

8 Public Facilities and Services

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the current state of public facilities and services in Plaquemines Parish. These facilities and services are provided by the Parish government and other institutions such as the Plaquemines Parish School Board and Sheriff's Office; the facilities and services include:

1. Fire and emergency services ;
2. Law enforcement ;
3. Public libraries;
4. Community Centers / Senior Services;
5. Public education;
6. Public health facilities and medical services;
7. Solid waste management services;
8. Boat harbors and marinas;
9. PROWM (Public Rights of Way Maintenance);
10. Mosquito control; and
11. Parish government administration facilities.

Discussion of the Parish's water and wastewater systems, drainage and stormwater management facilities, and parks and recreations services may be found in Chapters 5, 7 and 9 respectively. Additionally, an overview of the Parish budget and government structure is provided in **Section 11 of the Technical Addendum**.

Data and information related to facilities and services in Plaquemines Parish were collected from a wide variety of sources including previous studies conducted by the Parish, RPC, and others, interviews with Parish staff and officials, and field surveys conducted in the spring and summer of 2010.

A set of five maps showing the location of parish facilities in each of the six defined planning areas is included at the end of this Chapter.

8.1 Fire and Emergency Services

Plaquemines Parish is divided in seven fire districts served by 12 fire stations:

Figure 8.1: Plaquemines Fire and Emergency Services Facilities and Staffing

Fire Stations and EMS Facilities					
Dist.	Location	Facility	Address	Paid Fire-fighters	Volunteers
1	Pointe a la Hache	Fire Station /EMS	239 Adema Lane	12, one of whom is a Supervisor	Approximately 20
1	Phoenix	Sub-Station	13075 Highway 15		
2	Belle Chasse	Fire Station	104 New Orleans St.	18, of which 3 are Supervisors	Approximately 35
2	Belle Chasse	Fire Station	216 Engineers Rd.		
2	Jesuit Bend	Fire Station	13504 Highway 23		
3	Port Sulphur	Fire Station / EMS	113 Civic Drive	12, one of whom is a Supervisor	Approximately 30
3	Empire	Fire Station	31733 Highway 23		
4	Buras	Fire Station	35410 Highway 11	6, including one Supervisor	Approximately 20
5	Boothville	Fire Station	42661 Highway 23	6, including one Supervisor	Approximately 25
6	Lake Hermitage	Fire Station	2766 Hermitage Rd.	6, including one Supervisor	Approximately 20
7	Braithwaite	Fire Station	7139 Highway 39	12, of which 2 are Supervisors	Approximately 30
7	Braithwaite	Sub-Station	Edna Lafrance Rd.		

Fire services are delivered through 12 stations organized into seven districts. Most of the 12 fire houses are newly constructed replacements for facilities damaged by Hurricane Katrina. The O’Brien, Braithwaite, Phoenix and Lake Hermitage stations were completed in 2009 and the Buras, Port Sulphur, Boothville-Venice and Pointe a La Hache stations in 2010. The base floor elevations of the new stations are raised to guard against possible flooding

Staffing is accomplished through a combination of 72 paid firefighters and approximately 180 volunteers, as shown in the table above. The staffing plan provides 6 paid positions per station to ensure that there are at least two paid firefighters in each station 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The cost of staff and equipment is paid by a dedicated sales tax approved by voters in 2009.

Plaquemines Parish has mutual aid agreements with neighboring jurisdictions. The Woodlawn Station works with St. Bernard Parish. The Belle Chasse District has a mutual aid agreement with New Orleans, Tarrytown, and Gretna.

The Port Authority also relies on Plaquemines Parish firefighters. The Port provides the vessels and boat crew, but the Parish Fire Services Department provides the firefighters.



(left) Belle Chasse Fire Department; (right) Port Sulphur Fire Department

Emergency medical services are co-located with fire stations in Boothville-Venice, Pointe a la Hache and Port Sulphur. The Ambulance Department has 45 employees and six ambulance vehicles to provide 24/7 emergency medical service response to the residents of Plaquemines Parish in six ambulance districts:

- Belle Chasse
- Port Sulphur
- Buras
- Boothville/Venice
- Braithwaite
- Pointe a la Hache

The service is licensed by the state of Louisiana to operate Advance Life Support Ambulances. In addition, the Parish purchased a new “Sprint truck” that operates with a paramedic equipped with a heart monitor, immobilization equipment, and IV supplies. Three ambulance units are being remounted and refurbished in 2010 and a third is due for refurbishing in January 2011.

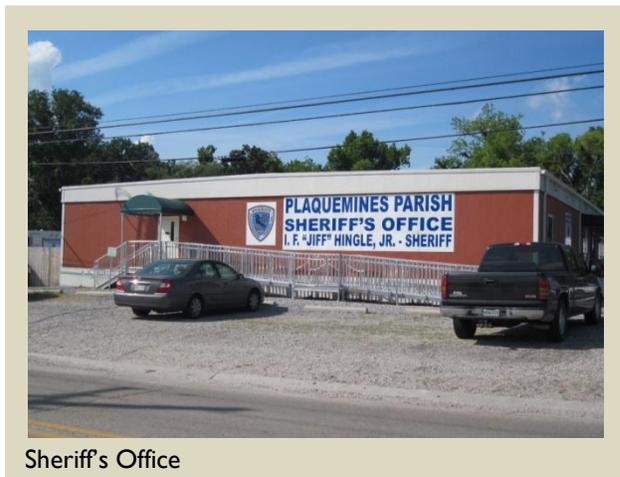
8.2 Law Enforcement

Prior to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the Sheriff’s Office, on average, employed a staff of 254 full time deputy sheriffs and support personnel and 24 part time employees and oversaw facilities including:

- 875 bed Adult Detention Center in Pointe a la Hache
- Prison Farm Packing Facility

- Tax Collectors Office and Evidence Room in Belle Chasse
- 3rd District Substation –East Bank
- Port Sulphur Lock-up and 911 Communication Center
- Marine Search and Rescue Office and Warehouse – East Bank
- Detective Bureau – Belle Chasse
- Detective Bureau – Port Sulphur
- Juvenile Detention Center & Juvenile Enforcement Offices – Belle Chasse
- Criminal Justice Records Management Systems Office – Belle Chasse
- Administration Office (Government Annex Building) – Belle Chasse
- Belle Chasse Lock-up

Currently, the Plaquemines Parish Sheriff's Office is headquartered at 302 Main Street in Belle Chasse and provides 24-hour crime prevention, investigation and enforcement services to Parish residents. In addition the headquarters, the Department operates the Belle Chasse Lock-up at 104 Avenue G, the Sheriff's Shooting Range at 18038 Hwy 23, the Port Sulphur Safety Office located at 133 Civic Drive includes the 911 Dispatch Center.



The Sheriff's Office is divided into twelve divisions, departments and offices, employing approximately 180 full and part-time staff. The Patrol Division is the largest and most visible division within the Sheriff's Office employing more than 60 officers. The division is divided into three districts: the 1st District includes all of Belle Chasse south to Myrtle Grove, the 2nd District reaches from Myrtle Grove south to Venice, and the 3rd District covers the entirety of the East Bank. In recent years, the Patrol Division has responded to an average of 18,000 service calls per year. In addition to the Patrol Division, the Marine Division routinely patrols the parish's many navigable waterways and provides search and rescue services. Other departments include the Detectives Bureau, Domestic Violence Office, Juvenile Division, and Narcotics Division. The Sheriff's Office also maintains a Crime Prevention Office which oversees a number of community policing and safety programs including a Citizen Police Academy, a safety course for hunters and McGruff the Crime Dog. In addition to the traditional services provided by a law enforcement agency, the Sheriff's Office is responsible for the collection of property taxes.

Since Hurricane Katrina, the Corrections Division which includes 60 correctional officers has operated out of the Belle Chasse lockup; inmates are currently processed here and transferred to the Orleans Parish Prison. Construction is underway on a new 91,000 sq. ft., 450 bed facility on the East Bank which will house Parish and State inmates and take the place of the previous 875 bed Detention Center which was devastated by Hurricane Katrina. The detention center will

include a courtroom, inmate vitiation area and administrative offices. It will also contain a Sheriff's Prison Farm to provide fresh produce.

Figure 8.2: Crime Rates, Plaquemines and Jefferson Parishes & State of Louisiana

Geography	Population Estimate	Violent crime	Rate / 1,000 residents	Property crime	Rate / 1,000 residents
Plaquemines					
2008	22,251	54	2.43	388	17.44
2007	21,539	56	2.60	600	27.86
2006	22,512	57	2.53	477	21.19
Jefferson					
2008	444,655	2,243	5.04	15,047	33.84
2007	440,339	2,616	5.94	15,090	34.27
2006	420,683	2,580	6.13	13,834	32.88
State of Louisiana					
2008	4,410,796	28,944	6.56	168,630	38.23
2007	4,293,204	31,317	7.29	174,991	40.76
2006	4,287,768	29,919	6.98	171,239	39.94

Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program, Offenses Known to Law Enforcement by State by Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Counties, 2008, 2007 and 2006, and Crime in the United State by State, 2008, 2007, and 2006.

