TOWN OF SUNSET
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2035

Town of Sunset
Comprehensive Plan 2035

Prepared for
the Town of Sunset, Louisiana
by

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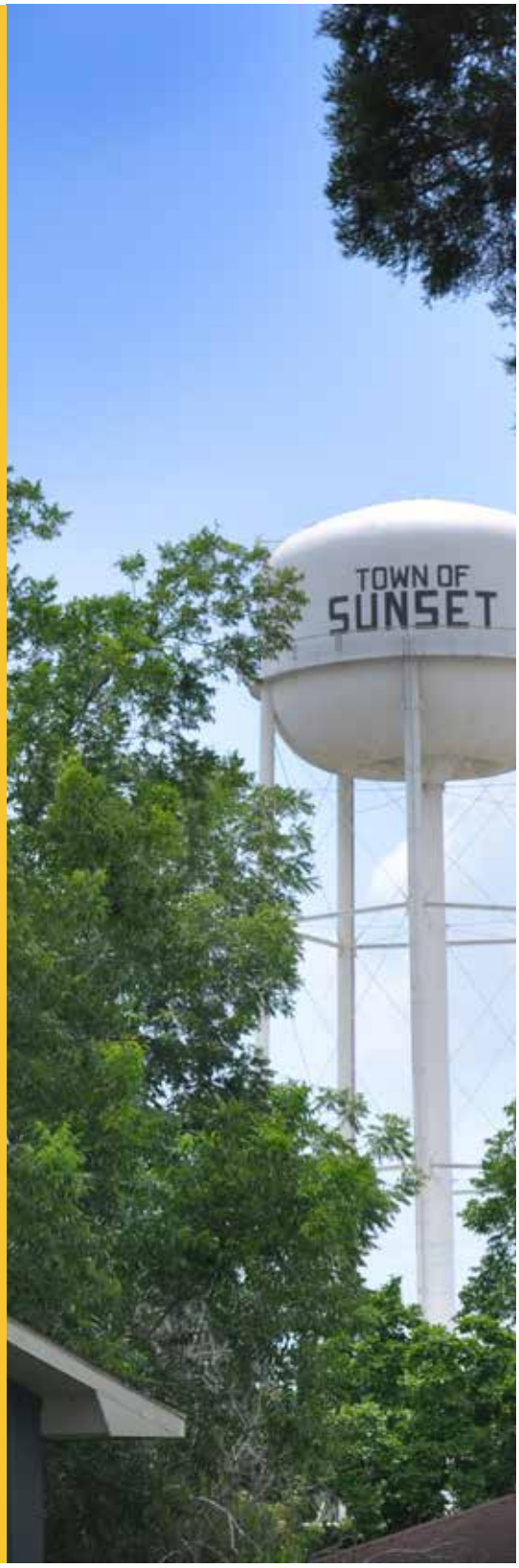

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1.INTRODUCTION

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1.1 ABOUT THIS PLAN

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What is a Comprehensive Plan?

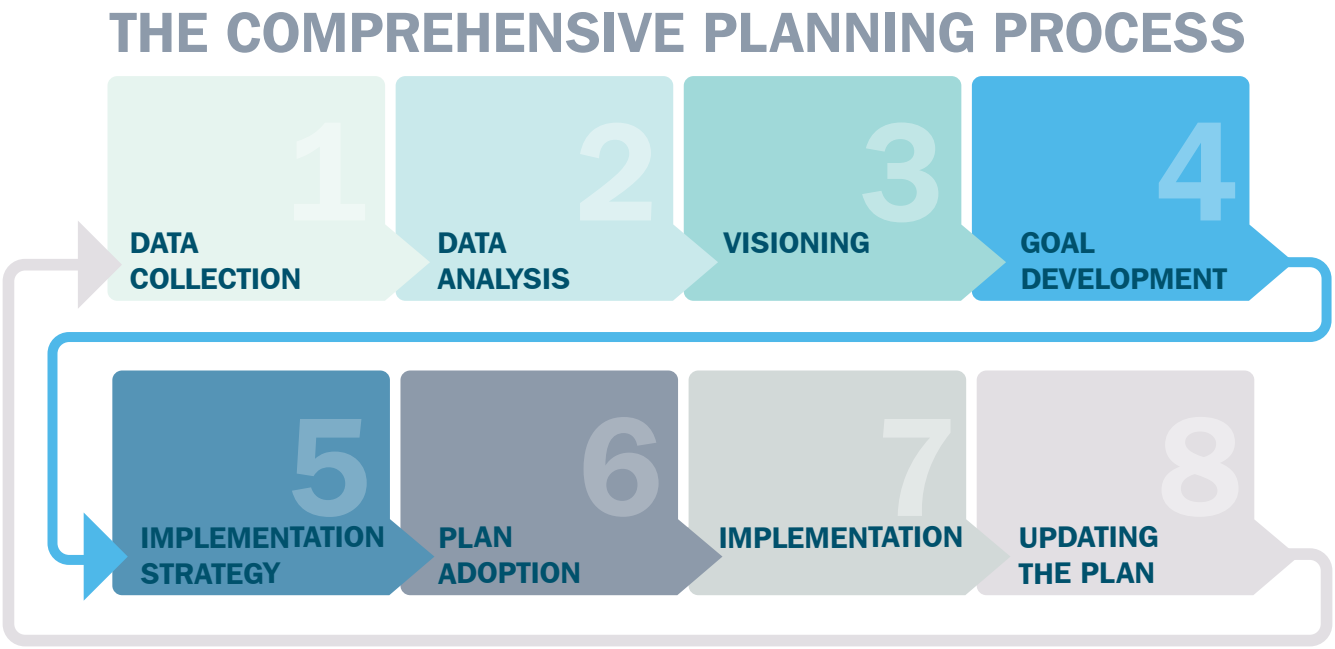
The State of Louisiana has established regulations for municipal planning efforts in State Legislation RS 33:106, which require local planning commissions to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality. The comprehensive plan is created in a collaboration of citizens, planners, and town leaders to guide local government and the community in how to develop the Town over next twenty years. Comprehensive plans contain detailed data and analysis on the existing condition of a community, covering a broad, comprehensive array of planning realms. Planning elements typically include land use, economic development, transportation, infrastructure, natural resources, environment, recreation, and housing. During the planning process citizens, community leaders, and planners develop a vision for the community in 20 years and formulate planning goals and objectives that will lead to the implementation of this vision. A comprehensive plan is a living document which provides guidance for both public and private development, and supports resilient and sustainable growth patterns. Land use regulations like a zoning code and subdivision regulations are based on the goals and vision stated in the comprehensive plan.

Why a Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Sunset?

The Town of Sunset is located along Interstate 49 (I-49), 20 minutes north of Lafayette and 15 minutes south of Opelousas. It was built over the last century atop of the Coteau Ridge and the majority of the Town's incorporated area lies outside the 100 year floodplain. As the Town provides adequate properties in low-risk flood zones, it is facing increasing growth pressure with every major natural disaster. Sunset is also located along LA Highway 182 (Napoleon Avenue) which connects Washington with Houma and LA Highway 93, connecting Arnaudville to Scott. Those roads constitute major access routes to I-49 for a large number of residents of the rural areas west and north of the Town of Sunset. As the Town continues to grow, land use conflicts and traffic congestion are multiplying. The existing infrastructure, including the local stormwater and sewerage system will, if the Town keeps up its current pace of growth, be inadequate for near future needs. In an effort to lead Sunset into a more resilient and sustainable future, the Town began in 2012 to address the lack of development regulations and the increasing growth pressure by creating a planning committee. The committee was able to secure grant funding for the development of a comprehensive plan and a town zoning ordinance. This effort was fully supported by the Mayor and the City Council who were aimed at establishing, together with the community, a vision for a more resilient and sustainable future for the Town of Sunset.

The Comprehensive Planning Process

At the beginning of the comprehensive planning process planners collect detailed data about the Town, covering all comprehensive planning elements. The planners interviewed community members, town leaders, and stakeholders to gather local knowledge about town issues. Subsequently, planners analyze the collected data and developed forecasts and projections for the Town's expected development. The community, meanwhile, through public participation in community workshops and public surveys, developed a vision for the future of the Town. Based on the data analysis and the community vision, planners and the Town



Img. 1.1.1: The comprehensive planning process

develop goals and objectives for the next 20 years, as well as an implementation strategy. The draft of the plan will be reviewed by the public, stakeholders, and leaders. Comments will be considered and incorporated before the Town officially adopts the plan. Based on an adopted comprehensive plan, the planners will then draft land use regulations for the Town. A zoning ordinance typically is the most important tool for implementing land use goals of a comprehensive plan. A comprehensive plan is a living document and the Town of Sunset is charged with periodically updating goals and objectives, reflecting the changing conditions and community needs over time.

Public Participation

A critical part for the development of a strong comprehensive plan is active community participation during the planning process. The planners as well as the town government were eager to provide plenty of opportunity during the planning process for the public to engage. Citizens were encouraged to take part in public workshops and surveys, follow the process on social media and the website, contribute their ideas, communicate their needs, and share their local knowledge about the physical, social, and cultural aspects of the community with planners, town leaders, and each other.

The Town formed a stakeholder group which is representative for the Sunset community. Stakeholders contributed to the visioning process at an initial visioning workshop and shared their specialized local knowledge about the Town in individual interviews with the planning consultants.

The planning process included tree public workshops. The first was held on August 27th 2014 and introduced the community to the comprehensive planning process and Smart Growth principles. After an introductory presentation, meeting attendees participated in interactive visioning activities. (More on this in Section 2: Community Vision). In the second

1.1 ABOUT THIS PLAN

Img. 1.1.2: Public Visioning Workshop on August 27th 2014

public workshop on November 12th 2014, the consultant team presented future scenarios for the Town of Sunset and the community shared their preferences and concerns on specific issues. (More on this in the Appendix: Future Scenario Documentation).

In the third public workshop held on April 7th 2015, the consultant team presented a draft of the comprehensive plan. The community was invited to leave comments and discuss future goals for the Town of Sunset. The second, revised draft of the plan was made available for review online, as well as in hard copy at the Sunset Library and the Town Hall and additionally comments were collected and integrated into the final draft of the document.

Organization of the Plan

This document is organized in four parts. The Introduction (1) stated the intent of this document and provides the reader an overview over the comprehensive planning process and the planning context. Community Vision (2) presents the Town of Sunset's vision statement and summarizes the visioning process. Existing Conditions (3) is a collection of the document's comprehensive planning elements. The individual elements provide the reader with detailed data and analysis of Sunset's current condition, as well as forecasts of future development and planning recommendations. Further each element features a set of planning goals and objectives. The Implementation Strategy (4) for Sunset presents a concept for implementing stated planning goals. The chapter includes short term implementation, long term implementation, as well as a collection of possible funding sources. The Appendix of the document includes additional data, as well as some documentation of the planning process.

1.2 CONTEXT

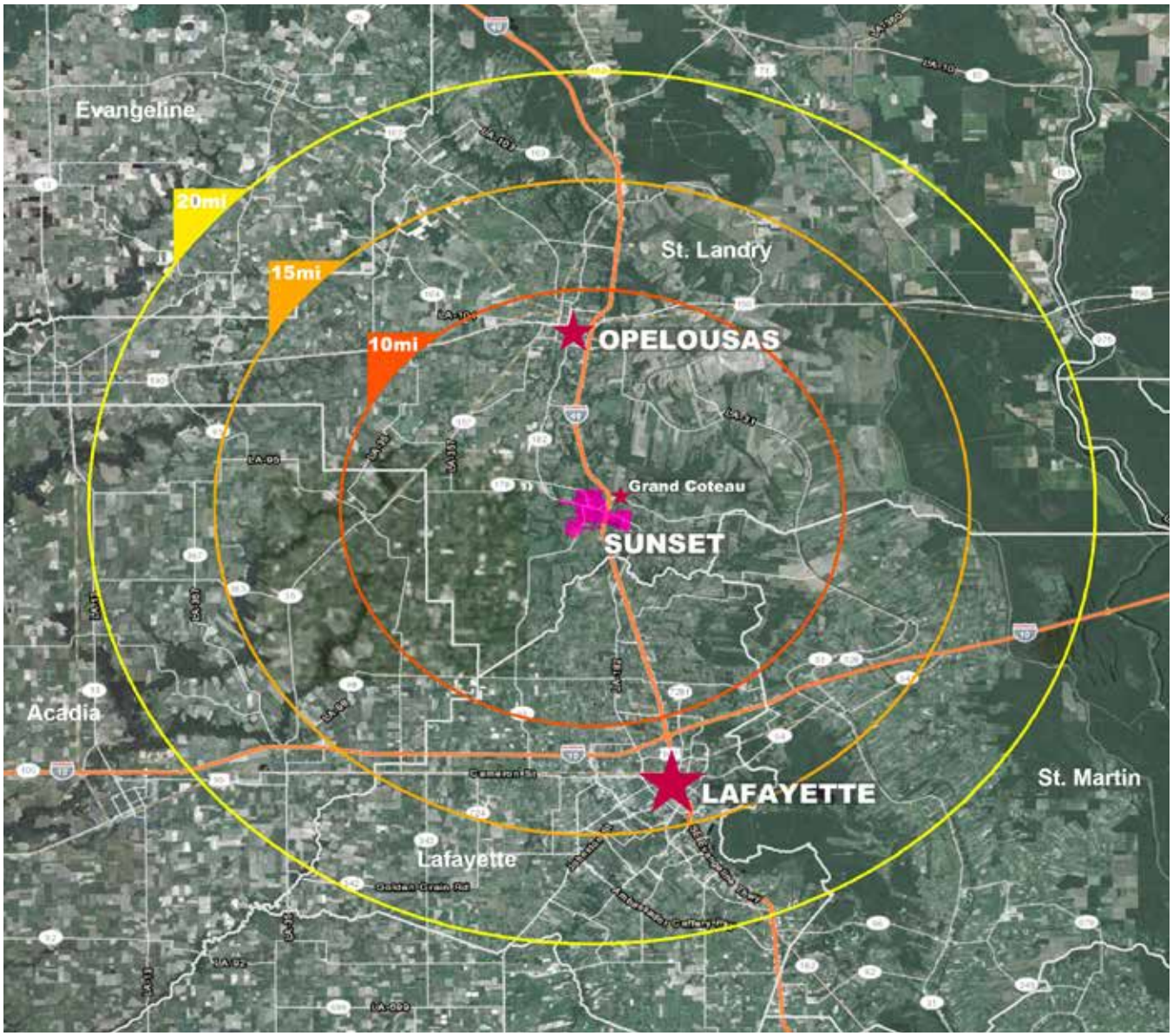
1.2 CONTEXT

Geographic Context

The Town of Sunset is in the southern part of St. Landry Parish, strategically located within a dynamic and growing region in immediate proximity to the Interstate Highway system. The Town covers approximately 3.1 square miles of land and is surrounded mostly by farmland. Sunset has an average elevation of 49 feet; no major water bodies lie within the town limits.

Adjacent to the Town in the northeast is Grand Coteau. While separated through the I-49 corridor, the two towns share their history and the geographic proximity supports the lively interaction between the two municipalities.

The Parish seat is Opelousas, located approximately 10 miles north of Sunset. The closest large city is Lafayette, 15 miles south of Sunset. With a population of 120,000 Lafayette is the largest urbanized area in the region.



Img. 1.2.1: Regional Context

The City provides health care facilities, higher education, and a healthy economy with a strong job market. The Town of Sunset is also part of the Lafayette Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

I-49 connects Sunset with Lafayette and Opelousas. Sunset also has three State highways: Highway 93 which connects the Town in the northwest to Cankton and Lafayette, and in the east to Arnaudville. Highway 182 connects in the south to Carencro, and northwards to Opelousas, while Highway 178 runs westwards to Church Point.

Demographic Profile

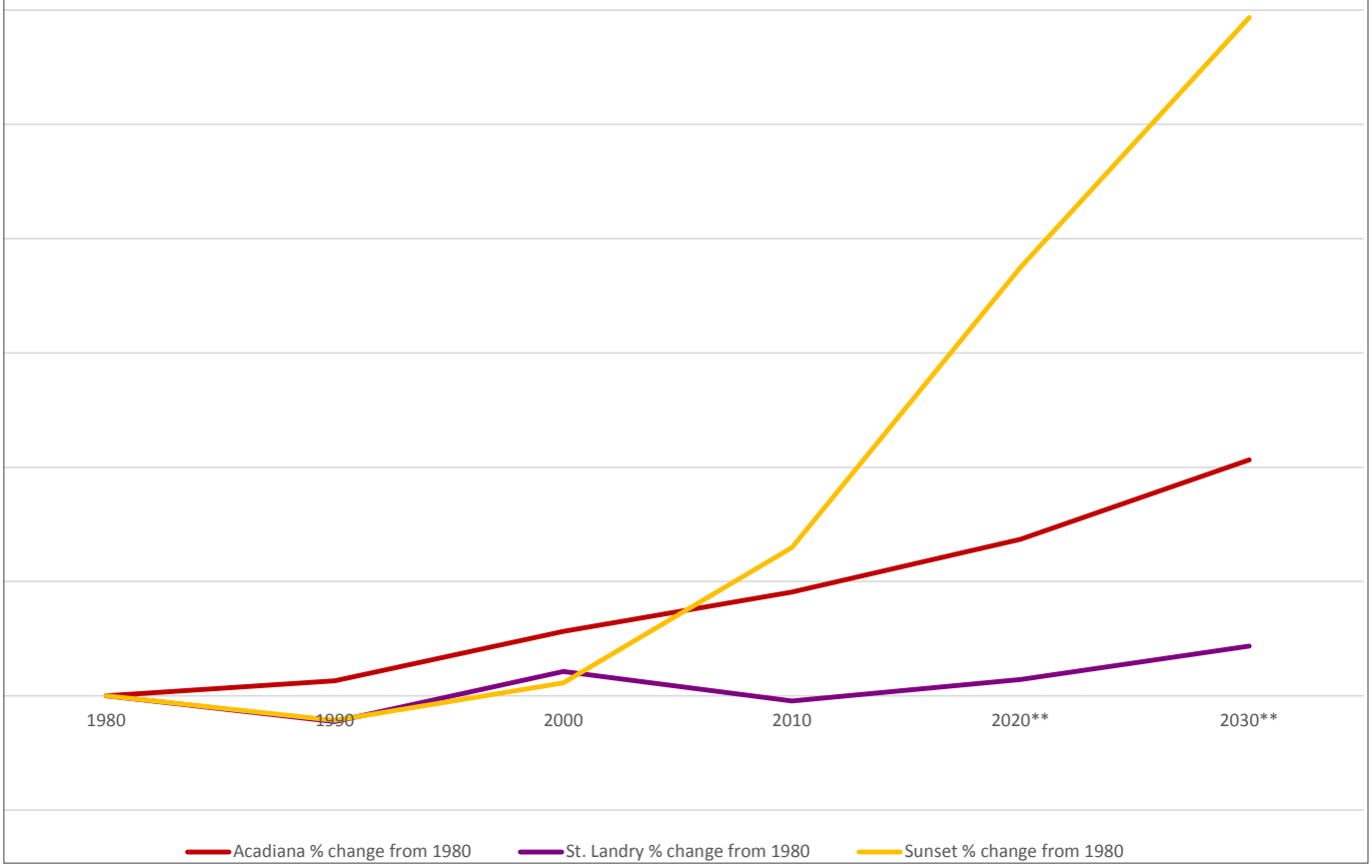
With a population of just under 3,000 and a job base estimated at 575 workers in 2013 Sunset is a small town in a rural setting. The population in the region and in Sunset has increased over the last decades, and forecasts see Sunset growing even in a faster pace over the coming 20 years, exceeding the growth pace of the Parish, and the region. (See Graph 1.2.2 and table 1.2.3).

Table 1.2.3: Growth Trends, Town of Sunset, 2010-2035

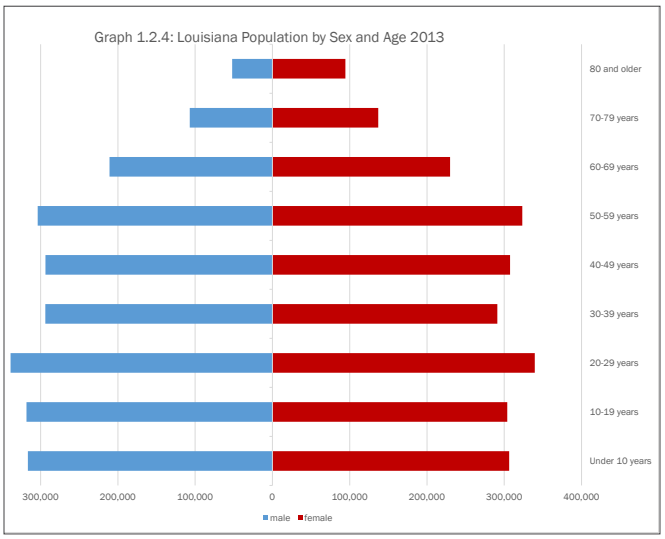
	Year				
	2010	2015*	2020*	2030*	2035*
Total population	2,897	3,445	4,025	5,030	5,750
Total households	1,129	1,378	1,610	2,012	2,300
Total housing units	1,226	1,566	1,819	2,261	2,570

Source: US Census Bureau, Louisiana Workforce; *forecast;

Graph 1.1.2: Regional Population Growth Trends, 1980 - 2030



1.2 CONTEXT



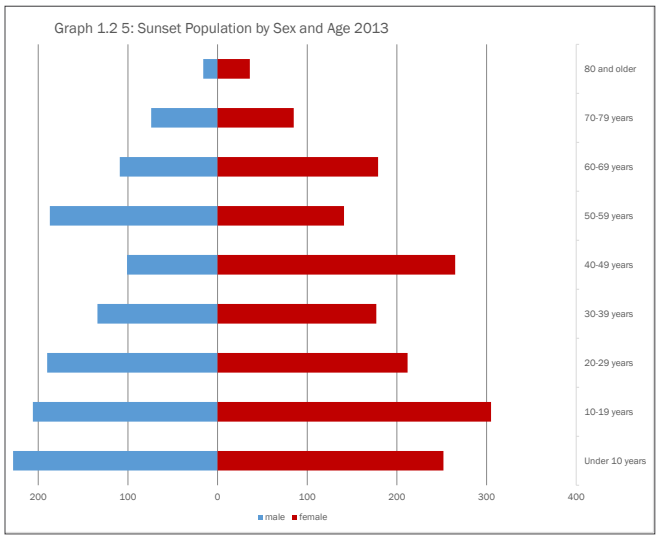


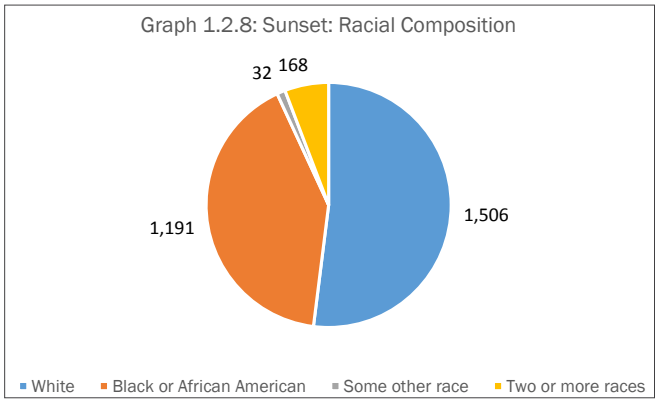
Table 1.2.6: Population by Age 2013				
	Louisiana		Sunset	
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total
Under 10 years	622,699	13.63%	480	16.57%
10-19 years	622,225	13.62%	511	17.64%
20-29 years	678,367	14.85%	402	13.88%
30-39 years	584,878	12.80%	311	10.74%
40-49 years	601,352	13.16%	366	12.63%
50-59 years	627,148	13.73%	328	11.32%
60-69 years	440,793	9.65%	288	9.94%
70-79 years	243,922	5.34%	159	5.49%
80 and older	146,584	3.21%	52	1.79%
Total	**4,567,968**	**100%**	**2,897**	**100%**
Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 2013 5 Year Estimate				

Table 1.2.7: Racial Composition, 2013				
	Louisiana		St. Landry Parish	
	Estimate	% of Total	Estimate	% of Total
Total:	4,567,968	100%	83,534	100%
White	2,874,235	62.92%	47,158	56.45%
Black or African American	1,463,345	32.03%	34,196	40.94%
American Indian & Alaska Native	28,466	0.62%	94	0.11%
Asian	73,460	1.61%	385	0.46%
Pacific Islander	2,141	0.05%	0	0.00%
Some other race	51,142	1.12%	330	0.40%
Two or more races	75,179	1.65%	1,371	1.64%
Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5 Year Estimates				

Population data on gender and age for the Town of Sunset, as visualized in the population pyramids below (Graphs 1.2.4 and 1.2.5) shows that the Town has, compared to the State, a relatively smaller share of residents aged between 20 and 50 years. Table 1.2.6, showing data for the genders combined, compares the State with those of the Town. These data again show the very strong representation of children and teenagers in Sunset, and a consistently lower percentage of residents aged between 20 and 59 years.

As shown in Table 1.2.7, the racial composition of the Town of Sunset is quite comparable to that of St. Landry Parish, with a little more than half of the population being white, and about 40% of the residents being African American. Graph 1.2.8 visualizes the shares of Sunset's racial composition, which constitutes a racially diverse community, as quite typical for the region.

Summed up, Sunset is a fast growing small town which is home to a diverse community. The relatively high percentage of under-aged population reflects the Town's family friendly environment.



2. COMMUNITY VISION

2. COMMUNITY VISION

Town of Sunset Vision Statement

"The Town of Sunset, with its rural countryside and urban corridor, will grow as a diverse community that promotes sustainable development and a high quality of life for all of its residents. Living and celebrating local culture, the Sunset community will preserve its small town charm and character for future generations."

Img. 2.1: Sunset strip welcome-sign

Visioning Process

The vision for the Town of Sunset was developed through an interactive visioning process. The statement was drafted based on the input of citizens and stakeholders, which was generated in two separate visioning workshops. Meetings were attended by members of the town leadership, the consultant team, and 16 stakeholders at the stakeholder meeting, as well as 20 community members at the public meeting. In both workshops the consultant team presented an introduction to the comprehensive planning process, smart growth planning principles for small towns, and specific planning considerations for the Town of Sunset. After this educational part of the workshop, attendees were asked to actively contribute to defining and establishing a vision for the future of the Town. The first task was to discuss Sunset's biggest assets and challenges in small groups and note their findings on a map. The groups would then decide on the three biggest assets and the three most pressing challenges and present those to the others. Most important assets named in this workshop were:

ASSETS

- *Location in the region and transportation corridors*
- *Available land for development and growth*
- *Open space & natural landscape*
- *Medical facilities*
- *Sunset's residents and unity*
- *Private schools*
- *Old Sunset High School building*
- *The local culture & history*
- *Library*
- *Small town feel*
- *Walkability*
- *Financial stability & stable businesses*
- *Town taxes*

CHALLENGES

- *Aging infrastructure*
- *Disorganized zoning & lack of land use regulations*
- *Large and unorganized layout and random growth*
- *No plan for the future*
- *Land use on Duffy Avenue*
- *Reluctance to growth*
- *Lack of consumer services, access to retail*
- *Lack of public green space & recreational options*
- *No entertainment*
- *St. Landry Parish school board system*
- *I-49 / Grand Coteau boundary*
- *Provision of housing choices for future growth*
- *Transportation: no stop-lights on Napoleon, Lack of walking and biking trails, no sidewalks*
- *Insufficient lights on Castille Street & Martin Luther King Street*

2. COMMUNITY VISION

After this exercise the attendees were asked to discuss in small groups their vision for the future of the Town of Sunset. Groups were challenged to consider what aspects of the Town should be preserved as they are and which things need to change. Those statements were presented by the groups. Presented values are listed in the box below and are actively reflected in the vision statement for the Town of Sunset 2035.

COMMUNITY VALUES

- *Excellent streets, Walk-and bikeable neighborhoods, a rails to trails project & accessibility*
- *Peace and serenity, lighted areas, and constant police protection*
- *Green spaces, a park, and a public swimming pool*
- *Thriving local businesses*
- *Good community schools*
- *Development, a main street corridor with building codes, consistency of buildings, ambiance*
- *Diversified housing*
- *A preserved local culture with festivals of arts & crafts, music, a rubboard festival, a Mardi Gras ball, and the Herb Festival*
- *Restaurants, hotels, café's, and the best spicy food*
- *Unity and family-love*
- *A maintained small town feel*
- *Better infrastructure*
- *A strong tax base to support local infrastructure*

Img. 2.2: Visioning workshop

3. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING ELEMENTS

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SECTION 3.1
LAND USE

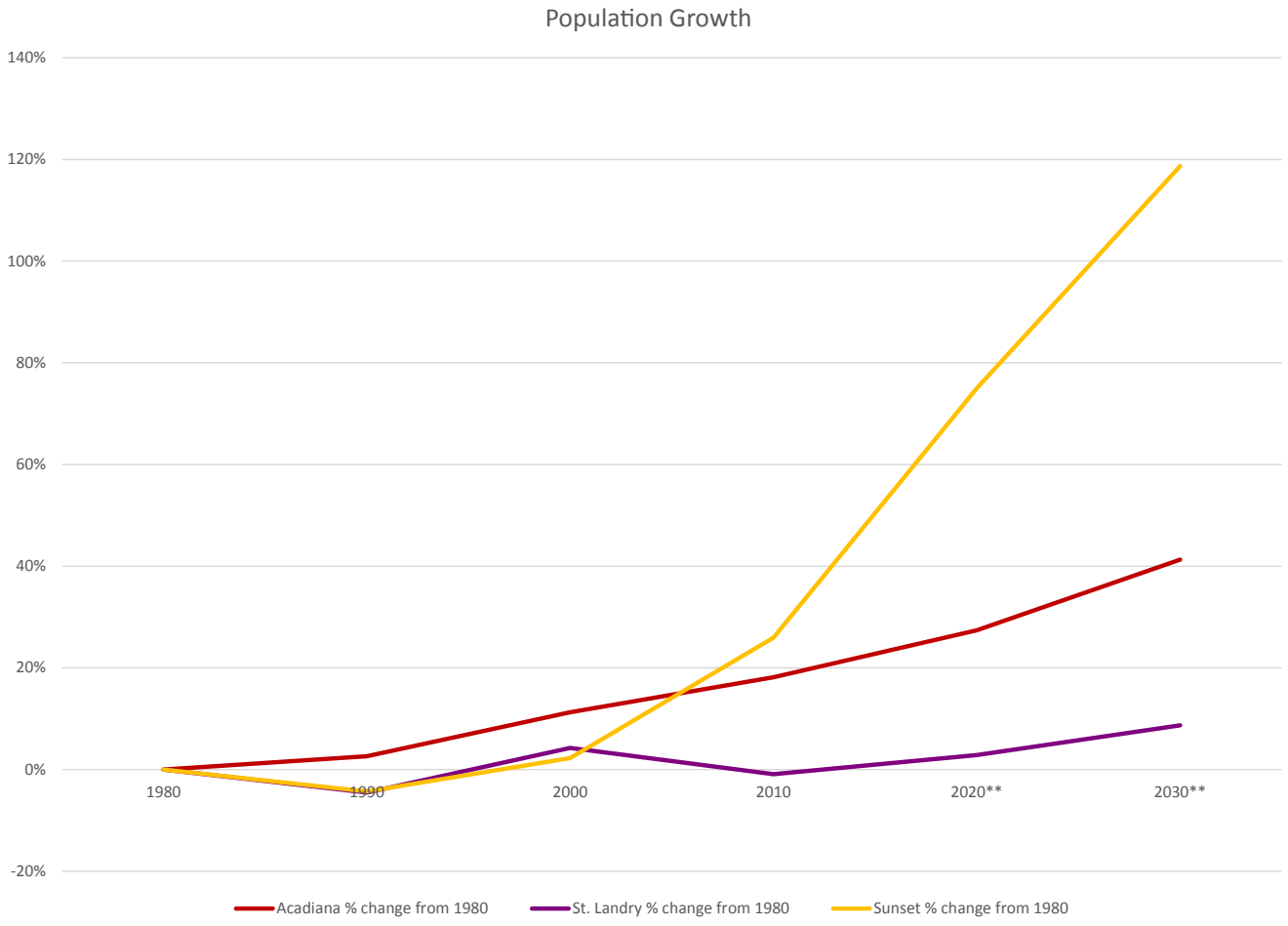
Introduction

The purpose of the Land Use Element is to document current land use, analyze future land needs of the growing community, and generate a plan for a sustainable future land use pattern. The Town's future land use plan was created to reflect the identity of the community while accommodating projected growth in a manner that enhances the overall quality of life, and balances economic, social, equity, and environmental aspects of the community.

Existing Conditions

Growth Trends

The Town of Sunset is growing. Except for a temporary low in the 1980s the Town has seen steady growth since its incorporation in 1904 and population numbers are increasing on an accelerating rate since 2000 (See Graph 3.1.1). The proximity to Lafayette and Opelousas, the convenient location right off I-49, and the Town's unique character and charm make living in Sunset a prime choice for a wide demographic range, including young families and retirees. The population of Sunset is projected to reach



Graph 3.1.1: Population growth for Sunset, St. Landry Parish and Acadiana

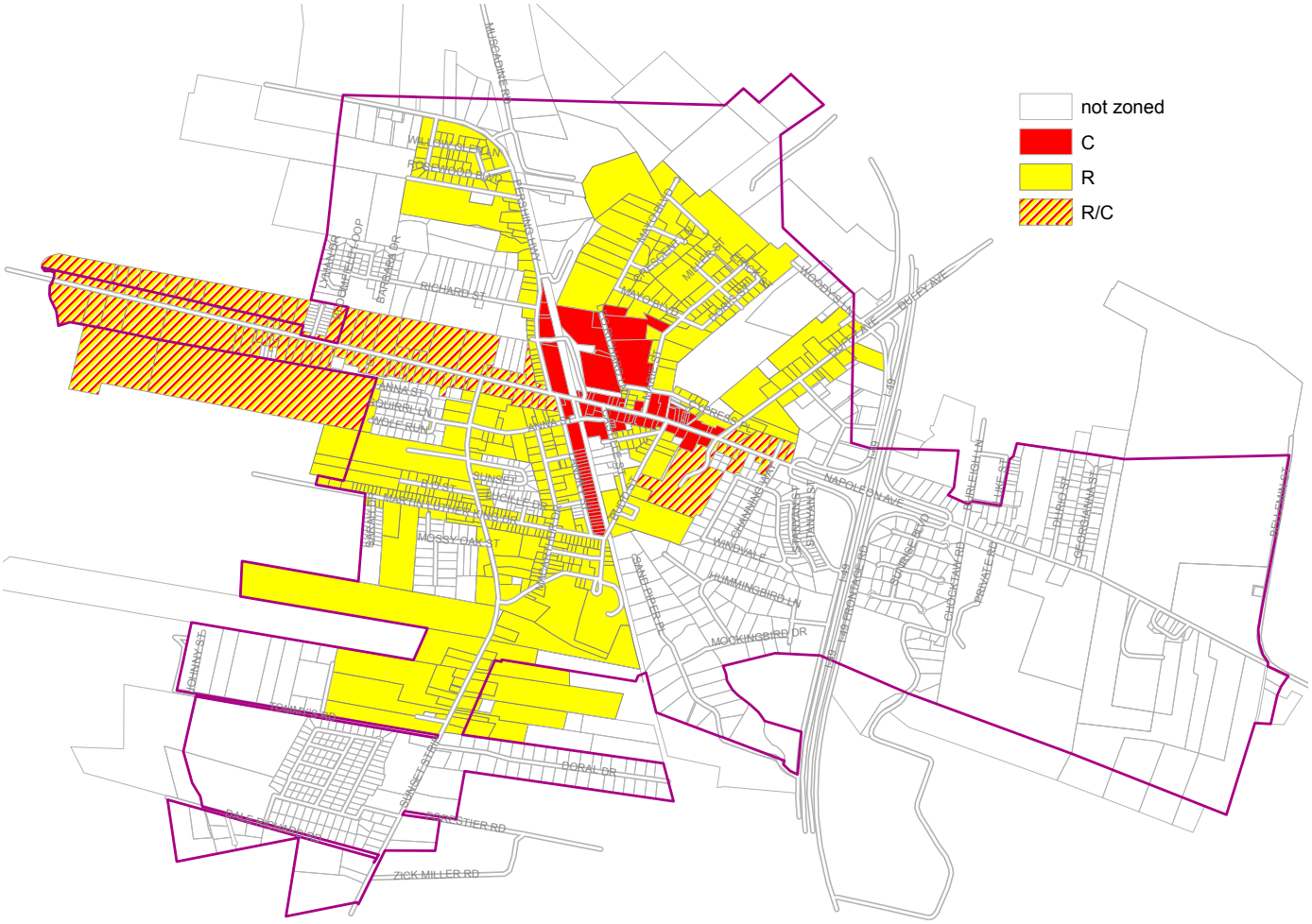
3.1 LAND USE

5750 in 2035. On the same pace household numbers will rise (See Table 1.2.3 in Section 1.2: Context). and Sunset will tentatively double its housing units within the next two decades. (More on this in Section 3.3: Housing). A growing number of residents will trigger the expansion of commercial and institutional uses as well as recreational options. (More on this in Section 3.2: Economic Development).

This fast pace of growth challenges the Town of Sunset to make deliberate land use decisions that guide development in a sustainable manner and maintain the Town's small town feel and quality of life for future generations.

Land Use Development

The Town of Sunset developed as a railroad town in the early 20th century. After the railroad was constructed in 1880, rail-related commercial and industrial uses aggregated along the intersection of the rail line and Napoleon Avenue followed by scattered residential development. Napoleon Avenue developed into the Town's major commercial corridor (More on this in Section 3.7: Community Design). The Town of



Map 3.1.2: Sunset zoning

Sunset adopted a minimalistic zoning ordinance in 1972 which features two uses: residential and commercial. In a later amendment a zone which allows for residential or commercial use on Napoleon Avenue west of Pershing Highway and west of Duffy Avenue was added by the Town government. (See Img. 3.1.2). Subdivisions which were approved after the adoption of the ordinance, as well as newly annexed parts of Town were left unregulated. The ordinance does not define in any detail which uses are permitted under which category. This lack of definition results in a mix of commercial, industrial, and institutional uses within the commercial zones, and a mix of housing typologies within the residentially zoned areas.

Existing Land Use

The existing land use is defined as the current use of a parcel. Seven general existing land-use categories were identified, some of which are divided into sub categories. (See yellow box below).

Table 3.1.3 shows the acreage and distribution of each existing land-use within the town limits of Sunset.

Table 3.1.3: EXISTING LAND USE

CATEGORY		PARCEL COUNT	ACRES	% OF TOTAL
Residential Total		**1007**	**725.629707**	**26.80%**
	Single Family	939	653.882656	24.15%
	Multi Family	6	15.985348	0.59%
	Manufactured Home	57	34.516466	1.27%
	Manufactured Home Park	5	21.245237	0.78%
Commercial Total		**49**	**47.204612**	**1.74%**
Institutional Total		**23**	**27.984913**	**1.03%**
	Government	9	9.174368	0.34%
	Health Care	9	5.550179	0.20%
	School	1	11.741505	0.43%
	Religious	4	1.518861	0.06%
Industrial Total		**34**	**127.817643**	**4.72%**
	Heavy Industrial	1	17.200232	0.64%
	Light Industrial	26	34.02581	1.26%
	Utilities	6	76.591601	2.83%
Open Space Total		**71**	**1151.3468**	**42.52%**
	Park	2	2.954286	0.11%
	Cemetary	1	0.782735	0.03%
	Agriculture	68	1147.60978	42.39%
Vacant Land Total		**387**	**627.534558**	**23.18%**
TOTAL		**1571**	**2707.51823**	

EXISTING LAND USE CATEGORIES

A. Residential (yellow, orange)

- *Single-family: Including detached single family structures for exclusively residential use.*
- *Multifamily: Including apartment buildings and town houses for exclusively residential use.*
- *Manufactures Home*
- *Manufactured Home Park: Including parcels that accommodate three or more manufactured homes for residential use.*

B. Commercial (red)

- *Including retail, services, restaurants, offices, and gas stations*

C. Institutional (blue)

- *Government*
- *School*
- *Health Care*
- *Religion*

D. Industrial (purple)

- *Light Industrial: Including warehouses, lumber yards, wholesale facilities, storage, and the like*
- *Heavy Industrial:*
- *Utilities: Including infrastructure facilities, transmission towers, and the like*

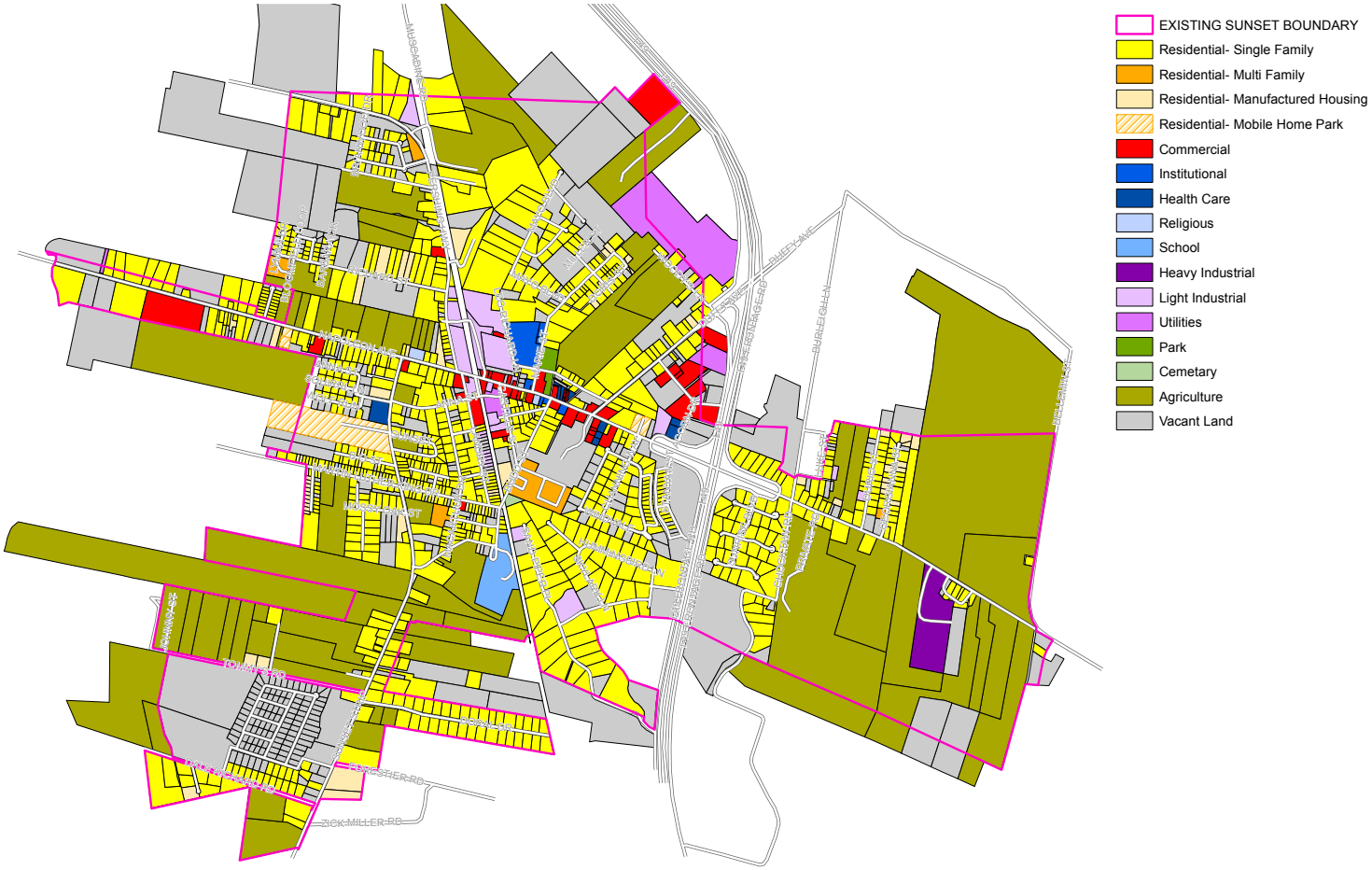
E. Open Space (green)

- *Park: Including recreational green space that is open to the public*
- *Agriculture: Including the production of crops, holding of life stock, horse related facilities, and the production and storage of hay.*

F. Vacant Land (grey)

- *Including greenfields and greyfields.*

3.1 LAND USE



Map. 3.1.4: Town of Sunset existing land use

A. Residential

Currently there are 1007 parcels in Sunset in residential use, which cover 26.8% of the Town's land. The gross density of residential development in Sunset is 0.45 units per acre (entire area divided by residential units), the net density is 1.69 units per acre (residentially used land divided by residential units). Residential development consists of predominantly single family detached structures, which constitute over 90% of the residentially used land. Parcel sizes vary widely, with a mean of 0.7 acres and a median of 0.42 acres. The Town further has a few apartment buildings, as well as a number of manufactures homes scattered within the residential areas. Some of the manufactured homes are located on the same lots as single family structures and serve as accessory buildings.

The residential development in Sunset surrounds the commercial, institutional, and light industrial uses of the town core. The Town grew organically over time forming a pattern of residential density gradually decreasing from the center toward the Town limits. The most densely populated areas

are the Martin Luther King neighborhood, the Mayo subdivision, and the residential parts of Downtown. A number of planned single family developments with larger lot sizes have been subdivided over the last two decades on the outskirts of town and provide suburban style residential housing choices. (More on this in Section 3.7: Community).

Sunset has seen a booming housing market since the 1990s and the number of new construction has positioned the median age of residential structures in Sunset at 1980, which is remarkably younger than that of the Parish and the State. (More on that in Section 3.3: Housing). Expected population growth and upward trending economic development will further spur new residential construction in Sunset over the upcoming years. Forecasts predict the residential housing stock in Sunset to double within the next 20 years from currently 1,226 units to 2,570 units in 2035. (See Table 1.2.3 in Section 1.2: Context) and new residential subdivisions of vacant land will increase residential gross density within the town limits to approximately 1 unit per acre.

B. Commercial

The majority of Sunset's commercial uses are clustered in two areas: Napoleon Avenue between Channing Way and Landry Street, and the triangle between Duffy Avenue, I-49 Frontage Road and Napoleon Avenue. Further a small number of commercial uses are dispersed throughout residential parts of town. At this point commercial development constitutes 1.74% of Sunset's gross area, totaling 47.2 acres of land.

Napoleon Avenue has historically been Sunset's main street corridor and features small scale commercial, institutional, and light industrial uses, as well as a small number of residential structures. Regarding commercial uses, the corridor accommodates a mix of businesses, with a large share of art- and antiques related stores. Other businesses along the road include two banks, a pharmacy, two restaurants, a bakery, a gas station, as well as a number of service-based businesses. Light industrial uses include a lumber yard and store. The Sunset Fire Station and a Church are located on the central stretch of Napoleon Avenue. While the street was a vibrant center for the community in its heyday, the area currently leaves a rather sleepy impression, especially during weekdays, as a number of stores are open only Friday through Sunday. Additionally a high number of commercial structures are vacant and some of them are physically dilapidated. Napoleon Avenue accommodates three of the Town's historically significant buildings: the Bank of Sunset, the Sunset Movie Theater, and the Hebert Richard residence. (More on this in Section 3.8: Town History and Historic Resources). The bank building and the movie theater building both currently stand vacant.

The triangle between Duffy Avenue, I-49 Frontage Road, and Napoleon Avenue is Sunset's primary shopping area for everyday needs.

Img. 3.1.5: Napoleon Avenue store fronts

3.1 LAND USE

Duffy Avenue, has historically been the direct connection to Grand Coteau and developed with residential structures on large lots. After the I-49 corridor (Hwy 167 at that time) was constructed in the 1950s Duffy Avenue became the Town's major gateway, as it connects to the I-49 exit 11. The construction of I-49 spurred development in Sunset and the triangle between Duffy Avenue, Napoleon Avenue, and the I-49 Frontage Road became the Town's center for medium and large scale commercial uses. (More on this in Section 3.7: Community Design). The area accommodates a locally owned grocery store, as well as national chain stores, a car wash facility, storage, medical uses, and more. The area targets motorized customers and stores generally feature large front parking lots with very little or no plantings. The area has potential for expansion as a number of vacant parcels totaling 15.25 acres are available for future development as commercial, office or institutional spaces.

Duffy Avenue itself was zoned as residential in the Sunset zoning ordinance from 1972, and is thus in exclusively residential use with detached single family structures on medium and large sized lots. The existing buildings have generally very large setbacks, ranging from 45 to 65 feet from the sidewalks. This corridor was the target of discussions during the planning process, as a large majority of Sunset's residents would like to see Duffy Avenue developed commercially as small, local businesses.

Duffy Avenue constitutes Sunset's major gateway and experiences a high level of traffic each day, with congestion during peak hours. Potential commercial development along the corridor will likely increase traffic levels. As discussed in more detail in Section 3.4: Transportation of this plan, Duffy Avenue will have to undergo a redesign process and incorporate access management techniques in order to general handle future traffic, specifically any additional traffic triggered by potential commercial land uses along the corridor.

C. Industrial

As a railroad town, the Town of Sunset has historically aggregated light industrial uses around the former railroad corridor. Even though the railroad ceased service in the 1980s and tracks were subsequently removed, the core of the Town is still an active industrial center, featuring lumber facilities, warehouses, and

Img. 3.1.6: Duffy triangle commercial development

the like. More storage facilities can be found in the triangle between Duffy Avenue, Napoleon Avenue, and I-49 Frontage Road, as well as in the northeast of the Town adjacent to I-49. The Town has one heavy industrial facility in East Sunset, the ExxonMobil Pipeline premises. A few smaller warehouses, body shops, and sheds are dispersed throughout town.

D. Institutional

Sunset's governmental and public institutional facilities are agglomerated downtown. Facilities include the Town Hall, Library, and Community Center on Marie St, the Fire Station on Napoleon Avenue, and the Police Station and Public Works Office on Castille Street. The area around those facilities was identified as Sunset's "Town Center" by Sunset residents during the planning process. Medical and religious facilities are further spread out through the neighborhoods. The Sunset Elementary School is located in the southern part of town, well accessible from the densest populated residential districts of Sunset.

E. Open Space

Parks and recreational open space in Sunset is very limited. Sunset has one public park, located downtown on Marie Street, across the street from the Town Hall. Adjacent to the park there are three basketball courts which are open for Sunset residents to use. The parcel next to the Sunset Bank, located between Napoleon Avenue and Boudreaux Street is as well a publicly accessible green space. The parcel, however, is in private ownership. The only other large open space is the Zion Travelers Graveyard, a small cemetery, located on Budd Street.

With 42.39% agriculture, this is the largest share of Sunset's land uses. Most agricultural land is currently used for hay production, other uses include equestrian facilities and crop production. Agricultural land is prevalent in East Sunset, as well as in the southwest along Sunset Strip.

F. Vacant Land

The Town of Sunset features two types of vacant lots: green fields and grey fields. While green fields constitute land that has never been developed, grey fields are parcels that used to have structures on them which were demolished or removed. Grey fields tend to be located more centrally, in the older parts of Town, and parcel sizes are generally smaller. Green fields, as they usually have not been subdivided for development yet, are predominantly large parcels, 3 acres and bigger, and tend to be located in the outskirts of town. Sunset has a small number of vacant parcels within its central area that were developed before, but currently have no structures on them. Vacancies are visible along the former rail corridor, where land has been left vacant and underutilized as a result of the discontinuation of the rail service in the 1980s. Further, a few vacant lots are located along Napoleon Avenue, as well as a significant number of vacant commercial structures. Dispersed through the downtown area of Sunset additionally a handful of blighted residential properties spur the impression of a slightly neglected and underutilized town center. Undeveloped green fields are predominately located on the outskirts of town. The land northwest of Duffy Avenue, as well as the large parcel south of the Duffy and Napoleon Avenue intersection are the most significant green fields within the urbanized area. Both of those lots are surrounded by residential uses. Currently Sunset features 387 vacant parcels with a total acreage of 627.53. The vacant land constitutes 23.18% of the Sunset gross area.

3.1 LAND USE

Recommendations

During public meetings the Sunset community developed a vison for the Town of Sunset that sees itself as a rural community with a unique small town feel. In order to remain a rural small town character many small communities tend to encourage low-density development. However, low-density residential development usually spurs a more suburban than rural land use pattern. Besides undermining the rural small town character, large lot sizes of 2- to 10-acres further pose a host of other problems including the inefficiency and higher cost of infrastructure and services, fragmented agricultural land which is thus less efficient to farm, disrupted natural habitats, as well as limited and disconnected rights-of-way. In an effort to preserve a rural character, and at the same time provide cost effective infrastructure and a walkable environment with small town amenities accessible to everyone without the need to get into a car, it is necessary to cluster development and set land use regulations that incentivize the conservation of large, continuous parcels for agriculture and open space. (Nelson 2012). The Town of Sunset should thus aim on incentivizing infill development where existing infrastructure is located and to improve and expand the walkable core of the Town, while also supporting the preservation of large continuous areas of agricultural land and open space, preferably on the outskirts of town where there is less interference of the town life with agricultural activities and operations.

The simplistic and incomplete development regulations currently in place in the Town of Sunset are by no means adequate for regulating the Town's current and future development. In order to control land use within Sunset, the Town needs to develop a comprehensive set of development regulations, including a zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations, and adopt those in a timely manner. Developed regulations should reflect the goals set in this Comprehensive Plan. A considerate comprehensive set of development regulations is the most effective tool to implement land use goals and lead future development in the desired direction.

Further the Town of Sunset should invest into a computer-based mapping system and staff training to maintain their property related data, including a zoning map. It is strongly recommended for the Town of Sunset to hire an experienced staff planner who will, in the future, be responsible for planning related questions, maintain the zoning map, and administer zoning and subdivision regulations applications. As such a position imposes an additional cost burden to the Town of Sunset, the town leadership could seek to partner with Grand Coteau to share the planner.

As Sunset has jurisdiction only over development within town limits, development that occurs outside of the Town is regulated by the Parish's development regulations. The Parish does not currently have a zoning code and development that complies with St. Landry's subdivision regulations can thus occur anywhere in the rural Parish. The Town of Sunset should be aware that potential development which is prohibited in Sunset, but meets a strong market demand, is likely to still occur, but will be pushed right outside of town limits, where design and use standards are less restricting. Such leapfrog development is further problematic as development outside town limits will not be connected to the municipal sewerage system. For cases like this it is important for the Town to have good relationships with the Parish

government and find consensus on how to plan for new development in the Parish generally, and specifically in the areas in close proximity to Sunset which might be annexed by the Town at one point in the future. The Town should further generally advocate for smart growth principals and educated Parish staff and officials, the general public, and other stakeholders about the benefits of more compact development.

Residential Development

Growing population numbers for the Town of Sunset will trigger the subdivision of land for more residential construction. Housing units in Sunset are projected to double within the upcoming 20 years. Currently Sunset has enough developable land to accommodate the projected additional residential development without any problems. However, the Town's infrastructure is already over capacity and two residential neighborhoods, as well as a few scattered single family homes, are not connected to the municipal sewerage system. In order to provide a high quality of life and ensure public health and safety, the Town should not allow development where no sewerage service is provided. Currently there is no sewerage service in the Mayo neighborhood, Shady Meadows, and the area around Muscadine Rd. The Town should further adopt a set of subdivision regulations that requires newly subdivided land to provide infrastructure, including sewerage lines, water lines, drainage systems, and adequate roads. (More on this in Section 3.5: Infrastructure). Additionally all parcels that do not have road access at this point (See Section 3.7: Community Design, Img. 3.7.5) should be prohibited from developing unless they are brought in compliance with the subdivision regulations. Alternatively, those who want to develop in areas without services will have to pay a high impact fee that will be dedicated to infrastructure improvements.

In order to preserve and revitalize existing neighborhoods that are centrally located and of walkable scale, the Town of Sunset should designate target areas for residential infill and promote those for new development as well as redevelopment. The land northwest of Duffy Avenue, as well as the large parcel south of the Duffy and Napoleon Avenue intersection are the most centrally located green fields within the urbanized area. Those parcels constitute holes in the development fabric of Sunset and the Town should incentivize residential development there to reconnect the Sunset core area and enhance internal connectivity. Therefore it is important to ensure proper accessibility to those areas.

Manufactured homes are an affordable housing option and should thus be allowed in the Town of Sunset. The Town should, however, regulate the use of manufactured homes to ensure that the developments meet infrastructure standards and that the appearance is compatible with the neighborhood character and design standards of the neighborhood.

Commercial Development

The Town of Sunset should maintain its existing commercial areas and accommodate new commercial development on vacant land within those areas. Additionally Duffy Avenue should, in the future, allow for neighborhood scale commercial development and incrementally develop into a neighborhood mixed use corridor that accommodates a variety of residential uses, as well as small and medium scale retail, service, and office uses. As transportation related limitations suggest to not allow for a traffic intense land use along the corridor (More on this in Section 3.4: transportation) the development of Duffy Avenue as an exclusively commercial corridor with large scale commercial uses is not recommended. If access management measures are in place, however, (most importantly the

proposed roundabout on the intersection with Napoleon Avenue), a neighborhood mixed use development as described above would be possible.

Future large scale commercial and healthcare related uses can be accommodated on the vacant land within the existing commercial triangle between Duffy Avenue, I-49 and Napoleon Avenue. This area is readily accessible for vehicular traffic and commercial uses of larger scale and high volume customer traffic are not in conflict with residential land uses. Further the location of the commercial cluster is, even though central, not disrupting Sunset's small town fabric, and thus not in conflict with the goal of improving Sunset's walkability and maintaining the small town feel of the community.

Napoleon Avenue is Sunset's main street and defines the character and appearance of the town core. At this point the corridor leaves a rather sleepy impression with many vacant storefronts, several stores closed Monday to Thursday, and dispersed vacant lots along the corridor. Sunset should direct revitalization efforts to this area and create an identifiable and attractive town center with a variety of retail and service options for Sunset residents, as well as visitors of the Town. In order to incentivize commercial infill the Town of Sunset should improve the streetscape by adding bike lanes, bike racks, street trees, street furniture, and crosswalks as needed. Further, the owners of existing businesses should establish a business association that partners on marketing efforts for Sunset's businesses and creates programs and events that incentivize the Sunset community and visitors to shop locally. Such could include the designation of one weekday as "shop local day" or seasonal events. The Town could further stimulate the infill of new businesses by creating tax incentives for businesses they want to attract, like restaurants, small retail, and boutiques, and locally owned services. As the character of the town center is suffering from the very limited business hours of those stores targeting visitors rather than locals, the Town should focus on attracting a diverse range of businesses, including those targeting the local community.

Open Space

Sunset is surrounded by agricultural lands and open spaces. These open space resources provide for the Town's needs for regional level parks and open spaces, but they do not meet all of Sunset's recreational needs. As a growing community Sunset needs to provide more close-to-home recreational options which are accessible for all resident, especially those which are less mobile, such as children, elderly, and Sunset's low income population. Neighborhood-scale public open spaces further enhance community cohesion, increase property values of close-by homes, and support walkability. Sunset should thus increase public open space, and provide options in walking distance from the most densely developed neighborhoods (more on this in Section 3.9: Recreation). Further green spaces can act as buffers to reduce land use conflicts.

Institutional

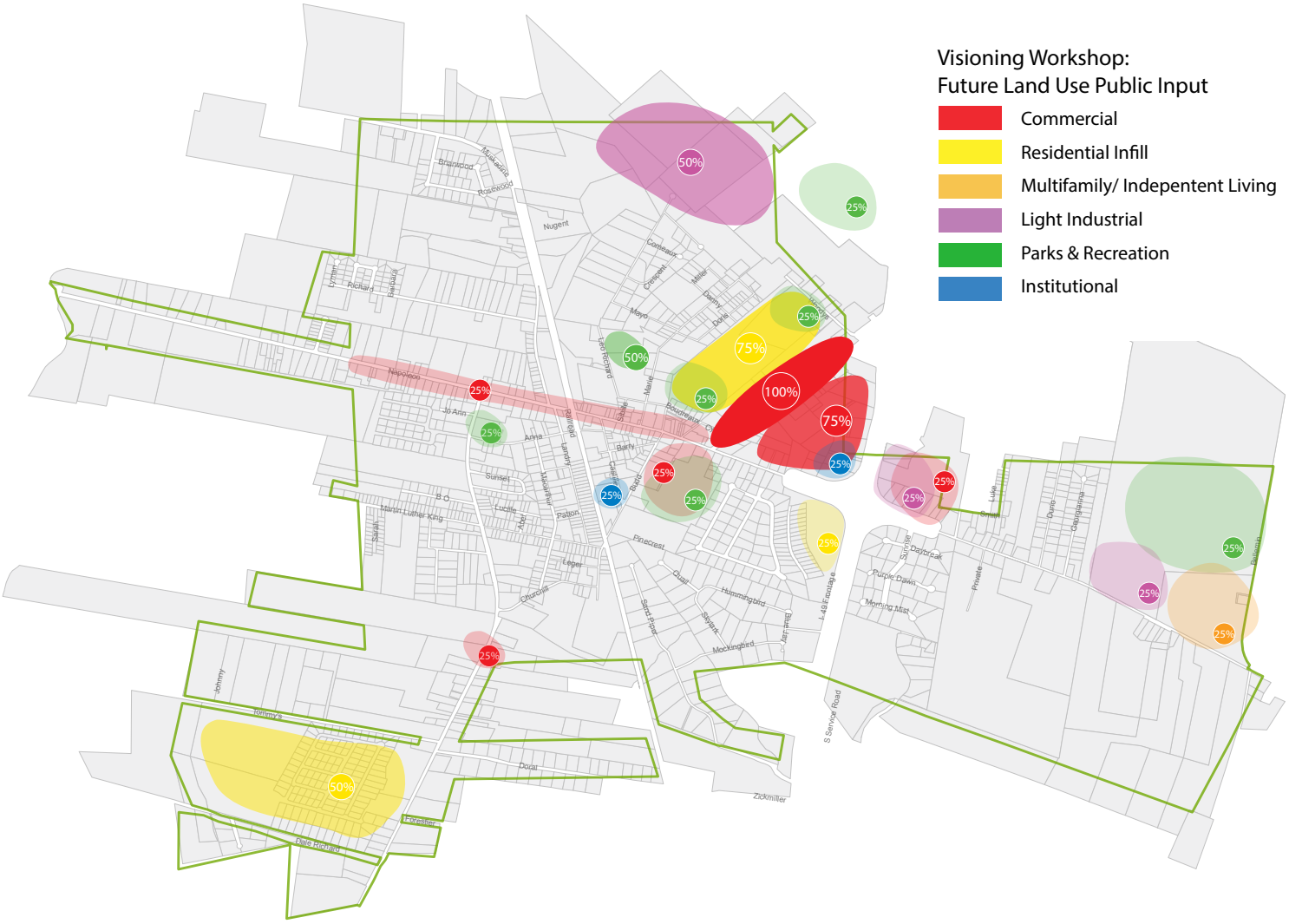
Healthcare is a growing sector in the region and the Town of Sunset already is home to a share of this thriving industry. As discussed further in Section 3.2: Economic Development, Sunset has the potential to attract an even bigger share over the upcoming decades. In order to provide an attractive location for healthcare related businesses, Sunset should reserve strategically located parcels for this land use. For this reason Sunset should cluster institutional uses around the existing facilities within the triangle between Duffy Avenue, I-49, and Napoleon Avenue, as

well as around the existing health care facility on Sunset Strip.

Industrial Uses

Another expected growth sector for Sunset, as stated in more detail in Section 3.2: Economic Development Element, is warehousing and storage. These uses require good access to the Interstate system. In order to relax the traffic situation on Duffy Avenue Sunset should provide for light industrial uses in the northern part of the Town, where large plots of developable land are accessible via the I-49 Frontages road. Light industrial uses there would also act as a buffer between the Interstate and the residential core area of Sunset and large scale uses would not interrupt the urban fabric of the Town.

Heavy industrial uses should be limited to the existing facility in Sunset East and regulations should not allow the expansion of this use, or the altering of industrial activity to one that would produce more externalities than produced at this point.



Map 3.1.7: Future land use public input composit map

3.1 LAND USE

Future Land Use

During the planning process future land use was discussed by the community, stakeholders, and Town leadership. Image 3.1.7 shows the public input on desired land use patterns for future Sunset development. The most discussed land use issue concerns the Duffy Avenue corridor, which the majority of Sunset's resident's would like to see developed commercially. Further, residential infill on vacant land within the Town limits was suggested, as well as light industrial uses in the northeast of Sunset. Most other mentioned land uses conform to existing land use patterns.

A future land use map is an integral part of every comprehensive plan. The purpose of the map is to provide a concept for future land use to guide development and land preservation according to the goals stated in the comprehensive plan. The Future Land Use Map of Sunset (Img 3.1.8) shows the location of generalized future land uses, through the year 2035, that the Town of Sunset intends to achieve through adoption and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and supporting development regulations. The location of future land uses is based on the Town of Sunset comprehensive Plan Vison Statement, community, and stakeholder input, the analysis of collected land use-, housing-, and economic data, growth projections, and transportation and infrastructure considerations. As Sunset aims on becoming a walkable community, it is important to cluster development and protect rural and agricultural areas. Transportation considerations lead to the concentration of larger scale commercial uses where automobile access is easily attainable, and limits commercial uses to neighborhood and main street scale where no additional traffic should be triggered (More on this in Section 3.4: Transportation).

The town limits of the Town of Sunset are not synchronized with property lines and this Comprehensive Plan recommends the Town to expand town limits to cover the whole parcels. (More on this in Section 3.7: Community Design).

The future land use map, created for this comprehensive plan features eight land use categories. The map defines future land use for all parcels which are currently as a whole or partly within Sunset corporate limits. Future land use categories are defined as follows:

A. Residential (yellow)

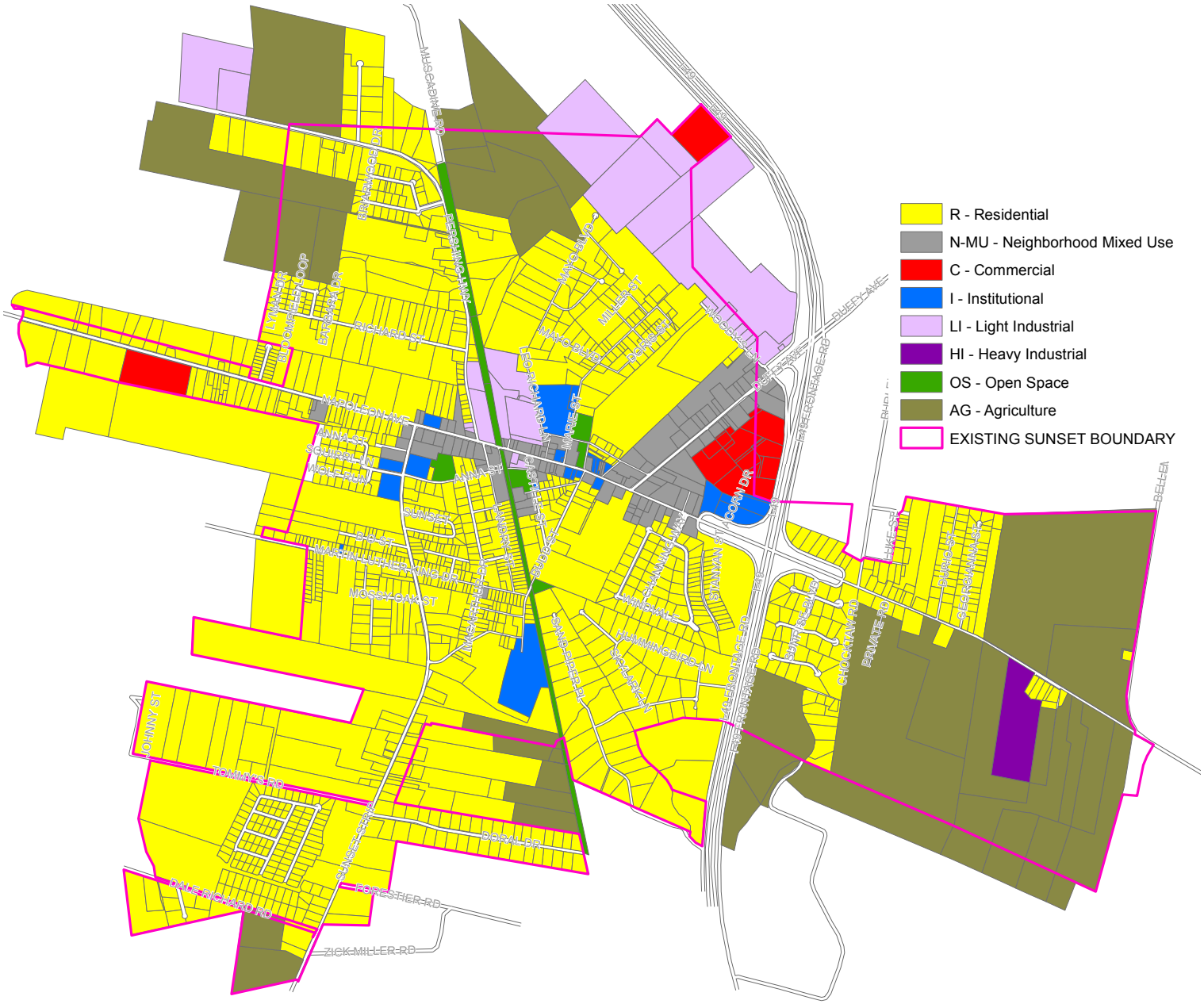
Sunset's residential neighborhoods are primarily characterized by detached single family development. While lot sizes differ in the different areas of Town, average net density for residential units currently lies at 1.69 units per acre. This low density value reflects the rural character of Sunset. While a rural feel should be maintained in certain areas of Town, the core neighborhoods should, in the future, provide a denser development pattern that allows for better walkability and a more efficient infrastructure provision. Increased development in the range of four to eight units per acre in the Town's target areas for residential development will be sufficient to meet the projected housing needs of the community and enhance the character envisioned in the Vision Statement. A density of four to eight units per acre will further support medium and small scale residential development and thus help to keep housing affordable for Sunset residents, as growth pressure mounts.

Within residential areas the Town should ensure to provide a variety of densities and housing types, including single family detached in various sizes, as well as options for low incomes, small

households, and senior citizens. Active retirees is a large and growing market in Louisiana. They typically demand smaller homes with less upkeep, but also open space and recreation areas. The Town of Sunset should thus ensure to meet the land use needs of this growing demographic group.

B. Mixed Use (grey)

Mixed Use encourages development where small scale retail and office uses are located adjacent to residential uses. The designation is intended to provide for a range of commercial and residential activities and services at an intensity of use still compatible with the



Map 3.1.8: Furture Land Use Map for the Town of Sunset
NOTE:The future land use map exhibited shows the land use for the area recommended for annexation, as discussed in Section 3.7: Community Design. The pink line represents Sunset's existing town limits.

limitations of the local transportation system. The land uses within the Mixed Use area should be compatible with each other and surrounding land uses. This type of development pattern is currently occurring along Sunset's Napoleon Avenue and should in the future be expanded to the Duffy Avenue Corridor, where commercial infill will incrementally change the existing exclusively residential land use pattern. Mixed Use is intended to promote well-designed pedestrian and bicycle friendly environments that provide commercial and recreational options in walking distance. Mixed use corridors should further provide higher density development than exclusively residential areas, and can include less costly and easier to maintain housing options, attractive for seniors, young residents, and low incomes, like town houses, and three- and four-plexes.

C. Commercial (red)

The Commercial designation is intended to provide for Sunset's large scale commercial activity and is strategically located where efficient access is ensured and the traffic intense uses do not impose a land use conflict on less intense land uses. Commercial activities in this area should be designed to serve a range of day-to-day needs for Sunset and also draw residents of the nearby rural areas. The area is designed for predominately vehicular traffic and allows for large scale front parking lots. However, pedestrian and bicycle safety and convenience has to be ensured and development standards should require sidewalks, cross walks, and bicycle racks for commercial uses. Further parking lots exceeding 8 spaces need to be planted with trees and provide stormwater management that captures the first 1.25 inch of runoff of each storm event.

D. Institutional (blue)

The Institutional designation is placed on all government facilities, community facilities, places of worship, schools, and healthcare facilities. Further, in order to provide attractive locations for new healthcare related businesses, Institutional land use clusters are located along Sunset Strip and in the triangle between Duffy Avenue, I-49, and Napoleon Avenue.

E. Light Industrial (light purple)

The light industrial areas are intended to provide location for most industrial uses without externalities, as well as utilities. Common uses for light industrial zones include warehousing and storage, wholesales and light manufacturing. Those zones benefit from good connections to the Interstate system and are thus located on the northern outskirts of Sunset, where such access is provided. Some of the existing light industrial uses in Sunset's town core could in the future be better utilized as commercial uses, as this area sees revitalization efforts implemented.

F. Heavy Industrial (dark purple)

The heavy industrial designation is intended to accommodate more intense industrial uses, which potentially produce externalities, such as noise, noxious emissions, and heavy truck traffic, and are thus not compatible with residential uses. Heavy industrial uses thus need to provide buffers to residential uses. In the Future land Use Map for Sunset the designation regards only one parcel.

G. Open Space (green)

The Open Space designation includes existing dedicated public open space, as well as areas that were identified during the planning process as potential recreational open spaces for Sunset. In an effort to increase public open space and recreational options for Sunset, the Town should

try to gain title over those parcels and transform them into public open spaces that provide a variety of recreational uses, meeting the needs of all Sunset residents.

H. Agriculture (brown)

The Agricultural Land Use category describes those areas of Sunset where clusters of agricultural land should be preserved. The area east of I-49 is currently of very rural character, with large plots of land active in agricultural use. In order to preserve large clusters of agricultural uses, maintain the rural character of the area and direct development in the denser areas of Sunset, this area should be kept in agricultural use for the foreseeable future. However, the development of a larger planned unit development, if compatible with the character of the area and the adjacent land uses, should be considered by the Town if proposed.

Agricultural areas in the northern part of Sunset are designated, as the area is not connected to the Sunset municipal sewerage system. This area also has limited access and should thus not be prioritized for development. Parcels in the Northwest of Sunset which are designated for agricultural uses are lacking street access, as well as those in the South adjacent to the rail corridor.

Goals & Objectives

Goal 1.1: Guide Sunset's future development to ensure sustainable development patterns and the maintenance of the community's quality of life and small town character.

Objective 1.1.1:
Develop and adopt a comprehensive set of land use and development regulations for the Town of Sunset that reflects the vision and goals set in this Comprehensive Plan.

Objective 1.1.2:
Hire an experienced staff planner for the Town of Sunset who will be responsible for planning related questions, maintain the zoning map, and administer zoning and subdivision regulations applications.

Objective 1.1.3
Establish good relationships with the Parish government and find consensus on how to plan for new development in the Parish generally. Advocate for smart growth principles and more compact development.

3.1 LAND USE

Goal 1.2: Direct growth to areas with existing infrastructure. Discourage development where infrastructure is lacking.

Objective 1.2.1
Encourage residential infill in the town core, where sewerage and water service is readily available.

Objective 1.2.2
Prohibit development in areas not served by the municipal sewerage system until this service is provided, or assess significant impact fees to fund future expansion of the system.

Goal 1.3: Provide attractive locations for economic development in Sunset.

