

# Population and Land Use Trends

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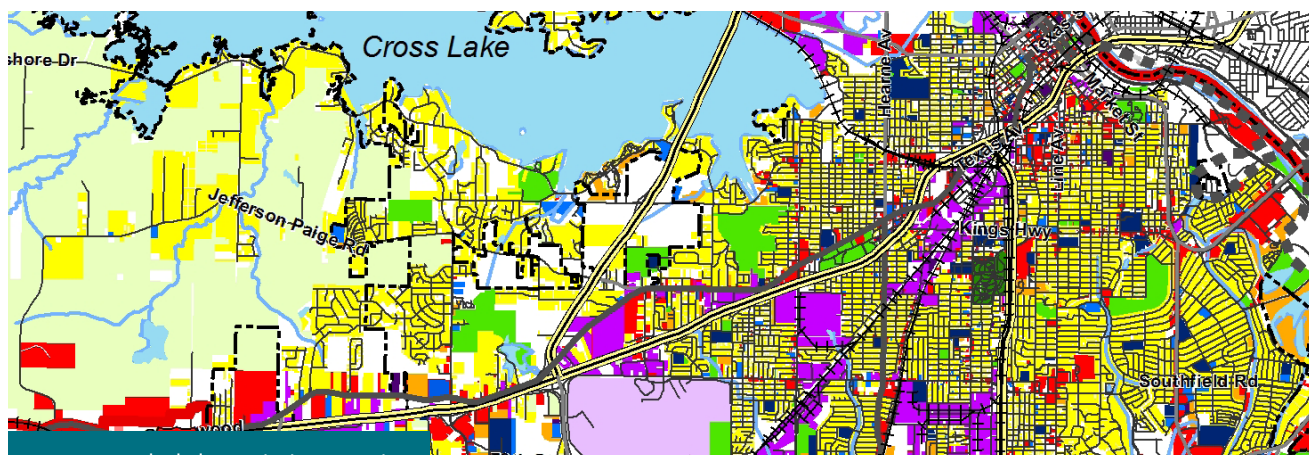
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personal vision statements:

*“Better use of land, less sprawl.  
Develop blighted areas.”*



## A. Sprawl Without Growth

Between 1950 and 2009, the land area of the City of Shreveport more than quadrupled, while its population grew one and a half times. Over 127,000 people lived in Shreveport's 24 square miles of land in 1950, at a density of 5,300 persons per square mile. By 2009, the estimated 200,000 people living within the city limits were spread out over 106 square miles of land, at a density of approximately 1,600 persons per square mile. Particularly since 1980, when the city's land area grew 26% while population remained stable, the City of Shreveport's story of physical development has been one of sprawl without growth.

Many of the forces behind this phenomenon acted on all U.S. cities during the 50 years after World War II: demographic forces that created a large market for family housing; expansion of car ownership and highways that made it easy and convenient to live far from employment centers; national tax and housing policies that encouraged suburban development; the growth of regional shopping malls that siphoned customers from the downtown retail market; and social changes like the end of legal segregation in schools and housing. Especially since the oil industry crash of the 1980s, Shreveport experienced the decline in downtown retail, disinvestment of neighborhoods in the city core, and development of new neighborhoods at the periphery of the city that was characteristic of most American cities in the second half of the 20th century. Shreveport's sprawl has not been accompanied by the explosive population growth and traffic congestion that has forced cities such as Atlanta to reconsider their development model. Shreveport's limited population growth, however, has produced unintended consequences in the form of unsustainable infrastructure costs (see map on next page).

Is Shreveport a "shrinking city?" This term is used to describe the cities, mostly formerly industrial Rust Belt

cities in the Northeast and Midwest, that have seen huge declines in population over the last 50 years, are unlikely to regain that population in the foreseeable future, and are rethinking ways to use the vacant properties and land within their borders. Population estimates for the City of Shreveport in 2009 place its population slightly below 200,000, with the Master Plan Area at 228,000<sup>1</sup>. But, unlike the Rust Belt, the census-delineated Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) that includes Caddo, Bossier, and DeSoto parishes has been growing in jobs, population and households. As of 2010, job creation and relatively low unemployment compare well with other places in the country suffering much more severely from the Great Recession of 2007-2009. On the regional level, future prospects are encouraging.

Nevertheless, the Shreveport-Caddo Master Plan Area shares many population and land use characteristics with shrinking cities, such as high levels of blight and vacancy. "Leapfrog development"—isolated subdivisions that are not adjacent to the city limits—can have long-term negative consequences on quality of life, income disparities, transportation options and costs, fiscal needs and economic competitiveness in the city core. With population density in the city decreasing significantly over time as a result of

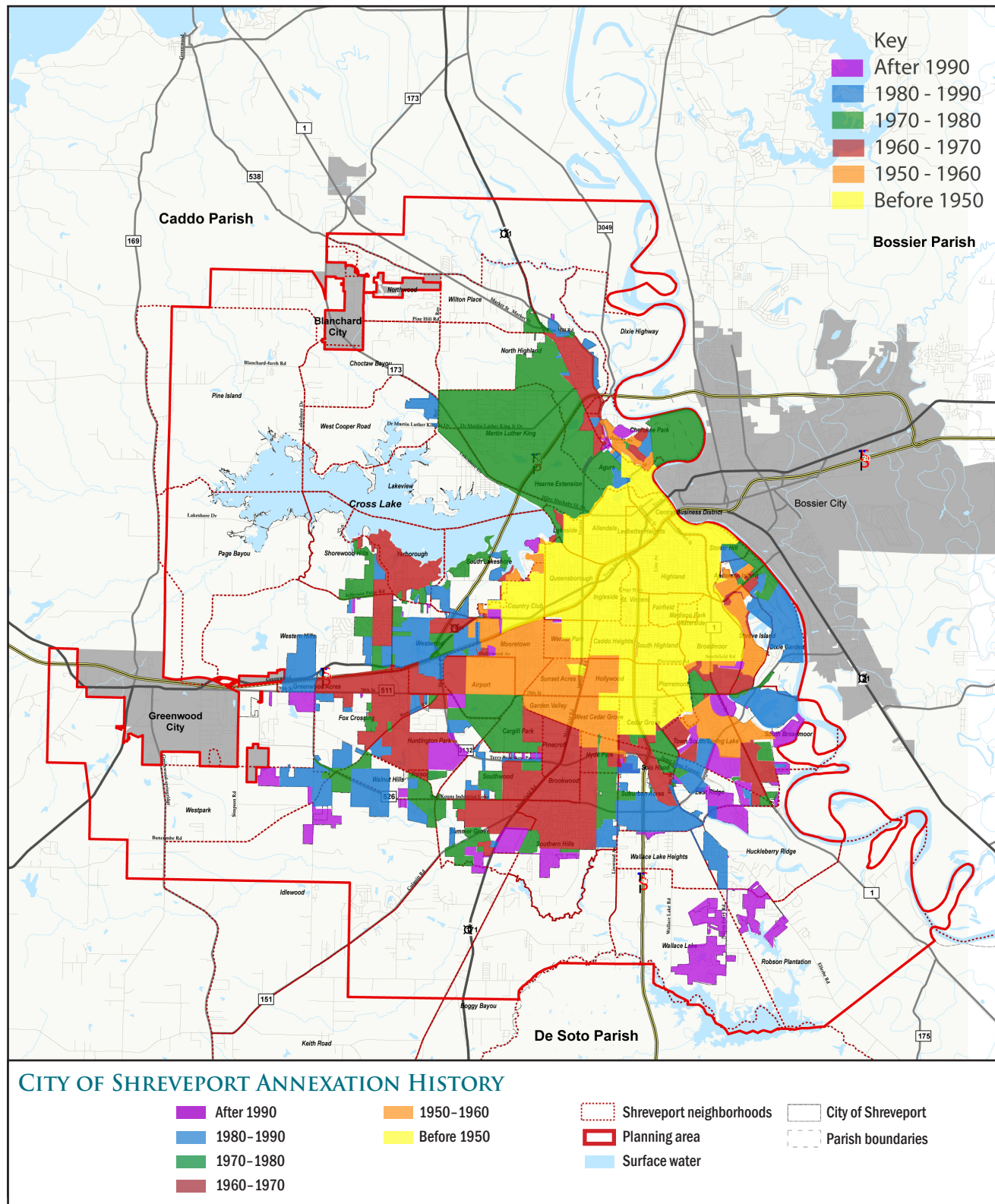
<sup>1</sup> 2009 population estimate by *ESRI Business Analyst*.