Figure 8.3: Law Enforcement Protection in Plaquemines and Jefferson Parishes & State of Louisiana

Parish	Population Estimate	Total law enforcement employees	Total officers	Officers per 1,000 residents	Total civilians
Plaquemines					
2008	22,251	188	185	8.31	3
2007	21,539	185	102	4.74	83
2006	22,512	173	172	7.64	1
Jefferson					
2008	444,655	1,449	1,005	2.26	444
2007	440,339	1,393	900	2.04	493
2006	420,683	1,289	854	2.03	435
St. Bernard					
2008	37,669	246	216	5.73	30
2007	33,439	219	194	5.80	25
2006	14,493	192	168	11.59	24

Source: FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Program, Full-time Law Enforcement Employees by State by Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Counties, 2008, 2007 and 2006.

8.3 Public Libraries

There are three library facilities in Plaquemines Parish: Belle Chasse, Buras, and Port Sulphur. There are 17 employees. The Buras and Port Sulphur libraries were destroyed by Hurricane Katrina, with the Belle Chasse library also sustaining damage. The Buras library has been rebuilt with a new 8,900 sq. ft. facility that is to open in December 2010. Reconstruction of the Port Sulphur library has been delayed as an alternate site is being considered for the facility.

However the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation provided funding for a temporary library trailer that that opened 2006 and continues to operate.

There is also a large, fully-equipped bookmobile, which was purchased by the Gulf Coast Libraries Project to as a replacement for the parish after the hurricane. This library on wheels provides weekly service to Buras, Port Sulphur, Boothville, Woodlawn (East Bank), Ironton and Jesuit Bend.

After an initial post-Katrina drop in circulation, library usage is rebounding; in 2007 the circulation was 16,789; however, circulation grew to 25,179 in 2008. The libraries' catalog includes print and non-print (audio and visual) materials including DVDs, CDs and videos; computers are also provided for public use at the Belle Chasse and Buras libraries. The Library leads the Parish with the fastest internet system available to the public via a Wi-Fi network. There is special programming for children and teens.

A grant-funded needs assessment for a new Belle Chasse library was completed in September 2009. This study concluded that Belle Chasse should become the headquarters of a Parish library system with Buras and Port Sulphur operating as branch locations. The current Belle Chasse library was built in the 1960s and renovated in the late 1970s but is inadequate in size and amenities to serve as a modern library headquarters for the Parish. The 2009 Library Study recommends a new building of 20,000 sq. ft. or more on a site of at least three acres to accommodate a library and the administrative services currently located in a FEMA trailer located in the Belle Chasse library parking lot. Additional study recommendations include the following:

- Using the current bookmobile for dedicated East Bank service; parking it in one location or moving it between the two ferry crossing points on designated days of the week. This would be a temporary service until the population of the East Bank rebounds and a small branch library can be opened and staffed.
- Obtaining a second, small bookmobile that could be operated by one staff member. This smaller vehicle would more easily navigate the Parish's secondary road network and be available to provide outreach services to retirement homes, schools and daycare centers.
- Expand the library systems annual operating budget to \$50 per capita, and then increase the operating budget by 5 percent annually.
- Increase hours of operation to 63 hours per week with alternating nights for the Buras and Port Sulphur branches to better serve the needs of working individuals and students.



(left) Port Sulphur Library (Temporary); (right) New Buras Library



(left) Belle Chasse Library; (right) Plaquemines Parish Book Mobile

8.4 Community Centers / Senior Services

In 2008, FEMA approved the Parish’s plan to consolidated ten pre-Katrina community service-oriented facilities into four new consolidated community centers (CCC) located in Davant (Percy Griffin CCC), Port Sulphur, Buras, and Boothville-Venice. The facilities replaced include destroyed/damaged community centers in the same communities as well as the Port Sulphur Civic Center, Diamond Community Center, Port Sulphur Medical Center, Boothville-Venice Senior Center, District 9 Council Office Building, Empire Civic Center, Port Sulphur Council on Aging and the Magnolia Center (a senior center). Funding for the new centers has been secured through the Plaquemines Legacy Campaign, a combined effort of the Plaquemines Parish Government, Plaquemines Parish School Board, United Way, local business community, YMCA and FEMA.

The new centers will provide senior services (Boothville-Venice, Davant, and Port Sulphur), youth development, counseling services, health and fitness equipment and programs, swimming pools, summer camps for children, meeting places/community rooms with commercial kitchen facilities and clinics staffed by roving nurses/paramedics provided by the Ochsner Hospital. In addition to providing community services, the centers will serve as places or refuge from floods, storms and other disasters. All facilities are being elevated a minimum of 9 feet and built to withstand winds in excess of 150 mph. In addition to these four consolidated community centers, the YMCA will soon be opening a new branch in Belle Chasse. A new YMCA is also being constructed in Belle Chasse with funding provided through ConocoPhillips.



(left) Port Sulphur Consolidated Community Center; (right) Boothville-Venice Community Center

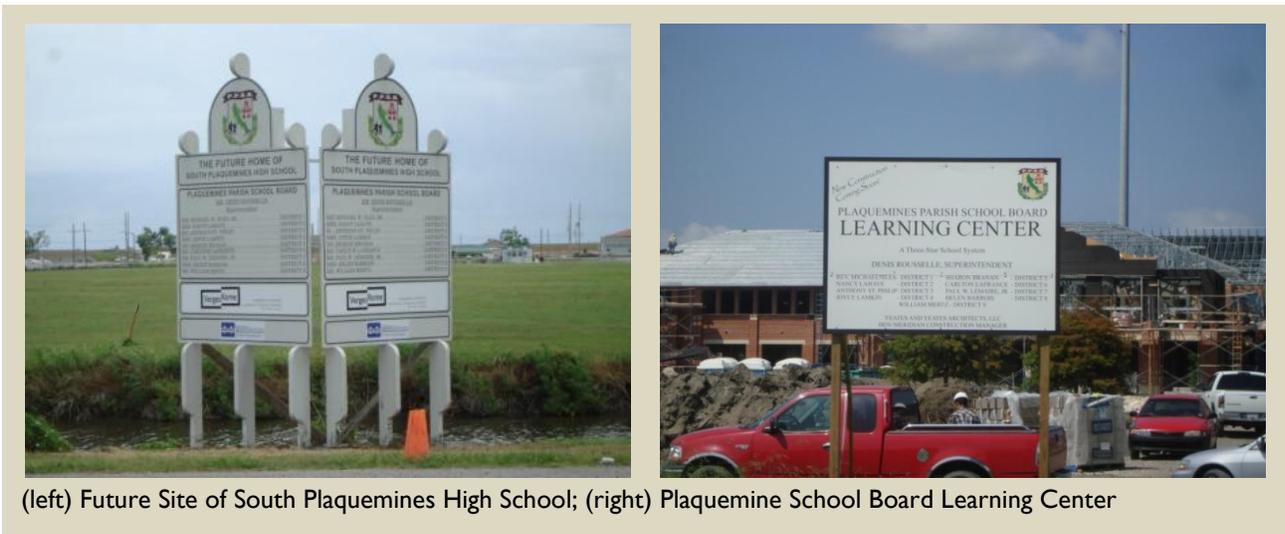


(left) Buras Community Center; (right) Davant Community Center *Photo by Robert G. Spears*

8.5 Public Education

There are currently seven public schools overseen by the Plaquemines Parish School Board including those school listed in **Figure 8.4**, and an Alternative School located in Belle Chasse. There is also an elementary charter school, Belle Chasse Academy, located at the Naval Air Station- Joint Reserve Base New Orleans in Belle Chasse, which is overseen by the Department of the Navy.

After Hurricane Katrina the three flooded high schools on the West Bank (Boothville-Venice, Port Sulphur and Buras) were permanently consolidated into the new South Plaquemines High School. This school is currently operating out of facilities at the site of the old Port Sulphur High School but will soon reopen at a permanent location on the site of the former Buras Middle School. The site of the former Buras High School will be redeveloped as a faculty housing site for South Plaquemines High School. The Alternative School will move from Belle Chasse to Port Sulphur once construction on the new Plaquemines Parish School Board Learning Center on Hwy 23 is completed; this is scheduled for the summer of 2011. The new learning center will also house vocational education and GED classes.



On the East Bank, the site of Phoenix High School is currently a consolidated campus including an elementary and middle school; however, a new facility is scheduled to open in 2012.



View of new Phoenix HS from Hwy. 15



View of new Phoenix HS from Hwy. 39

The top priority for Plaquemines Parish Schools is the system’s rebuilding/renovation projects which include a number of maintenance and housing facilities in addition to the school projects

previously noted. These projects are currently scheduled to close-out in 2012. **Figures 8.5 and 8.6** illustrate the aggressive school construction program that includes 12 projects funded by FEMA and 18 projects funded with CDBG funds.

