

**OVERALL GOALS, POLICIES, AND STRATEGIES
TO GUIDE THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
FOR TERREBONNE PARISH
2012**

This Comprehensive Plan Update is guided by six key goals. They are stated very broadly to reflect their status as goals and to allow them to be shaped and ultimately achieved by the policies, objectives, and strategies enumerated for each.

Goal #1: Sense of Place and Connectedness

Goal #2: Safe and Efficient Transportation System

Goal #3: Efficient and Attractively Varied Land Uses

**Goal #4: A Sustainable Community Through Avoidance of Hazards,
Nuisances, and Environmental Degradation**

Goal #5: High-Quality Infill Projects and Redevelopment

Goal #6: Effective Public Services and Facilities

The policies, objectives, and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan Update that correspond with each goal are provided below. Terrebonne Parish will work to implement these objectives.

Goal No. 1: Sense of Place and Connectedness

1. **Policy:** Promote sustainable growth management and resilient development practices in the Parish
 - 1) **Strategy:** Incorporate development Best Practices for coastal Louisiana from *"Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan"* and companion documents to promote sustainability and resiliency in the Parish
 - 1) **Strategy:** Actively participate in the formulation of the State's Coastal Master Plan

2. **Policy:** Achieve a sustainable balance between development activities, preservation of natural resources, and open space

- **Strategy:** Prepare, adopt, and aggressively implement unique and distinctive signage and landscape plans for each entrance to the Parish, coordinating entrance/gateway and signage designs in accordance with such concepts in use for the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area (ANHA)
- **Strategy:** Develop, adopt, and implement architectural/design review standards and procedures through use of an appropriate overlay district for scenic, historic and architecturally valuable districts and neighborhoods, and defined districts, corridors, or development areas where land use controls are in use.
- **Strategy:** Preserve rural landscapes and farmland through appropriate and sensitive land use measures such as conservation easements, etc.
- **Strategy:** Encourage alternative residential developments, such as neo-traditional, cluster, and TND-type neighborhoods that preserve open space within the development, minimize encroachment into environmentally sensitive areas, and facilitate connectivity for walking and biking.
- **Strategy:** Establish stronger standards for connectivity elements, such as sidewalks, bikeways, and open space requirements, in new subdivision developments to promote walking, biking, and a healthier lifestyle.

3. **Policy:** Promote Downtown Houma as the historic and cultural center of Terrebonne Parish.

1) **Strategy:**

2) **Strategy:**

3) **Strategy:**

[Insert sense of place/connectivity objectives from downtown plan and essential community design elements]

Goal No. 2: Safe and Efficient Transportation System

1. **Policy:** Foster transportation safety in all system components

- **Strategy:** Work with SCPDC to program priority roadway improvements based on available funding according to the *Houma-Thibodaux Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2035*.
- **Strategy:** Seek ways to promote increased transit use in the Parish as a way to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality
- **Strategy:** Work to fully implement ITS system to improve traffic flow and safety along the ITS-equipped corridors in the Parish

- **Strategy:** Seek to implement an emergency vehicle signal pre-emption feature along ITS-equipped corridors in the Parish
- 2. Policy:** Foster transportation accessibility and connectivity for all, and transportation system efficiency throughout the Parish.
- **Strategy:** Incorporate the “Complete Streets” design concept into all local development codes.
 - **Strategy:** Change development codes to require sidewalks in conjunction with all new streets in new subdivisions, and bike paths for increased inter-development connectivity.
 - **Strategy:** Complete currently planned bike trail system and work to plan and implement an expanded, parish-wide system with both on- and off-road segments.
 - **Strategy:** Ensure bike trail system roadway markings and signage are in accordance with the MUTCD to promote safety.
 - **Strategy:** Complete all ADA-required improvements in Downtown Houma from the Downtown Marina to the Good Earth Transit Station.
 - **Strategy:** Coordinate ADA requirements relative to transit stop and transit shelter locations along transit routes in the Parish.
 - **Strategy:** Require pedestrian and bicycle linkages/connections to existing or planned infrastructure and public facilities along all public streets.
- 3. Policy:** Work collaboratively to complete unfinished/unconstructed segments of I-49 between Lafayette and the westbank of Jefferson Parish.
- **Strategy:** As its first priority, TPCG should work with the Chamber of Commerce, South Central Industrial Association, South Central Planning and Development Commission, St. Mary Parish, the City of Morgan City, the Towns of Berwick and Patterson, and LADOTD to find acceptable funding mechanism(s) to complete that segment of I-49 South between the Wax Lake Outlet Bridge and Morgan City in the shortest amount of time.
 - **Strategy:** As its second priority, TPCG should continue to work through the local Chamber of Commerce and SCIA to collaborate with the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, other entities in that community, and their respective Legislative Delegations to complete the I-49 South through Lafayette Parish to its intersection with I-10 north of Lafayette.
 - **Strategy:** Third, work with other interested parties and governmental entities, including LADOTD, and the various Legislative Delegations impacted, to

continue the discussion relative to funding mechanisms for completion of I-49 South between Bayou Lafourche and Ames Blvd on Westbank Jefferson Parish.

