

CITY OF

CENTRAL

2010



MOORE PLANNING GROUP, LLC

LAND USE PLAN

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LETTER FROM THE MAYOR

DEAR CITIZENS OF CENTRAL

March 17, 2010

The purpose of the Master Plan is to provide us, your elected leaders, with a tool that will help us to guide the continuing growth and development of our City so that Central maintains and improves its high quality of life.

The vision that dictates the final form of the Master Plan comes from you - the many Central citizens who attended well publicized and open planning meetings and workshops over the past three years and provided us with your thoughts, ideas and aspirations for your City - translated into four goals which are the guiding principles for decisions in the planning.

The first goal is "To Retain the Sanctuary Feeling" by ensuring that when we grow, we grow in ways that don't destroy the things we love about Central but make them better.

The second and third goals, "To make our schools even better" and "To improve our transportation and drainage" are both things that we must continue to work on and make smart decisions about, and that are very costly.

Which leads to the fourth goal, "To increase business and shopping opportunities" which as you all know provide jobs and generate the revenue that we need to provide our residents with the high level of services you deserve – including great schools, good roads, water and sewer service, and police and fire protection.

Nobody, including me, likes paying high taxes. To avoid that, we must create the conditions that stimulate business growth. We are going to have to grow as a City. The secret is in growing in a way that satisfies all of the above goals - not just some of them, but ALL of them.

The Master Plan uses sophisticated technology, experience and commitment to translate your goals into something we can use to attract the kinds of quality growth that will enhance our lives and the lives of our children.

Can we do it? Can we continue to work together like we did when we decided to become a city - to work together, support each other, and enjoy together the fruits of this vision?

With your support, help, and prayers I think we can.

Sincerely,

Shelton "Wac" Watts, Mayor



Honorable Shelton "Mac" Watts - Mayor

CITY COUNCIL



Ralph Washington,
Mayor Pro-Tem



Louis Dejohn



Joan Lansing



Aaron Moak



Lucky Ross

INTRODUCTION



IN THE SPRING OF 2005 the residents of the community of Central made a bold move. After several years of grass roots meetings, coordination, and due diligence the community went to the polls and voted to incorporate, becoming the newest municipality in the State of Louisiana. Once this was accomplished, they pushed forward, establishing the Central Community School System as an independent school district.

Many things contributed to their success. Among the most important were:

- A determined, skilled, and forward thinking leadership group;
- A strong community participation ethic;
- A strong sense of ownership and commitment to the excellence of their community schools;
- A determination to have control over the growth and development of their community.

Having completed these ambitious tasks they settled into the equally arduous task of managing the myriad of responsibilities now placed squarely upon their shoulders. Among the most important of these new tasks were to initiate planning the form of their future city - a city that will be an expression of the character and quality of the people who call it home.

THIS MASTER PLAN is the result of that planning process - a process initiated in the fall of 2006. This report is a summary documentation of four years of meetings, mapping, site visits, and research. It represents the hard work of hundreds of dedicated citizens, elected leaders and professionals who contributed their diligent efforts and wisdom to its contents.

The plan should not, however, be understood as a final statement of purpose and intent. In reality, the work of implementation and adaptation is ongoing and perpetual. It should be understood as a tool upon which the foundations for the City of Central have been established and from which it will grow and flourish. It should be used as a guide for making future decisions because it is a translation of the community's vision for the future. Holding true to the principles and goals set forth in this Master Plan, present and future leaders and decision makers have a valuable resource not only for regulating growth, but for attracting the kind of quality growth that will elevate Central City as a shining example of Smart Growth and sustainability that others will want to emulate.

The following page documents the planning process.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN



THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE of this Master Plan is to provide community leaders, residents and property owners with guidance and relevant information for consideration and assistance in making informed decisions about the future growth and development of the community.

On a more urgent level, citizens saw the need for a plan that responded more definitively to their vision.

Before the City's incorporation, Central's growth and development was regulated by the Horizon Plan as one of the rural outskirts of East Baton Rouge Parish. Although large in area, the Central community represented a small fraction of the metro Baton Rouge area, and residents did not feel that their priorities received adequate attention. Four months after taking over the reigns, the community was inundated by development interests. Several factors were responsible for the heated interest in building residential development in Central:

- Large areas of reasonably priced, undeveloped land;
- A school system with strong appeal to young families;
- Very favorable financing for housing development; and
- A super-heated real estate market due to the influx of people from south Louisiana post Katrina/Rita.

The new community saw challenge and opportunity in the interest by developers. They wanted growth and economic

development in their community but they realized that they needed a new plan that could help them guide the growth in ways that would allow the community to protect the things they had worked so hard to assume control over.

Therefore, this plan has played a variety of roles during its development. Its first purpose was to help the community develop a deeper understanding of the combination of natural, human and economic resources that has shaped it up to this time. Next it served as a reason to come together to express their thoughts and dreams about the future and establish priorities and goals. The suitability Plan of 2007 allowed the City to fend off unwanted residential development which would have seriously stressed their ability to manage. Its first manifestation - the Interim Land Use Plan of early 2009 - allowed them to focus on economic development -attracting revenue and job producing investment. This installment of the Master Plan adds yet another layer - the justification for and mapping of future land uses in the City. This establishes the basis for adoption of a revised Zoning Ordinance and Development Code which will help to shape the City's physical, economic, and to some extent, social and spiritual form.

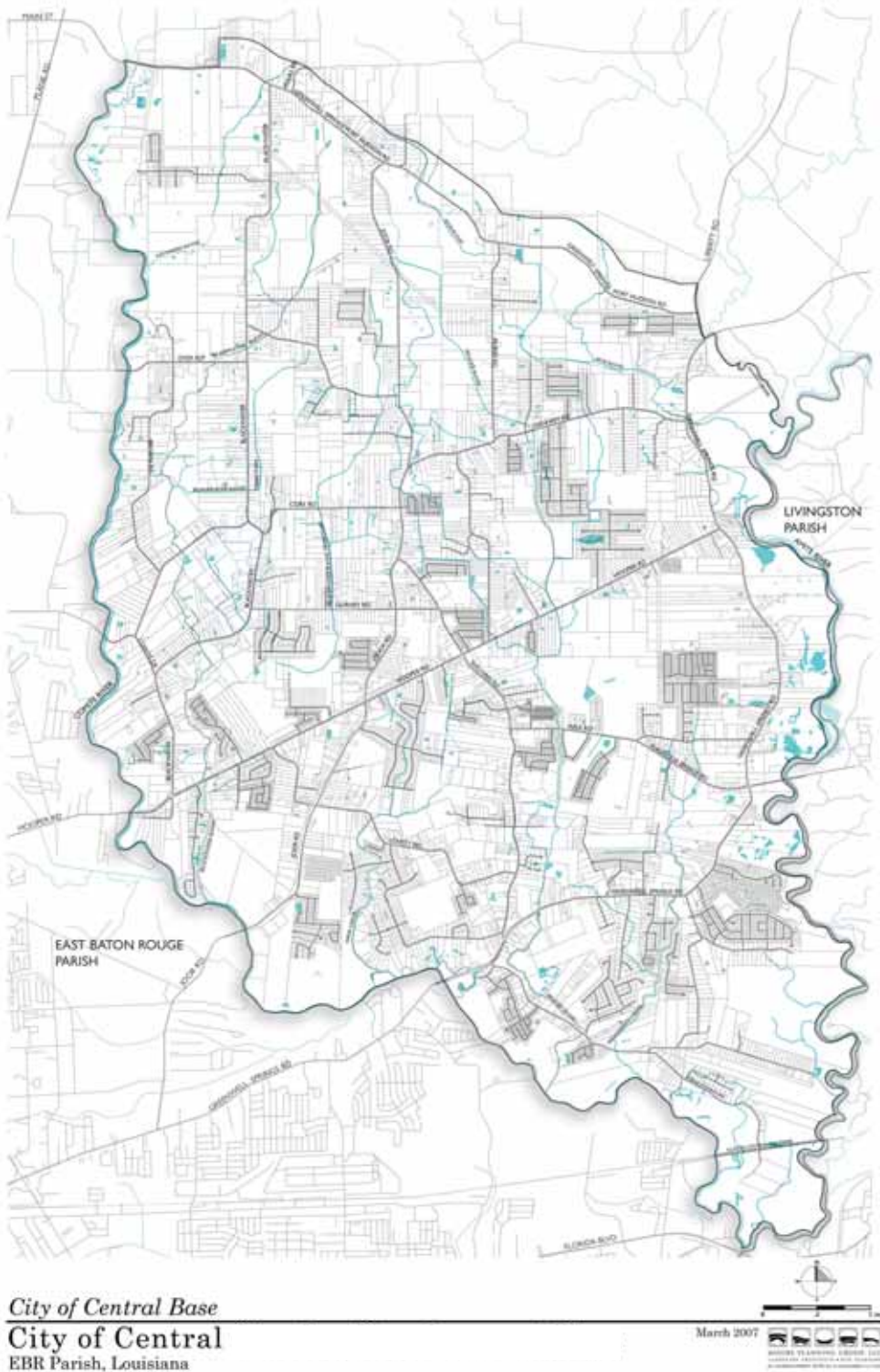
Its role is to continue serving as resource for all the above needs while adding a visionary element. After all, Central did not become a city in order to become like every other city.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

- The main objectives of this Master Plan are:
- To develop and document the planning process in an accessible document for use by City leaders and citizens.
 - To develop a land use plan that responds to both the land and the community's vision and goals, and from which a revised zoning ordinance and development code can be developed.
 - To set forth guidelines that promote orderly and sustainable development patterns and provision of efficient infrastructure.
 - To provide the City with a tool with which it can pro-actively seek positive investment in the City.

In order to achieve the listed objectives, the planning process that was developed and executed is as follows:

- **Existing Conditions Inventory** - Collection and mapping of local and regional Natural, Human and Economic resources
 - a. Coordination of planning activities for the City with other public and/or private regulatory or funding agencies/entities with concurrent planning efforts.
 - b. Initiation and completion of Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping of existing land and community characteristics and features.
 - c. Interpretation of a Market Feasibility Analysis, including a demographic and economic profile, housing assessment, and commercial feasibility study.
- **Community Visioning and Goals** - Established by means of meetings with the City leadership, the Planning Committee, and the community at large in participative workshops and town hall meetings in order to capture and document the primary concerns and priorities of the community.
- **Guiding Principles** - Utilize Smart Growth Principles and Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan to test community vision and goals against established planning principles.
- **Existing Conditions Analysis** - Combining the inventory resource mapping and with community vision and goals utilizing GIS mapping of suitability criteria.
 - a. Evaluate the land for development suitability, incorporating GIS data and using a process to evaluate and weigh critical development criteria in terms of desirability or benefit based upon community goals and needs.
 - b. Study transportation and infrastructure needs and opportunities as they relate to existing developed areas and those identified as suitable for growth
 - c. Apply Smart Growth principles to suitability maps, to formulate models identifying growth sectors for goal driven development.
 - d. Gather information from the market feasibility research, along with identified growth sector models, to create land suitability maps.
- **Synthesis and Land Use** - Developing a Proposed Land Use Plan that provides for orderly and fiscally responsible growth that is both realistic and implementable, to determine best uses for the land and/or control the direction of development to suit the needs of the citizens.
- **Implementation Strategy** - Employing the Elements of Community Sustainability to establish a sustainable balance between Infrastructure, Economic Development, Education and Livability through schematic development of selected Focus Areas.





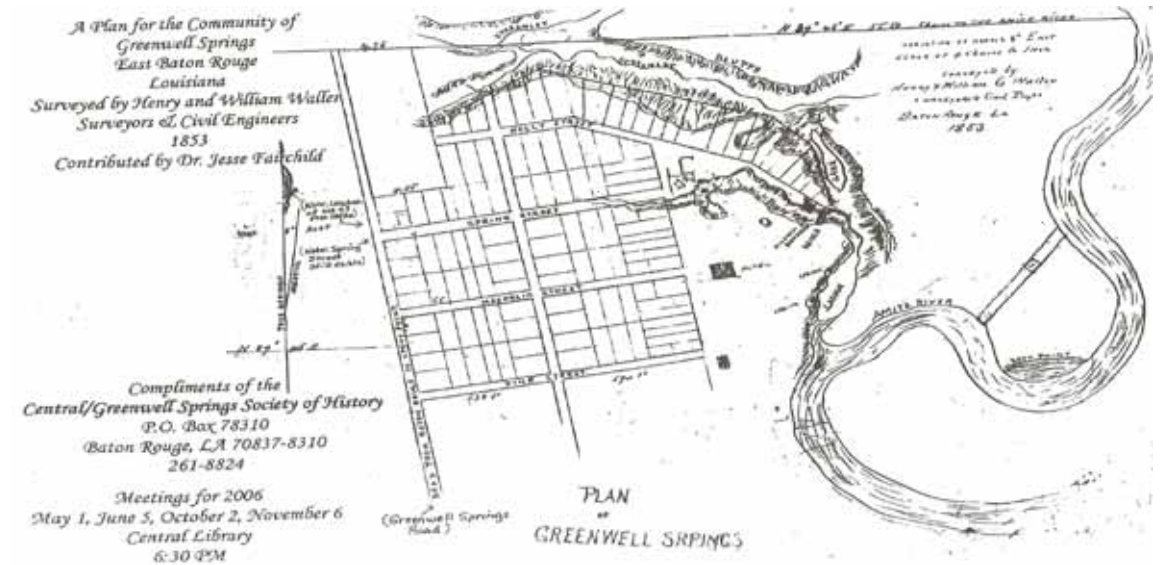
HISTORY OF CENTRAL

THE AREA IN AND AROUND CENTRAL has a rich history beginning with European settlers moving in and homesteading public lands dating as far back as the late 1700's and early 1800's. As with most early European settlements throughout the United States, Native Americans already had roots in the region. Amite and Choctaw Indians made their dwellings along the sandy banks of the Amite River that today makes up the eastern boundary of the City and Parish. The area's farmland is strewn with Indian arrowheads that were made from rocks found along the river's banks, together with Indian mounds that are still in existence today. This heritage should be acknowledged as an important part of the community's cultural asset base.

Historical roads of commerce traveled along two routes. One along winding trails that slashed through thick woods of pines, oaks, magnolias and holly, speckled with flowering dogwoods and redbuds. The other route required flatboats and barges along the meandering Amite River when the stream was swollen by rains. In time, these muddy trails gave way to roads that crisscrossed the area. Today, evidence of these routes can still be seen in the form of Greenwell Springs Road and Denham Road. Around 1810, near the current intersection of Hooper and Greenwell Springs Roads, sprang the earliest recorded community in the area - a small town called Burlington. The community was primarily known for the ferry crossing the Amite

River, but had become established enough to contain a post office, grist and saw mill, a brickyard and blacksmith. Ferry crossing such as the one functioning during the existence of Burlington, have played a major role in the history of Central. These crossings were an economically valuable resource that encouraged people to move through the area. Today, this same tradition is continued with the Magnolia Bridge crossing.

In 1853, a plan was in the works for the resort community of Greenwell Springs, a name originated from Robert W. Greenwell who was the previous owner of a 250 acre tract of land containing several springs. The development of a 125 lot subdivision and seven streets was soon created near the site of the springs. A large hotel with accompanying buildings was constructed to house visitors fleeing yellow fever epidemics



and heat in the cities of New Orleans and Baton Rouge. Those that came to the area looked for work, entertainment, and to partake in the therapeutic qualities of the 10 springs that were said to cure almost any ailment. At the outbreak of the Civil War more residents from Baton Rouge came to the Greenwell Springs area, taking refuge from Union forces. During this time southern troops commandeered the hotel and used it as their headquarters. After the Battle of Baton Rouge in 1862, victorious northern troops took over the hotel and at the war's end, the site was dismantled. During the Reconstruction period many people sold their land and new settlers moved into the area.

In 1910 a bottling company and new hotel were erected on the existing Greenwell Spring's site. The venture was not successful and the company went out of business. Not long after, the hotel was converted into the Greenwell Springs Tuberculosis Hospital. It burned down in 1922 and a new facility was rebuilt. The hospital treated tuberculosis patients until the 1950's. Today Greenwell Springs Hospital is used by the State of Louisiana as a psychiatric facility.

The proximity to the Capital City of Baton Rouge allowed Central to develop into a thriving community in the 1980's with small business growth, high-quality schools, and subdivision development. As the area of Central become more and more of an extension of Baton Rouge's lengthening suburbia, the

citizens of Central decided to band together and vote to get the City of Central incorporated in 2005.

The incorporation of Central was approved following the vote by Governor Kathleen Blanco. In 2006, another great step forward was made for Central as voters of the city, East Baton Rouge Parish, and the State of Louisiana agreed to allow Central to create the Central Independent School District.

The citizens of Central have had an exciting past and can look forward to a promising future. Today, with good leadership and careful planning future growth will insure an even higher quality of life and continued prosperity.





REGIONAL INFLUENCES

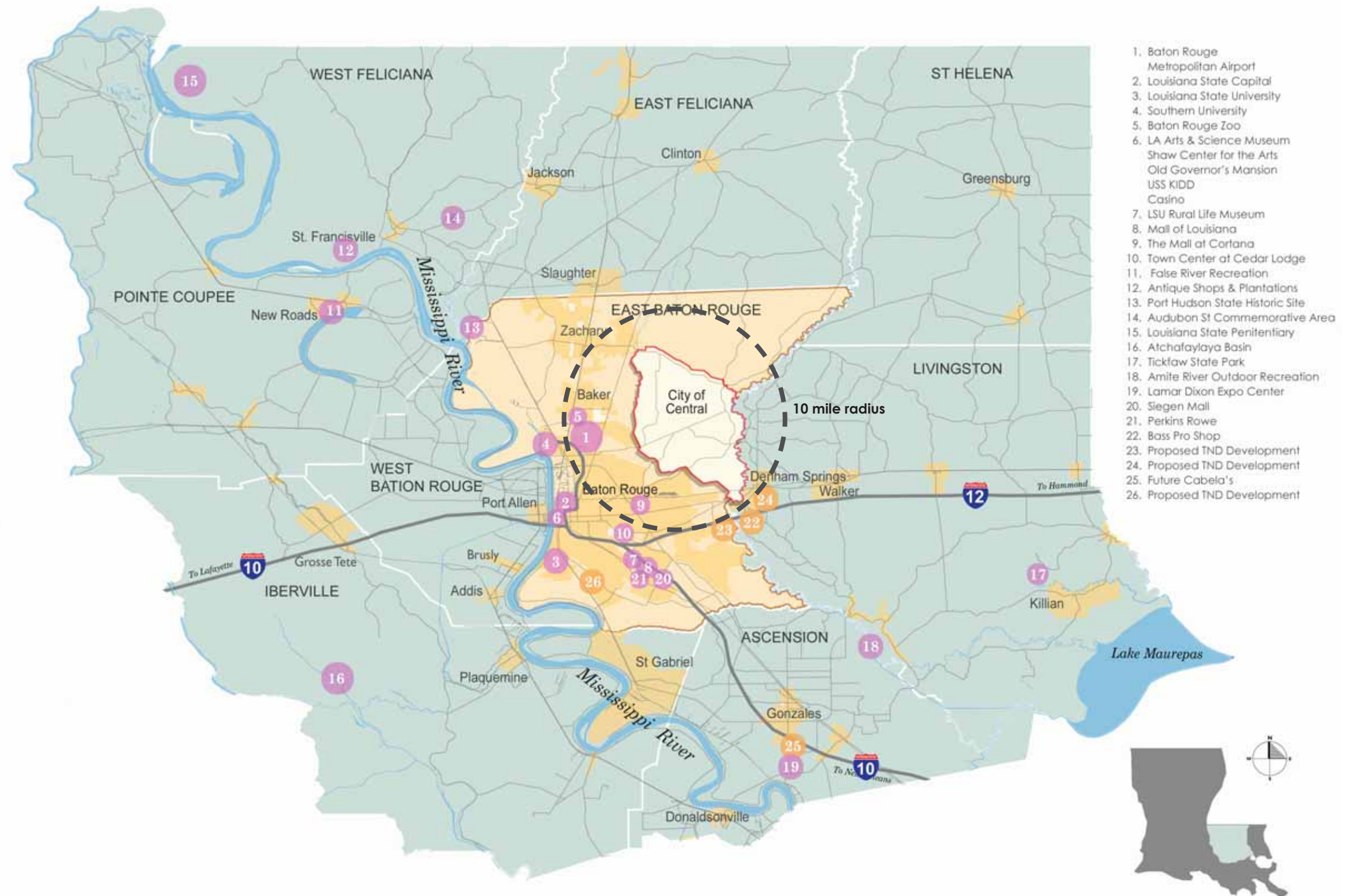


The inventory and analysis mapping represents the majority of the community assessment phase. Community assets and liabilities are grouped into three categories:

- Natural Resources - Includes land, water, and all other natural systems that affect or provide resources for living;
- Human Resources - Includes both the status of existing residents and the facilities, structures and systems that provide support;
- Economic Resources - Includes the facilities, products and services that promote economic activity and the infrastructure required to support commerce.

The assessment begins by looking at the community context at a regional scale. As shown in the map, the City of Central is located very near the center of the Baton Rouge Metro Area. It shares a boundary with Baton Rouge, the Capitol City and the State's most populous city. The surrounding areas, including the City of Zachary and Livingston and Ascension Parishes have seen explosive residential growth in the past five years that has seriously challenged their ability to maintain a high quality of life. Crowded interstate highways take their toll on commuters into Baton Rouge employment centers. Schools are having to expand faster than expected and disrupting community life. While Central has been somewhat insulated from these problems, increased development pressure is being felt.

The map illustrates the wide variety of economic and cultural assets in the region many of which are within a ten mile radius of Central.



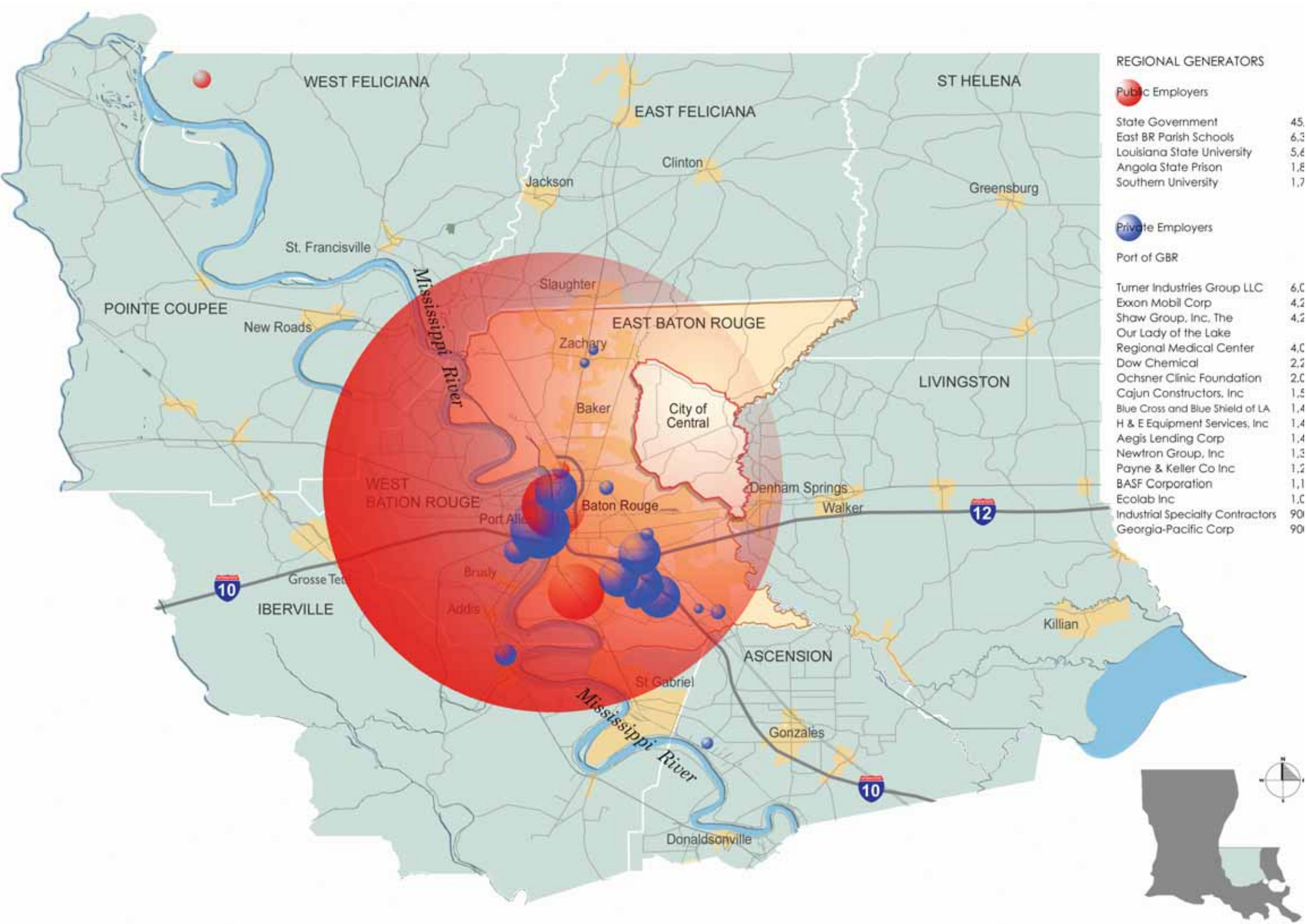
REGIONAL GENERATORS



The Regional Generators map illustrates the relative size and location of the region's principal economic "engines". They are divided into two groups; Public Sector and Private Sector. While none of the major generators are in Central, a majority of the Central workforce takes advantage of the opportunities presented in the Baton Rouge area. As is typical with most Capital cities, State Government is by far the largest public employer in the region providing six times more jobs than the next closest public or private entity. State offices provide well-paying jobs that provide a secure economic base for the community. Other important public generators include major educational institutions and the State Prison in West Feliciana Parish.

The private sector is much more diverse and is represented mainly by the manufacturing, transportation, construction and health care industries. Many of these entities require a highly trained workforce and provide good salaries for successful employees. The presence of this and the public sector generators create the need for a multitude of smaller employers that provide services to the regional population including financial and insurance services, food, transportation, and specialty products.

Along with the good things associated with its proximity to Baton Rouge also come some challenges typical of large cities. Crime rates, snarled traffic, and noise and air pollution among them. Central has fortunately not shared in these negatives but should remain vigilant to the potential as growth continues.

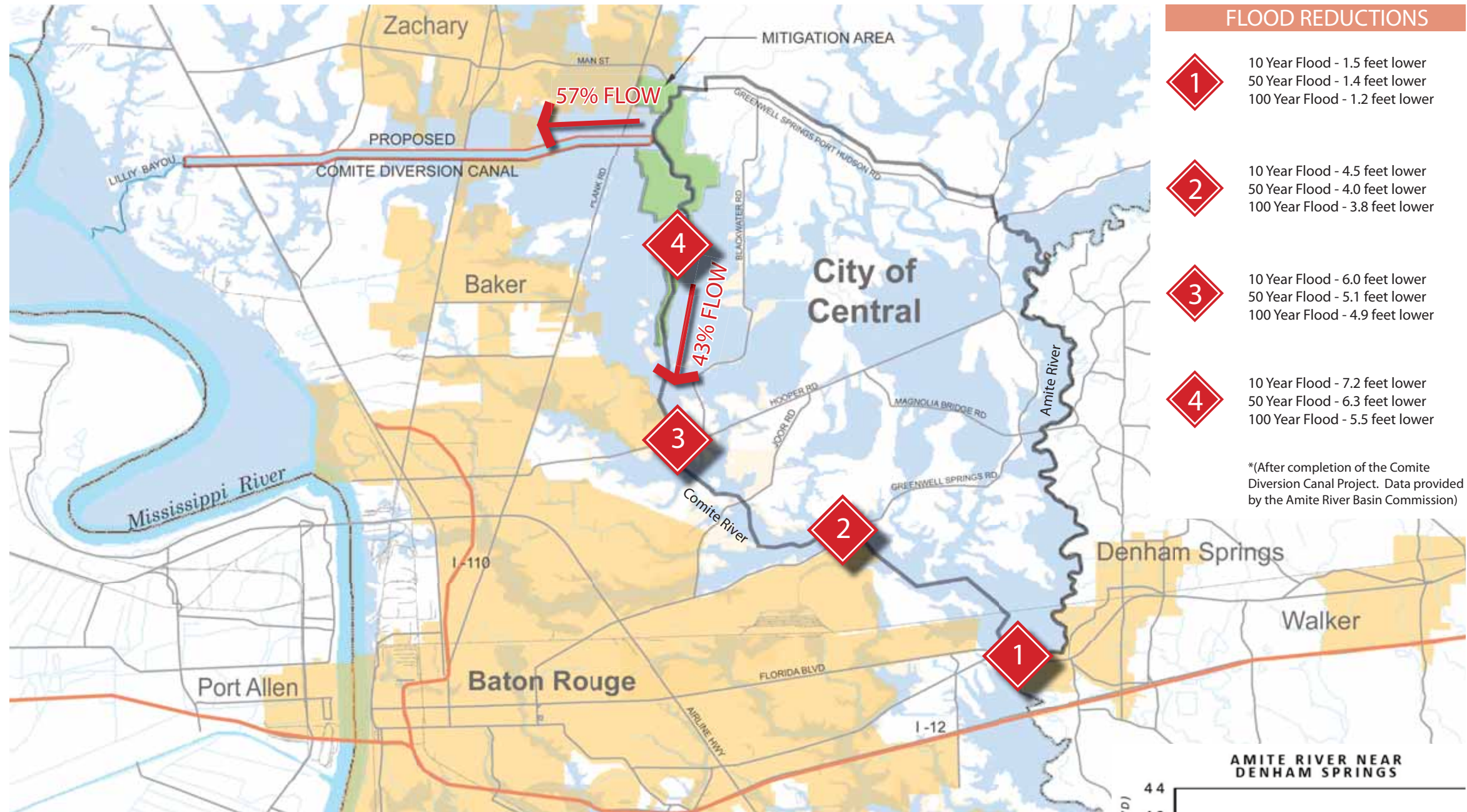


WATERSHEDS - AMITE RIVER BASIN



The City of Central is bound to the east and west by two major rivers: the Amite River and the Comite River. Both waterways are part of the Amite River Watershed that drains parts of two counties in Mississippi and parts of eight parishes in Southeast Louisiana. Due to the volume of water flow at the downstream outlet of the Amite River into Lake Maurepas, backwater flooding often occurs during extended rain events within the lower to middle reaches of the Amite River Basin. The last major flood event occurred in April 1983 which produced the highest water levels along the Amite River and Comite River during the 20th Century. This flooding event had a great impact on the City of Central.

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers - New Orleans District office has defined and proceed with construction of several projects within the Amite River Basin to assist in reducing backwater flooding. One such project is the Comite River Diversion Canal. The scope of this project is the construction of a water diversion canal from the Comite River through East Baton Rouge Parish to the Mississippi River. During long duration rain storm events, the diversion canal will displace approximate 57% of the flow within the Comite River. The hydraulic models studied by the Corps of Engineers indicate that flood levels within the lower to middle section of the Amite River and Comite River will be reduced between 1.2 to 7.2 feet depending for a storm event that ranges from a 10 year storm to a 100 year storm.

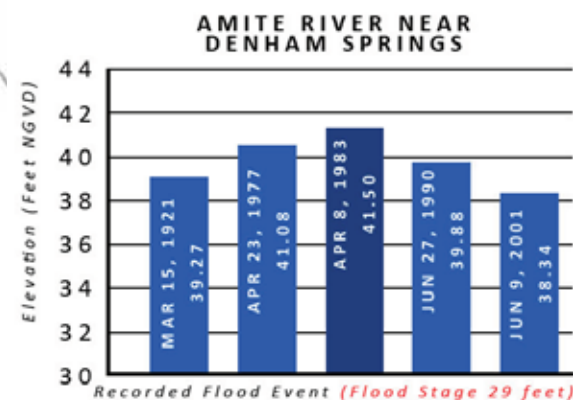


FLOOD REDUCTIONS

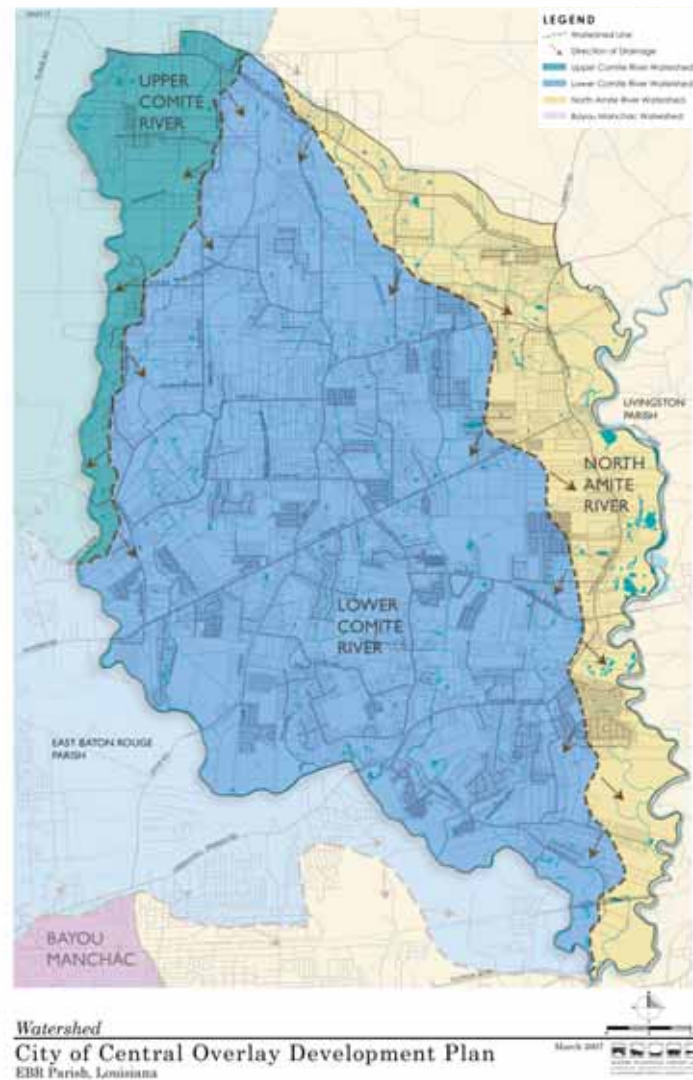
- 1** 10 Year Flood - 1.5 feet lower
50 Year Flood - 1.4 feet lower
100 Year Flood - 1.2 feet lower
- 2** 10 Year Flood - 4.5 feet lower
50 Year Flood - 4.0 feet lower
100 Year Flood - 3.8 feet lower
- 3** 10 Year Flood - 6.0 feet lower
50 Year Flood - 5.1 feet lower
100 Year Flood - 4.9 feet lower
- 4** 10 Year Flood - 7.2 feet lower
50 Year Flood - 6.3 feet lower
100 Year Flood - 5.5 feet lower

*(After completion of the Comite Diversion Canal Project. Data provided by the Amite River Basin Commission)

Even though the diversion canal will assist in alleviating flooding levels within the City of Central, flooding along the Comite and Amite Rivers will not be eliminated as flooding will continue to occur in the low lying areas of the City. As the City of Central and other areas within the Amite River Basin Watershed continue to grow in the future covering more of the land with impervious surfaces, flood pressure will continue if other measures to mitigate and manage storm drainage are not implemented.

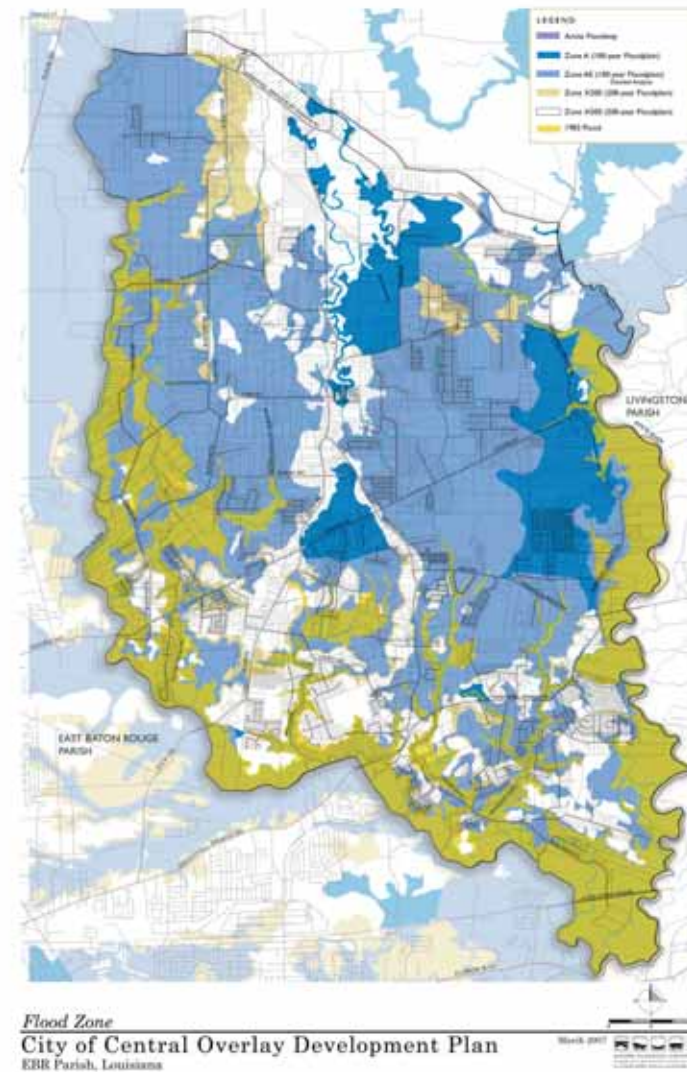


Natural Resources - WATERSHEDS



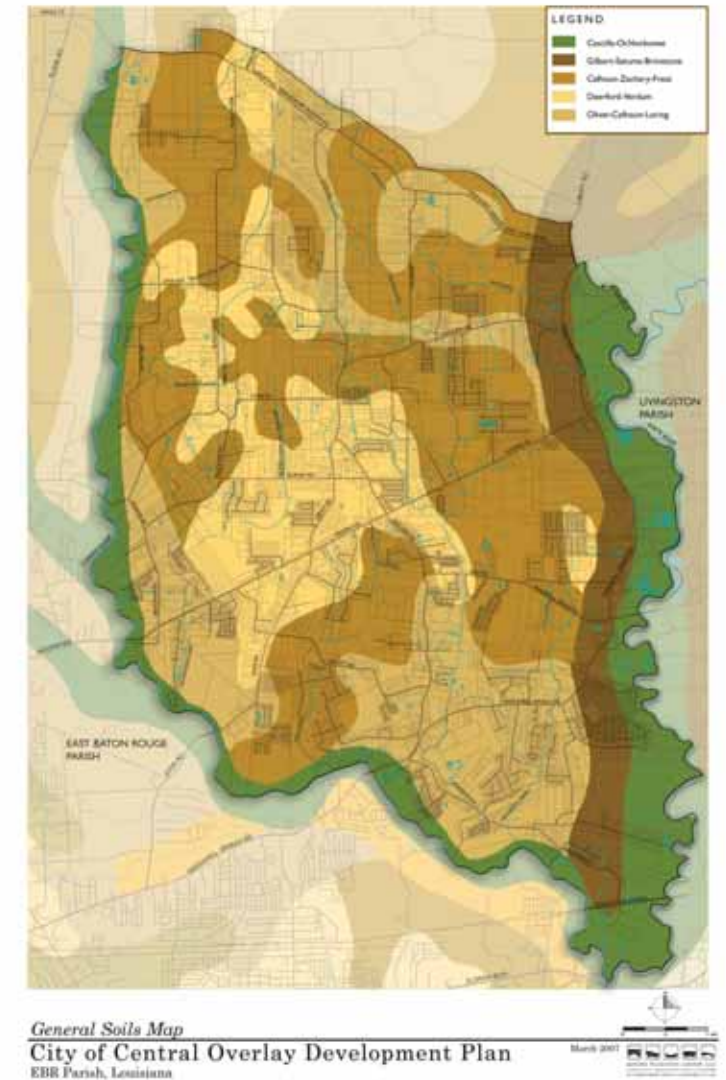
As shown in the map above, most of the incorporated area of Central is served by the Upper and Lower Comite River drainage basins. Major tributaries include Saunders, Blackwater and Beaver Bayous, and Draughan's and Shoe Creek. The eastern edge of the city falls within the Amite Basin. Watershed management and water quality protection are both considered high priorities at the Local, State and Federal levels and exert considerable influence on development capacity and patterns. Protecting the watershed from over-development, pollution and activities that burden the rivers with siltation will have far reaching benefits for the community. Maintaining and enhancing the capacity of the drainage system will have to be a high priority. A Flood Plain Management Plan for the City of Central should be completed as soon as possible to avoid compromising this crucial natural system.

Natural Resources - FLOOD ZONES



Recognizing the importance of protecting the City and regional water quality within the Amite River Basin and minimizing impacts to new and future development, the current 100 Year Flood level and topographic elevations within the City were further studied to determine which parts of the City were at greatest risk of repeated inundation. As shown on the map above, approximately 60% of the incorporated area is within the 100 Year Flood Zone. This presents great challenges to future development since development within these areas requires substantial filling and can significantly reduce the capacity of the drainage basin and cause more severe flooding in the remaining areas. An additional challenge for Central is the fact that flood risk can also be aggravated by conditions outside the City such as obstructions and capacity diminishing issues upstream and downstream of the two rivers.

Natural Resources - SOILS

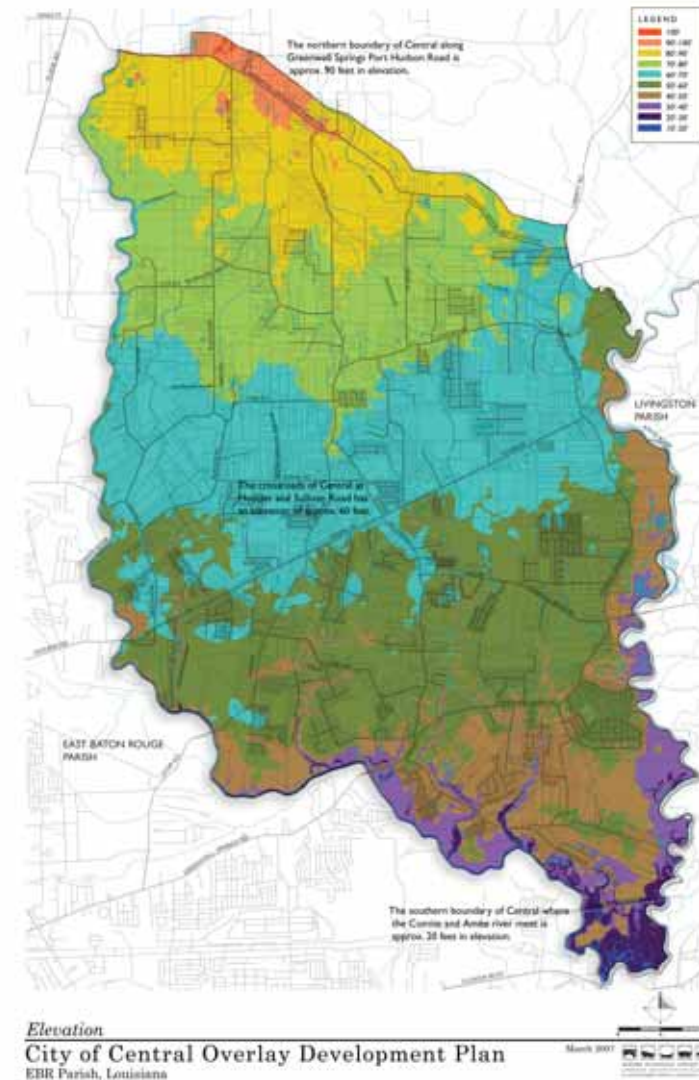


The soils in the City of Central fall into five (5) main groups:

- *Cascilla-Ochlockonee: Loamy soils on floodplains along rivers and subject to overflow*
- *Freeland-Loring-Olivier: Moderate to well drained loamy soils on the natural levees of creeks*
- *Calhoun-Zachary-Frost: Poorly drained loamy soils in broad flats and depressions*
- *Oliver-Calhoun-Loring: Poorly to moderately well-drained soils in broad flats and depressions*
- *Deerford-Verdun: Level to nearly level somewhat poorly drained loamy soils*

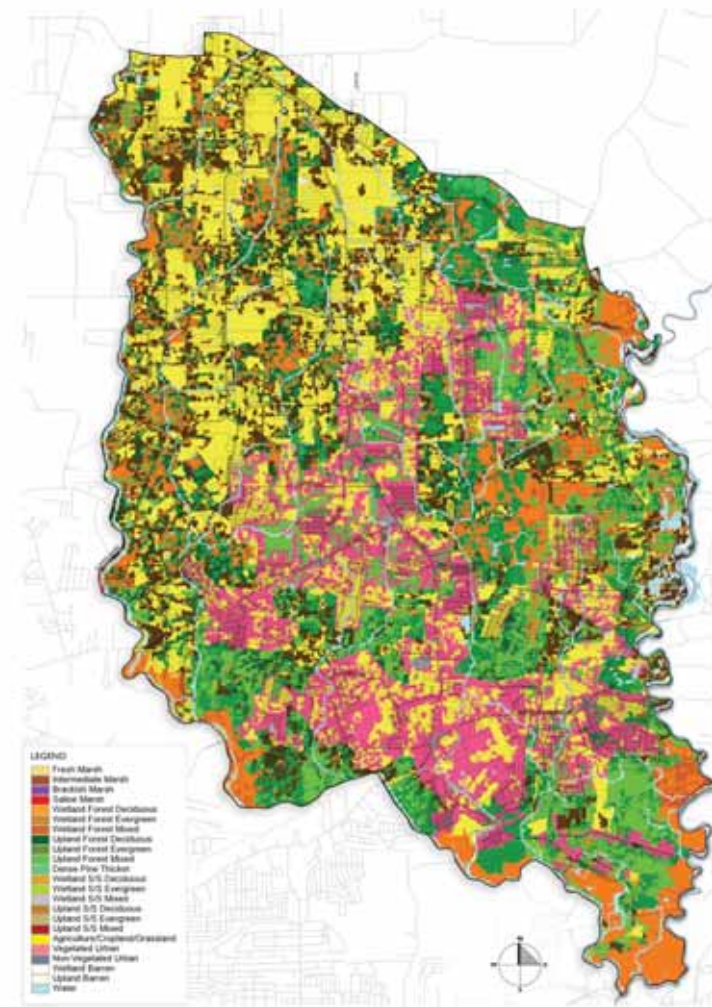
Other than the *Cascilla-Ochlockonee*, the other soil associations are capable of supporting new construction typical to the region without major costs or need for extraordinary soil engineering to provide for sufficient structural bearing capacity so long as adequate drainage can be provided. Best soils for urban/suburban development include the *Freeland-Loring-Olivier* and *Deerford-Verdun* associations.

