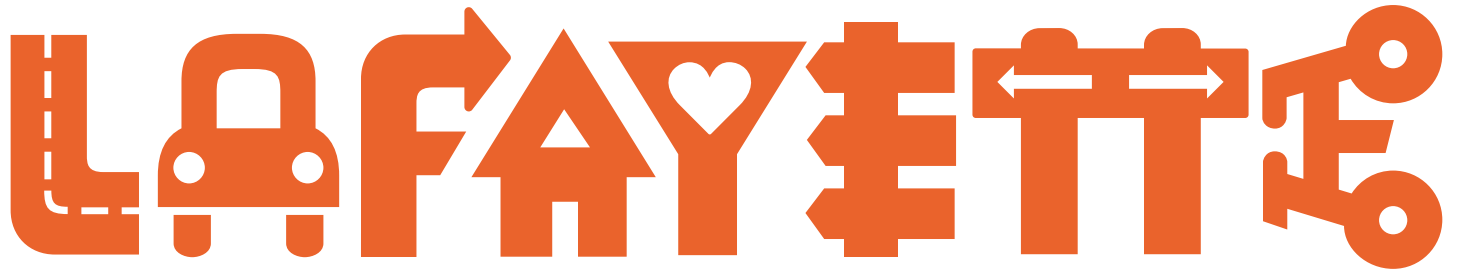


Plan



our people.

our community.

our economy.



Plan

Lafayette

OUR VISION 2035

In 2035, Lafayette is one of the nation's most exceptional communities, renowned for its rich Cajun and Creole heritage, its creative scene and culture of innovation, and its authentic 'joie de vivre.' Fueled by its desirable quality of life, its highly educated workforce and the community's entrepreneurial spirit, Lafayette has attracted substantial investment and growth. This growth has been managed and absorbed in a manner that allowed Lafayette to retain its small town neighborliness and unique way of life.

The Lafayette comprehensive plan has galvanized the community and has guided our political leadership in their decision making, keeping us on track and making steady progress toward realizing our Vision. Through a bold collaboration and an ongoing conversation among our engaged citizenry and our local government and institutional partners, *we have realized our Vision by leveraging our assets, correcting shortcomings and balancing our priorities for what makes our community outstanding.*



O U R
P E O P L E



O U R
C O M M U N I T Y



O U R
E C O N O M Y

Our Community: Its Character, Form and Function

Our People: A Vibrant Culture of Creativity, Innovation, and Compassion

Our Economy: The Prosperity of Our People

Prepared May 2014

PlanLafayette



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Capital One Bank – *Blake Cormier*
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Heymann Performing Arts Center
Holden Heights Neighborhood
Holy Rosary Institute
Iberia Bank – *N. Jerome Vasco, Jr.*
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Lafayette Economic Development Authority – *Gregg Gothreaux*
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Lafayette Parish Master Gardeners
Lafayette Public School System
Lafayette Science Museum – *Kevin Krantz*
Leadership Institute of Acadiana – *Rob Robison*
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Regions Bank – *David Landry*
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LIST OF ACRONYMS USED

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
CD	Community Development
CDO	Chief Development Officer
EQ	Environmental Quality Division- Public Works
FD	Fire Department
IS&T	Information Systems & Technology Department
LCG	Lafayette Consolidated Government
LPLS	Lafayette Public Library System
LPSS	Lafayette Public School System
LPSO	Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Office
LTS	Lafayette Transit System
LUS	Lafayette Utility Systems
OFM	Office of Finance and Management
PW	Public Works Department
PZD	Planning, Zoning and Development Department
P&R	Parks and Recreation Department
PD	Police Department

OTHER ENTITIES

AcA	Acadiana Center for the Arts
AEDC	Acadiana Economic Development Council
ARDD	Acadiana Regional Development District
BVD	Bayou Vermilion District
CPCAC	Comprehensive Plan Citizen Advisory Committee
CPTRT	Comprehensive Plan Technical Resource Team
DDA	Downtown Development Authority
DDC	Development and Design Center
DEQ	(Louisiana) Department of Environmental Quality
DLU	Downtown Lafayette Unlimited
DOTD	(Louisiana) Department of Transportation and Development
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GLCC	Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce
LCVC	Lafayette Convention and Visitors Commission
LDNR	Louisiana Department of Natural Resources
LDCRT	Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation & Tourism
LEDA	Lafayette Economic Development Authority
LED	Louisiana Economic Development
LHA	Lafayette Housing Authority

LHC	Louisiana Housing Corporation
LTA	Louisiana Transportation Authority
LWC	Louisiana Workforce Commission
MPO	Metropolitan Planning Organization
NRT	National Recreation Trails
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Services
PAL	Preservation Alliance of Lafayette
SBA	Small Business Administration
SLCC	South Louisiana Community College
UL	University of Louisiana at Lafayette
WRT	Wallace, Roberts and Todd

MISCELLANEOUS TERMS

AM	Access Management
BID	Business Improvement District
BMP	Best Management Practice
CDD	Community Development District
CDE	Community Development Entity
CIP	Capital Investment Planning or Capital Improvement Program (per context)
CLG	Certified Local Government
CPTED	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (Lafayette) Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan
CTP	(Lafayette) Consolidated Thoroughfare Plan
FLUM	Future Land Use Map
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
GIS	Geographic Information System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HR	Human Resources
ITS	Intelligent Transportation System
LINC	Lafayette in a Century
LOS	Level of Service
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
NMTC	New Markets Tax Credit
O&M	Operations and Management
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
R&D	Research and Development
ROI	Return on Investment
RPI	Reduced Phase Intersection
SOV	Single Occupancy Vehicle
TDM	Travel Demand Management
TIF	Tax Increment Financing
TSM	Transportation Systems Management
UDC	Unified Development Code



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PLANLAFAYETTE



OUR FUTURE

our Lafayette

With the adoption of PlanLafayette, our city and parish enters a bold new era, one of optimism and confidence with a clear direction forward.

For the first time in our history:

- We are motivated by a unified vision - one that reflects our shared values, as well as our diversity.
- We are confident in a framework for growth and investment that will guide us toward a future of prosperity, resiliency, and leadership in innovation.
- We have an action agenda that will ensure we will gain immediate traction and sustained progress and success building upon success over time.
- We have a new way of looking at our community.



We see our neighborhoods and downtown as opportunities for reinvestment and enhanced livability.



We see our natural resources – our bayous, wetlands, coulees – not just as areas that present flooding challenges, but as elements of a green infrastructure that connects our community, in that it enhances our essential character and defines our way of life.



We have a new attitude and structure for governance, one in which we are ensured a return on investment of our tax dollars. Actions and investments by local government create synergies with those of businesses and institutions, united in new partnerships for prosperity.



We have a framework to continue to reinvent and reinvest in our Hub City, embracing our heritage, celebrating our culture, while creating fertile ground for technical innovation to strengthen our economic prominence within our region and our nation.

LAFAYETTE 2035 VISION STATEMENT

VERSUS

NO PLAN (TREND GROWTH) SCENARIO

Managed growth and development in a manner that conserved land and natural resources ...

- Development in sensitive environmental areas
- Viability of agriculture in the parish impacted
- Investment in new or expanded parks, police, fire, and infrastructure required
- Strain increased on Lafayette's fiscal health and government's ability to fund services

Enhanced mobility... road network efficiency and connectivity, expanded transit choices, and bicycle and pedestrian friendly streets.

- Most new development (90%) located more than 1/4 mile from an existing bus transit line
- Bulk of transportation network will be auto-oriented (lack of access to transit and long travel distances)
- Inadequate sidewalks and few bike paths

Safe neighborhoods, expanded housing/lifestyle choices among diverse urban, suburban and rural settings.

- Most residential development is low density, disconnected single-family subdivisions

Downtown is active with new housing, retail, entertainment... day/ night activity

- Majority of new development and investment scattered throughout unincorporated Lafayette Parish, in areas south of I-10 and west of the city

Reversed blight... targeted initiatives to restore, revitalize, and rebuild along older highway corridors, nodes and interstate gateways into the community

- Level of Service on key corridors (e.g., Ambassador Caffery, Kaliste Saloom, Pinhook) will decline from additional traffic volumes. Travel times will increase

WHY DO WE PLAN?

Over the last two decades, Lafayette Parish's population increased by about 34%, from approximately 164,000 to more than 221,000 residents. Lafayette has also experienced one of the fastest growing economies in the nation, with a GDP that grew by 8.3% between 2009 and 2010, compared to 2.5% nationally. The Lafayette MSA ranked 24th of 200 metro areas in the "Best Performing Cities Index" in 2012 for its ability to create and sustain jobs and to foster economic growth. This healthy growth is projected to continue for the foreseeable future, with the expected addition of more than 66,000 new residents (expected in the city and unincorporated parish) and nearly 30,000 new jobs, between 2010 and 2030.

Growth has brought many positive changes to Lafayette, but other changes are negative. While the city has gained population, adjacent municipalities and outlying areas in the parish that are prone to flooding are growing at a faster rate. As a result of this scattered growth pattern, many of our roadways are becoming increasingly congested and over capacity. Transit coverage remains inefficient due to low densities of sprawling development. Efficient provision of adequate infrastructure and community services and amenities (such as quality schools or parks and recreation programs) is becoming fiscally infeasible. Furthermore, with the expected population and economic growth in the next two decades, Lafayette's infrastructure and services will need to be upgraded and expanded to support future demand.

PlanLafayette provides the framework for addressing these issues and problems in ways that will allow our community to achieve our aspirations to:

- enhance the places where we live, work and play;
- support and attract businesses and promote entrepreneurship;
- strengthen the image we project to the world;
- maintain our economic competitiveness; and
- to do all these things in a fiscally efficient manner, leveraging our assets and turning challenges into opportunities.

What are the key trends in Lafayette?

1 OUR POPULATION & ECONOMY ARE GROWING...

Lafayette Parish is projected to grow by 40%... from 221,578 in 2010 to more than 310,000 by 2030. If development continues at current residential densities, nearly 32,000 acres will need to be developed to support the growth in population. However, the parish only has 172,800 total acres.



2 WE LACK FUNDING FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

Inadequate funding for new infrastructure projects
Over 90,000 new residents will move to Lafayette Parish in the next two decades. Lafayette's transportation infrastructure will need to be modernized and expanded to support new demand. However, the average annual capital improvement budget is less than \$50 million, with only about \$20 million dedicated to roads and bridges, while the cost for each additional mile of new four-lane divided roadway averages over \$18 million!



3 WE ARE NOT FULLY INVESTING IN OUR QUALITY OF LIFE

Sidewalks and bike paths are incomplete
Segments of sidewalks and bike paths exist throughout Lafayette. However, many are incomplete and do not provide a safe and effective route of travel. About 62% of the city and 33% of the parish has sidewalk coverage.



4 WE CONTINUE TO BE CHALLENGED BY FLOODING

Large swaths of the parish are located within the 100-year flood zone
This means developments within these areas have higher flood insurance rates and increased risk of property damage from flood events. If new development continues in flood-prone areas, the risk of flooding due to greater amounts of impervious surfaces will increase.



PLANNING PROCESS



Residents discuss opportunities for the future at Community Forum 1 at Holy Rosary Institute



Residents participate in the Community Vision Open House

The PlanLafayette process was organized into three major work phases:

- **PHASE 1:** The work conducted in this phase included numerous interviews with representatives of community interests and organizations, the collection of a vast amount of data and, perhaps most importantly, the creation of two committees to provide policy guidance and technical support to LCG and the consultant team. The first committee, the Comprehensive Plan Citizen Advisory Committee (CPCAC), a 30+ member group, was appointed to represent broad community interests, facilitate community consensus, promote public ownership of the planning process and advise the City-Parish Council. The second committee, the Comprehensive Plan Technical Resource Team (CPTRT), consists of designated LCG staff and representatives from non-LCG entities, has the role of providing special expertise and access to information and resources at key steps throughout the process, and will serve as LCG’s partner in the implementation of the adopted plan.
- **PHASE 2:** The second phase of work consisted of three major tracks, all involving extensive community engagement:
 - *Vision Statement:* The Vision Statement describes the future that we, as a community, collectively aspire to achieve for Lafayette 20 years from now. The Vision Statement represents the “destination” to the comprehensive plan’s roadmap.
 - *Community Assessment and Trend Growth:* including an exhaustive analysis of Lafayette’s current built, natural, functional, demographic, economic, and regulatory conditions and trends, as well as the development of a Trend Growth (No Plan) Scenario that depicts where growth is most likely to occur in Lafayette over the next two decades, assuming no comprehensive plan is adopted and current policies and regulations remain unchanged. This “picture of the likely future” was compared to and found to be incompatible with the aspirations painted in the Vision Statement in a number of ways.
 - *Scenario Alternatives:* Three scenarios (Multi-Center Growth, Balanced Growth, and Corridor Growth), along with the Trend Growth (No Plan) Scenario, were presented to the public for selection. The resulting Preferred Future Scenario blends the preferences and priorities expressed by the Lafayette community and served as the foundation for the Future Land Use Map and the Policy Framework of the comprehensive plan.

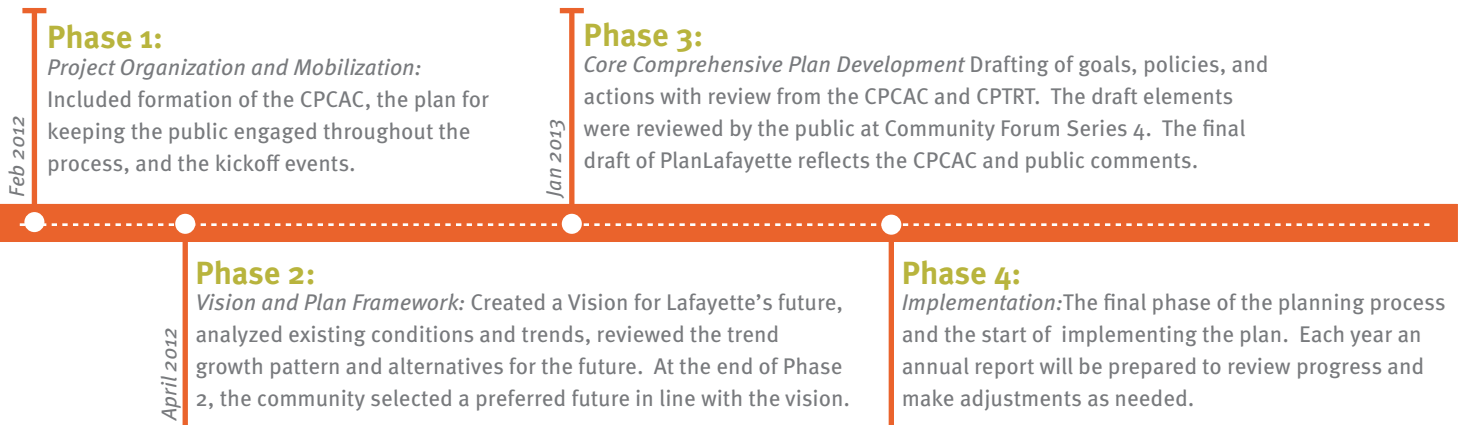
- PHASE 3: The final phase of the work program culminated in the production of the PlanLafayette document and executive summary.** PlanLafayette is divided into three major chapters, Vision, Elements, and Implementation. The Vision chapter presents the 20-year Lafayette Vision Statement. The Elements chapter contains the policy framework for the plan. Perhaps the most important part of any comprehensive plan, the Implementation chapter, contains a detailed plan to carry out the actions recommended in the policy framework, identifies responsibilities, partners, potential funding strategies, and mechanisms for tracking and evaluating progress. This chapter also contains methods and protocols recommended to facilitate inter- and intra-governmental coordination among the various entities that will have a role in implementing pieces of the comprehensive plan.



Residents throughout the parish participated in “shaping Lafayette” throughout the two-year process

Outreach

PlanLafayette was developed through a citizen-centered process that encouraged the entire community to contribute ideas for Lafayette’s future. Interactive public forums, workshops, open houses, portable “meetings in a box,” community events, and committee meetings provided more than 70 opportunities for direct citizen interaction and unprecedented dialogue. Complementary outreach ranging from media placements, phone calls, online surveys, e-blasts, social media, and many other tools broadened participation opportunities. In total, there were more than 7,000 points of citizen engagement during the PlanLafayette process, with an even greater media reach.



ELEMENTS & GOALS

The vision is written from a broad perspective. Each of the plan elements include goals, policies, and actions that will implement the vision over the next 20 years. The monitoring and tracking of actions and metrics will show the measurable results and progress towards making the vision a reality.

1 Land Use

GOAL 1: Align land use, transportation, and utility planning with the FLUM.

GOAL 2: Create a clear process for land use and zoning review, land use planning, annexation, and extension of utilities.

GOAL 3: Strengthen local planning, regional planning and coordination with surrounding municipalities.

ACTION PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

1.8.2

Develop a “Return on Infrastructure Investment Tool” to accurately and comprehensively calculate the expected ROI to the public on prospective infrastructure investments.

Based on public input, a preferred growth scenario was selected, one that reverses the trend of spreading out in a disconnected fashion, and instead focuses growth and development in mixed-use centers and corridors with greater access to transit, jobs, walkable neighborhoods, and parks and recreation. The “preferred scenario” is projected to consume less land, reduce costs associated with road, water and sewer extensions, and encourage walkable, mixed-use development patterns.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Uncertainty of future land uses, weak regulations, and lack of predictability for developers and property owners, especially in unincorporated areas of the parish despite the recently adopted land use ordinance.
- Obsolescence and disinvestment in older neighborhoods and commercial corridors.
- Fragmented development patterns and segregated residential, commercial, and industrial land uses impacting the viability of agricultural land use in the unincorporated parish.
- Continued growth pressures in the southern portion of the parish, in areas near Youngsville, Broussard, and Milton, which are placing strain on water and sewer services, roads, drainage, environmental resources and water quality, and community services such as schools.
- Assembling and replatting land and/or securing financing for mixed-use development, especially downtown.
- Retrofitting commercial, auto oriented corridors into mixed-use, pedestrian friendly transportation corridors.
- New FIRMs expansion of land classified as located within the floodway, 100 and 500 year floodplains and risk of flooding as impervious surfaces increase and development occurs in flood prone areas.
- Maintenance and upgrades for water, drainage, road/sidewalk, utilities, and sewer infrastructure in older, urban areas of the city.
- Increasing transit service to accommodate a growing and aging population and provide alternative modes of transportation to reach jobs and services.
- Concerns regarding impacts of the I-49 Connector project on surrounding land uses, community character, and pedestrian connectivity downtown and through neighborhoods.
- Lack of accurate, parcel-based land use information in GIS to track and plan for land use changes in the parish.
- Lack of a streamlined process for reducing the number of adjudicated properties in the parish and bringing them into productive use.
- Existing islands of unincorporated areas within the city limits.
- Lack of clear annexation policies and criteria (e.g., positive economic impact to city, adjacency to existing developed area) for annexing land into city of Lafayette.



2 Community Character

GOAL 1: Encourage a diverse range of housing opportunities and choices.

GOAL 2: Promote quality housing and encourage the rehabilitation and/or reuse of declining housing stocks.

GOAL 3: Develop and facilitate affordable housing opportunities for low income households.

GOAL 4: Protect and revitalize neighborhoods and assets.

ACTION PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

2.2.4

Integrate planning efforts of downtown, UL, and the Oil Center recognizing that they define the core of Lafayette.

As it pertains to population, Lafayette’s rich Cajun and Creole heritage, its creative scene and culture of innovation, and authentic “joie de vivre” combine to create a unique and attractive place. Combine these aspects with the built environment and that is the focus of the Community Character element - how the community looks and feels. This is of critical importance and is defined by how we protect, maintain, and create desirable neighborhoods, how we encourage compatible and diverse land uses, how we provide for ease of mobility, and how we protect cultural and natural resources.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- While downtown captures Lafayette’s unique history and culture, it lacks an established residential population and attractive and functional connections to surrounding areas.
- Major roadway corridors are designed nearly exclusively for automobiles-- decreasing walkability-- and for the provision of public utilities which results in unappealing visual clutter that detracts from the community’s overall sense of place.
- Major roadway corridors are flanked by segregated, single-use commercial development creating unappealing edges to residential neighborhoods without offering substantive choices for amenities or services.
- Lack of adequate, coordinated, and context sensitive standards for roadway and streetscape design.
- Lack of tree canopy and functional landscaping along corridors to provide physical buffers and visual screening detracts from the overall experience and character of the community.
- The existing architectural character of Lafayette’s commercial corridors does not convey the cultural heritage of the community.
- Obsolete and underutilized single-use commercial centers with expansive parking lots are in need of adaptive reuse or redevelopment.
- Disconnected and dispersed development in the unincorporated parish is threatening the rural character and viability of agricultural land use.
- Deteriorating infrastructure, vacant and blighted properties, and poorly maintained streetscape and housing in some older and historic neighborhoods.
- Lack of adequate green space and opportunities for residents to engage in healthful recreational activities.
- Lack of protection and public access to water resources, particularly coulees located within the city limits.

ELEMENTS & GOALS

3 Housing & Neighborhoods

GOAL 1: Preserve And Capitalize On Lafayette's Unique Character.

GOAL 2: Project An Attractive Community Image.

GOAL 3: Strengthen the character of downtown and its surrounding areas and neighborhoods.

GOAL 4: Direct growth toward mixed-use centers and major corridors.

ACTION PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

3.2.6 Encourage adaptive reuse of buildings for housing.

3.5.2 Use New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) to incentivize investment in lower-income communities.

Lafayette has a broad range of diverse neighborhoods that contribute to the parish's community and residential character. As primary places of residence, neighborhoods and housing units have significant impact on residents' daily activities and are the foundation of a safe, enjoyable community in which to live. Providing high quality, affordable, and diverse housing choices throughout the parish is essential to the future prosperity of Lafayette.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Housing inventory that consists primarily of single family homes. Greater diversity of housing choices is desirable to meet the needs of all type of households, especially those with very low incomes, single person households, retirees, and young adults and families.
- UL provides a limited amount of on campus student housing and, as a result, there are a large number of students living and renting in the surrounding areas downtown. The university is currently building housing that will help to strike a better balance between rental and owner occupied housing, but the need is expected to continue.
- Neighborhood resistance to poorly-designed affordable housing and other types of multifamily housing.
- Need for greater diversity of housing, especially downtown, and flexible parking standards based on the type of development.
- Need for additional high quality affordable housing inventory to meet the needs of families below 40 percent of median income, as well as, the homeless and those who are about to become homeless.
- Preserving the character of older, historic neighborhoods while new development occurs – and maintaining older housing in existing neighborhoods.
- Managing the potential impacts of the future I-49 Connector in surrounding neighborhoods.



4 Historical & Cultural Resources

GOAL 1: Promote and highlight key historical and cultural resources.

GOAL 2: Increase community-wide arts and cultural access and education.

GOAL 3: Value economic impact of arts and culture in the creative economy.

ACTION PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

4.4.3 Celebrate the cultural history of Lafayette by increasing community awareness through the design of public projects and facilities such as parks, plazas, and community buildings.

4.5.5 Work with neighboring communities to expand cultural programming throughout the region.

Culture stands at the core of every great city, but in Lafayette culture is essential to people's daily lives. From Festivals to Fais Do-Dos, from the Culinary Arts to Grammy-winning music, from extraordinary exhibits to theater and dance - Lafayette's culture is what makes Lafayette unique, distinct and tied together. The AcA serves the region as a cultural hub through community development, grant making, arts-in-education, exhibits, career development, public art and all things performing arts on large and small stages.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Maintenance and preservation of older structures of historical and cultural value.
- Reuse of existing historically or culturally significant structures.
- Coordination and reduction of overlap between historical and cultural organizations.
- Limited state and local funding for arts and culture.
- Access to arts and culture in underserved areas, schools, and neighborhoods that lack resources to get to performance venues.
- Managing potential conflicts between arts and cultural events and festivals and the growing downtown population.
- Communicating value of arts, culture, and local history in economic terms.

ELEMENTS & GOALS



5 Economic Development

GOAL 1: Produce more skilled workers locally for local jobs

GOAL 2: Broaden employment sectors that drive the parish economy.

GOAL 3: Continue to strengthen the identity and mix of uses in the downtown core.

ACTION PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

5-4-5
Leverage R&D activity at UL Lafayette to grow local business.

5-5-2
Offer targeted airlines marketing support or incentives to commit to Lafayette.

5-8.2
Increase residential and office uses downtown to help establish a 24 hour market for commercial success and increased pedestrian activity.

The comprehensive plan presents a key opportunity to align economic strategies within the broader community planning context. As a result, the economic development element of the plan identifies key challenges or hurdles for the future of the parish as it relates to investment and job growth. These can be addressed through changes or investments in land use polices, infrastructure, housing, education, tourism and other plan elements.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Need for a greater number of qualified workers with technical skills to meet the needs of the local economy.
- Limited airport service to attract a wide range of global corporations outside of petroleum and health care.
- Somewhat limited diversity in economy with a dependence upon three major industries, petroleum, health care and higher education, to drive the economy.
- Difficulty recruiting talented executives to Lafayette in the three primary industries. This difficulty can be traced to the perceived shortcomings of the public education system and the lack of employment opportunities in nonrelated industries.
- A significant agriculture and aquaculture sector whose fortunes are dependent upon the global commodities markets and the continued moving of production to lower cost- higher production agriculture markets around the world.
- Meeting the infrastructure needs of new development, including transportation and utilities, in fast growing areas of the parish.



6 Transportation & Mobility

GOAL 1: Preserve the existing and planned transportation system.

GOAL 2: Provide a multimodal transportation system that facilitates the operational efficiency and effective movement of both people and goods.

GOAL 3: Ensure safety for all users of transportation facilities and services.

GOAL 4: Identify the funding needed for LCG’s transportation system and potential sources for that funding.

ACTION PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

6.4.1

Adopt a “Complete Streets” policy with implementation strategies, to create and implement street improvement plans that balance the utilization of public right-of-ways between transit, automobiles/trucks, bicycles, and pedestrians.

Traffic congestion cannot be solved by simply building more road capacity because of limited funding and what is called induced demand. Induced demand means that improved roadway capacity inevitably attracts additional traffic because if the capacity of a roadway is increased, motorists will change their routes to take advantage of that improved roadway. Two principles that have guided the development of this plan have been to increase road network connectivity and expand the availability of alternative travel options – and make those options available wherever possible.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Improving the traffic efficiency of the road network, through improved access management, coordinated signal timing and improved street interconnectivity.
- Reducing SOV use and making transit more attractive to choice riders.
- Maintenance and preservation of existing transportation facilities to avoid expensive rehabilitation projects.
- Providing quality fixed transit service to urban and rural areas of the parish.
- Reducing congestion on existing Vermilion River crossings and building new crossings to increase connectivity across the river.
- Improving roadway connectivity (e.g., through road extensions) in previously developed areas.
- Expediting completion of the I-49 Connector.
- Implementation of Travel Demand Management (TDM) strategies such as ridesharing, staggered work hours etc., for more efficient use of transportation resources.
- Implementation of a comprehensive and interconnected pedestrian, bicycle, and trail system network as an integral part of regional transportation network.

ELEMENTS & GOALS

7 Utilities

GOAL 1: Coordinate with LUS to ensure that utilities incorporate the FLUM in the strategic planning of system expansions to provide adequate service to all customers in the service area.

GOAL 2: Continue to provide reliable service to all customers.

GOAL 3: Satisfy all environmental compliance regulations established by federal and state environmental agencies.

GOAL 4: Ensure adequate funding for needed existing infrastructure expansions and new facilities.

ACTION PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

7-4-4

Determine a source of annual funding for the systematic conversion of existing overhead facilities to underground facilities, in accordance with the long term master plan and determined priorities.

Since its inception in 1896, the LUS has been a driving force in shaping what Lafayette has become. These basic, yet necessary and critical services continue to be a foundation for residential, commercial and industrial development in the area. Today, LUS employs more than 530 people and operates as a department of LCG. As a publicly owned utility, LUS can provide its customers with competitive electric utility rates. In addition, LUS provides significant revenues to LCG through annual in lieu of tax payments thereby keeping taxes low and helping to support the city of Lafayette's general fund services including police and fire, parks and recreation, and community development. While focused on LUS, the following policies and actions also relate to Public Works and Planning, Zoning, and Development – realizing the need for continued coordination to strengthen these interrelationships.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Increasingly, stringent environmental regulations concerning air quality and wastewater treatment and discharge limits.
- Electric transmission capacity and reliability.
- Ability to grow the base of the LUS power system through annexation, consistent with the growth and land use policies of the comprehensive plan.
- Obtaining permits for new facilities and obtaining property for new or expanded facilities.
- Making timely investments in electric, water, wastewater and telecommunications systems to handle future growth.
- Ensuring safety and compliance in electric, water and wastewater systems.
- Addressing the need to increase energy generation, water production and wastewater treatment and plant infrastructure, including LUS Fiber, to meet future growth.
- Sludge management.
- Rural water district infrastructure upgrades are needed to meet current and future water demands especially in the area served by the Lafayette Parish Waterworks District North.



8 Community Facilities & Services

GOAL 1: Continue to provide reliable service to all customers.

GOAL 2: Support efforts to improve LPSS performance.

GOAL 3: Connect UL at Lafayette, Downtown, and surrounding neighborhoods.

GOAL 4: Encourage a range of technical training, adult education, and higher education opportunities in Lafayette.

GOAL 5: Enhance the role of community centers, libraries, and public buildings as centers of activity and neighborhood resources.

ACTION PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

8.9.1

Work with LPSS on facilities planning and continue the development of “Safe Routes to Schools” to encourage safe pedestrian paths with adequate lighting and traffic calming measures.

In addition to the state police and Lafayette Parish Sheriff’s Office, there are six municipal police departments, serving Lafayette, Carencro, Youngsville, Broussard, Scott, and Duson. The Lafayette Parish Sheriff’s Office serves unincorporated areas of the parish, and the state police serve the entire parish. The Lafayette Parish School System (LPSS) serves the entire Lafayette Parish. Lafayette has a relatively high percentage of students attending private schools; in 2009, 25% of all students (about 10,000 students) in Lafayette Parish attended private schools according to the National Center for Education Statistics. In addition to being a major employment industry in the parish, the healthcare system in Lafayette is an essential piece of overall community health and wellness. Based on several different health indicators (e.g., related to disease, lifestyles, health care, social and environmental factors, and the physical environment) Lafayette Parish ranks fifth in the state for overall healthy communities.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Continuing to provide high quality police, fire, and EMS services as the population grows.
- Reducing response times for fire departments and creating a workable system for sharing services among districts.
- Sharing resources and coordinating across municipal boundaries and with the larger Acadiana region.
- Addressing school facility needs, including buildings that are too large, too small, or in need of major repair or replacement.
- Ensuring that Lafayette graduates receive the training and skills needed to compete in the region’s economy and contribute to the vitality of the region.
- Lack of public trust in the school system.
- Strengthening relationship between UL and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Reducing overlap between community services and increasing resource sharing.

ELEMENTS & GOALS

9 Recreation & Open Space

GOAL 1: Operate and maintain Lafayette parks to provide opportunities for all residents to experience and enjoy the parish's open space and recreation.

GOAL 2: Expand role of parks and recreation in promoting healthy communities and opportunities for recreation.

GOAL 3: Utilize parks, recreation, open space, and waterways to expand the green infrastructure network.

ACTION PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

9.2.3
Create an integrated greenway network, connecting with the Park at the Horse Farm as a key location.

9.4.5
Communicate the value of parks and recreational programming.

At present the current park inventory, both active and passive, totals 1,500 acres, or 6.7 acres per 1,000 population in the parish. While this is well below what many comparably sized communities provide, Lafayette is unique in its outdoor recreation culture and extensive natural resources for fishing, hunting, boating and other forms of resource based recreation. Planning for future park and recreation needs is handicapped by the lack of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan identifying park development priorities, and tools to objectively determine them. These could include the creation of a set of Level of Service (LOS) standards for parks and recreational facilities, and for park spacing, tailored to the recreational preferences and participation rates unique to Lafayette, based on a recreational preferences and participation survey.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Funding for maintenance or expansion of existing parks and acquisition of new parks.
- Increased demand on urban and neighborhood parks, particularly in areas where growth is targeted (e.g., downtown parks, along University Avenue, and Johnston Street).
- Providing a range of accessible options for recreation, including walking, hiking, biking trails for a growing population.
- Lack of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan, as well as, LOS Standards to guide planning and measure needs and prioritizes future parks and recreation investments.
- Unlike other communities, no dedication or fee-in-lieu requirement for new development or a mechanism for the Parks and Recreation Department to accept and maintain small parcels of land.
- Lack of a greenway network of trails, bike paths, and sidewalks connecting parks and recreation centers.
- Ongoing maintenance needs for recreation centers, equipment, and parks, as well as, lack of funds to maintain small neighborhood and pocket parks; and little ability to incorporate new types of parks into the system.
- Lack of public access to the Vermilion River.



10 Resource Conservation & Hazard Mitigation

GOAL 1: Conserve and protect natural resources.

GOAL 2: Protect people and property from hazards.

ACTION PLAN HIGHLIGHTS:

10.1.2
Monitor and maintain existing drainage network throughout the parish.

10.3.4
Review agricultural zoning as part of the new UDC process and identify any barriers to farmland conservation.

While the region remains vulnerable to flooding, storms, and high winds, its higher elevation (36 feet above sea level) and location on the Louisiana Prairie Terrace means that the region does not experience the same flooding risks as areas to the south and west. However, the Bayou Vermilion's limited capacity for drainage and proneness to flooding is a major concern to citizens and businesses in flood prone areas. The Lafayette area historically averages 55-60 inches of rainfall per year, and it is projected that the "100 year flood" is actually happening as often as every 10 years. In 2012, the parish declared a state of emergency due to a major flash flood that stranded many residents, hitting Carencro particularly hard. FEMA's preliminary floodplain mapping (draft Flood Insurance Rate Maps) significantly expands the areas of the parish classified as special hazard areas or within the 100 year floodplain.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Protection of the region's waterways from pollutants and erosion caused by stormwater runoff.
- Declining aquatic ecosystems and surface water quality thereby increasing the possibility of the state's DEQ restricting the amount of discharge from commercial, industrial, and the municipal sewer system.
- Conserving open space and natural resources as the parish's population grows.
- Identifying and assessment of at-risk areas due to development patterns and monitoring development in and near sensitive environmental areas.
- Creating an integrated watershed approach for stormwater management that provides improvements in surface water quality and community recreation.
- Preserving and enhancing the region's tree canopy.
- Protecting people and property from storms and flooding and other natural or manmade disasters.

