

B. Economic Development

Introduction

Throughout the Community Visioning Workshops held in conjunction with the Comprehensive Master Plan, Plaquemines Parish residents identified economic prosperity as the number two priority for the future, immediately behind coastal restoration. As such, economic development should continue to be a top priority of the Parish Government. Economic growth and development is an essential function of a healthy community: a strong industry base provides critical tax revenue for government services while reducing the tax burden on residents. In addition, economic development, when executed effectively, provides more job opportunities for residents, thereby reducing travel time to/from work, increasing quality of life, and minimizing congestion on regional roads – creating a more desirable place to live. Increasingly, economic development is defined as an activity that increases jobs and industry while maintaining or improving quality of life in a community without compromising its future – changing simple local economic development to sustainable local economic development.

This section considers the favorable strategies, steps, and policies that will achieve economic development goals already set forth by the Parish and other possible opportunities identified by regional and national trends and local characteristics. The section is divided into four parts:

- B.1 Economic Vision, Shifts, and Forecasts
- B.2 Targeted New and Existing Industries
- B.3 Role of Parish Infrastructure and Services in Economic Development
- B.4 Policy Recommendations and Action Items

The information contained within the Community Agenda is supported by an in-depth analysis of existing economic conditions in Plaquemines Parish explored in the Economic Development element of the Community Assessment. Because of this, this section focuses on the future – the Parish’s direction and path for its economic future.

Regional Context

As Plaquemines Parish plans for its future industry and job growth, it is critical that the Parish moves forward with a regional perspective. Plaquemines Parish resides within Regional Labor Market Area 1 (RLMA 1) as defined by the Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC). This area includes Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany Parishes. Plaquemines Parish is unique to the region in that it provides the gateway to the Gulf of Mexico via the Mississippi River. It plays a unique role in serving offshore oil and gas facilities, leading State numbers in commercial fishing and agriculture, and hosting the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base.

Regional Labor Markets
Local economies operate within larger labor markets, which are areas where people live and work in different jurisdictions within a region. Employers draw workers not only from the community in which they are located but from within adjacent jurisdictions.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

What is it, and why does it matter?

The Greater New Orleans region’s CEDS is the guiding strategic plan summarizing regional economic development investment priorities and U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration eligible projects. The CEDS is updated every five years with the last update occurring in 2009. The CEDS update is governed by the Southeast Louisiana Economic Development board and the Technical Advisory Committee. The CEDS provides an overview of the region’s major economic clusters and provides details on infrastructure projects of regional significance.

Recommendations for the future should consider regional trends and resources. As a part of this, Plaquemines Parish should play an active role in the Regional Planning Commission’s (RPC’s) regular updates to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to ensure project eligibility for U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) funds.

1. Economic Vision, Shifts and Forecasts

As the saying goes, you have to know where you are going before you can get there. This adage holds true for economic development. In order to achieve a more robust economy, Plaquemines Parish must identify desired areas of industry and job growth, as well as the infrastructure, services, and other resources necessary to make that anticipated and desirable growth a reality.

With a strong existing industry base and low unemployment compared to the State of Louisiana and national rates, the Parish is currently posed well for future growth.¹ However, even with this relative strength, the Parish will face challenges, including those “Drivers of Change” discussed in Section A Population and Demographics—most notably environmental conditions and the long-term impacts of the Deepwater Horizon Disaster.

a. Summary of Key Industries

The Parish’s current industry strengths include military (Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base [NAS JRB]) operations, manufacturing, transportation and warehousing (tied to shipping and port logistics), public administration, mining (oil and gas extraction), and construction.² Agriculture and fishing are also considered important industries; however, these industries are more difficult to monitor and evaluate because many workers are self-employed and, therefore, are not recorded (“non-covered”³) in the State’s employment numbers. Plaquemines Parish had an estimated 1,124 non-covered workers in 2009⁴ (7.3 percent of the total non-military employment), a large majority of which are likely working in agriculture and fishing.

The aforementioned industries are the core of Plaquemines Parish economy and their expansion and contraction will continue to impact the Parish’s economy, tax base, and quality

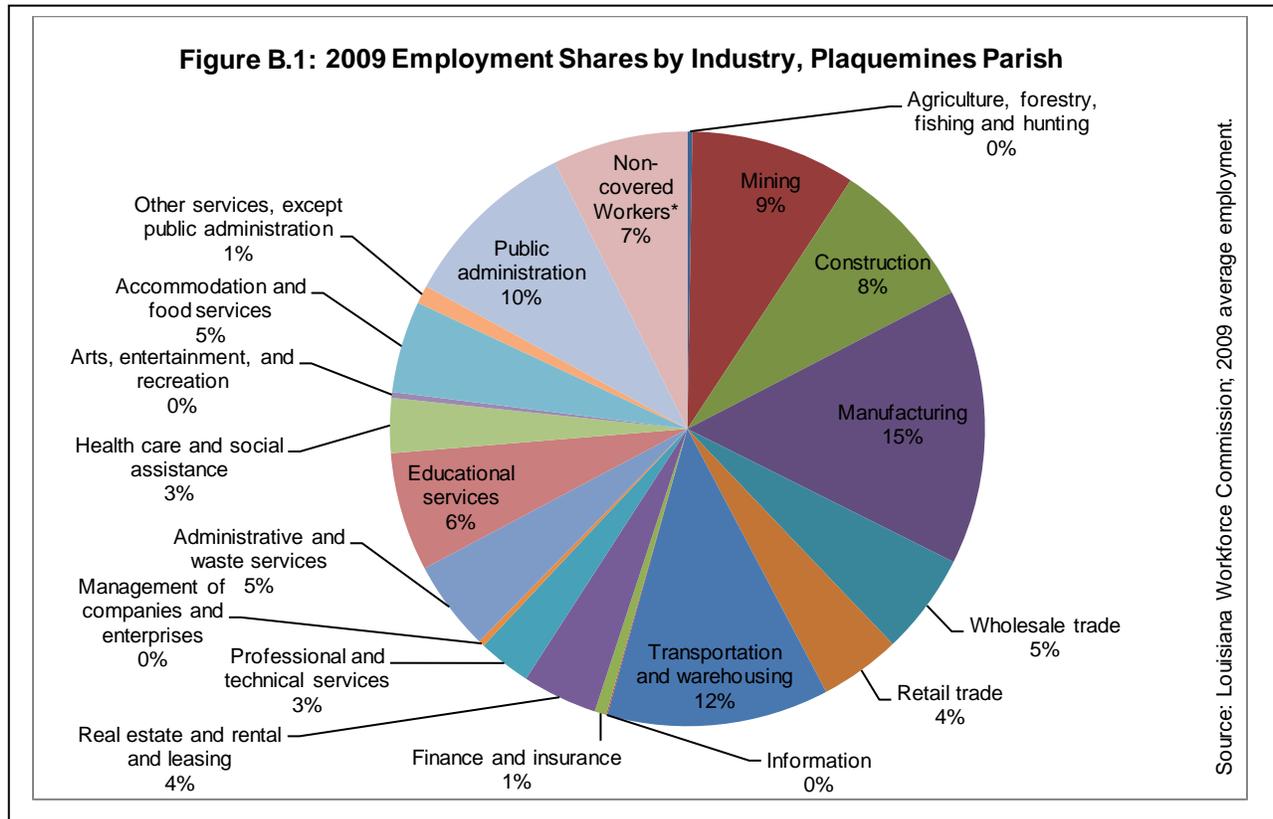
¹ See Section A Population and Demographics.

² See Economic Development Section of the Technical Appendix to the Community Assessment.

³ Non-covered workers are self-employed workers and non-paid family members who are not covered by the Louisiana Employment Security Law.

⁴ This estimate is based on the ratio of total non-covered workers to non-military workers in the region as estimated by the LWC for 2010.

of life in the future. A more detailed analysis of existing industry is provided in the Technical Appendix. See Table 3.1 of the Economic Development section for a location quotient analysis, comparing the Parish’s economic strengths in relation to the Regional Labor Market.



b. The Parish’s Plan

As a part of the Parish’s efforts to prepare for an enhanced and robust economy, the President’s Office recently produced the Nungesser Plan for Plaquemines Prosperity (P³). The Plan identifies target industries, economic development areas, and associated infrastructure needs and also includes an assessment of developable land. The Plan also explores future supporting needs, such as coastal restoration and marketing.

Target Industries

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

P³ focuses on ‘basic industries,’ which includes those services or products that are exported out of the Parish. Basic industries bring outside dollars into the local economy, thereby fueling other sectors of the economy and creating additional jobs (multiplier effect). Targeting basic industries is an effective strategy for instigating economic growth, rather than just sustaining the population and jobs that already exist.

Growing these targeted industries will generate a range of occupations to accommodate labor needs. In addition to creating more employment opportunities, these targeted and supporting industries will provide a critical increase in the Parish’s tax base (see the **Government Element**). The influx of supporting occupations would include higher paying positions (e.g. coastal and water management, renewable energy), as well as lower wage positions that will emerge from the Parish’s existing economic resources (e.g. tourism, agribusiness).

The Parish also identifies much of its existing jobs base as core economic development areas, which support the targeted industries.

Core Economic Development Areas

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

P³ will serve as an important guide for the Parish’s economic development strategy moving forward. With the addition of the community’s vision and the evaluation of the regional context, the Economic Development strategy of the Plaquemines Parish Comprehensive Master Plan builds upon the **P³** foundation. It ensures that economic development meets its purpose – improving the welfare and health of the community – by maintaining a jobs base that meets the existing population’s needs and goals, while also adapting strategies and policies to meet the necessities of a changing environment in order to increase the fiscal health and economic prosperity of Plaquemines Parish.

c. The Community’s Vision

As discussed in **Section A Population and Demographics**, community participants identified economic prosperity as being an integral component of its vision for the future. Residents that participated in visioning believed that the parish had a limited number of job opportunities. And while there was no clear consensus as to what types of jobs would be best for the Parish, community members indicated that their vision for the Parish’s future economy included a more diverse industry mix, better workforce training and attraction programs, and better utilization of the Parish’s existing industry base as a mechanism to grow associated industry clusters.

Some recommendations from the Community Visioning Phase of the CMP included the following:

- *Expand port facilities* – Port facilities are an economic strength that could be enhanced and developed to be more competitive with other area ports. Port expansion could lead to additional retail and commercial jobs.
- *Develop stronger industry clusters* – The example of oysters was provided in the community participation process. Currently, oysters are harvested in Plaquemines Parish then processed elsewhere. The processing could be done in Plaquemines Parish.
- *Grow the tourism industry* – Tourism was identified as an asset, particularly in the southern end of the Parish. Potential tourism strengths include sports fishing, Fort Jackson, eco-tourism (including the proposed Wetlands Discovery Center), cultural tourism, and recreational tourism.
- *Increase post K-12 educational/training opportunities* – Community members suggested that there is a missing link between the Parish’s outstanding K-12 school system and the local training/education needs available for graduating seniors. Community members believe that recent graduates tend to leave the Parish for employment opportunities and often do not return. These comments and perspectives indicate that the Parish should work to develop programs and incentives that retain the Parish’s youth and attracts others. Vocational and technical training may be ideal, but establishing a new school may not a viable short-term option due to competing schools and programs in adjacent parishes. As such, other strategies should be explored.

d. Economic Shifts

The Louisiana Workforce Commission (LWC) recently completed a critical analysis of Louisiana’s economy, projected likely changes in industry sectors, and evaluated future employment growth possibilities. The LWC projections forecast that employment in the New Orleans region will grow at a relatively slow pace from 2008 to 2018. During this period, statewide employment is expected to grow by 8 percent, whereas employment in the New Orleans region is expected to grow by just 3.1 percent. This is the second lowest employment growth projection of the eight labor markets in the State.

