

Community Assessment

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Photos courtesy of Nahoko Miyake (top left and top right) and Sarah Life (bottom)



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Photo courtesy of Lafayette Convention and Visitors Commission



EVANGELINE OAK
Longfellow's poem "Evangeline" immortalized the tragedy of the Acadian exile from Nova Scotia in 1755. This oak marks the legendary meeting place of Emmeline Labiche and Louis Arsenault, the counterparts of Evangeline and Gabriel.

Community Assessment

Introduction

Beginning in January 2012, the Lafayette Consolidated Government (LCG) initiated the preparation of the Lafayette Comprehensive Plan, an effort that will provide Lafayette Parish and the city of Lafayette with a long-term vision and a step-by-step action plan for implementation over the plan’s 20-year horizon. The Plan will address, integrate and coordinate numerous facets of the community, including land use, economy, transportation, infrastructure and public services, environmental and historic resources, and governance issues.

The approximately two-year process to develop the plan is organized into three major work phases. The first phase, Project Organization and Mobilization, provided the Consultant Team of WRT the opportunity to quickly reach an understanding of the range of community issues that likely would need to be addressed in subsequent phases of the planning process. Through the work conducted in that phase, including numerous interviews with representatives of a variety of community interests and organizations, the WRT Team sought to identify the nature of the challenges facing Lafayette Parish and the city of Lafayette today and those that may arise in the future.

The second phase of work includes two main components or segments which are being conducted in parallel tracks. In the first segment, “Articulating the Vision,” the WRT Team conducted a series of interactive forums with the residents of Lafayette Parish to solicit input on the community’s values and expectations for quality of life and development and design character. This input served to prepare a Vision Statement that expresses “what we want our community to be like in the future.”

In the second segment, “Community Assessment: Existing Conditions and Trends,” the WRT Team compiled and analyzed factual information about existing physical, functional, demographic, legal/regulatory, and economic conditions and trends. The purpose of this endeavor, which is documented in this report, is threefold:

- To objectively document factors and conditions which influence development today, identifying assets, shortcomings and deficiencies and how they may affect the future.
- To provide a baseline –a snapshot of the community in time to use as a standard against which to compare and measure progress in the future.
- To provide a platform for evaluating current and potential opportunities and constraints.

When contrasted with the Vision Statement, the Community Assessment and related Trend Scenario will reveal differences between the future that Lafayette aspires to and the one that is likely to occur if no action is taken to change the current course. The community’s opinions about the relative importance of different aspects of this contrast will support the creation of alternative scenarios for the future growth and development of Lafayette Parish. In the final phase of the planning process, the community’s preferences regarding possible alternative future scenarios will facilitate the formulation of goals and policies for the Comprehensive Plan.

Scope and Organization

The Community Assessment report is a summation of the WRT Team's review and analysis of a vast amount of information (maps, studies, plans, and other types of data) provided by LCG and other local and national sources. The document is not an inventory. Rather, the Team relied on the extensive array of information to extract and characterize the context within which the parish has developed in the past, the current situation, and the factors that will influence growth over the next 20 years.

The subjects covered in the evaluation were determined partially by the long list of issues identified through the initial stakeholder interviews, as well as to match those of the probable elements of the Core Comprehensive Plan, including:

- Land use and development patterns
- Community character and urban design
- Housing and neighborhoods
- Historic and cultural resources
- Economy
- Transportation and mobility
- Utilities
- Community facilities and services
- Parks and recreation
- Environment, natural resources, and open space
- Governance and regulatory framework

In the report, the above topics are organized into seven logical thematic chapter groupings, as follows:

1. **Regional Context:** This chapter examines Lafayette Parish and the city of Lafayette against the backdrop of the larger geographic, political, cultural, natural and economic region(s) in which the city and the parish function.
2. **Society and Economy:** This chapter assesses social and economic factors and trends, including past and current demographics, household characteristics, and jobs; and presents forecasts of population and employment for the next 20 years.
3. **Community Form:** This chapter covers a variety of form-related factors, including land use, zoning, and growth patterns, community design character and history, housing patterns, inventory and characteristics, and neighborhood structure and typologies.
4. **Infrastructure and Community Services:** This chapter, as its name suggests, encompasses an examination of the existing community infrastructure (transportation networks, water, sewer, electric, fiber) and public services and facilities (emergency services, libraries, schools).
5. **Natural and Cultural Resources:** This chapter deals first with the natural context of the parish, inventorying existing natural resources and identifying environmental factors and risks; it continues with a review of the parish's open space, parks and recreation system and resources; and it concludes with a review of the parish's historic and cultural resources. This section also discusses management and conservation efforts in all three of these resource areas.
6. **Regulations and Government:** The final chapter examines the parish's existing governmental structures and organization, and the regulatory framework that directs development.

When contrasted with the Vision Statement, the Community Assessment and related Trend Scenario will reveal differences between the future that Lafayette aspires to and the one that is likely to occur if no action is taken to change the current course.

Each chapter starts with an “At a glance” section, consisting of a list of concise bullet points which summarize key findings from the inventory and analysis. A more detailed narrative follows, describing factual information about each area of focus. Maps, tables and charts that validate the analyses are included in each chapter.

Throughout the report, focal information is included on specific factors ranging from job growth, to number of foreclosures, to transit ridership levels, and many others. This information has been selected as precursors to the possible “performance measures” to be used, later in the planning process, in evaluating alternative futures.

These factors are compared between Lafayette Parish or the city of Lafayette (as may be applicable) and one or more comparable communities. For this study, a total of six peer communities were selected with the input and agreement of LCG, including Austin (TX), Chattanooga (TN), Baton Rouge (LA), Fayetteville (AR), Huntsville (AL), and Greensboro (NC). These communities were chosen as peers due to a variety of similarities, although none of the six matches Lafayette in every criterion. The range of criteria applied includes the size of the population, geographic extent, community structure, regional role, economic base and relative economic strength during and after the economic recession, presence of a prominent higher education institution, strong cultural and arts scene, and local attitudes toward innovation and entrepreneurship.

The comparisons highlight areas of strength for Lafayette, but also areas in which Lafayette may be falling behind and may wish to improve based on the performance metrics achieved in other communities. The comparisons are not meant to provide community models for Lafayette; they do not suggest that Lafayette is or should be like any other community.





Photo courtesy of Jay Faugot, Jay Faugot Photography



Regional Context

The city of Lafayette occupies only 21% of the Parish's total land area, but 54% of all Lafayette Parish residents live within the city boundaries.

Lafayette is the largest city in the Parish, but its share of the population has shrunk by 6% between 1993 and 2010.

Lafayette Parish is the economic and cultural center of the 22-parish state-defined region known as "Acadiana".

In 2011 Lafayette was ranked as the **6th** fastest growing metro area in the nation in terms of GDP.

In 2010, approximately 16% of Parish residents spoke a language in addition to English at home, including Cajun French, Creole French, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

At a Glance

Regional Context

LOCATION AND GEOGRAPHY

Acadiana Region

Lafayette Parish is located in south central Louisiana. The parish is considered part of the Acadiana region, which includes 22 Louisiana parishes that extend from the Texas border east to New Orleans. The region is connected primarily by its culture, languages, and history, but also by its transportation routes (e.g., I-10), terrain, and waterways.

In 1971, the Louisiana State Legislature officially recognized these parishes and “other parishes of similar cultural environment” for their “strong French Acadian cultural aspects” (House Concurrent Resolution No. 496, June 6, 1971), and made “The Heart of Acadiana” the official name of the region. While the state recognizes the 22 parish area, locally, Acadiana represents a smaller area with a more fluid boundary.

Lafayette Parish

Lafayette Parish lies about 35 miles north of the Gulf of Mexico and 60 miles west of Baton Rouge along the I-10 Corridor (Figure 1.1). The parish seat is Lafayette, the fourth largest city in the state based on population and the largest city in the Lafayette-Acadiana combined statistical area, which also includes Acadia, Iberia, St. Landry, St. Martin, and Vermilion Parishes. In addition, Lafayette Parish, along with St. Martin Parish, is part of the Lafayette metropolitan statistical area¹.

The parish covers nearly 270 square miles, with the city of Lafayette accounting for 49 square miles or 18 percent of land area. The Vermilion River runs through Lafayette and forms part of the eastern border of the city and parish. The Vermilion stretches about 72 miles in length and generally flows south through Lafayette into the Vermilion Bay and then into the Gulf of Mexico. Lafayette’s land is higher in elevation than areas to the south and west of the region and, while still an issue, flooding is not as serious as in other areas of south Louisiana.

The region is connected primarily by its culture, languages, and history, but also by its transportation routes, terrain, and waterways.

¹Combined statistical areas are defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and represent larger regions that share significant social and economic activities (e.g., commodity or wholesale distribution).

Figure 1.1 Acadiana Region (as defined by the state of Louisiana)



Figure 1.2 Lafayette-Acadiana Combined Statistical Area

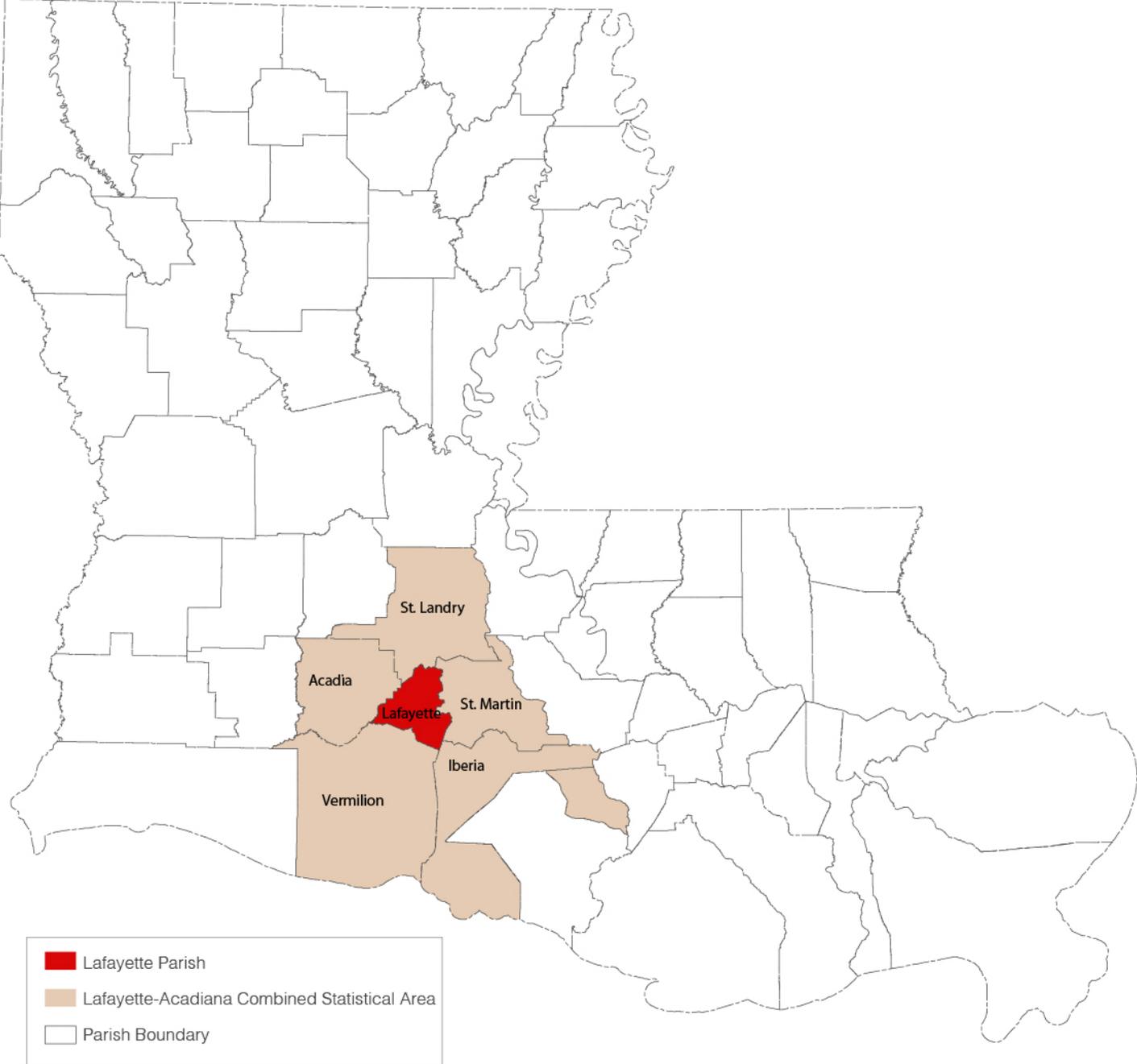
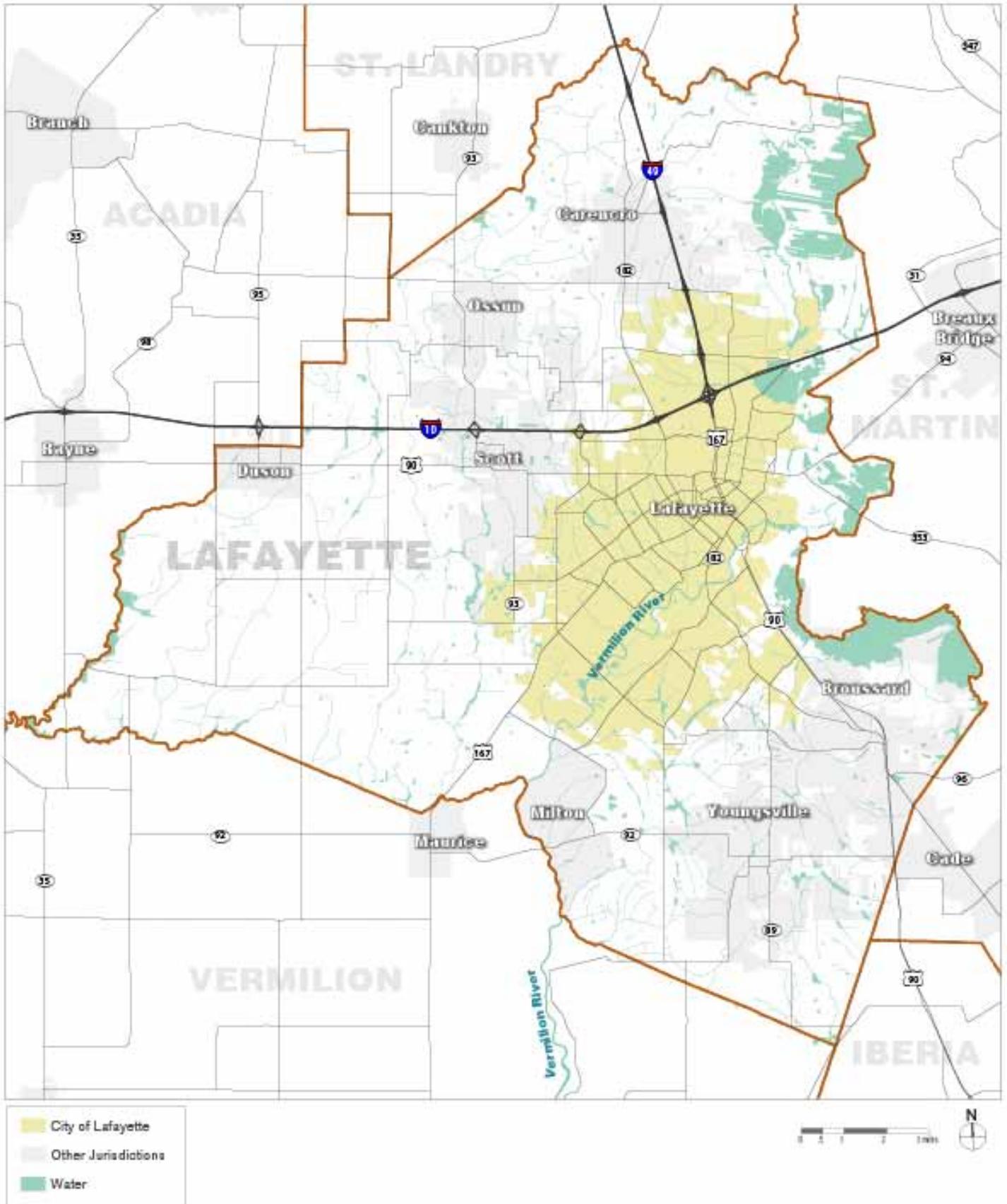


Figure 1.3 Lafayette Parish



POPULATION

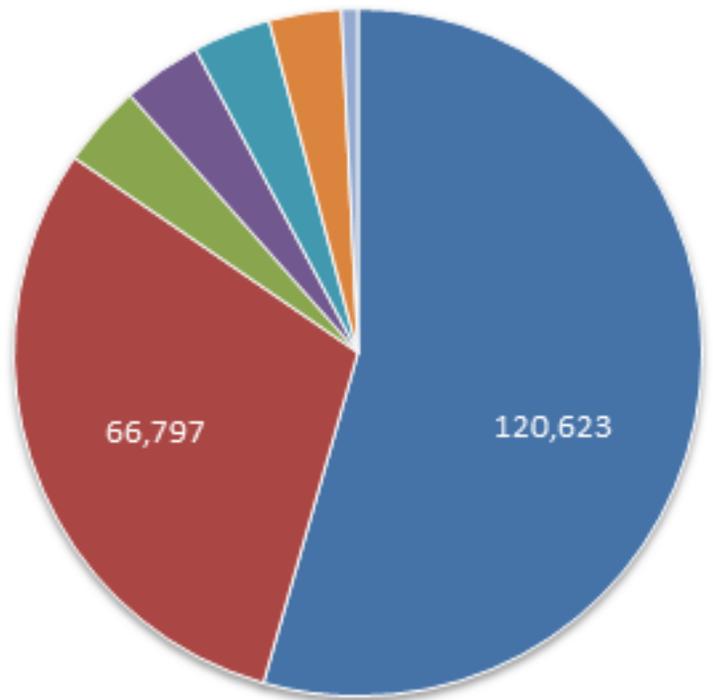
According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the Lafayette-Acadiana combined statistical area (Figure 1.2) is home to 550,134 people. 221,578 people reportedly live in Lafayette Parish, with more than half of them (54 percent) within the city of Lafayette. Another 30 percent of residents live in unincorporated areas of the parish, with the remaining 15 percent of residents living in the smaller towns and cities of Broussard, Carencro, Duson, Scott, Youngsville, and unincorporated Milton and Ossun. The population of Lafayette Parish as a whole has continued to grow over the years, as shown in Table 1.1.

The city of Lafayette and unincorporated areas of the Parish, which account for about 84 percent of the total parish population, are served by the Lafayette Consolidated Government (LCG).

The City-Parish Consolidated Government Home Rule Charter to join Lafayette Parish with the city of Lafayette was approved by a vote of Lafayette residents in 1992. The charter went into effect in 1996. Other incorporated municipalities within Lafayette Parish (e.g., Broussard, Duson) each have their own elected city council and mayor. LCG is organized with a President-Council government.

While the city of Lafayette has experienced steady growth over the last two decades (1-7% every five years), the number of residents in unincorporated Lafayette Parish has fluctuated. For example, between 2000 and 2005, the unincorporated population decreased by 8%, but then increased by 32% between 2005 and 2010. The decline likely coincides with some rural areas being annexed to municipalities, while the increase reflects cycles of new housing construction and was in part due to Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

The city of Lafayette remains by far the largest municipality in the parish; however, its share of the population is shrinking. In 1993, the city of Lafayette made up 60% of total population, compared with 54% of total population in 2010.



Source: US 2010 Census



Table 1.1 Historic Population Statistics

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010
Demographic Data Source	LA State Treasurer	LA State Treasurer	US Census Bureau	LA State Treasurer	US Census Bureau
City of Broussard Population	3,213	3,751	5,874	7,110	8,197
City of Carencro Population	5,429	5,596	6,120	6,351	7,526
Town of Duson Population	1,465	1,403	1,387	1,432	1,716
City of Lafayette Population	94,440	108,635	110,257	117,653	120,623
City of Lafayette % Change from previous five-year period	-	15%	1%	7%	3%
City of Scott Population	4,912	5,945	7,870	8,517	8,614
City of Youngsville Population	1,195	1,577	3,992	5,641	8,105
Incorporated Total Population	110,654	126,907	135,500	146,704	154,781
Incorporated Municipalities % Change from previous five-year period	-	15%	7%	8%	6%
Unincorporated Municipal Population	54,108	51,398	55,003	50,564	66,797
Unincorporated Municipalities % Change from previous five-year period	-	-	7%	-8%	32%
Total Population	164,762	178,305	190,503	197,268	221,578
Total Population % Change from previous five-year period	-	-5%	7%	4%	12%

Sources: LA State Treasurer, 2000, 2010 Census

HISTORIC AND SOCIAL OVERVIEW

French-speaking Acadians first settled the Lafayette Parish region in the mid-1700s after being uprooted from France and then from what is now known as Nova Scotia, Canada. The term Cajun is a variant of the word Acadian and became commonly used after the Acadians resettled in Louisiana. Another group of new residents, Creoles, descendants of African, West Indian, and European descent, joined the Acadians in the Spanish controlled territory. In 1823, the Louisiana State Legislature established Lafayette Parish naming it for General Lafayette in honor of his contributions to the Revolutionary War. The city of Lafayette was first known as Vermilionville and renamed to Lafayette in 1884.

The region's rich agricultural soils attracted rice and wheat farmers in the 19th and 20th centuries. The rise of the oil industry in the 1930s brought oil industry explorers to Lafayette and the population continued to grow. The growth of education, health care and professional service industries followed and continue to attract new residents.

The Lafayette of today is considered the Capital (recognized by state resolution in 1971) of Acadian history and culture, and blends the traditions of Cajun and Creole cultures, as well as Spanish, Native American, American, and African, in its music, cuisine, festivals, arts, and architecture. According to the US Census, in 2010 approximately 16% of parish residents spoke a language other than English at home. Languages spoken in Lafayette include Cajun French, French Creole, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Lafayette is known as the “Hub City” of southern Louisiana because of its central location within the regional road network, its location at the crossroads of Interstates 10 and 49, and its position as a regional leader in retail, healthcare, technology, oil and gas, and education. The population in Lafayette's trade market area is estimated to be in excess of 600,000 people.

Business and per capita income are strong in the region, in fact in 2011 Business Insider ranked Lafayette as the sixth fastest growing metro area in terms of GDP nationwide. A recent article in CNN Money cites a HIS Global Insight report suggesting that Lafayette will experience “the nation's largest gain in jobs among metropolitan areas, thanks to its booming energy sector.” While job and population growth have remained strong, cost of living and crime rates are relatively low in Lafayette, making the region attractive to new residents and businesses.

In addition, Lafayette—considered by many the center of Acadian and Cajun and Creole culture—is a strong magnet for regional and national tourism. More than 1 million tourists visit the area every year. The region's unique culture is highlighted through Lafayette's museums, restaurants, and renowned music, festivals and other events, and its people are celebrated for their “joie de vivre” – or joy of living.

REGIONAL PARTICIPATION

Lafayette Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)

As the transportation planning organization for the Lafayette Urbanized Area, the Lafayette MPO is governed by the Lafayette City-Parish Council. The MPO has several standing committees (e.g., Transportation Technical Committee, Policy Committee) that provide guidance to the MPO and staff. In addition, a 12-member Citizens Advisory Committee makes recommendations on issues concerning all aspects of the MPO. Citizen members are appointed by Lafayette City-Parish Council members, City-Parish President, and the south and north area Mayors.

Acadiana Regional Development District

Lafayette Parish is part of the Acadiana Regional Development District, one of eight planning districts in Louisiana. The District includes the Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, and Vermilion parishes. The District's mission is to strengthen the regional economy, develop partnerships, and improve collaboration and planning. Programs are focused on business assistance, rural businesses, economic development, and brownfield redevelopment. As a designated Economic Development District, the region is eligible for certain credits under the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) funded programs and planning. To date, Lafayette has not fully leveraged its involvement in the Acadiana Regional Development District.

Lafayette and Lake Charles are the largest cities in the Acadiana Regional Development District. Many businesses, non-profit organizations, schools, and television/radio outlets are identified with the name Acadiana.





Society and Economy

Lafayette Parish experienced Louisiana's 6th greatest rate of population growth between 2000 and 2010. The parish is expected to grow by an average of 1% annually, or 19.1% total, from 2010 to 2030, adding approximately 36,700 persons.

While parishwide population growth has been strong in the past, it has been geographically uneven: some areas in the city core lost population while outlying areas grew substantially.

Even after the economic recession, Lafayette Parish's unemployment rate of 4.3% remained well below that of the state (7.1%) and the U.S. (8.2%) as of April 2012.

While the overall ethnic and racial breakdown of the population has not changed drastically, some groups (Hispanics and Asians) have seen dramatic proportional growth. The population is becoming more diverse.

48% of the largest employers in Lafayette Parish (defined as more than 100 employees) are in the Oil & Gas or Healthcare sectors.

At a Glance

Society and Economy

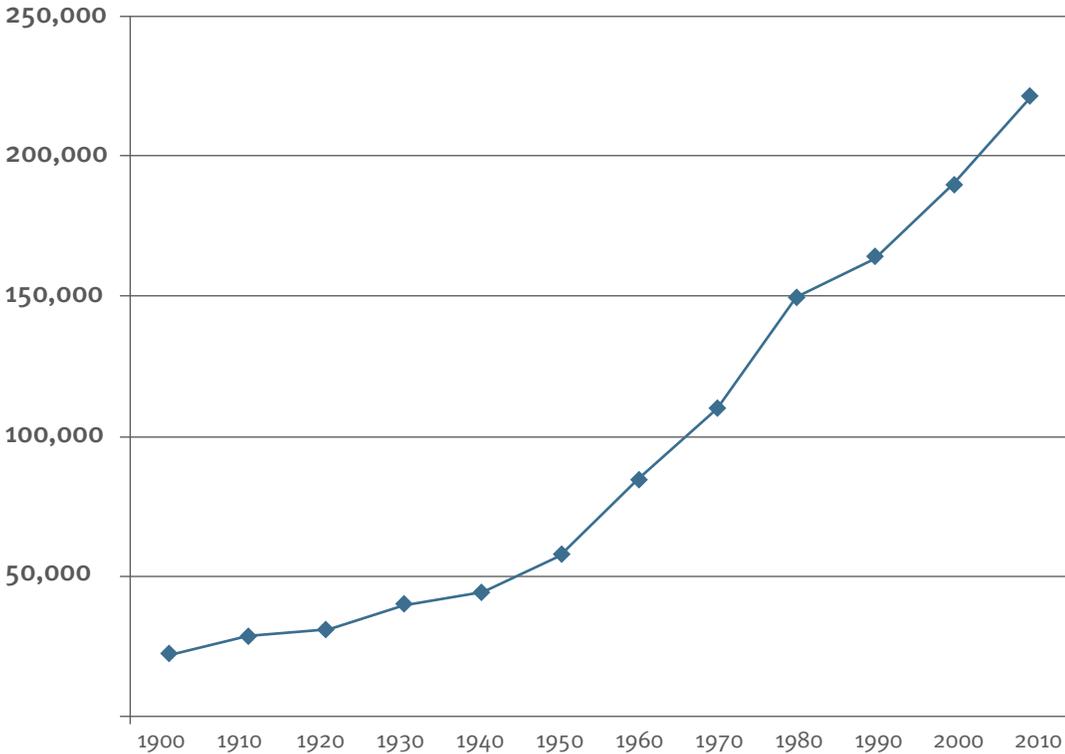
POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLDS

Population

For 110 years, Lafayette Parish has undergone steady, rapid growth. During this long period, the parish almost unfailingly outpaced both the state’s and the nation’s population growth every decade². In the early 1900s, the city of Lafayette was similar in size to surrounding towns. Over the last century, city of Lafayette’s pace of growth quickly exceeded nearby towns. There is nothing on the horizon to suggest that the parish will not continue to outperform the nation and state as a whole for the foreseeable future.

The graph below shows the long term historic growth of Lafayette Parish between 1900 and 2010. In 2010 the population in Lafayette Parish was 221,578.

Lafayette Parish Historic Population Growth, 1900-2010

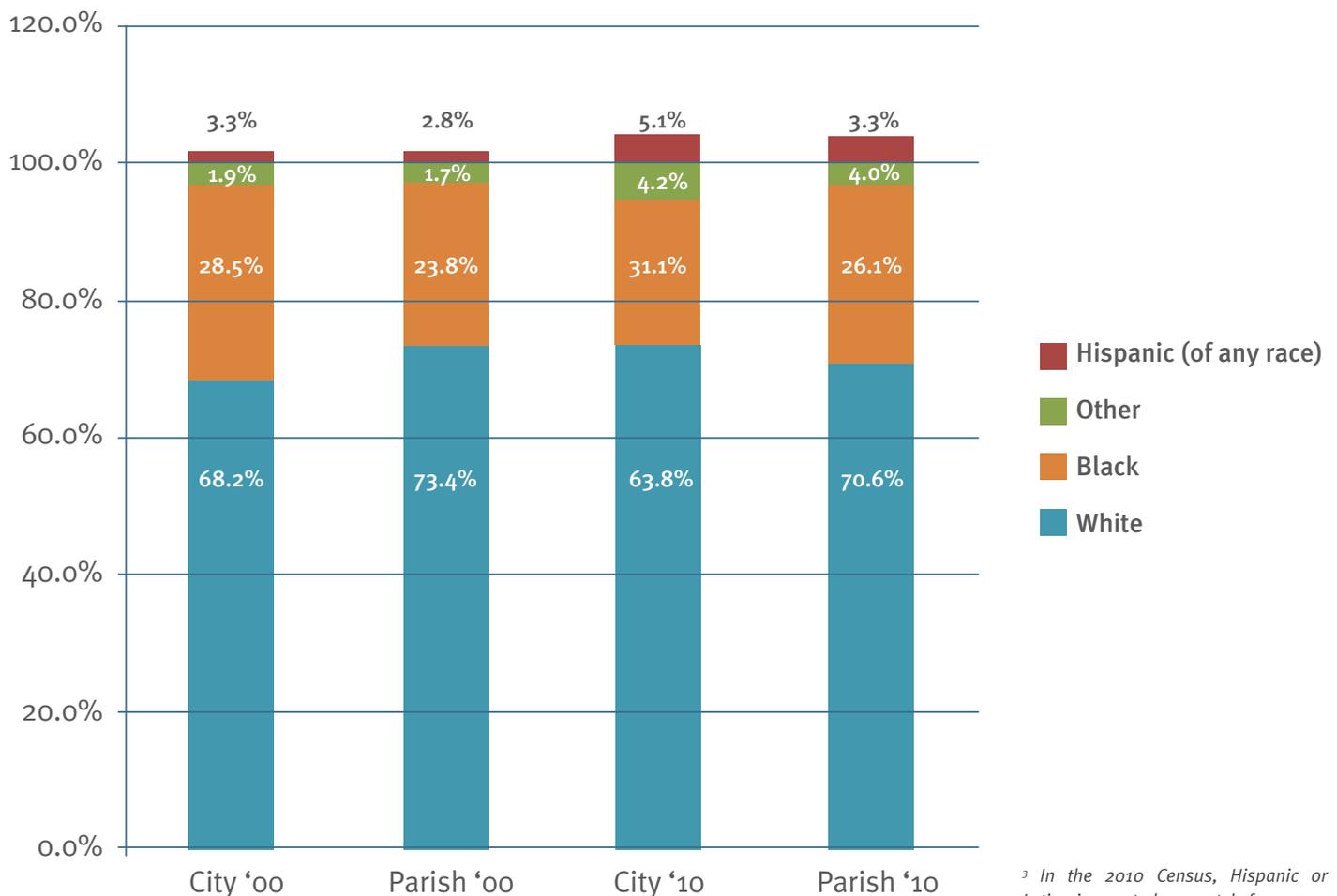


² With the exception of one decade in the early 1900’s, when Louisiana as a whole grew faster than Lafayette.

In terms of racial and ethnic makeup, residents in both the parish and the city have not changed dramatically over the past several decades – as shown below. In the parish, nearly 70 percent of residents are White, 26 percent African American, and the remaining 4 percent Asian or of mixed descent. While persons of Hispanic origin make up slightly less than 4 percent of total parish residents, the Hispanic population grew the most drastically by almost 159 percent from 2000 to 2010.³ In the city, white population dropped nearly 4 percentage points from 2000 to 2010 and is currently 64 percent, while the African American population increased more than 2 percentage points to 31 percent. Similar to that of the parish, percentage of Hispanic population increased significantly during the past decade.

Age-wise, a large share of the population of Lafayette Parish is relatively young. According to the American Community Survey, the parish’s median age estimated between 2006 and 2010 was 33.2 years. In 2010, the largest population cohorts were those that include young adults between ages 20-24 and 25-29, followed by those between ages 45-49 and 50-54. Youths under the age of 18 represent more than 24 percent of the population, indicating a large number of families⁴.

Racial & Ethnic Composition – Lafayette Parish and City (2000 & 2010)



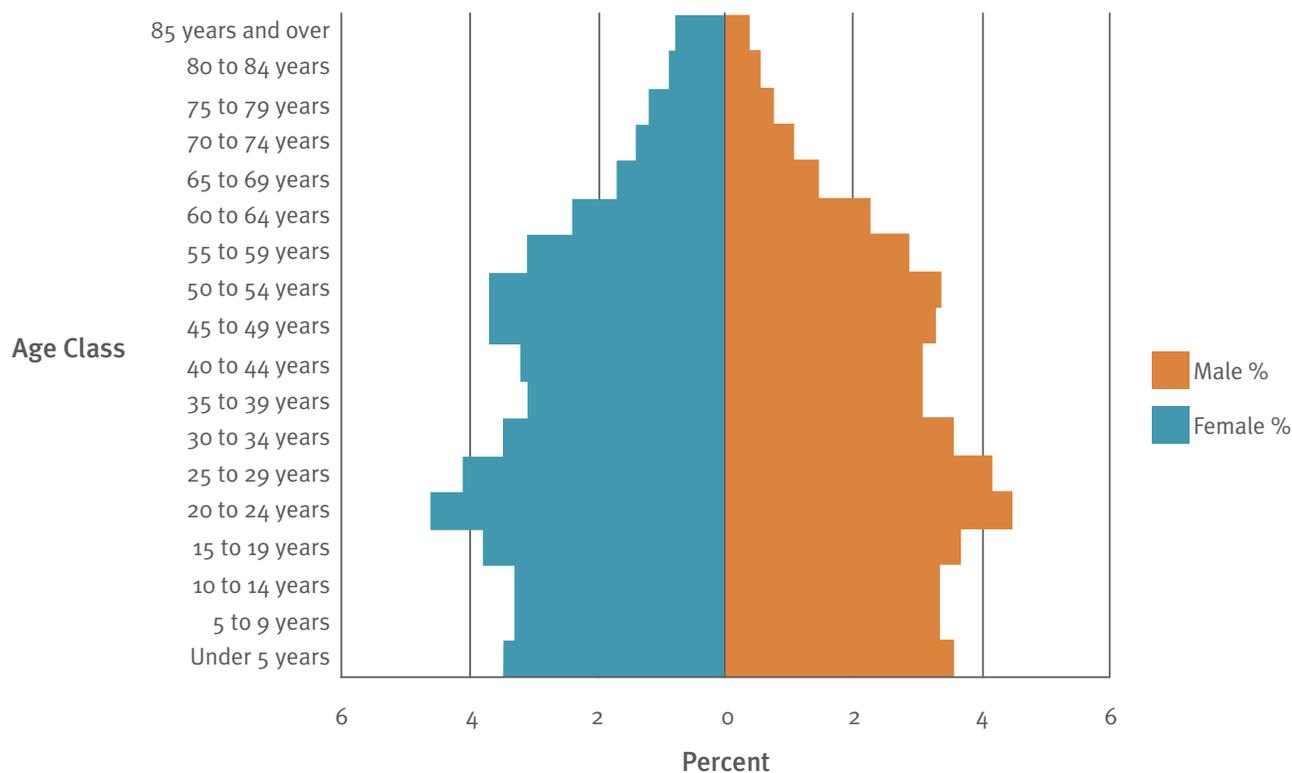
³ In the 2010 Census, Hispanic or Latino is counted separately from race. A person could select any race and Hispanic / Latino, which is why the graph exceeds 100%.

⁴ 2010 U.S. Census data for median age and number of families have not been yet released.

While population continues to increase parishwide, geographically growth varies widely. Several census tracts saw actual decline during the last decade. The following map shows the change in population by census tract in Lafayette Parish between 2000 and 2010. Some areas in the core of the city saw population loss while many of the outlying areas experienced substantial growth. The city of Youngsville experienced the greatest boom during the past decade, increasing its population by 103 percent from 3,992 to 8,105. Broussard and Carencro follow with 39.5 percent from 5,874 to 8,197 and 23 percent from 6,120 to 7,526 decennial growth, respectively. Scott grew by 9.5 percent from 7,870 to 8,614.

In 2010, the largest population cohorts were those between 20-29 years and 45-54 years of age. Females outnumber the males in all these cohorts.

