

Terrebonne Comprehensive Master Plan

**FINAL REPORT
(DRAFT)
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Acknowledgments

The Terrebonne Comprehensive Master Plan is a project of the Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government (TPCG), and the Houma-Terrebonne Regional Planning Commission. The TPCG and the Planning Commission have been supporters of this effort with the common goal of improving the lives of the citizens of Terrebonne Parish. The project was managed by a Steering Committee representing a cross section of the community, and the Steering Committee was supported by the TPCG Planning Department Staff. All have worked for the success of this effort.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The Terrebonne Comprehensive Master Plan project is an effort by the Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government (TPCG) to plan for the predicted changes that will affect the parish in the next 20 years. It is a visionary tool for parish leaders, planners, and decision makers to use in making the necessary tough decisions to improve the parish, and manage those changes.

Terrebonne Parish has experienced significant change in the recent past, particularly in the last 10 years. Economically, the parish emerged from the oil bust of the 80's with a strong, diversified economy in the 90's. This trend accelerated after the turn of the century, and continues today. The Houma-Thibodaux metro area continues to lead the states in jobs created and unemployment rate.

This economic expansion caused a concurrent population expansion. Both factors contributed to physical development of the parish, and to strains on existing infrastructure. The TPCG was forced to deal with development issues at many levels, and often lacked good, current information to make wise decisions. Faced with these and other issues, the TPCG decided to develop a Comprehensive Master Plan for the parish.

The TPCG (through a predecessor entity) conducted a similar process over 20 years ago. Though not as broad as the current plan, it did contain specific recommendations for infrastructure and other improvements. Many of those improvements and recommendations have been implemented.

The current effort broadly consisted of an inventory of certain parish-wide characteristics, a projection of changes in those characteristics, a process to solicit public input into the plan via several focus groups, and the drafting of the project report. This process began with the solicitation of proposals by the TPCG in the fall of 2000. T. Baker Smith & Son, Inc., assembled a team of Foreman and Associates, the South Central Planning and Development Commission, and Dr. Dennis Ehrhardt. This team possessed a vast knowledge of planning issues, and demonstrated expertise in local planning concerns. The TBS team was selected, and began this project on April 1, 2001.

The team first organized a Steering Committee. This Committee consisted of 21 persons representing a cross section of the parish population. It included government representatives, developers, property owners, engineers, and other interested parties. The committee's role was to advise the team during the conduct of the project, offering suggestions to improve the process and address necessary concerns, and to review deliverables.

Concurrent with Steering Committee Organization, the team began the Inventory and Projection of certain parish-wide characteristics. The purpose of the inventory and projection was to develop a tool to be used in creating strategies to accommodate predicted changes in our Parish over the next twenty years. To make sound decisions regarding the future, it is necessary to have a precise picture of the present. The Inventory and Projection report consists of accurate, recent data on the status of a variety of issues is summarized. This current information presents a snapshot of the parish. The report also contains projections for some of these characteristics. These projections were very important for development of goals and strategies for the project. This report was delivered to the TPCG in November 2001.

In recognition of the need for public involvement in this planning process, the team then organized 6 focus groups. The purpose of these focus groups was to solicit public input in identification of those issues of primary importance to the development and prosperity of Terrebonne Parish, now and into the future. Although it is possible to produce a plan for the parish without the use of such groups, the team and the TPCG Administration understood that public involvement was necessary to ultimate public acceptance of the plan. By involving the public in the process early, the public could shape the plan and develop ownership of it.

The team identified 6 areas for which long range planning was necessary. A focus group was then organized around that particular area. The Focus Groups were:

- 1) Infrastructure
- 2) Essential Community Design
- 3) Land Use
- 4) Housing
- 5) Public Facilities
- 6) Environmental Issues

The Focus Group process began at the Nov. 18, 2001 Kick Off meeting. At this meeting, over 150 residents were briefed on the Inventory and Projection effort. These persons were allowed to question the team and TPCG Administration, and were offered the opportunity to enlist in one or more of the Focus Groups.

Following the Kick-off meeting, the team and TPCG Administration worked to include additional persons in the Focus Groups. It was felt that each group should include a broad cross section of the community, with several points of view for a particular issue. To that end the team reviewed each group's membership and solicited additional persons as necessary. This process resulted in over 350 people participating in the various focus groups. Participants included developers, engineers, landowners, housewives, community activists, federal and state agency personnel, and many others.

Once organized, the groups began meeting. Each group met at its own schedule, but generally once a month. Each group followed the same process:

- 1) Identification of issues
- 2) Prioritization of issues
- 3) SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats)
- 4) Goal Development
- 5) Strategy Development

The results of the first three items are presented in Appendix A. Item 4 resulted in goal statements for each group. These goals reflect, in summary form, the group's deliberations and products from the first three tasks. The goals are, just as the name implies, long term goals for each particular issue. Most focus groups have several goals, a necessary result of the broad nature of each group. The team facilitated each group so that identified goal would be specific enough so that success, if achieved, could be quantified.

The groups then developed strategies for each goal. A strategy is the particular action or actions necessary to achieve a particular goal. Most goals required several strategies. Strategies should be much more specific than goals, and should contain a description of the who, what, when, where, and why for each.

It is important to remember that the strategies contained in this document represent recommendations for actions, nothing more, nothing less. The strategies are meant to reflect the concerns and suggestions of the respective focus groups as documented by the TCMP team. Implementation of these strategies is dependent on those entities responsible for the particular issue under discussion.

This report represents a summary of the work to date, with emphasis on those Focus Group recommendations. These recommendations are listed in detail in Chapter 3. Chapter 2 is a brief summary of the Inventory and Projection report. The full report was previously delivered to the TPCG. Chapter 4 is a description of the projected land use in 2020 for the parish. This projection is based on information developed in the project and on the familiarity of the team with the local area. This information is presented geographically in "Development Zones" previously delineated in this project.

Chapter 2

Inventory and Projection Summary

I) Introduction

This section contains a summary of the Inventory and Projection report completed in 2001. This Inventory and Projection report is a tool to be used in developing strategies to accommodate predicted changes in our Parish over the next twenty years. These strategies are presented in Chapter 3 of this report.

The inventory and projection report is a tool to be used in making these decisions. To make sound decisions regarding the future, it is necessary to have a precise picture of the present. In this section, accurate, recent data on the status of a variety of issues is summarized. This current information presents a snapshot of the parish.

Using this snapshot, the consultant team projected population changes in the parish over the next 20 years. Population is extremely important because it is seen as the driver for the changes in other characteristics. Population changes will drive land use, housing, infrastructure, and other changes over time.

This analysis was conducted both on a parish scale and on a more refined scale. Terrebonne Parish is located in the south central portion of Louisiana, and Houma is the major metropolitan area in the parish. The consultant team and parish decided it would be beneficial to analyze these parish characteristics on a more detailed scale. This allows for development of detailed strategies for individual communities. It is a recognition that the parish should be managed, for certain issues, on a community, rather than parish, level.

II) Description of Study Development Zones

Terrebonne Parish consists of several unique communities. These communities are the result of culture, access to natural resources, and several other factors, but the primary influence has been geography. Because much of Terrebonne is accessible only by water, many areas were, and still are, isolated. These communities exist as separate cultures. In the 20th century, there has been some commingling of communities, but there are still separate issues in these various areas. To help focus on the areas that are common in this project, several development zones were created. These development zones will allow the public, in the planning process, to develop strategies for issues specific to their community, as well as for the parish as a whole. (Figure 2-1)

The following is a list of these development zones.

- A. Development Zone 1 (Montegut)
- B. Development Zone 2 (Bourg)

- C. Development Zone 3 (Chauvin)
- D. Development Zone 4 (Grand Caillou)
- E. Development Zone 5 (Dularge)
- F. Development Zone 6 (East Houma)
- G. Development Zone 7 (South Industrial)
- H. Development Zone 8 (North Industrial)
- I. Development Zone 9 (Schriever)
- J. Development Zone 9A (Gray)
- K. Development Zone 10 (Upper Bayou Blue)
- L. Development Zone 11 (Bayou Cane)
- M. Development Zone 12 (Hwy. 311)
- N. Development Zone 13 (Chacahoula)
- O. Development Zone 14 (Gibson)
- P. Development Zone 15 (Bayou Black)
- Q. Development Zone 16 (Lower Bayou Blue)
- R. Development Zone 17 (West Houma)
- S. Development Zone 18 (Western Marsh)

III) Socio-economics

A) Introduction

The TBS team compiled information in order to provide a “snapshot” of the community regarding population, ethnicity, age, school attendance, live births, income, employment sectors and unemployment. Every effort was made to gather the most accurate and up to date information available. This information is an underlying component of the goals, objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

The data for the Terrebonne Parish Master Plan was gathered through extensive research of various information sources. Unfortunately some important Census data was unavailable at the time of this report preparation. The sources of the data included: US Department Of Commerce – 1990 Census of Population; US Department Of Commerce – 2000 Census of Population; US Department Of Commerce – 1992 Census of Retail Trade; US Department Of Commerce – 1994 County and City Data Book; Statistical Abstracts Of Louisiana 1981, 1990, 1994, 1997; Vital Statistics Of Louisiana – Louisiana Department of Health and Human Resources 1973, 1974-1975, 1992-1993, 1994, 1995; 1999 County Business Patterns for Terrebonne Parish; US Department Of Commerce - 1997 Economic Census; MapStats – Terrebonne Parish; American Fact Finder – 2000 General Housing Characteristics; Louisiana Department of Labor – Employment by Civilian Labor Force; US Department Of Commerce – 1997 Government Organization; Terrebonne Parish School Board.

The following sections contain information on population including ethnicity, age distribution, public school enrollment, and live births. Where possible, this information is presented on a finer geographic scale. Economic statistics are also presented. These economic statistics present a picture of the forces that drive our local prosperity. Following the economic statistics, population projections are presented.

B) Demographics

The demographic characteristics of Terrebonne Parish presented in this document are Total Population, Ethnic Population, Age Population, School Enrollment and Live Births.

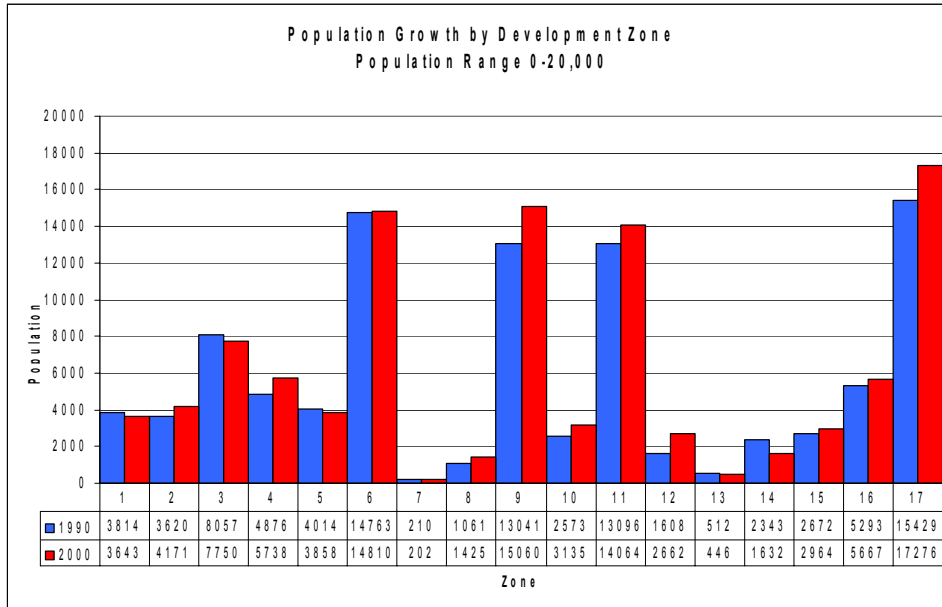
1) General Population Statistics

In 1990 the United States had a total population of 248,709,873. This figure grew by 13.1% to 281,421,906 in the year 2000. In Louisiana the 1990 population was 4,219,973 and grew by 5.9% to 4,468,976. In this report the Region is defined as the Parishes of Assumption, Lafourche, St. Mary and Terrebonne. In 1990 the regional population was 263,681 and grew to 271,365 by a growth rate of 2.9%.

In 1900 Terrebonne Parish had a population of 24,464 persons. The 2000 Census reported a population of 104,503 persons, for an increase of 80,039 persons during this 100-year period. Most of this population growth (51,065 persons) occurred between 1950 and 1980 due to the increase in oil related industries. Between 1980 and 1990 Terrebonne Parish had very little growth due to the economic downturn of oil related industries.