IMPLEMENTATION



Gateway example with street trees, coordinated signage, and pedestrian amenities, Image: WRT



Mixed-use center example, Image: WRT

The implementation section of PlanLafayette is perhaps the most important element of the comprehensive plan. This section includes a list of the goals, policies, and actions that make up the “to-do” list for PlanLafayette. Many actions cut across plan elements, LCG departments, and interest groups. Therefore, to succeed, implementation will require determined coordination and attention from all sectors of government and its partners - both immediately and over the next two decades.

The **Action Matrix** (separate Excel worksheet) provides a sortable matrix that includes detailed information about each action including the action, action type, the lead agency or department, and identifies linkages to other plans like the UDC.

Governance and Coordination outlines the many partners and roles they play in implementation of PlanLafayette. Implementation of the plan requires ongoing coordination between departments and communication with the public. LCG regularly partners with agencies, neighborhood planning groups, non-profits, businesses, and surrounding municipalities every day. The implementation of PlanLafayette will require the same type of and level of commitment from partners to be successful. Existing relationships may need to be strengthened and expanded; for example, many of the plan’s actions surrounding workforce training and education rely on partnerships and support from LPSS, UL, and local businesses. The plan’s development goals – from diverse housing to mixed-use development – rely on partnerships with the private sector. There are many ways in which LCG can encourage increased coordination and support planning with regional, state, and federal agencies. Coordination may include any or all of the following: verbal or written communications; scheduled or unscheduled meetings; requests for information or comments about plans, reports, etc. of other entities; special purpose groups organized to plan for or implement a specific task; standing committees, organizations, or groups; and agreements, resolutions, contracts, ordinances, grants, etc.

Monitoring and Updating describes the process for tracking, updating, and reporting the results of implementation. PlanLafayette provides the policy basis for future plans at different scales – e.g., neighborhood plans, small area plans, the Downtown Action Plan and other specific area plans. These plans will help to implement PlanLafayette and the overall vision for Lafayette in 2035.

The **Fiscal and Funding Strategy** section outlines resources for funding availability. PlanLafayette includes policies and actions to coordinate annual budgeting, the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), and new applications for funding sources to ensure funding is appropriated in accordance with the comprehensive plan. The plan includes many policies and actions that direct growth to centers and corridors, encourage reinvestment in existing infrastructure, and increase efficiencies in the provision of services such as parks, water, sewer, fiber, transportation, and schools. To accelerate the implementation of these policies and actions, incentives (both monetary or non-monetary) may be used. Monetary incentives may include tax expenditures, grants, vouchers and rebates. Non-monetary incentives include technical assistance, business planning assistance, marketing assistance, expedited permitting, regulatory relief, preferred loans, guarantee programs, and dedicated management teams in PZD and other departments.



Successful farmers market at the Park at the Horse Farm



01 CONTEXT

WHY DO WE PLAN?



Ronald Guidry

Cajun dancers can be found anywhere Cajun music is heard, from festivals to dance halls.

Small Parish, Big Heart

Carved out of the original St. Martin Parish in 1823, Lafayette is one of the smallest parishes in the state of Louisiana. Yet, as a community, Lafayette has enjoyed –and has been smart to capitalize on– many historic advantages that have contributed to consolidate our special character, strong sense of identity, and singular role within the region and the state.

Lafayette is known both as the Heart of Acadiana and as the Capital of Acadian history and culture because of the unique blend of Cajun and Creole, as well as, Spanish, Native American, American, and African cultures in our music, cuisine, festivals, arts, and architecture. We are also known as the “Hub City” of southern Louisiana because of our central location within the regional road network, our location at the crossroads of Interstates 10 and 49, and our position as a regional leader in technology, healthcare, oil and gas, education, retail and the arts.

Over the last two decades, Lafayette Parish’s population increased by about 34 percent, from 164,762 to 221,578 residents. We have also experienced one of the fastest growing economies in the nation, with a GDP that grew by 8.3% between 2009 and 2010, compared to 2.5% nationally. The Lafayette MSA ranked 24th of 200 metro areas in the “Best Performing Cities Index” in 2012 for its ability to create and sustain jobs and to foster economic growth. This healthy growth is projected to continue for the foreseeable future, with the expected addition of more than 66,000 new residents (expected in the city and unincorporated parish) and nearly 30,000 new jobs, between now and 2030.

Addressing our challenges and opportunities

Growth has brought many positive changes to Lafayette, but other changes are negative. While the city has gained population, adjacent municipalities and outlying areas in the parish that are prone to flooding and remote from the urban center are growing at a faster rate. As a result of this scattered growth pattern, many of our roadways are becoming increasingly congested and over capacity and transit coverage remains inefficient due to low densities of sprawling development. Efficient provision of adequate infrastructure and community services and amenities (such as quality schools or parks and recreation programs) is becoming fiscally unfeasible. Furthermore, with more than 90,000 additional people moving to Lafayette Parish in the next two decades, our infrastructure and services will need to be upgraded and expanded to support future demand.

If we ignore these issues and continue to grow and operate in the same manner as we have in the past, not only will our collective quality of life decline, but we could lose our competitive economic edge within the region and beyond. But how do we go about addressing this challenge?

“Destiny... is not a thing to be waited for, it’s a thing to be achieved”¹

Beginning in January 2012, LCG initiated the preparation of PlanLafayette, in an effort to equip Lafayette Parish and the city of Lafayette with the necessary tools to tackle the problem, a long-term vision, and the roadmap to reach it. PlanLafayette is an action-oriented plan that addresses, integrates and coordinates those facets of our community related to how we grow, including land use, economy, transportation, infrastructure and public services, environmental and historic resources, and governance issues.

To facilitate the preparation of the plan, LCG retained the services of a nationally recognized team of experts, led by planning and design firm WRT. The consultant team was also charged with developing complementary studies that implement specific policies of PlanLafayette for downtown Lafayette, two nodes, and three small areas around the city and parish, as well as a UDC.

The PlanLafayette process was organized into three major work phases:

- **Phase 1:** This phase was designed to allow the consultant team the opportunity to quickly acquire an understanding of the range of community issues that likely would need to be addressed in subsequent phases of the planning process.

The work conducted in this phase included numerous interviews with representatives of community interests and organizations, the collection of a vast amount of data and, perhaps most importantly, the creation of two committees to provide policy guidance and technical support to LCG and the consultant team. The first committee, the CPCAC, a 30+ member group, was appointed to represent broad community interests, facilitate community consensus, promote public ownership of the planning process and advise the City-Parish Council. The second committee, the *Comprehensive Plan Technical Resource Team* (CPTRT), consists of designated LCG staff and representatives from non-LCG entities and has



Ambassador Caffery Parkway, one of our congested roadways



Residents discuss opportunities for the future at Community Forum 1 at Holy Rosary Institute

¹ William Jennings Bryan

the role of providing special expertise and access to information and resources at key steps throughout the process. These entities will be LCG’s partners in the implementation of the adopted plan.

- **Phase 2:** The second phase of work consisted of three major pieces or “tracks,” all involving extensive community engagement (described in the next section). The first track resulted in the development of Lafayette’s long-term *Vision Statement*. The Vision Statement describes the future that we, as a community, collectively aspire to achieve for Lafayette 20 years from now. The Vision Statement represents the “destination” to the comprehensive plan’s roadmap.

The second track of Phase Two encompassed several work modules. In the first of these modules, the consultant team compiled a *Community Assessment*, an exhaustive analysis of Lafayette’s current built, natural, functional, demographic, economic, and regulatory conditions and trends. In the second module, the outcomes of this analysis were used to develop a *Trend Growth (No Plan) Scenario* that depicts where growth is most likely to occur in Lafayette over the next two decades, assuming no comprehensive plan is adopted and current policies and regulations remain unchanged. This “picture of the likely future” was compared to and found to be incompatible with the aspirations painted in the Vision Statement in a number of ways.



Comprehensive Plan Citizens Advisory Committee (CPCAC) Meeting

The third module involved soliciting input from the community to come up with a range of scenarios depicting alternative development patterns more consistent with the Vision than the Trend Growth Scenario. Three *Scenario Alternatives* (Multi-Center Growth, Balanced Growth, and Corridor Growth) were developed with guidance from the CPTRT and CPCAC and, along with the Trend Growth (No Plan) Scenario, were presented to the public for selection. The resulting *Preferred Future Scenario* is a blending of the preferences and priorities expressed by the Lafayette community and served as the foundation for the *FLUM and the Policy Framework* of the comprehensive plan.

- **Phase 3:** The final phase of the work program culminated in the production of the document that you are presently reading – *PlanLafayette*. PlanLafayette is divided into three major chapters, after this one: Vision, Elements, and Implementation. The Vision chapter presents the 20-year Lafayette Vision Statement. The Elements chapter contains the policy framework for the plan, organized around the following topics:

1. Land Use
2. Community Character
3. Housing & Neighborhoods
4. Historic and Cultural Resources
5. Economic Development
6. Transportation & Mobility
7. Utilities
8. Community Facilities & Services
9. Recreation and Open Space
10. Resource Conservation and Mitigation Hazard

Perhaps the most important part of any comprehensive plan, the Implementation chapter contains a plan to carry out the actions recommended in the policy framework, identification of responsibilities, partners and potential funding strategies, and mechanisms for tracking and evaluating progress. This chapter also contains methods and protocols recommended to facilitate inter- and intra-governmental coordination among the various entities that will have a role in implementing pieces of the comprehensive plan.



Scenario Planning Exercise at Community Forum Series 2



The Idea Wall at the Science Museum, ARTWalk, Community Forum Series 4 kickoff event

KEY TRENDS IN LAFAYETTE

Why PlanLafayette is Important

1 OUR POPULATION & ECONOMY ARE GROWING...

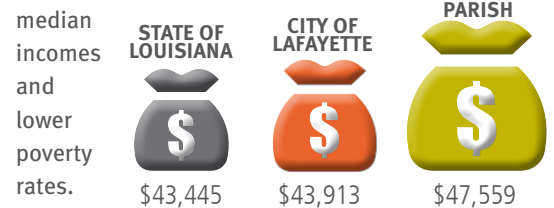
Most growth has occurred outside of the city...

Although the city is growing, areas outside the city are growing faster with an increasing number of low density single family residential developments in the parish's unincorporated or rural areas. However, more than 54% of all residents live within the city of Lafayette where densities are more than three times the parishwide average.



High median incomes

Compared to the state, the city of Lafayette and Lafayette Parish have higher



Lafayette's population is young

24% of the population is under the age of 18, which indicates a large number of families. In addition, young adults between the ages of 20 and 29 make up the largest population cohort.

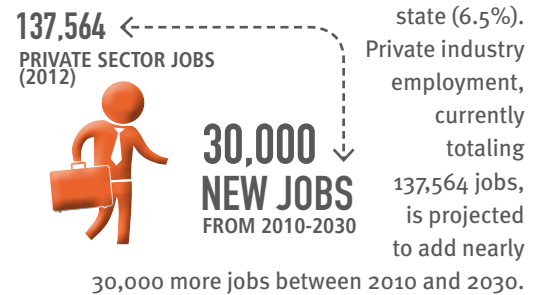
This means that there will be diversity in household types (e.g., single, married no kids, families, young adults living with parents, retirees, etc.)



throughout the parish, which will require more variety in housing choices.

Low unemployment rates & continued job growth

In 2013, Lafayette Parish's average unemployment rate of 4% is well below that of the state (6.5%).

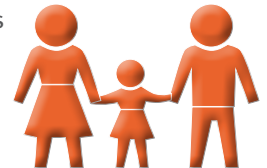


Lafayette Parish is projected to grow by 40%...

from 221,578 in 2010 to more than 310,000 by 2030. If development continues at current residential densities, nearly 32,000 acres will need to be developed to support the growth in population. However, the parish only has 172,800 total acres, of which almost one-third (53,300 acres) is already developed. Additionally, about 37% of new development is expected to occur in flood prone areas.

Poverty rates slightly lower than the state

The percentage of households living below the poverty level in the parish is 16.4%, compared with 16.9% in the city, and 18% in the state.



Sources: Census 2000, 2010, Projections from Lambert Associates, 2012; Susceptibility to Change Analysis WRT

Sources: Census 2010, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Louisiana Workforce Commission

2 BUT WE LACK FUNDING FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

Inadequate funding for new infrastructure projects

Over 90,000 new residents will move to Lafayette Parish in the next two decades. Lafayette's transportation infrastructure will need to be modernized and expanded to support new demand. However, the average annual capital improvement budget is less than \$50 million, with only about \$20 million dedicated to roads and bridges, while the cost for each additional mile of new roadways averages over \$18 million!



Many roadways are congested and over capacity

With increasing population and little to no funding for new roadways, congestion and traffic on Lafayette's roads will only continue to worsen—and today, too many roadways are congested and significant segments of six of our major arterials are rated poor (LOS E or F) for their ability to move traffic.

Public transportation is not a Convenient option

Public transportation can often reduce the demand on a city's roadway infrastructure and increase quality of life for residents. However, without significant funding to make the system more convenient or higher densities of development located near transit to increase ridership, residents will continue to choose driving over public transportation.



Sources: LCG. The average capital improvement budget calculated using 2014-2018 projected budgeted. Per linear costs for new roadways in the parish calculated in 2013 based on LCG project and maintenance records.

KEY TRENDS IN LAFAYETTE

Why PlanLafayette is Important

3 WE ARE NOT FULLY INVESTING IN OUR QUALITY OF LIFE

No dedicated funding source for parish parks

The city of Lafayette has a dedicated property tax, but the parish has no dedicated tax to fund parks within the parish. There are currently no standards set for acres of park per person. Additionally, the funding rate for city parks has not increased in 53 years!



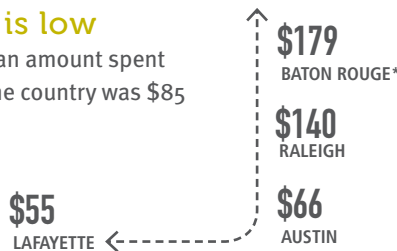
Sidewalks and bike paths are incomplete

Segments of sidewalks and bike paths exist throughout Lafayette. However, many are incomplete and do not provide a safe and effective route of travel for pedestrians and bicyclists. About 62% of the city and 33% of the parish has sidewalk coverage.



Park spending per capita is low

compared to the average city. The median amount spent per capita in a sample of cities across the country was \$85 compared to \$55 for Lafayette.



Schools are improving, but some still fall behind

In 2012, LPSS released an ambitious Turn Around Plan to become an “A” school district in six years through increased collaboration and effort. Overall, LPSS moved from 25th to 19th in the state based on 2008 and 2013 district performance scores. Between 2011 and 2012 the number of schools earning a “D” or “F” score fell by 15% (from 53 to 28 percent). A recent report ranked Louisiana schools a C+ compared to the nation. (Education Weekly 2013)

Sources: Community Assessment (2012), LPSS, Education Weekly, Trust for Public Land (2010) parking spending per capita, * Park spending estimated from: The Advocate “BREC approves \$80 million budget for 2014”

4 WE CONTINUE TO BE CHALLENGED BY FLOODING

Large swaths of the parish are located within the 100-year flood zone

This means developments within these areas have higher flood insurance rates and increased risk of property damage from flood events. If new development continues in flood-prone areas, the risk of flooding due to greater amounts of impervious surfaces will increase.



Poor drainage & flooding is a challenge for both urban development and agricultural uses



The negative effects of poor drainage and flooding can be managed through green infrastructure techniques such as rain gardens, stormwater planters, stream buffer restoration, and bioswales.

Sources: Community Assessment; WRT



Successful local "I'm Shaping Lafayette" outreach effort leading up to Community Forum Series 3 was supported by LCG, the GLCC and the POW! group.



Soccer team supporting PlanLafayette leading up to Community Forum Series 3.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

“Let each person do his or her part.”¹

Effective community engagement is about much more than just making contact with the public and inviting them to participate. It is about making sure that every individual and group in the community is offered meaningful opportunities to voice their opinions and to have those opinions reflected in the comprehensive plan. It requires reaching out both to those who are not yet aware of the process, as well as those who already are, and motivating them to become and stay engaged. Effective community engagement must encourage, facilitate and expand opportunities for citizen dialogue, and through this dialogue, it must engender ownership and buy-in of the recommendations included in the plan.

Who participated in PlanLafayette?

PlanLafayette was developed through a citizen-centered process that encouraged the entire community to contribute ideas for Lafayette’s future. Interactive public forums, workshops, open houses, portable “meetings in a box,” community events, and committee meetings provided more than 70 opportunities for direct citizen interaction and unprecedented dialogue. Supplementary outreach ranging from media placements, phone calls, online surveys, e-blasts, social media, and many other tools broadened participation opportunities. In total, there were more than 7,000 points of citizen engagement during the PlanLafayette process, with an even greater media reach.

A public-private sector partnership for successful public outreach

The tremendous success of the PlanLafayette public engagement effort is due, in no small part, to an innovative collaboration which emerged during the second half of the planning process, in the form of a Public Outreach Working Group (POW!) consisting of representatives from LCG, the GLCC, the United Way, the AcA, and others. Working with a variety of local public relations and graphic design professionals, the POW! Group was able to customize and fund event specific outreach campaigns that resonated with the community for their inventiveness and sense of fun.

“My employer asked me to attend, and I’m glad I did!”

“Our group was very diverse. It made for interesting conversations!”



Voting for a Preferred Future Scenario at Community Forum Series 3

¹ Rep. Barbara C. Jordan of Texas

PROCESS TIMELINE

More than 1,000 people participated in small group discussions focusing on two topics - How do we perceive the community today and how do we imagine our future? Participants listed the community characteristics they value and love, problems they would like to see resolved, challenges and threats to the future, and the trends and opportunities that should be seized to make Lafayette better in the future.



COMMUNITY FORUM #1
APRIL 2012

Community input from Forum 1 was grouped and distilled into a vision statement that expresses the community's aspirations for the future. The Vision Open House, held at the Horse Farm, gave community members the opportunity to review, comment, and celebrate their shared vision for Lafayette.



JUNE 2012
VISION OPEN HOUSE



COMMUNITY FORUM #2
NOVEMBER 2012

Community Forum 4 allowed the public to review and prioritize the comprehensive plan framework and learn about implementation. The event was a celebration of the plan and the hard work and energy put into this process by the Lafayette community!



COMMUNITY FORUM #4
FEBRUARY 2014

During PlanLafayette Week, the draft comprehensive plan was unveiled to the public following a nearly two year, community-driven process. Additionally, the LCG partnered with several community institutions to host activities around the plan's four big ideas: Refine Government, Revitalize Neighborhoods, Reenvision Natural Resources, and Reinvent the Hub City. These events included lectures, Small Area Plan Charrettes, and an exhibition at the Science Museum.



PLANLAFAYETTE WEEK
FEBRUARY 2014

Plan Lafayette

PLAN ADOPTION

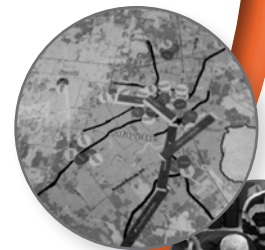


COMMUNITY FORUM #3
MAY 2013

Forum 3 engaged more than 1,000 citizens in reviewing and selecting a preferred future image of Lafayette. Fun and engaging outreach, including web and social media campaigns, brought a more diverse group of citizens into the planning process.



6 public meetings were held throughout the parish over 4 days, as well as additional Meetings in a Box and an online survey. About 700 people participated in group discussions and surveys to consider current trends and alternatives to the current trend that are more consistent with the community vision for Lafayette in 2035.



BY THE NUMBERS

- 7,000+ inputs
- 1,250+ Facebook Likes
- 330+ Twitter Followers
- 3,550 e-Blast mailing list
- 13 Meetings of the Comprehensive Plan Citizens Advisory Committee
- 4 series of Community Forums and Open Houses, Totaling 17 public events at locations throughout the parish
- 45+ volunteer led “Meetings in a Box” held by individuals and community groups



Residents and families of all ages celebrate Lafayette's future at Community Forum Series 3

PlanLafayette

W E E K

by the Numbers

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	
FEB 4-12 2014	4 PlanLafayette Week PROCLAIMED 3 Planning Commissioners 10 CPCAC Members IN ATTENDANCE	5 State of the Parish Address LARGEST SOTP CROWD 611 IN ATTENDANCE	6 LEDA Breakfast REENVISION NATURAL RESOURCES 75+ IN ATTENDANCE	7 LCVC Breakfast REINVENT THE HUB CITY 214 IN ATTENDANCE	8 Water Workshop 52 IN ATTENDANCE the788 / Lafayette Science Museum ArtWalk 900 IN ATTENDANCE	
10 DDA Lunches REFINE GOVERNMENT 110+ STANDING ROOM ONLY 1220 Small Area Plan Charrette @ North Gateway @ 8	11 Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce REVITALIZE NEIGHBORHOODS 125 ATTENDANCE Milton!10 LCG Small Area Plan Charrette @ Johnston/Bertrand @ 36 LCG Comp Plan Community Forum 77 IN ATTENDANCE	12 LCG Comp Plan Community Forum 85 IN ATTENDANCE PlanLafayette Happy Hour The Future of the Oil Center 240 IN ATTENDANCE	The REACH of PlanLafayette Week Number of Facebook Impressions for PlanLFT Week: 21,628 Phone Calls to Promote Community Forum Series 4: 31,728 Media Impressions - Print: 94,000 Media Impressions - Websites: 1,672,002 Media Impressions - Outdoor Billboards: 585,769 Completed Community Forum Series 4 Surveys: 257			

PlanLafayette Week was designed to introduce Lafayette to the ideas and action items recommended by the draft comprehensive plan. Enthusiastic public participation in these events demonstrated that **Lafayette is ready** to implement the plan and to make those big ideas a reality.

Be a part of PlanLafayette. It's up to YOU to make our vision a reality.

PlanLafayette.com

PlanLafayette Week was an overwhelming success. Community Forum 4 included two open house events held during the week of events.



02 VISION

VISION

Working in groups, participants at Community Forum #1 events generated shared ideas about Lafayette's future. These aspirations were analyzed and grouped further into common themes that became the vision, with feedback from the CPCAC and CPTRT. In July 2012, the vision was unveiled to the community for support at a celebratory open house at the Horse Farm property.

In 2035, Lafayette is one of the nation's most exceptional communities, renowned for its rich Cajun and Creole heritage, its creative scene and culture of innovation, and its authentic "joie de vivre." Fueled by its desirable quality of life, its highly educated workforce and the community's entrepreneurial spirit, Lafayette has attracted substantial investment and growth. This growth has been managed and absorbed in a manner that allowed Lafayette to retain its small town neighborliness and unique way of life.

The Lafayette Comprehensive Plan has galvanized the community and has guided our political leadership in their decision making, keeping us on track and making steady progress toward realizing our Vision. Through a bold collaboration and an ongoing conversation among our engaged citizenry and our local government and institutional partners, we have realized our Vision by leveraging our assets, correcting shortcomings and balancing our priorities for what makes our community outstanding.



Lafayette 2035 Vision Open House, July 2012 at the Park at the Horse Farm

How did people envision Lafayette in 2035...

“A safe community with a vibrant education system that aims to support the younger generation.”

“A pedestrian friendly community that provides opportunity for older community members to expand upon the independence and support they need in later life.”

“Retain and build upon our unique cultural assets.”

“A walkable, bikeable, culturally diverse and progressive city that supports innovation, conservation and education.”

“Improve recreation, open space, public space, tree preservation, and water recreation”

“Vibrant, safe, distinctive and prosperous community with small town charm, but with ample jobs, recreation, housing, and transportation options and opportunities.”

“A model community that embraces opportunity in education, healthy lifestyles, and employment to all, regardless of income or social status.”





SCÈNE MA LOUISIANE



FESTIVALS

LUS



OUR PEOPLE

A Vibrant Culture of Creativity, Innovation, and Compassion

- We remain a **caring community** of families, friends and neighbors who bring a **can-do-attitude** toward bettering the community through volunteer and faith-based initiatives.
- We are a national model for community supported investments in **information technology, health innovation** and **green infrastructure**.
- We have a **vibrant cultural scene** that celebrates and treasures its local artists and performers, its many venues (museums, Cajundome, Parc International, AcA, and our many festivals and celebrations).
- We are a **healthy, family friendly** community who sees our **youth** as our most valuable asset: one worthy of investment in **quality education** and school facilities, recreation, healthcare, opportunities for civic engagement and a diverse array of challenging local employment choices.
- Our **retirees** make up an important and valued share of the population as natives remain in the community, drawn –as are non-natives– by the rich culture, and opportunities for an **active and engaged senior lifestyle**.

Festivals Acadiens et Créoles, Photo: Philip Gould





OUR COMMUNITY

Its Character, Form and Function

- Mobility has been enhanced with improved **road network efficiency and connectivity**, expanded transit choices, and bicycle and pedestrian friendly streets.
- We have raised the bar of expectations for **community aesthetics and development quality**, applied through innovative development standards and incentives, and revitalization and beautification initiatives.
- We have **updated** and **streamlined** our **codes** and **regulatory approval** processes to become more **transparent, predictable** and **user friendly**.
- We have **managed growth** and development in a manner that conserves land and natural resources, is **fiscally sound**, and respectful of **private property rights**.
- We are a community of **safe neighborhoods** that provide expanded **housing** and **lifestyle choices** among **diverse urban, suburban and rural settings**.
- **Downtown** Lafayette is **activated** with new development of housing, retail and entertainment, supporting day and nighttime **activity** and a true **urban lifestyle** –one with a **distinct flavor of Acadiana**.
- Our expanded network of **open spaces, parks** and **greenways** and **trails** provide quality recreational opportunities, enhancing both quality of life and property values, while promoting **healthful outdoor activity**.
- We recognize the value of our precious **natural resources** through initiatives to protect and promote public enjoyment of the Horse Farm, the Vermilion River and our bayou ecosystems.
- We have increased the **effectiveness of local governance** through improved operational efficiencies and bold **initiatives that address parish-wide issues** and challenges, while ensuring that each municipality has an appropriate level of control over strictly local matters.

Festivals Acadiens et Créoles, Photo: Philip Gould





OUR ECONOMY

The Prosperity of our People

- We are home to major corporate employers, attracted by our highly **educated** and **motivated workforce**, our **information technology infrastructure** and our unique **quality of life**.
- We are home to locally grown **entrepreneurs** and **small businesses** that proudly retain a progressive adaptation of the “**wildcatter**” **attitude** of independence and drive to succeed through **determination, creativity** and **innovation**.
- We have leveraged UL and our medical institutions to become a leading center for **R&D, technology and health innovation**.
- We have mobilized as a community in taking proactive measures to address pockets of **poverty and crime** by **expanding opportunities** for all to engage in civic affairs and to share in Lafayette’s prosperity.
- We have improved our **workforce readiness** with partnerships to link educational curricula among our high schools, UL, and our technical and community colleges, to the skills needed by local businesses.
- We are **business friendly** with fair and transparent codes and regulations, and incentives and capital improvement initiatives designed to **attract** and **guide** desired **private investment** and development.
- We have **reversed blight** and **obsolescence** with targeted initiatives to **restore, revitalize** and **rebuild** along older highway corridors, nodes and interstate gateways into the community.

Acadian Village, Photo: Lafayette Convention & Visitors Commission



03 ELEMENTS

PLAN ELEMENTS

How the vision, elements, goals, policies and actions work together.

HOW DOES THE VISION BECOME REALITY?

The vision is written from the broad perspective. Each of the plan elements include goals, policies, and actions that will implement the vision over the next 20 years. The monitoring and tracking of actions and metrics will show measurable results and progress towards making the vision a reality.



1 Land Use

GOAL 1: Align land use, transportation, and utility planning with the FLUM.

GOAL 2: Create a clear process for land use and zoning review, land use planning, annexation, and extension of utilities.

GOAL 3: Strengthen local planning, regional planning and coordination with surrounding municipalities.

2 Community Character

GOAL 1: Encourage a diverse range of housing opportunities and choices.

GOAL 2: Promote quality housing and encourage the rehabilitation and/or reuse of declining housing stocks.

GOAL 3: Develop and facilitate affordable housing opportunities for low income households.

GOAL 4: Protect and revitalize neighborhoods and assets.

3 Housing & Neighborhoods

GOAL 1: Preserve and capitalize on Lafayette's unique character.

GOAL 2: Project an attractive community image.

GOAL 3: Strengthen the character of downtown and its surrounding areas and neighborhoods.

GOAL 4: Direct growth toward mixed-use centers and major corridors.

4 Historical & Cultural Resources

GOAL 1: Promote and highlight key historical and cultural resources.

GOAL 2: Increase community-wide arts and cultural access and education.

GOAL 3: Value economic impact of arts and culture in the creative economy.

5 Economic Development

GOAL 1: Produce more skilled workers locally for local jobs

GOAL 2: Broaden employment sectors that drive the parish economy.

GOAL 3: Continue to strengthen the identity and mix of uses in the downtown core.

ELEMENTS

6 Transportation & Mobility

GOAL 1: Preserve the existing and planned transportation system.

GOAL 2: Provide a multimodal transportation system that facilitates the operational efficiency and effective movement of both people and goods.

GOAL 3: Ensure safety for all users of transportation facilities and services.

GOAL 4: Identify the funding needed for LCG's transportation system and potential sources for that funding.

7 Utilities

GOAL 1: Coordinate with LUS to ensure that utilities incorporate the FLUM in the strategic planning of system expansions to provide adequate service to all customers in the service area.

GOAL 2: Continue to provide reliable service to all customers.

GOAL 3: Satisfy all environmental compliance regulations established by federal and state environmental agencies.

GOAL 4: Ensure adequate funding for needed existing infrastructure expansions and new facilities.

8 Community Facilities & Services

GOAL 1: Continue to provide reliable service to all constituents.

GOAL 2: Support efforts to improve LPSS performance.

GOAL 3: Connect UL, Downtown, and surrounding neighborhoods.

GOAL 4: Encourage a range of technical training, adult education, and higher education opportunities in Lafayette.

GOAL 5: Enhance the role of community centers, libraries, and public buildings as centers of activity and neighborhood resources.

9 Recreation & Open Space

GOAL 1: Operate and maintain Lafayette parks to provide opportunities for all residents to experience and enjoy the parish's open space and recreation.

GOAL 2: Expand role of parks and recreation in promoting healthy communities and opportunities for recreation.

GOAL 3: Utilize parks, recreation, open space, and waterways to expand the green infrastructure network.

10 Resource Conservation & Hazard Mitigation

GOAL 1: Conserve and protect natural resources.

GOAL 2: Protect people and property from hazards.

1. LAND USE

Lafayette Parish has experienced steady population and employment growth over the last century, nearly tripling in population since 1960, growing from about 85,000 to more than 220,000 in 2010. Today, unemployment is relatively low (dropping below 4% in 2012) and job and wage growth is high in comparison to other metro areas. With the steady population and employment growth, developed areas of the parish have increased. While the city of Lafayette remains by far the largest municipality in the parish, its share of the population is shrinking as new housing is built in rural outlying areas of the parish. Population projections suggest that housing growth will continue to occur at faster rates to the north and particularly to the south of the traditional city center.

Through the planning process, the community reviewed a trend growth projection and three alternative development scenarios. Based on public input, a preferred growth scenario was selected, one that reverses the trend of spreading out in a disconnected fashion, and instead focuses growth and development in mixed-use centers and corridors with greater access to transit, jobs, walkable neighborhoods, and parks and recreation. The “preferred scenario” is projected to consume less land, reduce costs associated with water and sewer extensions, and encourage walkable, mixed-use development patterns. The preferred scenario is refined into a Future Land Use Map (FLUM - Figure 4.1) to guide and accommodate new development and supporting infrastructure. The FLUM is intended to set the direction for specific changes to the zoning map and ongoing decisions about neighborhood and land use planning and infrastructure.

As expressed by the community, priorities for future development include:

- Increased redevelopment and reuse of existing buildings and sites
- Focused development in existing and emerging centers and corridors
- Stronger bicycle and pedestrian connections
- More mixed-use development
- Improved transit service and access
- Conserved farmland and open space
- Lower infrastructure and service costs



KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Uncertainty of future land uses, weak regulations, and lack of predictability for developers and property owners, especially in unincorporated areas of the parish despite the recently adopted land use ordinance.
- Obsolescence and disinvestment in older neighborhoods and commercial corridors.
- Fragmented development patterns and segregated residential, commercial, and industrial land uses impacting the viability of agricultural land use in the unincorporated parish.
- Continued growth pressures in the southern portion of the parish, in areas near Youngsville, Broussard, and Milton, which are placing strain on water and sewer services, roads, drainage, environmental resources and water quality, and community services such as schools.
- Assembling and replatting land and/or securing financing for mixed-use development, especially downtown.
- Retrofitting commercial, auto oriented corridors into mixed-use, pedestrian friendly transportation corridors.
- New FIRMs expansion of land classified as located within the floodway, 100 and 500 year floodplains and risk of flooding as impervious surfaces increase and development occurs in flood prone areas.
- Maintenance and upgrades for water, drainage, road/sidewalk, utilities, and sewer infrastructure in older, urban areas of the city.
- Increasing transit service to accommodate a growing and aging population and provide alternative modes of transportation to reach jobs and services.
- Concerns regarding impacts of the I-49 Connector project on surrounding land uses, community character, and pedestrian connectivity downtown and through neighborhoods.
- Lack of accurate, parcel-based land use information in GIS to track and plan for land use changes in the parish.
- Lack of a streamlined process for reducing the number of adjudicated properties in the parish and bringing them into productive use.
- Existing islands of unincorporated areas within the city limits.
- Lack of clear annexation policies and criteria (e.g., positive economic impact to city, adjacency to existing developed area) for annexing land into city of Lafayette.



