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LAFAYETTE IN A CENTURY LINC COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

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LAFAYETTE IN A CENTURY LINC COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

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LAFAYETTE IN A CENTURY

*Comprehensive
Master Plan for
Lafayette Parish*

L I N C

Lafayette Consolidated Government

Traffic & Transportation Department



Metropolitan Planning Organization

Comprehensive Planning Division

LAFAYETTE IN A CENTURY

***Comprehensive Master Plan
for Lafayette Parish***

Public Notice in the Advertiser: September 28, 2008

Public Hearing Date: October 9, 2008

City Parish Planning Commission Adoption Date:
October 27, 2008
Resolution No. 2008-04

Clerk of Court Recordation Date: April 8, 2009

Please index the following parties to this instrument:

Lafayette IN a Century (LINC) Comprehensive Master Plan

Lafayette Consolidated Government

Lafayette Parish

Lafayette City-Parish Planning Commission

City of Lafayette

Metropolitan Planning Organization

City of Broussard

City of Carencro

City of Duson

City of Scott

City of Youngsville

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**Lafayette City-Parish Planning Commission
Lafayette IN a Century (LINC)
Comprehensive Master Plan**

**DRAINAGE & STORMWATER
ELEMENTS**

Public Notice in the Advertiser: September 28, 2008

Public Hearing Date: October 9, 2008

City Parish Planning Commission Adoption Date:
October 27, 2008

Resolution No. 2008-04

Clerk of Court Recordation Date: April 8, 2009

Certified Transmittal Date to State Planning Office:



Local Government Transmittal Dates

Lafayette Consolidated Government:

City of Broussard:

City of Carencro:

City of Duson:

City of Scott:

City of Youngsville:



Lafayette Consolidated Government
Traffic & Transportation Department



Metropolitan Planning Organization
Comprehensive Planning Division

PREFACE

- 1) The Steering Committee focused on minimizing flooding of structures both residential and commercial.
- 2) The Bayou Vermilion and its tributaries (bayous, coulees and ditches) have a limited capacity for drainage.
- 3) Drainage and flooding are consistently identified as a major concern to parish citizens.
- 4) There is a lack of information on residential flooding for units not in the Federal Flood Insurance Program.
- 5) There is an urgent need for a comprehensive parish wide drainage plan which should be initiated at the earliest possible date.
- 6) Statement of Understanding: Although a comprehensive parish wide drainage plan is necessary and recommended, no drainage plan in Lafayette will solve the flooding problem completely or permanently. A drainage plan designed for a 10 year rainfall event will not eliminate flooding during a 25 year rainfall event. A drainage plan designed for a 50 year rainfall event will not eliminate flooding during a 100 year rainfall event. The Acadiana Area of South Louisiana has experienced 500 year rainfall events in the past.

1.1 DRAINAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Establish a permanent citizen-based Drainage Advisory Committee to coordinate and advise on drainage improvements, issues and standards for the Parish. This permanent Drainage Advisory Committee would be answerable to the City-Parish Planning Commission.

Commentary: The Drainage Committee spent eight months reviewing data, documents, and maps on flooding and drainage in Lafayette Parish. The Committee has also met with professional and technically trained individuals who know and understand hydrology. The committee members consider the information and education they have obtained on flooding and drainage problems in the area to be a valuable resource to the community that should be continued as a policy of the Comprehensive Master Plan. The Steering Committee is not necessarily suggesting that its members or subcommittee members be appointed to this permanent Drainage Advisory Committee, but that such a citizen group be established and serve as an important balance and link between public and private sector needs and demands.

1.2 FLOODING PROBLEMS RANKINGS

Divide “Flooding Problems” into four specific ranking designations:

- a) Residential Units
- b) Business Buildings
- c) Street/Roadways
- d) Land (Vacant, Agriculture, Yard)

Commentary: The Committee quickly recognized the subject of flooding and drainage problems mean different things to different people. For clarification the committee members ranked the term “flooding problems” for priority concerns and to help identify and recommend solutions. The Comprehensive Master Plan should clearly distinguish what is flooding in reference to drainage problems and issues. This policy should help distinguish and focus on solutions.

1.3 COMMUNITY RATING SYSTEM

Join the “Community Rating System” (CRS) Program sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Administered by the Louisiana Office of Emergency Preparedness. This program shall be established for maximum point values and benefit applications throughout Lafayette Parish.

Commentary: The program assigns point values to community activities which reduce flooding. Incentives are provided to encourage flood prevention strategies including reduction of flood insurance rates and grants for acquisition of critical or repetitive flooding locations for public open space and other practical uses. The program works to avoid future flooding through public information and management. The Steering Committee members determined that the CRS program clearly identifies a comprehensive plan for drainage and flooding policies, goals, and objectives. The

program also provides a well established and convenient tool for performance measures. Many of the community activities listed in CRS are already established in Lafayette Parish and would provide immediate point values and benefits.

1.4 FLOODING PROBLEMS CATEGORIES

“Flooding Problems” shall be classified into one of two categories:

- a) Existing Problems
- b) Future Problems

Commentary: The complexity of using the terms drainage and flooding and problems require an approach that may help simplify the issues and generate better understanding. Assuming there would be no further development in the parish (roads, houses, businesses, industry, etc.), where and what are the problems? This is the existing drainage and flooding category of actions to plan and resolve over time.

The Lafayette Area historically averages 55-60 inches of rainfall per year. This is important. Average means it is higher on occasion. It is not uncommon for half this amount to fall within a month! There must be a realistic balance between the Drainage Plan and the “not uncommon” rain event. It is projected that a 100 Year flood event is occurring in Lafayette Parish or a part of the parish every ten years.

Assuming new development in the parish will continue (with new roads, houses, businesses and industry), where and what are the problems? This is the future drainage and flooding category of actions to plan and resolve. The CRS program bridges both categories. However, to facilitate their discussions the Committee determined it was necessary to divide its recommendations on drainage into existing and future problems to better present solutions.

1.5 RESIDENCES THAT HAVE FLOODED

For Existing Residences that have flooded, the following actions shall be taken:

- a) A LCG Drainage Analysis.
- b) Causes identified shall be cured by responsible party if found to be localized.
- c) Residences are encouraged to be covered in the Federal Flood Insurance Program.
- d) Mandatory Federal Flood Insurance after the second event.
- e) Elevate Structure by: 1) utilizing grant funding; and 2) utilizing LCG resources.
- f) Buy out Option by: 1) utilizing grant funding; and 2) utilizing LCG resources.
- g) Condemnation/Demolition with three documented flooding events within five years.

Commentary: Drainage studies are currently underway through the Lafayette City-Parish Government Department of Public Works and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to identify and possibly resolve some of the flood way problems in the Parish. It is anticipated that the causes and solutions will not completely resolve the problems and will require substantial funding. The Committee members note that not all residences that

repeatedly flood (majority) are in the Federal Flood Insurance Program. The Parish participation in the Community Rating System (CRS) program combined with Flood Insurance and some capital resources on the federal, state, and City-Parish level should adequately address the problem over time.

1.6 BUSINESSES THAT HAVE FLOODED

For Existing Businesses that have flooded, the following actions shall be taken:

- a) A LCG Drainage Analysis.
- b) Causes identified shall be cured by responsible party if found to be localized.
- c) Business Buildings are encouraged to be covered in the Federal Flood Insurance Program.
- d) Mandatory Federal Flood Insurance after the second event.
- e) Elevate Structure by: 1) utilizing grant funding; and 2) utilizing LCG resources.
- f) Buy Out Option by: 1) utilizing grant funding; and 2) utilizing LCG resources.
- g) Condemnation/Demolition with three documented flooding events within five years.

Commentary: Drainage studies are currently underway through the Lafayette City-Parish Government Department of Public Works and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to identify and possibly resolve some of the flood way problems in the Parish. It is anticipated that the causes and solutions will not completely resolve the problems and will require substantial funding. The Parish participation in the Community Rating System (CRS) program combined with Flood Insurance and some capital resources on the federal, state, and City-Parish level should adequately address the problem over time.

1.7 STREETS/ROADS THAT HAVE FLOODED

For Existing Streets/Roads that have flooded, the following actions shall be taken

- a) For Streets/Roads that are frequently designed to be used as retention/detention facilities during high rainfall events, each must be inventoried for historic flooding records and readily available for reference.
- b) Appropriate signage shall be installed on these streets/roads with “No Traffic” identified above set flood level/stages.

Commentary: Committee members did not consider the issue of flooding streets and roads to be a significant problem during unusual rainfall events.

1.8 LANDS THAT HAVE FLOODED

For Existing Lands (vacant, agriculture, yard) that have flooded, the following actions shall be taken:

- a) An LCG Drainage Analysis should be conducted
- b) Causes identified must be cured by responsible party if found to be localized.

Commentary: Committee members recognize the numerous complaints about flooding yards, but decided agricultural lands and yards should be a secondary consideration during unusual rainfall events. Identification of these areas would serve to indicate potential localized or flood way problems, and specific actions or public resources are recommended to eliminate these situations.

1.9 RESIDENCES THAT FLOOD FOR THE FIRST TIME

For Existing Residences that Flood for the first time, the following actions shall be taken:

- a) An LCG Drainage Analysis.
- b) Causes identified must be cured by responsible party if found to be localized.
- c) Mandatory Federal Flood Insurance after the second event.

Commentary: Existing residences that flood for the first time may be caused by one or more temporary or permanent localized problems. Such situations should be studied for proper remedy within a short period of time. Should such flooding be generated by rising flood elevations or unusual rainfall events, then federal flood insurance must be made a mandatory requirement.

1.10 BUILDINGS THAT FLOOD FOR THE FIRST TIME

For Existing Business Buildings that Flood for the first time, the following actions shall be taken:

- a) An LCG Drainage Analysis.
- b) Causes identified shall be cured by responsible party if found to be localized.
- c) Mandatory Federal Flood Insurance after the second event.

Commentary: Existing businesses that flood for the first time may be caused by one or more temporary or permanent localized problems. Such situations should be studied for proper remedy within a short period of time. Should such flooding be generated by rising flood elevations or unusual rainfall events, then federal flood insurance must be made a mandatory requirement.

1.11 STREETS/ROADS THAT FLOOD FOR FIRST TIME

For Existing Streets/Roads that Flood for the first time, the following actions shall be taken:

- a) If designed for retention/detention, no action.
- b) If not designed for retention/detention, an LCG Drainage Analysis.
- c) Causes identified shall be cured by responsible party if found to be localized.

Commentary: The flooding of streets and roads is not considered a serious priority unless it is indicative of a developing localized problem.

1.12 LANDS THAT FLOOD FOR FIRST TIME

For Existing Lands (vacant, agriculture, yard) that flood for the first time, the following actions shall be taken:

- a) Noting that the flooding may be indicative of a localized flooding problem that might need correcting.
- b) An LCG Drainage Analysis.
- c) Localized causes (if found) should be cured by responsible parties within two years.

Commentary: Committee members noted a drainage problem which occurred in North Vermilion Parish. A Drainage District was established to help fund solutions. What was part of the problem? Beavers were building dams across waterways and coulees. This example was not viewed as a localized problem by committee members, but rather a general public maintenance responsibility.

1.13 FEDERAL FLOOD HAZARD AREA

Recognizing the expanding urbanization of the Parish and the resulting increased water runoff may require extending Federal Flood Hazard Area Boundaries and heighten existing flood elevations in the future, the minimum federal structural base floor standards are not considered satisfactorily preventive. The Base Floor Elevation of all new structures shall be constructed a minimum of six inches (6") (12) above the 100 year federal flood hazard area elevation as determined at the time of construction. This new standard shall apply to structures within the current Flood Hazard Areas. In addition, all new structures constructed outside the current Flood Hazard Area shall be elevated six inches (6") above grade level as a future flood prevention measure. A "Certificate of Elevation" shall be required only in the Flood Hazard Area.

Commentary: It was the unanimous opinion of the Drainage Subcommittee that the minimum floor elevation for new homes and businesses based on existing federal flood elevations is not adequate planning for the future. One member of the subcommittee noted that his home is outside but adjacent to the flood hazard area. He built his base floor twelve inches (12") above the federal flood elevation even though he was not required to do so and yet his home has almost flooded twice. The 100 Year Flood Event is a practical design standard for this area of Louisiana considering that such a rain event is occurring not once every hundred years, but more realistically every ten years. Assuming increasing urbanization and development in Lafayette Parish over the next century and lacking major capital expenditures for retention/detention facilities, it is prudent to prepare and protect future construction with increases in minimum base floor elevations as soon as possible.

1.14 DEVELOPMENTS EXCEEDING PRE-DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONS

Once both options are available, all new development plats and plans that result in increased water runoff exceeding the pre-development condition shall be required to

mitigate the increase through one of these two qualified options or combinations of these options:

- a) Construction of a retention facility that maintains the pre-development runoff.
- b) Payment of an equivalent amount of funds to a public funded Drainage District(s) to construct and support a local area wide retention facility established for that purpose.

The above options shall be designed and based on the following criteria:

1. 100 Year Storm Rainfall Event
2. Public fund drainage Districts to be established (one or more as deemed appropriate for the Parish) including perpetual maintenance.
3. Performance regulated which specify a measurable result before and after development is completed (as opposed to conventional regulated which specify exact standards to which improvements shall conform.)

Commentary: The Subcommittee debated this issue for many weeks. Recognizing that Lafayette Parish is blessed and at times challenged with plenty of rainfall events that overwhelm both natural and manmade drainage systems and that new residences, businesses, roads, parking lots and urban development land coverage will continue into the foreseeable future makes it incumbent on the present generation to prevent future obvious drainage problems to the greatest degree. The responsibility is here and now and must be incorporated into the Comprehensive Master Plan. The impact on the development community is well understood. Homes built over fifty years ago in both the urban and rural areas of the Parish were constructed on piers a couple of feet off the ground. New homes and businesses today are generally constructed with a slab at grade. Perhaps older construction methods may be more practically applied today and in the future given the climate and topography of Lafayette Parish. The Steering Committee members agreed with the Subcommittee position and voted unanimously in support of this recommendation.

1.15 DRAINAGE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

All existing drainage ways shall be under a regular and comprehensive maintenance program based on their designed or natural performance capacity and function.

Commentary: A parish drainage system can only work as well as it is maintained. Adequate public funding for regular and proper maintenance of the drainage infrastructure and network cannot be over emphasized. Again, the complexity of the drainage issues and needs in the Parish hamper the identification of solutions and compound the financing of these solutions. Committee members note the Parish has approximately \$1 million budgeted each year for drainage. This is not adequate for maintenance, much less for major capital improvements.

1.16 DRAINAGE STUDY AND PLAN

Initiation of a Comprehensive Parish Drainage Study and Plan to include at a minimum:

Lafayette IN a Century (LINC) Comprehensive Master Plan

- a) A one foot contour map of the Parish
- b) Map identification of all residential and business structures that have experienced flooding in the Parish.
- c) A drainage flow capacity analysis of all natural and man-made public drainage ways in the Parish.
- d) A plan for size, location and construction of areawide retention and detention facilities to mitigate 100 year rain events in the Parish.

Commentary: Recommendation No. 16 is not intended to preclude implementation of recommendations Nos. 1 through 15. Funding of this proposed Parish Drainage Study and Plan will be substantial and should be addressed by the financial issues and needs for the entire Comprehensive Master Plan. Even when monies are secured it will require several years before a Drainage Study and Plan would be completed. The LINC Steering Committee strongly supports the position that the remaining recommendations (1-16) be implemented at the earliest possible date.

1.17 ENFORCEMENT OF DRAINAGE REGULATIONS

Enforcement of existing and future drainage regulations shall be consistent and strengthened and follow a due process.

Commentary: Much discussion by the Committee was focused on localized flooding problems experienced by residents in relatively new subdivisions (last 20-30 years). As an example, streets and roads designed as “open ditch” are being compromised by individual hap hazard subsurface installations of culverts. Streets planned with open ditch drainage serve a local flood prevention need and should be maintained as such. Though it may be politically expedient to allow residents to individually subsurface their front ditch, the results negatively impact the local drainage system over time.

**Lafayette City-Parish Planning Commission
Lafayette IN a Century (LINC)
Comprehensive Master Plan**

**HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOOD
ELEMENTS**

Public Notice in the Advertiser: September 28, 2008

Public Hearing Date: October 9, 2008

City Parish Planning Commission Adoption Date:
October 27, 2008
Resolution No. 2008-04

Clerk of Court Recordation Date: April 8, 2009

Certified Transmittal Date to State Planning Office:



Local Government Transmittal Dates

Lafayette Consolidated Government:

City of Broussard:

City of Carencro:

City of Duson:

City of Scott:

City of Youngsville:



PREFACE

1. Neighborhoods are the critical building blocks of our community and should be planned, developed, enhanced, and protected.
2. Neighborhoods are our barometer on quality of life issues.
3. Lafayette Parish neighborhoods must be safe and healthy environments to raise and nurture succeeding generations.
4. Housing is a basic and fundamental need of all citizens and should be a primary community concern and focus.
5. “Affordable housing” is defined as owner-occupied residential units for the employed minimum-income family.
6. Housing in Lafayette Parish should be located in defined and viable neighborhoods with adequate infrastructure and services.

2.1 PLANS

The Lafayette Parish Comprehensive Master Plan should be developed and implemented on a defined and organized neighborhood level through the preparation and adoption of neighborhood plans.

Commentary: Residential land use comprises the largest single developed classification in the Parish. Obviously, this is where we live, where our children play, and increasingly where we may work in the future. We must plan the Parish on a realistic and viable neighborhood level. We can not allow our older neighborhoods to deteriorate and we must not allow new neighborhoods to be built without adequate basic services, infrastructure, planning, and citizen involvement. There should be two pilot neighborhood comprehensive plans in the Parish: The LINC North Neighborhood Pilot and the LINC South Neighborhood Pilot programs. This effort has already demonstrated some positive community responses. Even negative reactions to these neighborhood pilot plans and programs should be considered beneficial to public awareness and involvement.

2.2 BORDERS

Existing and future neighborhoods should be clearly defined with natural and manmade borders to help plan, organize, and support the area.

Commentary: The North/South LINC Neighborhood Pilot Areas were located in high growth areas of the Parish where substantial public and private investments have already been made or committed. Each area measures approximately two square miles. This may or may not be the ideal geographic size, but could be a starting point for a Parish-wide model program.

2.3 CONFORM WITH PARISH PLAN

Neighborhood plans shall be developed in conformity with the overall Parish-wide Comprehensive Master Plan framework.

Commentary: Planning decisions must be directed to the most appropriate level. Decisions that have limited impact on the Parish as a whole should be made on the advice and in consultation with the neighborhood primarily affected. On the other hand, planning decisions that affect the City-Parish as a whole should not be overly influenced by a single neighborhood's needs or interests.

2.4 "ADEQUATE" INFRASTRUCTURE

Existing and future neighborhoods shall be planned with "adequate" infrastructure improvements including sewer, water, electrical, communication, drainage, streets, and parks. Adequate services to be determined by other Comprehensive Master Plan elements of Utilities, Land Use, Conservation and Environment, and Transportation.

Commentary: Once a new subdivision has been constructed, it will be there for a long time. Start multiplying the subdivisions and what follows may be drainage problems, traffic congestion, low water pressure, and sewage problems. We sometimes call this development “progress.” What we may be doing is setting ourselves up for major public and private costly remedies to resolve such uncoordinated growth problems. Lafayette experiences the same “leapfrog” development activities that most urban areas experience. Too much development is built beyond adequate infrastructure because it is cheaper. It is cheaper because there is inadequate or minimal infrastructure. This pattern should be reversed.

2.5 COMMUNITY ORIENTED POLICING

To ensure that Lafayette Parish neighborhoods are safe and secure Community Oriented Policing shall be available to all neighborhoods.

Commentary: Law enforcement has changed over the last fifty years. Police no longer walk the streets, but drive in high powered technological units that respond to needs in minutes. But neighborhoods have lost something in the technological divide. Law enforcement may have lost its connectivity to the community, its neighborhoods, and its residents in the process. The old traditional “Officer Bill” who walked our neighborhoods in the past and who knew the residents and they knew him should be reconsidered as an integral part of a safe and secure neighborhood program. Our neighborhoods should not be walled enclosures. Community Policing has been tested and found to be a workable and viable solution to neighborhood security. Police who “walk the beat” have demonstrated locally in some of our older neighborhoods an effectiveness that is both traditional and community-oriented. At the very least the option should be available.

2.6 PARKS/SQUARES/GREEN SPACES

Neighborhood parks/squares/green spaces should be planned and developed for both existing and future neighborhoods in the Parish and as a general rule within a ten-minute brisk walk from every residence.

Commentary: Lafayette City and Parish Government and the Lafayette Consolidated Government have invested heavily in the development of regional and community-wide parks and recreation facilities. The recommendation here is for smaller public areas or squares, well situated within the heart of residential neighborhoods that compensate for smaller lot subdivisions and a general lack of open areas. Committee members note that most families must transport their children to area parks when all that is needed is more immediate and available open space. Children should not have to cross one or more major thoroughfares or travel several miles to reach open space. With increasing urban development in Lafayette Parish there must be a corresponding program to provide open public spaces for people. The new River Ranch development provides us with a model.

2.7 LINC NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS

Designated LINC Neighborhoods shall be organized and coordinated through neighborhood organizations following an organizational structure acceptable to the City-Parish Planning Commission, the Neighborhood Pride Section of the Department of Community Development and the Planning Division of the Department of Traffic and Transportation with administrative support coordinated through Lafayette Consolidated Government.

Commentary: Effective and viable neighborhoods require resident and property owner interests and involvement. Neighborhood organizations are absolutely necessary in developing community awareness and understanding. The LINC Neighborhood North and South Pilot Program should be utilized as a model method of organizing citizens to be actively engaged in their neighborhoods through an organizational structure that has been tried and tested over the years. Organizational adjustments should be considered, but the basic outline must be clearly established for long term associations. Local government is and should be a partner in the neighborhood process. However, since government has limitations a team approach is recommended. The Community Development Department of the Lafayette Consolidated Government provides neighborhood organizational support services for existing organizations and is a good example of neighborhood partnerships.

2.8 FUNDING FOR DESIGNATED LINC NEIGHBORHOODS

Permanent funding for Designated LINC Neighborhoods should be established and sustained if they are to be successful and durable as long term institutions. Neighborhood organizations must have coordinated resources to direct and manage as local neighborhood priorities are determined and implemented. A variety of funding tools shall be identified and provided as options for neighborhood consideration and use including local government.

Commentary: There exist several neighborhood organizations within the City and Parish of Lafayette that have managed to remain active for over thirty years. One of the essential items that have helped keep these organizations engaged and productive is money. Working with and through local government, fund raisers, grants and dues, these neighborhood organizations have made long-term impacts within and for their communities.

2.9 NEW DESIGNATED LINC NEIGHBORHOODS

New Designated LINC neighborhoods should be established and reinforced with a sense of identity or place.

Commentary: Residents need to identify with their neighborhood and community. As Lafayette Parish continues to expand its suburban growth pattern, neighborhood plans should help to associate new subdivisions with their immediate area and organization.

2.10 INCORPORATE DRAINAGE AND DETENTION

Designated LINC Neighborhood Plans shall incorporate drainage areas including bayous, coulees, canals, retention and detention facilities, parks, streets (existing and planned) and a variety of land uses that will protect and enhance existing and future property values.

