

F. Zoning and Other Development Regulations

Zoning codes and land use regulations need reorganizing and updating from time to time. Incremental amendments can introduce inconsistencies, ambiguity, and confusion—and produce disappointing outcomes. As communities change, so do their land use goals. Unanticipated consequences of previous decisions need to be corrected. A modern zoning code is based on planning goals and principles, is user-friendly and precise about what is and is not permitted, and provides clear standards for high quality and sustainable development. As a result, modern codes make it possible for most development projects to proceed without lengthy delays and reviews, because developers and communities know what to expect. Many communities, such as Tyler, Texas, have opted to create a “unified development code” that gathers into one document zoning, subdivision regulations, thoroughfare regulations, development standards, environmental regulations, sign regulations, historic preservation regulations, permits, and annexation.⁹

Given the time that has passed since the zoning ordinance has had the benefit of guidance from an up-to-date comprehensive master plan, revision of the ordinance is inevitable and desirable. Recent amendments to the ordinance have introduced best practices, providing a foundation for a new approach to land use regulations. With completion of the master plan, the MPC and the City will have the option of a complete rewrite of the zoning ordinance or the creation of a unified development code. In the interim, strategic amendments can be prepared to address the most pressing problems, such as administrative changes needed to respond to recent judicial decisions, and to ensure that the ordinance does not conflict with the master plan.

New challenges facing Shreveport may require new regulatory solutions. These challenges include:

- Promoting desired outcomes as expressed in the Master Plan Vision and Principles adopted by the MPC in December 2009.
- Implementation of best practices in regulation to achieve quality development.
- Recent judicial decisions specifying the need for clear statements of findings and reasons for land use decisions by the City Council and the MPC.
- Haynesville Shale drilling activity.
- Lack of consensus-based development standards and an appropriate, structured process for neighborhood involvement in land use decision making.
- Competitive development pressures from other local governmental jurisdictions.

The commentary below is linked to relevant Master Plan Principles adopted by the MPC.

User-friendliness

Clarity in organization and expression. Up-to-date zoning and land use regulations are organized to make it relatively easy for property owners and others to find and understand relevant information by using clear language, providing tables for rapid understanding of regulations, and providing illustrations (drawings and photographs) that show what is and what is not permitted.

The Shreveport zoning code is less user-friendly than it could be in several ways:

- Definitions need to be reviewed, updated, and consolidated in one location (for example, landscape and signage definitions are separated from the general definitions).
- Numerous “supplementary regulations” and a set of “miscellaneous districts” require users to consult many parts of the ordinance to make sure that all requirements have been identified. It can be easy to miss a requirement because they are not categorized and labeled for easy identification.
- Development standards are scattered throughout the zoning ordinance.

⁹ www.cityoftyler.org/Portals/0/docs/departments/metroplanning/pdfs/P&Z%20UDC%203_25_09%20amendment.pdf

- Subdivision regulations, environmental regulations, and other regulations affecting land use and development are located in separate chapters of the municipal code.
- There are no illustrations to aid in understanding.

Administration, enforcement, amendment and approvals

Approval criteria and written findings. The zoning code contains policies on amendment of the code and approvals by the planning commission, the board of appeals, the MPC administrative staff, and the City Council. However, there is no explicit statement that decisions should include written findings and response to criteria or policies. The lack of such requirements can create ambiguities, promote

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Streamline regulations while preserving appropriate safeguards for our resources and quality of life.

the impression among the public that decisions are unfounded or capricious,

and lead to legal challenges. A written record of findings and reasons for decisions, based on a simple set of criteria within the zoning ordinance, has the advantage of helping to structure the decision making process and providing an unambiguous record of the decision. Similarly, the code lacks a requirement that City Council decisions on land use or zoning matters be based upon findings of fact articulated for the record as part of motions to accept or deny, a step that has been found to be essential in supporting such decisions upon judicial review.

Streamlining by-right development with robust

standards. Comprehensive review and revision of the zoning code and associated land use regulations to be consistent with the Master Plan, once adopted, may make it possible to streamline development approvals by eliminating the need for MPC approval of all nonresidential development, including small projects. More robust development standards attached to by-right zoning can provide confidence to project proponents and the community that quality development will result. The MPC can then concentrate on more complex development approvals and area planning projects. Zoning that reflects the Master Plan's future land use map should also be less

subject to rezoning, particularly changes in use. This will give property owners more confidence in the long-term value of investments, and it will reassure residents, who will be able to count on stability in land use designations.

