

Housing



SECTION 10 – HOUSING

Introduction

The presence of safe and affordable housing is a necessity for every community. Housing is classified in different categories: single-family residences, duplexes, multifamily units, group quarters, manufactured homes, rural residential, and downtown units. A Texas Target Cities windshield survey was conducted in the City of Navasota to evaluate each housing type, except for the downtown loft housing. This section discusses the current housing conditions in the City of Navasota as well as other important information concerning housing issues.

Definitions

Single-Family Residence

A single-family residence, hereafter called a house, can be defined as a non-moveable structure constructed on the site of its permanent location. The house is designed to serve as a home for a single person or family rather than multiple individuals or families. A house normally has a solid attached foundation.



Single-Family Residence

Manufactured Home

A manufactured home is a movable or portable dwelling unit. This structure is delivered to its site by a motor vehicle. Under special permit it may be connected to utilities and designed without a permanent foundation for year-round living. This structure may consist of one or more units travel separately in tow and are designed to be joined into one integral unit.



Manufactured Home

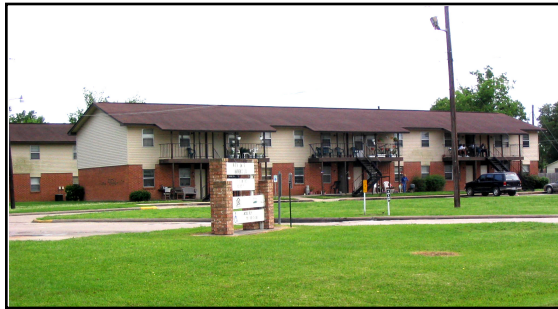
Duplex

A duplex is similar to a house but is composed of two separate and distinct dwelling areas within the same structure. This concept allows for the independent housing of two individuals or families within one structure.



Duplex

Multifamily Structure/Apartment Building



Multifamily Structure/Apartment Building

A multifamily structure or apartment building can be utilized to house three or more families or individuals within one building. The individuals or families live independently of each other, but all within the same structure.

Group Quarters

A group quarters structure has the capacity to house multiple unrelated individuals, where each individual may have a separate or shared living area or room. Meal preparation occurs at one location for all residents and assistance is provided. Such structures are sometimes referred to as “assisted living facilities.”



Group Quarters

Rural Residential



Rural Residential

The rural residential category includes both single-family homes and mobile/manufactured homes. These structures must be located on large parcels of land, over five acres.

Downtown Residential Units

Downtown residential units are identified as housing that is generally attached or associated with another land use activity such as commercial or retail use. For example, a downtown residential unit may be located on the second floor of a building whose primary use is a retail shop.