Natural Resources - ELEVATION



A topographic inventory of Central shows an east-west banding of elevations ascending from the extreme southeast tip of the incorporated area to the north western extremity. The typical flow of creeks, bayous and drainage systems follow land forms and are generally from north to south. While the flood zone calculations are complicated by a variety of other issues, the elevation can be a primary indicator of the development potential of an individual property based on the potential to affect positive drainage to lower areas.

Natural Resources - LAND COVER

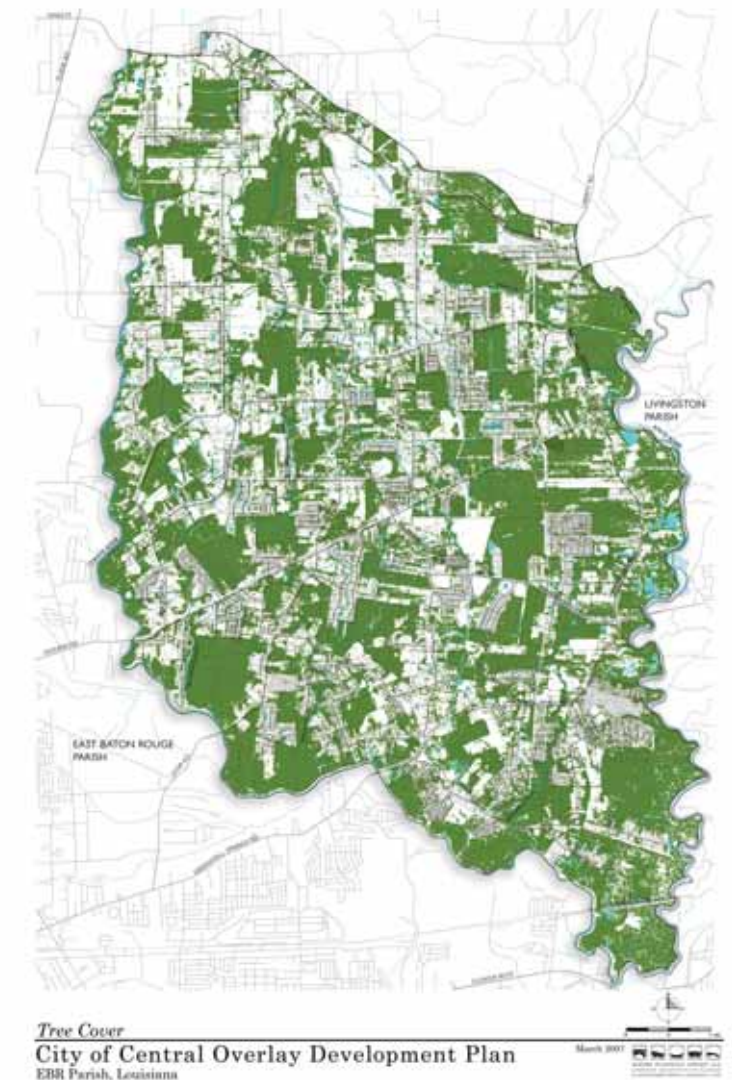


Land Cover mapping provides a snapshot view of the existing development densities and coverages in the community. Of primary interest are the following areas:

- **Vegetated Urban** - This category identifies moderately dense development of subdivisions, and commercial structures
- **Agriculture/Crop/Pasture** - This category identifies open land with little or no structural development, or development at very low density.
- **Forested** - This category identifies areas with dense tree cover outside of wetland areas
- **Forested Wetlands** - This category identifies areas with dense tree cover in wetlands

The land cover map provides valuable insight into the extent and character of existing development patterns and natural features. It also provides indications of where open lands may be available for future development

Natural Resources - TREE COVER

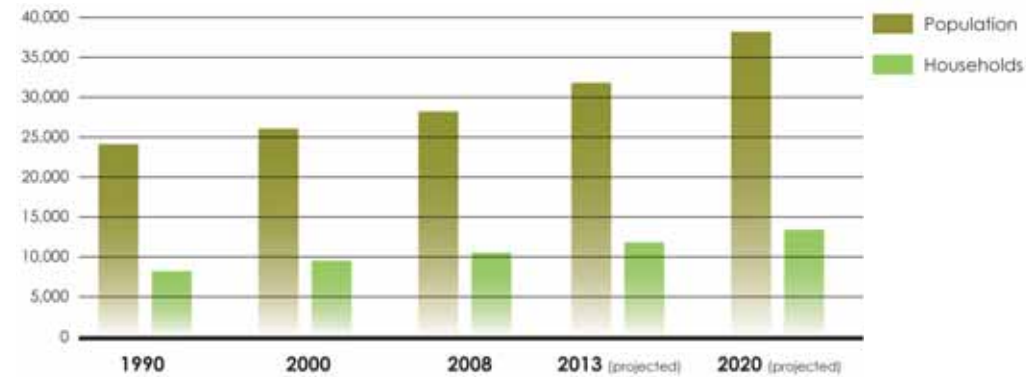


Tree cover mapping provides an indication of the richness of the natural environment in the community. Tree cover serves many important functions - oxygen production, environmental cooling, water control, wildlife habitat, noise reduction, and many others. In addition, tree cover and forested areas provide tangible economic benefits well beyond their value as timber. Natural areas attract high-quality development and add value to them. They provide high quality recreational and educational opportunities. They inspire with their beauty. This natural asset is one of the most valuable resources available to the Central community and should be given serious consideration in the planning process.

Human Resources - DEMOGRAPHICS



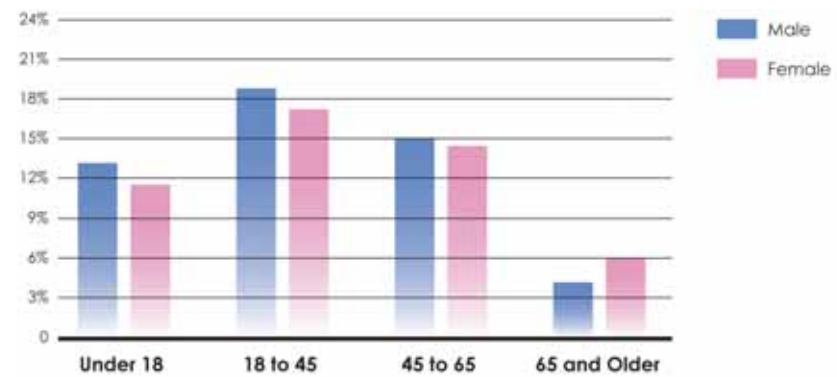
Population Growth



In 2005 when the City of Central became an incorporated municipality, it became Louisiana's 12th largest city. The total area of Central is approximately 66 square miles, which is almost the same area as Baton Rouge, but with only 10% of the population. The close proximity to the employment centers in the region and the recent creation of Central's own public school district has fueled its increase in population. During the 1990's the Central community experienced a growth rate of approximately 10.7 percent. The growth of households during this time was estimated at a cumulative 19.5 percent increase.

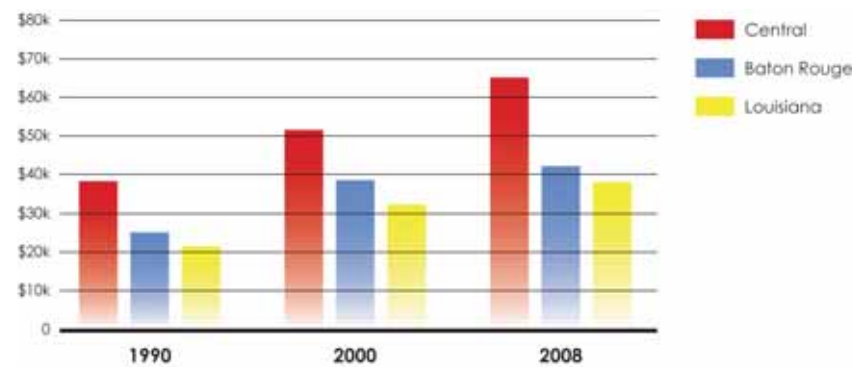
From 2000 to 2008 the growth slowed down to an annual rate of approximately 4.4 percent with an estimated population of 28,045. As improvements begin to happen with the Central School district facilities, it is anticipated that younger families will move into the City playing a major role in annual growth projected to be 38,430 in 2020.

Population Age



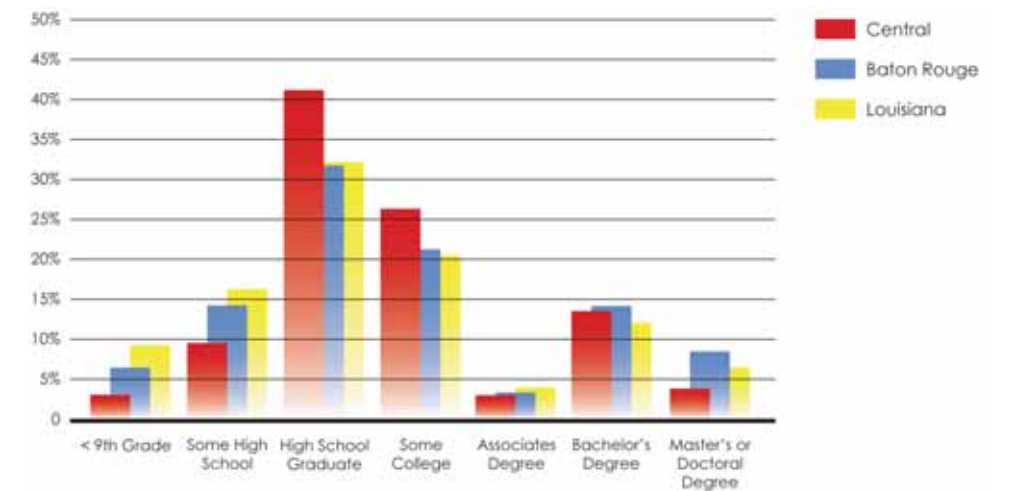
The current population composition in Central until 2008 had been one that followed national trends with a large number of middle aged and senior citizens, in comparison to children and young adults. This trend is changing as more young families move into the City and young adults decide to stay. As of 2008 the largest percentage of male and females were between the ages of 18 to 45, a highly desirable group for marketers and retail developers.

Median Household Income



The median household income in Central has consistently been of a higher value as compared to the median household income in the Baton Rouge region and overall in the State of Louisiana. This trend is anticipated to continue as the area grows and new opportunities for economic development are capitalized.

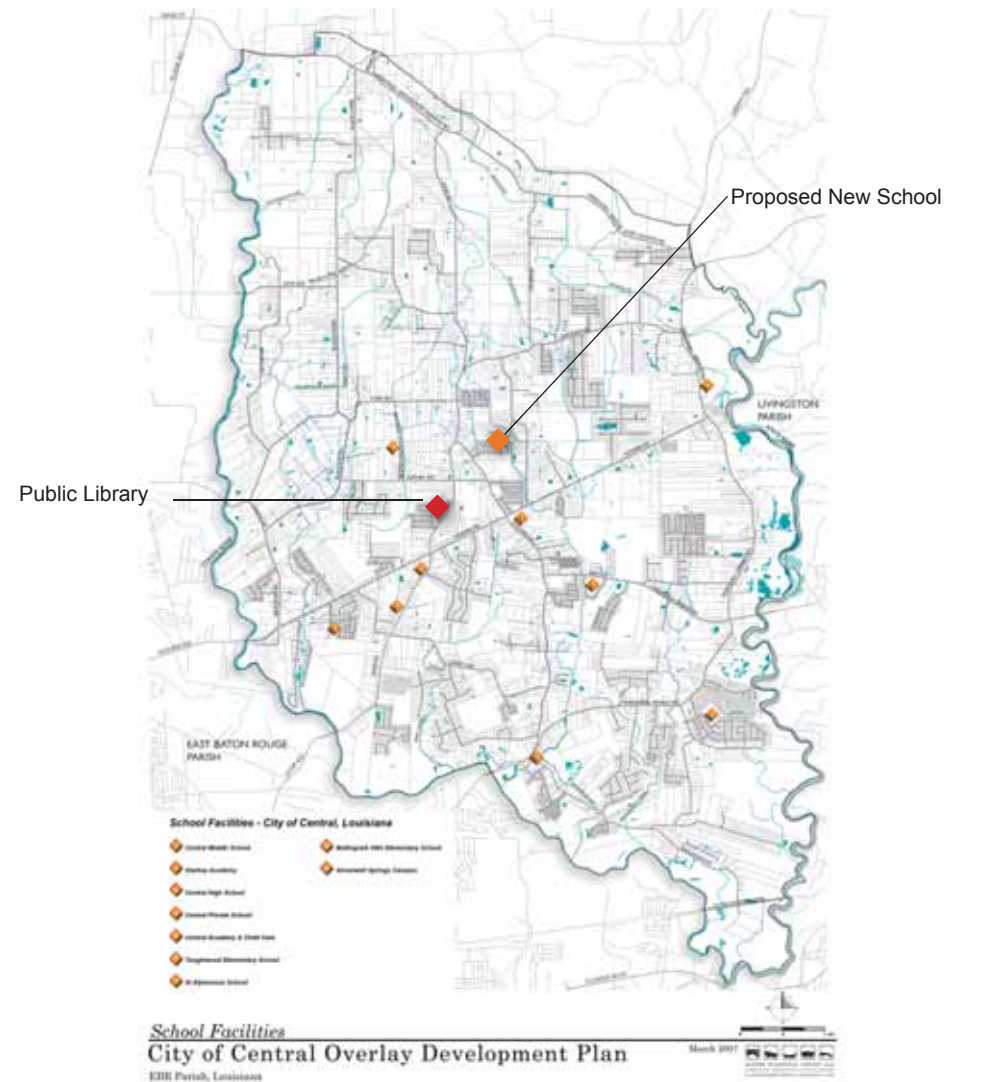
Education Attainment



Similar to Baton Rouge, the majority of education attainment in Central is concentrated within the middle education range, with a smaller percentage of the population without a high school degree and a smaller percentage of college graduates than the Baton Rouge region. The majority of the working population in Central, approximately 88 percent has a high school diploma or equivalent, compared to 80 percent in the Baton Rouge region. As the population grows it is anticipated that the educational attainment levels of the working-age population will increase to higher education levels with the influx of college educated households that move into the City.

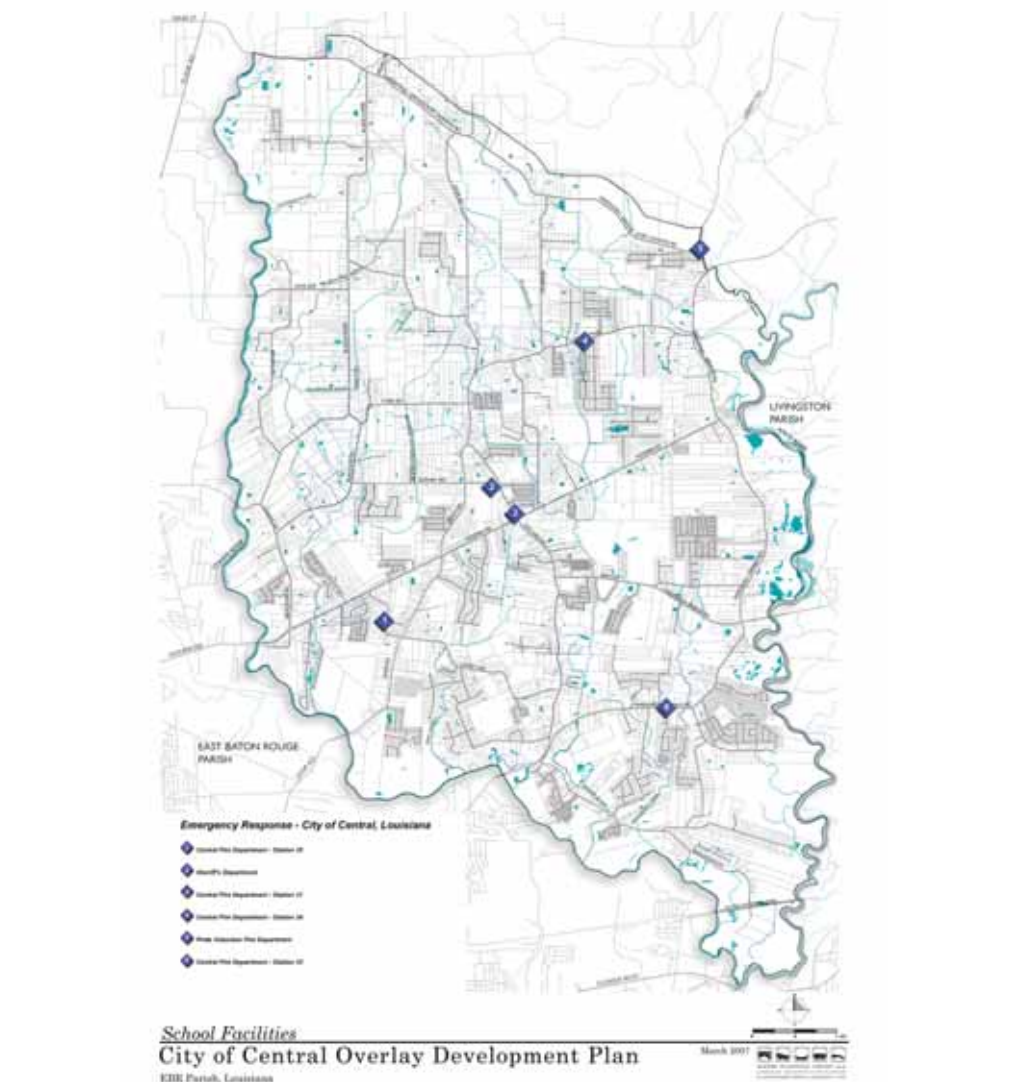


Human Resources - SCHOOLS



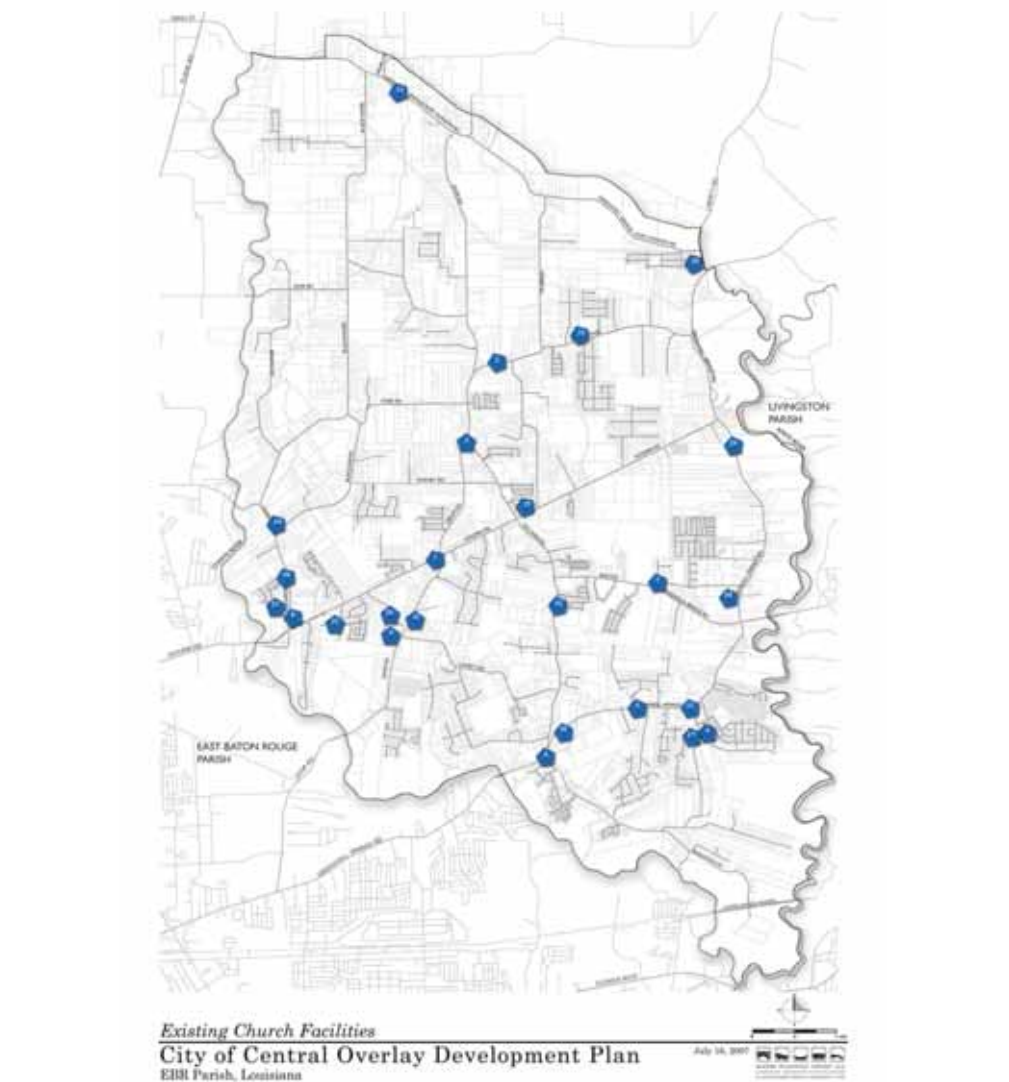
The map above shows the distribution of existing public and private educational assets. The City of Central was established by the citizens with the desire to create a high-quality learning environment that is focused on student achievement. Education is a high priority for the community as proven by the recently approved tax bond to improve existing facilities and construct new schools. Education and learning innovation extends beyond the traditional class room setting and should incorporate all new learning techniques and opportunities. One such opportunity would be to develop a learning campus within a mixed-use center that can be used by all citizens. Opportunities for higher and continued education and learning will give the City a strategic advantage for smart growth and sustainability, and will attract high-quality investment interest.

Human Resources - EMERGENCY RESPONSE



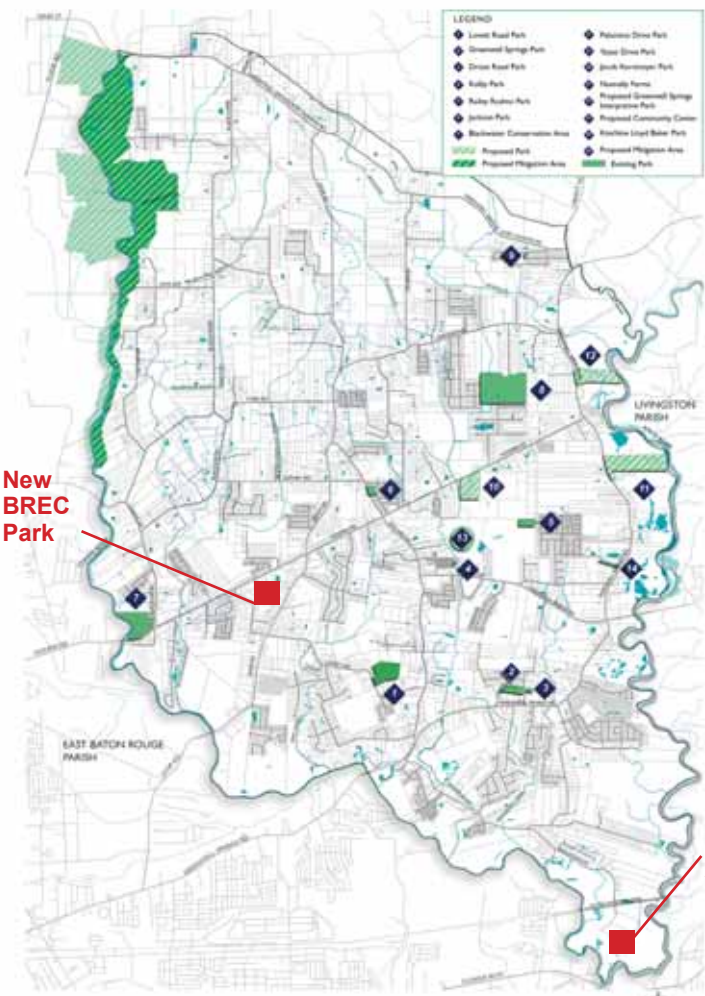
One challenge the City of Central faces as a newly incorporated community is establishing adequate public safety and emergency response infrastructure. The City currently has five fire stations that serve the entire 66 square miles and police protection within the City is currently being served by the East Baton Rouge Parish Sheriff Department. As the City grows and the tax base increases, additional fire protection and the creation of the City of Central Police Department should be explored for maintaining and improving high insurance ratings and the promotion of the City of Central as being a safe, livable, and caring community for all citizens.

Human Resources - PLACES OF WORSHIP



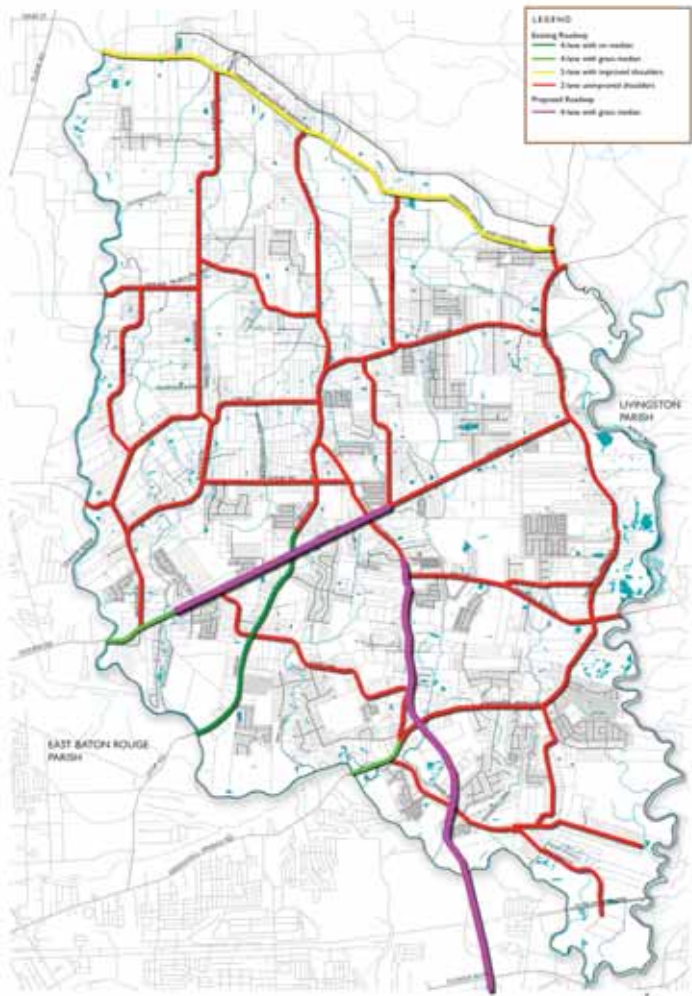
A review of the existing Places of Worship and Faith Based Organization facilities reveals that there are approximately 25 opportunities for citizens to participate and practice personal and community faith-based fellowship. The majority are located in close proximity to existing neighborhoods and demonstrate that religion is an important community livability component. Beyond their strictly spiritual function, community churches are often the locus for coordination of community service projects, health screenings, civic events and educational opportunities. As such, these facilities provide important community gathering and outreach facilities.

Economic Resources - EXISTING PARKS



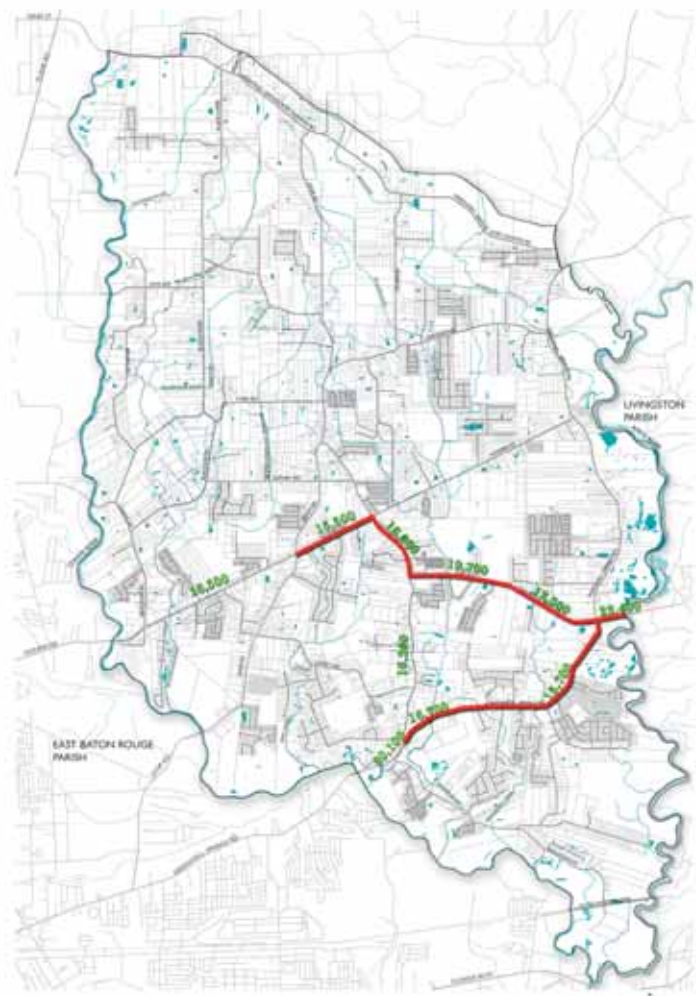
The majority of the park and recreation facilities within Central are part of the overall Baton Rouge Parish Recreation (BREC) system. These facilities range from small neighborhood parks to larger regional parks. BREC has recently purchased a tract of land east of Joor Road and north of Lovett Road and is planning a new active recreation sports complex to add needed baseball fields. It has also completed the purchase of a large tract at the confluence of the Amite and Comite Rivers. BREC long range plans also identify several other additions to the system including a strong desire to develop bicycle and canoe trails in the community which would be great assets. The outdoor recreation potential in Central is tremendous. Combined parks and conserved open space and wooded areas could be parlayed into a very strong attraction to future business and residential development.

Economic Resources - TRANSPORTATION



From the 1980's to early 2000's Central maintained a rural and low density residential atmosphere. The roadway network was designed for a rural area and the majority of the development is along 2 lane roadway corridors. These roadways were efficient in safely moving the low volume traffic within the Central and Greenwell Springs communities. In recent years Livingston Parish communities east of Central began experiencing rapid growth. The main vehicular corridors connecting Livingston Parish into East Baton Rouge Parish - Interstate 10 and Hwy 190 - became congested with daily commuters. Many commuters began utilizing the Magnolia Bridge / Wax Road Amite River crossing as an alternative creating serious traffic congestion in Central during daily peak traffic times. The majority of this traffic is commuter generated traffic which has created a burden for Central residents. Additional development

Economic Resources - CONGESTED ROADWAYS



along these transportation corridors should be carefully examined to prevent further impairment of traffic safety and function. There are several roadway improvement projects in the planning and construction phases that will assist in alleviating traffic congestion as well as provide capacity for new growth and development in Central. These projects include the widening of Joor Road south of Hooper Road, the Central Thruway, and widening of Sullivan Road from Lovett Road to Hooper Road. These major roadway improvements will have a positive impact. However, Central's roadway network will still be seriously deficient in collector class roadways needed to funnel traffic to major roadways from the widely spread residential areas around the community. Providing more route options will also provide for improved emergency response activities.

Economic Resources - SANITARY SEWER



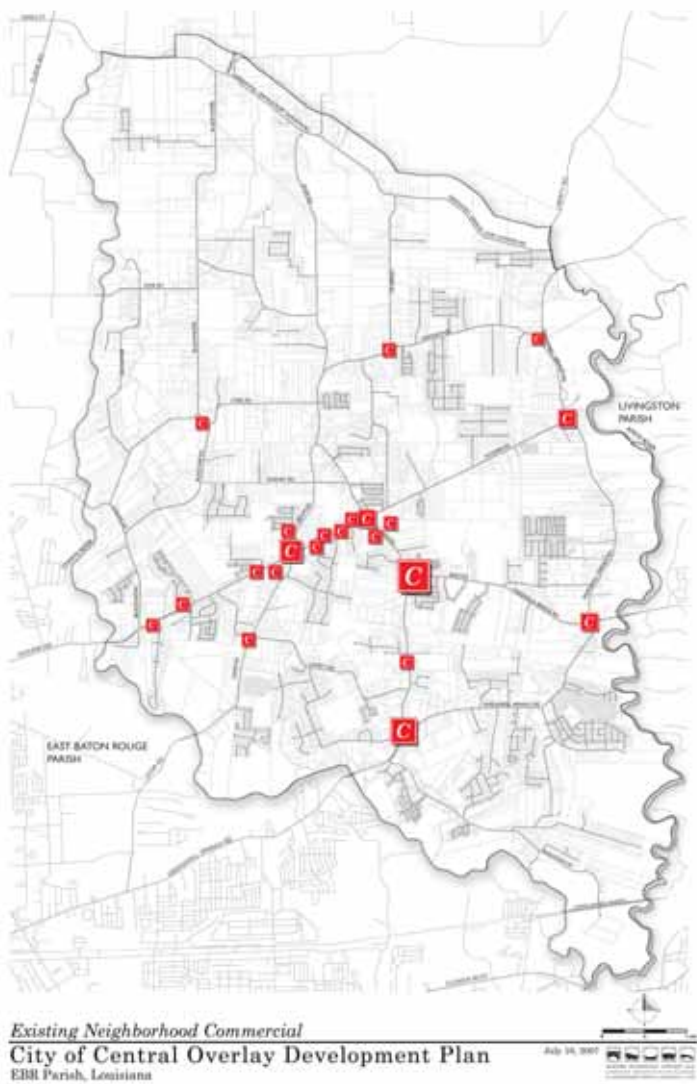
Sanitary sewer system improvements are currently underway that should add some capacity for expansion. Unfortunately, the improvements were designed before this planning process was finalized and so will not be totally integrated with the new land use plan.



The existing wastewater system within the City was developed to serve mainly residential areas that contained a density greater than 1 to 5 acre lot development and is composed of both gravity and pressurized force-main systems. The majority of the main service lines are located along existing roadways with a flow direction back to the wastewater treatment facility near the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Airport. At the time of the development of this phase of the City of Central Master Plan, the future capacity was unknown as East Baton Rouge Parish was beginning an overall Parish wastewater improvement master plan. The capacity to add a large residential or commercial development in the City and tie to the existing sanitary sewer system is limited. Outlying areas comprise more rural and agriculture land (low density land use) and have limited access to sanitary sewer and domestic water. The majority

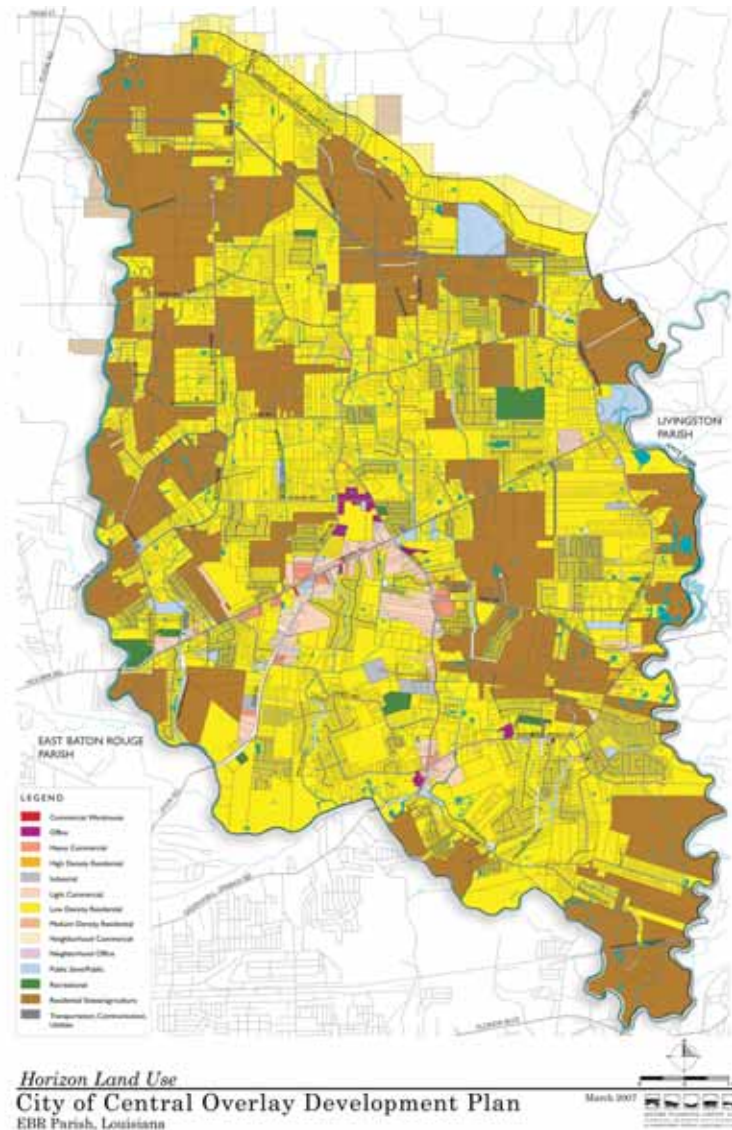
of existing development has been single-family detached residential neighborhoods with lot sizes from 10,000 s.f. lots to over 1 acre lots. Minimal commercial development along the transportation corridors and at key intersections include grocery, pharmaceutical, gas / convenient store, and fast-food type uses within strip commercial centers. Schools, faith-based facilities, and light-industrial businesses are scattered in close proximity to the residential neighborhoods. In areas without sanitary sewer service, individual treatment plants, PAC plants and septic systems prevail and pose a threat to health and environmental quality. Sparsely developed areas afford many development opportunities with large tracts of undeveloped land, but are challenged by lack of sanitary sewer infrastructure needed to support them.

Economic Resources - COMMUNITY COMMERCE



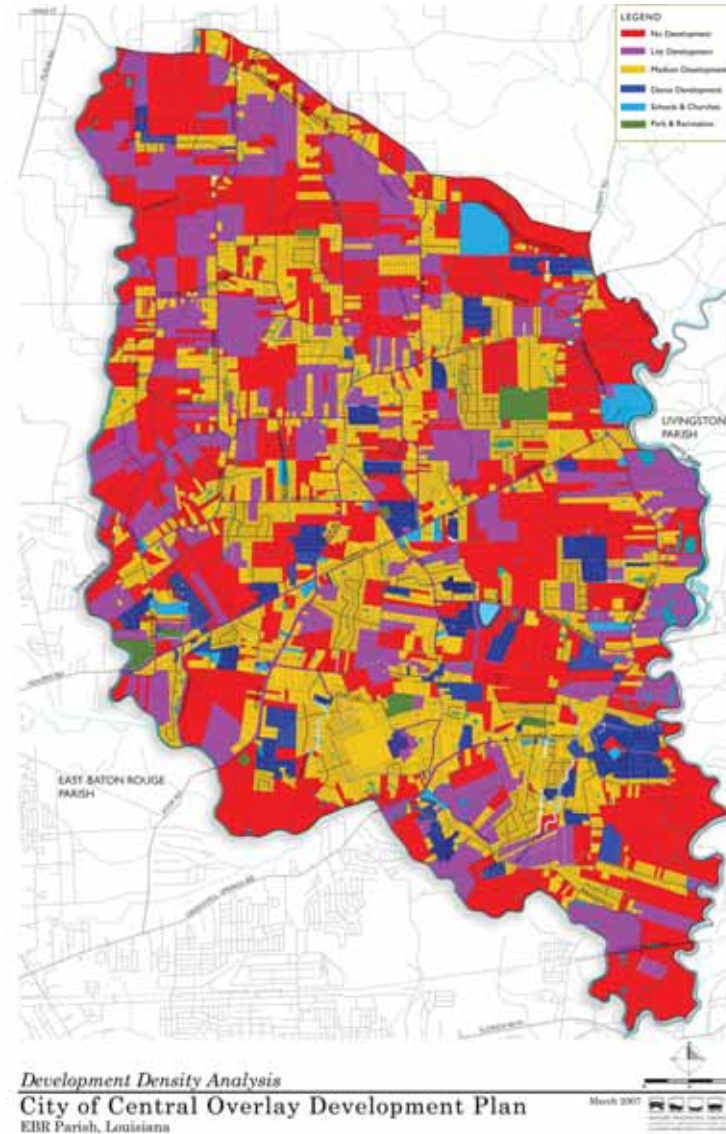
Existing commercial development in Central is limited. It typically occurs at or near roadway intersections and in a traditional suburban form - large parking lot in front, business to the rear. There are four major retail nodes and several minor ones scattered through the City. The most activity is strung out along Hooper Road between Joor and Sullivan Roads. According to the Market Feasibility report completed for Central, the area could support substantially more commerce than it does at this time. While this would be a benefit for the City in many ways, careful placement and arrangement should be sought in order to avoid creating a shallow depth hodgepodge that presents an unappealing image. There is currently no major manufacturing/assembly industry in the City.

Economic Resources - HORIZON PLAN LAND USE



The Horizon Plan shown above has been the regulating land use plan for Central up until the adoption of the proposed Interim Land Use Plan. The land use plan shown above demonstrates that East Baton Rouge Parish continued thinking of the Central community as a predominantly 'monotone' residential area on the outskirts of Baton Rouge with isolated clumps of rural uses. There are provisions for commercial development along the major roadways, but little response to the need of connectivity, open space, and drainage patterns.