*River Ranch residential development;
Photo: ASW*



Downtown Businesses

FLUM and Land Use Categories

The FLUM's generalized land use categories are defined below and illustrated in Figure 4.1. They are intended to provide general guidance for future development and infrastructure planning, while being flexible enough to allow for specific zoning designations within each area.

Mixed-Use Centers include: Downtown and the Oil Center, Ambassador Caffery North and Gloria Switch, Moss Street at the Northgate Mall, Johnston near the Acadiana Mall, Kaliste Saloom and Ambassador Caffery South.

Mixed-Use Center

Core mixed-use areas of the parish, including downtown. Uses include retail, office, services, restaurants, and residential. The mixed-use centers are envisioned as walkable districts served by transit. The mixed-use centers are anticipated to range in scale and density. The highest density uses and activity would take place downtown, with more moderate density and uses in the outlying centers.



Examples of Mixed-Use Centers

Transitional Mixed-Use occurs along corridors and between centers and residential neighborhoods.

Transitional Mixed-Use

Includes both commercial and residential mixed-uses. The transitional mixed-use category is anticipated to serve as a transition between higher density mixed-use (from the mixed-use center) to residential or other lower density uses. It is envisioned to include residential, retail, and office in a walkable neighborhood along a transportation corridor or as a ring surrounding a mixed-use center in a walkable, pedestrian friendly pattern.



Examples of Transitional Mixed-Use

Commercial/Office

Includes general commercial and employment uses, such as neighborhood retail, services, office, and limited residential. The scale of uses will vary based on the context surrounding each area. Newly developed and redeveloped areas are encouraged to accommodate all types of users – including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists. Development should include pedestrian friendly design features such as sidewalks, crosswalks, and street trees. Parking should be located at the interior or rear of the site, rather than fronting the primary road.

Commercial/Office is found along the I-49 planned extension, I-10, Kaliste Saloom Road, and sections of Ambassador Caffery Parkway.



Examples of Commercial / Office

Office/Industrial

Includes both light and heavy industrial uses existing in the parish. New light industrial or office park employment uses are also targeted in these areas, including along Cameron Street, Pont Des Mouton, the Airport, and Southpark Road. Buffering is recommended to help screen and transition between surrounding residential and mixed-use areas and office/industrial areas.

Office/Industrial is found along Cameron Street, Pont Des Mouton, the Airport, and Southpark Road.



Examples of Office / Industrial

Mixed Residential is located in centers and corridors surrounding Transitional Mixed-Use areas.

Mixed Residential

Includes a range of housing types within one or more neighborhoods. Housing types may include detached single family, attached single family, multifamily, and accessory dwelling units. While this area is envisioned to be predominantly residential, it could also include neighborhood retail and convenience uses.



Examples of Mixed Residential

Residential areas are found throughout the parish and near centers and corridors.

Residential

Predominantly detached, single family neighborhoods that also include appropriately located semi-attached and attached multifamily dwelling units. Neighborhood retail, services, offices, and institutions are also included in appropriate locations (e.g., along transportation corridors or at intersections).



Examples of residential neighborhoods

Rural Residential Mix

Includes areas adjacent to the city of Lafayette that may be appropriate for annexation in the future, as well as unincorporated agriculture, residential single family, commercial, industrial, and institutional uses. The UDC planning process will determine how to treat unincorporated rural land that falls within the Rural Residential Mix category and is not zoned within the city of Lafayette. Buffering between uses is recommended for commercial, institutional, and industrial uses.



Examples of Rural Residential Mix

Rural Residential Mix includes areas adjacent to the city of Lafayette.

Rural / Agriculture

Unincorporated parish land, predominantly used for agricultural and rural residential single family. The Rural / Agricultural land use category is the least intensive in terms of density and is anticipated to remain primarily rural residential and agricultural land uses. The UDC planning process will determine how to treat land that falls within the Rural / Agriculture category and is not zoned within the city of Lafayette. Agriculture and low-density rural residential uses, as well as conservation subdivision design are recommended. Buffering between uses is recommended for commercial, institutional, and industrial uses.



Examples of Rural / Agricultural Uses

Rural / Agriculture is unincorporated parish land generally used for agricultural or rural residential uses.

Parks are located throughout the city and include existing LCG parks.

Public Park

Includes parks and golf courses owned by LCG.



Examples of Public Parks

Key planned and committed transportation improvements are shown on the FLUM throughout the parish.

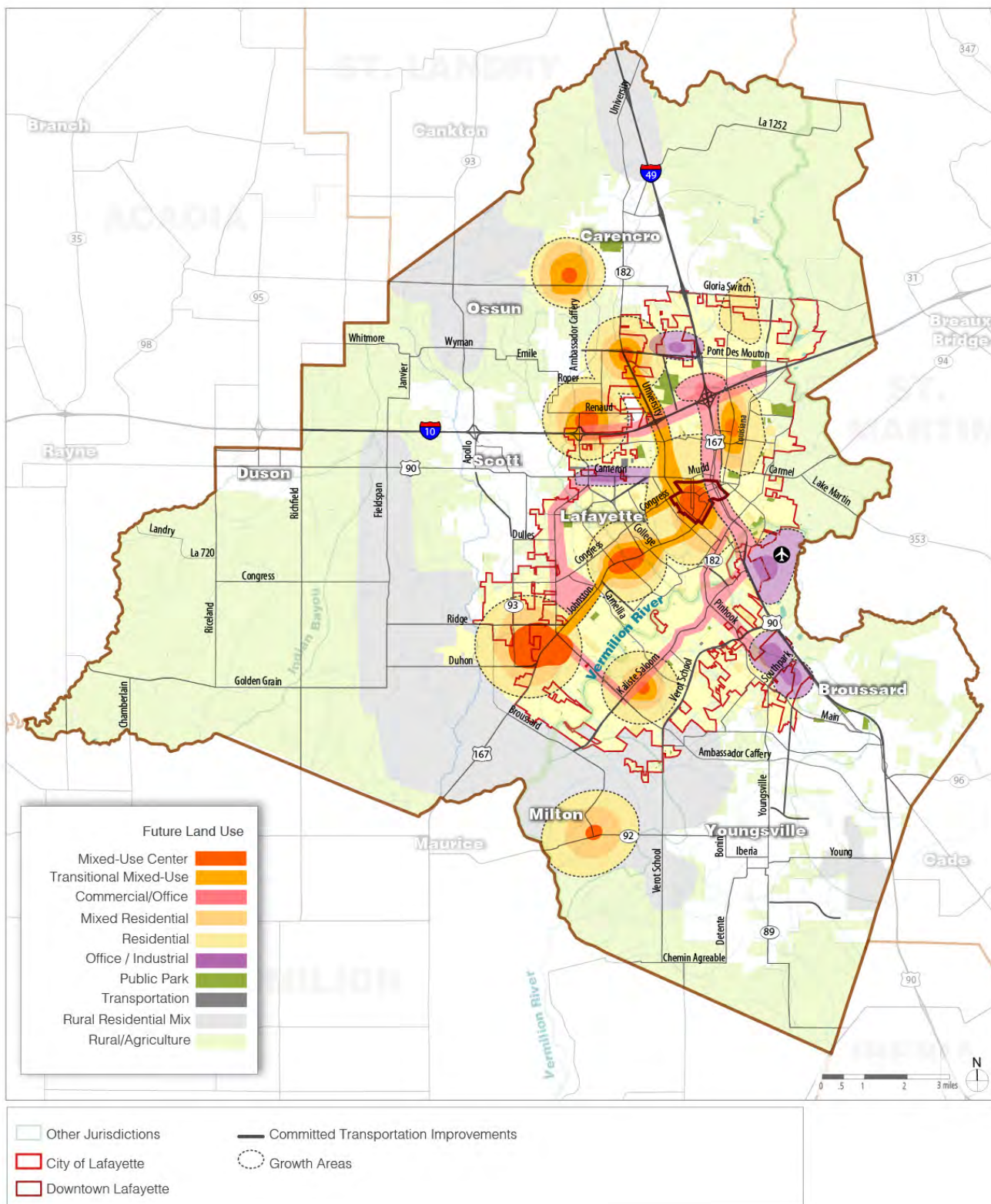
Transportation

Includes transportation facilities and infrastructure for rail and roadways.



Types of Transportation Facilities

Figure 3.1 Future Land Use Map



GOAL 1**ALIGN LAND USE, TRANSPORTATION, AND UTILITY PLANNING WITH THE FLUM.****POLICIES:**

» P 1.1. Encourage compact, mixed-use, pedestrian friendly development in centers and along corridors as designated by the FLUM. (Related to Community Character - Policy 10)

ACTIONS:**1.1.1**

Review zoning classifications for consistency with the FLUM.

1.1.2

Review proposed transportation improvements (e.g., new roads, road extensions, road widening, transit facilities, bicycle and pedestrian improvements, etc.) for consistency with the FLUM.

1.1.3

Revise the zoning ordinance to allow and encourage mixed land uses and incentivize pedestrian and transit friendly development.

1.1.4

Revise the zoning ordinance to include design standards for new development that address quality, street frontage, building entrances, utility placement and scale.

1.1.5

Study existing parking availability and need, and consider creating maximum parking standards for new development in mixed-use areas.

1.1.6

Implement incentives through the UDC and review processes to encourage and direct development in centers and along corridors.

1.1.7

Use the Small Area Plans and Model Nodal Plans as prototypes to illustrate desired land use and design principles for future development.

METRICS:

- » Number of parcels with existing zoning consistent with the FLUM
- » Miles of roadway improvements in targeted areas
- » Number of development applications in target areas



View of Downtown Lafayette



Lafayette Public Trust Finance Authority

Downtown Lafayette, Lafayette Public Trust Finance Authority Redevelopment Concept

POLICY:

» P 1.2. Protect and improve residential neighborhood character, including historical and cultural neighborhood resources.

ACTIONS:**1.2.1**

Require transitions in building height and landscape setbacks or buffers between higher intensity uses and residential neighborhoods.

1.2.2

Build capacity for local neighborhood planning through a citizen planner and advocacy program that provides training, examples of best practices, and information about resources available to improve neighborhoods. (Related to Housing & Neighborhoods Policy 11)

1.2.3

Produce a Neighborhood Planning Citizen Handbook designed to nurture better grassroots understanding of the neighborhood planning program.

1.2.4

Develop a neighborhood program that facilitates projects by providing the tools necessary to complete projects / programs.

1.2.5

Establish a regular capital program allocation devoted to neighborhood projects under the neighborhood program.

1.2.6

Address vacant lots with a streamlined adjudicated property policy and procedures to protect the historic character of older neighborhoods. (Related to Housing & Neighborhoods Policy 12, Future Land Use Policy 12)

» P 1.3. Encourage employment and retail centers located throughout the parish, with downtown serving as one of the major centers for concentration of jobs and retail businesses.

ACTIONS:**1.3.1**

Work with the LEDA and the GLCC to identify undeveloped or vacant sites within future and existing employment centers to be marketed to employers.

1.3.2

Develop standards that require all new and rehabbed retail and employment areas to be safe and accessible for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.

1.3.3

Work with business and property owners to implement streetscape and public amenities in employment and retail areas.

METRICS:

» Number of adjudicated properties

POLICY:

» P 1.4. Locate jobs near workforce living in the northern and northern central part of the parish near I-10 and better utilize existing infrastructure.

ACTIONS:

1.4.1

Implement the FLUM and its designation of office, retail, and industrial employment along I-10, I-49, Cameron Street, and downtown.

1.4.2

Improve the appearance of gateways to the city of Lafayette from I-10/I-49 intersection.

1.4.3

Work with the city of Scott to implement an office/light industrial gateway and corridor along Cameron Street into the city of Lafayette.

» P 1.5. Protect water resources and improve stormwater management. (Related to Resources Conservation Policy 1)

ACTIONS:

1.5.1

Develop a regional drainage and green infrastructure plan to reduce flooding through stormwater management improvements and enhanced buffers along waterways.

1.5.2

Increase buffer and building setbacks requirements from the Vermilion River and coulees.

1.5.3

Work with the BVD to build capacity so that BVD can participate in site plan review for development applications that impact the Vermilion River.

1.5.4

Revise landscape standards to encourage tree preservation over replacement of trees where possible and to include Low Impact Development practices such as curb cuts, rain gardens, bioswales, and native plants in parking lots.

1.5.5

Continue to protect and improve water quality and filtering in wetlands and marshes.

1.5.6

Encourage use of stormwater management tools including pervious pavers, rain gardens, bioswales, rain barrels, and other green infrastructure approaches to reduce the amount of runoff entering the region's waterways.

1.5.7

Explore opportunities to promote regional detention planning.

METRICS:

- » Water quality index
- » Percent of public projects incorporating green infrastructure techniques

POLICY:

» P 1.6. Improve connectivity by encouraging bike and pedestrian paths that provide a variety of safe options for traveling including walking, biking, transit, and vehicle travel. (Related to Transportation & Mobility Policy 3)

ACTIONS:**1.6.1**

Develop a local “Complete Streets Policy” and design guidelines to apply to all transportation projects, within a range of scales, and that are not inconsistent with Louisiana DOTD policies.

1.6.2

Create public information materials illustrating the planned multi-use and bicycle trail network and opportunities for recreation and transportation.

1.6.3

Work with the MPO and the Louisiana DOTD to ensure that bike and pedestrian improvements are consistent with the FLUM and the comprehensive plan.

1.6.4

Develop street connectivity standards and requirements in the subdivision regulations that improve safety and accessibility, and decrease traffic congestion.

» P 1.7. Plan for water and sewer improvements and extensions in areas of planned mixed-use, residential, and employment growth. (Related to Utilities Policy 1)

ACTIONS:**1.7.1**

Extend and increase capacity of water and sewer as needed to areas illustrated by the FLUM.

1.7.2

Review all LUS water and sewer extensions for compatibility with the fiscally sound annexation principles.

1.7.3

Plan infrastructure improvements to increase the community’s ROI and minimize long term costs of services.

METRICS:

- » Connectivity index
- » Servicing capacity of water and sewer in target areas
- » Fiscal analysis of land use

POLICY:

» P 1.8. Align taxation policy with the provision of hard (i.e. water, sewer, roads, electricity) and soft (i.e., police, library, parks) infrastructure.

ACTIONS:

1.8.1

Eliminate taxation vs. services abnormalities. Identify the areas where the taxation rates for services are substantially higher or lower than the cost of the current services being provided, and provide a framework for correcting any abnormalities.

1.8.2

Develop a “Return on Infrastructure Investment Tool” to accurately and comprehensively calculate the expected ROI to the public on prospective infrastructure investments.

1.8.3

Utilize the Return on Infrastructure Investment tool to develop and prioritize the annual CIP, allowing policy makers and public officials to understand both the cost of prospective infrastructure investments, as well as, their expected return.

1.8.4

Analyze whether current tax assessment policies support or undermine development goals in the comprehensive plan. If warranted, develop a strategy for changing state laws to align with an alternative value assessment approach.

» P 1.9. Coordinate with the Louisiana DOTD to ensure that the I-49 Connector corridor improvements are consistent with established policies, working within the parameters of the I-49 Connector Corridor Preservation and Management Action Plan. (Related to Housing & Neighborhoods Policy 10, Transportation & Mobility Policy 8)

ACTIONS:

1.9.1

Facilitate the continuation of the work of the Evangeline Thruway Redevelopment Team and update the Corridor Preservation and Management Action Plan as necessary to devise strategies for addressing anticipated impacts of the I-49 Connector such as noise abatement, all types of connectivity, relocation, and design of I-49 Connector and crossings.

1.9.2

Lead a public planning process to address necessary infrastructure improvements – including roads, bike paths, sidewalks, public plazas, parks, and related improvements – as well as other strategies to mitigate the impact of the I-49 Connector on the surrounding areas.

1.9.3

Coordinate with community stakeholders, including the DDA, LEDA, the GLCC, and other partners, to pursue strategies to increase economic development opportunities in the corridor.

1.9.4

Coordinate with the Louisiana DOTD I-49 to ensure local participation and input in the design of the I-49 Connector facility.

GOAL 2**CREATE A CLEAR PROCESS FOR LAND USE AND ZONING REVIEW, LAND USE PLANNING, ANNEXATION, AND EXTENSION OF UTILITIES.****POLICY:**

» P 1.10. Review zoning, subdivision, and site plan applications for consistency with the Lafayette comprehensive plan.

ACTIONS:**1.10.1**

Develop a set of comprehensive plan consistency standards to guide site plan review for future projects.

1.10.2

Expand the Areawide Development Review Committee's process to include review for compliance with the comprehensive plan.

1.10.3

Create a clear application process and outcomes for site plan approval and rezoning applications to reduce uncertainties for property owners and the development community.

» P 1.11. Improve the availability of parcel-based ownership and land use data for neighborhood planning, regional and annexation planning, parks planning, infrastructure planning, and disaster preparedness.

ACTIONS:**1.11.1**

Support efforts to complete and continually update the parish's parcel-based land use inventory in GIS-related to the Lafayette Parish Assessor's database information about detailed land uses, and develop a feedback system for regular updates and management of the data.

1.11.2

Add parcel-based land use data, flood zones, parks and trails, evacuation routes, and community resources (e.g., hospitals, libraries, and other public buildings) to the online Lafayette GIS Interactive Map layers site.

1.11.3

Integrate the updated parcel-based data with LCG's tracking software to monitor and track public complaints, service requests, work orders, and inspections and provide access to improve interdepartmental coordination of projects.

1.11.4

Work with departments on collection of complaint data so that it may be better integrated into software that has mapping capabilities.

1.11.5

Increase interdepartmental coordination and awareness of GIS mapping availability, including right-of-way acquisitions, and consider how to better integrate GIS staff with the Planning, Zoning, and Development Department (PZD).

METRICS:

- » Number of centralized, accurate GIS layers
- » Number of software configurations to increase data sharing

POLICY:

» P 1.12. Improve process for review and inspection of independent on lot septic systems to reduce potential environmental contamination of water and soil resources. (Related to Natural Resources Policy 1)

ACTIONS:

1.12.1

Require homeowner inspection of individual septic systems prior to sale or change in use.

1.12.2

Work with the Department of Health and Hospitals to conduct periodic inspections of individual and community septic systems.

» P 1.13. Improve code enforcement of blighted or deteriorated properties that degrade the character of downtown and of surrounding neighborhoods. (Related to Housing & Neighborhoods Policy 3)

ACTIONS:

1.13.1

Create an expedited process and streamline notice procedure for returning adjudicated properties, which represent a challenge in bringing community's abandoned and dilapidated structures, to commerce.

1.13.2

Accelerate the successful "Operation Blight Out" program.

1.13.3

Create incentives to encourage renovation and upkeep of buildings.

1.13.4

Utilize neighborhood planning to help identify, prioritize, and implement redevelopment within neighborhoods.

METRICS:

- » Map and inventory of individual septic systems
- » Number of adjudicated properties
- » Number of properties going through the Operation Blight Out program

GOAL 3**STRENGTHEN LOCAL PLANNING, REGIONAL PLANNING AND COORDINATION WITH SURROUNDING MUNICIPALITIES.****POLICY:**

» P 1.14. Develop a clear annexation planning policy/agreement that is based on the need and benefit of expanding the tax base and efficient delivery of services that can be adopted by all political jurisdictions in Lafayette Parish.

ACTIONS:**1.14.1**

Develop a set of financially sustainable annexation principles (e.g., prioritize annexation of land within city boundaries, areas that are economically and efficiently served by existing services, areas with citizen petitions for annexation) to guide planning and annexation to the city of Lafayette.

1.14.2

Coordinate and establish agreements among all municipalities in Lafayette Parish concerning future “areas of influence,” planning together for future annexation strategies.

» P 1.15. Continue to limit extensions of water and sewer service beyond city of Lafayette boundaries, other than as represented by the FLUM and planned annexation areas, to efficiently use resources and reduce overall infrastructure costs. (Related to Utilities Policy 1)

ACTIONS:**1.15.1**

Facilitate coordinated joint review of water and sewer service extensions in context of the FLUM and annexation planning with LCG departments, including LUS staff.

1.15.2

Continue to study estimated costs associated with water and sewer extensions to service planned mixed use centers and redevelopment areas.

» P 1.16. Strengthen multi-municipal planning and coordination through the MPO, LPSS, and emergency service providers, including land use planning, coordination of parks, transportation improvements, schools, community buildings, and provision of police, fire, and EMS services.

ACTIONS:**1.16.1**

Create a regular coordination process to share and update the MPO and regional service providers on planning projects and monitoring and tracking of comprehensive plan actions.

1.16.2

Monitor short and long range planning efforts of LPSS, emergency service providers, and other parish entities that impact land use and provision of services.

POLICY:

» P 1.17. Coordinate annual budgeting, the CIP, and new applications for funding sources to ensure funding is appropriated in accordance with the comprehensive plan.

ACTIONS:

1.17.1

Integrate the budgeting and capital improvement plan with the comprehensive plan by creating a system for ensuring proposed capital improvements are consistent with the plan.

1.17.2

Seek out grants and technical assistance programs to help implement the recommendations of the comprehensive plan and the FLUM.

1.17.3

Coordinate departmental grant writing efforts and expand the current efforts of CD staff grant writers to include all areas of the plan, including community and economic development assistance and natural resource conservation.

2. COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Community character is a broad phrase used to describe a set of attributes that make a community unique. It can include any number of characteristics, but is largely defined by two overarching ingredients - a community's population and its built environment. Together they define how we experience a community through our daily activities and create what may be referred to as a "sense of place." A dynamic and memorable sense of place provides an inviting environment for existing residents, future residents, and visitors by improving the overall experience of the place and ultimately the community's quality of life. It can also correlate directly to a more diverse and growing economy by attracting new residential development, investment, and jobs.

As it pertains to population, Lafayette's rich Cajun and Creole heritage, its creative scene and culture of innovation, and authentic "joie de vivre" combine to create a unique and attractive place. These aspects combined with the built environment, which is the focus of the Community Character element - how the community looks and feels, is of critical importance and is defined by how we protect, maintain, and create desirable neighborhoods, how we encourage compatible and diverse land uses, how we provide for ease of mobility, and how we protect cultural and natural resources.

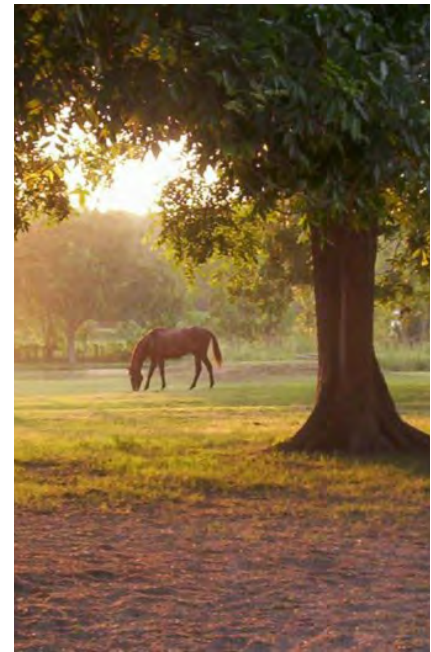
Lafayette Parish has numerous areas with distinct characteristics and opportunities for improvement that collectively define the region's character. These areas include downtown, the UL campus, the Oil Center, major roadway corridors such as Johnston Street and University Avenue, activity centers such as the Northgate and Acadiana Malls and River Ranch, and the parish's outlying agricultural and rural lands. Finally, Lafayette's neighborhoods, which range from historic to contemporary and from urban to rural, form the backbone of the community by serving as primary places of residence and daily activity.

Maintaining and improving Lafayette's community character means that the built environment will be defined by a high standard of quality that is applied to roadways, public spaces, buildings, and landscape. This quality is applied to aesthetics, function, and maintenance.



KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- While downtown captures Lafayette’s unique history and culture, it lacks an established residential population and attractive and functional connections to surrounding areas.
- Major roadway corridors are designed nearly exclusively for automobiles-- decreasing walkability-- and for the provision of public utilities which results in unappealing visual clutter that detracts from the community’s overall sense of place.
- Major roadway corridors are flanked by segregated, single-use commercial development creating unappealing edges to residential neighborhoods without offering substantive choices for amenities or services.
- Lack of adequate, coordinated, and context sensitive standards for roadway and streetscape design.
- Lack of tree canopy and functional landscaping along corridors to provide physical buffers and visual screening detracts from the overall experience and character of the community.
- The existing architectural character of Lafayette’s commercial corridors does not convey the cultural heritage of the community.
- Obsolete and underutilized single-use commercial centers with expansive parking lots are in need of adaptive reuse or redevelopment.
- Disconnected and dispersed development in the unincorporated parish is threatening the rural character and viability of agricultural land use.
- Deteriorating infrastructure, vacant and blighted properties, and poorly maintained streetscape and housing in some older and historic neighborhoods.
- Lack of adequate green space and opportunities for residents to engage in healthful recreational activities.
- Lack of protection and public access to water resources, particularly coulees located within the city limits.



The Park at the Horse Farm



ArtWalk

GOAL 1**PRESERVE AND CAPITALIZE ON LAFAYETTE'S UNIQUE CHARACTER.****POLICIES:**

» P 2.1. Protect and preserve historic and cultural resources and maintain historic character – especially in downtown and surrounding areas - while promoting reinvestment that is complementary to community character. (Related to Historic and Cultural Resources Policy 1)

ACTIONS:**2.1.1**

Identify and create incentives for adaptive reuse of buildings that are in need of redevelopment, including, but not limited to grants, tax incentives, fee waivers, revolving loans, expedited permitting, and flexible land use and building regulations.

2.1.2

Develop regulations that discourage the fragmentation of the historic urban framework such as the closure of streets and demolition of buildings with historic and/or cultural value.

2.1.3

Create special development review processes for sensitive areas, including the BVD, areas adjacent to wetlands, and within the 100-year floodplain to ensure complementary development near culturally and/or environmentally sensitive areas.

» P 2.2. Promote downtown, UL, and surrounding neighborhoods as the historic and cultural epicenter of the Lafayette community as described in the Downtown Action Plan (see Appendix B).

ACTIONS:**2.2.1**

Support the DDA and its information, marketing, and special events promotion activities.

2.2.2

Develop an activity plan for residents and visitors in downtown in order to take full advantage of downtown culture and amenities.

2.2.3

Establish a stronger pedestrian and transit connection between UL, downtown, and surrounding neighborhoods.

2.2.4

Integrate planning efforts of downtown, UL, and the Oil Center recognizing that they define the core of Lafayette.

2.2.5

Support UL initiatives to provide on campus housing, bike and pedestrian routes and structured parking to relieve pressure on surrounding neighborhoods.



Cameron Mehl



Mohit Srivastava

Holi Festival (Indian Festival of Colors) 2014

POLICY:

» P 2.3. Protect the character of rural areas and the viability of agricultural uses.

ACTIONS:**2.3.1**

Create incentives for planned centers of development that preserves rural and agricultural lands with special emphasis on the conservation of farmland, wetlands or water bodies, floodplains, historic sites, scenic viewsheds (an area of particular scenic or historic value), important woodlands, wildlife corridors, and recreation areas.

2.3.2

Consider an agricultural land program that encourages farmland preservation through conservation easements, and minimum lot sizes for residential development on land classified as agriculture by the parish tax assessor.

METRICS:

» Number of active farmland parcels



Lafayette agricultural land

GOAL 2

PROJECT AN ATTRACTIVE COMMUNITY IMAGE.

POLICY:

- » P 2.4. Incorporate an aesthetic into the built environment that exemplifies Lafayette’s regional character, history, and culture.

ACTIONS:

2.4.1

Use the Future Land Use categories to establish design guidelines that reinforce existing and/or desirable characteristics.

2.4.2

Create a parish-wide strategy to integrate coulees and floodways into the built environment through access easements, increased connectivity, opportunities for walking and biking, and improved landscape treatment with the goal of increasing recreational opportunities, improving community and environmental health, and creating a green infrastructure network. (Related to Resource Conservation Policy 1)

- » P 2.5. Integrate streetscape and pedestrian amenities into transportation corridors and streets to provide a distinct character and image and serve to better connect our neighborhoods. (Related to Transportation & Mobility Policy 3)

ACTIONS:

2.5.1

Prioritize the mixed-use corridors illustrated on the FLUM (e.g., Johnston Street, University Avenue) for complete streets improvements and coordinated streetscape improvements.

- » P 2.6. Integrate architectural and landscape features and/or public art such that they serve as gateways to important districts and enhance the overall community aesthetic.

ACTIONS:

2.6.1

Identify strategic locations for the integration of public art, historical markers, and gateway features into public projects and establish a dedicated funding mechanism for implementation.

2.6.2

Evaluate feasibility of designating neighborhood arts and cultural corridors or gateways, with associated streetscape elements, in targeted mixed-use areas.

METRICS:

- » Miles of greenway
- » Number of tactical urbanism projects (small, inexpensive, sometimes temporary projects designed to make places more vibrant)

POLICY:

» P 2.7. Work to ensure that Lafayette is a community that is aesthetically beautiful, uncluttered by litter, illegal signage, unkempt landscaping, etc.

ACTIONS:**2.7.1**

Expand the signage ordinance to include the unincorporated parts of the parish.

2.7.2

Create a public awareness campaign to educate businesses and the general public about right-of-way signage restrictions.

2.7.3

Encourage the public to report sign violations through the tracking software program.

2.7.4

Evaluate current staff capacity to enforce the sign ordinance, and other aesthetically related ordinances, and propose alternatives to assist with the enforcement.

2.7.5

Coordinate with other agencies (e.g. UL, the business community) to advance efforts to strengthen sign regulations and support roadside beautification efforts.

2.7.6

Coordinate with Public Works and the DOTD to work toward a more sustainable planting to reduce costs of maintenance and to increase aesthetics in roadway right-of-ways.



Examples of no-litter signage

GOAL 3

STRENGTHEN THE CHARACTER OF DOWNTOWN AND ITS SURROUNDING AREAS AND NEIGHBORHOODS.

POLICY:

» P 2.8. Implement the Downtown Action Plan (see Appendix B) as part of the comprehensive plan.

ACTIONS:

2.8.1

Create a district based structure for downtown Lafayette that will reinforce the downtown's diversity and accommodate community recommendations related to use, scale, intensity and character.

2.8.2

Implement the actions of the Downtown plan, including:

- Create a Downtown Character Program that emphasizes the importance of downtown's convenience, vibrancy, and building height to street relationship.
- Develop a Public Space Initiative to improve the quality of downtown streets and maintain, improve, and expand upon parks, squares, and plazas.
- Work with the Development Design Center (DDC) to implement the Downtown Action Plan, facilitate promotion and coordination of downtown development, and provide conceptual design services.
- Improve parking infrastructure and management downtown through technology and a parking management plan.
- Develop a Return on Infrastructure Investment Analysis Tool that measures the cost of services and infrastructure investments, as well as expected revenue generated by investments.

» P 2.9. Promote the redevelopment and associated improvements within the Oil Center.

ACTIONS:

2.9.1

Review and update as necessary the Re-envisioning the Oil Center Community Design Workshop findings as a basis for the creation of land use regulations and design standards that address the uniqueness of the Oil Center and are consistent with the comprehensive plan.

2.9.2

Consider strategies for funding infrastructure improvements to the Oil Center through a dedicated funding source.

» P 2.10. Support the implementation of the UL Master Plan and its Guiding Principles.

ACTIONS:

2.10.1

Adopt appropriate land use controls to help transition from the campus edges to surrounding neighborhoods.

2.10.2

Strengthen physical connections along key corridors including along Congress and St. Landry, and along Johnston Street – from the Park at the Horse Farm to downtown.

GOAL 4**DIRECT GROWTH TOWARD MIXED-USE CENTERS AND MAJOR CORRIDORS.****POLICY:**

» P 2.11. Encourage compact development/redevelopment within existing activity centers and along corridors that includes a mix of uses supportive of vibrant daily activity patterns. (Related to Future Land Use Policy 1)

ACTIONS:**2.11.1**

Create land use regulations that:

- Encourage the incorporation of a gridded system of walkable streets and a high degree of connectivity to surrounding areas;
- Allow flexibility in how buildings are used by simplifying the process to adapt from one use to another recognizing building code requirements; and
- Encourage bicycling and walking connections between neighborhoods and retail areas.

» P 2.12. Ensure that new development does not detract from the unique qualities of existing places and neighborhoods and where needed, enhances that character while engaging with those places and neighborhoods to promote connectivity. (Related to Transportation & Mobility Policy 5)

ACTIONS:**2.12.1**

Create land use regulations that provide for appropriate transitions in building mass and scale and provide for adequate buffers to existing neighborhoods.

2.12.2

Provide publicly accessible open space such as plazas, parklets, and pop-up installations to augment the park inventory for surrounding neighborhoods.

2.12.3

Enhance neighborhood entrances and gateways to neighborhoods through provisions such as improved streetscapes, enhanced landscape and lighting, and context specific signage.

METRICS:

» Acreage of parkland/recreational areas



Downtown Lafayette

3. HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

Lafayette has a broad range of diverse neighborhoods that contribute to the parish’s community and residential character. As primary places of residence, neighborhoods and housing units have significant impact on residents’ daily activities and are the foundation of a safe, enjoyable community in which to live. Providing high quality, affordable, and diverse housing choices throughout the parish is essential to the future prosperity of Lafayette.