Objective 1.3.1
Cluster large scale commercial development in the triangle between Duffy Avenue, I-49, and Napoleon Avenue

Objective 1.3.2
Allow for mixed use development along Duffy Avenue.

Objective 1.3.3
Revitalize Napoleon Avenue by redesigning the street scape as an identifiable town center and incentivize main street commercial infill development.

Objective 1.3.4
Establish development regulations for the triangle between Duffy Avenue, I-49, and Napoleon Avenue that require new development to comply with design and development standards that ensure efficient traffic circulation, attractive and functional parking, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and aesthetic building practices.

Objective 1.3.5
Cluster healthcare related institutional uses around existing healthcare facilities.

Objective 1.3.6
Provide location for light industrial uses like warehousing and storage where easy access is given and potential land use conflicts are minimized.

Goal 4: Expand public open space and recreational land uses in Sunset to meet the needs of the growing community.

Objective 4.1:
Transform the abandoned rail corridor into a greenway.

Objective 4.2:
Transform vacant town properties on Anna Street and behind the Sunset High School Building into public green spaces.

Objective 4.3:
Acquire additional parcels of underutilized land between the rail corridor and Castille Street and turn them into a public plaza.

Sources:

http://www.crt.state.la.us/cultural-development/historic-preservation/main-street/index

http://www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/getting-started/#.VEfbePnF8cQ

Nelson, Kevin. 2012. "Essential Smart Growth Fixes for Rural Planning, Zoning, and Development Codes". United States Environmental Protection Agency

SECTION 3.2
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

3.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The purpose of this element of the Sunset Comprehensive Plan is to set forth an economic development strategy that puts the Town on a deliberate forward-looking path focused on balanced and sustainable economic growth and diversification. Encompassed within this overriding goal is the formulation of achievable objectives and specific tasks that help retain existing jobs, attract new jobs, and encourage new private investment. Achieving these economic development objectives, however, must be accomplished within a framework of the community's core values as reflected in its vision statement, while building upon or leveraging its strengths, addressing and correcting its weaknesses, taking advantage of opportunities, and attempting to mitigate threats. The strengths and weaknesses are generally issues that are within reach for the community while opportunities and threats are uncontrollable externalities imposed by a wide range of economic, social, and political forces.

Existing Conditions

Sunset is a small town that thinks big. With a population of just under 3,000 and job base estimated at 575 workers in 2013, Sunset has a relatively small economic footprint. However, it is located in a vibrant growing region of the State and is blessed with immediate proximity to the Interstate Highway system with I-49 at its front door. This strategic location when combined with the anticipated energy-sector driven regional growth provide significant opportunities for the Town 's leadership to envision aggressive economic development strategies that might otherwise be considered somewhat unrealistic for a town the size of Sunset.

Another important factor is that not only does Sunset think big about its future but its leadership has also demonstrated an ability and willingness to think strategically and entrepreneurially. The first shows an ability to anticipate how the future might very well unfold while the second communicates an ability to think through and accept reasonable risks if it means bringing improvements to the community that support sustainable growth. A community which can think and act entrepreneurially has a clear competitive advantage over other similar cities. Such an advantage typically results in communities attracting the necessary resources to successfully execute their economic development strategies, including more entrepreneurial talent that can turn opportunities into viable enterprises that produce jobs, grow investment, and provide creative solutions to a range of issues. In an ever increasingly competitive national and global marketplace, it is particularly important for small towns in rural communities to embrace entrepreneurial principles in weighing choices and guiding decisions that will have long term implications on the sustainability of its economic development strategies.

Growth Trends and Outlook: Demographic and Economic

Local economies rarely function in isolation or independently of other economic systems. Rather, they are linked to a larger fabric of economic activities and forces that play themselves out at multiple levels – regional, State, national, and global. Consequently, the economy of a community such as Sunset is linked to and impacted by both the positive and negative movement of economic activity at any of these levels. The nature, intensity, and duration of many impacts are related to such linkages and the extent to which they may create a concentration of dependency on one or more businesses that represent the community's job supporting engines.

The economic development plan and strategies for Sunset are local by intent and necessity. However, this does not imply that they or the community itself are unaffected by conditions and changing forces that inevitably unfold within the larger surrounding geographical market context. Sunset functions as a local economic unit most immediately within the larger contexts of St. Landry Parish and the Acadiana region. The region consists of eight Parishes that are economically interdependent and largely linked together by a network of federal and State highways that facilitate economic commerce between communities including, but not limited to, commuting of workers to major employment centers. Lafayette Parish serves as the "hub" of the region with a total population of 230,845 (2013 estimate), a total employment base of 139,937 (also 2013 estimate) and a significant physical critical mass encompassing major shopping venues, office, and industrial buildings and a significant institutional presence including the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. (See Table 3.2.1).

Although most of the region's eight Parishes experienced population and job growth over the past decade or so, for some their expansions were somewhat modest. This is particularly true when compared to Lafayette which added 20,640 wage and salary jobs since 2001 and 8,910 just since 2010. This most recent surge of employment accounted for just under two-thirds of the regions total growth and drove Lafayette Parish's share of region-wide total employment from 48.8% in 2001 to 50.9% in 2013. The next largest share of the region's employment pie (12.1%) is in Iberia Parish where the number of jobs between 2010 and 2013 grew by 1,863. Much of the job growth during this period helped recover most of the 2,716 positions that Iberia Parish reportedly lost between 2006 and 2010. This was similar to what happened in St. Mary

Table 3.2.1: Summary of Population Growth by Parish, Acadiana Region

Area	Absolute					Absolute Change				% Change		
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2013 (July est.)	1980 - 1990	1990 - 2000	2000 - 2010	2010 -2013	1980 - 1990	1990 - 2000	2000-2010	2010 - 2013
Acadia	56,427	55,882	58,861	61,773	62,204	-545	2,979	2,912	431	-0.97	5.33	4.71	0.69
Evangeline	33,343	33,274	35,434	33,984	33,578	-69	2,160	-1,450	-406	-0.21	6.49	-4.27	-1.21
Iberia	63,752	68,297	73,266	73,240	73,878	4,545	4,969	-26	638	7.13	7.28	-0.04	0.86
Lafayette	150,017	164,762	190,503	221,578	230,845	14,745	25,741	31,075	9,267	9.83	15.62	14.02	4.01
St. Landry	**84,128**	**80,331**	**87,700**	**83,384**	**83,454**	**-3,797**	**7,369**	**-4,316**	**70**	**-4.51**	**9.17**	**-5.18**	**0.08**
Eunice	12,479	11,162	11,528	10,398	10,344	-1,317	366	-1,130	-54	-10.55	3.28	-10.87	-0.52
Opelousas	18,903	18,151	22,963	16,634	16,493	-752	4,812	-6,329	-141	-3.98	26.51	-38.05	-0.85
Port Barre	2,625	2,144	2,287	2,055	2,075	-481	143	-232	20	-18.32	6.67	-11.29	0.96
Sunset	2,300	2,201	2,352	2,897	2,914	-99	151	545	17	-4.30	6.86	18.81	0.58
St. Martin	40,214	43,978	48,583	52,160	52,936	3,764	4,605	3,577	776	9.36	10.47	6.86	1.47
Breaux Bridge	5,922	6,515	7,649	8,139	8,274	593	1,134	490	135	10.01	17.41	6.02	1.63
Henderson	1,560	1,543	1,531	1,674	1,699	-17	-12	143	25	-1.09	-0.78	8.54	1.47
St. Martinville	7,965	7,137	6,989	6,114	6,100	-828	-148	-875	-14	-10.40	-2.07	-14.31	-0.23
St. Mary	64,253	58,086	53,500	54,650	53,543	-6,167	-4,586	1,150	-1,107	-9.60	-7.90	2.10	-2.07
Vermilion	48,450	50,055	53,807	57,999	59,253	1,605	3,752	4,192	1,254	3.31	7.50	7.23	2.12
Acadiana Region	**540,584**	**554,665**	**601,654**	**638,768**	**649,691**	**14,081**	**46,989**	**37,114**	**10,923**	**2.60**	**8.47**	**5.81**	**1.68**
State	**4,206,098**	**4,219,973**	**4,468,976**	**4,533,372**	**4,625,470**	**13,875**	**249,003**	**64,396**	**92,098**	**0.33**	**5.90**	**1.42**	**1.99**

Source: United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census, 1980, 1990, 2000 and 2010 and 2013 estimate (US Census Bureau, Population Division)

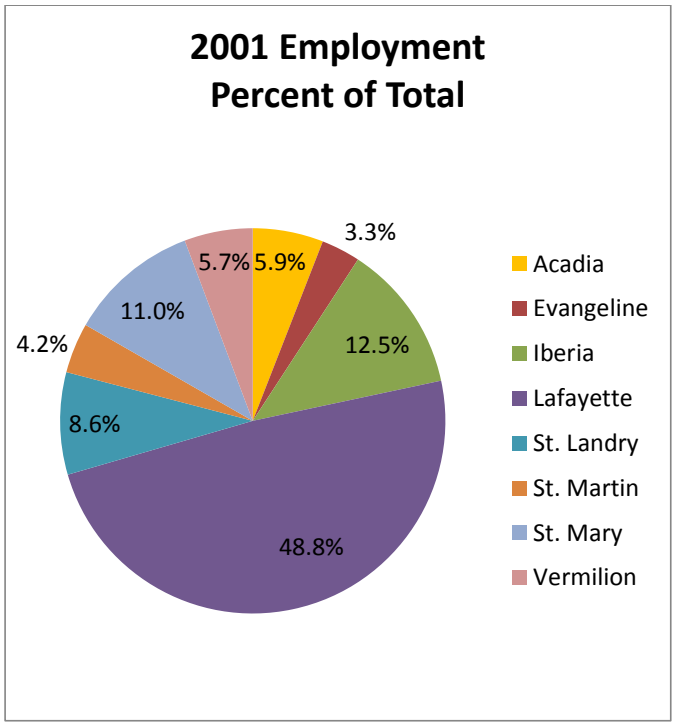
3.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

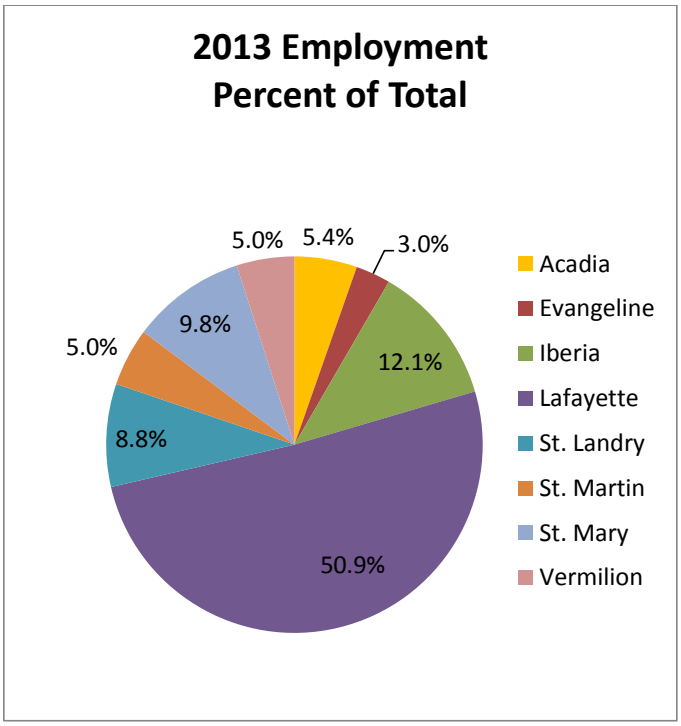
Parish where its share of regional employment slid from 11% in 2001 to 9.8% in 2013. Since 2010, St. Mary's wage and salary employment has grown by 1,115. However, this was just about enough to recover the 1,141 positions eliminated over the 2006 to 2010 period. (See Graphs 3.2.2 and 3.2.3).

St. Landry and Acadia Parishes are the only two in the region reporting job losses for the 2010 to 2013 period. While relatively modest losses at 202 and 222, respectively, they are indicative of some underlying weaknesses in one or more sectors of these local job markets. In St. Landry Parish, for example, sectors accounting for the largest drawdown on jobs during the 2010 to 2013 period include Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (down 110 jobs), Wholesale Trade (down 91 jobs), and Transportation and Warehousing (down 84 jobs). These net losses were softened by relatively healthy gains in sectors such as Accommodation and Food Services (up 173 jobs), Construction (up 97 jobs), and Healthcare (up 88 jobs). These job movements across and within business sectors is a normal part of the ebb and flow of local and regional economies and to a large degree help describe and quantify structural shifts that can either fuel or stifle future growth. (See Tables 3.2.4 and 3.2.5).

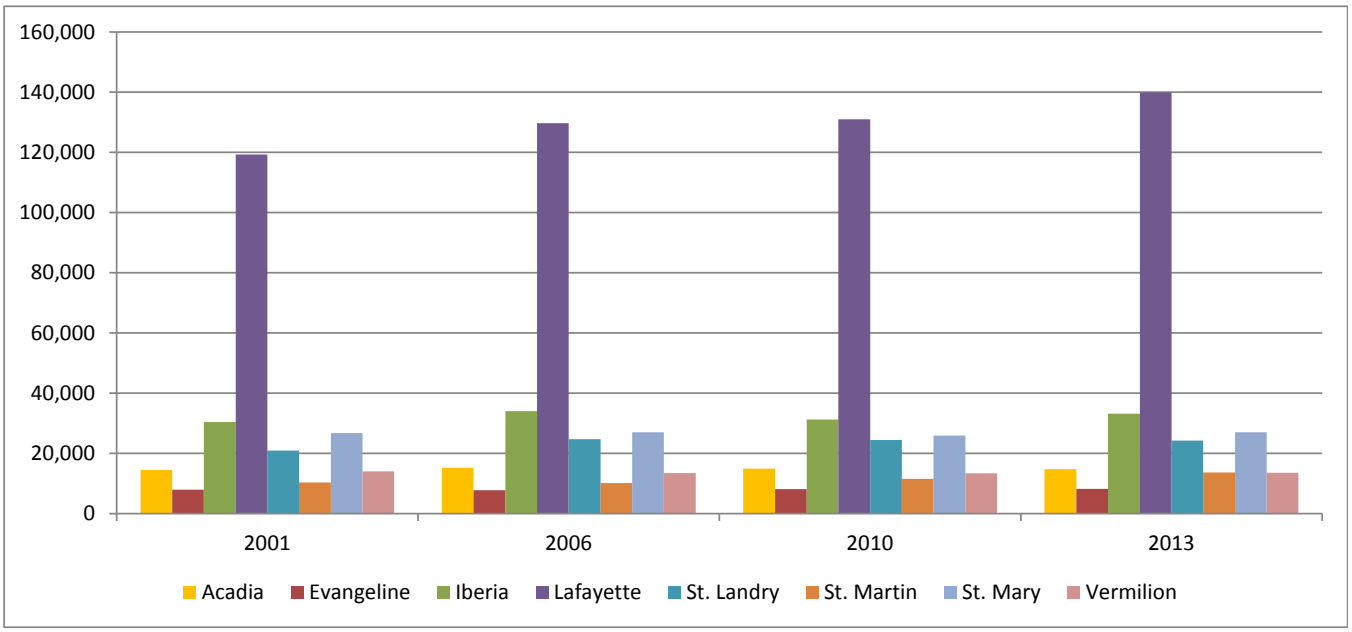
Long Term Growth Trends: Region, St. Landry Parish and the Town of Sunset

Economic restructuring is an on-going process that can occur naturally over time in response to or anticipation of macro-changes that unfold in technology. For leadership astute enough to recognize relevant game-changing shifts in technology, transitioning local and regional markets to a new structural blueprint unfolds in specifically targeted business recruitment and retention strategies. Relatively few of these shifts or the strategies to influence them occur very quickly. As such, many local and regional economies remain out of sync with national and global markets and the forces that create





Graph 3.2.2: Employment Trends by Parish, Acadiana Region, 2001 - 2013. Source: Labor Market Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program. Note: Total employment indicated here may not equal the sum of the employment for each sector of non-disclosed data



Graph 3.2.3: Employment Trends by Parish, Acadiana Region, 2001 - 2013. Source: Labor Market Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program. Note: Total employment indicated here may not equal the sum of the employment for each sector of non-disclosed data

Table 3.2.4: Employment Trends by Major Business Sector, St. Landry Parish, 2001 - 2013

Employment Sector	Year				Absolute Change		
	2001	2006	2010	2013	2001 - 2006	2006 - 2010	2010 - 2013
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	166	152	81	102	-71	-64	21
Mining	233	566	353	479	-213	246	126
Utilities	201	191	222	243	31	42	21
Construction	1,516	1,738	1,634	1,896	-104	380	262
Manufacturing	1,927	1,991	1,496	1,539	-495	-388	43
Wholesale Trade	806	758	810	867	52	61	57
Retail Trade	3,302	3,837	3,932	4,357	95	1,055	425
Transportation and Warehousing	748	1,862	1,354	1,391	-508	643	37
Information	182	172	154	154	-18	-28	0
Finance and Insurance	778	862	791	839	-71	61	48
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	182	218	221	286	3	104	65
Professional, Scientific, and Tech Services	588	602	640	750	38	162	110
Mgmt. of Companies and Enterprises	76	47	55	54	8	-22	-1
Adm. And Support and Waste Mgmt.	451	544	392	429	-152	-22	37
Educational Services	2,666	2,500	2,702	2,779	202	113	77
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,002	4,545	5,592	6,221	1,047	2,219	629
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	230	994	842	802	-152	572	-40
Accommodation and Food Services	1,295	1,303	1,343	1,660	40	365	317
Other Services	491	547	521	530	-26	39	9
Public Administration	1,124	1,212	1,344	1,439	132	315	95
Total Employment	**23,624**	**27,238**	**27,184**	**26,817**	**-54**	**3,193**	**-367**

Note: Total employment indicated here may not equal the sum of the employment for each sector due to non-disclosed data.
Source: Labor Market Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program

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Table 3.2.5:
Employment Trends by Major Business Sector, Acadiana Regional Development District, 2001 - 2013

Employment Sector	Year				Change		
	2001	2006	2010	2013	2001 - 2006	2006 - 2010	2010 - 2013
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	1,803	1,414	1,233	1,332	-181	-471	99
Mining	23,334	22,067	22,806	26,043	739	2,709	3,237
Utilities	1,437	1,521	1,632	1,564	111	127	-68
Construction	16,854	17,278	15,563	15,525	-1,715	-1,329	-38
Manufacturing	23,501	23,076	22,168	26,771	-908	3,270	4,603
Wholesale Trade	10,756	11,493	11,636	11,287	143	531	-349
Retail Trade	31,717	32,447	32,269	33,465	-178	1,748	1,196
Transportation and Warehousing	12,330	12,630	9,860	10,236	-2,770	-2,094	376
Information	3,677	4,577	3,826	3,621	-751	-56	-205
Finance and Insurance	6,321	7,562	6,718	6,722	-844	401	4
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	7,768	7,878	7,666	8,605	-212	837	939
Professional, Scientific, and Tech Services	8,430	9,779	10,681	12,470	902	4,040	1,789
Mgmt. of Companies and Enterprises	2,806	3,355	3,456	3,569	101	763	113
Adm. And Support and Waste Mgmt.	9,601	11,569	10,569	10,857	-1,000	1,256	288
Educational Services	18,859	20,201	20,726	19,777	525	918	-949
Health Care and Social Assistance	29,988	35,356	39,268	41,047	3,912	11,059	1,779
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	3,838	5,078	5,476	5,331	398	1,493	-145
Accommodation and Food Services	17,238	19,790	19,632	21,724	-158	4,486	2,092
Other Services	5,988	6,560	6,161	5,805	-399	-183	-356
Public Administration	8,018	8,313	9,345	8,815	1,032	797	-530
Total Employment	**244,281**	**262,165**	**260,832**	**274,703**	**-1,333**	**30,422**	**13,871**

Note: Total employment indicated here may not equal the sum of the employment for each sector due to non-disclosed data.
Source: Labor Market Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program

demand for goods and services. That is certainly true of many local Parish-level economies as well as the Acadiana region. This is clearly evident when long term demographic and economic growth patterns are considered for the region, St. Landry Parish and the Town of Sunset.

From 1980 to 2013, the Acadiana region experienced fairly steady and consistent job, population, and household growth. This is not to say that the region side-stepped economic setbacks because those did unfold during the 1980's with severe cutbacks across most of the energy sector. These reversals rippled through various layers of the local economy resulting in retail store closures, home foreclosures, bank failures, and a general sense of low community morale. However, the comeback which started in the 1990's has been generally robust with accelerated rates of employment, population, and household growth. By 2013, for example, the region's total employment base reached

Table 3.2.6: Summary of Economic and Demographic Trends, Lafayette/Acadiana Region, 1980 to 2010; Forecasts to							
Employment Sector	Year						
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2013 (Estimate)	2015 (Forecast)	2020 (Forecast)
Total employment	219,025	227,090	243,350	260,832	274,703	280,385	296,100
Total population	540,584	554,665	601,654	638,768	649,691	662,460	688,770
Total household population	533,704	545,652	588,720	627,035	638,030	650,670	676,955
Total households	174,817	193,667	220,272	242,894	245,916	251,945	263,165
Owner households	121,798	133,432	156,978	169,174	171,101	175,520	183,370
% Owner households	69.67%	68.90%	71.27%	69.65%	69.58%	69.67%	69.68%
Renter households	53,019	60,235	63,294	73,720	74,736	76,425	79,795
% Renter households	30.33%	31.10%	28.73%	30.35%	30.39%	30.33%	30.32%
Vacant housing units	12,486	24,962	23,733	26,407	27,535	26,885	27,215
Total housing units	187,303	218,629	244,005	269,301	272,128	278,830	290,380
Employment participation rate	0.41	0.41	0.40	0.41	0.42	0.42	0.43
Household population ratio	0.99	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98
Average household size	3.05	2.82	2.67	2.58	2.59	2.58	2.57
Occupancy rate	0.93	0.89	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.90	0.91
Jobs per household	1.25	1.17	1.10	1.07	1.12	1.11	1.13
Employment Sector	Annual Average Change						
		1980 -1990	1990 - 2000	2000 - 2010	2010 - 2013	2013 - 2015	2015 - 2020
Total employment		807	1,626	1,748	4,624	2,841	3,143
Total population		1,408	4,699	3,711	3,641	6,385	5,262
Total household population		1,195	4,307	3,832	3,665	6,320	5,257
Total households		1,885	2,661	2,262	1,007	3,015	2,244
Owner households		1,163	2,355	1,220	642	2,209	1,570
% Owner households							
Renter households		722	306	1,043	339	845	674
% Renter households							
Vacant housing units		1,248	-123	267	376	-325	66
Total housing units		3,133	2,538	2,530	942	3,351	2,310
Employment participation rate							
Household population ratio							
Average household size							
Occupancy rate							
Jobs per household							

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Louisiana Workforce Commission and Analyst

just over 274,700 supporting a total population of just under 650,000 and about 245,000 households. Continuing favorable structural shifts that are expected to align very well with emerging sectors receiving significant investment are fueling strong baseline forecasts of future growth going forward. By 2020, for example, the region's total job base is expected to stand at 296,100 supporting a population of 668,770 and 263,165 households. Over the longer term to 2035 strong regional economic fundamentals are expected to push the region's total employment to 360,200 and its total population to 809,150. (See Table 3.2.6).

St. Landry Parish's growth trends over the past three decades or so have been somewhat less impressive, although not for a lack of attempts

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by local leadership to diversify its manufacturing base with plants producing clothing and other soft goods. The pattern of population and employment growth largely demonstrated that the Parish's economic prospects were not well synced with those of the region. For example, during the 1980's both employment and population were declining even as the regional economy began to stabilize and recover from a very difficult period of economic shrinkage and financial turmoil. During the 1990's the

Table 3.2.7:
St. Landry Parish, Summary of Economic and Demographic Trends, 1980 to 2010; Forecasts to 2035

Employment Sector	Year								
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2013 (Estimate)	2015 (Forecast)	2020 (Forecast)	2030 (Forecast)	2035 (Forecast)
Total employment	28,850	27,525	23,642	27,184	26,817	27,404	29,495	34,775	37,690
Total population	84,128	80,331	87,700	83,384	83,454	84,405	86,530	91,450	94,750
Total household population	83,526	79,098	86,172	82,279	82,370	83,310	85,490	90,353	93,708
Total households	26,823	27,477	32,328	31,857	31,680	32,040	33,395	36,141	38,722
Owner households	19,043	19,725	22,865	22,494	22,429	22,655	23,645	25,624	27,493
% Owner households	71.00%	71.79%	70.73%	70.61%	70.80%	70.71%	70.80%	70.90%	71.00%
Renter households	7,780	7,752	9,463	9,363	9,250	9,385	9,750	10,517	11,229
% Renter households	29.00%	28.21%	29.27%	29.39%	29.20%	29.29%	29.20%	29.10%	29.00%
Vacant housing units	2,177	3,660	3,888	3,835	3,916	3,800	3,920	4,195	4,207
Total housing units	29,000	31,137	36,216	35,692	35,596	35,840	37,315	40,336	42,929
Employment participation rate	0.34	0.34	0.27	0.33	0.32	0.32	0.34	0.48	0.51
Household population ratio	0.99	0.98	0.98	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99
Average household size	3.11	2.88	2.67	2.58	2.60	2.60	2.56	2.50	2.42
Occupancy rate	0.92	0.88	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.90	0.90
Jobs per household	1.08	1.00	0.73	0.85	0.85	0.86	0.88	1.18	1.24

Employment Sector	Annual Average Change								
		1980 - 1990	1990 - 2000	2000 - 2010	2010 - 2013	2013 - 2015	2015 - 2020	2020 - 2030	2030 - 2035
Total employment		-133	-388	354	-122	294	418	528	583
Total population		-380	737	-432	23	476	425	492	660
Total household population		-443	707	-389	30	470	436	486	671
Total households		65	485	-47	-59	180	271	275	516
Owner households		68	314	-37	-22	113	198	198	374
% Owner households									
Renter households		-3	171	-10	-38	68	73	77	142
% Renter households									
Vacant housing units		148	23	-5	27	-58	24	27	2
Total housing units		214	508	-52	-32	122	295	302	519
Employment participation rate									
Household population ratio									
Average household size									
Occupancy rate									
Jobs per household									

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Louisiana Workforce Commission and Analyst

Parish's population grew but this growth was not necessarily fueled by new jobs and economic expansion as wage and salary employment declined by an average of 390 annually. Over the next decade (2000-2010) the swing of growth reversed itself as the Parish registered new job gains of 356 annually as total population fell steadily from 87,700 to 83,384 or by about 432 people a year. (See Table 3.2.7). Such a growth pattern presents lessons for the future, many of which do not want to be repeated. One that may have played a role is intra-Parish competition for business recruitment and the relative absence of a strong regional economic development organization to help navigate and focus business attraction efforts for the best possible local economic effect. Also, with Lafayette Parish as the "hub" when economic challenges arise and damage begins to unfold, the natural response is to protect and defend the core of what is crucial to the larger regional interests. As such, some local economies, such as those in St. Landry Parish, may be over looked or not receive a sufficient share of resources to address their particular needs or concerns.

No matter the reason, the primary objective going forward would be to not repeat what turned out to be a mistake or at least a misstep of the past. Lafayette Parish serving as the regional "hub" of economic activity is not going to change anytime soon...if ever. The defunct regional EDO is being reformulated. This is being guided by a region-wide plan and structure that has precedents for success in Baton Rouge and New Orleans, particularly in regard to the role, place and importance of smaller local economies in the overall prosperity and growth of the region in which they are located. St. Landry Parish has also recruited new leadership to guide its economic development activities and recently completed preparing a Strategic Plan for St. Landry Parish Economic Development to serve as a road map going forward. These are important to making possible strong economic growth for the Parish as a whole and for its unique local communities such as Sunset which play strategic roles in advancing job growth and capital investment.

For its part, Sunset's historic growth in terms of both jobs and population has been fairly steady over the past three decades or so. Tracking employment growth is somewhat of a challenge given the limits of information availability for small municipal areas from both State and federal sources. However, the BEA's zip code level reports provide enough information to show that job gains in the Town itself, while not necessarily large, have consistently trended upward even as Parish-wide employment has flattened or trended downward. Since 2000, total employment in Sunset has grown from 347 to an estimated 515 in 2013, a 48% gain. Over the same period the Town 's total population has grown from 2,352 to 2,914 or by just under 24%. (See Table 3.2.8).

Future Outlook: Growth and Structural Change

The outlook for the region as a whole and its constituent communities is one characterized by robust growth and on-going shifts in economic framework. The former is the inevitable result of the unfolding of significant investments announced over the past 18 to 24 months, particularly for the State's energy sector, many of which directly or indirectly impact the Acadiana region as well as many neighboring communities along the I-10 corridor from Baton Rouge to Lake Charles. Most of these projects involve substantial capital investment to facilitate increased development and production of oil and gas from both on-shore shale deposits and continued expansion of off-shore exploration.

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Table 3.2.8:
Summary of Economic and Demographic Trends, Town of Sunset, Louisiana, 1980 to 2010; Forecasts to 2035

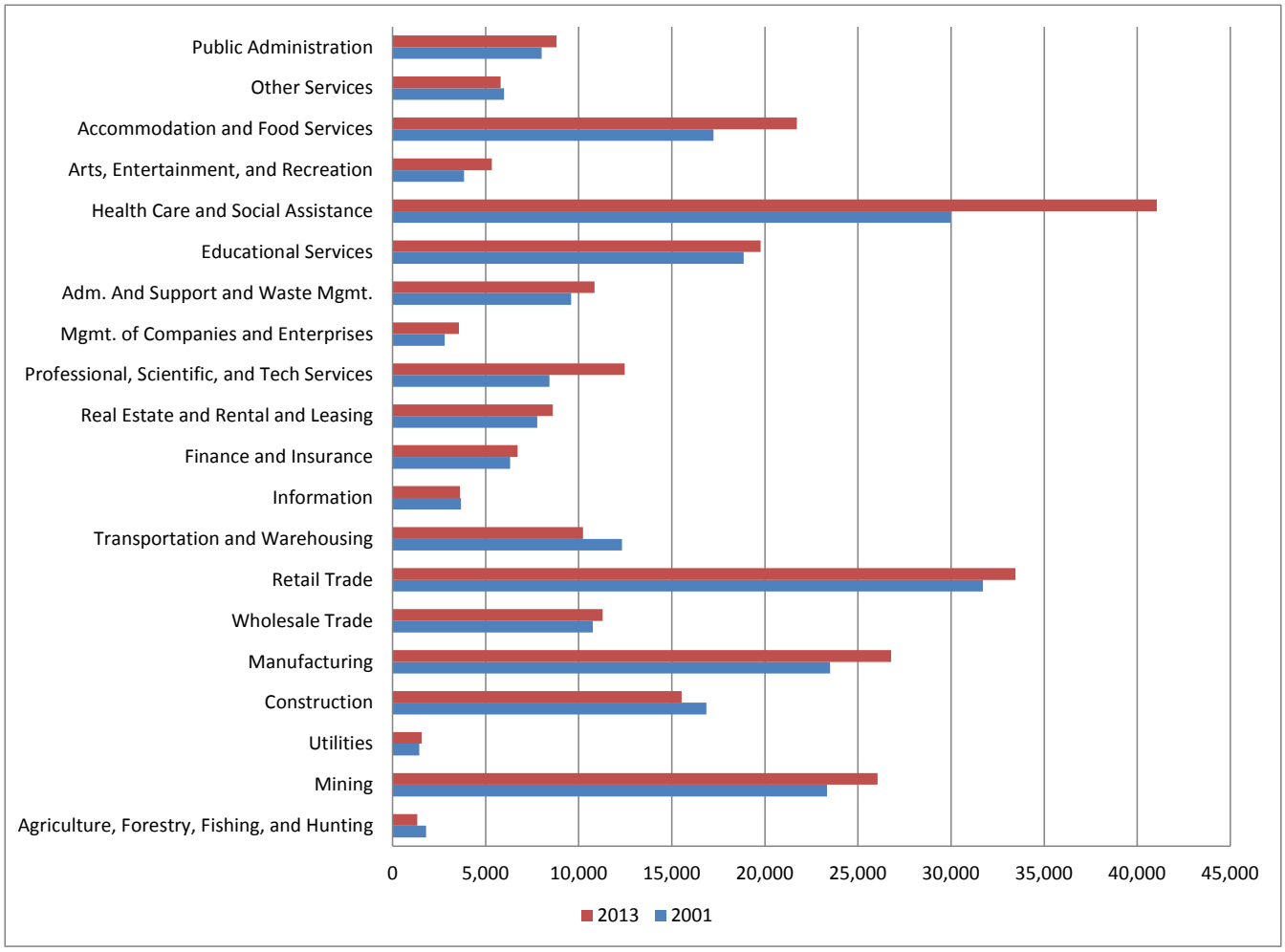
Employment Sector	Year								
	1980	1990	2000	2010	2013 (Estimate)	2015 (Forecast)	2020 (Forecast)	2030 (Forecast)	2035 (Forecast)
Total employment	288	277	347	488	515	625	777	1,090	1,315
Total population	2,300	2,201	2,352	2,897	2,914	3,445	4,025	5,030	5,750
Total household population	2,300	2,201	2,352	2,897	2,914	3,445	4,025	5,030	5,750
Total households	701	748	885	1,129	1,166	1,378	1,610	2,012	2,300
Owner households	493	486	582	739	767	908	1,063	1,328	1,520
% Owner households	70.33%	64.97%	65.76%	65.46%	65.80%	65.89%	66.02%	66.00%	66.09%
Renter households	208	262	303	390	399	470	547	684	780
% Renter households	29.67%	35.03%	34.24%	34.54%	34.20%	34.11%	33.98%	34.00%	33.91%
Vacant housing units	44	110	89	97	169	188	209	249	270
Total housing units	745	850	974	1,226	1,326	1,566	1,819	2,261	2,570
Employment participation rate	0.13	0.13	0.15	0.17	0.18	0.18	0.19	0.22	0.23
Household population ratio	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Average household size	3.28	2.94	2.66	2.57	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50
Occupancy rate	0.94	0.88	0.91	0.92	0.88	0.88	0.89	0.89	0.90
Jobs per household	0.41	0.37	0.39	0.43	0.44	0.45	0.48	0.54	0.57

Employment Sector	Annual Average Change								
		1980 -1990	1990 - 2000	2000 - 2010	2010 - 2013	2013 - 2015	2015 - 2020	2020 - 2030	2030 -2035
Total employment		-1	7	14	9	55	30	31	45
Total population		-10	15	55	6	266	116	101	144
Total household population		-10	15	55	6	266	116	101	144
Total households		5	14	24	12	106	46	40	58
Owner households		-1	10	16	9	71	31	27	38
% Owner households									
Renter households		5	4	9	3	36	15	14	19
% Renter households									
Vacant housing units		7	-2	1	24	9	4	4	4
Total housing units		11	12	25	33	120	51	44	62
Employment participation rate									
Household population ratio									
Average household size									
Occupancy rate									
Jobs per household									

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Louisiana Workforce Commission and Analyst

And, while OPEC's strategy to flood world markets with oil to drive prices down may postpone the unfolding of some investments, the majority will move forward as growing industrial countries such as China and India stabilize, grow and push demand for reliable energy sources.

By the end of 2015, the region's total employment is forecast to reach just under 280,400 supporting a total population base of 662,460. At the same time, St. Landry Parish is expected to see total employment reach 27,404 which will help push its total population up to 84,405. In Sunset, the Town 's job base is expected to reach 625 by the end of 2015 while its total population rises to 3,445. By the end of this decade (2020) the Acadiana region is forecast to have an economic base supporting

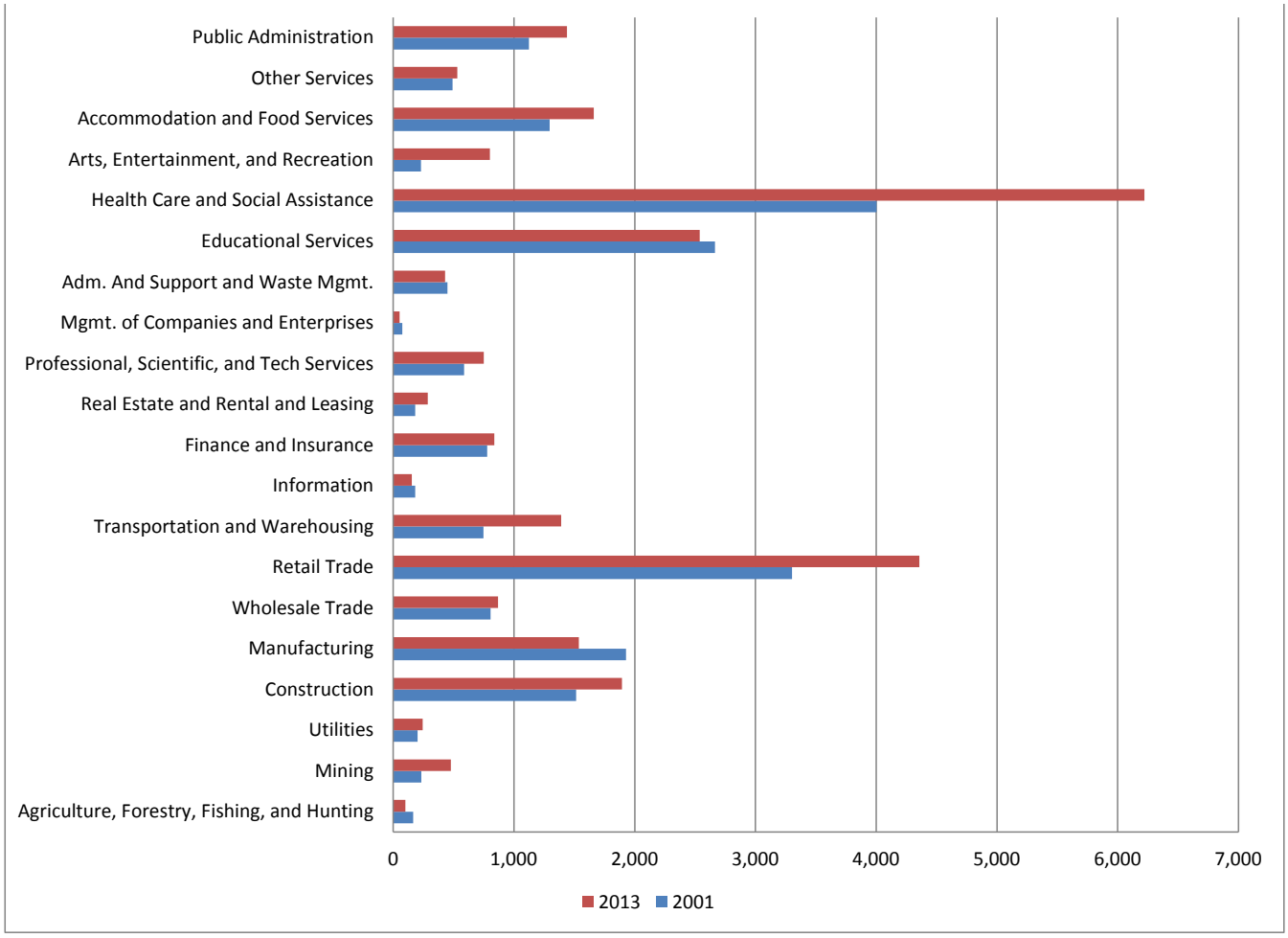


Graph 3.2.9: Employment Trends by Major Business Sector, Acadiana Regional Development District, 2001 vs. 2013

over 296,000 jobs and a population of almost 689,000 people. These growth trends are expected to extend into St. Landry Parish with total employment rising to just under 29,500 and population expanding to 86,530, while in Sunset the Town 's job base rises to 777 and its population reaches 4,025. Over the long term planning horizon to the year 2035, the region's total employment is forecast to reach 360,200 with total population reaching over 809,000. At the same time, both St. Landry Parish and Sunset are expected to share in this growth. The Parish's total employment is forecast to reach just under 37,700 as total population approaches 94,800, while in Sunset gradual but steady expansion pushes the town's total employment to 1,315 with a population of 5,750. (See Tables 3.2 6, 3.2.7, and 3.2.8)

The relative structure of a local or regional economy is best described by the distribution of total employment across the business or industrial sectors present. The comparative importance of these sectors is further defined by a Location Quotient which compares local and regional structures in terms of linkages and relationships to geographically broader economic systems and markets. The analysis shown in Graphs 3.2.9 and 3.2.10 summarize the former while Table 3.2.11 illustrates the latter. Both

3.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Graph 3.2.9: Employment Trends by Major Business Sector, St. Landry Parish, 2001 vs. 2013

are important to understanding the economic environment which will drive growth going forward at the regional and local levels and more importantly influence the pursuit of development and diversification opportunities in Sunset.

Location Quotients (LQ) are a tool which have been used historically to identify business and industrial sectors in a regional or local market that are its economic drivers or engines. By definition these are the "Basic" industries which produce goods and services in quantities large enough to satisfy local demand and export excess capacity to consumers in other market areas. The exporting of goods and services generates imported revenues which help build more production capacity through the creation of jobs and capital investment. Sectors with LQ's of 1.0 or greater are generally considered Basic or Export industries and have typically been the focus of economic development business recruitment efforts. Those sectors with LQ's of under 1.0 are generally considered non-basic which in one way or another meet their economic needs by providing services to local basic sectors and acquiring goods and services from producers in other geographic markets.

When comparing the economic structure of the Acadiana region to the State the four sectors

Table 3.2.11 Location Quotient Analysis, Acadiana Region and Selected Parishes, 2001 to 2013

Employment Sector	State						Acadiana					
	2001 Emp.	% of Total	LQ	2013 Emp.	% of Total	LQ	2001 Emp.	% of Total	LQ	2013 Emp.	% of Total	LQ
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	12,573	0.67%	n/a	9,380	0.50%	n/a	1,803	0.74%	1.10	1,332	0.48%	0.98
Mining	49,073	2.62%	n/a	51,628	2.73%	n/a	23,334	9.55%	3.64	26,043	9.48%	3.48
Utilities	15,550	0.83%	n/a	14,109	0.74%	n/a	1,437	0.59%	0.71	1,564	0.57%	0.76
Construction	133,837	7.16%	n/a	139,862	7.38%	n/a	16,854	6.90%	0.96	15,525	5.65%	0.77
Manufacturing	172,542	9.23%	n/a	144,021	7.60%	n/a	23,501	9.62%	1.04	26,771	9.75%	1.28
Wholesale Trade	77,365	4.14%	n/a	73,271	3.87%	n/a	10,756	4.40%	1.06	11,287	4.11%	1.06
Retail Trade	229,642	12.28%	n/a	224,892	11.87%	n/a	31,717	12.98%	1.06	33,465	12.18%	1.03
Transportation and Warehousing	82,093	4.39%	n/a	81,459	4.30%	n/a	12,330	5.05%	1.15	10,236	3.73%	0.87
Information	33,132	1.77%	n/a	29,787	1.57%	n/a	3,677	1.51%	0.85	3,621	1.32%	0.84
Finance and Insurance	61,710	3.30%	n/a	56,943	3.01%	n/a	6,321	2.59%	0.78	6,722	2.45%	0.81
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	36,078	1.93%	n/a	34,033	1.80%	n/a	7,768	3.18%	1.65	8,605	3.13%	1.74
Professional, Scientific, and Tech Services	69,865	3.74%	n/a	88,481	4.67%	n/a	8,430	3.45%	0.92	12,470	4.54%	0.97
Mgmt. of Companies and Enterprises	23,452	1.25%	n/a	25,340	1.34%	n/a	2,806	1.15%	0.92	3,569	1.30%	0.97
Adm. And Support and Waste Mgmt.	93,758	5.01%	n/a	98,242	5.19%	n/a	9,601	3.93%	0.78	10,857	3.95%	0.76
Educational Services	171,340	9.16%	n/a	164,680	8.69%	n/a	18,859	7.72%	0.84	19,777	7.20%	0.83
Health Care and Social Assistance	245,205	13.11%	n/a	289,503	15.28%	n/a	29,988	12.28%	0.94	41,047	14.94%	0.98
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	48,967	2.62%	n/a	38,558	2.04%	n/a	3,838	1.57%	0.60	5,331	1.94%	0.95
Accommodation and Food Services	156,668	8.38%	n/a	183,764	9.70%	n/a	17,238	7.06%	0.84	21,724	7.91%	0.82
Other Services	53,478	2.86%	n/a	46,925	2.48%	n/a	5,988	2.45%	0.86	5,805	2.11%	0.85
Public Administration	101,474	5.43%	n/a	97,847	5.17%	n/a	8,018	3.28%	0.60	8,815	3.21%	0.62
Total Employment	**1,870,140**	**100%**	**n/a**	**1,894,054**	**100%**	**n/a**	**244,281**	**100%**	**1**	**274,703**	**100%**	**1**

	St. Landry Parish						Lafayette Parish					
	2001 Emp.	% of Total	LQ	2013 Emp.	% of Total	LQ	2001 Emp.	% of Total	LQ	2013 Emp.	% of Total	LQ
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	166	0.70%	1	102	0.38%	1	150	0.13%	0.19	94	0.07%	0.14
Mining	233	0.99%	0	479	1.78%	1	15,136	12.69%	4.84	15,866	11.34%	4.16
Utilities	201	0.85%	1	243	0.91%	1	418	0.35%	0.42	495	0.35%	0.47
Construction	1,516	6.42%	1	1,896	7.07%	1	7,159	6.00%	0.84	6,528	4.66%	0.63
Manufacturing	1,927	8.16%	1	1,539	5.74%	1	7,554	6.33%	0.69	9,849	7.04%	0.93
Wholesale Trade	806	3.41%	1	867	3.23%	1	6,041	5.06%	1.22	6,882	4.92%	1.27
Retail Trade	3,302	13.98%	1	4,357	16.25%	1	15,504	13.00%	1.06	16,685	11.92%	1.00
Transportation and Warehousing	748	3.17%	1	1,391	5.19%	1	5,064	4.24%	0.97	3,984	2.85%	0.66
Information	182	0.77%	0	154	0.58%	0	2,185	1.83%	1.03	2,630	1.88%	1.20
Finance and Insurance	778	3.29%	1	839	3.13%	1	2,824	2.37%	0.72	3,139	2.24%	0.75
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	182	0.77%	0	286	1.07%	1	4,439	3.72%	1.93	4,382	3.13%	1.74
Professional, Scientific, and Tech Services	588	2.49%	1	750	2.80%	1	5,917	4.96%	1.33	8,886	6.35%	1.36
Mgmt. of Companies and Enterprises	76	0.32%	0	54	0.20%	0	2,116	1.77%	1.41	2,991	2.14%	1.60
Adm. And Support and Waste Mgmt.	451	1.91%	0	429	1.60%	0	6,361	5.33%	1.06	6,363	4.55%	0.88
Educational Services	2,666	11.29%	1	2,779	10.36%	1	5,999	5.03%	0.55	7,942	5.68%	0.65
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,002	16.94%	1	6,221	23.20%	2	14,639	12.27%	0.94	20,855	14.90%	0.98
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	230	0.97%	0	802	2.99%	1	1,668	1.40%	0.53	2,153	1.54%	0.76
Accommodation and Food Services	1,295	5.48%	1	1,660	6.19%	1	9,935	8.33%	0.99	13,379	9.56%	0.99
Other Services	491	2.08%	1	530	1.98%	1	3,108	2.61%	0.91	3,201	2.29%	0.92
Public Administration	1,124	4.76%	1	1,439	5.37%	1	3,075	2.58%	0.48	3,560	2.54%	0.49
Total Employment	**23,624**	**100%**	**1**	**26,817**	**100%**	**1**	**119,297**	**100%**	**1**	**139,937**	**100%**	**1**

which emerge as basic or export include Mining with a LQ of 3.478, Manufacturing (1.282), Retail Trade (1.026), and Real Estate (1.743). (See Table 3.2.11).

At the regional level there are six sectors which provide insight to structural changes that may help inform economic development strategies and their implementation. These include Mining; Manufacturing; Retail Trade; Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services; Healthcare and Social Assistance; and Accommodation and Food Services. Mining, for example, had a fairly healthy net gain of jobs from 2001 to 2013 but saw its share of total employment edge down from 9.55% to 9.49%. At the same time Mining's Location Quotient (LQ) edged down from 3.64 to 3.48. Clearly these shifts do not diminish

3.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Table 3.2.12: Employment Trends by Major Business Sector, Acadiana Regional Development District, 2010 to 2013 and Forecasts 2015 to 2035

Employment Sector	2010		2013		2015		2020		2030		2035	
	Emp.	% of Total	Emp.	% of Total	Emp.	% of Total	Emp.	% of Total	Emp.	% of Total	Emp.	% of Total
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	1,234	0.47%	1,333	0.49%	1,401	0.50%	1,451	0.49%	1,658	0.49%	1,730	0.48%
Mining	22,818	8.75%	26,056	9.49%	27,982	9.98%	29,462	9.95%	33,657	9.94%	35,768	9.93%
Utilities	1,633	0.63%	1,565	0.57%	1,626	0.58%	1,688	0.57%	1,964	0.58%	2,053	0.57%
Construction	15,571	5.97%	15,533	5.65%	15,421	5.50%	16,345	5.52%	18,657	5.51%	19,883	5.52%
Manufacturing	22,180	8.50%	26,784	9.75%	27,618	9.85%	29,225	9.87%	33,454	9.88%	35,624	9.89%
Wholesale Trade	11,642	4.46%	11,293	4.11%	11,356	4.05%	12,022	4.06%	13,713	4.05%	14,624	4.06%
Retail Trade	32,286	12.38%	33,482	12.19%	33,871	12.08%	35,828	12.10%	40,937	12.09%	43,620	12.11%
Transportation and Warehousing	9,865	3.78%	10,241	3.73%	10,374	3.70%	10,985	3.71%	12,596	3.72%	13,435	3.73%
Information	3,828	1.47%	3,623	1.32%	3,645	1.30%	3,909	1.32%	4,537	1.34%	5,007	1.39%
Finance and Insurance	6,722	2.58%	6,725	2.45%	6,897	2.46%	7,254	2.45%	8,330	2.46%	8,825	2.45%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	7,670	2.94%	8,609	3.13%	8,972	3.20%	9,446	3.19%	10,767	3.18%	11,418	3.17%
Professional, Scientific, and Tech Services	10,687	4.10%	12,476	4.54%	13,346	4.76%	13,917	4.70%	15,948	4.71%	17,001	4.72%
Mgmt. of Companies and Enterprises	3,458	1.33%	3,571	1.30%	3,673	1.31%	3,909	1.32%	4,436	1.31%	4,683	1.30%
Adm. And Support and Waste Mgmt.	10,575	4.05%	10,862	3.95%	10,935	3.90%	11,489	3.88%	13,104	3.87%	13,976	3.88%
Educational Services	20,737	7.95%	19,787	7.20%	20,048	7.15%	21,112	7.13%	24,476	7.14%	25,754	7.15%
Health Care and Social Assistance	39,289	15.06%	41,067	14.95%	41,217	14.70%	43,764	14.78%	50,079	14.79%	52,913	14.69%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	5,479	2.10%	5,334	1.94%	5,468	1.95%	5,804	1.96%	6,603	1.95%	6,988	1.94%
Accommodation and Food Services	19,643	7.53%	21,735	7.91%	21,926	7.82%	23,125	7.81%	26,478	7.82%	28,204	7.83%
Other Services	6,164	2.36%	5,808	2.11%	5,749	2.05%	6,040	2.04%	6,874	2.03%	7,348	2.04%
Public Administration	9,350	3.58%	8,819	3.21%	8,860	3.16%	9,325	3.15%	10,632	3.14%	11,346	3.15%
Total Employment	**260,832**	**100%**	**274,703**	**100%**	**280,385**	**100%**	**296,100**	**100%**	**338,600**	**100%**	**360,200**	**100%**

Note: Total employment indicated here may not equal the sum of the employment for each sector due to non-disclosed data.

Source: Labor Market Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program

the role of the Mining sector in the region. It has been and will continue to be critically important to job growth and capital investment going forward. Mining employment is forecast to reach 29,460 by 2020 and 35,770 by 2035. Also, it has and will continue to provide the impetus and opportunity to diversify the regional economy and thus create business attraction and expansion potential in other existing and emerging sectors within the region. This would include, for example, Manufacturing where strong net growth drove the LQ from 1.043 in 2001 to 1.282 in 2013 and in the Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (PST) sector which between 2001 and 2013 added about 4,000 jobs and saw its LQ reach .972. To some extent these shifts can be attributed to strategic initiatives that have been focused on economic diversification built upon the dual foundations of the energy (Mining) sector and intellectual capital embodied within the resources of UL Lafayette and the region's network of community and technical colleges. The region's Manufacturing sector is forecast to reach 29,225 jobs by 2020 and to continue growing to 33,454 and 35,624 jobs, respectively, in 2030 and 2035. In the PST sector the number of jobs is forecast to reach 13,920 by 2020 and 17,000 by 2035. These same intellectual resources along with steady population growth and unfolding changes in healthcare are quite evident in this sector's emergence in the region. Between 2001 and 2013, for example, the Healthcare sector grew by over 10,000 jobs (the largest net gain in any sector) while its share of total employment rose from 13.1% to 15.3%. At the same time this sector's relative strength when compared to the State as a whole increased as evidenced by its LQ rise from .936 to .978. Total Healthcare employment is forecast to reach 43,765 by 2020 and just over 52,900 by 2035. (See Graph 3.2.9 and Table 3.2.12).

In St. Landry Parish there are several sectors where net growth and relative strength may be creating opportunities for business growth within local communities such as Sunset. The most obvious is Healthcare and Social Assistance which added over 2,000 jobs between 2001 and 2013 and its share of total employment rose from 19.1% to 23.4%. More importantly its relative strength as a sector exporting services to neighboring communities became more evident as its LQ rose from 1.46 to 1.53. For Sunset, growth in this sector helps drive demand for office space that would be occupied by physicians and a wide range of medical professionals, technicians, and support staff. By 2020 total employment in the Parish's Healthcare sector is forecast to reach just under 6,760 with continued growth to 8,660 through the end of 2035. (See Table 3.2.13). Transportation and Warehousing is another sector demonstrating similar growth and shift in relative importance to the Parish's economic structure. It added over 500 jobs between 2001 and 2013 while its LQ rose significantly from .813 to 1.22. Given the nature of the transportation network serving the Parish and surrounding region the emergence of warehousing and distribution activities should not be surprising nor should it be an opportunity overlooked as part of Sunset's economic development strategy. By 2020, this sector's total employment is expected to reach 1,540 with continued expansion to 1,812 and 1,960 jobs in 2030 and 2035, respectively. The third sector meriting recognition is currently fairly small but poised for significant growth if current plans for a multi-use equestrian facility unfold as proposed. The Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation sector more than tripled in size with the addition of over 500 jobs (many of which were associated with the opening of Evangeline Downs race course) while the sector's LQ rose from near obscurity (.419) to 1.48. By 2020, this sector is forecast to account for 920 of the Parish's total job base. Over the longer range it is forecast for steady increases reaching 1,082 in 2030 and just under 1,170 in 2035. (See Graph 3.2.10 and Table 3.2.13).

Community Balance Sheet Analysis

This element of Sunset's Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide or roadmap for local community leaders as they make decisions directly affecting its economic future, its ability to sustain itself financially, and its acceptance as a place to live, work, and pursue entrepreneurial opportunities. To a large extent, how the Town 's strategy is formulated and then implemented is a matter of taking into consideration its balance sheet of assets (strengths) and liabilities (weaknesses) within the context of the market and economic environment in which it functions.

The following is a brief discussion of key elements of Sunset's balance sheet based upon information gathered during Steering Committee and Public meetings as well as from observations of the DBA planning team, and from other planning reports. Exhibit A summarizes what many believe are strengths which can be built upon to encourage and support economic development and growth in Sunset. The first three address the Town 's geographic location and strategic positioning with respect to transportation corridors that provide access to other assets, services, and attractions across the broader region while also facilitating the flow of commerce and movement of goods from one market to another. For Sunset, these assets make it possible to attract more residents while at the same time creating potential for business development linked to transportation, warehousing, and distribution. The Town 's location and its access to quality medical facilities also creates the potential to support development of office space focused on

3.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Table 3.2.13: Employment Trends by Major Business Sector, St. Landry Parish, 2010 to 2013 and Forecasts 2015 to 2035

Employment Sector	2010		2013		2015		2020		2030		20
	Emp.	% of Total	Emp.	% of Total	Emp.	% of Total	Emp.	% of Total	Emp.	% of Total	Emp.
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting	90	0.33%	102	0.38%	107	0.39%	109	0.37%	132	0.38%	139
Mining	392	1.44%	479	1.78%	499	1.82%	560	1.90%	668	1.92%	727
Utilities	247	0.91%	243	0.91%	252	0.92%	268	0.91%	313	0.90%	339
Construction	1,815	6.68%	1,896	7.07%	2,006	7.32%	2,130	7.22%	2,518	7.24%	2,725
Manufacturing	1,661	6.11%	1,539	5.74%	1,589	5.80%	1,716	5.82%	2,017	5.80%	2,190
Wholesale Trade	900	3.31%	867	3.23%	880	3.21%	956	3.24%	1,120	3.22%	1,210
Retail Trade	4,366	16.06%	4,357	16.25%	4,461	16.28%	4,814	16.32%	5,668	16.30%	6,140
Transportation and Warehousing	1,504	5.53%	1,391	5.19%	1,425	5.20%	1,540	5.22%	1,812	5.21%	1,960
Information	171	0.63%	154	0.58%	162	0.59%	183	0.62%	212	0.61%	241
Finance and Insurance	878	3.23%	839	3.13%	867	3.16%	923	3.13%	1,091	3.14%	1,176
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	245	0.90%	286	1.07%	299	1.09%	313	1.06%	372	1.07%	400
Professional, Scientific, and Tech Services	711	2.61%	750	2.80%	792	2.89%	864	2.93%	1,015	2.92%	1,108
Mgmt. of Companies and Enterprises	61	0.22%	54	0.20%	58	0.21%	71	0.24%	87	0.25%	102
Adm. And Support and Waste Mgmt.	435	1.60%	429	1.60%	444	1.62%	478	1.62%	567	1.63%	611
Educational Services	3,001	11.04%	2,779	10.36%	2,735	9.98%	2,950	10.00%	3,460	9.95%	3,754
Health Care and Social Assistance	6,210	22.84%	6,221	23.20%	6,317	23.05%	6,757	22.91%	7,981	22.95%	8,661
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	935	3.44%	802	2.99%	850	3.10%	920	3.12%	1,082	3.11%	1,168
Accommodation and Food Services	1,491	5.49%	1,660	6.19%	1,672	6.10%	1,802	6.11%	2,132	6.13%	2,307
Other Services	579	2.13%	530	1.98%	534	1.95%	578	1.96%	678	1.95%	731
Public Administration	1,493	5.49%	1,439	5.37%	1,455	5.31%	1,563	5.30%	1,850	5.32%	2,001
Total Employment	**27,184**	**100%**	**26,817**	**100%**	**27,404**	**100%**	**29,495**	**100%**	**34,775**	**100%**	**37,690**

Note: Total employment indicated here may not equal the sum of the employment for each sector due to non-disclosed data.
Source: Labor Market Statistics, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program

supporting the operational needs of medical and allied health professionals. These opportunities are further enabled in Sunset by the availability of suitably located land to accommodate both, residential and commercial development.

Three mostly quality of life factors which surfaced as assets involve education or education related activities. Good private schools were noted as an important asset to attract and retain families in Sunset while access to the University of Louisiana Lafayette Campus and its rich variety of educational, research, and service programs provided a wealth of resources which can be tapped to deepen and broaden the community's intellectual infrastructure. In some respects mention of the old Sunset High School building as an asset points to a specific location where these educational resources could coalesce to become a signature project of the Town 's economic development strategy, while at the same time building upon some of the Town 's unique character attributes such as its culture and heritage. This building asset could also serve as a strategic focal point for the Town 's continuing emphasis on tourism as it leverages other elements mentioned such as its Rubboard Festival, Mardi Gras Ball, and restaurants. Success in growing tourism as a significant contributor to creating new jobs and attracting capital investment to Sunset is enhanced by a backdrop that includes existing lodging facilities but more importantly by a municipal government that is fiscally sound supported by a populace with a strong work ethic. (Read more about this in Section 3.10: Tourism). In 2012, the most recent year for which reports were available, the Town received an unqualified audit of its financial activities for the period which ended with net assets of just under $2.2 million.

In short, Sunset has a store of assets upon which it can build a sound and sustainable economic development strategy. It is, however, in the opinion of many of its stakeholders not without challenges or weaknesses that need to be addressed if economic development efforts are going to reach their full potential. No one of the items shown in Exhibit B by itself is enough to necessarily stop the Town from moving forward economically. However, addressing them, possibly within the context of an executed strategy, would demonstrate that available resources are being deployed reasonably to remedy stumbling blocks to community progress.

The first three items listed are in fact being directly addresses by the Town 's investment in preparing a Comprehensive Resiliency Plan. Insufficient water and sewer capacity are both physical and fiscal issues some of which may be partially resolved through annexation and implementation of smart growth land use principles that introduce higher levels of operating efficiency in serving the water and sewer needs of residents and businesses. Preliminary land use recommendations include significant additions to the Town 's inventory of public green space (Read more about this in Section 3.9: Recreation) and a major element of the final plan is the introduction of a comprehensive zoning ordinance to replace the somewhat cryptic two page document that currently provides such guidance. (Read more about this in Section 3.1: Land Use).

Because of its relatively small economic footprint, Sunset by itself can only support a limited presence of retail, entertainment, and lodging. The Town 's economic development strategy going forward must be one reaching outward to attract spending and investment from well beyond its municipal boundaries and immediate surroundings. A focus on building its tourism sector is a significant

EXHIBIT A

Town of Sunset
Strengths/Assets

- *Geographic Location*
- *Highway Transportation Network (I-49/I-10 and Louisiana Highways 93, 182, etc.)*
- *Proximity/Accessibility to Amenities, Services and Attractions of Lafayette*
- *Land Available for Development – Commercial and Residential*
- *Medical Facilities*
- *Privates Schools*
- *Access to Higher Education Resources (Teaching, Research, Services)*
- *Sunset High School Building*
- *Culture and Heritage*
- *Residents with Strong Work Ethic*
- *Small Town Footprint*
- *Merchant Alliance/Unified Businesses*
- *Town's Fiscal Strength*
- *Rubboard Festival*
- *Restaurants*
- *Mardi Gras Ball*
- *Existing Lodging Facilities*
- *Library*

EXHIBIT B

Town of Sunset
Weaknesses/Liabilities

- *Insufficient Water and Sewer Capacity*
- *Limited Public Green Space*
- *Disorganized Town Zoning*
- *Limited Access to Retail and Consumer Services*
- *Limited Entertainment Venues*
- *Limited Hotel/Lodging Availability*
- *Weak Public Schools (St. Landry Parish)*
- *Reluctance of Some to Embrace Growth*

move in that direction as is targeting business recruitment in sectors such as Healthcare and Professional, Scientific and Technical, as well as Transportation and Warehousing.

The inadequacies inherent in much of the State's public K-12 education system present challenges for most communities attempting to formulate and execute economic development strategies. While the introduction of innovations such as charter schools in some districts has made a positive difference, deeply entrenched self-interests (i.e. teachers unions, political cronyism, etc.) create formidable barriers to sustainable progress. However, expecting change that aligns with executing Sunset's economic development strategy is probably unrealistic. Local leadership should work with Parish school officials to initiate improvements and lend support particularly when the intended outcome is a better prepared workforce.

One of the best ways to blunt resistance to growth in Sunset is to focus on the vision and core values established as part of the planning process. The small town footprint, character, and ambiance are to be maintained as part of the plan going forward even as the Town 's boundaries and size expand. The plan focuses on sustainable development, not runway growth. This is a principle that bears repeating by town leaders and stakeholders whenever this challenge surfaces.

It is fairly clear that Sunset's assets far outweigh the Town 's liabilities. In financial terms this would indicate a community which has an accumulated store of wealth or value from which it can draw to grow and sustain itself economically going forward. The next section will consider specific components of the Town 's economic development strategy going forward.

Recommendations

Economic Development Plan: Priorities, Targets, Goals, Objectives, and Strategies

The path to economic prosperity and sustainability for the Town of Sunset will no doubt include its fair share of twists, turns, potholes, and assorted other challenges. However, as the previous discussion emphasized, the Town is well positioned as it moves forward to grow and expand its economic footprint in alignment with St. Landry Parish and the broader region as a whole. This does not mean that Sunset's economic development strategy and implemented initiatives are lock-step mirror images of the Parish's or region's economic development plans. But it does mean that the Town 's plan should not conflict or run contrary to those adopted at the Parish and regional levels. There is always room for adapting local plans to ensure a consistency of effort, the leveraging of available resources, and collaboration with a more diverse mix of stakeholders. The recently completed St. Landry Parish economic development strategy provides a useful template for Sunset within which to formulate goals, objectives, and strategies to best serve the interests of the Town going forward.

Economic Development Priorities highlighted in the Parish plan provide a useful backdrop for strategies adopted and implemented by the Town of Sunset. (See St. Landry Parish Economic Development Strategic Plan). Physical Infrastructure, for example, provides the framework and foundation upon which the community can attract and effectively host new opportunities to fuel economic growth and diversification in a sustainable manner over the long term. To a large degree infrastructure issues and concerns are being addressed in the

preparation of the Comprehensive Master Plan. Therefore, the Town should seek to provide adequate physical infrastructure and supportive municipal services to accommodate and encourage sustainable economic development and diversification. This effort includes the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations by the Town Council Further recommended infrastructure projects need to be prioritized and a budget for top priority infrastructure projects needs to be prepared.

Economic and Community Development are also listed among the Priorities for the Parish and are thus of core interest and focus for the Town of Sunset. (See Strategic Plan for St. Landry Parish Economic Development). In essence these components are two sides of the same coin for most communities and are thus joined at the hip in their importance as the future unfolds for Sunset. Although defined in many ways, economic development is generally the active pursuit of opportunities to promote economic growth, diversification, sustainability, and the creation of wealth-building opportunities. Community development, for the most part, is the active engagement of stakeholders to create and sustain an environment conducive to and supportive of expanding economic opportunities through business recruitment, retention, and nurturing a culture of entrepreneurship. With respect to Economic Development, Sunset should pursue and maintain a strong local economy within the context of a sustainable natural environment and a high quality of life in order to provide jobs and other economic opportunities for residents of Sunset and its immediate surroundings, active commercial and public spaces which serve residents and visitors, and a sufficient tax base to support local services and fund necessary capital improvements.

Marketing/Communications is an understandable and practical priority for Sunset's economic development strategy. However, the Town itself will be well served to collaborate with marketing campaigns sponsored by the Parish, region, and State. The Town itself should, where possible, use social media and its own home website to promote special events and communicate business and economic development opportunities to its citizens and the public at large. Linking the Town 's website to St. Landry Parish's and to the State's through Louisiana Economic Development (LED) widens Sunset's outreach to those considering business and location opportunities. At a minimum this would include listings of available business locations as well as development ready vacant land parcels. To address this need the Town of Sunset should establish and maintain a marketing and communications program scaled to the needs, resources and capabilities of Sunset. A working committee of stakeholders could guide development and implementation of the Town 's marketing and communications program. Further the Town should seek to improve their web presence and provide critical information for attracting new businesses in an easily accessible manner.

Although the region and St. Landry Parish host a wide variety of mid to large sized corporate citizens, small businesses (those employing 20 or fewer people) account for the largest share of total employment. These small businesses are also drivers of innovation and creativity which in some cases blossom into fast growth firms that develop significant financial footprints. As a priority area for economic development, entrepreneurship, and small business

development, work in conjunction with business recruitment and retention to grow economic job and investment opportunities. Small firms are typically the product of economic "gardening" through which seeds of innovation are planted and nurtured by a culture of entrepreneurship that permeates the community. This nurturing process involves stakeholders and community leaders at multiple levels as well as reliance on sources of specialized assistance from elsewhere. Locally, the existing business community is one of the key resources for new start-ups and those considering a location in the Town . These current business owners and operators can provide a wealth of practical experience (both good and bad) and basic guidance on how to secure the necessary approvals and permits from the Town .
Although much of this nurturing process can be accomplished informally in a one-on-one context, more formally structured events and training opportunities can be sponsored by a local chamber of commerce or merchants and business association. Currently there are about 120 business establishments in the Town employing about 475 people. The majority of these firms are very small and classified within the Services (51%), Retail (16%), and Finance (10%) sectors. The Services sector accounts for an estimated 250 jobs (53%) in the Town with Education and Healthcare making up 16% and 15%, respectively of total Sunset employment. Although small in quantity, there are a sufficient number of establishments to support a local merchants and business association that could adopt as its primary focus the nurture and care of the Town 's entrepreneurial and small business ecosystem. Sunset should thus aim on being a community which values, proactively supports, nurtures, and encourages entrepreneurial initiative, creativity, and small business development.

The Priority of Education and Workforce

For the most part, the present performance and future direction of public schools serving Sunset residents is largely within the hands of the St. Landry Parish School Board. The Board, as an elected political body, sets policies, oversees the administration and controls the deployment of financial resources through the budgeting process. Sunset, as a relatively small municipality served by the public school system, has relatively little leverage to influence decision-making at the Board level short of having one of its residents elected to the Board. Of course, this would be one of only many voices on the Board each of whom may have their own local self-interests to address. Although this may have some long term possibilities for influencing the delivery of quality public education, there are several actions that Sunset residents could pursue to begin moving in that direction. None of these will necessarily have immediate effects and change the course of public education in the Parish and in Sunset. However, they can help move in that direction over the longer term leading to continuous improvements in the quality of education available to students across the full spectrum of grade levels and programs. A "working" committee of Sunset stakeholders should be formed to serve as a liaison and provide active oversight of the Parish School Board as well as the community and technical colleges serving the region. Educational administrators and the elected boards they serve are not necessarily enamored with the idea of concerned citizen oversight bodies evaluating their actions and decisions and generally holding them accountable. However, a working committee so focused can begin to influence decisions and encourage open discussion and debate about how the public school system is operated, how its financial resources are used and how it can be set on a path to make

it among the state's top performing schools. Service on such a committee will require people who do not shy away from debate, have the time to attend meetings regularly and who truly see and understand the value of a quality public education system for their community. Members of this committee should also participate in evaluating the workforce needs of employers and businesses in and around Sunset. The merchants and business association should take the lead in this effort and also serve as an interface role with the region's Workforce Investment Board (WIB). The WIBs are responsible for deploying federal job training and development financial resources through the State's Workforce Investment Commission (WIC). The WIC establishes statewide and regional priorities for funding based on forecasts of workforce needs across a range of factors (i.e. occupation, skill sets, certifications, etc.) over five to ten year planning horizons. These funds are allocated locally on a competitive basis to training and education providers including proprietary schools and community and technical colleges. The Sunset committee's role would be to see that St. Landry Parish and possibly training providers in the Town itself were receiving workforce training, particularly within the disciplines of the targeted business sectors identified in the economic development strategy. While both of these strategies to improve public education maintain a linkage to and dependence upon the existing system, incremental improvements over time are possible. However, the Town's leadership could pursue a third route as well focusing on an even more proactive approach involving the creation of a charter school in Sunset. For a community the size of Sunset, this would be a challenge but not one that would is insurmountable. Such a school could be tailored to the specific needs and interests of the Town's long term vision for itself and particularly its economic development goals. As such, a charter school could adopt curricula focused on specific career paths (i.e. creative arts, allied health, etc.) while offering high quality core material necessary to build a strong and durable platform for lifelong learning. Pursuing this path, however, will require a significant investment of time and energy to evaluate the feasibility of such a venture. In that regard, Sunset should create a committee of community stakeholders to evaluate the potential of creating a charter school.

Retirement Community

The rapidly aging "Baby Boomer" generation which is now in search of options for living and enjoyment after leaving the workforce constitutes an opportunity for Sunset's development as an attractive Retirement Community. Louisiana and the Acadiana region offer a number of features particularly attractive to retirees such as low taxes, an abundance of cultural and recreational assets, access to high quality healthcare, a good quality of life, and generally good weather. In some respects, Sunset already offers opportunities for older citizens who prefer to age in place in many of its residential single family neighborhoods or in one of three multi-family rental communities set aside for individuals 62 or older. These three communities are fully occupied (some with waiting lists) and thus demand should be sufficient to absorb additional units, particularly those which may be rent assisted. Developing more comprehensive retirement communities integrating a mix of residential products over a range of price and rent ranges and a menu of amenities and services requires a significant financial investment and particular experience. At a minimum, the town's Comprehensive Plan could include one or more parcels suitably zoned

for multi-family properties designed and built to accommodate retirees. The plan could also identify one suitably located and sized parcel to accommodate a retirement community offering a mix of single family attached townhomes and low density multi-family units with a suitably scaled core amenity package. A parcel of 30 to 50 acres should be sufficient.

Target Industries/Business Clusters

Economic development plans typically point to and at something. They point to a path for economic progress and advancement for a local, regional or State economy. And, at the same time, they usually point at industry sectors or business clusters that, in the opinion of those formulating the plan, are those most likely to drive the economy forward to reach goals and accomplish objectives articulated in the plan. Very often, as in the St. Landry plan, these targets already represent core or basic sectors that drive the economy forward and fuel job growth, capital investment and wealth creation in the local economy. In some cases these targets are identified and singled out as presenting the best possible opportunities for diversifying a community's economic base. Focusing on diversification does not mean abandoning the traditional sectors that have been responsible for fueling a local economy's long term historic growth. However, it is an acknowledgement of the need to reduce long-standing business and industry sector dependencies so that going forward it builds a more resilient foundation to bring about job creation, retention, and capital investment.

The St. Landry economic development plan identifies six specific sectors or business clusters that are priorities within the sphere of executing business attraction, business retention, and small business/entrepreneurship initiatives at the Parish level. They also inform and provide useful guidance for Sunset's plan going forward. The sectors identified for priority consideration include the following:

- *Oil and Gas Services*
- *Transportation and Logistics*
- *Agriculture*
- *Food Processing*
- *Culture and Entertainment*
- *Healthcare*

None of these are necessarily surprising and each of them to one extent or another already provide significant contributions to the regional and Parish economic framework and offer selective opportunities to help grow and diversify Sunset's economic base going forward.

Oil and Gas Services is a multifaceted and somewhat broadly inclusive business cluster grounded in the Mining sector. Mining has already been shown to be a significant basic sector for the entire region and that is not likely to change going forward. The current OPEC-led game of oil price "chicken" is likely to dent or delay some announced projects and is having an effect on the budgets and staffing plans of some oilfield related businesses in the Lafayette region and elsewhere in South Louisiana. For the most part, this is an adjustment process, albeit possibly painful, reflecting the new reality that the U.S. has abundant reserves that are technologically accessible. Resumed economic growth in China and recovery in several key E.U. countries would help spur energy demand, offset some of OPEC's oil dumping behavior and thus allow crude prices to rise. This is likely to be a long process of give and take that will ultimately rest at a range of crude oil and natural gas

prices that provide sufficient profit margins for everyone in the supply chain.