Incentives. Many communities allow greater density or other types of regulatory relief in return for provision of public benefits by the developer—as long as certain criteria are met. Such mechanisms are usually confined to particular zoning districts, types of development, and geographic areas. The Shreveport code does not provide for this type of incentive.

Structures for public participation. Except for MPC and City Council public hearings, the zoning code and the rest of the municipal code do not include any explicit procedures for structuring public participation. Many communities have developed systems that provide a defined public participation process, often, though not always, defined by ordinance.

Granting of variances and exceptional uses by the Board of Appeals or the MPC.

A comprehensive review of the variances that may be granted by the Zoning Board of Appeals is needed to achieve consistency in decision-making. The Board of Appeals is the appropriate body for variances and zoning relief based on hardship related to the specific characteristics of a property. The MPC is the appropriate body for zoning relief and conditions related to community planning goals. The Board of Appeals may not, therefore, be the appropriate body for making decisions on whether “special exception” uses should be allowed. Similarly, variances in hours of operation might be determined to be better decided by the MPC, the body that has recommended the base zoning or rezoning of a commercial use in light of community and neighborhood interests.

Fee schedules and content of applications. The zoning and subdivision ordinances currently incorporate fee schedules, meaning that every time fees are adjusted, the zoning ordinance must be amended. It may be more appropriate to provide for the fees in the ordinance and make the amount of the fees an administrative matter.

Similarly, the ordinance specifies information required for various application forms, but in practice the applications call for much more information. The zoning ordinance could require applicants to comply with detailed information as published by the MPC, which information could be revised as necessary.

City Council land use decisions. Rezoning is a legislative act properly within the authority of the City Council, to which the MPC provides advice. However, the City Council also has the role of hearing appeals of MPC decisions. Council decisions are not currently restricted to a review of the MPC record. This policy should be reviewed with an eye toward a possible return to the City Council’s traditional procedure of encouraging all parties to make their best factual presentations at the MPC hearing, the forum offering the best opportunity for complete factual analysis. While the Louisiana Open Meetings Law allows citizens an appropriate opportunity to speak to matters on a City Council agenda, the City Council can adopt its own policy establishing the basis of its decision in zoning appeals to be the record established before the MPC. If truly new information comes to the City Council, it retains the option of remanding the appeal to the MPC for further review.

Enforcement of building permits on contractors.

Currently, property owners rather than contractors are responsible for pulling building permits. As a result, when the zoning ordinance is violated—through failure to get approvals and permits or through work that is inconsistent with the permit or the ordinance—city officials can be reluctant to impose penalties or sanctions unless there are extreme adverse impacts on others. They believe that the property owners are not familiar with the requirements. In contrast, licensed contractors have to be familiar with legal requirements. Making contractors responsible for work done will end a situation in which zoning violators end up with an advantage over applicants who seek legal approvals.

Consistency and purpose statements

Consistency with the Master Plan and development goals. The zoning code has no overall purpose statement related to the development goals of the community, nor

does it include language expressing the intent that it be consistent with the Master Plan or other officially adopted plans. Consideration should be given to a “force of law” ordinance or charter amendment requiring that land use actions be consistent with the master plan and limiting amendment of the master plan to no more than once a year.

The Shreveport subdivision regulations do mention “current growth management

policies” and “conformity with the master plan” (Sec. 82-41-42), but how those findings are made is not clear. Purpose statements for specific zoning districts in many cases are out of date. For example, the statements of purpose for the R-A, B-2, I-1, and I-2 districts have not been updated since 1957, B-3 since 1958, and B-4 since 1975.

