

AFRICATOWN



Africatown Tourism Guide

The Historic Landing Place Of The Last Slave Ship In America



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Africatown Welcome Center

The Africatown Welcome Center site was known as Graveyard Alley for years. In the years after the Civil War, the former slaves were paid a small wage, and the Meaher family built houses on their land and rented them to the former slaves. After Africatown became part of the city of Mobile, the Alabama Highway Department decided to widen Bay Bridge Road to four lanes. To do this, they purchased (took) the land from those who lived along the highway and moved everyone out of Graveyard Alley. Later, the land was purchased by a local real estate company. In the 1980s, the land was donated to the Africatown Mobilization nonprofit, and plans were made to raise money for an official community welcome center.





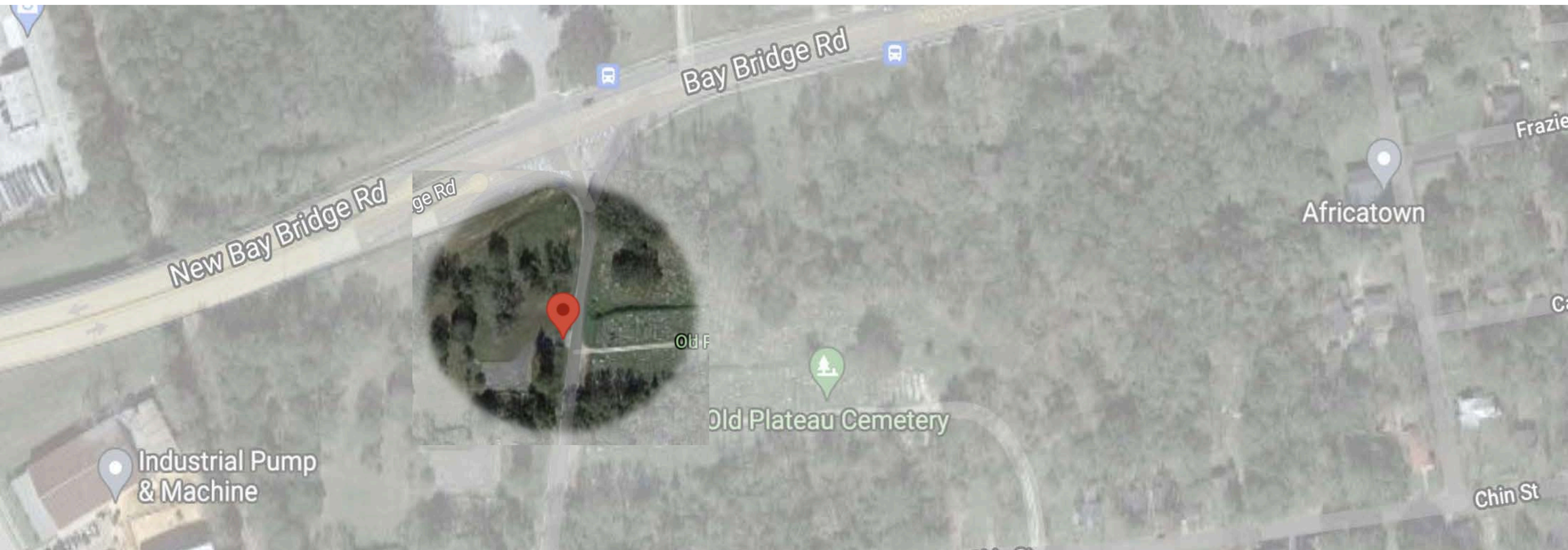
Africatown Welcome Center

In the 1990s, a used double-wide trailer was donated to Africatown and used as an office for the Africatown Welcome Center. In 2005, Hurricane Katrina blew the roof off the trailer and destroyed some items kept for storage. Although another double-wide was offered, the community decided not to accept the offer of another trailer and chose to hold out until an official welcome center could be constructed. After it was announced that funds were available following the BP spill fines being assessed, six Africatown supporters went to work and managed to apply for BP funds to build a brand-new Africatown Welcome Center. In 2017, it was announced that \$3.450 million had been approved to build a welcome center. The current sign that denotes the pending construction of a new welcome center was erected in May 2019.



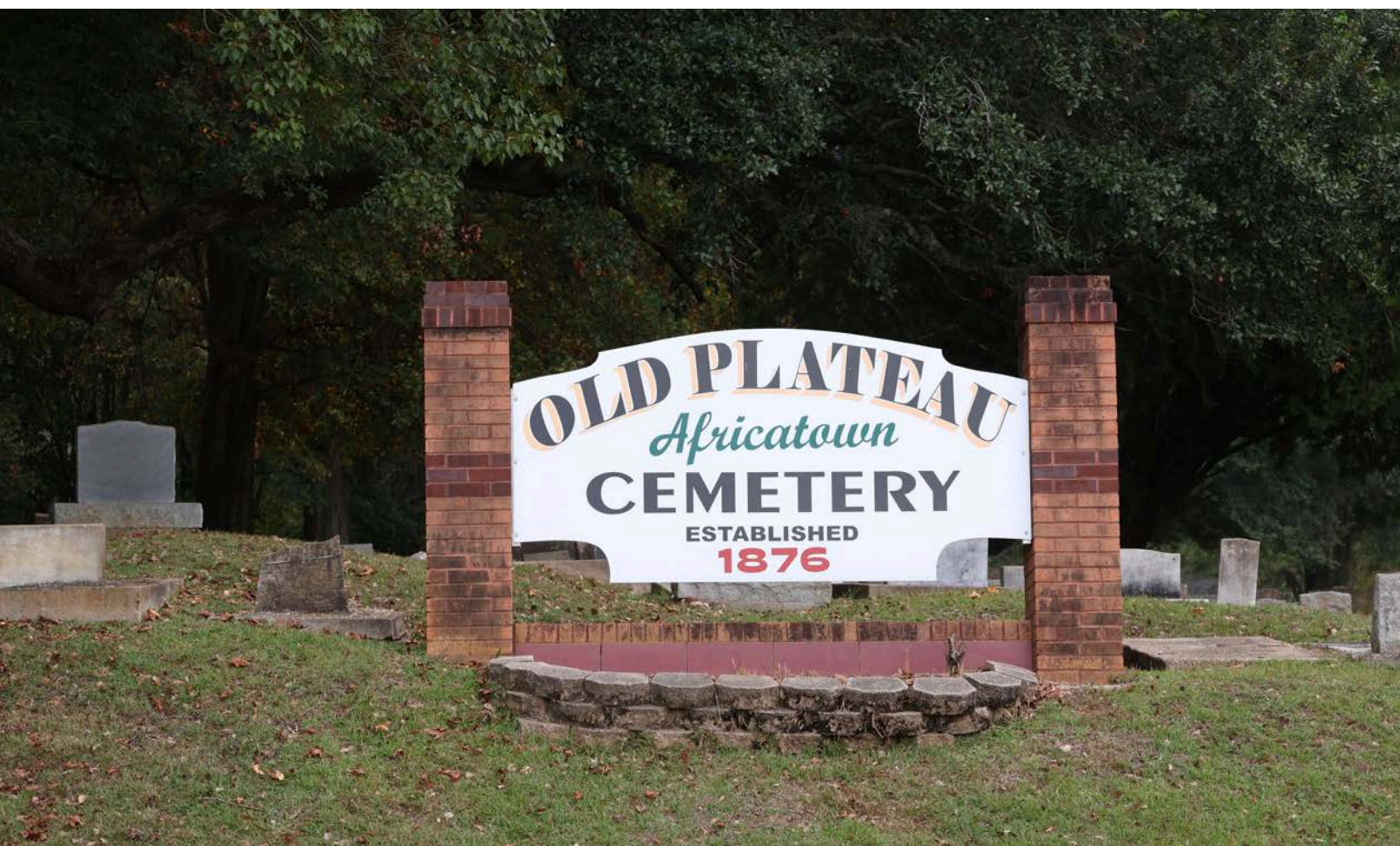
Africatown Welcome Center

From Bay Bridge Road, between Telegraph Road and S. Magazine Road/Tin Top Lane, turn and head south on Bay Bridge Cutoff Road. The Welcome Center location is across the street from the entrance to the Historic Africatown Cemetery, just before Chin Street.



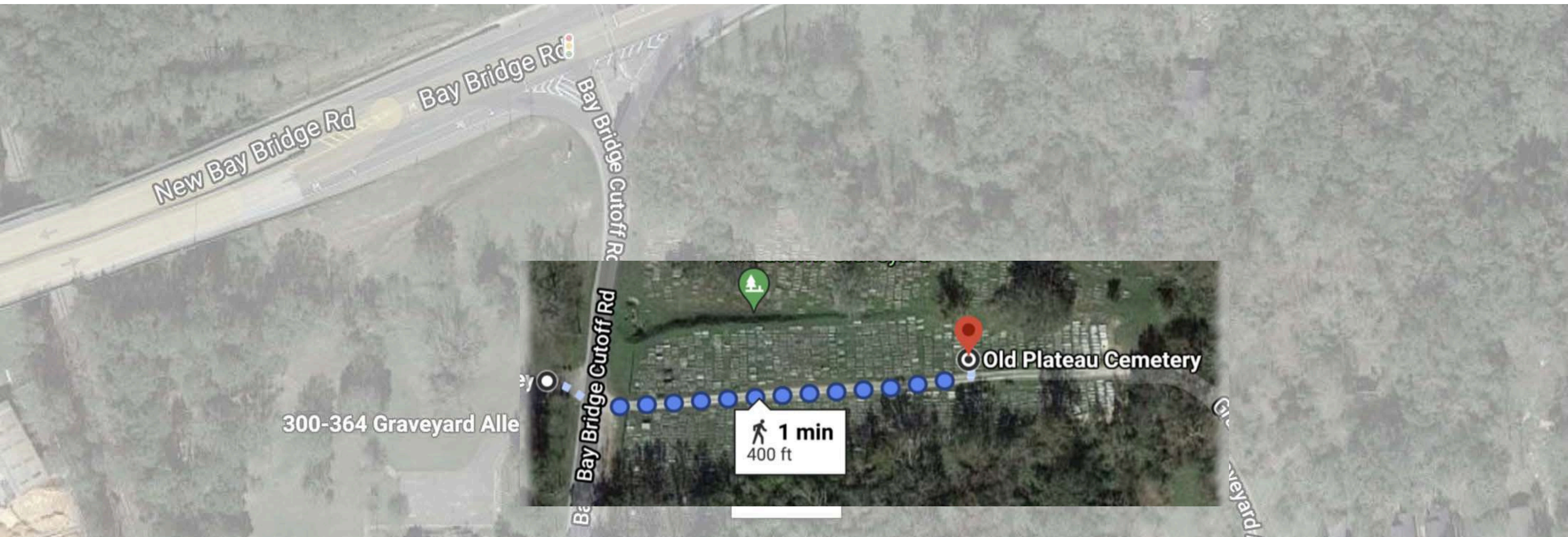
2 Africatown Historic Cemetery

The Africatown Historic Cemetery, originally known as the Africatown Graveyard, is the final resting place of those transported to America aboard the Clotilda and who settled in Africatown, as well as a Buffalo Soldier. The cemetery dates back to 1876, sixteen years after the Clotilda arrived on the night of July 8, 1860. As you face the cemetery, the left side is known as the old cemetery because most of those buried on that side died before the year 1980. The right side of the cemetery is known as the new cemetery because most buried there died after the year 1980. Most of the tombstones on the left face east to honor the last shipment of enslaved people, who always wanted to go back home to Africa, which is in the east. The tallest tombstone in the cemetery is a monument to Cudjoe Lewis, who at the time of his death was the last human cargo transported in the transatlantic slave trade, dying in 1935 at the age of 95.



