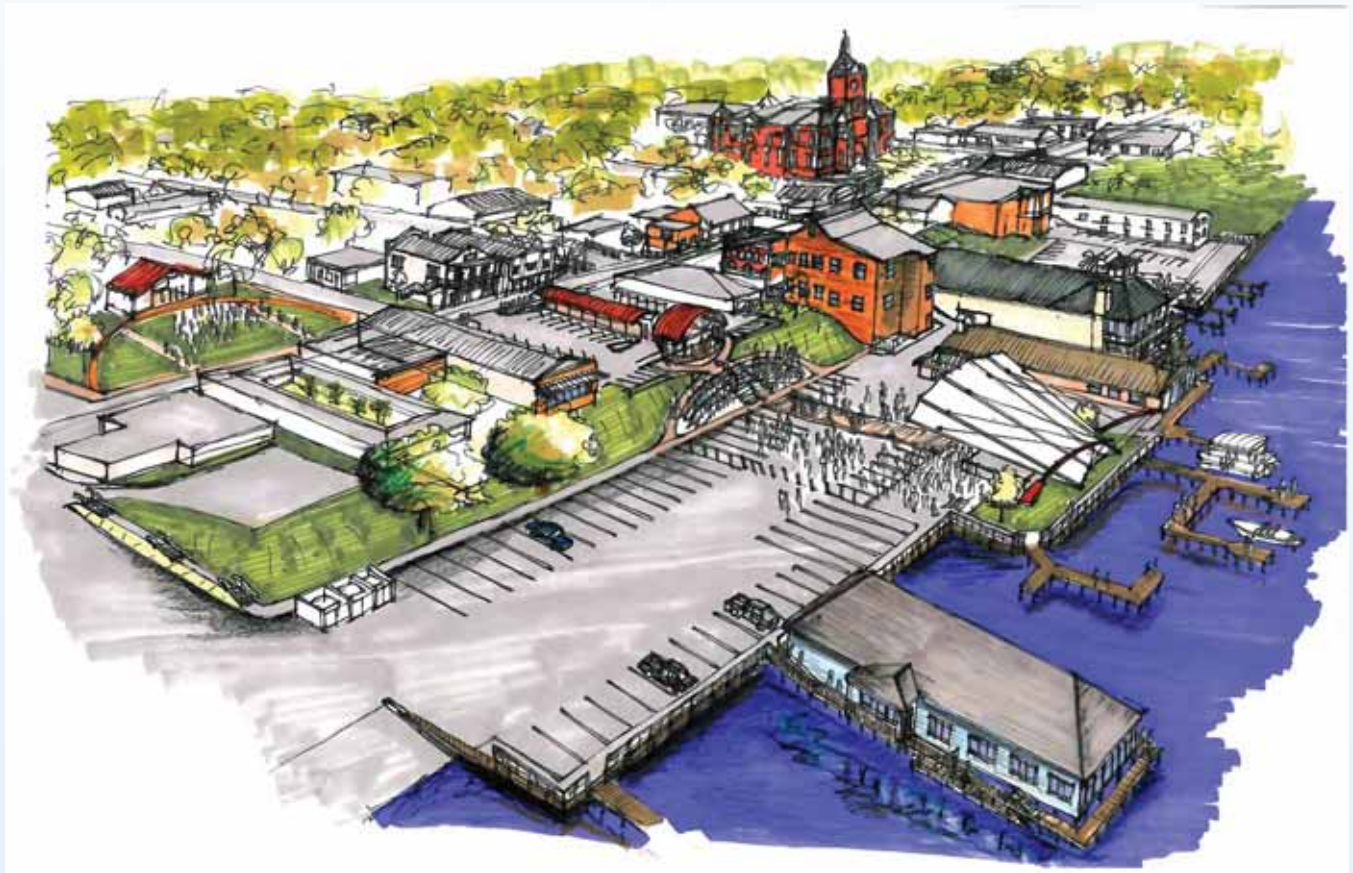




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NEW ROADS, Louisiana

COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN 2016



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COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN 2016 NEW ROADS, LOUISIANA

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February 2016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

New Roads, Louisiana, is in the center of the state—literally. An official state marker declaring this point as the “Louisiana Population Center U. S. Bureau of Census, 2000” is located in False River Park, the largest park in the city. As the center of the state, the community boasts of many typical Louisiana assets. Examples include lakes and nearby rivers with the Mississippi, Atchafalaya, and Red Rivers forming the east, north, and west parish boundaries, respectively. Plantation homes are numerous in and near the city; pastoral live oak trees and agricultural fields of sugar cane, corn, rice, wheat, sorghum, soybeans, and cotton abound nearby, acres of which are within or adjacent to the city limits and pecan production is synonymous with New Roads.

The city’s geological history is also unique in that the town was originally settled along the Mississippi River, but in the early 1700s, the river changed course. The city still thrives and the remnant waterway is now a lake—False River.

Today, New Roads is a city located along this beautiful pastoral lake. The waterway offers its citizens, seasonal residents, neighboring residents, and tourists alike opportunities for passive and active water-oriented activities such as fishing, skiing, swimming, and boating. It is no wonder that within this classic Louisiana setting, the citizens enjoy life so much that they share it with others by hosting numerous annual festivals: extensive Mardi Gras celebrations, a Spring Street Festival and Antique Car Show, the 4th of July boat parade, the fall Harvest Festival, Market at the Mill, and Christmas Ice Skating.

In taking advantage of a federal and state sponsored program focused on community sustainability and resiliency, the mayor and council chose to include federal and state objectives as a component of a comprehensive master plan and development code update. The most recent plan update was prepared in 1984 while the zoning code and subdivision regulations were updated circa 1972.

In following this approach, the city and its consultant team focused on key fundamental planning issues including but not limited to the following:

1. The population of New Roads has been stable, hovering near 5,000 residents for over 30 years. The 2010 Census indicated a slight but debatable decrease of the city’s population. The parish population been stable at approximately 22,500 for a half century.
2. The construction of the John J. Audubon Bridge provides improved highway accessibility across the Mississippi River offering unprecedented economic development opportunities.
3. The bridge, coupled with the recently completed three-lane section of La. Hwy. 1 along Hospital Road, exponentially expands the economic opportunities of the area.



In consideration of these basic issues, i.e., economic opportunities and population concerns, the direction of the comprehensive planning process leaned heavily toward economic development issues. These points offered the basis for the vision, goals, and objectives created by the city administration and the comprehensive plan steering committee. The views of the citizens attending public forums concurred with this approach.

The city desires to create the means necessary to increase the population at a steady rate setting a modest goal of increasing the population by 10% (500 persons) within a ten-year timeframe. To reach this goal, interest was directed toward increasing local job opportunities and the earning capacity of low wage earners; work force training at the Baton Rouge Community College (BRCC); reduced dependency on vehicular transportation; and improved pre-K thru 12 education. While public education was recorded as a major weakness and threat to the livelihood and long-term socioeconomic vitality of the community, the construction and development of the STEM Magnet Academy of Pointe Coupe and anticipated growth in technical training at the branch BRCC campus have bolstered the potential for positive future enhancement in the education realm.

The targeted market for retention and recruitment consists of culturally and ethnically diversified young, upwardly mobile families and senior citizens. With the primary emphasis on young families, citizens stressed two fundamental needs: (a) upgrades to the parish education system from pre-K through secondary levels and (b) job creation.

These system upgrades bolster job creation initiatives of the city. The regional suitability analysis indicates vast acreages of land ideally suited for industrial development along the Mississippi River corridor immediately east and north of New Roads. To incentivize industrial development and working collaboratively with parish economic development personnel, it is recommended that the city initiate consideration of expanding utilities eastward along La. 10 and/or the river road depending on specific opportunities that may arise. Planning for this opportunity should begin immediately.

Job creation in the immediate vicinity of New Roads is deemed a vital component to the region's social, cultural, and economic sustainability. Employment opportunities closer to New Roads than the 45-minute commute to Baton Rouge will serve to generate population stability and growth. Coupled with the noted public education sector improvements, mid-level wage earner jobs and job training will work to sustain and expand local economic opportunity.

This expansion should include housing industry initiatives. Presently, approximately 300 vacant lots and houses exist within the city limits. Many of the homes in several neighborhoods are in varying states of disrepair. At the same time, new homes are being constructed on vacant land requiring new and expanded utility systems. The opportunity for both affordable and market rate housing exists in the city. In paralleling the goal to increase the population with an emphasis on young working class families, encouraging reinvestment in older neighborhoods is recommended. Several opportunities for this initiative are described in the plan.

While several intersection improvements are recommended to facilitate improve traffic flow and safety relative to existing conditions, a future land use map and major street plan are presented. With the vast number of vacant lots available, the major street plan and future land use map are presented to serve as guides to preserving rights-of-way to ensure long-term orderly growth and to form the basis for the updated zoning code and map.

With the city being responsible for all utilities within most of the city limits, public works personnel and consulting engineers for the city were contacted regarding necessary capital improvements. Emphasis was placed on existing needs including streets as well as the condition, capacity, and useful life of the electrical, water, gas,

and sewerage systems. This assessment yielded a list of approximately \$20,000,000 in capital improvements within the 20-year planning horizon. In evaluating funding options, priorities were considered and presented for consideration of long-term strategies which include traditional city revenue mechanisms. However, because of the magnitude of this effort, additional energies will be required by the city in establishing 5-, 10-, and 20-year capital improvement plans.

As an additional economic enhancement tool, the plan directs the city toward a clearly focused and determined effort to expand tourism in New Roads and the vicinity. In this initiative, taking advantage of existing assets is critical. Assets include False River, historic sites such as the downtown area, more than 100 homes and plantations over 100 years old, historic trails and markers, and a historically significant publically owned and maintained Mississippi River landing near the edge of town.

Elements of this effort will be the continuation and expansion of annual festivals as well as develop more of a well-defined sense of place to build upon the city's uniqueness. This will include the addition of period amenities in the downtown area (e.g., light standards with seasonal and festival themed double banners), new monument-style gateway city entrance features, and wayfinding signage beginning near the Audubon Bridge and west of New Roads along La. 1 where False River comes into view. Other tourism considerations include overall cleanup of the community in all sectors with initial emphasis along major thoroughfares, accelerated removal of blight, and construction of a tourist information center/museum near the new bridge, perhaps inside the General Lejeune bridge approach loop. Collaboration with Parish tourism interests and similar interests in St. Francisville will allow this regional approach to expanding the tourism industry to move forward at an accelerated rate.

A complete list of plan recommendations is presented in Chapter VII. To accomplish the various initiatives, a final noteworthy plan recommendation suggests that the city employ a city planner or community development director. By this means, a single responsible person can be assigned responsibility for working with the administration toward objectives prioritized by the city administration. Another benefit is that the existing staff will not have to shoulder an additional work load in their already busy work routines. Assignments will range from implementing the city's GIS system to working with economic development interests and expanding tourism opportunities. Other responsibilities are evident in the complete list of plan recommendations.

NEW ROADS, LOUISIANA

COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN 2016

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background and Goals

With federal funding from U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) relative to Hurricanes Gustav and Ike recovery, the State Division of Administration's Louisiana Disaster Recovery Unit within the Office of Community Development funded a comprehensive plan update for the City of New Roads. By way of scope, the purpose of the comprehensive plan is to inventory and analyze the community following standard comprehensive planning standards.

The funding agency, based on the guidelines of the granting authority, requires that sustainability and resiliency be integral to the plan. In this case, elements of the Pointe Coupee Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan pertinent to New Roads and its surroundings are included. The scope was expanded to include cultural and socioeconomic objectives with community growth goals. The planning horizon emphasizes 5-, 10-, and 20-year objectives. This aspect of study is particularly notable in the Capital Improvement Plan chapter.

B. Objectives and Deliverables

The project objectives and deliverables focus on guidelines for future development. Emphasis is placed on stabilizing then growing the population by ten percent in a ten-year timeframe. Infill and reinvestment in areas of the community that exhibit evidence of deterioration on a vicinity-wide scale are emphasized. Opportunities exist for affordable housing in many areas. New market rate housing development is also encouraged as is commercial and industrial growth with the intent to expand the local employment base.

In the comprehensive plan as presented herein, major deliverables include the future land use map, major street plan, and a capital improvement plan relative to infrastructure. Based upon the future land use and major street plan development, an updated zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations are prepared and included. Upon completion of these deliverables, training for City staff and elected and appointed officials is planned.

C. Plan Development Process—Approach and Methodology

Plan development included four major components—research and analysis, public interaction, resulting master plan development inclusive of the analysis and public input, and adoption and implementation.



Steering Committee Meeting #1 June 4, 2015 6:00 PM at City Hall
Land Use and Wayfinding Strategies



Steering Committee Meeting #2 July 9, 2015 6:00 PM at City Hall
Present Inventory and Analysis, Gain perspectives on Future Growth, and Develop Vision Statement



Steering Committee Mtg. #3 September 14, 2015 6:00 PM
City Hall, Land Use and Wayfinding Strategies



Public Meeting #1 August 19, 2015 6:00 PM at Scott Civic Center
Present Data Analysis, Growth, Goals, Priorities, and Concepts



Steering Committee Mtg. #4 November 4, 2015 6:00 PM
City Hall, Present Preliminary Draft Comprehensive Plan Including Zoning Ordinance and Map



Public Meeting. #2 November 11, 2015 6:00 PM
City Hall, Present Preliminary Draft Comprehensive Plan Including Zoning Ordinance and Map

Research and analysis included an inventory of existing physical conditions such as soils, topography, and drainage, as well as land use, buildings assessment, and utilities. Intangible planning attributes include socioeconomic aspects of the community and region as well as visual character, overall appearance, public art, cleanliness, community character, philanthropic acts, and city-parish cooperation and collaboration.

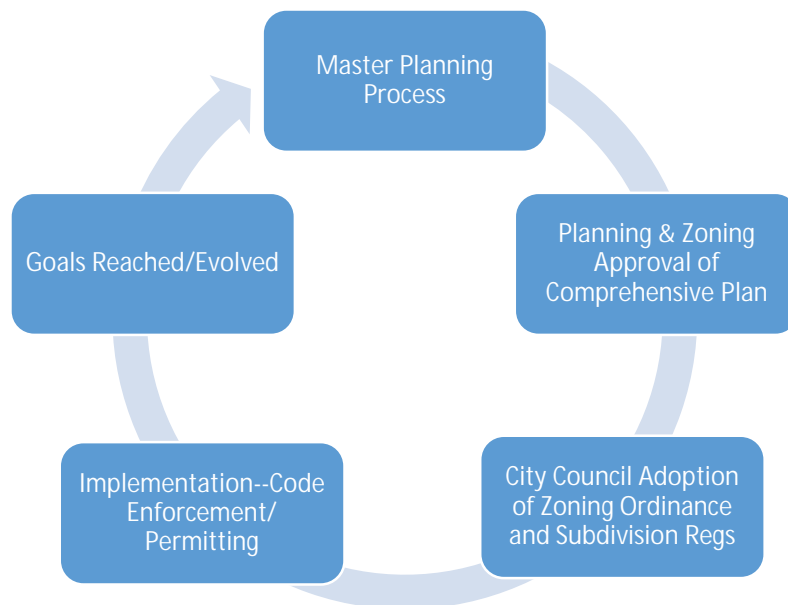
All of the inventory and analysis components were then evaluated using a SWOT analysis approach—Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. The SWOT approach allowed the community and region’s strengths to be compared and contrasted with weaknesses and threats. The objective was then to utilize strengths and opportunities to reduce or alleviate weaknesses and mitigate threats. Threats, such as natural hazard events, levee failures, derailments, and the like, were defined as settings or situations beyond the City’s ability to alleviate.

The inventory and analysis data was then presented for verification and, where necessary, clarification and/or Public interaction was based on input from the mayor, city council, the New Roads Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee, and interested citizens who attended any and all meetings related to plan development. Several public meetings and workshops held throughout the planning period provided guidance in plan development.

Development of the plan incorporated research data and analysis in combination with public input in the formation of plan concepts, goals, and objectives. The end results are the deliverables noted above. The following graphic illustration represents this planning process.



Approval of the master plan by the Planning and Zoning Commission is required. The City Council is required to adopt the zoning ordinance, zoning map, and subdivision regulations into law by ordinance. Beginning with the master planning process, required and recommended steps to plan implementation are presented in the diagram below.



D. Review of Literature and Precedent Communities

To adequately ascertain analytical data and establish the basis for community goals and objectives, previous documentation relative to the history, growth, and development of the municipality was evaluated. Several are listed and summarized below.

1. **1984 New Roads Master Plan** formed the initial basis for a thorough examination of New Roads strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities following the oil boom in the 1970s. The Master Plan focuses on improving transportation/traffic circulation and the city's land use strategy. A portion of the master plan's transportation recommendations have been implemented including its intersection improvements aligning with the major street plan and future land use plan. Recommendations were based on the zoning ordinance in place at the time. Several recommendations of that plan not yet implemented remain valid today and are thus incorporated in the current master plan design process.
2. The **Existing New Roads Zoning Map and Ordinance** were used as the basis for the review of current development regulations of the City of New Roads to assess the condition of the current codes and to develop a framework for updating the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations as part of the New Roads Comprehensive Planning Project. The following documents were utilized:
 - a. Zoning Ordinance and Map
 - b. Future Land Use Map
 - c. Major Street Plan
 - d. Subdivision Regulations
 - e. Permitting Rules and Regulations
 - f. Other Planning/Development Related Codes
3. **Pointe Coupee Parish Comprehensive Plan** outlines some of the larger issues in Pointe Coupee including transportation, education, shifts in the work sector, and lack of population growth. This master plan includes the desired path for the Parish outlined by community involvement and focuses on reducing travel times and improving street environments. The plan was adopted on August 18, 2009 but provided little that pertained to New Roads.
4. **New Roads and Old Rivers: Louisiana's Historic Pointe Coupee Parish by Randy Harelson (author), Richard Sexton (photographer), and Brian Costello (contributor)**
A book by Louisiana photographer Richard Sexton with superb text by Randy Harelson and historian Brian Costello published in 2012 introduces and celebrates the heritage, the nature, the communities, and the agricultural past and present of Pointe Coupee Parish. It clearly fulfills its intent of bringing a unique part of Louisiana into sharper focus for residents of Pointe Coupee Parish, all Louisianans and visitors alike.
5. **New Roads Municipal Building Feasibility Study** addressed potential for a historical building across from city hall on Main Street. This study offers useful research relative to the current New Roads commercial district and the desires of the city administration at the time.
6. **City of New Roads Historic District Commission** offers guidelines and an ordinance for addressing renovations and new construction within the historic district of New Roads. One of the major findings of this evaluation is that the historic district can be justifiably expanded to approximately ten-fold its present size as detailed in Section VI-C. Historic District Amenities and Potential for Expansion. A map is included that illustrates the current district outline and the recommended expansion area.

7. **A Site Assessment for Cultural Center Campus New Roads, La.** offers a proposal to create a cultural district in New Roads for educational and cultural development in the New Roads Shopping Center along and in the vicinity of Olinde Street. It includes a series of parks and walking paths. It suggests a means to enhance an area of town that was once a thriving commercial center. The plan was not implemented, but it did offer inspiration to the planners working on this 2015 update.
8. **Louisiana Toolkit V3** offers guidelines developed by the State of Louisiana based on Smart Growth principles incorporating sustainability and resiliency concepts following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Concepts for developing downtown renovation to emphasize upon the cultural heritage of New Roads are applicable. Discouraging construction within the floodplain is a major emphasis of this guide.
9. The **Upper Terrebonne Watershed Report** is an agreement among several parishes to mitigate flooding resulting from surge, stormwater, and riverine events of the Mississippi River. This document provided insight into the drainage and flood prone areas of the city.
10. **Pointe Coupee Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan**, as noted previously, documents potential natural hazards to New Roads and Pointe Coupee Parish. Most recommended projects from the plan included hardening of public buildings with several projects for infrastructure upgrades and drainage improvements.
11. The **2013 Historic District Architectural Inventory** was produced by the City of New Roads with the major work effort contributed by Brian Costello to document the significant historical structures within the community. The architectural typology for the various buildings was defined, and a brief history of each structure was included. The architectural styles include Creole cottages, creole great houses, shotgun buildings, center hall houses, Eastlake houses, nineteenth century two-story commercial buildings, and early 20th century public buildings.
12. **National Recreation and Park Association: Rejuvenating Neighborhoods and Communities through Parks—A Guide to Success** was utilized for creating concepts and justifying future neighborhood parks and revitalization efforts. Planning efforts were guided by using multiple approaches such as revisiting initial neighborhood park design concepts, analysis and inventory of current assets, review of pedestrian access and distance standards, and evaluating adjacent and nearby public amenities.
13. **2009 Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries Waterbody Management Plan Series; False River Lake History & Management Issues.** False River is well known for its trophy lake status and summer recreation draw. The abundance of aquatic life is attributed to the stabilization of the water level in 1947 which resulted from the construction of the lighthouse canal. There was a shift in the aquatic plant community structure of the lake in the early 1970's which continued to rapidly decline. By 1990, the north end of the lake had become void of vegetation. Recently, local outcry has generated support from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the USACOE, and a water quality improvement project is currently underway.

14. The Fairhope, Alabama Comprehensive Master Plan offers a plan that parallels New Roads in its relationship to a large body of water and its demographics. This recreation and retirement community provided identifiable architecture and a clean, bright neighborhood atmosphere. Only a 30-minute drive from Mobile, Alabama, the city has demonstrated stability, growth, and successful development near a larger metropolitan area. Although it has a population three and a half times greater than New Roads, Fairhope has a similar demographic composition, i.e., there are fewer young adults and more retirees than the national average. Fairhope updated its comprehensive master plan in 2006. As a result, the city's residents chose to adopt a strategy inclusive of mixed-use neighborhood centers at major intersections to create villages and upgrade their street environments.



Fairhope, AL Streetscape

15. Other Precedent Cities used for comparison and contrasts to New Roads as well as to glean successful opportunities based on community assets similar to New Roads such as the relationship to a large body of water, rich cultures, and small town architecture styles include Lafayette, LA; Mandeville, LA; Madisonville, LA; and Grapevine, TX. Information summarizing numerous positive attributes of the communities is presented below.

a. Lafayette, Louisiana: Lafayette is one of the largest cities in Louisiana. It is an hour drive from New Roads. Lafayette has a population of nearly 180,000, and is considered an icon of south Louisiana's culture and cuisine. The city offers exceptional guidance for New Roads in improving its own environment. Situated on the Vermillion River, Lafayette has a strong outdoor recreational culture. The city has invested in strengthening its infrastructure (resiliency), investing in its young generations (sustainability), and directing its growth to include all areas of its economy and diversity (balance).



Lafayette, Louisiana, Parc Sans Souci Festival International

b. Grapevine, Texas: This satellite city of Dallas and Fort Worth is located on Grapevine Lake. With a population of 50,000, its residents have integrated boating and recreational activities into everyday life. The city has above average schools and an exceptional public parks system. With its iconic western downtown, this satellite city continues to thrive by being an attractive area for commuters to Dallas and Fort Worth to live.



Downtown Grapevine, TX

c. Madisonville and Mandeville, LA: These two communities are recognized in Louisiana as two of the most progressive municipalities in the state regarding proactive zoning guidelines, modern approaches to urban infrastructure planning, and the enhancement of the quality of life for the citizenry by way of code enforcement. As a result, the municipalities are renowned for offering examples of governing authorities creating regional bell-weather communities leading the state as clean, green, sustainable, and resilient culturally and economically.

II. VISION, GOALS, and OBJECTIVES

VISION and DESIGN CONCEPT

To preserve and refine the cultural and historical context of New Roads and to better define a “sense of place” while developing pro-active and progressive modern and updated economic development initiatives to sustain and expand the population base, enhance the overall economic well-being of the community and region, and ensure resiliency to natural disaster events that may impact the community

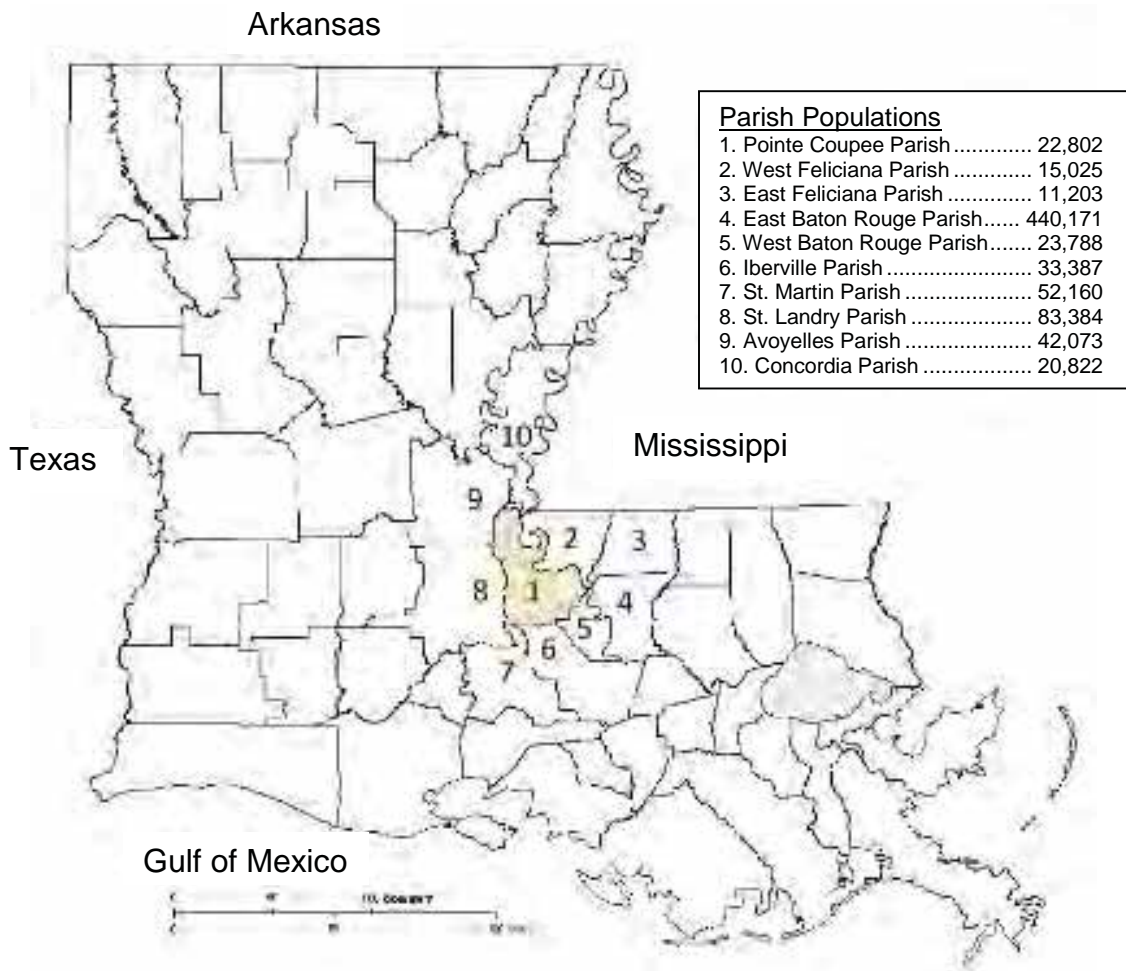
- 1. Growth and Population**—Stabilize and increase population with a moderate goal of 500 new residents within a 10-year timeframe with supporting commercial development
- 2. Housing Stock**—Encourage re-investment in older areas emphasizing new and rehabilitated affordable housing while allowing for new market rate housing development
- 3. Roadway/Corridor Enhancement**—Encourage investment and re-investment in commercial areas with particular emphasis along the Parent Street corridor
- 4. Economic Development**—Aid in job creation and retention as well as the overall health of the local economy as a complement to all other goals and objects by incentivizing commercial/industrial growth between New Roads and the Audubon Bridge, accommodating citizens domiciled outside of the New Roads city limits relative to large retail and related services, and expanding tourism interests as noted below
- 5. Tourism**—Expand and enhance local attractions and marketing, organize specifically for this purpose, and adopt a mindset similar to that of St. Francisville regarding preservation, restoration, imagery, and marketing
- 6. Cultural Amenities, Urban Art, and Imagery**—Create a “New Roads” defining atmosphere and iconic imagery that permeates the entire community by developing a sense of place from boundary to boundary with emphasis on downtown areas while also improving imagery along Hospital Road and other thoroughfares including Ferry Road to La. 10
- 7. Mitigation of Natural Disaster Impacts**—Increase sustainability and resiliency by developing responsible growth plans and infrastructure upgrades
- 8. Parks and Recreation**—Provide long-range maintenance plans for existing parks, develop new small parks in strategic locations, and organize parks and open space to enhance the downtown festival area
- 9. Infrastructure**—Utilize the utility system assessment provided with this planning report to maintain existing public works and to upgrade utility systems where necessary in accordance with existing and proposed population growth, the major street plan, and the future land use plan while considering utility extensions to outlying area as a means to support commercial and industrial development near the city
- 10. Regulatory**—Update zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, permitting procedures, and utility fees and create an Urban Planner or Community Development Director position with responsibilities inclusive of but not limited to the following: develop a citywide GIS system utilizing the GIS data prepared for this study with emphasis on city utility systems, ensure implementation of the proposed wayfinding and sense of place imagery, assist in park maintenance and development planning, coordinate the tourism status of the city, and update and maintain the GIS system.
- 11. CIP Funding**—Incorporate funding plans for short- and long range-utility improvements including expansion of utility systems outside of the current city limits and prioritize for implementation of “relatively small projects within a two- to five-year timeframe

III. REGIONAL SETTING PLANNING INVENTORY

A. General Setting

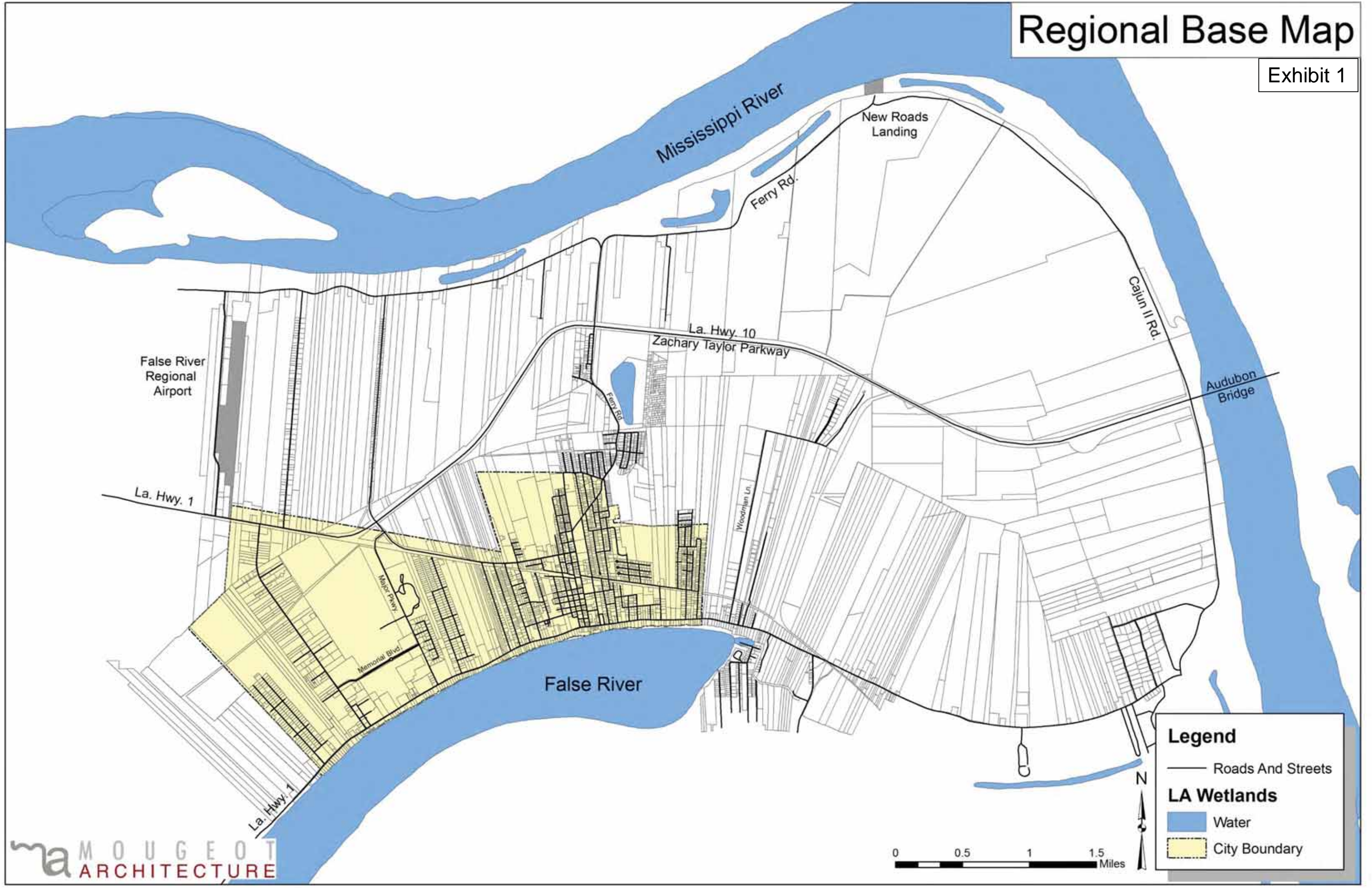
Since the French settled New Roads in the early 1700's, the city has played a critical role in the economic and cultural well-being of Pointe Coupee Parish. Native Americans and French, English, Spanish, German, African, and Italian settlers have used New Roads as a trading post to navigate the beautiful yet dangerous swamps that fill the basins of the Mississippi River Valley. The location of the parish in Louisiana is noted below in the state map.

The city, which was incorporated in 1897, is located along a natural alluvial levee that once overlooked the Mississippi River as it passed along the early settlement of what today is known as New Roads. The community lies along the oxbow lake known as False River. The city and general region are presented in Exhibit 1. This map also serves as the base map for discussion relative to regional concerns.

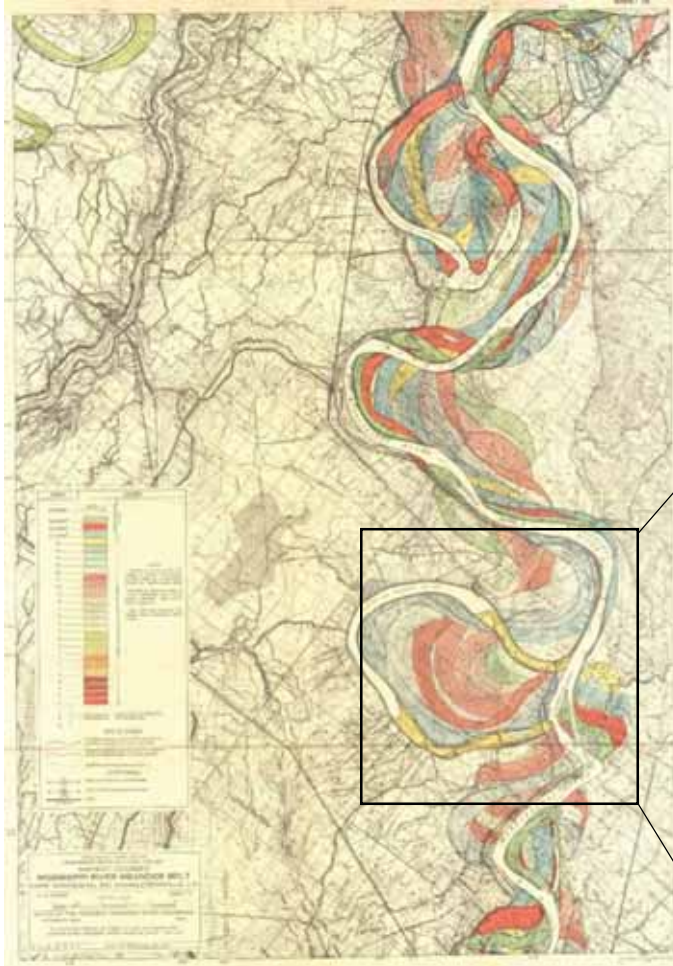


Regional Base Map

Exhibit 1

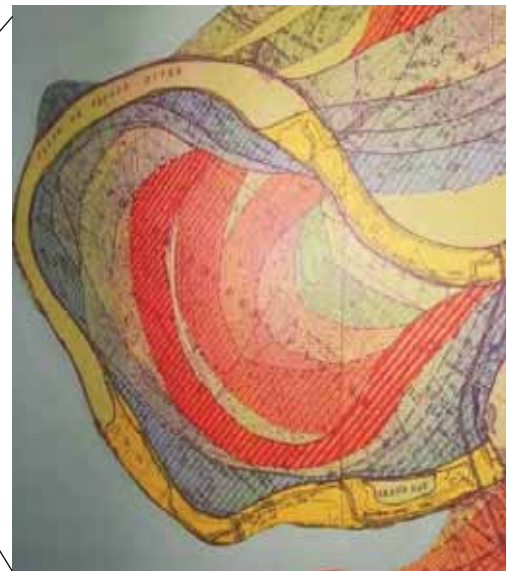


The distance from the north edge of False River at New Roads to the south bank of the Mississippi River is approximately three miles. The graphics presented in Exhibit 2 denote the many changes to the path of the Mississippi River over the centuries in the vicinity of New Roads. The enlarged map details the various paths that finally resulted in False River being abandoned to a more direct route of the Mississippi River. These maps were provided by the Louisiana Office of State Lands in the Department of Natural Resources.



This setting situates New Roads on high ground not susceptible to Mississippi River riverine flood events. This alluvial process resulted in the city being surrounded by fertile soils allowing year-round agriculture in the vicinity and providing the region with the ability to transport those commodities across the state and country.

Exhibit 2: Various Mississippi River Paths



False River offers the residents and tourists plentiful fishing and recreational capabilities without the dangers of the Mississippi River's current and unpredictability. New Roads and False River have always been an attractive site for families to build primary and recreational homes. Several historic plantations accentuate the landscape constantly reminding visitors of New Roads' agrarian history. These economic, geographic, and cultural assets have helped to keep New Roads, Pointe Coupee Parish, and the State of Louisiana sustainable and resilient through repeated economic downturns and environmental disasters. The City of New Roads is considered the cultural center of Pointe Coupee Parish and is optimistic about the opening of the Audubon Bridge linking New Roads with West Feliciana Parish, Baton Rouge, and the entire metropolitan area. The John J. Audubon Bridge and other manmade and natural features in Pointe Coupee Parish are depicted in Exhibit 3.