□

4. **Policy:** Support entrepreneurial efforts to begin intercity transit between Houma-Terrebonne and employment centers located to the east and west.

□ **Strategy:** Determine extent of inter-city commuting and have a study prepared to examine the feasibility of quality, curbside private-sector intercity transit service for Houma-Terrebonne.

5. **Policy:** Support improvements to local transit service and methods to attract new riders the Good Earth Transit system in Houma-Terrebonne

□ **Strategy:** Examine costs and feasibility of installing WiFi on all Good Earth Transit buses to allow connectivity to the internet for passengers.

□ **Strategy:** Examine costs and feasibility of developing an "app" downloadable to smart phones to allow transit users real time access to Good Earth Transit bus locations on their routes

□ **Strategy:** With property owners, examine the feasibility of servitude dedications for transit busses to allow transit stops to be sited much closer to the front doors of "big box" retailers along some of the major traffic corridors in the Parish such as M.L. King Blvd, and Grand Caillou Road.

Goal No. 3: Efficient and Attractively Varied Land Use

1. **Policy:** Encourage a sustainable mix of land uses in the Parish that meet the needs of current and future residents

□ **Strategy:** Explore alternatives to traditional zoning and land use regulations for use in the Urbanized Area of Houma-Terrebonne

2. **Policy:** Encourage land development patterns in the parish that are compatible with existing development

□ **Strategy:** Impose land use controls in those Development Zones where growth has and will continue to take place.

□ **Strategy:** Focus initial extension of zoning/land use regulations in DZs encompassing the LA 311 corridor above Savanne Road and the LA 24 corridor above Bayou Gardens Blvd., extending to one mile beyond the U.S. 90 ROW line.

- **Strategy:** As development in these corridors takes place, consider extending land use controls/zoning from the U.S. 90 corridor to parish boundary.
- 3. **Policy:** Encourage land development patterns that are supportive of cost-effective delivery of public services and infrastructure.
 - **Strategy:** Amend zoning ordinance to offer density incentives for infill development in the Urbanized Area of the Parish.
- 4. **Policy:** Meet the diverse housing needs in the Parish by providing a range of housing options to serve the long-term needs of parish residents.
 - **Strategy:** Create zoning standards in proposed future commercial districts to encourage mixed-use development
 - **Strategy:** Transition areas from less to more intense uses.
 - **Strategy:** Designate areas of the Parish suitable for redevelopment as mixed-use areas.
 - **Strategy:** Consider incorporating alternatives to simple Euclidian zoning, such as overlay districts for various purposes, into the Parish zoning code
 - **Strategy:** Encourage affordable housing throughout the parish which is directly accessible to employment centers via transportation alternatives such as transit.
 - **Strategy:** Form partnerships with local developers and non-profit organizations to provide affordable housing developments in appropriate locations throughout the parish
 - **Strategy:** Amend zoning code to allow one additional detached dwelling unit per net acre in the most restrictive residential zoning classification
 - **Strategy:** Amend zoning code to allow attached accessory single dwelling units
 - **Strategy:** Develop incentives within Parish codes to encourage the provision of additional public amenities, such as street lights, sidewalks, neighborhood parks, and landscaping in all new developments
 - **Strategy:** Create optional incentive programs that encourage innovative and creative land development practices which support mixed-use and affordable housing developments.
 - **Strategy:** Establish stronger standards for connectivity elements, such as sidewalks, bikeways, and open space requirements, in new subdivision developments
 - **Strategy:** Require linkages/connections to existing or planned infrastructure along all public streets