Africatown Historic Cemetery

Cross Bay Bridge Road to enter the cemetery. Cudjoe Lewis' grave is located on the northern side





Union Baptist Church

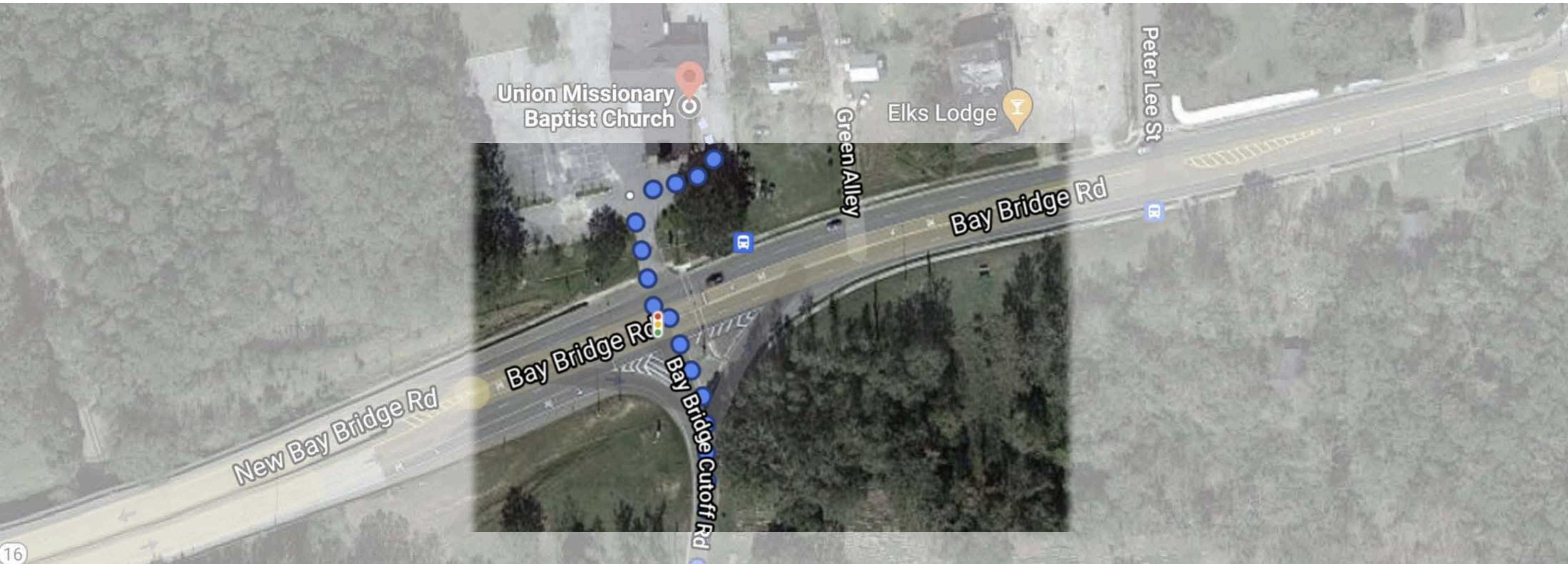
Church of the Slaves

First known as the Old Baptist Church and established in 1872, two years after the Africatown Township was incorporated, the Union Baptist Church became the first church established and built by the former slaves after they were set free. The Rev. Henry McCready was selected as its first leader.



Union Baptist Church

From the cemetery, head back north toward Bay Bridge Road.
Union Baptist Church is directly across the boulevard.





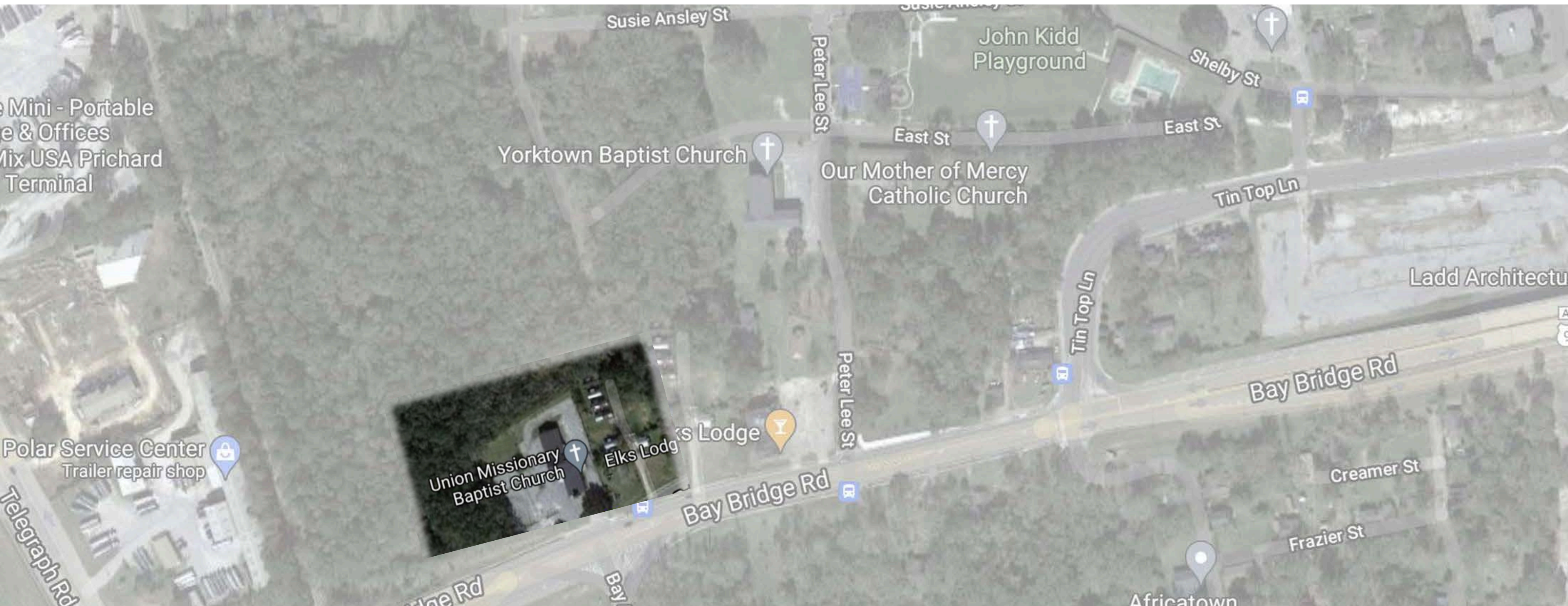
Bust of Kazoola “Cudjoe” Lewis

Cudjoe Lewis was one of the last people in the United States who had been transported as human cargo via the transatlantic slave trade, dying in 1935 at the age of 95. He was aboard the last slave ship, the *Clotilda*, which arrived in Mobile, Alabama, on the night of July 8, 1860.



Bust of Cudjoe Lewis

The Bust of Cudjoe Lewis is on the Southern side of the Church facing Bay Bridge Road.





Former Slaves Quarters

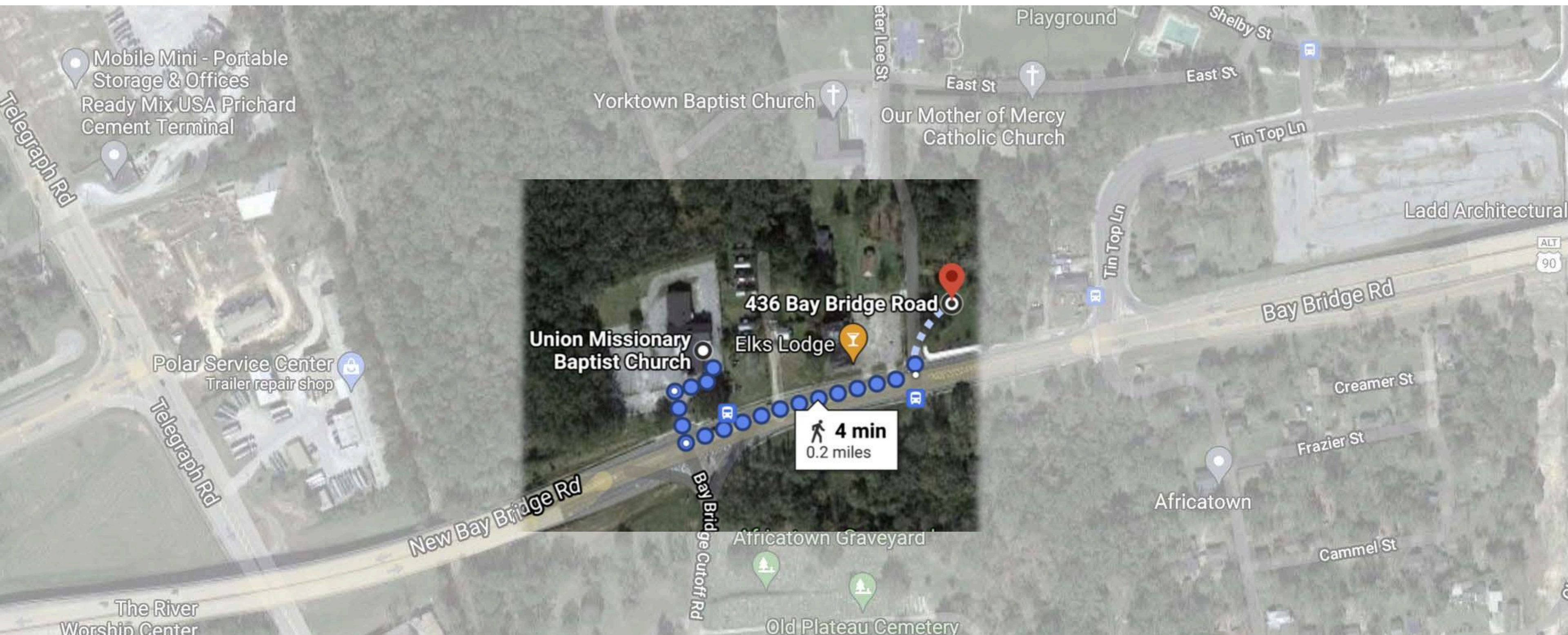
The Historic Green's Ally Homesite

Originally known as "The Slave Quarters," Green Alley is the place where the 35 enslaved people who formed Africatown lived after they finally settled on a place to live.