Methodology for LWC Employment Projections

The projections were developed using a baseline statistical model that considers historic data and then incorporates input from driver firms in the Louisiana economy, input from regional business meetings (including private sector, economic development, and workforce professionals), and information on economic development projects and major announcements. The projections incorporate the impacts of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita but do not capture the impact of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, which will be captured in the next round of projections.

The projections do not provide detailed numbers at the parish level due to confidentiality and reasons discussed in the Introduction to this section; however, it can be anticipated that Plaquemines’ industries will grow at the same rate as projected for the region as a whole. **Table B.1** outlines Plaquemines’ projected population growth by sector by applying the regional projected percent change in jobs to Plaquemines’ 2009 employment numbers.

Table B.1: Impact of Projected Regional Employment Changes to Plaquemines Parish

Industry	Workers 2009	% of Total	Projected % Change in Jobs 2008-2018*	Change in Jobs	Annual Average Change
Total	15,291	100.0%	-7.0%	-1067	-106.7
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	41	0.3%	-11.1%	-5	-0.5
Mining	1,373	9.0%	-22.1%	-303	-30.3
Construction	1,247	8.2%	-11.4%	-142	-14.2
Manufacturing	2,291	15.0%	-8.6%	-197	-19.7
Wholesale trade	840	5.5%	2.6%	22	2.2
Retail trade	672	4.4%	-0.9%	-6	-0.6
Transportation and warehousing	1,845	12.1%	-3.9%	-72	-7.2
Information	9	0.1%	-65.3%	-6	-0.6
Finance and insurance	98	0.6%	85.1%	83	8.3
Real estate and rental and leasing	624	4.1%	-128.4%	-801	-80.1
Professional and technical services	440	2.9%	17.7%	78	7.8
Management of companies and enterprises	50	0.3%	1.3%	1	0.1
Administrative and waste services	750	4.9%	-8.8%	-66	-6.6
Educational services	988	6.5%	10.8%	106	10.6
Health care and social assistance	455	3.0%	18.5%	84	8.4
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	48	0.3%	1.4%	1	0.1
Accommodation and food services	763	5.0%	13.9%	106	10.6
Other services, except public administration	151	1.0%	5.5%	8	0.8
Public administration	1,482	9.7%	4.7%	69	6.9
Non-covered Workers*	1,124	7.3%	-2.5%	-28	-2.8

*Louisiana Workforce Commission 2008-2018 RLMA1 Projected Employment by Industry.

During this 10-year time frame, the following projected regional trends are most relevant to Plaquemines Parish’s core industries:

- 8.6 percent decline in manufacturing jobs
- 11.4 percent decline in construction jobs
- 11.1 percent decline in agriculture, forestry, fishing, & hunting jobs
- 3.9 percent decline in transportation and warehousing
- 2.5 percent decline in self-employed (non-covered) employers

These numbers imply that without new employment, expansion announcements, or other innovative economic development initiatives led by the Parish, some of Plaquemines’ top industries are likely to see a notable reduction in jobs. These projections, in part, are a function of a suppressed market and the continuing shift to a primarily information-based economy. Despite these negative forecasts, job growth is expected in arts, entertainment, & recreation, professional and technical services, and public administration.

e. Other Important Influences

Aside from historic trends, known economic development projects, and likely changes in the broader economy, other influences will impact industry growth in Plaquemines Parish . The most noteworthy of these factors are the Deepwater Horizon Disaster, coastal restoration initiatives, the widening of the Panama Canal, changes in shipping/transportation channels, and changes in the energy economy and oil/gas policy.

Deepwater Horizon Disaster

The Deepwater Horizon Disaster is likely to have important impacts on Plaquemines’ economy. The oil spill, which began on April 20, 2010 with the Deepwater Horizon rig explosion and ended with the July 15, 2010 capping of the well, is estimated to have dumped some 4.9 million barrels of crude oil into the Gulf of Mexico. Negative impacts to the economy include adverse impacts on commercial and recreational fisherman, a decline in ecotourism, harmful shocks to coastal vegetation (critical to protecting coastal area business investments), increased offshore oil rig regulation, and negative impacts to the coastal Louisiana brand (likely to adversely affect tourism for years to come).

Industries experiencing immediate impacts from the Deepwater Horizon Disaster include the commercial fishing industry, tourism (particularly fishing and ecotourism), oil and gas, and ports and logistics. Several fishing, shrimping, and oyster operations were closed due to contamination concerns. Many areas of the Gulf of Mexico, particularly near Plaquemines Parish, were closed to commercial fishing beginning on May 2, 2010 and extending in some cases through November 15, 2010. At the time of this report, certain areas of the Gulf, particularly those around the Deepwater Horizon wellhead explosion, were still closed to fishing.⁵ These setbacks increased unemployment rates, forced the relocation of local workers, reduced tax revenues, decreased disposable income in the region, and stymied overall growth.

In the long term, Horizon oil spill will likely negatively impact investment rates in the area. Coastal protection and restoration, in particular, is critical to protecting the region’s

Greater Resiliency

Hurricane Katrina (2005) and the Deepwater Horizon Disaster (2010) highlighted the important influences of such events on the Parish’s key industries. These events, while largely uncontrollable, provide key guidance on steps the Parish should take to increase the resiliency of its base economy and targeted growth industries in the future. Economic development success in Plaquemines Parish will be a consequence of multiple factors:

- Safe investment environment
- Land appropriately prepared for development in conformity with the parish’s Comprehensive Master Plan, zoning and development regulations.
- Adequate and efficient transportation system
- Sufficient infrastructure, including water, sewer, and broadband
- Workforce readiness

⁵ U.S. Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. 24 November 2010. “NOAA Closes 4,200 Square Miles of Gulf Waters to Royal Red Shrimping.” Accessed at <http://www.noaaneews.noaa.gov/stories2010/20101124_closing.html>

investments and is likely to experience notable impacts from encroaching oil from the Deepwater Horizon Disaster. At the time of this report, the International Economic Development Council and other agencies were performing studies to address economic recovery for southern Louisiana in response to the Deepwater Horizon Disaster. In September 2010, the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration announced additional planning and technical assistance to states affected by the oil spill. Plaquemines Parish should pursue these and future funding streams to help mitigate the impacts of the oil spill.

Coastal Restoration Initiatives

As discussed in **Section E Coastal Protection and Restoration**, the effectiveness of coastal restoration efforts will be critical to economic development in Plaquemines Parish in the long-term. Coastal restoration protects the coast from seasonal storms and minimizes risk imposed on private and public investments. Major new investments in the economy and infrastructure are unlikely to be implemented if they are not protected from future disasters such as Hurricane Katrina.

Changes in Shipping/Transportation Channels

As discussed in the Technical Appendix, the expansion of the Panama Canal will channel additional activity to ports in the southeastern United States. The \$5.25 billion expansion project will double the Panama Canal's capacity and allow more traffic and larger, deeper-draft ships. Targeted local and regional initiatives to capture a portion of this growth will likely lead to positive impacts on industry and job growth for Plaquemines. The Parish is actively coordinating with public and private partners to facilitate such initiatives, including the dredging of Baptiste Collette and expansion of the Plaquemines port facilities.

Changes in the Energy Economy and Oil/Gas Policy

From a broader perspective, changes in the energy economy and oil/gas policy will shape growth in the Parish. Two phenomena are currently unfolding: (1) people and policies are beginning to move in the direction of a sustainable energy economy and away from crude oil, and (2) a decreasing oil supply is encouraging the Federal Government to permit drilling for oil in areas it has not previously permitted drilling. Because the Plaquemines Parish economy is heavily tied to oil and gas mining and associated industries, it is important that the Parish identify ways to both (1) increase its resiliency in light of the declining oil supply and (2) position itself to service potential new mining activities in the waters of the Eastern Gulf of Mexico. Proper positioning for both can help mitigate the impacts of projected market and policy changes.

Pervasive Impacts of Water

Water serves as a critical link between Plaquemines Parish and many of its core industries, including oil and gas extraction, the NAS JRB, commercial and recreational fishing, exporting of coal, and transportation and logistics. The Gulf of Mexico and the Mississippi River are also two resources that add to the area's quality of life and unique sense of character. Moving forward, water will continue to play an important role in new and old industries and will continue to

influence residents choosing to locate in Plaquemines. The policies that the Parish and Federal and State partners make to ensure access, protection from, and exploration of these waters will help grow existing and future industries.

f. Economic Forecasts

Three economic growth scenarios have been developed for Plaquemines Parish. These three scenarios provide for a low, medium, and high employment growth scenario.

Regional Growth Share Employment Growth Model

The two regional growth share scenarios provided in **Table B.3** (low and medium non-military employment growth) are developed by comparing the historic share of jobs in Plaquemines Parish to total jobs in the New Orleans regional labor market (using 1990, 2000, and 2009 data). Over this period, Plaquemines had had an average 2.8 percent share of the regional non-military employment. See **Table B.2**.

Table B.2: Historic Regional Employment Shares of Parishes in New Orleans Area (Non Military employment)

	Plaquemines	Jefferson	Orleans	St. Bernard	RLMA 1
2009 Employ Avg	14,404	194,529	168,587	9,852	509,723
% of RLMA1	2.8%	38.2%	33.1%	1.9%	100.0%
2000 Employ Avg	16,703	214,647	263,536	16,029	608,542
% of RLMA1	2.7%	35.3%	43.3%	2.6%	100.0%
1990 Employ Avg	15,923	180,370	268,306	12,619	548,978
% of RLMA1	2.9%	32.9%	48.9%	2.3%	100.0%
Average %	2.8%	35.4%	41.8%	2.3%	100.0%

The 2.8 percent share was applied to LWC regional employment projections to develop a low employment growth scenario. The low employment growth scenario anticipates 7.4 percent increase in non-military jobs from between 2010 and 2030. The second, medium growth scenario, assumes that Plaquemines Parish increases its share of regional employment to 3.5 percent by 2018, at which point it continues to capture 3.5 percent of regional employment through 2030. This scenario anticipates a 9.1 percent increase in non-military jobs from 2010 to 2030.

