

Living in Shreveport-Caddo: Neighborhoods and Housing

H
1
2
3
4
5

6

7
8
9
10
11
12
13



personal vision statements:

“Our neighborhoods are physically beautiful, mixed-income, racially and age diverse, community-minded and interlinked with all other neighborhoods.”

Chapter Summary

This chapter focuses on five issues: neighborhood form and types; neighborhood quality of life; neighborhood planning and participation in land use decisions; neighborhood commercial districts and resident access to retail; and overall housing markets and housing needs, including providing safe and decent housing to residents of all incomes. The discussion on neighborhood form and types analyzes the urban, suburban, exurban and rural areas and categorizes neighborhoods based on the different conditions affecting quality of life and new development. Enhancement of quality of life focuses especially on code enforcement and on creating a system to give residents a more structured role in land use decision making. Access to neighborhood-serving retail was an important issue for many residents and this chapter provides market evaluations at Youree Drive and 70th Street and for potential “urban villages” at locations in the areas of Pines Road/I-20, Mansfield Road/Bert Kouns, and MLK/Blanchard Highway. The chapter includes an analysis of housing development and affordable housing needs, with recommendations for changes in approach. More detailed revitalization neighborhood strategies are discussed at length in Chapter 11 and urban design issues are discussed in Chapter 12.

Strategies and actions for neighborhoods and housing include:

- Establish an administrative court to deal with code enforcement and quality of life violations
- Create a series of district and area plans to engage residents and other stakeholders in proactive planning connected to the Master Plan and its policies.
- In a new Unified Development Code, establish design standards for compatible infill development and provide for compact centers with neighborhood-serving retail.
- Create a community-based Housing Policy Advisory Council, including representatives of government staff, neighborhood organizations, for-profit and non-profit housing developers, realtors, and representatives of economic development organizations.
- Establish a rental housing code and strengthen city building codes to meet the minimum standards in the federal Section 8 code.

GOALS	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS
NEIGHBORHOODS	
<i>Enhanced character and livability for all neighborhoods, with investments to improve quality of life.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support initiatives and investments that improve physical character and environment, function, and access to community amenities throughout the Master Plan Area. • Promote neighborhood associations and community activities to encourage neighborhood identity, sense of ownership, and advocacy. • Promote proactive planning on the district and neighborhood level. • Create a structured community participation system for project review.
<i>Neighborhood centers providing access to retail and services for all neighborhoods.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus public efforts to support creation of walkable neighborhood commercial districts or nodes. • Locate civic and cultural uses within or adjacent to neighborhood commercial districts to act as anchors.
<i>Redevelopment of blighted and vacant properties in areas needing revitalization.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign a very high priority to a comprehensive, coordinated program to eliminate blight and redevelop vacant properties.
HOUSING	
<i>A comprehensive housing policy to support quality neighborhoods and meet the diverse housing needs of all households.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for a community-based system to develop and implement housing policy that includes stakeholders from government, the nonprofit sector, and the private sector.
<i>All housing in good condition and code-compliant.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assign a very high priority to effective and efficient property standards and code enforcement efforts.
<i>Quality housing to meet the diverse needs of households at all income levels and all stages of the life cycle.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the planning, regulatory and funding initiatives needed to provide a diversity of housing types, rental and ownership, market-rate and subsidized, to meet community needs.
COMMUNITY IDENTITY	
<i>A cohesive urban design identity for the entire planning area, with appropriate variations for diverse neighborhoods.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion of urban design goals and standards for private development and public planning and capital investment projects.

Findings

- Neighborhood form and character in the Master Plan Area varies according to the age and location of residential areas.
- Many parts of the Master Plan Area do not have easy access to neighborhood-serving commercial areas.
- Low overall population and household density poses a barrier to increased retail offerings near many neighborhoods.
- The majority of housing in the Master Plan Area consists of single-family homes and most households own a single-family home.
- Rental housing includes apartments and single-family houses.
- The diversity of housing types is limited. There are relatively few condominiums, townhouses, loft and other downtown-style apartments, assisted living, or other special housing types.
- Compared to other parts of the country, housing costs are low.
- As of 2010, a period of historically low mortgage rates, the median-priced home is within reach of the median-income household, assuming credit and downpayment standards can be met.
- Recent new housing development has focused on high-cost housing in southeast Shreveport and apartments or rent-to-own housing assisted with Low-Income Housing Tax Credits in MLK and other neighborhoods.
- Older, low-cost market-rate housing—for sale or for rent—is often in poor condition.
- In 2009, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development estimated that 42% of renters in Shreveport pay more than 30% of income for housing costs.
- Shreveport does not have a rental housing code.
- There are 7,199 adjudicated properties amounting to 1,586 acres in the Master Plan Area; 6,838 of these are within the city limits.
- The City of Shreveport typically receives annual federal entitlement funding in the amount of \$2.6 million in Community Development Block Grant funds, \$1.5 million in HOME housing funds, plus smaller amounts for Emergency Shelter Grants for homeless programs.

Challenges

- Providing a system of proactive neighborhood planning and neighborhood participation in land use decision making
- Bringing neighborhood-serving retail to many neighborhoods
- Creating critical mass with new developments in order to support retail and amenities
- Improving the quality of housing stock affordable to moderate and low-income persons
- Improving the quality of affordable rental housing
- Improving the function and design of commercial districts

A. Current Conditions

NEIGHBORHOODS OF CHOICE WITH DECENT HOUSING FOR ALL

Good neighborhoods are the bedrock of quality of life, and quality of life is a critical determinant of what makes metropolitan areas successful in the 21st century. Businesses locate where people want to be, and good neighborhoods, along with a great open-space system and a vibrant cultural life, rank among the key attractions that any city and metropolitan area can offer. As jobs increasingly follow people in the 21st century, rather than the other way around, investing in a high quality of life is also an economic development strategy.

What makes a good neighborhood? On a basic level, good neighborhoods are safe, clean and healthy, supported by well-maintained and well-run public services. They are comfortable and attractive, provide good access and circulation internally, as well as multiple transportation choices for travel to and from the neighborhood. To many people, good city neighborhoods have the advantage of diversity, whether among the people who live there or the variety of uses and things to do. Ultimately, good neighborhoods are about people and connections. The physical and social organization of a neighborhood should encourage people to get to know and trust one another. Over time, neighborhoods develop traditions expressed in care for public places such as a school or park, in festivals, and in holiday activities.

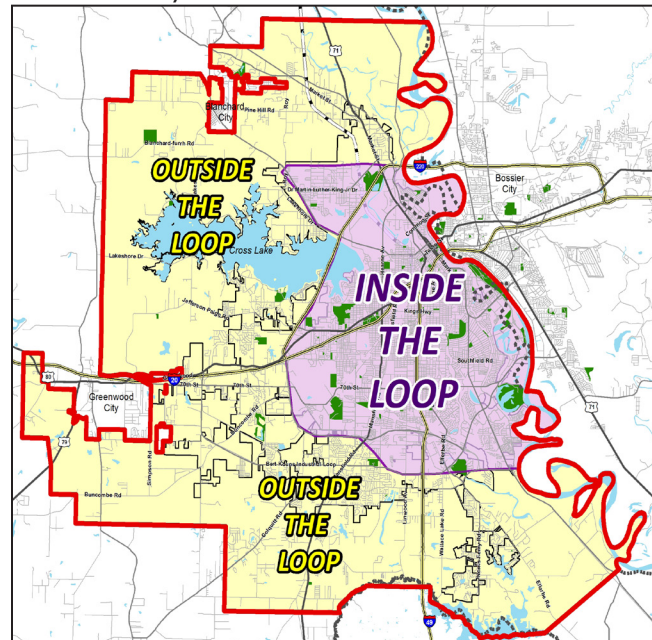
During the visioning process for this master plan, the majority of Shreveporters were clear that they want to see “smart growth” development policies and that they want every neighborhood to be a “neighborhood of choice.” At its foundation, smart growth means focusing resources and development in the city core, rather than promoting sprawl. In order to be successful at smart growth, each neighborhood within the city, regardless of household income level, should provide safety, decent and sanitary housing, infrastructure systems that are well-maintained, environmental and aesthetic amenities such as street trees, and easy access to parks, public spaces, and neighborhood retail and services. These are the characteristics of neighborhoods of choice.

Outside the city limits, many rural and exurban locations are not neighborhoods in the traditional sense. Expectations for nearby services and amenities are typically limited, as residents have made a choice to live outside the neighborhood context of a city or suburb. This is particularly the case with development along rural road frontage and small, scattered subdivisions surrounded by rural areas. However, in some cases exurban development takes the form of larger subdivisions that have more of a suburban neighborhood character, and residents expect future annexation by the City. In the context of smart growth and neighborhoods of choice, development in the unincorporated parts of the Master Plan Area should be channeled to form compact nodes that can grow to function as village centers.

NEIGHBORHOODS

The 308 square miles of the Shreveport-Caddo Master Plan Area include the City of Shreveport (approximately 124 square miles) and a five-mile planning and zoning jurisdiction area in unincorporated areas of Caddo Parish (approximately 184 square miles). As noted in Chapter 3, development patterns vary greatly within the Master Plan Area, from the urban character of much of the city “within the loop” to the complex mix of suburban, exurban and rural areas “outside the loop.”

MAP 6.1 INSIDE/OUTSIDE THE LOOP



Sources: NLCOG, Goody Clancy

In recent decades, the Master Plan Area has been experiencing the phenomenon of sprawl without growth. Even though the population has remained stable and the Shreveport-Caddo area added few new households, large areas in the urban center have been abandoned for new development at the edges of the city and in the unincorporated area outside the city limits. Overall density in the city has decreased over the last generation from 2,124 persons per square mile in 1980 to less than 1,700 persons per square mile in 2009. During the same period, the city annexed over 25 square miles of land, bringing in new subdivisions that arose in the periphery of the city and keeping the city's population stable at around 200,000 people.

The Master Plan Area is divided into 72 named areas—residential neighborhoods and commercial or industrial districts. Residents often identify most strongly with their particular neighborhood rather than with the city as a whole. The form, character and condition of neighborhoods reflect the economic, racial, political, and development history of Shreveport. Neighborhoods as discussed in this section of the master plan are made up of the residential units, parks and public spaces, and local commercial areas that primarily serve neighborhood residents. Areas that are centers of non-residential land uses are discussed in Chapter 7 and Chapter 12.

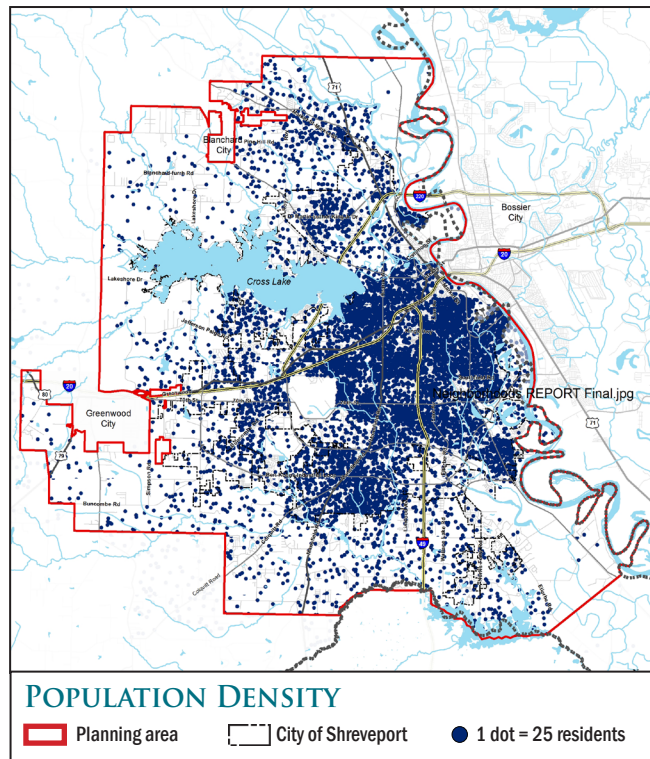
Neighborhood form and character

Neighborhood character is a composite of many features that together give an area its distinctive physical form and appearance. The relationship between structures and public spaces often molds social interactions, use of public space and sense of community. The physical environment or envelope in which people live does not determine what people do in an area, but it can set limits on what is possible or what they are likely to do. (For example, places without sidewalks do not encourage people to walk.) Features that help define a neighborhood's character include streets and sidewalks, the scale of buildings and public spaces, internal and external connections, building materials, architectural

styles, land uses, the number and type of public and social spaces, historic features, and development types.

Density—or in the case of disinvested neighborhoods, potential density if all the lots were occupied—is not uniformly distributed throughout the Master Plan Area. Inside the “loop,” most of the city reflects the urban neighborhood form that was almost universal before the expansion of suburban development in the 1960s and later: a grid of connected streets, small blocks, medium to small lots, and houses sited to face the street. Older neighborhoods are also relatively well provided with parks and public spaces. Outside the “loop” and the city core, in suburban and exurban locations, densities vary tremendously, from tightly platted subdivisions surrounded by vacant land, multifamily enclaves, gated subdivisions on golf courses, to houses on large lots along Cross Lake. Without mandates to provide parks and, until recently, sidewalks, these newer developments often lack public spaces.

MAP 6.2 POPULATION DENSITY



Source: NLCOG, 2000

Although development and annexation patterns have taken a complex course in the Shreveport-Caddo context, most suburban areas are subdivisions that were located adjacent to city areas and annexed in the 1960s or 1970s. Southern Hills is a good example of a suburban area that became part of the city. In the unincorporated part of the Master Plan Area—outside the city boundaries—“exurban” development has been growing and, in some cases, has resulted in annexation (for example, Southern Trace). While some true rural uses persist in the unincorporated area, much of the unbuilt land serves as a land bank for future expansion.

The Exurban Change Project of Ohio State University defines “exurbia” as:

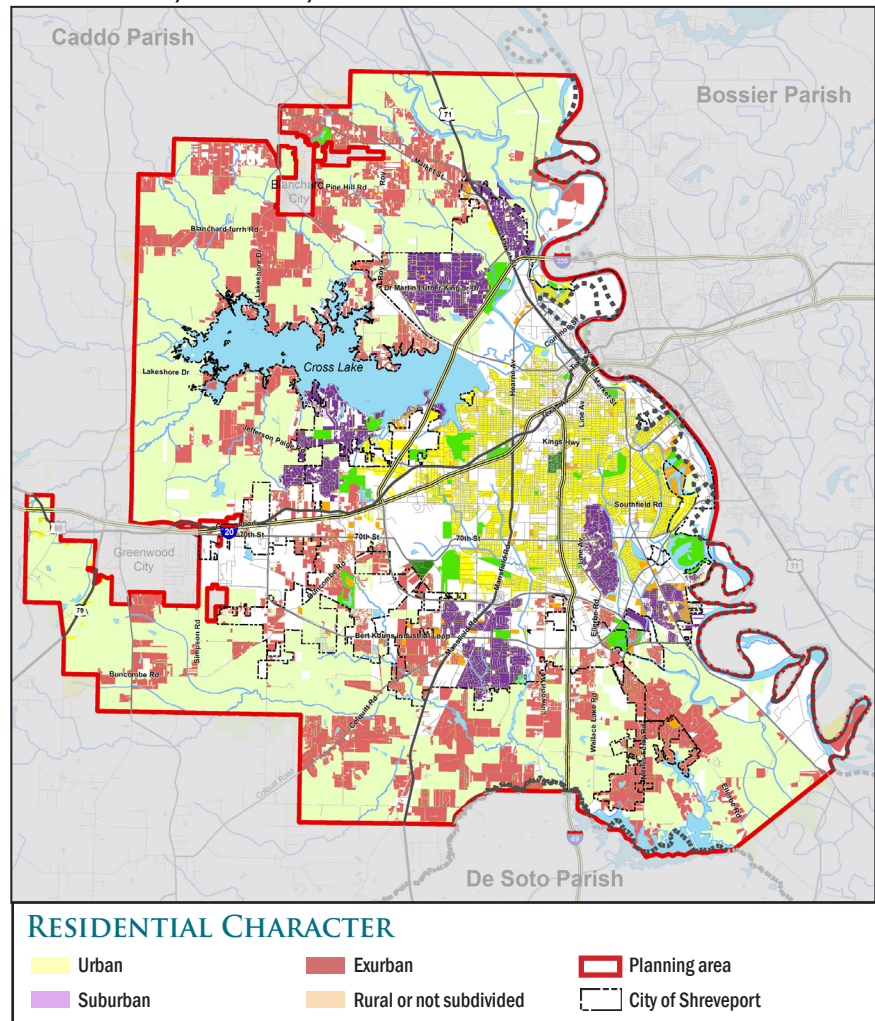
...a type of spatial pattern of settlements that differ from their suburban counterparts. Exurbs are located at greater distances from urban centers than suburban developments and are comprised of a different mix of land uses and population. Active farms are interspersed with different ages and types of very low density residential development, including roadside houses, new housing subdivisions, exclusive estates, and mobile homes. In addition, exurbia contains small, rural towns as well as newer edge-of-town retail, commercial, and industrial development.¹

Residential neighborhoods in the master plan area vary in form according to a number of characteristics.

- **Proximity to downtown and traditional street grid.**

For more than a century after the founders of Shreveport

MAP 6.3 URBAN/SUBURBAN/EXURBAN



Sources: Goody Clancy, NLCOG

established the rectangular downtown street grid in the 1840s, adjacent lands were subdivided with a continuous street grid, creating new neighborhoods that were easily connected to one another except where topography or water created barriers. Houses are sited to face the street, many of which have sidewalks and street trees. With the exception of a few blocks of very large houses in Fairfield, most of the buildings have modest front setbacks. Often, blocks contain back service areas or alleys with garage entrances, so there is no need for front garages and driveways that break sidewalk continuity. Because of the street grid, residents in these neighborhoods have multiple options for traveling to destinations such as shopping, employment, and schools. Corner stores

¹ <http://acde.osu.edu/programs/exurbs/def.htm>

and small clusters of retail and services persist in some locations, supplementing the commercial districts found on major streets in the more affluent areas. Highland, Allendale, and Queensborough are good examples of this type of neighborhood form. Once-separate towns like Cedar Grove and Mooretown and subdivisions like Broadmoor and South Highland developed adjacent to and connected with the older neighborhoods. The vast majority of the neighborhoods within the loop exhibit some variation on this neighborhood form. Spring Lake is an example of a neighborhood with a more suburban than traditional neighborhood form.

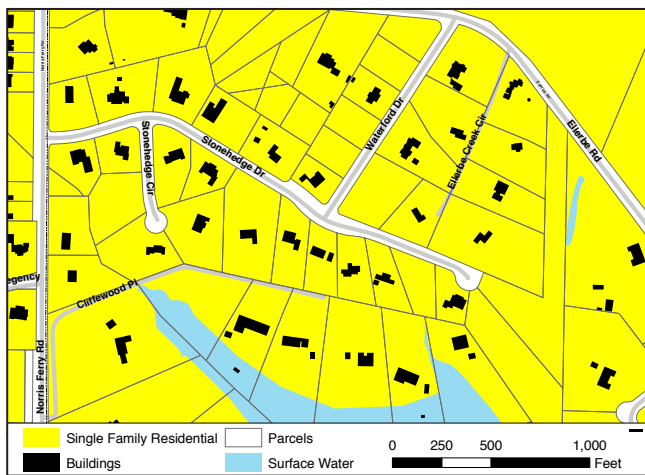
- Post-1950s suburban subdivision trends.** Most of these subdivisions are located outside the loop. They typically have curved roadways, multiple cul-de-sacs, and few direct connections to the collector or arterial streets that link them with shopping and employment areas. These developments tended to follow traditional placement of houses facing the street, but often with deeper front setbacks than in older neighborhoods. Garages are typically served by a driveway from the street. Most of these neighborhoods were designed to be auto-dependent, without sidewalks. Southern Hills, Western Hills,



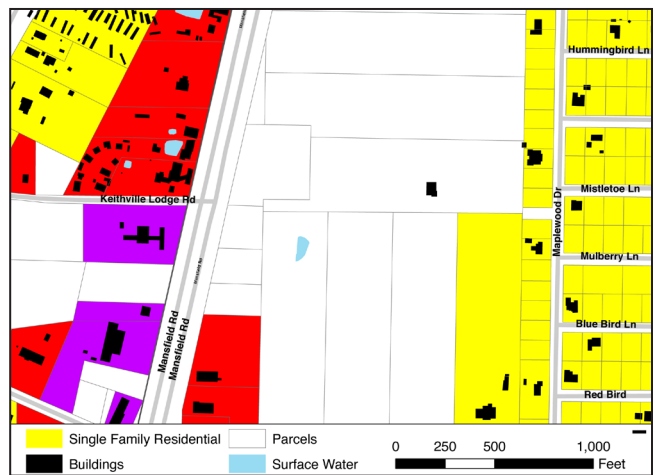
Small lots are typical of most older city neighborhoods.