Commentary: Neighborhood development must include an option for mixed uses which if designed correctly, taking into account the character, context and scale of the surrounding neighborhood, can provide unique opportunities for employment, shopping, housing, and public gathering space. It is desired that Designated LINC Neighborhoods should have a diversity and balance of land uses.

2.11 DESIGN AROUND THOROUGHFARE PLAN

Lafayette Parish should plan and design its future neighborhoods around the adopted Lafayette Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan.

Commentary: The City and Parish have had a thoroughfare plan since 1955. Numerous studies in the past have identified the need to protect future arterial corridors at critical locations. Neighborhood residents do not react favorably to arterial development through established residential areas. Yet the pattern continues, and the process allows new subdivisions to be built in the path of future thoroughfares. The I-49 Connector through the Lafayette Urban Center has provided the first serious opportunity for local, state and federal support of a corridor preservation program in Lafayette Parish. It is poor planning to allow new neighborhoods to be built and then follow with needed arterial construction. The cycle needs to be reversed.

2.12 PRESERVE AND ENHANCE IN I-49 CORRIDOR

Lafayette Consolidated Government and Lafayette Parish shall preserve and enhance older neighborhoods identified in the I-49 Connector Corridor Study for recommended improvements and maintenance programs.

Commentary: These neighborhoods will be the front door of the Lafayette community with direct access to downtown, the airport, the Oil Center, the University of Louisiana and the Cajundome Complex. This area should be the best we can make it and not allowed to deteriorate. The displacement of approximately 150 residents will have a significant impact on these neighborhoods and the Lafayette community as a whole. Neighborhood revitalization is a critical need for the corridor.

2.13 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The single most important permanent need for housing in Lafayette Parish is the availability of affordable housing. Local government shall take the initiative to facilitate private/public investment in this critical community need and at the earliest possible date.

Implementation strategies shall identify available options to provide the working poor with housing opportunity.

Commentary: There are government programs in existence (some federally funded, some locally funded) which are currently available to assist low income families to purchase or build a home. There are even private programs, such as Habitat for Humanity. But these efforts are a drop in the bucket compared to the overwhelming need. The problem of adequate affordable housing is not only a local program but national in scope. However, something must be done and soon. While Lafayette Parish has enjoyed a great deal of new housing activity over the last several years, the free market has not produced affordable housing. Homes are not being constructed in the \$50,000 - \$60,000 range for low salaried working couples. The First Time Home Buyers Program is not meeting the need for this modest income market.

2.14 COMPATIBLE HOUSING DESIGNS IN I-49 CORRIDOR

Prototype housing designs should be developed compatible with the existing housing found in the older neighborhoods located in the I-49 Connector Corridor Housing Study. These designs should be formulated into a number of selected specification options (1 bedroom, 2 bedroom, 3 bedroom and 4 bedroom) with plans for a test bid construction program.

Commentary: Athens, Texas is the location of a state of the art modular housing units being built by an international corporation at half the cost of current construction methods. The efficiency of the operation indicates that assembly line modular units will be the future of new housing. Specifications are needed to meet the displacement housing of over 150 residents for the I-49 Connector alone.

2.15 AFFORDABLE HOUSING INITIATIVES

Affordable housing initiatives are recommended first priority in the I-49 Connector Corridor Neighborhoods.

Commentary: The need for affordable housing is a Parish-wide problem, but that priority should focus on the I-49 Connector Neighborhoods due to the number of residents to be displaced. Secondary consideration should be provided to other older neighborhoods within the Parish as funding becomes available.

2.16 AFFORDABLE HOUSING ASSISTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT FUND

An Affordable Housing Assistance and Development Fund for Lafayette Parish should be established under the umbrella of the new community foundation (Acadiana Legacy Foundation).

Commentary: The establishment of the area community foundation is a great opportunity. It is hoped that this vital community asset will open new opportunities for advancing

resources to meet the challenge of affordable housing needs in the Parish now and well into the century.

2.17 HOUSING COMMITTEE FOR I-49 CONNECTOR CORRIDOR

A Housing Committee should be established comprised of 5-7 members from the existing neighborhood organizations affected by the I-49 Connector construction and answerable to the Planning Commission of the Lafayette Consolidated Government to facilitate alternative low cost housing construction. LCG, along with other involved agencies will be responsible for preparing a package 2-unit bid construction program that will be tested on eight (8) I-49 Connector prototype affordable housing designs with each bidder constructing one identical 2 bedroom and one identical 3 bedroom units within the I-49 Connector neighborhoods. This activity will serve as an experiment of cost containment and options for an expanded affordable housing program as part of the I-49 Connector effort. The I-49 Connector Project should be the community incubator for affordable housing initiatives throughout the Parish.

Commentary: Collaboration with a number of local builders, developers and housing professionals took place. All stated they could not conceive of building the type and style of housing identified in the I-49 Connector Study in the affordable housing price range of \$50,000 to \$60,000. This is the challenge today and certainly for the future. Alternatives will have to be developed if traditional stick building construction cannot meet affordable housing objectives. Private/public partnerships, non-profit organizations, local, state and federal programs may all have to put their shoulders to the wheel on this affordable housing objective in the Comprehensive Master Plan. Testing initiatives and creative ideas will certainly be needed for this program.

2.18 AFFORDABLE HOUSING FINANCING

A consortium of voluntary financial institutions should be established to pool and provide affordable housing financing exceptional to standard lending practices and restraints (including government programs) with special arrangements which will accommodate the needs of the borrower.

Commentary: There are area banks interested in coordinating this proposed consortium to help solve the problem of affordable housing needs.

2.19 PROMOTE AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND JOB TRAINING

Local government should continue to facilitate community-based and/or non-profit organizations that promote affordable housing and related job training efforts.

Commentary: There are existing federally-sponsored affordable housing programs managed locally through the Lafayette Consolidated Government Department of Community Development. The available government funding and restrictions meet only

a fraction of the Parish needs for affordable housing. These government programs should be continued and expanded.

2.20 HOUSING ASSISTANCE MARKETING

Affordable housing assistance programs both existing and proposed should be marketed regularly and consistently through public service announcements, brochures, displays, and updated through the Comprehensive Master Plan.

Commentary: Resources that exist today and may exist through the Comprehensive Master Plan in the future should be actively marketed. Affordable housing assistance programs will not help unless people are aware that such help is available.

2.21 HOUSING EDUCATION MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

A Housing Education Maintenance Program (HEMP) should be a mandatory requirement for all affordable housing loans.

Commentary: It was noted by several members of the committee that problems exist at all economic levels with people who do not know how to maintain their homes. However, special emphasis must be placed on new home owners who do not have any previous experience with home ownership.

2.22 INCENTIVE PROGRAMS FOR HOUSING OVER 50 YEARS OLD

Local government and the private sector should establish incentive programs to protect and preserve housing over fifty years old for residential or practical alternative uses suitable to the older neighborhoods in which many of these houses are located. Houses identified on national, state or local historic registers should receive special priority, consideration and financial assistance for the owners. There are several dozen such historic properties in the Parish in serious need of structural stabilization and rehabilitation.

Commentary: Many older homes in Lafayette Parish are in need of special and costly maintenance and updating but continue to meet the housing needs of many families. Countless numbers of these owner occupied houses are in need of funding for new energy efficiencies and structural protection. Federal funding is limited but does exist for financial assistance to qualified owners in targeted areas, but a much broader program is needed throughout the Parish. Historic houses are an asset to the Parish and should be preserved. Tax abatements, utility abatements, special grants and/or financing programs are suggested.

2.23 HOME AND YARD MAINTENANCE PROGRAM FOR ELDERLY AND HANDICAPPED

A home and yard maintenance program for the elderly and handicapped should be established and available to all Parish homeowners with limited incomes through public and private resources.

Commentary: We all know elderly and handicapped residents who are struggling to maintain yards and homes on limited fixed incomes. Many of these citizens must give priority to food, utilities and medical needs; this results in deteriorating houses and yard maintenance. Deteriorating houses and yards have a negative impact on the neighborhoods in which they are located. General assistance must be made available to this segment of our community now and in the future and certainly for the aging “baby boomers” generation.

2.24 NONTRADITIONAL HOME OWNERSHIP MODELS

Traditional single family home ownership should be considered a primary goal of local affordable housing initiatives, but a consortium of voluntary financial institutions should establish nontraditional home ownership models like limited equity cooperatives and land trusts, which are recommended in the I-49 Connector Study Corridor Preservation Plan.

Commentary: Though many people are familiar with condominiums, there are other options to home ownership that may prove beneficial and should be tested. Mixed use developments which are being highly promoted around the country may provide opportunity to experiment with new housing ownership scenarios that might prove economical and satisfactory.

This consortium should be a catalyst for researching and testing new directions in nontraditional home ownership.

2.25 AFFORDABLE UTILITIES AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Affordable Housing should be designed and constructed for affordable utilities and maximum energy efficiency.

Commentary: Low maintenance is a necessity for affordable housing. Utilities are a critical factor and must be limited to the minimum cost level practical.

2.26 UNIVERSAL DESIGN HOUSING

Universal design housing should be encouraged and available to some degree in all neighborhoods of the Parish.

Commentary: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) has focused attention and resources on accommodating the accessibility needs of the handicapped. Residential units for the handicapped are needed throughout the Parish now and even more so in the very

near future as the “baby boomers” continue to age. Some advance planning for this growing elderly population is needed.

2.27 PORCHES

Porches. Incentives should be established to promote construction of functional porches on all new housing in the Parish conducive to the climate and social needs of the area.

Commentary: Porches are not nostalgic sentimental aesthetics attached to housing, but practical, social, efficient and climate-friendly facets to local housing and neighborhoods. Porches were specifically identified as a special housing consideration in the I-49 Connector Study. This recommendation is not intended as a regulatory requirement for new construction, but a suggestion to home buyers, builders and developers that functional porches are encouraged in the design and construction of new homes as a practical accommodation to the culture and climate of the area.

2.28 MINIMUM HOUSING STANDARDS

Minimum Housing Standards shall be established and enforced within each governmental jurisdiction throughout the Parish.

Commentary: The need for minimum housing standards was demonstrated by the number of housing units found to be without some of the minimal facilities most committee members considered necessary for human habitation in modern America. Only within the corporate limits of the City of Lafayette and the unincorporated areas of the Parish were minimal housing standards identified and enforced. Lacking minimal housing standards was determined to be unacceptable for the Parish and its municipalities.

**Lafayette City-Parish Planning Commission
Lafayette IN a Century (LINC)
Comprehensive Master Plan**

LAND USE ELEMENT

Public Notice in the Advertiser: September 28, 2008

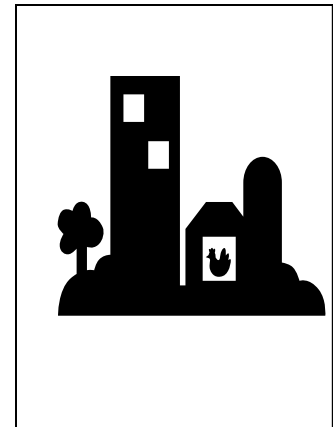
Public Hearing Date: October 9, 2008

City Parish Planning Commission Adoption Date:
October 27, 2008

Resolution No. 2008-04

Clerk of Court Recordation Date: April 8, 2009

Certified Transmittal Date to State Planning Office:



Local Government Transmittal Dates

Lafayette Consolidated Government:

City of Broussard:

City of Carencro:

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Lafayette Consolidated Government
Traffic & Transportation Department



Metropolitan Planning Organization
Comprehensive Planning Division

3.1 FOUNDATION PRINCIPLE

The foundation principle for the Lafayette Land Use Plan is performance-based and is applicable to all local governmental jurisdictions.

Commentary: Traditional zoning regulations are not a viable option for land use regulation for the entire Parish of Lafayette. The intention is to provide for property rights protection while also protecting adjacent property owners from incompatible land uses, and to protect residents and property owners by ensuring quality land development practices throughout Lafayette Parish. Performance-based standards are the foundation of the Land Use Plan. These standards offer maximum flexibility to the property owner while ensuring quality compatible development. Performance Based Standards seek to mitigate the effects of non-compatible uses while offering flexibility to the property owner. Unlike zoning, Performance Based Development Standards do not prohibit certain land uses rather, they encourage protection from non-compatible uses by utilizing performance standards. These standards include provisions for adequate infrastructure as well as buffer and setback standards.

3.2 EQUITABLE ASSESMENT

All land parcels of and other related properties, except those properties exempt by state law, are to be assessed equitably by the Lafayette Parish Assessor.

Commentary: Equitable tax assessments are crucial for the economic health of municipalities. The tax assessor shall be clear and consistent in the assessment of all property within its legal authority.

3.3 ANNUAL REVIEW OF TAX EXEMPTION

All tax exemptions and special tax classifications on property shall to be reviewed annually and shall be accurately applied.

Commentary: When properly applied, tax abatements, tax increment financing (TIF) and other tax incentives can aid development and redevelopment efforts within the Parish. However, these incentives should be used appropriately and applied accurately. There are clear and specific state and local guidelines that must be met in every case. Government officials should review all tax classifications annually to ensure proper adherence to state and local laws.

3.4 LAND USE DATA ACCESIBLE VIA INTERNET

Land use data for each land parcel in Lafayette Parish, including but not limited to descriptions, land use, zoning (if applicable), assessed values, and ownership, shall be accessible via the Internet.

Commentary: Access to timely and accurate land use information enables Parish residents to become actively involved in the planning process. Furthermore, access to

such information empowers Parish residents to make informed decisions about their property. Today it is not enough for governments to have such information available upon request to anyone who takes time to visit his local planning and tax assessment offices. Rather, government should be proactive in providing such information to the public in a way that is efficient and convenient to its residents. This could mean providing such information via the Internet or World Wide Web. The Parish is currently working on improving its Geographic Information System (GIS), which will allow government officials to provide detailed and accurate mapping of land use, zoning, and other key environmental features. In the future the Lafayette Consolidated Government should seek to provide planning documents, GIS maps, and assessment information via the Internet.

3.5 DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY DESIGNATION

Land use development intensity designations depend upon available infrastructure (unless owners / developers provide new infrastructure facilities). Both commercial and residential land uses shall follow an incorporated community's design requirements for infrastructure improvements if within a municipality, or within 2,000 feet of an incorporated community's boundary.

Commentary: The amount of development intensity allowed shall be based on the capabilities and capacities of available infrastructure and the development level designation identified within the Future Development Guide. Additional development intensity may be permitted if infrastructure systems are improved with private funds to acceptable levels to accommodate the increased intensity and the development area is appropriately buffered from adjoining less intense development areas.

3.6 DISCOURAGE "LEAPFROG" DEVELOPMENT

"Leapfrog" development throughout the Parish is discouraged.

Commentary: The importance of maintaining a contiguous and compact pattern of development cannot be overstated, as its benefits are numerous. This type of development pattern results in the preservation of agricultural land, lowers infrastructure costs and requirements, reduces pollution and minimizes environmental damages typically associated with urban growth. Infill development should be encouraged where possible to preserve the continuous and compact nature of the Parish and surrounding municipalities. Future Parish growth management strategies and policies should seek to capitalize on the historical patterns of development in the Parish. New development areas should adjoin existing development where possible and practical.

3.7 INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

Public infrastructure investments shall be prioritized into the following identified growth areas:

- a) Growth area 1: Within a municipality's corporate boundaries;

- b) Growth area 2: The area within 2,000' of a municipality's corporate boundaries;
- c) Growth area 3: Major arterial corridors specifically identified on the Lafayette Consolidated Government's Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan;
- d) Growth area 4: Balance of the Parish outside of the areas noted in areas 1 through 3.

Commentary: Infrastructure should be in place prior to or concurrent with development. To date, infrastructure needs have not kept pace with development within the Parish. This situation will have a negative impact on the future of the Parish, affecting the health, safety and welfare of its residents. All government entities need to promote policies encouraging new development in areas adequately served by existing or planned utility service. Unfortunately, the sporadic nature of the development patterns of the past twenty years makes it very difficult to plan for future utility extensions. Moreover, the level of service of current utilities has suffered throughout the Parish due to the burdens placed on Parish government and municipalities by the non-contiguous growth patterns. Clear and definable growth areas are not growth boundaries. Development can still occur in the balance of the Parish. However, if development occurs in advance of adequate infrastructure, the developer must provide for the construction and/or extension of service to the new development.

3.8 DISCOURAGED DEVELOPMENT

Proposed developments outside of Growth Areas 1, 2, and 3 shall be discouraged until adequate infrastructure is available.

Commentary: Growth areas 4 are defined by prevalent and important growth management issues. These include natural resource issues such as wetlands and habitat conservation, open space and agricultural preservation, and pollution control. Development is also discouraged by the environmental and physical characteristics or limitations in these areas such as floodplains, wetlands or steep slopes and/or geopolitical boundary locations.

3.9 TAX INCREMENT FINANCING (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and/or tax abatements shall be utilized as tools for encouraging and discouraging Land Use Plan goals and objectives.

Commentary: Incentives such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF) or tax abatements are tools for meeting the Land Use Plan goals and objectives. A thorough analysis of tax evaluations and valuations of property is needed to determine if there is enough potential revenue to use TIF. Because property valuations are lower in Lafayette Parish than in many other parts of the country, use of TIF and tax abatements may not be practical. Therefore, tax incentives including TIF and abatements should be carefully considered according to the size of the development and its potential cumulative impact and net benefit to the surrounding area and Parish.

3.10 REDEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Redevelopment of established urban areas and arterial corridors identified on the Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan for higher density uses shall be encouraged with a list of principal incentives.

Commentary: New development does not occur in the absence of a practical incentive. The profit motive drives commercial property owners and developers. All Parish municipalities need to be sensitive to the needs of various types of businesses. Meeting these needs is an essential element in developing a sound strategy to encourage quality compatible development within the Parish's urban areas and arterial corridors.

3.11 PRESERVATION INCENTIVES

Establish incentives to preserve older structures of historic value and/or cultural interest.

Commentary: Older structures, particularly historic buildings, should be preserved. These structures are a big part of local culture and civic identity. There are a number of federal programs available for the preservation of older buildings. Lafayette Consolidated Government and other Lafayette Parish municipal governments need to take a more active role in the preservation of these structures. This means developing a list of practical strategies and incentives aimed at saving these structures from demolition and decay as well as promoting their adaptive reuse.

3.12 RECOMMENDED DEVELOPMENT

Commercial development in Lafayette Parish is strongly recommended at the intersections of major and or minor arterial streets identified on Lafayette Consolidated Government's Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan. Nodal development shall be a defining characteristic of Lafayette Parish land use. Nodes are not necessarily exclusively commercial land uses. However, it is intended that nodes be of higher density than surrounding land uses.

Commentary: The commercial linear development pattern that has persisted throughout the Parish should not continue. This linear or "strip" development pattern has led to increased gridlock and traffic congestion along most of the Parish's major arterial roads, especially on Johnston Street.

3.13 NODAL DEVELOPMENT

Nodal development shall be limited to within one-quarter mile of intersections of major and minor arterials and identified on Lafayette Consolidated Government's Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan.

Commentary: Size and intensity of nodes may vary. A number of alternative design options for nodes should be considered to address different design issues, including opportunities to promote multiple modes of circulation and access, site planning issues,

building design issues, and site improvement issues. However, the size of potential nodes should be regulated to meet the original intent of the policy.

3.14 MINIMUM WIDTH TO DEPTH RATIOS

Minimum width to depth ratios should be established for properties within the designated commercial nodes.

Commentary: Shallow lots and “piano key” lots are a major obstacle to implementing a successful access management system. These lots prevent the incorporation of cross access easements and/or frontage and reverse frontage roads. More importantly, because of the lack of cross access opportunities, these lots have individual drives onto the main roadway. This problem persists in many of the major arterial corridors within the Parish, especially on Johnston Street. There may be opportunities to consolidate lots by property owners or enter into joint use access agreements by the property owners in order to comply with this recommendation. Lafayette Consolidated Government and other local governments should adopt policies that regulate this type of development, including mandating minimum lot frontages for new commercial development for designated commercial nodes and developing model joint use and access documents for property owners/developers to consider in planning the development of property.

3.15 DISCOURAGED COMMERCIAL NODAL DEVELOPMENT

Commercial nodal development outside of the designated boundaries shall be discouraged through the following:

- a) Controlling curb cuts to a maximum of one per 1,000 to 1,300' property line frontage on major and minor arterials indicated within Lafayette Consolidated Government's Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan and in conjunction with joint use (access) agreements between adjacent property owners / developers.
- b) Fifty foot planted screening and landscaping improvements are to be provided along major and minor arterials identified in Lafayette Consolidated Government's Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan for commercial land uses outside designated nodes.

Commentary: Commercial development beyond designated nodes shall not be prohibited, but when it occurs, it shall meet requirements of nodal development with regard to access and compatibility. Additional requirements would be included to discourage such development including strict adherence to the Lafayette Consolidated Government's Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan for access management plan contained in the Transportation Element of this Comprehensive Master Plan; curb cuts must be strictly controlled and joint use or access agreements between adjacent properties are to be utilized whenever possible.

3.16 DEVELOPED SITE PLAN DESIGNS

Lafayette Consolidated Government and other municipalities shall develop a number of typical site plan designs by January 2010 that guide developers, owners, contractors, planners, engineers, builders and architects in their planning of sites within designated commercial nodes. These design option(s) should include but not be limited to:

- a) the internal circulation of pedestrian, transit, bike and auto traffic;
- b) parking;
- c) landscaping;
- d) structure setbacks;
- e) scale and bulk of commercial establishments that visually blend with and enhance surrounding areas.

Commentary: Practical guidelines and examples should be followed when building in designated commercial nodes. These examples include the aforementioned design options. These options should be flexible to allow the property owner / developer with feasible options that meet the intent of the policy. The distribution of these typical plans should be distributed to the building and architectural professionals of Lafayette Parish and made available to other developers.

3.17 REDUCE PARKING SPACES

Parking spaces for commercial locations shall be reduced and/or a maximum number of spaces should be established for various business types. This will serve to increase green space defined within the performance buffer requirement.

Commentary: Green space should be incorporated into site planning. The intent of the policy is to facilitate the introduction and/or substitution of green spaces for parking spaces within commercial properties. New and existing parking areas should be properly buffered and/or screened. Often sites are “overparked”: the number of spaces is predicated on the maximum number of spaces needed for only a few days of the year. This practice results in massive areas of unused impervious concrete which increase storm water run off and represents additional cost by the developer / owner.

3.18 PERFORMANCE BASED LAND USE

Performance Base Land Use, 1980, by Lane Kendig shall be the recommended standard reference associated with the Land Use Plan, and the buffering criteria established herein, unless specifically identified within the text or exhibits of this element

Commentary: Lane Kendig’s, 1980, Performance Base Land Use, book is the essential reference for utilizing buffers with land uses. Consistent criteria, which meet the needs of the Parish are necessary. These criteria were adapted and incorporated into the Urban Development Intensity Level (UDIL) classification system.

3.19 BUFFER REQUIREMENTS

Lafayette Consolidated Government shall establish buffer requirements in the Lafayette Consolidated Government's land development regulations, (i.e. Subdivision Regulations / Development Code), in areas where new development conflicts with existing development, except in areas identified for industrial or light industrial uses in the Land Use Plan.