Economic Resources - LAND

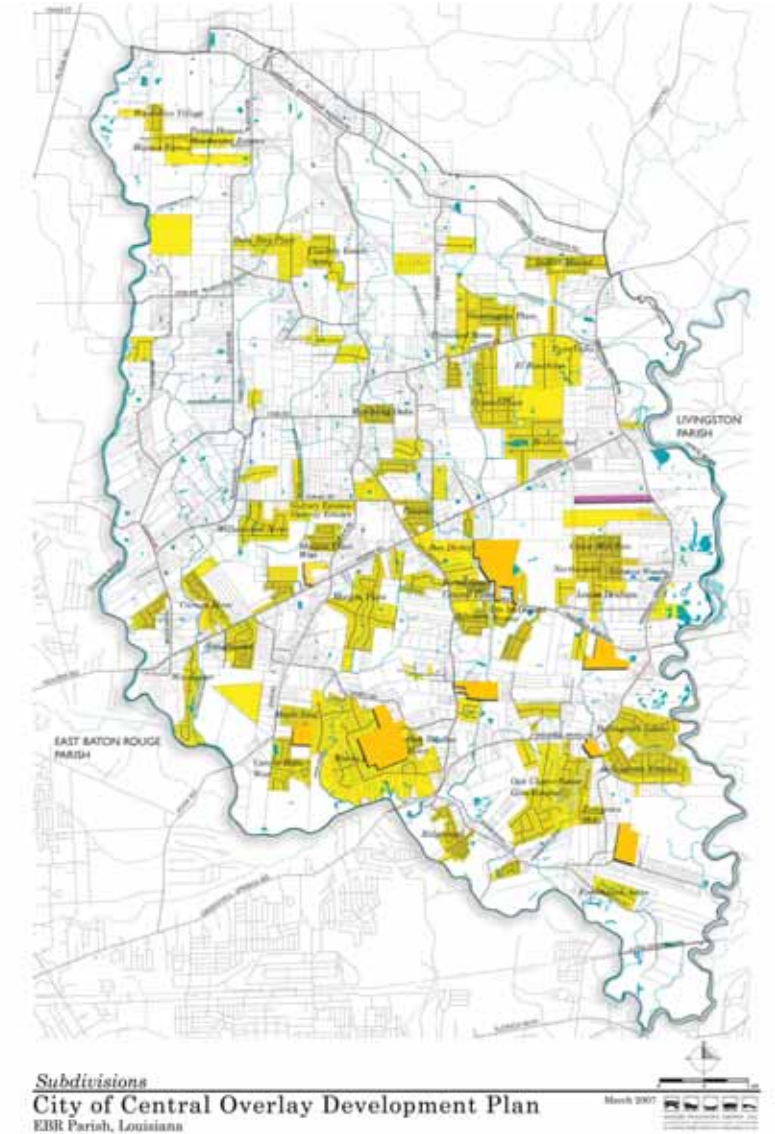


The Development Density map above classifies the community in terms of the intensity of existing development:

- *Dense Development - includes small lot residential and intense commercial development*
- *Medium Density - includes typical subdivisions and suburban style commercial development*
- *Low Density - includes very light residential, commercial, industrial and/or agricultural uses*
- *Undeveloped - includes areas with little or no development*

When compared to the Horizon Plan it shows how the "blanket" residential designation has led to sprawling, shallow development along existing roadways outstripping the Parish's ability to provide sanitary sewer service and stressing the transportation network. On the positive side, it also shows that there are significant areas of undeveloped land which can be used for new development or open space.

Economic Resources - RESIDENTIAL SUBDIVISIONS



This map identifies existing residential subdivisions in the community. Most of Central's residential areas are of high-quality and are a great benefit. Scattered areas of dilapidation do exist and bear close scrutiny over the long term to prevent the onset of blight. There are many other residential properties in Central not highlighted by this map due to the fact that they are single residences often on larger parcels established before subdivision regulations were institutionalized. The Existing Land Use Plan on the following page shows a more accurate depiction of residential development. As a land use, residential adds great value to a community if done properly and maintained adequately. It does, however, impose upon the community the need to provide a variety of services including: schools, roads, water and sewer service, garbage collection, emergency service, and other essential services.

COMMUNITY GOALS



GOALS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS



THE GOALS DEVELOPMENT PROCESS provides several important functions:

- Identifies key issues important to the community
- Allows for community expression of identity and character
- Provides the framework around which planning decisions are made

This process has spanned four years and has required countless hours of community meetings, interviews, and workshops. Citizen participants included State and local elected leaders, State and Parish officials, business owners, business and social organizations, professionals, and high school students. Additionally, these efforts were enhanced by community participation in three parallel efforts with overlapping themes and issues:

- Sustainability Design Assessment Team
- Market Feasibility Study
- Economic Development Assessment

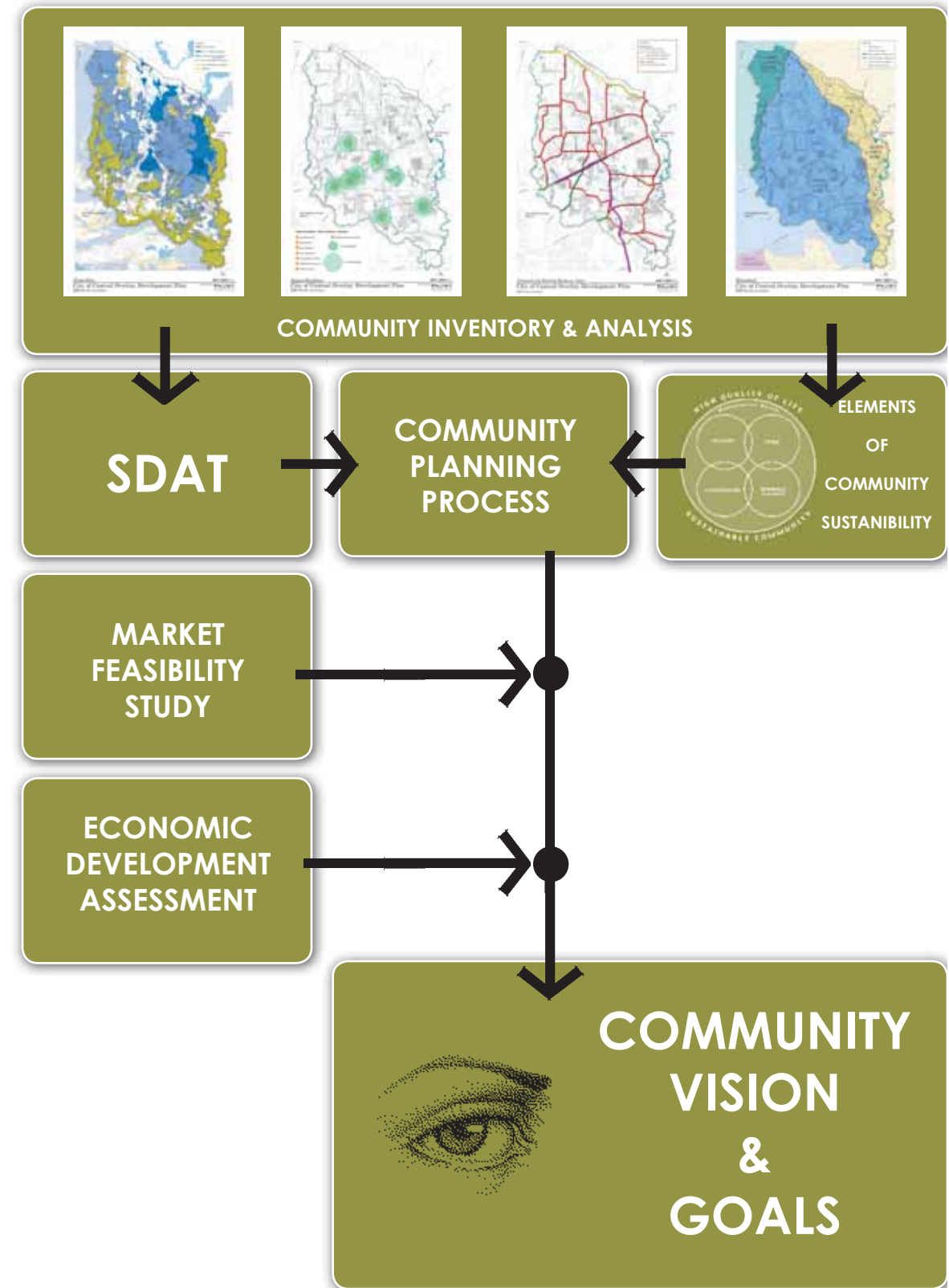
The results of each of these visioning and goals efforts were analyzed and distilled into a set of clearly defined goals that were used to guide the planning process. The following pages summarize the findings and conclusions.

Three key themes continued to rise to the surface during community visioning. The themes seem to capture the essence of what the community values and wishes to preserve as it moves forward,

RURAL CHARACTER - Central continues to be one of the most rural parts of East Baton Rouge Parish. Horses roam freely over open pasture land. Deep wooded areas weave throughout the City following freshwater creeks and bayous. Narrow country roads meander through long undeveloped stretches. Long-time residents have developed a great appreciation for these and many other attributes and fear that they are being lost to unbridled development. Preserving the essence of the rural feeling will be an important consideration.

CITY LIVING IN THE COUNTRY - While most residents enjoy living in "the country", they also appreciate access to the amenities that cities have to offer - fine dining, entertainment options, health and medical care, etc. At present, the problem is that they must leave the "country" to enjoy the "city". In addition to the inconvenience, residents also realize that this practice represents a net loss to their own community in terms of business development, job creation and sales taxes. They would like to have some of the niceties of the city in their own community, but only if it can be done without wrecking the country feeling.

SANCTUARY - Baton Rouge is the most populous city in the State. As such it offers access to many very important assets. However, along with the good things it also provides a heaping helping of unpleasant things - traffic congestion, violent crime, concrete and asphalt, noise, pollution, etc. In an eloquent statement at one of the community meetings a Central citizen described how when she crosses the bridge across the Comite River into Central, her heart rate decreases and her breathing relaxes. She feels like she has entered a sanctuary of trees and wildlife - of a peaceful community that provides for spiritual re-creation. There was unanimous agreement. Preserving this sense of "sanctuary" will be an important priority for the planning.





In January 2006 Central submitted a proposal to the AIA for an SDAT (Sustainable Development Assessment Team) program to assist the town and its citizens in addressing key issues facing the community. The issues included creating an identity for the newly incorporated city, preserving the city's rural lifestyle and beauty, developing a response to increasing pressures of development and traffic congestion, and addressing the ongoing threat of natural hazards and flooding. The proposal also emphasized the need to consider the integration of education, economic development, infrastructure, and livability as they affect these issues.

The AIA accepted the proposal and, after a preliminary visit by a small group in February, the SDAT members arrived in Central on April 16. For three days the team members, working closely with local officials, community leaders, technical experts, and citizens, studied the community and its concerns. During those three days, the team came to understand the issues and used its expertise to frame a wide range of recommendation which were presented to the community in a public meeting on April 18, 2006.

NATURAL RESOURCES

- Develop a floodplain mitigation plan
- Implement sustainable development strategies
- Protect valued scenic and cultural sites

TRANSPORTATION

- Develop a set of near- and long-term needed improvements
- Partner with existing initiatives to tailor current/future roadway designs to match Central's vision and land-use types
- Develop an implementation plan

PLANNING, LAND USE, AND LIVABILITY

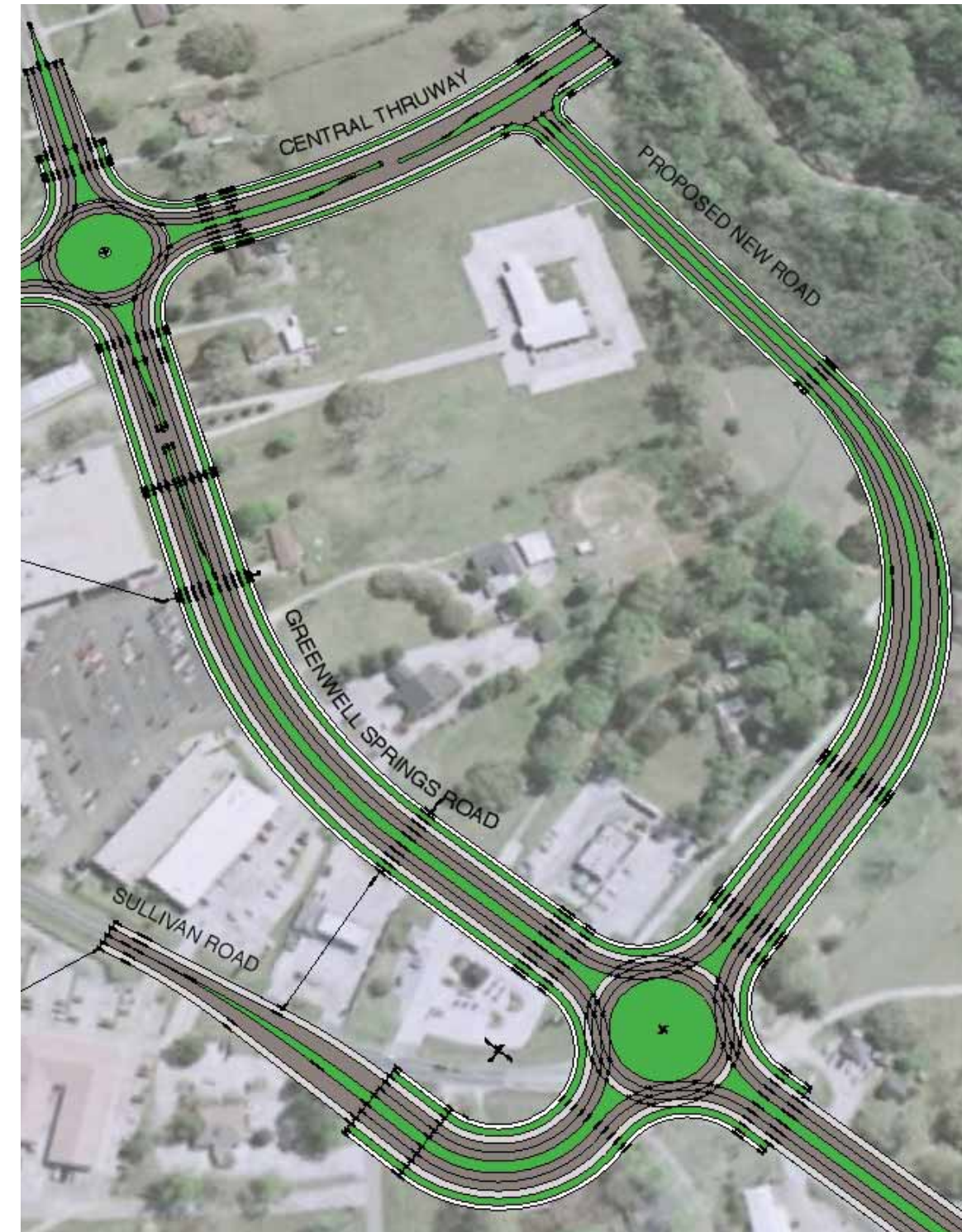
- Create a sense of place through a defined "downtown triangle"
- Balance jobs and housing in downtown
- Adopt zoning and subdivision regulations
- Create a set of design standards for downtown

SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

- Address physical needs of the current school building inventory
- Evaluate the location and placement of schools
- Adopt best practices for all new construction
- Set aside land for future neighborhood elementary schools

COMMUNITY LIVABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

- Create a sense of place, reinforcing the idea of Central as a sanctuary
- Foster the development of a Central vernacular - both for landscape and architectural design
- Embrace livable community strategies and incorporate them into zoning bylaws
- Provide housing affordability for all household types and age groups
- Consider "passive survivability" as a design criteria for all municipal buildings
- Ensure that economic development is sustainable



SDAT recommends consideration of roundabouts as an alternative road design measure to provide smooth traffic flow while preserving rural character. The plan above shows one option for the Greenwell Springs Sullivan intersection

MARKET FEASIBILITY STUDY



The City of Central contracted with GCR & Associates, Inc. in 2008 to provide a market feasibility analysis for future retail and commercial development. By analyzing local purchasing power and employment patterns, this analysis estimates the demand for additional retail services and commercial square footage in the coming years.

Ultimately, the analysis will serve as a tool for the city's elected officials and business leaders to plan for future growth through zoning, land assemblage, and potential public-private partnerships.

The first phase of the study concluded that Central will add an unprecedented number of new households over the next decade, and these households will have a higher income and greater number of children than current household averages. The second phase of the study translates the initial assessment into real values by determining local purchasing power, the capacity of local retail to absorb those purchases, and gaps in retail services. This phase also includes a summary of regional workforce patterns and the city's ability to absorb a portion of the region's job growth.

The work resulted in general recommendations that will be integrated into the Master Plan effort.

DEMOGRAPHIC HIGHLIGHTS

- Population growth in Central has been steady, and will rapidly accelerate in the coming years.
- The elderly population and the number of children will increase in relative terms and in real numbers, calling for additional services catering to the elderly and youth.
- The income distribution within Central will shift towards higher income households in the coming years.
- The racial profile of Central will become more diverse as the City continues to integrate with the Baton Rouge economy, but the City will remain a predominantly white community.
- In general, new residents will have a higher education level than current residents, and will travel outside the city limits for employment.
- Central may be able to attract employers in the health care, education, and finance, insurance and real estate industries as a part of Baton Rouge MSA employment growth.
- Central residents are much more likely to own homes than to rent.

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

- The overwhelming majority who responded to the survey list two complaints: limited shopping, services, and entertainment and congested roads and infrastructure.
- The top three goals expressed in the survey, in order of importance, were:
 - 1) attract new businesses, services, and retail;
 - 2) improve and expand roads and other infrastructure; and
 - 3) improve and expand education and education infrastructure.
- When asked why people visit Central, a quarter of survey participants did not know or stated that nothing attracted people to Central.
- When asked to identify the greatest advantages of living in Central, residents declared Central's quality of life as its best advantage, due to low crime rates, peaceful setting, and nice people.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish a city-sponsored, non-profit development corporation to identify potential areas for retail development and act as a liaison between the City and private development interests.
- Dedicate "nodes" within city limits targeted for retail activity. Separate "nodes" by retail typology through zoning regulations, so that big-box retailers do not detract from the charm of a neighborhood lifestyle center, and weekly trips to the grocery store are not overwhelmed with traffic to other areas.
- To effectively offer the full range of services consumers now demand, the City will need to coordinate with private developers to fuse public and private spaces. The initial consideration could be a town center at Hooper and Sullivan, where the city intends to locate its public offices.
- The City can offer incentives to potential developers to direct growth. Incentives can include infrastructure investment, economic incentives or simplified permitting processes. Incentive programs can be packaged with state and federal incentive programs.
- To streamline the process of development and to increase interest in Central among developers, market available commercial land through the city's web site. Provide technical assistance to landowners and potential developers to streamline real estate transactions.
- Identify an interim space for public use in order to help maintain the strong sense of community. Utilize the space on a regular basis as a means of facilitating community trade and gathering, including a farmer's market, festivals, and craft fairs. Simultaneously, work with the community to develop permanent gathering spaces.
- Develop recreation spaces in proximity to commercial areas to leverage additional spending. This will foster the relationship between recreation activities and related retail spending.
- Encourage new building and design trends through financial incentives and collaboration with cutting-edge builders. Embracing energy efficiency and green design will create a buzz about the city, and act as a marketing tool for bringing in new businesses.
- Focus on small enterprises as a part of the city's economic development initiatives. The competition to attract large firms is stiff, and the incentives can be expensive for the jurisdiction. Smaller businesses and start-ups are more interested in a healthy business climate and adequate space. The concentration of small firms will ultimately lead to a diverse business environment.

CENTRAL COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT



Early in 2009, Central leaders contracted with Steve Vassallo to conduct an economic development assessment and begin formulation of an economic development strategy for the city. The report is very optimistic:

“Central’s economic future is extremely ‘Bright’ primarily for the multiple reasons of attracting growth from a number of different industrial sectors including residential construction; retail; healthcare; light industrial; and retirees. A compelling case can be made for all of these components; however the greatest amount of growth may come from younger adults desiring their children to be educated in the Central School District.”

The following are some selected highlights from the report that were used to help guide the master plan development.

STRENGTHS and WEAKNESSES

Weaknesses

- Lack of Storm-water Drainage Capacity
- Lack of Moderately-Priced Housing
- Lack of Town Center
- Lack of Restaurant Options
- Lack of Good Signage and Gateways
- Lack of Medical Facilities
- Traffic Congestion
- Aged Appearance of Schools
- Lack of Polished Marketing Approach
- Sales Tax Leakage

Strengths

- Perceived Safety/Security
- Proximity to Baton Rouge
- Public School Performance
- Population Growth
- Growing Sales Tax Revenues
- Citizen Participation in Community Activities
- TND Development
- Vibrant Construction Activity
- City Leadership in Planning
- Availability of Land

COMMUNITY SURVEY

What is Central's' greatest appeal to prospective businesses?

- Fast Growing Area
- Ground Floor Opportunity For Development
- Great Schools
- Very Friendly People (country atmosphere)

Which should be Central's highest Economic Development priority?

- 50 % Retail Recruitment
- 19% Industrial Recruitment
- 15 % Service Sector Recruitment
- 16% High Tech

How would you describe Central to someone who has never been here?

- Small town country feel
- Friendly, caring growing area with great schools

If you could change only one thing about Central, what would it be?

- Infrastructure (primarily roads)
- Traffic
- School Facilities

Is there a “business void” that you would like to see filled in Central?

- Restaurants
- Variety of retail options

What do you like most about living in Central?

- Friendly atmosphere (the people)
- Country rural environment
- Low crime (safe area)
- Great schools

How would you rate “economic opportunity” in Central today?

- 30% Outstanding
- 47% Above Average
- 11% Average
- 4% Poor



COMMUNITY QUOTES

Below are some random quotes by community members made during economic development workshops.

“CENTRAL HAS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO SHAPE ITS OWN DESTINY.”

“LAST YEAR, CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL RECORDED THE HIGHEST TEST SCORES IN THE STATE FOR THE MANDATED TESTING REQUIRED.”

“THE LAND USE PLANNING IN CENTRAL HAS BEEN A POSITIVE STEP FORWARD FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.”

“ MY BUSINESS HAS PROSPERED BY GETTING INVOLVED IN THE COMMUNITY.”

TOP 20 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

In order of urgency as agreed by the community participants

- 1 Recruit Retail Establishments
- 2 Expand Medical Facilities
- 3 Aesthetic Improvements to Public Schools
- 4 Consolidate Zip Codes
- 5 Actively Pursue All Grant Opportunities
- 6 Establish a Town Center
- 7 Extend Hooper Road
- 8 Upgrade Chamber of Commerce web site
- 9 Improve Signage/Gateways
- 10 Recruit Louisiana Businesses
- 11 Create Economic Development Foundation
- 12 Recruit Community College
- 13 Basic Economic Development Training
- 14 Recruit White Collar Employers
- 15 Use Creative Marketing
- 16 Promote Business/Technology Parks
- 17 Sponsor Annual Event for Realtors
- 18 Promote Women Owned Business
- 19 Form Sister City Alliance
- 20 Recruit Corporate Headquarters



ELEMENTS OF SUSTAINABILITY



MAINTAINING BALANCE - As communities work toward a prosperous future for their citizens, it is essential to maintain a proper balance between the four essential elements of community sustainability: Education, Livability, Infrastructure and Economic Development. Scant resources must be invested so that these four areas maintain an equilibrium. Over-investment in one area will inevitably require cuts in others and will hinder a community's ability to be self-sustaining.

The nature of the four elements is that they are interlocking and some blending inevitably occurs. An educated population is required to stimulate high quality economic development while transportation and communications infrastructure make economic development possible. Finally, livability assets provide quality places within which families flourish and with which businesses can recruit high quality employees. Each element is composed of a variety of components which must be assessed and evaluated for quality, balance and service to the other elements. Investment in any element should always seek to also satisfy some requirements in others. Once a balance is achieved, communities can then focus upon looking forward. Anticipating future trends becomes an important consideration in city planning. Being aware of and planning for innovations in education, livability, infrastructure and economic development can help position a community at the forefront of emerging initiatives and attract positive investments.



HIGH QUALITY OF LIFE
Wikipedia begins its article on “Quality of Life” as follows: “The well-being or quality of life of a population is an important concern in economics and political science. It is measured by many social and economic factors. A large part is standard of living, the amount of money and access to goods and services that a person has; these numbers are fairly easily measured. Others like freedom, happiness, art, environmental health, and innovation are far harder to measure. This has created an inevitable imbalance as programs and policies are created to fit the easily available economic numbers while ignoring the other measures, that are very difficult to plan for or assess.”
Debate on quality of life is millennia-old, with Aristotle giving it much thought, eventually settling on the notion of *eudaimonia*, a Greek term often translated as ‘happiness, as central.”
One might otherwise look to Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and determine that the higher the population is on the pyramid, the higher their quality of life is.
Another description of communities with high quality of life comes from the United Kingdom, ... “places where people want to live and work, now and in the future. They meet the diverse needs of existing and future residents, are sensitive to their environment, and contribute to a high quality of life. They are safe and inclusive, well planned, built and run, and offer equality of opportunity and good services for all.”
Regardless of the interpretation, quality of life should be understood to occur on a continuum - from good to poor, high to low- and it is the responsibility of leadership to create the conditions that elevate the quality of life.

SUSTAINABILITY
Community sustainability is a simple concept that seeks equilibrium between production and consumption. Whenever consumption outpaces production, the community must import production, thus making it dependent and inherently unsustainable. Therefore, a sustainable community is one that practices good fiscal management and stewardship of resources so that it can provide for the basic needs of its members. Maintaining a balance between the four essential elements improves sustainability through careful management of natural, human and economic resources.



An enterprise in which all citizens, businesses, and institutions are actively engaged in the life-long pursuit of knowledge.

EDUCATION

- Pre-K through 12 (Public and Private)
- Libraries, Programs, Remote Learning
- Community Colleges
- Vocational-Trade School
- Universities/Advanced Degrees
- Continuing Education
- Workforce Training
- Enrichment Education



The neologism livability is an abstract noun often applied to the built environment and its contribution to the quality of life of inhabitants.

LIVABILITY

- Environment
- Recycling/Garbage/Solid Waste
- Public Safety
- Health Care
- Open Space/Parks and Recreation
- Land Use
- Historic/Cultural Amenities
- Community Character
- Convenience/Access
- Cost of Living



The built structures and systems which form the skeletal connections and support for social and economic activities in a community.

INFRASTRUCTURE

- Transportation
- Housing
- Storm Water Drainage
- Sewer
- Water
- Energy/Utilities
- Communications



Economic development is a complex multi-dimensional concept involving improvements in human well-being – however defined.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Natural Resources
- Community Development
- Business Retention and Growth
- Local Business Support
- Marketing
- Entrepreneurship Development
- Job Creation
- Market Access
- Tax Structure
- Labor Market & Recruiting Strategy





Throughout 2007 and 2008, Central leaders worked with Moore Planning Group, LLC. in the process of developing a Master Plan for their new city. MPG emphasized maintaining a careful balance between the “Four Elements of a Sustainable Community” : Infrastructure, Education, Economic Development and Livability. The work included extensive citizen workshops and review and culminated in a community Vision and a series of Goals and Objectives to guide the planning process. The Goals and Objectives are aligned with the elements and are provided here for review.

COMMUNITY VISION

Central - A community that cares. A sustainable community based in faith, education, and diversity embracing a balance of Education, Economic Development, Infrastructure, and Livability opportunities for all citizens.

The City of Central provides a combination of educators and education facilities that serve all residents using technology and innovative techniques for jobs not yet created.

Community Perception

- The City of Central was established due to the overwhelming desire of the citizens to create a community focused on providing first-rate education.
- Citizens held the perception and concern that the school facilities were not being kept up to date and many buildings had outlived their useful lifespan.
- Community leaders recognize that schools are what attract people and business to a community and it is important for the community to have control over future investment in the education system.
- The location of new schools is an important decision in the community. The perception is that schools are not always built in areas convenient to the students they serve

Reality Response

- The school system is what attracted current residents to the area and prompted them to incorporate as a City.
- As the new City grows it is critical to provide a school system that continues to exceed state and national standards and provides the community with well educated citizens and leaders of the future.
- Future school facilities should be developed in a sustainable manner both as physical structures and in terms of where they are located in the community.
- The City and Central School District have the opportunity to make schools an integral part of village and neighborhood centers.
- The master plan provides an opportunity to develop education facilities that go beyond the 12th grade and to provide technology that will enable students to obtain jobs in fields that do not exist today.
- Dedication to next generation technology will enable the City to achieve it's unique vision.

Objectives

- I The City, School Board, and business partners will provide a combination of educators and education facilities that serve all residents of the City.
- II The education system will foster work force development for jobs of today and tomorrow through the development and attraction of technology based employers and through partnerships with local and regional businesses
- III The Central education system and facilities will embrace and teach all levels of students about the environment and sustainable living practices.
- IV Education facilities will promote the use of next-generation technology to educate students for future jobs.
- V Educators and community leaders will explore the opportunity to provide higher education opportunities in the City.

Innovation

1. Seamless integration of learning between traditional schools and civic realm
2. Monitor / Publicize Test Scores
3. Building Entrepreneurship into secondary school program and physical plants
4. Turn Brainpower into Profit
5. Share Knowledge
6. Teacher Incentives
7. Health Care Alliance (K-16)



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL

The City of Central provides support for a wide range of economic opportunities, projects, programs, and policies within a diverse and sustainable employment base and high quality developments.

Community Perception

- The City of Central is a bedroom community that lacks diversity in business.
- There is a need for additional service businesses such as restaurants and entertainment venues.
- There is a need to grow the economic base in a manner that will provide employment opportunities to residents.
- The community does not want heavy industrial business due to environmental concerns.
- The preference is to attract research, technology, medical and education service industries to the City.

OBJECTIVES

Objectives

- I To create opportunities in medical and technology fields through the development of regional research and senior care facilities.
- II To utilize technology and vocational programs in the educational system to train residents for current and future employment within the community.
- III To establish a diverse and sustained employment base including a wide range of retail, restaurant and entertainment service business as well as research, technology, medical and other professional businesses incorporated into village and neighborhood centers.
- IV To provide opportunities for residents to access a wide range of employment opportunities and services in close proximity to their residence through the development of mixed-use village and neighborhood centers. This approach to community development fosters coordination between the City and economic development.

BUFFALO HUNTING vs. ECONOMIC GARDENING

Traditionally, local economic developers have sought growth by trying to lure businesses from outside a region. Hunting can produce big economic gains, but it poses lots of challenges: It's slow, uncertain and usually requires big marketing budgets and travel along with a raft of local and state incentives. It also may end up attracting highly mobile companies looking for the cheapest place to do business at the moment - and willing to leave for another town as soon as they believe the grass is greener elsewhere.

"Economic gardening" focuses on helping so-called second-stage companies with 10 to 50 employees and revenue of \$1 million to \$25 million - local businesses that have survived at least five years and are growing revenue and adding employees.

Economic gardening doesn't generate the headlines associated with big business relocations but can produce solid results within two to three years, its adherents claim. The approach is also attractive to economic developers because it doesn't require lots of capital. More than money, second-stage businesses need the kind of sophisticated marketing information, IT and management advice that much larger firms take for granted - and are often the key to expanding further.

- Barbara Miracle, Florida Trend (Excerpt)
<http://www.floridatrend.com/article.asp?aID=51943>

Reality Response

- River transportation, LSU, and State Government established the City of Baton Rouge as the major regional retail, service, and industrial employer.
- The synergy generated by these core industries enables Baton Rouge to attract other industries and will be a factor in the City of Central's efforts to develop an economic base.
- The City of Central has is a shared vision that will create a community that focuses on education, sustainability, and high quality of life as a guiding principle for community development.
- These factors become tools that the city can use to attract services and professional businesses to the city.
- The master plan should guide community efforts to retain/attract businesses that are consistent with the community's vision, goals and objectives as well as ensuring that businesses are appropriately located and designed within the City.

Innovation

- 1. Regional / Global Collaboration / Networking
- 2. Monitor / Publicize Median Household Income
- 3. Ingrained IT
- 4. Higher Learning Partner
- 5. Patent Assistance Program
- 6. Branding Consistency (National Image Challenge)
- 7. Housing Affordability / Range
- 8. Manage Growth Cycle
- 9. Attract citizens with "Learning Hunger Disease"
- 10. Comprehensive Workforce Analysis





THE INFRASTRUCTURE PARADIGM

Our communities are frequently disrupted, dissected, and visually polluted by noisy highways, monstrous transmission towers, utility poles, and drainage ditches. Undeniably, these structures deliver services essential to modern life. That their physical presence is often seen as a “necessary evil” overlooks their potential to meet an even broader range of needs. Their physical presence can, with proper planning, multiply the “quality of life” assets of communities - serving also as open space connections, recreation, and habitat preservation/continuity without cost multiplication.

This was the subject of an article entitled “Shared Wisdom” by William Morrish, FASLA, in *Landscape Architecture Magazine* which is excerpted below. These concepts rightly belong in the filter through which infrastructure improvements should be screened. The following summarizes Morrish’s “Shared Wisdom”.

Infrastructure ties everything together. Highways, transit stations, water mains, pumping stations, and treatment and disposal facilities are the visible underpinning of civic life that provide our ability to communicate and connect. The idea that you can escape ugly urban infrastructure has created the problem of sprawl.

Complex, multi-use systems that mimic ecological function and are seamlessly assimilated into their natural surroundings is the goal. Complex systems may use more land, but the costs pale next to those of maintaining concrete and steel. Infrastructure should protect and replenish natural systems, aggressively recycle products, and reclaim places. The landscape is a composition of man-made or man-modified spaces which can serve as infrastructure or background for our collective existence.

Land values are highest and crime rates are lowest wherever open space is integrated into the cultural and natural infrastructure. Merely creating an isolated park district draws no attention. Infrastructure has to be part of the basic civic equation. Well thought out infrastructure provides a social safety net and a cultural system that defines place and should inspire and shape the made landscape.

INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL

The City of Central has pro-active sustainable infrastructure and maintains a high priority on safe, functional, and aesthetically designed facilities.

Community Perception

- Traffic was noted as a major concern in the community, especially gridlock during morning and afternoon rush hour. People living in Livingston Parish add to traffic congestion as they travel through Central to and from Baton Rouge.
- Residents are concerned about the environmental and social impacts of the proposed Baton Rouge Loop Road. However, a lack of transportation capacity and infrastructure will limit the city’s ability to grow; in particular in the northern portions of the community.
- Residents are concerned about environmental problems due to potential failure or lack of maintenance of individual sewage treatment systems
- Home Owners, Property Owners, and Business Owners believe that the storm drainage and flooding hazards have been reduced by the implementation of the Comite Diversion Canal.

Reality Response

- It is important that the city develop infrastructure and transportation master plans to guide infrastructure expansion for current and future residents and businesses.
- These plans are also important tools for coordinating the construction of infrastructure in the city; such as installing sewer and water lines when roadway improvements are underway.
- The City of Central has taken a pro-active stance related to the Baton Rouge Loop Road and will work closely with citizens of Central and regional neighbors to ensure that this roadway will have minimal impacts on residents and maximize economic opportunities.
- Future growth and infrastructure improvements must incorporate innovative sustainable technology to minimize cost and waste as well as provide a high degree of protection for the natural environment.

OBJECTIVES

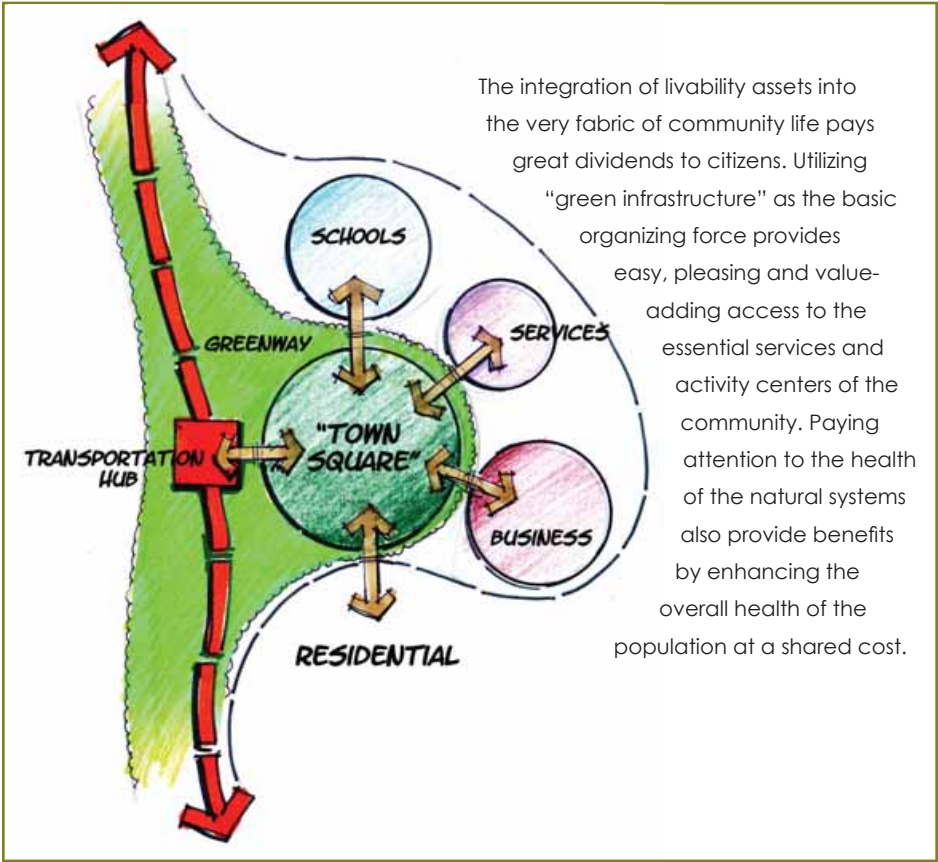
Objectives

- I To develop a safe, multi-modal transportation system that is designed in an aesthetically pleasing manner consistent with the vision of the city.
- II To develop an infrastructure master plan for the city that will guide policy and capital improvements and be coordinated with other capital investments in the community.
- III To develop infrastructure that is sustainable and is funded through enterprise programs.
- IV To attain LEED Platinum standards for all City facilities for the lowest possible energy consumption and to minimize costs associated with maintaining the facilities in order to minimize the expenses associated with infrastructure expansion.
- V To maintain a high priority on public health, safety and welfare through reducing the number of private sewage treatment plants, ensuring proper application of floodplain zoning, and protecting natural drainage areas and reducing and amount of impervious surfaces in the community.
- VI To embrace a local and regional approach to storm water and floodplain management working with local, Parish, and regional neighbors.
- VII To develop a transportation master plan that guides developers and city projects so that commercial and residential areas are easily accessible and interconnected and include transportation forms that minimize or lower energy consumption such as trails, bikeways, and alternative transportation services.
- VIII To ensure that the location and design of the Baton Rouge “LOOP Road” has minimal negative impacts on the community and provides maximum economic opportunities for developing village and town centers and employment in the city.
- IX To established an Infrastructure Action Team that provides grass roots input to the implementation of the plan.

Innovation

1. Sewer system capacity will drive most big decisions
2. Densification of Community – cost to manage / replace
3. Clean water is second only to sanitary sewer in terms of future concern





LIVABILITY GOAL

The City of Central is a healthy, safe, and sustainable community that preserves and enhances natural character and has well designed and interconnected mixed-use village and neighborhood centers.

Community Perception

- The City of Central is blessed with natural beauty, the Comite and Amite Rivers, and abundant woodland and wetland areas. Residents wish to preserve these important assets and have voiced concerns over limited access to the rivers.
- There is no real "center" to Central and lacks recreational and cultural activities for visitors.
- There is a lack of transitional housing for seniors and a need for a regional medical center in the city.
- Faith is important to the community. Some residents voiced a concern that as the community grows it will lose the moral fiber that exists now, and public safety could be threatened.

Reality Response

- The natural beauty of the river corridors, woodlots and wetlands are an important element in the City of Central. As the city grows it will be important to protect natural open space areas that benefit the environment and the community through the establishment of conservation and preservation planning policies and through implementation ordinances and codes.
- Balancing the need for new development with natural area preservation requires concentrating mixed-use and neighborhood centers in appropriate areas where transportation and infrastructure can support them and adhere to Smart Growth Principles.
- Linkages should be developed between open space areas. Village and neighborhood centers would be the optimal location for medical services and transitional housing. This type development provides opportunities for all ages of the community to interact as neighbors.
- This scheme also links the urban to the rural by providing easy access to recreation and natural areas through multi-use trails.

OBJECTIVES

Objectives

- I** To maintain a strong moral direction through faith-based interaction, and to provide public safety and community regulations that keep it safe, secure and protects property values.
- II** To develop defined town, village, and neighborhood centers where civic, cultural, education, entertainment, business and living space are combined in a mixed-use setting.
- III** To adopt ordinances defining and preserving open space.
- IV** To weave natural and recreation areas into urban centers through the development of multi-use trails.
- V** To provide access to health care services for all segments of the population.
- VI** To offer a mixture of housing for senior citizens into the fabric of the village and neighborhood centers providing easy access to public amenities, health and other important services.
- VII** To provide a wide range of parks and recreation opportunities for residents and residents of the region.
- VIII** To develop amenities that serve existing residents and attract visitors through an eco-tourism program and cultural facilities.
- IX** To incorporate sustainable development practices in all civic endeavors and promote these practices for the development of all property in the city.
- X** To support the establishment of a non-profit organization whose mission is to identify and purchase scenic and environmentally sensitive parcels of land to remain public open space for perpetuity.
- XI** To establish a citizen-based Livability Action Team that provides grass roots input to city and business leaders about the implementation of this plan.

Innovations

1. Entertainment / Venues (Art / Leisure / Sports)
2. Crime (Monitor / Publicize Risk Index)
3. Positive / Purposeful Conversation (Apathy)
4. Baby Boom living
5. Monitor / Publicize Health Statistics (County)
6. Balance civic participation and leadership
7. Communicate Project, Program, and Policy updates
8. Link and leverage assets
9. Alternative Energy
10. Conservation Planning



GOALS EVALUATION



The Community Goals for this planning process were formulated by first identifying a set of key issues. The key issues were concerns and concepts that consistently and repeatedly arose during visioning and goals discussions. The key issues are:

- The need for a CITY CENTER
- The need to improve TRANSPORTATION and connectivity
- The need to improve SCHOOL facilities
- The need to conserve GREENSPACE
- The need to attract MEDICAL FACILITIES
- The need for SENIOR FACILITIES to serve an aging population
- The need to attract more RETAIL/BUSINESS investment
- The need to improve drainage and sanitary sewer INFRASTRUCTURE
- The need to attract MIXED-USE developments
- The need to focus development in RETAIL NODES and avoid sprawl

These key issues are placed in a matrix (at right) and cross referenced with conclusions and recommendations taken from the SDAT, Market Feasibility Study, and the Community Economic Development Assessment for matches. Where there is total congruity between the Recommendation and Key Issues, entries receive double points. Where there is an indirect connection, one point. Where there is no relationship, zero points. The totals are then tallied to establish the finalized Community Goals.

GOALS ANALYSIS MATRIX

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS ↓	KEY ISSUES →									
	CITY CENTER	TRANSPORTATION	SCHOOLS	GREEN SPACE	MEDICAL FACILITIES	SENIOR FACILITIES	BUSINESS/RETAIL	INFRASTRUCTURE	MIX USES	RETAIL NODES
Expand Medical Facilities	□				■	□	□			
Establish a Town Center	■		□	□	□	□	□		□	
Create a sense of place through a defined “downtown triangle”	■				□	□	□		□	
Extend Hooper Road		■								
Recruit Community College			■							
Promote Business/Technology Parks							■			
Recruit Corporate Headquarters							■			
Recruit Retail Establishments							■			
Develop a floodplain mitigation plan				■				■		
Balance jobs and housing in downtown	■								■	
Evaluate the location and placement of schools			■							
Set aside land for future neighborhood elementary schools			■							
Dedicate “nodes” within city limits targeted for retail activity.	■						■			■
Coordinate with private developers to fuse a town center at Hooper and Sullivan	■									
Identify an interim space for public use.	■									
Develop recreation spaces in proximity to commercial areas.	□			■						□
Focus on small enterprises as a part of the city's economic development initiatives.							■			□
Protect natural drainage areas and reduce impervious surfaces in the community.				■				■		
Provide transportation network so that areas are easily accessible and interconnected		■		□					□	
Provide transportation network that includes trails and bikeways.		■		□						
Ensure that the Baton Rouge “LOOP Road” has minimal negative impacts .		■								
Develop defined town, village, and neighborhood centers.	■								□	■
Weave natural and recreation areas into urban centers.				■						
Provide access to health care facilities for all segments of the population.					■					
Offer a mixture of housing for senior citizens.						■				
Provide a wide range of parks and recreation opportunities.				■						

GOALS EVALUATION



Mayor Watts addresses participants at a visioning workshop



Central High School computer lab students assist with community mapping

GOALS ANALYSIS MATRIX

<div> <div>↓</div> KEY RECOMMENDATIONS cont'd </div>	<div> <div>→</div> KEY ISSUES </div>									
	CITY CENTER	TRANSPORTATION	SCHOOLS	GREEN SPACE	MEDICAL FACILITIES	SENIOR FACILITIES	BUSINESS/RETAIL	INFRASTRUCTURE	MIX USES	RETAIL NODES
Serve existing residents/attract visitors through eco-tourism and cultural facilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>						
Develop medical research and senior care facilities.					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Provide employment opportunities in close proximity to residential areas.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Improve Signage/Gateways		<input type="checkbox"/>								
Recruit Louisiana Businesses							<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Develop a set of near- and long-term needed improvements								<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Implement sustainable development strategies										
Protect valued scenic and cultural sites				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						
Tailor current/future roadway designs to match Central's vision		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>		
Adopt zoning and subdivision regulations		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Create a set of design standards for downtown	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								<input type="checkbox"/>	
Address physical needs of the current school building inventory			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Create a sense of place, reinforcing the idea of Central as sanctuary	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>						
Foster the development of a Central vernacular	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>					<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Embrace livable community strategies through zoning bylaws		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>				<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Provide housing affordability for all household types and age groups						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Ensure that economic development is sustainable		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>				
Offer incentives to potential developers to direct growth.	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Encourage new building and design trends.	<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide educators/ facilities that serve all residents of the City.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				
Attract technology-based employers					<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
Provide higher education opportunities in the City.			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>							
Develop transportation system designed in an aesthetically pleasing manner.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>								
Develop infrastructure master plan to guide policy and capital improvements.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Develop infrastructure that is sustainable.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
Attain LEED Platinum standards for all City and school facilities.										