The majority of housing units within parish neighborhoods consist of single family attached or detached homes. A smaller percentage consists of multi-family units, most of which are located within the city of Lafayette, and mobile homes, primarily in the unincorporated parish. Relative to comparable housing markets, Lafayette Parish’s housing market is in a generally healthy state, having remained relatively stable throughout the 2009 recession and housing crisis. With its variety of housing stock, large areas of developable land, and moderate housing cost in relation to incomes, Lafayette’s housing market is generally affordable and serves the majority of households, even a large number of families below the area median income. According to the Center for Neighborhood Technology’s Housing and Transportation Index (H+T), 86% of housing in the parish is considered affordable (i.e., spending 30% or less of income) to the typical median income household. The majority of housing is, however, single family detached dwelling units – limiting the availability of smaller, potentially more affordable choices.

While housing is generally considered affordable under the traditional definition of affordability, adding the cost of transportation (i.e., owning, driving, and maintaining a car) to the cost of housing means that the majority of households in Lafayette Parish are spending more than 45% of income on housing. In fact, 80% of typical, median income households are spending 45% or more on housing and transportation costs combined. These costs combined are greater for those living in suburban and rural areas where most households own more than one car and have longer distances to drive to work.

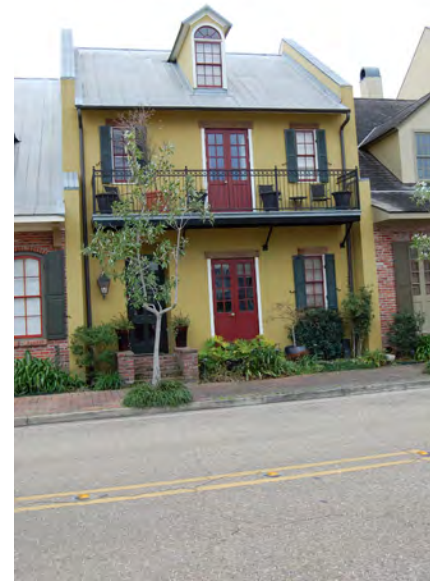
Households with very low incomes (including those living below the poverty level, or a reported 18% of all residents in 2012) continue to struggle to identify good quality market rate housing without some form of housing assistance such as Section 8 or public housing. Without this assistance these households generally live in lower quality housing. This is primarily because of expenses associated with ongoing household utility costs, upkeep of properties, and other household costs. As a result, even though properties may be debt free, very low income renters and owners often live in housing that does not meet national standards for housing quality. From a broader community development perspective, this creates conditions of blight in some neighborhoods, which inhibits reinvestment in many areas of the city and parish – especially in older neighborhoods surrounding downtown.



As a result, in a currently (and for the foreseeable future) well-functioning housing market such as Lafayette, the principal housing strategies need to focus on the strengthening and stabilizing older neighborhoods through reinvestment and infill development. A second focus is the location of housing, with respect to employment and commuting distances, that helps to determine overall affordability (housing and transportation costs) of neighborhoods. A third strategy relates to demographic shifts underway and is associated with changing housing preferences for retiring baby boomers and their children, the Millennials. Studies have found that the Millennial generation increasingly prefers alternatives to single family suburban homes, including attached homes and apartments in and around downtown, the university and other compact, walkable neighborhoods with an urban character.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Housing inventory that consists primarily of single family homes. Greater diversity of housing choices is desirable to meet the needs of all type of households, especially those with very low incomes, single person households, retirees, and young adults and families.
- UL provides a limited amount of on campus student housing and, as a result, there are a large number of students living and renting in the surrounding areas downtown. The university is currently building housing that will help to strike a better balance between rental and owner occupied housing, but the need is expected to continue.
- Neighborhood resistance to poorly-designed affordable housing and other types of multifamily housing.
- Need for greater diversity of housing, especially downtown, and flexible parking standards based on the type of development.
- Need for additional high quality affordable housing inventory to meet the needs of families below 40 percent of median income, as well as, the homeless and those who are about to become homeless.
- Preserving the character of older, historic neighborhoods while new development occurs – and maintaining older housing in existing neighborhoods.
- Managing the potential impacts of the future I-49 Connector in surrounding neighborhoods.



River Ranch residential development



Housing in an older, well-established Lafayette neighborhood

GOAL 1**ENCOURAGE A DIVERSE RANGE OF HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHOICES.****POLICY:**

» P 3.1. Encourage a variety of housing types at varying densities within residential areas.

ACTIONS:**3.1.1**

Provide improvements to public infrastructure – including water, sewer, and fiber availability – to service multifamily or attached housing units.

3.1.2

Provide incentives to encourage mixed-use and multifamily housing in targeted growth areas.

3.1.3

Collaborate with UL to plan and implement the development of student housing that is compatible with the character of neighborhoods surrounding downtown Lafayette.

3.1.4

Revise land use regulations and policies to promote compatible housing diversity in residential neighborhoods (i.e., allow for accessory apartments for aging family members or single households, on single family properties).

3.1.5

Use amenities such as improved sidewalk connections and public transit options to attract and encourage higher density housing in centers and along corridors.

» P 3.2. Increase opportunities for mixed-use housing development and live work units downtown and in mixed-use centers.

ACTIONS:**3.2.1**

Foster PPPs between the DDA, LEDA, and others (e.g., AcA) to encourage new types of housing in downtown Lafayette.

3.2.2

Revise zoning to allow live-work units, accessory units, and senior living units in mixed-use centers.

3.2.3

Study parking needs and encourage shared parking agreements to reduce onsite parking needs, as well as, parking that is sensitive to the context and surrounding uses.

3.2.4

Leverage historic and low income housing tax credits to rehab existing buildings into multifamily housing.

3.2.5

Continue developing marketing efforts to brand downtown living, including variety in housing options, arts and cultural amenities, walkability, restaurants, music venues, and retail.

3.2.6

Encourage adaptive reuse of buildings for housing.

METRICS:

» Number of new units of unconventional housing



Habitat for Humanity infill rendering, Lafayette, LA



Rendering of St. Mary Streetscape, ASW

GOAL 2**PROMOTE QUALITY HOUSING AND ENCOURAGE THE REHABILITATION AND/OR REUSE OF DECLINING HOUSING STOCKS.****POLICY:**

» P 3.3. Improve housing in blighted condition and encourage residents to maintain and improve their homes.

ACTIONS:**3.3.1**

Provide housing improvement incentives for the rehabilitation and repair of housing.

3.3.2

Implement stricter code enforcement.

3.3.3

Implement a volunteers housing rehabilitation coordination committee working with nonprofits, where the parish can designate a member of its team to serve to coordinate volunteer housing rehabilitation and building efforts in low income communities with the investment of in kind resources from charitable and related groups.

3.3.4

Support the Keep Lafayette Beautiful Committee and encourage programs that recognize and reward well groomed and attractive properties.

3.3.5

Strengthen neighborhood associations to increase accountability among stakeholders in the neighborhoods and encourage neighbors helping neighbors.

3.3.6

Create an “Adopt-a-Lot” program to aid in litter abatement.

3.3.7

Consider types of tax incentives for reuse of declining property.

» P 3.4. Improve the condition and level of maintenance of the current inventory of housing units in the parish.

ACTIONS:**3.4.1**

Create a Housing Condition Inspections program to conduct a condition survey of housing stock to gather data on housing unit conditions, degree of blight, and abandoned homes.

3.4.2

Create a rental housing inspection program to ensure that rental housing is safe and habitable.

3.4.3

Consider a low-cost loan or tax credit program that would encourage homeowners to invest in exterior home improvements.

METRICS:

» Number of code violations

POLICY:

» P 3.5. Provide opportunities for residents to build stability and wealth by investing in their own real estate in order to ensure maintenance of properties.

ACTIONS:

3.5.1

Partner with community based organizations to implement a tool loan program that would lend tools to neighborhood residents for property improvements.

3.5.2

Use NMTCs to incentivize investment in lower-income communities.

3.5.3

Consider a low-cost loan or tax credit program that would encourage homeowners to invest in exterior home improvements.

METRICS:

- » Number of homeowners participating in programs
- » Number of NMTC projects



Simcoe Street: Housing in need of repair

GOAL 3**DEVELOP AND FACILITATE AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLDS.****POLICY:**

» P 3.6. Continue to maximize and manage state and federal housing dollars through the LHA and the CD Department to ensure decent, safe, and sanitary affordable housing.

ACTIONS:**3.6.1**

Collaborate with affordable housing providers in the community to increase access to affordable rental and for sale units.

3.6.2

Encourage development of mixed income housing (market rate and affordable units) development.

3.6.3

Track and coordinate funding applications and awards through the LHA and CD Department.

» P 3.7. Work with lenders to leverage funds and ensure the availability of mortgage products for lower income buyers.

ACTIONS:**3.7.1**

Promote programs— such as Second Loan Home Purchase Programs for assisting low and moderate income working families' movement from renting to homeownership.

3.7.2

Develop new programs and enhance affordable housing options for low income families.

» P 3.8. Develop new programs and enhance affordable housing options for low income families.

ACTIONS:**3.8.1**

Review and evaluate training and educational programs for low and moderate income first time buyers to ensure successful transition and maintenance of home ownership.

3.8.2

Assist the private sector in developing affordable and workforce housing through the provision of incentives such as infrastructure upgrades, expedited permitting, fee waivers, parking reductions, additional density or intensity, special design considerations, etc.

3.8.3

Work with community development corporations and local and regional nonprofit groups to help provide affordable housing units.

3.8.4

Promote the preservation of existing housing stock, particularly of historical and cultural value, by seeking funds and developing new programs to assist qualified families to rehabilitate existing housing units.

POLICY:

» P 3.9. Continue to work with homeless prevention organizations and concerned public agencies to find shelter for homeless families and individuals.

ACTIONS:

3.9.1

Develop public private partnerships with local homeless prevention organizations and shelters to assist in the development of transitional or short term housing for homeless families.

3.9.2

Monitor and assist homeless population and population vulnerable to becoming homeless through surveys, outreach, and counseling.

METRICS:

» Number of affordable housing units



Habitat for Humanity infill, Lafayette, LA

GOAL 4**PROTECT AND REVITALIZE NEIGHBORHOODS AND ASSETS.****POLICY:**

- » P 3.10. Create a comprehensive strategy to address the impacts on neighborhoods and housing associated with potential future I-49 Connector changes. (Related to Future Land Use Policy 7, Transportation & Mobility Policy 8)

ACTIONS:**3.10.1**

Review, revise where necessary, and implement the Corridor Preservation and Management Action Plan to protect housing that is occupied and in good condition, build new housing for displaced units as necessary, and improve pedestrian and bicycle crossings and design of the I-49 Connector.

- » P 3.11. Strategically target the neighborhood planning program to provide support and guidance on best practices in growth areas and low socioeconomic neighborhoods. (Related to Future Land Use Policy 2)

ACTIONS:**3.11.1**

Dedicate fiscal and staff resources for neighborhood planning in key growth areas.

3.11.2

Identify funding opportunities through grants and public private partnerships with local businesses.

3.11.3

Implement a citizen planner program to build capacity for neighborhood planning and community building. (Related to Future Land Use Policy 2)

METRICS:

- » Number of funded Neighborhood planning projects

POLICY:

» P 3.12. Identify strategies to encourage redevelopment and prevent and mitigate blighting influences such as foreclosures, adjudicated occupied housing, and vacant properties in neighborhoods.

ACTIONS:

3.12.1

With the support of LEDA, the GLCC, and other interested parties, start a Redevelopment Authority with the ability to acquire vacant property, provide a land bank, assist with assembly of land suitable for development, and partner with the private sector.

3.12.2

Develop a program, such as the “Lot Next Door” or homesteading, to provide assistance to homeowners in the purchase of a blighted or abandoned property immediately adjacent to their home through the new Redevelopment Authority.

3.12.3

Encourage the development of a community land trust (neighborhood nonprofit) to develop affordable and mixed income housing, community gardens/farms, arts and cultural uses, and other neighborhood services through partnership with the Redevelopment Authority.

3.12.4

Promote the utilization of vacant sites as public parks or community gardens or public art installations to reduce undesirable impacts of vacancy and provide a neighborhood asset. Funding can be acquired through state and federal grants, with other community partners, or through crowdsourcing.

3.12.5

Continue to expedite the demolition of condemned structures.

3.12.6

Work with property owners and the PD to encourage CPTED principles in design of streetscape and lighting, parks, building entrances, and landscaping on private property to eliminate problem spots for vandalism and other crimes.

» P 3.13. Create infill and housing redevelopment strategies that complement and enhance the character of existing neighborhoods.

ACTIONS:

3.13.1

Establish regulatory and design guidelines for infill/redevelopment housing developments that ensure compatibility with surrounding properties.

METRICS:

- » Number of tactical urbanism projects
- » Number of properties going through the Operation Blight Out program

POLICY:

» P 3.14. Identify and assess the infrastructure needs of older neighborhoods and provide for improvements needed to ensure their sustainability.

ACTIONS:**3.14.1**

Support existing neighborhood planning efforts to identify and implement strategies for quality housing and infrastructure upgrades within neighborhoods.

3.14.2

Consider establishing an LCG fund dedicated to upgrading infrastructure to meet environmental regulations to improve drainage capacity, considering green infrastructure, and improve water pressure in neighborhoods.

3.14.3

Encourage neighborhoods to apply for state and federal historic registries to qualify for historic tax credits for home improvements.

3.14.4

Adopt conservation and improvement programs to increase the quality and sustainability of neighborhoods.

» P 3.15. Ensure that new housing and infrastructure is developed in a quality manner that reduces future costs associated with operations, maintenance, and redevelopment.

ACTIONS:**3.15.1**

Establish and enforce minimum quality standards for residential and neighborhood development throughout the parish.

3.15.2

Improve physical connections between and within neighborhoods through road extensions or improvements, bicycle lanes and trails, and a connected sidewalk network.

3.15.3

Encourage sustainable site design principles (e.g., onsite stormwater management, tree preservation, reductions in impermeable surfaces, greater energy efficiency) through regulatory incentives.

3.15.4

Increase use of LUS free or low cost services that encourage energy efficiency (e.g., energy audits, incentives for lower income households) to reduce operating costs and create healthy home environments.

3.15.5

Establish criteria for utility easements that do not preclude the many tenets of walkability, including street tree placement, building setbacks, etc.

METRICS:

- » Miles of roadway, sidewalk and bicycle facilities
- » Energy efficiency indices



LUS

LUS maintained utility lines

4. HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

Lafayette is located at the center of a diverse region that is known for its Acadian (Cajun) and Creole culture. The region's French heritage can be traced back to the forced migration of the French from what is now known as Canada. People who settled in Louisiana were nicknamed "Cajuns" and the local culture was born. The Creole population consisting of people from African, West Indian, and European descent joined Acadians in the then Spanish controlled territory of Louisiana. Today's residents speak a variety of languages including Cajun French, Creole French, Spanish, and Vietnamese. The parish's festivals, music, arts, and food showcase the local culture and traditions.

Culture stands at the core of every great city, but in Lafayette culture is essential to people's daily lives. From Festivals to Fais Do-Dos, from the Culinary Arts to Grammy-winning music, from extraordinary exhibits to theater and dance - Lafayette's culture is what makes Lafayette unique, distinct and tied together. The AcA serves the region as a culture hub through community development; grant making, arts-in-education, exhibits, career development, public art and all things performing arts on large and small stages.

There are over 95 locally designated landmarks, National Register buildings and districts, and significant cultural places located in the parish, the majority of which are found in and around downtown and its older neighborhoods. The Lafayette Preservation Commission is responsible for designating local Historic Properties, helping to revitalize business districts and historic neighborhoods through enhancement of historic resources, and developing uniform standards for protection and enhancement of special cultural and historical places and elements.

Downtown Lafayette is designated by the State of Louisiana as a "Cultural Products District," attracting visitors from across the country. Historic Preservation Tax Credits are available for properties within the district, in addition to a state sales tax exemption for all original works of art purchased in the district. Many downtown art galleries participate in a monthly ArtWalk to showcase local and regional arts and culture. Other significant historic resources include the Sterling Grove Historic District, a residential district of 250 acres and 43 buildings located northeast of downtown, and the Vermilionville Living History Museum and Folklife Park. Vermilionville, a major cultural and historic landmark within the BVD, is one of the largest representations of early Acadian settlements and attracts nearly 50,000 visitors a year.



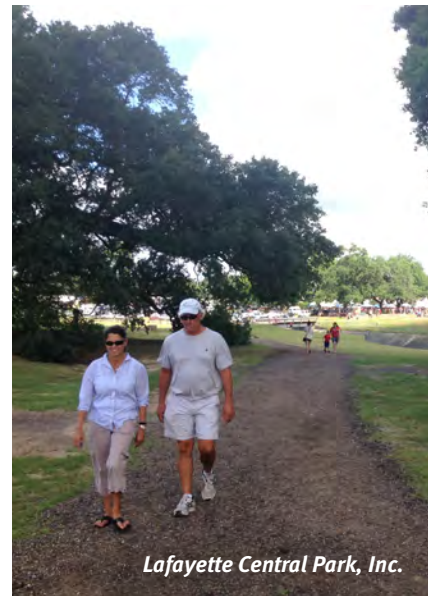
Lafayette has a number of cultural institutions that act as a foundation for the thriving arts scene. These include the AcA, the Acadiana Symphony Orchestra and Conservatory of Music, the Lafayette Ballet Theatre, the Children’s Museum of Acadiana, the Lafayette Science Museum, Cité des Arts, and the Hilliard University Art Museum. Major festivals and attractions include Festival International, Festivals Acadiens et Créoles, Mardi Gras, and the Zydeco Festival.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Maintenance and preservation of older structures of historical and cultural value.
- Reuse of existing historically or culturally significant structures.
- Coordination and reduction of overlap between historical and cultural organizations.
- Limited state and local funding for arts and culture.
- Access to arts and culture in underserved areas, schools, and neighborhoods that lack resources to get to performance venues.
- Managing potential conflicts between arts and cultural events and festivals and the growing downtown population.
- Communicating value of arts, culture, and local history in economic terms.



Festival International



Lafayette Central Park, Inc.

The Park at the Horse Farm

GOAL 1**PROMOTE AND HIGHLIGHT KEY HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES.****POLICY:**

» P 4.1. Support utilization of significant historical and cultural resources with the potential to serve as neighborhood anchors and community assets.

ACTIONS:**4.1.1**

Develop community partnerships with historical and cultural organizations to provide gathering and educational spaces for neighborhoods, as well as, build community and financial support for the organizations.

4.1.2

Encourage alternatives to the demolition of significant resources, such as architecturally compatible rehabilitation, adaptive reuse, and relocation.

4.1.3

Review impacts on historic resources during the planning and review of development projects, including considering alternatives to demolition or alteration of a historic property's character.

4.1.4

Continue efforts to fund the PAL historic preservation fund to provide a monetary source for local preservation incentives, such as an architectural assistance program for property owners. The fund may be supported through grants, private or public donations, or other sources.

4.1.5

Align funding through the PAL historic preservation fund with the comprehensive plan goals.

4.1.6

Apply for CLG status with the Louisiana Historic Preservation Office to be eligible for grant funds for historical and cultural preservation through the National Parks Service, in addition to location within the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area.

4.1.7

Document and protect archaeological resources on public land (e.g., along the Vermilion River) through education and explanatory and wayfinding signage.



Historic Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Downtown Lafayette

POLICY:

» P 4.2. Preserve and strengthen neighborhoods that are culturally and historically valuable but that do not meet eligibility criteria for designation as a local, state, or national district. (Related to Community Character Policy 1)

ACTIONS:**4.2.1**

Establish a process to identify, evaluate and designate culturally and historically significant neighborhoods as neighborhood character areas.

4.2.2

Continue to maintain an up to date database of significant buildings and sites with historic, cultural, archeological, or environmental value using the parish's GIS and use the data to monitor historic resources and promote tourism.

4.2.3

Encourage the retention of those qualities that contribute to neighborhood character areas through the application of design guidelines consistent with the local context of each area.

4.2.4

Support and enhance the efforts of the Lafayette Preservation Commission to include a role in development review for properties within neighborhood character areas.

4.2.5

Support the purchase of significant properties with wide appeal to the community.

POLICY:

» P 4.3. Increase coordination and resource sharing between organizations with a focus on historical and cultural resources, including the Preservation Alliance of Lafayette, DDA, Acadiana Historical Initiative at UL, Lafayette Preservation Commission, Lafayette Convention & Visitors Commission, and others.

ACTIONS:

4.3.1

Broaden PAL's role to help coordinate between affiliated historical and cultural resources partners to share information, resources, and seek out opportunities for grants and funding.

4.3.3

Develop a property owners' guide to historic preservation that includes an overview of the roles of each of the local organizations, available incentives, and funding opportunities.

4.3.5

Support local cultural and performing arts organizations by making available public facilities for performances and as exhibition space, where appropriate.

4.3.7

Organize multi-generational "study circles," "round tables," or "dialogue forums" to provide residents an opportunity to discuss issues of race, ethnicity and public policy, while building relationships.

4.3.2

Develop and implement straightforward and transparent preservation strategies, guidelines, and regulations for historic areas, sites and structures, and cultural resources.

4.3.4

Continue to leverage recognition of Lafayette's historic preservation program, participate directly in federal and state historic preservation programs, and gain access to designated historic preservation funding.

4.3.6

Expand historical tourism through Lafayette Convention & Visitors Commission marketing materials including a comprehensive listing of historical assets and walking tour ideas.

POLICY:

» P 4.4. Expand education and awareness of Lafayette's unique history and cultural identity in schools and community centers.

ACTIONS:**4.4.1**

Create a partnership between UL's Public History Program's Acadiana Historical initiative and the Lafayette Parish Public Schools to expand the reach of the historic and storytelling aspect of the initiative and connect students with seniors.

4.4.2

Use Lafayette's public libraries as community resources to introduce new residents, including non-English speakers, to the history and culture of the region through collections and events.

4.4.3

Celebrate the cultural history of Lafayette by increasing community awareness through the design of public projects and facilities such as parks, plazas, and community buildings.

4.4.4

Encourage the development of educational literature on Lafayette's historical and architectural resources and share with students through curriculum and program development.

4.4.5

Encourage active community involvement in preservation efforts through historical and cultural resource sponsorship programs.



LPSS Students

POLICY:

» P 4.5. Create additional opportunities for heritage, culture, and ecotourism in Lafayette Parish.

ACTIONS:

4.5.1

Continue to highlight Vermilionville as a major cultural and tourism attraction and support education about smaller historic sites throughout the parish.

4.5.3

Design and install outdoor interpretative and wayfinding signage highlighting historical resources and supporting self-guided tours.

4.5.5

Work with neighboring communities to expand cultural programming throughout the region.

4.5.2

Continue to create low cost guided walking tours of historic resources in Lafayette to showcase the region's numerous historic buildings and places, including downtown, the Sterling Grove Historic District, and the McComb-Veazey neighborhood.

4.5.4

Expand opportunities for ecotourism in the region, including bayou tours and other opportunities within the parish's waterways and future greenways.

4.5.6

Cultivate Lafayette's position as a food destination by evaluating and expanding on "food infrastructure" in the Lafayette community.

METRICS:

» Number of tactical urbanism projects

GOAL 2**INCREASE COMMUNITY-WIDE ARTS AND CULTURAL ACCESS AND EDUCATION.****POLICY:**

» P 4.6. Strengthen cultural and arts education in Lafayette schools.

ACTIONS:**4.6.1**

Work with the Lafayette Parish School System (LPSS) and AcA to assess the results and strategies for implementing the Community Audit for Arts Education – including training materials and arts integration.

4.6.2

Expand opportunities for afterschool arts programming and communicate opportunities through the schools.

4.6.3

Create public art, such as murals, that involve schools and children in design and creation of projects.

» P 4.7. Preserve and share Lafayette’s history through increased use of oral histories, storytelling, photographs, and archival data.

ACTIONS:**4.7.1**

Partner with the Preservation Alliance, UL, and other historical and cultural groups to create the opportunity for volunteers to interview and record oral histories of local residents.

4.7.2

Create an exposition or art show of local stories and photographs to educate and share the Lafayette community’s history and culture.

4.7.3

Encourage the participation of Lafayette’s rich diversity of ethnic groups in efforts to preserve historical and cultural resources through the inclusion of ethnic resources in collections and archival data.

METRICS:

- » Number of after school programs
- » Number of tactical urbanism projects

POLICY:

» P 4.8. Grow Lafayette’s successful downtown arts and cultural district and increase galleries, art and performance space, and cultural facilities.

ACTIONS:

4.8.1

Continue marketing efforts to attract and grow support for existing and new downtown art and cultural venues.

4.8.2

Encourage the development of live-work artist space and studio space downtown.

4.8.3

Consider funding mechanisms for a coordinated public art program downtown. (Related to Community Character Policy 7)

4.8.4

Expand development of galleries, performance spaces, and cultural venues downtown. (Related to Historical & Cultural Resources Policy 11)

4.8.5

Create stronger linkages and awareness between the downtown arts and cultural district and UL’s Hilliard University Art Museum and other related resources using signage and promotional materials.

» P 4.9. Strengthen gateways and placemaking within Lafayette commercial centers and neighborhoods with public art and coordinated streetscape elements. (Related to Community Character Policy 6)

ACTIONS:

4.9.1

Improve gateways into the city of Lafayette and downtown, including the I-10/I-49 North Gateway and Johnston Street, with coordinated streetscape improvements, signage, and amenities.

4.9.2

Designate and encourage “Neighborhood Arts/Cultural Corridors” as a way to distinguish the different character of areas and neighborhoods.

4.9.3

Inventory and preserve historic sidewalk stamps, street signs, lampposts, street trees, and other hardscape and cultural landscape elements, in addition to designated historical buildings, structures, and sites that contribute to the historic character of a neighborhood.

4.9.4

Encourage the use of local history themes in public art projects, when appropriate.

METRICS:

- » Number of non-conventional housing unit permits
- » Square footage of arts and cultural venues in downtown

GOAL 3**VALUE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ARTS AND CULTURE IN THE CREATIVE ECONOMY.****POLICY:**

» P 4.10. Maintain and grow Lafayette's festivals and cultural events.

ACTIONS:**4.10.1**

Consider future needs for festivals and special events as they continue to grow, including a permanent, larger location for outdoor festival and events downtown.

4.10.2

Coordinate with retailers, restaurants, and the Lafayette Convention and Visitors Commission to offer smaller special events targeted to visitors.

» P 4.11. Communicate the value of arts and culture to the Lafayette community.

ACTIONS:**4.11.1**

Partner with LEDA or the GLCC to measure economic impact of arts and cultural events, activity generated by ArtWalks and galleries, and educational impact of involving students in arts, historic, and cultural projects or events.

4.11.2

Create materials to communicate the value of arts and culture through LEDA, LCVC, and the GLCC.

4.11.3

Participate in and use National Historic Preservation Week to recognize those individuals, groups or businesses that have made a significant contribution to the preservation, protection or restoration of historical or cultural resources.

4.11.4

Finalize, adopt, and implement a Culture Plan through a collaborative process with cultural stakeholders and civic leadership in the community, to be led by the Aca. This may include civic beautification, neighborhood corridors, public art parks, a new cultural campus, and grant funding opportunities.



Stacy Lee

Cajun Courir de Mardi Gras 2014, Park at the Horse Farm

5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Lafayette is known as the Hub City of southern Louisiana because of its central location within the regional road network, its location at the crossroads of Interstates 10 and 49, and its position as a regional leader and destination for retail, healthcare, technology, oil and gas, and education. The population in Lafayette’s trade market area is estimated to be in excess of 600,000 people.

Job growth and per capita income are strong in the region; in fact in 2012 the Lafayette metro area was ranked 24 on the national list of 200 best performing metro areas – moving up nearly 70 spaces from 2011. While job and population growth have remained strong, cost of living and crime rates are relatively low in Lafayette, making the region attractive to new residents and businesses. Major industry employment sectors in order of number of jobs in 2011 include: Health Care; Retail Trade; Gas and Oil/Mining; Tourism and Accommodations; Manufacturing; Education; Professional and Technical Services; and Finance and Real Estate.

The comprehensive plan is one critical process where economic strategies can be aligned within the broader overarching planning context, and concurrently the comprehensive plan can be aligned with economic development needs of the community. As a result, the economic development element of the plan identifies key challenges or hurdles for the future of the parish as it relates to investment and job growth that can be ameliorated or overcome through changes or investment in land use polices, infrastructure, housing, education, tourism and other plan elements.



KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Need for a greater number of qualified workers with technical skills to meet the needs of the local economy.
- Limited airport service to attract a wide range of global corporations outside of petroleum and health care.
- Somewhat limited diversity in economy with a dependence upon three major industries, petroleum, health care and higher education, to drive the economy.
- Difficulty recruiting talented executives to Lafayette in the three primary industries. This difficulty can be traced to the perceived shortcomings of the public education system and the lack of employment opportunities in nonrelated industries.
- A significant agriculture and aquaculture sector whose fortunes are dependent upon the global commodities markets and the continued moving of production to lower cost- higher production agriculture markets around the world.
- Meeting the infrastructure needs of new development, including transportation and utilities, in fast growing areas of the parish.



Lafayette Airport



LUS infrastructure

GOAL 1**PRODUCE MORE SKILLED WORKERS LOCALLY FOR LOCAL JOBS.****POLICY:**

» P 5.1. Increase business skills training for high school graduates to allow local companies to hire and compete globally. (Related to Community Facilities Policy 7)

ACTIONS:**5.1.1**

Target federal and foundation grants that support greater workforce training, collaboration with major employers and industries, mentoring, and career path programs.

5.1.2

Work with LPSS to advocate for increased business skills training for local high school students through the Thibodaux STEM Magnet Academy, SLCC, and others.

5.1.3

Work with major employers to participate in an annual survey, conferences, job fairs, etc.

» P 5.2. Enhance coordination between the region's colleges and universities and major employers. (Related to Community Facilities Policy 10)

ACTIONS:**5.2.1**

Develop a business-driven education development strategy led by LCG, LEDA, and GLCC that includes the desired skills needed in local employees and expected growth in job sectors.

5.2.2

Annually survey HR managers to determine perceived improvement or diminishment of readiness of recent local hires.

METRICS:

- » Participation in employment readiness programs
- » Number of economically incentivized projects in target areas



Hilliard University Art Museum

GOAL 2**BROADEN EMPLOYMENT SECTORS THAT DRIVE THE PARISH ECONOMY.****POLICY:**

» P 5.3. Encourage population and economic growth that provides the basis for a more diverse economy.

ACTIONS:**5.3.1**

Work with LEDA's business attraction and economic development efforts to align them with government infrastructure planning, incentive programs, and future land use priorities.

5.3.2

Anticipate and make infrastructure investment in areas of the parish designated for employment, retail, and mixed-use growth in order to spur investment by development in key corridors or within principal nodes.

5.3.3

Explore special assessments for improvements (i.e. street signage, enhanced lighting, landscaping) in redevelopment areas where investment is imminent or already occurring in order to further drive property values and activity.

5.3.4

Evaluate the potential of a business license, or a similar program, to aid economic development by helping track and analyze trends in local business, and to increase the efficiency and accuracy of sales tax collection.

» P 5.4. Diversify economy by supporting startup and entrepreneurial businesses.

ACTIONS:**5.4.1**

Foster interaction between the public and private sector that enables innovation, secures talent, and improves the business climate for a growing economic base.

5.4.2

Support local incubators, like Opportunity Machine, and R&D efforts at UL to foster entrepreneurship and growth in technology related businesses.

5.4.3

Continue to support energy innovation that is at the forefront of the newest wave of technological development.

5.4.4

Leverage the parish's anticipated growth in the health sector to encourage both public and private investment in training within fields such as Emergency Medicine Training, Outpatient Care and Home Care.

5.4.5

Leverage R&D activity at UL to grow local business.

5.4.6

Continue to market region as a leader in technology related businesses with access to the fastest internet speeds in the country.

POLICY:

» P 5.5. Dedicate resources to encourage existing/additional airlines with greater levels of jet service to Lafayette Regional Airport on an enhanced schedule.

ACTIONS:

5.5.1

Schedule community and elected leaders (including Congressional Delegation) to meet every two years with airline route management executives to update on community growth and progress.

5.5.2

Offer targeted airlines marketing support or incentives to commit to Lafayette.

5.5.3

Obtain local corporate commitments to utilize enhanced service for a select period of time.

5.5.4

Update research every several years to evaluate the need for enhanced service and projected utilization levels.

5.5.5

Secure funding for the expansion of terminal facilities in order to meet growing demand, which is currently forecasted to be an additional 300% between now and 2025.

» P 5.6. Continue to increase tourism and expand the range of activities available to visitors. (Related to Historical & Cultural Resources Policy 3)

ACTIONS:

5.6.1

Invest in assets and infrastructure to ensure that gateways are attractive, streets are clean, pedestrian friendly, and well maintained.

5.6.2

Improve support services for a better visitor experience, including wayfinding signage, self-guided tours, lodging, parking, dining, packaged visitor guide videos for local hotels, increased quality taxi availability, and transit shuttles for major events.

5.6.3

Develop training programs for frontline staff to elevate LOS critical to tourism development.

5.6.4

Expand synergies and coordination of marketing by linking existing destinations, festivals and events.

5.6.5

Expand ecotourism through national exposure to events and competitions (e.g., fishing tournaments, triathlon events, etc.).

5.6.6

Support expansion of the UL Convention Center to include hotel facilities in order to increase competitiveness for potential conferences and special events.

METRICS:

» Number of visitor support services

POLICY:

» P 5.7. Maintain competitive and financial strength of LUS Fiber so it can continue to enhance its national position.

ACTIONS:**5.7.1**

Monitor national rollout of ultrahigh speed internet access by firms such as Google and AT&T to ensure that Lafayette business community and residents have equivalent or better speed, coverage, cost, and availability of access in relation to their peer cities as the high speed market continues to evolve.

5.7.2

Expand LUS Fiber access to more customer locations in the city of Lafayette, including multifamily residential communities and office buildings, as it becomes financially feasible to do so.