5. **Policy:** Ensure that the Parish is well served by attractive commercial districts in appropriate locations that meet the day-to-day needs of its residents and visitors;
- Strategy:** Locate primary shopping areas on major arterials and at major intersections.
 - Strategy:** Establish a minimum open space requirement in commercial districts.
 - Strategy:** Create smaller commercial zoning districts ensuring that uses allowed are compatible with the intent and location of the district and surrounding land uses.
 - Strategy:** Promote Downtown Houma as the historic, cultural, dining, and entertainment center of the Parish.
 - Strategy:** Grandfather in, and encourage small-scale neighborhood shopping services accessible by walking or biking.
 - Strategy:** Establish design guidelines for commercial development in excess of 4,500 square feet, addressing parking requirements and location, use of pervious surfacing materials, building appearance and construction materials, exterior lighting and exterior signage, and landscaping.
 - Strategy:** Research how other communities are addressing signage and commercial property maintenance issues.
 - Strategy:** Provide incentives for enhanced property maintenance
 - Strategy:** Create architectural/landscaping standards and review all new construction in commercial corridors and areas.
 - Strategy:** Create a Commercial Area/Corridor Overlay District to handle architectural/landscaping standards in commercial corridors and areas.
 - Strategy:** Use Commercial Area/Corridor Overlay District to evaluate landscaping regulations periodically to ensure increased tree coverage
 - Strategy:** Continue to direct public investment to enhance and maintain streetscapes in commercial areas, using such investments to implement the "Complete Streets" model.
 - Strategy:** Develop incentives, in conjunction with TEDA, to promote unique, locally-owned, and small businesses in the Parish, particularly in Downtown Houma
 - Strategy:** Develop incentives, in conjunction with TEDA, to retain existing businesses in the Parish and in Downtown Houma (also in conjunction with the Main Street Program).
 - Strategy:** Work with TEDA to maintain and publicize a detailed database of available vacant properties in the Parish

- **Strategy:** Encourage new commercial and industrial developments by offering land use and tax incentives (working through TEDA).
- **Strategy:** Working with TEDA, survey existing Parish businesses and address their land use and zoning-related needs and concerns

6. Policy: Maximize the benefits derived from the Parish’s investments in community facilities and infrastructure

- **Strategy:** Establish and maintain zoning districts within the urbanized area consistent with availability of public infrastructure and services
- **Strategy:** Acquire land through fee simple purchases, easements or other feasible methods for possible multiple public uses such as drainage/storm water management basins, greenways, walking, biking, and utility areas.
- **Strategy:** Encourage the grouping of public facilities in potential growth areas to create viable activity centers
- **Strategy:** Modify zoning and land development standards (or create a zoning overlay district) to allow higher densities and more intense land uses and development patterns surrounding major intersections in the Parish to take better advantage of existing infrastructure (utilities, roads, public transit, etc.), thus creating nodes of intense mixed-use development at these locations.
- **Strategy:** Create zoning and land development standards so that they relate to impacts on current and planned community facilities and infrastructure
- **Strategy:** Create new or modify existing zoning ordinance and land development/subdivision regulations with access management provisions to require, where possible, consolidation of new commercial driveways with existing driveways and coordination of traffic controls on all major corridors in order to promote traffic flow and alleviate congestion.
- **Strategy:** Review options for reservation of additional rights-of-way along select roadways/highways for future widening and/or improvements such as bike trails.
- **Strategy:** Strengthen provisions for parks and open space reservations in new or existing zoning ordinance and land development/subdivision regulations, and develop mechanisms with the appropriate Recreation District for maintenance and upkeep of these facilities.

7. Policy: Promote sustainable growth management practices in the Parish

- **Strategy:** Incorporate development Best Practices for coastal Louisiana from “Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan” and companion documents to promote sustainability and resiliency in the Parish

8. **Policy:** Achieve a sustainable balance between development activities, preservation of natural resources, and open space
- **Strategy:** Prepare, adopt, and aggressively implement unique and distinctive signage and landscape plans for each entrance to the Parish, coordinating entrance/gateway designs in accordance with the gateway and signage concepts in use for the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area (ANHA)
 - **Strategy:** Develop, adopt, and implement architectural/design review standards and procedures through use of an appropriate overlay district for scenic, historic and architecturally valuable districts and neighborhoods, and defined districts, corridors, or development areas
 - **Strategy:** Preserve rural landscapes and farmland through appropriate and sensitive land use measures such as conservation easements, transfer of development rights, etc.
 - **Strategy:** Encourage alternative residential developments, such as neo-traditional, cluster, and TND-type neighborhoods that preserve open space within the development and facilitate connectivity for walking and biking

Goal No. 4: A Sustainable and Resilient Community Through Avoidance of Hazards, Nuisances, and Environmental Degradation

1. **Policy:** Support protection of environmentally sensitive habitat areas, including efforts to create conservation zones.
- **Strategy:** Prepare a Terrebonne Parish Nature Priorities report in collaboration with Nicholls State University, environmental organizations and local schools showing the type, environmental sensitivity, character, and scenic value of natural areas and habitats in the Parish.
 - **Strategy:** Creation of the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area by the U.S. Congress is testimony to the unique and rich biological diversity of this part of the state. Terrebonne Parish should take full advantage of all this designation has to offer in terms of preserving this heritage for existing and future generations.
 - **Strategy:** Seek protection or conservation actions for priority open spaces throughout the parish.
 - **Strategy:** Promote the use of native plants and low-impact, low-maintenance practices in public landscaping and horticulture projects and combat the advance of invasive non-native species.