Commentary: Buffers can include plant materials such as hedges, native trees, shrubs, grassed berms, bike paths, nature trails, and/or fences developed according to criteria identified in the Development Intensity Matrix. Coulees and boulevards may also be used as buffers in combination with landscaped areas. Local landscape ordinances should be developed/updated to establish and include criteria necessary to implement buffering standards proposed by the Comprehensive Master Plan.

3.20 BUFFERS AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY LEVELS

Buffers between land uses and the buffer's dimensions shall be determined by the relative difference in Urban Development Intensity Levels (UDIL) of the respective land use.

Commentary: Use of the Urban Density Intensity Levels (UDIL) is a recommended tool to guide the future growth of Lafayette Parish. The UDIL system is a tool in the planning of better compatibility between and among land uses, especially between residential and non-residential uses. Certain land uses have similarities in intensity of use and can be compatible neighbors. Other land uses are very different from one another and do not make well-suited neighbors. This UDIL system is designed to promote the clustering of compatible land uses. Where the land use intensity levels are focused, they are generally inclusive, and it is intended that the UDIL will become an integral part of the development process throughout the Parish.

The intensity of a land use is based on several factors, including the density of the activity, the amount of traffic it generates, and the physical size and nature of the buildings associated with its use. Density is important in preserving the aesthetic and cultural integrity of areas. Parks and homes are often located next to each other, but not next to large shopping malls, because the mall is too dense to be a good neighbor to the homes and parks. Traffic generation is also vital in determining compatible land uses. Land uses that generate high levels of traffic do not make good neighbors to uses that create low traffic demands. The neighborhood and mall example applies here as well. A mall generates large amounts of traffic and requires large streets and vast parking, whereas neighborhoods need only small streets and little parking. Finally, the physical size and nature of buildings is considered in determining compatibility. Issues of scale, height, orientation, and massing are considered in deciding which types of uses will work well together. Large, bulky buildings, (as compared to residential uses with smaller, landscaped homes) often characterize industrial land uses. Placing these uses next to one another creates a poor visual environment and diminishes the overall aesthetic appeal of lower intensity areas. Using physical characteristics to determine compatibility helps to preserve and protect such important components of communities.

Buffers must be established and applied to new development incompatible with existing or typical development that surrounds it when the new development is located within a Development Level 0, 1, 2, 3 or 4 area as indicated on the Future Development Guide. In addition, buffers would be required when a more intense Development Level adjoins a lesser intense Development Level, for example a Development Level 2 area adjoins a Development Level 3 area. Buffers would not be required for industrial uses when located within Development Level 5 unless they adjoin a Development Level 4.

3.21 BUFFER CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE

Buffers shall be constructed or provided and maintained by the developer/landowner creating the conflict with a pre-existing land use, with the exception of industrial uses developed outside of identified industrial areas. In these cases maximum buffers are to be provided even if the adjacent land is not in use or is classified as agricultural.

Commentary: The land use elements should not place undue or unnecessary or unfair hardship on property owners. Therefore, all standards and policies will be administered uniformly and fairly. This means that buffers should be built and maintained by the developer/landowner who created the conflict with the pre-existing land use. There is one exception to this rule: high intensity industrial land uses (UDIL 5) developed outside of designated UDIL areas will be required to provide maximum buffers even if the adjacent land use is vacant or agricultural. These industrial uses (UDIL 5) are characterized by excessive noxious hazards, or noise and/or heavy traffic generation.

3.22 TYPES OF BUFFERS

Buffers shall include hedges, native tree and shrub species, berms, biking paths, nature trails, and /or fences as developed and specified. Coulees and boulevards may also be used as buffers in combination with landscaped areas.

Commentary: It is important to provide a variety of landscape and hardscape buffers to mitigate the effects of adjoining incompatible land uses. Most buffers provide a physical barrier that directly screens views and/or noise from adjacent uses including hedges, trees, shrubs, berms and fences. There is a practical use of other buffers including biking paths, nature trails, coulees and boulevards.

3.23 PERFORMANCE BUFFER STANDARDS

Performance buffer standards shall be incorporated within Parish and municipal landscape ordinances.

Commentary: The Subcommittee recommends that performance-based buffer standards outlined in this Land Use Plan be incorporated with the existing and future Parish and municipal landscape ordinances. For this reason, these standards were designed to be flexible enough to be used in combination with current Lafayette Consolidated

Government's landscape standards. The municipalities of Carencro, Scott, Duson, Broussard and Youngsville should incorporate these landscape ordinances.

3.24 NEW DEVELOPMENT IMPACT ON WATERSHED AREAS

Mitigation of new development is to be addressed by the construction of regional storm water retention/detention facilities. The impact of new development on watershed areas must be minimized. To establish such a program for this specific purpose, funding for these new drainage facilities and related maintenance should be established based on developer participation and dedicated millages and/or utility fees. It is anticipated that this program will be initiated by a lead agency as noted in the Drainage Element. This lead agency will establish policies and financing to construct and maintain storm water facilities.

Commentary: A primary concern for Parish residents is the protection of watersheds. Large developments within the Parish utilize detention ponds or lakes to capture excess stormwater runoff. Most developments in the Parish drain directly into the coulee system. Currently, roughly 50% of the Parish is developed. As future development occurs, more impervious surfaces are created, and storm water runoff into the coulee system increases. Unfortunately, this system is already overloaded. At the pace of current development, the likelihood of flood events will significantly increase. Development impact on watersheds be minimized and/or mitigated by the construction of retention /detention facilities. These facilities should be financed and maintained by local government through incorporation of utility fees.

3.25 STORM WATER DETENTION/RETENTION FOR RECREATION

Regional storm water retention/detention facilities should be planned for recreational purposes.

Commentary: The Parish does not have major water bodies and resources large enough to be utilized for recreation purposes. The construction of major retention/detention facilities should provide significant recreational amenities and opportunities that do not exist at present.

3.26 MUST CONNECT TO MUNICIPAL WATER AND SEWER

All developed land uses must connect to municipal water and/or sewer facilities if available. Alternately the developer / owner shall operate and maintain the system subject to an inspection and permitting program. After such a system is permitted, it will be inspected at least annually to ensure proper operation. The cost to maintain this program is recommended to be borne by dedicated user permit and/or inspection fees. The Lafayette Consolidated Government shall contract with the appropriate state agency for LCG to perform the inspection of these facilities in lieu of the state responsibility for the oversight of water and sewerage facilities.

Commentary: The amount of development intensity allowed shall be based on the capabilities and capacity of local infrastructure. Additional development intensity may be allowed if infrastructure systems are improved with private funds to acceptable levels of service to accommodate the increased intensity. Individual or private on-site sewage systems must meet appropriate federal, state, and local standards. More importantly, the developer must provide for a means to fund on-going maintenance, repair and operation of these systems for this purpose. In other words, the developer needs to demonstrate that these systems will be constructed, maintained and properly inspected for the life of the development.

3.27 DEVELOPMENT WITHIN COMMERCIAL NODES

Commercial development within commercial nodes shall accommodate corresponding intersection design standards identified in Lafayette Consolidated Government's Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan.

Commentary: There is a need for proper intersection design standards. New development and redevelopment projects must accommodate these standards to ensure the safe and efficient flow of traffic through Lafayette's transportation corridors.

3.28 GRADE SEPARATED INTERCHANGES

Grade separated interchanges have a substantial impact on adjacent land uses at selected planned arterial intersections and should be more aggressively pursued and implemented.

Commentary: The safe and efficient flow of traffic throughout the Parish is dependent upon adherence of proper access management techniques and good intersection and interchange design.

3.29 RAISED GREEN MEDIANS, BIKEWAYS, SIDEWALKS

New major arterials shall be constructed with raised green medians and combined bikeway/sidewalks on one side of the roadway separated from the curb to accommodate tree plantings wherever possible. Electrical facilities shall be placed underground along major arterials.

Commentary: A good access management plan should utilize median improvements to increase traffic flow and reduce the number of potential vehicular conflicts. Well-designed and efficient medians are one of the most important features of a safe and efficient roadway. Additionally, a raised median along major arterials provides an opportunity to provide aesthetic landscape improvements including street trees, shrubs and groundcover. A combined bikeway/sidewalk on one side of the roadway separated from the curb to accommodate additional landscape improvements should also be incorporated.

Overhead utility transmission and distribution lines should be placed underground along these new major arterials. Today communities are finding ways to place underground many utilities, including cable, telephone and power lines. Unfortunately, many of the overhead power lines along major arterials are main feeder lines. Before being located underground, these feeder lines must be encased in large concrete vaults and large switch boxes need to be placed intermittently to provide service to adjacent lines and properties. Because of this expense, it is very hard to relocate existing utilities along older major arterials. Therefore, it is important that utilities be located underground at time of construction of the roadway facility and adjacent developments.

3.30 CORRIDOR PRESERVATION PLAN AND PROGRAM

A Corridor Preservation Plan and Program shall be established for planned arterials identified in the Lafayette Consolidated Government's Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan that is comprehensive in scope and focuses on defining rights-of-way, land use, access management, and adequate building setbacks and adequate funding in advance of construction.

Commentary: The first step in promoting a safe, efficient, and aesthetically pleasing roadway is to establish a Corridor Preservation Plan and Program for future arterials. This Plan must be comprehensive in scope and should focus on promoting an effective access management plan that incorporates the functional and aesthetic concerns of the roadway and adjacent properties. Additionally, the program needs to anticipate future land use demands and plan accordingly. This means adopting policies that integrate access management solutions before development occurs as well as planning for the needs of existing developments.

3.31 ENCOURAGE LOWER DEVELOPMENT COSTS

Lafayette Consolidated Government and all local municipalities should work with development associations on a regular basis to coordinate and establish methods and procedures to encourage lower land development costs and construction of affordable housing.

Commentary: Collaborative problem-solving between the development community, local service providers and local governments is essential. Lafayette is blessed with a number of development associations which can assist in establishing tools, strategies, and policies to encourage lower development costs and to promote more affordable housing throughout the Parish.

3.32 COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

The Community Foundation of Acadiana (formerly the Legacy Foundation of Acadiana) or other community foundations should be used as a resource to facilitate the implementation of the goals and objectives of this Comprehensive Master Plan.

Lafayette IN a Century (LINC) Comprehensive Master Plan

Commentary: The Community Foundation of Acadiana will play an important role within the community. The flexibility and combination of private philanthropy with public interest may provide Lafayette Parish with a dynamic resource in this community foundation. The potential for improved quality of life programs and organization is unlimited locally. Community foundations have proven to be powerful enhancers to their areas around the country. The Greater Baton Rouge Community Foundation is a classic example of what can be achieved.

**Lafayette City-Parish Planning Commission
Lafayette IN a Century (LINC)
Comprehensive Master Plan**

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENTS

Public Notice in the Advertiser: September 28, 2008

Public Hearing Date: October 9, 2008

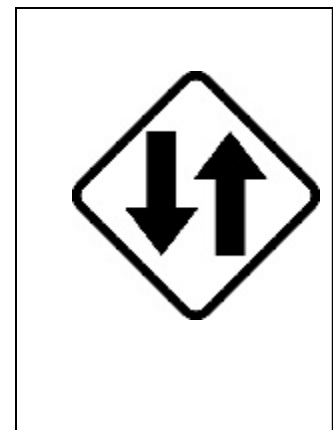
City Parish Planning Commission Adoption Date:

October 27, 2008

Resolution No. 2008-04

Clerk of Court Recordation Date: April 8, 2009

Certified Transmittal Date to State Planning Office:



Local Government Transmittal Dates

Lafayette Consolidated Government:

City of Broussard:

City of Carencro:

City of Duson:

City of Scott:

City of Youngsville:



Lafayette Consolidated Government

Traffic & Transportation Department



Metropolitan Planning Organization

Comprehensive Planning Division

PREFACE

Transportation is the second most important consideration in the Comprehensive Master Plan. Land use being the most important. The framework of the Lafayette Parish arterial transportation system has been planned for a long period of time. Charles Colbert completed the first Thoroughfare Plan in 1955 for the City and Parish Governments. Many of the arterials proposed in 1955 have yet to be built, but the need has not gone away. Camellia Boulevard bridge and extensions are only now being constructed after forty five years. Lafayette City-Parish is the Hub of the region. The economic viability of the community is critical to accessibility of retail, educational, industrial, service, and medical facilities. Lafayette City and Parish Government must maintain an aggressive and long range transportation plan and program. The MPO Citizen Advisory Committee, Transportation Technical Committee and Transportation Policy committees have reviewed the current transportation plans and programs and made the following set of recommendations to the LINC Steering Committee. The Steering Committee reviewed and adopted the MPO Committee report with modest changes and adjustments.

4.1 FUNDING

Develop a stable source of transportation funding with a rational nexus. Alternatives to be considered:

- a) Local option gas tax
- b) Roadway frontage fee
- c) Driveway access fee

Commentary: There is a concern that current gasoline taxes are still being channeled to activities other than transportation. Examples identified are state grant funding for local jails and for State Police. Transportation Taxes should be directly applied to transportation improvements and programs. However, considering the shortage of dedicated transportation revenue, the subcommittee recommends three potential sources for local project funding that should be considered thoroughly and submitted to the voters of Lafayette Parish with specific projects and programs.

4.2 MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF FACILITIES

Improve management and maintenance of existing transportation facilities with anticipated spending on new capacity projects.

Commentary: There is a continuing debate within the Lafayette community on the need for new streets, roads, and highways throughout Lafayette Parish. Priority should be focused on improving the management and maintenance of existing transportation infrastructure when programming spending on new capacity projects.

4.3 CORRIDOR PRESERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

Corridor Preservation and Management should be a major component of the transportation improvement program for the parish.

Commentary: The I-49 Connector Corridor Preservation and Management Plan serves as a model for identifying future arterial alignments well in advance of construction and need. There have been repeated studies and recommendations over the last twenty years urging local governments to institute corridor preservation for future thoroughfares. Maintaining the integrity of the Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan would be a logical objective and goal for future growth and development needs. The cost/benefits of corridor preservation are substantial and easily demonstrated on current projects. The Camellia Blvd extension/bridge was originally recommended and approved in March, 1956.

4.4 ACCESS MANAGEMENT PLAN

An Access Management Plan should be comprehensively adopted for all major thoroughfares in the parish, both existing and planned based on the Florida Model with immediate implementation on new development projects and a time frame technique to be determined for existing development (block by block).

Commentary: A tough political hardship is generated by the subject of access management. Commercial developers, business owners, property owners, and retailers generally desire full and unobstructed access to all roadways. It is difficult at best for local elected officials to say no. The proven reality is clearly demonstrated around the country that access management improves accessibility and safety. It is time that Lafayette applies this sophisticated expertise to our transportation network.

4.5 TRANSIT ALTERNATIVE

Enhance the transit alternative.

Commentary: Transit ridership has declined over the last twenty years. This is understandable given the growth and spread of the Lafayette urban area and auto use. The Lafayette Consolidated Government recently completed a major two year Parish Transit Study and Plan which recommends over eighteen new initiatives for transit improvement. This Transit Study and Plan should be an essential priority for the parish as a viable alternative to auto congestion, air quality and transportation for those citizens who are disenfranchised from the auto user group. Public transit is a community necessity and should be maintained and developed in a manner that can and will attract a larger citizen market.

4.6 NEW TECHNOLOGY

Implement new technology for enforcement, congestion management, and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS).

Commentary: The Citizen Advisory Committee, Transportation Technical Committee, and the Transportation Policy Committee have long supported and endorsed the concept and practical applications of Intelligent Transportation Systems. Having toured the ITS facility in Houston in 1997, CAC committee members recommended and urged the MPO and Lafayette Consolidated Government to prioritize this program for the Parish. Grant funds to complete an ITS Deployment Plan for the parish have been secured and should be contracted within the next few months. The State DOTD has indicated an initial funding support once the Deployment Plan is completed. Lafayette Consolidated Government should be prepared to fully partnership in this effort.

4.7 TRAFFIC CALMING PLAN

Develop and implement a Parish Traffic Calming Plan.

Commentary: Opposition is a natural reaction to increased development activity in and around established residential areas. Lacking a general grid network of streets (which provide alternatives for local and major streets and roads) Lafayette experiences negative congestion on the few through streets and roads available. Increased traffic and speed prompts the need for innovative techniques and options to slow through traffic, primarily,

on local residential streets. Traffic Calming designs should be incorporated into the long range transportation plan for the Parish.

4.8 ROADWAY DESIGN STANDARDS

Adopt uniform parish-wide roadway design standards for application by local, state and federal agencies.

Commentary: The CAC recommended and the Lafayette Consolidated Government, acting in its capacity as the Metropolitan Planning Organization, adopted design standards for all major street functional classifications in 1997 with the adoption of the Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan. These standards are to be applied to all street, road and highway construction in the Parish. The Lafayette Consolidated Government has improved construction cross standards, but many state projects are not being built accordingly. There has been some improvement, but more needs to be done. The Citizens Advisory Committee suggests revising the Functional Classification Design Standards and securing intergovernmental agreements with DOTD for future arterial construction.

4.9 SECONDARY STREET SYSTEM AND PLAN

Secondary Street System and Plan should be developed and adopted for long term growth and development of the parish.

Commentary: One of the critical transportation network needs throughout Lafayette Parish is the lack of inter-connectivity among Lafayette residential developments. The Planning Commission appears to work diligently requiring new developments to provide stub-outs and interconnecting streets as urban area expands. The problem is centered on the pervasive desire of many residents to live on dead end streets or cul-de-sacs and limit inter-connectivity to the greatest degree possible. The current Subdivision Regulations require cross streets every 1,500 feet along major arterials. This regulation is difficult to pinpoint and is frequently omitted or waived. A comprehensive parish-wide Secondary Street Plan needs to be developed. This plan should clearly identify minimal secondary streets within a given area.

4.10 FINANCIALLY CONSTRAINED TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Realisticize the Financially Constrained Transportation Plan (FCTP)

Commentary: The Financially Constrained Transportation Plan (FCTP) is a federally mandated requirement for urban areas receiving federal transportation funds for metropolitan transportation networks. The process attempts to apply realistic projections of transportation revenue from all sources (local, state, federal and private) in a comprehensive improvement program coordinated through the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in a cooperative war. The committee notes that project costs are continually escalating and becoming increasingly unrealistic. Revenues can be and are redirected and/or fluctuate enough to distort what resources are available to meet the

projected improvement plan schedule. Three suggestions to improve the process: 1) Annual review of FCTP project costs; 2) Annual review of all transportation revenue sources committed to the FCTP; and 3) Annually reduce or remove transportation projects when funding and costs do not match in the FCTP.

4.11 REDUCE GRADE SEPARATIONS

The number of planned grade separation intersections/interchanges should be reduced.

Commentary: There are a total of thirty-two grade separation interchanges and intersections planned in Lafayette Parish. Not one has been built in the last eighteen years. The Louisiana Avenue Interchange on I-10 will be under construction in the spring of 2001. The estimated cost of this new interchange is approaching \$20,000,000. Alternative designs in-lieu of grade separations should be considered for these planned intersections.

4.12 ROUNDABOUTS

Roundabouts should be considered as a viable alternative to grade separations and standard grade intersections.

Commentary: Recognizing the prohibitive cost of grade separations and the on-going cost of maintaining traffic signals and safety issues at regular grade intersections, reviewed recent studies on alternative roundabouts have been reviewed. Florida is beginning to experiment with new modern roundabouts which are better designed than the traffic circles we are familiar with in Alexandria. Clearwater, Florida has recently constructed a roundabout at a major intersection that is working well. Modern roundabouts keep traffic moving, are signal light free, safer for pedestrians, reduce traffic accidents substantially, provide an aesthetically pleasing asset to the community and cost 20% -30% of the money needed for a grade separation.

**Lafayette City-Parish Planning Commission
Lafayette IN a Century (LINC)
Comprehensive Master Plan**

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENTS

Public Notice in the Advertiser: September 28, 2008

Public Hearing Date: October 9, 2008

City Parish Planning Commission Adoption Date:
October 27, 2008
Resolution No. 2008-04

Clerk of Court Recordation Date: April 8, 2009

Certified Transmittal Date to State Planning Office:



Local Government Transmittal Dates

Lafayette Consolidated Government:

City of Broussard:

City of Carencro:

City of Duson:

City of Scott:

City of Youngsville:



Lafayette Consolidated Government
Traffic & Transportation Department



Metropolitan Planning Organization
Comprehensive Planning Division

5.1 IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

The Economic Development plan recognizes the importance of quality of education for the economic vitality of the Parish. Quality education attracts new business and industry because it is part of “quality roof tops” and it contributes skilled people to work in those newly created positions.

5.2 LOCAL CULTURAL ASSETS

LCG and local municipalities should capitalize on local cultural assets in the arts and the humanities. One example of this would be to promote all aspects of Cajun, Creole, and Zydeco Music by offering instruction in traditional music as well as the business and technology of the music industry.

Commentary: By perpetuating those unique cultural aspects of our area, we can develop education toward the business of music. Lafayette could become the "Nashville" of Cajun and Zydeco Music. Why not The Cajun, Creole and Zydeco Hall of Fame here in Lafayette Parish? All other performance and visual arts should be encouraged as well.

5.3 ANNUAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FINANCIAL CONFERENCE

LCG and local municipalities, with the aid of State and Federal Agency grants (if necessary) along with the private sector shall develop, promote, plan, and hold an "Annual Economic Development Finance Conference" in Lafayette Parish for the purpose of establishing Economic Development funding sources.

Commentary: Business and government together should hold an annual conference for the purpose of seeding economic development and attracting venture capital and resources. The conference itself may be seeded by grants and/or local government budgeted seed capital for a predetermined time period beyond which the conference should take the financial responsibility for future ongoing events. The conference should be non-profit in that funds generated should be for perpetuating the event and not for the profit of private individuals.

5.4 SUPPORT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

LCG, local municipalities, and the private sector should continue to fund, promote, and support the primary economic development agencies in Lafayette Parish, as well as continue to promote "industry parks" in strategic areas of the Parish with a concerted effort to prevent duplication of services in order to make the best use of available resources.

Commentary: Emphasis should be on building on the economic development agency resources currently available and strengthening their presence in the Parish. Industrial Parks have played a key role in business retention and diversification in Lafayette Parish. Rooftops follow industry, retail follows rooftops.

5.5 EMPHASIS ON TECHNOLOGY

LCG and local municipalities should fund and adhere to a comprehensive Economic Development Plan for the future, which places emphasis on areas of the technology industry while continuing to recognize and promote those industry assets we currently possess.

Commentary: While technology will continue to have the most dramatic affect on Economic Development in the future, agriculture, oil and gas, health services, and the retail industry, among others, should continue to be developed and recruited. Before dollars are invested there must be a demand.

5.6 PRIVATE SECTOR ATTRACTION OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The private sector should be encouraged to take a greater role in the attraction of business development in Lafayette Parish.

5.7 ENSURE BANDWIDTH FOR ALL CITIZENS

LCG. shall leverage the Lafayette Utility System fiber-optic investment to ensure inexpensive access to bandwidth for all its citizens.

5.8 RETRAIN WORKFORCE

LCG, local municipalities, and the private sector should aide in facilitating the retraining of our workforce with accepted and standardized technology training and certification.

5.9 “TECHNOLOGY ACCELERATOR”

LCG, local municipalities, and the private sector should establish a "Technology Accelerator", like the LITE Center or a source that will allow organizations to see, think and use information and data in an innovative way; and will encourage, facilitate, and enable the development of innovative solutions for public and private enterprises.

