

Chapter Six

Parks, Recreation, & Open Space

Providing safe and accessible parks and recreational opportunities helps to improve quality of life. In addition, public open space helps define and connect neighborhoods and improve the recreation possibilities for all residents. This chapter guides decisions regarding the improvement of existing parks and ongoing development of new facilities and spaces, commensurate with changes in the future population, demographics, and development patterns.

In general, Zachary has an adequate amount of parks and recreation spaces to meet existing needs, but requires additional maintenance and funding to keep pace with its expected future population growth. This plan focuses on:

- ◆ Enhancing the park system based on the needs and desires of residents through their participation and input;
- ◆ Continually improving and expanding facilities and programs;
- ◆ Promoting safe and enjoyable open space environments;
- ◆ Providing a wide range of opportunities accessible to all persons;
- ◆ Protecting and integrating natural resources into the design of parks; and
- ◆ Developing an organizational structure and administrative capacity to provide proper maintenance and effective facility and program management.



Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to plan for the short- and long-term needs of the community. It forms policy directions pertaining to the placement of parks and recreational amenities within the City and its future growth area, the classifications of parks and types of facilities needed, and the methods by which enhancements and improvements may be funded. The chapter identifies the challenges, opportunities, and needs for improving the local park system.

There are several reasons why this chapter is important:

- ◆ Invest in the community's livability and quality of life, which contributes to its economic development and attractiveness as a place to live and conduct business;
- ◆ Improve the quality and appearance of public spaces to form a positive and desirable image of Zachary for residents, visitors, and investors;
- ◆ Provide areas and facilities for citizens of all ages to meet their active and leisure recreation needs;
- ◆ Contribute to a healthy community life by enabling residents to use parks and trails for sport and exercise;
- ◆ Satisfy the interests of local recreation leagues and activity groups who use facilities for athletic events and social interaction;
- ◆ Improve the safety and utilization of parks by making necessary improvements and desired enhancements;
- ◆ Form decision-making criteria for acquiring and developing new parks, including their type, design, location, spacing, and methods of financing;
- ◆ Provide adequate areas and facilities within close proximity to all persons, including a diverse range of parks to meet the individual needs of citizens; and
- ◆ Preserve valued open space and other sensitive lands for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.

Issues and Opportunities

This chapter is designed to ensure that Zachary “catches up” on its deficiencies in providing parks and recreation areas and facilities. The community’s two priority issues are:

1. enhance the current parks to meet (or exceed) a minimum standard of quality and maintenance; and
2. add new neighborhood and community parks and greenways and linkages commensurate with future development.

New Community Park



Located near an existing wetland, New Community Park (located adjacent to the Zachary Youth Park) will provide increased recreational opportunities for residents.

Coordination and Intergovernmental Cooperation

As one of the fastest growing cities in the region, Zachary will inevitably see an increased demand for recreational programs and facilities. To meet this increasing demand, the City would benefit by joint acquisition, development, and ongoing maintenance of public spaces to stretch its local resources for the development and redevelopment of its parks. Coordination and collaboration among agencies (such as with the school district, the East Baton Rouge Parish Parks and Recreation Commission (BREC), and other local agencies and organizations) would mutually benefit all interests because it eases the burden of tax dollars and, at the same time, allows a pooling of resources to enhance the quality of areas and facilities.

Collaboration requires effective communication and coordination among stakeholders. Through agreements created between public/semi-public agencies, as well as partnerships with the private sector, the parks and recreation system benefits in its quality while better meeting the needs of users. Joint acquisition, construction,

operation, and maintenance allow efficient use of public dollars while ensuring that park facilities are well coordinated and connected.

Unfortunately, funding for parks is often secondary to that of the utility infrastructure (e.g., water, wastewater, and drainage systems) and safety sensitive services (i.e., police and fire protection). However, parks are an equally important part of the public infrastructure system. Therefore, identifying a dedicated funding source, such as a parks and recreation district,¹ and effectively leveraging state and federal grants and private foundations funds will be increasingly important to develop and sustain an inheritable parks and recreation system.

Coordination and collaboration among agencies is of mutual benefit to all interests. It eases the burden on public tax dollars and enhances the quality of areas and facilities.

GOALS

- ▶ A park system that is coordinated and managed by Zachary officials and staff
- ▶ Provision of public information regarding the availability of parks and recreational programs
- ▶ Cooperation to address the area's recreational needs and environmental conservation priorities

Recommendations

1. Continue to support and develop the Zachary Parks and Recreation Department to oversee the development and maintenance of parks while coordinating with other organizations such as BREC.
2. As part of a City-wide website, create a "parks and recreation" section. This should provide information as to upcoming events and programs, park locations and hours, volunteer opportunities, and links to related regional and state-wide sites.
3. In collaboration with BREC, create up-to-date park maps to identify current facilities and planned future improvements. Public access to these maps will prove helpful for users of the park system.
4. Develop agreements with BREC and the Zachary Community School District for the joint acquisition of land, improvements, and maintenance of facilities, as well as the use and management of areas and buildings.
5. Establish a Parks and Beautification Board with representation from BREC. The Board would serve an advisory role to the Parks and Recreation Department and help to guide the direction of park policies and decisions. The Board would also be involved in studying park and recreation issues and identifying needs and possible solutions.
6. Establish programs for lease/purchase, tax incentives, and provision of public maintenance to entice private sector participation in the construction of new parks.
7. Establish cooperative agreements with developers and landowners to develop parkland in new neighborhoods, which may be privately owned and maintained or dedicated to the City.
8. Encourage private sector participation in providing parks and public open space by permitting land development practices such as development



¹ Zachary's power to add and develop parks is part of its "home rule" power, which is provided in Article 6, Section 5 of the Louisiana Constitution.

clustering. Create incentives that will result in an efficient utilization of land and provide greater opportunities for the enjoyment of open space and preservation of the natural environment.

9. Establish alliances with local churches and other institutions for use of their lands and facilities (as available) in exchange for monetary contributions and City-funded improvements.
10. Facilitate park planning and design charrettes in the design and development of parks within their respective neighborhoods.

Balanced, Convenient, and Accessible Parks

A good system of parks creates a balance of recreation areas and public spaces across the community. In doing so, *all* residents have equal access to public spaces and recreational areas to meet their active and passive recreational needs. These parks and open spaces must be located and designed to complement the surrounding neighborhoods by way of their accessibility, arrangement, and appropriateness of equipment and facilities to match the needs of their users.

A *system* of parks offers diversity ranging from larger-scale facilities serving persons within the broader region (within a one-hour driving distance) to community-wide facilities (generally serving a one-mile area) and those that serve immediate and nearby neighborhoods. A range of spaces and activities should provide a combination of indoor and outdoor facilities, as well as an adequate assortment of activity types (both passive and active) to meet the individual and collective needs of residents.

GOALS

- ▶ A balanced and wide variety of public parks, recreational areas, and open space in near proximity to all residents
- ▶ Investment and reinvestment in the parks and recreation system to raise its level of quality
- ▶ An even distribution of parks and recreation facilities throughout the community
- ▶ Adequate funding and resources – on par with similar-sized communities – to perform ongoing maintenance and construct needed improvements

Recommendations

1. Support and carry out an aggressive park and facility maintenance program. The program must first conduct a physical condition assessment (to be repeated annually) to identify and log all necessary maintenance items, including repair of broken equipment, identification of unsafe conditions and remedies for correction, and items warranting more significant capital expenditures. Cost estimates should be compiled and integrated into an annual work program and capital improvements program.
2. Create an operation and management plan for the development of new facilities and delivery of park services and recreational programs, including a maintenance plan with scheduling and personnel tracking. Work directly with BREC to establish priority improvements and a strategic implementation program with annual targets and objectives.
3. Develop a new community park serving the recreational needs on the east side of Downtown.
4. Monitor opportunities to acquire desirable tracts that are favorably situated in new growth areas for future park development. It is particularly important to target potential purchases before area land prices escalate with oncoming urbanization.

Adopted April 5, 2010

5. Address the needs of youth sports and athletic leagues for the provision of adequate fields and facilities to support the desired level of recreational activity and offerings.
6. Expand the range of facilities available to include those that provide an added attraction, such as family picnic shelters/areas, walking and biking trails, indoor fitness and exercise facilities, play areas, natural areas/conservation parks, swimming pools/splash pads, cultural or neighborhood center, and other types of activity areas per the preferences of community residents.
7. Establish additional funding sources to facilitate park planning and recreational programming improvements.
8. Establish a “Friends-of-the-Park” program to solicit neighborhood involvement to enhance and police public parks.
9. Perform regular safety inspections to identify potentially harmful or dangerous conditions and create an itemized list of repairs and improvements.
10. Add overhead and walkway bollard lighting in each of the neighborhood and community parks to enhance early morning/evening use and to promote park safety.
11. Improve accessibility for disabled and handicapped users by adding sidewalk curb cuts and ramps, wheelchair accessible sidewalks and trails, and providing other accessible facilities and equipment.
12. Replace or construct new park signs that are uniform in appearance with maintenance-free landscaping or xeriscape plant materials around the base.

Available Funding Techniques:

- ◆ Current revenue
- ◆ Reserve funds
- ◆ Enterprise and revenue funds
- ◆ General obligation bonds
- ◆ Lease-purchase
- ◆ Eminent domain
- ◆ Authorities and special districts
- ◆ Sales tax
- ◆ User fees
- ◆ In-kind services and volunteer participation
- ◆ State and federal assistance
- ◆ Land donation
- ◆ Trust fund
- ◆ Private financing
- ◆ Land dedication
- ◆ Fee-in-lieu of development
- ◆ Tax deferral
- ◆ Tax reductions

Preservation of “Green Ribbons”

An essential element of a parks and recreation system is greenbelts and linear linkages that tie together – like ribbons – the community’s neighborhoods, parks, schools, and other public spaces. There are multiple opportunities for creating pedestrian linkages and off-street trails between community attractions. Excess rights-of-way along streets, alleys, bayous, and railroads; utility and drainage easements; and wide shoulder lanes along rural roadways are ideal to create such linkages. These would help interconnect the system of City and Parish public spaces, as well as neighborhoods throughout the community.

GOALS

- ▶ Develop a comprehensive community trail network
- ▶ Build an interconnected system of multi-purpose paths, trails, lanes, and routes that are accessible, convenient, and connect to neighborhoods, parks, schools, workplaces, and other destinations
- ▶ Promote gradual expansion of a City-wide trail and bikeway network

Recommendations

1. Extend the trail network to connect the City and provide access to outlying open space resources (refer to *Map 6.3, System Plan*).



Recreation opportunities connected to adjacent uses, such as this walking path near the Lane Regional Hospital, provide opportunities to enjoy a safe, outdoor environment. Creating more of these opportunities will help to connect places throughout Zachary.

Source: KKC Photos

2. Utilize rights-of-way, easements, natural drainage courses, and natural trails to link the City's parks and recreation areas.
3. Adopt a policy for the conversion and use of floodways and drainage channels, railroad corridors, and other rights-of-way and easements as trails and connections.
4. Regularly submit applications for Federal grants through the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (SAFE-TEA), the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program, and other available programs to leverage funds for bikeway and trail planning and development.
5. Require sidewalk and trail locations to be shown on preliminary plats to allow pre-development review and post-construction inspection of plan conformance.

6. Create a sidewalk improvement program to repair, replace, or install new sidewalks (or trails in the case of rural street sections) in high pedestrian use areas, thereby providing safe walking connections to segments of the community trail system.

Tammany Trace Bike Trail



The Tammany Trail system provides a safe, scenic trail that connects urban, suburban, and rural terrains. This 31-mile asphalt trail and parallel equestrian trail connects five communities. Users can use this trail on foot, skates, bicycles, and horses. Providing a complete trail network for Zachary would create additional recreation opportunities by linking neighborhoods, parks, schools, and commercial areas.

Source: <http://www.tammanytrace.org/>

7. In coordination with BREC, develop greenways along each of the creeks, floodways and drainage ways, and other flood-prone areas, as well as forested corridors within the City and its growth area. These areas may be used for trails that tie the community together.
8. Coordinate with East Baton Rouge Parish and/or the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development to install shared right-of-way signage and provide adequate road shoulders along rural roadways to accommodate avid cyclists.
9. Amend the subdivision regulations to require pedestrian easements in appropriate mid-block locations between lots (or at the end of cul-de-sacs and elsewhere) to allow access to existing or planned parks and trails. This must be integrated as part of the plat review and approval process, which will require designation of park and school sites and identification of sidewalk locations and any planned internal trails within the development.
10. Amend the street cross sections in the subdivision ordinance to include provisions for trails and bikeways. These facilities should be included in new road projects and reconstruction projects, where feasible and acceptable.

Needs Assessment

To assess the level of adequacy of the existing parks and recreation system, it is necessary to evaluate the supply of parks and relate them to facility standards to gauge their level of service. In addition, it is necessary to consider the increase in projected population, forecast future needs, and identify both current and forthcoming deficiencies.

The assessment of need for neighborhood and community parks varies according to their purpose and use. Community parks are intended to function on a large-scale basis, serving the parks and recreation needs of the entire community. They are typically 10 acres or larger in size and include facilities for area-wide activities and assembly events, such as picnic areas, walking/jogging trails, ball fields, and other larger-scale activities. Ensuring adequate and equitable recreation and leisure opportunity for all citizens is the objective of community parks.



A high priority of the park system is the maintenance of grounds and facilities.

Source: KKC Photos

The use of neighborhood parks is intended for the residents of adjacent and nearby neighborhoods. Here, the focus is on safety, accessibility, and proximity. Complete coverage of all neighborhoods is not necessary for neighborhood parks; rather, it is more important to have a well-distributed system to serve the needs of nearby residents. An acceptable walking distance to neighborhood parks is up to eight blocks.

Resources vs. Needs

A combination of standards and user demands was utilized to evaluate the need for parks and recreational facilities. User demands were identified through the input of key persons who participated in stakeholder interviews and attended the Citizens' Congress.² Utilizing national standards, the acreage of parks and recreation areas needed currently

Table 6.1, Recommended Area Standards

Classification	Standard	Low	High	Recommended
Play Lot	0.25 to 0.5 acre/1,000 persons	3.51	7.03	5.27
		5.96	11.92	8.94
Neighborhood Park	1 to 3 acres/1,000 persons	14.00	42.17	28.11
		23.84	71.54	47.66
Community Park	3 to 5 acres/1,000 persons	42.17	70.28	56.22
		71.54	119.25	95.40
Total		59.74	119.48	89.68
		101.34	202.71	152.00

NOTES: The acreages are based on a Year 2007 estimated population of 14,055 persons. The future acreage needs are based on a Year 2030 population projection of 23,843 persons.

Table 6.2, Current and Future Park Demands

Classification	Existing Supply	Acres Needed		(Surplus)/Deficiency	
		Current	Year 2030	Current	Year 2030
Play Lot	0.50	5.27	8.94	4.77	8.44
Neighborhood Park	47.50	28.11	47.66	(19.39)	0.16
Community Park	355.80	56.22	95.40	(299.58)	(260.40)
Total	403.80	89.68	152.00	(314.20)	(251.80)

Source: Kendig Keast Collaborative

² This also included the results of the *Community Attitude & Interest Citizen Survey*.

and in the Year 2030 is displayed in **Table 6.1, Recommended Area Standards** and **Table 6.2, Current and Future Park Demands**. The need for additional parks and recreation acreage is determined by applying the recommended standards to the existing and projected future populations.

Current Needs - As shown in *Table 6.1, Recommended Area Standards*, the standards range on a basis of 1,000 persons. Based upon a 2007 U.S. Census population estimate of 14,055 persons, the total acreage currently needed ranges from 60 to approximately 119 acres of play lots, neighborhood parks, and community parks. The recommended standard is a total of roughly 90 acres. Assuming a Year 2030 population of 23,843 persons, the total recommended need is 152 acres. This includes 5.27 acres of play lots, 28.11 acres of neighborhood parks, and 56.22 acres of community parks.

Presently, together, the City and BREC maintain roughly 404 acres of parks and recreation areas, plus an additional 643 acres of special use areas and facilities. Since the latter sites are not utilized by all persons on a daily basis, they are not included for the purpose of this analysis. As displayed in *Table 6.2, Current and Future Park Demands*, overall there is more than sufficient parkland to meet the needs by the Year 2030. The most significant need is in the provision of small play lots where an additional 8.44 acres will be needed.

What is BREC?

The Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge operates public park and recreation facilities and programs throughout East Baton Rouge Parish. As a member of the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) BREC has been recognized as one of America's premier recreation and park departments. BREC maintains 184 parks that offer a wide variety of facilities and activities.

BREC was created by a State Legislature Act in 1946 as an independent body whose sole purpose is to develop, maintain, and operate public parks and recreational facilities for all people in East Baton Rouge Parish.

Money for financing land purchases, construction of facilities, maintenance, and operation of activities is obtained by taxes as voted by the citizens of East Baton Rouge Parish and from income from facilities, concessions, and programs. Other funds come from local governmental agencies and the Federal Government.















Source: www.brec.org

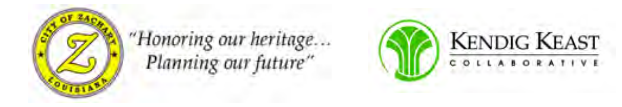
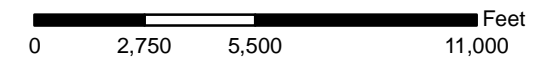
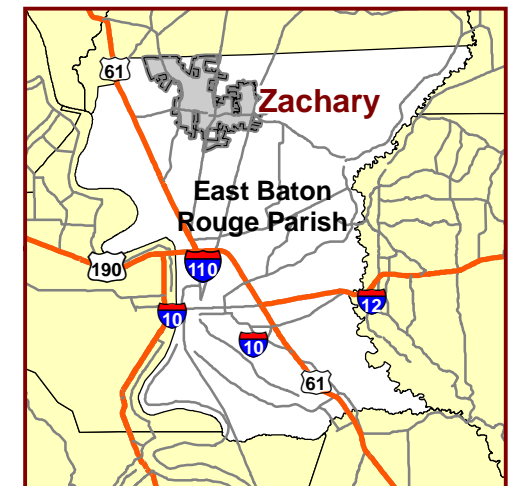
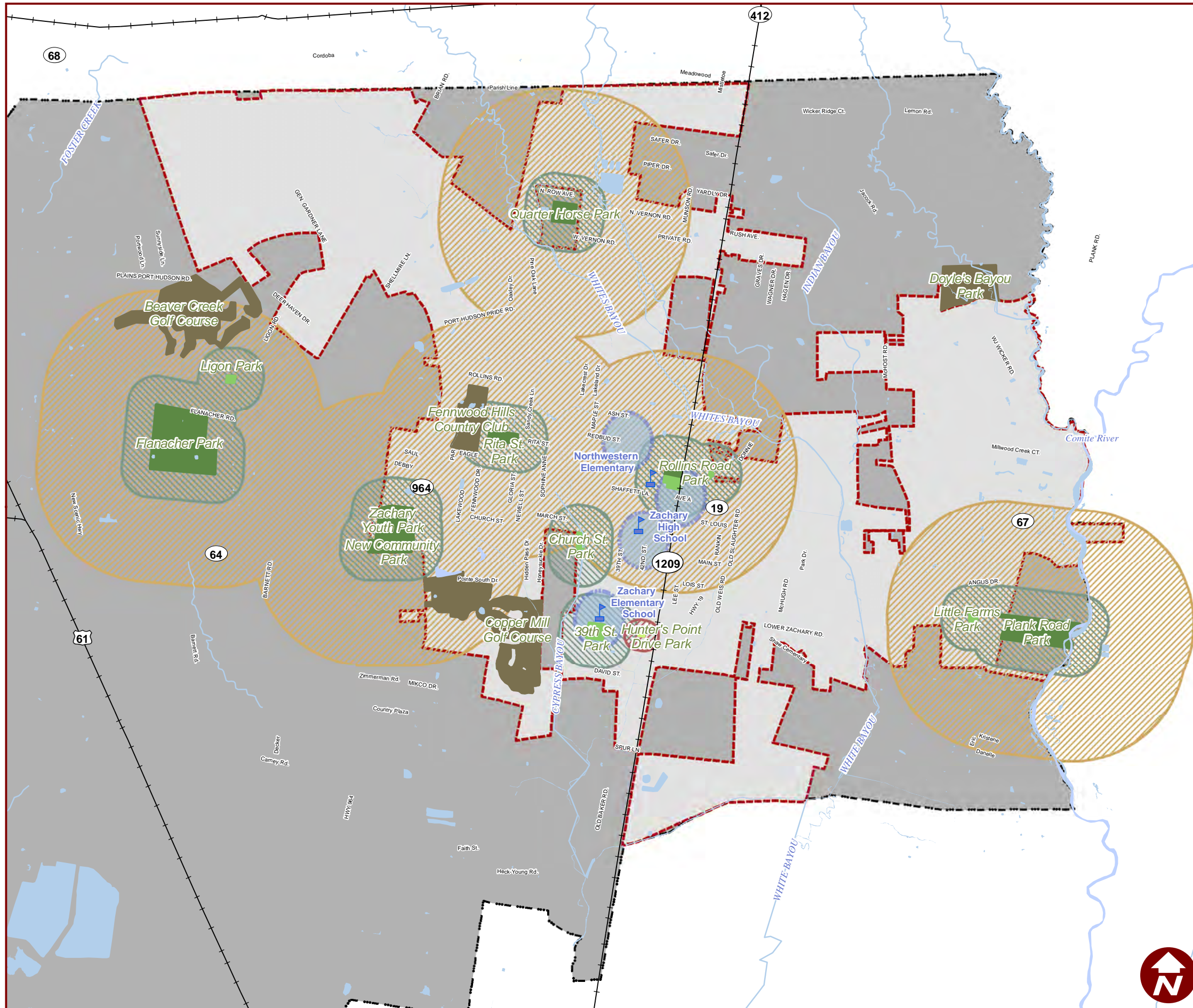
Parks Service Areas

Evaluating service areas is an effective means of determining if the parks are well located relative to their users. This analysis allows identification of those areas of the community that have sufficient park areas available and, more importantly, those that are in need of parks and recreation areas and facilities. Findings of the service area analysis include:

- ◆ **Community parks** have a primary service area of one mile, meaning that a majority of persons utilizing these area-wide parks generally reside within this area. As illustrated by **Map 6.1, Park Service Areas**, while there are five community parks, due to the location of New Community Park immediately adjacent to the Zachary Youth Park, effectively, there are four service areas. Unfortunately, the service areas of these parks serve relatively undeveloped areas, those outside the City limits, and the western-most neighborhoods in the City. The developed area of the City is, therefore, not sufficiently served by community parks. As a result, there is a need for more community parks even though, according to standards, there is a sufficient acreage of parks to meet the 20-year needs.
- ◆ **Neighborhood parks** are intended to provide residents with ample opportunity for both passive and semi-active recreation activity within close proximity to their home. Whereas community parks are designed for large-scale, area-wide events and activities, neighborhood parks are intended to meet the daily recreation needs of nearby residents. The level of activity is limited due to the size and location of these parks and the equipment and facilities available. Neighborhood parks should be

Map 6.1 Park Service Areas

-  Mini Park
-  Neighborhood Park
-  Community Park
-  Special Use Areas and Facilities
-  Schools
-  School Service Areas
-  Community Park Service Area (1 mi.)
-  Neighborhood Park Service Area (1/4 mi.)
-  Play Lot Park Service Area (1/8 mi.)
-  Corporate Limits
-  Proposed Zone of Influence
-  Major Water Bodies
-  Streams
-  Railroads



within a short walking distance for the residents of one or more neighborhoods, thereby encouraging use and promoting convenience, ease of access, and walking safety for neighborhood children. Illustrated by *Map 6.1, Park Service Areas*, are the one-quarter mile service areas of the six neighborhood parks. The intent is to have well-distributed and evenly spaced neighborhood parks proximate to the residentially developed areas. Between the neighborhood parks and school grounds, there is good coverage except for the areas closest to the intersection of Main Street and Central Avenue.

