

# GROWTH CENTER COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESS REPORT



## GROWTH CENTER 16

PREPARED BY THE OFFICE OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
CITY OF BATON ROUGE/ PARISH OF EAST BATON ROUGE

Dufrocq Elementary School  
330 South 19<sup>th</sup> Street  
August 16, 2005

The Horizon Plan, with the support of the Planning Commission and Metropolitan Council, advocates the implementation of community planning in the designated Growth Centers of the Parish. This community planning initiative began in 2003 and will continue through 2007.

It is important that the Horizon Plan continues to reflect the vision that City-Parish residents have for their Parish while responding to current development conditions in the City-Parish. The Horizon Plan identifies a comprehensive plan for the orderly growth of the Parish by identifying where particular land use categories are appropriate. This Community Planning process in the designated Growth Centers involves a study of Horizon Plan land use categories and elements of community design, with the intention of increasing citizen participation in identifying the issues of concerns about growth and design in the Parish. This Community Planning in the Growth Centers involves no change or recommendations for change of zoning districts or the allowable uses within them.

### **WHAT IS A GROWTH CENTER?**

Growth Centers are areas of concentrated activity such as retail, office, public facilities, a range of residential development, cultural, and recreational activities linked with a variety of transportation choices such as vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian.

***Regional Growth Centers*** include regional shopping centers, institutions, high-density office and residential complexes, medical centers and other major activities serving the entire parish.

***Community Growth Centers*** include community shopping centers, medium to high-density office and residential complexes, public and recreational facilities and similar activities serving community areas.

Growth Center 16 is a Community Growth Center.

### **WHEN WERE GROWTH CENTERS DESIGNATED?**

Growth Centers were originally designated in the 1992 Horizon Plan. The Planning Commission studied these areas in more detail for the first update of the Horizon Plan 1992-1997, and exact boundaries were delineated for each Growth Center. For the second update of the Horizon Plan, 1998-2002, these boundaries were studied and amended or re-affirmed with input from the community during the Neighborhood/Subarea Planning Process.

### **GROWTH CENTER PUBLIC MEETINGS**

The purpose of the public meetings is to give residents, patrons, and business owners an opportunity to participate in planning for their Community or Regional Growth Center. Elements to be studied in each Growth Center include **transportation, land use, environmental features, and design**. Topics for discussion at the meetings include Horizon Plan land use, bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities, landscape improvements, and possible design guidelines for future construction in Growth Centers.

### **Growth Center Elements**

A variety of elements work together to create the daily experience of living, working, eating, and shopping within the Growth Center. The elements have been identified for the purpose of this report as transportation, land use, environment, and design. Details contained within these elements include roads, sidewalks, shopping, services, architectural features, and natural resources. Following is a brief inventory of elements in Growth Center 16.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Public Transportation

The Capital Area Transit System (CATS) operates public bus routes throughout areas of the City-Parish. The CATS bus terminal is located in Growth Center 16. Most CATS bus routes include a stop at the bus terminal.

### Bicycle/Pedestrian Amenities

Government Street, North Boulevard, 19th Street, Main Street and North Street are included on the Baton Rouge Bike Map. The area includes a system of pedestrian sidewalks and crosswalks.

### Major Street Plan

The Major Street Plan for Growth Center 16 specifies roadway lanes, pavement width and right-of-way standards for all Major Streets in the Growth Center. North Street, Main Street, Laurel Street, Florida Street, Convention Street, North Boulevard, Government Street, 19th Street and 22nd Street are designated major streets within the Growth Center.

Government Street, 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and Florida Street are designated completed or programmed. North Street, Main Street, Laurel Street, Convention Street, North Boulevard, and 19<sup>th</sup> Street are designated additional pavement and/or right-of-way required on the Major Street Plan.

### Capital Improvement Program

The City-Parish Capital Improvements Program contains Capital Improvement Projects, Transportation Improvement Programs, Community Development Projects and Federal Aid Projects that are either currently under construction, under design or complete.

### Growth Center 16 Current Capital Improvement Projects

Program	Improvement Type	Status
North Boulevard (10 <sup>th</sup> Street to 19 <sup>th</sup> Street)	New roadway and RR overpass	Under construction

8/13/04

## LAND USE

### Horizon Plan Land Use Categories

#### *Residential Estate/ Agriculture (RE/A)*

Includes areas of rural character, agricultural lands, significant natural areas and single-family residential uses.

