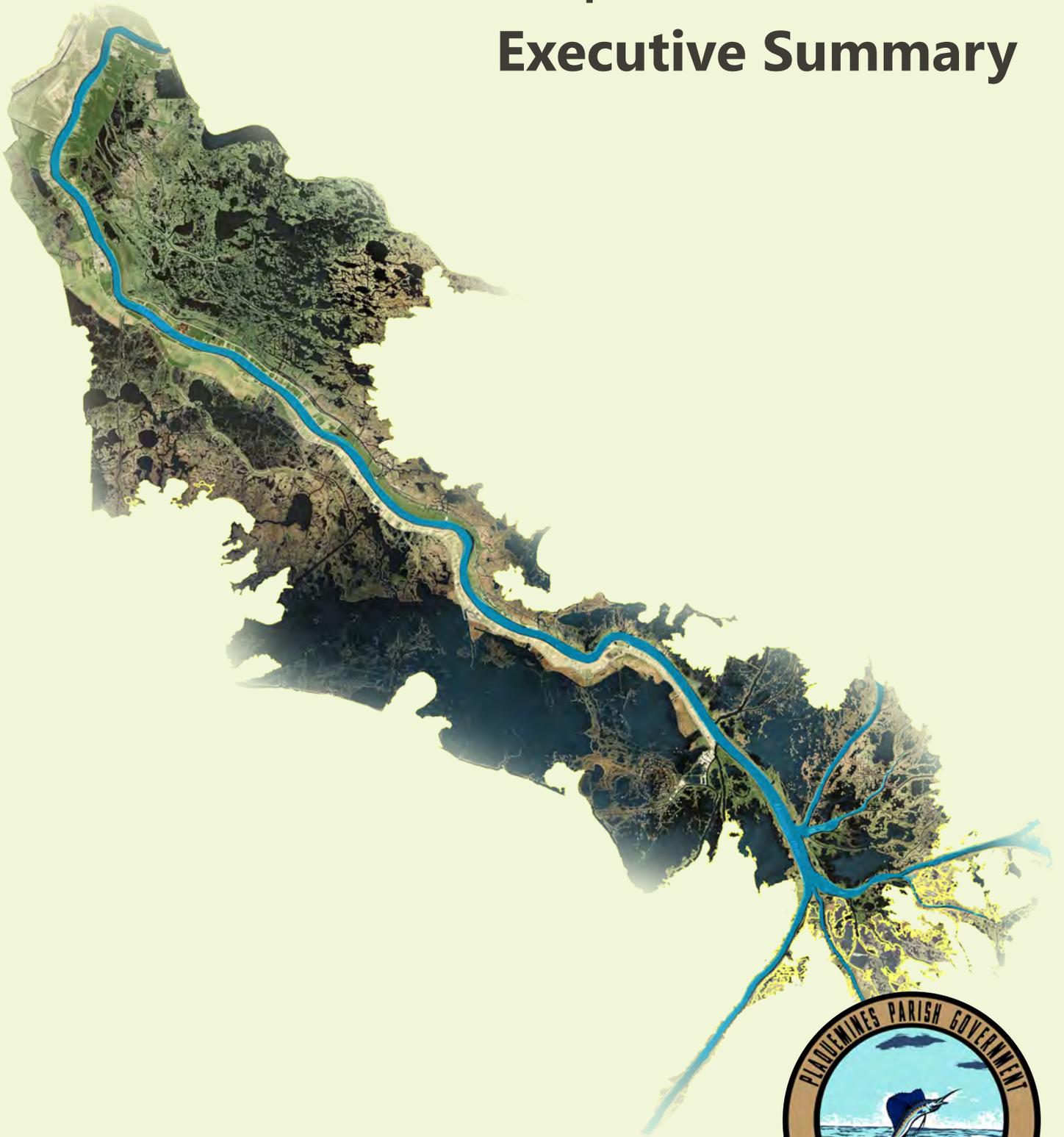


Plaquemines Parish Comprehensive Master Plan Executive Summary



PLAQUEMINES PARISH COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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SECTION I - THE BIG PICTURE

Letter from the President

Dear Fellow Citizens of Plaquemines Parish Louisiana,

Perhaps more than any other place in the nation, Plaquemines Parish has been shaped by the forces of nature, and our history has been defined by our relationship with nature. In the past, we've been washed away, but have always come back to reclaim the land, the river and wetlands, the life that they support, and the mineral resources that lie beneath them. With the development of this Comprehensive Master Plan (CMP), the people of our Parish will break new ground in managing the wealth that God has given us, and in shaping our community and your government to protect and grow that legacy for the people that depend on it.

Our goal, like the rest of the gulf coast is to be safer, stronger and smarter in our response to the hazards of our part of the world, but we need to go farther. Facing a world changed by recent hurricanes and the Deepwater Horizon tragedy, but also a world changed by globalization, technology, and economic upheaval, Plaquemines Parish has developed in the CMP a roadmap to a safer environment, a stronger economy, and a smarter government to serve you, and those who will come after us. This roadmap leads to new land use practices that protect your community, our natural bounty, and the places you work and shop. It leads to new infrastructure that strengthens our economy by protecting economic assets from hazard, improving transportation mobility, and creating sites for jobs and opportunity to grow. And it leads to a smarter parish government that is more responsive, efficient, and effective in delivering services and maintaining the public assets that belong to you.

Read on, and you will see a plan that is bold and far-reaching, but also one that is closely tied to your interests. It is founded on work previously accomplished and under way that focuses on demographics, infrastructure, federal installations, and the condition of the wetlands and fastlands that constitute our first line of defense. Numerous interviews of Parish Council members, Parish department officials, leading Parish citizens, and business representatives helped identify key issues and opportunities that will affect the future growth of the Parish. These observations were enriched by the input of concerned citizens that attended a series of six visioning workshops held through the Parish in May and June, 2010.

From these sources, our planners developed the Community Assessment that constitutes the foundation of an analysis that pursues the realization of your priorities over the months and years to come. That analysis and the recommendations resulting from it constitute the Community Agenda that forms the second part of the CMP. Finally, based on the input of stakeholders and local leadership, an Action Plan and Short Term Work Program define the priority and order of future steps to make the plan a reality.

Our home, Plaquemines Parish, is a place unique in the world and first in our hearts. By understanding our challenges and opportunities, and by planning ahead to improve our communities, services, infrastructure and government, we can strengthen our ties to this special place and help it to accommodate our children and newcomers with opportunity and an incomparable quality of life. Your Parish government is committed to that vision, and with the help of each of you who call it home, to making it a reality.

Billy Nungesser

Plaquemines Parish President



SECTION I - THE BIG PICTURE

WHY PLAN

Plaquemines Parish has undergone a dramatic transformation over the past several years. Hurricane Katrina not only forever altered the natural geography of the Parish, but it also forever altered the face of Plaquemines' neighborhoods and communities, the local economy, and residents' collective expectation for the future. The long-term effects of Katrina, as well as the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, are still unfolding. Therefore, it is more critical than ever that Plaquemines begins to proactively plan for its future growth and security.

Dozens of complex factors exist that will shape and influence the future of Plaquemines Parish—and understanding the long-term effects of today's choices is quite difficult. In response, the comprehensive master planning process helps residents, leaders, and policy-makers understand and evaluate these many interacting forces. The Comprehensive Master Plan (Master Plan) will aid in anticipating, accommodating, and guiding future growth, while also preserving and enhancing the much-loved character of Plaquemines Parish.

THE MASTER PLANNING PROCESS

Comprehensive Master Plan: Purpose

The Plaquemines Parish Comprehensive Master Plan captures local perspectives on needs, goals, and workable implementation strategies in Plaquemines Parish and sets forth a framework for Plaquemines' sustainable growth and development. More specifically, the Master Plan

includes a careful analysis of a variety of planning elements that will influence and inform future development. These planning elements include population and demographics, economic development, multi-modal transportation systems, water and wastewater systems, coastal protection, drainage and stormwater management, public facilities and services, parish-owned properties, land use, and government structure. When well-planned, these inter-dependent elements synthesize to create a vibrant community, a healthy natural environment, a thriving economy, and an effective government.

The Master Plan also documents the Parish's agenda for partnership with the state and federal government, and with the private sector, each of whom are essential for success.

Comprehensive Master Plan: Methodology

In developing the Master Plan, Plaquemines' consultant team, JJG and H. Davis Cole, collected background data, contextual information, and critical input from multiple sources, including the following:

» Existing studies, reports, & plans

The project team worked with Parish staff to collect previous studies and reports, reviewed their findings, and extracted key components to serve as the foundation for the Master Plan.



» **Interviews**

The consultant team conducted interviews with Parish Council members, department officials, local business representatives, and community leaders.

» **Citizen participation**

Most importantly, this Master Plan benefited from the input of citizens. Understanding the interests, values, and goals of Plaquemines' residents was a central priority in the development of Plaquemines' first Master Plan.

The master planning process begins with four evaluative phases: Project Initiation, the Community Assessment, the Visioning process, and the Community Agenda. The Project Initiation phase launched the master planning process and was followed by the Community Assessment. The purpose of the Community Assessment was to gather background data in order to better understand the history, previous decisions, and circumstances that exist within the Parish. After establishing a thorough understanding of the Parish's existing context, the consultant team led the Visioning process, which consisted of interviews and public workshops. The goal of these workshops was to identify the area-specific needs of individual Parish communities and also to assemble the broader priorities and needs shared throughout the Parish. The next stage of the master planning process—the Community Agenda—involved an extensive analysis of the information gathered during the previous phases. The background data and citizen input was synthesized into recommendations that ultimately inform the short and long-term goals and action-items set forth in the final portion of the process—the Action Plan. The Parish itself completes the final phase of the master planning process by adopting and implementing the Master Plan in coming years.