Zoning districts and use regulations

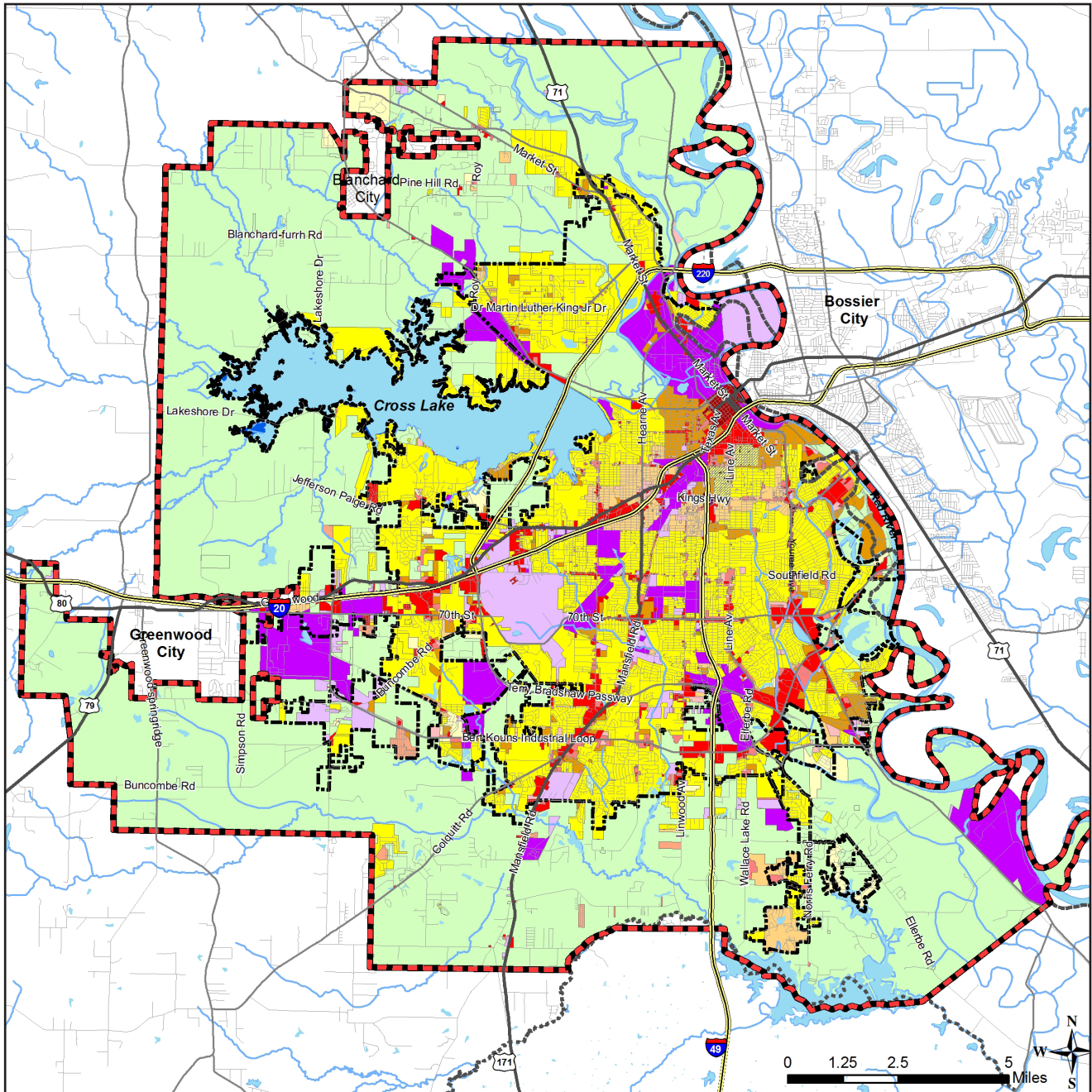
Revision of zoning districts. For the most part, the Shreveport zoning code has traditional, separated, single-use zoning districts, but there are far too many separate districts in the residential category, often based on tiny differences in density. At the same time, the ordinance does not clearly distinguish between multifamily and other residential zoning districts, and there may be a need for more distinction among different kinds of business districts. All zoning districts will need to be reviewed and some amended to make them consistent with the future land use map in the Master Plan. The issues to be reviewed are likely to include mixed use development; residential uses downtown; transitional districts; overlay districts, neighborhood conservation districts; and other refinements.

Updated use regulations. The zoning code lists permitted uses under each zoning district, with all other uses assumed to be prohibited. Modern zoning codes typically group land uses, providing definitions for those groups, and often further create land use categories based on common characteristics such as type of products, site conditions and impacts, amount of activity, and so on. The table of uses allows a rapid review of which use categories are allowed by

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Develop a ‘culture of planning’ where decisions are based on a set of principles designed to attain the community’s vision.

MAP 3.9 EXISTING ZONING



EXISTING ZONING

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|-----------------|
| B-1 Buffer districts | R-1D and R-1H One family urban districts | R-MHP Mobile home districts | Study area |
| B-2 Neighborhood business districts | R-1(TH) Townhouse districts suburban | SPI-1 Highland urban conservation districts | Shreveport City |
| B-2A Business park districts | R-2 Multifamily suburban | SPI-3 Commercial overlay districts | Interstate |
| B-3 Community business districts | R-2(TH) Townhouse districts urban | SPI-4 Interstate corridor overlay districts | US highway |
| B-4 Central business districts | R-3 Multifamily urban | SPI-5 Cross Lake watershed districts | LA highway |
| I-1 Light industrial districts | R-4 Multifamily high rise | | |
| I-2 Heavy industrial districts | R-A Residential agricultural districts | | |
| R-1 One family suburban districts | | | |

Source: MPC

right or by special permit in which zoning districts. The advantage of this system is that it eliminates the “laundry list” approach to uses and the need to amend the zoning code as land use types change over time.