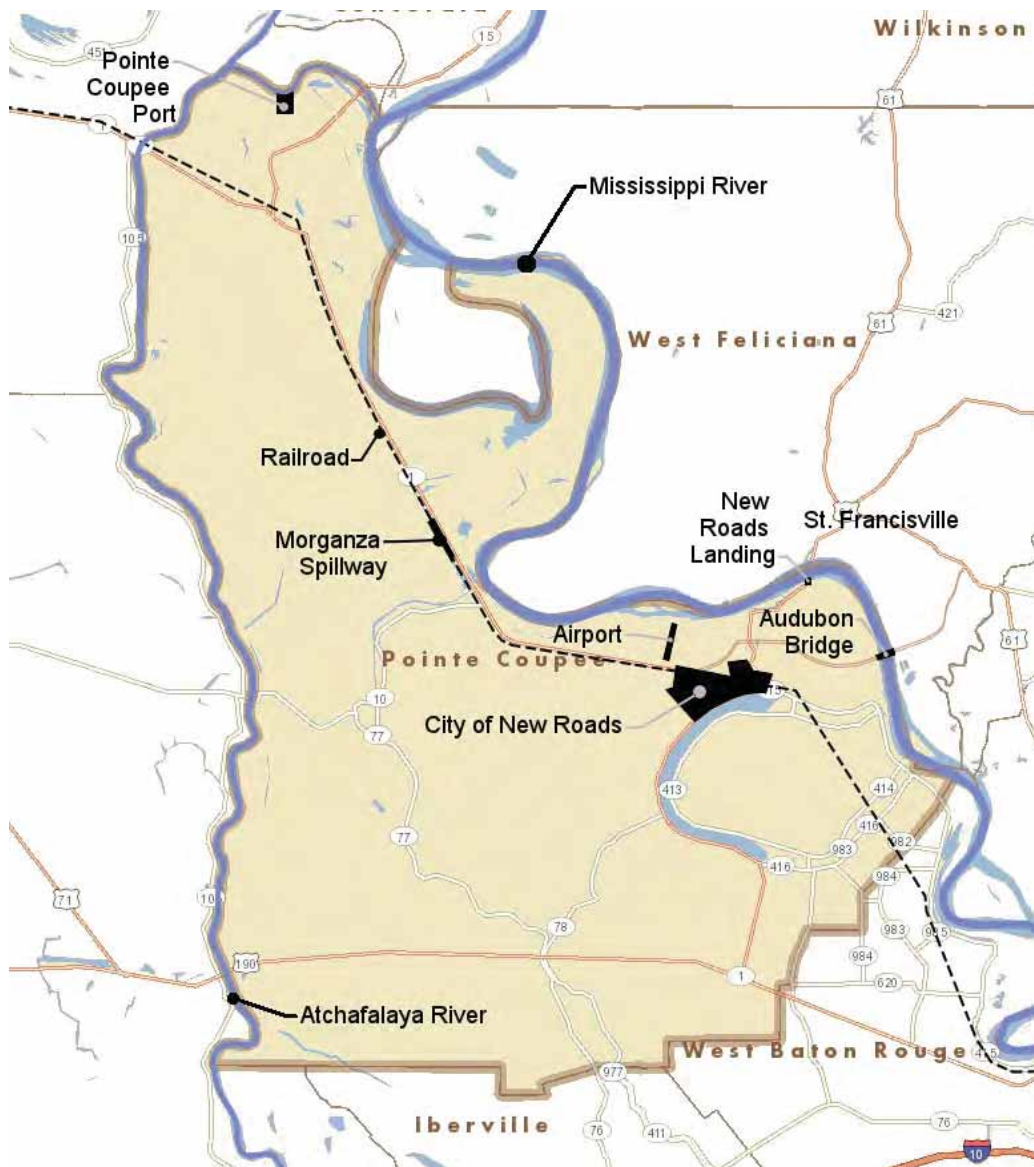


Exhibit 3. New Roads and Pointe Coupee Parish Features

The bridge offers a convenient alternative to accessing the city from the North. Since the opening of the bridge, local citizens of New Roads indicate that they are traveling to Baton Rouge more and more by way of the new bridge in lieu of U. S. 190 though Port Allen crossing the Mississippi River at the Huey P. Long-O.K. Allen Bridge or the I-10 Wilkinson Bridge.

Supplementing the bridge are the False River Regional Airport and the New Roads River Port Landing. The airport boasts of a 5,000 ft. runway, a new terminal, and aircraft hangars. The facility accommodates small jet traffic, is well-managed and maintained, and offers the first ever solar powered LED taxiway lighting system in a general aviation airport with no commercial jet traffic. The airport is often used by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development Office of Aviation as an example of a well-run city-parish cooperative endeavor. Additional information regarding the airport can be found at www.falseriverregionalairport.com.

Prior to the construction of the Audubon Bridge, a State operated ferry carried vehicles across the river between the east and west banks. With the abandonment of the ferries, two river landings were available for use. On the west bank, i.e., the New Roads side, the State transferred the landing and associated property to the Pointe Coupee Parish Port Commission. The port commission maintains the old ferry landing site offering access to and use by recreational and commercial fisherman, hunters, and industry. Opportunities abound regarding economic benefits and the use of the New Roads Landing.

The City of New Roads has a rich history evident in the French Colonial plantation homes in and around the city. In 1803 the United States completed the Louisiana Purchase, and the territory became part of the United States. In-migration of American settlers increased, changing Louisiana culture.

In 1822, Catherine Dispau (a free woman of color called "La Fille Gougis") created a multi-block subdivision out of her False River plantation. This was located at the terminus of a "new road" linking False River with the older Mississippi River settlement to the north. This is the area now bounded by West Main, New Roads, West Second and St. Mary Streets. The latter was named for St. Mary's Catholic Church, founded in 1823. The community was referred to variously as the "village of St. Mary" or Chemin Neuf.

One of the most notable homes is the Parlange plantation house shown below constructed circa 1750. The lower floor was typically constructed of masonry to better resist damage from the frequent river flooding. Since the community was established on the natural bank of the river, the residents had to readapt when the river changed course.



It is because of the changing course of the Mississippi River in the early 1700s that New Roads got its name. As the early settlement had developed along the river, which is now the False River oxbow, the change in course likely due to a major flood event, literally relocated the path of the Mississippi River away from the early settlement. A new road became necessary to reconnect the town to the river, which at that time was and remains a

major thoroughfare in the transfer of goods and services nationally and internationally. As a result, this new road led from what is today Main Street in New Roads to the Mississippi River. This roadway is named New Roads Street and as such is historical in nature having served to connect the town to the river since the early 1700s. One of the first recommendations of this master plan is to encourage the governing authorities of New Roads and Pointe Coupee Parish as well as the State of Louisiana to re-establish this roadway and land use along the roadway to emphasize the historical significance of the corridor.

B. Limit of Study

The construction of the John J. Audubon Bridge is extremely important to the future of New Roads. Long-term economic development initiatives based on the unimpeded and dependable connectivity between New Roads, St. Francisville, and the greater Baton Rouge area are justified and included in the plan recommendations. These recommendations focus on tourism, commercial and industrial growth incentive, and job creation. For this reason, the scope of planning was expanded beyond the city limits of New Roads. Justifications for this expanded area of study begin with the new bridge but also include nearby land suitable for urbanization, willing landowners, prior economic development activity at the parish level, and opportunity for infrastructure investment by the city. The map shown in Exhibit 1 depicts the extent of the study area in regards to the regional perspective. New Roads is located in the southwest quadrant with the Mississippi River and False River prominently visible.

Besides the physical layout of the study areas and natural features such as the Mississippi River and False River, other notable features include two state highways (La. Hwy. 1 and La. Highway 10) and a railroad (Kansas City Southern).

C. Historical Synopsis

Today, New Roads is considered a large town or small city. Its population has been relatively steady at or near 5,000 citizens. In mid-2015, census estimates approximated the town's population at 4,831. The corporate limits encompass 4.6 square miles yielding a population density of 1,092 persons per square mile. A brief history of the community is given below, and a 1906 historical map is depicted in Exhibit 4.

- 1699** Pierre Lemoyne D'Iberville explored the area that is now Pointe Coupee Parish and established a trading post.
- 1700's** Spanish authorities cut a road from the settlement to the Mississippi River, Frenchmen called the road "Chemin-Neuf" translated to "New Roads".
- 1848** Due to the fertile land and plentiful crops, New Roads excelled in commodity trading and related commerce and became the government center in 1848 with the construction of its first courthouse.
- 1875** The town was incorporated and reincorporated in 1892.
- 1890** New Roads had its first telephone line, street lamps, and an Academy.
- 1897** New Roads was incorporated and its first mayor is named, Harry Demouy
- 1922** New Roads held its first Mardi Gras parade and still has the 2nd oldest Mardi Gras parade in Louisiana which began after three New Orleans' parade.
- 1970's 1980's** Tuscaloosa Trend created an oil boom for New Roads but slowly faded as global demand faded and prices stabilized making the Trend less appealing.
- 1983** New Roads annexed 1,700 acres of land. This increased its population to over 5,000 people and qualified the town as the City of New Roads.
- 2011** John James Audubon Bridge opened connecting New Roads to West Baton Rouge Parish.

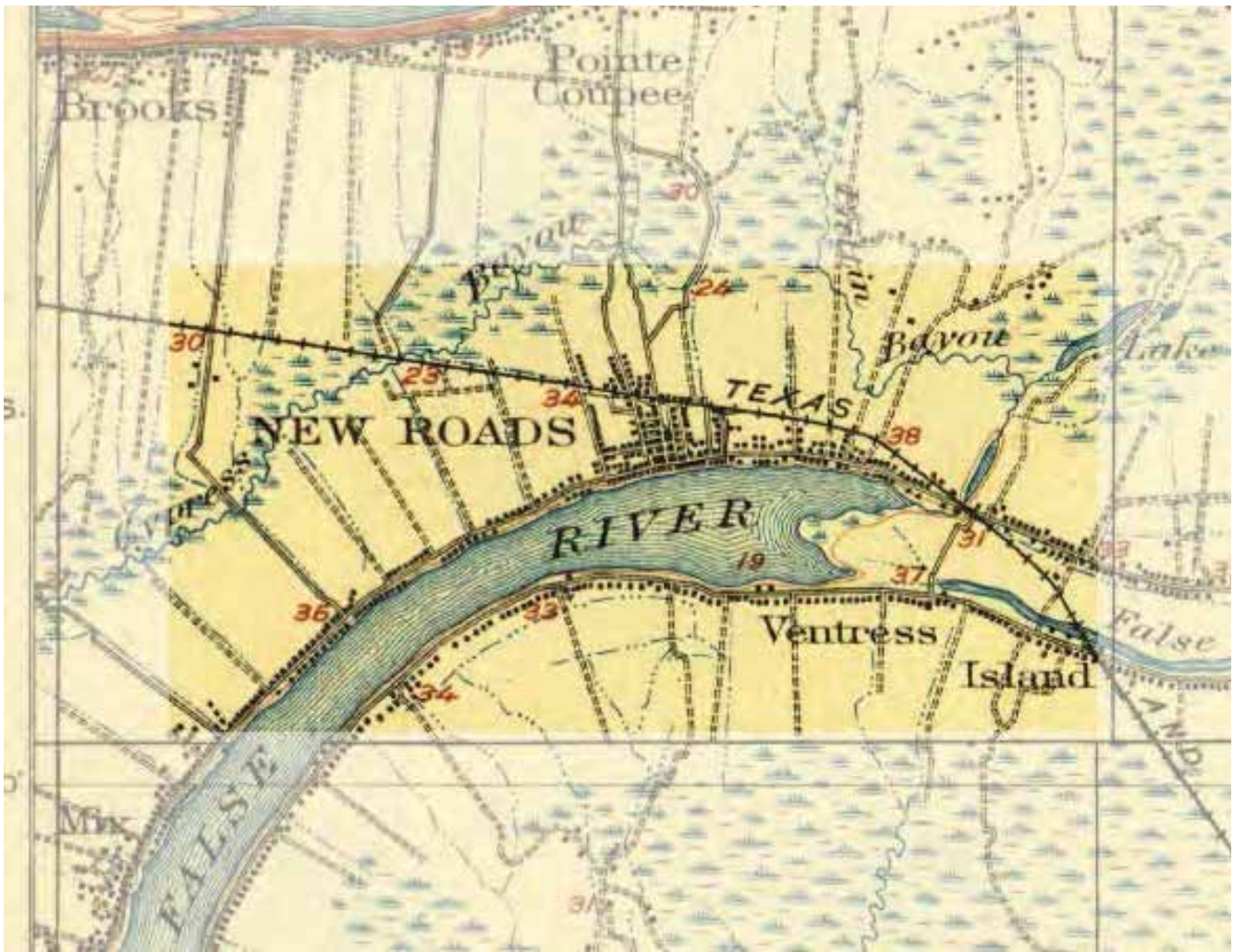
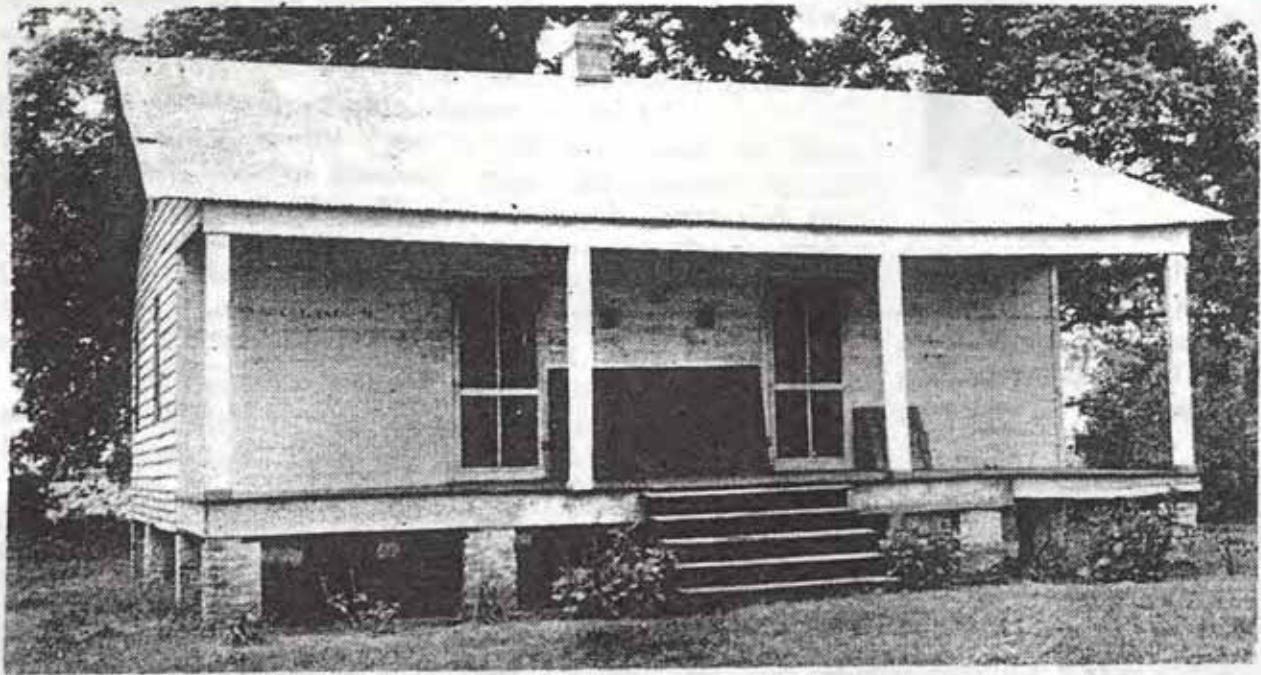


Exhibit 4. 1906 New Roads, La Historical Map (USGS Historical Map)

Several notable and historically significant Americans were born and/or reared in the New Roads area. Several examples are noted below.

Julien Poydras: An important businessman/philanthropist in the early days of Pointe Coupee Parish. Julien Poydras invested in business and real estate. Serving in both the U.S. House of Representatives and the Louisiana Senate, he was instrumental in getting Louisiana (Orleans) admitted into the Union. He also served as president of the First Louisiana Constitutional Convention. Today, he is considered the “Father of Louisiana Public Education.” Mr. Poydras spent most of his life as a civil servant working for the parish. His legacy includes founding the New Orleans Asylum as well as a dowry for poor brides. He is buried beneath a monument honoring him in front of Poydras High School on Main Street in New Roads.

Lieutenant General John A. LeJeune: Known as the “Greatest Leatherneck of All Time,” Lt. General LeJeune finished his near 40-year military career as a Lieutenant General having served as the 13th Commandant of the Marines for nine years. Lt. General Lejeune was born at LaCour Plantation in Pointe Coupee Parish; his family resided in New Roads and has a historic house there today. He was awarded several distinguished honors including the Legion of Honor by the French Government for his efforts in World War 1, and he authored the Marine Corps Birthday message which has been read every year in celebration of its creation since 1921.



Not everyone of the great comes from mansions in democratic America. General John A. Lejeune, leader of the U. S.'s famed Second Marine division in World War I and hero of Argonne Forest, was born in this humble home. The visitor will find it in the backyard of the General's kinsman, Ovide B. LaCour. Camp Lejeune, great Marine training base, is named for the General.

The parish has previously expressed interest in seeking funding for a Welcome Center/Cultural Museum that will be named in honor of General John A. LeJeune. The location is proposed to be between the City of New Roads and the Audubon Bridge along LA Highway 10. The center would include parking, restrooms, wayfinding kiosks, and museum features. Locating this facility near the terminus of the Bartram Trail would enhance the experience of this collaborative tourism destination. A conceptual sketch and plan view are shown in Exhibit 5A and 5B.



Exhibit 5A Rendering of proposed City-Parish Visitor's Center by PCPPJ/Mougeot Architecture.

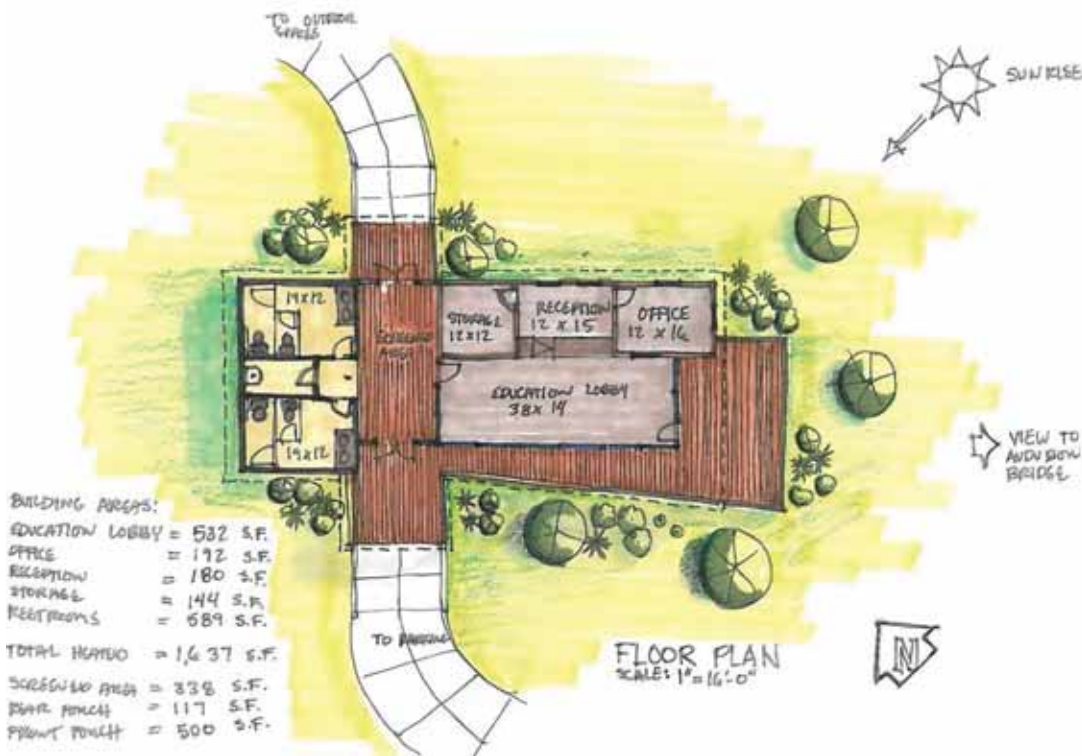


Exhibit 5B. Rendering of proposed City-Parish Visitor's Center Site/Floor Plan by Pointe Coupee Parish Police Jury and Mougeot Architecture

The Bartram Trail follows the approximate route of 18th-century William Bartram's southern journey from March 1773 to January 1777 shown in Exhibit 6. Bartram explored much of the territory which is now the states of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Tennessee. In 1775 Bartram crossed the Mississippi to visit Pointe Coupee Parish. This was the westernmost point that he reached during his travels.

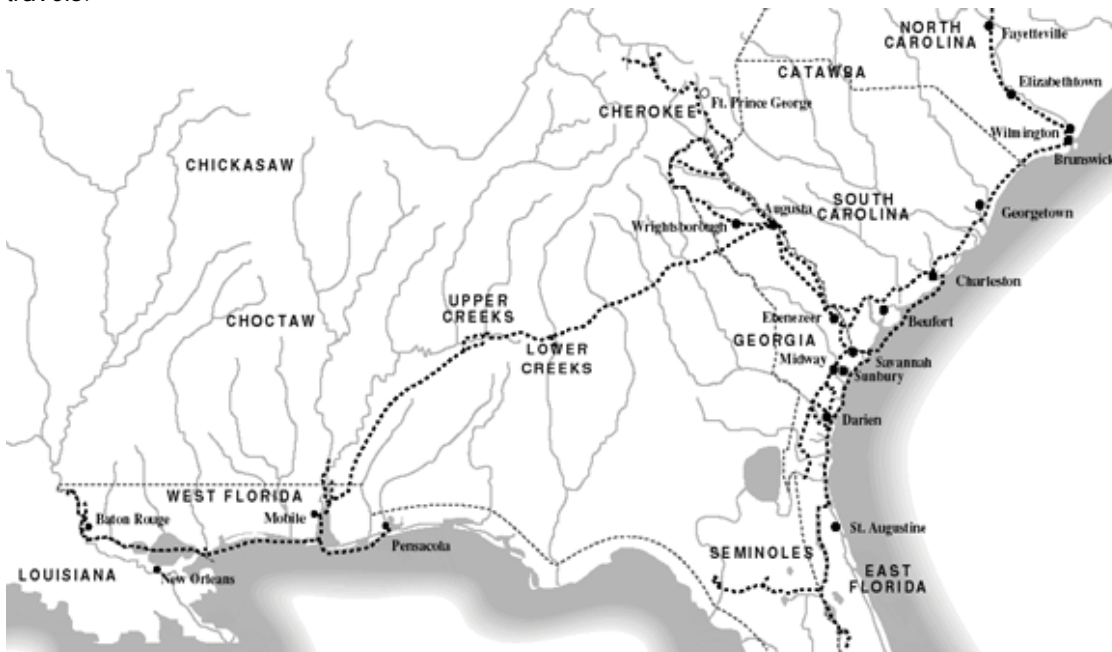


Exhibit 6. 1773-1777 William Bartram Trail: Source: <http://www.deltawoodsandwatersexpo.com>, 10.22.15

Other Pointe Coupee notables include **James Randal**, author of the poem *Maryland, My Maryland*, which became the battle song of the Confederacy, and **Ernest J. Gaines**, author of the *Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman*. **Sister Ann Constance Livaudais**, a cherished member of the church and a long-time teacher in Pointe Coupee Parish, has been preserving the area's history while making her own mark in that history with her paintings of local scenes and historic places.

D. Regional Land Suitability Assessment

1. Overview

The City of New Roads is situated on the northwestern shore of False River in Pointe Coupee Parish. With a population of approximately 5,000, it is the only city in Pointe Coupee. Of the total 2015 parish population of approximately 22,500 citizens, 7,811 residents live in incorporated areas of the parish making up approximately 35% of the total population. The parish map presented in Exhibit 7, Pointe Coupee Parish Municipalities, shows the proximity of New Roads to other municipalities in the parish—Morganza, Livonia, and Fordoche .

The evolution of the region from the early 1700s until today is based on numerous natural features and occurrences. A brief summary of these landscape features is critical to the goals, objectives, and recommendations of the comprehensive plan. The following maps and text support this finding.

An aerial view of New Roads is presented in Exhibit 8 which offers an aerial view of the community and its immediate surroundings. The New Roads base map, which is used as the base for most city maps used throughout this planning report, is presented as Exhibit 9 on page III-12.



Exhibit 7. Pointe Coupee Parish Municipalities with 2010 Census counts



Exhibit 8A: Aerial view of New Roads and Vicinity

2. Topography, Drainage, and Floodplains

Pointe Coupee Parish is bordered by the Mississippi River on the east, the Red River (Old River today) to the north, and the Atchafalaya River to the west. These waterways and the accompanying manmade levees define the northernmost limits of the Terrebonne River Basin as shown in red on Exhibit 8B. Stormwater that falls in the parish stays within the Terrebonne Basin until it reaches the Gulf of Mexico. In general terms, the entire Pointe Coupee region is well drained as a naturally formed gravity drainage system.

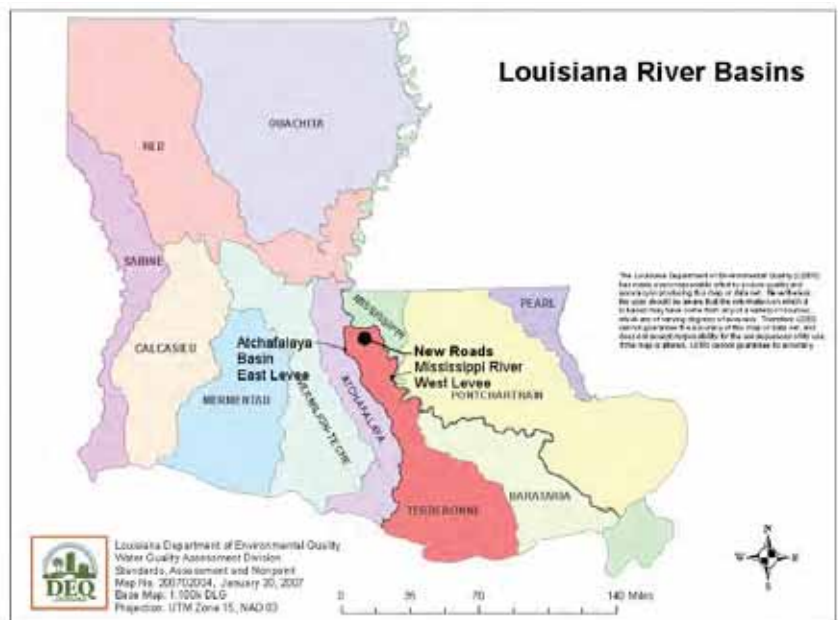
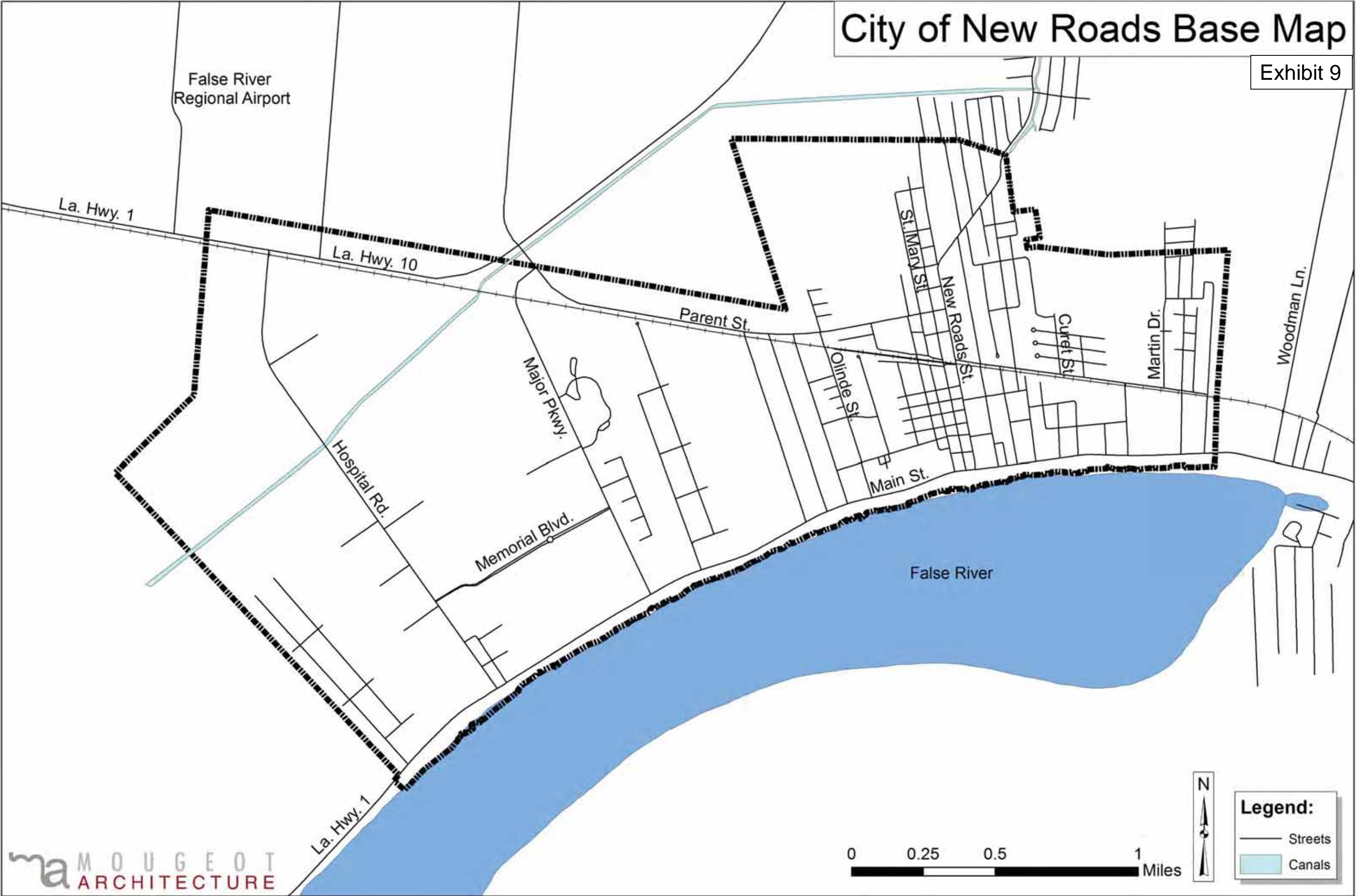


Exhibit 8B: Louisiana River Basins

City of New Roads Base Map

Exhibit 9



From the outset in the 1700s, the community developed along the west bank of the Mississippi River on the river's natural levee at elevation 35 MSL. As the town expands northward and spreads away from its center at Main St. and New Roads St., the elevation gradually drops to the north. The contour map presented in Exhibit 10, New Roads Topographic Map, depicts the elevation variation.

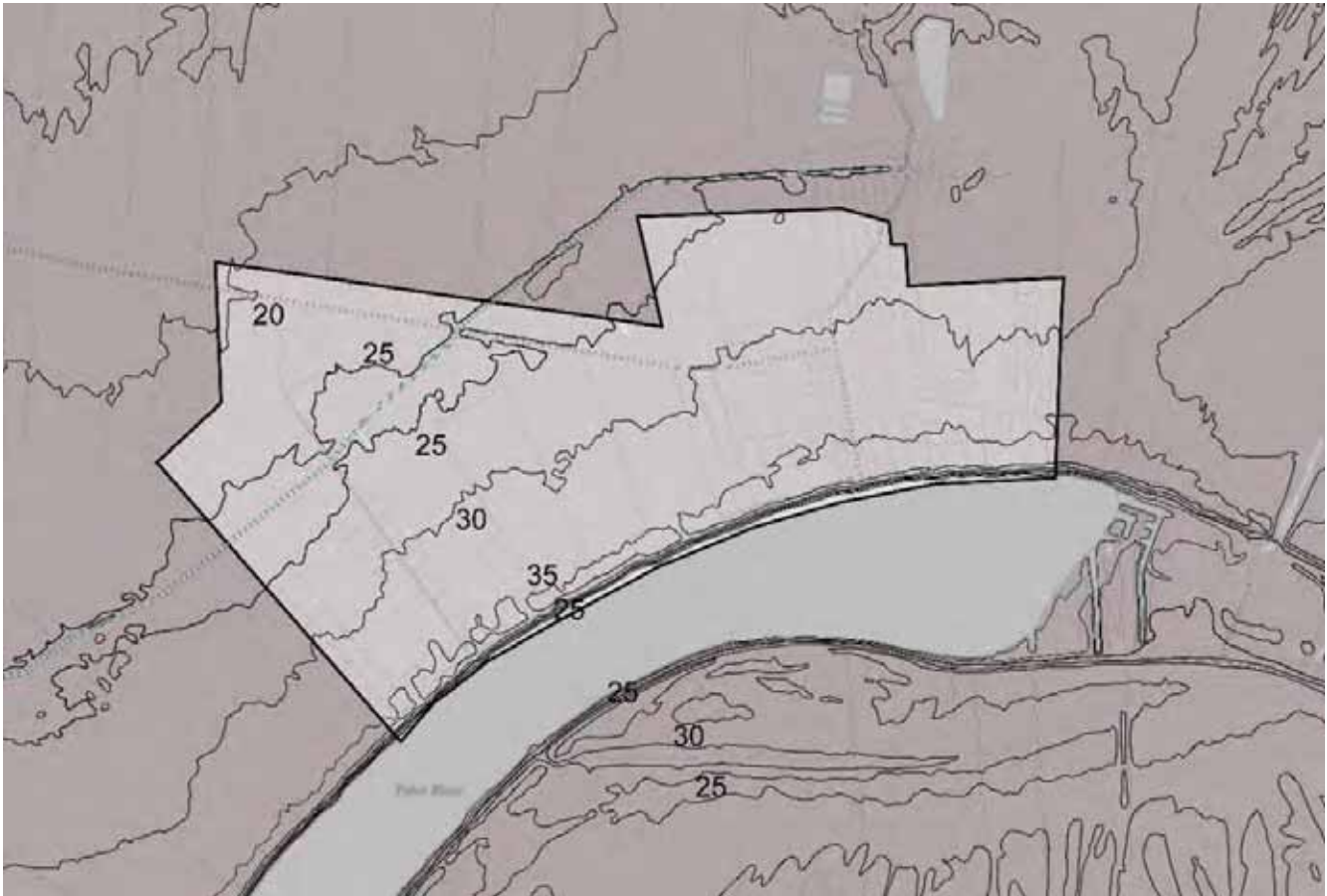


Exhibit 10. New Roads Topographic Map (USGS Map)

Notable from this exhibit is the fact that a natural low-lying area (25 ft. contours and lower) exists in the northwest sector of the city running east-west north of the community. This natural drainage conduit, with manmade improvements, is the Portage Canal, likely a name given to the region by early explorers and settlers. Stormwater runoff from New Roads drains to this naturally occurring low-lying area and the Portage Canal which then feeds into the Terrebonne Basin Watershed. When the upper Terrebonne Basin watershed is inundated with storm water runoff and/or surge from the Gulf of Mexico, flooding occasionally occurs in the lower elevations of New Roads.

The Pointe Coupee Parish Police Jury has primary jurisdiction over maintaining the efficacy of the canal's drainage flow and outfall capacity. The Parish's primary drainage network is highlighted in Exhibit 11, Vicinity Drainage. Typically, stormwater runoff and resulting drainage has not caused problems in the area. However, according to the Pointe Coupee Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan, approximately 24 homes in the city are classified as repetitive loss structures. Although specific addresses were not attainable, City officials indicate that the homes are concentrated in the northeastern sector where homes built decades ago were not constructed to current International Building Code (IBC) and floodplain management standards. In New Roads today, the IBC and flood plain rules and guidelines regulate urban development. Because of the town's relative elevation and the construction of the federally certified Mississippi River levee system, the town is not threatened by riverine flood events.



Exhibit 11 New Roads Vicinity Drainage Map

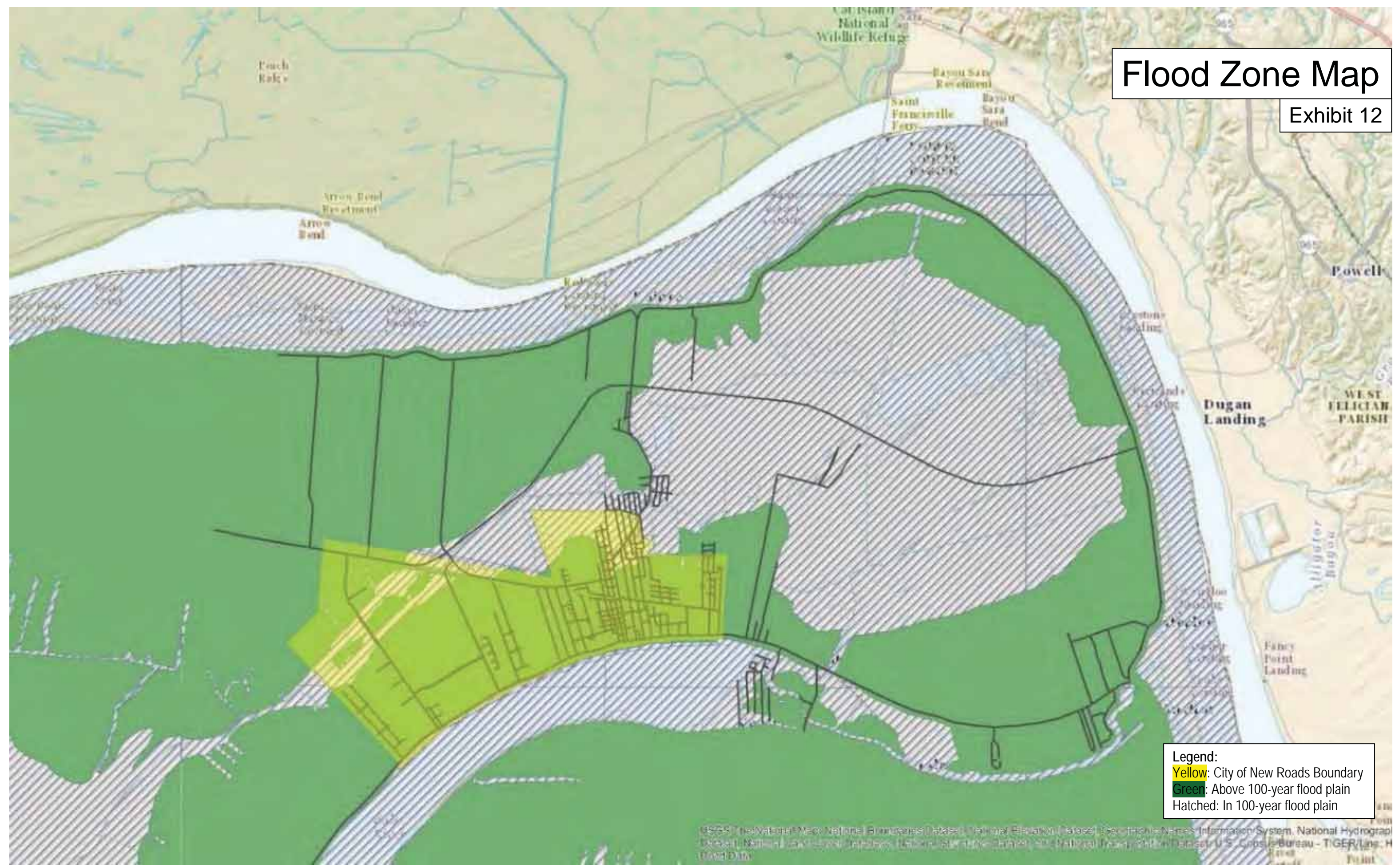
Evident in Exhibit 12, Flood Zone Map, land between the Mississippi River's natural levee ridges form a low-lying area. Two separate low-lying areas exist in the vicinity, one to the north east and one to the southwest. These two areas are connected by the referenced depressed area within which Portage Canal is situated. Because of the location of New Roads and the sloping from the natural levees to the Portage Canal, some northern areas of the city are in Zone "A" (100-year flood plain). Construction in a Zone "A" brings risk for flooding as well as higher flood insurance rates. To create a more resilient community, interventions must be included to protect residents, structures, and infrastructure. Examples are participation in the federal flood plain management program and development code enforcement relative to the IBC.