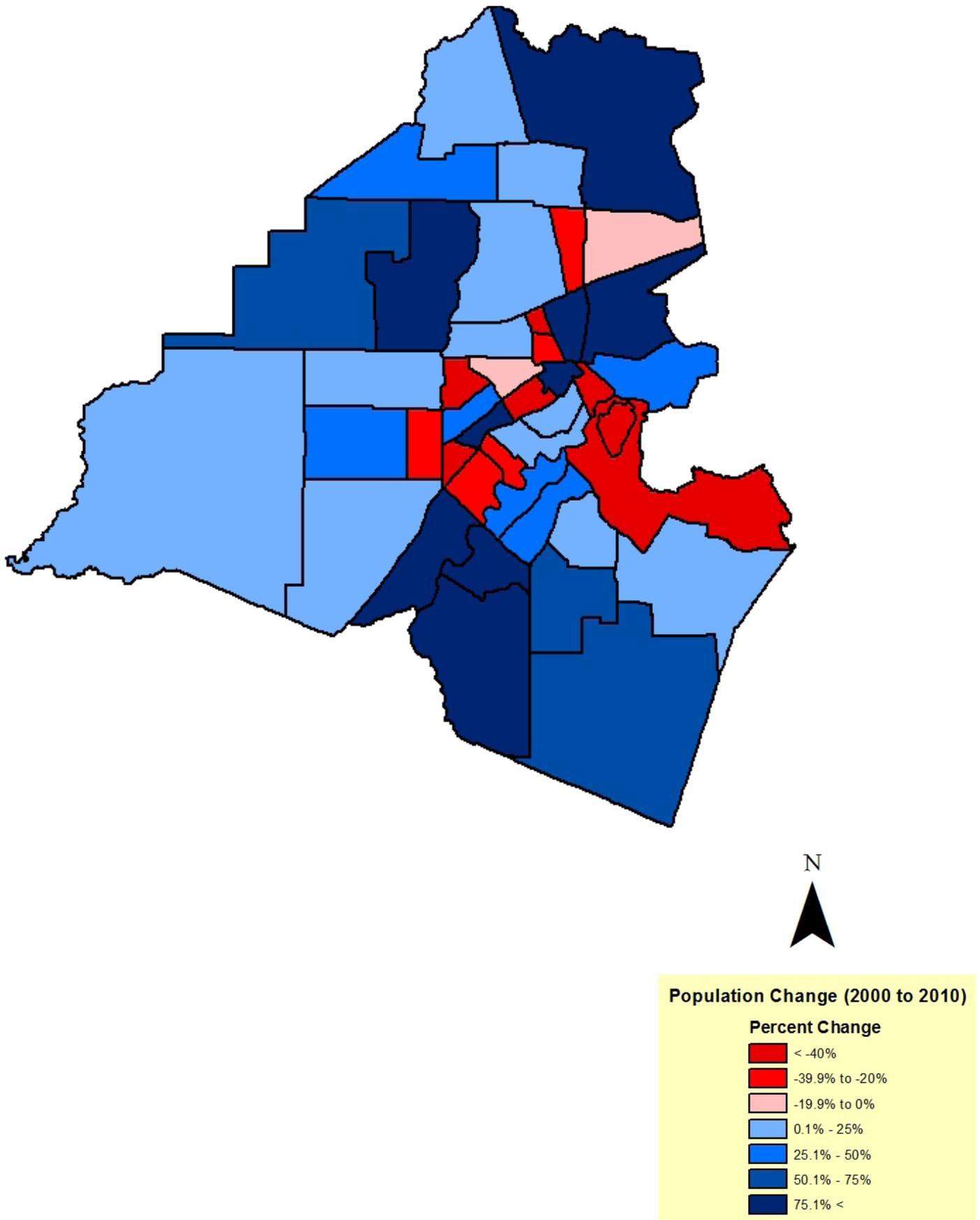
Population Pyramid for Lafayette Parish, 2010



Source: US Census

Figure 2.1 Lafayette Parish, Change in Population (2000-2010)

Source: US Census



Households

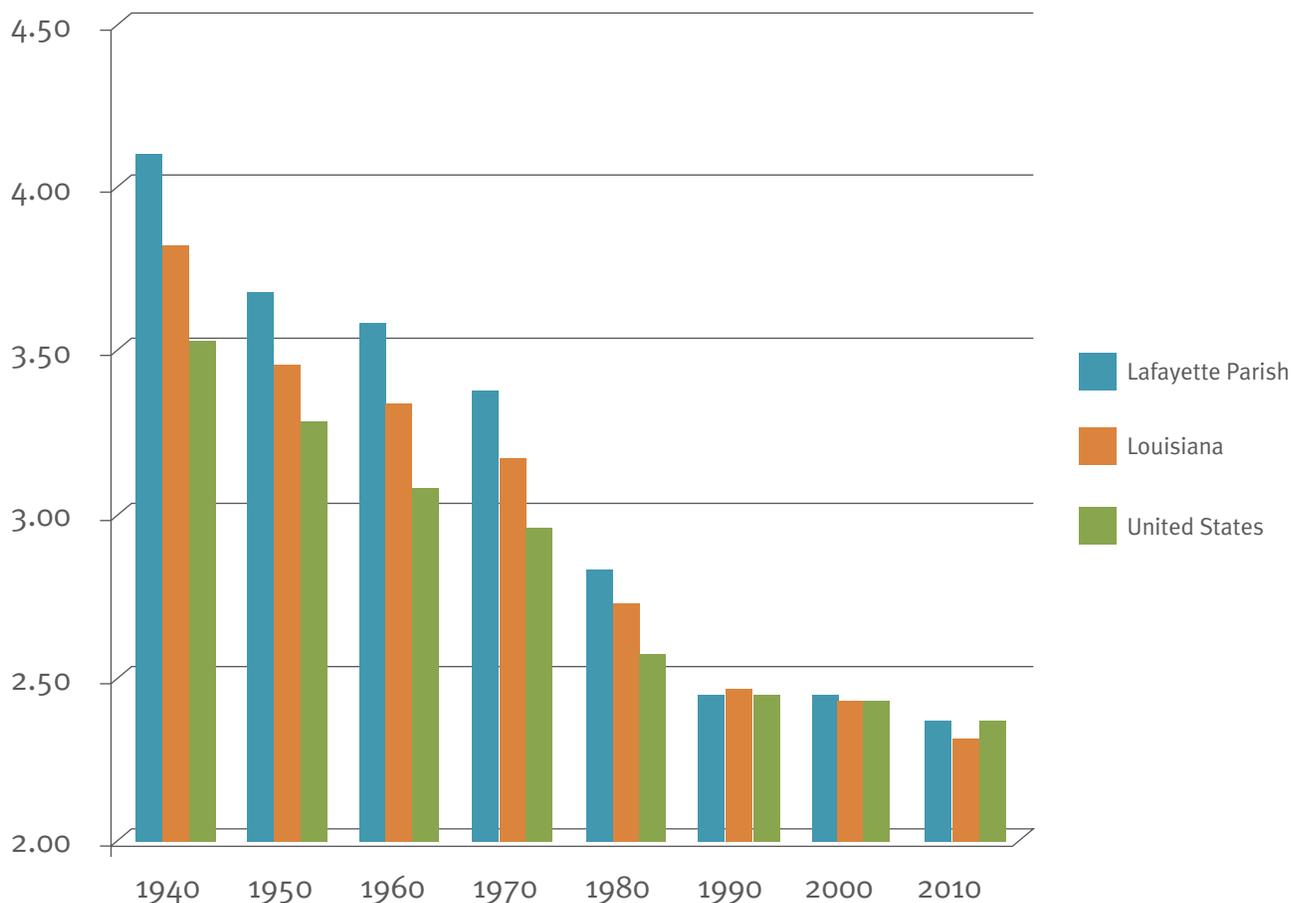
As was the case with population, the number of households in every decade at least since World War II has grown at a faster rate in Lafayette Parish, than in Louisiana or the nation as a whole. The number of households increased by nearly sevenfold between 1940 and 2000 and by another 20 percent between 2000 and 2010 (from 73,372 to 87,027 households).

Over the last century, the number of persons per unit in Lafayette Parish dropped from 16 percent above the national average before World War II to being nearly indistinguishable from the national average today. In comparison to many other metropolitan areas, Lafayette's relatively affordable land and housing and strong employment growth has allowed more residents (e.g., new families, seniors) to purchase or rent their own homes. Perhaps even more importantly, families have been choosing to have fewer children, resulting in smaller households.

As long as housing remains affordable to the population and the economy remains strong, housing growth is expected to continue to grow at an equal pace. This is distinct from less affordable metropolitan areas where lack of affordability slows housing unit demand and residents either live farther away from the city center or wait longer to form their own households.

The number of households in the parish increased by 20 percent between 2000 and 2010.

Persons Per Unit, 1940-2010



EMPLOYMENT AND LABOR

In 2000, the unemployment rate in Louisiana and the Lafayette Parish was 5.0 percent and 3.8 percent, respectively. By 2007, the unemployment rate in Louisiana declined to 3.8 percent, while Lafayette Parish went down to 2.7 percent. Following the national (and global) economic recession that started in 2007 and the impact of Hurricane Katrina—the state’s unemployment rate registered 8.2 percent in beginning year 2010, while Lafayette Parish reported unemployment just under 6.0 percent. Since that time, unemployment in Lafayette Parish has steadily declined, reaching 4.3 percent in April 2012. This is well below the current state (7.1 percent) and national (8.2 percent) unemployment rates.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Unemployment Rate*

4.3%

City of Lafayette, LA

6.4%

Baton Rouge, LA

5.5%

Austin, TX

5.7%

Huntsville, AL

7.1%

Chattanooga, TN

* Bureau of Labor Statistics as of April 2012

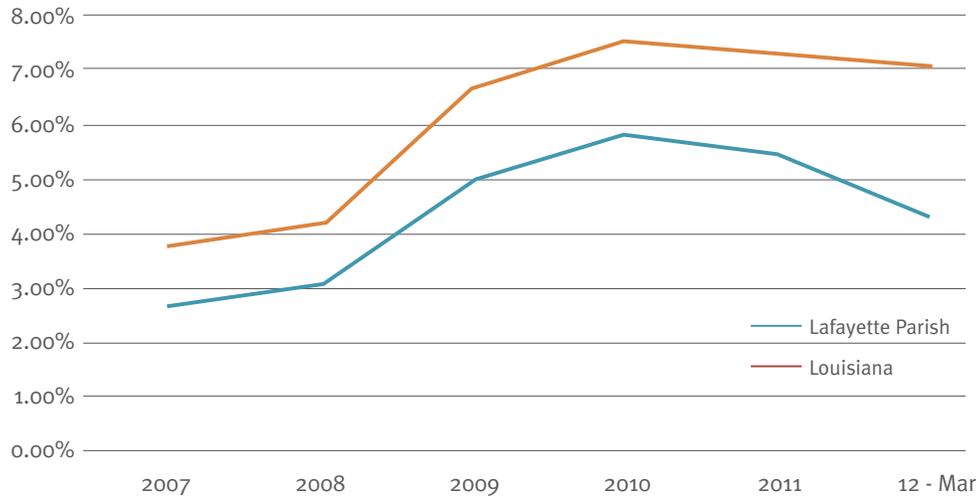
In terms of total labor force, the Lafayette Regional Labor Market Area (RLMA) –including Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary and Vermilion Parishes— has a total employment base of approximately 279,000, of which nearly 95 percent is private sector employment (264,000).⁵ Lafayette Parish’s private industry employment base comprises a total of 132,600 jobs, or 50 percent of the RLMA. As summarized below, the state, Lafayette RLMA and Lafayette Parish experienced solid private sector employment growth in 2007 and 2008, before declining to negative (or zero) growth in 2009 and 2010. Through Q2 2011, the state and Lafayette region has once again shifted to positive employment growth.

⁵ Louisiana Workforce Commission – Employment and Wages 2011. Note: Employment data for 2011 as noted herein is based upon Q2 2011 employment data.



Lafayette’s regional (MSA) private sector jobs are expected to grow by nearly 35,000 between 2008 and 2018.

Lafayette Parish and Louisiana Unemployment Rate Trend



Source: US Department of Labor

HOW DO WE COMPARE?
Percentage of Residents with Bachelor's or Master's Degree*

City of Lafayette, LA

Bachelor's 23%
Master's 6.3%

Austin, TX

Bachelor's 27.9%
Master's 10.9%

Chattanooga, TN

Bachelor's 17.5%
Master's 5.2%

Baton Rouge, LA

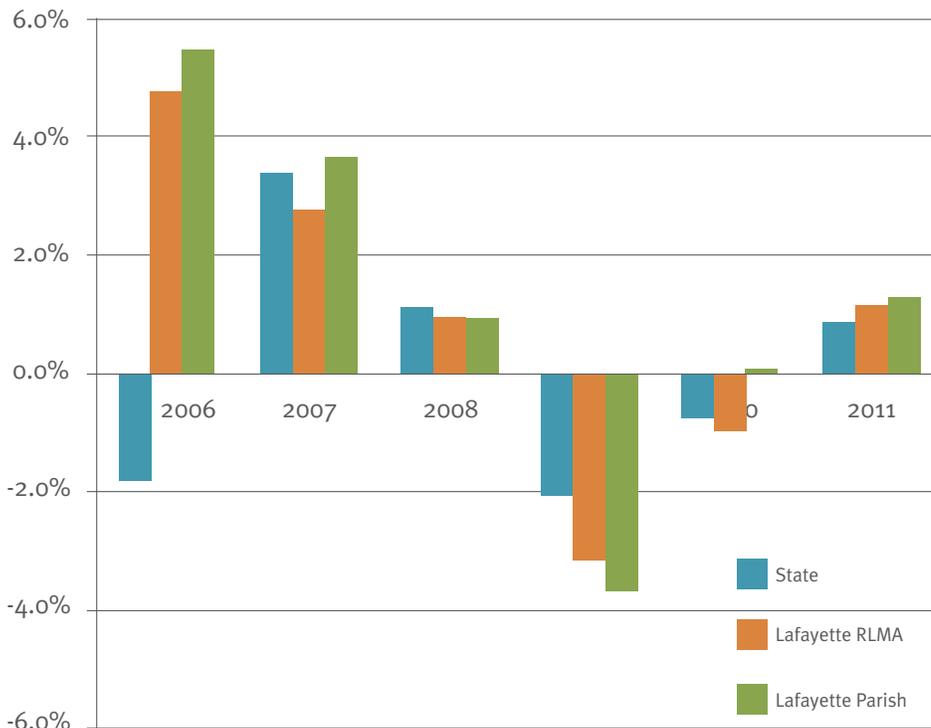
Bachelor's 23.9%
Master's 7.9%

Huntsville, AL

Bachelor's 24.2%
Master's 9.6%

* Census, ACS, 5-year estimates, Census, 2010.

Louisiana, Lafayette RLMA, and Lafayette Parish % Change in Total Private Sector Employment 2006-2011



Source: Louisiana Workforce Commission

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Overall Job Growth (2007-2011)*

2.17%

City of Lafayette, LA

-2.66%

Baton Rouge, LA

3.92%

Austin, TX

-3.5%

Huntsville, AL

-5.65%

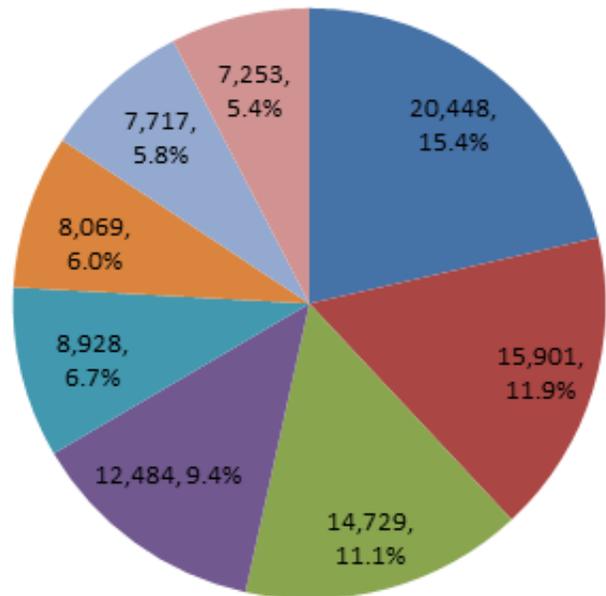
Chattanooga, TN

* Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012.



The eight largest private industry sectors represent more than 70 percent of total private sector employment in Lafayette Parish, with Health Care/Social Assistance (20,448) and Retail Trade (15,901) comprising the largest industry sectors. The following chart identifies employment among the largest industry sectors in Lafayette Parish along with their percentage of total private sector employment.

Lafayette Parish - Breakdown of 8 Largest Private Industry Sectors, 2011

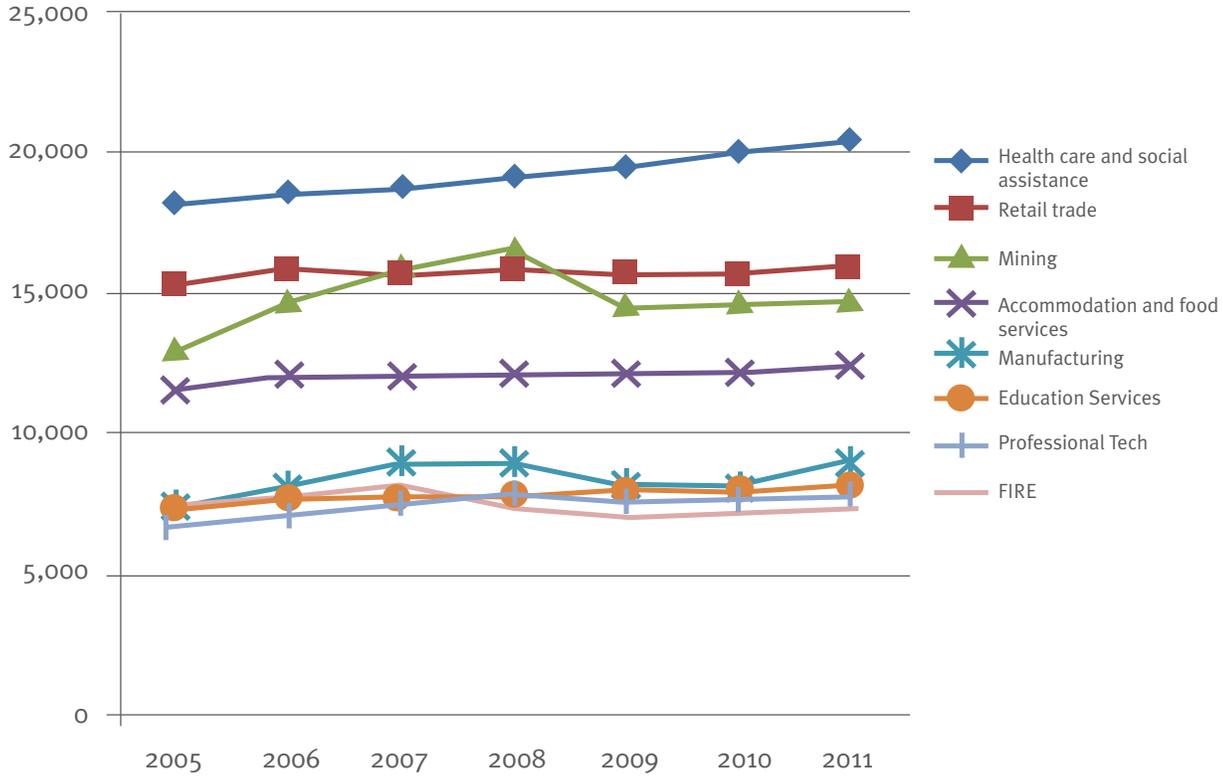


Source: Louisiana Workforce Commission

- Health care and social assistance
- Retail trade
- Mining
- Accommodation and food services
- Manufacturing
- Educational services
- Professional and technical services
- Finance Insurance and Real Estate

The Professional and Technical Services, Health Care/Social Assistance and Manufacturing sectors were among the strongest growth sectors from 2005 to 2011, while all other major sectors remained relatively unchanged or experienced slight negative growth.

Lafayette Parish Private Industry Sector Growth Trends (2005-2011)



Source: Louisiana Workforce Commission

HOW DO WE COMPARE? Percentage of Households Below Poverty level*

16.9%

City of Lafayette, LA

17.3%

Austin, TX

19.7%

Chattanooga, TN

26%

Huntsville, AL

17.7%

Huntsville, AL

* Census, ACS, 5-year estimates, Census, 2010.

HOW DO WE COMPARE? Cost of Living Index*

99.2%

City of Lafayette, LA

95.5%

Austin, TX

91.1%

Chattanooga, TN

91.2%

Huntsville, AL

* ACCRA Cost of Living Index. 100 is the average score for the ACCRA Cost of Living Index, 2012.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Percentage of Population who is uninsured*

18%

Parish of Lafayette, LA

17%

East Baton Rouge Parish
(Baton Rouge, LA)

24%

Travis County (Austin, TX)

13%

Madison County (Huntsville, AL)

15%

Hamilton County
(Chattanooga, TN)

* County Health Rankings
and Roadmaps, [www.
countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org)

The median household income in Lafayette Parish is \$47,559, which is slightly higher than the median household income in the city of Lafayette (\$43,913) and the State of Louisiana (\$43,445), according to the American Community Survey 5-year estimates. It may be that recent housing construction outside of the city is attracting households with higher incomes.

The percentage of households living below poverty level in the parish is 16.4 percent, compared with 16.9 percent in the city of Lafayette, 18 percent in the state, and 13.8 percent in the nation. This rate is lower than the state and comparable cities. Lafayette's relatively low employment rates and strong economy help to keep poverty rates down; however, many residents struggle to afford food, housing, and healthcare. LCG and community and social service organizations, such as Lafayette Catholic Services, United Way, Acadiana C.A.R.E.S, and religious organizations, are working to help families, children, and other residents in need of services. The percentage of Lafayette's population with higher education degrees is greater than the state average and on par with comparable communities. Growing enrollment in local technical, college, and universities suggests that educational levels will continue to increase.

Based on several different health indicators (e.g., related to disease, lifestyles, health care, social and environmental factors, and the physical environment) Lafayette Parish ranks 6th in the state for overall healthy communities. The parish rates in the top ten in part due to its access to clinical care, relatively high education attainment, and low unemployment. However, Lafayette ranks lower than national benchmarks for adult obesity, teen pregnancy rates, poor physical health days, and access to fresh foods.

Challenges to the national and international competitiveness of major industries in the parish include the limitations on passenger air travel, the quality of education, and the lack of economic diversity.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Residents who are overweight / obese*

29%

Parish of Lafayette, LA

32%

East Baton Rouge Parish
(Baton Rouge, LA)

25%

Travis County (Austin, TX)

31%

Madison County (Huntsville, AL)

30%

Hamilton County
(Chattanooga, TN)

* County Health Rankings
and Roadmaps, [www.
countyhealthrankings.org](http://www.countyhealthrankings.org)

According to the Louisiana Workforce Commission employment projections (which is provided at the RLMA level only), Lafayette’s regional total private sector is projected to add nearly 35,000 jobs between 2008 and 2018 (or an average of 3,500 new jobs per year and 1.2 percent annual growth), while the public sector is expected to add an additional 2,059 total jobs (or 205 per year). For the largest industry sectors, Health Care/Social Assistance is projected to achieve the strongest growth (2.3 percent per annum), followed by Mining (1.7 percent per annum) and Accommodations/Food Service (1.4 percent per annum).

Major Employers

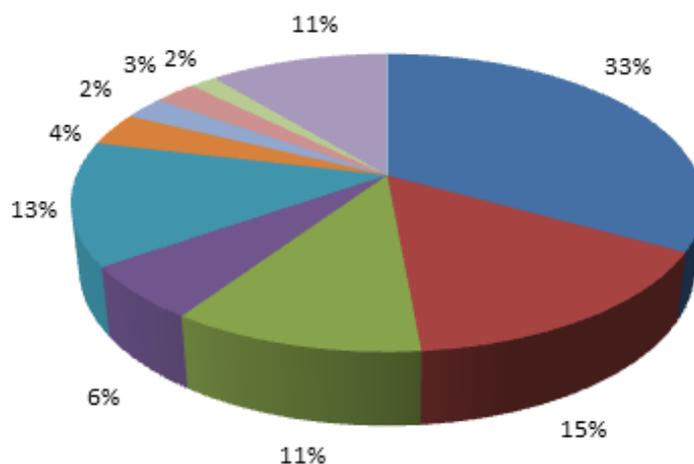
Beyond the School Board, Lafayette Consolidated Government, and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, the next ten largest employers in Lafayette (with the exception of Wal-Mart) were in the Health, Manufacturing, or Oil & Gas industries. Indeed, and with the exception of several retailers, these three industries dominate the list of largest employers in the parish. There are 160 employers in the parish with more than 100 employees. Taken as a whole, *these 160 employers represent over 40 percent of total non-farm employment in the parish.* The following graph shows the breakdown of the largest employers by industry based upon the number of employees in each industry group.

Economic Base

Consistent with Lafayette Economic Development Authority’s (LEDA) strategy and analysis, the long term health of the local economy is most likely going to be driven by four primary industries. These primary industries are: healthcare, energy, higher education, and arts and entertainment. These growth industries tap into the unique culture of Lafayette and its role in advanced manufacturing, which will build upon Lafayette’s strengths in energy and higher education sectors.

Lafayette is a leading regional healthcare and international energy center and these two industries will continue to provide the underlying economic support for the growth in the community. The creative industries including film, art, museums continue to emerge and are heavily associated with the culture of Lafayette and the surrounding region.

Lafayette Parish Employment by Industry Companies with Greater than 100 Workers (2011)



Source: Lafayette Economic Development Authority (LEDA)

- Oil & Gas
- Health Care
- Education
- Public Administration
- Retail & Services
- Transportation
- Wholesale Trade
- Manufacturing
- Telecommunications
- Other

The Professional and Technical Services, Health Care/Social Assistance and Manufacturing sectors saw the strongest growth from 2005 to 2011. The creative industries including Film, Art, and Museums continue to rise, and are heavily associated with the culture of Lafayette and the surrounding region.

Advanced manufacturing is an offshoot of the energy industry and the presence of higher education in the community. Lafayette is known worldwide for its oil and gas extraction technology innovation and equipment manufacturing. As a result, this engineering and inventive know-how is applicable to other manufacturing sectors as well, to the extent that focus is placed on helping companies make the transition or expand beyond their current core energy related manufacturing business.

Several significant concerns exist regarding the community's ability to continue to be internationally and regionally competitive as it relates to a number of major industries in the parish. These include:

- Limited and relatively expensive passenger air access , which diminishes the ability of members of the business community to easily travel nationally and internationally in comparison such as:

- Concern about elementary and secondary education not producing ready-to-work support staff; and,
- Lack of diversity in the economy and general size of the job market, making it difficult to attract top recruits with families (particularly in the healthcare industry) where a spouse also is maintaining a career and has difficulty finding a well-paying position in their field of expertise.

Airport	# of Carriers	Enplane PAX (2011)	Enplane per County/Parish Resident	Deplane PAX (2011)	Deplane per County/Parish Resident	Low Cost Carriers
Lafayette (LFT)	3	228,000	1.02	227,000	1.01	0
Austin (AUS)	9	4.2M	3.95	4.2M	3.95	4
Chattanooga (CHA)	4	305,000	0.89	305,000	0.89	1
Huntsville (HSV)	4	632,000	1.86	632,000	1.86	0

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

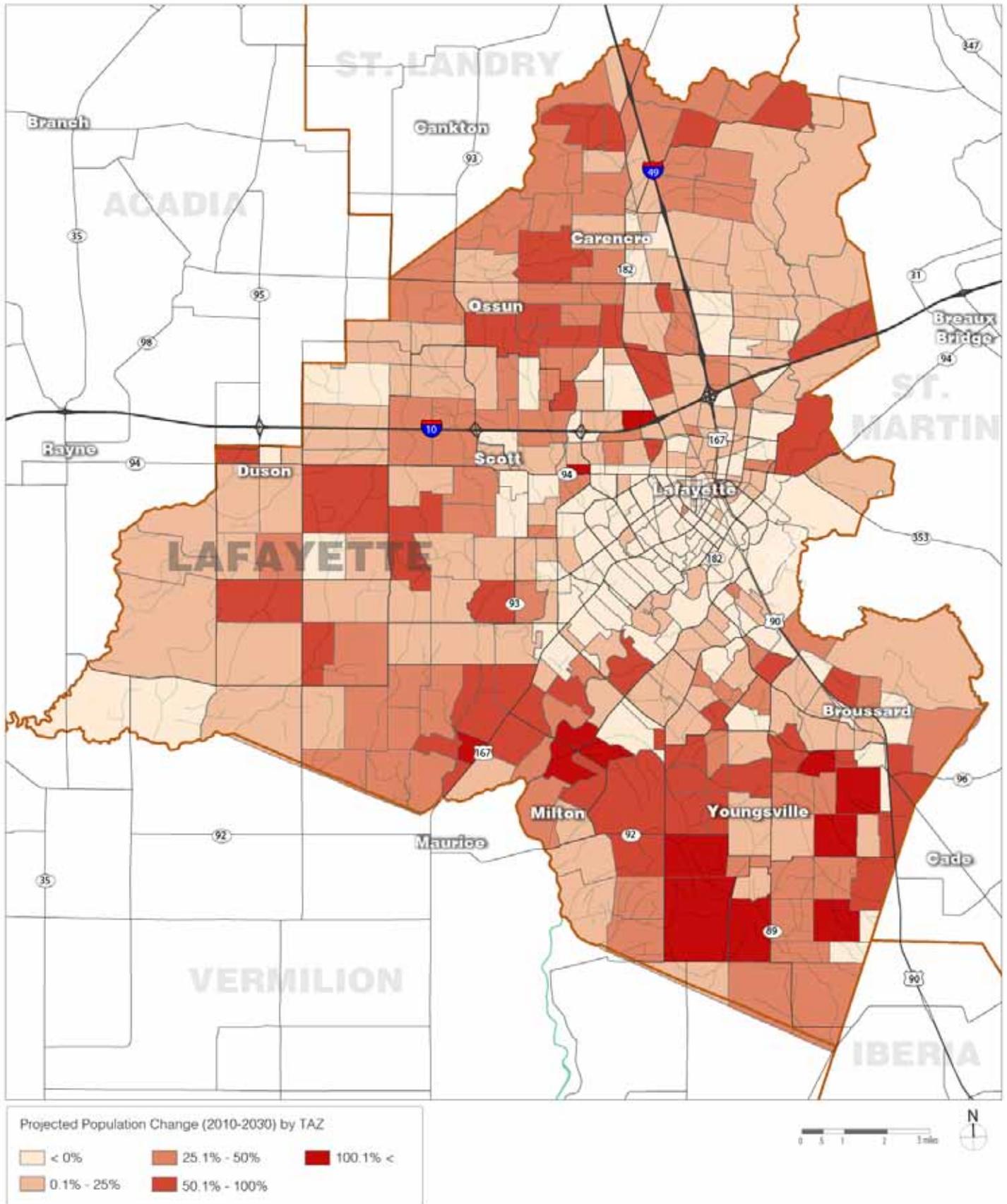
The following map shows the projected population change by Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) between 2010 and 2030 based upon a 2003 estimate completed by a demographer under contract to LCG.⁶ Overall population in Lafayette Parish was projected to grow from 212,442 in 2010 to 249,145 in 2030 or by 17.3 percent. The actual Parish population according to the 2010 Census was higher than projected at 221,578.

The trend in Lafayette has been that the overall Parish is growing at a faster rate than the city of Lafayette. Under the 2003 model the core urban areas of the city were expected to continue to lose population (as illustrated in Figure 2-2). However, given rising transportation costs and the changing housing and lifestyle preferences favoring urban settings these areas are expected to gain population over the plan horizon. Population estimates for 2011 show the same annual growth rate (1.3 percent) for the parish and city. Still, the presence of low cost land and affordable housing will continue to encourage families to principally locate in suburban areas of the parish for the foreseeable future. The analysis of growth, and its impact on Lafayette, will be updated as the new population projections become available.

While parishwide population growth has been strong in the past, it has been geographically uneven: some areas in the city core lost population while outlying areas grew substantially.

⁶ It should be noted these projections are currently being updated by a demographer by TAZ with the benefit of 2010 Census results.

Figure 2-2 Lafayette Parish, Percent Change in Population Projections (2010-2030)







Community Form

Nearly 41% of all of the housing in Lafayette Parish was developed in the 1970s and 1980s.

Many of the parish's 30,454 occupied rental units are clustered within the city core and around the University of Louisiana at Lafayette campus.

Almost 66% of all housing units in the parish are single-family (detached or attached).

The highest percentage (40%) of land use in the city of Lafayette is single-family residential, while the smallest is mixed-use development.

More than 2,600 subdivision lots have been approved since 2000.

At a Glance

Community Form

LAND USE

Lafayette Parish includes a diverse set of land uses within the city of Lafayette, its surrounding cities, and unincorporated Lafayette Parish. Two distinct, concentric rings of land use are evident in the parish, reflecting the history of Lafayette through the progression of development patterns. Inside, an established, compact urban core with concentrations of commercial, industrial, and institutional uses, and dense though predominantly single-family neighborhoods is seen. Outside, the landscape in the unincorporated parish is rural, undeveloped or used for agriculture, interspersed with single-family residences and a smattering of industrial uses.

In fact, the predominant land use in Lafayette Parish is agriculture. In unincorporated areas, agriculture makes up about 54% of land, or more than 58,000 acres (see Table 3.1). According to the 2007 Census of Agriculture, Lafayette Parish had 713 farms in over 67,000 acres, the majority of which were used for cropland. In addition, the location of an oil or gas well on a property does not necessarily change its classification, and many properties with oil or gas wells remain classified as agriculture or undeveloped.

Development has recently started to spread away from the urban core and into these rural areas—particularly along the southern reaches of the parish. Commercial and industrial uses are following suit, radiating along the major roadway corridors toward the sprawling new subdivisions. The scattered growth pattern (which increases traffic and infrastructure costs, as well as poses potential conflicts between users) is beginning to jeopardize the viability of agricultural land uses and the Parish’s rural character.

The scattered growth pattern (which increases traffic and infrastructure costs, as well as poses potential conflicts between users) is beginning to jeopardize the viability of agricultural land uses and the Parish’s rural character.

Table 3.1 - Land Use Breakdown

LAND USE CATEGORY	City and Unincorporated Parish		City of Lafayette		Unincorporated Lafayette Parish	
	Acres	%	Acres	%	Acres	%
Agriculture	60,721	44%	1,836	6%	58,886	54%
Commercial	5,219	4%	4,218	14%	1,001	1%
Industrial	3,413	2%	1,495	5%	1,918	2%
Institutional / Public or Semi-Public	2,273	2%	1,746	6%	527	0.5%
Single Family Residential	33,421	24%	11,943	40%	21,478	20%
Multi-Family Residential	1,165	1%	986	3%	179	0.2%
Mixed Use	9	0%	9	0%	-	-
Mobile Home	2,763	2%	156	1%	2,607	2%
Public Park / Recreation	1,239	1%	962	3%	277	0.3%
Transportation / Utilities	3,392	2%	1,691	6%	1,701	2%
Undeveloped	25,174	18%	4,555	15%	20,620	19%
Water	765	1%	231	1%	534	0.5%
Total	139,555	100%	29,827	100%	109,728	100%

Source: LCG GIS, 2012

Residential land uses make up about 25% of LCG’s total area. Of this, low density residential development comprises the vast majority. This land use is concentrated in the city of Lafayette, but it can also be found scattered throughout the parish’s unincorporated communities. Development pressure is highest in the southern half of the parish (see Figure 3-3). The cost of providing and maintaining infrastructure associated with new development in unincorporated areas has increased the financial burden of local governments to pay for and maintain infrastructure and transportation improvements.

In general, the parish lacks traditional development patterns which are often characterized by a mix of uses within walking distance of one another. Residential neighborhoods that integrate or are within walking distance of parks, schools, commercial uses, or employment centers are a minority. In some cases, where neighborhoods are in close proximity to services, street connections or sidewalks are lacking.

The mix of land use in downtown Lafayette consists mostly of commercial and institutional uses, with limited residential or mixed-use development options. There are a few exceptions in the older neighborhoods in and around downtown. Many of the parish’s historic buildings and sites are located downtown. Given downtown’s importance as an economic and cultural center for the region, a separate analysis of land uses and related issues is being prepared as part of the Downtown Strategic Framework.

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette campus is located directly south of and adjacent to downtown and includes a mix of educational, residential, and commercial land uses. The recently completed University of Louisiana at Lafayette Master Plan (2011) is the guiding document for future development and redevelopment of the university. A major objective of the master plan is to weave together two currently separate districts (Academic Campus and the University Commons) and the proposed Lourdes Hospital Zone (if acquired) into one cohesive campus through improvements to land use mix, the pedestrian and transit experience, open space, and transportation and parking.

Major commercial corridors that spread out from downtown Lafayette along major transportation arterials (see Figure 3-1) include highway commercial and other auto-oriented uses. In addition, industrial land uses (including the Lafayette Regional Airport) make up about 5% of the city of Lafayette and 2% of unincorporated Lafayette Parish. These uses are concentrated primarily along US 90 southeast of the airport along the edge of the parish, as well in a “node” westward of the urban core, also along US 90. Even though industrial uses tend to cluster together in hubs, there are instances, especially in the unincorporated area, where lack of zoning and appropriate buffering or separation requirements have resulted in excessive proximity between industrial and residential neighborhoods, with attendant conflicts. Undeveloped land is a large land use category in the city and unincorporated areas. This category includes land in transition that has been platted but not yet developed.



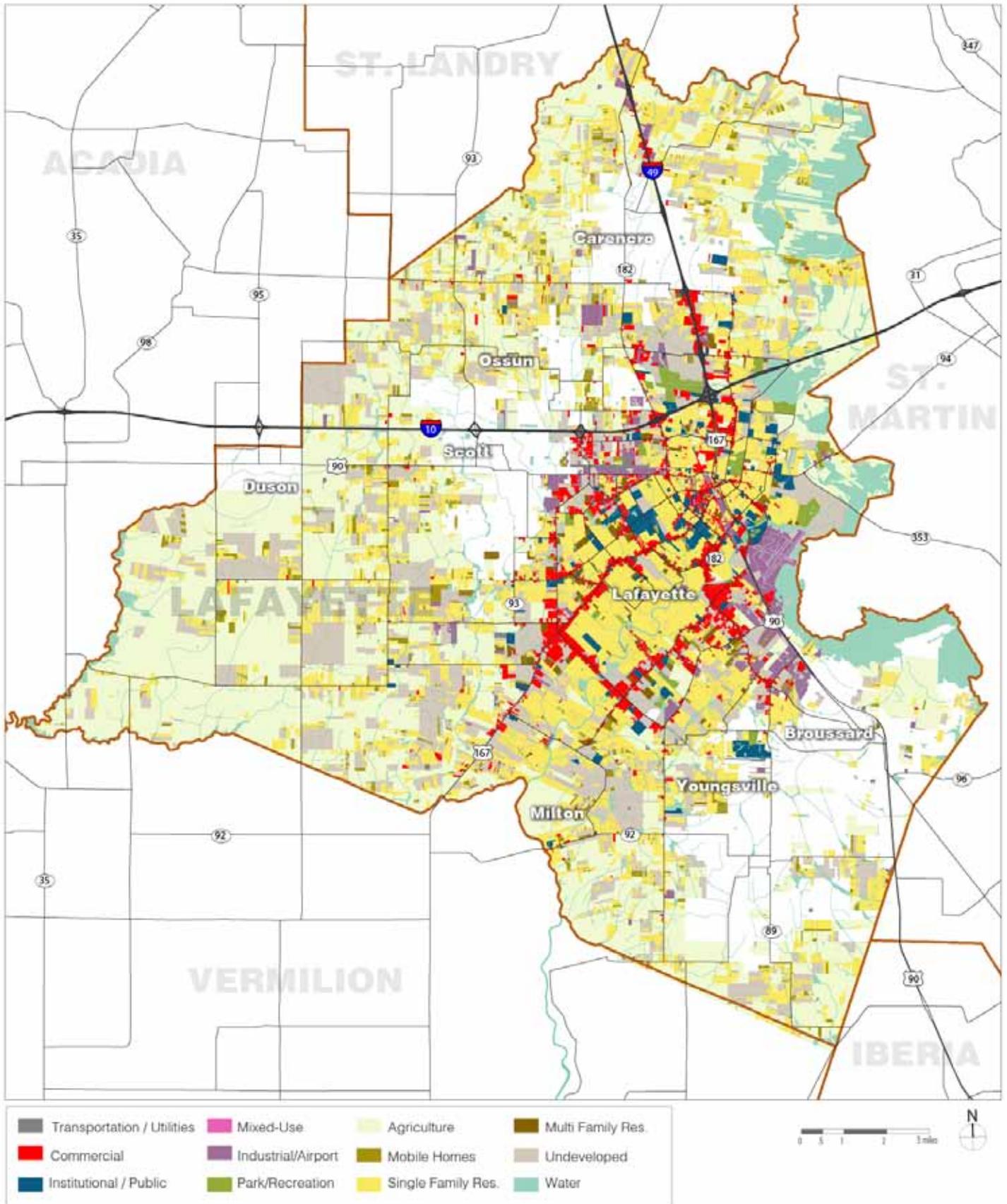
Public open space and recreational uses make up about 3% of land area in the city of Lafayette and less than 1% of unincorporated areas. In the city, recreational open space equates to about 8 acres per 1,000 residents (calculated using GIS), which is below national guidelines of roughly 10 acres per 1,000 residents. Most open space is concentrated in the city of Lafayette or neighboring jurisdictions, with virtually no public open space in the parish’s unincorporated areas (see Figure 3-1). Note that the Horse Farm property is not included in this calculation. The eastern boundary of the parish is formed by forested wetlands and shrublands.



