit Administration FTA Report 1011
7. Improving Safety for Pedestrians and Bicyclists Accessing Transit, Federal Highway Administration, FHWA-SA-21-130
8. Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks Guide, Federal Highway Administration
9. Handbook for Designing Roadways for the Aging Population, Federal Highway Administration
10. Pedestrian Lighting Primer, Federal Highway Administration
11. Improving Intersections for Pedestrians and Bicyclists, Federal Highway Administration
12. Jackson County 2018 Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trails Master Plan, Chapter 7: Bicycle and Pedestrian Design Guide and Appendix A: Complete Streets Policy Ordinance Template
13. Harrison County's Active Living Initiative, Appendix C Standard and Typical Section Drawings for Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The MPO is committed to working with local, state, and federal partners to develop reliable and efficient networks that access neighborhoods, transit, recreation, business, retail, and entertainment while creating safe and viable options for walking, bicycling, and shared mobility. The Federal Highway Administration's Bikeway Selection Guide was developed to educate local practitioners on bikeway selection types.

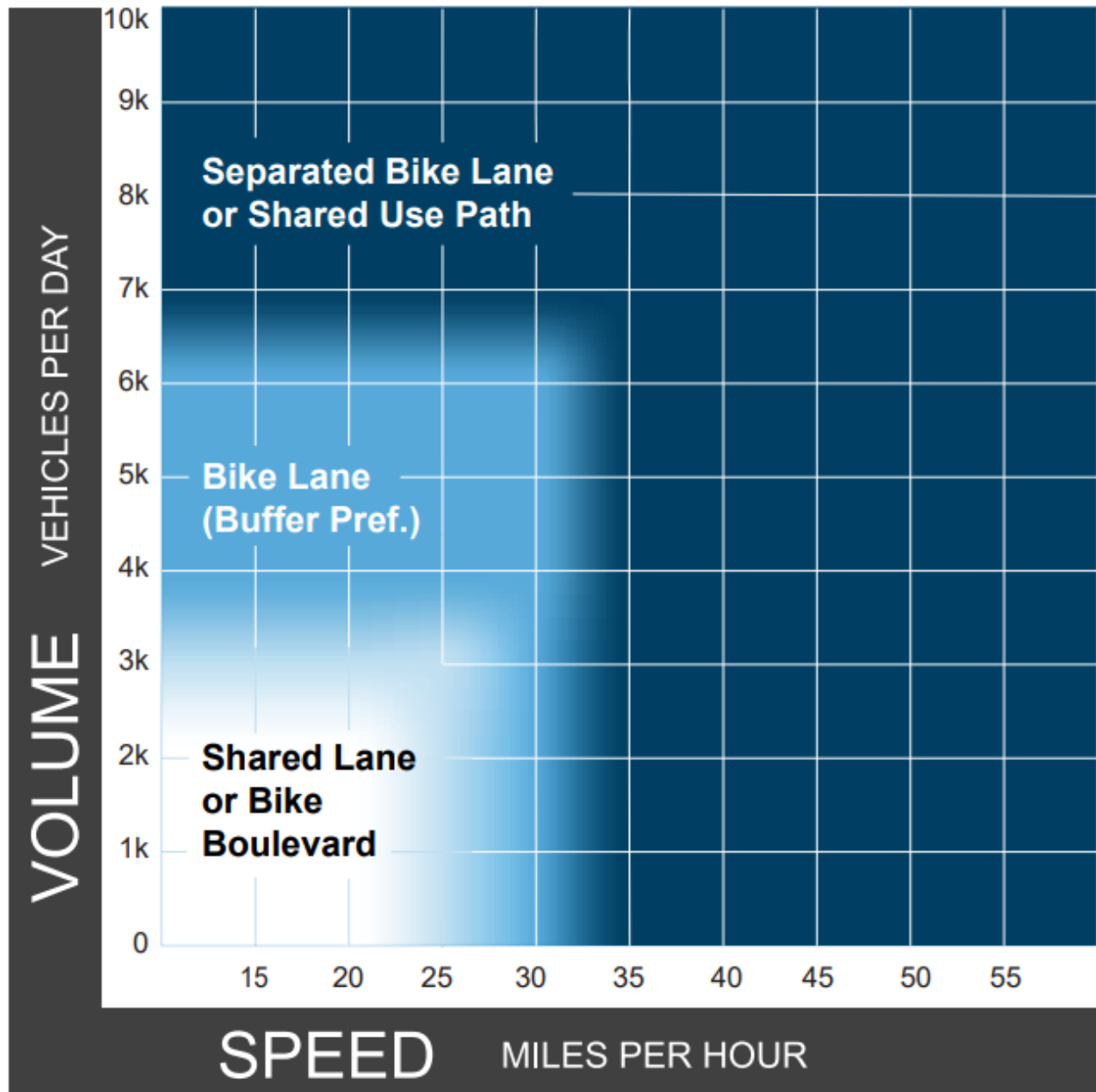
https://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/ped_bike/tools_solve/docs/fhwasa18077.pdf.

This informative tool guides bikeway policy, planning, selection, and implementation practices. The Guide illustrates types of facilities using charts, tables, and photographs.

For example, when considering what type of bikeway facility to build, refer to the bicycle facility guidance matrix charts below that are based on vehicles per day and miles per hour of a roadway in an urban roadway context and a rural roadway context.

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FHWA BIKEWAY SELECTION GUIDE (URBAN)

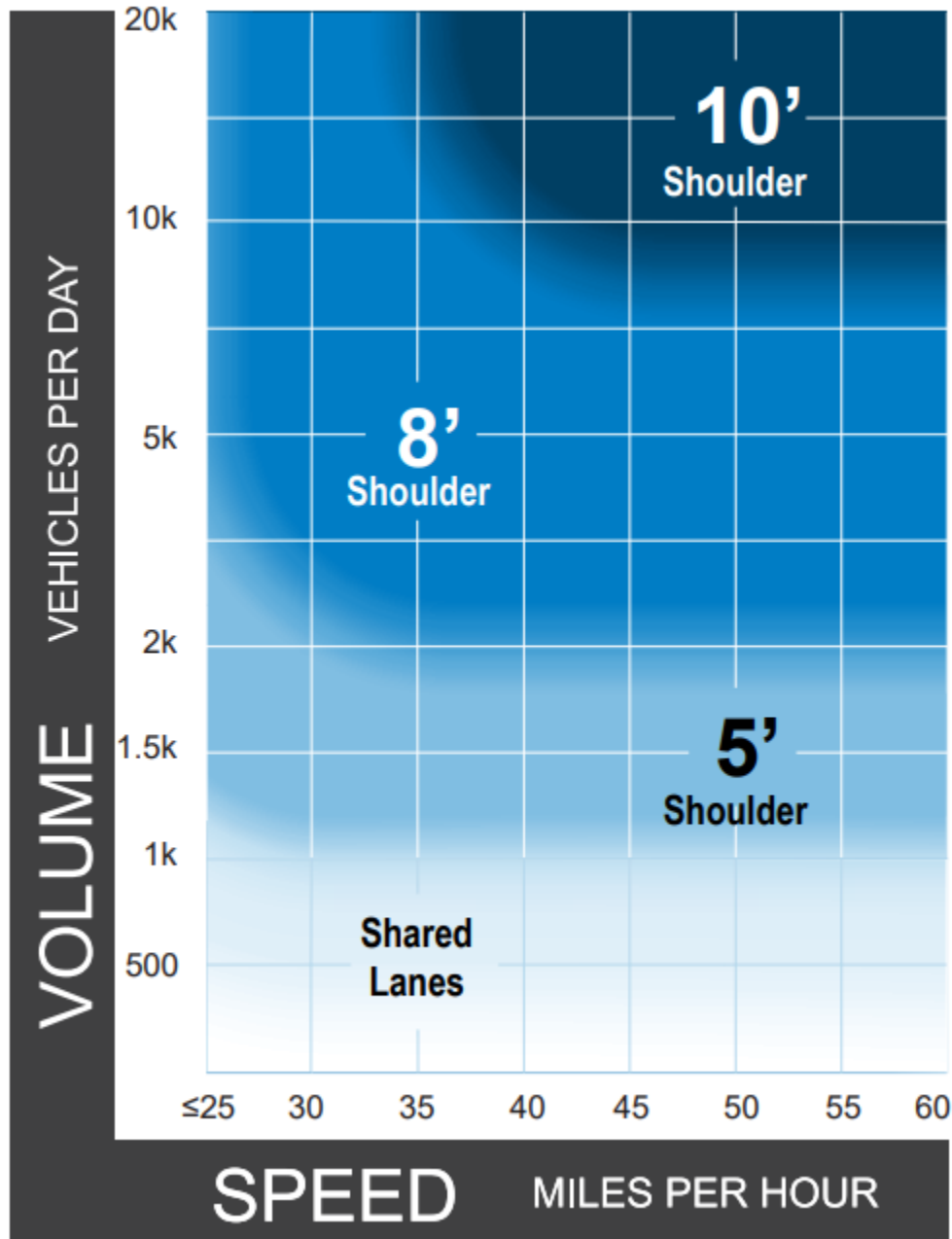


NOTES: Preferred Bikeway Type for Urban, Urban Core, Suburban, and Rural Town Contexts.