Comprehensive Master Plan: Big Questions, & Big Decisions

The purpose of the master planning process is to explore and evaluate the many factors that will affect Plaquemines' future. While the relationship between them are often complementary, they can also create unforeseen and contradictory outcomes. Plaquemines' residents and leaders will be making countless difficult decisions concerning land use, transportation, new industry, coastal restoration, and capital improvements. How these decisions will interplay and affect one another cannot always be known. However, identifying and exploring the Big Questions and Big Decisions during the Community Assessment and Visioning phases was a strategy used to begin to address the many choices and their possible inter-related outcomes. The Executive Summary highlights some of the Big Questions and Big Decisions that were further analyzed in each element of the Community Agenda. The recommendations and strategies discussed in the Community Agenda, which are also outlined here in the Executive Summary under 'Recommendations & Strategies,' are responses to the Big Questions and Big Decisions. The Action Plan maps the Parish's strategy for implementing those recommendations for a stronger, safer, smarter future.

11 Major Planning Elements

- Population & Demographics
- Economic Development
- Coastal Restoration
- Drainage & Stormwater Management
- Multi-Modal Transportation
- Water & Wastewater Systems
- Public Facilities & Services
- Parks & Recreation
- Parish-Owned Properties
- Land Use
- Government Organization



SECTION II - SETTING THE STAGE

PLAQUEMINES PARISH TODAY

Residents of Plaquemines Parish are fortunate enough to straddle 70 miles of the scenic Mississippi River and includes some of the country's most beautiful and rich coastal wetlands. This matchless geography dramatically shapes the Parish's economy, its environment, its culture, and its community identity.

Plaquemines Parish residents agree that Plaquemines is a great place to live. Plaquemines children go to great schools, its communities are comfortable and safe, and residents are surrounded by unparalleled natural beauty. Residents who participated in the Visioning workshop identified dozens of Parish assets and those listed to the right are highlighted as some of the most valued assets of Plaquemines Parish today. Visioning participants also identified some key barriers and threats to the future of Plaquemines Parish, most of which centered upon threats from hurricanes and floods.

A glance at the lists of assets and threats to the right demonstrates how much Plaquemines residents love their home. Identifying the benefits of living in Plaquemines comes easy for all who live in the Parish—the assets far out-number the threats. Throughout the Visioning workshops and public involvement process, it was evident that Plaquemines residents care deeply about the future of their environment, their livelihoods, their culture, and their communities. It was equally evident that Plaquemines residents believe Plaquemines will continue to grow into a thriving future.

In July of 2005, just a few months prior to Hurricane Katrina, Plaquemines' population is estimated to have reached an all-time high of 28,565. However, the devastation of Katrina caused a dramatic population loss, as residents were forced to relocate while clean-up and rebuilding efforts were underway. But despite the challenges, 92 % of local residents who par-

Most Valued Assets

- Security/safety
- Good police protection
- Overall quality of life
- Excellent fishing and hunting environment
- Oil and gas
- Good place for kids
- Good schools and education
- Low taxes
- Good income levels
- Natural environment
- Beautiful area
- Sense of community
- Land available for development
- River and bature
- Industrial base
- Proximity to New Orleans
- Commercial and recreational fishing
- Good air
- Seafood
- Agriculture– citrus and good soil!
- Fort Jackson
- Venice Port

Key Barriers & Threats

- Possibility of too much growth
- Hurricanes
- Oil Spills
- Limited job opportunities
- Limited housing diversity
- Flooding
- Insurance rates
- Loss of Coastal Wetlands
- Population loss

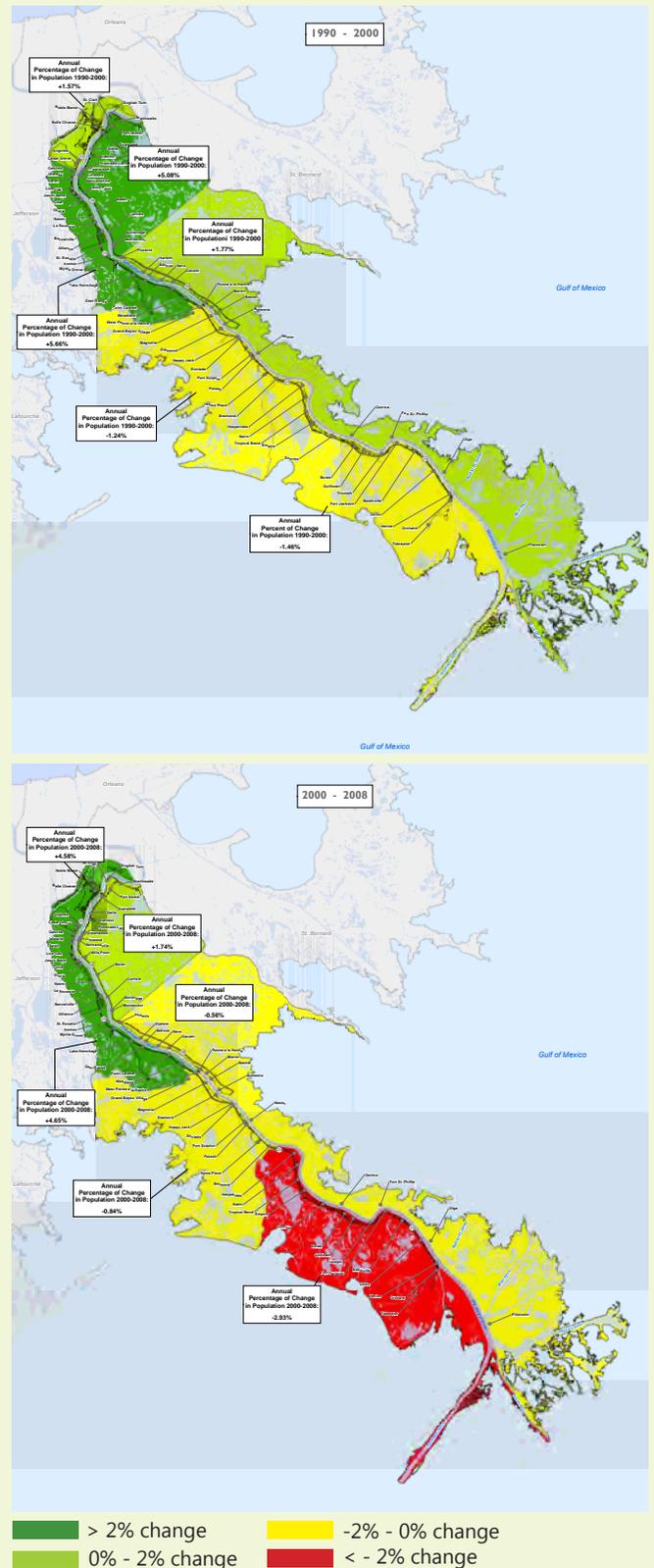


anticipated in the post-Katrina Road Home program opted to return and rebuild their homes in Plaquemines Parish rather than permanently relocate. Since 2005's losses, the Parish's population has begun a steady growth, particularly in the northern areas of the Parish—Plaquemines was home to approximately 20,942 residents in 2009 and 23,042 in 2010. And although the population has yet to rebound to pre-Katrina levels, these numbers demonstrate the unyielding commitment and confidence Plaquemines residents have in their community.

The Parish's restoration efforts since the storms of 2005 and the Deepwater Horizon disaster have been successful and will continue into the coming years—and because of the Parish's strong recovery efforts, the infrastructure is sound and the communities are growing. However, additional investments will be necessary as the Parish continues its efforts to grow the economy and ensure its security. As illustrated in the maps to the right, the geography of Plaquemines' communities has shifted considerably in recent years--and future development and investments must coordinate with this new pattern. Today the majority of the Parish's population is concentrated in the northern portion of the Parish; however, small communities are scattered throughout the East and West Banks, all of which deserve protection.

The natural disasters of recent years and the subsequent challenges remind Plaquemines residents of how vulnerable they are nested between the Mississippi and the Gulf, but they do not deter the community's collective optimism and hope for a sustainable and thriving future. The Plaquemines Parish Comprehensive Maser Plan creates a framework for achieving the stability and growth the community desires.

Map 1. Annual Percent Change in Population



PLAQUEMINES TOMORROW

Through all of the discussions and visioning activities, residents returned to the notion of sustainability and continually echoed a collective desire to direct the Parish's priorities and goals in a sustainable direction to ensure a stronger, safer, smarter future. Residents agreed that in order to create a plan for a sustainable future, the Parish must first focus on environmental security, economic diversification, and population growth. Residents of Plaquemines Parish are very proud of their history, their local character, and their natural environment—therefore, in conjunction with efforts to foster sustainable economic development, residents also desire to see the development of policies that improve the overall livability of the Parish and reinforce and strengthen its deep cultural identity. Visioning workshop participants developed a pyramid to illustrate Plaquemines' priorities (see Diagram 1), with coastal restoration and storm protection establishing the foundation of the Parish's economy and community.

Although the past few years of recovery have been difficult, Plaquemines Parish has the opportunity to reframe its challenges into opportunities. Maintaining post-disaster momentum and capitalizing on the local economic and cultural strengths puts the Parish in a unique launching position for future development and growth. As Plaquemines moves forward, new challenges will continually emerge; however, the master planning process provides the Parish the opportunity to anticipate and address some of those challenges.

Plaquemines residents acknowledge the Parish's existing limitations and share a healthy understanding of the obstacles and challenges the Parish will face moving forward. Plaquemines' coastal environment can sometimes be harsh—living with threats and preparing for uncertainties will continue to be the Parish's greatest challenge; however, directing future growth in a sustainable way and mitigating future risks will

require careful attention in coming years. The Master Plan explores these possible challenges in detail and sets forth strategies for overcoming each of them.

Living with Natural Threats

The qualities that make Plaquemines so beautiful and unique—its proximity to the Gulf, the Mississippi, and its long, narrow geography—also make living in the Parish predictably unpredictable. Floods, hurricanes, and storm surge are constant threats--and consequently, the Parish will continue to battle land subsidence and the loss of coastline. Another storm is always around the corner—and living with that threat is a way of life in Plaquemines Parish.

However, regardless of how commonplace the threat might be, preparing for these eventualities is essential to the Parish's stability and growth. Restoring Plaquemines' coast and wetlands is central to all planning endeavors. The coastline, wetlands, and barrier islands not only protect lives, property and homes, but the coastal environment also plays a significant role in sustaining the livelihoods of many residents. If the coastal environment is left unmanaged and unprotected, all other planning and development plans become obsolete.