This population data can be presented by Development Zone (Table 2-1). The 2000 population of the Terrebonne Parish Development Zones varies from the highest populated, Zone 17 (West Houma) having 17,276 persons, to the lowest populated, Zone 7 (South Industrial) having 202 persons. The growth of these zones over the last decade (1990-2000) has also varied from zone to zone. Zone 6 (East Houma) is a heavily populated zone but did not grow very much with only an increase of 46 persons at a 0.3% growth rate. Zone 7(South Industrial) is a very lightly populated zone showing a decrease in population (-8) at a growth rate of -3.8%. Zone 9 (Schriever) is another heavily populated zone and grew very much with an increase in population (2,019) and a growth rate of 15.5%. Zone 11 (Bayou Cane) is another heavily populated zone and grew in population (968) with a growth rate of 7.4%. Zone 13 (Chacahoula) is another very lightly populated zone showing a decrease in population (-66) at a growth rate of -12.9%. Zone 17 (West Houma) is the most populated zone and increased in population (1,847) with a growth rate of 12.0%.

Table 2-1



2) Ethnicity

For the purpose of this report 1990 and 2000 ethnic populations were categorized by White, Black, Indian and Other. These categories were determined to reflect the diversity of the Terrebonne Parish population.

In 1990 the Terrebonne Parish had a total population of 96,982 of which 77.4% were white, 16.5% were black, 5.1% were Indian and 1.0% were other. In 2000 the Terrebonne Parish had a total population of 104,503 of which 74.1% were white, 17.8% were black, 5.3% were Indian and 2.8% were other.

3) Age

In 1990 the United States had a total population of 248,709,873 persons. The vast majority of the population was in the 25 to 34, 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 year age groups. In 2000, the United States had a total population of 281,421,906 persons. Once again the vast majority of the population was in these same age groups. The 25 to 34 year age group decreased in population while the 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 year age groups increased in population over the last decade (1990-2000). This trend can be seen at the national, state, regional (Assumption, Lafourche, St. Mary and Terrebonne Parishes) and parish levels.

The population of Terrebonne Parish has grown from 96,982 persons in 1990 to 104,503 persons in 2000. As on the national and region level, the vast majority of the population was in the 25 to 34, 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 year age groups. The 25 to 34 year age group decreased in population while the 35 to 44 and 45 to 54 year age groups increased in population over the last decade (1990-2000). The 25 to 34 year age group decreased by

2,577 persons or 15.3%. The 35 to 44 year age group increased by 3,135 persons or 22.8%. The 45 to 54 year age group increased by 3,688 persons or 38.5%. These two age groups alone account for 90.7% of the total population growth of the parish. This demonstrates that Terrebonne Parish follows the national trend of the aging “baby boomer” population.

4) Public School Enrollment

Terrebonne Parish School Enrollment as a whole has been decreasing over the last 20 years. In the 1981-82 school year Terrebonne Parish had a public school enrollment of 21,191 students. This figure decreased to 20,779 students in the 1984-85 school year. School enrollment increased and decreased over the next 4 years until it rose to 21,169 students in the 1988-89 school year. This figure dropped sharply the following year to 20,609 and again in 1990-91 to 20,069 students. School enrollment remained in the 20,000 to 20,500 range until it dropped to 19,807 students in the 1998-99 school year. In 1999-2000 this figure dropped to 19,658 students.

One of the possible reasons for the decline in Kindergarten and Elementary school enrollment may be the decline in the under 5 year age group and the 5 to 9 year age group populations from 1990 to 2000. The under 5 year age group decline by 646 persons or 7.7%. The 5 to 9 year age group declined by 1,072 or 11.4%. The increase and decrease in Middle School enrollment cannot be explained with 1990 and 2000 Census data. The Census data shows that the 10 to 14 year age group has decreased by 61 persons or .7%. This cannot explain the fluctuation of Middle School enrollment that was observed from 1990 to 2000. The increase in High School enrollment does correlate with the increase in the 15 to 19 year age group from 1990 to 2000. The 15 to 19 year age group increased by 1,434 persons or 18.7% over this time period.

5) Live Births

In Terrebonne Parish the live births are an important statistic to consider, because when compared to in-migration it is an essential component to developing population projections. It also has a direct affect on the school systems as changes in kindergarten grades follow trends set by live birth patterns.

The most visible Terrebonne Parish live births trend over the past 20 years has been a decline, with a slight rise in the years 1996 and 1997. This closely resembles the chart for school enrollment that shows a decrease in recent years. This drop in school could be partially attributed to the lower birth rate that shows a steady decline since 1960.

C) Economic Conditions

In 1990 Terrebonne Parish had a median household income of \$21,765. This figure is very similar to the surrounding Parishes of Assumption, Lafourche and St. Mary as well as the state. However, it is drastically below the national household income level of \$30,056. It is also well below all of the national regional median household incomes (Northwest, Midwest, South, West). There are many reasons for this discrepancy. One of the main reasons for this difference is the cost of living factor which deviates from one part of the country to another. Historically, the south has always had a lower cost of living than most areas of the United States.

While it is generally believed that Terrebonne Parish is by and large employed by the Oil and Gas Sector (Mining and Minerals), the Services Sector of the economy consist of the most employees with over 12,000 persons. The Retail Sector of the economy has the second most employees with over 10,000 persons. Even the Government Sector of the economy has more employees than the Oil and Gas Sector with over 7,000 persons. The Oil and Gas Sector contains just over 5,000 persons. This relationship between categories has been the case throughout the 1990's.

While it may also be generally believed that the Oil and Gas Sector (Mining and Minerals) of the economy contributes the most total earnings in Terrebonne Parish, the Services Sector of the economy contributes the most total earnings with over \$350,000,000, followed by the Oil and Gas Sector is second with over \$300,000,000.

D) Population Trends

A primary component of this master plan is an estimate of the future conditions in the parish. The primary driver for almost all other parish characteristics is population. As population changes, positively and negatively, so goes the parish. The TBS Team decided to use the "Straight Line Method" to project Population changes. The results of this method are presented in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2 Terrebonne Parish Projected Population

Area		1990	2000	Diff	% Change 1990 - 2000	2005	2010	% Change 2000 - 2020	2020
1	Montegut	3814	3643	-171	-4.48%	3558	3472	-9.4%	3301
2	Bourg	3620	4171	551	15.22%	4447	4722	26.4%	5273
3	Chauvin	8057	7750	-307	-3.81%	7597	7443	-7.9%	7136
4	Grand Caillou	4876	5738	862	17.68%	6169	6600	30.0%	7462
5	Dularge	4014	3858	-156	-3.89%	3780	3702	-8.1%	3546
6	East Houma	14763	14810	47	0.32%	14834	14857	0.6%	14904
7	South Industrial	210	202	-8	-3.81%	198	194	-7.9%	186
8	North Industrial	5293	5667	374	7.07%	5854	6041	13.2%	6415
9	Schriever	13041	15060	2019	15.5%	16070	17079	26.8%	19098
10	Upper Bayou Blue	2573	3135	562	21.8%	3416	3697	35.9%	4259
11	Bayou Cane	13096	14064	968	7.4%	14548	15032	13.8%	16000
12	Hwy 311	1608	2662	1054	65.5%	3189	3716	79.2%	4770
13	Chacahoula	512	446	-66	-12.9%	413	380	-29.6%	314
14	Gibson	2343	1632	-711	-30.3%	1277	921	-87.1%	210
15	Bayou Black	2672	2964	292	10.9%	3110	3256	19.7%	3548
16	Lower Bayou Blue	1061	1425	364	34.3%	1607	1789	51.1%	2153
17	West Houma	15429	17276	1847	12.0%	18200	19123	21.4%	20970
18	West Marsh	0	0	0			0		0
Totals		96982	104503	7521	7.76%	108264	112024		119545

IV) Land Use

A) Introduction

This first part, “Inventory and Projections,” of the Comprehensive Plan, provides the fundamental information needed to facilitate the planning, decision-making, and policy formulation process required in the compilation of the final plan. A major element of this part is the “Land Use Inventory.” The information contained in the “Land Use Inventory,” complemented with the expressed wishes of the citizens of the Parish, serves as the primary instrument by which the “Future Land Use Plan” will be formed.

B) Methodology

Beginning in May, 2001, and spanning a period of five (5) months, the planning team conducted a windshield survey of the existing land use of every parcel of property in the Parish. Utilizing aerial photography, supplemented with digitized parcel boundary data provided by the Terrebonne Parish Office of the Assessor, each parcel was assigned a land use classification.

The land use classifications were formulated to facilitate a determination of both the existing patterns of land use, as well as an identification of what land uses predominate the overall landscape both Parishwide and within each specific development zone.

C) Results

Terrebonne Parish encompasses approximately 1,151,331.40 acres. The breakdown of land uses for the Parish is depicted in Table 2-3 below.

Table 2-3 Terrebonne Parish Land Use

Land Use #	Land Use Name	Acreage	Percent
1	Single Family Residential	13004.12	1.1%
2	Multi-Family Residential (Low Density)	94.76	0.0%
3	Multi-Family Residential (High Density)	224.13	0.0%
4	Mobile Homes	1727.75	0.2%
5	Mobile Home Parks	406.44	0.0%
6	Commercial	1947.63	0.2%
7	Offices	121.59	0.0%
8	Medical Offices	35.40	0.0%
9	Home Occupations	19.32	0.0%
10	Public Services	4212.03	0.4%
11	Industrial	3506.39	0.3%
12	Agricultural	26341.99	2.3%
13	Vacant/Open Land	41240.55	3.6%
14	Environmentally Sensitive Areas	1048949.78	91.8%
15	Wellheads	281.85	0.0%
16	Camps	327.56	0.0%

Total Area with Land Use Classification	1142441.29	100.0%
Other (Waterways & Streets)	8890.11	
Development Zone Acreage	1151331.40	

Analysis of the distribution of land uses on a parish-wide basis resulted in the following observations:

- Land use patterns in Terrebonne Parish have been traditionally influenced by a number of factors---physical, cultural, and regulatory;
- Other major influences affecting development in the Parish include the recently completed improvements to U. S. Highway 90, coupled with on-going improvements to the roadway system and public transit system. These enhancements to the transportation system have increased the residential attractiveness of Terrebonne Parish to persons working in neighboring parishes.
- The concentration of industry and outstanding medical facilities in Terrebonne Parish continue to attract new families into the area;
- With over 90% of the total land area in the Parish classified as “Environmentally Sensitive,” the most significant factor which will continue to be the primary driver as to where future land use occurs is suitable land availability;
- Pressures for suitable/developable land will continue, especially as regulatory controls such as those imposed under the National Flood Insurance Program and Section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act become more stringent;
- Only 8% or 93,491.51 acres are deemed suitable for development.
- Of the 8% of the lands suitable for development, the predominant land use classification is “Vacant/Open Land” (44%).
- While the agricultural industry in Terrebonne Parish may appear to have lost significance, 28% of the lands suitable for development are either under cultivation or utilized for livestock purposes. The “Agricultural” classified lands are the second most predominant use in the Parish.
- Residential land usage accounts for 16.4% of all land uses in the Parish, with “Single Family Residential” land classifications continuing to be the predominant residential-type development.
- As residential land usage increases, the demand for land to facilitate associated commercial, industrial, and public service activities will increase, thereby creating opposing demands or a decentralization of commercial and industrial activities;

- The low-lying areas of the Parish have experienced a significant increase in “Camp/Recreational Housing” land usage over the last ten (10) years. During this same time period, these same areas have seen an out-migration of population, with little to no increases in conventional single-family residential land usage.
- “Public Services” land usage throughout the Parish is easily distinguished in the areas of public recreational and school facilities.

V) Housing

A) Introduction

One of the essential elements in the Terrebonne Comprehensive Master Plan is housing. According to the 2,000 United States Census, there are 39,928 housing units in Terrebonne Parish. These include single-family dwellings, multi-family units and mobile homes (either on individual lots, or in mobile home parks). Ninety percent of these units were occupied at the time the census was conducted, while 10% were vacant. Of the occupied units, 76% were owner occupied and 24% renter occupied.

As part of the inventory and projection phase of the comprehensive planning process, a visual housing survey of the entire housing stock was conducted simultaneously with the land use survey. The land use survey team used 5 housing categories. These were single-family residential, multi-family residential (low density), multi-family residential (high density), mobile homes and mobile home parks. The end result of the housing survey was to classify all housing in the parish into four categories. These are surveillance, maintenance, minor rehabilitation, and major rehabilitation and minor redevelopment. In addition, approximately 500 structures (almost all residential) were identified as being in need of demolition.

The housing survey was conducted on a block by block basis, and in rural areas where visible breaks could be ascertained. On a parish-wide basis, it was not practical to evaluate on a dwelling by dwelling basis. Each block, or street segment, was evaluated in two ways. First, an overall Environmental Services Index was compiled. Secondly, the structural conditions were assessed.