GOALS SUMMARY

Based upon the analysis, a summary of the community goals used to drive planning decisions are as follows:



LIVABILITY GOAL

Retain the Sanctuary Feeling

- Preserve the rural setting including trees, open spaces, and wildlife habitat
- Protect against air, water and light pollution
- Demand sensitive architecture and infrastructure design



EDUCATION GOAL

“Make Our Schools Even Better”

- Expand and upgrade school facilities
- Work to better integrate schools into community life
- Pursue innovation in every aspect of education



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL

Increase Shopping and Business Opportunities

- Develop a City Center
- Provide space and conditions that attract great development
- Provide incentives and fast-track for great development



INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL

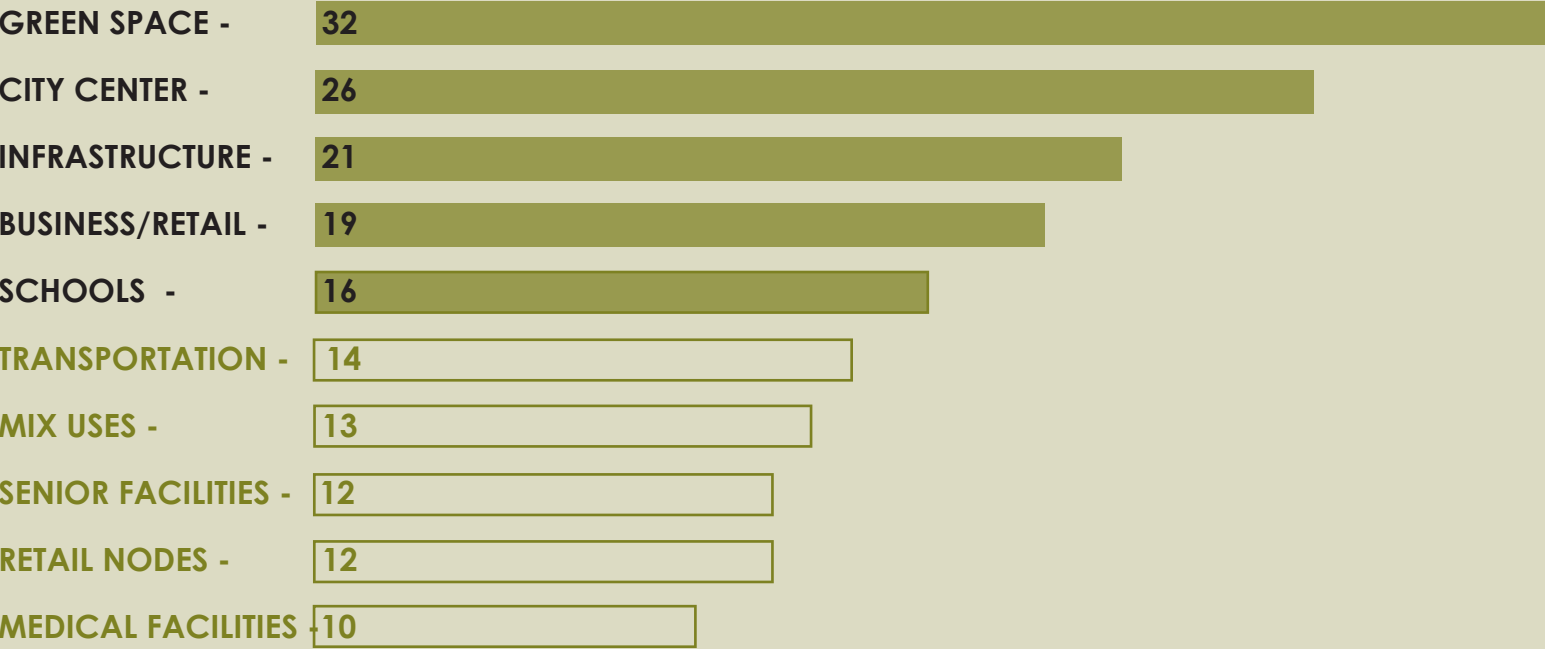
Improve Drainage and Connectivity

- Reduce flooding frequency and severity
- Reduce traffic congestion
- Expand sanitary sewer service

GOALS ANALYSIS MATRIX

	CITY CENTER	TRANSPORTATION	SCHOOLS	GREEN SPACE	MEDICAL FACILITIES	SENIOR FACILITIES	BUSINESS/RETAIL	INFRASTRUCTURE	MIX USES	RETAIL NODES
KEY RECOMMENDATIONS cont'd										
Reduce the number of private sewage treatment plants.										
Embrace regional approach to storm water and floodplain management										
Adopt ordinances defining and preserving open space.										
Incorporate sustainable development practices										
Establish non-profit organization to purchase scenic and environmentally sensitive land										
TOTALS	26	14	16	32	10	12	19	21	13	12

The protection/conservation of “green” space is the highest priority among the key issues. This issue affects or is affected by so many of the other considerations - from very practical considerations like providing for better drainage and flood-plain management, through the more poetic issue of preserving the sanctuary feeling. It also can be tied into the concept of improving connectivity with trail systems and adding value to all new development by insuring permanent “park-like” spaces and buffering between incompatible uses. Planning concepts will have to respond to this overwhelming public interest in a direct and thorough manner.



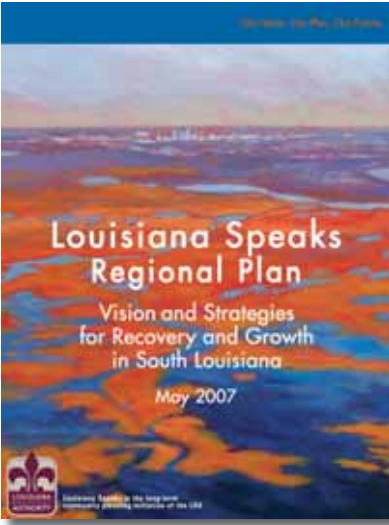
GUIDING PRINCIPLES



LOUISIANA SPEAKS REGIONAL PLAN CRITERIA

The **Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan (LSRP)** is the long-term community planning initiative of the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) which was established to provide an action plan for redevelopment within the State after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated the costal regions and metropolitan areas of Lake Charles and New Orleans in 2005. The three Vision Goals; Recover Sustainably, Grow Smarter, and Think Regionally, provide a dynamic and flexible framework for communities to enhance the qualities that provide a safe, functional, and desirable place to live, work, and play.

The key strategies for each Goal were evaluated during the development of the **Central Master Plan** to gauge Central's existing assets, determine areas which needed to be improved, and identify projects, programs, and policies that will provide Central with a stable foundation for long-term sustainable growth. A matrix score sheet was developed that compared current planning and future planning initiatives for Central to the Actions defined within the Regional Plan. An example of the evaluation sheet and evaluation criteria are illustrated below:



Evaluation Categories:

- Addressed to an extent in Overlay Plan
- Will be addressed in Master Plan
- Action(s) Performed to Accomplish Vision Goals
- Action(s) Performed to Accomplish Vision Goals

LRA and Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan and the City of Central Overlay Development Plan & Master Plan

Addressed to an extent in Overlay Plan

Will be addressed in Master Plan

Action(s) within Strategy Performed to Accomplish Vision Goals

Action(s) within Strategy to be Performed to Accomplish Vision Goals

The Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan is set to guide our state and its people on a bold new course, through our recovery and into a safer, stronger, smarter future.

Vision Goal One Recover Sustainably: Strategies for Near-Term Recovery

1

Enable our Recovery by adopting the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) Master Plan to make us safer from storms, and linking land use, transportation, and economic development policies to the CPRA's investments and strategies.

NA

1.1 Adopt the CPRA Master Plan

NA

1.2 Adopt and Fund CPRA Annual Plans

1.3 Maintain and Enforce the State Uniform Construction Code

Locate non-hurricane parts that may not be applicable to Uniform Construction Code

1.4 Elevate and Strengthen Existing Structures

Defined base flood elevations and location of existing force mains. Overlayed current 2006 FEMA Flood Data & Available LIDAR Topographic information to determine levels of inundation.

1.5 Coordinate Short Term Implementation of Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan with State Protection and Restoration Plans.

Utilized the Regional Plan & Planning Toolkit Goals & Objectives to generate a framework for the City of Central

2

Insure our Recovery by identifying obstacles to affordable insurance and acting to keep private insurance available to households and businesses.

NA

2.1 Increase Private Insurance Capacity through Statutory and Regulatory Reform

NA

2.2 Explore Short -Term Public Funding to Attract Private Insurers.

NA

2.3 Achieve Public and Individual Risk Management

NA

2.4 Model the Impact of Public Risk-Management Strategies

NA

2.5 Promote Louisiana's Progress to Insurers

3

Align Recovery and Growth Planning by coordinating locate, parish, state, and federal recovery efforts with implementation of Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan.

3.1 Prioritize Funding for Local/Parish Projects with High Recovery Value and Regional Significance

Currently coordinating with the Amite River Basin Commission, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, & East Baton Rouge Parish officials for Stormwater Management & Regional Watershed issues.

3.2 Immediately fund priority regional projects.

Integrate planning efforts of regional loop with evacuation possibilities within master plan

NA

3.3 Support Local Recovery Plans, including the city of New Orleans' Recovery Plan

3.4 Coordinate and Provide Technical Support for Municipalities and Parishes Applying for HMGP Funds.

Define areas and infrastructure for potential HMGP funding

3.5 Use the Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan to provide ongoing guidance and criteria for the allocation of Federal and State Funds

Comparing goals of Regional Plan with outcome of City of Central Overlay Plan

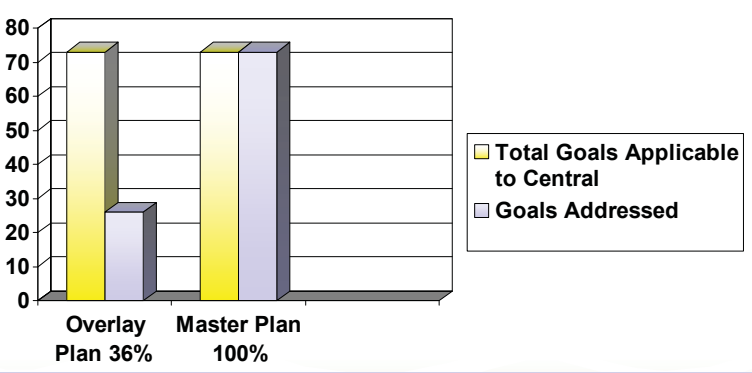
NA

3.6 Leverage GO Zone Extensions

NA

3.7 Use the Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan to provide guidance for the transfer of properties in the Road Home Corporation.

The initial Evaluation Grade for Central



Examples of key LSRP Strategies achieved are:

LSRP Vision Goal 1: Recover Sustainably

1.1.4 Elevate and Strengthen Existing Structures

Defined base flood elevations and location of existing force mains by overlaying current 2006 FEMA Flood Data and utilized Available LIDAR Topographic information to determine levels of inundation for 100 Year storm events.

1.3.5 Use the Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan to provide ongoing guidance and criteria for the allocation of Federal and State Funds

Compared goals of Regional Plan with suitability criteria and outcome of City of Central Overlay Plan.

1.4.1 Focus Public Investment into Developed Areas and Centers

Utilized GIS suitability mapping to define areas for in-fill development.

1.5.1 Enhance and Adequately Fund Workforce Development and Training Programs

Defined suitability criteria for land uses near existing schools to encourage extension of classroom teachings in real world businesses.

1.7.8 Integrate Schools and Medical Facilities into Neighborhoods

Defined suitability criteria for appropriate land uses within defined radii of schools.

LSRP Vision Goal 2: Grow Smarter

2.1.5 Purchase High-Risk and Environmentally Sensitive Land

Defined High-Risk/ Environmentally Sensitive Land for Conservation and Transferable Development Right Areas (TDR)s.

2.2.3 Develop Model Codes for Community Development

Utilized Transect Zones as a framework for Zoning Code and Site Development Regulations.

2.3.1 Prioritize Regional and Sub-Regional Transportation Projects

Mapped possible routes of proposed Baton Rouge Loop Road through Central based upon Central's established Vision and Goals.

2.4.3 Stimulate the Growth of knowledge-based industries

Defined areas suitable for "High Tech Value" Land Use Industry.

2.5.1 Set regional and sub-regional housing targets

A Market Feasibility Study was conducted to identify sustainable levels of Residential, Commercial, and High-Tech Industry for short-term, medium-term, and long-term growth in Central.

2.6.2 Nurture the development of Talent

LOUISIANA SPEAKS REGIONAL PLAN CRITERIA

The City of Central has established the “Central Independent School District” to take control of community learning facilities with the goal to be the No. 1 School District in the State of Louisiana.

2.7.4 Locate and Design Schools and Medical Facilities to create better neighborhoods and spur community development

Defined suitability criteria for appropriate land uses within defined radii of schools.

LSRP Vision Goal 3: Think Regionally

3.1.2 Integrate the vision

Conducted series of Community Visioning Workshops to receive citizen input.

3.2.4 Enhance Local Planning Capacity

Established Framework of Overlay Plan and Master Plan to be consistent with revised City of Central Zoning Codes and Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan & Planning Toolkit.

These principles were adhered to in the land use planning and result in more compact growth patterns, a focus on infill around existing development and where existing infrastructure exists, and where providing new infrastructure will be most cost effective.

COMMUNITY PRINCIPLES

Growth can provide both opportunities and challenges. All growth provides opportunities for short-term economic development through new construction, job creation, and market growth. But, if the growth is chaotic, of poor quality, and unprincipled, short-term prosperity quickly gives way to long-term problems. To bring enduring value to the community, growth through new development must take into consideration the vision for the future expressed by existing residents and landowners.

As expressed in the 2007 by the American Institute of America (AIA) program **Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT) Community Charrettes**, the community identified several goals for the future direction of the city that were used to guide the planning. These goals are listed below:

- **Develop town, village, and neighborhood centers that include a mix of housing, shopping and employment uses.**
- **Provide education and healthcare facilities that serve all residents of the city.**
- **Develop a mulit-modal transportation system that is aesthetically pleasing and is designed to reduce energy consumption through alternate forms of transportation.**
- **Ensure proper application of floodplain zoning, and the protection of natural drainage areas.**
- **Preserve open space and maintain the rural character of the city.**
- **Incorporate sustainable development practices in the development of all property in the city.**

**It should be noted that these goals were also used in the suitability criteria to generate the Sector Mapping.*

There is no doubt that growth at any level will have an effect on the character of the community. In order to manage growth sustainably, the community agreed to use Smart Growth Principles as a means to evaluate new development.

SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES

There is no doubt that growth at any level will have an effect on the character of the community. In order to manage growth sustainably, the community agreed to use Smart Growth Principles as a means to evaluate new development. The Smart Growth Principles include:

1. **Mix Land Uses** - New, clustered development works best if it includes a mix of stores, jobs and homes.
2. **Take Advantage of Existing Assets** - Public investments should focus on getting the most out of what we’ve already built.
3. **Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices** - Communities should offer a range of options: houses, condominiums, affordable homes for low income families, and “granny flats” for empty nesters.
4. **Foster “Walkable” Neighborhoods** - These places offer not just the opportunity to walk but something to walk to. A compact, neighborhood contributes to peoples’ sense of community because neighbors get to know each other.
5. **Promote Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place, Including Use of Historic Buildings** - In every community, there are things that make each place special. These should be protected and celebrated.
6. **Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty, and Critical Environmental Areas** - People want to stay connected to nature and are willing to take action to protect farms, waterways, ecosystems and wildlife.
7. **Strengthen and Encourage Growth in Existing Communities** - Before we plow up more forests and farms, we should look for opportunities to grow in already built-up areas.
8. **Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices** - People can’t get out of their cars unless we provide them with another way to get where they’re going. More communities need safe and reliable public transportation, sidewalks and bike paths.
9. **Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost-Effective** - Builders wishing to implement smart growth should face no more obstacles than those contributing to sprawl.
10. **Encourage Citizen and Stakeholder Participation** - Plans developed without strong citizen involvement don’t have staying power.





GIS SUITABILITY CRITERIA AND SCORING

To begin the GIS Suitability and Overlay Development Process, initial analysis for determining development suitability was factored using three MPG Community Planning Principles; **Safety, Function, and Aesthetics**. Existing asset data and mapping for Natural, Human, and Economic Resources were compiled using existing GIS Data obtained from the City of Baton Rouge Planning Department, LSU Atlas, Louisiana Speaks Data, windshield surveys, and interviews with Central citizens. This data provided the framework for criteria. The Overlay Development Process Framework and Program are as follows:

- Safety**
 - Limit Development in the 100 year flood plain and the Amite River Floodway
 - Encourage new development within proximity to existing emergency response infrastructure
 - Encourage new development adjacent to existing sanitary sewer infrastructure
- Function**
 - Encourage new development adjacent to existing development
 - Provide equitable opportunities and housing affordability
 - Preserve open space and indigenous vegetation
- Aesthetics**
 - Encourage conservation of areas prone to flooding
 - Encourage conservation of areas containing stands of mature over-story tree canopy vegetation
 - Establish a unique "sense of place" identity

Community Visioning and Goals

In order to "fine tune" the suitability mapping to Community's desires, an additional layer of criteria and weighting selection was based directly upon these community goals:

- Retain the Sanctuary Feeling**
 - Preserve the rural setting including trees, open spaces, and wildlife habitat
 - Protect against air, water and light pollution
 - Demand sensitive architecture and infrastructure design
- "Make Our Schools Even Better"**
 - Expand and upgrade school facilities
 - Work to better integrate schools into community life
 - Pursue innovation in every aspect of education
- Increase Shopping and Business Opportunities**
 - Develop a City Center
 - Provide space and conditions that attract great development
 - Provide incentives and fast-track for great development
- Improve Drainage and Connectivity**
 - Reduce flooding frequency and severity
 - Reduce traffic congestion
 - Expand sanitary sewer service



GIS SUITABILITY CRITERIA AND SCORING

Suitability Mapping

The GIS Suitability Mapping for the Overlay Development Plan utilized electronic data gathered and created that best represented the Program as described previously for Safety, Function, and Aesthetics and the Community Goals. This data set included eleven (11) types of existing Natural, Human, and Economic assets. The 11 GIS model features are:

- 100 Year Flood Plain
- Soils Types
- Existing Land Cover
- Existing Transportation
- Congested Roadways
- Existing Sanitary Sewer and Water Infrastructure
- Existing Schools
- Existing Parks
- Existing Churches
- Existing Neighborhood Shopping
- Existing Emergency Response

A suitability criteria matrix was developed identifying those features within each data set that have a desirability/compatibility with new development and or potential for natural resource conservation. These features were ranked on a scale of 0 to 5 with 0 being absolutely not suitable and 5 being most suitable for four types of future land use development. A total of 79 features were evaluated and scored for four (4) land use types; Residential, Light Industrial (High Tech), Commercial Mixed-Use, and Conservation.

Another level of evaluation that was added to the suitability model was the ranking or Weighted Average that each model feature influenced the resulting outcome. Since the majority of Central is located with the 100 year flood plain, and the citizens desire to protect the natural environment, the influence of the 100 year flood plain and levels of possible inundation were assigned a Weighted Average of 33 percent.

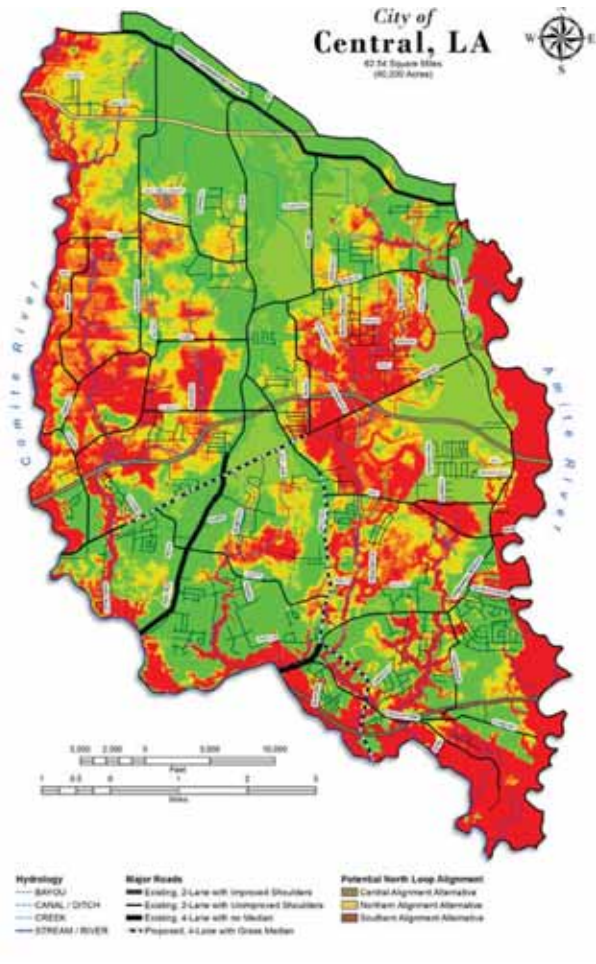
The second highest Weighted Average, 20 percent, was assigned to sanitary sewer and water infrastructure which promotes connection to existing development and utilities.

The third highest Weighted Average , 13 percent, was assigned to existing transportation infrastructure. The majority of the existing roadway network consists of 2-lane roads with no shoulders. Many are located within existing developed areas and are not designed to safely handle increased sub-urban densities. Many roadways are also heavily congested during peak daily travel times.

City of Central GIS Suitability Criteria	RESIDENTIAL	LIGHT INDUSTRY	COMMERCIAL - MIXED USE	CONSERVATION	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
I. FLOOD PLAIN					33%
a. Zone X - Outside 100 Yr Flood	5	5	5	3	
b. Zone AE - 100 yr Flood with no base flood elevation determined	4	4	4	3	
c. Zone A - 100 yr with Base Flood Elevation determined - 1 foot inundation	4	4	4	3	
d. Zone A - 100 yr with Base Flood Elevation determined - 2 foot inundation	3	3	3	3	
e. Zone A - 100 yr with Base Flood Elevation determined - 3 foot inundation	2	2	2	3	
f. Zone A - 100 yr with Base Flood Elevation determined - 4 foot inundation	1	1	1	3	
g. Zone A - 100 yr with Base Flood Elevation determined - 5 foot inundation	0	0	0	5	
h. Areas within Amite River Floodway	0	0	0	5	
2. SOILS					10%
BoA	2	2	2	5	
CcA	2	2	2	5	
DaA	3	3	3	3	
DrB	5	5	5	3	
FeB	5	5	5	3	
FrA	2	2	2	5	
GeA	2	2	2	5	
GtA	2	2	2	5	
KwA	5	5	5	3	
LoB	3	3	3	3	
OpA	5	5	5	3	
OpB	5	5	5	3	
OUA	2	2	2	5	
Pt	2	2	2	5	
Qt	3	3	3	3	
SaB	3	3	3	3	
ScA	3	3	3	3	
ScB	5	5	5	3	
ScD	5	5	5	3	
UrA	0	0	0	3	
W	0	0	0	5	
3. EXISTING LAND COVER					4%
a. Open Water	0	0	0	5	
b. Developed, Open Space	3	1	1	1	
c. Developed, Low Intensity	1	1	1	1	
d. Developed, Medium Density	1	1	1	1	
e. Developed, High Intensity	1	3	3	1	
f. Bare Rock/Sand/Clay	5	5	5	2	
g. Deciduous Forest	3	3	3	5	
h. Evergreen Forest	3	3	3	5	
i. Mixed forest	3	3	3	5	
j. Shrub/Scrub	5	5	5	3	
k. Grasslands/Herbaceous	3	3	3	3	
l. Pasture/Hay	5	5	5	1	
m. Row Crops	5	5	5	1	
n. Forested Wetland	0	0	0	5	
o. Emergent Herbaceous Wetlands	0	0	0	5	
4. EXISTING TRANSPORTATION					13%
a. 2 Lane / no shoulder - 0 to 100 feet	1	3	3	5	
b. 2 Lane / no shoulder - 100 to 300 feet	3	1	3	3	
c. 2 Lane / no shoulder - 300 feet greater	3	1	1	3	
d. 2 Lane with shoulder - 0 to 100 feet	3	3	5	5	
e. 2 Lane with shoulder - 100 to 300 feet	3	3	3	3	
f. 2 Lane with shoulder - 300 feet greater	5	1	3	3	
g. 4 Lane with median - 0 to 100 feet	0	5	5	5	
h. 4 Lane with median - 100 to 300 feet	3	5	5	3	
i. 4 Lane with median - 300 feet greater	5	5	3	3	
j. 2 Lane roadway with heavy congestion during peak travel times	1	1	1	1	
5. CONGESTED ROADWAYS					4%
a. half mile	1	1	1	1	
b. one mile	3	3	3	3	
c. greater than one and one half miles	5	5	5	5	

6. EXISTING SANITARY SEWER AND WATER INFRASTRUCTURE					20%
a. 0 to 500 Feet from forcemain	5	5	5	3	
b. 500 to 1000 Feet from forcemain	4	4	4	3	
c. 1000 to 1500 Feet from forcemain	3	3	3	3	
d. 1500 to 2000 Feet from forcemain	2	2	2	3	
e. 2000 to 2500 Feet from forcemain	1	1	1	3	
f. 2500 Feet and Greater from forcemain	0	0	0	3	
g. Existing sanitary sewer gravity lines.	1	1	1	1	
7. EXISTING SCHOOLS					4%
a. one mile	5	1	5	5	
b. three miles	3	3	3	3	
c. greater than three miles	1	5	1	1	
8. EXISTING PARKS					3%
a. one mile	5	1	5	5	
b. three miles	3	3	3	3	
c. greater than three miles	1	5	1	1	
9. EXISTING CHURCHES					3%
a. one mile	5	1	5	5	
b. three miles	3	3	3	3	
c. greater than three miles	1	5	1	1	
10. EXISTING NEIGHBORHOOD SHOPPING					3%
a. one mile	5	3	5	5	
b. three miles	3	5	3	3	
c. greater than three miles	1	1	1	1	
11. EXISTING EMERGENCY RESPONSE					3%
a. one mile	5	5	5	5	
b. three miles	3	3	3	3	
c. greater than three miles	1	1	1	1	
					100%

Risk of Flooding



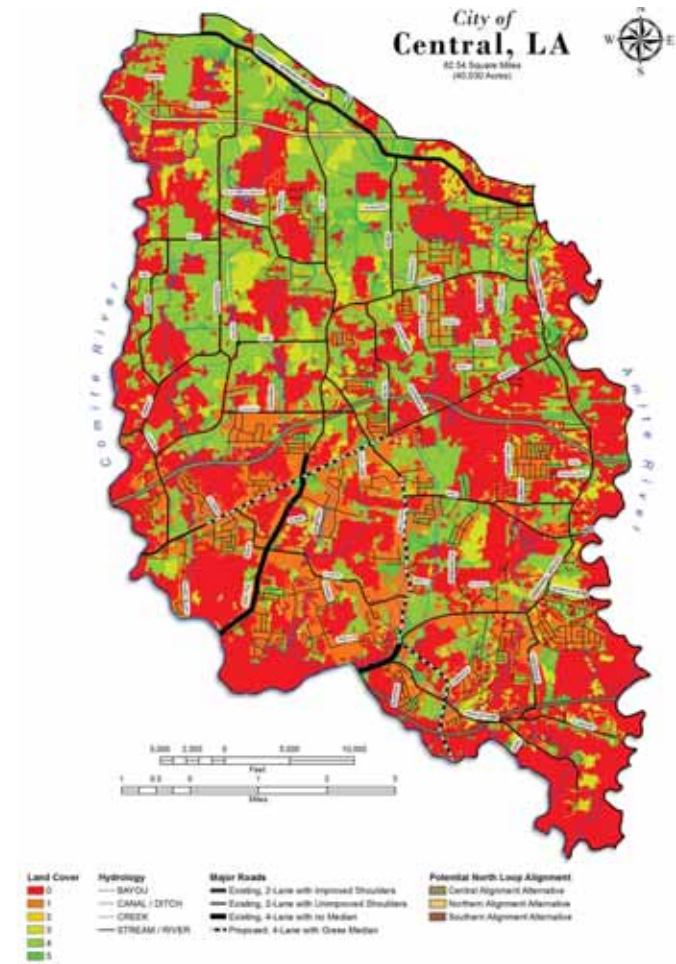
Analyzing 2006 FEMA Flood Map and LIDAR Topographic Data, a map was created identifying areas of Central that are at risk for inundation during rain events, and thus less desirable for future development. Areas located adjacent to the Comite and Amite Rivers, as well as areas along Beaver Bayou and Blackwater Bayou were identified to be at the highest risk for flooding.

Soil Bearing Capacity



Soils were examined for their development capacity. Characteristics such as engineering bearing capacity and infiltration rates related to stormwater management were considered in the evaluation of twenty-one soils. In general, soils tested throughout the city rated primarily as moderate for development, with some isolated areas to the north and south rating as suitable.

Land Cover



Land cover was evaluated for developed and undeveloped areas. Development priorities were placed on areas of disturbed or bare land, and grasslands, whereas forests and wetlands were determined not as suitable for development but as areas most important for conservation, to maintain the rural character of the city. The city includes a good mix of both types land cover.

Using criteria developed from community goals, natural, cultural and infrastructure features were mapped individually. The series of figures on this and subsequent pages shows a sampling of the mapping that was done and how the criteria affected the mapping of suitability characteristics.

Some criteria were established on the basis of scientific practicality - some soils, for example, support construction activities more readily than others. Others were heavily influenced by Community Goals. The role of Community Goals can be seen in the following example considering Land Cover analysis:

Forested areas/wooded wetlands were given very low scores in the suitability criteria for practical reasons and because preservation of these features responds directly to multiple community goals including:

- Preserve the rural setting including trees, open spaces, and wildlife habitat
- Protect against air, water and light pollution
- Provide space and conditions that attract great development
- Reduce flooding frequency and severity

Smart Growth Principles played a greater role in development of criteria for determining distances - it is more suitable to have neighborhoods closer to schools, churches and neighborhood shopping thereby reducing driving distances and encouraging biking and walking.

SUITABILITY MAPPING LEGEND

- Least Suitable
- Unsuitable
- Marginally Suitable
- Suitable
- Most Suitable

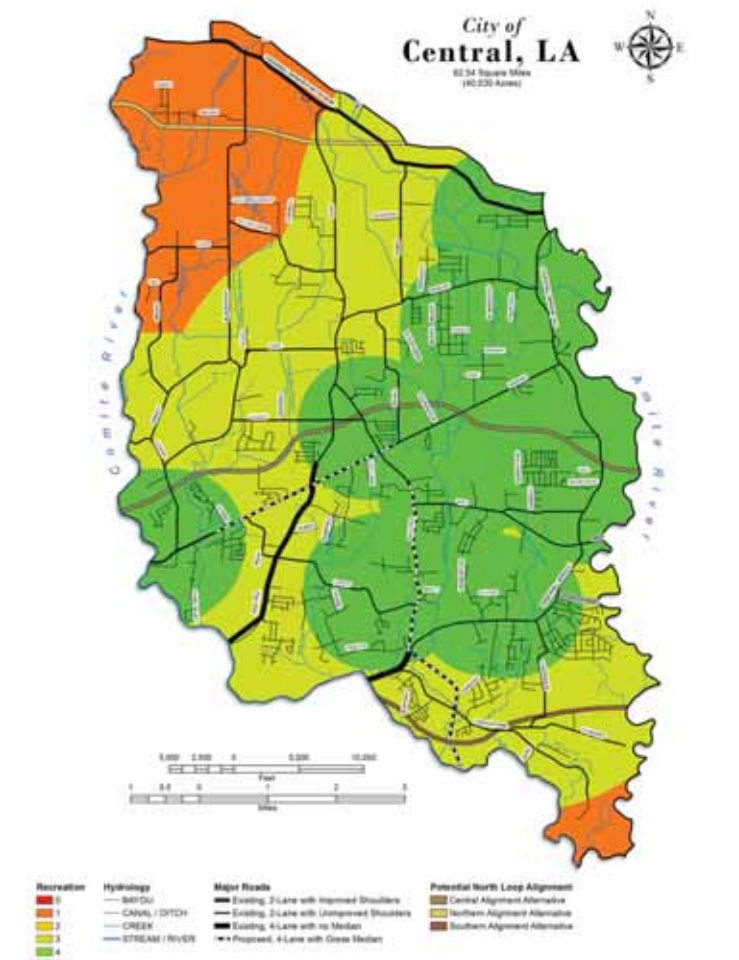
In general, green areas are suitable for new development and red areas are not, with are varying degrees in between. It should be understood that even if an area is suitable under one condition, another more highly ranked condition might nullify or reduce its suitability.

Existing Parks

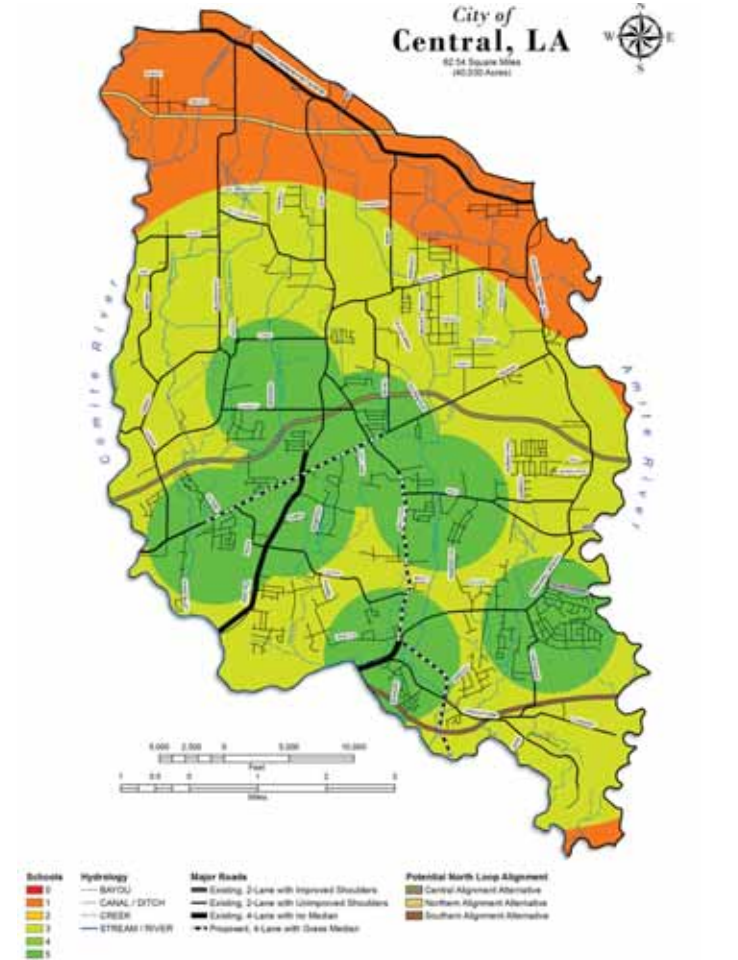
Existing Schools

Existing Places of Worship

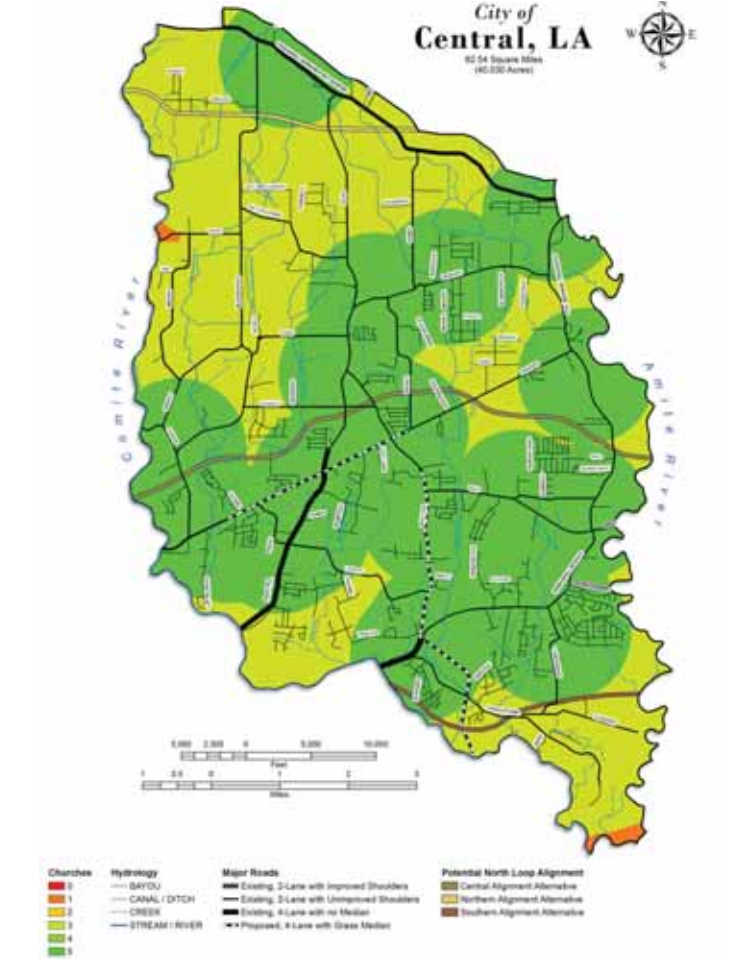
Existing Emergency Response



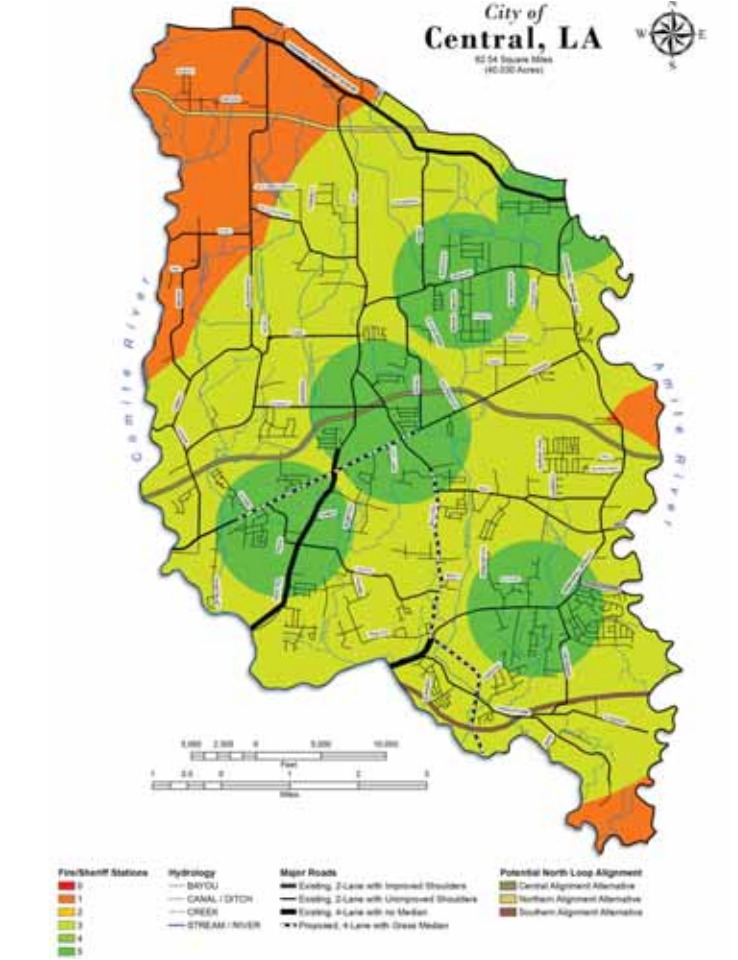
Development suitability was examined based on distances from existing recreational facilities. Sites within one mile of a facility were considered the most suitable, while land within three miles was rated as only moderate for development. This mapping also aids in identifying areas in the city in greater need of recreational opportunities.



Education plays an important role in any community. When evaluating Central, land most suitable for development was determined as sites within one mile of an elementary, middle, or high school. Central's schools are primarily located in the middle or southern portions of the city where the northern portion of the city lacks schools within five miles.

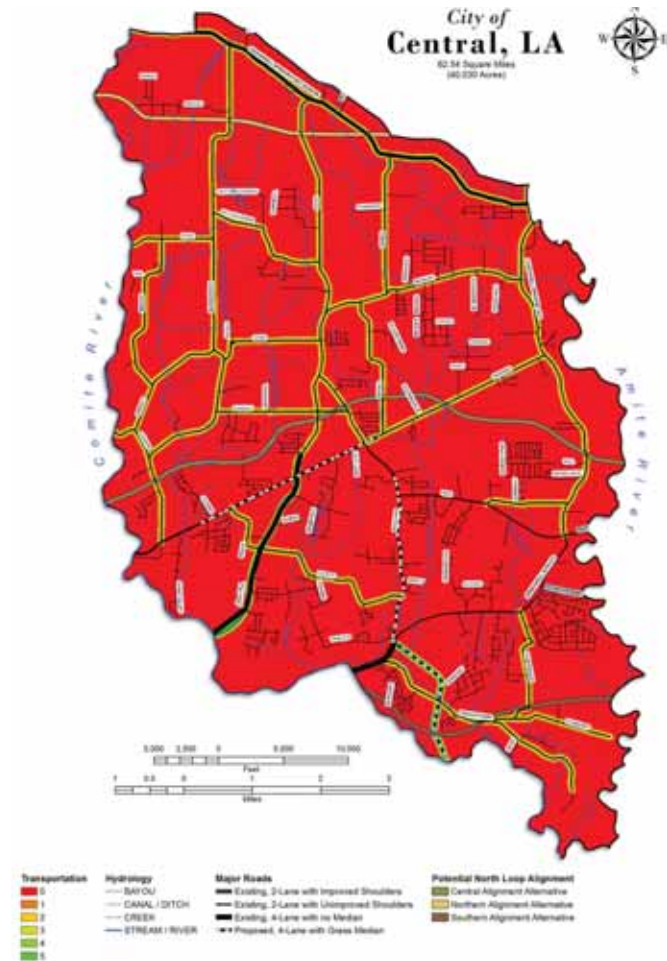


Areas in Central were assessed on their livability and diversity by their proximity to a place of worship. Due to the large quantity of places of worship found in Central, only very small areas of land are located more than five miles away from such an establishment.



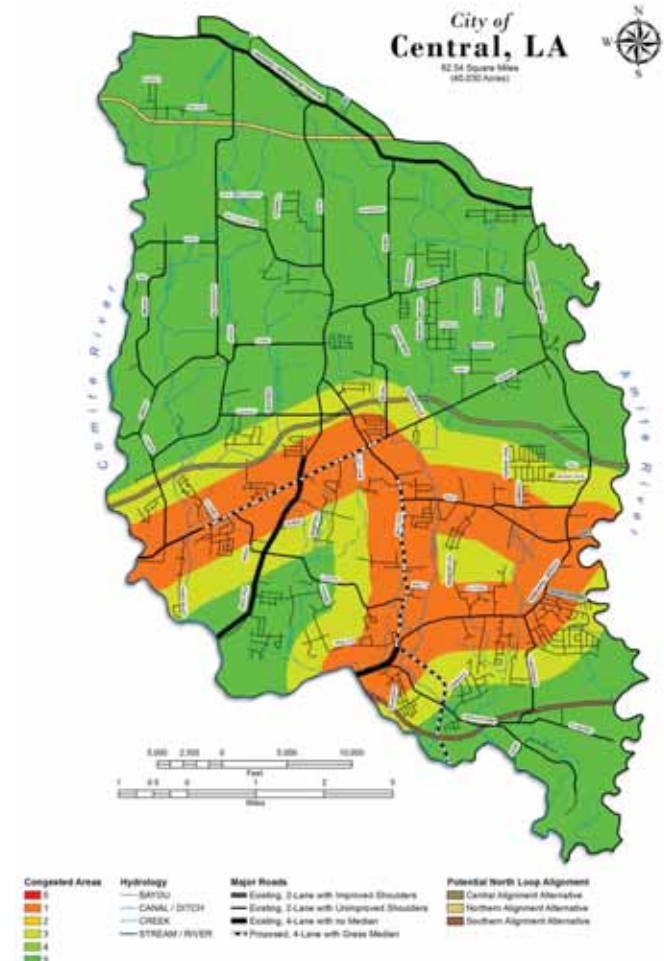
Sites were examined for future development based on their location to emergency response services. Lands within one mile of a fire station and EBRP Sheriff substations were considered most suitable. The analysis highlights the northern portion of the city as underserved in regards to emergency response facilities.