Beyond bricks and mortar, priorities include working with local business leaders to expand vocational and technical education opportunities and initiating a Head Start program to extend early education opportunities in the parish.

The Parish's public schools are considered very good and their tests scores are typically some of the highest in the state according to school system officials. The high percentage of certified teachers in the Parish system (most recently 100 percent) contributes to this as does its relatively small size which allows for close, hands on management.

Prior to Hurricane Katrina, system wide enrollment was approximately 5,000 students. After falling to 2,803 at the end of the 2005-2006 school year; since then, enrollment has steadily increased. According to school system officials, school facilities are generally at capacity and school populations are not fluctuating very much outside of Belle Chasse, where elementary school enrollment is on the rise. This trend is anticipated to continue due to the shift of population from the southern to the northern reaches of the Parish. Enrollment figures for the 2009-2010 school year and the 2010-2011 school year are shown in **Figure 8.4**. There has been little change this year over the past year except for the growth at Belle Chasse Middle School and South Plaquemines High School and the slight decrease in enrollment at the two elementary schools in the south end of the Parish: Boothville-Venice and South Plaquemines.



(left) Boothville-Venice Elementary School; (right) Belle Chasse High School

Figure 8.4: Plaquemines Parish Public Schools

School	2009-2010 Enrollment	2010-11 Enrollment	Change
Belle Chasse High School	882	890	8
Belle Chasse Middle School	670	716	46
Belle Chasse Primary School	1,053	1,056	3
Boothville-Venice Elementary School	378	365	-13
Phoenix High School	193	209	16
South Plaquemines Elementary School	258	252	-6
South Plaquemines High School	348	376	28
TOTAL	3,782	3,864	82

Source: Plaquemines Parish School Board.

Figure 8.5 Plaquemines Parish School Construction - FEMA Funded Projects

Preliminary Projected Timeline
PPSB Recovery Construction Program - FEMA Projects

Print Date: 7/28/2010
Data Date: 7/22/2010

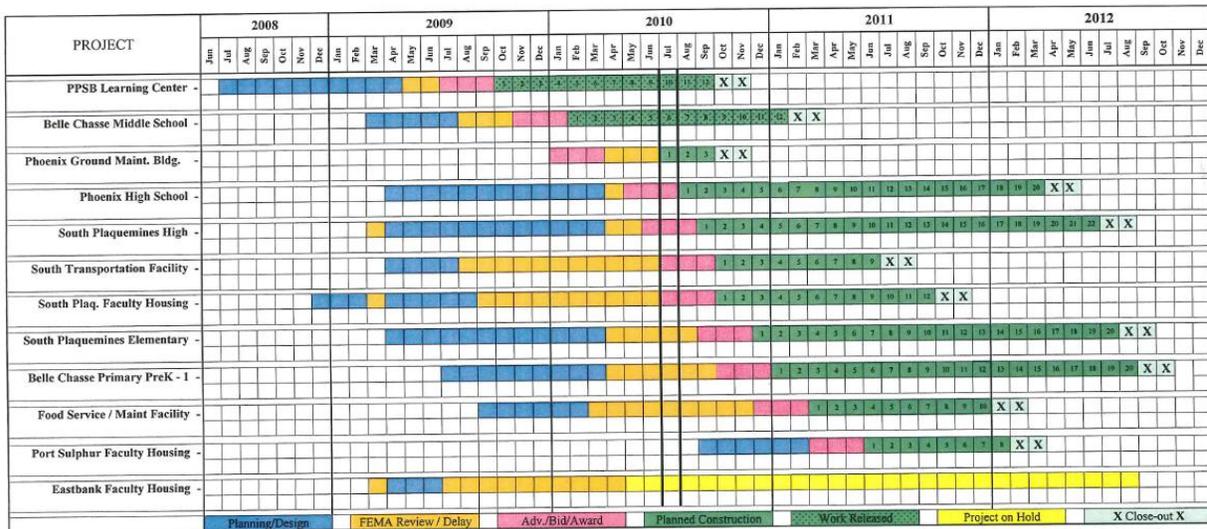
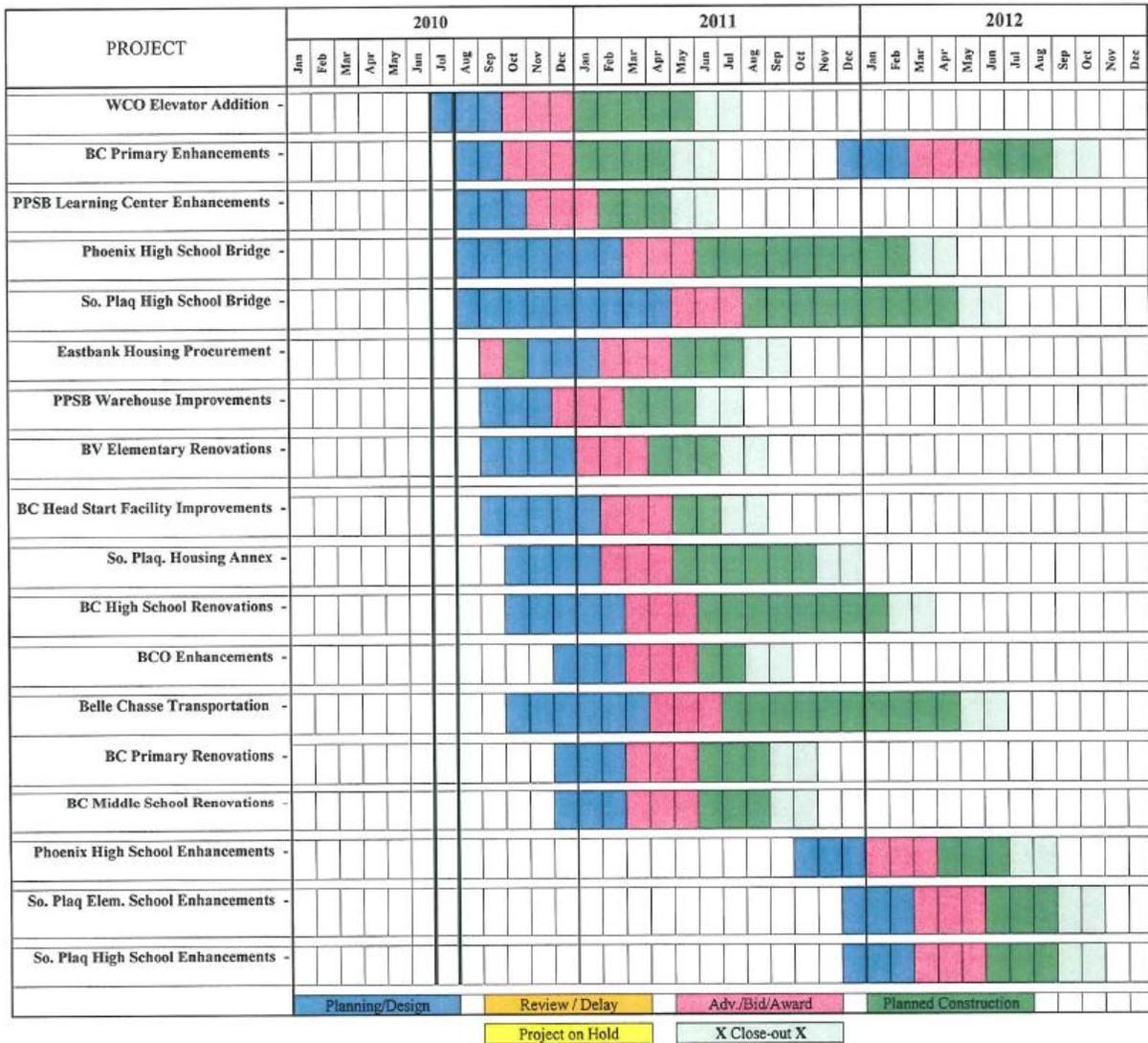


Figure 8.6 Plaquemines Parish School Board Construction Projects funded by the CDBG Program

Preliminary Projected Timeline
PPSB Recovery Construction Program - CDBG Projects



8.6 Public Health Facilities and Medical Services

Before Hurricane Katrina, Plaquemines residents could receive medical care and health services at two locations- the Plaquemines Medical Center Hospital and Medical Human Resources Annex building. Both facilities were destroyed by the storm. However, FEMA has agreed to allow the Plaquemines Medical Center Hospital Service District #1 to combine grant funding intended for replacing each of the two destroyed medical buildings to be consolidated for the construction of a single new, three-story medical facility at 27136 Highway 23 in Port Sulphur. The new facility will offer the same services as the previous two facilities: patient care and the Families in Need of Services (FINS) program, an intervention process aimed at preventing formal juvenile court involvement. The proposed design will be more efficient to operate and safer as the first floor of the new facility will be used only for covered parking. Construction of this new facility is reported to have begun in February 2010.