FIGURE 3.1 CITY OF SHREVEPORT LAND AREA, 1980-2009

	LAND ACRES	WATER ACRES	TOTAL ACRES	TOTAL SQ. MI. (LAND+WATER)	NET INCREASE (SQ. MI.)
1980	51,875	10,128	62,003	96.88	n/a
1990	62,571	10,395	72,967	114.01	17.13
2000	65,082	10,395	75,477	117.93	3.92
2001	65,513	10,395	75,909	118.61	0.68
2002	65,867	10,395	76,262	119.16	0.55
2003	66,101	10,411	76,519	119.55	0.39
2004	66,677	10,411	77,088	120.45	0.90
2005	67,723	10,411	78,135	122.09	1.64
2006	67,759	10,411	78,171	122.14	0.06
2007	67,954	10,411	78,355	122.45	0.31
2008	67,955	10,411	78,357	122.45	0.00
2009*	68,017	10,411	78,428	122.54	0.10
TOTAL INCREASE, 1980 TO 2009				26 sq. miles	
PERCENTAGE INCREASE, 1980 TO 2009				26%	

\* As of July 31, 2009 (last recorded annexation of 5/13/2009). Source: City of Shreveport

MAP 3.1 CITY OF SHREVEPORT ANNEXATION HISTORY



Sources: LSUS Noel Memorial Library, City of Shreveport staff, Goody Clancy



annexation, the stress of providing dispersed services and expanding infrastructure continues to deepen for the city, with escalating costs and declining levels of service.

## B. Historic Growth and Development<sup>2</sup>

At the time of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, traders and settlers of European descent were already entering the lands of the Caddo Indians on the Red River. Navigation was impeded by a massive, natural logjam called the Great Raft. By the early 1830s, more people were traveling through the area on their way to Texas, and the federal government was promoting river navigation. In quick succession, the Army Corps of Engineers commissioned Captain Henry Miller Shreve to clear the Great Raft in 1832; the federal government acquired the land in the Caddo Indian Treaty, relocating the Caddo Indians to Oklahoma in 1835; Shreve and six others formed the Shreve Town Company with a square grid of 8 by 8 streets on the Red River in 1836 (today's Central Business District); in 1838, Shreveport was officially incorporated; and it became the seat of newly-formed Caddo Parish in 1839. At its founding, Shreveport was where the South met the West, with today's Texas Street and Texas Avenue serving as the gateway to the then-Republic of Texas. By 1850, there were 1,040 residents in the river port, serving the surrounding cotton plantation economy and the riverboat economy and, like most ports, known as a rowdy community with what we today would call a multicultural population.

Shreveport grew during the Civil War, escaping the war's destruction and even serving for two years as the state capital. In the second half of the 19th century, cotton production continued its dominance of the regional economy, but Shreveport also developed some local industries, such as breweries. Steamboats lost out to the railroads after the 1870s. Modernization brought paved streets, public water and sewer systems, and streetcars.

Much of downtown remained residential before the 1920s, but new neighborhoods had emerged by 1900 in Highland, Allendale, Queensborough, West End, and Ingleside, and St. Paul's Bottoms developed as a red light district and center of popular music.

The 1905 discovery of oil in Caddo Parish made Shreveport into an important center of the petroleum industry. Prosperity based on oil, cotton and the timber industry sustained the region through the 1920s. Tall buildings began to appear downtown in 1911, a 35-mile streetcar network was in place in the 1920s, and population growth spurred the development of new neighborhoods and suburbs including Lakeside, Mooretown, Stoner Hill, South Highlands, Broadmoor, and Pierremont.

Continued oil and gas, cotton and timber production and the construction of Barksdale Air Field helped the region weather the Great Depression and the World War II years. By the 1950s, Shreveport-Caddo was thriving and growing but with side effects, including poor housing and housing shortages, crowded schools, and traffic congestion. These growing pains led the Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) to commission the area's first comprehensive plan in 1956-7 by planner Arch R. Winter. Much of this plan focused on a new transportation network, identification of industrial sites, location of public facilities, and redevelopment of blighted areas to serve the growing city. The plan also made a point of recommending parks and reserves of agricultural and forestry land, as well as parkways. Implementation of the plan focused particularly on the transportation network.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Shreveport became one of the most important manufacturing centers in Louisiana, with AT&T, General Electric, and General Motors among the national corporations that located plants in the area. With two local hospital systems, a charity hospital, and the opening of the LSU medical school in 1969, Shreveport solidified its role as the health care center for the entire ArkLaTex region. With two public post-secondary institutions, LSU-Shreveport and Southern University-Shreveport, as well as Centenary College, which had relocated to Shreveport in the early twentieth century, the

<sup>2</sup> This brief historic review is indebted to Eric J. Brock, *Eric Brock's Shreveport* (Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Company, 2001) and to the Caddo Parish Sheriff's Office, "A Brief History of Caddo Parish," July 16, 1999.

city also emerged a regional educational center. Suburban subdivisions appeared at the southern and northern edges of the city, and shopping malls drew retail business away from the traditional downtown retail sector.

Prosperity based on the oil industry, the air force base, and a strong manufacturing base, kept Shreveport growing and relatively prosperous through the 1970s. The largest number of housing units in the city today was built during the 1960s and 1970s, when the city was growing and expanding. During 1985-87, the Shreveport economy was shaken by the crash of the oil industry and layoffs at the AT&T plant that represented a harbinger of times to come. Many people left the city to look for opportunity elsewhere. Per capita incomes in real dollars have hardly budged since 1979, and population has remained more or less stable since 1990.

When Arch Winter was invited back in 1978 to prepare an update to the 1957 Master Plan, he noted the changes that had taken place since the 1950s:

*"[T]he land use pattern of the city...has changed considerably. Not so much in its pattern, but in the quantity of land being consumed by urban development.... We have a much more scattered kind of development than we had...back in the 1950's.... retail trade has almost gone from our Central Business District.... We have plenty of land....we could accommodate in [the] inner area 470,000 people.... So the problem in Shreveport is not a scarcity of land... the problem here is to get the best available possible use of the land."*

Winter went on to recommend that "the open bayous and the flood plains...be preserved as permanent open green space." He noted that "the plan centers a lot on the older inner areas of the city that need redevelopment. Most of the problems of those areas are still with us....We will have to have a policy of giving priority to improving housing and providing housing within the compact area as opposed to providing additional services to accommodate all of the growth farther out of the inner areas."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Arch Winter summary of 1978 Master Plan update—Public Hearing, 1978 Master Plan, August 15, 1978. Available at the MPC office.

City leadership and the MPC in 1980 launched sector plans for infrastructure needs for planning sectors in the southwest, southeast and north periphery of the city, because they were seen as future suburban growth areas. It was assumed that the city's economic future would continue to lie in industrial development. The 1981 plan that resulted from this effort identified sprawl as a major problem for the city and proposed "Growth Incentive Zones which will encourage growth in areas best suited for it and provide a more compact growth pattern." A water and sewer ordinance was prepared that placed the expense for extension of water and sewer on developers rather than on the City and existing water and sewer customers, with criteria and a point system to guide decision making about service extensions. While not an impact fee, this represented an effort to reduce the cost of infrastructure development to the City and to function as a disincentive for leapfrog development.

The 1980s marked a period of ferment in Shreveport, as the community searched for a new direction. As part of the city's sesquicentennial celebration in 1986, a FutureShape Commission was formed and held a conference that brought together many residents. The priority issues that emerged from this effort were jobs, substandard housing, clean city, urban design, education, and improved black-white relations.<sup>4</sup> Many participants in the FutureShape events felt change did not come fast enough.

Another Master Plan update was prepared in 1987 to address these issues and to incorporate the large number of neighborhood, transportation, infrastructure and program plans completed in the mid-1980s. Many elements of Shreveport's physical development today have their intellectual roots in these plans of the 1980s, especially downtown streetscape improvements and ideas such as the convention center and hotel, the West Edge as an arts district, development and parks on Cross Bayou, and housing downtown; an affordable housing plan focused on inner city rehabilitation; and so on. At the same time, the plan contained internal contradictions: in some sections it stressed avoiding sprawl, but in others it focused on transportation and infrastructure expansion and an

<sup>4</sup> MPC, 1987 Master Plan Compendium Update for the Shreveport Metropolitan Planning Area, adopted 1987.

aggressive annexation policy “adopted with the objectives of maintaining a healthy socioeconomic level and tax base and preventing the incorporation or expansion of suburban municipalities that would block the logical growth of the city.”<sup>5</sup> In an era of social conflict and difficult economic conditions in urban centers all over the country, this policy reflected the fear that the city would become an impoverished core surrounded by well-off suburbs.

Implementation of a series of recommended projects for downtown was a signal accomplishment of the 1990s and early 2000s. I-49 was built in the 1990s, to join I-20, which was built in the 1960s. At the same time, sprawl and leapfrog development, high infrastructure costs and inner core disinvestment continued. This 20th century model of development has become increasingly costly and uncompetitive in the new environment of the 21st century.

### C. Population Trends

Like metropolitan populations all over the country, the population in Shreveport-Bossier has been growing older and more diverse—not just in race and ethnicity but also in household type, with fewer traditional families and more non-family households. While the Shreveport-Bossier region as a whole has grown over the last 30 years, Shreveport and Caddo Parish have not maintained their share of this growth. In general, population trends have been somewhat negative for the City of Shreveport in particular, as it has experienced a slight net loss of population since 1980, and a declining share of the regional population. From a purely demographic point of view, the regional story in the last generation has been the steady population growth of Bossier City and Parish.