5.10 LICENSING INTELLECTUAL PROPERTIES

LCG, local municipalities, and the private sector should facilitate licensing of intellectual properties from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette to in-state private companies.

5.11 ESTABLISH TIER ONE PRESENCE

LCG, local municipalities and the private sector should establish a "tier-one" presence in Lafayette Parish. “Tier-one” is the first component necessary to connect to the internet; it is what is needed to get on and off the internet. It is needed to use fiber efficiently.

Commentary: This is the development of a digital "on and off ramp" into Lafayette from the Internet Super Highway, now only accessible through Houston and larger metropolitan areas.

5.12 PROVIDE SEED AND VENTURE CAPITAL FOR TECHNOLOGY

LCG and local municipalities in partnership with the private sector and the private sector should develop a strategic plan to provide seed and venture capital for promising technology ventures.

5.13 INTERNET ACCESS FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES

LCG and local municipalities should provide for all governmental services to be accessed via the Internet.

5.14 MAKE BUSINESS A PRIORITY OF INFRASTRUCTURE

LCG and local municipalities should make business a priority in the planning and design of the physical infrastructure. The infrastructure of Lafayette Parish requires further development, updating and maintenance. This infrastructure should be designed and implemented to support the growth of residential and business development.

Commentary: AGAIN: Industry brings rooftops, retail follows rooftops.

5.15 FULL TIME CUSTOMS AGENT AT AIRPORT

LCG, local municipalities, and the private sector should continue the development of Lafayette Regional Airport as an international port of entry. The service of a "Full Time" customs agent should be funded.

Commentary: Currently the agent must be called with 24 to 48 hours notice. If Lafayette is to attract International Business, this would be a necessary step.

5.16 BUSINESS SPECIFIC ADVERTISING

LCG, local municipalities, and the private sector should embark on a business specific advertising campaign to promote Lafayette Parish for business and company recruitment.

5.17 CAJUN, CREAOLE, AND ZYDECO MUSIC HALL OF FAME

LCG, local municipalities, and the private sector should embark on a campaign to raise funds to develop and build "The Cajun, Creole and Zydeco Music Hall of Fame" to honor contributions to our native cultures and develop a year round tourist attraction for the whole world to visit.

5.18 PROMOTE MUSIC INDUSTRY

LCG, local municipalities, and the private sector should continue to study, quantify, develop, and promote all aspects and phases of the Industry of Music in Lafayette realizing the Music Industry's positive impact on Economic Development in the Region and contribution to the Nation and other cultures around the world.

5.19 PROMOTE PRIDE IN UNIQUE CULTURE

LCG, local municipalities, and the private sector should embark on a local campaign to continue to develop personal pride in all those who live here and contribute to the unique cultures of our region. Lafayette Parish shall believe in itself first as well as its assets and contributions to the state, nation, and the world in order to compete and participate in a global economy.

5.20 NO TOLERANCE FOR LITTER

LCG, local municipalities, and the private sector shall embark on a campaign for a "No Tolerance for Litter" attitude and pride in the physical appearance of our unique part of the globe.

5.21 PROMOTE BENEFITS OF TECHNOLOGY USE

LCG, local municipalities, and the private sector should embark on a campaign to promote the benefits of technology use in our homes and businesses.

5.22 STREAMLINE GOVERNMENT PROCESS FOR BUSINESS START-UP

LCG, local municipalities, and the private sector shall streamline all governmental processes involved in business start-up and development.

5.23 RESEARCH HIGH TECH READINESS

LCG and local municipalities should fund the necessary research to provide comparative analysis to other communities for High Tech readiness.

5.24 REVIEW INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE

LCG and local municipalities which make up Lafayette Parish should consistently and periodically revisit and review institutional structure, in open dialogue with its residents, to improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and representation of the current forms of government.

**Lafayette City-Parish Planning Commission
Lafayette IN a Century (LINC)
Comprehensive Master Plan**

UTILITIES ELEMENTS

Public Notice in the Advertiser: September 28, 2008

Public Hearing Date: October 9, 2008

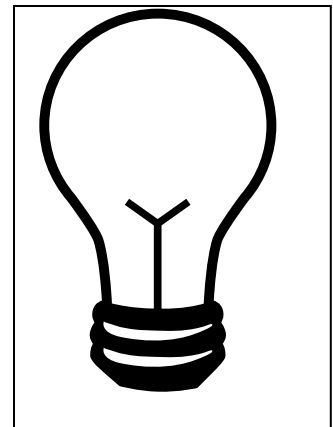
City Parish Planning Commission Adoption Date:

October 27, 2008

Resolution No. 2008-04

Clerk of Court Recordation Date: April 8, 2009

Certified Transmittal Date to State Planning Office:



Local Government Transmittal Dates

Lafayette Consolidated Government:

City of Broussard:

City of Carencro:

City of Duson:

City of Scott:

City of Youngsville:



Lafayette Consolidated Government
Traffic & Transportation Department



Metropolitan Planning Organization
Comprehensive Planning Division

PREFACE

Municipally owned utilities systems have a proud history of efficient operations and dedicated service to their communities. Traditionally, municipal electric utilities operate at a profit which is utilized for maintenance and expansion, returned to community funds, or used to subsidize other utilities such as water and sewage, which usually operate at a loss. Lafayette Parish incorporated towns served by two non-municipally owned utilities, Entergy, an investor-owned company, and SLEMCO, an REA utility, have been serving customers in Lafayette Parish for many years. Other utilities are furnished by Lafayette Utilities System (LUS) and other private utilities, such as natural gas, telephone/communications, garbage, and environmental.

Current global economic changes, and rapid transformations in the communication industry, are creating adjustments and concern in the operation of local utilities. Availability, management and cost of utilities are of great concern to all end users and are a major factor in promoting/directing viable land use (smart growth) in Lafayette Parish. Available utilities drive land use. Environmental requirements continually impact on utility operations.

6.1 PREPARE LUS FOR ELECTRIC UTILITY DEREGULATION

Lafayette Utilities System (LUS) shall be prepared for electric utility deregulation.

Commentary: Federal and State government restructuring of electricity will cause many changes in the way retail electric power is marketed. LUS has a choice: 1) It can close the Lafayette Market to competitive electric providers; or 2) It can open the community to world electric providers and compete in the new global market. Utilities will negotiate prices with large end-users and let supply and demand determine prices for buyers and sellers. LUS must assure that it has now, and can maintain in the future, sufficient generating capacity and transmission lines to restructure, be competitive, and, at a minimum, keep its present large end-user accounts.

Restructuring of the electric utility must be implemented in a manner that benefits all customers and does not benefit one customer class to the detriment of another. LUS must continue to be sensitive to all customers with availability, service and costs upon restructuring. LUS must be sure that restructuring does not affect other utilities laterally. LUS must also evaluate whether the on-going sale of wholesale power may produce more income in the structured market place.

6.2 MUNICIPALITIES - PREPARE FOR RESTRUCTURING OF ELECTRICAL SERVICES

Parish incorporated municipalities Broussard, Carencro, Duson, Scott and Youngsville, and the unincorporated areas shall review their electrical franchises, contracts, and agreements in preparation for restructuring of electrical services within their communities.

Commentary: Electric utility companies which supply parish municipalities and the unincorporated areas of the parish are all considering electrical restructuring, and local governments should be determining what effect this will have on their citizens and their local utility operations. Some areas of concern are:

- Additional revenue
- Partnering opportunities
- Brown-outs/black-outs
- Customer service
- Customer costs
- Customer billing
- Customer education
- Emergency preparedness
- Preventive maintenance

6.3 REBATE PLAN

LUS shall maintain a viable rebate plan to be more competitive for services to new residential, commercial and industrial developments.

Commentary: LUS is surrounded by electric utility competitors with sales personnel who seek potential customers that could be served by LUS. Currently, developers are required to front the cost of infrastructure with some reimbursement. LUS requirements are more demanding with quality equipment capable of handling anticipated future capacity. Other electrical companies do not require front end development electrical installation investment costs, making LUS far more expensive. However, by offering rebates to the developers, LUS can get these customers online and recoup rebate costs over a period of time. Some of these developments may be annexed by the City of Lafayette later with LUS already serving the area. LUS must continue its investment incentive package to new development. The global electrical market will demand competitiveness for the LUS program.

6.4 URGE PROVIDERS TO LAY WIRE UNDERGROUND

Electrical providers are strongly urged to lay wire underground where economically feasible.

Commentary: Underground electrical construction is a major factor in rendering uninterrupted service to users. Lafayette Parish has its share of weather fronts, high winds, hurricanes, trees, squirrels, snakes, etc. to which overhead lines are susceptible. Most of this can be eliminated by burying wires. Underground wiring, whether residential or commercial, enhances the appearances of an area. All parish utilities should plan for underground whenever costs can be justified, or whenever a user or group of users are willing to contribute towards costs.

6.5 ESTABLISH LAFAYETTE PARISH ELECTRIC DISTRICT

A Lafayette Parish Electric District should be established with the ability to contract with electrical providers for services throughout the parish or portions thereof. This District should be created with representation divided by City-Parish Council Districts.

Commentary: To serve the best interests of Lafayette Parish citizens the Lafayette Parish Electric District would negotiate with available electrical providers for the best priced electrical services. The fragmentation of electrical services today does not provide for the best negotiating position and price for parish citizens and jurisdictions, particularly in a deregulated environment.

6.6 ESTABLISH LAFAYETTE SEWAGE UTILITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Lafayette Sewage Utility Development Committee shall be formed under the direction of the Lafayette Council of Governments (COG).

Commentary: This committee should be a major entity organizing, coordinating, developing and completing most of the sewage recommendations presented herein. The

Lafayette Sewage Utility Development Committee should seek input, keep informed, coordinate and recommend to the Council of Governments on their sewer plans to accomplish stated goals in the Comprehensive Master Plan.

6.7 DESIGNATE SEWER DISTRICTS

The Lafayette Sewage Utility Development Committee shall designate sewer districts to encompass all of Lafayette Parish.

Commentary: Formation of sewer districts should be accomplished early in the plan to expand sewer services to rural areas. Districts must be sized to meet qualifications for grants and loans. Location of districts should include consideration of existing facilities, priority needs, and future growth areas. Formation of sewage districts should be the job of the Lafayette Utility Sewage Committee with guidance from the appropriate municipal utility managers. This committee should coordinate with parish municipalities and consider partnerships and intergovernmental agreements through the Lafayette Council of Governments.

6.8 PREPARE SEWAGE TREATMENT AND DISPOSAL PROGRAM

The Lafayette Sewage Utility Development Committee shall prepare a sewage (wastewater) treatment and disposal program and plan for approval by the electorate. These programs and plans shall provide guidance and requirements which relate to the disposal of sewage and incorporate, at a minimum, any Local, State and Federal requirements (i.e., La. Dept. of Environmental Quality, La. Dept. of Health and Hospitals, La. Public Service Commission and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency). Critical to these programs and plans for sewage treatment and disposal are minimum design, construction, and maintenance standards for the following three types of installations: 1) Individual Treatment Systems; 2) Subdivision / Community Systems; and 3) Municipal Systems

- A. Sewer Districts shall be assigned as responsible agency for the planning, approval, operation and supervision of all independent waste water systems.
- B. Requirements for installation, inspection and maintenance of individual sewage systems are to include fees, monthly charges and/or professional certification.
- C. Municipal sewer services throughout the parish.
- D. Prohibition of new individual septic tank systems discharge of sewage effluent in Lafayette Parish after December 31, 2006.
- E. All new community sewage infrastructure shall be planned and designed for connection with municipal systems at some point in the future.
- F. Municipal and Sewage District systems shall be planned and designed for connection and economic efficiency.
- G. Community sewage infrastructure shall be designed to the standard of the nearest municipality.
- H. Sewage districts shall expand sewer facilities in the parish in a reasonable amount of time

- I. Within the first year the sewer district should have an expansion plan that is in conjunction with an overall Comprehensive Master Plan for the parish.

Commentary: Untreated sewage effluent from any individual or community sewage disposal system should not be allowed to discharge directly into the drainage network, particularly the open ditches along roadways and streets in the unincorporated areas of the parish. We have learned from previous experiences in a number of parish subdivisions that some independent operators of waste water systems have not maintained their operations properly. Municipal sewage utilities have a long history of experience and dependability in operating waste water systems. Our future sewage infrastructure should be focused around the municipal and proposed district networks.

The recommendations will be difficult to attain because sewage disposal is a costly effort; however, we will never meet our objectives unless goals are in place and we can focus on them. The Parish of Lafayette is rapidly developing urban area. We cannot wait for patchwork solutions when greater economy and efficiency is achievable with intergovernmental cooperation and coordination among the parish municipalities. The Lafayette Council of Governments appears to be the vehicle to help coordinate this necessary objective.

The USEPA is progressively tightening effluent discharge requirements which will affect everyone now and in the future. We should not and cannot wait for federal mandates. The expense to address the sewage needs of tomorrow is building up today and we cannot afford to delay in planning and preparing for the future. New development must be coordinated with available infrastructure in a compatible system. Recommended target dates are aggressive and are made as a challenge to the Parish and to the Council of Governments to get the ball rolling on this important element.

6.9 ADMINISTER FLOODWATER/STORMWATER PLANS AS A PUBLIC UTILITY

Floodwater/Stormwater Plans, programs and management shall be declared a public utility and administered as such.

Commentary: All impervious surfaces contribute to the need for universal stormwater management and planning. Residential, commercial, and industrial structures as well as hard surfaced roadways and parking areas continuously deliver stormwater to both natural and artificial drainage systems throughout the parish. Notwithstanding the current drought experienced over the last three years, the needs and responsibility for flood and stormwater control is on-going and must be shared by all. Many local governments around the country have declared flood control and stormwater management a public service utility and operate it as such.

Efficient management of stormwater has been a major problem second only to land use. The high cost involved to address this problem and the competition for funds with other public works projects hamper drainage capacity in both existing and future infrastructure.

This utility, when provided with dependable financing, shifted from a limited property tax base to user fees could better address stormwater with all its environmental problems.

6.10 MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL COORDINATION OF STORMWATER

Stormwater is a parish wide responsibility involving all local governments and shall be coordinated on a multi-jurisdictional level.

Commentary: Recognizing the Parish of Lafayette involves five municipal governments in addition to the Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government, each with separate jurisdictional boundaries and authority, it is incumbent on these local governments to work together to solve, plan and manage stormwater to and including the Bayou Vermilion. These governmental boundaries do not conform to watersheds or the drainage flow of the parish and options must be determined at the earliest date on who will coordinate this priority need, and then proceed to implement the drainage recommendations already submitted for the Drainage Elements.

6.11 REFERENCE ST. PETERSBURG, FL STORMWATER ORDINANCE

Review the St. Petersburg, Florida Stormwater Ordinance, which has been in effect for the past ten years, and utilize as a practical reference guide for experienced local floodwater/stormwater applications. The St. Petersburg Ordinance is referenced whole in this element.

Commentary: Ten years of practical experience with the St. Petersburg, Florida Stormwater Ordinance serves as a solid reference base on which to draft a Lafayette Parish Stormwater Ordinance that will best serve the needs of Lafayette Parish. The St. Petersburg Ordinance has undergone numerous real life situations and changes and is today a proven, in place utility that is getting the job done with the cooperation of local developers, businesses and residents. A viable plan, properly implemented and maintained will satisfy the Quality of Life mandates our citizens are demanding.

6.12 MAKE POTABLE WATERSERVICE AVAILABLE BY 2010

Potable water service should be available throughout the parish by the year 2010 and shall be planned and developed on a network of systems for water pressure maintenance. Water districts shall expand water facilities in the parish in a reasonable amount of time and within the first year the sewer district should have an expansion plan that is in conjunction with an overall Comprehensive Master Plan for the parish.

Commentary: Safe, high quality water for all citizens of Lafayette Parish must be planned and available as soon as possible. Lafayette Parish is a rapidly urbanizing parish that cannot allow continued development where such a basic need as potable water infrastructure does not exist.

6.13 PARISH WIDE FIRE HYDRANTS

Fire Hydrants shall be parish wide.

Commentary: Although recent improvements in developing an interconnecting fire fighting water system have been achieved, efforts must be continued and aggressively followed through to protect new developing areas of the parish. Development activity is not waiting for the needed infrastructure. Fire hydrants save life and property and reduce insurance costs for all. The current annual average savings from a Class 4 to a Class 2 in Lafayette Parish is \$75.00 for a wood frame \$50,000 home and \$105.00 for a brick \$100,000 home. Land development should be encouraged where water and other utilities are available first, to reduce demand for expansion of utilities where they do not yet exist.

6.14 WATER SYSTEM TESTING AVAILABLE ON DEMAND

Water system testing shall be available on demand.

Commentary: There have been numerous complaints over the last few years on the quality of the potable water available in a number of areas of the parish. Safe potable water is a necessity for the citizens of Lafayette Parish. The Lafayette Utility System (LUS) has the best and safest potable water available and should be used as a measure against privately operated and public systems in the parish. Testing of water systems should be readily available to citizens with any concerns on their water systems' safety or quality.

6.15 MONITOR CHICOT AQUIFER

The Chicot Aquifer is vital to the future of Lafayette Parish and should be monitored locally as well as through state and federal agencies.

Commentary: A number of factors are combining to raise concern the Chicot Aquifer may not be an unlimited water resource. This aquifer is too important to be neglected or abused. Current citizens as well as future citizens will be dependent on both the quantity and the quality of the water obtained from the aquifer. Lafayette Consolidated Government and specifically the Lafayette Utilities System should take steps for periodic reporting to the public on the condition of the Chicot Aquifer at a minimum of every six months.

6.16 WATER CONSERVATION POLICY REGARDING LAWN WATERING

A parish wide water conservation policy regarding lawn watering shall be established by all local governments through intergovernmental agreements.

Commentary: Conflicting regulations on lawn watering can affect the water pressure in a parish wide water system network. General public use of restricted water resources must be coordinated and enforced throughout the parish equitably. Recent reports on rainfall in Lafayette Parish indicated that the current year may be the worst or lowest measured

since 1902. Three years of low rainfall is a historic event for the area and it is not known how much longer the current drought will continue. Intergovernmental coordination is encouraged on this effort to limit the watering of lawns.

6.17 CONTINUE SUPPORT FOR LUS FIBER OPTIC CONNECTION

Parish wide support for the LUS Fiber Optic Internet Connection shall be continued.

Commentary: One of the great benefits of a public utility is the capacity to reinvest in the community. The Lafayette Utility System (LUS) has demonstrated a history of this type of initiative over the last 100 years. The system has once again boldly stepped ahead and invested in a fiber optic network to facilitate both business and residential customers and the community with new available technology. Lafayette Parish and surrounding areas will benefit as the utility expands its services. There is no guarantee that this fiber optic system will be profitable immediately. But, it will facilitate business and personal communication in the area and become profitable within a reasonable time. It is worth the risk and LUS needs to continue these types of initiatives.

6.18 COMMON CONTRACT SCHEDULE FOR GARBAGE COLLECTION

There should be a common contract schedule among local governments for the collection of garbage.

Commentary: There should be logic to the potential inclusion of the five municipalities of Broussard, Carencro, Duson, and Youngsville in this service. The LCG contract is for five years. The timing for future garbage contracts should be coordinated.

6.19 LAFAYETTE COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS RESPONSIBLE FOR COORDINATED GARBAGE CONTRACTS

The Lafayette Council of Governments should be responsible for the coordination of garbage contracts throughout the parish among the local governments.

Commentary: The coordinating role of COG among the local government elected officials, particularly the five municipalities of Broussard, Carencro, Duson, and Youngsville is noted.

6.20 ENHANCE AND PROMOTE NATURAL GAS SERVICES

Natural gas services should consider be enhanced and promoted for residential and commercial use.

Commentary: Only one local government, the City of Carencro, owns and operates its own natural gas distribution system. The remaining governments franchise gas service within their respective jurisdictions. The cost of natural gas escalated recently and has generally been by-passed as an essential service for the last ten to twenty years. Carencro

continues to profit from its gas system, but has not expanded its network. Natural gas is a practical local alternative because it is a local resource. Placing existing natural gas systems in the public service sector of local government can make the viable difference between profit and loss. Natural gas provides the parish with options. Natural gas service should continue to be an essential utility for the foreseeable future, if supported publicly. It is understood the existing gas system infrastructure may be in need of costly replacement. This information should certainly be evaluated on any buyouts. It is believed that significant portions of the general public, given the option at a reasonable cost, would elect to utilize combined electric and natural gas services.

6.21 COORDINATE FRANCHISE AGREEMENTS

Local government franchise agreements should be coordinated among Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government and the municipalities of Broussard, Carencro, Duson, Scott and Youngsville for timing, cost, and services.

Commentary: Currently, each local government is negotiating and contracting for franchise services independently of each other on garbage collection, gas, and electricity. Savings could be realized if the parish operated as a whole in the negotiations with the various providers of these services.

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PUBLIC SERVICE ELEMENTS

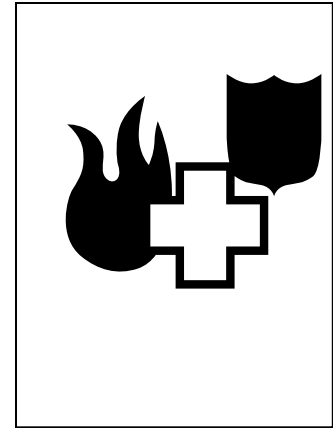
Public Notice in the Advertiser: September 28, 2008

Public Hearing Date: October 9, 2008

City Parish Planning Commission Adoption Date:
October 27, 2008
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Certified Transmittal Date to State Planning Office:



Local Government Transmittal Dates

Lafayette Consolidated Government:

City of Broussard:

City of Carencro:

City of Duson:

City of Scott:

City of Youngsville:



Lafayette Consolidated Government
Traffic & Transportation Department



Metropolitan Planning Organization
Comprehensive Planning Division

PREFACE

The Public Services Element of LINC incorporates a broad number of community services:

- Police Protection
- Fire Protection
- Emergency Medical Services
- Lafayette Parish Library System
- Public Buildings
- Health Services
- Human Services
- Public Education
- Public Funding
- Public Safety
- Intergovernmental Coordination

These services need to be reviewed, reorganized, and reordered based on the needs, demands, and priorities of the public. In addition, the political process engaged here should be upgraded to meet new challenges and standards. However, the most obvious lesson learned is that we cannot apply the "magic wand" theory.

Citizens expect quality, efficiency, and high productivity in public services. It has become evident that, if we are to get a better return on our investment, merging and/or consolidation of services and functions should occur. Consolidation can and does vary in application and definition. Instead, what is recognized is that "intergovernmental agreements" and "mutual aid pacts" are proven tools of merger and can be utilized more effectively. Public financial responsibilities and resources can and should be substantially overhauled to better meet the needs of the new century.

Efficiency and higher productivity are accomplished through better use of resources. Mergers are common in the business community as companies attempt to produce a better product and/or service. Although consolidation is not applicable to or appropriate for every government function it been identified that government provided services and products that could better serve the public through a merger of resources.

The needs are great, the expectations are great, and public participation in the process is essential. But, the public involvement in and understanding of the process is limited. There are many reasons and many opinions for a lack of public participation in the governmental process. The public information is available but few are bothering to pay attention or get involved. Lafayette is certainly not New England with its tradition of public involvement in the governmental process.