5.7.3

Evaluate the feasibility of pursuing multiple marketing pathways – including those that continue to position LUS Fiber as a local service provider with excellent internet, cable, and phone service and other methods that brand LUS Fiber as a national leader in high speed internet service delivery.

5.7.4

With the assistance of LEDA and other entities, develop and market Fiber case studies that communicate tangible outcomes for companies who have located to Lafayette because of Fiber or who have been successful because of Fiber availability.

5.7.5

Continue national networking with Fiber to the Home (FTTH) Council, American Public Power Association (APPA), and other entities and fiber-to-the-premise communities to remain a national leader in high speed internet availability.

5.7.6

Support local community efforts that help market LUS Fiber products and build Lafayette's position as a leader in high speed internet.

GOAL 3

CONTINUE TO STRENGTHEN THE IDENTITY AND MIX OF USES IN THE DOWNTOWN CORE.

POLICY:

» P 5.8. Establish downtown as the heart of the community and a center of cultural activity with a mix of retail, service, civic, office, and residential uses as described in the Downtown Action Plan. (Related to Future Land Use Policy 3, Community Character Policy 2)

ACTIONS:

5.8.1

Encourage higher density and intensity of development, given its central location, development patterns, and proximity to employment, services, education, and other amenities.

5.8.2

Increase residential and office uses downtown to help establish a 24 hour market for commercial success and increased pedestrian activity.

5.8.3

Evaluate opportunities for capturing mid to longer term downtown/Oil Center hotel demand that is driven by both overnight leisure and business sectors.

5.8.4

Emphasize gateways to downtown, strengthen the sense of place and identity downtown, and enhance signage to help residents, workers, and visitors navigate the area.

5.8.5

Encourage a new or enhanced civic gathering space downtown that is integrated into the fabric of downtown and provides public amenities.

METRICS:

» Downtown density

6. TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

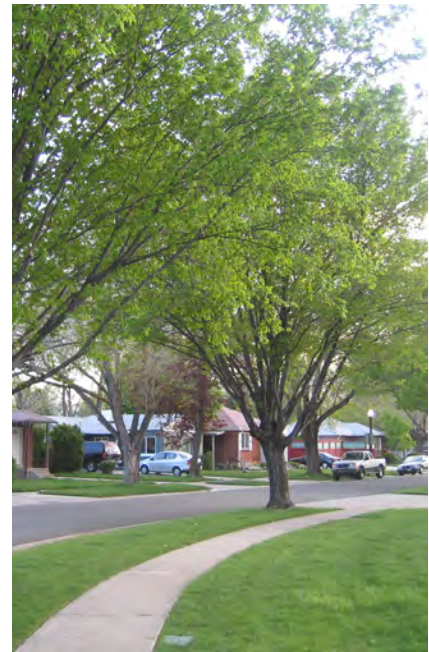
Like many peer communities, Lafayette has a transportation system that remains highly automobile dependent, with low rates of transit ridership, and most areas of the city and parish lacking convenient access to accessible transit routes or safe facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists. Lafayette’s highly constrained road network has a significant amount of congestion induced travel time delays during peak periods of the day. An analysis of the 2010 Lafayette Travel Demand model results show that commuters lost over 2.8 million hours and \$59 million annually due to traffic congestion in the Lafayette metropolitan area. This congestion can be attributed to the high rate of single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) use, lack of alternative travel choices, and lack of parishwide connectivity.

Communities cannot solve traffic congestion simply by building as much roadway capacity as the anticipated demand for travel would seem to require due to the funding constraints and the reality of induced demand. Induced demand means that improved roadway capacity inevitably attracts additional traffic because if the capacity of a roadway is increased, motorists will change their routes to take advantage of that improved roadway. Two principles which have guided the development of this plan have been to increase road network connectivity and expand the availability of alternative travel options and make those options available wherever possible. Possibilities include enhanced connectivity requirements, new or improved transit routes, or modal choices that serve the same origins and destinations. In the case where there is a projected need for additional roadway capacity, the preferred response may not be a wider facility, but enhanced operational efficiency. Improvements can be achieved using Transportation System Management (TSM), Travel Demand Management (TDM), or Information Technology (ITS) strategies and Access Managements (AM) techniques that serve to optimize the performance of a facility.



KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Improving the traffic efficiency of the road network, through improved access management, coordinated signal timing and improved street interconnectivity.
- Maintenance and preservation of existing transportation facilities to avoid expensive rehabilitation projects.
- Reducing congestion on existing Vermilion River crossings and building new crossings to increase connectivity across the river.
- Expediting completion of the I-49 Connector.
- Implementation of Travel Demand Management (TDM) strategies such as ridesharing, staggered work hours etc., for more efficient use of transportation resources.
- Implementation of a comprehensive and interconnected pedestrian, bicycle, and trail system network as an integral part of regional transportation network.
- Reducing SOV use and making transit more attractive to choice riders.
- Providing quality fixed transit service to urban and rural areas of the parish.
- Improving roadway connectivity (e.g., through road extensions) in previously developed areas.



Model residential street typology



Existing Johnston Street signage

GOAL 1**PRESERVE THE EXISTING AND PLANNED TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM.****POLICY:**

» P 6.1. Continue to manage and maintain existing transportation facilities, including safety features such as signing, lighting, striping, pedestrian crosswalks, and traffic signal equipment.

ACTIONS:**6.1.1**

Improve the conditions of existing transportation facilities in areas identified on the FLUM as mixed-use centers and corridors and prioritize the use of transportation funds in these areas.

6.1.2

Use LCG's tracking software to allow citizens to report missing and/or needed improvements of the transportation system and track the information.

» P 6.2. Improve corridor preservation and management to protect existing and planned transportation corridors from inconsistent development and potential negative environmental, social, and economic impacts.

ACTIONS:**6.2.1**

Continually work with the MPO to review and update the Lafayette MPO long-range transportation plans to ensure that they conform to the priorities identified in the parish FLUM, with an emphasis on improvements to existing roadways.

6.2.2

Develop and adopt parishwide Functional Classification Design Standards that incorporate best practices in "Complete Streets" design (street improvements that balance the utilization of public right-of-ways between transit, automobiles/trucks, bicycles, and pedestrians).

6.2.3

Develop detailed corridor plans for specific/identified roadways in targeted areas.

6.2.4

Improve coordination and collaboration between the numerous departments that impact roadway design standards and sections – including the Louisiana DOTD, Planning, Zoning, and Development (PZD), Public Works, LUS, and the MPO.

6.2.5

Develop and adopt a parishwide Corridor Preservation Plan that conforms to the priorities identified in the parish FLUM and plans for land preservation within designated corridor right-of-ways.

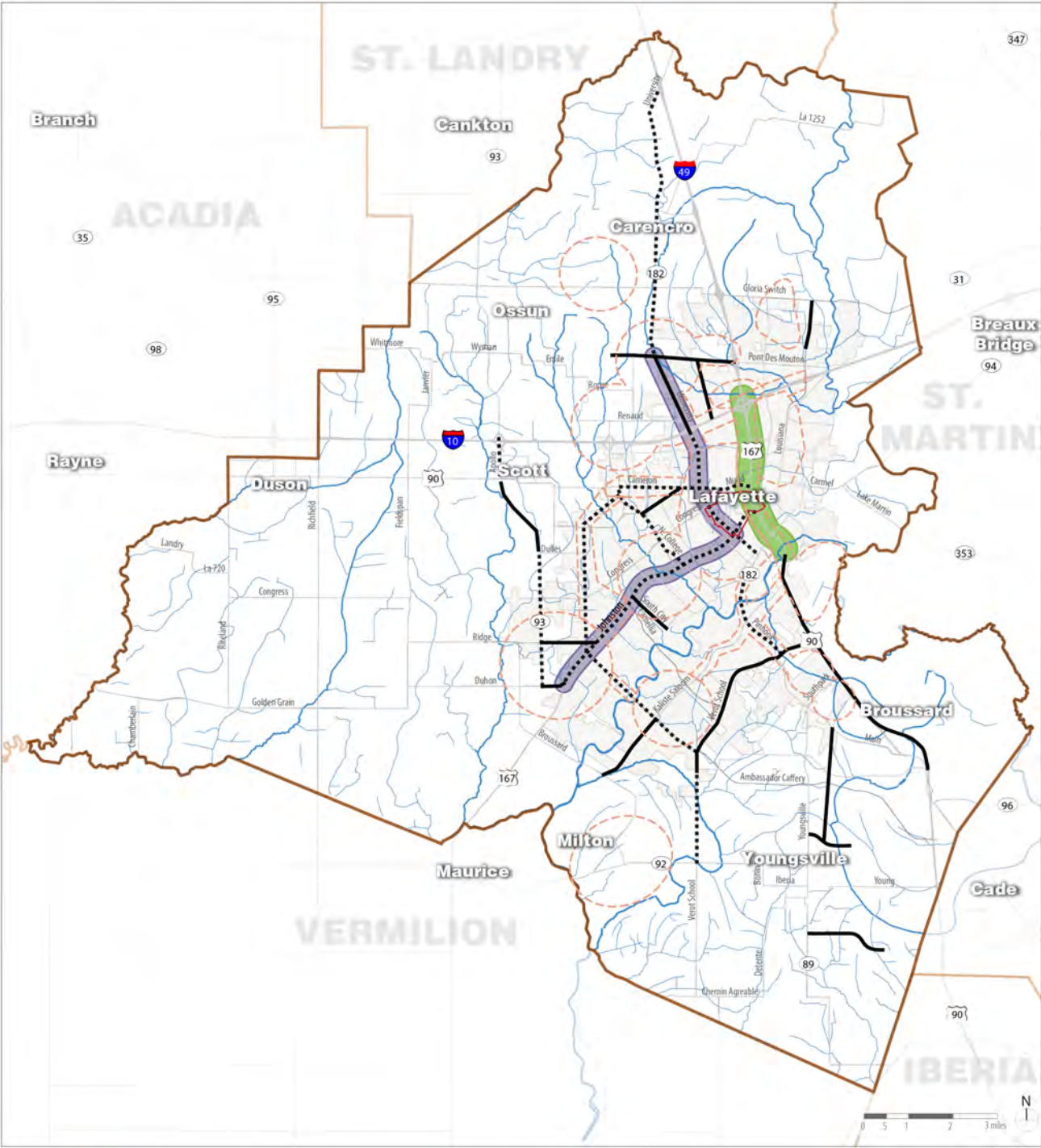
6.2.6

Preserve and protect targeted transportation corridors identified in the long-range transportation plans, even when the implementation of project is many years into the future, so long those plans have been revised to reflect priorities identified in the comprehensive plan.

METRICS:

» Miles of right-of-way funding secured

Figure 3.2 Future Growth Areas and Transportation Improvements



- Multi-Modal Transportation Corridors
- 1-49 Area of Influence
- Committed Road Improvements
- Proposed Road Improvements
- City of Lafayette
- Downtown Lafayette
- Growth Areas

POLICY:

» P 6.3. Continue to improve transportation efficiency through access management planning and implementation.

ACTIONS:**6.3.1**

Develop a comprehensive AM Plan in coordination with Louisiana DOTD, MPO and statewide AM Policy that implements strategies to preserve and enhance the efficiency and safety of the arterial street network by reducing and consolidating private entrances and median crossovers.

6.3.2

Promote AM practices such as raised medians, driveway consolidation and connectivity.

6.3.3

Consider requiring Traffic Impact Studies for new projects based on the estimated trips generated by the proposed development to identify and mitigate adverse impacts on the surrounding transportation system.



Example of complete street improvements that are designed to accommodate all types of users

GOAL 2

PROVIDE A MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT FACILITATES THE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVE MOVEMENT OF BOTH PEOPLE AND GOODS.

POLICY:

» P 6.4. Provide multi-modal facilities along transportation corridors to improve connectivity for neighborhoods and surrounding uses by facilitating mobility for all users. (Related to Community Character Policy 11)

ACTIONS:

6.4.1

Adopt a “Complete Streets” policy with implementation strategies, to create and implement street improvement plans.

6.4.2

Develop a streetscape classification system and associated design standards that emphasize multimodal facilities, landscape design criteria (with emphasis on native plant materials), and amenities (street furniture, pedestrian scaled lighting, wayfinding signage, and bus stops) that enhance the safety and comfort of roadways for all users.

6.4.3

Coordinate with Public Works and the MPO to update long-range transportation plans with streetscape classification system and associated design standards that are sensitive to the surrounding context.

6.4.4

Implement the recommendations of the draft 2040 Lafayette MPO Bikeway Plan when consistent with the FLUM.

» P 6.5. Invest in new technology to enhance transportation efficiency and improve safety.

ACTIONS:

6.5.1

Develop parishwide Intelligent Transport System (ITS) Deployment and Implementation strategies using technology to improve congestion, inform users of delays and alternate routes, and improve safety in an emergency evacuation scenario.

6.5.2

Improve congestion management using automated data collection and analysis of traffic volume and accidents.

METRICS:

» Miles of complete streets

POLICY:

» P 6.6. Increase transit service, efficiency, and use.

ACTIONS:**6.6.1**

Work with the MPO to review and continually update the parishwide Transit Plan and ensure its consistency with the comprehensive plan.

6.6.2

Develop a transit trip planner application to provide real time trip information and bus stop locations.

6.6.3

Improve public transit service and access through technology, educational and marketing materials, and improved transit shelters and facilities.

6.6.4

Support increased transit service and frequency of service by encouraging higher density development in mixed-use centers and corridors and coordination with transit routes.

6.6.5

Investigate the feasibility of limited free bus service and dedicated routes along targeted multimodal corridors such as University Avenue and Johnson Street to encourage ridership and increased density and to support commercial activity and tourism.

6.6.6

Continue to investigate feasibility of UL/LTS transit partnership to leverage resources to maximize fulfillment of transit needs and build potential pipeline of ridership.

METRICS:

» Number of transit users

POLICY:

» P 6.7. Reduce congestion and improve mobility, regardless of mode.

ACTIONS:

6.7.1

Invest in low cost strategies, such as channelization, turning lanes, signal retiming, signage etc., to maximize efficiency and safety for immediate congestion relief.

6.7.2

Reduce traffic on arterials roads by improving connectivity and creating new linkages between existing local and collector roads.

6.7.3

Work with local businesses to help implement Travel Demand Management (TDM) strategies such as ridesharing, staggered work hours, alternative work schedules, and telecommuting, for more efficient use of transportation resources.

6.7.4

Plan and fund roundabouts as a viable alternative to grade separations and standard at grade intersections.

6.7.5

Consider innovative intersection designs such as RPIs, J-turns etc., but only when such designs are compatible and complimentary to pedestrian and bicycle travel.

6.7.6

Reduce traffic congestion by redesigning major corridors to prioritize safe walking, biking, transit, and driving options and incorporating those elements through all phases of the planning and design process.

6.7.7

As part of the Corridor Preservation and Management Action Plan, promote the inclusion and integration of multi-modal approaches in the design of the I-49 Connector and surrounding corridor.

6.7.8

Pursue the construction of a new Vermilion River crossing, to be accomplished by the extension of South City Parkway across the river to Kaliste Saloom, to reduce the traffic load on already congested existing crossings and to provide a parallel alternative to Ambassador Caffery Parkway.

METRICS:

- » Miles of right-of-way funding secured
- » Connectivity index
- » Number of roundabouts built
- » Number of vehicle hours of delay

POLICY:

» P 6.8. Make Lafayette a model city for safe, convenient, and attractive for walking and biking options for people of all ages and abilities.

ACTIONS:**6.8.1**

Plan, develop and maintain a comprehensive pedestrian, bicycle, and trail system network, with emphasis on growth areas, as an integral part of the regional transportation network.

6.8.2

Expand pedestrian and bicycle connectivity with new designated routes, enhanced or new signage, and connectivity.

6.8.3

Require sidewalks on both sides of streets for all proposed new and redevelopment projects. Also, provide connections to existing and/or proposed sidewalks to ensure an interconnected pedestrian system.

6.8.4

Provide for clearly marked bicycle and pedestrian features, such as sidewalks, bicycle routes, trails, designated crosswalks, curb cuts, refuge areas and pedestrian signals, in the construction and reconstruction of transportation corridors.

6.8.5

Provide sidewalks, trails and/or bicycle routes that link residential concentrations with transit stations, mixed-use activity centers, shopping districts, recreational facilities, employment centers, and major public facilities, and provide for pedestrian and bicycle circulation within mixed-use centers.

6.8.6

Develop promotional materials that clearly show the beneficial health impacts of walking and biking, and encourage residents to take advantage of the parish's expanding network of bicycle paths, trails, and sidewalks.

6.8.7

Work with the development community to accommodate multimodal transportation in new developments (e.g., bicycle parking, shading, neighborhood connections, etc.).

6.8.8

Collaborate with external agencies, including DOTD and the MPO, to develop design standards for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and integrate these into recommended cross sections for LCG sponsored roadway projects and/or improvements.

6.8.9

Continue to monitor innovation in technology which could reduce net demand on transportation infrastructure or increase efficient infrastructure utilization, for example taxi apps (Uber), ridesharing apps, bike sharing, and other citizen tools that could change the way residents choose to travel and make it easier for them to make alternate transportation decisions.

METRICS:

- » Miles of bicycle facilities
- » Miles of sidewalk
- » Number of bicyclists

POLICY:

» P 6.9. Ensure that transportation system improvements are in compliance with the FLUM and reviewed for consistency with the comprehensive plan.

ACTIONS:

6.9.1

Consider requiring all new development and redevelopment to include pedestrian and/or bicycle amenities in order to mitigate adverse impacts upon the transportation system and provide transportation options.

6.9.3

Develop policies and design guidelines that encourage the design and development of mixed-use projects to support public transportation and non-motorized travel and reduce traffic on major roads.

6.9.2

Develop policies that encourage higher density residential development in mixed-use activity centers to promote non-motorized trips and transit services to reduce SOV use.

6.9.4

Develop policies that encourage compatible commercial use and appropriate land uses such as childcare facilities in mixed-use centers and in close proximity to public transportation stations.

METRICS:

» Number of tactical urbanism projects

GOAL 3**ENSURE SAFETY FOR ALL USERS OF TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES AND SERVICES.****POLICY:**

» P 6.10. Proactively manage safety deficiencies of transportation system.

ACTIONS:**6.10.1**

Analyze crash records to identify high crash locations and probable causes.

6.10.2

Develop and implement an annual safety improvement plan with dedicated funds to correct identified safety deficiencies.

6.10.3

Pursue safety funds from state and federal agencies and continue collaboration with the Acadiana Transportation Safety Coalition.

6.10.4

Continue to explore technological tools to improve and address community safety transportation related issues.

6.10.5

Develop public information campaigns to educate citizens about the most common crash types caused by driver behavior to reduce the occurrence of these crashes.

6.10.6

Plan to resolve conflicts between motorized and non-motorized traffic by correcting unsafe conditions for walking and bicycling.

6.10.7

Monitor and enforce the provisions and regulations for transporting hazardous materials.

» P 6.11. Institute traffic calming measures and geometric street designs to reduce vehicular speeds in residential neighborhoods, improve safety, and improve pedestrian and bicyclist comfort.

ACTIONS:**6.11.1**

Continue and expand the existing traffic calming program to additional neighborhood streets meeting the program's criteria and with support from the community.

6.11.2

Educate citizens on traffic calming program through success stories, before and after photographs to show the impact, and results of changes in behavior.

6.11.3

Consider road configurations in new subdivisions with safety in mind (e.g., T-intersections, roundabouts).

METRICS:

- » Number of crash incidents
- » Number of traffic calming installations
- » Spending on bicycle infrastructure

POLICY:

» P 6.12. Prepare for emergencies through an Emergency Evacuation Plan.

ACTIONS:

6.12.1

Maintain a parishwide evacuation plan in concert with statewide evacuation plan.

6.12.2

Plan to provide assistance for residents with special transportation needs or disabilities during an evacuation and provide ongoing outreach and education to ensure residents are aware of evacuation plans.

6.12.3

Develop a parishwide designated evacuation routes and shelter locations map.

6.12.4

Continuously educate all residents about designated evacuation routes and install evacuation route signs along the designated evacuation routes where missing.

GOAL 3

IDENTIFY THE FUNDING NEEDED FOR LCG'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND POTENTIAL SOURCES FOR THAT FUNDING.

POLICY:

» P 6.13. Pursue local, state and federal funding support for LCG's transportation system.

ACTIONS:**6.13.1**

Develop a stable source of local transportation funding and secure local matching funds from local, state, and federal funds with consideration for alternatives such as local option gas tax, roadway frontage fee, and driveway access fee.

6.13.2

Strengthen coordination with Louisiana DOTD and the Legislative Delegation to receive fair share of state and federal funding.

6.13.3

Partner with LEDA and GLCC to develop a LCG policy regarding TIF Districts to fund infrastructure improvements. The policy should establish prioritized and preferred criteria for TIF District proposals.

6.13.4

Work with the MPO to secure funds from the 10% Urban Systems fund commitment for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

» P 6.14. Increase PPPs as part of infrastructure projects.

ACTIONS:**6.14.1**

Seek out and facilitate PPPs, to finance new construction, new transportation services, and improvements to existing facilities and services.

6.14.2

Work with local business and property owners to fund transportation improvements, signage, and streetscape improvements in key locations.

6.14.3

Work with the Redevelopment Authority and partners to facilitate infrastructure projects.



Aerial view of Lafayette

7. UTILITIES

The Lafayette Utilities System (LUS) is a city of Lafayette owned entity that provides electric, water and wastewater and fiber optic services mainly to the city of Lafayette and, by limited exceptions, to other areas within Lafayette Parish. In providing these services, it is notable that LUS is owned only by the city of Lafayette, and not by LCG. The provision of any LUS services outside the city limits of Lafayette does not convey any ownership rights to entities outside of the city, but are only made when such expansions are to the long term benefit of LUS and the city. The critical services provided by LUS are significant elements in providing support for the city’s infrastructure. These essential quality of life services play an important role in continuing to shape the patterns of development throughout the city and, to a much lesser extent, the parish.

Since its inception in 1896, the LUS has been a driving force in shaping Lafayette. These basic, yet necessary and critical services continue to be a foundation for residential, commercial and industrial development in the area. Today, LUS employs more than 530 people and operates as a department of LCG. As a publicly owned utility, LUS can provide its customers with competitive electric utility rates. In addition, LUS provides significant revenues to LCG through annual in lieu of tax payments thereby keeping taxes low and helping to support the city of Lafayette’s general fund services including police and fire, parks and recreation, and community development. While focused on LUS, the following policies and actions also relate to Public Works and Planning, Zoning, and Development – realizing the need for continued coordination to strengthen these interrelationships.

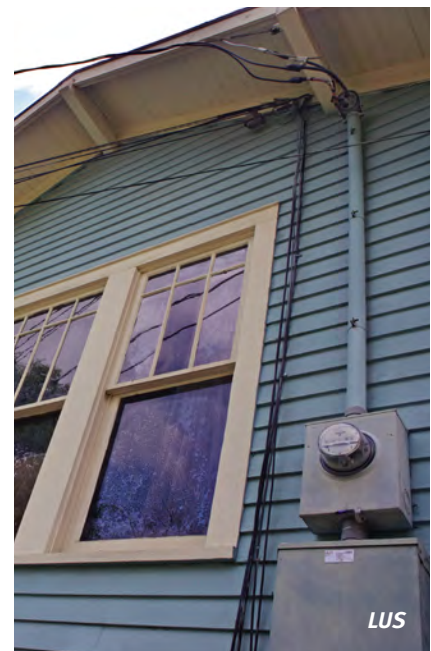


KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Increasingly, stringent environmental regulations concerning air quality and wastewater treatment and discharge limits.
- Electric transmission capacity and reliability.
- Ability to grow the base of the LUS power system through annexation, consistent with the growth and land use policies of the comprehensive plan.
- Obtaining permits for new facilities and obtaining property for new or expanded facilities.
- Making timely investments in electric, water, wastewater and telecommunications systems to handle future growth.
- Ensuring safety and compliance in electric, water and wastewater systems.
- Addressing the need to increase energy generation, water production and wastewater treatment and plant infrastructure, including LUS Fiber, to meet future growth.
- Sludge management.
- Rural water district infrastructure upgrades are needed to meet current and future water demands especially in the area served by the Lafayette Parish Waterworks District North.



Lafayette Utilities System



LUS electric meter

GOAL 1

COORDINATE WITH LUS TO ENSURE THAT UTILITIES INCORPORATE THE FLUM IN THE STRATEGIC PLANNING OF SYSTEM EXPANSIONS TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE SERVICE TO ALL CUSTOMERS IN THE SERVICE AREA.

POLICY:

» P 7.1. Ensure that there are adequate LUS and LUS Fiber facilities available to serve future growth areas.

ACTIONS:**7.1.1**

Develop or update existing master plans of LUS utilities (electric, water, and wastewater) and LUS Fiber facilities in compliance with the FLUM.

7.1.2

Identify new city of Lafayette infrastructure and LUS Fiber facility locations and/or existing facility expansions to serve future growth areas that cannot be served by current facilities, including the new centers to be located at Ambassador Caffery Parkway at Gloria Switch and Ambassador Caffery Parkway and I-10.

» P 7.2. Develop policies that encourage new development within the service areas of existing infrastructure with excess capacity, or where systems can be realistically expanded, including identification of revenues to support those policies.

ACTIONS:**7.2.1**

Review existing facility capacity, current demands and expansion potential.

7.2.2

Identify feasible existing facilities for expansion to serve the needs of future growth.

7.2.3

Preserve land near existing facilities for future expansion.

7.2.4

Adopt policies to encourage development within the existing services areas such as requiring the proposed developments to bear the cost of new facilities outside existing service areas.

METRICS:

» Capacity of water and sewer infrastructure



LUS managed water tower and power lines



Flickr/kainet

Lafayette's fiber network and service provides a regional and national economic advantage.

GOAL 2**CONTINUE TO PROVIDE RELIABLE SERVICE TO ALL CUSTOMERS.****POLICY:**

» P 7.3. Maintain high reliability of LUS utility services through continued proactive monitoring of usage and capacity, and maintaining infrastructure systems.

ACTIONS:**7.3.1**

For the electric utility, continue to maintain a tree trimming program for its entire distribution system to minimize outages and maintain high reliability of the overall system and revisit current PZD policies related to planting smaller tree species that are compatible with overhead power lines.

7.3.2

Monitor the Chicot Aquifer, locally and through state and federal agencies, as it is vital to the future of Lafayette Parish.

7.3.3

Encourage planting of drought resistant and native plants and continue to support water conservation through the parishwide water conservation policy regarding lawn watering for all local governments through intergovernmental agreements.

7.3.4

Develop a program for the installation of appropriate backflow prevention devices for residential and commercial customers to ensure the safety of potable water supply.

» P 7.4. Seek the eventual conversion to all underground electric utilities, contingent upon an adequate funding source.

ACTIONS:**7.4.1**

Continue to require underground electric utilities in all new developments funded by both developers and the utility system.

7.4.2

Develop a long term master plan, based on the parish FLUM, and identify funding, including participation by landowners, to convert existing overhead electric facilities to underground, including addressing other service providers using those facilities (i.e. telephone, cable, fiber), contingent upon an adequate funding source.

7.4.3

Consider strategies and funding for Public Private Partnerships for converting existing overhead line facilities underground.

7.4.4

Determine a source of annual funding for the systematic conversion of existing overhead facilities to underground facilities, in accordance with the long term master plan and determined priorities.

METRICS:

- » Water quality index
- » Miles of underground utility

GOAL 3

SATISFY ALL ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE REGULATIONS ESTABLISHED BY FEDERAL AND STATE ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCIES.

POLICY:

» P 7.5. Ensure existing and future regulatory compliance.

ACTIONS:

7.5.1

Continue to identify existing and future regulatory requirements and conduct a gap/deficiency analysis to identify action items needed to meet the requirements.

7.5.2

Implement plan of action items using BMPs to meet regulatory requirements.

7.5.3

Educate residents and business owners about new regulations and Lafayette's efforts to improve environmental quality.

» P 7.6. Increase sustainable practices in electric, water, sewer utilities and waste management, contingent on adequate funding. (Related to Resource Conservation and Hazard Mitigation Policy 1)

ACTIONS:

7.6.1

Work with Public Works to manage stormwater runoff by appropriate water detention and retention practices, and to design solutions that add aesthetic value to surrounding areas and provide potential recreational amenities.

7.6.2

Partner with the BVD to increase water protection, expand stormwater management efforts, and limit potential negative impacts of development and impervious surfaces within the district.

7.6.3

Expand the Rain Barrel Program to improve water quality by reducing the amount of stormwater runoff and surface water pollutants that enter the Bayou Vermilion watershed.

7.6.4

Increase the volume of recycled materials (including yard waste and compost) so as to decrease the volume of solid waste going to landfills.

7.6.5

Expand the current recycling program to include multifamily residential and commercial buildings in the city of Lafayette.

7.6.6

Expand awareness of the "household chemical day" and continue to accept e-Waste materials to divert electronic materials from landfills and generate revenue for the recycling program.

7.6.7

Expand the LUS land application (land farming) program within Lafayette Parish to additional farms to reuse biosolids (sludge) that results from wastewater treatment practices.

7.6.8

Work with parish water districts and municipalities to employ water conservation methods and policies.

METRICS:

- » Stormwater volumes
- » Number of rain barrel sales

POLICY:

» P 7.7. Enhance flood protection in the parish. (Related to Resource Conservation and Hazard Mitigation Policy 5)

ACTIONS:**7.7.1**

Study the establishment of Drainage Utility Districts to adequately fund drainage improvements.

7.7.2

Ensure adequate and continued maintenance of existing drainage facilities.

7.7.3

Establish adequate drainage maintenance easements or servitudes.

7.7.4

Complete periodic updates of the parishwide Drainage Master Plan.

7.7.5

Coordinate with FEMA as it adopts the final FIRMs and ensure that the new maps are effectively and accurately communicated to the public, so as to decrease uncertainty.

» P 7.8. Increase energy efficiency and reduce per capita energy use. (Related to Housing & Neighborhoods Policy 15)

ACTIONS:**7.8.1**

Conduct energy audits of public buildings and implement improvements that reduce costs, while improving energy efficiency.

7.8.2

Increase outreach and education to LUS customers about cost savings associated with lighting improvements, smart meters, insulation, maintaining systems, and other home energy improvements.

7.8.3

Consider workshops and demonstration projects that help to educate the public, real estate professionals, and developers about energy efficiency and indoor air quality.

7.8.4

Leverage technology to maximize conservation by citizens using smart meter technology.

METRICS:

» Energy usage per household

GOAL 4

ENSURE ADEQUATE FUNDING FOR NEEDED EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE EXPANSIONS AND NEW FACILITIES.

POLICY:

» P 7.9. Develop and maintain a capital improvement and asset management plan consistent with the FLUM.

ACTIONS:

7.9.1

Conduct periodic studies to ensure adequate utility rates using cost-of-service methodologies set forth by LUS bond covenants, including adequate funding for capital improvements.

7.9.2

Implement a cost sharing program and set of guidelines for infrastructure expansions, contingent upon a funding source.

7.9.3

Maintain strong revenues through efficient and reliable operations and enhanced telecommunications while keeping rates competitive.

7.9.4

Strive to obtain and maintain the highest bond rating levels possible, recognizing the uniqueness of LCG and LUS, in order to more cost effectively fund future large scale projects.

7.9.5

Evaluate current practices of selling excess water and power outside of the city as compared to the impact on the revenues of LUS, the city of Lafayette, and on annexation decisions.

8. COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

Police, Fire, EMS, and Community Health

In addition to the state police and Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Office, there are six municipal PDs, serving Lafayette, Carencro, Youngsville, Broussard, Scott, and Duson. The LPSO serves unincorporated areas of the parish, and the state police serve the entire parish.

Service calls in Lafayette Parish have been increasing since 2005. The number of calls for police service has increased each year since 2005, with the exception of a large decrease in 2006. Between 2005 and 2011, the years in which data is available, the total number of calls increased by 25%. The Lafayette PD struggles to fund and maintain enough police officers to keep up with population growth. The current level of police service (2.03 officers per 1,000 people) is above the national recommended standard of 1.9 officers per 1,000 people for communities under 249,000 residents. The total number of crimes committed in Lafayette Parish has remained relatively consistent in the last decade; however the per capita crime rate has been decreasing. According to the parish's Uniform Reporting Statistics, combined violent and property crimes have remained fairly constant over the years despite population growth. As a result, the per capita crime rate, with the exception of 2007 and 2009, has decreased.

The parish's fire departments are stretched to respond to newly annexed and widely dispersed areas as the parish's population grows. Lafayette Parish has a total of eight fire districts: Duson, Broussard, Carencro, Judice, Youngsville, Lafayette, Milton, and Scott. However, Lafayette's fire stations are centrally located within or near the city limits calling into question response times for outlying unincorporated areas of the parish, particularly in the southern reaches of the parish. Lafayette fire fighters are full time, while the other municipalities use volunteer fire fighters. Despite an increase in the number of calls by six percent between 2002 and 2012, the Lafayette FD staff has not increased. There is no separate taxing district for services such as fire. In addition, there may be a need for greater regionalization of services and/or new fire stations to adequately serve the parish population. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is provided by Acadian Ambulance Service, which operates the National EMS Academy in Lafayette. Acadian Ambulance Service is a private company.

The percentage of the population living below poverty level in Lafayette is estimated at 16% in the parish and 17% in the city. While this is slightly below the state poverty rate (18%), many residents and households struggle to afford housing, food, and healthcare. LCG and community and social service organizations, such as Lafayette Catholic Services, United Way, Acadiana C.A.R.E.S, Bridge Ministries, and other religious organizations, are working to help families, children, and other residents in need of services.