2. **Policy:** Support protection of wetlands for their storm water management, flood control, and habitat value.
 - **Strategy:** Coordinate Parish capital projects to protect wetlands and other sensitive areas.

3. **Policy:** Support local, state and federal efforts to have our local water bodies meet or exceed national clean water standards.
 - **Strategy:** Implement storm water management best practices to reduce non-point source pollution in parish water bodies.
 - **Strategy:** Strengthen local ordinances that support and work in conjunction with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality to enforce unpermitted water discharges to help improve water quality in the parish.
 - **Strategy:** Monitor septic systems and other sources of commercial and industrial water contamination.
 - **Strategy:** Encourage use of natural drainage and passive storm water management practices throughout the parish.

4. **Policy:** Support development and implementation of a greenway plan and program that uses flood plains, drainage basins, retention ponds, and undeveloped land to connect neighborhoods with parks, schools, community destinations and Downtown Houma.
 - **Strategy:** Incorporate development of the greenway system into the planning process to integrate a network of on-street and pedestrian routes.
 - **Strategy:** Develop strategic partnerships with private landowners to facilitate public access to greenway and waterfront areas.
 - **Strategy:** Require safe pedestrian linkages to green networks from new developments.
 - **Strategy:** Create new park land in the greenway system where necessary and feasible.
 - **Strategy:** Focus on underserved areas of the parish, particularly outside the urbanized area, in developing new parks in conjunction with the various Recreation Districts.
 - **Strategy:** Develop partnerships with private and public landowners, such as the Terrebonne Parish School Board and the Terrebonne Levee and Conservation District, to increase public access to usable open space.

5. **Policy:** Support plans and programs that increase public access to the parish's water resources for recreational purposes either near or on the water.
- Strategy:** Development meaningful public access to, and nature experiences along parish water resources.
 - Strategy:** Formalize partnerships with such public entities as the Terrebonne Levee and Conservation District, to provide public access to and enjoyment of the parish's water resources.
 - Strategy:** Update or develop anew a batture access plan for the parish to identify areas where public access to the parish's scenic bayous, including the GIWW, needs to be preserved.
 - Strategy:** Develop and quantify, in conjunction with the Economics Department at NSU, the public amenity of the parish's existing natural bayous and other waterways.
6. **Policy:** Support high quality, well-maintained parks, recreational areas, and greenway network and infrastructure in the parish.
- Strategy:** Ensure sufficient funding and resources for maintenance of parks and recreational facilities
 - Strategy:** If necessary, promote partnerships with the private sector and/or citizens for on-going maintenance of park systems
 - Strategy:** Adopt low-maintenance landscaping and building practices to reduce overhead costs or parks and recreational facilities
7. **Policy:** Support measures designed to reduce storm damage from wind and water along the coastal plain and in those areas of the parish falling inside the 100-yr. flood plain contour.
- Strategy:** Educate the public on the benefits (in relation to the costs) of building homes and businesses in vulnerable flood-prone areas to a higher standard in terms of construction techniques, construction materials and structure elevation at least one foot above the regulatory flood protection elevation.
 - Strategy:** Develop, adopt, and implement more stringent flood plain damage prevention measures to promote sustainability and resiliency.
 - Strategy:** With available funding continue to aggressively pursue non-structural hazard mitigation remedies, such as acquisitions and elevations.

- 8. Policy:** Support efforts to reduce ozone-related emissions by 20% by 2030
- Strategy:** In conjunction with South Central Planning & Development Commission, undertake and complete a parish-wide ozone-related emissions audit.
 - Strategy:** In conjunction with SCPDC, plan, promote and implement an Ozone Reduction Pilot Program in the parish.
- 9. Policy:** Support efforts to quantify and fully understand the long-term impacts of sea level rise on Terrebonne Parish.
- Strategy:** Prepare a parish-wide climate action plan, taking into account the impacts of sea level rise on the parish
- 10. Policy:** Support efforts to ensure all parish buildings and operations are models of resource and energy efficiency
- Strategy:** Institute a green procurement and building policies
 - Strategy:** Take leadership position in use of alternative and renewable energy at all parish buildings.
 - Strategy:** Take steps to make all parish buildings and facilities more energy efficient
 - Strategy:** Pursue use of compressed natural gas (CNG) in all parish-owned vehicles