**Table B.3: Non Military Employment Projections , Regional Growth Share Model
Plaquemines Parish**

	2008	2009	2010	2015	2018	2020	2025	2030
Unmodified RLMA1*	560,206	561,924	563,642	565,360	577,386			
Low Growth Scenario (2.8%)	15,613	15,528	15,528	15,950	16,094	16,190	16,431	16,671
Medium Growth Scenario (3.5%)	15,613	15,528	15,528	15,998	16,214	16,335	16,635	16,936
High growth rate % of regional jobs	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.032	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035
Regional Job Growth Increase per Yr	1,718							

*Regional Labor Market includes all parishes in the LWC's RLMA 1: Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James, St. John the Baptist, & St. Tammany.
Estimates for 2019-2030 were developed by assuming the region experiences the same annual job increase as applied for 2008-2018.

Local Employment Growth Model (High Employment Growth)

The third, locally driven employment growth model is developed by considering forecasted regional changes in industry sectors and likely changes in the local economy, which will increase employment growth over time. The cumulative impacts of each of these influences on local employment growth are reflected in **Table B.4**.

Table B.4: Employment Projections - Local Model, Plaquemines Parish

Employment Driver	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Non-military - RegEmployGrowth*	15,077	14,544	14,363	14,719	15,083
NAS JRB Employment	7,100	7,100	7,100	7,100	7,100
NAS JRB Expansion Employment		2,425	2,425	2,425	2,425
NAS JRB Exp Indirect Jobs		146	146	146	146
AMAX Port Construction (APC)		1050			
APC Indirect Jobs		700			
AMAX Port Operations (APO)			630	630	630
APO Indirect Jobs			350	350	350
Citrus II Port Construction (CPC)			1,000		
CPC Indirect Jobs			667		
Citrus II Port Operations (CPO)				900	900
CPO Indirect Jobs				650	650
Total Jobs	22,177	25,964	26,680	26,269	26,633
Total Non-military Jobs	15,077	16,439	17,155	17,394	17,758

*Non-military regular employment growth based on 2008-2018 Louisiana Workforce Commission's employment projections. 2019-2031 non military employment growth assumes the annual rate of non-military employment growth experienced by the Parish between 1990 and 2000 (0.48%).

Employment Drivers for Local Employment Growth Model

Below is a brief description of each employment driver. These employment drivers are discussed in more detail under Section A.3 Targeted Industries.

Non-military Regular Employment Growth – The projected regional growth trends for each sector of the economy (see **Table B.1**) are applied to Plaquemines Parish base employment numbers for each sector for 2011-2018. Because there is a projected decline in many of Plaquemines key sectors through 2018, the projections show a small decline in regular employment growth during this period. From 2018 to 2030, it is assumed that Plaquemines will have replaced some of these declining sectors with new jobs in other sectors; the annual rate of non-military employment growth experienced by the Parish between 1990 and 2000 (0.48%) is applied to these years. It is important to point out that some of the decline in employment numbers is considered an outcome of increased business efficiency and improved technology, rather than loss of industry.

NAS JRB Expansion – The employment of the NAS JRB is projected to increase by 2,425 employees in 2011. This expansion is seen as a constant increase to the Base's employment through the planning horizon. In addition, it is assumed that there will be some increase in indirect jobs (notably services in the northern area of the Parish) to accommodate the new employees. Forecasts estimate that an additional 146 indirect jobs will be created in the Parish as the result of the NAS JRB expansion. This growth is applied at a constant rate across the planning period.

Port Projects – The Parish is actively seeking the expansion and growth of its port facilities. To account for potential growth, two possible port projects and their potential direct and indirect employment impacts are added to the projection. These projections anticipate AMAX port construction to occur from 2014 to 2015 and, once in operation beginning in 2016, to produce 630 and 350 direct and indirect jobs, respectively. These projections also anticipate Citrus II port construction occurring between 2020 and 2022 and to produce 900 direct and 650 indirect jobs once in operation in 2023. It is important to emphasize that neither of these projects is definite; rather, they are placeholders for a range of port investments that could occur in Plaquemines Parish in coming years. They are incorporated here to help project changes in employment that could result from port development and expansion. While some expansion could be expected at existing facilities, it is estimated that newly created jobs will replace jobs that were eliminated due to such influences as the oil spill or competition with adjacent port facilities.

2. Targeted New & Existing Industries

A forward-thinking approach to sustaining and building the Plaquemines Parish economy will require an economic development approach that nurtures and grows existing industries while developing the right services, facilities, incentives, and prepared labor force to target desirable new sectors to the Parish. **Map 3.1 Current Economic Resources** (see Economic Development section of Technical Appendix to the Community Assessment) provides a review of existing economic resources in Plaquemines Parish, including major employees, transportation facilities, historic resources, and environmental attractions of regional or national significance. Map 3.1,

along with the analysis of existing conditions and future economic trends provided in the Technical Appendix, summarizes the base economic scenario in Plaquemines Parish.

In addition to those industries analyzed previously, the Parish is also targeting the following industries for future growth:⁶

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

Plaquemines Parish either (1) already has a competitive advantage in each of these industries or (2) is in the process of developing strategies and appropriate capital investments to support the growth of these sectors. The growth of these industries is supported by a plan developed by the Parish President's office: *P³: The Nungesser Plan for Plaquemines Prosperity*, as discussed in Section A.1. To grow each of these existing and targeted industries, it is prudent that the Parish develop a keen understanding of the needs of each these sectors and key industries as the planning process moves forward. Each of these base and targeted industries and their existing and/or likely future required needs, particularly those needs that are generally publicly supported, is described below. **Map B-1 Economic Investment Map** illustrates the cumulative locations of both existing and proposed economic investments, including related infrastructure improvements identified in **Section B.2**. Inset maps of the Belle Chasse, Pointe a la Hache, and the Venice Port Complex are provided on the following pages.

a. Military – NAS JRB Expansion

As discussed in the Community Assessment, the NAS JRB plays a very important role in the Parish and in the State of Louisiana as a whole—and expansion of the NAS JRB will continue to play an important role in the Parish's future. Among other improvements, the NAS JRB is building a new 102,600 square foot Navy Exchange (NEX) and Commissary. This will have two notable impacts to the Plaquemines Parish economy: additional job opportunities (captured by the high growth employment scenario, see **Table B.4**) and additional traffic on West Bank roads. While the additional jobs are a benefit of the expansion, the additional traffic could inhibit other Parish growth if not supported adequately by improvements to the Parish's road network, such as the Peters Road Bypass and other projects discussed in more detail under **Section B.4.b Role of Transportation System**.

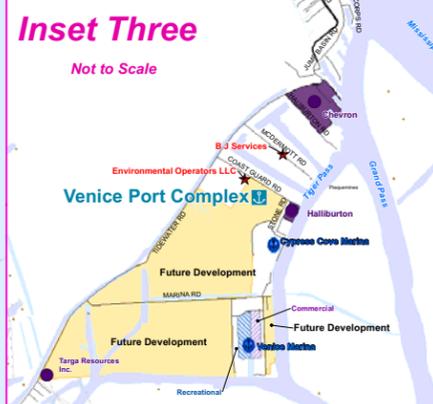
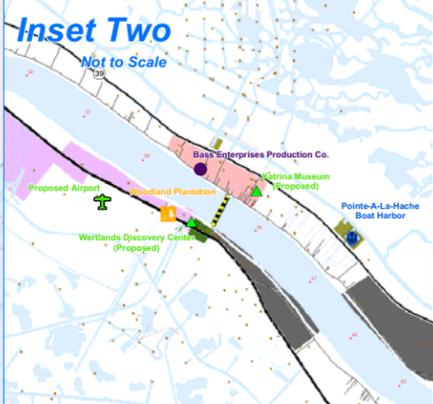
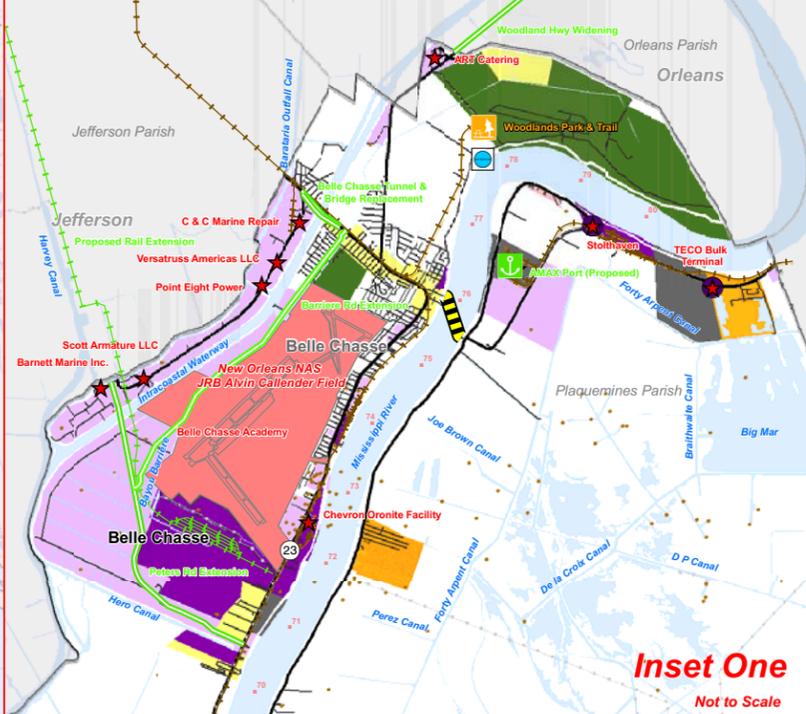
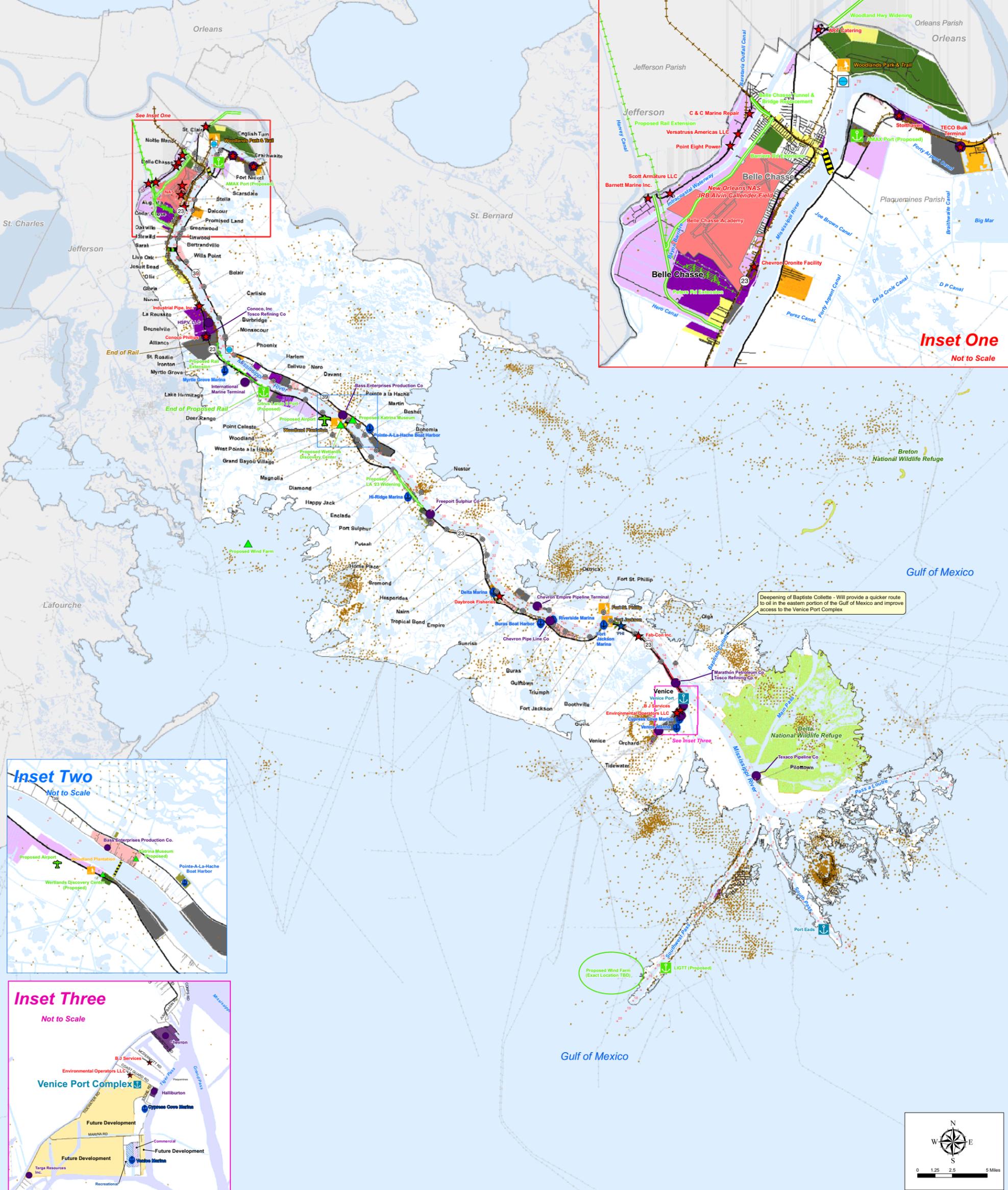
Currently, the NAS JRB is one of the top employers in the state and its recently completed Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) identifies important steps to be taken by both the Parish and the NAS JRB to insure the base's long-term viability in Plaquemines. Most of these considerations are discussed in the **Section I Land Use** and involve limiting growth around the base due to noise