#### *Low Density Residential (LDR)*

Includes areas where single-family detached housing will be the predominant land use.

#### *Medium Density Residential (MDR)*

Includes areas where small single family, two family and multi-family housing of a spacious character, and garden and town homes will be predominant.

#### *High Density Residential (HDR)*

Includes areas where multi-family housing, high-rise housing structures and very small, tightly spaced single-family housing will be predominant.

#### *Neighborhood Office (NO)*

Includes areas of small offices, professional offices and personal services to serve the needs of surrounding residential areas.

#### *General Office (GO)*

Includes areas where large or multi-storied professional, general administrative or non-retail sales offices are located.

#### *Neighborhood Commercial (NC)*

Includes areas of small retail stores, such as corner groceries, cafes and drugstores, to serve the needs of surrounding residential neighborhoods.

#### *Light Commercial (LC)*

Includes a variety of commercial and miscellaneous service activities generally serving a wide area and located primarily along existing major thoroughfares.

#### *Heavy Commercial (HC)*

Includes a variety of commercial and miscellaneous service activities, such as hotels, shopping malls and department stores, which are relatively large in size, generate a large volume of traffic or impact large areas of land and existing development.

#### *Commercial Warehousing (CW)*

Includes facilities characterized by extensive warehousing and frequent heavy trucking activity, but not involved in manufacturing or production.

#### *Industrial (I)*

Includes areas where manufacturing, chemicals, refining, warehousing, open storage and similar industrial facilities will be the predominate uses.

*Public/Semi-Public (PSP)*

Includes areas where government, educational, religious, and charitable uses will be the primary land use activities.

*Transportation, Communication and Utilities (TCU)*

Includes areas where railroad, trucking, aviation, ports, automobile parking, communication and utility facilities will be dominant.

*Recreation (R)*

Includes parks, recreational activities, amusements, group camps, cultural activities, and public assembly facilities.

*Planned Unit Development (PUD)*

Includes areas where developments under the Planned Unit Development (PUD) provisions of the Unified Development Code have been approved by the Planning Commission. Development in these areas will follow a unified site design plan for a mix of compatible land uses, clustering of buildings, increased densities and common open space.

## LAND USE ANALYSIS

### Existing Land Use

The existing land use is a mix of Industrial, Commercial, Office, Public/semi-public, Medium and Low Density Residential. Commercial developments are prevalent along Florida Street, North Boulevard and Government Street.

The current (2005) approximate percentages of existing land use in Growth Center 16 are as follows:

<b>Existing Land Use</b>	<b>Estimated percentage of existing land use</b>
Commercial	20%
Vacant	18%
Public/ Semi-Public	16%
Medium Density Residential	15%
Low Density Residential	10%
Recreation	6%
Industrial	6%
Office	6%
Transportation, Communications and Utilities	3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Zoning

The Existing Zoning for Growth Center 16 is a mix of M1 (Light Industrial), C2 (Heavy Commercial), C1 (Light Commercial), C-AB-2 (Commercial Alcoholic Beverage- Bars and Lounges), C-AB-1 (Commercial Alcoholic Beverage- Restaurant), B1 (Transition), A4 (General Residential), and A3.1 (Limited Residential).

There has been one (1) request for rezoning in Growth Center 16 since 2000. This request was from A3.1 (Limited Residential) to NO (Neighborhood Office). This rezoning request was approved.

The current (2005) approximate percentages of Zoning in Growth Center 16 are as follows:

<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Estimated percentage of existing zoning</b>
C2 (Heavy Commercial)	41%
A3.1 (Limited Residential)	19%
M1 (Industrial)	19%
A4 (General Residential)	11%
B1 (Transition)	7%
C1 (Light Commercial)	2%
NC (Neighborhood Commercial)	>1%
C-AB-1 (Commercial Alcoholic Beverage- Restaurants)	>1%
C-AB-2 (Commercial Alcoholic Beverage- Bars and Lounges)	>1%
B (Off Street Parking)	>1%
C5 (Business District)	>1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Horizon Plan

The Horizon Plan Land Use for Growth Center 16 includes a mix of Industrial, Heavy Commercial, Light Commercial, Neighborhood Commercial, General Office, Neighborhood Office, Medium Density Residential and Planned Unit Development.