As the community grows, achieving a system of neighborhood and community parks that is uniformly distributed may be accomplished in several ways, including pre-development acquisition by the City or BREC, dedication requirements concurrent with subdivision approval, public/private partnerships, and other strategies. While the provision of community parks is generally agreed to be the responsibility of the government entity, the responsibility for neighborhood parks generally lies with private development. Requiring the dedication of parkland concurrent with a final plat is a sound method to assure adequate park areas consistent with the demand and impact placed on the public parks system by new development.

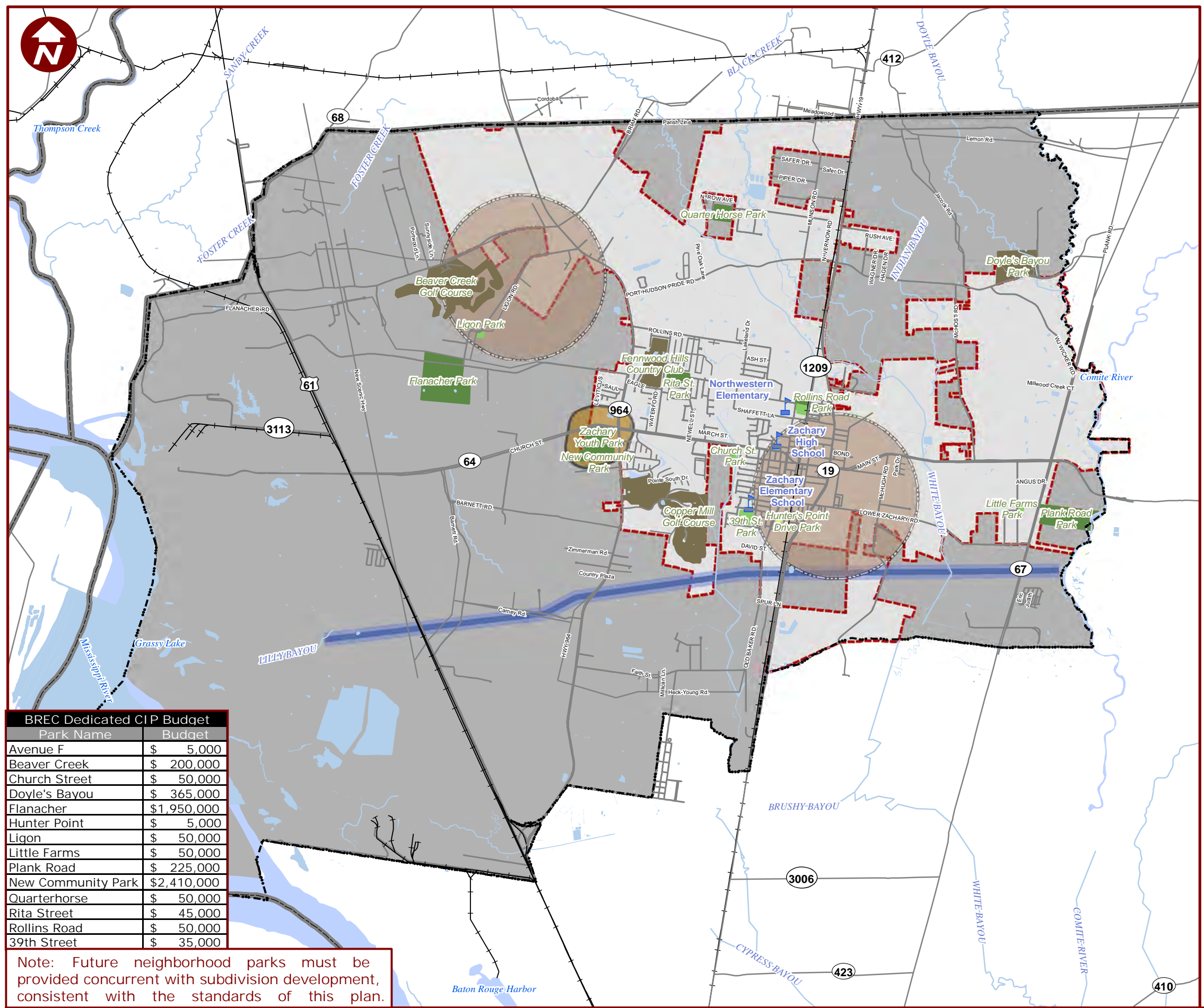


Summary of Needs

The priorities to enhance and improve the park system include:

- ◆ Although the overall acreage meets standards, there remains a community park need in the Central City area. Acceptance of land donation, dedication, or land acquisition should be considered in the near term while there is undeveloped land in this area.
- ◆ Four new neighborhood parks are needed within the Central City area to improve existing deficiencies, as shown by **Map 6.2, System Plan**. If coordinated with the above recommended new community park, the number of new neighborhood parks may be reduced to three since the community park would also meet the nearby neighborhood needs.
- ◆ With exception of the above recommended needs, the overall acreage of parks is sufficient to meet the Year 2030 needs. Therefore, emphasis should be placed on development of unimproved parks and enhancement or revitalization of existing parks.
- ◆ Further development of year-round recreational programs (indoor and outdoor) will be needed with the increasing demands of a growing population. This will require new recreation centers and eventually, a multi-purpose activity complex.
- ◆ At this early point in the City's growth, it is essential to create standards and require land set-asides for development of a greenway system. This will facilitate development of a City-wide trail network concurrent with new development.

Map 6.2 System Plan



- Parks & Schools**
- Mini Park
 - Neighborhood Park
 - Community Park
 - Special Use Areas and Facilities
 - Schools
- Park Need Areas**
- Neighborhood Park Need Area (1/4 mi.)
 - Community Park Need Area (1 mi.)
- Boundaries, Water, & Infrastructure**
- Future Diversion Canal
 - Corporate Limits
 - Proposed Zone of Influence
 - Parish Boundary
 - Major Water Bodies
 - Streams
 - Railroads

BREC Dedicated CIP Budget	
Park Name	Budget
Avenue F	\$ 5,000
Beaver Creek	\$ 200,000
Church Street	\$ 50,000
Doyle's Bayou	\$ 365,000
Flanacher	\$1,950,000
Hunter Point	\$ 5,000
Ligon	\$ 50,000
Little Farms	\$ 50,000
Plank Road	\$ 225,000
New Community Park	\$2,410,000
Quarterhorse	\$ 50,000
Rita Street	\$ 45,000
Rollins Road	\$ 50,000
39th Street	\$ 35,000

Note: Future neighborhood parks must be provided concurrent with subdivision development, consistent with the standards of this plan.

0 0.45 0.9 1.8 Miles

"Honoring our heritage... Planning our future"

- ◆ Increased funding support is warranted for the ongoing maintenance and improvement of parks. A dedicated funding source is needed for ongoing park development and system expansion.
- ◆ During the horizon of this plan, a full-time position will be necessary to oversee recreational programs, park construction and maintenance, and trail system development. In the interim, this may be handled by forming a Parks Board that is supported by staff.

Park Classifications

The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) published the Recreation, Park, and Open Space Standards and Guidelines to establish criteria for the provision of parks and recreation facilities and open space. These standards serve as a guide for the ongoing development of the City's parks and recreation system. Given the desires expressed by residents and the rate of growth, continued development and enhancement will be necessary to meet the needs and expectations of the community.

While standards are useful, it is important that they "fit the community" given such considerations as participation trends, user characteristics, demographics, climate, natural environment, and other factors. Leisure and recreation values are unique in Zachary, meaning that the standards must be balanced by the input received from residents throughout the plan implementation process.

A variety of types and sizes of parks and recreation facilities and activities are recommended to satisfy the diverse interests of the population, to ensure adequate and equal opportunities for all persons, and to encourage use by all ages. The classifications of parks, their roles, and typical facilities and improvements follow.

Play lot

Play lots are intended for limited activity by immediately adjacent residents, such as those who are within apartment complexes and urban, densely populated subdivisions. There are no specific criteria to guide their development, although they should have facilities to meet the needs of children and their parents. The notable features that distinguish a play lot from a neighborhood park are its considerably smaller size, fewer and smaller-scaled facilities, and their location within dense residential settings.

Park and recreation opportunities promote the health of residents, provide activities for residents of all ages, and preserve natural environments. They also play a role in attracting visitors to the community, thus promoting local tourism and economic development.

Play lots are intended to provide a play area within a very short walking distance of residents within an apartment complex, manufactured home subdivision, or urban neighborhood. They are not intended to mitigate the need for nearby parks. Instead, their purpose is to supplement neighborhood parks, particularly in the development types described above.

Neighborhood Parks

Neighborhood parks provide facilities that conveniently accommodate use by surrounding neighborhoods – typically within a distance of four to eight blocks. Ease of access from neighborhoods, central location, and pedestrian/bicycle linkages are key considerations of nearby neighborhood parks. They should be designed to accommodate the needs of all ages and, therefore, should have a blend of passive and active facilities.

Neighborhood parks are intended to provide residents ample opportunities for passive (walking, picnicking, nature viewing, etc.) and semi-active (playground, open play fields, game tables, etc.) recreation activity. As displayed by the **Figure 6.1, Typical Neighborhood Park**, the designed level of activity is limited because of the size and location of these parks and the equipment and facilities available.

The size of neighborhood parks varies according to the availability of property, method and timing of acquisition, and intended use. One or two vacant lots or several acres may both adequately serve the needs of a neighborhood if they are evenly distributed and there are sufficient facilities available. National standards recommend a minimum neighborhood park size of five acres. Due to the intended purpose and use of neighborhood parks, their location and proximity to and within neighborhoods is more important than their size.

The minimum size of a neighborhood park should be five acres, with a standard of one acre per 1,000 residents. Recommended facilities and improvements include:

- ◆ Benches
- ◆ Picnic tables with shelters
- ◆ Barbecue pits/grills
- ◆ Sidewalks and/or a natural walking trail
- ◆ Shade trees and landscaping
- ◆ Drinking fountain(s)
- ◆ Security lighting
- ◆ Multi-purpose open play area and play courts
- ◆ Playground equipment and/or a playscape (up to 25 children)
- ◆ Perimeter fencing or landscaping
- ◆ Restrooms with on- or off-street parking
- ◆ Dog walking area
- ◆ Trash receptacles
- ◆ Curb cuts and crosswalks

Figure 6.1, Typical Neighborhood Park



Neighborhood parks should be within short walking distances (1/2 mile or less) for the residents of one or more neighborhoods, thereby encouraging use and promoting convenience, ease of access, and walking safety for neighborhood children. Whenever possible, they should be located away from busy arterial streets and should not require any busy street crossings for access from their constituent neighborhoods.

Zachary Youth Park



The signage provided at this community park creates a distinctive gateway welcoming users to this park. Other parks could benefit from similar enhancements.

Source: KKC Photo

Community Parks

Community parks serve the parks and recreation needs of an entire community. They are larger in size and include facilities and improvements for area-wide activities and assembly events, such as large picnic shelters, walking/jogging trails, athletic fields and courts, and other larger-scale activities. It is essential

that adequate off-street parking be provided, particularly for organized sporting events and tournaments. Community parks should be located adjacent and connected to a greenway to provide linear linkage to other areas of the community.

In Zachary, the community parks should serve as focal points for civic gatherings and organized recreational programs, special events, and sports league play. Further, they may also become major landmarks within the community; a symbol that enhances community identity and is beloved by residents.

National standards recommend a minimum community park size of 10 acres. Those with athletic field complexes for organized sports, though, may be as large as 40 or more acres, as shown in **Figure 6.2, Typical Community Park**. In acreage terms, the standard is five acres per 1,000 persons. Recommended facilities and improvements include:

Figure 6.2, Typical Community Park



Community parks should be centrally located for convenience to all residents. It should have direct access to a collector or arterial street in order to handle special event traffic while avoiding neighborhood disruption. Community parks should include adequate off-street parking. The "ideal" service radius of a community park is one mile. A community park located in or near a residential area usually serves a secondary role as a neighborhood park.

- ◆ Picnic tables with shelters
- ◆ Barbecue pits/grills
- ◆ Sidewalks and/or a natural walking trail
- ◆ Biking trails
- ◆ Shade trees and native landscaping
- ◆ Drinking fountains
- ◆ Security lighting
- ◆ Multi-purpose open play areas
- ◆ Multi-purpose courts
- ◆ Playground equipment and playscapes (up to 50 children)
- ◆ Bicycle racks
- ◆ Perimeter fencing or landscaping
- ◆ Street signs indicating "children at play"
- ◆ Benches
- ◆ Trash receptacles and enclosures
- ◆ Curb cuts and crosswalks
- ◆ Tennis courts

- ◆ Basketball courts
- ◆ Softball and little league fields with bleachers
- ◆ Soccer/football fields with goals and goal posts
- ◆ Field house
- ◆ Sand volleyball courts
- ◆ Swimming pool or spray park
- ◆ Covered pavilions
- ◆ Performance stage (optional)
- ◆ Restrooms and locker room
- ◆ Fencing for ball fields and athletic courts
- ◆ Concrete surface for a general play area
- ◆ Off-street parking

A comprehensive and integrated system of parks and recreational opportunities that respond to the needs and desires of local residents contribute to livable communities.

Facility Standards

As parks and recreational opportunities are evaluated for acquisition, development, or redevelopment, it is important for the City to have a standardized list of facilities and equipment desired for each type of park (as outlined in the preceding section) to assess the development feasibility of each site. There are important considerations in designing parks including the size, shape, and orientation of the site; pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular access and parking; adjoining land uses; development constraints, such as grades, drainage, and flooding; environmental impacts; and the anticipated uses of the park. In assessing the feasibility of a site, each is important.

Table 6.3 - Facility Development Standards

Classification	Use	Service Area	Desirable Size	Acres/1,000 Population	Desirable Site Characteristics
Playlot	Small areas intended primarily for the use of children (toddlers - age 9) containing play equipment, swings, slides, sandboxes, and benches.	Less than 1/4 mile radius.	1,000 square feet - 1 acre	0.25 - 0.50 acres	Within neighborhoods and close to apartments, townhouses, or housing for the elderly.
Neighborhood Park	Landscaped natural park of limited size primarily for passive recreational needs of all ages but with designated active areas. Provides scenic and aesthetic value including open lawn space, small picnic areas, nature walks, and areas for court games, if not provided nearby.	1/4 to 1/2 mile radius (Serves one or more neighborhoods).	3-5 acres	1-3 acres	Should be located in the center of a single larger or several smaller neighborhoods.
Community Park	A large natural and /or landscaped area to provide an escape from City congestion without traveling a large distance. Provides both intensive and passive uses. Typical facilities include swimming pool, picnic areas, paths, game courts, gardens, natural areas, pavilions, ample parking, and restrooms.	1 to 2 miles (serves large segments of the population)	10+ acres	3 - 5 acres	Designed to accommodate a large number of people and a wide variety of activities.

Source: Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines, National Recreation and Parks Association, 1995.

Displayed in **Table 6.3, Facility Development Standards**, are the standards for each classification of park, which may be used to determine the locations, size, and other characteristics of future parks.

Inventory

The park system provides a variety of recreational opportunities. The majority of parks are owned and maintained by BREC.

Table 6.4, Existing Parks

Park Name	Acreage	Status
Playlots		
Avenue F Park (BREC)	0.3	Developed
Hunter Point Park (BREC)	0.2	Developed
Sub-Total	0.5	
Neighborhood Parks		
Church St. Park (BREC)	7.1	Developed
Ligon Park (BREC)	2.7	Developed
Little Farms Park (BREC)	2.3	Developed
Rita Street Park (BREC)	12.9	Developed
Rollins Road Park (BREC)	10.5	Developed
39th Street Park (BREC)	12.0	Developed
Sub-Total	47.5	
Community Parks		
Flanacher Park (BREC)	175.0	Undeveloped
New Community Park (BREC)	43.0	Undeveloped
Zachary Youth Park (City)	33.8	Developed
Plank Road Park (BREC)	82.1	Developed
Quarterhorse Park (BREC)	21.9	Undeveloped
Sub-Total	355.8	
Special Use Areas and Facilities		
Doyle's Bayou Park BREC	97.0	Developed
Beaver Creek Golf Course BREC	200.0	Developed
Fennwood Hills Country Club	72.7	Developed
Copper Mill Golf Course	273.6	Developed
Sub-Total	643.3	
Total Park Acreage	1047.1	

The locations of the parks and recreation facilities are displayed in **Map 6.3, Parks Inventory**. A summary of these facilities is provided in **Table 6.4, Existing Parks**, which includes their size, classification, ownership, and improvement status. Descriptions of the individual parks follow.

Playlots

- ♦ **Avenue F:** Located near Avenue L, this playlot provides open space immediately north of Downtown within a residential neighborhood.
- ♦ **Hunter Point:** Owned and maintained by BREC, Hunter Point is a playlot located south of LA 64 and west of LA 19 within a neighborhood.

Community Parks

Zachary has five community parks totaling 355.8 acres. However, as indicated in **Table 6.4, Existing Parks**, three of the parks totaling 239.9 acres are not yet developed. Other than New Community Park, which adjoins Zachary Youth Park, the other two undeveloped community parks will serve the future needs of residents as their service areas develop. The timing of their development is reliant upon the event of development that occurs in proximity to these properties. Generally, they should be developed when 50 percent of their service areas are built out. The community parks are as follows:

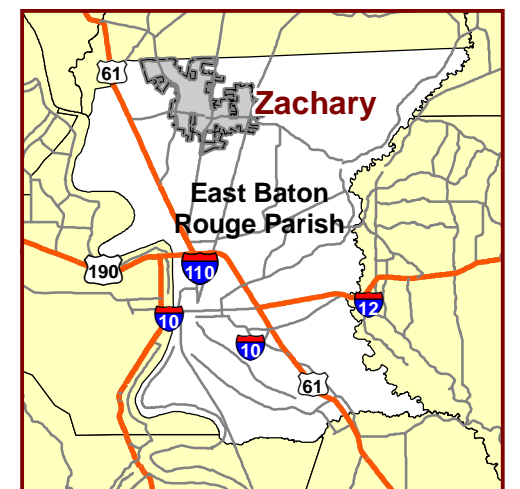
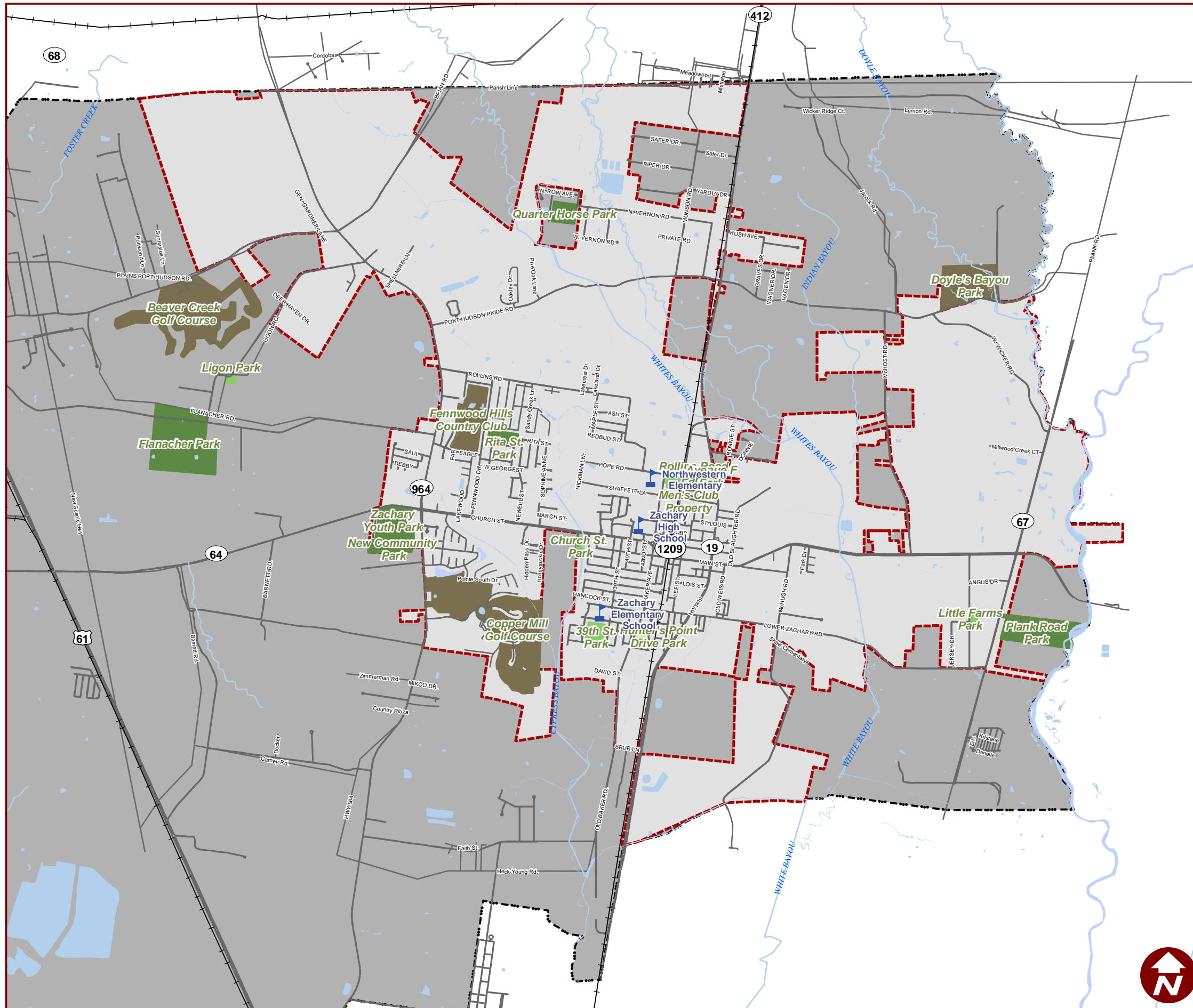
- ♦ **Flanacher:** This undeveloped park is the largest park near Zachary. It is located approximately

one mile west along Flanacher Road. With a dedicated budget of \$1,950,000, BREC plans to develop this park into a premiere recreational area for Zachary. Plans for this site envision a mix of active and passive activities (e.g., ball fields, soccer fields, nature trails, etc.), as well as a large conservation area.

- ♦ **New Community Park:** Proposed by BREC, this \$2.4 million project will expand Zachary Youth Park and allow for increased facilities and activities. The new park will extend opportunities for community-wide activities, as well as provide natural features.

Map 6.3 Parks Inventory

-  Mini Park
-  Neighborhood Park
-  Community Park
-  Special Use Areas and Facilities
-  Schools
-  Corporate Limits
-  Proposed Zone of Influence
-  Major Water Bodies
-  Streams
-  Railroads



"Honoring our heritage...
Planning our future"



- ◆ **Zachary Youth Park:** This park is the only one owned by the City. Therefore, it serves a primary recreational space for the community with nine baseball/softball fields. The park provides convenient access and parking. With the development of the adjacent New Community Park, this location will continue to serve as a primary source of outdoor recreation in the community.
- ◆ **Plank Road:** Plank Road Park is 82.1 acres located just outside the City limits (along LA 67) on the east side of Zachary. This park has three ball fields, an indoor recreation facility, and ample parking. With a working budget of \$225,000, this park provides recreational opportunities for the underserved east side of town. This site is in need of maintenance to make it a fully utilized site.
- ◆ **Quarterhorse:** This 21.9 acre undeveloped park is on the north side of town along N. Vernon Road. This space provides recreational opportunities for a relatively small portion of the population, but will play a larger role as the City develops northward.