The majority (54%) of the land in unincorporated Lafayette Parish is in agricultural use. The second largest land use category is single-family residential (20%) .



Figure 3-1 Existing Land Use



Existing Zoning

The city of Lafayette has zoning regulations, while unincorporated areas of the parish are regulated through the parish’s subdivision ordinance and the landscaping and lighting requirements in the zoning regulations. There is a “Good Neighborhood Ordinance” for development in the parish and a recently adopted buffering land use ordinance for the unincorporated parts of the parish.

The city of Lafayette’s zoning ordinance includes 18 zoning categories and two overlay districts. Considering acres zoned, the three largest classifications are: R-1-A (Single-Family Residential); B-G (General Business); and I-1 (Light Industrial). Of the three, the largest zoning classification, in total acreage, is R-1-A. This classification requires a minimum 8,500 square foot lot size and, in addition to single-family residences, permits art galleries, agriculture, bed and breakfast facilities, parks, schools, townhomes, and public utilities.

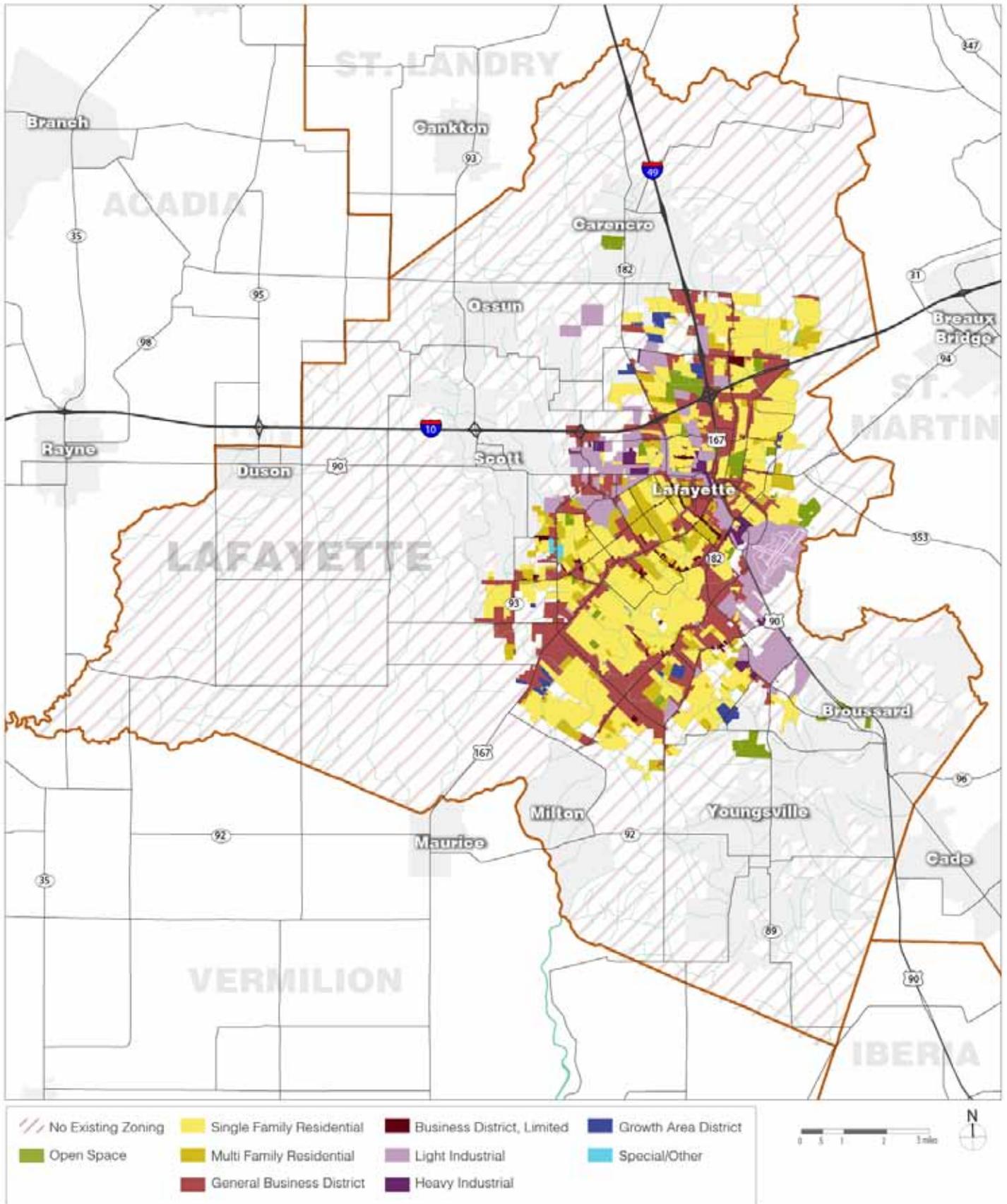
About 2% of the city’s land area, or just less than 500 acres, is classified as a Growth Area District (GAD). The purpose of the GAD is to allow for orderly annexation and subsequent zoning of annexed areas without approved development plans. The Planning, Zoning, and Codes Department or a property owner may request a property be zoned with a specific classification. The City-Parish Council and Zoning Commission conduct an annual review of land within the GAD and may assign a zoning district classification to a parcel.

A lack of zoning in the parish’s unincorporated areas endangers the viability of agriculture and the preservation of rural character. This is because the absence of zoning, combined with low land and development costs, have facilitated the development of low density, scattered housing in rural areas. Urban development in agricultural areas jeopardizes farming by separating continuous agricultural parcels, adding traffic to rural roads, and creating potential use conflicts that result from dust, noise, and odors. Recent development in the parish is characterized by segregated land uses, a lack of public uses such as open space, parks, and institutions, and auto-oriented development patterns.

**Table 3.2 City of Lafayette
Zoning Districts**

Zoning Classification	Description	Acres	%
R-1-A	Single-Family Residential District	8,647.5	26%
R-1-B	Single-Family Residential District	3,139.7	10%
R-1-C	Single and Two-Family Residential District	3,171.5	10%
R-2	Multifamily Residential District	2,987.7	9%
R-3	Mobile Home Park District*	13.3	0%
R-4	Condominium & Townhouse District*	298.1	1%
B-1-M	Business-Medical District*	6.9	0%
B-1-O	Business-Office District*	37.7	0%
TND	Traditional Neighborhood/New Urbanist Development*	61.7	0%
B-N	Neighborhood Business District	171.1	1%
B-1-L	Limited Business District	257	1%
B-T	Transitional Business District	1,043.8	3%
B-2-I	Intermediate Business District	411.8	1%
B-G	General Business District	6,513.6	20%
CBD	Central Business District	151.4	0%
I-1	Light Industrial District	5,003.5	15%
I-2	Heavy Industrial District	460.9	1%
GAD	Growth Area District	493.4	2%
	Total	32,874.5	100%

Figure 3-2 Generalized Zoning



Growth Patterns

Subdivision growth since 2000 reflects the existing land use patterns (see Figure 3-1) with a large number of low density single family residential developments occurring in the parish’s unincorporated/rural regions. Subdivisions built more recently tend to be larger in land area than those from the early 2000s.

Less than half of recent subdivision growth has occurred in the city of Lafayette. Since 2000, about 41% of the region’s subdivision development has taken place within the city of Lafayette, while the remaining 59% occurred in surrounding communities or in unincorporated Lafayette Parish. This is consistent with census tract population trends showing that a number of areas in the city core saw population loss, while many outlying areas experienced substantial growth over the last decade.

Several factors are driving growth to unincorporated areas, including the lack of physical constraints, low development costs, lack of interested sellers / land availability, and lack of zoning regulations to the north, west, and south of the city of Lafayette (see Figure 3-3). Relatively low property taxes, agricultural exemptions, and a generous homestead exemption further reduce the availability of land as they reduce costs of holding on to property. This pattern has been fairly consistent since 2000. However, national demographic and economic trends are combining into a growing preference for living in more traditional neighborhood development patterns, suggesting the potential for a shift back to living downtown and in surrounding neighborhoods within the city of Lafayette. In the city, River Ranch (a traditional neighborhood/mixed-use development) has been successful in filling some of the need, but there not enough downtown or traditional neighborhood type housing units to meet the demand.

The southern half of the parish, most notably around the southern edge of the city of Lafayette, Youngsville, and Milton, has seen the highest amount of subdivision lot growth. Approximately 65% of subdivision growth since 2000 has occurred south of US 90. Land around the Vermilion River has faced particularly high development pressures.

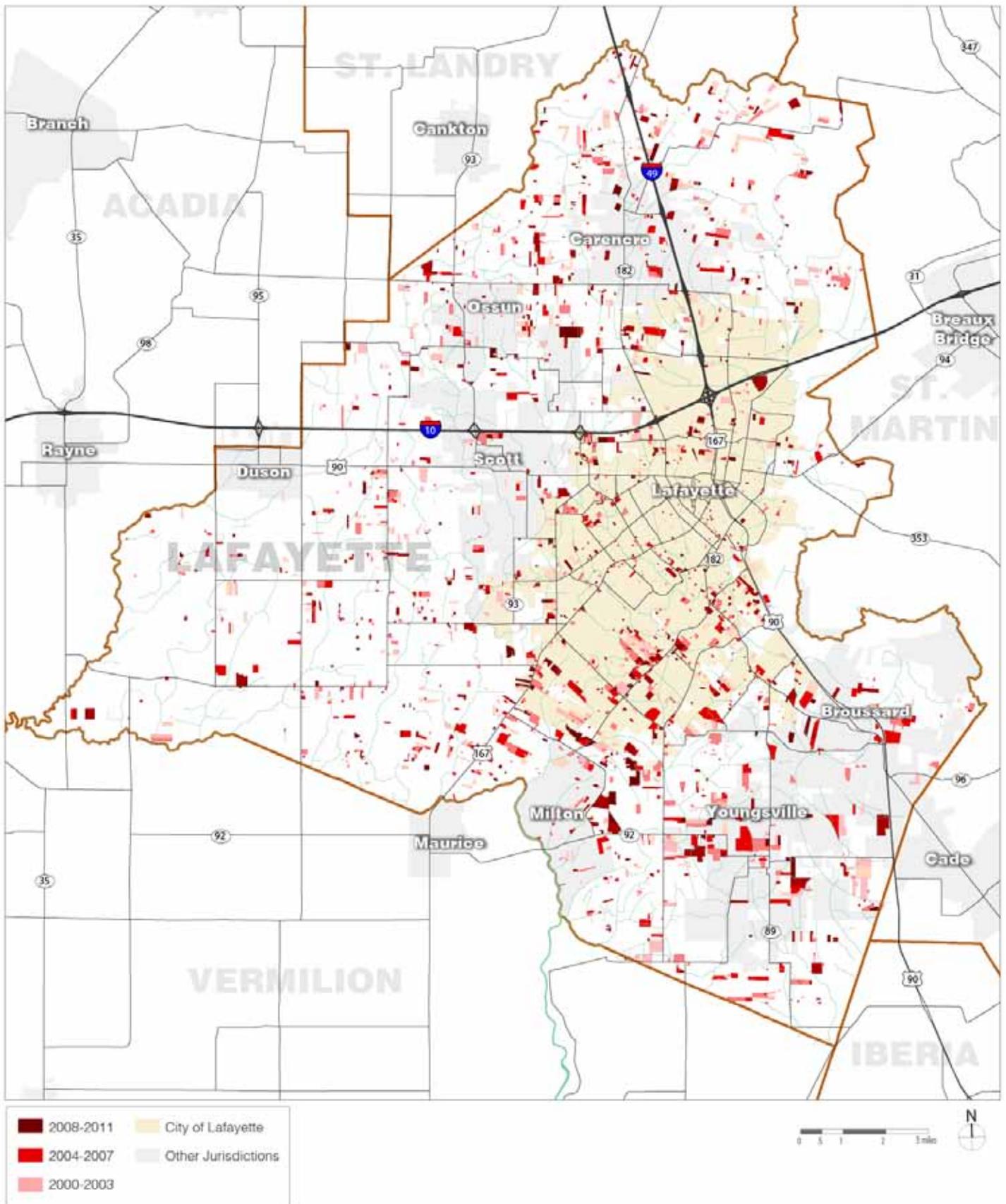
Table 3.3 Subdivision Growth Since 2000

Year Approved	Total no. of Subdivision lots
2000	101
2001	76
2002	82
2003	116
2004	108
2005	89
2006	78
2007	117
2008	99
2009	81
2010	76
2011	56
TOTAL	1,079

Since 2000, about 60% of the region’s residential development has occurred outside of the city of Lafayette (unincorporated Lafayette Parish or other municipalities).



Figure 3-3 Subdivision Growth since 2000



COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Lafayette Parish’s settlement patterns originated when the French owned the Louisiana Territory in the 1700s and French linear land divisions were granted along the Vermilion River. Over time, the parish growth occurred according to the transportation network –along the Vermilion River and the Old Spanish Trail and fanned out to Ambassador Caffery Parkway and south along Pinhook Road. This pattern is evident in today’s transportation network and is reinforced by the residential development pattern which shows growth to the south.

Neighborhood Types

Parish neighborhoods can generally be categorized within three typologies as described below. The majority (about 90%) are low-density and composed of single-family units, though occasional multi-family dwellings are not uncommon.

Typology one:

Typology one neighborhoods are within close proximity to downtown or to neighborhood oriented commercial districts. Their street network is a highly connected grid composed of narrow streets. The resulting square block pattern creates a more walkable and pedestrian friendly pattern which places less importance on the automobile. In addition, curbs and sidewalks give streets a more urban appearance. As the parish’s oldest neighborhoods, they boast mature tree canopies and a building stock with historical character and a wide range of architectural styles. These neighborhoods also have the oldest homes in the parish.

Typology two:

Similar to typology one neighborhoods, these post-war neighborhoods have connected street grids, however the block pattern changes from square to rectangular for a more automobile oriented pattern. Curbs are practically non-existent, while wide swales/ditches and intermittent sidewalks are common. Homes generally have larger setbacks and there is greater emphasis on automobile parking. The building stock is typically more modest, exhibiting simple construction and less variation in style.

Typology three:

These contemporary suburban neighborhoods generally flank commercial corridors and are designed primarily for automobile circulation. The neighborhoods have good connectivity internally, but poor connectivity with adjacent neighborhoods with few access points to main roads. The long rectangular block pattern of these neighborhoods stems from the “long lot” surveying method typically used by the French and Spanish along waterways. Streets are wider than those found in older neighborhoods and most homes have enclosed garages or carports which become a prominent building element. There are no street curbs and few sidewalks. Lots and building footprints are typically larger than typology one and two neighborhoods with generous setbacks. In addition, the building stock is more uniform in character.

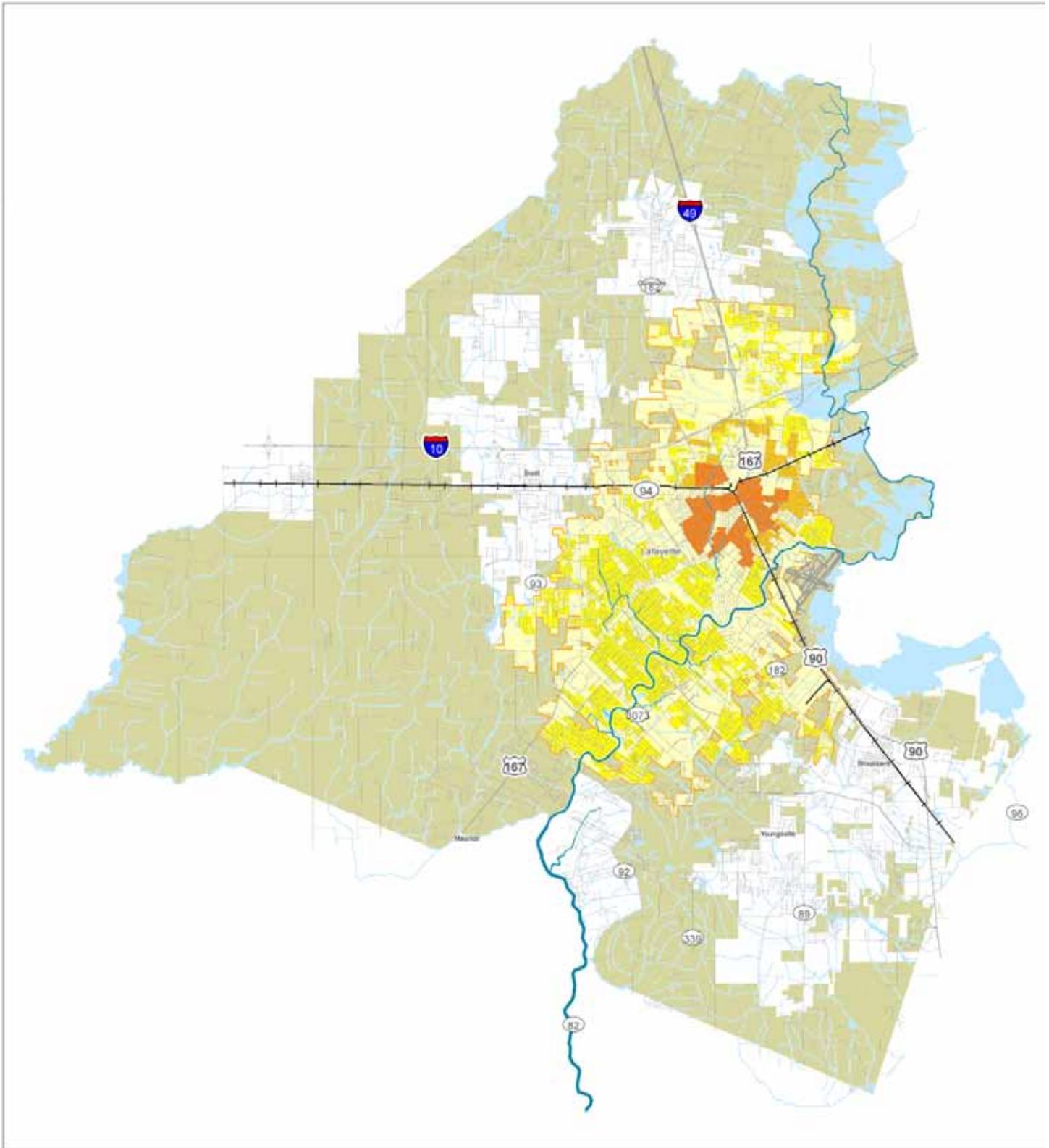
Other Areas:

The remaining areas in the parish are mostly rural and lack consistent characteristics. There is a mix of agriculture and open space, industrial uses, older subdivisions, and some newer large lot subdivisions. This pattern occurs mostly west of Ambassador Caffery Parkway and north of Johnston and was settled after Louisiana became a territory of the United States in 1805.

There are a few anomalies which did not fit neatly within the neighborhood types, including River Ranch (mixed-use, mixed residential uses). In addition, despite other growth patterns consistent with sprawl, there are few examples of single point of entry cul-de-sac subdivision which are most common with sprawling development.

Within the city boundaries, density is concentrated in areas east of Ambassador Caffery, north of Congress Street, west of the Evangeline Throughway, and south of I-10.

Figure 3-4 Neighborhood Typologies



- Typology 1
- Typology 2
- Typology 3



Figure 3-5 Typology Diagrams

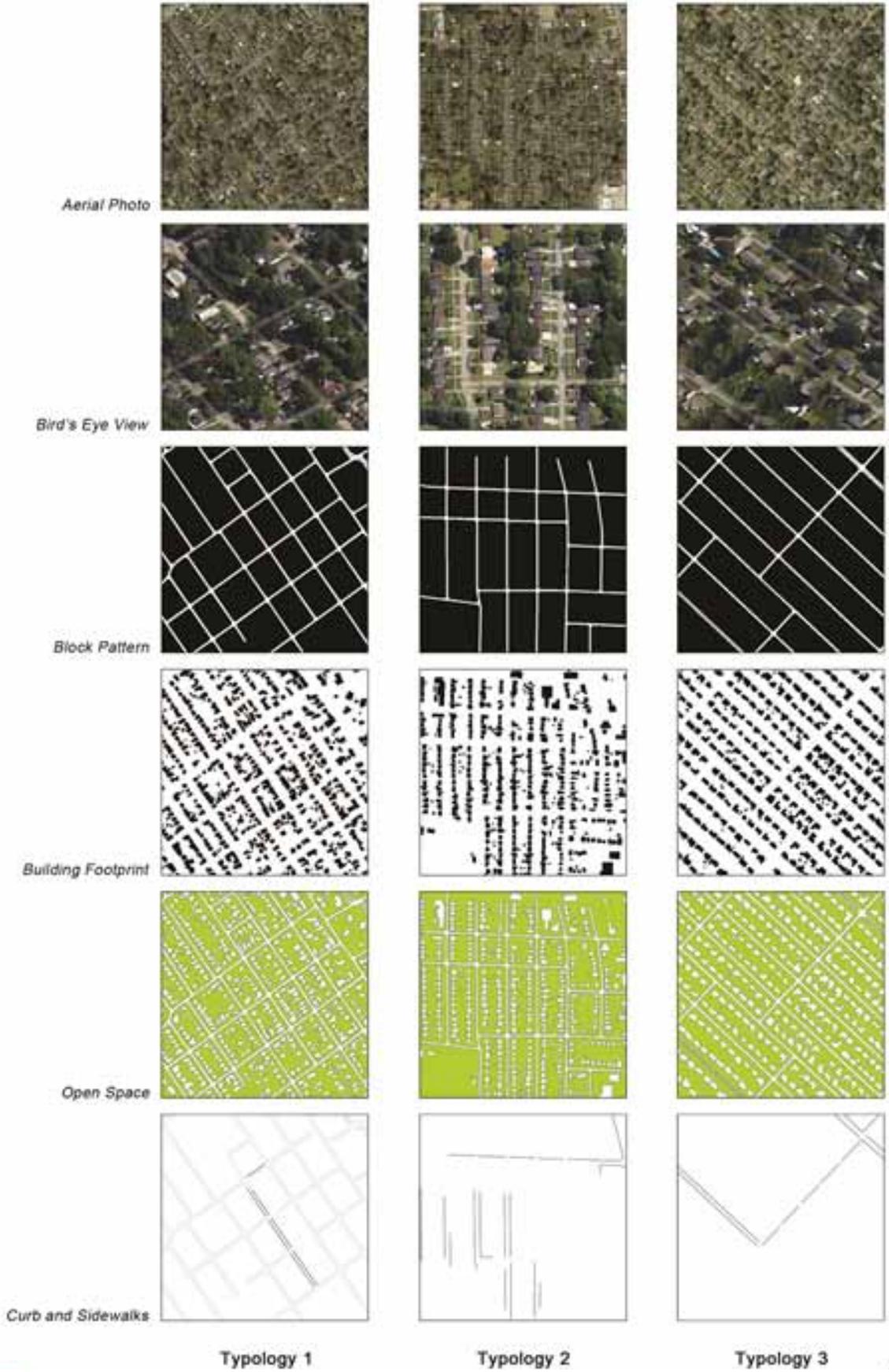
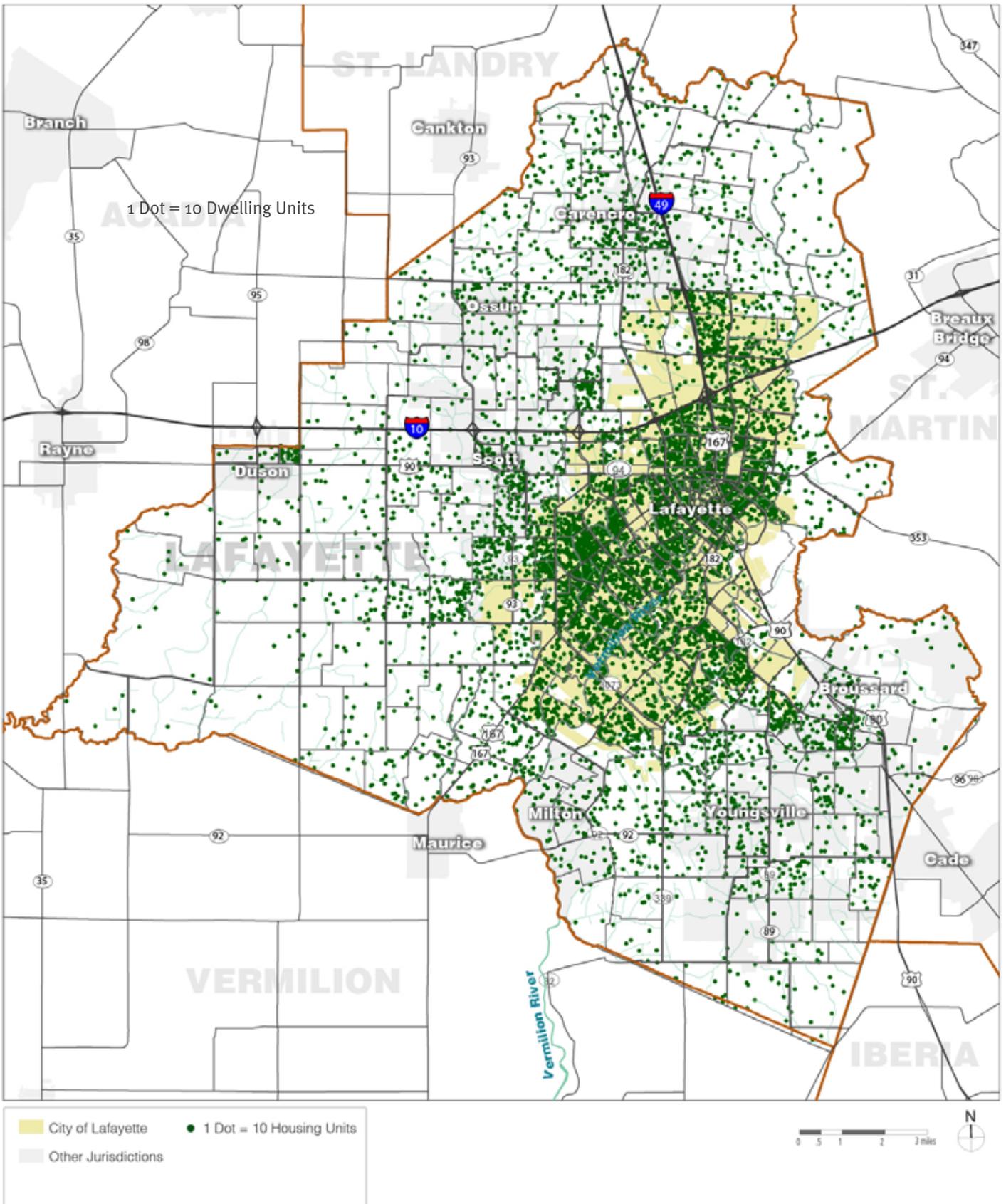


Figure 3-6 Residential Density



The parish was developed in such a way that development is now concentrated within the boundaries of the city of Lafayette and the center of growth has shifted to the south. The southern portion of the parish was settled first and to this day is more populated than the north. Lafayette’s settlement pattern originated from the two main trade routes –Vermilion River and the Spanish Trail. These trade routes influenced the parish’s transportation system which ran parallel to the Vermilion River (Johnston Street) and the Spanish Trail (Southern Pacific Railroad, US 90 (Cameron), followed by Interstate 10), and, consequently, the southerly development pattern.

Downtown Lafayette was established at the bend of the Spanish Trail and marks the northernmost part of the development pattern. Additional grids were laid out around the Downtown at varying axes and bore no relation to the first grid. Later, when the Southern Pacific Railroad was built, streets were realigned and curved to be perpendicular to the railroad tracks.

South of Downtown, large tracts of land were granted as 200 acre lots abutting the Vermilion River and additional roads were built along the backs of these lots and parallel to the River. Over time, local roads were built between the original land grants and perpendicular to the Bayou. Additional development followed the alignment of the Old Spanish Trail to the south along Pinhook Road. This pattern is best illustrated with the street pattern and dot density diagrams which show that the densest development is concentrated east of Ambassador Caffery, south of Cameron, and north of Kaliste Saloom.

More than 90% of the city’s residential neighborhoods are predominantly single-family residential. Of residentially zoned neighborhoods, about 64% are zoned R-1 A or B (single-family residential). The remaining 36% are zoned for two-family or multi-family uses.

The American Community Survey 5-year estimates indicate that nearly half of all housing was built in the 1970s and 1980s. 21.3% of all housing parishwide was built in the 1970s and 19.6% was built in the 1980s.

The parish has recorded the age of all residential subdivisions since 1900. The subdivision map indicates when the subdivisions were platted, but does not record when they were developed. The oldest residential subdivisions were built around Downtown and most of the long lots along Vermilion River were not platted as subdivisions until the 1950s and 1960s.

Table 3.4: Lafayette Parish: Year Structure Built

	Estimate	%
Total housing units	91,333	91,333
Built 2005 or later	5,505	6.0%
Built 2000 to 2004	9,571	10.5%
Built 1990 to 1999	15,022	16.4%
Built 1980 to 1989	17,940	19.6%
Built 1970 to 1979	19,480	21.3%
Built 1960 to 1969	10,008	11.0%
Built 1950 to 1959	7,100	7.8%
Built 1940 to 1949	2,684	2.9%
Built 1939 or earlier	4,023	4.4%

Source: 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

HOW DO WE COMPARE?
Building Permits (2011)*

739
Lafayette Parish

1,924
Madison County
(Huntsville, AL)

449
Washington County
(Fayetteville, AR)

1,681
Guilford County
(Greensboro, NC)

* US Census, Quickfacts, 2011.

Figure 3-7 Street Grid

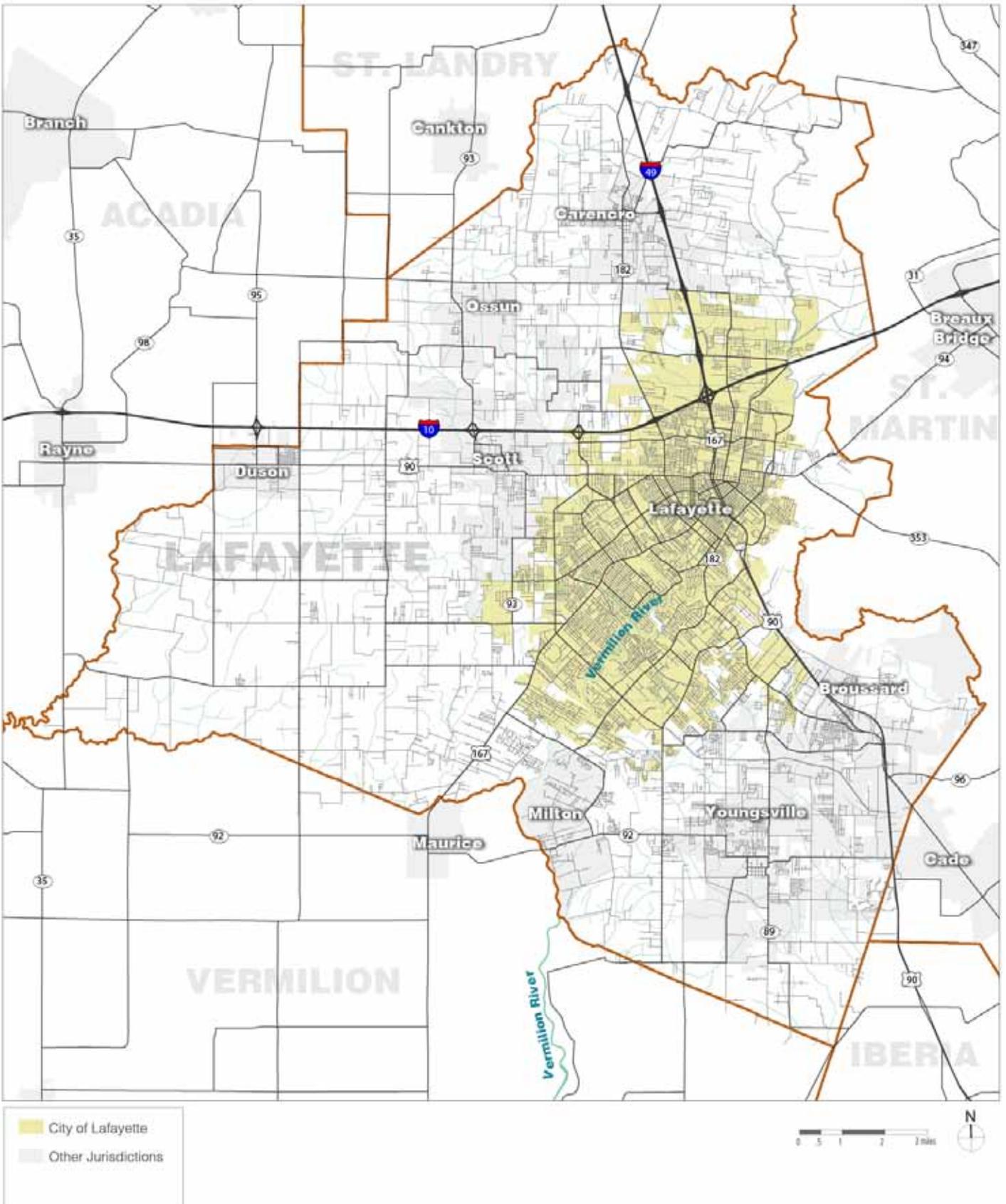
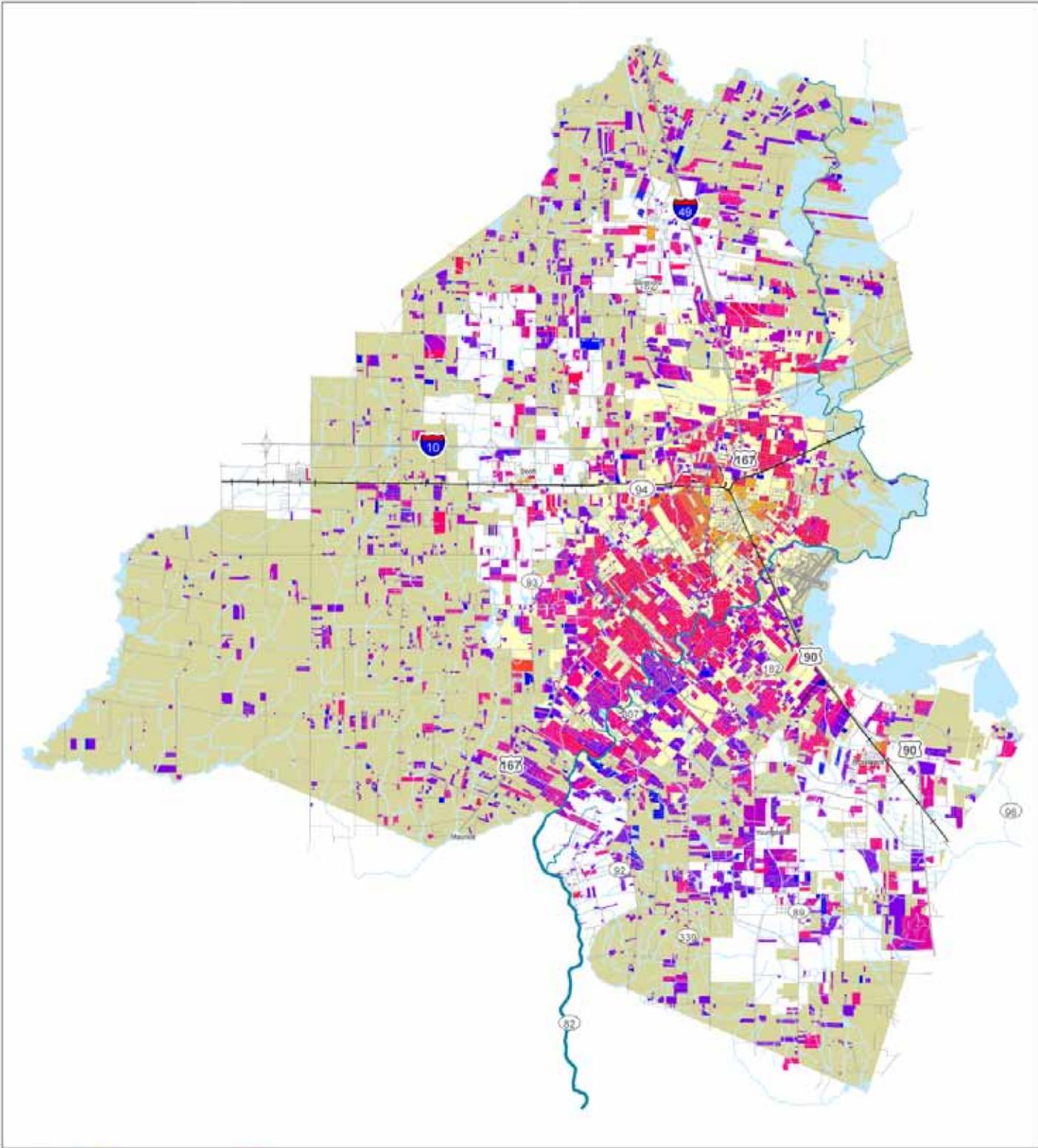


Figure 3-8 Chronology of Residential Subdivisions



- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1900-1909 | 1960-1969 |
| 1910-1919 | 1970-1979 |
| 1920-1929 | 1980-1981 |
| 1930-1939 | 1990-1999 |
| 1940-1949 | 2000-2009 |
| 1950-1959 | 2010-2011 |



There are several unique districts, corridors, and neighborhoods which shape and drive the parish's growth patterns. Downtown, the Oil Center, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and surrounding residential neighborhoods form the central core of the city and parish.

The major retail corridors also influence the neighborhood patterns. These include Ambassador Caffery Parkway, Johnston Street, Pinhook Road, Moss Street, Kaliste Saloom Road and Evangeline Thruway.

There are also several neighborhoods with important historic value, especially around the university and downtown. These include McComb, Veazey, Freetown, Port Rico, Crapeauville, Fightingville, Saint Streets, Sterling Grove, and many of the neighborhoods surrounding the university. The city's original residential subdivision, Mills Addition, lost many homes in the 1940s and 1950s. This neighborhood is a historic resource which is generally not being improved or protected, with the exception of the individual homeowners and the Lafayette Public Trust Financing Authority (LPTFA).