1. The above chart assumes operating speeds are similar to posted speeds. If they differ, use the operating speed rather than the posted speed.
2. Advisory bike lanes may be an option where traffic volume is less than 3,000 ADT.
3. Refer to page 32 of the Bikeway Selection Guide for a discussion of alternatives if the preferred bikeway type is not feasible.

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FHWA BIKEWAY SELECTION GUIDE (Rural)



NOTES: Preferred Shoulder Widths for Rural Roadways

1. This chart assumes the project involves reconstruction or retrofit in constrained conditions. For new construction, follow recommended shoulder widths in the AASHTO Green Book.
2. A separated shared-use pathway is a suitable alternative to providing paved shoulders.
3. The chart assumes operating speeds are similar to posted speeds. If they differ, use the operating speed rather than the posted speed.
4. If the percentage of heavy vehicles is greater than 5%, consider providing a wider shoulder or a separate pathway.

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URBAN (BIKEWAY)

SEPARATED BIKE LANE

- Providing one-way bike lanes separated from vehicles by raised medians, bollards, planters, curbs, or flexible delineator posts, etc. on each side of a two-way street, or
- Providing a two-way bike lane separated from vehicles by raised medians, bollards, planters, curbs, or flexible delineator posts, etc. on one side of the street.



SHARED USE PATH

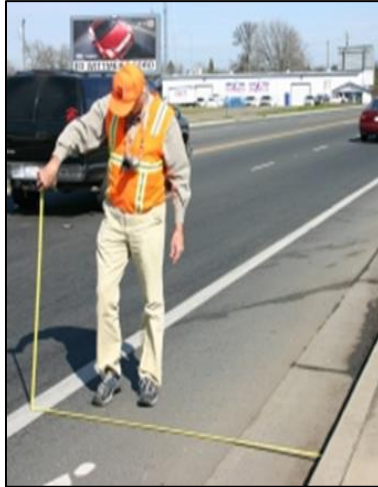
- Minimum 10-ft pathway on one side of the roadway/bridge to accommodate 2-way bicycle traffic and pedestrian users simultaneously,



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BIKE LANE OR SHOULDER

- Minimum 3-ft paved shoulders on each side of the road where curbs are present, or
- Minimum 4-ft paved shoulders on each side of the road where curbs are absent, or
- Minimum 5-ft bike lanes on each side of the road



SHARED LANE

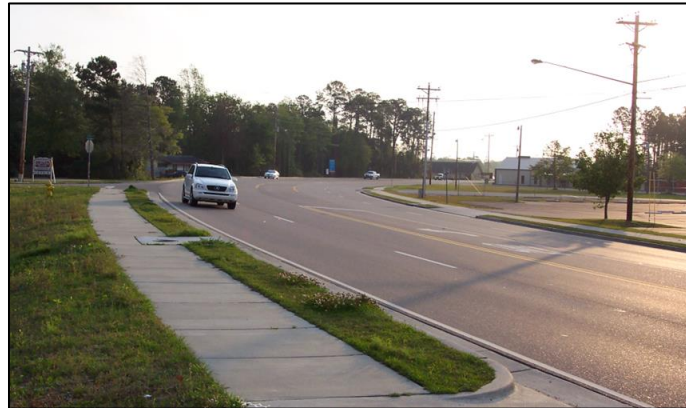
- Shared lane signage and/or pavement markings can be used



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URBAN (PEDESTRIAN PATHWAY)

- An existing or new continuous 5-ft sidewalk on both sides of the roadway/bridge, or
- An existing or new continuous 5-ft sidewalk on one side of the roadway/bridge, or
- If an 8 ft plus pathway will be present on one side of the road, then a 5-ft sidewalk is preferred on the other side of the roadway/bridge, but not required.



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PERFORMANCE MEASURES

A critical step in the metropolitan planning process is the evaluation of policy efficacy. The assessment of achievement in specific areas (known as performance measures) is a valuable tool for determining if the region is making progress towards the goals of the Complete Streets vision. All of the transportation projects in the region that receive federal and state funding will be analyzed using the performance measures methodology. The performance measures for this policy are as follows:

PERCENTAGE OF SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS SUITABLE FOR PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

PERCENTAGE OF TRANSIT STOPS WITH SUITABLE PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

PERCENTAGE OF FEDERAL-AID ROADS WITH PEDESTRIAN PATHS

PERCENTAGE OF FEDERAL-AID ROADS SUITABLE FOR BICYCLES BASED ON FHWA BIKEWAY GUIDE

PERCENTAGE OF MOBILITY CORRIDORS SUITABLE FOR BICYCLES BASED ON FHWA BIKEWAY GUIDE

PERCENTAGE OF MOBILITY CORRIDORS WITH PEDESTRIAN PATHS

PERCENTAGE OF OF STOPS WITH SHELTERS

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CONTACT INFORMATION

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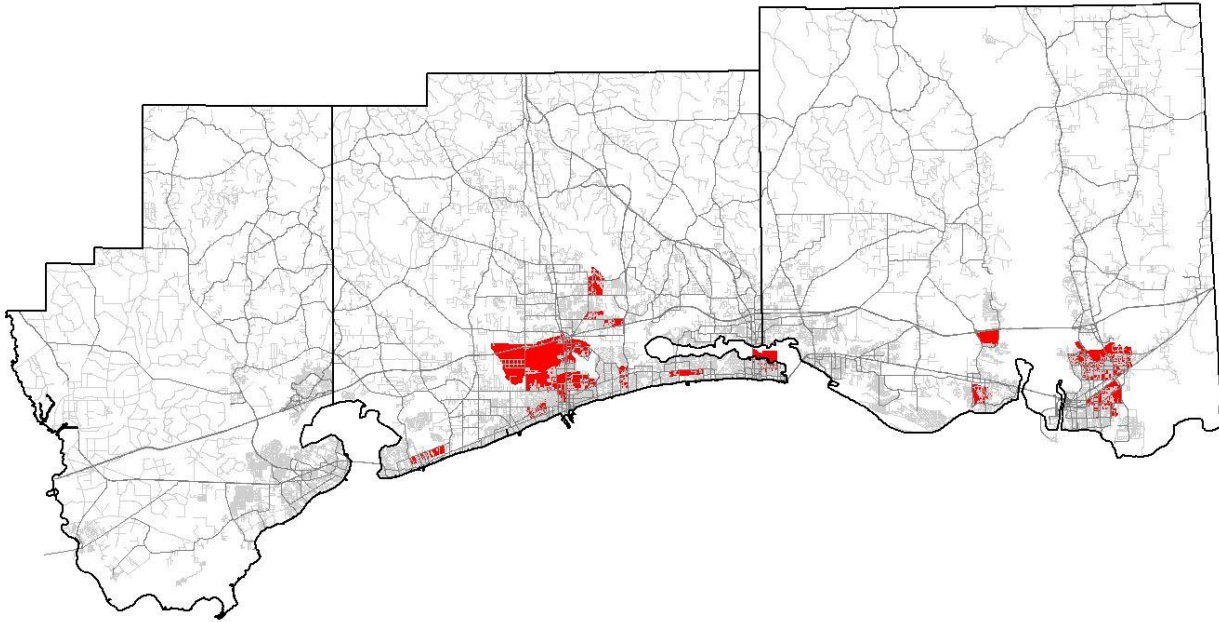
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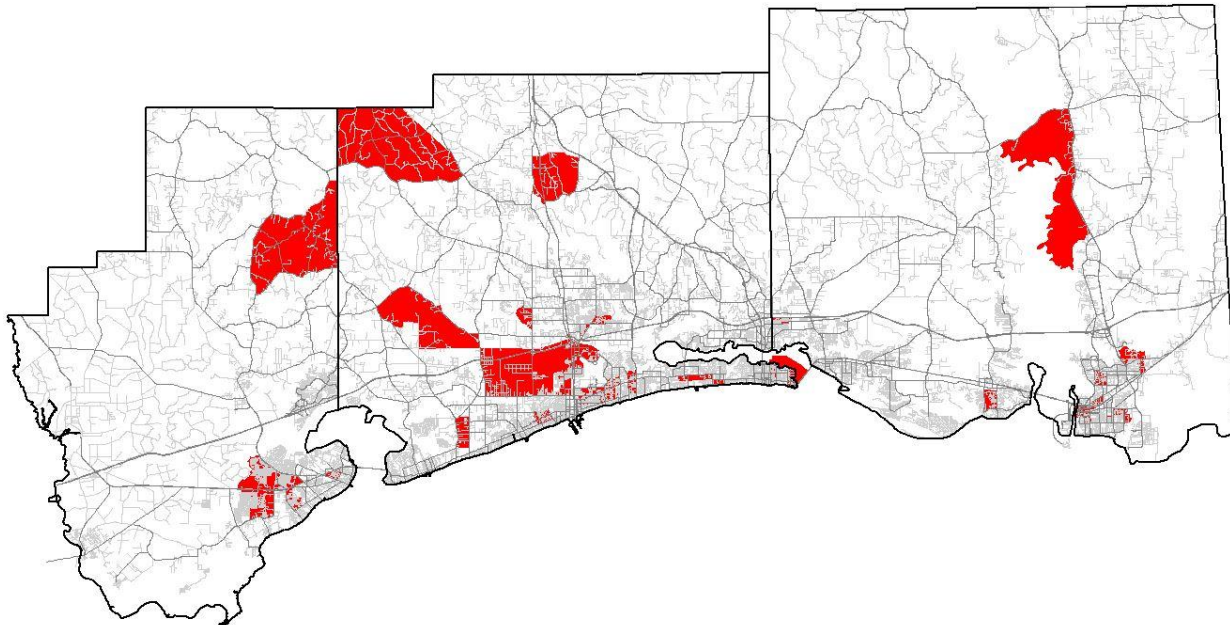