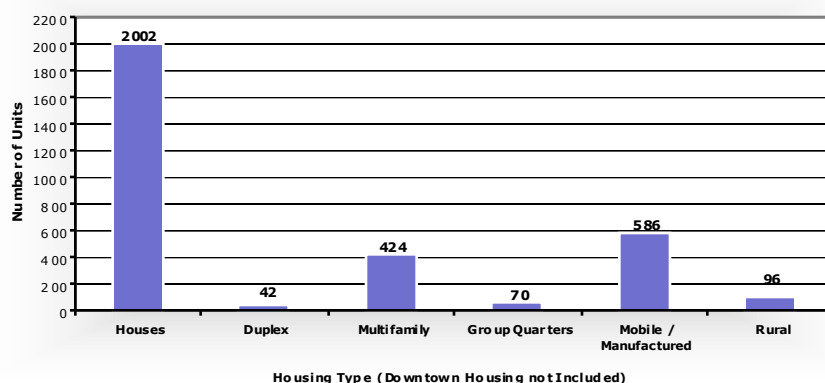


Downtown Residential Units

Current Housing Status

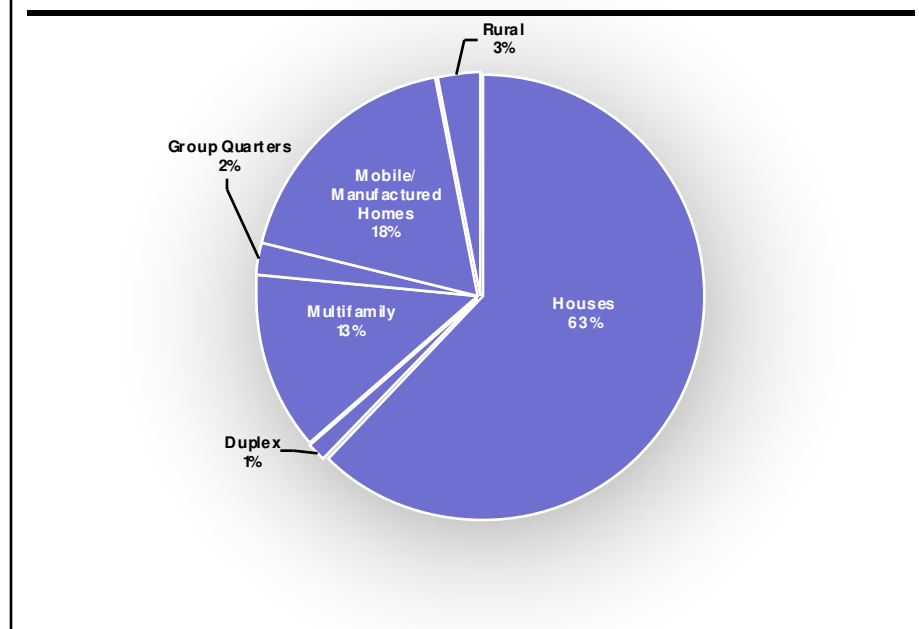
The housing stock of Navasota is varied, but includes primarily single-family homes. Currently there are 2002 single-family homes, 42 duplex units, 424 multifamily units, 1 group quarter, 586 mobile/manufactured homes, and 96 rural residential units for a total of

Figure 10.1: Housing Types by Number of Dwelling Units

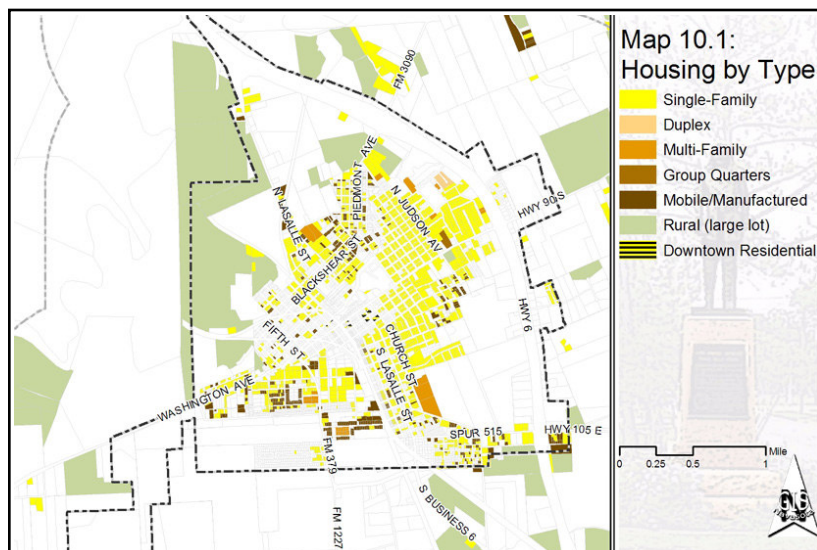


3,151 dwellings (Figure 10.1). Downtown units were not included as a part of the study due to the planning team’s inability to secure this information from a windshield survey. Through examination of the data, it is clear the most popular form of dwelling in Navasota is single-family housing comprising 62.17% of the housing. Mobile/manufactured homes are second comprising 18.2% of the housing stock (Figure 10.2). The remainder of the housing stock is comprised of multi-family units at 13.17%, rural housing at 2.98%, group quarters at 2.17%, and duplexes at 1.30%.