There are also patterns of blight which affect where new investment and redevelopment has occurred. The majority of these areas occur in the older portions of the city and qualify as low/moderate income as illustrated in the LCG 2008/2012 Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Consolidated Plan. Adjudicated properties, ie. properties in tax arrears, exacerbates blight and lessens redevelopment in these neighborhoods.

The Lafayette in a Century (LINC) is a planning effort based on a document called the LINC recommendations that emphasized the importance of neighborhood planning. Over more than ten years various levels of neighborhood or sector planning were undertaken. The process identified fourteen various neighborhoods or sectors for additional planning efforts, including Lafayette North.

To date, LCG has developed future land use plans and established a neighborhood planning group, known as a coterie, to implement the plans for four neighborhoods. Much of the preliminary work of neighborhood and sector planning effort were in conjunction with the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's Community Design Workshop. LCG also worked with businesses and residents to develop a Sector Plan for Lafayette North. The Lafayette North Plan covers the entire northern half of the parish and provides a detailed report of potential improvements based on a two-year

public involvement process. It includes the area north of Cameron St. to the parish line including the Northgate Mall.

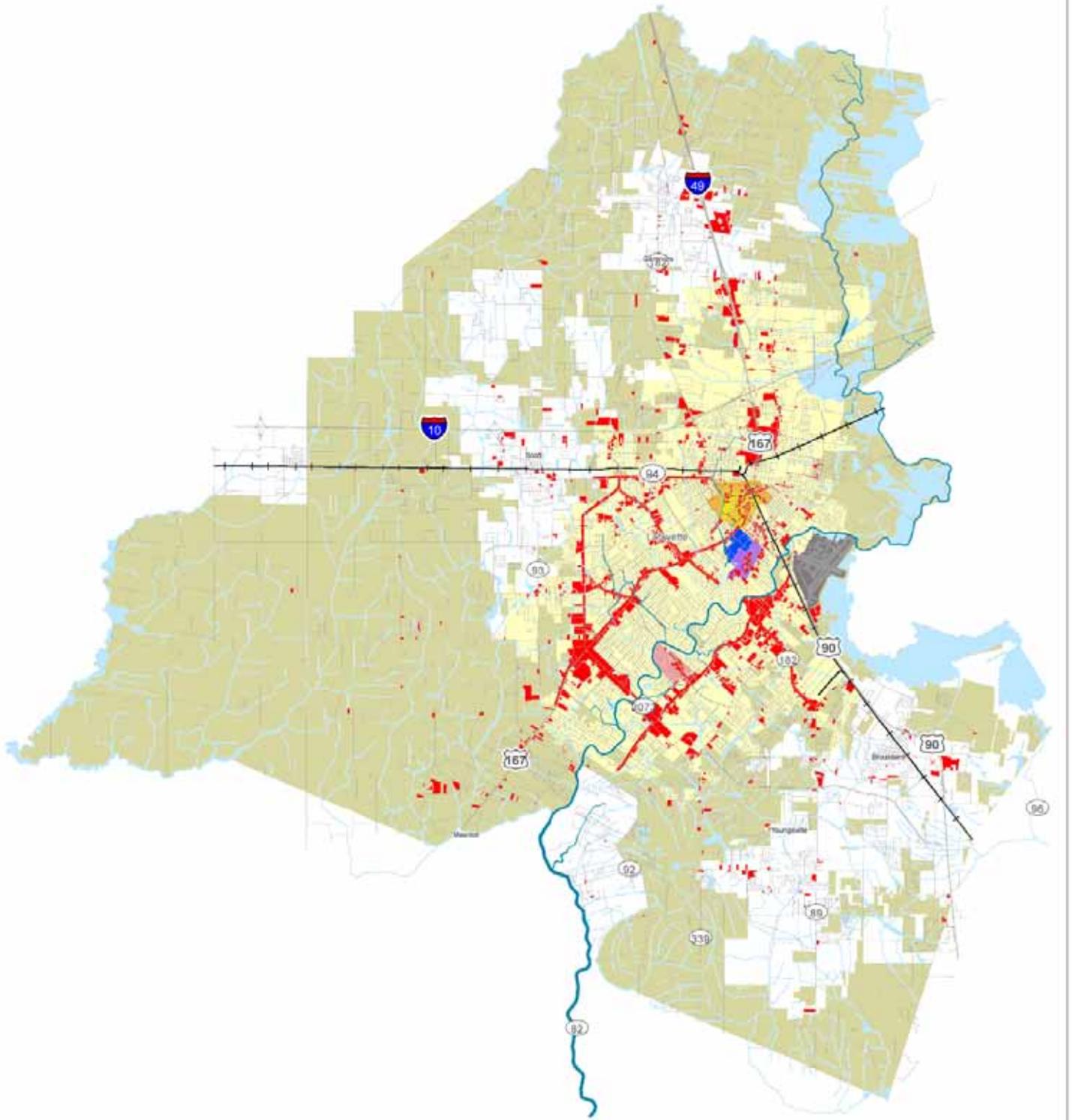
Future land use plans were created for LINC neighborhood 1, LINC neighborhood 3, LINC neighborhood 4 also called the Northeast Gateway, LINC neighborhood 6—the West Neighborhood, LINC neighborhood 7—Freetown-Port Rico, LINC neighborhood 11—McComb Veazey, and LINC neighborhood 13—La Place. Currently, only neighborhoods 4, 7, 11, and 13 have coterie assisted by planning staff working toward implementation.

LINC urban core neighborhood plans for McComb Veazey, Freetown-Port Rico, and La Place showcase opportunities for redevelopment and reinvestment. McComb Veazey is an older neighborhood with a high rate of poverty. The neighborhood plan highlighted several issues including vacant lots, a need to preserve historic structures, concerns about safety and blight, and a 7.3% vacancy rate (close to Lafayette's vacancy rate of 7.1%). Adjudicated properties contribute to blight in these neighborhoods. The largest contributing factor to properties going into adjudication is lack of clear and defined ownership, known as clouded title. Over the decades as original property owners died, there were no probates or secessions. Further compounding the issue are the high costs involved in rectifying clouded titles, which can meet or exceed an adjudicated property's market value. Several attempts have been made to streamline the adjudication process but they have not been successful.

Freetown-Port Rico was settled by freed slaves prior to the Civil War and later platted as "Mouton Addition". It included people of African, Cajun, Lebanese, Middle Eastern, Greek, Spanish, and Irish decent and boasted a black only jazz hall (Good Hope Hall) with notable musicians attracting white audiences to listen from outside. This historically significant neighborhood is a predominantly rental community for the University and most homes were built before 1950. There are several conflicts between industrial and commercial uses in this neighborhood and encroachment from off-campus student housing developments and associated parking issues. Crime is also a concern.

The surrounding downtown neighborhoods north of downtown are some of the oldest planned and developed neighborhoods in the parish, parts were platted as early as 1876. For planning purposes this neighborhood is called La Place. Crime, safety, lighting, and code enforcement are the major issues identified in the LINC plan.

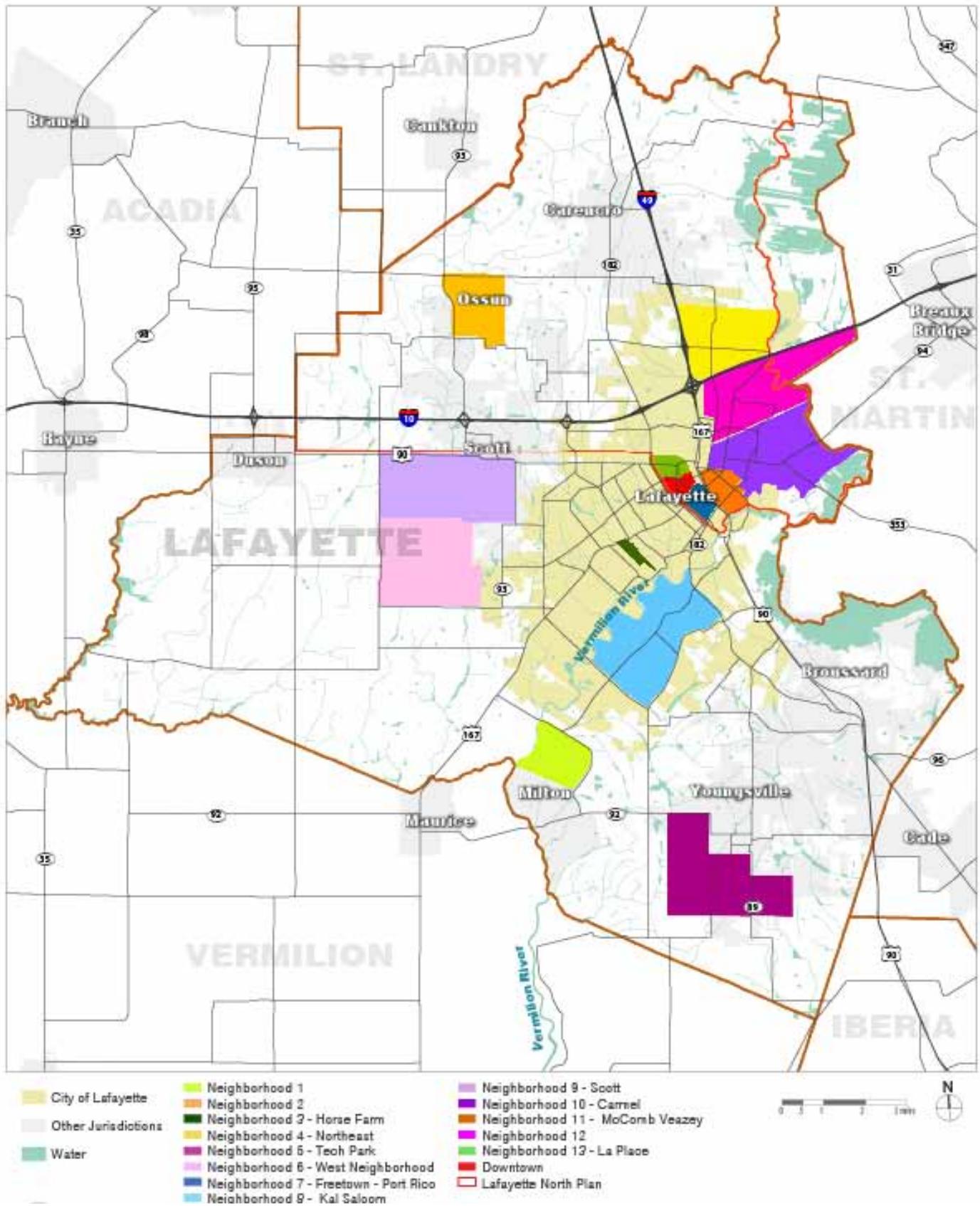
Figure 3-9 Unique Districts, Corridors and Neighborhoods



- Downtown Core
- Commercial Core
- Historic Neighborhoods
- University of Louisiana Lafayette
- Oil Center
- River Ranch
- Commercial Corridors
- Airport



Figure 3-10 LINC Neighborhood and Sector Plans



HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

In spite of the economic downturn and the national housing crisis, Lafayette Parish’s housing market remains relatively stable. Housing prices have steadily risen compared to other comparable markets and the rate of housing foreclosures is moderate. However, this analysis reveals that rental housing costs as a percent of household income are somewhat high and unaffordable to nearly half of all households. The city of Lafayette has a greater variety of housing types and densities than unincorporated Lafayette Parish.

The findings from the 2006-2010 Community Survey 5-year estimates, demonstrate that out of 91,333 housing units within Lafayette Parish, nearly 23% of housing is multi-family (defined as 2 or more units in a structure). The survey also estimates that 15% of parish housing is composed of 5 or more units in structure. This is slightly higher than the estimates for the same type of housing statewide which calculated that 10% of housing is composed of 5 or more units in a structure and 18% of housing is composed of 2 or more units in a structure.

The majority of units (65.8%) are single family attached or detached homes, while mobile homes represent 11.3% of total housing. The total number of mobile homes is considerably higher than similar counties across the United States, but more or less equivalent to the state of Louisiana estimates for mobile homes as illustrated in Table 3.5. Children often “stay at home” by living in mobile homes on their parent’s property until they move into their own homes or build their own homes on the family land.

Figure 3-10 illustrates a predominance of single family housing across the entire parish with a cluster of smaller multi-family housing units around the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and larger multi-family parcels sporadically distributed throughout the city of Lafayette. There are few examples of multi-family housing within unincorporated Lafayette Parish. Additionally, most of the mobile home parks are located outside of the city boundaries and in unincorporated Lafayette Parish. This disparity is likely due to new City regulations which prohibit new mobile homes within Lafayette City.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Median Housing Value (2010)*

\$151,600

Parish of Lafayette, LA

\$153,800

Guilford County
(Greensboro, NC)

\$130,000

State of Louisiana

\$200,300

Travis County
(Austin, TX)

*U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File and 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Table 3.5 Housing Types

Housing Type	Lafayette Parish, LA		Louisiana	
	Estimate	%	Estimate	%
UNITS IN STRUCTURE				
Total housing units	91,333	100%	1,910,036	100%
Single family detached	58,024	64%	1,257,820	66%
Single family attached	2,125	2%	54,488	3%
Duplex, triplex, quadriplex (2-4 units)	6,996	87%	149,533	8%
Multifamily (5 or more units)	13,673	15%	190,017	10%
Mobile home	10,343	11%	255,334	13%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	172	0.2%	2,844	0.1%

Driven by available land, schools, and road network improvements, growth is occurring in the southern areas of the City of Lafayette and surrounding unincorporated areas.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Housing Unit Breakdown,
Percentage of Single-Family Detached*

63.5%

Parish of Lafayette, LA

64.4%

Guilford County
(Greensboro, NC)

66%

State of Louisiana

52.7%

Travis County
(Austin, TX)

* 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Housing Unit Breakdown,
Percentage of Multi-Family*

15%

Parish of Lafayette, LA

21.4%

Guilford County
(Greensboro, NC)

10%

State of Louisiana

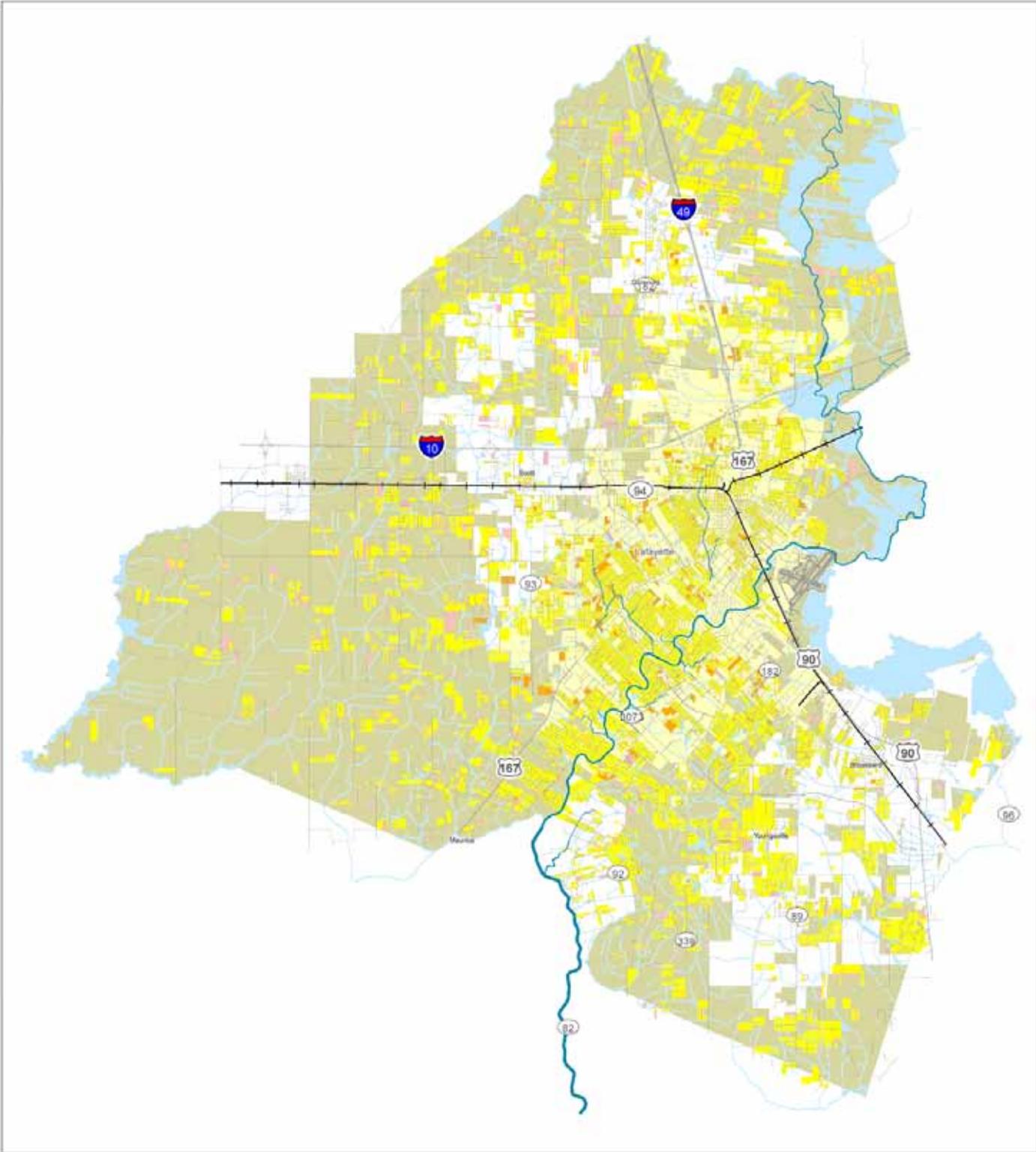
32.3%

Travis County
(Austin, TX)

* 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.



Figure 3-11 Housing Types



- City of Lafayette
- Lafayette Parish
- Mobile Home
- Single Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential



The parish covers nearly 269 square miles and 171,981 total acres at an average density of 0.54 dwelling units per acre according to the US Census Bureau. But because most of the density is concentrated within the boundaries of the city of Lafayette, the density is much higher within the city limits and more than three times the parishwide density at 1.66 dwelling units per acre. The pattern of development precisely follows the boundaries of the city with pockets of higher densities within the city east of Ambassador Caffery, north of Congress, and south of I-10. Density is considerably lower outside of the city in unincorporated Lafayette Parish.

According to the ACS 5-year estimates for 2006-2010, the median value of owner-occupied housing units in Lafayette Parish is \$151,600, which is lower than the national median of \$188,400. This represents a 50.85% increase in housing value since 2000 which is slightly lower than the increase for the nation which is 57.53%. This figure is indicative of a relatively stable housing market. In addition, the compound annual growth rate of 4.2% shows a relatively stable market compared to national trends and comparable counties like Guilford County or Travis County, Texas which has slower growth. Homeowners in Lafayette can apply for a homestead tax exemption if they reside in their homes, reducing the taxable value of the home by \$75,000, and resulting in significant savings for the individual. With the homestead exemption, a home with a fair market value of \$200,000 with result in a property tax of \$1,075 outside of the city of Lafayette and \$1,415 inside the city boundaries.⁷

Homeownership costs as a percentage of household income are also relatively low. About 26% of households spend more than 30% of their income on housing. This is lower than comparable counties. Lafayette's increase of 34% (from 17% to 26%) is also lower than the national 10-year estimates which show a 38% overall increase in households who are spending 30% or more of household income on monthly housing costs.

Table 3.6 Homeownership Rate

	2000 Number	2010 Estimates	% Change
US	52.34%	66.60%	14.26%
Lafayette Parish	66.04%	64.9%	-1.14%
Louisiana	67.94%	68.2%	0.26%

Source: US Census Quick Facts and US Census Bureau, 2000 Summary File, 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

⁷ Tax bill illustration provided by the Lafayette Assessor's website: www.lafayetteassessor.com/taxcalculation.cfm

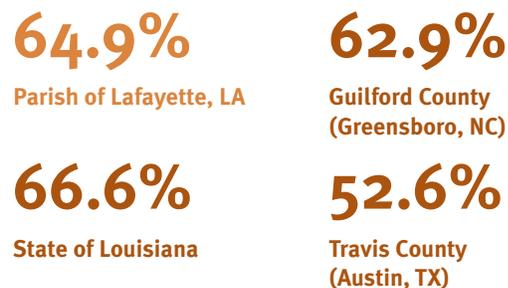
While homeownership costs are relatively affordable, rental rates as a percentage of household income are somewhat high: nearly half of all renters are spending 30% or more of their household income on gross rent. In addition, rental costs as a percentage of household income in the parish have increased considerably since 2000. The American Community Survey estimates that 46% of households in occupied rental units spend 30% or more of their income on gross rent. Although the nation and comparable counties have similar estimates, this represents a 32% increase from 2000 to 2010 for Lafayette Parish, one reason being that rents increased in Lafayette after Hurricane Katrina. This substantiates the community's concern that rental costs are not affordable and highlights a need for more affordable housing.

The estimated homeownership rate has remained relatively stable between 2000 and 2010 with only a one percent change. The 2010 homeownership rate estimates for Lafayette Parish of 64.9% are very similar to the national average of 66.6%, but lower than the State of Louisiana average of 68.2%.

The total number of foreclosed properties in the city of Lafayette is low compared to other similar sized communities, and average when evaluated as a percentage of total dwelling units. The total number of residential properties in the foreclosure process provides a good indication of the housing market's health and the overall health of the economy. The city of Lafayette has 348 residential properties in foreclosure out of 93,656 housing units. But as a percentage of the total number of dwelling units, Lafayette falls in the middle of comparable cities. National foreclosures number 1,486,957 for the month of August and according to RealtyTrac are occurring at a much higher ratio than is the case in Lafayette.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Homeownership Rate*



* U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File and 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

Table 3.7 Foreclosures by City

	Lis Pendens	Auction	Bank Owned	Defaults	Total Foreclosures	Total DU	Percentage
Baton Rouge, LA	0	434	530	0	964	99,943	0.96%
Greensboro, NC	0	468	495	63	1026	122,124	0.84%
Lafayette, LA	71	100	177	0	348	52,421	0.66%
Huntsville, AL	0	107	340	0	447	83,481	0.54%
Chattanooga, TN	0	116	213	0	329	80,012	0.41%
Austin, TX	0	606	772	0	1378	345,283	0.40%
Fayetteville, AR	0	14	57	0	71	34,568	0.21%

Source: RealtyTrac June 2012

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Housing Affordability, Percentage spending more than 30% on Monthly Housing Cost*

26%

Parish of Lafayette, LA

37.6%

United States

33%

Guilford County (Greensboro, NC)

34%

Travis County (Austin, TX)

* U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File and 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

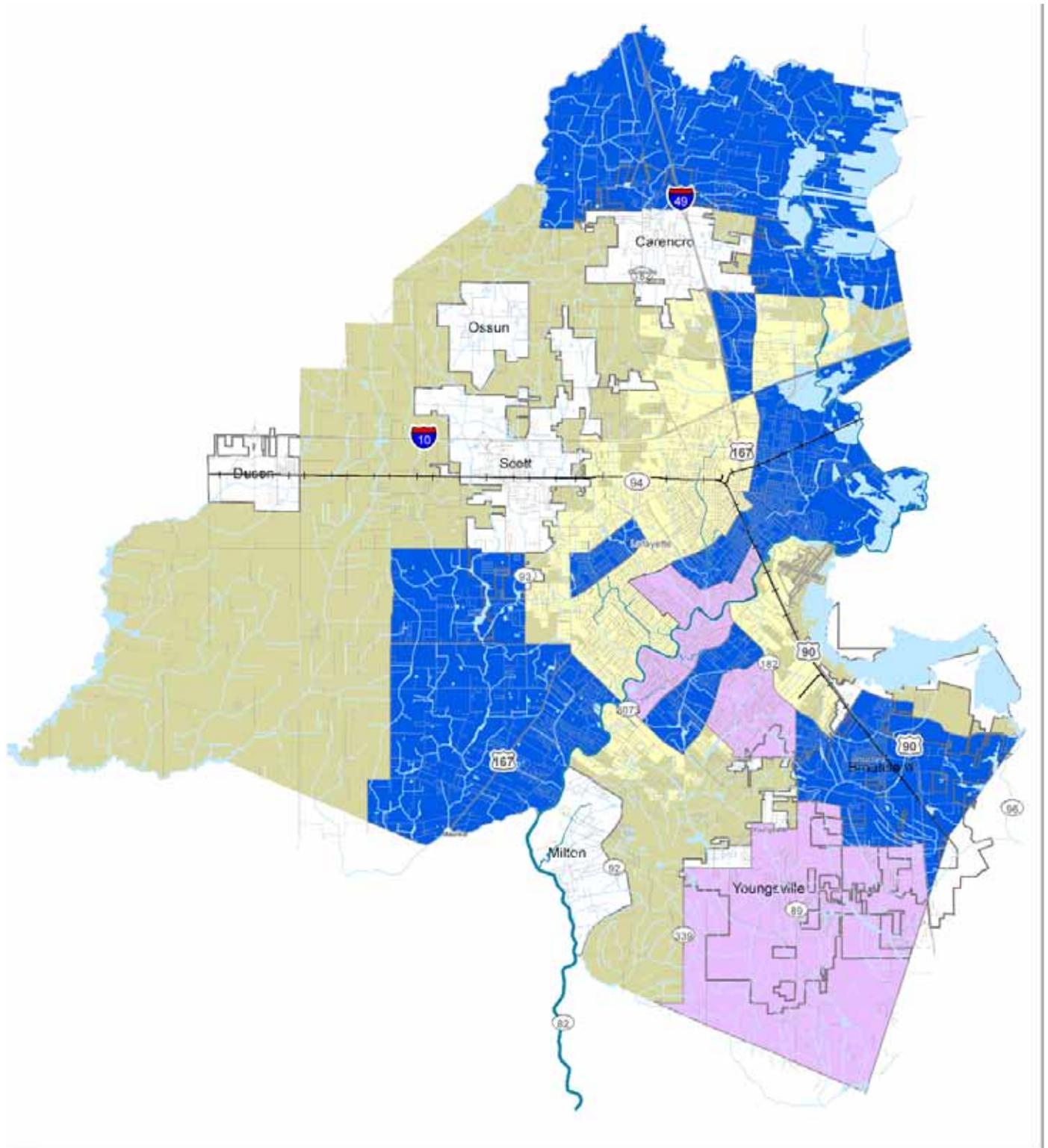
Housing occupancy rates remain strong for renter and owner occupied housing in Lafayette compared to the national average.

Table 3.8 Vacancy Characteristics

Subject	Lafayette Parish	
	Number	Percent
Total vacant housing units	6,629	7.1%
For rent	2,797	42.2%
Rented, not occupied	179	2.7%
For sale only	1,059	16%
Sold, not occupied	278	4.2%
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	515	7.8%
For migratory workers	49	0.7%
Other vacant	1,752	26.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census.

Figure 3-12: Vacant Housing Units



■ 200-299 Vacant Units Per Census Tract
■ More than 300 Vacant Units Per Census Tract



Occupancy rates remain strong for renter and owner occupied housing compared to the national average. About 65% of housing in Lafayette Parish is owner-occupied and 35% is renter occupied. This rate is similar to Guilford County, North Carolina (61% owner occupied and 39% renter occupied), as well as the national average (67 owner occupied and 33% renter occupied). Many of the parish's 30,454 occupied rental units are clustered within the city core and around the University of Louisiana at Lafayette which had 16,885 students enrolled for the fall semester 2011, but only 1,700 on-campus beds to accommodate student housing. The assumption is that a substantial segment of the rental market is being consumed by students. The University of Louisiana Lafayette is working to accommodate more on campus housing, which may impact rental demand / rates.

The US Census Bureau calculated that in 2010, 7.1% of housing units were vacant. This is lower than the national average of 11.4% and other comparables. In addition, of the vacant units, 42% of vacancies occurred in rental housing units while only 16% of for sale housing was vacant. However, 26.4% of housing was vacant for other, unspecified reasons. Figure 3-12 illustrates the concentration of 200 or more vacant units in the parish. Many of them are clustered in Youngsville and Broussard, the area north of the airport, and the more rural portions of the parish. There is also a higher concentration of vacant seasonal units along the Bayou Vermilion. The "other vacant" category may be high due in part to the adjudication process.

About 26% of all households spend more than 30% of their income on housing, but this is lower than the average estimate for the U.S. Nearly half of all households in occupied rental units are paying 30% or more of their household income on gross rent.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?
 Housing Affordability, Percentage spending more than 30% on Monthly Rental Cost*

46%

Parish of Lafayette, LA

50.8%

United States

50%

Guilford County
 (Greensboro, NC)

50%

Travis County
 (Austin, TX)

* U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File and 2006-2010 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

LAFAYETTE
CITY HALL



MOUTON

735





Infrastructure and Community Services

Almost 32% of working residents commute out of the parish for employment.

Lafayette has a very limited number of dedicated bicycle facilities, but recent activity is signaling a shift to increase bicycle projects.

With 63,500 customers (of which 82% are residential units), LUS is the main provider of electric service in the city of Lafayette

Approximately **83%** of Lafayette Parish workers commute to work by single-occupancy vehicle use.

A total of 18 deep water wells provide water from the Chicot Aquifer to LUS Water customers.

At a Glance

Infrastructure and Community Services

TRANSPORTATION

Lafayette Parish benefits from a well-connected network of highway, rail, and air transportation. The parish lies at the crossroads of two interstate corridors, I-10 (fourth longest interstate highway in the United States, after I-90, I-80, and I-40) and I-49 (and future I-49 South corridor), and along one Class I freight railroad, the BNSF Railway Company. The transportation system also supports air and passenger rail travel, waterways, bicycle paths, and pedestrian walkways.

This multi-modal system is designed to provide intra-parish travel along major corridors and across the Vermilion River, as well as to connect the parish to other metropolitan areas. The region is within no more than a day's drive of several major population and commerce centers, including New Orleans, LA, Shreveport, LA, Atlanta, GA, Dallas/Fort Worth, TX, Memphis, TN, and Houston, TX. In addition, Lafayette Regional Airport offers passenger and cargo air service to a variety of national destinations. This connectivity is an asset for both interregional travel and commercial movement of goods.

The primary means of movement within the parish is the single-occupant automobile. The roadway network includes federal interstates and highways (e.g., I-10, I-49, US 90 [Evangeline Thruway], and US 167 [Johnston Street]), state highways (LA 182, LA 3073/3184, LA 3095, LA 3025, LA 733, LA 728-3 and LA 98) and local roads that provide access within the region. Parish roadways also provide right of way for buses, making the thoroughfare network an integral part of the public transit system. In addition, roadways are used for bicycle travel. Roadways remain a primary component in addressing the region's transportation needs despite travel demand management (TDM) strategies to reduce vehicular demand to improve air quality and reduce congestion.

Other transportation options serve the parish include Lafayette Transit System (LTS), the only fixed-route transit system in the parish, and para-transit service provided by LTS Para-Transit, Lafayette Council on Aging Para-Transit, SMILE Community Action Agency Para-Transit and Lafayette Association for Retarded Citizens (LARC). LTS and LTS Para-Transit services are limited to the city of Lafayette, but other para-transit service extends into rural areas of the parish. In addition, the Lafayette Parish School Board Bus System and University Student Transit Service provide transit services to local schools and University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities, such as sidewalks and bicycle lanes, are generally found in the oldest parts of city of Lafayette and around the University of Louisiana at Lafayette campus. Outside of these locations, the presence of such facilities varies. Many of these facilities that do exist within the parish fail to connect to other similar facilities which hinder the use of these facilities.

Lafayette Regional Airport (LFT) is the sole provider of air service in Lafayette Parish and links southwest Louisiana to the world. LFT's potential air service market also includes seven neighboring parishes: Acadia, Evangeline, St. Martin, St. Landry, St. Mary, Vermilion, and Iberia Parishes. Air service to and from LFT is provided by Delta Connection, American Eagle and United Airlines. These airlines offer daily nonstop flights to hubs in Dallas/ Fort Worth and Houston, Texas; Atlanta, Georgia; and Memphis, Tennessee.

There are limited rail facilities and traffic through the Lafayette area; these movements are primarily routed north to avoid a crossing through the Atchafalaya Basin. There are only two lines in the parish, which intersect at one point. The northern section of the North-South rail line to Opelousas was abandoned, as was a portion of the eastern section of the East-West line. The western section of the East-West line is jointly owned by Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Union Pacific. The inactive eastern half of the East-West line is owned by Louisiana Delta. BNSF also owns the active southern portion of the North-South line. Amtrak provides passenger train service via the two active lines through Lafayette (the western section of the East-West line and the southern portion of the North-South line) between Louisiana and California. The number of Amtrak boardings and alightings for 2011 was 6,295.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Daily vehicle miles traveled, per capita*

37.37

Lafayette

24.9

Baton Rouge, LA

28

Austin, TX

40.48

Huntsville, AL

32.9

Chattanooga, TN



Road Network Capacity

Most of the principal arterials in the parish have unrestricted access to local traffic, creating conflict points, reducing roadway capacity and increasing the number of crashes, as well as travel time.

Major 4-lane arterials are designed to carry traffic volumes of 20,000 to 25,000 vehicles per day. Demand on most of the major parish corridors (Johnston Street, Ambassador Caffery Pkwy, Kaliste Saloom Road, W Congress St, Pinhook Road, etc.) during peak periods is higher than the capacity which, coupled with unrestricted access, is causing severe congestion and safety issues.

Similarly, the current Vermilion River crossings –at Pinhook Road, Camellia Boulevard and Ambassador Caffery Pkwy, Evangeline Thruway, Surrey St. and General Mouton (no volumes available) – are carrying more traffic than they can handle (51,000, 33,000, 48,000, 60,000 vehicles per day, respectively), and may be inadequate to handle future growth. These crossings provide trip interchanges between the southeast side of the river and the northwest side of the river with both of these areas experiencing booming development, particularly the southeast area. This expected growth will increase the need for additional capacity on the existing crossings and/or an additional crossing like the South College extension.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Percentage of Households spending more than 45% of income on housing and transportation combined*

51.7%

Lafayette

52.52%

Baton Rouge, LA

51.75%

Austin, TX

54.82%

Fayetteville, AR

54.73%

Chattanooga, TN

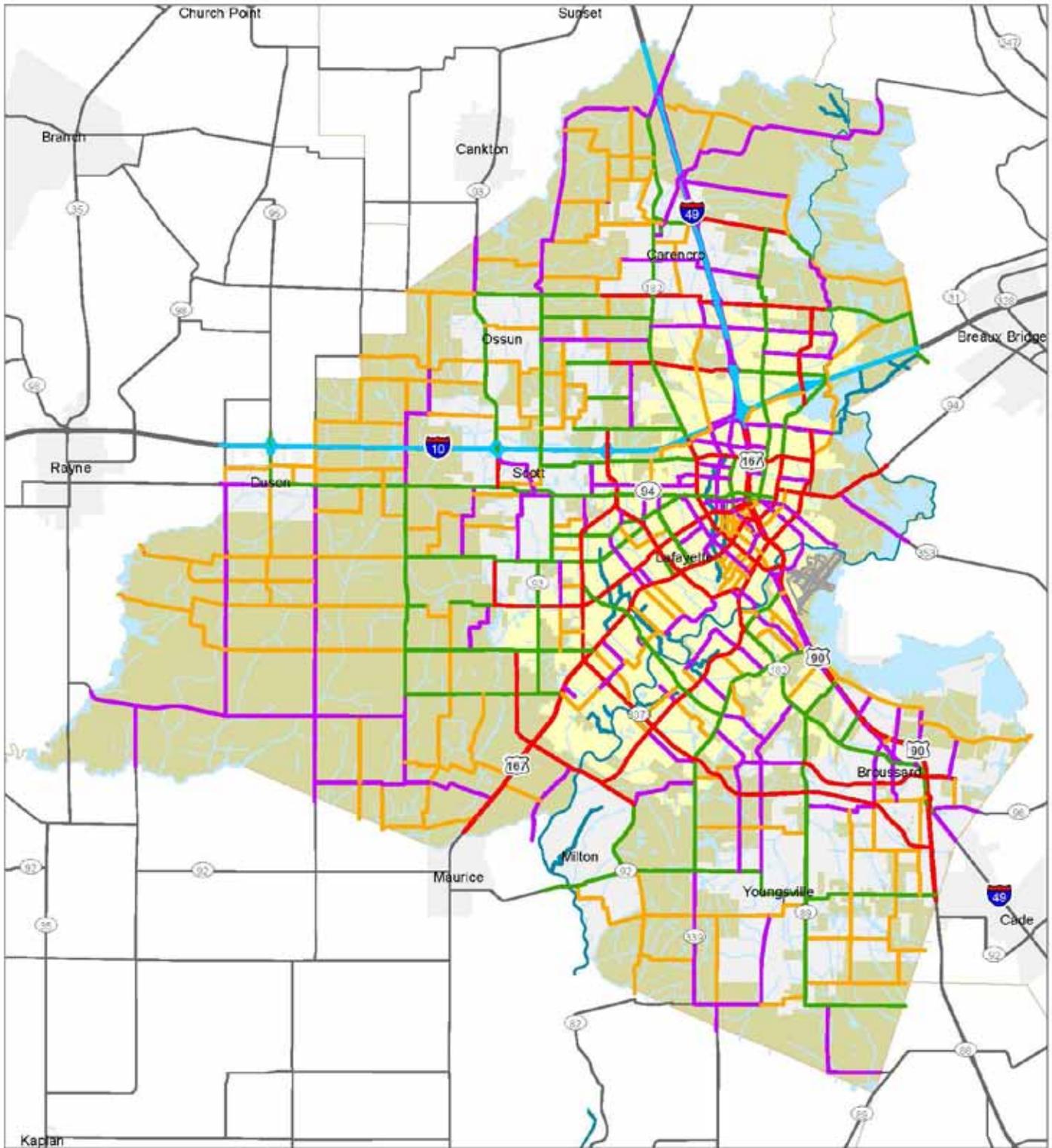
47.75%

Huntsville, AL

* H+T Index, Center for Neighborhood Technology



Figure 4-1 Street and Highway System



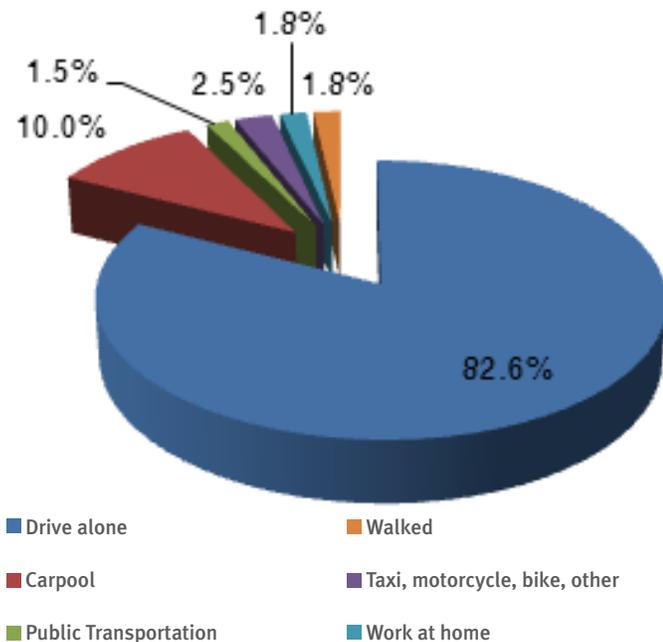
- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Vermillion River | Functional Classes |
| Wetlands and Streams | Interstate |
| City of Lafayette | Principal Arterial |
| Parish Boundary | Minor Arterial |
| Incorporated Places | Collector |



Commuting Patterns

Lafayette Parish has a high rate of single-occupancy vehicle use to commute to work. According to 2006-2009 American Community Survey (ACS) by Census Bureau, nearly 83% of the parish's commuters drove to work alone. This is significantly higher than the national average of 76% and slightly lower than the state average of 84%. The high rates of single-occupancy vehicle use are, to a large extent, the product of region-wide patterns of low-density development and segregated land uses and the absence of other attractive transportation options.

