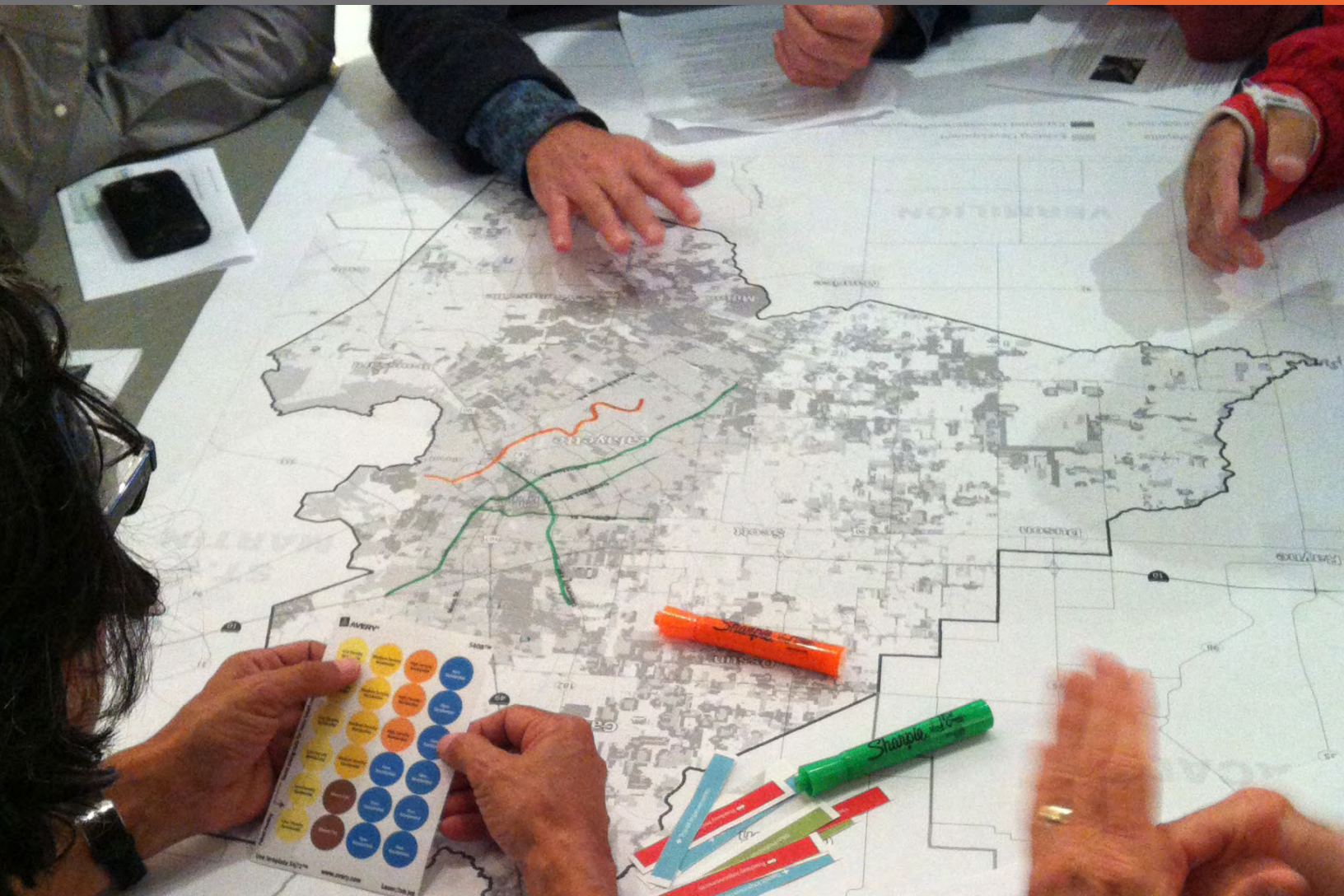


Citizen Planner Handbook

PLANNING COURSEWORK FOR CITIZENS



Lafayette Consolidated Government
Department of Planning, Zoning and Development

Prepared by:
Lafayette Consolidated Government
With assistance of WRT Planning & Design



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Philadelphia Citizens Planning Institute <http://citizensplanninginstitute.org/>
American Planning Association Minnesota Chapter
Plan Lafayette Executive Summary
Lafayette Consolidated Government Home Rule Charter

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PREFACE

This book is one of a series of three books used as resources in the neighborhood planning process in Lafayette, Louisiana. The planning process supported by these books will guide new and established neighborhoods through the steps necessary not just to create a plan, but also to organize neighborhood support around implementation of that plan. To the right are descriptions of the books that help to make this process work:

- **CITIZEN PLANNER HANDBOOK**

This handbook, along with classes offered by the department, is aimed at building leadership capacity at the neighborhood scale and promoting understanding of how local governments work, what planning and regulations do, how to navigate them, and other key issues that affect the development of a neighborhood.

- **NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT TOOLKIT**

The Project Toolkit is designed to help neighborhoods implement neighborhood-scale projects. The toolkit features 20 specific “Do-It-Yourself” projects that residents and neighborhoods can undertake with limited governmental assistance; highlights local resources and best local, regional and national practices; and includes tips for organizing and fundraising to implement these types of projects. Neighborhood groups can use the toolkit to generate project ideas, as well as access step-by-step guidance and resources.

- **NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING PROCESS WORKBOOK (IN DEVELOPMENT)**

This workbook is conceived as a guide for new neighborhoods to go through the steps of the planning process. The workbook will support neighborhood leaders as they engage fellow residents in defining the neighborhood boundaries, collecting information on the neighborhood conditions, creating the neighborhood vision and plan, and moving the plan through the city’s approval process toward implementation.

INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS THE CITIZEN PLANNER PROGRAM?

Planning at the parish, city and the neighborhood levels are priorities in PlanLafayette. Training local citizen planners to develop their own neighborhood plan will build community, create sound land use policy and revitalize neighborhoods (see PlanLafayette Housing & Neighborhoods Policy 11 and Future Land Use Policy 2.)

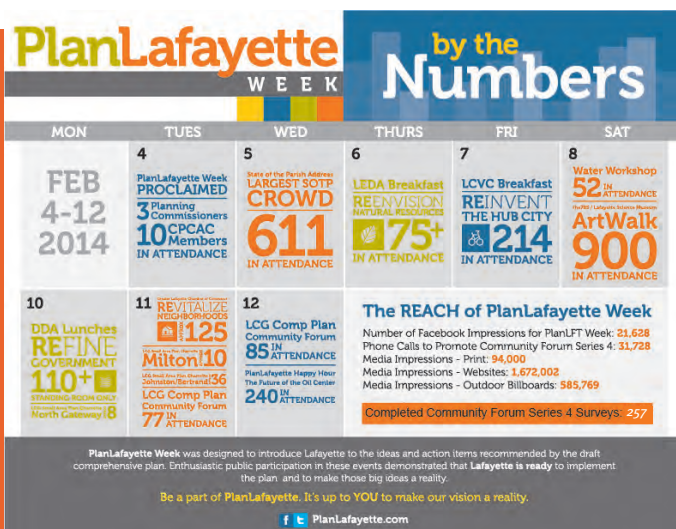
The Citizen Planner Program is designed to provide education and training to future community leaders. This program is taught by trained professionals in the topics to be discussed.

The objective of this program is to foster a greater awareness of land use; decision makers' roles and responsibilities resulting in more livable communities; the protection and conservation of natural resources; and better overall land use decisions throughout the parish.

WHO ARE CITIZEN PLANNERS/NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS?

You know them! Citizen Planners/Neighborhood Leaders are individuals interested in playing a more informed and active role in shaping the future of their communities and in building the knowledge base of their neighborhood organizations. The program outlined in this chapter is designed to help aspiring leaders:

- Identify community assets, assess needs, and shape positive neighborhood change.
- Understand how the LCG development code can improve the process and quality of development projects.
- Pinpoint tools to protect a community's unique assets and promote good development.
- Recognize / realize how planning will improve the likelihood that quality of life neighborhood improvements will get implemented.



CITIZEN PLANNER CLASSROOM

Participants are actively engaged in learning from each other, as well as from our instructor/facilitators. One of the goals of the Citizen Planner courses is to provide practical tools individuals can take back to their neighborhood organizations or communities. These courses have been developed for individuals and leaders within neighborhood organizations who are highly motivated to engage in planning issues on equal footing with other stakeholders.

To make the most of your time investment, class sessions will be structured relevant to your interests and needs. Real life examples will be included as much as possible with opportunities for learner interactions through Q&A and group exercises.

The course series is described in the next chapter of this book. This book will continue to grow from year to year and as new courses are taught they will be added to this book.

The “Neighborhood Toolkit” and the “Neighborhood Planning Workbook” will also be made available to those who participate in Citizen Planner courses.



SESSIONS

- *The Big Picture with Big Ideas: What is planning and the Comprehensive Plan*
- *Land Use & Zoning Code (Unified Development Code)*
- *Government: Roles and Responsibilities*
- *Organizing and Holding Meetings*
- *Neighborhood Implementation Toolkit*
- *Good Planning Begins with Good Data*
- *Preserving a Sense of Place in a Neighborhood*
- *Complete Streets and Commercial Corridors*
- *Making your Organization More Effective*
- *Urban Design Principles*

HOW DO I SIGN UP FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP PROGRAM?

Classes are scheduled and communicated primarily via email on a first-come, first-served basis. We will strive to hold monthly courses so that there are ample opportunities for interested participants to take these classes.

Note: YOU MUST BE A RESIDENT OR WORK IN THE CITY OF LAFAYETTE OR UNINCORPORATED PARTS OF LAFAYETTE PARISH TO QUALIFY.

Visit <http://www.lafayettela.gov/ComprehensivePlan> for updates on courses.

CORE COURSES

(1) The Big Picture with Big Ideas– What is Planning and the Comprehensive Plan

The goal of this course is two-fold: 1) to explain what planning is and why we do it; and 2) to describe PlanLafayette, Lafayette's comprehensive planning process and parts of the plan that were created.