(left) Temporary Home of Plaquemines Medical Center in Port Sulphur;
(right) Future Site of New Plaquemines Medical Center

In the meantime, Plaquemines Medical Center is using a temporary (trailer) facility located at 26851 Highway 23 in Port Sulphur. This temporary facility provides 24-hour urgent care; patients seen at the facility are released back to the primary care physicians, specialists or to an emergency department as appropriate. In addition to urgent care, the medical center also provides screening physicals and immunizations.

Public health services are offered by the Plaquemines Health Department, located at 3706 Main Street in Belle Chasse. This center is open from 8:00 am to 4:30 pm, Monday through Friday. It is staffed by a Superintendent, 5 sanitarians, a public health nurse, a secretary and a clerk.

The public health nurse provides HIV testing, free flu immunizations, pregnancy tests and tuberculosis control. She makes periodic visits to Port Sulphur, Boothville and the East Bank. The Public Health Department also provides public education for a variety of health topics for children, families and seniors.

The sanitarians provide the following services:

- Environmental health services including design and inspection of individual wastewater treatment facilities;
- Monitoring quality of public water supplies;
- Food service sanitation inspections of restaurants, and public food services in day care centers, schools and nursing homes.

Animal control provides the following services:

- Public education on animal spaying and neutering control of rodents, opossums, armadillos, and other pests in residential areas;
- Inspection and enforcement of parish ordinances related to blighted structures, overgrown grass, junk accumulation and improperly stored vehicles;
- Service to the fruit growing industry in Plaquemines Parish by controlling Citrus Pysllid and Apple Snails;
- Prevention of animal cruelty and abuse;
- Removal of dead animals from right of way.

Beginning in 2011, Animal Control will be operating a new animal shelter in collaboration with Plaquemines Animal Welfare Society (PAWS), a non-profit organization that provides dedicated volunteers. The new Shelter is designed to qualify for green energy certification. It will use geothermal heating and cooling systems, will make maximum use of natural lighting, and use a combination of landscaping and white roof materials to minimize heat gain and reduce energy use and operating cost.

8.7 Solid Waste Management Services

Plaquemines Parish provides residential curbside pick-up of solid waste and yard debris for all residents with public water service using parish trucks operated by 47 employees. The parish is divided into two collection areas: Solid Waste North covers the East Bank, Belle Chasse and areas south to Ironton; Solid Waste South encompasses the areas south of Ironton to Venice.

Residential waste is collected two times per week on the West Bank and once per week on the East Bank. Each resident who has public water pays an additional charge of \$5 per month for one can and \$5 for each additional can. Waste collected by garbage trucks is hauled to one of three parish transfer and collection facilities located in Belle Chasse, Port Sulphur, and Boothville. There it is placed in larger compacted roll-off dumpsters for transfer to the municipal solid waste (MSW) landfill operated by Environmental Operators, LLC and located at 339 Coast Guard Road in Venice.

The northern transfer and collection facility (North Facility) located at 170 Sewer Plant Road serves the Belle Chasse area. Approximately 90 to 140 tons of waste is collected per day in the Solid Waste North collection area of which this facility handles 40 to 60 tons. The North Facility

also serves as a collection point for electronics, white goods, tires, and used oil. There is a main office building at the North Facility which houses administrative staff and a second trailer for other staff as well as a maintenance facility.

There are two waste transfer and collection facilities located south of Belle Chasse. The Port Sulphur Facility, located at 135 Compactor Road, serves the mid-section of the parish’s West Bank and the Boothville Facility located at 146 Compactor Road serves the southern end of the parish. Each facility handles approximately 18 to 40 tons of waste per week resulting in one to two compacted roll-offs filled with MSW per week for transport to the landfill. Both sites include office buildings housing administrative staff; the Port Sulphur facility currently includes a small maintenance facility, with a larger facility under construction.

Yard waste is picked up by “cherry picker” trucks and transported to the transfer facilities or the closed Walker Road Landfill for staging or burning in the case of wood waste materials. Inert waste materials such as concrete are also staged at the Walker Road Landfill for reuse on Parish projects. Construction and demolition waste (C&D) is disposed of at the Industrial Pipe C&D landfill located in Belle Chasse.

The parish’s three transfer and collection facilities accept drop-off recyclable materials, which are then transported to Riverside Recycling located adjacent to Industrial Pipe in Belle Chasse.



Compactor Facility



Walker Road Landfill



Recycling Drop Off in Plaquemines Parish

8.8 Boat Harbors and Marinas

Plaquemines Parish currently owns and operates five public boat harbors on the Gulf of Mexico.

The purpose of the boat harbors is to provide affordable places for commercial fishers to maintain their boats. The Empire Boat Harbor also includes a dry dock and lift for marine repairs. This is especially important to small business-owners so that they don't need to permit and build their own docks and it attracts them to do business in the fishing grounds surrounding Plaquemines Parish. Parish marinas are the only slips available for commercial fishers. Other Parishes in the New Orleans area do not provide this service. Interviews with parish staff indicate there is no attempt to keep others out who are not commercial fishers.

The boat harbors include a wide variety of slip sizes and prices. Slip rentals are priced higher for non-residents than for residents. Seniors also receive a discounted rate. The prices vary from \$15 per month for a senior resident to rent a 15 foot by 30 foot slip in Buras to \$155 per month for a non-resident to lease a 30 foot by 100 foot slip in the Venice Harbor.

The boat harbors were severely damaged during Hurricane Katrina and many fishers lost their boats. The harbors have now been completely restored or rebuilt and are back in operation thanks to grant funds from FEMA. A sixth boat harbor, Port Eads is yet to be rebuilt with FEMA funds. It used to have 80 slips, an ice house, and other conveniences, but was destroyed by Katrina.

Figure 8.7 presents a summary of the number of slips in each boat harbor and the occupancy rates in August, 2010. Occupancy averaged 53 percent with the highest occupancy being at Empire and the lowest at Buras. Buras is the largest of the boat harbors with 298 slips.

Slip rentals are often passed down among family members and there is very little official recorded turnover. Slips are cherished thing since they are very affordable and yet very valuable. There is a waiting list, and it is hard for newcomers to find slips. The parish does not require proof of ownership of the boat that is anchored in the slip, so there is not much control over how the slips are used or by whom. Therefore the parish staff cannot provide a user profile but they assume that the users are mostly commercial fishers.

Figure 8.7 Plaquemines Parish Boat Harbors, Marinas & Shipyard

Plaquemines Parish Boat Harbors, Marinas & Shipyards					
	BURAS BOAT HARBOR	EMPIRE BOAT HARBOR	EMPIRE SHIPYARD BOAT HARBOR	POINTE A LA HACHE BOAT HARBOR	TOTAL
SLIP TOTAL	298	78	35	164	817
CURRENTLY LEASED	89	75	30	134	435
CURRENTLY VACANT	209	3	5	30	382
% Leased	30%	96%	86%	82%	53%

Source: Plaquemines Parish Boat Harbors & Marinas Department records.



Also there is a need to institute planned replacement of equipment, such as boat hoists. There is no plan for these expenses when they occur periodically. There is no appraisal of the value of this equipment, which would have to be done to set up a sinking fund.

There are few services available at the boat harbors, although there is a restaurant adjacent to the Buras Marina. The Empire Shipyard includes hoists for boat repairs and equipment for propeller replacements. The boat has to be brought ashore at the shipyard at Empire and hoisted up to do the work. It should be done in just an hour or so, but some boat owners leave

the boat on the hoist for days at a time. This wastes capacity and makes others wait, since there are only a few available hoists. The rate is supposed to take that into account.

8.9 Public Rights of Way Maintenance

The public rights of way maintenance (PROWM) division is managed by the Director of Operations. PROWM maintains all Parish property and rights of way, levees, and state highways. PROWM also operates and maintains the Parish's street sweeper; fills pot holes; maintains growth around drains, culverts, signs, poles, and mile markers; cuts trees; fills sandbags during hurricane season; and maintains all PROWM equipment. When fully staffed, the division has approximately 49 personnel; however, as of December 2010, the division was comprised of 43 personnel, including one superintendant, five foremen, one secretary, two street sweepers/mowers, 31 tractor drivers, and three mechanics.

The public grounds maintenance division also plays a role in public rights of way maintenance. This division is managed by the Director of Public Works and is responsible for maintaining all public grounds and servitudes, for cleaning and manicuring parks and ball fields, and moving furniture and equipment as needed for Parish events and festivals.

Mowing is done throughout the year; however, there is substantially more work during warm seasons. The Parish is divided into several coverage areas that are maintained by separate crews. A typical crew consists of 5-10 drivers and one foreman.