Lafayette Parish: Commute to Work by Mode



HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Percentage Commuting to Work Mode*

Lafayette	Baton Rouge, LA
9.96% Carpool	12.15% Carpool
1.46% Public Transit	2.18% Public Transit
2.48% Walk to work	3.42% Walk to Work
Austin, TX	Fayetteville, AR
11.99% Carpool	10.8% Carpool
5.16% Public Transit	1.04% Public Transit
2.03% Walk to Work	3.33% Walk to Work
Chattanooga, TN	Huntsville, AL
10.94% Carpool	9.68% Carpool
2.06% Public Transit	0.57% Public Transit
2.49% Walk to Work	1.08% Walk to Work

* 2009 American Community Survey, 3 Year Estimates

Almost 32% of the region's working residents commute out of the parish for employment. In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated approximately 125,115 jobs in Lafayette Parish of which 60,613 (48.2%) jobs were filled by local workers. The following tables show the parish labor market size, parish's labor force and employment efficiencies.

According to the 2008 American Community Survey, average one-way commute time to jobs in Lafayette Parish is 21.4 minutes. This equates to about seven and half full days driving annually. About 58% of work trips have a range of 10 to 24 minutes of commute time (see appendix for illustration).

Table 4-1: Lafayette Parish Labor Market Size (Primary Jobs)

2010		
	Count	Share
Total Employed in Lafayette Parish	125,115	100.0%
Total Workers Living in Lafayette Parish	88,708	70.9%
Net Job Inflow (+) or Outflow (-)	36,407	-

Table 4-2: In-Area Labor Force Efficiency (Primary Jobs)

2010		
	Count	Share
Total Workers Living in Lafayette Parish	88,708	100.0%
Living and Employed in Lafayette Parish	60,613	68.3%
Living in Lafayette Parish but Employed Outside	28,095	31.7%

Table 4-3: In-Area Employment Efficiency (Primary Jobs)

2010		
	Count	Share
Total Employed in Lafayette Parish	125,115	100.0%
Employed and Living in Lafayette Parish	60,613	48.4%
Employed in Lafayette Parish but Living Outside	64,502	51.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application and LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (Beginning of Quarter Employment, 2nd Quarter of 2002-2010).

Congestion

Lafayette has a significant amount of congestion-induced travel-time delays during peak periods of the day. An analysis of the 2010 Lafayette Travel Demand model results show that commuters lost over 2.8 million hours and \$59 million annually due to traffic congestion in the Lafayette metropolitan area. The average commuter in this urbanized area experienced about 26 total hours per year of delay due to highway congestion. While roadway congestion is not as significant as in major urban areas across the nation, it still has the potential to affect economic development, contribute to air quality problems, and negatively impact the region’s livability.

Roadway congestion can be measured by examining roadway level of service (LOS) at peak hours of the day. A roadway segment with an LOS of E or F generally has more traffic than can be handled, leading to long queues at intersections or slow traffic on freeways/interstates and major arterials. Due to the region’s high amount of congestion, several segments/intersections of its roadways routinely operate at LOS E or F. Figure 4-2 shows these areas, which are concentrated in the city of Lafayette. Not surprisingly, significant areas of congestion occur along US 167 (Johnston Street), Ambassador Caffery Parkway, Verot School Road, Pinhook Road, US 90 and Kaliste Saloom Road.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Length of commute to work*

20.4 mins

Lafayette

20.4 mins

Baton Rouge, LA

22.7 mins

Austin, TX

17.6 mins

Fayetteville, AR

18.3 mins

Chattanooga, TN

18.2 mins

Huntsville, AL

* 2009 American Community Survey, 3 Year Estimates

Transportation Options

Public Transit

Development patterns of the late twentieth century have resulted in limited alternatives to vehicular transportation. Lafayette Parish has minimal transit service which, along with low-density development and separation between trip origins and destinations, compounds the challenge of providing service.

Fixed-route transit service is limited to the city of Lafayette, where approximately 29,000 occupied housing units are within one-quarter mile of a LTS fixed route (see Figure 4-3). This equates to approximately 29% of the total occupied housing units in Lafayette Parish. This means that the average citizen has few transportation options beyond the private automobile. About 33% of streets include sidewalks in Lafayette Parish and about 62% of sidewalk coverage in the city of Lafayette. Many of the neighborhoods built in the 1970s and 1980s lack sidewalks. In addition, there are only a few dedicated bicycle routes; they include Johnston Street (From Lewis Street to Ridge Road), the Atakapa Ishak Multi-Purpose Trail, and the recently completed University Common (an off-road paved bicycle path beginning at UL’s Horticultural Center on Johnston Street extending up Cajundome Boulevard to Eraste Landry Road). In 2010, about 5.7% of residents in the parish commuted via walking, cycling, or transit, which is up from 4.2% in year 2000.

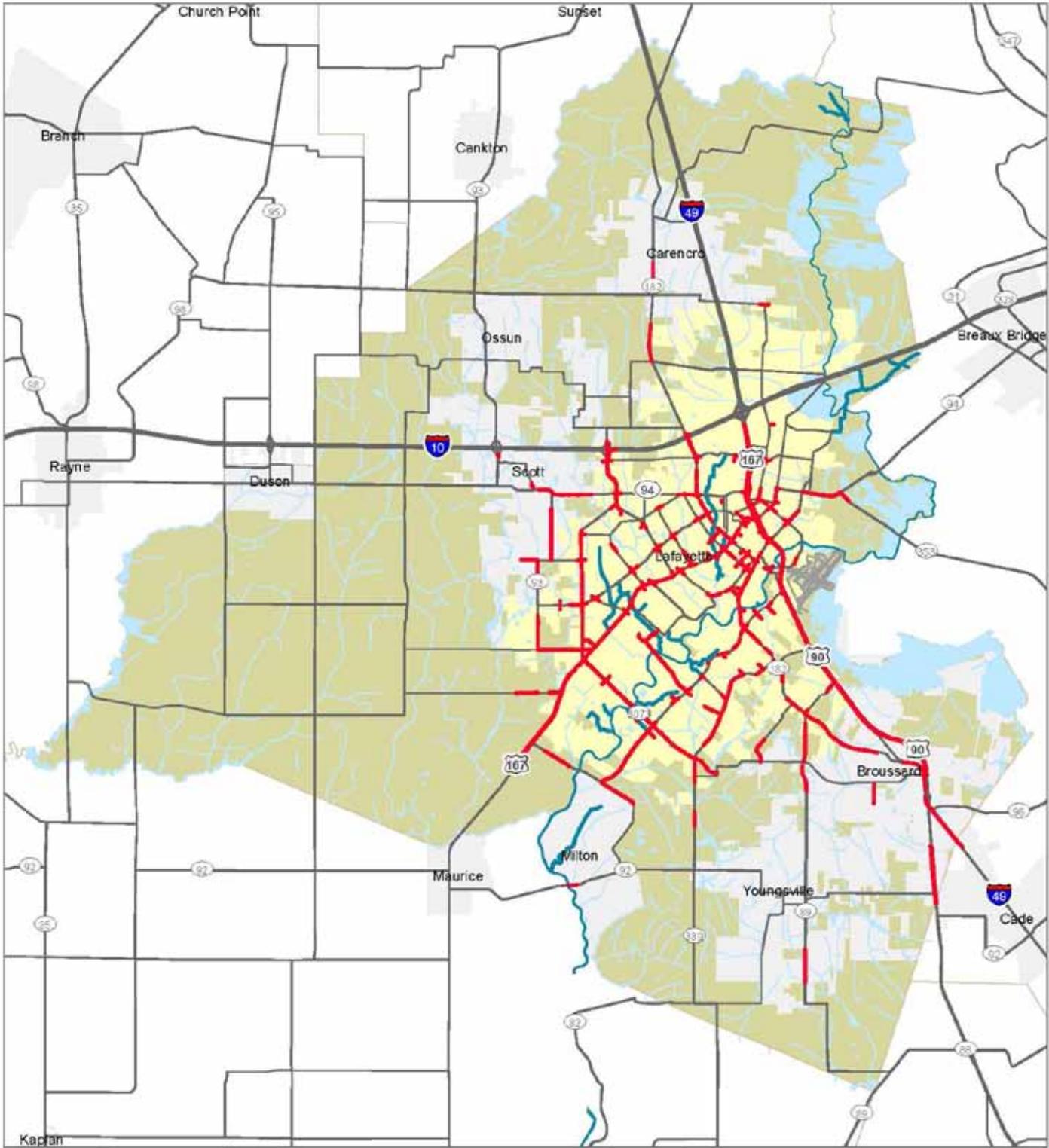
Table 4.4 Sidewalk Coverage

Jurisdiction	Street Miles	Sidewalk Miles	% of Streets with Sidewalks
Lafayette Parish	1,747	569	32.6
City of Lafayette	751	462	61.5

Source: Lafayette Consolidated Government

Nevertheless, demand for transit service is increasing. LTS’s fixed-route transit service has seen ridership grow steadily over the past decade. Average passenger trips on LTS increased by 7% between 2000 and 2010. The following table lists the LTS’s annual unlinked passenger trips between 2000 and 2010.

Figure 4-2 Capacity and Congestion Issues (Level of Service) in Lafayette Parish



- Vermillion River
- Wetlands and Streams
- City of Lafayette
- Parish Boundary
- Incorporated Places
- Unincorporated Lafayette Parish
- LOS E/F



Map 2- Capacity and Congestion Issues

Table 4.5 Transit Ridership

Year	Unlinked Passenger Trips
2000	1,355,386
2001	1,142,402
2002	1,050,235
2003	1,067,502
2004	1,197,876
2005	1,377,467
2006	1,548,335
2007	1,599,010
2008	1,606,210
2009	1,488,364
2010	1,449,914

Source: <http://www.ntdprogram.gov/ntdprogram/data.htm>

The following identifies several transit service gaps that exist in transit services, according to the 2035 Transit Plan developed by the Lafayette Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO):

• **Physically Challenged**

At present, the New Freedom Program under Section 5317 of the current transportation act is not being implemented in Lafayette Parish. The New Freedom Act would provide transportation funding for services resembling those being provided by LARC for its specialized population of developmentally challenged individuals.

Some of these individuals are currently serviced by SMILE, but others are not because of their location in rural areas or because of the programmatic status. Transit service for rural specialized populations could be provided for employable populations who are physically disabled, rather than just the developmentally challenged as is the case now.

• **Day of the Week**

A second service gap entails the lack of available transit on weekends. Currently, the only service provider that operates on Saturday is the LTS’s Section 5316 program . The program is limited to providing service for employment related activities. Expansion of this service requires additional funding, which may be difficult under the current economic climate.

• **Rural Populations**

Lafayette Parish is an urban parish that receives Section 5307 funding to operate “fixed route” transit service. This type of funding essentially precludes the receipt of Section 5311 funding for Rural and Small Urban Areas. Many parts of the parish are not included in the Census Bureau’s Lafayette Urban Area; therefore, are not serviced by a concerted program. Some citizens are being serviced by SMILE and LARC, while others not living in the service area of these two organizations are not receiving transit services.

• **Time Sensitive Riders**

The typical headway between LTS buses is thirty minutes. However, the regularity of service is not always an exact 30 minutes due to various reasons. As a result, if a rider misses a ride because the bus is running early, he/she may have to wait for more than an hour for the next bus, meaning that the total wait time might be as much as 60 minutes. Any effort to increase the frequency of bus service to reduce wait times will increase the operating and maintenance costs which require additional funding.

In 2011, the Rosa Parks Transportation Center, a multi-modal transportation terminal, was completed which connects LTS buses, Greyhound bus (future) and railroad (Amtrak) services at one central location and provides a convenient transfer process among these various transportation modes. This investment facilitates inter- connectivity between various modes which could improve ridership. The Rosa Parks Transportation Center could be leveraged to promote public transportation within the region.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Transit ridership, weekday / Per Capita

4.377/0.038

Lafayette

13,730/0.060

Baton Rouge, LA

128,000/0.156

Austin, TX

488/0.006

Fayetteville, AR

9,500/0.056

Chattanooga, TN

891/0.005

Huntsville, AL

In addition, opportunities exist in the city of Lafayette and other parts of the parish for transit-oriented development (high density residential and mixed-use development). Several areas within the region have strong potential for this type of development, even in suburban locations that currently have no transit service. High-density residential and mixed-use developments are being planned for the I-49 Corridor as well at select intersections of major arterials or nodes. These provide the opportunity to develop transit oriented developments (TOD) as an incentive for developers to build new construction and convert old construction to uses that would be linked by transit services.

- **Bicycling**

Even though bikeway planning in Lafayette area began in the 1970's, today there are only two dedicated bicycle routes one of which is along Johnston Street (From Lewis Street to Ridge Road) and the other one is the recently completed University Common (an off-road paved bicycle path beginning at UL's Horticultural Center on Johnston Street extending up Cajundome Boulevard to Eraste Landry Road). The facilities that do exist from previous plans lack adequate signage and fail to connect to other bike routes. There are a number of bikeway projects being considered which show a shift towards a more bicycle friendly community. Specific bikeway projects, including the Atakapa-Ishak Trail and the Souvenir Gate, and their status, are listed in the Appendix.

Figure 4-3 Transit Routes in Lafayette Parish

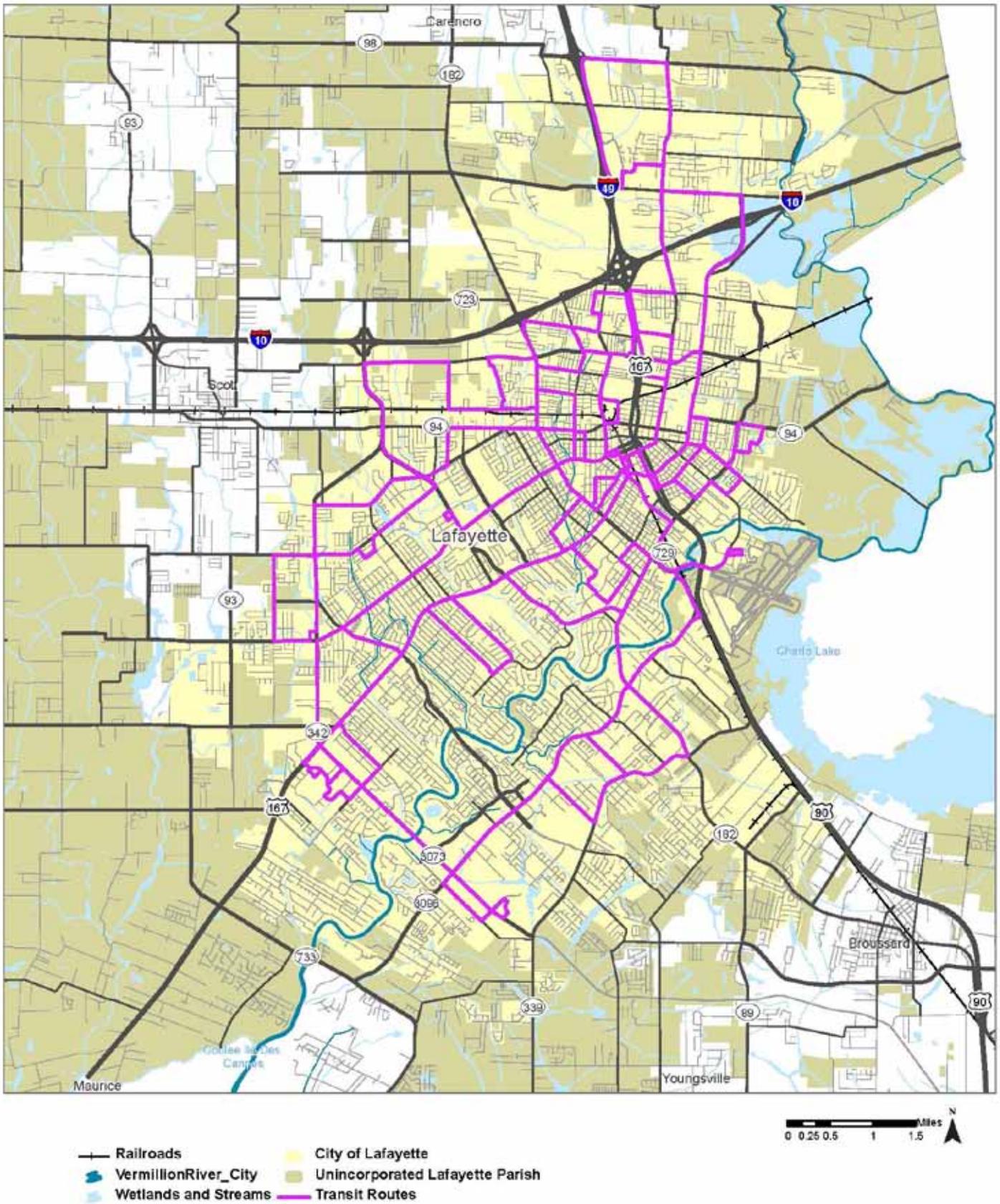
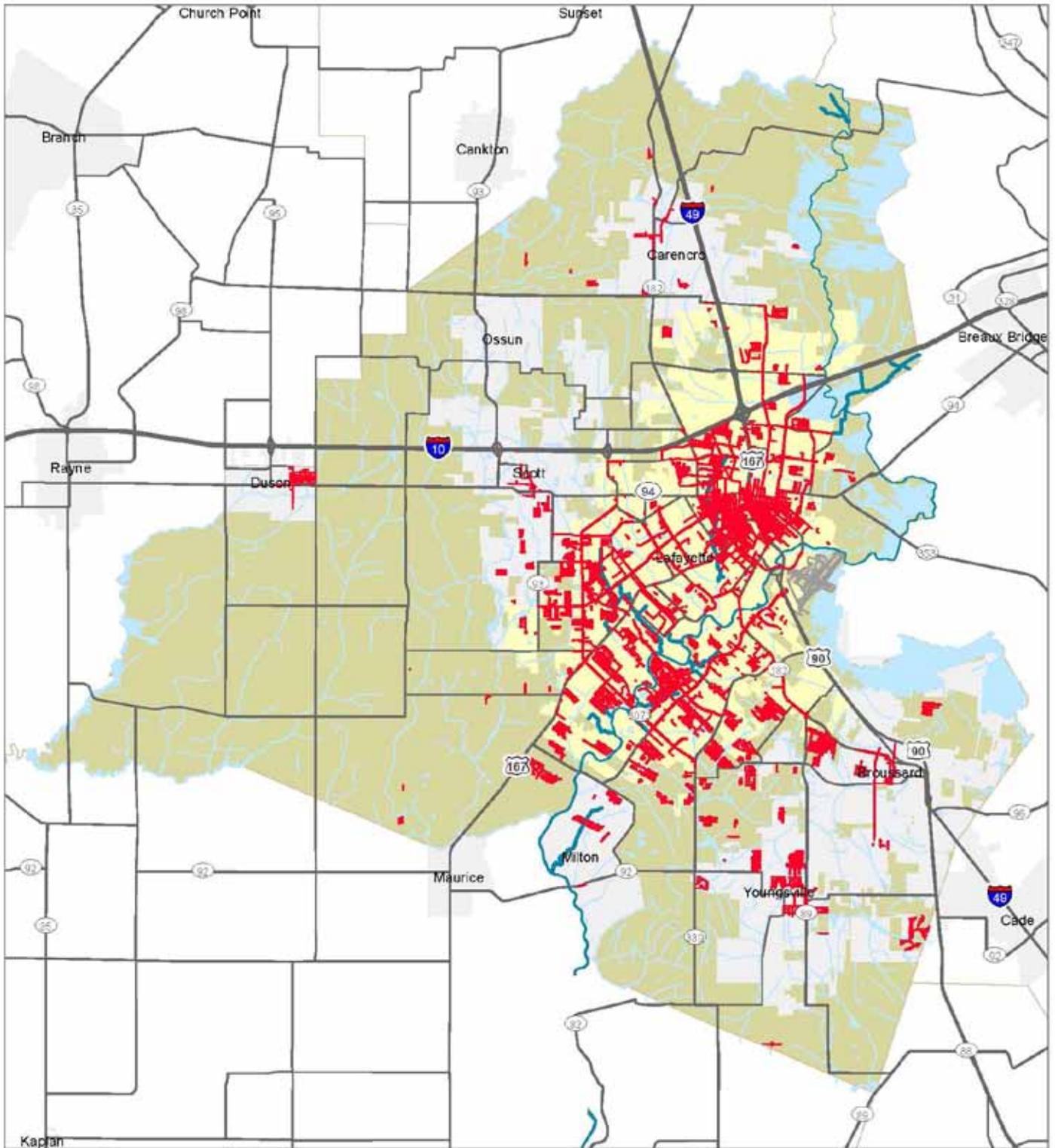


Figure 4-4 Sidewalks Coverage



-  Vermillion River
-  Wetlands and Streams
-  City of Lafayette
-  Parish Boundary
-  Incorporated Places
-  Unincorporated Lafayette Parish
-  Sidewalks

Source: Lafayette Consolidated Government

Figure 4-5 National Freight Traffic



Note: Long-haul freight trucks typically serve locations at least 50 miles apart, excluding trucks that are used in movements by multiple modes and mail.
Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Office of Freight Management and Operations, Freight Analysis Framework, version 3.1, 2010.

Freight Operations

Lafayette has limited manufacturing activity and most of the freight is destined and/or passing through the Lafayette area. The primary routes for truck freight are I-10, I-49 and US 90 / SE Evangeline Thruway corridors, the latter of which is planned to become an I-49 extension. Connecting Alexandria and Shreveport to the north to New Iberia and Houma to the south, heavy regional truck traffic, particularly heavy sugar cane trucks, on US Highway 90 contributes significantly to congestion and road bed deterioration.

According to FHWA's Freight Analysis Framework Version 3,⁸ long distance truck volume on I-10 near the eastern parish boundary was 10,000 trucks per day in year 2007 and it is forecasted to increase 126% by year 2040. Similarly, long distance truck volume on I-49 (north of I-10) is forecasted to increase 92% by 2040 from 3,900 trucks in year 2007. Once the SE Evangeline

Thruway/U.S. 90 corridor (I-49 Connector) is fully converted to interstate standards, truck freight movement should be greatly improved as it will be directly adjacent to the airport and the Rosa Parks Transportation Center, a multi-modal facility. Freight tonnage information for Lafayette Parish is not readily available.

There are limited rail facilities and freight traffic through the Lafayette area. A federal survey shows that the amount of rail activity in the Lafayette area is negligible. There are only two active lines that service the Lafayette area. The amount of freight serviced by these lines is not readily available.

Lafayette does not have a river port. Cargo can be delivered via the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, and the proximity of Lafayette to the Gulf of Mexico makes deliveries and exports by sea feasible even though currently there is no such activity. The nearest deep water port is 50 miles east at the Port of Baton Rouge. The Port of Lake Charles is 70 miles west. Both ports have a channel depth of 40 feet. The Port of Iberia is a shallow draft port 23 miles southeast of Lafayette. The Port of West St. Mary is also a shallow draft port and is 35 miles southeast of Lafayette in Franklin, Louisiana. Other accessible shallow draft ports include the Port of Vermilion in Abbeville, which is roughly 25 miles southwest of Lafayette and the Twin Parish Port in Delcambre, which is roughly 20 miles southeast of Lafayette.

⁸ FHWA's *The Freight Analysis Framework (FAF)* integrates data from a variety of sources to create a comprehensive picture of freight movement among states and major metropolitan areas by all modes of transportation

Air Travel & Cargo Services

Served by three commercial airlines, Lafayette Regional Airport (LFT) links southwest Louisiana to the world. LFT currently serves approximately 450,000 air passengers annually. In 2011, LFT was ranked 167 out of 451 airports in the nation based on total number of domestic passengers served. The volume of enplaned and deplaned passengers has been increasing for the five year period 2007-2011. The following table shows the historic trend.

Table 4.6 Annual Passenger Volumes

2007 - 2011			
Year	Enplaned	Deplaned	Total
2007	221,722	219,904	441,626
2008	210,885	209,091	419,976
2009	210,145	209,589	419,734
2010	225,302	222,924	448,226
2011	228,380	227,350	455,730

The number of passenger trips continues to increase despite above-average ticket prices. According to the U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics, average commercial passenger airfares at LFT for 2011 were \$497 which is 37% higher than the national average of \$364. 2011 domestic fares at LFT were 37% higher than the national average (\$364), 48% higher than fares from New Orleans (\$335), 16% higher than fares from Baton Rouge (\$428), and 2.5% lower than fares from Lake Charles (\$510). LFT’s high ticket prices are attributable in part to the fact that the airport is not a carrier hub and has little low-cost carrier competition.

LFT also has air freight operations and fixed base operators. Cargo operations are provided by Federal Express and UPS. Each offers Next-Day Air Gateway service. The airport has also developed a cargo ramp to better facilitate cargo operations. As noted in the MPO’s 2040 Freight Transportation Plan, from 2003 to 2007, cargo enplanements and deplanements have increased by 584% and 355%, respectively.

There are two Fixed-Base Operator’s (FBOs) at LFT: Landmark Aviation and Noble Flight. The FBOs offer a range of services including aircraft fueling, parking, storage, and rentals. Other services include flight training, charters, aircraft maintenance, avionics service, and catering.

Transportation Funding

Transportation funding sources are less certain in today’s economic environment. Currently, federal and state sources provide the vast majority of funding for transportation projects as most of the major corridors in Lafayette Parish are federal or state highways. But the needs of the region are greater than the amount of funding that it receives from federal/state sources. This may require the region to seek out new long-term revenue sources for transportation projects.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Adequate water, sewer and electric facilities form the cornerstones of the Lafayette Parish infrastructure. These utility systems coupled with the roadway network have shaped development patterns throughout the region. Lafayette Parish benefits from a plentiful water supply, water and wastewater systems that generally have excess capacity, excellent broadband Internet coverage, and ample capacity of electricity.

The Lafayette Utilities System (LUS) is one of the departments of the Lafayette Consolidated Government (LCG), providing electric, water, sewer, phone, television and high-speed internet services (via fiber optic network) to residential, commercial and industrial customers . Fiber services are limited to the corporate limits of the city of Lafayette, while water, electric, and sewer may extend outside of the city limits of Lafayette.

As prescribed by the LCG Home Rule Charter, the City-Parish President appoints a Director of Utilities subject to the approval of the Lafayette City-Parish Council and the Lafayette Public Utility Authority (LPUA). The City-Parish President and LUS Director manage the day-to-day affairs, while the Council and LPUA (made up of those council members whose districts comprise at least 60% of city residents) are the legislative bodies for the system. In addition, for matters dealing with the Boyce, LA power plant, the Council, acting in it capacity of the Lafayette Public Power Authority (LPPA) is the legislative group for that facility.

Electric Facilities

There are three main providers of electricity in Lafayette Parish:

- LUS
- Southwest Electric Membership Corporation (SLEMCO)
- Entergy

LUS is the main provider in the city of Lafayette but the other three companies provide electricity in other portions of the Lafayette Parish. The entire parish of Lafayette has electric service.

LUS serves the largest area out of the four companies due to the large size of the city of Lafayette in comparison to the entire parish. In addition, there are some small areas outside the city limits that are serviced by LUS Electric. This is a strategy deployed by LUS to serve areas which are anticipated to be annexed into the City in the not too distant future. LUS serves both residential and commercial customers and has ample capacity to meet future needs. LUS currently has 63,500 customers. Of that total, 51,800 are residential and the remaining customers are from businesses, schools, and churches. Typically the power usage is split 50/50 between residential and non-residential customers. In year 2011, LUS had the ability to generate 731 MW of power, but only needed 492 MW of power. LUS has, on occasion, sold excess power.

LUS currently has a contract with SLEMCO to cover an area outside the city of Lafayette, commonly referred to as the “area of influence.” This agreement allows for the purchase of SLEMCO customers by LUS upon annexation of areas within this area of influence. The contract also gives LUS the first right of refusal for these newly annexed customers. The current agreement was entered into in 2004 and expires in 2019. LUS Electric has four locations for generating power, as shown in Table 4-7.

Table 4.7 Generating Power Sites

Unit	Fuel	Net Capacity (MW)
Bonin Unit 1,2,3	Natural Gas	285
Hargis-Hebert Unit 1, 2	Natural Gas	97
TJ Labbe Unit 1, 2	Natural Gas	97
Rodemacher Power Station-Unit 2 (Boyce, LA)	Coal	246
TOTAL		725

Existing infrastructure also includes 14 electrical substations (served by transmission voltages of 69 kV or 230 kV) and three power generation plants. There are approximately 16.1 miles of 230 kV transmission lines and 28.4 miles of 69 kV transmission lines.

In the 1970s, an entity formed by state legislative action known as the Lafayette Public Power Authority (LPPA) was developed and owns 50% of an electric generating plant (Rodemacher Power Station 2) in Boyce, LA. Other owners of this facility include Cleco at 30%, and Louisiana Energy and Power Authority (LEPA) at 20%. Lafayette is also a member of LEPA, but the 50% ownership does not include the portion owned by LEPA. This facility provides approximately 65% of all power to the city of Lafayette. The plant is fueled by coal. The facility owns two coal trains, which routinely carry 8800 BTU content coal from the Powder River Basin in Gillette, WY to this plant.

LEPA is an association of public power entities in Louisiana. Members of LEPA include: Abbeville, Alexandria, Erath, Houma, Jonesville, Kaplan, Lafayette, Minden, Morgan City, Natchitoches, New Roads, Plaquemine, Rayne, St. Martinville, Vidalia, Vinton, Welsh, and Winnfield.

According to the Louisiana Public Service Commission, LUS has one of the best records for reliability in the state of Louisiana for outages, specifically frequency of outages, and the time to recover from outages. Part of this record has to do with the aggressive nature of LUS’s tree trimming program and the robust nature of LUS’s transmission, substation and distribution infrastructure. This reduces the possibility of many outages that would occur due to fallen trees and/or limbs from trees.

LUS Electric has four locations for generating power (consisting of a total of eight generating units) fueled by natural gas and coal.

Table 4.8 Energy Provider

Energy Provider	SAIDI ¹ Minutes/Customer	SAIFI ² Interruptions/Customer
LUS	44.5	1.02
Entergy	136.2	1.20
AEP SWEPCO	277.2	2.03
Claiborne Electric Cooperative	228.6	1.51

Source: Brian McManus, Louisiana Public Service Commission, 3/11

Note: The LPSC does not receive SAIDI and SAIFI data from municipality-owned utilities.

¹System Average Interruption Duration Index

²System Average Interruption Frequency Index

LUS Electric’s greatest challenges come from the current uncertainty in environmental standards and the issues related to transmission availability and reliability for the Lafayette area. Currently LUS is anticipating many regulatory standard changes with higher air quality standards most likely being the biggest challenge in the next couple of years, due to the present high degree of reliance on coal.

New stringent environmental regulations will impact costs to customers as LUS must make the necessary upgrades to the coal plant. Two regulations that will require significant upgrades to the plant are the Cross State Air Pollution Rule intended to limit the interstate transport of Ozone Season Nitrogen Oxide (NOx) emissions and the Mercury and Air Toxics Standards that will require the reduction of certain emissions. The estimated costs to complete these projects are up to \$88 million.

Other regulatory agencies that govern LUS electric operations from a regulatory standpoint include: North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ), Southwest Power Pool (SPP), and Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH).

LUS is also dealing with challenges in transmission availability and reliability for the Lafayette area with its involvement in what is called the Acadiana Load Pocket (ALP). This project is a joint effort of LUS, Cleco, and Entergy in the construction of a new transmission system from the Boyce, LA plant to Lafayette in order to maintain the reliability of transmitting electric power to the area.

LUS is currently a member of the Southwest Power Pool (SPP), a reliability coordinator of the bulk electric system. LUS is currently evaluating the possibility of changing its reliability service from SPP to Midwest Independent Transmission System Operator (MISO). MISO provides reliability services for the bulk electric system along with an electric market. LUS believes that it will be increasingly difficult to expand its electric service area because of so many locations in Lafayette being “land-locked” due to the annexation activities of the other municipalities in Lafayette Parish. There are opportunities for new services to be provided through infill and redevelopment within the existing service area.

In addition, even with the availability of property, obtaining all necessary permits for new facilities will become extremely difficult in the coming years.

Water consumption is about 84,000 gallons a year per residential customer and 434,000 gallons a year per commercial customer.

Water Facilities

The area serviced by LUS Water is typically and generally within the city of Lafayette corporate limits. There are some areas outside of the city limits that receive service from LUS Water due to the extremely close proximity of these areas to existing water infrastructure. Conversely, there are small areas within the city limits that do not receive services from LUS Water due to the fact that these areas are not incorporated as part of the city of Lafayette.

The source of LUS Water is supplied by ground water wells from the Chicot Aquifer. A total of 17 deep water wells provide water for all LUS customers in the city of Lafayette and others through wholesale water sales.

There are four treatment plants –North Water Plant, located at 200 North Buchanan Street and South Water Plant, located at 810 West Broussard Road and two additional smaller plants that together service the Lafayette area. These treatment facilities combined for a production capacity of 50.6 million gallons daily (mgd).

LUS Water has ample capacity for the provision of water to both residential and commercial customers within the city of Lafayette. LUS Water has 52,000 water meters in service. Water distribution is managed through approximately 1,064 miles of main lines. Water consumption is roughly 84,000 gallons per year per residential customer and 434,000 gallons per year per commercial customer. After providing all potable water needs for the city of Lafayette, LUS is able to provide water through wholesale agreements to the City of Scott, Water District North, the City of Broussard, Water District South, Milton Water System, and the City of Youngsville. In 2011, LUS Water sold 1.8 billion gallons of water through wholesale agreements. The following table provides Wholesale Water Sales Volumes in gallons.

LUS anticipates that there is sufficient water production capacity supply these wholesale water agreements, along with the needs of the city of Lafayette, for years to come.

LUS Water has a Master Plan developed in 2004. It has been updated as needed periodically, but there has not been an updated version republished. The updates are incorporated into the overall computer model for their own internal purposes. The city of Lafayette has a Water Conservation Ordinance in place which was adopted by the LPUA and Lafayette City-Parish Council in May, 2001. The ordinance controls the times for automated watering systems for the period May-October each year. Watering is allowed only between the hours of midnight and 2:00 PM. The ordinance not only controls the times for watering, but also who is allowed to water on a particular day. There is a set schedule of fines for violating the ordinance, which is monitored by LUS.

Currently, LUS Water is in compliance with environmental regulations, but does face other challenges. LUS does not see any reason that remaining in compliance will be a challenge in the near future. One environmental issue that LUS is currently looking to improve is the need for backflow prevention valves for residential and commercial fire and landscape sprinkler systems. The customer is required to have these installed and tested on an annual basis, but until now there has been no enforcement. LUS plans to have an ordinance put in place regulating installation and testing in the near future.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Reclaimed Water

No

Lafayette

Yes

Austin, TX

No

Baton Rouge, LA

Yes

Fayetteville, AR

No

Huntsville, AL

The customer is required to have these installed and tested on an annual basis, but until now there has been no enforcement. LUS plans to have an ordinance put in place regulating installation and testing in the near future.

Despite adequate production capacity, with the current, existing water infrastructure LUS may not be able to meet water demands 20 years from now. Expansion of water services could be limited by the sizes and extent of distribution lines. This appears to be the greatest challenge of the water system as they have the capability of producing all water needed from the Chicot Aquifer, but do not have the proper distribution infrastructure network to get that water to the areas of future demand. Essentially, the limits of distribution lines may create a bottleneck for LUS Water services. Even growth within certain areas of the city proves to be difficult because of the limitations in the distribution lines.

LUS also believes that it will be difficult to expand its wholesale water services to other cities in the parish. The main concern is the distribution system. For example, the city of Scott owns all of the water lines that service their residents and businesses. The question becomes how will LUS distribute water to service any area on the other side of Scott? LUS Water is basically becoming “boxed in” with its ability to distribute water to various areas of the parish.

Wastewater Facilities

The area serviced by LUS Wastewater is typically within city limits of Lafayette. There are some areas outside of the city limits that receive service from LUS Wastewater due to their close proximity to existing infrastructure in the area. There are also areas within the city limits that do not receive services from LUS wastewater. This is due mainly to these areas historically having not been annexed by the city of Lafayette. LUS has “first right of refusal” to own and operate new “package treatment” plants which may be installed in areas outside the corporate limits of the city of Lafayette and in the parish.

LUS Wastewater has excess treatment capacity. There are nearly 42,000 wastewater service connections with LUS. Existing infrastructure includes 571 miles of collection pipe, 145 lift stations, and four treatment plants. Communication with the wastewater facilities is accomplished through a combination of antennas, cellular service, and fiber optic services. This communication allows for LUS to monitor its facilities remotely. See the appendix for hydraulic loads (mgd) for the four treatment plants were provided by LUS.

In 2011, the total precipitation was 51 inches. For the Ambassador Caffery Plant, the permitted capacity is only 6.0 mgd, but the actual plant capacity is 9.25 mgd. All permits with the wastewater facilities are current and in order, and will expire on March 31, 2014 .

Lafayette is currently seeking solutions to the need for additional capacity for wastewater treatment for certain growing areas in the city. There are currently no plans for a new treatment plant, but LUS anticipates that they will have a need for a new plant within the next 20 years. LUS is performing a study to expand its South Treatment plant to accommodate the influx/overflow in demand for the Ambassador Caffery Treatment Plant. The results of the study may show that some of the Ambassador Treatment service areas could be permanently rerouted to the South Treatment plant. The reason for this rerouting and expansion at the South Treatment plant is due to availability of expansion area at the South Plant and the lack of expansion area at the Ambassador Plant.

There are a few environmental and capacity challenges that LUS Wastewater will face in the next 20 years. Like many places throughout the south, Lafayette faces challenges with flat terrain. Due to the flat terrain there is a need to use many lift/pump stations to move wastewater through the collection system which translates into higher costs for LUS.