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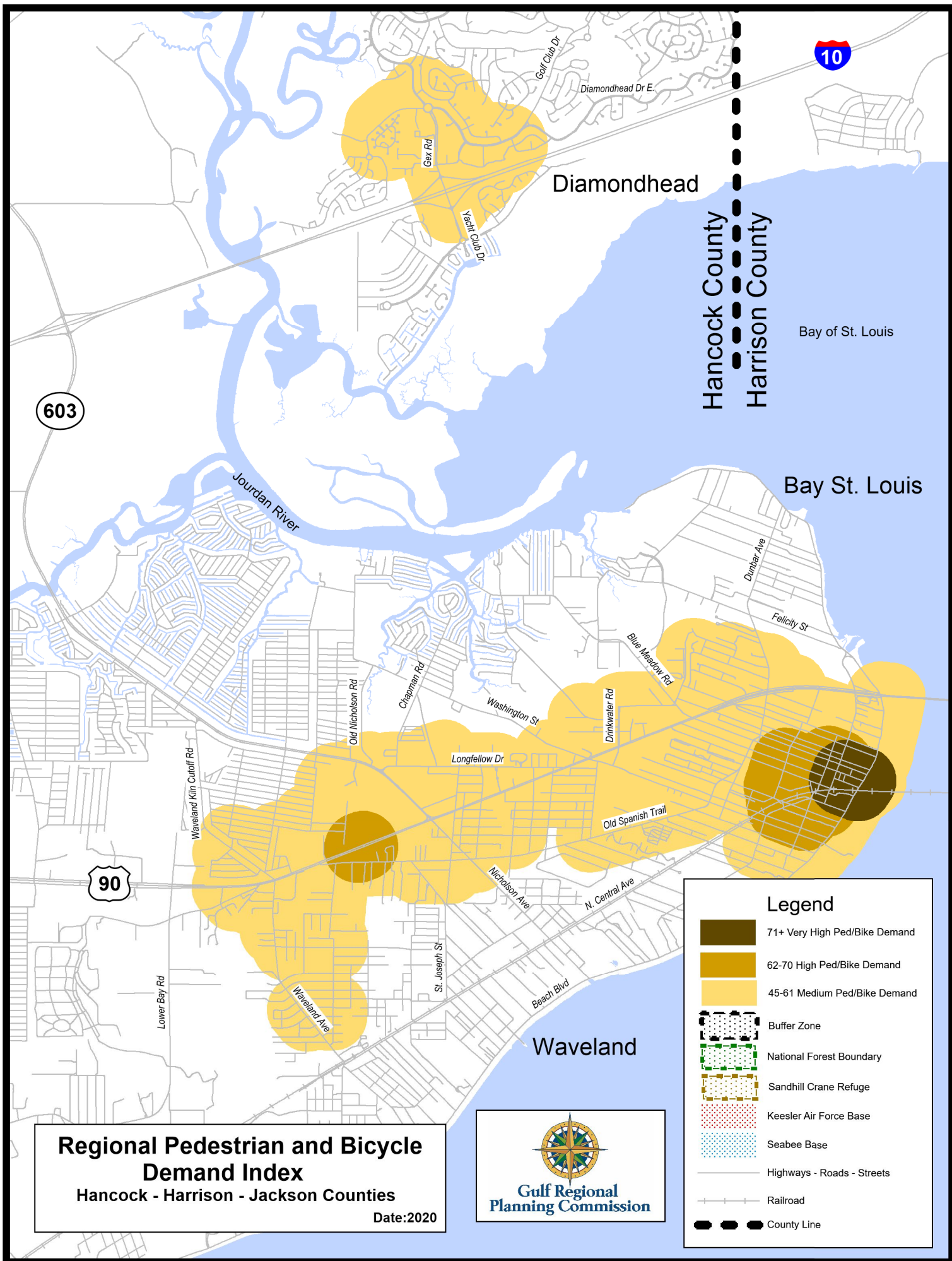
APPENDIX