Figure 10.2: Housing Units by Percentage of Total Housing



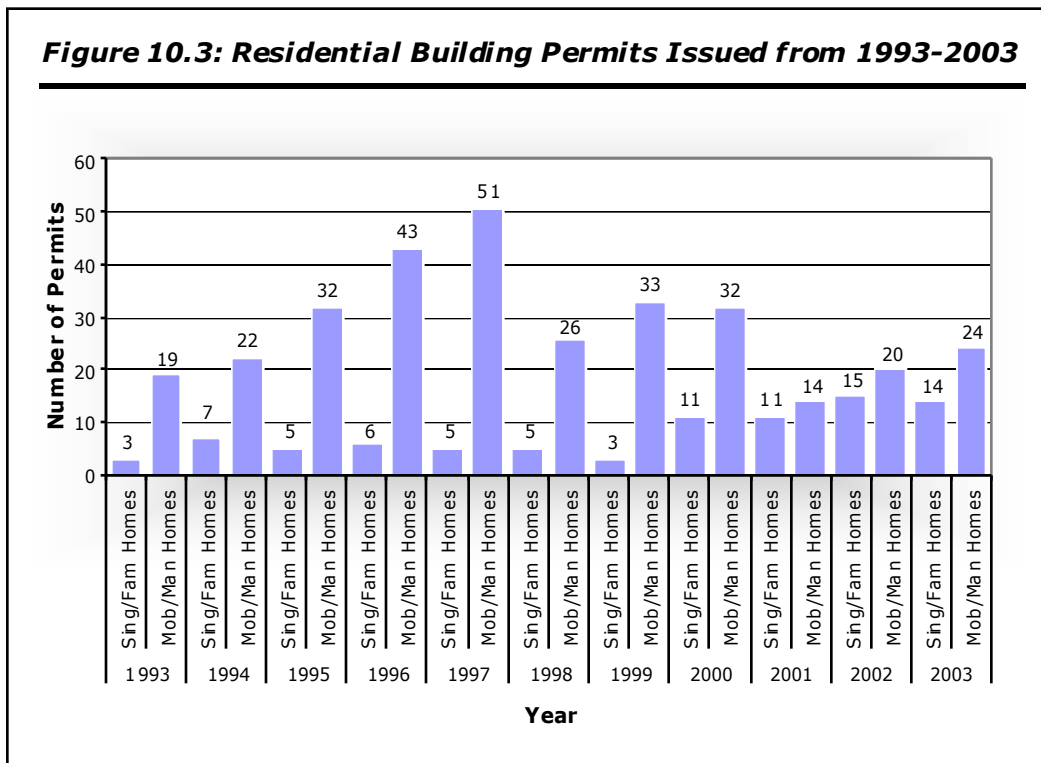
Map 10.1 indicates each housing type and location in the City of Navasota. According to the current City zoning ordinance, the minimum lot size for a single-family unit is 6,000 square feet, with a minimum setback of 25 feet in the front and 20 feet in the rear. The