For Sunset, oil and gas services creates job opportunities for its working residents, particularly those who commute to Lafayette and other parts of the region. These jobs generate salaries and wages some of which are spent locally in retail and service establishments. This sector, however, also creates opportunities for Sunset to serve as a location for one or more businesses engaged in oil and gas services, particularly the technology and engineering aspects of the sector. Parcels reserved in the comprehensive plan as sites for office buildings would provide the Town and Parish with the opportunity to recruit such businesses to Sunset. These parcels can be marketed through the sites and buildings page of the Parish economic development website as well as LED commercial property database. These parcels should be appropriately zoned for multi-level office buildings and be as development ready as possible to facilitate approvals in the entitlement process.

The region, Parish, and Sunset are blessed with an array of highways and rail services that make Transportation and Logistics a natural target for business and economic development opportunities. This is a fast growing sector that is being ever transformed by changing technology, producer needs and customer preferences. Product handling continues to demand new innovations in equipment used in today's warehouses and distribution centers and thus the design and construction of buildings to accommodate these activities. The rapid evolution in the use of robotics in cargo handling and storage, for example, calls for construction standards requiring perfectly leveled reinforced slabs and foundations and 38' to 42' ceiling heights to accommodate vertical storage using state of the art fork lifts. For Sunset, its Comprehensive Plan's parcels identified for light industrial are suitably located to support warehouse facilities and should be marketed as such through the sites and buildings pages of the Parish's and LED websites. Again, these parcels should be appropriately zoned to easily accommodate warehouse and distribution facilities. The Town 's focus should be on potential space users primarily on highway transportation with secondary emphasis on those servicing cargo transit by water, air or rail.

Agriculture has been a bedrock contributor to the economy of the region since the earliest days of its settlement, and it will continue to play a strategic role going forward for the Parish and Sunset. Although somewhat in the background, agricultural activities are quite evident in the area with producing fields adjoining residential and commercial land uses and abutting municipal boundaries. In terms of gross value of production, soybeans, rice, and feed grains account for the major economic contributions to this sector's field grown crops. Aquaculture, particularly the production of crawfish is a major crop with a 2013 harvest of 10.2 million pounds from approximately 17,000 acres of managed ponds. Within the category of animal production, horses contributed just under $21 million of economic value in the agriculture sector during 2013. This included breeding of horses used for racing, showing, and general recreation. For Sunset, the agriculture sector and some of its major production elements supply important raw material for related activities such as food processing and production. This is particularly true for field grown rice and pond raised crawfish both of which are vital ingredients to a wide range of prepared meals and restaurant menu items. With respect to horses, Sunset already

hosts the Baronne Veterinary Clinic which is a well-known equine medical and surgical center. This facility provides specialized medical treatment for race horses as well as those engaged in a wide range of competitive events in both English and Western disciplines. As the presence of equine events and activities grows, the demand for veterinary and related professional services is likely to expand. For Sunset, this can create opportunities to attract business to one or more commercial parcels included in the Master Plan.

In a region where the prevailing culinary standard is "Live to Eat," Food Processing and anything related to the preparation, packaging, and distribution of food for consumption falls into the category of a "no brainer" as a business development target. Like the home-grown Tony Chachere's, this is a target sector ripe with entrepreneurial and small business development opportunities. The continued growth of consumer interest and preferences for prepared meals and on-going improvements in the technology of preserving fresh foods unfolds an almost endless range of opportunities for local entrepreneurs and culinary artists to bring their recipes and creations to market. While many who follow this path do so in their own home kitchens, commercializing and launching a new enterprise to produce, market and distribute food products typically requires a fair amount of management and technical assistance. Those in and around Sunset can access the Cajun Accelerator Station located in Opelousas. The Station is operated by St. Landry Economic Development in partnership with a rich mix of resource partners. These include the Acadiana SBDC at UL Lafayette, the Manufacturing Extension Partnership of Louisiana (MEPOL), the Procurement Technical Assistance Center (PTAC), and the Service Core of Retired Executives (SCORE). Growing the Food Processing sector results in jobs and capital investment that in some cases would find locating in Sunset strategically advantageous. This in turn creates demand for light manufacturing and processing space as well as accommodations to handle warehousing and distribution activities.

Culture and Entertainment as a target for economic development initiatives in Sunset is also addressed in the Tourism element of the Master Plan. (See Tourism Element pp##). Culture embodies a very wide range of activities, amenities, events, historical backdrops and the like, all of which provide an exhaustive menu of entertainment possibilities for locals and visitors alike. It is what makes the region, Parish and Sunset a destination on many travel itineraries and defines place and a sense of home for residents.

For the most part, the culture of an area is reflected by a network of formal and informal relationships and interactions among cottage businesses and micro-enterprises that focus on one or more aspects of local art, history, heritage, music and of course food. These all can fuel entrepreneurial initiatives which create and grow retail businesses, require space to accommodate their needs and build a critical mass that becomes more attractive to visitors and tourists. People already frequent the area to enjoy and experience its cultural ambiance and a wide variety of festivals and special events hosted by local communities and regional organizations. Evangeline Downs is not only a major employer supporting about 650 jobs, it is also the anchor of what can become a significant cluster of equestrian activities drawing visitors from across the U.S. as well as foreign countries. The equestrian expo center proposed for a parcel adjoining the Downs will

be significant to developing this cluster and only increase the number of visitors who frequent the area. This event center, somewhat comparable to the Lamar-Dixon Center in Gonzales, LA, will host events that cut across most equestrian disciplines (i.e. English, Western, etc.) and which in many cases extend for several days to several consecutive weeks. Since most equestrian events have a fair amount of "down time" for competitors and exhibitors, visiting surrounding communities and spending money in them is inevitable. This is particularly true for those wanting to enrich their dining experiences and take advantage of new and unique recreational and entertainment activities. Sunset is well positioned to take significant advantage of the business opportunities presented by the Expo Center. Promoting the Town 's attractions and coordinating special events to coincide with activities at the Expo Center can and should be the responsibility of the Town 's Merchant and Business Association.

As previously discussed, the Healthcare sector has a relatively large economic footprint in St. Landry Parish and represents business development and expansion potential for the Town of Sunset. From 2001 to 2013, employment in healthcare and allied fields grew from 4,002 to 6,221 or by 55.4%. At the same time, the share of the Parish's total employed workforce engaged in this sector rose from 16.9% to 23.2% while its location quotient (or measure of relative economic importance) increased from 1.292 to 1.518. In essence, healthcare services offered by facilities in St. Landry Parish are exported beyond its boundaries and thus attracting visitors from neighboring communities. This would be particularly true for the Opelousas General Health System, the Parish's largest employer with a workforce of just under 1,200 people.

St. Landry Parish is also the location of three other healthcare facilities each of which employ 180 to 200 people. These include Acadian Medical Center, Eunice Manor, and Senior Village Nursing Home. Each of these provide a base of operation for a wide range of physicians and other medical professionals. Sunset, which hosts the South Campus of the Opelousas General Health System and the St. Landry Extended Care Hospital, also has the opportunity to attract doctors and other professionals to locate in one or more buildings that could be developed on commercial parcels included in the Comprehensive Plan. This would include, but not necessarily be limited to physicians with specialties who operate from multiple locations (i.e. neurologists, cardiologists, pulmonologists, etc.) and who have admitting privileges to several hospitals, including specialty surgery centers. A potential tenant mix would also envision dentists and oral surgeons, physical and occupational therapists, eye care professionals, and dermatologists as well as space for those providing support services (i.e. nursing, home care), medical equipment, and assistive devices. These buildings could be developed and marketed as commercial space for rent or as professional condominiums or both. In either case, commercial parcels embodied within the Comprehensive Plan are strategically located to support such uses.

3.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goals & Objectives

Goal 2.1: Provide adequate physical infrastructure and supportive municipal services to accommodate and encourage sustainable economic development and diversification.

Objective 2.1.1:
Secure adoption of the Comprehensive Plan by the Town Council in a timely manner.

Objective 2.1.2:
Adopt and implement the recommended land use and development code.

Objective 2.1.3:
Prioritize recommended infrastructure projects embodied within the Community Improvement component of the Comprehensive Plan.

Objective 2.1.4:
Prepare budgets for top priority infrastructure projects and examine potential funding opportunities relying on local, State and federal resources.

Objective 2.1.5:
Create a stakeholder committee empowered by the Town Council to oversee the process of adopting and implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

Goal 2.2: Support programs and initiatives focused on enhancing and building the intellectual capacity and infrastructure by continuous improvement of the Parish's primary and secondary educational resources.

Objective 2.2.1:
Establish a working committee of community elected, professional, and business stakeholders to serve as a liaison with the Parish School Board and the community and technical colleges serving the region.

Objective 2.2.1:
Assess the education and workforce needs of businesses located in Sunset in collaboration with the merchants and business association.

Objective 2.2.3:
Establish a working committee of community leaders to fully evaluate the feasibility of creating a charter school in the Town of Sunset.

Goal 2.3: Proactively support, nurture, and encourage entrepreneurial initiative, creativity, and small business development.

Objective 2.3.1:
Organize and operate a merchants and business association to represent the interests and concerns of the Town's entrepreneurs and business owners.

Objective 2.3.2:
Encourage the Town's municipal leadership to adopt and implement policies and ordinances that encourage business development.

Objective 2.3.3:
Link with other business associations in St. Landry Parish to attract business assistance, financial resources, and expertise to nurture and grow the local entrepreneurial ecosystem. This would include but not necessarily be limited to:

- *The Acadiana SBDC at UL Lafayette*
- *The Cajun Acceleration Station*
- *Service Core of Retired Executives (SCORE)*

Objective 2.3.4:
Redevelop the old Sunset High School building as an enterprise and education center focused on nurturing and growing the Town's emphasis on the arts, culture and heritage to attract visitors and tourists. Form a working task force of local stakeholders to begin discussing programming options for the building as well as potential funding sources for the necessary capital improvements.

Goal 2.4 : Establish Sunset as an attractive retirement community that offers an integrated a mix of residential products over a range of price and rent ranges and a menu of amenities and services.

Objective 2.4.1:
Include one or more parcels suitably zoned for multi-family properties designed and built to accommodate retirees.

3.2 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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SECTION 3.3
HOUSING

3.3 HOUSING

Introduction

Housing is a critical element of a community's comprehensive plan as it affects every resident of the community, current and future. The character and quality of housing very much defines a community's image and thus its attraction to both existing residents and those who may be considering residency in the Town of Sunset.

The supply and condition of a community's housing stock is closely linked to economic forces that fuel demand but also to the existence and enforcement of codes and ordinances governing construction quality, maintenance, and the like.

Although the following discussion focuses on the Town of Sunset, it is important to note that housing markets are very porous. That is,

Table 3.3.1:
Summary of Economic and Demographic Trends, Lafayette/Acadiana Region, 1980 to 2010; Forecasts to 2035

Absolute									
Employment Sector	**1980**	**1990**	**2000**	**2010**	**2013 (Estimate)**	**2015 (Forecast)**	**2020 (Forecast)**	**2030 (Forecast)**	**2035 (Forecast)**
Total employment	219,025	227,090	250,267	274,635	283,428	289,290	305,490	349,305	375,475
Total population	540,584	554,665	601,654	638,768	649,691	662,460	688,770	763,815	809,150
Total household population	533,704	545,652	588,720	627,035	638,030	650,670	676,955	751,039	795,994
Total households	174,817	193,667	220,272	242,894	245,916	251,945	263,165	293,333	313,011
Owner households	121,798	133,432	156,978	169,174	171,101	175,520	183,370	204,382	218,045
% Owner households	69.7%	68.9%	71.3%	69.6%	69.6%	69.7%	69.7%	69.7%	69.7%
Renter households	53,019	60,235	63,294	73,720	74,736	76,425	79,795	88,951	94,966
% Renter households	30.3%	31.1%	28.7%	30.4%	30.4%	30.3%	30.3%	30.3%	30.3%
Vacant housing units	12,486	24,962	23,733	26,407	27,535	26,885	27,215	29,535	30,781
Total housing units	187,303	218,629	244,005	269,301	272,128	278,830	290,380	322,868	343,792
Employment participation rate	0.405	0.409	0.416	0.430	0.436	0.437	0.444	0.457	0.464
Household population ratio	0.987	0.984	0.979	0.982	0.982	0.982	0.983	0.983	0.984
Average household size	3.053	2.817	2.673	2.582	2.595	2.583	2.572	2.560	2.543
Occupancy rate	93.3%	88.6%	90.3%	90.2%	90.4%	90.4%	90.6%	90.9%	91.0%
Jobs per household	1.253	1.173	1.136	1.131	1.153	1.148	1.161	1.191	1.200

	Annual Average Change							
Employment Sector		**1980 - 1990**	**1990 - 2000**	**2000 - 2010**	**2010 - 2013***	**2013 - 2015****	**2015 - 2020****	**2020 - 2030****	**2030 - 2035****
Total employment		807	2,318	2,437	2,931	2,931	3,240	4,382	5,234
Total population		1,408	4,699	3,711	3,641	6,385	5,262	7,505	9,067
Total household population		1,195	4,307	3,832	3,665	6,320	5,257	7,408	8,991
Total households		1,885	2,661	2,262	1,007	3,015	2,244	3,017	3,936
Owner households		1,163	2,355	1,220	642	2,209	1,570	2,101	2,733
% Owner households		(0.8%)	2.4%	(1.6%)	(0.1%)	0.1%	0.0%	(0.0%)	(0.0%)
Renter households		722	306	1,043	339	845	674	916	1,203
% Renter households		0.8%	(2.4%)	1.6%	0.0%	(0.1%)	(0.0%)	0.0%	0.0%
Vacant housing units		1,248	(123)	267	376	(325)	66	232	249
Total housing units		3,133	2,538	2,530	942	3,351	2,310	3,249	4,185
Employment participation rate		0.004	0.007	0.014	0.006	0.000	0.007	0.014	0.007
Household population ratio		(0.004)	(0.005)	0.003	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000
Average household size		(0.235)	(0.145)	(0.091)	0.013	(0.012)	(0.010)	(0.012)	(0.017)
Occupancy rate		(4.8%)	1.7%	(0.1%)	0.2%	(0.0%)	0.3%	0.2%	0.2%
Jobs per household		(0.080)	(0.036)	(0.005)	0.022	(0.004)	0.013	0.030	0.009

*Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Louisiana Workforce Commission and Analyst, *Estimate, **Forecast*

market dynamics of supply and demand are not necessarily confined within municipal or other boundaries. The forces of supply and demand for small communities generally extend well beyond their boundaries to the Parish and regional levels. Major capital investments, for example, that create new jobs and attract new businesses in one location typically disperse their economic effects over wide geographic landscapes. These in turn drive the need and demand for new housing units as well as those within the existing housing stock.

Growth Trends: Present, Past, and Future

The current stock of Sunset reflects long term cycles of economic and population growth not just within the town itself, but also within the larger geographic spheres of the Parish and

Table 3.3.2:
Summary of Economic and Demographic Trends, St. Landry Parish, 1980 to 2010; Forecasts to 2035

Absolute									
Employment Sector	**1980**	**1990**	**2000**	**2010**	**2013 (Estimate)**	**2015 (Forecast)**	**2020 (Forecast)**	**2030 (Forecast)**	**2035 (Forecast)**
Total employment	28,850	27,525	30,683	35,582	36,540	37,180	39,450	45,100	48,125
Total population	84,128	80,331	87,700	83,384	83,454	84,405	86,530	91,450	94,750
Total household population	83,526	79,098	86,172	82,279	82,370	83,310	85,490	90,353	93,708
Total households	26,823	27,477	32,328	31,857	31,680	32,040	33,395	36,141	38,722
Owner households	19,043	19,725	22,865	22,494	22,429	22,655	23,645	25,624	27,493
% Owner households	71.0%	71.8%	70.7%	70.6%	70.8%	70.7%	70.8%	70.9%	71.0%
Renter households	7,780	7,752	9,463	9,363	9,250	9,385	9,750	10,517	11,229
% Renter households	29.0%	28.2%	29.3%	29.4%	29.2%	29.3%	29.2%	29.1%	29.0%
Vacant housing units	2,177	3,660	3,888	3,835	3,916	3,800	3,920	4,195	4,207
Total housing units	29,000	31,137	36,216	35,692	35,596	35,840	37,315	40,336	42,929
Employment participation rate	0.343	0.343	0.350	0.427	0.438	0.440	0.456	0.482	0.508
Household population ratio	0.993	0.985	0.983	0.987	0.987	0.987	0.988	0.988	0.989
Average household size	3.114	2.879	2.666	2.583	2.600	2.600	2.560	2.500	2.420
Occupancy rate	92.5%	88.2%	89.3%	89.3%	89.0%	89.4%	89.5%	89.6%	90.2%
Jobs per household	1.076	1.002	0.949	1.117	1.153	1.160	1.181	1.181	1.243

Annual Average Change									
Employment Sector		**1980 - 1990**	**1990 - 2000**	**2000 - 2010**	**2010 - 2013***	**2013 - 2015****	**2015 - 2020****	**2020 - 2030****	**2030 - 2035****
Total employment		(133)	316	490	319	320	454	565	605
Total population		(380)	737	(432)	23	476	425	492	660
Total household population		(443)	707	(389)	30	470	436	486	671
Total households		65	485	(47)	(59)	180	271	275	516
Owner households		68	314	(37)	(22)	113	198	198	374
% Owner households									
Renter households		(3)	171	(10)	(38)	68	73	77	142
% Renter households									
Vacant housing units		148	23	(5)	27	(58)	24	27	2
Total housing units		214	508	(52)	(32)	122	295	302	519
Employment participation rate									
Household population ratio									
Average household size									
Occupancy rate									
Jobs per household									

*Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Louisiana Workforce Commission and Analyst, *Estimat, **Forecast*

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region. Surges of economic and job growth are usually associated with accelerating the addition of new inventory while periods of shallow to no economic expansion would produce relatively few, if any, additions to the town's housing stock. Since housing, like all forms of real estate is fixed by location, demand for it is driven by uncontrollable market forces surrounding it at multiple geographic levels. Tables 3.3.1 through 3.3.3 summarize some of these key trends and associated metrics for the Town of Sunset, St. Landry Parish and for the larger eight Parish Acadiana region. These tables present historic trends back to 1980 as well as forecasts to the year 2035.

Table 3.3.3: Summary of Economic and Demographic Trends, Town of Sunset, Louisiana, 1980 to 2010; Forecasts to 2035

Absolute									
Employment Sector	**1980**	**1990**	**2000**	**2010**	**2013 (Estimate)**	**2015 (Forecast)**	**2020 (Forecast)**	**2030 (Forecast)**	**2035 (Forecast)**
Total employment	288	277	347	488	515	625	777	1,090	1,315
Total population	2,300	2,201	2,352	2,897	2,914	3,445	4,025	5,030	5,750
Total household population	2,300	2,201	2,352	2,897	2,914	3,445	4,025	5,030	5,750
Total households	701	748	885	1,129	1,166	1,378	1,610	2,012	2,300
Owner households	493	486	582	739	767	908	1,063	1,328	1,520
% Owner households	70.3%	65.0%	65.8%	65.5%	65.8%	65.9%	66.0%	66.0%	66.1%
Renter households	208	262	303	390	399	470	547	684	780
% Renter households	29.7%	35.0%	34.2%	34.5%	34.2%	34.1%	34.0%	34.0%	33.9%
Vacant housing units	44	110	89	97	169	188	209	249	270
Total housing units	745	850	974	1,226	1,326	1,566	1,819	2,261	2,570
Employment participation rate	0.125	0.126	0.148	0.168	0.177	0.181	0.193	0.217	0.229
Household population ratio	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Average household size	3.281	2.943	2.658	2.566	2.500	2.500	2.500	2.500	2.500
Occupancy rate	94.1%	88.0%	90.9%	92.1%	87.9%	88.0%	88.5%	89.0%	89.5%
Jobs per household	0.411	0.370	0.392	0.432	0.442	0.454	0.483	0.542	0.572

Annual Average Change									
Employment Sector		**1980 - 1990**	**1990 - 2000**	**2000 - 2010**	**2010 - 2013***	**2013 - 2015****	**2015 - 2020****	**2020 - 2030****	**2030 - 2035****
Total employment		(1)	7	14	9	55	30	31	45
Total population		(10)	15	55	6	266	116	101	144
Total household population		(10)	15	55	6	266	116	101	144
Total households		5	14	24	12	106	46	40	58
Owner households		(1)	10	16	9	71	31	27	38
% Owner households									
Renter households		5	4	9	3	36	15	14	19
% Renter households									
Vacant housing units		7	(2)	1	24	9	4	4	4
Total housing units		11	12	25	33	120	51	44	62
Employment participation rate									
Household population ratio									
Average household size									
Occupancy rate									
Jobs per household									

*Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Louisiana Workforce Commission and Analyst, *Estimate, **Forecast*

1980 to 1990

The 1980s were a decade of significant economic challenge for Sunset and St. Landry Parish as well as for communities across the region and State. What started as a decade of fairly promising prospects driven by the need to rapidly expand domestic oil and gas exploration and production unfolded as a period of significant economic challenge and damage. Between 1984 and 1987 the State registered a net loss of over 166,000 wage and salary jobs, the majority of which were in its southern labor markets. A slow but steady recovery started about the fourth quarter of 1987 although the effects of this severe downturn lingered into the 1990's. This was fairly evident for St. Landry Parish as a whole where total employment dropped from 28,850 to 27,525 (4.6%) and total population fell by 4.5% from 84,128 to 80,331. The Parish's household count managed to edge up 2.4% as average household size fell from 3.11 to 2.88 persons. The Town of Sunset did not escape the negative effects of the "energy bust" but the impacts were somewhat blunted. The town's total employment fell from an estimated 288 jobs to 277 jobs between 1980 and 1990, while its total population fell from 2,300 to 2,201 or by 4.3%. At the same time, however, the continued shrinkage in average household size helped grow the household count by 6.7% from 701 to 748.

1990 to 2000

The 1990s were a decade of continued recovery and stable growth and prosperity for the region, St. Landry Parish and the Town of Sunset. Region-wide total population and the number of households grew by 4,699 and 2,661, respectively on an annual average basis. This was being fueled by strong economic performance with the addition of 1,626 new wage and salary jobs annually. In St. Landry Parish, however, employment decreased to 23,624 by 2000, as its total population grew to 87,700 or by 9.2% and the number of households rose to 32,328 or by 17.7% during the same period. Sunset continued to steadily grow during this decade as its population reached 2,352 (up 6.9%) and its household count rose to 885 (up 18.3%). In essence, the town generally kept pace with both the region and the Parish in its growth performance, and continues to do so in a fairly consistent manner.

2000 to 2010

The 2000s were a decade of contrasts with regard to economic and demographic growth patterns. On the one hand, both the town and region continued to grow while on the other St. Landry Parish's total population and household count declined. The region's economic expansion continued and even accelerated from 2000 to 2010 as total wage and salary employment grew by an average of 1,748 jobs annually. This helped fuel population and household gains which brought these two drivers of housing demand to 638,768 and 242,894, respectively by decade's end. At the same time the Town of Sunset experienced a steady pace of growth which brought its total population to 2,897 and its total household count to 1,129 by 2010. Steady household growth helped absorb some of the town's vacant housing inventory and drove its overall occupancy rate to 92.1%.

2010 to 2015

The region, Parish and town are all strategically positioned to benefit from the significant economic expansion that is expected to unfold across the southern half of Louisiana over the next five to fifteen years. A more detailed discussion of these economic forces is presented in the Economic Development

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Element of this report. Suffice it to say, however, that these economic forces will drive population and household growth going forward and thus provide strong underpinnings for housing demand across the spectrum of product types and price/rent segments. By mid-decade 2015 the region's total population is forecast to reach 662,460 (up 3.7% over 2010) as the number of households grows to just under 252,000. This will be sufficient to support a total housing inventory of 278,830 housing units that are 90.4% occupied. St. Landry Parish's projected growth brings its total population to 84,405 (up 1.2% over 2010) and its total household count reaches 32,040. By 2015, the Town of Sunset is forecast to have a total population of 3,445 and a total of just under 1,380 households living in the community. This growth will fuel expansion of the town's housing inventory to 1,566 units at an average occupancy rate of 88%. This is a utilization rate which allows for an adequate supply of frictional vacancies to accommodate normal levels of movement and turnover.

2015 to 2020

Many of the economic benefits of the anticipated significant investments in the region will begin to hit their stride during the second half of this decade and into the next. This is not to say that some slowing or pauses in growth are not to be expected because they always seem to materialize for one reason or another, most of which are beyond the reach and control of decision and policy makers at the local, regional, and even State levels. Various types of unforeseeable events have a nasty way of altering expectations and reality. The forecasts presented here attempt to take such events into account without trying to do the impossible, namely pinpoint their occurrence. The good news for the Acadiana region is that, in many respects, it can insulate itself from many economic shocks by remaining on a course emphasizing continued diversification of its economic base and thus drive the forces fueling its population and household growth. By 2020, the region's total population is expected to be just under 689,000 (up 4.0% over 2015) with a total household count of 263,165 (up 4.5% from 2015). St. Landry Parish is expected to see its fair share of this regional growth as its total population grows to 86,530 (up 2.5% from 2015) and the number of households grows by 4.2% reaching 33,395 by the end of the decade. In Sunset, the total population is projected to reach 4,025 while its household count grows to 1,610 by 2020. This growth would be sufficient to grow the town's total housing inventory to 1,819 units with an average occupancy rate of 88.5%. It should be noted that for all forecasts for the Town of Sunset its municipal boundaries are anticipated to remain the same. In other words all growth expectations are organic and do not allow for geographic expansion through annexation.

2020 to 2030

Slight unexpected pauses notwithstanding, this decade is expected to be one of steady and sometimes robust growth going forward for the region, St. Landry Parish, and the Town of Sunset. By the dawning of this new decade, it should be fairly clear how many announced investments actually gain traction, unfold, and come to fruition. Even more importantly, their actual impacts will become evident and readily measurable. The region's total employment is forecast to grow at the rate of 4,250 jobs annually reaching just under 339,000 by 2030. This economic trajectory pushes the region's total population to just under 764,000 (up 10.9% from 2020) while the total household count rises to over 293,300 (up 11.5% over 2020). St. Landry's Parish growth is also expected to accelerate resulting in total population reaching

91,450 (a gain of 5.7% over 2020) while the number of households rises to 36,141 or 8.2% more than at the start of the decade. By 2030, Sunset's total population is forecast to grow to 5,030 while the number of households increases to just over 2000. At the same time, the town's total housing inventory is expected to grow to about 2,260 units with an average utilization rate of 89%.

2030 to 2035

This is expected to be a period of continued economic prosperity and demographic growth for the region and by association in the Parish and Sunset as well. The maturing of many new investments will continue to have spill-over effects on a wide range of businesses and institutions throughout the region and particularly along its interstate corridors. These expansions will generate new jobs, attract population in-migration and encourage new household formations. By 2035 the region's total employment is forecast to exceed 360,200 jobs as its total population grows to over 809,000 (up 5.9% from 2030) and total households rises to over 313,000 (an increase of 6.7%). In St. Landry Parish, an accelerated pace of job growth pushes total employment by mid-decade to 37,690 (up 8.4%), while total population grows 3.6% to 94,750 and the number of households increases by 7.1% to 38,722. Sunset's strategic geographic position will help attract a healthy share of this economic prosperity and growth. The town's total population is forecast to reach 5,750 by 2035 as the number of households grows to 2,300. This is a household count sufficient to support a total housing inventory of 2,570 units at an average occupancy rate of 89.5%.

Existing Conditions

Housing Tenure

Homeownership, is an important economic stabilizer for individual neighborhoods and communities overall. Although homeownership does not necessarily ensure good maintenance and blight deterrence, it is more likely to be more effective in addressing both when compared to neighborhoods with high proportions of absentee owned rental properties. Homeowners also move less frequently than renters and thus cause less housing turnover. This creates an overall sense of stability which in many ways is reflected by a neighborhood's relative desirability as a place to live and consequently in how much someone would be willing to pay to do so. In short, homeownership is typically associated with steady upward mobility of housing values which attracts further residential development to the community.

In Sunset, homeowners have typically accounted for about two-thirds of all households and, they are expected to remain so going forward over the planning horizon to 2035. (See Tables 3.3.2 and 3.3.3). The only exception to this pattern historically was in 1980 when homeowner households were 70.3% of the total count. Since then the share of owner households has ranged between 65% and 66% which has generally mirrored homeownership in the US as a whole but slightly less than in St. Landry Parish where owner households make-up about 70% to 71% of all occupied housing units. In both cases, town and Parish, the balance between the two tenure classes generally indicates a healthy housing.

Renter households have historically accounted for about 34% to 35% of all households in the Town of Sunset (compared to 29% Parish wide) extending back into the 1980's and is forecast

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to remain within that range going forward to 2035. As rental housing plays a significant role in providing affordable shelter to those for whom ownership is not a possibility (i.e. income) or a desirable option (i.e. the elderly or infirm), the community should find a balance that accommodates rental housing within its overall planning and development strategy, particularly within the context of its long term resiliency and sustainability.

Housing Utilization

Occupancy or vacancy rate of a towns housing stock measure to what extent housing assets are used to service the shelter needs of those living in the community. Stable to rising occupancy rates typically are indicators of relative strength, that prices and rents are stable and that those who need a place to live are finding a sufficient inventory of available units. These conditions also indicate that property owners are able to command prices and rents that provide a satisfactory return on their investment and demonstrate to others such as lenders that collateral values for mortgage loans are relatively safe. Rising vacancy rates, on the other hand, can quickly become signs for alarm. On the demand side they are usually associated with weak economic conditions that are dampening household growth, while on the supply side they usually reflect an attempt to add more new housing units to inventory than can reasonably be absorbed by the market.

The historic pattern of occupancy rates for both the town and St. Landry Parish clearly reflects economic cycles. The Parish's average occupancy rate edged down from 92.5% to a rather consistent range of 88% to 89% since 1980. This 10% to 11% vacancy rate appears to be a relative equilibrium for the Parish as a whole and thus one that provides sufficient frictional inventory allowing households to move around with an adequate range of alternative housing choices available to them.

In Sunset, average occupancy was at its highest (94.1%) in 1980 and has since fluctuated between 88% and 92%. This fluctuation is primarily due to the relatively small size of the community's total housing stock and the impact any significant addition of new households

Table 3.3.4: Type of Housing Unit in 2012

	Sunset		St. Landry Parish		Louisiana	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Total Units	1,326	100%	35,892	100%	1,964,329	100%
Single Detached	886	66.82%	24,901	69.38%	1,282,032	65.30%
Single Attached	12	0.90%	195	0.54%	61,867	3.10%
Double	55	4.15%	1,238	3.45%	74,461	3.80%
3 or 4 Units	44	3.32%	601	1.67%	84,393	4.30%
5 to 9 Units	95	7.16%	601	1.67%	66,766	3.40%
10 to 19 Units	16	1.21%	107	0.30%	55,904	2.80%
20 or More Units	28	2.11%	502	1.40%	77,283	3.90%
Other	190	14.33%	7,747	21.58%	261,623	13.30%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

or housing units can have on measurement of inventory utilization. This range of average occupancy in Sunset, however, seems to function well without any extraordinary movements of prices or rents. St. Landry Parish's overall average occupancy rates generally mirror those of the Town settling into a range of 89% to 90%. This too appears to accommodate movement of households into and within the Parish without exerting any unusual pressure on prices and rents. Projected growth in Sunset is expected to naturally increase its inventory of housing and thus its footprint of residential assets available to current and newly arriving households. As such, its inventory of vacant units will grow both in absolute and relative terms.

Housing Types

Table 3.3.4 provides a snapshot profile of the town's housing inventory by structure type when compared to the Parish and State. For the most part, the town's housing inventory is comprised of mostly single family dwellings (67.7%) as compared to the Parish at just under 70% and that State at 68.4%. The slightly higher concentration of multifamily dwellings reflects a greater diversity of residential options than the Parish overall and thus may be better able to accommodate households with a wider range of shelter needs. The majority of the town's multifamily inventory consists of dwellings with two to ten units in a building and relatively few in buildings with a larger physical footprint. Multifamily housing communities consisting of lower density dwellings are generally more preferred by renter households, particularly those who are older and who have chosen a smaller community as a place to live.

Housing Condition

Chronologic age is one of the best indicators for the condition of the housing stock. With a median year built of 1980 Sunset's housing inventory is fairly young in both absolute and relative terms when aligned with the Parish (1976) and the State (1977). (See table 3.3.5). More newly built housing is generally associated with more current construction standards as well as designs and layouts that contain less functional obsolescence. This enables buyers

Table 3.3.5: Year Structure Built

	Sunset		St. Landry Parish		Louisiana	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Total housing units	1,326	100%	35,892	100%	1,964,329	100%
Built 2010 or later	9	0.68%	184	0.51%	10,136	0.50%
Built 2000 to 2009	352	26.55%	4,930	13.74%	295,294	15.00%
Built 1990 to 1999	167	12.59%	5,447	15.18%	253,515	12.90%
Built 1980 to 1989	140	10.56%	4,890	13.62%	305,884	15.60%
Built 1970 to 1979	188	14.18%	7,007	19.52%	382,323	19.50%
Built 1960 to 1969	157	11.84%	4,749	13.23%	261,477	13.30%
Built 1950 to 1959	117	8.82%	3,890	10.84%	207,014	10.50%
Built 1940 to 1949	102	7.69%	2,538	7.07%	105,281	5.40%
Built 1939 or earlier	94	7.09%	2,257	6.29%	143,405	7.30%
Median Year Built	1980		1976		1977	

Source: US Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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Table 3.3.6: Residential Building Permits – Single Family Housing, Acadiana Region, 2000 – May 2014 YTD

Absolute

Area	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Acadia	152	165	183	205	167	182	221	197	97	119
Evangeline	104	108	121	127	97	70	85	74	52	53
Iberia	181	146	159	217	245	174	282	192	178	111
Lafayette	854	729	991	1,289	2,019	1,625	1,791	1,182	670	607
St. Landry	233	208	267	288	301	304	422	258	179	145
Eunice	*4*	*0*	*12*	*10*	*12*	*13*	*13*	*12*	*8*	*12*
Opelousas	*17*	*17*	*34*	*35*	*39*	*28*	*26*	*22*	*15*	*5*
Port Barre	*1*	*1*	*0*	*1*	*2*	*2*	*2*	*0*	*0*	*NA*
Sunset	*14*	*14*	*8*	*19*	*18*	*36*	*38*	*5*	*11*	*12*
St. Martin	171	141	183	193	200	184	264	241	159	159
Breaux Bridge	*21*	*10*	*59*	*27*	*44*	*28*	*29*	*30*	*31*	*16*
Henderson	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
St. Martinville	*3*	*4*	*4*	*5*	*5*	*5*	*13*	*2*	*4*	*5*
St. Mary	90	93	77	100	113	90	94	103	78	53
Vermilion	125	172	212	268	286	272	322	141	263	126
Total Acadiana	**1,910**	**1,762**	**2,193**	**2,687**	**3,428**	**2,901**	**3,481**	**2,388**	**1,676**	**1,373**
Louisiana	***13,109***	***13,274***	***15,225***	***18,478***	***20,289***	***20,206***	***23,806***	***16,640***	***11,689***	***10,755***

Annual Change

Area	2010	2011	2012	2013	2013 May YTD	2014 May YTD
Acadia	101	142	142	129	34	41
Evangeline	41	48	72	50	23	30
Iberia	93	109	95	107	23	36
Lafayette	618	647	1,084	1,229	540	496
St. Landry	139	143	120	138	35	48
Eunice	*15*	*8*	*3*	*6*	*NA*	*NA*
Opelousas	*4*	*8*	*6*	*19*	*NA*	*NA*
Port Barre	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
Sunset	*6*	*6*	*7*	*6*	*NA*	*NA*
St. Martin	160	120	114	170	54	71
Breaux Bridge	*27*	*18*	*22*	*25*	*NA*	*NA*
Henderson	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
St. Martinville	*2*	*2*	*1*	*4*	*NA*	*NA*
St. Mary	52	49	52	67	15	8
Vermilion	129	149	161	184	63	54
Total Acadiana	**1,333**	**1,407**	**1,840**	**2,074**	**787**	**784**
Louisiana	***10,210***	***9,959***	***11,526***	***12,380***	***5,623***	***5,208***

Annual Change

Area	2000-2005	2005 - 2006	2006 - 2007	2007-2008	2008 -2009	2009 -2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	5/13 YTD - 5/14 YTD
Acadia	9	(63)	(76)	122	(40)	59	(41)	(13)	13	(7)
Evangeline	49	(26)	(11)	23	(13)	19	17	(46)	22	(7)
Iberia	115	(198)	76	(53)	49	34	(30)	26	(12)	(13)
Lafayette	(605)	(775)	97	449	74	18	408	(292)	(145)	44
St. Landry	47	(282)	85	45	28	10	(27)	41	(18)	(13)
Eunice	*(9)*	*(1)*	*(3)*	*8*	*(1)*	*(10)*	*2*	*8*	*(3)*	*NA*
Opelousas	*(13)*	*(2)*	*(3)*	*(3)*	*9*	*5*	*(6)*	*15*	*(13)*	*NA*
Port Barre	*(1)*	*(2)*	*2*	*#VALUE!*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
Sunset	*(20)*	*(35)*	*39*	*(5)*	*(7)*	*6*	*1*	*(2)*	*1*	*NA*
St. Martin	67	(103)	(59)	82	1	(41)	34	62	(56)	(17)
Breaux Bridge	*(6)*	*0*	*0*	*(16)*	*26*	*(20)*	*13*	*(1)*	*(3)*	*NA*
Henderson	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
St. Martinville	*6*	*(19)*	*13*	*(1)*	*(4)*	*3*	*(1)*	*4*	*(3)*	*NA*
St. Mary	4	5	(34)	0	24	(2)	6	12	(15)	7
Vermilion	(97)	(231)	303	(259)	140	17	(8)	11	(23)	9
Total Acadiana	**580**	**(1,673)**	**381**	**409**	**263**	**114**	**359**	**(199)**	**(234)**	**3**
Louisiana	***3,600***	***(10,766)***	***2,215***	***4,017***	***389***	***294***	***1,818***	**(713)**	**(854)**	**415**

Source: U. S. Census Bureau: Residential Building Permits

Table 3.3.6: Residential Building Permits – Single Family Housing, Acadiana Region, 2000 – May 2014 YTD

Absolute

Area	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Acadia	152	165	183	205	167	182	221	197	97	119
Evangeline	104	108	121	127	97	70	85	74	52	53
Iberia	181	146	159	217	245	174	282	192	178	111
Lafayette	854	729	991	1,289	2,019	1,625	1,791	1,182	670	607
St. Landry	233	208	267	288	301	304	422	258	179	145
Eunice	*4*	*0*	*12*	*10*	*12*	*13*	*13*	*12*	*8*	*12*
Opelousas	*17*	*17*	*34*	*35*	*39*	*28*	*26*	*22*	*15*	*5*
Port Barre	*1*	*1*	*0*	*1*	*2*	*2*	*2*	*0*	*0*	*NA*
Sunset	*14*	*14*	*8*	*19*	*18*	*36*	*38*	*5*	*11*	*12*
St. Martin	171	141	183	193	200	184	264	241	159	159
Breaux Bridge	*21*	*10*	*59*	*27*	*44*	*28*	*29*	*30*	*31*	*16*
Henderson	*0*	*0*	*0*	*0*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
St. Martinville	*3*	*4*	*4*	*5*	*5*	*5*	*13*	*2*	*4*	*5*
St. Mary	90	93	77	100	113	90	94	103	78	53
Vermilion	125	172	212	268	286	272	322	141	263	126
Total Acadiana	**1,910**	**1,762**	**2,193**	**2,687**	**3,428**	**2,901**	**3,481**	**2,388**	**1,676**	**1,373**
Louisiana	***13,109***	***13,274***	***15,225***	***18,478***	***20,289***	***20,206***	***23,806***	***16,640***	***11,689***	***10,755***

Annual Change

Area	2010	2011	2012	2013	2013 May YTD	2014 May YTD
Acadia	101	142	142	129	34	41
Evangeline	41	48	72	50	23	30
Iberia	93	109	95	107	23	36
Lafayette	618	647	1,084	1,229	540	496
St. Landry	139	143	120	138	35	48
Eunice	*15*	*8*	*3*	*6*	*NA*	*NA*
Opelousas	*4*	*8*	*6*	*19*	*NA*	*NA*
Port Barre	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
Sunset	*6*	*6*	*7*	*6*	*NA*	*NA*
St. Martin	160	120	114	170	54	71
Breaux Bridge	*27*	*18*	*22*	*25*	*NA*	*NA*
Henderson	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*
St. Martinville	*2*	*2*	*1*	*4*	*NA*	*NA*
St. Mary	52	49	52	67	15	8
Vermilion	129	149	161	184	63	54
Total Acadiana	**1,333**	**1,407**	**1,840**	**2,074**	**787**	**784**
Louisiana	***10,210***	***9,959***	***11,526***	***12,380***	***5,623***	***5,208***

Annual Change

Area	2000-2005	2005 - 2006	2006 - 2007	2007-2008	2008 -2009	2009 -2010	2010 - 2011	2011 - 2012	2012 - 2013	5/13 YTD - 5/14 YTD
Acadia	9	(63)	(76)	122	(40)	59	(41)	(13)	13	(7)
Evangeline	49	(26)	(11)	23	(13)	19	17	(46)	22	(7)
Iberia	115	(198)	76	(53)	49	34	(30)	26	(12)	(13)
Lafayette	(605)	(775)	97	449	74	18	408	(292)	(145)	44
St. Landry	47	(282)	85	45	28	10	(27)	41	(18)	(13)
Eunice	*(9)*	*(1)*	*(3)*	*8*	*(1)*	*(10)*	*2*	*8*	*(3)*	NA
Opelousas	*(13)*	*(2)*	*(3)*	*(3)*	*9*	*5*	*(6)*	*15*	*(13)*	NA
Port Barre	*(1)*	*(2)*	*2*	*#VALUE!*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	*NA*	NA	NA
Sunset	*(20)*	*(35)*	*39*	*(5)*	*(7)*	*6*	*1*	*(2)*	*1*	NA
St. Martin	67	(103)	(59)	82	1	(41)	34	62	(56)	(17)
Breaux Bridge	*(6)*	*0*	*0*	*(16)*	*26*	*(20)*	*13*	*(1)*	*(3)*	NA
Henderson	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
St. Martinville	*6*	*(19)*	*13*	*(1)*	*(4)*	*3*	*(1)*	*4*	*(3)*	NA
St. Mary	4	5	(34)	0	24	(2)	6	12	(15)	7
Vermilion	(97)	(231)	303	(259)	140	17	(8)	11	(23)	9
Total Acadiana	**580**	**(1,673)**	**381**	**409**	**263**	**114**	**359**	**(199)**	**(234)**	**3**
Louisiana	***3,600***	***(10,766)***	***2,215***	***4,017***	***389***	***294***	***1,818***	**(713)**	**(854)**	**415**

Source: U. S. Census Bureau: Residential Building Permits

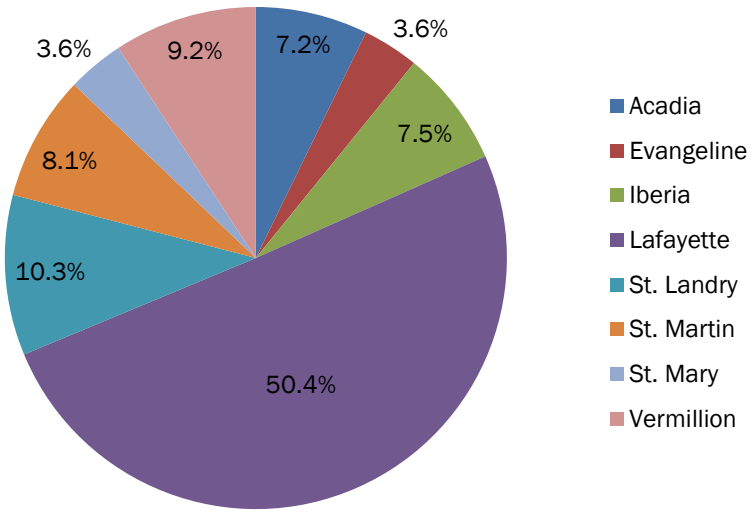
and investors to more quickly address basic deferred maintenance issues and to bring basic design and layouts up to more current market expectations with potentially modest capital investments. Units reportedly built since 2000 account for the single largest cohort (27.2%) of the town's current housing stock. In the Parish and that State the share of housing built since 2000 stands at 14.2% and 15.5%, respectively.

Residential Construction Trends

New residential construction is typically considered a leading indicator of the direction in which a local housing market is expected to move going forward into the future. The expectation for Lafayette Parish and by association for other Parishes within the region as well are very positive.

Tables 3.3.6 and 3.3.7 and Graphs 3.3.8 through 3.3.11 summarize residential single and multifamily new construction trends for the Acadiana region by Parish and selected local municipalities from 2000 to May 2014. Production levels are measured using permits issued by jurisdictions as compiled and reported by the US Census Bureau. As the "hub" of the region's economic activity it should come as no surprise that Lafayette typically accounts for one-half or more of annual single family construction activity, averaging a 50.4% share for the entire 2000 to 2013 period. St. Landry Parish accounted for the second largest share (10.3%) of new single family construction over this same period followed by Vermillion (9.2%), and St. Martin (8.1%). (See Graph 3.3.8).

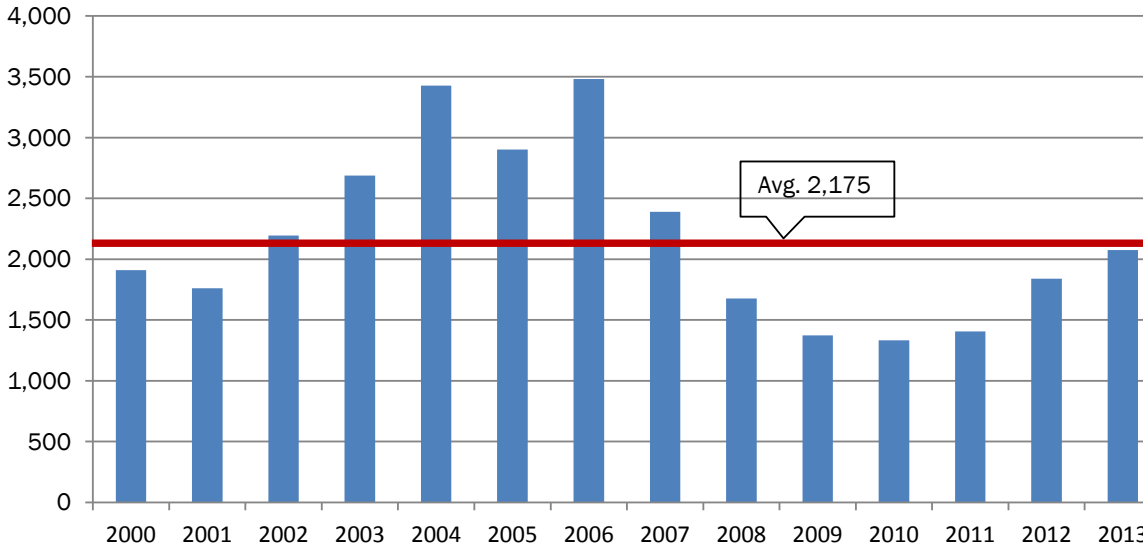
Graph 3.3.8
Residential Building Permits - Single Family Housing
Distribution of Total Permits by Parish
2000 - 2013



Note: Total Permits for Acadiana from 2000-2013 is 30,453.

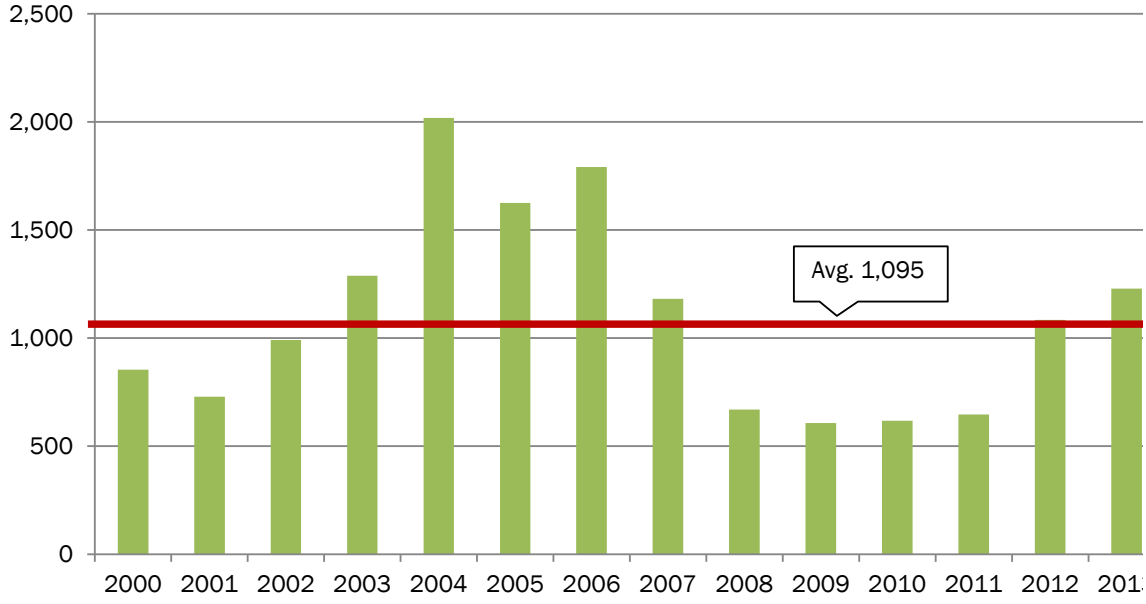
Source: US Census Bureau: Residential Building Permits

Graph 3.3.9: Residential Building Permits - Single Family Housing
Acadiana Region, 2000 - 2014 YTD



Source: US Census Bureau, Residential Building Permits

Graph 3.3.10: Residential Building Permits - Single Family Housing
Lafayette Parish, 2000 - 2014 YTD



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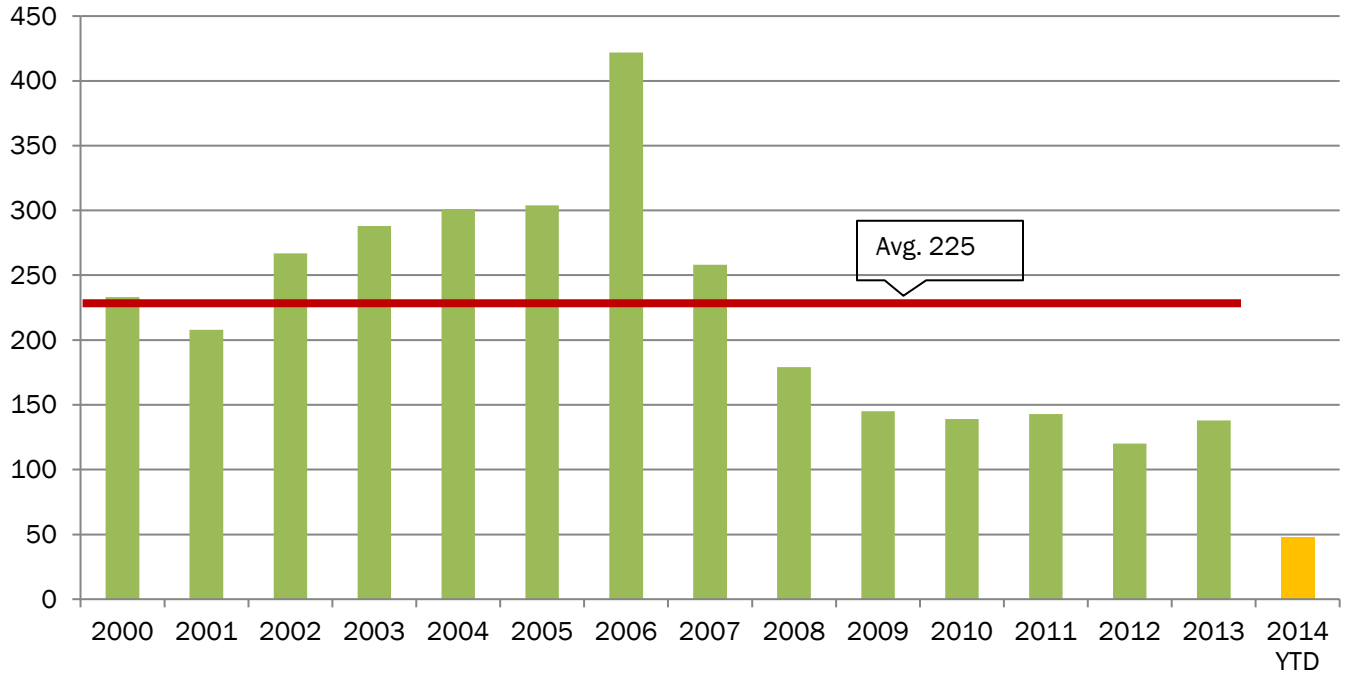
Graph 3.3.11: Residential Building Permits - Single Family Housing
St. Landry Parish, 2000 - 2014 YTD



In St. Landry Parish the number of permits issued has been steady at a pace somewhat below the 2000-2013 average of 225 units permitted annually. Steady increases in new single family homebuilding since 2002 peaked at 422 units in 2006 .The pullback from 2008 through 2012 can best be considered an adjustment to restore or ensure balance within the market.

The volume of new single family home permits in St. Landry Parish can be expected to trend up as housing producers anticipate the growth and influx of new households with shelter needs.

With the exception of a mini-surge of new single family construction in 2005 and 2006, the number of units permitted in the Town of Sunset has typically ranged from 10 to 15 annually through 2009 and under 10 units thereafter. This is not necessarily a bad indicator for the town given its residents' vision of maintaining a small town character for Sunset and the fact that its land controls (i.e. zoning ordinance) is significantly obsolete as a guidance document to help manage the community's growth going forward.

Residential multifamily construction activity in the region is concentrated primarily in Lafayette Parish. Since 2000, multifamily permits peaked in 2006 at 789 units in the region and has since trended downward to a range of 160 to 175 units through 2013. During the 2006 peak year, Lafayette Parish accounted for 427 units permitted (54.1% of the total), while Iberia and St. Landry made up most of the balance with 241 and 57 units permitted, respectively. Since

then, St. Landry Parish issued permits for 51 units (2007) and 47 units (2008). Thereafter, Census reports indicated that no multifamily permits were issued by any jurisdiction within the Parish.

Financial Characteristics and Constraints in Housing

In Sunset, neither prices nor rents appear to be creating a significant burden on resident households.

Housing Values and Mortgage Expense

Another advantage of a relatively younger housing stock is that, all other things being equal, home values will tend to be upwardly biased. In Sunset the median value reported by the Census Bureau's 2008-2012 American Community Survey was $122,400. This was significantly higher than St. Landry Parish's $85,000 but a little lower than the overall median for the State of $137,700. More importantly, however, for a local market such as Sunset is the balance between value and household income which is indicated by a ratio of 3.22. This means that the median value of owner-occupied housing in the town is 3.22 times the overall median income of households residing there. In healthy local markets this index typically ranges from 3.0 to 3.5, indicating a stable relationship between the dynamics of demand and supply and a market where housing is affordable. (See Table 3.3.12(8)).

A companion indicator of homeowner affordability is the proportion of monthly income being used to service an outstanding mortgage obligation as well as other expenses associated with ownership. Table 3.3.13 provides a profile of these scenarios for Sunset in comparison to St. Landry Parish and the State. Once again there are few, if any, indicators of alarm with respect to potential financial burdens for owner households in the town. One measure of potential housing cost burden is the 30% threshold where total monthly expenses associated with homeownership are 30% or greater of the household's gross monthly income. Loan underwriting guidelines, however, are somewhat more lenient for most home mortgages that are

Table 3.3.12: Housing Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units

	Sunset		St. Landry Parish		Louisiana	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Total Units	761	100%	21,789	100%	1,142,965	100%
Less than $50,000	151	19.84%	6,157	28.26%	180,043	15.80%
$50,000 to $99,999	146	19.19%	6,189	28.40%	229,960	20.10%
$100,000 to $149,999	150	19.71%	3,788	17.38%	210,613	18.40%
$150,000 to $199,999	132	17.35%	2,484	11.40%	209,691	18.30%
$200,000 or $299,999	122	16.03%	2,101	9.64%	186,828	16.30%
$300,000 to $499,999	53	6.96%	898	4.12%	91,003	8.00%
$500,000 to $999,999	0	0.00%	125	0.57%	27,918	2.40%
$1,000,000 or more	7	0.92%	47	0.22%	6,909	0.60%
Median Value	$122,400		$85,100		$137,700	
Median Income	$38,036		$36,183		$42,944	
Value to Income	3.22		2.35		3.21	

Source: US Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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Table 3.3.13: Selected Monthly Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income						
	Sunset		St Landry Parish		Louisiana	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Units with a mortgage	436	100%	9,929	100%	638,611	100%
Less than 20.0 %	215	49.31%	5,223	52.60%	294,900	46.20%
20.0 to 24.9 %	104	23.85%	1,442	14.52%	93,525	14.60%
25.0 to 29.9 %	25	5.73%	509	5.13%	63,394	9.90%
30.0 % or more	92	21.10%	2,755	27.75%	186,792	29.20%
% with mortgage		57.30%		45.90%		56.40%
Units without a mortgage	308	100%	11,597	100%	493,755	100%
Less than 10.0 %	131	42.53%	5,863	50.56%	248,968	50.40%
10.0 to 14.9 %	88	28.57%	2,205	19.01%	90,307	18.30%
15.0 to 19.9 %	25	8.12%	862	7.43%	49,488	10.00%
20.0 to 24.9 %	11	3.57%	688	5.93%	30,375	6.20%
25.0 to 29.9 %	13	4.22%	572	4.93%	18,764	3.80%
30.0 % or more	40	12.99%	1,407	12.13%	55,853	11.30%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

conventional and originated within FNMA/FHLMC guidelines for sale into the secondary market as well as those originated under FHA insured or VA guaranteed loan programs. The total Debt to Income Ratio for conventionally underwritten FNMA/FHLMC mortgages is now 43% of gross monthly income while for FHA and VA loans it is generally in the range of 40% to 42% with some minor adjustments to how gross monthly income is measured. Consequently, the fact that an owner household's monthly housing costs' including loan payments, exceeds 30% should not be considered a particular concern.

In Sunset, the majority (57.3%) of the owner households have mortgages and thus count debt service as part of their monthly housing expense. By comparison households with similar financial obligations account for 45.9% and 56.4% of all owners in St. Landry Parish and the State, respectively. In terms monthly cost burden using the 30% threshold, Sunset owners are proportionately less pressed (21.1%) than those in the Parish (27.8%) and State (29.2%). This again is a sign of relative strength for the town's housing market. When the monthly commitment of mortgage payments is excluded, the proportion of owner households above the 30% threshold drops significantly in Sunset to just under 13% as well as in St. Landry Parish (12.1%) and the State (11.3%).

Rental Housing Costs and Affordability

Monthly rent is the primary financial obligation of a renter household to ensure their shelter needs are met. In high cost areas with limited availability, access to affordable rental units can be a significant challenge for many, particularly those who may need to be close to their place of employment or in close proximity to family, healthcare providers, and the like. Tables 3.3.14 and 3.3.15 profile the Sunset rental market and

Table 3.3.14: Gross Monthly Rent for Renter-Occupied Housing						
	Sunset		St. Landry Parish		Louisiana	
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total
Gross Rent						
Occupied units paying rent	367	100%	7,637	100%	492,392	100%
Less than $200	64	17.44%	420	5.50%	11,222	2.28%
$200 to $299	63	17.17%	820	10.74%	21,523	4.37%
$300 to $499	57	15.53%	1,984	25.98%	60,753	12.34%
$500 to $749	139	37.87%	2,978	38.99%	145,064	29.46%
$750 to $999	24	6.54%	1,130	14.80%	133,860	27.19%
$1,000 to $1,499	20	5.45%	274	3.59%	94,314	19.15%
$1,500 or more	0	0.00%	31	0.41%	25,656	5.21%
Median Rent	$495	-	$545	-	$762	-

Source: US Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 3.3.15: Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income						
	Sunset		St. Landry Parish		Louisiana	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Total Units	335	100%	7,211	100%	477,963	100%
< 15.0%	63	18.81%	1,187	16.46%	66,229	13.90%
15.0 to 19.9%	61	18.21%	677	9.39%	55,985	11.70%
20.0 to 24.9%	18	5.37%	829	11.50%	53,302	11.20%
25.0 to 29.9%	47	14.03%	638	8.85%	48,471	10.10%
30.0% or more	146	43.58%	3,880	53.81%	253,976	53.10%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

illustrate a condition of relative affordability. In an absolute sense the median rent in Sunset of $495 is 9.1% lower than St. Landry Parish's $545 and much lower than the State's overall median of $762. The single largest segment of rental housing in Sunset (37.9%) is made up of units with rents ranging from $500 to $749 followed by two segments with rents of under $300 (34.5%). A similar profile of the Parish's rental market shows that 39% of rental units are offered in the $500 to $749 bracket with the next segment (26%) at rents ranging from $300 to $499 monthly.

The rent burden for renter households is also measured using the 30% or greater threshold. That is, a renter household is assumed to be burdened if their monthly housing costs, primarily rent, exceeds 30% of their gross monthly income. Although this standard is widely

accepted it may not always adequately quantify relative cost burden. This would be particularly true for households earning cash income or who receive certain forms of public assistance that is not imputed to their monthly budget. When compared to the Parish and State, Sunset is a more affordable rental housing market with 43.6% of these households paying rents that exceed the 30% threshold. Comparable ratios for the Parish and State are 53.8% and 53.1%, respectively.

Housing Sales and Pricing Trends

Home sales activity and emerging pricing patterns are also indicative of a local housing market's strength and possible weaknesses. Steady volumes of unit and dollar volume of sales typically indicate favorable economic conditions that are sufficiently fueling demand for both existing and newly constructed inventory. These indicators are typically accompanied by upward movements of prices and a clearing of accumulations of excess inventory in local markets. Tables 3.3.16 through 3.3.18 summarize single family home sales in St. Landry Parish by market sub-sector (zip code) for the years 2010 through 2013 and for year-to-date (YTD) periods extending through mid-September 2014. These sales include only realtor-assisted transactions reported through the regional Multiple Listing Service (MLS) and thus exclude sales by owners or with the assistance of others who were not licensed agents (i.e. attorneys). The broker assisted sales, however, do account for a majority of the activity recorded in most local markets and thus is a reliable source of information with which to measure and evaluate activity levels and pricing patterns.

By just about every measure presented in these tables, the Sunset housing market can be categorized as strong in both absolute terms and when compared to other sub-markets within St. Landry Parish. Over the past few years, the town has consistently accounted for the third or fourth highest levels of unit and dollar volume of sales activity and it has rather consistently been the sub-market generating the highest average price and price per square foot of living area. Between 2010 and 2013, for example, the number of homes sold in Sunset rose from 25 to 31 units (up 24%) while the total dollar volume of sales increased by just under 41% from $4.1 million to $7.5 million. This produced an average price for the year 2013 of $242,055 or $105.79 PSF. By comparison, unit sales Parish-wide grew by 21.5% (261 to 317) over the same period as total dollar volume rose 15.5% to just over $39.7 million. This resulted in an overall average selling price in 2013 for St. Landry Parish of $125,292 or $68.39PSF. Arnaudville, Eunice, and Opelousas are the only sub-markets in St. Landry Parish that generate more or a comparable volume of sales than Sunset. However, with few exceptions, they do so at significantly lower average prices and prices PSF. Aside from the obvious property tax implications for municipalities with higher average prices, the per square foot prices present in Sunset are a very healthy indicator with respect to attracting more new residential construction. These prices form the basis for appraisal comparables that lenders use to gauge their levels of interest in providing construction loans to build and mortgage loans to purchase new homes. In this regard, Sunset is a very attractive opportunity with a strong underlying pricing structure. (See Tables 3.3.16 through 3.3.18).

It appears that Sunset's market momentum which emerged in 2012 is extending well into 2014. Through mid-September there were 31 broker assisted sales recorded with a total dollar

Table 3.3.16 a: Single Family Residential Realtor-Assisted Sales by Zip Code, St. Landry Parish, 2010 - 2013

Sales Volume and Price Trends

City	Zip Code	2010 Average Price	2010 Unit Sales	2010 Gross Sales	2011 Average Price	2011 Unit Sales	2011 Gross Sales
St. Landry Parish							
Arnaudville	70512	$144,306	18	$2,597,500	$151,950	22	$3,342,900
Church Point	70525	$145,600	4	$582,400	$152,680	5	$763,400
Eunice	70535	$87,965	39	$3,430,630	$88,953	45	$4,002,885
Grand Coteau	70541	$70,500	1	$70,500	$0	0	$0
Lawtell	70550	$30,500	1	$30,500	$73,500	1	$73,500
Leonville	70551	$0	0	$0	$20,000	1	$20,000
Opelousas/Plaisance	70570	$122,867	130	$15,972,722	$114,647	114	$13,069,808
Port Barre	70577	$116,250	8	$930,000	$167,625	4	$670,500
Cankton/Sunset	70584	$256,406	24	$6,153,745	$192,533	30	$5,775,999
Sunset		*$264,772*	*23*	*$6,089,745*	*$197,678*	*27*	*$5,337,300*
Washington	70589	$104,417	6	$626,500	$97,975	4	$391,900
Krotz Springs	70750	$17,751	1	$17,751	$0	0	$0
Bunkie	71322	$0	0	$0	$90,000	1	$90,000
Melville	71353	$50,000	1	$50,000	$64,500	4	$258,000
Palmetto	71358	$7,000	1	$7,000	$0	0	$0
St. Landry Parish Total		**$130,210**	**234**	**$30,469,248**	**$123,199**	**231**	**$28,458,892**

City	Zip Code	2012 Average Price	2012 Unit Sales	2012 Gross Sales	2013 Average Price	2013 Unit Sales	2013 Gross Sales
St. Landry Parish							
Arnaudville	70512	$137,641	17	$2,339,900	$121,698	31	$3,772,625
Church Point	70525	$108,833	6	$653,000	$125,035	11	$1,375,381
Eunice	70535	$101,425	47	$4,766,964	$100,765	50	$5,038,259
Grand Coteau	70541	$117,000	5	$585,000	$210,000	2	$420,000
Lawtell	70550	$150,000	1	$150,000	$0	0	$0
Leonville	70551	$123,500	1	$123,500	$79,000	1	$79,000
Opelousas/Plaisance	70570	$128,218	123	$15,770,818	$105,819	171	$18,095,132
Port Barre	70577	$119,970	20	$2,399,400	$150,571	7	$1,054,000
Cankton/Sunset	70584	$163,984	25	$4,099,600	$234,003	36	$8,424,100
Sunset		*$163,984*	*25*	*$4,099,600*	*$242,055*	*31*	*$7,503,700*
Washington	70589	$229,182	14	$3,208,549	$219,167	6	$1,315,000
Krotz Springs	70750	$170,000	1	$170,000	$0	0	$0
Bunkie	71322	$114,000	1	$114,000	$0	0	$0
Melville	71353	$0	0	$0	$72,000	2	$144,000
Palmetto	71358	$0	0	$0	$0	0	$0
St. Landry Parish Total		**$131,727**	**261**	**$34,380,731**	**$125,292**	**317**	**$39,717,497**

Note: Excludes lots, condominiums and multi-family dwellings. Includes single and double detached single family dwellings and townhomes., Source: Van Eaton Romero, A Latter & Blum Company

volume of just under $8.3 million. This already matches the unit sales level achieved for all of 2013 with total dollar volume of sales outpacing last year's performance by about 11%. When compared to the same time period in 2013, unit and dollar volume of residential single family sales are outpacing last year by 19.2% and 41%, respectively in the Town of Sunset. A similar

3.3 HOUSING

Table 3.3.16 b: Single Family Residential Realtor-Assisted Sales by Zip Code, St. Landry Parish, 2010 - 2013

Sold Price Per Square Foot

City	Zip Code	2010 Average Price	2010 Average Sq. Ft.	2010 Price Per Square Foot	2011 Average Price	2011 Average Sq. Ft.	2011 Price Per Square Foot
St. Landry Parish							
Arnaudville	70512	$144,306	1,689	$85.44	$151,950	1,679	$90.50
Church Point	70525	$145,600	2,165	$67.25	$152,680	1,833	$83.30
Eunice	70535	$87,965	1,662	$52.93	$88,953	1,977	$44.99
Grand Coteau	70541	$70,500	1,568	$44.96	$0	NA	NA
Lawtell	70550	$30,500	1,155	$26.41	$73,500	1,421	$51.72
Leonville	70551	$0	NA	NA	$20,000	1,609	$12.43
Opelousas/Plaisance	70570	$122,867	1,863	$65.95	$114,647	1,758	$65.21
Port Barre	70577	$116,250	1,527	$76.13	$167,625	1,871	$89.59
Cankton/Sunset	70584	$256,406	2,130	$120.38	$192,533	2,051	$93.87
Sunset		*$264,772*	*2,157*	*$122.75*	*$197,678*	*2,048*	*$96.52*
Washington	70589	$104,417	1,538	$67.89	$97,975	1,416	$69.19
Krotz Springs	70750	$17,751	1,176	$15.09	$0	NA	NA
Bunkie	71322	$0	NA	NA	$90,000	1,120	$80.36
Melville	71353	$50,000	1,016	$49.21	$64,500	1,576	$40.93
Palmetto	71358	$7,000	1,400	$5.00	$0	NA	NA
St. Landry Parish Total		**$130,210**	**1,817**	**$71.66**	**$123,199**	**1,821**	**$67.65**

City	Zip Code	2012 Average Price	2012 Average Sq. Ft.	2012 Price Per Square Foot	2013 Average Price	2013 Average Sq. Ft.	2013 Price Per Square Foot
St. Landry Parish							
Arnaudville	70512	$137,641	1,702	$80.87	$121,698	1,604	$75.87
Church Point	70525	$108,833	1,853	$58.73	$125,035	1,637	$76.38
Eunice	70535	$101,425	1,742	$58.22	$100,765	1,800	$55.98
Grand Coteau	70541	$117,000	1,568	$74.62	$210,000	1,806	$116.28
Lawtell	70550	$150,000	2,285	$65.65	$0	NA	NA
Leonville	70551	$123,500	1,500	$82.33	$79,000	1,440	$54.86
Opelousas/Plaisance	70570	$128,218	1,880	$68.20	$105,819	1,801	$58.76
Port Barre	70577	$119,970	1,588	$75.55	$150,571	1,750	$86.04
Cankton/Sunset	70584	$163,984	1,951	$84.05	$234,003	2,224	$105.22
Sunset		*$163,984*	*1,951*	*$84.05*	*$242,055*	*2,288*	*$105.79*
Washington	70589	$229,182	2,320	$98.79	$219,167	2,250	$97.41
Krotz Springs	70750	$170,000	1,906	$89.19	$0	NA	NA
Bunkie	71322	$114,000	1,200	$95.00	$0	NA	NA
Melville	71353	$0	NA	NA	$72,000	2,111	$34.11
Palmetto	71358	$0	NA	NA	$0	NA	NA
St. Landry Parish Total		**$131,727**	**2,075**	**$63.48**	**$125,292**	**1,832**	**$68.39**

Note: Excludes lots, condominiums and multi-family dwellings. Includes single and double detached single family dwellings and townhomes., Source: Van Eaton Romero, A Latter & Blum Company

pattern has emerged in St. Landry Parish as a whole where YTD 2014 unit sales are about 18.7% ahead of the pace set last year and total dollar volume has surged ahead of 2013's pace by just over 32% through mid-September.