Reducing Risks

As Plaquemines continues to rebuild and pursue new development, the Parish must make every effort to coordinate coastal restoration and levee construction efforts, land use decisions, and infrastructure investments to ensure maximum safety and also to protect the investments of families and businesses. Ensuring that Parish residents live in the safest possible environment and ensuring the protection of future business investments will require strengthened development policies that support quality and security. Developing protective policies, creating a pro-business environment, and also protecting the quality of life of residents will continue to be a challenge to the Parish.

Directing New Growth

In the coming years, the Parish intends to attract new industry, new residents, new jobs, new educational opportunities, and new infrastructure investments. The Parish intends to do so in the smartest and most sustainable way possible. When carefully planned and executed, a successful economic development program can benefit everyone in Plaquemines: a strong economic base provides critical tax revenue for government services, reduces the tax burden on residents, provides more job opportunities for residents, and creates a more desirable place to live.

Directing and steering this growth will be critical to its success. Through new policies and public-private partnerships, Plaquemines can attract more diverse job opportunities for residents, while protecting and improving the local environment, the local character, and the high quality of life.

**PLAQUEMINES VISION -
Safer, Stronger, Smarter**

Because of its rich culture, abundant recreational opportunities, and the beautiful natural environment, Plaquemines residents have a deep sense of community—one that is rooted in the local geographic identity. And despite threats posed by hurricanes and other environmental conditions, residents are confident in the Parish’s ability to endure and thrive in a safer, stronger, and smarter future. The community envisions a future that is centered upon a healthy natural environment, a sustainable economy, and a high quality of life—and the Master Plan seeks to provide a framework for realizing these desires.

Coastal restoration and levee protection provide the foundation for all of the Parish’s future objectives; therefore, each of the elements set forth in the Master Plan will depend upon the protection offered by the wetlands, the barrier islands, and the levee system. Creating a long-term plan



... Diagram 1. Vision Pyramid

for coastal restoration and flood management will ensure a *safer* and more secure future.

In addition to coastal protection and restoration, the Master Plan emphasizes strategies and measures that will aid in creating a *stronger* community fabric and economic base. Sustainable growth will depend on strategies that attract new residents, strengthen the local infrastructure, and grow new industries. Investing in tourism opportunities, attracting green industries, and implementing transportation improvements will not only begin establishing a firm economic base, but these initiatives will also aid in creating a more livable community.

And finally, as demonstrated by community participation in the Visioning workshops, quality of life measures, such as education, recreation opportunities, and cultural amenities, are extremely important to the Plaquemines community. The Master Plan includes planning recommendations and guidance that will further strengthen the ability of Plaquemines residents to interact with each other and their environment easily and comfortably. Attaining the highest possible standards for the local quality of life involves establishing a *smarter* and more accessible network of public services, public parks and facilities, and land uses.

SECTION III - THE COMMUNITY AGENDA

First - SAFETY and SECURITY

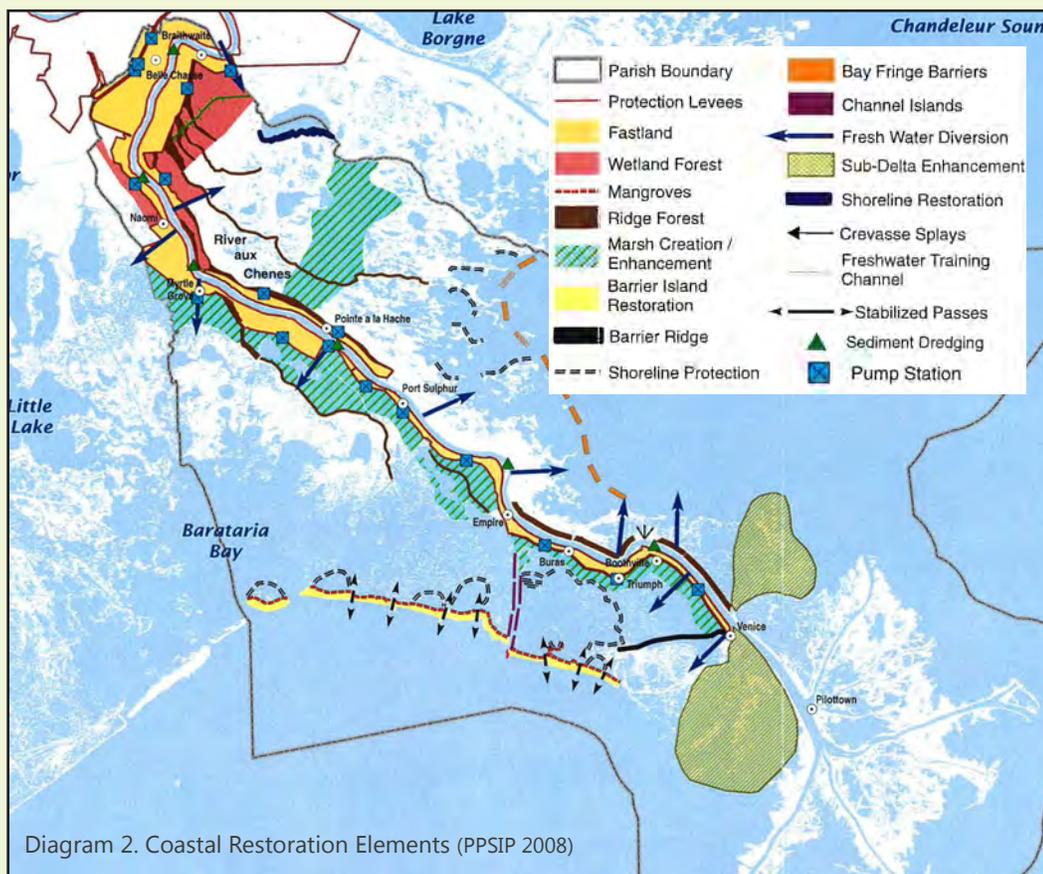
Protecting Plaquemines homes, livelihoods, and quality of life is the Parish's foremost priority—and protecting Plaquemines' communities and its economic well-being is wholly intertwined with the protection and restoration of the natural environment, particularly the wetlands, marshes, and barrier islands that provide protection from Gulf storms.

Strengthening the protection system and adopting greater levels of flood protection is the only way Plaquemines residents can afford to live safely and comfortably in the traditional manner that has made Plaquemines Parish such a culturally unique community. However, levees alone cannot offer the long-term protection Plaquemines needs. The Parish requires an integrated system of levees, barrier islands, forested wetlands, sediment and freshwater diversions.

Coastal Protection and Restoration

The 2008 Plaquemines Parish Strategic Implementation Plan provides the foundation for the Parish's coastal restoration efforts. As illustrated in Diagrams 2 and 3, the Parish's approach is based upon the Multiple Lines of Defense principle. This principle seeks to maximize the performance of non-structural protective measures, such as barrier islands, marshes, and ridges, which complement the Parish's engineered structures, such as highways, levees, and raised homes.

Standing alone against the tide, structural approaches disrupt natural systems and make human activity cumbersome and difficult. Supporting evidence notwithstanding, the higher Average Base Flood Elevations (ABFEs) required for structural approval are burdensome and unpopular.



Threats

- Mississippi Flooding
- Gulf Hurricanes
- Hurricanes
- Erosion
- Land Subsidence
- Rising Sea Levels

Lines of Defense

- Levees
- Marsh & Wetlands
- Forested Ridge
- Barrier Islands
- ABFE 100-Year Flood Protection
- Strong local drainage system

Diagram 2. Coastal Restoration Elements (PPSIP 2008)

The Parish’s strategy intends to implement a sustainable, environmentally friendly coastal restoration process that will lower the ABFE and promote economic development. Moving forward, coordinating the Parish’s phasing and implementation strategy with regional and state initiatives will be critical, as will coordinating with regional, state, and federal partners for funding. While large and complex restoration projects are vital to the sustainability of the coastal environment, the Parish must balance the implementation of smaller, short-term projects with larger-scale initiatives in order to maximize protection in the near and long-term. The Master Plan explores the process of project prioritization in further detail and the Action Plan sets forth action items for reaching short and long-term coastal restoration goals.

Drainage and Levee Improvements

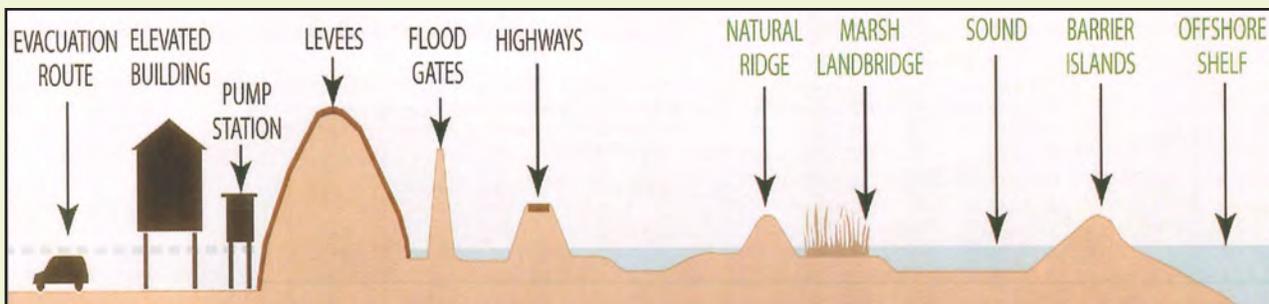
Restoring and strengthening the Parish’s levees is a critical element of the Multiple Lines of Defense strategy. Aside from Belle Chasse, the majority of the Parish’s developable land is confined between the river levees and back levees—however, much of the back levee system is not federally owned, and is beyond local capacity to improve and maintain. In order to maximize flood protection and to ensure levee performance and maintenance throughout the Parish, Plaquemines is currently pursuing federalizing the back levees. As with the other coastal restoration initiatives, levee construction must be

phased strategically because of the cost of land acquisition and construction. Federalization of the existing levees and also extending levee protection to other areas of the Parish will be critical to the Parish’s success in securing existing communities, as well as attracting new industry and new residents.