B) Results

Excluding environmentally sensitive areas, housing accounts for 16.4% of the land use in Terrebonne Parish (Table 2-4). Eighty eight percent of the housing in Terrebonne Parish is in the surveillance category. All housing, regardless of age, size and cost that is not in some other category is placed in the surveillance category, as structural and environmental conditions change over time. Five percent of the parishes housing stock has been placed in the maintenance category and another five percent requires minor

rehabilitation. These two categories warrant priority attention, particularly the maintenance category. Money available for housing programs can have the greatest impact in the maintenance category, as more areas can be stabilized. Two percent of the parishes housing stock are in the major rehabilitation and minor redevelopment category. To attempt to improve these areas is probably cost prohibitive.

Table 2-4 Terrebonne Parish Housing Data

Housing Classification	Description	Acreage	Percent
A	Surveillance	14078.02	88%
B	Maintenance	878.50	5%
C	Minor Rehabilitation	854.75	5%
D	Major Rehabilitation and Minor Redevelopment	270.70	2%
Total		16081.96	100%

VI) Infrastructure

A) Introduction

The existing infrastructure of Terrebonne Parish is discussed in this section. For the purposes of this report, infrastructure includes utilities such as electricity, potable water, natural gas, sanitary sewerage, solid waste, and transportation. These various subjects are separated into public utilities (electricity, gas and water) and services (all others).

The importance of infrastructure cannot be overemphasized. A community cannot prosper without adequate infrastructure to service its population. This information will be combined with the projected population changes to identify areas of critical need.

B) Public Utilities

1) Potable Water

Potable water service is provided parish wide by a single entity, Consolidated Waterworks District # 1. CWD#1 operates two water plants--one in Schriever with a current capacity of 16 MGD, and a second plant in Houma with a capacity of 8-MGD. The CWD#1 is constructing an 8-MGD expansion for the Schriever facility, which is expected to be on line by March 2002. The raw water source for the Schriever Plant is the Mississippi River via Bayou Lafourche and the Lefort Canal. Raw water to operate the Houma Plant comes from the Gulf Intracoastal Water (GIWW). Pressures and volumes in the distribution system are maintained by 19 elevated water tanks, 2 ground standpipes, 2 surface reservoirs, and 14 pump stations. Revenues to operate, maintain, and improve the system are generated by water consumption rates.

2) Gas and Electricity

Gas and electric service are provided throughout Terrebonne Parish, each by one government entity and two publicly held utility companies. Electricity is provided by TPCG, South Louisiana Electric Cooperative Association (SLECA), and Entergy. Gas is provided by TPCG, South Coast Gas Co. and Trans-Louisiana Gas Co.

a) Electricity

The TPCG electric system consists of generation facilities, the high voltage transmission facilities which connect the electric system to Entergy Louisiana (ENLA); ten distribution substations; the sub-transmission system which connects the generating plant; and the lower voltage distribution system which provides direct service to the electric customers. The TPCG serves 10569 customers with electric service (8,981 residential, 1,587 commercial, 1 industrial).

As an electric cooperative, SLECA is a non-profit corporation that is jointly owned by all of its members. Electricity sold by SLECA is generated by the 1,620 net-megawatt coal-fired Big Cajun II steam generating station in New Roads, La. SLECA charges only as much as necessary to cover its operation cost. Because of this, SLECA is capable of providing its customers with the lowest rates of the three electric utility providers in its service area. The 2001 total customer base exceeds 17,700.

Entergy is a publicly owned and operated utility. Electricity generated by Entergy originates from any of several generating facilities. Some of those include Waterford 1, 2 and 3(N), Sterlington, Nine Mile Point, River Bend (N), Grand Gulf 1(N) & 2(N), and Little Gypsy (G). Entergy's total customers in Terrebonne Parish have fluctuated over the past few years, but has averaged around 24,000.

b) Gas

Consistent with the consolidation of City and Parish governments in 1984, the Utilities System undertook management and operation of the natural gas distribution system owned by the Terrebonne Parish Police Jury (Parish System, now known as the Rural System) around 1985 and consolidated it with management and operations of the City's municipal system. Because of differences in physical and operational characteristics of the systems, they remain separate and will likely remain so for the foreseeable future. The service area of the Urban System generally covers the City Limits and certain immediately adjacent developed areas. The Rural System primarily services three bayou arteries south, west, and northwest of the City. The TPCG system serves approximately 14,000 meter locations.

South Coast Gas Co. is a private corporation, and has been providing gas service in southeast Louisiana since the mid-40's. Their current customers' base in Terrebonne is over 6,000. The service area encompasses Bayou Petit Caillou from Presque Isle to Cocodrie, Montegut, Sara Road, Bayou Grand Caillou from Ashland to Dulac including Four Point, Bayou Blue between Prospect Street and Bayou Blue By-Pass Road, and Bayou Terrebonne between Bayou Blue By-Pass Road and Thibodaux.

Atmos Energy of Louisiana (ATO) was recently formed when Trans Louisiana Gas Co. and Louisiana Gas Service Co. merged. ATO serves approximately 6,200 customers in Terrebonne Parish.

C) Public Service Inventory

In this section, various public services in Terrebonne Parish are described. These services include sewerage, drainage, solid waste, and transportation.

1) Sewerage

The TPCG Pollution Control Division, within the Utilities Department, is the entity responsible for sewerage collection and treatment for parish served locations. Pollution Control operates and maintains two (2) regional wastewater treatment plants, eight (8) package treatment plants, and one (1) oxidation pond. Transportation and collection facilities include gravity lines, force mains, pump stations, and holding basins. In the denser urban areas, pump stations are used to relay sewage to one of the two regional plants. As sewerage expands into the rural areas, holding basins are utilized to relay

sewage to one of the regional plants. Exceptions to this are interim package treatment plants.

SLECA is the parent company of Total Environmental Solutions (TESI), formerly Johnson Properties, Inc. Some of Johnson Properties were taken over by the Terrebonne Parish Pollution Control. The others are still privately operated and maintained by SLECA/TESI using monthly revenue collections

There are two other private systems operating in the Parish. One is The Lakes Subdivision along Little Bayou Black. This oxidation pond was designed to handle up to 200 residences. The other private system is owned and operated by Terrebonne Sewer Systems, L.L.C. This facility is capable of treating approximately 170,000 gpd and is located off of Corporate Drive.

2) Solid Waste

Residential solid waste is coordinated through the TPCG Solid Waste Division. Commercial solid waste disposal is privately contracted by the individual facilities. Currently 110,000 tons of solid waste is collected annually in Terrebonne Parish by Solid Waste Disposal, Inc. (SWDI), a private company. SWDI transports solid waste to a transfer station at the Ashland Landfill. Another private entity, W. B. Company, Inc. (WBCI) transports the solid waste to the River Birch Landfill in Jefferson Parish. Terrebonne Parish is currently constructing a construction and demolition (C & D) Landfill.

3) Drainage

There are 63 permanent drainage pump stations, as well many portable drainage pump stations in Terrebonne Parish. It is estimated that these facilities provide forced drainage improvements to over 60,000 acres (± 94 sq. mi.) of land in Terrebonne Parish. In addition to the drainage system, a hurricane protection system is planned for Terrebonne Parish. This system will include a series of levees, flood control structures, smaller water control structures, and a lock in the Houma Navigation Canal.

4) Transportation

In the transportation inventory, roads (local, state, and federal), air transportation, waterways, and mass transit are discussed. Local roads are maintained by the Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government Roads and Bridges Department. In addition to roads, Terrebonne Parish operates and maintains 77 movable and fixed-span bridges.

Terrebonne Parish is in Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development District 02. State roads and bridges in Terrebonne Parish are operated and maintained by a local maintenance and operation unit located on South Van Avenue in Houma. LDOTD also has a construction administration unit in the parish. Located on LA 24 between Houma and Thibodaux, this unit oversees the construction of new and renovated state roads and bridges.

In Terrebonne Parish, US 90 is the only federal highway. It is proposed to be upgraded in the future to interstate standards

In 1997, Terrebonne Parish began operating public transit busses. The Transit System owns 8 buses, with 6 in service every day. The other two are spares. The system also

owns 2 paratransit buses. The system provides service basically in an around the urban area of Houma, with a route extension that provides service to the Nicholls State University Campus in Thibodaux. The system plans to expand service to the rural areas of the parish soon.

5) Waterways

Terrebonne Parish includes a vast network of navigable waterways, and these waterways are the economic mainstay of the parish. The two (2) most important waterways to the Parish are the GIWW and the HNC. The Terrebonne Port Commission owns approximately 400 acres off the HNC, close to Houma.

6) Airports

Located in the southeastern portion of Houma and approximately two (2) miles from the Study Area, the Houma-Terrebonne Airport occupies approximately 1,812 acres of land. More than 800 acres are used for aviation servicing and operation, with approximately 1,000 acres being dedicated to various industrial businesses.

7) Rail

Rail service to the industrial areas of the Parish ceased to exist in the mid-1980's. This discontinuance was a direct result of a lack of demand for rail in the Parish, given the depressed economic conditions of the era. Since that time, the track facilities have been removed and the property has reverted to the adjacent property owners. Currently, there is rail service provided in the northern area of the Parish (Schriever) by Louisiana and Delta Railroad.

VII) Other Services

In preparing this report, certain other aspects of this parish have been identified as important for the long range growth of our community. These issues did not fit neatly into the previous sections. The following sections contain descriptions of a few of these issues.

A) Recreation

Public recreation in Terrebonne Parish is a shared responsibility. The Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government operates the Recreation Department (TPR). This Department is a part of the parish government and as such operates throughout the parish. It works in close association with the 11 Recreation Districts in the Parish. The various recreation districts provide the physical facilities (gyms, fields, etc.). The TPCG recreation department organizes and conducts the parish wide programs that use the facilities.

B) Schools

Terrebonne Parish School System is managed by an elected 15-member School Board. This 15-member board will be reduced in the next election cycle (2003). The School System is administered by a School Superintendent and 2,555 personnel. The School System serves 19,663 students in Grades K-12 as well as 353 pre-K (2000-2001 school year). There has been a sustained and continued decline in school enrollment over the last 20 years. The School System maintains 43 school sites. The School System owns and/or leases 186 buses.

C) Libraries

The Terrebonne Parish Library System is a separate entity but works closely with the Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government. The Library System currently has 1 main branch and 8 satellite branches. A new main branch library is currently under construction off Civic Center Blvd. in Houma. The Terrebonne Parish Library System is currently funded through a ¼ cent sales tax, which was recently passed. This funding has allowed the system to expand programs and facilities. In the year 2000, the Library System held 534 programs and activities at the various branches.

Chapter 3

Focus Group Results

II) Introduction

In recognition of the need for public involvement in this planning process, the team organized 6 focus groups. The purpose of these focus groups was to solicit public input in identification of those issues of primary importance to the development and prosperity of Terrebonne Parish, now and into the future. Although it is possible to produce a plan for the parish without the use of such groups, the team and the TPCG Administration understood that public involvement was necessary to ultimate public acceptance of the plan. By involving the public in the process early, the public could shape the plan and develop ownership of it.

The team identified 6 areas for which long range planning was necessary. A focus group was then organized around that particular area. The following is a brief description of the six Focus Groups:

1) Infrastructure

This focus group discussed issues related to the basic services necessary to support our quality of life in the Parish. Issues discussed include drainage/hurricane protection; air, ground and water transportation; utilities, including electricity, sewerage, water and gas; and other pertinent issues. This focus group developed strategies to ensure that these services are provided in such a manner that the lack of such services does not hinder the continued development of our community.

2) Essential Community Design

The Essential Community Design Focus Group analyzed current trends and practices regarding standard development design and urban corridors in the Parish. The group examined issues relating to the orderly development of heavily utilized corridors, landscaping, design and use of community roadways, signage, historic preservation, and preservation of natural amenities in the development of lands throughout the Parish. The group developed goals, strategies, and objectives designed to increase the attractiveness and livability of Terrebonne Parish.

3) Land Use

The Land Use Focus Group analyzed existing land use patterns in the Parish and ways to maintain/improve effective land utilization so as to encourage harmony and compatibility between land uses; to develop a general pattern for the location

distribution and characteristics of future land use; and, to identify strategies to effect land use goals and objectives.

4) Housing

The Housing Focus Group analyzed the condition of the current housing stock and ways to maintain/improve it; assess present and future housing needs, including affordable housing and the extent to which current public and private housing programs are addressing those needs; identify barriers to affordable housing; analyze impediments to production of housing; and, to develop strategies to eliminate housing problems including regulatory constraints.

5) Public Facilities

The Public Facilities Focus Group analyzed existing community facilities and the established level of service, and attempted to determine if such facilities are meeting the needs of the citizens of the Parish. Goals, strategies, and objectives were determined to ensure that the public facilities throughout the Parish are adequate to support future land use and growth projections. Such facilities may include libraries, schools, hospitals, and recreational facilities.