It also appears that the town's average home price is on course to exceed the 2013 measure. Through mid-September 2014 the average price of homes sold in Sunset stood at $267,677 ($129.50 PSF), an increase of almost 18%

Table 3.3.17: Existing House Price Trends (Realtor-Assisted Sales) - Average Sales Price, St. Landry Parish, 2010 - 2013				
Average Sales Price				
City	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**
Arnaudville	$144,306	$151,950	$137,641	$121,698
Church Point	$145,600	$152,680	$108,833	$125,035
Eunice	$87,965	$88,953	$101,425	$100,765
Grand Coteau	$70,500	NA	$117,000	$210,000
Lawtell	$30,500	$73,500	$150,000	NA
Leonville	NA	$20,000	$123,500	$79,000
Opelousas/Plaisance	$122,867	$114,647	$128,218	$105,819
Port Barre	$115,250	$167,625	$119,970	$150,571
Cankton/Sunset	$256,406	$192,533	$163,984	$234,003
Sunset	*$264,772*	*$197,687*	*$163,984*	*$242,055*
Washington	$104,417	$97,975	$229,182	$219,167
Krotz Springs	$17,751	NA	$170,000	NA
Bunkie	NA	$90,000	$114,000	NA
Melville	$50,000	$64,500	NA	$72,000
Palmetto	$7,000	NA	NA	NA
St. Landry Parish	*$130,210*	*$123,199*	*$131,727*	*$125,292*
Percent Change				
City	**2010 vs. 2011**	**2011 vs. 2012**	**2012 vs. 2013**	**2010 - 2013**
Arnaudville	5.30%	-9.42%	-11.58%	-15.67%
Church Point	4.86%	-28.72%	14.89%	-14.12%
Eunice	1.12%	14.02%	-0.65%	14.55%
Grand Coteau	NA	NA	79.49%	197.87%
Lawtell	140.98%	104.08%	NA	NA
Leonville	NA	517.50%	-36.03%	NA
Opelousas/Plaisance	-6.69%	11.84%	-17.47%	-13.88%
Port Barre	45.44%	-28.43%	25.51%	30.65%
Cankton/Sunset	-24.91%	-14.83%	42.70%	-8.74%
Sunset	-25.34%	-17.05%	47.61%	-8.58%
Washington	-6.17%	133.92%	-4.37%	109.90%
Krotz Springs	NA	NA	NA	NA
Bunkie	NA	26.67%	NA	NA
Melville	29.00%	NA	NA	44.00%
Palmetto	NA	NA	NA	NA
St. Landry Parish	*-5.38%*	*6.92%*	*-4.89%*	*-3.78%*

Source: Van Eaton Romero, A Latter & Blum Company

3.3 HOUSING

Table 3.3.18: 2/19/2015 Existing House Price Trends (Realtor-Assisted Sales) - Price Per Square Foot, St. Landry Parish, 2010 - 2013				
Average Sales Price				
City	2010	2011	2012	2013
Arnaudville	$85.44	$90.50	$80.87	$75.87
Church Point	$67.25	$83.30	$58.73	$76.38
Eunice	$52.93	$44.99	$58.22	$55.98
Grand Coteau	$44.96	NA	$74.62	$116.28
Lawtell	$26.41	$51.72	$65.65	NA
Leonville	NA	$12.43	$82.33	$54.86
Opelousas/Plaisance	$65.95	$65.21	$68.20	$58.76
Port Barre	$76.13	$89.59	$75.55	$86.04
Cankton/Sunset	$120.38	$93.87	$84.05	$105.22
Sunset	*$122.75*	*$96.52*	*$84.05*	*$105.79*
Washington	$67.89	$69.19	$98.79	$97.41
Krotz Springs	$15.09	NA	$89.19	NA
Bunkie	NA	$80.36	$95.00	NA
Melville	$49.21	$40.93	NA	$34.11
Palmetto	$5.00	NA	NA	NA
St. Landry Parish	*$71.66*	*$67.65*	*$63.48*	*$68.39*
Percent Change				
City	2010 vs. 2011	2011 vs. 2012	2012 vs. 2013	2010 - 2013
Arnaudville	5.92%	-10.64%	-6.18%	-11.20%
Church Point	23.87%	-29.50%	30.05%	13.58%
Eunice	-15.00%	29.41%	-3.85%	5.76%
Grand Coteau	NA	NA	55.83%	158.63%
Lawtell	95.83%	26.93%	NA	NA
Leonville	NA	562.35%	-33.37%	NA
Opelousas/Plaisance	-1.12%	4.59%	-13.84%	-10.90%
Port Barre	17.68%	-15.67%	13.88%	13.02%
Cankton/Sunset	-22.02%	-10.46%	25.19%	-12.59%
Sunset	-21.37%	-12.92%	25.87%	-13.82%
Washington	1.91%	42.78%	-1.40%	43.48%
Krotz Springs	NA	NA	NA	NA
Bunkie	NA	18.22%	NA	NA
Melville	-16.83%	NA	NA	-30.68%
Palmetto	NA	NA	NA	NA
St. Landry Parish	*-5.60%*	*-6.16%*	*7.73%*	*-4.56%*

Source: Van Eaton Romero, A Latter & Blum Company

Table 3.3.19a: Single Family Residential Realtor-Assisted Sales by Zip Code, St. Landry Parish, January - September 19, 2010 - January - September 19, 2014

Sales Volume and Price Trends

City / Zip Code		2010 Average Price	2010 Unit Sales	2010 Gross Sales	2011 Average Price	2011 Unit Sales	2011 Gross Sales	2012 Average Price	2012 Unit Sales	2012 Gross Sales
St. Landry Parish										
Arnaudville	70512	$170,775	12	$2,049,300	$146,200	17	$2,485,400	$118,809	11	$1,306,900
Church Point	70525	$200,000	2	$400,000	$144,850	4	$579,400	$108,833	6	$653,000
Eunice	70535	$92,195	33	$3,042,430	$110,105	25	$2,752,625	$96,994	38	$3,685,765
Grand Coteau	70541	$70,500	1	$70,500	$0	0	$0	$87,500	4	$350,000
Lawtell	70550	$30,500	1	$30,500	$73,500	1	$73,500	$0	0	$0
Leonville	70551	$0	0	$0	$20,000	1	$20,000	$123,500	1	$123,500
Opelousas/Plaisance	70570	$121,014	97	$11,738,328	$121,069	74	$8,959,131	$128,029	88	$11,266,568
Port Barre	70577	$0	0	$0	$190,167	3	$570,500	$122,272	18	$2,200,900
Cankton/Sunset	70584	$209,887	20	$4,197,745	$185,971	21	$3,905,400	$158,588	16	$2,537,400
Sunset		*$217,566*	*19*	*$4,133,745*	*$183,020*	*20*	*$3,660,400*	*$158,588*	*16*	*$2,537,400*
Washington	70589	$166,250	2	$332,500	$131,000	2	$262,000	$324,906	8	$2,599,250
Krotz Springs	70750	$0	0	$0	$0	0	$0	$170,000	1	$170,000
Bunkie	71322	$0	0	$0	$90,000	1	$90,000	$114,000	1	$114,000
Melville	71353	$0	0	$0	$64,500	4	$258,000	$0	0	$0
Palmetto	71358	$0	0	$0	$0	0	$0	$0	0	$0
St. Landry Parish Total		**$130,127**	**168**	**$21,861,303**	**$130,431**	**153**	**$19,955,956**	**$130,246**	**192**	**$25,007,283**

City / Zip Code		2013 Average Price	2013 Unit Sales	2013 Gross Sales	2014 Average Price	2014 Unit Sales	2014 Gross Sales
St. Landry Parish							
Arnaudville	70512	$127,638	24	$3,063,300	$264,642	19	$5,028,199
Church Point	70525	$88,238	8	$705,900	$146,400	8	$1,171,200
Eunice	70535	$95,705	38	$3,636,800	$88,065	43	$3,786,808
Grand Coteau	70541	$210,000	2	$420,000	$119,950	2	$239,900
Lawtell	70550	$0	0	$0	$0	0	$0
Leonville	70551	$0	0	$0	$0	0	$0
Opelousas/Plaisance	70570	$116,111	115	$13,352,748	$125,598	151	$18,965,241
Port Barre	70577	$150,571	7	$1,054,000	$114,445	11	$1,258,900
Cankton/Sunset	70584	$219,417	29	$6,363,100	$256,848	33	$8,476,000
Sunset		*$226,988*	*26*	*$5,901,700*	*$267,677*	*31*	*$8,298,000*
Washington	70589	$252,600	5	$1,263,000	$133,083	6	$798,500
Krotz Springs	70750	$0	0	$0	$0	0	$0
Bunkie	71322	$0	0	$0	$0	0	$0
Melville	71353	$72,000	2	$144,000	$0	0	$0
Palmetto	71358	$0	0	$0	$0	0	$0
St. Landry Parish Total		**$130,447**	**230**	**$30,002,848**	**$145,512**	**273**	**$39,724,748**

Source: Van Eaton Romero, A Latter & Blum Company; Note: Excludes lots, condominiums and multi-family dwellings. Includes single and double detached single family dwellings and townhomes.

Table 3.3.19b: Single Family Residential Realtor-Assisted Sales by Zip Code, St. Landry Parish, January - September 19, 2010 - January - September 19, 2014

Sold Price Per Square Foot

City / Zip Code		2010 Average Price	2010 Average Sq. Ft.	2010 Price Per Square Foot	2011 Average Price	2011 Average Sq. Ft.	2011 Price Per Square Foot	2012 Average Price	2012 Average Sq. Ft.	2012 Price Per Square Foot
St. Landry Parish										
Arnaudville	70512	$170,775	1,789	$95.46	$146,200	1,708	$85.60	$118,809	1,607	$73.93
Church Point	70525	$200,000	2,635	$75.90	$144,850	1,865	$77.67	$108,833	1,853	$58.73
Eunice	70535	$92,195	1,717	$53.70	$110,105	2,135	$51.57	$96,994	1,674	$57.94
Grand Coteau	70541	$70,500	1,820	$38.74	NA	NA	NA	$87,500	1,418	$61.71
Lawtell	70550	$30,500	1,155	$26.41	$73,500	1,421	$51.72	NA	NA	NA
Leonville	70551	NA	NA	NA	$20,000	1,609	$12.43	$123,500	1,500	$82.33
Opelousas/Plaisance	70570	$121,014	1,863	$64.96	$121,069	1,759	$68.83	$128,029	1,873	$68.36
Port Barre	70577	NA	NA	NA	$190,167	2,024	$93.96	$122,272	1,592	$76.80
Cankton/Sunset	70584	$209,887	1,984	$105.79	$185,971	1,981	$93.88	$158,588	2,025	$78.31
Sunset		*$217,566*	*2,009*	*$108.30*	*$183,020*	*1,962*	*$93.28*	*$158,588*	*2,025*	*$78.31*
Washington	70589	$166,250	1,704	$97.56	$131,000	1,685	$77.74	$324,906	2,506	$129.65
Krotz Springs	70750	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	$170,000	1,906	$89.19
Bunkie	71322	NA	NA	NA	$90,000	1,120	$80.36	$114,000	1,200	$95.00
Melville	71353	NA	NA	NA	$64,500	1,576	$40.93	NA	NA	NA
Palmetto	71358	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
St. Landry Parish Total		**$130,127**	**1,834**	**$70.95**	**$130,431**	**1,840**	**$70.89**	**$130,246**	**1,815**	**$71.76**

City / Zip Code		2013 Average Price	2013 Average Sq. Ft.	2013 Price Per Square Foot	2014 Average Price	2014 Average Sq. Ft.	2014 Price Per Square Foot
St. Landry Parish							
Arnaudville	70512	$127,638	1,623	$78.64	$264,642	2,120	$124.83
Church Point	70525	$88,238	1,443	$61.15	$146,400	2,073	$70.62
Eunice	70535	$95,705	1,834	$52.18	$88,065	1,645	$53.54
Grand Coteau	70541	$210,000	1,806	$116.28	$119,950	1,920	$62.47
Lawtell	70550	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Leonville	70551	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Opelousas/Plaisance	70570	$116,111	1,895	$61.27	$125,598	1,796	$69.93
Port Barre	70577	$150,571	1,750	$86.04	$114,445	1,721	$66.50
Cankton/Sunset	70584	$219,417	2,229	$98.44	$256,848	2,037	$126.09
Sunset		*$226,988*	*2,294*	*$98.95*	*$267,677*	*2,067*	*$129.50*
Washington	70589	$252,600	2,502	$100.96	$133,083	1,731	$76.88
Krotz Springs	70750	$0	NA	NA	$0	NA	NA
Bunkie	71322	$0	NA	NA	$0	NA	NA
Melville	71353	$72,000	2,111	$34.11	$0	NA	NA
Palmetto	71358	$0	NA	NA	$0	NA	NA
St. Landry Parish Total		**$130,447**	**1,893**	**$68.91**	**$145,512**	**1,828**	**$79.60**

Source: Van Eaton Romero, A Latter & Blum Company; Note: Excludes lots, condominiums and multi-family dwellings. Includes single and double detached single family dwellings and townhomes.

Table 3.3.20: Existing House Price Trends (Realtor-Assisted Sales) - Average Sales Price, St. Landry Parish, January - September 19, 2010 - January - September 10, 2014						
Average Sales Price						
City/Zip Code		**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**
Arnaudville	70512	$170,775	$146,200	$118,809	$127,638	$264,642
Church Point	70525	$200,000	$144,850	$108,833	$88,238	$146,400
Eunice	70535	$92,195	$110,105	$96,994	$95,705	$88,065
Grand Coteau	70541	$70,500	NA	$87,500	$210,000	$119,950
Lawtell	70550	$30,500	$73,500	NA	NA	NA
Leonville	70551	NA	$20,000	$123,500	NA	NA
Opelousas/Plaisance	70570	$121,014	$121,069	$128,029	$116,111	$125,598
Port Barre	70577	NA	$190,167	$122,272	$150,571	$114,445
Cankton/Sunset	70584	$209,887	$185,971	$158,588	$219,417	$256,848
Sunset		*$217,566*	*$183,020*	*$158,588*	*$226,988*	*$267,677*
Washington	70589	$166,250	$131,000	$324,906	$252,600	$133,083
Krotz Springs	70750	NA	NA	$170,000	NA	NA
Bunkie	71322	NA	$90,000	$114,000	NA	NA
Melville	71353	NA	$64,500	NA	$72,000	NA
Palmetto	71358	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
St. Landry Parish		*$130,127*	*$130,431*	*$130,245*	*$130,447*	*$145,512*
Percent Change						
City/Zip Code		**2010 vs. 2011**	**2011 vs. 2012**	**2012 vs. 2013**	**2013 vs. 2014**	**2010 - 2014**
Arnaudville	70512	-14.39%	-18.74%	7.43%	107.34%	54.97%
Church Point	70525	-27.58%	-24.87%	-18.92%	65.91%	-26.80%
Eunice	70535	19.43%	-11.91%	-1.33%	-7.98%	-4.48%
Grand Coteau	70541	NA	NA	140.00%	-42.88%	70.14%
Lawtell	70550	140.98%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Leonville	70551	NA	517.50%	NA	NA	NA
Opelousas/Plaisance	70570	0.05%	5.75%	-9.31%	8.17%	3.79%
Port Barre	70577	NA	-35.70%	23.14%	-23.99%	NA
Cankton/Sunset	70584	-11.39%	-14.72%	38.36%	17.06%	22.37%
Sunset		-15.88%	-13.35%	43.13%	17.93%	23.03%
Washington	70589	-21.20%	148.02%	-22.25%	-47.31%	-19.95%
Krotz Springs	70750	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Bunkie	71322	NA	26.67%	NA	NA	NA
Melville	71353	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Palmetto	71358	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
St. Landry Parish		*0.23%*	*-0.14%*	*0.16%*	*11.55%*	*11.82%*

Source: Van Eaton Romero, A Latter & Blum Company

3.3 HOUSING

Table 3.3 21: Existing House Price Trends (Realtor-Assisted Sales) - Price Per Square Foot, St. Landry Parish, January - September 19, 2010 - January - September 10, 2014						
Average Price Per Square Foot						
City/Zip Code		**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**
Arnaudville	70512	$95.46	$85.60	$73.93	$78.64	$124.83
Church Point	70525	$75.90	$77.67	$58.73	$61.15	$70.62
Eunice	70535	$53.70	$51.57	$57.94	$52.18	$53.54
Grand Coteau	70541	$38.74	NA	$61.71	$116.28	$62.47
Lawtell	70550	$26.41	$51.72	NA	NA	NA
Leonville	70551	NA	$12.43	$82.33	NA	NA
Opelousas/Plaisance	70570	$64.96	$68.83	$68.36	$61.27	$69.93
Port Barre	70577	NA	$93.96	$76.80	$86.04	$66.50
Cankton/Sunset	70584	$105.79	$93.88	$78.31	$98.44	$126.09
Sunset		*$108.30*	*$93.28*	*$78.31*	*$98.95*	*$129.50*
Washington	70589	$97.56	$77.74	$129.65	$100.96	$76.88
Krotz Springs	70750	NA	NA	$89.19	NA	NA
Bunkie	71322	NA	$80.36	$95.00	NA	NA
Melville	71353	NA	$40.93	NA	$34.11	NA
Palmetto	71358	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
St. Landry Parish		*$70.95*	*$70.89*	*$71.76*	*$68.91*	*$68.39*
Percent Change						
City/Zip Code		**2010 vs. 2011**	**2011 vs. 2012**	**2012 vs. 2013**	**2013 vs. 2014**	**2010 - 2014**
Arnaudville	70512	-10.33%	-13.63%	6.37%	58.74%	30.77%
Church Point	70525	2.33%	-24.39%	4.12%	15.49%	-6.96%
Eunice	70535	-3.97%	12.35%	-9.94%	2.61%	-0.30%
Grand Coteau	70541	NA	NA	88.43%	-46.28%	61.25%
Lawtell	70550	95.83%	NA	NA	NA	NA
Leonville	70551	NA	562.35%	NA	NA	NA
Opelousas/Plaisance	70570	5.96%	-0.68%	-10.37%	14.13%	7.65%
Port Barre	70577	NA	-18.26%	12.03%	-22.71%	NA
Cankton/Sunset	70584	-11.26%	-16.59%	25.71%	28.09%	19.19%
Sunset		-13.87%	-16.05%	26.36%	30.87%	19.58%
Washington	70589	-20.32%	66.77%	-22.13%	-23.85%	-21.20%
Krotz Springs	70750	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Bunkie	71322	NA	18.22%	NA	NA	NA
Melville	71353	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Palmetto	71358	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
St. Landry Parish		*-0.08%*	*1.23%*	*-3.97%*	*-0.75%*	*-3.61%*

Source: Van Eaton Romero, A Latter & Blum Company

Map 3.3.22: Housing sales in Sunset, 2010 - 2014

when compared to $226,988 ($98.95 PSF) for the same period in 2013. (See Tables 3.3.19 through 3.3.21)

Rent-Assisted Housing

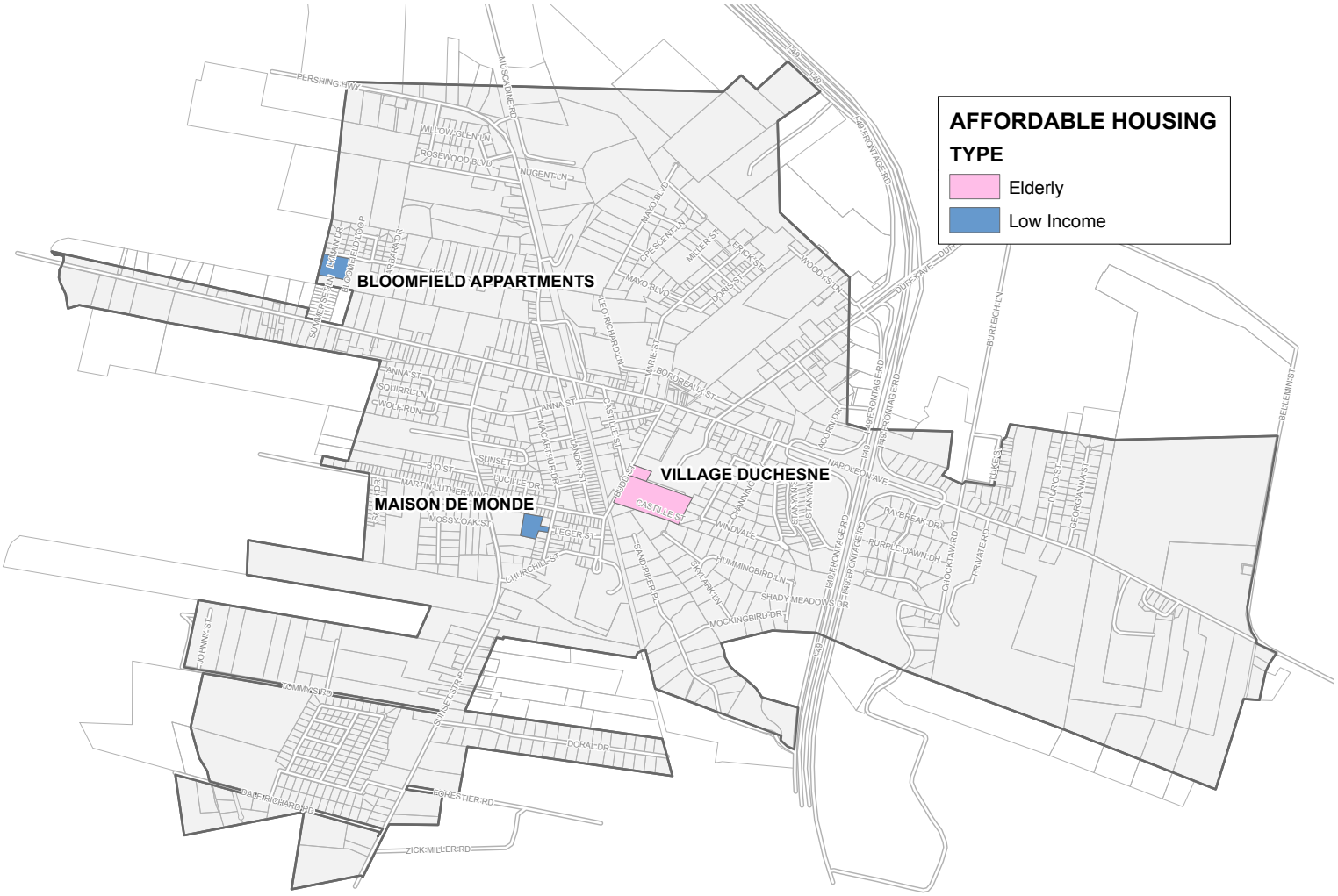
The ability and willingness to accommodate the housing needs of multiple demographic segments within a local community is important to its long term sustainability and resiliency. Including a wide variety of housing types at different price and rent levels helps encourage diversity within the community while at the same time fulfilling some very important and essential needs for existing and new residents alike. Rent-assisted housing is a very important component of a community's housing strategy, particularly when it serves the needs of the elderly and disabled. The current housing stock in Sunset includes properties which address these needs specifically. These include Village Duchesne developed to meet the shelter needs of senior households and the somewhat smaller Maison De Monde which focuses on providing housing and supportive services for the disabled. Both of these properties are typically 100% occupied and have waiting lists of prospective tenants. Going forward, it would be advisable to include within the town's comprehensive plan and housing strategy the addition of more rent-assisted housing to accommodate the shelter and service needs of the elderly and disabled.

3.3 HOUSING

The third rent-assisted community in Sunset is the Bloomfield Apartments. This property is one of many in rural communities throughout Louisiana managed by O.S.C. Management of Metairie, LA. It was developed and financed through the Section 515 programs of the USDA's Rural Development Administration and thus provides access to affordable shelter for families and households in small towns and rural communities. Unlike some affordable rental programs, there are no minimum monthly rents for these apartments. However, the maximum rent tenants pay is 30% of their adjusted gross income.

Recommendations

Local housing strategies unfold over time within the context of market dynamics influenced by the forces of demand and supply measured at various levels of geographic reference (i.e. neighborhood, town, Parish, region, etc.). Discussion to this point has focused primarily on supply and existing conditions within the local housing market. The following shifts the focus forward to forecast levels of future demand that could be anticipated based upon expected economic and employment growth and the



Map 3.3.23: Affordable housing in Sunset

Table 3.3.26:Forecast Total Demand for Sales Housing, St. Landry Parish, LA, 2015 to 2035			
Price Range*	2015 - 2020	2020 - 2030	2030 - 2035
< $45,000	141	125	132
$45,000 - $74,999	100	90	93
$75,000 - $99,999	87	82	89
$100,000 - $149,999	119	114	130
$150,000 - $224,999	153	168	216
$225,000 - $299,999	110	133	183
$300,000 - $449,999	84	104	147
$450,000 +	52	61	87
Total Owner Demand[a]	**846**	**877**	**1,077**

Source: Analyst

* 2012 Dollars

[a] Includes demand driven by net growth (See Table 3.3.1) and demand resulting from existing households relocating within the market, trading up or transitioning to another category or owner housing based on mobility rates by tenure status as reported by the US Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.

Table 3.3.27: Forecast Demand for Rental Housing, St. Landry Parish, LA, 2015 to 2035			
Rent Range*	2015 - 2020	2020 - 2030	2030 - 2035
< $375	434	411	399
$375 - $624	186	197	212
$625 - $874	91	100	114
$875 - $1,249	110	127	149
$1,250 - $1,874	115	134	156
$1,875 - $2,499	52	63	73
$2,500 - $3,749	28	37	44
$3,750 +	7	13	18
Total Renter Demand[a]	**1,023**	**1,082**	**1,165**

Source: Analyst

* 2012 Dollars

[a] Includes demand driven by net growth (See Table H-1) and demand resulting from existing households relocating within the market, trading up or transitioning to another category or owner housing based on mobility rates by tenure status as reported by the US Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.

increases in households and income levels that would accompany these gains. The depth of demand is quantified in terms of total units of sales and rental housing while demand mix is expressed within the context of specific price and rent ranges. These price and rent range segments are a direct reflection of the income distributions of owner and renter households for both Sunset and St. Landry Parish and thus their housing affordability profile going forward through each forecast period. These forecasts are summarized in Tables 3.3.25 through 3.3.30 for St. Landry Parish and in Tables 3.3.31 through 3.3.34 for the Town of Sunset. In both cases, the outlook for future housing demand is strong and steady which reflects the economic and demographic drivers that are anticipated over the forecast horizon.

St. Landry Parish

Net household growth typically reflects steady economic expansion which encourages new household formations as well as net in-migrations of those pursing new economic or job opportunities. In addition to meeting the need to shelter new households local markets must also accommodate changes in inventory which may require replacements for units removed through demolition or adaptive reuse to non-residential purposes as well as the introduction or absorption of vacant units to maintain what is generally referred to as frictional vacancy. These units allow for movement without placing undue pressure on either prices or rents. In St. Landry Parish, the interplay of these factors results in an average demand forecast of 386 additional units annually from 2015 through 2020, comprised of estimated 272 owner occupied units and 114 renter occupied units annually. For the 2020 to 2030 decade forecast demand for additional housing units in St. Landry Parish is expected to average 412 units annually (276 owner and 136 renter), while over the longer term horizon through 2035 demand for additional inventory is expected to average 635 units annually.

The second major dynamic which housing demand forecasts attempt to capture is the overall effects of household movement and relocation within local markets. (See Tables

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Table 3.3.28:Total Owner Households by Income Range St. Landry Parish, LA, 2000 to 2035						
Income Range	2000		2010		2015	
	(Census)	% of Total	(Census)	% of Total	(Estimate)	% of Total
< $15,000	6,495	28.4%	4,409	19.6%	3,851	17.0%
$15,000 - $24,999	3,535	15.5%	2,992	13.3%	2,696	11.9%
$25,000 - $34,999	3,253	14.2%	2,429	10.8%	2,356	10.4%
$35,000 - $49,999	3,657	16.0%	3,217	14.3%	3,217	14.2%
$50,000 - $74,999	3,700	16.2%	3,936	17.5%	4,055	17.9%
$75,000 - $99,999	1,173	5.1%	2,452	10.9%	2,855	12.6%
$100,000 - $149,999	707	3.1%	2,002	8.9%	2,243	9.9%
150000 +	345	1.5%	1,035	4.6%	1,382	6.1%
Total	22,865	100.0%	22,472	100.0%	22,655	100.0%
Median Household Income	$29,313		$41,607		$46,306	
Income Range	2020		2030		2035	
	(Forecast)	% of Total	(Forecast)	% of Total	(Forecast)	% of Total
< $15,000	3,779	16.1%	3,080	12.5%	3,045	11.9%
$15,000 - $24,999	2,769	11.8%	2,168	8.8%	2,175	8.5%
$25,000 - $34,999	2,417	10.3%	2,070	8.4%	2,098	8.2%
$35,000 - $49,999	3,285	14.0%	2,957	12.0%	3,122	12.2%
$50,000 - $74,999	4,270	18.2%	4,903	19.9%	5,143	20.1%
$75,000 - $99,999	3,144	13.4%	4,139	16.8%	4,375	17.1%
$100,000 - $149,999	2,347	10.0%	3,351	13.6%	3,531	13.8%
150000 +	1,455	6.2%	1,971	8.0%	2,098	8.2%
Total	23,466	100.0%	24,639	100.0%	25,587	100.0%
Median Household Income	$47,638		$60,427		$61,442	

Source: U.S. Census and Analyst, Forecasts in constant 2012 dollars

3.3.26 and 3.3.27). These movements typically occur in anticipation of or a response to a lifestyle or lifecycle change which necessitates a shift in shelter needs or aspirations. This could include, for example, households trading up to larger or better quality housing, or those downsizing to smaller space and different residential settings. Each of these circumstances has the effect of creating inter- and intra- market mobility that results in an on-going churning of the housing market. The mover rates used to forecast total sales and rental demand are based on an analysis of American Community Survey information covering the 2008 to 2012 periods for owner and renter households in St. Landry Parish and the Town of Sunset. For the most part, households within virtually every demographic and economic segment move in a typical year. However, the rate at which these households move, relocate or otherwise generate turnover within the market is greatly influenced by their tenure status and income level. (See Tables 3.3.28 and 3.3.29).

The forecasts shown in Tables 3.3.26 and 3.3.27 for St. Landry Parish attempt to measure

Table 3.3.29:Total Renter Households by Income Range St. Landry Parish, LA, 2000 to 2035						
Income Range	2000		2010		2015	
	(Census)	% of Total	(Census)	% of Total	(Estimate)	% of Total
< $15,000	5,496	58.1%	4,672	50.0%	4,214	44.9%
$15,000 - $24,999	1,513	16.0%	1,526	16.3%	1,717	18.3%
$25,000 - $34,999	942	10.0%	889	9.5%	845	9.0%
$35,000 - $49,999	822	8.7%	786	8.4%	957	10.2%
$50,000 - $74,999	499	5.3%	796	8.5%	985	10.5%
$75,000 - $99,999	129	1.4%	375	4.0%	413	4.4%
$100,000 - $149,999	40	0.4%	272	2.9%	197	2.1%
$150,000 +	22	0.2%	19	0.2%	56	0.6%
Total	9,463	100.0%	9,335	100.0%	9,384	100.0%
Median Household Income	< $15,000		$15,059		$17,789	
Income Range	2020		2030		2035	
	(Forecast)	% of Total	(Forecast)	% of Total	(Forecast)	% of Total
< $15,000	3,929	40.3%	3,641	36.0%	3,428	32.8%
$15,000 - $24,999	1,775	18.2%	1,861	18.4%	1,881	18.0%
$25,000 - $34,999	858	8.8%	961	9.5%	1,045	10.0%
$35,000 - $49,999	1,102	11.3%	1,234	12.2%	1,401	13.4%
$50,000 - $74,999	1,151	11.8%	1,315	13.0%	1,432	13.7%
$75,000 - $99,999	536	5.5%	607	6.0%	669	6.4%
$100,000 - $149,999	302	3.1%	364	3.6%	418	4.0%
$150,000 +	98	1.0%	132	1.3%	178	1.7%
Total	9,751	100.0%	10,115	100.0%	10,452	100.0%
Median Household Income	$20,335		$22,613		$24,558	
Source: U.S. Census and Analyst, Forecasts in constant 2012 dollars						

these market forces as well as the previously discussed need to accommodate net new growth due to expansion of the market's standing inventory. Whether someone gravitates to a new or existing unit within a given price or rent range will depend largely on availability and affordability. From 2015 to 2020, total demand for sales housing (both new and existing) is forecast to average 846 units annually in the Parish. The largest overall unit demand is forecast for price levels between $100,000 and $300,000 and probably represents the primary target for new home production during this period. The second most likely target for new construction would be at prices exceeding $300,000 where unit demand is forecast to average about 135 units annually. This does not mean, however, that new construction would be impossible or unlikely at prices under $100,000 but it might imply something other than a traditionally built subdivision home. Alternatively this could include modular construction, new factory built homes, higher density residential communities or some combination thereof. Over the 2020 to 2030 period total sales demand is forecast to average 877 units annually in St.

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Table 3.3.30: Forecast Demand for Additional Housing Units Sunset, LA, 2015 - 2035, (Annual Averages)			
Item	2015 - 2020	2020 - 2030	2030 - 2035
Change in Total Households	46	41	57
Owner	*31*	*27*	*38*
Renter	*15*	*14*	*19*
Increase in Units to Replace - Total Lost Inventory a	5	5	7
Owner	*3*	*3*	*4*
Renter	*2*	*2*	*3*
Increase (Decrease) in Inventory to allow for Sufficient Frictional Vacant Inventory b - Total	4	4	4
Owner	*2*	*2*	*2*
Renter	*2*	*2*	*2*
Total Demand for Additional Housing Units	**55**	**49**	**68**
Owner Demand	*36*	*32*	*44*
Renter Demand	*19*	*18*	*24*

Source: Analyst

[a] Includes housing demolished or otherwise lost due to natural or man-made causes and those converted to non-residential uses and removed from inventory due to condemnation as blighted. This is estimated based on analysis of existing owner and renter housing inventory reductions by age cohort.

[b] Assumes that overall occupancy rate rises slightly over the forecast 2030 to 2035 period thus resulting in a new absorption of vacant inventory.

Landry Parish. Again, a significant portion of this demand is clustered between a $100,000 to $300,000 pricing target, with a notable shift in unit demand at prices over $300,000. As the full effects of long term regional economic expansion ramp up, the demand for new and existing sales housing is forecast to accelerate to 1,077 units annually from 2030 to 2035. Demand for housing with price points between $150,000 and $450,000 is forecast to account for the largest segments of demand for this forecast period.

Total rental housing demand forecasts are summarized in Table 3.3.27 and clearly reflect higher propensities to move and relocate among households functioning within this segment of the market. Overall, rental demand for the 2015 to 2020 period is forecast to average 1,023 units annually and then rise to 1,082 and 1,165 units annually for the 2020-2030 and 2030-2035 period, respectively. Given the income profile of the market and allowing for some upward earnings movement for renters going forward, it is rather clear that the need for rental assistance is not likely to subside anytime soon. The single largest segment of demand for rental housing over the entire forecast horizon is for units renting for under $375 per month (in 2012 constant dollars). At a minimum, this illustrates the need to maintain and reinforce existing rental assistance programs serving people throughout St. Landry Parish while at the same time developing long term policies that attract private investment to this sector of the market. The rental demand forecast also illustrates a growing potential to introduce new market-rate multifamily communities in St. Landry Parish. This is best reflected by the clustering of unit demand at rent levels ranging from $875 to $1,875 per month as well as demand within the $1,875 to $2,500 rent range. Although multifamily properties could include units renting for $2,500 or more they would most likely represent a relatively small share of the overall mix. Rents at these levels typically reflect rental of single family homes with the space and amenities associated with such housing.

Table 3.3.31: Forecast Total Demand for Sales Housing, Sunset, LA, 2015 to 2035			
Price Range*	2015 - 2020	2020 - 2030	2030 - 2035
< $45,000	10	10	11
$45,000 - $74,999	11	10	13
$75,000 - $99,999	7	8	9
$100,000 - $149,999	9	10	12
$150,000 - $224,999	7	7	9
$225,000 - $299,999	14	15	21
$300,000 - $449,999	11	13	17
$450,000 +	6	7	10
Total Owner Demand[a]	**75**	**80**	**102**

Source: Analyst

* 2012 Dollars

[a] Includes demand driven by net growth (See Table H-6) and demand resulting from existing households relocating within the market, trading up or transitioning to another category or owner housing based on mobility rates by tenure status as reported by the US Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.

Table 3.3.32:Forecast Demand for Rental Housing, Sunset, LA, 2015 to 2035			
Rent Range*	2015 - 2020	2020 - 2030	2030 - 2035
< $375	22	17	16
$375 - $624	15	19	24
$625 - $874	13	14	17
$875 - $1,249	6	9	14
$1,250 - $1,874	9	13	16
$1,875 - $2,499	5	7	8
$2,500 - $3,749	0	1	2
$3,750 +	0	0	1
Total Renter Demand[a]	**70**	**80**	**98**

Source: Analyst

*2012 Dollars

[a] Includes demand driven by net growth (See Table H-6) and demand resulting from existing households relocating within the market, trading up or transitioning to another category or owner housing based on mobility rates by tenure status as reported by the US Census Bureau, 2008-2012 American Community Survey.

Town of Sunset

Tables 3.3.30 through 3.3.34 mimic the issues discussed above, but focus on the Town of Sunset. They cover the same forecast periods and attempt to capture the same market dynamics but for a decidedly smaller geographic area. As such, the depth and breadth of unit demand is more shallow and narrower. This has obvious implications for the size and scale of residential projects that can be pursued going forward without overstepping the market's ability to absorb new inventory targeted for specific price or rent ranges.

Over the 2015 to 2020 period, for example, total sales demand in Sunset is forecast to average 75 units annually with the majority at price points above $225,000. The middle market, which in many cases could be accommodated by some new inventory, accounts for a somewhat smaller share of sales demand in the town at prices ranging from $75,000 to $225,000. Going forward, it is highly likely that most of the market's demand at prices under $75,000 would be met by existing units in the town's housing stock. A very similar distribution of demand is anticipated over the next two forecast periods when total sales demand is expected to average 80 and 102 units from 2020 to 2030 and 2030 to 2035, respectively. In essence, this is a depth of demand that could reasonably support the absorption of 10 to 20 lot subdivisions targeting new homes priced between $225,000 and $450,000. (See Table 3.3.31).

Rental housing demand is forecast to grow steadily within a market scale and rent profile that has been characteristic for the town. (See Table 3.3.32). Demand averaging 70 to 100 units annually is anticipated over the majority of the planning horizon with the highest concentrations reflecting an on-going need to provide rent assisted units in the local market. This is obvious in the expected need to accommodate those with income and affordability limitations that translate to monthly rents of under $375 but also illustrated by the demand cohorts encompassing monthly rents from $375 to $875. The ability to absorb

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Table 3.3.33:Total Owner Households by Income Range, Sunset, LA, 2000 to 2035						
Income Range	2000		2010		2015	
	(Census)	% of Total	(Census)	% of Total	(Estimate)	% of Total
< $15,000	148	25.4%	132	17.9%	135	14.9%
$15,000 - $24,999	105	18.0%	113	15.3%	133	14.6%
$25,000 - $34,999	56	9.6%	64	8.7%	76	8.4%
$35,000 - $49,999	106	18.2%	52	7.0%	96	10.6%
$50,000 - $74,999	100	17.2%	89	12.1%	94	10.4%
$75,000 - $99,999	37	6.3%	130	17.6%	175	19.3%
$100,000 - $149,999	19	3.3%	106	14.4%	130	14.3%
150000 +	12	2.1%	52	7.0%	69	7.6%
Total	583	100.0%	738	100.0%	908	100.0%
Median Household Income	$31,785		$52,528		$53,723	
Income Range	2020		2030		2035	
	(Forecast)	% of Total	(Forecast)	% of Total	(Forecast)	% of Total
< $15,000	133	12.5%	143	10.8%	152	10.0%
$15,000 - $24,999	147	13.8%	170	12.8%	182	12.0%
$25,000 - $34,999	101	9.5%	120	9.0%	150	9.9%
$35,000 - $49,999	135	12.7%	157	11.8%	169	11.1%
$50,000 - $74,999	96	9.0%	122	9.2%	137	9.0%
$75,000 - $99,999	195	18.3%	267	20.1%	322	21.2%
$100,000 - $149,999	164	15.4%	222	16.7%	258	17.0%
150000 +	94	8.8%	127	9.6%	149	9.8%
Total	1,065	100.0%	1,328	100.0%	1,519	100.0%
Median Household Income	$54,167		$65,163		$69,525	
Source: U.S. Census and Analyst, Forecasts in constant 2012 dollars						

a relatively large volume of new market-rate rental units in Sunset will be somewhat limited going forward. This does not mean that such properties could not meet with a measure of success but that such additions to inventory would need to be in relatively small doses. Expanding the size and scope of new rental properties might very well create an opportunity to develop a mixed income community using a blended financial structure that incorporates market-rate and rent-assisted apartments.

The condition, mix, cost and availability of housing in Sunset are distinctive strengths for the community and every effort should be made to ensure that this condition only improves. As the housing stock is relatively young it suffers from less functional obsolescence than might otherwise be expected. Consequently costs associated with maintenance, repair,

Table 3.3.34:Total Renter Households by Income Range, Sunset, LA, 2000 to 2035						
Income Range	2000		2010		2015	
	(Census)	% of Total	(Census)	% of Total	(Estimate)	% of Total
< $15,000	190	62.9%	185	47.3%	173	36.9%
$15,000 - $24,999	52	17.2%	82	21.0%	103	22.0%
$25,000 - $34,999	22	7.3%	49	12.6%	68	14.5%
$35,000 - $49,999	15	5.0%	9	2.4%	24	5.1%
$50,000 - $74,999	17	5.6%	57	14.5%	52	11.1%
$75,000 - $99,999	6	2.0%	8	2.2%	35	7.5%
$100,000 - $149,999	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
$150,000 +	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	14	3.0%
Total	302	100.0%	390	100.0%	469	100.0%
Median Household Income	< $15,000		$17,436		$22,361	
Income Range	2020		2030		2035	
	(Forecast)	% of Total	(Forecast)	% of Total	(Forecast)	% of Total
< $15,000	160	29.3%	120	17.5%	117	15.0%
$15,000 - $24,999	125	22.9%	168	24.6%	195	25.0%
$25,000 - $34,999	83	15.2%	119	17.4%	140	18.0%
$35,000 - $49,999	31	5.7%	65	9.5%	76	9.8%
$50,000 - $74,999	82	15.0%	113	16.5%	131	16.8%
$75,000 - $99,999	41	7.5%	59	8.6%	70	9.0%
$100,000 - $149,999	10	1.8%	18	2.6%	23	3.0%
$150,000 +	15	2.7%	22	3.2%	27	3.5%
Total	547	100.0%	684	100.0%	779	100.0%
Median Household Income	$24,039		$29,428		$29,537	
Source: U.S. Census and Analyst, Forecasts in constant 2012 dollars						

and adapting structures to current market standards and expectations are more likely to be rewarded with offsetting value appreciation. Additions of new homes to inventory have been steady allowing for on-going freshening of the town's housing stock. This promotes filtering which helps mitigate the possibility that some neighborhoods drift toward becoming undesirable and ultimately pockets of blight with abandoned and dilapidated structures. The steady supply of housing in Sunset has been met with sufficient demand to absorb new inventory and produce a relatively healthy occupancy rate. As such there are no areas within the town where market dynamics appear to be out of balance. This general balance in the market has produced a relatively favorable pricing structure for both sales and rental housing which is well within reach of households in Sunset. Housing needs are being met without creating a price/

rent burden on residents. Affordability within the rental market has been improved with the introduction of three rent-assisted housing communities. This has helped reduce the incidence of rental cost burden for Sunset when compared to the Parish and State. However, going forward there is sufficient need anticipated to support the addition of more rent-assisted housing relying on the programs currently being used. Forecast demand for both sales and rental housing is of sufficient depth to support the introduction of new inventory at market prices and rents. Demand segments by price and rent range for market-based development, however, are somewhat narrow. This implies introduction of specifically targeted property types in staged phases that deter supply from running too far ahead of demand. Given the focus on in-fill development of strategic land parcels this should not be a problem going forward.

Goals & Objectives

Goal 3.1: Promote a community environment that eliminates artificial barriers to housing while at the same time offering a wide range of choices by neighborhood, type, and tenure.

Objective 3.1.1
Adhere to programs and agency guidelines designed to eliminate housing discrimination.

Objective 3.1.2
Support housing that incorporates facilities and services to meet the healthcare and social service needs of households with special needs such as seniors and people with disabilities.

Goal 3.2: Ensure that the Town of Sunset has an adequate supply of suitable and affordable housing units that conform to the needs and demands of its existing and future residents.

Objective 3.2.1
Create the necessary land use ordinances that encourage and to the extent possible facilitate the development and construction of residential for sale housing that encompasses a range of detached and attached single family products that satisfy demand anticipated within target price ranges.

Objective 3.2.2
Encourage the creative use of density within a mix of single family housing products so as to promote sustainability and resiliency while developing a sense of place offering efficient design, value-added amenities and attractive neighborhood features.

Objective 3.2.3
Encourage the development and construction of both market rate and rent-assisted multifamily apartments by

- *Including multifamily density categories for strategically located parcels that can accommodate attractively designed multifamily communities.*
- *Partnering with one or more local nonprofit organizations to sponsor to develop and finance non-public rent-assisted apartments to accommodate the shelter needs of seniors and the disabled.*
- *Supporting efforts to preserve and improve existing multifamily housing communities.*
- *Exploring development strategies for new multifamily residential communities that incorporate non-residential activities and services and that link these communities to the town center and other town amenities.*
- *Encouraging community involvement in helping to maintain and improve rent-assisted properties so as to ensure their receiving favorable inspection scores from their management oversight agencies.*

Goal 3.3: Encourage a broad range of community-based amenities and human services that make housing developments and their surrounding neighborhoods attractive places to live and work.

Objective 3.3.1
Do this while protecting the physical environment, natural resources and community cultural assets.

Objective 3.3.2
Incorporate innovative ideas focusing on healthy lifestyles (i.e. walking, biking, etc.) and the introduction of lifecycle housing or services that would not otherwise be provided.

Objective 3.3.3:
Develop a rails-to-trails along the existing railroad corridor that will connect Sunset's public open spaces, parks and community facilities and add on to a more walkable environment and a higher quality of life for Sunset.

3.3 HOUSING

Objective 3.3.4:
Establish an attractive and functional public downtown plaza for Sunset that can be programmed with monthly and seasonal events like farmers markets, arts and crafts markets, Christmas events, flea markets and other cultural activities.

Goal 3.4: Increase recreation options and activities for Sunset youth and seniors

Objective 3.4.1:
Partner with local and regional governmental, non-profit and community organizations to organize recreational programs for the residents of Sunset, including monthly senior trips, seasonal youth athletics, and after school/summer programs.

Sources:

"Office of Multi-family Housing Programs – Physical Inspection Scores," U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, April 9, 2014.

U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing, 1980.

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U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, 2008 – 2012.

Louisiana Tax Commission, Annual Report, Table No. 44 – "Taxpayers Homestead Exemption," 2013.

State Profile and Selected Parishes: Acadia, Evangeline, Iberia, Lafayette, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary and Vermillion, Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., Washington, D.C., 2012.

SECTION 3.4
TRANSPORTATION

3.4 TRANSPORTATION

Introduction

This element of the Comprehensive Plan analyzes Sunset's transportation system, including its roadway and street network, and provides recommendations to improve the system to support a resilient and sustainable development of Sunset and help the community provide a transportation network that safely accommodates the needs of all users.

Existing Conditions

Regional Connectivity

The Town of Sunset is situated along around two primary state highways, LA 182 and LA 93. In addition, the communities of Sunset and Grand Coteau are bisected by I-49. The Town itself is located in St. Landry Parish and is approximately eleven miles north of the intersection of I-49 and I-10 in Lafayette, LA. Sunset, therefore, is easily accessible from both of these high-speed highways. (See Map 3.4.1)

LA 182 and LA 93, known as Napoleon Avenue and Duffy Avenue, respectively, form the major avenues of access through and to the Town of Sunset. LA 182 (Napoleon Avenue) is an alternate highway connecting Sunset with Opelousas to the north, and Lafayette to the south. Between Sunset and Opelousas, LA 182 is a state designated Scenic Byway.

LA 93 connects the Town of Sunset with the Village of Cankton and the Town of Scott to the south. LA 93 also connects Sunset to the Town of Grand Coteau to the east. This roadway is also a State designated Scenic Byway.

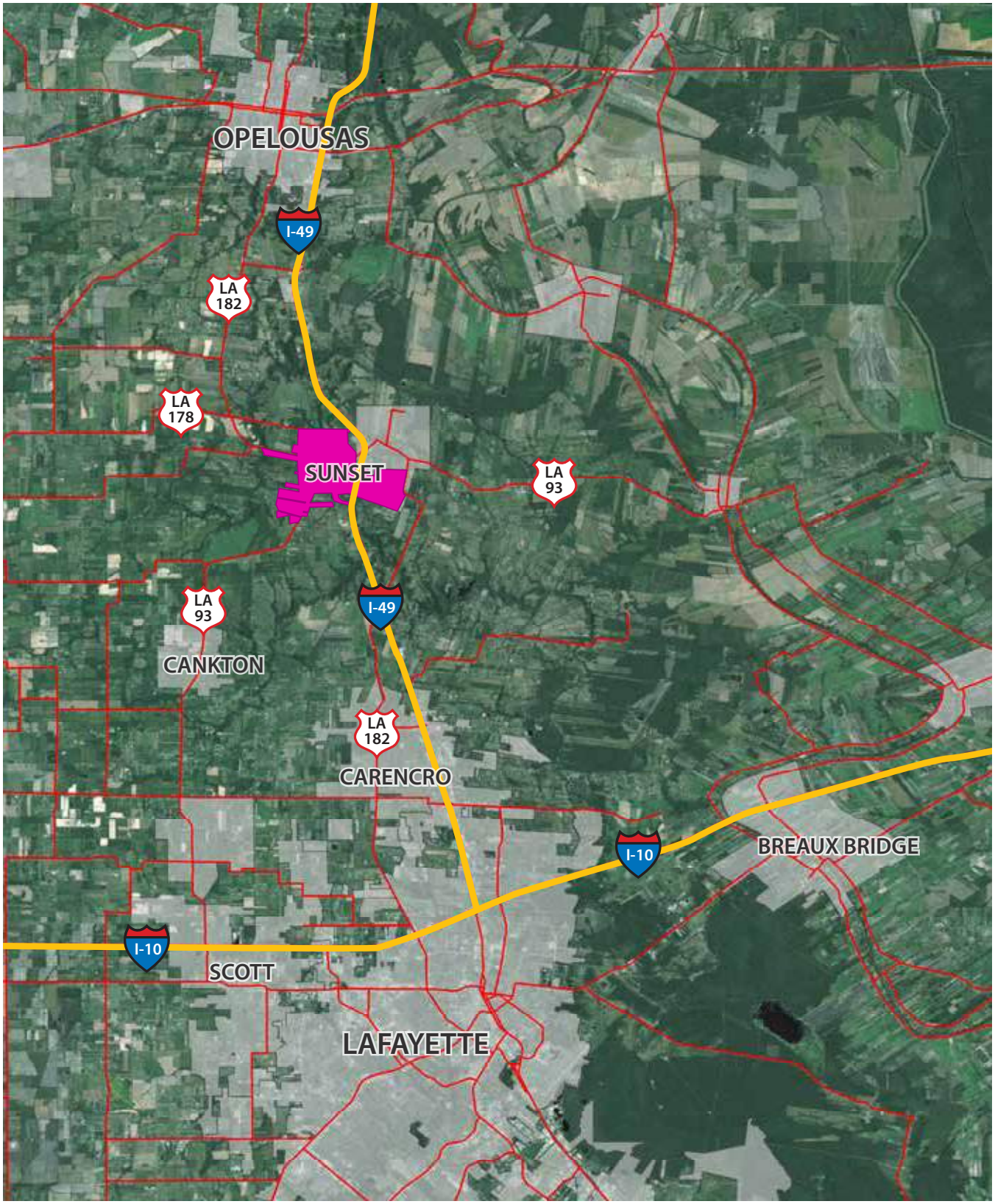
The ease of access to both I-49 and I-10 gives the Town of Sunset a great deal of regional and state-wide connectivity without the problems usually associated with having a major interstate facility slicing through the community. I-10 is a multi-state, multi-lane high-speed highway facility from Florida to California. With the upcoming completion of I-49 north of Shreveport to the Arkansas border, the Town of Sunset will have high-speed connectivity to Shreveport and beyond, and to I-20 which runs through north Louisiana to Mississippi and to Texas. As I-49 is completed in segments south of Lafayette, Sunset's connectivity to communities in Terrebonne, Lafourche, St. Charles, Jefferson, and Orleans Parishes will greatly improve. This stretch of I-49 is in the design phase as of this writing.

Sunset Street Layout and Orientation

In general, the layout of streets in Sunset is greatly influenced by the location of its major arterials and major collector streets. These form spines out from which local streets grow (See Img. 3.4.2). Sometimes the intersections of these local and major streets are at right angles; sometimes not. The railroad line which once ran through the Town of Sunset in a generally northwest to southeast orientation has also played a role in the orientation of streets in Sunset. Today, this railroad corridor is abandoned and may be brought back to life, not as a rail line, but as a community connector corridor of some sort.

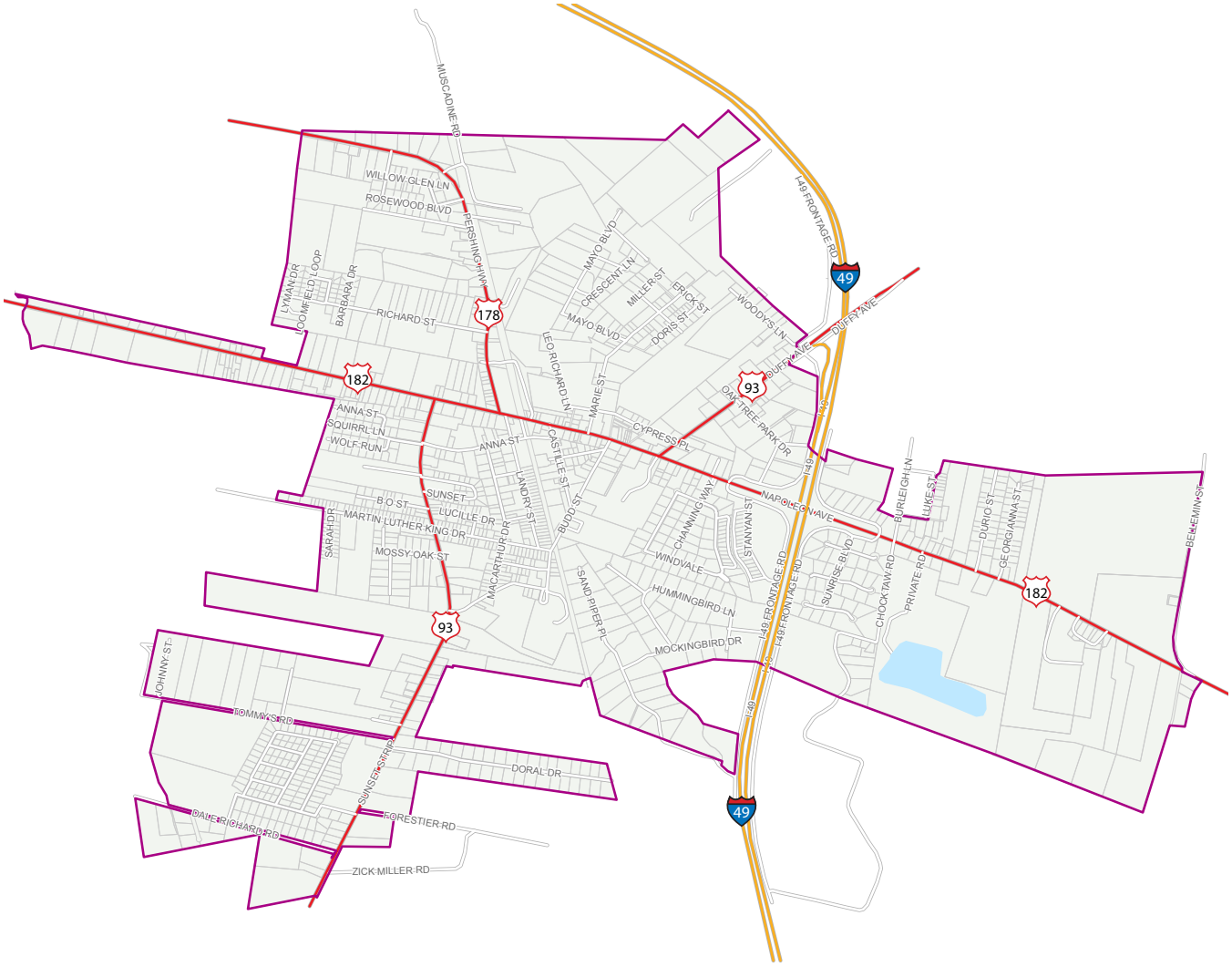
Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Pedestrian and bike paths and similar facilities in the community are measures of connectivity. The more they are present, the easier it is for residents and visitors to get around the community without having to resort to motorized vehicles. An important component of placemaking is the connectivity necessary to facilitate walking and biking in the community. Two methodologies that are useful in measuring



Map 3.4.1: Regional context

3.4 TRANSPORTATION



Map 3.4.2: Sunset street grid

connectivity in a community are the Link to Node Ratio (LNR) and the Connected Node Ratio (CNR). Although such methodologies are usually applied to measure connectivity in larger communities, their application to a town the size of Sunset, nevertheless, provides useful insight into connectivity, and thus walkability, in Sunset.

Some definitions are necessary so that these methodologies can be understood.

Link-Node Ratio

Link-Node Ratio (LNR) is an index of connectivity equal to the number of links divided by the number of nodes within in a study area. Links are defined as roadway or pathway segments between two intersections or the nodes. Nodes also include the end of a cul-de-sac or the end of a dead-end street. A perfect grid has a LNR of 2.5. It has been suggested (Ewing, 1996) that a link-node ratio of 1.4, about halfway between extremes, is a good target for network planning purposes.

Connected Node Ratio

The Connected Node Ratio (CNR) is the number of street intersections divided by the number of intersections plus cul-de-sacs (including dead-end streets). The maximum value is 1.0. Higher numbers indicate that there are relatively few cul-de-sacs/dead-end streets and, theoretically, a higher level of connectivity. CNR values of 0.7 or higher are favored in measuring connectivity with this ratio. According to one recent study (Marshall & Garrick, 2009), a link-node ratio of 1.4 and a connected node ratio of 0.75 are frequently set "...as the minimum connectivity required for a walkable community" (p. 13).

An analysis was performed to determine these ratios for Sunset. Using a street map of the community showing corporate limits, 190 links were found, with 172 nodes. The link-node ratio for Sunset, therefore, is 1.1, a little less than what is considered the minimum necessary for walkability. In addition, the number of connected nodes in Sunset, using the same map, was determined to be 129, which resulted in a CNR of 0.68 for Sunset. Again, this is less than the 0.75 ratio generally considered the minimum for walkability. While the ratios determined for Sunset are marginal at best, the community could institute some provisions in its subdivision regulation that would improve connectivity and, thus, walkability and bikeability.

Currently, there are no bike paths or trails in Sunset. In addition, sidewalks are not required in local development codes used by the Town of Sunset, although sidewalks are present in isolated locations in the Town. From a practical standpoint, these components of connectivity in Sunset are effectively missing at this time.

Sunset's residents would like to increase walkability in the Town and create a comprehensive network of pedestrian and bicycle paths throughout Sunset, as expressed during public meetings and in surveys and comments.

Roadway conditions

The Town of Sunset through its Public Works Department is responsible for the maintenance of local streets. According to the supervisor in charge of this department, it is a struggle to keep local streets in good condition. Throughout the Town, street types vary; some with open ditch construction, and others with subsurface drainage. However, in the newer subdivisions with subsurface drainage, there are very few sidewalks.

State roadways fall under the responsibility of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development for maintenance. In general, problems with state roadways requiring maintenance are addressed as they arise.

Traffic Volume & Flow

Traffic volume data is collected by the Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development at selected representative locations around Sunset. These locations are depicted in map 3.4.3. The numbers shown in conjunction with each station location (red dot) are DOTD station numbers and the history of traffic count volumes at those locations. As these were available for a number of previous consecutive years (1995-2012), the data provided a good base of information upon which to develop projections of traffic growth at these locations out to 2035. Traffic volumes on local streets within the Town of Sunset were not available for this planning effort. However, since these streets are local, residential types or minor collectors for the most part, there is no reason to believe that any of these are either over-capacity or approaching this limit at this

3.4 TRANSPORTATION

time. No mention was made of traffic congestion problems on these streets, although some of these streets are not without problems.

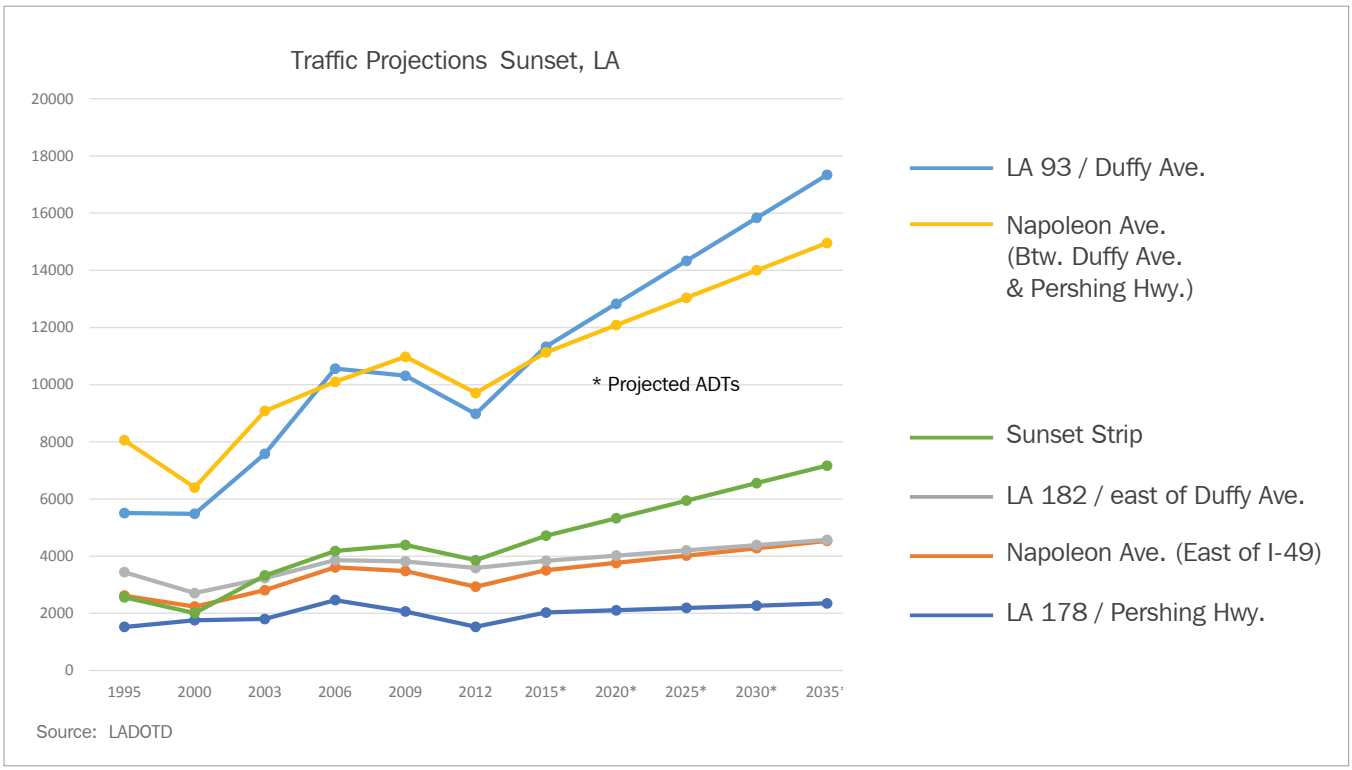
Traffic data associated with the stations shown on map 3.4.3 (including the station noted as not shown) are included in an appendix. Projections, however, are shown in the 3.4.4 as well.

The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) maintains traffic count stations on the state roads in the Town of Sunset. These roads are LA 93 (Duffy Avenue and Sunset Strip), LA 182 (Napoleon), and LA 178 (Pershing Highway). Map 3.4.3 shows that LA 93 and LA 182 (Napoleon Avenue) overlap between Duffy Avenue and Sunset Strip where LA 93 turns south. These roadways are considered Sunset's major arterial roadways.

The traffic projection graphic (Img. 3.4. 4) utilizes the historical traffic count (ADT) base data contained in the appendix to develop ADT projections from 2015 to 2035. The graphic shows that traffic volumes (ADT) at four of the locations in and around Sunset will grow modestly but steadily through 2035. These roadways should easily accommodate this level of traffic in the horizon year assuming normal and expected growth in the area.

As shown in figure 3.4.4, two roadways in particular will experience significant traffic volume growth. However, these two streets currently carry higher traffic volumes that the other four locations and have done so historically. The LA 93 location is Duffy Avenue, the primary connection to and from I-49 that handles virtually all of the commuter traffic of

Img. 3.4.3: Sunset Traffic count locations; NOTE: Station location on Napoleon Avenue east of I-49 not shown on map



Img 3.4.4: Traffic forecast graph

which Sunset has a great deal (see discussion above in this section). However, in order to get to Duffy Avenue and I-49, traffic must utilize Napoleon Avenue (LA 182) for the most part since there is no connection to I-49 from LA 182 (Napoleon Avenue) at this time. The only access at this location is to the service or frontage roads along I-49, although one leads back to LA 93 where it is possible to access I-49.

Transportation and Travel Characteristics

Travel to Work Trips

The Town of Sunset is served by no local transit system at this time. Therefore, the vast percentage of journey to work trips in Sunset (93.42%) is accounted for by private vehicles (cars, trucks, vans, etc.), as shown in Table 3.4.5. This figure for Sunset is a little higher than the comparable figure for Louisiana because virtually all of the metropolitan areas of the State have transit systems, including the City of Lafayette. Sunset's biking and walking modes to work capture just a little less than the State and somewhat less than the U.S. Apparently, many more as a percentage work at home in the country at large than in Sunset or the State.

Vehicles per Household

If such a high percentage of journey to work trips are made by private conveyance, auto availability for households must also reasonably comparable. For 2010, the number of vehicles per household in Sunset are shown as 2.2, which

Table 3.4.5: Mode of Transportation to Work, 2010 (% of trips made by mode)

	Sunset	Louisiana	U.S.
Car, Truck, Van, etc.	93.42%	91.33%	87.32%
Public Transportation	0.25%	2.00%	4.44%
Walk, Biking, other	3.55%	3.81%	4.00%
Work at Home	2.77%	2.86%	4.24%

Source: U. S. Census

is very comparable to the figures for Louisiana and the U.S (See Table 3.4.6). However, the percentage of households with no vehicle is a bit higher in Sunset than in Louisiana and in the U.S.. However, the percentage of Sunset households with at least one but no more than two vehicles is 72.15%, which compares to 74.53% for Louisiana and 71.09% for the U.S. The percentage of multi-vehicle households (3 or more vehicles) in Sunset is somewhat higher than Louisiana, but lower than the U.S. figure. However, all the figures shown in the table above are reasonably close with no significant statistical differences.

Travel Times to Work

Census data for travel time to work indicates that, nearly 45% of Sunset residents have work commutes longer than 30 minutes, which is a higher percentage than that of Louisiana or the U.S. The comparable figures for Louisiana and the U.S. are 35.88% and 38.59%, respectively. (See table 3.4.7). Also, data in the table indicate that a much smaller percentage of Sunset commuters (18.49%) have work commutes of less than 15 minutes. Comparable figures for Louisiana and the U.S. are 26.23% and 25.26%, respectively.

Table 3.4.6: Number of Vehicles per Household, 2010

	Sunset	Louisiana	U.S.
Median Vehicles/HSH	2.2	2.1	2.2
No Vehicles	10.08%	9.17%	8.49%
1 Vehicle	32.39%	35.53%	32.66%
2 Vehicles	39.76%	39.00%	38.43%
3 Vehicles	13.81%	12.64%	15.03%
4+ Vehicles	3.96%	3.66%	5.39%

Source: U. S. Census

Table 3.4.7: Travel Times to Work, 2010

	Sunset	Louisiana	U.S.
Travel Time <15 min.	18.49%	26.23%	25.26%
15-29 minutes	36.83%	37.90%	36.15%
30-59 minutes	33.78%	27.11%	29.43%
60+ minutes	10.90%	8.77%	9.16%

Source: U. S. Census

These generally longer commute to work times in Sunset, in addition to the high percent of work trips by private vehicle, may account for much of the peak hour traffic congestion that is evident at the intersection of Duffy Avenue and Napoleon Avenue. Although the Duffy Avenue approach to this intersection is stop-sign controlled, active traffic control by law enforcement personnel is required during the PM peak period in particular to reduce traffic build-up and congestion, and to reduce the potential for traffic accidents. These data also suggest that Sunset is more of a "bedroom" community. People choose to live in Sunset for a number of reasons, but most work elsewhere within the Lafayette or Opelousas metropolitan area.

Specific Corridors

Duffy Avenue

During public, stakeholder and steering committee meetings a majority of the residents of Sunset expressed the need to transform the currently residential Duffy Avenue into a commercial corridor. Duffy Avenue currently is one of the most utilized corridors in Sunset and during peak hours frequently congested. Traffic on Duffy Avenue is further projected to increase dramatically by the planning horizon (see Img 3.4.4: Traffic forecast graph). Commercial uses increase traffic volumes compared to residential ones. Thus, in case of commercial land use on Duffy Avenue, the current design of the corridor would be insufficient. A number of Sunset residents further suggested to implement either a traffic light or a roundabout on the intersection of Duffy Avenue and Napoleon Avenue, where a police office currently regulates traffic during peak times.

Rail Corridor

Img. 3.4.8: Sunset traffic control on Duffy Avenue and Napoleon Avenue at rush hour

The abandoned rail corridor that leads through the center of the Town of Sunset is not used. According to the Sr. Manager of Union Pacific Railway's Property Management & Real Estate department, the railroad company owns the corridor in fee. (Email conversation 10/23/2014). Earlier efforts to transform the corridor into a public trail have failed due to the opposition of corridor neighbors who were concerned about safety issues. Additionally the Town leadership stated that the ownership of the land was unclear. During public meetings for the comprehensive plan a large number of Sunset residents stated that they would like to see the corridor transformed into a multi-use trail. (More on this in section 3.9: Recreation)

Metropolitan Planning Organization

As a new member of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, Sunset will be able to participate in the planning process that produces the metropolitan transportation plan. Metropolitan transportation plans include the methodology to indicate where roadway capacity improvements are needed based on forecasted deficiencies in the planning horizon year. The roadway improvements recommended in such a transportation plan normally include committed projects—for which funding has been allocated—and long-range projects, all designed to address the deficiencies noted. However, final recommendations must be based on the expected availability of future funding, meaning that the plan must be "fiscally constrained." Overall, this usually means that not all projects can be included in the long run, so the transportation plan utilizes a screening process to rank projects according to their ability to reduce congestion (Existing + Committed). Ultimately, the transportation plan will generate a program of staged improvements to the transportation system over three time

periods, or stages (short term, intermediate term, and long-term), in order to preserve the necessity of recommending a system of roadway improvements that is fiscally constrained.

Recommendations

With this Comprehensive Plan, Sunset has taken the first step in transforming itself into a community which preserves and enhances its historical charm and unique qualities. Transportation necessarily plays an important role in all this. Although Sunset lacks at this time all the components of a full transportation system, it is expected that this deficiency will be corrected in time. When all the transportation pieces are present and available to Sunset, its citizens and visitors will enjoy a full range of travel options, with the appropriate mode available for the appropriate trip. This will undoubtedly reduce congestion and make travel safer and more pleasant for all. Until that happens, however, Sunset must deal with those issues over which it can exercise some level of control. These include a major streets plan, and transportation-related aspects of its development code. Overall, Sunset needs a safe and efficient transportation system. What follows are the recommendations pertaining to a safe and efficient transportation system for the Town of Sunset.

Internal Connectivity

The Town of Sunset should begin to address its future transportation needs by improving the existing street grid and adopting policies that will facilitate a better street pattern for future subdivisions.

Major Streets Plan

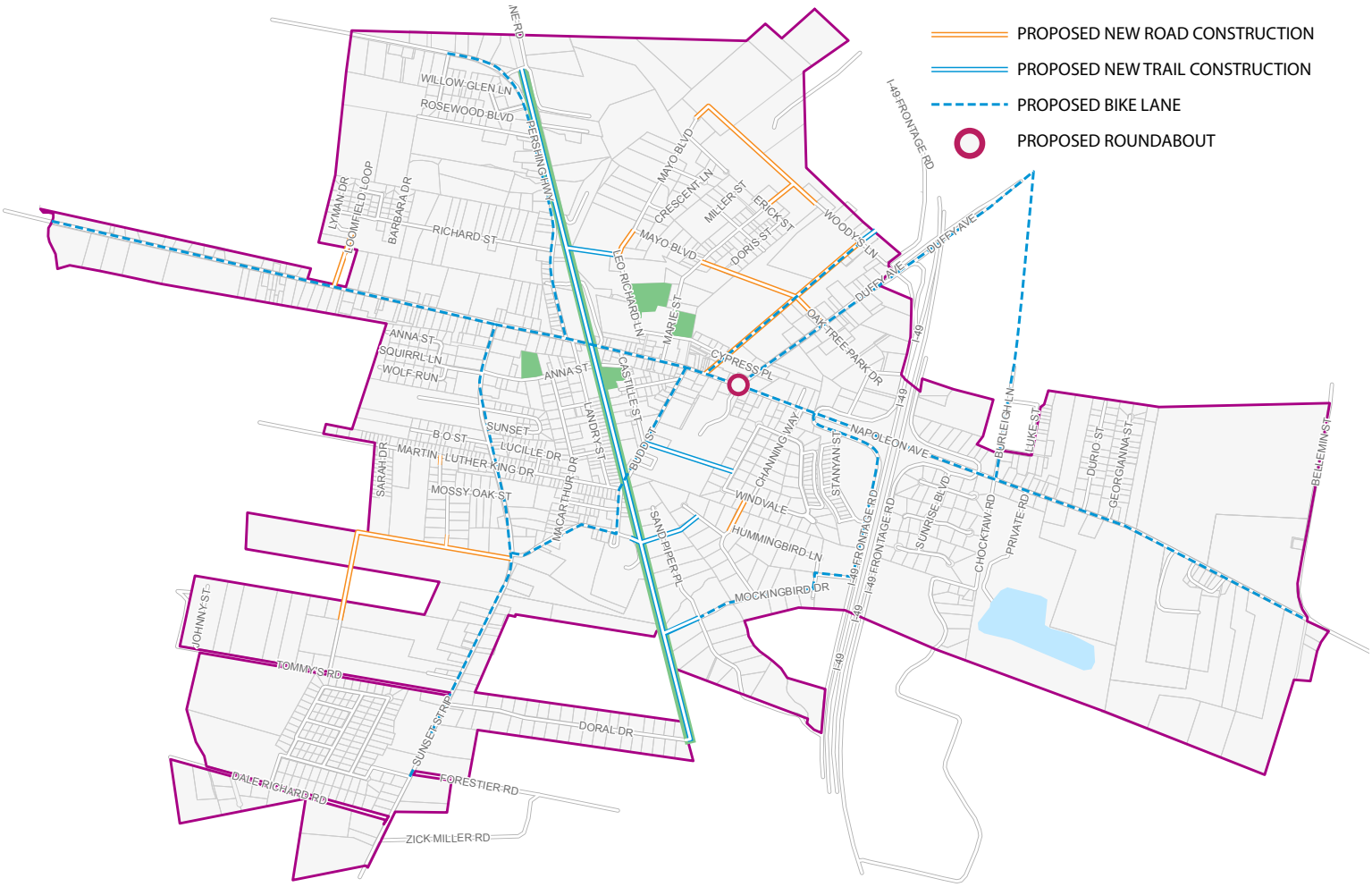
It is difficult to change what already exists as streets currently provide access to parcels of land and, for the most part, have determined land use patterns at least in the short term. However, the Major Street Plan which has been prepared for this comprehensive plan indicates the recommended major network and the new roads and/or realignments which should be implemented in Sunset over the planning horizon (2035). These new roads are designed to facilitate future development and provide better access and connectivity throughout the Town.

New Road Construction

In order to improve internal connectivity and walkability and traffic flow, the Town of Sunset should make efforts to connect the fragmented street grid at strategic locations. The following new road constructions are recommended: (See Map. 3.4.9)

The undeveloped subdivision between Dale Richard Road and Tommy's Road should provide two additional connections to Tommy's Road, to improve access to the approximately 130 lots. Tommy's Road should further be paved and subsequently annexed by the Town of Sunset.

The cul-de-sac on Mossy Oak Street should be connected to Martin Luther King Drive. Further Churchill Street should be extended across Sunset Strip and connect with Timber Trail, Mossy Oak's second cul-de-sac. Churchill should, in a second phase, as the area sees more residential development, be further extended westward and connected northward (as shown on the major street plan) with an additional road to the subdivision between Dale Richard Road and Tommy's Road. Those new constructions will effectively improve the connectivity in the southwest of Sunset and prepare this area for future development.



Map. 3.4.9: Sunset Major Street Plan

In order to connect the development around Richard Street in the Pershing neighborhood more closely to the urban fabric of Sunset, Lyman Drive should be extended to connect with Summerset Lane. Alternatively Bloomfield Loop could be extended to Napoleon Avenue. While this option would be a longer stretch, it would not impact any existing development. The parcels between Richard Street and Napoleon Avenue include four lots which currently have no road access (More on this in Section 3.1: Land Use) and a number of vacant lots that could potentially be developed within the planning horizon of this plan. If land in this area gets developed, it is crucial that all lots have direct access to a public right-of-way. Further, Richard Street and Napoleon Avenue should then be connected on more locations, building block sizes of not larger than 400 feet in order to ensure a walkable environment.

Mayo Boulevard should be connected to Leo Richard Lane in the south and to mend the street grid in that area to provide for a walkable environment. This new right-of-way can potentially also be facilitated to extend the sewerage system to the Mayo subdivision, which is currently not connected to the sewer net. (More on this in the Section 3.5: Infrastructure). Further, Woody's Lane should be extended

northwestward to meet Mayo Boulevard. As the vacant land between Duffy Avenue and Marie Street is in the process of being subdivided for single family development. Such an extension would embed the new subdivision into the neighborhood and avoid another isolated development that separates neighborhoods and inhibits walkability in Sunset.

The Town of Sunset should require new development between Duffy Avenue and Marie Street to be adequately connected to the existing street grid and provide sufficient provisions for pedestrians and bicyclists. A new subdivision should, on a minimum, provide access to Mayo Boulevard, Oak Tree Park Drive, Napoleon Avenue and Woody's lane. Internal connectivity should be provided.