⁶ See previous discussion of *P³* strategy (**Section B.1.b**)

level and other combat simulations that require a buffer between the base and other development. The Future Land Use Plan identifies business parks and major industries as appropriate future land uses around the Base, which would serve the Base's needs without creating conflict with its operations.

Located in the northeast segment of the Parish, the NAS JRB is the most significant land use in the Belle Chasse area. As a result of the increased base activity, there are potential multiplier effects for the Parish. Increased road capacity, once implemented, may attract additional residents, shops, and services (as accounted for in the high employment growth scenario).

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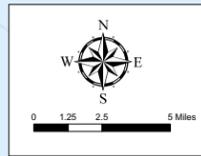


**Comprehensive Master Plan
Plaquemines Parish,
Louisiana**

Economic Investment Map

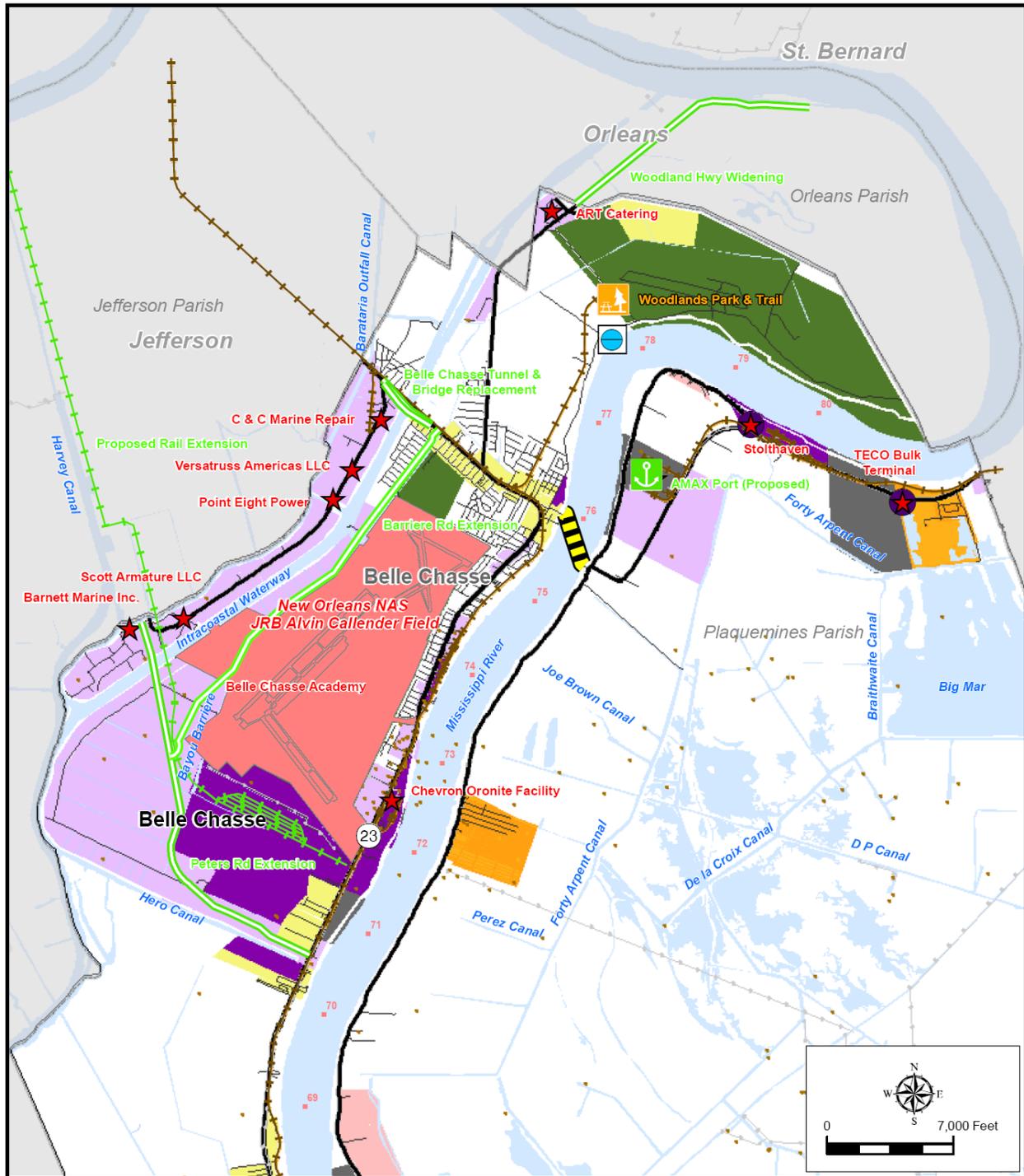
January 13, 2011

Legend (Shoreline of Map is Pre-Katrina)		Future Land Use Classification	
— State Highway	★ Major Employer	● Oil & Gas Well	■ Business Park
— Local Road	★ Growing Employer	— Oil & Gas Pipeline	■ Major Industries
— Proposed Transportation Improvement	● Major Terminal	● River Mile Marker	■ Institutional Complex
— Railroad	▲ Proposed Facility	■ Nat'l Wildlife Refuge	■ Marine Commercial Corridor
— Proposed Railroad	⚓ Port	■ Marina/Harbor Complex	■ Port/Terminal Complex
— Ferry Crossing	⚓ Proposed Port	■ Naval Air Station	■ Rural Community Center
— Proposed Ferry Crossing	⚓ Tourist Attraction	⚓ Hydro Turbine Facilities	■ Small Community Mixed Use
● Communities	⚓ Marina	⚓ Proposed Airport	■ Suburban Mixed Use