6) Environmental Issues

This focus group developed strategies to ensure that sensitive environmental resources or concerns are addressed and preserved, if necessary. These resources may include air, water, and sensitive land areas. It also may include a discussion on wildlife refuges or management areas.

The Focus Group process began at the Nov. 18, 2001, Kick Off meeting. At this meeting, over 150 residents were briefed on the Inventory and Projection effort. These persons were allowed to question the team and TPCG Administration, and were offered the opportunity to enlist in one or more of the Focus Groups.

Following the Kick-off meeting, the team and TPCG Administration worked to include additional persons in the Focus Groups. It was felt that each group should include a broad cross section of the community, with several points of view for a particular issue. To that end the team reviewed each group's membership and solicited additional persons as necessary. This process resulted in over 350 people participating in the various focus groups. Participants included developers, engineers, landowners, housewives, community activists, federal and state agency personnel, and many others.

Once organized, the groups began meeting. Each group met at its own schedule, but generally once a month. Each group followed the same process:

- 6) Identification of issues
- 7) Prioritization of issues

- 8) SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats)
- 9) Goal Development
- 10) Strategy Development

The results of the first three items are presented in Appendix A. Item 4 resulted in goal statements for each group. These goals reflect, in summary form, the group's deliberations and products from the first three tasks. The goals are, just as the name implies, long term goals for each particular issue. Most focus groups have several goals, a necessary result of the broad nature of each group. The team facilitated each group so that identified goal would be specific enough so that success, if achieved, could be quantified.

The groups then developed strategies for each goal. A strategy is the particular action or actions necessary to achieve a particular goal. Most goals required several strategies. Strategies should be much more specific than goals, and should contain a description of the who, what, when, where, and why for each. In addition to the work of the focus groups, the team added strategies where deemed advisable. These strategies are noted as underlined text.

The following sections contain the goal statements and strategies for each focus group. In addition to the work of the focus groups, the team has added its suggestions for a particular issue where necessary.

II) Focus Group Results

A) Infrastructure

The Infrastructure Focus Group divided its discussions into 2 broad categories: Utilities and Services, and Transportation. The Focus Group prepared a goal statement for each category, and detailed strategies to achieve the goals.

1) Utilities and Services

Goal

Provide for the public health, safety, and welfare while providing competitive utilities and services for the continued economic growth and quality of life sustainability in Terrebonne Parish.

The strategies to achieve this goal were grouped into the following subcategories: Water Supplies, Natural Gas, Electrical Power, Sewerage, Sanitation, Drainage, and Disaster Prevention. Each is discussed in the following paragraphs.

(a) Water Supplies

- (i) In order to assure adequate raw water supplies, the Consolidated Water District No. 1 (CWD1) should develop long range cooperative agreements with Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District and/or other agencies that control available surface waters. If no agreements exist, they should be developed as soon as possible. When current ones expire, extend use option as long as possible and if needed, renegotiate other terms of the agreement.
- (ii) The CWD1 should identify raw water sources other than the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, Bayou Black and Bayou Lafourche. Such sources may include the Atchafalaya and/or Mississippi Rivers, rainfall runoff storage, and well water.
- (iii) The CWD1 should begin negotiations with the Terrebonne Levee & Conservation District for utilizing the proposed hurricane protection system as a means of controlling salt water introduction into our raw water drinking supplies.
- (iv) The CWD1 should take a more active role in supporting fresh water introduction from the Mississippi River and Atchafalaya River into Terrebonne Parish. Efforts to support these activities should begin now.
- (v) The CWD1, through its association with the Louisiana Conference on Water Supply, Sewerage, and Industrial Wastes, South Central Region, should initiate efforts to study regional needs of long term raw water use agreements, alternate water sources, salt water reduction, and introduction of fresh water to provide adequate raw water supplies on a regional basis. This regional assessment should be made in the next 5 years in anticipation of future developments.
- (vi) The CWD1 should conduct a 10-year needs analysis. This analysis should be based on the latest census statistics and industry demand. Reservoir capacity and treatment capacity should be increased to meet the proposed demand.
- (vii) In anticipation of future expansion, the CWD1 should re-evaluate its current rate schedule to insure adequate resources based on the need for future expansion, operation, and maintenance activities.
- (viii) In order to properly facilitate future operation, maintenance, replacement and upgrade of the water system, CWD1 should provide continuous personnel training, maintain accurate records on equipment and facility life; perform scheduled maintenance, repair, and replacement work, all on an annual basis.

(b) Natural Gas

- (i) To insure adequate supplies and sources, TPCG should investigate privatization, renegotiate long term agreements for the supply of

natural gas, and introduce legislation which would give TPCG first right on 16th Section resources.

- (ii) To improve reliability, the TPCG, in collaboration with local private suppliers and the Public Service Commission, should define specific service areas within Terrebonne Parish with emphasis on areas that could be serviced by multiple providers.
- (iii) TPCG, in collaboration with local gas providers, should develop a long term plan for linking all natural gas suppliers to all customers.
- (iv) TPCG should evaluate its user rates and, if necessary, adjust them accordingly to provide adequate funds for maintenance, operation, replacement, expansion and linkage.
- (v) TPCG should become an active player in the daily market for natural gas in order to acquire gas at cheaper cost. TPCG may not be able to do this alone, and may need to become part of a larger consortium of small buyers.

(c) Electrical Power

- (i) TPCG, working with Entergy, SLECA, legislators and the Public Service Commission should improve the current Terrebonne Parish service guidelines such that users and providers have greater certainty regarding electrical service areas.
- (ii) In order to develop alternative power sources using water, wind, and/or solar energy, TPCG should conduct a short term feasibility study of alternative power sources.
- (iii) In order to develop alternative fuels such as coal, fuel oil, and waste burning, TPCG should initiate a long term study of alternative fuels for power generation.
- (iv) TPCG should continue to investigate the feasibility and impact of deregulating power generation.
- (v) TPCG should conduct a long term feasibility study to determine advantages and disadvantages of privatizing its power generation and transmission facilities.
- (vi) TPCG should replace overhead lines with underground services on a regular basis.
- (vii) TPCG should become an active player in the daily market for electricity in order to acquire electricity at cheaper cost. TPCG may not be able to do this alone, and may need to become part of a larger consortium of small buyers.
- (viii) TPCG should connect its service areas through looping, as opposed to radial connectivity, to the greatest extent practical.

(d) Sewerage

- (i) TPCG should prioritize areas and develop cost estimates to provide community sewerage throughout Terrebonne Parish. The plan should

investigate alternative methods of collection and transportation of sewage to the existing regional treatment facilities and based on recent census figures, identify growth areas and recommend improvements to service those growth areas. Priority ranking should be based on growth areas identified in the plan. Cost consideration should include alternative collection methods.

- (ii) TPCG evaluate its current rate structure for sewage collection, transportation and treatment in order to fund recommendations. If possible, additional tax revenue should be dedicated to sewerage improvements instead of being commingled with other capital improvements.
- (iii) TPCG, working with its State Legislators, DEQ and Dept. of Health & Hospitals, should streamline existing cumbersome water quality regulations.
- (iv) TPCG should request legislation to provide more resources to the State water quality agencies for monitoring, reporting, and regulating noncompliance, including stiffer penalties for noncompliance.
- (v) TPCG should establish a local water quality management office to assist State agencies in monitoring and reporting noncompliance.
- (vi) TPCG should enact local water quality legislation, authorizing the Parish to levy fines, penalties and, when necessary, prosecute for non-compliance.
- (vii) TPCG should develop public information on Parish wide sewerage issues such as water quality, cost, funding, and public health concerns.

(e) Sanitation

- (i) TPCG, working with local tri-parish officials, should investigate long term garbage disposal alternatives such as land filling, incineration, recycling, and alternative fuels. This study should also investigate structuring of a possible cooperative agreement between the regional Parishes involved.
- (ii) TPCG should permit and operate the Construction and Demolition (C&D) Landfill.
- (iii) TPCG should provide more C&D disposal facilities (roll off containers with elevated access) throughout the Parish.
- (iv) TPCG should reassess its current litter laws, and establish an office specifically tasked with monitoring and enforcement of those litter laws.
- (v) TPCG should reevaluate current sanitation fees and raise these fees to a level commensurate with expenses.
- (vi) TPCG should identify dedicated funding sources in addition to user fees for funding litter abatement enforcement, public education, and other sanitation expenses.

- (f) Drainage
 - (i) TPCG should perform a comprehensive study on all of its existing forced drainage systems to determine required pumping and reservoir needs. The study should also address the adequacy of the existing levee systems in light of the proposed Morganza to the Gulf Hurricane Protection System. Cost estimates for the upgrade should be included.
 - (ii) TPCG should provide forced drainage to flood prone areas that currently do not have forced drainage systems.
 - (iii) TPCG should enact regulatory provisions to regulate development along and within natural drainage arteries.
 - (iv) TPCG should reduce response time on minor drainage problems by providing more funds for personnel and equipment, or by reorganizing and rescheduling the use of existing personnel and equipment on an interdepartmental basis.
 - (v) TPCG should increase dedicated funding for drainage activities (evaluation of existing drainage systems, providing new drainage systems and/or relocation, developing legislation to regulate development along major drainage arteries and reduce response to minor drainage problems). TPCG should continue to pursue state and federal grant money for drainage improvements and provide information that can be used to disseminate to the public to educate them on drainage issues.
 - (vi) TPCG should require that cooperative agreements with adjacent parish governments be developed prior to implementation of major drainage improvements.
 - (vii) TPCG should consult with other upstream entities on drainage impacts.
 - (viii) TPCG should evaluate its current drainage design criteria with emphasis on a higher level of protection and the associated costs.
 - (ix) TPCG should manage development along major drainage arterials to prevent impacts to upstream drainage.

- (g) Disaster Protection
 - (i) TPCG Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) should evaluate its current disaster and evacuation plan to insure conformity with current conditions. The new plan should be disseminated to all residents of Terrebonne Parish. The plan should address: location of local shelters which people could evacuate to, the identification of existing and proposed evacuation routes and procedures, flood proofing of essential community facilities.
 - (ii) The OEP should determine the adequacy of existing local shelters, and make recommendations on the feasibility and practicality of construction of other local shelters.
 - (iii) TPCG should flood proof essential community facilities such as power plants, substations, and hospitals.

- (iv) The OEP should publicize and disseminate emergency preparedness plans and procedures to the public via all media including, at a minimum, a general public hearing.
- (v) TPCG should identify a dedicated funding source to fund all OEP activities.
- (vi) TPCG should reduce the time to construct the Morganza to the Gulf Project. Such means may include, but are not necessarily limited to, the providing of more local funds for the construction.

2) Transportation

(a) Ground Transportation

Goal

Provide for current and anticipated future needs for efficient movement of traffic within, into, and out of Terrebonne Parish.

The strategies to achieve this goal can be grouped into several categories: Ground Transportation, Air Transportation, Water Transportation, and Rail Transportation. Each is discussed in the following paragraphs.

(b) Ground Transportation

- (i) TPCG should commission the preparation of a ground traffic management plan to address the current and future needs as outlined in the Transportation Improvement Program. Emphasis should be placed on coordination of signalization based on traffic demand, turning lanes, signage, and parking.
- (ii) TPCG should initiate a study to reassess its transportation improvement program with emphasis on more Gulf Intracoastal Waterway crossings, loop roads, and connector streets around the metropolitan area.
- (iii) TPCG should develop a new roadway design standards to improve the life expectancy of local roads.
- (iv) TPCG should provide public transportation in all areas of Terrebonne Parish with consideration of industrial labor work schedules.
- (v) TPCG should establish an office, supported by a dedicated funding mechanism, to coordinate and handle road and bridge construction and maintenance grants and establish a dedicated funding vehicle specifically for the construction and maintenance of roads and bridges in Terrebonne Parish.
- (vi) TPCG should create an automated traffic management control center to manage the increasingly complex traffic flow in the parish.

- (vii) The TPCG, utilizing any available Federal, State, or Local revenues, should build or improve the following roadways:
 - (i) A new Gulf Intracoastal Waterway crossing East and West of the existing crossings in Houma.
 - (ii) Replacement of the Houma Navigation Canal Bridge
 - (iii) More crossings of Bayou Terrebonne in East Houma, particularly at East Street, Clendenning Road and Woodlawn Ranch Road.
- (viii) The TPCG, utilizing any available Federal, State, and Local revenues, should build an arterial loop around Houma consisting of:
 - (i) 4 Lane La. Hwy. 311 to US Hwy. 90
 - (ii) Extend the couplet south to Presque Isle
 - (iii) Extend Howard Avenue to Coteau Road and Bayou Blue
 - (iv) Extend Hollywood Road to Big Bayou Black and Bayou Dularge
 - (v) Extend St. Louis Canal Road to Coteau Road
 - (vi) Extend Bayou Gardens Blvd. to Bayou Blue (Figure 3-1)

(c) Air Transportation

- (i) The Houma-Terrebonne Airport Commission should investigate regional opportunities for partnering with Terrebonne Port Commission and should work towards redesignation of air services at the Houma-Terrebonne Airport.