Existing Roadways



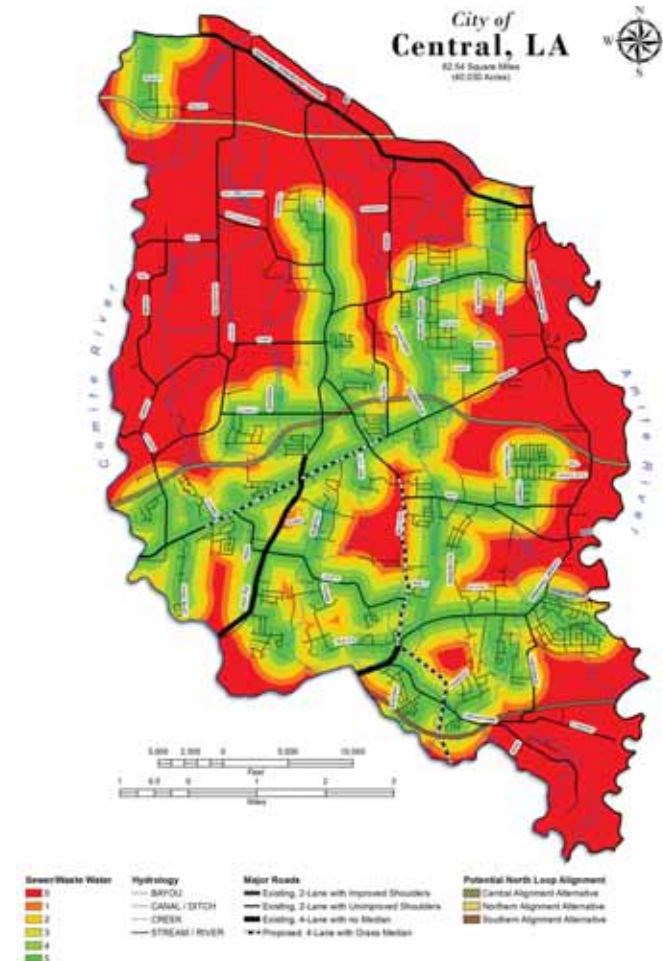
Roads were examined in Central based on their hierarchy and connectivity. After examining the current road network, the analysis determined that because of a lack of road hierarchy, little land is conducive for development based on the existing system.

Existing Congested Roadways

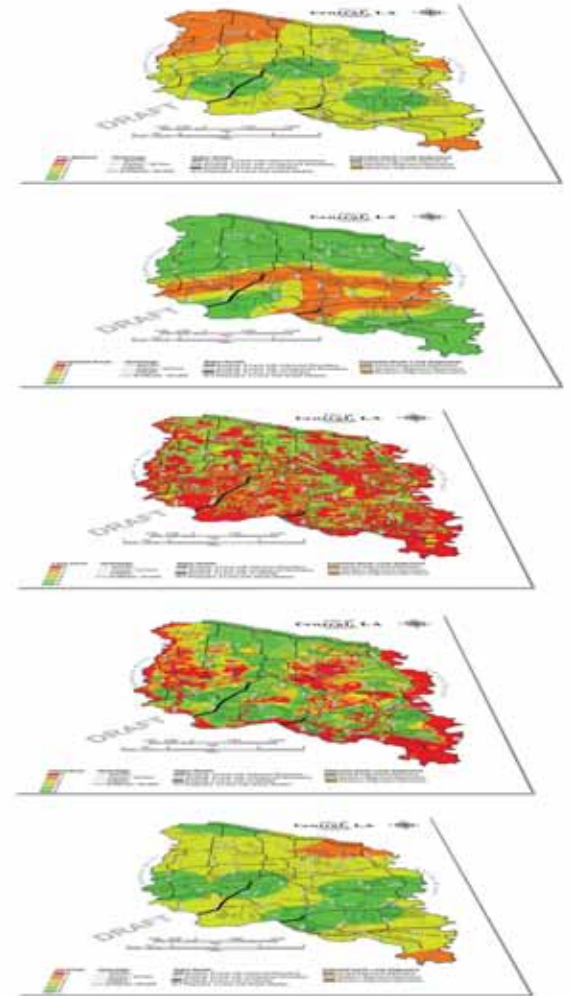


Roads were examined in Central based on their existing congestion. Roads that currently have the heaviest congestion were deemed less suitable for additional development. Land adjacent to the congested roadway and less than one-half mile from the roadway was determined as the least desirable for future growth.

Existing Sanitary Sewer



Developable land was analyzed based on its connectivity to the existing wastewater system. Areas determined as most suitable were those located in close proximity to a forcemain line, with distances between 0 to 500 feet being the most attractive for development. Due to the cost of adding lines, land 2,500 feet or further away from a forcemain were rated as unsuitable.



Overlay Composite

Once completed, analysis maps were layered using GIS technology and, using the ranking criteria, areas with consistently high or low suitability ratings were magnified. Medium rated areas were either accentuated or muted depending upon the combined layers. This process produces an objective portrait of the city land area in terms of overall suitability.

DEVELOPMENT SUITABILITY

Suitable Development Composite

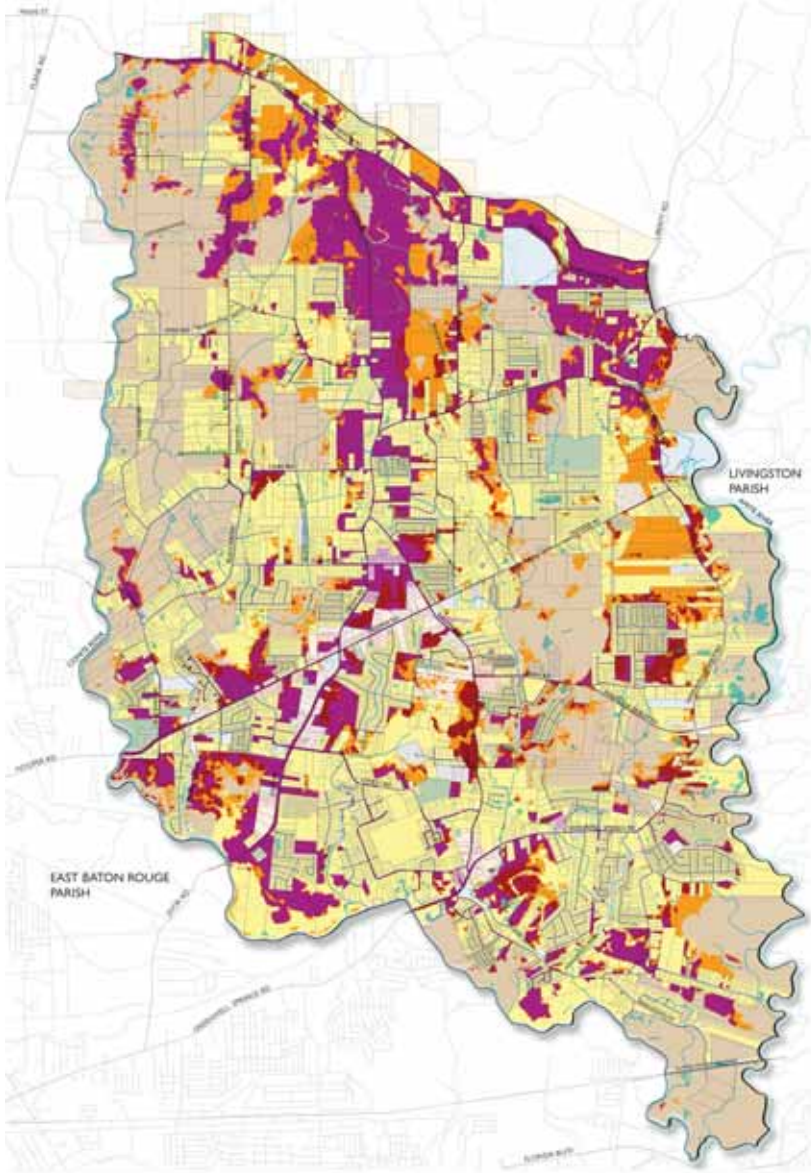
The resulting composite of suitable areas for new Residential, Light Industry, and Commercial Mixed-uses were placed on the existing East Baton Rouge Land Use Plan (Horizon Plan) at the time Central was officially designated a city in 2007.

This composite (as shown to the right) focuses potential suitable land for development throughout the city but mainly in clusters in the northern part of the city. These areas typically are outside the 100 year flood plain, and are in areas where minimal disturbance to the existing natural areas would be required.

The northern part of the City is the least dense part of the city and utility infrastructure is minimal. This area is well suited for long-term growth as the city builds utility infrastructure, emergency response, and transportation capacity.

There is also a strong relationship of suitable areas for development adjacent to existing roadway corridors that contain 4 lanes of vehicular traffic in the central and western part of the City. Hooper Road and recently widened Joor Road are two existing roadways that have direct connections to the employment centers and major “big-box” shopping centers in the City of Baton Rouge. The lack of employment centers and variety of shopping venues has contributed to Central citizens traveling outside their community. The promotion and establishment of high-quality development will reverse this current daily out-migration trend.

It is important to understand that although the analysis shows these areas as suitable for new development, it does not follow that it would be desirable to do so. In order to comply with Smart Growth Principles and Community Goals another layer of analysis will be applied in the Sector Mapping which follows.



RESIDENTIAL, LIGHT INDUSTRY (HIGH-TECH), AND COMMERCIAL MIXED-USE COMPOSITE

- Legend**
- Existing Rural as designated by Horizon Plan
 - Existing Residential (Densities Vary)
 - Suitable for future Residential
 - Suitable for future Commercial
 - Suitable for future 'High Tech' Industry

OPEN SPACE SUITABILITY

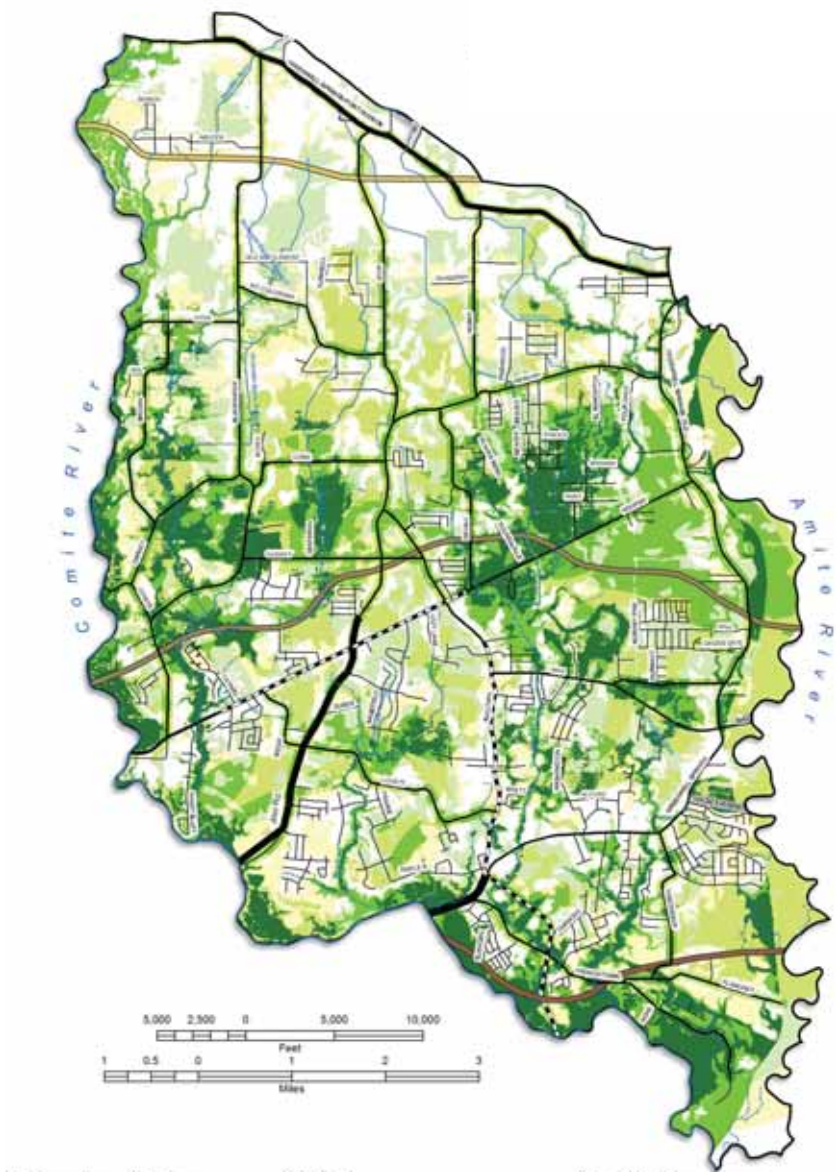
Suitable Conservation Composite

The Suitable Conservation Composite illustrates those areas within the City that should be considered unsuitable for new development, or that should have special limitations to the type and extent of that development. Areas illustrated with the dark green are areas most suitable for conservation or greater development limitations. Areas in white or light green as areas of existing development or potential future development locations.

As stated earlier, the City of Central is considered by the majority of citizens as a “rural” community. The conservation of natural drainage ways, and over-story tree canopies are critical to maintaining the rural atmosphere. The composite focuses suitable areas for conservation along both the Amite and Comite Rivers, and in drainage corridors north and south of Hooper Road.

Many of the existing roadway corridors contain over-story canopies. As future development occurs, the City should consider incorporating greater landscape setbacks to protect the existing vegetation or greater landscape requirements for new developments.

Also, areas along internal drainage ways are highlighted as potential conservation areas to maintain natural drainage, protect existing wildlife corridors, and to include possible greenway trails to provide another level of recreation for the citizens of Central.



CONSERVATION COMPOSITE

- Legend**
- Existing Development or least suitable for Conservation
 - ↓
 - Most suitable for Conservation

OVERALL LAND DEVELOPMENT SUITABILITY

Final Suitability Mapping Analysis

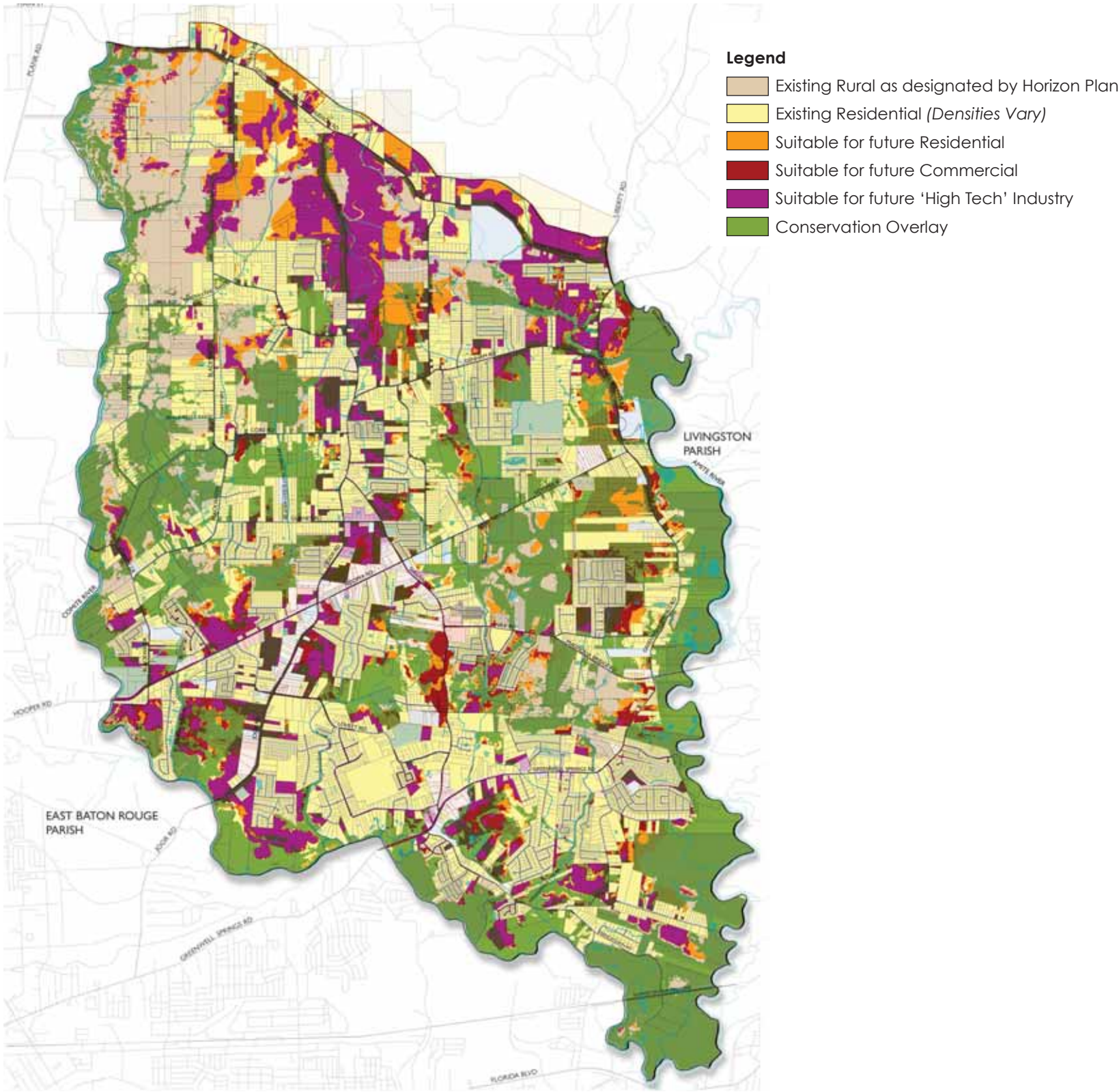
Final analysis combines conservation suitability and potential development suitability mapping to create the Overall Land Development Suitability Plan. This plan provides the framework and serves as a land use planning tool for the Phase One Master Plan and future master planning efforts.

The green “Conservation Overlay” layer is placed on top of the Development Suitability layers illustrating which areas should incorporate a higher level of planning and attention to the existing natural conditions above and beyond what is currently practiced within East Baton Rouge Parish. Requiring additional conservation planning in future development will attract high-quality developments creating a community that will promote itself as the place to live, work, and play and nurture a sustainable economic base for the City of Central.

As the City grows and additional detailed mapping is developed and asset features are documented in GIS data formats, this initial analysis should be updated and refined with future master plan updates. Greater detailed electronic information will refine the suitable areas for conservation and development within the City.



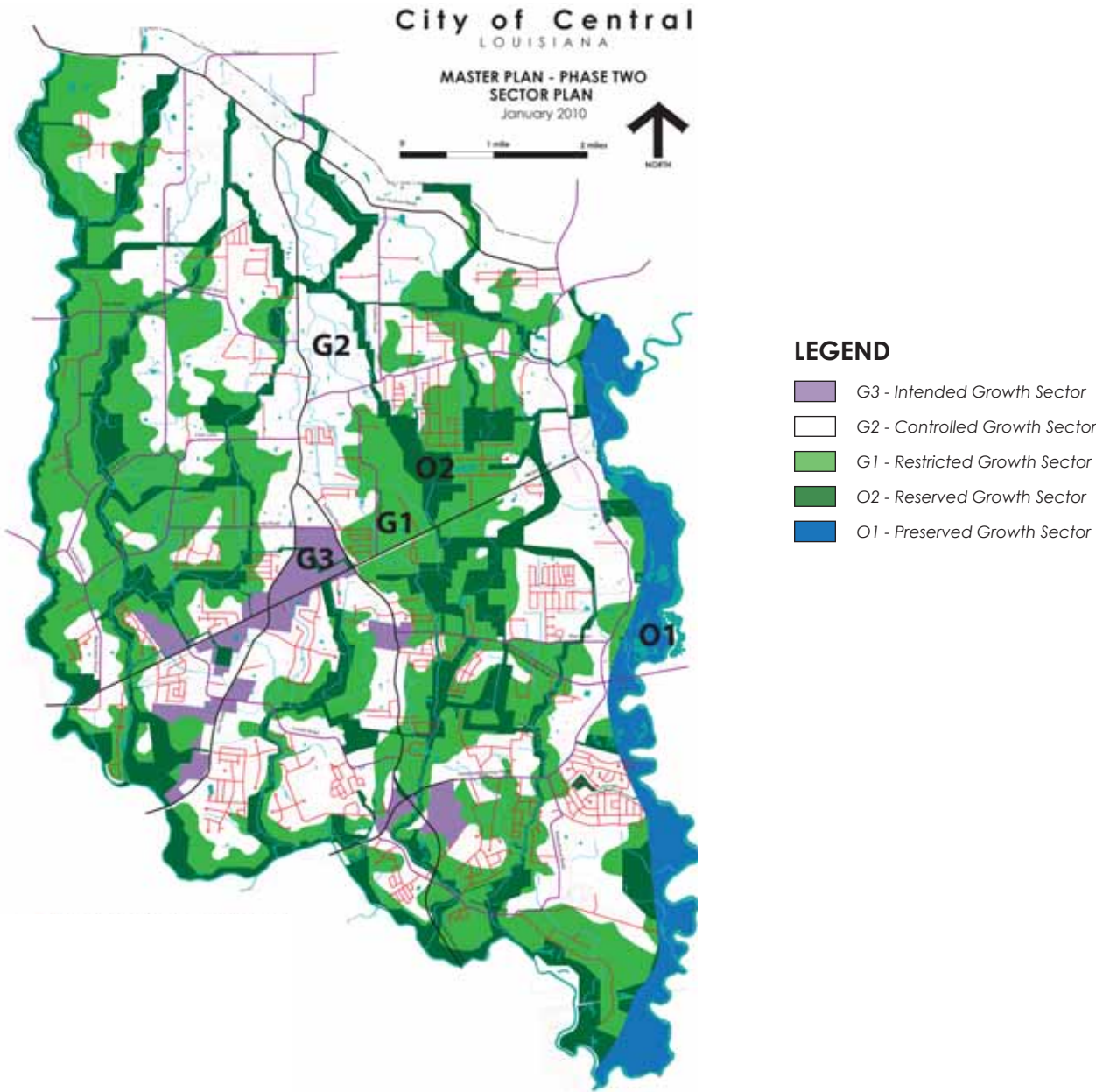
Traditional development practices devastate the land in order to maximize profit to the detriment of the community.



SECTOR PLAN

The Sector Plan represents the final step in the suitability mapping. With its graduated levels of intensity, it provides the City with a powerful tool that helps guide sustainable development by directing it into areas with the greatest potential for success, and at the least long-term expense to the City. It serves as an economic development tool that can be used to attract positive development by beginning to establish policy guidelines about how the City can support new development in priority areas, and discourage ill-advised development in areas that are not suitable at this time.

New development in unsuitable areas creates many challenges; it may pose a danger to existing or future users, it may create traffic and drainage problems, or require expensive infrastructure upgrades. Development in unsuitable areas can also result in a slow and steady degradation of the environmental and scenic and rural quality of the community.



The Sector Plan is a condensation of the suitability process translated into a policy tool. It establishes five sectors:

- G3 Intended Growth Sector**
These are areas that match high suitability with adequate infrastructure resources and can be developed in compliance with the Smart Growth goals of the community. Most often, intended growth areas are located and in conjunction with existing development. Infill development is encouraged because it brings high-value new development/ redevelopment to areas with established community systems, infrastructure, and social fabric. These are the highest priority areas in which to direct new growth. Development in these sectors can be strongly encouraged by offering a variety of incentives such as deferred taxes, tax credits, permit fast-tracking, density bonuses, and public participation in infrastructure improvements, upgrades and construction.
- G2 Controlled Growth Sector**
Characterized by areas with slightly less suitability and/or existing infrastructure resources typically adjacent to and just beyond existing development. Streamlining the permit process, density bonus options and offering assistance with infrastructure development are tools that might be used to encourage development of these high-priority areas.
- G1 Restricted Growth Sector**
These are areas that have considerable pressure for development, but due to either poor overall suitability or lack of existing infrastructure should be carefully monitored to limit new development in the near term. Uncontrolled new development in these areas could quickly overrun the ability to provide essential services at a reasonable cost. In this sector, projects should be considered individually. Only very high-value, transformative developments should receive special assistance with regard to permitting and development assistance. Other projects that have minimal beneficial impact or increase sprawling, unconnected development should be discouraged.

- O2 Reserved Growth Sector**
This sector is primarily composed of lands either in agricultural or forested uses, with increased risk for flooding and where new development could adversely impact existing development or valued cultural amenities. These areas could be designated as sending areas for development rights to the Intended Growth and Controlled Growth Sectors, should such a scheme prove useful in Central.
- O1 Preserved Growth Sector –**
These lands are typically wetland areas that are densely wooded and include lands within the Amite River Floodway. These areas are subject to frequent flooding, have little or no supporting infrastructure, and should be conserved for their traditional undeveloped uses. In addition, these lands provide exceptional recreational and tourism opportunities that can help to diversify the City's economic base. New development should be strongly discouraged in these areas.

TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

Transfer of development rights programs allow landowners to transfer the right to develop one parcel of land to a different parcel of land. Generally, TDR programs are established by local zoning ordinances. In the context of sensitive area conservation, TDR is used to shift development from conservation areas to designated growth zones closer to municipal services. The parcel of land where the rights originate is called the "sending" parcel. When the rights are transferred from a sending parcel, the land is restricted with a permanent conservation easement. The parcel of land to which the rights are transferred is called the "receiving" parcel. Buying these rights generally allows the owner to build at a higher density than ordinarily permitted by the base zoning.

For more detailed information see the links at http://www.plannersweb.com/sprawl/solutions_sub_tdr.html



SYNTHESIS LAND USE

The process for establishing the Proposed Land Use Plan for the City of Central begins with the Horizon Plan, the Land Use Plan for East Baton Rouge Parish that once regulated new development in the City. As mentioned previously, Central citizens felt that this plan did not adequately represent their needs and values.

The next phase of the process involved the mapping and evaluation of existing community assets and preparation of suitability criteria based upon Smart Growth Principles, Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan Guidelines, and most importantly, Community Goals.

The analysis generated the Suitability Plan that maps areas of the City that are most suited for new development based upon the criteria.

From there, the planning progressed to the Sector Plan which identifies priority development areas from the City's point of view taking into consideration the ability of existing infrastructure to serve new development as well as the short and long-term cost for provision and maintenance of services. In essence, the Sector plan identifies where new development is wanted in the near future. What remains to be determined is what kind of development should occur in these high priority areas.

From there, the process proceeds to a mapping of existing land use in order to determine existing development patterns so that when proposed land uses are integrated into the fabric of the community, existing and traditional uses can be respected. The final step is the delineation of the proposed new uses, arranged in a manner that will satisfy a variety of conditions as shown at right.

The arrangement and amount of each land use is determined by consideration of several layers of guiding principles that serve to structure development patterns based upon shared criteria:

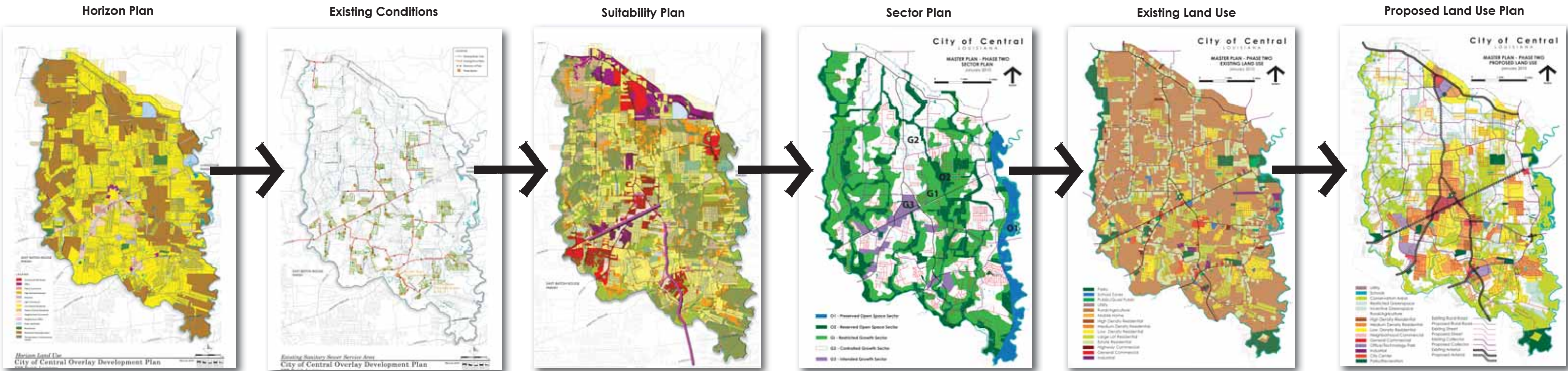
COMMUNITY GOALS require that land use distribution retains the sanctuary feeling, improves drainage and connectivity, increases shopping and business opportunities, and improves educational opportunities.

SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES require that there be a range of housing choices, a strong sense of place, mixed land uses, preserved open space, walkability, and that new growth be directed toward existing infrastructure.

LOUISIANA SPEAKS REGIONAL PLAN requires that our communities be more sustainable from a social and economic standpoint and more resilient against natural disasters.

MPG PRINCIPLES require that growth and new development improve of enhance community safety, function and beauty. Finally, the market feasibility component must be taken into account which provides guidelines regarding the capacity of the Central community to absorb and grow portions of the regional market that are essential for economic sustainability. As has been mentioned previously, retail and job growth are essential for the future of Central. These must be supported by existing and new residential development. A careful balance must be maintained to ensure the overall health of the community.

This section of the report details the synthesis of these factors and culminates in the Proposed Land Use Plan for the City.



EXISTING LAND USE

The starting point for drafting a proposed land use plan is mapping of existing uses. The historical absence of major automobile and railroad transportation arteries through the City has contributed to sparse commercial development and a predominance of residential development, most of which is clustered around existing public roads and highways. Several large subdivisions have also been built over the past twenty years. Some of these, surprisingly, have even been constructed wholly or partially within the 100 Year Flood Zone. In general, the development pattern is chaotic and inefficient from a sustainability standpoint.

As a departure point for the Proposed Land Use Plan, existing land uses were mapped using classifications that respond to a wide variety of development forms and attempt to translate subtleties that will be helpful in converting existing assets and community goals into desirable and sustainable patterns. The greatest variety is seen in residential development. Six different land use classifications are used to provide an accurate picture - from apartments to estate homes. These classifications are based upon the density of existing development and not necessarily upon the value nor intensity of development. Therefore, based strictly on density and use, a small farmstead home on a 20 acre parcel is treated the same way as a palatial estate on a five acre parcel. The key consideration is that they both provide residence for a single family and occupy at least one acre.

It should also be noted that on the existing land use map parcels are not necessarily mapped as contiguous entities. If only a small part of a large parcel is developed, that part may be shown as a Residential use while the remaining undeveloped parcel will be shown as Rural/Agricultural. This is done to provide an accurate accounting of how the land is actually developed, and more accurately depict its future potential for development.

The following is a listing of land use classifications used and a brief definition of the use.

Rural/Agriculture

This land use designation is used to describe areas that have not been subdivided into individual commercial, industrial or residential lots and upon which development in the form of structures is minimal. Scattered homes and outbuildings such as barns and sheds are typical. For the purpose of this land use planning effort, this use was also assigned to the undeveloped (typically rear) portions of parcels of five acres or greater area. Most of the area is either in pasture land or in wooded lowlands. Some wooded areas contain trees of forestry value. These lands and the open, undeveloped spaces they provide are responsible in large part for the "rural" feeling that is frequently cited as a major community asset. It represents approximately 62% of the total area of the City.

High Density Residential

This land use designation is used to describe properties with apartments and condominiums, typically multi-story units with common parking areas. It represents approximately .15% of the total area of the City. Most of the existing high density residential units were built on major road frontage parcels as part of subdivisions.

Mobile Home

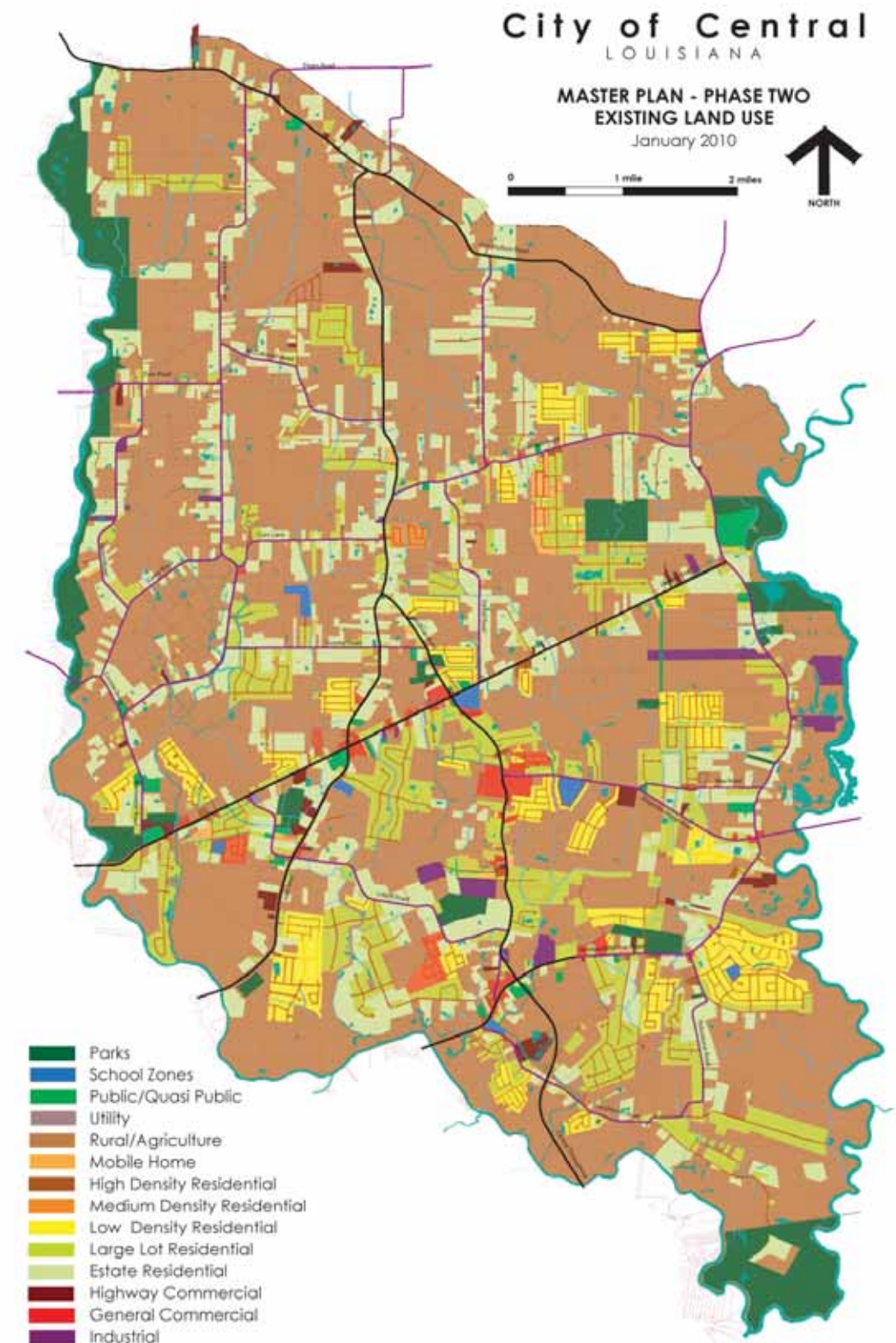
This land use designation is used to describe properties occupied by mobile homes. It represents approximately .25% of the total area of the City. Only a small percentage of these are located in traditional Mobile Home Parks. The rest are placed on residential lots and frequently within neighborhoods with more traditional site built homes.

Medium Density Residential

This land use designation is used to describe properties occupied by homes at a density of four or more per acre. It represents approximately .20% of the total area of the City. These small lot residential properties are typically found within uniform subdivisions and, in one case, as part of a PUD.

Low Density Residential

This land use designation is used to describe





properties occupied by homes at a density between two and four per acre. It represents approximately 5% of the total area of the City. These medium lot residential properties are typically found within uniform subdivisions and provide housing for a majority of the Central City population.



Large Lot Residential

This land use designation is used to describe properties occupied by homes at a density between one and two per acre. It represents approximately 8% of the total area of the City. Most of these large lot residential properties are found within uniform subdivisions although some are located on individual lots along previously existing roadways in rural areas. A surprisingly high number of these properties are located inside the 100 Year Flood Zone.



Estate Residential

This land use designation is used to describe properties occupied by homes at a density between one per acre and one per five acres. It represents approximately 12.0% of the total area of the City. Approximately half of these large lot residential properties are found within uniform subdivisions. The rest are located on individual lots along previously existing roadways in rural areas. Many of these have detached outbuildings such as barns, sheds and workshops.



General Commercial

This land use designation is used to describe properties occupied by facilities and/or operations used for indoor wholesale, retail and office activities. It represents approximately 1% of the total area of the City. Facilities vary from large retail stores to small shops and food service facilities. Larger facilities are located at major roadway intersections in the form of shopping centers. Architectural design and quality vary greatly. There is no regional retail currently located in the City.



Highway Commercial

This land use designation is used to describe properties occupied by facilities and/or operations



used for wholesale, retail and service activities typically with outdoor storage of equipment and products. These operations usually can generate environmental impacts (noise, dust, etc...) that affect neighboring properties. It represents approximately 1% of the total area of the City.



Industrial

This land use designation is used to describe properties occupied by facilities and/or operations used for manufacturing and assembly activities, usually with a major outdoor component. It represents approximately 3% of the total area of the City. Most of these facilities are materials assembly, storage and transfer operations. There is no known heavy manufacturing within the city limits.



Schools

This land use designation is used to describe properties occupied by public and private schools and associated facilities. It represents approximately .75% of the total area of the City. There are currently five public and three private school facilities operating in the City. The Central Community School System is currently in the process of planning a new school facility near the center of the city which will represent an important addition to education on the community.



Parks and Recreation

This land use designation is used to describe properties occupied by park and recreational facilities. It represents approximately 3% of the total area of the City. Most of these are public parks operated by BREC. However the designation also includes several privately operated outdoor recreational facilities. It also shows several proposed facilities - Greenwell Springs, Hooper Road, and mitigation properties along the Comite River.



Public - Semi Public

This land use designation is used to describe properties occupied by public and semi-public facilities including churches, and government offices and facilities. It represents approximately .5% of the total area of the City.



EXISTING LAND USE



A typical Public-Semi Public facility



A typical General Commercial development



A typical Low Density Residence



A typical Highway Commercial development



Both of these are Estate Residential when occupying more than one acre - undeveloped portions are classified as Rural/Agricultural

CITY OF

CENTRAL
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FLOODPLAIN - OPEN SPACE

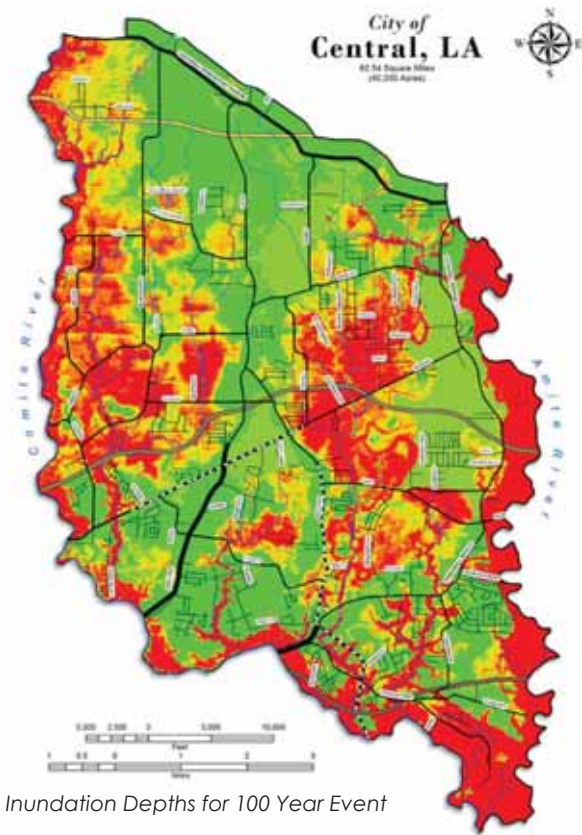
During the Suitability Mapping described earlier in this report, it was noted that large areas within Central are within the 100 Year Flood Zone and present a relatively high risk for new development. These areas also serve as flood basins and if left unobstructed can provide considerable safety benefits for existing and future development in the community. The community also has expressed a strong interest in preserving open space as a community character and environmental asset. Based upon these criteria the first element mapped is the open space.

Greenways

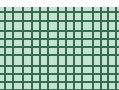
This designates areas where inundation during a 100 year storm event would exceed four feet. These areas are considered unsuitable for development and should be protected from development in order to insure adequate flood basin area. Lands located in the greenway designation can be utilized for agricultural purposes - pasture, forestry, etc... - but severe restrictions should be placed upon any activity that would diminish floodplain capacity or contribute to degradation of water quality. Also included in this classification is the flood way of the Amite River. The recommended use for these areas is as public greenspace, including parks and trails serving to create non-vehicular connections throughout the City. Some areas may also be considered as suitable for designation as conservation easements and permanent open space within the framework of Conservation Subdivisions when appropriate. However, maintaining the connectivity capability should be the highest priority.

Parks

This land use designation is used to describe properties occupied by public parks and related recreational facilities. Most of these areas are owned and operated by BREC. Other properties with closely related activities are also shown as this land use. Also shown are lands proposed for acquisition as wetland mitigation for the Comite River Diversion Canal project, since these lands could easily be programmed to comply with the intended land use in this classification.



Restricted Greenspace

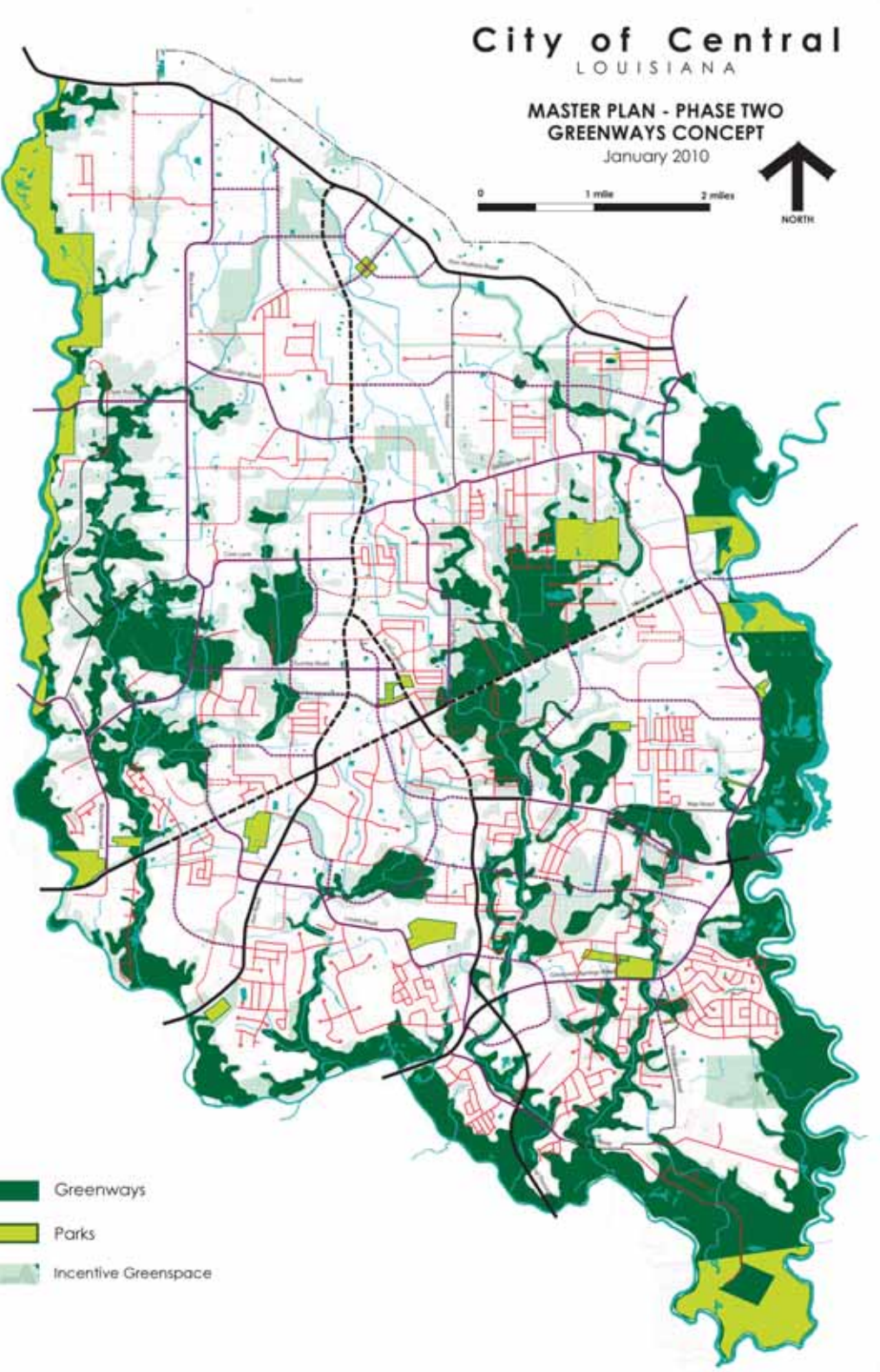


This designation is used to describe properties within the 100 Year Flood Zone with inundation levels of less than four feet. The density of development in these areas should be restricted. In some cases, when an underlying land use designation is shown, density bonuses should be given priority over development in these areas.