Former Slaves Quarters

Walk east down Bay Bridge Road. The site is at the northeastern corner of Peter Lee Street.





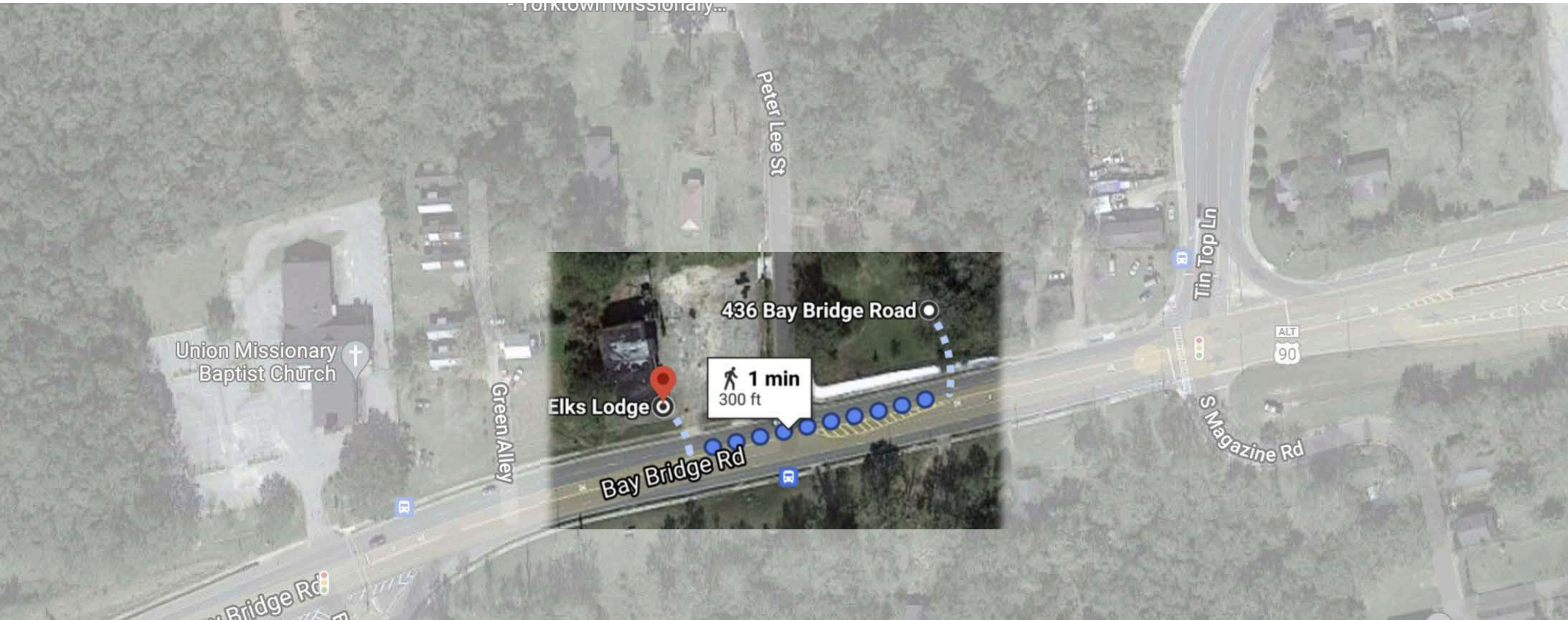
Historic Elk's Lodge

Located in what was once considered "Downtown Africatown," the Elk's Lodge has served as the primary social gathering spot for Africatown residents and others for over 90 years.



Historic Elk's Lodge

Walk back west down Bay Bridge Road, crossing Peter Lee Street. The lodge is just before Green Alley.





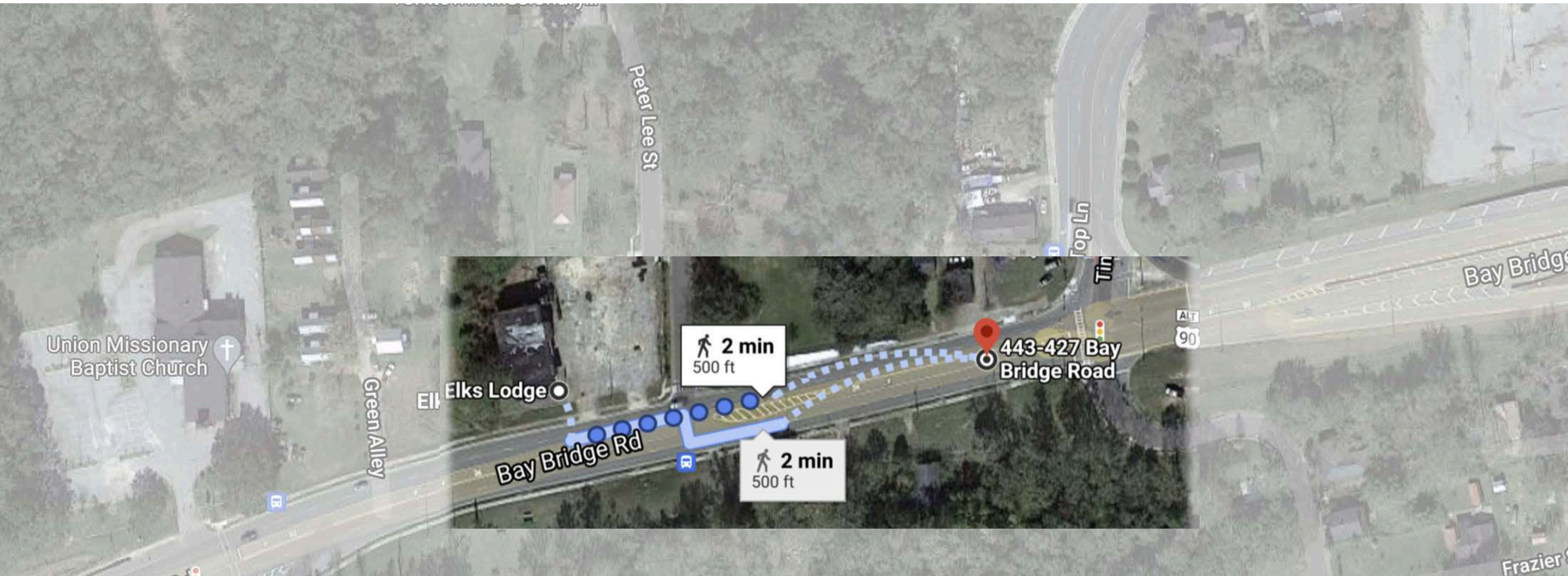
Mural of the Clotilda

The slave ship, the Clotilda, was the last ship recorded to bring enslaved people into the United States, landing in Mobile, Alabama, on the night of July 8, 1860. It transported a human cargo of 110 people, ranging in age from 5 to 23 years, from Africa to the United States.



Mural of the Clotilda

Head east on Bay Bridge Road. The mural can be found just before Tin Top Lane.



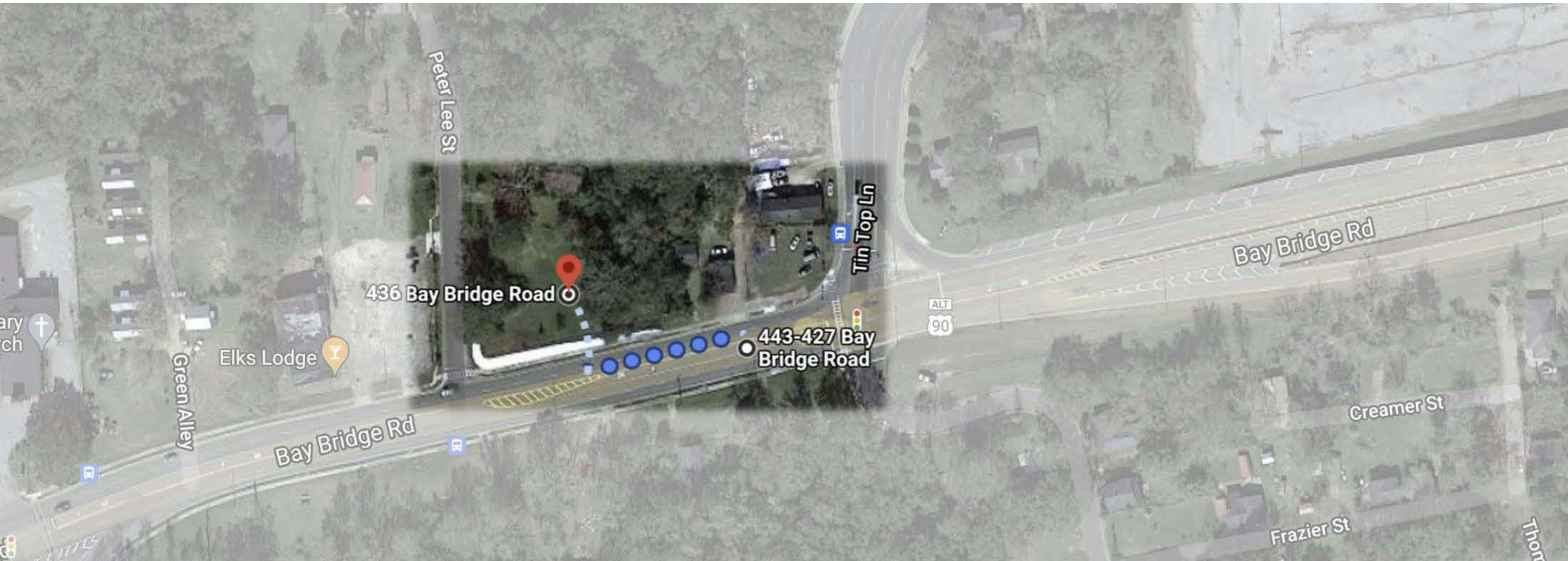
8 Remains of Historic Slavery-Era Fireplace

Located on the land owned by the first tribal leader of Africatown, Peter Lee "Gumpa," the remains of his original house fireplace are the only structures that remain from the original slavery era.



Remains of Historic Fireplace

Walk back east on Bay Bridge Road. The fireplace will be just west of the Green Alley site.