Investing in the water and drainage infrastructure that sustains Plaquemines neighborhoods is also a critical element in flood protection. After Katrina, much of the Parish’s stormwater and drainage system was repaired or replaced; however, to maximize performance and to meet the increasing demand that will accompany new development, the Parish must create a system for monitoring, evaluating, and planning for long and short-term system-wide improvements, efficient operations, and routine maintenance of pumps, food gates, canals, and other infrastructure.

The Parish’s drinking water system and wastewater collection and treatment system area also vulnerable to the elements. These systems must be improved and managed to operate in even the most challenging conditions, in order to protect public health. Tying all these systems into a proactive risk management and communications system can maximize the Parish’s response to challenging conditions.

Diagram 3. Multiple Lines of Defense



Visioning: Big Questions, Big Decisions

- » How can the Parish provide **maximum flood protection** in the most vulnerable communities?
- » What challenges will Plaquemines face if the Parish adopts **federal ABFE** standards?
- » How will the Parish fund **long-term restoration initiatives**?
- » What combination of projects and policies will best protect the Parish and which should be built first?
- » Can the Parish provide **100% protection** in all of the Parish?
- » What impact will the recovery effort from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill have on local coastal recovery efforts?
- » How can the Parish **coordinate efforts** with the Army Corp of Engineers and other parishes?
- » What level of flood protection will create the level of security needed for **target growth industries**?



Safety and Security Recommendations & Strategies

Maximize Performance of Non-Structural Measures

...Implement coastal diversions, berms, barrier islands, forested wetlands, and freshwater diversions in clusters to achieve multiple lines of defense.

Balance the Implementation of Large and Small Restoration Projects

- ...Smaller hot-spot projects provide immediate relief and stops ecosystem degradation.
- ...Large projects have the ability to stabilize the coastal environment in greater scale, making small project functionalities more sustainable.
- ...Delay or failure to implement regional restoration projects may undercut small projects in performance or project endurance.
- ...Computer modeling should help determine the optimized implementation strategies

Proactive Risk Management and Communication

...Phase rebuilding infrastructure and return of population with implementation of flood defenses where possible to avoid endangering residents and properties. Based on USACE's study of major hurricanes affecting New Orleans, the magnitude of losses have steadily trended upwards in each major storm surge event from 1900 to 2006 (USACE, 2008).

Adopt and enforce federally promoted advisory base flood elevations (ABFEs)

...Enforce ABFEs for those choosing to reside in flood-prone areas of the parish or use other accepted federal standards based on coastal restoration efforts.

Intergovernmental Cooperation and Cost Sharing is Essential.

...The Parish must continue close coordination with state and federal agencies for planning, funding, and constructing coastal protection and restoration projects. Likewise, Plaquemines must aggressively seek opportunities to partner with other coastal parishes and regional organizations for cost-sharing.

Continue Efforts to Federalize Back Levees

- ...Back levees are needed along with other projects to create multiple lines of defense.
- ...Federal cost-sharing is essential.
- ...Phase strategically.
- ...Extending levees on the west bank beyond Oakville may be a prerequisite to getting investors to build a port at the Citrus II site. It may also be necessary to consider building levees to protect a port site in Braithwaite.

Create Water & Wastewater Systems Operation and Maintenance Guidelines

...Operation and maintenance guidelines should outline performance standards, sets forth inspection requirements, and establishes a method for monitoring and evaluating utility rates and needs.

Develop a system-wide computer model of the Parish water distribution system

- ...The model will allow the Parish to predict water pressure and flows at any point within the system.
- ... The model will allow operators to predict the impact of line closures.
- ... The model will allow the Parish to develop and implement a Capital Improvements Program to address any identified deficiencies in pressure and/or flow throughout the system.

Create Financial Plan & Continue to Seek Funding for Restoration

- ...A financial study should be performed to evaluate the cost-to-benefit ratio for proposed restoration projects then prioritize projects based on its physical merits as well as the cost-effectiveness in the competition for limited funding resources.
- ...Continue to press BP for additional funding for coastal protection and coastal restoration. Ensure that Congress does not use BP payments to replace federal commitment to projects.

Second - STRONGER GROWTH

Visioning workshop participants resoundingly agreed that job creation and economic growth should be among the Parish’s top-most priorities –the community desires to see a more diverse and sustainable economic base, perhaps one that relies less on local natural resources. Bringing growth industries to Plaquemines will generate new supporting business and job opportunities and will also attract new residents.

With a strong existing industry base and low unemployment compared to state and national rates, the Parish is currently well-positioned for future growth. However, too often industrial development and growth means sacrificing invaluable environmental and cultural resources for short-term gain. But Plaquemines does not intend to simply attract any opportunity available—instead, with the guidance of the Master Plan, the Parish will craft economic development policies that will attract businesses and industries that can provide opportunities for this generation and those to come.

Future Residents

Residents are one of the most valuable assets in Plaquemines Parish—and investing in the Parish’s citizens and the long-term vitality of the local communities is critical to Plaquemines’ future security. Therefore, in addition to coastal restoration and economic growth, the Parish also recognizes the importance of regaining and surpassing the pre-Katrina population—and new industry and new jobs will attract new residents. However, strengthening local education opportunities is also critical to attracting and retaining new residents, particularly young people. As the Parish continues its efforts to attract target industries, it must also develop vocational and technical programs that will train the existing and emerging workforce for future job opportunities. As new jobs emerge, and as the local network of services continues to develop, Plaquemines will become an even more attractive home for new residents—a great place to live, work, and play.



Table 1. Population Projections

Employment-driven Population Projections, Plaquemines Parish	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Low Growth*	22,440	25,520	25,904	26,289	26,674
Medium Growth*	22,440	25,597	26,135	26,616	27,097
High Growth**	22,440	26,303	27,449	27,830	28,413

Source: Louisiana Workforce Commission historic data and regional growth projections.
 *Projected population based on Plaquemines Parish historic ratio of population/jobs (1.6) applied to Louisiana Workforce Commission employment projections for New Orleans region.

Plaquemines anticipates and welcomes growth and development in coming years; however, to ensure the success of this future growth, Plaquemines must create policies and strategies to ensure that the Parish can adequately accommodate new development and preserve the high quality of life that residents currently enjoy.

The Master Plan sets forth guidelines and recommendations for accommodating and directing residential growth in a manner that encourages efficiency, security, comfort, and sustainability. The Future Land Use Plan captured in the Master Plan's Community Agenda is based upon the concept of community and village centers and envisions a network of walkable neighborhoods that share centrally located community centers, neighborhood parks and amenities, and well-connected infrastructure. See Diagram 4 and Future Land Use Maps on page 20.

Guiding growth in an efficient and sustainable manner will require updated subdivision and zoning regulations, public-private partnerships to ensure adequate housing stock, and new programs and policies to incentivize smarter, planned growth.

Economic Development - For the Next Generation

Plaquemines' port-based industries, the oil and gas industries, and the fishing and seafood industries have traditionally been our economic strongholds—and each depends upon the Parish's coastal environment and also taxes its natural integrity. These industries are not projected to have high growth in coming years; additionally, the strength of these industries rises and falls in direct relationship to the health and security of Plaquemines' coastal resources. Although these industries have been critical to Plaquemines' traditional economy, these industries alone cannot prepare the Parish for the strongest possible future.

Plaquemines' unpredictable environment demands a resilient and stable economic base. And as national policy continues to trend in favor of technology, renewable resources, and 'greener' industries, the Parish must establish strategies to attract these emerging industries. In the Plan for Plaquemines Prosperity (P3), the Parish identified target industries, economic development areas, and associated infrastructure needs that will foster a sustainable future. Among others, the



Diagram 4. Village Center Example

PLAQUEMINES PARISH COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

identified target industries include renewable energy, value-added agribusiness, transportation and logistics, tourism and hospitality, and coastal research and water management. The geography, natural environment, and cultural and historic resources position Plaquemines perfectly for success in these industries.

The Master Plan builds upon the P3 plan and outlines strategies to coordinate broader economic development initiatives with port and infrastructure expansions, efficient land use planning for investment areas, workforce training and education programs, and partnership opportunities. As with each project or policy contemplated in the Master Plan, understanding the regional context and coordinating accordingly is critical. Planning with a broader scope and developing regional partnerships provides opportunities to leverage funding and better ensures long-term viability.

While new industry is a critical element of economic development, the Parish must also capitalize on existing opportunities for local 'economic gardening.' Plaquemines is rich with existing opportunities for local growth, particularly through partnerships with the Naval Air Station and Joint Reserve Base (NAS JRB) and development of the eco-tourism and value-added agribusiness industries. Instead of solely spending resources to attract new businesses to our community, economic gardening initiatives seek to retain and expand existing businesses and encourage investment in home-grown industries. Such local sustainable development strategies can include business incubators, loan programs, and other policies to grow small businesses.

Core Economic Development Areas

- Fishing
- Tourism
- Oil Industry
- Retail & Commercial Property
- Residential
- Government
- Coastal Restoration

Target Industries

- Renewable Energy
- Tourism & Hospitality
- Coastal & Water Management
- Transportation & Logistics
- Value-added Agribusiness
- Oil & Gas
- Chemicals Manufacturing

Visioning: Big Questions, Big Decisions

- » How can the Parish improve **quality of life** for existing and future residents?
- » How can the Parish equip communities to meet the needs of residents of all ages, particularly the increasing **elderly** population?
- » What can the Parish do to attract **new jobs** and also attract **new residents**?
- » How can the Parish foster **new connections** between communities and work centers?
- » How can the Parish diversify the base economy with **forward-looking industries**, such as renewable energy, technology, and eco-tourism?
- » How can the Parish best prepare the emerging and existing workforce for future jobs?
- » How can the Parish rebuild the coast in a way that also improves economic **stability** and **resilience**?
- » How can the Parish **foster growth** in existing **local businesses**?
- » How can the Parish balance **environmental protection** with **economic development** demands?