3. Soils

Because New Roads is situated along the Mississippi Alluvial Plain, eons of occasional flooding created loamy soils on the natural levees and clayey soils in the lower lying swampy areas. As a result, six different soil types have been recorded throughout the city proper: Bruin, very fine sandy loam; Commerce, silt loam; Commerce, silty clay loam; Sharkey, silty clay loam, Sharkey, clay, and Tunica clay. Bruin soils exist along the natural levees while the commerce soils are noted running east-west through the main core of the city. The primary exception is the corridor along the elongated depression where Portage Canal is located; Sharkey clay soil exists there. False River's river bed contains mostly clayey and organic soils. This creates a bath tub effect that reduces the Mississippi River's influence on False River's water level. The soil map in Exhibit 13 shows the location of these varying soil types.

Flood Zone Map

Exhibit 12



Legend:
Yellow: City of New Roads Boundary
Green: Above 100-year flood plain
Hatched: In 100-year flood plain

USGS The National Map, National Elevation Dataset, Digital Elevation Model, Geographic Names Information System, National Hydrographic Survey, National Water Research Institute, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - TIGER/Line, Hydro Data

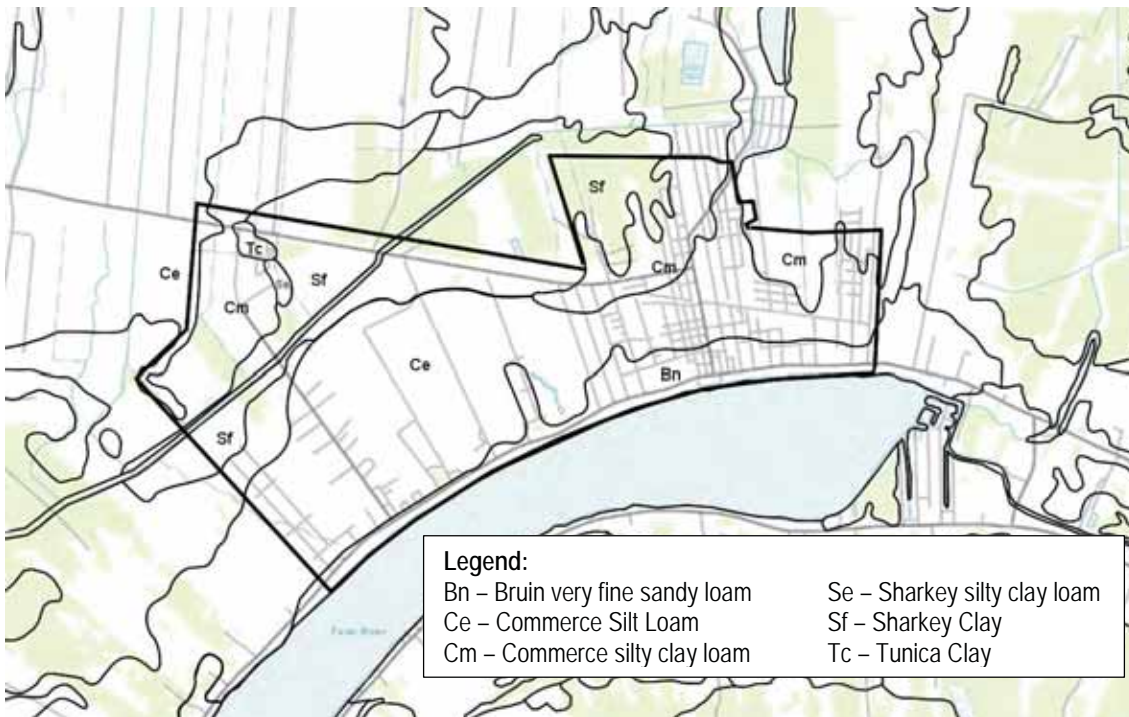


Exhibit 13. Soils Map (Tax Assessor Website over USGS Base Map)

Perhaps more evident in color on a regional perspective (Exhibit 14, Regional Soils Map after USDA Soils Data), soils formed in low-lying areas exist east of the city, north of the city, and along the city's northern sectors. These low-lying clayey soils are indicative of frequently flooded areas which are not conducive to sustainable development. These areas should not be zoned for urban development.

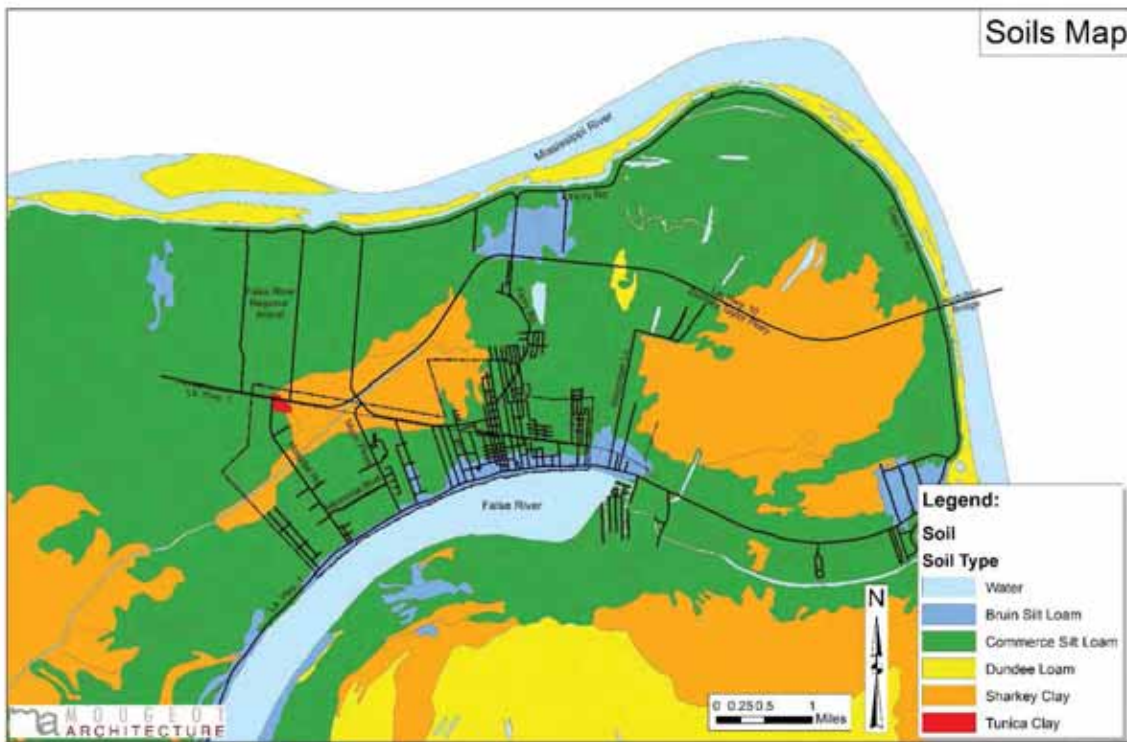


Exhibit 14. Regional Soils Map after USDA Soils Data

4. Wetlands

Shown at the regional scale, wetlands in the vicinity of New Roads are located in small pockets in the northernmost sectors of the city and in larger areas immediately north of town. These areas are typically lower in elevation than surrounding areas and in expanses defined by poorly drained soils east and west of the city. These areas are clearly defined in Exhibit 15, Wetlands. According to federal wetland data, the areas are defined as Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland. In regard to future land use policy and sustainable urban development, wetlands, poorly drained soils, and flood zones are considered as constraints to development. In accordance with objectives embedded in this comprehensive plan by both the City and the funding entity, future urbanization in these area is to be avoided when and where practical.

5. Pipelines

Large pipelines extend underground in the vicinity of New Roads. These systems, which typically move unrefined and refined petroleum products through the state, extend from the east, continuing westward under the Mississippi River, traversing the region north of the city limits, crossing the airport near the southern end of the runway, and extending onward to the east. While pipelines are often considered constraints to urban growth and development, the constraint is not major as only the space above the pipeline corridor is affected. Nonetheless, the pipeline corridors are highlighted on the composite physical constraint map, Exhibit 18, Page III-21.

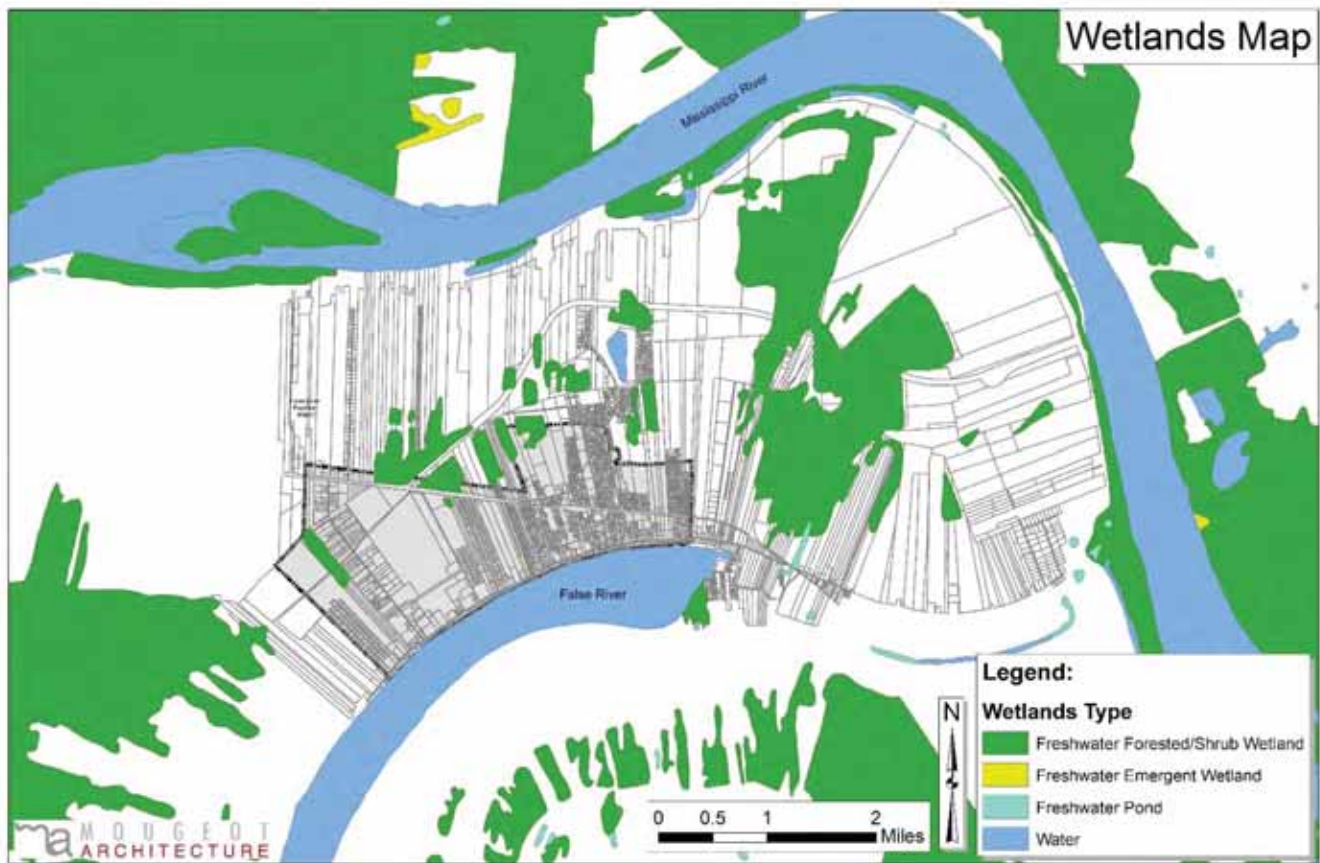


Exhibit 15. Wetlands (Louisiana Fish and Wildlife Services)

6. Existing Land Use

As noted in the introductory chapter, the limit of study was not restricted to the City of New Roads; rather, it was expanded northward and eastward to include the landscape between False River and the Mississippi River. By incorporating this approach, opportunities offered by the proximity of New Roads to the Mississippi River, the John J. Audubon Bridge, major state highways (LA 10 and LA 1), additional soils suitable for commercial and industrial inducement, and expanded utility infrastructure potential could be incorporated into the planning process. The regional Level I Land Use Map presented below (Exhibit 16) identifies this expanded study area. The New Roads city limit is highlighted in the southwest quadrant.

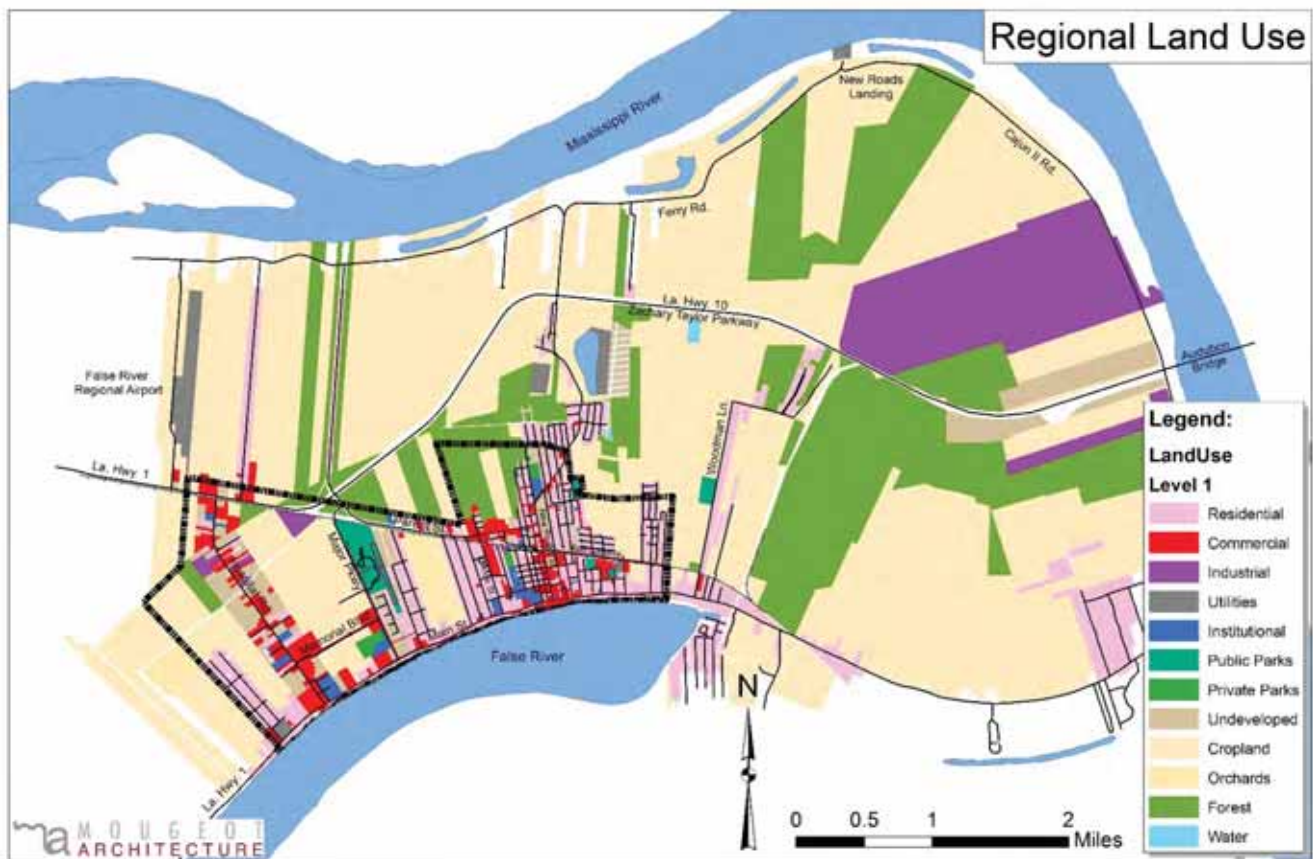


Exhibit 16. Regional Land Use Map

From this regional perspective, land use is noted in three major categories: agricultural (cropland, pasture, orchards, and undeveloped/fallow land), forestland (deciduous and forested wetlands), or industrial. However, small sections of residential use are also noted. With the exception of forested wetland areas, pipeline corridors, and floodplains, the land is ideally suited for urbanization. The Cajun II electrical generating station located along the Mississippi River is a major industrial and economic influence in the region.

This land area is also important to the region from an historical perspective. In this regard, two trails pass through the region, and both pass through New Roads. The False River Historic Trail enters the parish near U. S. 190 and La. Hwy. 1 and follows Main St. south of New Roads and continues through the city. In addition, the Zachary Taylor Parkway, traverses the community. This historic trail was enacted by legislation in 1992 to spur tourist interest and resultant economic enhancement. It is named after Zachary Taylor, the only U. S. president to be born in Louisiana.

The Parkway is approximately 210 miles in length and begins at Interstate 49 near Alexandria to the northwest and follows an easterly route along Louisiana Highways 1 and 10 and Mississippi Highway 26 ending near Poplarville, Mississippi, at Interstate 59 in Mississippi. In Pointe Coupee parish, the Parkway enters the parish as La. Hwy. 1 from Simmsport to Lettsworth and Morganza, passes the False River Regional Airport, continues through the northwest corner of New Roads, and follows La. Hwy. 10 across the Audubon Bridge. It then extends eastward through Louisiana's Florida Parishes to I-59 in Mississippi. The map depicted in Exhibit 17 outlines the route of the Parkway. In late 2015, the Zachary-Taylor Parkway Commission was updating the Scenic Byways Master Plan, Traffic Study, and Economic Development Plan for the Parkway.



Exhibit 17. Zachary Taylor Parkway: Route Map
www.zacharytaylorparkway.com, 10-26-15

Of additional historical interest in the immediate vicinity of New Roads is the terminus of the Bartram Trail. In mid-2015, a Bartram Trail historical marker was placed across from the St. Francis Catholic Church along Ferry Road just north of the airport. This feature adds to the collection of historically important critical mass useful in expanding tourism interests in the New Roads area, an economic development goal established by the City and comprehensive plan steering committee.



E. Regional Evaluation/Suitability Summary Assessment

The regional assessment presented above is summarized below following a SWOT assessment format (Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats, and Opportunities). This assessment forms the basis for the regional future land use map that follows.

1. Strengths

Assets of the community and region relative to natural physical features are abundant.

- The John J. Audubon Bridge offers improved connectivity to St. Francisville and the Baton Rouge metro area.
- State highway infrastructure is plentiful and in good to excellent condition.
- Flat, relatively well-drained topography, especially along the river corridor, with a good gravity drainage system in place is ideally suited for urban expansion, especially from an industrial perspective.
- Vast acreages of suitable alluvial soils also support urban growth.
- False River is a major local and regional attraction with excellent water quality.
- The history of the region and city offers economic expansion opportunities in the tourist market.
- Scenic by-ways and trails also offer expanded tourism opportunities.
- Dynamic Mississippi River geology is unique to the formation and history of the region.
- The community has become a regional destination base, e.g., historic downtown, Wal-Mart as a regional draw, restaurants, False River, etc. and needs to capitalize on the opportunities afforded.
- Minimal concern exists regarding natural hazard events (no susceptibility to storm surge or riverine flood events and only minor concern regarding extended stormwater events).

2. Weaknesses and Threats

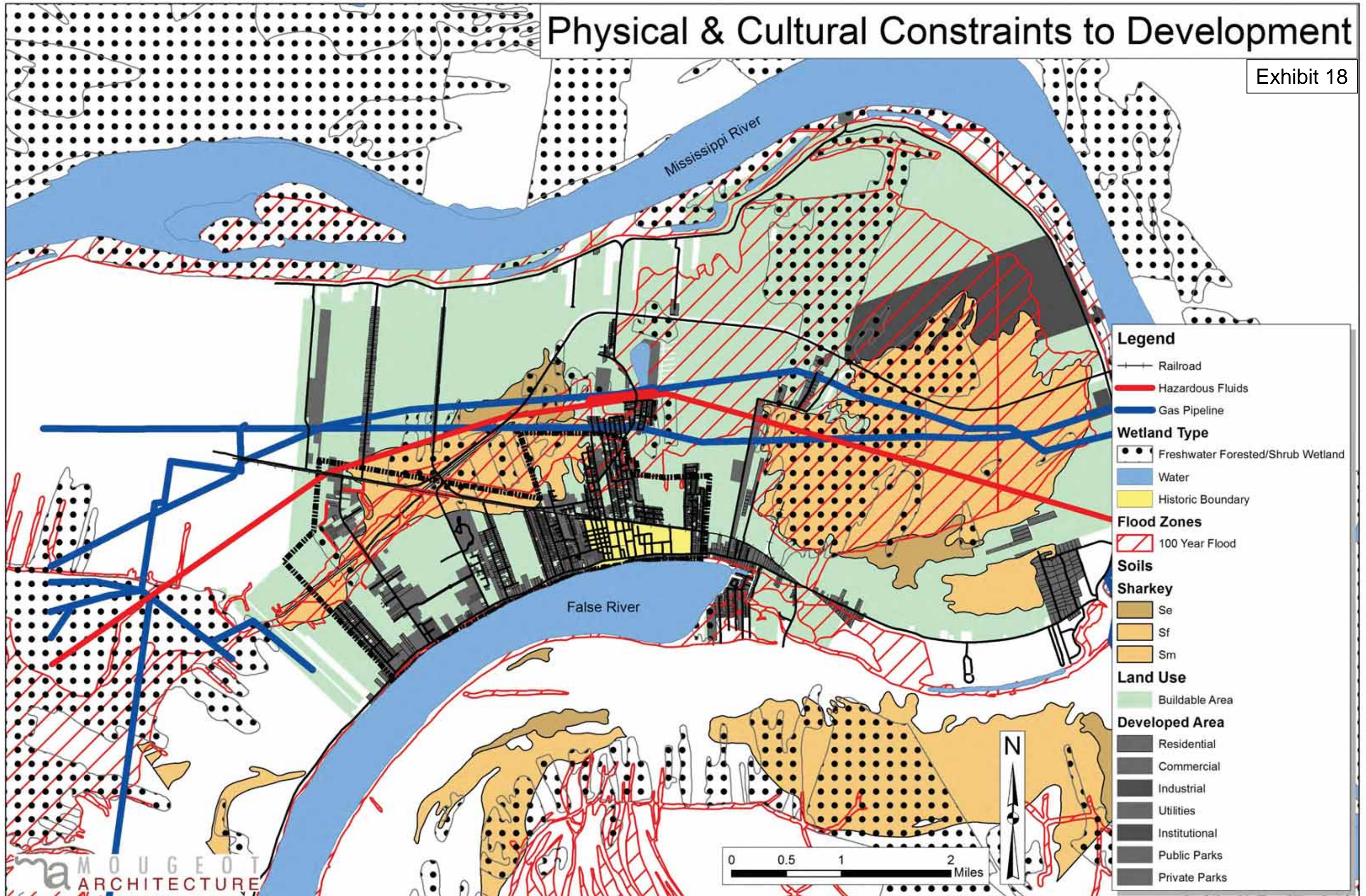
- Large expanse of forested wetlands, flood plain, and large pipelines in the expanded regional study area offer constraints to urbanization.
- Unification is needed to ensure collaboration and cooperation between scenic tourism interests and the need for industrial expansion along the bridge/La. 10 corridor and river roads corridor.
- While False River is well-known throughout the region, "New Roads" is not as well known.
- The city lacks a well-defined sense of place—community identity, boundaries, major features attractions, etc.
- The City is not fully engaged or organized for expanding a tourism based focus.
- Urban expansion outside of the city limits but within the study area will result in reducing prime agricultural acreage.

3. Opportunities

- Create stronger local bonds between New Roads and False River.
- Brand New Roads with False River and regional tourism interests.
- Create stronger regional bonds with St. Francisville and the east side of the river.
- Organize to recognize regional as well as city historically based critical mass.
- The regional vicinity between the city and the bridge offer an ideal setting for industrial development.
- This setting offers the opportunity for the city to expand its utility network to benefit potential industrial users.
- The opportunity to consider annexation at this time may offer economic benefits to the community and region at large.

Physical & Cultural Constraints to Development

Exhibit 18



F. Regional Future Land Use

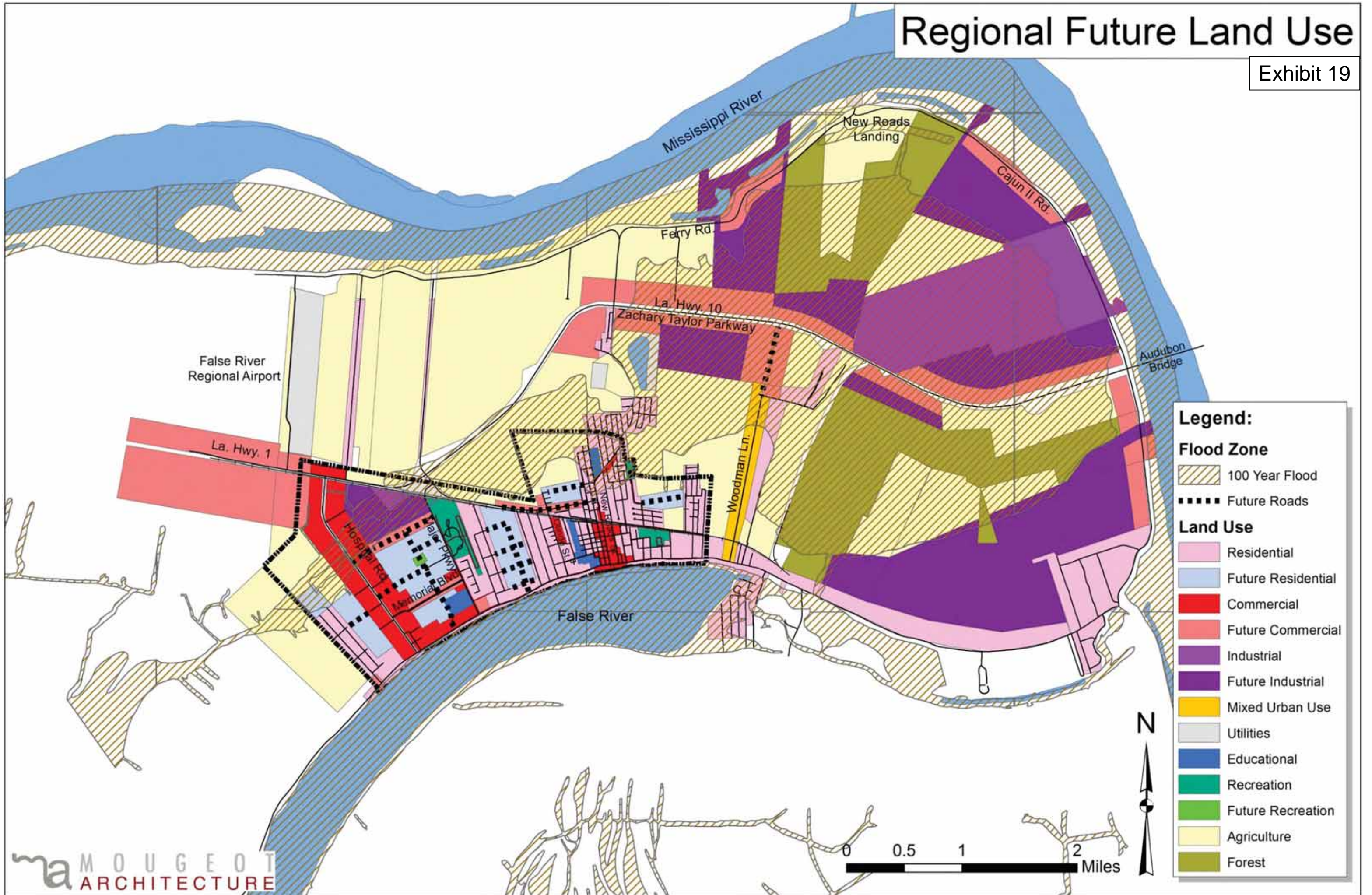
To graphically summarize the regional presentation of this chapter relative to land suitability and future potential for urbanization, Exhibit 18, Physical and Cultural Constraints to Development, is presented. The combining of constraints noted heretofore also offers a view of areas void of constraints. These areas offer the most suitable opportunity for regional urbanization. The physical and cultural constraints map identifies factors that contribute to land development suitability. Factors such as oil and gas pipelines, flood zones, wetlands, developed properties, and poor soil all contribute to difficulties when developing a residential subdivision, commercial areas of any size, and industrial sites.

Relative to New Roads' planning vision and goals, the opportunity for creating new primary jobs, i. e., those that generate new revenue in the locale by generating direct economic benefits in addition to indirect and induced economic activity would be ideally suited in the areas shown in white on the regional Physical and Cultural Constraints map.

In establishing a goal to increase the population and economic opportunities, planners and citizens alike agreed that the present labor force leans heavily in the direction of blue collar opportunities with the realization that white collar jobs would be included within the proportional norm. Therefore, working with Parish representatives in efforts to expand industrial use in the area is recommended. In that regard, future land use within the city limits should be focused on residential and commercial growth and not on industrial uses. As a result of these findings, future land use in the expanded region is presented in Exhibit 19, Regional Future Land Use. Future land use within the city limits of New Roads is addressed in Chapter VII, Section B.

Regional Future Land Use

Exhibit 19



The recommended expansion of industrial lands offers two major issues worthy of consideration. First, in comparing existing land use with future land use at the regional scale, future industrial land will replace agricultural land in some places and some of the industrial site land area is located within the 100-year floodplain. Secondly, with the need to increase historical tourism as an economic development tool, the pastoral landscape from the bridge to New Roads and along the river roads would be conflicted if industry were allowed along highway frontage. It is hereby recommended that the city and parish governmental entities be aware of this conflict and encourage or by ordinance regulate usage along the highway frontage. As a minimum, New Roads officials and tourism oriented citizenry should remain conscious of this concern and work diligently to the benefit of both industrial use and preservationists interests.

IV. SOCIOECONOMIC INVENTORY and ANALYSIS

With the regional perspective and broader scale issues addressed, planning assessment now focuses on more site specific data, i.e., the city itself. This analysis begins with a demographic and socioeconomic evaluation.

A. Base Data

U. S. Census Bureau and associated data presented in the following two tables (Exhibits 20 and 21) offer a broad general vision of the socioeconomic characteristics of New Roads relative to the parish, the state, and the nation. Information is presented relative to population, home and household values, and income. Pertinent information and conclusions drawn from this information are presented in the following sections of this chapter.

Location	New Roads		Pointe Coupee Parish		
	Year	2000	2010	2000	2010
Total Population		4,966	4,831	22,763	22,802
Median Age		37.8	43.9	36.7	41.4
Households		1,825	2,020	8,397	9,082
Average Household Size		2.6	2.3	2.67	2.5
Families		1,243	1,223	6,171	6,289
Average Family Size		3.24	3.04	3.17	3.02
Owner Occupied Housing Units		1,170	1,207	6,526	6,932
Average Home Value		\$67,800	\$122,886	\$68,400	\$113,100
Median Household Income		\$24,583	\$35,625	\$30,618	\$45,363
Mean Household Income		\$38,989	\$55,924	\$41,473	\$58,614
Per Capita Income		\$14,328	\$23,384	\$15,387	\$23,742

Exhibit 20. New Roads and Pointe Coupee Parish Demographic Information (2000, 2010 Census, 2009-2013 American Community Survey)

Location	Louisiana		United States		
	Year	2000	2010	2000	2010
Total Population		4,468,976	4,533,372	281,421,906	308,745,538
Median Age		34	35.8	35.3	37.2
Households		1,656,053	1,728,360	105,480,101	116,716,292
Average Household Size		2.62	2.55	2.59	2.58
Families		1,156,438	1,160,118	71,787,347	77,538,296
Average Family Size		3.16	3.1	3.14	3.14
Owner Occupied Housing Units		1,125,135	1,162,299	69,815,753	75,986,074
Average Home Value		\$85,000	\$138,900	\$119,600	\$179,900
Median Household Income		\$32,566	\$44,874	\$41,994	\$53,046
Mean Household Income		\$45,923	\$62,773	\$70,883	\$73,487
Per Capita Income		\$23,090	\$35,507	\$21,587	\$28,155

Exhibit 21. Louisiana and U. S. Demographic Information (2000, 2010, 2009-2013 American Community Survey)

B. Population and Age Characteristics

According to the U. S. Census Bureau, the population of New Roads in 2010 was 4,831. This is a decrease of 135 residents from the 2000 population of 4,966. Though relatively minor and not verifiably accurate, this 2.7% decrease is consistent with a general decline that has been evident since 1990. This basis is graphically depicted in Exhibit 22. New Roads Historical Population which also includes a population projection to 2019.

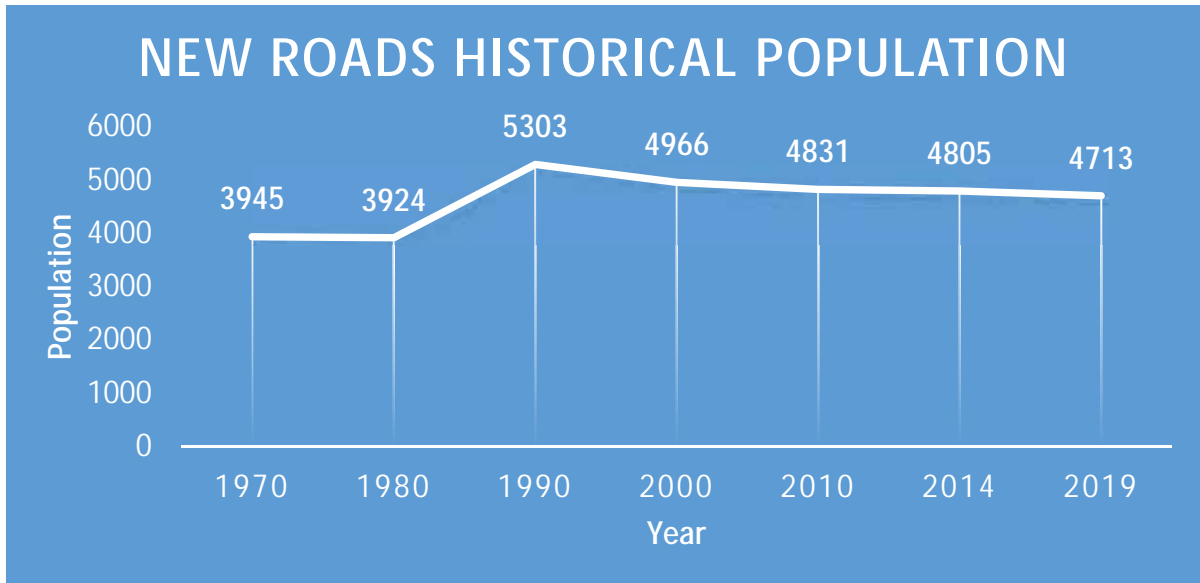


Exhibit 22, New Roads Historical Population

According to data provided in the 1984 New Roads city plan, estimates indicated that the population peaked in 1984 at 5,634. Based on data provided by ESRI (Environmental Systems Research Institute), the GIS program used for mapping and socioeconomic data analysis throughout this report, the population projection for 2019 is 4,713. Assuming a 2020 population at or near 4,700 and using the 1990 Census population of 5,303, an 11.4% decrease in the city's population will have been experienced by 2020. To be conservative, a 10% population decline over a 30-year period offers a basis for establishing population goals for the city.

At the parish level, the population is relatively stable with virtually no net change in population from 2000 to 2010, approximately 22,500 citizens. At the state level, a growth rate of 1.4% was experienced during the same ten-year time frame. While the city's population decline is relatively minor, the fact that the city is losing population while the state and nation are increasing in population is noteworthy.

Also possibly of significance is the fact that the city's population in 2010 was 58.6% Black, 39.3% White, and 2.1% Hispanic and other. In contrast, nationally, racial diversification is 49.7% white, 12.7% black, 25.1% Hispanic, 7.9% Asian, and 3.7% multiracial, and 1% other. At New Roads Comprehensive Planning Steering Committee meetings, at public meetings, and in conversations with elected officials, it was agreed that a comp plan goal would be for the city to increase its population by 500 persons in a 10-year planning horizon and that growth should target young, upwardly mobile families of childbearing age consisting of a racial diversity somewhat consistent with national data as noted above. While a discussion of the benefits of more diversity in the population base of cities across America and the health and sustainability of the corresponding economies is beyond the scope of this report, more ethnic diversity as well as population growth in New Roads is a comprehensive plan goal. This approach may expand the market for re-investing in older homes and empty lots in those residential areas of the city in most need of revitalization.

For the sake of regional comparison of smaller cities in the region, data relative to four other communities in the Baton Rouge metro area was collected and is presented in Exhibit 23. Population of Surrounding Communities with 2019 Projections. In summarizing, since 1970, the population of Livonia has more than doubled; Krotz Springs has grown significantly in population; St. Francisville has remained stable as desired by the citizenry in accordance with recent planning documentation, and Zachary has increased its population from 5,500 to 14,000. The rise in the population of Zachary is attributable to several factors, two of which are its proximity to Baton Rouge and Baton Rouge out-migration over the past several decades.