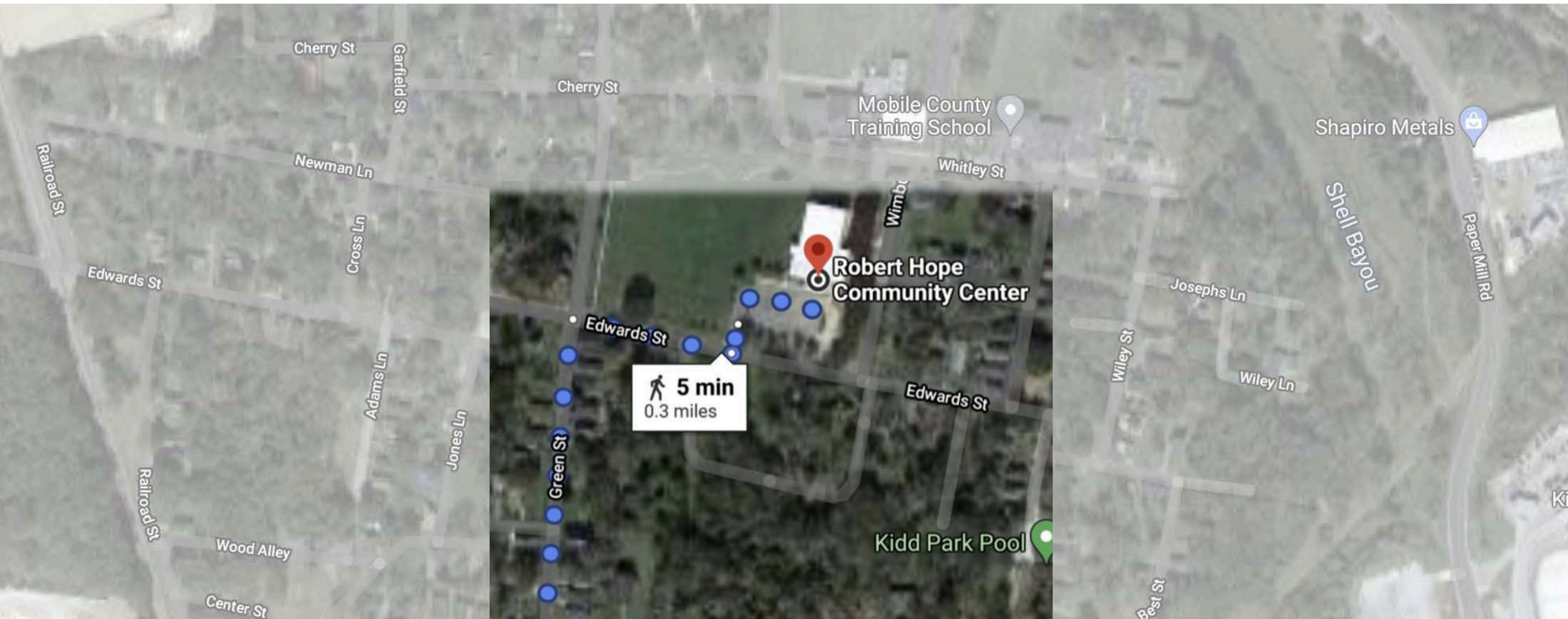
Robert Hope Community Center

The land that the community center occupies was given to the Mobile County School System by descendants of the Clotilda for the express purpose of education and recreation for the children of Africatown. The original Whitley Elementary School was built here but fell into disrepair and was torn down and rebuilt in the city of Prichard after desegregation in the 1970s. In the 1990s, the city of Mobile leased the land from the school system and built a community center.



Robert Hope Community Center

Head north on Green Street and turn right onto Edwards Street. The Community Center is on the left side before Wimbush Street.





Africatown Heritage House



Africatown Heritage House

The Heritage House is located across Edwards Street from the community center.





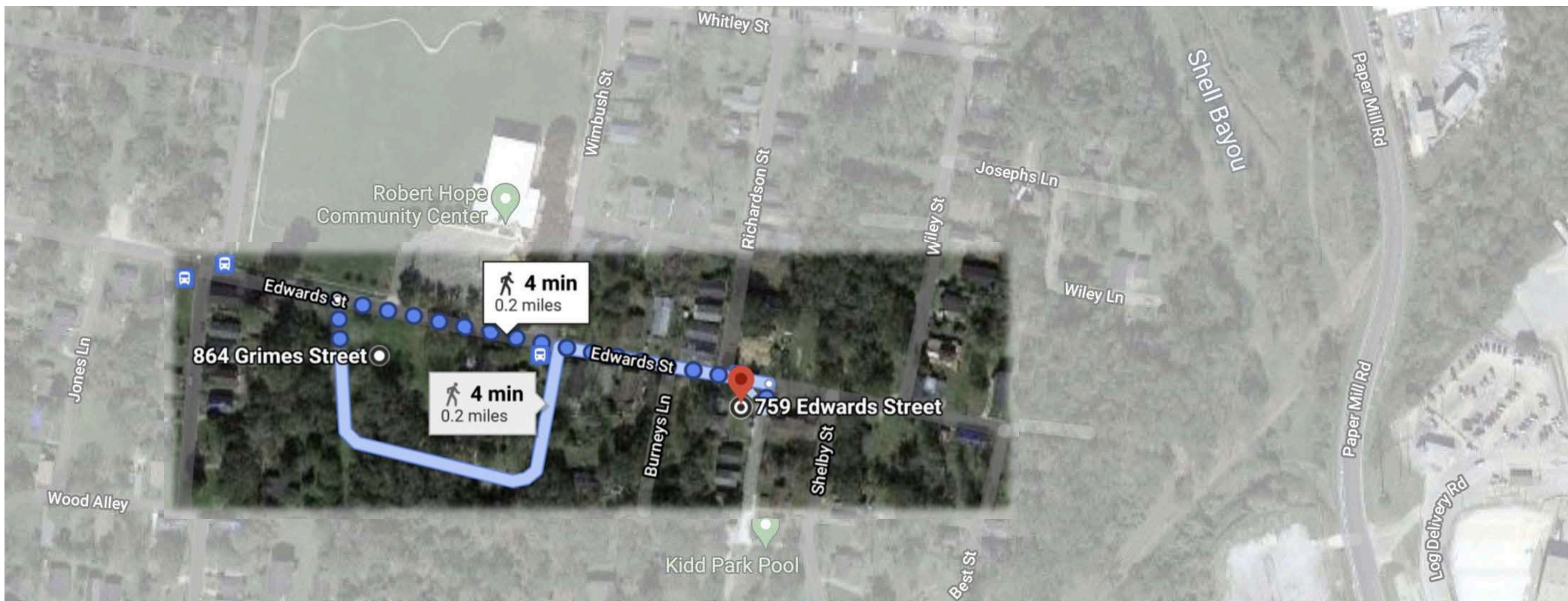
Cleon Jones Homestead

Africatown's Cleon Jones has often been referred to as "the greatest all-around athlete in the history of Mobile County." As a senior in high school, he ran for 1,800 yards and 22 touchdowns in football, averaged 21 points, 12 rebounds, and 10 assists in basketball, hit for an average of over .800 and was 5-0 as a pitcher in baseball, and ran a 9.2 in the 100-yard dash, never losing a race in track. In Major League Baseball, he batted .340 and was the third-leading hitter in the National League as he led his New York Mets (the "Miracle Mets") to their first World Series title in 1969.



Cleon Jones Homestead

Go east on Edwards Street. The homestead is on the right side, after Richardson Street, on the corner of Summerlin Lane.





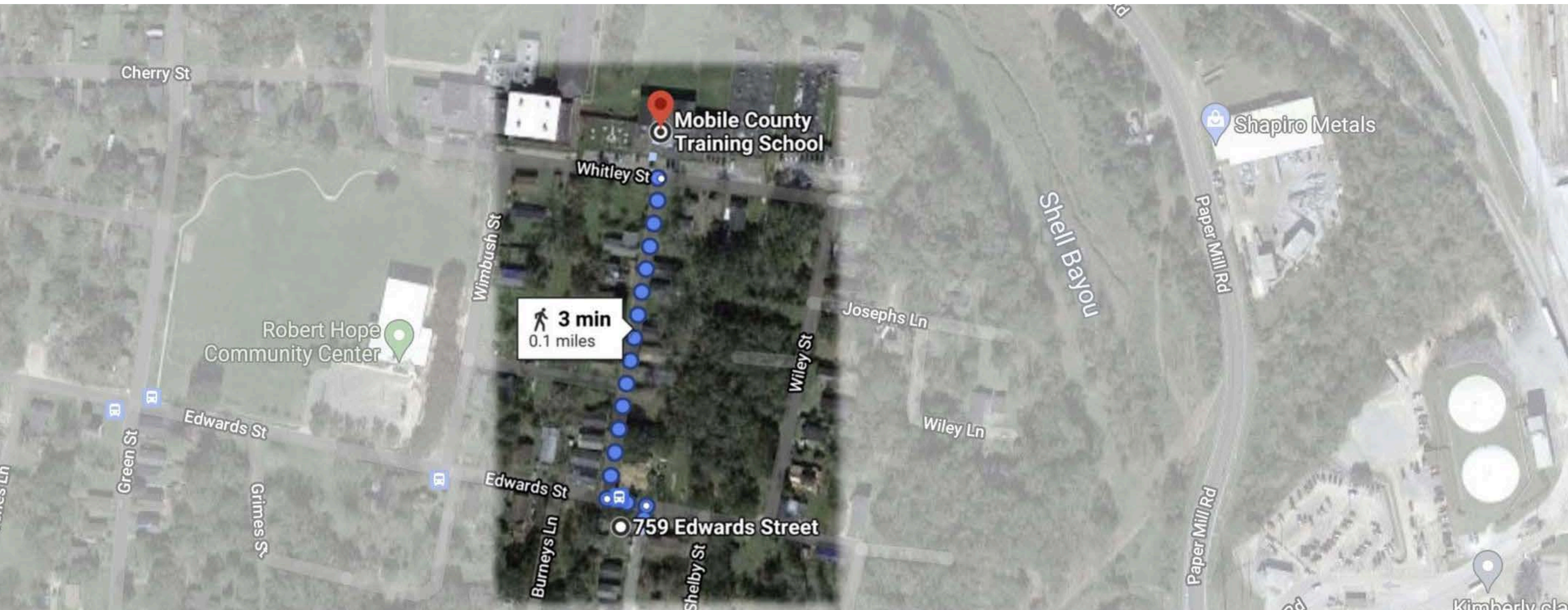
Historic Mobile County Training School

First formed in 1880 at the Union Baptist Church, it grew and evolved and was certified by the state of Alabama in education as Mobile County Training School in 1910, making it the first training school for Black students in the state of Alabama. In 1915, it burned down and was rebuilt with the help of a grant from the Rosenwald Foundation, thus becoming a Rosenwald School. Julius Rosenwald and Booker T. Washington worked together to build over 5,000 schools to educate formerly enslaved Black people and their descendants after the Civil War ended. Of the more than 5,000 schools they built throughout the Southeast, Mobile County Training School is the only one that remains active and continues educating Black children through the public school system every day. Certified by the National Accreditation Association in 1935, it was the only public school in the city of Mobile for Black students that offered all 12 grades until 1950.