The most challenging aspects of change will involve the political process. While the founding theories for Civil Service, professional unions for fire and police, and political associations of elected officials, such as the sheriff, were well-intended and admirable,

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contemporary needs demand changes. Civil Service, for example, is too restrictive on salary in the technology fields and too entrenched on seniority.

Altering the political process will require a supportive and cooperative effort between the public and our elected officials on the Parish and state levels. Many of the recommendations offered in this report are impacted either by Louisiana legislation or constitutional directives and must be addressed at the state level to permit local advances. And we must recognize that what we seek to change in state law will affect every local governing body in Louisiana. It is indeed a daunting task.

7.1 MONITOR EMS CARE; REWRITE EXISTING ORDINANCES

Implement a process by which, first, we can monitor the quality of existing EMS care and, second, assure continued and future quality EMS in the Parish. A major rewrite of the existing emergency medical service provider ordinance(s) is needed to assure the continued and future quality of emergency medical services in Lafayette Parish. The revisions shall allow opportunity for competitive services (public and/or private) and also provide for expansion and strengthening of the Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board.

Commentary: The existing medical service provider ordinance was reviewed and it was determined that the language is so specific in its intent to define emergency medical services that it could serve to defeat its primary purpose: a quality EMS provider(s). It establishes a set of standards under which an EMS provider can operate in the city and unincorporated areas of Lafayette Parish and, although the ordinance was well intentioned, it does not allow for either changes in EMS standards and services or a monitoring of the quality of provided services.

The ordinance effectively grants Acadian Ambulance Service an exclusive franchise. This was acknowledged by Richard Zuschlag, one of the founders of AASI, who conceded that his company enjoys a "semi-monopoly" based on public trust. He has expressed support for a multi-year EMS franchise agreement and so it is suggested that the franchise be open to competitive bidding. An expanded and empowered EMS Advisory Board could assure Lafayette Parish of continued and future quality EMS.

7.2 EXPAND EMS BOARD

The existing Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Board should be expanded from five members, currently, to nine and include a representative from the following cross section agencies in the community: 1) Henry Tyler Medical Society; 2) SLERC; 3) Lafayette Parish Communication District (911); and 4) Lafayette Parish Council on Aging.

Commentary: The existing representation of the Emergency Medical Services Board was not adequate to represent a fair and appropriate level of community involvement and understanding of the issues at work in this important public service. Currently, the EMS Advisory Board consists of five members: one appointed by the area Mayors, one by the City/Parish President, one by the Medical Society, and two by the City/Parish Council, with one of the two representing minority interests. The additional Board representatives would be selected to better evaluate the needs of emergency medical services in the Parish.

7.3 EMS BOARD SET STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

The EMS Board (expanded) should be empowered to determine acceptable quality standards for emergency medical service providers, establish criteria for EMS franchise bids, and monitor performance, rates, and charges by emergency medical service providers.

Commentary: The existing ordinance restricts the EMS Advisory Board to "hearings" on applications for permits and... make recommendations as to the issuance of certificates of necessity." That limited mandate would explain why the EMS Board has not met in recent memory. The absence of authority to establish and/or alter standards for the provision of emergency medical service providers to be a major deficiency in the current process and strongly supported the recommendation that this "gap" be remedied at the earliest possible date. The purview of the EMS Advisory Board should extend past "ambulance" standards. For example, it should have played a major role in the recent establishment of the "first responder" program in the Lafayette Fire Department and the deployment of Automated External Defibrillators (AED) and the "Heart Starter" CPR initiative.

7.4 EMS BOARD MEETINGS

The Emergency Medical Services Board shall meet regularly, at least quarterly and at best monthly.

Commentary: The Board is important to the community and should institute a regular schedule of meetings that are available to the public.

7.5 EMS ORDINANCE ADOPTION

All Parish local governments shall adopt EMS ordinances concurrently.

Commentary: Not all local governments have emergency medical service provider ordinances to govern the operations within their respective jurisdictions. The potential exists for there to be six providers in the Parish with each being limited to the geographical boundaries of the local government. It would be mutually beneficial for all the municipalities in the Parish to work with the Consolidated Government in adopting concurrent ordinances and selecting emergency service providers.

7.6 CONSOLIDATE LAW ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS

Law enforcement administrative functions should be consolidated.

Commentary: The Louisiana Constitution establishes the Sheriff of the Parish as the chief law enforcement officer. The Lawrason Act, which governs the municipalities of Broussard, Carencro, Duson, Scott, and Youngsville, requires the Police Chief to be elected. Any and all efforts to consolidate and/or merge law enforcement functions in Lafayette Parish would arguably embrace the Sheriff and the local Chiefs of Police as pivotal factors, as would the cooperation of all municipalities. More law enforcement personnel are needed on the streets and roads of the Parish and municipalities. Consolidation of law enforcement administrative functions can help facilitate that objective. The actual consolidation of municipal police departments with the Sheriff's Department is desirable, but not practical (constitutionally). Intergovernmental agreements may be the more viable option on an immediate and program level. To

increase law enforcement productivity increase coordination and consolidation of as many municipal law enforcement functions as possible with the Parish Sheriff's Office. Consolidation of law enforcement administrative functions would allow for more personnel to be assigned to working within and with the community.

7.7 CONSOLIDATE DISPATCHING FACILITIES

The Lafayette City Police, Fire, Lafayette Sheriff, and 911 Communication District dispatching facilities shall be consolidated into one with a backup resource.

Commentary: Consolidation already exists with the Sheriff handling dispatching for the municipalities of Broussard, Carencro, Duson, Scott, and Youngsville; the Fire Department handling calls for the Lafayette Parish Fire Association; and the Lafayette Communication District coordinating all emergency services. Responsibilities The responsibilities of the Lafayette Communication District should be expanded with the charge of merging dispatch personnel and facilities into one. The emergency dispatching needs of the Parish emergency services could be more efficiently operated by this further consolidation. Reduction in equipment, purchasing, operation, and maintenance as well as a better utilization of personnel, should generate an improved and effective system. Any duplication of 911 services causes response time delays especially in areas on the edge of incorporated and unincorporated areas.

7.8 FORMULA FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT PERSONNEL INCREASE

Increase law enforcement personnel on the street based on a per-capita Parish formula.

Commentary: Community Policing has become a trendy phrase in contemporary law enforcement. But just as important is community involvement. The cop on the beat and the man on the street need to communicate. Police have a significant impact on a community. There are the obvious effects of providing protection and a sense of security. But there is more potential for their sphere of influence: Public Relations. There is a need to reestablish that "on the beat" relationship that once existed between police and the public. People skills are needed by police officers to strengthen their bond with the public and particularly the younger generation. The City of Lafayette is short approximately thirty-six officers for a city its size. Inadequate funding is the reason for the shortfall.

7.9 EXPAND CORRECTIONAL CENTER CAPACITY

The correctional center capacity should be expanded with additional facilities in the rural area of Lafayette Parish.

Commentary: A rural correctional facility will provide for a more economical correctional environment and allow for the implementation of work programs that are not now suitable in the downtown center.

7.10 ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION

Alternatives to incarceration shall be identified and implemented in Lafayette Parish and in the State of Louisiana. Community Service Sentencing and Drug Court are successful examples that shall be multiplied within the next five years.

Commentary: The State of Louisiana has the highest incarceration rate in the nation: 736 inmates per 100,000 population and well above the national average of 434. We cannot afford to continue warehousing persons guilty of criminal wrongdoing. It costs approximately \$13,000 annually for each inmate. Proven alternative programs to incarceration, such as the Drug Court, are offering nonviolent drug offenders the opportunity to rehabilitate and straighten out their lives and is costing roughly \$2,600 annually and returning a productive individual to society. Community Service Sentencing will require an improvement in monitoring and enforcement over existing procedures, but it too has great potential for the Parish. A skills evaluation team is needed as well as the opportunity to work morning, noon, night, and weekends with professional enforcement.

7.11 REVIEW AND RESTRUCTURE JUDICIAL SYSTEM'S ADJUDICATION PROCESS

The Judicial System's adjudication process needs to be reviewed and restructured for faster judgments, including more full-time and fewer part-time assistant district attorneys as well as a needs assessment on accomplishing faster judgments.

Commentary: The inalienable right of individuals exists to a swift and fair handling of criminal charges. However, that the opportunity exists to exploit the system to the advantage of the criminal and to prolong the process to avoid prosecution and, possibly, incarceration should be carefully examined. This shortcoming in the judicial system should be carefully examined.

7.12 DEVELOP PROGRAMS FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT DOWNTIME

The City of Lafayette Fire Department shall further examine and develop programs that make better use of the downtime between fire calls.

Commentary: Firefighting efforts in Lafayette Parish, both public and volunteer, are to be commended and applauded. With the Lafayette Fire Department as the coordinating agency, communication and cooperation have resulted in a professional and effective, Parish-wide fire fighting force. The Lafayette Fire Department's initiation of a number of programs including HAZMAT and the "first responder" on medical emergencies, dealing with breathing problems, are productive uses of available manpower.

7.13 YEAR ROUND SCHOOLING

The school year shall be gradually expanded in Lafayette Parish, over a ten-year period, to "year-round schooling," from 180 days to 220. That would require four additional school days each year over the ten-year period.

Commentary: Society has changed the system of education. The Courts have changed the system of education. Public education has deteriorated overall over the last twenty to thirty years. This does not mean there are no improvements and bright spots, but generally, the public educational environment needs improvement and expansion. For this reason it is proposed that the bold revamping and reorganization of public education in the Parish to attract public attention, imagination, initiative, and support. The recommendations are not necessarily new, but are fundamental necessities for Lafayette Parish education to rise above national and international averages. We work and live in a new global economy. We have the enterprises, locally, to be the best. National averages in education should not be the standard goal for Lafayette Parish students. We should strive to rise above the Southern average and the national average.

The objective is to expand the limited amount of classroom time available to teachers and students on basic fundamentals that we feel are important today and certainly in the future. Much has been discarded and diluted over the years to make it easier for both teachers and students and less has been expected of the system. That philosophy and practice should be changed. Much more classroom time is a necessity. School systems that have experimented with increased class time have demonstrated significant improvements. Children today do not fit into an educational system and schedule designed to accommodate the harvesting of crops on the farm. Children do not need a three-month vacation. They need more and better education. Let us take the initiative.

7.14 CHARTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

The Lafayette Parish School System should support and promote an innovative, year-round "Charter School" program that maintains the same standards and accountability expected of the Public School System, to insure an education alternative to students at risk.

Commentary: Every attempt to educate our young people should be exhausted. This trend is salvaging many students throughout the country. These programs must be performance based, and should hold students and parents accountable for their progress. It is better to educate now than to incarcerate later.

7.15 EXTEND LENGTH OF SCHOOL DAY

The length of the school day should consider be gradually expanded in Lafayette Parish, over a ten-year period, from seven hours to nine hours inclusive of lunch and recesses. School periods should begin no earlier than 7:30 a.m. and end no earlier than 4:30 p.m.

Commentary: Our society is rapidly moving into a highly competitive and educated world with technology making astronomical advances yearly. What can be imagined in twenty-five and fifty years is almost unlimited. It is critically important that future generations be provided with educational advantages above the national average. Teachers, instructors, technologists, and coaches need more time to instruct. An expanded school day makes sense. One advantage would allow all schools to provide arts

programs--a proven enhancement to learning ability. A second advantage would put school children on a day schedule similar to their working parents. The social, family, and educational implications are enormous.

7.16 CLASS INSTRUCTION TIME – FOCUS ON BASICS

Programming for class instruction time should be coordinated for maximum focus on the basics which will prepare a better educated work force in addition to new available structured programs in arts education, civics, foreign language, environment, social graces, physical education, and technology.

Commentary: The future of our educational system is important to the quality of life and opportunity for the next generation. Lafayette Parish is not poor. It can and should provide for this expanded public education vision.

7.17 PROVIDE STUDENT SUPPLIES AND SCHOOL RESOURCES

Basic student supplies and community school resources (computers) should be provided to public school students.

Commentary: Parent-sponsored fund raisers for paper and other basic supplies may be appropriate for private school support, but is not acceptable for the public school system. These fund raisers are unequal and depend on the socio-economic character of the school zones. Dependence on fund raisers to provide basic teacher and student supplies should be lessened with more emphasis placed on local tax revenues generating the adequate provision of such materials.

7.18 INCREASE TEACHER PAY

Classroom teacher pay in Lafayette Parish should be the best in the state of Louisiana and certainly not less than fourth. Incentive pay and accountability should be fundamental programs as part of this plan.

Commentary: There are no acceptable excuses for Lafayette Parish classroom teachers being paid less than in adjacent Parishes, being paid less than the best compensated public teachers in Louisiana, or less than the top 25% in the South. Pay them and they will come and stay.

7.19 SALARY RANGE TO ATTRACT BEST EDUCATORS

The Lafayette Parish School System shall pay classroom teachers a salary in a range to expect to attract the best educators for every Parish student. Salaries for Lafayette Parish educators should be competitive with neighboring Parishes and States. Lafayette Parish must reach above the Southern Average and strive to rank in the top ten percent nationally, and Number 1 in the State in all categories of education in the Nation.

Commentary: Lafayette Parish can no longer settle for nor accept any position that places the Parish in less than the top 10% in any Nationwide Educational Poll or Rating and expect to compete in a World Class Global Economy. Lafayette Parish competes not just with neighboring States, but also with neighboring Parishes for qualified educators. Lafayette Parish now ranks 17th in teacher pay in the State and 3rd in Acadiana. Calculations indicate that when the present State Legislature's proposed teacher pay increases reach classroom teachers at the end of the year 2001, Lafayette Parish Teachers will drop to 24th in the state and below the salaries of our neighboring Parishes. This is a direct result of the relationship between the MFP calculations and Tax and Millage Rates for Lafayette Parish. While the current MFP needs to be reformed, adjusted, or changed, this is a State issue and a long-range solution. Lafayette Parish is now a hotbed for recruitment from other States competing for our UL graduates. Neighboring States offer starting salaries almost double those offered in Lafayette Parish as well as signing bonus incentives. Teachers will soon only have to leave for neighboring Parishes to enjoy increased pay.

7.20 LINK TEACHER SALARIES TO PERFORMANCE

Lafayette Parish teacher salaries should be directly linked to performance. Teachers and students shall be accountable. Strict standards shall be enforced and monitored by teacher and student performance evaluations and testing. If classroom teachers cannot maintain the high standards set by Lafayette Parish, they should teach elsewhere. The goal shall be to produce a consistently better product across the board: better educated students.

Commentary: Comparatively speaking, Lafayette Parish educators have a history of doing more with less than some Parishes. In the year 2000, the St. Tammany Parish Public School's average ACT score was the highest in the State of Louisiana at 21.3. Lafayette Parish was 2nd with an average score of 20.7. The State average ACT test score was 19.6. The national average ACT Score was 21. The most current Lafayette Parish LEAP 21 scores indicate Lafayette Parish scores are below neighboring parishes for 4th and 8th graders. Lafayette Parish residents and taxpayers should expect higher performance for higher pay. Excellence in return for Excellence.

7.21 PARTICIPATE IN CONTINUING EDUCATION AND CERTIFICATION FOR TEACHERS

Lafayette Parish teachers should be encouraged to continue their education and strive for teacher certification. Lafayette Parish should participate in the costs associated with continued education and certification. Participation in costs by the Parish should be performance based.

Commentary: Teachers should be encouraged to use programs established in the curriculum at ULL. ULL should continue to develop ongoing programs to ensure that we continue to develop and educate resources here in Lafayette Parish.

7.22 PROPERTY TAX BASED FUNDING

Funding for public education in Lafayette Parish should be transferred from a sales tax base to a property tax base.

Commentary: There appears to be a pervasive opinion that public education costs in Lafayette Parish should be "dumped" on citizens in adjacent Parishes who shop in Lafayette Parish retail centers. The responsibility for the cost of public education is the sole responsibility of Lafayette Parish citizens. Property taxes are a stable and necessary public revenue source. Student attendance and needs do not rise and fall with Christmas sales. Sales taxes are better applied by local governments to build and maintain the public infrastructure needed to support arterials and highways and other public improvements accessing retail and business centers.

7.23 ADDRESS CURRENT TAX STRUCTURES

State, Parish, and Municipal elected officials shall address the current tax structures, which are regressive and not conducive to economic development and business attraction to our state and region. Elected officials are obligated to address, debate, and solve these problems. Tax Reform shall be balanced, fair, competitive with neighboring states, pro-growth, locally-based, and revenue neutral.

Commentary: It will take courage to make tax change. "Repeating the same behavior over and over, expecting different results is the definition of insanity." All properties should be taxed fair. All property taxes shall be collected

7.24 STRENGTHEN TRUANCY ORDINANCES AND POLICIES

LCG and local municipalities should strengthen Parish truancy ordinances and policies in accordance with State law, providing for student and parent accountability. A "Truancy Clearing House" should be established to administer, evaluate, and adjudicate truancy cases. This program should be empowered by supportive participation from LCG, other local municipal governments, the school system, law enforcement, and the judiciary.

Commentary: Statistics indicate that teen pregnancies, drug abuse, juvenile theft, gang violence, and juvenile crime on the whole increase when students are on the street and not in the classroom. LCG in conjunction with Law Enforcement, Community Oriented Policing, Service Agencies, and Local Government and Municipalities should establish, with intergovernmental agreements, and State and Federal Grants, a program similar to the Rutherford House in Shreveport, Louisiana. Parents and students should be held accountable and if necessary fined for noncompliance.

7.25 REDUCE ADMINISTRATIVE AND OVERHEAD COSTS

The Lafayette Parish School System shall continue to strive to reduce administrative costs and overhead in order to make the success of the Classroom Teacher the highest priority.

Commentary: Lafayette Parish ranks in the lower categories in taxation for school funding, and is penalized in funding by the structure as such by Louisiana's MFP formula. Lafayette Parish has for many years continued to strive to produce a better product with less. It is strongly encouraged to keep a watchful eye on administrative costs.

7.26 REDUCE CLASS SIZES

The Lafayette Parish School System should reduce class sizes to promote learning excellence by lower student to teacher ratios.

Commentary: While this issue is well recognized by all, it is the first to be eliminated when funding is tight.

7.27 CAREER TRACKS LEARNING PROGRAMS

The Lafayette Parish School System should further develop and promote "Career Tacks Learning Programs" for Lafayette Parish students promoting vocational learning in business, technology, and other non-secondary trade education career paths.

Commentary: Lafayette Parish must recognize the need for skilled workers and provide for early introduction into areas of trade and business. We are raising and growing the next generations of citizens, teachers, laborers, entrepreneurs, business, and community leaders for Lafayette Parish. Will we reap what we sow, or will we have to watch our product leave for more competitive areas?

7.28 COORDINATE BETWEEN ALL LAFAYETTE PARISH SECONDARY AND POST-SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The Lafayette Parish School System should coordinate between all Lafayette Parish secondary and post-secondary schools.

Commentary: The curricula should be designed to coordinate between all Lafayette Parish Schools, and also with the university and the community college level. Students must have the tools they need to succeed long before they reach the secondary level. Lafayette Parish students should expect to get an education at any public school in the Parish.

7.29 JOINT PLANNING

LCG and the Lafayette Parish School System along with other Parish Municipalities should work together to carry out future planning. The building of schools, roads, bike trails, bus stops, and other infrastructure needs are several examples of joint planning that should take place in order to ensure that adequate infrastructure exists. There should be

regularly scheduled and ongoing meetings to prompt dialogue between the two bodies to insure that we are walking lockstep, together toward a well-planned future.

Commentary: Schools are built to service a portion of the community, and should be planned with transportation, safety, growth, and access in mind. Lafayette Parish should take a pro-active philosophy into the future, rather than one of reaction. The discussion and timing of tax initiatives and renewals are other examples requiring cooperation. With a comprehensive plan for growth and development, it is imperative that all entities work in a cooperative effort to see that these plans are carried out.

7.30 “JUST IN TIME”

The Lafayette Parish School System should establish a "JUST IN TIME" philosophy and strategy for education. Education should fit the needs of business, industry, and society. Lafayette should remain time sensitive to meet the current needs of business and economic development, but flexible enough to adjust to future needs as well.

Commentary: Curricula should be time sensitive and fit the needs of the students to the business and technology of the day. Just 20 to 25 years ago, the technology sector, now so important to economic development, was in its infancy and not taught in secondary education.

7.31 PROVIDE LIFE-LONG AND DISTANCE LEARNING

14. LCG, local municipalities, and the private sector shall continue to aggressively support and provide life-long and distance learning to the parish workforce. Continuing Educational programs promote the development of qualified and skilled workers by offering them the opportunity to update workforce skills through local educational institutions (the University of Louisiana and Lafayette Community College).

Commentary: As was mentioned in the previous elements, the curricula should articulate with those in Lafayette Parish Schools, but should also be flexible enough to respond to the needs of business and industry in Lafayette Parish. Previous generations benefited from updated technology and skills.

7.32 PROMOTE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

LCG, local municipalities, and the private sector shall aggressively promote public awareness on the importance of continuing education on Economic Development. By utilizing and promoting the workforce educational assets and resources in Lafayette Parish, the parish becomes a more desirable location for business development and location.

Commentary: When the workforce is more educated, it is more diverse. When the economy is more diverse, the opportunity for our citizens to fall into mediocrity is

reduced. The University of Louisiana at Lafayette is Louisiana's second largest university with more than 16,000 students enrolled in a variety of undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs. Potential employers are assured a substantial number of diverse graduates. Students in Lafayette Parish have the opportunity for many certification and technical programs offered at the Community College and private, technical school level if the University is not their option. These fast track programs assure potential employers a quick and ready workforce. Each of these institutions, as well as other private institutions in Lafayette Parish, offers the employee and the employer the opportunity for life-long learning, which serves to improve the workforce and attract business to our community. While these assets are available to all residents of Lafayette Parish, it requires recognizing that we compete with other cities and like-institutions throughout the state.

7.33 ENSURE LATEST TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT

LCG, local municipalities, the business community and the private sector should work together through grants, partnerships, intergovernmental agreements, community trusts, and endowments to ensure that these educational facilities possess the latest technology and equipment to provide the tools for learning.

Commentary: Examples of this include some private technical schools offer students a personal computer when they enroll and upon graduation they keep the equipment.

7.34 LONG-RANGE PLAN FOR PUBLIC BUILDINGS

A long-range plan for public buildings of the new government shall be prepared within the next five years which will outline and program for needed facilities over the next fifty years.

Commentary: Lafayette Consolidated Government has purchased and inherited a variety of city and Parish government buildings scattered around the urban area. The study and projected urban development of the Parish should be the impetus for necessary public facility needs and locations over the long-term rather than the short term. Adequate buildings, adequate space, adequate accessibility, adequate location, and adequate public design should be consolidated and planned appropriately. The public buildings should be representative of what our community is and wants to be. Our public buildings should be better than they are. With all due respect to the Police Jury of the time, the current Lafayette Parish Court House is nothing of which to be proud. It is inefficient, inaccessible, and has the appearance of a large jail. Surely we can do better in the future.

7.35 MEETING HALLS THROUGHOUT PARISH

Meeting Halls should consider be planned and built throughout the Parish: one in the southern part of the Parish, one the eastern part of the Parish, and one in the western part of the Parish. This should be accomplished in conjunction with the expansion of the public library system discussed later.