Back of map

Map B.2





Comprehensive Master Plan
Plaquemines Parish,
Louisiana

Economic Investment Map
Belle Chasse

January 14, 2011

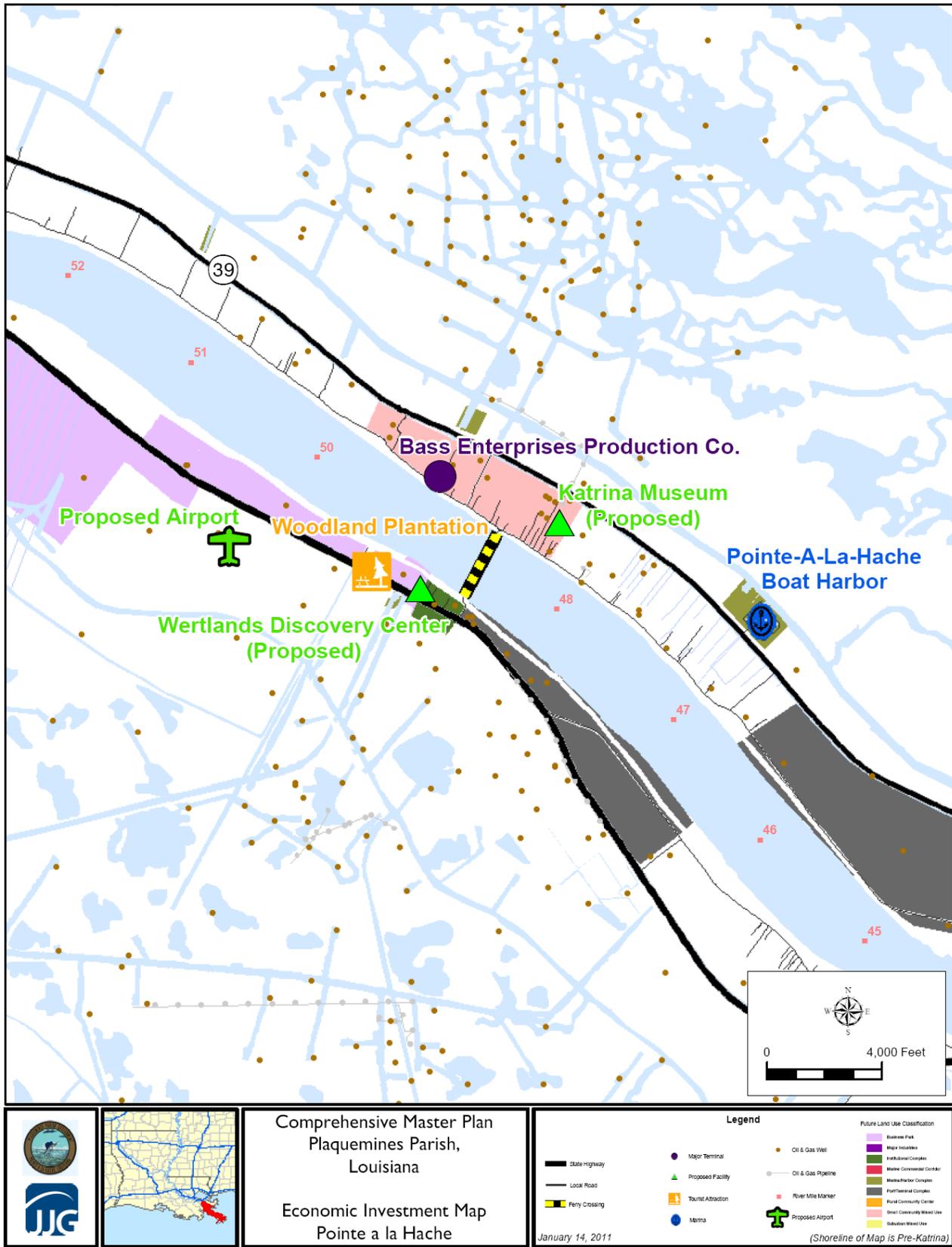


Legend

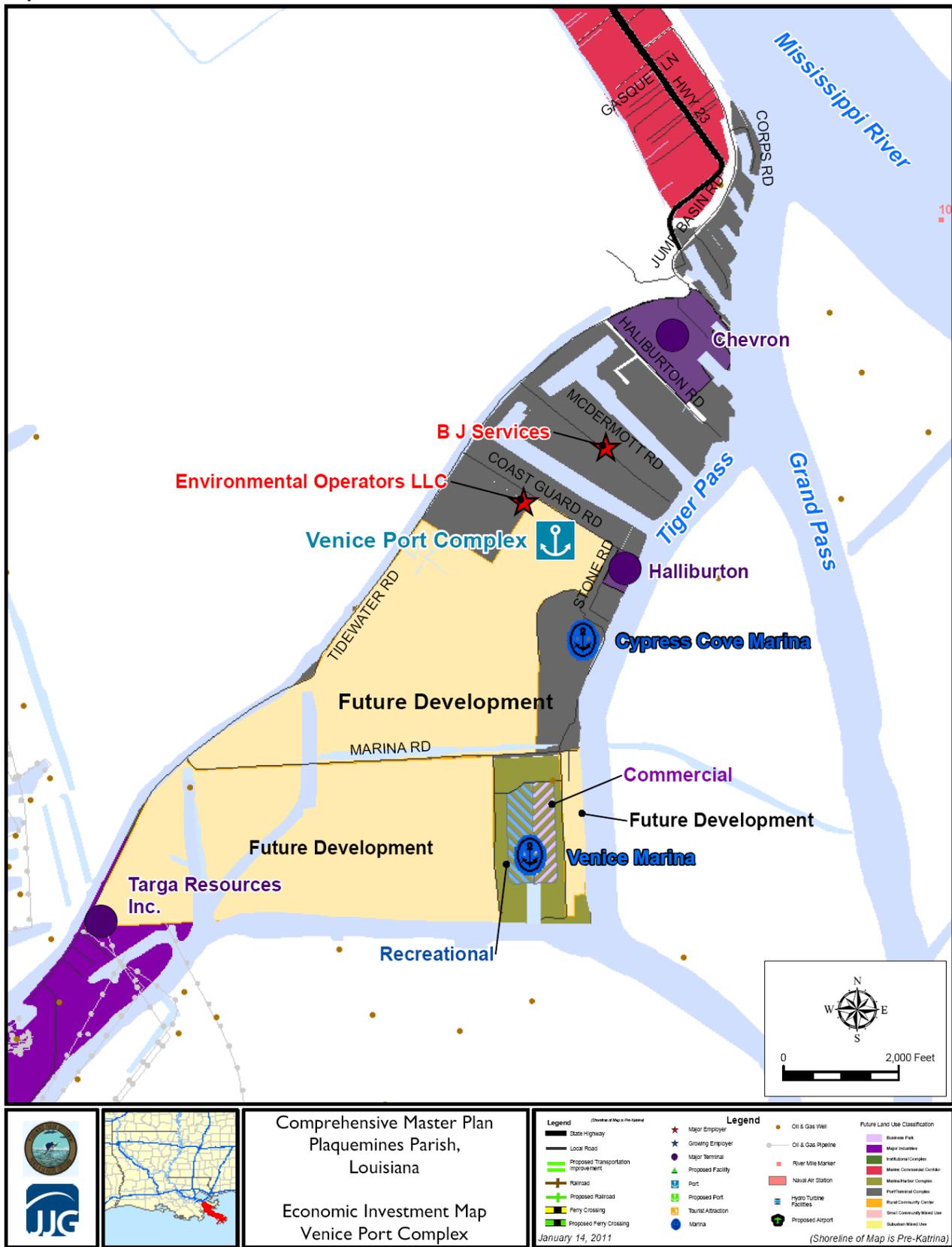
State Highway	Major Employer	Oil & Gas Well	Future Land Use Classification: Business Park
Local Road	Major Terminal	Oil & Gas Pipeline	Institutional Complex
Proposed Transportation Improvement	Proposed Port	River Mile Marker	Marine Commercial Corridor
Railroad	Hydro Turbine Facilities	Naval Air Station	Marina/Harbor Complex
Proposed Railroad	Tourist Attraction	Port/Terminal Complex	Rural Community Center
Ferry Crossing		Small Community Mixed Use	Suburban Mixed Use
Proposed Ferry Crossing			

(Shoreline of Map is Pre-Katrina)

Map B.3



Map B.4



b. Transportation and Logistics Industries

Given its location at the mouth of the Mississippi, Plaquemines Parish has historically been involved in transportation and logistics industries, particularly those businesses transporting goods or services in and out of the Gulf of Mexico. Improving intermodal connections among new port facilities, rail, and roads will be critical in achieving the desired impact of port investments, particularly in areas south of Belle Chasse.

Ports

The Parish is in the process of completing an in-depth port study that is anticipated to include recommended targeted port investments. Three desirable opportunities for investment include the following:

1. AMAX Port Development: Terminal Concept

The AMAX port project represents an opportunity to expand the Parish's port facilities in the short-term. The AMAX site is located on the East Bank of the Parish just north of the current ferry location. Port development on this site would require some environmental and brownfield remediation; however, even with the necessary remediation efforts, the project is anticipated to require only a two-year construction period. Development of this port would likely consist of "market-driven terminal operations." See **Table B.4** for forecasted direct and indirect job growth associated with this project.

2. Citrus II: Container Terminal Concept

Citrus II is a new facility proposed for the area just south of the International Marine Terminal on the West Bank of the Parish. In order to be actualized, this project would require southward extension of the railroad and levee protection. Key components of this project could include the following:

- Phase 1A – two berth marine container terminal project
- Phase 1B – development of an adjacent "on-dock" intermodal rail terminal project

3. Venice Port Expansion

The Venice Port facility is the most established port facility in the Parish. It provides close access to offshore oil facilities and is well-positioned to play a role in ongoing oil spill remediation efforts and coastal restoration needs. Expansion opportunities for existing industries include:

1. Upstream exploration and production supply and support service industries
2. Commercial sports fishing industries
3. Ecotourism industry
4. Oil-spill response center

Needs to sustain Venice as a major support and supply base for the Gulf region include:

1. Long-term service and infrastructure needs for off-shore support

2. Assessment of needs as a result of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill
3. Confirmation of dredging of Baptiste Collette, Tiger Pass, and Grand Pass
4. Continued support and promotion of Venice by the State of Louisiana as one of the two major exploration and support bases for gas and oil in Southern Louisiana

Other key factors critical to Venice’s future include the following:

- Hospitality infrastructure
- Inclusion of tourism sectors of sports fishing, bird hunting, and eco-tourism in port development planning
- Consideration of commercial fishing needs in investments and enhancement for the port

Louisiana International Deep Water Gulf Transfer Terminal

There has also been strong state-led political will to develop a Louisiana International Deep Water Gulf Transfer Terminal (LIGTT). The Louisiana State Legislature appointed a LIGTT Authority in 2008. The Authority’s mission is to position Louisiana as “an international hub for cargo ships by promoting, planning, financing, developing, constructing, operating, maintaining, and modifying deep water terminal and intermodal facilities to be constructed in Plaquemines Parish.”⁷ If constructed, the terminal would allow for deepwater transfer of container cargo off the coast of Plaquemines Parish and would meet demand for deep water transfer points for larger vessels. Although this proposed facility is highly discussed, at the time of this Comprehensive Plan, there is not yet an implementation plan or dedicated financing stream for such an investment. If actualized, this port facility would provide increased international trade connections between Plaquemines Parish and the rest of the world, bringing additional jobs and economic investment to the Parish.

c. Industries Promoting Green Jobs & Renewable Energy

The Parish is proactively pursuing and engaging investment ideas for renewable energy. Renewable energy can occur within a site-by-site role in the Parish (e.g. solar panels on homes, geothermal heating), or can become a larger economic development driver, influencing the Parish’s power grid, carbon emissions, quality of life, and industry base. Making a step forward in alternative energy will provide the Parish with an economic advantage as federal and state governments consider incentivizing or mandating the use of renewable energy. Listed below are some noteworthy starter projects, possible initiatives, resources, and possible challenges that should be considered by the Parish as it

Green Jobs & Renewable Energy
The BIG Picture
 Renewable energy and green jobs are increasingly considered important elements to the nation’s recovery from the recession (December 2007 to June 2009) and sustained sluggish economy (ongoing into 2011). They represent growing components of the national economy, which will have increasing influence in the years to come. Developing an economy fueled by renewable energy is a first step in preparing for the day when oil and gas are no longer king. Pursuing industries that promote green jobs is a next step for capitalizing on the growing green sector of the national economy.

⁷ Louisiana State Senate. “Governor Bobby Jindal Announces Appointments to the Louisiana International Deep Water Gulf Transfer Terminal Authority” accessed at <<http://senate.legis.state.la.us/crowe/default.asp>>

works to increase renewable energy and grow green jobs as a part of its economic foundation.

Current and Possible Projects within and near Plaquemines Parish

The Parish and its partners have (1) been approached by private investors to pursue alternative energy programs and (2) have begun investigating alternative energy programs. Below is a list of existing or possible projects within or in close proximity to Plaquemines Parish:

- NAS JRB future use of hydrokinetic power in the Mississippi River; Base has mandate to reduce energy consumption by three to five percent per year until 2015 and is already slated to test this new technology.
- Plaquemines Parish Government is pursuing possible partnerships with wind farm investors (Wind Energy Systems Technology [W.E.S.T.]) for projects in Barataria Bay and Southwest Pass.
- British Petroleum (BP) is working with the Parish to pay for the installation of solar panels on fishermen roofs as a way to help mitigate costs of oil spill on fishermen.
- Free Flow Power Corporation has a pilot project for hydropower reaching from St. Louis to Plaquemines Parish; 80 sites along the Mississippi River; three are slated for Plaquemines.
- Tulane University Riversphere project.
- EcoPark Initiative – “The vision of EcoPark is to co-locate green/sustainable manufacturing, distribution and retail businesses in an industrial park or zone in New Orleans.” Part of the initiative will include a non-profit arm for educating consumers about sustainable building products. The Bohn Ford building in Mid-City New Orleans has been identified as the future home for EcoPark.