Mobile County Training School

Head north on Richardson Street until you reach Whitley Street. MCTS is across the street.





MCTS Alumni “The Den Archives” Museum

Originally the shop department for “County” when it was a high school, it was seldom used after County became a middle school in 1971 and was not used at all after 1990. In 2012, State Rep. William Clark spoke to the Mobile School Board and obtained permission to use the old shop building as a meeting place for the MCTS Alumni Association. Over the years, MCTS graduates and Africatown residents have donated items that serve as a reminder of the historical significance of the school and the community.



Mobile County Training School

The Alumni Den is located east of the school, at the end of Whitley Street.





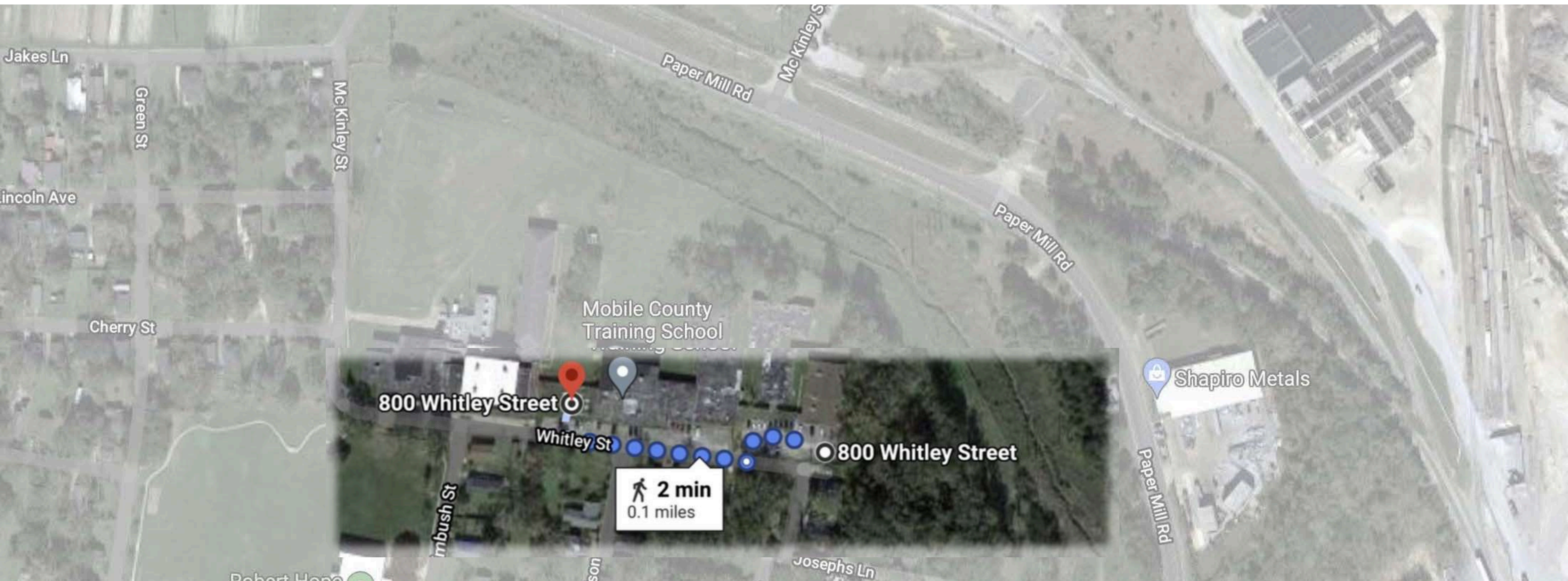
Africatown Freedom Bell

The Africatown Freedom Bell is said to be the only thing salvaged from the Clotilda before it was burned and sank. The Clotilda slaves carried the bell with them and eventually placed it in the Union Baptist Church. After the school was built, it was moved to the school and rang in the morning to begin classes and in the evening to end the school day. In the 1990s, employees of the Mobile School System maintenance crew removed the bell for "repairs" and never returned it. In 2017, the MCTS Alumni Association purchased and installed a new bell to reestablish the MCTS and Africatown Freedom Bell tradition.



Freedom Bell

Heading back west on Whitley Street, the Freedom Bell is located on the MCTS campus.





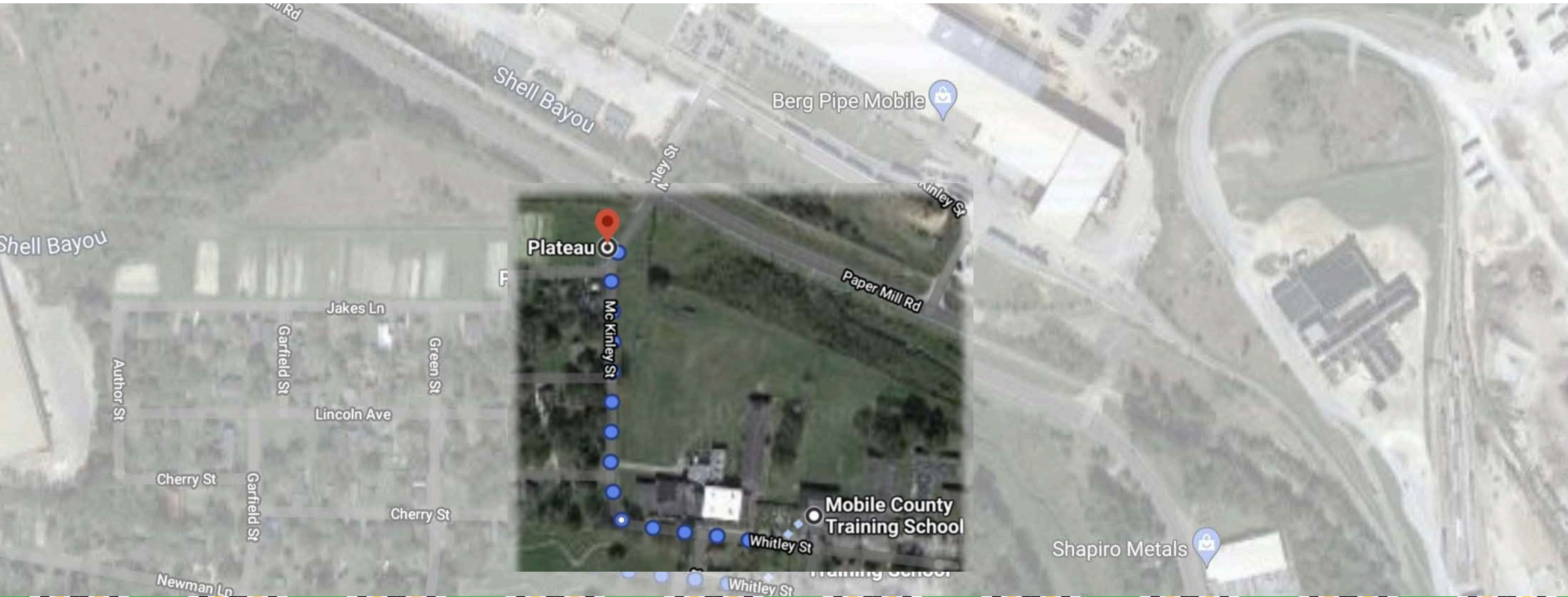
Africatown Community Gardens

The area just north of Jakes' Lane in Africatown was originally called "New Quarters" and was occupied by homes under the power lines and plant rental homes owned by the Meaher Family. In the early 1970s, the Meaher Family moved everyone out of those houses, tore them down, and sold the land to Alabama Power, who used it to build a power line through the community down to the Mobile River. For years, Africatown residents kept the area north of Jakes' Lane clear of woods and crops. In 2014, Alabama Power deeded the entire six acres of land to the Africatown Community, thus creating the Africatown Community Gardens. In the mid-1970s, led by Africatown resident Joe Sellers and others, the gardens became the largest community gardens in the state of Alabama.



Community Gardens

Walking west on Whitley Street and making a slight right onto McKinley Street, the community gardens will be on the left, at the corner of Jakes Lane, just before Paper Mill Road.





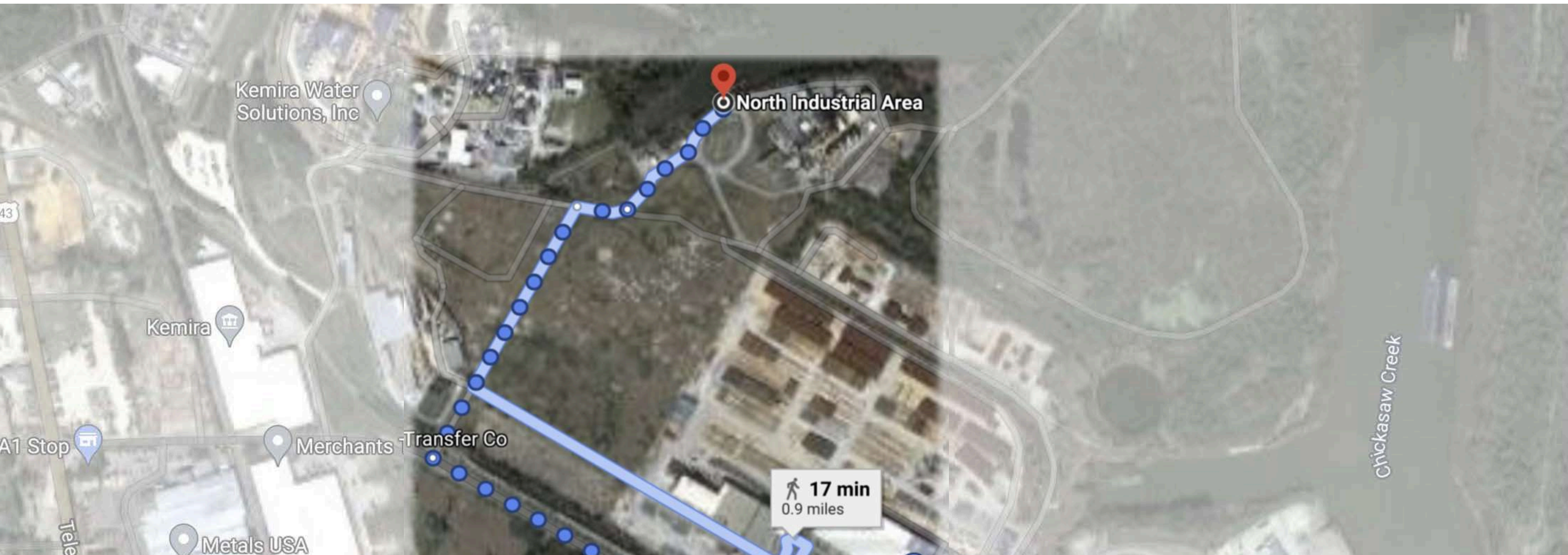
Historic Hog Bayou Hunting Grounds

Hog Bayou is the area north of Paper Mill Road that the slaves from the Clotilda used for hunting and fishing to help feed themselves. They decided not to build any houses in that area so as not to drive away the vast amount of wildlife there.