The current (2005) Horizon Plan land use in Growth Center 16 is as follows:

<b>Horizon Plan Land Use</b>	<b>Estimated percentage of Horizon Plan Land Use</b>
Light Commercial	20%
Medium Density Residential	18%
Public/ Semi-Public	13%
Heavy Commercial	12%
General Office	8%
Industrial	8%
Recreation	7%
Planned Unit Development	7%
Neighborhood Office	4%
Transportation, Communications and Utilities	2%
Neighborhood Commercial	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **Conservation Areas**

The Horizon Plan identifies potential Conservation Areas for the City-Parish as areas generally associated with bottomland hardwood forests, upland or flatland forests and areas of frequent flooding within the 100-year flood plain. There are no conservation areas in Growth Center 16.

### **Water and Natural Area Associations**

There are no water features within Growth Center 16.

## **DESIGN**

### **Landscape Character**

Magnolia and Live Oak trees are located throughout Growth Center 16. Parking areas for commercial developments along Florida Street lack landscaping.

### **Architectural Character**

Growth Center 16 includes a mix of residential and commercial buildings. There are also an abundance of early 20<sup>th</sup> century structures within the Growth Center.

### **Signage Character**

Growth Center 16 has billboards along the Government Street, Florida Street, and North Street. There are wall, monument, awning, and projecting signs throughout the Growth Center.

### **Unique Features**

Renaissance Park, Magnolia Cemetery, St. Vincent de Paul, the Mid City Design District, and the Capital Area Transit System bus terminal are unique features within Growth Center 16.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

<b>Growth Center 16 Demographic Information Census Tracts (Block Groups):</b>		
	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Population</b>		
Population by Race		
White	14%	15%
Black	85%	83%
Other	2%	1%
Median Family Income	\$8,893	\$16,703
<b>Educational Attainment</b>		
Those 25 years and older		
High School	54%	57%
Bachelor Degree	11%	13%
<b>Housing Units</b>		
Total	2,275	1,516
Owner-Occupied	33%	37%
Not Owner-Occupied	67%	63%
Median Value Owner Occupied Unit	\$31,900	\$40,450
Mean Travel Time to Work	23.3 minutes	20.4 minutes

Source: US Dept. of Commerce, 1990 Census of Population and Housing; 2000 Census of Population and Housing

### **Design Tools Available for Growth Centers**

Driven by an interest in quality of life in their communities, the citizens of Baton Rouge called upon the City-Parish Government in the 1992 Horizon Plan to establish a system for designation of urban design districts or corridors within the parish.

The Planning Commission can provide additional information regarding tools and features available for those interested in a community design program for their Growth Center. Community design programs, including urban design overlays and guidelines, are an effective way for local citizens to create and maintain built environments that satisfy both individual and community needs.

## **Urban Design Overlay District**

Urban Design Overlay District refers to a traditional overlay ordinance that does NOT change the underlying zoning category, i.e. all permitted uses remain the same, but rather imposes additional requirements relating to concerns such as green space, landscape, and architectural features.

*The purpose of an Urban Design Overlay District is to provide requirements or incentives intended both to protect a specific resource or area and encourage development to a desired standard of aesthetic quality.*

### **Features of an Urban Design Overlay District may include:**

landscape buffers  
building articulation  
parking  
building materials  
lighting  
signage  
bicycle/pedestrian design

### **Model Process to Establish an Urban Design Overlay**

- ✓ Form a committee composed of Metro Council representatives from the area, residents, property owners, business owners, developers, architects, engineers, landscape architects, planners, and other interested parties.
- ✓ Define the purpose of the proposed Urban Design Overlay
- ✓ Identify the area to be covered by the proposed Urban Design Overlay
- ✓ Specify the boundaries of the proposed Urban Design Overlay
- ✓ Establish specific requirements of the proposed Urban Design Overlay
- ✓ Proposed Urban Design Overlay is presented to Planning Commission
- ✓ Proposed Urban Design Overlay is presented to the Metropolitan Council

Additional information regarding Growth Centers and Urban Design is available from the Planning Commission at 225-389-3144 or from the website [www.brgov.com/dept/planning](http://www.brgov.com/dept/planning).