Commentary: The Lafayette Parish population is approximately 191,000. A general average growth rate of 2,000 additional people per year will conservatively project an increase of 20,000 every ten years. Local government should integrate and accommodate public participation in its operation with facilities conducive to public meetings and area accessibility.

The Clifton Chenier Services Center is a great example of local government public buildings designed and built to function within a greater neighborhood area. Town Halls with 300 seat auditoriums and adequate sound and visual equipment should help connect Lafayette Consolidated Government with the greater neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Recreation Centers, into which city revenues have been invested heavily, are great for community recreation and are facilities of which we can be proud, but have you tried to hold a meeting in a room next to a gym? At least three additional Town Halls should be planned and constructed over the next twenty years.

7.36 PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM

Lafayette Consolidated Government and Parish municipalities shall prepare, adopt, and implement a formal Public Information Program.

Commentary: A Public Information Program is needed to inform the public on the positive impact of Lafayette Consolidated Government. There is an important need to inform citizens, on a regular basis, of both the success and failure of local government in achieving community goals and objectives. Public relations are usually focused on accentuating the positive and that should be a part of the program, but measures should be included to help evaluate what is not working. Take the message to the people via community organizations, neighborhood groups, professional associations, and churches. Talk shows, feature stories, and press releases should be supported and made an integral part of the Public Information Program.

7.37 LINC COMPONENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM

The LINC Comprehensive Master Plan shall be a primary component of the proposed "Public Information Program" for the Lafayette Consolidated Government and Parish municipalities

Commentary: It is logical and rational to consider the Comprehensive Master Plan as a spoke in the public information wheel.

7.38 COMPUTERIZE PUBLIC INFORMATION

Computerize all public information for access through one central website for all local governmental resources. Hire a computer specialist to coordinate.

Commentary: Advancing technology should mandate local government upgrade public information through the internet. The manual processing and documentation for government operation which was acceptable twenty and thirty years ago is not productive with the technology available today. Personnel, departments, agencies, and elected officials should join together to achieve internet access for government functions and have this happen within the next two of years. This should not be a "long term" goal. Coordination and cooperation should be the marching orders for efficient and effective public information access. The technology, in our opinion, is affordable and available. The Lafayette Consolidated Government should expedite this effort at the earliest possible schedule. The LUS Fiber Optic network provides LCG with the capacity to lead the state in technology applications.

7.39 ESTABLISH BROADER LOCAL TAX BASE

Local governments should establish a broader local tax base to pay for local services.

Commentary: The idea behind this goal is to give local governments a broader tax base so the state can reduce funding many local projects and services in the state budget. The present system, in place for generations in Louisiana, has perpetuated a centralized government: revenue sharing is based on the collection of monies by state government which is then redistributed at the local level. Local governments are funded on their lobbying power and political clout.

The property tax serves as a primary source of local government revenue in many other states. In Louisiana, local governments can collect property taxes, but the collection from property taxes is sharply limited by the state, via the Homestead Exemption. That limits the base of taxable properties and results in a dependency on fluctuating sales taxes and hits local governments with a varying income - particularly school systems. It has been reported that the state will spend more than \$350 million in 2000-01 for things that should be paid for by local government. Hobbled property taxes distort the government's ability to plan and program its responsibilities.

It is often stated that government should be run like a business. There is a degree of applicability in this statement, but the greater portion of governmental responsibilities and obligations remain regardless of economic revenue fluctuations. Lafayette Parish local governments, including the Lafayette Consolidated Government and the Lafayette Parish School Board are substantially dependent on sales taxes which fluctuate with the local economy. Students and basic, common governmental services do not fluctuate as rapidly, if at all.

Mistrust of government and a lack of public confidence in public officials have resulted in "dedicated" revenue sources; for example, sales taxes are dedicated to specific capitol

improvements. In addition, sales taxes are "split" by public vote with the current commitment of 75% for capitol improvements and 25% for maintenance. These "dedicated" and "split" tax dollars place severe restrictions on the budgeting process. In summary, Lafayette Consolidated Government is handicapped in its ability to allocate revenue resources to needed public services. Therefore, tax structures need to be reformed and overhauled for greater stability where stability is needed, and flexibility when flexibility is needed. Tax reform, however, should be revenue neutral and would necessarily require local and state governments to effect a revenue neutral transition.

It has been said that Lafayette Parish is successful despite being located in the State of Louisiana. Lafayette has and continues to overcome inequities built into the State budgeting process. Lafayette in particular and Louisiana in general are to successfully reverse our downward educational and economic roller coaster experience, we should restructure our governmental financial resources.

7.40 LOWER HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION

Lower the Homestead Exemption, with provisions to retain existing exemptions for the elderly (>65) and low-income families domiciled for at least two years in a primary residence throughout any given year.

Commentary: The State \$75,000 homestead exemption on Parish-wide property taxes is unique in the United States. Homeowners in this state pay less in property taxes than their counterparts in other states. There are a number of drawbacks to our present property tax situation. Inequities in the assessment of property result in inequitable taxation on some property owners. Because of the Homestead Exemption, businesses and owners of rental property may pay higher taxes. This taxation is considered an expense and the cost is passed on to customers in the form of higher prices. Renters, who are poorer on average than homeowners, indirectly pay the property tax because it is passed along in their rent. Lowering the Homestead Exemption is an integral part of tax reform allowing local governments to raise more money from a larger property tax base.

7.41 REASSESS SALES AND USE TAXES

Reassess Sales and Use Taxes.

Commentary: Sales and Use Taxes present a dilemma in government financing. It is arguably inequitable and hurts the poor as the poor pay a larger percentage of their income to sales taxes than do more affluent taxpayers. However, it can be a very viable financial tool to fund specific public needs. Sales and use taxes should be dedicated to those public benefits used by everyone - residents and non-residents of Lafayette Parish. For example, transportation improvements are critical to the City/Parish and its position as a retail hub. Streets, roads, highways, bridges, intersections, transit, and the airport are vital to the business, service, and retail sectors of our economy. Public enhancements can be attractions to the Parish and sales taxes should be used to further the appeal of business and quality of life priorities.

7.42 ADDRESS COMPREHENSIVE TAX REFORM

The Louisiana Legislature should address Comprehensive Tax Reform as soon as possible. The Lafayette Parish delegation shall support this effort.

Commentary: Louisiana has a regressive tax structure that negatively impacts economic development. Business, from big companies to mom-and-pop enterprises, shoulders 85% of the cost of providing property tax revenues to local government. In addition, we should wean ourselves of dependence on "sugar daddy" revenue sources. Oil and gas, gaming, tobacco settlements, and general business taxation have been the focus of government revenue in lieu of our paying more in personal taxes. If we are to attract new industry we should build a new tax base to strengthen our educational system and to meet the needs and obligations demanded of local government and at the same time be conducive to the new global economy.

7.43 CREATE EQUITY IN PROPERTY ASSESSMENTS

The Lafayette Parish Tax Assessor shall institute true reform to create equity in property assessments. Again, this requires Louisiana legislative action which we urge the Lafayette Parish delegation to support. In addition, the Louisiana, the Louisiana Tax Commission should improve the oversight of the Parish Tax Assessors.

Commentary: Louisiana Tax Assessors are notorious for "low-balling" the fair market value of property in the Parishes. The Louisiana Tax Commission provides some oversight and orders changes when the numbers appear too much out of line. However, the Commission is stretched very thin: it only has seven appraisers to review all sixty-four Parish assessors' statewide. That is one appraiser for every ten assessors. Lawmakers should increase state funding to the Louisiana Tax Commission to improve oversight of assessors and make sure property values reflect true market conditions.

7.44 USER/SERVICE FEES

User and/or Service fees shall be utilized to offset or decrease the cost of providing public services but will reflect the value of services received and not as a means to inflate public service budgets.

Commentary: Public services are for the people. Common services are those government responsibilities that are applicable to the needs of the general population (i.e., fire protection, police protection, drainage, parks, etc.). But, there are also general services which government provides to citizens that are specialized (Clerk of Court, development review, zoning changes, building permits, parking, event management, licensing, and golf courses). The citizen user should cover common services substantially, if not totally. Not everyone needs to record official documents daily with the Clerk of Court who operates a totally supported user-based operation. User fees should be increased to more adequately cover the cost of selected public services.

7.45 GOALS FOR LIBRARY STANDARDS

Establish goals to meet or exceed national minimum library standards.

Commentary: Lafayette Parish has experienced rapid population growth in recent decades. The population demographics reveal a large proportion of youth and senior citizens in the city and Parish, an increasing ethnic diversity in the community, and a highly educated population involved in lifelong learning. This places a growing demand on a library system, which is already inadequate to serve the population of the Parish. And, with emphasis on economic development and the anticipated continued growth of the city and Parish population, the library system will become increasingly more deficient.

In general, a lack of space currently prevents adequate collections from growing and restricts the kinds of services that can be offered to the public. The Lafayette Public Library System is below both state and national standards for:

- a) Square footage per capita
- b) Visits per capita
- c) Total collections per capita
- d) The only favorable comparison is the circulation per capita, which indicates the high demand for library materials in spite of small facilities with limited collections.
- e) A further comparison against state and national standards show a Library System that is losing ground in building area.

7.46 EXPAND LAFAYETTE PARISH LIBRARY SYSTEM

Lafayette Parish Library System requires expansion. This would necessitate the renovation of the Main Library and the building of Area Libraries.

Expansion of public area and services at the Main Library should accommodate the demands of the increasing population with:

- More and new kinds of materials
- Comfortable and adequate seating
- Quiet study areas
- More logical arrangement
- A separate young adult's area
- A program of adult education
- Additional and smaller meeting spaces for community gatherings.
- Exhibit spaces to provide library visitors with additional visual experiences.

The expansion and addition of Area Libraries would allow for better and more convenient accessibility. There should be a library service within 3.5 miles for 95% of the Parish population.

The Area Libraries should be large regional facilities of 30,000-40,000 sq. ft. They will be full-service libraries with separate children's and young adult spaces, meeting rooms/exhibit spaces, and (in some) computer labs.

Lafayette IN a Century (LINC) Comprehensive Master Plan

Smaller branch/neighborhood libraries should be like the ones in the MLK Center, the Chenier Center, and any of the existing ones such as in Duson and Milton. They could house special collections and services reflecting the area community.

7.47 INCREASE LIBRARY COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Increased involvement of the Library in community outreach.

Commentary: Our Public Library should provide for increased services to the homebound and children in daycare.

7.48 SPECIALIZED BUSINESS AND TECHNOLOGY SECTION

Advancements in technology require the establishment of a specialized business and technology section in any expansion plan.

Commentary: As the country enters the "Information Age," the increase in electronic publishing and telecommunications makes flexibility the primary goal in library design. Telecommunication systems must provide access to the library collections from homes and offices. Other considerations could be satellite links for distance learning, conferences, etc.

7.49 AUGMENT LIBRARY STAFFING

Expansion of the Public Library System will necessitate staffing augmentation. Staffing should be sufficient to coordinate centralized services and to handle increased business in the Area Libraries.

7.50 LIBRARY SHOULD OPERATE FREE OF POLITICAL INFLUENCE

The Lafayette Parish Public Library System should be allowed to operate as an independent public service free of political influence.

Commentary: The Lafayette Parish Library Board should be responsible and accountable for governing the system.

7.51 ELIMINATE UNDUE POLITICAL INFLUENCE

Undue political influence should be eliminated from all elements of public services.

**Lafayette City-Parish Planning Commission
Lafayette IN a Century (LINC)
Comprehensive Master Plan**

**CONSERVATION & ENVIRONMENT
ELEMENTS**

Public Notice in the Advertiser: September 28, 2008

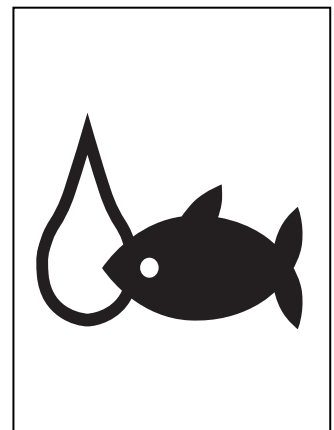
Public Hearing Date: October 9, 2008

City Parish Planning Commission Adoption Date:
October 27, 2008

Resolution No. 2008-04

Clerk of Court Recordation Date: April 8, 2009

Certified Transmittal Date to State Planning Office:



Local Government Transmittal Dates

Lafayette Consolidated Government:

City of Broussard:

City of Carencro:

City of Duson:

City of Scott:

City of Youngsville:



Lafayette Consolidated Government
Traffic & Transportation Department



Metropolitan Planning Organization
Comprehensive Planning Division

PREFACE

It is necessary to continue efforts to protect the unique natural landscape of southwest Louisiana. Our rich agricultural lands were the reason why the first settlers came to this area and remain a source of connection to our unique cultural heritage. Our goal is to save some of this natural and agricultural beauty from being entirely consumed by our rapidly growing urban area so future generations of urban residents may have access to something other than endless shopping centers and subdivisions. It is especially important to protect environmentally sensitive lands, such as wetlands, from being overdeveloped.

8.1 FUND GRANT WRITER POSITIONS

Lafayette Consolidated Government and Parish municipalities shall fund necessary grant writer positions for the purposes of obtaining additional federal, state and private funding for environmental and conservation programs and planning for Lafayette Parish. This position shall focus on procurement of environmental and conservation grants to help build resources for initiatives in the community as well as coordination between and among LCG departments for such grants.

Commentary: Lafayette Consolidated Government needs to make the obtaining of funds for the improvement of our physical environment a top priority. Limited local resources hamper this effort. A full-time grant position dedicated solely for environmental and conservation programs should more than offset the payroll cost within two years. Federal, state and private agencies and foundations are in place to help local governments facilitate environmental and conservation programs. This new position is a good investment that can pay for itself within a short term. Grant writing is a time-consuming process and calls for technical knowledge and expertise. A grant writer can generate revenues and this should be a necessary goal.

8.2 ENCOURAGE CREATION OF LAND TRUSTS

LCG and parish municipalities shall encourage the creation of land trusts to ensure the preservation and the integrity of Lafayette's physical environment. Encourage a public relations campaign to make corporations and private citizens aware of the tax advantages of land trusts.

Commentary: Open spaces and natural areas soften the impact of urbanization upon the natural environment and residents' quality of life and enhance the value of surrounding lands as they become developed. Government is not always able to secure title to large tracts intended to remain economically idle. Therefore, when individuals place large estates or farmland in trust, private philanthropy can be a valuable addition to the quality of life in a community.

8.3 PURCHASE CONSERVATION EASEMENTS

Conservation Easements, which can be used to insure some land is preserved in its natural state, shall be purchased.

Commentary: Conservation easements result when the right to develop portions of property, rather than the entire property, is acquired by some entity such as government or a private foundation (i.e., the Nature Conservancy or Community Foundation of Acadiana). This is important to many who have had land in families for several generations and who do not wish to part with it or risk having it subdivided by future generations. The cost of acquiring development rights/ conservation easements is also lower than outright purchase (and eventual upkeep) of entire tracts, and since the landowner keeps actual title to the land, both the landowner and the public benefit.

8.4 IMPLEMENT MANDATORY RECYCLING IN ALL GOVERNMENT OFFICES

Mandatory recycling shall be implemented immediately in all government offices.

Commentary: The use of recycling in Lafayette shows a commitment on the part of our government leaders to the community and should serve as an example to other organizations. Nonetheless, government offices generate much paper which should be recycled.

8.5 ENCOURAGE PARTNERSHIPS TO PROMOTE ARBORICULTURE

Partnerships should be encouraged to promote arboriculture. A public relations campaign should include information on how to form these partnerships.

Commentary: The use of partnerships between private and public organizations to promote tree planting, maintenance, and education, is an opportunity that must be exploited. For instance, Lynch Gardens and other similar organizations are available to provide assistance to municipalities and others wishing to improve tree planting parishwide.

8.6 TREE CANOPY

Federal, state and local resources shall be devoted to maintaining a 55% tree canopy for the urban area.

Commentary: Currently, we are at less than 40% in our urban area. Scientists and urban planners have long identified the "Urban Heat-Island Effect," which is caused by the absorbing of sunlight by the buildings and pavement of urban areas. This raises both daytime and nighttime temperature and results in: higher energy costs; more consumption of water to maintain vegetation; discomfort for residents; increased effects of air pollution; and altered weather patterns. Temperatures in Lafayette are often several degrees above that of the surrounding countryside and the experience of larger cities indicates that continued loss of tree canopy along with increased urbanization will only worsen this trend over time. Federal Grants are available to combat this phenomenon. For instance, Baton Rouge recently received a grant to increase vegetation in its downtown area.

8.7 ESTABLISH MANDATORY TREE EASEMENT

Tree easements off sidewalks shall be established and shall be mandatory in new developments and renovations wherever possible.

Commentary: There is great value in planted strips that can absorb rainwater runoff from commercial lots. This is a permeable area, a dynamic area between street and businesses. Implementation of this recommendation will also accomplish other goals of this plan, such as increasing shade cover and decreasing air pollution.

8.8 IMPLEMENT LANDSCAPE AND TREE ORDINANCES

Strong city-parish and municipal landscape and tree ordinances shall be implemented immediately to preserve and protect trees, with mitigation being secondary and used only as a last resort.

Commentary: Without question, such ordinances will improve the built environment in Lafayette Parish. Lafayette must compete with other areas which are trying to attract new residents and anything which improves the condition of the city must be adopted. For example, the Mobile, Alabama tree ordinance is over forty years old.

8.9 PROTECT CYPRESS AND NATIVE HARDWOOD SPECIES

City-parish and municipal landscape ordinances shall be extended to protect Cypress and native hardwood tree species in addition to other than live oak. In addition, the threshold for inclusion as a protected tree will be decreased to less than 18" DBH.

Commentary: The purpose of the tree ordinance should be to protect as many valuable trees as possible in order to preserve the beauty and environmental quality of the community.

8.10 ENFORCE THESE ORDINANCES BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND COURTS

Penalties for cutting a protected tree shall be enforced and levied.

Commentary: These ordinances should be defined and enforced by local governments and the courts.

8.11 TREE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Mitigation policies and procedures and disbursement of funds shall be recommended by an active Tree Advisory Committee.

Commentary: Mitigation should take place in Lafayette Parish and its municipalities.

8.12 REDUCE RIGHT-OF-WAY REQUIREMENTS FOR DEVELOPERS WHO PROTECT ADDITIONAL TREES

Right-of-way requirements by City-Parish Government, Parish municipalities, and LaDOTD shall be reduced for developers who protect additional trees.

Commentary: This recommendation is designed to reward property owners and developers who protect trees in addition to those required to be protected under the City-Parish tree ordinance.

8.13 RESOURCES AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR TREE MAINTENANCE

For the maintenance of city-owned trees and landscaped areas, the local Departments of Public Works and the Departments of Parks and Recreation shall devote adequate resources and develop partnerships for the maintenance of public areas.

Commentary: Proper upkeep of public property is essential to implementing the goals of this plan.

8.14 CREATE ARBORIST POSITION

The creation of a full-time arborist position financed by public and private agencies.

Commentary: A professional tree surgeon is necessary to monitor the health of trees in our parks and on public properties. Duties should also include educating the public about tree planting and consulting with the designers of transportation projects and developments about cutting and planting trees.

8.15 TREES CUT ON PUBLIC LANDS

When practical, trees cut or trimmed on public lands shall be shredded/chipped and wood chips subsequently left under remaining trees instead of removal of the debris to landfills. This shall be clearly stated in any contract awarded a tree-cutting firm.

Commentary: Healthy soils are required to maintain healthy vegetation without the use of watering and fertilizers and the cost of chipping would be no greater than paying to haul the material away.

8.16 PARKING AREAS – GREEN SPACES

A percentage of parking areas shall be reserved for green space and tree islands to be planted with native vegetation. Green space should be developed in all new developments, renovations, in older lots.

Commentary: There is a need to provide shade and thus reduce summertime temperature as well as decreasing the amount of impervious surface area subsequently reducing rainwater runoff . Green spaces will also improve the appearance of commercial areas and contribute to a more pleasant urban design. Native tree species such as magnolias, live oaks, etc. should be included.

8.17 ENCOURAGE RAISED MEDIANS

Raised medians are encouraged on all major and minor arterials and shall be landscaped with native species.

Commentary: Raised center medians on city streets break up the visual effects of acres of concrete and provide for improved operational capacity and safety of our road network

8.18 MINIMUM AND MAXIMUM PARKING REQUIREMENTS

Minimum and maximum parking requirements for commercial and retail developments shall be adopted for all new developments and renovations. The standard to follow would allow no fewer than one parking space per 300 sq. ft. and no more than one parking space per 200 sq. ft. A developer desiring less than the required parking spaces would be allowed to reduce the number of spaces to the minimum, by increasing green area at a ratio of 2:1. (Reducing 2 parking spaces by increasing green area by the sq. ft. of one space).

Commentary: Lafayette businesses presently are required to construct more parking than is necessary. The adoption of the above standard will significantly improve the quality of the landscape and built environment in Lafayette by allowing for more green space and the reduction in the amount of impermeable surfaces, thus reducing rainwater runoff, because Lafayette businesses presently are required to construct more parking than is necessary. The reduced minimums also allow affected parties to save money by not being forced to build more parking areas than are typically necessary for a specific location.

8.19 ENACT LIGHTING ORDINANCE

By December 2009, Lafayette Parish shall enact a lighting ordinance specifically including provisions regarding exterior private, public, and commercial lighting. The ordinance should include reasonable penalties for non-compliance, procedures for handling complaints against non-compliant lights, and (if necessary) language requiring enforcement. The ordinance shall affect all new developments and renovations. Specifically, the ordinance will affect the following outdoor lighting applications:

- a. street lighting, driveways, and parking lots;
- b. commercial lighting, advertising signage, and building illuminations;
- c. neighborhoods and housing developments;
- d. miscellaneous (parks and recreation facilities, towers, flags, decorations, etc.)

Commentary: The ordinance should be as simple and inexpensive to enforce and implement as possible. The ordinance should be enforced.

8.20 OUTDOOR LIGHTING

Outdoor lighting shall be part of the planning process to ensure that the proper lamps are used for different applications. Existing luminaries which are not in compliance should be changed within a set time limit, possibly ten years, or when moved, or when the lamp or fixture is changed.

Commentary: Review during planning will ensure better lighting early and inexpensively. Different uses of outdoor lighting require different types of bulbs and housings. Using the most appropriate lamps saves the air and water pollution produced in the generation of wasted energy. There should be reasonable limitations on how brightly an area can be lighted. Lighting standards used in planning should be easily understood and enforced.

8.21 SHIELD BRIGHT OUTDOOR LIGHT

Bright outdoor lights shall be appropriately shielded. All lighting fixtures shall be installed to eliminate glare, light trespass and wasted light. These changes should take place within a set time limit as set forth in Element 20.

Commentary: Light trespass is light intruding in areas where it is not wanted or needed. Glare reduces visibility and safety. Properly designed and installed fixtures will improve driving safety by keeping poor lighting from shining directly into drivers' eyes. Part of being a good neighbor is lighting one's property without intruding light on surrounding areas. Using modern fixtures yields a net savings in energy costs. Directing the lighting to the subject and to the ground where it is most cost effective is the essence of good lighting. Lafayette Consolidated Government and local Municipalities should take a leadership role in lighting standards by using the most effective shielding possible. Up-lighting is inappropriate for billboards and other advertising, flag poles, signs, decoration, and similar functions. Down-lighting for these applications is more consistent with the other lighting recommendations. The use of high intensity lights such as searchlights and upward pointing lasers for advertising and entertainment purposes is unacceptable on a permanent basis.