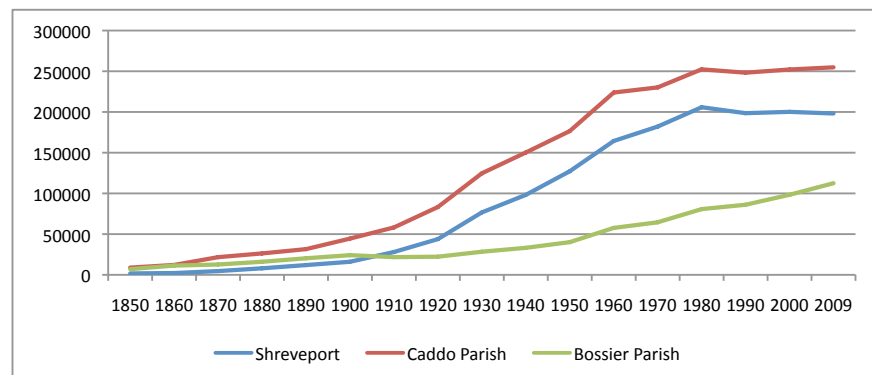
Economically speaking, Caddo Parish and Shreveport retain the majority of jobs in the region, with a high and increasing population-to-jobs ratio, which means that jobs are still being created in Shreveport-Caddo even as the population remains stable. However, the Caddo Parish share of regional employment has been decreasing and per capita income in Caddo Parish has declined slightly since 1999, with opposite trends in Bossier Parish. Moreover, employment and income gaps between African-Americans and whites in the Master Plan Area are significant. African-Americans are twice as likely as whites to be unemployed; have a poverty rate almost four times as great as white residents; and their median earnings stand at less than two-thirds of white median earnings. Changing these overall trends and conditions is a fundamental challenge facing the Shreveport-Caddo community in the next 20 years if it is to achieve its ambitious vision. The Master Plan is designed to serve as a guide to overcoming that challenge.

### Population and households

The Shreveport-Caddo area grew quickly between the discovery of oil in 1905 and the crash of the oil economy in the 1980s. Since 1980, population has remained more or less stable. Since 2000, Caddo Parish has grown slightly while

FIGURE 3.2 REGIONAL POPULATION TRENDS, 1990-2009

	1990	2000	2009 (EST.)	% CHANGE, 1990-2000	% CHANGE, 2000-2009
Shreveport	198,525	200,145	198,133	-0.2%	-1.0%
Caddo Parish	248,253	252,161	254,829	2.6%	1.1%
Shreveport-Bossier parishes	334,341	350,471	367,368	9.9%	4.8%
Louisiana	4,219,973	4,468,976	4,488,442	6.4%	0.0%



Sources: U.S. Census; City of Shreveport

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

the city population remained flat. However, population within the Shreveport-Bossier metro area<sup>6</sup> has increased 22 percent since 1990. While the City of Shreveport has remained around 200,000 persons with a net loss in population of 5,789 since 1980 (a 3 percent decrease), Caddo Parish outside of the City has gained 6,326 persons (a 14 percent increase). In comparison, Bossier Parish has experienced significant growth since 1980 of almost 30,000 persons, or a 37 percent increase. Further comparisons of the city with the metropolitan statistical area (MSA), which includes Caddo, Bossier, and De Soto parishes, reveal that the city holds a declining share of regional population. In 1980, that share stood at 57 percent; it had dropped to 51 percent by 2008. In contrast, Bossier Parish increased its share of regional population from 22 to 28 percent over the same period.

While population has remained relatively stable, the

<sup>6</sup> Demographic information for the Shreveport-Bossier metro area includes data gathered from Caddo Parish and Bossier Parish. This data was gathered because Census Shreveport-Bossier MSA boundaries changed over time to include different groupings of Parishes. For example, the 1990 MSA included Caddo and Bossier parishes, 2000 included Caddo, Bossier and Webster parishes, and 2007 data included Caddo, Bossier and DeSoto parishes, but not Webster Parish.

number of households—which has a direct impact on the demand for housing units—has increased since 1990, by 5% in the city and 7% in the parish. More households mean smaller families, more empty-nesters, more single persons living alone, and greater demand for variety in the types of housing available. The census defines families as households of people related by blood or marriage. A “family,” therefore, can be a married couple without children at home. According to the 2000 census, 35% of total households in the Master Plan Area had related children at home and 25% of households included persons 65 years or older. Seventeen percent of all households were single-parent families with related children. Although the Shreveport-Caddo area remains family-oriented in many ways, only about a third of all households have related children living at home. These local numbers showing fewer households with children and fewer family households reflect national trends.

### Age composition

Like many other places in the U.S., the Master Plan Area is growing older as the baby boom generation ages. The 2009 median age is 36.3 with an estimated increase to 36.7

in five years. If current demographic trends continue, the older age cohorts will continue to grow, particularly since the general health and survival prospects of the baby boom generation are better than previous generations.

### Race and ethnicity

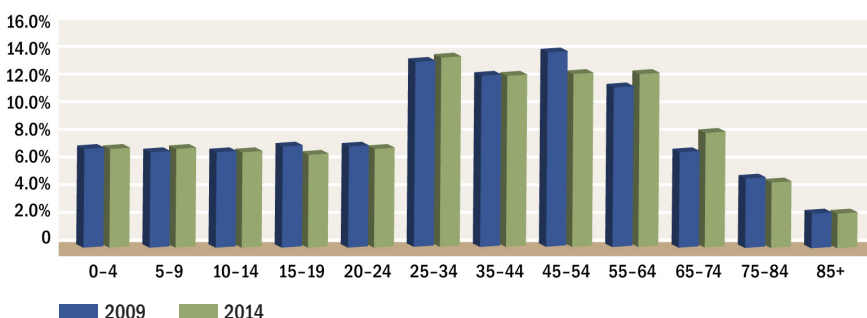
Since 1990, all jurisdictions in the region are becoming more multiracial and multi-ethnic, reflecting national trends. In the Master Plan Area, the African-American population has been growing about 1% a year since 1990. Asians and Other (including people who identify as American Indian or of mixed race) make up about 3% of the population. Hispanics can be of any race and are

FIGURE 3.3 HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE

	SHREVEPORT HOUSEHOLDS		CADDO PARISH HOUSEHOLDS	
	1990	2007	1990	2007
Total	75,645	79,348	93,348	99,450
One-person households	28.7%	32.8%	27.1%	30.9%
Family households	68.1%	63.1%	69.8%	64.7%
Average household size (people)	2.62	2.44	2.66	2.46

Source: U.S. Census 1990 and ACS 2007

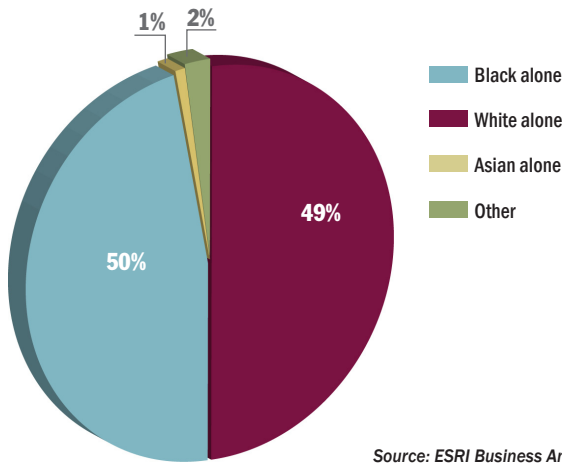
FIGURE 3.4 MASTER PLAN AREA ESTIMATED POPULATION BY AGE, 2009-2014



Source: ESRI Business Analyst, 2009



FIGURE 3.5 MASTER PLAN AREA ESTIMATED POPULATION BY RACE, 2009



Source: ESRI Business Analyst, 2009

therefore not included in the pie chart. They make up an estimated 1.8% of the Master Plan Area population. Though small as a percentage of the total population, the Hispanic population has been growing 3% a year in the city and over 7% a year in Caddo Parish overall. If Shreveport and Caddo Parish expand employment and make quality of life improvements, it is likely that the Hispanic population will continue to grow significantly.