Curved roadways, larger blocks and multiple cul-de-sacs typical of postwar suburban development



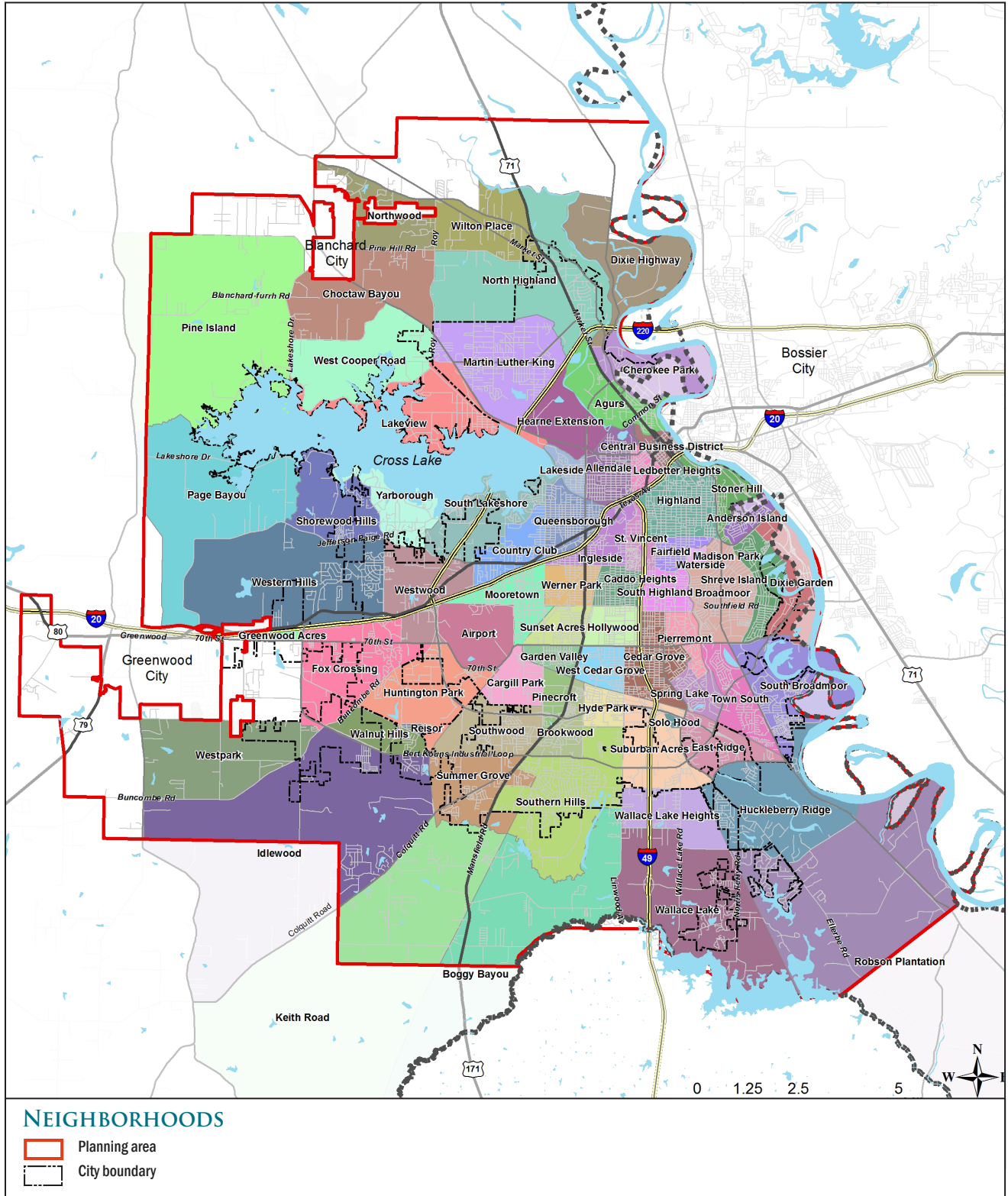
Recent large-lot suburban development outside city limits in the southeast



Exurban development: a mixture of small subdivisions, mobile home parks, and nonresidential development separated by undeveloped land in the Keithville area.

Sources: NLCOG, Goody Clancy

MAP 6.4 SHREVEPORT NEIGHBORHOODS



Source: NLCOG, 2009

and North Highland are typical of this type of subdivision.

- **Large-lot, large-house, and gated community market demand at the turn of the 21st century.**

Large-lot, single-family subdivisions, luxury townhouse or condominium developments, or golf course communities, often gated and at exurban, “leapfrog” locations, are generally connected by only one or two entrances or exits to a single arterial road. Most of this type of development is located in southeast Shreveport, both inside and outside the city limits.

- **Sprawling exurban development in semi-rural areas.**

Sprawl at the edges of the master plan area, both inside and outside city limits, takes the form of custom houses on large lots; small, isolated subdivisions; scattered clusters of single-family houses along rural roads; mobile home parks; and unplanned mixtures of residential and nonresidential development along arterial roads.

- **Continuing existence of rural residences outside the city.**

Houses or mobile homes on large farm or forestry parcels continue to exist in the rural parts of the Master Plan Area.

The Master Plan Area has examples of a wide range of development formats, though not necessarily as wide a range of housing types. Single-family residences are the overwhelming majority, including some developments with attached units. Outside of older neighborhoods, multifamily developments are typically not integrated into the surrounding context by street connections and suitable transitions in scale. They are surrounded by fences and provide one

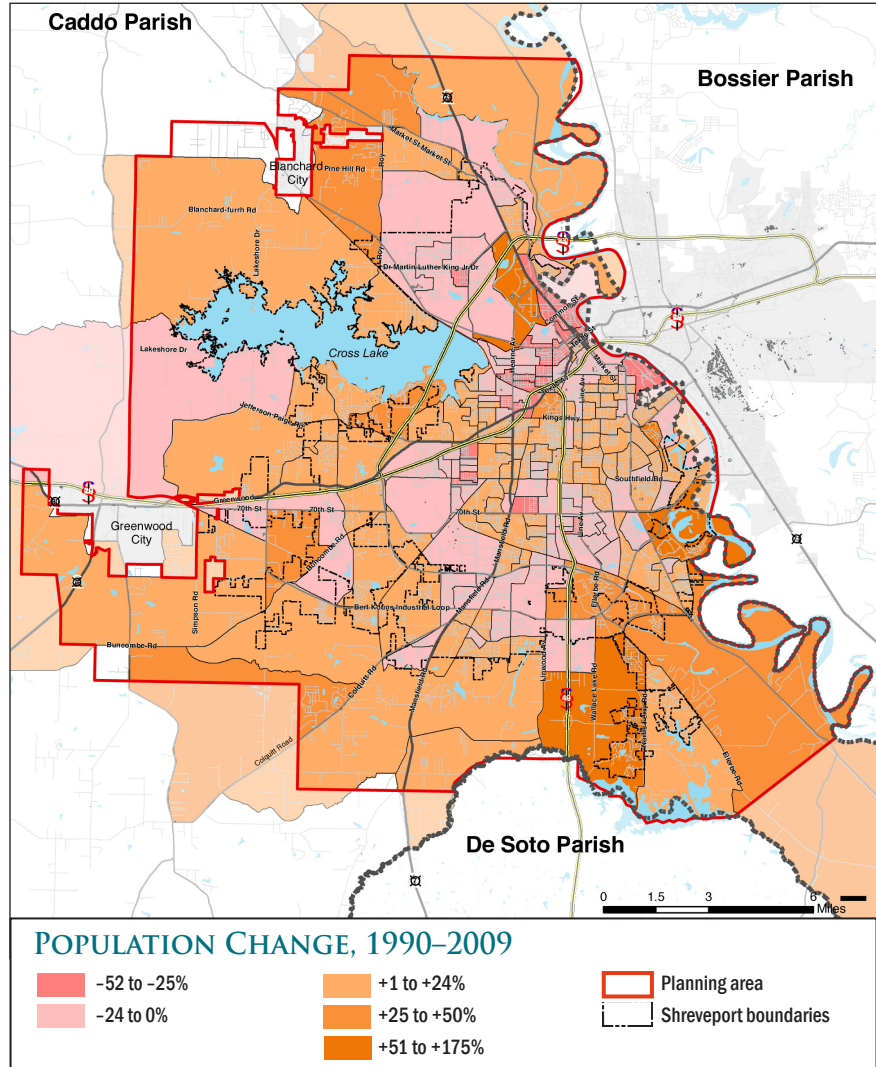
or two entrances/exits from a single collector or arterial street. This pod-like site plan for multifamily development is required by current zoning.

Neighborhood types

Planning agencies typically put neighborhoods into categories according to their needs. For the Shreveport-Caddo Master Plan Area, four different neighborhood categories were identified:

- **Stable areas** are not experiencing above-average rates of population change, have average or below-average poverty rates and fewer vacant housing units than other areas. Within the city limits, stable areas tend to be those

MAP 6.5 POPULATION CHANGE 1990-2009



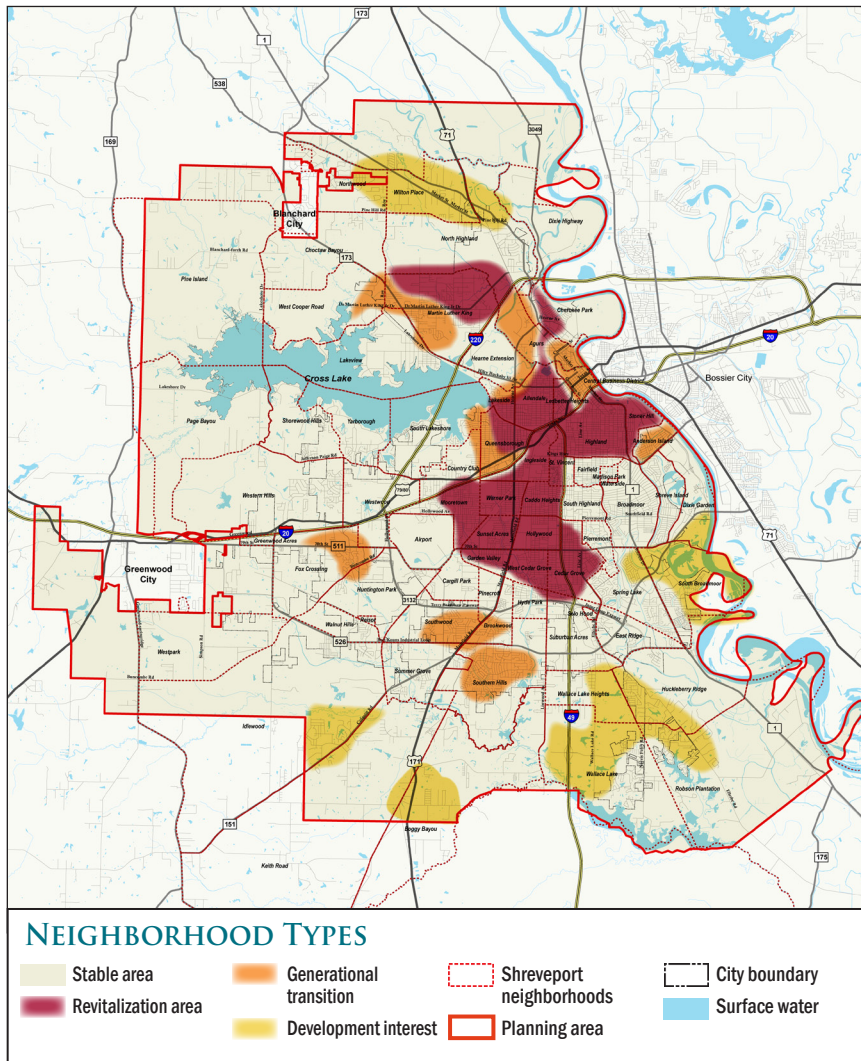
Source: NLCOG, ESRI Business Analyst, 2009

with the strongest housing markets and highest-income households. They are located predominantly in the eastern part of the city, outside of the city, and in rural parts of the planning area.

- **Changing areas** are in transition and may require attention to shape change in positive direction
 - > **Generational transition** areas are those where the population is stable in number, but residents and the housing stock are aging. There has been little recent development activity and special attention is required to ensure continued stability and encourage reinvestment.

- > **Development interest** areas are those where population has increased as a result of recent development and where additional vacant and underutilized land continues to draw interest for new housing development opportunities.
- **Revitalization areas** are losing population; have a higher poverty rate than other areas; have concentrated locations with adjudicated property; have a higher percentage of vacant housing units; and include census tracts that are eligible for expenditure of federal Community Development Block Grant funds because at least 51% of the households in those tracts qualify as low- or moderate-income.

MAP 6.6 NEIGHBORHOOD TYPES



Source: NLCOG, Goody Clancy

Stable areas

- **Stable city neighborhoods.** Stable areas in the city do not experience large changes in population, development activity, or income. Residents in these neighborhoods are most concerned with assuring that their neighborhoods are safe and well-maintained, with good code enforcement, security, and well-maintained public services and public spaces. They focus on whether any infill development is compatible with neighborhood character and want development that occurs at the edges of the neighborhood to be positive, to incorporate appropriate transitions, and to avoid adverse impacts. Many of these neighborhoods have strong neighborhood associations, and most are located either in the eastern part of the city—south of Kings Highway and east of I-49, such as South Highland and Broadmoor—or they are located outside the loop and toward the

edges of city boundaries (for example, Southern Hills, Western Hills, and North Highland).

- **Stable rural areas.** These areas are considered relatively stable because, although most have grown modestly in population since 1990, they have not yet experienced the strong development activity seen in the southeastern part of the master plan area and a few other locations. The northwestern and western parts of the master plan area tend to see less development because of several barriers: Cross Lake, a sparse road network and limited connections to major arterials and highways, infrastructure costs, and undevelopable land. Over the long term, if other parts of the Master Plan Area become more developed, these areas may start to see development pressure. The construction of I-49 in the north may spur development near the interchange. Changes in the zoning ordinance recommended in this master plan in Chapter 12 will set a framework for orderly future development within the context of a smart growth land use pattern.
- **Planning implications.** Stable areas need vigilance to make sure that they continue to do well. Within the city, many will continue to be Shreveport’s most sought-after neighborhoods, but others need to be monitored. Maintenance and enforcement are critical tools in preserving stability, plus careful attention to neighborhood edges and transitions, as well as amenities. Policies need to be put in place for rural areas that are currently stable in order to be ready for future development pressures, when more detailed planning would be needed.

Changing areas

- **Generational transition neighborhoods.** Some areas have been experiencing population decline as a result of aging households or people moving out. Some are adjacent to revitalization areas that have seen significant disinvestment in recent decades. These neighborhoods may be at risk of further decline. For example, Southern Hills remains a strong neighborhood, but many of its households comprise empty-nesters who are growing

older. In order for the neighborhood to continue to be successful, a gradual generational turnover must occur, with younger families moving in.

- **Development interest areas.** Most of the changing areas where population has been growing over the last 20 years are located outside the loop, with the exception of the area around LSUS and a few North Shreveport areas. Typically exurban, they are also often characterized by “leapfrog” development, particularly south of the city.
- **Planning implications.** Monitoring current development, real estate, land use, demographic and other community conditions in changing neighborhoods and identifying potential future issues is essential. If change is coming in the form of new development, ensuring quality development that reinforces the positive qualities of the neighborhood should be the goal. Where conditions are deteriorating, identification of the source of problems and early intervention to correct them is critical. In both cases, a neighborhood planning process that involves existing residents and property owner will set the framework for positive change. Incorporation of enhanced development standards in zoning and other relevant ordinances, as recommended in this master plan, will help implement the resulting plans.

Revitalization neighborhoods

Revitalization neighborhoods are located in the city rather than in exurban and rural areas. They contain high numbers of adjudicated properties, boarded-up houses, vacant lots, deteriorated housing, and vacant commercial and industrial sites. A significant portion of remaining property is in the hands of absentee owners, and there are many transient, low-income residents. In some neighborhoods, such as Ledbetter Heights and parts of Allendale and Cedar Grove, demolition of substandard housing has created a landscape of overgrown lots interspersed with traditional housing, often in poor repair, and a few areas of redevelopment. Strategies to revitalize these neighborhoods must focus on community assets, such as employment centers, to create a critical mass of revitalization that can attract private investment. In many

cases, well-maintained homes, often occupied by elderly persons who have deep roots in the neighborhood, are interspersed with the signs of disinvestment, and in some cases whole sections of the neighborhood continue to do well. Chapter 11 of this master plan lays out improvement strategies for revitalization neighborhoods.

New Development Types in Shreveport

Recent residential development in the Master Plan Area has tended to follow established suburban-style models common in the ArkLaTex region: golf course communities, gated communities, winding streets and cul-de-sacs. Apartment communities are self-contained. Neighborhood-serving retail is found in small strip centers on arterial roads.

Newer development types have just begun to appear in the Shreveport area. There is one TND—traditional neighborhood development—built on a greenfield site (that is, previously undeveloped land) at the southern edge of Shreveport. What makes TNDs “traditional” is a design emphasis on the characteristics typically found in neighborhoods built before World War II: sidewalks and easy pedestrian connections; single-family homes oriented to the street, often with porches; alleys where garages and service areas are located; some mixture of housing types, so that townhouses and modest-sized apartments coexist with single-family homes; parks and recreation areas within walking distance; neighborhood-serving retail. If the location is right and the development large enough, there is sometimes the intention to include offices as well as shops and services. TNDs are ideally located within or close to existing neighborhoods so that they are connected to a broader network of

transportation and services. Unless they are the size of new towns, TNDs built on greenfield sites often have an insufficient number of households to support retail on their own. They typically locate with some frontage on a major road and locate the retail there, so that it attracts customers from outside of the TND. The Shreveport development incorporates many of the design characteristics associated with TND, but its exurban location and lack of external connectivity means that, from a large-scale planning point of view, it currently functions as a “pod,” much as conventional developments do.

Another new development type in Shreveport is the mixed-use, mixed-income development. One example is planned for a site on Clyde Fant Parkway east of Stoner Hill, but has not begun construction as of late 2010. It is programmed to include both market-rate and affordable housing, including rental and ownership multifamily housing, single-family houses, townhouses, as well as commercial and retail areas, office, condominiums, and parks. Because of the site’s location, on Clyde Fant and below the Stoner Hill bluff, it is also likely to be a development with good internal walkability but less favorable pedestrian connections to other areas.



Examples of typical new residential development in Shreveport.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

The distribution of commercial districts in the Master Plan Area reflects historical development patterns, transportation routes, and the spread of the population over an increasingly large area. Shreveport has more land zoned for retail, at varying intensities, than can be supported by the city’s households—as the vacant stores along prominent corridors attest. The attraction of suburban malls combined with the oil bust decimated downtown retail in the 1980s; depopulation and disinvestment has left many of Shreveport’s core neighborhoods without enough households to support retail.

Smaller retail locations can be found in older neighborhoods, where corner stores within neighborhoods

and discontinuous blocks of storefronts on collector streets still exist—though outside of the eastern part of the city, these traditional neighborhood stores are often vacant. Commercial strip development can be found along the major streets that radiate from the city center. Closer to downtown the lots are small, as are the businesses. Larger lots and commercial strip development becomes more prevalent toward the loop and beyond. East-west arterials with commercial development include Kings Highway and 70th Street. Large-lot commercial development is concentrated from Youree and 70th and along Bert Kouns. Outside of the major commercial areas in the southeastern part of the city, many commercial areas are characterized by low-value development interspersed with vacant lots.



Riverscape is designed to be a mixed-use and mixed-income development with a range of housing types, shops, and offices. It is internally walkable but most other connections will require a vehicle.



The Provenance development, shown above and below, is designed as a traditional neighborhood development or TND to include shops, parks, and recreation within walking distance of each other. Provenance, however, connects to other development only by major roads.