Neighborhood Parks

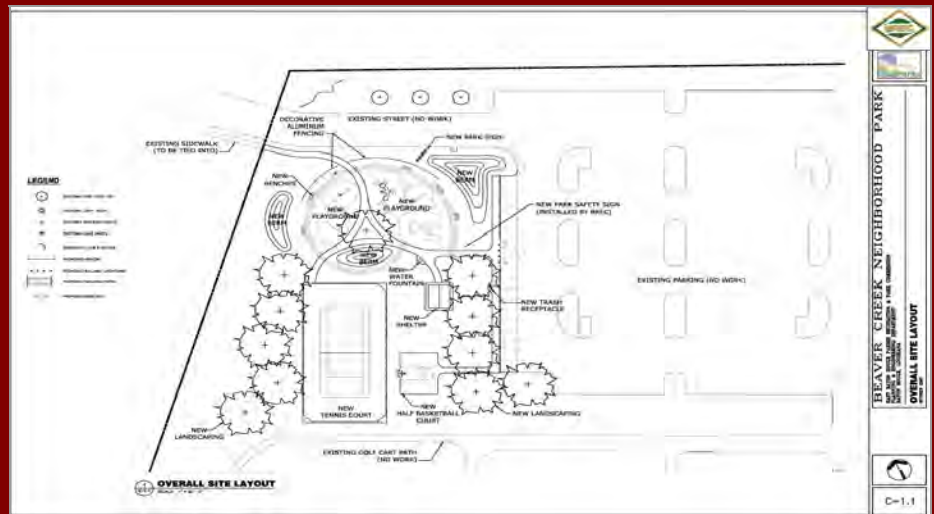
There are six neighborhood parks totaling 47.5 acres, as shown by *Map 6.1, Park Inventory*. The concentration is generally near Downtown, as well as the developed areas of the community. Descriptions of these parks include:

- ◆ **Church Street:** This 7.1-acre park is located along LA 64 just west of Downtown. With a relatively new skate park and baseball field, this park provides outdoor activities for residents.
- ◆ **Ligon:** This park is 2.7 acres and located outside the City limits to the west. It has one ball field, restrooms, play equipment, and parking.
- ◆ **Little Farms:** This park is 2.3 acres and located on the east side of Zachary.
- ◆ **Rita Street:** Located near the Fennwood Hills Country Club, this park provides two ball fields and other recreation opportunities. While there is available parking, there are accessibility issues due to its location.
- ◆ **Rollins Road:** Located just north of Downtown, this park is generally an open area with one ball field.
- ◆ **39th Street:** Located near the corner of Hemlock and 39th Street, this park includes a ball field and tennis courts. Its location and accessibility to the surrounding community are issues to be resolved.

Special Use Areas and Facilities

- ◆ **Doyle's Bayou:** Located just outside the City limits on the northeast corner of Zachary, this special use park is 97 acres and was originally developed as soccer fields. Recent plans by BREC show this space being converted to a natural conservation area. The shortage of adequate soccer fields and the loss of these fields warrants a plan for their replacement.
- ◆ **Beaver Creek Golf Course and Future Neighborhood Park:** Located outside of the City limits, this golf course is owned and operated by BREC. Plans for the development of this space call for a new neighborhood park (as reflected in **Figure 6.3, Beaver Creek Neighborhood Park Site Plan**). With a \$200,000 budget for this site, this is a focus of BREC's improvement priorities.

Figure 6.3, Beaver Creek Neighborhood Park Site Plan



Source: BREC website: www.brec.org

- ◆ **Fennwood Hills Country Club:** This private course is located on the west side near Fennwood and Worsham Dr. and is surrounded by a residential community.
- ◆ **Copper Mills Golf Course:** This private golf community is the largest of the special use facilities. It, too, is nestled within a master planned community.

Trails and Greenways

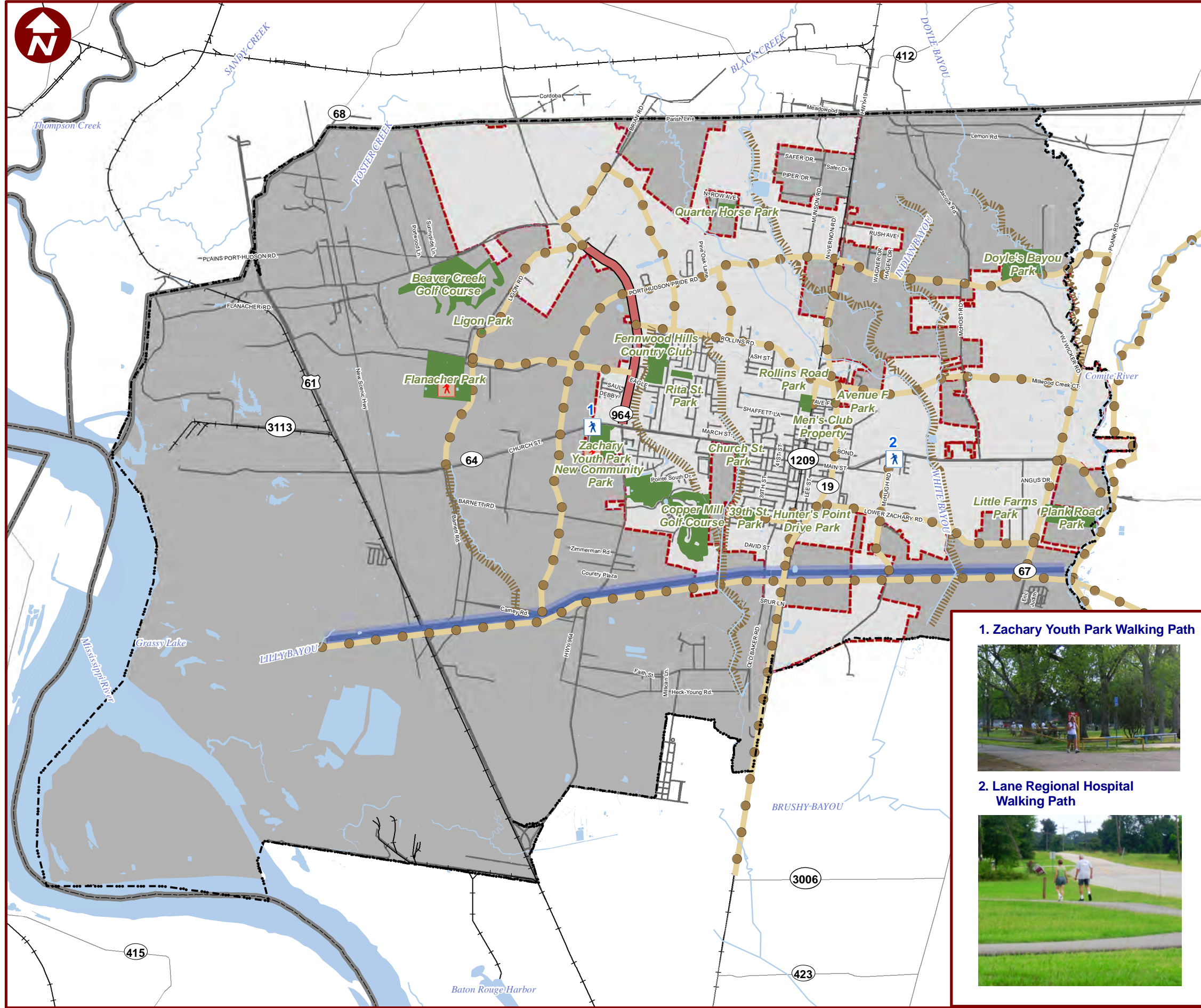
Currently, there are few trails in Zachary. Other than a sidewalk along LA 964, the Zachary Youth Park walking path, and the Lane Regional Hospital walking path, there are no other trail segments. However, given the number of bayous and drainage canals, there are abundant opportunities for developing a system. This would create important linkages between neighborhoods, parks, and schools, while also creating new sources of recreation for the community. A conceptual community-wide trail system is illustrated on **Map 6.4, Proposed Trail Network**. These proposed trails are also included in BREC's "Capital Areas Pathway Project."

Joint Use of School Facilities

School playgrounds, athletic fields, and courts contribute to the community's recreational inventory, which helps to meet the local demands. If open and fully accessible to the public, they enhance the availability and service area coverage of neighborhood parks within the City. Sharing these public resources also facilitates cost efficiency and minimizes duplication of public areas and facilities. Therefore, it is recommended that the City, school district, and other local entities and agencies formalize reciprocal agreements for jointly purchasing, developing, and maintaining parks, open spaces, and indoor facilities.

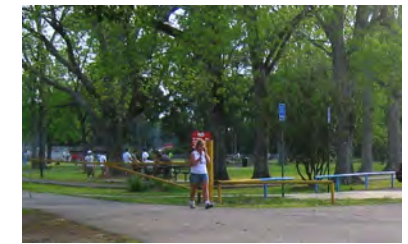


Map 6.4 Proposed Trail Network

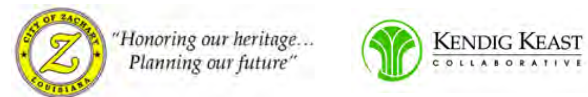
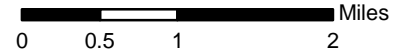
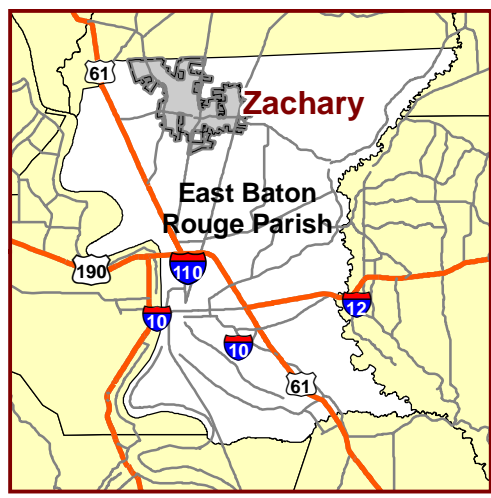


- Existing Trails & Parks**
- Existing Walking Trails
 - Parks
- Future Trails**
- Proposed Trails
 - Potential Path Improvements
 - Nature Trails
 - Proposed Multi-Use Trail
- Boundaries, Water, & Infrastructure**
- Future Diversion Canal
 - Corporate Limits
 - Proposed Zone of Influence
 - East Baton Rouge Parish Boundary
 - Major Water Bodies
 - Streams
 - Railroads

1. Zachary Youth Park Walking Path



2. Lane Regional Hospital Walking Path



Chapter Seven

Economic Development

Reaching a consensus for a common understanding of economic development principles is a critical first step in creating attainable goals and strategies for the City of Zachary. One standard for local economic development is the acknowledgement of the importance for collaboration and partnership. This is of particular significance in a suburban market like Zachary, whose local economic conditions are largely a result of wider metropolitan and regional trends. For example, the likely emergence of Baton Rouge as the leading regional economic growth center for the central Gulf Coast will dramatically increase the probability that ongoing development pressures in Zachary will continue or increase. The effectiveness of economic development policy decisions and efforts in Zachary should, therefore, be judged by how the community positions itself within the greater regional economy. Policy decisions will then generate a positive response from private investors to diversify the tax base and increase job opportunities, while at the same time promoting community character and image, talent attraction and development, and Zachary's overall long-term economic sustainability.

Over the long-term, Baton Rouge will likely emerge as the leading economic growth center for the central Gulf Coast. As result, Zachary can expect growth pressures to continue.

Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to provide the City guidance for the pursuit of strategic opportunities leading to sustainable economic vitality, as well as a diversified tax base, over the next several years. Some issues, however, that have an indirect impact – but lie beyond the direct responsibility of the City – are also raised in this chapter. In other words, the impact of decisions made outside the community may have both negative and positive effects on not only Zachary's economic development goals, but also its quality of life and community character. One such example is the potential placement of a new Interstate 10 bypass within close proximity of the community. A decision in favor of an alignment between Zachary and Baker would have enormous consequences on the long-term development of the community. The local community's response to this alignment would strongly influence Zachary's business recruitment prospects and development pattern. Similarly, many of Zachary's business recruitment and target industry prospects will largely be the result of efforts by the Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce or other state-wide and regional economic development organizations. This is all to say that the City of Zachary, first and foremost, should develop strong working relationships with local and regional partners in both the public and private sectors to ensure that the community can enlist the support of allies in achieving its overall economic development goals.

This chapter is divided into three sections:

- ◆ Issues and opportunities to leverage Zachary's competitive advantages for diversifying its tax base and creating employment opportunities for its citizens.
- ◆ Assessment of trends affecting economic development opportunities in Zachary; and

- ◆ Presentation of target sectors for Zachary, including a definition for each and the rationale for its selection.

Issues and Opportunities

The following goals and recommended actions were formulated to specifically address the key economic challenges and opportunities in Zachary, which were identified through the preceding, local input, and the consultant's expertise. Meeting these economic development goals will reposition Zachary as the northern anchor for the Baton Rouge region, setting it on a course for long-term economic growth, vitality, and a high quality of life.

Promoting desired businesses and maximizing strategic opportunities requires a proactive, systematic, and coordinated economic development program.

Promoting the Importance of Economic Development

Despite strong population growth trends in the Zachary area since 2000, the development of the community's business sector has lagged. This situation is not unique and is, in fact, a recognized development pattern common to rapidly growing suburban communities throughout the country. If Zachary continues to follow this suburban development pattern, the next stage in the City's growth will result in an influx of national retail and restaurant chains. Already, the City has seen an initial wave with the arrival of Chili's and Home Depot. Zachary's growth, however, has been led primarily by the continued development of new subdivisions. While chains contribute greatly to the local tax base, suburban "big box" development runs counter to the vision proposed by local residents. Managing these conflicting trends and desires will be of the utmost importance if Zachary is to become the city that residents envision: a freestanding community with a balanced local economy.

While cities can utilize a number of tools to influence development patterns (e.g., infrastructure improvements, zoning, etc.), promoting desired businesses and maximizing strategic opportunities requires a proactive, systematic, and coordinated economic development program. The key for Zachary's long-term success will be balancing the desires of local residents to maintain its community character, while also promoting new businesses that will enhance and diversify the tax base to fund needed infrastructure improvements and municipal services.

GOALS

- ▶ Develop a professional economic development program
- ▶ Establish strong working partnerships with local and regional allies to promote economic development
- ▶ Become a recognized leader in economic development within the region

Recommendations

1. Consider various options for enhancing and expanding economic development efforts. Currently, the City relies largely on its Chamber and the regional Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce. The Zachary Chamber is presently operating under severe budgetary constraints and, therefore, has insufficient resources to conduct a high quality, full-service, and professional economic development program. The Baton Rouge Area Chamber, on the other hand, is a well-established program whose mission is to serve the entire parish. This regional mission, however, inevitably limits its degree of focus on Zachary and the attention the community needs for its economic development efforts. This

is not to say that Zachary should discontinue its existing relationship with the regional Chamber. Only the Baton Rouge Chamber has the name recognition and resources to properly promote economic development to a wide, national audience. Zachary should expand on its relationship with the Baton Rouge Chamber. At the same time, the community should consider establishing a local program to act as a partner with the regional Chamber and promote local economic development interests. Without a local program, the City will face considerable difficulties in completing many of the recommendations of this chapter. The community has at least three options for enhancing local efforts: 1) provide funding for the Baton Rouge Chamber to establish an office in Zachary; 2) establish an in-house economic development staff position within the City; or 3) increase funding to the Zachary Chamber to enable it to hire a certified economic development officer and perform necessary functions.

2. Develop a formal incentives policy that is carefully crafted in a transparent manner to ensure net fiscal, economic, and social benefits to Zachary taxpayers. The following principles should be considered: 1) the targeted investment would not occur without the incentive; and 2) the investment should generate new economic activity instead of displacing existing businesses. When creating an incentives deal for a particular prospect, the following items should be included: 1) a statement demonstrating how the proposed incentive relates to broader economic development strategies; 2) a formal cost/benefit estimate weighing the estimated direct/indirect benefits (e.g., tax base enhancement, increase in retail sales, increase in wage rates, etc.) to the incentive costs (e.g., tax abatements, training subsidies, infrastructure improvements, etc.) associated with a particular deal; and 3) a “clawback” agreement that guarantees the recovery of incentives funds if the firm makes fewer hires or investment expenditures are less than promised.
3. Strengthen Zachary’s leadership base and deepen the business community’s involvement in economic development. Promoting and retaining leadership is a long-term, but invaluable, component to economic development. Without committed leaders, economic development practitioners often find themselves lacking the necessary public and political support to undertake needed initiatives. Local leaders can assist in advocating for the improvement of a local business climate and can also be effective in marketing Zachary in the course of their business-related interactions. One method for raising awareness of economic development issues and building support among Zachary’s leadership and citizenry is through the establishment of an annual event to keep business leaders and citizens informed of specific economic opportunities and challenges. This event could include information regarding key economic trends and business climate issues (e.g., taxation, initiatives, business announcements, etc.), serve as a rally to build support for specific initiatives, and provide a forum for celebrating successes.
4. Enhance and expand leadership training programs and networking opportunities, especially those that help identify and prepare young professional adults for future positions of leadership. This will be increasingly important as the community continues to draw young families to the City. Initiating young professionals early about the City’s direction and goals and increasing their involvement in the community will result in greater support and understanding of Zachary’s long-term economic development goals.

Without committed leaders, economic development practitioners often find themselves lacking the necessary public and private support to undertake needed initiatives.

Stimulating Activity in Downtown

The redevelopment and revitalization of Downtown should be considered one of the best opportunities to retain and enhance identity as a distinct community within the rapidly sprawling northern East Baton Rouge Parish. By committing to a more compact urban form, Zachary can influence development patterns toward the City's center and away from unincorporated areas surrounding the community. At the same time, focusing economic activity in the Downtown area will also bring a unique opportunity to develop a stronger sense of place. This goal also has clear economic development value. The value this brings to economic development is that it clearly communicates to both businesses and investors that the City is devoted to excellence.

The City should encourage the establishment of a new vision for its historic area that embraces the following principles: 1) redeveloping underutilized and vacant properties and buildings; 2) upgrading the overall appearance of the Downtown area; 3) protecting the significant private and public investments that have already occurred in the Downtown area over the years; 4) increasing retail, dining, entertainment, housing, and professional office options; and 5) and assuring that the Downtown's position as a primary hub for civic life will be maintained and enhanced.

GOALS

- ▶ Develop a vision for Downtown as the established hub for civic, social, and economic life
- ▶ Develop a retail recruitment strategy for Downtown
- ▶ Redevelop strategic intersections and sites throughout Downtown and the surrounding area
- ▶ Promote a Downtown location for any proposed new transit facilities

Recommendations

1. Establish a Downtown Zachary Task Force (comprised of the Zachary Chamber, major Downtown property owners, Downtown businesses, local public officials, City staff, and other local allies). The purpose of the Task Force should be to establish a vision for Downtown as a viable economic center for the City and surrounding area, identify potential funding sources for revitalization efforts, and promote public and private investment in the Downtown area. Proposed strategies for raising awareness of Downtown include:
 - a. Developing a retail strategy to assist existing businesses and to promote the attraction of new retail establishments in Downtown. Consideration should be given to hiring a Downtown retail consultant to assist in crafting this strategy.
 - b. Assisting in establishing new special events and supporting existing ones, such as ZFest, to bring activity Downtown (e.g. outdoor festivals, live music, outdoor movies, farmers market, craft fairs, etc.).
 - c. Promoting the redevelopment of strategic sites and key intersections in and around the Downtown area. The Task Force and key allies should work with both public and private property owners to identify, inventory, and prioritize sites at highly visible or strategic locations suitable for redevelopment (e.g., the intersection of LA 19 and LA 64).
 - d. Creating an information packet, including an inventory of priority sites, to provide to commercial brokers, retail site consultants, and franchises seeking locations. Working with the Zachary Chamber and the City to develop marketing materials that promote Downtown as a destination for specialty retail and dining. These materials should be distributed locally and regionally to

- both developers and franchise owners seeking a new location in the Zachary area. Include redevelopment opportunity sites in all marketing materials for Zachary.
- e. Over the long term, encouraging the establishment of a Downtown market space in either an existing or new building to assist local start-up retailers, locally made arts and crafts dealers, and locally grown agricultural products.
2. Consideration should be given to the establishment of a tax increment finance district for Downtown Zachary to develop a mechanism for increasing funding of public improvements in Downtown and making it more attractive to private investors.
 3. Over the long term, consider the development of a joint-use facility or complex occupied by Zachary public sector entities and strategic partners (e.g., new city hall, police station, parish annex office, Zachary Community Schools, etc.) in Downtown. As the community and surrounding area continue to grow, the City, as well as other public sectors entities, will inevitably need to increase staff and space beyond their current uses. The development of a municipal complex would provide a unique opportunity to anchor the Downtown with a significant employment center. This, in turn, would have the effect of intensifying pedestrian traffic in and around the facility and generating increased demand for retail and dining options on adjacent properties. City-owned sites in Downtown should be at the top of the list for consideration.
 4. Promote the development of a light rail or commuter rail station in Downtown Zachary. While it would not be feasible to lead the development of a regional commuter transit system, the City should be ready to respond positively as a willing partner if such a system were to be developed within the Baton Rouge region. Two recent planning documents for Baton Rouge cite the need for the development of such a system. 1) Plan Baton Rouge (2004), a program of the Center for Planning Excellence, cites the potential for the development of a light rail station in Zachary. 2) The Baton Rouge Metropolitan Area Transportation Plan Update (2006) states that “the long range vision for CATS to develop into a regional transportation authority that will operate bus, busways, light rail, park-and-ride facilities, van pools, demand response, and special programs is well on tract.” Nationally, the location of light rail stations are increasingly being viewed as a catalyst for the development of villages in both urban and suburban real estate markets.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District:

TIFs are tools that use future gains in taxes to finance the public improvements in targeted zones. When the public improvement is completed, there is an assumed increase in the value of surrounding real estate and often new investment (new or rehabilitated buildings, for example). This increased site value and investment creates more taxable property, which increases tax revenues, which are the “tax increment.” TIFs dedicate that increased revenue to finance debt issued to pay for the project. TIFs are generally designed to channel funding toward improvements in distressed or underdeveloped areas where development would not otherwise occur.

Retaining and Expanding Local Business

Many judge industrial recruitment as the most important aspect of economic development. However, additional opportunities for cultivating economic growth and vitality can lie closer to home. “Economic gardening” is the most overlooked – but often most important – economic development activity. In other words, ensuring the continued prosperity and survival of local employers is crucial to sustaining a healthy economy.

An awareness of existing local businesses’ needs for remaining competitive in their respective industries is essential. In other words, Zachary and the area’s leadership must remain vigilant and responsive to the various issues that affect the profitability and competitiveness of existing employers. Therefore, the City and its economic development partners should build awareness of the needs that existing employers

have and assist to develop policies and mechanisms to support local business and industry. Existing local companies are, by far, the largest and most reliable source for creating new jobs. The fact that the area has recently experienced the shutdown of one major industrial employer only heightens the importance for area economic development interests in understanding how local issues affect the competitiveness of area employers.