### School enrollment

According to state Department of Education data, Caddo Parish public school enrollment decreased 14% from 48,553 in 1990 to 41,757 in 2009/10, with two-thirds of students listed as African-American or other minority racial composition. Sixty-five percent of students in the system are eligible for free or reduced lunch because of limited family income. Private-school enrollment stands at approximately 7,950. Bossier Parish public school enrollment grew 20% between 1990 and 2009/10. Forty-six percent of Bossier students qualify for free or reduced-cost lunches and 38 percent of the school population is African-American or other nonwhite minority.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Louisiana Department of Education, District at a Glance, [www.doe.state.la.us](http://www.doe.state.la.us); [www.privateschoolreview.com](http://www.privateschoolreview.com)

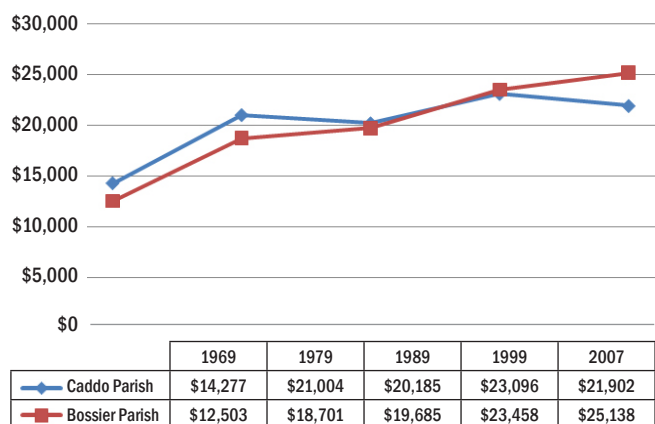
### Incomes and employment

Per capita incomes have leveled off in recent years in Caddo Parish and increased steadily in Bossier Parish. Recent per capita data indicate a per capita income of \$21,902 for Caddo and \$25,138 for Bossier (expressed in constant 2009 dollars). Caddo Parish's figure reflects a decrease from 1999.

Employment and earnings vary among different segments of the population. Thirty-five percent of the households in the Master Plan Area were estimated to have incomes under \$25,000 in 2009. The Census Bureau estimated that 20% of the population in Caddo Parish was living in poverty in 2008, and 30% of the population under 18 years old was living in poverty. In that year, the poverty threshold for a family of four was \$22,025.

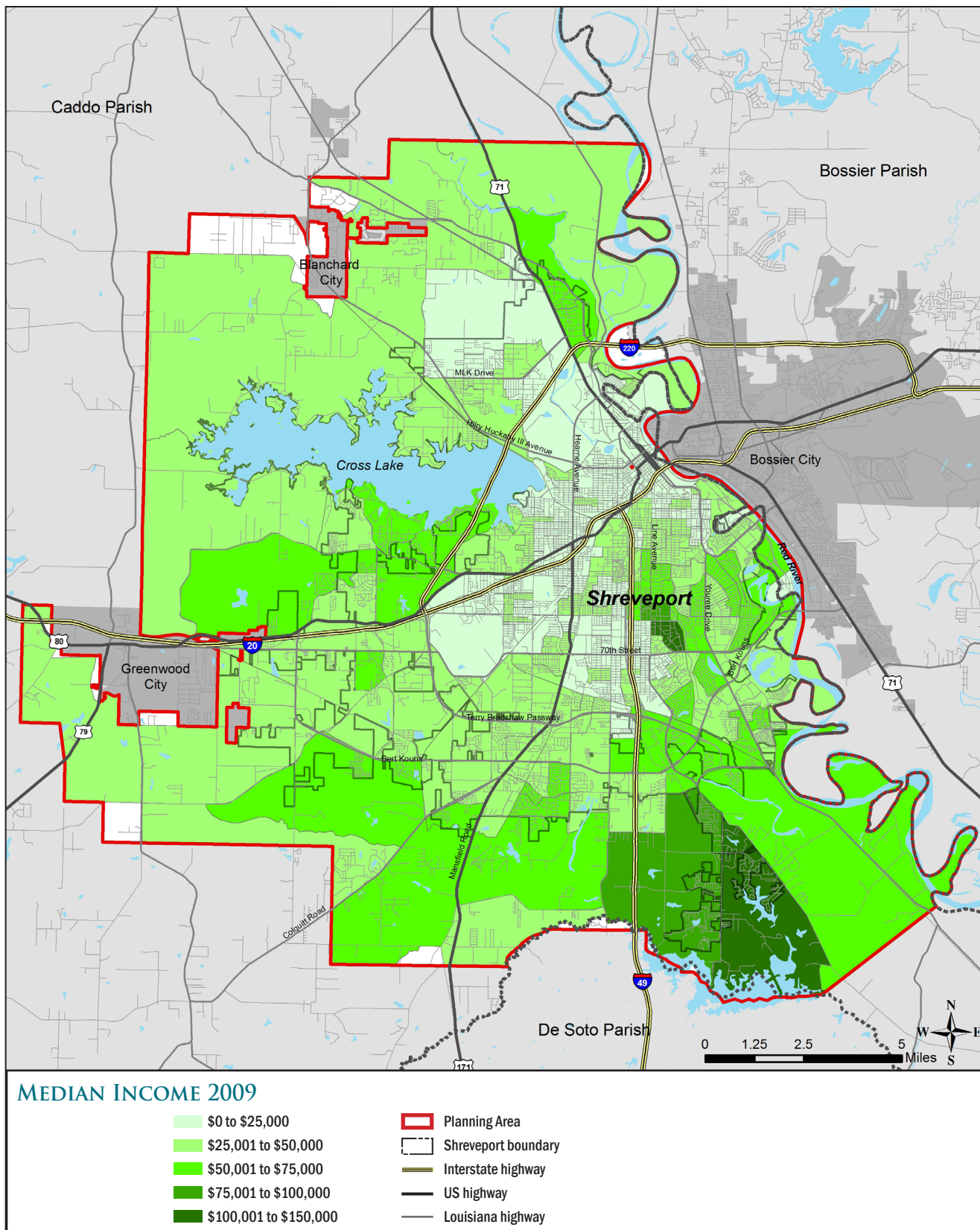
There is a particularly large income and employment gap along racial lines. During the period 2006-8, the unemployment rate for African-Americans in Caddo Parish averaged 11.6 percent, more than double the rate of 4.6 percent for whites. Median earnings for African-Americans in 2008 were 59 percent of white median earnings. Reflecting these lower employment and earnings levels, the poverty rate for African-Americans in Caddo Parish, 32.9%, is almost four times that of whites, 8.4%.

FIGURE 3.6 PER CAPITA INCOMES, CADDO AND BOSSIER PARISHES (2009 DOLLARS)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, adjusted to constant 2009 dollars

MAP 3.2 MEDIAN INCOME 2009

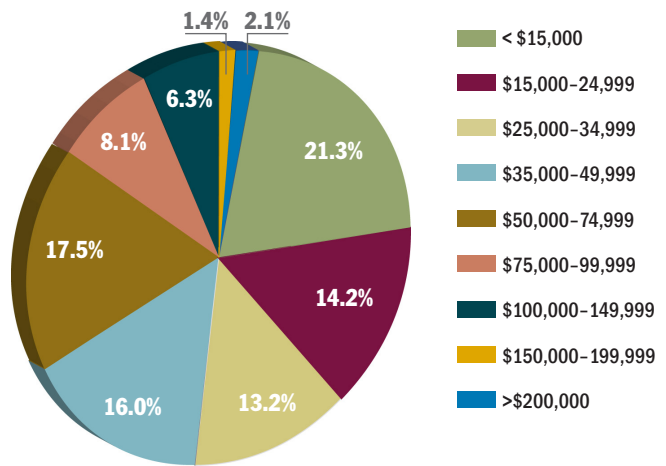


Source: ESRI 2009

Caddo Parish continues to house the majority of jobs in the region, though its share of regional employment has fallen from 77 percent in 1970 to 70 percent in 2008. This indicates a trend of out-migration of employment from the traditional employment center. However, the parish has the highest ratio of jobs-to-population in the three parishes in the region and continues an increasing trend. In general, a higher ratio indicates an employment center and a lower ratio typically indicates a bedroom community. An increasing trend is a positive sign, particularly in a place like Caddo Parish where population is essentially flat or growing slowly but employment continues to grow. Commuting patterns also indicate that Caddo Parish continues to serve as the employment center of the region.