The Urban Land Institute’s description of suburban strip development fits many Shreveport locations very well:

Typically, they are one-dimensional forms of development that lack a distinct sense of place or community and that increasingly are plagued by problems to do with fragmentation, congestion, inconvenience, inefficiency, deterioration, and visual blight . . . While a single automobile-oriented shopping center is easily accessible, dozens lined along the same suburban arterial are not. Consumers continue to shop there, of course, but in the coming years, increasing choices will undoubtedly force major changes in the strip environment if they are to retain their competitive position and economic vitality.”

Strip commercial development in Shreveport usually does not serve as a neighborhood center for residential areas because the arterials function as barriers between neighborhoods rather than as seams that weave neighborhoods together. Even when a neighborhood backs onto the retail lots that line a corridor, as often happens, residents may still need to use cars to enter traffic on the arterials in order to reach the commercial area. The arterials are designed to discourage pedestrian crossing or access.

RETAIL MARKET EVALUATIONS

The development model of recent years has seen the abandonment or lack of reinvestment in older retail locations, such as Mansfield Avenue, in favor of Youree Drive, closer to higher-income residential areas and on easy-to-develop, formerly agricultural lands. Youree and 70th Street has become the “100 percent corner,” the location where retailers want to locate because of its visibility, access and critical mass of retail activity.

Residents who do not live in the eastern part of the city often complain about the lack of neighborhood-serving retail near them and about the concentration of retail and services in southeast and east Shreveport. Retailers, especially national and regional chains, make locational decisions based on factors that include the number of households, household income and aggregate income, drive times, and location of competitors. The planning team conducted a market evaluation of retail opportunities

in several locations: Youree Drive and 70th Street; Mansfield Road and Bert Kouns; Pines Road and I-20; and MLK at Southern University. This market evaluation is based on current conditions and trends for the 2008-2013 period. It shows that there are opportunities for modest shopping centers (up to 100,000 square feet) at Mansfield Road and Pines Road, and a small convenience center (up to 20,000 square feet) on MLK at SUSLA. (The full report can be found in the Appendix.) In addition, because a number of residents expressed a desire for a Whole Foods market in Shreveport, the team reviewed that company’s market requirements but concluded that it would not likely locate in Shreveport without evidence of more household and demographic growth.

Youree Drive and East 70th

The major retail center in Shreveport today is Youree Drive around East 70th Street, with well over 2 million square feet of retail. Another retail concentration is located in Mall St. Vincent, a conventional, 555,000-square-foot indoor mall. Built in 1976, Mall St. Vincent is located at the intersection of Kings Highway and Fairfield Road. With the advent of Youree Drive development, retail has moved from the center of the city to the south and east.

An average of 53,600 vehicles per day (2004 data) passing through the Youree Drive/East 70th intersection makes this one of the most visible locations in the city. In addition, Youree Drive’s location puts retailers close to many households with relatively high average incomes.

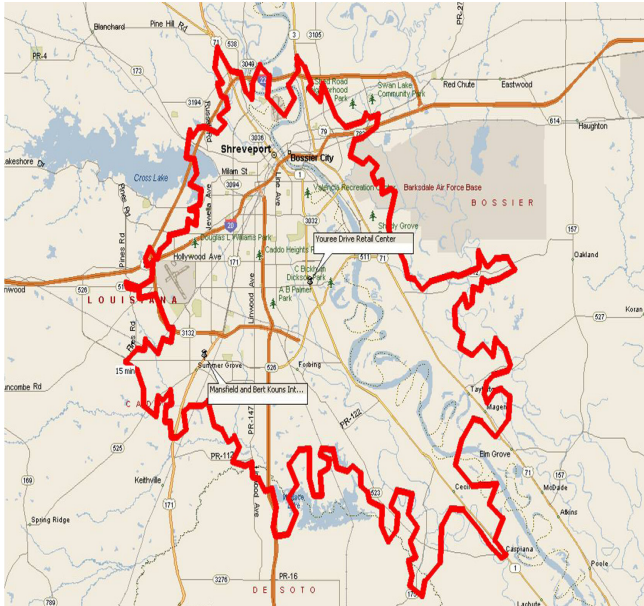
Youree Drive’s success also yields its greatest market weakness—traffic congestion resulting from an excessive

FIGURE 6.1 **YOUREE DRIVE, 10-MINUTE DRIVE TIME**

	METRO SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER AREA	CITY OF SHREVEPORT	YOUREE DRIVE & EAST 70TH
Households	153,321	79,226	49,681
Household average annual growth rate, 2000–2008	0.7%	0.1%	0.4%
Median household income	\$40,146	\$34,798	\$39,244
Average household income	\$54,621	\$50,720	\$55,430

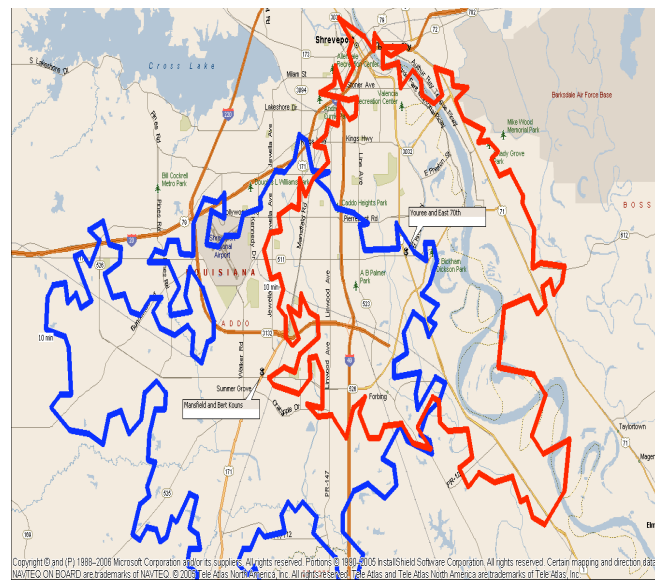
Figures are for 2009. Source: Claritas, Inc.; W-ZHA

MAP 6.7 15-MINUTE DRIVE TIME FROM YOUREE/70TH



Sources: Claritas, Inc.; W-ZHA

MAP 6.8 10-MINUTE DRIVE TIMES FROM YOUREE/70TH AND FROM MANSFIELD/BERT KOUNS



Sources: Claritas, Inc.; W-ZHA

number of driveways. For day-to-day shopping, Youree Drive is not convenient to residents who live beyond a 5- to 7-minute drive. However, because it offers such breadth and depth of shoppers' goods stores for comparison shopping, Youree Drive's primary trade area is likely a 15-minute drive zone—a trade area that encompasses most of the City of Shreveport.

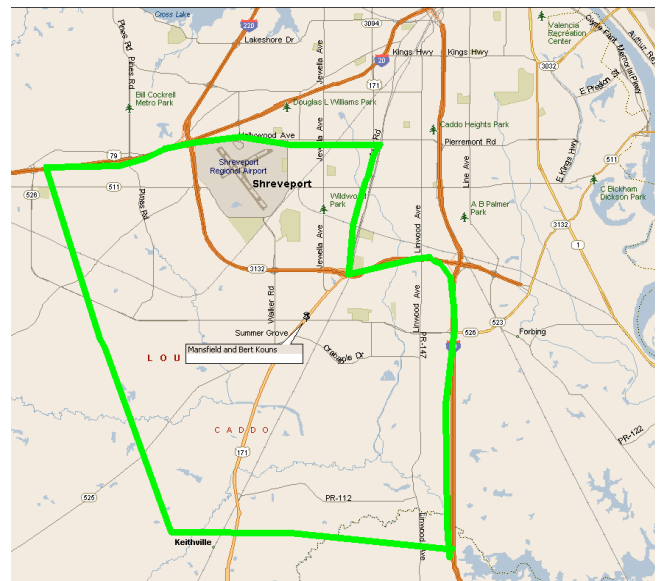
Mansfield Road and Bert Kouns Industrial Loop Expressway intersection area

The market within a 10-minute drive of the Mansfield Road/Bert Kouns intersection is not as strong as the Youree Drive/70th Street market, but it is stable and growing.

Trade Area: Mansfield Road/Bert Kouns. Large community centers can draw from a 10-minute-drive trade area, depending on the competition. Map 6.7 illustrates the 10-minute drive areas from both Youree Drive/East 70th and Mansfield Road/Bert Kouns intersections. The trade areas overlap between Mansfield Road and Youree Drive, south of Hollywood Avenue and north of the Inner Loop.

Given its location and character, Youree Drive retail is likely to continue to be a strong investment location for comparison-shopping retail. Specialty stores, apparel, jewelry, furniture, and other stores that target the

MAP 6.9 COMMUNITY-ORIENTED RETAIL TRADE AREA FOR MANSFIELD/BERT KOUNS



Sources: Claritas, Inc.; W-ZHA

regional market will demand a Youree Drive location because of its depth and breadth of retail offerings. The Mansfield area does not represent a competitive location for these types of retailers.

Neighborhood retail—small shopping centers anchored by a grocery store—typically draw a majority of their patronage from households within a 5-minute drive. Mapping the

FIGURE 6.2 MANSFIELD/BERT KOONS 10-MINUTE DRIVE TIME

	METRO SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER AREA	CITY OF SHREVEPORT	YOUREE DRIVE/EAST 70TH	MANSFIELD/BERT KOONS
Households	153,321	79,226	49,681	28,343
Household average annual growth rate, 2000–2008	0.7%	0.1%	0.4%	0.2%
Median household income	\$40,146	\$34,798	\$39,244	\$33,924
Average household income	\$54,621	\$50,720	\$55,430	\$45,998

Figures are for 2009. Source: Claritas, Inc.; W-ZHA

5-minute drive-time zones for both the Youree Drive/East 70th and the Mansfield Road/Bert Kouns intersection shows that those trade areas do not intersect.

The Mansfield Road area may have the potential to compete for additional neighborhood and community-oriented retail stores. Youree Drive's congestion makes it less attractive for day-to-day, quick shopping trips. A reasonable trade area for community-oriented retail in the vicinity of the Mansfield Road/Bert Kouns intersection appears in Map 6.9. The trade area reflects Youree Drive's impact on the retail landscape.

Trade area retail expenditure potential. The Mansfield trade area contains approximately 20,000 households with a median income of \$37,750, above the city average of \$34,800. The Mansfield trade area is projected to continue to grow over the next five years. By 2013, households in its trade area will have the potential to spend approximately \$390 million in retail stores per year. The trade area is large enough to support numerous shopping centers. Assuming that \$350 in retail sales is required to support a square foot of retail space, residents in the trade area have the potential to support over a million square feet of retail. Some retail spending will occur in the trade area, while other spending will occur on Youree Drive and in other locations.

Existing retail supply. The existing retail supply in the trade area is located in old strip commercial centers or buildings along commercial corridors. A detailed inventory of trade area retail was not conducted. However, the major shopping centers in the trade area contain approximately 620,000 square feet of retail space.

Market opportunity. There are two Brookshires supermarkets and a Kroger supermarket on Mansfield Road close to the Mansfield/Bert Kouns intersection. There is a Super Walmart at 9550 Mansfield Road, south of the Mansfield/Bert Kouns intersection. While there is considerable retail supply in the Mansfield trade area, the supply is generally old and unattractive. The trade area's demographics and future projected growth suggest that higher-quality community retail is warranted in this area. There may be an opportunity to develop a small (75,000- to 100,000-square-foot) community shopping center in the Mansfield area. A small department store or a new replacement grocery store could anchor such a center. Stores oriented to day-to-day shopping would fill out the remainder of the center. Only 10 percent of the trade area's expenditure potential would need to be captured to support such a center in the Mansfield area.

FIGURE 6.3 SHOPPING CENTERS, MANSFIELD TRADE AREA

CENTER NAME	ADDRESS	SQ. FEET
Summers Grove	9140 Mansfield Rd.	177,960
Southpark Village	8900 Mansfield Rd.	103,440
South Jewella Plaza	8201 Jewella Ave.	37,430
Canterbury Square	2530 Bert Kouns Loop	40,130
Eastridge Plaza	341 E. Bert Kouns	113,000
Mansfield Center (retail)	9076 Mansfield Road	150,000
TOTAL		621,960

Source: Claritas, Inc.; W-ZHA

Pines Road and Interstate 20

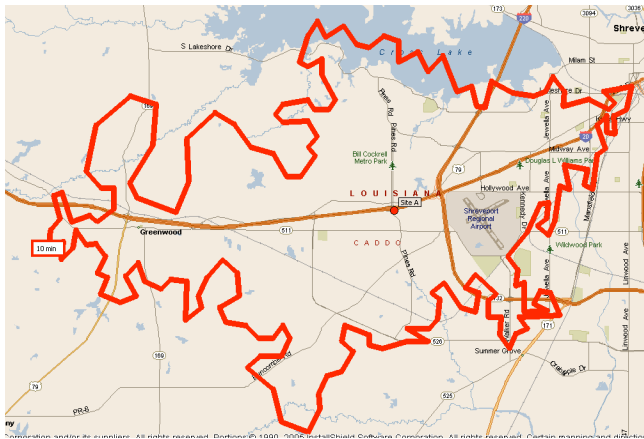
A Walmart Supercenter and the largely vacant Huntington Park Shopping Center sit at the intersection of Pines Road and Interstate 20. Approximately 18,000 vehicles travel Pines Road—an important point of access to the neighborhoods north of the interstate—each day in the vicinity of the interchange. Pines Road ends at Bert Kouns Industrial Loop Expressway to the south, and

FIGURE 6.4 PINES/I-20, 5-MINUTE DRIVE TIME

	MANSFIELD/ BERT KOUNS	PINES/I-20
Households	9,361	3,882
Median household income	\$40,181	\$40,857
Average household income	\$47,660	\$48,402

Figures are for 2009. Source: Claritas, Inc.; W-ZHA

MAP 6.10 10-MINUTE DRIVE TIME FROM PINES/I-20



Sources: Claritas, Inc.; W-ZHA

the Shreveport Regional Airport sits to the east of the intersection. Far fewer households exist within a 5-minute drive of the intersection than is the case with the Mansfield Road intersection. The 4,000 houses in the area are barely enough to support the Walmart grocery store.

Trade Area: Pines Road/I-20. There is relatively little retail in this part of the city. The Walmart is positioned to capitalize on lake residents and to capture spending from the urban households east on I-20. The Walmart likely draws from within a 10-minute drive, an area that contains approximately 18,400 households. Although there is a concentration of households within a 10-minute drive east of the Walmart, this trade area is not projected to grow significantly over the next five years.

Market opportunity. The market opportunity for the Pines Road/I-20 area is essentially the same as that for Mansfield Road/Bert Kouns. There is the potential to develop a community shopping center of 75,000 to 100,000 square feet, but household growth within

the 5-minute-drive area will be necessary to support additional neighborhood retail. The Walmart retards neighborhood shopping growth because it incorporates the typical anchors of neighborhood centers—general merchandise, grocery and drug stores. Further compromising the Pines Road/I-20 area is the appearance and performance of the Huntington Park center.

In the near term, however, because of household count, traffic volume and projected household growth to the south along Interstate 49, Mansfield Road/Bert Kouns is considered a stronger community retail location than Pines Road/I-20. In the near term, it is important to either redevelop Huntington Park Shopping Center or retenant it with non-retail establishments.

Martin Luther King Drive and Shreveport Blanchard Highway Intersection Area

There is a mix of education, healthcare, transportation and residential uses in the vicinity of the intersection of Martin Luther King Drive and Shreveport Blanchard Highway. In addition to Southern University, the David Raines Community Health Center and Kansas City Southern Railroad are employment centers in this area. The area is primarily residential in character.

According to representatives of Southern University, whose campus sits adjacent to the intersection, Southern is the sixth fastest-growing two-year university in the country; enrollment during its fall 2010 semester reached approximately 2,835. The university offers technical training and associates degrees. Among eleven buildings on the 103-acre campus there are 240 dormitory rooms. With little retail nearby, the university relies for a shopping area on North Market Street, where there are two supermarkets, drug stores, and other neighborhood- and community-serving retail establishments.

There is considerable of traffic on North Market Street. While over 48,000 vehicles travel through the North Market/Martin Luther King Boulevard intersection each day, only 12,400 vehicles travel through the Martin Luther King Drive and Shreveport Blanchard Highway intersection.

Trade Area:

Student and University Employee Spending

Given the prominence of North Market Street, the trade area for retail in this area will be constrained. The target market will likely be the students and employees at Southern University as well as nearby households. The average college student spends approximately \$2,560 per year (nine months) in stores and eating and drinking establishments. Southern University students have the potential to spend \$7 million per year in stores and eating and drinking establishments.

Almost half of this spending is for shoppers goods like apparel, electronics, and music/books. Food and health-related expenditures represent 20 percent of student spending. Of total student spending, 30 percent occurs in eating and drinking establishments (in excess of meal cards). There are very few eating and drinking outlets on-campus.

Although surveys exist that quantify annual office employee spending, specific retail spending information is not available for university faculty and administrative employees. For this analysis, the consultant team assumed that the spending patterns of faculty and administrative employees resemble those of office workers. The 168 full- and part-time faculty members have the potential to spend almost half a million dollars annually in stores and eating and drinking establishments on or near campus.

Together students and faculty members represent a potential \$7.5 million in annual spending at stores and restaurants, with the bulk of this potential spending being done by students.

Resident Retail Spending Potential

Map 6.11 delineates the 5-minute drive time from the Brookshire’s Supermarket (with pharmacy) on North Market Street. The Martin Luther King/Shreveport Blanchard Highway intersection is a 6-minute drive from the supermarket.

North Market Street retail is very convenient to households east of Shreveport Blanchard Highway. It represents a more competitive location for large-scale, community-oriented retail.

FIGURE 6.5 ANNUAL STUDENT SPENDING, SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AT SHREVEPORT (2,400 STUDENTS)

TYPE OF SPENDING	AVERAGE SPENDING/STUDENT	ANNUAL STUDENT SPENDING
Shoppers’ goods	\$1,160	\$4,289,000
Convenience goods	\$512	\$1,452,000
Eating and drinking	\$888	\$2,517,000
TOTAL	\$2,560	\$7, 258,000

Source: American Demographics/Student Monitor; W-ZHA

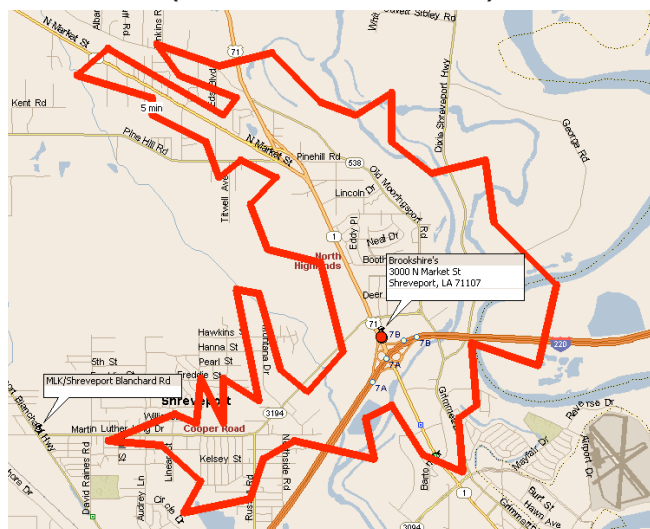
FIGURE 6.6 ESTIMATED ANNUAL FACULTY SPENDING, SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY AT SHREVEPORT (130 FACULTY, EST.)