Shady Meadows is currently isolated from the Sunset street grid and can only be accessed from I-49 Frontage Road. Shady Meadows is also not connected to the Town's sewer system. (More on this in Section 3.5: Infrastructure). In order to provide better access to and from the neighborhood, Sandpiper Place should connect to Churchill Street with a newly constructed road or pedestrian and bike trail, crossing the abandoned rail corridor. The connection could make use of a currently vacant lot in the subdivision so that no developed lots are impacted. This road construction is crucial for Sunset, as it also provides the necessary public right-of-way to extend the Town's sewerage system to Shady Meadows.

Channing Way in the Oak Trace neighborhood should additionally be connected to Shady Meadows to improve internal connection and thus walkability, and provide another access point to the isolated neighborhood.

The following new trail constructions are recommended:

Sunset should support the transformation of the abandoned rail corridor to a multi-use path (More on this in Section 3.9: Recreation). Such a path would efficiently improve Sunset's walkability and link Sunset's future green spaces with the Town center and the Sunset Elementary School. The trail should further be connected to the Shady Meadows neighborhood via an extension of Mockingbird Drive., and so facilitate a convenient and efficient bicycle network in Sunset.

Sunset should connect the Oak Trace neighborhood with Budd Street via a multi-use path. The vacant land lying in between is prime land for future residential development. Such a trail would ensure the proper connection of development on this land to the adjacent neighborhoods, and reconnect Oak Trace to the urban fabric of Sunset.

Sunset should, in the future, require all new subdivisions to be adequately connected to the existing street grid with block sizes not exceeding 400ft in length in order to provide a walkable environment and an efficient street grid for vehicular circulation.

Additionally to the above, the Town of Sunset should adopt policies or design principles that will help to foster better access, mobility, traffic and pedestrian safety, and connectivity throughout the community. Such principles should be incorporated into a set of subdivision regulations (development codes).

Complete Streets

The underlying idea of Complete Streets is that choice is key to improvements in transportation safety, service, comfort, and performance. The ability to choose a mode of transportation, given

the needs of the trip, frees the traveler from exclusive dependency on the automobile. All users—pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers—are served by an effective Complete Streets system which takes into consideration the needs of all users, including those with disabilities, the elderly, and children. Mindful of the growing number of bicyclists in the region and the growing number of biking opportunities, the Town of Sunset should begin to address the need for designated bike paths and trails in the Town. Bike paths or routes can provide a great deal of connectivity in the community, giving cyclists access to jobs and services, in addition to recreational opportunities. But, to achieve connectivity, bike paths must allow reasonably convenient (and safe) travel from residential areas to major shopping and employment centers around the Parish.

According to the National Complete Streets Coalition (www.completestreets.org), the benefits associated with implementation of a Complete Streets policy address a wide range of community issues and these benefits accrue to all communities, regardless of size or location and are stated in the box below.

Thus the Town of Sunset should adopt a Complete Streets ordinance and ensure that the following goals are met by all new road construction and improvements of existing roads.

- *Inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in all street projects*
- *Construction of ADA-compliant pedestrian facilities throughout the Town.*
- *Connecting the existing pedestrian infrastructure.*
- *Collection of traffic accident data to inform needed pedestrians and bicyclists safety improvements.*
- *Evaluation of all regulations that pertain to pedestrians and bicyclists, and including the existing pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure, and update these regulations as needed.*

BENEFITS OF COMPLETE STREETS

- *Economic growth and stability: Increased access can result in increased sales, economic growth and stabilization of marginal areas.*
- *Safety improvements: Measures designed to reduce pedestrian-vehicular conflicts have been shown to reduce risks to pedestrians by a significant amount.*
- *Traffic congestion reduction and capacity increases: Allows people to avoid congested travel corridors and, in doing so, increase transportation network capacity and reduce congestion*
- *Public health improvements: Increased use of bicycles and more walking help to improve health through increased activity.*
- *Child safety: Streets designed to safely accommodate bicycling and walking encourage children to more frequently engage in physical activity and gain independence. A Complete Streets program helps the Safe Routes to School program which is gaining in popularity around the country.*
- *Air quality improvements: The substitution of a bike trip for one automobile trip will help to reduce automobile emissions which helps to achieve cleaner air in the community.*

3.4 TRANSPORTATION

Street Design and Layout

The design and layout of new streets and roadways in the Town of Sunset—streets under Sunset's control—should be based on the following design principles (Recommended Practices For Subdivision Streets, ITE, 1965; updated 1993) whenever possible:

Operational Improvements

From the traffic projections produced for this section, along with other related transportation data, it is clear that commuter traffic in Sunset is on the rise. Although this section does not contain similar data for Sunset, anecdotal information and well as informal observation

STREETS LAYOUT DESIGN PRINCIPLES

- *All land parcels should have adequate vehicular and pedestrian access.*
- *Since the primary function of local streets is to provide access to abutting properties, street widths, the placement of sidewalks, the pattern of streets in the community, and the number of intersections should all relate to the safety and efficiency of providing access to abutting properties.*
- *Local street systems should be designed to minimize through traffic movements, but every effort should be made to eliminate cul-de-sacs or dead-end streets.*
- *Through traffic on local streets and collectors tends to increase average speed and volume of traffic, thereby increasing accident potential. In doing so, these all detract from residential amenities.*
- *Street patterns should minimize excessive vehicular travel.*
- *Ideally, every part of a residential area should be interconnected with every other part, and with peripheral developments as directly as possible. Although this may conflict with other principles, excessive indirect travel reduces the livability of an individual area. In addition, added travel within neighborhoods increase fuel consumption, contribute to air pollution, increases midblock "frictions" with parked cars, driveways and pedestrians. This results in increased hazards within the neighborhood.*
- *Local street systems should be logical and comprehensive with rational systems of street naming and numbering, simple, consistent, and understandable.*
- *Such systems should be designed to accommodate the needs of visitors, delivery trucks, emergency vehicles, and residents.*
- *The efficiency of arterial streets should not be adversely impacted by adjacent local circulation and land development patterns.*
- *This may require the application of access management techniques involving the control of driveways, placement of intersections, and full or partial control of access. Ideally, land development should occur so that no residential parcels require direct access to major streets.*
- *The local circulation system should not have to rely on extensive traffic regulations to function efficiently and safely.*
- *Consideration of the type and intensity of land use, off-street parking, zoning and subdivision requirements, off-street maneuver areas and other accessory circulation elements concurrently with street design guidelines will minimize the need for traffic regulation and enforcement. Development controls should be sufficient to provide circulation amenities necessary to keep the need for enforcement to a minimum. Four-way stop signs should not be used as a speed control device at minor/local street intersections.*
- *Traffic generators in residential areas should be considered in the design of local circulation patterns.*
- *Schools, shopping facilities, and churches can cause traffic congestion on the local street system. These should be located to the extent possible along collector streets.*

- *Planning and construction of residential streets should clearly indicate their local land access function.*

- *Residential streets should have an appearance in keeping with their function. They should not be over-designed or over-built. Appurtenances (street lights, etc.) should be in keeping with the residential character and pedestrian scale.*

- *The local street system should be designed for a low volume of traffic.*

- *To the extent possible, the design of the local and collector street system should recognize the need for residential amenities along all the streets in the neighborhood.*

- *Local streets should be designed to discourage excessive speeds.*

- *Residential streets should be designed to discourage fast movement (more than 30 mph) through the use of traffic calming techniques.*

- *Pedestrian-vehicular conflict points should be minimized.*

- *Pedestrian travel within the neighborhood, such as from home to school, or from within the neighborhood to points outside should entail a minimum of street crossings. Sometimes this can be achieved through proper design of street patterns, land use arrangements, school district boundaries, and pedestrian routes. Typical methods include use of looped streets, special interior pedestrian paths and the proper placement of high pedestrian traffic generators. In general, while vehicular flow is outward-oriented to the peripheral major streets, pedestrian travel should be inward-oriented to avoid these heavier vehicular flows. It is important, therefore, that sidewalks be available on both local and collector streets.*

- *Only the minimum amount of land/space should be devoted to street uses.*

- *It is desirable to minimize local street mileage and pavement area in order to reduce construction and maintenance costs, as well as to allow the most economic land use pattern.*

- *The system or arrangement of local streets should allow development parcels to be platted in economical and practical patterns, shapes, and sizes.*

- *Streets as a function of land use must not unduly hinder the development of land. Distances between streets, angles of intersections, the number of streets, and related elements all impact and influence efficient lot layout in an area.*

indicate that a similar situation, if less dramatic, exists locally and could be getting worse. A range of operational improvements can be considered which can increase efficiency within the roadway network. Many of these suggested improvements are relatively inexpensive and could be cost-effective measures to improve traffic operations locally and reduce delays. Traffic operational improvements could include various signalization improvements (new signals, synchronization, and signal interconnect).

Access Management

Effective strategies in the area of Access Management have been used to preserve the traffic-carrying characteristics of minor and major arterials which are threatened with excessive and/or uncontrolled curb cuts. Access Management strategies can include left-turn restrictions, prohibition of on-street parking, intersection and/or traffic signal spacing, the use of frontage roads to control direct access to land use, various types of turn lanes, roadway modifications with medians, and more. Access

management policies can be written into transportation plans, subdivision regulations, or major thoroughfare plans. Access Management techniques are cost-effective and should be pursued by the Town of Sunset particularly with new commercial centers and development, and the proposed commercial redevelopment of Duffy Avenue These include:

- *Construction of right-turn lanes at congested intersections.*
- *Center left turn lanes on heavily traveled commercial streets.*
- *Traffic control signage improvements*
- *Turn prohibitions to limit conflicting movements at intersections during peak hours.*

Carpooling

As Sunset's journey-to-work trips made by single-occupancy vehicles amount to a comparably large percentage, Sunset should make efforts to promote carpooling and shuttle buses to major employment areas in order to address peak hour congestion. If shuttle buses turn out as a feasible transportation alternative for Sunset residents, the Town could look into the establishment of a Park-N-Ride facility.

Highway Safety

Since a great deal of public tax monies are spent on building the transportation and highway infrastructure, it is important that sufficient funds are dedicated to improve highway safety. This applies only to roadways which utilized state and/or federal funds in their construction and are part of the major street plan identified in the plan. The Town of Sunset can benefit, as the metropolitan transportation plan is highly likely to recommend system preservation be given funding priority. The plan, therefore, allocates a significant amount of funds available precisely for this purpose. Some of this will likely accrue to Sunset.

Metropolitan Planning Organization

In addition, the Town of Sunset will eventually need to work in conjunction with the Lafayette MPO to ensure its roadway and related transportation needs are included in the metropolitan transportation plan. This is not something that needs to be done immediately, but it is most certainly in Sunset's future.

Transportation & Land Use

There is a direct link between land use and transportation. Virtually all land use types generate traffic, some more than others. But transportation improvements necessary to accommodate this traffic usually makes the land more accessible and, therefore, increases the likelihood of induced land development. In turn, transportation providers are increasingly being asked to assess the likely land development impacts of their transportation improvements and, in some cases, to mitigate these impacts.

Dispersed land development may contribute to growing environmental problems. Such development is characterized by lower densities, reduced transportation options, marked separation of residences, jobs, and shopping opportunities. Moreover, such development, according to the EPA, can exacerbate air and water pollution and increase habitat loss, as well as increase demands on the transportation system, reducing its efficiency. Such reduction in efficiency is a result of the same number of people and same level of economic activity generating more and longer trips. However, if transportation and land use are planned in conjunction with each other, the challenges associated with managing these problems are reduced. For this reason,

decision-makers in Sunset should use the metropolitan transportation plan as a resource to be consulted along with its Comprehensive Plan when choices regarding transportation and land use are presented. Sunset should further coordinate land use decisions and transportation decisions and ensure that subdivision regulations require adequate transportation infrastructure for proposed land uses.

Town Center

With the creation of a town center, the Town of Sunset will need to ensure that all areas of this town center are accessible to pedestrians, including those with disabilities in accordance with ADA guidelines. In other areas, sidewalks along state routes through the downtown area of Sunset can be constructed through grants from DOTD's Alternative Transportation program. Additionally, the roadways leading to the Middle School are in need of improvements as the streets are currently too narrow to safely accommodate school buses and cars. However, a more comprehensive approach needs to be taken to facilitate the type of safe and efficient connectivity which pedestrians require. Specific policy recommendations, if adopted, would begin to more comprehensively address pedestrian needs in the Town. These include:

- *The completion of all ADA-required improvements in the designated town center, including crosswalks, signage, stop lines, additional wheelchair ramps, the widening of sidewalks where necessary, and seamless, or at least unimpeded pedestrian access throughout.*
- *Coordinate and incorporate pedestrian connectivity needs associated with the town center with the design suggestions to enhance downtown gateways, and other improvements shown in another section of this plan.*
- *Completion of a detailed assessment of ADA-related needs in some of the more heavily traveled commercial corridors in the Town of Sunset (Napoleon and Duffy), and the implementation of needed improvements to enhance or promote pedestrian connectivity and safety.*
- *Coordination of connectivity and ADA requirements relative to transit stop and transit shelter locations along all transit routes at the appropriate time.*
- *Amendment the existing subdivision regulations to require sidewalks, ADA ramps, and better pedestrian connectivity and safety in every new development, whether residential or commercial.*

Public Transportation

The Town of Sunset should expect to experience a growing demand for regional transit. In large part this is attributable to the aging Baby Boomer population and the desire for people to age in place. While it is true that the first wave of this generation turned 65 yrs. in 2011, their senior years may be characterized more by travel and mobility, rather than aging in place. Nevertheless, the lifestyle changes which are expected to accompany the aging of the 'Boomer" generation—such as smaller households, leading to smaller dwellings on smaller lots—may lead to a surge in in-fill development in established urban areas. This development, in turn, could lead to the higher densities which are conducive to efficient transit operations. If current trends continue—and there is every indication that they will—a community's ability to meet its future travel demands will depend significantly on its ability to offer the public an integrated travel options. Sunset should thus partner with other communities and aim to attract a public transportation provider to establish a route through Sunset.

Duffy Avenue

Although sentiment for a ramp connector at Napoleon (LA 182) and I-49 was discussed a

few times and given support at several planning meetings with the citizens of the Town of Sunset, such a connector will be impossible to bring to fruition. One issue is the U.S. Federal Highway Administration's standards for highway interchange spacing, which is a minimum of one mile apart in urban areas and two miles apart in more rural areas. This standard helps maintain the functioning and flow of traffic on the highway. The existing interchanges are less than one mile apart. In addition, LA 182 (Napoleon) crosses I-49 via an overpass. The construction of the LA 182 overpass required built-up approaches at a certain grade to support the LA 182 roadway as it crosses over I-49 at the required clearances. In the field, it is quite evident that the service road running along the west side of I-49 at this location, hugs the slope of the embankment which supports LA 182. The addition of a ramp connection to I-49 South would be adversely impacted by this embankment and the underlying drainage system, which would result in significant additional costs to have it engineered and constructed properly. Another issue for the ramp connector to southbound I-49 is the apparent lack of sufficient clearances to allow a properly designed ramp to fit between the service road along the west side of I-49 at this location and I-49. Because of these very tight horizontal clearances, a ramp connector may not fit within interstate ramp guidelines. The southbound on-ramp at this location would probably need an extended acceleration lane to avoid conflicts with traffic entering southbound I-49 from LA 93, given the relative close proximity of the two on-ramps. Such conflicts could cause traffic slowdowns during the peak period for southbound I-49 traffic.

Without this additional connector, it should be assumed that nearly all of the traffic generated in Sunset will utilize Duffy (LA 93) to get to and from I-49. Nevertheless, given the projected traffic growth on Duffy Avenue for the planning horizon and local sentiment to encourage commercial development such that Duffy becomes a commercial corridor, care must be taken to ensure that all users and the adjacent land uses can be adequately and safely accommodated without causing traffic congestion on the corridor.

One recommendation to facilitate traffic flow is to ensure that the proposed roundabout at the Duffy/Napoleon intersection is designed to safely accommodate traffic including large trucks. The design of this facility will require additional ROW to safely meet the needs of all traffic and enhance traffic flow through it at a reasonable speed. Although a proposed design for this roundabout is provided, it should not be substituted for required engineering design based on traffic and other considerations (ROW, utilities, etc.).

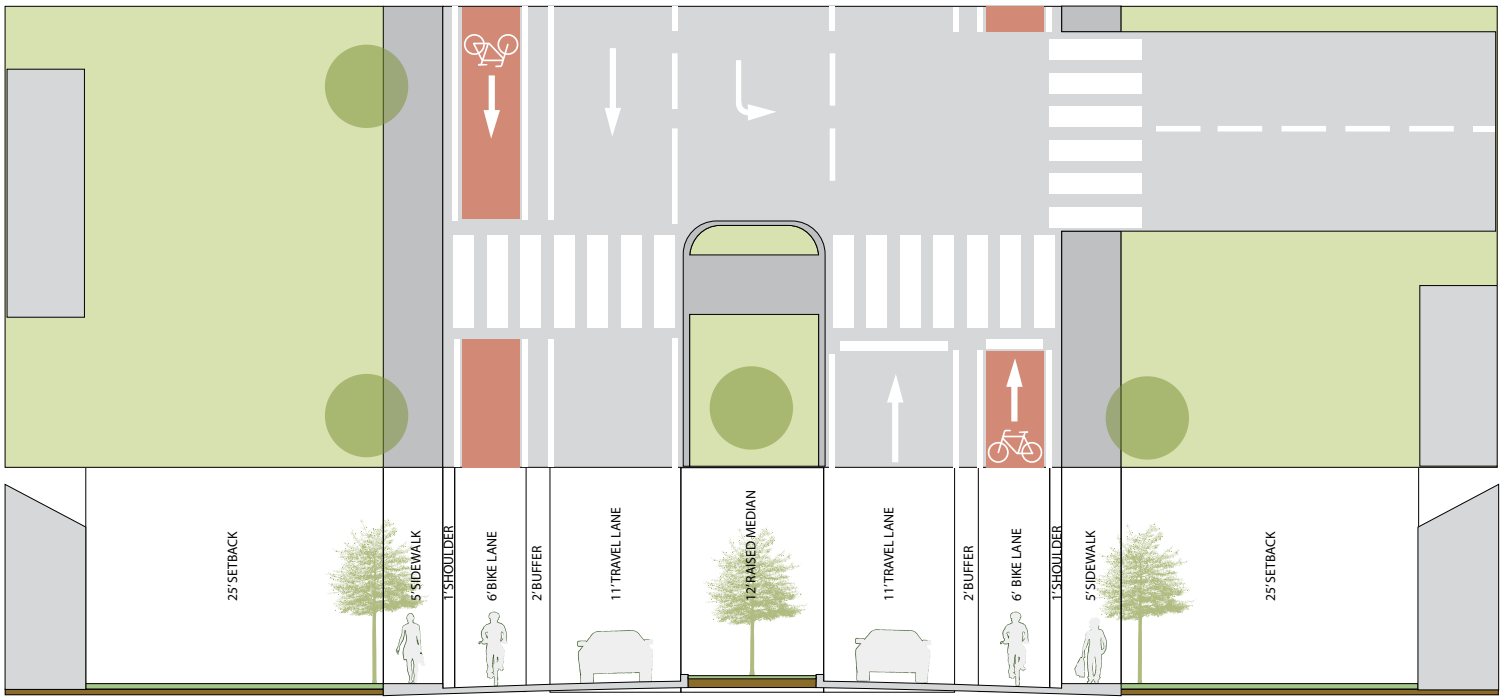
Much discussion during community meetings was on the commercialization of Duffy Avenue. As this corridor is now a major gateway into the Town of Sunset, how this commercialization is handled is critical to its aesthetics and the overall traffic function of the corridor. The corridor is also to be included in the bike path system being proposed for Sunset. This path system can be handled two ways. One has the bike path located in additional acquired ROW on both side of Duffy. The other has dedicated bike lanes utilizing the outside travel lane in each direction on Duffy Avenue

The question to be addressed is whether Duffy should be reduced to one lane in each direction with bike lanes and a wide, landscaped center median. Several factors must be considered to arrive at a suitable answer. These are shown below.

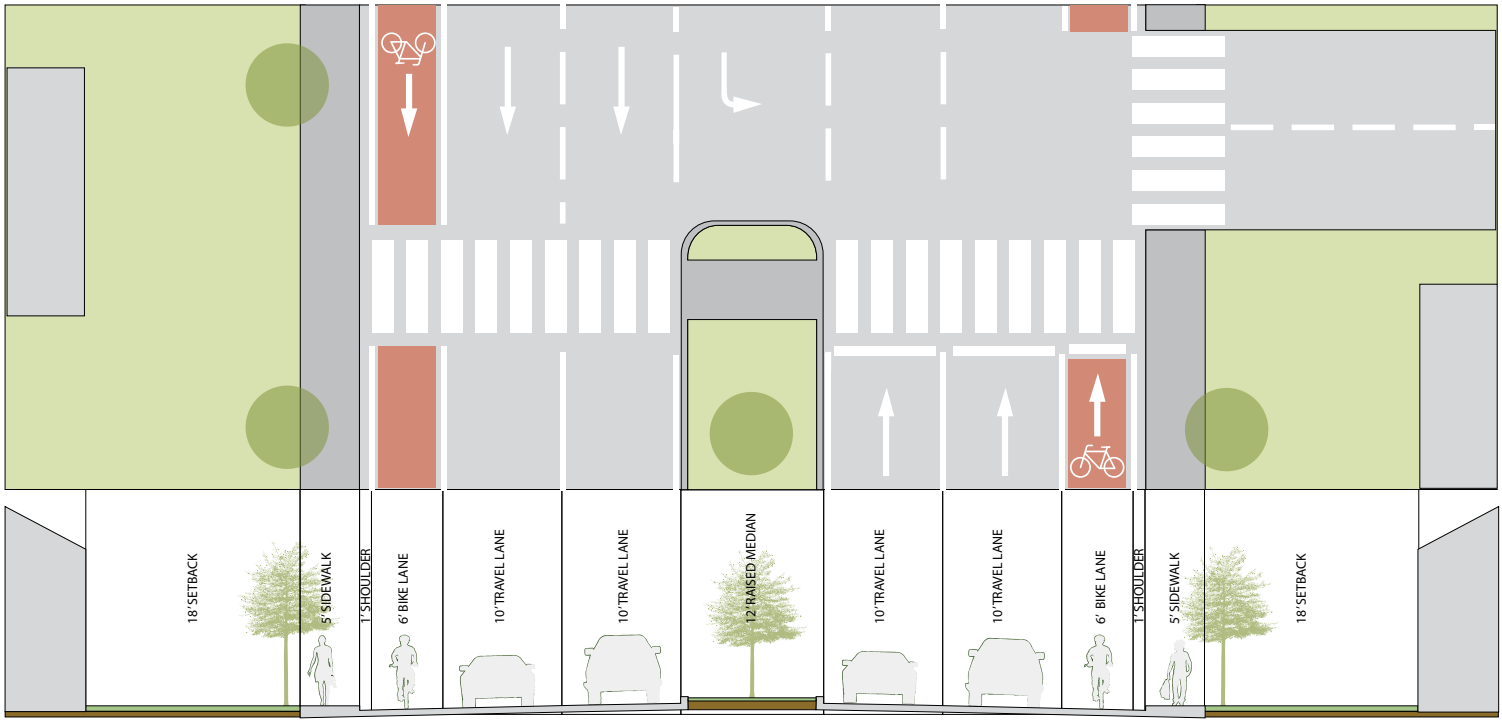
- *The intensity of commercial development along Duffy Avenue corridor.*
- *The use of access management techniques to limit curb/driveway cuts along the corridor.*
- *The need for an actuated traffic signal at Duffy and Oak Tree Park Drive, actuated to allow nearly uninterrupted free flow on Duffy.*
- *Left turn bays designed into the landscaped center median on Duffy Avenue*
- *An enhanced U-turn lane on Duffy north of Oak Tree Park Drive.*
- *The prohibition of left turns (except from the signalized intersection) from property along the Duffy Avenue corridor. The proposed roundabout at*

Img. 3.4.10: Possible design for Duffy Avenue improvements: one car lane and a bike lane in each direction

3.4 TRANSPORTATION



DUFFY AVENUE / PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS 1



DUFFY AVENUE / PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS 2

Img. 3.4.11: Sections of two possible designs for Duffy Avenue

Duffy/Napoleon intersection and the U-turn lane (see above) will facilitate left turns.

- *Appropriate zoning and other regulations (signage, landscaping, etc.) to gradually facilitate and enhance land use changes.*

- *Two lanes of traffic (one in each direction) with bike lanes and a landscaped center median for the Duffy corridor can work but only under the following conditions:*

  - *Commercial development must be strictly controlled through appropriate zoning regulations. Mixed use development set back from the roadway are preferable, coupled with strong and enforced access management techniques (such as a common ingress/egress) to limit curb/driveway cuts onto Duffy. The proliferation of curb/driveway cuts in this corridor will severely impact traffic flow and safety.*

  - *Land use and aesthetics in this gateway corridor will be greatly enhanced by the adoption, use, and enforcement of appropriate signage and landscaping controls.*

  - *Because there is a strong probability that additional commercial development will take place quickly on the land around Oak Tree Park Drive, a traffic signal (assuming the warrants are met) is recommended for the intersection of this street with Duffy Avenue It should be actuated such that traffic flow on Duffy is stopped only when necessary to accommodate left turning movements from Oak Tree Park Drive.*

  - *The landscaped center median in the Duffy corridor needs to be broken at a few logical points in the corridor and left turn bays should be incorporated into the median to facilitate access to property.*

  - *Left turns from Duffy Avenue property should be prohibited in the corridor to facilitate traffic flow and enhance safety. This will also reduce the need for additional traffic signals. To accommodate left turning movements (except at Oak Tree Park Drive where a signal is to be installed), both a roundabout at Duffy/Napoleon of sufficient size, and an enhanced U-turn lane on Duffy north of Oak Tree Park Drive must be installed.*

Nothing recommended here negates the need for further traffic engineering and planning study. Duffy Avenue should be treated as a corridor with traffic projections and land use considerations used as the basis for the timing and implementation of these recommendations. The sensitive handling and timing of these recommendations will allow the Town of Sunset to develop a very attractive gateway corridor into its community.

Rail Corridor

The transformation of the rail corridor into a public greenway would greatly improve the Town's internal connectivity and the local pedestrian and bicycle network. Thus the Town of Sunset should support this project and begin to initiate a community led effort for establishing a greenway it the abandoned corridor. (More on this in Section 3.9: Recreation)

3.4 TRANSPORTATION

Goals & Objectives

Goal 4.1: Improve the connectivity of the existing street grid and adopt policies that will facilitate a better street pattern for future subdivisions.

Objective 4.1.1
Adopt a Major Street Plan for Sunset as shown in Map 3.4.9. Recommended components of this plan are shown of the map. Seek funding for the local components of the Major Street Plan, particularly those designed to improve corridor traffic flow, capacity, safety, or connectivity.

Objective 4.1.2
Adopt subdivision regulations that require new subdivisions to provide a comprehensive connection to the existing street grid, as well as internal connectivity.

Objective 4.1.3
Adopt policies and design principles that foster better access, mobility, traffic and pedestrian safety, and connectivity throughout the community. Incorporate those principles into the Town's subdivision regulations.

Objective 4.1.4
Base future design and layout of new streets and roadways in the Town of Sunset on the design principles stated in the element above.

Goal 4.2: Create a multimodal transportation system for Sunset to provide an integrated travel options to the residents of the Town of Sunset that allows for the best mode of transportation for each trip, as walking and cycling for local trips, public transit for travel on congested corridors and for non-drivers, and automobile travel to access dispersed destinations and for carrying loads.

Objective 4.2.1:
Adopt a Complete Streets policy for the Town of Sunset. Update local roadway standards and development requirements to facilitate implementation of the policy.

Objective 4.2.2:
Retrofit Napoleon Avenue between Duffy Avenue and Pershing Highway to a Complete Street, including bike lanes in both directions, pedestrian crossings on major nodes, the addition of street

trees along the corridor, and stormwater management around the intersection of Napoleon Avenue and Castille Street.

Objective 4.2.3:
Conduct a traffic engineering and planning study for the redesign of the Duffy Avenue corridor as Complete Street.

Objective 4.2.4:
Establish development codes to require sidewalks in conjunction with all new streets in new subdivisions, and bike paths for improved inter-development and inter-community connectivity.

Objective 4.2.5:
Include ADA-required improvements in the development of the Sunset town center.

Objective 4.2.6:
Require pedestrian and bicycle linkages/connections to existing or planned infrastructure and public facilities along all public streets

Objective 4.2.7:
Add pedestrian crossings where needed.

Objective 4.2.8:
Partner with other communities in the region to attract a regional public transportation provider to establish a route through the Town of Sunset.

Goal 4.3: Employ traffic operational improvement strategies at key locations to increase efficiency within the Sunset roadway network, advance Sunset's transportation infrastructure, and improve traffic flow on the major streets.

Objective 4.3.1
Fund and implement a roundabout at the intersection of Duffy Avenue (Highway 93) and Napoleon Avenue (Highway 182). Before this is implemented, appropriate traffic engineering analysis should be undertaken.

Objective 4.3.2
Seek funding to implement access management improvements on Duffy Avenue to support neighborhood – mixed use infill and redevelopment along this corridor.

3.4 TRANSPORTATION

Goal 4.4: Create a strong bicycle transportation network for the Town of Sunset.

Objective 4.4.1:
Address the need for designated bike paths and trails in the Town. Create a connected bicycle network that includes trails, bike Lanes, shared lanes, bicycle-friendly intersections, signage, and parking.

Objective 4.4.2:
Partner with the Parish and other communities in the region to establish designated bike routes. Provide safety measures and signage for those routes.

Objective 4.4.3:
Initiate and support a community based effort to establish a greenway on the abandoned rail corridor. Transform the abandoned rail corridor into a multiuse path, connecting Pershing Highway with Doral Street.

Goal 4.5: Make planning decisions that are considerate about the interplay of land use and transportation.

Objective 4.5.1:
Implement land use regulations that discourage dispersed land development in Sunset, such as low density residential development, scattered commercial development, and development in fringe areas.

Objective 4.5.2:
Require new subdivisions to provide adequate transportation infrastructure for the proposed land use, including bike and pedestrian facilities.

Sources:

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3.4 TRANSPORTATION

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SECTION 3.5
INFRASTRUCTURE

2.5 INFRASTRUCTURE

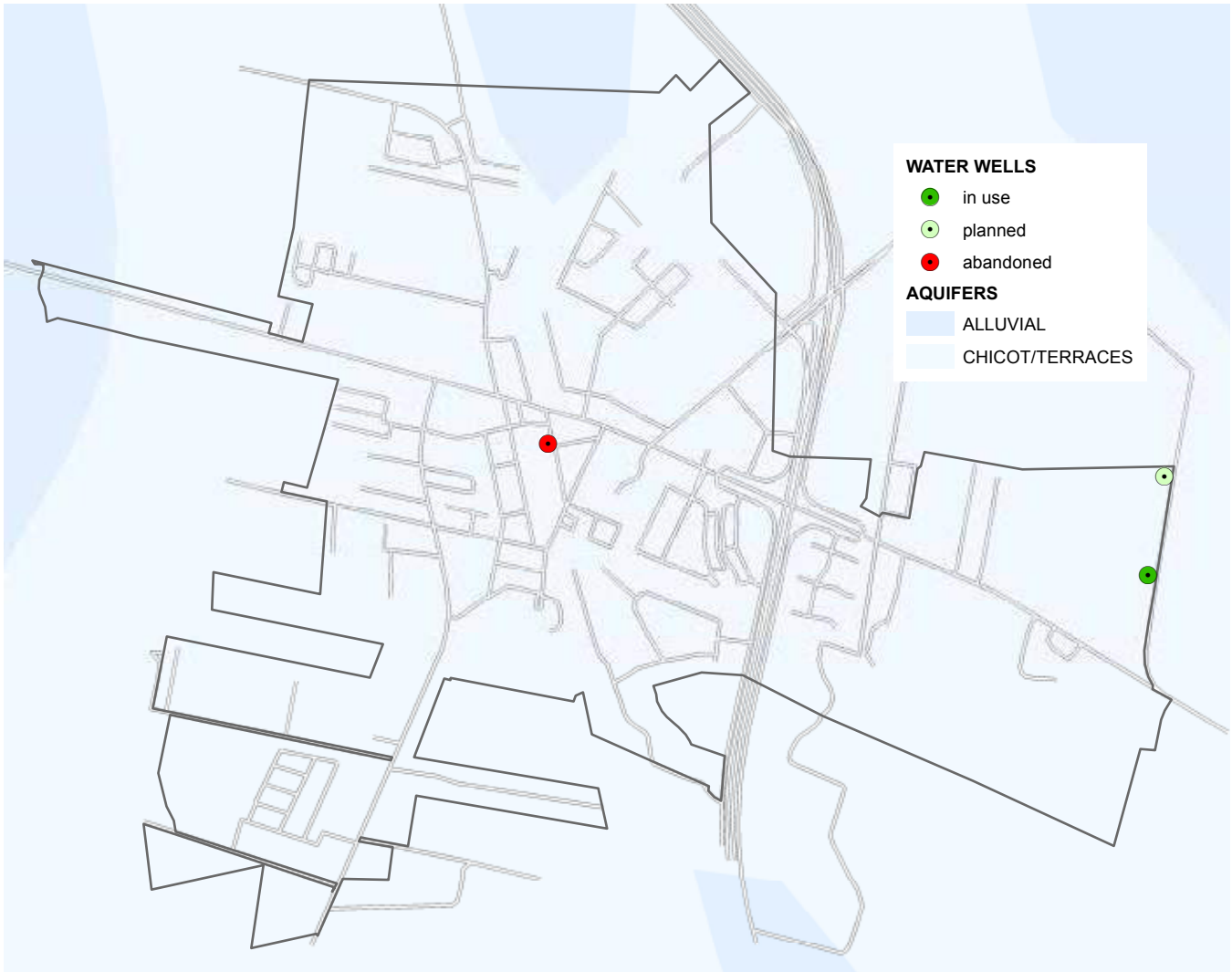
Introduction

Good public infrastructure and well-functioning services system are critical components that a municipality can provide to spur growth and economic development. These elements underpin the desired growth and development and contribute considerably to a high quality of life in the community. A high quality of life, in turn, makes the community attractive to visitors and to those who may decide to become residents of the community. The availability of good quality water and wastewater treatment facilities can help influence the location of development in the community and, in this regard, it is important for the community to be pro-active rather than reactive. In addition, some of these vital services are key to building a more resilient community.

Existing Conditions

Drinking Water

Drinking water in the Town of Sunset is currently supplied by one water well. (See map 3.5.1). At one time, two wells supplied water to the town, but one (No. 4) was abandoned because of water quality issues, primarily water odor and color, according to the Public Works Supervisor.



Map 3.5.1: Sunset's water wells

The one operational well (Water Well No. 5) has a depth of 150 feet and a design pumping rate of one million gallons per day (1.00 MGD). This rate is more than sufficient to meet the town's average daily demand for fresh water which is 0.34 MGD, according to the town's consulting engineer. Water treatment is by chlorine gas at the well.

The Town of Sunset has only one water tower for water storage and to provide pressure in the waterlines. (See Img. 3.5.2). If the town's one functioning well had to be shut down for an extended period (more than a day or two), the Town Council may be forced to impose water use restrictions because the water tower only holds enough water to meet normal demand for approximately twelve hours, according to the Public Works Supervisor. If average daily water demand is approximately 340,000 gallons (Town Engineer) and the water tower holds approximately 170,000 gallons (Public Works Supervisor), it is reasonable to conclude that an extended shutdown of the town's only water well could lead to restricted water use in the town.

Potable water is one of the key elements helping to ensure that a community can effectively bounce back from a disaster. The key measure of resiliency is the quick restoration of critical governmental services and commercial activity in the community after a disaster. It is further reasonable to conclude that additional growth in Sunset will lead to additional demand for water, increasing the average daily demand and reducing the town's water reserve as a percentage of average daily demand. This points to the need for a second water well in the very near future. According to the Town Engineer, this need was recognized and, consequently, funding for the replacement well was secured and work is currently underway. When this well

Img. 3.5.2: Sunset water tower

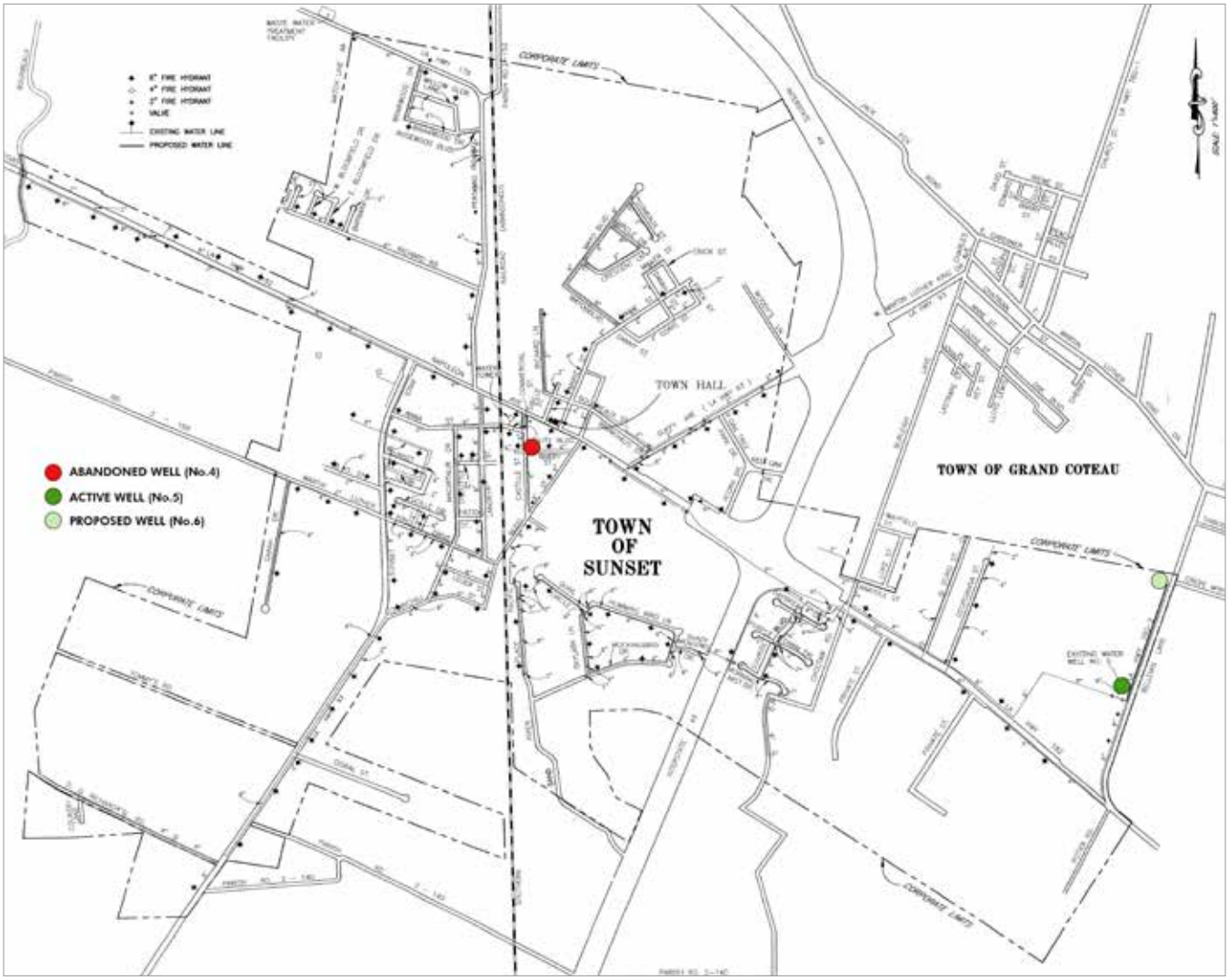
comes on line, the town's water system will have the redundancy it needs to ensure uninterrupted operation and to facilitate community resiliency. It is noted that Sunset's one existing water well is located near the town's extreme eastern boundary, some distance from the water tower located in the center of town. Water from this location must be pumped approximately 1.8 miles to the water storage tower. The proposed new water well (No. 6) is located northeast of the current operational well and will add more than a quarter mile to the distance water must be pumped to reach the water tower.

2.5 INFRASTRUCTURE

A community water system has several key components: a water source, a treatment system, a storage system, and a distribution system. According the both the Public Works Supervisor and the Town Engineer, the water distribution system (See map 3.5.3) is experiencing problems related to age (leaks and breaks), particularly with the older galvanized water mains. Therefore, waterline replacement is a high priority for the town. Presently, the water distribution system in the Town of Sunset is a collection of 8-inch, 6-inch, and 2-inch water lines. While the larger lines are generally adequate for fire protection, the 2-inch lines support only 2-inch fire hydrants. These are found in some of the older areas of the town, particularly in areas where inadequate water pressure has been noted by the Fire Department (see below). The town would do well to replace the smaller lines in the water distribution system, upgrading to 6-inch mains at least, although the larger lines are preferable.

Water Rates

The Town of Sunset charges customers for the water they consume on a monthly basis.



Map 3.5.3: Sunset's water system, Source: Grooms Engineering, edited by the author;

Residential and commercial customers are charged the same rate, although some commercial customers may use much more water than a typical residence. Water rates in Sunset are as follows:

- *$10.00 (flat fee) for first 200 gallons of water.*
- *$0.0143 per gallon for 201 to 400 gallons.*
- *$0.0114 per gallon from 401 gallons up.*
- *$300 for water connection fee (one time)*

A household or a commercial establishment, for example, consuming 1,100 gallons of water in a month would pay a little less than $21.00 for water consumption in that month. A business or residence consuming 10,000 gallons in a month would pay a bit more than $122.00 for water use in that month, based on the rate structure above. Since water rates in a community should closely relate to the actual costs of producing the project and making it available at the point of consumption, it is assumed that the water rate structure in Sunset is sufficient to meet production and operating costs without having to draw a supplement from the General Fund. If water rates in Sunset are not sufficient to meet all production and operating costs associated with the water system, rates should be adjusted accordingly.

It is difficult to compare water rate structures across communities, even those of similar size, as other factors like water source and energy cost might differ. However, by way of a rough comparison, for 10,000 gallons of water consumed by a residence in Terrebonne Parish, the base amount paid, according to the rate structure, would be about $34.00. Compared to Sunset that water rate is relatively inexpensive. Sunset's water distribution system is shown on the map below which is assumed to be accurate and up to date.

Wastewater Treatment

The proper treatment of wastewater is crucial for maintaining the community's health and environmental well-being. Wastewater treatment is also one of the four critical components that allow a community to achieve resiliency. The wastewater treatment system in Sunset utilizes oxidation ponds that were constructed in 1968. Approximately 27 years later in 1995, the ponds were converted to a new system manufactured by LEMNA Technologies, Inc. with UV disinfection. Although such systems are very efficient in treating sewage, the system overall, is not without on-going problems. For example, the treatment capacity, according to the Town Engineer, is 0.36 MGD, while the average daily inflow is 0.88 MGD, exceeding the treatment capacity by more than 140%. Also, the design load is exceeded by nearly 47% indicating the need for a larger treatment facility.

The oxidation ponds were sized to meet the anticipated demand in 1968. Since then, the Town of Sunset has grown. It is obvious now that the two ponds which comprise Sunset's wastewater treatment facility are undersized to meet the current demand. At this time, the oxidation ponds take up approximately 11.5 acres in total. Based on current standards, the treatment ponds should be at least twice as large to handle existing demand, and larger still to handle additional growth.

A large portion of demand at the oxidation ponds may be attributable to the high levels of infiltration from storm water runoff the system currently experiences (Town Engineer). This was corroborated by the Public Works Supervisor who indicated that the Louisiana Department of

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Environmental Quality (DEQ) has stated to the town that the oxidations ponds have exceeded their design capacity and heavy rain infiltration is causing overflow. The town has no holding facility for this water which prevents its discharge into the receiving stream until it is treated. In light of this information, it is obvious that the town's sewer collection system will need to undergo significant rehabilitation and equipment at the treatment facility will need to be replaced. Both of these should be given high priority by the town's administration. However, these improvements should not be undertaken, unless on an emergency basis, until a master plan for the system is completed.

Because a sewer system is a collection system with lift stations and force mains—as opposed to a water system which distributes water from one or more sources—its problems are much more difficult to fix. For example, repair of or addition to the system in one area may overwhelm downstream capacity if the changes aren't properly accounted for across the entire system. Properly addressing Sunset's sewage treatment capacity and collection system will require a sewer master plan. Without a master plan there is no way to be certain that money spent on the sewage collection system is being spent effectively. A master sewer plan will also help the town with proper expansion of its sewer collection network and treatment capacity as the town grows.

Map 3.5.4: Sunset's sewer system, Source: Grooms Engineering, edited by the author;

The Town of Sunset operates eleven lift stations scattered strategically around the community. However, some of these require constant attention, particularly those with old pumps. There are problems with some of the older sewer mains as well, and periodic smoke testing is done to isolate problems with broken and leaking mains. (See map 3.5.4)

The town also experiences sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) according to the Public Works Supervisor. This is a very serious condition that occurs when a sewer line overflows and backs up either at a manhole or in a business or residence, spilling raw sewage on the ground or worse, in a residence or business. These occurrences are so serious that they must be documented, cleaned up, and reported to DEQ. Such a condition may be caused by a sewer line with an incorrect fall, broken lines, or tree roots growing into the line causing a blockage. The Town of Sunset must make every effort to cure the defects or conditions that lead to SSOs so that their frequency is dramatically reduced or eliminated altogether. In a system with aging collection lines, such as those in some parts of Sunset, the SSO problem can re-occur without very pro-active maintenance practices, such as video-inspection of sewer lines on a periodic basis.

Treated water from the town's wastewater treatment facility is discharged into Bayou Vermilion via a ditch from the facility. However, during times of heavy rain causing overflows at the oxidation ponds, untreated water is also discharged into the receiving stream. Although there appear to be no problems with the discharge permit at this time (Public Works Supervisor) this could change if water quality downstream from the treatment facility deteriorates below permit parameters. This is a situation that is monitored by DEQ.

Another reason to undertake a sewer system master plan and ultimately expand the sewer system is that portions of the Town of Sunset are not connected to this system. As the town grows, this situation could become much more widespread. In these areas now, some type of approved on-site sewage treatment systems are used, but they are not periodically inspected by the town. As these systems fail, the quality of water discharged into roadside ditches can deteriorate dramatically creating potential health problems and ground water pollution.

Sewer fees in Sunset are based on water usage and are the following:

- *$10 for the first 200 gallons of water as per meter;*
- *$0.0125 for 201 gallons and up.*
- *$50 sewer tap for new customers*
- *Any required boring to make the connection is ultimately paid by the customer.*

One relatively inexpensive alternative for wastewater treatment is the use of a constructed wetlands facility. Such a facility could be used for additional treatment at the current treatment pond location, or could be used as a new system to meet wastewater treatment needs in another area of the town expected to experience new growth. Many large municipalities, such as Beaumont, Texas, use constructed wetlands exclusively for wastewater treatment. Other areas, such as Terrebonne Parish, are using constructed wetlands as a final treatment stage where the discharge is being used to rebuild wetlands in one area of the Parish.

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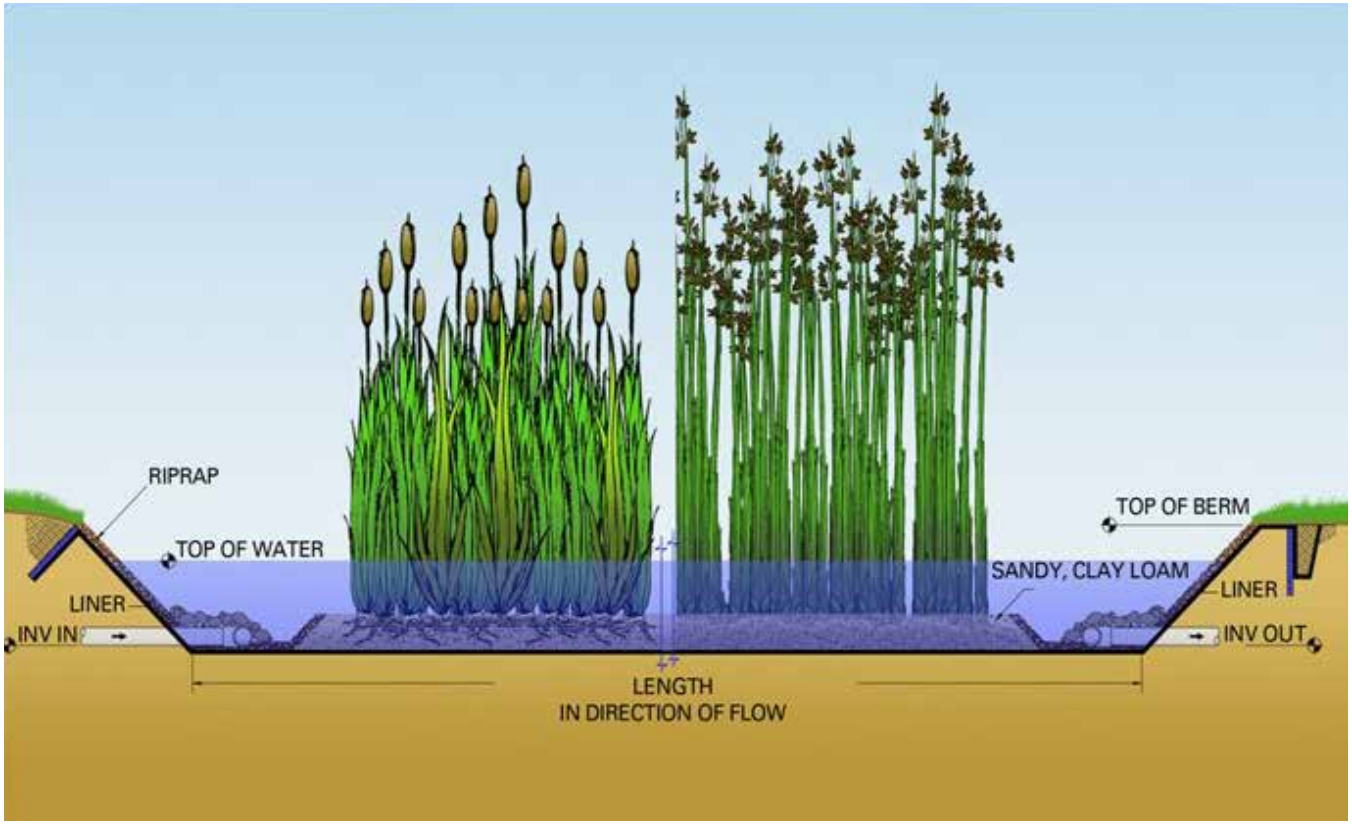
Constructed wetlands are systems that replicate the functions of natural wetlands. Treatment systems that use natural processes involving wetland vegetation, soils, and associated microbial actions to improve water quality.

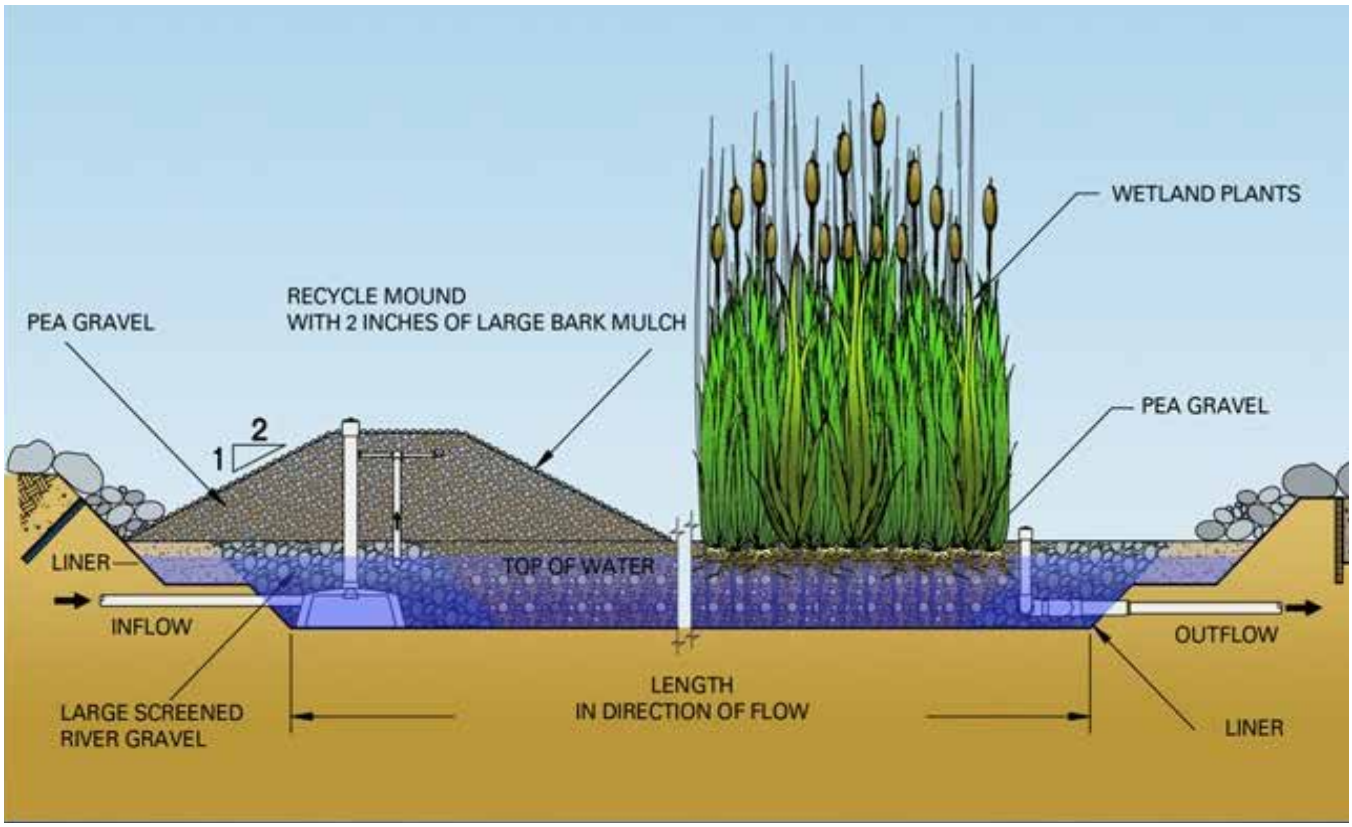
They work by acting as a filter. As water flows through a wetland, it slows down; suspended solids are trapped by vegetation and settle out. Other pollutants are transformed to less soluble forms taken up by plants or become inactive. Wetland plants also foster conditions needed my microorganism growth, which eventually transform and remove pollutants from the water.

Constructed wetlands improve water quality and support wildlife habitat. They are sustainable and may help to recharge an aquifer. They can also be a cost-effective and technically feasible approach to treating wastewater. In most cases, they are less expensive to build than traditional wastewater treatment options, have low operating and maintenance expenses, and can handle fluctuating water levels. Also, constructed wetlands are aesthetically pleasing and can reduce or eliminate odors associated with wastewater and wastewater treatment.

Depending on the water quality desired and winter temperatures, wetlands should average between one-half to one square foot per gallon of water treated per day. Assuming a 100,000 gallon per day discharge and one square foot per gallon, the treatment facility would require about 2.25 acres. The addition of just one acre of constructed wetlands to the town's existing wastewater treatment facility to serve as a tertiary treatment facility should be sufficient to handle the current demand and improve the quality of water being discharged at this time.



Img. 3.5.5 Free water surface constructed wetland



Img. 3.5.6 Subsurface constructed wetland

In general, constructed wetlands are built on uplands and outside floodplains or floodways to avoid damaging natural wetlands and other aquatic resources. Frequently they are constructed by excavating, backfilling, grading, diking, and installing water control structures to establish the desired hydraulic flow patterns. With highly permeable soils, an impervious, compacted clay liner with original soil placed over the liner is usually required. Afterwards, wetland vegetation if planted or allowed to establish naturally. (See Img. 3.5.5 and 3.5.6 for the two types of constructed wetland facilities.

The type of constructed wetlands facility shown in Image 3.5.5 is a free water surface type. The system depicted in Image 3.5.6 is a subsurface facility.

Constructed wetlands wastewater treatment can be used in any number of applications, including industrial and commercial development. Such systems can eliminate the need for on-site mechanical package treatment facilities and they can be sized to handle considerable loads.

Surface flow systems are cheaper to construct ($25K to $60K), excluding the cost of the land. Subsurface flow wetlands cost more ($75 to $125, exclusive of land), but they are more efficient and can be smaller for the same level of water quality.

Topography, soils, hydrology, and vegetation would have to be analyzed around the Town of Sunset to determine the feasibility of a Constructed Wetland Treatment System. More information can be found at www.natsys-inc.com, Natural Systems International. Not only can such a system provide an effective alternative

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to conventional wastewater treatment, but it can also reduce the need for extensive new infrastructure.

Drainage

The drainage system within the Town of Sunset is the responsibility of the Public Works Department for needed repairs and routine maintenance. Although the town's drainage system functions well in general, it is not without problems caused in particular by heavy rains. Most of the drainage in town is by open ditch, (See Img. 3.5.7) although there are parts of Sunset with subsurface drainage, particularly in the newer subdivisions.

Drainage problems in town are generally site specific. For example, there is a drainage canal that becomes blocked periodically with fallen trees and illegal dumping (Public Works Supervisor). This situation causes some flooding along some areas of West M.L. King during heavy rains. Also, an area around the intersection of Napoleon and Castille floods during heavy rain events, but flooding may be caused by undersized drainage lines and a great deal of surface run-off in this area of the town. The town also lacks an overall stormwater management plan or stormwater management

Img. 3.5.7 Drainage ditch next to Duffy Avenue

Img. 3.5.8 Green infrastructure: bio-retention cell

design manual. Short of the design recommendations such a plan or manual can provide, it is difficult to property size stormwater management features. (See Img. 3.5.8)

Areas of town that experience periodic street flooding caused by considerable sheet flow and possibly undersized drainage lines might benefit from bioswales that could help to reduce the amount of water entering storm drains. Areas of high run-off would benefit from a reduction in impervious surfaces which help to capture sheet flow and allow percolation back into the ground.

The most commonly used permeable pavement surfaces are pervious concrete, porous asphalt, and permeable interlocking concrete pavers. Other options include plastic and concrete grids, as well as amended soils (artificial media added to soil to maintain soil structure and prevent compaction).

Continued development in the Town of Sunset will mean more parking lots and more impervious surfaces. These will generate more run-off, placing added strain on an already marginal drainage system. The Town of Sunset currently has little in the way of development regulations,

although the town collects building permit fees on construction within the corporate limits based on the value of construction or repair. A building permit can cost as little as $100 and as much as $300. At this point Sunset does not provide its own subdivision regulations and thus the Parish regulations apply. Those, however, do not specify the amount of impervious surfaces an individual residential lot is allowed to have or the amount of existing trees that can be removed. There are further no regulations aimed at alleviating stormwater management issues in the town and there is no set of development regulations in place or a master stormwater management plan for the town. This means that new drainage systems may be sized to meet a 10-year storm event, instead of a 25-year event. The latter standard would help to prevent localized flooding from a heavy rain storm event. More resilient and sustainable approaches to stormwater management, such as utilizing green infrastructure and pervious paving, are being used across the country and in South Louisiana. Any master stormwater management plan or drainage improvements should consider and incorporate these approaches to ensure long-term viability of the system, as well as improved water quality of discharges in to the Vermilion River.

Gas Service

The Town of Sunset purchases natural gas from a supplier and then resells to its customers in the town. Gas rates in the Town of Sunset are as follows:

- *$11.88 (plus fuel adjustment) for first 5 C.F of gas used as per meter*
- *$0.1252 per C.F. >5 C.F. to 500 C.F.*
- *$0.1184 per C.F. 501 C.F. and up*
- *$200 for gas connection (tap)*

Town Administration should ensure that the system pays for itself and that customers are getting the best value available for this service.

Solid Waste Collection

Solid waste collection in the Town of Sunset is handled by a private company under contract to St. Landry Parish. Therefore, Sunset does not bill its residents and businesses for this service. Customers pay for this service on their annual property tax bills (Sunset Utility Clerk).

Sunset Police Department

The Sunset Police Department (SPD) has ten employees of which six are sworn officers. These are the police personnel with arrest powers and the officers who are available for patrolling and responding to calls and emergencies in the community. The Police Chief is elected by the voters of Sunset and there will be a new Police Chief in Sunset for the term beginning 2015. The SPD currently has an inventory of four vehicles for patrol purposes. One is approximately 14 years old and the other three are 2008 models. The department does not use motorcycles or any other vehicle for patrol purposes. Nor does the SPD utilize foot patrols, bike or mounted patrols, although foot patrols were used at one time and may be re-established. Foot patrols gave police officers and the public an opportunity to interact and is an example of good and effective community policing. In addition, foot patrols can help to foster good community relations. However, the SPD will probably need at least two more patrolmen to be able to re-establish foot patrols even if limited to the downtown business area of the town.

The most common calls to which the Sunset Police Department responds are domestic issues and misdemeanors. In addition to domestic

calls, there are occasional calls for shoplifting, drug related issues, and a major felony situation very infrequently. The Town of Sunset appears to be fairly quiet in this regard. The SPD department is responsible for handling traffic accident investigations anywhere in the town and on that portion of I-49 within the corporate limits of Sunset. Traffic citations are issued for such violations, but most of these are in response to blocked driveways. However, the investigating officer makes every effort to find the owner of the offending vehicle and have it voluntarily moved. Ticketing and towing are last resorts. Few tickets are written for parking, particularly since the town has no parking meters. All fine monies generated from citations are deposited in the town's General Fund.

Currently, funding for the Sunset Police Department is provided by the Town of Sunset as a line item in its General Fund. The Police Department, along with the Fire Department, must compete for funding with all other town-funded departments. No special millage or sales tax supports the SPD. Although the SPD is required to live within its budget, it has been said that the Town Council has, in general, approved SPD requests for vehicles or equipment. The Town Council may be called upon to approve in upcoming budgets requests to replace high mileage patrol vehicles, to upgrade the department's computer system to allow computer access for officers in patrol vehicles, and for various other equipment needs.

Adequate communication between law enforcement agencies and first responders is an on-going and critical need. Such communication supports community resiliency. The St. Landry Parish Sheriff, State Police, police departments in surrounding towns, and other first responder agencies must be able to effectively and quickly community with each other in the face of an emergency. In the Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) Action Plan for Sunset (Appendix M – Town of Sunset) contained in the St. Landry Parish HMP Update, one of the proposed new action items is the following:

"Improve both technological and administrative communication capabilities among fire, police, 911, and other State and local emergency operations through improved planning and the upgrading of communication infrastructure and equipment."

The Town of Sunset should actively pursue the implementation of this action item in conjunction with St. Landry Parish.

Given the size of the Sunset Police Department and the number of sworn officers on the roster at this time, the department can only assign one officer for road patrol most of the time. It has been shown that the Town of Sunset will grow at a faster rate than St. Landry Parish and this expected growth will highlight the need for additional officers on the roads of the town. Recent budget cuts have put the Police Department of having to do more with less resources, so there are no resources currently available to accommodate the expected growth. The intersection of Duffy Ave. and Napoleon Ave. experiences PM traffic congestion and requires the use of a police officer for traffic control at this location. The situation could be remedied by either a traffic signal with appropriate actuation and timing or a traffic circle. This action ties up a law enforcement officer who could be available for other needs in the town. Further, police cruisers need to be upgraded with on-board computers to speed up inquiries in the field and to assist officers quickly and more efficiently.

Img. 3.5.9 Sunset fire station

Sunset Fire Department

The Town of Sunset is currently served by a volunteer fire department (See Img. 3.5.9) with twelve volunteers on the roster, of which only six are active, according to the Fire Chief. The fire department currently has two funded and paid positions which allows one paid person to be on duty each weekday until 5:00 PM. Someone is at the fire station on duty Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The Fire Chief is not appointed by the Town of Sunset, but elected to the position by the members of the Fire Department.

The Sunset Fire Station is located downtown at 855 Napoleon Ave. From this location, according to the Fire Chief, no part of the Town of Sunset is more than 8-10 minutes from the station which speaks to its central location. There are no areas for town expansion or growth that would be difficult to serve from this central station. Consequently, there are no substations in the town. However, according to the Fire Chief, there are certain areas of the Town of Sunset that are currently underserved or not served as well with fire protection as other parts of town. Certain streets, Marie and Pershing Hwy (LA 178) in particular, have inadequate water pressure at some hydrants. This situation is somewhat mitigated at this time by the mutual aid agreement with the Village of Cankton which can supply a tanker truck for fire calls in these areas. Further Shady Meadow and Oak Trace subdivisions are isolated as they provide very limited street access. The access limitations result in longer reaction time for the Sunset Fire Department. Additional street connections, as discussed in Section 3.4: Transportation could thus improve safety in those neighborhoods.

In terms of equipment, the Sunset Fire Department has two pumper trucks (only one is Class A rated); one service truck; one mini-pumper/brush truck; one utility truck; and one command vehicle. The pumper truck that is not Class A rated is approaching 35 years in age (1980 model) and its age is becoming an issue, in addition to parts getting scarce. The Fire Chief indicated that this truck will need to be replaced soon.

The Sunset Volunteer Fire Department is currently rated as Class 5, which is very respectable for a volunteer department. The higher the rating (with 1 being the highest), the lower fire insurance premiums in the community.

2.5 INFRASTRUCTURE

Img. 3.5.10 Sunset fire truck

Most of the larger fire departments around the State that are manned full time are Class 2 departments. There are issues, according to the Fire Chief that are making it increasingly difficult to maintain its Class 5 rating. Obviously, there is a need for a new pumper, one that is Class A rated, and a new or upgraded service vehicle to replace the 1993 model currently in service. In addition, a third pumper truck may be required if the Town of Sunset continues to grow. However, should the Fire Department acquire a third pumper, it will need a secure location to house it as the location on Napoleon Ave. is not large enough. A secure location could mean a well-placed substation in a strategic location in the town. The Department's Class 5 rating is borderline with the two pumpers on hand now, but continued population growth in Sunset will make this rating difficult to keep without a third pumper and a secure location to store it.

According to the Fire Chief, a baseline new pumper may cost as much as $350,000. One that is fully equipped may run as much as $75,000 more. Given all the other equipment needs the Fire Chief would like to have—and that he believes will be required as the town grows--$2,000,000 would resolve all these equipment issues.

The Fire Department's rating is due for re-evaluation in 2016. According to the Fire Chief, the department lost points due to manpower issues, having only one Class A rated pumper, insufficient water pressure in some areas of town; and lack of good record keeping. This last point has been addressed and the department is taking steps to improve or at least keep its current rating. The lack of sufficient water pressure in certain areas of the community is an issue that should be addressed by the Town Council and Mayor in conjunction with the town's Public Works Department and Town Engineer.

The Town of Sunset participates in a Parish-wide mutual aid agreement; all fire departments in St. Landry Parish are party to this agreement. The Sunset Fire Department has a special arrangement with Fire District #4 in the Village of Cankton whereby both fire departments answer calls in both communities. Both communities benefit from this arrangement.

The Sunset Fire Department also serves as a first responder for EMS calls in the community. Its personnel remain on the scene until relieved by Acadian Ambulance, St. Landry EMS, or Med Express. The Sunset Fire Department does not provide emergency medical transportation.

The FY2015 budget for the Sunset Fire Department is $86,000 of which $30,000 covers salaries. The rest is for operating expenses. The department's budget is a line item in the town's General Fund budget, thus making the Fire Department totally dependent on Sunset for its funding. There is no dedicated millage supporting the Fire Department. Realistically, if the Fire Department is to grow to match the expected growth in the community, and maintain or improve it fire rating, additional

permanent funding will be required. The Fire Chief is considering a proposal for a "fire protection fee" that would require approval by the Town Council. Additional permanent funding would allow the Fire Department to acquire additional equipment, rolling stock, and, perhaps, a substation. Some communities, with voter approval, have levied a special tax millage (ad valorem) to support both fire and police departments. In some of the larger communities where such a millage exist, the funds generated each year are insufficient to meet the needs of each department and additional funding through the communities' General Funds is necessary. This potential funding source for the Sunset Fire Department would need to be carefully scrutinized before asking the voters of Sunset to approve. However, it is possible that at least a portion of such a fee or special millage could be offset by lower insurance premiums for the town if the additional funding would help to improve the Fire Department's fire rating. According to the Fire Chief, this is a distinct possibility.

There have been on-going efforts to merge the fire departments of Sunset and Grand Coteau. The Grand Coteau Fire Department (GCFD) currently has a much lower rating (10) than its Sunset counterpart (5) and this is a cause of concern. Contributions to the merger effort by the GCFD (equipment, rolling stock, personnel, etc.) may not be enough to offset the expected decline in Sunset Fire Department's rating. While Grand Coteau's rating may improve as a result of the merger, Sunset's may actually decline. This issue, while important to both communities, should be carefully discussed at length. Considerable caution and forethought will be required to ensure a desirable and equitable outcome for both communities, particularly for Sunset.

Life safety is the primary concern of the Sunset Fire Department (SFD). To this end, funds must be found to allow for the acquisition of the outdated and aging pumper truck used by SFD as well as other equipment. There is concern that this particular pumper, if called upon to perform in response to a fire emergency, may not reliably perform, despite the department's on-going efforts to keep it in top shape. Parts for this aging truck are difficult to find now. Further it has been stated that the SFD carries 12 volunteers on its roster of fire fighters. However, because of the age of half of these, only 6 volunteers can be relied upon to answer most emergencies. Obviously, the recruiting of younger volunteer personnel is critical to the SFD maintaining its operational levels and keeping or improving it fire class rating.

2.5 INFRASTRUCTURE

Recommendations

As indicated at the beginning of this section, the single most critical component that the Town of Sunset can supply to support economic development in the community is a first-class infrastructure and public services system. Nearly every aspect of infrastructure and public services, particularly public safety, is in need of additional funding to meet its obligations and/or to grow. The town will not grow if its water and wastewater treatment systems are inadequate and unreliable, or worse, pose a public health problem. Also, the town will have difficulty growing if fire and police protection are working with outdated equipment and lack of personnel.

Sewer System

Deferred maintenance and capacity problems (in particular) are the current state of affairs for the Sunset sewer system. In order to achieve the town's master plan vision for 2035 and attract new growth, support economic development, and retain existing households and businesses, it is imperative that the sewer system be brought up to standard. Sunset should thus seek to fund and implement a sewer master plan. Due to the age and condition of the sewer system, complete information on existing conditions underground is lacking, making it difficult to formulate recommendations about partial improvements to serve development because the capacity and condition of the entire system is unclear. A sewer master plan is a critical first step in making sure this basis infrastructure system can continue to effectively serve the Town of Sunset. The sewer master plan should be prepared to be consistent with the policy framework of the Sunset Master Plan. Implementation of the sewer master plan will require long-term incremental investment. To be given priority in the sewer master plan is the correction of Sunset's SSO problem to meet EPA requirements.

Further Sunset should explore alternative methods for urban wastewater treatment and management. Constructed wetlands, as discussed above, are manmade ponds that contain aquatic plants to treat wastewater and that can be designed to mimic the bio-filtration actions of natural wetlands. In doing so, constructed wetlands can accept discharge such as wastewater, storm water runoff, or even sewage (if properly sized and constructed for the particular application). Constructed wetlands are even capable of removing sediments and pollutants such as heavy metals from the water. Water eventually discharged from constructed wetlands can be used for irrigation or for other purposes. Such systems have been used successfully in municipalities throughout the country to reduce or eliminate the need for more extensive (and expensive) infrastructure investments. Federal funds for innovative projects of this type can be available. Such a system contributes greatly to the overall sustainability of the area. Sunset should therefor evaluate the potential and economic feasibility of using tertiary treatment of treated wastewater with a constructed wetlands system at the Sunset wastewater treatment facility, should new EPA regulations require much cleaner discharge in the future. The town should also consider the potential and economic feasibility of using a constructed wetlands system at the Sunset treatment facility to handle overflow and to increase the capacity of the facility.

The Town of Sunset has, at this point, no policy for the use of "grey water" in appropriate applications such as landscaping, irrigation, or constructed wetlands. Grey water is wastewater generated from domestic activities such as laundry, dishwashing, and bathing, which taken together makes up 50 to 80 percent off residential wastewater. Water used to flush toilets and

Img. 3.5.11 Sunset water tower and drainage ditch

similar uses is excluded from the definition of grey water.

Water

In order to address realistic future needs for water distribution system growth, additional water treatment facilities, and new water source(s) the Town of Sunset should prepare and adopt a water supply master plan. Such a plan can also address system redundancy in case of failure in one or more components of the system, standard distribution lines for each particular application including fire hydrant service. Like the sewer master plan, the water supply plan will need to include investigation of the subsurface water distribution system.

The Town of Sunset must also ensure that the public utilities it provides its citizens, such as water and sewer, are treated as Enterprise Funds in the town's budget. This means that each of these must have a rate structure that ensures these services will not need financial assistance from the General Fund except, perhaps, for dire emergencies. These types of municipal services should generate sufficient funds to cover operations, maintenance, and most emergencies.

Policy and Administration

In order to grow in a sustainable manner and manage the town efficiently Sunset should set priorities for infrastructure funding and combine federal, State, local bond, and other funding to achieve infrastructure goals. To support the town leadership in doing so the Town of Sunset should consider the acquisition and implementation of a municipal asset management (AM) system. Asset management (AM) involves taking care of the physical systems, assets, and structures owned by the municipality and their agencies, all of which represent a huge community investment over time. The idea of AM is to ensure that these community assets deliver the desired level of service at the most reasonable cost. Most AM systems are connected to geographic information systems (GIS), so assets are mapped and their locations connected to a data-

base containing information on when they were put in service, expected service life, condition, and how much annual maintenance is needed. Not only buildings, but equipment and vehicles can be (should be) included in the community's AM system. Managers of local infrastructure need this information in order to make the most cost-effective decisions on whether and when to maintain, repair, or replace assets. While an AM system requires an initial investment, training and improved data systems, asset management ultimately saves money. An AM system can be built incrementally, as assets are improved, built, or acquired and put into the system. The Town of Sunset, the other municipalities in the Parish, and St. Landry Parish could benefit from sharing the costs of acquiring and implementing an asset management system.

Aiming to remove some of the burden of capital expenses and maintenance (but not day-to-day operation) for infrastructure from the town's General Fund and allow more current funds to be used for maintenance and rehabilitation of existing infrastructure, Sunset should evaluate the potential benefits and costs of establishing infrastructure impact fees for water, sewer, and drainage. Impact fees are standard charges made on new development that are used to fund capital improvements to serve that new development. Other areas of the State (East Baton Rouge and St. Tammany Parishes) have levied such impact fees on single family, multi-family, and commercial development. The fees are tied to roads, water, and sewer impacts. In order to implement such fees, a study would be required to develop a fair system of evaluating fees and ensuring that their administration meets the legal test of a "nexus" between the impacts on municipal services caused by new development and the fee imposed. Waivers of impact fees can be facilitated as an incentive to encourage development in desired locations within the town. This initiative would be one way of discouraging leapfrog development in areas further from the town center, where infrastructure is more costly to maintain over the long term, and encouraging infill development.