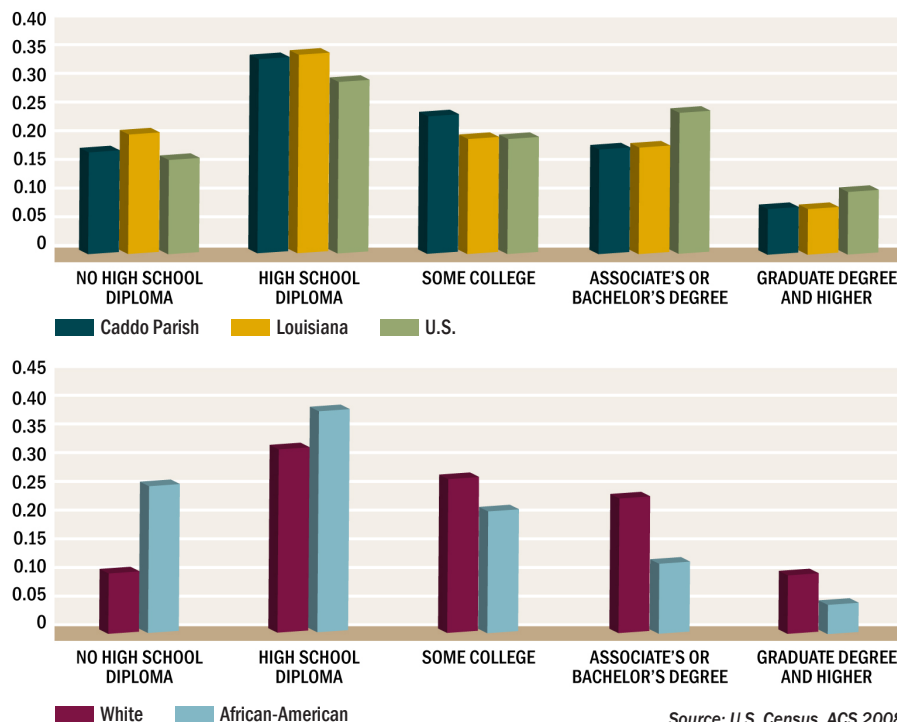
Shreveport's greatest economic strengths lie in what are considered knowledge-intensive industries such as information, education, health care, and professional and technical services. As the central city of the region, it attracts economic activities that benefit from a central location and direct interactions, such as professional services, finance, health care, education, media, culture and

FIGURE 3.7 CADDO PARISH HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME (2009)



entertainment, and, in some cases, retail. Caddo Parish has particularly strong concentrations of employment in mining (oil and gas), health care, and arts, entertainment and recreation (which includes the casino industry) relative to both state and national averages. A high concentration of employment indicates that an area is well-positioned competitively with regard to a particular industry.

FIGURE 3.8 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT, POPULATION 25+, 2008



Source: U.S. Census, ACS 2008

### Education levels

Given the importance of knowledge-based industries in the economy of the Master Plan Area, the fact that overall educational attainment is relatively low represents a competitive disadvantage. The proportion of adults with post-secondary degrees, which are increasingly recognized as the key to obtaining living wage jobs, is below the national average. Disparities between African Americans, 15% of whom hold a post-secondary degree, and whites are significant.

FIGURE 3.9 STATE OF LOUISIANA POPULATION PROJECTIONS BY PARISH, 2010-2030

	TOTAL POPULATION			WHITE POPULATION			AFRICAN-AMERICAN POPULATION		
	2010	2020	2030	2010	2020	2030	2010	2020	2030
Caddo Parish	247,970	240,880	231,790	122,840	109,910	97,100	120,880	125,810	128,400
Bossier Parish	112,470	126,780	141,350	83,240	92,970	102,750	24,750	28,270	31,610
TOTAL	362,450	369,680	375,170	208,090	204,900	201,880	147,640	156,100	162,040

Source: State of Louisiana

## D. Population Projections

Demographers frequently stress that population *projections* are not *predictions*. The reliability of projections more than ten years in the future declines with each succeeding year. Population change is made up of net natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration (immigration minus outmigration), both of which can take unpredictable turns, especially migration. Population projections reflect judgments about the likelihood of existing trends continuing. A 1980s-era projection for Caddo Parish, for example, put its population at about 303,000 for the year 2000. A high estimate for just the city of Shreveport in the year 2030 was 385,000.

LSU researcher Dr. Troy C. Blanchard, working with the State of Louisiana, has prepared parish population projections for the period 2010-2030<sup>8</sup> (see Figure 3.9). His projections of current trends suggest that Caddo Parish will lose population, Bossier Parish will gain population, the number of African-Americans will increase in both parishes, and the number of Hispanics will increase in both parishes, but particularly in Bossier.

These projections are based on demographic trends as of 2000-2005. Economic or other conditions that might affect demographic trends did not figure in the analysis. Therefore, these state demographic projections for Caddo Parish can be taken as the “current trends

extended” scenario for population. If most conditions continue as they were earlier this decade, Caddo Parish is likely to lose overall population. We know, however, that some significant changes have already affected regional conditions, including the exploitation of the Haynesville Shale Play and the new jobs and infusion of money that it has brought. However, the Shreveport-Caddo community needs to do more to ensure that it gains lasting benefits from the Haynesville Shale while working to overcome other challenges to expansion and growth.

The Shreveport-Caddo community’s vision for the future in 2030 will be difficult to realize if population continues to decline. Rather than assuming that trends will continue as before, this Master Plan assumes that the Shreveport-Caddo community will not only take steps to capture more regional growth that would be coming anyway, but will make investments and take initiatives to attract even more growth to this region. The scenarios or approaches to the plan that were tested through public participation (described in Chapter 2) are based on that potential. The population numbers are based on setting benchmark rates for job growth in Caddo Parish and then using 2009 population-to-job ratios to estimate the population that would be expected to accompany those jobs. Caddo Parish would then have to attract all the population associated with those jobs to attain the population growth numbers

FIGURE 3.10 BENCHMARK SCENARIO POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR THE MASTER PLAN AREA

	EXISTING 2009	SCENARIO 1	SCENARIO 2	SCENARIO 3
Households	90,286	116,441	118,760	134,297
Estimated population*	198,133	256,170	261,272	295,453

\*Average household size of 2.2 persons per household.

<sup>8</sup> Dr. Troy C. Blanchard, Population Projections of Louisiana Parishes through 2030, Louisiana Parish Population Projections, Series, 2010-2030 developed for the State of Louisiana (Office of Electronic Services, Division of Administration) by Louisiana State University. <http://www.louisiana.gov/PopProjections/ExcelFiles/LA%20Projections%20Technical%20Report.pdf>



for each scenario. Since these scenarios are for Caddo Parish only, they in no way presume a zero-sum game between Caddo and Bossier parishes, since it is assumed that Bossier will continue to have its own growth rate.

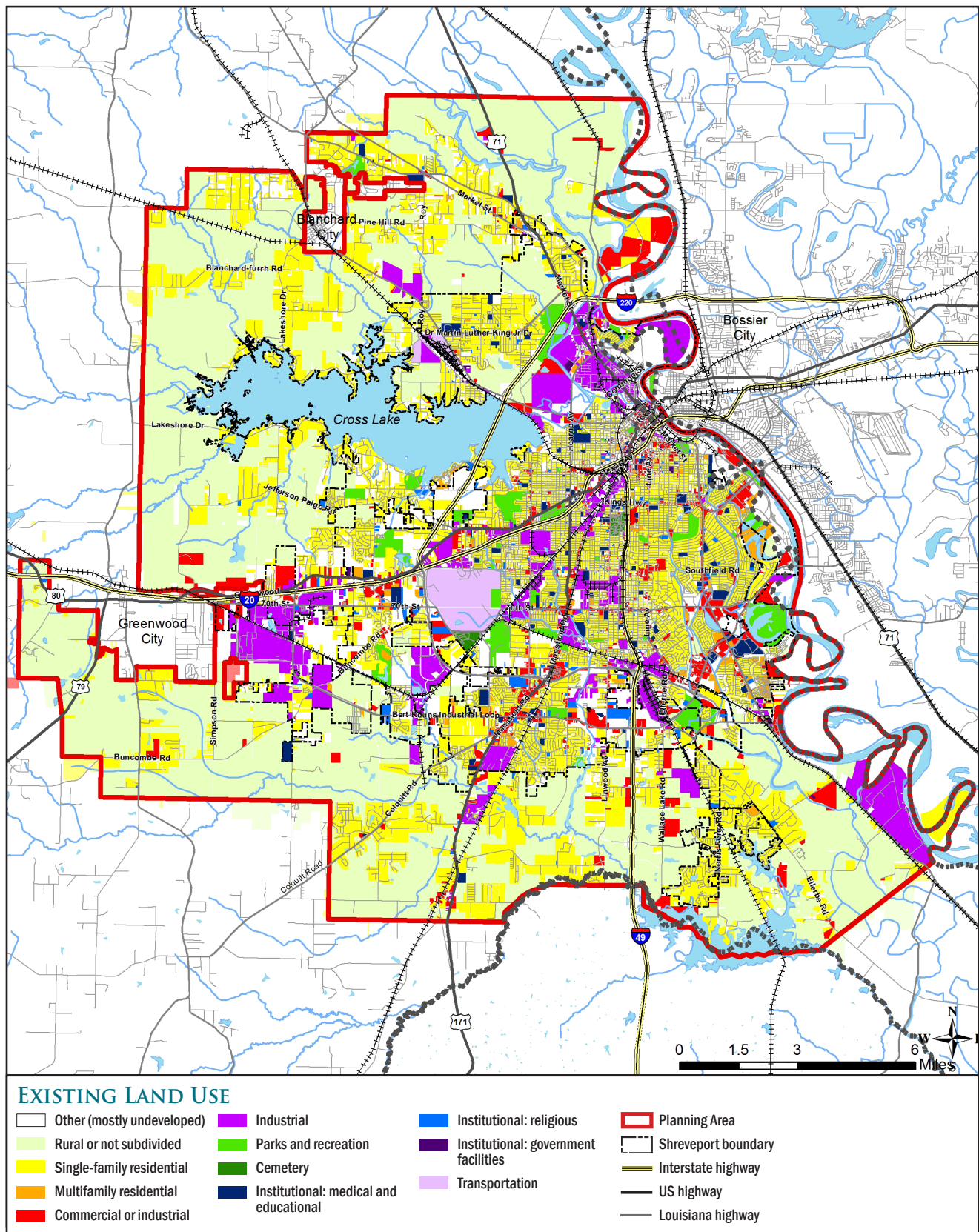
This Master Plan is the policy and strategic framework designed to guide Shreveport-Caddo toward growth through success on two levels: 1) jobs growth to reach the job-creation benchmark and 2) quality of life and other improvements so that the population associated with these jobs will want to live in Shreveport.