Incentive Greenspace



This designation is used to describe undeveloped properties that would best serve the overall community if preserved as open space. Development proposals for these properties should be reviewed for compliance with the overall greenspace development plan and judged accordingly.



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DENSITY ZONES

The next issue to be addressed in the land use synthesis is identifying density zones. Density zones were determined based upon six contributing factors:

- Development Suitability Analysis that identified which areas of the City were most suitable/unsuitable for new development;
- Character of Existing Development where existing development dictates the overall density of the area;
- Capacity of Existing Infrastructure, most notably transportation and sanitary sewer infrastructure;
- Community desire to adopt Smart Growth practices that stress infill, walkability, and density;
- Community desire to respect and preserve an open space network and maintain some of the rural character.
- The need to stimulate retail and job generating business.

With these factors in mind the plan identifies three Density Zones in the city.

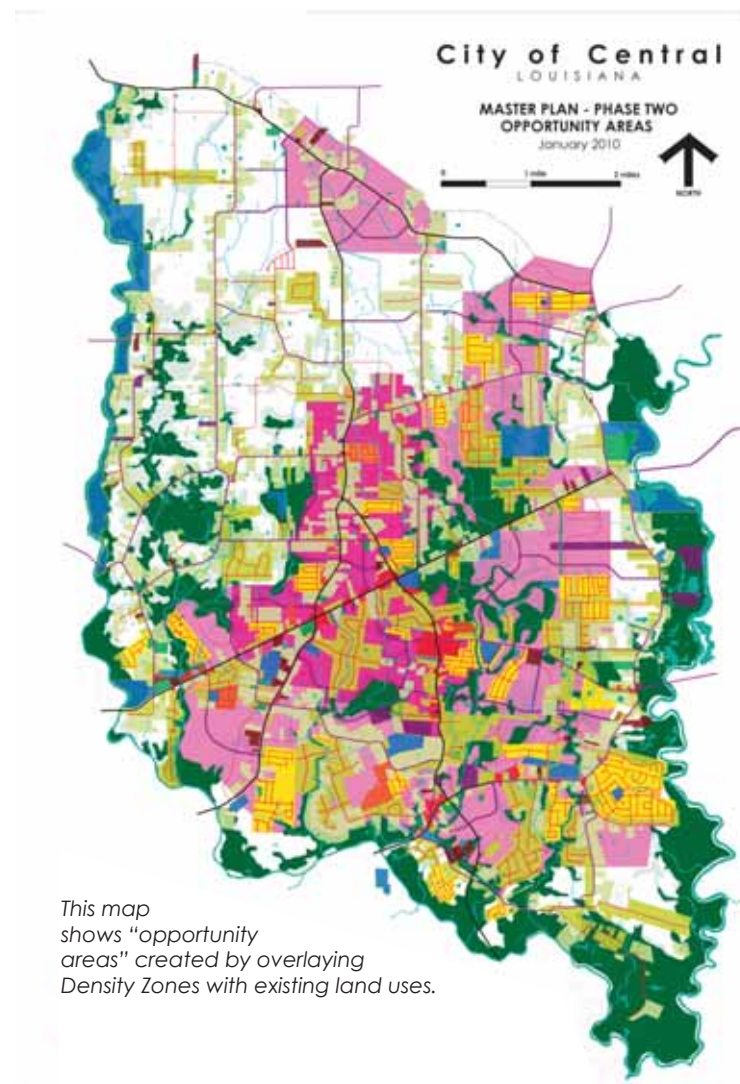
Core Density Zone

This zone identifies the core of the city where the highest density of development will be focused.

Located near the geographic center, the area will be easily accessible to all parts of the community. It also encompasses the area that currently has the most intense development, and is served by infrastructure systems with the highest capacity. Building up the density of this area will also help to provide conditions to support incremental increase in retail and office development in the City. Finally, the Core Density Zone is surrounded by greenway and priority greenspace areas which serve to add value to the core area while providing a buffer between it and less densely developed areas.

Moderate Density Zone

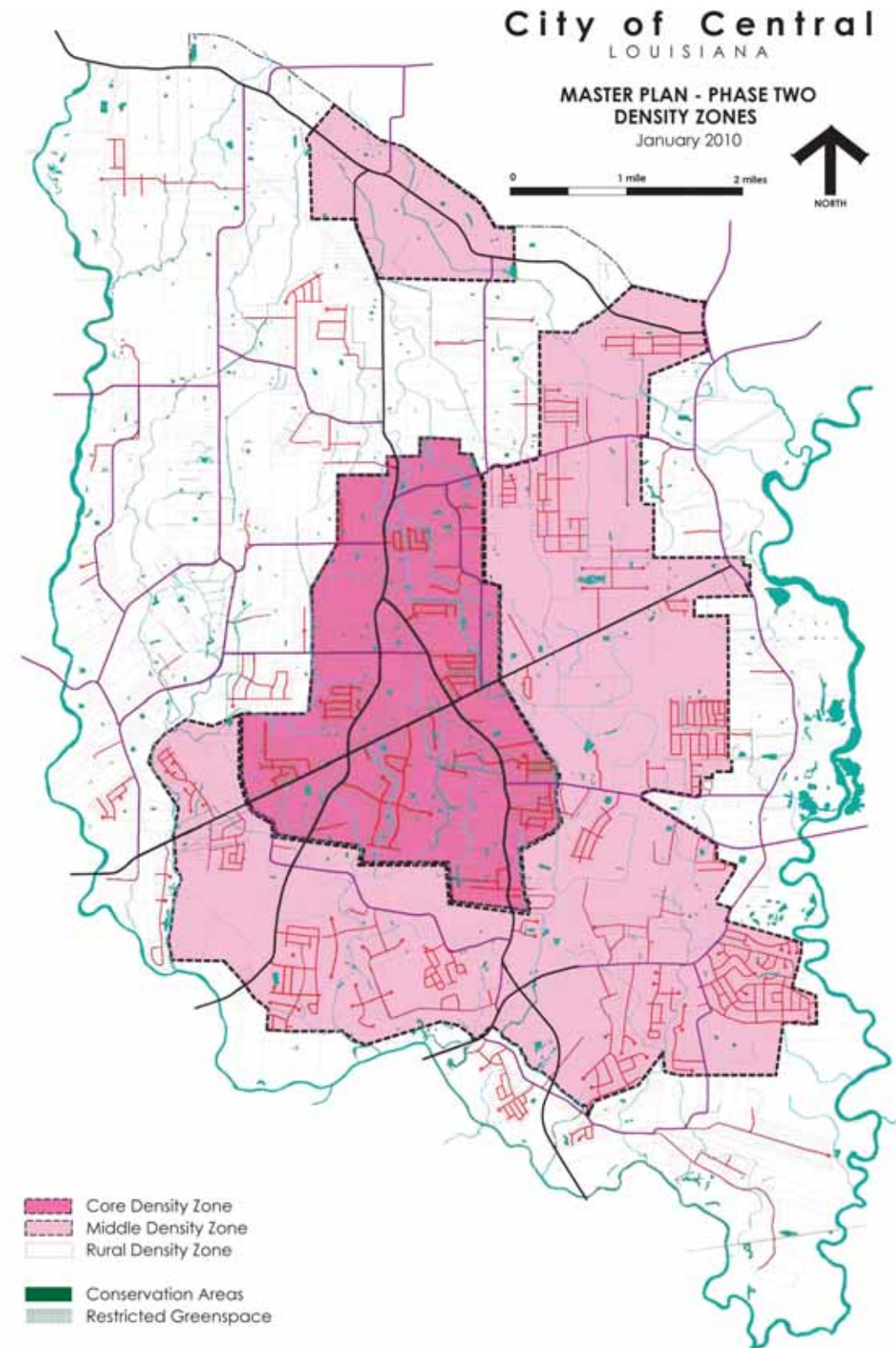
This zone identifies areas that, based on existing character and suitability factors, will provide space for moderate density development. While much of this area is currently residential in nature, this zone should also be considered for some additional commercial and office development as long as it does not detract from (compete with) development within the core area. It also identifies an area in the northern part of the city that should be considered



for future moderately dense development, but only when adequate infrastructure facilities can be assured.

Rural Density Zone

This zone identifies areas that should continue to preserve the rural character of the City. Due to lack of infrastructure capacity and suitability issues, these areas should maintain a very low density. Focus should be placed on providing appropriate retail and transportation services and acquisition of important flood management resources.



CORE ZONE LAND USE

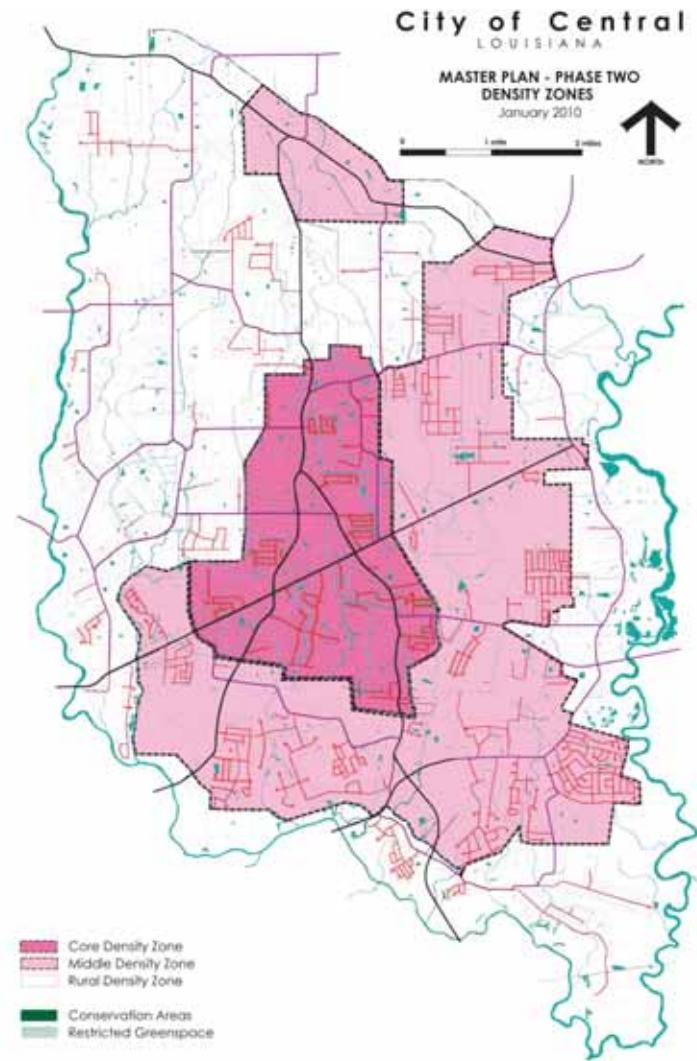
Proposed land uses in the Core Zone are a combination of residential and commercial of the highest intensity classifications including:

- High Density Residential - including apartments, townhomes and condominiums;
- Medium and Low Density Residential - including small and medium size lot single family residential development;
- General Commercial - including retail and office development of moderate size; and
- City Center - including mixed use development that might include multi story live/work units, public facilities, and retail development with a "downtown" character.

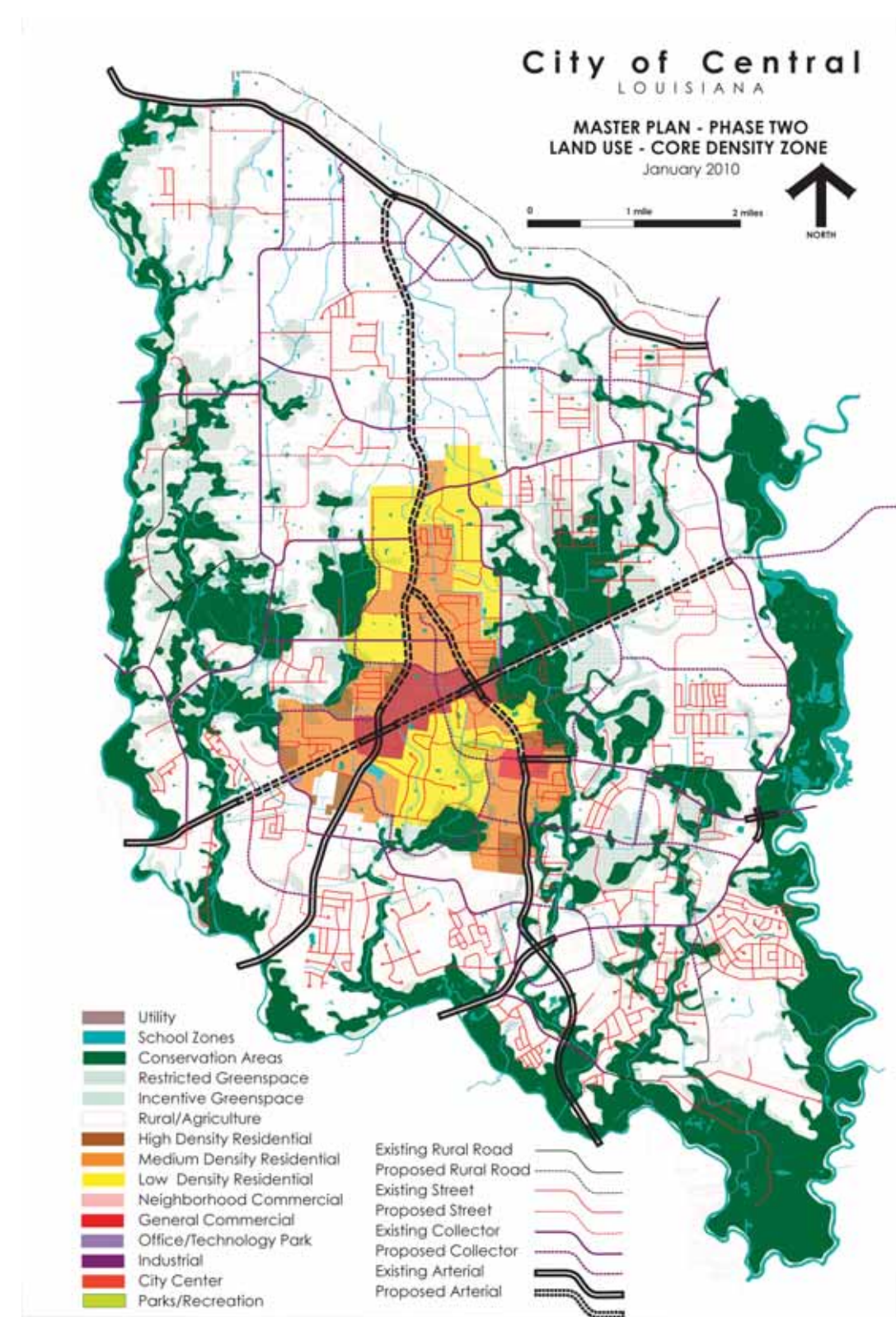
Utilization of these land use classifications to increase the densities in this zone is of critical importance for several reasons. First, in order for the City Center concept to be viable, a "critical mass" must be established. Current population density in Central does not support the creation of what will have to be a regional commercial development. Adding to the population in well designed residential developments around the Core area will provide the necessary market potential.

The next consideration is a response to Smart Growth Principles that emphasize quality, density, and walkability. Providing adequate population within close proximity of the City Center will help reduce the need for automobile use and expensive and inefficient parking space requirements. At average densities, the proposed land use in the Core Zone will provide for an additional 800-1000 residential units within a two mile radius of the City Center. Provision of bike lanes and walking trails should be a required element for development plans in this zone.

Finally, concentration of densities will reduce the need for and the cost of public infrastructure in the Core zone, shifting the financial burden more toward the development. This will bear careful monitoring, however, in order to prevent escalation of costs beyond the point of reasonable returns for investors. Careful and innovative approaches and design solutions will be required to achieve the desired balance.



A typical mixed use commercial development for the City Center



MODERATE ZONE LAND USE

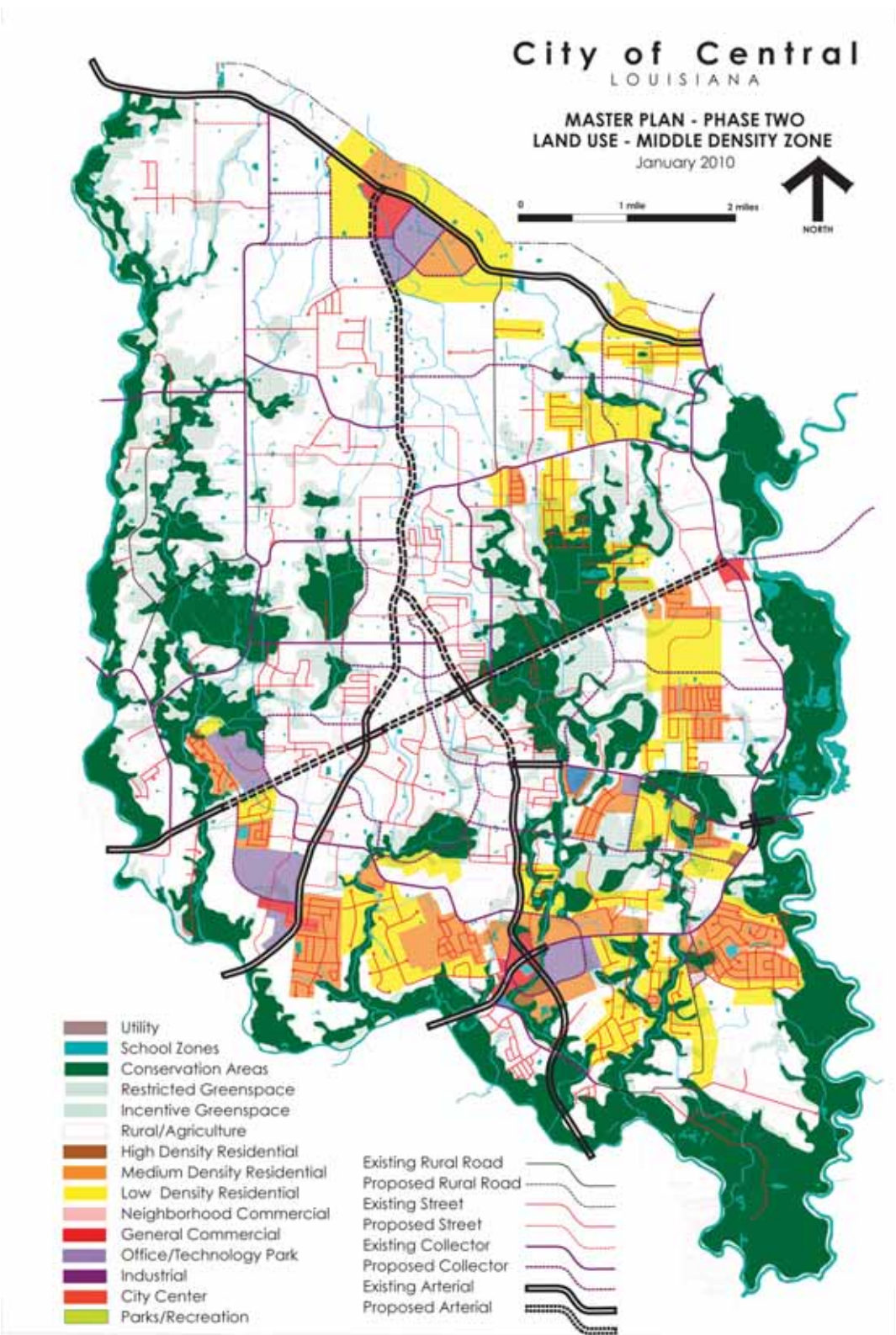
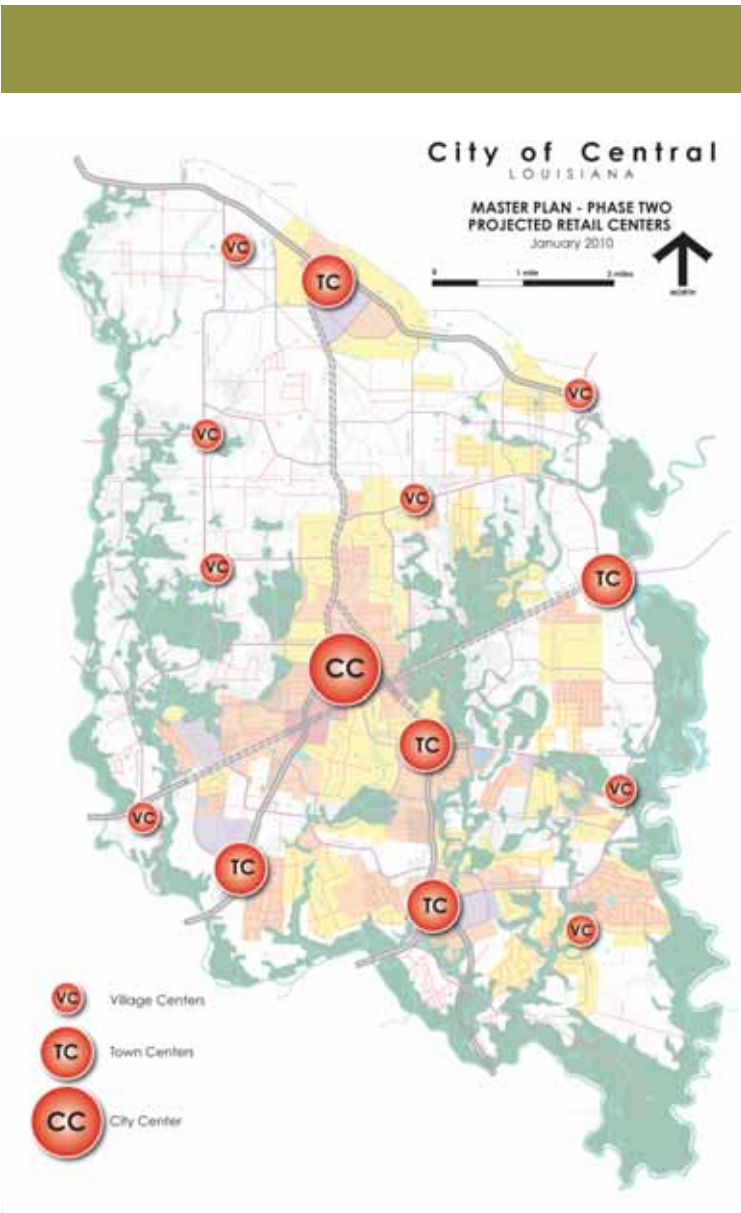
Land uses in the Moderate Zone are a combination of residential and commercial of moderate intensity classifications including:

- Medium and Low Density Residential - including medium size lot single family residential development;
- General Commercial - including retail and office development of moderate size assembled to form Town Centers; and
- Office/Technology Park - including developments that provide for scientific/medical/technological research facilities, and research and development of products and services not including heavy industrial processes.

Utilization of these land use classifications in the Moderate Zone serves several purposes. First, it provides for continuing development of residential and commercial properties that are compatible with existing development and infrastructure assets. Creation of commercial nodes at important intersections also supports the assembly of "Town Centers" that provide shopping opportunities within close proximity to major residential areas while not detracting from the City Center. It should be noted that most of the residential area in this zone is already built-out,

This zone also includes several important areas of the Office/Technology Park classification. The intent of this land use is to attract and provide space for high value job producing office parks of exceptional design quality to provide good jobs in the community. The areas are located for access to transportation infrastructure and availability of larger tracts of land capable of supporting larger campus-like developments.

The Moderate Zone also includes a substantial area in the north-central part of the City. This area, indicated as highly suitable for new development is mapped with a Town Center, Office/Technology Park and surrounding residential development. The area takes advantage of relatively good transportation infrastructure but will require substantial investments in other public facilities before it can be developed. For that reason this area should be considered a future development area.



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RURAL ZONE LAND USE

Land uses in the Rural Zone include residential and commercial development of low intensity classifications including:

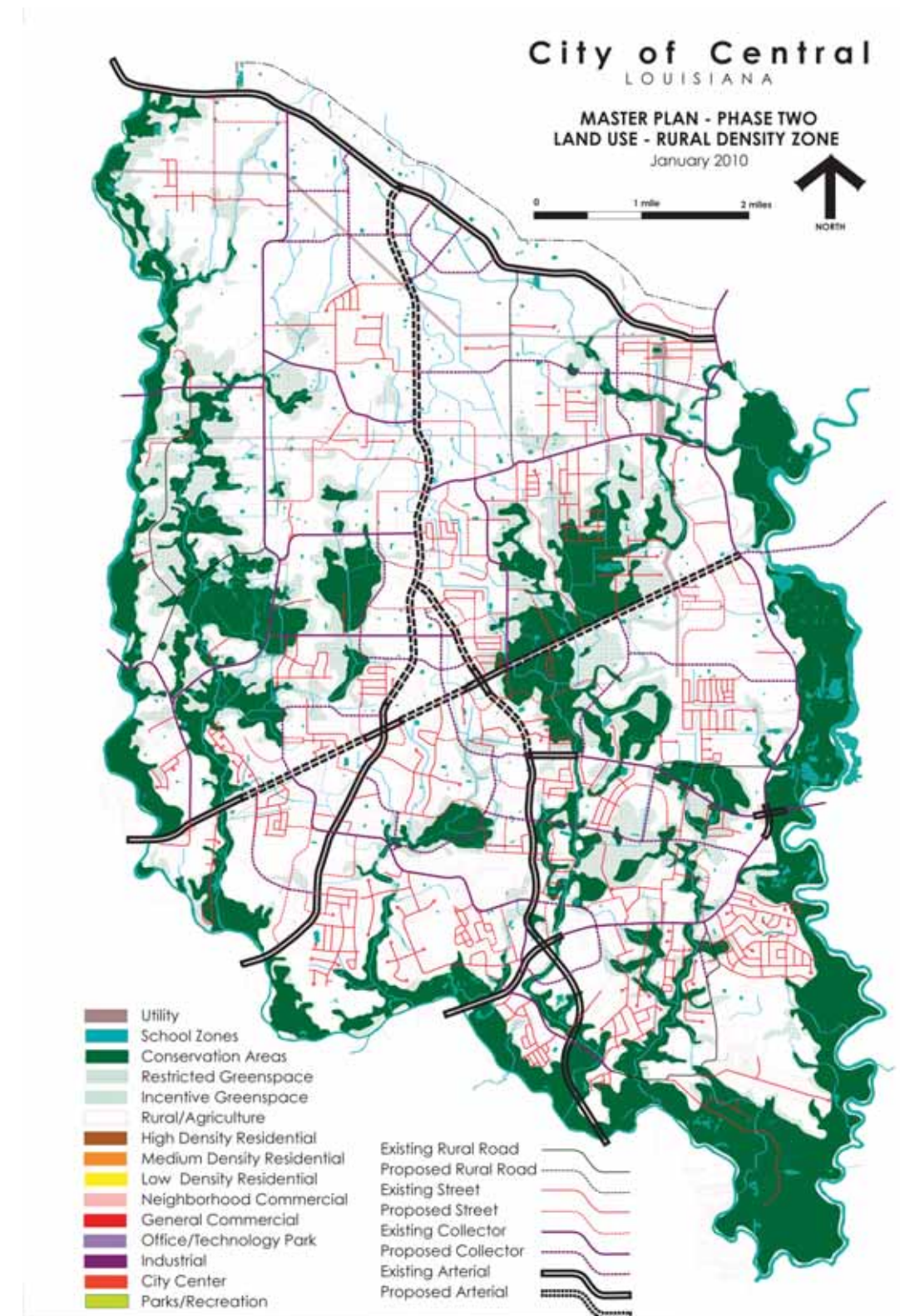
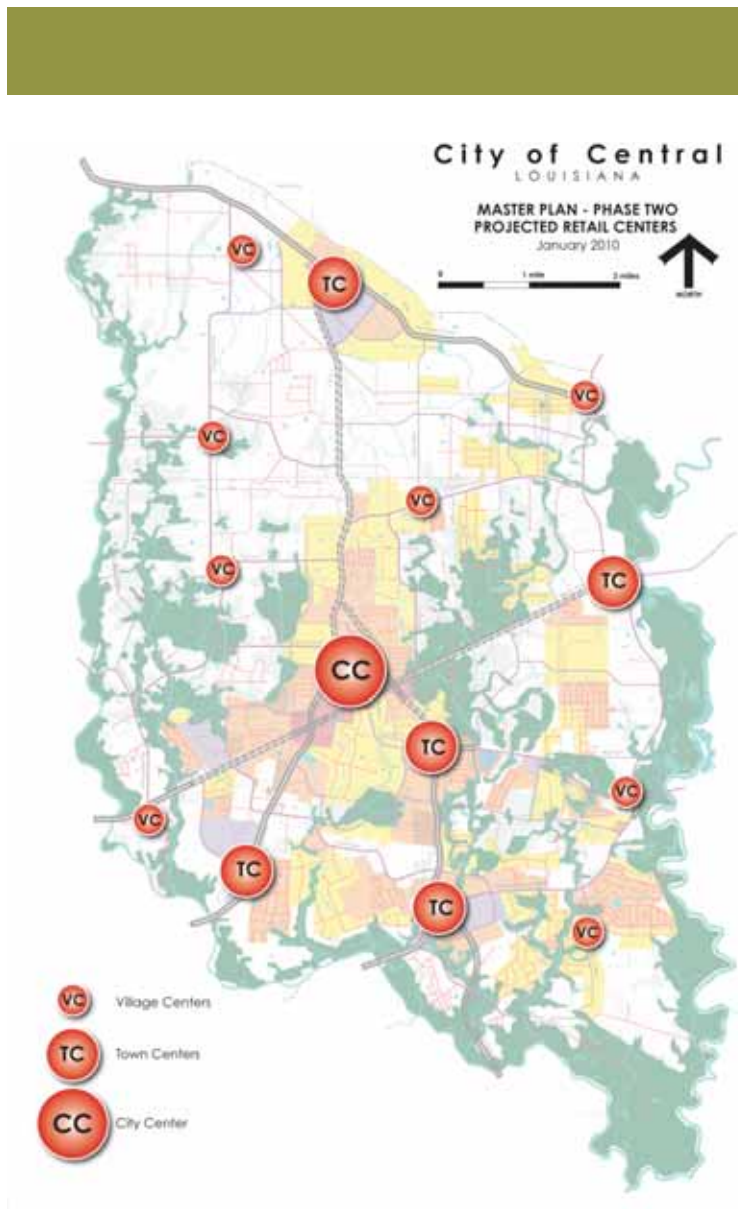
- Rural/Agriculture - which consists of very Low Density Residential and agricultural uses including large lot single family residential development; and
- Neighborhood Commercial - including small scale retail and office development assembled to form Village Centers at strategic locations.

Utilization of these land use classifications in the Rural Zone serves the purpose of limiting near-term development in areas that do not have the support of basic transportation and sanitary sewer infrastructure. There are several areas within the Rural Zone that were previously developed at higher densities in this zone. It is recommended that new development in these areas be restricted to the new densities specified.

In order to provide for the convenience of residents in the Rural Zone, several Village Center locations are shown on the map. Generally located at intersections of existing roads, these “centers” provide for the development of neighborhood commercial development of small scale and consistent with the rural character of the area. Design guidelines for such facilities should specify building height and coverage, signage and parking requirements, and architectural style and materials.



Appropriate design guidelines could help to create this kind of memorable and fitting “village centers” in Central’s Rural Zone



PROPOSED LAND USE

The Proposed Land Use Plan for the City of Central provides for a well integrated pattern of land uses that responds to the suitability of the land for new development and the goals of the community for the future of the City. In contrast to the East Baton Rouge Horizon Plan (near right) which is dominated by low density residential, the Proposed Land Use Plan for Central calls for a healthy mixture of residential densities, concentrated commercial nodes, and respect for natural systems and open space desires of the community. A definition of the Land Use classifications intended are as follows:

Rural /Agriculture

This classification designates areas of minimum density development. Intended for agricultural and very low density residential uses with a maximum density of one unit per ten acres. Residential and agricultural structures should be restricted to areas outside the 100 year flood plain and should be not be paced or constructed in ways that reduce or impede the floodplain.

Low Density Residential

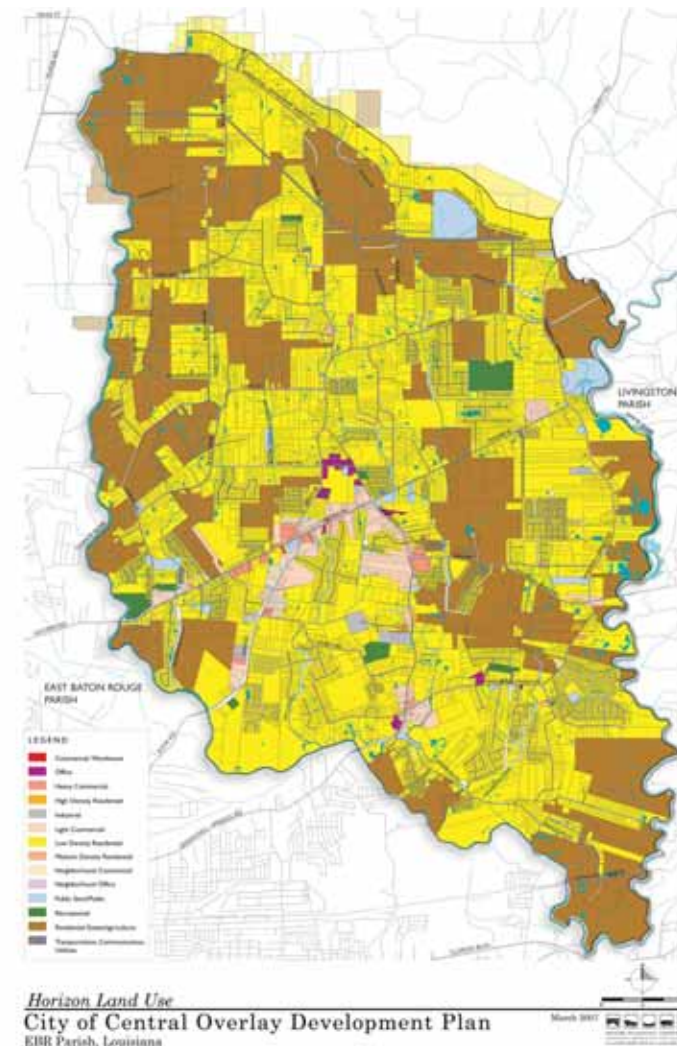
This classification designates areas of low density development. Intended for site-built single family residential construction with a maximum density of 2 units per acre. Minimum allowable densities in these areas should be restricted to one unit per five acres.

Medium Density Residential

This classification designates areas of medium density development. Intended for site-built single family residential construction with a maximum density of 4 units per acre. Minimum allowable densities in these areas should be restricted to 2 units per acre. This classification should be restricted to properties with access to collector class roadways or be required to upgrade existing roadways to collector classification if it does not exist.

High Density Residential

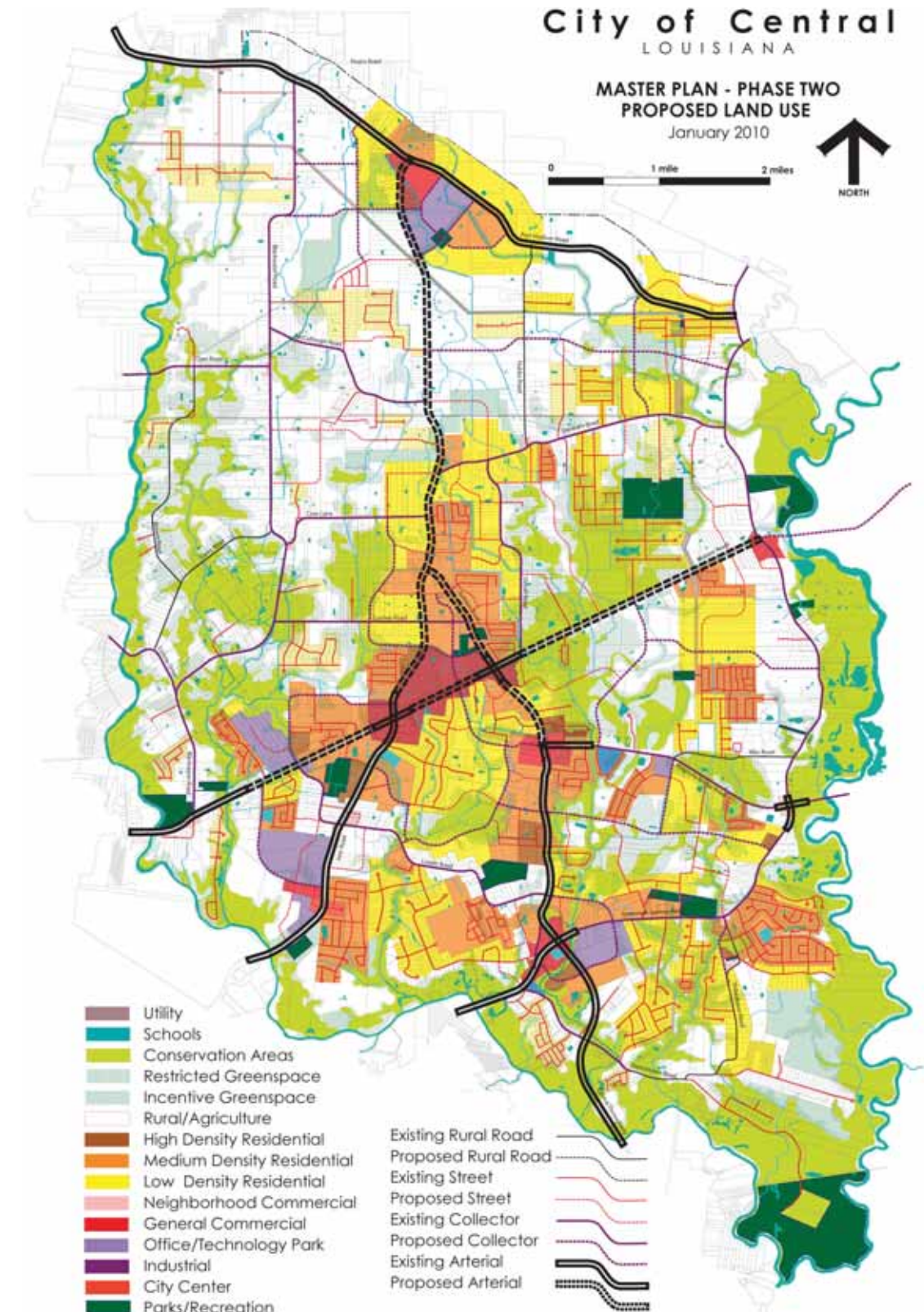
This classification designates areas of high density development. Intended for site-built single and



multi- family residential construction with a maximum density of 8 units per acre. Minimum allowable densities in these areas should be restricted to 5 units per acre. This classification should be restricted to properties with access to collector class roadways or be required to upgrade existing roadways to collector classification if it does not exist.

Neighborhood Commercial

This classification designates areas of low intensity development. Intended for small scale retail and office development that serves the immediate needs of adjacent residential neighborhoods. These areas are



LAND USE CATEGORIES

designated as “Village Centers” in the Master Plan and should be restricted to development of integrated clusters of retail and office facilities with shared access and parking.

General Commercial

This classification designates areas of moderate to high intensity development. Intended for medium to large scale retail and office development that serves several neighborhoods as well as areas immediately outside the City. These areas are designated as “Town Centers” in the Master Plan and should be restricted to development of integrated grouping of retail and office facilities with shared access and parking. This classification should be restricted to properties with access to arterial class roadways or be required to upgrade existing roadways to arterial classification if it does not exist.

Office/Technology Park

This classification designates areas of moderate intensity development. Intended for the development of research and technology based business and light manufacturing. These areas are intended to be developed as integrally designed “park-like” settings with high aesthetic standards. This classification should be restricted to properties with access to arterial class roadways or be required to upgrade existing roadways to arterial classification if it does not exist.

City Center

This classification designates areas of high intensity development. Intended for mixed use residential, retail and office development that serves as the downtown or central business district of the City and as a regional business and shopping destination. These areas should be restricted to development of integrated grouping of retail, office and dense residential facilities with shared access and parking. It is also intended that this area will have a significant amount of “community space” and may include governmental facilities. The public realm in this classification (streets/public right of ways) will display high levels of design and construction quality.

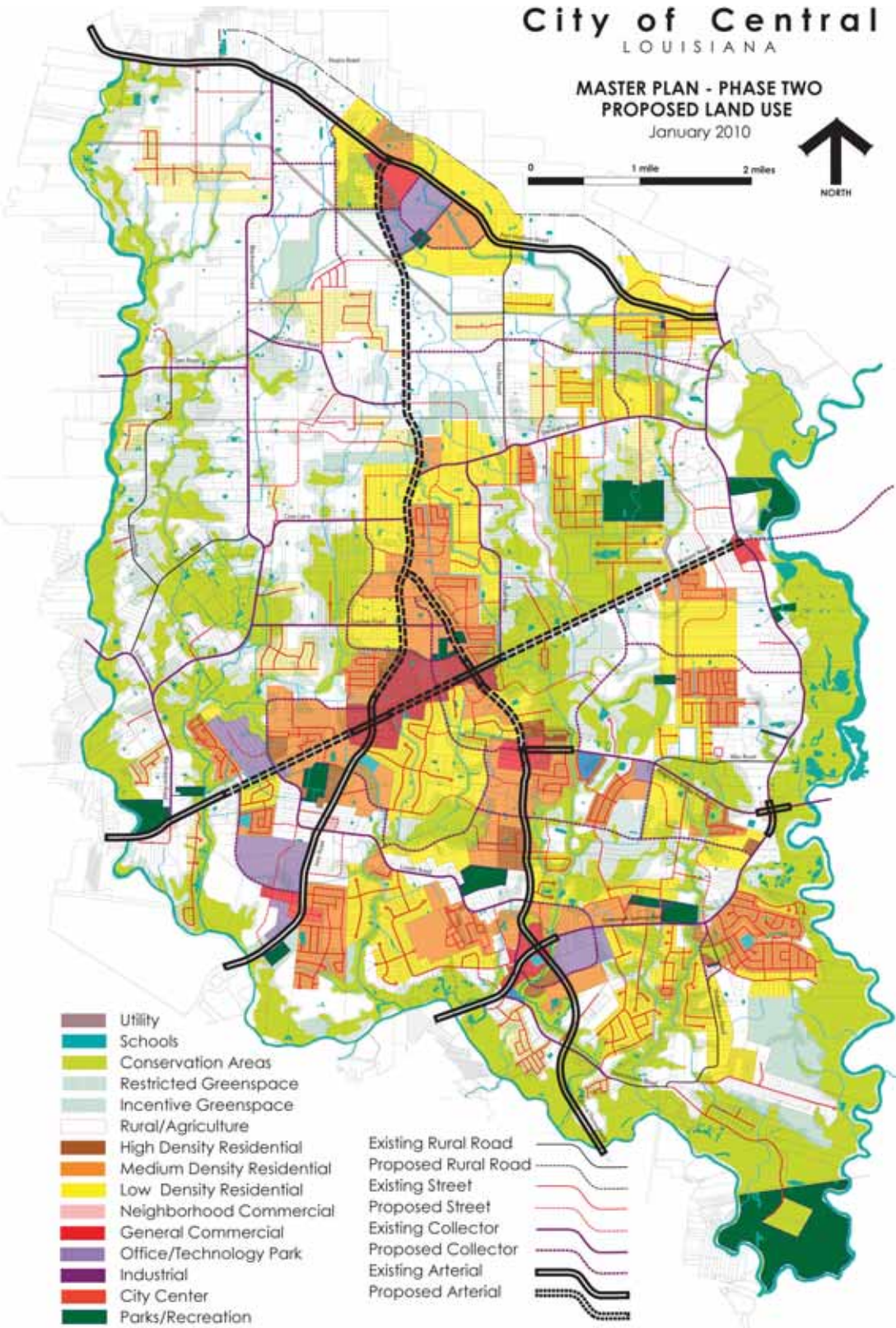
Walkability and connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods, schools, parks and other community assets will have a high priority.

Coordination with Zoning Ordinance

The land use classifications used vary slightly from the zoning districts being contemplated in the revised Zoning Ordinance currently under development. The chart below identifies equivalences between the two classifications.

Zoning Ordinance	Land Use Plan
R/A	RURAL/AGRICULTURE
R1	LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
R2	MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
R3	HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
B1	NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS
B2	GENERAL BUSINESS
ORD	OFFICE/TECHNOLOGY PARK
–	CITY CENTER

The City Center is the only land use classification designation for which there is no equivalent in the zoning districts. This is a very specialized classification that should have a response in the zoning ordinance, but will require additional planning before this should be attempted.