In addition to being a major employment industry in the parish, the healthcare system in Lafayette is an essential piece of overall community health and wellness. Based on several different health indicators (e.g., related to disease, lifestyles, health care, social and environmental factors, and the physical environment) Lafayette Parish ranks fifth in the state for overall healthy communities. The parish ranks in the top ten in part due to its access to clinical care, relatively high education attainment, and low unemployment. However, Lafayette ranks lower than national benchmarks for adult obesity, teen pregnancy rates, poor physical health days, and access to fresh foods. In addition, 20% of the parish under the age of 65 was uninsured in 2013. There are seven hospitals located in the city of Lafayette, all located south of downtown (see Figure 4.3). Generally there are many more health service providers – doctors’ offices, hospitals, and health clinics (including those specifically serving Medicare / Medicaid patients) located on the south side of the parish.

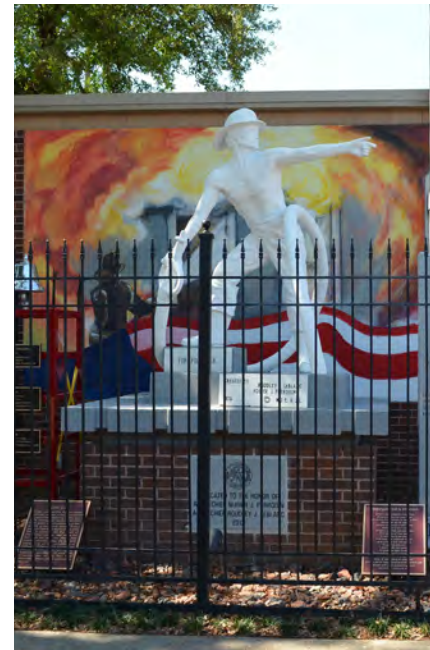
Education and Libraries

The Lafayette Parish School System (LPSS) serves the entire Lafayette Parish. Within this system, nine sub districts serve the student population. Each sub district typically includes multiple middle schools and elementary schools, and there are 6 traditional high schools distributed throughout the parish. Lafayette has a relatively high percentage of students attending private schools; in 2009, 25% of all students (about 10,000 students) in Lafayette Parish attended private schools according to the National Center for Education Statistics.

In 2012, LPSS released a progressive Turn Around Plan to address its challenges and improve the performance of the district. The plan focuses on pre-K school readiness, health, school facilities, and academic performance and sets a goal of moving the district from a “C” rating under state categories to an “A” district by 2018. Based on the fall 2012 and 2013 accountability releases, LPSS as a district earned the letter grade “B” for the second consecutive year. Overall, LPSS moved from 25th to 19th in the state based on 2008 and 2013 district performance scores. Between 2011 and 2012 the number of schools earning a “D” or “F” score fell by 15% (from 53 to 28 percent).

Lafayette Parish is home to several postsecondary institutions, most notably University of Louisiana Lafayette– the largest of the UL System with nearly 17,000 students enrolled. Other institutions of higher education include SLCC (which has expanded to include the former Louisiana Technical College), and several for profit colleges, all located in the city of Lafayette.

The parish is served by ten geographically distributed public libraries. The library system has expanded in recent years, including the current expansion of the main library. With the expansion, the library is expected to meet or exceed comprehensive standards for libraries located within 90% of the population, one librarian per 10,000 persons, and collections of 2.5 per capita.



Firefighter statue outside Lafayette fire house

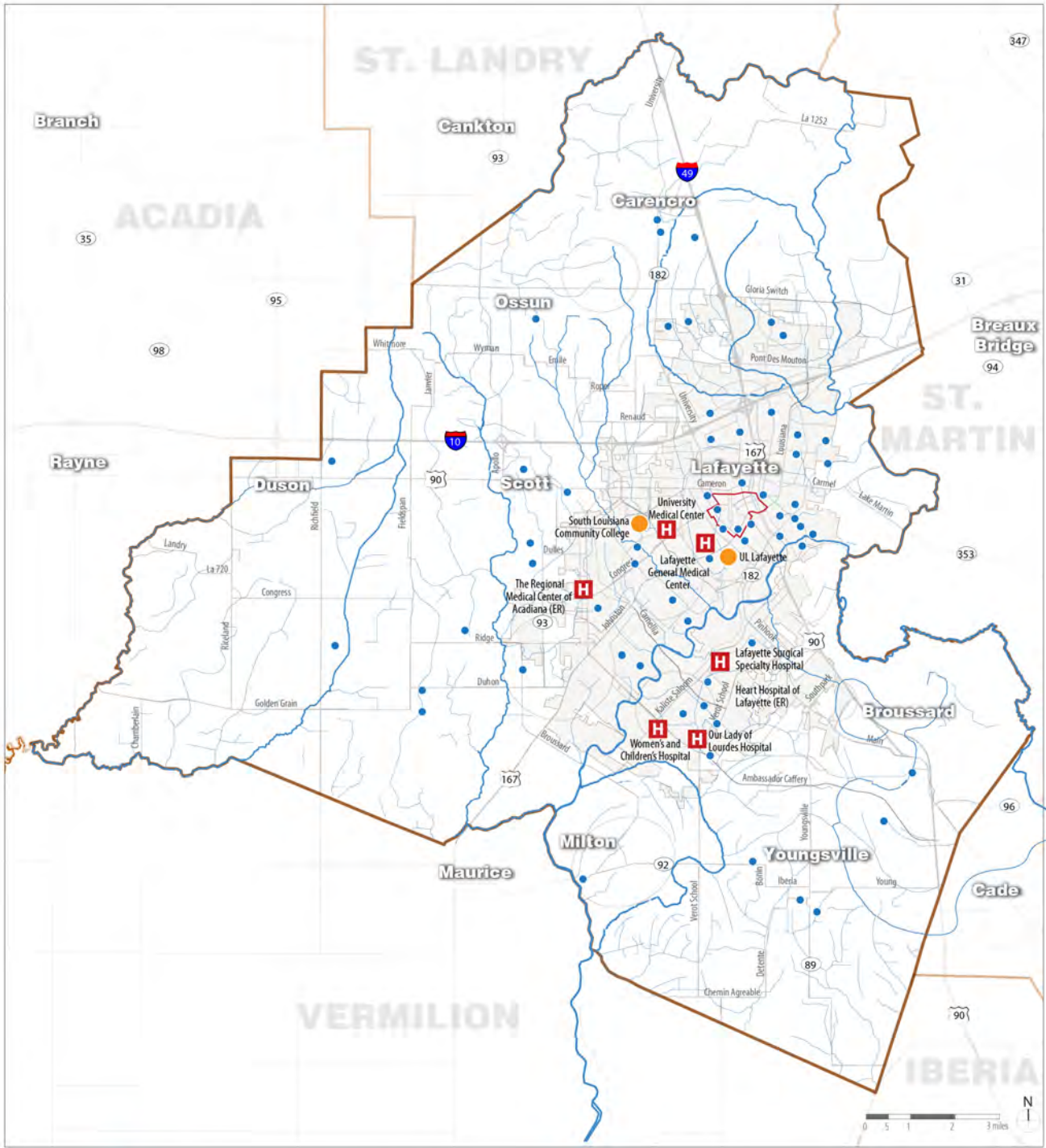


LPSS students

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Continuing to provide high quality police, fire, and EMS services as the population grows.
- Reducing response times for fire departments and creating a workable system for sharing services among districts.
- Sharing resources and coordinating across municipal boundaries and with the larger Acadiana region.
- Addressing school facility needs, including buildings that are too large, too small, or in need of major repair or replacement.
- Ensuring that Lafayette graduates receive the training and skills needed to compete in the region's economy and contribute to the vitality of the region.
- Lack of public trust in the school system.
- Strengthening relationship between UL and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Reducing overlap between community services and increasing resource sharing.

Figure 3.3 Future Growth Areas and Institutions



- Hospital
- K-12 School
- University
- Future Growth Area
- City of Lafayette
- Downtown Lafayette

GOAL 1**CONTINUE PROVIDE RELIABLE SERVICE TO ALL CUSTOMERS.****POLICY:**

» P 8.1. Use the FLUM as a guide to engage in long term planning for population growth and police, fire, and EMS facility needs.

ACTIONS:**8.1.1**

Locate new police and fire stations near planned population centers and secure future sites where possible.

8.1.2

Coordinate between police, fire, EMS and other community centers or facilities to co-locate facilities where possible (e.g., community center, health center, police post or station) to reduce costs and gain efficiencies in building construction, parking, maintenance, sharing resources, etc.

» P 8.2. Continue to increase community policing efforts and work with community organizations and schools in neighborhoods dealing with higher crime rates.

ACTIONS:**8.2.1**

Increase outreach to the community through bike and walking patrols, neighborhood meetings, and school outreach.

8.2.2

Use precinct place-based data to target areas for increased patrols to respond to high crime areas or current hot spots.

» P 8.3. Coordinate on a regional basis to reduce crime, improve safety, and share resources with the greater region's police and fire districts.

ACTIONS:**8.3.1**

Increase cooperation with state police, Sheriff's Office, Lafayette's municipal PDs, and surrounding parishes to share information, target high crime areas, and share training and staffing resources.

8.3.2

Provide crime prevention and safety education to Lafayette residents through coordination between police, fire, and EMS, including outreach to those with limited English language skills.

8.3.3

Create a feedback loop for implementation of the MPO's Transportation Safety Plan and Safe Routes to Schools between the MPO and the parish's public safety and planning departments.

8.3.4

Provide for a parish courthouse complex that will meet future demands for public service, including up-to-date technology and safety features, and that is an asset to downtown.

METRICS:

» Number of crime incidents

POLICY:

» P 8.4. Improve LOS standards and reduce response time for fire districts.

ACTIONS:

8.4.1

Develop a policy and fee schedule for sharing fire and emergency response services between the city of Lafayette and surrounding municipalities and the unincorporated parish.

8.4.2

Encourage participation in volunteer and paid firefighter employment opportunities and educate students about the type of training and career skills needed.

8.4.3

Encourage planned, phased development that is consistent with the FLUM, as an approach to help to reduce response times and distance needed to travel between stations and developed areas.

8.4.4

To facilitate enhanced EMS, fire and police services, require that all new construction adhere to common parishwide address posting guidelines.

» P 8.5. Adequately fund and plan for public safety, including police, fire, and EMS services as population grows.

ACTIONS:

8.5.1

Continue to plan for new stations and staff to serve a growing population, including adjusting staffing models based on density and housing types, through long range strategic plans and capital improvement planning.

8.5.2

Clearly communicate the costs of emergency services and benefit to the community.

8.5.3

Evaluate the feasibility of extending the geographic coverage of Animal Control Services to the parish, taking into consideration the potential benefits (opportunities for more volunteers, more foster homes, more people interested) as well as potential costs of additional infrastructure (shelters) and staff.

POLICY:

» P 8.6. Improve community health and wellness through greater access to health services, reduction in preventable disease, and education.

ACTIONS:

8.6.1

Partner with health providers to improve access to health and wellness services in underserved areas through siting new locations or considering mobile health centers.

8.6.2

Create education and promotional materials about the benefits of active living, recreation, and fresh foods for all ages. (Related to Parks & Recreation Policy 4)

8.6.3

Work with LPSS and early education providers to ensure that all children have access to quality early education and childcare.

8.6.4

Work with the LTS to increase service and ensure access to major community health, wellness, schools, and childcare facilities.

8.6.5

Consider developing a comprehensive mental health services delivery system.

8.6.6

Promote policies that foster communities free of the abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) abuse problems and coordinate with LPSS to develop a mandated health curriculum addressing substance use and abuse while promoting overall healthy behaviors.

8.6.7

Encourage the Parish Health Unit to explore creative service delivery methods and partnerships with LCG, LPSS and other public health entities.

METRICS:

» Number of health screenings, and follow-up procedures for high cholesterol, diabetes, and high blood pressure

POLICY:

- » P 8.7. Promote a healthy community through obesity and chronic illness prevention by encouraging locally-based food production, transportation choices, and physical activity. (Related to Recreation and Open Space Policy 9.3 and 9.4)

ACTIONS:

8.7.1

Partner with neighborhood and civic organizations and LPSS to increase the number of neighborhood community gardens on vacant properties.

8.7.2

Develop standards in the UDC or other incentives that encourage fresh food access, farmers markets, food cooperatives, and fresh produce or grocery markets.

8.7.3

Promote participation in recreational programs for all ages through special events and outreach through the media, President's office, Parks and Recreation Department, health organizations, and LPSS.

8.7.4

Increase healthy foods in schools through partnerships with LPSS and technical and grant assistance from USDA Farm to Schools Program.

- » P 8.8. Reduce and prevent the occurrence of disease, disability, and poor health in the community.

ACTIONS:

8.8.1

Work with the health community to promote preventative health initiatives which include public health information on current health issues.

8.8.2

Support increasing the number of children aged 0-5 receiving recommended well-child examinations through partnerships and education to parents.

8.8.3

Support increasing the portion of people age 40 and over who receive regular exams for early detection of cancer.

8.8.4

Promote reductions in preventable disease through asthma prevention, pneumonia and influenza vaccination, increased screenings, education, and follow-up procedures for high cholesterol, diabetes, and high blood pressure, and community awareness, prevention, testing, and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, HIV, and Hepatitis B.

METRICS:

- » Miles of sidewalk and bicycle facilities
- » Transit ridership volumes

- » Number of health screenings, and follow-up procedures for high cholesterol, diabetes, and high blood pressure

GOAL 2**SUPPORT EFFORTS TO IMPROVE LPSS PERFORMANCE.****POLICY:**

» P 8.9 Work with LPSS to implement its strategic Turn Around Plan in the short term and continue to improve school district educational opportunities and results.

ACTIONS:**8.9.1**

Work with LPSS on facilities planning and continue the development of the federal program, “Safe Routes to Schools”, to encourage safe pedestrian paths with adequate lighting and traffic calming measures.

8.9.2

Involve local schools in neighborhood planning efforts and seek to improve connectivity with the surrounding neighborhoods through neighborhood quality strategies, community use of school facilities, before and after school programs, etc.

8.9.3

Support LPSS in identifying and establishing partnerships / alliances that can facilitate the implementation of the Turn Around Plan.

» P 8.10 Strengthen planning and coordination between LCG and LPSS to improve forecasts for student and facility needs.

ACTIONS:**8.10.1**

Assist LPSS in forecasting student enrollment and demographic trends and coordinate planning to locate schools and facilities in areas with adequate roads, water, and sewer infrastructure.

8.10.2

Work with LPSS to evaluate transit needs of high school students and provide solutions to increase transit use.

8.10.3

Develop strategies to improve and mitigate transportation management during peak school arrival and departure times.

POLICY:

» P 8.11. Partner with local businesses and employers to ensure students have an opportunity to gain skills needed in the local workforce. (Related to Economic Development Policy 1)

ACTIONS:

8.11.1

Assist in leveraging the business community, including LEDA and GLCC in connecting directly with students on mentoring and career planning.

8.11.2

Engage business community to support teachers and principals on curriculum development related to career training and opportunity for apprenticeship programs.

» P 8.12 Improve community health by increased outdoor play in schools. (Related to Parks and Recreation.)

ACTIONS:

8.12.1

Develop educational and environmental based programs and activities at local parks and centers.

8.12.2

Provide afterschool recreational opportunities and coordinate with LPSS to encourage student participation.

» P 8.13. Encourage community involvement in LPSS long range planning and decision making.

ACTIONS:

8.13.1

Work with LPSS to recommend and adopt acceptable LOS Standards for the school district and plan for future school locations and supportive infrastructure.

8.13.2

Monitor development applications and demographic trends to determine if enrollment LOS Standards will be exceeded by planned development and create recommendations for the parish's planning and development review commissions.

8.13.3

Encourage increased sharing of development application information with LPSS to better project future school needs.

GOAL 3

ENCOURAGE A RANGE OF TECHNICAL TRAINING, ADULT EDUCATION, AND HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES IN LAFAYETTE.

POLICY:

» P 8.14. Coordinate with UL to support implementation of its Master Plan and Guiding Principles to realize the benefits of investment in the urban core. (Related to Community Character Policy 9)

ACTIONS:**8.14.1**

Improve physical streetscape connections from UL along Johnston Street, University Avenue, Bertrand Drive, and St. Landry Street to create a stronger visual relationship with the campus, improve gateways, and create more walkable connections between campus and the surrounding community.

8.14.2

Extend the commercial corridor along Jefferson Street and McKinley Street to connect downtown with Freetown-Port Rico and UL.

8.14.3

Continue to strengthen university and neighborhood relations through student participation in community organizations, partnerships with regional nonprofits, and partnerships with local high schools.

» P 8.15 Expand research, technology, and economic development through UL's research park and LEDA. (Related to Economic Development)

ACTIONS:**8.15.1**

Support UL's efforts to develop and implement a master plan for growth of the research park.

8.15.2

Work with LEDA to identify target industry centers and potential tenants.

» P 8.16 Collaborate with the parish's colleges, university, and public school system to increase access to technical schools and colleges and match workforce training with employer needs. (Related to Economic Development)

ACTIONS:**8.16.1**

Work with LEDA to survey area businesses to determine gaps in employee skills sets.

8.16.2

Encourage low cost adult education and technical training that provides the type of skills employers are seeking.

GOAL 4

ENHANCE THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY CENTERS, LIBRARIES, AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS AS CENTERS OF ACTIVITY AND NEIGHBORHOOD RESOURCES.

POLICY:

- » P 8.17 Continue to expand community-based classes, events, and opportunities for neighborhood interaction at the parish's libraries, recreation and senior centers.

ACTIONS:

8.17.1

Survey residents through community centers and libraries about community interest in different types of classes or groups.

8.17.2

Create theme-based classes focused on health and foods, gardening, book clubs, local culture, arts and crafts, and city and neighborhood planning.

- » P 8.18 Partner with historic, cultural, and arts-based organizations to enhance programs through Lafayette's public buildings and libraries. (Related to Historical & Cultural Resources, Economic Development)

ACTIONS:

8.18.1

Create and update free or low cost exhibition space for local historic, cultural, and arts based organizations.

8.18.2

Partner with organizations to design and install public art in public buildings.

8.18.3

Encourage educational and art based sponsored lecture and discussion series at Lafayette's public libraries.

- » P 8.19 Reduce costs and improve efficiency through increased sharing of resources and facilities, as well as, joint use agreements between agencies.

ACTIONS:

8.19.1

Integrate public buildings into the community through easy access for pedestrians and bicyclists and as part of mixed-use neighborhood development.

8.19.2

Develop public buildings to high standards of energy efficiency, including sustainable design practices, use of native plants in landscape design, state of the art technologies, and interconnectivity between public buildings and services.

METRICS:

- » Energy efficiency in public buildings

POLICY:

» P 8.20 Encourage development near community facilities and services (e.g., schools, recreation centers, health facilities) to fully utilize existing services and limit duplication.

ACTIONS:**8.20.1**

Strengthen relationships between service providers by encouraging resource sharing and physical linkages between neighborhoods and health providers, recreation centers, and schools.

8.20.2

Develop policies to incentivize developments that complement and link to community facilities and services.

» P 8.21 Co-locate future community facilities to maximize efficiencies in service provision and reduce capital and operating costs.

ACTIONS:**8.21.1**

Evaluate space needs, departmental roles, and interagency relationships to determine opportunities to maximize collaboration and improve efficiency.

8.21.2

Upgrade public buildings through energy efficiency improvements, modernization, and technology improvements through a coordinated capital improvements program.

8.21.3

Plan for future space needs located in areas best suited to serve the regional population and co-locate public services where possible (e.g., recreation center, health facility, social service facility).

8.21.4

Increase the number of joint use facility agreements that encourage school playgrounds to serve some of the community's parks needs and schools to serve some of the need for recreational facilities.

METRICS:

» Number of joint use facility agreements



N.P. Moss Preparatory School

9. RECREATION & OPEN SPACE

The LCG Parks and Recreation Department operates and maintains the parish's 36 parks, 10 recreation centers, pools and golf courses, totaling over 1,500 acres. Within the parks inventory, downtown's parks (Central Parks Network) are a network of three urban parks / special event venues supporting the downtown cultural district. They are owned and maintained by LCG and managed by the Downtown Development Authority. Most of LCG's parks are located within city boundaries and are considered moderate sized parks, ranging between 18 and 70 acres.

Significant LCG parks include Moore Park close to the I-10/I-49 interchange, Girard Park and Recreation Center, and centrally located City Park, which also includes an 18-hole golf course. In addition, the department operates two other municipal golf courses. Most of Lafayette's parks offer active recreation facilities, including a variety of sports fields, picnic areas, and playgrounds. Some include trails, swimming, and cultural or natural resources. The recent transfer of the Horse Farm property on Johnston Street to LCG has added about 100 acres to the parks inventory. The Park at the Horse Farm is planned to be one of the region's signature parks. Its design and transition into a passive community park is being overseen by nonprofit Lafayette Central Park, Inc.

The Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of athletics and sports programs including baseball, basketball, soccer, and tennis. Lafayette's 10 recreation centers offer a variety of low cost and free recreational classes and activities, as well as hosting community group meetings. More than 50,000 youth and adults participated in programs in 2011. Much of the success of these programs is made possible through the volunteer driven neighborhood youth associations that assist with organization, coordination, and financial support for the athletic teams.

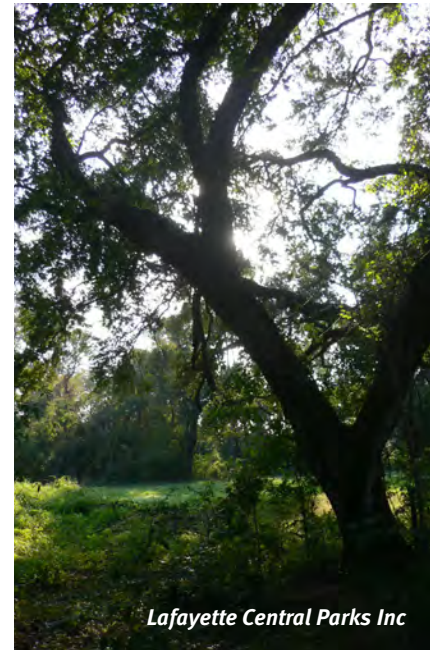
The Parks and Recreation Department has a staff of about 118 in five divisions. In FY 11/12, the Department had an adopted budget of \$12.12 million, of which approximately one-fourth was allocated to operations and maintenance. Funding for parks and recreation is a challenge as there is no dedicated millage in the parish and the city millage has remained at the same rate as 1961. The Community Assessment for the comprehensive plan, completed in 2012, found that per capita park spending in Lafayette was lower than comparable communities, about \$54 per person, compared to \$180 per person in Baton Rouge, and \$140 per person in Raleigh, NC. The Parks and Recreation Department does not have official LOS standards or adopted park typologies.



At present the current park inventory, both active and passive, totals 1,500 acres, or 6.7 acres per 1,000 population in the parish. While this is well below what many comparably sized communities provide, Lafayette is unique in its outdoor recreation culture and extensive natural resources for fishing, hunting, boating and other forms of resource based recreation. Planning for future park and recreation needs is handicapped by the lack of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan identifying park development priorities, and tools to objectively determine them. These could include the creation of a set of LOS standards for parks and recreational facilities, and for park spacing, tailored to the recreational preferences and participation rates unique to Lafayette, based on a recreational preferences and participation survey.

KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Funding for maintenance or expansion of existing parks and acquisition of new parks.
- Increased demand on urban and neighborhood parks, particularly in areas where growth is targeted (e.g., downtown parks, along University Avenue, and Johnston Street).
- Providing a range of accessible options for recreation, including walking, hiking, biking trails for a growing population.
- Lack of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan, as well as, LOS Standards to guide planning and measure needs and prioritizes future parks and recreation investments.
- Unlike other communities, no dedication or fee-in-lieu requirement for new development or a mechanism for the Parks and Recreation Department to accept and maintain small parcels of land.
- Lack of a greenway network of trails, bike paths, and sidewalks connecting parks and recreation centers.
- Ongoing maintenance needs for recreation centers, equipment, and parks, as well as, lack of funds to maintain small neighborhood and pocket parks; and little ability to incorporate new types of parks into the system.
- Inadequate public access to the Vermilion River.



The Park at the Horse Farm



Bayou Vermilion

GOAL 1

OPERATE AND MAINTAIN LAFAYETTE PARKS TO PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL RESIDENTS TO EXPERIENCE AND ENJOY THE PARISH'S OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION.

POLICY:

» P 9.1. Plan for present and future park and recreation needs and encourage multi-use public spaces that can function in a variety of ways to serve the recreation needs of the surrounding neighborhoods.

ACTIONS:**9.1.1**

Create LOS and park classification standards for neighborhood, community and special use parks, and active recreation facilities, based on a community survey of recreation preferences and participation rates and an evaluation of present facility utilization.

9.1.2

Create LOS standards and minimum park size standards for park classifications that differentiate between the needs of different areas of the urbanized and the rural areas of the parish.

9.1.3

Develop a set of evaluation criteria to determine how well each park within the Lafayette park system is meeting the community's needs (e.g., appropriately size for facilities and programs, serves multiple age groups, is connected and accessible to surrounding neighborhood or business district, protects diversity of landscape, contributes to watershed health, etc.).

9.1.4

Apply the LOS standards and park classification standards to the current and projected population to determine present and future deficiencies in parks, by classification and recreation facilities.

9.1.5

Prepare a Parks, Recreation and Open Space Master Plan that creates a connected park system and identifies priorities, general locations and funding sources to build and operate future park and recreation facilities. Conduct a survey of community needs in relation to existing parks and recreational facilities, as part of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

9.1.6

Develop new parks and expand existing parks to address service gaps and recommended growth areas, and plan for long term population growth and demographic shifts that may impact service needs.

9.1.7

Develop a fair cost sharing approach that provides funds from residents throughout the parish, including those in unincorporated areas.

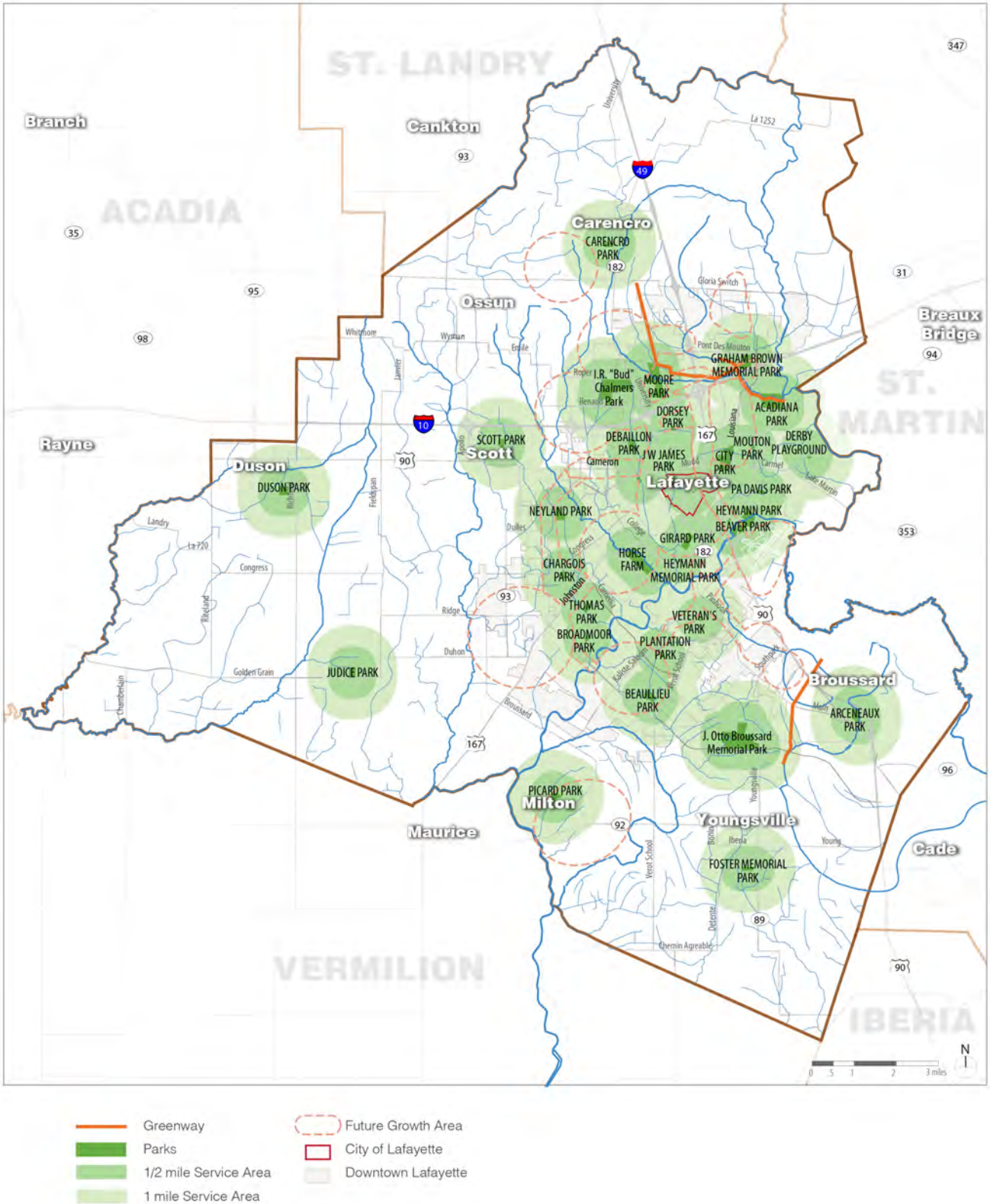
9.1.8

Work to service the community with fiber services in recreation centers throughout the city.

METRICS:

- » Acres of parkland per capita
- » Population within 1/4 or 1/2 mile of park

Figure 3.4 Future Growth Areas and Park Service Areas



POLICY:

» P 9.2. Increase access and connectivity between and within parks and neighborhoods through a network of safe sidewalks, bike paths/trails, greenways, and transit options.

ACTIONS:**9.2.1**

Improve walkability to parks by filling in gaps in the sidewalk network and building new sidewalks in priority locations, including in areas that connect to parks and recreation sites. (Related to Transportation & Mobility, MPO 2035 Pedestrian Plan)

9.2.2

Create a network of trails and bikeways that link parks and recreation centers throughout Lafayette. (Related to Transportation & Mobility, MPO 2035 Bikeway Plan)

9.2.3

Create an integrated greenway network, connecting with the Park at the Horse Farm property as a key location.

9.2.4

Increase secure bike parking near entrances to Lafayette's recreational facilities.

9.2.5

Improve safety on off-street trails using lighting, directional signage, and ongoing maintenance of trails and surrounding landscape.

9.2.6

Continue partnering with organizations such as TRAIL (Transportation Recreational Alternatives in LA) to improve trails and bicycle infrastructure in the region. (Related to Transportation & Mobility)

9.2.7

Increase transit accessibility to parks by expanding or planning new routes that have stops within a ¼ mile or 5 minute walk of a park. (Related to Transportation & Mobility)

METRICS:

- » Miles of bicycle facilities
- » Number of transit stops near parks

GOAL 2

EXPAND ROLE OF PARKS AND RECREATION IN PROMOTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR RECREATION.

POLICY:

» P 9.3. Increase coordination between health providers and Lafayette Department of Parks and Recreation.

ACTIONS:

9.3.1

Partner with health providers and advocacy organizations to develop opportunities for passive and active recreation that is consistent with the needs of different user groups including – children, special needs communities, and seniors.

9.3.2

Share research and evidence based findings that show improved mental and physical health (reduction of chronic diseases) related to the use and impact of parks and recreation sites.

» P 9.4. Increase utilization of parks and recreational programming in order to improve the health of the Lafayette community.

ACTIONS:

9.4.1

Develop a promotional campaign to encourage active recreation through walking, biking, and programing currently available in Lafayette’s parks and recreational facilities.

9.4.2

Consider parks and recreation sites that are best suited to host farmers market and/or dedicate space for community gardens and urban agriculture.

9.4.3

Partner with school districts to increase educational use of parks (e.g., nature programming) and recreational activity.

9.4.4

As maintenance is required, increase variety in parks and playgrounds to serve different needs and provide variety between parks.

9.4.5

Communicate the value of parks and recreational programming.

POLICY:

» P 9.5. Support education through outdoor play and recreation.

ACTIONS:**9.5.1**

Coordinate with the school district, afterschool programming, and community groups in design and programming of parks and recreation centers near schools.

9.5.2

Encourage outdoor educational programs and “classrooms” that may include special opportunities for science, writing, or environmental projects through partnerships with Lafayette schools similar to the Nature Station in Acadiana Park.

9.5.3

Continue to partner with schools and organizations (e.g., Boy Scouts / Girl Scouts) to increase resource and facility sharing through shared use agreements.

9.5.4

Design parks that become community meeting places with play opportunities that are available to children of all levels of ability.

METRICS:

» Number of students participating in park and recreation programming

GOAL 3

UTILIZE PARKS, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE, AND WATERWAYS TO EXPAND THE GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK.

POLICY:

» P 9.6. Protect the quality of the Vermilion River and its use for passive and active recreation.

ACTIONS:

9.6.1

Consider requirements to increase landscape buffers or setbacks from the Vermilion River to filter and reduce potential runoff and improve water quality.

9.6.2

Involve the BVD in the review of all zoning and subdivision review of properties adjacent to the Vermilion River.

9.6.3

Increase special events (e.g., kayak trips) and educational events that connect or are held at Bayou Vermilion's parks such as Beaver Park, Rotary Point, and Southside Park.

» P 9.7. Communicate the value of green infrastructure's essential environmental, economic, and social benefits (e.g., community health) to the community.

ACTIONS:

9.7.1

Work with LCG departments, including the Public Works EQ Division, to coordinate communications materials, BMPs, and create incentive programs to encourage residents to implement stormwater management practices. (Expand public information staff capacity in the Administration.)

9.7.2

Communicate the numerous benefits of green infrastructure practices to the community through education, the website and social media, and outreach. (Expand public information staff capacity in the Administration.)

» P 9.8. Use parks to improve water quality, increase tree canopy, and connect people with multi-use trails.