Public Safety Facilities

Sunset should seek to provide public safety facilities and services (police, fire, EMS) that meet best practices performance standards in all areas of the Town of Sunset. The Sunset Volunteer Fire Department needs to be upgraded to meet existing and future service demands. Therefor the preparation of a 5-year strategic plan is recommended, that addresses all its needs for that time period. This planning effort should be undertaken with due consideration to the Sunset Comprehensive Plan. A strategic planning process will help the SVFD in effectively using its data and communicating its needs to the public. The planning process should include an evaluation of the Fire Department needs and on the basis of this assessment ,the town should develop a realistic plan to secure the funding needed for new rolling stock and other equipment needs. Funds may also be needed to acquire a suitable site to house new fire-fighting vehicles.

The Sunset Police Department should as well prepare a 5-year strategic plan, including an assessment of planning, facility, and equipment priority needs and a strategy for enhanced collaboration with other agencies. The plan, as well, should be accomplished with due consideration to the Sunset Comprehensive Plan. Such a strategic planning process will help the SPD in effectively using its data and communicating its needs to the public, and improve the SPD's ability to respond effectively to emergency calls. Further, the emergency call system in Sunset

should be studied to evaluate the equipment, management systems, and number of personnel needed for effective response and the results of the study implemented.

Additional to those measures the town should create a long-term plan to meet the Sunset Police and Fire Department facility and equipment needs through an annual Capital Improvements Planning process. Because of the many demands on limited capital funds, the needs of the two Departments should be included in the overall capital planning process that includes criteria for priority-setting and long-term, incremental planning. Sunset should ensure the operating funds for any required new staffing and facilities. If new fire-fighting or police facilities are to be constructed or otherwise acquired, this must be accompanied by a plan for future staffing (if necessary) and maintenance costs.

To improve first response to emergencies throughout the Town Sunset should promote interagency cooperation for management team and training. The town should require mandatory interagency management teams and training for all first responder agencies in the Town of Sunset. Because first responders from various agencies may be involved in emergency situations in Sunset, previous training and organization in interagency teams can enhance performance.

Stormwater Management

Communities are increasingly implementing green infrastructure for storm water management that encourage preservation of natural drainage systems and, where preservation is not feasible, encourage use of natural drainage and channel design practices to the extent possible. Current best practices emphasize the many benefits of preserving natural drainage:

- *Floodplains store water during big storms, reducing the velocity of the water, and reducing downstream flooding.*
- *The natural floodplain buffer between developed areas and the stream mitigates nonpoint source pollution from the developed areas.*
- *Tree conservation, parks, greenways, and*

Img. 3.5.12 Green infrastructure as public amenity

recreational areas in the floodplain enhance the community.

For stormwater management infrastructure in new development, the Town of Sunset should consider implementing a "10 percent rule" to identify potential downstream impacts. Such a rule would require that calculations of peak flows, velocities, and hydraulic effects should proceed downstream to the point where the drainage area represents 10 percent of the total drainage area. This best management practice would allow the Town of Sunset and its Town Engineer to identify potential impacts from new development and discover existing deficiencies early in the development process when remedies are relative inexpensive. The identification of specific drainage courses and floodplains throughout the town with sufficient ROW to allow development and implementation of natural drainage systems (green infrastructure). Sunset should consider acquiring additional ROW along drainage courses and floodplains where more is needed. These amenities would adequately serve the runoff needs of the area, offering primary treatment to improve water quality inn the receiving stream or body of water, and serve as a recreational and aesthetic amenity designed to improve the quality of life in the surrounding community. Sunset should further encourage protection and integration of natural drainage features into the community through park systems and planned land use by coordinating park and land use planning with planning for drainage and storm water management to create neighborhood amenities, when possible. Additionally, the town should adopt development regulations that promote green infrastructure and default language that reflects a preference for natural drainage and natural channel design. Such regulations should promote natural drainage and natural channel design where feasible.

Stormwater management best management practices should be incorporated into any local development codes that may be adopted, including applications in all general land use classification types. Ideally, stormwater management regulations could become part of a Unified Development Code that would ensure that zoning, subdivision, and environmental regulations are consistent and easily accessed in one place.

Developed areas have impervious surfaces, mainly rooftops and paved areas, that shed storm water at high velocities, sending it into the municipal storm water system, and receiving streams where it increases pollution, erosion, and turbidity if not managed properly. The runoff generated by a quarter-inch of rain on a typical roof amount to 55 gallons of water. This illustrates the need to consider some type of best management practice that retains water on site so that it either evapo-transpires (into the air or absorbed by trees and plants), slowly infiltrates back into the ground, or is used to water planting areas. Unchecked stormwater runoff results in costly maintenance and operation of existing drainage systems, or, more likely, the expansion of such systems. Sunset should thus explore and consider the establishment of a stormwater utility with discounts for on-site reduction of stormwater flow to public streets and infrastructure. The purpose of such a utility is to create a dedicated funding source for maintenance and improvement of stormwater management. The fee for stormwater impact would be based on the amount of runoff that enters the public stormwater management system—the use of the system by the property owner. This reflects the principle used for water and sewer service in the Town of Sunset, i.e., customers pay for the service based on usage measured by their water meters. Stormwater utility fees are typically calculated based on the amount of

impervious surface on the site. Stormwater utilities typically provide an incentive for green infrastructure practices by offering credits against the stormwater fee to private property owners who reduce or eliminate runoff or improve the water quality of the runoff. By establishing a stormwater utility, a community is creating a type of enterprise fund similar to the water and sewer funds, where the cost of maintenance and capital expenditures should be paid by the utility's revenues. This frees up General Fund resources for government services and facilities that do not have the potential to generate revenue. State courts around the country have found that stormwater utility charges are true user fees for services and not taxes. The development of a stormwater management master plan is essential because it will put forward the program of specific projects, etc., that need to be funded and then the rate structure will have to be adjusted so that, over time, the enumerated programs and projects can be put into effect and supported by sufficient funding. The stormwater management master plan for the entire Town of Sunset should focus on the following goals:

- *Reduce flood damage*
- *Minimize increase in storm water runoff from any new development*
- *Reduce soil erosion from development and construction projects*
- *Assure adequacy of existing and proposed bridges and culverts*
- *Maintain groundwater recharge. This is particularly important for Sunset since it draws its drinking water from wells.*
- *Minimize nonpoint source pollution*
- *Maintain the integrity of stream channels for biological function and drainage*
- *Minimize pollutants in stormwater runoff from new and existing development*
- *Protect public safety.*

Img. 3.5.13 Parking lot stormwater management

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This plan should demonstrate how it would promote these goals, comply with State and federal regulations and be integrated with other plans and documents, including the Sunset Comprehensive Plan. Supplement storm water management ordinances and manual eventually adopted by the Town of Sunset with incentives and public education for the use of best practices that promote on-site management and infiltration of storm water.

The town should further, whenever repaving municipal parking areas, require permeable surface construction and other stormwater best management practices. Where the underlying soils are suitable or are amended to be more porous, permeable parking areas will reduce stormwater runoff. Strategies such as the use of permeable surfaces in parking areas while retaining impervious circulation areas can be one way of balancing conditions to promote more suitable natural drainage. Additionally a "Green Streets" approaches to stormwater management should be explored and the town should consider to replace some storm water drains with natural areas and native plant species that absorb the majority of stormwater. Green Streets include vegetated elements that intercept stormwater contaminated with gasoline, oil, and other chemicals for infiltration and mitigation. Such early interception of runoff reduces stress on stormwater sewers and helps the system return relatively clean water to the receiving streams. In Sunset, such practices may have the added benefit of helping to reduce wet weather SSOs. Such systems can include planted bio-retention "bump outs" at corners and mid-block or wide vegetated areas between sidewalks and streets.

ADA Compliance

Currently the Town of Sunset lacks comprehensive compliance with ADA accessibility standards in both public and private facilities. Therefor the town should use dedicated funds to remedy existing ADA deficiencies in public buildings and spaces, as well as ADA needs in new public construction. ADA compliance is a legal necessity as well as a moral imperative so that all citizens can participate in public life. In order to meet this necessity Sunset needs to develop a plan that documents ADA compliance and deficiencies and request funding. Evidence of compliance is valuable in requesting federal and other funding for public projects. Further it is recommended that the town establishes a policy for using universal design criteria in the design of any new municipal buildings. Universal design is the next step beyond handicap-accessible or barrier-free design. It is predicated on the idea of designing spaces to be usable and attractive to everyone, without specialized elements specifically for disabled people (see: www.design.ncsu.edu/cud/about_ud/udprinciplestext.htm [The Center for Universal Design, North Carolina State University]). The goal of the policies above is to complete any outstanding ADA deficiencies identified in public buildings in town. The town should allocate funds in the town's annual budget to work toward eliminating these deficiencies. ADA information available to the public and to private sector developers should be continued to be kept updated on the town's website and provide informational brochures or web-based information to guide private sector developers and the public in general about ADA standards, compliance, and permitting issues.

Goals & Objectives

Goal 5.1: Upgrade Sunset's sewer system to high standards that meet the present and future needs of the community.

Objective 5.1.1
Fund and implement a sewer master plan for the Town of Sunset.

Objective 5.1.2
Seek a funding mechanisms that will allow expansion of sewer system on a town-wide basis. Therefor consider giving water and sewer service in the Town Enterprise Fund status which will allow these services to be self-sufficient if rates are properly set.

Objective 5.1.3
Where private community sewer systems are in use in new subdivisions along the urban fringe of the town, encourage development such that entry or connection to the public community sewer system can be facilitated.

Objective 5.1.4
Integrate land use and infrastructure investment policies to avoid expanding or extending new infrastructure when existing infrastructure could be more efficiently utilized.

Objective 5.1.5
Explore alternative methods for urban wastewater treatment and management. Consider the potential and economic feasibility of using a constructed wetlands system at the Sunset treatment facility to handle overflow and to increase the capacity of the facility.

Goal 5.2: Provide excellent quality and adequate quantity of drinking water to meet all current and future needs of the Town of Sunset.

Objective 5.2.1
Prepare and adopt a water supply master plan for the Town of Sunset that addresses realistic future needs for distribution system growth, additional water treatment facilities, and new water source(s), as well as system redundancy in case of failure in one or more components of the system, standard distribution lines for each particular application including fire hydrant service.

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Goal. 5.3: Improve the local stormwater management infrastructure to be reliable and efficient by promoting the preservation of natural drainage and green infrastructure and make use of natural channel design in drainage plans and regulations.

Objective 5.3.1
Prepare a stormwater management master plan for the entire Town of Sunset. Adopt a stormwater management ordinance and manual for the Town of Sunset. Supplement the regulations with incentives and public education for the use of best practices that promote on-site management and infiltration of stormwater.

Objective 5.3.2
Implement green infrastructure measures that encourage preservation of natural drainage systems and, where preservation is not feasible, encourage use of natural drainage and channel design practices.

Objective 5.3.3
Adopt policy that requires permeable surface construction and other storm water best management practices for large scale new development, and when repaving municipal parking areas.

Objective 5.3.4
Promote initiatives that aim to make stormwater management infrastructure a public amenity. Encourage protection and integration of natural drainage features into the community through park systems and planned land use. Coordinate park and land use planning with planning for stormwater management to create neighborhood amenities.

Objective 5.3.5
Adopt development regulations that will effectively treat stormwater and run-off issues at the residential level to reduce strain on the stormwater infrastructure in the town and promote stormwater management best practices and default language that reflects a preference for natural drainage and natural channel design.

Objective 5.3.6
Establish a stormwater utility with discounts for on-site reduction of stormwater flow to public streets and infrastructure to promote green infrastructure and secure a sustainable funding mechanism for public stormwater management service.

Goal No. 5.4: Improve and maintain public safety in the Town of Sunset. Update facilities and services (police, fire, EMS) to meet best practices performance standards in all areas of the Town of Sunset.

Objective 5.4. 1
Prepare a 5-year strategic plan for the Sunset Volunteer Fire Department that seeks to upgrade to meet existing and future service demands. Create a long-term plan to meet the Sunset Volunteer Fire Department facility and equipment needs through an annual Capital Improvements Planning process.

Objective 5.4. 2
Prepare a 5-year strategic plan for the Sunset Police Department that identifies planning, facility, and equipment priority needs and plans enhanced collaboration with other agencies. Create a long-term plan to meet the Sunset Police Department facility and equipment needs through an annual Capital Improvements Planning process

Objective 5.4.3
Seek permanent funding sources and mechanisms to upgrade the police and fire departments and meet equipment and personnel needs necessary to meet expected growth in the community.

Objective 5.4.4
Fund all public safety departments so they are able to meet best practice standards through 5-year plan cycles for facilities and services planning in coordination with the town's capital improvement program.

Objective 5.4.5
Promote interagency cooperation by requiring mandatory interagency management teams and training for all first responder agencies in the Town of Sunset to improve first response to emergencies throughout the Town of Sunset.

Objective 5.4.6
Support community-based public safety programs

2.5 INFRASTRUCTURE

Goal 5.5: Set priorities for infrastructure funding and combine federal, state, local bond and other funding to achieve infrastructure goals.

Objective 5.5.1
Seek out best-practice examples of municipal asset management. Consider implementation of a GIS-based municipal asset management system to reduce long-term maintenance costs and prolong useful life of such assets.

Objective 5.5.2
Evaluate the potential benefits and costs of establishing infrastructure impact fees for water, sewer, and drainage. Consider establishing infrastructure impact fees throughout the Town of Sunset. Use waivers of impact fees as an incentive to encourage development in desired locations within the town.

Goal 5.6: Improve ADA accessibility within public and private facilities in Sunset.

Objective 5.6.1
Develop a plan that documents ADA compliance and deficiencies and requests funding. Allocate funds in in the town's annual budget to work toward eliminating these deficiencies. Complete any outstanding ADA deficiencies identified in public buildings in town.

Objective 5.6.2
Use dedicated funds to remedy existing ADA deficiencies in public buildings and spaces, as well as ADA needs in new public construction.

Objective 5.6.3
Establish a policy that requires the application of "universal design criteria" in the design of any new municipal buildings.

Objective 5.6.4
Continue to update ADA information available to the public and to private sector developers. Keep ADA accessibility information updated on the town's website and provide informational brochures or web-based information to guide private sector developers and the public in general about ADA standards, compliance, and permitting issues.

Objective 5.6.5
Support for funding to meet all outstanding ADA deficiencies in public facilities and town center sidewalks.

SECTION 3.6
RESILIENCY

3.6 RESILIENCY

Introduction

A community's resiliency is defined through the ability to respond efficiently to disasters and bounce back quickly to a normal state. Small towns generally have fewer financial, technical, and staff resources on which to draw in response to hazards and disasters. The hazard mitigation element for the Town of Sunset is aiming on developing strategies for risk reduction of future disasters, as well as building preparedness among the community for possible disaster scenarios.

Existing Conditions

Hazards

Natural hazards are the largest single contributor to catastrophic or repetitive damage to communities throughout the nation. All areas of the U.S. are under threat from these types of hazards. According the St. Landry Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP), however, the Parish and the Town of Sunset have determined that only four main hazards warrant the development of mitigation actions. The reasons for this vary. In some cases, such hazards are considered unlikely to occur, or have occurred only rarely with light damage. In other cases, volcanic eruptions, avalanche, dam failures, earthquakes, and landslides, for example,have never occurred in the area and for a number of reasons, are never expected to occur. The Town of Sunset is impacted by

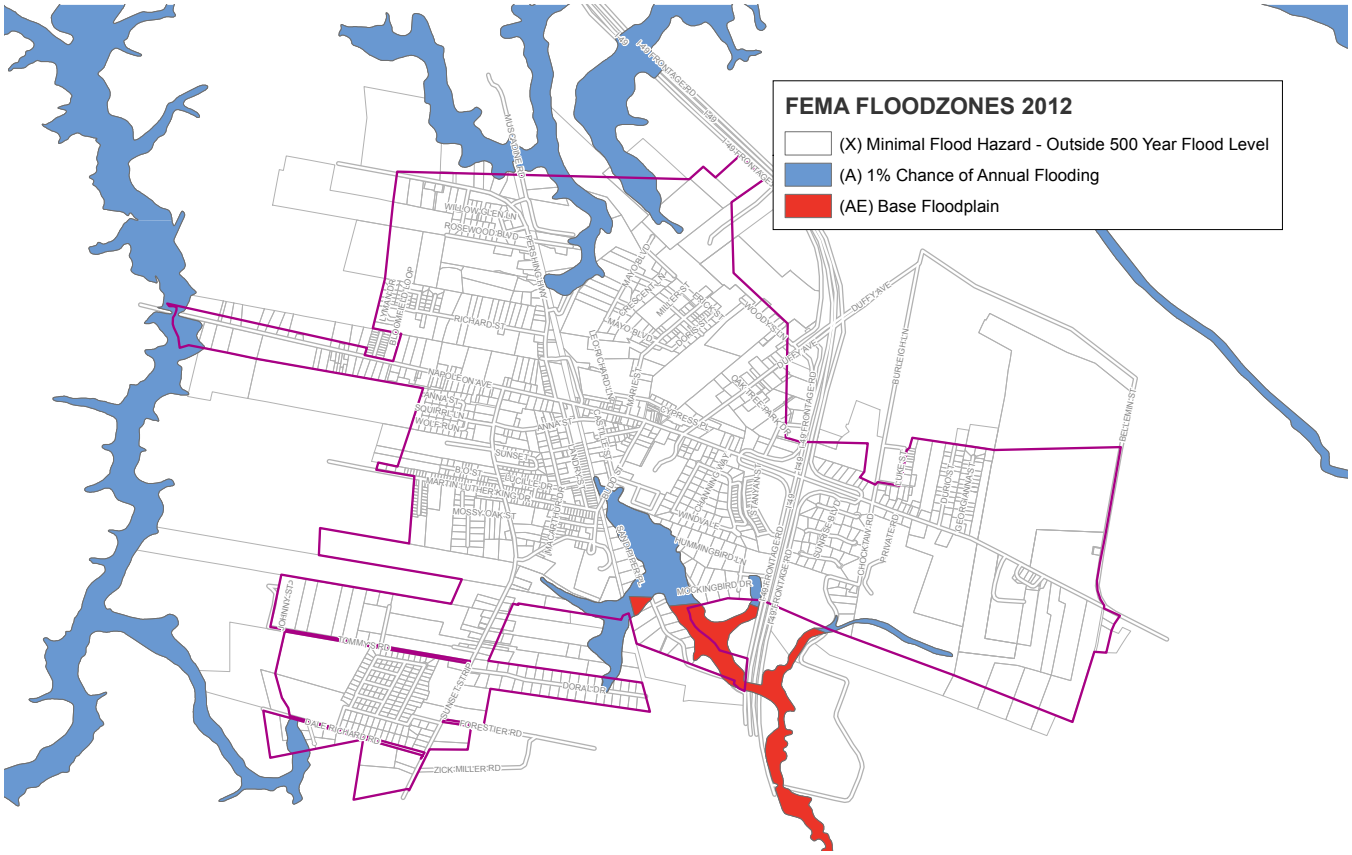
- *floods*
- *severe storms (thunderstorms, lightning, high winds, and hail)*
- *tornadoes*
- *hurricanes*

Floods

Flooding has occurred in the Town of Sunset in the past. Most of these flood events have been associated with disasters which have received federal disaster declarations. Some events have been associated with hurricanes and tropical storms and have caused damage throughout St. Landry Parish. Others, such as the flood of mid-May 2004, caused measurable damage in Sunset. Although only peripheral areas of the Town of Sunset are in the 100-year floodplain (see map), a severe rain storm event with 8 or more inches of rain in a relatively short time can cause localized flooding particularly in the low-lying areas of Sunset. Given its location in south Louisiana and relative short distance from the Gulf of Mexico, flooding from hurricane or tropical storms remains a distinct possibility. According to the latest St. Landry Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan, flooding is highly likely throughout St. Landry Parish, and by extension in Sunset. There have been six federally declared flood disaster events in the past which have included St. Landry Parish. As of December 31, 2009, there were 42 NFIP insured structures in the Town of Sunset. Since 1978, fifteen insurance claims have been filed with NFIP for insured structures in Sunset. Payouts to insured homeowners have greatly exceeded the amount of total premiums paid. The Town of Sunset considers flooding as a major hazard. (See Img. 3.6.1)

Severe Storms (Thunderstorms, Lightning, High Winds, and Hail)

Thunderstorms, sometimes referred to as "thunder events," are composed of lightning and rainfall, and can intensify into a severe thunderstorm with damaging or deadly hail, high winds, tornadoes, and flash flooding. The National Weather Service (NWS) estimates that over 100,000 thunderstorms occur each year



Img. 3.6.1: FEMA flood zones

on the U.S. mainland. Approximately ten percent are classified as "severe." Thunderstorms spawn as many as 1,000 tornadoes each year. Such storms are highly likely throughout St. Landry Parish and can certainly impact the Town of Sunset. The National Climatic Data Center's (NCDC) data show that since 1979, there have been at least 129 thunderstorms wind events, four high wind events since 2000, four lightning events since 1995, and 50 hail events since 1976 that have caused property damage in St. Landry Parish.

Tornadoes

The States along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts have some of the highest occurrence rates of smaller tornadoes (EF0, EF1, and EF2). Based on NOAA tornado data from 1997 to 2006, EF0, EF1, and EF2 tornadoes account for approximately 80 to 95 percent of reported tornadoes in any given year. According to FEMA the states along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts have some of the highest occurrence rates of smaller tornadoes (EF0, ER1, and EF2). Based on NOAA tornado data from 1997 to 2006, EF0, EF1, and EF2 tornadoes account for approximately 80 to 95 percent of reported tornadoes in any given year, according to FEMA (Design and Construction Guidance for Community Safe Rooms, 2008). Peak tornado season in the southern States is from March through May. According to NCDC, the probability of tornadoes reoccurring each year in St. Landry Parish is highly likely, with a percentage range of 75% to 100%. NCDC's data indicates that there have been 50 tornadoes, including waterspouts, in St. Landry Parish since 1950. These events occurred from 1951 to 2010, yielding a 118%

reoccurrence rate. The Town of Sunset has exposure to tornadoes at that same rate as the Parish as a whole.

Hurricanes

According to FEMA and the Louisiana Office of State Climatology, there have been nine hurricanes resulting in Major Disaster Declarations in St. Landry Parish since 1950. Three of these hurricanes have occurred from 2002 to 2008, yielding reoccurrence rate of 50%. Therefore, the probability of hurricanes occurring each year in St. Landry Parish is likely, with a percentage range of 35% to 75%. The Town of Sunset experiences the same vulnerability to a hurricane event as the rest of St. Landry Parish. In addition, the Town of Sunset will experience increasing, possibly damaging winds from even a minimal hurricane (Cat. 1) approaching and striking the Gulf Coast from any direction (Kaplan and DeMaria, 1995). Of the 16 federally declared disasters in St. Landry Parish, nine were due to hurricanes or tropical storms. Hurricanes, in addition to wind damage to structures, can bring about structural and street flooding, and extensive power outages that can cause problems for days or even weeks after the storm event has passed.

Evacuation Routes

In the event residents of the Town of Sunset were required to evacuate, I-49 is the State designated evacuation route. Although this highway is not currently included in the State's official interstate contraflow plan, traffic flow on this highway facility would most likely be in a northerly direction as evacuees from coastal parishes south of Lafayette head to their designated sheltering parishes. This is not to say that State emergency management and law enforcement officials would not consider imposing contraflow in I-49 should circumstances warrant. Access to I-49 in Sunset is via LA 93 (Duffy St.) primarily, and by LA 182 (Napoleon Avenue), although indirectly by this route since it leads back to LA 93—and for this reason, in an evacuation situation involving the Town of Sunset, law enforcement personnel would be needed to control traffic at the LA 93/I-49 North entrance ramp. The intersection of these two state roads in the Town of Sunset is already congested during the PM peak period in particular and will worsen. (See ADT projections in Section 3.4: Transportation). Regardless of the presence of a traffic signal or a roundabout at this intersection, during an evacuation scenario, traffic control by law enforcement personnel will be required at this intersection as well.

Existing Hazard Mitigation and Related Plans

St. Landry Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Town of Sunset is part of the Parish's Hazard Mitigation Plan (Appendix M of the Parish's HMP), and adopted its own Action Plan providing mitigation actions to address the adopted mitigation goals which respond to the hazards listed above. These goals include the following:

- *Identify and pursue preventive measures that will reduce future damages from hazards.*
- *Enhance public awareness and understanding of disaster preparedness.*
- *Reduce repetitive flood losses in the Town.*
- *Facilitate sound development in the Parish and Town to reduce or eliminate the potential impact of hazards.*

Some of these goals were carried over from the 2006 HMP, but at the time the 2011 HPM was adopted, Sunset had completed no actions items

or projects included in that 2006 plan. At some point in the near future, this plan will be updated with more current information.

St. Landry Parish Emergency Operations Plan

St. Landry Parish additionally has a very detailed Emergency Operations Plan which was approved by the Mayor of the Town of Sunset and which assigned the Mayor certain responsibilities in the event of a natural or man-made disaster that affects the Town of Sunset, as well as generally St. Landry Parish. In virtually all emergency situations where the St. Landry Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness is called into action along with the Parish President. Local Mayors, including the Mayor of Sunset, are responsible for coordinating with these (Parish President, Parish OHSEP Director, Sheriff's Office), and local emergency responders. In other emergency situations of a parish-wide nature, the Mayor of Sunset will be responsible for Resource Support primarily, and emergency management and community disaster recovery secondarily.

Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Guide

The State of Louisiana, through the Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) has prepared and made available to the public the "Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Guide." This informative publication is designed to assist all of the State, including the leadership and residents of the Town of Sunset, in preparing for, preventing, responding to, recovering, and mitigating disasters.

Louisiana Shelter Operations Plan

The State, again through GOHSEP and in conjunction with the Louisiana Department of Social Services (DSS), has further prepared the "Louisiana Shelter Operations Plan (Hurricane Emergencies)" which provides the framework within which Parishes impacted by hurricanes (in some manner) can coordinate their actions with GOHSEP Emergency Support Function-6 (ESF-6) Section. The Department of Social Services plays a key role in this function. This shelter operations plan calls for the evacuation during a hurricane emergency of as much of the impacted population as possible from the path of the storm and their relocation to relatively safe areas outside of the highest level of storm surge flooding and hurricane force winds. The plan places those parishes most at risk from the effects of hurricanes in a Risk Area called Sector D. Most of these are coastal parishes and St. Landry Parish, fortunately, is not listed among these Risk Area Parishes.

Louisiana Shelter Task Force Plan (LSTF)

St. Landry Parish is, however, listed in the Louisiana Shelter Task Force (LSTF) plan since it is not part of the Coastal Parish Risk Area. St. Landry has been placed in Sector C of the LSTF along with Beauregard, Allen, Evangeline, Pointe Coupee, West and East Feliciana, West and East Baton Rouge, Livingston, and St. Helena Parishes. This plan describes an orderly procedure to be followed by Louisiana parishes in responding to a hurricane emergency. It is not designed to "replace or supersede any local plans..." and it does not "usurp the authority of any local governing body." There are problems which always come to light when people affected by evacuation are sheltered. This plan deals with those issues and problems, indicating the actions that should "...be taken at each stage of the sheltering operation."

The plan states some assumptions that directly impact St. Landry Parish (as a Section C Host area parish) and, consequently, the Town of Sunset. These assumptions are as follows:

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- *Sector C Host area parishes will pre-identify pre-storm shelter locations for use as last resort refuges or staging areas for risk area government personnel and equipment. No such locations have been identified in the Town of Sunset at this point.*

- *Sector C Host area parishes could be requested to provide post storm sheltering. These facilities are not intended to be conventional shelters, but rather, facilities that are believed to be reasonably safe from the principle damaging effects off hurricanes without the amenities of a shelter.*

The Town of Sunset, if it has identified and expects to use a hurricane evacuation shelter within the town limits pursuant to any of the assumptions enumerated above, should ensure that the shelter(s) are:

- *Of wind-resistant construction;*

- *Situated outside of floodplains or areas where access roads could be flooded; and*

- *Located away from facilities which make, use, or store hazardous materials.*

The Town of Sunset may be asked to park vehicles and equipment, store supplies, and host key workers temporarily. This request would be channeled through St. Landry Parish as a Sector C Parish. In some of the coastal parishes, equipment, supplies, and key personnel essential for hurricane response and recovery may not be able to be protected in-place. For this reason, Sector C Parishes may receive requests from the evacuating jurisdictions to lend assistance in this regard. In any case, as the probability of hurricane landfall increases, mandatory evacuations will be ordered in the affected coastal parishes. As a Sector C Parish, St. Landry and the Town of Sunset should take steps to ensure that they are ready to accommodate last resort sheltering or staging as needed.

Recommendations

The Town of Sunset Action Plan, as stated in the St. Landry Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP), has detailed several projects that will reduce the Town's vulnerability to various natural hazards and greatly help to increase resiliency. Unfortunately, the implementation of most of these actions hinges on the receipt of federal disaster assistance grants or other outside funding. There are some steps, however, that the Town of Sunset can take on its own without incurring much, if any costs. These steps would promote achievement of one of the mitigation goals adopted by the Steering Committee, namely, finding and implementing measures that would facilitate sound development in the Town to reduce or eliminate the potential impact of hazards (St. Landry HMP, Appendix M-Sunset, p. 4). For example, Sunset could adopt a stronger building code and a set of subdivision regulations that go beyond those in use currently. More resilient subdivision regulations, for example, should require all new subdivisions within the Town to be connected to the Town's community sewer system (assuming the system is upgraded), ban on-site sewage disposal systems and private water wells within that area. Sunset will need to ensure that its municipal water supply is adequate to meet expanding needs. (More on that in Section 3.5: Infrastructure). Also, a more resilient community will result if the Town is able to purchase its small number of repetitive/severe repetitive loss properties, remove the acquired structures, and convert the property to green space. If acquisition is not possible, the Town should make every effort to have these properties elevated at least one foot above the BFE. Both acquisition/removal and elevation will help to reduce flood velocities and flood heights, having an overall beneficial effect on the community at large.

Although flood damage appears to be localized in parts of Sunset, the effects of wind damage can be widespread in the community. High wind can result from thunderstorms, tornadoes, and hurricanes. To make the community more resilient, local building codes could specify design factors to mitigate windstorms for light frame construction. Suggested stability design tables for wind loads can be found in the Appendix.

Subdivision regulations for new development within the Town of Sunset should adopt provisions requiring the use of less impervious surfaces in parking lots, more planting areas, and methods to more effectively handle runoff through the use of stormwater management features (Green Infrastructure) on streets. These provisions would help to reduce or eliminate localized flooding by reducing sheet flow, place less strain on drainage infrastructure, and reduce the amount of inflow into the sanitary sewer system. Such new regulations and practices would make Sunset more resilient.

Other resiliency measures, that would also increase connectivity in the Town which in turn improve the social and cultural sustainability of communities, are subdivision regulations requiring sidewalks in all new subdivision developments, and the development of bike/pedestrian paths or a bike/pedestrian loop around the Town.

Further, the Town of Sunset should make concerted efforts to complete some of the goals set in the St. Landry Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) as they are key to community resiliency. For example, hardening of the Town's identified critical facilities through wind-retrofitting since they are not subject to flooding (Town Hall, Police, and Fire Stations), adding back-up power generation to water distribution and sewage collection/treatment systems, and providing localized drainage improvements to reduce or eliminate flooding would help to make the Town more resilient and aid in storm recovery. The 2006 HMP includes wind retrofit mitigation projects for the Sunset Town Hall, and both the Police and Fire Stations. These structures, along with the elementary school (which could be used as a shelter if hardened), have been identified as the Town's critical facilities. These wind retrofit projects are designed to protect exterior windows and doors against wind pressure and impacts of wind-borne debris associated with 130 MPH winds. These projects are awaiting grant funds for implementation.

In light of the hazards for which mitigation actions have been adopted, the Town of Sunset should take the steps detailed in its HMP Action plan, and add others as necessary, to ensure that interruptions to the provision of potable water, wastewater treatment, energy, and transportation due to the hazard events described in the HMP are short-lived. This will enable the Town of Sunset to more quickly restore critical government services and commercial activity, and ensure a more resilient community.

In case of a mandatory evacuation the most likely sheltering parishes for evacuees from the Town of Sunset are Rapides and Avoyelles. Town officials should make arrangements with these parishes so that in the event evacuation from Sunset were required, residents would be assured of a public evacuation center somewhere in either Rapides or Avoyelles Parishes, or both.

The Town of Sunset should further become

3.6 RESILIENCY

familiar with all the documents referenced in the Louisiana Shelter Task Force Plan (LSTF) and take steps to become prepared. This should be done in conjunction with the St. Landry Parish Emergency Manager, in the Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness.

Goals & Objectives

Goal 6.1: Reduce or eliminate the potential impact of hazards by implementing measures that facilitate sound development in Sunset.

Objective 6.1.1
Adopt a stronger building code that requires new construction to comply with the Louisiana Unified Construction Code recommended wind resistance standards.

Objective 6.1.2
Develop subdivision regulations which require all new subdivisions within town limits to be connected to the Town's community sewer system, ban on-site sewage disposal systems within the Town and the drilling of private water wells.

Goal 6.2: Strengthen municipal facilities in Sunset to meet resiliency objectives.

Objective 6.2.1
Ensure that the municipal water supply is adequate to meet expanding needs. Put the Town's second water well back in service, or drill another well.

Objective 6.2.2
Extend the Sunset sewerage treatment facility to meet the needs of existing and forecasted development.

Objective 6.2.3
Enhance the resiliency of the Town's identified critical facilities through wind-retrofitting in compliance with the latest State Building Code.

Objective 6.2.4
Add a back-up power generation to water distribution and sewage collection/treatment systems.

Objective 6.2.5
Provide a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian network.

Goal 6.3: Mitigate and reduce flood damage in the Town of Sunset.

Objective 6.3.1
Purchase repetitive/severe repetitive loss properties, remove the acquired structures, and convert the property to green space. If acquisition is not possible, make every effort to have these properties elevated at least one foot above the BFE.

Objective 6.3.2
Implement green infrastructure measures on public land in flood prone areas of the Town.

Objective 6.3.3
Provide localized drainage improvements to reduce or eliminate flooding, make the Town more resilient, and aid in storm recovery.

Objective 6.3.4
Require new development with impervious surface larger than 5,000 sf to include stormwater management features.

Objective 6.3.5
Require wind resistant street trees and plantings on new streets. Incorporate these on existing streets.

Goal 6.4: Prepare for the case of a mandatory evacuation.

Objective 6.4.1
Make arrangements with Rapides Parish and Avoyelles Parish for the event of a mandatory evacuation from Sunset.

3.6 RESILIENCY

Sources:

St. Landry Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan, June 2011. Providence Engineering & Environmental Group, LLC

Appendix M – Sunset, LA, contained in St. Landry Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan, June 2011.

St. Landry Parish Emergency Operations Plan, June, 2011 (Emergency Contact List updated July 2013).

Louisiana Emergency Preparedness Guide, Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness.

Louisiana Shelter Operations Plan (Hurricane Emergencies), Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness.

Traffic Count Data, Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development

Louisiana Emergency Evacuation Plan and Map, Louisiana Shelter Task Force

Stability System Design Tables for Wind Loads, in "The Companion Manual to the Windstorm Mitigation Manual for Light Frame Construction," December 1999.

Kaplan, J., DeMaria, M., 1995: A Simple Empirical Model for Predicting the Decay of Tropical Cyclone Winds After Landfall. J. App. Meteor., 34, No. 11, 2499-2512. Model online at: http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/wind/risk_areas.shtml.

SECTION 3.7
COMMUNITY DESIGN

3.7 COMMUNITY DESIGN

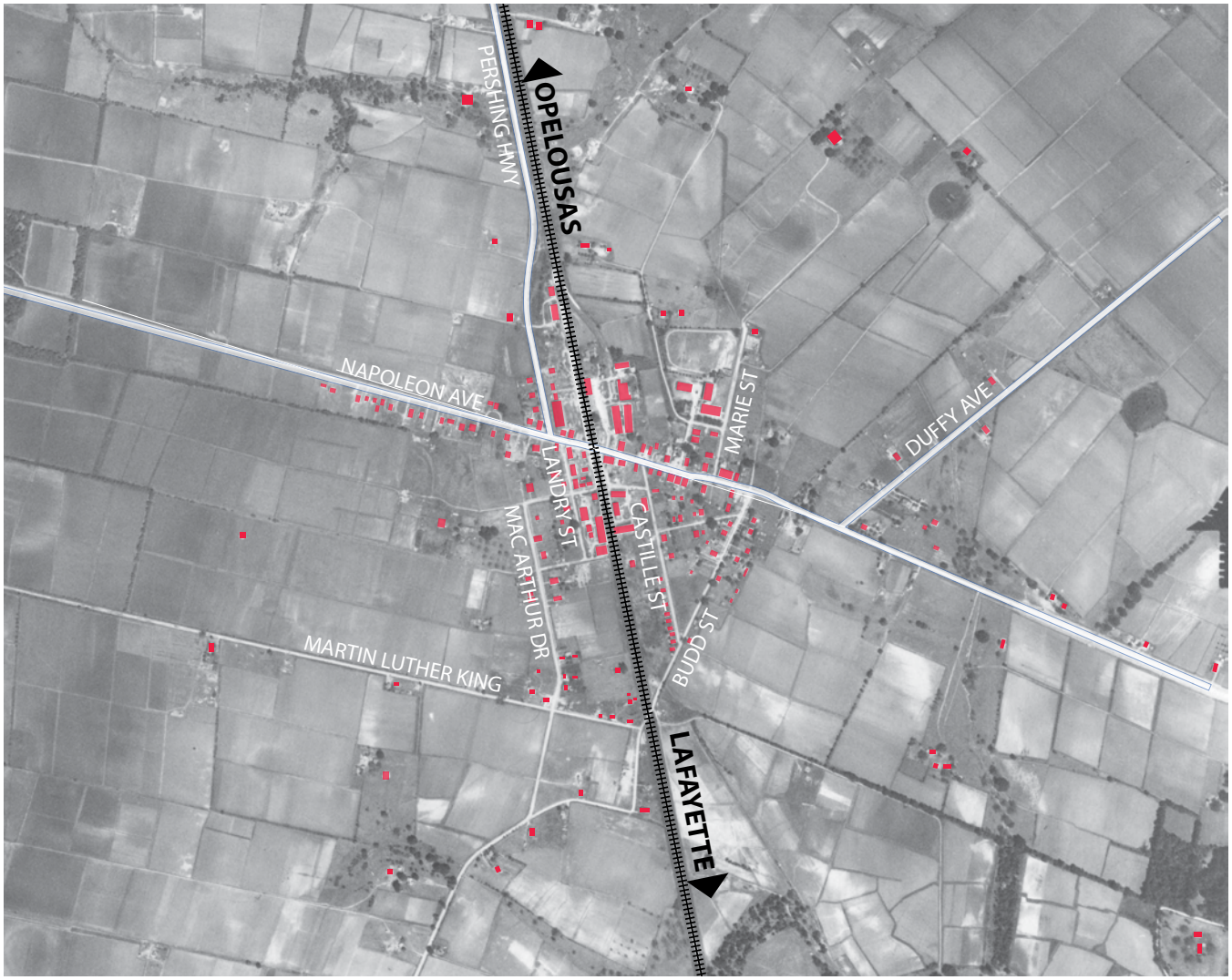
INTRODUCTION

This element analyzes Sunset's built environment and identifies specific community features that define the Town's character. The purpose is to describe the existing community design, and find opportunities to improve the Town's attractiveness, functionality, and physical cohesion. Furthermore, the analysis of the physical structure of existing neighborhoods will guide the appearance and functionality of future infill development as well as new subdivisions.

History of Settlement

The Town of Sunset developed as a typical Louisiana railroad town. In 1880 the Southern Pacific rails were laid between Lafayette and Opelousas, and the settlement arose around a rail station a mile southwest of the Town of Grand Coteau, which was at that time already established. Grand Coteau connected to the new rail station via Duffy Avenue and Napoleon Avenue.

After the rail line started service, businesses began to settle around the rail depot, and in



Img. 3.7.1: Sunset development in 1940

Img. 3.7.2: Sunset development in 1969

1904 the Town of Sunset was incorporated. The triangular shape of the initial street grid developed out of the angle in which the existing Napoleon Avenue intersected with the rail line.

In the early development stages Napoleon Avenue, Pershing Highway, and Duffy Avenue acted as the major arterials, Budd Street, Castille Street, and MacArthur Street framed the development around the rail corridor and Landry Street, Barry Street, Ann Street, and Martin Luther King Street (then Bellevue Street) completed the street grid in the southern part of town. North of Napoleon Avenue Marie Street and Leo Richard Lane accommodated residential development. Light industrial rail-related development occurred around the rail corridor, and Pershing Highway. More development arose over the following decades and the street grid within the initially developed area became denser.

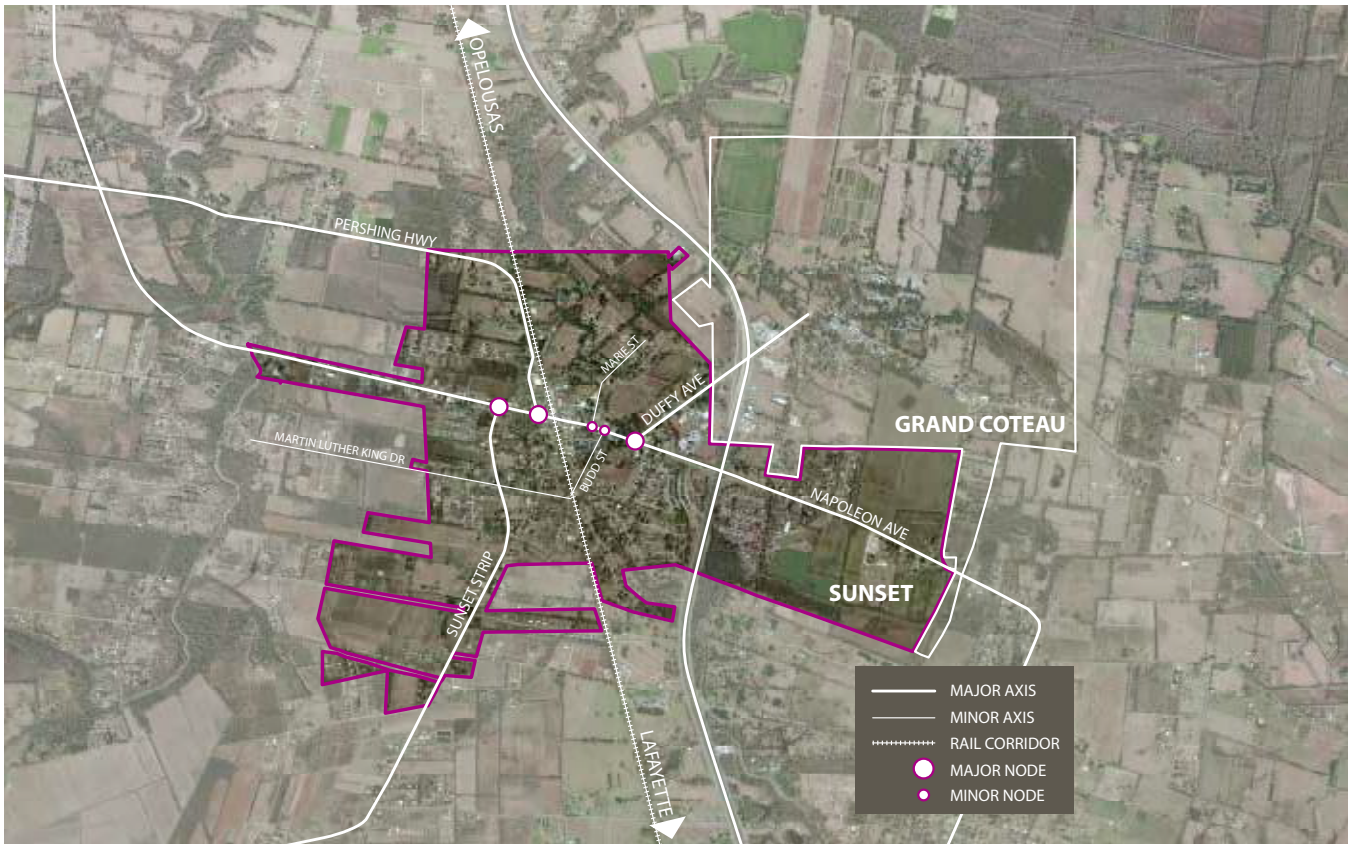
The extension of State Route 167 from Alexandria to Abbeville, which would later become Interstate 49, started construction in 1949 and was completed in the early 1950s.

3.7 COMMUNITY DESIGN

This major highway cut between the Town of Sunset and Grand Coteau. The new highway exit was constructed in Grand Coteau, leading into Duffy Avenue. Therefore, Duffy Avenue subsequently replaced Napoleon Avenue as the major gate to the Town of Sunset. The new state route further divided Sunset into two parts and isolated the eastern area of Sunset from the town center. This area has, as a result, kept a very rural character up until today.

In 1972 the Town of Sunset adopted a zoning ordinance that designated existing streets as either residential or commercial. The ordinance was amended one time and later designated remaining un-zoned stretches of Napoleon as commercial and residential. Later approved subdivisions were left unregulated. (More on that in Section 3.1: Land Use)

During the 1990s and 2000s residential development in the Town of Sunset boomed and a number of new subdivisions were developed within the town limits. Subdivision with luxury lots in Shady Meadows and Sunrise Estates were approved in the early 1990s, followed by subdivisions on Bloomfield Loop for Sunset's public housing development, as well as infill around Mayo Boulevard. Mossy Oak and Oak Trace subdivisions started single family house construction in the early 2000s. Fox Trace subdivided in 2004 and construction started in 2005. Sunset Terrace was subdivided off Sunset Strip between Tommy's Road and Dale Richard Lane into small single family lots and the developer plans to start construction soon. Currently the land between I-49 Frontage Road and Stanyan Street is in the process of being subdivided into luxury lots for single family residential development.



Map. 3.7.3: Sunset nodes and axes

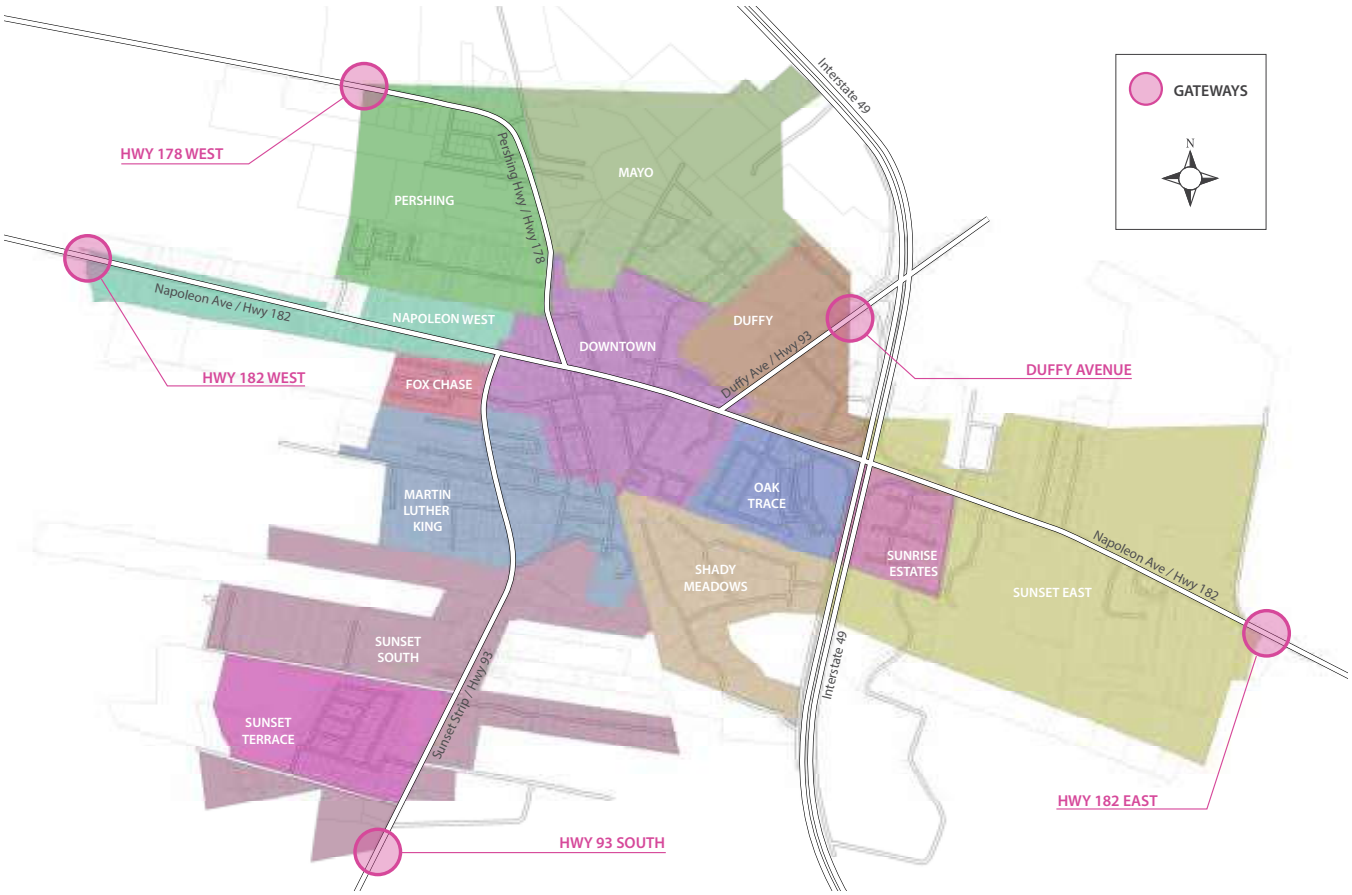
EXISTING CONDITIONS

Community Design

Development in the Town of Sunset occurred incrementally and the Town grew organically around its axes and nodes, which results in a mostly irregular street grid and a large variety of lot and block sizes and shapes. Napoleon Avenue constitutes the major east-west axis. Sunset Strip, Pershing Highway, and Duffy Avenue, all terminate at their intersection with Napoleon Avenue. Those intersections mark the Town's most important nodes. All three streets, as well as the rail corridor, intersect Napoleon Avenue in different angles, which supports the characteristic irregularity of Sunsets' physical shape and street grid.

Town Shape

The past annexation and subdivision practice of Sunset has led to oddly shaped town limits. The shape of Sunset suggests that the Town annexed land based on street corridors rather than parcels or neighborhoods. In large parts the town limits do not follow property lines, which results in a large number of parcels which are partly located in Sunset and partly in the rural parish, as well as parcels which Sunset shares with the adjacent Town of Grand Coteau. In the South of Sunset, west of Sunset Strip, in two cases parcels along both sides of a road were annexed, but not the road itself, which results in an odd cut into the shape of the Town. One of the roads, Tommy's Road, is an unpaved gravel road. Additionally to this issue, the Town features a number of lots which do not provide direct



Map. 3.7.4: Neighborhoods and gateways

street access. (See Img. 3.7.5). The subdivision of land which results in individual parcels without street access is illegal according to the St. Landry Parish Subdivision Regulations. Most of those isolated parcels are currently vacant or in agricultural use, only a limited number features structures.

Gateways

The Town has five major access points: one leading from north-east into Sunset, coming from Grand Coteau, and one in north, west, south and east. Exiting from I-49, Duffy Avenue (Highway 93) leads into Sunset from north-west and intersects with Napoleon Avenue (Highway 182). This road is the most frequented gateway to Sunset and is also a historic and primary connector to Grand Coteau. At this gateway the road features a 40 feet wide median which accommodates a rural themed sculpture as well as signage that marks town limits and advertises the Corridor des Artes. Both sides of the road feature landscaped green spaces and traffic islands. Highway 93 subsequently turns westwards into Napoleon Avenue for and after a short stretch again southwards into Sunset Strip, which constitutes the South gateway to Sunset, connecting the Town of Sunset to the City of Lafayette. This gateway is of rural character with scattered residential development on both sides.

Map. 3.7.5: Sunset road access

Some of the roads that intersect with Sunset in this part of town are not paved. A town sign marks the town limits.

Highway 182, Napoleon Avenue, runs as the Town's major thoroughfare through Sunset in an east-west direction. On both sides the town limits are marked with signs and the Town's appearance incrementally transitions from a rural appearance into a denser town center. At the west gate a little bridge crosses a small creek, which draws a natural border to the Town.

North access point to the Town of Sunset is over Pershing Highway (Highway 178), a small rural highway that connects Sunset to Opelousas. This road was formerly called the Sunset Highway and used to be major access point from the north before the construction of I-49.

Landmarks

The Sunset water tower is located in the very center of the Town and is, due to its height, Sunset's most prominent landmark. The Sunset High School building, even though located two blocks off the major thoroughfare, also represents one of the Town's most significant landmarks.

Neighborhoods

The Downtown area is located around the intersection of the old rail corridor and Napoleon Avenue. The angle in which these corridors intersect, together with Budd Street, frame the triangular shape of the street grid. This neighborhood is the oldest neighborhood in town and contains the majority of Sunset's historically significant buildings. While Napoleon Avenue is a historically commercial corridor, mostly light industrial uses are aggregated along the former railroad axis. The area further accommodates most of the Town's institutional buildings, including the newly built town hall, the Sunset Library and the Community Center on Marie Street, the fire station on Napoleon Avenue, and the Police Station and Public Works Office on Castille Street. Further, Sunset's only public green space, the Town Park, which is stage for the annual Herb Festival, and also accommodates the Town's public basketball courts, is located along Marie Street. The remaining streets accommodate a relatively dense fabric of single family residential structures on small lots. Blocks vary in size and shape, but are generally of walkable proportions. The downtown area features sidewalks in good condition along both sides of Napoleon Avenue. Landry Street, Anna Street, Railroad Avenue and Budd Street provide partial sidewalks on only one side of the street. The remaining streets in Downtown do not provide pedestrian facilities at all. The tree canopy of Downtown is dense in the residential areas, but generally lacks coverage within the central, light industrial and vacant area of Downtown, adjacent to the former railroad line, as well as along Napoleon Avenue. Prevalent tree types in the part north of Napoleon are southern live oaks, pecans, pines and junipers. The area south of Napoleon features live oaks and pines as well and a number of southern magnolias, sweet gum's

Img. 3.7.6: Napoleon Avenue

and hackberries. There are no street trees along Napoleon Avenue.

The closing of the rail line in the 1980s and subsequent displacement of the rail tracks has removed the structural backbone of the Downtown site layout and left a void that makes the remaining development specifically between Landry Street and Castille Street appear uncoordinated and random. This area also has a high rate of vacancy, which further exacerbates the uncoordinated appearance.

East of Downtown, Duffy Avenue is seamed by single family residential development on both sides. The corridor has been historically the main connection to Grand Coteau and a number of historic residences seam the road. The area north-west behind Duffy Avenue is currently vacant, but land owners plan to develop the parcels in near future as single family residential community with three levels of lot sizes. South-east of Duffy Avenue Sunset's main commercial area is located. The area can be accessed via Duffy Avenue, as well as from two access points off Frontage Road. Currently large scale commercial and light industrial uses are predominant there, including a locally owned grocery store, as well as national chain stores and medical facilities.

The area currently features a number of vacant lots and has potential to be developed further as Sunset grows. While Duffy Avenue has sidewalks on both sides of the street, the commercial area south-west of the corridor does not provide pedestrian facilities. The layout of commercial and institutional development is based on automobile traffic with large parking facilities in front of the buildings, almost no landscaping, and very few street trees. The area surrounding the residential development along Duffy Avenue features a tree canopy of predominantly southern live oaks. Other species in this area include maple, golden rain tree, elm, cherry, and crepe myrtle.

North of Downtown the Mayo neighborhood stretches between the old rail corridor to Doris Street and the town limits. The residential development around Mayo Boulevard and the northern end of Marie Street includes small to midsized single family lots, some of which date back to the 1930s. Behind this relatively dense development, large lots with scattered residential and agricultural development stretch

Img. 3.7.7: Duffy Triangle

out to Pershing Highway and the north-eastern town limits. Streets in this neighborhood do not have sidewalks. The Mayo area has a remarkable number of mature pecan trees, as well as southern live oaks. However, the invasive Chinese tallow tree also grows in the area. The tree canopy in the north-west of the neighborhood along Muscadine Road is densely forested and features a large number of tree species, including elm, hackberry, sweet gum, pecan, pines, southern live oaks, sycamore, willow, juniper, green ash, catalpa, and Chinese tallow.

Northwest of Downtown, between the rail corridor and the town limits, the Pershing area accommodates residential development, as well as large open spaces. Along the west side of Pershing Highway single family residences seam the rural road. In the southern part residential development on large lots occurs along Richard Street. At the end of Richard Street the Bloomfield development, Sunset's public housing facility, is located. The development consists of brick style duplexes and two story apartment buildings. Further up north on Willow Glenn Lane and Rosewood Boulevard the Rosewood apartment complex is located. The only streets that provide sidewalks in this area are Barbara Drive and the first block of Pershing Highway. Pershing features a dense tree canopy within the undeveloped areas of the neighborhood. The trees growing here are primarily oak species, including a large number of Southern Life Oaks and Water Oaks. Additionally the neighborhood features pecan trees as well as a number of Chinese tallows.

North of Pershing the western stretch of Napoleon Avenue is home to single family residential uses on relatively large lots, scattered commercial sites, and the old rooster fight arena,

Img. 3.7.8: Mayo

an event venue. Napoleon Avenue, on this side of town, does not provide sidewalks. This area features a tree canopy in the backyards of residential lots that includes southern live oaks, hackberries, maples, pecans, and pines, as well as a few water oaks.

One block north of Napoleon Avenue down Sunset strip, the Fox Chase subdivision accommodates ranch-style single family residential structures on medium sized lots. Built in 2005 the subdivision is one of the newest developments in the Town. The area is accessible through only one street which leads

Img. 3.7.9: Fox Chase

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into 3 cul-de-sacs. Currently about two third of the lots are built out.

South-west of Downtown around the intersection of Martin Luther King Drive and Sunset Strip, the Martin Luther King neighborhood accommodates a relatively dense fabric of single family residential development, as well as the Sunset Elementary School. Budd Street, leading to the Elementary School, features sidewalks on both sides of the street, and Martin Luther King East Drive has a complete sidewalk along one side. The west part of Martin Luther King Drive features partial sidewalks on one side of the street. While Sunset Loop features ranch style residences on medium sized lots, small single family lots line Martin Luther King Drive, B O Street, and Lucille Drive. Around Martin Luther King Drive mostly southern live oaks, junipers, pecans, and pine trees grow. The area further features a number of cypress trees, catalpa, hackberries, and sycamores. The eastern part of Martin Luther King Drive was one of the early residential settlements of Sunset and the majority of buildings there are older than 50 years.

Farther down south, west of Sunset Strip, Mossy Oak street features medium sized lots for single family uses and even farther south lots become larger and the neighborhood transitions into the more rural setting of Sunset South. Down there scattered single family residential development lines the country road. Partly unpaved side roads lead into rural residential and agricultural use areas. Predominantly pine trees grow in this part of town. Additionally a few cypress trees, southern live oaks, pecans, and water oaks can be found. West of Sunset Strip, almost at town limits, Sunset Terrace just recently was subdivided into approximately 130 small residential single family lots. While the road network of the subdivision is internally connected, access to the subdivision is only possible over only one major and one side gateway. In Sunset South the only street providing a sidewalk is Caribbean Drive.

Oak Trace and Shady Meadows are both located south-east of Downtown Sunset and are framed by the I-49 Frontage Road and the former rail corridor. Both subdivisions feature exclusively single family residential development. Shady Meadows, the older one of the two neighborhoods, consists of four winding roads seamed by large lots and very large lots. Roads

Img. 3.7.10: Martin Luther King

Img. 3.7.11: Shady Meadows

end in cul-de-sacs and the development is accessible only from two access points off Frontage Road.

The design of the internal street network has a typical suburban, automobile-based residential appearance. The upscale neighborhood accommodates tasteful family homes and large mansions. The roads in Shady Meadows do not have sidewalks and the area features predominantly water oak, pecan, and birch trees. Oak Trace, which was subdivided in the early 2000s, is slightly better accessible as, in addition to gateways from Frontage Road it also features an entrance point on Napoleon Avenue. The subdivision street grid, however, is not connected internally and access from one part of the subdivision to the other is only possible by foot or bike. The lots in this subdivision are medium sized and feature suburban style single family homes. The tree canopy of this area primarily consists of southern live oaks, southern magnolias, and water oaks. Both subdivisions are extremely isolated from the Town of Sunset and generally cannot be well accessed from the rest of the community.

East of I-49 Sunset has maintained its rural character. North of Highway 182 three residential streets feature small to medium sized residential single family development. South of the highway, right off I-49 the Sunrise Estates subdivision provides medium sized lots with nice single family residences. The roads in this development are slightly winding and end in cul-de-sacs. The main road features a landscaped median, but no sidewalks are provided. The street grid is neither internally connected nor do roads connect to the external street network except of one access point to Frontage Road. The subdivision was built in the early 2000's and has a suburban and automobile- based appearance. The remaining part of Sunset East is of rural character with partly agricultural uses, as well as horse related activities. Tree species in this area include pines, pecans, catalpa, water oaks, and sweet gum. Further, the ExxonMobil pipeline facility, Sunset's single heavy industrial land use is located in this part of town.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The shape of Sunset largely suggests that the Town was shaped in regard to street corridors rather than neighborhoods or areas. Sunset's town limits thus in large parts intersect parcels. This past practice leads to administrative issues, as well as legal complications. Sunset should thus approach the annexation of all parcels which are currently only partly in Sunset. (See Img. 3.7.12). The two street corridors in the south, Tommy's Road and Dale Richard Road which are outside the town limits, should become incorporated into Sunset's town limits in order to reach a more homogeneous and orderly town form which allows for easier administration of municipal taxes, services, and utilities. In a second phase Sunset could approach expanding the town limits in the east up to the creek which runs in a north-south direction. (Sunset future boundary 2)

Additionally the Town of Sunset should seek to redefine its border to Grand Coteau and aim on reducing the number of parcels which are partly under both jurisdictions, and redraw town limits along property lines. Further, Sunset needs to eliminate parcels without road access by either providing road access, or resubdividing parcels into parcels that do have road frontage and are under the same ownership.

The Town of Sunset has an organically grown, relatively dense center that gradually transitions

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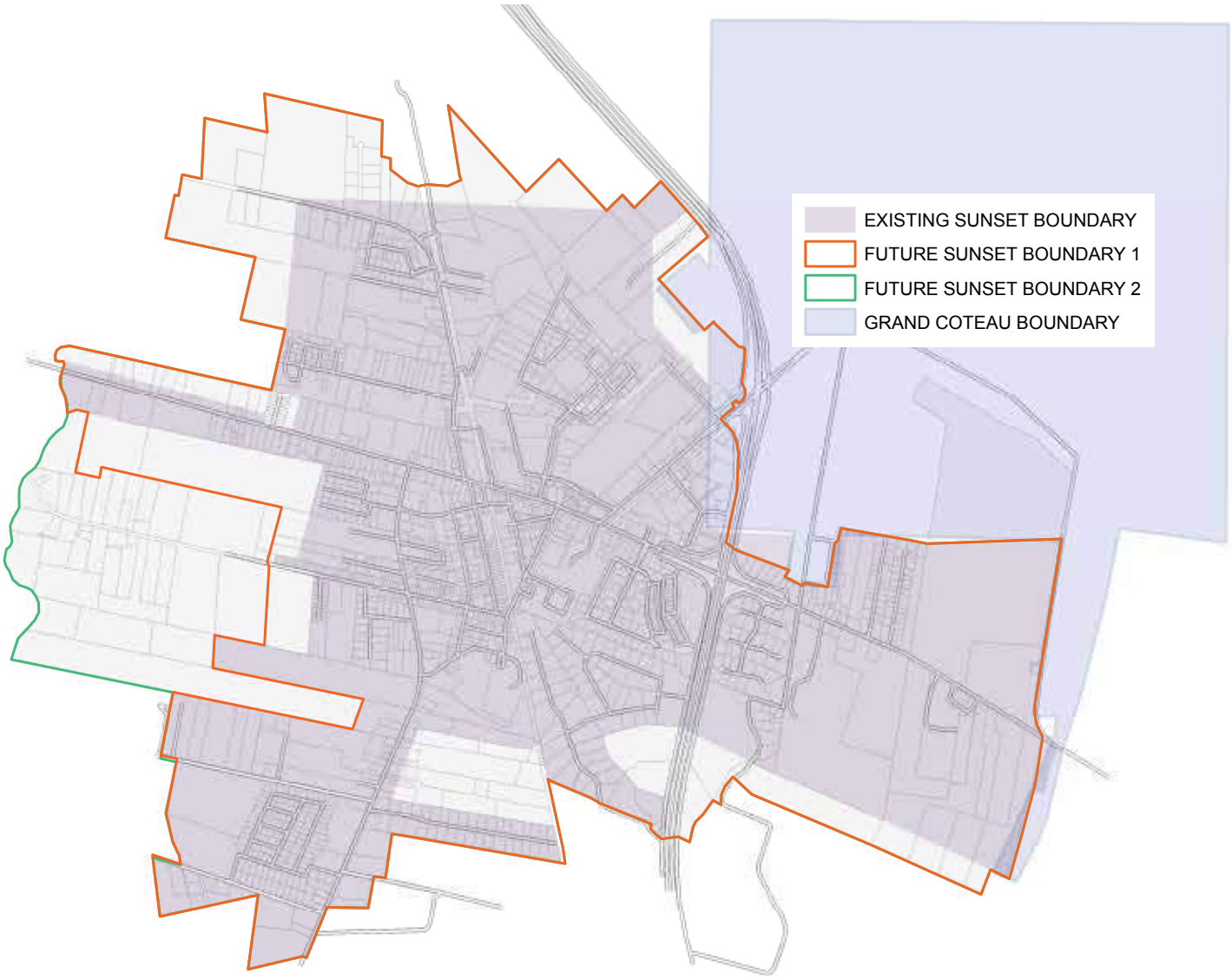

into the low density rural surroundings. The town center features commercial and institutional uses, which support the downtown-feel of the area and define the natural town core. The displacement of the railroad line and the remaining scattered rail-related light industrial structures, as well as the vacant land resulting from this displacement, have, however, left a structural void within this area which needs to be filled. Sunset should thus create a recognizable Town Center in Downtown Sunset around the intersection of Napoleon Avenue and Marie Street. Within the downtown area, especially around civic uses and on routes to the elementary school, a complete network of sidewalks and pedestrian crossings school should be established to promote foot and bicycle traffic and to provide safe routes for kids to and from school. The commercial area southeast of Duffy Avenue is not designed in a pedestrian friendly manner either. The roads in this area lack sidewalks and street trees.

The majority of parking lots is not landscaped. Here as well the Town of Sunset should make investments in street improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists, and develop regulations that require private development of relevant size to provide landscaping.

Oak Trace, Shady Meadows, Sunrise Estates and Fox Chase, Sunset's new subdivisions, are suburban style residential developments that were all planned and built within a very short period of time. All four of them lack, to different degrees, connectivity to the remaining parts of town which grew organically over a last century. The limited road access to those developments disturbs the overall connectivity and walkability of the Town and spurs a car-dependent lifestyle. The new subdivision in South Sunset, which has not started construction yet, will accommodate approximately 130 single family units with only one access to the main street, and one side gate. This area, which will in the future be one of the densest residential developments of Sunset, is further cut off from the Town's remaining residential development by a green belt and a rural setting on all four sides. Sunset must ensure that future developments provide sufficient access and a level of connectivity that enables walking and biking as efficient modes of transportation. Existing isolated subdivisions should be reconnected to Sunset's urban fabric by adding connections where necessary.

During public meetings and in surveys, Sunset's residents expressed with a strong consensus the desire to have commercial uses along Duffy Avenue. As Duffy constitutes the Town's major entrance corridor commercial uses would seem natural to this area. The corridor, however, developed over a long time in a low density residential manner. Residences along Duffy Avenue including structures that date back to the early 20th century. Potential commercial uses along this corridor need to be designed and used in a manner that allows for a mix of uses and a transition between residential and commercial development. Further, access to commercial uses along Duffy has to be managed in order to keep traffic safe and flowing. (More on this in Section 3.4: Transportation)

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GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goal 7.1: Redefine Sunset's town limits to reach a more homogeneous and orderly town form which allows for easier administration of municipal taxes, services, and utilities.

Objective 7.1.1
Reduce and ultimately eliminate the amount of parcels which are partially within Sunset's town limits by synchronizing Sunset's town limits with existing property lines.

Objective 7.1.2
Partner with the Town of Grand Coteau to redefine the border between both Towns to follow property lines. Negotiate the swap of parcels with Grand Coteau with the ultimate intention of designating the I-49 corridor as the border between the two towns.

Objective 7.1.3
Annex Tommy's Road and Dale Richard Road, part of Zick Miller Road, the Summerset Lane Subdivision as well as the land between Sunset Strip, Doral Street, and Sand Piper Place to reach a more homogeneous town shape. Pave Tommy's Road.

Objective 7.1.4
Reduce the number of parcels without direct road access and ultimately eliminate not accessible parcels by resubdividing them with adjacent parcels that provide road access, or, alternatively, create access roads.

Goal 7.2: Revitalize the Sunset Town center along the old rail corridor to mend the town fabric and create a unique sense of place that provides an attractive and functional environment for residents and visitors alike.

Objective 7.2.1
Design a recognizable and memorable area in Downtown Sunset around the intersection of Napoleon Avenue and Marie Street to be the Town Center.

Objective 7.2.2
Redesign Napoleon Avenue between Duffy Avenue and Pershing Highway as a complete street. Add street trees along Napoleon Avenue.

Objective 7.2.3
Install safe and attractive pedestrian walkways within the town center.

Objective 7.2.4
Establish a multiuse trail along the old rail line that connects Sunset internally and recreates the structural backbone of the downtown area.

Objective 7.2.5
Enhance the visibility of the Town's history by installing information boards and interpretive signs at historic structures.

Objective 7.2.6
Create a central public open space on the underutilized land between the former rail corridor and Castille Street.

Goal 7.3: Improve Sunset's internal connectivity and enhance walkability and bikeability.

Objective 7.3.1:
Connect the street network of Shady Meadows and Oak trace to Budd Street and the Rail corridor via pedestrian and bicycle alleys.

Objective 7.3.2:
Incentivize residential development along Sunset Strip to mend the gap between the Town center and the new subdivision between Tommy's Road and Dale Richard Lane.

Objective 7.3.3:
Require future subdivisions to adequately connect to the existing street grid and to also provide internal connectivity for all transportation modes (vehicular, pedestrian, bicyclist.

Goal 7.4: Design the Duffy Avenue street scape as the Town's major gateway.

Objective 7.4.1:
Add plantings and gateway identification signage of the appropriate scale at the Town entrance.

Objective 7.4.2:
Design the streetscape as Complete Street and connect pedestrian and bike routes into the commercial triangle south of Duffy Avenue.

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SECTION 3.8
TOWN HISTORY & HISTORIC RESOURCES

3.8 TOWN HISTORY & HISTORIC RESOURCES

Introduction

The preservation and maintenance of historically relevant resources in the Town of Sunset is critical to protecting the town's cultural identity and enhancing economic activity. Well maintained historic buildings and sites will strengthen the town's character, promote its rich history, further build community identity, and encourage attractive development.

Existing Conditions

Town History

In 1821, two sisters of the Religious Order of the Sacred Heart traveled from St. Charles, Missouri to Louisiana and founded a convent and school in present-day Grand Coteau. The school eventually became the Academy of the Sacred Heart and drew settlers to the area. A small town, which at the time was called St. Charles Town, developed around the facility. Later the name was changed to Grand Coteau. In the late 1800s Napoleon Robin, a local planter, started efforts to bring the railroad to the area. In 1880 the Southern Pacific rails were laid west of Grand Coteau, at the site of today's Town of Sunset, and connected southwards to Lafayette and northwards to Opelousas. In the same year, Victor Hugo Sibille, who would later become Sunset's first mayor, built his house at the railroad. After rail line service commenced, businesses began to emerge around the rail depot. In 1904, the Town of Sunset was incorporated. Victor Hugo Sibille, mayor of Sunset at the time, initiated the establishment of cotton gins, saw mills, lumber yards, syrup mills, and a telephone company in the area. In the 1980s, after nearly a century of economic activity, the railroad closed and the tracks were removed from Sunset. The railroad corridor, however, still exists, maintaining the former connection to Opelousas and Lafayette.

In its early days Sunset and the surrounding region produced primarily cotton. At the turn of the 20th century, boll weevils began to appear in the region. These beetles fed on and consequently destroyed most of the cotton crop. The Town of Sunset reacted by shifting its economic focus to the production of sweet potatoes, and became soon known as "Sweet Potato Capital of the Nation". Over time, economic factors began to shift Sunset's agricultural production from sweet potatoes to soybeans and corn, which continue to be the town's major crops today.

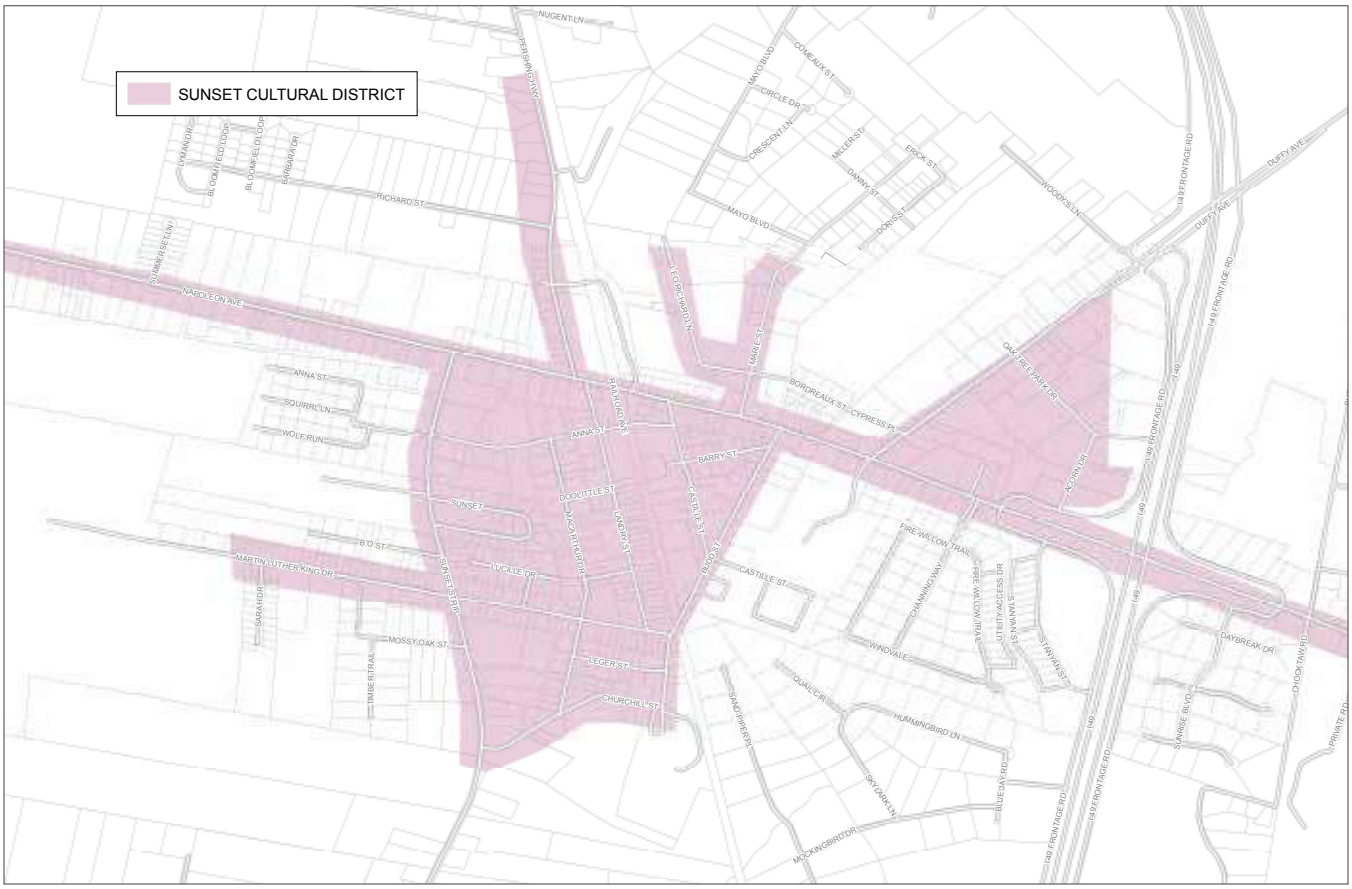
More recently, Sunset has earned the title "Rubboard Capital of the World" as lifetime Sunset resident Tee Don Landry, son of Willie Landry who was producer of the Zydeco instrument since 1946, is hand producing the original Z-Key Rubboards in the Town of Sunset. The Rubboard as we know it, was invented by Opelousas born Zydeco artist Clifton Chenier and his cousin Roscoe Chenier. The title "Rubboard Capital of the World" was proclaimed in 2014 by the Louisiana Legislature via Resolution SRC81. Rubboards are one of only four musical instruments founded in the United States. Tee Don Landry, has built more than 2,200 rubboards to date. He keeps an active record of each rubboard transaction and even marks their new homes on a map, some landing in Europe.