Review of the exceptional and conditional uses and procedures. The zoning ordinance allows for several categories of conditional uses. Most zoning districts include a list of “special exception uses” that are permitted only with approval of the Zoning Board of Appeals. Some zoning districts have other lists of uses that require MPC approval. Many of the uses on these lists may no longer be suitable. “Extended use” zoning provides that a land use generally viewed as having higher impacts than the uses permitted in the base zoning can be permitted on a case-by-case basis, subject to approval by the MPC. Updating the land use regulation system, as discussed above, should include a review of the conditional-use system to make it consistent with the goals of the master plan and improve its user-friendliness.

Development standards

Development standards for better urban design and for sustainability. The zoning code offers a limited array of development standards, and they are scattered among various sections of the code. Some appear in other ordinances, including Chapter 82–Subdivision Regulations; Chapter 25–Oil, Gas and Other Hydrocarbon Well Operations; Chapter 34–Flood Prevention and Protection; Chapter 78–Streets, Sidewalks and Other Public Places; and Chapter 98–Vegetation. In general, there is no urban design vision and associated standards for different areas within the MPC jurisdiction.

Although the landscape requirements in the current regulations are the most extensive, they will likely need refinement. In commercial developments, for example, access management, internal circulation, cross-parcel connections, and provision for safe and comfortable pedestrian circulation through parking lots can be required. Standards that go beyond “buffering” are needed to improve transitions between zoning districts that have higher densities and impacts and those with lower densities and impacts. Scenic corridor protection can protect visually

attractive routes as they develop. Flexibility in meeting parking needs, through shared parking and other options, can be made available; current requirements produce huge areas of unused parking pavement. Moreover, development standards should also incorporate and encourage sustainable development practices—for example, allowing for natural drainage systems, pervious pavement and solar panels. Currently, only a portion of the Highland District is subject to design review and to demolition delay for architecturally or historically significant structures (SPI-1 Highland Urban Conservation District). Similar neighborhood conservation districts may be suitable in other locations.

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Promote and enforce quality design standards in private development regulations.

Planned unit development

Development standards. The PUD section of the zoning ordinance contains limited design standards. Submittal requirements do not include materials showing existing conditions or give sufficient guidance on the level and kinds of detail needed by decision makers.

Oil and gas extraction

Given the Haynesville Shale Play and the public interest in supporting gas extraction while protecting people, property and the environment from adverse impacts of hydraulic fracturing shale drilling, gas wells, distribution pipes, and so on, there may be a need for more detailed land-use regulation of shale gas activities.

Regulation of gas extraction. In Sec. 106-116, the zoning ordinance gives the Board of Appeals authority to approve and set conditions on the extraction of oil and gas. Chapter 25 of the municipal code, “Oil, Gas and Other

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- *Protect the quality of the water, air, and landscape.*
- *Establish policies that create the conditions to support the growth of local businesses and attract investment and entrepreneurs.*

Hydrocarbon Well Operations,” also regulates well operations permitted by the state after January

1, 2008. While some of the regulations provide clear prohibitions or criteria for operations, such as the measurable criteria for noise, in other cases, language lacks clear prescriptive or performance standards. For example, Sec. 25-16, “Abatement of dust, vibration, or odors,” calls for minimizing impacts, “as far as practicable.” The regulations also lack clarity about enforcement and penalties for violations.

Sign regulations

Updated sign regulation. Sign regulations will require review to assure consistency with the urban design principles in the master plan and to assess the need for regulations covering new types of signage, such as electronic signs, which are already appearing in the city.

Site plan review

Refinement of site plan review. The ordinance requires that, in the case of a rezoning request, the MPC approve a specific development plan—a process known as site plan review—before any building permits can be issued. In other cases, a less detailed development plan may be required. Refinements could build on successful experiences with

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High standards of quality in development and design.

developers, such as the “operational site plan”

created as part of the Pines Road Wal-Mart site, which was developed in cooperation with the MPC. An operational site plan would be required to be posted in a visible location in the store office, so that store managers will know expectations and zoning inspectors may easily check compliance.