average lot size for a mobile/manufactured home is 4,800 square feet with a 25-

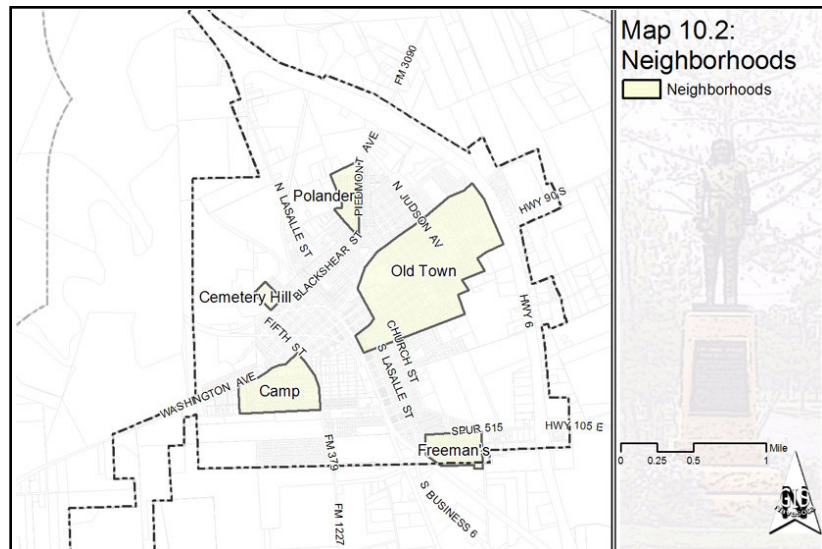
foot front yard setback and a 15-foot back yard setback. Multi-family residential lots must be a minimum of 7,500 square feet for the first two units and 1,500 square feet for each additional unit. The multi-family front yard setback must be a minimum of 25 feet with a 20-foot rear setback. Restrictions for duplex and group quarters are grouped under the multi-family sections in the current zoning ordinance and rural housing units are not addressed.

Most houses have a slab-on-grade foundation, wood framing, and a brick façade. The average residential house is approximately 3,500 square feet and has a fair market value of \$58,500 according to 2000 Census data. When examining Figure 10.2, it is evident that single-family housing and mobile/manufactured housing composes a majority of the dwellings within Navasota. The Grimes County Central Appraisal District provided data which indicated that the average appraised value of a single-family home is \$52,000 and \$19,000 for a mobile/manufactured home in Navasota.



Neighborhoods

the City of Navasota does not have officially designated neighborhoods, but does have five distinct areas based on the legal description of the property itself as well as the subdivisions of land (Map 10.2).



The neighborhoods or parts of the City are:

- **Freeman's Town**

- This neighborhood is located south of SPUR 515.
- The area is composed of smaller single-family homes and mobile/manufactured homes. Many of the homes as well as the roads in this area are stressed and in need of repair.

- **Camp Subdivision**

- It is located south of 105 and west of FM 379.
- Separated from rest of the City by roads, this is actually a traditional neighborhood with commercial services in walking distances of residences.
- The neighborhood is comprised of many mobile/manufactured and single-family homes. There are several stressed areas within the area.

- **Old Town**

- Old Town is located north and south of Washington Avenue (ends around Manley in the south and Neal in the north).
- The homes in this area were mostly built in the 1920's and 1930's.
- It is composed of traditional Victorian homes.
- Old Town is the largest and oldest neighborhood area in Navasota. There are many historical structures in this area and the majority of homes are

in excellent or good shape. Most of the residential structures are single-family homes.

- **Cemetery Hill**

- This area is located east of the cemetery.
- Cemetery Hill is a smaller neighborhood. There is a mix of single-family and mobile/manufactured homes in the area and most are in good to fair condition.

- **Polander**

- This neighborhood is located north off Piedmont Avenue and along Chinski Street
- Polander is also comprised of mixed single-family homes and mobile/manufactured homes. A majority of the homes in this neighborhood are considered to be in fair to poor condition, making the neighborhood a stressed area in the urban fabric of Navasota.

Housing Analysis

A block-by-block analysis was conducted to evaluate the housing stock through a windshield survey in Navasota. However, Downtown housing was not included in this survey. The City was separated into block sections and evaluated based on foundation, frame, roof, and yard condition. From the block analysis conducted, most homes in Navasota are in good condition. Each housing type was evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- **Roof**

- 4: Overall good condition with no obvious damage or wear
- 3: Fair condition, minimal damage or wear is evident, small repairs may be required
- 2: Poor condition, more extensive problems such as missing shingles
- 1: Holes in the roof, need complete repair and replacement

- **Frame**

- 4: Overall good condition, no obvious damage or wear
- 3: Fair condition, minimal damage or wear is evident, only slight maintenance required