Within the past few years, the Town of Sunset has provided fertile ground for small, entrepreneurial businesses. Local crafts-people and retailers opened up fused glass art galleries and studios, antique markets, thrift shops and antique stores. In July 2012, Sunset was approved by the Louisiana Cultural

Districts (LCD) program as the Sunset Cultural District, a title that allows a waiver of sales tax on transactions of original, handcrafted pieces. The initiative seeks to trigger community revitalization through fostering local cultural activity. St. Landry Parish currently is home to five Louisiana Cultural Districts. The borders of the district, as seen on Image 3.8.1 suggest that the creation of the district was based on corridors, rather than areas. Thus the district line intersect parcels along almost its entire length. Regulations of the Cultural District only apply to the land within the district area, and not to the rest of intersected parcels. As in the case of La Caboose Bed and Breakfast, the main building is within the cultural district, but the historic structures in the rear of the property are not. However, there is a procedure to expand Cultural Districts, offered by the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism, that can be facilitated to change existing district boundaries to include whole parcels.

St. Landry Parish and Sunset, as well as Opelousas, Cankton, Grand Coteau, are further located in the Atchafalaya National Heritage Area. The four main goals of the Heritage Area, as stated in the Atchafalaya Trace Heritage Area Management Plan (2002) are:

- *Building understanding and identity*
- *Expanding economic opportunities*
- *Strengthening place*
- *Increasing community*



Map 3.8.1: Sunset Cultural District)

3.8 TOWN HISTORY & HISTORIC RESOURCES

The Town of Sunset has established twin town partnerships with St. Paul en Cornillon in France and Nassagne in Belgium. Twin town partnerships are made between towns to promote cultural and commercial ties. The exchange between Sunset and its twin towns is lively and triggers international visits from both communities.

Historic Buildings

Historic Landmarks

The National Historic Landmark designation is an official recognition by the federal government of the national significance of a historic property. The designation as National Historic landmark is ascribed to districts, sites, and structures of exceptional value for the heritage of the United States. National Historic Landmarks are designated by the Secretary of the Interior. Buildings, sites, districts, structures listed in the National register of Historic Landmarks constitute the nation's most significant historic heritage. Historic Landmarks are eligible for a number of federal and state tax incentive programs, as well as the restoration Tax Abatement Program.

The Town of Sunset features one federally designated Historic Landmark within corporate limits, as well as one outside of town, which carries a Sunset zip code.

Sunset High School

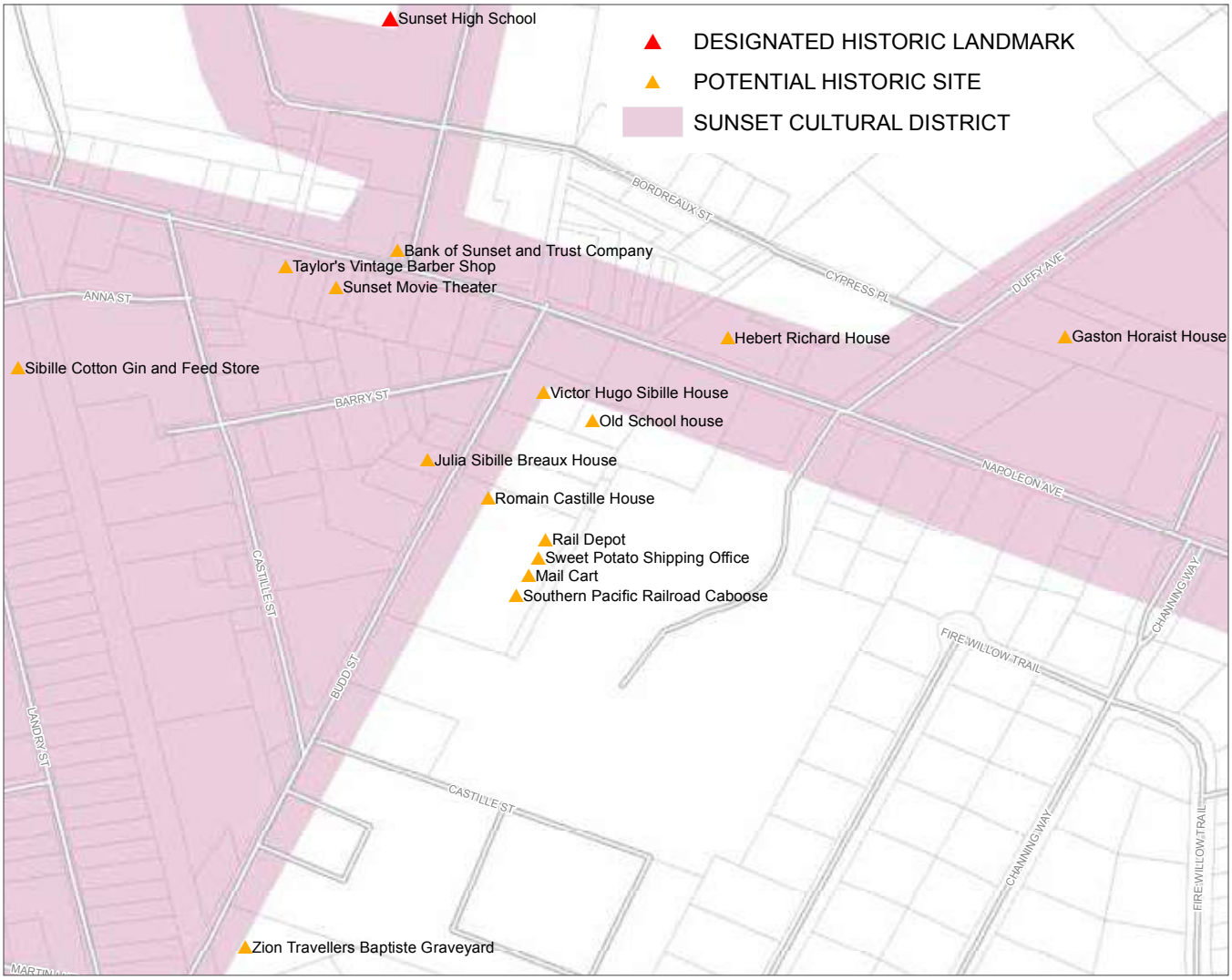
In 1926, Sunset High School (Img. 3.8.2) was constructed on Marie Street. The high school was operational until 1991, when area high school activity was consolidated to Beau Chene High School. The beautiful, old, brick building, which is located in the center on Sunset's civic district, was designated as a Historic Landmark

Img. 3.8.2: Sunset High School Building

in 1999. While the former high school building has been standing vacant for over 20 years, it is structurally sound and received roof repairs in spring 2014. Returning the building to active use, however, would require further renovations and mold remediation. At this point it is unclear which future use the building could have. During the planning process a number of ideas came up, including establishing an arts incubator facility, an indoor fitness center, an antiques mall, a town museum, or community class rooms.

Chretien Point Plantation

About 1.5 miles southwest of Sunset Chretien Point Plantation is located. The historic landmark was built in 1831 and includes 20 acres of land on the banks of the Bayou Boudreaux. At its peak, the mansion was surrounded by 3,000 acres of cotton field and was manned by roughly 500 slaves. The Antebellum plantation home, which was designed in the French Creole, Federal, and Classical Revival styles, served as the model for Gone with the Wind's "Tara" plantation. The building is constructed of red brick and is surrounded by a columned gallery. The plantation grounds served as a stage for the Civil War during which a cannonball destroyed a portion of



Map. 3.9.3: Possible historically significant sites in Sunset

3.8 TOWN HISTORY & HISTORIC RESOURCES

the upper section of the house. After a change in ownership the estate was fully renovated in 1975 and became a Historic Landmark in 1977. At this time the plantation is used as a private residence and is not open for visitors.

Other Historically Significant Sites

Additionally to the Historic Landmarks, the Town of Sunset has a number of old buildings which are of significance for the town's history and heritage, and draw a lively picture of the past of the Louisiana early 20th century railroad town. Most of the historically significant buildings are located near the historic town center along Budd Street and Napoleon Avenue. Buildings include private residences, institutional buildings, businesses and vacant structures.

Napoleon Avenue

The Bank of Sunset, (Img. 3.8.4) built in 1906, on the corner of Napoleon Avenue and Marie Street, was constructed to protect silver from local thief bands, which frequently robbed train wagons transporting silver for cotton product from Opelousas to Sunset. The Bank of Sunset was one of few financial institutes in the U.S. that were not forced to close during the Great Depression and was further on called the "Biggest Little Bank in the World." The historic Bank of Sunset building later accommodated Sunset Town Hall. In 2011, however, Sunset Town Hall moved to its present-day location on Marie Street and the bank building has been vacant since. The building is in private ownership. The old Sunset Movie Theater (Img. 3.8.5) is located on the 800 block of Napoleon Avenue. Currently the building is vacant. The Herbert Richard House is located At 939 Napoleon Avenue. It was constructed around 1900 and served as the private residence of Herbert Richard, a major cotton broker in Sunset. Today, the house remains in use as a private residence. Taylor's Vintage Mini Barber- Shop is located on the 800 block of Napoleon Avenue. The barber is in his 90's and retired in 2014. He is a veteran of World War II and survived the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

Budd Street

The Old School Building, located at 113 Budd Street, was constructed in 1870. The creole cottage-style building serves as an attorney's office today. Behind the Old School building the Victor Hugo Sibille House was built in 1880, serving as the home of Sunset's first mayor. The building was designed in a Greek Revival style and is in use as a private residence. Victor

Img. 3.8.4; Bank of Sunset

Img. 3.8.5: Sunset Movie Theater

Img. 3.8.6: J Sibille Breaux House

Img. 3.8.7: Sibille Cotton Gin and Feed Store

Hugo Sibille later built another house on 138 Budd St for his daughter Julia Sibille Breaux (Img. 3.8.6). The building was constructed in 1898 in a Queen Ann Revival style. The former Romaine Castille Residence is located at 145 Budd Street. Romaine Castille was a prominent businessman in the early days of Sunset. The Victorian cottage-style house was constructed in 1902 and currently serves as the main building of La Caboose, Sunset's only bed & breakfast. La Caboose utilizes several historic buildings for its bed & breakfast operation including an original Southern Pacific Railroad Caboose, the former Sweet Potato Shipping Office, the old Rail Depot, and a historic Mail Car. Each building was relocated from its original site on the historic rail corridor to its current location at La Caboose. The Zion Travelers Baptiste Church and graveyard, established in 1870, are located further south on Budd Street.

Other Buildings

The Sibille Cotton Gin and Feed Store (Img. 3.8.7) is located on 312 Anna Street, adjacent to the former railroad corridor. The former store now accommodates the Rail Stop Flea Market, an antiques store. The Joe Sibille House, located at 155 MacArthur Street was built around 1900. The Gaston Horaist House, located at 138 Duffy Avenue, was built around 1890.

Historic Preservation

Neither the Town of Sunset nor St. Landry Parish have any measures for historic preservation in place. However, while the Cultural District does not directly preserve historic sites, it incentivizes the preservation of old buildings by providing a tax credit up to 25% of the cost of rehabilitation of vacant and blighted, or owner-occupied residential structures that are at least fifty years old. In order to take advantage of the tax credit improvements must exceed a minimum of $20,000 total cost. The maximum granted tax credit is $25,000.

Recommendations

The Town of Sunset has an interesting history that is unique to Sunset and reflective of the region. Remnants of the once thriving railroad business and vibrant town life tell a lively story of the past. This heritage and the Town's history as a typical Louisiana railroad town have the

3.8 TOWN HISTORY & HISTORIC RESOURCES

potential to intrigue residents and visitors alike. However, there are no measures in place that support the preservation of historic sites in the Town of Sunset. In order to take advantage of this potential, Sunset should focus on making those assets accessible for interested spectators and preserve them for future generations. Sunset should thus form a Historic Preservation Committee that will take the lead on preserving and promoting local history. The committee should list and document potential historically significant buildings of the Town and evaluate them for eligibility for registration as National Historic Landmark.

Most of the historic sites are located within a few minutes walking distance from each other and could potentially be facilitated for a historic walking tour that tells interested visitors and Sunset residents about the history and heritage of the Town. Such a map will raise awareness among Sunset residents for their historic sites and further support the Town as a tourist destination. Further the Town of Sunset should look into acquiring one of the historic buildings on Napoleon Avenue and establish a Railroad and Sweet Potato Museum that exhibits the Town's history. The vacant barber shop would be well suited to accommodate a tourist information center.

The area between the former rail corridor and Budd Street which comprises the historic town center, faces current challenges of underutilization and blight. Most of the historic buildings are located in between primarily light industrial uses and scattered vacant lots. Some of the old structures are in dilapidated states. Further, the existing streets in the central part of town do not provide sidewalks and lack shade trees. The area generally gives an unstructured impression and does not appear inviting for pedestrians and visitors. The Town of Sunset should thus prioritize the establishment of a more pedestrian friendly environment in this area and further incentivize the renovation and rehabilitation of buildings and lots in the historic Downtown area. As this area is within the boundaries of the Cultural District, homeowners can take advantage of the available tax credit for renovations of historic buildings.
Sunset has only one designated Historic Landmark within town limits, the Sunset High School building. The building is currently standing vacant and in need for repair. Sunset's Town leadership should find funding for the renovation of this building and bring it back to use for the community.

Goal 8.1: Initiate the preservation of Sunset's history and historic structures for future generations.

Objective 8.1.1:
Form a Historic Preservation Committee that will take the lead on preserving and promoting local history.

Objective 8.1.2:
List potential historically significant buildings of the Town and initiate regulations for preserving them. Evaluate the potential of historic buildings for registration as National Historic Landmark.

Objective 8.1.3:
Incentivize the renovation and rehabilitation of buildings and lots in the historic Downtown area. Organize an informational event for homeowners within the Cultural District to educate them on how they can make use of the Cultural District Tax Credit program.

Objective 8.1.4:
Expand the Town of Sunset Cultural District and synchronize the district limits with property lines to include whole parcels.

Objective 8.1.5:
Find funding for renovation of the Sunset High School. Redevelop the building with a use that supports local culture and heritage.

Goal 8.2: Enhance the visibility, knowledge and appreciation of the Town's history and historic structures for both, residents and visitors.

Objective 8.2.1:
Develop a Historic Sites Map for the Town that maps historically significant buildings and sites and states the history of Sunset. Featuring information about the Town's history and its historic buildings this map will raise awareness among Sunset residents for their historic sites and further support the Town as a tourist destination.

Objective 8.2.2:
Establish a Railroad and Sweet Potato Museum in the Bank of Sunset building that exhibits the Town's history.

Objective 8.2.3:
Partner with Grand Coteau on marketing the two communities as historic sister towns.

3.8 TOWN HISTORY & HISTORIC RESOURCES

Goal 8.3: Revitalize the historic downtown area of Sunset.

Objective 8.3.1:
Initiate the establishment of a more pedestrian friendly environment within the historic core of Sunset by constructing new and improving existing sidewalks. Plant shade trees along streets in the Downtown area.

Objective 8.3.2:
Reconnect the urban fabric between the old rail corridor and Budd Street as an inviting area for as well residents as visitors by establishing a public open space that features recreational opportunities and monthly events.

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Legislation for Louisiana Cultural Districts, ACT No. 298. 2007. http://www.crt.state.la.us/Assets/OCD/arts/culturedistricts/legislation/Act298.pdf

Louisiana Division of the Arts, Office of Cultural Development. http://www.crt.state.la.us/cultural-development/arts/cultural-districts/overview/index

South St. Landry Community Library (http://www.southstlandrylibrary.com/?page_id=31)

St. Landry Parish Tourist Commission (http://www.cajuntravel.com)

Zydeco Cajun Prairie Website (http://zydecocajunbyway.com/history.html)

SECTION 3.9
RECREATION

3.9 RECREATION

Introduction

Parks, recreation opportunities, and open space promote a higher quality of life by providing numerous economic, environmental, health, safety, and aesthetic benefits (National Recreation and Park Association). Benefits include, but are not limited to:

- *Attracting and retaining residents*
- *Promoting community engagement and positive youth development*
- *Encouraging physical fitness and active living*
- *Increasing nearby property values*
- *Creating spaces for biodiversity and important natural functions*
- *Providing safe, natural buffer areas*

As Sunset keeps growing on a comparably fast pace, it is important to improve and expand existing parks, recreation, and open spaces, as well as recreational programming, to take advantage of the benefits listed above, and maintain a strong sense of character and community in the Town.

Img. 3.9.1: Sunset's Town Park

Existing Conditions

Sunset residents of all ages actively participate in a variety of recreational activities, including hunting, fishing, horseback riding, and many more. Activities such as running, bicycling, golf, and fitness classes are also increasingly gaining in popularity. Additionally, school-age residents engage in organized sports like football, baseball, softball, basketball, cross country, track, and soccer through their respective schools. However, the recreational facilities in the Town of Sunset are rather limited and there are, at this point, no athletic programs offered in Sunset. Other programmed activities in the Town are limited to those offered by the South St. Landry Community Library, and are predominantly of educational rather than recreational character (see Community Facilities, pp 3.9-5). Thus most Sunset residents currently have to drive to places outside of town to satisfy the recreational needs of them and their families.

Parks

There are currently two parks located within Sunset: Town Park and Bank of Sunset & Trust Company Park (Bank Park).

Town Park (See Img. 3.9.1) is located on Marie Street at Boudreaux Street, across from Town Hall and the Sunset High School building, which is currently standing vacant. The covers approximately 2 acres of land. The backside of the park borders a large vacant parcel that is currently under consideration to be subdivided for residential development. Town Park includes a meadow with large, mature trees, as well as three basketball courts. The meadow is nicely shaded, predominantly flat, and not programmed. The annual Sunset Herb Festival is held in this park every fall. The park features two small benches located near the Marie Street entrance as well as electrical outlets for festival

tents and lights for nighttime use. A portable bathroom is this there permanently and provides for public restroom use.

The basketball courts of Town Park are located just south of the meadow and are surrounded by a 10 foot tall chain-link fence with a gated entry fronting Marie Street. The courts are well maintained with a smooth, intact concrete surface. The striping on the courts, however, appears rather old and is partly faded. Two of the courts feature permanent hoops and the third court has portable hoops. Two wooden benches front the basketball courts. The benches are in good condition, however, they are situated in an unshaded area of the court and are thus uncomfortable to use during the warm seasons. There are two functional drinking fountains located near the benches.

The 0.87 acre site of Bank Park (See Img. 3.9.2) is located between Napoleon Avenue and Boudreaux Street, adjacent to the Bank of Sunset & Trust Company building. Bank Park features two open grass lots separated by the bank parking lot drive on Budd Street. Bank Park is owned and maintained by the Bank of Sunset & Trust Company, but it is open to the public and is used as a festival site during the Herb Festival. Both lots feature vegetation with predominantly small tree species. The front lot of Bank Park is of a generally of a more designed appearance than the rear one, and features a semicircle brick wall display lined with benches and raised planters. Between the brick display and the parking lot drive is an open grass area. The back lot, located at Budd and Boudreaux Streets, features a gazebo containing a table and several chairs that can accommodate approximately 6 to 10 people. The gazebo is lighted and has a ceiling fan. Trees line the street front and surround a shed located behind the gazebo at the edge of the lot.

Img. 3.9.2: bank park

Both Sunset parks and the basketball courts are centrally located in the Downtown area and in close proximity to the Town's major community facilities and the central part of Napoleon Avenue. This area was identified by Sunset residents as the "town center" during public meetings and is generally well accessible. The area itself has very limited residential development. The majority of Sunset's present residential development is located in the southern neighborhoods of town, and so is the Sunset Elementary School. Walking distance from the school to the basketball courts is approximately 12 minutes and it takes about 15 minutes to walk there from Martin Luther King, which is Sunset's densest residential neighborhood.

Currently neither of the open spaces provides off-street parking. There are, however, parking spaces available on the other side of Marie Street, pertaining to the Sunset Town Hall, the South St. Landry Parish Community Library and the Sunset Community Center respectively.

3.9 RECREATION

Around Sunset

Located just outside of the town limits on I-49 South Service Road, St. Ignatius Park (Kermit Couvillion Fields) contains several baseball, softball, little league, and soccer fields. This facility, even though geographically connected to Sunset's town fabric, is within Grand Coteau town limits and used by St. Ignatius School in Grand Coteau as well as the ACSAA for games and tournaments. The fields are generally not well maintained and in severe disrepair.

Beau Chene High School (BCHS), the local public high school, is located on LA 93 in Arnaudville. BCHS offers several competitive athletic programs for students. For men, athletic teams include: football, cross country, basketball, soccer, baseball, and track. For women, athletic teams include: volleyball, cross country, basketball, soccer, softball, and track. The BCHS campus includes a gymnasium, practice fields, 400 meter track, football and soccer field, baseball field, softball field, and a batting cage.

NEARBY RECREATION FACILITIES

City Park, Church Point, LA
10.6 miles away
- *3 tennis courts*
- *1 baseball field*
- *4 softball fields*
- *Playground*
- *Shelter houses*

Carencro Park, Carencro, LA
9.1 miles away
- *2 tennis courts*
- *1 basketball court*
- *1 baseball field*
- *4 softball fields*
- *3 little league fields*
- *Shelter houses*

Girard Park – Lafayette, LA
(large-scale) 16.2 miles away
- *2 tennis courts*
- *2 basketball courts*
- *1 baseball field*
- *1 pool*
- *Running trail*
- *Fitness stations*
- *Disc golf*
- *Playground*
- *Pond*

Moore Park – Lafayette, LA
(large-scale) 14.8 miles away
- *Youth football fields*
- *24 soccer fields*
- *4 baseball fields*
- *Hiking trail*
- *Mountain bike trail*
- *Go-kart track*
- *Pond*
- *Shelter houses*
- *Concessions*

South City Park – Opelousas, LA
(slightly large-scale) 9.1 miles away
- *8 tennis courts*
- *4 baseball fields*
- *1 football stadium*
- *1 playground*
- *Shelter house*
- *1 pool*

Pelican Park, Carencro, LA
9.1 miles away
- *4 baseball fields*
- *Seating*
- *Shelter houses/picnic area*

Community Facilities

The South St. Landry Community Library (See Img. 3.9.3) is located on Marie Street, near Town Hall and the Sunset High School building. It primarily serves the communities of Sunset, Grand Coteau, Bristol, and Cankton. The Community Library is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday and offers several special programs and activities throughout the year including reading programs for youth, young adults, and adults, computer classes, a weekly story hour for children, and a weekly movie screening. It also offers occasional classes for arts & crafts, dance, and exercise. South St. Landry Community Library constitutes Sunset's major community facility and gathering location for residents of all ages. The Sunset community is proud of their excellent facility.

The Town of Sunset Community Center is located behind the Town Hall and the Sunset High School building on Marie Street, where it was built in early 2014. The Community Center hosts public meetings and events throughout the year. It is also available as a rental venue for special events.

Img. 3.9.3: South St. Landry Community Library

3.9 RECREATION

Recommendations

The Town of Sunset is surrounded by open spaces in agricultural or forestry use. Even though these resources may meet the community's needs for regional level parks and open spaces, they still leave a need for close-to-home recreational opportunity which is accessible without an automobile. As recreational options in the Town of Sunset are rather limited the Sunset community currently has an unmet demand for playgrounds and programmed recreational activities, as well as passive open spaces. Considering existing population and future growth, Sunset needs to improve and expand recreational facilities and provide more programmed options for its residents.

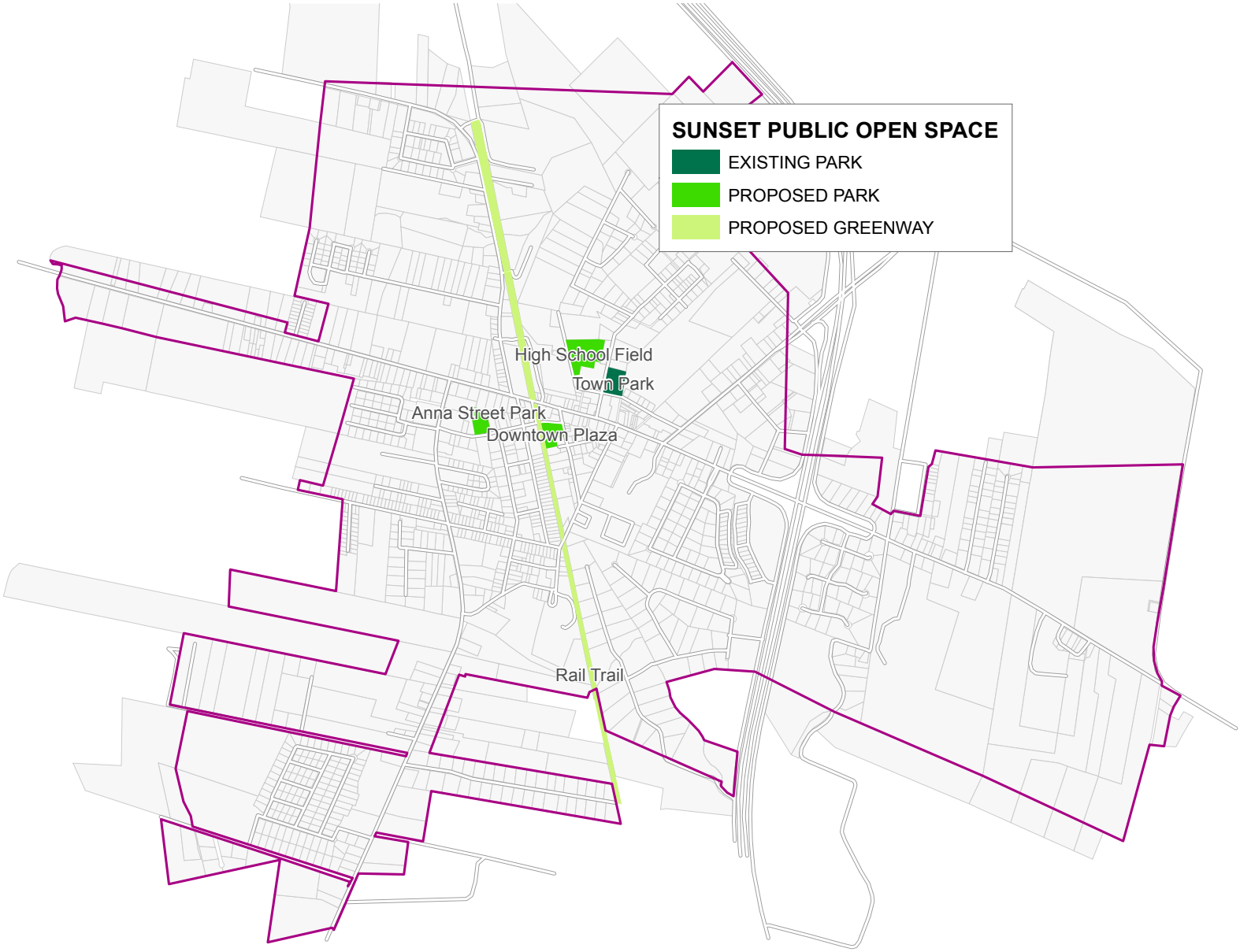
During the planning process Sunset residents frequently expressed the wish for more recreational options, including both, facilities and programs. Comments included demands for a public park, a recreation center / YMCA, a public pool, a soccer field, a walking track, a volleyball court, a tennis court, a children playground, activities for kids, after school programs, and more. Further the Sunset community would like to see the Herb Festival expanded and further establish an annual Rubboard Festival in town.

Improve Existing Parks and Recreation Facilities
Town Park, currently the only park in Sunset, will, in the future, play a more central role for the Town, as the vacant land behind it will accommodate residential development. In order to integrate the park with the upcoming development subdivision approvals should require sufficient access to the park. The park should further be improved with additional landscaping, park furniture, as well as a children playground. The basketball courts need to be restriped and the portable basketball hoops should be replaced with permanent ones. Further a permanent restroom facility should be added.

Create New Parks, Recreation Facilities, and Designated Open Spaces
During the planning process the Town of Sunset identified four sites that are suitable for accommodating additional public open space that meets the recreational needs of Sunset's present and future population. Identified locations are the field behind the Sunset High School building, the vacant town property on Anna Street, the vacant and underutilized land between the former rail corridor and Castille Street, and the vacant former rail corridor. (See Img. 3.9.5)

Sunset High School Field
The Town of Sunset owns a large parcel on Marie Street that currently accommodates the Town Hall, the Sunset Community Center and the vacant Sunset High School building. Behind the High School building a large part of this parcel lies undeveloped. (See Img. 3.9.4). The land, which potentially could be designated for public open space, has an area of 4.13 acres.

Img. 3.9.4: Sunset Highschool Field



Img. 3.9.5: Sunset potential future public open space

Along Leo Richard Lane the land is partly lined by mature pine trees. The adjacent parcel in the rear of the vacant field is densely vegetated with shrubs and trees and thus well buffered from neighboring uses. The field itself is primarily lacking trees - and would be well suited to accommodate public playfields. In fact, this land was used as a football field for the Sunset High School before the school was closed in the 1990s. Currently the land lies idle. During the annual Herb Festival the field is used for festival parking for visitors.

In the future this land should accommodate a playfield sized at football regulation, which can be scaled down when needed for other athletics as soccer, lacrosse, and other ball games. The field should further be used as grounds for festivals and events throughout the year. As currently the field is used for parking during the Herb Festival, future parking will have to be accommodated partly around the community center, as well as street parking and off-street parking on smaller dispersed sites throughout the Town.

3.9 RECREATION

Anna Street Property

The Town of Sunset owns vacant property on Anna Street, between Mac Arthur Drive and Sunset Strip (east of 145 Anna Street). (See Img. 3.9.6). This 1.27 acre parcel is located within one of Sunset's older residential neighborhoods and features a remarkable number of mature trees. Tree cover consists mainly of Live Oaks and a few other deciduous species, including Swamp Red Maple, and Pecan. A concrete slab 85 by 60 feet is located in the center of the parcel. The property is currently not in use and could be transformed to a public park that features recreational facilities for the residents of the neighborhood without substantial financial effort. Due to the proximity to residential development a park on this property would be well suited to accommodate un-programmed, family and senior friendly facilities, like a children playground, a walking track, and outdoor fitness equipment. The existing concrete slab should be facilitated as base for a larger picnic pavilion.

Img. 3.9.6: Anna Street property

Downtown Sunset, underutilized land between the rail corridor and Castille Street

South of Commercial Street, between Castille Street and the abandoned rail corridor lies a plot of underutilized land. (See Img. 3.9.7). The redevelopment of this area into a public open space could potentially revitalize Downtown Sunset and reconnect the interrupted urban fabric in this neighborhood. The parcels which comprise this block are partly in town- and partly in private ownership. Currently the land accommodates the Sunset DPW building and a red barn which is used for the storage of hay. The remaining land is vacant and partly used for outdoor storage purposes. The area features no trees and is covered by mainly grass with a few scattered and dilapidated concrete slabs. A number of drainage ditches lead through the parcels. The area suitable for a potential public open space covers 1.77 acres of land.

Img. 3.9.7: Underutilized land between Castille Street and the rail corridor

The parts of the land which are currently in private ownership should be acquired by the Town. The Town should establish this area as a public plaza that accommodates programmed monthly and seasonal events like farmers markets, arts and crafts markets, Christmas markets or cultural activities. The red barn can be renovated to accommodate an antiques store, restroom facilities or a cafeteria. A rendering of a possible design for the plaza can be seen in Img. 3.9.8.

Img. 3.9.8: Rendering: possible Town Plaza design

Rail Corridor

The abandoned rail corridor that cuts through the Town of Sunset has been lying idle since the railroad ceased service in the 1980s. This land could potentially be developed into a linear park or greenway. During public meetings the community of Sunset has expressed the need to create a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment in the Town. The greenway would connect the downtown plaza area with the Sunset Elementary School and farther down to Doral Street and the southern neighborhoods of Sunset. North of Napoleon Avenue, the rail corridor connects to Pershing Highway via Railroad Avenue and could further be connected to Leo Richard Lane to provide access to the field behind the Sunset High School. The rail greenway would thus function as connector between the future Sunset public open spaces and community facilities, and as well act as a structural backbone for the Town's underutilized central area. (Read more in Community Design Element). Further such a trail would greatly improve the Town's internal connectivity and the local pedestrian and bicycle network. Trails additionally spur local economy and improve property values of surrounding properties.

The segment of the rail corridor is approximately 1.8 miles, divided into three sections:
The downtown section, which leads from Napoleon Avenue to the intersection of Martin Luther King Street and Budd Street. This stretch is approximately 0.38 miles long and has an area of 2.68 acres. This core piece of the greenway is adjacent to the underutilized Downtown area. Currently a drainage ditch runs along the corridor in this area, featuring one mature Pecan tree adjacent to it. Farther North the corridor is lined by large shade trees. The North segment of the proposed trail is located between Muscadine Road and Napoleon Avenue and features a

length of 0.75 miles and an approximate area of 13.5 acres. Here the corridor is surrounded by industrial uses. The South segment of the corridor stretches over 0.6 miles from Martin Luther King Street down to Doral Street, passing the Sunset Elementary School. This segment covers an approximate area of 5.74 acres and is lined by shade trees almost along the whole length.

Past efforts to convert the rail corridor into a trail have failed due to a lack of public support and administrative complications regarding the ownership of the land. According to the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee and the St. Landry Parish Tourism Commission adjacent home owners had concerns about safety along the trail. Further the town leadership had problems identifying owners of the corridor land. Thus the effort stagnated and the corridor is, at this point, still lying idle.

During research for the comprehensive plan Union Pacific Railroads claimed that the railroad company owns the above described land in fee. Also a majority of the residents participating in the comprehensive planning process expressed their support for a rails to trails project in Sunset. As stated on the rails-to-trails conservancy website, rail-trail conversions often face opposition from landowners living adjacent to the corridor due to a lack of information. "Unanswered criticism of trail proposals usually fuel this opposition and lead to misconceptions, including confusion related to property rights issues, concerns that property values will drop and liability will increase, and fears of increased crime such as littering, trespassing, burglary and vandalism." (Rails to Trails Conservancy, railstotrails.org). However, numerous studies refute that rail-trails increase crime, lower property values or introduce new liability claims. Thus a strong and inclusive outreach component of such an undertaking is crucial for the successful realization of the project.

A new approach to realize this project should be based on an effective public outreach strategy. First step for reaching the conversion of the corridor into a public asset for Sunset should thus be to build broad support for the project within the Sunset community. Further the conversion of the Corridor can be phased and first cover only parts of the land which are adjacent to vacant or light industrial uses in the Downtown area. This way the community can see how the greenway is actually used and maintained. The stretches leading through residential neighborhoods can be added in a second phase, when public support is stronger and the first part of the trail has proven as an asset for the community.

Increase Recreation Options and Activities for Sunset Youth and Seniors

In order to increase youth recreational opportunities, Sunset officials should coordinate with St. Landry Parish and neighboring municipalities to form a youth athletics organization. Lafayette and Baton Rouge each have established youth athletic organizations that can serve as models. These Parishes may also be willing to offer some guidance in establishing a youth athletics organization. Lafayette, for example, has seven volunteer-driven Neighborhood Youth Associations. The NYAs coordinate youth baseball, softball, basketball, football, tennis, track & field, and volleyball. The Lafayette Youth Soccer Association coordinates all youth soccer within Lafayette Parish.

Sunset further should coordinate with adjacent

municipalities and St. Landry Parish to establish a senior activities organization for senior residents of the area. Just as it is important for youth to be exposed to health and physical activities, it is also important for seniors to lead healthy and active lifestyles. This coordination and collaboration is especially critical as the population of St. Landry Parish continues to age. Lafayette and Baton Rouge each have established senior activities and centers that can serve as models.

Provide Better Connection and Access to Parks, Recreation, and Open Space

All residents, regardless of their ability to drive or own a car, should be able to access parks, recreation facilities, and open space. Sunset needs to improve its existing infrastructure as well as create new infrastructure in order to meet this need. This should be accomplished through the installation of bike lanes, crosswalks, and trails that better connect residents of all ages to recreation.

Goals & Objectives

Goal 9.1: Ensure safe and convenient access to public recreation facilities throughout Sunset.

Objective 9.1.1:
Install, and properly sign according to MUTCD, crosswalks and other safety measures for pedestrians and bicyclist on routes that connect to open public spaces.

Objective 9.1.3:
Provide sidewalks and safe bicycle routes to and around new and existing recreation facilities in Sunset. Install bike racks at access points to existing and future recreation facilities.

Objective 9.1.4:
Require new subdivisions adjacent to public space be designed to provide direct and safe access to public open spaces.

Goal 9.2: Maintain and improve existing public open space in Sunset.

Objective 9.2.1:
Improve the Basketball courts in Town Park on Marie Street.

Objective 9.2.2:
Improve park aesthetics and natural functions of the Sunset's Town Park.

3.9 RECREATION

Goal 9.3: Create new parks, recreation facilities, and designated open spaces.

Objective 9.3.1:
Reestablish the football field behind Sunset High School building and the Community Center; accommodate a variety of ball games on the field, including football and soccer. Facilitate the field as festival grounds and parking, as needed.

Objective 9.3.2:
Transform the vacant town property on Anna Street into a public park with a walking/running track and fitness stations. Remove the existing concrete slab or reuse it as base for a picnic shelter or tennis courts.

Objective 9.3.3:
Develop a rails-to-trails along the existing railroad corridor that will connect Sunset's public open spaces, parks and community facilities and add on to a more walkable environment and a higher quality of life for Sunset.

Objective 9.3.4:
Establish an attractive and functional public downtown plaza for Sunset that can be programmed with monthly and seasonal events like farmers markets, arts and crafts markets, Christmas events, flea markets and other cultural activities.

Goal 9.4: Increase recreation options and activities for Sunset youth and seniors

Objective 9.4.1:
Partner with local and regional governmental, non-profit and community organizations to organize recreational programs for the residents of Sunset, including monthly senior trips, seasonal youth athletics, and after school/summer programs.

Sources:

Municipal Research & Services Center of Washington. 1994. "Report No. 31: Level of Service Standards: Measures for Maintaining Quality of Community Life". Washington DC.

National Recreation and Park Association. 2014. "the Power of Parks". Video. http://www.nrpa.org/power-of-parks/

SECTION 3.10
TOURISM

3.10 TOURISM

Introduction

The Town of Sunset is located in the heart of Acadiana, a region internationally known for its rich culture, which stands for unique and excellent experiences of food, music, and craft. The Town is also part of a region grounded in the history of settlers from Nova Scotia who survived harsh conditions to birth the Cajun heritage and lifestyle that has influenced southern Louisiana from New Orleans to Lake Charles. This element will analyze St. Landry Parish's and Sunset's current tourism industry and assess Sunset's potential for enhancing this sector to, in the future, become one of its main economic pillars.

Existing Condition

Overview

Tourism is a growing sector throughout the United States. Nationally the GDP generated from tourism grew 2.8 % between 2011 and 2012, at the same pace as Louisiana tourism, where domestic travelers spent almost $9.9 billion during that period. Expenditures resulting from domestic travel grew by 1.8% between 2011 and 2012 within the State, and directly supported 101,300 jobs, which comprise 6.4% of Louisiana's total private employment. Wage and salaries for employees of the tourism sector consequently also increased by 2.7%. Within Louisiana the tourism related economy generated almost $1.2 billion in tax revenue between 2011 and 2012, of which 47.7% were raised by federal government, 32.9% by the State, and 19.4% by local governments (Louisiana Office of Tourism, 2013).

The largest share of Louisiana's travel expenditures is traditionally generated by food services, followed by auto transportation, lodging, and recreation and entertainment.

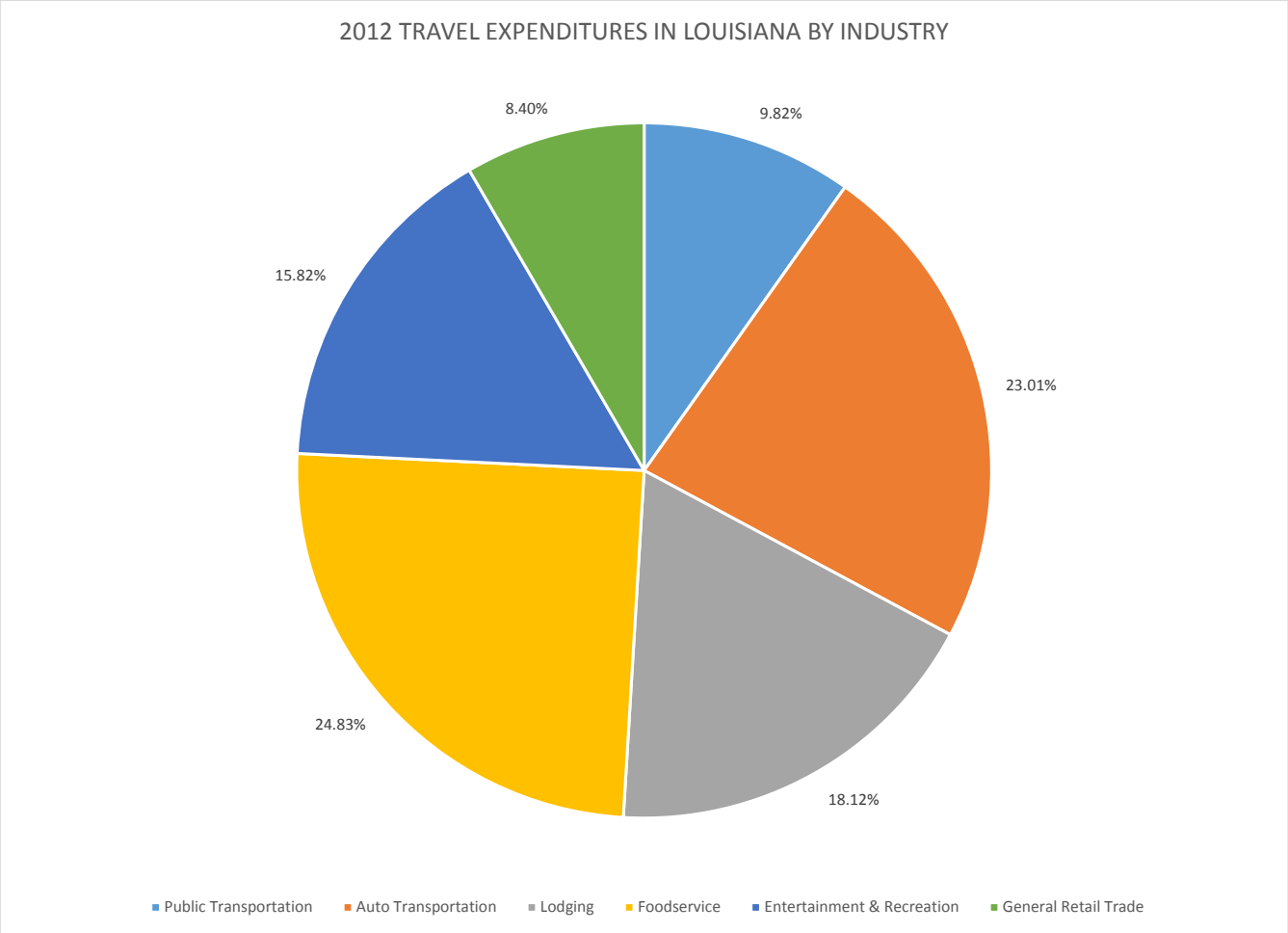
Table 3.10.1: 2012 Travel Expenditures by Industry, Louisiana

Industry	Total ($ millions)	
Public Transportation	970	10%
Auto Transportation	2,274	23%
Lodging	1,791	18%
Foodservice	2,453	25%
Entertainment & Recreation	1,563	16%
General Retail Trade	830	8%
TOTAL	9,880	100%

Source: U.S. Travel Association

In 2012 St. Landry Parish ranked 16th out of Louisiana's 64 Parishes in total travel expenditures, with $94.83 million spent by domestic travelers. This number constitutes 0.96% of the State's total. Compared to 2011, however, the Parish's travel related total expenditures decreased slightly by 0.76%. Tourism related jobs directly supported approximately 600 jobs in the Parish in 2012 and generated a tax revenue of $2.66 million for federal, State, and local governments. Regarding its tourism industry St. Landry Parish is largely benefitting from its proximity to Lafayette, which has built up a strong reputation as premier destination for experiencing Acadian culture, and additionally offers a broad variety of other recreational activities for visitors. Lafayette Parish ranked fifth within the State's domestic travel expenditures with a total of $450.7 million and a growth of 5.56% over the previous year, which is the highest growth rate in the State.

Louisiana tourism is trending upwards according to a forecast prepared by the Hospitality Research Center at the University of New Orleans that predicts the number of visitors to Louisiana will reach 28.2 million by 2017. During the same year, total spending is forecast to reach $11.7 billion or approximately $415 per visitor



Graph 3.10.2: 2012 Travel xpenditure in Louisiana bby Industry

(Ortiz, 2014). If St. Landry Parish maintains its relative share of State-wide tourism expenditures going forward, total visitor spend in 2017 would reach just over $112.3 million. Assuming an expenditure pattern mirroring the State-wide experience, this would generate for the Parish an estimated $27.8 million in food sales, $17.8 million for entertainment and recreation, $20.3 million in general retail purchases. For local government these expenditures would produce just under $3.2 million in tax collections.

Market Research

Selecting a travel destination is driven by many factors such as the uniqueness of local attractions and events, the range and variety of outdoor activities available and the opportunity to meet friends and family. Most travelers to Louisiana are drawn to local venues throughout the State by rich local cultures featuring Jazz and Zydeco music, arts and crafts, and of course its distinctive southern cuisine. According to a study published by the Louisiana Office of Tourism in 2012 a quite high number of respondents stated to visit Louisiana specifically for its cuisine (Market Dynamics Research Group. 2012). Louisiana is widely renowned for its excellent local food and large number of outstanding restaurants. Cajun and Creole food, as well as Louisiana Seafood are main drivers of the State's tourism industry. While New Orleans remains the most attractive destination for

3.10 TOURISM

visitors in Louisiana, the Acadiana region as well keeps playing an important role in the State's tourism. This is particularly true in Lafayette where tourist and convention/group meeting visitor activity has grown steadily over the last two decades.

Tourist travelers select destinations based upon an awareness or knowledge of the place itself; an understanding of the type and range of activities available; and information about the type, quality and cost of visitor accommodations. In these regards, word-of-mouth recommendations and online presence are crucial components of a tourist destination's marketing and promotional program. The importance of personal recommendations, as well as the tendency of travelers to use internet services to gather their travel information will in the future result in an increasing influence of social media on travel behavior. Currently most people research their travel destinations online and a good web presence is critical for the establishment of a successful local tourism industry. Most important for travelers are the use of search engines like Google, as well as travel websites like Trip Advisor when planning a trip. Further the availability of deals or coupons plays an increasing role in attracting tourists. Almost 20% of the respondents of the 2012 Louisiana Office of Tourism survey claimed that they use discount and deal websites like Groupon, Living Social, and TravelZoo for planning their trip. Those deals also encourage travelers to choose activities which they would not normally and about 6% of the survey respondents stated that they spend additional money when they use discount and deal websites. Once on the road, people keep using search engines and travel websites, specifically on their mobile devices, but locally available travel brochures become the main source of information on available attractions, activities, destinations, and services (Market Dynamics Research Group, 2012).

St. Landry Parish Tourism

St. Landry Parish has established a Parish Tourism Commission which is managing the Parish's tourism efforts. The commission is located in a state of the art tourist information center off I-49 in Opelousas, runs a website and Facebook page, organizes monthly meetings of tourism representatives of the Parish's towns, and provides financial assistance and expertise for the marketing of tourism-related projects or events throughout St. Landry Parish. The Tourism Commission has established good relations with Lafayette Parish and frequently partners with them on marketing projects. Towns featured on the commission website and in the St. Landry Parish print brochure are Arnaudville, Cankton, Eunice, Grand Coteau, Krotz Springs, Leonville, Lewisburg, Melville, Opelousas, Palmetto, Port Barre, Sunset, and Washington.

Cultural Tourism

The marketing strategy of St. Landry Parish is primarily based on the rich culture and heritage of the region. Local music, food, festivals, arts and crafts, and the Cajun way of life are major attractions of the area.

Cuisine

Food plays a major role in the culture and heritage of St. Landry Parish, and an increasing number of visitors are drawn to the area by the offerings of local specialties. Towns throughout the Parish regularly host food themed festivals, including the Cracklin' Festival in Port Barre, the Sweet Dough Pie Festival in Grand Coteau, the World Championship Crawfish Étouffée Cook Off in Eunice, the annual Gumbo Cook-off in Opelousas, the Catfish Festival in Melville, and the Étouffée Festival in Arnaudville. The

tourism website of the Parish features a section about gumbo and lists restaurants within the Parish that serve the local dish. The Tourism Commission further established the Boudin Trail through the Parish and printed a brochure that lists local stores that sell the Cajun specialty.

Music

Located in the heart of the Acadiana region, St. Landry Parish has a strong tradition in Cajun music. Opelousas is the official "Zydeco Capital of the World" and the Town of Sunset just recently became "Rubboard Capital of the World." Opelousas hosts an annual two day Zydeco festival in October and Lebeau hosts a one day fest in July.

Art

St. Landry Parish is renowned for its numerous arts and crafts and antique stores. Antique dealers and markets draw visitors from all over the region to the towns of the Parish. Washington, Opelousas, Arnaudville, and Sunset are the main destinations for visitors looking to buy antiques and local original art. Arnaudville, Eunice, Grand Coteau, Opelousas, and Sunset, are part of the Louisiana Cultural District Program, which allows for tax-free sale of original works of art within the borders of the designated district. Sunset, Grand Coteau, Arnaudville, as well as Cecilia and Henderson in St. Martin Parish partner on an annual arts event in April, the Corridor des Arts tour (see below, Town of Sunset Festivals for more information). Further, the State of Louisiana promotes an Antiques Trail, which features stores in Sunset, Opelousas, and Washington.

Outdoor Tourism in St. Landry Parish

Natural beauty and recreational outdoor activities like hiking, fishing, bird watching, camping and paddling draw visitors to St. Landry Parish.

Paddling

Bayou Teche is a popular destination for paddling and accommodates a number of paddling events each year, most importantly the Tour du Teche, a three day competition that features the whole length of the Bayou, a route of 130 miles through St. Landry, St. Martin, and Iberia Parish and draws competitors from all over the country.

Bicycling

St. Landry Parish is further a popular destination for bicycling. Three designated bike routes lead

Img. 3.10.3: Antiques in Sunset: Rail Stop Fleamarket

through the Parish and the Parish government has made efforts to provide additional safety measures for bikers along these routes. Cycle Zydeco is an annual four day cycling event, hosted by the non-profit organization Trail. The 172 mile long route leads through several towns of the Parish, including Arnaudville, Eunice, and Opelousas.

Hunting, Fishing and Wildlife

St. Landry Parish is located along the Atchafalaya Basin, the world's largest freshwater swamp wilderness. The Parish provides access to two Wildlife Management Areas, and a number of Bayous. Hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching are popular activities as well among visitors, as also for locals. Alligators, hogs, and nutria can be hunted in the Atchafalaya Basin, and fishermen can catch speckled trout and redfish in teh lower reaches of the Atchafalaya basin. A local company offers guided hunting and fishing tours for visitors. Sherburne, a 40,000 acre Wildlife Management Area (WMA) provides for a variety of outdoor activities, including hunting, fishing, ATV trails, trapping, camping, hiking, and bird watching. Thistlethwaite WMA features 11,000 acres of mature hardwood forest which accommodates the largest diversity of oak species anywhere in the State of Louisiana. The WMA provides a total of eleven miles of wood trails and is a popular destination for hunting, birding and nature walks. The WMA is part of the Red River Birding Trail of American's Wetland Birding Trails. The Indian Bayou Area is a 28,000-acre public access area which is home to some of the country's most productive wildlife habitat. The area is located in the heart of the Atchafalaya Basin and offers exceptional experiences for hunters, fishermen, and bird-watchers. Bayou Teche offers visitors a Natural History Wildlife Tour, a Louisiana Birding Tour, and Cajun Cultural Heritage Tour.

Retirement in St. Landry Parish

St. Landry Parish is working to establish itself and the region as a retirement destination. Retirestlandry.com, a website run by the St. Landry Parish Tourism Commission, advertises the convenient location, mild climate, affordable cost of living, excellent cuisine, rich local history, safety, and availability of excellent medical facilities as assets for attracting retired citizens to relocate to St. Landry.

Towns in St. Landry Parish

Opelousas, the Parish seat and with 16,413 residents, is the largest town in St. Landry Parish and is also the official "Zydeco Capital of the World." Most of the city's marketing for tourism is based on the local music and Zydeco music is performed at virtually every local event. Opelousas also has a historic city center and a number of Cajun restaurants add to the City's attractions. The city offers a variety of options for overnight guests, including hotels, bed & breakfasts as well as campgrounds. The City is also home to a lively horse racing and breeding scene. Evangeline Downs Racetrack & Casino was United States' first "Racino" and features a one-mile oval track. Further two equestrian centers host periodical horse sales that draw visitors into the region.

Eunice, also known as the "Prairie Cajun Capital," has 10,398 residents and is St. Landry Parish's second largest city. The Town is home to the Cajun Music Hall of fame, and "Rendez-vous des Cajuns," a live Zydeco radio and TV show, often presented in Cajun French and broadcasted every Saturday night from the Liberty Theater. Cajun accordions are produced in Eunice and shipped all over the world.

Arnaudville, located on the banks of Bayou Teche, is home to a lively arts scene, and was awarded

"Cultural Economy Hero of the Year 2013" by the Louisiana Cultural Economy Foundation. The Town provides visitors with a number of locally owned restaurants, antique shops, and art galleries. NUNU's, a local community arts collective, regularly shows works of local artists, hosts music events and dances, and other cultural events. Arnaudville hosts an annual Étouffée Festival in April and Le Feu et L'eau Rural Arts Celebration every year in December. The Town also hosts the 7 Mile Yard Sale.

Washington is a historic steamboat town. The town center features 19th century architecture with more than 80% of the buildings listed on the Historic Register. Washington has a large number of antiques dealers, over 100 of them accommodated in an art deco school. The Town provides a variety of bed & breakfast options for overnight guests. Washington hosts an annual Catfish Festival in April.

Grand Coteau, located adjacent to the Town of Sunset, was built around the Academy of Sacred Heart, which was established in 1821. The Town is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and more than 70 buildings with the small community are designated as architecturally significant and surrounded by beautiful old oak trees. This facility if a popular destination for religious retreats which attract groups from throughout South Louisiana. The Town is host for the annual Sweet Dough Pie Festival, the Festival of Words, and together with the Town of Sunset for the Exit 11 yard sale. Further Grand Coteau established a weekly farmers market which takes place every Saturday.

Tourism in the Town of Sunset

Located along the I-49 corridor between Lafayette and Opelousas the Town of Sunset is strategically well positioned for attracting tourists. Sunset shares I-49 exit 11 with Grand Coteau. Both towns offer visitors a different set of attractions. While Grand Coteau is mostly visited for its historic architecture and its rich Catholic heritage, visitors to Sunset usually come for strolling through the numerous local antiques markets and art studios searching for unique articles and gifts.

The Town of Sunset has no specific town department or staff member responsible for local tourism. All administration and organization of tourism related events and marketing is done by engaged citizens of the Town. There are two

Img. 3.10.4: Arts and Crafts in Sunset: Jerilyn's Fused Glass Studio

Img. 3.10.5: Antiques in SUnset: Bayou Some Stuff Thrift Store

3.10 TOURISM

unsalaried Tourism Representatives for Sunset, Margret Brinkhaus, owner of La Caboose Bed & Breakfast, and Jerilyn LaVergne, owner of Jerilyn' s Fused Glass Gallery. They work on a voluntary basis together with the St. Landry Parish Tourism Commission to promote Sunset as a tourist destination.

Antiques and Local Art

Together with Arnaudville and Washington, Sunset counts as one of the main destinations in the Parish for antiques and the St. Landry Parish Tourist Information frequently sends visitors looking for art and antiques to the Town. The Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism certified the Town of Sunset's Cultural District in July 2012. The primary goal of the Cultural District Program is to spark community revitalization based on cultural activity through tax incentives. Within a designated cultural district original works of art can be purchased without sales tax. Most of the arts and antiques stores are opened Thursday to Sunday. Monday to Wednesday the Town's Main Street leaves a very sleepy impression, with most of the storefronts closed.

ANTIQUES AND ART STORES IN THE CULTURAL DISTRICT

Antique Woods of Louisiana
184 Pershing Highway
Mon.-Fri.
Woodworking services, original designs

Bayou Some Stuff Thrift Shop
789 Napoleon Avenue
Thu.-Sat.
Thrift store

Handmade Metal Design & Secret Cypress
758B Napoleon Avenue
Mon.-Fri.
Metal design, incorporating sinker cypress, original art

J&B Quilting
988 Napoleon Avenue
Tue.-Sat.
Quilting Fabrics & classes

Jerilyn's Fused Glass Gallery
918 Napoleon Avenue
Wed.-Sun.
Fused glass original art

Remember When Antiques
959 Napoleon Avenue
Fri.-Sun.
Antiques and vintage furniture

Sunset Antique Market
151 Leo Richard Lane
Fri.-Sun.
Antiques and collectibles

The Sunset Rail Stop
312 Anna St.
Thu.-Sun.
Flea market, antiques, monthly open air flea market event

The Funky Flea
829A Napoleon Avenue
Thu.-Sun.
Antiques and vintage furniture

The Glass Porch Studio
297 Pershing Highway
By appointment only.
Fused glass, original art

In a partnership with the communities of Grand Coteau, Arnaudville, Cecilia, and Henderson, which are all designated Louisiana Cultural Districts, Sunset has formed the Corridor des Arts, a trail connecting and promoting the region's local art and culture. The initiative was incubated by the Arnaudville based NuNu Arts & Culture Collective, and offers interested visitors the opportunity to explore creative spaces along the corridor. The initiative has a Facebook page and participating artists and studios are branded with the Corridor des Arts logo.

Architecture

Sunset has one building which is designated as a historic landmark, the old Sunset High School Building. The structure has been vacant since 1991 and is in need of mold remediation. The Town further features a number of potentially historically significant buildings, most of them located within the old town center along Budd Street, Napoleon Avenue, and Marie Street. (More on this in Section 3.8: Town History and Historic Resources). The Town's bed & breakfast, La Caboose, located on 145 S Budd St. is home to a number of historic structures which are the reminiscent of the old railroad activity. Except for the mail building all structures were transported to the site. Buildings include the former Railroad Depot, built in 1914, the Caboose, built in 1920, the old Ticket Office, constructed in 1930, and a Mail/Passenger Car from the 1800's. The bed & breakfast is a popular overnight spot in the region, as it offers a very unique experience to visitors. Besides the buildings at La Caboose none of the Town's historically significant buildings are marked or in any other way made visible for interested visitors.

Chretien Point, a historic plantation is located outside of the town limits, in southwest Sunset. (More on this in Section 3.8: Town History and Historic Resources). The plantation can be seen from the street, but is in private ownership and at this point not open for visitors.

Img. 3.10.6: Corridor des Arts sign on Duffy Avenue

Zydeco Rubboard Capital

The Town of Sunset was proclaimed "Zydeco Rubboard Capital of the World" in 2014 by the Louisiana State Senate via Resolution SRC81. (More on this in Section 3.8: Town History and Historic Resources). Looking at nearby "World Capitals," like Opelousas, "Zydeco Capital of the World," or the Town of Scott, "Boudin Capital of the World," this designation brings a lot of potential for Sunset's tourism. While not capitalized upon yet, the Town is eager to promote this new opportunity and make the "Zydeco Rubboard Capital" an exciting destination for fans of the Cajun music culture. Possible attractions include a music festival and a museum.

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Festivals and Events

Festivals and events are an excellent way for the Town to attract visitors to come, enjoy, and spend money in Sunset. Sunset currently features one annual festival and is home to a handful of art and antiques related events.

Annual Herb & Garden Festival

Each first Saturday in May the Sunset Garden Club organizes this popular festival in the Town's park on Marie Street, which features native plants, flowers, fresh herbs, garden art, herbal products, and speakers. The festival charges a $5 admission fee and is family friendly. The Herb and Garden Festival has a website, http://www.sunsetherbfestival.com, and a flyer is available at the St. Landry Parish Tourist Information.

Corridor des Arts Open Studio Tour and Art Market

The Corridor des Arts hosts the "Corridor des Arts Open Studio" Tour and Art Market annually in April. Visitors have the opportunity to view and purchase original work in a wide variety of media and styles and see live demonstrations from the artists. The event features professional artists and fine crafters from all over Louisiana.

Exit 11 Yard Sale

The Arnaudville Chamber of Commerce together with Grand Coteau and the Town of Sunset organized a flea market event twice a year, the 7 Mile Yard Sale. The 7-Mile Yard Sale, held along Highway LA 93, was the longest yard sale in Louisiana and attracted visitors from all over to find great deals. Arnaudville is still holding the event, but is not partnering with Sunset and Grand Coteau anymore. Sunset and Grand Coteau are thus organizing their own yard sale event, the Exit 11 Yard Sale, which had its successful debut on September 20th 2014 and in the future will be held twice a year, every April and September. The yard sale is held along Highways 93 and 182 in Grand Coteau and Sunset and residents and visitors can set up tables for a fee of $25 to sell their goods. Sold items range from crafts, food, antiques, and furniture to jewelry, glassware and one-of-a-kind items. The event is family friendly and has free admission.

2nd Saturdays

The Sunset Railroad Station is holding a monthly outdoor Flea-market in front of the old rail station on Anna St. The market is organized by Railroad Station and features a different theme every month. The event is free to the public and family friendly.

La Place de Chauntecler

The 75 year old facility, located on 238 Napoleon Ave. was formerly known as the Sunset Recreation Club. The venue used to accommodate rooster fights, which attracted people from all over and played a vibrant role in Sunset's local culture and life. In its hey-day the rooster fighting activity brought Sunset the name "Cockfighting Capital of the World". The venue was renovated in 2013 and now hosts a wide range of events, including musical and theatrical

Img. 3.10.7: Sunset Welcome Sign on SUnset Strip

performances, comedy shows, as well as bike and car rallies. The 10,000 square foot large round theater accommodates seating for over 600 persons and the venue further comprises a 9 acre large outdoor area. The facility is air-conditioned and features a commercial kitchen and a café.

Events in Grand Coteau

Grand Coteau holds an annual Sweet Dough Pie Festival every October and the Annual Festival of Words in November. It holds a Christmas event, Grand Noel, in November and also takes part in the Exit 11 Yard Sale together with the Town of Sunset. Grand Coteau additionally established a farmers market in summer 2014, which is held weekly on Saturdays.

Accommodations and Restaurants

La Caboose, the Bed & Breakfast, provides 4 rooms, which each host between two and four guests. Rates range between $85 and $100 per night, including breakfast. Sunset further provides one RV Park at 116 I-49 North Service Road, which features 18 full hookups, and one Motel, the Sunset Motor Inn, located at 2153 I-49 North Service Road, which has 31 rooms available.

The Town has three restaurants, Café Josephine at 818 Napoleon Avenue, which offers excellent Cajun cuisine, and Little Mexico, a Mexican Restaurant located on 733 Napoleon Avenue, and Beau Chene Restaurant a truck stop style restaurant on 1828 North I-49 Service Rd. Further Janise's Supermarket on 147 Oak Tree Park Dr. features a deli with homemade plate lunches.

Web Presence and Marketing

The St. Landry Parish Tourism Commission is hosting a tourism website for the Town of Sunset (www.sunsetlouisiana.com) and features the Town on their parish-wide tourism page (www.cajuntravel.com). www.sunsetlouisiana features a short town history, information on local stores, restaurants, and overnight possibilities, as well as an overview of events held in Sunset, and a picture gallery. Overall the website makes a sleepy and not-updated impression. The Parish website www.cajuntravel.com embeds the Town of Sunset into the marketing for the whole region. The website is up-to-date and very well organized and administered. While all towns of St. Landry Parish are featured on that website the overall impression experienced here is that of a culturally rich region, worth a visit. As Sunset is a small town with only a handful of attractions it largely benefits from being presented in the context of the region. Websites from specific events are generally sparse on information and hard to find on the web.

The Town of Sunset is featured on Tripadvisor.com with La Caboose bed & breakfast, Café Josephine, Beau Chene Restaurant and Little Mexico. La Caboose and Café Josephine have excellent ratings, while Little Mexico and Beau Chene are rated with only two out of 5 stars.

Img. 3.10.8: La Caboose Bed & Breakfast

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Under "Things to do in Sunset" Trip Advisor lists only Chretien Point Plantation, which is not publicly accessible anymore. The plantation is also listed as an overnight option in Sunset, which is not the case anymore. Trip Advisor does not feature the Parish as a whole, or the Acadiana region, so whoever goes on the website and doesn't look specifically for Sunset will not find it.

The Town of Sunset is featured in a large number of printed flyers and brochures, available at the St. Landry Parish Tourist Information Center and in local tourism-related businesses. The Parish publishes a brochure which features all towns of the Parish, as well as a map and an event calendar which include information about the Town of Sunset. Janise's Supermarket is listed on the Parish's Boudin Trail brochure as a vendor of the local Cajun delicacy. Sunset is also part of the Louisiana Antiques Trail and the print brochure of this route lists four of the Sunset antiques stores. La Caboose and the Herb & Garden Festival additionally have their own printed flyers.

Recommendations

Tourism is vitally important to the economic development, growth, and sustainability in communities of all types, sizes and locations. However, this is particularly true for small towns and rural communities which typically have fewer options available to diversify their economic base. These options may be due to their relative isolation from major commercial transportation corridors or from a variety of comparative disadvantages which typically unfold over time driven by rapid technological changes, shifts in corporate location preferences and the like. Nonetheless, most communities have something unique to offer visitors whether it is their history, heritage, culture, architecture or their proximity to natural assets in an environment that invites a wide range of outdoor activities and sporting events.

What is common to most, if not all, tourism venues is that the thrust of local initiatives is to make them distinctly destination oriented. This is important for several reasons:

Img. 3.10.9: Sunset print marketing

First, and probably most importantly, the destination-orientation of a community's tourist venues and attractions positions the tourism sector as an export or basic business sector of the local economy. Export or basic sectors are vitally important to local communities in that they are growth drivers and are responsible for attracting money from other areas which circulates locally and thus generates more spending and supports more jobs. Historically, basic sectors have usually been associated manufacturing, mining, and other heavy industry activities. However, rather than exporting manufactured or processed goods, a vibrant local tourism sector is exporting the community's unique mix of attractions, events, and assets to visitors who bring with them (import) money to spend. This spending circulates through the local economy supporting jobs, generating tax revenues, and providing a basis for new business start-ups or expansion of existing establishments.

Tourist destinations over time develop a distinct sense of place which when properly nurtured and protected define their identity and image to the consuming public. The more developed a community's sense of place as a destination to visit, the more likely it will be able not only to attract more consumers but also to keep them longer. Generally speaking, the longer visitors stay at one destination, the more they are likely to spend on food, lodging, retail goods, and entertainment. As such, longer stays typically translate into greater economic benefit to the local community.

The length of stay, however, is typically related to the critical mass and mix of attractions, events, amenities, and natural features offered by the destination. In other words, the infrastructure of tourism in a local community will: drive its success in defining itself as a worthy destination for visitors to place on their travel "bucket list;" determine how long they stay and how much they spend; how often they return; and most importantly how often they recommend the destination to others (i.e. friends, family, business/professional associates, etc.). The last of these items is very important for any tourist destination but particularly so for small communities with limited marketing and promotion budgets.

The current offerings of activities, assets, and events that attract visitors to Sunset and its surroundings is impressive for a town of Sunset's size. Much of the existing tourism infrastructure focuses on local art, antiques, music, and food related festivals and events and its recent designation as the "Rubboard Capital of the World." These are all strategically important when differentiating Sunset as a visitor destination while at the same time establishing it within the mix of communities that define the larger network of destinations in St. Landry Parish in particular and in the broader geography of Acadiana.

To strengthen Sunset's tourism industry the Town's tourism development strategy should focus on attracting from without or nurturing from within more businesses that give visitors more reasons to spend money and stay longer. The two most likely to accomplish this goal are businesses selling local art and antiques as well as restaurants offering menu items distinctively heavy with local cuisine. Success in attracting such enterprises usually means introducing more competition for existing businesses and possibly some push back from them. However, the goal is to build a broader and deeper infrastructure with a footprint that clearly says "Destination." In the end, if the strategy is successful all businesses stand to benefit.

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The second important component of Sunset's tourism strategy going forward that should be given priority is the addition of lodging facilities to accommodate visitors and event attendees. Travel planning for many people revolves around the type, quality, and location of lodging facilities available at or very near a destination. This is even more important for travelers who want to soak in the culture and ambiance of the communities they choose to visit. Presently in Sunset lodging options are limited to a four room B&B, a 31 unit motor court/motel and RV park with 18 full hookups.

Sunset's tourism development strategy (which is also part of its economic development strategy) should include attracting and possibly incentivizing the creation of more lodging options. This should include securing a nationally recognized (flag) hotel with good visibility from and proximity to I-49 as well as the introduction of more B&B's in the older more historic parts of the Town. Given the anticipated tourism growth in St. Landry Parish and the surrounding region over the next few years, the opportunities for Sunset's tourism sector can be expected to expand and attract the attention of those who can help build its infrastructure. If, for example, Sunset is able to capture 20% of the forecast 2017 visitor expenditures for St. Landry Parish ($112.3 million), the Town would generate just under $22.5 million in tourist-generated spending. This would include about $5.6 million for food, $3.6 million for entertainment and recreation, just over $2.0 million for retail purchases and $4.2 million for gross lodging expenditures. If all this lodging revenue was captured by one hotel in Sunset it would be sufficient to support an 80 to 100 room facility at and ADR (Average Daily Rate) of about $120 to $140. Although this is a very preliminary estimate, it does in fact illustrated that a new lodging facility for a location in Sunset could be within reach.

Goals & Objectives

Goal 10.1: Foster Sunset's local tourism.

Objective 10.1.1:
Initiate the establishment of a tourism committee that organizes and administers Sunset's tourism related initiatives.

Objective 10.1.2:
Expand Sunset's tourism industry by adding additional tourism related services. Facilitate and support new tourism related businesses like bed & breakfasts, restaurants, café' s, and antiques stores to open up in Sunset.

Objective 10.1.3:
Attract a national hotel chain to open a branch in the Town of Sunset.

Objective 10.1. 4:
Facilitate the establishment of more local events and festivals.

Goal 10.2: Establish a partnership with other tourist destinations in the region.

Objective 10.2.1:
Partner with Grand Coteau on marketing for tourism and present the attractions of both towns as a package to the potential visitor.

Objective 10.2.2:
Establish or foster tourism partnerships with other towns in the region. Create new and foster existing trail related tourist attractions like the Corridor des Artes and the Boudin trail and market them effectively.

Objective 10.2.3:
Establish a network of bike trails through the Parish. Print maps, install signage and provide safe bike routes.

Goal 10.3: Improve Sunset's tourism related marketing

Objective 10.3.1:
Present Sunset as a historic railroad town. Create a map and signage to mark historic buildings and make the local history accessible for visitors and residents.

Objective 10.3.2:
Improve the Town of Sunset's tourism related web performance. Redesign the town's tourism website and update it on a regular basis with news and documentation on local events and attractions. Link the site to sites from partner towns. Update and expand on available information about Sunset on Trip advisor and similar websites.

Objective 10.3.3:
Create a recognizable brand for the Sunset tourism experience and use it for all tourism related marketing efforts.

Objective 10.3.4
Market the Town of Sunset as Rubboard Capitol of the World. Establish a rubboard festival and create a small museum and shop for town visitors.

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Objective 10.3.5
Market Sunset's culinary attractions and capitalize on culinary tourism. Promote Café Josephine and Janise's Supermarket as culinary attractions. Promote the establishment of more food related businesses.

Objective 10.3.6:
Use discount and deal websites, groupon etc. to attract visitors.