At the same time, leveraging existing resources among the local business community – including innovation, knowledge, research, finances, and business and social networks – and matching those resources with opportunities should not be overlooked. The presence of the major employers in the area, as well as the community's proximity to Baton Rouge, should be treated as unique and primary assets for fostering and enhancing a culture of entrepreneurship.

GOALS

- ▶ Support the retention and expansion of existing businesses
- ▶ Encourage entrepreneurship and small business creation
- ▶ Develop policies and programs in support of local business

Recommendations

1. Establish a formal business retention and expansion program fortified with clear policies and activities to support local employers. Activities should include, at a minimum:
 - a. Maintain an inventory of existing business to 1) ensure an understanding of types of businesses in the community and 2) keep tabs on expansions and layoffs.
 - b. Call on existing employers on a periodic basis to 1) achieve a better understanding of their ongoing challenges and 2) uncover potential opportunities for local expansions.
 - c. Act as a liaison between area workforce development providers and local businesses to ensure their awareness of area resources and communicate the needs of area employers to workforce development providers.
 - d. Work with area taxing jurisdictions to establish formal incentives policies targeted toward local businesses, as well as outside prospects.
 - e. Make sure that local businesses and industries remain aware of any technical and financial assistance programs that are available.
2. Establish an entrepreneurship program to facilitate local business start-up activity. One way for jumpstarting this effort would be the development of an Entrepreneur's Forum where individuals can network and discuss key issues relevant to their efforts. This forum should be lead by the Zachary Chamber with assistance from the local Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and meet with current and potential entrepreneurs in the area to better understand issues affecting their business decisions and provide networking opportunities for area professionals and emerging entrepreneurs. The Chamber should consider itself as an advocate for local entrepreneurs and act as a liaison between them and area governments by facilitating in the provision of local government assistance and helping address issues and challenges. The Chamber is also encouraged to consider sponsoring an annual awards program for area entrepreneurs and small businesses for the most innovative and creative concepts and products.

Leveraging and Expanding Educational and Workforce Development Assets

The importance of educational institutions and workforce training resources cannot be overstated. Employers must be assured access to trainable workers. At the same time, young adults, families with children, and even retirees are all drawn to locations that offer access to educational opportunities. As a result, it is imperative that the City and area partners remain supportive of Zachary Community Schools.

Area leaders should continue to strive for excellence in education, as well as workforce training programs, to meet long-term economic development goals. This is especially important if Zachary is to emerge as a business anchor for the northern Baton Rouge region. For this to be achieved, Zachary must be an attractive destination for regional talent, which would help the area retain existing employers and attract new industry.

GOALS

- ▶ Solidify and promote Zachary's status as a community that offers excellence in public education
- ▶ Establish workforce development and other training programs to meet the needs of existing area employers
- ▶ Position Zachary as a site for a future community college campus

Recommendations

1. Continue to support and promote excellence in the public schools by coordinating City services and infrastructure in support of school facility expansions. In addition, the City and Chamber should continue to promote Zachary's public schools as part of the community's overall economic development marketing efforts. Prior to doing this, the City and Chamber should meet with area school officials to establish a coordinated marketing message, as well as offer assistance in the creation of new marketing materials for Zachary Community Schools.
2. Assist in the facilitation of an annual Zachary Workforce Development Summit to: 1) better understand the labor force availability, talent assets, and training capabilities available for potential employers; and 2) maintain and solidify existing cooperative relationships between Louisiana Workforce Commission, Baton Rouge Area Chamber, Zachary Chamber, the school district, Baton Rouge Community College, and the business community. The primary purpose for this summit is to ensure that area businesses are made aware of any potential workforce development incentives (i.e., customized training incentives, tuition reimbursable tax credits, etc.) that are available to Louisiana businesses and that area training programs continue to match business needs in Zachary.
3. Encourage Zachary Community Schools and the Baton Rouge Community College to consider supporting the establishment of new or the expansion of existing internship/apprenticeship programs (if a demonstrated need is determined through a workforce development conference) that aid in the placement of vocational/technology students with area employers.
4. Assist in the promotion and establishment of a branch campus of Baton Rouge Community College. Specific training and educational programs should be closely considered at the proposed branch, including nursing programs in conjunction with Lane Memorial Hospital, as well as other workforce development training programs. It is recommended the City open a dialogue with potential partners, including Baton Rouge Community College, Georgia Pacific, ExxonMobil, Zachary Community Schools, and Lane Memorial Hospital, to gauge their interest in collaboratively supporting the establishment of a branch campus in Zachary. The City and supporting businesses, however, should recognize that the establishment of a full-fledged branch campus may require a sustained, long-term

effort. In the interim, consideration should be given to identifying an underutilized building to serve as a potential workforce training site.

Providing Adequate Sites and Infrastructure

Zachary is in an enviable position of being “in the path of growth” of one the largest and fastest growing metropolitan regions along the Central Gulf Coast. To this point, however, a majority of Zachary’s and the area’s growth has been limited to residential development. While the area is fortunate to be a prime location for new neighborhoods, providing services to support residential needs is a difficult proposition for communities with a limited tax base. In addition, balancing the need for commercial sites with the desire of residents to protect their investments from incompatible uses is also a challenge.

Zachary is well-positioned to become the northern business anchor of the Baton Rouge MSA.

Already Zachary is beginning to reap the rewards of its location and strong population growth. Evidence for this includes the recent and ongoing Lane Memorial expansions, as well as the potential for a new mixed-use development on the western fringes of the City. Clearly, Zachary is well-positioned to become the northern business anchor of the Baton Rouge MSA.

These significant developments alone, however, will not be sufficient to carry out that vision. One of the most critical efforts will be to ensure that adequate sites for business and industrial development are available in the face of rapidly increasing residential growth. Developing a mechanism for identifying and retaining strategic sites will help Zachary develop a balanced, sustainable economy and tax base. Therefore, the City must determine the feasibility of developing a modern business park to stimulate employment growth. In addition, the City should consider working with East Baton Rouge Parish and the Baton Rouge Area Chamber to identify and promote additional sites outside the City. Developing a business park, however, can be a costly venture. As a result, the City must carefully weigh various options for the timing and location of a business park. Entering into a public/private partnership with a developer presents a potential option for lowering the financial burden on local tax payers.

GOALS

- ▶ Develop a modern, fully serviced business park to promote the creation of primary job opportunities
- ▶ Develop a collaborative, working relationship with the Baton Rouge Area Chamber and East Baton Rouge Parish to promote other sites for private development within the area

Recommendations

1. The City should play an active role in the development of a business park within its jurisdiction or zone of influence. One means for accomplishing this would be the development of City-owned sites for new and/or expanding businesses in Zachary. It is recommended that a Business and Industrial Sites Task Force be established and comprised of relevant City officials and staff, area business leaders, the Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce, property owners, local residents, and neighborhood associations to gauge and build support for the need for new business sites in Zachary. The Task Force should assist in determining the desirability and feasibility of the various options for the development of business sites with consideration for the growth and development policies of this plan and management and ownership of the site(s) (i.e., City-owned and developed, a public-private partnership, privately developed and managed, etc.). Once these issues have been resolved, the Task

Force should identify appropriate sites for the development of a new business park in Zachary. This evaluation process should include, at a minimum, infrastructure availability at each site, including electricity, natural gas, water/wastewater, road, and telecommunications.

2. Zachary should open a dialogue with the Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce and East Baton Rouge Parish to develop a working relationship and understanding for the appropriate development of business and industrial sites beyond the City limits. This is strongly encouraged for two primary reasons. 1) A recent study entitled “Pursuing Excellence in Business Development,” commissioned for the Baton Rouge Area Chamber, found that a critical shortage of suitable business sites exists in the Parish. Specifically, the report stated “East Baton Rouge Parish must invest in new product, and specifically greenfield site development and industrial parks with all infrastructure for potential corporate investment.” This opinion was echoed in conversations with the Baton Rouge Area Chamber and highlights the strategic importance of available land in the Zachary area, specifically sites along U.S. 61. The vitality of such sites will directly influence the economic conditions in Zachary and employment opportunities for its citizens. 2) The second reason that the City should be involved in these decisions is to ensure that local preferences are taken into consideration. In other words, the City should insert its involvement to demonstrate the community is a reliable economic development partner and as a defensive measure to protect its quality of life and community character.

Raising an Awareness of Opportunities

As with all successful marketing, it is critical to identify target audiences and focus efforts on them. The primary target audiences for Zachary should be: 1) local and regional business leaders who can influence business location and other investment decisions; 2) key allies, such as state and regional economic development organizations; 3) members of the region’s various media; and 4) decision makers at companies within the target industries.

The most important target audience should be the people and businesses who are already invested (either financially or emotionally) in the community. They are also who represent Zachary on a daily basis in their business and personal interactions –regionally, nationally, and internationally. A sustained internal marketing campaign should be undertaken to generate and promote a positive image of Zachary. Making sure that existing residents and local business leaders have a positive image of the community is critical to the success of any external campaign as these are the people who can best tell the “Zachary story” to the outside world.

Zachary must set itself apart from the competition throughout the region. The most effective marketing strategies are those that promote specific initiatives and opportunities. In other words, the various target audiences must be swayed by the message that their interests can be maximized by investing social and economic capital in Zachary. Specific initiatives or projects that could be considered for highlighting include: redevelopment opportunities in Downtown; properties along U.S. 61; and a potential future business park.

GOALS

- ▶ Position Zachary as the anchor for the northern Baton Rouge region
- ▶ Obtain support for economic development among Zachary’s residents and leadership
- ▶ Heighten awareness of Zachary throughout Louisiana as an excellent business location with a high quality of life

Recommendations

1. Build consensus for a primary theme/message for marketing Zachary. Marketing themes and messages should be intrinsically linked to the vision the community has adopted. This Plan recommends the following economic development vision statement: *Zachary will be the northern anchor of the Baton Rouge region, providing opportunities for excellence in living, education, healthcare, business, shopping, and recreation.* If the City and its economic development allies determine this is a suitable economic development vision, it is recommended that consideration be given to the development of a branding/image theme that supports this vision statement and promotes Zachary and the surrounding area's key economic development assets and amenities. Once an economic development theme/message has been chosen, it should be incorporated within current and future marketing materials for the City and Chamber.
2. The City and Chamber should focus their marketing efforts on promoting and enhancing Zachary's image, primarily in the Baton Rouge area. Assets such as the school district, proximity to Baton Rouge, existing area businesses, Downtown Zachary, and distinct development opportunities should be promoted. The primary goal for these marketing efforts is to raise awareness of Zachary as a community focused on high-quality developments that offers a favorable business climate. While perceptions of Zachary in the Baton Rouge region are largely positive, the prevailing image appears to be that the community is somewhat isolated and "out-of-the-way." Marketing efforts should be devoted to altering this regional perception.
3. The City and its target sector marketing efforts should be closely coordinated with the efforts of the Baton Rouge Area Chamber of Commerce. This recommendation is the result of both pragmatic and strategic decisions. Successful national target sector marketing requires a significant budget and is often aided by established name recognition. While Zachary is known in the region for its excellent schools, awareness of the community outside the State is low. Overcoming this lack of awareness would be too costly and time consuming for the City to accomplish. This makes sense from a strategic perspective in that the City's long-term success will largely be the result of external influences from Baton Rouge. In other words, Zachary's economic development successes hinge on the achievements of regional economic development efforts. Establishing a reputation as a reliable partner in regional economic development will be essential for Zachary in diversifying its economy through quality developments and higher-wage businesses.

Overview of Conditions

Zachary has historically been viewed as a rural community with a high quality of life. At the same time, the presence of major industrial employers in the northern parish, such as Georgia Pacific and ExxonMobil, has provided job opportunities for local residents. Its image as a small, isolated community lying on the fringes of a larger metropolitan area is, however, no longer the case. Already, the community

Protecting Zachary's quality of life, promoting the prosperity of its citizens, and diversifying the tax base will be the community's greatest challenges in the coming years.

is experiencing intensifying suburbanization pressures as new developments spread north. Zachary's high-quality public schools and its proximity to Baton Rouge have contributed considerably to its attractiveness to new residents. An assessment of the region's economic and demographic trends reveals that the Baton Rouge metropolitan area is well-positioned over the long-term to become the leading economic

growth center in the State. Given an expanding area-wide recognition of Zachary's quality of life attributes, it is likely that the community will experience continued growth.

Zachary's political and business leadership must recognize that the City lies directly in the path of growth – bringing with it both great opportunities and challenges. Future expansions in retail and housing are obvious opportunities. Ongoing and potential infrastructure improvements, such as the new Audubon Bridge and the I-10 loop, will continue to present opportunities, as well as challenges. Protecting its quality of life, promoting the prosperity of its citizens, and diversifying the tax base will be the greatest challenges in the coming years. In other words, balancing business expansion and attraction opportunities, a need for a diversified and sustainable tax base, and the desire for an enhanced quality of life will determine the success of Zachary's long-term economic development efforts.

Recommended Policies

Economic development goals, strategies, and actions must be driven by a clear vision. While conceptually this makes sense, the more practical value of a vision is in directing community resources. As a result, successful vision statements are bold and provide clear direction for economic development efforts and can be supported by realistic goals and strategies. The following vision achieves these objectives:

Zachary will be the northern anchor of the Baton Rouge region, providing opportunities for excellence in living, education, healthcare, business, shopping, and recreation.

This statement presents a clear focus for Zachary's economic development efforts: diversifying the tax base, while at the same time continuing to support and enhance the area's already strong quality of life amenities. Due to its strategic location, Zachary can also reposition itself as an emerging center for activity on the northern side of the Baton Rouge region.

This vision, however, can only be fulfilled if appropriate and realistic goals and strategies are established. Diversifying the tax base must continue to be a principle goal for long-term economic sustainability due to the ongoing need to fund important infrastructure improvements and provide critical public services. Achieving this goal will require economic development efforts that help shift the burden of property taxes from the homeowner to a more balanced tax base with greater contributions from business and industrial enterprises. At the same time, Zachary cannot afford to lose focus of the qualities that have made it so desirable for both long-term residents and newcomers: quality neighborhood environments served by exceptional public schools.

This chapter provides an array of strategies for enhancing the business climate and diversifying the tax base. It includes both traditional and non-traditional recommendations with a view toward establishing an environment that fosters long-term economic sustainability and vitality. Each strategy is coupled with the objective of improving Zachary's long-term economic vitality and livability. Finally, this chapter is integrated with the rest of the plan by highlighting the importance of growth management and preserving community character.

The following goals will support the economic development vision, provide a strong framework for strategies and actions, and reflect the desire of its citizens to enhance the community's quality of life:

- ◆ Promoting the importance of economic development
- ◆ Stimulating activity in Downtown
- ◆ Retaining and expanding local business
- ◆ Leveraging local and regional educational and workforce development assets

- ◆ Providing adequate sites and infrastructure
- ◆ Raising an awareness of opportunities

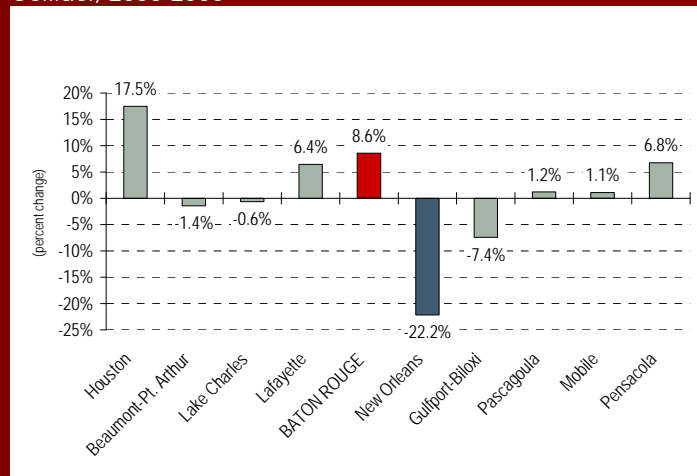
The following target sectors were determined to represent the best (both long- and short-term) opportunities for expanding business within Zachary and the surrounding area:

- ◆ Healthcare Services
- ◆ Retail and Leisure
- ◆ Professional Services
- ◆ Machinery/Specialty Machining
- ◆ Advanced Materials

Assessment: Demographic and Economic Trends

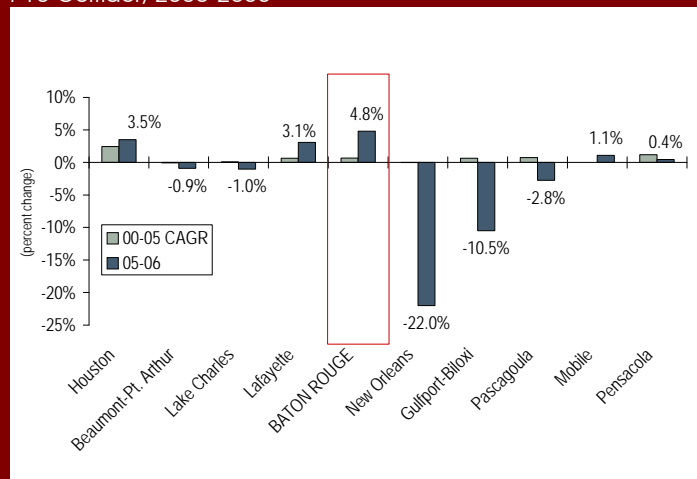
To understand the opportunities available, an assessment of the area’s demographic and economic trends was conducted. The purpose of the assessment was to identify Zachary’s unique economic strengths and

Figure 7.1, Population Change in Metro Areas along I-10 Corridor, 2000-2006



Source: U.S. Census

Figure 7.2, Population Comparison between Metro Areas along I-10 Corridor, 2000-2006



Source: U.S. Census

weaknesses in the context of the regional and national economies. The assessment team relies on the most current and accurate data sources (proprietary and public) covering these attributes that most clearly demonstrate Zachary’s recent economic performance in relation to the broader region. This quantitative analysis includes a review of existing economic and demographic data, such as population and employment growth and distribution, and labor conditions in Zachary, East Baton Rouge Parish, and the surrounding metropolitan region, which was supplemented by the following activities to form the recommendations:

- ◆ Tours of Zachary area sites to better understand the community’s economic development product from a real estate standpoint, and
- ◆ Focus group meetings and interviews with area residents, business leaders, and economic development experts to help establish priorities for appropriate goals and objectives.

Regional Population

Trends

The last few years have brought a dramatic shift in the central Gulf Coast region’s population (defined here as the I-10 corridor from Houston to Pensacola). From 2000 to 2006, the region’s largest metropolitan statistical area (MSA), Houston, experienced a 17.5 percent population increase,

while the second largest, New Orleans, saw a dramatic 22.2 percent decrease. At the same time, the Baton Rouge MSA welcomed an 8.6 percent population growth rate as displayed in **Figure 7.1, Population Change in Metro Areas along I-10 Corridor, 2000-2006**. These population shifts are undoubtedly related to the effects of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, but underlying regional trends had already influenced growth patterns throughout the central Gulf Coast region. **Figure 7.2, Population Comparison between Metro Areas along I-10 Corridor, 2000-2006**, indicates that only the Houston MSA was experiencing at least moderate population growth from 2000 to 2005 with a 2.5 percent compounded annual growth rate (CAGR). The Baton Rouge and Pensacola MSAs rounded out the top three fastest growing MSAs, each experiencing a 0.7 percent annual increase in population. During the two hurricanes, however, Baton Rouge’s population grew 4.8 percent, making it the fastest growing MSA along the central Gulf Coast from 2005 to 2006.

Strategic Implications

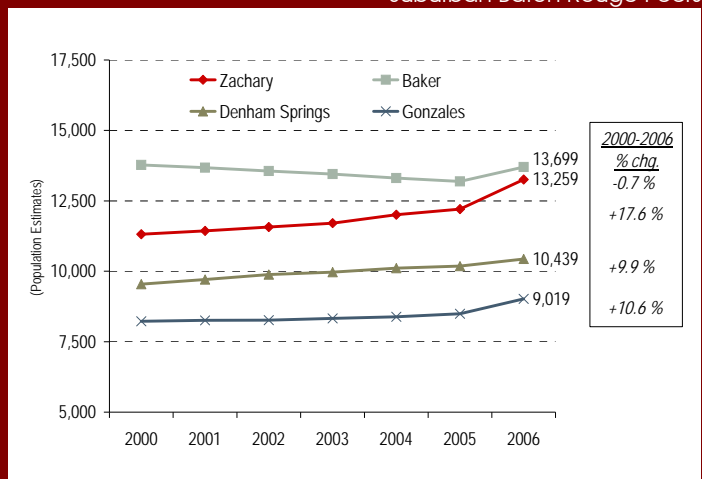
Understanding wider regional population trends provides the necessary context for determining aspects of local growth potential. The effects of hurricanes in recent years have been appreciable: slower population growth in communities located within close proximity of the coast. The impact of the hurricanes appears to be that both individuals and businesses are reconsidering potential relocation decisions to coastal and near-coastal communities. But recovery efforts along the coast are still underway. It may, therefore, be too soon to definitively determine long-term impacts; however, substantial barriers to entry are being erected (e.g., higher insurance rates). These trends appear to favor cities like Baton Rouge and Zachary that are located far enough away from the coast to avoid immediate danger of coastal flooding and that offer an excellent infrastructure network that enables them to serve as economic centers for the wider region. As a result, future economic growth prospects for the entire Baton Rouge MSA appear favorable over the long term if the metropolitan area is able to position itself as a population growth center. If this is achieved, then Zachary will likely become a leading destination for new residents.

Local Population

Trends

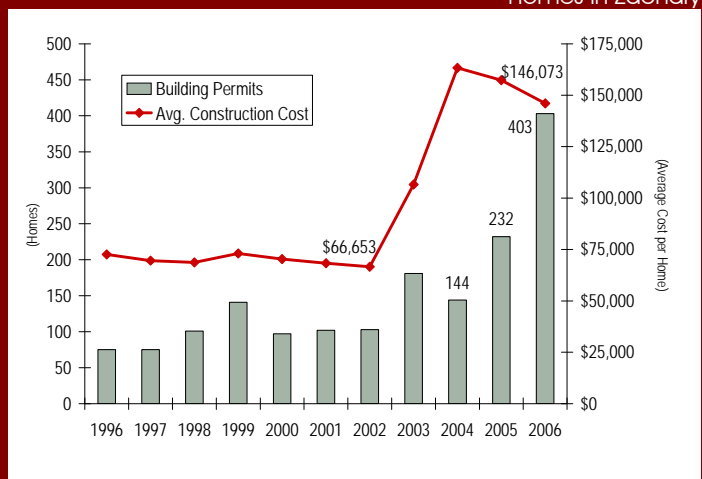
Zachary ranks second in population size among the four largest suburban communities in East

Figure 7.3, Population Growth, Mid-Year Estimates 2000-2006, Suburban Baton Rouge Peers



Source: U.S. Census

Figure 7.4, Single-Family Building Permits 1996-2006, New Homes in Zachary

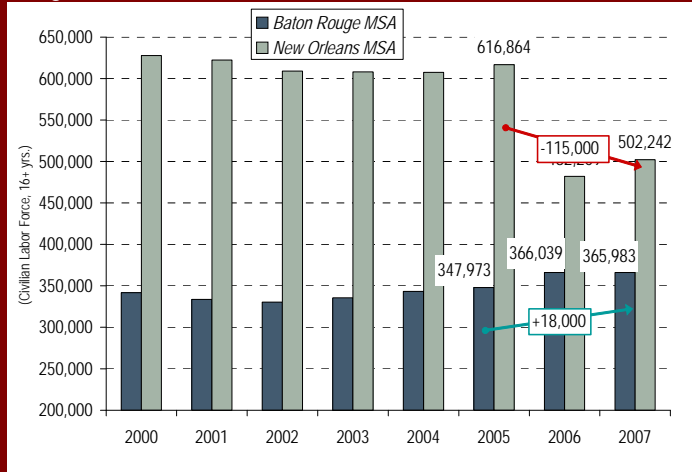


Source: U.S. Census

Baton Rouge Parish. From 2000 to 2006, Zachary added 1,984 new residents, a 17.6 percent increase as shown in **Figure 7.3, Population Growth, Mid-Year Estimates 2000-2006, Suburban Baton Rouge Peers**. Zachary's growth rate during this period made it the second fastest growing city in the state with a population of 10,000 persons. At the same time, it gained more residents than all but three cities in Louisiana, regardless of size. While Zachary remains the second largest community in the parish, its growth curve steepened in 2006, enabling it to nearly match Baker in overall size. These data indicate that Zachary will soon become the most populous of Baton Rouge's four major suburbs. Clear evidence of this rapid population growth can be seen through the rise in single-family building permits, exhibited in **Figure 7.4, Single-Family Building Permits, 1996-2006, New Homes in Zachary**. Throughout the late 1990s and into 2002, the number of single-family permits in Zachary remained nearly constant. In 2003, however, the number of permits began to increase greatly. By 2006, single-family permit activity in Zachary had increased fourfold from previous years, while the average permit value more than doubled.