- 2: Poor condition, more extensive work required such as painting, new siding, brick replacement
- 1: Exterior wall instability
- **Foundation**
 - 4: Overall good condition, no obvious damage or wear
 - 3: Fair condition, minimal damage or wear is evident, only slight maintenance required
 - 2: Poor condition, in need of major repair, cracks in the foundation, crumbling
 - 1: In need of replacement
- **Yard**
 - 4: Overall good condition, nice landscaping and well manicured yard, no trash lying around
 - 3: Fair condition, less landscaping but mainly well kept, no trash lying around
 - 2: Poor condition, poorly landscaped, un-kept trees/shrubs/grass, trash and junk piles in the yard/porch
 - 1: No yard, no landscaping, and in need of extensive maintenance

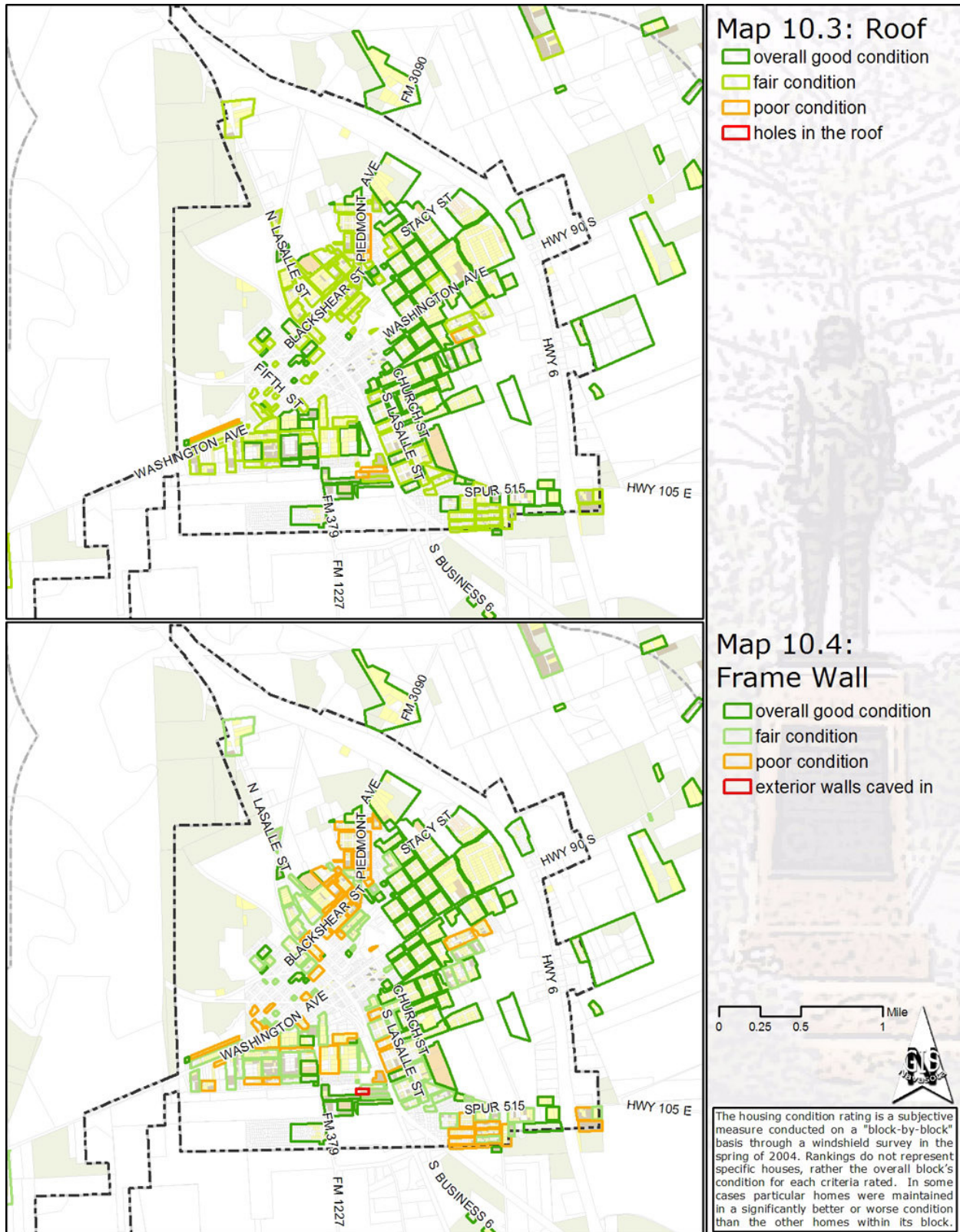
The housing condition data was collected according to previously defined study areas. The determined rating was an average of what was seen across the entire study site for each variable: roof, frame, foundation, and yard. Maps 10.3, 10.4, 10.5, and 10.6 show the results of each individual criterion, while Map 10.7 is an average for all four factors.