Stronger Growth for Greater Resiliency

Hurricane Katrina and the Deepwater Horizon disaster forefronted the significant impacts such events can have on the Parish's economic stability. The Parish has the opportunity to learn from these events and capitalize on recovery momentum to grow a more diverse industry base and increase the Parish's economic resiliency. Economic development success in Plaquemines Parish depends upon multiple factors:

- » Safe investment environment
- » Land development in conformity with the Parish's Master Plan, zoning and development regulations
- » Adequate and efficient transportation system
- » Sufficient infrastructure, including water, sewer, and broadband
- » Workforce readiness

Stronger Growth Recommendations & Strategies - Population Growth

Develop active utility account database and add housing permit data to GIS database.

...Lacking an up to date database of residents makes it difficult for the Parish to analyze population densities and migration patterns, which in turn makes it difficult for the Parish to gauge areas in need of concentrated economic development, services, or other needs.

Develop a housing strategy for sub areas of the Parish based on 2010 Census data.

...To attract and retain these workers, the Parish must provide appropriate workforce housing (short and long-term housing, affordable, safe, time-competitive commutes). Although data analysis indicates that Plaquemines currently has an adequate housing supply to meet future growth needs, type, size, and location may not be ideal for sustainable future growth.

Monitor and evaluate the changing characteristics of the Parish's population.

...Monitoring and evaluating local population trends is critical to providing adequate and efficient public services; likewise understanding the dynamics of the local population is critical to anticipating and fostering sustainable growth and development.

Partner with schools to develop work force development programs for targeted industries.

...Provide more educational opportunities within the Parish by partnering with high schools to raise graduation rates and establishing technical colleges and vocational schools focusing on green industry job training and other target-industry skills. Additionally, the Parish can develop employment opportunities by attracting new employers that will provide jobs appropriate to the skill sets of residents.

Capitalize on community identity to attract new residents and strengthen the existing community.

...Support local festivals and events that celebrate the heritage and unique history of Plaquemines Parish.

Stronger Growth Recommendations & Strategies - Economic Development

Strengthen tourism/ ecotourism

...In conjunction with existing and ongoing efforts to protect and preserve the Parish's natural assets, such as the river, marshes, and wetlands, developing the Parish's eco-tourism potential is an excellent low-impact economic development opportunity. Capitalize on recent national exposure in a positive way.

Invest in Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip

...Whether or not these forts are established as National Parks, enhancing them will attract visitors and boost the Parish's cultural tourism potential.

Improve Infrastructure

...Plaquemines' unique geography requires that infrastructure is improved to connect distant economic centers, such as ports, industrial zones, and commercial centers. Additionally, to attract industry and economic development, every effort must be made to protect such investments from natural disaster and other such risks. Examples: implement levees, railroad, planned road improvements, general aviation airport.

Diversify economic base

...Grow industries such as renewable energy, technology, education, and services.

Create partnerships with target-industry leaders

...As the Parish seeks to diversify and expand its industry base, new partnerships with targeted corporations and industries, as well as with local business leaders, research institutions, and universities, will aid in coordinating the Parish's future growth in a positive and sustainable direction. Ex--PABI, GNO, Entergy, Tulane, NOAA

Workforce development and connections with local schools and universities

...Strong connections with Parish schools can help create linkages between school curriculums and the Parish's core and targeted industries. Similarly, the Parish can foster partnerships with area vocational schools, colleges, and universities to coordinate educational and training programs that meet the needs of targeted and growing industries. Examples: VoTech for renewable energy and Coastal Research.

Third - STRONGER INFRASTRUCTURE

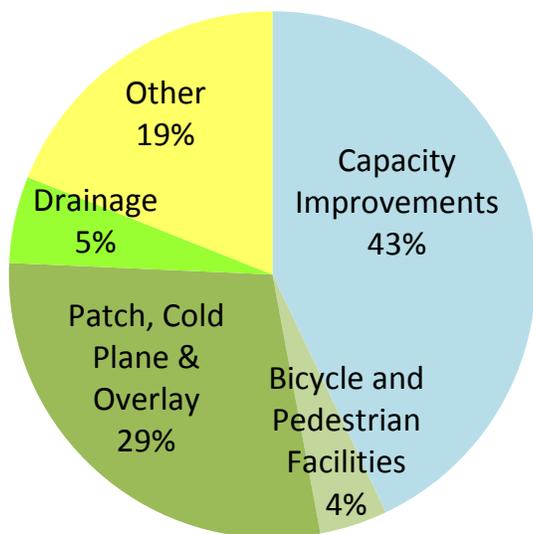
Preparing for the Parish’s future growth requires expanding and improving existing infrastructure to accommodate growing demands. The Parish’s infrastructure systems support and serve the local economy and communities--ensuring their adequacy is a critical element of emergency preparedness and prevention.

Although many of Plaquemines’ roadways and much of the water and wastewater system was repaired or replaced after Hurricane Katrina, new industries, new businesses, and new residents will increasingly burden these facilities in coming years. The Master Plan outlines strategies for developing an integrated plan for new construction, capital improvements, and routine maintenance to ensure the efficiency and long-term adequacy of the Parish’s infrastructure systems.

Multi-modal Transportation

Transportation is the backbone of any economy—and as the Parish grows and develops, an accessible and well-connected multimodal transportation network will become increasingly critical. Plaquemines’ linear geography spanning the

Diagram 5. FY 2011 - 2014 Transportation Improvements Funding



Mississippi creates a challenging transportation environment—commutes tend to be longer and the current lack of transportation options and routes can cause congestion in predictable places. As illustrated in Diagram 5, funding exists for an extensive list of transportation improvements that are already slated for development in the Parish—and many others are in various phases of planning and implementation. However, planning for and prioritizing improvements and expansions for all travel modes will become more important as new development arrives in the Parish. The Community Agenda of the Master Plan includes a framework for implementing improvements to the existing transportation system based on the current operating conditions and anticipated future travel demand.

The Parish’s planned multi-modal system seeks to accommodate and provide choices for all users—whether they are young or old and whether they are shipping freight, commuting to work, running an errand, or walking to the park—and includes ferries, roadways, railways, public transit, ports, airports, sidewalks, and bikeways. The Master Plan outlines policies and recommendations for achieving the desired multimodal system and some of these are highlighted in the table of Stronger Infrastructure Recommendations on Page 17.

Providing more transportation choices for all users will decrease travel time and reduce congestion. Additionally, expanding the Parish’s transportation system to provide more connections to and from neighborhoods, employment centers,

Multi-Modal Transportation System Elements

- Roadways
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities
- Public Transit
- Ferry System
- Railroad
- Ports
- Airport

commercial centers, and public amenities will sustain economic growth in the long-term and will increase quality of life for Parish residents.

Water & Wastewater Systems

In addition to transportation initiatives and the efforts to maximize flood protection, the Parish's water and wastewater system is also essential to the health of the local economy and communities. In order to ensure adequate service, for emergency preparedness and response, and in order to accommodate future demands, the Parish requires a well-mapped, interconnected, and flexible water system. Damaged portions of the Parish's water and wastewater system were repaired after Hurricane Katrina; however, as previously discussed, population distributions have changed in recent years as residents relocated.

Today the highest population densities are in the northern end of the Parish—and population projections anticipate that this trend will continue. Additionally, the Master Plan's strategies for efficient land use planning include efforts to direct growth towards those denser, better-protected areas of the Parish. The growing population and influx of businesses in these target areas will increase demands and will eventually necessitate additions and improvements to the water system.

Additionally, there are currently some areas of the Parish without public wastewater facilities. To meet this existing service need and in anticipation of future growth, the water and wastewater system must be developed in coordination with other infrastructure improvements and capital investments.

To meet the highest performance standards and to improve operational efficiency, the Parish must also establish a system for monitoring and evaluating the water and wastewater system and create a plan for improvements, expansions, and maintenance in accordance with the Parish's targeted growth areas. The Master Plan outlines recommended updates to the zoning and subdivision regulations that can be crafted to ensure that service grows in pace with development.

Visioning: Big Questions, Big Decisions ----

- » How can the Parish provide transportation **choices** for **users of all ages and abilities**?
- » What transportation investments are necessary to improve **disaster responsiveness**?
- » Where is the greatest demand for **new connections** linking community centers and work centers?
- » What transportation investments are needed to accommodate the **future growth** the Parish hopes for?
- » How can the Parish provide better neighborhood and recreational amenities, such as bikeways and sidewalks?
- » What transportation investments will improve **safety** and **efficiency** for all users?
- » What efforts are needed to coordinate waste water systems with other flood protection measures?
- » How can the Parish ensure that necessary water and waste-**water connections** are provided for future development nodes?
- » What water system improvements are needed to provide adequate **hazard mitigation**?



Stronger Infrastructure Recommendations & Strategies - Transportation

Increase public transportation choices

...Reinstate bus service, develop commuter services such as vanpools and carpools, and expand demand response public transportation.

Improve ferry operations

...Complete conversion of ferry fleet to green vehicles, construct new consolidated ferry crossing located near Jesuit Bend, construct new ferry ramps and docks to provide simultaneous loading and offloading, and consider potential for privatization of future ferry operations.

Improve freight railroad connections

...Consider relocating the Belle Chasse portion of the NOGC railroad to form a bypass on the west via a new crossing over the Intracoastal Waterway and work with stakeholders to continue extending the rail line south.

Improve air access

...Implement the recommendations of the *General Aviation Airport Feasibility Study*, to construct a general aviation airport with a 4,200 ft. runway near West Pointe a la Hache.

Make improvements to Barriere Road

...Support the change in the location of the Main Gate of NAS-JRB to Barriere Road and widening and extension of Barriere Road to the future Peters Road Bypass.

Increase roadway connectivity

...Encourage connectivity in the roadway system to decrease travel distances & times by increasing route options and safety for all users by creating parallel routes, coordinating traffic signals, and implementing traffic management strategies.

Stronger Infrastructure Recommendations & Strategies- Water Systems

Update water and sewer master plan

...Update the Parish's water and sewer master plan in order to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the Parish's systems. The plan update will allow the Parish to better monitor and address maintenance schedules and gaps in service and also to identify future needs.

Create Water & Wastewater Systems Operation and Maintenance Guidelines

...Operation and maintenance guidelines should outline performance standards, sets forth inspection requirements, and establishes a method for monitoring and evaluating utility rates and needs.