Administrative character of site plan review. Public hearings on site plan review are a matter of discretion for the MPC. However, site-plan review is currently subject to ultimate legislative decision by the City Council, an unusual structure that invites litigation. Consideration should be given to making site plan review a truly administrative process, delegated initially to MPC staff with right of review by the MPC board on appeal. Then the only additional review allowed would be judicial, with a deadline for filing appeals that mirrors the existing

30-day deadline for appealing City Council actions that arise from review of MPC or ZBA decisions.

Subdivision regulations

Subdivision design characteristics. As noted earlier, language in the subdivision ordinance (Sec. 82-41 and 82-42) requires that subdivisions meet design standard and criteria for accepting a subdivision, (Sec. 82-71) including conformity to the Master Plan and any approved neighborhood plans.

Issues that need consideration in updating subdivision regulations include:

- Review of street and right-of-way widths to avoid over-capacity and excessive impervious surfaces, to provide flexibility in subdivision design, and potentially, to create incentives for desired subdivision types, such as conservation/open-space clustered subdivisions
- Review of maximum block size, cul-de-sac length and similar measures with an eye toward promoting pedestrian friendliness
- Compatibility of proposed lot sizes and street circulation design with surrounding and nearby development. Among other goals, this measure provides flexibility while placing developers on notice that merely meeting minimum lot sizes in a particular zoning district does not insure approval. It also addresses concerns raised in a recent judicial decision.

MASTER PLAN PRINCIPLES

- *Connect people and places.*
- *Promote and enforce quality design standards in private development regulations.*

Flood prevention and drainage

Chapter 34 of the municipal code regulates development in floodplains, drainage and stormwater management, and erosion and sedimentation controls.

Consistency with the master plan. In considering applications for variances from floodplain regulations, the City Council is directed to consider a set of criteria, including “the relationship of the proposed use to the

comprehensive plan and floodplain management program of that area,” (Sec.34-53(d)(8)). This will include consultation of the infrastructure sections of the Master Plan that propose open space corridors in bayou and floodplain corridors, and maximizing natural drainage.

Infill construction in floodplains. Variances are permitted on lots smaller than a half acre for new construction and substantial improvements if the surrounding lots have structures below the base flood elevation established

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Good stewardship of our natural and cultural heritage

by FEMA. Prohibition of new construction should be

considered, since the City has a program to buy out property owners located in areas of high flood risk.

Building above base flood elevation. Many communities require the first floor of new buildings be at least one foot above base flood elevation. These regulations appear to permit building at base flood elevation.

Drainage and stormwater management. The regulations should be reviewed to consider revision and/or addition of low-impact development alternatives and incentives for natural drainage solutions.

G. Toward Growth and Opportunity Without Sprawl?

In the last 50 years Shreveport-Caddo has searched for the right approach to stimulating growth and balancing revitalization of the city’s core with expansion at the city’s edges. It followed the post-World War II pattern of cities across the U.S. as private automobiles became the preferred mode of transportation, and new development spread in “greenfield” locations where building costs were low and development was supported by tax policies and other government incentives. By the turn of the 21st century, many unanticipated consequences of the postwar development model have become evident, particularly because Shreveport has not been growing, and the increasing cost of sprawling development is born by a static population.

Shreveport is also experiencing major demographic trends that have affected the entire country: an aging population, smaller households with fewer children, and increasing racial and ethnic diversity. With a successfully diversified economy, the city’s most competitive economic sectors are firmly part of the “knowledge economy.” Shreveport is competing with other communities for the most sought-after workers in the 21st century: well-educated knowledge workers who tend to be mobile and choose where they want to live based on urban amenities and walkable environments, cultural attractions, and access to outdoor recreation and attractive natural environments.

At the same time, like many other communities, Shreveport faces a set of enduring problems that constrain possibilities of success and grow out of the history of residential segregation and unequal opportunity. Since the 1956 Master Plan, almost every update has included planning recommendations for blighted neighborhoods, and every decade since the 1980s has produced its list of neighborhood revitalization plans. Small resources have resulted in small successes, but the forces of disinvestment have remained powerful. A third of Shreveport’s African-American residents still live in poverty and, on average, they have lower incomes, less education, and higher unemployment rates than their neighbors. These are critical statistics for a community that cannot afford to waste human capital.