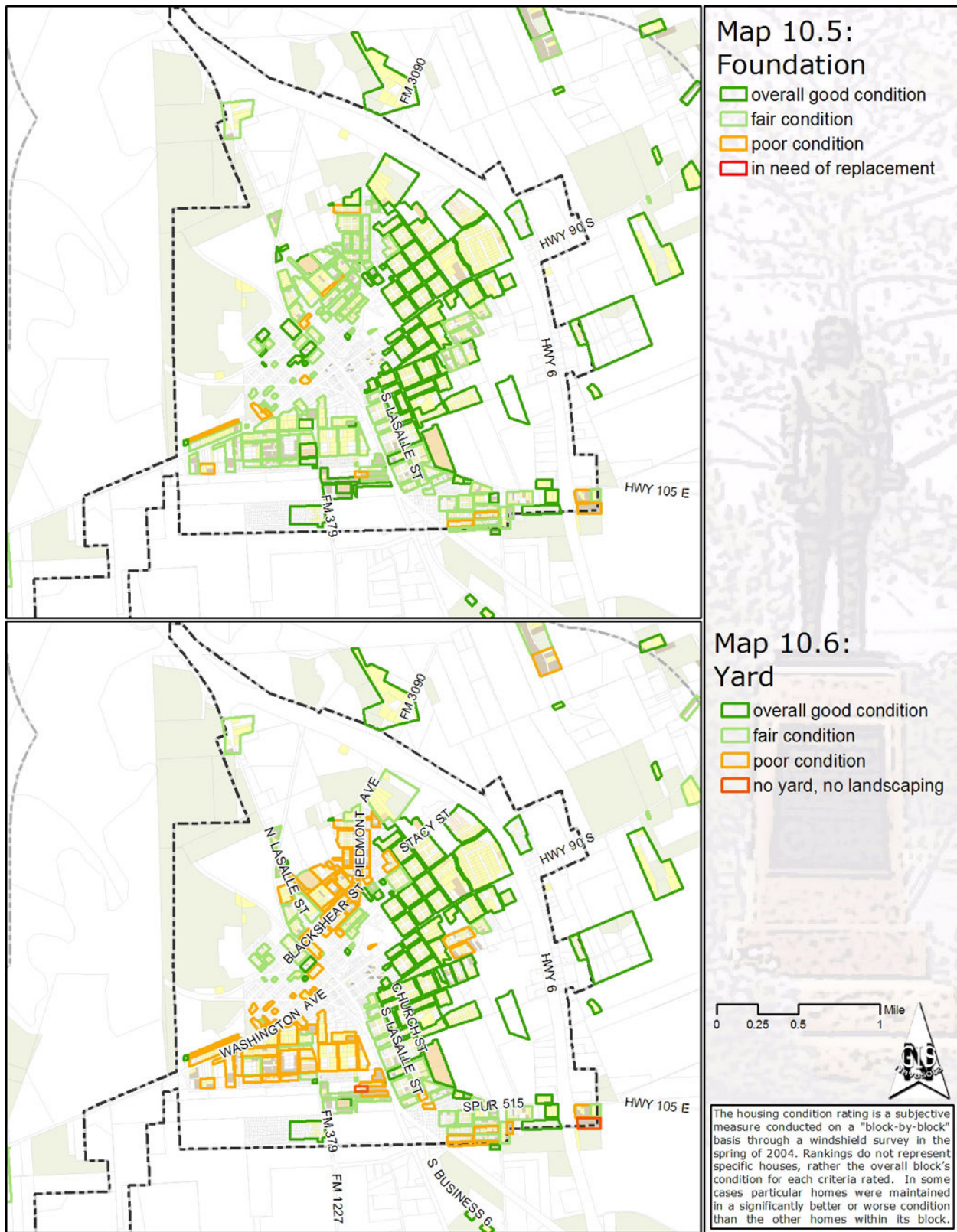
After review of the collected housing condition data, it is clear that housing conditions tend to follow subdivision lines, thus emphasizing the importance of building codes and high development standards from project start to finish. Enforcement of these standards throughout the entire community and in places of new development is a key element for the improvement of housing in Navasota. If high standards are implemented from the beginning of the development process, higher quality homes and neighborhoods will most likely be built. Likewise, if high