Develop a system-wide computer model of the Parish water distribution system

...The model will allow the Parish to predict water pressure and flows at any point within the system (will aid in lowering fire insurance rates), predict the impact of line closures, and to develop and implement a Capital Improvements Program to address any identified deficiencies in pressure and/or flow throughout the system.

Invest in wastewater improvements

...Monitor and update mechanical and electrical systems for all wastewater treatment facilities, upgrade treatment capacities at certain locations, consolidate locations, etc.



Fourth - SMARTER SERVICES

Quality of life measures, such as education, recreation opportunities, and cultural amenities, are extremely important to the Plaquemines community. The Parish seeks to deliver the highest possible standards for quality of life by providing an accessible network of public services, public parks and facilities, and efficient land uses. However, as mentioned above, many returning Plaquemines community members and new residents are choosing to locate in areas of the Parish that offer maximum flood protection, particularly in the northern portion of the Parish near Belle Chasse. To meet the existing service needs and in anticipation of future growth, the Parish must establish a plan to regularly evaluate and realign public services based on the changing population distributions. Additionally, developable land offering maximum flood protection is scarce in Plaquemines—and as new residents arrive, creating an efficient network of land uses and services will become even more critical. The Parish must coordinate land use planning efforts with provisions for public services, infrastructure planning, and capital investments in order to meet new development with adequate infrastructure and services.

Future Land Use Plan Goals & Objectives

- Require higher quality development standards
- Increase “quality of life” for Parish residents, including:
 - Sense of place – unique natural setting
 - Economic prosperity
 - Recreational opportunities
 - Family and community ties
 - Daily access to necessities of life
- Protect property values and the tax digest
- Promote land use compatibility
- Promote development standards for the built environment to protect the health, safety and welfare of all residents
- Protect natural resources
- Balance growth with capacity of infrastructure and public services
- Promote the unique character of the Parish’s small communities and rural areas
- Provide opportunities for affordable housing

Land Use

The ultimate goal of the Parish’s land use planning efforts is to establish a framework for quality development that will enhance quality of life in the Parish, preserve the character of existing neighborhoods, encourage efficient travel and mobility, protect the natural environment, and promote accessibility to services and amenities for all residents. To this end, the Future Land Use Plan and the development policies captured in the Master Plan are based upon an extensive transportation network, ‘character areas,’ development nodes, and village and community centers. The Future Land Use Plan and its corresponding policies also seek to channel new growth around existing communities and commercial centers and towards areas offering the greatest flood protection. In order to accomplish the vision set forth in the Future Land Use Plan, updates to the subdivision and zoning regulations will be necessary to incentivize efficient land use and to ensure that new development meets the highest possible design standards and best practices. See Land Use Recommendations on page 21.



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Directing future growth in a manner that creates service clusters, commercial development nodes, and well-connected neighborhoods is not only critical to the success of the economic development plans, but it also essential to providing smarter services to all residents. Clustering communities around shared services, such as schools, civic centers, community centers, parks, and recreation facilities allows the Parish to ensure accessibility for all residents.

Public Facilities and Services

The Parish currently provides an extensive network of services to Plaquemines residents to promote safety, public health, and education, including the following:

- » Fire and emergency services
- » Law enforcement
- » Public libraries
- » Community Centers/ Senior Services;
- » Public Education
- » Public health facilities and service
- » Solid waste management services
- » Boat harbors and marinas
- » Public Rights of Way Maintenance
- » Mosquito control, and
- » Other general government facilities

The Parish's narrow, linear landmass creates a challenging environment for providing public services that require proximity to customers. However, in coordination with land use planning initiatives, the Parish can begin clustering neighborhoods, service centers, and transportation connections in order to better serve residents. Community centers and public facilities will serve multi-purposes, such as health, education, civic engagement, and recreation. When well-planned, such shared public amenities can serve as neighborhood anchors and gathering places for all residents to enjoy.

Continuing to monitor and evaluate growth areas and development patterns will be critical to ensure adequate service in the long-term. To

Character Areas

Developing character areas is a strategy used to preserve and emphasize the features that contribute to the desired quality of a community as a whole rather than at the parcel-level. The character of an area can be understood by looking at several characteristics, such as the following:

- » Prevalent uses and the mixture of uses
- » Scale of community, reflected in the sizes and configuration of lots and structures
- » Site design features, such as degree and location of open space, landscaping, parking, driveways, signs, accessory structures, stormwater facilities, and other features
- » Design and connectivity of streets, side walks, and other pedestrian facilities
- » Intensity of development
- » Building location, dimensions, and orientation
- » Types of natural features and viewsheds
- » Location and type of civic buildings and public spaces
- » Functional and spatial relationships between uses
- » Sensitive or unique environmental resources

ensure service accessibility, the Parish must allocate programs, service levels, and personnel in coordination with the relative needs in each area of the Parish.

Parks and Recreation

Residents of Plaquemines Parish share a love of the natural environment and value recreation and time spent outdoors. And the Parish strives to ensure that every resident has access to abundant open space, parks, and recreation facilities.

Many parks and facilities were replaced or repaired after Katrina—and the Parish currently meets or exceeds the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) standards for park service based on the current population base. However, as Plaquemines attracts more families, demand for neighborhood park space will

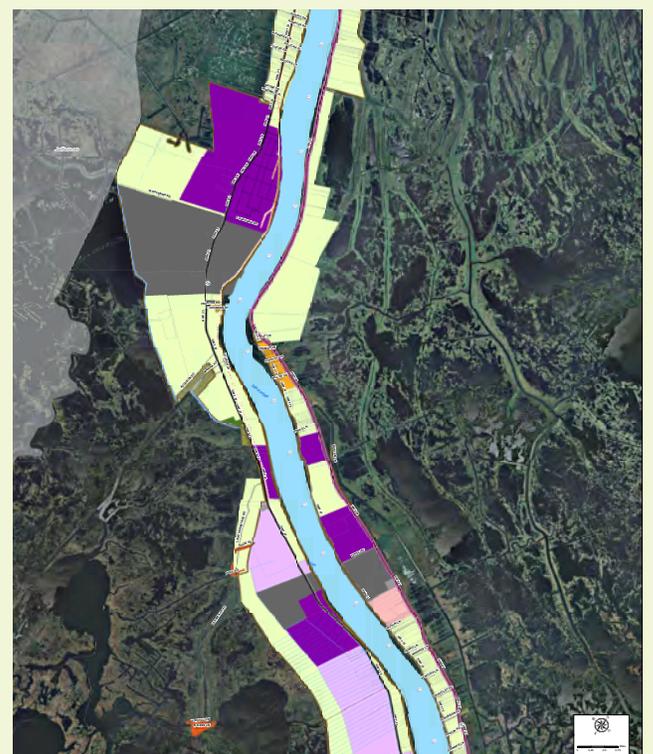
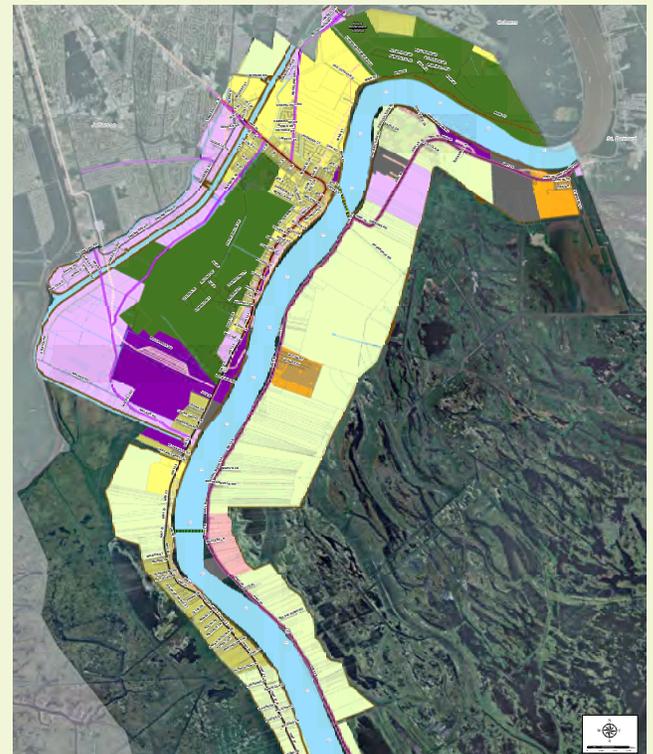
grow—and more can always be done to improve the quality of recreation opportunities today. For instance, in coordination with other planning initiatives, the Master Plan recommends that open space be included in all new residential development projects and outlines provisions for sidewalk and bike connections linking schools and neighborhoods to parks and recreation facilities. The Master Plan also recommends new soccer fields, basketball courts, and playgrounds in under-served areas. The Parish’s ultimate goal is to provide safe and quick access for all residents, regardless of age or ability.

Additionally, opportunities exist to coordinate parks and recreation planning efforts with tourism initiatives and other economic development plans. For instance, plans exist to construct paths along the levee system, which will provide pedestrian and bicycle connections between Parish attractions, as well as views of the river and wetlands. The abundant historic and cultural resources can also be better utilized for local festivals and other recreation opportunities, and also to attract tourists and visitors.

Visioning: Big Questions, Big Decisions

- » How can the Parish consolidate facilities and services to maximize efficiency and also provide **accessible services** all residents?
- » Can public facilities serve as gathering places and **community centers** for neighborhoods and communities?
- » How can the Parish use existing **parks, open spaces, and historical sites** to generate tourism?
- » What areas of the Parish have the greatest need for additional recreational programs?
- » What subdivision and development policies are needed to **protect** existing and **future homes and investments**?
- » How can the Parish ensure that future development is **sustainable** and concentrated around adequate services and infrastructure?
- » How can the Parish best use zoning incentives to encourage growth around existing communities and commercial nodes?

Figure 6. Future Land Use Maps



Smarter Services Recommendations & Strategies - Public Services

Evaluate and monitor population distributions

...Coordinate the planning of public facilities and services to meet the changing needs of the population.

Coordinate public service development with the Future Land Use Plan

...Cluster public facilities to create multi-service centers, which anchor neighborhoods and provide greater access to services.

Promote green building practices for new government facilities

...Green buildings decrease overall operating expenses and set a community standard of sustainable development. Additionally, when locating future public facilities, evaluate the impact the new development will have on public safety, traffic, natural resources, drainage, noise, aesthetics, and neighborhood character and involve the public in the site selection and design.