Hog Bayou Hunting Grounds

Walk up McKinley Street and turn left onto Papermill Road. Turn onto Berg Spiral Pipe Road and take a slight right to continue toward the North Industrial Area on Chickasaw Creek.





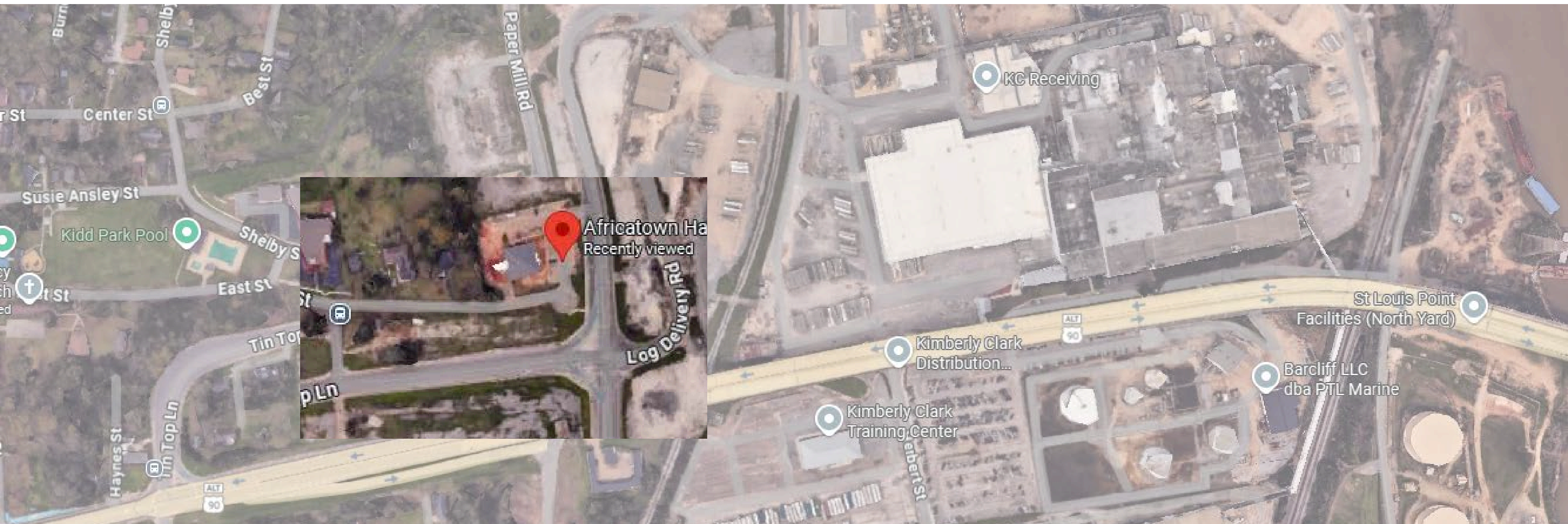
Africatown Hall & Food Bank

The Africatown Hall and Food Bank serves as a vital community hub, dedicated to supporting residents and preserving the spirit of unity that defines Africatown. The hall features five office spaces, a large meeting room that can be divided into two smaller rooms, a fully equipped kitchen, and a large freezer to safely store food for the food bank. A spacious warehouse with built-in shelving provides ample storage for food supplies, and a convenient drive-thru allows residents to easily pick up food without leaving their vehicles.



Africatown Hall & Food Bank

Walk east on Bay Bridge Road and turn onto Tin Top Lane. Make another left to continue on Tin Top Lane, and the church will be across the street where Tin Top Lane meets Shelby Street.





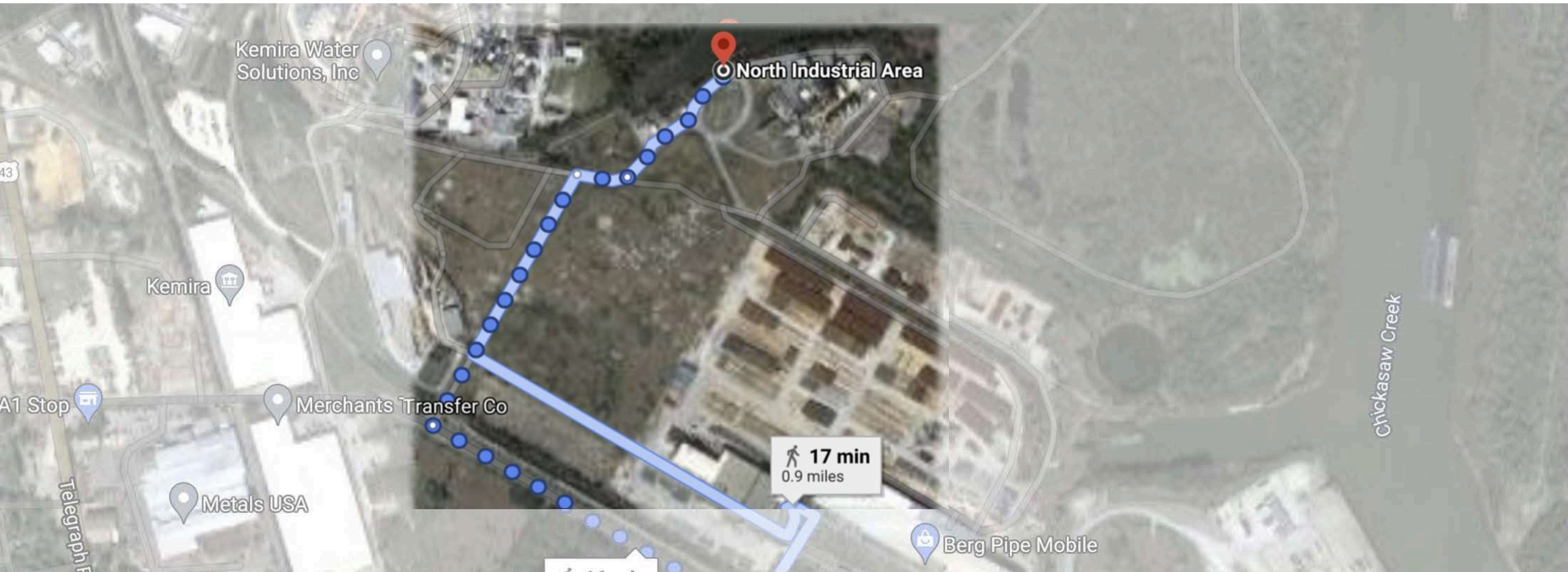
The Historic Williams Motel

The Williams Motel is a small motel, first owned by a Black man, Mr. John Williams, located near the Mobile River on the east side of Africatown. Built in the 1940s, rooms could be rented by the month, week, day, or hour, depending on the need.



Hog Bayou Hunting Grounds

Walk up McKinley Street and turn left onto Papermill Road. Turn onto Berg Spiral Pipe Road and take a slight right to continue toward the North Industrial Area on Chickasaw Creek.





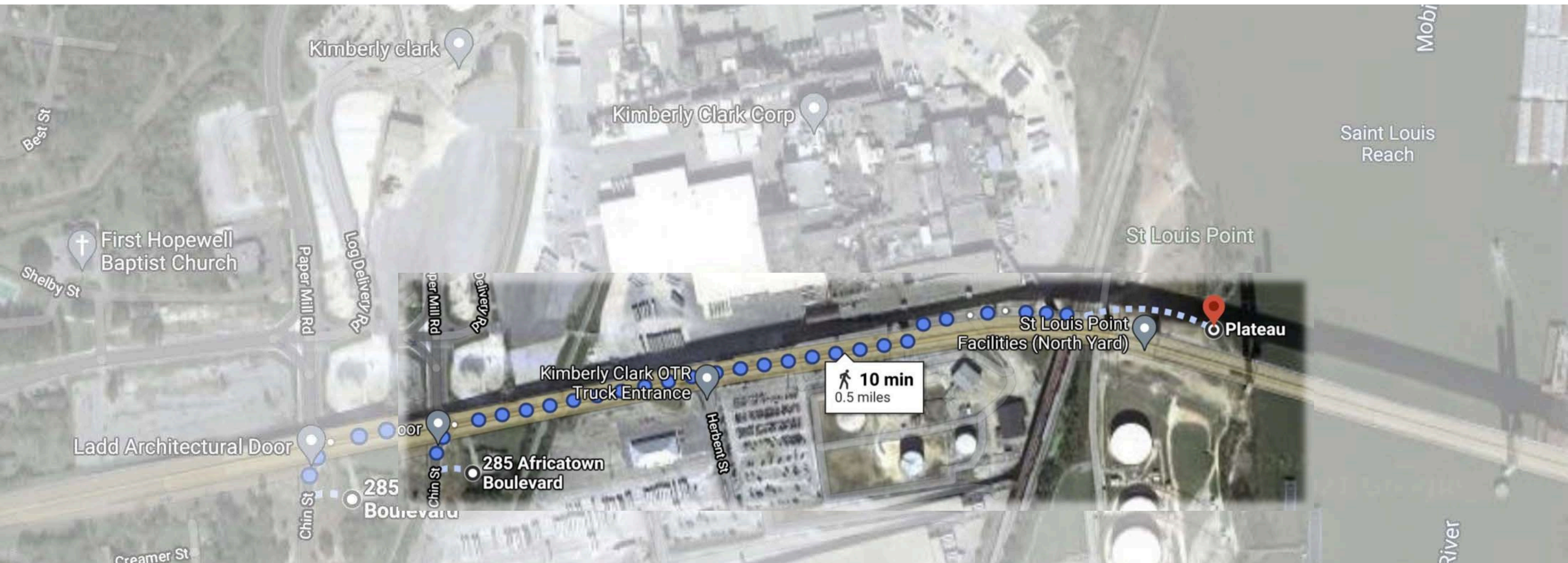
The Clotilda Landing

Although the Clotilda did not officially land, the area underneath the Africatown Bridge on the west side of the Mobile River is referred to by locals as Clotilda Landing because it is next to the area where the slaves from the Clotilda originally settled after they were brought to this country. Africatown residents fish there regularly and have family picnics at the site.