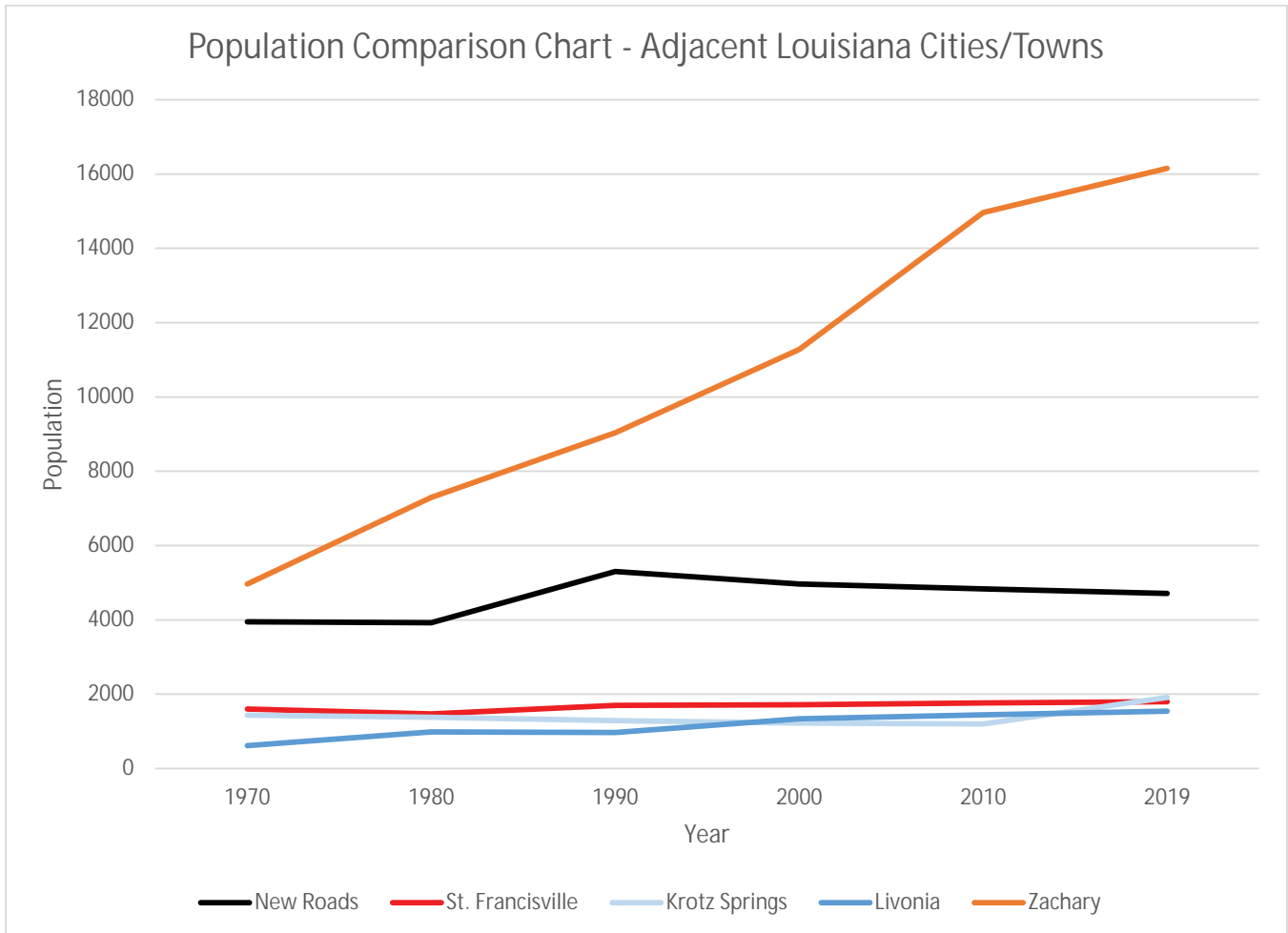


Exhibit 23: Populations of Surrounding Communities with 2019 Projections (LA State Census Bureau)

In review of age related data, the city of New Roads and Pointe Coupee parish populations are aging as is the U. S. as a whole. Between the 2000 and 2010 census, New Roads' median age has increased from 37.8 to 43.9. During this time period at the national level, the median age went from 35.3 to 37.2. The 6.3 years upper age difference in 2010 is significant as is the rate of change, i.e., 1.9 years difference in the ten-year period at the national level versus 6.3 years in New Roads.

As can be noted in Exhibit 24. Percentage of Specific Age Groups vs. Total Population (1970 – 2010), a shifting trend is of interest. During the 1970s, 1980s, and most of the 1990s, New Roads had a much higher proportion of young people, i.e., ages 0 to 24, than did the nation at-large. By 2010, though, as this group had aged to the 25 – 34 age group, the population of this age cohort dropped below the national average. In 2010, the New Roads citizenship exceeded the national median age in the 45 – 85 age group. The conclusion is that the city's population base is aging faster than the nation's. The general consensus of planning participants suggests that young people are moving away.

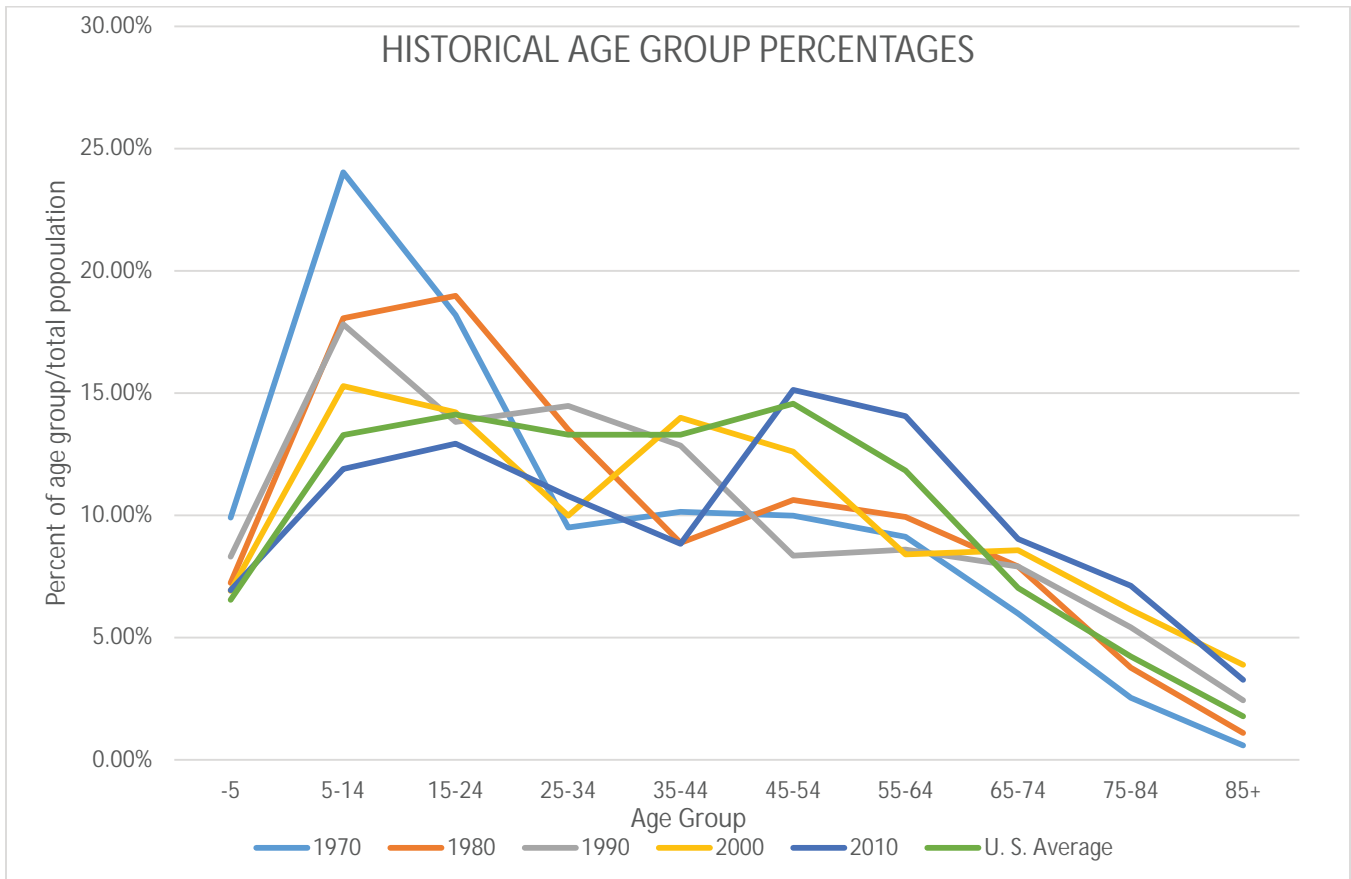


Exhibit 24. Percentage of Specific Age Groups vs. Total Population: 1970 - 2010 (1970-2010 La Census Data)

Review of age specific data representative of New Roads only is presented in Exhibit 25, New Roads Change in Percentage of Specific Age Groups from 1990 to 2010, indicates clearly that the population age shifted proportionately. In the 90s, the majority of the population was below 45 years of age. By 2010, the population shifted with more citizens being 45 or older.

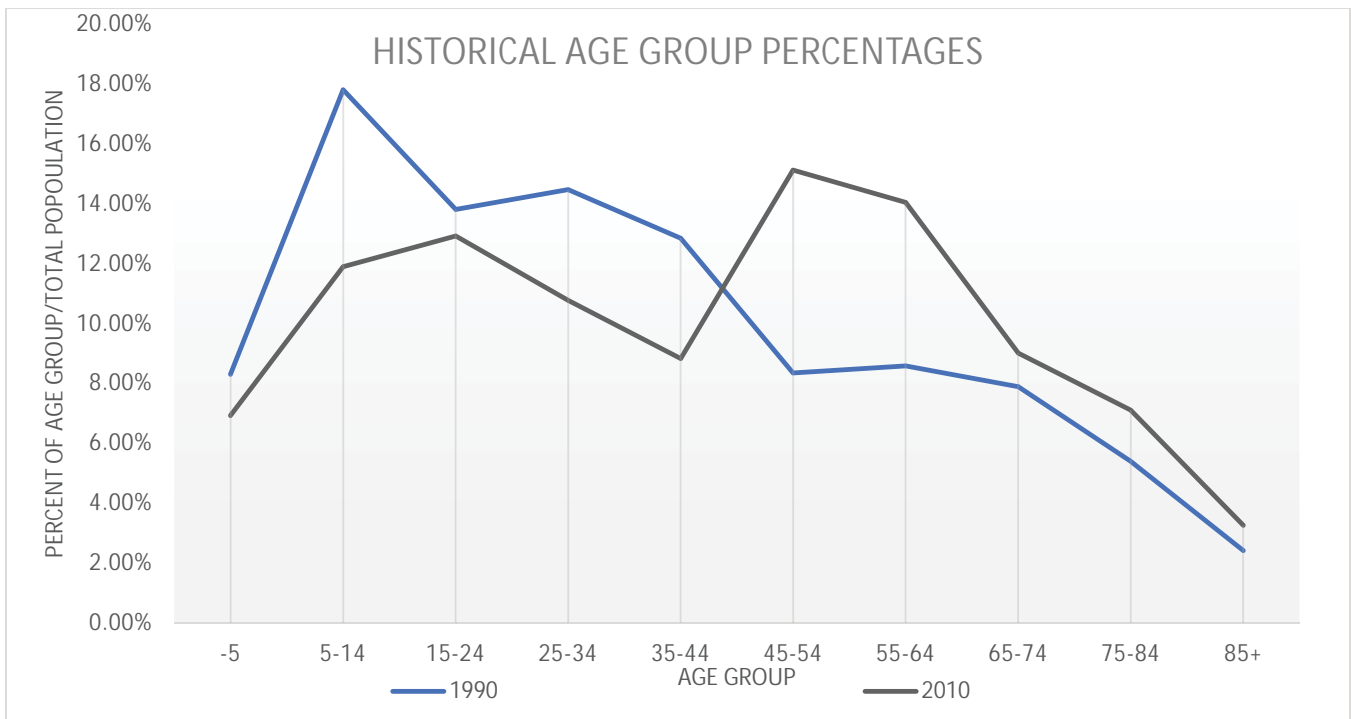


Exhibit 25: New Roads Change in Percentage of Specific Age Groups from 1990 to 2010 (1990 and 2010 Census Data)

While these traits are not considered a negative trend in municipalities focused on creating an environment to draw retirement age and elderly citizens, for a city looking to maintain and increase its population with young, upwardly mobile citizens of child-bearing age, determining a causal relationship for the shifting and aging population is imperative. One reason confirmed by the planning team and citizens of the community for both the population decline and the aging population base is because of the poorly rated public schools. The school board is working to make changes in this regard. A new Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) school is in the planning stages. Other improvements were noted, but more detail in educational issues related to the Pointe Coupee educational system is beyond the scope of this report.

A second reason noted is that most mid- to upper-level paying jobs are in the Baton Rouge area and the greater than 45-minute one-way commute is considered too much of a commute for Louisiana citizens. While this commute is not considered long in dense urban settings across the country, it is considered long in the Baton Rouge metro area where the average commute is 26.9 minutes one way (http://www.nola.com/traffic/baton-rouge/index.ssf/2015/06/baton_rouge_traffic_worse_has.htm, June 29, 2015). Thus, older citizens are staying home while the younger citizens are moving to better schools and to homes closer to the job market.

C. Income and Earnings

In terms of per capita income, the city's percent change (63.2% increase) nearly equaled that of the nation (64.5%) in growth between 2000 and 2010 while the parish and state were approximately 10% lower. In addition, New Roads rated higher in the growth of mean household income (43.4%) between 2000 and 2010 than did the parish (41.3%), state (36.7%), and nation (3.7%).

Even with the population of New Roads in slight decline and aging, the economic strength of the city is growing. Median income for full-time working men has risen 35% since 2010 while the median income for full-time working women has risen 8.5%. Although both males' and females' earnings are less than the parish and the state, New Roads is closing the gap. The median household income rising from \$24,583 in 2000 to \$35,625 in 2013 is a 45% increase over the last 13 years.

The commercial and economic growth of New Roads continues to attract visitors from surrounding areas. The general consensus is that the John J. Audubon bridge, a new Wal-Mart Super Store, several destination restaurants, numerous festivals, and recreation opportunities offered by False River and the False River Park and rodeo facility on Major Parkway are reasons why income levels are increasing. New Roads being the parish seat also offers a sound basis for economic sustainability. Other reasons include the attitude and approach to improving the quality of life in New Roads by the administration and city council. This proactive can-do attitude was noted at several meetings by the constituency.

In addition, New Roads offers a relatively high proportion of professional commercial services within its city limits for a city of its size. These service providers are crucial to the livelihood of the city's economy. For a small city, an abundance of the following professions were noted: banking, financial Institutions, hospital staff, doctors, lawyers, business owners, and insurance companies.

From an earnings perspective, the city has historically been below Louisiana and Pointe Coupee Parish levels relative to average workers' earnings. As noted in Exhibit 26, Median Income Earnings for Full-time Workers, city based earnings are escalating at a rate higher than the parish and the state. This factor may be attributable to the new bridge and new businesses along the Hospital Road commercial corridor.

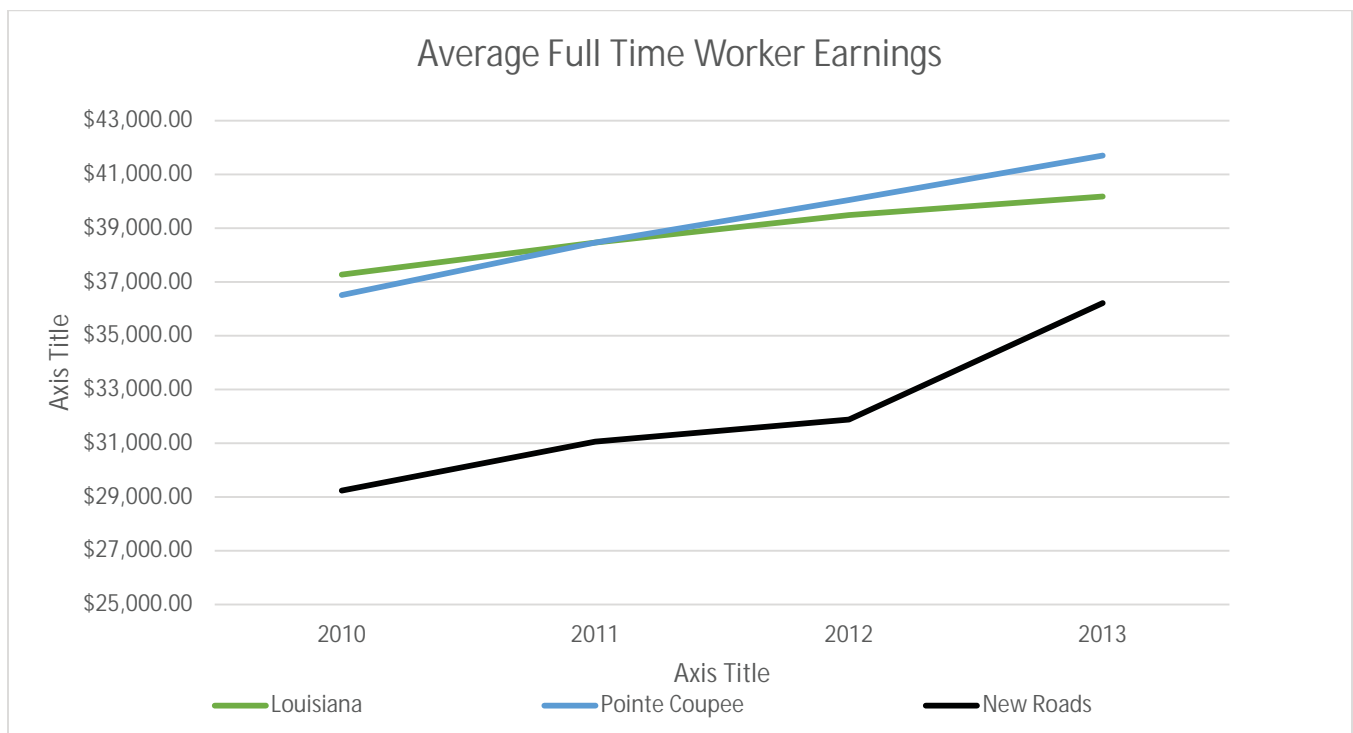


Exhibit 26. Median Income Earnings for Full time Workers (2009-2013 American Community Survey)

A household is defined by the Census Bureau as two or more people living together who are related by blood or marriage. The Census Bureau calculates the combined income of everyone in the household. In comparing household income in New Roads to Pointe Coupee Parish, the state, and the nation, as evidenced below in Exhibit 27, Income of Households vs. Total Population, the New Roads population consists of proportionately more households with lower income and fewer with higher income compared to national, state, and household incomes.

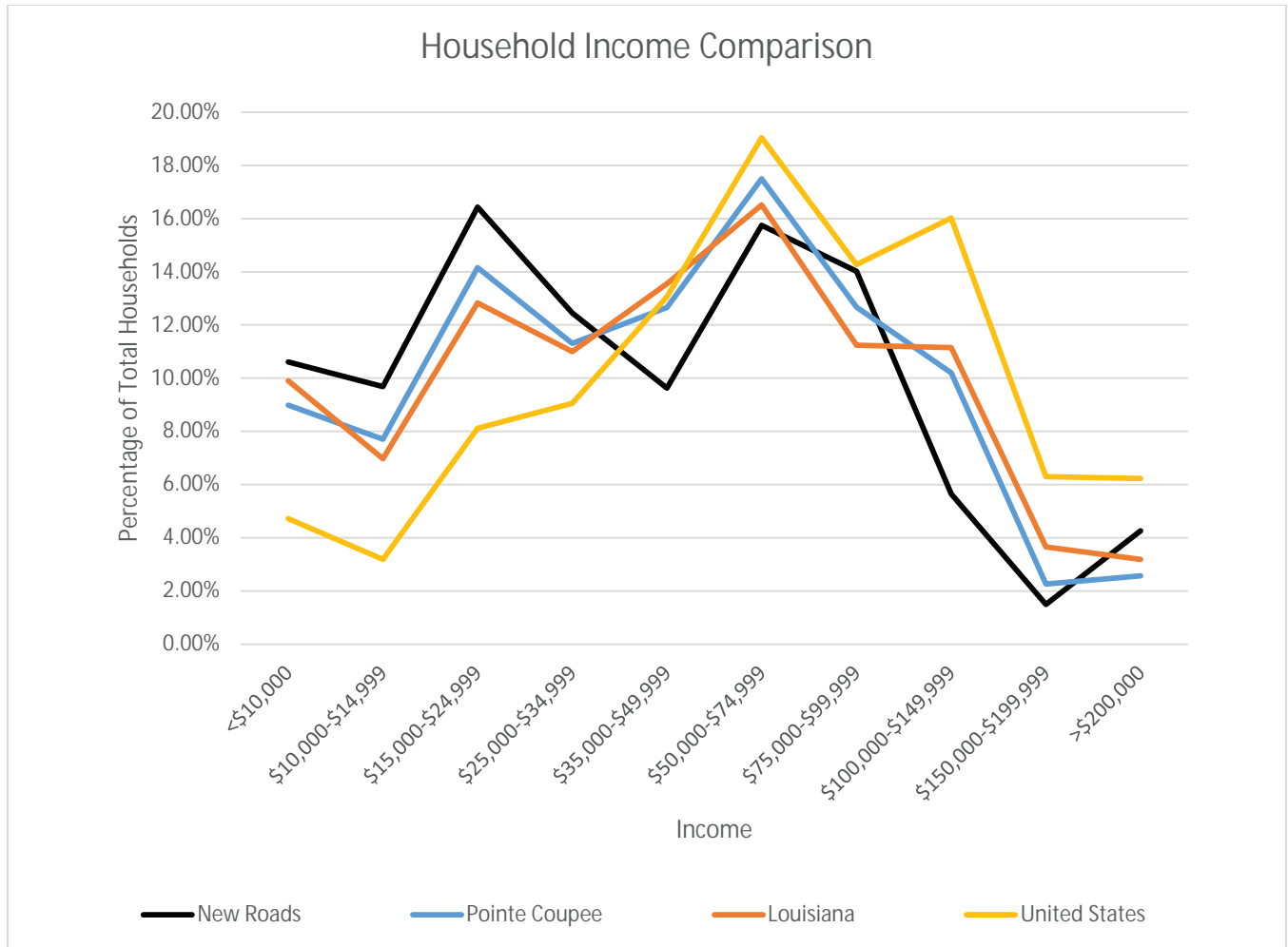


Exhibit 27. Household Income Comparison (2010 Census)

D. Property Values

Property values in New Roads have shown greater improvements than the parish, state, and nation in recent years. The average home in New Roads has risen 181% in value since 2000. Parish home values have risen 165%, the State 163%, and the nation at 150%. Although the average home value is lower than the state and national average, New Roads' location on False River and the historical significance of some homes will continue to strengthen home values and attract new construction/renovations. Additionally, it is noteworthy that the rise in parish home values is very much a function of increased values in New Roads.

In 2000, home values in New Roads (\$67,800) and Pointe Coupee Parish ((\$68,400) were far lower than that of the state (\$85,000) and the nation (\$119,600). While the average home value in New Roads recorded in 2010 (\$122,886) is higher than that of the parish (\$114,100), it is lower than that of the state (\$138,900) or the nation (\$179,900). As noted in further residential land use analysis, the recent surge in home values in New Roads is the result of a single new market rate housing subdivision in New Roads. The 2000 values more closely reflect the actual long-term and historical housing values in the city while 2010 values include a major new residential development, the first in several decades.

Nonetheless, care must be taken to realize that while new homes in one area of the city have a positive impact on property values citywide and parishwide, a high percentage of homes are below median values and reflect poor living conditions in many parts of the city. This subject is detailed more in the Land Use Assessment section of Chapter V. on residential use.

E. Permits and Building Construction

1. Residential

Building construction data obtained from the Pointe Coupee Parish permit office indicates that from 2008 through 2014, parish residential construction was primarily limited to the New Roads corporate limits. As noted in the data presented in Exhibit 28, Permitting Activity in New Roads city limits, the national downturn in the U. S. economy that began in 2008 did little to negatively affect residential development in New Roads. Over 40 new homes were constructed between 2008 and 2010. The community had not seen this much new residential construction in a three-year period since the 1950s and 1960s.

Of most significance to the city's planning efforts is the fact that the vast majority of this new residential construction took place in a new subdivision east of Major Parkway and that these homes reflect market rate housing with average costs, including the purchase of land, ranging from \$225,000 to \$300,000. The concentration of permitted residential construction sites is noted in Exhibit 29. Permitting Map. Approximately 80 percent of the sites and 90% of the construction costs were associated with the new homes in the new subdivision off Major Parkway.

Year	No. of Residential Permits	Residential Total Value	No. of Commercial Permits	Commercial Total Value
2008	13	\$2,199,905	5	\$4,490,000
2009	14	\$2,131,305	1	\$142,000
2010	14	\$2,030,910	0	\$0
2011	9	\$1,729,230	3	\$2,725,000
2012	8	\$1,161,010	2	\$14,165,484
2013	6	\$1,790,766	5	\$4,010,105
2014	9	\$2,128,146	9	\$11,787,083
2015	4	\$894,784	1	\$687,417
TOTAL	77	\$14,066,056	26	\$38,007,089

Exhibit 28. Permitting Activity in New Roads City Limits (Pointe Coupee Permit Dept.)

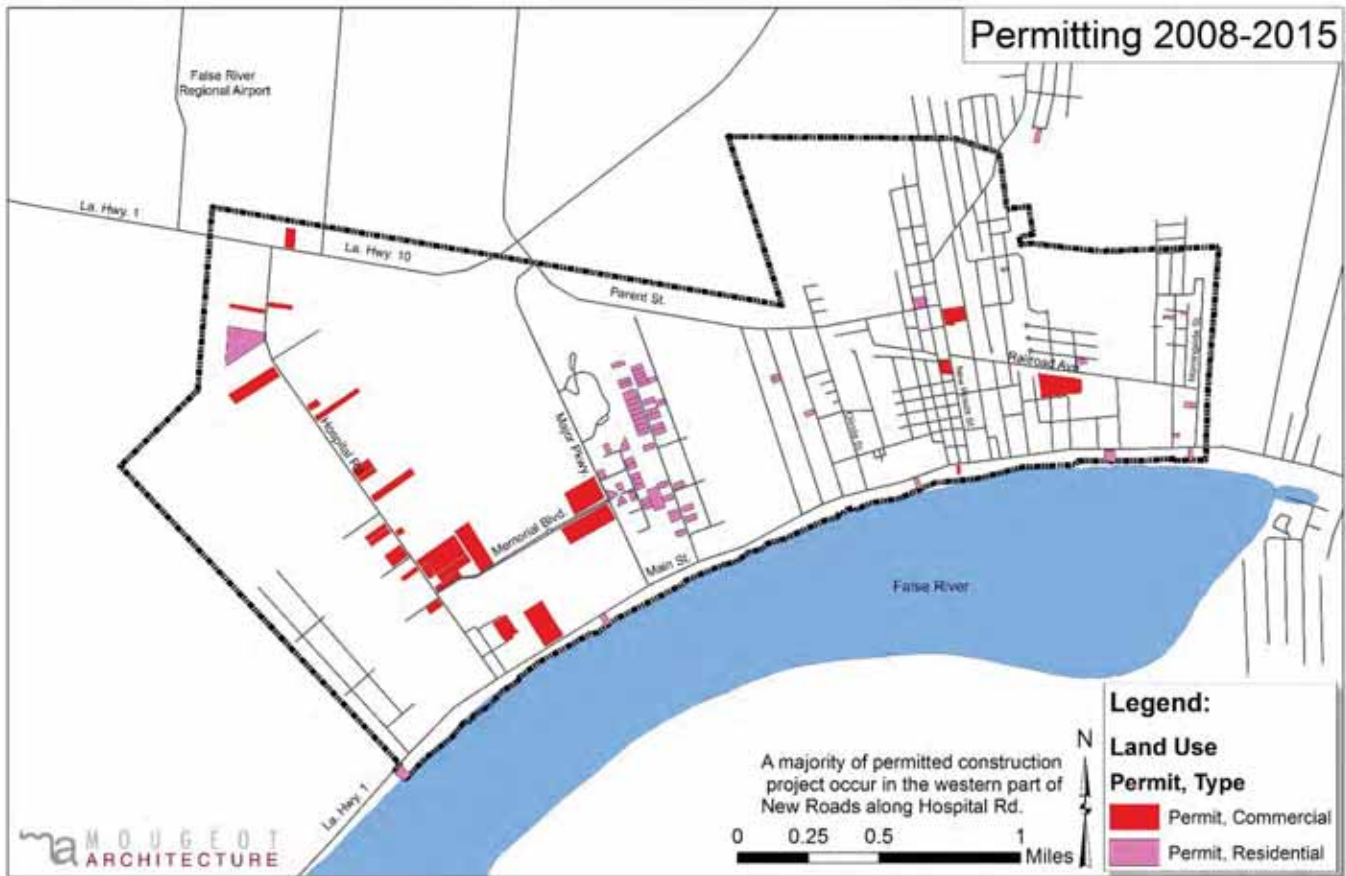


Exhibit 29. Permitting Map (ArcGIS Map, Pointe Coupee Permitting Dept.)

2. Commercial

While the U. S. financial crisis of 2008 had no negative impact on residential construction in New Roads, it appears to have had an impact on commercial construction. While five permits were issued in 2008 for a value of \$4,490,000, only one permit was written in 2009 and none in 2010. The city has since recovered with the construction of 20 commercial developments valued at \$33,375,089, one of which was the Super Wal-Mart in 2012. As a general consensus, elected officials and steering committee members alike consider the Wal-Mart decision to relocate the old Wal-Mart and expand to a super store and the opening of the Audubon Bridge in 2011 to be major factors benefitting the economic well-being of the community presently and for future decades.

Similar to residential development during the 2008 to 2015 timeframe, the vast majority of development occurred on the west side of town. Two major commercial developments occurred along Major Parkway with most of the remainder occurring along Hospital Road. It is important to note that several of the new commercial developments were constructed along Memorial Parkway, the newest roadway constructed in the city which was designed as a connector between Major Parkway and Hospital Road.

F. Socioeconomic SWOT Assessment

In summary, significant conclusions and goals drawn from this data as presented by consultants and citizens participating in the planning process are as follows:

1. The city's population is decreasing while the median age of residents is increasing. While the population is showing signs of continuing to age in place, elected officials and citizens alike are intent upon increasing the population by targeting young upwardly mobile citizens of child-bearing age with diversity a primary objective.
2. To reduce commute time, the City will increase efforts to create new industrial development within close proximity of the city. In that regard, City officials and the business community are to foster opportunities for creating more mid- to high-level jobs in the New Roads area. This recommendation leads to consideration of the City working with Parish economic development personnel regarding identifying land near the city limits that is suitable and otherwise conducive to commercial and industrial development.
3. Annexation and possible extensions of city utilities are major objectives worthy of serious consideration.

V. PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT

A. Regional to City Transition

With the local socioeconomic assessment and the regional suitability assessment complete, an in-depth analysis of the existing and future land use within the city proper is addressed. To begin, the regional physical and cultural constraints that affect the city proper are noteworthy. The following map, Exhibit 30B, identifies constraints for future land development presented on the regional level that penetrate the city land mass. In New Roads, physical constraints are generally limited to relatively low areas along and in the vicinity of the Portage Canal. Here, poor soils and evidence of the 100-year floodplain are noted. As an in-depth assessment was presented in the regional assessment, Chapter III, additional detail and justification relative to physical constraints are not warranted; however, recommendations for future land use will be affected by these constraints relative to sustainability and resilience guidelines presented by state and federal authorities.

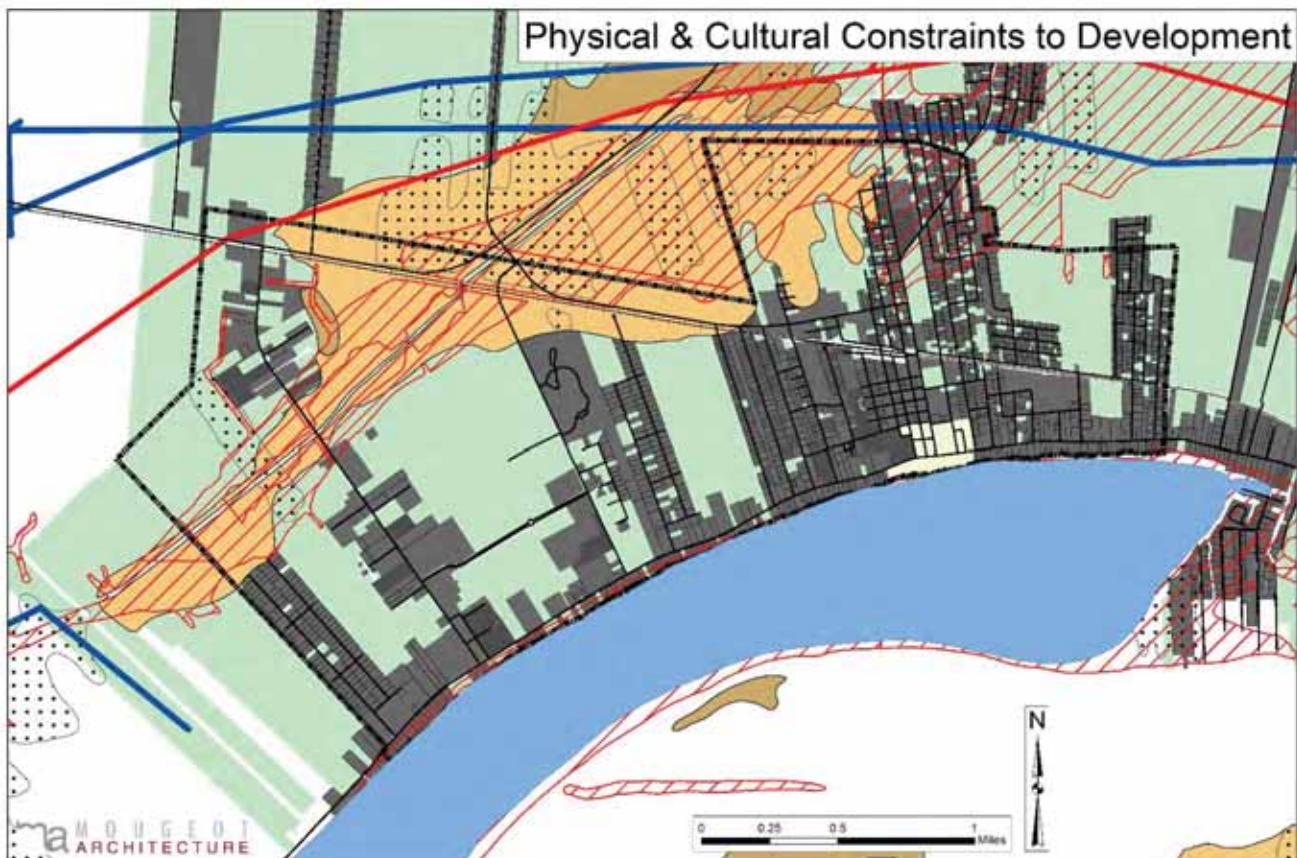


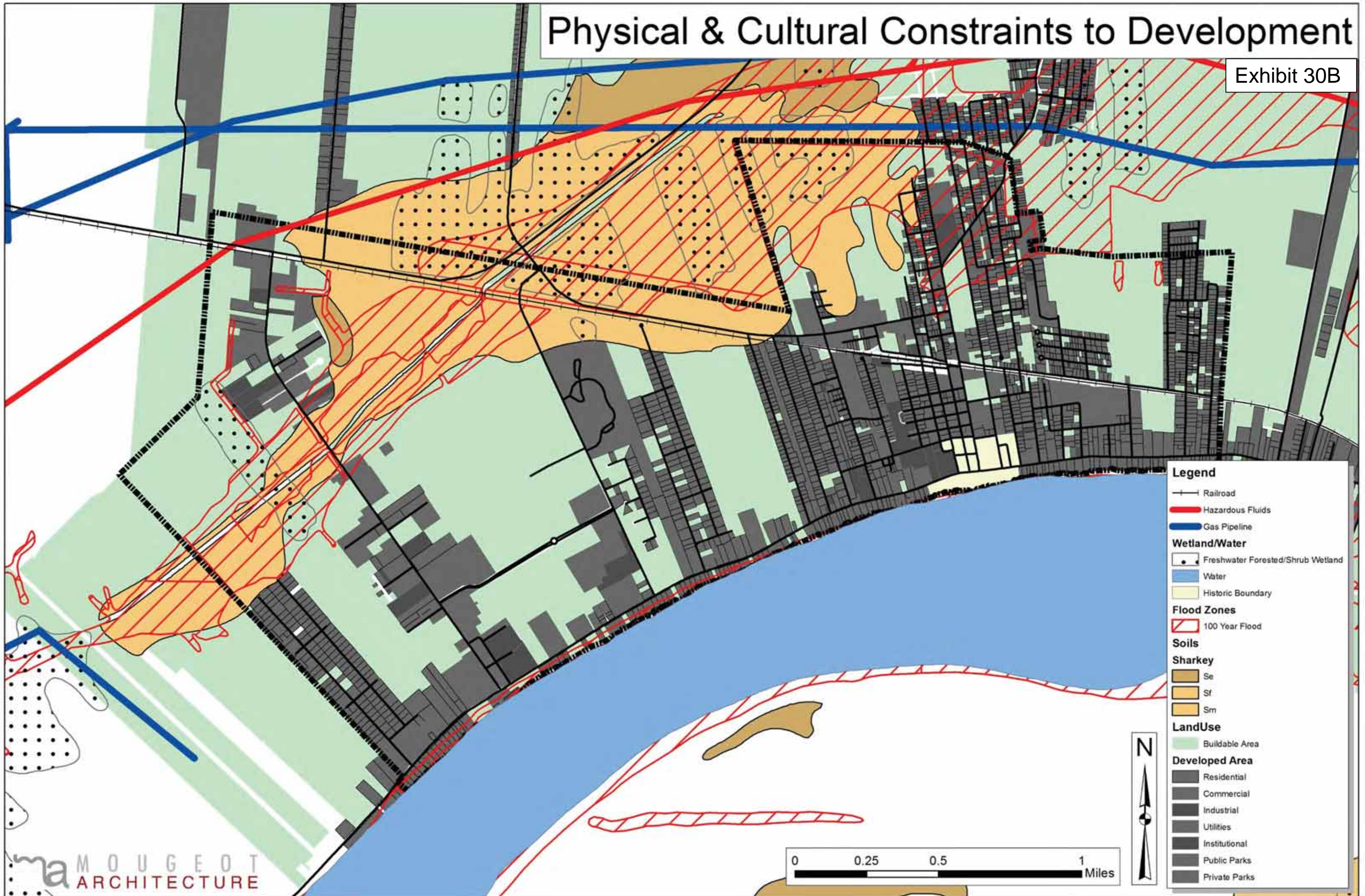
Exhibit 30A. Physical and Cultural Constraints to Development (See Exhibit 30B for clarity)

B. Citywide Street and Roadway Network

The two major highways that traverse the city and region, La. Hwy. 1 and La. Hwy. 10, while somewhat disjointed in layout through the city, offer ready access to and through the community. As shown on the city base map shown in Exhibit 31, other major thoroughfares run north-south. These roadways are referenced throughout this section of the report and include Hospital Road (a.k.a La. 1), Major Parkway, Olinde Street, New Roads Street, and Morningside Street (at the easternmost boundary). Portions of Parent Street, New Roads Street, and Hospital Road are urban sections of La. 1 and La. 10. In Exhibit 31, City of New Roads Base Map, the street base map is presented with arterial and collector roadways highlighted.