Create a Capital Improvements Program

...Set rational capital improvement priorities based on a Master Plan and develop a life-cycle approach that takes into account maintenance, operating, and replacement costs.

Smarter Services Recommendations & Strategies - Parks and Recreation

Maximize potential of existing parks as tourist destinations

...Existing tourism resources include Fort Jackson and Fort St. Philip (establish as National Park site), Mardi Gras Point, the Katrina Museum, and possible bicycle trails on levees.

Construct sidewalks and bicycle/multipurpose trails

...There is a need for better pedestrian and bicycle access to parks.

Construct parks and facilities based on the National Recreation and Parks Association guidelines

...By 2030 Belle Chaise needs 6 Playgrounds (1 acre), 3 Neighborhood Parks (5-10 acres), 1 Community Park (20-50 acres), and a soccer field. Additionally, based on population projections, Jesuit Bend needs at least 2 more neighborhood parks and 3 more playgrounds.

Smarter Services Recommendations & Strategies - Land Use

Use the Future Land Use Map and the policies of the Future Land Use Plan Element as a guide to future zoning decisions

...Create and preserve "character areas" that emphasize the features that contribute to the character of a community as a whole.

Concentrate growth around existing communities and commercial nodes

...Use Parish initiated rezonings and incentives to encourage concentrated growth in existing communities and to develop new nodes on the east bank and in south Plaquemines.

Preserve the unique character of communities and establish connections between commercial nodes, employment centers, and communities

...Use the Future Land Use Data Sheets, which highlight various character areas, as a guide for preserving the unique character of different communities in the Parish and to encourage compact, village-style development around existing community centers.

Incorporate recommendations from the Plaquemines Parish NAS-JRB/ Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) concerning Military Influence Areas

...Implement overlay districts for height, uses, appearance, and noise attenuation standards, establish aviation easements procedures in Subdivision Regulations, create stormwater controls adjacent to the NAS-JRB, and create a Memorandum of Understanding for joint review of rezoning and development applications.

Use the Future Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Master Plan as a framework for making revisions to the Subdivision Regulations and Zoning Ordinance

...Implement the goals set forth in the Future Land Use Plan and guide future development based on policies set forth in the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations.

Fifth - SMARTER GOVERNANCE

To accomplish the goals set forth in the Master Plan, Plaquemines' government operations must be as organized and efficient as possible. Given the unique geography and environment, routine government operations, such as providing utilities, can be more costly to administer. Additionally, specialized programs, such as ongoing post-Katrina recovery efforts and coastal restoration projects, are a great expense to the Parish. However, such services are essential to the Parish's existence and demand will only escalate in coming years—therefore, ensuring efficiency in all government operations is critical.

The Master Plan examines the current structure of Plaquemines Parish Government's organization, budget, and finances in order to improve its effectiveness, to ensure quality service for all residents, and to prepare for the future needs of a growing population and economic base. Smarter governance requires continuous scrutiny of the Parish's operational efficiency; it requires ongoing analysis of our revenue and spending; it requires inter-departmental coordination and collaboration; it requires innovation and public-private partnerships; it requires short and long-term planning; and it requires citizen support and participation.

Government Organization

The 1986 voter-approved Charter for Local Self-Government establishes Plaquemines' form of government, which is comprised of a Parish President and a nine-member Parish Council who serve the residents in their respective Council Districts. Under the Parish Charter, Plaquemines' government administration is headed by three officials who serve as heads of the three primary departments: Director of the Department of Administration, Director of the Department of Public Service, and the Director of the Department of Operations. These three officials administer and manage over 50 functions provided by the Parish and oversee over 600 classified and unclassified

Parish employees. To reduce the burden on so few officials and to address missing functions in the Parish's operations, the Master Plan recommends revisions to the Parish Charter to include several new positions and departments. See Figure 10.

In addition to the reorganization of Parish officials and staff, privatization of some functions, decentralizing government services into satellite centers, and providing appropriate services through an on-line interface could also improve the quality of service to all residents and improve the efficacy and efficiency of administration.

Government Finance

As previously stated, the Parish's standard government operations can be more costly per capita because of the low population density and the extent of the specialized services the Parish provides. Additionally, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, local service demands have dramatically transformed and increased—and many of recovery efforts and related initiatives have been federally funded; however, these federal funding sources are not guaranteed indefinitely and relying so heavily on such revenue streams is not sustainable. See Figures 7 , 8, & 9.

The Master Plan addresses the issues listed below and outlines recommendations for improved financial planning and operations.

- » Cost-Efficiency of Parish government
- » "Crisis-Management"
- » Reliance on grant funds
- » Rising maintenance and operating costs
- » Reliance on oil and gas revenues
- » Decrease in economic strength
- » Deficits in certain enterprise funds
- » Under-pricing fees for services

PLAQUEMINES PARISH COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

» Capital project evaluation and selection

In the coming years, the Parish's budget and operations will continue to be greatly influenced by the extensive geography of the service area, the need for efficient services throughout the Parish, the current shifts and anticipated growth in local population, and the continuous demand for flood protection. As Plaquemines prepares for growth, it is more critical than ever that the Parish maintain the most efficient and sustainable financial operations possible. Identifying stable, long-term revenue sources, planning for capital improvements, and maintaining balanced government funds will be critical in ensuring the Parish's financial preparedness for the long-term.

Figure 9. 2009 Plaquemines Parish Expenditures by Type

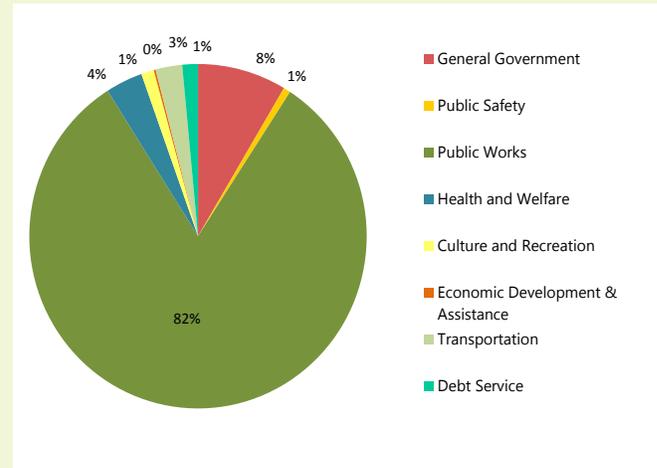


Figure 7. 2009 Plaquemines Parish Revenues by Source

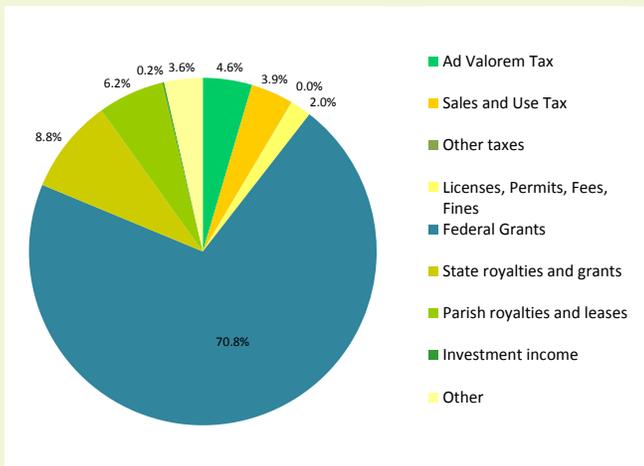
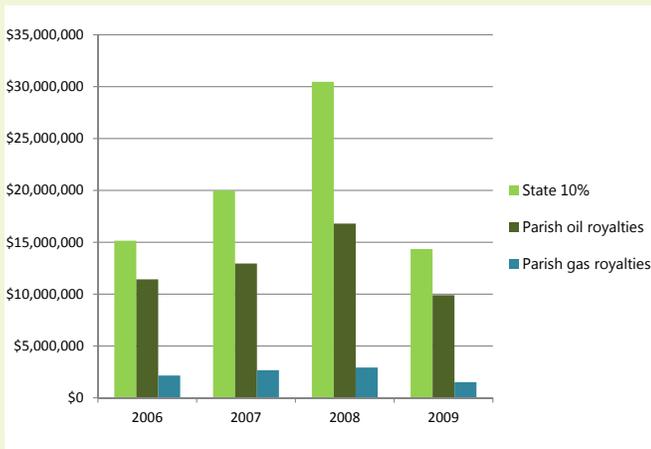