(2) Land Use and Zoning Code- Unified Development Code

This course is an introduction to land use and zoning and their role in community development. The goal is to present a clear idea of how land uses are determined and the formal process associated in designating zoning code and districts.

(3) Government – Roles and Responsibilities

This course provides the fundamentals of how government operates in Lafayette, including an overview of what it means to have a consolidated city-parish structure. This course also shares departmental roles and responsibilities.

ADDITIONAL COURSES

(4) Organizing and Holding Meetings

This course offers tips and suggestions on facilitating effective and efficient meetings, such as developing agendas and creating action summaries. Learn tips on making your organization and neighborhood leverage its assets and accomplish more.

(5) Neighborhood Implementation Toolkit

This course reviews community project ideas cited in the Neighborhood DIY Toolkit. Participants will look closely at the projects and discuss steps in implementing in their own neighborhood.

(6) Good Planning Begins with Good Data

Review local and national case studies that show the importance of using good data to document and inform decision making. We will learn how to access local data and how data reveals patterns otherwise not obvious.

(7) Preserving a Sense of Place in a Neighborhood

This course reviews successful place-making projects locally and nationally. Participants will study their own neighborhoods and discover its historical and cultural sense of place.

(8) Complete Streets and Commercial Corridors / Planning a Successful Better Block

This course will explore the importance of complete streets and commercial corridors in the urban core by studying successful and unsuccessful road design.

(9) Urban Design Principles and Lafayette's Downtown

This course will review the Downtown Action Plan and its suggestions for urban design. We will study human-scale communities that are walkable, while being economically and culturally viable.

(10) Success Stories

These courses vary and allow planners and citizens to share how they have transformed their neighborhoods.

THE BIG PICTURE WITH BIG IDEAS— WHAT IS PLANNING AND THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN [COURSE 1]

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOAL

The goal of this course is two-fold: 1) to explain what planning is and why we do it; and 2) to describe PlanLafayette, Lafayette’s comprehensive planning process and parts of the plan that were created.

INTRODUCTION TO PLANNING

WHAT IS PLANNING?

Planning is the “art” and “science” of assessing current community conditions while envisioning the healthy future development and growth of a community. Planning involves “art” by designing cities that function well and “science” by utilizing technical data to make informed decisions. Planning is a continuing process that guides communities in proactively shaping the future of its natural, built, social, cultural and economic environments.

The AMERICAN PLANNING ASSOCIATION offers the following definition:

Planning, also called urban planning or city and regional planning, is a dynamic profession that works to improve the welfare of people and their communities by creating more convenient, equitable, healthful, efficient, and attractive places for present and future generations.

Planning enables civic leaders, businesses, and citizens to play a meaningful role in creating communities that enrich people’s lives.

Good planning helps create communities that offer better choices for where and how people live. Planning helps communities to envision their future. It helps them to find the right balance of new development and essential services, environmental protection, and innovative change.



WHY DO WE PLAN?

Planning is a democratic process and gives a voice to all citizen stakeholders including, residents, home owners, neighborhood organizations and the development community of businesses, developers, designers and investors. Planning allows for the co-creation of one's community and the crafting of a vital and healthy place for people to live. Growth and change in our communities is happening constantly, and creating a plan is a way to wisely manage that change. Change can often be observed by population growth, increased traffic, new businesses and new neighborhood developments. However, while many areas of a city may seemingly change for the positive, examples of unfavorable change can be depreciating value of neighborhoods and a deteriorating downtown, unemployment, blight and litter. Change can be a result of both internal and external forces.

A planning group of stakeholders discusses:

1. What are our weaknesses and opportunities?
2. What are our goals and vision?
3. How do we actively accomplish these tasks?

The process of crafting a planning document aids communities in arranging their vision into a single document which can then easily be distributed and conveyed to citizens, partners and funders.

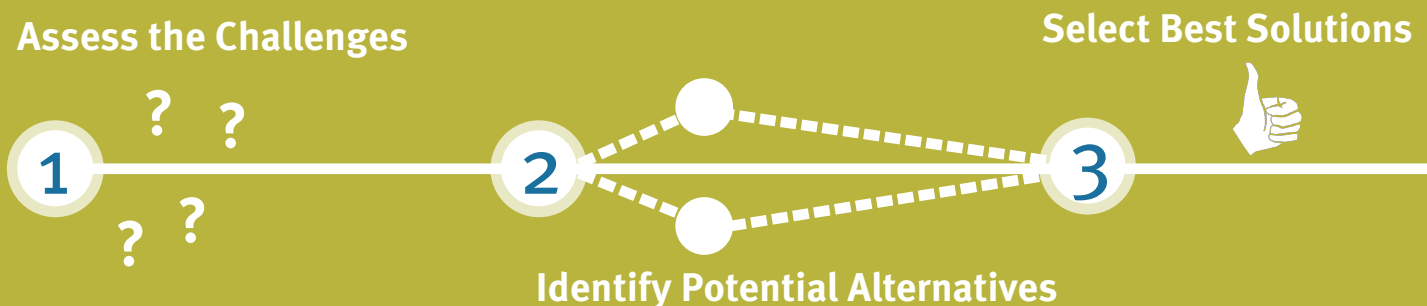
The Plan, created with community consensus, becomes the playbook that steers stakeholder decisions now and in the future. Plans force us to set goals and establish projected action timelines for implementation. A plan outlines explicit outcomes and expectations for multiple entities, organizations and policy changes.

- Planning helps communities concentrate on a vision and steps to accomplish it.
- Planning uses consensus-building about future land-use, community development and design.
- Planning utilizes data, maps and technology to assist people in visualizing possibilities.
- Planning allows government to work more effectively on behalf of the community.



THE PLANNING PROCESS

1. **ASSESS THE CHALLENGES:** A needs assessment is one way of identifying current problems and ensuring the appropriate issues are being addressed by the entire community. Problems are often intertwined and complex, although some are obvious such as updating infrastructure to meet development needs.
2. **IDENTIFY POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVES:** Planning stakeholders need a range of options to consider. Consider case studies from other communities that have dealt with a similar issue and cater it to your unique situation.
3. **SELECT BEST SOLUTIONS:** Community-wide citizen participation is key to identifying both problems and best solutions for an area. All neighborhoods, businesses and stakeholders should be invited to have a seat at the table. Planners are crucial in community outreach and facilitating meetings.
4. **IMPLEMENT ACTIONS:** The plan should consist of the favored actions to effect change in the neighborhood and community. Specific organizations and groups should be identified to carry out each action, along with a short/ mid/long-term timetable. Potential costs involved and funding sources can be identified in the action plan, also. The plan may include zoning adjustments, ordinance changes, capital improvement projects, and the synchronization among multiple organizations. The community is responsible for making the changes!
5. **EVALUATE PLAN PERFORMANCE:** A plan is considered a living, breathing document that is not set in stone, but evolves and changes as actions are taken. Typically, a staff is hired to assist in implementing a community-wide plan. At a neighborhood level, volunteers and residents carry the torch to implement their plan. Tracking progress can be done annually and semi-annually as projects are accomplished or as priorities change. Planners assess whether the actions that were taken have been effective. If they were not effective, why not? What caused this potential solution to be ineffective? Is there another option? Should the problem be redefined? The action and evaluation cycle continues on an as-needed basis.



AUTHORITY TO PLAN

The authority to engage in land use planning is set forth in Louisiana law (Title 33, Section 106). Planning is considered to be an exercise of the police powers (interest of general security, health, safety, morals, and welfare) of the state. Municipal planning is based on state law (often called state planning enabling legislation). Under enabling legislation, city or parish planning begins with an analysis of community needs and goals which are then formulated into a Comprehensive Plan, sometimes called a Master Plan, at the city or parish scale. The Comprehensive Plan then becomes the guiding policy for community development and other more specific area plans - the zoning ordinance, and other land use regulations must be consistent with the community's comprehensive plan.

There will be more discussion later in this handbook about the need for comprehensive plans and the important relationship between plans and land use regulations.

PLANNING COMMISSION AND PLANNING, ZONING, AND DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT (PZD)

Many communities, including Lafayette, have boards or commissions that are involved in planning the future of the community. Examples of these include planning and zoning commissions, parks and recreation boards, downtown development associations, economic development authorities, housing authorities, watershed districts, historic preservation commissions, etc.

Most planning commissions have four areas of concentration:

1. Developing the community's comprehensive plan - as outlined in state law, the Planning Commission is the adopter and keeper of jurisdiction's comprehensive plan.
2. Creating and maintaining land use plans
3. Planning for capital improvements and/or special projects
4. Reviewing development applications



In Lafayette, the Planning Commission is an appointed advisory body that:

- receives its charge from the state enabling legislation;
- informs the governing body as to what citizens want and where the best long range interests of the community lie;
- evaluates information from staff, other public agencies, and testimony gathered in public hearings regarding
- development proposals, ordinance amendments, capital improvements, and other land use issues, in order to make recommendations to the governing body;
- supports its decisions with findings of fact designed to promote the health, safety and welfare of citizens, guided by the Comprehensive Plan; and
- reviews the capital improvement budget prepared by the City-Parish President for its conformance with the adopted comprehensive plan.

The Planning, Zoning, and Development Department (PZD) is divided into four Divisions each handling unique responsibilities. PZD strives to be a “one-stop-shop” for businesses and individuals involved in a variety of activities, including:

- Purchasing or developing property (platting, subdivisions, plan review);
- Undertaking construction projects (permitting, inspections); and
- Condemning unsafe structures
- Opening or relocating businesses (certificates of occupancy, land use regulations).
- Implementing the comprehensive plan

The Department is also responsible for assisting citizens with requests for:

- Zoning variances or reclassification;
- Abandonments of easements or rights-of-way;
- Annexation of land into the city of Lafayette; and
- Including a property on the Lafayette Parish Register of Historic Properties.