TYPE OF SPENDING	AVERAGE SPENDING/EMPLOYEE*	ANNUAL EMPLOYEE SPENDING*
Shoppers’ goods	\$1,160	\$133,800
Convenience goods	\$618	\$103,800
Eating and drinking	\$1,712	\$287,600
TOTAL	\$3,126	\$525,200

* inflated to 2010 dollars

Source: ICSC, “Office Worker Spending Patterns, 2003”; W-ZHA

MAP 6.11 5-MINUTE DRIVE TIME—BROOKSHIRE’S SUPERMARKET (3000 NORTH MARKET STREET)



Source: Claritas, Inc.; W-ZHA

FIGURE 6.7 HOUSEHOLD TRENDS & PROJECTS, MLK TRADE AREA

	2000	2008	2013	CHANGE			
				2000–08		2008–13	
				NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%
Households	3,001	3,212	3,318	+211	7%	+106	3.3%

Sources: Claritas, Inc.; W-ZHA

FIGURE 6.8 RETAIL EXPENDITURE BY STORE TYPE, MLK TRADE AREA (2013 PROJECTIONS)

General merchandise	\$17,342,786
Furniture	\$2,662,962
Electronics and appliances	\$3,552,378
Building material	\$13,039,571
Food and beverage	\$15,428,866
Health and personal care	\$18,137,442
Apparel and accessories	\$6,033,180
Sporting goods, hobby, books, music	\$2,801,183
Miscellaneous store types	\$3,452,779
Eating and drinking establishments	\$10,965,990
Total shopping-center-inclined expenditure	\$83,417,137

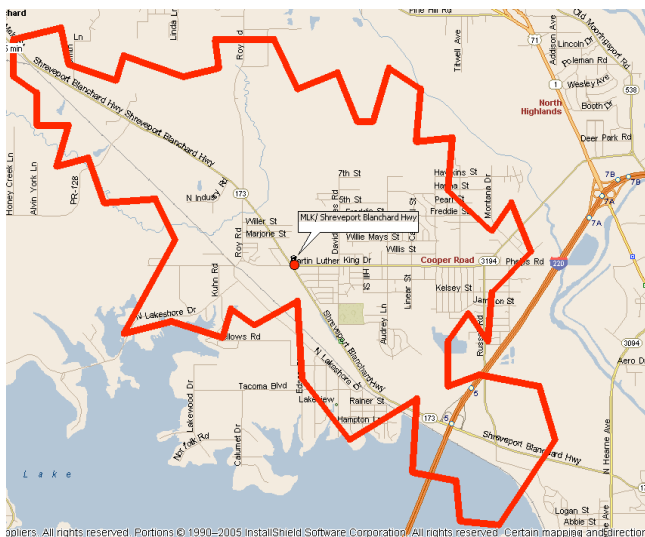
Source: W-ZHA

FIGURE 6.9 TOTAL EXPENDITURE POTENTIAL FOR THE MLK/BLANCHARD TRADE AREA

TYPE OF SPENDING	STUDENTS + FACULTY	RESIDENTS	TOTAL
Shoppers' goods	\$3,422,800	\$48,884,839	\$52,307,639
Convenience goods	\$1,555,800	\$23,566,308	\$25,122,108
Eating and drinking	\$2,804,600	\$10,965,990	\$13,770,590
TOTAL	\$18,099,200	\$52,758,000	\$91,200,337

Source: W-ZHA

MAP 6.12 5-MINUTE DRIVE TIME—MARTIN LUTHER KING DRIVE AND SHREVEPORT BLANCHARD HIGHWAY



Source: Claritas, Inc.; W-ZHA

Map 6.12 illustrates the boundaries of the 5-minute drive from the Martin Luther King/Shreveport Blanchard Highway interchange. Most of the households within this area reside east of Shreveport Blanchard Highway.

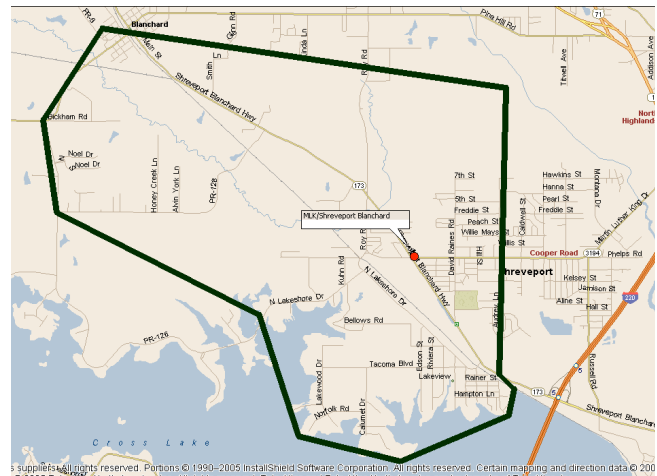
Map 6.13 shows a reasonable trade area for neighborhood-serving retail focused at the MLK-Blanchard Highway area. This trade contains 3,212 households and is projected to grow. These households have the potential to spend \$83.4 million per year in retail stores and eating and drinking establishments.

Market Opportunity

The student, faculty, and resident markets have the aggregate potential to spend approximately \$91 million in shoppers' goods stores, convenience-oriented stores, and eating and drinking establishments.

Given the competition on North Market Street, it is unlikely that this location could support a grocery-anchored shopping center. It may, however, offer an opportunity to develop a small neighborhood center of 10,000 to 20,000 square feet anchored by a convenience or a drug store. Additional tenants could include a small café, a dry cleaners, and take-out food establishments. It is in the interest of the university and neighborhood groups to work together in order to create an "urban village"

MAP 6.13 MLK/BLANCHARD HIGHWAY TRADE AREA FOR NEIGHBORHOOD RETAIL



Source: Claritas, Inc.; W-ZHA

at this area that serve both residents and the university community. This urban village, over time, can develop to serve as a mixed-use activity center balancing the North Market Street commercial area at the other end of Martin Luther King Drive.

ATTRACTING FOOD STORES TO UNDERSERVED NEIGHBORHOODS

Communities adopt a number of strategies to recruit grocery stores. These strategies fall into two broad categories: 1) data and marketing and 2) financial incentives.

Data and marketing. There is clear evidence that urban markets can be underserved simply because the buying power of the market is not understood or

well documented. Communities perform their own market analyses to demonstrate market opportunities to potential grocers. The market analysis documents household characteristics and buying power as well as the current lack of supply to tap this market.

Incentives. Cities employ many incentives to persuade a quality food store to locate in a community. One strategy is to assemble a site of sufficient size to accommodate a grocery store and to transfer the site to a store for a nominal fee. Other strategies include the use of tax-increment financing to underwrite development costs or property tax abatements in order to lower operating costs. Federal New Market Tax Credits have been used to support development of a grocery store in larger, mixed-use projects.

Market Realities for Grocery Stores

Grocery stores apply several criteria when selecting a location. The two primary ones are market potential and site visibility/accessibility.

- In terms of **market potential**, grocery stores consider the number of households and the character of the competition. Grocery stores typically locate in market areas that are growing.
- Grocery stores prefer sites that have easy access from **major thoroughfares**. High traffic volume is considered an asset, especially if the site is on the side of the street where traffic volume is high on the trip home. Sites visible from the road and convenient to growth areas are valuable to grocery stores as well.
- Households spend approximately 10 to 15 percent of total **income** in food stores. Lower-income households spend a higher share and upper-income households spend a lower share. Approximately 5.7 percent of disposable income in America is spent on "food at home."
- To turn a profit, grocery stores need to achieve **sales** of \$350 to \$500 per square foot of space per year. For conventional grocery stores, 70 to 80 percent of store sales are derived from households within three miles of the store. Specialty stores like Whole Foods and Trader Joe's can draw from a broader area.
- Supermarkets generally range in **size** from 50,000 to 75,000 square feet. By definition, supermarkets bring in at least \$2 million in sales per year, although the Food Marketing Institute calculates the average at above \$18 million. It takes \$200 to \$300 million in income or a minimum of 4,500 to 5,000 households in the primary market to support a supermarket. The number of households required to support a supermarket increases with the presence of competition.
- **Smaller stores**, like Trader Joe's, range in size from 10,000 to 15,000 square feet. Neighborhood stores can be 5,000 to 10,000 square feet.
- Two thousand households is the **minimum** required to support a food store that is not a convenience store.
- **Specialty natural foods stores**, like Whole Foods, seek locations with high concentrations of well-educated households and households without children. The market within a 10-minute drive of East 70th and Youree Drive does not appear to have the income and educational characteristics comparable to other locations where there is a Whole Foods.

Pennsylvania's Fresh Food Initiative. In 2003 Pennsylvania passed the nation's first statewide economic development initiative aimed at improving access to markets that sell healthy food in underserved rural and urban communities. Using \$10 million of state-provided seed money, the program assembled a financing pool worth \$40 million that combined bank loans and New Market Tax Credits. The pool helps finance fresh-food retailers that locate in communities that are underserved by conventional financial institutions. The initiative provides a range of financing resources such as pre-development grants and loans, land acquisition and equipment financing, capital grants for project funding gaps and construction, and permanent finance.

Specialty food stores. In Shreveport, the master plan team analyzed the characteristics of the market within a 10-minute drive of the corner of East 70th and Youree Drive. The profile of this market does not compare favorably to the other Whole Food locations. While household density is comparable to some locations, income and educational attainment fall below the comparables. For these reasons, it may be difficult to recruit a Whole Foods.

HOUSING

The master plan area offers some variety in housing types—that is, it contains single-family homes, small apartment buildings, garden apartments, large apartment complexes, townhouses, a few midrise apartment houses, and mobile homes. All these housing types exist as both owner-occupied and rental units. Other tenure arrangements, like condominiums or cooperatives, are rare.

Housing characteristics

Number and type of housing units. The Shreveport-Caddo Master Plan Area in 2009 had an estimated total of 103,466 housing units, of which 90,316 (87%) are located within the city itself and 13,150 are outside the city limits in unincorporated areas of Caddo Parish. Almost 13% of the total housing units are vacant. Most people in the Shreveport-Caddo area live in single-family houses, and that is likely to continue to be the case over the long term, even if new housing types are introduced.

According to 2000 Census data, over 70% of the housing units in the Master Plan Area are single-family homes. Approximately 14% of the housing units are in two- to nine-unit buildings. Medium-sized multifamily structures of ten to forty-nine units account for 4% of all housing units, and more than 5% of units are in structures containing 50 or more units. In addition, 5% of the housing units are mobile homes.

Smaller and older multifamily buildings can be found in older parts of the city where they are integrated into the neighborhood. Newer multifamily developments tend to be located and designed as self-contained “pod” developments near highways. The zoning ordinance requires that they be surrounded at a minimum by a six-foot fence and generally treats new multifamily development as a necessary evil. Map 6.13 shows the location of market-rate apartment house complexes with more than 50 units surveyed by the LSU Center for Business and Economic Research. For the most part they are located at the edges of the city or near highways. The overall occupancy rate for multifamily complexes of this type in the Shreveport-Bossier market remained stable at approximately 94% between 2001 and 2008.²

² LSU Center for Business and Economic Research, *Shreveport-Bossier City Commercial and Multi-Family Real Estate Market Report*, Year End 2008.

A Note on Housing Data

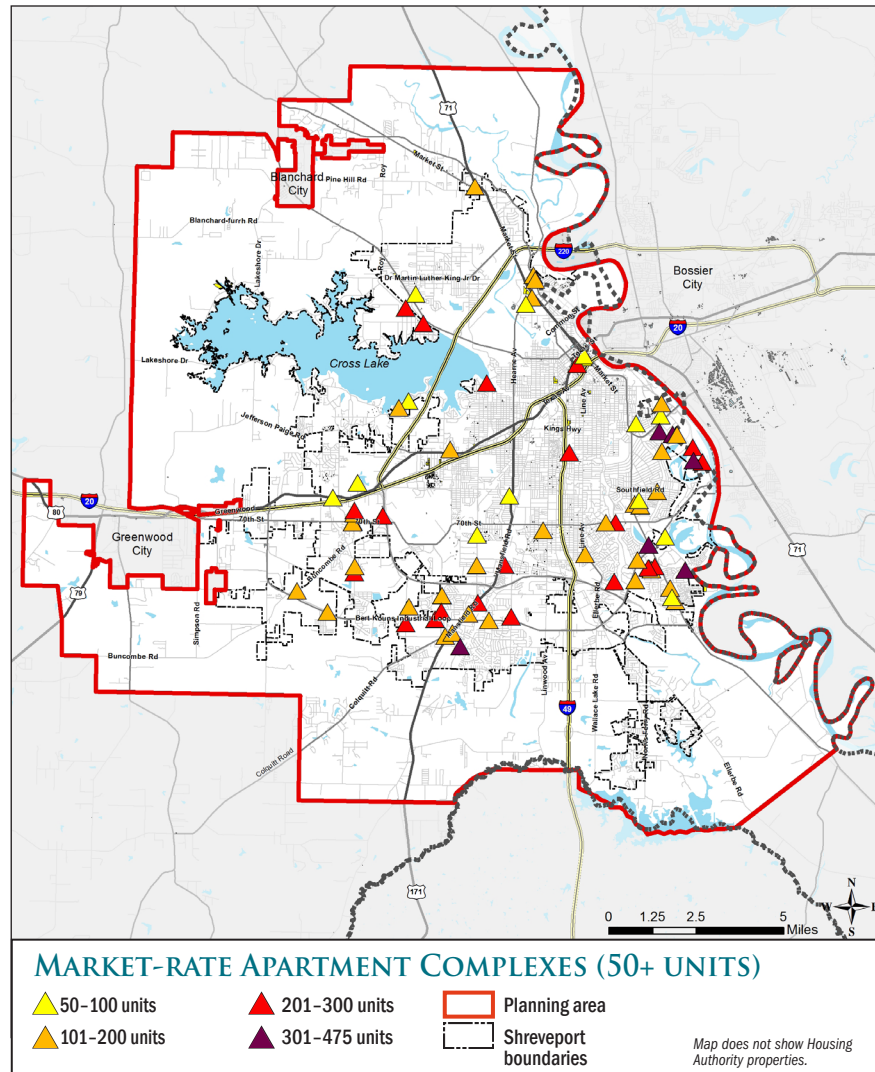
The most precise and reliable data on housing remains the decennial census. This master plan is being developed in 2009-2010, and the 2000 census data is by now quite out of date. Because population in the Shreveport-Caddo MPC planning area has remained relatively stable since the 1980s, however, 2000 census data can still be used to analyze many aspects of the area's housing conditions. When available, 2009 estimates on housing and population data are provided, as well as 2014 projections based on the assumption that current trends will continue. These data were created by ESRI Business Analyst, a proprietary database, based on the census and other sources.

Housing tenure. The majority of housing units in the Master Plan Area are owner-occupied (60% of the occupied units and 54% of all units). Cities normally have more rental units than suburban or rural areas, and this is also the case in the Shreveport-Caddo Master plan area, where 42% of the occupied housing units within the city boundaries are rentals, in contrast to the area outside the city limits, where 20% of occupied housing units are rentals. The rent-to-own model has been introduced in a few recent subdivisions, with a 15-year rental period after which the tenant has the option to purchase.

The number and percentage of rentals has increased slightly over the last two decades. In the city, the number of rental units increased by 3,000, with a corresponding increase from 39% to 42% of occupied housing units. Shreveport’s proportion of rental housing is not particularly high, compared to most cities. Lafayette, Oklahoma City, Chattanooga and Fayetteville have similar percentages of renter households, while Little Rock has 59% renters and Dallas has 52% renters. Larger cities often have more renters.

Age of housing. According to the 2000 census, more than three-quarters of the housing units in the city were built before 1980, with another 15% built during the 1980s. Reflecting the city’s stable population and modest growth in households, fewer than 10% of the housing units counted in 2000 had been built during the 1990s. About a third of the city’s housing units are more than 50 years old, and some 6,800 units (8% of the total) were built before 1940. This reflects the post-World War II boom when Shreveport was growing quickly. Although

MAP 6.14 MULTIFAMILY HOUSING



Source: Goody Clancy (data from LSUS Shreveport-Bossier City Commercial and Multi-Family Real Estate Market Report)

the city proper saw some residential development during the 2000s, the general age distribution of the city’s housing stock has not changed significantly. Precise data on age of housing are not available for the part of the plan area outside the city boundaries. Housing developments in Keithville and North Highlands began in the 1970s and 80s, but there has also been subdivision development in recent decades.

Net production of new housing. Between 2000 and 2008, building permits were issued for 4,207 single-family homes and 958 units in multifamily developments in the

FIGURE 6.10 HOUSING UNITS: NUMBER, VACANCY, TENURE (2009)

	CITY OF SHREVEPORT	MPC AREA OUTSIDE CITY	MASTER PLAN AREA TOTAL
Total housing units	90,316	13,150	103,466
Occupied units	78,534	11,752	90,286
Vacant units	11,782	1,398	13,180
Percent vacant	13%	11%	13%
Owner-occupied	45,640	9,341	54,981
Percent of total occupied	58%	80%	61%
Renter-occupied	32,894	2,411	35,305
Percent of total occupied	42%	20%	39%

Source: ESRI Business Analyst

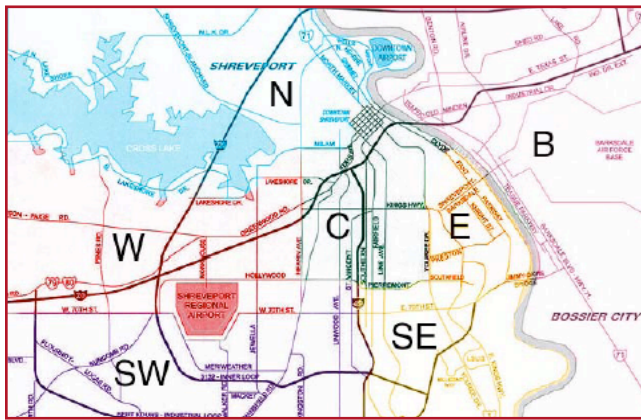


FIGURE 6.11 MULTIFAMILY HOUSING: MARKET SURVEY TOTAL (YEAR END, 2008)

SUBMARKETS	NUMBER OF PROPERTIES	NUMBER OF UNITS	OCCUPANCY
B—Bossier City	25	4,139	95%
C—Central	5	806	94%
E—East	9	1,818	95%
N—North	6	706	93%
SE—Southeast	21	4,501	94%
SW—Southwest	20	3,604	90%
W—West	14	2,364	97%
Totals	100	17,938	94%

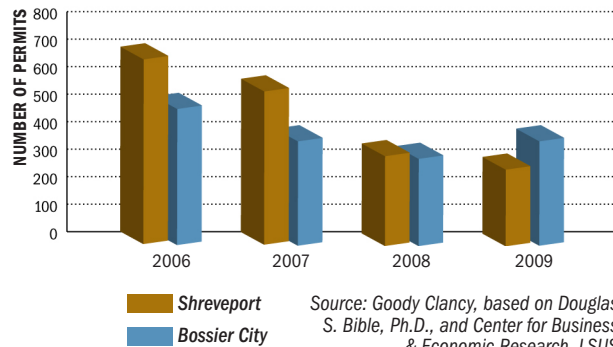
Source: ESRI Business Analyst

city. Although not hit as hard as other regions by the end of the housing bubble in 2008, the number of single-family building permits in the city in 2008 and 2009 was approximately half the 2006 number.

In the city, from 1990 to 2007, the number of housing units increased by about 3 percent, from 87,473 to 90,334. In Caddo Parish outside the city, the number of housing units increased by 13 percent from 20,142 in 1990 to 22,789 in 2007. In the same period, the number of Bossier Parish housing units grew by 35 percent, with a net increase of 12,422 units.

The net new number of housing units also depends on the number of demolitions. In the city, from 2000 to 2009, a total of 4,807 residential building permits were issued along with 1,983 demolition permits, resulting in a net increase of residential units of 2,824. This equates to approximately 207 demolished units per year—just under half the number of new units permitted.

FIGURE 6.12 SINGLE-FAMILY BUILDING PERMITS, SHREVEPORT & BOSSIER CITY



Source: Goody Clancy, based on Douglas S. Bible, Ph.D., and Center for Business & Economic Research, LSUS

FIGURE 6.13 CITY OF SHREVEPORT NET HOUSING PRODUCTION, 2000–2009

	RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS	RESIDENTIAL DEMOLITION PERMITS	NET NEW UNITS
2000–2009 total*	4,807	1,983	2,824
Annual average	502	207	295

* Through August 5, 2009

Source: City of Shreveport

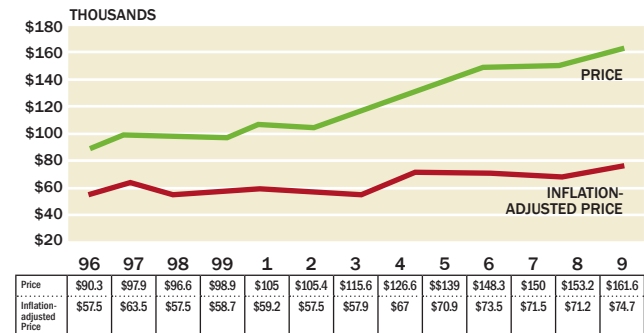
Cost of housing. In December of 2009, the average price of a single-family house was \$160,238 in the Shreveport-Bossier market, and the household income needed to buy that average-priced home was \$33,993. Data for 2008 show a median price at \$113,000 (half cost more, half cost less). The median household income for the master plan area in 2009 was estimated at \$36,027. Because mortgage rates and housing prices were quite low, many households had the income to purchase a single-family house—if they had the creditworthiness to qualify for a mortgage.³

Adjudicated properties. Adjudicated properties are properties put up for sale by the City or the Parish to satisfy outstanding property taxes, but that did not find buyers at the auction. Although they remain in the care of the governmental bodies, they do not become government property unless the governments act to take possession. Louisiana has a very long redemption period for these properties, with complex notification requirements and multiple opportunities for owners to redeem them by paying the taxes owed. This means that the properties remain vacant in neighborhoods for many years while the legally required period for redemption ticks down. It takes a minimum of five years to transfer ownership and often many more, and many of these properties have clouded title. The vast majority of adjudicated properties are residential.