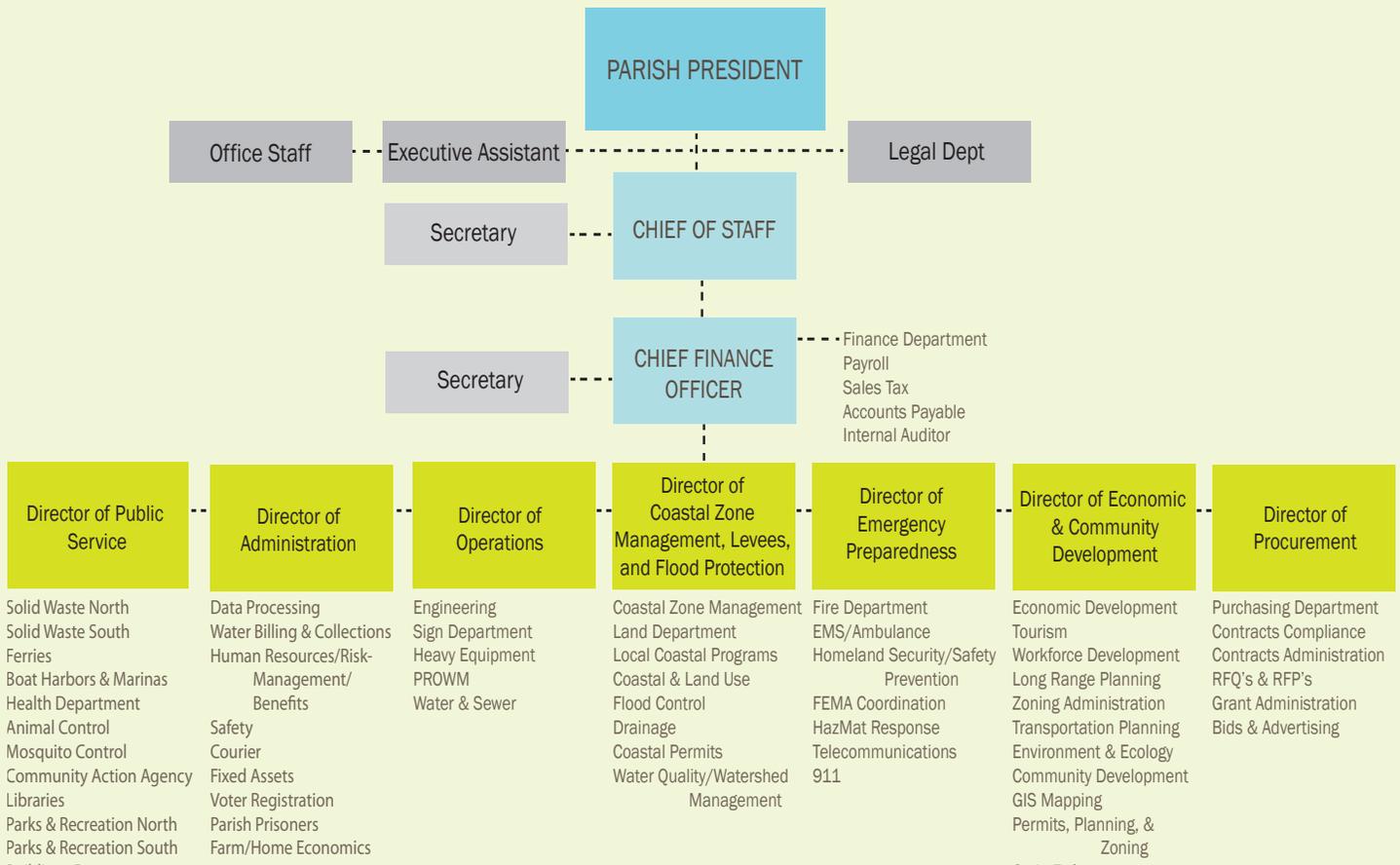
Figure 8. Trends in Governmental Fund Revenues by Source, 2006-2009



Visioning: Big Questions, Big Decisions

- » What effort is needed to retain enough **state** and **federal funding** to achieve our coastal restoration and flood protection goals?
- » How can the Parish develop a more **diverse** and **stable revenue** stream?
- » What other funding sources exist to aid in financing coastal recovery projects?
- » Are all Parish residents **fairly represented** by members of the Parish Council?
- » How can the Parish increase **accountability** and control in major decision-making?
- » What changes need to be made to government services to improve **quality of service** and efficiency?
- » How can the Parish achieve more effective **collaboration** between the various arms of Parish government?
- » What **new positions and departments** are needed to more effectively implement Parish plans and meet Parish goals?
- » How should the Parish realign fee structures to achieve **cost recovery** in Enterprise Funds?
- » How will reorganizing the fee schedules for government provided services impact residents?
- » What planning actions are needed in order to be prepared for **rising costs** of government administration?
- » What additional services are needed to guarantee **accessible services for all** Parish residents?

Figure 10. Recommended Government Organization



Smarter Governance Recommendations & Strategies - Government Organization

Create additional government positions to increase operational efficiency

...Create new positions, including a Chief of Staff and a Chief Financial Officer. Additionally, create Directors of Coastal Zone Management & Flood Control, Homeland Security, Economic & Community Development, and a Director of Procurement to supplement the Directors of Public Service, Administration and Operations.

Create new government departments to address Parish needs

...Create new departments and restructure to better address parish needs.

Evaluate the economic efficiency of government-provided services

...Evaluate the potential cost and benefits of privatization of selected services, such as solid waste, boat harbors and marinas, roadside maintenance, and mosquito control.

Update Parish Charter

...Revise the Plaquemines Parish Charter as necessary to accomplish the recommendations set forth in the Comprehensive Master Plan.

Smarter Governance Recommendations & Strategies - Government Finance

Adopt a Parish Comprehensive Financial Master Plan

...Adopt a Parish Financial Master Plan to guide future public and private investment and also set firm short and long-range targets for improving financial performance.

Prepare an Economic Recovery Plan

...Adopt an Economic Recovery Plan to set short and long-range goals for targeted economic growth and industry diversification.

Prepare a long-range financial plan for the Parish

...Prepare a long-range financial plan that includes developing a prioritization process for capital improvements, evaluating and identifying future funding sources, and realigning fee structures to achieve cost recovery in the Parish's Enterprise Funds.

Take advantage of Special Assessment Districts and impact fees

...Evaluate use of Special Assessment Districts and impact fees to maintain investments after federal funds have diminished.



SECTION IV - THE ACTION PLAN

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Action Plan Organization and Development

The findings of the Community Assessment, the input received from citizens and Parish leaders, and the analysis and recommendations compiled in the Community Agenda all inform the short and long-term goals and action items set forth in the final portion of the Master Plan process—the Action Plan.

The Action Plan is the final implementation program and provides a detailed strategy for achieving the community's vision. The Action Plan has two major components: goals and action items.

The goals and associated action items are organized according to the Visioning pyramid developed during visioning phase of the master planning process. The goal statements are synthesized from recommendations detailed in the Community Agenda. Any one recommendation, strategy, or action item often supports multiple planning goals; therefore, the Action Plan organizes a bundle of inter-related action items under each goal that work together to achieve the stated goal. Action items are broken into four categories, programs, policies, projects, and studies:

- » Policy - requires legislation to implement or incentives and disincentives through government planning and action
- » Program - ongoing activities undertaken by Parish
- » Project - generally a one-time investment or capital improvement, plus associated maintenance and operations costs
- » Study - analysis or investigation into feasibility and/or alternatives

To create the Action Plan, approximately 575 recommendations were compiled from each chapter of the Community Assessment and Community



Vision Pyramid → Evaluation Criteria

Agenda. This exhaustive list of recommendations was categorized into policies, programs, projects, and studies and then evaluated according to the action plan evaluation matrix developed by the project team.

The top three priorities illustrated in the Visioning pyramid informed the evaluation criteria, resulting in a matrix wherein recommendations and activities were ranked based on the degree to which they 1) support coastal restoration and storm protection; 2) support a robust and healthy economy; and 3) support the highest possible quality of life. The list of recommendations were ranked and prioritized based on the scale outlined below.

• Supports Coastal Restoration & Storm Protection

Scale = 0 – 7

- 0 = No real connection
- 1 = Smarter planning
- 2 = Education, helps avoid related issues
- 3 = Simple project
- 4 = Project
- 5 = Important project
- 6 = Very important project
- 7 = Critical activity

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• Supports a Robust and Healthy Economy

Scale = 0 – 6

- 0 = No real connection between employment and jobs
- 1 = Creates a more favorable business climate but no direct jobs
- 2 = Creates a more favorable business climate or creates temporary jobs
- 3 = Creates a more favorable business climate and should lead to permanent jobs
- 4 = Critical infrastructure investment or policy
- 5 = Immediate impact on jobs, creating 10+ permanent jobs
- 6 = Immediate impact on jobs, creating 30+ permanent jobs

• Supports a High Quality of Life

Scale = 0 – 5

- 0 = No QOL benefits
- 1 = Benefits a few, hurts some
- 2 = Benefits some
- 3 = Benefits many
- 4 = Improvement (benefits all)
- 5 = Major improvement (benefits all)

• Composite Score =

- + *Supports Coastal Restoration/Storm Protection*
- + *Supports a Robust and Healthy Economy*
- + *Supports a High Quality of Life*

• Cost

Scale 7-1

- 7 = 0-\$250,000
- 6 = \$250,000-500,000
- 5 = \$500,000-1 million
- 4 = \$1-5 million
- 3 = \$5-10 million
- 2 = \$10-25 million
- 1 = > \$25 million

• Implementation Time

- Short = 1-2 years
- Medium = 2-5 years
- Long = > 5 years
- Ongoing

• Funding

- Local - Yes / No
- Federal - Yes / No

In addition to the rankings above, each of the 575 recommendations was evaluated based on estimated cost, implementation time, and funding availability.

The recommendations were then ranked and sorted first by total composite score (supports coastal restoration + expands basic employment + improves quality of life), then by estimated cost, and then by project type (policy, program, project, or study).

Sort Methodology:

Composite Score → Cost → Type

Next, the top 10 recommendations were compiled across all planning elements, yielding 110 recommendations, which were then organized under the three Visioning pyramid categories.

And finally, these highest ranking recommendations were organized into action item bundles based on the goal each recommendation supports. Each action item listed in the Action Plan includes the implementation time, the responsible party, a cost estimate, and potential funding and implementation partners.

Short Term Work Program

In addition to the Action Plan, the Master Plan also includes a Short Term Work Program (STWP), which identifies specific implementation actions the Parish intends to take during the first five-year time frame of the planning period. The STWP includes any ordinances, administrative systems, investments, financing arrangements, or programs and initiatives that must be immediately established in order to implement the Action Plan and the Master Plan.

The action planning evaluation process and the resulting Action Plan and Short-term Work Program were vetted and validated during workshops with citizens, volunteer committee members, and Parish leadership.

Get Involved

To learn more about the Plaquemines Parish Comprehensive Master Plan or to get involved in Master Plan implementation initiatives, please visit <http://www.plaqueminesparish.com/> and <http://www.plaqueminesmasterplan.com>.

Figure 11. Example Action Plan Evaluation Matrix

Recommendation	Project, Program, Policy, or Study	Supports Coastal Restoration/Flood Protection	Expands Basic Employment	Improves QOL?	Composite Score	Cost	Implementation Time	Local Implementation?	Funded ?	Parish's Role
		0-7	0-6	0-5		1-7	Short, Med, Long, Ongoing	Y/N	Y/N	
Prepare an Economic Recovery Plan	Study	2	4	2	8	6	Short	Y	N	Lead
Create Department of Economic & Community Development	Policy	0	5	3	8	7	Short	Y	N	Lead