Shreveport-Caddo residents understand, however, that the presence of neighborhoods and commercial areas hit by disinvestment ultimately affects every resident and the whole area’s success: the public opinion survey and community meetings indicated strong support for revitalization of inner core neighborhoods and downtown. Shreveporters have also made a community-wide commitment to improving public education. The Caddo Parish Schools Master Plan, underway at the same time as this master plan, is one facet of this commitment and the workforce development recommendations in this master plan are a key aspect of the plan’s economic development strategies.

Shreveport-Caddo can no longer sustain the “sprawl without growth” development model that has characterized its last 30 years. It is costly; it creates a fragmented landscape that neither enhances city life nor establishes new centers; and it fails to meet the diverse needs of a population that increasingly seeks a variety of options in quality of life. As the only major city in the region, Shreveport’s opportunity is to offer the best in city life

along with the easy access to nature and the outdoors that is a major attraction of Northwest Louisiana. This Shreveport-Caddo Master Plan looks forward to 2030, just a few years before the city will begin its third century of existence. The purpose of this Master Plan is to ready Shreveport-Caddo for success in meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

Principles to guide new zoning and the Unified Development Code

A modern zoning ordinance is more than requirements and mandates. It should make it easy to do the right thing. Obstacles that stand in the way of desirable development practices should be removed, and the connection to the land use policies of the master plan should be evident in the both the text and the zoning map.

Consistency with the Master Plan

- Provide for systematic neighborhood, citizen, and property owner input into proposed zoning changes.
- Create districts and regulations to provide the MPC with land use tools to implement the master plan vision and goals.
- Connect zoning to the master plan by basing the zoning map on the land use element of the master plan and the Future Land Use Map.

Usability, Streamlining, and Administration

- Eliminate obstacles to development by deregulating routine matters, minimizing nonconformities, and eliminating unnecessary and redundant regulations.
- Whenever possible and without losing desired development outcomes, replace discretion and administrative interpretation with standards to make regulation consistent and predictable for development decision making.
- Make administrative provisions and processes consistent, predictable and understandable for anyone using the zoning ordinance—resident, property owner, developer, or staff person.
- Make the ordinance easier to understand by modernizing terms and using appropriate illustrations, tables, matrices and charts.
- Establish a more advanced design review process linked to thresholds of impact. For example, require review by the MPC Board and

public hearings for projects that meet a certain size or impact, such as all projects at or above 50,000 sf, all projects with traffic impacts above a certain level, and so on.

- Institute planned development review for larger projects to better integrate new projects into their context. While this is especially appropriate for campus-like developments, this can be beneficial in numerous types of other non-residential development.
- Provide for approval criteria and written findings to be made by the MPC and the City Council in all land use decisions.
- Create a design review process that informs both the developer and the neighbors of community design standards and operational concerns.

Rural Area Principles

Over the long term, continuation of the leapfrog and sprawl development pattern in the unincorporated parish areas of the MPC jurisdiction—multiple small subdivisions, multifamily development, and mobile home parks emptying onto long corridors of low-density commercial development—will result in traffic congestion and lack of amenities, eventually overwhelming the Caddo Parish landscape that Shreveport-Caddo residents admire.

- Establish an as-of-right minimum lot size for residences that reflects rural conditions, such as 25 acres.
- Establish urban village zones to encourage compact development of commercial and higher-density uses.
- Require rezoning to a residential district and consideration of open space, transportation, infrastructure and Master Plan issues before allowing suburban-style subdivision development.
- Provide for “conservation/open space

subdivisions” that cluster housing in order to keep the rest of the property for nature, agricultural or forestry uses.

- Consider establishing “right to farm” standards that recognize common agricultural and forestry activities as having precedence over expectations of subdivision residents.
- Establish development standards for rural light industry to minimize off-site impacts.

Residential Neighborhood Principles

Single- and two-family residential

- Review residential zoning districts to ensure that they reflect existing or desired character and consolidate residential zoning districts that do not result in significant variations in development.
- Integrate character standards into residential district regulations where there is a desire to maintain existing residential character.
- Ensure that new infill or redevelopment housing built in the older parts of the city is compatible with the patterns established by the historic street grid, traditional orientation of front doors to the street, average setbacks, and parking strategies (parking on street, in alleys or at rear where driveways are not part of the traditional streetscape).
- Ensure that new infill in suburban-style developments is compatible with established patterns.

Multifamily (including townhouse)

- Connect multifamily housing to its surrounding neighborhood by integrating it into the street system and providing regulations that ensure proper transitions from lower- to higher-density development.
- Ensure that multifamily housing is sensitive to its context by creating design and development standards that are compatible with the surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- Encourage adaptive reuse of historic structures by including development flexibilities and

exemptions, linked to specific criteria, that will eliminate the need for variances and streamline the approval process.