Physical & Cultural Constraints to Development

Exhibit 30B



The newest road in the city, Memorial Boulevard, was designed with characteristics of a “complete street” with sidewalks, bike lanes, and roundabouts. More study is directed to sidewalk needs in Section D of this chapter. Traffic along this roadway has not yet reached collector-size volume, but it will serve in that capacity as residential and commercial growth occurs between Hospital Road and Major Parkway. Other streets in the community are typical urban streets, some with sidewalks but most without.

The construction of the John J. Audubon Bridge and the recent upgrade to Hospital Road from a two-lane section to a three-lane section are the most recent State sponsored roadway improvements. Both of these major construction improvements have been beneficial to New Roads from both a traffic standpoint and by way of encouraging economic development. Upon communicating with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) and receiving a list of proposed projects for Pointe Coupee Parish for construction between now and 2020, it was determined that no state or federal roadway projects are planned for the study area.



John J. Audubon Bridge <http://www.google.com/imgres?imgurl=https://upload.wikimedia>.

C. Land Use Assessment

Information presented in the Existing Land Use Map, Exhibit 32, is offered for use in assessing the present setting of the community as a basis for future opportunities regarding community sustainability and resilience throughout the 20-year planning horizon. The analysis that follows focuses on land use relative to the vision, goals, and objectives established by the city administration, comprehensive plan steering committee, and citizens' input during public meetings (Chapter II). By addressing the planning assessment by land use function, the entire area of the city will be addressed.

1. Water—False River

While the city's southern boundary follows the edge of False River and the city includes no water, water is a major consideration in any discussion of planning for the City of New Roads. If New Roads had only one remarkable feature, that feature would be False River. For this reason, and since False River offers numerous benefits to the community with no negative features noted, this plan recommends that the city embrace the lake (False River) and maximize its benefit in any and all branding of the city. According to the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, the False River ecosystem is in excellent condition regarding water quality. According to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, an ongoing effort to restore the lake as a trophy bass fishery is underway. The ongoing U. S. Army Corps of Engineers False River Aquatic Resources Ecosystem Restoration Project is evidence of the ongoing efforts to maintain and enhance False River.

Once part of the Mississippi River, False River was disconnected in the 1720's after repeated annual flooding events changed the Mississippi River's course. Now an oxbow lake, False River offers seasonal yet year-round recreational camping, boating, fishing, and swimming opportunities. More than 900 docks and boathouses track the shoreline. It is in the city's best interest to ensure that stormwater runoff, urban waste, and agricultural runoff do not threaten the biological balance of the lake.

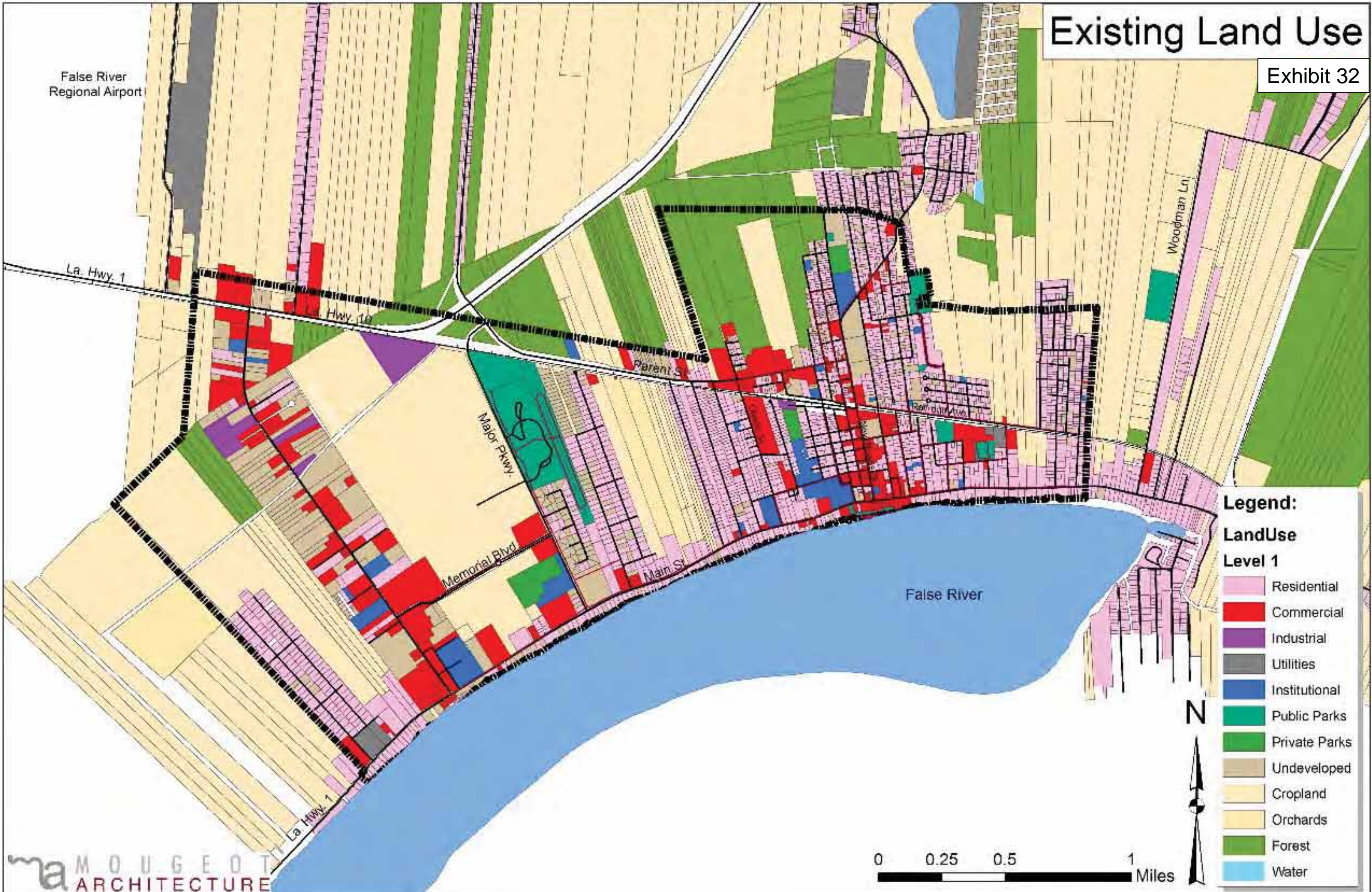
2. Industry and the Railroad Track

Land in industrial use is minimal in New Roads, limited to only one manufacturing site located near Parent Street and Major Parkway. Based on the analysis conducted for this plan and in accordance with citizen and administration comments, industrial growth within the city limits is not encouraged. However, industrial development is encouraged along the river corridor east and north of the city. This conclusion was presented earlier in the regional assessment and reiterated here to confirm those findings and recommendations.

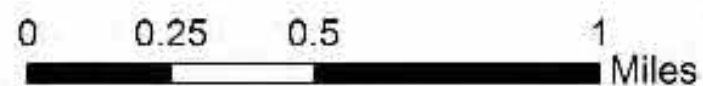
While truly a transportation function of land use analysis, the railroad and its impact is more of an industrial use function in this assessment of New Roads. The Kansas City Southern Railroad track traverses the middle of the city from boundary to boundary in an east-west direction. Trains plow the track several times daily creating loud, irritating noise and carrying hazardous chemicals. This scenario is typical of all large U. S. cities and hundreds of smaller communities. With little that the City can do regarding the rail corridor and rail operations, the planning effort focused on safety issues with particular concern regarding the need for alternative routes should evacuation of areas along the track be required. In that regard, two new streets are recommended: One new street connecting Cherry Street to Martin Street and another extending West 11th Street to Fir Street have been proposed. These two roadways have been under consideration for construction for several years. Construction by the parish police jury has begun on one of the two roadways.

Existing Land Use

Exhibit 32



- Legend:**
- LandUse**
- Level 1**
- Residential
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Utilities
 - Institutional
 - Public Parks
 - Private Parks
 - Undeveloped
 - Cropland
 - Orchards
 - Forest
 - Water



3. Agricultural Land (Cropland and Pasture) and Undeveloped Land

As a function of urban planning, agricultural land is seldom considered. In the case of New Roads, though, these lands are salient because the vast majority of vacant, undeveloped land is agricultural land. If new (vs. rehabilitation or renovation) residential and commercial lands are to be developed, they will develop on agricultural land. In some circles, consideration is presented whereby agricultural chemicals are used in the immediate vicinity of citizens. In sugar cane harvesting, burning is often associated with the process. These features are often considered not conducive to urbanization or urban expansion.

In contrast, these lands are often considered as areas with soils ideally suited to development. Typically, in Louisiana, replacing farmland with urban areas is preferred to utilizing floodplains or wetlands for that purpose. In comparison to the vast acreages of prime farmland in Pointe Coupee Parish, using farmland for urban expansion within the New Roads city limits is the preferable alternative.

4. Residential and Commercial Use

The city limits area shown in Exhibit 32 above constitutes 2,920 acres, or 4.6 square miles. As indicated in Exhibit 33, Land Use 2015, New Roads, La, residential land occupies approximately 27 percent. Within this residential area are approximately 300 vacant lots as evidenced in Exhibit 34, Infill Properties Map. While approximately a quarter of these lots are in relatively new subdivisions, the remainder are within older neighborhoods.

LAND USE 2015, NEW ROADS, LA	Acres	Percent
Agricultural	999	34.2%
Residential	809	27.7%
Commerical Services	226	7.8%
Industry	38	1.3%
Institutional Public (includes parks)	245	8.4%
Trans Comm. Utilites	177	6.1%
Forested	209	7.2%
Undeveloped	217	7.4%
Total	2921	100.0%

Exhibit 33 Existing Land Use Table

In keeping with the goal to encourage reinvestment in older neighborhoods, the opportunity exists for reinvesting in these residential neighborhoods without the added cost burden of installing new utility infrastructure. Lots are typically smaller than those in the recently developed residential areas, and roads and other utilities are in place.

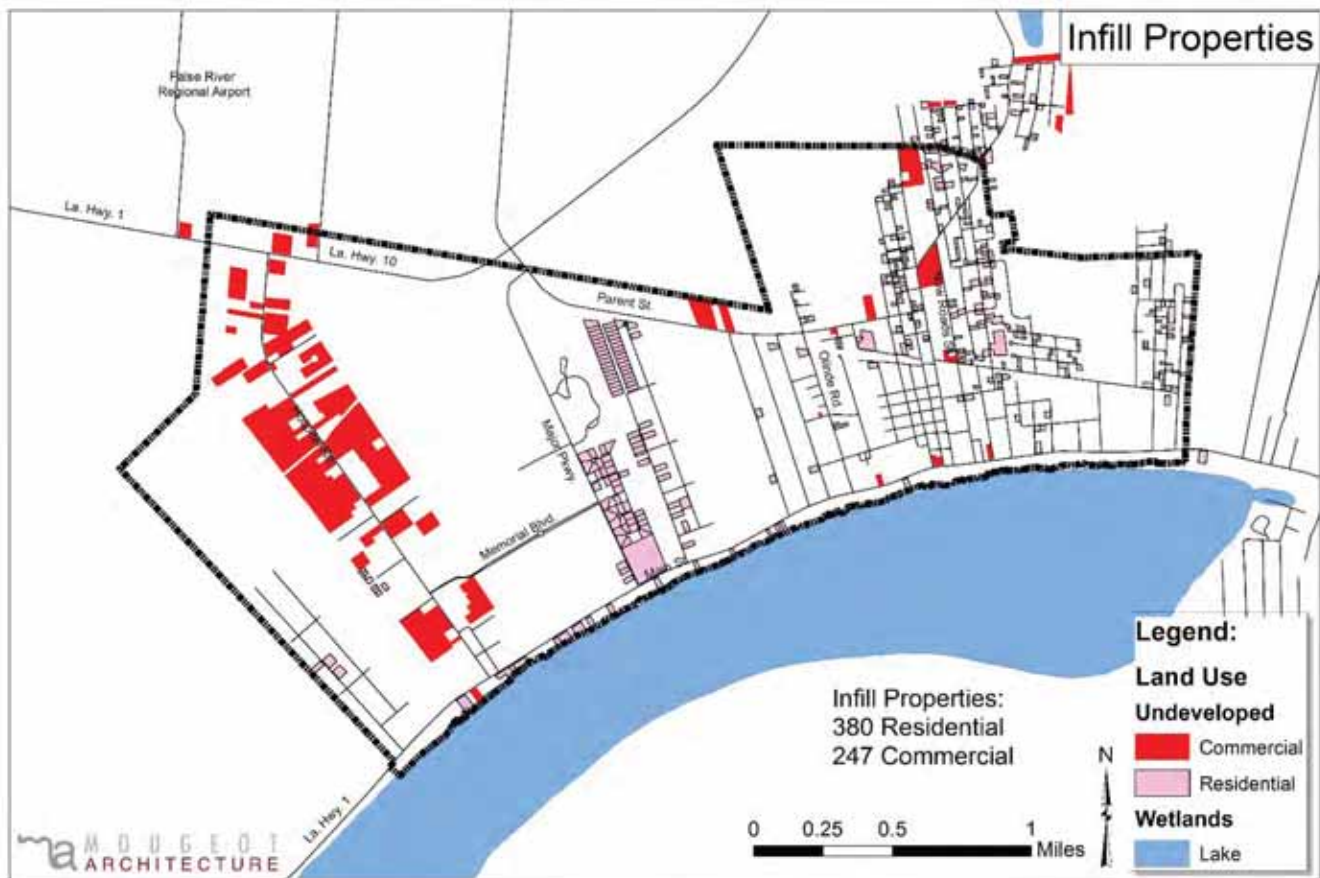


Exhibit 34 Infill Properties Map

In contrast, commercial land use covers approximately eight percent of the city landscape and generally exists in three distinct areas—downtown, along the east end of Parent Street, and along Hospital Road. Generally, with the exception of homes being converted to commercial services uses in the downtown sector, commercial areas are segregated from residential uses. With the exception noted, little in the way of mixed land use, i.e., residential, commercial services, and/or retail, is evident in the city. However, more mixed use areas are recommended as a means to reinvigorate older areas and encourage healthy lifestyles, i.e., more walkable settings.

The most recent commercial sector development has occurred and continues to occur along Hospital Road. This corridor is the “new” New Roads commercial region. In 2014, a major restaurant chain (McDonald’s) and large retail chain (Wal-Mart) relocated from Main Street to Hospital Road. A three-lane highway section was constructed by DOTD (La. 1), and traffic has increased substantially. According to anecdotal evidence provided by citizens of the community and supplemented by tax collection data, commercial sales have increased substantially with the construction of new commercial establishments along Hospital Road and the combined benefit of the Audubon Bridge providing ready access to New Roads from the east side of the Mississippi River. Anecdotal evidence suggests that as business concerns increase and grow along Hospital Road, less business opportunity and attractions are supported downtown. This is considered a major finding presented by the steering committee, one that justifies and encourages more adept consideration in enhancing historical tourism interests in New Roads with emphasis on the downtown area.

Continued commercial growth is anticipated along Hospital Road. With available vacant land within the Hospital Road commercial corridor and recent highway improvements, the general consensus is that the recently

evolving commercial sector growth trend will continue along Hospital Road. With a goal of increasing the population and existing vacant land along Hospital Road being reduced at a rapid rate, a future land use recommendation is to allow for expanded commercial growth as mixed use commercial in vacant areas between Hospital Road and Major Parkway.

In that regard, several comments from citizens suggest that zoning and other regulatory codes should be updated to enhance the visual appearance of the commercial corridor. The consultant team supports the community's goal to improve the city's overall imagery and to encourage tourism interest. This concept is expanded upon in Chapter VI, Cultural Assessment and Imagery. By way of constraints, though, commercial development should not be encouraged in the floodplain area along Portage Canal which crosses Hospital Road.

The older, long established commercial area of New Roads is considered its "Historic Downtown." The locale is centered in the vicinity of New Roads Street and Main Street. While Main Street parallels False River along the entire length of the city's southern boundary, it offers little in the way of views of the lake from Main Street or recognizable accessibility to the waterfront. A significant exception is noteworthy. The City constructed and maintains two interconnected parkways along False River. These parkways offers boat launches and public parking. They also offers public waterfront access and use as well as support to adjacent business enterprises. In-depth analysis of these parkways led to consensus recommendations for parkway improvements. It is recommended that the parkway behind city hall be redesigned to accommodate amphitheater style seating backing up to city hall with a stage featuring the lake as its backdrop.

While somewhat smaller in scale, a further parkway related recommendation is to replace trees behind city hall with trees and shrubs that do not block the view of the lake from city hall. The wall of city hall that faces the lake is a southern exposure; therefore, screening from direct sunlight is suggested. A conceptual rendering in support of the recommendation is shown as Exhibit 35. The recommendation also proposes to add gateway features to the parkways to give visitors entryway to the parkway and to offer a sense of place pertinent to other similar objectives presented throughout the plan. These recommendations are detailed in Chapter VI.



Exhibit 35 Downtown Stage and Amphitheater

The downtown commercial area offers the best historical features available in the city. Community leaders, both elected and business oriented, have done an admirable job of maintaining the historical area in its period sensitive appearance. However, several recommendations surfaced during the planning process relative to potential enhancements in the downtown commercial area to attract citizens and tourists alike. To better keep the historical aspects of the downtown area in line with typical "historic downtowns" across the country, it is recommended that the street lights downtown be replaced with light standards more reflective of the downtown area. Curved or otherwise decorative light standards with double hangars for seasonal display are recommended.

Because the space is walled on each side and several buildings are two stories in height, relatively tall light standards are suggested.



Additionally, while electrical service wiring was relocated from along Main Street frontage to the rear of buildings in the 1980s to offer a more pleasing, less cluttered atmosphere, major electrical rehab is required to upgrade the downtown wiring to underground along Main Street and along Morrison Parkway as well as increasing line and transformer voltage to 15KV in this area. Other suggested electrical upgrades include updating electrical substations, constructing a new electrical substation near Major Parkway. More detailed utility upgrades are presented in Chapter V., Section E., Utilities.

In contrast to the sustainability and resilience of the downtown commercial area, the commercial corridor along Parent Street has declined over the past two decades. This commercial sector extends southward along Parent Street from New

Roads Street to Olinde Street and includes the Olinde Shopping Center. Because of the recent downturn of this area, many buildings along Parent Street are vacant. Several have been vandalized, some windows are boarded up, and the area shows signs of neglect and disinvestment. Many consider this an unfortunate set of circumstances as the area is ideally suited to catering to the commercial needs of older residential areas of town. Consideration was given to citizen inquiry regarding the possibility of relocating city hall to the Olinde Shopping Center area. Overwhelming evidence of other communities throughout the country has shown that keeping government sector administrative operations in the historic area is more often than not a saving grace for downtown economic vitality and sustainability. Therefore, the recommendation is for city hall to remain in its current location.



In keeping with the vision of this comprehensive plan, as a means of incentivizing reinvestment in this area, constructing a “complete street” section along Parent Street from New Roads Street to Olinde Street is proposed. Pedestrian and bicycle use along the corridor is significant, even with unpaved shoulders along the roadway. Public sector investment, likely from State and local sources, will be required. A typical section cut through Parent Street is shown in the graphic presentation to the right. However, it was agreed that a four-lane section is not justified.



The concept of encouraging reinvestment in older residential and commercial areas continued to surface at planning forums as a major comprehensive plan recommendation. This recommendation was initially based upon information presented in Chapter IV, Socioeconomic Inventory and Analysis, i.e., stalled population, aging population, proportion of family incomes below national average, etc. and was reinforced by additional data. As noted previously, the vast amount of vacant lots existing in older, established neighborhoods also supported the reinvestment concept.

Building permit data presented in Chapter IV established that the vast majority of building permits, both in value and frequency, occurred as commercial development near Hospital Road and as residential homes located between Hospital Road and Major Parkway and not in older sections of the city. Exceptions were noted in the historic sectors where large older homes were converted to professional services offices particularly near the courthouse.

In assessing the condition of buildings in the city, a building condition assessment covered every building in the city—residential, commercial, institutional, and governmental. The results of that survey are graphically depicted in Exhibit 36, Building Condition Assessment. In review of the mapped data, red denotes buildings in bad condition, orange represents buildings showing visible signs of degradation, and yellow depicts buildings that, if left unattended, will be considered in poor condition within two years. Blues and greens are used to represent buildings in good to excellent condition.

By quick glance, visual evidence suggests that residential and commercial areas of the city are in a state of significant decline; thus further support for the need and recommendation for reinvestment with particular emphasis on affordable housing opportunities in older sections of town. As further support for this fundamental and basic plan recommendation, vacant lots were presented previously in Exhibit 37, Infill Properties. Approximately two-thirds of the vacant residential properties in New Roads are located in the easternmost area of the city north of the railroad track.

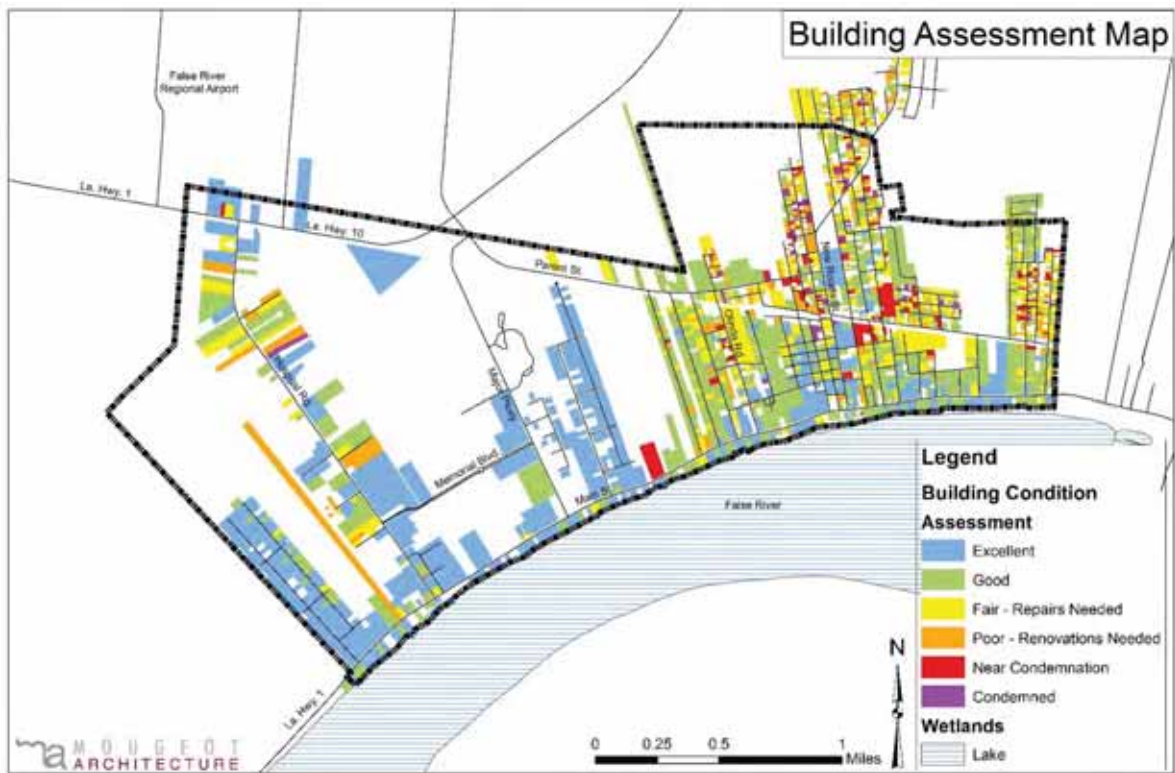


Exhibit 36 Building Assessment Map

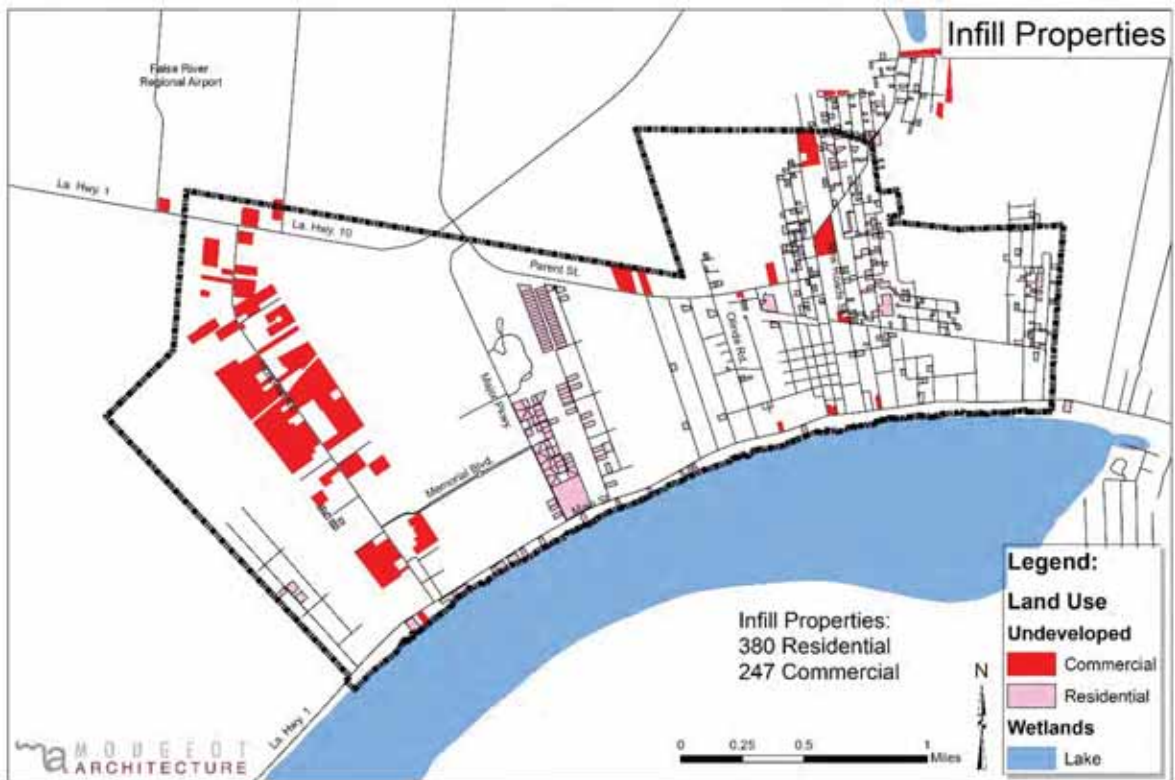


Exhibit 37 Infill Properties

The trend toward the increase in rental vs. owner-occupied housing (see table in Exhibit 38, Owner-Occupied Housing 2015) is indicative of the opportunity offered for young, upwardly mobile citizenry of childbearing age, i.e., families with young parents and children, for affordable housing as starter homes. While jobs are needed in the city and its immediate surroundings, affordable housing offers incentive to attaining the growth goals of the city. Therefore, a strong connection exists with the City in its bid to incentivize industrial growth along La. Hwy. 10 and river road to the bridge as a means to creating both new jobs and housing opportunities—both market rate and affordable housing.

As a major incentive in support of reinvestment in older areas of communities in the state, the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism offers a tax incentive program that, supplemented with similar federal initiatives, offers a 45 percent tax credit to eligible and conforming developers. For this reason the formation of a New Roads cultural district is hereby recommended. The program is highlighted in Chapter VI. in an in-depth discussion of the nearby New Roads Historic District.

5. Institutional

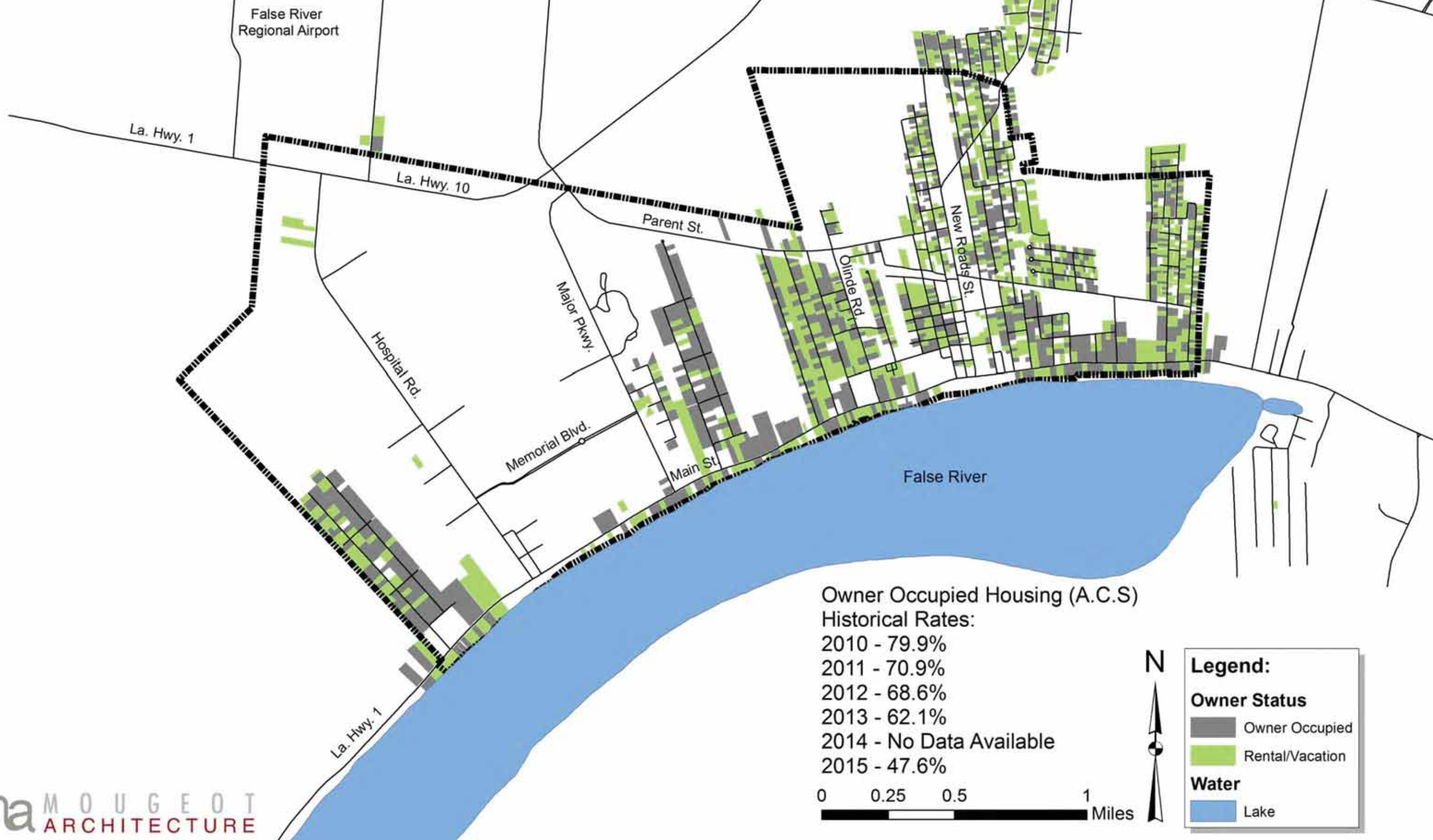
a. Schools, Hospital, and Government Buildings

Institutional uses noted in this section refer to schools, government buildings, and the hospital. These facilities are shown in Exhibit 39, Public and Institutional Facilities. Also depicted in this image are parks and recreation sites. These uses are considered traffic generators and, as such, are discussed in that vein.

Education surfaced early in the planning process as both a weakness and a threat. However, because the parish school board is responsible for the public schools in the city and region, planning issues related to schools and education per se are not included as a function of the New Roads comp plan. Nonetheless, it is important to note that if a major goal of the city is to increase the population base with young upwardly mobile professionals with families or family rearing potential, a high quality public education system is imperative. Therefore, plan recommendations focus on transportation improvements that improve school access by auto, bicycle, and walking with a focus on intersection upgrades and construction of new sidewalks. These subject areas are detailed in the transportation section of this chapter

Owner Occupied Housing - 2015

Exhibit 38



New Roads has one public elementary school, two private schools, a center for the arts, and a small branch of Capital Area Technical College. Rosenwald Elementary School is a public school in the northeast sector of the city. Recently, it has shown improvement in testing scores but is still below average. Presently, all public high school students attend Livonia High School. Pointe Coupee Central High School, located near Morganza, is presently not holding classes. It is being renovated as the STEM Magnet Academy of Pointe Coupee. The emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and math, will cater to all students with hands-on learning experiences to encourage learning and work ethic benefits as an alternative to standard education programs in the region. The re-opening of the school is anticipated to have a positive impact on the public school system in Pointe Coupee and New Roads as well.

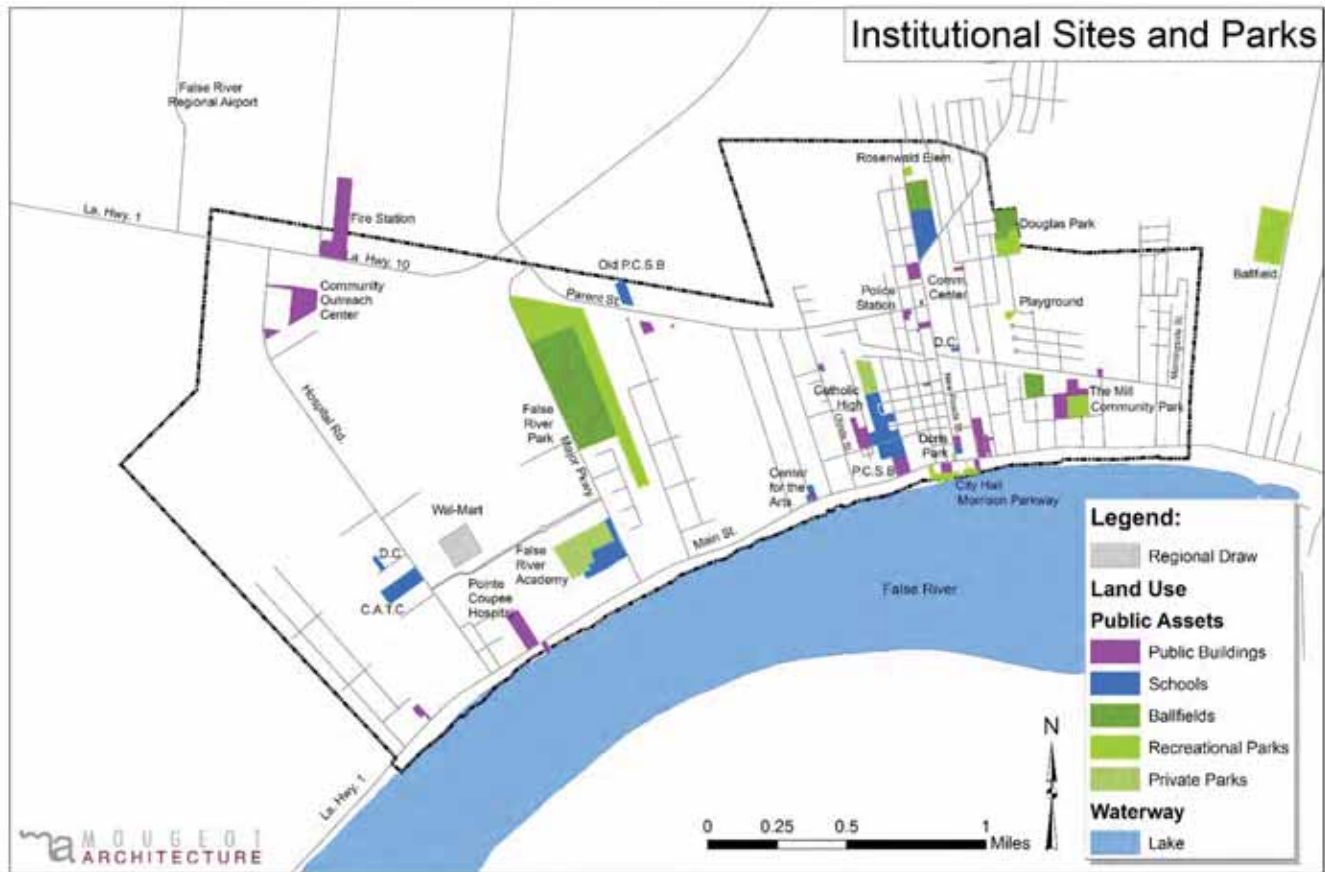


Exhibit 39. Institutional Sites and Parks Map

Catholic of Pointe Coupee is a private school with grades PK3-12. The school has an excellent extra-curricular program. False River Academy is also a private school. It accommodates students from three years of age through high school. In addition to its high educational standard, the school also has an excellent extra-curricular program.

The Center of the Arts, a not for profit facility situated at West Main St. and Westend, provides art and music classes to the public. With only one music teacher in the Pointe Coupee Parish school system and art being offered only at Livonia High School, the Center for the Arts provides what the citizenry consider an invaluable service for the city and the parish.

The Capital Area Technical College: Jmonville Campus is a branch of the Baton Rouge Community College System (BRCC). The campus offers the following five programs: Office Administration, Patient Care Technician, Nurse Assistant, Welding, and GED.

With a branch of BRCC on Hospital Road and the new STEM Academy under construction, it appears that Pointe Coupee and New Roads are beginning to embrace its higher end education needs. The STEM Academy and BRCC campus are seen as positive upgrades that will benefit the region by educating and training personnel needed in the local workforce. In that regard, the education system improvements are expected to help New Roads in its efforts to maintain and grow its present population base and to encourage in-migration.

Government buildings such as the courthouse and city hall in the downtown area serve to offer continuous activity in the downtown district. This activity supports economic vitality and generates traffic. At times, traffic flow to and from the schools, particularly along Main St. generates traffic congestion in the morning and again in the afternoon. As a result, several intersection improvements are recommended. These improvements are intended to allow for safer and smoother traffic flow, particularly during school rush times. Left and right turn lanes are recommended along Main St. at Major Parkway and Olinde Street.

b. Parks and Recreation

New Roads has a respectable parks and recreation system with several parks located throughout the city. These parks range from small neighborhood parks to large multi-purpose recreational sites such as False River Park which includes open field recreation, a civic center complex, and an arena. A brief description of existing parks is offered below with locations noted in the previously noted Exhibit 39, Public Facilities.