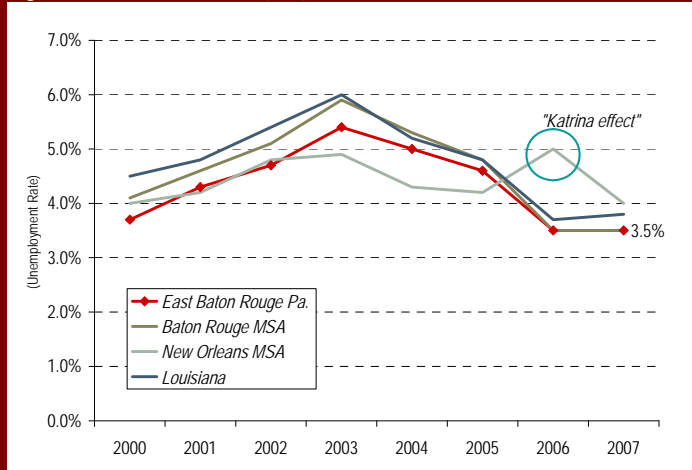
Strategic Implications

Figure 7.5, Change in Regional Labor Force 2000-2007, Baton Rouge and New Orleans Metro Areas



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Figure 7.6, March Unemployment Rates, 2000-2007



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Recent trends indicate that Zachary is evolving into a leading suburban destination. Given the timing of recent accelerations in both building permits and population growth, it is likely that the founding of Zachary Community Schools has played a significant role. This, coupled with the potential for the Baton Rouge MSA emerging as a leading economic center along the central Gulf Coast, the possibility exists that growth pressures in Zachary could further accumulate. As a result, it will become increasingly important for the community to plan for the future to protect and enhance its character and livability while, at the same time, diversifying its tax base to finance necessary infrastructure improvements.

Regional and Local Labor

Trends

Figure 7.5, Change in Regional Labor Force 2000-2007, Baton Rouge and New Orleans Metro Areas, reveals that, in leading up to 2005, little change occurred in the labor markets for Southeastern Louisiana's two urban areas: New Orleans and Baton Rouge. Hurricane Katrina, however, caused a 28 percent decline in New Orleans' labor force from 2005 to 2006. Only a small portion of those New Orleans workers remained within the wider region, and Baton Rouge only experienced a five percent increase in its labor pool. As a result, the combined labor force of New Orleans and Baton

Rouge was nearly 100,000 less in March 2007 than in March 2005. The departure of workers and those seeking work has forced down unemployment rates in both cities. For example, East Baton Rouge Parish’s unemployment rate stood at 3.5 percent in March 2007, as shown in **Figure 7.6, March Unemployment Rates, 2000-2007**, it’s lowest March unemployment rate since 1999.

Strategic Implications

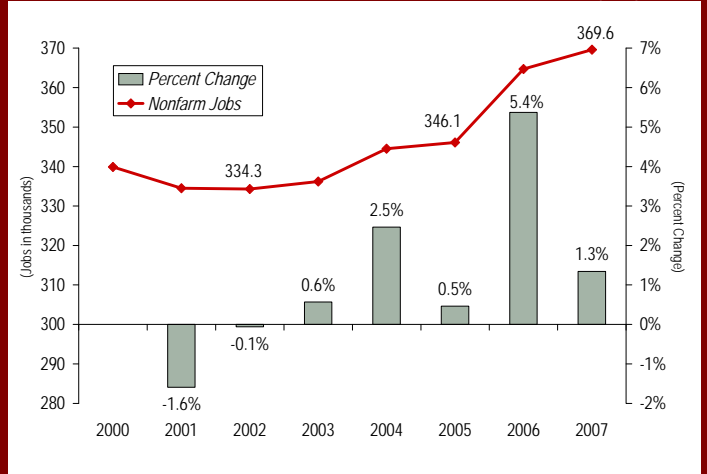
These data indicate that labor availability may become a long-term issue for Southeast Louisiana. It is also likely that, in the near future, labor shortages might become the norm across the nation as the “baby boom” generation begins to exit the workforce. As a result, competition for skilled workers and young talent will intensify and employers across the country will find it increasingly difficult to replace retirees. Consequently, Southeast Louisiana Communities like Zachary should focus on assising employers to create higher paying jobs to attract workers from outside the region. At the same time, Zachary and other communities need to place increasing focus on improving community character to be more attractive to potential residents. Zachary and Southeast Louisiana communities should, therefore, emphasize the retention and development of skilled workers. Zachary is fortunate that it can call upon its high quality of life with its excellent schools and new neighborhoods to make it an attractive choice for new residents and workers.

Metro Area Employment

Trends

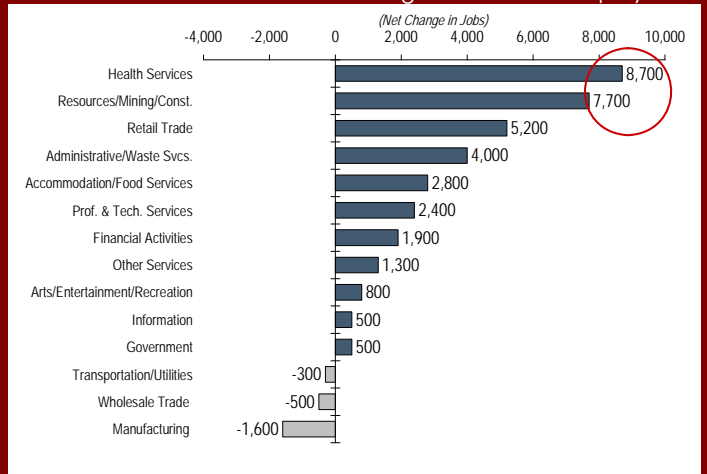
Since 2003, the Baton Rouge MSA has added over 33,000 new jobs, representing a 9.9 percent increase as reflected in **Figure 7.7, Baton Rouge MSA Employment 2000-2007, March Unemployment**. This recovery from the last recession arrived in two bursts of job creation: 2004 and 2006. Nearly 50 percent of the new jobs

Figure 7.7, Baton Rouge MSA Employment 2000-2007, March Unemployment



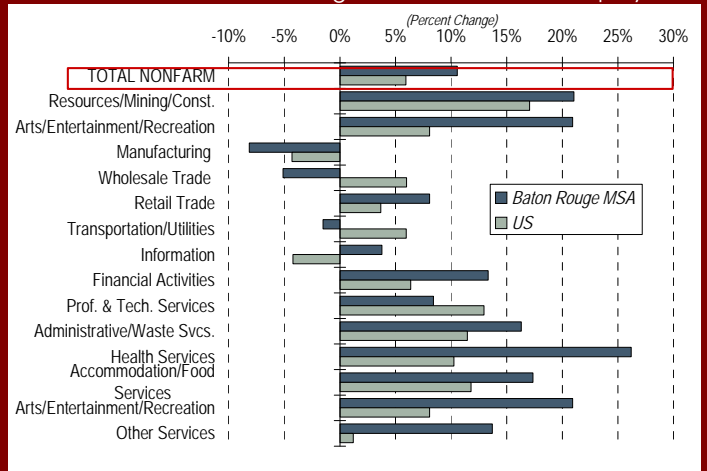
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Figure 7.8, Employment Change by Sector 2003-2007, Baton Rouge MSA March Employment



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

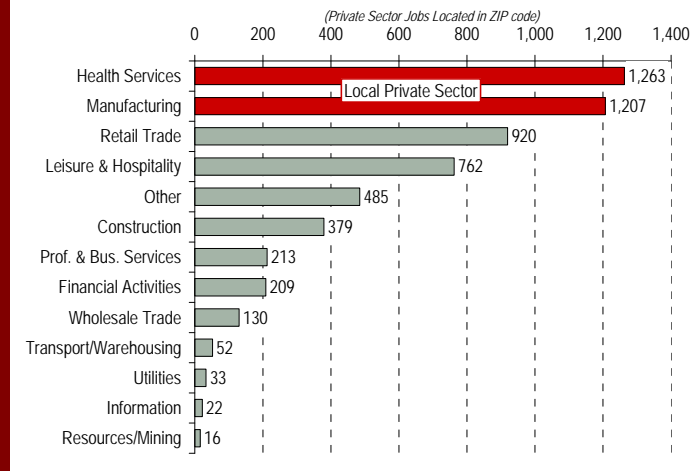
Figure 7.9, Employment Growth Comparison by Sector, 2003-2007, Baton Rouge MSA & U.S. March Employment



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

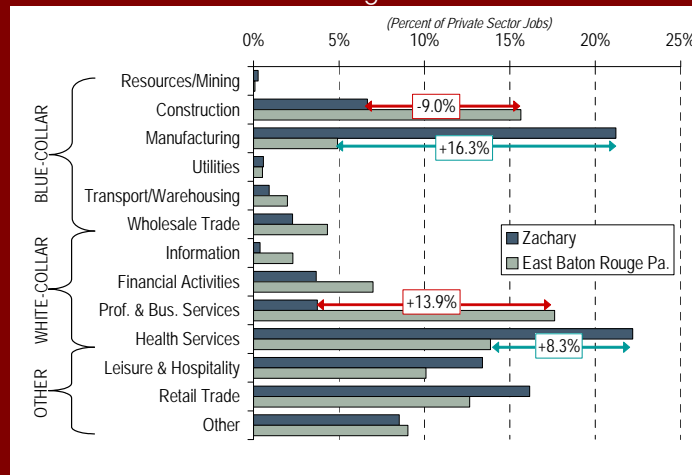
were created within Health Services and Resources/Mining/Construction, as shown in **Figure 7.8, Employment Change by Sector 2003-2007, Baton Rouge MSA March Employment**. Other strong employment generators included Retail Trade and Administrative/Waste Services. Other traditionally blue-collar sectors (aside from Resources/Mining/Construction) experienced net decreases in employment from 2003-2006. For example, the number of manufacturing jobs in the metro area declined by 1,600 during this period. A comparison of job growth rates between the Baton Rouge MSA and the nation by industry sector (See **Figure 7.9, Employment Growth Comparison by Sector, 2003-2007, Baton Rouge MSA & U.S. March Employment**) reveals that the region’s job losses in Manufacturing were comparable to national trends. Overall, the metro area’s non-farm job base increased 10.6 percent, nearly doubling job growth nationally. In terms of growth rate, the Baton Rouge area’s strongest employment sectors were Health Services, Resources/Mining/Construction, and Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; however, growth was widespread throughout the economy. In fact, all but four sectors (Professional and Technical Services, Transportation and Utilities, Wholesale Trade, and Manufacturing) outpaced national growth rates.

Figure 7.10, Zachary Employment Sector 2005, Zip Code 70791



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and TIP Strategies

Figure 7.11, Employment Distribution Comparison 2005, Zip Code 70791 and East Baton Rouge



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and TIP Strategies

Strategic Implications

Metro area employment conditions have improved dramatically in recent years, led by growth in a number of sectors including Retail Trade and Resources/Mining/Construction. Other traditionally blue-collar industries, however, have seen declines. This would indicate that the Baton Rouge economy is in a period of transition, moving toward a more services-oriented economy. These trends will directly impact Zachary’s employment growth and tax diversification prospects.

Local Employment

Trends

A plurality of local private sector jobs – as represented by the Zip code in which Zachary is located – is in two industries: Health Services and Manufacturing, as displayed in **Figure 7.10, Zachary Employment Sector 2005, Zip Code 70791**. Other leading employment sectors are Retail Trade and Leisure and Hospitality. Together, these four industries represent nearly three-quarters of all private sector jobs in the Zachary area. A comparison of Zachary’s employment distribution with that of East Baton Rouge Parish, shown in **Figure 7.11, Employment Distribution Comparison 2005, Zip Code 70791 and East Baton Rouge**, reveals that that the local area’s job picture largely reflects the Parish’s, except within four industry sectors. Locally, Manufacturing and

Health Services is several percentage points higher than throughout the Parish. At the same time, the share of jobs in Construction and Professional and Business Services lag sharply behind the surrounding area.

Strategic Implications

An apparent contradiction exists within Zachary, especially in terms of the concentration of manufacturing and other blue-collar jobs located within the Zachary area (as defined by its Zip code) versus trends indicating the community is becoming a higher income suburb to Baton Rouge. On the other hand, the concentration of healthcare-related jobs in Zachary would appear to complement the suburbanization trends and may present an opportunity that can be leveraged for economic development in the community. Given these trends, local economic development activities should focus on assisting in the stimulation and maturation of the local services sector, including financial and professional and business services, as a means for bringing higher paying jobs to the area. While an initial step might be to aim toward firms that meet local market demand, Zachary could position itself over the long term in garnering interest from corporate business service firms who work in a wider, regional market. In order to accomplish this, Zachary must improve to identify and develop a “prestige” site with high visibility that could eventually attract investment. This should, however, be considered a long-term economic development goal.

Target Sectors

It is recommended that Zachary pursue the following target sectors, as they present the best opportunities for business retention, expansion, and attraction activities to the area. These industries were selected for their ability to serve a dual purpose: 1) to bolster and diversify the area’s economy over the short term by taking advantage of existing assets and 2) to provide a pathway to sustained economic growth over the long term. In addition, community character factors were heavily weighed against mere job growth goals due to the stated desire of residents to maintain and enhance the community’s quality of life. As a result, several target sectors can be seen as non-traditional economic activities more than as “basic” or “primary” industries.

- ◆ Healthcare Services
- ◆ Retail and Leisure (Downtown)
- ◆ Professional Services (locally serving)
- ◆ Machinery/Specialty Machining
- ◆ Advanced Materials

Healthcare Services

Access to healthcare, both primary care and emergency care, is viewed as a quality of life issue for residents and an economic issue for communities. The presence of healthcare facilities is also seen as key in location decisions for most industries. While access to healthcare is an important factor in corporate location decisions (67.2 percent of respondents in Area Development’s annual corporate survey rated health facilities as “important” or “very important” in 2002 – up from 65.3 percent in 2001), it is less critical

This sector includes establishments providing health care for individuals, including ambulatory health care services and hospitals. The services provided by establishments in this sector are delivered by trained professionals. All industries in the sector share this commonality of process; namely, labor inputs of health practitioners with requisite expertise. Many of the industries in the sector are defined based on the educational degree held by the practitioners included in the industry.

than other business-related factors such as availability of skilled labor (90.9 percent) and highway accessibility (86.6 percent).

With the continued loss of manufacturing jobs, once the most critical driver in local economic development, communities are becoming increasingly reliant on the healthcare industry as a source of employment and tax revenue. Growth in the U.S. healthcare sector is largely driven by two major factors: population growth and an aging population. As the baby boom generation approaches retirement age, a larger share of all consumer spending in the nation is being spent on healthcare related expenses. In addition, healthcare includes many occupations that offer relatively high wages and abundant career-ladder opportunities.

Rationale and Considerations

1. Planned expansions at Lane Memorial Hospital and the positioning of Zachary as the northern healthcare hub for the Baton Rouge region.
2. Strong regional population growth and local affluence.
3. High-quality housing and schools, making it a more desirable location for healthcare professionals.
4. More office space, especially Class A and B, will be needed in the Zachary area for it to capture additional growth from this sector, especially among specialty clinics and providers.
5. The establishment of a nursing program through the development of a Zachary satellite of Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC).

Potential Niches

1. Specialty clinics.
2. Medical and diagnostic labs.
3. Allied health.
4. Fitness, nutrition, and wellness clinics/facilities.

The retail trade sector comprises establishments engaged in retailing merchandise, generally without transformation, and rendering services incidental to the sale of merchandise.

The leisure sector includes a wide range of establishments that operate facilities or provide services to meet varied cultural, entertainment, and recreational interests of their patrons. This sector comprises 1) establishments that are involved in producing, promoting, or participating in live performances, events, or exhibits intended for public viewing; 2) establishments that preserve and exhibit objects and sites of historical, cultural, or educational interest; and 3) establishments that operate facilities or provide services that enable patrons to participate in recreational activities or pursue amusement, hobby, and leisure-time interests.

Retail and Leisure

The retail trade and leisure sectors have been among the leading national job creators during the last several years, driven by increased consumer spending and population growth, especially in locations with natural and/or man-made amenities. While these industries are not known for offering high wage jobs, they remain important to local government for their contributions to sales.

In addition, retail and leisure are increasingly being viewed as amenities that a community cannot do without. When searching for a new home, potential

residents (both singles and families) strongly take the available shopping amenities into consideration. As a result, employers – who are interested in retaining and recruiting workers – have come to realize the importance of retail and leisure assets.

Retail and leisure amenities also strongly influence the attraction of visitors and, eventually, retirees. Increasingly, communities are coming to realize the potential for linking these two groups. Over time, a tourist who frequently visits a place begins to adopt a notion of brand loyalty for that community or destination which can, in turn, strongly influence retirement location decisions. Today's retirees are much more affluent than past generations and are more likely to increase consumer spending in the area, especially increasing demand for the region's healthcare economy. The leading edge of baby boomers is set to retire soon, but analysts expect the nature of their retirement to be distinctly advantageous as they are anticipated to be more active community participants and more likely to start up new business enterprises.

Rationale and Considerations

1. Solidify existing status as a retail trade center for the northern tier of the Baton Rouge MSA and outlying rural areas.
2. Establish downtown Zachary's status to position it as a destination for entertainment and shopping.
3. High-end retail and leisure amenities help draw skilled talent to support target sectors, especially in upper wage occupations in sectors such as healthcare, professional, and business services.
4. Increase visibility and enhance image of Zachary as a destination.
5. Enhance small business and assistance programs for existing independent retailers and area residents who might be interested in opening an establishment.

Potential Niches

1. Boutique clothing and full-service dining in Downtown.
2. Movie theatre.
3. Hotels/motels/bed and breakfast establishments.
4. Outdoor recreation and entertainment venues, including bike paths and hiking/jogging trails, especially near the Comite River or the diversion canal.

Professional Services (locally serving)

Professional service companies often form the backbone of a community's business community. Often, these are small offices filling the needs and demands of the local community. While these small businesses are often perceived as simply "mom and pop" companies, they can play a critical role in developing a business climate that is conducive to entrepreneurship.

This broad services sector includes firms that provide services to companies and individuals. It includes legal, accounting, real estate, financial planning, insurance, and banking. Many establishments within this sector are small start-up enterprises and serve a local, rather than regional or national, market.

Many consider business recruitment to be the most important role for the economic development practitioner. Other avenues for economic growth and vitality, however, are just as essential – especially in communities that are lacking some of the key attributes that site selectors and recruitment prospects are seeking. In most communities, plentiful economic development opportunities lie closer to home if properly cultivated. "Economic gardening" is the most overlooked – and often most important – process for stimulating local growth and vitality. Promoting entrepreneurship involves leveraging existing resources in the local business sector – including innovation, financing, know-how, and business and social networks – and matching those resources with investment opportunities. In essence, it should be a critical component of any business retention and expansion program.

Suburban markets are increasingly being seen as viable places to do business, especially among professional service companies. Strong population growth provides the critical mass that these locally serving businesses need to succeed. In addition, office developers across the country increasingly have suburbs in their sights. Also, small businesses often prefer to be in emerging suburban markets because they are closer to home and are able to garner greater attention – and gratitude – from the local jurisdiction, as well as their new patrons. Finally, the spread of the nation’s telecommunications infrastructure, especially broadband services, has enabled small businesses in smaller towns to compete with their urban competitors.

Rationale and Considerations

1. Fill in gaps in the local economy to serve local demand for professional and business services.
2. Potential for growth and local economic diversification, especially among upper wage professional positions.
3. Opportunities for local entrepreneurs and start-up businesses.
4. Begin to set the stage for higher-end office development and professional and business activities and assist in establishing Zachary as the employment center for the northern Baton Rouge metropolitan region.
5. Promote smaller office developments throughout Zachary, but particularly in the Downtown area and sites in close proximity to Lane Memorial.
6. Difficulty in marketing to this broad sector according to traditional economic development practices.

Potential Niches

1. Legal services.
2. Architecture and real estate.
3. Accounting and other financial services.
4. Engineering services.
5. Entrepreneurship.

The machinery industry includes companies that manufacture or distribute equipment, machinery, and/or related components, including agriculture, construction, and mining machinery; industrial machinery; material handling equipment; and other general purpose machinery.

The specialty machining industry comprises establishments, known as machine shops, primarily engaged in machining metal parts on a job or order basis. Generally, machine shop jobs are low volume, using machine tools such as lathes (including computer numerically controlled), automatic screw machines, and machines for boring, grinding, and milling.

Machinery/Specialty Machining

The location of machinery manufacturers and specialty machiners (machine shops) is highly dependent on the industries they are servicing. As a result, they tend to cluster in close proximity to these end-users. For example, regions with a strong presence in the oil and gas industry (as in the Central Gulf Coast) will typically serve as a location for machine shops that custom produce exploration and other mining-related equipment. Employment trends within specialty machining are typically strongly influenced by the health of its customer base. In other words, during times of high oil prices, exploration activity increases, resulting in greater demand for machining orders. As a

result, employment levels are often cyclical in nature. Additionally, machine shops are increasingly incorporating technology in their production, which requires a more highly skilled, experienced, and technologically savvy worker. As a result, U.S. machinery manufacturers are very competitive in

international markets. For example, U.S. suppliers for oil and gas machinery and equipment are active in virtually all upstream petroleum markets, and U.S. technology and quality are considered among the best available in most product categories.

Rationale and Considerations

1. Proximity to Baton Rouge's petrochemical complex and other industrial employers, such as Georgia Pacific.
2. Availability of highly skilled workforce, both locally and regionally.
3. Potential to support existing industrial employers in the region.
4. Ongoing construction and industrial expansions may provide opportunities for increased demand for new business.
5. The expansion of technical training programs through Zachary Community Schools and the establishment of a Zachary satellite of Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC).
6. Consideration of the development of a modern business park to site new employers in this sector.

Potential Niches

1. Machine shops serving the region's petrochemical complex and oil and gas industries.
2. Construction and mining machinery.