Commercial District Principles

- Create standards for compact, neighborhood-oriented commercial districts that mitigate impacts on residential areas.
- In older parts of the city where corner stores have been traditional, provide special-permit processes within the residential zoning district to support the continued existence of such uses and to ensure that they are compatible with the neighborhood.
- Create a commercial district specifically designed to accommodate and encourage pedestrian-oriented, walkable shopping environments.
- Create commercial districts where shoppers arrive primarily by auto to be pedestrian-friendly and functional, but where parking is not the most visually prominent land use.
- Revise the current commercial district standards to ensure a high quality of design and integration with other uses, as well as safety and comfort for pedestrians.
- Map commercial areas on the zoning map, based upon the future land use map and master plan policies to create compact commercial and mixed-use development.
- Include design standards for each scale of commercial development.
- Locate mixed-use development on the zoning map within or near commercial areas. Mixed-use development can also function as a buffer between large-scale commercial development and adjacent neighborhoods.
- Tailor sign standards to the district, both in terms of the types of signs allowed and their size. The regulations should work to achieve a coordinated appearance within a commercial area or along commercial corridors.

Districts with Mixed Uses

Mixed-use areas combine diverse uses, mixed horizontally and vertically, each of which must be individually successful while contributing to a larger experience and identity. This does not mean that every property within a mixed-use center must contain more than one land use. What it does mean is that mixed-use properties and buildings will be permitted; that single-use sites will be designed to be compatible with other desired uses in the mixed-use center; and that the public and semipublic realm (streets, sidewalks, parking lots, building setbacks, building facades, landscaping) will be designed to work together and create human-scaled, walkable environments while still accommodating cars, loading and similar necessities

The Future Land Use Map identifies three Major Mixed-Use Areas: Downtown; the core medical district redevelopment area from LSU Health to Willis Knighton; and the Youree Drive retail and multifamily-development area near LSUS. Urban Village Mixed-Use Areas occur in two kinds of locations: as a medium-density adjacent area next to a Major Mixed-Use Area; and as existing retail centers or intersections appropriate for compact, walkable centers with retail and services to support nearby residential areas. Over time, as the number of households grows and the revitalization of core neighborhoods becomes more successful, additional mixed-use areas may prove suitable.

Because mixed-use development is more complex, it will require more design and standards review than development in other zoning districts. Some of this can be accomplished through administrative review based on clear standards, but in the case of larger projects, or projects with bigger impacts, a public hearing and approval by the MPC Board would be necessary.

- Provide regulations to insure proper transitions from lower- to higher-density development.
- Create districts for mixed-use development of

various scales. This includes vertical mixed-use (within one building) and mixed-use on the broader neighborhood level.

- Establish urban design goals and standards for mixed-use districts that emphasize pedestrian-oriented ground floors, sidewalks and streets.
- Manage the amount, location, and design of parking to support urban design goals in mixed-use districts; require, where appropriate, contributions to a network of open spaces through the development approval process.
- Establish zoning for downtown that reflects the mix of subdistricts identified in the master plan, transforming it from a series of individual destinations into a cohesive, interconnected, and well-managed center:
 - > Continue to **allow higher heights and densities** in downtown than elsewhere, particularly in the Central Business District.
 - > Establish a system of **primary streets with design standards** that are characterized by continuous zero-lot-line street wall, active ground-floor uses, transparency (percentage of the building frontage with windows) and permeability (building frontage with doors opening on to the street).
 - > Establish regulations to **promote adaptive reuse of historic buildings**, using the National Register Shreveport Commercial Historic District as the focus of adaptive reuse efforts.
 - > Support historic investments by **removing unnecessary obstacles to the rehabilitation of existing buildings** such as parking requirements and expansion of nonconforming uses.

Business Park and Industrial Uses

- Reduce conflicts both within industrial districts and between industrial districts and adjacent non-industrial districts.
- Provide appropriate locations for business and light industrial facilities in attractive and accessible settings.
- Refine the current industrial district structure

to accommodate a range of industrial development, including standards for research and light industrial/office parks.

- Include design standards for both buildings and the larger design of the site for industrial, business, and research parks. Design standards will help to mitigate impacts and assure a desired aesthetic image.
- Review performance standards for industry in establishing uses and evaluating impacts near residential areas.
- Include new landscaping standards to buffer incompatible uses, screen parking lots and outdoor storage areas, and improve the appearance of the site and street frontage.