REFERENCES FOR FURTHER READING

Some excellent resources and references that can help familiarize you with the basic concepts of planning and current trends include:

- The Citizen’s Guide to Planning, 4th edition, by Christopher J. Duerksen and C. Gregory Dale. APA Planners Press, Chicago, 2009.
- *Planning*, a monthly magazine published by the American Planning Association, www.planning.org.
- American Planning Association Guide to Planning, <https://www.planning.org/aboutplanning/>
- CityLab (<https://www.citylab.com/>)
- Next City (<https://nextcity.org/>)
- Congress for New Urbanism (<https://www.cnu.org/>)

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

A comprehensive plan is a long-range plan or “guidebook” for a community’s growth, development, and redevelopment. It is a vision for the future that plans for a twenty year time period, based on local conditions, values and aspirations. It is called comprehensive because it coordinates the efforts of many different aspects of a community, such as land use, transportation, housing, and economic development.

PlanLafayette, our comprehensive plan, was adopted by the Planning Commission in June 2014 and endorsed by City-Parish Council in July 2014. An excerpt from the Executive Summary describing the vision, planning process, and implementation of the plan follows.

OUR FUTURE, OUR LAFAYETTE

With the adoption of PlanLafayette, our city and parish enters a bold new era, one of optimism and confidence with a clear direction forward.

For the first time in our history:

- We are motivated by a unified vision - one that reflects our shared values, as well as our diversity.
- We are confident in a framework for growth and investment that will guide us toward a future of prosperity, resiliency, and leadership in innovation.
- We have an action agenda that will ensure we will gain immediate traction and sustained progress and success building upon success over time.
- We have a new way of looking at our community.
- We see our neighborhoods and downtown as opportunities for reinvestment and enhanced livability.
- We see our natural resources – our bayous, wetlands, coulees – not just as areas that present flooding challenges, but as elements of a green infrastructure that connects our community, in that it enhances our essential character and defines our way of life.
- We have a new attitude and structure for governance, one in which we are ensured a return on investment of our tax dollars. Actions and investments by local government create synergies with those of businesses and institutions, united in new partnerships for prosperity.
- We have a framework to continue to reinvent and reinvest in our Hub City, embracing our heritage, celebrating our culture, while creating fertile ground for technical innovation to strengthen our economic prominence within our region and our nation.

WHY DOES LAFAYETTE NEED A PLAN?

Over the last two decades, Lafayette Parish’s population increased by about 34%, from approximately 164,000 to more than 221,000 residents. Lafayette has also experienced one of the fastest growing economies in the nation, with a GDP that grew by 8.3% between 2009 and 2010, compared to 2.5% nationally. In 2012, the Lafayette MSA ranked 24th of 200 metro areas in the “Best Performing Cities Index” for its ability to create and sustain jobs and to foster economic growth. This healthy growth is projected to continue for the foreseeable future, with the expected addition of more than 66,000 new residents (expected in the city and unincorporated parish) and nearly 30,000 new jobs, between 2010 and 2030.

The economic downturn which began in 2015 has impacted some of the robust forecasts, but there is still reason to be bullish about the future of Lafayette and its continued growth.

Growth has brought many positive changes to Lafayette, but other changes are negative. While the city has gained population, adjacent municipalities and outlying areas in the parish that are prone to flooding are growing at a faster rate. As a result of this scattered growth pattern, many of our roadways are becoming increasingly congested and over capacity. Transit coverage remains inefficient due to low densities of sprawling development. Efficient provision of adequate infrastructure and community services and amenities (such as quality schools or parks and recreation programs) is becoming fiscally infeasible. Furthermore, with the expected population and economic growth in the next two decades, Lafayette's infrastructure and services will need to be upgraded and expanded to support future demand.

PlanLafayette provides the framework for addressing these issues and problems in ways that will allow our community to achieve our aspirations to:

- enhance the places where we live, work and play;
- support and attract businesses and promote entrepreneurship;
- strengthen the image we project to the world;
- maintain our economic competitiveness; and
- to do all these things in a fiscally efficient manner, leveraging our assets and turning challenges into opportunities.

PLANLAFAYETTE PROCESS

The PlanLafayette process was organized into three major work phases, all of which involved a robust public outreach component:

PHASE 1: The work conducted in this phase included numerous interviews with representatives of community interests and organizations, the collection of a vast amount of data and, perhaps most importantly, the creation of two committees to provide policy guidance and technical support to LCG and the consultant team. The first committee, the Comprehensive Plan Citizen Advisory Committee (CPCAC), a 30+ member group, was appointed to represent broad community interests, facilitate community consensus, promote public ownership of the planning process and advise the City-Parish Council. The second committee, the Comprehensive Plan Technical Resource Team (CPTRT), consisting of designated LCG staff and representatives from non-LCG entities, had the role of providing special expertise and access to information and resources at key steps throughout the process, and will serve as LCG's partner in the implementation of the adopted plan.

PHASE 2: The second phase of work consisted of three major tracks, all involving extensive community engagement:

1. **Vision Statement:** The Vision Statement describes the future that we, as a community, collectively aspire to achieve for Lafayette 20 years from now. The Vision Statement represents the “destination” to the comprehensive plan’s roadmap.
2. **Community Assessment and Trend Growth:** This track included an analysis of Lafayette’s current built, natural, functional, demographic, economic, and regulatory conditions and trends, as well as the development of a Trend Growth (No Plan) Scenario that depicts where growth is most likely to occur in Lafayette over the next two decades, assuming no comprehensive plan is adopted and current policies and regulations remain unchanged. This “picture of the likely future” was compared to and found to be incompatible with the aspirations painted in the Vision Statement in a number of ways.
3. **Scenario Alternatives:** Three scenarios (Multi-Center Growth, Balanced Growth, and Corridor Growth), along with the Trend Growth (No Plan) Scenario, were presented to the public for selection. The resulting Preferred Future Scenario blends the preferences and priorities expressed by the Lafayette community and served as the foundation for the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and the Policy Framework of the comprehensive plan.

PHASE 3: The final phase of the work program culminated in the production of the PlanLafayette document and executive summary. PlanLafayette is divided into three major chapters, Vision, Elements, and Implementation. The Vision chapter presents the 20-year Lafayette Vision Statement. The Elements chapter contains the policy framework for the plan. Perhaps the most important part of any comprehensive plan, the Implementation chapter, contains a detailed plan to carry out the actions recommended in the policy framework, identifies responsibilities, partners, potential funding strategies, and mechanisms for tracking and evaluating progress. This chapter also contains methods and protocols recommended to facilitate inter- and intra-governmental coordination among the various entities that will have a role in implementing pieces of the comprehensive plan.

OUTREACH

PlanLafayette was developed through a citizen-centered process that encouraged the entire community to contribute ideas for Lafayette’s future. Interactive public forums, workshops, open houses, portable “meetings in a box,” community events, and committee meetings provided more than 70 opportunities for direct citizen interaction and unprecedented dialogue.



Complementary outreach ranging from media placements, phone calls, online surveys, e-blasts, social media, and many other tools broadened participation opportunities. In total, there were more than 7,000 points of citizen engagement during the PlanLafayette process, with an even greater media reach.

To build upon this forged momentum, PlanLafayette Week was created as an annual event to continue discussing the Big Ideas, community partnerships and plan implementation. The week-long event offers a platform for sharing with the community ongoing implementation of the plan's action items as well as those as upcoming initiatives. It also provides an opportunity to hear from planning experts from across the country as they share their expertise to help move one or more action items along.

PLAN ELEMENTS AND GOALS

Each of the plan elements includes a snapshot of key challenges, goals, policies, and actions that will implement the citywide vision over the next 20 years. The monitoring and tracking of actions and metrics will show the measurable results and progress towards making the vision a reality. A synopsis of each element follows.

1. LAND USE

This element is about the pattern and mix of development and its location. Through the planning process, a “preferred future” was selected by the community from among four growth alternatives. The preferred future scenario seeks to reverse a trend of spreading out in a disconnected fashion, and instead focuses growth and development in mixed-use centers and along corridors, with greater access to transit, jobs, walkable neighborhoods, and parks and recreation. The preferred future scenario is projected to consume less land, reduce costs associated with road, water and sewer extensions, and encourage walkable, mixed-use development patterns.

- GOAL 1: Align land use, transportation, and utility planning with the Future Land Use Plan (FLUM).
- GOAL 2: Create a clear process for land use and zoning review, land use planning, annexation, and extension of utilities.
- GOAL 3: Strengthen local planning, regional planning and coordination with surrounding municipalities.



2. COMMUNITY CHARACTER

This element is about the desired “look” and “feel” of Lafayette. It’s about how our rich Cajun and Creole heritage, our creative scene, our culture of innovation, authentic “joie de vivre” and distinctive built and natural environment can combine to create a unique and attractive place. Community character is defined by how we protect, maintain, and create desirable neighborhoods, how we encourage compatible and diverse land uses, how we provide for ease of mobility, and how we protect cultural and natural resources.

- GOAL 1: Preserve and capitalize on Lafayette’s unique character.
- GOAL 2: Project an attractive community image.
- GOAL 3: Strengthen the character of downtown and its surrounding areas and neighborhoods.
- GOAL 4: Direct growth toward mixed-use centers and major corridors.

3. HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Lafayette has a broad range of diverse neighborhoods that contribute to the parish’s community and residential character. As primary places of residence, neighborhoods and housing units have significant impact on residents’ daily activities and are the foundation of a safe, enjoyable community in which to live. Providing high quality, affordable, and diverse housing choices throughout the parish is essential to the future prosperity of Lafayette.

- GOAL 1: Encourage a diverse range of housing opportunities and choices.
- GOAL 2: Promote quality housing and encourage the rehabilitation and/or reuse of declining housing stocks.
- GOAL 3: Develop and facilitate affordable housing opportunities for low income households.

4. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Culture stands at the core of every great city, but in Lafayette culture is essential to people’s daily lives. From festivals to fais do-dos, from the culinary arts to Grammy-winning music, from extraordinary exhibits to theater and dance - Lafayette’s culture is what makes Lafayette unique, distinct and tied together. The AcA serves the region as a cultural hub through community development, grant making, arts-in-education, exhibits, career development, public art and all things performing arts on large and small stages.



- GOAL 1: Promote and highlight key historical and cultural resources.
- GOAL 2: Increase community-wide arts and cultural access and education.
- GOAL 3: Value economic impact of arts and culture in the creative economy.

5. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The comprehensive plan presents a key opportunity to align economic strategies within the broader community planning context. As a result, the economic development element of the plan identifies key challenges or hurdles for the future of the parish as it relates to investment and job growth. These can be addressed through changes or investments in land use policies, infrastructure, housing, education, tourism and other plan elements.

- GOAL 1: Produce more skilled workers locally for local jobs.
- GOAL 2: Broaden employment sectors that drive the parish economy.
- GOAL 3: Continue to strengthen the identity and mix of uses in the downtown core.

6. TRANSPORTATION AND MOBILITY

Traffic congestion cannot be solved by simply building more road capacity because of limited funding and what is called induced demand. Induced demand means that improved roadway capacity inevitably attracts additional traffic because if the capacity of a roadway is increased, motorists will change their routes to take advantage of that improved roadway.

The principles that have guided the development of PlanLafayette are to increase road network connectivity and to expand the availability of alternative travel options, while making those options as accessible as possible.

- GOAL 1: Preserve the existing and planned transportation system.
- GOAL 2: Provide a multimodal transportation system that facilitates the operational efficiency and effective movement of both people and goods.
- GOAL 3: Ensure safety for all users of transportation facilities and services.
- GOAL 4: Identify the funding needed for LCG's transportation system and potential sources for that funding

7. UTILITIES

Since its inception in 1897, LUS has been a driving force in shaping Lafayette. The basic, yet necessary and critical services provided by LUS continue to influence the volume and pattern of residential, commercial and industrial development in the area. Today, LUS employs more than 530 people and operates as a department of LCG. LUS provides significant revenues to LCG through annual in lieu of tax payments, thereby keeping taxes low and helping to support the city of Lafayette's general fund services including police and fire, parks and recreation, and community development. While focused on LUS, the following policies and actions also relate to Public Works and Planning, Zoning, and Development – realizing the need for continued coordination to strengthen these interrelationships.

- GOAL 1: Coordinate with LUS to ensure that utilities incorporate the FLUM in the strategic planning of system expansions to provide adequate service to all customers in the service area.
- GOAL 2: Continue to provide reliable service to all customers.
- GOAL 3: Satisfy all environmental compliance regulations established by federal and state environmental agencies.
- GOAL 4: Ensure adequate funding for needed existing infrastructure expansions and new facilities.

8. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

For Lafayette to truly be the desirable place to do business and to live that we aspire to, it must offer the types of services and amenities sought-after by employers and employees alike. In addition to great parks and infrastructure, those services and amenities must include great schools, efficient emergency services, quality libraries, accessible health care, and versatile civic buildings.

- GOAL 1: Continue to provide reliable service to all customers.
- GOAL 2: Support efforts to improve LPSS performance.
- GOAL 3: Connect UL, Downtown, and surrounding neighborhoods.
- GOAL 4: Encourage a range of technical training, adult education, and higher education opportunities in Lafayette.
- GOAL 5: Enhance the role of community centers, libraries, and public buildings as centers of activity and neighborhood resources.



9. RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE

The current park inventory, both active and passive, totals 1,500 acres or 6.7 acres per 1,000 population in the parish. While this standard is below what many comparably sized communities provide, Lafayette is unique in its outdoor recreation culture and extensive natural resources for fishing, hunting, boating and other forms of resource based recreation. Planning for future park and recreation needs has been hindered by the lack of a community-wide Parks and Recreation Master Plan identifying park development priorities, and tools to objectively determine them. These could include the creation of a set of Level of Service (LOS) standards for parks and recreational facilities, and for park spacing, tailored to the recreational preferences and participation rates unique to Lafayette, based on a recreational preferences and participation survey.

- GOAL 1: Operate and maintain Lafayette parks to provide opportunities for all residents to experience and enjoy the parish's open space and recreation.
- GOAL 2: Expand role of parks and recreation in promoting healthy communities and opportunities for recreation.
- GOAL 3: Utilize parks, recreation, open space, and waterways to expand the green infrastructure network.

10. RESOURCES CONSERVATION AND HAZARD MITIGATION

While the region remains vulnerable to flooding, storms, and high winds, its higher elevation (36 feet above sea level) and location on the Louisiana Prairie Terrace means that Lafayette does not experience the same flooding risks as areas to the south and west. However, the Bayou Vermilion's limited capacity for drainage and proneness to flooding is a major concern to citizens and businesses in flood prone areas. The Lafayette area historically averages 55-60 inches of rainfall per year, and it is projected that the "100 year flood" is actually happening as often as every 10 years. In 2012, the parish declared a state of emergency due to a major flash flood that stranded many residents, hitting Carencro particularly hard. FEMA's preliminary floodplain mapping (draft Flood Insurance Rate Maps) significantly expands the areas of the parish classified as special hazard areas or within the 100 year floodplain.

- GOAL 1: Conserve and protect natural resources.
- GOAL 2: Protect people and property from hazards.



The flooding of August 2016 increased the awareness about Lafayette's challenges in managing its stormwater. Action items that involve water management and hazard mitigation have become more urgent from the perspective of the community.

IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation section of PlanLafayette is perhaps the most important element of the comprehensive plan. This section includes the “to-do” list for PlanLafayette. Many actions cut across plan elements, LCG departments, and interest groups. Therefore, to succeed, implementation requires determined coordination and attention from all sectors of government and its partners –both immediately and over the next two decades. The Implementation Chapter contains several items:

The **Action Matrix** is a sortable worksheet of information about each action, including the action type, the lead agency or department, and linkages to other initiatives like the UDC. A section on **Governance and Coordination** outlines the many partners and roles they play in implementing PlanLafayette. LCG regularly partners with agencies, neighborhood planning groups, non-profits, businesses, and surrounding municipalities. The implementation of PlanLafayette will require the same type of and level of commitment from partners to be successful. There are also various ways in which LCG can encourage increased coordination and support planning with regional, state, and federal agencies, including:

- Provide insight on background data and trends;
- Make available maps and graphics that help visualize future growth, redevelopment, and preservation;
- Share our community’s vision for Lafayette’s future including roads, utilities, housing, parks and open space, education, and other community facilities;
- Facilitate future development and reinvestment;

The **Monitoring and Updating** section describes the process for tracking, updating, and reporting the results of implementation. PlanLafayette provides the policy basis for future plans at different scales – e.g., neighborhood plans, small area plans, the Downtown Action Plan and other specific area plans. These plans will help to implement PlanLafayette and the overall vision for Lafayette in 2035.

The **Fiscal and Funding Strategy** section outlines resources for funding availability. PlanLafayette includes policies and actions to coordinate annual budgeting, the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), and new applications for funding sources to ensure funding is appropriated in accordance with the comprehensive plan. The plan’s policies and actions direct growth to centers and corridors, encourage reinvestment in existing infrastructure, and increase efficiencies in the provision of services such as parks, water, sewer, fiber, transportation, and schools. To accelerate the implementation of these policies and actions, incentives (both monetary or non-monetary) may be used. Monetary incentives may include tax expenditures, grants, vouchers and rebates. Non-monetary incentives include technical assistance, business planning assistance, marketing assistance, expedited permitting, regulatory relief, preferred loans, guarantee programs, and dedicated management teams in PZD and other departments.

THE BIG IDEAS

The four “big ideas” break the comprehensive plan up into bite-size chunks for ease of discussion and implementation. Although the comprehensive plan covers 465 action items, the four big ideas helps the community to speak in general terms about the over-arching goals for our community:

- Refine Government: Making the best use of tax dollars building a smarter, more efficient government
- Revitalize Neighborhoods: Strengthening neighborhoods, increasing housing choice, and supporting business
- Reinvent the Hub City: Investing in community assets that define the Hub City of the future
- Reenvision Natural Resources: Finding opportunity in our environmental challenges

LAND USE AND UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE

[COURSE 2]

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOAL

This course is an introduction to land use and the Unified Development Code and their important roles in community development. The course goal is to present a clear idea of how land uses are determined and the formal process associated in designating Unified Development Code districts.

LAND USE

WHAT IS LAND USE?

- Refers to how the land is generally used – whether it is residential, commercial, industrial, open space, or a mix.
- One definition states that “land use planning is defined as the process of protecting and improving the environments in a city through the proper use and development of land.” (Leung, Hok Lin 1989, Land Use Planning Made Plain).
- Land use planning is a process for determining how land will be used, both now and in the future.

WHAT DOES A LAND USE PLAN DO?

A Future Land Use Plan expresses the community’s vision for future land use and change over time. A future land use plan illustrates types of land uses (e.g., commercial, mixed-use, residential, parks and open space, transportation) either at a general concept level or more specifically for individual parcels illustrated on a map. Lafayette’s current Future Land Use Map is conceptual in nature; however, planning staff is actively working on making the map a planning tool.

Having a land use plan in place is important to guide future decisions and address potential land use conflicts:

- Ensure that a concrete plant isn’t located next to a residence
- Ensure that tax revenues are invested wisely
- Minimize the risk of flooding in existing and new developments



WHAT IS A LAND USE PLAN?

A Policy Document that...

- Guides decision making:
 - Guides government decisions on infrastructure expansion and improvement – i.e., Capital Improvement Program
 - Provides a reference for rezoning and development decisions
- Informs property owners and developers:
 - Informs property owners of the plans for infrastructure expansion
 - Allows developers to reference adopted area plans when developing proposals and determining site locations
- Facilitates communication and cooperation among various stakeholders including LCG, neighborhood organizations, the Lafayette Parish School System (LPSS), and LUS.

WHY LAND USE PLANNING?

- As a framework for decision-making:
 - Offers guidance to City-Parish staff, Planning Commission, City-Parish Council, developers, businesses, residents, and others on what land uses are encouraged and discouraged in the area.
 - Establishes a common understandable vision that encourages investment by businesses at all scales.
- To gain balance and certainty:
 - A land use plan offers residents and businesses a clearer picture of the type of development that is desired by the community.
 - This greater level of certainty can help promote business investment opportunities and economic growth, and foster neighborhood stability.
 - Finally, land use planning helps protect property values.