Advanced Materials

Materials have played an important role throughout history in the development of the world's economy, from the Stone Age to the Plastics Age. Recent progress in technology research has ushered in the beginning of a new era: the age of Advanced Materials. This new era cannot, however, be defined by the use of a single material, but rather in the conception and diffusion of a vast array of materials. To underscore the significance of this new period, the U.S. Department of Commerce has identified advanced materials as one of five emerging technologies America must master to remain competitive in the world marketplace.

"Advanced materials" is a diverse collection of industries that encompasses materials, technologies, specialty materials, performance materials, engineered materials, composite materials, and smart material systems. Strength, durability, and even superconductivity are hallmarks of the products from these industries. Applications range from military to consumer products to bioscience. The building blocks of this industry include: engineered polymers, resins, and specialty chemicals; advanced fibers and specialty adhesives; structural ceramics and composites; metal composites, powder metals, and high temperature alloys; and surface engineering, electronics, and nanotechnology.

Based largely on increasing knowledge and understanding of the microscopic properties of matter and on the mastery of new industrial reproduction processes, innovations enable different materials to be combined and customized with new properties to make new alloys or composites. The growth in possibilities has not only been an impetus for changes in downstream products and services, but also in the innovation of upstream materials. In other words, under the old industrial model, designers and engineers were limited in the development of products by the materials available to them. Today, new materials can be developed and customized to fit the demands of specific technical needs. For example, requirements of the microelectronics industry have led to the development of a vast supplier network for semiconductive and photosensitive materials, high-purity chemicals, and new ceramics and resins.

The advanced materials industry is composed of products with considerable “value-add,” meaning the profit gained from altering materials that are less refined into a more profitable product is substantial. This industry can be generally characterized as follows:

- ◆ Tailored or engineered to fit very specific requirements in specific applications,
- ◆ Market segments are generally small and niche oriented,
- ◆ Profit margins are high and prices are generally set in relation to the value provided to the final end-user and less with regard to what competitors charge, and
- ◆ Value is provided to the end-user by providing a technological edge or greater efficiency.

Rationale and Considerations

1. Proximity to Baton Rouge’s petrochemical complex, allowing access to multiple suppliers of raw materials.
2. Access to ongoing research in advanced materials and nanotechnology at Louisiana State University.
3. High quality of life (schools and housing) in Zachary, making it attractive for research and development activities and their employees.
4. Availability of highly skilled workforce, both locally and regionally, with knowledge of materials sciences.
5. Potential to influence other targets, especially healthcare (R&D and testing), and support existing industrial employers in the region.
6. The expansion of the River Bend plant may present opportunities for the development and fabrication of advanced building composites as a result of construction activities.
7. Consideration of the development of a modern business park to site potential recruits.

Potential Niches

1. Advanced polymeric materials.
2. Composites.
3. Advanced building materials.
4. Research, development, and testing.

Chapter Eight

Implementation

*"Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work."*¹

- Thomas A. Edison

This plan sets forth a vision as to how Zachary should develop over the next 20 years – and beyond. With the vision in place, the community must now direct its attention and resources toward plan implementation. Each of the goals, policies, and recommended action statements identified throughout this plan must be turned into specific programs, initiatives, and/or new standards. This element establishes priorities and sets forth a process to ensure the plan is implemented and kept current over time.

The comprehensive plan should be a “living document,” that is, a document that is frequently referred to for guidance in decision-making with regard to land development and public investments in infrastructure and services. It is in that context that this is the Chapter that breathes life into the rest of the Comprehensive Plan, by setting out a practical, prioritized, and sequenced implementation program. The key objective of this chapter is to integrate the different elements of the plan together in such a way as to provide a clear path for sound decision-making.

Implementation is not just about a list of action items. It is a challenging process that will require the commitment of the City’s elected and appointed officials, staff, residents, business owners, East Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LaDOTD), Zachary Community School District, Recreation and Park Commission for the Parish of East Baton Rouge (BREC), Baton Rouge Area and Zachary Chambers of Commerce, environmental organizations, and other organizations and individuals who will serve as champions of the plan.

Purpose

Implementation is an essential step in the plan development process. It requires the commitment of the City’s leadership, including the Mayor and City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, other City boards and commissions, and City staff. It is also necessary for there to be close coordination with and joint commitment with each of the above described agencies and organizations that significantly influence Zachary and its growth.

Each chapter of this plan outlines specific issues to be addressed to achieve what is envisioned by community residents. In response are a large number of recommended actions that relate to regulatory changes, programmatic initiatives, and capital projects. While these recommendations are comprehensive and intended to be accomplished over the 20-year horizon of this plan, near-term strategies must be put in place to take the first step toward implementation. These strategies must be prioritized, with decisions as to the sequencing of activities, the capacity to fulfill each initiative, and the ability to obligate the necessary funding. Those deemed as top priorities and viewed as feasible in the short-term are placed in a five-year action plan. In addition to implementing these targeted strategies, the broader policies set



forth by the plan text and maps may be used in making decisions related to the physical and economic development of the community.

The purpose of this chapter is to integrate the elements of the plan to provide a clear path for sound decision making. This chapter outlines the organizational structure necessary to implement the plan, strategic directions and priorities for implementation, and a process for regular evaluation and appraisal of the plan to ensure it is kept relevant and viable.

Responsibility for Implementation

Simply setting out an implementation framework in this Chapter is not enough to ensure that the action items of this plan will be carried out. These action items should be consulted frequently, and should be widely used by decision-makers as a basis for decisions regarding:

- ◆ The timing and availability of infrastructure improvements;
- ◆ City-initiated and owner-initiated annexations;
- ◆ Proposed development and redevelopment applications;
- ◆ Special use permits;
- ◆ Zone change requests;
- ◆ Expansion of public facilities, services, and programs;
- ◆ Annual capital budgeting;
- ◆ Zoning and subdivision code re-writes and amendments;
- ◆ Intergovernmental coordination and agreements; and
- ◆ Operations, capital improvements, and programming related to individual City departments.

To be successful, the City must utilize this plan on a daily basis, and it must be integrated into ongoing governmental practices and programs. The recommendations must be referenced often and widely used to make decisions pertaining to the timing and availability of infrastructure improvements; proposed development applications; zone change requests; expansion of public facilities, services, and programs; and annual capital budgeting, among other considerations.

Each Council member, staff person, and member of boards, commissions, and committees has an obligation to use this plan in guiding their decisions. The plan is designed to guide the growth and economic development of the community. It is intended to guide staff – of all departments – in managing their individual activities, annual work programs, and capital projects.

The primary means of implementation include:

1. *Preparation of new land development regulations to ensure a quality and character of development that reflects the community's vision.* The revision of the zoning and subdivision ordinances will improve land use compatibility, conserve natural resources and open space, preserve the character and integrity of neighborhoods and other valued areas, improve the efficiency of facility and service provision, and contribute to a fiscally responsible pattern of urban growth.
2. *Formation of policies by City staff, Planning and Zoning Commission, and the directions of the City Council.* As new development is proposed, staff and the City's advisory boards, together with the City Council, must abide by the policies and recommendations of this plan. The text of this plan, coupled with the land use, growth, and thoroughfare plans, provide the requisite guidance for achieving that envisioned by the residents and stakeholders of this community.

3. *Regular updates to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) identifying capital projects for street infrastructure; water, wastewater, and drainage improvements; park, trail, and recreation facility provisions; and other public buildings and municipal services.* These capital improvements must be coordinated with the objectives of this plan and implemented consistent with the future land use and growth plans, thoroughfare plan, parks and recreation system plan, and other relevant plans and policies.
4. *Identification and implementation of special projects, programs, and initiatives to achieve organizational, programmatic, and/or developmental objectives.* These may include further studies, detailed area plans, such as individual neighborhood and/or special district plans, or initiating or expanding upon key City programs. These tend to be ministerial in function, which may support or influence physical improvements or enhancements, but themselves focus on community betterment.

Implementation Strategies

Shown in **Table 7.1, Summary Action Plan** is the key near-term strategies for implementing this plan. Additional detail may be found within the respective plan chapters. These strategies highlight the steps to be taken by the City, often in coordination with other jurisdictions, organizations, or agencies. This tabulation is designed to be kept up-to-date and used on an ongoing basis as part of the regular review process. Each year, the projects that are substantially complete should be removed, with the corresponding years advanced one year and a fifth year of programmed actions added. In this way, this action plan may keep the City Council appraised as to the progress of implementation.

Table 7.1 Summary Action Plan	
Action Agenda	Primary Action Items
	Priority No. 1
	Amend the land development regulations including the zoning, sign, and landscaping ordinances and the subdivision regulations.
	Priority No. 2A
	Prepare a fiscal impact model to gauge the feasibility and implications for public finances of new development and annexation activity in the Preferred Growth Areas.
	Priority No. 2B
	Conduct an annexation study to include a facility needs assessment for the preferred growth areas. The needs evaluation should include provision of municipal services and facilities as well as utility capacity requirements.
	Priority No. 2C
	Adopt a utility extension policy subject to the criteria of this plan. Subsequently commission an impact fee study.
	Priority No. 2D
Negotiate an Intergovernmental agreement with EBRP to realign the Zone of Influence, conduct joint development review, and/or amend the Horizon Plan consistent with this plan.	
Priority No. 3A	
Enhance local economic development efforts through a commitment for increased funding, in accordance with the recommendation of Chapter 7, Economic Development.	
Priority No. 3B	
Develop a formal economic development incentives policy.	

**Table 7.1
Summary Action Plan**

Priority No. 3C
Identify and acquire land for a business park.
Priority No. 4A
Prepare a Downtown Master Plan including a preliminary municipal facility plan and land acquisition strategy, fringe area plan, and urban form study.
Priority No. 4B
Prepare a historic preservation plan for the historic and garden districts including preservation guidelines and construction standards.
Priority No. 4C
Study the warrant for designation of Downtown as a registered historic district. As warranted, designate a Downtown Historic District.
Priority No. 4D
Create a Business Improvement District (BID) for Downtown improvement projects.
Priority No. 5
Prepare a master drainage study and plan.
Priority No. 6A
Prepare traffic engineering and design study for LA 64 to identify Transportation Systems Management (TSM) improvements.
Priority No. 6B
Construct Transportation System Management (TSM) improvements along LA 64.
Priority No. 7A
Commission a corridor design study and plan for gateway treatments and streetscape enhancements along LA 19 South and LA 64 West.
Priority No. 7B
Construct gateway and roadway enhancement improvements along LA 19 South.
Priority No. 8A
Commission a pedestrian mobility study and plan to prepare a comprehensive network of trails, sidewalks, and bike lanes.
Priority No. 8B
Construct the priority pedestrian mobility improvements.
Priority No. 9
Commission a mobility study to investigate design options and alternative alignments for a LA 64 bypass.
Priority No. 11
Negotiate agreements with BREC and the Zachary Community School District for joint acquisition, development, and maintenance of park spaces.

Table 7.1 Summary Action Plan	
	<p>Priority No. 12A</p> <p>Acquire land for construction of a new community park east of Downtown.</p>
	<p>Priority No. 12B</p> <p>Design and construct a community park east of Downtown.</p>
	<p>Priority 13</p> <p>Adopt a policy requiring LEED construction of municipal buildings and facilities.</p>

Plan Administration

During the development of the plan, community leaders in government, business, civic groups, and others came together to inform the planning process. These leaders, and new ones to emerge over the horizon of this plan, must maintain their commitment to the ongoing implementation of the plan's policies – and the periodic updating of the plan to adapt to changing conditions or unforeseen events.

Education and Training

Comprehensive plans are relatively general in nature, but they are still complex policy documents that account for interrelationships among various policy choices. As such, educating decision-makers and administrators about plan implementation is an important first step after plan adoption. As the principal groups that will implement the plan, the City Council, the Planning and Zoning Commission, and City department heads should all be “on the same page” with regard to priorities, responsibilities, and interpretations. Consequently, an education initiative should be undertaken immediately after plan adoption, which should include:

- ◆ A discussion of the individual roles and responsibilities of the Council, Commission, Board, or individual staff members.
- ◆ A thorough overview of the entire Comprehensive Plan, with emphasis on the parts of the plan that relate to each individual group.
- ◆ Implementation tasking and priority setting, with allow each group to establish a one-year and three-year implementation agenda.
- ◆ Facilitation of a mock meeting in which the use of the plan and its policies and recommendations is illustrated.
- ◆ A question and answer session.

Role Definition

As the elected officials, the City Council will assume the lead role in implementing this plan. Their chief responsibility is to decide and establish the priorities and timeframes by which each action will be initiated and completed. In conjunction with the Mayor, they must manage the coordination among the various groups responsible for carrying out the plan's recommendations. Lastly, they are also responsible for the funding commitments required, whether it involves capital outlay, budget for expanded services, additional staffing, further studies, or programmatic or procedural changes.

The City Council will take the lead in the following general areas:

- ◆ Act as a “champion” of the plan.
- ◆ Adopt and amend the plan by resolution, after recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- ◆ Adopt new land development regulations to implement the plan.
- ◆ Rezone property proactively.
- ◆ Approve interlocal agreements that implement the plan.
- ◆ Establish the overall action priorities and timeframes by which each action item of the plan will be initiated and completed.
- ◆ Consider and set the funding commitments that will be required.
- ◆ Offer final approval of projects and activities and the associated costs during the budget process, keeping in mind the need for consistency with the plan and its policies.
- ◆ Provide policy direction to the Planning and Zoning Commission and staff.

The Planning and Zoning Commission will take the lead in the following general areas:

- ◆ Host the education initiative described in the Education and Training section above.
- ◆ Periodically obtain public input to keep the plan up to date, using citizen meetings, hearings, surveys, or other methods, to obtain advice on the planning process, plan, and implementation.
- ◆ After holding one or more public hearings to discuss potential recommendations, make recommendations to the City Council with regard to plan updates and plan amendments.

All departments are responsible for administering this plan, specifically as it relates to their function within the organization. Many departments were involved in the plan development process and are, therefore, familiar with its content and outcomes. They must now be enrolled as implementers to ensure their budgets and annual work programs are in line with the plan.

City Staff will take the lead in the following general areas:

- ◆ Manage day to day implementation of the plan.
- ◆ Support and implement capital improvements planning efforts.
- ◆ Manage the development of new land development regulations.
- ◆ Conduct studies and develop additional plans.
- ◆ Review applications for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan when required by the Idaho Statutes or the City’s land development regulations.
- ◆ Negotiate the specifics of interlocal agreements.
- ◆ Administer collaborative programs and ensure open channels of communication with implementation partners.

Plan Implementation Board

While the Planning and Zoning Commission will play a critical role in implementing the plan, it cannot expend all of its efforts toward ensuring continued implementation of the plan. As such, a Plan Implementation Board should be appointed by City Council with the purpose of assisting the Planning and Zoning Commission and ensuring that programs and activities are carried out to implement the plan.

The Board's role is to refine and prioritize the implementation plan and initiate action over the short term on the basis of annual work programs and five-year projected timeframes.

It is recommended that the Citizens' Delegation continue to function in a new role and serve as the Plan Implementation Board, along with other members of the community (as deemed necessary). The Citizens' Delegation was instrumental in developing the plan and is familiar with its policies and recommended strategies. Having the members of the committee continue in this capacity will bring continuity and consistency to the planning process and will allow for an effective transition into plan implementation.

Responsibilities of the Board would include the following:

1. Refine the strategies outlined in the plan and identify specific actions beyond the information provided in this general plan.
2. Determine methods or programs to be used to implement the proposed actions, specifically identifying which agencies and/or departments will be responsible for their implementation, coordinating with City staff to estimate costs and identify proposed sources of funding, and establishing timeframes in which the recommended actions will be accomplished.
3. Prepare and present to the Planning and Zoning Commission a recommended list of programs and actions to be implemented annually, as well as a prioritized list to be implemented over a five-year period.

A similar role might be supported by the Louisiana Development Ready Community (LDRC) Steering Committee, which has already met to establish goals and actions for the near future. Many of these actions overlap with the priorities from the overall Plan and will enable a series of quick successes. Draft goals include:

- 1. Organize Economic Development Committee**
 - a. Create a partnership with City and Chamber strengthening the connection between the two entities.
 - b. Hire an Economic Development Director.
 - c. Work with the City and Parish to develop a plan to expand the city limits.
 - d. Identify Development Ready Sites within the existing City limits and beyond.
- 2. Infrastructure Enhancement**
 - a. Advocate for projects leading to the improvement of current highways and development of new corridors and research opportunities for funding.
 - b. Review solutions for waste water disposal and explore opportunities for funding.
- 3. Revitalize Downtown**
 - a. Identify the "center of Zachary" and explore opportunities of creating plans for infill development and investment.
- 4. Improve Intergovernmental Relationships**
 - a. Enhance political and business relationships between Baton Rouge and Zachary.
 - b. Participate in the process and develop relationship between Zachary and city parish planning department.
 - c. Continue building relationships with BREC.
- 5. Market Zachary in the Region and Beyond**
 - a. Establish and maintain a Website.
 - b. Develop and establish a demographic database.
 - c. Work with BRAC to market Zachary both regionally and nationally

- d. Work with BRAC to market Zachary both regionally and nationally.
 - e. Develop Zachary's Community Brand.
- 6. Leadership Development**
- a. Identify and enhance existing leadership development programs.
 - b. Create a young leaders initiative targeting professionals ages 25-40, with a purpose of connecting them with one another and existing leaders in the community.
 - c. Identify local resources, as LSU, who could assist in leadership development and schedule meetings or workshops to discuss possibilities.

Plan Amendment

This plan must remain flexible and allow for adjustment to change over time. Shifts in political, economic, physical, and social conditions and other unforeseen circumstances will influence the priorities of the community. As growth continues, new issues will emerge, while others may no longer be relevant. Some action statements may become less practical, while other plausible solutions will arise. To ensure that it continues to reflect the vision and remains relevant and viable over time, the plan must be revisited on a routine basis, with regular amendments and warranted updates.

Revisions to the plan are two-fold: minor plan amendments should occur bi-annually and more significant updates handled every five years. Minor amendments may include revisions to the land use and growth plan or thoroughfare plan as the development pattern unfolds. Major updates will involve reviewing the base conditions and growth trends; re-evaluating the goals, policies, and recommendations; and formulating new ones in response to changing needs and priorities.

Annual Progress Report

A progress report should be prepared annually by the Planning and Zoning Commission, with the assistance of the Plan Administrator, and presented to the Mayor and City Council. This ensures that the plan is regularly reviewed and modifications are identified for the minor plan amendment process. Ongoing monitoring of plan consistency with the City's ordinances must be an essential part of this effort.

The Annual Progress Report should include:

- ◆ Significant actions and accomplishments during the past year, including the status of implementation for each programmed task.
- ◆ Implementation constraints, including those encountered in administering the plan and its policies.
- ◆ Proposed amendments that have come forward during the course of the year, which may include revisions to the plan maps, or other recommendations, policies, or text changes.
- ◆ Recommendations for needed actions, programs, and procedures to be developed and implemented in the forthcoming year, including a recommendation of projects to be included in the CIP, programs and initiatives to be funded, and priority coordination needs with public and private implementation partners.

Bi-annual Amendment Process

Plan amendments should occur on a bi-annual basis, allowing proposed changes to be considered concurrently so that the cumulative effect may be understood. The proposed amendment must be

consistent with the goals and policies set forth in the plan. Careful consideration should also be given to guard against site-specific plan changes that could negatively impact adjacent areas and uses or detract from the overall vision and character of the area. Factors that should be considered include:

- ◆ Consistency with the goals and policies of the plan.
- ◆ Adherence with the future land use, growth, thoroughfare, and parks and trails plans.
- ◆ Compatibility with the surrounding area.
- ◆ Impacts on infrastructure provision.
- ◆ Impact on the ability to provide, fund, and maintain adequate services.
- ◆ Impact on environmentally sensitive and natural areas.
- ◆ Contribution to the vision of the plan and character of the community.

Five-Year Update/Evaluation and Appraisal Report

An evaluation and appraisal report should be prepared every five years. This report should be prepared by the Plan Administrator, with input from various City departments, Planning and Zoning Commission, and other boards and committees. The report involves evaluating the existing plan and assessing how successful it has been in implementing the vision and goals. The purpose is to identify the successes and shortcomings of the plan, look at what has changed, and make recommendations on how the plan should be modified. The report should review baseline conditions and assumptions about trends and growth indicators, and it should evaluate implementation potential and/or obstacles related to any unmet goals, policies, and recommendations. The result of the evaluation report will be a revised master plan.

More specifically, the report should identify and evaluate the following:

1. Summary of plan amendments and major actions undertaken over the last five years.
2. Major issues in the community and how these issues have changed over time.
3. Changes in the assumptions, trends, and base studies including the following:
 - a. The rate at which growth is occurring relative to the projections put forward in the plan.
 - b. Shifts in demographics and other growth trends.
 - c. The area of urban land that is designated and zoned and its capacity to meet projected demands.
 - d. City-wide attitudes and whether changes necessitate amendments to the vision and goals.
 - e. Other changes in the political, social, economic, or environmental conditions that dictate a need for plan amendment.
4. Ability of the plan to continue to successfully implement the vision.
 - a. Individual statements or sections of the plan must be reviewed and rewritten to ensure that the plan provides sufficient information and direction to achieve the intended outcome.
 - b. Conflicts between goals and policies that have been discovered in the implementation and administration of the plan must be resolved.
 - c. The action agenda should be reviewed and major actions accomplished should be highlighted. Those not accomplished should be re-evaluated to ensure their relevancy and/or to revise them appropriately.
 - d. The timeframes for implementing the individual actions should be re-evaluated. Some actions may emerge as a higher priority given new or changed circumstances, while others may become less important.
 - e. Based upon organizational, programmatic, and procedural factors, as well as the status of previously assigned tasks, the implementation task assignments must be reviewed and altered to ensure timely accomplishment.

- f. Changes in laws, procedures, and missions may impact the ability to achieve the goals. The plan review must assess these changes and their impacts on the success of implementation, leading to any suggested revisions in strategies or priorities.

Appendix A

Community Profile

Table A.1 – Historic Population Change (1960-2000)

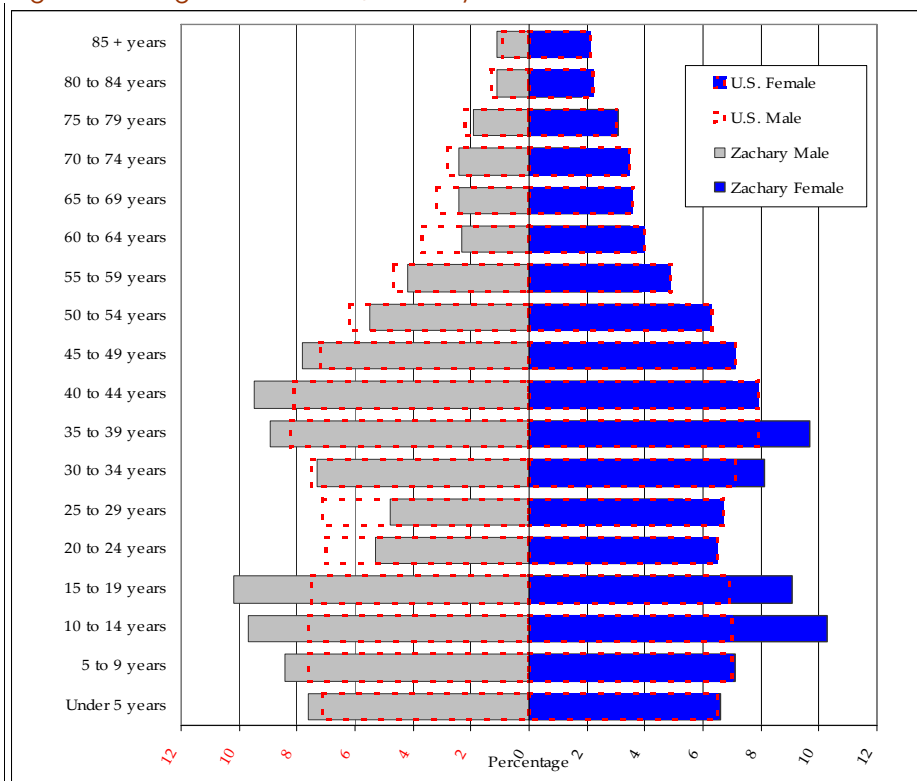
YEAR	Zachary	% Change	Louisiana	% Change
1960	3,268	-	3,260,600	-
1970	4,964	34.2%	3,641,306	10.5%
1980	7,525	34.0%	4,205,900	13.4%
1990	9,471	20.5%	4,219,973	0.3%
2000	11,275	16.0%	4,468,976	5.6%

U.S. Census 1950-2000

Historic Population

- Over 8,000 persons became residents of Zachary from 1960 to 2000.
- Zachary experienced a population increase of 1,804 persons from 1990 to 2000, a 16 percent increase.
- Zachary has experienced a much larger average increase in population (26.2 percent) than the State (7.5 percent) every decade since 1960.