Possible Alternative Energy & Green Jobs Initiatives in Plaquemines Parish

The following initiatives represent possible projects that the Parish can pursue as a part of an Alternative Energy Strategy and effort to grow green jobs.

Major Initiatives

- New port facilities that specialize in import of green technology
- Job training center for green technologies
- Research center and laboratory for coastal restoration sciences

Site Specific Initiatives

- LEED buildings – public facilities moving forward
- Low Impact Development (LID) standards
- Solar panels and small scale wind turbines

Job Creation Initiatives

- Manufacturing renewable energy components
- Installation of new technologies on homes and businesses

- Research in advancing renewable energy technologies such as hydrokinetic energy and related applications to green energy science

Realities & Possible Barriers

Attraction of new manufacturing businesses that develop green products and produce major outlays of alternative energy will require appropriate facilities, incentives, infrastructure, political support, investment security, and assurance that the appropriately trained workforce lives within or adjacent to Plaquemines Parish to meet the businesses needs.

Possible Barriers

- The existing power grid may not be sufficient to support distribution of power from alternative energy sources to users on the grid
- Investment risks posed by threat of future coastal storms like Katrina
- Long term impact of subsidence and sea level rise on investments
- Lack of financing for new infrastructure

Partners and Resources & Education and Training Resources

Building an alternative energy base and subsequent green jobs base will require partnerships with public and private entities, resources, and strategies that are coordinated with local education and training resources. Examples of such resources include the following:

Partners & Resources

- Plaquemines Association of Business and Industry
- NAS JRB – likely tester of alternative energy technologies; a typical role that the military has played with new technologies
- Greater New Orleans, Inc. – regional partner to facilitate regional growth in alternative energies
- Entergy – ensuring that new alternative energy resources are compatible with the existing grid and offer opportunities for the Parish to sell power back to the grid
- BP’s continued investment in the region to help mitigate the economic impacts of Deepwater Horizon oil spill
- Wind farm investors & hydrokinetic turbine investors
- Center for Bioenvironmental Research at Tulane/Xavier Universities
- City of New Orleans, Solar America City by the U.S. Department Energy; the Parish can benefit from the resources New Orleans has access to as a part of this program
- State of Louisiana – offers a 50 percent State tax credit to spur the installation of solar in residential and apartment projects

Education and Training Resources

- Plaquemines Parish Public Schools – develop special curriculum and/or programs to educate and develop interest in green jobs and alternative energy in K-12 student body

- Belle Chasse Academy – develop special curriculum and/or programs to educate and develop interest in green jobs and alternative energy in K-8 student body
- Louisiana Green Corps – “green” job skills training program for youth between the ages of 17-24 in the Greater New Orleans area
- U.S. Green Building Council – has multiple training programs to help prepare individuals to work in the green building industry; qualified persons can apply for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) credentials to support green building projects.
- Tulane University – Master in Sustainable Real Estate Development Program
- University of New Orleans – Department focused on alternative energy design and applications

Benchmarking

Benchmarking is a valuable tool for evaluating the Parish’s progress in growing green jobs and alternative energy when compared to adjacent parishes and the region. The Parish should develop a system for measuring and monitoring and evaluating its progress. By doing so, the Parish can determine needed improvements to its energy portfolio in order to stay competitive with adjacent parishes and can also identify possible green industry strengths that can be capitalized on.

Currently, no widely-accepted system exists for measuring green industries, jobs, etc. The Bureau of Labor Statistics is slated to release a methodology for measuring green jobs in spring 2012; the Brookings Institute will release its own methodology and measurement in May 2011.

d. Coastal and Resource Management Opportunities

Due to its location along the Mississippi River delta, Plaquemines Parish has a unique relationship and responsibility to its bodies of water. Developing a niche in coastal and water management is a logical economic development pursuit for Plaquemines Parish. The Parish has the opportunity to develop a specialization in this component of the economy, as its environment is literally a living laboratory for researching and addressing the impacts of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, ongoing recovery from Hurricane Katrina and subsequent storms, subsidence, and increasing sea level rise.

While this is a practical area of growth for Plaquemines Parish, it should also be recognized that adjacent parishes are in a very similar situation. Coordinating with adjacent parishes to create a united regional approach to fostering industry growth is critical; otherwise, Plaquemines’ efforts might be thwarted by competition with adjacent parishes for the same opportunities, as has been the case with port facilities and other industries in the past.

Development of associated strategies should consider the following:

- Educational resources and research centers are a key component to development coastal research and management industries. Plaquemines Parish can work with its K-12 school system to develop an interest in this field.

- Development of a business incubator for coastal and water management enterprises. There may be a demand for such a facility in the region.
- Work with elected representatives to the state and federal government to promote investments in coastal and water management research and development projects in Plaquemines Parish.

e. Tourism and Hospitality

Increased tourism offers an opportunity for economic growth in the Parish. The unique location of Plaquemines Parish at the mouth of the Mississippi River, its rich history and culture, its role in growth of the oil industry, and the challenges that have been met by its resilient residents can provide history and civic lessons for future generations. The natural assets of the river, the wetlands, and the abundant recreation opportunities create many opportunities for tourism.

The Parish's current tourism sector⁸ centers upon recreational fishing and does not take advantage of its potential relationship to ecotourism. However, the Parish has targeted ecotourism and the hospitality industries as future growth sectors. In addition, the State is projects future growth in arts, entertainment, and recreation, as well as accommodation and food services industries. These industries would be complementary to Plaquemines' tourism initiatives.

In order to capitalize on its cultural, historic, and outdoor tourism opportunities, the Parish must develop a specific and actionable tourism development plan and it must include a regional and a local component. The tourism development plan should identify potential economies of scale; in particular, ways in which the Parish can leverage regional and Parish-wide tourism resources to minimize costs of marketing, staff, and facilities maintenance.

Current Tourism Attractions

Below is a cursory review of key tourism attractions in the Parish. A more complete list of existing attractions is provided in the Economic Development section of the Technical Addendum.

Recreational Fishing

- Boat Harbors – There are currently five boat harbors in the Parish for boat and ship storage. These are revenue producing sites for the Parish and can be used to attract additional recreational fishing enterprises.
- Marinas, fishing docks, and piers – These facilities provide low-cost fishing and water recreation opportunities for local residents and visitors. These facilities when paired with nearby convenience stores can increase quality of life and also attract visitors to area small businesses.

⁸ The Parish's tourism assets are described in detail in the Economic Development element of the Technical Appendix to the Community Assessment.

- Boat storage and slips— The costs of slips provide revenue to the Parish, but there is currently some concern that the fees are not consistently collected and fail to result in sufficient revenue for the Parish. Although this is primarily an issue of governmental operations (see **Section J**), it directly affects the tourism industry.

Ecotourism

Prior to the Deepwater Horizon Disaster, ecotourism in the Parish was primarily driven by the Breton National Wildlife Refuge and marsh environments attractive to migratory birds and wildlife. The long-term impact of the oil spill on these resources is not yet fully known; however, the Parish can use this experience as an opportunity to draw attention to the area's unique resources and the importance of their restoration and protection. The Wetlands Discovery Center, discussed below, is an example of a tourism project that would attract visitors and also raise awareness for natural resources protection and preservation.

Successfully growing the ecotourism sector will require a combination of Parish, state, federal, and private investments and a proactive marketing campaign. The Mississippi River is one of the Parish's greatest tourism assets; however, the River's tourism potential is currently underdeveloped; however, the Parish can attract visitors to the Mississippi by providing a combination of venues that include viewing-towers and accessible river fishing piers. Additionally, the Wetland Discovery Center would allow visitors to view the complex ecosystem of the Gulf's estuaries and marshlands.

Hunting

During the community visioning phase of this project, community members listed the favorable hunting environment as one of the Parish's greatest assets—and hunting is among the Parish's most successful current tourism attractions. Components of the Future Land Use Plan identify areas for resource conservation, which will help ensure that hunting is preserved as a recreation opportunity for residents and visitors.

Festivals

As discussed in the Technical Appendix to the Community Assessment, festivals celebrating Plaquemines' culture and history are a great attraction and tourism generator. As described further below, the Parish should continue to promote and expand these events in coordination with a strategic tourism plan. Community centers, as identified in the Future Land Use Plan, and historic sites are ideal locations for such events. In some cases, it may be possible to create a festival environment on a more regular schedule by promoting or supporting local farmers markets or artists fairs.

Future Tourism Investments

Future tourism investment opportunities exist throughout the Parish (as detailed below), providing an opportunity to highlight the unique characteristics of each region of the Parish while also branding the Parish as a whole. In order to be effective, it is recommended that the Parish complete a strategic plan for tourism development that identifies a strategic communications system, wayfinding system, and targeted investment strategy to achieve the

vision. Such efforts will require special knowledge in grants and funding streams, as well as coordination with relevant State agencies and initiatives. To lead this effort, it is recommended that the Parish develop a “Plaquemines Parish Tourism Development Council.” This new council would be tasked with completing the strategic plan for tourism development, including research and analysis of potential tourist sectors. Information collected should include the demographics of visitors, what attracted visitors to Plaquemines Parish, the length of visitors’ stay, and an analysis of the spending habits of visitors.

Parish-wide Tourism Investment

- *Levee Bicycle Trail* – As further discussed in the Multi-modal Transportation System element of the Community Agenda, Plaquemines Parish is presently working with the Army Corps of Engineers to design a bicycle path along the federal levees abutting the Mississippi River. The network is planned to extend from Belle Chasse to the Port of Venice. The bicycle path is considered another amenity in the Parish’s growing tourism resources and will also provide additional mobility options for Parish residents.

East Bank Tourism Investment

- *Katrina Museum* – A Katrina museum is proposed for the old court house in Pointe a la Hache on the East Bank. The museum would provide an educational attraction and would provide an important tribute to an event that will continue to dramatically influence the Parish’s future.

Northern West Bank Tourism Investment

- *Welcome Center* – A welcome center is proposed for the Parish. The welcome center will offer visitors the opportunity to identify all possible attractions of interest and plan their stay more fully.

Central West Bank Tourism Investment

- *Proposed Wetlands Discovery Center* – The Wetlands Discovery Center has been touted as an opportunity to highlight the important natural resources of Plaquemines Parish and the Mississippi Delta. The center would educate the public on the ecosystem of the lower Mississippi Delta. The Wetlands Discovery Center also complements the Parish’s goal to target and grow water and coastal management industries. This proposed resource can also be utilized to help increase awareness and interest in coastal resources management by Parish residents and youth. The proposed site for the center is just upriver from the West Pointe a la Hache Ferry. Preliminary renderings of the facility have been completed and a feasibility study will soon be conducted.