The total area maintained by PROWM is 39.76 square miles / 10.5 square miles per cycle. Levees are cut in three-week cycles and lower-end ditches and banks are cut on a six week cycle. PROWM vehicles consist of the following:

- Tractors - 33
- 5-ft bush hogs—3
- Trucks
 - 1 small body dump truck
 - 3 mechanic trucks
 - 6 extended cab trucks
 - 11 crew cabs- all are 4 door pickups
- 3 bobcats – 1 East Bank, 1 Belle Chasse, 1 South
- 5 edgers
- 20 weed-eaters
- 12-15 chainsaws
- 1 vacuum truck for street sweeping
- 2 dump body trailers
- 3 trailers – 18 ft.
- 3 light trailers
- 3 small lawnmowers
- 3 small cart 'mules' – small 3 wheel utility vehicles
- 1 trailer for road crack sealants
- 1 small roller and asphalt patching machine

Every year during winter months, the PROWM crew has 3 ½ months of 'down time,' which is typically used for maintenance activities. Because the need for this program is seasonal, the Parish could decrease operational costs by employing its staff seasonally and/or combining crews in order to share equipment and labor costs. As stated above, personnel costs account

for over 50% of PROWM's total expenditures and over 76% of the total expenditures for grounds maintenance. Creating a more efficient staff and operations program could potentially decrease the total cost of the program.

8.10 Mosquito Control

The mission of Mosquito Control is to limit the population of mosquitoes as well as mosquito borne diseases and illnesses to the residents and wildlife in Plaquemines Parish. The Mosquito Control Division reports to the Director of Administration. This division consists of 24 staff members, including a supervisor, four fulltime larvacide experts, and multiple fog truck drivers. Mosquito control is funded by the Public Health Fund.

In 2007 Mosquito Control purchased an airplane to control mosquitoes in marsh areas where trucks cannot reach. The airplane has an enhanced GPS guidance system that guides the airplane to the exact location of a predetermined ground target and improves the efficiency of the spraying.

The Mosquito Control Division utilizes 16 fog trucks, four utility trailers, one fork lift, one lawn mower, and two gator vehicles. The division operates from three facilities – one in Buras on Highway 11, one in Port Sulphur on Compactor Road, and one in Braithwaite on Edna LaFrance Road on the East Bank.

In 2007 Mosquito Control purchased a Piper Aztec airplane to control mosquitoes in marsh areas unreachable by truck. The plane has an enhanced GPS guidance system that guides the plane to the exact location of a predetermined ground target and improves the efficiency of the spraying.

Fogging trucks spray on a nightly basis, weather permitting. The fogging trucks are divided into four coverage areas of the Parish: Upper and Lower Parish East Bank; Upper Parish West Bank; Middle Parish; and Lower Parish West Bank. Within these coverage areas, the mosquito crew is assigned target areas and a schedule for covering each target. The larvacide program treats ditches, manholes and unattended pools with adulticide pesticides in order to decrease the population of mosquitoes in their larva stage. This program is seasonal and there is a need to avoid paying for labor when the service is not active. Fog truck drivers use their vehicles for personal use, increasing the cost of this program.

8.11 Parish Government Administration Facilities

Pointe a la Hache has been the seat of government in Plaquemines since the formation of the Parish. On January 12, 2002, the Parish courthouse there was severely damaged by arson and Parish government activities were temporarily moved to Belle Chasse. Government offices and services were further consolidated in Belle Chasse after Hurricane Katrina as many facilities on the East Bank and in South Plaquemines were destroyed or heavily damaged. The ad hoc

nature of the relocations resulted in the scattering of government functions often into spaces and locations not well suited to accommodate the specific departmental needs.

Today, there are approximately 40 separate Parish offices; approximately 20 are located in Belle Chasse, including most general government offices, the Ferry Department, Health Department and Council on Aging. The other 20 are scattered throughout the parish with concentrations in Braithwaite and Pointe a la Hache on the East Bank and Port Sulphur in South Plaquemines.

Figure 8.8 provides a breakdown of the general parish government offices; those highlighted in yellow are properties without functioning buildings (9) and those highlighted in blue are buildings currently not in use (4).





(left) Site of new Animal Control Facility in Belle Chasse (partnership with PAWS); (right) Council on Aging – Temporary Site in Belle Chasse



(left)Buras Auditorium; (right) Belle Chasse Auditorium



(left) District 8 Council Office – Buras; (right) Parish Government Offices, Popich Building – Belle Chasse

Figure 8.8: Plaquemines Parish Government Offices

Facility Name / Department or Office	Address	Location
Belle Chasse Auditorium	8398 HWY 23	Belle Chasse
Animal Shelter (PAWS)	459 F EDWARD HEBERT BLVD	Belle Chasse
Belle Chasse Annex Building	301 MAIN ST	Belle Chasse
Belle Chasse Dog Pound	152 SEWER PLANT RD	Belle Chasse
Civil Service	481 F EDWARD HEBERT BLVD	Belle Chasse
Clerk of Court	301-A MAIN ST	Belle Chasse
Community Action Agency	479 F EDWARD HEBERT BLVD	Belle Chasse
Council on Aging - Belle Chasse	3712 MAIN ST	Belle Chasse
District Attorney's Office	208 AVE G	Belle Chasse
Drug Counseling Center	3708 MAIN ST	Belle Chasse
Ferry Department	88 CLEVAS ST	Belle Chasse
Health Department	3706 MAIN ST	Belle Chasse
Heavy Equipment Dept.	192 SEWER PLANT RD	Belle Chasse
Planning, Permits & Zoning and Engineering Dept.	102 AVE G	Belle Chasse
Plaquemines Parish Council Office (Temporary)	106 AVE G	Belle Chasse
Popich Building - Plaquemines Parish Government Offices	8056 HWY 23	Belle Chasse
Public Right-of-Way Maintenance (PROWM) Dept.	156 SEWER PLANT RD	Belle Chasse
Soil & Water Conservation	479 F EDWARD HEBERT BLVD	Belle Chasse
Temp Court House (Trailer)	450 F EDWARD HEBERT BLVD	Belle Chasse
Solid Waste Offices North	168 SEWER PLANT RD	Belle Chasse
Water Collections	203 MAIN ST	Belle Chasse
Boothville-Venice Community Center	112 GILLE LN	Boothville
Council District 9 Office	160 GILLE LN	Boothville
Council on Aging - Boothville (Property Only)	40718 HWY 23	Boothville
Braithwaite Auditorium (Property Only)	1253 HWY 39	Braithwaite
Braithwaite Mosquito Control	138 EDNA LAFRANCE RD	Braithwaite
Edna Lafrance Building	124 EDNA LAFRANCE RD	Braithwaite
Environmental Services Lab (Property Only)	138 EDNA LAFRANCE RD	Braithwaite
Woodlawn Building (Not in Use)	7163 HWY 39	Braithwaite
Buras Auditorium	35619 HWY 11	Buras
Buras Flag Pole	35427 HWY 23	Buras
Buras Mosquito Control	35354 HWY 11	Buras
Council District 8 Office	118 AUDITORIUM DR	Buras
Buras Community Center	118 AUDITORIUM DR	Buras
Percy Griffin (Davant) Community Center	15577 HWY 15	Davant
Council District 1 Office	15535 HWY 15	Davant
Diamond Community Center (Property Only)	25078 DIAMOND RD	Diamond
Empire Civic Center (Property Only)	32844 HWY 11	Empire

Facility Name / Department or Office	Address	Location
Riverbend Senior Center	13735 HWY 23	Jesuit Bend
PALH Community Center (Property Only)	17563 HWY 15	Pointe a la Hache
PALH Council Office (Not in Use)	18047 HWY 15	Pointe a la Hache
PALH Courthouse (Not in Use)	18039 HWY 15	Pointe a la Hache
PALH Maintenance Building	18045 HWY 15	Pointe a la Hache
Toy Collection Office (Property Only)	18043 HWY 15	Pointe a la Hache
Port Sulphur Community Center	278 CIVIC DR	Port Sulphur
ARC Building	30263 HWY 23	Port Sulphur
Council Districts 6 & 7 Offices	35354 HWY 11	Port Sulphur
Council on Aging - Port Sulphur (Property Only)	27419 HWY 23	Port Sulphur
Maintenance Dept. - South	168 ELDORADO ST	Port Sulphur
Port Sulphur Government Building	144 SCHOOL RD	Port Sulphur
Port Sulphur Insurance Building (Property Only)	347 CIVIC DR	Port Sulphur
Port Sulphur Mosquito Control	117 COMPACTOR RD	Port Sulphur
South Maintenance Yard	22952 HWY 23	Port Sulphur