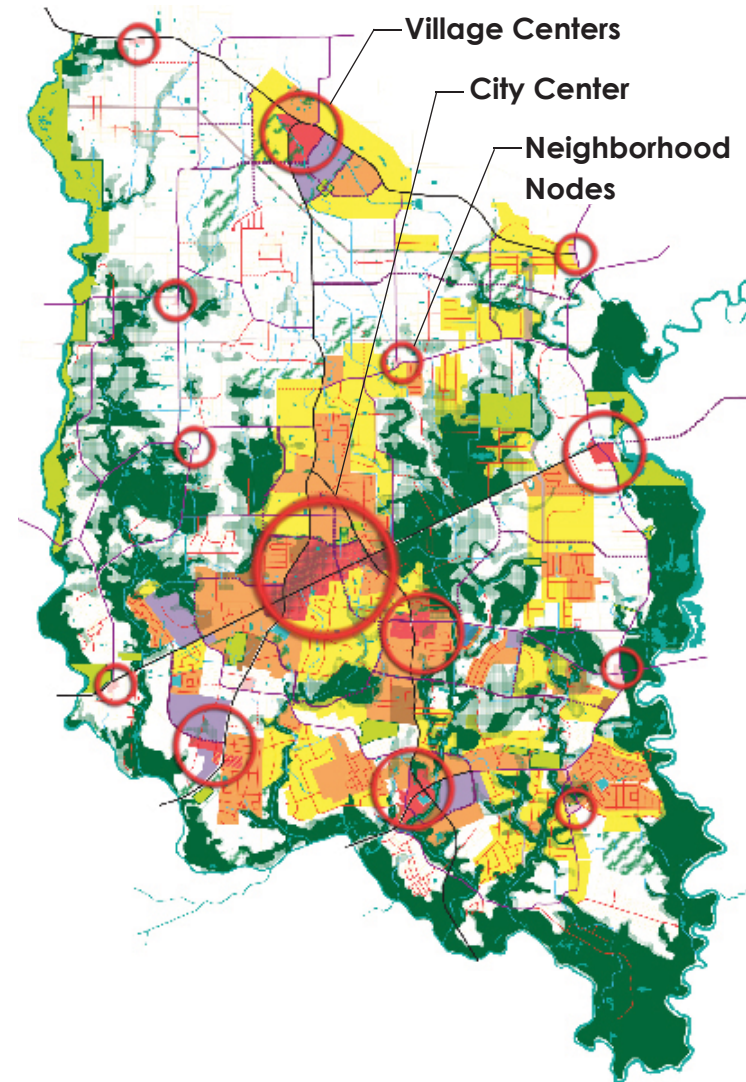
PROPOSED RETAIL NODES

Identified as a key need for the City of Central in all phases of the planning was the development of a strong retail presence. Retail growth will help the City in several ways: building a strong tax base from which other improvements can be financed; providing shopping and services to Central residents; reducing the need to drive into surrounding cities; and providing a source of jobs. However, developing a sustainable retail presence requires a careful balancing of market forces and careful attention must be paid to coordinated growth of infrastructure capacity. Finally, in order to avoid the unsightly and wasteful land consumption practice of strip development, and strengthen the positive benefits of Smart Growth practices, commercial development must be harnessed.

The approach in the land use plan is to designate a three tier system of Retail Nodes including:

City Center - This designation is given to what is intended to be the most important retail and mixed use cluster in the community. Envisioned as the future "downtown" of the City of Central, this area is expected to serve a variety of roles critical to the success of the City. In addition to being the business and retail center, it also has potential to provide a cultural and civic "heart" of the community. Its success will require that competing use be restrained so as not to dilute the market. It is intended to be designed as an integrated complex of retail, office, entertainment and residential with ample open and civic space accessible to the core area via roads and trails within a five minute trip.

Village Centers- This designation includes some existing and some new proposed retail nodes along major traffic routes or at main intersections around the City and will provide easy access to neighborhoods outside the core development area. Village Centers provide opportunities for more traditional development but should also be required to conform to high community design standards occurring as they do along major roadways and at several city gateways. In most cases, these nodes are positioned to take advantage of existing residential



areas and provide for convenient access to shopping by neighborhood residents in the Moderate Density Zone.

Neighborhood Nodes - These relatively small nodes are located strategically in the Rural Density Zone and are intended to provide for convenience shopping and business opportunities in the out-lying areas. As with the Village Centers these too should be required to conform to community standards in siting and architectural quality in order to insure that they remain assets to the overall community.

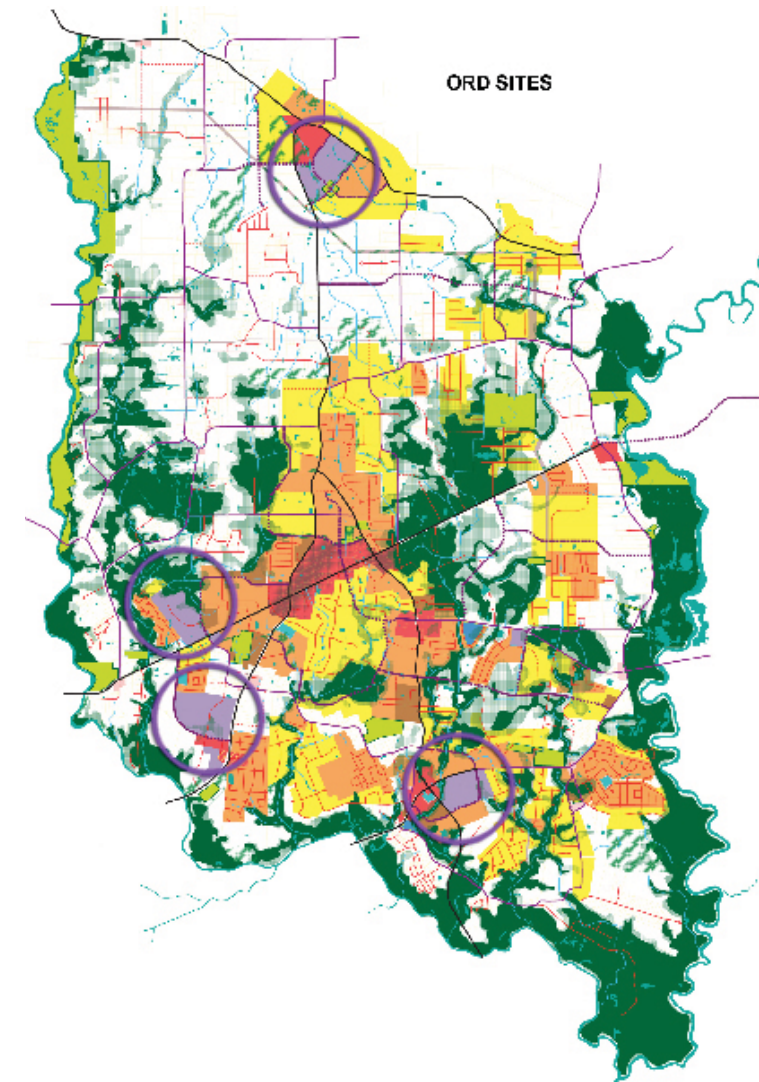
PROPOSED ORD NODES

ORD node designation are for areas with the necessary suitability, land area, and access to infrastructures that would support important job and value-creating office and research campus development. These should be reserved and used to attract clean industry from the technology, science and medical sector. Typically these uses bring with them downstream support businesses which can be integrated into the campus facilities avoiding fragmentation and unnecessary duplication of facilities and services. These site may also be ideal locations for medical and educational facilities - hospitals, clinics, branch campuses, community college, and technical schools - all of which provide support and training for the more traditional ORD uses.

As might be expected, competition for this kind of investment is intense and will require:

- A strong marketing effort on behalf of the City to attract investors, and
- A dedication to providing a high level of quality of life amenities throughout the community demanded by employers and employees in this sector.
- Development of sophisticated technology infrastructure capacity at high levels.

The competition is fierce but the payoff for even developing a niche presence in this industry is enormous.



"The creative-class analysis suggests that rural growth depends greatly on the attractiveness of rural communities, their landscapes, and their climates. Visits to websites of chambers of commerce and local development organizations in rural areas show that many rural communities are advertising their quality-of-life amenities to prospective businesses and residents. However, economic evaluations of the impact of public and private investments on growth still rarely consider quality-of-life factors. The creative-class study suggests rural growth impacts cannot be understood without taking these factors into consideration.

Despite an urban affinity, the creative class—perhaps more able and apt than others in the workforce to choose where to live based on quality-of-life considerations—can be drawn out of cities to high-amenity rural locations. Their activities, in turn, appear to generate new jobs and local growth. Rural areas lack the business and consumer services available to urban businesses and residents, but rural areas tend to have the upper hand in landscape, which may service the creative temperament. "

Excerpt from "The Creative Class: A Key to Rural Growth", 2007

http://www.creativeclass.com/creative_class_communities/

City of Central

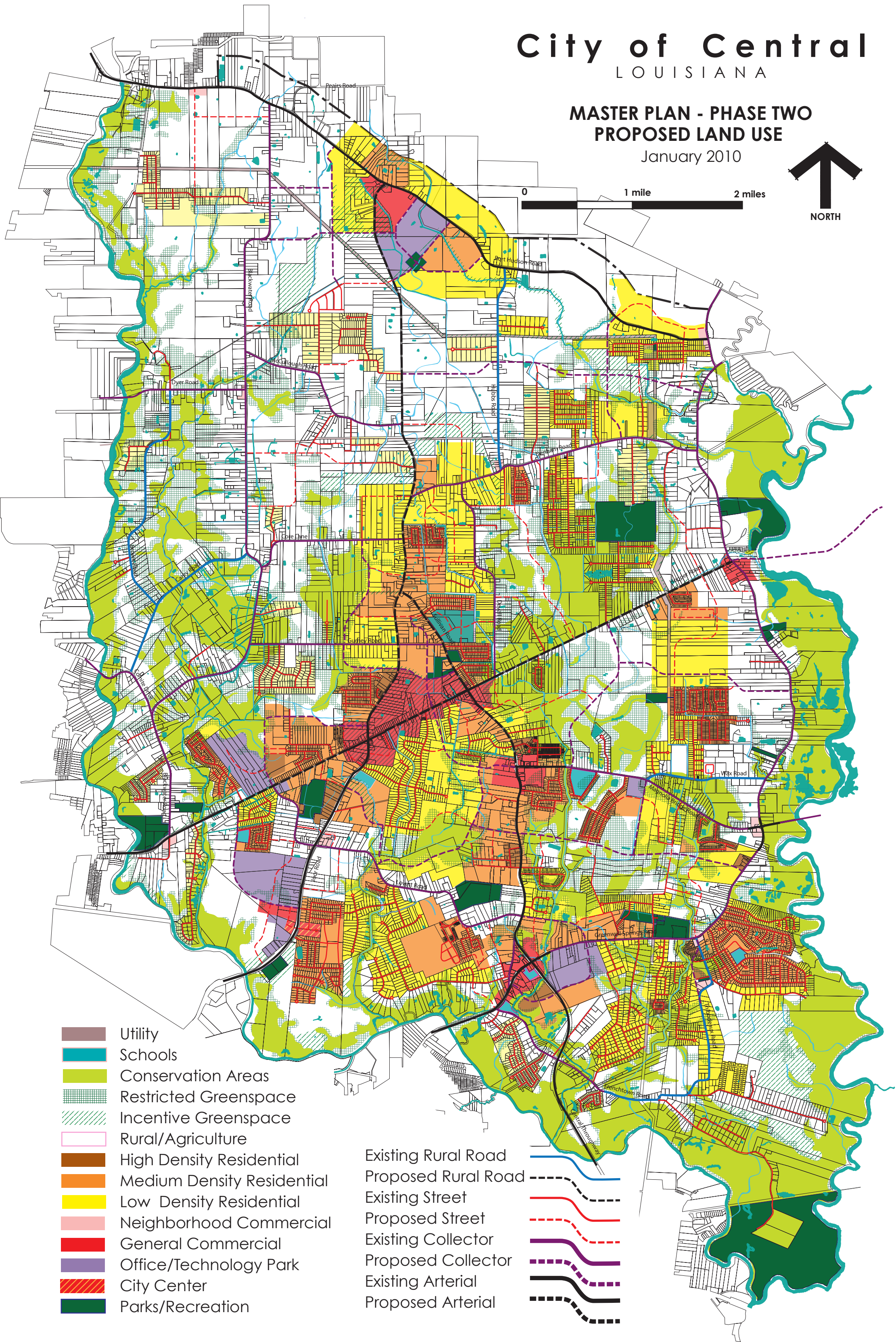
LOUISIANA

MASTER PLAN - PHASE TWO PROPOSED LAND USE

January 2010



0 1 mile 2 miles



IMPLICATIONS



DEVELOPMENT CODE IMPLICATIONS

Adoption of the proposed Land Use Plan will require adaptations to the existing development code in several areas. First, the City is currently using an interim Land Use Plan which will be superseded by this plan and finally sever the City's dependence upon the East Baton Rouge Parish Horizon Plan for guidance on land use issues. The City has also adopted several sections of the East Baton Rouge Parish Unified Development Code for regulating a variety of issues. Some of these will carry over into the City's new code while others will require changes or adaptations.

Zoning Issues - The City is currently considering adoption of a revised zoning ordinance that is crafted to provide the Planning and Zoning Commission with a great deal of latitude in guiding new development that complies with the expressed vision and goals of the community. This proposed Land Use Plan warrants revisiting several issues in the zoning ordinance.

The Zoning Ordinance and Land Use Plan meshes well on the following uses:

RA- Rural/Agricultural	Rural/Agricultural
R1- Single Family	Low Density Residential
R2- Single Family	Medium Density Residential
R3- Single Family Attached/Multi Family	High Density Residential
B1- Neighborhood Business	Neighborhood Commercial
B2- General Business	General Commercial
ORD - Research and Development	Office/Technology Park

However, the Land Use Plan uses several additional classifications that are not addressed in the ordinance. They include the following:



Conservation Areas include areas at high risk for deep inundation during heavy rain events. They also include floodways along the Amite River. The intent of the Land Use Plan is that no new development be permitted in these areas. Restricted Greenspace are also areas at high risk for inundation within the 100 Year Flood Plain. The intent of the Land Use Plan is that new development be heavily restricted in these areas to prevent excess filling in the flood plain. Unless previously developed,

the underlying land use is always Rural/Agricultural permitting the lowest density development. Consideration should be given to providing density bonuses for developments that set aside permanent open space in these areas. Incentive Greenspace areas include corridors highly suitable for development of open space linkages connecting important assets throughout the city. Like the previous use, the underlying land use is always Rural/Agricultural permitting the lowest density development, and consideration should be given to providing density bonuses for developments that set aside permanent open space in these areas. (see following pages for more on this issue)

A secondary consideration is the preservation of undeveloped open space, value enhancement, the potential for non-automobile linkage between community assets, and as community "health infrastructure".

In order to fulfill the intent, innovative ordinances may have to be included. One method of protecting the interest of property owners while preserving open space is the establishment of a Transfer of Development Rights Program. Utilizing a TDR Program, all three of these uses would be considered "TDR Sending Areas" - where the presumed right to develop this land can be transferred to another development in a "TDR Receiving Area". These programs can be complicated to administer and often require considerable initial investment to "bank" development rights if receiving areas are not in great demand.



City Center - The primary purpose of this use, located near the center of the incorporated area, is to provide for the development of a "downtown" area for the community. The downtown, a well integrated combination of public and private realm is intended to be developed at much higher density than the rest of the city. The anticipated densities also go well beyond definitions and limits found in the draft code. While the current practice requiring that developments beyond a certain size be treated as Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) could conceivably be used to regulate this area, it may need to be addressed as a separate district with its own guidelines and requirements. (see following pages for more on this issue)



Schools - Schools are typically provided for in other classifications as a conditional use. Every effort should be made to locate schools in a manner that compliments surrounding uses and enhances the integration of educational activities with community life - including economic development, business, and recreation. The issue

of walkability is often discussed when considering school placement. While this is an important consideration, it does not necessarily mean that schools location should be enslaved by proximity issues. A more important consideration is providing the means by which students can commute between home and campus without needing to be bussed or driven. Locating school campuses along public greenways, bike trails, and roadway corridors designed with pedestrians in mind will pay greater dividends into the future.

Design Guidelines - To fully implement the direction initiated in this planning process, it will be necessary to draft and adopt strict design guidelines for a variety of elements. Roadway design, open space conservation, and the City Center concepts are discussed on the following pages as an introduction to the required guidelines, These along with other issues such as lighting, signage, landscaping, setbacks, may require further refinement.

Health Utility



There is no question that the built environment has a tremendous affect on public health in the United States. Children and adults with better access to parks, trails, clean water and air and who spend ample time engaged in recreation have lower disease rates and a higher quality of life. The very conditions keeping many Americans sick – heart disease, diabetes and some forms of cancer are preventable, and

incidence rates can be improved with the help of the built environment. We can point to countless examples that facilitate better health: from the presence of urban gardens, to the location of parks and trails, to the simple installation of more bike racks.

The "Health Utility" is an emerging concept that seeks to institutionalize the relationship between healthy places and healthy people. Its objective is to provide a steady and dependable stream of funding for the planning and implementation of policies, programs and built projects that enhance and encourage individuals to engage in healthy lifestyles. The economic benefits - improved productivity, reduced sick time, lower insurance rates, and savings on medications - represent one of the greatest untapped resources available for communities struggling to meet the fiscal demand for services.

EXISTING ROADWAY NETWORK



The City of Central, having recently become incorporated, has some catching up to do in terms of roadway infrastructure - especially concerning capacity and connectivity. The existing roadway network has been barely adequate to support the mostly rural nature of Central in the past. However, the growth and development density indicated in the proposed Land Use Plan will require roadway improvements to ensure adequate access and mobility.

The existing roadway system consists of six state highways and a mixture of paved Parish and Local roads at fairly regular intervals. The State Routes include the following: Highway 64 (Port Hudson Road); Highway 410 (Blackwater Road); Highway 408 (Hooper Road); Highway 37 (Greenwell Springs Road); Highway 946 (Joor Road - south from Hooper); and Highway 3034 (Magnolia Bridge Road). These roadways, built and maintained to State standards are in good condition but do not necessarily meet the needs of Central's growth plans.

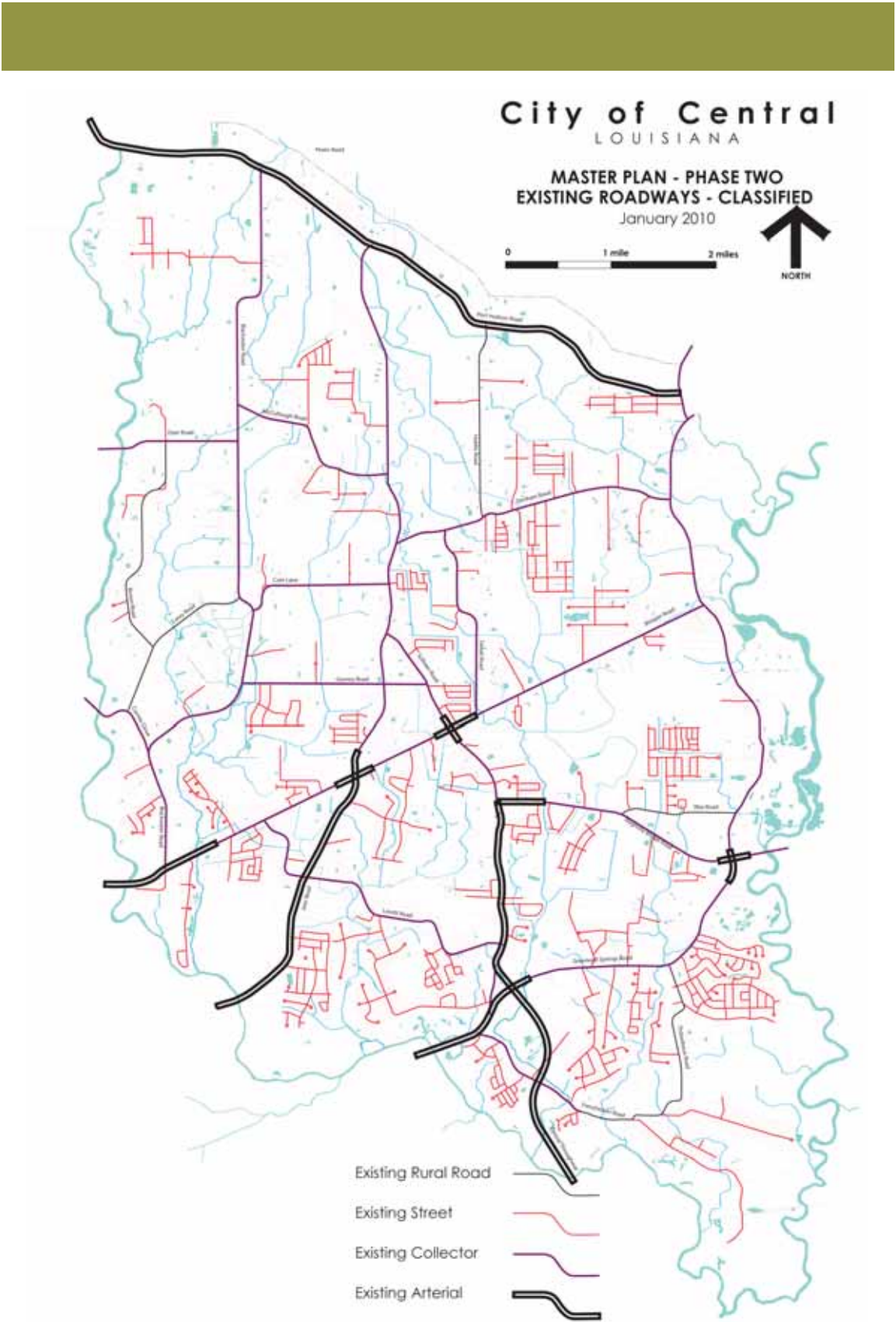
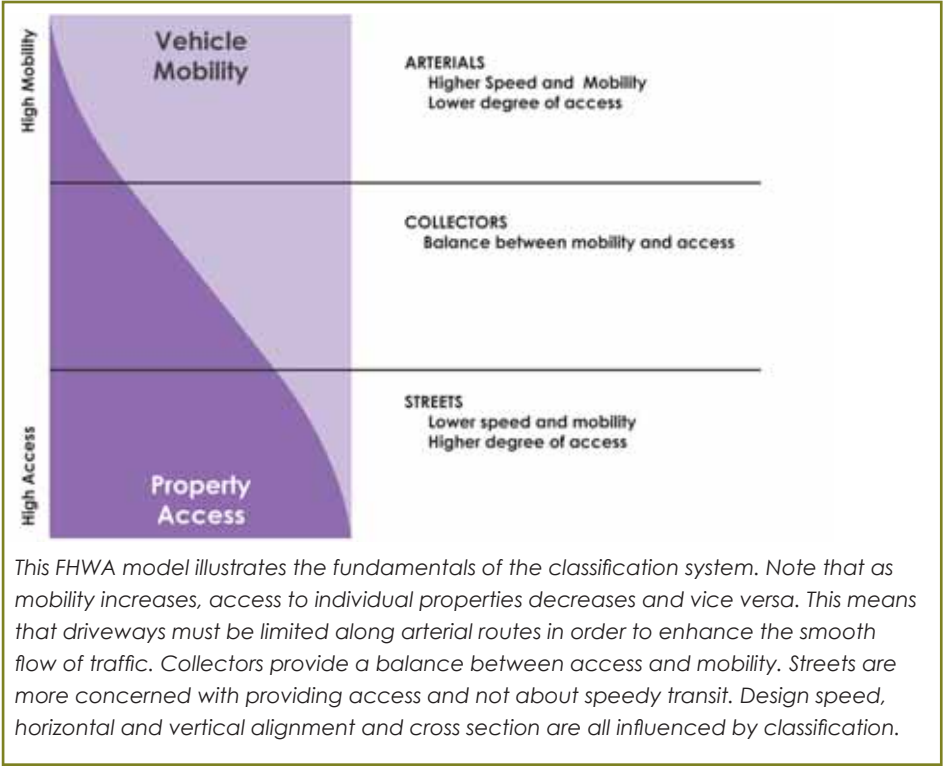
Other important roadways include Parish Roads including: Sullivan Road, Lovett Raod, Frenchtown Road, Gurney Road, Core Lane, McCullough Road, Denham Road, and Deval Road.

These roadways (shown on the map at right) form the basis of the existing transportation network in the City of Central. In order to adequately prepare the kind of quality growth required to meet the community's goals, careful roadway planning will be required. The first step is to adopt a roadway classification system that will help to support the Land Use Plan and allow City leaders to plan transportation improvements with confidence. A classification system based upon Federal Highway Administration has been used to identify roadway capacity, mobility and access. In this system, **Arterials** refer to major

roadways that provide through route connections to destinations outside the City. **Collectors** refer to roadways that collect vehicles from smaller streets and roads, and **Streets** refer to neighborhood and most subdivision streets. A proper balance of these classifications is generally considered necessary for efficient transportation. The intervals at which the arterials, collectors and streets occur should be directly related to the density of development.

An analysis of the existing network reveals several issues that will be a challenge to the kinds of growth and economic development desired by Central. **Areterials** show serious east-west and north-south deficiencies. The Port Hudson Road is the only arterial that traverses Central and is at its northern extremity in a sparsely developed area. Several ongoing and planned projects will help. These include the Joor Road widening and the Central Throughway projects which will provide arterial service from Hooper Road south into Baton Rouge. The network of **Collectors** are at inadequate intervals to support growth and density projections for the Core and Medium Zones where density are encouraged. The primary inadequacy in the **Street** network is the multitude of non-connecting "stub-outs" in subdivisions throughout the City. This forces vehicles to gather on collectors ill-designed for increasing demands.

The proposed Roadways map on the following page recommends several enhancements to Central's roadway network.



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PROPOSED ROADWAY NETWORK

The Proposed Roadway Network plan provides connectivity throughout the City that responds to the proposed Land Use Plan and to the desired density set forth in the plan. Higher density areas in the Core Zone are served by expanded arterials and collectors. The Medium Zone is served by expanded collector networks, greater connectivity between streets and collectors, and better access to arterials. Rural Zones show moderate improvements in connectivity.

The following changes are reflected in the proposed plan:

- **Highway 408 (Hooper Road)** - elevated to an **Arterial** for its entire length with a connection across the Amite River into Livingston Parish.
- **Highway 946 (Joor Road)** - elevated to an **Arterial** for its entire length.
- **Sullivan Road** - elevated to an **Arterial** for its entire length.
- There are also slight extensions of Arterial status along Magnolia Bridge and Greenwell Springs Roads to coincide with proposed Collector additions.
- New **Collectors** are shown in most of the Core and Medium Zone areas in order to improve overall connectivity, facilitate movement to Arterials, and enhance development possibilities in these areas.
- New **Streets** are also shown in these areas to improve connectivity and promote greater depth of development.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

The roadway improvements shown will likely require many years to accomplish, however, leadership should pay close attention to careful coordination between roadway enhancement and new development. In some cases, private developers should bear the cost of expanding the capacity of the transportation network when their proposed developments overburden the existing infrastructure. This plan also will allow the City to achieve better connectivity among and between new and existing developments by requiring developers to provide for access shown on the plan.

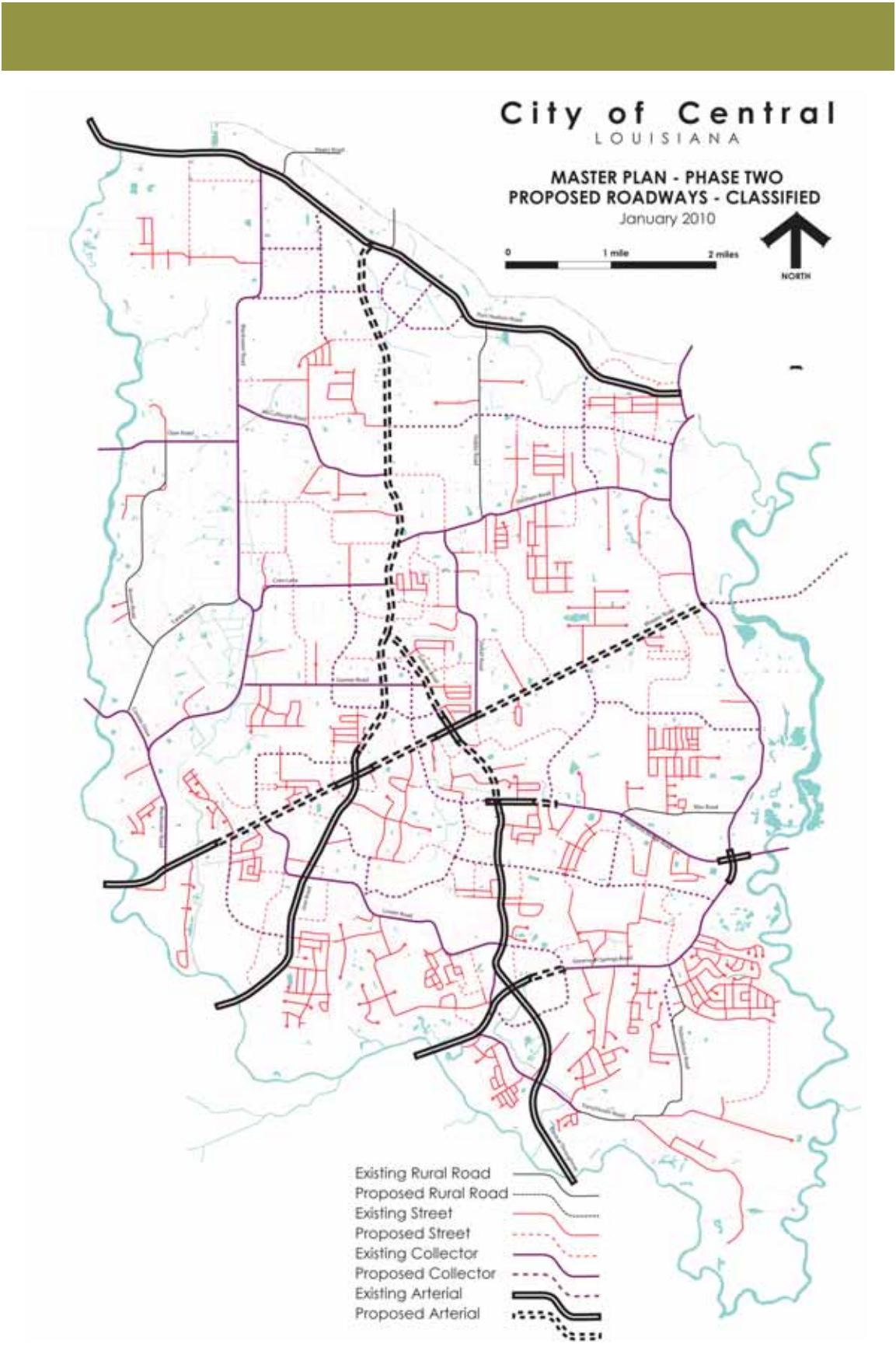
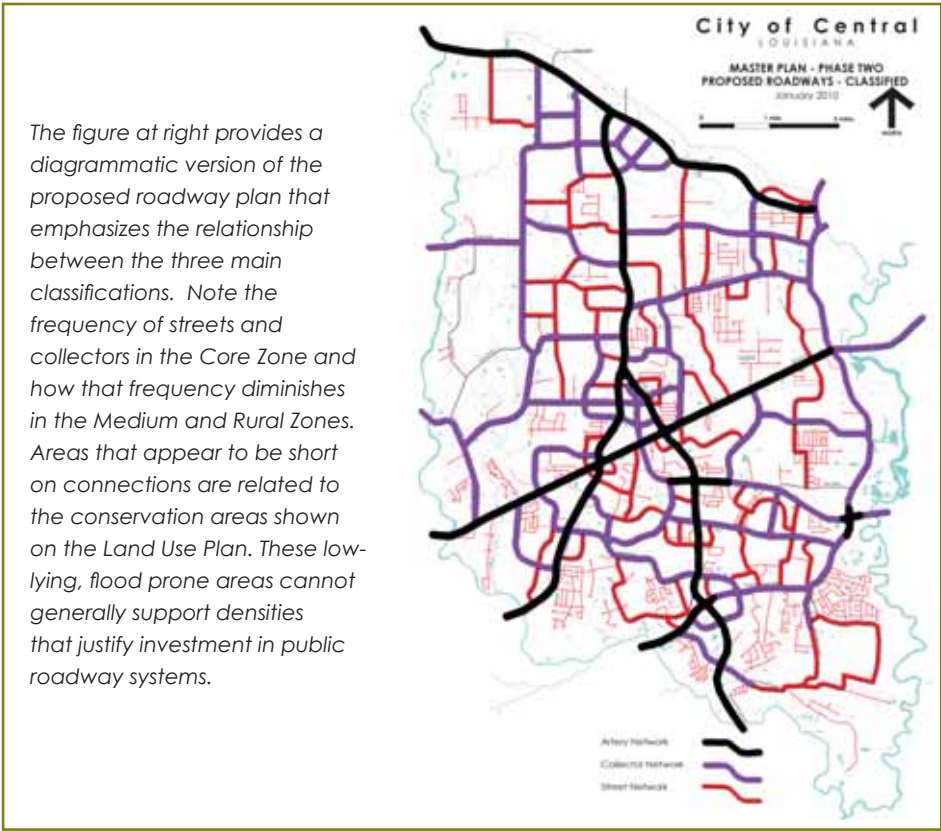
A long range capital plan should be formulated in order to begin the process of funding major roadway improvements and to provide seed money with which the City can assist developers in providing transportation infrastructure for the growth and continued development of the community.

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Roadway design should be related to context. An arterial traversing densely developed urban area assumes a distinctly different character than one passing through sparsely populated rural areas. The proposed Land Use Plan for Central includes a variety of context areas that should be reflected in roadway design. The following pages suggest standards for consideration.



Rapid residential growth to the east in Livingston Parish is causing serious traffic delays along some of Central's thoroughfares and is a constraint to new business investment.



ROADWAY DESIGN STANDARDS

The Land Use Plan recognizes three Density Zones as part of the long-term community development strategy:

Core Zone - where the densest and most walkable development is envisioned.

Medium Zone - which has a more suburban feeling with well-defined nodes of commercial development

Rural Zone - characterized by very light development with a "country feeling".

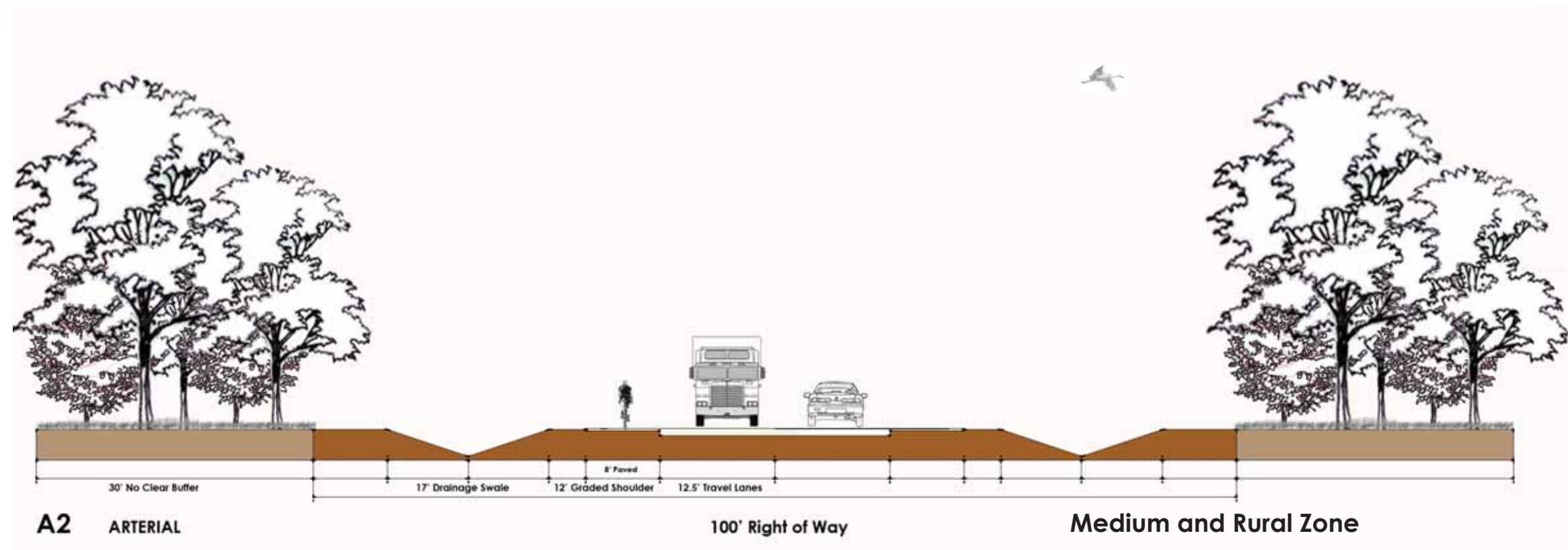
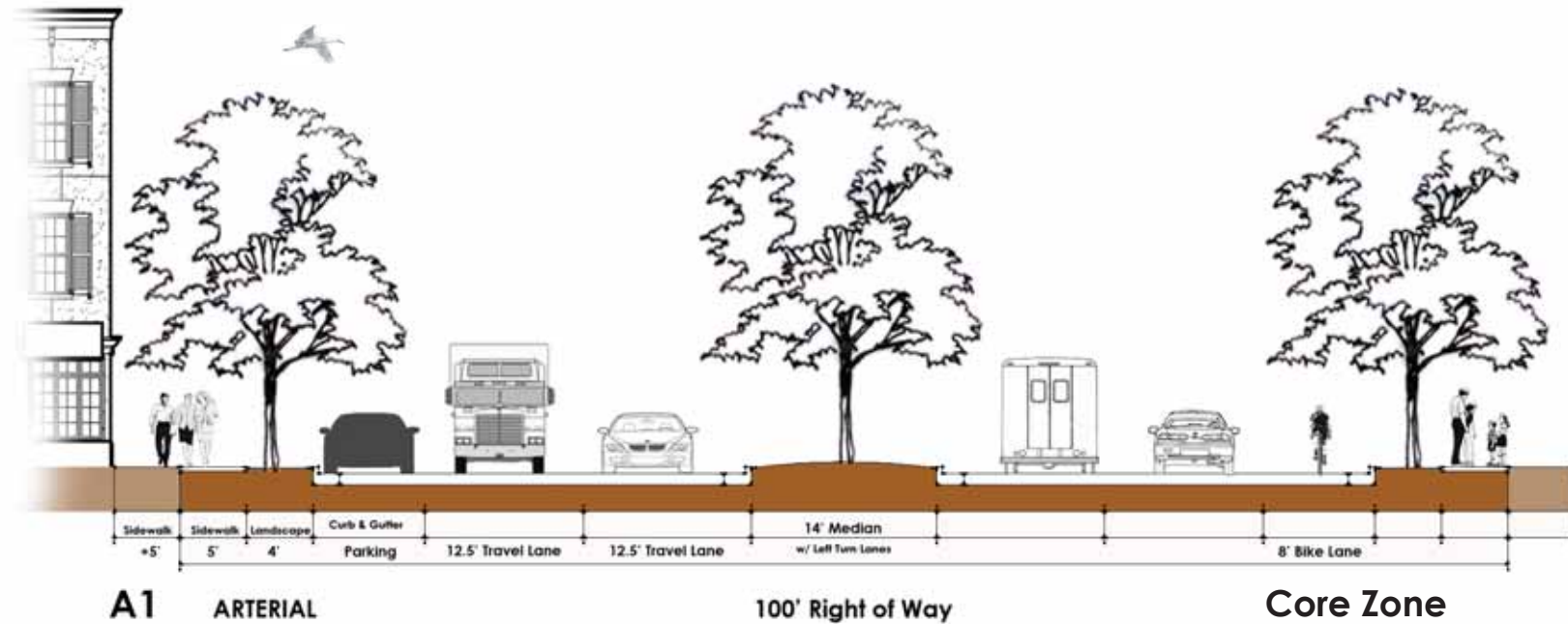
The recommended roadway design standards shown on these pages are an initial effort at defining context sensitive solutions for Central's roadway development program. They provide preliminary design section considerations for **Arterials**, **Collectors** and **Streets** that respond to the overall development goals of the City. A more detailed description of standards and how they might differ and/or exceed existing State and Parish design standards should become an integral part of the City Development Code revision process.

ARTERIALS

As part of the roadway network, arterials provide the greatest mobility for vehicles. Their principal function is to move large amounts of traffic through an area with minimum delay and disruption. Contrary to common experience, they do not have to create unsightly gashes through the community, nor create barriers to pedestrian and other non-vehicular connectivity. They can also be designed in such a way that they fit within the surrounding context and become an integrated and unified part of the community fabric.

A1 Arterial shown at right should be used in the Core Zone. It requires a minimum 100' right of way, a landscaped median that can be utilized for occasional left-turn lanes, curb and gutter, and paved width that will accommodate street-side parking and/or bike lanes. When used in an area with zero set back requirements, additional width should be afforded for wider sidewalks and angle parking. This design provides capacity and scale that stimulates "street-life", encourages walking, and a safe and beautiful transit corridor.

A2 Arterial should be the minimum standard in the Medium



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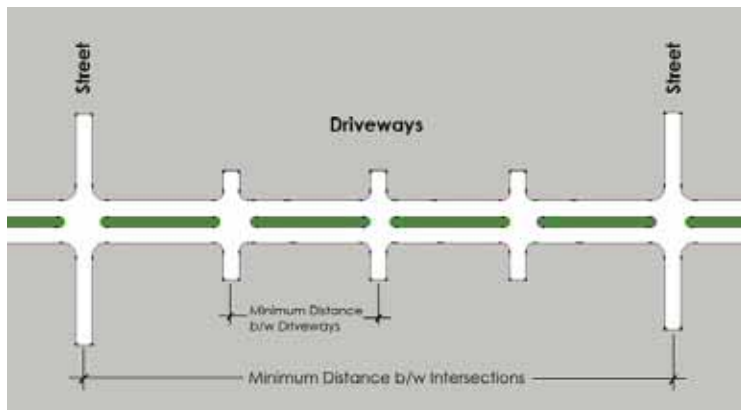
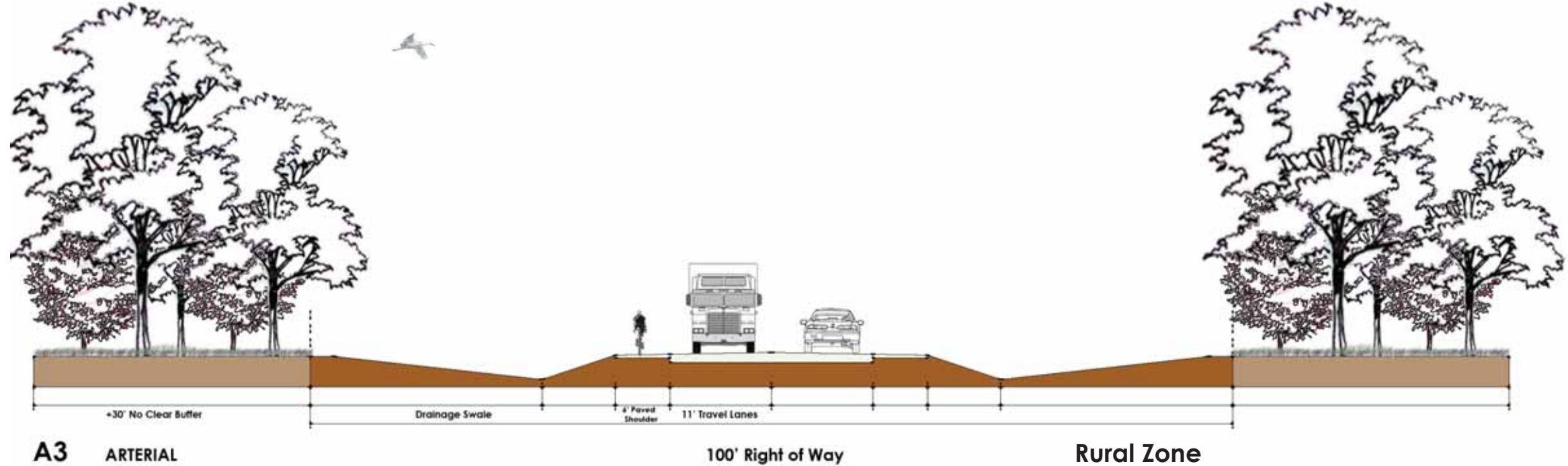
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ROADWAY DESIGN STANDARDS

Zone and may be appropriate for some parts of the Rural Zone as well. It requires a minimum 100' right of way, paved shoulders that can be utilized for right-turn lanes and/or bike lanes and a wide easement for utilities and drainage structures. This design provides added capacity and has the quality of a country highway. The plan also recommends that the City adopt, as part of the Development Code, some provision for maintaining existing vegetation as a buffer between the roadway and new development. This measure would help to preserve some of the beautifully forested lands and maintain the rural feel of Central.