Southern West Bank Tourism Investment

- *Enhanced Fort Jackson* – Fort Jackson is the subject of federal legislation that, if passed, would authorize completion of a feasibility study for making Fort Jackson a national park. The study would analyze whether or not the Fort is ideal for a national park site.

However, regardless of the outcome of this legislation, investment in the area with or without federal support will be critical to boosting the Parish’s cultural tourism.

- *Mardi Gras Point* – Mardi Gras Point is the home of the first Mardi Gras and is a great Parish attraction. Enhanced signage and supporting facilities would attract more visitors to the southern end of the Parish.
- *Lighthouses*—The southern end of the Parish boasts five lighthouses. These lighthouses are exceptional cultural and historic resources and should be preserved and promoted as tourist destinations.
 - Three in Southwest Pass
 - One in South Pass (at Port Eads)
 - One at the end of Pass A Loutre

f. Chemicals Manufacturing (sufficient industrial land)

The Parish’s P³ initiative⁹ identifies chemical manufacturing as a targeted growth industry. The Parish currently has some specialization in this sector due to the Chevron Oronite plant, which is a major chemical manufacturing employer in the region. To grow this industry, the Parish must begin identifying appropriate space for such industries and ensuring the availability of a work-ready labor force. The Parish may need to invest in speculative buildings or identify possible improvements to existing buildings to attract these types industries. The Parish should also consider coordinating training programs with regional vocational tech schools, area colleges, and the LWC to prepare residents of the Parish for jobs in this sector. The LWC currently offers programs to train new and existing employees, including its Incumbent Worker Training Program, Eligible Training Provider Information, Veterans’ Services, and Apprenticeship opportunities.

Value-added Agriculture

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Rural Business Development office defines value-added agriculture as the following:

- *A change in the physical state or form of the product (such as milling wheat into flour or making strawberries into jam).*
- *The production of a product in a manner that enhances its value, as demonstrated through a business plan (such as organically produced products).*
- *The physical segregation of an agricultural commodity or product in a manner that results in the enhancement of the value of that commodity or product (such as an identity preserved marketing system).*

As a result of the change in physical state or the manner in which the agricultural commodity or product is produced and segregated, the customer base for the commodity or product is expanded and a greater portion of revenue derived from the marketing, processing or physical segregation is made available to the producer of the commodity or product.

g. Oil & Gas (existing)

Oil, gas, and associated industries are critical components of the Parish’s existing employment and tax base.¹⁰ Promoting the continued investment and growth of the oil and gas industry and related support sectors in Plaquemines Parish will require ongoing investment in the ports, logistics, and coastal

⁹ See **Section B.1.b** for more information.

¹⁰ For a more detail analysis of the existing the Parish’s energy sector, see the Economic Development and Parish Government and Finance sections of the Technical Appendix.

restoration. Chevron Oronite and Conoco Phillips are two of the Parish’s largest oil and gas industry employers. Their continued presence in the community will be a result of capital investment, continued railroad service and terminal access, and sustained back levee protection. In order to attract additional businesses in this sector, the Parish will likely need to encourage extension of the private railroad and aid in marketing and promoting existing and future terminal and port facilities. The Parish is currently completing a comprehensive port master plan that will explore strategies for growing the oil and gas industry. In addition, the Baptiste Collette dredging project will expand access to the eastern Gulf of Mexico in the future, should the federal government permit new drilling wells in this area.

h. Value-added Agribusiness

As documented in the Economic Development Section of the Community Assessment, Plaquemines Parish is a major producer of agricultural products for the State of Louisiana and is a national seafood provider. Among its top products are menhaden, oysters, shrimp, navel oranges, and other citrus fruits. Most of these items are produced by self-employed workers. Plaquemines Parish could see a greater ‘multiplier effect’ from these agricultural products by pursuing value-added agribusiness in the following ways:

- Scenario1* Turn agricultural products into more specialized products, or
- Scenario2* Capture these products in a complementary sector of the Parish economy, such as manufacturing or processing.

The multiplier effect leads to additional economic activity in the local economy because, instead of agricultural products leaving Plaquemines Parish immediately after harvesting, they would be “reused” in the local community to produce additional products, thereby creating additional jobs and tax revenue (Scenario 2). Similarly, producing more specialized, higher-value products produces additional revenue, thereby increasing worker salaries, increasing residents’ spending power, and increasing local tax revenue (Scenario 1).

Input from stakeholder interviews and the public involvement process indicated that there is insufficient facility-ready land for seafood processing in Plaquemines. Therefore, the Parish should identify needed infrastructure and consider developing agri-business facilities, or even a small agri-business industrial park. Sufficient transportation infrastructure and water and sewer facilities will be necessary to fully support and attract such enterprises.

3. Role of Parish Infrastructure and Services in Economic Development

The services and infrastructure provided by the Plaquemines Parish Government will play a critical role in promoting economic development. Managing anticipated growth and decline in existing industries and working to develop targeted economic development strategies will require thorough coordination with all branches of the Parish government, as well as regional and state government agencies. To develop effective economic development strategies, coordination with the future land use plan, water and sewer services, information

infrastructure, transportation, the education system, and other integral components of the Plaquemines community is critical.

This section briefly considers the role of each of the following elements of Parish-led services or infrastructure in economic development:

- a. Land Use
- b. Transportation
- c. Infrastructure
- d. Education and Workforce Training
- e. Community Services & Facilities

a. Role of Land Use in Economic Development

Having a balanced Future Land Use Plan that considers economic development trends and goals, as outlined in **Section I**, is critical for ensuring that Plaquemines Parish can accommodate future economic growth. The Future Land Use Plan identifies appropriate investment areas for major industries, business parks, agriculture, community centers, and mixed use nodes. Utilizing the Future Land Use Plan to direct future development will ensure that each of the Parish's existing and targeted economic sectors has room to grow. The Comprehensive Master Plan recommends that the Parish's zoning and development regulations be reviewed and revised to ensure that future development is appropriately regulated without deterring economic investment. This review should include a careful review process for siting facilities for targeted growth industries – ensuring that possible investment in one industry does not deter investment in another industry. For example, the Parish's regulations and policies should promote both tourism and chemicals manufacturing in a complementary way.

b. Role of Transportation in Economic Development

The following transportation projects will have an important influence on the Parish's economic growth initiatives:

1. *Barriere Road Widening and Extension to Peters Road* –Phase 1 of this project is complete and Phase 2 is anticipated in the near term. Peters Road will provide important access to the current back entrance of the NAS JRB and will also provide an additional emergency exit route for the Base. This is particularly important due to expansion of the NAS JRB facility and the additional traffic expected as a result. Additionally, the Peters Road Extension will provide critical congestion relief to Hwy 23 to Belle Chasse, which is the principal entry and exit point for the Parish. This corridor plays an important role in mobility for the workforce and businesses in Plaquemines Parish. The Harvey Canal businesses and those located on Engineers Road will also benefit from this additional access through Jefferson Parish.
2. *Widening of Belle Chasse Hwy and Woodland Hwy* – These widenings are important investments for relieving congestion entering and exiting Plaquemines Parish. Because the Parish has limited north/south travel modes, improving mobility in this area is particularly important.

3. *LA 23 Improvements* –Widening of Hwy 23 in the area adjacent to the NAS JRB is also important for easing congestion on this principal transportation artery.
4. *Southward extension of the railroad* – This investment will be critical in attracting additional port investments in the Parish, particularly the proposed Citrus Lands Port. The rail line currently terminates just south of Conoco Phillips. The Parish would like to relocate the rail line out of the Belle Chasse/Hwy 23 area in coordination with LA 23 improvements and the southward extension of the rail line. Relocating the line will require coordination with rail providers and anticipated economic development projects.
5. *Baptiste Collette Dredging* – In anticipation of new off-shore drilling opportunities in the Eastern Gulf, the Baptiste Collette dredging project will serve to improve the transportation and logistics sector of Plaquemines’ economy by improving access for larger vessels.
6. *Airport Development* – A new airport is proposed for a site along Hwy 23 below Hermitage Road and near the proposed Citrus II Port facility. The proposed airport is considered an important partner facility for the port and would attract businesses and investors.

As economic development projects and initiatives move forward, the Parish should ensure that traffic impact studies are undertaken for new or expanding businesses anticipated to increase employment or trips on the Parish’s roads. This includes new industries planning to utilize the Parish’s waterways and potential new port and terminal facilities.

c. Role of Infrastructure in Economic Development

Water and Sewer Infrastructure

Sufficient water and sewer capacity and infrastructure is essential for attracting and sustaining businesses in the manufacturing sector and should be coordinated with targeted major industries, such as port investments. **Section D Water and Wastewater Treatment Systems** discusses the Parish’s existing service and outlines needed future service areas and investments. Economic Development staff must coordinate with the Parish’s water and wastewater leadership to ensure that areas of the Parish targeted for economic development projects have adequate water and wastewater infrastructure. Relevant information should be included in inventories of developable land and vacant buildings.

Telecommunications & Fiber Optics Infrastructure

During the public visioning process, participants raised concerns about having adequate communications infrastructure within the Parish, particularly for residential uses. However, if this is a problem for residents, it is also likely an issue for small businesses and possibly larger base industries. It is essential that the Parish ensure access to such necessary services to support existing businesses and to promote new business development, particularly in small and suburban mixed-use centers.

Additionally, many of the Parish's targeted industries are involved in global commerce and will increasingly require access to improved communication networks to sustain their business operations. To accommodate these needs and to attract such enterprises, the Parish should work with regional and state partners to identify opportunities to develop its fiber optics cable network.

d. Role of Education and Workforce Training in Economic Development

Changes in the Parish's industry make-up will create a demand for new jobs while eliminating the need for others. These changes will in turn influence the needed occupation mix in the Parish and the desirable skill sets for those emerging employers. A cohesive strategy for economic development must consider ways to prepare the existing and potential workforce for jobs in the community. As discussed in previous sections, it is essential that the Parish establish strong connections with the Plaquemines Parish schools coordinate the schools' curriculum and programs with the Parish's core and targeted industries. Doing so will help develop interest and knowledge in the Parish's base economy and prepare the next generation of Plaquemines Parish workers. The Parish should also develop strong relationships with area vocational and technical schools and colleges/universities to facilitate coordination of educational and training programs that meet the needs of targeted and growing sectors in the Parish's economy.

e. Role of Community Services & Facilities in Economic Development

Businesses desire supporting facilities and services to provide a support network for growing their business, or otherwise provide a desirable and accommodating environment for their employees. Such possible future community facilities and services may include nearby multi-use trails and parks, small business-assistance centers, accommodating solid waste facilities, a strong K-12 education system to attract families, workforce training opportunities, and ongoing success of organizations such as PABI. These efforts and services are critical for helping attract and retain new businesses. Collecting information on the adequacy of such services and facilities should be included in regular business surveys as recommend in action item B.1. See **Section G Public Facilities and Services** element of the Community Agenda for more details on this network of supporting services and facilities.