Clotilda Landing

Walk east on Africatown Boulevard/Bay Bridge Road past Kimberly-Clark down to the river. Keep going until you reach the river under the bridge!



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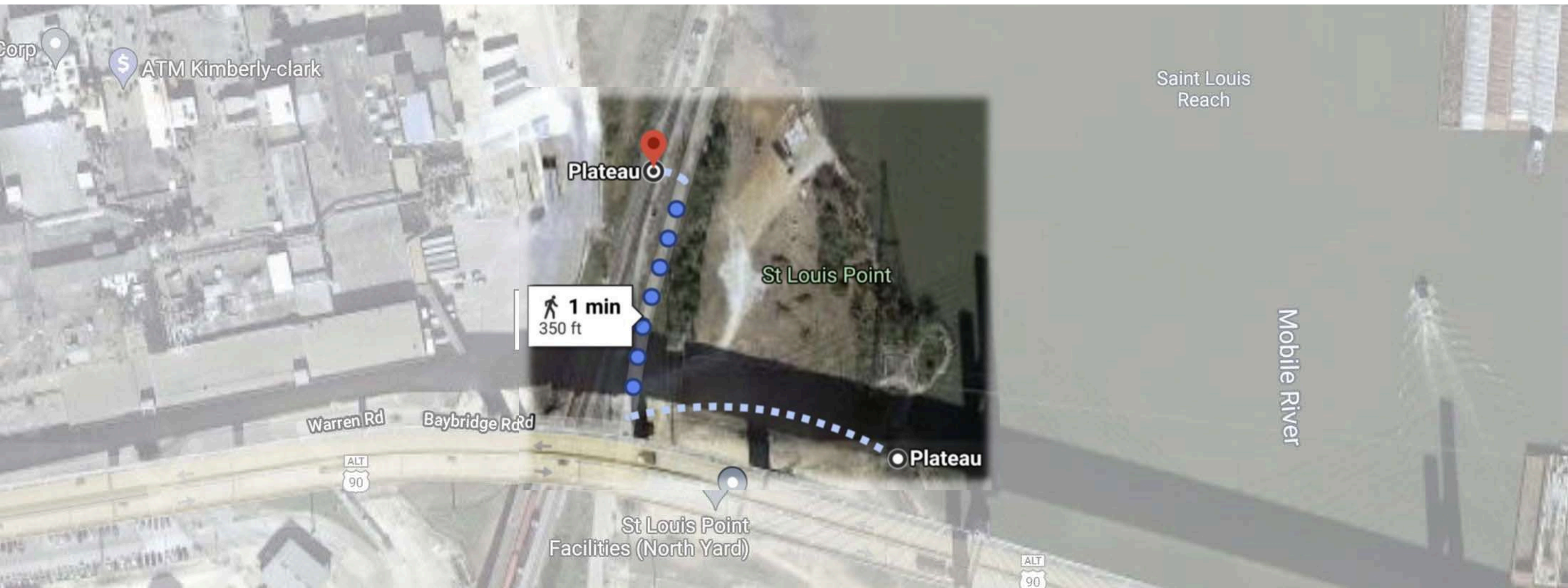
Africatown's Historic Railroad Turn Bridge

The Africatown Turn Bridge is one of the few turn bridges that remain in the United States. When navigating the waterways that surround Africatown, once you leave the Mobile River and pass the turn bridge, you enter Africatown's Hog Bayou. If you walk north past the turn bridge, what the locals consider Hog Bay, there are miles and miles of marshland for hunting and fishing.



Railroad Turn Bridge

The railroad bridge is just north of the landing.





Happy Hills Housing Project

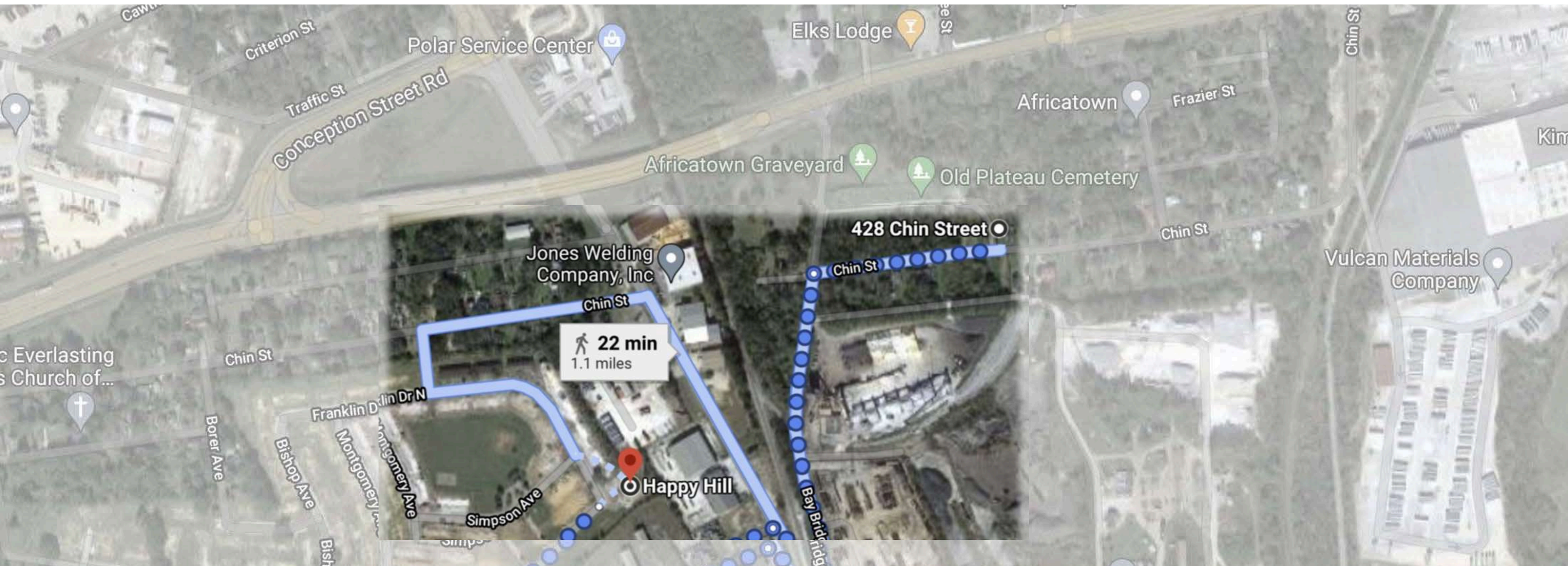
(now demolished)

After the Africatown community voted to annex to the City of Mobile in 1960, the city decided to build a public housing project in the Happy Hills section of Africatown to relieve overcrowding that existed in Plateau and Magazine Point. The Josephine Allen Housing Project was constructed and consisted of about 250 housing units for approximately 1,500 people. The housing project was shut down, and the last family was moved out in 2015.



Happy Hills

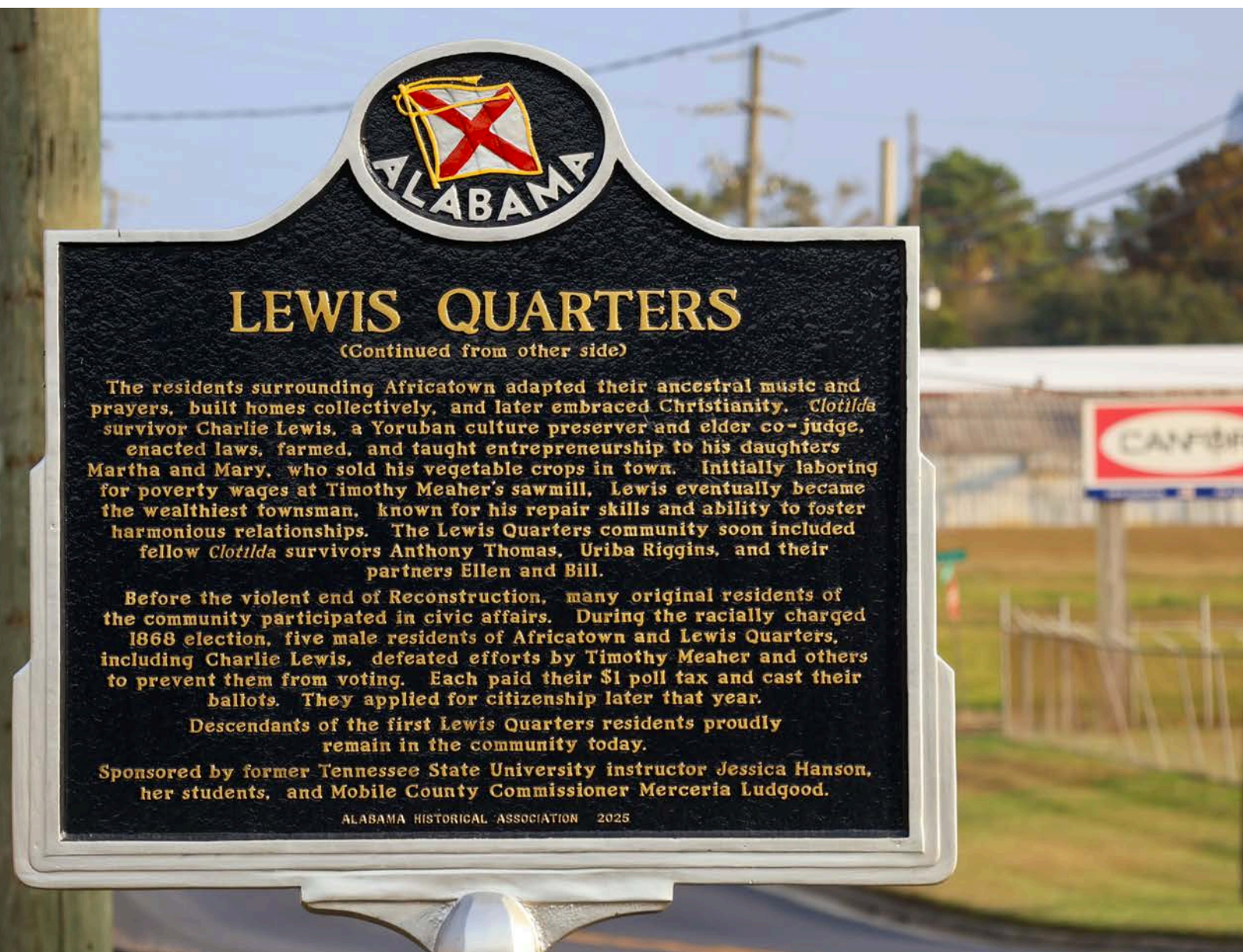
Walk west on Chin Street and turn left onto Bay Bridge Cutoff Road. When you reach Telegraph Road, turn right and then left onto Stimrad Road. Bear right onto Dr. Thomas Avenue. Make the first right onto Mayrad Portis Avenue, followed immediately by Herman Drive. Happy Hill is at the intersection of Herman and E. Franklin drives.



