

# Gulf Front Recommendations to Board of Directors

## May 8, 2009

### Introduction

The current MLS interpretation of “Gulf front” does not allow property which, by community standards, is considered Gulf front property to be described as such. Communities in South Walton County, for example, have homes that would meet the current interpretation if the property boundary continued to the shoreline. By broadening the scope of the Gulf front definition and including some specific qualifiers, the MLS will be able to offer members a better opportunity to meet the needs and expectations of buyers and sellers.

### Current Characteristics

In determining whether a property is Gulf front, the MLS Committee currently requires the property to have the following characteristics:

1. The subject property must have a boundary that fronts the water.
2. There may not be property in between the subject parcel and the shoreline.
3. Access to the beach from the subject property must not require the crossing of a road.
4. In multi-building condominiums, only buildings with direct views of the Gulf are considered Gulf front regardless of other considerations.

### Proposed Characteristics

To meet the expectations of a broader range of would-be Gulf front buyers, the following characteristics are recommended:

1. The property boundary may reach the shoreline or the beach, or the boundary may be contiguous to the beach.
2. Intervening property between the subject parcel and the shoreline may be present under the following conditions:
  - a. the intervening property must be owned by a relevant owners’ association or by a government entity, and
  - b. there must be no structure that impedes the view from the subject property, and the intervening property owner should not be able to build a structure that impedes the subject property owner’s view without having to take measures by which the subject owner would reasonably be aware.
3. The shoreline must be accessible in a legal and safe manner, without excessive or extraordinary travel and without crossing a road or alleyway.

### Changes to LIST-IT

To ensure that subscribers and would-be buyers have an opportunity to understand the characteristics of a specific Gulf front property or to exclude certain characteristics from a search of Gulf front property, some additions will need to be made to LIST-IT as follows:

1. Two required, single-choice lists would be added to the input forms.
  - a. Gulf Front Boundary
    - i. To the Water
    - ii. To the Beach
    - iii. Contiguous to the Beach
  - b. Beach Access
    - i. Property Adjacent to Beach
    - ii. Association-owned Access
    - iii. Public Access

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2. These lists would be combined into one list for searching so that characteristics may be searched individually or in combination (a technical issue only).
  - a. Gulf Front Description
    - i. Boundary: to the Water
    - ii. Boundary: to the Beach
    - iii. Boundary: Contiguous to Beach
    - iv. Access: Property Adjacent to Beach
    - v. Access: Association-Owned
    - vi. Access: Public
3. A field called "Beach Frontage" would be added and be similar to Water Frontage. Water Frontage would only be required if the Gulf Front Boundary is "To the Water." Beach Frontage would represent the frontage of the subject property, not of any larger, intervening parcels. Water Frontage and Beach Frontage may both be zero in cases where the property is on a bluff or contiguous to the beach.
4. No changes would be made to the Waterfront or Waterview lists.

Changes to the MLS Rules

The current definition of Waterfront would need to be altered and new definitions added to accommodate the new policy and LIST-IT changes.

1. **Waterfront:** Property that fronts the water and has no road to cross to get to the water, or property that meets the definition of Gulf Front.
2. **Gulf Front:** Property on or contiguous to the beach
  - a) where there are either no parcels in between the subject property and the Gulf, or where any intervening parcels are owned by a relevant property-owners' association or government entity, contain no structures that impede the view from the subject property, and where the owners are currently restricted from building obstructing structures; and
  - b) where safe and legal access to the Gulf is available without having to cross a road or alleyway, travel an excessive distance, or take extraordinary measures to reach the Gulf.
3. **Gulf Front Boundary – to the Water:** a situation where a property for sale actually meets (or extends past) the mean high-water line.
4. **Gulf Front Boundary – to the Beach:** a situation where a property for sale has a southern boundary that isn't quite to the water, but where the property line extends past the dunes or other natural barrier.
5. **Gulf Front Boundary – Contiguous to the Beach:** a situation where a property for sale does not have a southern boundary that extends beyond the end of the dunes, but otherwise meets the definition of Gulf Front.