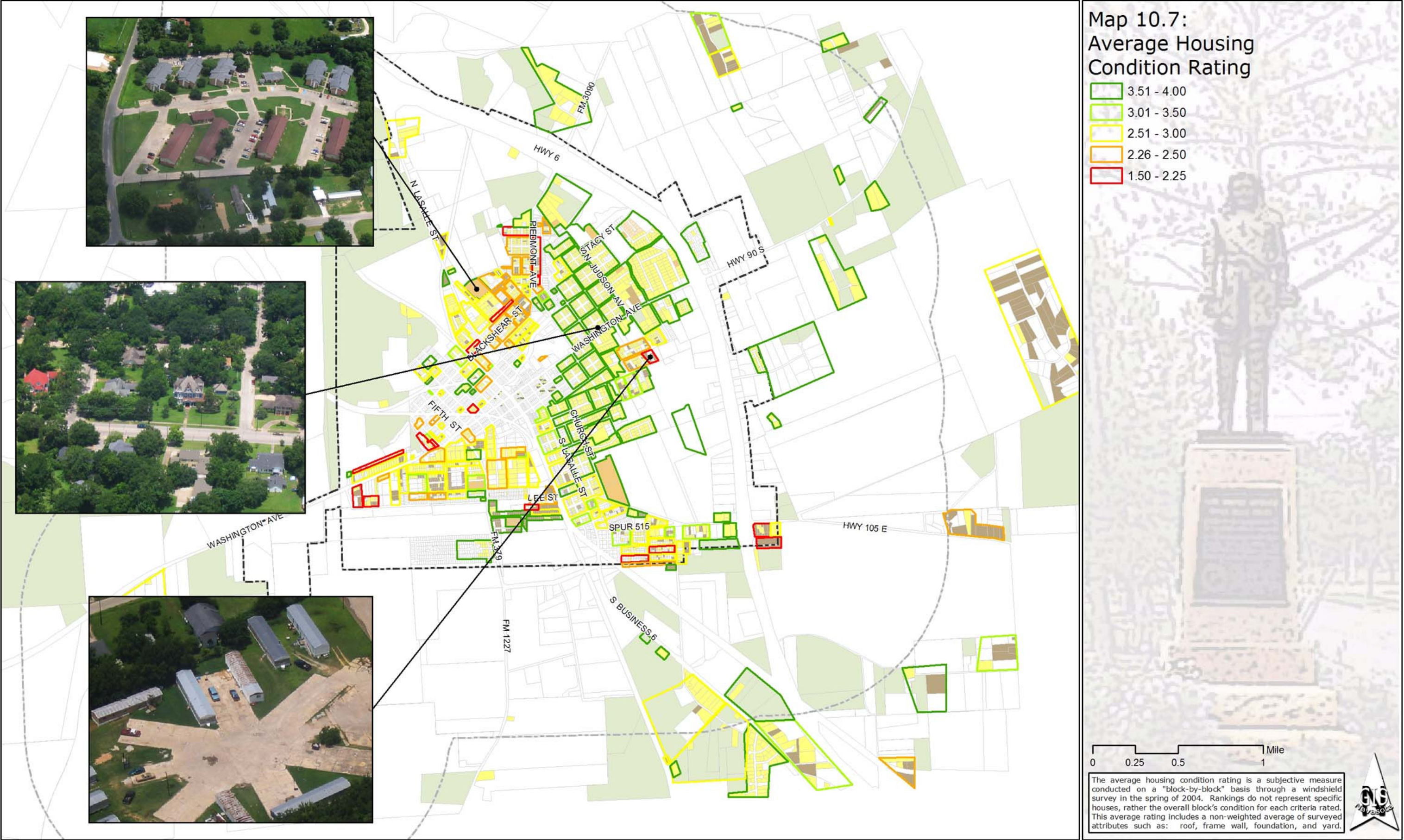
building and development standards are not enforced, lower quality homes may be built thus resulting in lower quality residential units and neighborhoods.