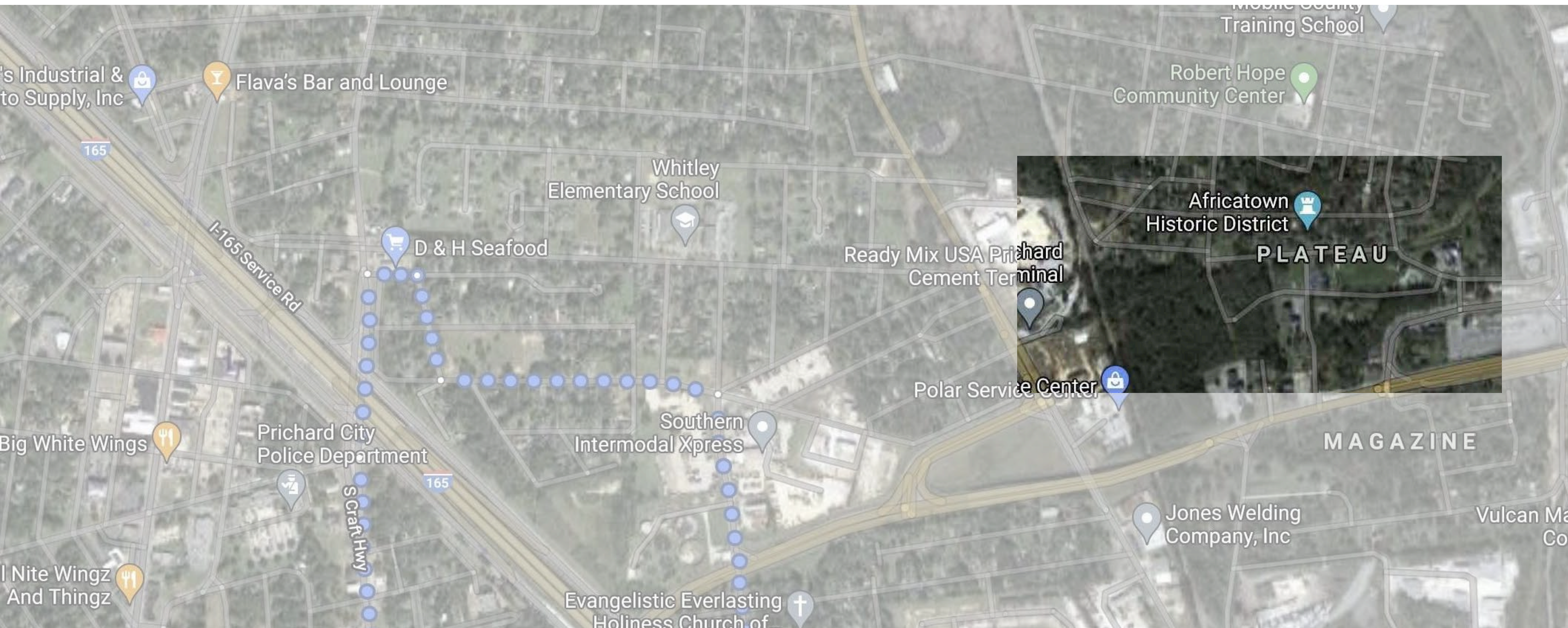


Lewis Quarters

After Africatown had been incorporated in 1870, Charlie Lewis, brother of Cudjoe Lewis, moved his family west along Three Mile Creek and eventually settled near what is now the intersection of Conception Street and Three Mile Creek. That section of the creek is the deepest part of the entire creek, about 8 feet deep. He purchased land in the area and relocated his close family members there.



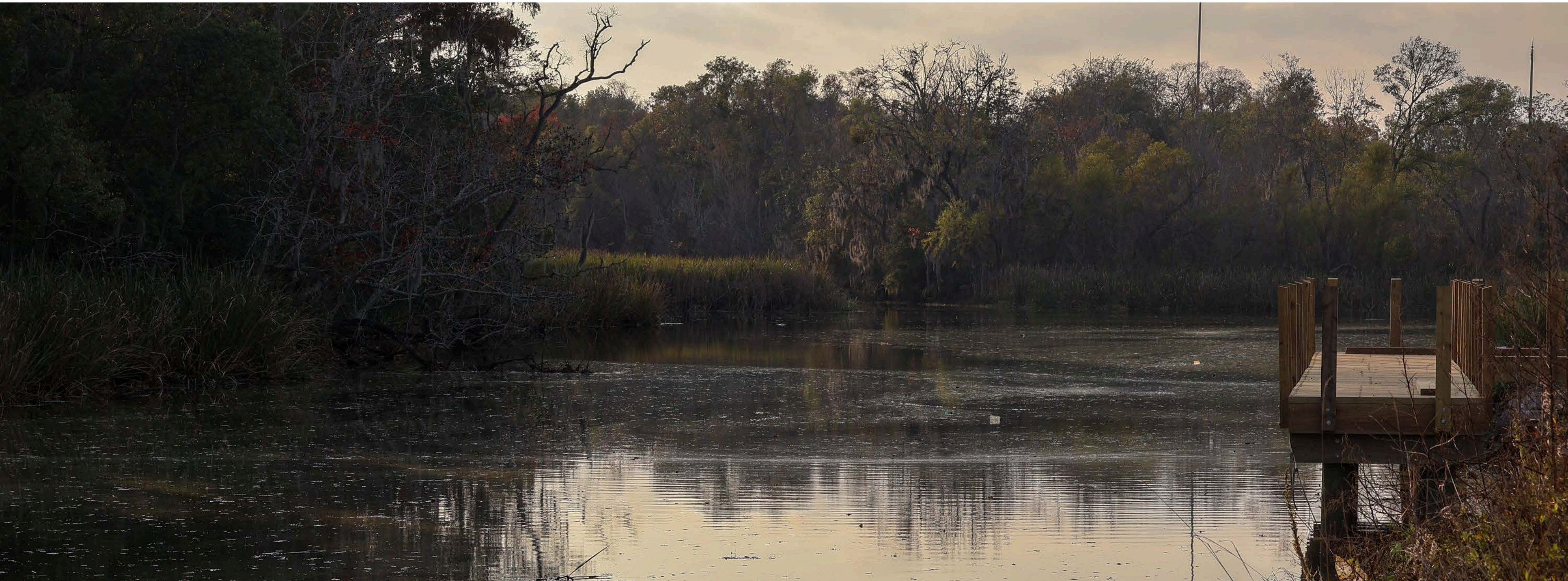
Lewis Quarters



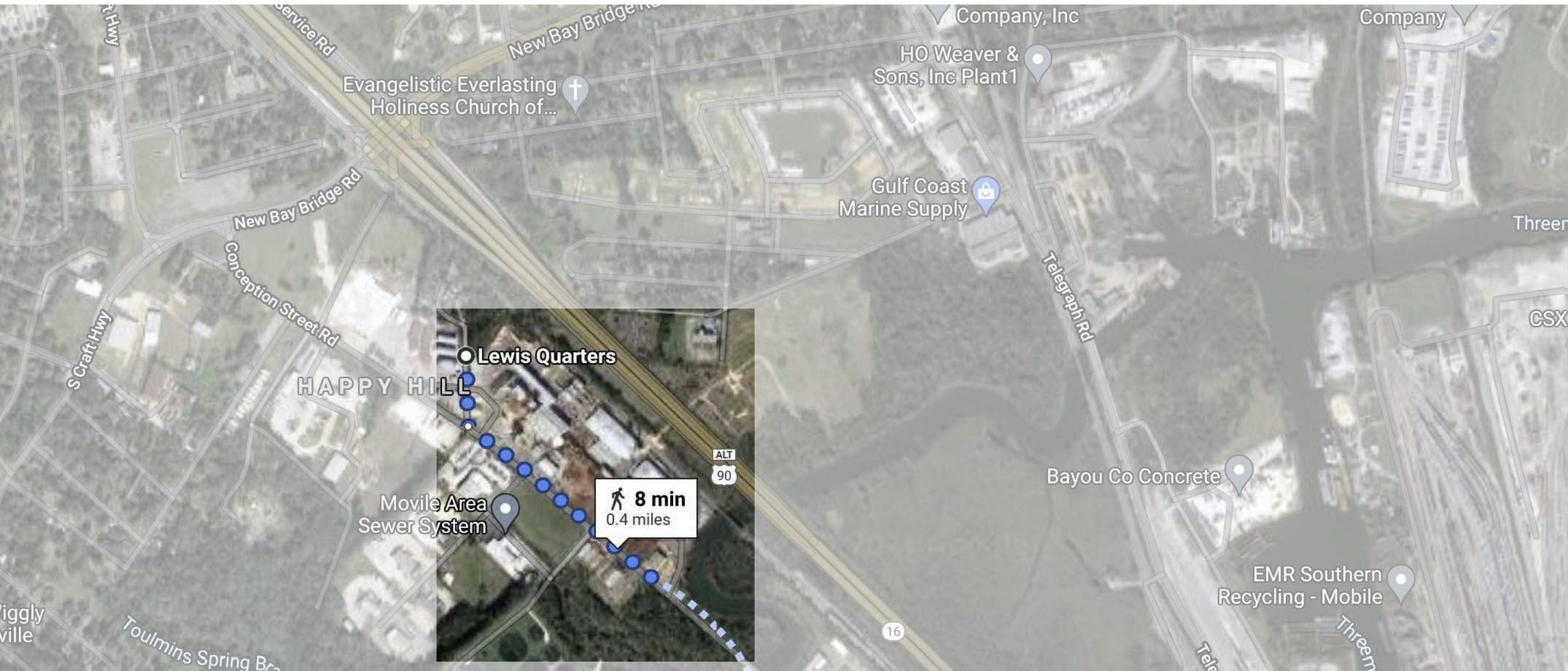


Lewis Landing 1

A small section of land on the west side of the intersection of Three Mile Creek and Conception Street is used by locals as a fishing dock.



Lewis Landing 1





Lewis Landing 2

A small strip of land on the east side of the intersection of Three Mile Creek and Conception Street, just behind the lumber mill, is used by locals for fishing and for launching their canoes, paddleboards, and jet skis into the creek.



Lewis Landing 2