(d) Water Transportation

- (i) The Port of Terrebonne should become self-sufficient by developing a revenue source for the development of the Port; and exercise their authority to insure navigability of commercial waterways within Terrebonne Parish.
- (ii) The Port Commission should encourage tourism through the use and expansion of downtown Marina and other marina facilities.

(e) Rail Transportation

- (i) TPCG, working with the Port Commission and the Airport Commission and other industrial groups in Terrebonne Parish, should initiate a study on the feasibility and alignment of rail service in the Houma metropolitan area.

B) Environmental Issues

The Environmental issues Focus Group developed one overarching goal for Terrebonne Parish related to environmental concerns (i.e. “Mission Statement”) and six more specific goals. After debating the various suggested goal statements, the group felt that the

following statement captured the long term wishes of the group for environmental issues. The following is the Environmental Issues Focus Group Mission Statement:

Terrebonne Parish, through its various governmental bodies, should exercise its authority to properly implement and enforce environmental laws, rules, and regulations to promote the health, safety and welfare of its population.

The following are the six goal statements for the environmental issues focus group. The goals generally deal with the following major issues: Solid Waste, Air Quality, Environmental Education, Wetlands, Water Quality, and Health Care. The Focus Group also developed strategies to achieve those goals. Those strategies are presented following each goal statement.

1) Solid Waste

Goal

To develop and implement a program for the collection and disposal of all solid waste in an environmentally sound manner, including measures to reduce the amount of solid waste, along with litter abatement programs.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG should continue its efforts to permit the Construction and Demolition Landfill at the earliest possible date in order to reduce the parish waste stream.
- (b) The TPCG should, with the appropriate agencies, impose a deposit fee on bottles, cans, and other reusable or recyclable litter.
- (c) The TPCG should expand satellite solid waste collection sites, and should provide adequate security (e.g. inspectors, video surveillance) to prevent abuse of those sites.
- (d) The TPCG should coordinate disposal of non industrial hazardous waste materials (e.g. asbestos, batteries) through the landfill and educate citizens of the opportunities for proper disposal.
- (e) The TPCG should implement a recycling program with guarded pick up stations, including a study of cost effective methods for recycling.
- (f) The TPCG should investigate alternate uses of non-hazardous solid waste, such as power generation with such waste.

2) Air Quality

Goal

To improve and enhance air quality in Terrebonne Parish.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Nicholls State University, and other interested parties should organize an air quality sampling system for the bayou region.
- (b) The TPCG should develop Parish guidelines and standards for air quality.
- (c) The TPCG (through the respective Fire Districts), Louisiana Department of Agriculture, farmers, and the American Sugar Cane League should work together to encourage agricultural practices for cane harvesting as alternatives to burning.
- (d) The TPCG (through the respective Fire Districts) should educate the public and manage marsh burning such that such burning is conducted safely with due respect for adjacent highway, aircraft, and other traffic.

3) Environmental Education

Goal

Raise awareness of environmental issues affecting Terrebonne Parish through education of citizens through multiple avenues.

Strategies

- (a) The Terrebonne Parish School Board and the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux should create an implement an environmental education curriculum for grades K-12.
- (b) The local science and other interested teachers should form a local branch of the Louisiana Association of Environmental Education.
- (c) The TPCG, the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Program and other environmental or conservation groups should utilize movie “trailers” for the purpose of promoting awareness of environmental issues.
- (d) The TPCG should dedicate a portion of its website to provide information, data, and studies on environmental issues affecting Terrebonne Parish.
- (e) The Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium should establish an environmental fellows program for community leaders, elected officials, and appointed officials to educate those individuals on regional and local environmental issues.
- (f) The “Keep Terrebonne Beautiful” organization should continue its litter abatement programs including the beach sweep program.
- (g) The local ministerial associations, the Interchurch Conference, and the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux should develop environmental stewardship programs in each church or parish.
- (h) The media (newspaper, television, radio) should provide environmental information via regular environmental briefs or news items.

- (i) The Terrebonne Parish Library System should, working with environmental or conservation groups, develop and promote the use of library facilities for environmental programs.
- (j) The TPCG should develop a recycling awareness program to reduce the waste stream in the Parish.
- (k) Terrebonne Parish citizens should form an ad hoc committee to monitor environmental characteristics on a regular basis and report these findings annually.
- (l) The local boy and girl scouts should incorporate environmental merit badges into their programs with emphasis on local environmental issues.
- (m) The TPCG should, to the greatest extent practical, support the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program.
- (n) The community, including the TPCG, environmental groups, and community leaders, should organize an annual concert focusing on environmental issues with entertainers such as Tab Benoit.

4) Wetlands

Goal

Preserve and enhance Terrebonne Parish wetlands and other important habitats, in concert with affected landowners, as well as state and federal interests.

Strategies

- (a) Government, at all levels (Federal, State, and Local), should provide technical assistance and coordination to landowners for wetland preservation and enhancement projects. At the local level, the Coastal Zone Management Administrator may be the appropriate party to perform this task.
- (b) The TPCG should monitor state and federal wetland programs and projects to encourage more projects in Terrebonne Parish.
- (c) Nicholls State University and LUMCON should dedicate resources and personnel to the problem of coastal erosion, making this issue of paramount importance within their respective entities.
- (d) The TPCG, State of Louisiana, and the Federal government, along with other interested parties should rebuild and maintain Louisiana's barrier islands.
- (e) The TPCG should develop financial incentives for landowners to protect wetlands, such as property or sales tax rebates, or exclusions.
- (f) The TPCG, through implementation of recommendation (a), should encourage projects that preserve the scarce sediment resources of our area.
- (g) The Terrebonne Parish Assessors office should re-evaluate the assessment of marsh, swamps and other wetlands. If the wetlands are considered

more valuable, financial incentives suggested in recommendation (e) will be more appealing.

- (h) The TPCG should dedicate a specific portion of its annual budget to developing and implementing coastal restoration projects. This funding can be matched with state and federal programs, with the goal of constructing one coastal restoration project within Terrebonne Parish every year.

5) Water Quality

Goal

To improve water quality within Terrebonne Parish by reducing and solid waste discharges into parish waters, preventing salt water intrusion, and reducing agricultural runoff.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG should implement a parish wide sewer system at the earliest possible time.
- (b) The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals should monitor existing individual systems regularly to ensure proper maintenance and prevent unsewered discharges.
- (c) The DHH, with the TPCG, should monitor community sewer plants and develop an assessment of the cumulative effects of such systems.
- (d) The TPCG, in association with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, should assess the source and condition of water flowing into the parish from outside sources, in order to determine the ambient quality of the water in the parish.
- (e) The TPCG, in association with the LDEQ, should assess the water quality of rainfall in the region.
- (f) The TPCG, the Terrebonne Consolidated Waterworks District, and other involved agencies should develop and implement a plan to retard saltwater intrusion threatening the freshwater drinking supply of Terrebonne Parish.
- (g) The TPCG, in association with the Louisiana Department of Agriculture, should encourage the use of retention ponds or reservoirs for agriculture runoff.
- (h) The TPCG should request from LDEQ and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries an analysis of the recently implemented nutria bounty on water quality.
- (i) The TPCG should request from LDEQ a report on mercury contamination in Terrebonne Parish.
- (j) The LDWF should educate the public on the dangers of releasing invasive species into state waterways.

6) Health Care

Goal

Ensure a healthy community environment by developing and implementing a plan that focuses on prevention and interventions of epidemiological diseases associated with bioterrorism, mosquito-borne pathogens, other infectious illnesses and environmental health hazards.

Strategies

The Environmental Issues Focus Group identified three broad areas to address to achieve this goal. Each is discussed in detail below.

- (a) Reduce the risk of mosquito-borne diseases – This objective may be reached by implementing the following strategies:
 - (i) The TPCG should strive to reduce or eliminate stagnant or standing water within the Parish. More specifically, the TPCG may achieve this by educating the public on the hazards associated with standing water in their yards or other areas and by monitoring and preventing standing water in Parish-owned facilities, lands and other areas.
 - (ii) The TPCG should continue the Parish wide Insect Spraying Program.
 - (iii) The TPCG should, in association with the regional public health unit and the 2 local hospitals, develop and implement an educational program focused on potential mosquito-borne diseases.
 - (iv) The TPCG, in association with the regional public health unit and the 2 local hospitals, should encourage the use of personal protective clothing and mosquito repellent. These tasks may be achieved through speeches to civic groups, regular environmental tips inserted into the media.

- (b) Plan for potential bioterrorist attacks – This objective may be achieved by implement the following strategies:
 - (i) The TPCG should, in association with the Sheriff's Office, the State Police, State Office of Emergency Preparedness, and other necessary parties creating a written bioterrorism defense plan.
 - (ii) The TPCG should request and utilize the maximum amount of state and federal bioterrorism planning funds.
 - (iii) The TPCG should instill confidence in Parish residents regarding safety from bioterrorism threat. The TPCG can achieve this by properly planning for such threats and making the public knowledgeable of such planning.
 - (iv) Once a bioterrorism response plan is completed, the TPCG should educate citizens on the overall plan and each citizen's responsibility relative to that plan.

- (c) Monitor Centers for Disease Control and other pertinent data to comprehensively identify health issues in the Parish – This objective may be achieved by implementing the following strategies:
 - (i) The TPCG should, in association with the regional public health unit, publicize illnesses and/or health statistics on at least an annual basis. The TPCG may want to provide this data on the TPCG website or by linking the TPCG website to other sites with this data.
 - (ii) Once these Parish health issues are identified, the TPCG should work with the regional health authority, local hospitals and other necessary agencies to improve the identified health risks.
 - (iii) The local medical association, 2 local hospitals, in association with the TPCG, should encourage pro bono medical education and services on identified health care issues in Terrebonne Parish.

C) Essential Community Design

The Essential Community Design Focus Group developed 5 goal statements during its deliberations. These goal statements are presented in the following section, with the associated strategies to achieve those goals.

1) Green Space

Goal

To provide an adequate amount of quality, conveniently located and accessible open areas and green-space to satisfy a range of development and human activity.

Strategies

- (a) Conduct an inventory of the current system/provision of parks, publicly owned green space, cultural facilities, historic sites, and other public areas. The inventory must assess usership and condition so as to determine if the area is properly facilitating the recreational and cultural needs and desires of the neighborhoods each is designed to serve, as well as the Parish as a whole. Put another way, before we ask or build more, we must maintain and properly operate what is in existence.
- (b) Through formal parish government action, create the necessary consortium to coordinate the functions of the various oversight committees (i.e., Downtown Development, Recreation Districts, Parish Departments, Tourist Commission, Museum Planning Commission, etc.). The Consortium will be charged with reviewing the inventory and making recommendations to each committee, designed to ensure that the needs and desires of the citizenry and the objectives of the Master Plan are met in a comprehensive and cost effective manner. The Consortium must be

facilitated by Parish Government and composed of members of each oversight committee.

2) Cultural Facilities

Goal

To provide for an adequate amount of well-located and coordinated cultural facilities to serve the basic needs of the population throughout the Parish.

Strategies

- (a) ***Same As Above.*** Conduct an inventory of the current system/provision of parks, publicly owned green space, cultural facilities, historic sites, and other public areas. The inventory must assess usership and condition so as to determine if the area is properly facilitating the recreational and cultural needs and desires of the neighborhoods each is designed to serve, as well as the Parish as a whole. Put another way, before we ask or build more, we must maintain and properly operate what is in existence.
- (b) Through formal parish government action, create the necessary consortium to coordinate the functions of the various oversight committees (i.e., Downtown Development, Recreation Districts, Parish Departments, Tourist Commission, Museum Planning Commission, etc.). The Consortium will be charged with reviewing the inventory and making recommendations to each committee, designed to ensure that the needs and desires of the citizenry and the objectives of the Master Plan are met in a comprehensive and cost effective manner. The Consortium must be facilitated by Parish Government and composed of members of each oversight committee.

3) Aesthetics

Goal

To incorporate aesthetic components in all developments in the Parish designed to ensure a pleasant environment for the entire population.