ACTIONS:

9.8.1

Create a connected park system through developing new parks as needed and identified in the Parks Master Plan and increasing trail, bicycle, and greenway connections between parks and recreation centers.

9.8.2

Create best practices demonstration projects (e.g., rain gardens, pervious pavers, green roofs on parks and recreation buildings, bioswales) and communicate their benefits in Lafayette parks.

9.8.3

Prioritize park and recreation sites for planting new trees.

9.8.4

Develop Camellia Green Park as a demonstration of combining parks, public art, pathways, etc. in corridor design.

METRICS:

» Miles of bicycle facilities

10. RESOURCE CONSERVATION & HAZARD MITIGATION

Lafayette Parish is part of the Bayou Vermilion Watershed area. A watershed is an area of land that drains to the waterway. The Vermilion River (or Bayou Vermilion) is the major hydrological feature of our watershed. Nearly forty miles of the river flow through the parish, roughly paralleling Johnston Street. This is considered the “urban river corridor.” From Pinhook Bridge southward, the Vermilion River is considered navigable for larger vessels by the Army Corps of Engineers. Stewardship over the Bayou Vermilion is the responsibility of the Lafayette Parish BVD. Aside from the Vermilion River, the parish contains several other important waterways that are part of the Teche–Vermilion Watershed. The primary groundwater resource of Lafayette Parish is the Chicot Aquifer system, followed by the Atchafalaya Aquifer system.

Lafayette maintains a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems, known as a MS4, with the state’s DEQ that mitigates watershed protection and stormwater management. Lafayette’s stormwater drainage system includes both engineered and natural waterways. Flooding due to poor drainage and flow capacity limitations of the natural drainage system are significant issues. In addition, large swathes of the parish are located within the 100 year flood zone. Stormwater runoff and outfalls particularly impact the quality of the parish’s surface water resources. Pollution in the Vermilion River is a health and environmental concern, but has been improving over the last several years. Factors contributing to the shift include reduced cattle ranching in the north part of the parish, efforts to reduce runoff from farming operations, increased natural vegetation buffers along the river, reduced individual septic systems from subdivisions, and increased enforcement of illegal commercial dumping.

While the region remains vulnerable to flooding, storms, and high winds, its higher elevation (36 feet above sea level) and location on the Louisiana Prairie Terrace means that the region does not experience the same flooding risks as areas to the south and west. However, the Bayou Vermilion’s limited capacity for drainage and proneness to flooding is a major concern to citizens and businesses in flood prone areas. The Lafayette area historically averages 55-60 inches of rainfall per year and it is projected that the “100 year flood” is actually happening as often as every 10 years. In 2012, the parish declared a state of emergency due to a major flash flood that stranded many residents, hitting Carencro particularly hard. FEMA’s preliminary floodplain mapping (draft FIRMs) significantly expands the areas of the parish classified as special hazard areas or within the 100 year floodplain.



KEY CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- Protection of the region’s waterways from pollutants and erosion caused by stormwater runoff.
- Declining aquatic ecosystems and surface water quality thereby increasing the possibility of the state’s DEQ restricting the amount of discharge from commercial, industrial, and the municipal sewer system.
- Conserving open space and natural resources as the parish’s population grows.
- Identifying and assessment of at-risk areas due to development patterns and monitoring development in and near sensitive environmental areas.
- Creating an integrated watershed approach for stormwater management that provides improvements in surface water quality and community recreation.
- Preserving and enhancing the region’s tree canopy.
- Protecting people and property from storms and flooding and other natural or manmade disasters.



The Park at the Horse Farm Tree Canopy



Coulee Illes des Cannes

GOAL 1**CONSERVE AND PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES****POLICY:**

» P 10.1. Enhance the protection of aquatic ecosystems including rivers, coulees, and wetlands to improve water quality and stormwater management.

ACTIONS:**10.1.1**

Prepare a comprehensive green infrastructure plan with Low Impact Development strategies for the parish to address stormwater management, modifications to the storm sewer system, and integration with the open space and trails system.

10.1.2

Monitor and enhance existing drainage network throughout the parish.

10.1.3

Increase BVD capacity and involve the district in review of all applications for development within the impacted boundary.

10.1.4

Continue to work with agricultural landowners and farmers to reduce animal waste and fertilizers from entering waterways.

10.1.5

Increase public education on the benefits of integrated green infrastructure practices in reducing stormwater, improving water quality, and providing potential recreational benefits.

10.1.6

Create incentives and develop Low Impact Development criteria for residential and commercial developments.

10.1.7

Work toward an inspection program for individual septic systems.

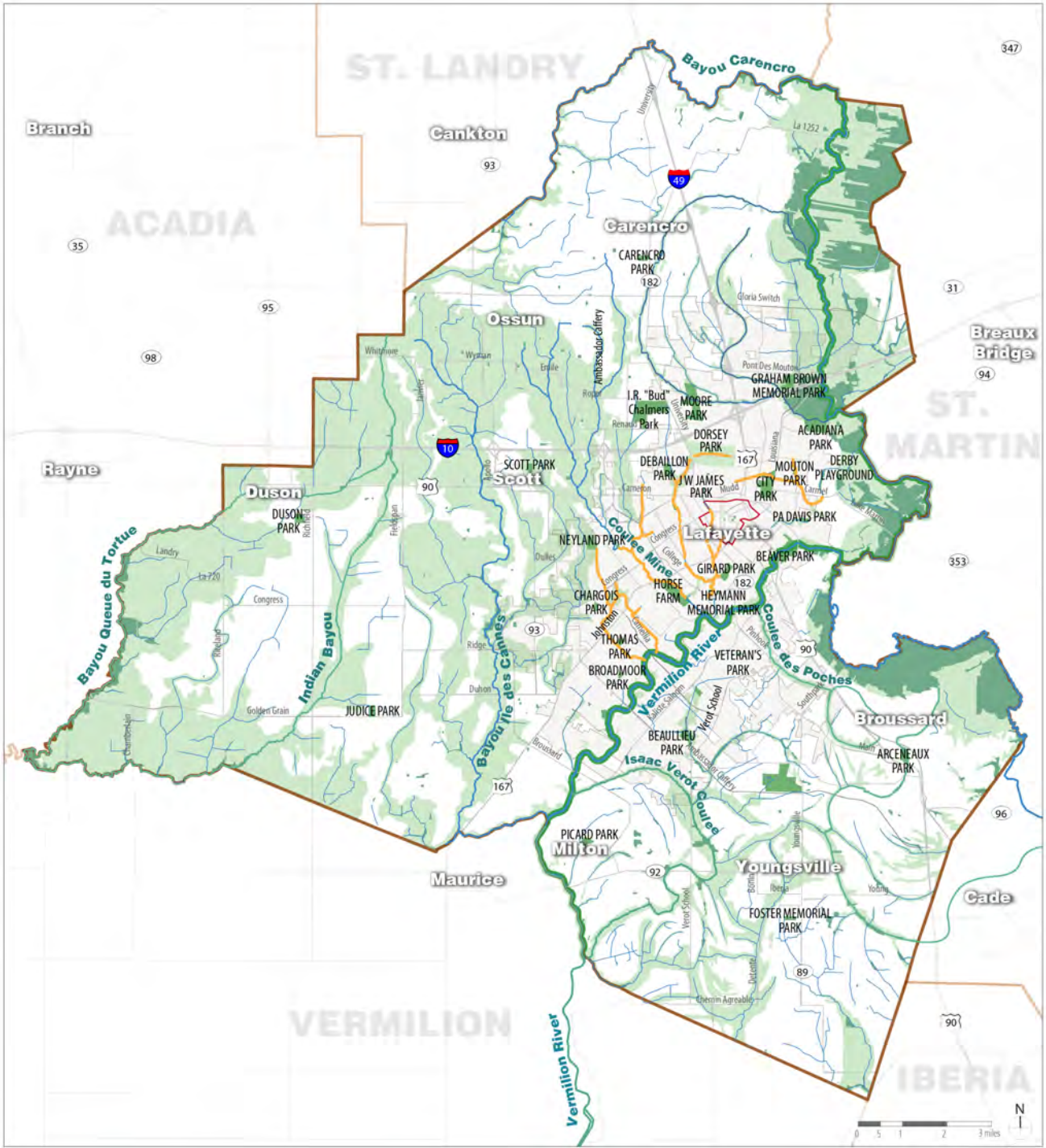
10.1.8

Using GIS, create a system for prioritizing waterways in need of buffers and improved water quality.

METRICS:

» Water quality index

Figure 3.5 Green Infrastructure Opportunity Areas



- Potential Coulee Greenway
- Parks
- 100-Year Floodplains and Floodway
- Wetlands
- City of Lafayette
- Downtown Lafayette

POLICY:

» P 10.2. Increase the urban tree canopy in established and new neighborhoods, as well as, in newly developing areas.

ACTIONS:**10.2.1**

Develop a consolidated set of street tree planting guidelines that are sensitive to surrounding context and use and align conflicting rules.

10.2.2

Revise land development codes to encourage tree preservation over tree replacement.

10.2.3

Work with organizations like Trees Acadiana to encourage landowners to plant native trees on their property through grants, incentives, and assistance with installation.

10.2.4

Partner with local nurseries to offer discounts or promotions to encourage planting of native trees.

» P 10.3. Encourage agricultural preservation and local food production. (Related to Community Character)

ACTIONS:**10.3.1**

Work with farmers to identify challenges and barriers to continued farming related to land development and the transportation network.

10.3.2

Encourage implementation of BMPs such as integrated pest management, reduced use of nitrogen fertilizers, and increased buffers to limit runoff from farms to waterways.

10.3.3

Work with farmers to increase direct sales through farmers markets, u-pick locations, and value added products.

10.3.4

Review agricultural zoning as part of the new UDC process and identify any barriers to farmland conservation.

METRICS:

- » Number of active farmland parcels
- » Number of green infrastructure projects

GOAL 2

PROTECT PEOPLE AND PROPERTY FROM HAZARDS.

POLICY:

» P 10.4. Reduce potential property damage and hazard to life through sound site design practices, and building design practices, and locating development away from known hazard areas. (Related to Utilities)

ACTIONS:

10.4.1

Conduct a risk assessment to determine the potential impacts of hazards to the people and economy of Lafayette by reviewing existing data on hazards, technology, and available protection resources. Include maps of critical facilities and future development areas.

10.4.2

Continue to require building elevating and flood proofing in the special hazard areas (defined on FIRMs as the 100-year floodplain) and address potential hazards through application of the Louisiana State Uniform Construction Codes. Review the impacts of existing standards and the need for more stringent building standards where needed.

10.4.3

Use the results of the risk assessment to create strategies for mitigation (e.g., education and management of onsite stormwater) and to prepare the Emergency Evacuation Plan. (Related to Transportation & Mobility)

» P 10.5. Increase open space and create a green infrastructure network that provides recreational opportunities, helps alleviate stormwater runoff, and assists in protecting the parish from storm hazards. (Related to Parks and Recreation)

ACTIONS:

10.5.1

Create a green infrastructure network through planning, coordination between departments, easements, and/or land acquisition that is focused on improving resiliency from storm events.

10.5.2

Focus on improving health of wetlands plant and animal communities to improve filtering of water and drainage.

10.5.3

Increase plant buffers along all waterways to reduce erosion and protect properties from flooding, and create a protective zone between waterways and development.

10.5.4

Use guidance on best practices – e.g., Best Practices Manual for Development in Coastal Louisiana – to guide planning and design.

10.5.5

Develop a greenways plan and work with property owners to create easements or other means to provide recreational access (i.e., walking/biking trail) along coulees within Lafayette Parish. (Related to Recreation and Open Space Policy 2)

10.5.6

Connect waterways to parks and allow community access through trails, signage, boating facilities (e.g., launches, boat rentals), and fishing piers.

METRICS:

» Miles of bicycle facilities



04 IMPLEMENTATION

OVERVIEW

PlanLafayette consists of many goals, policies, and actions, most can be traced back to a handful of overarching themes, most of which originate from the Lafayette 2035 Vision, namely our aspirations to:

- enhance the places where we live, work and play;
- support and attract businesses and promote entrepreneurship;
- strengthen the image we project to the world;
- maintain our economic competitiveness; and
- do all these things in a fiscally efficient manner, leveraging our assets and turning challenges into opportunities.

The actions described in Chapter 3 make up the “to-do” list of the comprehensive plan. Many actions cut across plan elements, LCG departments, and external organizations. Therefore, to succeed, their implementation will require determined coordination and attention from all sectors of government and its partners – both immediately and over the next two decades, to create a more predictable planning .

Chapter 4 is organized into four sections:

- **Action Matrix** outlines the organization of the plan actions (separate Excel workbook that is sortable by responsibility, funding source, etc.) and provides a framework as to how each action will be implemented.
- **Governance and Coordination** outlines the many partners and roles they play in implementation of PlanLafayette.
- **Monitoring and Updating** describes the process for tracking, updating, and reporting the results of implementation.
- **Fiscal and Funding Strategies** outlines resources, mechanisms, and opportunities, to achieve funding.

ACTION MATRIX

There are many LCG departments and divisions involved in the implementation of diverse elements and functions of the PlanLafayette. The PlanLafayette Action Matrix (sortable Excel workbook) specifies the lead responsibility, internal and external partners, type of action, coordination needs, and potential funding sources for each action listed in Chapter 3. The matrix includes:

- **Element:** Section and element reference from Chapter 3 (e.g., 3.1 Future Land Use).
- **Policy #:** Policy reference from Chapter 3 (e.g., 1.1).
- **Action #:** Action reference within each policy from Chapter 3 (e.g., 1.1.1).
- **Action Item:** Action as described in Chapter 3.
- **Action Type:** General description of action type (Regulation, Planning, Capital, Outreach, Program, Partnerships).
- **Lead:** Primary department or organization responsible for carrying out the action.
- **Division:** As applicable, division within the Lead Department is specified
- **UDC Regulation:** Actions that involve development of new regulations and revisions that will be part of the new UDC. LCG is combining its revised regulations into a single, integrated code. This document – known as the UDC – has an essential role in implementing the plan’s actions. The UDC will combine the existing zoning, subdivision, and parish land use regulations into a single document. This provides a more user friendly structure than the existing zoning, subdivision and development regulations that are currently scattered throughout the Lafayette Consolidated Government Code of Ordinances (the “LCG Code”).



Community Forum #3 PlanLafayette mural

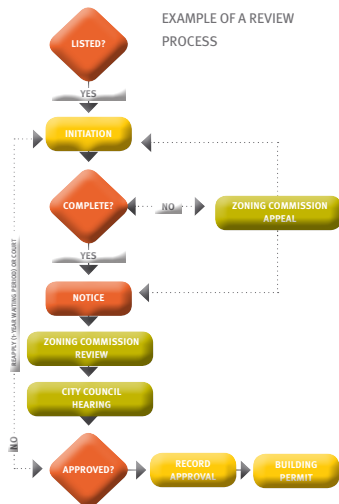
Many of the PlanLafayette actions are related to the regulations that the UDC will control - building form, land use, development character, and the environment. The UDC may use incentives, such as by-right mixed-use districts, reduced permit fees or streamlined developed review, as tools to encourage pedestrian friendly, mixed-use development in corridors and centers.

The policies and actions from the comprehensive plan will guide the development of the UDC and the planning process dovetails with the end of the comprehensive planning process so that there can be a seamless transition from the plan to regulations. For each action item, columns are checked for stakeholders active in that item:

- **IS&T:** Actions that involve the Information Services & Technology Department or technology in general. These actions include mapping, data sharing and organization, and GIS.
- **Communications:** Actions that involve community outreach materials (e.g., brochure, marketing materials), education
- **Consultant:** Actions that could require retaining a consultant for a new study, outside analysis, or planning process.

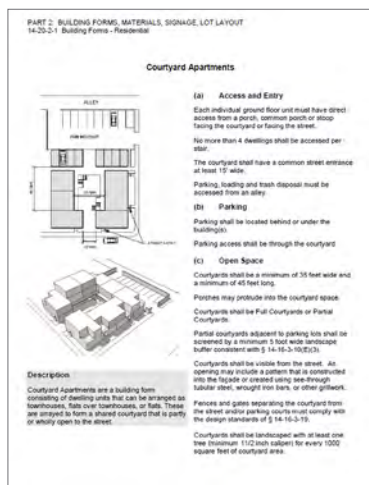
1 WHY A UDC?

- Consolidates land development regulations
- Integrates standards and procedures
- Brings codes into the 21st Century



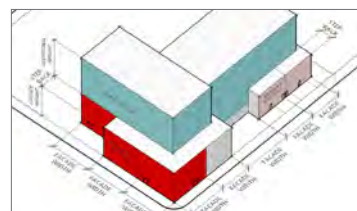
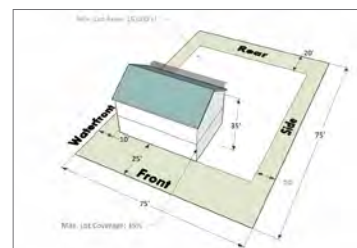
2 WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- Current outdated regulations lead to confusion
- Regulations are not context sensitive
- Right-size zoning and subdivision standards
- Zoning rules enacted in 1972



3 WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Easy to understand regulations
- Complete standards and procedures
- Zoning and land use controls that support economic development
- Predictability - saving time and money



- **Partner (internal):** LCG departments that will assist and partner with the lead to implement the action.
- **Partner (external):** Outside (non-LCG) partners that will assist and partner with the lead to implement the action.
- **Funding – CIP:** Funding that will need to be identified for capital projects through CIP.
- **Funding – O&M:** Funding for staff to carry out actions that will be identified through department O&M plans.
- **Funding – Grants, Foundation, PPPs:** Funding identified through outside sources such as grants, foundations, and PPPs.
- **Funding – Other:** Funding identified through user fees, permit fees, partnering contributions, and/or state and federal allocations.
- **Timeline:** Short-Term Actions (1-2 Years), Mid-Term Actions (2-5 years), Long-Term Actions (5-10 years). Short-term actions are those that have resources in place and can begin or be completed quickly following plan adoption. Mid-term actions may be more involved and require additional study, planning, or funding before they can get started. Long-term actions generally are those which require at least three to four years to define needs and opportunities, create programs and build partnerships, and establish new funding (e.g., grants) or staff resources.



Community Forum #4 - What can you do to help implement PlanLafayette?



Lafayette streets

GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION

LCG Planning Functions

Implementation of the plan requires ongoing coordination between departments and communication with the public. LCG departments involved in implementation of the plan include:

- **LCG Administration – Chief Development Officer (CDO)**

During the process of preparing PlanLafayette, LCG created a new position, **CDO** as a one-stop shop for issues related to future planning and current development. The CDO will oversee the implementation of the comprehensive plan and helps to facilitate action and coordination between departments. The CDO position reports directly to the City-Parish President and works closely with LCG department directors, as well as non-governmental organizations in Lafayette.

LCG should review the various positions that deal with grants, consider whether all potential funding sources are being pursued, and consider the possibility of a new position to coordinate grants throughout LCG and ensure they are related to the comprehensive plan implementation, including arts and culture, economy, transportation, parks and recreation, environmental quality, technology and education.

- **Planning, Zoning, and Development Department (PZD)**

During the course of the comprehensive planning process, the PZD Department was reorganized and renamed to better reflect the role of the department. The Planning, Zoning, and Development Department is responsible for updating and overseeing the implementation of the comprehensive plan, development, zoning, and codes. The Department is divided into three divisions: Planning; Zoning & Development Review, and Codes.

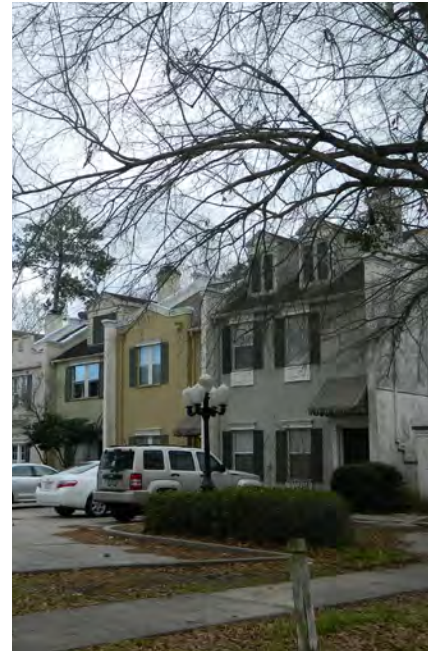
The **Planning Division** is responsible for long and short-term planning, including the comprehensive plan and neighborhood planning, and houses staff for the Lafayette MPO. The **Zoning & Development Review Division** maintains the zoning ordinance, reviews and approves land subdivision applications, and works closely with the Planning and Zoning Commission. The **Codes Division** is charged with implementing the Louisiana State Uniform Construction Codes, permitting, and coordination with the Federal Flood Management Program.

LCG should consider adding a *Comprehensive Plan Implementation Planner* position in PZD to work directly with the CDO and coordinate and track the implementation of the plan within PZD and with other departments. The Implementation Planner would be a liaison to the other departments, but all departments would be partners in implementation, leading the actions they are responsible for and providing updates through the annual report. The Implementation Planner, with support from other PZD staff and the CDO, would compile the annual report and work with IS&T to maintain the plan metrics.

Key Role in Implementation:

PZD is responsible for the greatest number of action items within the plan, and has an essential role in the plan implementation. PZD oversees and manages how the parish develops in the future and assists in the development of the CIP. The following is a summary of the key actions PZD will be responsible for implementing:

- *Creation of the UDC and revision of zoning to be consistent with the plan and the FLUM.*
 - *Short and long-term transportation planning through the MPO, including the coordination of the I-49 Connector project.*
 - *Development of Complete Street Principles to create and implement street improvement plans that balance the needs of transit, automobiles, bicycles, and pedestrians.*
 - *Building capacity for neighborhood planning through a citizen planner and advocacy program.*
 - *Development of comprehensive plan consistency standards to guide site plan review of future projects.*
 - *Create an expedited process and streamline notice procedures for returning adjudicated properties that represent a challenge in bringing the community's abandoned and dilapidated structures to commerce.*
 - *Facilitate a regional drainage, parks, and green infrastructure plan to reduce flooding through stormwater management improvements and enhanced buffers along waterways.*
- **Lafayette Utilities System (LUS)**
The Lafayette Utilities System (LUS) is the largest department of LCG, providing electric, water, sewer, phone, television and high-speed internet services (via fiber optic network) to residential, commercial and industrial customers. Fiber services are limited to the corporate limits of the city of



Lafayette housing

Lafayette, while water, electric, and sewer may extend outside of the city limits with limitations. As a publicly owned utility, LUS transfers approximately \$22 million of in-lieu of tax (ILOT) to the LCG General Fund each year. Given its essential role in provide community services of water, wastewater, electric, and fiber, LUS is essential in implementing many of the physical aspects of the plan.

Key Role in Implementation:

- *Consider approaches to expand and enhance provision of services to areas illustrated as targeted areas by the FLUM, with the capacity to serve denser development and mixed-use.*
- *Review all water and sewer extensions for compatibly with the comprehensive plan.*
- *Provide improvements in public infrastructure to service multi-family and/or attached housing units.*
- *Continue to study estimated costs associated with water and sewer extensions to service planned mixed use centers and redevelopment areas.*
- *Plan infrastructure improvements and annexations to increase the community's ROI and minimize long-term costs of municipal services.*

- **Public Works (PW)**

Public Works oversees and manages many of the physical components of the parish, including buildings, streets, bridges, drainage, and recycling and waste systems. In addition, PW provides management and design for capital improvement projects, facilities and vehicle fleet management, transit operations, and traffic engineering.

Key Role in Implementation:

- *Prioritize the mixed-use corridors illustrated on the FLUM for complete street improvements.*
- *Establish a prioritization method for the funding of capital improvements based on factors that include the realization of comprehensive plan policies, cost-effective traffic congestion relief, intersection improvements, and complete street projects.*
- *Provide sidewalks, trails, and or bicycle routes that link neighborhoods with transit stations, mixed-use centers and corridors, and major public facilities.*
- *Reduce traffic on arterial roads by improving connectivity and creating new linkages between existing local and collector roads.*

- Upgrade public buildings through energy efficiency improvements and technology improvements through a coordinated capital improvements program.
- Encourage use of stormwater management tools and other green infrastructure approaches to reduce the amount of runoff entering the region's waterways.
- Create best practice demonstration projects (e.g., rain gardens, pervious pavers, green roofs, bioswales) in parks and at public building sites.
- Work with PZD in implement the neighborhood program.

- **Parks and Recreation Department (P&R)**

The Parks and Recreation Department operates and maintains nearly 40 park sites throughout the parish. Most of the parish parks offer recreation facilities, including a variety of ball and sports fields, picnic areas, and playgrounds. Some include trails, swimming, and cultural or natural resources. Lafayette's downtown parks are often used for concerts, movies, or other special events. The planning for the new Park at the Horse Farm is underway and when completed will add 100 acres of needed parkland to the existing park inventory, managed by the nonprofit Lafayette Central Park, Inc.

Key Role in Implementation:

- Prepare a Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan that includes LOS and park classification standards and creates a connected park system with priorities for future capital investments and funding sources.
- Partner with LPSS to increase the educational use of parks and increase sharing of facilities and resources.
- Increase special events and educational events connecting Bayou Vermilion's parks thereby increasing their visibility.
- Work closely with Lafayette Central Park to create a world-class park based on the community's vision.
- Improve facilities for safe bicycle and pedestrian access at and between Lafayette's parks.
- Use parks and future sites to demonstrate BMPs in stormwater treatment and storage.
- Work with PZD to implement the neighborhood program.

- **Community Development Department (CD)**

The CD's goal is to promote services that enhance the physical, social, educational, and cultural conditions in Lafayette. CD provides a broad range of services including: housing services to low and moderate-income



Jessie Livingston Taylor Neighborhood Services Center

households and special needs households; economic development; housing and financial counseling; neighborhood revitalization; arts, cultural, and historic programs; senior programs; and homeless services. CD also manages state and federal funding and grant opportunities.

Key Role in Implementation:

- *Improve access to affordable rental and for sale housing through programs such as the 2nd Loan Home Purchase Program and by working with non-profits to create more opportunities for affordable and workforce housing options.*
- *Encourage investment in and the rehab of existing housing and commercial buildings in the targeted growth areas.*
- *Work with PZD to implement the neighborhood program.*
- *Participate in the creation of a Culture Plan to leverage Lafayette's culture in attracting and growing businesses and supporting the arts and cultural community.*
- *Work with LPSS and the AcA to assess the results and implementation of the Community Audit for Arts Education, including training materials and arts integration into public education.*
- *Utilize the role of CD in funding and housing construction / rehabilitation efforts to demonstrate key components of the comprehensive plan, such as housing choice, walkable site design, and architectural design that is compatible with existing neighborhood fabric.*

• **Information Services & Technology (IS&T)**

The Information Services & Technology Department manages the coordinated development of technology services for LCG and external organizations that contract with LCG for technology services. IS&T develops, maintains, and supports LCG's GIS system and public safety applications, which are central to LCG departments.

Key Role in Implementation:

- *Evaluate the current IS&T Strategic Plan and seek to improve efficiencies through GIS integration of the areas related to plan implementation (e.g., emergency management analysis and response, hazard mitigation analysis, permit review analysis, tracking and data mining, coordination with the parcel and assessor data, review of land use applications and permitting, development application evaluation, connectivity index, etc.).*
- *Work with PZD to complete and continually update their land use inventory, based on the Lafayette Parish Tax Assessor's parcel based data, in GIS and develop a feedback system for regular updates and managing of the data.*

- *Update the online GIS Interactive Map layers with parcel data, parks and trails, evacuation routes, and community resources.*
- *Increase interdepartmental and intergovernmental coordination of GIS Mapping availability and consider how to better integrate GIS staff with the PZD Department.*
- *Use tracking software to allow citizens to report needed improvements or repairs and to analyze the data to help drive department decision making.*
- *Work with LCG departments to consolidate software and/or create applications to share information across departments.*

- **Police and Fire**

The parish’s cities and unincorporated areas are all served by PDs responsible for their particular jurisdiction. There are six local PDs, one sheriff’s office, and the state police serving Lafayette Parish. The LPSO serves unincorporated areas of the parish, and the state police serves the entire parish. The Lafayette PD operates with several divisions including criminal investigations, public information, school resources, SWAT, and traffic. The parish has eight total fire districts. The Lafayette district fire fighters are full time, while the other districts rely on volunteer services. Fire stations are located within or close to the city of Lafayette.

Key Role in Implementation:

- *Assess and study locations for new police and fire stations near planned population centers consistent with the FLUM.*
- *Coordinate between police, fire, EMS, and other community centers to co-locate community services and share resources where possible (e.g., police station / community center).*
- *Increase regional cooperation with state and surrounding municipalities to share information, target high crime areas, and share training / staffing resources.*
- *Develop a policy and fee schedule for sharing fire and emergency response services between the city and surrounding areas.*
- *Encourage participation in volunteer and paid firefighter employment opportunities and educate students about the type of training and career skills needed.*
- *Work with property owners and PZD to encourage Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) to eliminate problem spots for vandalism and other crimes.*



Lafayette PD Mounted Patrol Unit

- **Office of Finance and Management (OFM)**

OFM provides the development and oversight of programs and procedures for overall financial management, financial reporting, accounting, budgeting, purchasing, and property / inventory management and compliance. OFM provides financial support and reporting services for all LCG departments.

Key Role in Implementation:

- *Working with PW and IS&T, produce a “ROI Tool” to develop and prioritize the annual CIP, allowing policy makers and public officials to understand the cost of prospective investments, as well as their return.*
- *Create public materials to communicate the annual CIP process and track and monitor projects to share with the public online.*
- *Work with PZD and the CDO to restructure the budgeting process to reflect comprehensive plan objectives.*

- **Lafayette Public Library System (LPLS)**

The library system includes ten geographically distributed public libraries overseen by an eight-member appointed Library Board of Control. The mission of the library is to enhance the quality of life of the community by providing free and equal access to high-quality, cost-effective services that meet the need for life-long learning, recreation, and cultural enrichment. The library system has responded to growth in the community by opening new branches (North Regional and South Regional) and is now finishing renovation to the Main Library branch. Lafayette libraries provide a range of essential community services and special events, advertised through the libraries website and newsletters.

Key Role in Implementation:

- *Partner with arts, cultural, and historical organizations to provide exhibition space and integrate public art into libraries and other public buildings.*
- *Increase educational and arts based lectures and discussion series.*
- *Upgrade library buildings through energy efficiency management programs, modernization, and technology improvements through a coordinated CIP.*
- *Work with other departments (e.g., PZD) to improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities and access to libraries.*
- *Coordinate between police, fire, EMS, and other community centers to co-locate community services and share resources where possible (e.g., police station / community center).*

Partners in Implementation

LCG regularly partners with agencies, neighborhood planning groups, non-profits, businesses, and surrounding municipalities every day. The implementation of PlanLafayette will require the same type of and level of commitment from partners to be successful. Existing relationships may need to be strengthened and expanded; for example, many of the plan’s actions surrounding workforce training and education rely on partnerships and support from LPSS, UL, and local businesses. The plan’s development goals – from diverse housing to mixed-use development – rely on partnerships with the private sector.

Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) are a tool sometimes used to reduce the government’s cost of infrastructure improvements. Extensive study is needed before entering into a PPP, for example, municipalities run the risk of selling assets at too low of a cost in a hurry to make up for budget deficits.

- **Downtown Development Authority (DDA)**

Created in 1983, the DDA works to address the downtown’s economic, physical, social and cultural redevelopment through capital projects. Over the years, DDA has supported special events and festivals, as well as large and small public improvements and facilities such as the AcA, the adaptive reuse of the Evangeline Hotel, and the Children’s Museum of Acadiana. DDA promotes residential and mixed-use projects downtown and provides marketing and business development to improve the economic climate.

Key Role in Implementation:

- *Develop an activity plan for residents and visitors in downtown in order to take full advantage of downtown culture and amenities.*
- *Promote the development of housing, office, and live-work studio space in downtown.*
- *Encourage a new or enhanced civic gathering space in downtown that is integrated with the existing fabric and offers an additional community amenity.*
- *Concurrent to the comprehensive planning process, DDA developed a Downtown Action Plan (see Appendix B) to develop focused recommendations specific to downtown. The action plan priorities include:
—Create a Downtown Character Program that emphasizes the importance of downtown’s convenience, vibrancy, and building height to street relationship or “outdoor rooms.”*

What is a PPP?

A PPP is a contractual arrangement between a public agency (federal, state or local) and a private sector entity. Through this agreement, the skills and assets of each sector (public and private) are shared in delivering a service or facility for the use of the general public. In addition to the sharing of resources, each party shares in the risks and rewards potential in the delivery of the service and/or facility.

7 Keys to Successful PPPs

- Public Sector Champion
- Statutory Environment
- Government Organized Structure (e.g., dedicated team for PPP projects or programs, involved throughout, including monitoring agreement).
- Detailed Contract / Business Plan
- Clearly Defined Revenue Stream
- Stakeholder Support
- Long-term partnership, trust, experience, capacity of private partner



Downtown from above

- Develop a Public Space Initiative to improve the quality of downtown streets and maintain, improve, and expand upon parks, squares, and plazas.
- Work with the DDC to implement the Downtown Action Plan, facilitate promotion and coordination of downtown development, and provide conceptual design services.
- Improve parking infrastructure and management downtown through technology and a parking management plan.
- Develop a Return on Infrastructure Investment Analysis Tool that measures the cost of services and infrastructure investments, as well as expected revenue generated by investments.

- **Lafayette Parish School System (LPSS)**

The Lafayette Parish School System (LPSS) serves the entire parish with nine sub districts and 45 elementary, middle, and high schools. LPSS is one of the largest employers in the parish and is committed to the success of the students and the community. The recent “Turn Around Plan” focuses on improving early education, community health, school facilities, and academic performance in the near-term. The success of Lafayette’s public education system is essential for the future of Lafayette, and is linked to growing our neighborhoods, economy, and community well-being.