Goal No. 5: High-Quality Infill Projects and Redevelopment

- 1. Policy:** Support efforts to creatively and attractively use vacant lots and parcels in developed areas to meet community housing needs.
- Strategy:** Catalogue all vacant lots and parcels in the urbanized area suitable for housing development
 - Strategy:** Amend the current zoning ordinance to create an “infill development overlay district” designation with regulations designed to create attractively designed housing units such as townhomes or condominiums on vacant lots.
 - Strategy:** Amend current zoning ordinance minimum lot size to accommodate one additional housing unit per net acre of land in R-1 Residential districts.
 - Strategy:** Amend current zoning ordinance to allow accessory dwellings (one per parcel) in all single-family zoning districts.

2. **Policy:** Support efforts to utilize larger vacant parcels in the urbanized area as part of an affordable housing strategy.

- **Strategy:** Catalogue vacant parcels (minimum four contiguous lots or as large as four typical lots in the neighborhood) in the urbanized area suitable to support affordable housing developments, making sure each is adequately served by utilities (water, sewer, etc.) and that transit service is immediately available or can be made available.
- || **Strategy:** Evaluate current zoning and development regulations for adequacy in the development of such parcels; amend as necessary to facilitate this type of development.
- || **Strategy:** In pursuit of the overall goal and specific objective, require developers to provide drainage and traffic impact studies for the site to be developed in this manner in order to identify and mitigate potential problems.

Goal No. 6: Reliable and Efficient Public Utility and Facilities Infrastructure Designed to Meet the Needs of the Community for the Next 30 Years

1. **Policy:** Support investments in needed infrastructure upgrades or rehabilitation/reconstruction where necessary, not only to improve service and avoid potential health issues in the community, but to support economic development initiatives and redevelopment in the parish's urbanized core.

- **Strategy:** Engage the assistance of business groups to help educate the public about the benefits of joining the Bayou Lafourche Fresh Water District.
- **Strategy:** Thoroughly consider all the long-term benefits and costs of joining the BLFWD, versus renewing a contract for fresh water supply with the BLFWD
- **Strategy:** Provide funding to implement the recommendations of the parish sewer master plan nearing completion.
- **Strategy:** Investigate funding mechanisms and grant combinations that will facilitate expansion of community sewerage system on parish-wide basis.
- || **Strategy:** Continue to work to eliminate the causes of Sanitary Sewer Overflows in the parish.
- **Strategy:** Amend applicable building codes to require apartment complexes to be constructed with grease traps so that a source of SSO problems can be eliminated

2. **Policy:** Support full implementation of a GIS-based parish asset management system.
 - **Strategy:** Thoroughly investigate various options for public asset management systems, speaking with communities and counties throughout the country that utilize such systems to save money by prolonging the useful life of public assets.
 - **Strategy:** Implement a parish asset management system as a prerequisite for the development of infrastructure master plans.

3. **Policy:** Support integration of drainage facilities into a public amenity network
 - **Strategy:** Evaluate best practices as they emerge for alternative, non-structural solutions to urban run-off treatment and management
 - **Strategy:** Incorporate an inter-connected system of run-off retention basins and drainage infrastructure into a public amenity asset

4. **Policy:** Support full funding of public safety operations in the parish on annual basis.
 - **Strategy:** Assist public safety departments in the development of realistic 5-year plan cycles for facilities and services in coordination with the parish's Capital Improvement Program
 - **Strategy:** Support community-based public safety programs.
 - **Strategy:** Assist in the development of interagency incident-management teams and additional training for first-responders.

5. **Policy:** Where possible, look to meet new needs and demands for public facilities by expansion/enhancement of existing facilities first, before considering the building of new facilities.
 - **Strategy:** Implement best practices for long-term, life-cycle energy and resource efficiency in improvements/renovations of existing public facilities, and in the construction of new ones.

6. **Policy:** Support efforts to reduce solid waste stream by 25% by 2030.
 - **Strategy:** Explore viable methods to reduce solid waste stream through effective recycling or other programs.
 - **Strategy:** Explore viable best practices for solid waste disposal options for the parish.
 - **Strategy:** In conjunction with other entities, such as South Central Planning & Development Commission and other surrounding parishes and municipalities, discuss and explore cost effective regional solid waste disposal solutions

7. Policy: Support efforts to achieve full compliance with accessibility standards under ADA in both public and private facilities.

- Strategy:** Provide funding in parish annual budget to address all outstanding ADA deficiencies in public facilities, including transit system shelter infrastructure.
- Strategy:** Make ADA accessibility information available to the public throughout the parish