Additional Privately Provided Services

New employers will attract new workers and create a subsequent need for additional housing and additional services, restaurants, and shopping centers. These services and resources are most often be filled by the private sector. The Parish can guide and encourage this growth process by identifying private services and goods that are under-supplied in the Parish, thereby highlighting opportunities for private investment in the Parish.

4. Policy Recommendations and Action Items

a. Key Economic Development Principles

Among an extensive list of strategies already discussed, it is recommended that Parish-led economic development initiatives focus on incorporating four key principles to all of its economic development initiatives:

1. Coordinate with regional and local economic development agencies and business leaders
2. Target Investment areas based on Future Land Use Plan
3. Coordinate economic development pursuits with transportation improvements
4. Promote economic gardening and sustainable local economic development

1. Coordinate with Regional and Local Economic Development & Business Leaders

To achieve the Parish’s economic development vision, the Parish must work collaboratively with public and private partners representing local and regional interests. To this end, it is recommended that the Parish develop a “Plaquemines Parish Economic Development Council” consisting of representatives from the following organizations:

- Plaquemines Parish Government
- Greater New Orleans, Inc.
- Plaquemines Association of Business and Industry
- Plaquemines Parish School Board
- Entergy

The Plaquemines Parish Economic Development Council would ensure that future economic development investments and strategies are coordinated with (1) existing and planned infrastructure, (2) regional initiatives, and (3) the interests of the Plaquemines’ existing business community. The Council would also ensure that the Parish is developing and growing its economy in a sustainable fashion consistent with the Comprehensive Master Plan. Efforts pursued by the Council will include coordination with the New Orleans region’s CEDS.¹¹

2. Target Investment Areas based on Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan identifies appropriate geographic areas for different types of commerce. The Parish’s economic development staff should ensure that future investments and economic development pursuits are consistent with this plan. By doing so, the Parish will ensure a coordinated approach for economic growth that includes industry sector clustering, preserves land for existing and new industry expansion, and provides the appropriate mix and location of services and commercial uses to support a growing

¹¹See the Introduction for more information on the New Orleans region’s CEDS.

employment and population base, while also preserving the unique residential and economic character of Plaquemines Parish.

The nodes and targeted investment areas included in the Future Land Use Plan, along with appropriate business types, include the following¹²:

- *Agricultural* - agriculture, limited commercial uses associated with farming and agriculture (veterinarians, farm stands, etc.)
- *Rural Community Center* - commercial uses
- *Small Community Mixed-use Node* - retail outlets, restaurants, service businesses, offices, some light manufacturing uses
- *Suburban Mixed-use* - office, retail and personal services land uses
- *Major Industries* - large industrial uses such as Alliance Refinery, Chevron Oronite, and others of similar scale and intensity, along with associated services needed for the labor force
- *Marina Harbor Complex* - water related light industrial uses for boats and marina equipment, accessory uses that support commercial and recreational fishing.
- *Port/Terminal Complex* - major port facilities and intermodal loading and transfer facilities including associated storage, refrigeration, warehousing and distribution facilities, marine fabrication and repair, and limited amounts of convenience retail and restaurants serving the labor force
- *Institutional Complex* - limited retail and office development that complement school/government needs may be appropriate; businesses such as neighborhood stores, small restaurants, service stations and similar uses
- *Marine Commercial Corridor* - small and medium scale commercial uses, live work structures, businesses such as neighborhood stores, small restaurants, service stations and similar uses
- *Business Park* - offices, technology parks, and large low impact businesses and industries with supportive commercial uses

Currently, major industries are concentrated along Engineers Road in close proximity to the NAS JRB. The Future Land Use Plan encourages major industries to locate areas targeted for port development (near Venice, Citrus Lands II, and just south of the NAS JRB).

3. Coordinate Economic Development Pursuits with Transportation Improvements

As previously discussed, transportation investments will be critical to the economic prosperity of the Parish. Currently, the NAS JRB produces a significant number of trips along Hwy 23. Other economic development initiatives will increase traffic on roadways and water channels and will require coordination with the RPC and the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development to ensure the transportation network accommodates the needs of the Parish's existing and potential businesses and industry.

¹² For a map of the Future Land Use Plan, see **Section I**.

4. Ensure Sustainable Local Economic Development

Economic gardening¹³ is an economic development strategy that works to retain and expand existing businesses, as opposed to spending resources to attract new businesses to a community. As sustainability and “buy local”¹⁴ continue to gain in support from consumer, as well as federal and state government policies, the Parish should consider focusing on sustainable economic development strategies and promoting the growth of home-grown industries. Several such tactics have already been discussed and include:

- Business Incubators – Business incubators provide low cost or free business services provided to small or upstart businesses to help them develop a strong business base during their first years of operation. Services may include office space, financial guidance, access to copiers and machines, and networking opportunities.
- Value-added agribusiness – As defined previously, value-added agribusiness can include either (1) turning existing agricultural products into more specialized products, or (2) capturing agricultural products in another component of the Parish economy, such as manufacturing or processing.
- Tourism & Hospitality – Growing these industries includes promoting the Parish’s unique sense of place, preserving existing cultural and ecotourism attractions, expanding tourist-based industries such as deep-sea fishing, increasing lodging opportunities, and marketing the Parish’s attractions via a coherent wayfinding system, advertising in appropriate publications, etc.

b. General Policy Recommendations

These policy recommendations are general policies that should guide the decision-making process of the Parish’s economic development leadership.

1. Maintain an open dialogue between the economic development arm of the Parish and other departments, ensuring cross-department approaches to anticipated growth. *For example, coordinate with the Operations Department to ensure that changes in zoning and development regulations are compatible with siting needs of targeted industries.*
2. Ensure strong ties exist between the business community, economic development staff, Plaquemines Parish School System, and the Parish.
3. Play an active role in the Plaquemines Association of Business and Industry (PABI) and other regional business associations and economic development agencies.
4. Play an active role in the Regional Planning Commission’s updates to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).
5. Monitor possible opportunities for developing a business incubator for coastal and water management enterprises.
6. Work with elected representatives to the state and federal government to promote investments in coastal and water management research and development projects in

¹³ Economic gardening is an effective economic development strategy first coined in Littleton, Colorado in 1989.

¹⁴ “Buy local” refers to a grassroots movement to promote purchasing of local goods over those shipped in from other places. An example of “buy local” is to eat at a restaurant owned and operated by a Plaquemines Parish resident versus eating at a chain restaurant owned by group based in another state.

Plaquemines Parish that could increase employment opportunities in Plaquemines Parish.

7. Maintain a strong working relationship with the RPC and state partners to ensure needed transportation projects are supported and promoted through state and federal funding mechanisms.
8. Ensure that future investments and economic development pursuits are consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.
9. Work closely with the NAS JRB to ensure synergies between the Base and the Parish in initiatives such as alternative energy, transportation improvements, and compatible development policies.
10. Develop relationships with regional vocational tech schools, area colleges, and the LWC to ease establishment of future workforce training opportunities appropriate to support targeted industries.

c. Regulatory Recommendations

The following recommendations would require changes to the Parish's Code of Ordinances.

11. Adopt and implement zoning and development regulations promoted by the NAS JRB JLUS.
12. Complete a comprehensive review of the Parish's existing zoning and development regulations to ensure that desirable industry growth is permitted and protected by the Parish's code. Modify zoning and development regulations as determined appropriate.
13. Identify appropriate mechanisms for incentivizing inclusion of green energy in development and redevelopment sites. Incorporate in zoning and development regulations as determined appropriate.
14. Ensure that traffic impact studies are undertaken for all likely new or expanding businesses anticipated to significantly increase employment or trips on the Parish's roads and waterways. Add requirements to the Parish's development code where appropriate.

d. Seek Loans to Small Businesses

Currently, the Small Business Administration (SBA) is offering low-interest loans to small businesses in Louisiana and other states in the Gulf Coast region experiencing financial losses following the Deepwater Horizon Disaster, which largely impeded commercial and recreational fishing in the Gulf of Mexico. The SBA's Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDL) are available immediately in designated parishes across four states to help meet the financial needs of qualifying small businesses.

e. Action Items

These are specific action items that a cost or specific time frame can be assigned to for implementation.

1. Develop a new arm of Parish Government that combines economic development staff with community development staff responsible for short and long term planning.
2. Develop a “Plaquemines Parish Economic Development Council.”
3. Develop a “Plaquemines Parish Tourism Development Council.” This new council would be tasked with completing the strategic plan for tourism development, including completing survey research regarding tourists and identifying a potential funding source such as a hotel/motel tax.
4. Complete a strategic plan for tourism development that identifies a strategic communications system, wayfinding system, and targeted investment strategy to achieve the vision. The tourism development plan should identify ways the Parish can leverage regional and Parish-wide tourism resources to minimize costs of marketing, staff, facilities maintenance, etc.
5. Develop an Alternative Energy Strategy that incorporates site-specific and Parish-wide strategies for alternative energy, as well as a coordinated approach for linking alternative energy to existing power grid.
6. Conduct a regular survey of existing employers in the Parish to identify possible expansions, closures, and additional strategies the Parish can pursue or address to maintain a pro-business environment. Coordinate carrying out survey with PABI.
7. Develop a system for measuring and tracking the Parish’s progress in alternative energy and green jobs.
8. Coordinate the Parish’s Capital Improvement Plan with economic development initiatives to ensure that capital improvements meet the needs of anticipated industry growth.
9. Identify needed infrastructure and consider the development of agri-business facilities, or even a small agri-business industrial park.
10. Coordinate with the Parish’s water and wastewater leadership to ensure that areas of the Parish being targeted for economic development projects have adequate water/wastewater infrastructure.
11. Invest in an interactive website that provides current data on available development sites and vacant buildings in the Parish that are ready for investment or occupation.
12. Coordinate regularly with Entergy’s Economic Development Program¹⁵ to ensure that its New Orleans Area Site Selection center maintains current and valuable data pertaining to Plaquemines Parish.
13. Work with rail partners to facilitate the extension of the rail line southward to Citrus II lands.

¹⁵ See the Economic Development section of the Technical Addendum to the Community Assessment for more information.

14. Work with the Plaquemines Parish School Board and Belle Chasse Academy to develop special K-12 curriculum designed to ignite interest and basic understanding in the Parish's targeted growth industries as detailed previously.
15. Develop programs and incentives that retain the Parish's youth and attracts others.
16. In partnership with LSU AgCenter, survey agricultural producers to identify potential opportunities for agri-business pursuits and potential needed facilities.
17. Work with elected representatives to the state and federal government to promote investments in coastal and water management research and development projects in Plaquemines Parish.
18. Conduct a feasibility study for the Wetlands Discovery Center.
19. Provide support to small businesses in the Parish. Small business support needs should be coordinated with the regular survey of existing employers, through business incubators (if developed), and the Louisiana District Office of the Small Business Administration.
20. Pursue Economic Development Administration and future funding streams designed to help communities mitigate the impacts of the oil spill.
21. Consider opportunities to use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) as a tool for attracting industry growth via infrastructure and facility investments.