The master plan area contains 7,199 adjudicated properties covering 1,586 acres in total. Ninety-five percent of these properties (6,838) lie within the city limits, and 62% are located inside the loop.

Foreclosure conditions. Because Louisiana did not have a housing bubble, it has not suffered the same foreclosure rates that accompanied the end of the bubble in other states from 2007 on. In 2009, however, Shreveport had the highest foreclosure need in Louisiana. In a survey of 13 Louisiana jurisdictions receiving CDBG entitlement funds Shreveport ranked:

FIGURE 6.14 AVERAGE ANNUAL SALE PRICE SINGLE-FAMILY HOME (SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER)



Source: Bible, “Market Trends,” LSUS and NW Louisiana Association of Realtors

FIGURE 6.15 ADJUDICATED PROPERTIES AND ACRES WITHIN THE MASTER PLAN AREA

	TOTAL	PERCENT	ACRES	TOTAL AREA (LAND ONLY, IN ACRES)
Total adjudicated parcels	7,199	100%	1,586	196,934
Within city limits	6,838	95%	1,359	77,695
Inside the loop	4,439	62%	1,243	50,303

- No. 1 in overall foreclosure need
- No. 2 in percentage of all loans that are considered subprime (15.4%)
- No. 1 in percentage of loans more than 30 days delinquent (10.5%).

Predatory lending has been a problem in the area. People who are elderly, lack education, or are unsophisticated about borrowing have become involved without fully understanding the consequences in a variety of complicated loan products—such as interest-only loans, adjustable-rate mortgages, negative-amortization loans, and reverse mortgages.⁴

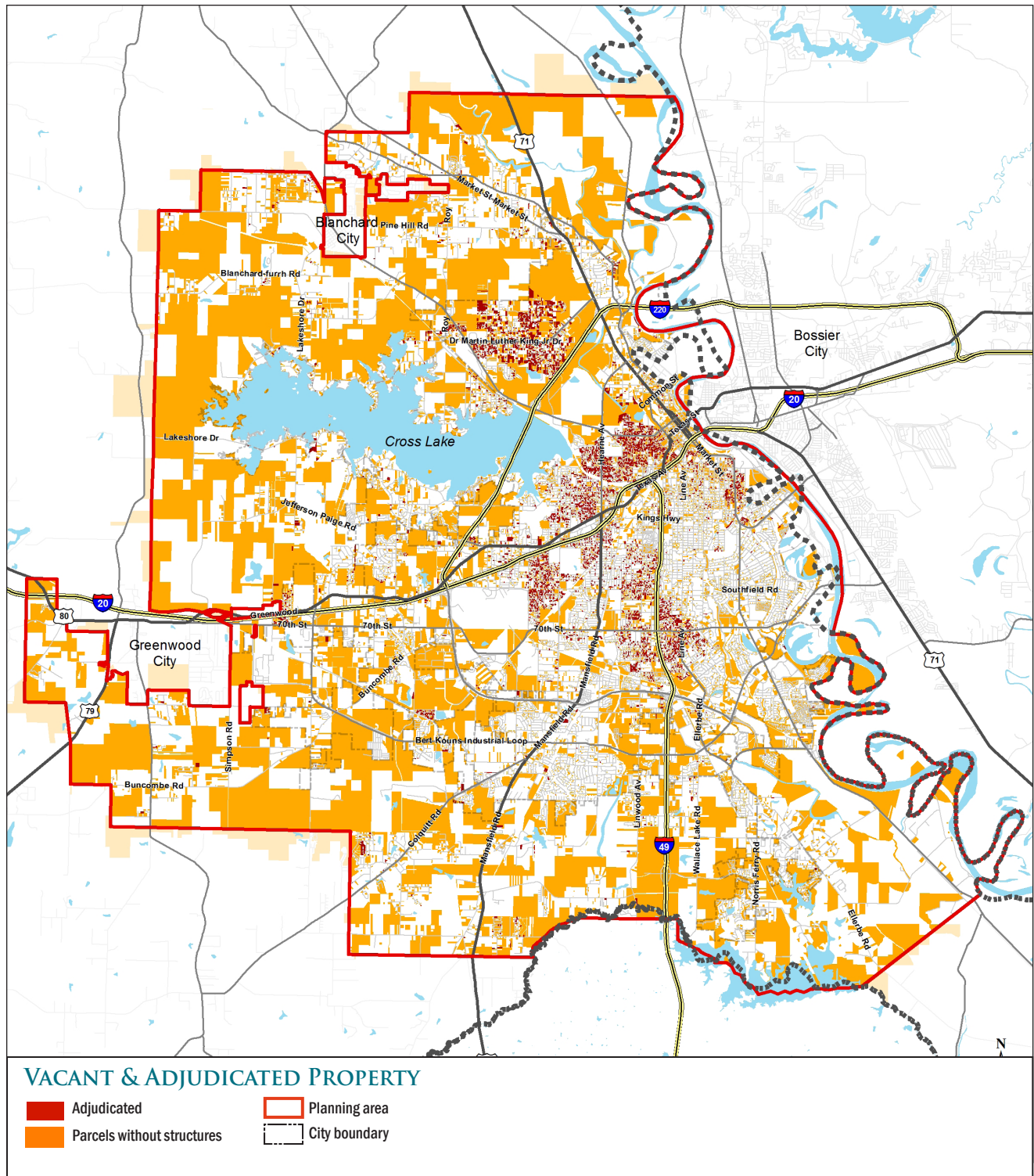
HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Housing is typically defined as “affordable” when a household pays no more than 30 percent of its income for housing-related costs. For rental housing, this figure includes rent and utility expenses; for homeowners, it includes mortgage payments, taxes and insurance. The “no more than 30% of income” standard is used by the U.S.

³ Douglas S. Bible, “Market Trends in Residential Real Estate, Shreveport-Bossier,” July 2009, LSUS. The charts in this section also come from this source. www.lsus.edu/cber/Real%20Estate/4th%20Q%20Combined.pdf

⁴ Foreclosure-response.org; City of Shreveport Consolidated Plan 2009-2013, p. 35.

MAP 6.15 VACANT AND ADJUDICATED PROPERTIES

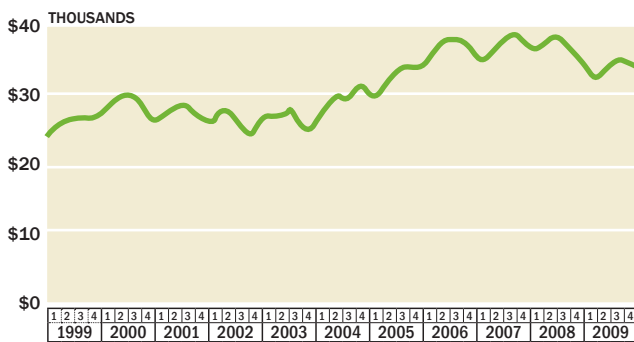


Source: NLCOG 2009

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for its housing programs and like most states and localities, Louisiana and Shreveport have adopted this affordability standard for their housing programs. HUD is moving toward inclusion of transportation costs as part of the affordability definition in recognition of the way that high transportation costs from an affordable unit to jobs or other destinations can affect total living expenses. A recent study of housing affordability ranked the Shreveport-Bossier Metropolitan Statistical Area at 125th for affordability out of 175 U.S. metropolitan areas. Using a price-to-income ratio (median price of a single-family house divided by the median household income) for the third quarter of 2009, the study found the Shreveport-Bossier MSA to be “moderately unaffordable.”⁵

⁵ 6th Annual Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey-2010; www.demographia.com/dbi.pdf

FIGURE 6.16 INCOME REQUIRED TO PURCHASE AND AVERAGE PRICE SINGLE-FAMILY HOME



Source: Bible, “Market Trends,” LSUS and NW Louisiana Association of Realtors

FIGURE 6.17 SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER AVERAGE ANNUAL WAGES FOR SELECTED OCCUPATIONS (MAY 2008)

Lab technician	\$28,880
Emergency medical technician/paramedic	\$24,330
Home health aide	\$17,400
Nursing aides/orderly	\$18,600
Child care worker	\$15,800
Dishwasher	\$14,940
Maids and housekeeper	\$15,860
Gaming dealer	\$14,710
Hotel desk clerk	\$19,340

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2008, Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Area Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates—Shreveport-Bossier City, LA

Who needs affordable housing?

A wide variety of people need affordable housing. They include persons on fixed incomes (the elderly and disabled), working individuals and families who earn low wages, and homeless and special-needs populations with supportive-service needs. In Shreveport, this group can include people like restaurant and hotel workers, maintenance workers, retail salespersons, construction laborers, health care aides, and government workers. Members of these households are productive members of the area workforce and the backbone of some key economic sectors, such as health care, entertainment and tourism.

What is government-assisted housing?

Government programs have been created to help people obtain decent, affordable homes. “Assisted housing” is housing that is made available at below-market cost through government programs to households who meet income-eligibility requirements. The role of housing assistance varies according to the strength of the local housing market and the cost of housing. In high-cost markets, subsidies are required if affordable housing is to exist at all. The business community is often one of the biggest supporters of subsidized affordable housing in high-housing-cost markets because it is essential to retaining the workforce. In these high-cost areas, having 10–15% of housing units as cost-restricted through subsidy programs is often cited as a minimum goal. In weak and/or low-cost housing markets, like many parts of the Master Plan Area, many market-rate housing units—both rental and ownership units—are inexpensive and meet the standard for affordability for many low-income households.

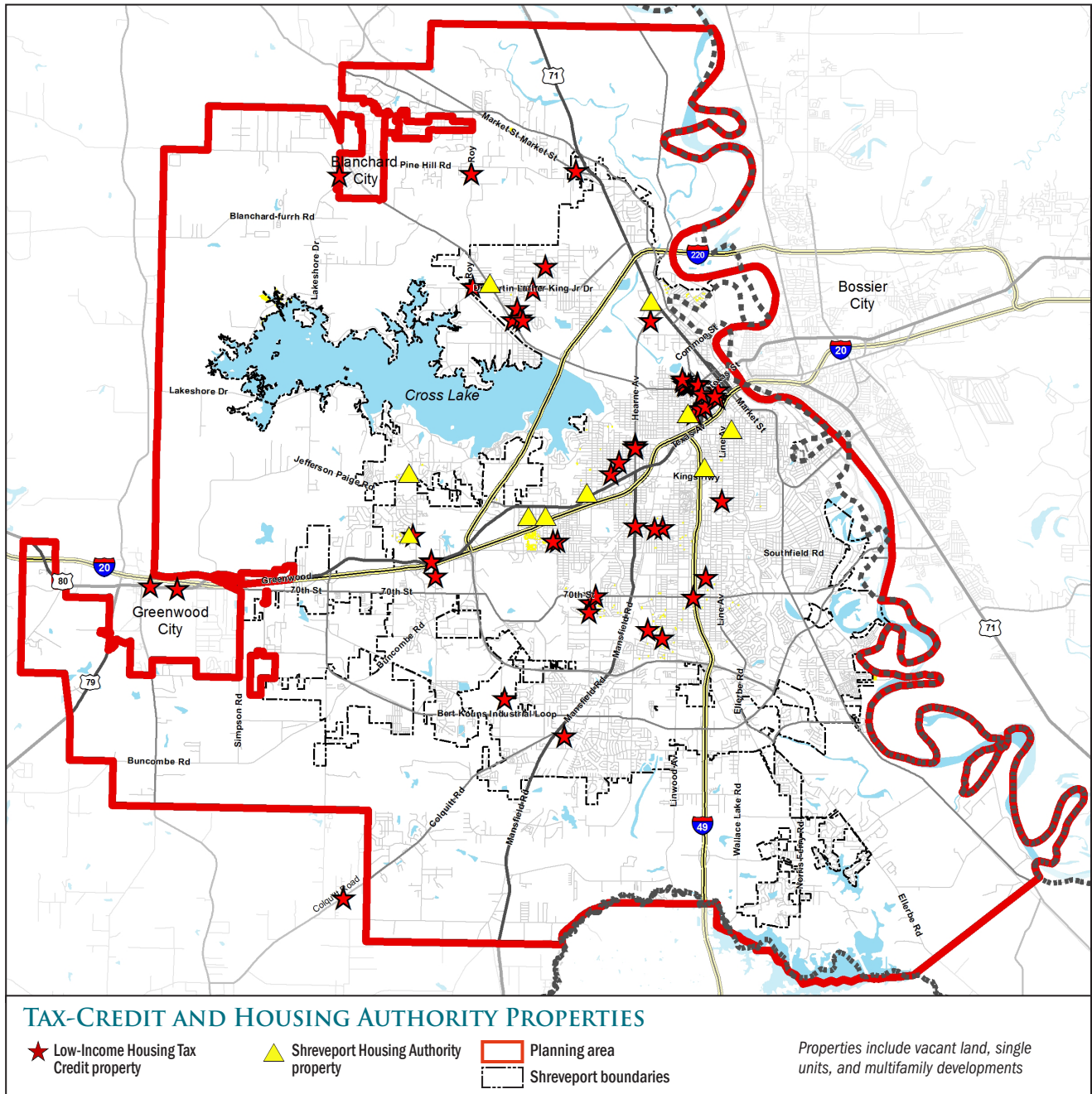
While a segment of Shreveport’s market-rate housing inventory, both rental and ownership, is very affordable, much of it is in poor condition. As of January 2010, 145 single-family houses were listed for sale within the city limits for \$50,000 or less (including a few for less than \$10,000). The vast majority of these were located in low-income neighborhoods within the city core and in poor condition. According to City and Housing Authority staff, some investors in low-cost rental housing in Shreveport resist bringing their properties up to code. Property-standards enforcement in Shreveport focuses on external conditions,

and the lack of a rental code means that many rental units, although affordable, offer substandard living conditions.

Assisted-housing programs have many technical requirements. In most, households pay no more than 30% of their income, and the government pays the difference. Standard

definitions are based on an “area median income” (AMI) that is calculated annually by HUD for metropolitan areas. The FY 2009 AMI for a family of four in the Shreveport-Bossier metropolitan area is \$52,300. Most HUD programs target households below 80% of AMI, which is \$41,850 in FY2009 for a family of four in Shreveport-Bossier. The

MAP 6.16 TAX-CREDIT AND HOUSING AUTHORITY PROPERTIES



Sources: U.S. Department of HUD; NLCOG, 2009

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program, described below, targets households below 60% of AMI, and public housing usually focuses on assisting very-low-income households at 30% of AMI or below. In communities where the gap between housing costs and household incomes is particularly wide, state and local governments have increasingly included households with incomes between 80% and 120% of AMI for homebuyer assistance—which has been done in Shreveport.

In 2009, HUD released estimates of the number of households with housing affordability problems based on the Census's American Community Survey data for 2005-2007. In Caddo Parish, 22% of homeowners and 49% of the renter households were estimated to have housing problems. As might be expected, housing problems were particularly severe among very-low-income renter households making 30% of AMI or less. Twenty-four percent of all renter households were making 30% AMI or less (\$15,700 dollars annually for a family of four) and had housing problems.⁶ The Louisiana Housing Finance Agency has estimated that in 2012 there will be demand for 3,685 rental units affordable to households making less than 80% of AMI, and demand for 3,765 ownership units.⁷

Assisted housing

Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8). Housing Choice Vouchers (HCV, previously known as “Section 8”) provide federal funds to make up the difference between what a tenant can afford to pay (30% of income) and the monthly rent, up to limits set annually by HUD. Housing authorities are assigned a set number of vouchers to administer. The vouchers can be “project-based,” meaning tied to a particular physical housing unit, or “tenant-based,” meaning that individuals can go into the private housing market to use the voucher. Every year, HUD sets limits, called Fair Market Rents (FMR), on the amount of rent payable under vouchers based on unit size and location. Tenant-based vouchers are not tied to a particular location, and the holder of the voucher can go anywhere in the United States to rent a place to live. The Shreveport metropolitan area has higher FMRs than four of the other

eight Louisiana MSA regions. The FY2010 Fair Market Rents for the Shreveport-Bossier MSA (which also includes DeSoto Parish) are:

- Studio—\$535
- One-bedroom—\$615
- Two-bedroom—\$719
- Three-bedroom—\$912
- Four-bedroom—\$941

The Shreveport Housing Authority and the Caddo Parish Commission administer Section 8 programs. As of January 2010, the Housing Authority was authorized to issue up to 3,274 tenant-based vouchers, but only about 2,800 were funded, and 2,394 were in use. The average wait time to get a voucher was three years. Project-based vouchers are assigned to several privately-owned assisted housing developments: University Oaks I and II; US Goodman Plaza; McAdoo Hotel (single-room occupancy or SRO); Buckhalter (SRO).

Public housing. The Shreveport Housing Authority owns a total of 719 public housing units, of which 175 are scattered-site single-family houses. The authority manages another 294 units, for a total of 1,013 units. As of 2008, 61% of public housing residents were very-low-income (less than 30% of area median income). In January 2010, there were 306 names on the waiting list for public housing; on average, the wait for a public housing unit was six months to a year.

The Housing Authority owns land in Allendale, where 270 housing units were demolished several years ago. The authority plans to rebuild that development with approximately 150 units in a mix of cottages and townhouses as well as a mix of incomes (up to 80% of AMI). Approximately 20% of the units would be for elderly households. The property lies within the proposed right-of-way for the I-49 Inner City Connector, a highway project that is under study but has not been approved or funded (see Chapter 9 for a discussion). Map 6.15 shows the location of Housing Authority properties, not all of which represent multifamily developments—some are single-family houses scattered within neighborhoods and some locations are vacant parcels.

⁶ <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/cp.html>

⁷ LHFA Housing Needs Assessment for Caddo Parish, January 2010

Supportive housing for elderly and disabled persons.

Several HUD programs provide funding to nonprofit housing organizations for supportive housing for the elderly and disabled. Supportive housing includes services to help residents in their daily lives, and units involved in these programs must remain affordable for 40 years. Shreveport has 349 such housing units.

Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Program.

Created by the 1986 federal Tax Reform Act, the LIHTC program has become the major source of financing for affordable rental housing in the United States by providing tax benefits to developers of housing that meets specific criteria. The LIHTC program provides a dollar-for-dollar reduction in a developer's tax liability for a ten-year period. The major elements of tax credit financing as it functions in Louisiana are:

- Projects must have rent-restricted units that meet either of two conditions: 1) at least 20% of households have incomes at or below 50% of AMI; or 2) at least 40% of households have incomes at or below 60% of AMI.
- Projects must meet the low-income requirements for at least 30 years.
- The State of Louisiana receives a fixed allocation of tax credits based on its population.
- The Louisiana Housing Finance Agency (LHFA) allocates the tax credits in a competitive process based on priorities it defines in an annual qualified allocation plan (QAP).
- Developers raise capital for the project by syndicating the tax credit to an investor or group of investors.
- State agencies are responsible for monitoring compliance with the requirements of the projects.

HUD counts 2,461 housing units in 59 Shreveport LIHTC projects placed in service through 2007. The projects range from 1 to 254 units, with an average of about 50 per project. A few additional projects have been approved since 2008. The system for awarding tax credits is run by the State through LHFA, but the State did not have a comprehensive housing policy until recently, and communication about projects with municipalities

was not a priority. As a result, Shreveport historically has had little influence over how the QAP, allocation of tax credits, or approval of projects might address local priorities for location or design quality—though the City has also lacked policies about affordable housing. Map 6.16 shows the location of LIHTC housing developments built up to 2007.