Environmental concerns for wastewater treatment and discharge are more of an issue and challenge than with water treatment. Wastewater is treated and discharged into the Vermilion River. The current conditions in the Vermilion River have caused limitations for the waste load allocations for LUS. It is unlikely that LUS will receive an increase in these allocations. Therefore, LUS needs to have an upgraded system with tertiary treatment in place before the service area grows. It is also possible that nutrient limits for nitrate and phosphorus could be added to the LUS wastewater permits within the next 10 years. All of the environmental regulations are being closely monitored in order that LUS will remain in compliance with all regulations.

LUS has developed a reputation with regulators of a well-run sludge management and land application program. LUS has depended on private landowners to continue to receive wastewater plant sludge on their properties for beneficial re-use. As Lafayette Parish continues to grow, it could be anticipated that these sites may no longer be available or will be restricted. In addition, LUS produces Class B sludge, which is a target of further investigation for pathogen effectiveness and contamination transport by EPA.

Potential modifications to sludge processes may be required to upgrade Class B sludge treatment methods. Regulators may push utilities to adopt Class A solids standards. EPA has indicated it will further review and evaluate pollutants in sludge.

Recycling and Solid Waste

The Environmental Quality Division of Public Works is responsible for regulatory environmental compliance, solid waste collection, recycling, composting, and code enforcement. LCG provides curbside recycling pickup for city residents. All residents can drop off recyclables at the Recycling Foundation in Lafayette. Weekly trash and yard waste collection is provided for all city and unincorporated residents and operated by Allied Waste. The curbside yard waste is turned into compost available for free residential pickup at the Dean Domingues Compost Facility. LCG publishes an annual guide to waste disposal, reuse, and recycling programs for residents and businesses.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Solid Waste (rate 4 / 96 gal)

\$21.11

Lafayette

\$30.95

Austin, TX

n/a (taxes)

Chattanooga, TN

\$17.16

Baton Rouge, LA

\$19.66

Fayetteville, AR

\$16.50

Huntsville, AL

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Solid Waste Pick up

1/week

Lafayette

1/week

Austin, TX

1/week

Chattanooga, TN

2/week

Baton Rouge, LA

1/week

Fayetteville, AR

1/week

Huntsville, AL

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Recycling Pick up

1/week

Lafayette

1/two weeks

Austin, TX

1/two weeks

Chattanooga, TN

1/week

Baton Rouge, LA

1/week

Fayetteville, AR

1/week

Huntsville, AL

Broadband Services

Broadband Internet coverage is provided through LUS Fiber in the city of Lafayette. In 1998, LUS found a solution for their outdated communication equipment within the municipal utility system and decided to build a fiber ring in Lafayette. After considering all of the options, LUS determined that a 24 strand fiber optic ring would be suitable to accomplish their communication goals of communication with an associated cost of \$3,000,000. Further research revealed that an additional \$600,000 investment could increase capacity to a 96 strand fiber optic ring. LCG and LUS opted to fund the 96 strand fiber ring and invest in the community's future.

In 2000, LUS Fiber worked with the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce and LEDA to recommend a wholesale and governmental network. By 2002 LUS Fiber had 14 wholesale customers selling both bandwidth and bandwidth with Internet. Two years later, LUS Fiber began providing services to the Lafayette Parish School System, eventually including all parish schools.

As LUS Fiber services were growing within the government, LCG decided to propose retail service to the citizens of Lafayette. The primary purpose of this initiative was to wire every street in the city with fiber in order to make the city of Lafayette more attractive for economic development. In 2005, the public passed a proposition, with a favorable vote of 62% to authorize LUS Fiber retail services within the city of Lafayette and the sale of revenue bonds to pay for the system infrastructure.

In 2007, the first bonds were issued in the amount of \$110,405,000. The entire project to provide fiber along all local streets was completed ahead of schedule and the fiber-to-the-home network was completely built-out by July 2010. LUS Fiber continues to expand its commercial and residential customer base. Multi-tenant office and apartment buildings are being wired for LUS Fiber connectivity as it becomes feasible to do so.

Infrastructure construction typically followed the existing utilities. Where existing utilities were underground, the fiber optic cables were also run underground. If the utilities were attached to general utility poles, the fiber optic cables were also run on those same poles. LUS entered into a joint-use agreement for the use of poles. In addition, LUS Fiber maintains a franchise agreement with LCG for operations.

LUS Fiber intends to only serve residents and businesses within the city limits. In the case of new annexation, LUS Fiber performs a study to determine the benefits versus the costs of expanding service to that area. From a capacity and "ability to serve" an expanded area, there is sufficient system capability should capital dollars be made available to support such an infrastructure expansion to serve the entire Lafayette Parish area.

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette has already worked with LUS Fiber to provide staff with an integrated system that would allow a direct connection from the university to the homes of staff. This is possible through unique features of the LUS Fiber network where it provides peer-to-peer 100 Mbps capability to all its Internet customers. The University of Louisiana at Lafayette also has a direct connection with some of the high schools. This allows for a much faster network, it essentially eliminates any lag time in the network. This is especially useful for the Academy of Information Technology high school – Carencro High School.

LUS Fiber has more than enough capacity to meet future needs and is so far ahead of the competitive curve for broadband capacity that it will be in strong financial condition to make necessary upgrades.

Businesses in Lafayette have the ability to affordably utilize internet speeds of up to 1 Gigabit per second, far faster than most communities nationwide.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Services

The parish's cities and unincorporated areas are all served by police departments responsible for their particular jurisdiction. There are six local police departments, one sheriff's office, and the state police serving Lafayette Parish. The six local police stations are Lafayette, Carencro, Youngsville, Broussard, Scott, and Duson. The Lafayette Parish Sheriff's Office serves unincorporated areas of the parish, and the state police serves the entire parish. (see Figure 4-6).

Service calls in Lafayette Parish have been increasing since 2005. The number of calls for police service has increased each year since 2005, with the exception of a large decrease in 2006. Between 2005 and 2011, the years in which data is available, the total number of calls increased by 25%.

The Lafayette Police Department struggles to fund and maintain enough police officers to keep up with population growth. The national recommended standard is 2.5 officers per 1,000 people. The Lafayette ratio is approximately 2.1 officers per 1,000 people, falling below national standards.

Table 4.9 Lafayette Parish (All Police Departments) – Calls for Service

	Calls for Service
2005	175,749
2006	90,267
2007	188,730
2008	192,940
2009	204,918
2010	212,583
2011	233,835

Source: LCG, compiled police districts

The total number of crimes committed has remained relatively consistent in the last decade; however the per capita crime rate has been decreasing. According to the parish's Uniform Reporting Statistics, total violent and property crimes have remained fairly constant over the years despite population growth. As a result, the per capita crime rate, with the exception of 2007 and 2009, has decreased.

Parish police departments are making efforts to modernize and become more proactive in improving safety and preventing crime, e.g., training efforts. The Lafayette Sheriff's Department is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) and the LPD is pursuing accreditation.

School crime and drug prevention programs incorporate an officer into schools to act as a counselor, mentor, and "Stay on Track" facilitator. Officers are also involved in civic clubs, Boys & Girls Club, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, and other community organizations in an effort to improve community relationships and quality of life.

The parish's fire departments are stretched to provide service to newly annexed areas. Lafayette Parish has eight total fire districts: Duson, Broussard, Carencro, Judice, Youngsville, Lafayette, Milton, and Scott. However, LCG's 13 stations are centrally located within or near the city of Lafayette calling into question response times for outlying unincorporated areas of the parish, particularly in the southern reaches of the parish (see Figure 4-6). Only the Lafayette fire fighters are full time the other municipalities use volunteer fire fighters. There is no separate taxing district for services such as fire. In addition, there may be a need for greater regionalization of services and/or new fire stations to adequately serve the parish population.

The Acadian Ambulance Service provides emergency medical services in the region and has a national reputation in training. The Acadian Company began operation in Lafayette in 1971 and has expanded to serve parishes and counties spanning Louisiana, Texas, and Mississippi. The company has grown to nearly 4,000 employees in total and operates the National EMS Academy with its main campus located in Lafayette.

Table 4.10 Lafayette Parish Total and Per Capita Crime Rates

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Violent/ Property Crimes Total	10,233	9,221	9,250	10,193	9,740	10,244	9,686	9,129
Lafayette Parish Population	195,800	197,268	197,268	203,462	208,981	211,827	221,578	224,390
Per Capita	0.052	0.047	0.047	0.050	0.047	0.048	0.044	0.041
Per 100,000	5,226	4,674	4,689	5,010	4,661	4,836	4,371	4,068

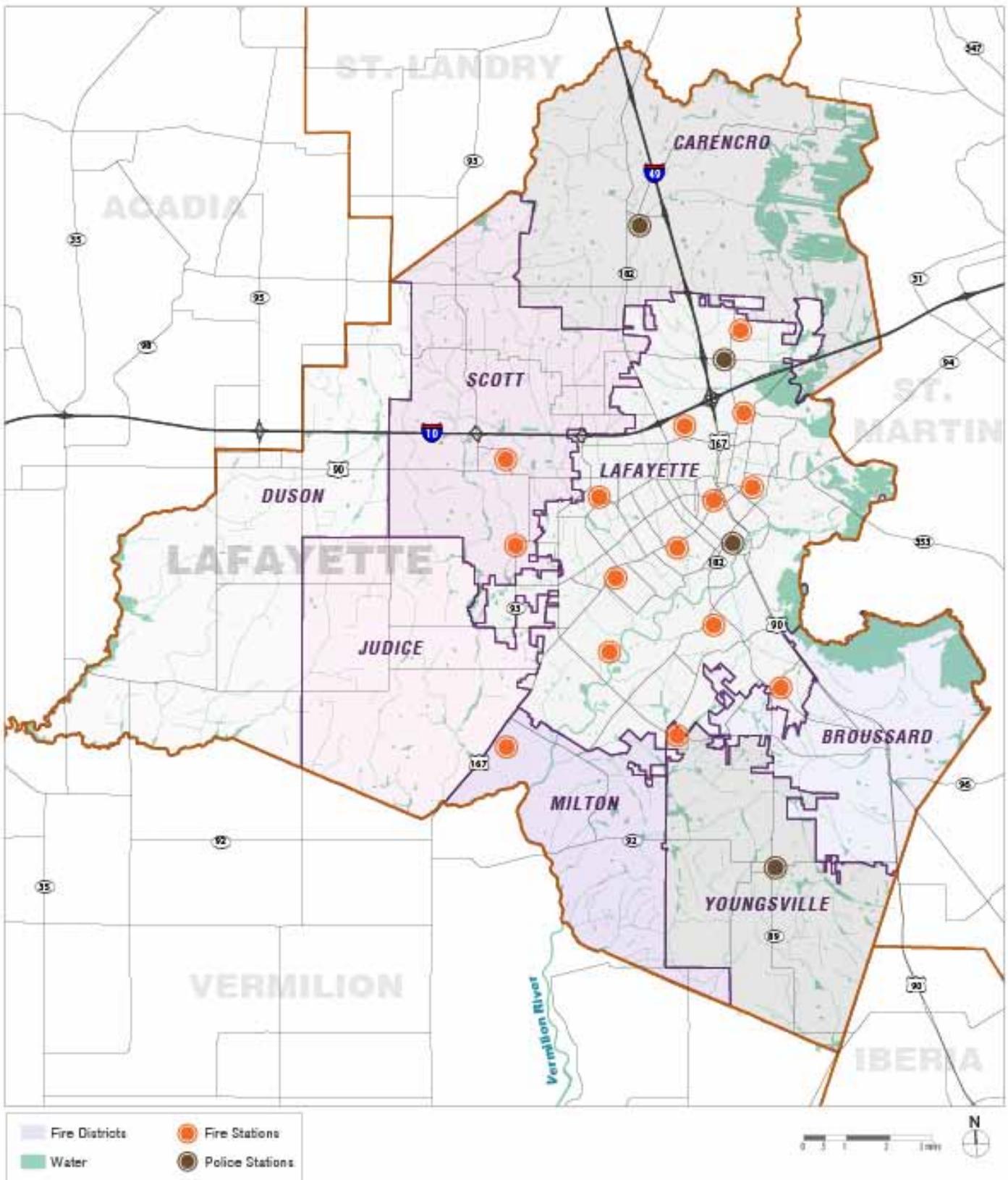
A current level of police service of approximately 2.1 officers per 1,000 people falls below the national recommended standard of 2.5 officers per 1,000 people.



The parish’s 13 fire stations are centrally located within or near the city of Lafayette but serve newly annexed and outlying incorporated areas of the parish, raising concerns about response times and the need to build and staff two more fire stations with minimum staffing of 27 additional firefighters.



Figure 4-6 Existing Police and Fire Services



Education

The Lafayette Parish School System (LPSS) serves the entire parish. Within this system, nine sub-districts serve the general population. Each sub-district contains one high school and typically multiple middle schools and elementary schools (see Figure 4-7). The district has 39 public elementary schools, 10 middle schools, and 12 high schools. Middle and high schools are listed in the Appendix. The parish also has a large number of private schools for K-12 students. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), in 2009, 25% of all students in Lafayette Parish attended private schools (9,853 of 39,758 students).

According to the Louisiana Department of Education, Lafayette Parish schools perform lower than Louisiana state averages. The parish’s “growth label” was typically poor, with 82.1% of test results showing minimal growth, no growth, or decline in improvement. This compares to the state average of 73.8% receiving similar growth reports. Essentially, a growth label describes the level of growth achieved by a school and is based on that particular district’s target for improving statewide test scores (see Table 4-11).

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

College Enrollment*

30.6%

Lafayette Parish

36.0%

Travis County
(Austin, TX)

28.8%

Hamilton County
(Chattanooga, TN)

*2010 American
Community Survey

The parish’s student-to-teacher ratio is higher than state averages. The Lafayette Parish School System student-to-teacher ratio is 13.5 students: 1 teacher compared to the state average of 12.7 students: 1 teacher. Lafayette Parish has higher than average graduation rates. The parish graduation rate is 73.2%, compared to the state average of 70.9%.

Lafayette Parish is home to a number of post-secondary education institutions, most notably the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Set on 1,298 acres in an urban setting close to downtown Lafayette, the school contains the largest enrollment within the nine-campus University of Louisiana System with almost 17,000 total students. Its in-state tuition and fees are \$5,374 (2012-13) and out-of-state tuition and fees are \$14,344 (2012-13). Other significant higher learning institutions include Louisiana Technical College, South Louisiana Community College, and several for-profit colleges, all located in the city of Lafayette.

Table 4.11 School Performance Index (2010-2011)

School System	Number of Schools	Number of Students	Number of Faculty	Minimal Growth, No Growth, or Decline in Test Results
Lafayette Parish	45	30,218	2,246	82.1%
State of Louisiana	1,478	696,558	54,858	73.8%

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

High School Graduates, percent of persons age 25+*

84.2%

Lafayette Parish

86.3%

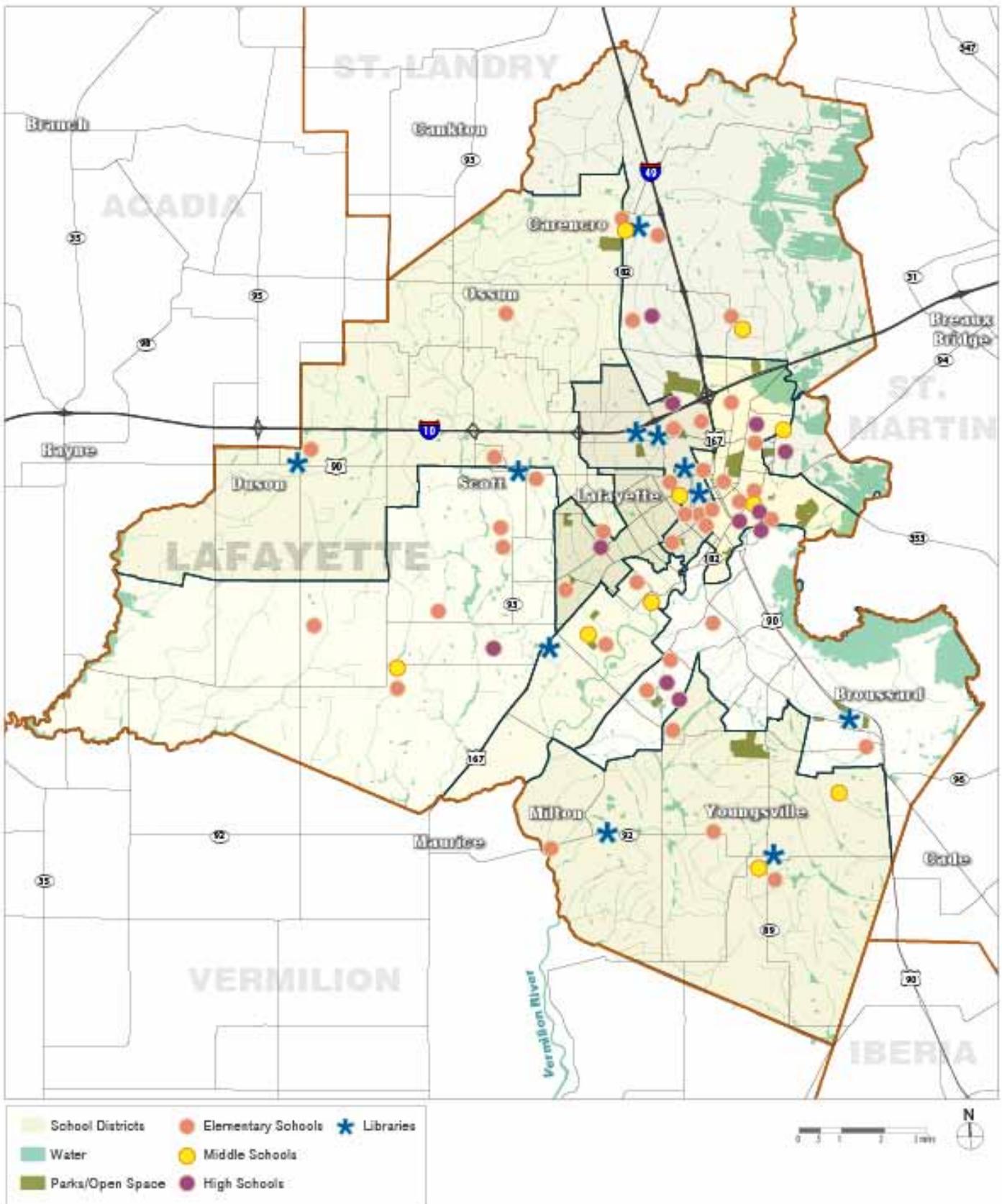
Travis County
(Austin, TX)

85.4%

Hamilton County
(Chattanooga, TN)

*Census, 2006-2010 ACS

Figure 4-7 Existing Education System



Libraries

Lafayette Parish is served by 10 geographically distributed public libraries. The Library is overseen by an 8-member Library Board of Control. The Board is appointed by the City/Parish Council, with one appointment by the City-Parish President. The Board appoints the Library Director. The Library Director assesses the libraries capacity based on Louisiana standards that use measures based on “Essential, Enhanced or Comprehensive” benchmarks.

Voters in Lafayette Parish approved the partial funding of a library expansion recommended by Hidell & Associates in 2002. The North Regional Library (in Carencro) was opened in 2007. The South Regional Library (in Lafayette) was opened in 2009. The Main Library is currently undergoing a major renovation and is expected to reopen in 2014. The East Regional Library will be bid in 2012 and may open by 2014. Plans for the West Regional Library will begin in FY 2012-2013 and may open by 2016.

Adequate library space requirements vary, but are often based on facility size as a function of square feet per person. With the expansion, the twelve libraries in the region will equate to about 0.71 square feet per person, which is below the current industry and State of Louisiana recommendation of 1 square feet per person. However, since the opening of the North and South Regional Libraries, the Library System currently meets and will continue to meet the Comprehensive standard offering library service at a geographic location within a 3.5 mile radius of 90% of the population.

The Library System currently has a collection size of 522,098. This equates to 2.33 per capita, below the Essential standard of 2.5 per capita. It is anticipated that the Library will meet or exceed the Essential standard once the East and West Regional facilities are open.

The Library System currently is below the Essential standard of 1 staff member per 2,000 population and currently meets the Essential standard of 1 Librarian per 10,000 population. Once the building program is complete (estimated to be 2016), the Library System should meet or exceed the Essential standards.

Table 4.12 Libraries in Lafayette Parish

Library Name	Address	Zip Code	Current SQ FT	Projected SQ FT in 2016
Chenier Branch	220 W. Willow Street, Bldg. C, Lafayette, LA	70501	3,175	3,175
Main Public (closed for renovations until 2014)	301 W. Congress Street, Lafayette, LA	70501	63,000	63,000
East Regional Library	(new construction)	-	-	15,000
West Regional Library	(new construction)	-	-	15,000
Jefferson Street Branch (temporary during main library renovation)	538 Jefferson Street, Lafayette, LA (temporary)	70501	-	-
Butler Memorial Branch w/in Martin Luther King Recreation Center	309 Cora Street, Lafayette, LA	70501	845	845
Scott Branch	5808 W. Cameron Street, Scott, LA	70503	2,021	2,021
South Regional Branch	6101 Johnston Street, Lafayette, LA	70503	37,600	37,600
Broussard Branch	100 W. Main Street, Broussard, LA	70518	2,040	2,040
North Regional Branch	5101 N. University Avenue, Carencro, LA	70520	12,564	12,564
Duson Branch	310 Avenue au Nord, Duson, LA	70529	1,452	1,452
Milton Branch	Highway 92, Milton, LA	70558	2,388	2,388
Youngsville Branch	506 Lafayette Street, Suite C, Youngsville, LA	70592	4,000	4,000
Total SF			129,085	159,085



Photo courtesy of Philip Gould



Natural and Cultural Resources

Fruit, vegetable, and grain farming added over \$50 million in gross farm value and animal enterprises added over \$40 million to the economy in 2011

An 8-mile stretch of the Vermilion River passes through the City of Lafayette.

About 51,000 children and adults participate in Lafayette's parks and recreation programs.

In 2011, aquaculture totaled **\$2.79** million in gross farm value, 85% of which came from crawfish farms.

There is no property tax millage dedicated to parks and recreation in the parish.

At a Glance

Natural and Cultural Resources

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Hydrology

The Vermilion River (or Bayou Vermilion) is the major hydrological feature of the area. The Vermilion River cuts directly through the parish and city of Lafayette. The river begins at Bayou Fusilier and flows southward through Lafayette, eventually emptying at Vermilion Bay into the Gulf of Mexico. The River is approximately 72 miles in total length, with 33.5 of those miles running within Lafayette Parish. Approximately 8 miles of the river flow through the city of Lafayette, roughly paralleling Johnston Street. This is considered the “urban river corridor.” The remaining 25.5 miles are called the “rural river corridor.” From Pinhook Bridge southward, the Vermilion River is considered navigable for larger vessels by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Stewardship over the Bayou Vermilion is the responsibility of the Lafayette Parish Bayou Vermilion District, created in 1984 as a political subdivision of the State of Louisiana by an act of the State Legislature.⁸ The District’s broad purpose is “engaging in any activities which would enhance the general condition of Bayou Vermilion.” More specifically, the district is charged with improving water quality and beautifying the Bayou Vermilion “in an effort to promote the bayou as a recreational and cultural asset” and with “creating and controlling a new type of viable economic development adjacent to Bayou Vermilion so as to provide a diversified economic base for the city and parish of Lafayette.” This includes not only managing and conserving the environmental resources within the District, but also cultural resources such as the Vermilionville Living History Museum and Folklife Park. The district is currently updating its 1985 Master Plan.

Aside from the Vermilion River, the parish contains several other important waterways including Bayou Queue de Tortue, Bayou Carencro and Coulee Ile des Cannes, as well as natural tributaries to the Vermilion River such as Isaac Verot Coulée, Coulée des Poches, and Coulée Mine. These water resources are part of the Teche-Vermilion Watershed.

Additionally, deciduous wetland forests are found along the parish’s eastern border (Cote Gelee wetlands). These areas are low-lying, prone to flooding, and thus sensitive to development (see Figure 5-1).

⁸(RS 33:9202)

Ground and Surface Water Resources

The primary groundwater resource of Lafayette Parish is the Chicot aquifer system (with over 43 million gallons per day withdrawn), followed by the Atchafalaya aquifer (less than 1 million gallons per day withdrawn). The base of fresh groundwater ranges from about 700 to 999 feet below sea level, exceeding 1,000 feet in depth only in the central areas of the parish.

Recharge to these aquifers is from rainfall in recharge areas northwest of Lafayette Parish, infiltration from the Atchafalaya River into the Atchafalaya aquifer, vertical leakage through surficial clays, and to a lesser extent, upward leakage from the underlying Evangeline aquifer. Discharge from the aquifers is by natural flow into rivers, leakage into underlying aquifers, and withdrawal from wells.

State well registration records indicate that in 2009 there were about 4,800 active wells in Lafayette Parish, including 4,028 domestic, 361 public-supply, 321 irrigation, and 80 industrial wells. (See Figure 5-1)

The Vermilion River and Bayou Tortue are the two primary sources of fresh surface water in Lafayette Parish. According to a 2011 report produced by the USGS Louisiana Water Science Center, in 2005 about 3.6 million gallons per day (mgd) of surface water was withdrawn in Lafayette Parish, including nearly 2 mgd for rice irrigation and 1.7 mgd for aquaculture. About 1.2 mgd of that total volume came from the Vermilion River. Bayou Carencro and Coulee Ile des Cannes are also among the major sources of surface water.

Stormwater, Drainage and Flood Hazard

Lafayette's stormwater drainage system includes both engineered and natural waterways. Flooding due to poor drainage and the flow capacity limitations of the natural drainage system are significant issues.

Although Lafayette Parish does not face flooding threats as considerable as areas to the south (due to its location on top of the Louisiana Prairie Terrace, which is characterized as higher in elevation than surrounding areas), large swathes of the parish are located within the 100-year flood zone (see Figure 5-2).

Lafayette's Final Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), issued by FEMA, are pending. The preliminary flood maps delineated the floodway and floodplain expanded boundaries using hydrological modeling (see Figure 5-2). The flood zone to the northeast of the parish includes those sizable areas of wetlands characterized by forest ground cover. Other flood zones include both developed and agricultural uses. The forthcoming flood maps will be a useful tool for long-term land use planning, as well as for property owners who are uncertain as to how the development potential of properties or flood insurance requirements may be impacted.

Water Quality

Water from the Chicot aquifer upper sand ranges in hardness from soft to very hard but in general is moderately hard. The water tends to be slightly acidic (pH < 7.0) but generally does not exceed the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Secondary Maximum Contaminant Levels (SMCLs) for drinking water for pH and color, as well as concentrations of chloride, iron, and dissolved solids. Iron concentrations at certain locations do exceed the SMCL of 300 µg/L. Manganese concentrations generally exceed the SMCL of 50 µg/L.

Few water-quality data are available for the shallow aquifer layers of the Chicot system in Lafayette Parish, but the base of the lower sand contains saltwater throughout the parish.

Water from the lower sand of the aquifer is generally hard, and generally does not exceed the SMCLs for pH and color, as well as for concentrations of chloride and dissolved solids. Iron and manganese concentrations generally exceed their SMCLs of 300 µg/L and 50 µg/L.

Stormwater runoff and outfalls particularly impact the quality of the parish's surface water resources. Pollution enters the Vermilion River and surrounding waterways through stormwater runoff and erosion, stormwater outfalls that empty directly in the river, debris, and trash. Levels of fecal coliform in the Vermilion River are a community health and environmental concern, but have been improving over the last several years. Factors contributing to the shift include reduced cattle ranching in the north part of the parish, efforts to reduce fecal matter runoff from farming operations, increased natural vegetation buffers along the river, reduced individual septic from subdivisions, and increased enforcement of commercial dumping.

Air Quality

LCG and the Bayou Vermilion District are working to reduce pollution from entering the region's waterways and improve water quality. The Bayou Vermilion District and LCG, with assistance from a Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality Grant are implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce pollution and stormwater runoff using measurable results. The project's primary goals are:

- Reduce runoff through infiltration, retention, and evaporation.
- Improve runoff quality through the creation of infiltration sites on previously impervious surfaces.
- Find beneficial uses for water rather than exporting it as a waste product down storm sewers.
- Raise public awareness about BMPs known to reduce water quantity, improve water quality, and the beneficial uses and types of native wetland plants.



EPA has designated Lafayette Parish as an attainment area. Recent air monitoring data reported by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) rate Lafayette Parish's air quality as generally between good to moderate.

The American Lung Association's 2012 State of the Air report (which uses EPA's Air Quality Index information) ranks Lafayette and Lafayette Parish among the cleanest US cities for short-term particle pollution (24-hour). However, the parish gets a grade of "D" for ozone (7 high-ozone days between 2008 and 2010)⁸.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Point in Time Air Quality Comparison*

Good
AQI = 7

City of Lafayette

Good
AQI = 11

Baton Rouge, LA

Good
AQI = 23

Austin, TX

Good
AQI = 20

Huntsville, AL

Good
AQI = 49

Chattanooga, TN

**Air Monitoring Data, Louisiana DEQ, July 25, 2012. Ozone, AQI = lower values are better; AirNow.gov*

⁸To calculate these grades, increasing weights are assigned to the days when air pollution levels reach the higher ranges. These are added together and the weighted average calculated, with grades assigned based on that weighted average. For year-round levels of particle pollution, annual average levels calculated by EPA are used.

Figure 5-1 Hydrology

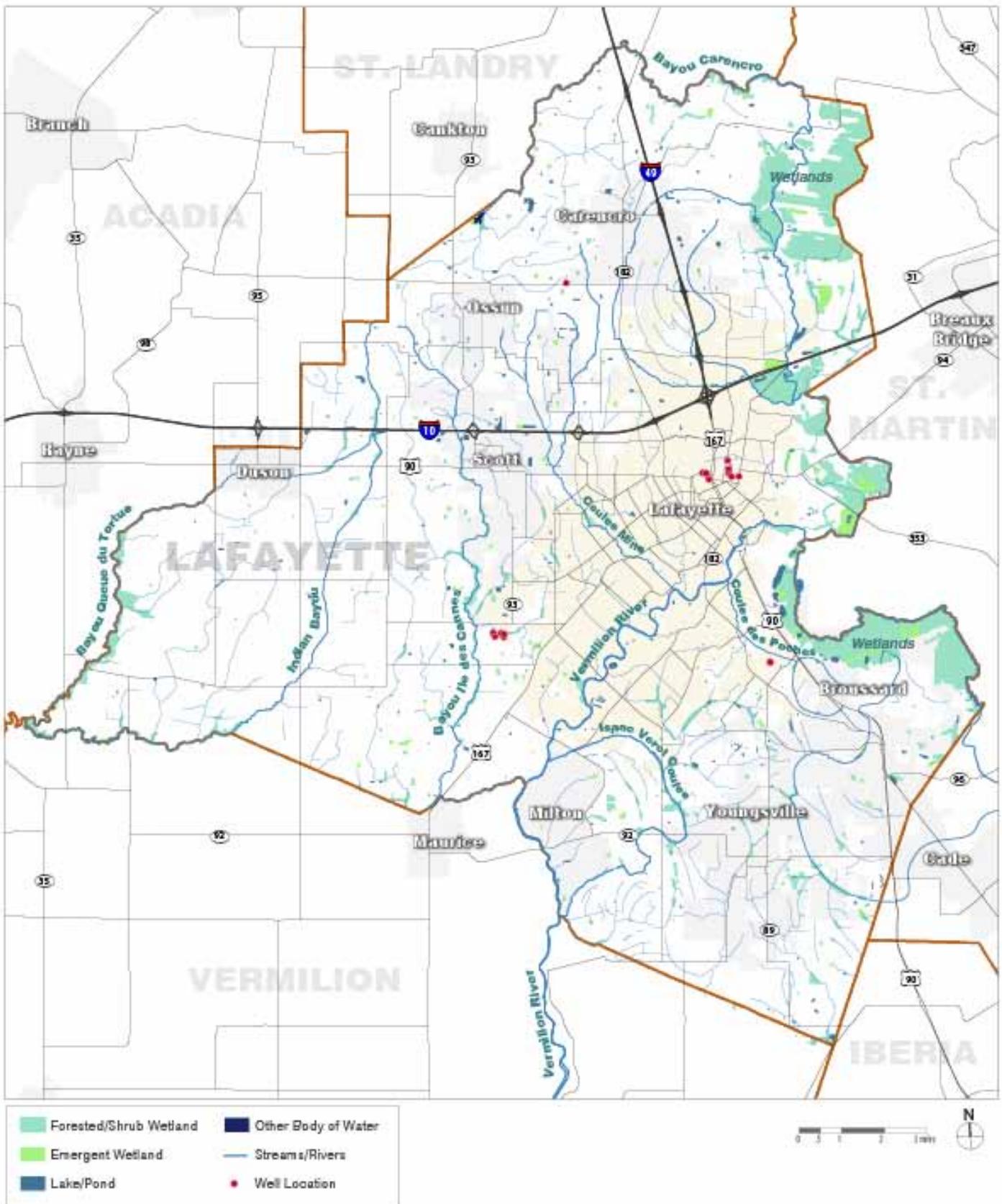


Figure 5-2 Existing Flood Zones

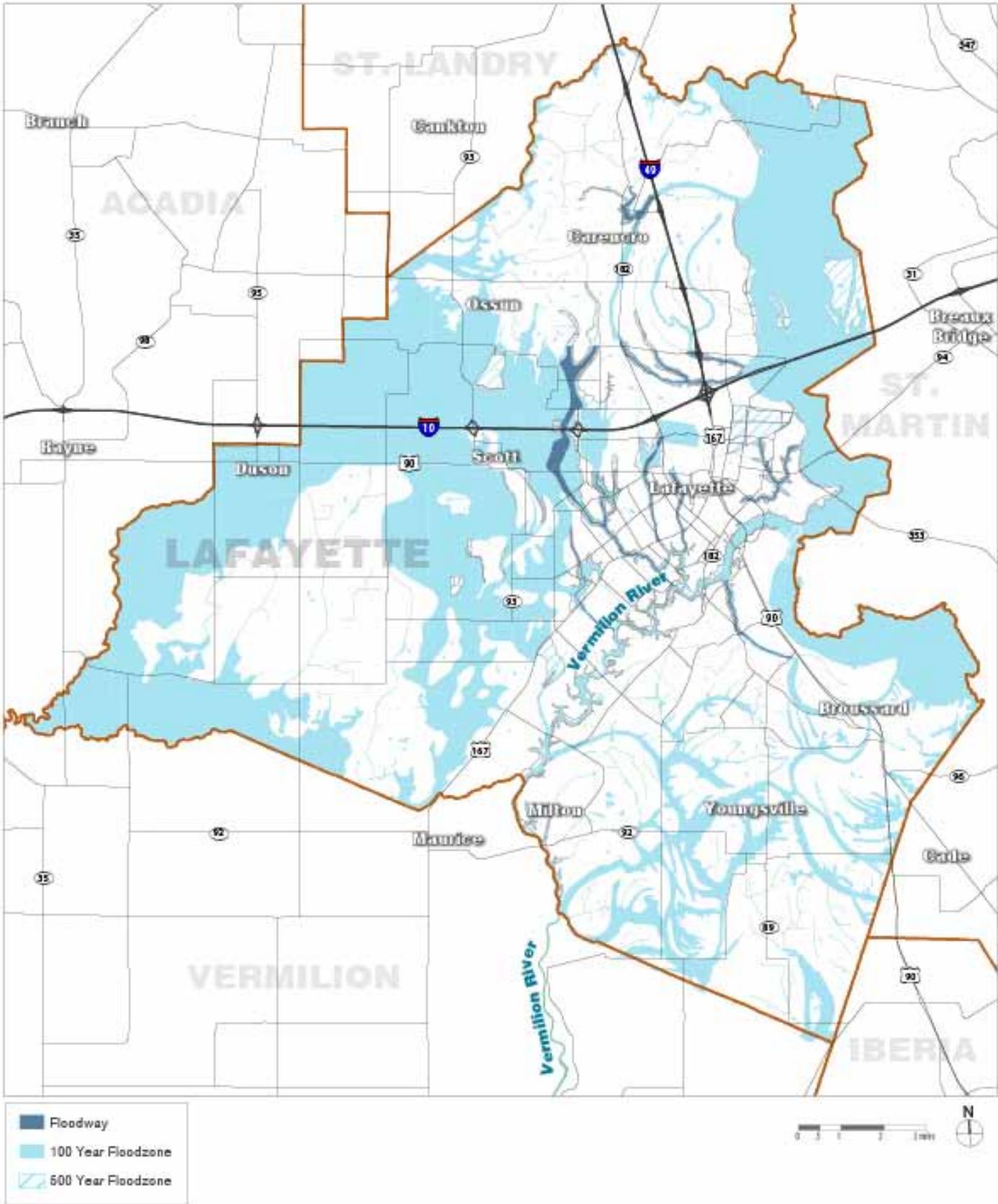
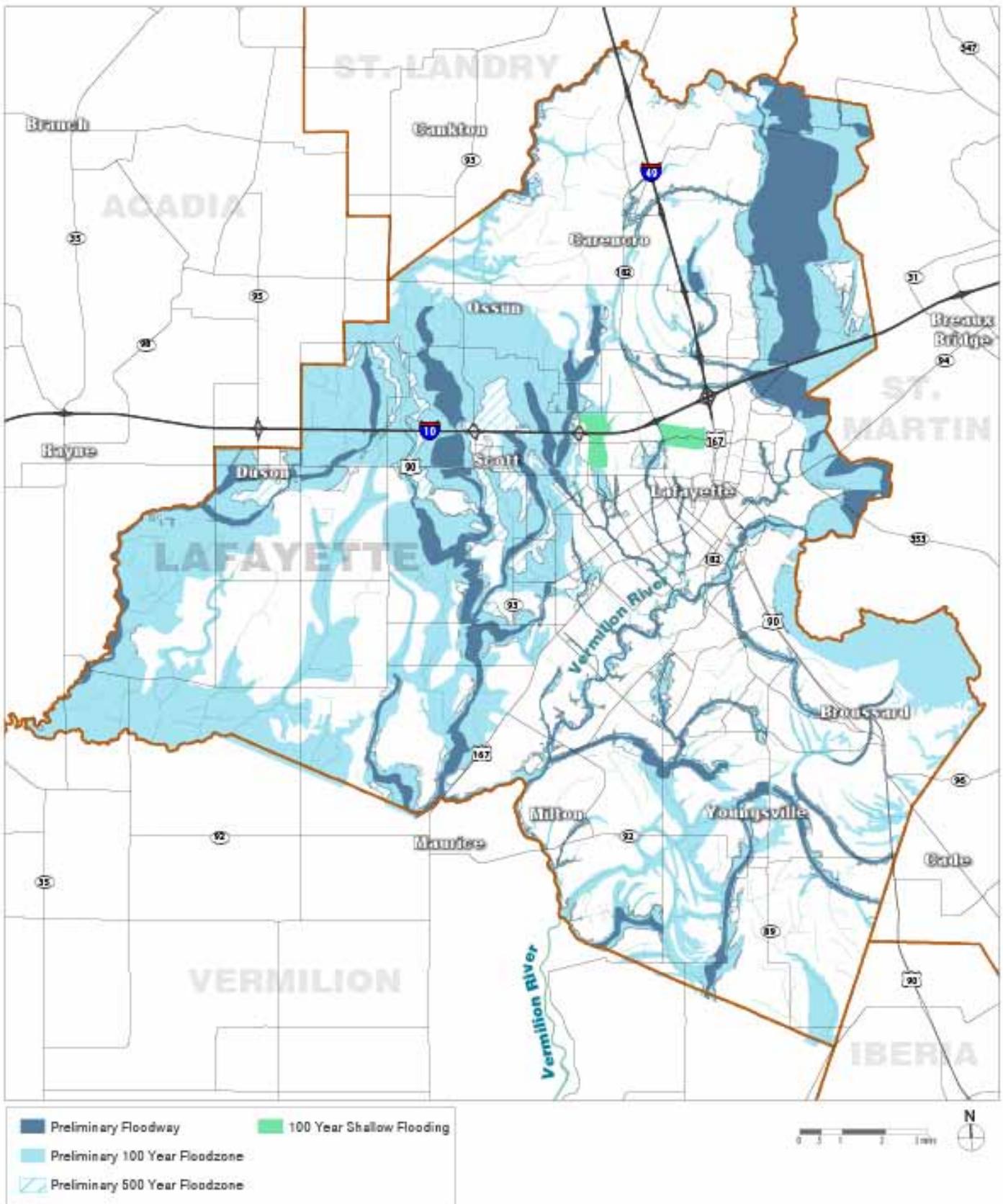


Figure 5-3 Preliminary Flood Zones (FEMA)



Land Resources

The predominant soil type in Lafayette Parish is Calhoun Silt Loam, which is deep and poorly drained due to slow permeability and high water retention capacity. Consequently, poor drainage and flooding is a challenge for both urban development and agricultural uses.