There is a clear dividing line between high quality housing and lower quality housing in the City. LaSalle Street bisects the City not only physically, but also as a clear identification of the change in residential fabric from north to south. A few other thoroughfares such as Piedmont Avenue and FM 379 delineated changes in residential quality. When examining the conditions north of Washington Avenue, several problem areas include the following:

- Piedmont Avenue appears to be the dividing line between the good and fair rating scale utilized in the housing survey. Both the yards and structure of homes along and to the west of Piedmont appear to be in worse shape (mainly as 2's and 3's) than homes to the east (mainly 3's and 4's)
 - Building foundations mainly appear to be in good conditions across Navasota (mainly 3's and 4's) except for several problems areas west of Piedmont and along Chase Street.
 - Building roofs also appear to be in good condition across Navasota except for a small area east of Piedmont and north of Chase Street







When examining the conditions south of Washington Avenue, several problem areas include the following:

- The area west of FM 379, known as the Camp Subdivision is somewhat blighted in comparison to surrounding areas. The area is poorly maintained, but structurally sound.
 - Most yards in this area are overgrown or poorly maintained.
 - Roofs and foundations are in good condition, however the frame walls of many structures are failing.
- Another blighted area in Navasota is an area known as Freeman's Town. In comparison to other parts of the City, this area is slightly overgrown and unmanaged. The homes are not in the best condition.

Public Housing

The Navasota Housing Authority (NHA) currently operates only one public housing facility, Allen White, which is composed of 50 units. The NHA is concerned about the availability of public housing in Navasota because currently many of the housing units do not conform to Section 8 housing standards.

Section 8 vouchers are rental subsidies for low-income residents provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. There are four privately owned rental housing complexes in Navasota that accept Section 8 vouchers to assist low income individuals and families. There is currently only one nursing home in Navasota, Daybreak Nursing and Rehab, but there are plans underway to develop another facility.

Additionally, Navasota High School and the Brazos Valley Affordable Housing Corporation (BVAHC) have partnered to build homes for the community in an effort to assist with affordable housing. This private/public partnership is a benefit to each party and the community. Students have the opportunity to work with licensed and skilled tradesmen to learn how to build homes. In turn, the high school program utilizes the labor of students to assist in the home construction

process, saving the community money on the final product. The result of this partnership is the construction of affordable homes for citizens of Navasota.

Another joint venture between the City and the Brazos Valley Affordable Housing Corporation (BVAHC) involves the construction of an affordable housing neighborhood. BVAHC is constructing houses on a parcel of land dedicated by the City to the corporation.

Through projects, such as the two discussed above, the City of Navasota is taking a proactive role in assisting with affordable housing.

Housing Needs

In addition to affordable housing issues, a sufficient quantity of elderly housing is another item of concern. With the growing elderly population in Navasota, additional assisted living facilities are needed.

Sources:

City of Navasota Staff, 2004.
Navasota Housing Authority, 2004.