Figure A.1 – Age and Gender, Zachary



U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile



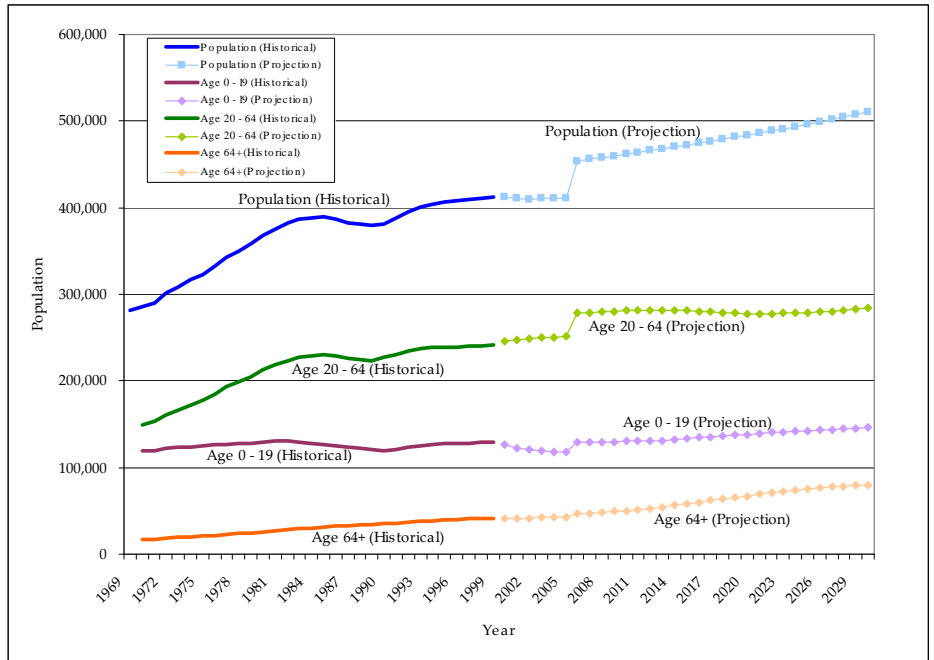
Age and Gender

- Zachary has a higher percentage of younger residents, ages 5 to 19 years, than the national average, specifically teenagers, than the national average. It also has a larger percentage of middle-aged adults.
- The 20-24 and 25-29 age cohorts are below the national average, meaning that a large percentage leave after high school and contribute to those located in Zachary in their 30's and 40's.
- Persons 50 years and older represent a smaller percentage of the population than national averages.
- The most significant age cohorts in Zachary, compared to national averages, are persons aged 35 to 49 years, which largely represents young families and first-time home buyers.

Figure A.2 – Historic and Forecasted Population by Age, East Baton Rouge Parish

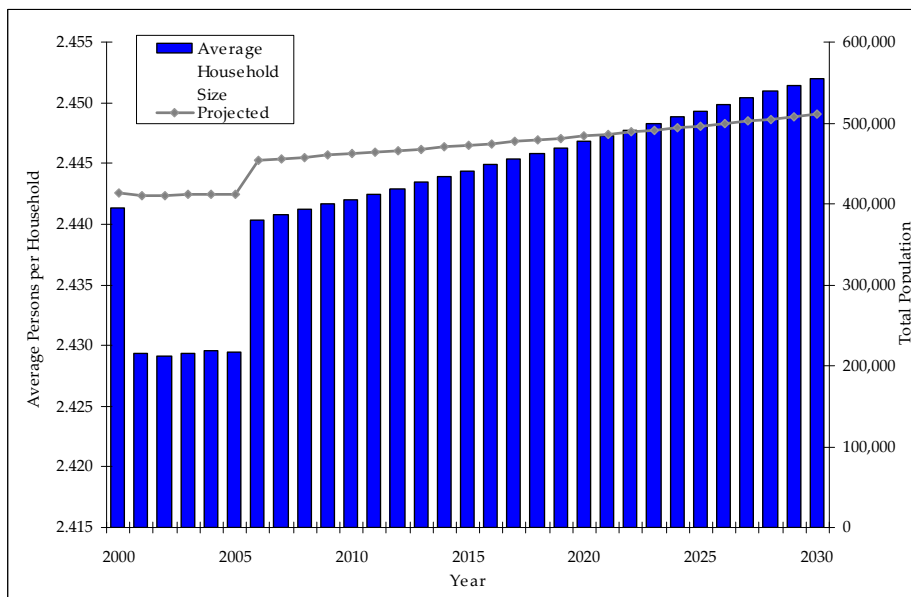
Historic and Forecasted Population

- The older age cohorts are projected to experience the greatest increase, which will likely result in an increase in the median age over time.
- The expected “graying of the population will influence the demands for housing and health services, among others, while lessening school-related impacts.
- Due to a similar rate of growth for school-age children in the Parish, there is likely to be an increased demand in Zachary schools due to its high rating.



Woods and Poole Economic, Inc. (2006)

Figure A.3 – Projected Population and Household Size, East Baton Rouge Parish



Woods and Poole Economic, Inc. (2006)

Projected Population and Households

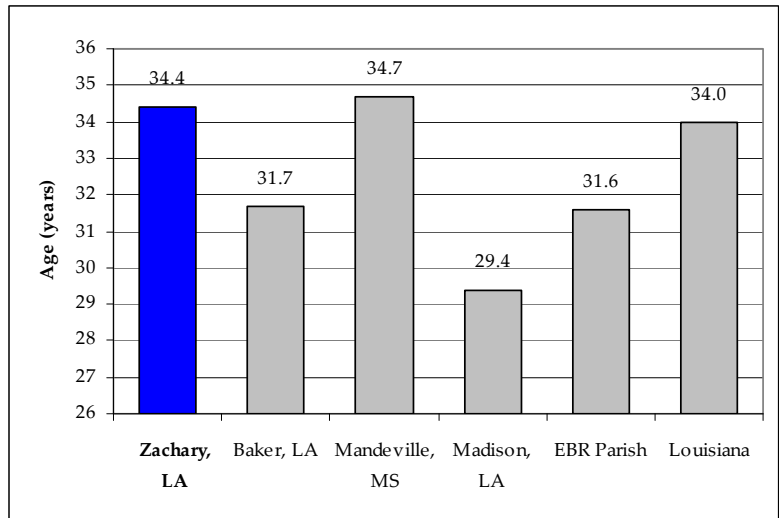
- In the Year 2000 there was a population of 412,770 persons and a total of 169,073 household units in the East Baton Rouge Parish, adding to 2.44 persons per household.
- A similar household size is presented for the Year 2030 (2.45 persons), leading to increases in population and households of 97,988 persons and 39,227 units, respectively.
- The projected annual increase in population for East Baton Rouge Parish is 23.7 percent.

Median Age

- The median age in Zachary is 34.4 years, which is comparable to the State.
- Baker (31.7 years), Madison (29.4 years), and the East Baton Rouge Parish (31.6 years) exhibit a younger median age.

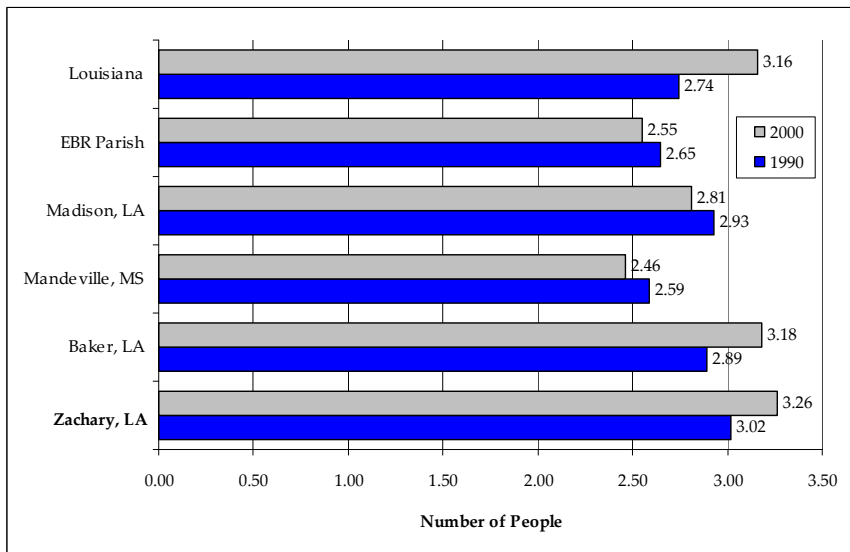


Figure A.4 – Median Age



U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile

Figure A.5 – Household Size

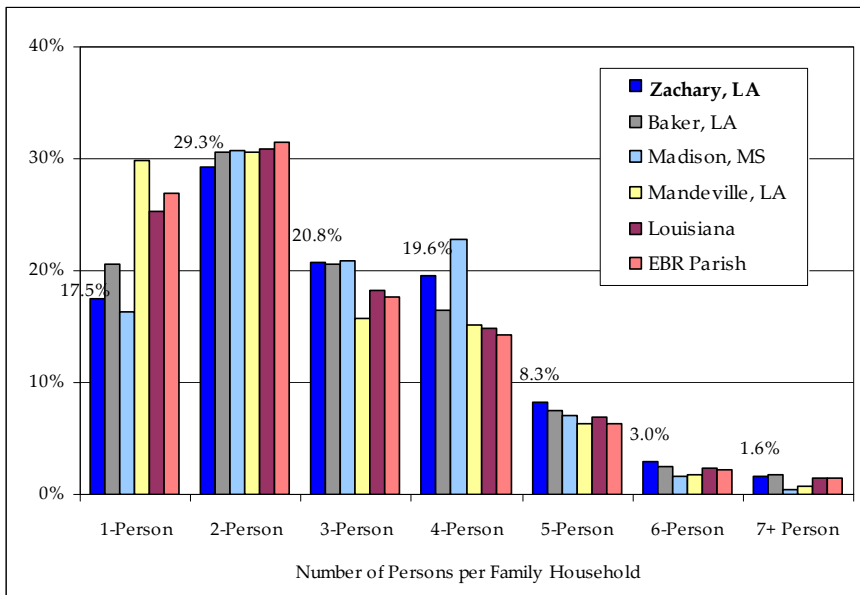


U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile

Household Size

- The average household size in Zachary is 3.26 persons, which is high compared to the State, Parish, and each of the peer cities. This may be due, in part, to a larger family size as well as the high proportion of children 19 and younger (See Figure A.1 – Age and Gender).

Figure A.6 – Family Households



U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile

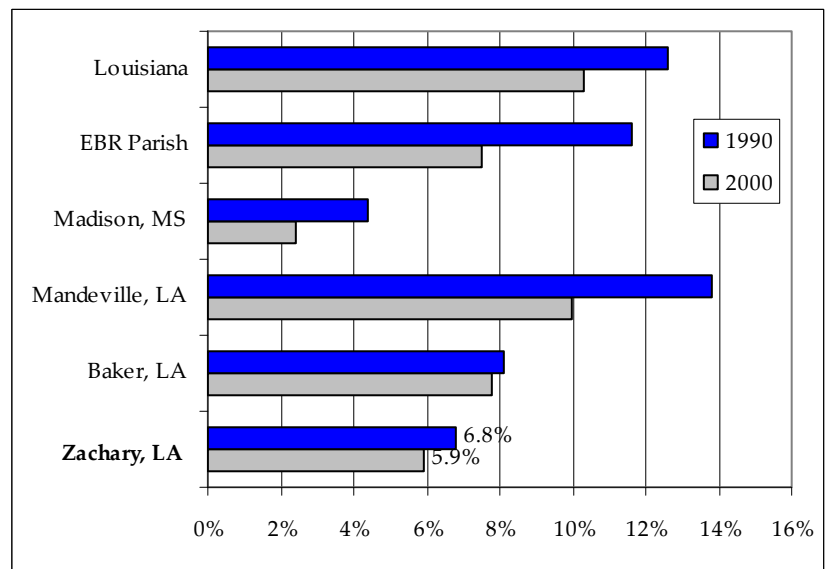
Family Households

- Comparatively, Zachary has a smaller percentage (67.6 percent) of persons living in one to three person units than the State (74.4 percent), Parish (76.0 percent), and the comparison cities. Consequently, Zachary has a higher percentage of persons living in four to seven-person households (32.5 percent), which increases the average household size.
- This statistic relates to home and lot size to accommodate more persons and vehicles per person.

Housing Unit Vacancy Analysis

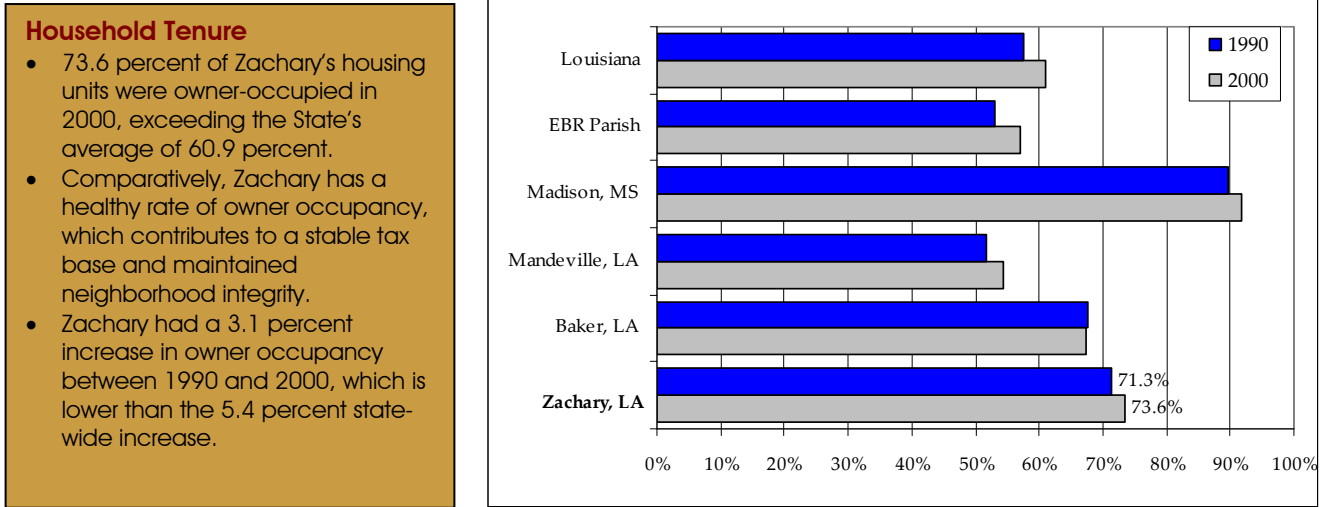
- In both 1990 and 2000, Zachary had relatively low vacancy rates compared to the State, Parish, and its peer cities.
- As expected, due to the increasing demand for new home construction, there is a low vacancy rate in Zachary. A healthy vacancy rate that allows for housing availability and market flexibility is 8 to 10 percent.
- A trend of home construction will likely continue until the vacancy rate approaches 9 to 10 percent.

Figure A.7 – Housing Unit Vacancy



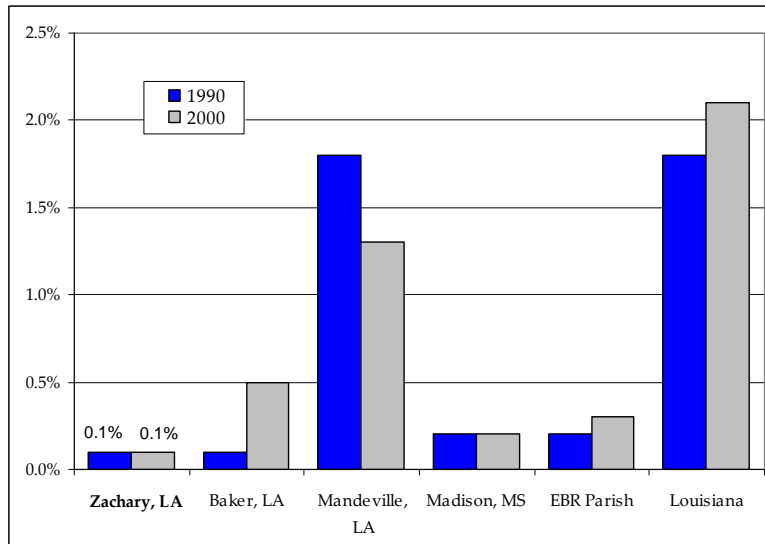
U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile

Figure A.8 – Owner Occupied Units



U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile

Figure A.9 – Seasonal Units



U.S. Census 1990-2000 Comparison

Seasonal Units

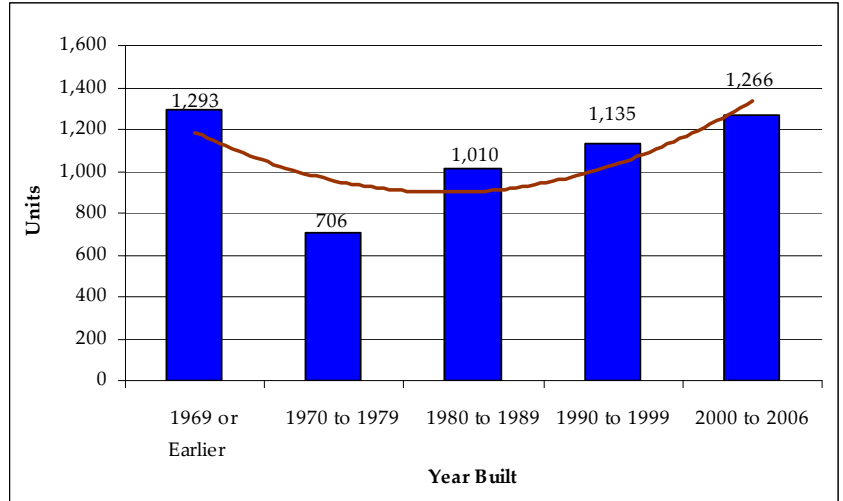
- Only 0.1 percent of Zachary's housing units (1990 and 2000) are seasonal; well below the state's average of 2.1 percent in 2000.
- While seasonal units contribute to the economy, a stable and balanced supply of workforce housing is important to maintain values and quality of life.

Housing Age, Zachary

- 55.6 percent of the housing in Zachary was built before 1990.
- There has been a steady increase in home construction, since 1970, due to the increase in population.

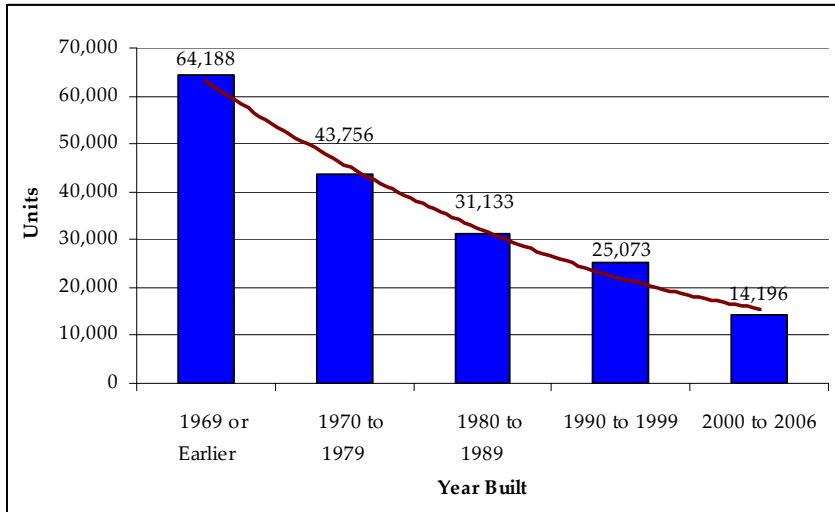


Figure A.10 – Year Structure Built, Zachary



U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile

Figure A.11 – Year Structure Built, East Baton Rouge Parish



U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile

Housing Age, East Baton Rouge Parish

- Almost 78 percent of housing in the parish was built before 1990.
- There has been a steady decline in home construction in the parish. From 1990 to 1999 there was an average of 2,507 homes built per year. From 2000 to 2006 it has reduced to 2,366 homes per year.

Housing Affordability

- Zachary's affordability index estimate is 1.34, meaning that the median income household earns more than enough to buy the median-priced house.
- 1,241.73 per month is an affordable mortgage payment for the City's median household income of \$49,669.
- Louisiana's index estimate is 1.00, so the median family income is exactly equal to the income a conventional lender would require for the family to purchase the median priced house.

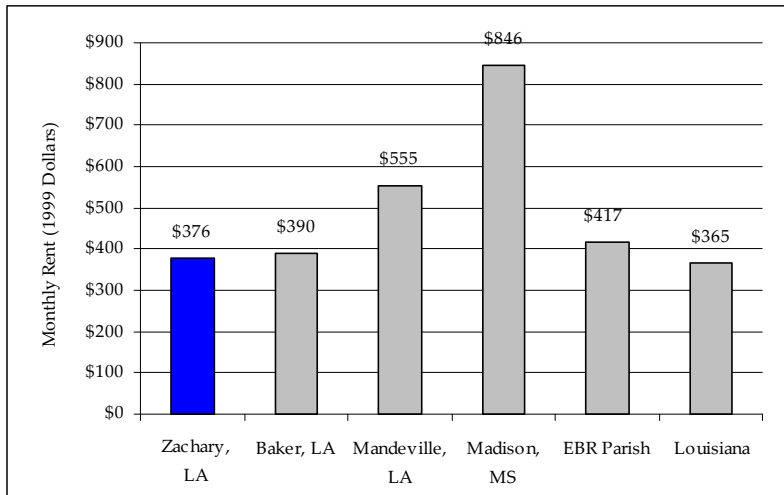
Table A.2 – Housing Affordability Index Estimates

	Zachary, LA	Baker, LA	Mandeville, LA	Madison, MS	EBR Parish	Louisiana
Median Monthly Mortgage	\$930	\$696	\$1,224	\$1,124	\$876	\$816
Median Household Income	\$49,669	\$35,151	\$52,500	\$71,266	\$47,480	\$32,566
2000 Affordability Index Estimates	1.34	1.26	1.07	1.59	1.36	1.00

U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile



Figure A.12 – Median Gross Rent



U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile

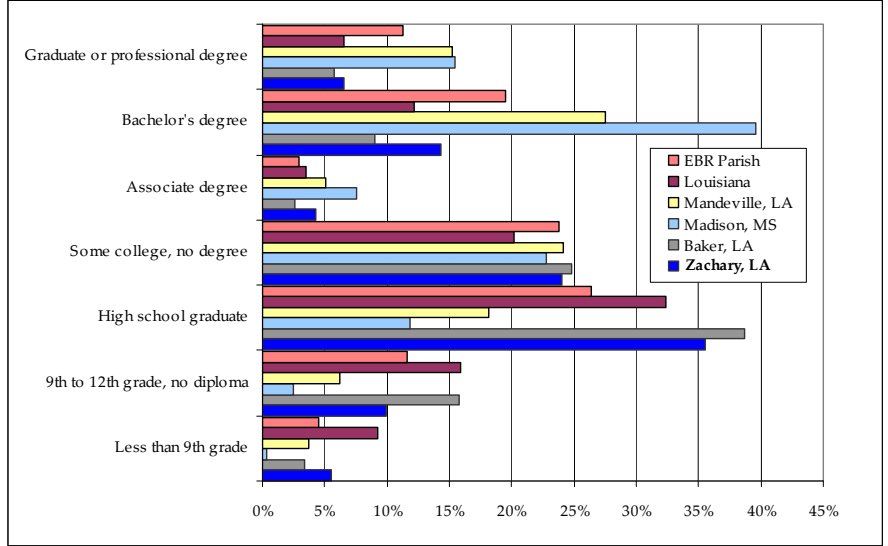
Median Monthly Rent

- Zachary's median gross rent is \$376 per month; similar to Baker (\$390) and the state average (\$365), and lower than Mandeville (\$555) and Madison (\$846).
- A relatively low median gross rent aids in community affordability, which supports the housing needs of the workforce.
- The median gross rent amount signals the size and age of affordable units, which should be monitored to meet community needs.