Other common soil types in the parish include: Memphis Silt and Sharkey Clay which also experience frequent flooding. Sharkey Clay is exclusively found in the low-lying forest wetlands of the parish's eastern border, with the eastern portion of the parish containing soils found in the Memphis series (see Figure 5-4). These are often found on terraces and uplands of the Coastal Plain.

The majority of these soils Parish are suitable for agricultural uses, including the urban areas of Lafayette and surrounding jurisdictions. Figure 5-5 illustrates prime agricultural land (the highest quality for crop production) and land of statewide importance (considered good for crop production, other than prime) outside of already developed areas. As a result of its abundance of prime agricultural soils, agriculture remains a major land use in the region. Farmland of statewide importance tends to exist along water corridors, most notably to the northeast and south central sections of the parish. Land not suitable for farmland primarily exists around the region's wetlands to the far east sides of the parish. As discussed in Chapter 3, about 54 percent of land in unincorporated Lafayette Parish is in agricultural use.

The top four crop items, in terms of acreage are sugarcane, forageland (i.e., land used for hay or grass), soybeans, and rice. Monetarily, sugar cane is the most economically productive crop of the parish. Other key market shares are cattle and aquaculture, in particular crawfish. In 2007, the market value of agricultural products sold was over \$30 million.

Farmland decreased between 2002 and 2007. During that period, total farmland acres decreased by 10% along with a decrease in the average size of farms.

While there is a strong agricultural heritage in the region and agriculture remains a major economic driver, land area in farms or agricultural use decreased by 10% between 2002 and 2007 (from 74,803 acres in 2002 to 67,422 acres in 2007) according to the Census of Agriculture. At the same time, the number of farms decreased (albeit only from 715 to 713) and the average farm size decreased. This suggests that farms are remaining in operation, but doing so with fewer acres of land, and potentially converting farmland to other uses.

Scattered development jeopardizes the long-term viability of agriculture. Residential and other non-agricultural development restricts access to farmland and generates land use conflicts due to the dust, noise, and odors associated with farming operations.

More public outreach and awareness about the value of agriculture and the threats posed by poor development patterns is needed. As development occurs in traditionally agricultural areas, new residents must be informed about the region's farming practices and potential impacts of living next to operating farms.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Land in Farms*

**67,422 acres /
39% of Parish**

**Lafayette Parish
(City of Lafayette)**

**262,481 acres /
42% of County**

Travis County (Austin, TX)

**72,165 acres /
25%**

**East Baton Rouge Parish
(Baton Rouge, LA)**

**Agricultural Census, 2007
for Parish or County.*

Figure 5-4 Soil Types

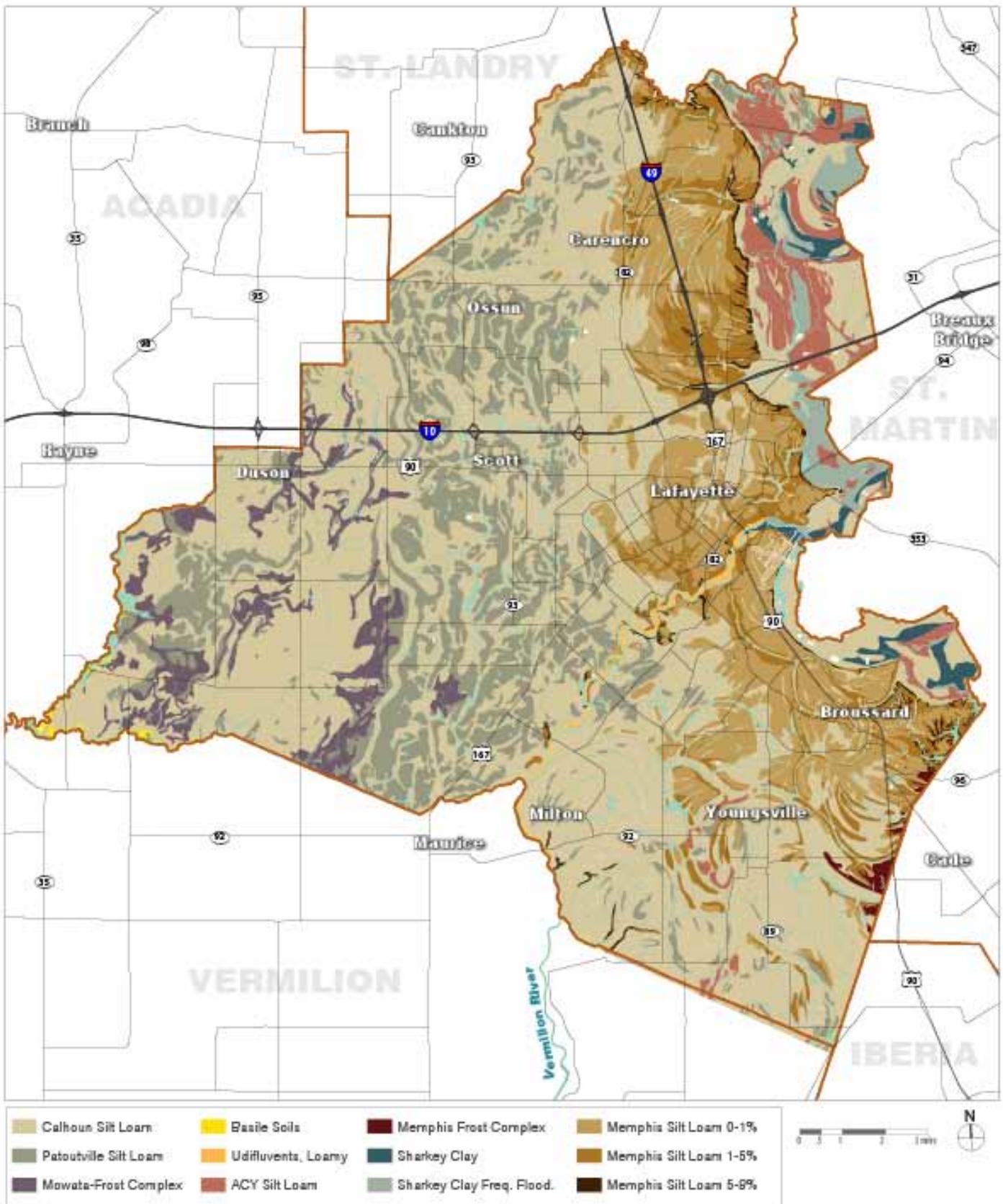
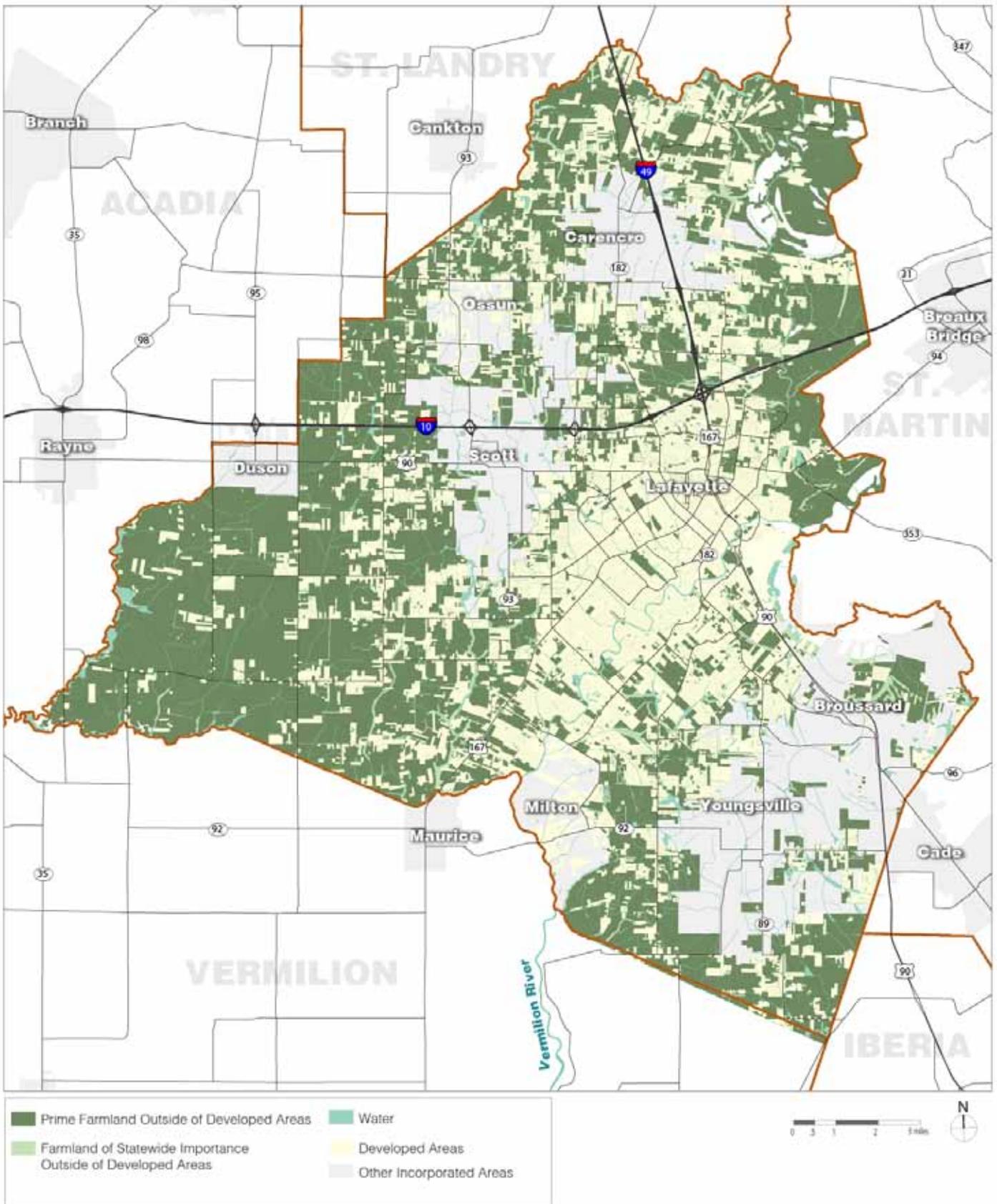


Figure 5-5 Prime Farmland



RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

Parkland

The Lafayette Consolidated Government Parks and Recreation Department operates and maintains 38 park and recreation sites (including golf courses listed in Table 5.1) throughout the parish, totaling approximately 1,322 acres. The Central Parks Network is a network of three urban parks/special event venues developed as focal points supporting the cultural district in the Downtown. The venues are owned and maintained by LCG, and community interaction and use of the parks is managed by Downtown Lafayette Unlimited for LCG.

The total acreage represents only a small amount of the parish’s total land (less than 1%) and approximately 4% of land area in the city of Lafayette. However, the region’s bayous and swamps provide expansive opportunities for canoeing, fishing, hiking, and numerous other outdoor recreation activities.

Level of service (LOS) is the term used to describe the quantifiable measurement of park provision. LOS can be used to establish numerical standards that can be used over time to track the condition of the park system and to ensure adequate provision of facilities and equal opportunity for residents. The Parks and Recreation Department currently does not have numerical standards in place for this purpose. However, a simple division of the parks and recreation acreage in the city of Lafayette by the city’s population results in a calculation of parkland provision (or level of service) of approximately 8 acres per every 1,000 persons (or 0.01 acres per person). Funding for parks and recreation is challenging as there is no dedicated mileage in the parish and the city mileage has remained at the same rate as 1961.

The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) –an organization that offers guidance to communities that choose to adopt LOS standards— recommends an overall LOS ratio of between 11.25 acres and 20.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. The city and unincorporated areas are below the lower end of this range. Even with the addition of the Horse Farm to the park inventory, Lafayette lags behind other communities in the provision of land for parks.

Facilities

The inventory of existing parks varies widely in size, ranging from less than 1 acre to more than 200 acres.

The parish does not have an adopted set of park typologies, characterizing different parks by size, facilities, function and service area. However, typologies are useful in identifying the needs of a community for specific park sizes, types of facilities, and service areas. Generally, smaller parks (e.g., up to 1 acre) may be referred to as mini-parks; parks between 1 and 10 acres may be considered neighborhood oriented; parks larger than 10 acres and smaller than 50, 100 or 250 acres (depending on the size of the population) may be considered community-wide parks. Larger parks are often viewed as regional parks. There may also be special use facilities such as aquatic complexes, golf courses, community centers and others .

The Parks and Recreation Department’s park system includes five facilities larger than 100 acres, though no larger than 222 acres. The transfer of the Horse Farm will add to the inventory of larger properties (+/- 90 acres). The majority of the system consists of moderately sized sites, ranging between 18 and 70 acres.

While the majority of LCG’s parks can be found within the city of Lafayette (see Table 5.1 and Figure 5-6), some of the area’s major parks are within the boundaries of surrounding municipalities and communities. These include the Southside Regional Park near Broussard and Youngsville as well as Pelican Park in the northern parish City of Carencro.

Significant city of Lafayette parks include Moore Park close to the I-10/I-49 interchange, Girard Park and Recreation Center, and centrally located City Park, which also includes an 18-hole golf course. The department operates two other municipal golf courses.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Park Spending Per Capita*

\$54.70

City of Lafayette

\$100

City of Baton Rouge

\$69

City of Austin

\$150

City of Raleigh, NC

Most of the parks offer active recreation facilities, including a variety of ball and sports fields, picnic areas, and playgrounds. Some include trails, swimming, and cultural or natural resources. The city's downtown parks are often used for concerts, movies and other special events. Figure 5-7 illustrates park service areas for different sized parks. Parks less than 10 acres have a service radius of ½ mile, parks sized 11-50 acres have a radius of 3 miles, and parks more than 50 acres in size have a 10 mile radius. While the majority of residents are located within the 10 and 3 mile radius of nearby parks, few are within the service areas of smaller neighborhood or community parks.

There are also ten recreation centers, all of which are in the city of Lafayette: Girard Park, Robicheaux, George DuPuis, Comeaux, Domingue, Martin Luther King, Heymann, J. Carlton James, and Thomas Park. The recreation centers provide youth and adult athletic programs and serve as locations for community meetings, receptions, socials, summer enrichment and holiday camps. The Girard and Domingue Recreation Centers are located close to downtown and the remaining are scattered throughout the city limits. In 2011, approximately 500,000 people attended special events (public and private –rentals) held at recreation centers.

The Parks and Recreation Department operates and maintains 38 parks and recreation sites (including golf courses) throughout the parish, totaling approximately 1,322 acres.

**Park Level of Service is estimated for Lafayette based on the city of Lafayette population and total park acreage for the city as classified in GIS. Park spending per capita (2011-12 Adopted Budget), includes capital and operations spending for all Lafayette Parish residents. Trust for Public Lands Reports for all comparables (2010) includes capital and operations spending, 3-year average. In the TPL national sample, spending per resident ranges from \$31 to 303, with a median of \$85. TPL reports are only available for large cities.*

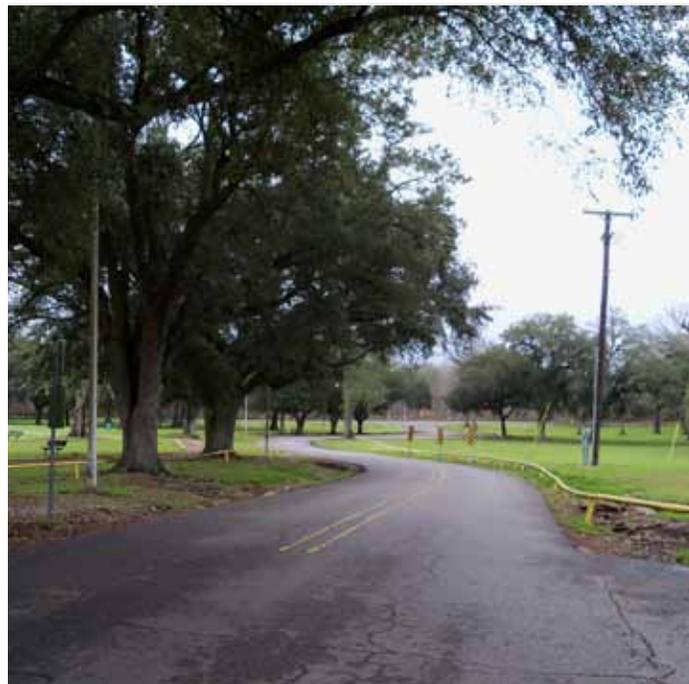


Table 5.1 LCG Parks and Recreation Facilities

	Downtown Parks	Characteristics	Size (Acres)
1.	Parc International	Stage and greenroom/backstage area, 2 pavilions, special events	n/a
2.	Parc Sans Souci	Stage, grassy areas, large fountain, special events	n/a
3.	Parc Putnam	Benches and landscape plantings, special events	n/a
	Other Parks		
4.	Acadiana Park	Open play, lighted tennis courts, basketball court, baseball field, picnic areas, playground, campground, trails, nature station, historic interpretation	117 Acres
5.	Arceneaux Park	Tennis courts, soccer fields, basketball courts, lighted ball fields, batting cages, t-ball, covered picnic areas, playground	31 Acres
6.	Beaullieu Park	Comeaux Recreation Center, soccer fields, ball fields, batting cages, trails, covered picnic areas, playground	29 Acres
7.	Beaver Park	Tennis center, ball parks, covered picnic areas, playgrounds, fishing pond with pier/boat ramp, historic interpretation, large pavilion	70 Acres
8.	Broadmoor Park	Ball fields, covered picnic areas	8 Acres
9.	Carencro Park	Open play area, tennis courts, basketball courts, lighted ball fields, t-ball, covered picnic areas, playground	17 Acres
10.	Chargois Park	Open play area, tennis courts, soccer fields, basketball courts, lighted ball fields, covered picnic areas, playground, historic markers	10 Acres
11.	City Park	Domingue Recreation Center, 18-hole golf course and clubhouse, Mouton Swimming Pool & Bath House, Clark Field (lighted football and soccer stadium basketball courts, baseball), picnic areas, playground	104 Acres
12.	Dalton “Pee Wee” LeBlanc Park	Basketball courts, baseball, covered picnic area, playground	5 Acres
13.	Debaillon Park	Lighted pavilion with picnic tables, 2 lighted flag football fields, 1-mile walking/bicycle trail through park, tennis courts, basketball courts, picnic areas, playground	33 Acres
14.	Derby Playground	Playground, basketball	1 Acre
15.	Dorsey-Donlon Park	MLK Recreation Center, outdoor pool, tennis courts, basketball courts, ball parks, jogging trail, covered picnic areas with grills, playground	15 Acres
16.	Duson Park	Covered pavilion with lights & benches, open play area, ball parks w/ lighted fields, t-ball, covered picnic areas with grills, playground	29 Acres
17.	Foster Memorial Park	Open play area, tennis courts, soccer fields, basketball courts, lighted ball fields, batting cages, walking track, covered picnic areas, playground, historic markers	16 Acres
18.	Girard Park	Main Office of Lafayette Parks & Recreation Department, Girard Park Recreation Center outdoor pool, jogging trail, work-out station, covered pavilion with restrooms and grill, open play area, tennis courts, hitting wall, basketball courts, backstop ball diamond, covered picnic areas, playground, 9-hole disc golf course, pond, natural wildlife, historic markers	33 Acres
19.	Graham Brown Memorial Park	George Dupuis Recreation Center, work-out station, jogging trail, batting practice areas, lighted tennis courts, covered	50 Acres
20.	Heymann Park	Heymann Park Recreation Center, pavilion, jogging trail, lighted tennis courts, basketball courts, covered picnic areas, playground, regulation baseball field	28 Acres
21.	I.R. “Bud” Chalmers Park	Wetlands Golf Course and Driving Range	182 Acres

22.	J. Otto Broussard Memorial Park (Southside Regional Park)	Fabacher Field Baseball Complex, pond, Les Vieux Chenes 18-hole golf course, clubhouse and pro shop, cart rentals, driving range	222 Acres
23.	J.W. James Playground	Fabacher Field Baseball Complex, pond, Les Vieux Chenes 18-hole golf course, clubhouse and pro shop, cart rentals, driving range	4 Acres
24.	Judice Park	Open play area, basketball courts, backstop ball diamond, covered picnic areas with grills, playground	22 Acres
25.	Lil Woods Playground	Basketball courts, covered picnic areas	3 Acres
26.	Maurice Heymann Memorial Park	Garden, benches, walking path, picnic areas, and historical markers	3 Acres
27.	Moore Park	Soccer complex (20-30 fields), lighted soccer fields, lighted softball fields, youth football field, covered picnic areas, hiking trail, go-kart track, restrooms, children's playground, and fishing pond	130 Acres
28.	Mouton Playground	Open play area, tennis courts, basketball courts, covered picnic areas with grills, playground	6 Acres
29.	Neyland Park	Robicheaux Recreation Center, Earl J. Chris Natatorium (Olympic-size heated indoor pool), tennis courts, basketball courts, lighted ball fields, batting cages, covered picnic areas with grills, playground, historical markers	30 Acres
30.	Eraste Landry Playground	Baseball backstops, benches, open play area, covered picnic areas with grills, playground	7 Acres
31.	Pa Davis Park	Bowles Activity Center, jogging trail, lighted soccer field, basketball courts, lighted ball fields, covered picnic areas, 18-hole disc golf course, playground and therapeutic playground area	30 Acres
32.	Parc de Lafayette	Small bandstand, waterfall fountain with small pool, benches, and commemorative markers	0.5 Acres
33.	Picard Park	Tennis courts, soccer fields, ball parks, lighted fields, t-ball field, jogging trail, covered picnic areas, playground	24 Acres
34.	Plantation Park	Lighted ball fields	11 Acres
35.	Scott Park	Jogging trail, backstop ball diamond, lighted fields, covered picnic areas with grills, restrooms, playground	17 Acres
36.	St. Anthony Playground	Basketball courts, covered picnic areas with grills, playground	2 Acres
37.	Thomas Park	Thomas Park Recreation Center, jogging path, tennis clubhouse, lighted tennis courts, hitting wall, soccer fields, ball parks, basketball court, playground	18 Acres
38.	Veteran's Park	Veteran's wall naming all deceased Acadiana veterans having served in Vietnam, natural wildlife, covered picnic areas with grills, restrooms, playground, fishing pond, commemorative markers	6 Acres
		Total Acreage (note: park acreage is approximate and differs from land use calculation from GIS)	1,322 Acres

There are five boat launches in the region, four of which are suitable for motorized boats and one that is used for canoes. There is interest and a need for enhanced water recreation opportunities through increased access to the Vermilion River, both for passive uses such as a linear park or boardwalk and active water recreation such as fishing and additional boat launches. In the effort to improve recreational opportunities, the Bayou Vermilion District and LCG continue to work on improving water quality and removing debris from regional waterways.

Programs, Participation, Operations and Revenue

The Parks and Recreation Department offers a variety of athletics and sports programs including baseball, softball, basketball, football, volleyball, tennis, and track and field. The soccer program is managed by the Lafayette Youth Soccer Association (LYSA). Other programs offered by the Department include the arts, karate, gymnastics, dance, exercise, and tutoring / homework assistance, among others. In addition, therapeutic activities and programs are offered, geared towards individuals with disabilities and senior citizens.

In 2011, the Department hosted over 150 teams and over 10,000 adults who participated in recreational team sports. An even greater number of youth are involved; in 2011, more than 41,000 young people participated in Lafayette's athletic teams including basketball, baseball, soccer, swimming, golf, and Special Olympics.

The success of many of these programs is made possible by the support of volunteer-driven Neighborhood Youth Associations. Today, there are seven such organizations in the parish, assisting with organization, coordination and financial support of athletic teams, recreational programs, and leisure activities:

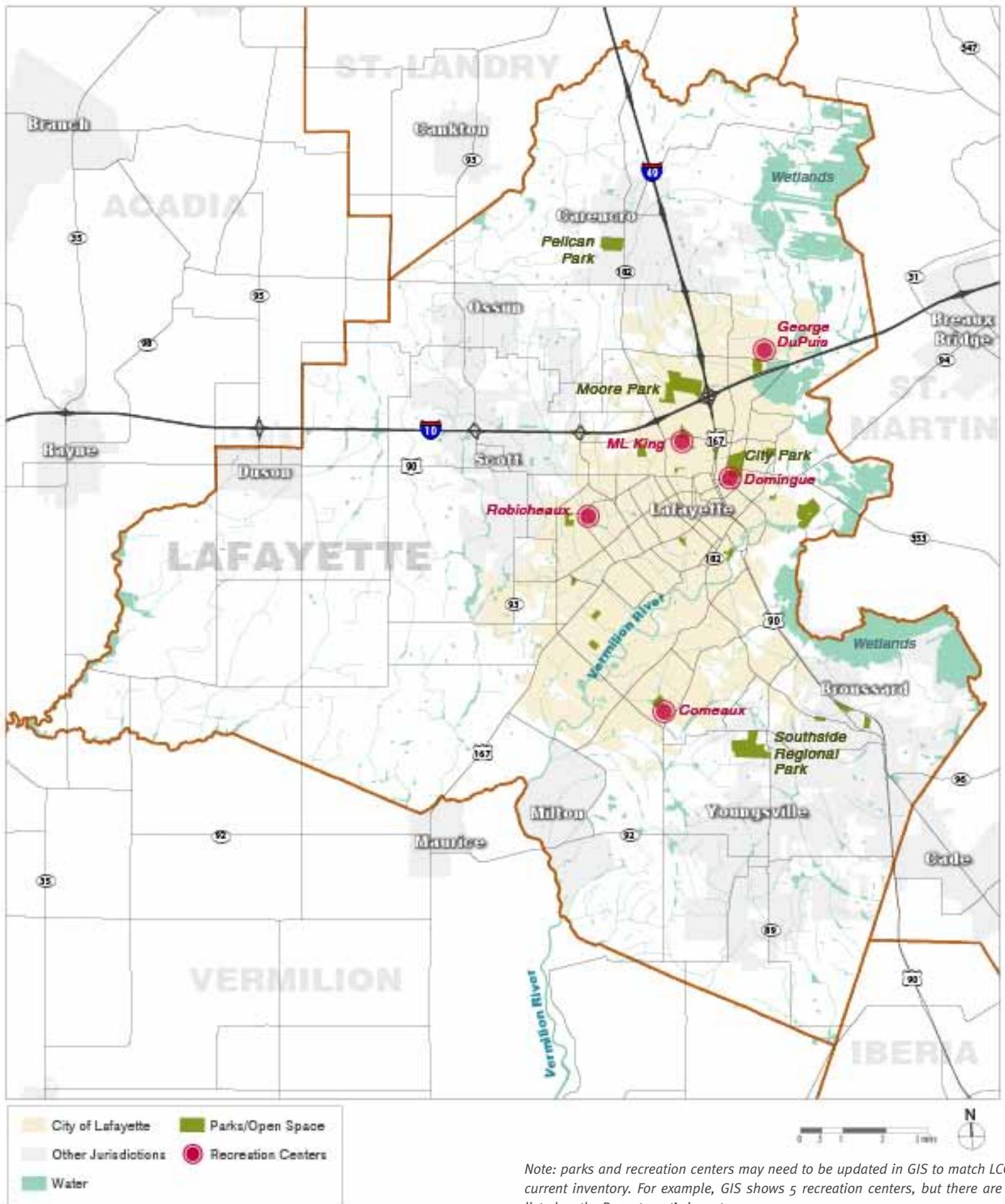
- Brown Park Athletics (BPA)
- Broussard/Youngsville Youth Association (BYYA)
- Cajun Sports Association (CSA)
- Carencro Area Youth Sports, Inc. (CAYSI)
- Scott Area Team Sports (SATS)
- South Lafayette Youth Sports, Inc. (SLYSI)
- South West Athletics (SWA)

The Parks and Recreation Department has a total of 118 staff positions organized around five divisions, and supervised by three managers under a department director. The FY 2011 departmental budget is \$11.62 million, of which approximately one-fourth was allocated to operations and maintenance. The city has a dedicated millage that has not increased since 1961 and that there is no dedicated parish millage for parks and recreation.

Registration, rental fees, ticket sales and admission fee revenues account for a significant part of the Parks and Recreation Department budget. Revenues from athletic and summer enrichment programs, facility rentals, swimming classes, and other recreational activities help to cover the costs of operations and maintenance.

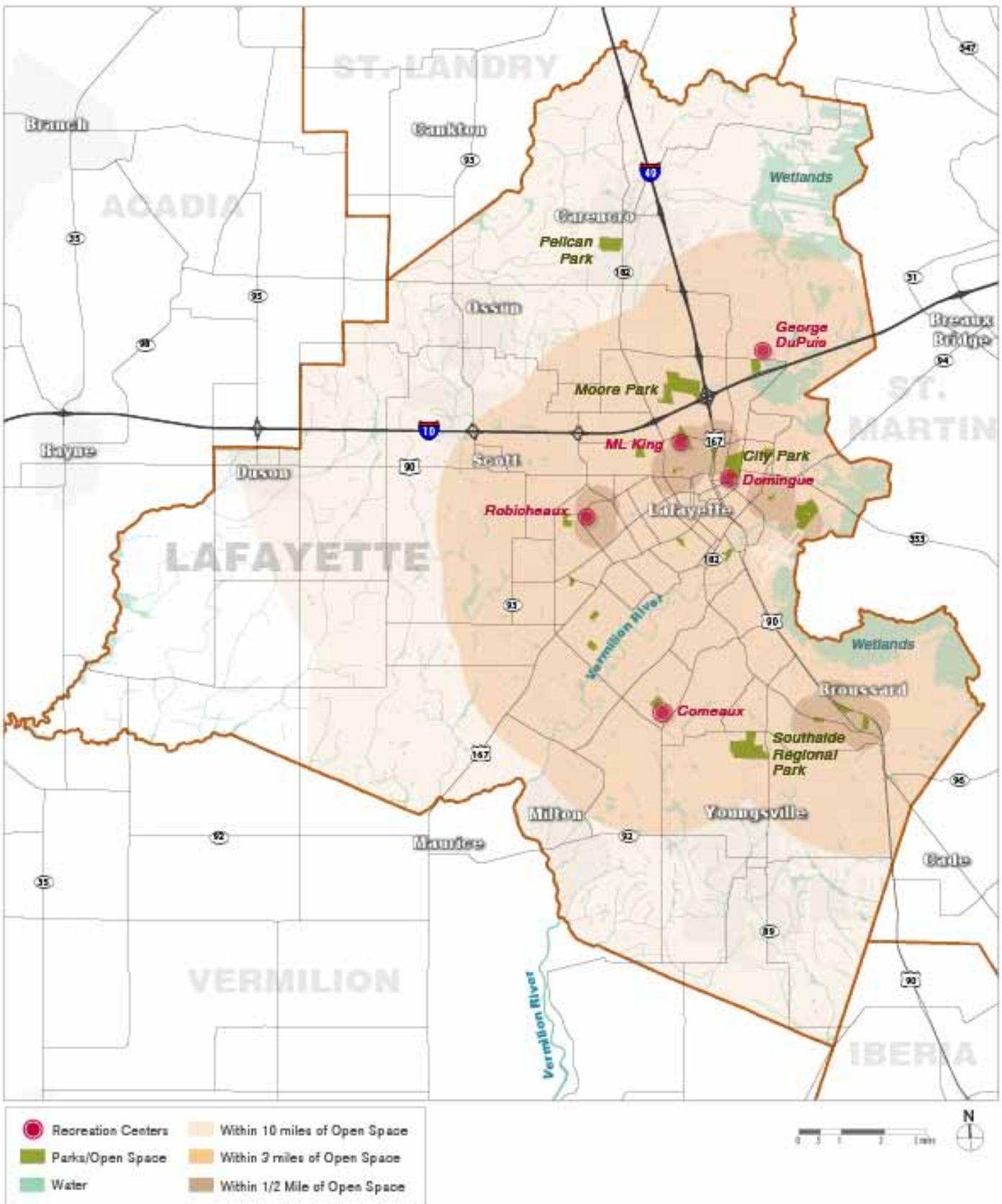
The Department staff works with the City-Parish Recreation Advisory Commission, a board consisting of 11 citizen members appointed to represent the interests of the entire community, advising and assisting the Department in the management of the Recreation and Parks program.

Figure 5-6: Existing Parks and Recreation



Note: parks and recreation centers may need to be updated in GIS to match LCG's current inventory. For example, GIS shows 5 recreation centers, but there are 10 listed on the Department's inventory.

Figure 5-7 Park Service Area Analysis



CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

More than 80 landmarks, significant buildings, or cultural places of interest dot the parish’s landscape (see Figure 5-7). The vast majority are located in and around downtown Lafayette and the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Significant landmarks include the Cajundome, National Register listed St. John’s Cathedral, the Lafayette Science Museum, the Holy Rosary Institute, Acadian Village and Vermilionville. Lafayette’s preservation sites are categorized by architectural type and construction date (see Table 5-2).

Two historic districts, Main Street and Sterling Grove, are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Main Street Historic District (203-302 East Main Street) covers 30 acres and five buildings and was added in 1983. The periods of architectural significance are 1875 through 1921. The Sterling Grove Historic District (Evangeline Thruway, E. Simcoe, Chopin, North Sterling Streets) includes 250 acres and 43 buildings and was added to the National Register in 1984. Sterling Grove is a residential district, with single-family dwellings, and is listed for its architecturally significant buildings constructed from 1825 to 1949. In addition to the two Historic Districts, 32 properties are listed on the National Register and are considered local preservation sites.

The Vermilionville Living History Museum and Folklife Park is a major cultural and historic landmark within the Bayou Vermilion District. The park is one of the largest representations of early Acadian settlement and includes original, restored Acadian structures (dating from 1790 to 1890), as well as reproductions built in the style of the 19th century. The historic buildings are on display and visitors are encouraged to walk through the village, view artisans demonstrating traditional techniques, and study historic artifacts. Vermilionville also offers tours, environmental education, music and special events, traditional Cajun and Creole foods, and locally produced arts and crafts.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Number of National Register Landmarks*

34

Lafayette Parish

83

East Baton Rouge Parish
(Baton Rouge, LA)

177

Travis County (Austin, TX)

82

Madison County
(Huntsville, AL)

96

Hamilton County
(Chattanooga, TN)

* National Register of
Historic Places database.