CITY OF SHREVEPORT HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD PROGRAMS

Since 2000, most of the City's efforts through the Community Development Department and nonprofit housing developers have been directed toward assisting low- and moderate-income homeowners and helping more households become homeowners. The Housing Authority and some nonprofits focus on providing rental housing and programs predominantly for very-low-income households. LIHTC projects provide rental housing for low- and moderate-income households.

The Community Development Department operates housing-related programs using federal and private funding sources, coordinates volunteer housing activities, and works with nonprofit developers of affordable housing.

Federal funding

The City of Shreveport is an "entitlement community," which means that it receives annual funding from the federal government for housing and community development purposes, based on a formula that includes population, poverty rates, age of housing and similar criteria. The funds must be used to benefit low- and moderate-income persons (households at 80% or less of AMI), who can live anywhere in the city or in census tracts that have at least 51% low- and moderate-income households. In order to receive these funds, the City must prepare a five-year strategic plan, called the Consolidated Plan, and associated one-year action plans.

Every year, the City typically receives about \$2.6 million in CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) entitlement funds and \$1.5 million in HOME (housing) funds, as well as smaller amounts for emergency grants for homeless shelters.

In addition, the City operates some revolving-fund programs that produce income as loans are repaid.

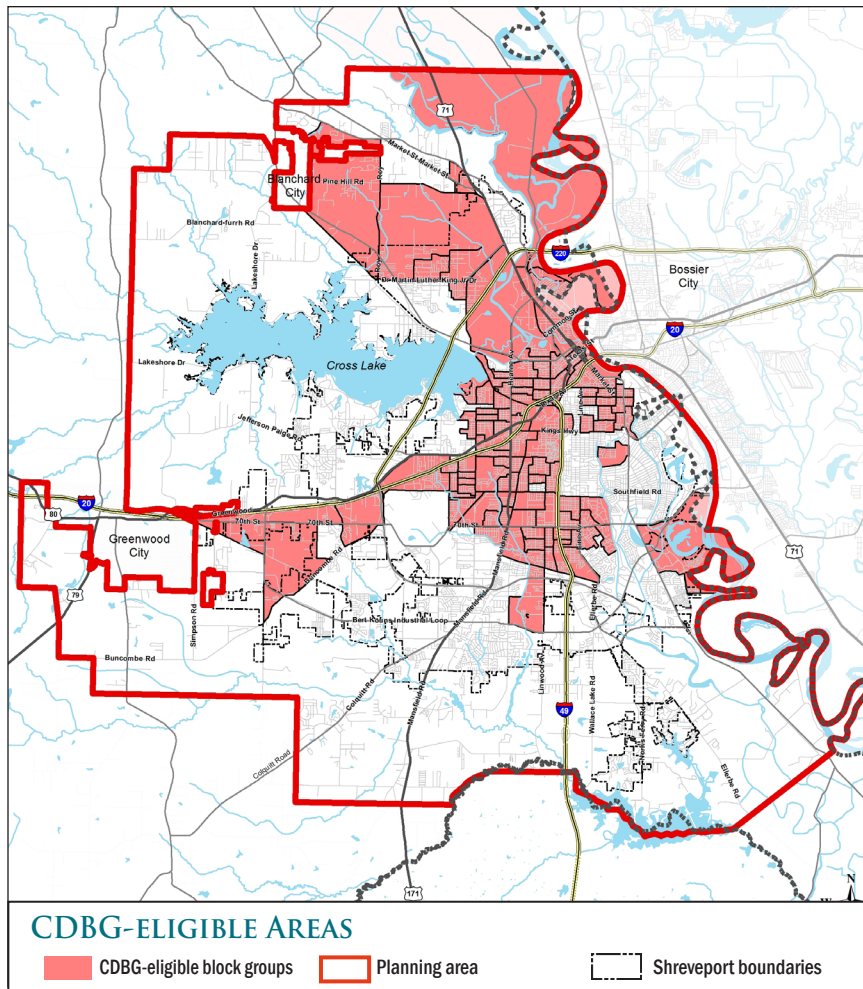
The City can use CDBG funds for a wide range of community development activities aimed at revitalizing neighborhoods, promoting economic development, or improving community facilities and services. Affordable housing was identified as the top priority in the 2009-2013 Consolidated Plan.

Neighborhood revitalization program

The City offers housing programs under the umbrella name of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, which focuses on ownership housing.

HAPPI Program (Home Buyers Assistance Program Participation Initiative). This program offers downpayment, buydown and closing-cost assistance up to 20% of the sales price or appraised value through participating local lenders in partnership with the City of Shreveport. This assistance is available to income-eligible first time homebuyers (defined as not owning a home within the last three years) who complete an approved homebuyer-education class. Volunteers of America and other nonprofits run the homebuyer training programs. The applicants also have to qualify for a mortgage with a lender approved by the City, and the property itself must meet HUD housing-quality standards.

MAP 6.17 CDBG-ELIGIBLE CENSUS TRACTS



Source: NLCOG, 2009

The Consolidated Plan calls for more training programs in homeownership and credit counseling; funding assistance for downpayments, closing costs and principal write-downs; and new construction and lease-purchase programs.

Rehabilitation assistance.

Rehabilitation assistance through grants or loans is available to income-eligible owner-occupants to bring their properties up to minimum housing-quality standards. Many clients of these programs are elderly and/or disabled low-income households who do not have the money to maintain and repair their homes. There are several types of rehab programs: Emergency Repairs, Exterior Façade Programs, and Limited Repair. The *Emergency Repair* program is for immediate health and safety issues. The *Exterior Façade* programs include two annual volunteer programs—Paint Your Heart Out Shreveport and World Changers—and programs that provide wheelchair ramps and roof

repairs. The *Limited Repair* program addresses major system repairs, exterior repairs, energy efficiency, and interior health and safety repairs.

The Consolidated Plan sets goals for emergency repairs, limited rehabilitation, and reconstruction.

New construction and land acquisition for affordable housing and homeownership

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, the Community Development Department commissioned a two-stage Strategic Neighborhood Revitalization Plan that identified, analyzed and recommended revitalization programs for eight neighborhoods in the city core plus the MLK neighborhood. The City Council, acting as a redevelopment agency, also acquired a relatively small number of adjudicated lots by eminent domain and sold or donated them to small nonprofits, many of them faith-based, for redevelopment as affordable ownership housing. This program ended with voter approval of an amendment to the Louisiana constitution strictly limiting the conditions for eminent domain takings by government. Some of the purchased properties have been developed into affordable homes, but not all recipient organizations proved capable of building and selling houses to eligible buyers. As a result, some of these lots have yet to see any construction.

In 2007, the Community Development Department launched an initiative to plan and build ownership housing in income-eligible neighborhoods. As of 2010, the department has developed or is in process of developing several small ownership projects. These projects require several layers of funding for site acquisition, design and other soft costs, infrastructure and construction. Funding comes from a range of federal, state, local and private sources. Infrastructure improvements or completely new infrastructure has proved necessary in these projects, adding a million dollars or more to their costs, even though they are located in older parts of the city. Funding for the infrastructure comes from both public and private sources. Current projects are:

- **Shepherd Place—MLK neighborhood**
 - > 22 three- and four-bedroom single-family houses; 51% restricted to low-/moderate-income households;

- > Three-year lease-sale program during which the lessees received homebuyer and credit counseling;
- > 25% subsidy of purchase price for downpayment and closing costs.

- **Concordia Place—Stoner Hill**

- > 25-40 energy-efficient units in two phases (phase one under construction 2010);
- > most of the land was purchased from a nonprofit;
- > first phase homebuyers (12 single-family units) receive up to \$30,000 in downpayment assistance, homebuyer and credit counseling;
- > for households of up to 120% of AMI, or \$62,700 for a family of four.

- **Heritage Place—Allendale**

- > future project of 30-40 single-family, 3- and 4-bedroom houses;
- > the goal is to demolish 81 blighted buildings and redevelop 78 vacant properties;
- > for households at or below 120% of AMI, with a quarter of homes being sold to people at or below 50% of AMI;
- > because of requirements of the funding source, most of the lots are adjudicated properties.

- **Cedar Grove East**

- > With the collaboration of Community Support Programs, a nonprofit developer, the project has entered the conceptual stage. The development will include a mix of types (apartments, townhouses, and cottages), tenures (rental and ownership), income levels, and a possible mixture of uses on Line Avenue.

Community Development plans future ownership development projects in Ledbetter Heights, Cedar Grove, Hollywood, Mooretown, Sunset Acres, Cherokee Park, and Highland. Like the Allendale project, eligibility criteria will be set at 120% of AMI, with one quarter of the buildings available to households at or below 50% of AMI. These housing projects are planned and managed by Community Development Department staff with the assistance of consultants. In the case of larger projects, the department expects to work with local nonprofit organizations to build housing units

Further discussion of revitalization programs, projects and recommendations appears in Chapter 11.

Mortgage default and foreclosure prevention and housing counseling. Data show that foreclosures represent a potentially serious problem in Shreveport. The Consolidated Plan recommends creation of an escrow account for new homebuyers to be used for repairs. Similarly, the plan calls for a mortgage-default and foreclosure-prevention program.

Predevelopment loans. The Consolidated Plan recommends amplifying government funds with more private-sector partnerships.

Improving the housing context. The Consolidated Plan also includes important recommendations for improving the policy and legal context for housing in Shreveport:

- creation of a rental-housing-inspection ordinance and pilot program;
- adoption of a local Fair Housing Ordinance; and
- increased collaboration with housing professionals and community members through a Housing Council and a Community Development Task Force.

HOMELESS POPULATION AND HOMELESS SERVICES

HOPE for the Homeless is a collaborative of more than 60 public and private groups working to assist homeless persons in nine northwest Louisiana parishes. It organizes the Continuum of Care for the Homeless, a planning and implementation process required for federal homeless funding. According to HOPE, approximately 4,500 people use their services annually in northwest Louisiana. The January 2009 point-in-time survey of the region identified 973 homeless people (55 on the street; 50 categorized as chronically homeless). Of these, 29% were under age 18; 24% were veterans; and 14% were victims of domestic violence.

HOPE has created an effective continuum of care for managing homelessness through emergency shelters (335 beds in Shreveport); transitional housing (614 beds in Shreveport); and permanent supported housing (292 beds

TABLE 6.18 CONTINUUM OF CARE: HOMELESS AND SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING GAP ANALYSIS FOR 9 NW LA PARISHES (2009)

		CURRENT INVENTORY	UNDER DEVELOPM'T	UNMET NEED/GAP
INDIVIDUALS				
BEDS	Emergency shelter	212	128	0
	Transitional housing	420	9	0
	Permanent supportive housing	113	43	493
	Total	745	180	493
PEOPLE IN FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN				
BEDS	Emergency shelter	60	52	0
	Transitional housing	283	0	0
	Permanent supportive housing	44	0	338
	Total	387	52	338

in Shreveport). Nearly \$10 million in public and private funds goes to support this network every year.

The most important unmet need is for permanent supportive housing. HOPE’s strategy is to move from the model of managing homelessness to a “Housing First” model. This model is based on research that showed that the chronically homeless (approximately 20% of the northwest Louisiana homeless population) require a disproportionate amount of resources and that they do better if first provided a secure place to live, followed by effective case management. The Housing First model has three components:

1. Crisis intervention, emergency services, screening, and needs assessment
2. Permanent housing
3. Case management

The Housing First model depends on having an adequate supply of decent, affordable housing and coordinating services effectively so that people placed in permanent housing can continue to live there successfully.

B. Community Issues and Concerns

Shreveport-Caddo residents agree that neighborhood quality of life and housing issues are central to a successful future for the Shreveport-Caddo planning area.

Public opinion survey

Improving neighborhood quality of life, assuring quality housing for all, and revitalizing areas with vacant housing and land consistently attracted strong support in the public opinion survey:

- 81% of respondents called improving quality of life “very important” to the future of the Shreveport area.
- 67% said it was “very important” and 23% said it was “somewhat important” to the area’s future to have quality housing for all income groups.
- 48% said it was “very important” and 34% said it was “somewhat important” to revitalize central city neighborhoods.
- 46% said it was “very important” and 34% said it was “somewhat important” to improve the function and appearance of commercial areas.
- 52% strongly agreed and 32% agreed that Shreveport’s future should include redevelopment of areas with vacant buildings and land.

Survey respondents saw room for improvement. While 59% reported that the condition of their neighborhood had stayed the same in recent years, a greater percentage felt that conditions in their neighborhood were worsening (24%) rather than improving (14%). And most did not yet see the Shreveport area as an excellent place to live. Only 20% called it excellent, while 39% deemed it good, and 31% felt it was just average.

Vision forum for the 2030 master plan and “speak out” neighborhood vision meetings

Neighborhood issues and housing were frequently mentioned at these meetings. Participants talked about how much value they put on sense of community, family, and connected neighborhoods. They saw opportunities for community renewal and pride, development of a housing

policy and program for affordable housing, and envisioned:

- self-sustaining neighborhoods that are age-, race- and income-integrated, with local food, recreation, educational outreach, neighborhood retail, and economic opportunities;
- neighborhoods with easy access to work areas and commerce areas and with better and affordable housing;
- neighborhoods that are well cared for, safe, and that generate pride; and
- enforcement of laws and regulations in the neighborhoods.

District and neighborhood meetings

The major concerns that surfaced in district and neighborhood level meetings included:

Enforcement of property standards, housing and zoning codes.

Residents use the term “code enforcement” to refer to a broad range of enforcement issues at the neighborhood level, primarily relating to private property conditions, especially the following:

- Blight elimination
- Property maintenance and upkeep
- Safe and sanitary housing conditions
- Illegal home businesses
- Littering
- Other “quality of life” violations such as junk cars, dumping, and so on.

Affordable housing. While housing costs are relatively low in the Shreveport-Caddo area, much low-cost housing—both market rate and subsidized—is of poor quality. In recent years, new housing assisted through federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) has been the most common type of subsidized housing. Many residents believe that LIHTC developments will bring down property values, that they will be poorly maintained and attract crime, and that they are poorly built and designed, so these residents feel that such housing does not fit in with surrounding neighborhoods. Market-rate affordable housing, such as mobile home parks and older housing that is poorly maintained, also concerns many residents because of potential impacts on neighborhoods.

Neighborhood retail and services. With the exception of the eastern and southeastern parts of the city, Shreveport neighborhoods would like to see more, or more diverse neighborhood-serving retail and services. In general, residents mentioned the unattractiveness of almost all commercial corridors throughout the city.

Walkability and connectivity. Residents in all parts of the planning area, and particularly in the city, called for sidewalks and safe and attractive pedestrian conditions. In addition, many residents recognized a need to better connect neighborhoods, for community amenities like parks and neighborhood commercial districts, and asked for more greenways and bicycle-pedestrian trails.

Participation in planning and development decisions. Neighborhood residents reported feeling that they are not consulted early enough in planning, zoning and development decisions. Neighborhood input about the potential impacts of subsidized housing, especially LIHTC developments, mobile home parks, and commercial projects ranked as particular concerns.

Infrastructure and other public investments. City residents felt that public resources were going to pay for infrastructure and services to new development at the city edges (the result of “leapfrog development”) rather than being applied to repair and maintain existing infrastructure and keep up services. Residents from all parts of the city reported infrastructure problems, from flooding and water main breaks to sewer backups.

Neighborhoods and housing in the Vision and Principles

The Vision describes neighborhoods as “safe, clean and welcoming...connected by shared civic spirit and a network of inviting public spaces and transportation choices.... our diverse neighborhoods offer attractive and affordable choices for [all kinds of households].”

Many master plan principles directly support neighborhood and quality of life:

- Connected people and places
- Fairness and opportunity for everyone
- Good stewardship of our natural and cultural heritage
- A green and healthy community
- High standards of quality in development and design
- Communication, transparency and community participation.

C. Strategies and Actions to Achieve the Goals

Goal 1

Enhanced character and livability for all neighborhoods, with investments to improve quality of life.

Policies:

- *Support initiatives and investments that improve physical character and environment, function, and access to community amenities throughout the Master Plan Area.*
- *Promote neighborhood associations and community activities to encourage neighborhood identity, sense of ownership, and advocacy.*
- *Promote proactive planning on the district and neighborhood level.*
- *Create a structured community participation system for project review.*

STRATEGIES

A. Revise the regulatory system for residential districts.

Zoning and other development regulations should promote infill and new neighborhoods with a diversity of housing choices, interconnections and appropriate transitions; support desired neighborhood character; and make it easy for property owners and developers to understand the requirements for improving existing properties or building new housing.

Action

1. Revise residential zoning to reflect existing and desired character.

As noted in Chapter 3, the city contains many separate single-family/two-family residential districts distinguished only by very small differences in density. In other cases, areas may be zoned for multifamily development but are predominantly or entirely single-family in character. Locations suitable for multifamily, townhouse, or mixed residential and commercial uses have not been established with planning criteria. The Future Land Use Map in Chapter 12 provides guidance for residential uses. Zoning that reflects existing residential character, where the desire is to retain it, or that reflects desired future character, where change would be beneficial, should be put in place. This process will involve writing standards for infill development or new housing, as well as for suitable transitions between areas of higher density and areas of lower density. Standards for site design and building form should be the focus, rather than the current practice of relying on fences and unconnected streets to create pod-like development sites that separate different density levels and land uses.

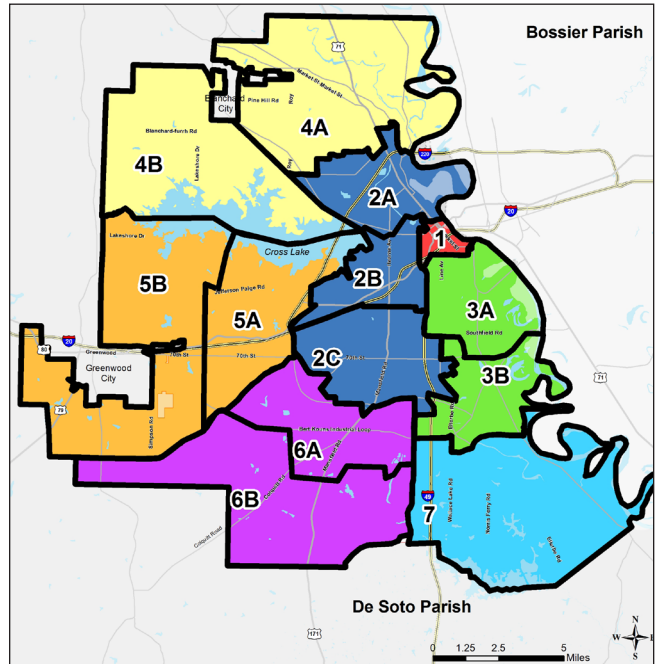
B. Create a system for Area Plans and engage neighborhood residents, businesses, property owners and other stakeholders in proactive planning connected to the Master Plan and its policies.

Actions

1. Identify a set of planning districts defined by geography and character.

Shreveport and the Master Plan Area have a large number of neighborhoods and small subdivisions in an exceedingly large area. By dividing the Master Plan Area into a set of planning districts,

MAP 6.18 PROPOSED PLANNING DISTRICTS



Sources: NLCOG, Goody Clancy

the MPC can develop broad policies appropriate to these areas which will then inform decision-making about land use, transportation and infrastructure. The proposed planning districts in Map 6.18 were created to:

- Use census tracts/block groups and city limits in district boundaries in order to facilitate data gathering.
- Reflect policy preferences about areas “inside the loop” and “outside the loop.”
- Reflect urban, suburban and exurban character.

The seven large districts were created to reflect the overall policy focus in the Vision and Principles to promote growth within the loop. Then, Districts 2 through 6 were further subdivided to reflect different characteristics:

Planning District 1—Downtown and Vicinity.

Downtown is unique in character, complexity and importance, so it is a separate planning district.

Because the potential for downtown goes beyond the Central Business District and West Edge, nearby areas were also included by using the Downtown Development Authority boundaries for the planning district. Planning policies for downtown include promoting housing, historic preservation, arts and entertainment, access to the waterfronts, and interconnections to increase walkability. (See Chapter 10, which focuses on Downtown and the Waterfront.)

Planning District 2—Core Revitalization Areas.