CONCEPTS TO CONSIDER WHEN DEVELOPING A LAND USE PLAN

- **URBAN SPRAWL** – The spreading outwards of a city and its suburbs to low-density, auto-dependent development on rural land, with associated design features that encourage car dependency. Critics argue that sprawl has certain disadvantages, including:
 - Long travel distances to and from work
 - High car dependence
 - Inadequate facilities – health, cultural, recreational, entertainment, schools, etc.
 - Higher per-person infrastructure costs

PlanLafayette includes policies and actions that seek to reverse the general trend in Lafayette of spreading development outward from the traditional city center, and instead focus growth and development in mixed-use centers and corridors, a result of feedback during the Plan's development.

- **ADEQUATE INFRASTRUCTURE** – Infrastructure includes hard services like roads, water, sewer, etc. and soft services like education, fire protection, law enforcement, recreation programs, libraries, etc.
 - The level of infrastructure necessary to support growth requires the determination of adequate public facilities and services. This determination is part of the land use planning process. Focusing on adequate infrastructure for new development:
 - Infrastructure investment can allow a community to maintain influence and/or control over the timing and sequence of new development.
 - Requires the community to link its comprehensive land use plan with its capital improvement program.
 - Encourages contiguous and infill development because of their proximity to existing urban infrastructure and services.

As part of the PlanLafayette process, LCG departments and LUS worked together to analyze potential need for public water and sewer improvements that will be necessary to support the Future Land Use Map.

- **INFILL DEVELOPMENT** – Building and developing in vacant areas in city centers or urban settings, which promotes the betterment of these city centers, uses existing infrastructure and building sites, and leaves rural areas and open spaces undeveloped. Advocates state that infill development can reduce traffic congestion, save open space, create



more livable communities, and reduce public costs. Benefits of infill development include the potential to reduce overall traffic congestion, conserve open space, create more livable and walkable communities, and reduce public infrastructure costs.

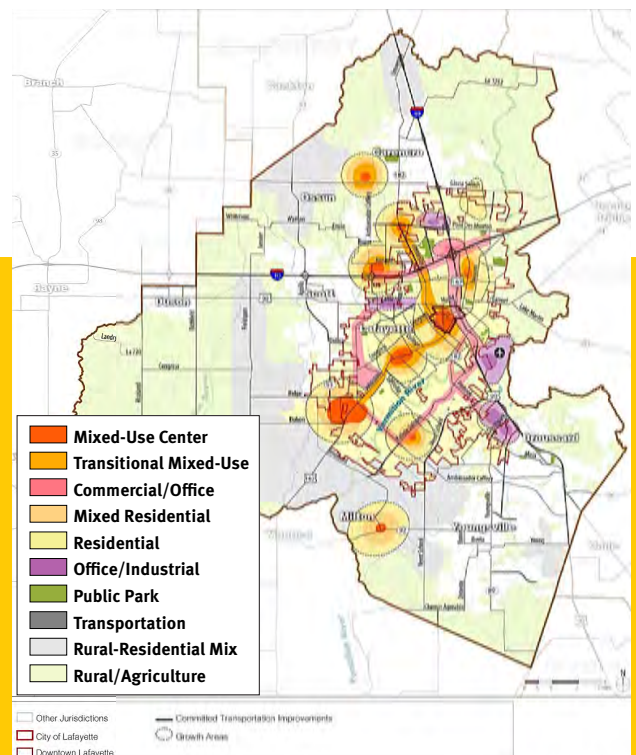
- **MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT** – The practice of allowing more than one type of use in a building or set of buildings. This can mean some combination of residential, commercial, industrial, office, institutional, or other land uses. Mixed use guidelines often result in residential buildings with street-front commercial space. Retailers have the assurance that they will always have customers living right above and around them, while residents have the benefit of being able to walk a short distance to get groceries and household items, or see a movie. Public safety is enhanced by a seven day a week, 24 hour and day active population.
- **WALKABILITY** – A measure of how friendly an area is to walking. A 5-minute walk radius or ¼ mile distance to essential services (e.g., grocery, cleaners, bank, pharmacy, etc.) is the general rule of thumb for walkability. Walkability has many health, environmental, and economic benefits. Factors influencing walkability include adequate sidewalks, safe walking conditions, traffic and road conditions, land use patterns, building accessibility, and built form, among others. A website (www.walkscore.org) can help estimate a neighborhood's walkability.
- **COMPLETE STREETS** – Roadways designed and operated to enable safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and public transport users of all ages and abilities are able to safely and comfortably move along and across a complete street. Features include sidewalks, bike lanes (either on street or separated), public transit access, and vehicle drive lanes.
- **NODAL DEVELOPMENT** – A complete, compact, mixed-use community that includes places to live, work, learn, play, shop and access services and concentrated at the intersections of major streets.

These communities are called nodal developments because they act as nodes, or hubs, for both the residents living in the center itself and for people in nearby communities. Like old-fashioned village centers, good nodal developments include a mix of residential, commercial and service elements in a small, walkable area.

- **URBAN SPACE** – The planning and design of cities focusing on the 3-D form and function of public and private spaces. Urban design draws from architecture, urban planning, landscape architecture, and engineering. It includes public spaces that are used freely on a day-to-day basis by the general public, such as streets, plazas, parks, and public infrastructure. Some aspects of privately owned spaces, such as building facades or domestic gardens, also contribute to public space.

GENERAL LAND USE CATEGORIES SEEN ON A LAND USE MAP (See below, or go to PAGE 35 in PlanLafayette)

- **MIXED-USE CENTER** – Uses include retail, office, services, restaurants and residential. Examples include Downtown and the Oil Center.
- **TRANSITIONAL MIXED USE** – Uses include transitional spaces of commercial (high-density) and residential (low-density) mixed-uses.
- **COMMERCIAL / OFFICE** – Includes general commercial and employment uses, such as neighborhood retail, services, office and limited residential.
- **OFFICE / INDUSTRIAL** – Includes both light and heavy industrial uses, along with office parks.
- **MIXED RESIDENTIAL** – Includes a range of housing types within one or more neighborhoods. Housing types may include detached single family, duplex, fourplex and apartment complexes.
- **RESIDENTIAL** – Predominantly detached, single family neighborhoods that also include appropriately located semi-attached and attached multifamily dwelling units.
- **RURAL RESIDENTIAL MIX** – Areas adjacent to the city of Lafayette, not zoned within the city of Lafayette, as well as unincorporated agriculture, residential single family, commercial, industrial and institutional.



Future Land Use Map

- **RURAL / AGRICULTURE** – Unincorporated parish land, primarily used for agriculture and rural residential single family housing.
- **PUBLIC PARK** – Includes parks and golf courses owned by LCG.
- **TRANSPORTATION** – Includes transportation facilities and infrastructure for rail and roadways.

OTHER CONCEPTS THAT MAY BE ILLUSTRATED ON A LAND USE MAP

- **FLOODPLAIN** – Any normally dry land area that is susceptible to being inundated by waters of the 1% chance flood (i.e, the 100-year flood) and where structures can be built but must be above the flood elevation.
- **FLOODWAY** – The channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land area that must be reserved in order to discharge the velocity waters of the regulatory flood, and where development is limited by regulations.
- **TRANSPORTATION/INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK** – the network of roads, streets, railways (or railroads), pipes, power lines, or nearly any structure which permits either vehicular movement or flow of some commodity. Most maps at least a street network to provide reference points. Some maps also show the hierarchy in the road network.
 - Freeways - At the top of the hierarchy are limited access roads freeways or motorways, including most toll roads. These roads provide largely uninterrupted travel, often using partial or full access control, and are designed for high speeds.
 - Arterials - are major through roads that are expected to carry large volumes of traffic. Arterials are often divided into major and minor arterials, and rural and urban arterials.
 - Collectors - collect traffic from local roads, and distribute it to arterials. Traffic using a collector is usually going to or coming from somewhere nearby.
 - Local roads - These roads have the lowest speed limit, and carry low volumes of traffic. In some areas, these roads may be unpaved.



- **TRANSIT ROUTES, GREENWAYS, BIKEWAYS** – Depending on the scale and level of detail, the land use map may highlight the public transit network, greenways, trails, and/or bike paths.
- **WALKABILITY** – Represented as a radius, typically 1/4-mile for a 5-minute walk or 1/2-mile for a 10-minute walk, from a particular location or intersection.

UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE (UDC)

The Unified Development Code (UDC) translates the land use goals of the comprehensive plan into an ordinance or law which regulates the way in which the land may be used by property owners. The ordinance regulates the development of individual lots and the use of land and buildings within the community. The regulations are contained in two important documents: the UDC Zoning District map and the text of the UDC.

A UDC ZONING DISTRICT MAP

All of the land in a community is divided into districts which are drawn and shown on the jurisdiction's official map. The purpose of the districts is to outline what land uses are suitable in specific areas of the community. A typical UDC map will designate areas for residential uses, commercial uses, mixed-use, and industrial uses, etc. In Lafayette, only land within the City of Lafayette municipal boundary is placed into districts, because unincorporated areas do not have zoning.

A copy of Lafayette Consolidated Governments UDC Zoning Districts is shown on the opposite page (subject to change). The Official UDC Zoning District Map is maintained as an electronic map layer by the LCG Geographic Information Systems (GIS) application maintained by PZD.