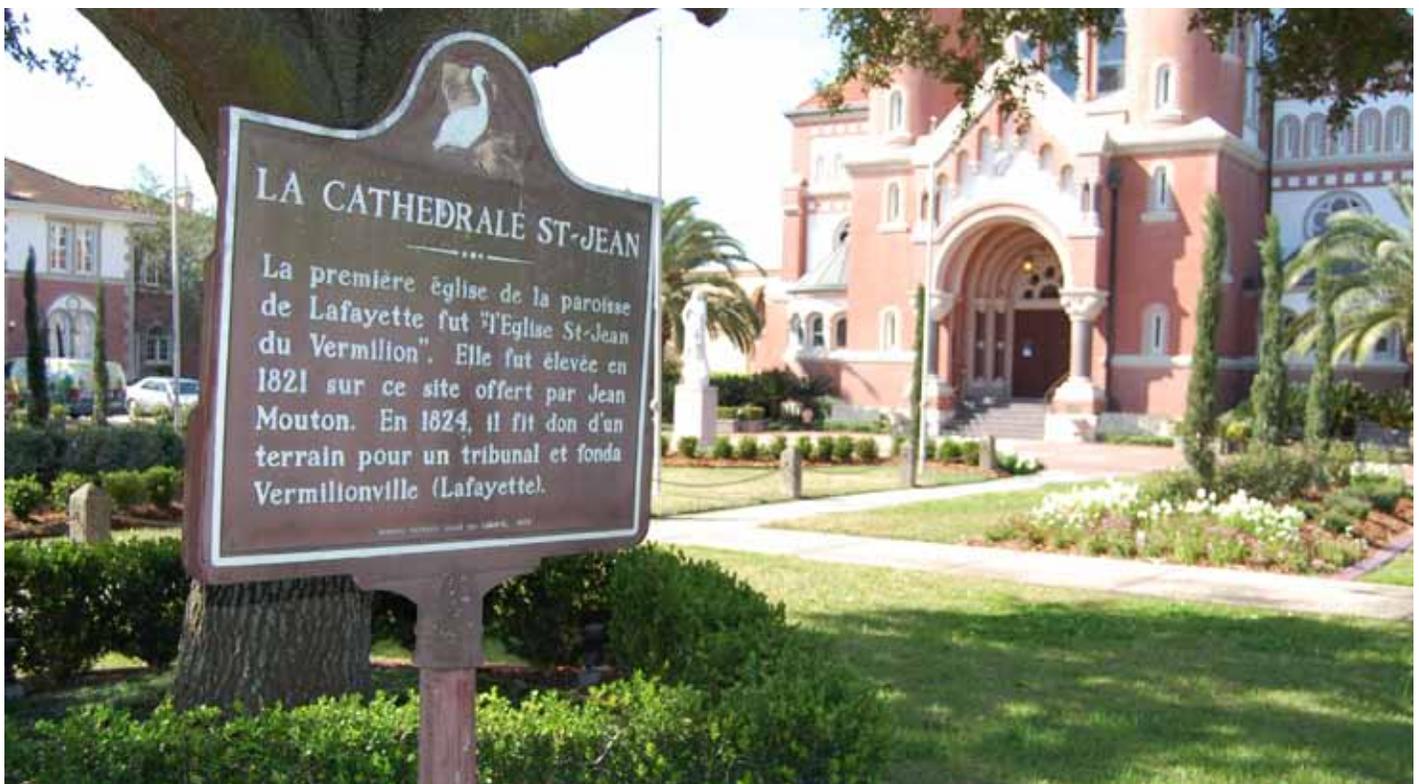


Table 5.2 Lafayette Cultural and Historic Resources

ID	Preservation Site	Architectural Type	Construction Date	Listed on National Registrar
1	Hope Lodge #145	Gothic Revival	1916	Yes, Listed 1983
2	Alexandre Mouton House	French Colonial	Circa 1810	Yes, Listed 1975
3	Old Guaranty Bank	Neo-Classical	1908	Yes, Listed 1984
4	Old City Hall	Italianate	1898	Yes, Listed 1975
5	First United Methodist Church	Neo-Classical	1925	Yes, Listed 1984
6	Charles Mouton Plantation House	French Creole	Circa 1820	Yes, Listed 1980
7	Alexandre Latiolais House	French Creole	Circa 1790	Yes, Listed 1985
8	Jean Batiste Mouton House	French Creole	Circa 1835	
9	Saint John's Cathedral & Property	Romanesque Revival	1916	Yes, Listed 1979
10	Saint John's Rectory	Spanish Revival	1921	
11	Lafayette Hardware Store	Italianate	Circa 1890	Yes, Listed 1984
12	Lafayette Middle School	Collegiate Gothic	1926	Yes, Listed 1984
13	Café Vermilionville	French Colonial	Circa 1835	Yes, Listed 1983
14	Good Hope Hall	Modified Colonial Revival	Circa 1880	
15	200 Cherry Street	Queen Anne Revival	Circa 1907	
16	Chargois House	Modified Colonial Revival	1915	
17	Caillouet House	French Colonial	Circa 1896	
18	Greenhouse Senior Center	Queen Anne Revival	Circa 1900	
19	Moss Building	Italianate	1906	
20	Oneziphore Comeaux House	French Creole	Circa 1880	
21	Dr. J. D. Trahan House	French Creole	Circa 1869	
22	J. Arthur Roy House	Eastlake	1901	Yes, Listed 1984
23	Louis Bazin House	Queen Anne Revival	Circa 1880	
24	Levy-Leblanc House	Folk Victorian	Circa 1900	
25	Caffery House	French Colonial	Circa 1886	
26	Cypress House	Queen Anne Revival	Circa 1900	
27	Crow Girard House	Queen Anne Revival	1900	
28	Soulier House	Queen Anne Revival	1916	
29	Saucier-Bares House	American Foursquare	1917	
30	Clayton Martin House	Eastlake	1905	
31	Koury Law Office	Queen Anne Revival	1905	
32	Most Holy Sacrament Convent	Spanish Revival	1924	
33	1304 Saint John Street House	Bungalow	Circa 1910	
34	L. O. Clark House	Spanish Revival	1927	
35	Jeanmard House	Queen Anne Revival	1907	
36	312 S. Pierce Street	American Foursquare	1910	

Table 5.2 Lafayette Cultural and Historic Resources (continued)

37	Shady Brook House	Colonial Revival	Circa 1912	
38	Martin House	Modified Queen Anne Revival	1907	Yes, Listed 1984
39	N. P. Moss School	Jacobean Revival	1925	
40	Eloi Girard House	English Tudor Revival	1,322 Acres	
41	Hanley-Gueno House	American Foursquare	1935	
42	Dauterive House	American Foursquare	Circa 1900	
43	Saint Mary's Orphanage	Spanish Revival	1919	
44	Barrios House	Queen Anne Revival	Circa 1925	
45	Fredrick Tolson House	Colonial Revival	Circa 1902	
46	La Maison Acadienne Française	Colonial Revival	Circa 1905	Yes, Listed 1984
47	Whittington-Gueniere House	Colonial Revival	Circa 1920	
48	Hamilton House	Bungalow	1915	
49	Pollingue-Brown Townhouse	Eclectic	Circa 1920	
50	Gröheim	English Tudor Revival	Circa 1927	
51	Whitfield House	French Creole	1927	
52	Poché Building	Commercial Vernacular	Circa 1910	
53	Circa 1900 House	Queen Anne Revival	1920	
54	Denbo-Montgomery House	Eclectic	Circa 1900	
55	Hohorst House	American Foursquare	1898	
56	William Brandt House	Greek Revival	1905	Yes, Listed 2002
57	Lafayette Train Depot	Early 20th Century Movement	Circa 1840	
58	Sans Souci	Commercial Vernacular	1911	
59	Maurice Heymann Building	Italian Renaissance Revival	Circa 1880	
60	Armand Broussard House	French Creole	1925	
61	Louis Arceneaux House	French Creole	Circa 1790	
62	Joseph Firnberg House	French Creole	Circa 1840	
63	Joseph Buller House	French Creole	Circa 1860	
64	Lagrange Family House	French Creole	Circa 1807	
65	Judice Inn	Commercial Vernacular	Circa 1830	
66	Circa 1910 House	Queen Anne Revival	1947	
67	Couret House	French Creole	Circa 1910	
68	Prudhomme-Begnaud House	Colonial Revival	1836	
69	Carver House	Colonial Revival	1929	
70	Dr John & Edith Miles House	Colonial Revival	1948	
71	Lafayette's Second City Hall	Art Deco	1939	
72	Emelie Judice Mouton House	Queen Anne Revival	1908	

Table 5.2 Lafayette Cultural and Historic Resources (continued)

73	Cunningham House	Colonial Revival	1926	
74	Grado Building	Vernacular Commercial	Circa 1890	
75	Circa 1901 House	Queen Anne Revival	Circa 1901	
76	Fournet House	Eclectic	1919	
77	Southern Bell Telephone & Telegraph Exchange	Commercial	1927	
78	Nickerson-Chappuis House	Bungalow	1931	
79	Heymann Food Store	Art Deco	1935	
80	Colomb-Chauvin House	Bungalow	1921	
81	Moss House	Queen Anne Revival	Circa 1910	
82	Tribune Building	Eclectic	Circa 1928	
83	Garfield House	American Foursquare	Circa 1890	
84	Saint Ann's Infirmary	Eclectic	1937	
85	Givens Townhouse	Eastlake	1893	
86	Dr. Louis B. Long House	English Tudor Revival	1929	
87	Keller's Bakery	Eclectic-Modern	1948	

Culture and Arts

Lafayette is known for being the center of Acadian (Cajun) and Creole culture in the United States. The rich French heritage can be traced to the Le Grand Derangement in 1755 when thousands of French Canadians were forced from their homes for their refusal to sign an unconditional oath of allegiance to Britain. Most of the Acadian populations ended up in Louisiana (often after going back through France), eventually earned the nickname ‘Cajuns’ and the local culture was born. The Creole population, descendants of African, West Indian, and European descent, joined the Acadians in the Spanish controlled territory. Today, residents speak a variety of languages, including Cajun French , Creole French, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Food, music, and festivals might be the three words that best encapsulate Lafayette’s local culture. The region is known for its Cajun and Creole food with its spicy, robust flavors.

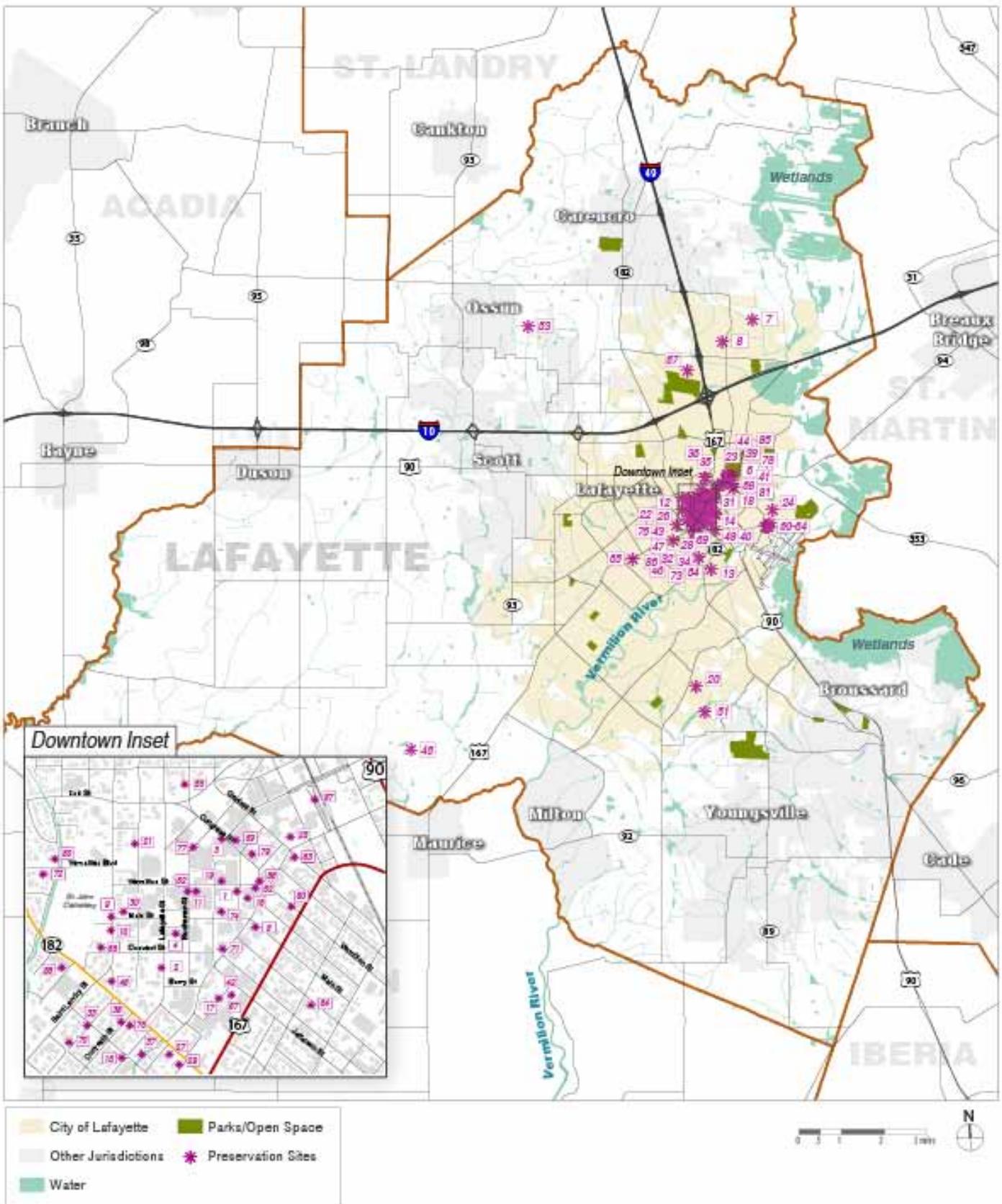
Lafayette has a number of cultural institutions that act as a foundation for the thriving arts scene. These include the Acadiana Center for the Arts, the Acadiana Symphony Orchestra and Conservatory of Music, the Lafayette Ballet Theatre, the Children’s Museum of Acadiana, the Lafayette Science Museum, and Cite des Arts. In March 2010, the State of Louisiana designated Downtown Lafayette as a Cultural Products District. Historic Preservation Tax Credits are available for properties within the district, in addition to a state sales tax exemption for all original works of art purchased in the district.

The area also has a thriving arts community consisting of theatre, visual arts, galleries, and music. But the region is perhaps best known for its unique Cajun and Creole music scene. These assets are showcased during the annual Mardi Gras celebrations and numerous music events and festivals throughout the year, most notably Festival International, Festivals Acadiens et Creoles, the Zydeco Festival, and others. Local arts and technology “incubators” such as Cité des Arts and the Opportunity Machine encourage and provide resources for small businesses and artists. The Cite des Arts produces local plays, musicals, live music events, dance, films, and other cultural performances in downtown Lafayette. The Switch facility is the Opportunity Machine shared workspace facility that acts as an incubator space for technology start-ups and entrepreneurs.

Additionally, the parish is home to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and associated Ragin’ Cajuns sports teams which rally students, alumni, and residents alike.



Figure 5-8 Historic and Cultural Preservation Sites







Government and Regulations

The city of Lafayette and Lafayette Parish merged their government functions through a City-Parish charter in 1996. This entity is known as the “Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government” (LCG).

The city of Lafayette and the unincorporated parish regulate subdivisions through separate regulations.

LCG’s City-Parish Council consists of nine members elected from single-member districts for four year terms.

In recent years, the city of Lafayette and other municipalities have struggled with competitive annexations, with a result that some municipalities are growing faster than the city of Lafayette.

At a Glance

Government and Regulations

LAFAYETTE CITY-PARISH CONSOLIDATED GOVERNMENT

The Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government Home Rule Charter went into effect in 1996. Lafayette Consolidated Government is organized with a President-Council government and provides services to residents within the city of Lafayette and unincorporated areas of Lafayette Parish.

LCG has appointments on 31 separate boards and commissions including the Planning & Zoning Commission, the Board of Zoning Adjustment, and the Lafayette Preservation Commission. The roles and make up of selected boards and commissions follows:

- **The Lafayette City-Parish Council:** LCG’s legislative power is vested in a nine-member council elected from single-member districts for four year terms. The elected members are term limited. The City-Parish Council is the governing authority of the city of Lafayette and is responsible for levying property taxes, providing municipal type services, and for annexation. The Council holds regular meetings twice a month.
- **City-Parish Planning Commission:** The Planning Commission reviews and approves properties being platted inside and outside the city of Lafayette. Before being reviewed by the Commission, a plat is reviewed with a recommendation by the Areawide Development Review Committee, or ADRC, an interdepartmental group responsible for compliance with drainage, transportation, utilities, etc.
- **City-Parish Zoning Commission:** The Zoning Commission reviews properties within the city of Lafayette. The Zoning Commission makes recommendations to the Lafayette City-Parish Council on amendments to the zoning Ordinance, zoning assignments for newly annexed property and requests for rezoning. The same five commissioners stand on both the Planning Commission and the Zoning Commission.
- **Lafayette Preservation Commission:** The purpose of the Lafayette Preservation Commission is to oversee the designation of historic properties, help revitalize, protect, and enhance business districts and historic neighborhoods, and establish uniform procedures for the protection and enhancement of historically significant resources.
- **Lafayette Board of Zoning Adjustment (BOZA):** BOZA makes interpretations of zoning regulations and rules on a determination made by the Zoning Administrator, grant variances where there are practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships in carrying out the strict letter of the ordinance, and move a zoning boundary up to 30’ in certain instances. Appeals of BOZA decisions are to the court systems.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Voter Turnout*

44.2%

Lafayette Parish

40.1%

Guilford County
(Greensboro, NC)

* Electionresults.sos.la.gov; results.enr.clarityelections.com/NC/
Guilford

All LCG departments, offices, and agencies operate under the direction and supervision of the LCG City-Parish President. LCG Departments include Community Development, Planning, Zoning and Codes, Finance and Management, Fire, Police, Parks and Recreation, Public Works, Utilities, Information Services and Technology, Traffic and Transportation, and an autonomous Civil Service Department.

While there are linkages across all departments, the functions of the Community Development Department (CDD), the Planning, Zoning, and Codes Department, and the Traffic and Transportation Department may need to be further refined and adjusted. The Community Development Department strives to enhance the physical, social, educational, and cultural conditions in Lafayette through arts and culture, housing, economic development, and social services. The Planning, Zoning, and Codes Department primarily administers codes and regulations. The Traffic and Transportation Department is responsible for transportation planning and implementation, as well as comprehensive long-range planning.

The Traffic and Transportation Department also functions as the Lafayette Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the transportation planning entity for the larger Lafayette Urbanized Area. The LCG Council conducts a separate meeting and sits as the governing body of the MPO.

ZONING, LAND USE, AND SUBDIVISION CONTROLS

LCG administers several key development controls. These include the city’s zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations for both the city and parish, and the buffer distance/site location regulations that apply to the parish (the “Good Neighbor Ordinance”). In addition, there is a recently adopted buffering “Land Use” ordinance governing the unincorporated parts of the parish. There are a number of specific additional regulations in Chapter 26 of the Code of Ordinances that are discussed in the next section, such as gas station parking and flood control requirements. The major regulations that control growth and development in the parish are summarized in Table 6-1.

HOW DO WE COMPARE?

Form of Government*

Consolidated City / Parish

Lafayette Parish

1. City (Mayor/ Council)

2. Elected County Board

Travis County (Austin, TX)

1. City (Mayor/ Council)

2. Elected County Board

Madison County (Huntsville, AL)

1. City (Mayor/ Council)

2. County within Piedmont Triad Council of Governments (12 county region)

Guilford County (Greensboro, NC)

Table 6.1 Summary of Development Controls
(Source: LCG Code of Ordinances)

	Reference (LGC Code of Ordinances)		City	Parish
Zoning Ordinance	Appendix C	Regulates uses, setbacks, and design by district (landscape and lighting provisions apply to parish)	X	
Subdivision Regulations	Appendix B	Establishes design and improvement standards for new subdivisions, resubdivision, and vacation or abandonment of plats.	X	X
Greenbelts & Buffers (Good Neighbor Ordinance)	Chapter 26, Art. XIV, Div. 3	Establishes property line setbacks and buffer zones between intensive uses (such as landfills and borrow pits) and schools and residential areas.		X
Building Setbacks	Chapter 26, Div. 2	Requires front building setbacks along thoroughfares	X	X
Historic Preservation	Chapter 26, Art. XII	Regulates the alteration and demolition of historic structures.	X	X
Building and Construction Codes	Chapter 26, Arts. III, IV, VIII	Regulates the construction of buildings, electrical systems, and plumbing/gas to protect health and safety.	X	X
Structural and Property Maintenance	Chapter 26, Arts. II, V, VII; Chapter 97	Provides for the condemnation of dangerous buildings, maintenance of buildings and property, and moving buildings over the highways. Chapter 97 controls the growth (height) of grass and noxious weeds.	X	X
Flood Damage Prevention	Chapter 26, Art. XI	Restricts or prohibits uses that create dangerous situations during flooding, or requires floodproofing within areas of special flood hazard.	X	X
Airport Zoning	Chapter 26, Art. X	Provides overflight protection for the Acadiana Regional and Lafayette Municipal Airports.	X	X
Street & Parking Standards	Various	Establishes standards for access, street improvements, and parking.	X	X

Adopted in 1972, Lafayette’s Zoning Ordinance established zoning districts of which there are currently 18. The regulations have a conventional structure. This includes 15 “base” districts: 6 residential districts, 7 business districts, and 2 industrial districts. The Central Business District (CBD) zone governs downtown Lafayette, while the Traditional Neighborhood District (TND) allows the development of mixed use communities such as the Village of River Ranch (though River Ranch was built before the TND ordinance). Two (2) overlay districts establish design standards for Louisiana Avenue, and the Growth Area District (GAD) accommodates existing uses that are annexed to the city pending their rezoning to an appropriate district. The zoning regulations address development standards such as parking, landscaping and signs. There are procedures for site plan review in special districts (excluding R-4), commercial plan review, and for re-zonings and variances (including conditional re-zonings).

The base and TND (residential, business and industrial) districts list 278 uses in separate paragraphs in each set of district regulations. An Appendix (Chapter 6) arrays these uses in a table that shows the districts where they are permitted. The use regulations follow a cumulative (or “pyramid”) pattern found in older zoning regulations. This means that uses allowed in the city’s less intense districts (such as R-1-A Single-Family) are typically allowed in the more intense districts. In fact, residential dwelling units are allowed in the city’s Light Industry (I-1) district, though not the Heavy Industry (I-2) district. Development standards within the districts include basic minimum lot area and setback standards.

The dimensional (yard, bulk and height) standards in the zoning districts are conventional and flexible. The district standards do not explicitly establish a maximum height. The standards require minimum amount of open space within yards (see Figure 6-1). Eleven of the city’s 18 zoning districts have a 20 foot front setback, 5 foot side setback, and 10 foot rear setback in residential areas (Table 6-2). Unless a building falls within an overlay district, all buildings are allowed anywhere outside the yards. The district regulations do not control façade design, garage placement, or the location of buildings relative to parking areas.

Figure 6-1 Typical front, side and rear yards in most of Lafayette’s zoning districts

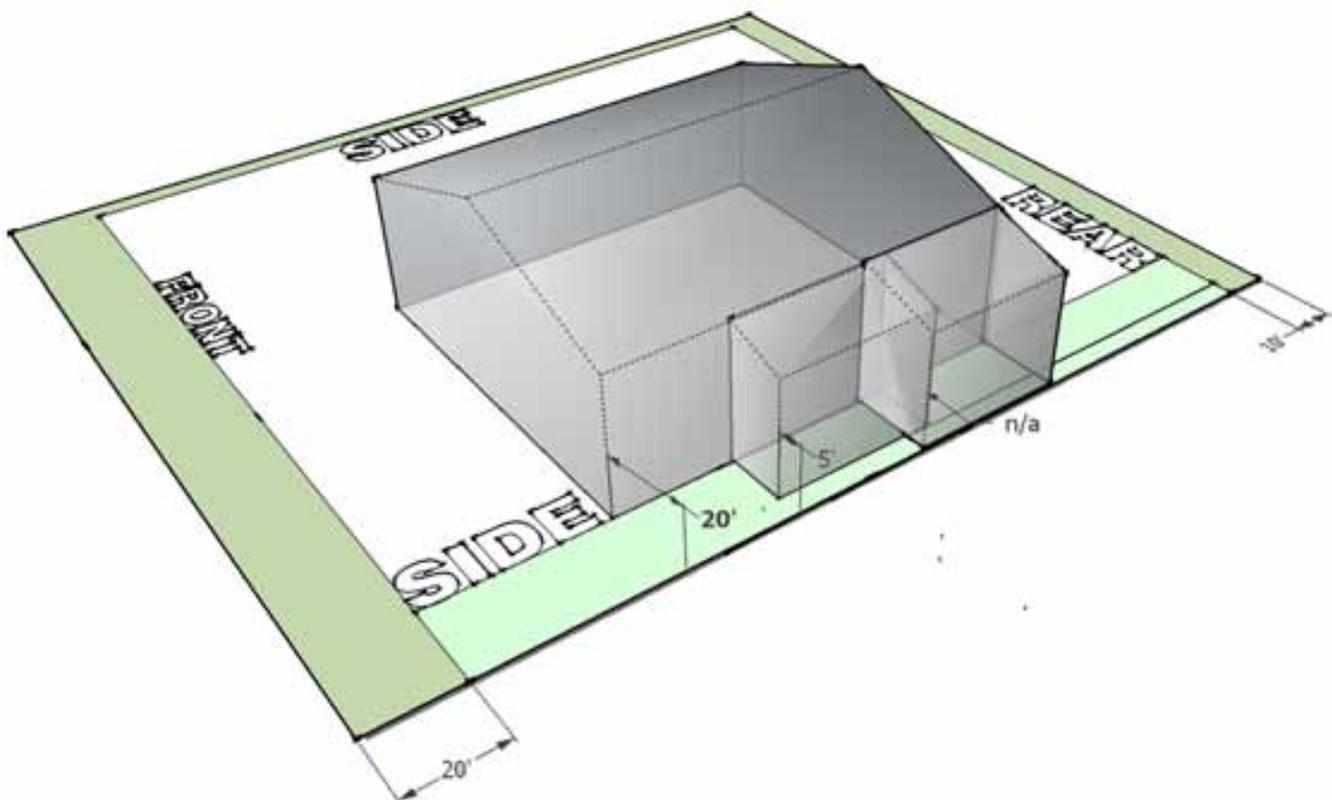


Table 6.2 Summary of Existing Lafayette Zoning District Dimensional Standards

	Lot Area (sq. ft)	Front Yard	Side Yard	Rear Yard	Yard Open Space
	<i>(per dwelling unit)</i>	<i>(feet)</i>	<i>(feet)</i>	<i>(feet)</i>	<i>(% lot area)</i>
R-1-A Single-Family Residential District	8,500	20	5	10	20%
R-1-B Single-Family Residential District	7,000	20	5	10	20%
R-1-C Single and Two-Family Residential District	4,500 (single-family) 5,000 (two family)	20	5	10	20%
R-2 Multifamily Residential District	See R-1-C + 4,000 for 1st 2 units + 1,000 for remaining units (multi-family) 2,500 (condo) 3,500 (multi-family) 3,500 ZLL (zero lot line)	20	5	10	20%
R-3 Mobile Home Park District	3,500	20	5	10	25%
R-4 Condominium and Townhouse District	2,500 condo/townhomes 3,500 ZLL	20	5	10	25%
B-1-M Business-Medical District	--	20	--	--	20%
B-1-O Business-Office District	--	20	20	20	20%
B-N Neighborhood Business District	--	20	--	10	20%
B-1-L Limited Business District	--	20	--	10	20%
B-T Transitional Business District	--	20	--	10	20%
B-2-I Intermediate Business District	--	20	--	10	20%
B-G General Business District	--	20	5	10	20%
CBD Central Business District	--	--	--	--	--
I-1 Light Industrial District	--	20	5	10	20%
I-2 Heavy Industrial District	--	--	--	--	10%

The Zoning Ordinance includes several tools that accommodate mixed use development. The CBD regulations allow a very broad mix of uses, and does not impose setback, parking, or open space requirements.

The city accommodates new, “greenfield” mixed use development in the TND regulations. The TND regulations provide for several discrete areas with a mix of residential and commercial uses (Mixed Residential and a Neighborhood Center), along with design standards that provide for a compact, mixed use community. Design standards include garage and garage placement, maximum front setbacks, and maximum block lengths. Architecture, street, and sign standards are not established in the regulations, but are instead provided by the developer.

The Louisiana Avenue overlay districts require cross-access between parcels, and establish architectural standards such as building materials, wall plane projections, and façade transparency.

While the unincorporated areas of the parish are not zoned (except for landscape and lighting requirements), they do abide by a site location regulation for certain intensive uses such as wrecker yards, borrow pits, and prisons. A new interim performance ordinance passed in 2012 adds a buffering requirement for any conflicting land uses in the unincorporated parts of the parish. The ordinance applies several layers of separation standards, which vary based on the facility’s distance from residences, residential subdivisions, or schools. “Greenbelts” are a facility’s distance from lot lines, and range from 10 to 100 feet. “Buffer zones” are the minimum distance from residences, residential subdivisions, or schools. These range from 0 to 300 feet. Facilities that are close to residences, residential subdivisions and schools must provide an 8-foot high fence inside the property line.

Both the city and parish are governed by subdivision regulations. There are separate regulations for the city and the unincorporated parish, along with different standards and procedures. The regulations provide for plat approval by the Planning Commission or, in some cases, a Hearing Examiner. The regulations provide for the design of lots, block, streets, utilities, common open space, and other infrastructure. The regulations appear to have little relationship to each other, with some distinctions that are not related to either the physical characteristics of the incorporated and unincorporated areas, or to the legal requirements that govern municipal and parish government⁹. In addition, each regulation

has different definitions for items such as blocks, building lines or building setback restrictions, and the Comprehensive Plan.

In addition to the land development regulations summarized above, the LCG Code of Ordinances includes a number of ancillary land use and development restrictions. These include:

- Restrictions for specific uses or business types, such as adult businesses (Chapter 6), animal service facilities such as kennels and livestock confinement (Chapter 10), entertainment establishments (Chapter 18), gas stations (Chapter 26, Article 1), petroleum exploration (Chapter 58), solid waste (Chapter 74), secondhand dealers (Chapter 90), and towing and wrecking operations (Chapter 98).
- Chapters 26 (Development Standards) and 78 (Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places) include standards for streets and parking.
- Chapter 34 addresses drainage and stormwater management.
- Procedures for nuisance abatement, including zoning violations, are included in Chapter 34.

LCG’s jurisdiction includes the city of Lafayette and the unincorporated areas of the parish, but does not include any of the other incorporated municipalities in the parish (Broussard, Carencro, Duson, Scott or Youngsville). The residents in these municipalities do vote for the City-Parish President and the City-Parish Councilman in whose district they reside.

⁹Because the government functions are combined, it is possible for the City and unincorporated Parish to have a single set of subdivision regulations anyway.

Preliminary Issue Identification and Evaluation

- **There are few significant differences between many of the district regulations.** The Zoning Ordinance does not include a high number of districts. However, there are modest differences between some of the districts, and in particular the business districts. This suggests that the districts could be combined to improve clarity and ease of understanding.
- **The zoning and development regulations are scattered and uncoordinated.** The various development regulations throughout the parish repeat and duplicate definitions, procedures, and standards. The most obvious example is the city and parish subdivision regulations, which have a number of differences that appear to differ only because they were written at different times. Combining the regulations avoids duplication, makes information easier to find, and streamlines the overall body of regulations. In addition, this is easy to accomplish while maintaining differences in the regulations that apply to the city as opposed to the unincorporated areas of the parish.

In addition, the zoning district names are confusing and difficult to follow. For example, “R-1-A” is the city’s single-family detached zoning district. Most modern zoning regulations would simply title this district “R-1” or something that describes the character of the district, such as “R-SF.”

- **The zoning districts and development regulations lack purpose statements.** The base districts lack purpose statements or graphics. This can make it difficult to determine where to apply the districts, and hard for general public or casual users to understand. Integrated graphics, diagrams that show how dimensional standards work, and photographs of typical or desired development in the districts would make the regulations easier to understand, and create a clear link to the city’s plan policies.

While the city of Lafayette has a zoning ordinance, only the landscaping and lighting requirements of the zoning regulations apply in the unincorporated areas of the parish

- **The zoning and subdivision regulations should offer more “by right” options for quality development.** As in many communities with conventional approaches to zoning, applicants who want to build affordable housing or mixed use projects are often forced into a legislative review process, such as rezoning. This is because over half of the City’s land is zoned for residential, which does not allow commercial uses (residential units are allowed in the City’s business districts). The rezoning process creates substantial uncertainty, time and expense by applicants. By clearly defining the standards that apply to these projects and establishing criteria for transitions to lower density neighborhoods, the city can allow mixed use development in residential districts with administrative procedures that speed up the process.
- **The zoning regulations lack a planned district option.** It is anticipated that the new Unified Development Code will include clear, predictable standards and procedures. However, a development that does not meet the standards of any of the city’s zoning districts, use regulations, and design standards would either need to develop a text amendment to the regulations, or seek a series of variances. A Planned Development District enables an applicant in this situation to instead provide a master site plan and development agreement, and to negotiate its approval with the city. Modern zoning regulations typically provide this option. The city subdivision regulations do include a “Planned Unit Development” option in its subdivision regulations, and the parish regulations mention the concept in several places. However, combining the regulations would clarify that developers can use this tool to master plan both uses and density (a zoning function) and infrastructure (a subdivision design function).
- **The system of classifying and permitting uses is flexible, but obsolete.** The cumulative zoning system is flexible, but can allow a disparity between how land is zoned and how it is developed. For example, I-2 industrial sites could be developed for residential subdivisions. This not only makes the mapping and planning process incoherent, but could also convert land needed for employment based uses to residential use. The modern trend in zoning regulations is to use a non-cumulative system, where each district has its own set of uses. One example is a matrix, such as the one shown in the Appendix.

In addition, all uses in the Zoning Ordinance are listed as unconditionally permitted. While the definitions reference conditional uses, the concept does not appear in the body of the ordinance. While the Board of Adjustment’s variances and certain rezoning may include conditions there are no conditional uses allowed in the ordinance. Conditional use review allows the city to allow potentially intensive uses in a district, while curing concerns about the use with case by case review and conditions. This can provide market flexibility in siting a range of uses, while addressing community concerns about how they develop.

- **The list of permitted uses lacks a systematic focus. The list of uses is fairly specific, but incomplete and difficult to follow.** Uses are set out in large, cluttered paragraphs. A matrix format (see Appendix) allows the reader to easily tell where a use is allowed, and how the districts are structured. In addition, the city can compare the list of uses with national classification systems such as the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) and the American Planning Association’s Land Based Classification System (LBCS) to ensure that it is comprehensive and complete. In addition, the uses can be arranged by category (for example, by residential, commercial, and industrial) to make them easier to follow.

In addition, as is shown in the Appendix, some uses in the district regulations are listed as prohibited. However, uses that are not specifically listed as permitted are typically considered to prohibit. A matrix format clearly presents which uses are permitted, which are conditionally permitted, and which are prohibited in each district. This eliminates the confusion about whether unlisted uses are permitted or not.

- **The range of permitted residential uses is broad, but could expand.** The broad listing of dwelling unit types in the residential districts seems to capture the range of possible products available in the market. However, the regulations allow accessory apartments in some districts, but only the TND ordinance recognizes secondary, detached units (such as “granny flats” or ECHO units). In addition, the regulations do not distinguish between “mobile homes” and manufactured homes built to the HUD Code. Some communities allow the modern HUD Code home in a variety of settings, subject to design standards that maintain neighborhood compatibility while accommodating an affordable housing product.

- **The Residential District standards need to be modified.** The standards for residential development are fairly modest. The standards allow single-family lots as small as 4,500 square feet, and the minimum lot size metrics for the R-2 Multifamily district can accommodate up to 40 units per acre. However, the conventional minimum lot size standards can make creative design a challenge, with minimum requirements for lot size, setback, open space, and parking areas taking up valuable space.
- **The zoning standards do not address design quality.** Other than the Louisiana Avenue overlay and, to some extent the TND, the standards are not prescriptive about design quality. For example, garage and parking placement on a lot could vary significantly from the historic pattern of lot development, and create blank walls along a street. An applicant in a business district could place blank wall or garage door 30 feet from the street, a conventional big façade 400 feet from the street and behind a large parking area, or a highly modulated façade with a “Main Street” character 20 feet from the street and 5 feet from its neighbor. More prescriptive standards could maintain much of the flexibility offered by the existing regulations, while protecting community character.



- **Rezoning decisions are made primarily based on adjacent land uses requiring the need for a future land use map or other guidance.** LCG staff has limited criteria to review rezoning requests. Without the benefit of a future land use map or growth map, staff makes rezoning recommendations on an ad-hoc basis by considering adjacent uses. Review criteria could include not only compatibility with neighboring uses, but also how the zoning request meets plans policies, citywide or regional needs, impacts on public facilities, nuisance or safety issues, environmental issues, market and economic impact issues, fiscal impacts, and related considerations.
- **The zoning regulations do not address differences in context.** Other than the CBD (which has a locational focus) and the I-2 (Heavy Industrial) district, all of the base districts include a 20 foot front yard requirement. While this is appropriate in single-family neighborhoods and some business and employment areas, it mandates a suburban character throughout the city. This character is appropriate in some areas, but inconsistent with the historic pattern of development in others. In addition, pulling buildings away from the street can break the connection between building frontages and streets or sidewalks, creating a streetscape that is hostile to pedestrians. Similarly, at the city's edge and in rural areas of the unincorporated parish, these standards can yield higher densities, intensities, and infrastructure that is inconsistent with a rural environment. The zoning district standards could be modified to vary setback, bulk, density and design requirements that are appropriate for the community's urban, suburban and rural settings.
- The Business Districts have few significant differences between them. The city should consolidate its business districts. There are few significant differences between them. The city can use development and supplemental use standards to resolve issues with uses that are presently allowed in some districts but not others.
- **Limited Options for Mixed Use Development.** Unlike many TND regulations, the city's TND district is not excessively long or "fussy." It requires only 2 kinds of areas, and includes a modest set of standards. Lafayette's TND has been used but there is no built developments completed at this time. The regulations could be improved with better graphics and tighter language,¹¹ but otherwise appear to accomplish the city's purposes for greenfield, mixed use projects.
- **The parking regulations are scattered and confusing.** Parking regulations are codified in both the Zoning Ordinance and Chapter 26. The parking regulations should be consolidated for ease of use. The list of uses tied to parking ratios should be integrated with those in the zoning districts to avoid confusion in terminology and definition. While some regulations are currently set out in Chapter 26 because they only apply to unincorporated areas, parking requirements are applied throughout the parish. The unified regulations can easily distinguish between what is required in the city as opposed to the unincorporated areas.
- **The city and unincorporated parish subdivision regulations are filled with inconsequential differences.** As is discussed above, there are many differences in definitions, procedures, and even subdivision infrastructure requirements that are not easily explained by location, statutory authority, or other matters. The regulations simply read as if they were adopted by separate governmental entities. Because the government functions are consolidated, this is no longer necessary. The subdivision regulations can be combined while maintaining important distinctions in location, policy, and development patterns. This could significantly streamline the regulations, making them easier to read. In addition, each set of regulations has examples of best practices in subdivision procedures that could apply throughout the parish. Examples include family subdivisions, optional sketch plat review, and the review of minor plats by a hearing examiner. Incorporating these changes could make the review process shorter and less expensive for both the applicants and LCG.

¹¹ For example, the "Overview", paragraph 2, provides for a "neighborhood center" and a "mixed residential" area. However, under "Land Use Allocations," uses are listed for mixed residential areas and (in paragraph 2) "mixed-use areas." While it appears that the regulations use the "neighborhood center" and "mixed-use" area interchangeably, the regulations should make this clear in order to avoid confusion.

¹² A "node" is the terminus or intersection of streets, such as an intersection or the end of a cul-de-sac. A "link" is a street section between nodes.

- The subdivision regulations in the city and unincorporated parish are not context specific. As with the zoning standards, most of the subdivision standards do not respond to the specific character areas of the parish. For example, block length standards are the same regardless of whether the development is a resubdivision near downtown, a new suburban community, or a cluster of rural homes. There are some differences in standards depending on whether the subdivision is located in an incorporated area. Otherwise, the standards do not vary by location.

- **The connectivity regulations do not include a performance standard.** The community has struggled with the connectivity issue for several years, and the Vision Statement references street connectivity. The standards restrict block lengths, require pedestrian connections for long blocks, and restrict the length of cul-de-sacs. The city’s regulations for cul-de-sacs or dead end streets simply establish general considerations (such as tract size) and maximum length and turnaround diameter. The parish regulations require dead-end streets to be terminated by a cul-de-sac or a provision for future extension to neighboring property, along with a single 800 foot maximum length. The regulations do not provide guidance and how to provide a coherent, connected street network. A performance standard, such as a “connectivity ratio” that divides street links by nodes,¹² can guide applicants in designing well connected streets. At the same time, the ratio can vary by context in order to balance the community’s concerns for efficient traffic flow with market demands for security and privacy.



The LCG PZC Department reviews the subdivision regulations in the municipalities of Scott, Carencro, and Youngsville while Broussard has their own Planning Commission. Scott is in the process of establishing their own Planning Commission.

Figure 6-2 Example of Connectivity Ratio