The Core Revitalization Areas are located within the loop and in the MLK neighborhood. Although this diverse planning district has a number of well-kept homes and stable areas, it is also the location of most vacant buildings, blight, and adjudicated properties. This area also has concentrations of older and obsolete commercial and industrial areas. Because Planning District 2 is so large, it is divided into three subdistricts: **2A**—within the city limits north of downtown, including MLK and other predominantly residential neighborhoods, as well as residential and nonresidential areas with the potential to benefit from proximity to the river and to downtown; **2B**—areas that can benefit from proximity to regional assets such as a revitalized downtown and the large employment centers represented by the medical districts; and **2C**—areas with complex mixtures of residential, commercial and industrial uses that need significant new planning to reach their potential. Planning policies for Planning District 2 will take a strategic and integrated approach to revitalization, making significant investments to create critical mass.

Planning District 3—East. Planning District 3 contains the largest number of stable neighborhoods within the loop, the majority of retail areas, and many neighborhood amenities, although it also has a share of disinvested neighborhoods. Subdistrict **3A** is the older part

of the East District and includes neighborhoods in transition such as Highland and Stoner Hill. Subdistrict **3B** has a somewhat different character because more of it was built after World War II. Planning policies for District 3 should promote neighborhood stability and selective revitalization, infill housing, pedestrian and bicycle connections, and improvement of traffic function.

Planning District 4—North. Planning District 4 encompasses the part of the master plan area that lies north of the city limits and Cross Lake. Subdistrict **4A** has already seen subdivision development, and the construction of I-49 may bring new development pressures. Subdistrict **4B** is more rural, with a few subdivisions. Policies in Planning District 4 should focus on avoiding sprawl and scattered exurban development and shaping orderly suitable development to protect rural character and sensitive environments.

Planning District 5—West. Planning District 5 is divided into Subdistrict **5A**, which includes subdivisions and other development within the city limits, and Subdistrict **5B**, a mix of industrial, commercial and exurban development, as well as rural areas. Planning policies for Subdistrict 5A should focus on identifying areas for infill and future development, connecting isolated neighborhoods, integrating into the city's system of green infrastructure any environmentally sensitive areas and other areas not suitable for development, and planning for more neighborhood-serving retail as the market permits.

Planning District 6—Southwest. Planning District 6 is similar to Planning District 5 in that Subdistrict **6A** is an established suburban area within the city limits and Subdistrict **6B** is characterized by sprawling, exurban development. The residential parts of 6A need monitoring to make sure that as Southern Hills

and other long-established developments in the area go through a generational transition, with older residents giving way to younger residents, the area remains in good condition. Planning policies for Subdistrict 6B should focus on connections and avoiding further sprawl.

Planning District 7—Southeast. Planning District 7 has attracted higher-cost residential development and some neighborhood-serving retail and services. It also includes the port and its associated industrial land. Developments that have been annexed by the City have created costly infrastructure and service obligations. Planning policies for this area will need to recognize the existing development, infrastructure investments and momentum around certain locations, such as the port. However, policies should focus on limiting further sprawl development and assumption of infrastructure and service demands by the City.

2. Prepare Framework Plans for each Planning District.

Because the planning districts and subdistricts are large and diverse, MPC staff should prepare Framework Plans that translate the policies of the Shreveport-Caddo Master Plan into more specific planning principles for each planning district and subdistrict. Framework Plans should include policies on the following issues:

- infill development
- subdivision character and connectivity
- mixed use and commercial districts
- open space and green systems
- infrastructure and services

Chapter 12 will provide a foundation for the Framework Plans. Draft Framework Plans should be discussed in public meetings with neighborhood associations, other residents, business owners, and property owners in each planning district or subdistrict. Then the Framework Plans should be presented to the MPC

Board for approval through a public hearing process and adopted as part of the master plan.

3. Prioritize development of Framework Plans based on development trends and strategic investments.

As of mid-2010, areas that are likely to experience sprawl development pressures are proposed Planning Districts 7 and 6B. As I-49 construction moves south toward I-220, Districts 4A and 2A will also need a planning framework to reduce the likelihood of sprawl development. The Framework Plan for Planning District 2B—featured in Chapter 11 as strategic area for revitalization—should be relatively easy to develop based on the conceptual plan in Chapter 11.

4. Develop templates to create Area Plans for neighborhoods, commercial districts, and other areas smaller than planning districts or sub-districts.

In many cities, individual plans are prepared for neighborhoods and other areas smaller than planning districts by the city's planning agency, and then they are adopted by the planning commission and the city council as official parts of the city's master plan. Given a geographically large and diverse master plan area and limited resources, it would be difficult for the MPC to draw up detailed plans for every neighborhood or nonresidential area. By developing templates for Area Plans of different types, however, the MPC can oversee plans that are undertaken by groups ranging from neighborhood or commercial district volunteers, to professionals under contract with government or development entities. The MPC should identify and give priority to those areas most in need of new plans or identify existing plans that are most suitable for adoption as part of the master plan. Where government funds are used for planning, MPC staff should be included on the government planning team that identifies the planning area, writes the scope of work, and serves as the client to consultants preparing the

plan. Other city staff, such as transportation and infrastructure engineers, should also be included in planning projects.

The process for creating and adopting Area Plans can follow these steps:

- **Initiation.** A neighborhood association or other organized group of residents and stakeholders can request that the MPC prepare a plan; provide funding to hire an outside consultant to prepare the plan; hire their own consultant (or seek assistance from universities or similar sources); or even organize themselves to prepare the plan internally. The MPC Board, the City Council or the Mayor can also request that a plan be prepared. In order for a plan to be adopted, the Planning Commission staff will need to approve the boundaries of the planning area and the plan's basic structure.
 - **Public participation.** The planning process will need to be overseen by a stakeholder committee representing all affected interests, and it should include at least three public workshops or meetings. The first public meeting must take place near the start of the planning process, to elicit ideas for the future of the neighborhood or district. The second public meeting must present interim ideas for the plan and allow public feedback. The third public meeting must occur when a full draft of the plan is available, so that the public can review it and provide comments.
 - **Elements of the plan.** The Area Plan must conform to the goals and policies of the adopted MPC Master Plan. At a minimum, the Area Plan must include sections on existing conditions, including zoning and other regulations; overall goals; housing; public realm (parks and public spaces, including sidewalks); mixed-use or nonresidential areas, including market support; urban design; circulation, parking and transportation; and sustainability (green infrastructure, energy efficiency, and so on). Other relevant sections can be added at the discretion of the planning group. An implementation plan must be required that identifies actions, responsible parties, proposed timeline and potential funding sources.
 - **Adoption.** The MPC can adopt criteria and procedures for submission and approval of Area Plans as part of the master plan. In order for the plan to be adopted as part of the Shreveport-Caddo Master Plan, the plan must be reviewed by MPC staff (if they did not prepare it directly) for conformity with Area Plan guidelines and for conformity with the overall goals and policies of the Shreveport-Caddo Master Plan. If Commission staff did not prepare the plan, they might ask for changes to make the Area Plan consistent with the Shreveport-Caddo Master Plan. Then the Area Plan will be submitted to the MPC for a public hearing and adoption. After adoption by the MPC, a similar submission with a public hearing may be made to the City Council and/or the Parish Commission for approval as an official part of the Shreveport-Caddo Master Plan.
5. **Engage neighborhood groups and students to perform rapid "neighborhood audits" of the public realm to aid in targeting resources for public improvements.**
 Neighborhood audits provide information and promote priority-setting about how to target resources for public improvements. The MPC can work with local organizations, such as Community Renewal, churches, schools, college students, neighborhood associations or other groups to develop a consistent format for neighborhood-based inventories of the condition of sidewalks, streets, lighting, street trees, drains, blighted properties, and so on. Regularly scheduled annual Neighborhood Audit Walks, in which neighbors

walk a particular route (using different routes each year) and note issues of concern, would be one way to make this a consistent process. Today’s handheld computers make it easy to enter information into a spreadsheet, obviating the need to enter data later. Neighbors could then prioritize the issues that need attention, taking into account any City or Parish criteria that government agencies make available to them.

These audits must then be presented to City and Parish departments for inclusion in their asset-management systems and work plans. The City must also be willing to respond to neighborhood groups about progress being made on neighborhood priorities, including explanations of funding difficulties and any other barriers to implementation, as well as the criteria used to evaluate competing improvement projects.

6. Provide the MPC with sufficient resources to support district and neighborhood planning.

In order to implement the master plan, and provide a foundation of public participation for District and Area plans, it is essential that the MPC have the resources to undertake and/or supervise these planning projects. MPC staff today devote the bulk of their time to processing project applications because everything but single- or two-family projects must receive MPC board approval. In Chapter 12, this master plan calls for a new unified development code that will reform zoning, create higher standards, and reduce the proportion of development projects that must come before the MPC. However, there will still be a need for some MPC staff members to focus on project approval applications, so resources for planning are essential.

These resources could take various forms, but in any case there should be an annual commitment to completing at least one District Plan and one Area Plan. Options include:

- reorganization and streamlining of current staff and work systems to free up time for more planning
- one or more permanent staff planning positions
- creation of a roster of approved on-call planning consultants with funding dedicated to planning projects
- dedicated funding every year for planning projects and issuance of RFPs to select consultants to do the plans in conjunction with the MPC (and other departments, if appropriate, such as the Community Development Department) and with specified levels of community participation.

C. Create a structured system for neighborhood consultation on significant development projects and land use changes.

Actions

1. Provide a structured method for neighborhood associations, residents, and other stakeholders to be informed of forthcoming redevelopment and development projects.

After Area Plans are completed and regulations amended to reflect the plans, if necessary, there should be fewer projects that cause community concern. However, controversial projects will always emerge, and it is important to give stakeholders an opportunity to comment before the public hearing process begins, so that problems can be worked out in advance. A simple system can be developed as described here.

The MPC should adopt a policy that private or government projects meeting certain criteria must be taken for comment to the residents, property owners, or business owners who may be affected by the project. Potential criteria or thresholds, any one of which could trigger community review, could be:

- request for zoning change⁸
- 50,000 square feet of nonresidential uses
- 200 housing units
- potential traffic impacts (based on expected traffic impacts for the use and intensity as provided in the most recent ITE (Institute of Transportation Engineers) *Trip Generation Handbook*.

When the MPC becomes aware of a project that meets one or more of the criteria, it should inform the project proponent that a meeting with neighborhood residents or other stakeholders is required and also inform the affected neighborhood(s) through existing neighborhood associations or, if no neighborhood association exists, through other organizations (nonprofit groups, schools, churches, libraries and so on) and through good faith efforts to publicize a meeting to be held in or near the affected neighborhood(s). The MPC will then assist project proponents in setting up a meeting to introduce the project. MPC staff should also attend these meeting(s) and provide a written report on the results.

The goal of this process is for the project proponent to arrive at the MPC hearing with potential problems resolved and with the support of neighborhood stakeholders. Where these kinds of processes exist, it sometimes takes more than one meeting to work out mutually agreeable results, as the project proponent may be asked to provide information, alter a site plan or building, or otherwise modify the proposal. Experience shows that this process often produces better projects with more community benefits. Although it may appear to introduce uncertainties and slow down the development process, it represents a

significant improvement on the current system, in which discussions occur only when a project has already reached the forum of the MPC or City Council public hearing. In those situations, it is difficult for decision makers to judge how representative of a broader set of stakeholders the people who attend a public hearing during working hours may be. This kind of system will function best once the land use and development regulatory framework in the MPC area has been reformed and improved with higher development standards, because many projects will be able to proceed as of right.

2. Update and maintain a list of neighborhood associations and promote the formation of neighborhood associations where they do not exist.

The MPC should work with other government agencies and public officials to update and maintain its list of neighborhood associations. Small grants could be made available to a nonprofit organization, such as Community Renewal or Volunteers for America, to hold several training sessions for existing and prospective neighborhood organizations, in order to encourage greater capacity and knowledge of best practices among existing organizations and promote the formation of new ones.

3. Schedule public hearings on major development projects and planning issues in the evening, when needed, to enhance the opportunity for public participation.

Many citizens cannot attend public hearings held during the working day because they cannot leave their jobs during that time. It is common practice in many cities to schedule nighttime public hearings of the planning commission and board of zoning appeals.

⁸ In Chapter 12, this master plan recommends a complete zoning reform for the MPC area, which would be expected to establish zoning districts, development standards, and commission procedures that would be consistent with the master plan and based on community consensus, thus drastically reducing the number of requests for zoning changes.

D. Establish design standards to guide new development and redevelopment to contribute to harmonious neighborhood character.

Actions

1. Establish standards in the zoning ordinance to guide the scale and character of new infill development to fit with the character of established residential areas and to ensure appropriate transitions from those areas to redevelopment of underutilized sites on neighborhood edges.

Zoning should set parameters on infill development so that desired neighborhood character—whether existing or identified in a community-based plan—remains consistent with neighborhood expectations. Where a variety of scales, building types, and housing unit types may coexist within a few blocks or even on the same block, base zoning that recognizes this heterogeneity will make it easier for property owners to improve and, within limits, expand their property as a matter of right. Design principles and guidelines can be developed through specific Area Plans and as part of site master plan design guidelines for redevelopment of larger sites. Although design guidelines are particularly important in historic districts, they are worthwhile for other neighborhoods. Experience in other communities has shown that even voluntary guidelines, when well presented and communicated to property owners, architects, and developers, can result in more compatible design. These guidelines should not prescribe architectural styles but rather focus on compatibility in terms of bulk, height, orientation on the lot and similar measures.

Development in newer parts of the city, and even in small redevelopment projects within the city, has tended to rely on creating “pods” of new development that are unrelated in character and disconnected physically from the surrounding

urban framework of streets and building orientation to the street. Small, suburban-style cul-de-sacs are being inserted into historic street-grid patterns, disrupting the urban rhythm. Multifamily developments, whether market-rate or assisted by tax credits to create affordable housing, are mandated to have high fencing, thus creating separated enclaves. Standards in the zoning ordinance can provide for graduated, appropriate transitions in scale, massing, treatment of parking and landscape between different types of housing. Moreover, new development should stay connected to surrounding neighborhoods, rather than depending on only one or two access points to a major road.

2. Create a design catalogue to provide examples of housing designs compatible with neighborhood character in different Shreveport neighborhoods.

Building on the *Louisiana Speaks Pattern Book*, a catalogue of house and multifamily designs and design guidelines for use by nonprofit and for-profit developers and builders, will establish a set of preferred design types appropriate for different areas of the city and different lot sizes.⁹ While these can be particularly useful in development of assisted housing, they should not be mandated for all developments but presented as guidance, with appropriate annotation of the features that have particular importance.

3. In areas with security issues, apply established techniques of crime prevention through environmental design in new development.

Crime prevention through environmental design is an established specialization that emphasizes several elements: natural access control, natural surveillance, territorial reinforcement, and maintenance. The kinds of security advantages that people often believe are associated with gated communities can be obtained with simple

⁹ *The Louisiana Speaks Pattern Book*, prepared by Urban Design Associates, is available at: http://www.planningexcellence.org/louisiana_speaks_downloads.asp

design solutions that do not require creating an isolated enclave unconnected from its surroundings.

4. Create a program to notify property owners about their sidewalk maintenance responsibilities and offer a betterment program

to promote sidewalk repair and maintenance in neighborhoods.

Many property owners do not know that they are legally responsible for the sidewalks in front of their property because the City has typically taken responsibility for sidewalk repairs—when funds have been available. If the City is not prepared

Design for Crime Prevention in Multifamily Buildings

Multifamily buildings do not necessarily mean multiple problems. There is a certain amount of truth to the saying “there’s safety in numbers.” Management may need to create opportunities for neighbors to get to know one another and create neighborhood watch programs. When neighbors take responsibility for themselves and each other it creates a safer environment.

Natural Access Control

- Keep balcony railings and patio enclosures as low as possible using opaque materials.
- Define entrances to the site and each parking lot with landscaping, architectural design, or symbolic gateways.
- Block off dead-end spaces with fences or gates.
- Use devices which automatically lock upon closing on common building entrances.
- Provide good illumination in hallways.
- Allow no more than four apartments to share the same entrance; individual entrances are recommended.
- Limit entrance access to the building to only one or two points.

Natural Surveillance

- Design buildings so that exterior doors are visible from the street or by neighbors.
- Use good lighting at all doors that open to the outside.
- Install windows on all four facades of buildings to allow good surveillance.
- Assign parking spaces to residents. Locate the spaces next to the resident’s unit, but not marked with their unit number. This makes unauthorized parking easier to identify and less likely to happen.

Designate Visitor Parking

- Make parking areas visible from windows and doors.
- Adequately illuminate parking areas and pedestrian walkways.

- Position recreation areas (pools, tennis courts, club houses) to be visible from many of the units windows and doors.
- Screen or conceal dumpsters, but avoid creating blind spots and hiding places.
- Build elevators and stairwells in locations that are clearly visible from windows and doors.
- Allow shrubbery to be no more than three feet high for clear visibility in vulnerable areas.
- Site buildings so that the windows and doors of one unit are visible from another (although not directly opposites).
- Construct elevators and stairwells to be open and well lighted.
- Place playgrounds where they are clearly visible from units, but not next to parking lots or streets.

Territorial Reinforcement

- Define property lines
- Use low shrubbery three feet maximum and fences to allow visibility from the street.
- Accentuate building entrances with architectural elements, lighting and/or landscaping.
- Clearly identify all buildings and residential units using street numbers that are easily observed from the street.
- Where possible, locate individually locking mailboxes next to the appropriate units.

Source: Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design, City of Virginia Beach, VA

to enforce the ordinance requiring private maintenance of sidewalks, it should eliminate the ordinance (Sec. 78–136). In many parts of the city sidewalks are absent, inadequate, or in bad condition. While the City could take responsibility for sidewalk installation or improvements when doing reconstruction or redesign of arterials or when infrastructure improvements are part of city-funded revitalization projects, sidewalk maintenance on neighborhood streets could remain the responsibility of property owners. In that case, the City should provide standards for construction and repair of sidewalks, as well as a list of approved contractors from which a property owner can choose.

An annual notification in the property tax bill or other City communication about sidewalk maintenance responsibilities should also include information on the required standards for sidewalks that contractors must meet if property owners wish to contract for repairs. Liens or payments on the property tax bill could be used as enforcement mechanisms.

Another approach is to offer a betterment program. Under a betterment program, property owners are assessed all or partial costs for the installation of new sidewalks or repair of existing sidewalks. The work is done by the City and the betterment fee is typically calculated using a formula that takes into account the length of frontage and the size of the lot, and assessed through the property tax bill. The program can be voluntary—in which case a majority of property owners along a street would agree to pay the fee and petition the City to get on the list. The program could also be initiated by the City when sidewalk installation or upgrades are needed to meet code requirements or as part of a broader project. The fees to be paid could vary according to whether the project is resident-initiated (in which case the residents could be asked to pay the entire cost) or city-initiated (in which case the costs could be shared).

Goal 2

Neighborhood centers providing access to retail and service for all neighborhoods.

Policies:

- *Focus public efforts to support creation of walkable neighborhood commercial districts or nodes.*
- *Locate civic and cultural uses within or adjacent to neighborhood commercial districts to act as anchors.*

STRATEGIES

A. Amend commercial strip zoning along arterial roads to promote more compact, mixed-use districts.

Most Shreveport commercial corridors are unattractive and poorly designed. Long corridors of commercial or industrial zoning combined with shifting market interest has resulted in low-density, low-value development and many vacancies along parts of Youree Drive north of Southfield, Mansfield Road, North Market Street, parts of Line Avenue and Kings Highway, and 70th Street. With few exceptions, the corridors in the older part of the city, from 70th Street north, tend to have shallow and often small lots backing onto residential areas. Even if some of the lots can be assembled into bigger parcels, the shallow lots constrain development by national retailers. To some degree, local merchants and small businesses have sought out these locations, but there is an oversupply of this space exacerbated by competition from newer chain development in the southern part of Youree Drive and Bert Kouns Industrial Loop and the ring of Walmarts in the metropolitan area. The traffic congestion that affects the areas with newer retail development is the result of poor access-management design, not lack of road capacity.

Over time, zoning strategies that create incentives to attract commercial investment to locations that retailers seek—major intersections—can promote corridors with focused nodes of development where vehicle access can be better managed and internal conditions can

be designed to produce more efficient, attractive and people-friendly environments. Enforceable design standards are essential for success. Stronger zoning and enhanced design standards will improve the appearance and function of commercial corridors as businesses redevelop with the confidence that neighboring lots will also have to meet enhanced standards. Areas that are more pleasant for customers to visit will attract more businesses.