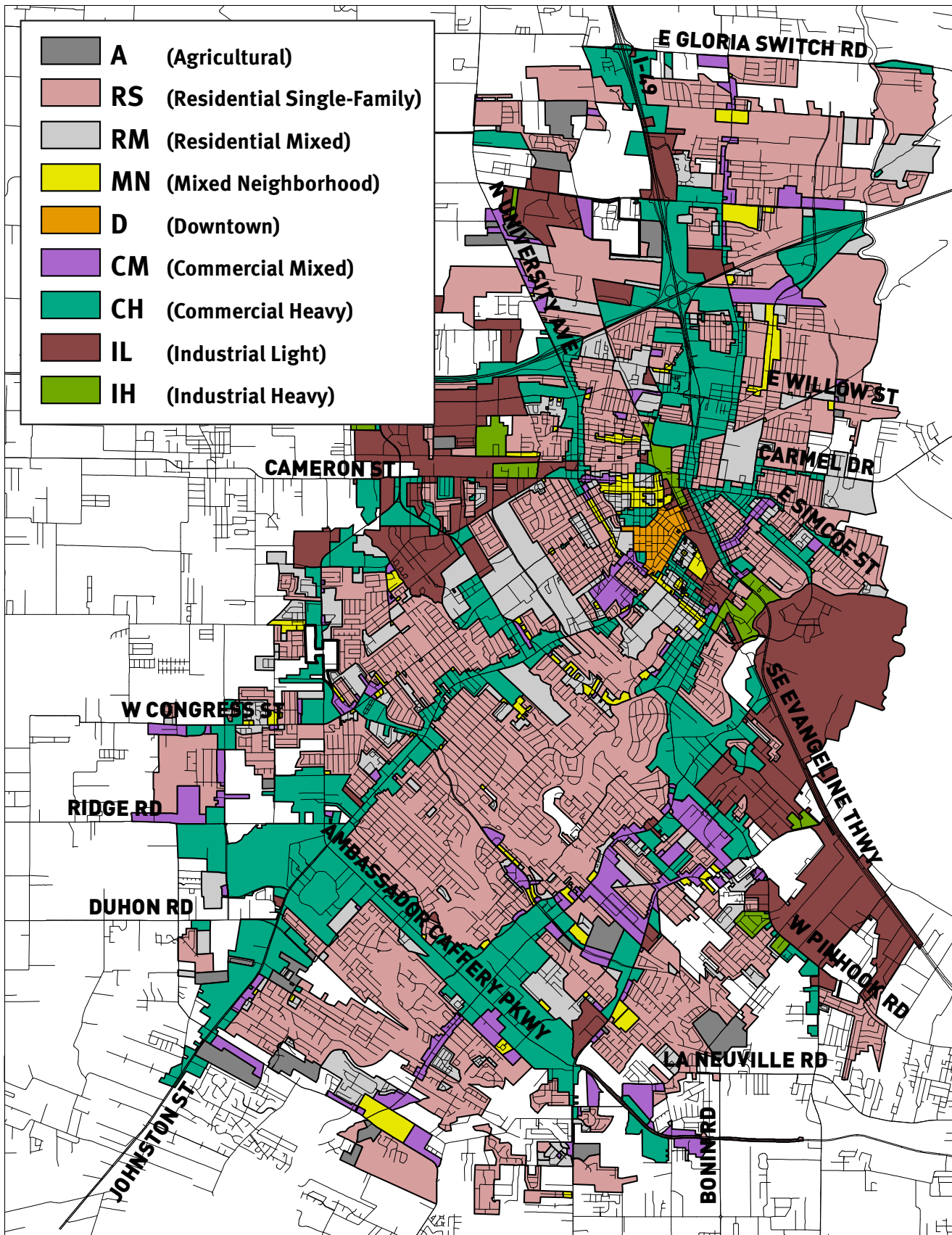
CREATING UDC ZONING DISTRICTS

The zoning of a property should be consistent with its Comprehensive Plan designation from the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). The Plan informs district designations in the City of Lafayette. In many cases, existing districts closely represent the present land use in the community. For example, areas already developed as residential generally are zoned as such, and commercial district boundaries tend to follow established commercial areas. Creating districts to follow existing development is fairly easy, though care must be taken to make sure that district boundaries are not arbitrary or creating "single use" districts.

Many communities use zoning districts to guide certain types of development into specific areas. This is especially true in newer communities and those experiencing growth. Areas that are undeveloped or in need of redevelopment may be zoned to encourage certain land use activities. As the community continues to develop, those uses are channeled into the appropriate zone.

Since the UDC zoning district map is a legal document, the boundaries of the UDC zoning districts must be drawn with care and precision. Errors delineating a district boundary may cause a land owner hardship or development delays, and could even affect such things as mortgage financing and property taxes.

Usually district boundaries follow centerlines of streets, alleys, railways, or other landmarks, so as to allow for easier interpretation of a parcel's designation. However, sometimes the boundaries may need to follow individual lot lines or cross through unplatted parcels. When this occurs, extra care must be taken to ensure that the boundaries are appropriately placed.

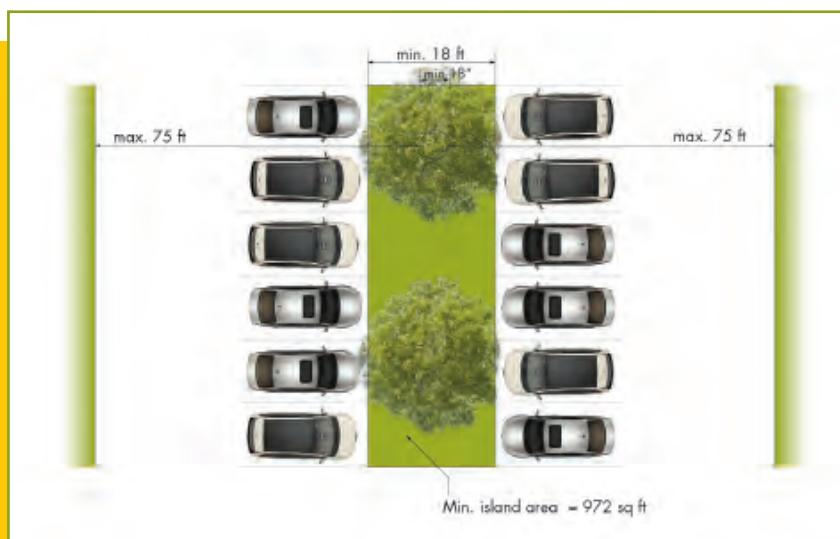


UDC Zoning Districts (as of 8/2017 - Subject to Change)

UDC REGULATION TEXT

While the UDC Zoning District map outlines the various zoning districts, it is the actual text of the UDC ordinance that spells out the specific land use regulations. The ordinance addresses such matters as:

- **ARTICLE 1:** Introduction – this article cover the purpose of the code, consistency with the comprehensive plan and explanation of materials.
- **ARTICLE 2:** UDC Zoning Districts – Defines the zoning districts, establishes lot sizes, open space requirements, setback requirements, height restrictions, and identifies what uses are allowed in which districts.
- **ARTICLE 3:** Standards – Defines the technical information, which may or may not be required by a specific UDC Zoning District. The items covered in this article are: Access Management and Driveways, Building Height and Design, Mixed Use Center Design Standards, Servitudes (Easements), Covenants and Restrictions, Fences, Flood Damage Protection, Historic Preservation, Improvement Guarantees, Landscaping, Buffers and Screening, Commercial Lighting, Lots, Block and Setbacks, Parking and Loading, Open Space, Environmental Storm Water Management and Improvements, Street Design, Street Names, and Utilities.
- **ARTICLE 4:** Procedures – This article describes the procedures on how to complete the following procedures: General Application Process, Comprehensive Plan Amendment Process, Zoning Process, Subdivision Platting Process, Administrative Process (Building Permit, Certificate of Occupancy , and Abandonment), Appeal Process, and Enforcement Process.
- **ARTICLE 5:** Use Standards – This article discusses additional restrictions that some land uses may have in some districts. These uses are: Accessory Buildings, Accessory Apartments, Adaptive Reuse, Auto & Truck Repair, Bed & Breakfasts, Car Wash, Cemeteries, Drive –Through Facilities, Garage/Carports, Gasoline and Diesel Fuel Sales, Home Occupations, Housing Types, Junkyards, Manufactured Homes/ Mobile Homes/ Trailers, Pipelines/ Railroad Right of Ways, Pools, Self-Service Storage, Signs, Solid Waste, Temporary Uses, Truck Stops, Wireless Communications.
- **ARTICLE 6:** Nonconformities – This Article protects and regulates nonconforming uses, buildings, structures, and lots (referred to collectively as “nonconformities”), and specifies the circumstances and conditions under which those nonconformities may continue. The City finds that nonconformities that adversely affect the orderly development and value of district should not continue unless restricted. At the same time, reinvestment in some properties that do not strictly comply with current regulations can maintain existing neighborhood assets and promote economic development, and therefore is allowed with appropriate conditions.



The diagram to the left illustrates parking lot landscaping and other features required by the Unified Development Code.

- **ARTICLE 7: Agencies** – This article outlines the authority and duties of the following: Administrator, Planning and Zoning Commission, Board of Zoning Adjustment, Hearing Examiner, and the Areawide Development Review Committee.
- **ARTICLE 8: Definitions** – This article discusses the definition of terms in the whole UDC, including General Definitions, Zoning District Boundaries, Abbreviations, Technical References, and Tree & Shrub Species.
- **ARTICLE 9: Legal** – This Article discusses the following items: Severability, Repeal of Conflicting Ordinances, Conflicts/ Relations to Other Laws, and the Effective Date.
- **ARTICLE 10: Application Checklists** – This article discusses the Application Requirements, Submittal Requirements, Fees, and Forms for each type of application that is begin applied for.
- **ARTICLE 11: Transition** – This article talks about the process which the city and parish will go through to transition from current regulation to the UDC Code.

ARTICLE 2 DETAILS

Article 2 only includes the City of Lafayette because zoning districts are not applicable to unincorporated areas. To promote the public health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community, the City of Lafayette is divided into the following districts:

- **“AG” AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS** – The “A” Agricultural district implements the Rural/Agriculture future land use category of PlanLafayette by creating a district for land that is principally agricultural or natural in character. The area has low residential densities, and commercial areas are small in scale and either buffered from residential uses or integrated with a conservation design development. This district is applied on a voluntary basis at the request of a property owner, or as part of an area plan. Property owners have the option to build on a lot by lot basis, or to use a conservation subdivision option. Unincorporated areas that are not subject to the “A” district are subject to the landscaping, buffering and screening standards in Article 3.
- **“RS” Residential Single-Family** – The “RS” districts implement the Residential future land use category of PlanLafayette by providing for predominantly detached, single family neighborhoods. The dimensional standards accommodate a variety of densities and lot sizes.