8.22 UNDERSTAND BETTER LIGHTING

Efforts should be made to help the people and businesses in the parish understand that better lighting need not be a financial burden, and that it can actually improve the safety and quality of life for residents and visitors.

Commentary: A letter accompanying consumer power bills would reach the majority of the responsible citizens in an authoritative way. Public awareness and education will go a long way to improving the understanding of appropriate lighting. Partnerships should be created with the School Board and private entities to improve lighting awareness.

8.23 MINIMIZE COMMERCIAL LIGHTING WHEN CLOSED

Billboard and on-site commercial lighting shall be minimized during times when businesses are closed or late at night, except where needed for security.

Commentary: Businesses would reduce energy costs by reducing exterior lighting. This should include internally lighted signs. Some cities have found it worthwhile and safe to turn off some streetlights and traffic lights late at night.

8.24 ADOPT LIGHTING ELEMENTS

LCG and all Municipalities in Lafayette Parish shall adopt these lighting elements by December, 2009.

Commentary: Adoption throughout the Parish will result in the most energy savings, the greatest reduction of glare and light trespass, and the best preservation of the night sky,

night habitats, and nighttime vision for our citizens. It would improve the nighttime appearance of the entire area. It would encourage other Acadiana parishes to consider the same steps, spreading these advantages throughout the region.

8.25 CONTINGENCY PLANS FOR HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

State and local governments shall immediately update and maintain contingency plans for dealing with potential problems resulting from hazardous materials moving through Lafayette.

8.26 MONITOR AND REPORT AIR QUALITY

Lafayette Consolidated Government shall immediately begin to monitor and publicly report its air quality and, with cooperation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), should use the data gained to identify air quality issues and develop strategies aimed at substantially reducing the likelihood that such issues will result in a non-attainment designation. This is urgent and a matter of public health.

Commentary: The experience of others indicates that the more Lafayette does on its own, the less severe the Federal action will be, and the more that an area delays or the worse the problem is, the harsher the conditions imposed will be. Therefore, Lafayette must keep abreast of all Federal ozone decisions and must be able to use its data to identify and respond to any violations as quickly as possible.

8.27 ENCOURAGE ALTERNATIVE SUGARCANE HARVESTING METHODS

State and Local Governments continue to work with the sugarcane industry to encourage alternative sugarcane harvesting methods so that burning can be phased out.

8.28 COMPLIANCE WITH WATER QUALITY REGULATIONS

Lafayette Parish and local municipalities shall take the necessary steps to ensure timely compliance with all water quality regulations.

Commentary: The Clean Water Act of 1972 states that "all bodies of water across the nation will be fishable and swimmable." Compliance with Federal regulations is necessary and achievable. Here in Louisiana we love our streams and lakes, and it is incumbent on us to take care of them.

8.29 ENFORCE NOISE STANDARDS WITH MANDATORY FINES

The City-Parish noise standards shall be enforced with mandatory fines.

Commentary: Lafayette residents are entitled to quiet enjoyment of their residences. Enforcement of City-Parish noise standards will lead to improved quality of life for

Lafayette residents, making our communities, parks, and neighborhoods more attractive places in which to live and recreate.

8.30 COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF VERMILION RIVER AND CHICOT AQUIFER

A current comprehensive study of the Vermilion River watershed and the Chicot Aquifer must be done. Such a study shall be done in conjunction with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality so that water quality problems can be identified and solutions developed and implemented. This is more than a quality of life issue; it is a health issue and should be addressed immediately.

Commentary: Phased-in compliance with Federal Clean Water Act regulations began in the largest cities and is gradually working down to smaller cities. Compliance with Phase III of the Clean Water Act amendments of 1990 will be required within Lafayette Parish by 2006. These regulations will limit non-point source pollution (pollution that does not come from a single source, such as a factory) and Total Maximum Daily Load (the amount of pollutants able to be absorbed by a waterway) and it is necessary to assess immediately what will be required to implement these regulations in order that the costs of compliance can be anticipated and absorbed over time. Otherwise, Lafayette Parish may find itself unprepared for implementation, and being declared non-compliant would impact the availability of Federal funds, damage the reputation of the city, and have a harmful impact on the economy.

8.31 EDUCATE PUBLIC ON NEED TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

LCG, the DEQ, and the Bayou Vermilion District shall work together to educate the public on the need to improve our water quality.

Commentary: There are many possibilities: a) BVD can work with the school board to establish a program in which high school students could earn course credit by studying natural resource conservation; b) BVD, the Louisiana Extension Service, and RECYCLING FOUNDATION can educate primary school children in the advantages of recycling and conserving organic material in their own yards; c) The DEQ and the BVD can establish a successful program such as one in St. Tammany Parish which presents workshops to HBA members on how to incorporate environment-friendly designs and save money at the same time; d) Cooperation can be used in the development of retention areas, with DEQ or BVD possibly funding construction and an urban wetland education center; e) DEQ and BVD can fund education for homeowners about disposing of toxic wastes and yard wastes.

8.32 LANDSCAPE ORDINANCES – REQUIRE FILTRATION AREAS

Filtration areas shall be required along bayous and other waterways as part of local landscape ordinances in order to encourage natural filtration of water and detoxification of dangerous impurities.

Commentary: Vegetation along bayous and waterways provides filtration for water purification and a defense against erosion and flooding. Detention areas can be wetlands if plants are added. For example, Bluebonnet Swamp in Baton Rouge is a bottomland hardwood swamp with added boardwalks which make the area accessible for people to enjoy. St. Tammany Parish already requires detention for all new developments. All indications suggest that builders will save money because less concrete is needed.

8.33 PUT ALL SEWER SYSTEMS INTO COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS

All public and private sewer systems in Lafayette Parish shall be put into compliance immediately with existing regulations as previously recommended by the Drainage, Land Use and Utilities Subcommittees and the full Steering Committee.

Commentary: In order for Lafayette Parish to improve its water quality, steps must be taken to ensure that both public and private sewer systems, including individual treatment plants, are in compliance with existing laws.

8.34 CREATE SEWAGE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Immediately create a sewerage infrastructure development committee.

8.35 "BEST PRACTICES" EDUCATION FOR FARMERS

Immediately implement a program for the education of farmers in "Best Practices" that can improve farm efficiency and reduce farm runoff, especially manure from cattle operations now polluting the Vermilion. Additional efforts must be made to construct barriers to isolate cows from the bayou to avoid direct and indirect avenues of contamination.

Commentary: This is required if non point-source pollution is to be reduced. The DEQ and Extension service make grants available to local governments for the types of education programs outlined above.

8.36 EXPAND DISPOSAL AND RECYCLING TO INCLUDE NOXIOUS AND HAZARDOUS HOUSEHOLD WASTE

Disposal and recycling efforts shall be expanded to include noxious and hazardous household waste.

Commentary: Lafayette should be commended for its excellent recycling program, but improvements can be made. People pour used motor oil, etc. down storm drains because they don't know what else to do with it and incorrectly think that it will go to a treatment plant. Therefore, an educational campaign should be coupled with an expansion of our excellent recycling program.

8.37 ESTABLISH RESERVOIR

A reservoir for water draining into Lafayette Parish should be established. Surrounding parishes should be invited to contribute to this concept.

Commentary: Lafayette is not the only parish affecting the flow of floodwaters into the Bayou Vermilion. A large retention facility, not necessarily in Lafayette Parish, will be able to drain surrounding parishes without flooding the Bayou Vermilion.

8.38 UNDERGROUND ELECTRICAL WIRING

Underground electrical wiring shall be installed in all new construction as well as in conjunction with scheduled replacement of older lines in order to improve community appearance and increase property values.

Commentary: Over time the cost of installing underground wiring in conjunction with normal maintenance (street widening, replacing telephone poles, etc.) is more or less equivalent once upkeep costs are accounted for.

8.39 ZERO TOLERANCE FOR LITTER

There shall be zero tolerance for litter.

8.40 CHANGE LITTER STATUTES TO MISDEMEANOR WITH FINES

Litter statutes shall be changed from a criminal offense to a misdemeanor with stiff fines.

Commentary: Monies collected should go back to enforcement and community education/litter prevention projects. Such laws must be enforced by all local municipalities and the courts.

8.41 PROVIDE ADEQUATE TRASH BINS

Adequate trash bins shall be provided in highly trafficked areas in order to reduce littering.

Commentary: During Mardi-Gras, several committee members noticed that people took care to properly dispose of litter when trash bins were available. If more trash bins were located in areas that are frequented by pedestrians or shoppers, the littering of our streets might be successfully reduced.

8.42 PUBLIC AWARENESS OF ENHANCING QUALITY OF LIFE

The Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government and parish municipalities shall help promote and initiate efforts to educate public awareness of the quality of life in the parish and what can be done to enhance it.

Lafayette IN a Century (LINC) Comprehensive Master Plan

Commentary: In order to influence public attitudes and behavior regarding the environment, necessary if progress is to be made, an educational campaign is needed.

**Lafayette City-Parish Planning Commission
Lafayette IN a Century (LINC)
Comprehensive Master Plan**

URBAN DESIGN ELEMENT

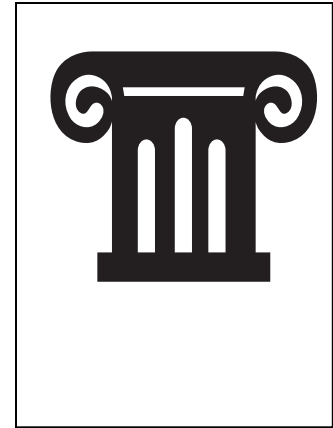
Public Notice in the Advertiser: September 28, 2008

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City Parish Planning Commission Adoption Date:
October 27, 2008
Resolution No. 2008-04

Clerk of Court Recordation Date: April 8, 2009

Certified Transmittal Date to State Planning Office:



Local Government Transmittal Dates

Lafayette Consolidated Government:

City of Broussard:

City of Carencro:

City of Duson:

City of Scott:

City of Youngsville:



Lafayette Consolidated Government
Traffic & Transportation Department



Metropolitan Planning Organization
Comprehensive Planning Division

PREFACE

Urban Design refers to the aesthetic, social, physical, and functional aspects of a city such as: the planning and designing perspective views of public spaces, building locations and facades which produce unity and harmony among diverse uses and needs. The primary focus of urban design is making public spaces and the merging of social satisfaction and the physical built environment with the practical needs of the community. Urban Design is a quality of life element of the Comprehensive Master Plan and shall provide an important contribution to the future Lafayette Parish and its urban development.

Melville Branch, a nationally recognized city planner, notes:

Only recently are the more highly developed and affluent industrialized nations beginning to view urban design as worth greater emphasis when it supports the local economy by increasing people's desire to continue living in a community or by attracting new residents to the city. It is no longer considered by those involved as a regal or purely aesthetic luxury. Studies have been made showing that urban design affects people in subtle and hitherto unrecognized ways besides the aesthetic pleasure it brings those who appreciate it: visual identification with the neighborhood or place where we live; awareness of other parts of the locality; even our composure and sense of well being.

Lafayette has any number of beautiful and aesthetic buildings scattered around the area. It is in their placement and setting that often clashes with urban design principles and practices. The end result can be and often is a detraction rather than a community asset. But who decides what is an asset and what is a detraction? Speaking on 19th century urban design, Melville Branch continues:

Except on the few occasions when the populace was in political control, they had little or nothing to say about urban design. Furthermore, they had little interest in it, since undoubtedly they were far more concerned with vital matters affecting their livelihood, survival, and the afterlife. Ruling authorities were less concerned with the desires and welfare of the population than is politically necessary today.

The Lafayette Parish Urban Condition

The American City is, at best, a difficult entity to read and comprehend. This difficulty may be attributed to the collision of two very different city types that make up the urban condition. This condition is composed of the traditional city and its post-industrial counterpart, the suburban city. The traditional city is defined as the downtown area and its adjacent neighborhoods that developed prior to the impact of the automobile. A suburban city is the area that developed after the 1950s. Both the traditional city and the suburban have their own characteristics. Lafayette's traditional city was a planned, urban grid with cohesive block structures. This urban design pattern is found in Broussard, Carencro, Duson, Scott and Youngsville downtown areas. But these areas have become fragmented and broken by the invasion of the automobile to accommodate parking lots, road expansion, 20th century commercialism, and modern architecture.

Lafayette IN a Century (LINC) Comprehensive Master Plan

By comparison, Lafayette Parish's suburban city is even less defined. It expands past the traditional cores of the city and towns and is composed of its own set of urban elements: the suburb track houses, the commercial strip, and the ill-defined and unplanned growth on the urban fringes. The suburb is driven by commercialism, the automobile, and the population explosion of the mid to late 20th century. The Lafayette Parish suburban edge is intangible, unrestrained, and has inefficient land use. It is primarily composed of one-story construction sitting on over-sized building lots with a low population density.

The Lafayette Parish Comprehensive Master Plan: Lafayette IN a Century provides us with an opportunity to direct and focus public and private investment on the quality needs and advantages of urban design throughout the Parish – now and into the future. Practical recommendations are listed below which support the vision and the proven advantages to the physical development of the community as well as the social impact.

9.1 STOP FRAGMENTATION

Downtown Lafayette, Oil Center, Broussard, Carencro, Duson, Scott and Youngsville should stop the “fragmentation” that has occurred over the last fifty years and restore the original urban framework.

Commentary: Fragmentation occurs when the urban block is disrupted by the removal of buildings for parking lots. This situation can be corrected by using a method known as urban infill. This means replacing the parking lots with appropriate urban buildings that would relate to the street and would activate the commercial core with commerce.

As mentioned in the preface, the 20th century population explosion and the automobile have produced a series of vacant properties in the downtown areas of Lafayette Parish municipalities. These vacancies have interrupted the street wall’s continuity. The “street wall” being the urban buildings which frame public areas like streets. The street wall should read as one continuous building along the street edge. This condition previously existed in downtown Lafayette and in the municipalities along their Main Streets and in their commercial core areas. By infilling empty properties with appropriate urban buildings, the urban street wall could be re-established. The street wall acts as a human psychological reference point. People in urban conditions respond favorably to defendable space; space that is contained and uninterrupted. Reestablishing the street wall with urban infill would revitalize Lafayette Parish municipal downtowns. Reestablishing the street wall from an economic perspective would provide places for commercial activity such as stores, restaurants, and cultural events.

9.2 APPROPRIATE ARCHITECTURE FOR DOWNTOWN AREAS

Appropriate architecture for the downtown areas of Broussard, Carencro, Duson, Lafayette, Scott and Youngsville, including the Lafayette Oil Center, shall be established as follows:

- a) All new infill buildings shall be a minimum of two stories high and up to 85' height in downtown Lafayette and the Oil Center.
- b) High rise buildings will be designated to their own sector (See Urban Code, Downtown Lafayette, 1995).
- c) All new infill buildings should have a minimum 80 percent of the building facade on the property line of the street facing wall.
- d) All new urban infill buildings should have 70-80 percent site coverage of the property in the downtown areas.
- e) Additional site coverage should be required for parking located behind the buildings, thereby screening parking from the street front.
- f) Urban buildings should be adjacent to the sidewalk and create a continuity of the street wall.

Commentary: Appropriate urban infill buildings should be the goal of urban design. Building height should be of appropriate scale to fit or coexist with the existing buildings for Lafayette Parish municipal cores. Stand alone suburban buildings are inappropriate to an urban context. Suburban buildings generally have extreme street setbacks and are

surrounded by acres of asphalt. This type of building construction has greatly contributed to the fragmentation of our urban centers.

9.3 ENCOURAGE MIXED USE OF DOWNTOWN MULTI-STORY BUILDINGS

The majority of municipal downtown multi-story buildings should be occupied with commercial on the ground floor and office and housing integrated on the top. Mixed uses should be encouraged.

Commentary: Mixed use development brings activation to the downtown by allowing residents an opportunity for housing. This housing revitalizes the downtown areas and promotes continuous occupation of the area itself rather than having an 8:00-5:00 community.

9.4 FACADE TREATMENTS SHOULD BLEND WITH SURROUNDING INDIGENOUS BUILDINGS

The facade treatment (exterior elevation) in municipal downtowns, including the Oil Center, should be of appropriate scale, texture, and material(s) to blend with the surrounding, indigenous buildings.

Commentary: Appropriate windows, doors, materials, and other architectural elements provide continuity for the street wall. These elements provide scale for pedestrians, produce an appropriate urban texture, and would be in context with the surroundings. Metal buildings, generally, distract from historic districts and urban centers. Facade treatments should camouflage the exterior of metal buildings for compatibility with surrounding buildings.

9.5 STRATEGIES FOR DOWNTOWN PARKING

Parking in downtown areas should have four clear strategies:

- a) Street parking facilitates activity along main streets and should be encouraged.
- b) At grade parking should be tucked behind buildings and screened from the street front.
- c) Parking courts (at grade) should be organized in the middle of the block and screened from the street.
- d) Downtown Lafayette and the Oil Center should have adequate parking garages to meet increasing density over time.

Commentary: Parking lots are the major contributing factor to the fragmentation of the downtown areas. A society built on convenience has destroyed its history and urban fabric. As previously mentioned, parking strategies can allow automobile groupings in places that contribute to the urban design rather than destroy it.

9.6 PROMOTE EFFECTIVE PUBLIC TRANSIT SYSTEM

An effective public transit system shall be encouraged and promoted as an alternative to the auto dependency condition of the downtown areas. Specifically, coordinated public transit between large parking areas such as the Cajun Dome, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, the Oil Center, downtown Lafayette, the Acadiana Mall, and Northgate Mall could link existing high traffic areas and reduce the dependency on the automobile.

Commentary: Effective public transit diminishes the impact of the automobile. An effective public transit system would reduce the congestion and land use requirements for parking facilities. An overall coordinated strategy with parking and public transit would effectively reduce ground use parking lots.

9.7 DOWNTOWN CORE AREAS DESIGN

Each Main Street and adjacent side streets in downtown core areas shall be designed with street trees, walkways, lighting, secondary landscape, and benches. Overhead utility lines shall be removed and placed underground.

Commentary: Streetscape provides continuity and activation of a downtown area. Street trees and landscape provide physical and psychological barriers between the pedestrian and the automobile. Streetscapes, generally, increase property values and facilitate desired urban land uses.

9.8 INTEGRATE PUBLIC ART INTO URBAN DESIGN LANDSCAPE

Public art shall be integrated into the urban design landscape with a public allocation of one percent (1%) of total cost on both new and renovation of public buildings, public roadways and parks.

Commentary: Cities that incorporate successful art programs use these programs as an integral part of the urban setting. The purpose of public art is to stimulate the urban landscape through color, texture, signage and play. Public art becomes an attraction to the urban environment. The revenues derived from public construction projects for public art should be channeled through the Lafayette Arts Council as an incentive for preparing a comprehensive public arts plan for the Parish.

9.9 SIGN ORDINANCE

Signs shall be of the appropriate size, color, and texture to integrate itself into the urban fabric. An aggressive sign ordinance applicable in both urban and suburban areas shall be adopted along the models found in Steamboat Springs, Colorado and Hilton Head Island, North Carolina as well as a selected list of communities which are attached to this recommendation for reference and as a resource. Implementation of this new Parish wide sign ordinance shall be phased into compliance over a ten year period.

Commentary: Appropriate signage must be provided in downtown core areas that is not an obvious focal object. Competing and overwhelming signs distract and detract from the physical urban environment and should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Suburban areas along arterial roadways are particularly emphasized for sign regulation. The new Ambassador Caffery South Parkway project should be used as an initial prime example of how signs must be limited to build an attractive community.

9.10 PHASE OUT BILLBOARDS

No new bill boards shall be permitted throughout the Parish and existing bill boards phased out over time.

Commentary: The highways and by-ways of Louisiana that are free of bill boards are far more attractive areas than those with bill boards. State and local elected officials have historically hesitated on opposition to these oversized signs to the detriment of the community. Some cities around the country have resorted to the outright purchase of bill boards at public expense and with voter approval. Lafayette Parish could be far more attractive area without unsightly bill boards. Several communities around the country have taken this issue to the public voters where public dollars are approved for the acquisition and removal of existing bill boards. The City of Houston banned billboards in 1980.

9.11 STREET DESIGN

Street design should include all classification of streets. These are defined as freeway, major arterial, minor arterial, major collector, minor collector, and local roadways.

- a) Each street classification should integrate linear forested green space areas, sidewalks, bike paths, lighting, and benches.
- b) Street design should require green space separating the pedestrian from the automobile.
- c) This green space should be planted with street trees and be minimum 8-12 feet wide.
- d) Sidewalks should be a minimum of eight feet wide and bike paths should be the appropriate size of eight feet wide each way.
- e) Lighting and landscaping benches should be included for the pedestrian.
- f) All arterial streets should have appropriately placed public art.

Commentary: Healthy contemporary cities include public space for the pedestrian. Street design should include pedestrian access while fulfilling automobile requirements. Public space along major arterials and local streets provides a connection from neighborhood to neighborhood or from neighborhood to shopping district. This pedestrian connection reduces automobile dependency. New major arterials in the Parish will have parallel linear parks parallel to shield residential areas. This is a positive step into the future.

9.12 NODAL SYSTEM

Strip commercial design should be reorganized into a nodal system at the intersection of two arterial roadways.

Commentary: The commercial strip is generally located along major arterial highways with commercial businesses lining both sides. Nodal designs are organized around a central point of reference such as a park or building complex. Nodal development organizes commercial districts into a concentric ring strategy allowing internal, local circulation for automobile and pedestrian travel. This internalized model reduces automobile trips, thereby alleviating traffic on congested arterial highways.

9.13 BUILDINGS FRONTING A MAJOR ARTERIAL

Buildings fronting a major arterial should have a setback, green space in front with parking organized to the side and/or to the rear. The buildings should be a minimum of two stories with mixed use (commercial on the ground floor, residential above) programming. Appropriate facade design should allow the building to relate to the arterial road.

Commentary: This reorganized emphasis on buildings facing streets with appropriate facades and closer to the arterial establishes a relationship of building to street and focuses the attention on the building rather than on the parking lots. Mixed use buildings (minimum two stories high) would provide a denser environment with better land use.

9.14 REDUCE PARKING, CONVERT TO “GRASS GREEN SURFACE”

Existing parking in suburban commercial areas should be reduced by 40 percent which can be converted to a “grass green surface” for maximum allowed parking based on current requirements or simply utilized for forested green space. New proposed commercial development should also incorporate this 40% reduction before being constructed and also include the “grass green surface” alternative for maximum allowed parking.

Commentary: Reduced parking requirements for existing strip commercial developments would allow for square footage expansion, both horizontally and vertically. This expansion would foster better land use, mixed use building types, and provide green space. High volume parking areas (Acadiana Mall) can include alternative parking strategies. Alternative parking lots are developed with a solid underlayment and grass on top. This provides additional parking during the high volume Christmas Season (three weeks out of the year) yet allows the same area to be grassy meadow for eleven months out of the year. This parking alternative is a much improved suburban design as opposed to a vast asphalt sea surrounding commercial buildings.