Zoning in itself, however, is not enough to make development happen or, for example, to attract neighborhood-serving retail. Marketing efforts can be helpful in highlighting underserved areas with significant aggregate demand. Ultimate success will depend on the ability of the City and Parish to attract more jobs and residents inside the loop. Achieving the vision for neighborhoods in this way depends on achieving the economic development vision.

Actions

1. Designate intersections and sections of commercial corridors for different intensities of commercial development and introduce mixed-use zoning options that create “urban villages.”

The urban village areas will promote and facilitate housing development around neighborhood commercial centers, including design standards that require connections and walkability. Some of these urban villages can be designated as areas for “transit-ready” development. This means that over the long term, as Shreveport gains more population, these areas will have the development capacity to build higher-density, mixed-use areas that can support enhanced transit, such as express buses, bus rapid transit, and possibly in the more distant long term, light rail.

2. Establish a boulevard program to redesign major commercial corridors, such as Mansfield Road, to create parkway-style environments with enhanced streetscapes that create more

attractive development opportunities.

Parts of Mansfield Road and other Shreveport thoroughfares are already designed for boulevard treatments because they have internal lanes for through traffic and parallel service roads. In many cases, they also have grass-covered swales for stormwater drainage. Most, however, lack landscape treatments designed to make them attractive. Combined with the rezoning strategy for urban villages and concentration of commercial activities at specific nodes, landscaped medians, significant trees (not small shrubs) along service roads, landscaped swales for beauty and enhanced treatment of polluted stormwater, and similar strategies can make the areas between compact centers more attractive for multifamily or, in some cases, single-family development. The “complete streets” transportation policies recommended in Chapter 8 and the use of natural drainage best practices as amenities, discussed in Chapter 9, can be applied to these potential boulevard corridors.

3. Develop a façade improvement program with a matching grant or a revolving low-interest loan fund for designated older commercial districts.

The Downtown Development Authority has a façade improvement program and a similar program can be created for other parts of the city where older commercial districts are in or adjacent to areas where redevelopment is occurring. CDBG funds can be used if the business is located in an eligible census tract. It is beneficial to provide basic design assistance along with the funding and require approval of the design before funds are disbursed.

4. Improve the function and design for all neighborhood centers, including access management, internal circulation, buildings at the street edge, pedestrian networks, landscaped and distributed parking fields, and so on, through enhanced development standards in development regulations.

As noted in Chapter 8, traffic problems in Shreveport are almost entirely due to poor access management. New mobility, circulation and development standards in zoning and other regulations can have a surprisingly rapid effect in retail areas because retail buildings have the shortest lifespan of building types. Successful retailers know they have to redesign their sites and continue to make them fresh to attract consumers. Because Shreveport inside the loop also has many areas with vacant or obsolete retail space, focused growth over the next several decades can attract more interest in these sites—and redevelopment will then result in places that function better and have better design.

5. Locate new civic uses to serve as anchors within or adjacent to neighborhood commercial districts designated for current or future walkability.

The City and Parish can help bring customers to commercial districts by locating civic uses such as libraries, police and fire stations, schools, clinics, and similar facilities in commercial districts. New or renovated public facilities should be pedestrian-friendly and compatible with surrounding development—for example, locating parking to the side or rear of the building and providing windows and articulation on the street façade.

6. Coordinate disposition of or new uses for publicly owned properties, including schools, with the MPC to ensure compatibility with neighborhoods and commercial areas.

The disposition of publicly owned properties, including schools, located in or near commercial districts, should be preceded by an evaluation of potential uses and urban design strategies that can contribute to strengthening the commercial district. The school district should work with the MPC and affected neighborhoods to plan for preferred outcomes in the case of school-building reuse. If disposition and private-sector

development of a property is desired, the school district should prepare an RFP that provides criteria for the desired range of uses and the urban design strategy preferred. Transfer to other public entities should also require a commitment to suitable urban design strategies.

7. Promote the development of business or merchants' associations to serve as the voice of business owners in specific commercial districts.

A business or merchants' association organizes business owners to identify and prioritize the issues of most concern to them and serves as the voice and advocate for business interests in a neighborhood district. The existence of such organizations also benefits both the City and neighborhood residents during neighborhood and commercial district planning processes.

8. Recruit neighborhood-serving retail to underserved neighborhoods with market analyses and incentives.

A market analysis is essential to understanding and demonstrating what kind of retail is possible given the number of households and incomes, competition from Walmarts and similar nearby businesses, and unfilled market niches in the area. In some cases, neighborhoods do not have enough households to support national chain retail but could support a smaller local business. Incentives to attract stores could include fast-track approvals, fee waivers, grants and loans, land assembly and land discount, and site preparation assistance.

Where there is sufficient household density, lower-income neighborhoods often wield significant aggregate purchasing power. The Institute for a Competitive Inner City, led by Michael Porter of Harvard Business School, has found in several studies that lower-income neighborhoods are often very underserved by all kinds of retail. Cities like Columbus (OH), San

Diego, Denver, and Oakland have increased grocery and other retail offerings in urban neighborhoods by active recruitment.¹⁰

9. Support the development and capacity of farmers markets to increase access to fresh, local foods; to build community; and to support local agriculture and economic development.

As discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, expanding community gardens, farmers' markets, and urban agriculture enterprises should be part of an overall strategy to provide access to fresh food throughout the city.

Goal 3

Redevelopment of blighted and vacant properties in areas needing revitalization.

See Chapter 11 for discussion, strategies and actions.

Goal 4

A comprehensive housing policy to support quality neighborhoods and meet the diverse housing needs of all households.

Policy:

- Support for a community-based system to develop and implement housing policy that includes stakeholders from government, the nonprofit sector, and the private sector.

STRATEGIES

A. Create a community-based Housing Policy

Advisory Council, including representatives of government staff, neighborhood organizations, for-profit and nonprofit housing developers, realtors, and representatives of economic development organizations.

Affordable housing needs and policy can be contentious issues. An advisory group with wide representation would help educate the public and advise the Mayor, City Council, the Parish Commission, and the MPC about housing needs and help create greater consensus on the location, appearance, and management of assisted housing in Shreveport. Government staff should include representatives of the MPC, Community Development Department, Parish Commission, Housing Authority and any other appropriate agency, such as the professional Redevelopment Authority recommended in Chapter 11.

Action

1. Establish a Housing Policy Advisory Council

The Council should be staffed by the Community Development Department and MPC and meet at least quarterly. Its activities should include:

- Development of policies that promote mixed-income, diverse housing environments and reduce concentrations of poverty.
- Review of new standards for new and rehabilitated market-rate and subsidized housing that create neighborhoods rather than projects by requiring integration with surrounding areas.
- Annual report on housing needs, priorities, and policies to the Mayor, Council, Parish Commission and MPC Board.
- A public hearing on housing needs, priorities and policies at the MPC once a year.
- Development of policies to communicate local housing needs and priorities to state and

¹⁰ James Miara, "Retail in Inner Cities," *Urban Land* (January 2007), pp.98–105; see also www.icic.org.

federal housing agencies, as well as national nonprofits, and work with LHFA on selection criteria for tax credit projects.

Goal 5

All housing in good condition and code-compliant.

Policy:

- *Assign a very high priority to effective and efficient property standards and code-enforcement efforts.*

STRATEGIES

A. Establish systems to support enforcement of quality of life regulations.

Actions

1. **Continue to coordinate and integrate the activities of all government offices that enforce property standards, the building code, the zoning code, and similar regulations by assigning coordination responsibility to a specific department head or a staff member in the Mayor's office.**

Code enforcement involves a variety of laws, governmental staff and offices. Shreveport has already made progress in coordinating efforts around enforcement of property standards. Making one person responsible for coordinating the varied enforcement efforts will help ensure that resources are applied strategically to the worst violators.

2. **Create a detailed property database with information on tenure, condition, code status, and other aspects of all properties.**

Lack of good information makes it much more difficult to be effective in code enforcement. A detailed property database can be created incrementally.

3. **Consider creating a ticketing system with fines for quality-of-life offenses such as littering and illegal dumping, storage of junk cars, lack of mowing, and noise.**

Many communities have developed ticketing systems with fines for quality-of-life offenses.¹¹ Not only do these programs improve neighborhoods, but there is considerable evidence that they help cut crime. At the same time, funds from the fines can help pay for increased police time.

B. Establish a rental housing code to ensure that rental properties are fit for habitation.

The current property standards code in Shreveport focuses on external conditions. A number of rental properties in the city, however, appear to provide substandard living conditions for tenants. The lack of a rental housing code and organized enforcement of building and health codes in existing housing encourages landlords to continue to rent substandard housing. Tenants in Louisiana may pay for repairs and seek reimbursement from landlords, as long as they go through a state-sanctioned process, but, unlike in many other states, tenants are not allowed to put rent into an escrow account while negotiating maintenance or repair issues with a landlord. A rental housing code will give landlords in Shreveport the incentive to keep their rental units in safe and habitable condition. The system should be developed in consultation with owners of apartment complexes, as well as single-family rentals. Because the code would require more inspection staff, fines and fees collected under the rental code should be returned to support the program.

The purpose of a rental housing code is to provide minimum occupancy standards to safeguard the health, property and the welfare of tenants, occupants, users and owners of rental housing. The code will establish minimum standards related to the condition,

¹¹ For example, Buffalo, New York, found that ticketing for quality-of-life offenses cut crime. "Quality-of-life policing helps cut crime in Buffalo's Northeast District," *Buffalo News*, July 31, 2008.

maintenance and occupancy of rental dwellings in order to ensure that rental housing is safe, sanitary and suitable for habitation.

A rental housing code typically includes these elements:

- **Application:** The code shall apply to all rental dwelling units within the City of Shreveport. Dwelling units include any and all units with one or more rooms intended to be occupied by someone other than the owner in exchange for periodic payments to the owner for the occupancy. This shall include apartments, multi-unit complexes, single-family units, dormitories and boarding houses.
- **Registration:** All rental housing must be registered with the City’s Property Standards Department. A registration fee shall be charged to offset the cost related to registration, administration and inspection of rental units. Any owners who willfully fail to register a unit shall be guilty of a misdemeanor on the first offense. Enhancement of penalties for habitual violators.
- **Inspection:** A rigorous inspection program will be required to assure occupants’ safety, structural and mechanical integrity of buildings and to avoid the negative impact of substandard units on surrounding communities and the city as a whole. All dwelling units must be inspected annually and certified as safe for occupancy. All certified dwelling units shall be listed publicly as available for occupancy. An annual inspection fee shall be charged for each dwelling unit inspected. The inspection will include examination of:
 - > structural elements (roofs, floors, walls, foundation and overall structure)
 - > plumbing
 - > electrical system
 - > heating and cooling systems
 - > weatherproofing
 - > security
 - > fire safety (smoke detectors and proper exits)
- **Enforcement:** Enforcement should include both the opportunity for the tenant to seek redress and for the landlord to take care of any violation. The rental code should spell out an enforcement process that includes:
 - > complaint process for the occupant
 - > inspections after complaints
 - > notice to owner of finding and/or illegal condition(s)
 - > notice to owner of potential penalties
 - > owner opportunity to cure violation
 - > reinspection
 - > administrative court—imposition of penalties for noncompliance

Actions

1. Consider strengthening the city building code to the standards of the federal Section 8 (HCV) housing code.

The federal government requires that landlords who accept Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) bring their rental housing units up to what are considered minimum housing-condition standards.¹² The City of Shreveport’s minimum standards are less rigorous than the federal standards. Raising City standards to the level expected of landlords who receive federal funds through rental vouchers would improve the overall quality of housing available for low- and moderate-income renters throughout the city.

2. Enact a Shreveport rental housing code.

The details of a rental housing code should be developed through a consultative process that involves government, nonprofit and for-profit stakeholders. The Community Development Department can take the lead, with assistance of the City Attorney’s office and then work out the details with the previously proposed Housing Policy Advisory Council, as well as other groups. Many cities have developed rental housing

¹² For standards, see: http://www.healthyhomestraining.org/ipm/IPM_MFH_Ref_2_HUD_HQS_9-11-08.pdf

codes with the elements discussed earlier. The system should be sufficiently broad to have the desired effect and support the costs of enforcement, while minimizing impacts on good landlords. A good, relatively simple example comes from Morgantown, WV.

C. Create an administrative court to deal with quality-of-life violations.

Legislative amendments passed in 2007 give any municipality or parish in Louisiana the power to adopt an administrative adjudication hearing procedure to deal with violations of ordinances regulating public health, housing, fire codes, environmental matters, and historic districts. (La. R.S. 13:2575.B.) If Shreveport establishes a ticketing system for quality-of-life violations, the administrative court could be limited to those who fail to pay the fines and who have repeated violations.

The administrative hearing resembles a court proceeding; comparable administrative courts operate in cities such as Monroe (“Environmental Court”), Baton Rouge (“Litter Court”), and Logansport (“Code Enforcement Court”), offering useful working models. The hearing officer(s) appointed by the municipality or parish may be the municipal or parish director of health or his/her designee, or an attorney having been licensed in Louisiana for two or more years. The hearing officer(s) may be given authority to:

- administer oaths and affirmations;
- issue orders compelling the attendance of witnesses and defendants and the production of documents;
- levy fines, fees, penalties, and hearing costs; and
- order violators to correct violations within a stipulated time.

Importantly, to enforce correction of any violations, the hearing officer may record a lien and privilege against the property in question. This nonexclusive legal remedy acts as a judicial mortgage against the property, allowing any fine and costs imposed to be enforced

against the property itself. Any liens placed against the property are included in the next annual tax bill, and failure to pay the lien can make the property subject to sale through code enforcement lien foreclosure. Unlike a tax sale, this kind of sale can transfer a property with clean title, avoiding the redemption problems common to adjudicated properties.

This relatively new legal remedy creates a streamlined means for enforcing property standards and similar municipal ordinances without burdening the docket in either a mayor’s court or criminal district court and it is also self-financing through payment of court costs by defendants.

To date, the comparable courts in Monroe and Logansport have achieved a reputation for effectiveness that has persuaded almost all defendants to correct violations prior to any administrative hearing. Such an administrative court could be established in Shreveport by ordinance.

Action

1. **Establish a quality-of-life court pilot project—once a week for a year to gauge the need and benefit.**

The quality-of-life court would focus on enforcing property standards, housing and rental codes, littering ordinances, and public health ordinances once a week for a year to gauge the need and benefit.

Goal 6

Quality housing to meet the diverse needs of households at all income levels and all stages of the life cycle.

Policy:

- **Support the planning, regulatory and funding initiatives needed to provide a diversity of housing types, rental and ownership, market-rate and subsidized, to meet community needs.**

STRATEGIES

A. Expand the diversity of housing choices, with amenities, to reflect the increasing diversity of ages, household types and backgrounds, while ensuring appropriate standards and guidelines for fitting new housing into existing neighborhoods—for example, condominiums, townhouses, live-work units, lofts.

Actions

1. **Expand first-time homebuyer and credit-counseling programs and explore employer-assisted housing programs with major employers.**

Many Shreveport renters who would like to own their own homes have the income to pay a monthly mortgage and to meet the maintenance needs of a home. They may not, however, have the credit history to qualify for a mortgage or enough money for a downpayment or closing costs.

Although Shreveport is not a high-cost housing market, many employees make low wages, even with large employers such as the casinos and health care providers. In employer-assisted housing programs the employer provides downpayment or closing-cost assistance to help employees become homeowners.

2. **Expand housing-rehabilitation programs with strategies such as revolving loan pools.**

The current housing-rehab programs focus primarily on elderly and disabled homeowner. Low-interest loan programs can be established with local banks to assist income-eligible owner-occupants of any age. In addition, a number of communities also have rehab programs designed for rental housing. When a property owner takes advantage of a low-interest loan to rehab a rental property, the owner must make a legal agreement to keep rents affordable to low- and moderate-income households for a certain number of years. In this way the rehab funding benefits the

target group, which is income-eligible renters.

This kind of program could work with the Rental Code registration and enforcement program recommended earlier.

3. **Establish a marketing program and a one-stop housing center for all government-assisted homeownership, rehabilitation, and rental programs.**

In addition to enhancing existing first-time homebuyer fairs and similar marketing efforts, Community Development could develop a one-stop housing center in an easily-accessible location.

4. **Support the development of supportive permanent housing for residents who are at risk of homelessness and/or are living in substandard housing, as well as other group homes, while balancing the needs of neighborhoods.**

HOPE is focusing on providing supportive permanent housing for its clients and should pursue federal funding for supportive-housing programs. Because of low housing costs, social service agencies may tend to cluster their developments and their clients in certain areas, such as downtown or older neighborhoods with big houses. It is important, on the one hand, to provide for and welcome well-managed group homes and supportive housing environments. However, it is also important that all neighborhoods, including downtown as a future residential area, have a diversity of household types and that no one area becomes over-supplied with supportive housing. HOPE should be part of the Housing Policy Advisory Council in order to be part of the discussion about creating diverse and balanced neighborhoods and housing.

5. **Make investments in infrastructure and amenities where housing development is desired.**

As noted in Chapter 9, reserving some city funds for infrastructure and public-realm amenity costs

where housing development is desired will help advance redevelopment inside the loop.

Goal 7

A cohesive urban design identity for the entire planning area with appropriate variations for diverse neighborhoods.

Policy:

- *Include urban design goals and standards for private development and public planning and capital investment projects.*

STRATEGIES

More detailed discussion of the urban design principles below will be found in Chapter 12.

A. Revise zoning and subdivision regulations to promote a well-designed, attractive and functional urban design context and public realm.

Actions

1. Establish building, street, infill and subdivision design standards that focus on people rather than vehicles (while accommodating vehicles as needed).
2. Ensure sensitive transitions from residential to nonresidential areas through zoning and design standards.
3. Revise the sign ordinance to ensure that signs are compatible with desired character of the surrounding context.
4. Preserve and enhance the character of older neighborhoods by preserving the street grid, orienting new development to fit in with older character (in terms of dimensions and placement on the lot) and to harmonize with the design character of existing development without necessarily copying older forms.

5. Ensure that new subdivisions or apartment complexes connect with the surrounding context, including any future roads, rather than create isolated developments with connections to only one road.
6. Ensure that new subdivisions provide sidewalks, street trees, public open space, and similar amenities.
7. Permit and encourage low-impact development in subdivision regulations, such as narrower residential streets, natural drainage, and other innovative infrastructure approaches.
8. Provide expedited approvals for new development that meets urban design standards and is located in areas where development is desired.

B. Establish high-quality urban design standards for the public realm and implement them over time

Actions

1. Develop design principles and standards for private and public development in all commercial districts. Include more detailed guidelines for the public realm (streets, streetscape, public spaces) in Area Plans. Design principles for neighborhood commercial districts should strive to create human-scaled, fine-grained physical environments while accommodating cars as needed. These principles have repeatedly proven to be successful around the country in redevelopment of suburban-style commercial strips and shopping centers, where people are looking for pedestrian-friendly environments in their shopping experience, even if they initially arrive by car. Shreveport already has an example of this type of environment, the Shoppes at Bellemeade on Youree Drive. While not all types of commercial development can support the detail at this shopping area,

enhanced design standards can require the breakup of large parking fields with more shade trees; designated, landscaped pedestrian routes through parking areas for safety and comfort; location of retail closer to the road, with large parking areas shielded from direct view of the road; and internal circulation between commercial parcels to avoid excessive numbers of curb cuts on the street.

2. **Establish a context-sensitive design standard for streetscapes as part of the Area Plans, and work with LADOTD and NLCOG to plan improvements for urban arterials that are state roads. "Complete Streets" policies recommended in Chapter 8 will enhance city streets.**
3. **Establish a program for public art in infrastructure projects, such as a One Percent for Art program. See Chapter 5.**

D. Getting Started

Early actions that are not costly will provide a foundation for more ambitious activities.

ACTIONS	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Create a Housing Policy Advisory Council that is broadly representative of the MPC area	Mayor and City Council with Community Development and MPC
Enact a rental housing code	MPC; Community Development; Mayor and City Council
Create an administrative court to deal with code enforcement and quality of life violations	Mayor and City Council
Strengthen city building codes to meet the minimum standards in the federal Section 8 code	Mayor and City Council; Community Development
Establish planning districts for future planning efforts and community consultation on land use issues	MPC