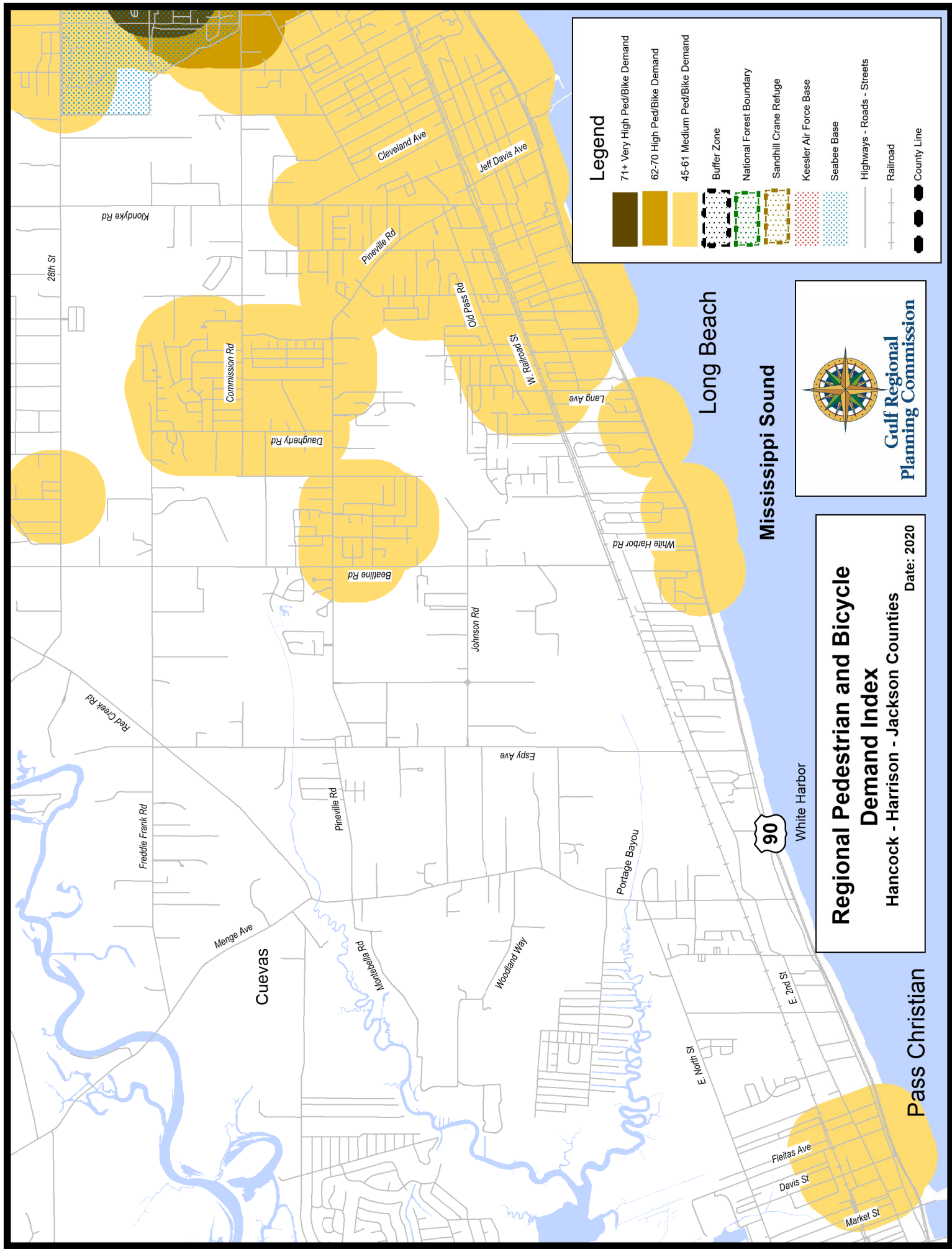


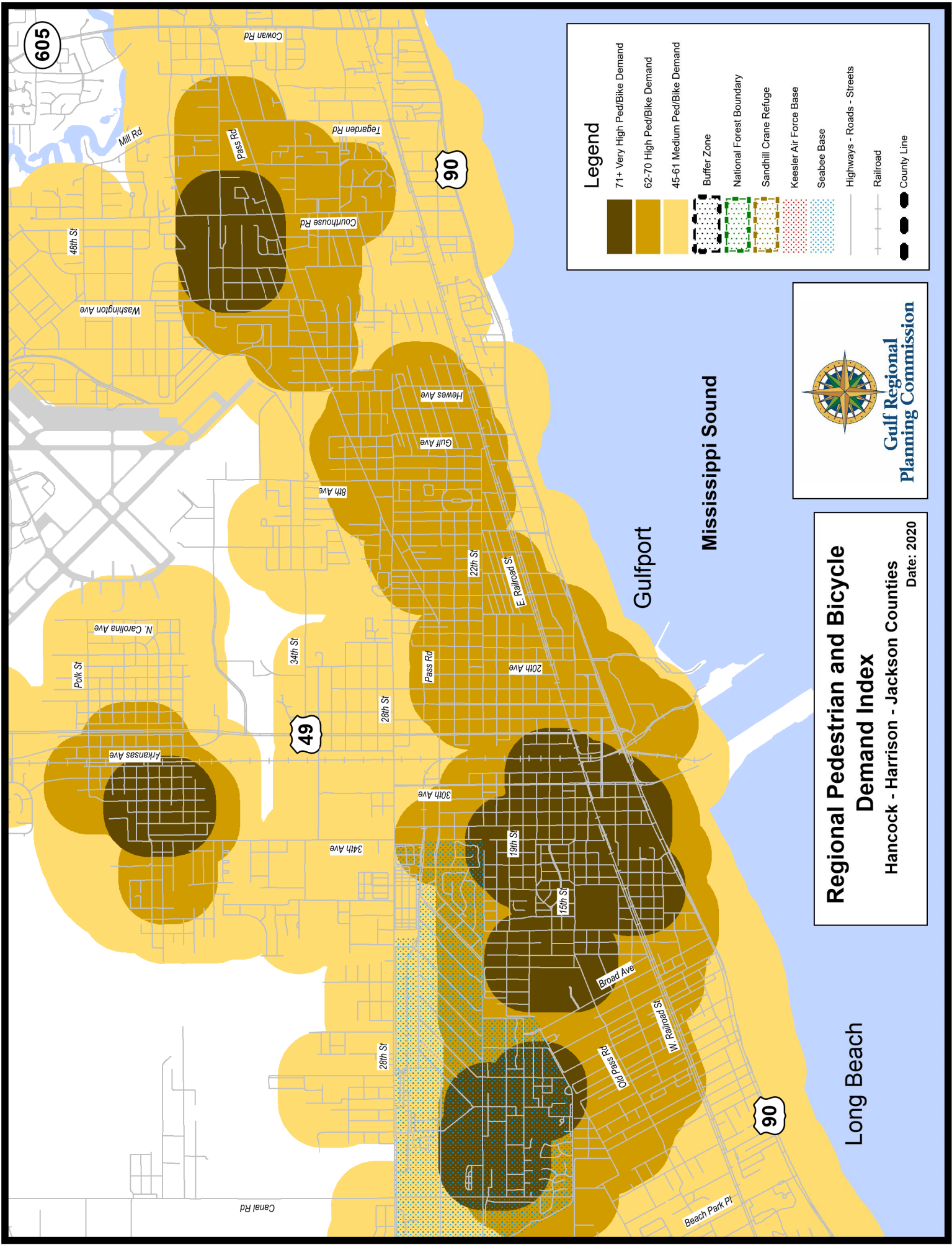
Minority Concentrations



Low Income Concentrations





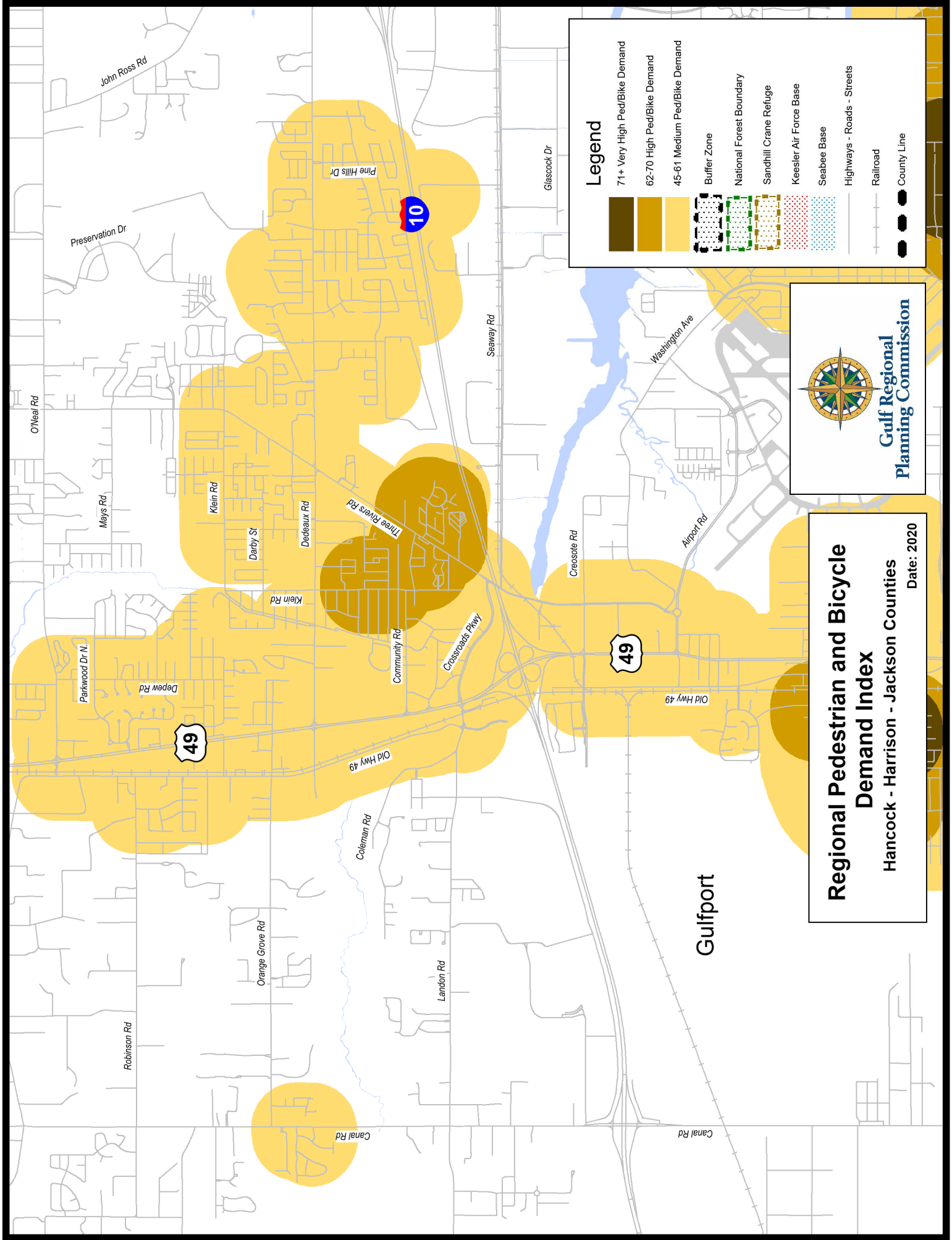


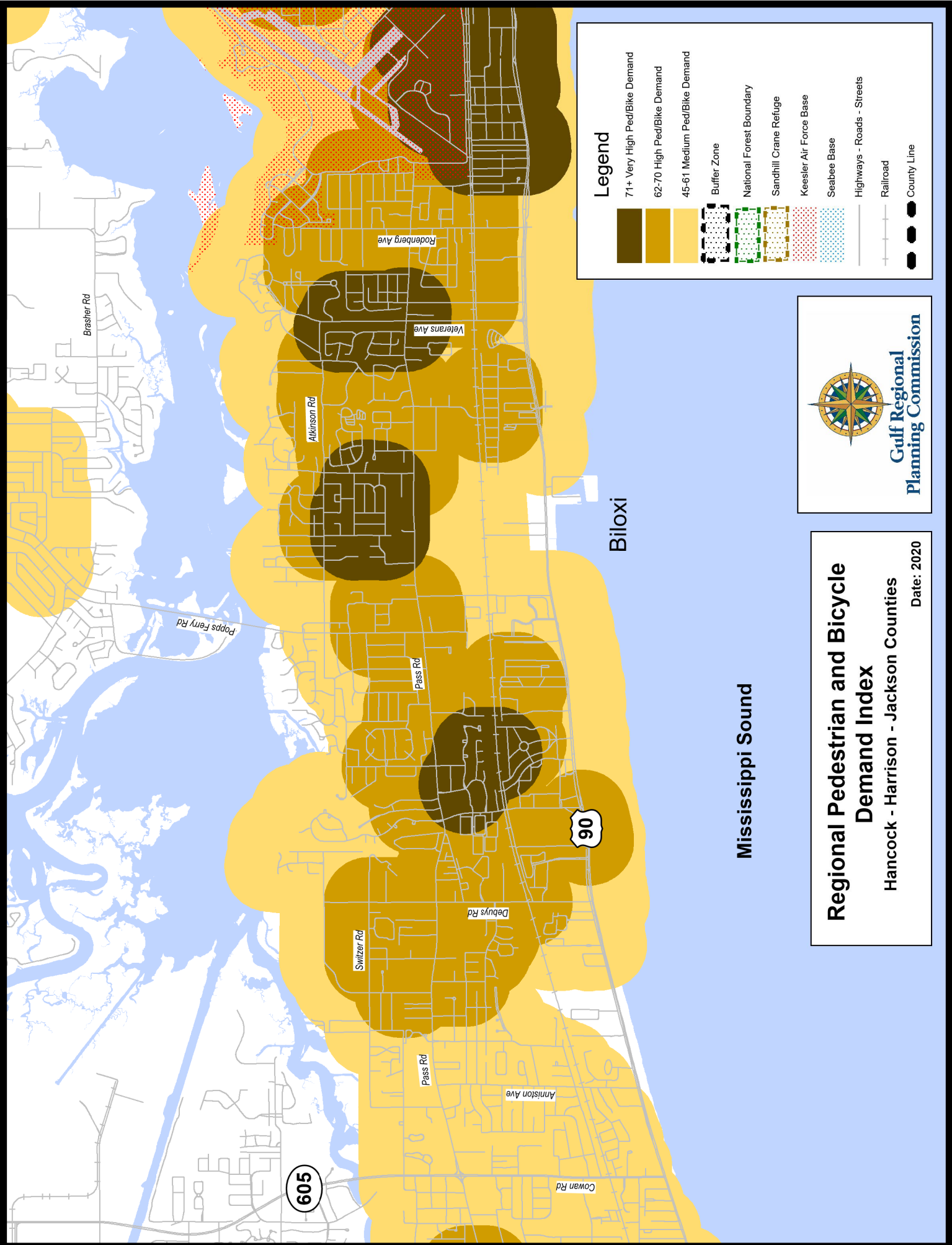
Legend

- 71+ Very High Ped/Bike Demand
- 62-70 High Ped/Bike Demand
- 45-61 Medium Ped/Bike Demand
- Buffer Zone
- National Forest Boundary
- Sandhill Crane Refuge
- Keesler Air Force Base
- Seabee Base