Key Role in Implementation:

- Partnering with PZD and AcA to expand opportunities for arts and cultural programming through schools and recreation centers.
- Working with LEDA and PZD to increase business skills training for local high school students.
- Continuing to partner with early education providers and PZD to ensure all children have access to quality early education.
- Partner with PZD to improve sidewalk and bicycle access, and ensure safe routes to schools with adequate lighting and clear pedestrian crossings.
- Coordinate with PZD on forecasting student enrollment, demographic trends, and facilities planning.
- Work with LCG and other entities to share both facilities and school grounds for joint facilities and parks.
- Demonstrate best practices in design of buildings and school grounds that encourages neighborhood connectivity and safe routes to schools.



N.P. Moss Preparatory School

- **Lafayette Economic Development Authority (LEDA)**

LEDA provides assistance to local companies in their growth, market development, and workforce development efforts. LEDA also works to recruit additional companies to the region and to assist in the development of new companies to diversity the parish’s economy. LEDA hosts an annual job fair and networking luncheons, as well as offering site selection assistance, business visitations, and market research.

Key Role in Implementation:

- *Work with PZD and CDO to target business development consistent with the FLUM.*
- *Work with PZD, GLCC, and other partners to start a Redevelopment Authority.*
- *Partner with PZD and others to measure the economic impact of arts and cultural events.*
- *Coordinate with LPSS to connect students with the business community for mentoring and career planning.*
- *Advocate increased business skills training for local high school students.*
- *Work with LCG to promote comprehensive plan objectives that give the parish a competitive advantage in attracting new business and keeping the younger generation.*

- **University of Louisiana at Lafayette (UL)**

Located directly south of and adjacent to downtown, UL is the second largest university in Louisiana and the largest campus within the eight-campus UL system. With almost 18,000 students in undergraduate and graduate programs, UL is a leader in computer science, engineering, and nursing fields. The campus totals about 1,400 acres including the main campus, the Athletic Complex and Cajundome, University Research Park, and the Center for Ecology and Technology.

Key Role in Implementation:

- *Improve pedestrian and transit connections between the campus, downtown, and surrounding neighborhoods.*
- *Work with DDA to expand the downtown planning area to include the UL campus, particularly the Hilliard University Art Museum, and the Oil Center.*
- *Partner with PZD to increase housing options in the city, including student housing that is compatible with the character of neighborhoods surrounding downtown.*



LEDA Offices



Lafayette Convention & Visitors

Local food / Cultural tourism

- *Expand the role of the Acadiana Historical Initiative and partner with LPSS to highlight the storytelling tradition and connect students with seniors/adults.*
- *Continue to leverage R&D activity to grow local start-up businesses and entrepreneurs.*
- *Work with LEDA and other partners to develop a master plan for growth of the research park.*
- *Partner with LCG on sustainability related efforts to implement best practices, reduce waste, increase tree cover, and reduce energy use and emissions through UL's Office of Sustainability.*
- *Encourage walking and biking as a primary means of transportation for students by improving the accessibility and ease of bicycle lanes, bicycle facilities and sidewalk network on campus and connected to other areas of the city.*

- **Lafayette Convention & Visitors Commission (LCVC)**

LCVC was created in 1974 to serve as the tourism promotion and marketing coordinator for Lafayette Parish. Today, LCVC markets Lafayette Parish throughout the world as a highly attractive vacation and convention destination, works to attract business and service conventions, and promotes the parish through tourism efforts.

Key Role in Implementation:

- *Work with partners to create a culture plan that may involve a new cultural campus, public art projects, and community beautification.*
- *Expand historical tourism, working with PZD, through marketing and materials including a comprehensive listing of historical assets and self-guided walking tours.*
- *Maintain and grow Lafayette's festivals and cultural events through considering a permanent outdoor festival location and coordinating partnerships with retailers and restaurants during special events.*
- *Cultivate Lafayette's position as a food and cultural destination.*
- *Strengthen Lafayette's sense of place by emphasizing gateways to neighborhoods and special districts, through the use of architecture, landscape, or public art installations.*

- **Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce (GLCC)**

A private, nonprofit, the GLCC is considered the premier business advocacy organization in the region with 1,200 members in the parish and area at-large. The GLCC regularly assesses the needs of local business owners and executives and develops programs to deliver strategic solutions to those needs.

Key Role in Implementation:

- *Support the creation of a Redevelopment Authority with the ability to acquire vacant property, provide a land bank, and assist with assembly of suitable land for development.*
- *Work with LCG and LEDA to develop a business-driven education development strategy that includes developing skills needed in local employees and accounts for expected growth in job sectors.*
- *Partner with LCG and LEDA to measure the economic impact of arts and cultural events and educational impact of involving students in historic and cultural projects.*
- *Work through the Community Development Division of the GLCC to strategically support the implementation of action items that align with Chamber priorities.*
- *Affect policy changes that will improve the business climate, including education, infrastructure, and quality of life initiatives.*

• Lafayette Parish Assessor

The Lafayette Parish Assessor is responsible for identifying, locating, and fairly valuing all property in the parish. The Assessor also maintains a parcel GIS database, tracks ownership changes, keeps descriptions of buildings and property characteristics, and approves applications for tax exemptions. The Parish Assessor's office should work with LCG and the IS&T Department to update and share resources for the parish's land use and ownership GIS database.

Key Role in Implementation:

- *Work with LCG to complete and continually update the parish's parcel-based land use inventory and develop a feedback system for regular updates and management of the data.*
- *Consider an agricultural land program that encourages farmland preservation through conservation easement on land classified as agricultural in use.*
- *Work with LCG to ensure that lands assessed agricultural are in fact being used for agricultural purposes.*



CPCAC members at work

- **Citizens Advisory Implementation Task Force**

The Comprehensive Plan Citizens Advisory Committee (CPCAC) was formed in 2012 to provide guidance, feedback, support, and review of the planning process and in-progress work products. The creation of a similar group is recommended to help support LCG Departments in implementation of the plan, work with neighborhood and other community groups, and provide feedback on the plan's progress and necessary updates.

The implementation task force should include subject matter experts (e.g., environmental resources, housing) to serve on and help lead subcommittees or directed task force groups to drive implementation.

Key Role in Implementation:

- *Review the annual report and provide feedback on results and metrics.*
- *Volunteer or sign up for interest groups dedicated to implementing a particular action or project from PlanLafayette.*
- *Share stories of local results and progress with LCG and the community at large.*
- *Encourage friends and neighbors to get involved in PlanLafayette implementation projects.*

REGIONAL, STATE AND FEDERAL COORDINATION

PlanLafayette addresses issues that are under the purview of LCG and are local to Lafayette Parish and the city of Lafayette. However, communities do not function in a vacuum. Certain problems do not simply cease at the geo-political boundaries of individual governmental units. They are frequently shared by (and are the responsibility of) other municipalities or an entire region, sometimes even an entire state. To effectively address such issues, it is imperative to coordinate and collaborate across jurisdictions.

There are four major areas that are addressable through a coordinated approach with regional, state and/or federal entities. Improved coordination in all these areas will not only allow LCG to capitalize on cross-jurisdictional synergies and opportunities, but will also expand our access to resources that may otherwise not be as readily available.

Listed below is a sampling of regional, state and federal programs, agencies and organizations that LCG should consider improving coordination with to achieve specific goals and actions of PlanLafayette under each of these topical areas. The list provided is a representative, not exhaustive. There are also dozens of local and regional nonprofit organizations with which LCG coordinates efforts. In some cases, present coordination is adequate but limited. Coordination usually occurs along a continuum of activities, ranging from informal contacts to formal procedures, actions, or agreements.

Transportation

- **Lafayette MPO**

LCG hosts the Lafayette MPO, the transportation planning agency for the Lafayette Urbanized Area including Lafayette Parish and parts of Acadia, St. Landry, Vermilion, St. Martin, Iberia, and Vermilion Parishes. In 2012, the MPO planning area was expanded to include portions of Iberia Parish and the City of New Iberia, an expansion that brought the total population area to over 250,000 and transitioned the MPO to a Transportation Management Area (TMA).

The designation of a TMA carries with it several benefits (e.g., additional Federal funding), but it also imposes additional obligations on the MPO regarding the coordination of transportation planning activities within the TMA boundary under 23 CFR 450. For example, a major requirement of a TMA is that the MPOs must develop a Congestion Management Process for the entire TMA. Air quality planning must be coordinated among all the participating jurisdictions. In addition, all other transportation plans and programs within a TMA must be



Louisiana DOTD

based on a continuing and comprehensive transportation planning process carried out by the MPO in cooperation with the State and transit operators, which in turn must be certified by the FHWA and the FTA at least once every three years. While its main focus is transportation planning, with the TMA designation, there is an opportunity to broaden the scope of the MPO to include regional security planning, disaster response and recovery, and energy considerations.

The Lafayette MPO consists of representatives from Lafayette Parish, the surrounding local governments, transportation authorities and the state. Lafayette Parish has over 50% of the representation on the governing board. The primary role of the MPO is the preparation of short and long-range transportation plans, the coordination of federal, state and local transportation programs and projects, and the allocation of federal, state and local funds for transportation projects and programs. As part of the comprehensive plan implementation, the LCG CDO should help to coordinate and complete a long-range transportation plan, utilizing staff from LCG, MPO, and other necessary parties, to ensure that transportation priorities and plans are consistent with and seek to implement the concepts of the comprehensive plan and FLUM. In addition, the Lafayette MPO acts as a liaison between local governments, the Louisiana DOTD, LTA, FHWA, and FTA.

Most MPOs nationwide have elected to establish stand-alone, independent central staffs. However, the Lafayette MPO has successfully used an LCG/MPO shared-staffing concept for many years before the recent MPO expansion and TMA designation. The same operational concept is expected to continue in the structure of the expanded MPO for the time being; however, in the future a formalized structure that defines how LCG staff, the Planning Commission, and Council coordinate with and fit within the MPO structure may need to be redefined.

- **Louisiana Department of Transportation Development (DOTD)**

DOTD's mission is "to deliver transportation and public works systems that enhance quality of life and facilitate economic growth" for Louisiana residents, businesses and government partners. To fulfill this mission, DOTD maintains four functional divisions: Multimodal, Engineering, Operations, and Management & Finance. Many major roads and road bridges in Lafayette Parish are under DOTD's jurisdiction, including LA 3073, (Ambassador Caffery Parkway), LA 182 (Pinhook Road), LA 2035 (College Road), LA 342 (Bertrand Dr.), LA 339 (Verot School Road), LA 92 (E. Milton Avenue), and others. DOTD is currently working with LCG and the MPO on a complete street demonstration project on Johnston Street, as well as the planning and design of I-49.

DOTD offers its partners (including organizations and individuals as well as regional and local government partners) technical assistance and access to federal and state transportation funding for initiatives such as Safe Routes to School, Complete Streets, Statewide Flood Control, Outdoor Advertising, and Public Transportation. DOTD also works with the LTA to promote, plan, finance, develop, construct, control, regulate, operate and maintain toll ways and transit ways within the state.

- **Louisiana Transportation Authority (LTA)**

A statewide agency, LTA was created in 2001 by the Louisiana Legislature and it is based in East Baton Rouge Parish. The agency is governed by a board of nine directors, which includes the Secretary of DOTD. The goal of LTA is “to encourage investment in the state of Louisiana by private entities and to facilitate to the greatest extent feasible the financing, development, and operation of transportation facilities.”

In pursuit of this goal, LTA is authorized to pursue alternative and innovative funding sources, including but not limited to public/private partnerships, tolls, and unclaimed property funds to supplement public revenue sources for the purpose of improving the state’s transportation system.

Housing

- **Lafayette Housing Corporation (LHC)**

The LHC was established in 1980 pursuant to the Louisiana Housing Finance Act contained in Chapter 3-A of Title 40 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, as amended. The enacting legislation grants LHC the authority to undertake and administer various state and federal programs to assist in the financing of housing needs in the state of Louisiana, including low-rate mortgage, down payment and/or closing cost assistance programs for low to moderate income homebuyers; energy cost assistance and home weatherization programs; distribution of HOME formula grants from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); and allocation of federally allotted tax credits to incentivize the development of low-income rental housing. LHC also awards and monitors grants from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development to fight localized blight and neglect affecting Louisiana communities.

LHC specializes in forming partnerships with federal, state and local governmental units, banks, lending institutions and non-profit and for-profit developers to make housing affordable for Louisiana’s families. These partners utilize LHC’s financial and technical assistance programs to reach out to the individual homeowner or renter.

Economic Development

- **Louisiana Economic Development (LED)**

The state agency responsible for strengthening business environment and economy in Louisiana, LED offers a variety of programs, incentives and tools that complement LEDA's local efforts, including the Competitive Projects Payroll Incentive program, R&D tax credits, "angel investor" tax credits, and others. LED also fulfills its mission working through a variety of boards and councils:

—*Louisiana Board of Commerce and Industry (LBCI)*: advises on applications for tax incentive programs, including Enterprise Zone, Industrial Tax Exemption, Quality Jobs and Restoration Tax Abatement.

—*Louisiana Board of International Commerce (LBIC)*: serves as the authority to advance the state's international commerce initiatives and competitive position in the global marketplace by attracting foreign and domestic investment and by enhancing the state's trade-based economy.

—*Louisiana Economic Development Corporation (LEDC)*: reviews and administers financial assistance programs designed to help small businesses gain access to capital, loan guarantees and loan participations.

—*Louisiana Innovation Council (LIC)*: with representation from major economic groups and educational institutions, seeks to establish a comprehensive economic strategy and innovation agenda that will grow the state's economy and enhance competitiveness.

—*Louisiana Military Advisory Council (LMAC)*: provides a forum for issues concerning the installations and units of the Armed Forces located in Louisiana and the military and retired military personnel and their families who reside in the state.

- **Acadiana Economic Development Council (AEDC, Inc.)**

AEDC is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization founded by local economic developers and incorporated in 2004. AEDC supports and supplements the missions of the primary economic development organizations in the Acadiana parishes of Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, and Vermilion. LEDA's President and CEO represents Lafayette Parish on the Board of AEDC.

- **Acadiana Regional Development District (ARDD)**

Established by Legislative Act in 1967, ARDD is one of eight regional planning districts throughout the state of Louisiana focused on business retention and creation. ARDD assists municipal and parish governments within the parishes of Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, and Vermilion.

ARDD is a quasi-governmental agency whose main source of funding comes from local membership dues and grants. These funds are utilized to promote economic development projects in the region through assistance with grants and other programs offered by LED.

- **Lafayette Workforce Commission (LWC)**

LWC is the state agency charged with overseeing and providing workforce development services to employers and job seekers in Louisiana. By focusing on the needs of employers, LWC helps Louisiana maintain the competitive edge necessary to draw business.

LWC's functions include developing the workforce, providing support services, and administering the unemployment benefits and tax programs. LWC also provides information and analysis on shifts in occupations and industries within the state. Workforce development includes apprenticeships, incumbent worker training, customized training and incentives. For employers, LWC offers recruiting, training and retraining, outplacement services, and valuable information on employment law and labor market trends and statistics.

- **Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation & Tourism (DCRT)**

A state department under the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, DCRT serves as an umbrella for the coordination of a variety of functions, including the Office of Cultural Development which includes the Division of Archaeology, Division of the Arts, Division of Historic Preservation, Division of Cultural Districts, and the Council for the Development of French in Louisiana (CODOFIL). These divisions, in turn, offer several types of technical assistance, incentives and funding for regional and local programs. For instance, the Division of the Arts funds grants for Artist Career Advancement, Decentralized Arts Funding, Regional Development Agency Performance Plan, Special Initiatives, and Stabilization.

The Division of Cultural Districts manages the Cultural Districts Program, designed to spark community revitalization based on cultural activity through tax incentives. Lafayette has one certified cultural district: Downtown Lafayette.

Environment

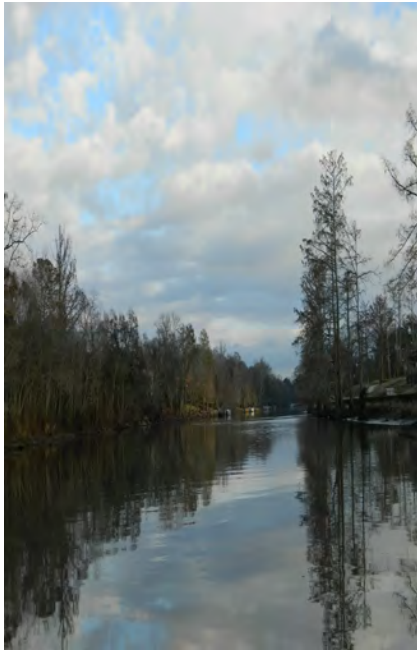
- **U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)**

Louisiana is part of EPA's Region 6, which also encompasses Arkansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. The mission of EPA is to protect human health and the environment. To do this, the agency:

- Develops and enforces regulations that implement federal environmental laws;
- Studies environmental problems ranging from toxic substances, greenhouse emissions and air pollution, to urban heat island, to water security issues;



Louisiana DCRT, Division of the Arts



Teche-Vermilion basin

- Fosters partnerships and collaborative work with businesses, non-profit organizations, state and local governments and individuals;
- Sets up grant programs to benefit state environmental programs and educational institutions (e.g., air and water grants, brownfields, environmental justice, pollution prevention, small business innovation research grants, etc.); and
- Promotes environmental education through sharing of information.

- **Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR)**

DNR is a state agency that provides technical assistance for and access to a variety of federal grants and incentive programs related to topics such as energy conservation and transportation efficiency. DNR is responsible for administering all activities involving the conservation and development of all natural and mineral resources of the state, including the conservation and regulation of geological oil, gas, and lignite resources, management of all of the state's mineral assets, management and conservation of ground water resources program, and implementation of the Louisiana Coastal Resources program (LCRP)

- **Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**

Formerly the Soil Conservation Service (SCS), NRCS is a permanent agency within the U.S. Department of Agriculture. NRCS's mission is to help conserve the nation's soil, water, air and other natural resources through technical assistance, conservation planning, conservation easement incentives, and broad landscape conservation initiatives. The agency name was changed in 1994 to better reflect the broadened scope of the agency's concerns.

- **National Recreation Trails (NRT)**

The National Trail System Act of 1968 authorized creation of a national trail system comprised of designated NRT, National Scenic Trails and National Historic Trails. The NRT Program supports designated NRTs with an array of benefits, including promotion, technical assistance, networking and access to funding. NRT have been designated in a variety of urban, rural, and remote areas. New designations are announced each year.

- **Teche-Vermilion Freshwater District**

The Teche-Vermilion Freshwater District Board of Commissioners was created as a unique joint cooperative agreement of the federal, state, and local governments. It is a political subdivision of the state. Almost all of its funding comes from property taxes from the owner parishes, including Lafayette, Vermilion, Iberia, and St. Martin. Through an intergovernmental agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the District Board of Commissions is responsible for the maintenance and operation of the Teche-Vermilion Basins Project. The purpose of the project is to restore the flow of water to the Teche-Vermilion basin, improve water quality, and prevent salt water from entering the lower parts of the basin.

Recommendations to Increase Coordination

There are many ways in which LCG can encourage increased coordination and support planning with regional, state, and federal agencies. Coordination may include any or all of the following: verbal or written communications; scheduled or unscheduled meetings; requests for information or comments about plans, reports, etc. of other entities; special purpose groups organized to plan for or implement a specific task; standing committees, organizations, or groups; and interlocal agreements, resolutions, contracts, ordinances, grants, etc.

The following are examples of specific potential coordination mechanisms and strategies. The ultimate goal is to increase the effectiveness, efficiency, and responsiveness of LCG and to improve consistency in decisions and actions between LCG and various agencies.

- Encourage the creation of a regional committee to review and coordinate the joint pursuit of grant funding opportunities.
- Encourage the creation of an Intergovernmental Forum and convene regular work sessions of regional stakeholders (parishes, municipalities, MPO, etc.) to share information about current plans, projections, issues and potential solutions.
- Seek to maintain equal representation on regional agency and other organizations' boards.
- Seek opportunities to work with neighboring municipalities, parishes and the MPO on multi- and cross-jurisdictional planning efforts, particularly those related to land use and development impact review; transportation management; public facilities; public safety; potable water; drainage; solid waste; conservation; emergency management and evacuation.
- Coordinate efforts with neighboring municipalities, parishes, and regional and state housing agencies to foster regional housing goals.
- Actively participate and cooperate in regional/statewide transportation planning efforts to promote regional public transit systems and improve access to alternative travel modes.
- Promote policy coordination regarding open space, greenways and trail systems to reflect regional goals and complement other jurisdictional efforts.
- Establish and maintain a complete, updated database of existing and planned intergovernmental and interagency agreements and memoranda of understanding.

How PlanLafayette Coordinates Supplemental Plans and Regulations

PlanLafayette, neighborhood plans, the Downtown Action Plan, small area plans, and the UDC are all guides for future decisions from spending to regulations. These plans work together by providing decision makers with coordinated but different perspectives.

Lafayette Neighborhood Plans address neighborhood issues and improvements. They should be consistent with PlanLafayette.

Small Area and Nodal Plans (started during the PlanLafayette process) provide urban design, transportation, and open space recommendations based on community input.

PlanLafayette provides the long-range vision, policies, and actions for Lafayette and provides a guide for other smaller-scale plans.

The Downtown Action Plan is part of PlanLafayette (Appendix B) and provides detailed action steps for downtown over the next 10 year period.



HOW ARE THE PLANS CONNECTED?

1 PlanLafayette *comprehensive plan*

PlanLafayette provides guidance on the future of the parish from a broad perspective. It cuts across city services and departments to achieve Lafayette's vision for the future. The plan illustrates the preferred growth pattern for the future, and describes policies and actions that address housing, transportation, utilities, the environment, and community services.

2 Neighborhood Plans

Neighborhood Plans provide more detailed plans for how neighborhoods within the parish will accommodate growth and change. PlanLafayette helps clarify how different aspects of the built environment, city systems, and government work together and determines the future growth pattern for the city.

2 Downtown Action Plan

The Downtown Plan, working within this framework, provides a detailed view of development within Downtown Lafayette in the coming decades. PlanLafayette illustrates how emerging growth patterns influence development throughout the parish.

2 Small Area & Nodal Plans

Small area plans and nodal plans, at varying densities, provide a set of localized best practice recommendations for development. This includes a series of design guidelines and site plans that conform to the vision and priorities set in the comprehensive plan. PlanLafayette articulates guidelines that influence the parish on a broad scale.

3 UDC *Unified Development Code*

The UDC will consolidate land development regulations, integrate standards and procedures, and streamline the review process needed for new development. PlanLafayette serves as a guideline for creating regulations and making decisions for the city and parish. To provide a seamless transition the UDC is being prepared immediately following PlanLafayette.

FISCAL AND FUNDING STRATEGIES

Capital Improvements Planning

PlanLafayette includes policies and action to coordinate annual budgeting, the CIP, and new applications for funding sources to ensure funding is appropriated in accordance with the comprehensive plan.

A successful capital improvements program provides a number of benefits including:

- Facilitating coordination between community-wide needs and the city's operating budgets
- Increasing opportunities for obtaining federal and state aid for capital projects
- Linking public facilities to other planning efforts and private development
- Encouraging careful project planning that meets the vision and goals of the comprehensive plan
- Gaining public support and buy-in for projects described through PlanLafayette

The plan recommends applying the following guidelines for review of proposed capital improvements:

1. The proposed capital improvement is located within a growth center or corridor as designated on the FLUM.
2. The proposed capital improvement will improve efficiency in the infrastructure network.
3. Lafayette's Home Rule Charter calls for the Planning Commission to review the CIP for conformity to the comprehensive plan.

To build transparency into the CIP process, the CIP Division of Public Works should prepare a proposed report to the community providing background on the process, guiding principles, and a summary of CIP funding and major projects during the last five years.

Other Funding Strategies

- **Property Taxes**

Property tax provides funds to local government to provide essential services such as public education, public safety, transportation and roads, water, wastewater, and trash collection, parks and recreation, libraries, and environmental protection. Property tax is assessed at least every four years as mandated by state law. However, individual properties may be adjusted yearly in light of a

Best Practice: Richmond, Virginia Capital Improvement Reporting

The City of Richmond uses its CIP to strategically invest in and develop capital projects. The City, in line with the practices of a well-managed government and city charter requirements, uses a long range planning process to develop a five-year CIP. Each capital project included in the five-year program has been recommended (and approved upon adoption) for additional or new funding in the first fiscal year of the plan and/or included as a planned project in the subsequent four fiscal year.

To be included in the CIP, the project should cost more than \$25,000 and must have an expected useful life greater than the life-span of any debt used to fund the project. Projects include construction and major renovations of buildings; economic development activities; acquisition of property; improvements to roadways, bikeways, and sidewalks; and the efficient operation of the water, sewage and gas systems.

A key component of the CIP is the availability of debt capacity to finance CIP projects.

http://www.richmondgov.com/Budget/documents/CapitalImprovementPlans/2013-2017_ProposedCapitalImprovementPlan.pdf

property sale or other factors affecting real estate value. In the state of Louisiana there is a \$75,000 homestead exemption, meaning that, for the purposes of parish taxes, a property with a homestead exemption is only taxed the value of the property exceeding \$75,000.

A study of three residential home values revealed that a home valued at \$70,000 pays annual taxes of \$125 and a home valued at \$151,000 pays annual taxes of \$917 for all city, school, police and other taxing districts. The average Lafayette Parish millage is lower than Rapides, Ouachita, St. Tammany, East Baton Rouge, and Caddo Parishes. A LPSS study found that Lafayette Parish was 49th out of 69 in average millage rate in the state. An increase in property tax millage could be fairly insignificant to property owners, while helping to fund needed services and projects.

- **Sales Taxes**

City sales tax provides a portion of the city of Lafayette revenue, or 43% of total LCG revenues. The current sales tax varies by district in the parish ranging from 8% and 10%, with 4% of the total dedicated to the state. The rate in the city of Lafayette and the unincorporated parish is currently at 8%. An increase in local sales tax would require council ordinance and vote followed by voter approval.

- **New Markets Tax Credits**

Established in 2000, the New Markets Tax Credits (NMTC) program attracts investment capital to low-income communities and by permitting individual and corporate investors to receive a tax credit against their Federal income tax return in exchange for making equity investments in specialized financial institutions called Community Development Entities (CDEs). There are qualifying census tracts located throughout the state of Louisiana including: Lafayette, Baton Rouge, Lake Charles, Shreveport-Bossier City, New Orleans, Houma, Monroe and Alexandria.

- **SBA Loans**

SBA offers a variety of loan programs including general small business loans, microloans, real estate and equipment loans, and disaster loans. The General Small Business Loan Program 7(a) is the most common of the SBA loans and includes low-interest loans for qualifying small businesses.



NMTCs

- **Community Development District (CDD)**

Common in downtowns and cities around the county, CDDs (as they are called in Louisiana) or Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) in other states are defined areas within which businesses pay an additional tax or membership fee in order to fund projects or services such as cleaning streets, providing security, and/or marketing.

- **Grants, Partnerships, Crowdfunding, Fundraising , Foundations**

The plan recommends expanding the role of grant writers to include research and writing of grants, partnerships with foundations and other organizations that generally support the comprehensive plan across departments. In addition to the traditional process of applying for grants, many cities are turning to crowdfunding to help support capital projects, special events, and services. Advantages to crowdfunding websites include: central location for anyone to view information about the project, the day to day progress toward the goal, and the ability to use social media. There are several examples of successful crowdfunding sites focused on community and public projects including citizinvestor.com and neighbor.ly. Lafayette is planning to launch a crowdfunding site to help support public projects in the near future.

- **Capital and Operational Cost Savings**

LCG can be a model for best practices in energy efficiency by examining current energy use patterns and equipment through a comprehensive energy audit. Benchmarking current performance will help to identify low-cost building and infrastructure improvements that, over time, can substantially reduce building operational costs.

Incentives

Our current policies often subsidize, incentivize, and encourage certain types of development that are not cost effective for taxpayers. The comprehensive plan presents an opportunity to incentivize those types of development that provide taxpayers a better return on investment. The plan includes many policies and actions that direct growth to centers and corridors, encourage reinvestment in existing infrastructure, and increase efficiencies in the provision of services such as parks, water, sewer, fiber, transportation, and schools. To accelerate the implementation of these policies and actions, incentives (both monetary or non-monetary) may be used.

Monetary incentives may include tax expenditures, grants, vouchers and rebates. Non-monetary incentives include technical assistance, business planning assistance, marketing assistance, expedited permitting, regulatory relief, preferred loans, guarantee programs, and dedicated management teams in PZD and other departments. Potential incentive types to consider in encouraging the private sector and property owners to embrace the plan's policies and actions include:

Incentives to direct development to growth areas designated on the FLUM

- Tax abatements
- Reduced review and permit fees
- Streamlined development review

Incentives to encourage renovation and maintenance of buildings

- Low-cost loans
- Tax credits

Incentives to attract multi-family or attached housing units to centers and corridors

- Public infrastructure improvements – water, sewer, roads and streetscape improvements in designated areas

Incentives to encourage sustainable design through regulatory incentives

- Density bonus for sustainable site design features (e.g., point system)

Incentives to encourage energy efficiency through low-cost services

- Free or low-cost energy audits
- Incentives for low-income households to make energy efficiency improvements

MONITORING AND UPDATING THE PLAN ACTIONS

PlanLafayette provides the policy basis for future plans at different scales – e.g., neighborhood plans, small area plans, the Downtown Action Plan and other specific area plans. These plans will help to implement PlanLafayette and the overall vision for Lafayette in 2035.

Decision-Making Principles

- 1. The UDC must be consistent with the PlanLafayette vision, policies, and actions.** LCG is in the process of updated its zoning and subdivision ordinances to create the UDC. Existing inconsistencies should be identified and addressed through the UDC process. New standards should be created where any gaps exist.
- 2. Rezoning requests and proposed development plans must be consistent with PlanLafayette, and the FLUM.** Applicants for zoning changes should demonstrate that the proposed use is consistent with the intent of the FLUM. The FLUM is broader and more conceptual in nature than specific zoning districts. In the case where proposed development clearly conflicts with the comprehensive plan, an approval should not be granted unless the plan is amended.
- 3. PlanLafayette is a guide to direct how LCG invests money and does its Capital Improvements Planning (CIP) and annual operating budgets.** In addition to considering PlanLafayette actions in the crafting of other plans, policies, and projects, the annual capital improvements planning and budget must be consistent with the comprehensive plan. The effectiveness of PlanLafayette relies in part upon the extent to which the departments regularly consider the plan in decision making affecting the parish's future.

Annual Report and 5-Year Updates

In order for the comprehensive plan to remain useful over time, it is essential to develop protocols to monitor progress on the many initiatives called for in PlanLafayette, evaluate implementation effectiveness, and to keep it current as new information becomes available and as circumstances change.

An ongoing process, the comprehensive plan should not be a one-time event and a static document and map. The plan will guide ongoing, more detailed planning and will need to respond to changing needs and conditions. To ensure the plan is current and useful, the Planning Commission and the Planning, Zoning, and Development Department, on behalf of City-Parish Council will monitor plan

implementation progress annually, and will conduct a thorough review, revision, and update of the Comprehensive Plan at least every five years.

The following checklist will guide the plan monitoring and updating process, to be established within six months of comprehensive plan adoption. At the anniversary of plan adoption, staff shall submit a report indicating actions taken, progress made toward plan implementation during the previous year, and work planned for the upcoming year.

Every five years, staff will submit a Five-Year Evaluation Report to the Planning Commission that summarizes the major accomplishments of the five-year period, results of performance metrics, and recommendations for amendments to the plan. Once a specific action has been implemented as documented in the Annual Report, the performance monitoring will help to assess whether the action is having positive results.

ANNUAL REPORT	5-YEAR UPDATE	Annual Report & 5-Year Update Checklist
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Update the Action Matrix indicating the status of each action.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Highlight the successes of the past year / 5 years.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Note any necessary changes to the actions within the plan.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Summarize the next year's priorities and work program and assign responsibilities.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Define the ongoing role for the Comprehensive Plan Citizens Advisory Committee or other vehicle for continuous citizen participation and dialogue.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Summarize the ongoing process for coordination (e.g., LCG departments, institutions, adjacent municipalities, LPSS, development interests, etc).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Update performance metrics with data from the last 5-year period or as data becomes available.




A sample report is illustrated below. The Annual Report may be a summarized version of the report card. The detailed status of each action should be tracked internally on a regular basis using the Action Matrix or other tools.

SAMPLE REPORT CARD

How will we measure success & track progress?

What has been done in the last year, is the action in progress, in planning, or complete?

What were the challenges/ lessons learned during implementation?

ACTION	STATUS	BASELINE INDICATOR	PROGRESS	COMMENTS	WORK PLAN
6.2.3 Develop detailed corridor plans for specific/ identified roadways in targeted areas.	In progress	Number of corridors without detailed corridor plans		Challenges to implementation include coordination between agencies and funding	Work with agencies to identify funding for corridor plans
5.6.6 Expand ecotourism through national exposure to events and competitions (e.g., fishing tournaments, triathlon events, etc.).	In planning	Number of ecotourism events & visitor/ attendee count		Look into coordinating with non-profit / charity organizations	A number of events are in the planning stage (working with local businesses to establish new events to draw visitors from all over the country)
10.5.2 Focus on improving health of wetlands plant and animal communities to improve filtering of water and drainage.	Complete	Number of wetlands with improved filtration systems or green infrastructure elements (swale, planters, etc)		Challenges include finding funding sources to maintain the wetlands in the long-term	Identify additional funding sources (state, local universities, grants) to ensure long-term health of wetlands and animal habitats

The baseline number/statistic (taken before implementation) used to measure success.

Did the steps taken to implement the action exceed, meet, or not meet goals set?

What follow-up steps need to be taken to implement the action?