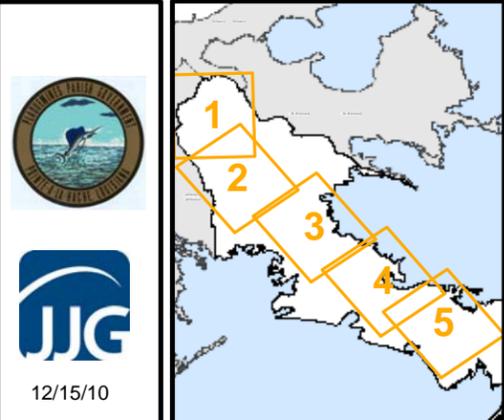
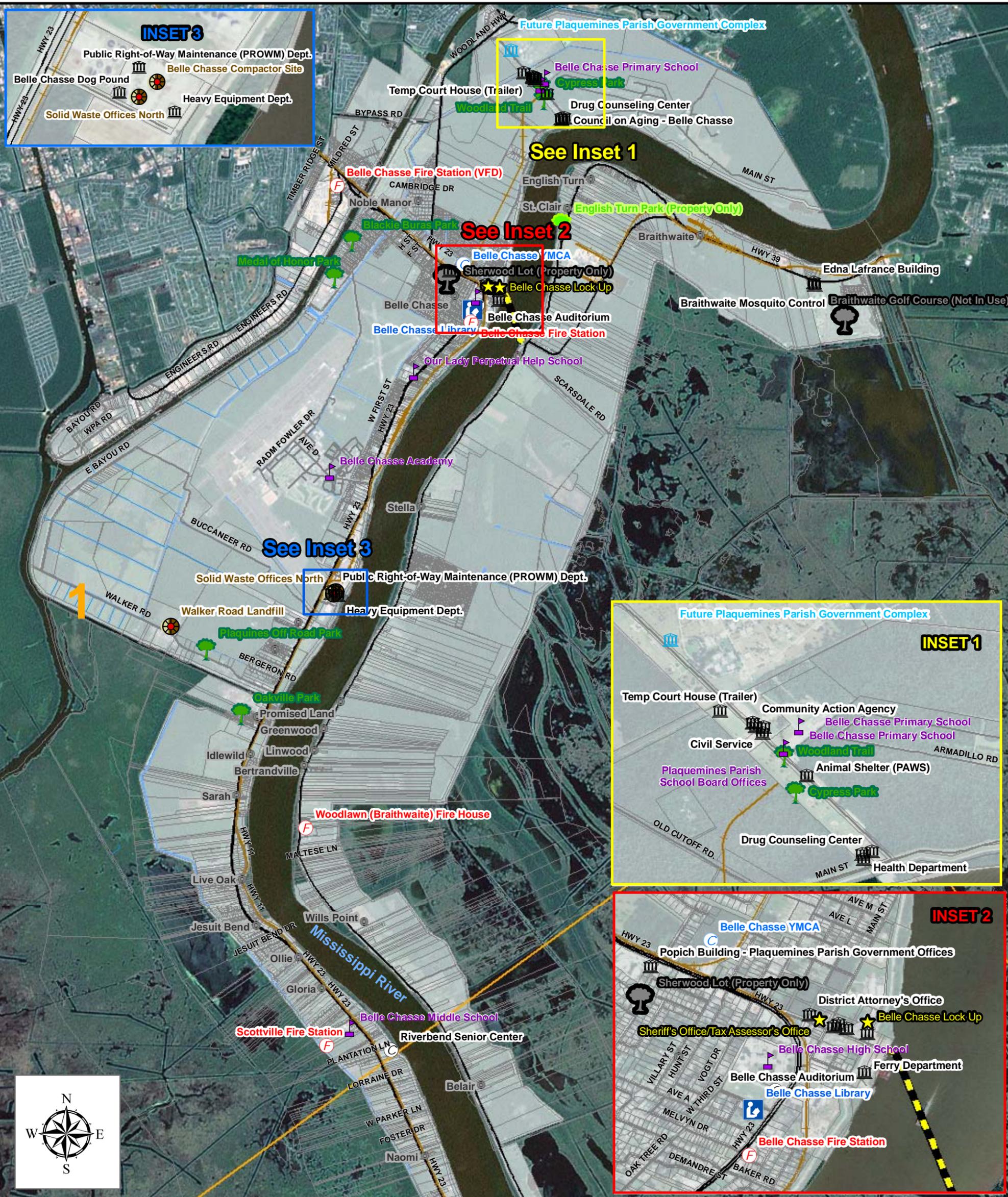
In early 2010, the Parish purchased the former State School facility on F. Hebert Boulevard, and an announcement has been made that the Parish will build a consolidated government campus on this property. This decision has the potential to greatly impact the organization and efficiency of government and services in Plaquemines Parish, resulting in improved technology, communication and energy efficiency. However, no decision has been made about the disposition of existing buildings that would be vacated by the Parish and the future of the historic courthouse at Pointe a la Hache.

8.12 Public Facilities and Services Issues and Planning Needs

There are a number of issues that the Parish should investigate further to develop a stronger, more coordinated capital improvements program and service delivery strategy. Specific topic areas where in-depth studies would be beneficial include:

- *Plan for consolidation and department co-location.* Due to the ad hoc nature of rebuilding efforts after Hurricane Katrina, Parish departments are often located far from one another and in spaces inadequate to meet the particular department needs. In coordination with reviewing the departmental structure of the Parish government, a space needs study should be undertaken to determine the office, storage, and other needs of each department. Additionally, opportunities for co-location of departments should also be researched to determine if there are opportunities to share flexible spaces and equipment in order to reduce costs and gain efficiency. Possible co-location might include PROWM, Mosquito Control and Solid Waste, especially at satellite locations outside of Belle Chasse.

- *Become a green leader.* Many Parish facilities that were not damaged/rebuilt after Hurricane Katrina have reached the end of their lifespan and are inefficient in terms of energy consumption. As the Parish seeks to become a leader in “green energy” it may be worthwhile to study the cost/benefit of pursuing LEED or similar building programs for new government facilities. Specifically, this should be studied for the new government complex to be located on the F. Edward Herbert property.
- *Create hubs of government activity.* Currently, government facilities and services outside of Belle Chasse are scattered among the parish’s many smaller communities. The consolidation of the Parish community centers in four locations outside of Belle Chasse provides an opportunity to create distinct nodes of government activity, such as is developing in Port Sulphur with the government building, medical center, and school and in Buras with the Auditorium, Fire Station, Library, District 8 Council Office and schools located in close proximity. This pattern of development could also be pursued in the Davant and Boothville-Venice areas. A study should be undertaken to determine the properties that the Parish owns in proximity to each of the consolidated community centers as well as what nearby properties it may be able to obtain through purchase, dedication or land swaps when feasible.
- *Increase accessibility of government.* Many Parish agencies do not maintain websites and the main Plaquemines Parish website is disorganized and difficult to navigate and provides limited opportunities to fill out and submit on-line applications, make on-line payments or provide feedback. An overhaul of the Parish website including concentrating on enhancing its organization and functionality of on-line services is recommended. Potential on-line services include submittal of building inspection requests, on-line registration for recreational sports teams, and payment of fines and fees. Additionally, many Parish agencies lacking websites, such as the Council on Aging and Health Department. These agencies should have websites created that include links to the Parish government website.



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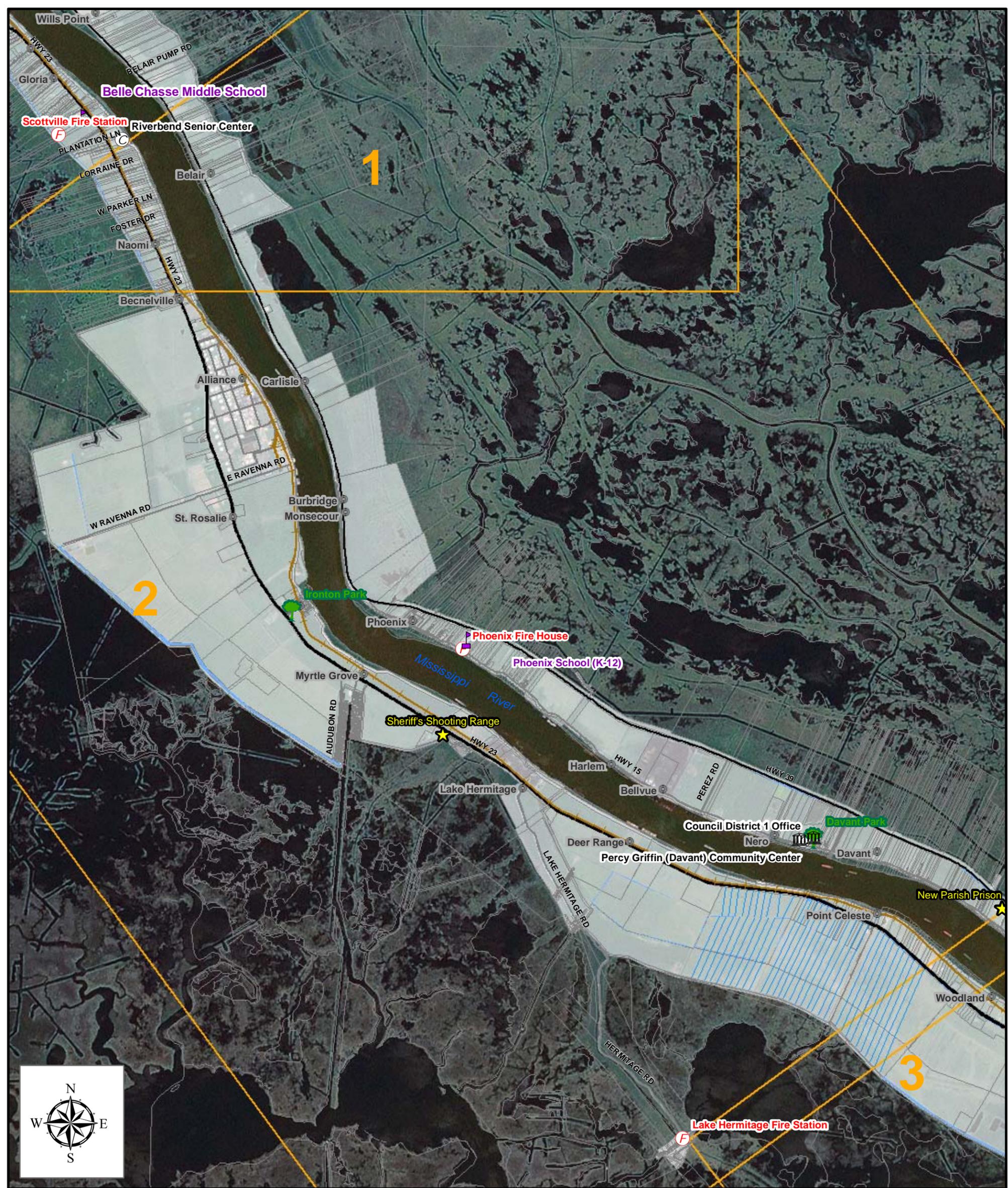
**Public Facilities & Recreation
Map No. 1**