- Highways - Roads - Streets
- Railroad
- County Line


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**Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle
 Demand Index**
 Hancock - Harrison - Jackson Counties
 Date: 2020





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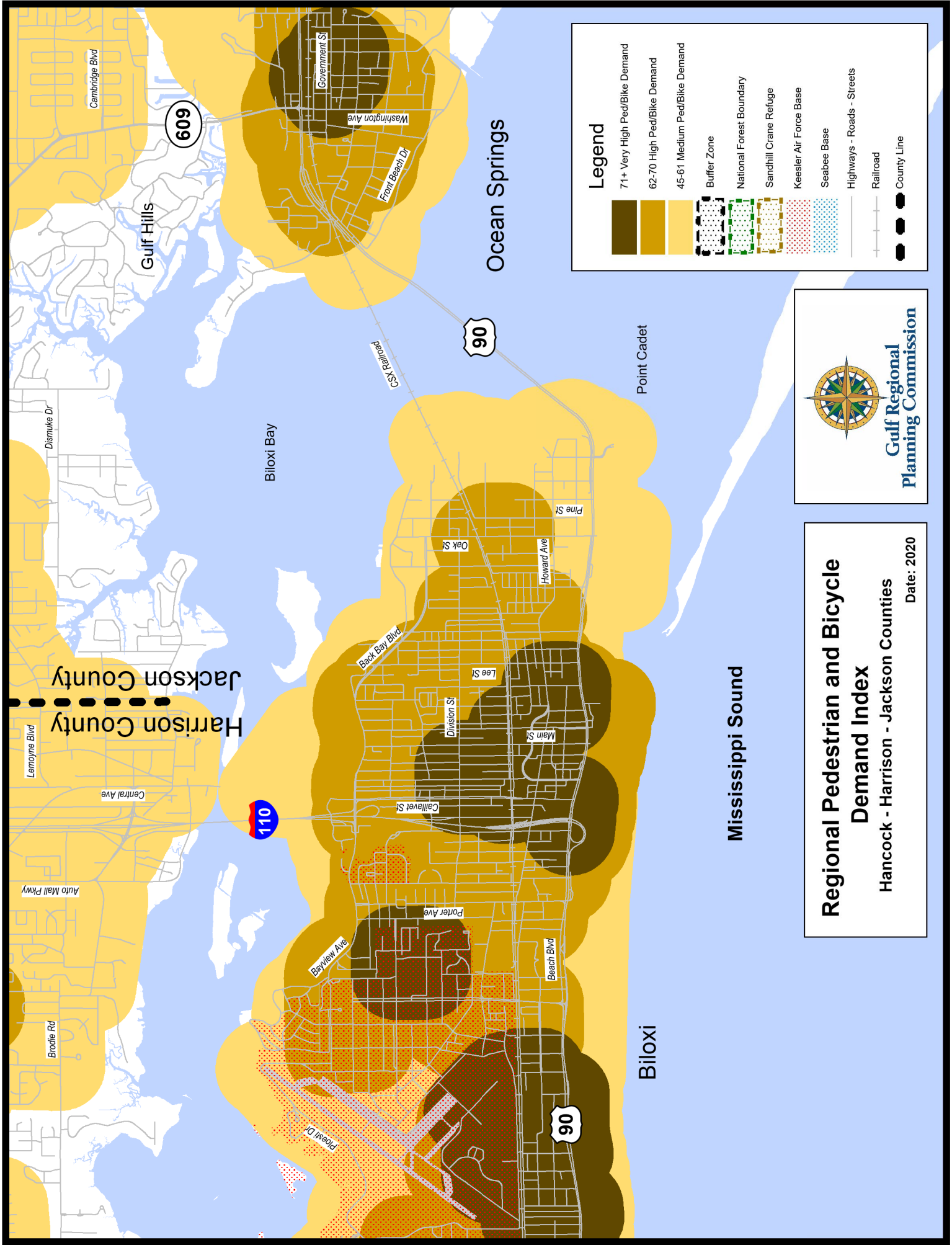
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Regional Pedestrian and Bicycle Demand Index