Institutional Uses

- Create zoning districts that accommodate large office, medical and educational employment centers, such as Willis-Knighton, LSU Health, and LSUS. Specific zoning for such developments can facilitate a more orderly and efficient regulation process. In some cities, zoning requires institutions to file an institutional master plan that indicates future development plans within five or ten years. Institutional district development regulations should clearly indicate the scope of each development, requirements for transitions between campus activities and adjacent neighborhoods, and procedures for addressing concerns involving the institution, the City and adjacent neighborhoods.
- Allow mixed-use development in institutional districts.
- Establish appropriate boundary transitions between major uses and surrounding neighborhoods to ensure good neighbor compatibility.

Open Space Districts

Open space zoning is a way to make sure that at minimum, proposals to change from open space to other uses will have to go through a public process

and seek new zoning. Open space zoning districts typically limit structures to a low floor area ratio and require any structures be supportive of the open space uses.

- Zone public parks, rights-of-way along drainage ways and bayous, wetlands, and other recreational or environmentally sensitive lands as open space.
- Provide appropriate locations for open spaces and public recreational areas.
- Distinguish between conservation and recreation areas.

Sustainability and Environmental Standards

Zoning for sustainability helps shape development that is energy- and resource-efficient, minimizes the impact of human land uses, and promotes compatibility with local climate and environmental systems.

Zoning can support and encourage sustainable development by eliminating or revising existing rules that unnecessarily hinder sustainable development, providing incentives to encourage sustainable design techniques, and requiring basic sustainable development standards that address landscape, building materials, and building siting, and relate the location of use types and densities to public transportation access.

- Promote the use of water conservation and innovative stormwater-management techniques in site planning and new construction, including the use of semipervious paving materials, where conditions are suitable.
- Encourage, and in some cases require, sustainable stormwater management, scaled to the size and character of the site, such as bioswales, green roofs, and parking lot landscaped islands designed to absorb stormwater.
- Include parking alternatives, such as shared parking lots and parking space maximums, to reduce the amount of paved surfaces in a new development.

- Allow for land banking of parking facilities—where a portion of a parking area is kept in green space until the paving of additional parking areas is proved necessary because of sufficient parking demand—to reduce impervious surfaces.
- Allow urban agriculture in appropriate locations, including small scale beekeeping, poultry and similar activities, where appropriate. In addition, community gardens can be permitted as well as required for certain types of new construction, such as large multifamily developments.
- Permit temporary farmers markets in certain districts, subject to regulations, so that locally-grown produce can be sold within the community.
- Allow small-scale food processing in certain commercial districts.
- Permit solar collectors as an accessory use but with the proper zoning standards in place to minimize negative aesthetic impact.
- Create building siting guidelines for larger developments to allow for passive solar systems.
- Allow small-scale wind energy systems, subject to standards that regulate noise levels at the property line.
- Require bicycle parking facilities for certain types of new development, as well as bicycle storage facilities in larger residential development.
- Establish standards that address the number of bicycles to be accommodated for various land use categories.
- Require setback maximums or build-to standards to establish the desired scale of development within areas where a pedestrian-orientation is desired.
- Require pedestrian cross-access connections between sites and to adjacent developments, to create a larger, walkable environment, shared parking, and fewer curb cuts.
- Regulate the spacing of curb cuts to preserve sidewalk continuity for pedestrians and preserve on-street parking spaces.

Oil and Gas Regulations

Although the state governs where oil and gas wells can be drilled and how surface water is used in drilling activity, local jurisdictions can enact regulations about how wells are drilled and operated, and to mitigate impacts. The State Office of Conservation adopted Order U-HS for the Haynesville Zone in 2009, but several areas of concern remain that local jurisdictions may address.

- Require a noise management plan before operations begin detailing how the equipment used in the drilling, completion, transportation or production of a well complies with maximum noise levels allowed under local law. (Caddo and Bossier Parishes have contracted consultants to recommend maximum noise levels and expect to adopt regulations in Fall 2010.)
- Require well operators to immediate contact local governments when specific well incidents that need to be reported, such as spills.
- Limit heavy truck traffic to roadways designed for commercial loads and issue permits with approved routes.
- Regulate pipelines in public rights-of-way and across public property so that pipeline operators do not interfere with or damage existing utilities; provide local governments with a plat identifying pipeline locations, with a detailed cross section and GIS data.
- Require fencing and landscape maintenance near drill sites to prevent fire hazards.