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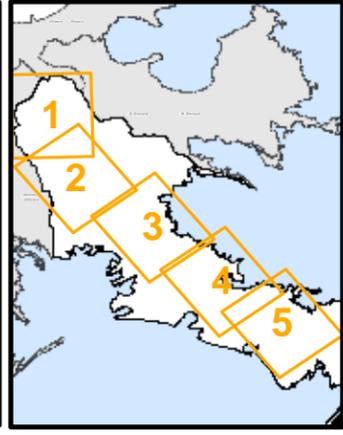
Legend

Community	Government Building	School	Community Center
Ferry Crossing	Proposed Government Building	Proposed School	Proposed Community Center
State Highway	Sheriff's Office	Park	Library
Local Roads	Fire Station	Inactive Park	Map Grid
Railroad	Solid Waste Facility	Proposed Park	
Canals			

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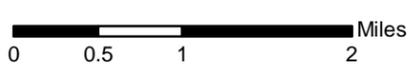


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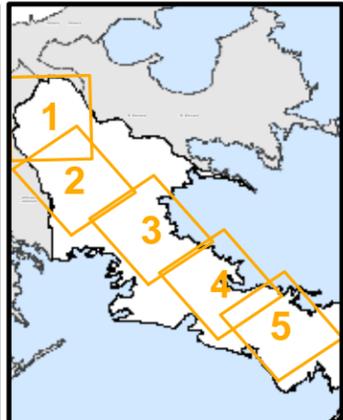
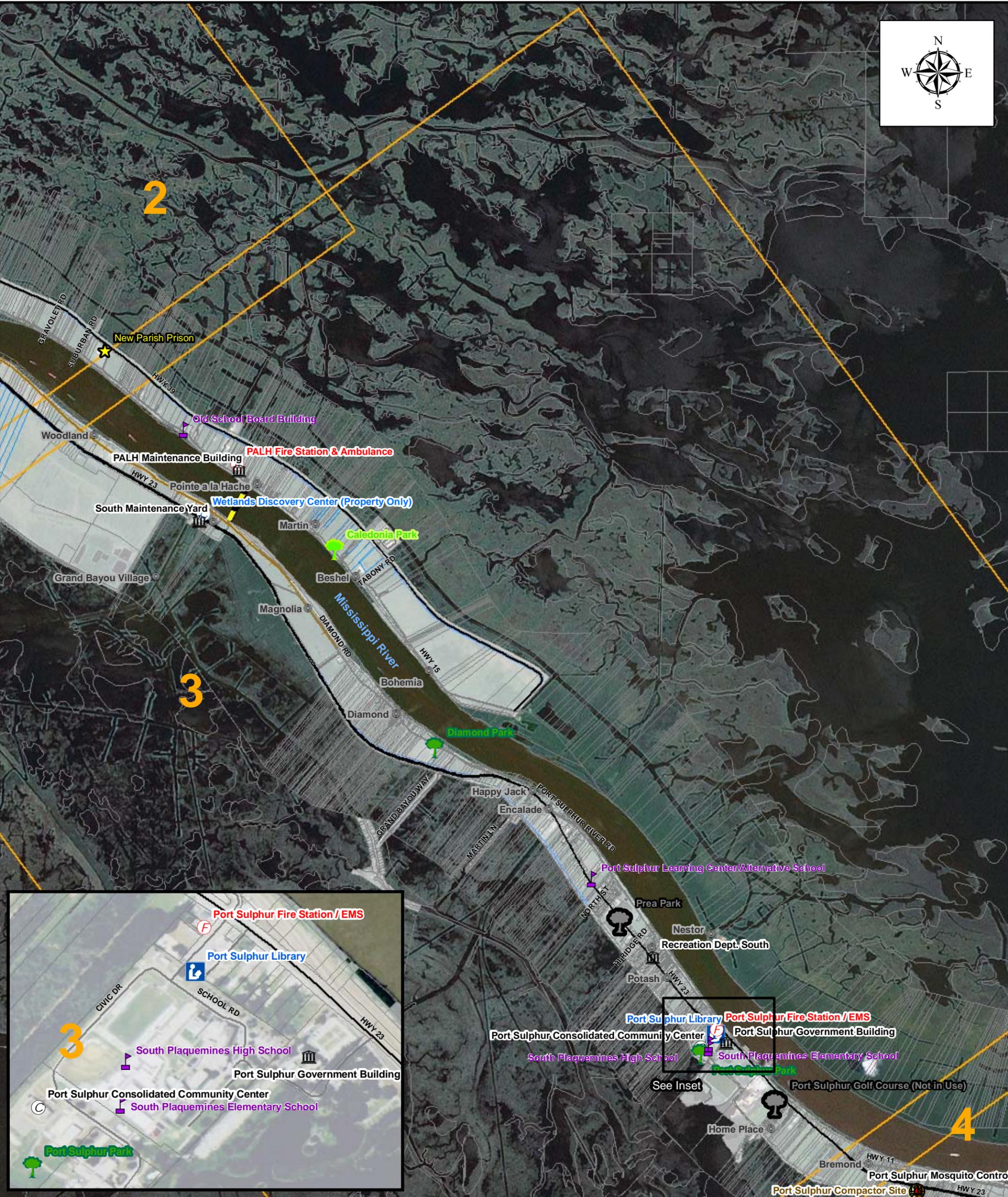
**Public Facilities & Recreation
Map No. 2**



Legend

- | | | | |
|----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Community | Government Building | School | Community Center |
| Ferry Crossing | Proposed Government Building | Proposed School | Proposed Community Center |
| State Highway | Sheriff's Office | Park | Library |
| Local Roads | Fire Station | Inactive Park | Map Grid |
| Railroad | Solid Waste Facility | Proposed Park | |
| Canals | | | |