Doris Park is a small urban square at the corner of New Roads St. and Main St. used primarily for passive activity such as small group gathering and viewing downtown activities. It was constructed to utilize a small space remaining after intersection upgrades.

Emmitt J. Douglas Park, located at 11th St. and Bayou Run Dr., includes a baseball field, walking path, basketball courts, children's play area, a large pavilion, and picnic pavilions.

Community Park is located near the Old Mill along Railroad Avenue at Mill and Community Streets. As the most recent park upgrade, it includes open space with paved walks and a splash pad. The park also boasts of the old mill building. While the mill is frequently used and appreciated by the citizenry, major rehabilitation is needed to preserve and protect the building for continued long-term use.

Morrison Parkway is situated on False River behind city hall and provides parking space for several businesses and government facilities. It includes two boat launches, boat docks, and places for families to gather. It also serves as a prime location for festival activities several times a year. Two restaurants located along the parkway overlook the lake. Because of the numerous festivals that take place in the downtown area and along the parkway, recommended improvements include amphitheater seating and a stage. Considered a major plan recommendation, the upgrade to Morrison Parkway is listed as a line item on the capital improvements plan presented in Chapter VI.



Old Mill Community Park



Morrison Parkway downtown along the banks of False River

False River Park is the largest recreational facility in town. Located on Major Parkway, it consists of several baseball diamonds, a civic center, walking path, tennis courts, and basketball courts. The Jeff Smith Community Center features a covered arena and other rodeo and 4H oriented facilities. Youth practice football fields are currently under development behind the Jeff Smith walking path as well. It has been suggested during public

forums that residential use allowing large ranch style lots and housing for those desiring homes where horses could be nurtured is a market niche worthy of consideration. Other communities in nearby parishes have noted similar community requests. In the case of New Roads, where a major community goal is to increase the population, it is recommended that this concept be considered in the revisions to the town's zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations. A layout of False River Park and the Jeff Smith Community Center (arena) upgrades are noted in the photo below.



False River Park layout and recommended expansion and upgrade

According to National Recreation and Park Association standards, residential concentrations should be within a half mile radius of large recreational parks and within a quarter mile of small neighborhood parks. Even though New Roads has an extensive parks program, 51% of residents do not fall within these recommended guidelines. And while the schools contain recreational areas (Catholic, False River Academy, and Rosenwald Elementary), they are not considered public parks and therefore cannot be considered in this analysis.

In Exhibit 40, existing parks are shown in dark green while the noted radius standards are shown in light green. Residential areas not being served by existing parks are shown in light gray. As evident in the graphic, the central and easternmost areas of the city could best be served by future small, neighborhood park development.

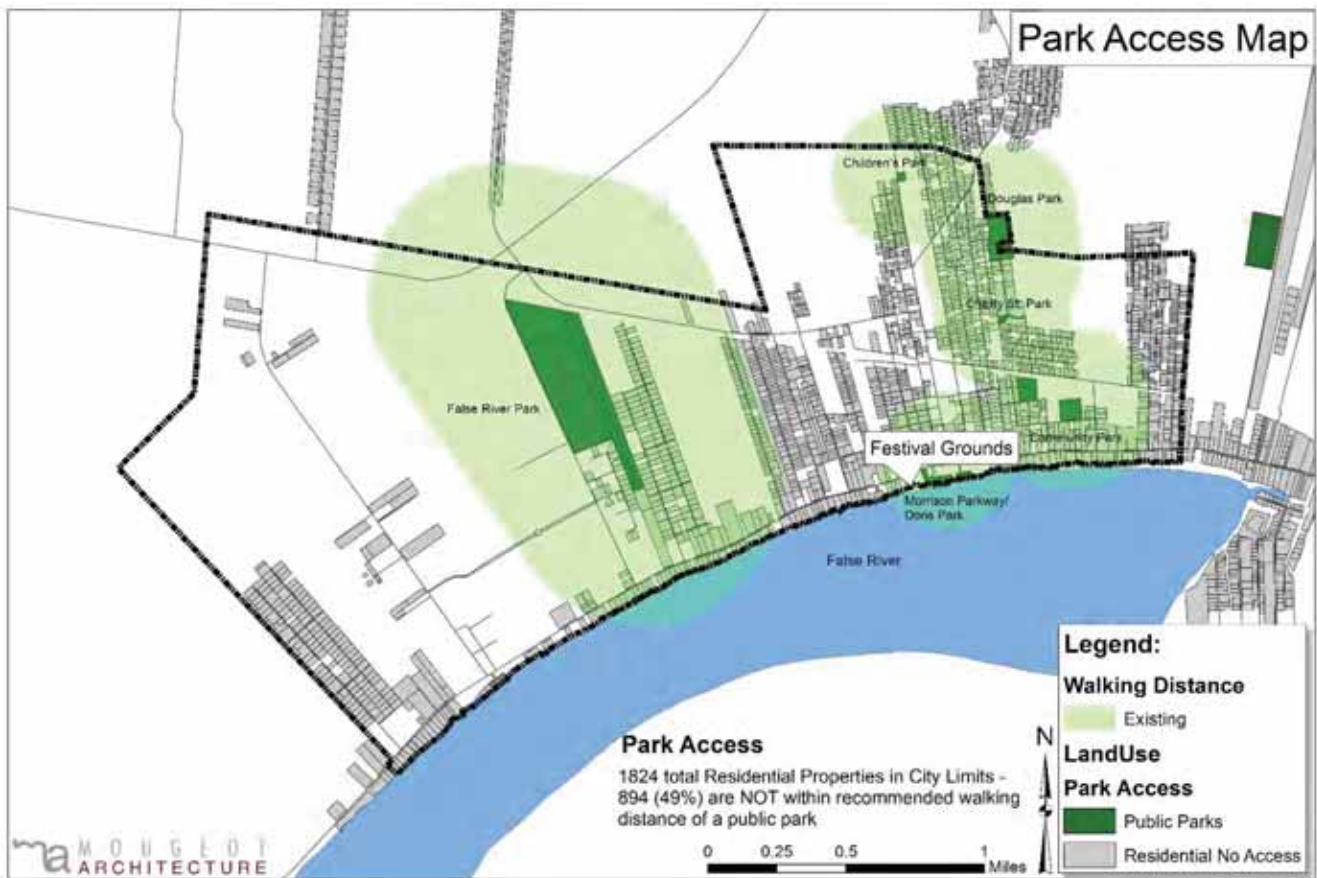


Exhibit 40 Existing Parks and Playgrounds Map

The current trend in America today considers parks as more than just playgrounds. “They provide formal and informal gathering places for building community. They help to positively influence property values. They give city dwellers a place to connect to the natural world. They make our urban areas more inviting for living, working, and relaxing.” (www.planning.org/cityparks, October 29, 2015). All of these features conform to the goals and objectives of this planning initiative, particularly in reference to influencing property values and making urban areas more inviting for living, working, and relaxation. If this is a current trend, it is a trend pertinent in encouraging young families to remain in or to move to New Roads.

Based on the noted national park standards, the general vicinity of several proposed small neighborhood parks are shown as light green circles in the existing and proposed park map (Exhibit 41). Of particular interest for a new park is a site across Main Street from city hall. This parcel is owned by the City and is used often as a major venue for many of the city’s festivals and other downtown events. During planning meetings with local citizens, a suggestion was offered to consider the site as prime commercial space rather than as a prime recreation site. The overwhelming and resulting conclusion was that the site would best be developed as a park designed for festival activities when festivals occur; but, more importantly, it should be a park designed for daily use for relaxing, small and large group gathering, and family activities. Ideally, a sculptural form uniquely symbolic of the rich geological (changing river courses) and cultural history (famous citizens, plantations, diverse peoples, etc.) of New Roads would be focal point of the park and constructed as a unique New Roads tourist attraction. Most importantly, the design of the park must satisfy criteria for multiple purposes and varying functions.



Exhibit 41. Existing and Proposed Parks Map

D. Traffic and Transportation—Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Auto

Traffic and transportation analysis focused on existing conditions relative to sidewalks, bike routes, and auto and truck traffic. Major commercial land uses such as those located along Hospital Road and the commercial concentrations of the downtown area are considered significant traffic generators and/or destinations. Two obvious examples of major traffic generators along Hospital Road are the Wal-Mart and McDonald's. Also included as local traffic generators are the hospital, all schools, and large parks. In New Roads, origins of traffic flow will be addressed as the residential neighborhoods. For purposes of this assessment, the existing land use map provided at the beginning of this chapter has been abstracted to highlight traffic origins, destinations, and generators. The result of this land use as a function of traffic assessment is presented in Exhibit 42, Traffic Origins, Destinations, and Generators.

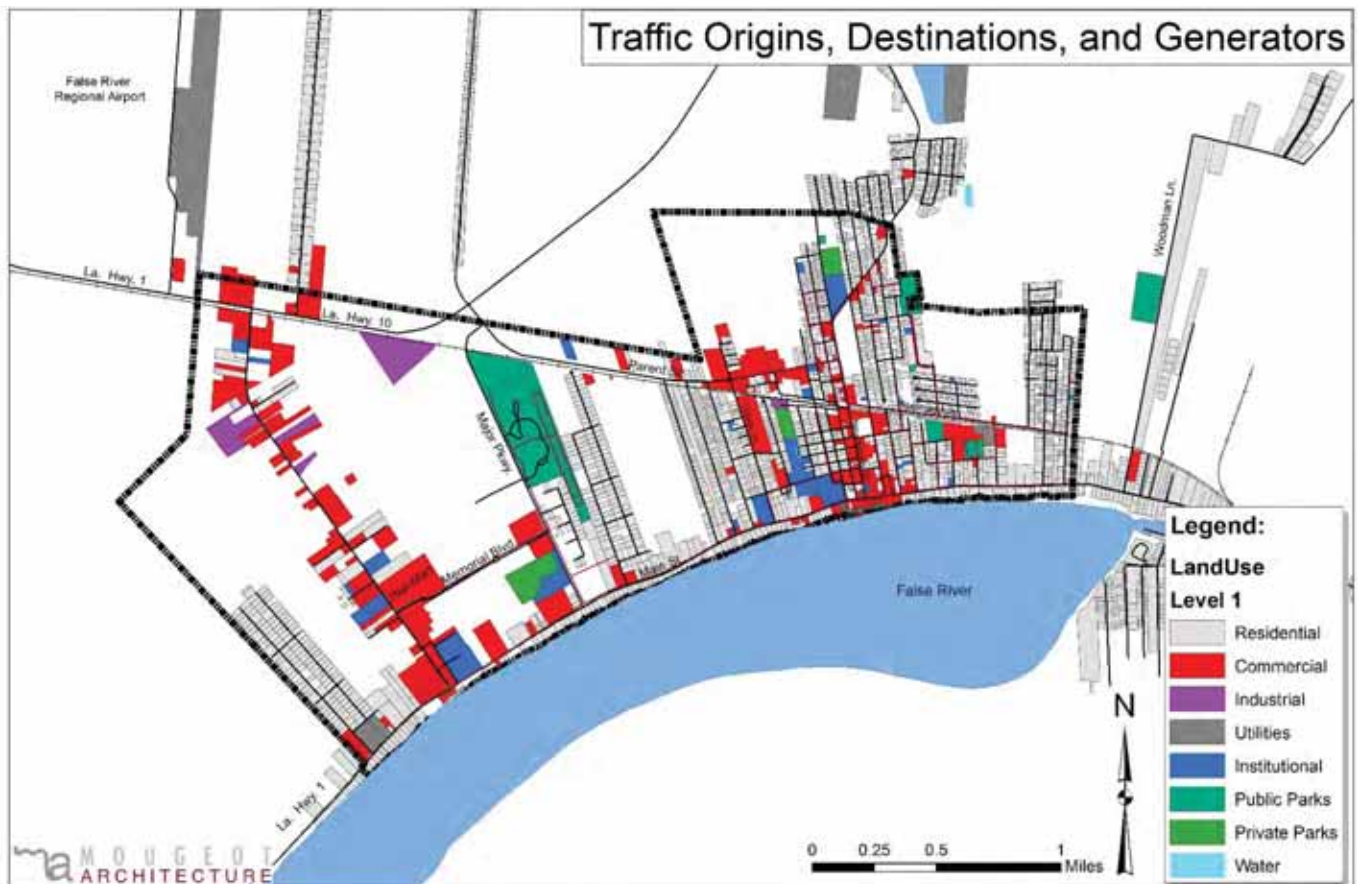


Exhibit 42. Traffic Origins, Destinations, and Generators

1. Sidewalks and Bike Ways

For purposes of this city planning effort, pedestrian flow and bicycle use are considered similar as the use and function corridors are conjoined and internal to all points in the city. Also, based on the city's mostly segregated land use and historical development pattern, little to no mixed use areas other than the transitional residential to commercial fringe north of the downtown area, the demographic make-up of the city, and traditional transportation use, sidewalks and bikeway use is primarily oriented to school traffic. However, with the national trend toward and recommendation for more, small neighborhood parks, pedestrian and bicycle accessibility to those existing and proposes sites becomes the main focus.

To ensure that adequate pedestrian facilities are constructed in the future, it is recommended that City subdivision regulations require sidewalks in all future developments. Adherence to "complete streets" guidelines and recommendations should be required of all future commercial and residential subdivision developments.

Presently, approximately 10.5 miles of sidewalks exist in New Roads with only about one-third of the residential population having direct access to sidewalks. These sidewalks, as well as soon to be constructed sidewalks, are also shown in Exhibit 43. Presently, as noted in the legend, the condition of existing sidewalks ranges from good to need for immediate replacement.

It is recommended that the city initiate a sidewalk improvement program to include repair, rehabilitation, and new sidewalks. The first priority should be to repair or rehabilitate existing sidewalks in need of such improvements. The city should then prioritize the citywide program to install sidewalks with emphasis on school, parks, and commercial area accessibility relative to residential concentrations wherever right-of-way is adequate. A recommendation for sidewalks along both sides of Hospital Road is included in this plan.

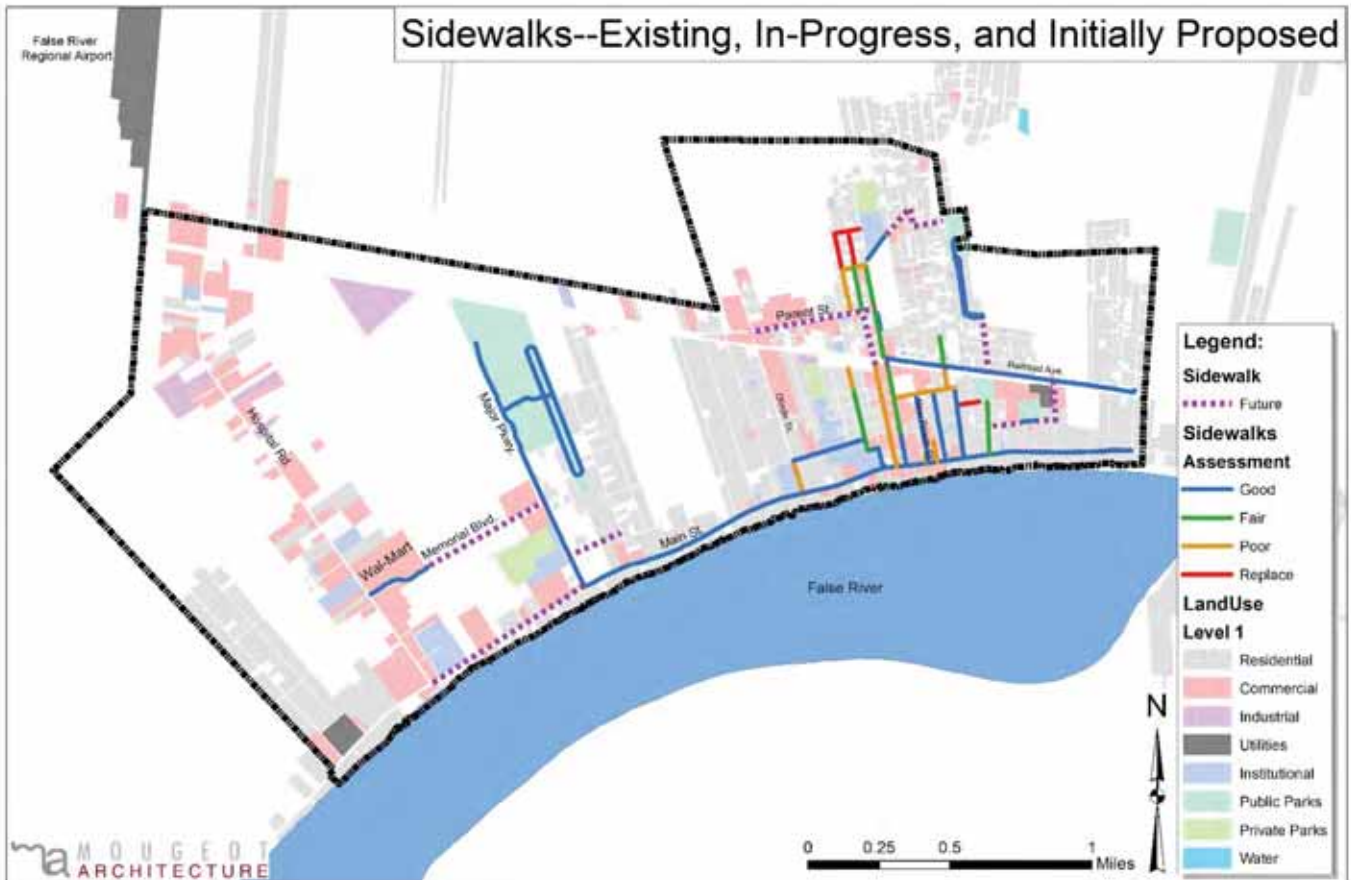


Exhibit 43. Sidewalks—Existing, In-progress, and Proposed

As noted in introductory chapters of this plan, New Roads is situated along two major state highways, La. 1 and La. 10. La. 1 provides a direct route from U. S. Hwy. 190 from the Baton Rouge metro area to La. 10 providing an eastern traffic corridor to the John J. Audubon Bridge and west and north to the False River Regional Airport, the Port of Pointe Coupee, the popular casino in Marksville, and on to Alexandria. The bridge, coupled with the recently completed three-laning of Hospital Road (La. 1 in New Roads), offers major traffic benefits and economic opportunities to the city. However, other smaller improvements to the roadway network are important to the goals of the city.

Current traffic demand has increased along Hospital Road. This increase is due in part to increased truck traffic along the truck route through the city and the relocation and expansion of the Wal-Mart store and resulting outliers including the newly relocated McDonald's restaurant and several additional retail outlets. While no empirical data was collected regarding the customer base, planning committee members offered a consensus opinion that, because of the bridge, the Wal-Mart now serves residents from throughout the parish and both sides of the Mississippi River.

2. Roadway and Intersection Improvements

Traffic flow along all sectors of state roads receives high level of service ratings from the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development. However, as noted previously, a citywide assessment noted peak period traffic needs at locations along Main Street at Major Parkway and Main Street at Olinde Street relative to school traffic in the morning and again in the afternoon. Traffic control personnel are needed at these locations to ensure caution and safety. At both of these locations, right turn lanes and center left turn lanes are recommended.

Along Parent Street from La. 10 to Olinde Street, decades old enterprises have gone out of business in recent years. In general, many of the commercial uses in the area are in a state of decline and in need of re-investment. The right-of-way along Parent Street beginning at New Roads Street is wide and can adequately support an urban section improvement. It is recommended that this roadway be reconstructed as a complete street with a center turn lane, a bike lane, and sidewalks separated from the road and bike lane by a buffer area. This project will serve as a public sector incentive to the private sector for reinvestment in the vicinity and will be of value to surrounding residential areas that would benefit from the walkable amenities and retail service areas. The resulting health benefit parallels a nationwide initiative as a major sustainability component in urban design. The revised zoning ordinance and maps revisions should complement this recommendation.

The intersection of Hospital Road and Main Street is one of the first visual images of New Roads seen by travelers from US 190. The view is cluttered, disorganized, and suggests a state of disarray. A wholesale revamp of the Main St.-Hospital Road intersection is proposed. For example, a suitably sized roundabout would serve to minimize long queues at the existing traffic signal, smooth traffic flow, improve the appearance of the vicinity, encourage business opportunity, increase property values, and serve as major enhancement to an entrance to the city. One of the major objectives of this plan is to increase tourism traffic. If this goal is to be fulfilled, the realization that appearance counts is critical. This is one primary location where that objective should be initiated. More supporting documentation to enhancing tourism as an economic development goal is covered in the following chapter.

Another intersection worthy of revamping is in the vicinity of Parent Street at Delta Place where Major Parkway joins Parent Street. For decades, this intersect functioned smoothly with east-west traffic traveling unimpeded along La. 10 (Parent Street) with Delta Place and Major Parkway intersecting La. 10. However, DOTD revised the intersection to the satisfaction of what seems to be no one in New Roads. The result is an awkward and confusing pair of intersections. The city administration, planning committee, and citizens of the community have requested a re-evaluation of this intersection by DOTD. The local recommendation supports the consideration of a roundabout again aligning LA. 10 along a straight axis.

From a safety perspective, two roadway extensions or connector streets are needed. These new roadways are to connect Martin and Curet Streets and St. Mary and Olinde. Both are located in the northeast section of town, and both relate to providing an alternate means of egress for residential areas should a railroad accident occur. The City and Parish are aware of these needs as they have been discussed for many years. The improvements were recommended in prior planning efforts. The Parish has begun the initial phases of one of the projects. These roadway projects are again recommended as high capital improvement priorities.

In the review of traffic flow within and through the city, citizens suggested that, with the construction of the bridge, less transient traffic is finding its way to the downtown area. This situation is exacerbated by the expansion of the commercial corridor along Hospital Road and subsequent growth as a major regional traffic generator. In keeping with the objective to increase tourism interest in New Roads and as a means of attracting more traffic to and through the downtown area as a major economic development initiative, it is recommended that Woodman Lane, located just outside of the eastern city limits be extended to LA 10.

This proposed connector ties in with a complementary recommendation to construct a tourist information center inside the General Lejeune bridge approach loop near the foot of the bridge. Such a facility at this location would be useful in directing traffic to the historic downtown area of the city while also offering a more direct route to downtown. The scenic route along river road would also be an alternative route to downtown. This recommendation, however, is in no way intended to deter traffic from using Ferry Road for access to and departure from the downtown area. To the contrary, it is suggested that for the city to have authority in zoning and maintenance along what is likely the most historic roadway in the city, annexation along the corridor is plausible and worthy of consideration.

E. UTILITIES

In assessing utility systems in New Roads, meetings were held with municipal staff and consultant engineers. The results of those discussions are summarized below. The utility upgrade recommendations cover the majority of the ten- to twenty-year planning horizon. The costs of upgrades are also noted. A detailed cost breakout is provided for reference in Section VII – Plan Recommendations and Conclusions on page 10.

1. Electrical

In assessing utilities relative to resiliency to natural disasters, the city's electrical system surfaced as having the highest need of all city utilities. The last major rehabilitation effort occurred in the late 1980s with a relatively minor upgrade limited to the downtown commercial area. That project was limited to relocating electrical services from along Main St. to the rear of buildings as a city roadway and sidewalk upgrade. Today, in 2015, the following projects are recommended for inclusion in a ten to twenty year capital improvement program. The estimated cost for total work is \$3,800,000.

- a. Upgrade downtown electrical supply system (approx. 3,000 LF) to 15KV
- b. Convert voltage in service lines from 5 KV to 15KV including changing transformer boxes
- c. Upgrade existing substation with electronic monitors
- d. Construct new substation to service new residential and commercial areas in the vicinity of Major Parkway and Hospital Road area (near Major Parkway at RR)
- e. Extend electrical services eastward along Mississippi River terraces

This suggested consideration of eastward extension is in conformance with economic development goals to incentivize industrial growth east and north of New Roads. Estimating the cost of expansion is considered beyond the scope of this report at this time. Coordination between the city, the city's consulting engineer, and the proposed user industry(ies) will be required at the proper time.

2. Sewerage

Recommended sewer system improvements generally pertain to upgrades to existing system components. Treatment capacity is adequate in accommodating reasonable growth, but useful life is limited to less than ten years for the systems listed below. Similar to the recommendation to expand electrical services along the river road, sewer system expansion is a critical component to industrial inducement. Improvements a – e are estimated to cost \$7,500,000.

- a. Replace or rehab Olinde St. pump station including service area improvements
- b. Construct infiltration and inflow improvements in the Railroad Pump Station service area
- c. Install all needed general infiltration and inflow improvements as well as pump station and line upgrades citywide
- d. Replace Sixth St. pump station
- e. Rehabilitate Fazend pump station
- f. Extend sewer collection and treatment services eastward along and Mississippi River terraces. This suggested consideration of eastward and/or northward extension is in conformance with economic

development goals to incentivize industrial growth in the vicinity of New Roads. Estimating the cost of expansion is considered beyond the scope of this report at this time. As with the electrical service extension recommendation, coordination between the city, the city's consulting engineer, and the proposed user industry(ies) will be required at the proper time.

3. Water

Required water system improvements include both maintenance and projects such as transmission and distribution line upgrades and water tower maintenance (painting). The long-term capital cost is estimated at \$1,500,000 for above improvements.

4. Gas

When a majority of the gas distribution system was installed in the city, the tubing used had a relatively short useful life. The "invasion tubing" is failing and the rate of repair is escalating. The rate of increase warrants the City's consideration of a systemwide upgrade. The estimated cost of this upgrade is \$5,000,000.

5. Drainage

Internal drainage within the city limits is the function of the city's department of public works. General and routine maintenance was noted as being adequate with no flooding occurring within the city's internal system. However, outfall canal and retention areas are a function of the Pointe Coupee Parish government. On occasion, outfall becomes slow because maintenance is needed on the Portage Canal, the main drainage conduit in the vicinity of New Roads. Close coordination with the Parish is required in that regard. Recommendations related to the drainage system are as follows:

- a. Routine maintenance; no capital improvement anticipated
- b. Maintain diligence regarding Parish drainage upgrades and maintenance along Portage Canal and the railroad track
- c. Update all ordinances that pertain to city utility systems

6. Communication

Consider providing public wireless communication access places at various locations within the community such as parks and pedestrian routes.

VI. CULTURAL ASSESSMENT and IMAGERY

A. Historic Corridors, River Courses, False River Oxbow

New Roads has a thriving economy for tourism and residents alike. Major commercial businesses have expanded into New Roads in recent years. Residential construction has been steadily increasing around False River. The city of New Roads hosts several events every year including a car show, boat parade, and the second oldest Mardi Gras celebration in the state behind New Orleans. A local airport, river port, railroad, and new Mississippi River Bridge (John J. Audubon Bridge) in the nearby vicinity efficiently connect the cultural and economic assets of New Roads with nearby major cities and transportation routes.

The profound historic and cultural roots are exemplified by major historical routes running through the city such as the Zachary Taylor Parkway and the False River Historical Trail as highlighted in Exhibit 44, Historic Corridors. The William Bartram Trail follows the Ferry Road north of the bridge with a trail terminus monument place across from the St. Francis Church near the airport.

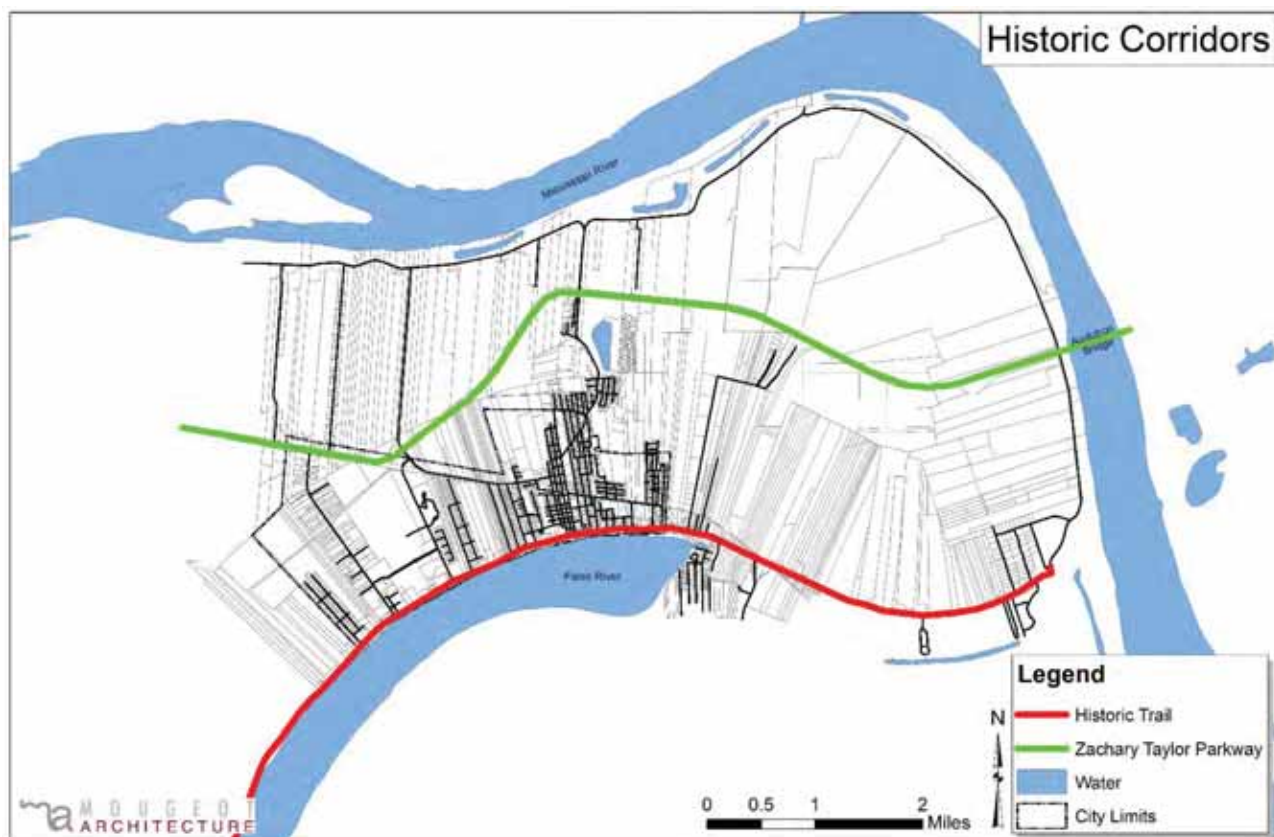


Exhibit 44. Historic Corridors

B. Downtown

New Roads is one of the oldest settlements in Louisiana and in the Mississippi River Valley established by European colonists as a trading post in the 1720's. In 1722 the seasonal flooding cut a shorter path leaving behind the oxbow lake today known as False River. Many of the historic plantations within and surrounding the city tell this story by their adaptability to these river flooding events prior to the construction of the levees. These homes were constructed with a lower level of masonry to resist water damage. The lower levels were used primarily as utility and storage spaces that were sacrificial spaces during high river levels. The upper levels were constructed of wood and were utilized as the main living quarters.

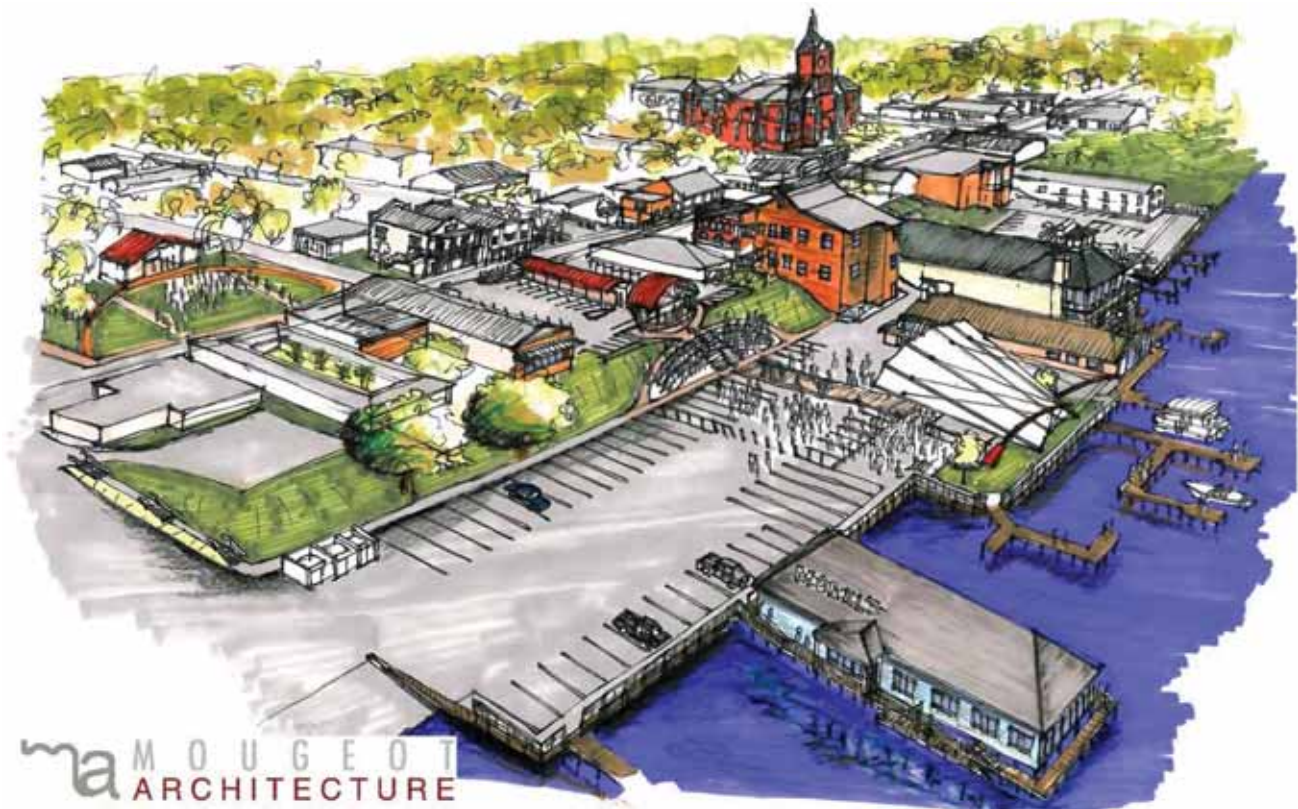
Visitors are constantly reminded of a rich culture and timeless architecture when driving through the city. From sporadic views of False River to plantations and oak alleys, a visual resonance exists expressing a welcoming appeal. Driving through town, visitors experience a sense of place genuine to this area. Many other small towns that developed along the Mississippi River are now visually cut off from the river as a result of the levee system. In order to reach its smart growth goals, New Roads must embrace this charm while aspiring to expand its amenities to increase its demand for young adults searching for a unique place to raise their families. Bringing in new working class residents will help with managing and maintaining infrastructure as well as public services such as schools, libraries, parks and recreation, and police and fire services.

Downtown Amenities:



Morrison Parkway boundary including east and west entrance drive

The downtown area has great potential for tourist attractions such as walking tours and historical museums. As depicted in the preceding image, Morrison Parkway offers substantial parking and other public amenities such as fishing, a public boat launch, picnic areas, public restrooms and restaurants. This parking is centrally located to downtown but lacks adequate pedestrian connection between the lower parkway and upper Main Street. There is a significant natural elevation change caused by the Mississippi River which makes the vertical incline difficult for pedestrians. Adjusting the incline by winding the path back and forth into the embankment will make the experience much more pedestrian friendly.



Conceptual rendering of Morrison Parkway and Main Street Park pedestrian improvements

The following photographs illustrate examples of successful exterior amphitheatres for similar purposes as described in the recommendation for Morrison Parkway. A raised stage area would allow for an outdoor multipurpose area for bands at current and future civic events.



Mark's Park Amphitheater: St. Louis, Missouri
www.awningstoday.com, 10-23-15



First Security Amphitheater: St. Louis, Missouri
www.scmarchitects.com/, 10-23-15

A seating area carved into the sloped embankment would be ideal for these events. The paved area of Morrison Parking must remain as a parking surface as a result of the grant that was received to make the original parkway improvements. This surface area could be improved with brick paving to better function as a multipurpose outdoor space.



Vetter Stone Amphitheater: Mankato, Minnesota
www.onekgguy.blogspot.com, 10-22-15



City of St. Louis Park, Veterans Memorial Amphitheater: St. Louis, Missouri
www.damonfarber.com, 10-22-15

Main Street elevations were photographed and combined to develop a complete north and south façade as depicted in the following Exhibit 45. Many of the historical buildings are captured within this Main Street east/west boundary. This extended photograph also helps to depict the existing street/scape and current sense of place.

Existing Streetscape

Exhibit 45



South Elevation

A



South Elevation Continued



North Elevation

B



North Elevation Continued

C. Historic District Amenities and Potential for Expansion of Historic Structures

The Historic District Commission recognizes 120 historical structures. These structures and monuments are more than fifty years old and carry architectural and historical significance. Seven of these are listed on the Historic National Registry. Eighty-seven are more than 100 years old. Only twenty-three are included in the historic district defined in the following map Exhibit 46. Most of the properties are in living condition and solidify the historic nature of the city. These historic structures offer an opportunity to attract tourist in and around the downtown area.