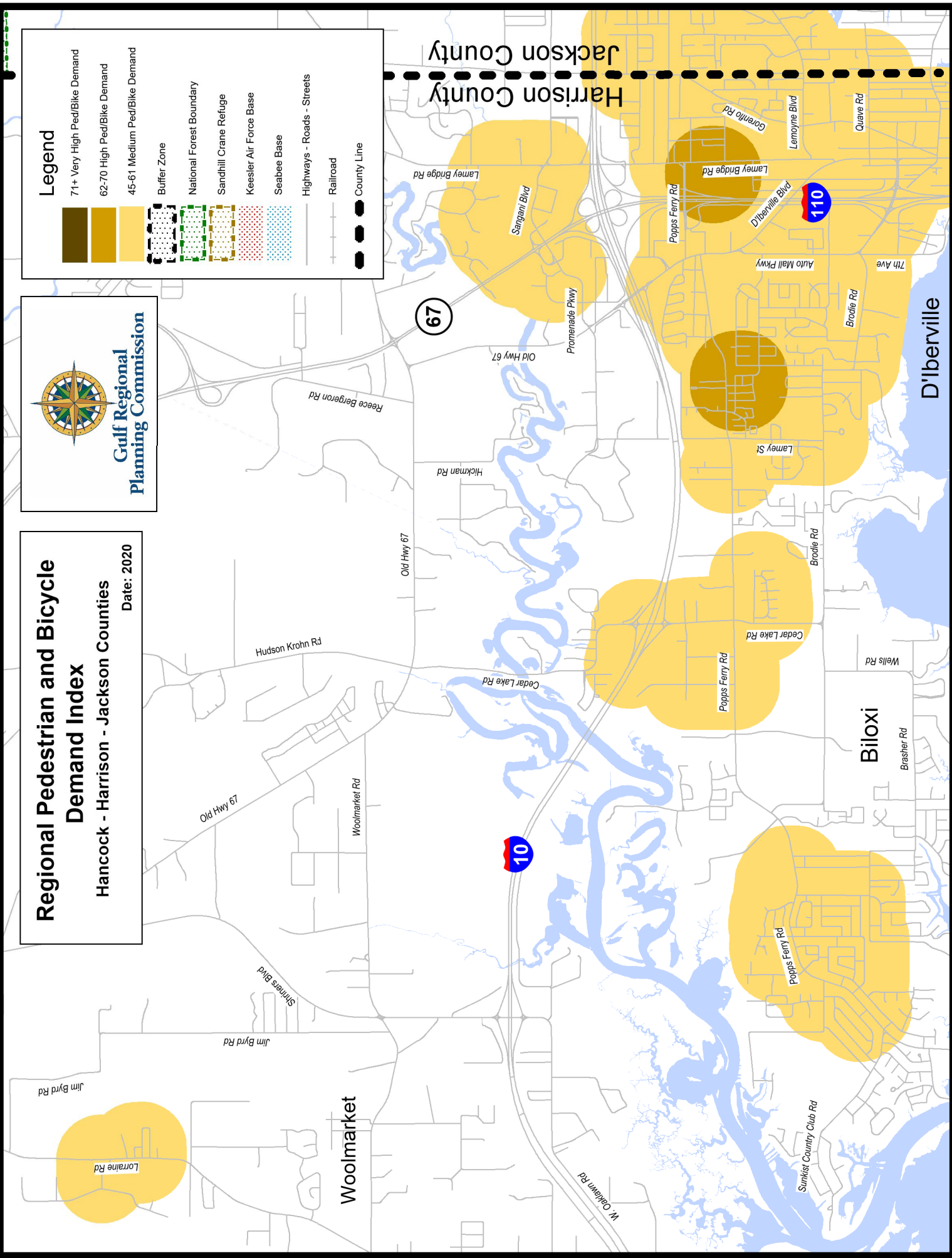
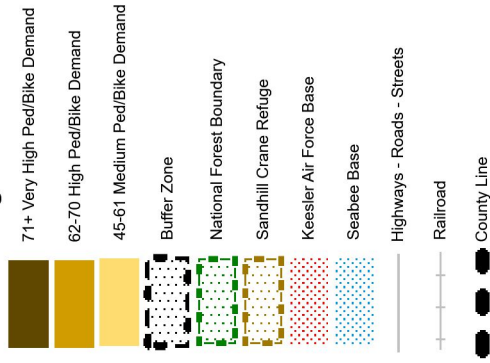
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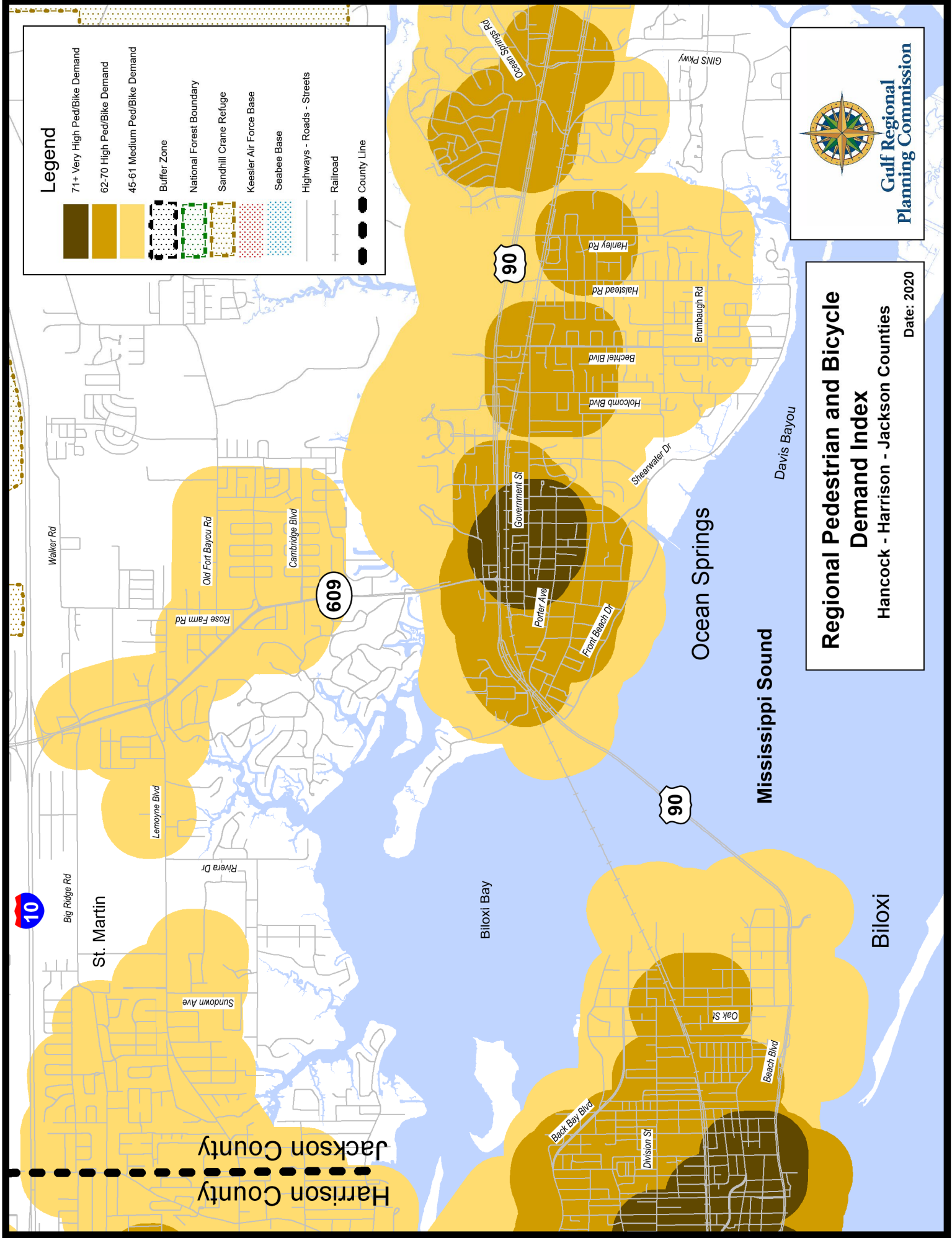
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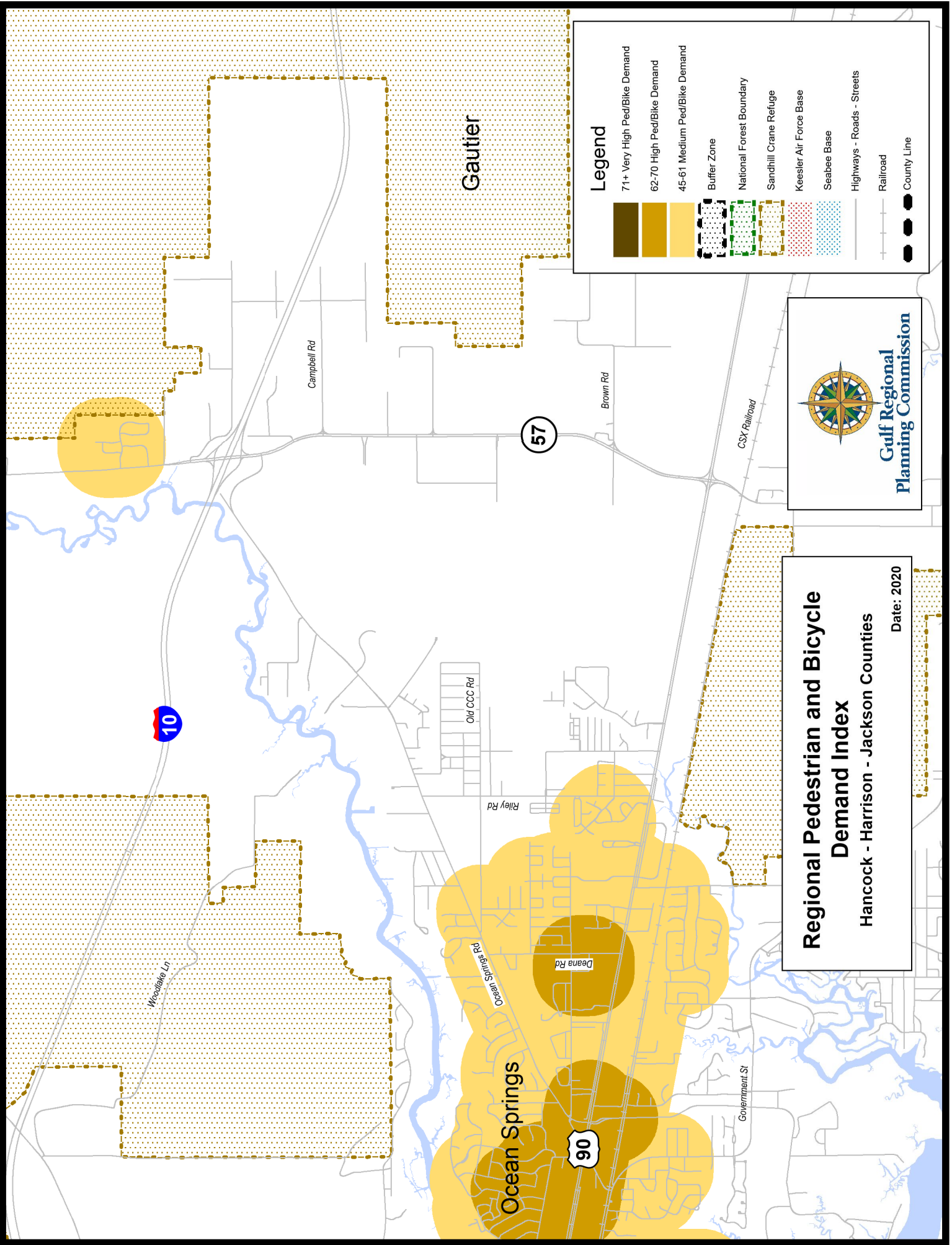