- **“RM” Residential** – The “RM” districts implement the Mixed Residential and Residential future land use categories of PlanLafayette by providing for a wide range of housing types, from single-family detached units to apartments. The dimensional standards accommodate a variety of densities and lot sizes.
- **“MN” Mixed Use Neighborhood** – The “MN” districts implements the Transitional Mixed-Use future land use category of PlanLafayette, provides an opportunity to establish neighborhood retail, convenience, service, office, and institutional uses in the Residential and Mixed Residential categories, provides a transition between residential areas and more intense commercial corridors, and provides opportunities for pedestrian access between residential and commercial areas.
- **“MX” Mixed Use Center**– The “MX” districts implement the Mixed-Use Center future land use category of PlanLafayette for centers outside of Downtown. This includes a wide range of commercial, institutional and residential uses, and development design and intensity that supports walkable streets and transit. MX districts are part of approved mixed-use centers (MUCs) (see § 89-28). The MX district is divided into subdistricts based upon the development context, and the location of a lot on an “A” or “B” Street.
- **“D” Downtown**– The “D” district implements the Mixed-Use Center future land use category of PlanLafayette in the Central Business District (CBD), now Downtown. This provides the highest density and intensity in the City and Parish, and preserves its unique character and function.
- **“CM” Commercial-Mixed**– The “CM” district implements the Commercial/Office future land use category of PlanLafayette. This district provides for compact development patterns and pedestrian friendly design features.
- **“CH” Commercial-Heavy**– The “CM” district implements the Commercial/Office future land use category of PlanLafayette. This district allows compact development patterns, but provides flexibility for front parking, loading, and building design features for heavy commercial or service-oriented uses (such as large format retailers, auto dealerships, and repair services). PlanLafayette provides that the Commercial/Office future land use category is principally a pedestrian oriented area, this district should be used only for locations where these uses currently exist, or where a rezoning applicant demonstrates that there is an unmet market demand for the use.

- **“IL” Industrial-Light**– The “IL” district implements the Office/Industrial future land use category of PlanLafayette by accommodating existing light industrial uses, and encouraging new light industrial or office park employment uses in locations designated in the plan. Buffering is required in Article 3.
- **“IH” Industrial-Heavy**– The “IH” district implements the Office/Industrial future land use category of PlanLafayette by accommodating existing and future heavy industrial uses. Buffering is required in Article 3.
- **“PD” Planned Development**– The “PD” district gives the LCG, property owners, and developers the opportunity to proceed with development that cannot meet the standards in one of the base zoning districts, and is consistent with and accomplishes the policies of PlanLafayette, or a strong public need, and provides the LCG valid assurances that it will mitigate any anticipated impacts on the general public. A PD rezoning requires legislative approval, which involves a high degree of discretion by the Zoning Commission and City-Parish Council.
- **“PI” Public/Institutional**– The “PI” district is appropriate in any PlanLafayette land use category, and specifically implements the Public Park category. These standards provide flexibility for the wide range of potential public or institutional facilities.

For more detailed information on Article 2 and the other articles in the UDC, see: <http://lafayettela.gov/ComprehensivePlan/Pages/unified-development-code.aspx>



GOVERNMENT—ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

[COURSE 3]

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOAL

This course provides the fundamentals of how government operates in Lafayette, including an overview of what it means to have a consolidated city-parish structure.

FORM OF GOVERNMENT

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.

The “President-Council” form of government consists of an elected Council, is the Lafayette City-Parish Council, and constitutes the legislative branch of the government. An elected President acts as the Chief Executive Officer and head of the executive branch.

MAYOR-PRESIDENT

EXECUTIVE AUTHORITY

The Mayor-President serves as the chief executive officer of the City-Parish Government and exercises general executive and administrative authority over all departments, offices and agencies of the City-Parish Government, except as otherwise provided by the charter.

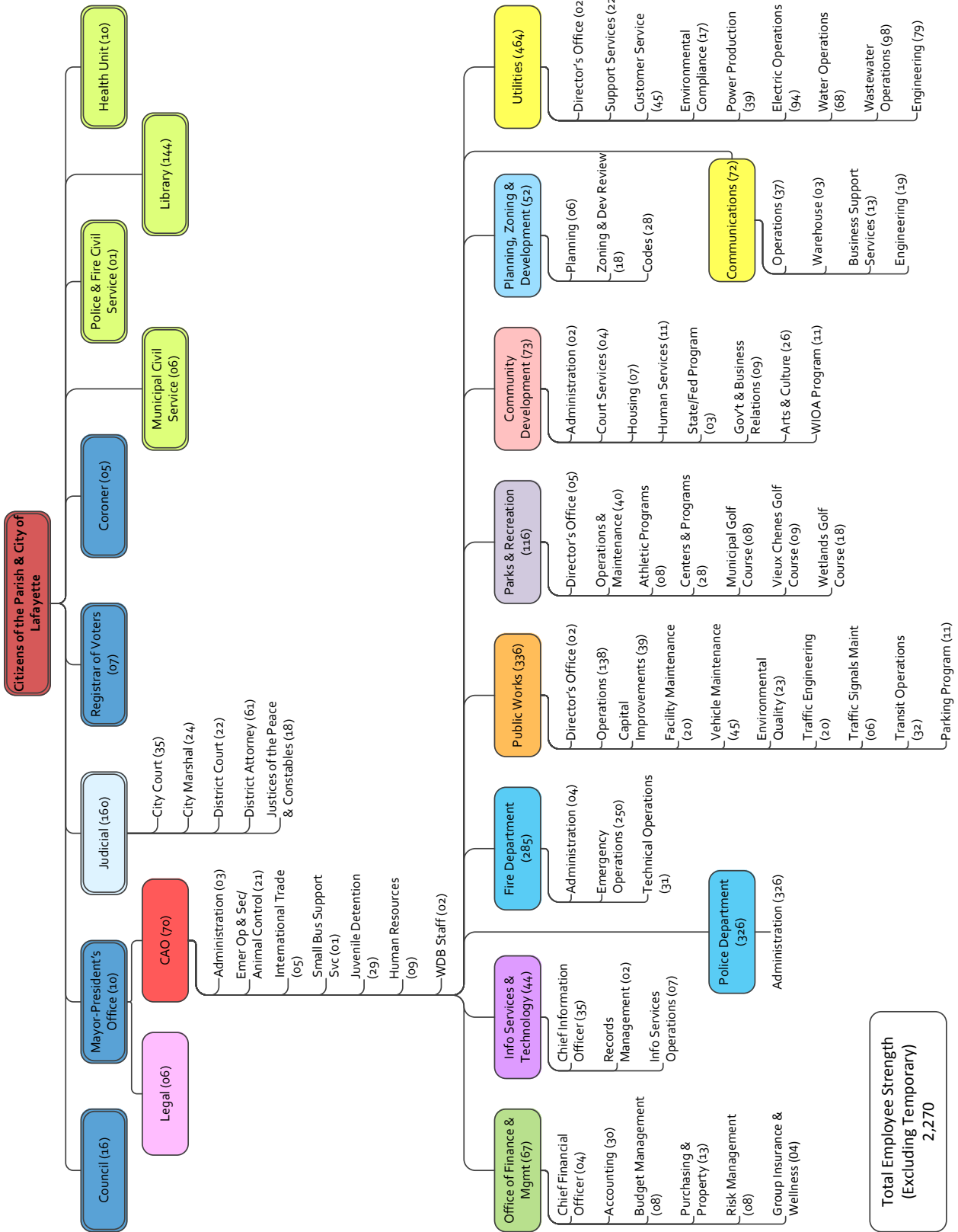
ELECTION

The Mayor-President is elected at large by the qualified voters of the parish according to the election laws of the state for a four (4) year term. A person who has served as President for more than two and one-half terms in three (3) consecutive terms is not eligible to qualify as a candidate for President for the succeeding term.

POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE PRESIDENT

The President as chief executive officer of the City-Parish Government shall have the following powers and duties, as defined by the Home Rule Charter of the Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government found at www.lafayettela.gov:

- See that all laws, provisions of this charter and acts of the Council, subject to the President's direction and supervision, are faithfully executed.
- Appoint and suspend or remove for just cause all City-Parish Government employees and appointive administrative officers provided for by or under this charter, except as otherwise provided by this charter or other personnel rules adopted pursuant to this charter. The President may authorize any administrative officer who is subject to the President's direction and supervision to exercise these powers with respect to subordinates in the officer's department, office or agency.
- Direct and supervise the administration of all departments, offices and agencies of the City-Parish Government, except as otherwise provided by this charter.
- Prepare and submit the annual operating budget and five year capital improvement budget to the Council.
- Sign contracts for projects, equipment, non-professional services and materials and supplies specifically identified in the approved operating and capital improvement budgets or as specifically identified by ordinance. Contracts for projects, equipment, nonprofessional services or materials and supplies not so identified shall be submitted to the Council for approval.
- Sign contracts for professional services only after receiving recommendations from a professional services review committee created by ordinance. The committee shall consist of not more than five (5) members, two (2) to be appointed by the President and three (3) to be appointed by the Council.
- Submit to the Council and make available to the public, within one hundred twenty (120) days after the end of the fiscal year, a complete report on the finances and administrative activities of the City-Parish Government as of the end of each fiscal year.
- Make such other reports as the Council may reasonably request to enable the Council to conduct its functions.
- The President or designee shall attend all meetings of the Council and keep the Council fully advised as to the financial condition and future needs of the City-Parish Government and make such recommendations to the Council concerning the affairs of the City-Parish Government as deemed desirable.
- Perform such other duties as are specified in this charter or may be required by the Council, not inconsistent with this charter.



Lafayette Consolidated Government Organizational Chart with the number of employees in each division listed in parentheses.

CITY-PARISH COUNCIL

COMPOSITION, QUALIFICATIONS AND ELECTION

As defined by the Home Rule Charter of the Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government found at www.lafayettela.gov, the legislative power of the City-Parish Government is vested in a Council consisting of nine (9) members elected from single member districts for four (4) year terms, one from and by the qualified electors in each district as hereinafter defined.