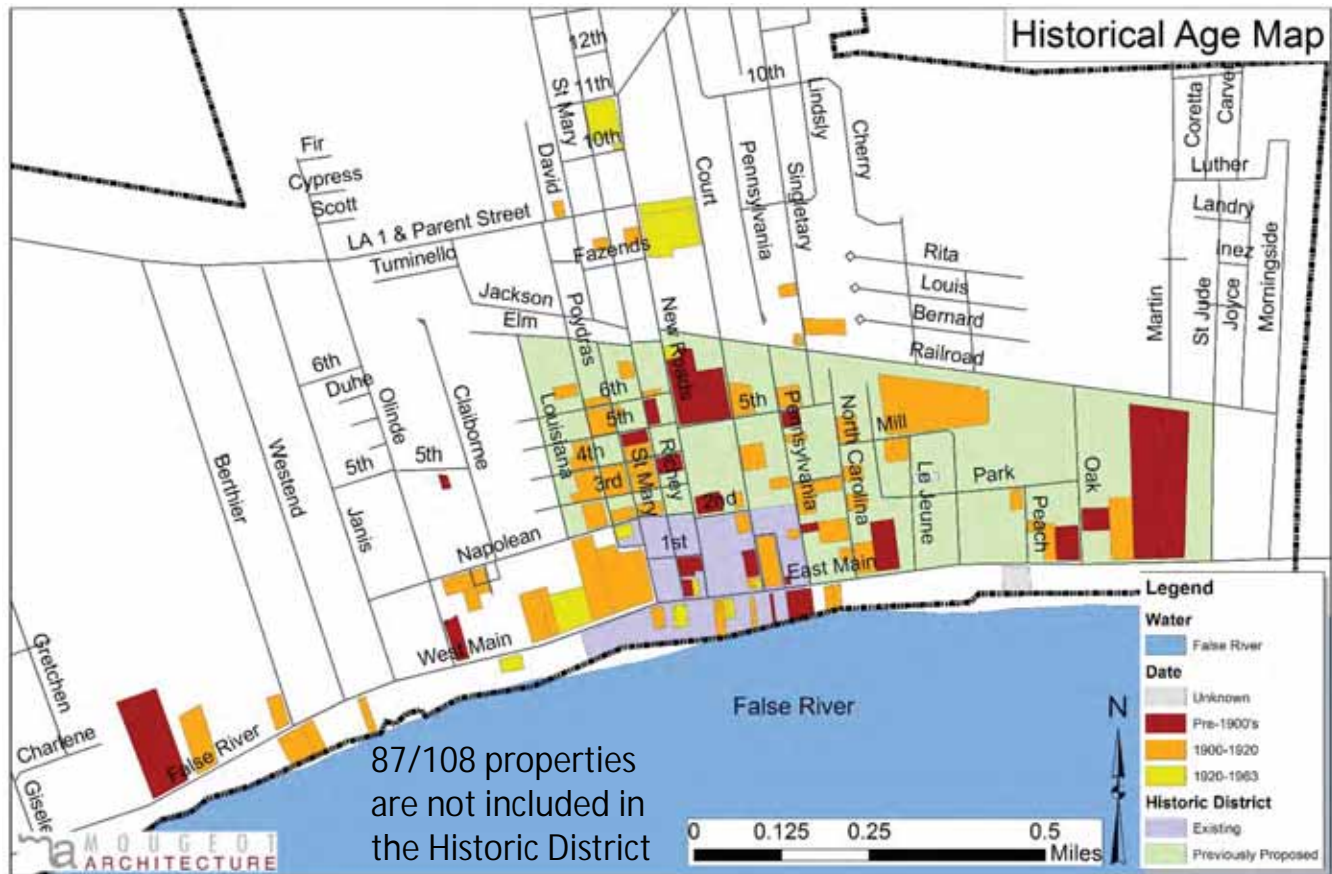


Exhibit 46 Historic District and Proposed Expansion Map

A plan for a Cultural Center Campus which centered on the Olinde Shopping Center was previously proposed by City consultants. The recommendations from this previous study expressed the desire to redevelop abandoned structures and to link pedestrian spaces to encourage urban revitalization and reinvestment. This proposal may warrant further consideration although the proposed boundary (shown in green on Exhibit 46) does not focus on incorporating existing historic structures.

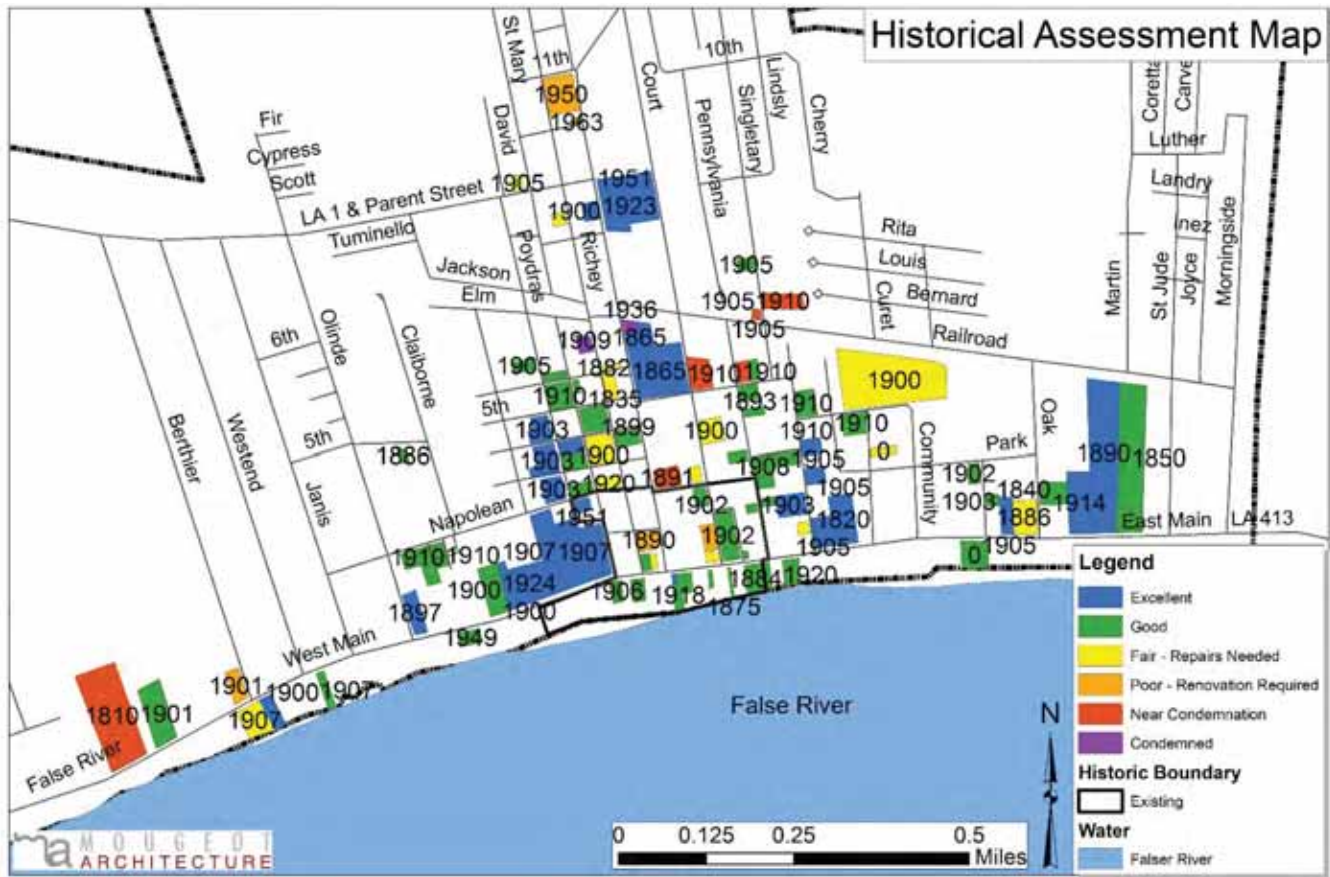


Exhibit 47 Historical Structures Map; 50 years or older (USGS Map, New Roads Historic Structure Inventory)

Noteable Examples of Historic Structures:

Poydras High School, located at 460 West Main Street, was named after Julien de Lalande Poydras, a French American merchant and educator who resided in Pointe Coupee Parish in the late 18th and early 19th century and was the first President of the United States Senate. The building was constructed in 1924 by funds bequeathed to the parish by Poydras and continued to serve as a public high school until 1981. Poydras is by some referred to as “the father of public education in Louisiana.” The building is now the Julien Poydras Museum and Cultural Center owned by the Pointe Coupee Historical Society.



Julien Poydras Museum and Cultural Center



LeJeune House: 507 East Main Street

Various historical structures, many over one hundred years old, provide a significant tourism opportunity for the local community. One such notable local historical structure is the LeJeune House which dates to 1820. This plantation home located at 507 East Main Street rests in the shade of the 300 year old Samson Oak. This was the first home in New Roads and is listed on the National Record of Historical Places.



Another local icon is the former First National Bank of New Roads. This two story structure is located at 102 East Main Street in the middle of downtown. Designed in Classical Revival style, it was constructed in 1909 along the bank of False River. The building façade includes a stone water table, quoins, a belt course, large keystones above most windows, pronounced lintels and an elaborate door surround. The structure was most well known as Hebert's Jewelry which operated for about 70 years from 1922-1998.

First National Bank 2015

The two story Heritage Building next door to Ma Mama's Kitchen was constructed in 1936 of freestanding load bearing brick walls. It initially housed the Weill's Department Store and later became Vee's 5 & 10 Center store, both South Louisiana chain stores. The building was purchased in 2009 by the City of New Roads and has recently received a grant from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The grant will go towards programming required to develop preliminary plans and cost estimates for repurposing the building as a community cultural museum.



Heritage Building 116 West Main Street (right side)

D. Cultural Events

1. **Mardi Gras:** The city of New Roads hosted its first Mardi Gras Ball in 1881. It celebrated Mardi Gras with its first parade in 1922. This is the fourth oldest parade in the state behind three New Orleans' parades. The festival draws thousands of people every year and continues to strengthen the community and economy. There are currently two parades. The first is Community Center Parade and the second is the New Roads Lions Club parade.



New Roads Mardi Gras 2010. St. Mary Cathedral in background



New Roads Mardi Gras 2010. Ma Mama's Kitchen in background

The first Harvest Festival on False River took place in October of 2011. The event exhibits local arts and crafts, live music, and carnival rides. The festival is a celebration of local agriculture and Louisiana Secretary of Agriculture Mike Strain served as a keynote speaker to open the ceremonies. The local crops include sugar cane, corn, wheat, pecans, and soybeans. A food court made up of local restaurants provides an opportunity to experience rich, flavorful cuisines. Images taken from the 4th annual 2015 Harvest Festival illustrate this wonderful celebration.



Harvest Festival October 29, 2015: View down Main Street west towards St. Mary's



Harvest Festival October 29, 2015: View of Public Park



Harvest Festival October 29, 2015: View down Main Street east



Harvest Festival October 29, 2015: View at Morrison Parkway



Harvest Festival October 29, 2015: View down Main Street west

Other notable events include:

Spring Street Festival & Antique Car Show: Annual event in March. Historic cars are displayed along the downtown corridor and parkway.

4th of July Music Festival & Boat Parade: Annual 4th of July music festival and boat parade along False River.

Christmas Ice Skating Rink: The city installs a skating rink across from City Hall for the public to enjoy.

Christmas in New Roads Parade: 1st Saturday in December.

Market at the Mill: A three day antique and vintage market at the old mill in April. Have also had Holiday Market at the Mill in November.

E. Aesthetics and Imagery

1. Strengths



The strengths of New Roads culture include numerous tourist attractions such as False River, a great inventory of well kept historical buildings, small city character and charm, great landscaping and scenery, rich cultural history, and local festivals and events. Views of False River really help to establish a sense of place while traveling through New Roads. The historic downtown appeal also helps to define the era in which the city was established. Scott Gaudin, Chairman of the Board of Directors for the West baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce, was quoted in the Advocate in 2015 stating "When I think of what Port Allen downtown needs to be like, I think of New Roads." It is widely known that New Roads is a growing tourist attraction for the region. It is obvious that there have been concerted efforts to improve and expand on the current success although the local economy continues to struggle from lack of growth.

2. Weaknesses and Threats

Competing with surrounding communities that are experiencing growth in the young working class population, thus generating new tax dollars, has proven to be a challenge for all sectors of government. This lack of growth is also evident in the local housing market. Many of the old structures that become vacant are left abandoned and are deteriorating. There has also been a trend to the rental market. Many of the homes are not owned by the occupants. This tends to decrease the amount of annual dollars spent in maintenance and upkeep. Refer to Owner Occupied Housing Map in Section V – C. 4 for a map of this trend.

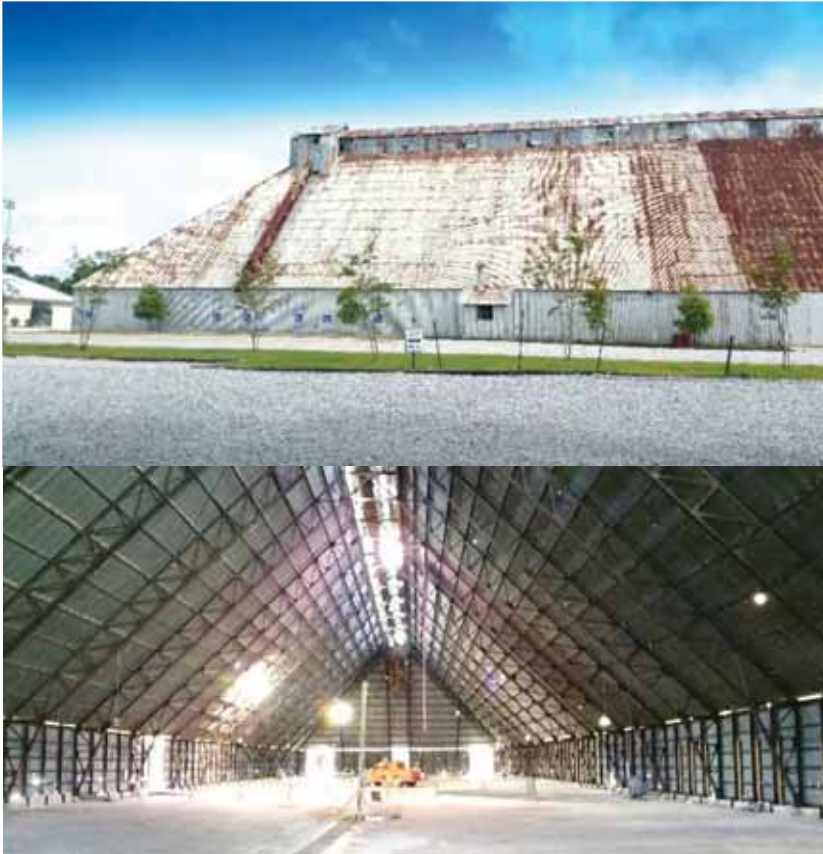
The abandoned and unoccupied structures as referenced in the existing conditions assessment map in Section VI – C are great examples of eyesores to opportunities. The structures that are deemed to be beyond repair or monetarily infeasible to renovate to current building code requirements, for non-historic structures, can be cleared for affordable residential housing infill lots. These sites can be targeted for incentivized local and federal tax credits relative to urban renewal and revitalization. Some of these sites can be utilized as small neighborhood parks where they fall within the vicinity of proposed new parks in the park access map located in Section V.

3. Eyesores to Opportunities

The residential and commercial structures that are in poor condition as referred to in the building assessment map in Section V, could be renovated for reuse by local developers. As the local population begins to increase, the housing and commercial markets will increase prospectively. The synchronized planning components help to attract the desired young upwardly mobile middle class families.



Another opportunity to turn an eyesore into an opportunity is to continue revitalization efforts to enhance and maintain the Old Mill storage building at 311 Mill Street. The structure was once utilized as a cotton seed mill for New Roads Oil Mill and later for Southern Cotton Oil Company. It was originally constructed in 1900 and is now owned by the City of New Roads. The building is being utilized by the community to store Mardi Gras floats and for local antique venues. The opportunities for public use are endless and the building is an iconic feature to the community.



The Old Mill offers tremendous potential for public use as is already being experienced with Market at the Mill. Many of the windows are broken and pigeons are nesting in the clearstory space above. The exterior roofing is rusting and may warrant a capital improvement budget for future repairs. These types of renovations can be extremely costly due to the size of the structure. Current venues will not likely generate adequate funding for this kind of maintenance. There are various funding programs that assist with precisely this kind of project but it takes time to apply and receive funds. Recommendation include finding funding sources that will align with the future maintenance needs as well as additional renovations to the facility that will render the space more functional to the community. Maintaining this structure will ensure many years of future public use of this facility.

F. Tourism and Goals for Enhancing Tourism

1. Define a Sense of Place

a. **Main Street:** One of the primary goals for enhancing and increasing tourism is to define a sense of place within the city along Main Street. An effective method to define a sense of place is to utilize zoning ordinances to develop a quality of consistency within the city. Signage and streetscape play an important role in this development. One nearby example of utilizing local attractions, both private and public, to increase tourism is St. Francisville in West Feliciana. Walking tour guide brochures were developed that provide directions to each historical structure, detailed information on the history of those buildings and a customized historical sign at each location. These guides are systematically placed at various commercial and public buildings throughout the town.



Historic structures and tourism signage in St. Francisville

b. **Downtown Area:** The downtown generally has adequate parking but during special occasions where an unusual number of visitors come to the downtown area, on street parking becomes hard to find. As mentioned in section VI-B, many visitors are completely unaware of the free public parking available in Morrison Parkway. As depicted in the concept sketches below, decorative signage identifies the east and west public entrances to this parking. It also serves as an opportunity to list other free public amenities such as a boat launch, fishing piers, restrooms, and picnic areas. Also illustrated are opportunities for pole signage signifying False River access and recreation icons such as bass fishing. These could be seasonal signs and banners that help to increase tourism during the thriving summer months. These could be replaced with holiday or festival banners during other times of the year.



Main Street Improvements and Morrison Parkway West Side Entrance Concept: Wayfinding Signage to Riverfront Parkway



Main Street Improvements and Morison Parkway East Side Entrance Concept: Wayfinding Signage to Riverfront Parkway

c. Regional Signage:

i). **Signage outside of the city boundary:** There is currently no signage outside of the city that directs or encourages through traffic to the city. Recommendations are to include several structures outside of the city limits within the Pointe Coupee Parish boundary. These structures would serve as a friendly reminder for those traveling through the city to take some time out to enjoy the beautiful local attractions. One such structure could take advantage of an existing pigeonnier located along LA Hwy 1 (False River Drive) between LA Hwy 190 and Hospital Road about 7 miles outside of the city limits. Another could be located along LA Hwy 1 (Morganza Hwy) between Morganza and Hospital Road. This structure could utilize an existing agricultural structure such as the old "Joe Beaud" potato shed. A third could be positioned along LA Hwy 10 between the John J. Audubon Bridge and LA Hwy 1. These undertakings could be a collaborative effort between the city and the parish.



Existing pigeonnier along False River Drive



Existing pigeonnier in West Feliciana Parish

Regional Cooperation: Drivers along LA. 1 north towards New Roads often feel as though they are already in the city. Reminding people that there are a number of unincorporated towns surrounding False River reinforces the fact that New Roads is a small city with a quaint urban environment. The assets of the city include its downtown, historical architecture, and festivals attract tourist year around.



Concept rendering of pigeonier along False River Drive

ii). **Gateways/Boundary Signage, Existing City Limits Signs:** The city of New Roads has poorly defined city limits. Although there are existing city limit signs, the presence of False River expands the perception of entering New Roads much sooner than the defined city limits. A more clearly defined city limits boundary will provide visitors with a greater sense of the city as a whole and help create stronger visual relationships for their experiences. From the point of entry, these gateway signs will instill a sense of place that visitors will begin to characterize as New Roads. One example found in Louisiana is the entrance signage into Grand Isle as illustrated below. Grand Isle is a barrier island in Jefferson Parish which is surrounded by water and is a major tourist destination in the summer. Tourists travel from hundreds of miles to enjoy the great fishing opportunities. The entrance sign visually connects with these major tourism attractions and lets visitors know that they are entering their destination.



Image from <http://www.wunderground.com/>: November 2, 2015

The photographs of the existing city limit signage below illustrate how small and visually cluttered the existing signs appear as visitors enter various points into the city. Many of the wood entry signage has deteriorated and is in need of repair or replacement. There are many different signs at each location attempting to signify entrance into the city. These could be simplified and reduced into a single monument sign.



Existing city limit sign entering east on Main Street



Existing city limit sign entering north on New Roads Street

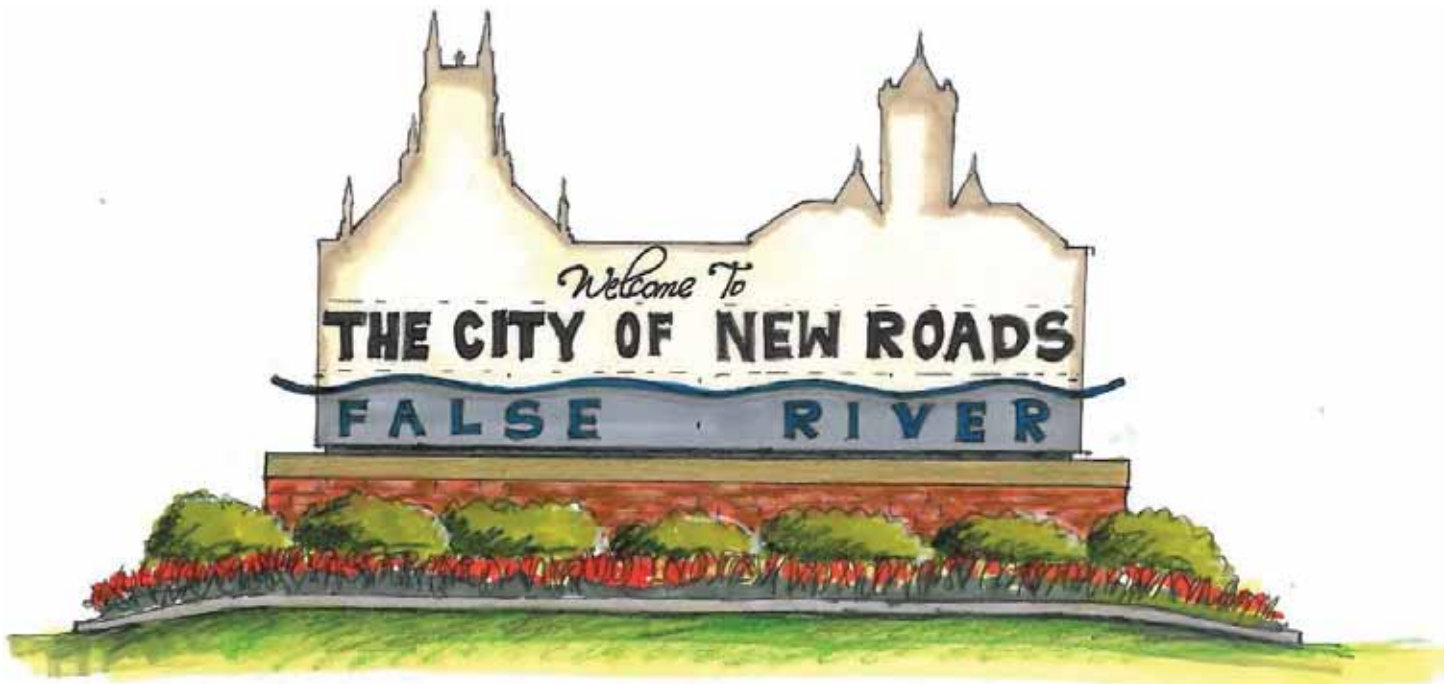


Existing city limit sign entering west on Main Street



Existing city limit sign entering west on Morganza Hwy

Proposed Gateway/Boundary Signage: The following concept gateway/boundary sign for the City of New Roads should be unique and characteristic of the area for visitors and citizens. Much like the success with the Grand Isle sign, this sign could take advantage of the major local attractions such as False River. Another unique feature in this concept sketch is two iconic buildings detailed in the upper silhouette. The two buildings represented are St. Mary's Catholic Church and the parish courthouse. These buildings represent the east and west boundaries of the downtown area along Main Street and are well known landmark features for visitors boating on False River.



Gateway/Boundary Wayfinding Signage (City Limit Sign) as Referenced in the Gateway Map

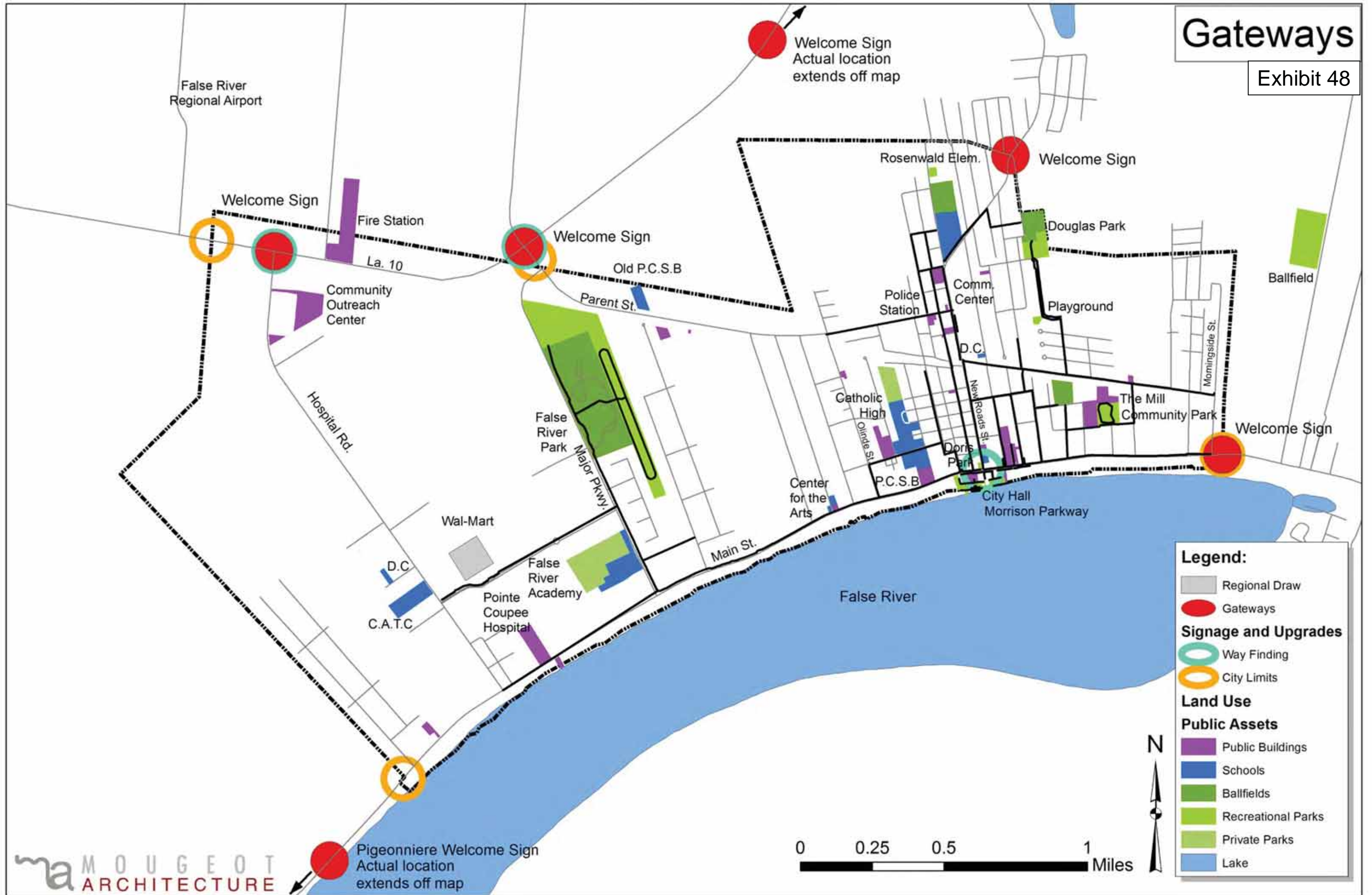
iii). **Directional Signage, Existing Directional Signs:** Currently there is inadequate directional signage within the city. Directional signage as recommended in the Gateway Improvements plan (Exhibit 47) would incorporate wayfinding signage at many of the major intersections. This example shows a larger directional sign in West Feliciana that illustrates directions and distances.



Example of Directional Signage as Referenced in the Gateway Map

Gateways

Exhibit 48



2. Regional Collaboration

Develop cooperative endeavors with Pointe Coupee Parish and surrounding parishes on common tourism interests. This could include collaborative one day or weekend tours with multiple stops in each parish.

3. Utilize the Port Commission's New Roads Landing

The old Mississippi River ferry landing, which is now named the New Roads Landing, is located just north of New Roads. In 2014, ownership and operations of the landing was transferred to the Pointe Coupee Parish Port Commission. It is used for commercial, industrial, recreational, and emergency access to the river, and is suitable for docking river cruise vessels and U. S. Army Corps of Engineers vessels that ply the river. The port commission has discussed improvements to the landing that will continue to upgrade vessel docking, improve passenger loading and disembarkation, and upgrade the overall aesthetics of the site. Communication between the administration and the port commission to discuss detailed improvements to benefit river-based tourism is recommended.

4. Improve Vehicular Access to Downtown

The current available public parking for the downtown area is either street parking along Main Street or one of its adjoining streets or public parking in Morrison Parkway. These are not metered spaces and are currently used by employees, visitors, and commercial customers. During the typical day, parking space is not an issue but on certain occasions, such as court house activities or other special local events parking can be problematic. Improving pedestrian connectivity north of Main St. would allow greater areas to be utilized and improve parking conditions. Public street parking in lots within two to three blocks north of Main St. with a targeted capacity of 30-60 spaces could serve to reduce the strain of parking in the downtown area.

5. Establish and/or Maintain Riverfront Views

Establish zoning ordinance provisions that maintain the sense of place connection with False River by building setback and landscaping requirements. Landscaping that grows canopies high above ground will help to minimize the visual obstructions to the river views. Enforce lawn maintenance regulations. Many of the properties along False River Drive have overgrown lots that restrict the river views.

6. Keep New Roads Clean

Establish community participation and volunteer efforts for keeping the city clean and beautiful. Enforce fines for littering and require community service for offenders that requires cleanup hours. Continue to complete annually in the "Clean City" contest and strive to improve each year. Update the city ordinance in regard to litter.

7. Attitude Adjustment and Political Will

Enhancing tourism is a major economic development driver as well as an initiative for improving the quality of life in New Roads, i.e., appearance counts; therefore, the administration, other elected officials, and citizens alike will have to embrace the concept and step forward in pro-active fashion to implement this goal. Several projects and ideas have been offered throughout this planning report. Examples include expanding the boundaries of the historical district and revising the historic district ordinance to enhance the historical character of the community. Other examples include instituting a complete streets approach to street and roadway improvements, installing wayfinding and monument signage at the town's entrances to enhance the sense of place and better define the downtown area, expanding the festival arena to include a town square park setting across from city hall to unify the area, replacing fixtures downtown with new period lighting with seasonal and festival banners, and instituting and maintaining a general clean-up of the community.

This likely requires a shift in attitude about how citizens sense and envision the town and its character. When comparing the historical attractiveness of St. Francisville to New Roads, it is obvious that similarities do exist, but the contrast is vivid in many instances. In St. Francisville, streets and rights-of-way are well-groomed in the historical sectors. Obvious rules and guidance are in place to offer a sense of time when life was slower and antebellum living was the norm. In contrast, one gets the sense that in New Roads, the setting is more the result of happenstance than a conscious effort to create and maintain order and charm.

Typically, to accomplish this goal, the first step should be taken by the local governing authority. To be successful, a group of citizens must be appointed and assigned a long-term objective to implement improvements that generate tourism interests. "Long-term," in this instance, means that the group organized specifically to spearhead these initiatives must be a core group of citizens who can devote themselves to these goals disregarding election cycles. Continuity is imperative.

This group would not be an ad hoc committee as such; it would be a standing committee with a place on the town council's agenda at each meeting with a directive to ensure that plan recommendations relative to the overall tourism objectives and the specific projects are implementable. It will be the mayor and council's responsibility to finance the enhancements with fiscal responsibility over a reasonable period of time but sooner rather than later. Clear focus needs to be placed on the historical district expansion and the ordinance tightening.

It is important, also, that this group work closely with the Pointe Coupee Port Commission in recommending improvements at the New Roads Landing on the Mississippi River just north of town to allow tour boat docking and safe and aesthetically pleasing boarding and disembarking. Coordination with St. Francisville in taking advantage of the John J. Audubon Bridge and the convenient connectivity of the communities to encourage group tours of both communities rather than one or the other suggests regional cooperation that guarantees success of the mission to expand tourism interest by expanding the opportunity in this region of the state.

G. Recommendations Summary

1. Historic Corridors

- a. Emphasize historic significance of New Roads by educating the public on historic trades and the history of False River

2. Downtown

- a. Provide improved pedestrian connection to Morrison Parkway for increased public use
- b. Provide enhanced festival features such as amphitheater seating and covered stage

3. Historic District

- a. Expand the existing historic district to include the majority of the historic buildings in the downtown area, within walking distance

4. Cultural Events

- a. Continue to maintain and expand current events and festivals

5. Aesthetics and Imagery

- a. Incentivize reinvestment to restore or replace abandoned and blighted areas
- b. Maintain small town appeal
- c. Continue to maintain and enhance the old mill for tourism opportunities

6. Tourism Enhancements

- a. Define sense of place
- b. Develop self-guided tour map and signage at historic buildings
- c. Coordinate multiple city/town day or weekend tours

7. Gateway/ Directional Signage Improvements

- a. City Limits – Monumental Signs
- b. Wayfinding – At various intersections
- c. Wayfinding – At Morrison Parkway East and West Entrances
- d. Wayfinding – Regional Welcome Signs

VII. PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS and CONCLUSIONS

A. Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The summary listing of findings of the New Roads Comprehensive Plan 2016 is presented below. The findings and recommendations are combined into ten major sections all respecting the course of study as directed by the comprehensive plan steering committee, the elected officials of New Roads, and the citizens of the community through forums or personal feedback. Each category begins with an overriding objective followed by suggestions and/or recommendations intent upon accomplishing the overriding objectives and reaching community goals.

The ten categories of findings and recommendations are as follows:

1. Growth and Population
2. Housing Stock
3. Roadway and Corridor Enhancement
4. Economic Development
5. Tourism
6. Cultural Amenities and Urban Art
7. Mitigation of Natural Disaster Impacts
8. Parks and Recreation
9. Infrastructure
10. Regulatory Matters

1. Growth and Population—To stabilize the current population base by reducing out-migration while encouraging in-migration with a focus on culturally and racially diversified, young, and upwardly mobile families of childbearing age as well as the elderly

- a. Increase population by 10% by 2025
- b. Increase commercial and industrial job opportunities near New Roads
- c. Target young, upwardly mobile families for both retention and in-migration
- d. Simultaneously target senior citizens for retention and in-migration
- e. Create/generate quality of life enhancements suitable to above
- f. Provide opportunity for affordable housing stock—target infill lots
- g. Provide opportunity for re-investment to enhance housing stock
- h. Provide and encourage opportunity for market rate housing in areas defined in future land use plan by way of updated zoning ordinance
- i. Continue to support improvement in education standards in all schools
- j. Generate in-migration by way of young, upwardly mobile child-bearing age families with school age children along with new jobs to help continue local public education improvements

2. Housing Stock—Encourage affordable housing re-investment in older areas (\$155,000 range) while also allowing for new market rate housing development

- a. Create mixed-use zones in open areas suitable for urbanization within existing city utilities coverage
- b. Create Culture, Recreation, and Tourism (CRT) Cultural District to incentivize reinvestment (\pm 45% tax credits) in areas most in need of revitalization
- c. Incentivize opportunity for re-investment to enhance housing stock
- d. Provide opportunity for affordable housing stock—target infill lots
- e. Provide and encourage opportunity for market rate housing in areas defined in future land use plan—update zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations accordingly

- f. Consider formation of non-profit organization and/or collaborate with existing Non-Governmental Organizations that aid in urban restoration (Habitat for Humanity, UREC, etc.)
- g. Invest in first time home owner program (consider collaboration with the Baton Rouge Area Foundation)
- h. Maximize utilization of HUD/CDBG programs through coordination with the New Roads Housing Authority (Consider 3rd party assistance)
- i. Be proactive in condemnation after offering the above (Consider 3rd party assistance)
- j. Update and modernize condemnation and related ordinance(s)

3. Roadway and Corridor Enhancement—To encourage investment and re-investment in commercial areas, improve traffic flow, and upgrade safety

- a. Adopt comp plan inclusive of future land use and major street plan (including Woodman Lane extension)
- b. Construct Martin Drive to Curet St. connector
- c. Construct St. Mary to Olinde connector
- d. Upgrade LA1-Hospital Road intersection ASAP. Consider major intersection enhancement such as a roundabout and significant city entrance feature at LA1-Hospital Road intersection
- e. Petition DOTD for complete street redesign along Parent Street from New Roads Street to Olinde to incentivize commercial reinvestment in the northern section of the city
- f. Construct bicycle and pedestrian to and from obvious destinations (schools, parks, commercial areas, etc.)—see sidewalk assessment in comp plan
- g. Support extending Woodman Lane to LA10 and consider as a major corridor with direct access to and from downtown
- h. By law, P&Z Commission to require ROW as per major street plan in all future plot plans/developments
- i. Require “complete streets” for all new streets where practical
- j. Maintain current public parking for use at no charge due to lack of adequate customer and employee parking downtown. Consider adding additional parking which could have a minimal parking fee along main street with revenues dedicated to consensus community upgrades along or near Main Street (e.g., period lighting, relocated electrical service lines, additional parking, other downtown attractions, as well as other City-based economic development objectives as noted below)
- k. Consider providing additional public parking on north side of Main Street to service existing businesses (New ordinance recommended to require dedicated parking for new building with major renovations.)
- l. Intersection improvements: Main Street at Hospital Road, at Major Parkway, and at Olinde Street and at Parent Street near Major Parkway
- m. Consider the completion of landscaping and memorial development at the traffic circle of Memorial.