Strategies

- (a) First and foremost, TPCG should enforce what is currently on the books. If necessary, additional staff and/or additional monies to facilitate existing staff should be dedicated to this issue. Comprehensive parish wide enforcement is needed.
- (b) The TPCG should immediately begin the creation of regulations addressing the following parish wide: *Landscaping, Off and On Premise Signage, Reservation of Critical Lands such as the Battures, and Anti-*

Littering Laws. These regulations should be mindful that, in certain areas of the Parish, less regulation is better or unwarranted. In areas that possess special characteristics (i.e., historical significance, environmental significance, entranceways into the Parish, etc.) such as the Downtown Area, greater regulation may be warranted and properly facilitated. The implementation of regulations should be a transitional process, mindful that, community acceptance is critical to the success of the effort.

- (c) The TPCG should begin implementation of comprehensive land use regulations as soon as possible.

4) Utilization of Parish Physical Resources

Goal

To ensure the most efficient and reasonable utilization of the Parish's physical resources while ensuring that any short-term uses of man's environment will be to the long range benefit to all.

Strategies

- (a) Implement a consortium of qualified individuals who shall be responsible for addressing a broad range of concerns relating to the use or non-use of environmentally sensitive areas, focusing on the preservation, conservation, and enhancement of unusual man-made projects and/or natural features which have unique historical, architectural, or natural value. This would include the identification and planning for the stabilization of those areas, which might be best retained in their rural-like character promoting their value as agricultural resources and/or adequate land reserves for the future.
- (b) Areas ideally suited for redevelopment (i.e., downtown), should be formally designated. Subsequent to designation, a comprehensive study should be completed which identifies characteristics/issues which serve as impediments to redevelopment (i.e., crime, poor infrastructure, blighted properties, overall unattractiveness). The Parish Government should target these areas for capital improvements and work with the private sector to create incentive programs to spur redevelopment.

5) Harmonious Implementation

Goal

To achieve the goals of this element without unduly disrupting the goals of other elements.

Strategies

- (a) Adopt and implement the Master Plan.
- (b) Conduct annual reviews of the Master Plan to ensure that governmental actions are in accord with the Plan.

D) Land Use

The following are the 9 goals developed by the Land Use Focus Group during its deliberations.

Goal #1—Maintain a strong, but flexible parish wide land use plan to achieve a quality environment for all areas of the Parish;

Goal #2—Adopt and support land uses that conform to the adopted land use plan;

Goal #3—Develop aesthetic standards to corridors that are considered highly visible in Terrebonne Parish; and, promote the establishment of overlay districts;

Goal #4—Promote controlled commercial growth in specified areas of the Parish;

Goal #5—Promote the sharing of parking facilities and linking developments designed for similar compatible use to encourage clustering of commercial uses.

Goal #6—Preserve and enhance the rural areas of the Parish;

Goal #7—Encourage the preservation and protection of waterways, roads, and highways, which have scenic, cultural, natural, and/or historic characteristics worth preserving for future generations;

Goal #8—Protect existing wetlands while providing controlled growth in specified areas;

Goal #9—Promote orderly development;

Subsequent to goal development, the Focus Group debated extensively the strategies to implement these goals. The group decided that, rather than listing specific strategies for each goal, the group would offer general guidance for future land use decisions in Terrebonne Parish. The group felt that if this guidance was followed to the greatest extent practical, land use conflicts would be minimized within the parish.

1) Residential Land Use Designation: The designation of lands for residential usage shall be based on the following considerations:

- “Density” is the major determinant of residential land use in the Parish. Put another way, the designation of land for residential purposes must be based on the provision/supply of utilities, community facilities, and community services.
- Access to major transportation facilities;
- The nature of adjacent land uses;
- Maintaining the existing rural character of lands by ensuring low density land use patterns and uses in the rural areas of the Parish;
- Accessibility to public water and utilities;
- Land designated for multi-family residential use should occur in areas which: (a) are located near activity centers or major roadways; (b) are desirable for residential use, but possess characteristics which are otherwise unsuitable for single family residential land use;
- The increase or decrease of density will function as a transition between incompatible land uses. The concept being an ability to provide a variety of land uses which might otherwise result in incompatible land use relationships.
- In areas where public services cannot economically provided, and are not anticipated to be provided, within the planning period of the Master Plan, land designated for residential use will be very low density and rural in character. The concept being: only residential development, which will not demand or need the extension of services that cannot be feasibly provided will be planned.

2) Commercial Land Use Designation: The designation of lands for commercial usage shall be as follows:

- The designation of lands for commercial usage shall be based on: (a) adequate service population, according to forecasted population distribution; (b) access via good transportation facilities; and (3) relationship to surrounding existing land use.
- Spot and strip commercial land use designations are considered undesirable and will be discouraged;
- In rural settings, commercial land use designations will be sized and located at a scale consistent with the population it will serve

- 3) Industrial Land Use Designation: The designation of lands for industrial usage shall be as follows:
- Location of industrial-type land use designations will be based on area wide considerations---specifically, not an attempt to locate a certain amount of industrial development in each development zone. Location of industrial land use designations will be made on the basis of the advantageous characteristics any given area exhibits for such development and without consideration to arbitrary geographical limitations.
 - Land, which is most advantageous for industrial land use designation will contain the following characteristics: (a) good access to major transportation facilities; (b) good proximity to urban services; and (c) possess a full range of services.
- 4) Public Facilities Land Use Designation: The designation of lands for public facilities usage shall be as follows:
- Location of land designated future public facilities will be based on a parish wide approach to the provision of such services. Such locations will also be based on logical service areas, defined according to generally accepted standards promulgated by authorities in each of the various specialized fields, as well as, the concerns raised by the Public Facilities Focus Group.
 - Master facility plans developed by the various public facility authorities will be incorporated into land use plan;

In addition to this guidance, the focus group also made the following suggestions:

- 5) The Parish should implement land use regulations on a parish wide basis. There, however, must be extensive consideration given to the fact that the parish population and development characteristics are extremely diverse. Accordingly, the regulations must be created in careful contemplation of these diversities and differences and appropriately tailored to fit the regulatory needs of each community.
- 6) The Parish should begin the development of land use regulations immediately, especially given the rapid rate of development in the Parish. While there is only one way the Parish can implement land use regulations, the process demands much public participation and possibly even bringing the issue to the voters—but before being placed on a ballot for consideration, the proposed zoning plan and accompanying regulations should be developed so that the

voting public will be well-informed. This will also avoid possible criticisms relating to citizens not knowing exactly what they are voting on.

- 7) The Parish must place most of the effort in conducting a series of public hearings, as well as placing deliberations from the hearing on the Parish website, in the newspapers, and all other media.
- 8) The Parish should address each concern raised and comprehensively work toward gaining public acceptance, realizing that the government will never make all of the people happy all of the time.
- 9) The particulars of the regulations must be formulated in consideration of the goals and objectives of the Master Plan. Accordingly, different provisions will have to be created to meet the regulatory needs of each community.

E) Public Facilities

The public facilities focus group created 8 goal statements for public facilities in Terrebonne Parish, and a suite of strategies to achieve those goals. The following sections contain those goal statements and strategies.

1) Public Safety Facilities

Goal

To provide that Terrebonne Parish has adequate public safety facilities to meet the needs of its citizens over the next twenty years.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG will facilitate a utilization profile of all public safety agency facilities in the parish (Police, Sheriff, Fire, emergency shelters, etc). Specific tasks should include:
 - (i) The Public Works Department and Planning Department will work together to create a paper and/or computer file utilization profile questionnaire. The profile will include such information as existing space utilized, percentage and sector of public served, anticipated space requirements, and other information necessary to determine future needs
 - (ii) These departments collaboratively administer the questionnaire and evaluate the results, thus creating a Public Facilities Capital Improvement Plan.
 - (iii) Report findings to appropriate Council committee for adoption of the Capital Improvement Plan.
 - (iv) Present recommendations to appropriate entity to encourage assistance in procurement of Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

2) TPCG/TPSB Coordination

Goal

The TPCG and Terrebonne Parish School Board are working together to maximize utilization of physical facilities (recreational, educational, etc.) and thereby providing the best utilization of tax dollars.

Strategies

- (a) The Terrebonne Parish School Board should develop a 20 Year Capital Improvements Plan.
 - (i) The Terrebonne Parish School Board, in cooperation with the Citizen Advisory Group, and higher education officials, should comprehensively evaluate the capital improvement needs of the school system.
 - (ii) The results and findings of the Capital Improvement Plan should be made public and compared it to the Parish's CIP.
- (b) The TPSB (Building and Sites Committee) and the Terrebonne Parish Council (Public Works Committee) should meet quarterly to discuss common issues and facility improvement plans.

3) Public Facilities and Tourism

Goal

Terrebonne Parish Public Facilities are showcased as tourist attractions and add to our tourist business base as examples of our unique culture and community.

Strategies

- (a) The Houma/ Terrebonne Tourist Commission, in association with other involved entities should review the parish Hotel Motel tax for sufficiency in light of needed promotional exercises.
- (b) The Houma/ Terrebonne Tourist Commission and the Houma/ Terrebonne Airport Commission should meet to explore avenues for partnership for promotional regional exchanges.
- (c) The Houma/ Terrebonne Tourist Commission, in association with the Downtown Development Board, should create a local map which identifies the area's various public facilities and attractions.

4) Recreation

Goal

The TPCG, in association with the various recreational districts, should develop a recreation facility master plan to meet expected demand over the next 20 years.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG should conduct an independent and objective evaluation of the pros and cons of consolidation of the various recreation districts and the TPCG Recreation Department.
- (b) The TPCG should evaluate the present and future needs for recreational programs and facilities throughout the Parish for the next 20 years, and devise a long term, dedicated funding source to meet those needs.

5) Access to Water Related Activities

Goal

The public has greater access to water dependent recreational activities through improved Public Facilities such as boat launches, piers, and other improvements.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG should assess the location and suitability of publicly owned land which could be sold or leased for water based recreational purposes. This may include at a minimum working with the Assessor, Planning Department, and the Economic Development Department to construct a GIS inventory of such property.
- (b) The TPCG should consider the creation of recreational water based development incentives such as sales tax or property tax rebates for improvements related to water based recreational activities.

6) Public Facilities Expansion Needs

Goal

Existing public facilities have adequate land for anticipated expansion needs and preservation.

Strategies

- (a) All public agencies with major physical facilities (TPCG, TPSB, and Sheriff's Office) should assess their individual present and future needs and develop a plan for expected expansion.
- (b) The TPCG (Planning Department) should evaluate future land-use and zoning plans in light of potential land needs for public facilities.

7) Health Care Assessment

Goal

A health care providers' assessment and recruitment plan should be developed and implemented by the TPCG, the Terrebonne General Medical Center, the LSU Health Services Division, and other necessary parties, such that excellent health care is available in the community.

Strategies

- (a) The Terrebonne General Medical Center, the Chabert Memorial Hospital, the local medical professional association, and other interested parties should meet regularly to discuss future needs and availability of physicians.
- (b) These same parties should consult with consultants or advisors to determine future needs of the Parish.
- (c) The TPCG should study and encourage the location of needed medical facilities by providing financial incentives for these types of developments.

8) Public Cemeteries

Goal

Public Cemeteries rules and regulations are proposed and enacted that provide for the orderly use of the existing facilities, and these regulations are clearly understood by the public.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG should clearly identify the existing public cemeteries in the parish, estimate the available remaining space, and determine future public cemetery needs. Detailed mapping should also be implemented for use control issues.
- (b) The TPCG should assess the protocols and procedures employed by other parishes.
- (c) Through the Public Cemetery Administrator, the TPCG should develop a set of rules and regulations that can best suit both the public and government needs.

F) Housing

The Housing Focus Group identified 8 goals relative to housing for Terrebonne Parish. Those goals and the strategies necessary to achieve those goals follow.

1) Affordable Housing Stock

Goal

Terrebonne Parish contains sufficient affordable housing stock to meet the needs of Parish residents.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG, through its Housing and Human Resources department (DHHR), should act as a conduit for information on affordable housing incentive programs in the Parish, perhaps through the parish website and other methods.
- (b) The TPCG, local banks, and other involved agencies should, via public/private partnerships, offer low interest loans to low to moderate income residents to encourage and foster individual home ownership.
- (c) The TPCG should become a “market player” in developing residential properties to provide additional low to moderate income housing.

2) Housing Maintenance

Goal

Housing maintenance has improved throughout the Parish such that less than 10% of the housing in the parish is considered in need of minor or major rehabilitation.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG (DHHR & HPD), the Bayou Realtors Association, the Terrebonne Parish Sheriff’s Office, and other interested parties should develop a housing maintenance public awareness program emphasizing the safety benefits of proper housing maintenance. This public awareness program should educate the public as to the need to improve housing conditions.
- (b) The TPCG (DHHR) should identify and utilize federal housing maintenance and rehabilitation programs to the maximum extent practical.
- (c) The TPCG (DHHR) should, when identifying housing maintenance code violations, identify and inform the homeowners of available programs for financial assistance

3) Blighted and Abandoned Housing

Goal

The TPCG, with other involved parties, has an adequately funded and aggressive program for the removal of blighted and abandoned housing throughout the Parish.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG (Planning Department) should evaluate, and if warranted, streamline the process for the removal of blighted and abandoned housing.
- (b) The TPCG should take a proactive approach to addressing the blighted and abandoned housing problem by funding an additional condemnation inspector.
- (c) The TPCG (Planning Department, DHHR), with the other involved agencies should create a replacement program for dwellings that are demolished in order to provide timely replacement of housing stock and quality neighborhoods.
- (d) The TPCG should at a minimum continue the currently existing funding.