Reduced parking as well as alternative “grass green” options generates a number of positive developments for the community:

- a) Increase rainwater ground absorption through reduced impervious surface.

- b) Reduced heat indexes through less pavement construction.
- c) Improved aesthetics.
- d) Reduced construction cost.

9.15 NEW NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN - CONTRIBUTIONS

New neighborhoods should be designed with contributions to public parks, forested areas and retention/detention districts or facilities.

Commentary: Studies now reveal that people need public spaces even in suburban environments. Our developed subdivisions are lacking public areas. It is an identified social need as well as an aesthetic benefit to incorporate public spaces for our Parish subdivision development densities. Regional parks are not the final solution to this human need. The planned construction of individual or area wide retention/detention facilities in all new development, both commercial and residential is an opportunity to provide a common solution to two problems or shortcomings in our Parish built environment. Mechanisms must be established to fund and maintain this identified need for public space. Drainage/stormwater plans may be the common vehicle to utilize in the process.

9.16 INTERCONNECTED NEIGHBORHOODS

Neighborhoods should be interconnected with neighborhood streets allowing for local traffic and pedestrian travel. Higher density per acre for neighborhoods should be encouraged and could allow for more open space by incorporating two story houses sitting on smaller lots.

Commentary: Isolated suburban neighborhoods are a contributing factor to the overload of traffic on major arterial roadways in Lafayette Parish. These isolated developments restrict localized automobile and pedestrian traffic and push all connections to the arterial streets. Larger sector plans rather than individual subdivision plans are needed to integrate local and collector streets to connect neighborhood to neighborhood and allow for a smoother transition of localized traffic. These larger sector plans should be inclusive of park systems with recreation, green space and retention facilities.

9.17 ESTABLISH MANAGED GROWTH POLICIES

Lafayette Parish municipal governments and Lafayette Consolidated Government shall join together to establish “managed growth policies” for the Parish. These growth policies should lead to the creation of managed growth boundary lines or by controlling growth through already established “areas of influence” surrounding each municipality. A timeline should be guaranteed by each jurisdiction for phased adequate infrastructure to be installed prior to consideration of new development plans on a Parish wide level.

Commentary: The problems associated with unrestricted development are now being experienced by Parish municipalities and the Parish government. Growth strategies

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would provide better infill development practices and stop the leap-frog development that presently exists. Restrictions on development drive up costs, but it is the inefficiency of the scattered suburban development pattern that is raising public infrastructure cost and investment to an even greater degree.

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ARTS & CULTURE ELEMENTS

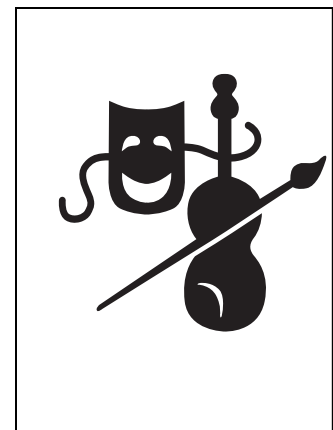
Public Notice in the Advertiser: September 28, 2008

Public Hearing Date: October 9, 2008

City Parish Planning Commission Adoption Date:
October 27, 2008
Resolution No. 2008-04

Clerk of Court Recordation Date: April 8, 2009

Certified Transmittal Date to State Planning Office:



Local Government Transmittal Dates

Lafayette Consolidated Government:

City of Broussard:

City of Carencro:

City of Duson:

City of Scott:

City of Youngsville:



Lafayette Consolidated Government
Traffic & Transportation Department



Metropolitan Planning Organization
Comprehensive Planning Division

PREFACE

In order to meet the need for increased cultural and entertainment opportunities for residents and tourists, the creation of a cultural entertainment industry in Lafayette is recommended that will combine the talents of local artists with the economic development opportunities available locally. Already, as a direct outgrowth of previous discussions regarding this strategy, the Louisiana Crossroads series was created involving local performances by nationally renowned Acadiana artists. It is also important to increase the awareness of the importance of arts and culture in all aspects of the life of the community, not just tourism.

10.1 ARTS AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS FUNDING

Arts and cultural programs administered by the Acadiana Arts Council shall receive permanent, line-item funding in the annual Lafayette Consolidated Government and area municipalities' budgets based upon a Parish-wide population formula to bring us to a national standard. This shall be implemented beginning January, 2010.

Commentary: A Lafayette Consolidated Government planning department survey of a dozen southern cities similar in size to Lafayette ranked our community at the bottom in total funding for arts and cultural programs. Nationally, the growth of funding support for the arts through city and county government has increased in the past 20 years, not only in real dollars but also in the capacity of these funds to be powerful leveraging devices for other funding sources. However, in its 2000/01 fiscal budget, Lafayette Consolidated Government cut its support of arts and cultural programs by 50%. Repeated studies have proven that every tax dollar invested in the arts returns to the economy a minimum of six times over. An investment in the arts is an investment in the local economy through tourism, education and new business recruitment. The unique cultural climate of the Acadiana region is one of our community's greatest natural resources and must be viewed as such by community policy makers.

10.2 ARTS PROGRAMS – PRIORITY FOR FUNDING FORMULA

Neighborhood-based, free-or-low-cost arts programs shall be a priority within the new per capita funding formula.

Commentary: Cultural resources can form a community "glue," particularly in neighborhoods where both common identity and the physical structure have deteriorated. Group mural projects, community gardens, festivals, and neighborhood involvement in designing capital improvements all create a greater sense of safety, ownership, and commitment to the community. By basing programs in neighborhoods, all citizens are provided access to and opportunity for participation in high quality arts activities.

10.3 AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

A comprehensive, after-school program shall include the arts as a key component and shall be implemented for all Lafayette Parish public schools through collaborations among Lafayette Consolidated Government, area municipalities, Lafayette Parish School Board, Acadiana Arts Council, local businesses, and other community partners.

Commentary: The dropout rate for students with low arts involvement is 45% higher than the rate for highly arts-involved students. An after-school arts program should leverage community resources to create a comprehensive model motivating students to learn, decreasing dropout rates, promoting cultural understanding and improving thinking and problem-solving skills. Opportunity for participation in arts classes should not be dependent on a family's economic ability to pay for services.

10.4 ADOPT A MASTER PLAN FOR CULTURAL ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

LCG shall adopt a strategic master plan for the cultural entertainment industry by December, 2009.

Commentary: There are few geographic regions – nationally or globally – that have the cultural mystique of Acadiana. Lafayette, the region's capital, is second only to New Orleans in state tourism. By investing in the creation of a cultural entertainment industry and entertainment-related businesses, with a particular focus on the indigenous Cajun and Zydeco music forms, LCG will create an incalculable cultural and economic multiplier effect. Note: As a direct result of CERC subcommittee meetings, the Acadiana Arts Council and Lafayette Economic Development Authority have created the Louisiana Crossroads Initiative, a research and development effort concentrated on the creation of a niche music industry to include performance, broadcasting, recording, management, production and manufacturing. The flagship of the initiative, the Louisiana Crossroads music series, is a production partnership between the arts council and public radio station KRVS.

10.5 ESTABLISH A PERCENT-FOR-PUBLIC-ART PROGRAM

A Percent-for-Public-Art Program shall be established.

Commentary: Public art programs use a small fraction of total construction budgets from public construction projects for creation and installation of artwork accessible to the general public. Works may range from sculptures to murals to artisan-designed building elements such as stair railings or light fixtures. Public art programs add character to public buildings and improve the image of the urban area for residents and visitors alike.

10.6 EXPAND ARTS FACILITIES

To support the unique and thriving local cultural ecology, Lafayette shall continue to expand its arts facilities, including a 200-300 seat theater, possibly as part of a library expansion; a 500-800 seat theater; and a visual arts museum meeting museum industry standards and providing flexible space for rehearsals, workshops, meetings, and administrative functions of community arts organizations.

Commentary: As Lafayette continues to grow and prosper, expectations about the availability and variety of quality arts and cultural spaces will rise. In the 40-plus years since the construction of the Heymann Performing Arts Center, Lafayette has grown in population, economics, education, and the arts. However, the availability and variety of community-accessible venues has not grown to reflect the true potential of the Lafayette market.

10.7 DESIGNATE AN ARTS DISTRICT

LCG shall designate an arts district in which the cultural entertainment industry can center, thus creating economies of scale and increasing the number of venues within close proximity and within easy access of local patrons and tourists.

Commentary: As is true with retail clustering, the proximity of arts-related businesses and venues one to another stimulates overall market visibility and patronage. Cities such as Memphis, New Orleans, Branson, Nashville and Austin have all successfully developed cultural/arts clusters.

**Lafayette City-Parish Planning Commission
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Comprehensive Master Plan**

**RECREATION & OPEN SPACE
ELEMENTS**

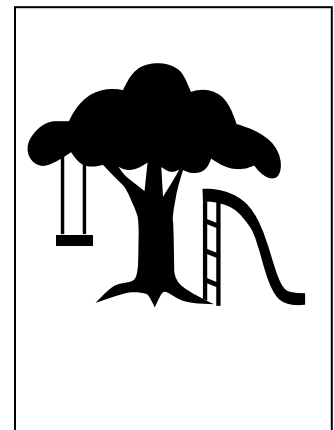
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Lafayette Consolidated Government
Traffic & Transportation Department



Metropolitan Planning Organization
Comprehensive Planning Division

PREFACE

Lafayette is a rapidly growing urban area and there is a need to provide adequate recreational spaces and services in the face of increasing population growth and economic development in Lafayette Parish. Steps should be taken to increase the variety and number of recreational opportunities available to current residents and to provide for the increased demands of the future comparable to other comparable cities in the south:

Non-Capital Recreation Funding in Southeast & Southwest Cities		
City	Population	Per Capita Expenditure
Savannah, GA	130,000	\$71.59
Irving, TX	180,000	\$69.86
Chattanooga, TN	147,000	\$67.14
Winston-Salem City, NC	168,000	\$58.85
Shreveport, LA	187,000	\$57.48
Chandler, AZ	170,000	\$45.58
East Baton Rouge Parish	480,000	\$44.31
Little Rock, AR	180,000	\$37.50
LCG, Lafayette, LA	164,472	\$32.90
Arlington, TX	315,000	\$27.23
<i>*From respective city budgets online and interviews with city officials.</i>		

11.1 FUND GRANT WRITER POSITIONS FOR RECREATIONAL PLANNING

Lafayette Consolidated Government should fund necessary grant writer positions for the purposes of obtaining additional federal, state and private funding for recreation programs and planning for Lafayette Parish. This position will focus on procurement of grants to help build resources for recreation and open space initiatives in the community and coordinating between and among LCG departments for such grants.

Commentary: Lafayette Consolidated Government should make the obtaining of funds for increased recreational opportunities a top priority. Limited local resources hamper this effort. A full-time grant position dedicated solely for recreation and open space programs should more than offset the payroll cost within two years. Federal, state and private agencies and foundations are in place to help local governments facilitate such programs. This new position is a good investment that can pay for itself within a short term. Grant writing is a time-consuming process and calls for technical knowledge and expertise. A grant writer can generate revenues and this is a necessary goal.

11.2 PER CAPITA STANDARD FOR OPERATING REVENUE

Lafayette Parish operating revenue for the Recreation Department shall be increased to a per capita standard based on parish population.

Commentary: The introductory table to this element is a reasonably accurate comparison (apples to apples) to the Lafayette Recreation Department. Winston-Salem, North Carolina has an excellent program and model to follow and could be the goal and standard to follow. The Parish property tax millage is the logical and practical source for increased public funding for recreation and open space development. The Parish municipalities have varying degrees of funding for their respective recreation programs. The fragmentation and inconsistency should be stabilized with a Parish-wide base of support. A minimal per capita annual funding in the amount of \$60 should be achieved within the next few years and sustained through periodic increases. Recreation is a quality of life issue for the Parish and should be supported as both a benefit for Parish residents and an asset to economic development.

11.3 SOLICIT DONATIONS FOR PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

The appropriate agency of municipal governments shall actively solicit land donations for parks and open space based on the overall needs and plan for the Parish.

Commentary: Private donations of land to both government and private foundations are encouraged for the purposes of establishing parks and protecting environmentally or culturally significant sites/open spaces for current and future generations. The parish cannot wait for urban development to create the shortage of available sites and opportunities. There should be an on-going program to acquire and secure appropriate locations well in advance of need. But these potential park and open space sites must be part and compatible with the Comprehensive Master Plan for the Parish.

11.4 ESTABLISH NEIGHBORHOOD AND POCKET PARKS

Neighborhood parks and pocket parks shall be established in both new and existing neighborhoods.

Commentary: Residents are increasingly demanding public spaces and playgrounds in their neighborhoods. Pocket parks are small parks in neighborhoods or commercial developments that allow for a wide variety of uses, sometimes just a little garden or green space, sometimes a playground, etc. Pocket parks can be made from vacant lots, corner lots that are too close to commercial uses, areas that are prone to flood, or are unusually shaped and cannot be built upon. Setting aside a small parcel for recreation and green space will enhance the attractiveness of our neighborhoods and accomplish many of the goals of this plan. Maintenance should be coordinated through neighborhood organizations with the assistance of LCG.

11.5 ACQUIRE AREA FOR PARKS

The City-Parish shall acquire, at a minimum, eight (8) twenty-five acre parcels for area parks. After study the following locales were selected:

- 1) North of Gloria Switch Road, East of I-49, West of Bayou Vermilion
- 2) West of North University Avenue, North of Ira Street
- 3) South of Gloria Switch, West of Ambassador Caffery North and North of I-10
- 4) West of Coulee Isle des Cannes, South of I-10 and North of Ridge Road
- 5) South of East Broussard Road, East of Johnston St. and West of Bayou Vermilion
- 6) East of East Broussard Road, South of Vincent Road and West of Verot School Rd
- 7) South of Fortune Road, West of La. Hwy. 89, and East of Verot School Road
- 8) East of La. Hwy. 89, South of Ambassador Caffery South, and West of Hwy. 90

Commentary: Over the next century, the population of Lafayette will expand and become more prosperous and urban. Therefore, the demand for parks and recreational activities will increase substantially. Twenty-five acres is generally considered the minimum requirement for a park serving an area larger than a single neighborhood. Diversity in the kinds of park facilities available to residents is necessary. Parks should be not just for ball fields, but for passive recreation as well. There should be clearly defined green spaces for passive recreation, such as hiking, public art, picnics, et cetera.

11.6 IMPROVE AND EXPAND PUBLIC ACCESS TO BAYOU VERMILION

Public access to the Bayou Vermilion for recreation should be improved and expanded.

Commentary: The Bayou Vermilion is a necessary resource for all the people of Lafayette, and should be seen as such. People who use a waterway for recreation are less likely to use it as a dumping ground. The Bayou Vermilion District is tasked with the responsibility to improve the Bayou Vermilion through water quality and recreation use. Development along the river should be encouraged to provide public viewing and access

along the Bayou with the ultimate goal being to further increase recreational use along this water through the parish.

11.7 BUILD BIKE TRAILS THROUGHOUT PARISH

Bike trails/ways shall be built throughout the Parish, including along major and minor arterials following a comprehensive plan for such a system. These trails shall be separated from the roadways thereby keeping municipality liability to a minimum.

Commentary: Most humans have the ability to ride a bike. It is generally an accepted form of transportation for adolescents. Many university students still ride a bike to school out of convenience if not necessity. Many adults would ride a bike today if practical and safe routes could be identified and developed for their recreational use. The federal government has been promoting the construction of bikeways as an alternative mode of transportation.

11.8 CONSIDER STORMWATER DRAINAGE/RETENTION FACILITIES FOR RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Stormwater Drainage/Retention facilities shall be considered for potential recreational development throughout the parish.

Commentary: There is a need for localized and possibly regional storm water retention/detention facilities and recommends such facilities be constructed in accordance with the results of a parish-wide comprehensive drainage study. Agencies such as the BVD and DEQ need to cooperate in the construction of these facilities. It is imperative that Lafayette Parish construct and maintain retention facilities in order to accommodate the runoff from increased commercial and residential development. These facilities will: a) alleviate the flooding which regularly disrupts the parish; b) provide a source of recreation and therefore economic benefit/ revenue for the area; c) encourage eco-tourism; d) employ a considerable workforce and; e) supply dirt for the berms and landscaping throughout the parish. Such a facility could incorporate University programs in wildlife management and renewable resources.

11.9 COMMUNITY PUBLIC GARDENS

Community public gardens should be established on available vacant lots.

Commentary: There is a need for putting vacant residential lots owned by the City-Parish to productive use, rather than allowing them to become overgrown and littered. There have been many successful public garden programs in urban areas, both large and small, throughout the US and guidelines are available from HUD that will help neighborhoods plan their projects.

11.10 ESTABLISH LINEAR PARKS

Linear parks along streets, waterways, and arterials shall be established.

Commentary: Linear Parks take advantage of physical and manmade corridors which are pre-existing or planned. They allow for a variety of uses, especially walking, jogging, or biking, and can serve to screen residential areas from roadways and protect right-of-ways from encroachment by adjacent land uses. Linear parks are proposed as an integral part of the Camellia Blvd. and I-49 Connector projects and should be planned when new roadways are built through established residential areas.

11.11 CONSTRUCT BUS STOP SHELTERS AND BENCHES

Bus stops shall have shelters and benches and shall be constructed with shade in mind, especially trees. These shelters are recommended to double as bike route/way recreational rest stops following a comprehensive bikeway plan.

Commentary: Making the transit service more user-friendly safe and attractive will help accomplish the goals of the Comprehensive Master Plan as well as provide recreational bike riders with convenient rest stops throughout the parish-wide transit and bikeway system. Bus stop shelters can double as bikeway rest stops in addition to serving as a pedestrian rest stop where adequate sidewalks are installed or planned.

11.12 SUPPORT EXPANSION OF ACADIANA NATURE STATION

LCG shall financially support the expansion of the Acadiana Nature Station to encourage eco-tourism, as well as consider construction of additional nature stations throughout the parish.

Commentary: The Acadiana Nature Station is a valuable resource for locals as well as a potential draw for visitors who wish to experience the natural beauty south Louisiana has to offer. Wetlands located around this facility should be acquired both to protect the existing trails and station and to increase the potential nature areas for eco-tourism opportunities. Additional nature stations need not be confined to wetland areas.

11.13 MULTI-PURPOSE RECREATIONAL CENTERS

Multi-purpose recreation centers are needed outside the corporate limits of the City of Lafayette.

Commentary: Sufficient capital dollars have been made available by City of Lafayette sales tax collections to fund recreation improvements within the corporate limits. Unfortunately, the parish revenue is grossly insufficient to develop and maintain parks, much less recreation centers in the unincorporated suburban areas. This inadequacy emphasizes the need for new parish revenue particularly dedicated to recreation needs.

11.14 ADDITIONAL GOLFCOURSES

A fourth golf course should be planned for the western portion of the parish south of I-10, and additional golf courses should be planned for throughout the parish in the future.

Commentary: The growth and popularity of golf particularly with the "Baby Boomers" makes it incumbent on the Consolidated Government to prepare for a fourth golf course in that portion of the parish currently lacking either a private or public course. Potentially, this fourth proposed golf course could be designed and planned in conjunction with a major area retention/detention facility in the western area of the parish. Though golf courses support themselves, there remains the cost of purchase and construction. However, combining the two uses together makes sense to committee members and it is strongly recommended that a feasibility study be made for operation and maintenance of such a combined operation.

11.15 DOUBLE RECREATIONAL ACREAGE OVER NEXT 100 YEARS

Assuming a doubling of the Lafayette Parish population (2000 Census = 190,500) over the next one hundred years and assuming the current recreation acreage (1,500 acres) is adequate for the current population, then the Consolidated Government shall put processes in place immediately which will double the recreation acreage over the next one hundred years at a rate of fifteen acres per year.

Commentary: Existing park properties within the parish have been developed. There should be more. The City-Parish must prepare a comprehensive plan for recreation and open space and develop the resources to implement the plan, particularly in the acquisition of property on a consistent and timely basis and where it will be needed.

11.16 ESTABLISH LAFAYETTE RECREATIONAL ACTION TEAM

A Lafayette Recreation Action Team should be established to promote and secure organized national sports competition and recreational facility uses in Lafayette Parish Parks and Recreation Centers.

Commentary: Lafayette City-Parish Recreational Facilities should be utilized to the greatest degree practical for both local users and for national recreational competitions. A special recreational marketing team targeted to the needs of national competitions should be organized to promote Lafayette for selected national meets. The economic potential of sponsoring national competitions locally is only limited by the efficient operations and use of available facilities. Similar to the Lafayette Visitors and Convention Center staff support, this proposed Recreation Action Team would be specialized to determine the best matches of local facilities and accommodations to the national recreational competition needs. Local sports participants and parents are generally time strapped to take on the hosting of national competitions. A local staff team designed to help coordinate such events would greatly expand the opportunity to host these national competitions. A minimum of three staff should be established to initiate the Recreation

Action Team which may possibly be supported in the long term through a competitive fee structure. The feasibility of the economic impact of this investment should be made.

11.17 FORM COMMUNITY SERVICE CORPS

A Community Service Corps (CSC) should be formed and organized by the Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government and area municipalities to foster responsibilities and support in high school students on the needs and progress of their community.

Commentary: Many of the open space & recreation elements will require additional employees paid under the operation and maintenance limitations of local government. There exists a pool of available resources in the youth of our community who should be introduced to and experience the overwhelming needs of the community and the responsibilities of civic participation. The Community Service Corps would be limited to high school students who are interested in committing two hours per week to selected work tasks needed by the community. The CSC would be organized and chartered by the Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government. Supervisors would be hired by local private support groups to manage the activities and work of the CSC volunteers. Public funding should be very limited. The program priority should be the training and experience of teenagers in supporting the public needs of the community on an on-going basis. This program could be mandatory for all high school students. There could be a part time wage paid after a set number of hours in the program similar to the Civilian Conservation Corps established during the Depression.

11.18 MAINTAINING PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Maintaining public parks and open spaces shall be raised to a new community standard with a dependable source of revenue.

Commentary: There is a minimal level of maintenance at most public park and open space areas. Rather than landscaped areas, grass and ordinary trees and shrubs appear to be the norm. More is required to improve the on-going appearance of these areas. The Community Service Corps (CSC) may be a good resource to start with in moving the aesthetics of public parks and open spaces throughout the parish.

11.19 PREPARE COMPREHENSIVE PARK AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

A Comprehensive Park and Open Space Plan for Lafayette Parish should be prepared by December, 2009 and Lafayette Consolidated Government Recreation budgets should be divided annually into three categories: a) Operation and Maintenance, b) Capital Construction and c) Property Acquisition with a minimal funding of 20% of total recreation appropriations made to each of the three categories.

Commentary: Economic conditions fluctuate and government sales tax revenues fluctuate accordingly. Budget restrictions should not hamper sound planning. The best time to invest in business is often in the worst economic times. Future park and recreation

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properties may best be acquired during slowdowns in the local economy. The future appears bright for Lafayette Parish and we must strive to build a quality of life for succeeding generations to enjoy and share. Those generations may well be our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

SPECIAL AREAS:

Lafayette City-Parish Planning Commission Lafayette IN a Century (LINC) Comprehensive Master Plan

Downtown Development Authority Growth Management Program
Clerk of Court Recordation Date: October 29, 2007