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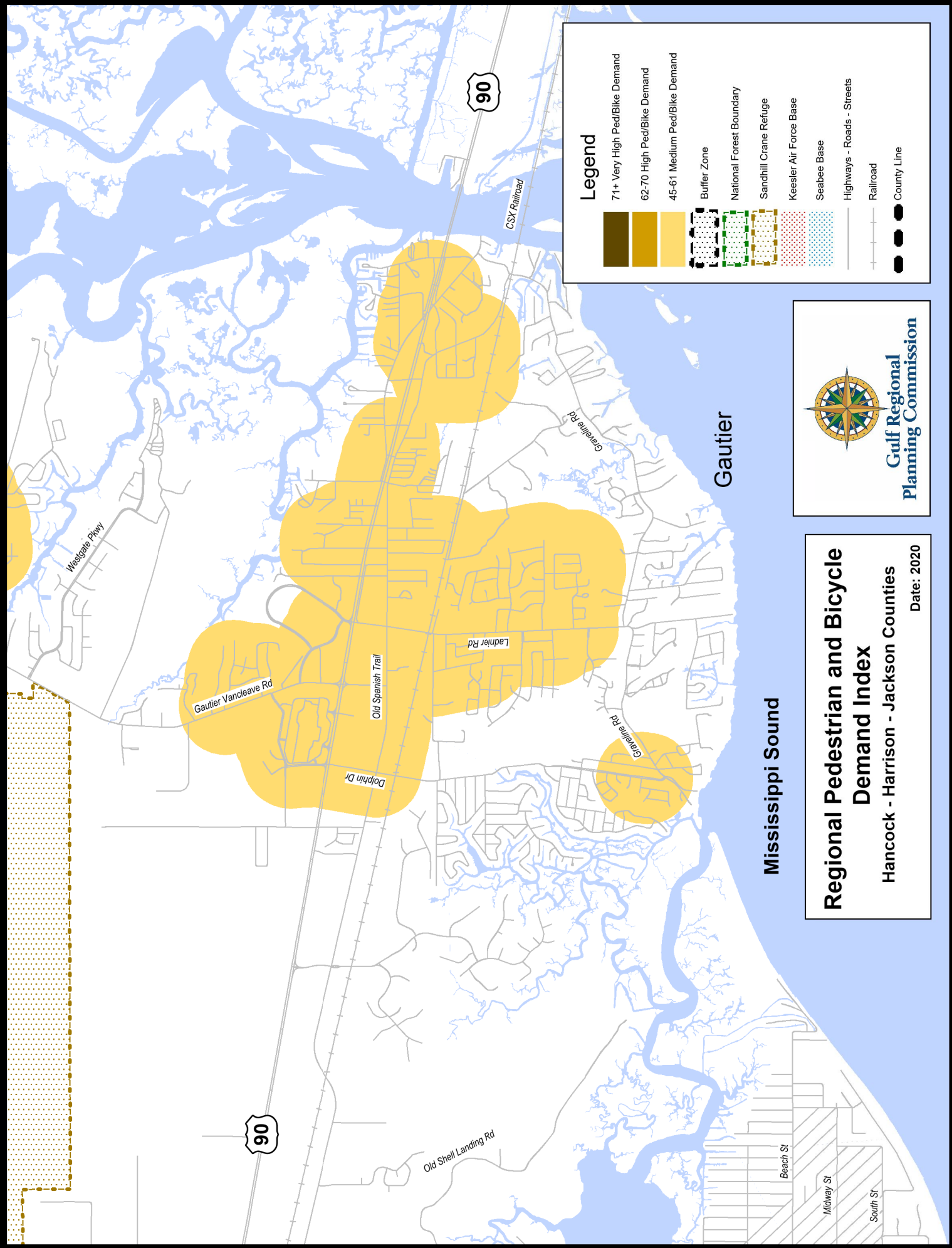
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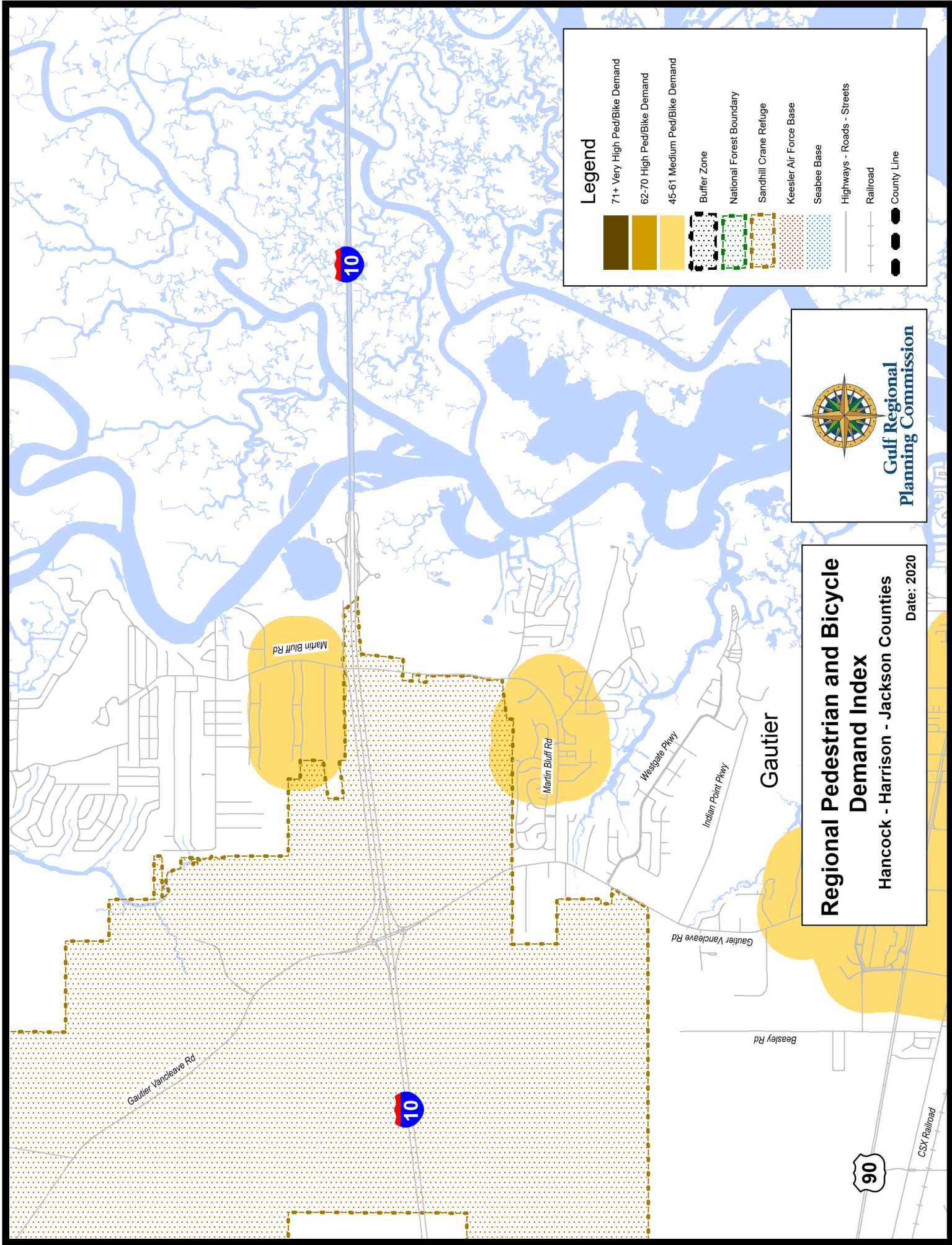