4) Parish Wide Building Codes

Goal

The TPCG (Planning Department) should adopt and implement Parish-wide building and housing codes consistent with those currently in existing in the urban service district.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG, through the various fire districts, should document electric fires throughout the parish to demonstrate the seriousness of the problem.
- (b) When implemented, such parish wide building codes should include measures to protect from wind and water damage from hurricanes.
- (c) The TPCG (Planning Dept.) should be adequately staffed to inspect buildings throughout the parish for compliance with the code.
- (d) The TPCG (Planning, Public Works) should plan infrastructure and other improvements cognizant of the effect such improvements may have on building patterns in the parish, and also cognizant of the potential risk to such structures from existing environmental conditions.

5) Tax Incentive Programs

Goal

There are tax incentive programs in Terrebonne Parish which encourage multi-family housing developments and diversification in the housing stock.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG should identify and disseminate information on currently available incentive programs.
- (b) The TPCG should, where gaps exist in those programs, create locally sponsored programs with such incentives (sales or property taxes).

6) Subdivision Covenants

Goal

The Terrebonne Parish public is aware of subdivision covenants, the methods for enforcing such covenants, and the role of the TPCG in that process.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG, through the subdivision approval process, mandates purchaser notification of subdivision covenants, and the method for enforcing such covenants

7) Flood Elevation Requirements

Goal

The impact of flood elevation requirements on housing stock in the lower areas of the Parish has been assessed and responsive measures are in place.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG (Planning Dept., DHHR) should conduct a study of existing housing below FEMA mandated elevation in the Parish to identify housing stock at risk or of lesser value.
- (b) The TPCG (Planning Dept., DHHR) should analyze the increased cost associated with building structure to the FEMA required height throughout the parish to determine the added cost of that requirement.

8) Hurricane Threats

Goal

The TPCG has a plan for long term or permanent movement of people affected by hurricanes in the southern reached of the parish.

Strategies

- (a) The TPCG (DHHR, OEP) should develop a plan for the long term or relocation of people displaced by hurricanes or tropical storms, particularly those below or at the poverty level, to the northern areas of the parish.

Chapter 4

Projected Land Use

I) INTRODUCTION

This section contains a discussion of the predicted future land use for the parish. This prediction is for the year 2020. This future land use projection is based on several factors, including:

- 1) population projections
- 2) topography, particularly elevation
- 3) potential for flooding
- 4) existing and proposed infrastructure
- 5) available developable land
- 6) development trends

These factors were of course augmented by the team's expertise and experience in the area. The land use projection is also based on the work of the Land Use Focus Group. This group developed a list of recommendations for managing future land use in the parish (Chapter 3). The future land use projection used the same land use categories as the current inventory.

The projected land use presented herein should not be interpreted as a final, conclusive determination for a particular piece of property. The projected land uses reflect trends identified by the Master Plan team, and application of those trends to the independent development zones. It is likely that tract-specific characteristics will determine the future land use for each individual tract.

The following sections contain a description of the future land use for each development zone. The development zones are distinct sub-areas of the parish identified by the team and used throughout the project. These are areas for which detailed planning was deemed advisable (Figure 2-1). A summary figure and table for Terrebonne Parish is also presented (Figure 4-18, Table 4-18).

II) Future Land Use Descriptions

A) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 1 – MONTEGUT

This development zone is the area between Bayou Terrebonne and Bayou Pointe-aux-chenes and includes the communities of Montegut and Pointe-aux-chenes. Population in this area is predicted to decline by 9% in the next 20 years. This

area ranges in elevation from 5' MSL in the northern portions down to 3' and 2' MSL in the most southerly reaches. These areas have been impacted over time from major flooding events (hurricanes and tropical storms). This is the case even though these areas are protected by existing forced drainage systems. This area was severely impacted by flooding associated with Hurricane Lili. Besides the forced drainage systems, the major infrastructure in this area includes La. Highways 55, 58 and 665. Land use is expected to be influenced by the increase in recreational campsites particularly in the lower reaches. The area is serviced by all major utilities except sewerage. A hurricane protection system is planned for this area. This hurricane protection system will protect the areas above Humble Canal including the communities of Montegut and Pointe-aux-chenes. The community of Isle de Jean Charles will not be within the hurricane protection system. This hurricane protection system will take 20 years to construct and is not expected to greatly influence land use changes in that time period. Additionally, a State-owned wildlife management area is located within this development zone.

Based on the above, the following is the predicted land uses for the development zone. The only major land use change predicted for this development zone is the conversion of existing land uses along Bayou Pointe-aux-chenes and Terrebonne in the lower reaches from the existing land use to residential camps. This trend is occurring on all major bayous in Terrebonne Parish.

Other more traditional development will be deterred by the potential for flooding. The social and economic problems associated with flooding will dampen development, and federal, state, and local building requirements (related to flooding) will also drive the cost of new construction up

(Figure 4-1, Table 4-1)

B) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 2 –BOURG

This development zone consists of the Bayou Terrebonne Ridge just south of the City of Houma. The Company Canal is another prominent feature of this development zone. The southern end of the development zone is just above the community of Montegut on Bayou Terrebonne. The population in this development zone is expected to increase by 26% in the next 20 years. The elevation ranges from relatively high near the urban area of Houma (10' MSL) to the lower part of the development zone closer to Montegut (5' MSL). The low part of the development zone has been impacted from major flooding events. The upper area has been less impacted. Because of these impacts, the lower area is subjected to FEMA building requirements which could hamper development. The existing infrastructure in the development zone consists of La. Highways 24, 55 and 659. Major thoroughfares include Dream Come True Road and Country Drive. The lower area is somewhat protected from hurricane storm surges. The

northern portion of the area is served by all major utilities. The middle to southern area is not served by sewerage. There is a large amount of relatively high land suitable for development. Proposed infrastructure improvements include the widening of Country Drive and the Morganza to the Gulf Hurricane Protection System. The widening of Country Drive may make the northern area of this development zone more attractive for development. The hurricane protection system should provide greater protection to the lower areas from storm surges; however the hurricane protection system may not be constructed during the time frame of this projection.

Based on the above and foregoing, the predicted land uses for the development zone is as follows. The existing open land in the northern portion of this development zone is most likely to be converted to single family residential. Much of the open land in the northern portion of the development zone is already served by existing neighborhood streets. This characteristic may make this area extremely desirable for conversion to single family residential use. The same is true for a portion of property close to the Company Canal in the vicinity of the Bourg elementary School. Additionally, some pieces of open land close to La. Highway 24/Highway 55 intersection will most likely be converted to commercial use. This is consistent with the current trend in that area. Development in the lower reaches of this zone will be deterred by federal, state, and local building requirements and because of susceptibility to flooding.

(Figure 4-2, Table 4-2)

C) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 3- CHAUVIN

This development zone is characterized by the Bayou Little Caillou Ridge and the associated La. Highway 56 and Bayouside Drive. Bayou Little Caillou is the most populous of the bayous in Terrebonne Parish, but the population is predicted to continue to gradually decline over time (8%). The elevation in this development zone ranges from 6' to 8' MSL in the northern reaches down to 2' or 3' MSL in the more southern reaches. The area is of moderately high elevation and has not been subjected to major flooding impacts in recent years. The area is protected by several forced drainage systems. Federal, state, and local building requirements below Boudreaux Canal restrict the types of structures. The area is serviced by all major utilities except sewerage. There are no significant infrastructure improvements planned which may affect land use. These forced drainage systems will be augmented by the hurricane protection system. This system is expected to take 20 years to construct. It is not expected that this system will influence land use decisions prior to completion. Below Boudreaux Canal, there are very limited amounts of land available for development in the traditional sense. Development trends in this development zone involve conversion of existing land uses to recreational camp sites, particularly in the lower areas.

Based on the above, the predicted land use for the area is as follows. Below Boudreaux Canal, any land use change is expected to be conversion from the existing land use to camp sites. Bayou Little Caillou has been the focal point of this trend in the Parish for the last 10 years. This trend is expected to continue. Above Boudreaux Canal, few land use changes are expected in the middle of the development zone. Urban development around the City of Houma may spill over into this development zone at the northern end. It is projected that several tracts near the Houma-Terrebonne Airport will be converted to commercial or industrial uses. (Figure 4-3, Table 4-3)

D) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 4 - GRAND CAILLOU

This development zone consists of the Bayou Grand Caillou Ridge from Houma south to Dulac. Generally, there will be development pressures in the northern reaches of this development zone. These development pressures will be traditional (commercial, industrial and residential). This area is close to the urban area of Houma, and is also close to some existing industrial areas. The population is projected to expand by 30% over the next twenty years. This population will most likely be located in the northern section of this development zone. This development zone is relatively low (8' – 3' MSL) in elevation and prone to flooding events, particularly towards the more southern areas of the development zone. These factors will deter development in the lower reaches in the traditional sense. The only major infrastructure improvement expected is the construction of a hurricane protection system. This system will include the construction of a lock in the Houma Navigation Canal and a levee at the lower end of this development zone. This system will not be complete for 15 – 20 years. This development zone is served by all major utilities in the northern reach. The southern areas do not have sewerage. In the extreme lower reaches, convenient access to outdoor activities (fishing and hunting) will drive continued expansion of recreational campsites.

Based on this information, the projected land use calls for an increase in public services in the area around the jail and landfill, an increase in mobile homes north of the landfill, conversion of some open or agricultural land to commercial development, and an increase in the number of campsites in the lower reaches. The vast acreage of environmentally sensitive lands is not expected to be converted to another land use. The middle of this development zone is not expected to undergo major changes due to its elevation and the associated federal, state, and local building requirements. These factors will deter development. The hurricane protection system may make this land more appealing to development; however, it is not expected to be fully functional until 15-20 years in the future; therefore, it is not expected to have a significant impact on land use during the projected time frame. (Figure 4-4, Table 4-4)

E) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 5 - BAYOU DULARGE

This development zone is located on Bayou Dularge in the southwest part of Terrebonne Parish. It consists of a single, low-lying ridge (3' to 5' MSL) protected by several forced drainage levees. The population in this area is predicted to decline 8% in the next 20 years. The population consists primarily of commercial fishermen and other moderate income levels. This area has historically been negatively impacted by flooding events. The lower area has seen continued expansion of the recreational campsites. The area's infrastructure consists of a single state highway, a single Parish road, and the previously mentioned forced drainage systems. The area is served by all major utilities with the exception of sewerage. The Morganza to the Gulf Hurricane Protection System will ultimately provide hurricane protection for the middle to upper area of this development zone above Falgout Canal. This hurricane protection system will be constructed over the next 20 years but is not projected to dramatically impact land use changes within that time.

The only land use change for this development zone is the continued development of campsites in and around the Falgout Canal Area and at the lower end outside of the forced drainage area. The lack of economic opportunity as well as susceptibility to flooding events will negatively impact potential development in this development zone. (Figure 4-5, Table 4-5)

F) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 6 - EAST HOUMA

This development zone is characterized by urban development. The development zone is entirely within the Urban Services District in Terrebonne Parish. It consists primarily of older houses, subdivisions and commercial developments within the metropolitan area of Houma. Predicted population is expected to increase by .6%, which is considered insignificant for land use changes. There is a significant low income population within the area.

Flooding impacts are not expected to drive land use decisions in this area. There are several large tracts of available land within the development zone; most notably, lands controlled by Walter Land Company and the Houma-Terrebonne Airport Commission. Predicted infrastructure improvements include the widening of Grand Caillou from Industrial Blvd. to the Woodlawn Ranch Road, improvements to the existing Prospect Street Bridge from a 2-lane to a 6-lane structure, the strengthening of a runway at the Houma-Terrebonne Airport, and widening of Industrial Blvd. The area is served by a full suite of utilities including sewerage. Because of the low to moderate income characteristics of some of the population, mobile homes may become more prevalent in this development zone.

Predicted future land use is as follows. Large tracts along Industrial Blvd. are predicted to convert to industrial use. Tracts along Grand Caillou Road are predicted to convert to commercial. It is expected that additional tracts within the Houma-Terrebonne Airport Commission property will be converted from open land to industrial use. The open areas along Woodlawn Ranch Road are expected to convert to residential except for the area adjacent to the Houma-Terrebonne Airport Commission property. It is expected that this area will be converted to public service. Walter Land Company is developing Patriot Point Subdivision adjacent to the Ellender High School property in this development zone. This subdivision will consist of single family residential units and should be fully utilized in the project time period. Figure 4-6, Table 4-6).

G) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 7 - SOUTH INDUSTRIAL

This development zone is just south of the Urban Services District of Houma. The area consists of the lands surrounding the Intracoastal Waterway and the Houma Navigation Canal outside the City. There is a small residential population in the area. The area is relatively low, but because of fill operations, have not been subject to flooding impacts from rain events or tropical systems. The area is currently primarily industrial and is home to many large fabrication and oil related companies in the community. Major infrastructure in the area include the Houma Navigation Canal, La. Highway 315, Industrial Blvd. and La. Highway 57. The area is expected to benefit from the construction of the Houma Navigation Canal Lock. Improvements to Industrial Blvd. are projected to positively impact development activities. Improvements to the Houma Navigation Canal (deepening) may make property within this development zone more attractive.

Based on the above factors, the predicted land use is as follows. The area surrounding the Terrebonne Parish Port Site will be developed as a combination of industrial and commercial applications. Approximately one-half of this large tract will be converted to those uses. Figure 4-7, Table 4-8)

H) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 8 - NORTH INDUSTRIAL

This area is east of the limits Houma Urban Services District. The area is along the Bayou Terrebonne Ridge between Houma and Bourg. The population is projected to increase in the area by 13% in the next 20 years. The area is relatively high elevation (10' – 5' MSL) and is bounded by the Intracoastal Waterway to the north and east. The area is well drained, although some recent flooding occurred because of extreme rainfall associated with a tropical storm. The area contains several large tracts of available, developable land. The area infrastructure includes La. Highways 24, 659 and Prospect Street. Major infrastructure improvements include improvements to the Prospect Street Bridge. The area is served by all major utilities including sewerage.

Based on the above factors, the following is the predicted land use for this development zone. The areas fronting on the Intracoastal Waterway will be converted from vacant, open land to industrial uses. This is consistent with adjoining land uses. Additionally, open land areas towards the northwest corner of this development zone will likely be converted to industrial uses. Open areas adjacent to existing residential areas will likely be converted to residential areas. This is particularly true for those areas along La. Highway 659. (Figure 4-8, Table 4-8)

I) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 9 - SCHRIEVER

This development zone consists primarily of the Bayou Terrebonne Ridge from the outskirts of Thibodaux down to the area of Oaklawn Subdivision and Southland Mall. It includes U. S. Highway 90-La. Highway 24 intersection and the intersection of La. Highway 24 and the Burlington Northern Railroad. The population in the area is projected to increase by approximately 27% in the next 20 years. The area is relatively high in elevation (12' – 5' MSL) and to a great extent is not subject to flooding impacts except for isolated torrential rain events. There are no major infrastructure improvements which may affect land use decisions in the next 20 years. The area is serviced by all major utilities except sewerage.

Based on the preceding discussion, the following is the predicted land use for this area. Several large tracts south of U. S. Highway 90 are predicted to be converted to residential sites. Another large tract below U. S. Highway 90 is planned as commercial and will most likely be that land use. The area surrounding the intersection of La. Highway 24 and U.S. Highway 90 is predicted to become commercial. North of U. S. Highway 90, several mobile home areas will be developed with some sprinkling of family residential sites along the ridge. (Figure 4-9, Table 4-9)

J) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 9A – GRAY

This development zone is part of the previously mentioned Schriever Development Zone. It is discussed here separately because of unique characteristics and development pressures. This area is dominated by the US Hwy. 90/La. Hwy. 24 interchange. This particular area is already converting from existing land uses to commercial, and this trend is expected to continue. In addition to the areas close to that intersection, another commercial development is underway along Hwy 24 closer to the southern boundary of this development zone. The Gray area will be impacted by the expected increase in population

documented above. This population increase will result in an increase in residential and mobile home land use. (Figure 4-10, Table 4-10)

K) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 10 - UPPER BAYOU BLUE

This development zone consists of the southwestern half of the Bayou Blue Ridge between U. S. Highway 90 and La. Highway 182. It also contains the Coteau Ridge from La. Highway 24 to La. Highway 182. The population in this area is predicted to increase by 36% in the next 20 years. This area consists of a relatively high ridge area with relatively lower marsh and swamp areas between the ridges (8' – 3' MSL). The area enjoys easy access to U. S. Highway 90 and the more urban areas of Houma via La. Highway 182 and La. Highway 24. The area is protected by flooding impacts by a large forced drainage project. The area is serviced by all major utilities except sewerage. There are no major infrastructure improvements planned which may affect land use in the next 20 years.

Based on the foregoing, the predicted land use is as follows. The large vacant, open land area adjacent to U. S. Highway 90 is projected to become commercial. A single large tract in the vicinity of Country Estates is predicted to be converted from vacant, open land to mobile homes. A single large tract in the vicinity of the Bayou Gardens/Coteau Road intersection is predicted to become residential. Another single large tract in the vicinity of Coteau Road and La. Highway 24 is predicted to be converted to mobile homes. (Figure 4-11, Table 4-11)

L) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 11 - BAYOU CANE

This development zone consists of the area immediately adjacent and north of the Urban Services District. The area is characterized by older neighborhoods and mixed commercial development. Population in this development zone is predicted to increase by 14% over the next 20 years. The area is of relatively high elevation and is well drained. Drainage is augmented by several forced drainage projects. The area is not prone to flooding. Major infrastructure in the area include La. Highway 24, Martin Luther King Blvd., Hollywood Road and various neighborhood streets. The area is serviced by all major utilities including sewerage. The area also contains various amounts of open land suitable for development.

Based on the above, the following is the predicted land use for this area. Areas of vacant, open land adjacent to existing subdivisions are generally projected to convert to single family or multi-family residential. This is true for many of the open areas to the east of Bayou Terrebonne. Areas fronting along Martin Luther King Blvd. to the west of Bayou Terrebonne are generally predicted to convert to commercial use. Development is expected to fill in vacant, open land between existing land uses with similar land uses. (Figure 4-12, Table 4-12)

M) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 12 - LA. HIGHWAY 311

This development zone consists of the corridor surrounding Hwy. 311 from the edges of the Urban Services District in Houma out to the Schriever area. This development zone contains the greatest amount of open, developable property of all of the development zones. The development zone is characterized by property of sufficient elevation that is adequately drained (10' – 3' MSL). The population is projected to increase by over 50% in the next 20 years. Highway 311 is the main thoroughfare in the development zone. As population increases in this zone, the highway will most likely be widened to 4 lanes. Residents in this development zone will have easy access to the commercial centers of Houma and to U. S. Highway 90. The utilities to the area are adequate for projected development with the exception of sewerage. Community sewerage is currently provided to the area close to the urban area of Houma. Areas away from the Urban Services District do not have community sewerage.

The development zone consists of large tracts of partially developed residential subdivisions. These subdivisions are predominantly between Savanne Road and the urban area of Houma. Land use in these areas is predicted to convert from vacant, open land to residential. The intersection of Savanne Road and La. Highway 311 is predicted to convert from vacant, open land to commercial. This is consistent with the use of high traffic intersections for commercial enterprises. Matherne Realty controls the vast open acreage immediately adjacent to Martin Luther King Blvd. in this development zone. Portions of this open acreage will convert to residential uses, consistent with the Matherne Realty Master Plan. Land in the Ellendale Subdivision area is predicted to convert to residential. A new subdivision behind Ardoyne Subdivision is predicted to convert to residential use. The majority of the area surrounding the intersection of U. S. Highway 90 and La. Highway 311 is controlled by a single landowner. This landowner has developed a master plan which calls for commercial development at this intersection. It is predicted that this will occur in the next 20 years. (Figure 4-13, Table 4-13)

N) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 13 - CHACHOULA

This development zone consists of the areas surrounding the Chachoula Ridge and Bull Run Road. This area is remote and rural and consists of a very low population. The population projection for this development zone is for a slight decline from the already low residential population. The infrastructure in this area consists of the aforementioned Bull Run Road. The area has a moderately accessible connection to Houma via La. Highway 311 and to other areas via U. S. Highway 90. It is serviced by all major utilities except sewerage. There are no significant infrastructure improvements planned which may affect land use. The

area is of moderately high elevation and has not been subjected to major flooding impacts in recent years.

Based on the above, the projected land use for the development zone is as follows. A very slight increase in single family residential and mobile homes are predicted for this development zone. This residential development could result from workers choosing to commute to the Morgan City area, a short drive on U.S. Highway 90.

(Figure 4-14, Table 4-14)

O) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 14 - GIBSON

This development zone is characterized by a single ridge in the westernmost area of Terrebonne Parish. The development zone consists of low-lying areas (6' – 3' MSL) adjacent to the Bayou Black Ridge as well as U. S. Highway 90. The area is rural in character. The predicted population change is a significant decline (87%) over the next 20 years. The percent decreased is somewhat accentuated by the general sparse population of the area. The area is low-lying and prone to flooding impacts from the Atchafalaya River. This development zone is also home to a large industrial complex serving the oil & gas industry. The area consists of low to moderate income level persons. The area is currently serviced by all major utilities except for sewerage. There are no major infrastructure improvements planned for this development zone.

Based on the above, it is unlikely that significant new development will occur in this area in the next 20 years. The area is far from major employment centers and does not offer amenities desired by the residents. Because of the completion of U. S. Highway 90, employees of those major employment centers prefer to live either in Thibodaux or Houma. The highway has, to some extent, isolated this area. Figure 4-15, Table 4-15)

P) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 15 - BAYOU BLACK

This development zone is characterized by the Bayou Black Ridge with developed areas adjacent to the ridge. The area is predicted to experience a 20% increase in population change over the next 20 years. The Bayou Black Ridge in this area is relatively high (5' to 8' MSL). La. Highway 182 is located on the south side of the ridge with an accompanying Parish road on the north side of the ridge. Savanne Road intersects with these two highways in this development zone. The area is somewhat subject to flooding events from the Atchafalaya River. The eastern portion of this development zone is served by all major utilities including sewerage. The remainder of the area does not have sewerage. The eastern portion of the development zone is close to the urban area of Houma.

It is predicted that the population increase will be located in the major vacant, open land areas at the easternmost boundary of this development zone. The Morganza to the Gulf Hurricane Protection Project will protect the easternmost portion of this development zone. In addition, there are several components of a forced drainage system proposed for the southern half of the ridge. The Morganza to the Gulf System will take 20 years to construct and is not expected to influence land use decision in that time period. The other forced drainage systems have a longer time line than the Morganza to the Gulf System and therefore are not expected to influence land use decisions. (Figure 4-16, Table 4-16).

Q) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 16 - LOWER BAYOU BLUE

This development zone represents the southern half of the Bayou Blue Ridge south of La. Highway 182 as well as the entirety of the Coteau Ridge south of La. Highway 182. The population in the area is predicted to continue to increase by 50% over the next 20 years. The area's population increase most likely is attributable to out migration from the lower areas of the Parish by low to moderate income persons. The ridge area is characterized by low elevations while the areas between the ridges consist of swamp and marsh. Although these areas are low-lying, impacts from flooding have been minimal and are projected to remain as such. The area is in close proximity to the commercial and residential areas of Houma. Major infrastructure in this area includes Prospect Street Extension, La. Highways 660 and 316 as well as La. Highway 182. The area is serviced by all major utilities except sewerage. Access to this area is expected to improve with the improvements to the Prospect Street Bridge.

Considering the foregoing, the predicted land use is as follows. Several areas adjacent to La. Highways 660 and 316 are expected to be converted to mobile homes or mobile home parks. This continues the current land use pattern. The areas around Prospect Street Extension are expected to be converted to commercial applications. This is consistent with the characteristics of that particular corridor as high traffic and high visibility. (Figure 4-17, Table 4-17)

R) DEVELOPMENT ZONE 17 - WEST HOUMA

This development zone consists of the western half of the Urban Services District of Houma. It consists of many of the older neighborhoods and/or developments within the City of Houma.

The population is predicted to increase 20% in the next 20 years. This area is well drained and generally consists of higher property. There are significant amounts of vacant, open land at the western and southern boundaries of this development zone. This area is serviced by all major utilities including sewerage. The area is well served by the current roadway network.

The following are predicted land uses for the development zone. It is predicted that the area surrounding Terrebonne General Medical Center in downtown Houma will continue converting to medical services. This trend has been apparent over the last several years and is predicted to continue. The vacant, open land to the west and south of the development zone is planned and projected to be converted to single family residential to a great extent. An exception is property on the southeast corner of the development zone abutting Barrow Street Extension. This area is predicted to be converted to commercial use. (Figure 4-18, Table 4-18)