## E. Land Use

“Land use” is an umbrella term for the activities that actually occur on a given parcel of land, such as residential, retail, industrial, agricultural, or transportation uses. Land uses can change over time—for example, when a farm becomes fallow land and then is turned into a residential subdivision. Zoning is the tool that a local government employs to regulate the uses of the land. Land use and zoning are not identical, however, as vacant land can be zoned for a use that has not yet been developed; uses can be “grandfathered” or “nonconforming” (meaning that they existed before the land was zoned for a different use); and zoning categories can permit more than one use—for example, an area zoned for industrial uses may also permit commercial uses, which may come to predominate in the area.

For existing land use, the planning team relied on a land use map prepared by the MPC, with some cross-checking with zoning. Although the land use map may not be completely up to date, it conveys the general patterns of land use in the Master Plan Area well. Zoning in the Master Plan Area is quite malleable, and zoning changes are quite common.

MAP 3.3 EXISTING LAND USE



Source: City of Shreveport Assessors Database, MPC, NLCOG, Goody Clancy



### Rural uses

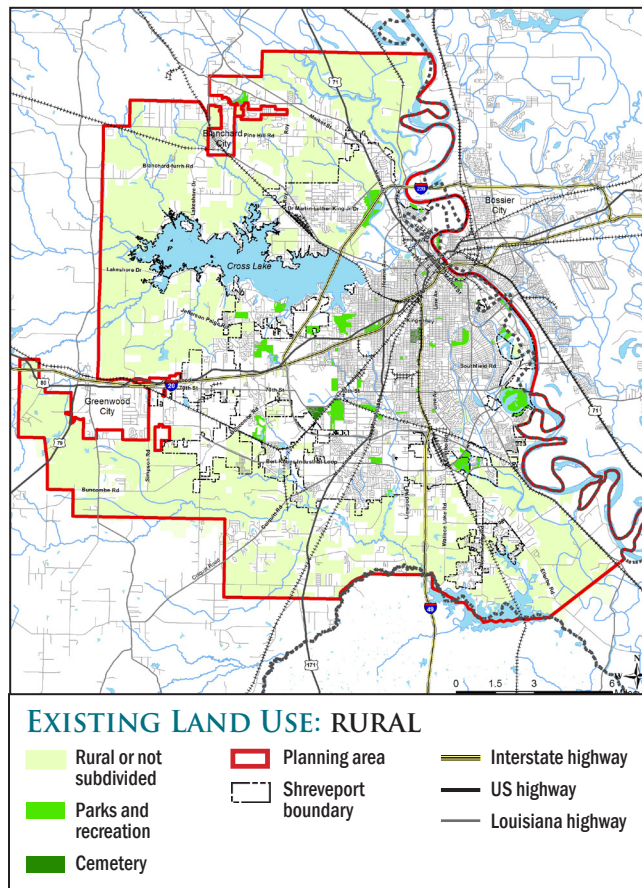
The MPC land use map does not distinguish between residential uses on a large parcel of land that still may be in agriculture or forestry and a subdivision. In order to understand how much land is still available in large parcels, the planning team identified all lots 25 acres or over that are located outside the city limits. Although there are rural enterprises on some of this land, much of it is being held in expectation of development one day, particularly land to the south. It serves as the sprawl frontier and the rural land bank for Shreveport (though the city itself has a significant amount of land available for development or redevelopment). The Keithville area and North Highlands were already feeling development pressures in the 1970s and 1980s. Because of its remaining “greenfield” sites (areas that have not been built on before), MLK has attracted development in recent years. The construction of I-49

may increase development interest in greenfield sites to the north, despite infrastructure problems, but the western part of the Master Plan Area is likely to remain more rural in character for a long time because of Cross Lake and a limited road network. Restraining the unplanned expansion of subdivisions in rural areas will be one of the challenges in implementing the Master Plan.

### Residential uses

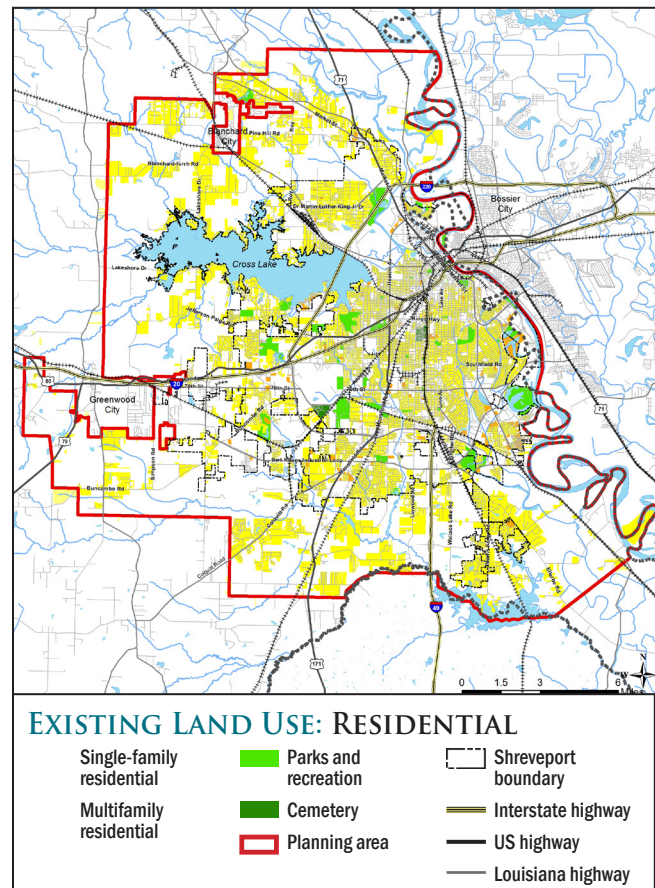
Residential land uses predominate in the Master Plan Area. The map below shows residential areas within the city limits and, in the unincorporated area, identifies “residential” rather than “rural” as those lots smaller than 25 acres that have a house on them. The vast majority of residential areas have single- or two-family homes. Multifamily developments are scattered throughout the city. Although some are located on arterial streets and near

MAP 3.4 EXISTING LAND USE: RURAL



Source: City of Shreveport Assessors Database, MPC, NLCOG, Goody Clancy

MAP 3.5 EXISTING LAND USE: RESIDENTIAL



Source: City of Shreveport Assessors Database, MPC, NLCOG, Goody Clancy

important intersections, few planning criteria appear to have been applied in decisions about locating them. In many cases, when developers find a suitable parcel of land for multifamily development, they go to the MPC to get the parcel rezoned. While impacts on the immediate surroundings may be considered in decision making, there does not appear to be an overall planning approach to their location.