4. Economic Development—To aid in job creation and retention as well as the overall health of the local economy as a complement to all other goals and objectives, both internal and regional

- a. Redevelop Parent Street from New Roads Street to Olinde as complete street to encourage commercial retail revitalization targeting north city marketplace
- b. Maintain City Hall as downtown anchor with a new city plaza park across the street
- c. Restore retail services facility at Olinde shopping area or convert to government sector if private sector not willing.
- d. Create and expand jobs close to New Roads by incorporating LA 10 corridor and river ridge land, zoning as heavy commercial and/or industrial, and incentivize by investing in utility extensions

- e. Over time, expand utility services toward the J. J. Audubon bridge along lands suitable for industrial development (river ridge and sites coordinated with Parish economic development initiatives) with consideration to expand the city's corporate boundary first to include Woodman Lane then eastward
- f. Continue to support False River Regional Airport

5. **Tourism**—Envision tourism as a major economic development component

- a. Embrace community spirit and attitude similar to that of St. Francisville regarding tourism culture, community pride, historical district enhancements, private property upgrades, etc.
- b. Expand the historic district, inventory individual properties, print tour guides, etc.
- c. Fully develop and expound on a unified approach to defining the New Roads “sense of place”—ingress, egress, internal corridors as well as transient thoroughfares
- d. Expand and enhance multi-focused tourism, e.g., downtown commercial, historical buildings, and False River
- e. Capitalize on “Destination New Roads” concept—Expand tourists’ interests in New Roads including festivals, featured restaurants, wayfinding (Destination New Roads concept) and other directional signage, boat tours, bus tours, etc.
- f. Group/coordinate efforts with St. Francisville regarding a two-city tour capitalizing on the J. J. Audubon bridge
- g. Take advantage of the New Roads Landing
- h. Upgrade the New Roads Street corridor from LA 10 to Main Street in its truest historical context relative to history as well as Mississippi River cruise opportunities
- i. Consider “Cruise New Roads”—Mississippi River boat cruises, self-driven auto tour with New Roads and St. Francisville featured together, a two-day motorcycle weekend (bikes park along main street or perhaps expand car fest to bike and car fest if willing to try)
- j. Coordinate tourism interests with St. Francisville, Pointe Coupee Parish and West Feliciana Parish.
- k. Contact GM/Chevrolet and take advantage of “Find New Roads,” the Chevrolet national ad campaign (Plaquemine did this once).
- l. Expand tourists’ interests in New Roads by creating additional unique features such as sculptural attractions, other cultural district features, upgraded gathering sites, etc.
- m. Downtown/Historical District, other commercial areas, airport, etc.—consider utilizing advertising potential approaching from the J. J. Audubon Bridge, and add monument(s) to direct traffic to New Roads.
- n. Construct a visitor’s center/cultural museum along Hwy 10 on the West side of the James Audubon Bridge. The center can be named in honor of General John Archer LeJeune.
- o. Continue to support the False River Regional Airport and related local growth in the transportation industry
- p. Continue to work with and support the Pointe Coupee Parish Port Commission, i.e., New Roads Landing
- q. Continue to take advantage of Main Street program
- r. Consider overall city plan in the best utilization of public spaces for festivals and other cultural events; consider design revision, maintenance, and upgrades to parks to complement all entertainment/festival venues
- s. Behind city hall, remove trees, utilize slope for terraced seating and entertainment venue, replace with minimal high branching trees for shade to open the view of False River from city hall (time to coincide with underground electrical system upgrade)
- t. Work with LDWF to bring False River back to trophy lake status to improve fishing for local citizenry as well as tourist/out of town visitors

- u. Consider implementing as much of this as possible in time for a weeklong 125 year New Roads anniversary event in 2020
- v. Insert way-finding signage and forms as well as city limits signs/forms as a means to help create and define the new New Roads sense of place.

6. Cultural Amenities and Urban Art—Utilize to modernize the city while creating the sense of place to define the community at and within its boundaries as well as approaches to the community

- a. Acquire ROW/land as needed to develop and construct attractive three dimensional wayfinding features directing traffic to New Roads and points of interest: LA 1 at first sight of False River utilizing existing pigeonaire, LA 10 intersection (to downtown), second LA 10 intersection at Hospital Road commercial corridor; LA1 at vacant lot near city boundary, present city boundary on LA 10, present city boundary near Bayou Run; city boundary along Main Street at Morningside, near John J. Audubon bridge, at Woodmen Lane extension, and other locations as shown on accompanying map
- b. Develop a new park across from city hall as the City Plaza incorporating design features that accommodate all existing festival and future envisioned events with a new, unique unifying structure symbol, e.g., large, vertically oriented sculpture capturing the Mississippi River meanders as per historical map [ex., Whole Foods (see graphic)]
- c. Install new period style lighting along downtown Main Street with festival and seasonal banners 24/7, 365.
- d. Continue to compete annually in clean city contest—obtain feedback from program to score higher each year
- e. Maintain Clean City attitude and awareness program for citizens and city employees year-round
- f. Become a statewide leader in actively and constantly removing litter while encouraging public awareness of litter issue
- g. Update city ordinance to increase and enforce littering fines
- h. Create CRT Cultural District
- i. Expand historic district to include a majority of historic structures where practical
- j. Update Historic District ordinance
- k. Create a New Roads Cultural District in compliance with Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism eligibility criteria as a means to offer redevelopment tax credits and encouraging revitalization through reinvestment in older residential and commercial sectors
- l. Create major entrance improvements such as sculptural forms
- m. Plan a weeklong 125-year anniversary celebration and utilize this event date to encourage implementation of other recommended improvements.

7. Mitigation of Natural Disaster Impacts—Upgrade utilities and city ordinances as a means of striving for cultural and economic sustainability, resiliency, and other responsible means to mitigate impacts of natural disaster events

- a. Consider second phase relocation of downtown and other commercial area electrical services to underground
- b. Require underground electrical service on all future urbanization
- c. Ensure all future development in flood-prone areas conform to IBT
- d. Participate with Parish to alleviate cause of 24 repetitive loss claims
- e. Participate with Parish with other recommendations from parish Hazard Mitigation Plan relative to New Roads
- f. Construct Martin Drive to Curet Street connection to allow for a secondary exit if railroad is blocked

8. Parks and Recreation—Upgrade community parks as a means of improving the quality of life for citizens of New Roads and as a means to encourage in-migration

- a. Upgrade parks using a citywide Park Master Plan approach
- b. Focus on maintenance and upgrades as well as new small parks within defined service areas (see plan map)
- c. Develop new festival park across from city hall as a featured attraction and city plaza with layout suitable to multiple uses

9. Infrastructure—Establish Capital Improvement Plan with 10 - 20-year horizon to maintain existing public works and upgrade where necessary in accordance with population growth, major street plan, future land use plan (See VII-C for estimated costs)

- **Electrical**
 - a. See Electrical in Natural Disaster Mitigation
 - b. Upgrade downtown electrical supply system (approx. 3,000 LF) to 15KV
 - c. Convert voltage in service lines from 5 KV to 15KV including changing transformer boxes
 - d. Upgrade substation with electronic monitors
 - e. Construct new substation to service new residential and commercial areas in the vicinity of Major Parkway and Hospital Road area (near Major Parkway at RR)
 - f. Extension eastward along and Mississippi River terraces
- **Sewerage**
 - a. Replace or rehab Olinde St. pump station incl. service area improvements
 - b. I&I improvements in the Railroad Pump Station service area
 - c. Replace Sixth St. Pump Station
 - d. Rehabilitate Fazend Pump Station
 - e. General infiltration and inflow improvements as well as pump station and line upgrades citywide
 - f. Extension eastward along and Mississippi River terraces
- **Water**—Line and water tower maintenance (no capital improvements anticipated)
- **Gas**—Replace all “invasion tubing”
- **Drainage**
 - a. Routine maintenance; no capital improvement anticipated
 - b. Encourage Parish drainage upgrades/maintenance along Portage Canal and railroad
 - c. Update all ordinances that pertain to City utility systems
 - d. No capital improvement recommended
- **Streets**
 - a. See Major Street Plan with intersection improvements
 - b. Construct Martin to Curet St. connector—City-Parish collaboration
 - c. Construct St. Mary to Olinde connector—City-Parish collaboration
 - d. Costs could be shared between Parish, City, and private participation

10. Regulatory Matters—Update and modernize Zoning, Subdivision Regulations, Permitting, Utility GIS, etc.

- a. Create city planning department—begin with one employee educated and trained in urban planning plus part-time intern to input GIS data working with public works
- b. Expand New Roads GIS using GIS docs provided in the 2015 comprehensive plan as basis and other ACAD documents available for utility systems (obtain from engineering firms)
- c. Consider city permitting and building inspection if deemed beneficial

- d. Manage condemnations
- e. Serve as code enforcement for all applicable ordinances
- f. Continue to update and modernize zoning code
- g. Continue to update and modernize subdivision regulations
- h. Continue to update and modernize ordinances that relate to utility systems
- i. Zone to encourage more affordable homes (e.g., lot vs. home SF ratio)
- j. Encourage infill and revitalization in older residential areas
- k. Be proactive in litter abatement (regulatory and DPW/City policy)—repeat
- l. Develop a landscape ordinance
- m. Incorporate all development ordinances into a Unified Development Code
- n. Ensure that future development near the Portage Canal floodplain conforms with IBC and required flood zone elevations

B. Future Land Use and Major Street Plan

Continuing to follow the guidance of the comprehensive plan vision statement, goals, and objectives, the future land use plan addresses community sustainability and resiliency as a function of land suitability, existing urban infrastructure, historical development, and current and emerging trends. As a major objective, stabilizing and increasing the city's population emerged as a top priority. Expanding tourism as a major economic development goal was a close second. These objectives are interrelated.

As such, a conservative goal of increasing the population by 500 citizens in ten years was established. Complementing this ambition is generating reinvestment in areas of the city most in need of refurbishment. These two goals also work hand in hand. It is for these reasons that the reconstruction of Parent Street was recommended. In addition, several other new streets are recommended throughout the city as a function of the future land use plan.

Typically, future land use plans are prepared as a means of directing future growth. In the case of New Roads, while the Future Land Use Plan is intended to fulfill that objective, it must be restated that the approximately 300 vacant lots that currently exist in the city limits is more than enough to fulfill the needs of persons and families seeking to build new homes—affordable or market rate. However, with the City intent on modernizing its zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations and its desire to also modernize other ordinances pertinent to budget and the appearance of the community, the Land Use Plan, as required by Louisiana law, is intended to serve as the basis for the zoning update. The land use plan is presented as Exhibit 49.

Based on past and current trends and the land suitability analysis, most undeveloped land is shown as urbanized. In the northeast section of town where residential and commercial areas trending in a downward direction, new residential land use is not noted. Reinvestment is encouraged in these areas as is the formation of a cultural district to generate opportunities for tax incentives and revitalization. Future residential development is encouraged near the Parent Street commercial area where a complete street rehabilitation program is recommended.

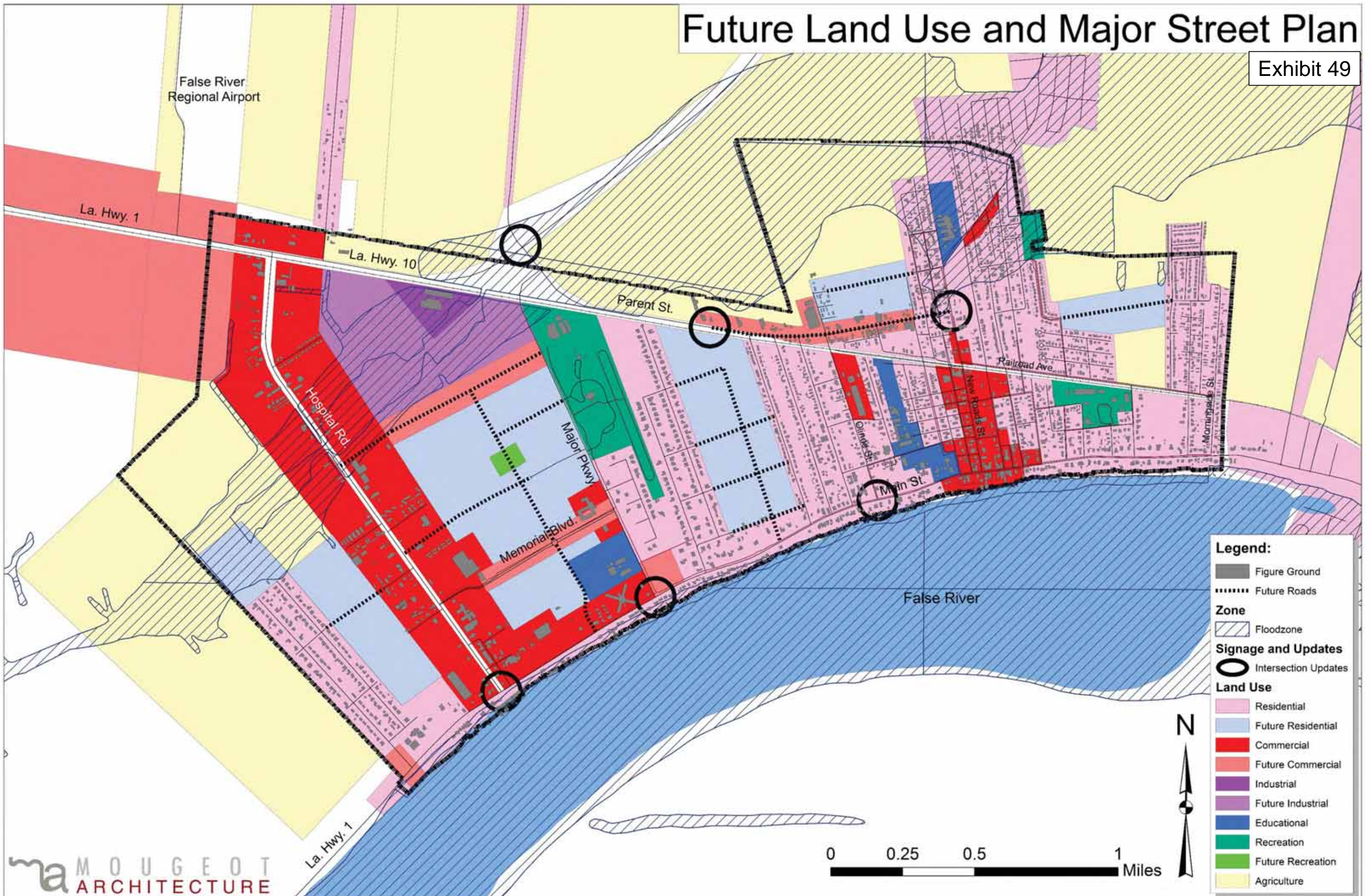
While new parks are recommended, specific sites were not identified but sectional locations were noted. One exception, though, is the recommendation to construct a new plaza type park across from city hall. Also, it must be reiterated that while commercial use is shown the full length of Hospital Road, caution is recommended to ensure that floodplain compliance rules and regulations at the local, state, and federal levels are followed in the noted flood zone area.

The Major Street Plan presented as Exhibit 50 includes new roads and major intersection improvements. Wayfinding signage and directional signage complement the major street plan as presented in Chapter VI. Potential wayfinding signage, upgrades to city entrances, and other examples of urban art presented in Chapter VI are all intended as complementary to the overall goal of better defining a sense of place and community, unifying the city, and transforming New Roads as a significant regional tourist destination following the pattern of other communities across the state and nation relative to historical and art based tourism.

Summarizing the roadway improvements presented previously, two connector streets to improve safe evacuation away from the railroad track are shown as is the recommended major upgrade to Parent Street. Main Street intersection improvements at Major Parkway and Olinde to improve traffic flow to and from schools are shown. New streets are depicted in mid-city areas such as between Hospital Road and Major Parkway and between Gretchen and Berthier. New roadway alignments through undeveloped areas are intended to organize future traffic flow, to provide opportunity for commercial nodes oriented toward neighborhood walkability and convenience, and to encourage grid based development. These alignments must be included on the updated zoning map to ensure preservation of the rights-of-way for transportation use. The Woodman Lane extension is also included as is a connecting roadway between Fern and Ewing which is intended to provide an alternate means of egress and to provide direct access from the subdivision to the expanding Hospital Road commercial corridor. The right-of-way is also a means of encouraging future residential areas in that vicinity.

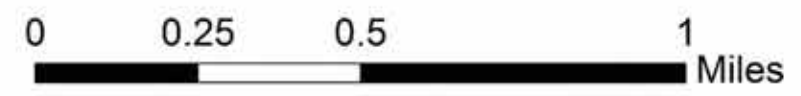
Future Land Use and Major Street Plan

Exhibit 49



Legend:

- Figure Ground
- Future Roads
- Zone**
- Floodzone
- Signage and Updates**
- Intersection Updates
- Land Use**
- Residential
- Future Residential
- Commercial
- Future Commercial
- Industrial
- Future Industrial
- Educational
- Recreation
- Future Recreation
- Agriculture



C. Capital Improvement Plan Funding Requirements Summary

Estimates are rough order of magnitude for planning and long term budgeting purposes only.

(Based on 2015 cost projections)

1. Electrical		
a. Upgrade downtown electrical supply system.....	\$1,000,000	
b. Convert voltage 5KV to 15KV.....	\$1,000,000	
c. Construct new substation to service residential and commercial along hospital road.....	\$1,500,000	
d. Upgrade existing substation with electronic monitors.....	<u>\$300,000</u>	
	Total	\$3,800,000
2. Sewer		
a. Replace or rehabilitate Olinde St. Pump Station.....	\$2,000,000	
b. Construct infiltration and inflow improvements.....	\$3,000,000	
c. Construct infiltration and inflow at railroad pump station.....	\$1,000,000	
d. Rehabilitate Fazend Pump Station.....	\$500,000	
e. Replace Sixth Street Pump Station.....	<u>\$1,000,000</u>	
	Total	\$7,500,000
3. Water		
a. Distribution line upgrades and maintenance and water tower maintenance.....	Total	\$1,500,000
4. Gas		
a. Replace invasion tubing.....	Total	\$5,000,000
5. Streets		
a. New street from Martin to Curet.....	\$600,000	
b. New street from St. Mary to Olinde.....	\$600,000	
c. Sidewalk repair and upgrade.....	\$70,000	
d. New sidewalks.....	\$700,000	
e. Intersection improvements *.....	TBD	
f. Wayfinding Signage.....	\$27,000	
g. Monumental Signage.....	<u>\$75,000</u>	
	Total	\$1,200,000
6. Communication		
a. Provide wireless communication access at parks and pedestrian routes.		TBD

Total CIP funding projections \$19,872,000+

*Costs associated with this item to come from D.O.T.D.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Wayfinding and Signage Suggestions
- B. Utility Layouts
 - 1. Water Distribution System
 - 2. Gas
 - 3. Electrical
 - 4. Sewerage
- C. Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations
- D. Zoning Map

WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

LA 10 Westbound after crossing the JJA Bridge

←	Visitor Station with Kiosk and Restrooms
←	Bartram Trail Terminus Historical Marker Scenic Route
↑	Zachary Taylor Parkway
↑	New Roads, 3 miles ahead
↑	New Roads Mississippi River Landing

LA 10 Westbound at Woodman Extension

←	Downtown New Roads
←	Historic District
←	False River Landings
↑	False River Regional Airport

LA 10 Westbound at New Roads Street

←	Historic Downtown New Roads
←	New Roads False River Landings
←	Local Business Offering(s)
→	New Roads Mississippi River Landing
→	Bartram Trail Marker

LA 10 Eastbound at New Roads Street

→	Historic Downtown New Roads
→	New Roads False River Landings
→	Local Business Offering(s)
→	New Roads Mississippi River Landing
→	Bartram Trail Marker

LA 10 Westbound at Parent Street

←	False River Park and Civic Center
←	Pointe Coupee Multi-Use Center
←	Jeff Smith Arena
←	False River Academy

LA 10 Eastbound at Parent Street

→	False River Park and Civic Center
→	Pointe Coupee Multi-Use Center
→	Jeff Smith Arena
→	False River Academy

False River Drive at Parent Street

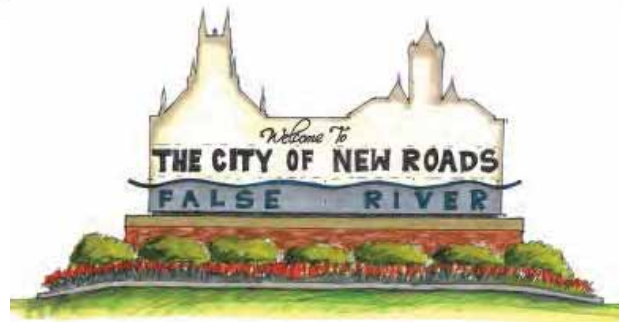
→	False River Park and Civic Center
→	Pointe Coupee Multi-Use Center
→	Jeff Smith Arena
→	False River Academy

LA 10 Westbound at City Boundary (near airport)

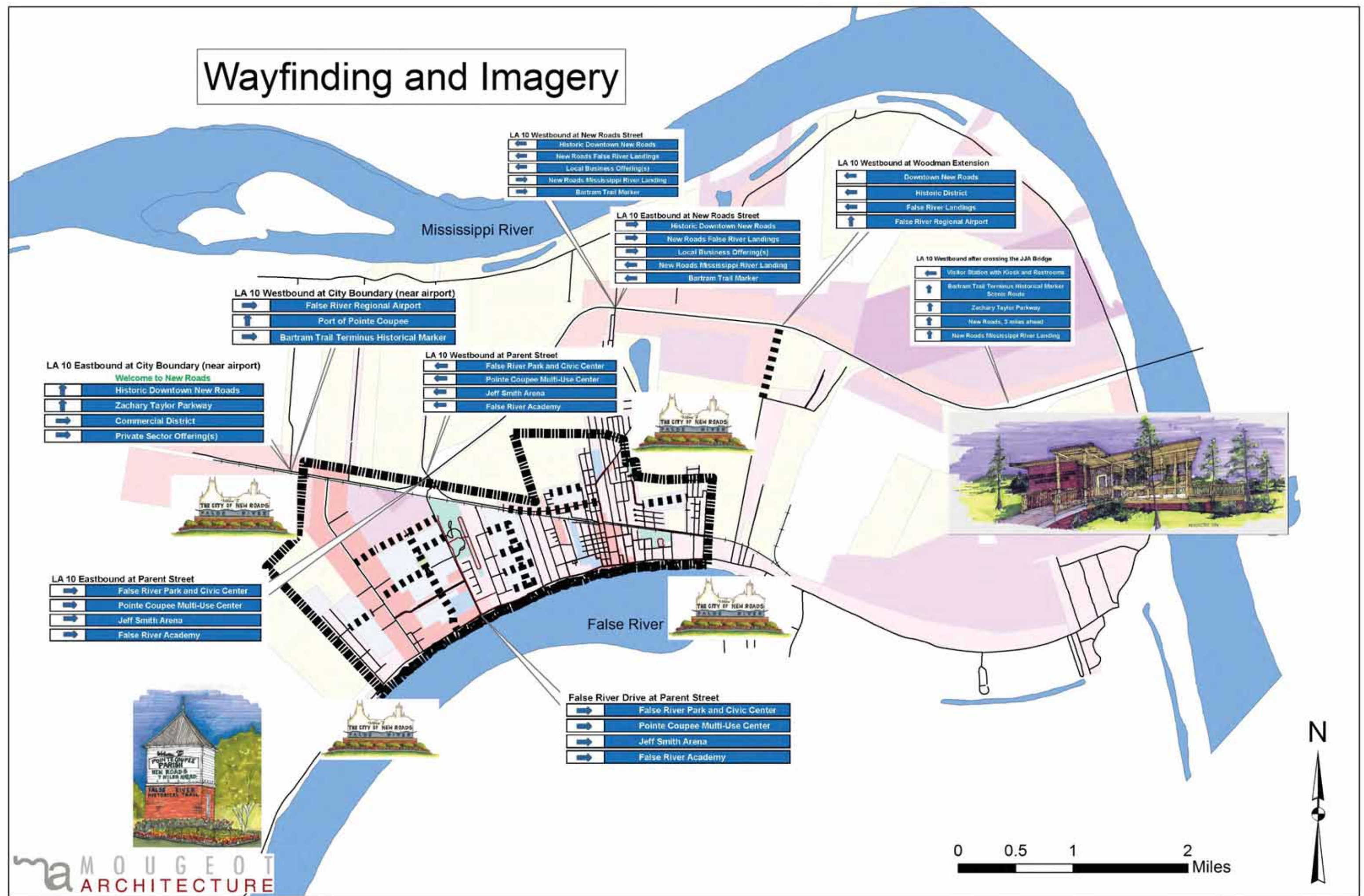
→	False River Regional Airport
↑	Port of Pointe Coupee
→	Bartram Trail Terminus Historical Marker

LA 10 Eastbound at City Boundary (near airport)

<i>Welcome to New Roads</i>	
↑	Historic Downtown New Roads
↑	Zachary Taylor Parkway
→	Commercial District
→	Private Sector Offering(s)



Wayfinding and Imagery



- LA 10 Westbound at New Roads Street**
- Historic Downtown New Roads
 - New Roads False River Landings
 - Local Business Offering(s)
 - New Roads Mississippi River Landing
 - Bartram Trail Marker

- LA 10 Westbound at Woodman Extension**
- Downtown New Roads
 - Historic District
 - False River Landings
 - False River Regional Airport

- LA 10 Eastbound at New Roads Street**
- Historic Downtown New Roads
 - New Roads False River Landings
 - Local Business Offering(s)
 - New Roads Mississippi River Landing
 - Bartram Trail Marker

- LA 10 Westbound after crossing the JJA Bridge**
- Visitor Station with Kiosk and Restrooms
 - Bartram Trail Terminus Historical Marker
 - Scenic Route
 - Zachary Taylor Parkway
 - New Roads, 5 miles ahead
 - New Roads Mississippi River Landing

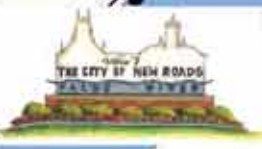
- LA 10 Westbound at City Boundary (near airport)**
- False River Regional Airport
 - Port of Pointe Coupee
 - Bartram Trail Terminus Historical Marker

- LA 10 Westbound at Parent Street**
- False River Park and Civic Center
 - Pointe Coupee Multi-Use Center
 - Jeff Smith Arena
 - False River Academy

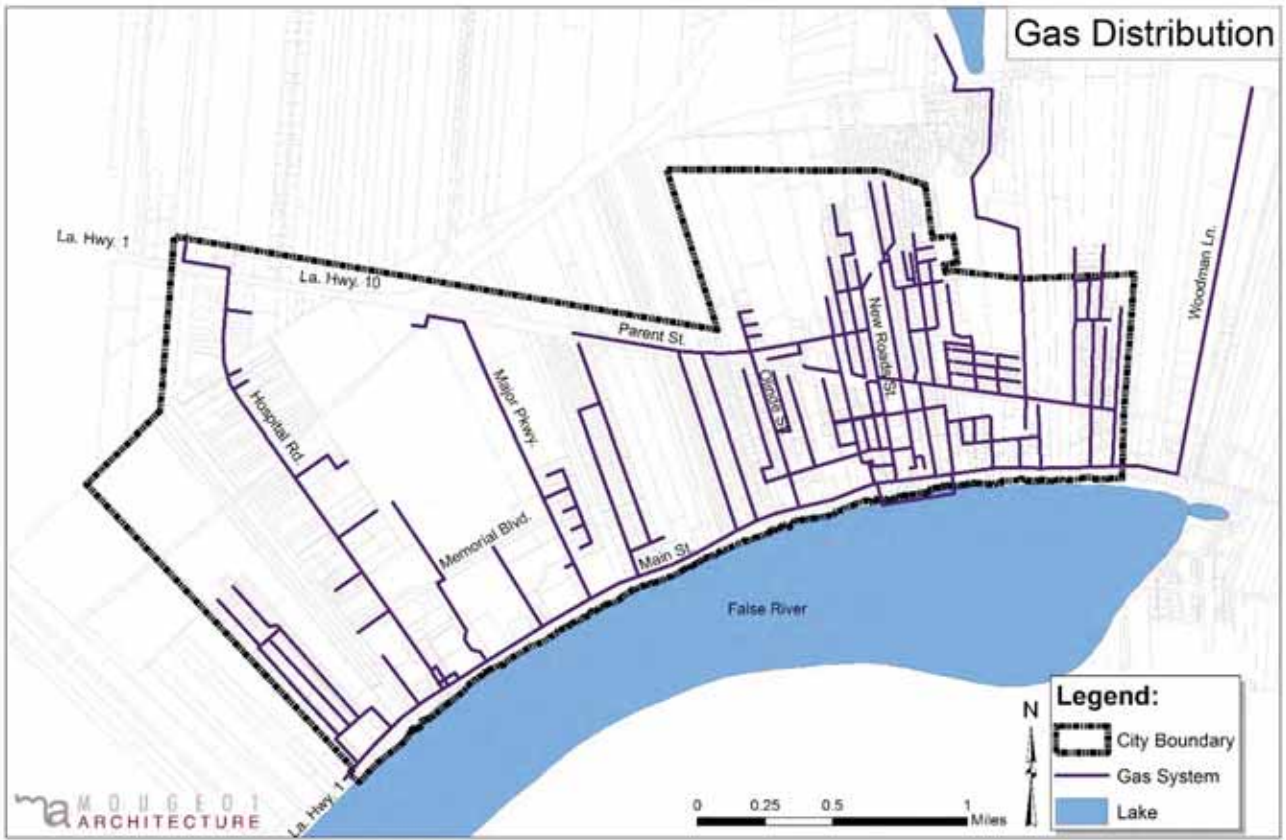
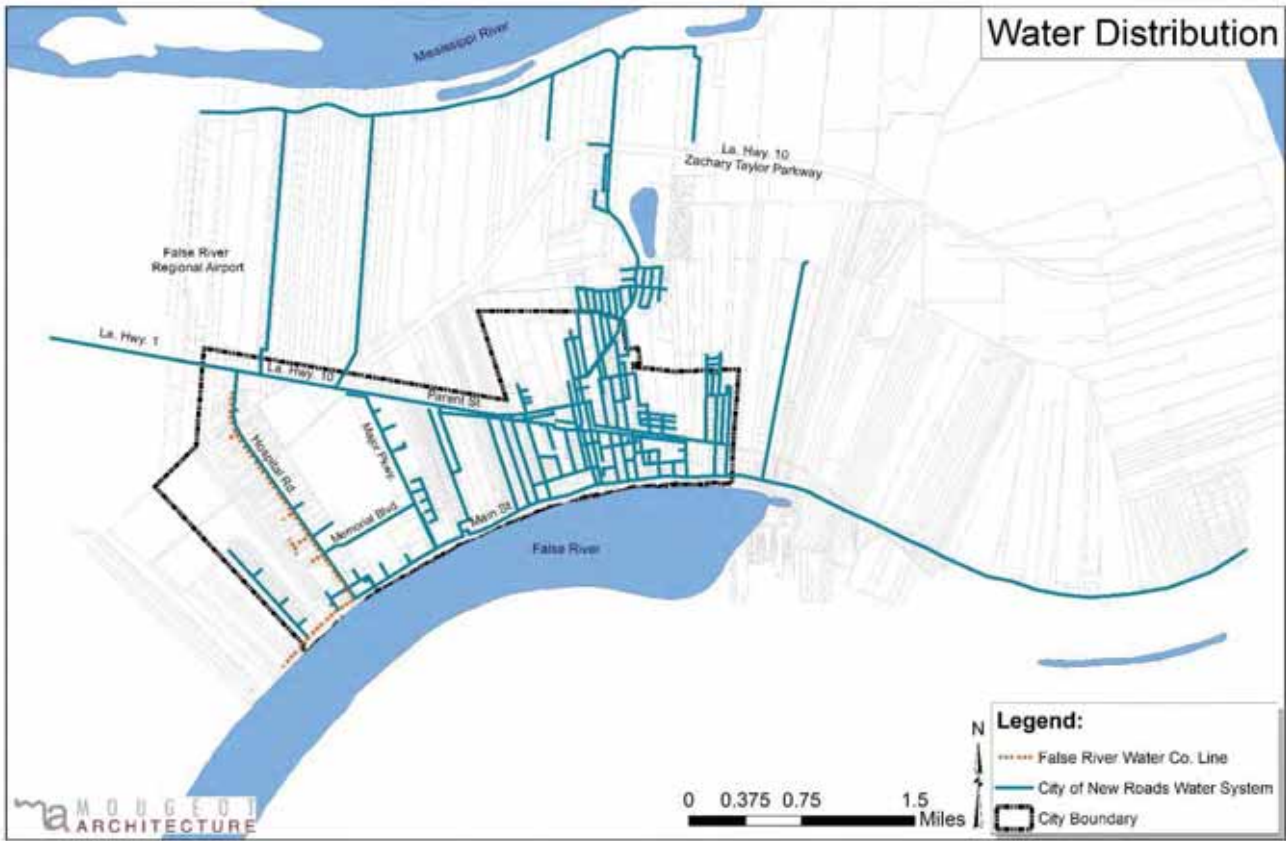
- LA 10 Eastbound at City Boundary (near airport)**
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- LA 10 Eastbound at Parent Street**
- False River Park and Civic Center
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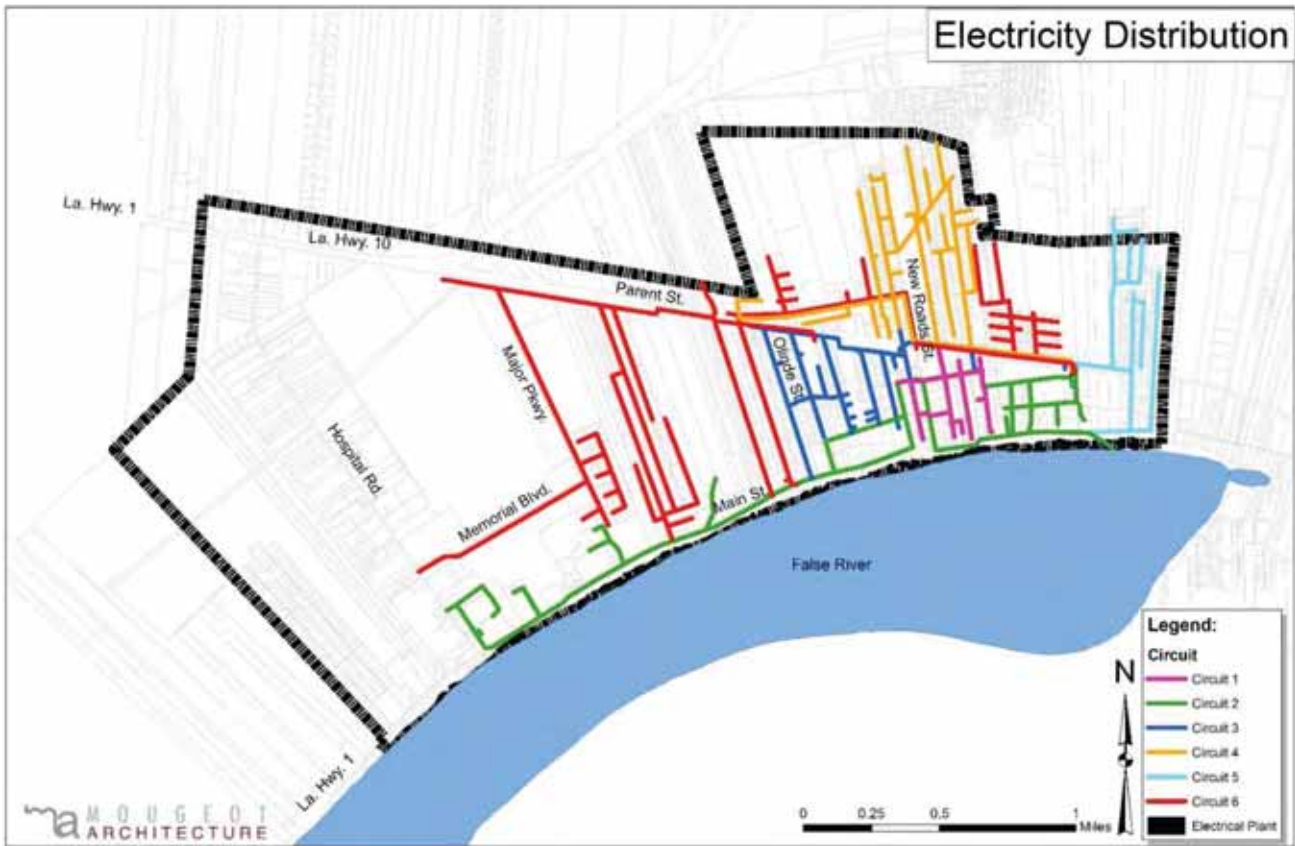
- False River Drive at Parent Street**
- False River Park and Civic Center
 - Pointe Coupee Multi-Use Center
 - Jeff Smith Arena
 - False River Academy



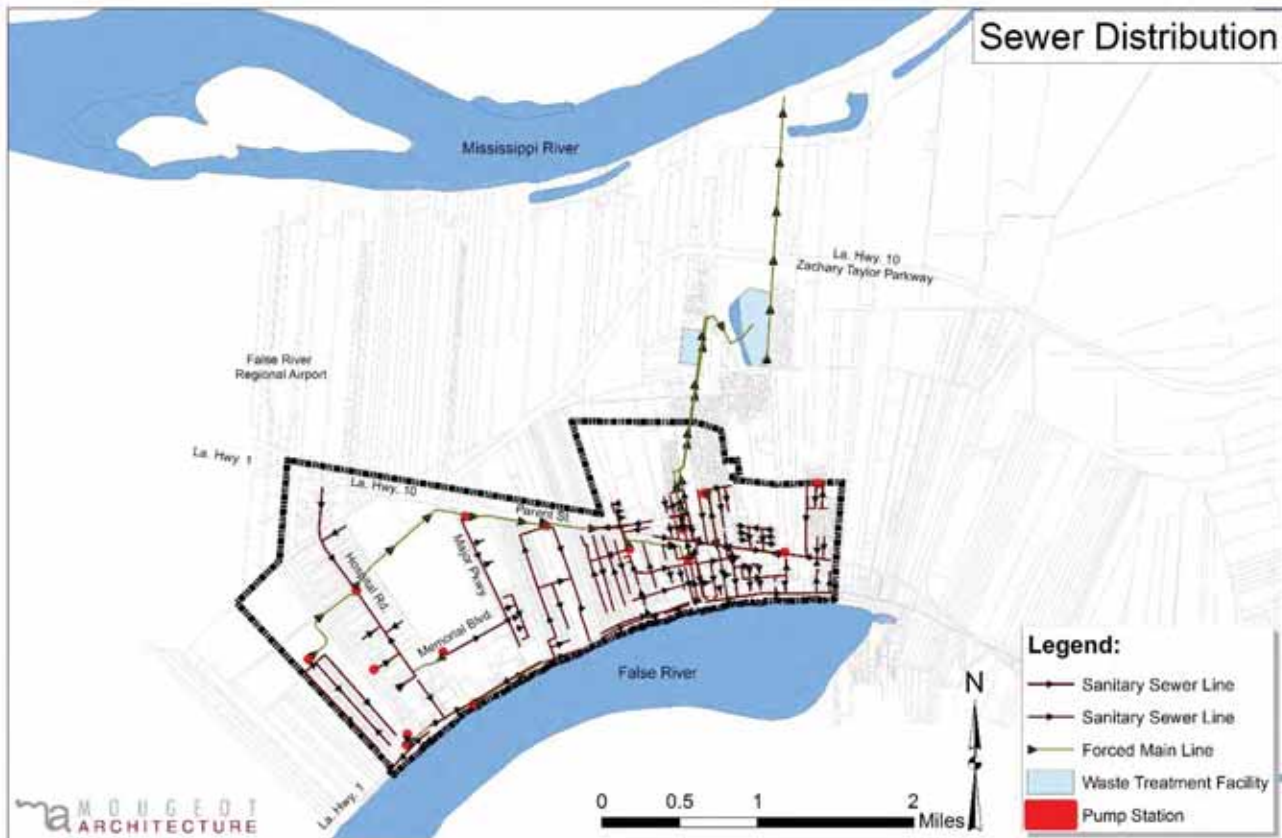
EXISTING UTILITY SYSTEMS



Electricity Distribution



Sewer Distribution



ZONING ORDINANCE AND SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

ZONING MAP