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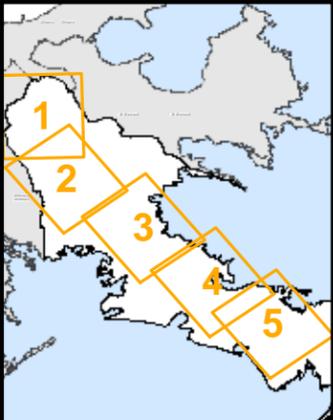
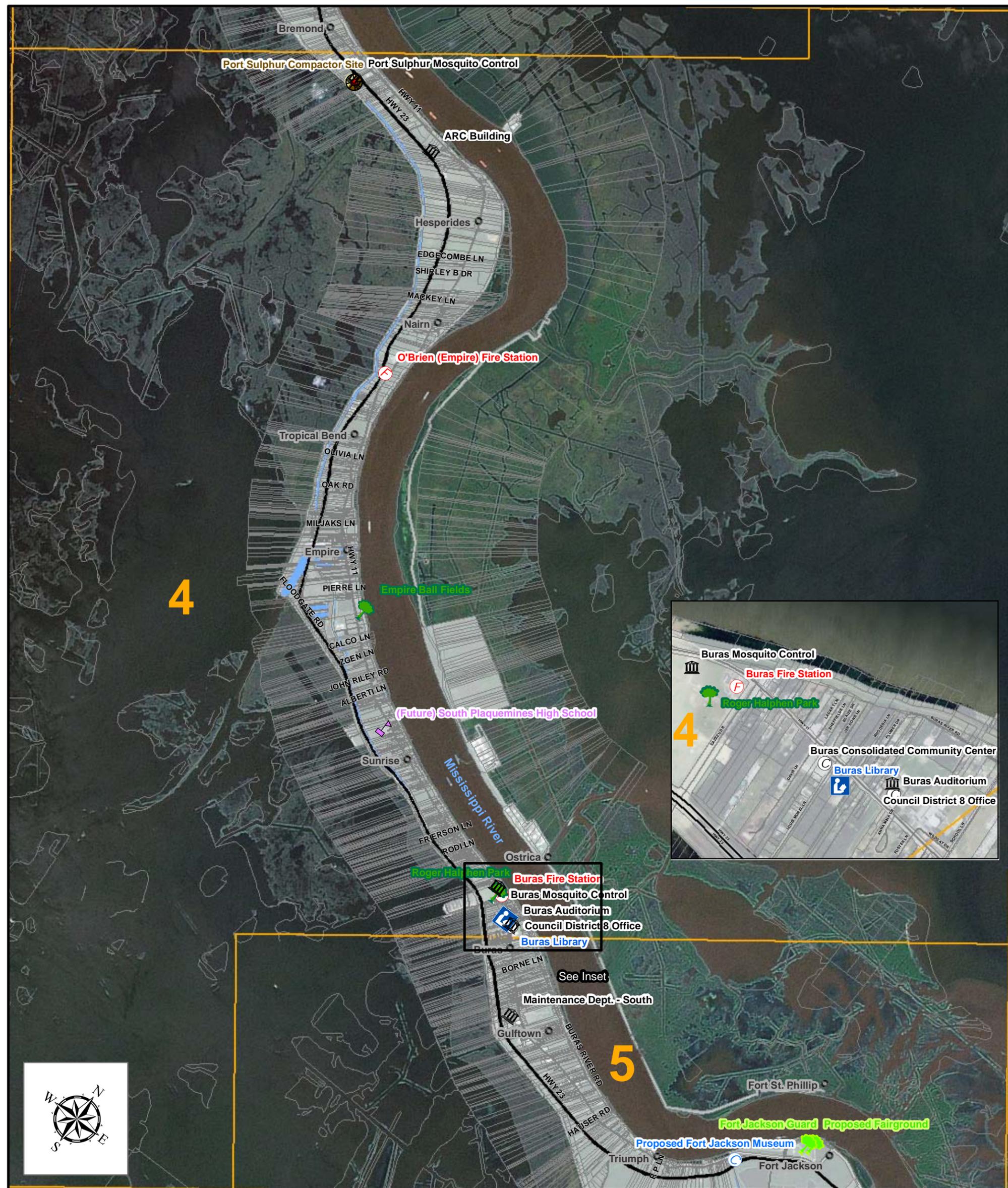
**Public Facilities & Recreation
Map No. 3**



Legend

- Community
- Ferry Crossing
- State Highway
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Canals
- Government Building
- Proposed Government Building
- Sherriff's Office
- Fire Station
- Solid Waste Facility
- School
- Proposed School
- Park
- Inactive Park
- Proposed Park
- Community Center
- Proposed Community Center
- Library
- Map Grid

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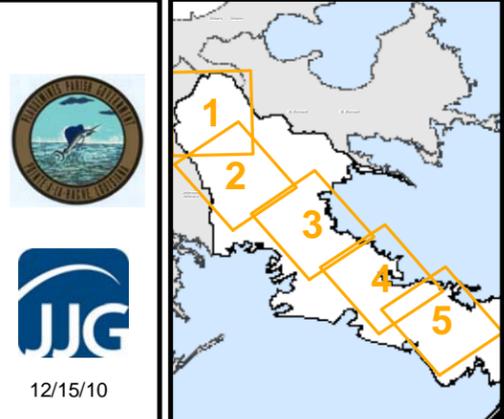
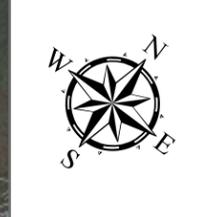
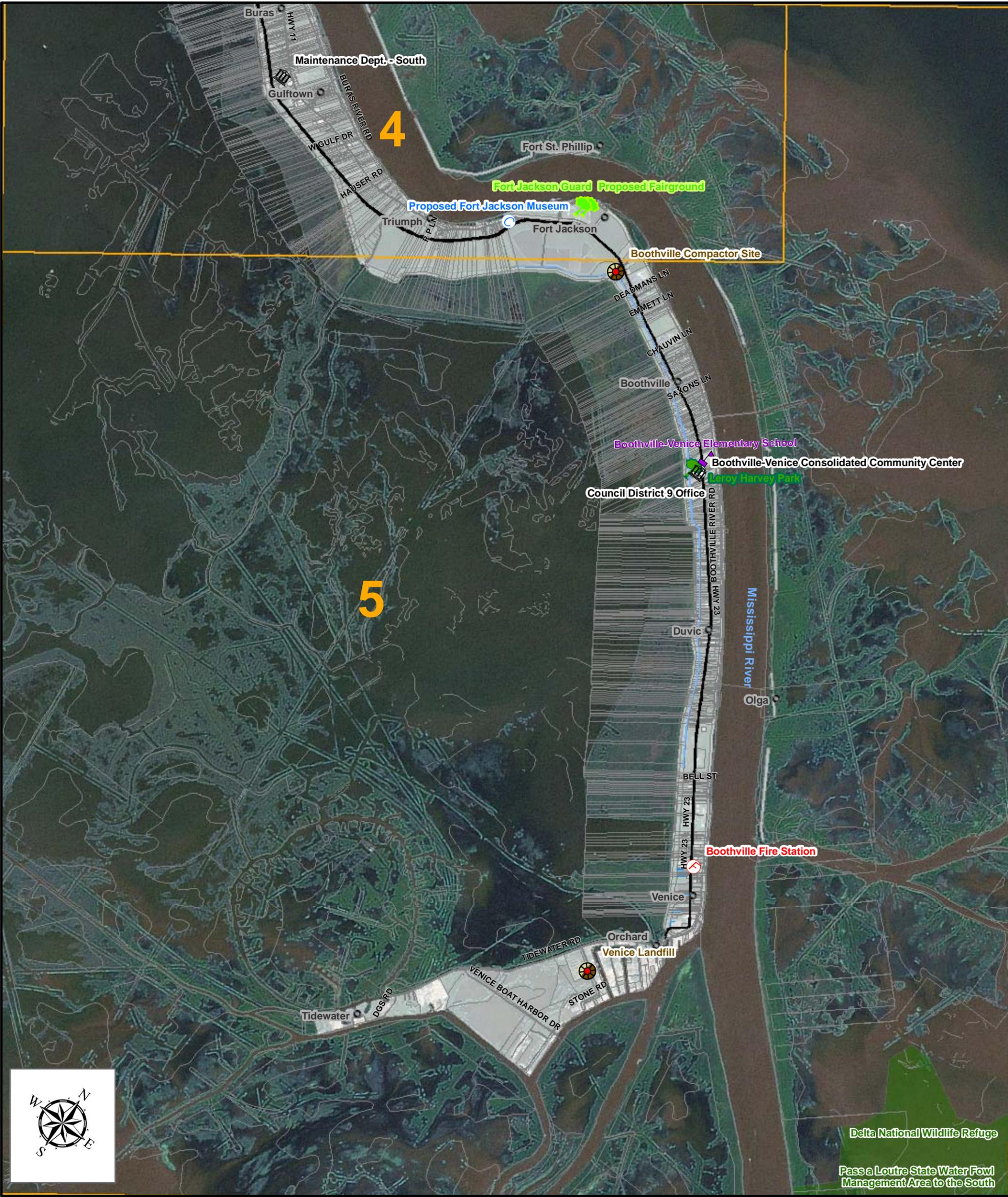
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Public Facilities & Recreation
Map No. 4

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Legend			
	Community		Government Building
	Ferry Crossing		Proposed Government Building
	State Highway		Sherriff's Office
	Local Roads		Fire Station
	Railroad		Solid Waste Facility
	Canals		School
			Proposed School
			Park
			Inactive Park
			Proposed Park
			Community Center
			Proposed Community Center
			Library
			Map Grid

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Comprehensive Master Plan
Plaquemines Parish,
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Public Facilities & Recreation
Map No. 5

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Legend			
	Community		Government Building
	Ferry Crossing		Proposed Government Building
	State Highway		Sherriff's Office
	Local Roads		Fire Station
	Railroad		Solid Waste Facility
	Canals		School
			Proposed School
			Park
			Inactive Park
			Proposed Park
			Community Center
			Proposed Community Center
			Library
			Map Grid

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