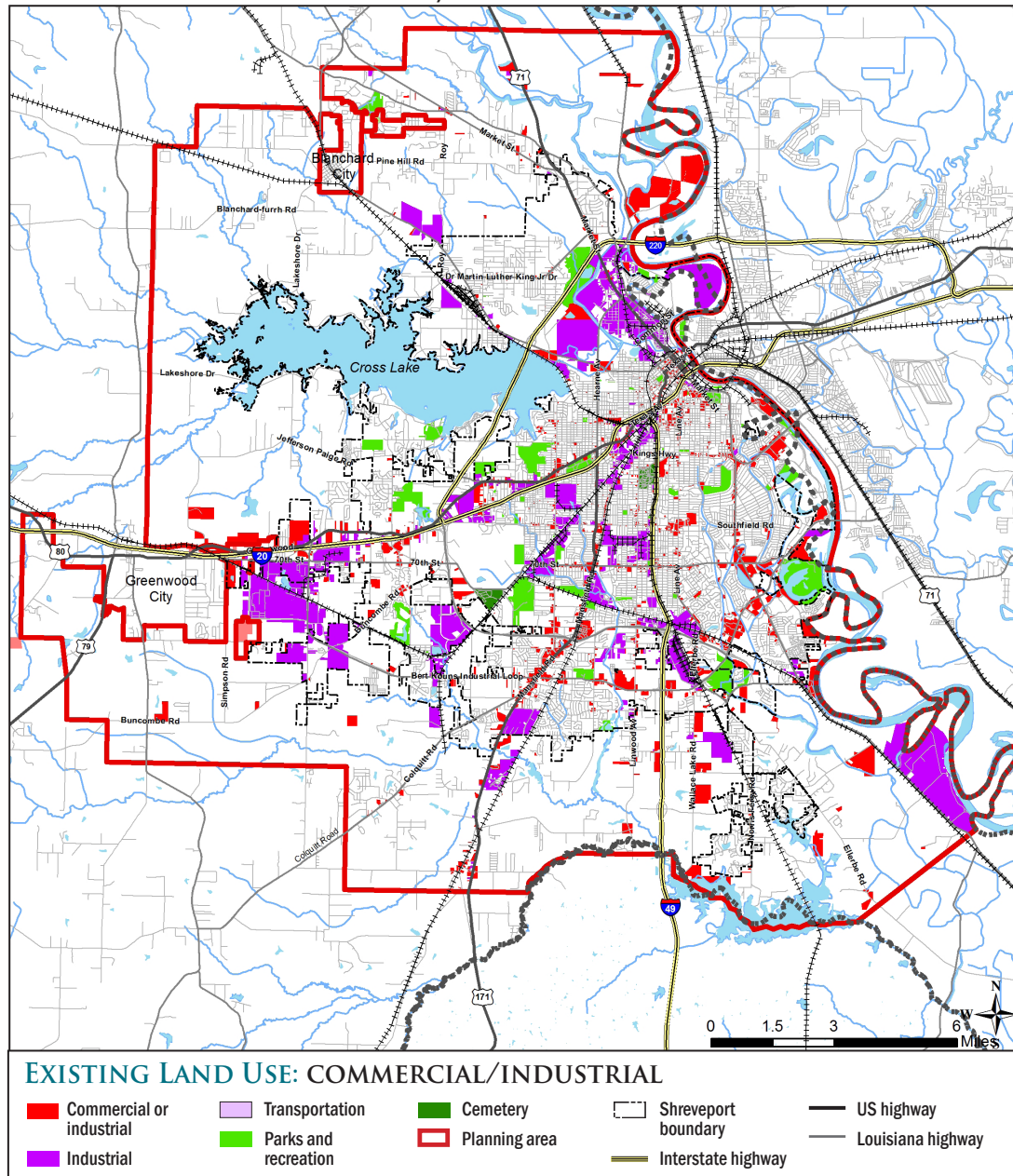
### Commercial and industrial uses

Commercial and industrial uses tend to be clustered around or along roads or railways. Commercial areas outside of downtown can be found around important intersections and, to a lesser extent, along major roads. While retail uses are prominent in the eastern part of the city, on Mansfield Road at Bert Kouns, and along I-20 near the airport, large areas of the city have very little retail or other

commercial land uses. Moreover, except for the more favored locations in east Shreveport, many commercial areas have underutilized or vacant buildings and lots.

Shreveport has a large number of acres of industrial land—though a high percentage of industrial land is also underutilized or vacant—and with very few exceptions the industrial sites have existing or potential rail connections. This pool of industrial land is a legacy of Shreveport's role as one of the most industrialized cities in Louisiana. It is unlikely that

MAP 3.6 EXISTING LAND USE: COMMERCIAL/INDUSTRIAL



Source: City of Shreveport Assessors Database, MPC, NLCOG, Goody Clancy



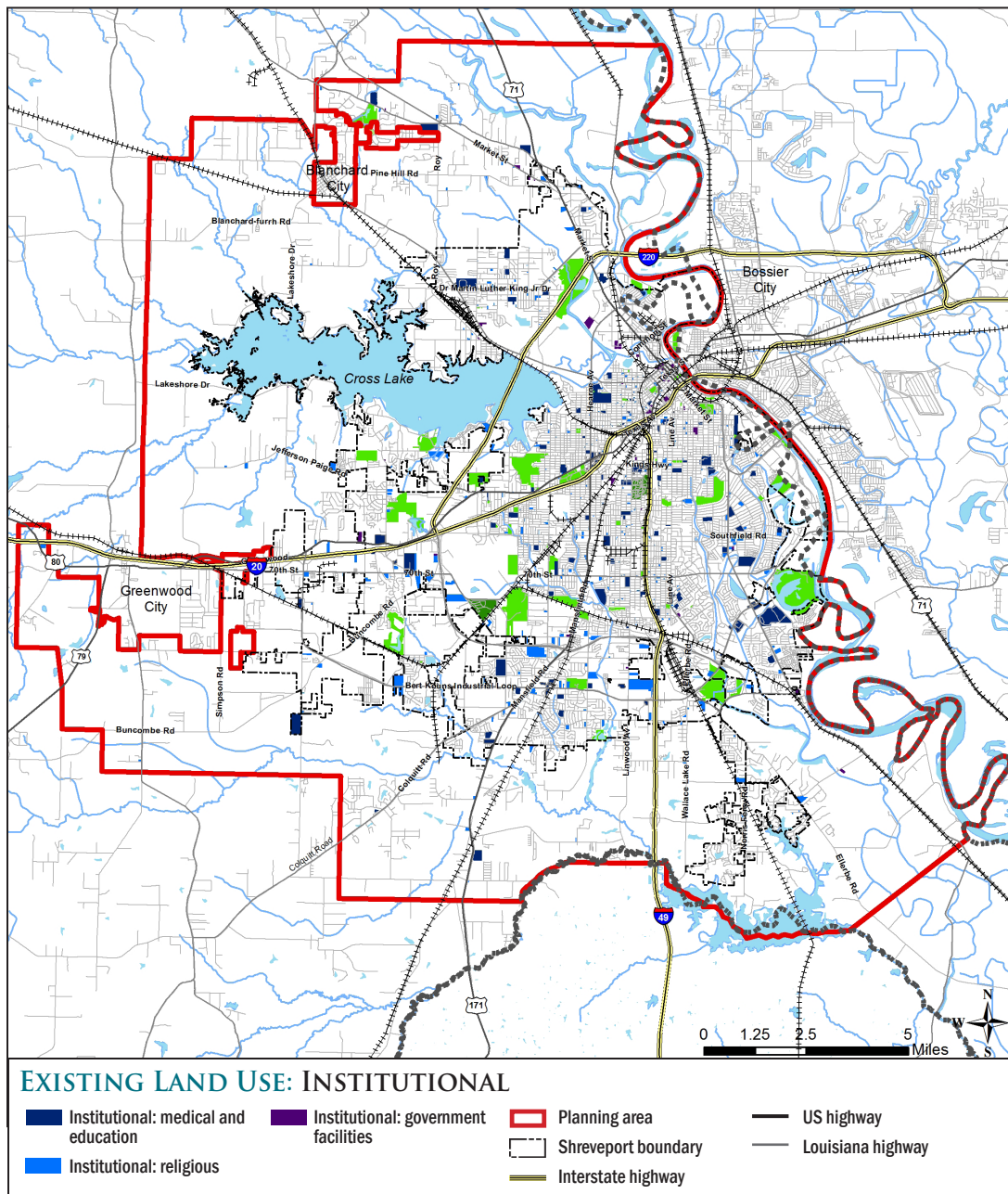
there will again be a need for this much industrial land, particularly smaller sites close to the city center.

### Institutional uses

Institutional uses are well-distributed throughout the city, particularly in its older areas. Because of disinvestment, inner-core neighborhoods can have a mismatch between

population and institutions such as schools. However, the years of community investment in existing public institutions argues for bringing more population back to areas that these locations serve, rather than abandoning them for peripheral locations—and incurring the expense of new building.