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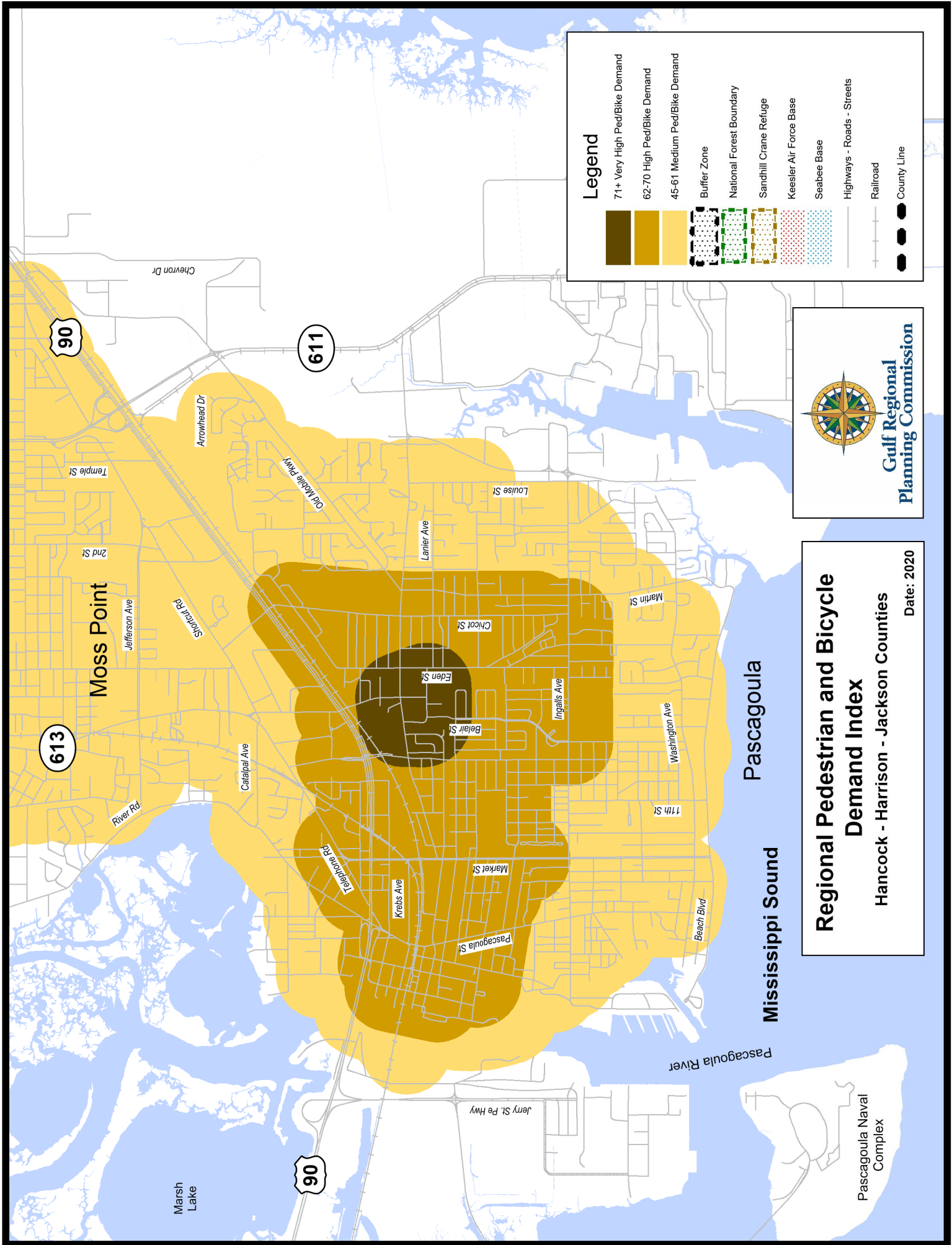
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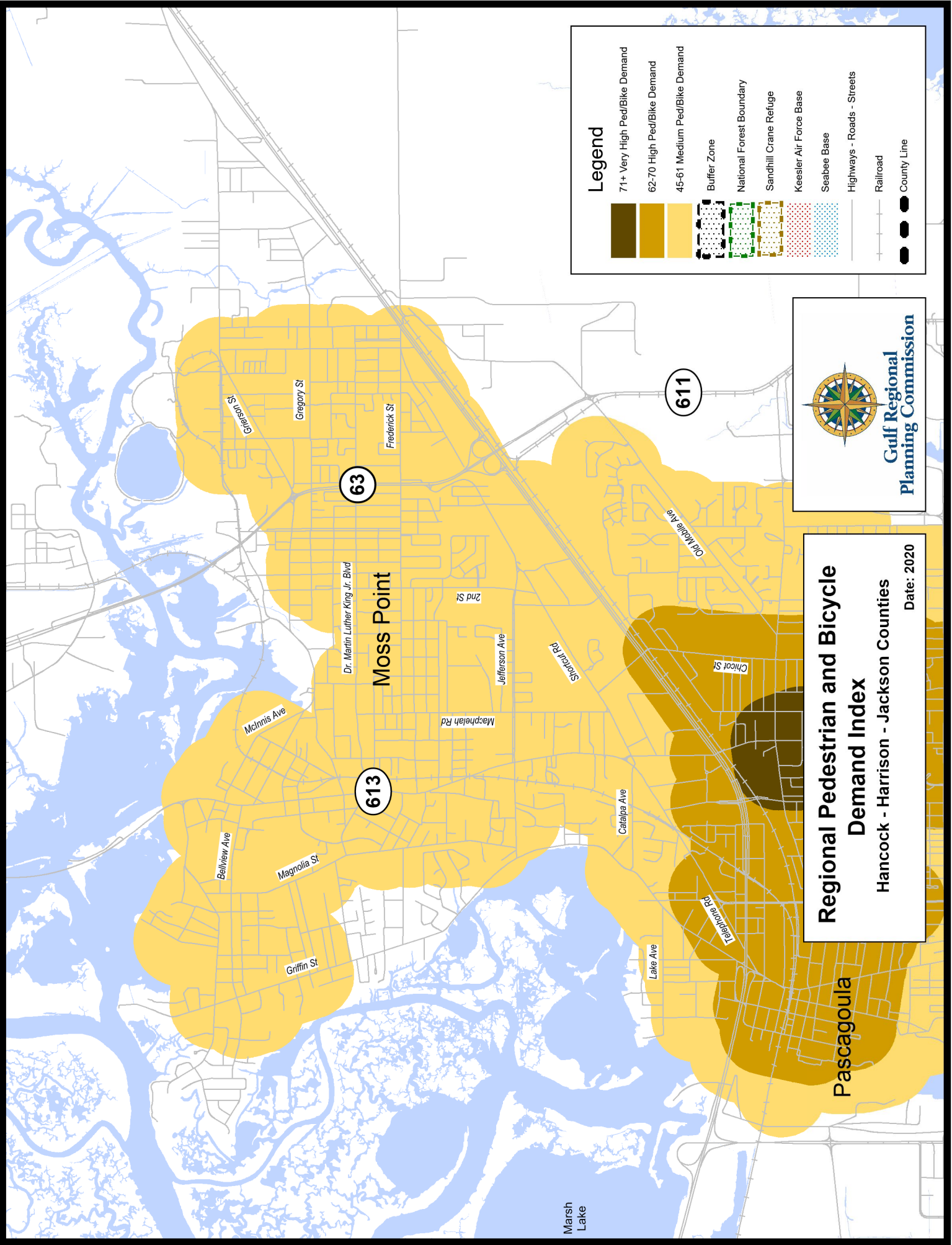
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