Figure A.13 – Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment

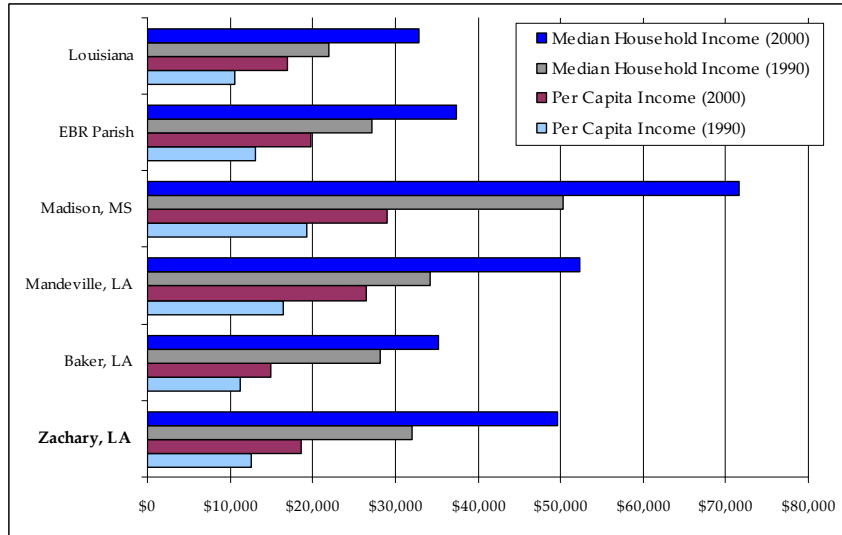
- Zachary has a higher percentage of its population with some college, no degree and less education than its comparison cities and hence, a lower percentage with an associate degree or higher.
- In all levels of education Zachary is better than the State average, including a similar percentage of population with less than a high school degree and a higher percentage with at least a high school diploma.
- Economic development objectives and initiatives should focus on increasing the educational attainment of the population.



U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile



Figure A.14 - Income



U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile

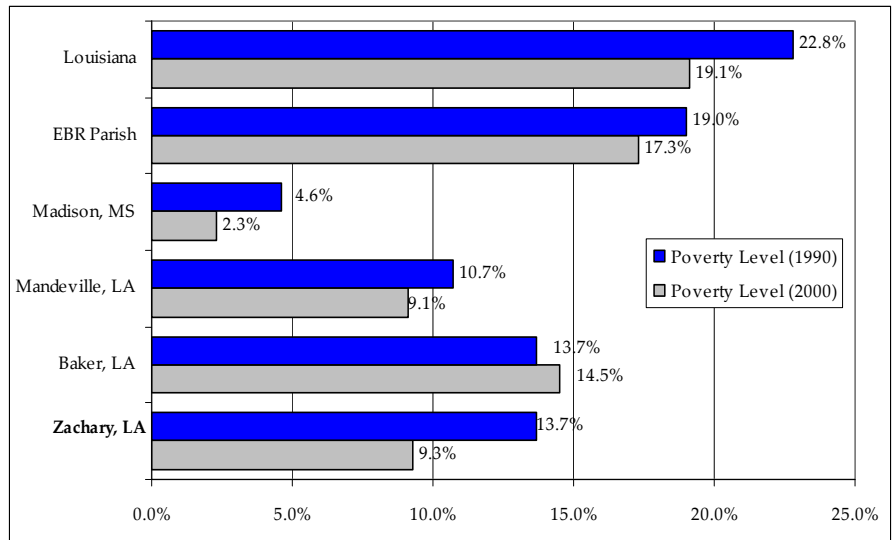
Income Comparison

- Zachary's per capita and median household incomes exceed Baker, are favorable to that of the State, but fall below that of Madison and Mandeville.
- The percent change of Zachary's median household income from 1990 to 2000 is 55.3%, which exceeds the State, Parish, and all comparison cities.
- Zachary's change in per capita income is 48.3%, which only exceeds the City of Baker (33.6%).

Figure A.15 - Poverty

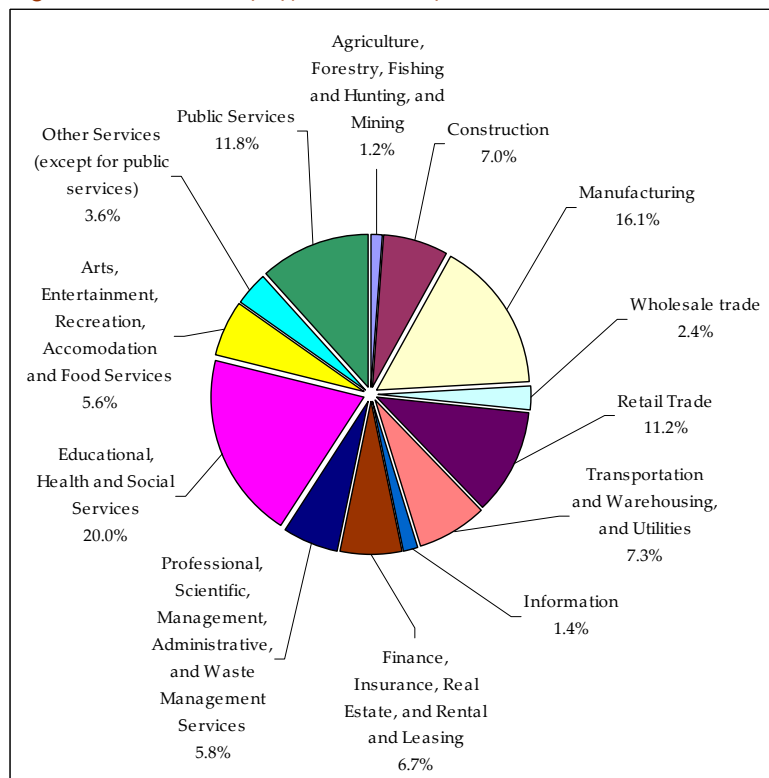
Poverty

- With a 9.3% poverty level, Zachary is well below Louisiana's average of 19.1%.
- As the community grows and new homes are constructed the poverty rate is likely to decrease.
- Between 1990 and 2000, the poverty rate has decreased 32.1 percent. The only comparison to experience a greater decrease is Madison (50%).



U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile

Figure A.16 – Industry Types, Zachary



U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile

Industry Sector Types

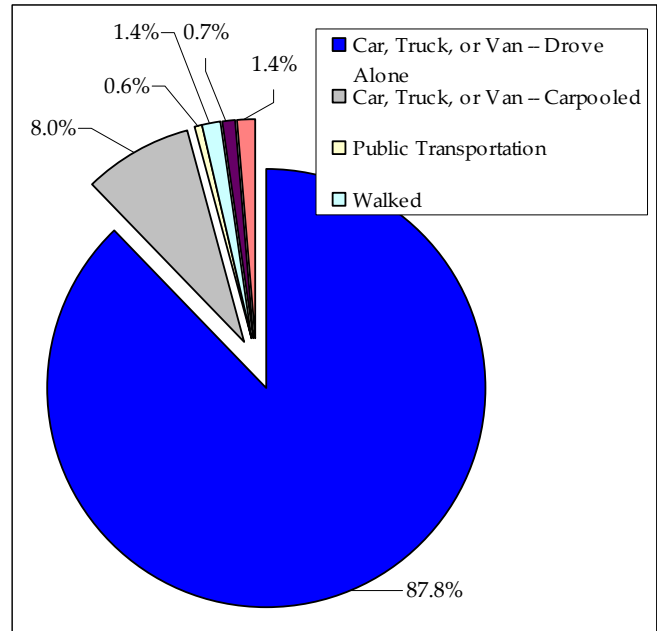
- Most of Zachary's workforce draws its paycheck from the Education, Health and Social Services (20%) and Manufacturing Industries (16.1%).
- Public Services and Retail Trade add an additional 23% combined.
- To increase the work base and offer more employment opportunities, the economic development strategy must focus on rezoning and attracting higher wage employers, including Manufacturing; Information; Finance, Insurance, Real Estate, and Rental and Leasing; and Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, and Waste Management Services.



Transportation Mode Share

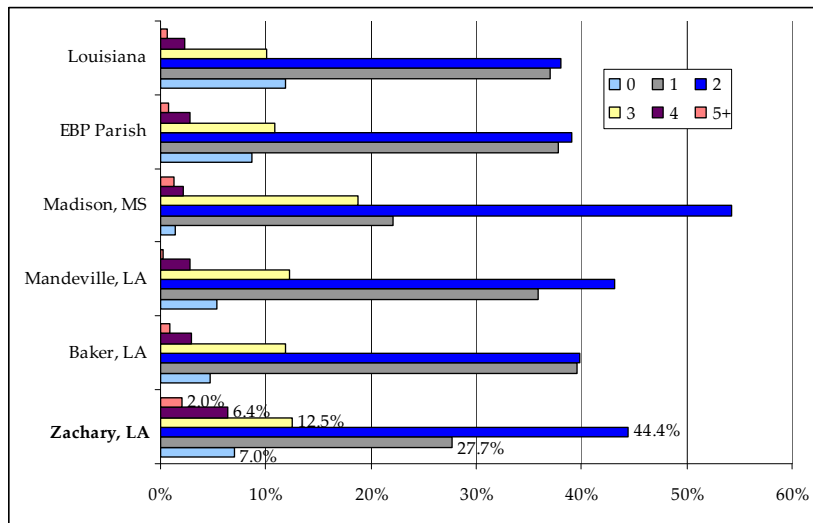
- Most Zachary residents (95.7%) commute to work in a car, truck, or van, with 87.8% driving alone; well above the national average of 75.7%.
- Only 0.6% of residents commute to work via public transportation, indicating a lack of public transportation available to consumers (2.4% of Louisiana residents use public transportation).
- Only 1.4 percent walk to work, meaning there are great opportunities to increase employment within the community and encourage mixed use environments.
- It is expected that the percentage of those who work at home will increase, thereby receiving amendable land use revisions and zoning allowances.

Figure A.17 – Transportation to Work, Zachary



U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile

Figure A.18 – Vehicles per Household



U.S. Census 2000: Summary Profile

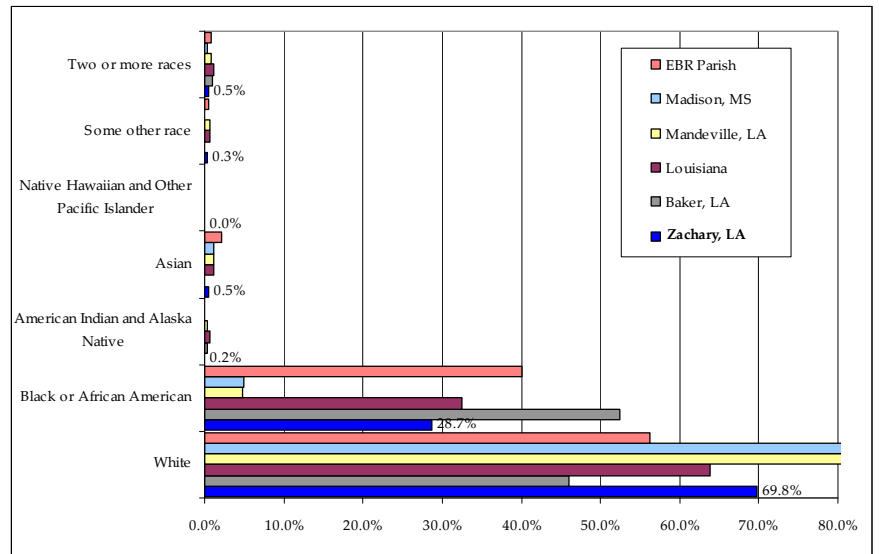
Vehicles per Household

- The average number of vehicles per household is average compared to the State, Parish, and peer cities from 0 to 3 cars. Zachary contains a larger percentage of 4- car (6.4 percent) and 5-car households (2.0 percent).
- Zachary averages 1.9 cars per household; Madison has the only higher average (2.0 cars).

Race Comparison

- In Zachary, 69.8 percent of the population is classified as "White", which is higher than the State average (63.9 percent).
- The second largest race is "Black or African American" contributing nearly 29 percent of the population in Zachary (and 32.5 percent in Louisiana).
- Each of the other census-designated races together amount to 1.5 percent of the population in Zachary.

Figure A.19 – Race Comparison



U.S. Census 2000: Detailed Race Profile

Adopted April 5, 2010

Appendix B

Types of Land Character

Zachary has identified its desired future vision as an economically balanced, highly attractive, family-oriented, suburban community composed of a variety of highly livable neighborhoods. To implement this vision, a means of converting this statement of future intent into land use policies and development regulations must be formed. A community character analysis was used to characterize the existing development and to document the land use patterns and design elements that form the character of individual developments and the community as a whole.

This approach allows the formulation of standards to achieve the desired community character.

Each of the community character types described below is present in Zachary with varying degrees of significance. The more readily identifiable are the:

- ◆ Urban character in Downtown, which is significantly interrupted by the state highway but remains as the City's core;
- ◆ Auto-urban nature of commercial development along each of the major corridors;
- ◆ Industrial uses along the railroad, developing along LA 67/Plank Road, and, to a certain extent, along the entrance ways of LA 64;
- ◆ Auto-urban neighborhoods in the well established areas of the community, with small to moderately sized lots and homes;
- ◆ Suburban character of neighborhoods with moderate and larger sized lots and homes;
- ◆ Scattered areas of estate residential around the periphery of the community; and
- ◆ Agricultural and natural areas.

Character Types

The range of community character types and their functions are as follows:

Natural Character

Natural areas surrounding Zachary have been left undeveloped mainly due to their constraints of urban development, such as the extent of flood ways and floodplain areas surrounding the community. These areas offer great opportunity for development clustering, allowing the resources to be protected while providing for attractive, low impact development environments.

Agriculture Character

The character of this rural area is dominated by low intensity agricultural cropland and pastures; where homes are customarily an accessory to agriculture. The landscape is accented by a few farmsteads, outbuildings, and in some cases a virtually unbroken flat horizon, which contribute to its rural character

Countryside Character

This type of rural character includes sparse residential acreages commingled with agriculture, which are increasingly prevalent in the ex-urban areas (the areas beyond the city limits) where the first signs of suburbanization are present. There are many emerging examples of a countryside character around Zachary, raising the importance for growth management.

Estate Character

This character type is prevalent around the outlying, peripheral areas of Zachary, and increasingly so as more development encroaches within the rural landscape. An estate character requires low density



There are large estate areas around Zachary, such as the "North Vernon" area.

development on larger properties (typically one acre or larger), thereby producing a visual openness. As a result of larger lot sizes, open space and vegetation are intended to be the dominant views. The buildings are to be apparent, yet secondary to the landscape. Depending on the size of the home and its percent of coverage and location on the lot, the estate character may more closely resemble a larger version of the typical suburban character. To achieve an estate character, the design of subdivisions must actively seek to imitate more rural areas through the use of rural street cross sections without sidewalks, vast open space throughout the development, the use of rural fence types and/or hedgerows to divide properties, the preservation or planting of native vegetation along property boundaries, and generous building setbacks on all sides.

Suburban Character

This character type is very different from the urban type. The distinguishing factors of a suburban character are an increased open space – both on individual sites and cumulatively throughout a development – and the preservation or use of vegetation within and between developments. This helps to create a more even balance between building mass and "green mass." Rather than creating a sense of enclosure by buildings, as in an urban environment, trees and vegetation form a very different sense of enclosure. Therefore, open space and vegetative cover are essential elements in creating a suburban space.

The physical distinction between a suburban and urban character is the level of use intensiveness or magnitude of activity affecting adjacent uses. Suburban environments are sought as relief from more intensive urban settings, thereby leading to the popularity of contemporary neighborhoods denoted for their larger lots, privacy fences, and open areas.

All too often, the open space that contributed to the suburban character of a neighborhood is abutting land that is not yet developed and open views that are not yet closed. As in the case of many

neighborhoods in Zachary, particularly those that are on the edge of the City or those that currently abut vacant land, the adjacent views that contribute to the rural small-town character are temporary, rather than permanent. The natural open space and views of the landscape are “borrowed” from the adjoining land. Consequently, as additional development occurs abutting these existing neighborhoods, the character will change. This is an important consideration as to the design of new subdivisions and whether they use the adjacent land or incorporate permanent open space into the development to sustain its original character.

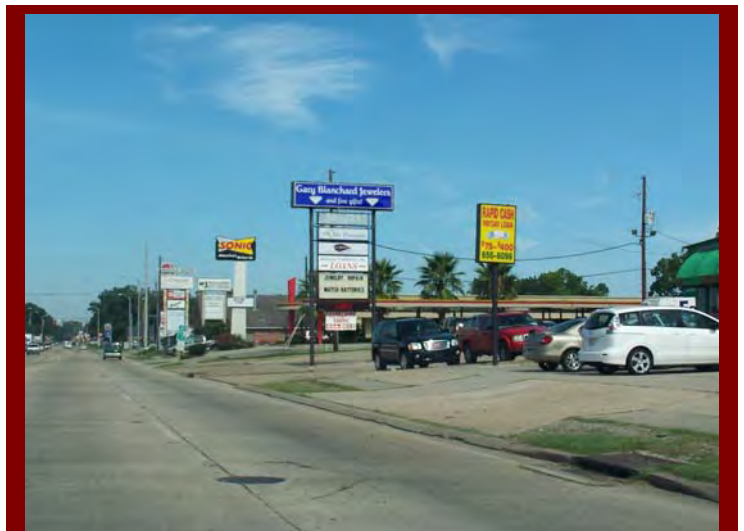
In many of the newer suburban character neighborhoods in Zachary, a large percentage of the homes have views of “open space” across the street or behind their lots. Most of this space, however, is borrowed until it is developed, which often leads to a dissatisfaction of homeowners when there are proposals to develop the adjacent land. Therefore, to maintain these views and achieve the community character expressed as desirable by the residents, this borrowed open space must be incorporated into each development. One means of achieving this character is by clustering development, thereby maintaining an equal or higher density while preserving permanent open space.

Auto-Urban Character

This character type is most commonly associated with a highway-oriented commercial or business strip. Fast food restaurants, gas stations, and strip shopping centers like those found along LA 64/Zachary-Deerford Road and increasingly along LA 964 are the dominant commercial images of an auto-urban character. Higher density residential uses such as attached and multiple-family housing and manufactured home communities also have this character due to their density, limited open space, relative amount of impervious surface devoted to buildings and parking lots, and increased building enclosure.

The primary difference in urban and auto-urban characters is the role of the automobile in its site design. Rather than buildings oriented to the street, as in an urban setting like that found in Downtown, auto-urban environments are characterized by large parking lots surrounding the buildings.

Although the development intensity of auto-urban areas is usually less than that found within an urban setting, this is commonly due to lower land values and design preference, as opposed to development regulations. Auto-urban uses require a significant amount of space for high levels of automobile dependent interaction, i.e. large surface parking lots with multiple points of ingress/egress. As a result, buildings are constructed at the back of the site nearest neighboring uses and away from their roadway frontage. Auto-urban uses also have a greater reliance on site access, thereby adding to the number of driveways and access points. The result is expansive parking areas that dominate the front setback and, thus, the character of the development.



The development along the City's major corridors exhibits an auto-urban character due to their large front setbacks, expanses of parking, limited landscape surfaces, and extensive signage.

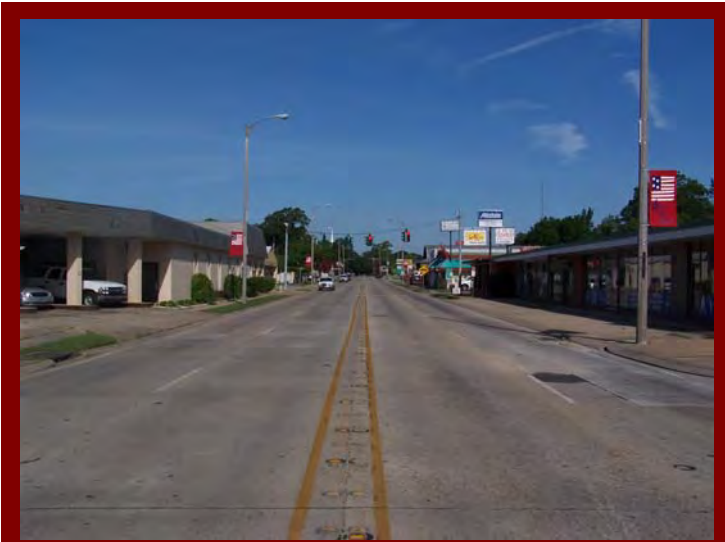
The impact of accommodating motor vehicles, as is typical of contemporary development, is a primary determinant in the character of an auto-urban environment. Auto-urban uses, with very few exceptions, consume more land for streets, parking, and other vehicular use areas than is covered by buildings, which commonly exceeds a two-to-one ratio. This type of development design demands large sites and proximity to a high-volume arterial roadway, which diminishes the importance of architecture and results in reduced open space and commonly, elimination of natural features.

Urban Character

Urban areas are historically the center of commerce, culture, and entertainment in the community. The features that contribute to an urban character similar to that found in Downtown are the proximity of

uses to the public ways, with little or no building setbacks, and a strong pedestrian orientation at the sidewalk level. An urban center is designed with an intensity of use to draw people into close contact, where congestion and personal encounters are both expected and essential for a vibrant community center.

Urban spaces are “architectural,” meaning that they are enclosed by buildings. In other words, the distance across a space, e.g. the width of a downtown street in relation to height of the block face, is essential for creating an “urban” environment. This environment is formed Downtown as a result of the building face abutting a moderately wide pedestrian pathway (sidewalk), a roadway narrowed by parking on both sides, and a narrow or nonexistent grass strip between the sidewalk and street.



Although the width of LA 64 breaks down the sense of enclosure in the historic downtown areas, there it is urban in character due to the build-to line and the placement of parking areas to the side and rear.