MAP 3.7 EXISTING LAND USE: INSTITUTIONAL



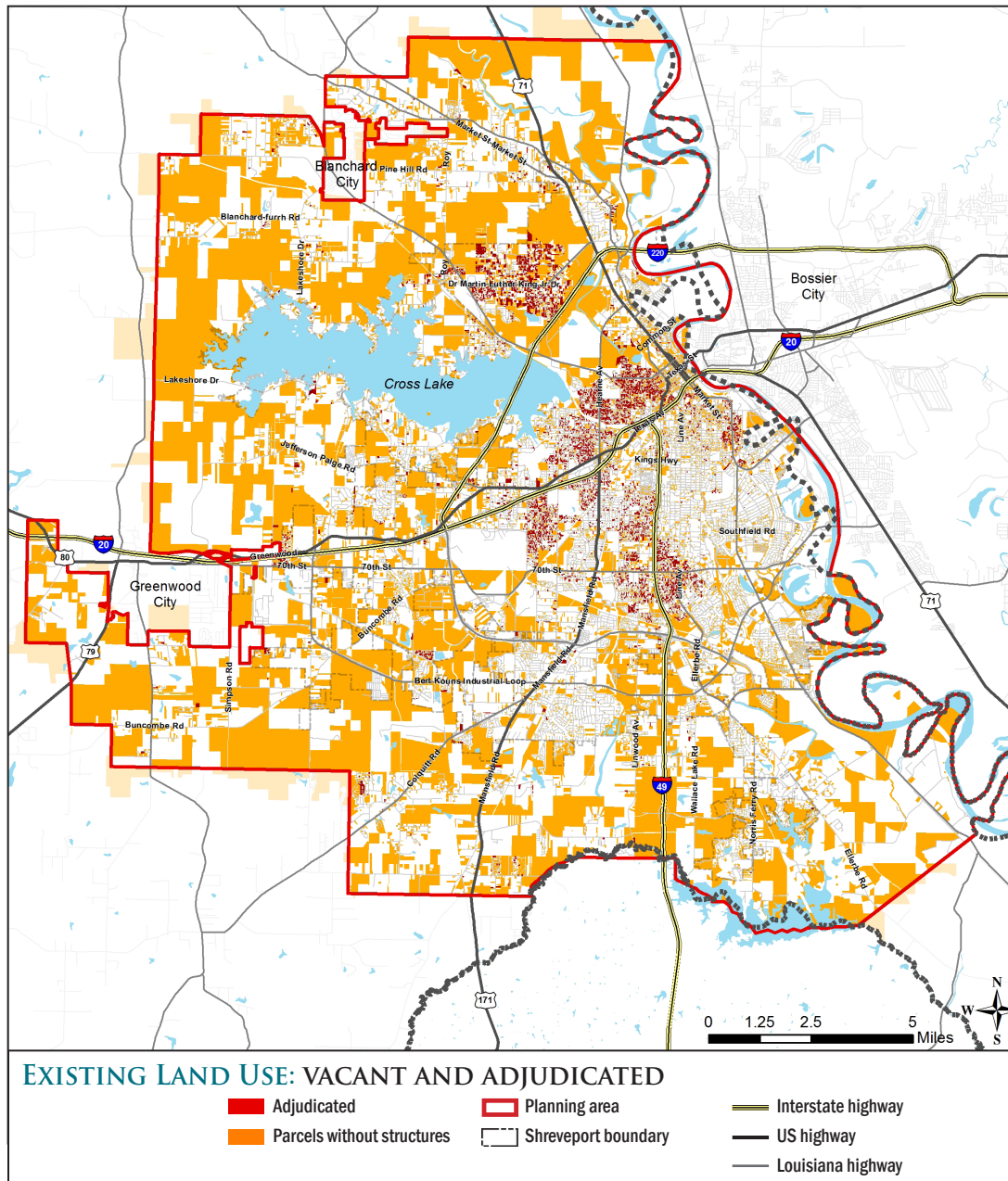
Source: City of Shreveport Assessors Database, MPC, NLCOG, Goody Clancy

### Vacant land and adjudicated properties

There are 6,849 adjudicated properties in the city of Shreveport and an additional 350 elsewhere in Caddo Parish. The Master Plan Area includes 7,199 adjudicated properties amounting to 1,586 acres. Although many people believe that the city or parish governments own adjudicated properties, technically they do not unless they complete a process to take legal control of the properties.

The “vacant” properties shown on Map 3.8 are lots or parcels that have no building on them. In addition to the approximately 75,879 acres in the “rural” land use areas, there are 2,763 acres within the city. Some of these city properties have a function, such as parking lots or industrial storage areas. Depending on their location, they may be suitable for redevelopment at some point the future.

MAP 3.8 EXISTING LAND USE: VACANT AND ADJUDICATED



Source: City of Shreveport Assessors Database, NLCOG 2009, Goody Clancy

## F. Zoning and Other Development Regulations

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

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

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

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

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

### User-friendliness

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

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

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

<sup>9</sup> [www.cityoftyler.org/Portals/0/docs/departments/metroplanning/pdfs/P&Z%20UDC%203\\_25\\_09%20amendment.pdf](http://www.cityoftyler.org/Portals/0/docs/departments/metroplanning/pdfs/P&Z%20UDC%203_25_09%20amendment.pdf)



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

### **Administration, enforcement, amendment and approvals**

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

#### **MASTER PLAN PRINCIPLE**

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

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

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

### **Streamlining by-right development with robust**

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

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

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

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

### **Granting of variances and exceptional uses by the**

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

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



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

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

#### **Enforcement of building permits on contractors.**

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

#### **Consistency and purpose statements**

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

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

The Shreveport subdivision regulations do mention “current growth management

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

#### **Zoning districts and use regulations**

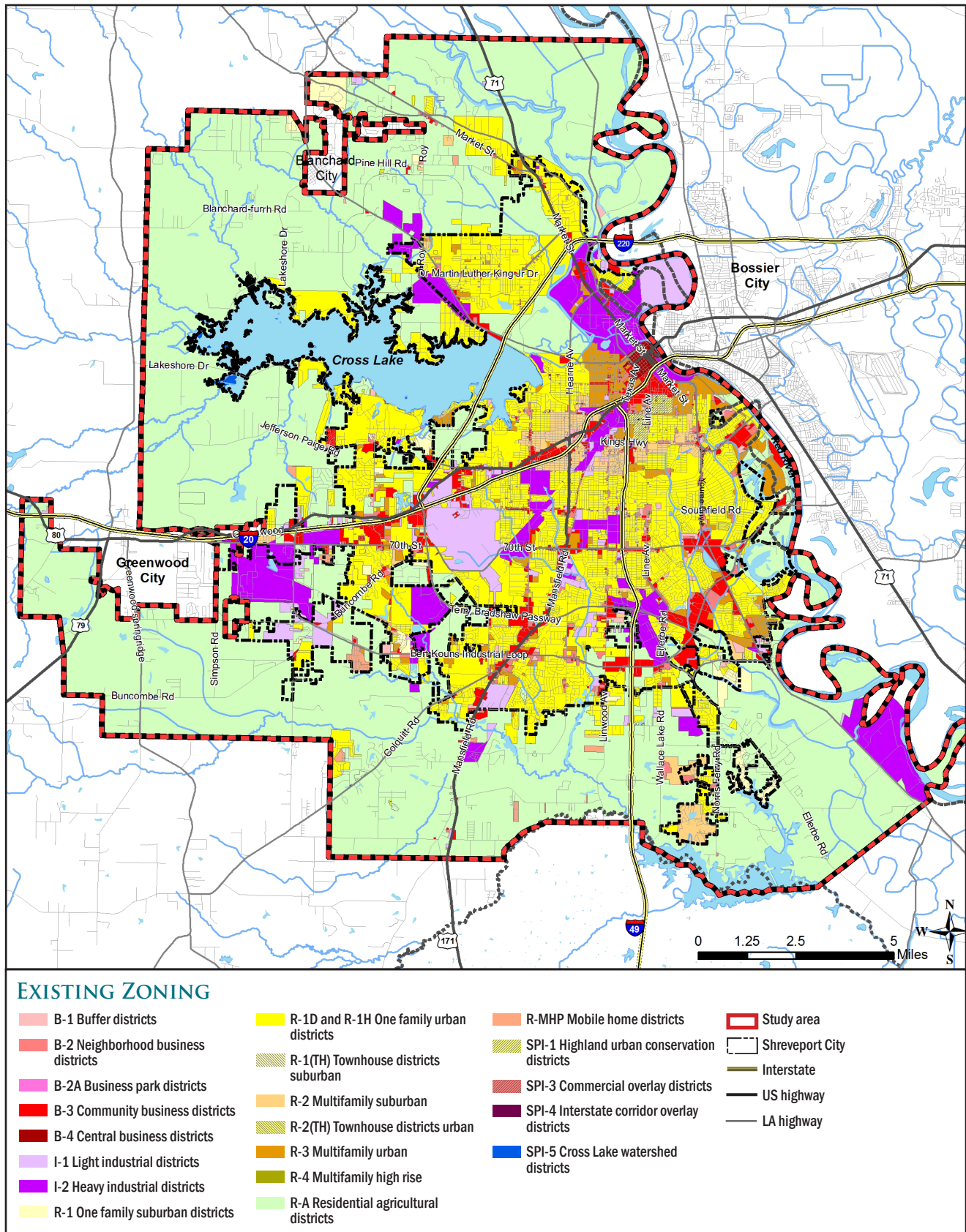
**Revision of zoning districts.** For the most part, the Shreveport zoning code has traditional, separated, single-use zoning districts, but there are far too many separate districts in the residential category, often based on tiny differences in density. At the same time, the ordinance does not clearly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

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

#### **MASTER PLAN PRINCIPLE**

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

MAP 3.9 EXISTING ZONING



Source: MPC

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

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

### Development standards

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

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

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

#### MASTER PLAN PRINCIPLE

*Promote and enforce quality design standards in private development regulations.*

### Planned unit development

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

### Oil and gas extraction

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

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

#### MASTER PLAN PRINCIPLES

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

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



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

### Sign regulations

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

### Site plan review

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

#### MASTER PLAN PRINCIPLE

*High standards of quality in development and design.*

developers, such as the “operational site plan”

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

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

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

### Subdivision regulations

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

Issues that need consideration in updating subdivision regulations include:

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

#### MASTER PLAN PRINCIPLES

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

### Flood prevention and drainage

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

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



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

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

#### MASTER PLAN PRINCIPLE

*Good stewardship of our natural and cultural heritage*

by FEMA. Prohibition of new construction should be

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

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

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

## G. Toward Growth and Opportunity Without Sprawl?

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

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

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

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

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

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