A3 Arterial should be used as a minimum standard for all other applications. The main difference between this and the A2 Arterial is the width of pavement. In the Rural Zone, especially where new development is not anticipated over the next ten -15 years, this section should provide adequate capacity while providing a safe and attractive transit space.

A key consideration in establishing standards for roadways is access spacing- referring to the minimum distance required



between intersections, as well as minimum distance between and maximum widths of driveways- as they relate to the roadway. Typical Federal and State Standards lean toward allowing more access than necessary and controlling access can substantially improve the safety and overall quality of community facilities unrelated to roadways. Minimum standards should be adopted and stringently enforced to insure compatibility with community goals.



This photograph of Greenwell Springs Road approaching the intersection with Sullivan Road typifies the use of the A1 section in a rural setting. Using minimum standards does not preclude providing better facilities when appropriate and desirable.



This road shows the wide paved shoulders required in the A2 section. Paved shoulders are a considerable safety improvement and also provide additional facilities for bicyclists.



A county highway with preserved vegetation on both sides provides a very appealing and easily maintained corridor for vehicles and for people.



ROADWAY DESIGN STANDARDS

COLLECTORS

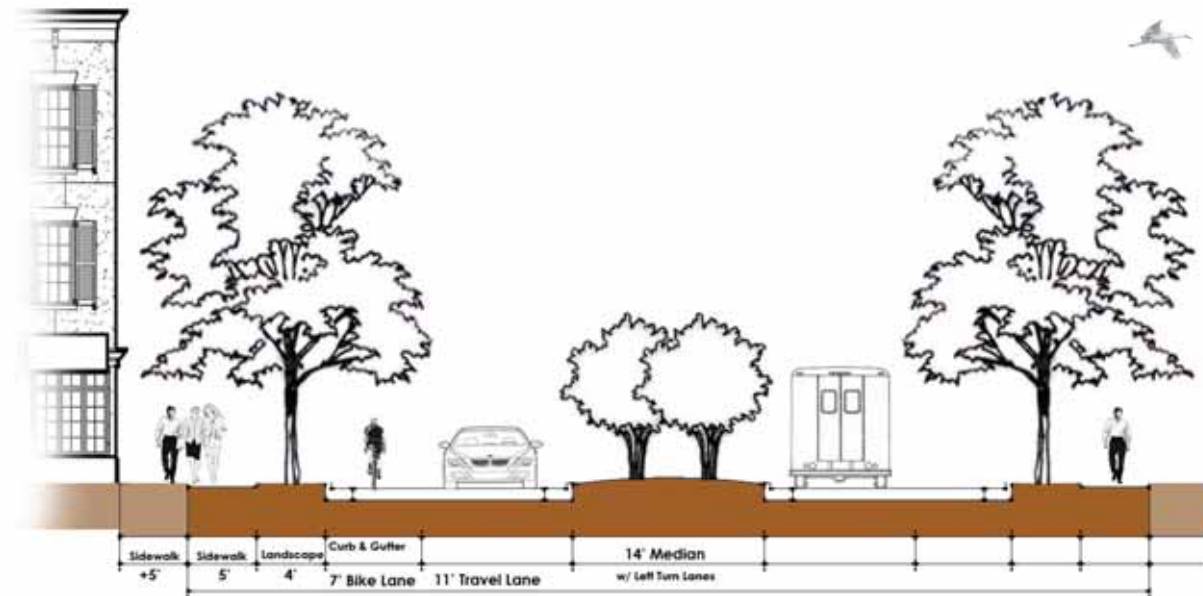
The primary function of collectors is to gather and organize vehicles from neighborhood streets, alleys and parking lots and provide vehicular connections between these areas and arterials. In the Land Use Plan, Collectors are used mainly to provide transportation between residential areas and commercial nodes that are typically located along the arterials. Collectors can also be designed in such a way that they fit within the surrounding context. There are two design sections recommended.

C1 Collector shown at right should be used in the Core Zone. It requires a minimum 70' right of way, a landscaped median that can be utilized for occasional left-turn lanes, curb and gutter, and paved width that will accommodate street-side parking and/or bike lanes. When used in an area with zero set back requirements, additional width should be afforded for wider sidewalks and angled parking.

C2 Collector should be used in the Medium and Rural Zones and is a similar standard to most rural State Routes with the exception that the Collector requires paved shoulders. Particular attention should be paid to the provision of drainage ditches that are simple to maintain. In some cases, where ditch depth exceeds 3 feet, additional right of way width may be required. Provision should also be made to provide for a no-clear buffer zone when Collectors traverse forested areas in order to fulfill the Community's Goals of preserving open space and the natural environment.



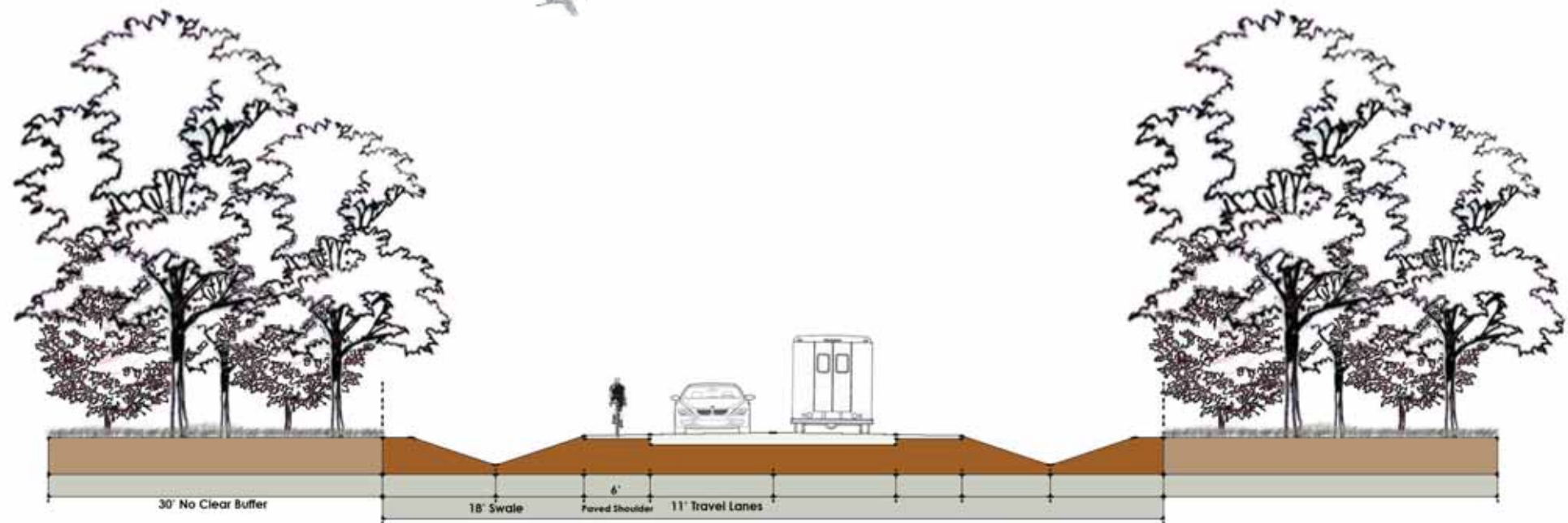
The tree protection zone will help to prevent unnecessary clearing of roadside trees as shown in the left photo. The photo at right shows the benefits of adopting this policy.



C1 COLLECTOR

70' Right of Way

Core Zone



C2 COLLECTOR

70' Right of Way

Medium and Rural Zone

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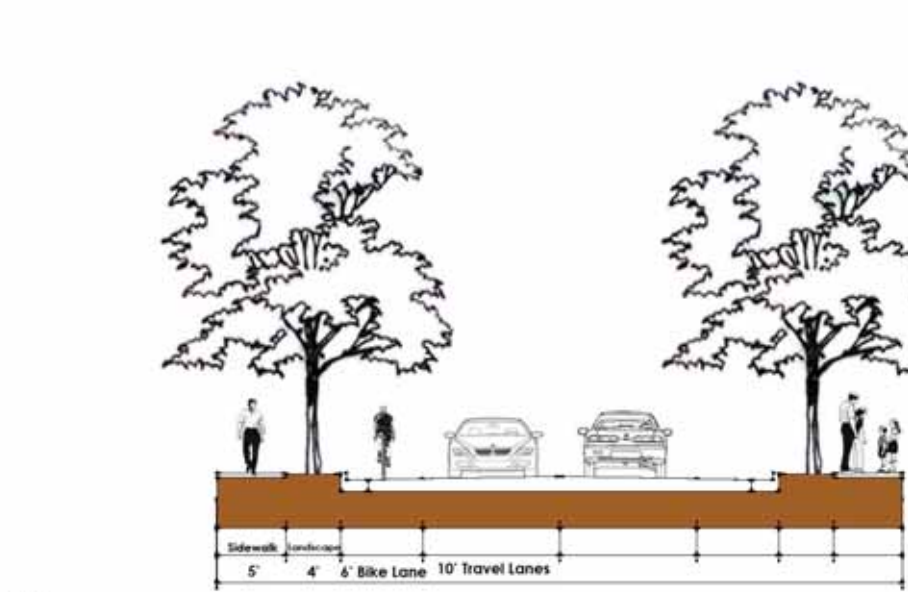
ROADWAY DESIGN STANDARDS

STREETS

The street network includes subdivision streets, neighborhood streets, and city streets that provide the greatest access to private property. Streets typically occur at frequent intervals and should be laid out to promote maximum connectivity. Dead end streets and cul-de-sacs should be strictly limited and should always be used in conjunction with streets that provide multiple options for travel to the same destination. This is a safety issue (fire and police protection, evacuation, emergency access) and an efficiency issue. There are two design sections recommended.

S1 Street shown at right should be used in the Core and Medium Zones. It requires sidewalks, landscaping and curb and gutter, and a paved width that will accommodate street-side parking and/or bike lanes.

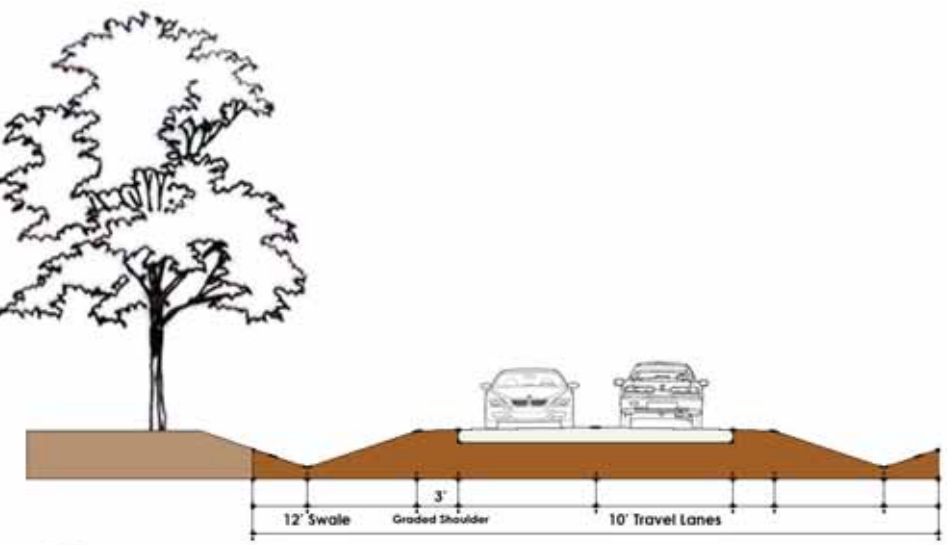
S2 Street is appropriate for use in the Rural Zone to maintain a country feel. The minimum required 50 foot right of way is required to provide adequate space for utilities and drainage.



S1 STREET

50' Right of Way

Core and Medium Zones



S2 STREET

50' Right of Way

Rural Zone

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- A1** 100' - 110' ROW
 - minimum 5' sidewalks both sides
 - minimum 4' landscape space both sides
 - minimum 8' parking or bike lane both sides
 - minimum 4 - 12.5' travel lanes w/ curb and gutter
 - minimum 14' median w/ left turn lanes as needed
- A2** 100' ROW
 - minimum 8' utility space both sides
 - minimum 17' drainage space both sides
 - minimum 12' graded shoulder both sides (8' paved)
 - minimum 2 - 12.5' travel lanes
 - minimum 30' no-clear buffer both sides recommended
- A3** 100' - 110' ROW
 - minimum 16' utility space both sides
 - minimum 17' drainage space both sides
 - minimum 6' paved shoulder both sides
 - minimum 2 - 11' travel lanes
 - minimum 30' no-clear buffer both sides recommended
- C1** 70' - 80' ROW
 - minimum 5' sidewalks both sides
 - minimum 4' landscape space both sides
 - minimum 7' parking or bike lane both sides
 - minimum 2 - 11' travel lanes w/ curb and gutter
 - minimum 14' median w/ left turn lanes as needed
- C2** 70' ROW
 - minimum 18' drainage space both sides
 - minimum 6' paved shoulder both sides
 - minimum 2 - 11' travel lanes
 - minimum 30' no-clear buffer both sides recommended
- S1** 50' ROW
 - minimum 5' sidewalks both sides
 - minimum 4' landscape space both sides
 - minimum 6' bike lane both sides
 - minimum 2 - 10' travel lanes w/ curb and gutter
- S2** 100' - 110' ROW
 - minimum 12' drainage space both sides
 - minimum 3' graded shoulder both sides
 - minimum 2 - 10' travel lanes



This illustration demonstrates the need for connectivity. Consider the impact on school buses, fire trucks, and for normal daily activities like attending a neighbor's birthday party.

SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM CAPACITY



In addition to transportation facilities, another "big ticket" item that has the potential to restrict positive growth is limited sanitary sewerage treatment capacity. Collection and treatment services are currently provided by East Baton Rouge system. The Parish is currently evaluating the existing and future capacity of the system and it appears that there are some serious limitations for growth in the Central area.

The current system is dependent upon a series of pump stations and force mains that converge on a main line that parallels Hooper Road and moves the waste to a treatment facility in north Baton Rouge. There is fairly good coverage for areas south of Hooper Road and parts of the area to the north. However, there are still large expanses in the far north and north west parts of the City that have no access to collection facilities.

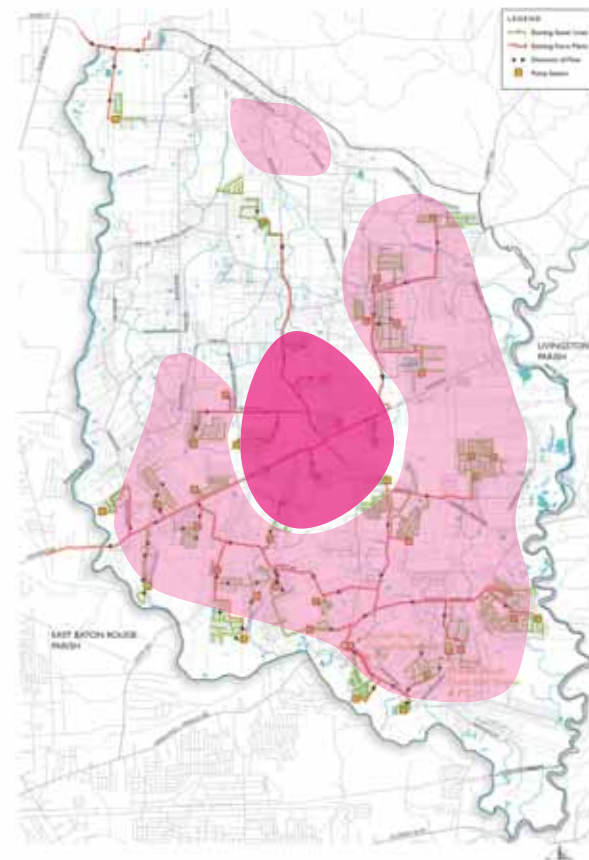
Having originally been designed for subdivision development typical for outlying "bedroom" communities, the system will not be capable of handling the densities projected in the Proposed Land Use Plan. The Market Feasibility Study suggest that a moderate growth scenario projects a population increase of 15,000 people over the next ten years. This translates into between three and five thousand new residential units that will require sewerage treatment facilities. The study also suggests a substantial growth in retail establishments that will further tax the existing system. Increasing capacity will be required.

Options for adding capacity include working cooperatively with the Parish

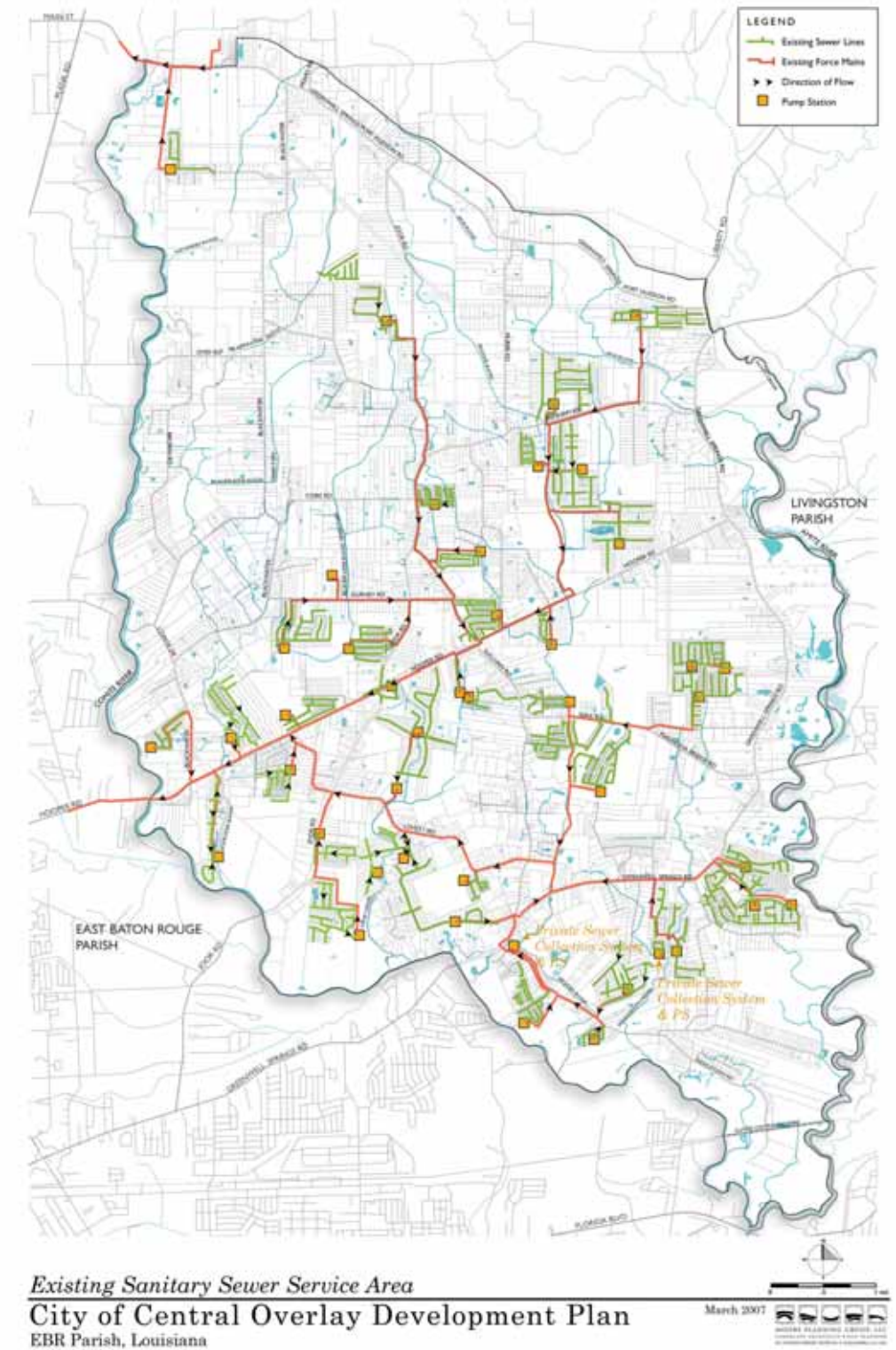
to finance the expansion of collection and treatment facilities, initiating a supplementary Municipal system, or allowing de-centralized treatment facilities. Consideration should focus on long term sustainability rather than on short term cost savings since short term savings often translate into long term expense that far outweighs the savings benefit.

The priorities should be upon building additional capacity in the desired growth areas - the Core Zone and Moderate Zones, especially for the most intense development density areas like the City Center - followed by gradual expansion into un served areas - especially the area in the Moderate Zone at intersection of Port Hudson and Joor Roads.

There are also options for financing the expansion including Low Interest Federal and State Loan programs, development impact fees and Tax Increment Financing to name several typical tactics.



Expansion of capacity of the sewerage treatment system should be approached strategically. This diagram indicates expansion priority in three levels. The greatest urgency will be in capacity for the Core Zone which is anticipated to be the driving force for economic development for the City. Next will be enhanced service for those areas with existing service where additional growth is desired, including the area to the north which currently is unserved. Lastly, long range consideration should be given to areas in the Rural Zone whose densities should be kept as low as possible until the capacity expansion can accommodate them.



CITY CENTER



From the beginning of the planning process, the community decided that their new City needed some sort of identity space - a "City Center" - that would serve as a symbol of community aspirations. Indeed, as the planning process proceeded, development of this city center idea was placed high on the list of community goals, second only to preserving green space. The relationship between these two primary goals is a strong one. Developing a concentrated core area will help prevent sprawling strip development that could destroy the rural character and consume hundreds of acres of open space. It also supports the other primary goals of increasing business and retail development while utilizing existing transportation infrastructure. During the SDAT phase of planning this concept began to take shape both theoretically and physically. The report leaves no doubt of its importance:

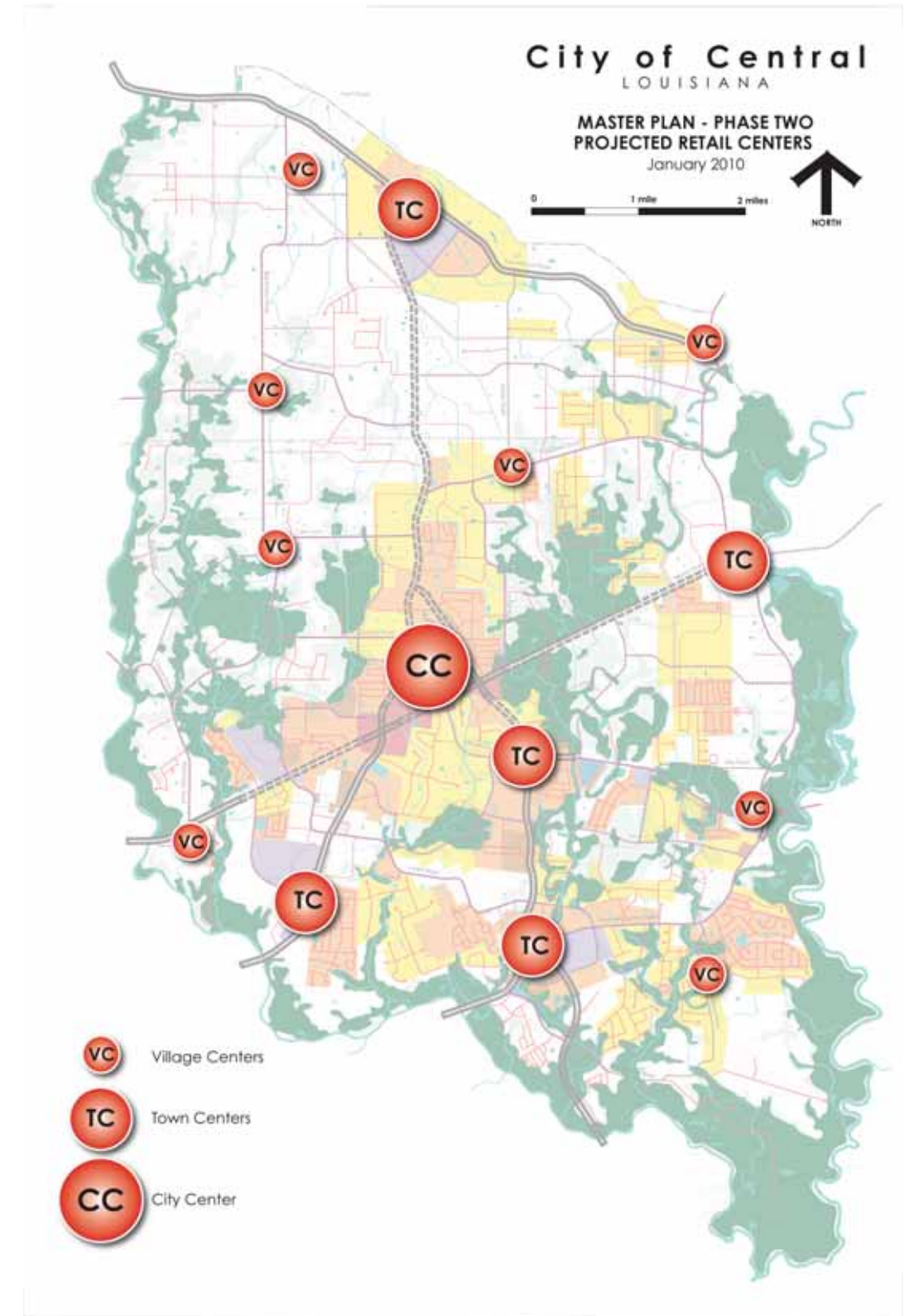
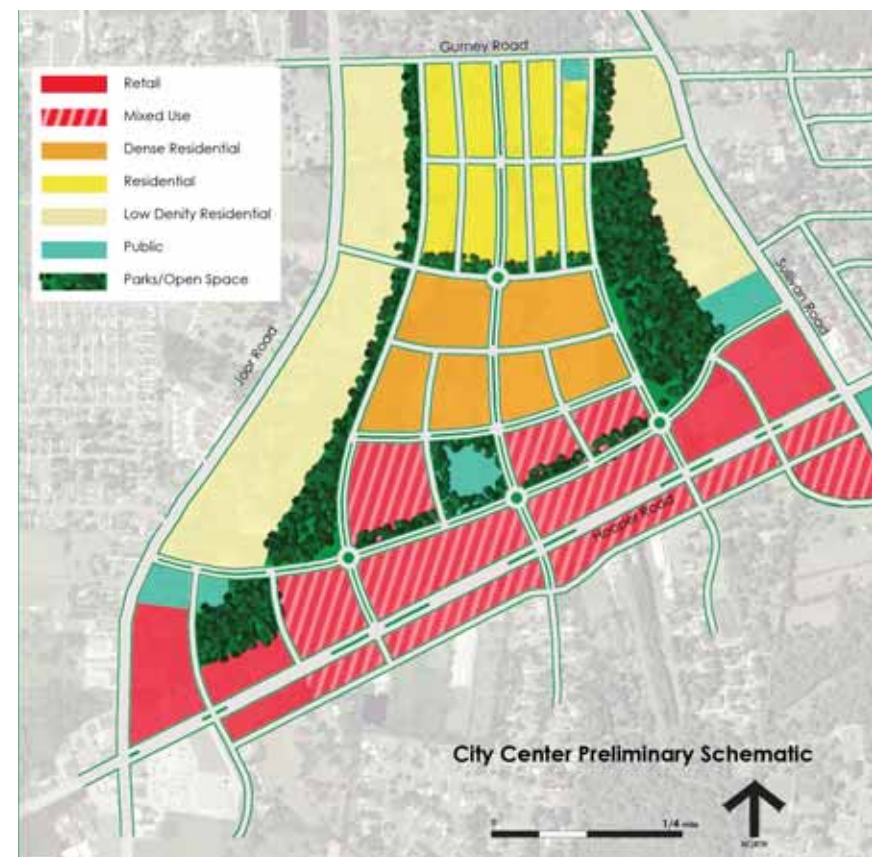
"Creating a true downtown with jobs and housing may be the single most effective economic development measure that Central could do. Although a downtown would create more housing than it would create jobs, it would create many jobs and create a magnet that would make Central more amenity rich and start drawing additional jobs to the community."

While a more detailed design study will have to be completed to fully explore the potential for this type of development, it seems clear that it would address a great many issues and should be pursued. The area preliminarily identified is made up of a number of individual parcels between Hooper, Gurney, Joor and Sullivan Roads and is very nearly in the center of the incorporated area.

City Center

The figure at right is from the SDAT Report. It illustrates how a dense retail and office core could take advantage of existing roadways and provide the critical mass necessary to fuel economic development. The scheme below is a refinement that takes into consideration existing green space while extending the retail development across Hooper Road, Central's most important arterial. Creating a quality presence along Hooper Road will greatly improve the chances of success for the City Center while projecting the quality image

to the many commuters that use this route on a regular basis. The scheme also demonstrates how parks and green space can be used to link the existing Library with other public (proposed City Hall and historic residence) and private amenities.



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CITY CENTER

There is some existing retail development that reflects the “suburban” reality of Central's past, along with a mixture of residential development and some undeveloped pasture land. There are also some significant forested areas and one historic home. Every effort should be made to incorporate these wooded areas into the open space network which would greatly enhance the quality and value of the retail, mixed use and residential development under consideration.

As in any similar circumstance, the success of this effort depends upon the bringing together of a diverse group of interests. The first and probably most important interest is the land owners. They will have to agree to permit the development of the land. Secondly, interest must be generated within the private development and investment community. In addition, the project could be phased to allow incremental growth and permit long term financing of infrastructure expansion.

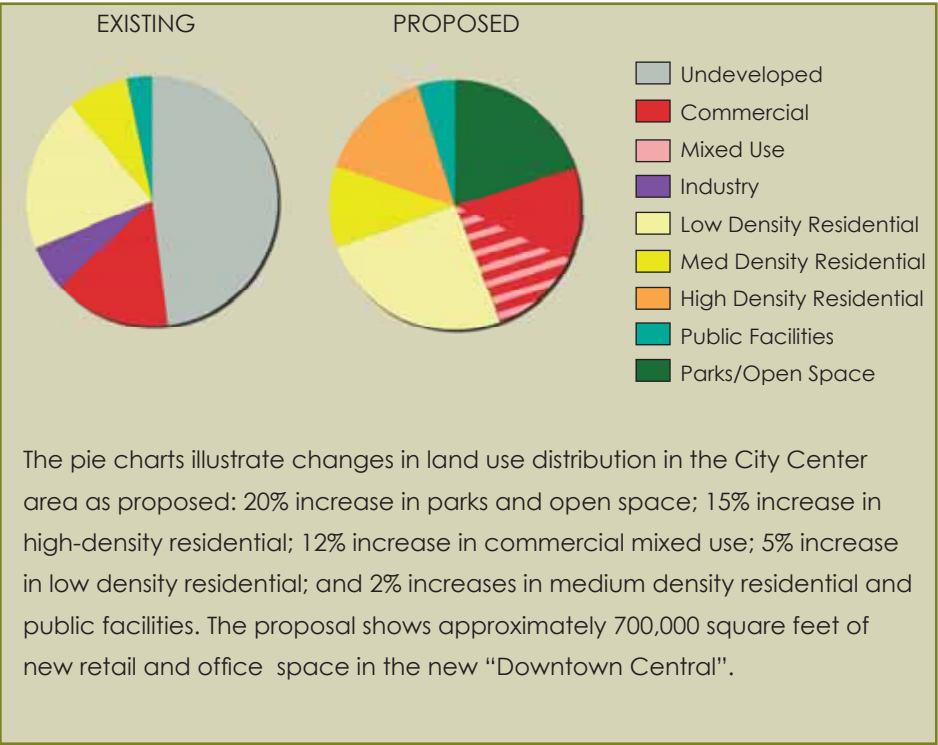


EXISTING - Corner of Hooper and Sullivan Roads

This figure is part of a study model for the City Center area. It illustrates how using street-side parking, street trees and sidewalks along with maximum setback requirements for commercial buildings on Hooper Road can begin to create a “downtown” effect and stimulate community activity.



The figure below shows an expanded aerial view of the model. Note the density of commercial development along Hooper and provision for parking inside each cluster block. This provides the opportunity for street-side parking and a vibrant streetscape. Also shown are provision for a City Hall complex as a link between the library and the historic home and new “central” park space. Important to note is that the park spaces provide buffering between the new denser development and existing homes along Joor and Sullivan Roads.



OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION



Much of the undeveloped land in Central consists of forested low lands in the 100 year Flood Zone that can become inundated during normal heavy rains. These low areas play an important role in providing runoff collection, retention, water table replenishment and flood prevention. Other undeveloped lands include pasture land and wooded areas above the flood plain. Taken as a whole, these undeveloped areas provide the community with an abundance of open space and a feeling of closeness with nature that is prized by Central residents. Assembling these areas and combining them with existing and proposed park and recreation areas will allow for development of recreational trails that will reduce dependence on automobile use and encourage active community engagement and more healthy lifestyles.

As in any such initiative, acquisition and assemblage will be the greatest challenge and will depend on broad community support - both politically and financially. The plan recommends use of several implementation tools and strategies. The implementation strategy involves capturing these lands in one of three ways:

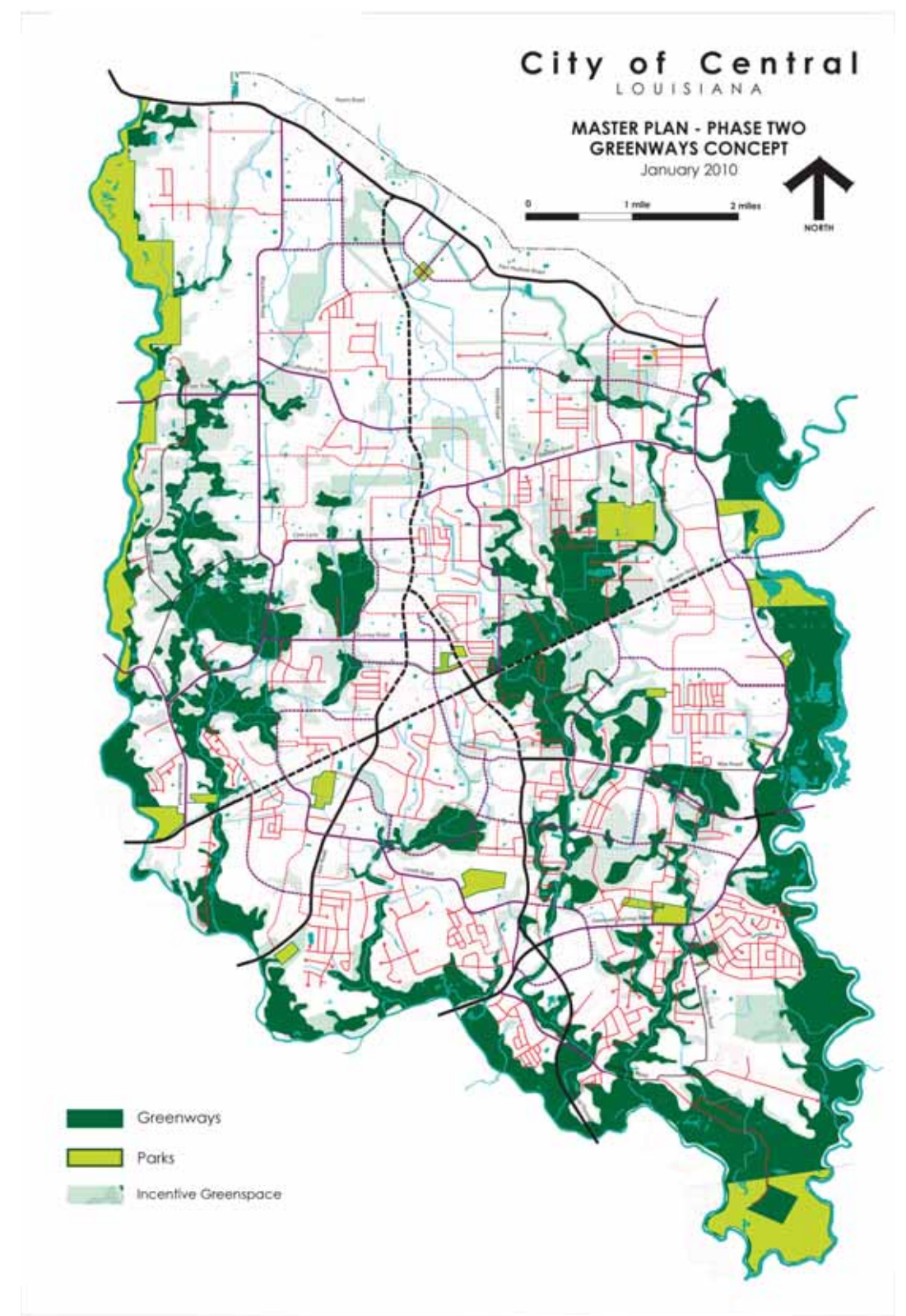
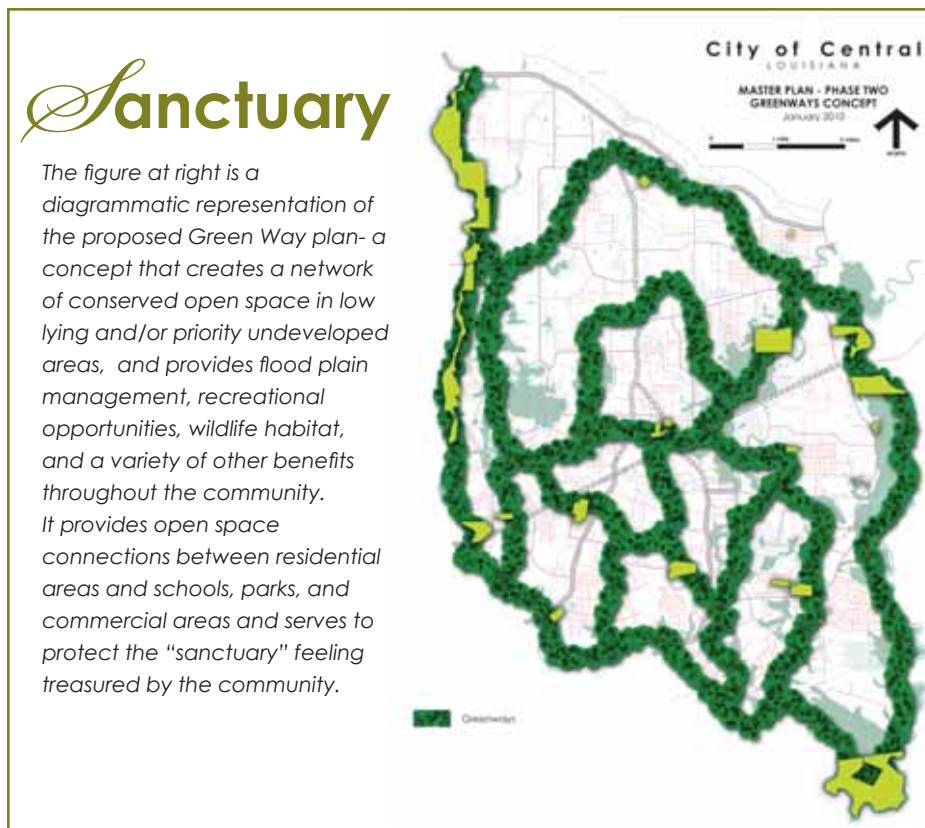
Purchase - The most straightforward approach involves buying the land from a willing seller at a fair price. Most of these lands have very little development potential which should keep the purchase/assessment price down. That does not, however, always translate into the owner's estimation of its inherent value.

Transfer of Development Rights - Introduced earlier in this text, this approach provides for acquisition of the lands through a financial transaction between

the property owner and a developer of a different property who wishes to increase the density beyond that which would normally be permitted. The compensation is managed through the TDR Program and ownership of the land is transferred to the program operator who agrees to preserve it in an undeveloped state or according to the specific agreement. For example, some of these lands may be minimally developed as recreation areas with trails.

Conservation Easements - In this method, the land is encumbered by an agreement which restricts its development for the purpose of conservation. The easement may be sold or donated to the receiving entity, and the land remains the private property of the original owner. There are substantial tax incentives that support this method and it is growing in importance as a means for conserving undeveloped lands. Depending upon the details of the agreement, the public may or may not have access and/or use rights to the property. Some communities establish a Conservation Trust as the holder of the easement to allow public entities time to gather the resources to purchase the rights or the property.

In the City of Central, it is advisable to utilize all three of these methods to begin assembling these land as soon as possible.



CONSERVATION SUBDIVISIONS

Adopting **CONSERVATION SUBDIVISION** regulations into the City's development code will offer greater opportunities for development of high quality residential properties while conserving the open spaces that are critically important for floodplain management necessities. Communities with open/ green space master plans can use conservation practices to great advantage in assembling integrated open space networks in areas where they have the greatest positive impact. Developers and landowners benefit because density bonuses may be given that allow construction of more housing product. The development and the community both benefit because the end product is of higher quality, value, and is more desirable in the marketplace.

The example shown at right illustrates the general concept. Figure A shows a 90 acre forested property. Eight acres of this are very flood prone and designated as Open Space Preservation. Thirty two acres are in the 100 year flood zone and should be left undeveloped to preserve the floodplain. The property is currently zoned Rural which permits a maximum density of one residence per ten acres. Development per the requirements might yield the layout shown in Figure B. This scheme may or may not allow for preservation of low lying wooded areas. A typical development request is shown in Figure C where dense development and maximum product are proposed as a way to maximize profits for developers. Low lands are filled and replaced with back lot retention areas and connectivity is ignored. Figure D demonstrates a possible development using Conservation Subdivision methods. The result protects the low land forests as permanent open space and flood plain, increases the density to allow increased product, reinforces present and future connectivity and adds value to the homes and the community at large.

A sample ordinance is provided for consideration by the City of Central for adoption into the Development Code.

Figure A - EXISTING CONDITIONS



Figure B - ZONING REQUIREMENTS



Figure C - REQUESTED REZONING



Figure D - CONSERVATION OUTCOME



GOALS SCORECARD

One of the most important advantages of having participated in this rigorous planning process is the surety that decisions made with the guidance of this plan will have support of the community. The presumption is that when the intent of the plan is followed, it represents the consensus will of residents. While respecting individual rights, it gives higher value to the "common good" that will benefit the greatest number of people and will, in the long run, provide greatest benefits to each individual.

The City of Central is in the enviable position of having a natural attraction to development investment. It has available land, higher than average income and education levels, great schools, and a beautiful setting. However, this constellation of qualities can be negated if development practices are not brought into line with plan objectives.

As a tool for ensuring positive, high value, and goals driven development, this plan provides some strong advantages if properly utilized. The "Goals Scorecard" at right is one example of how this can be accomplished. It will help real estate investors in negotiations with property owners arrive at a reasonable expectations about the value of property, and help developers avoid costly delays in the permit approval process. It will allow Planning and Zoning Commission members and city permit review staff to make determinations with confidence, and ensures a level of fairness to all parties. Finally, it raises the expectations on all sides of the development process about the quality demanded by the community.

As shown at right, the scorecard is a fairly simple questionnaire that uses Community Goals to rate the appropriateness of a proposed development. Especially useful in cases where a development proposal requests a variance or other special consideration, it also would be an appropriate "calling card" that will be quickly disseminated throughout the real estate and development community and begin to set the tone for negotiations in the City of Central.

The scorecard is a very simplified example of how the plan can be an effective tool to guide new development. It should be developed further and consultations with the development community and property owners would be advantageous so that clarity and transparency is ensured. The precise metrics of scoring need refinements and it is possible that other criteria need to be included. Used prior to permit application, the scorecard will allow developers an opportunity to self score their idea and, if necessary, alter the concepts to attain a more favorable response from the community. In the end, the community and the project promoter will benefit from speedy approval of high-value, goals-linked development in the City.

Evaluate the proposed project on a scale of 1-10 based upon the criteria below.

Does the proposed project ...?

• Preserve the rural setting including trees, open spaces, and wildlife habitat		
• Protect against air, water and light pollution		
• Utilize sensitive architecture and infrastructure design		
LIVABILITY GOAL - Retain the Sanctuary Feeling		of 30
• Expand and upgrade school facilities		
• Work to better integrate schools into community life		
• Pursue innovation in every aspect of education		
EDUCATION GOAL - "Make Our Schools Even Better"		of 30
• Develop a City Center		
• Provide space and conditions that attract great development		
• Provide incentives and fast-track for great development		
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL - Increase Shopping/Business Opportunities		of 30
• Reduce flooding frequency and severity		
• Reduce traffic congestion		
• Expand sanitary sewer service		
INFRASTRUCTURE GOAL - Improve Drainage and Connectivity		of 30
TOTAL		of 120