- A Council member who has served more than two and one-half terms in three (3) consecutive terms cannot be eligible to qualify as a candidate for Council member for the succeeding term.
- A Council member must be at least eighteen (18) years of age and a qualified elector of the district from which elected at the time of qualification.

COUNCIL MEETINGS AND RULES

The Council meets regularly at least twice a month at intervals of at least two (2) weeks at such times and places as the Council may prescribe. Special meetings may be held on the call of the presiding officer of the Council or a majority of the authorized membership of the Council with such notice as may be required by state law.

OPEN MEETINGS: All meetings of the Council and its committees are open to the public in accordance with the provisions of general state law. The Council provides by resolution a procedure whereby interested persons are given an opportunity to be heard at Council meetings on any matter relating to City-Parish Government.

RECORDATION: The Council determines by resolution its own rules and order of business and provides for keeping a record of its minutes and proceedings. All official actions of the Council are published in the official journal within thirty (30) days of the action taken.

AGENDA: At all regular meetings of the Council, the Council operates from an agenda which must be published at least two (2) days, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, prior to the meeting. The agenda for special or emergency meetings must be made available to the public as soon as practical prior to the meeting.

CHAIR ELECT: At the first regular meeting of a newly elected Council and annually thereafter, a chair and vice chair are elected by the Council from among the Council Members. The chair presides at meetings of the Council, supervise or delegate supervision of Council employees, and carry out such other duties as the Council may authorize.

VOTING: All voting shall be by roll call, and the ayes and nays shall be recorded in the minutes of the Council by the individual vote of each Council member. Not less than a majority of the authorized membership of the Council constitutes a quorum to transact business.

ACTION REQUIRING AN ORDINANCE

An act of the Council having the force of law shall be by ordinance. An act requiring an ordinance includes but is not limited to those which:

- Adopt or amend an administrative code.
- Provide a fine or other penalty or establish a rule or regulation for violation of which a fine or other penalty may be imposed.
- Levy taxes, assessments and charges.
- Adopt the operating budget and capital improvement budget and appropriate funds for the City-Parish Government.
- Grant, renew or extend a franchise.
- Provide for raising revenue.
- Regulate the rate or other charges for service by the City-Parish Government.
- Authorize the borrowing of money, in any manner authorized by law.
- Incur debt in any manner authorized by law.
- Dispose of any real property owned by the City-Parish Government.
- Convey or lease or authorize the conveyance or lease of any lands or property of the City-Parish Government.
- Acquire real property on behalf of the City-Parish Government.
- Adopt or modify the official map.
- Adopt or modify regulations for review and approval of plats.
- Adopt or modify subdivision controls or regulations.
- Adopt or modify the zoning plan, maps and regulations.
- Amend or repeal any ordinance previously adopted.
- Propose amendments to this charter.

All ordinances must be codified in accordance with Article VI, Section 10 of the constitution.

An act of the Council which is not to have the force of law may be enacted by resolution. A resolution may be used by the Council for purposes such as a formal expression of will of the Council; to authorize a person or persons to sign legal and financial documents for a project or purpose previously approved by ordinance; and as may be authorized by this charter. The President's veto authority shall not apply to resolutions.

All ordinances and resolutions are passed by the favorable vote of at least a majority of the authorized membership of the Council except as otherwise provided in this charter.

ORDINANCES IN GENERAL

INTRODUCTION: All proposed ordinances must be introduced in writing at a meeting of the Council in the form required for adoption and, except for codifications, the operating budget and capital improvement budget, must be confined to one subject expressed clearly in the title.

All proposed ordinances are read by title when introduced and published in the official journal by title within fifteen (15) days of introduction, except that ordinances proposing amendments to the charter are published in full. Except as otherwise provided in the section on "Emergency Ordinances," no ordinance can be considered for final passage until at least two (2) weeks from date of introduction and after a public hearing has been held on the ordinance.

With the final approval of ordinances by the President, or the Council in case of a veto by the President, such enacted ordinances are published in full or in summary at the Council's discretion in the official journal by the clerk of the Council within seven (7) days after adoption. Every enacted ordinance, unless it specifies another date, becomes effective at the expiration of ten (10) days after final adoption.

SUBMISSION OF ORDINANCES TO THE PRESIDENT

Every ordinance adopted by the Council is signed by the presiding officer or the Clerk of the Council. The Clerk of the Council certifies to its passage, and it is presented to the President within three (3) days after adoption, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. The Clerk of the Council records upon the ordinance the date and hour of its delivery to the President.

Within ten (10) days after the President's receipt of an ordinance, it must be returned to the Clerk of the Council with the President's approval or with the President's veto. The clerk then records upon the ordinance the date and hour of its receipt from the President. If the proposed ordinance is not signed or vetoed by the President within ten (10) days after receipt, it is considered adopted. If the ordinance has been adopted, it is considered finally enacted and become effective as provided in the section on "Ordinances in General." If the ordinance is vetoed, the President submits to the Council through the clerk a written statement of the reasons for the veto. The veto statement is published in full in the official journal by the clerk, as soon as practical thereafter. All ordinances vetoed by the President are vetoed in full, except that the President has authority to veto individual appropriation items in the ordinances adopting the operating and capital improvement budgets and amendments thereto.

Ordinances vetoed by the President are submitted to the Council by the Clerk of the Council no later than the next regular meeting held after publication of the veto statement. Should the Council vote, not later than the second regular meeting held after receipt of the vetoed ordinance, to override the President's veto of the ordinance by the favorable vote of at least two thirds of its authorized membership, said ordinance is considered finally enacted in accordance with the section on "Ordinances in General" and become law irrespective of the veto by the President. The procedure for overriding vetoed ordinances applies to individual appropriation items in the operating and capital improvement budgets vetoed by the President.

The right of the President to veto as provided in this section applies to all ordinances adopted by the Council except ordinances for: plans for reapportionments; amendments to this charter; establishing, altering or modifying Council procedure; appropriating funds for auditing or investigating any part of the executive branch; or as may be otherwise provided by this charter.

PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

The Planning and Zoning Commission consist of seven (7) members appointed by the City-Parish Council for five (5) year staggered terms as determined by the Council. Four (4) members be qualified electors residing within the corporate limits of the city of Lafayette and three (3) members are qualified electors residing within the parish in an area outside the corporate limits of any municipality. Vacancies on the commission are filled by the Council.



The staff of the Planning, Zoning and Development Department serves as staff for the Planning and Zoning Commission. The commission constitutes a parish planning commission in that portion of the parish outside the city of Lafayette and a city planning and zoning commission for the city of Lafayette. Except as otherwise provided by this charter, the City-Parish Planning and Zoning Commission have all the powers and duties conferred or imposed on parish and city planning commissions by the general laws of the state.

Whenever the commission recommends to the City-Parish Council a zoning plan for the city of Lafayette, including the text of a zoning ordinance and the accompanying map or maps, the Council may, by ordinance, divide the city of Lafayette into districts or zones of such number, shape and area as it may determine, and for such purposes may regulate the erection, construction, conversion, alteration, and uses of buildings and structures and the uses of land. The City-Parish Council is the final authority on all zoning map changes.

The commission constitutes the zoning commission for those areas included within the boundaries of the city of Lafayette. Appeals from decisions of the commission shall be to the City-Parish Council. The decision of the Council is final, subject to appeal to the appropriate court.

The commission reviews the capital improvement budget prepared by the President and, prior to submission of the budget to the Council, shall advise the President as to the conformance or nonconformance of the budget to the master plan for the consolidated government.

This section does not apply to municipalities in the parish which are not a part of the consolidated government, except that a municipality, by contract, may participate in the master plan.

FUNCTION OF BOARD

The functions of the Board are be as follows:

- The Planning and Zoning Commission may establish any policy, procedure, rule, and/or regulation concerning the conduct of its affairs, including, but not limited to, the conduct of its meetings as the Planning and Zoning Commission in its sole direction shall deem necessary for the conduct of its business.

BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENT

LEGISLATIVE INTENT

Pursuant to the Home Rule Charter for Lafayette City-Parish Consolidated Government, the Lafayette City-Parish Council may, by ordinance, reorganize any Board or commission in existence at the date the Charter becomes effective. By adopting Ordinance O-180-96, as amended, the Lafayette City-Parish Council recognized and reorganized the Board of Zoning Adjustment previously established by Ordinance O-191 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Lafayette, Louisiana.

NUMBER OF MEMBERS

The Board consists of five members and two alternate members. Any member or alternate member must be a land owner in Lafayette Parish, Louisiana, as well as a registered voter and domiciled within the corporate limits of the City of Lafayette, Louisiana, at the time of his/her appointment, and he/she must remain a land owner and a registered voter and domiciled within the corporate limits of the City of Lafayette, Louisiana during his/her term of office.

The two alternate members serve only when called upon to constitute a quorum. When serving, alternate members shall have all of the powers and duties of regular members.

METHOD OF APPOINTMENT

The City-Parish President appoints one member as his direct appointment. Four members are the direct appointments of the Lafayette City-Parish Council. One of the four members must be a minority as defined by La. R.S. 38:2233.2. The two alternate members are the direct appointments of the Lafayette City-Parish Council as a whole.

FUNCTION OF BOARD

The functions of the Board are be as follows:

- The Board adopts its rules and regulations; however, any rules adopted by the Board of Adjustment, Zoning Administrator, or other official are not be effective until approved in writing by the Lafayette City-Parish Council.
- The Board of Zoning Adjustment has the following powers, as stated in Article 4 and Article 7 of the UDC:
 - a To hear and decide variances and appeals pursuant to Article 4, 89-68 Variances and Appeals to Board of Zoning Adjustment (BOZA) of the UDC.
 - b To hear and decide all matters referred to it or upon which it is required to pass under Article 4, 89-68 of the UDC.
 - c To adopt its rules and regulations, which become effective only after they are approved in writing by the Lafayette City-Parish Council.

Reference Material

http://www.indianaplanning.org/?page_id=1221

http://www.nc-apa.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=47&Itemid=104

<http://lafayettela.gov/ComprehensivePlan/SiteAssets/Comprehensive%20Plan%20Pages/Unified-Development-Code/UDC%20final%20combined.pdf>