Sources:

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SECTION 3.11
ENVIRONMENT

3.11 ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

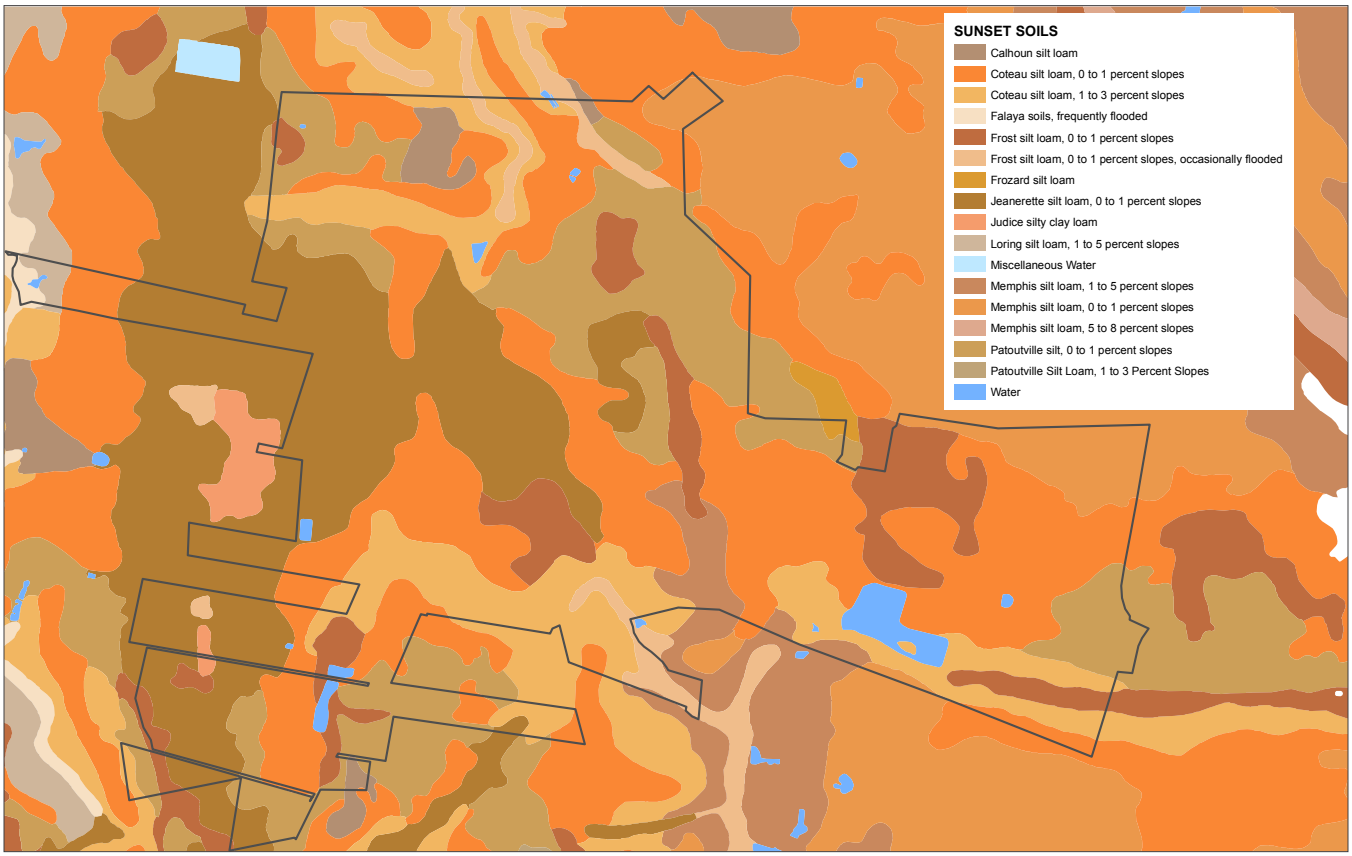
The vision for the Town of Sunset is to protect and conserve its environmental assets and to foster a green, active, ecologically diverse, and economically sound community. The Environmental Element identifies, maps, and assesses the vulnerability of natural resources in the Town in order to propose conservation and enhancement measures.

Existing Conditions

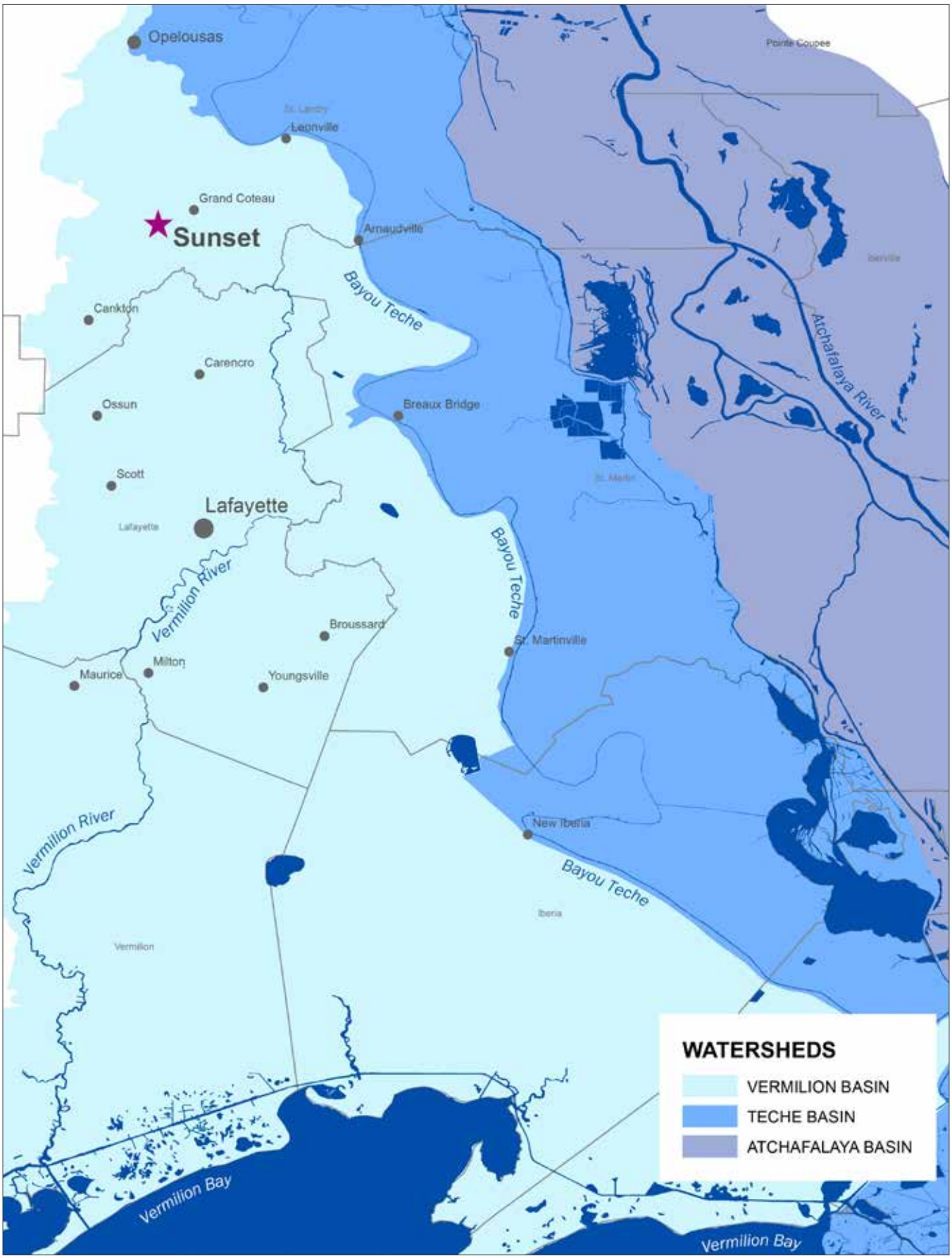
Geology

The Town of Sunset is positioned between Opelousas and Lafayette in the hilly terrain of the Prairie Complex, deposited during the Pleistocene time (0.1-2 million years ago). With the Red River and Atchafalaya River Floodplains directly to the east, this region sits securely above the adjacent floodplains but is composed of abandoned river deposits that provide rich agricultural land; however, the early settlers in the area first struggled before they found crops that could flourished in the loamy soils and humid climate of the region.

Fluvial deposits from the Pleistocene Age found in Sunset are evidence of prehistoric rivers that flowed southwest to the coast as the coastline was building into the Gulf of Mexico. Today Sunset's topsoil consists mostly of silty loam deposits with Coteau silt loam and Jeannerette silt loam being the most prevalent. These soils are somewhat poorly drained with shallow water table depths ranging from 12-36 inches below the surface. Loamy soils are suited for agricultural use because of their ability to retain water while allowing an overabundance of water to drain.



Map 3.11.1: Sunset soils



Map 3.11.2: Watershed context

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Hydrology

Watershed

A watershed is an area of land that drains to a common water body, such as a lake, river, or estuary or into another watershed or drain pipe. Its boundaries are determined by the highpoints and ridgelines that direct the flow of water. The Town of Sunset is within the Vermillion-Teche Watershed Basin. This basin is fed by the Vermillion River from the north who's "headwaters flow from the City of Opelousas through Carencro to New Flanders Bridge in central Lafayette" (Vermillion Teche Basin Annual Report, bayouvermilionpreservation.org)

When it rains, water flows downhill to the lowest point through ditches, storm drains, and coulees to finally end in the bayous and rivers of the area, or primary waterway. As rainwater runs across roadways, parking lots, and other impervious land covers, it picks up every contaminant in its path. These contaminants flow from Sunset to Bayou Vermilion. The health of the watershed can be indicated by looking at the health of the primary waterway, in this case, Bayou Vermilion.

Bayou Vermilion has issues with trash and debris as well as the following common pollutants:

- *Fecal coliform*
- *Non-point source pollution (runoff from urban and agricultural land)*
- *Heavy metals*
- *Silt and clay from eroding banks and construction sites*
- *Organic matter that rids the water of its dissolved oxygen.*

Water Quality

After the flood of 1927, the US Army Corps of Engineers constructed the West Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee which allows the Army Corps the ability to divert floodwaters out of the Mississippi River and away from major cities including Baton Rouge and New Orleans; however, in doing this, the natural flow of freshwater from the Mississippi River to the Atchafalaya and Vermilion-Teche River systems was eradicated. With the addition of increased rural settlements along the areas waterways, fecal coliform and dissolved oxygen levels have increased from the discharge of septic water. Additionally, growing agricultural activity furthers degradation of surface water in the form of nutrients and sediment flowing as runoff from the fields. Nonpoint source pollution (NPS) is any pollution that results from land runoff, precipitation, atmospheric deposition, drainage, seepage, or hydrologic modification and therefore has many sources in a developed area (water.epa.gov). It is different from point source pollution because it is not actively monitored as it would be at industrial and sewage treatment sites. NPS is a major concern for the water quality of the region as Bayou Teche and the Vermilion River have been declared impaired water bodies by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, according to Appendix A of the 2012 Louisiana Water Quality Inventory Integrated Report. This means that they are not suitable for recreational uses, such as fishing, boating, and swimming that act as major tourist appeals for the area.

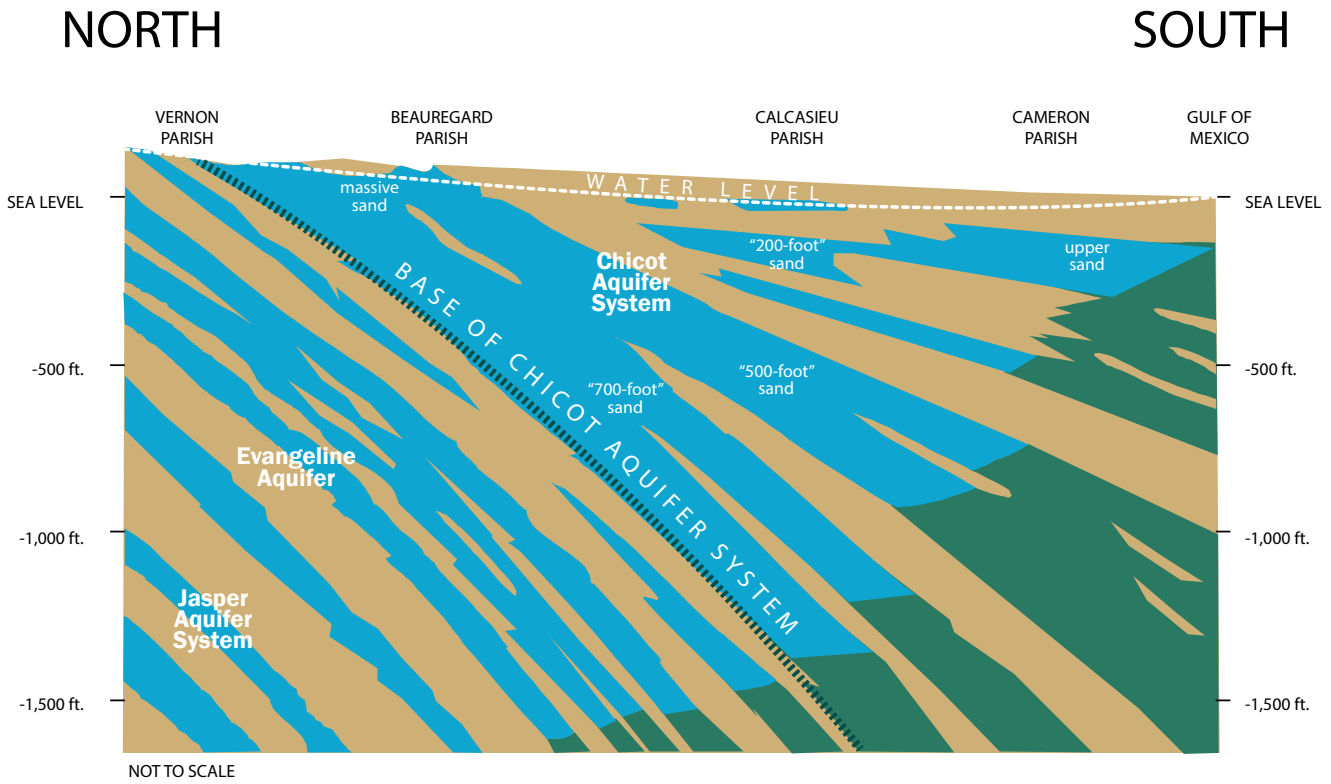
Fecal coliform is a bacteria that is dangerous to humans in high concentrations and is a growing water quality concern for the Town of Sunset as approximately 10% (about 83 acres) of the Town is not connected to the Town's sewer system. A large concentration of the newer

developments in the southwestern corner of the Town that use individual septic systems are of particular concern. It is the responsibility of the owner to regularly inspect and maintain individual septic systems; therefore, they are typically not maintained to the same standards as municipal systems. (More on this in Section 3.5: Infrastructure)

Groundwater

Groundwater is an important source of potable water because it has filtered naturally through layers of soil and rock. Certain layers such as those composed mostly of sand and gravel are very porous and hold large quantities of groundwater known as aquifers. The Town of Sunset's primary water source is groundwater which is fed by the Chicot Aquifer System, like much of southwestern Louisiana. The aquifer covers a large portion of the region in varying levels of thickness; median to coarse grained sand and gravel layers dip and thicken toward the Gulf of Mexico, thinning out as they approach Texas. Atop the aquifer are layers of alluvial deposits from the Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers. (1996 305b Appendix F) The water levels of the aquifer fluctuate seasonally with the changes in river stages and precipitation.

The Chicot Aquifer has the highest withdrawal rates in the State because of its location within a rich agricultural corridor and because it is also the only source of potable water for the area. Of the 660 million gallons per day pumped, 58% is used for agriculture irrigation, specifically for the cultivation of rice, and 14% for the public supply. St. Landry Parish accounts for only about 5% of the total withdrawals from the Chicot Aquifer at 31.63 million gallons per day. There are two active wells inside and two outside Sunset town



Img. 3.11.3: Profile diagram of Chicot aquifer

3.11 ENVIRONMENT

limits, as well as one emergency well. Those facilities service approximately 3,600 residents.

It is important to not only understand where the Town of Sunset receives its potable water but also the recharge zone for the water source to plan for the health of the system for generations to come. The Chicot Aquifer is recharged from the Atchafalaya Basin as well from its northern extents in Vernon, Rapides, Beauregard, Allen, and Evangeline Parishes. Infiltration of rainfall over these areas, lateral and upward movement from adjacent underlying aquifers, such as the Evangeline Aquifer, and overbank stream flooding are ways in which the Chicot Aquifer are recharged. The heavy industrial component of the region poses a threat to the recharge zones as well as the following aquifer usage and contamination concerns: (Forsman Groundwater Resources in LA)

- *Contamination from surface runoff*
- *Downward and upward migration of contaminants from leaky confining beds*
- *Direct flow of contaminants by way of improper well installations*
- *Saltwater intrusion from the south*
- *Changes in groundwater flow direction due to excessive pumping*

Sunset must do their part to ensure the health of the Chicot Aquifer by prohibiting groundwater contamination. As previously mentioned, this would include decreasing the number of septic tank systems by transferring to the municipal sanitary sewer system.

Ecology & Biodiversity

Sunset does not have any natural waterways directly within its limits, rather it sits among large swaths of agricultural land that exists within the coastal prairie habitat. In the 1980's, St. Landry Parish cleared large forested areas and converted them into cropland and pasture, decreasing the number of farm units and increasing the average size of farms. While the agriculture of the area adds to the rural aesthetics, culture, and economy, it leaves very little refuge for wildlife, which results in very little biodiversity.

Though St. Landry Parish lacks its native woodlands, the Town of Sunset has managed to preserve 25% of its tree canopy cover. A large community of mature hardwood trees exist including such natives as Live Oaks, Southern Pecans, Hackberries, and American Elms and are a major asset to the aesthetic of the Town. The management and preservation of the existing canopy cover is an important aspect of the Town's appeal and successful growth.

The visual quality and character of the Parish is also enhanced when continuous natural areas are accessible to residents and visitors. In addition, large swaths of continuous green space provides a larger permeable area for infiltration of stormwater reducing localized flooding.

There are currently no endangered species that inhabit the Town of Sunset or within St. Landry Parish, however, the very rare Swallow Tailed Kite is known to nest in the region. This is a spectacular bird of prey with a wing-span up to four an half feet. Increased canopy cover could be especially beneficial to the species by providing nesting habitat in Sunset as they migrate between South and North America.

Map 3.11.4: Canopy cover

Air Quality

Sunset's Air Quality Index has been steadily improving since 2000. With an average of 27.6, the Town's Air Quality Index is lower than the national average of 32.0. Sunset has not been known to have issues with air quality, which could be partly due to the dense tree canopy and suburban/rural conditions.

Recommendations

Soils

As Sunset continues to grow and develop, soil preservation will become increasingly important to ensure the health of one the region's major economic drivers, agriculture. Soil preservation runs hand in hand with water quality and quantity control. Stormwater management practices prevent erosion by holding soils in place with native trees, shrubs, and grasses. Increased permeability among developed sites will allow water to percolate into the loamy soils to strengthen soil structure and improve fertility.

Water

To minimize fecal coliform and other pollutant contamination in the groundwater and nearby surface water systems, Sunset must decrease the number of septic tanks and drain fields to improve water quality for their town and the health of the Vermilion-Teche River Systems. As the Town expands its municipal sanitary sewer system, properties with individual systems should be required to migrate to the municipal

system. To comply with the Clean Water Act TMDL levels MS4 requirements, the Town should limit development projects outside of the service area of the municipal sanitary sewer system.

As the Town grows and develops, the implementation of green infrastructure should be implemented to prevent sediment, nitrate, and phosphate pollutants from entering the nearby surface waters. Stormwater runoff should be managed using green infrastructure strategies throughout the Town's public right-of-ways, green spaces, and parks as well as in private developments in the form of parking lot bioswales, raingardens, and curb extensions to name a few.

As the demand for freshwater increases within the Chicot Aquifer System from heavy agricultural, industrial, and municipal withdrawal, the effects of increased withdrawals on groundwater systems, is a cause for concern. Sunset can do their part to recharge the groundwater system by providing increased green space that allows stormwater to infiltrate into the soils.

Ecology & Biodiversity

Preserving and increasing tree canopy is an important goal for the Town of Sunset. (Are there any current landscape codes that require a site clearing permit prior to development that in turn requires a categorization and cataloging of trees on site) Landscape and tree preservation codes are to be created to provide significant credit for saving existing trees of value, depending upon species and size, and to reduce site clearing prior to construction. Significant improvements can be made by including an ordinance that would help preserve mature, native tees and tree canopy within the Town's limits for new development.

The Town has preserved its southern charm by maintaining a large portion of its native hardwoods within an agricultural setting. These aesthetics can be further enhanced by creating and enforcing tree preservation and landscape ordinances. Other improvements, such as increased green space that double as bicycle/pedestrian paths and green infrastructure will also have major impacts on the aesthetics and native ecology of the Town. By managing stormwater runoff in green infrastructure practices, Sunset will be doing their part to improve water quality for downstream systems that contribute to tourism in the region. Lastly, water quality within in the groundwater system must be improved by broadening the extents of the sanitary sewer system to include the southwestern corner of Sunset and in all new developments.

Goals & Objectives

Goal 11.1: Improve and protect the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater

Objective 11.1.1:
Reduce pollutant discharges to surface and groundwater bodies to meet or surpass applicable federal, State, and local standards to improve and maintain human health and the environment

Objective 11.1.2:
Continue to support and participate in State and federal clean water programs

Objective 11.1.3:
Prepare and adopt erosion control and landscape ordinances to reduce adverse impacts of urban development and redevelopment on surface water quality that requires the use of stormwater best management practices

Objective 11,1.4:
Implement a local groundwater protection strategy for the Town of Sunset consistent with the Louisiana Ground Water Protection Strategy

Goal 11.2: Preserve and restore tree canopy

Objective 11.2.1:
Fully enforce and enhance existing site clearing and landscape codes

Objective 11.2.2:
Improve landscape and site clearing ordinances to preserve existing mature trees and increase tree canopy cover with new development to maintain 25% coverage.

Objective 11.2.3:
Increase penalties for non-permitted site clearing and removal of existing trees.

Objective 11.2.4:
Incentivize the preservation and protection of existing trees on development sites.

Objective 11.2.5:
Identify and prioritize areas for reforestation around the town center.

Objective 11.2.6:
Partner with arborists and landscape contractors to promote and train in proper tree care, including pruning to ensure the health and viability of trees in the Town.

Objective 11.2.7:
Require and enforce licensed arborists to be engaged in the maintenance of historic specimen trees of valued species identified in CZOs.

Goal 11.3: Protect, preserve, and enhance land resources and natural features

Objective 11.3.1:
Develop guidelines for the preservation of view corridors and restoration of natural resources

Objective 11.3.2:
Coordinate conservation and development of important natural resources by establishing a committee that represents the views of the federal, State, and local agencies involved in these efforts, including private and no- profit agencies

Objective 11.3.3:
Establish guidelines that preserve significant natural views and vistas, important visual linkages and corridors through establishment of planting standards, sign control, and other urban design techniques.

Goal 11.4: Improve air quality to exceed national ambient air quality standards

Objective 11.4.1:
Provide infrastructure for additional transportation modes including transit, bicycles, and pedestrians (see Section 3.4: Transportation)

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3.11 ENVIRONMENT

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4. IMPLEMENTATION

4. IMPLEMENTATION

Every plan is only as good as its implementation. This chapter describes implementation tools and catalyst projects that the Town of Sunset can facilitate to implement the community's planning goals and guide the town to become a more resilient and sustainable place to live and work.

Implementation Tools

Zoning & Land Use Regulations

Land use regulations are a very powerful planning tool, as they regulate the location and intensity of the town's future development and thus define what shape and character the growing community will have.

Based on the concept and recommendations stated in Section 3.1: Land Use of this Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Sunset will develop and adopt land use regulations, including a comprehensive zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations that will define a sustainable growth pattern for the Town of Sunset and facilitate the Smart Growth the community is envisioning for their town. In addition to land use, the regulations will control the appearance and intensity of development. Zoning regulations will include design standards for retrofits of existing properties as well as standards for new developments. Subdivision regulations will regulate the provision of infrastructure, connectivity and capacity of the transportation network, as well as lot sizes. Land use regulations will further include requirements for the provision of landscaping, parking, and open space for new development to ensure that Sunset maintains and improves upon its quality of life.

When developing new regulations an emphasis will lie on creating an easy to use document that will be legible and understandable for everyone. Supporting graphics and step-by-step instructions will provide guidance for development and subdivisions. The new regulations will be beneficial for the Sunset community and support the improvement of property values by facilitating livable and sustainable development in the Town.

By enforcing land use regulations, the Town of Sunset can guide and control where and how growth occurs within the community. The regulations will be customized to address and meet the goals set in the elements of this Comprehensive Plan and fit the needs of a growing small town in a dynamic region.

Economic Incentives

In order for Sunset to attract new economic development, foster existing businesses, and create a local and diverse economic base, the Town will facilitate economic and fiscal policy incentives. A variety of to implement economic development strategies and incentive options can be used to attract, retain, or grow businesses. Initiatives or programs that encompass one or more incentives designed to enhance a local community's business prospects are typically elements of a gap financing strategy. The "gap" is usually the difference between the total cost of carrying out a project or individual transaction and the amount the conventional private sector sources would be willing and able to finance. The gap must then be filled by a mix of non-private or non-conventional resources that could be drawn from an array of public/government or nonprofit/philanthropic sources. Depending on the size and nature of the gap, the gap-fillers might be numerous and somewhat eclectic.

By far, the most prolific provider of incentives, programs, and enhancements is the federal

government, particularly through agencies such as the Small Business Administration (SBA), Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Rural Development Authority of USDA, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

(More on economic incentives can be found in Appendix C)

Community Engagement, Education and Cohesion

The community plays a vital part in the implementation process of a Comprehensive Plan. Strong community engagement is crucial for the success of a plan. It is important for Sunset to keep the community involved in current and future planning efforts as well as the initiation and conduction of catalyst projects. The catalyst projects listed below provide opportunities for the Sunset community to participate in meaningful citizen engagement and contribute to and champion revitalization and growth projects for Sunset.

Regional Planning

Sunset is a member of the Lafayette Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). For small towns, participation in regional planning efforts is important as they are linked to the larger fabric of the region and affected by economic, political, and environmental activity. Resiliency is often a regional matter, as unstable situations, whether they be of economic, environmental, or social character, tend to affect a larger region rather than an isolated small location. The needs of small towns can easily be overlooked in regional matters; therefore, the Sunset Comprehensive Plan presents a comprehensive planning concept that supports common goals and Smart Growth principles shared with the larger region. By advocating for Sunset's planning vision and goals, the Town can become a strong voice in the MPO and further educate neighboring communities in Smart Growth issues and sustainable planning.

Short Term Implementation: Quick Start Projects

Following adoption of the Plan, it is critical for the community that participated in its development and supported its adoption see tangible action quickly – action directly tied to goals and objectives in the plan. Without the quick start projects described below, plans become forgotten and stale, making it harder to obtain community support for implementation of the plan. It is recommended that as many quick start projects as possible be fully implemented within two years. Momentum is critical to success.

Zoning and Subdivision Regulations

The Plan calls for the development, adoption, and enforcement of a comprehensive set of land use regulations that support the implementation of Sunset's land use goals. Regulations will include the following.

- *Use Zones*
  The regulations for Sunset would establish zones for residential, neighborhood mixed use, commercial, institutional, open space, agriculture, light industrial and heavy industrial. All land within Sunset town limits would be designated as a land use zone with applicable established uses and design standards.

- *Subdivision Regulations*
  Sunset would establish controls for the subdivision of land, to ensure adequate infrastructure and road connectivity, and the maintenance of the Town's quality of life.(More on this in Section 3.1: Land Use).

4. IMPLEMENTATION

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GOALS ADDRESSED:

1.1 Guide Sunset's future development to ensure sustainable development patterns and the maintenance of the community's quality of life and small town character.

1.2 Direct growth to areas with existing infrastructure. Discourage development where infrastructure is lacking.

1.3 Provide attractive locations for economic development in Sunset.

2.4 Establish Sunset as an attractive retirement community that offers an integrated a mix of residential products over a range of price and rent ranges and a menu of amenities and services.

4.1 Improve the connectivity of the existing street grid and adopt policies that will facilitate a better street pattern for future subdivisions.

4.2 Create a multimodal transportation system for Sunset to provide an integrated travel options to the residents of the Town of Sunset that allows for the best mode of transportation for each trip, as walking and cycling for local trips, public transit for travel on congested corridors and for non-drivers, and automobile travel to access dispersed destinations and for carrying loads.

4.5 Make planning decisions that are considerate about the interplay of land use and transportation.

5.3 Improve the local storm water management infrastructure to be reliable and efficient by promoting the preservation of natural drainage and green infrastructure and make use of natural channel design in drainage plans and regulations.

11.3 Protect, preserve, and enhance land resources and natural features.

Table 4.1: Project Plan Zoning and Subdivision Regulations

ACTION	TIMELINE	ESTIMATED COST
Develop land use regulations	5 months	funded
Public hearing	1 month	n/a
Adoption of regulations by the Town	1 month	n/a
Enforcement	From adoption, ongoing	n/a
TOTAL:		FUNDED

Potential Funding Sources:
The development of this Comprehensive Plan and the subsequent development of land use regulations to implement the goals of the plan is funded by a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Disaster Recovery Program through the State Office of Community Development. The development of land use regulations for Sunset is already funded and in process.

Anna Street Park Playground

The Town of Sunset owns property on Anna Street between Mac Arthur Drive and Sunset Strip. During the planning process, this property was identified as a well suited site for family and senior oriented public open spaces. The Plan proposes it be transformed into a park, featuring a walking trail, a playground, and picnic shelter. Outdoor fitness equipment can be added to the park as more funds become available. (More on this in Section 3.9: Recreation).

Potential Funding Sources:
There are several funding options which might be pursued, none of which are mutually exclusive. For instance, one options could be used to fund design fees, another for the trail, another for the playground equipment, and another for lighting and site furnishings.

- *Option 1: Secure a single major donor with exclusive naming rights. This could be one of the area's major businesses such as the Bank of Sunset, St. Landry Bank & Trust, Opelousas General Health, or Precision Drilling. Alternatively, there are a number of well-endowed family foundations in the area which could be approached. This would include, but not be limited to*
  - *The Stuller Family Foundation ($47.8 million in assets)*
  - *The James D. Moncus Foundation ($1.5 million)*
  - *The Mosing Family Foundation ($1.9 million)*
  - *The Eddy Knight Family Foundation ($8.9 million)*
  - *The Pugh Family Foundation ($5.1 million).*

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GOALS ADDRESSED:

1.1 Guide Sunset's future development to ensure sustainable development patterns and the maintenance of the community's quality of life and small town character.

3.3 Encourage a broad range of community-based amenities and human services that make housing developments and their surrounding neighborhoods attractive places to live and work.

9.1 Ensure safe and convenient access to public recreation facilities throughout Sunset.

9.3 Create new parks, recreation facilities, and designated open spaces.

9.4 Increase recreation options and activities for Sunset youth and seniors.

11.2 Preserve and restore tree canopy.

11.3 Protect, preserve, and enhance land resources and natural features.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

- *Option 2: Solicit the assistance of the Community Foundation of Acadiana to develop and help execute a fundraising campaign modeled on the one they have rolled out for their New Iberia Recreation & Parks project. The Sunset project would be considerably smaller but town leaders could gain valuable input and guidance from the Acadiana organization. The foundation's campaign raised $210,000 for the playground project in New Iberia.*

- *Option 3: Make the playground project a community-wide effort involving the full cross section of Sunset's citizens. This campaign would focus on securing participation from across the community including but not limited to the following:*

  - *School children holding fundraisers of their own design such as bake/candy sales, plate dinner sales, car washes, etc. The school raising the most money has its name put on the playground's acknowledgements placard at its entrance.*

  - *Collection boxes placed in every Sunset business with friendly competition to see which can raise the most money from customers and patrons. This could be accompanied by a side competition to see which business' employees donated the most toward the playground project. In both cases, recognition for the most funds raised would be included on the playground's acknowledgements placard at its entrance.*

  - *Special promotions offered by local businesses could include the donation of a portion of their sales on "Playground Bonus Days." This would encourage citizens to shop or patronize businesses on days when they know their purchases are helping to fund the community playground.*

- *Option 4: Solicit donations of planting materials and playground equipment from major area retailers such as WalMart, Lowes, Home Depot, Academy Sports and the like.*

To fund on-going maintenance and upkeep of the playground, the Town might consider creating a recreation district to collect property tax millages, fees, or both to ensure financial resources are available to sustain the playground. The Town might also consider soliciting several local civic or business organizations to adopt the playground to handle basic maintenance such as mowing grass, collecting trash, and the like. The Town should also include the playground on regular police patrols to guarantee security and discourage vandalism. The installation of sufficient lighting and security cameras should also be included in the budget.

Table 4.2 Project Plan Anna Street Park

ACTION	TIMELINE	ESTIMATED COST	
Obtain funding for park design; construction of playground, picnic shelter, trail, and park furniture	4 months	n/a	
Develop a park design (hire landscape architect)	3 months	$	22,000
Park construction (hire contractor)	6 months		
Trail material & construction, 8' wide at 700' in distance		$	50,400
Picnic shelter material & construction		$	20,000
Playground equipment, 2-5 year old		$	60,000
Playground equipment, 5-12 year old		$	55,000
Lighting, 6 street lights, including installation		$	24,000
TOTAL:		$	231,400

Complete Street Ordinance

During the comprehensive planning process the community expressed the need to improve options for alternative modes of transportation and increase the walkability and bikeability of the Town. Thus the Plan recommends that the Town of Sunset adopt a Complete Streets policy to facilitate development of safe and attractive accommodations of all modes of Sunset's transportation network. (More on this in Section 3.4: Transportation).

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GOALS ADDRESSED:

1.1 Guide Sunset's future development to ensure sustainable development patterns and the maintenance of the community's quality of life and small town character.

2.3 Proactively support, nurture, and encourage entrepreneurial initiative, creativity, and small business development.

4.1 Improve the connectivity of the existing street grid and adopt policies that will facilitate a better street pattern for future subdivisions.

4.2 Create a multimodal transportation system for Sunset to provide an integrated travel options to the residents of the Town of Sunset that allows for the best mode of transportation for each trip, as walking and cycling for local trips, public transit for travel on congested corridors and for non-drivers, and automobile travel to access dispersed destinations and for carrying loads.

4.4 Create a strong bicycle transportation network for the Town of Sunset.

4.5 Make planning decisions that are considerate about the interplay of land use and transportation.

5.6 Improve ADA accessibility within public and private facilities in Sunset.

6.2 Strengthen municipal facilities in Sunset to meet resiliency objectives.

7.2 Revitalize the Sunset Town center along the old rail corridor to mend the town fabric and create a unique sense of place that provides an attractive and functional environment for residents and visitors alike.

7.3 Improve Sunset's internal connectivity and enhance walkability and bikeability.

9.1 Ensure safe and convenient access to public recreation facilities throughout Sunset.

11.4 Improve Air Quality to exceed national ambient air quality standards.

Table 4.3 Project Plan Complete Streets Ordinance		
ACTION	TIMELINE	ESTIMATED COST
Draft a Complete Streets Ordinance	1 month	n/a
Council Meeting & Hearing	2 months	n/a
Adoption of the Ordinance by the Town	1 month	n/a
TOTAL		n/a

Intermediate Projects

Intermediate Projects are envisioned to be implemented within five years of plan adoption. These projects take longer to develop, fund, and complete, so they require early work, while quick start projects are underway, to ensure they can be completed.

Rails to Trails

The plan recommends that Sunset convert the abandoned rail corridor, leading through the Sunset town center, into a greenway. The multi-use path would connect the downtown area with the Sunset Elementary School and to the southern extents of Doral Street and the adjacent neighborhoods. North of Napoleon Avenue, the rail corridor would connect to Muscadine Road. It would also connect to Leo Richard Lane to provide access to the field behind the Sunset High School. The segment of the rail corridor is approximately 1.8 miles long.

The conversion of the rail corridor into a multiuse trail should be based on an effective public outreach strategy. First step will be to build broad support for the project within the Sunset community. Sunset would initiate and support the establishment of a rails-to-trails task force who would lead a community support-based effort to establish a greenway on the abandoned rail corridor. This effort would require early and extensive communications and coordination with the Union Pacific Railroad Company. (More on this in Section 3.9: Recreation and 3.4: Transportation).

Potential Funding Sources:

Acquiring a rail corridor and transforming it into a recreational amenity is rarely a simple task. The process typically involves many different interests and usually requires multiple stages of groundwork and effort. This may involve conducting research to confirm ownership of

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GOALS ADDRESSED:

1.4 Expand public open space and recreational land uses in Sunset to meet the needs of the growing community.

3.3 Encourage a broad range of community-based amenities and human services that make housing developments and their surrounding neighborhoods attractive places to live and work.

4.1 Improve the connectivity of the existing street grid and adopt policies that will facilitate a better street pattern for future subdivisions.

4.2 Create a multimodal transportation system for Sunset to provide an integrated travel options to the residents of the Town of Sunset that allows for the best mode of transportation for each trip, as walking and cycling for local trips, public transit for travel on congested corridors and for non-drivers, and automobile travel to access dispersed destinations and for carrying loads.

4.4 Create a strong bicycle transportation network for the Town of Sunset.

7.2 Revitalize the Sunset Town center along the old rail corridor to mend the town fabric and create a unique sense of place that provides an attractive and functional environment for residents and visitors alike.

7.3 Improve Sunset's internal connectivity and enhance walkability and bikeability.

8.3 Revitalize the historic downtown area of Sunset.

9.1 Ensure safe and convenient access to public recreation facilities throughout Sunset.

9.3 Create new parks, recreation facilities, and designated open spaces.

9.4 Increase recreation options and activities for Sunset youth and seniors.

11.2 Preserve and restore tree canopy.

11.3 Protect, preserve, and enhance land resources and natural features.

11.4 Improve Air Quality to exceed national ambient air quality standards.

Table 4.4 Project Plan Rails to Trails

ACTION	TIMELINE	ESTIMATED COST	
Initiate a Rails-to-Trails task force	July to September 2015		n/a
Public outreach and support building	September 2015, ongoing		n/a
Building partnerships	September 2015, ongoing		n/a
Research ownership and possibilities to gain title for the land	Spring 2016		
Develop a trail design (hire landscape architect)	Winter 2016	$	100,000
Obtain funding for trail phase 1		$	186,000
Construction phase 1 (hire contractor)	Summer 2017		
Obtain funding for trail phase 2	Winter 2017	$	368,000
Construction phase 2 (hire contractor)	Summer 2018		
Obtain funding for trail phase 3	Winter 2018	$	294,000
Construction phase 3 (hire contractor)	Summer 2018		
TOTAL:		$	948,000

the corridor, establishing an estimated value or acquisition cost, ensuring that all title rights have been cleared of liens and other claims, estimating costs of improvements to make the corridor an attractive recreational asset and securing financing for development costs and on-going maintenance. At a minimum the initial planning team would typically involve a landscape architect project manager, an attorney, an appraiser well versed in right-of-way valuations (particularly for railroad property), a surveyor, an environmental engineer, and a historic preservation specialist. These will be in addition to the community task force of stakeholders assembled to drive this project.

Ownership, control, operations, and management of the trail once completed, are issues that should be addressed early in the planning process. In most cases the local, state, or federal agency that buys the corridor builds the trail as well (i.e. Town of Sunset). The agency may develop the trail using its own labor and equipment or retain an independent construction company to carry out the project. In either case, a landscape architect with recreational trails expertise should be hired to develop the schematic design, design development plans, and construction documents. The same landscape architect should be hired to provide construction administration to ensure plans, specifications, regulations, and codes are followed. This, in many instances, has been supplemented by community volunteers who have helped with construction along with donations of materials from local suppliers, home improvement and building materials retailers and the like. Some trail construction projects have also used salvaged material (i.e. gravel, crushed rock, etc.) provided by private contractors or local or state agencies.

Once a trails project is completed and operational, it could be managed by a local agency (i.e. parks and recreation department or district) or by an independent nonprofit organization chartered as a tax exempt 501(c)3. These organizations are often labeled "Friends of the Trail" and may be responsible for maintaining the trail, sponsoring special events, soliciting donations, collecting user fees, building a membership support group, advocating for on-going government assistance or tax support from the local community and the like. As a body independent from the municipality, the nonprofit can solicit and receive grant funds from private donors, private and corporate foundations, and other sources that might otherwise be off limits to a public jurisdiction. If the municipality retains legal ownership of the trail, it can enter into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) or Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the nonprofit to perform all of the necessary duties to maintain and financially sustain the trail.

The primary Federal funding source for rails to trails projects is the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) of the Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The RTP provides funds to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities. The RTP funds come from the Federal Highway Trust Fund and represent a portion of the motor fuel excise tax collected from non-highway recreational fuel use (i.e. ATV's, snowmobiles, and off-highway motorcycles). RTP is a block grant program allocating just under $54.3 million to the states. Louisiana's 2015 apportionment is just over $1.0 million. The primary point of contact in Louisiana for the RTP funds is Mr. Michael W. Domingue, Recreational Trails Administrator, Louisiana Office of State Parks, Division of Outdoor Recreation, P.O. Box 44426, Baton Rouge, LA 70804-4426, 225-

342-4435 (Phone), 225-219-9429 (Fax) or mdominigue@crt.state.la.us.

RTP funds are not likely to provide all of the financial resources for initial development of the trail nor for its on-going maintenance and operation. These funds, however, can be leveraged using locally generated tax revenues for capital improvements, donations from local corporate citizens, and private donors including foundations. The experience of trail projects throughout the U.S. suggests that securing funding involves a creative mix of activities tailored to the needs and market environment of the local trail. The following are six major approaches used by many trails in the U.S. as documented by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy in its publication Community Built: Stories of Volunteers Creating and Caring for Their Trails.

Fund Raising Events are an effective way to involve a wide cross-section of the community to contribute to the development, construction and on-going operation and maintenance of the trail. Competitive activities such as fun-runs and races generate entry fees not only from local residents but from participants from outside the community as well. Events such as these are organized, staffed, and run by private groups (i.e. "Friends of the Trail") with all or most of the proceeds going to the trail budget. Other well developed trails such as Tammany Trace in St. Tammany Parish sponsor arts and crafts festivals, musical performances, and similar activities at or near their trailhead facilities. These trailheads also very often feature exhibits or museums describing historical and cultural aspects of the trail and its surroundings. Trailheads also become focal points around which a mix of commercial business activities emerge such as those in Abita Springs, Covington and Mandeville. These activity centers bring people to the community who spend and thus generate tax revenues. The Friends of Katy Trail (in Katy, Texas) collect membership fees and also sell memorial benches for $2,500 each which can be placed along the trail rest stops.

Grant-Based Programs are used by virtually every rails to trails organization to supplement self-generated revenues from fees, memberships, special events and the like. These self-generated resources are important, however, in that many granting agencies and organizations expect grantees to provide some cash match as leverage. This is particularly true for state and federal programs but is also very often expected by private and corporate foundations. Grants can be used to help supplement the trail's operational and maintenance budget as well as for targeted capital improvements and enhancements.

Membership Dues are often more symbolic of community support rather than providing access to the facility. Most trails are open and publically accessible so membership is not absolutely necessary. However, when accompanied by a T-shirt, cap or other visible sign of affinity, membership is at least recognized and can become a source of pride. It can also allow free access to trail venues not generally open to the public or for which there is a fee for entry and it can carry special privileges at special events (i.e. concerts, shows, etc.) in the form of reserved seating.

Dedicated Property or Other Taxes provide a steady and fairly predictable revenue stream to support on-going trail operations and maintenance as well as revenue that can be used to service bond debt used to make capital improvements. Property tax dedications are usually associated with incremental millages

collected from all property owners within a given jurisdiction or from within a part of the jurisdiction such as a Business Improvement District (BI) or recreation district. In a small community such as Sunset where most of the town's residents would benefit from the trail, it would probably be advisable to establish one master recreation district. Revenues generated could be used not only for the trail but for other amenities such as the playground and ball field.

Volunteer Engagement is at the heart of most rails to trails projects across the U.S. and is a major contributor to cost savings for operations and maintenance. "Friends" groups organize and carry out fundraising campaigns and special events; they organize work days with other volunteers to clean the trail, do basic maintenance and repairs or clean graffiti; they plant and replant flowers and other vegetation along the trail; and they haul dirt, mulch and other bedding materials wherever it may be needed. Additionally, "Friends" solicit donations of materials, equipment, and where necessary expert labor (i.e. plumbers, electricians, etc.) to carry out tasks to complete more challenging maintenance and repair activities.

User Fees are probably the least effective source of revenue for most trails since they are typically openly accessible to the public. This would be particularly true for a relatively short trail such as the one in Sunset. User fees or trail permits, however, could be required for those scheduling a special event or activity (i.e. birthday party) on the trail. This fee could be applied to providing security (which may be advisable or required for some events) and for assuring that trash is properly handled and repairs to damaged facilities are made in a timely manner.

High School Park Playfield

The large parcel on Marie Street that currently accommodates the Town Hall, the Sunset Community Center, and the vacant Sunset High School building provides adequate open space to accommodate a football field, which citizens identified as a needed major recreation facility. The property is owned by the Town of Sunset, and parking can be accommodated around the Community Center and along the streets. (More on this in Section 3.9: Recreation).

Potential Funding Sources:

Building or making improvements to a community ball field and facilities is another project that can be used to rally support and participation from a wide variety of Sunset's residents and corporate citizens. In some ways, funding strategies are similar to those discussed for the playground but at a higher level of financial commitment. Ball fields are great community gathering places which bring together citizens from across the generational spectrum. They are also places where community's corporate citizens can display their support for the facility and activities hosted there. Again there are a wide range of funding options, the following of which, is only a partial list of suggestions:

- *Option 1: Solicit major corporate donors who will affix their names to major components of the facility depending on the amount committed. The following is simply illustrative but puts the focus squarely on local businesses to take the lead in making the ball field a reality.*
    - *Bank of Sunset Field (Lead Sponsor)*
    - *WalMart Concession Stand*
    - *Lowes Bleachers*
    - *American Bank & Trust Bleachers*

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GOALS ADDRESSED:

1.1 Guide Sunset's future development to ensure sustainable development patterns and the maintenance of the community's quality of life and small town character.

3.3 Encourage a broad range of community-based amenities and human services that make housing developments and their surrounding neighborhoods attractive places to live and work.

9.1 Ensure safe and convenient access to public recreation facilities throughout Sunset.

9.3 Create new parks, recreation facilities, and designated open spaces.

9.4 Increase recreation options and activities for Sunset youth and seniors.

- *St. Landry Bank & Trust Dugout/Locker Room*
- *St. Landry Homestead FSB Dugout/Locker Room*
- *Opelousas General Scoreboard*
- *Precision Drilling Lights*
- *Fences funded by businesses with names and corporate logos on signs affixed to the fence. These would include, but not be limited to firms such as Evangeline Downs, Waveland Corporation, Ventura Foods, Tanner Services and Rentals, Acadiana Medical Center and the like.*
- *Implementing this strategy will require full support of the Town's leadership and business stakeholders.*

- *Option 2: Broaden the reach of solicitations to include corporate and family foundations active in the region. This could also include requesting assistance from the Community Foundation of Louisiana which has experience in raising funds for recreational facilities. It could also be beneficial to reach out to sports foundations operating within the region including private foundations of professional team owners such as the one funded by Saints and Pelicans owner Tom Benson.*

The ball field's on-going operation and maintenance would be included as part of the Town's recreation district along with self-generated funds from facility rental, hosting events, concession sales and the like.

Table 4.5 Project Plan High School Playfield

ACTION	TIMELINE	ESTIMATED COST	
Obtain funding for the playfield construction and bleachers.	4 months	n/a	
Design & Construction Documents (hire landscape architect)	3 months	$	25,000
Construction (hire contractor)	3 months		
Grading, turf, stormwater management		$	250,000
Field layout System		$	300
Bleachers, 4 piece		$	14,000
Goal Post, 2 piece		$	7,000
High mast lighting, 6 lights		$	60,000
TOTAL:		$	356,000

3.3 Water Well No. 6

The Town of Sunset is currently operating with only one functional water well, Well No. 5. Well No. 4 was abandoned due to color and odor of the water. In order to provide for the present and future water needs of Sunset and comply with resiliency objectives, the Town will build an additional well, Well No. 6.

Potential Funding Sources:

The Town of Sunset has secured grant funding for Well No.6. The project will be conducted between fall 2015 and Spring 2016.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GOALS ADDRESSED:

2.1 Provide adequate physical infrastructure and supportive municipal services to accommodate and encourage sustainable economic development and diversification.

5.2 Provide excellent quality and adequate quantity of drinking water to meet all current and future needs of the Town of Sunset.

6.2 Strengthen municipal facilities in Sunset to meet resiliency objectives.

Table 4.6 Project Plan Water Well

ACTION	TIMELINE	ESTIMATED COST
Design & Construction	Fall 2015 to early 2016	$65,000 to $75,000
TOTAL:		$ 65,000 to $75,000

Long Term Projects

Long term projects are extensive and realized through phased implementing a series of separate projects. They can take as a long as 10 to 15 years. It is critical to begin early and ensure that decisions made and projects implemented along the way do not thwart or make more costly the implementation of long term projects.

Town Center Place Making and Napoleon Avenue Street Improvements

The Sunset Plan calls for creating a recognizable Town Center in Downtown Sunset around the intersection of Napoleon Avenue and Marie Street. Renovating the streetscape of Napoleon Avenue as a Complete Street and further improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the town core to provide a walkable and attractive environment for the community are the primary recommendations to realize the Town Center concept.. (More on this in Section 3.7: Community Design)

Potential Funding Sources:

The creation of a Town Center (TC) for Sunset is important to its long term growth and development as a place to do business. The TC can provide a much needed focal point around which to build the Town's identity and to launch multiple marketing and promotional campaigns to attract visitors. Creating a TC however will take time and multiple layers of financial resources to fund capital improvements, introduce enhancements, and support and sustain on-going operations. Carrying out such a project requires commitment of the Town's elected, professional and business leadership and broad-based support from its business owners and citizens at large.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GOALS ADDRESSED:

1.3 Provide attractive locations for economic development in Sunset.

2.3 Proactively support, nurture, and encourage entrepreneurial initiative, creativity, and small business development.

3.3 Encourage a broad range of community-based amenities and human services that make housing developments and their surrounding neighborhoods attractive places to live and work.

4.2 Create a multimodal transportation system for Sunset to provide an integrated travel options to the residents of the Town of Sunset that allows for the best mode of transportation for each trip, as walking and cycling for local trips, public transit for travel on congested corridors and for non-drivers, and automobile travel to access dispersed destinations and for carrying loads.

4.4 Create a strong bicycle transportation network for the Town of Sunset.

7.2 Revitalize the Sunset Town center along the old rail corridor to mend the town fabric and create a unique sense of place that provides an attractive and functional environment for residents and visitors alike.

7.3 Improve Sunset's internal connectivity and enhance walkability and bikeability.

8.3 Revitalize the historic downtown area of Sunset.

10.1 Foster Sunset's local tourism.

The physical boundaries of the TC should be firmly established and defined under state statute as an Economic Development District (EDD). These are also typically called TIF's or Tax Increment Financing Districts through which a local municipality can capture and dedicate sales taxes (and in some cases property taxes) to be used exclusively within the defined district. These dedicated revenues can be used to provide enhanced services within the district (i.e. security, more frequent garbage collection, street cleaning, etc.) as well as to carry out capital improvements designed to make the district more attractive to businesses.

Under state statute, EDD's can levy up to 2% in sales taxes, a 2% hotel occupancy tax and up to 5 additional mills of property taxes on assessed real property located in the district. EDD's are also authorized to issue bonds with the approval of the appropriate local legislative body (i.e. Town Council) and the State Bond Commission. Once created an EDD is considered a political subdivision of the state and shall possess powers and authority as such, including the authority to issue tax increment revenue bonds.

Initial capital investments necessary to create Sunset's Town Center could possibly be secured through a combination of federal and state

Table 4.7 Project Plan Town Center Place Making		
ACTION	TIMELINE	ESTIMATED COST
Create Town Center Task Force	Fall 2015	n/a
Establish Vision & Goals for Town Center	Spring 2016	n/a
Conduct a Design Competition involving ULL and LSU	Fall 2016	n/a
Create Town Center Economic Development District	Spring 2017	n/a
TOTAL:		n/a

grants. At the federal level, a Public Works Grant from the Economic Development Administration could provide up to $1.0 million if the application demonstrates sufficient economic benefits in terms of jobs created or saved and net new private investment attracted to the community. Most of these grants, however, also require a local cash match which could include funds provided by the state (i.e. capital outlay or other program) and from excess reserves from within the Town's budget.

Sewerage Treatment Plant Extension

The existing Municipal Sewerage System in the Town of Sunset is currently already over capacity. Two major subdivisions within town limits are not connected to this system and currently operate on on-site sewage treatment systems. In order to accommodate existing and future sewerage needs of the quickly growing community, to reduce ground water pollution from individual treatment plans, the Town needs to expand the sewerage system. (More on this in Section 3.5: Infrastructure)

Potential Funding Sources:

The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality maintains a revolving loan fund entitled, Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) which provides very low interest loans to qualified communities to address wastewater treatment deficiencies. Although this funding source utilizes monies appropriated from the federal government on a formula basis; the CWSRF program aims to provide funding assistance for high-priority water quality projects. Although most projects funded through this

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GOALS ADDRESSED:

1.3 Provide attractive locations for economic development in Sunset.

2.1 Provide adequate physical infrastructure and supportive municipal services to accommodate and encourage sustainable economic development and diversification.

5.1 Upgrade Sunset's sewer system to high standards that meet the present and future needs of the community.

6.1 Reduce or eliminate the potential impact of hazards by implementing measures that facilitate sound development in Sunset.

11.1 Improve and protect the quality and quantity of surface water and groundwater.

Table 4.8 Project Plan Sewerage Treatment Plant Extension		
ACTION	TIMELINE	ESTIMATED COST
Contract engineering study to confirm size and type of wastewater treatment expansion to eliminate current deficiencies, support growth and economic development for Sunset, including new lines and lift stations required to serve new or underserved areas of Town.	Fall 2015 to early 2016	$65,000 to $75,000
Contact LDEQ about the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and seek to complete and submit a funding application for the sewer projects identified above.	Immediately after completion of above engineering study, but early contact with LDEQ will facilitate the application process.	n/a
Undertake a sewer rate utility study with the goal of establishing an Enterprise Fund for the sewer utility which would allow it to operate independently of the Town's General Fund.	As soon as possible.	$65,000 to $70,000
Actively participate in the next St. Landry Parish Hazard Mitigation Plan so that relevant mitigation projects for the Town of Sunset can be included in HMP Action Plan	Next HMP cycle	n/a
Contact the Louisiana Office of Community Development to seek guidance for the submission of possible funding applications to cover its infrastructure needs	As soon as possible	n/a
Contact the regional representative of USDA to discuss grant options available to Sunset to meet some of its infrastructure needs.	As soon as possible.	n/a
Explore the possibility of adding a fixed utility fee for a specified period of time to monthly utility bills in Sunset to address the most pressing sewer system needs.	As soon as possible.	n/a
Adopt and or/revise land development regulations to require all new subdivisions within the Town limits to be connected to the municipal sewer system. Require new developments within one-half mile of the town limits in an unincorporated area to be connected to Sunset's municipal sewer system as a condition for annexation at any time in the future.	By end of 2015	n/a
TOTAL:		$ 145,000

source require some level of local match, CWSRF has funded 100% of project costs for eligible communities that are unable to provide a local match.

The establishment of an Enterprise Fund for the Sunset sewerage treatment facility will eventually put this system on a much better financial footing since the system will generate sufficient funds to pay for its operations and maintenance, and with careful planning, its expansion in the future. After the system has built up a reserve of funds to handle emergencies, some portion of the system's revenues should be able to be dedicated to a bond initiative that will generate the money needed for further expansion of the system. The dedicated revenues can then be used to retire the debt. However, and among other things, guidance by a competent bonding attorney is highly advisable.

Of immediate concern is the possibility of falling out of compliance with discharge permit parameters at Sunset's sewage treatment facility. A local property tax millage or sales tax increase could be passed for a specified period of time and funds generated could be directed to meet this pressing need. Perhaps a faster method of generating funds to address this need at the sewage treatment facility and conditions throughout the system is the addition of a fee specifically for that purpose to monthly utility bills. Such a fee may only require an ordinance and public hearings by the Town Council for passage, whereas a millage or sales tax increase would require a vote of the people.

Other potential funding sources include the Louisiana Office of Community Development (OCD) which is housed within the Division of Administration. Although each category has a funding ceiling, OCD provides funding assistance to small communities for new sewer systems, sewer treatment, sewer system rehabilitation, potable water treatment, fire protection improvements, and street improvements. Engineering/architectural fees involved in the development of grant-eligible projects are reimbursable items under this grant program. The Town of Sunset Administration should pursue further opportunities with OCD at its earliest convenience.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) maintains a Rural Development grant program which, among other things, can provide funding for community facilities, utilities (sewer, water, etc.) and other services to rural communities. Town Administration should contact and set up an exploratory meeting with the regional USDA representative to discuss this funding option.

Duffy and Napoleon Avenue Intersection Roundabout

As the major gateway to Sunset, Duffy Avenue is facing high traffic volumes which will continue to increase as Sunset develops and grows. The intersection of Duffy Avenue and Napoleon Avenue is currently unregulated and experiences serious congestion during peak hours. In order to optimize traffic flow on this important route, the Town of Sunset will implement a roundabout in this location. (More on this in Section 3.4: Transportation)

Potential Funding Sources:

If Sunset is able to get its roadway improvement projects into the MPO's transportation plan and subsequent annual elements, then funding is largely assured from highway funds apportioned to the MPO. This process, however, is not a swift one. For this reason, local Sunset officials should begin the discussion about its needs with the MPO as soon as possible.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING GOALS ADDRESSED:

2.1 Provide adequate physical infrastructure and supportive municipal services to accommodate and encourage sustainable economic development and diversification.

4.3 Employ traffic operational improvement strategies at key locations to increase efficiency within the Sunset roadway network, advance Sunset's transportation infrastructure, and improve traffic flow on the major streets.

Table 4.9 Project Plan Duffy and Napoleon Avenue Intersection Roundabout

ACTION	TIMELINE	ESTIMATED COST
Work with MPO officials to have traffic improvements along state roads in Sunset, such as a roundabout at Duffy/Napoleon intersection. Other improvements on Duffy are to be incorporated into the Transportation Plan and eventually into the Unified Work Program first as traffic engineering feasibility studies and then as projects to be funded including the necessary engineering design and construction costs.	This can begin as soon as possible to ensure that a path to fund these projects is established.	n/a
ROW acquisition ($20/sf x 8,500 sf)		$ 170,000
Construction of roundabout (including concrete for roadway and sidewalk, curbing, drainage, utilities, striping, signage, contractor mobilization, temporary traffic control, and contingency (does not include landscaping)		$ 330,000
TOTAL:		$ 500,000

4. IMPLEMENTATION

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5.APPENDIX

FUTURE SCENARIOS
FOR THE TOWN OF SUNSET

Developed for the
Town of Sunset Comprehensive Plan
November 2014

Overview Table 1

A. Preserved Small Town Feel & Incremental Development 2

B. The Modern & Walkable Small Town 6

C. Economic Thriving & Progressive Development 10

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OVERVIEW TABLE

	SCENARIO A: Preserved Small Town Feel & Incremental Development	SCENARIO B: The Modern & Walkable Small Town	SCENARIO C: Economic Thriving & Progressive Development
Transportation	• A three-way traffic light will be added at the intersection of Duffy and Napoleon Avenues • A multi-use trail will be installed on the former railroad corridor from Napoleon Ave to Sunset Elementary School • Sidewalks will be improved and bike paths will be added on existing streets that connect major facilities (town center, commercial triangle, school, baseball fields)	• A roundabout will be added at the intersection of Duffy and Napoleon Avenues • A multi-use trail will be installed on the former railroad corridor from Railroad/Pershing Avenue to Doral Drive • Sidewalks will be improved and bike paths will be added on existing streets that connect major facilities (town center, commercial triangle, school, baseball fields); wayfinding signage will also be added • Pedestrian and bike trails will be added to connect Shady Meadows and Oak Trace to the new railroad multi-use trail, which will improve the connectivity and walkability in the Town	• A roundabout will be added at the intersection of Duffy and Napoleon Avenues • A multi-use trail will be installed on the former railroad corridor from Railroad/Pershing Avenue to Sunset Elementary School • Sidewalks will be improved and bike paths will be added on existing streets that connect major facilities (town center, commercial triangle, school, baseball fields) • Pedestrian and bike trails will be added to connect Shady Meadows and Oak Trace to the new railroad multi-use trail, which will improve the connectivity and walkability in the Town
Duffy Avenue	• The corridor remains residential; existing vacant parcels will be developed as single-family residential units • Travel lane widths will be reduced; bike lanes and crosswalks will be added • Traffic controls, landscaping, and wayfinding signage will be added	• The corridor will transform into a mix of residential and neighborhood commercial use; vacant parcels will be developed as small office, medical, and retail--commercial infill between residential buildings will make the corridor appear more dense and lively • The corridor will be reduced to two travel lanes, one in each direction; a raised, landscaped median and safe pedestrian and bike facilities will be added • Traffic controls, landscaping, and wayfinding signage will be added	• The corridor will transform into a commercial corridor; existing vacant parcels will be consolidated to form larger plots that support a mix of local and national stores and restaurants; residential units will incrementally phase out • Access management, a shared parking lot, and safe pedestrian and bike facilities will be added • Traffic controls, landscaping, and wayfinding signage will be added
Duffy- I-49 Triangle	• Commercial development will continue in this area	• Commercial development will continue in this area • Medical development will also occur	• Commercial development will continue in this area • Medical development will also occur • A commercial office park will be added
Napoleon Avenue	• The corridor will remain commercial with Main Street character; commercial infill on existing vacant properties will further diversify the corridor • **The segment from Budd Street to Castille Street will be designed as a town center with landscaping and street furniture** • Bike lanes will be added in each direction • Green infrastructure will be installed at the Castille Street intersection in order to reduce localized flooding that presently occurs	• The corridor will remain commercial with Main Street character; the merchant alliance will join the Louisiana Main Street Program and the corridor will be designated as an official Louisiana Historic Main Street Corridor • Complete Street improvements will be made between Duffy Avenue and Pershing Highway, including safer pedestrian and biking facilities, landscaping with shade trees, and traffic calming measures; the segment from Castille Street to Landry Street will receive design improvements to become more of a recognizable town center • Green infrastructure will be installed at the Castille Street intersection in order to reduce localized flooding that presently occurs	• The corridor will remain commercial with Main Street character; commercial infill on existing vacant properties, focused on tourism and antiques, will further diversify the corridor • Complete Street improvements will be made between Duffy Avenue and Pershing Highway, including safer pedestrian and biking facilities, landscaping with shade trees, and traffic calming measures • **The from the roundabout to Budd Street will develop as Sunset's town center** • Green infrastructure will be installed at the Castille Street intersection in order to reduce localized flooding that presently occurs
Trailhead	• Shade trees will be planted along the multi-use trail to improve user-friendliness, definition, and aesthetics • Existing buildings in the area will be renovated; surrounding streetscapes will receive landscpaing improvements; roads will be repaired • Vacant land currently used for parking and storage will be visually structured and screened with landscaping • Residential infill development will incrementally reconnect the urban fabric	• **The area between the multi-use trail and Castille Street will be redeveloped as a public plaza; this area and the sement of Napoleon Avenue between Landry and Castille Streets will constitute the Sunset town center**; the plaza will include shade trees, benches, and landscaping; it will be programmed with a weekly farmers market and periodic flea markets • The existing swale along the rail corridor will be retrofitted to a bioswale • Existing buildings in the area will be renovated and the surrounding public spaces will receive design enhancements • The existing red barn will be restored to function as retail space for an antique-type business	• The area between the multi-use trail and Castille Street will be redeveloped as a public park; the park will include a playscape for children as well as a picnic area • Signage will incorporated into the park to inform users about the Sunset's history and nearby historic buildings
Residential	• The two large parcels northwest of Duffy Avenue will be subdivided into large lots for single-family residential development; the area will be connected to main transportation corridors and the elementary school via bike- and pedestrian-friendly routes • Single-family residential development will occur along Sunset Strip between Churchill Street and Tommy's Road • The Town will annex additional lands south of the town limits to expand areas for low-density residential development	• The two large parcels northwest of Duffy Avenue will be developed as a residential area with diverse housing choices, including townhouses and apartments; the area will be connected to main transportation corridors, the elementary school, and the baseball fields via bike- and pedestrian-friendly routes • Single-family residential development will occur between Napoleon Avenue, Pershing Highway, and the town limits as well as the southern area along Sunset Strip	• The two large parcels northwest of Duffy Avenue will be developed as a residential area with diverse housing choices, including townhouses and apartments; the area will be connected to main transportation corridors, the elementary school, and the baseball fields via bike- and pedestrian-friendly routes • Single-family residential development will occur between Napoleon Avenue, Pershing Highway, and the town limits as well as the southern area along Sunset Strip
Tourism	• One to three additional bed & breakfasts will open within the town limits • One to three new restaurants and a new café will open on Napoleon Avenue	• A national chain hotel will construct a location in Sunset, along the I-49 corridor • A second bed & breakfast will open within the town limits • New restaurants and a new café will open on Napoleon Avenue	• A national chain hotel will construct a location in Sunset, along the I-49 corridor • One to three additional bed & breakfasts will open within the town limits • New restaurants and a new café will open on Napoleon Avenue
Recreation	• Marie Street Park will be furnished with benches and landscaping improvements will be added along the fringe; the existing basketball courts will be refurbished; a permanent restroom facility will be added • The baseball fields north of Sunset will be refurbished and a small building with restroom facilities will be added • The vacant town-owned property on Anna Street will be transformed into a public park with play structures for children as well as a picnic area • The Town will construct a public football field on the vacant land behind the old high school building and existing community center	• Marie Street Park will be furnished with benches and landscaping improvements will be added along the fringe; the existing basketball courts will be refurbished; a permanent restroom facility will be added; a walking trail and a play structure for children will also be added • The baseball fields in the North of Sunset will be refurbished and a small building with restroom facilities will be added • The vacant town-owned property on Anna Street will be transformed into a public botanic garden, featuring park furniture and a picnic pavilion • A community facility with a public pool and volleyball courts will be constructed on the vacant land behind the old high school building and existing community center • The old high school building will be renovated to serve as the new community center • The existing community center will be reconfigured to serve as a community fitness center, including fitness equipment and classes	• Marie Street Park will be furnished with benches and landscaping improvements will be added along the fringe; the existing basketball courts will be refurbished; a permanent restroom facility will be added; a walking trail will also be added • The baseball fields in the North of Sunset will be refurbished and a small building with restroom facilities will be added • The vacant town-owned property on Anna Street will be transformed into a public park with tennis courts, a walking/running trail and outdoor fitness stations • The property behind the old high school building and existing community center will serve as the Town's festival grounds
Culture	• A small rubboard festival and the herb festival will be held annually at the Marie Street Park • The old high school building will be renovated to serve as an arts incubator facility as well as classroom space for community activities and classes	• The herb festival, a small rubboard festival, and a local art festival will be held at the Marie Street Park	• A bigger herb festival and a two-day rubboard festival will be held annually at the new festival grounds • The old high school building will be renovated to serve as an antiques mall and a rubboard museum • The old Bank of Sunset building will become a Sunset history museum, which will begin operating only on weekends

A. Preserved Small Town Feel & Incremental Development

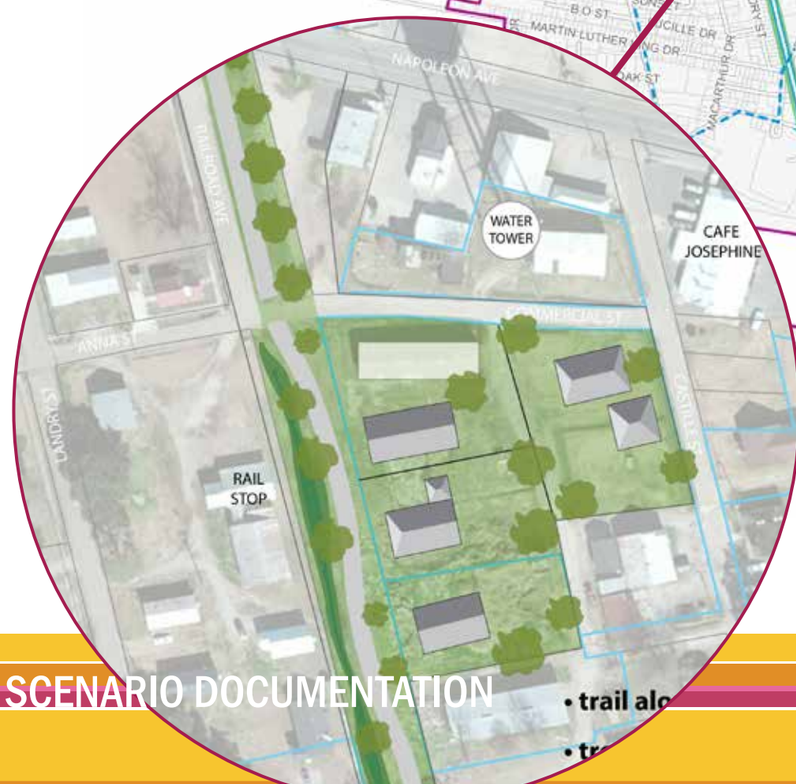
FUTURE SCENARIO A

- New road constructions connect existing and new development
- Bike trails connect Shady Meadows & Oak Trace to the town core
- Traffic light on Napoleon Ave. & Duffy Ave.
- Bike lane on Duffy Ave. & Napoleon Ave.
- Rail corridor trail between Napoleon Ave. and the elementary school
- Stormwater management on Napoleon Ave. & Castille St.

TRANSPORTATION

FUTURE SCENARIO A

- Town center on Napoleon Ave. & Marie St.
- Duffy Ave. remains in residential use
- Low density residential northwest of Duffy Ave.
- Main street commercial infill on Napoleon Ave.
- 2-3 new bed & breakfasts
- More commercial development in the triangle northeast of Duffy Ave.
- Residential infill in the town center adjacent to the railroad corridor



DEVELOPMENT

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FUTURE SCENARIO A

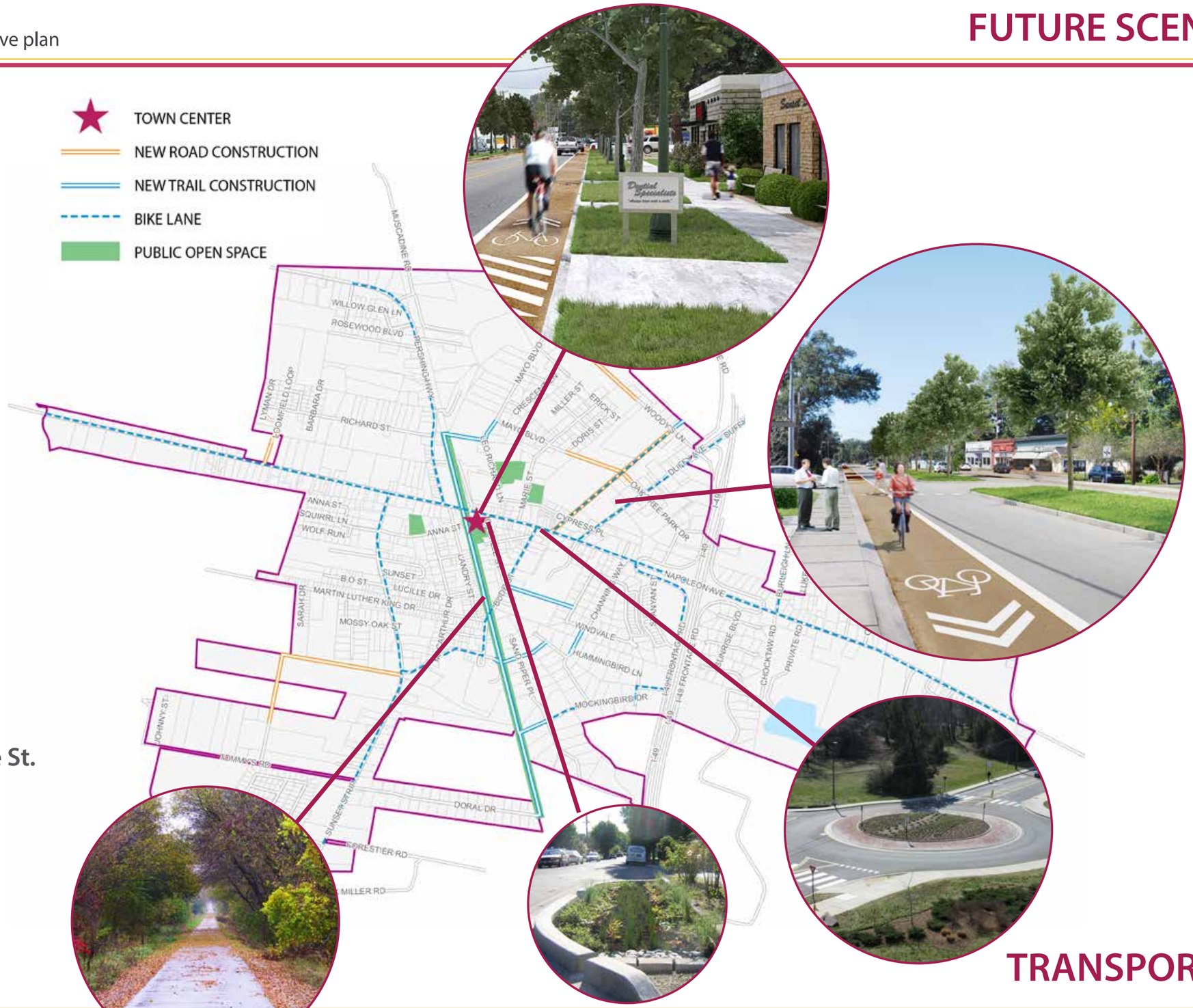
- Improved basketball courts on Marie St.
- Improved park on Marie St. with landscaping and park furniture
- Football field on the vacant lot behind the Sunset High School
- Park with a playground for children and a picnic shelter on the vacant town property on Anna St.
- Improved baseball fields north of Sunset

RECREATION

B. The Modern & Walkable Small Town

FUTURE SCENARIO B

- New road constructions connect existing and new development
- New bike trails connect disconnected areas for pedestrians and bicyclists
- Roundabout on Napoleon Ave. & Duffy Ave.
- Bike Lane and raised median on Duffy Ave. & bike lane on Napoleon Ave.
- Comprehensive bike lane & sidewalk network
- Complete Street on Napoleon Ave.
- Rail corridor trail from Pershing Hwy. to Doral St.
- Stormwater management on Napoleon Ave. & Castille St.



TRANSPORTATION

FUTURE SCENARIO B

- Downtown plaza on the vacant land along the rail corridor
- Town center between Napoleon Ave., Landry St., and Castille St.
- Mixed-use and neighborhood commercial infill along Duffy Ave.
- Medium density residential northwest of Duffy Ave.
- Napoleon Ave. becomes official Louisiana Mainstreet Corridor
- National chain hotel
- Medical development in the triangle northeast of Duffy Ave.

DEVELOPMENT

FUTURE SCENARIO B

- Downtown plaza on the vacant land along the rail corridor
- Town center between Napoleon Ave., Landry St., and Castille St.
- Mixed-use and neighborhood commercial infill along Duffy Ave.
- Medium density residential northwest of Duffy Ave.
- Napoleon Ave. becomes official Louisiana Mainstreet Corridor
- National chain hotel
- Medical development in the triangle northeast of Duffy Ave.

DEVELOPMENT

C. Economic Thriving & Progressive Development

FUTURE SCENARIO C

- New road construction connects disconnected areas for vehicular traffic
- Roundabout on Napoleon Ave. & Duffy Ave.
- Bike Lane and raised median on Duffy Ave. & bike lane on Napoleon Ave.
- Additional bike lanes
- Complete Street on Napoleon Ave.
- Rail corridor trail from Pershing Hwy. to the elementary school
- Stormwater management on Napoleon Ave. & Castille St.

TRANSPORTATION

FUTURE SCENARIO C

- Town center around the intersection of Duffy Ave. & Napoleon Ave.
- Commercial development along Duffy Ave. replaces homes
- More antique stores & restaurants on Napoleon Ave.
- Single-family residential & townhouses northwest of Duffy Ave.
- More bed & breakfasts
- Rubboard Museum in Bank of Sunset building
- National chain hotel
- Office park in the triangle northeast of Duffy Ave.

DEVELOPMENT

FUTURE SCENARIO C

- Improved basketball courts on Marie St.
- Improved park on Marie St. with landscaping and park furniture
- Festival ground behind the Sunset High School
- Tennis courts and outdoor fitness equipment on the vacant town property on Anna St.
- Park with children's playground and picnic shelter on the vacant land Downtown
- Improved baseball fields north of Sunset

RECREATION

POLL QUESTION RESULTS

Public Meeting 11/12/2014

WHERE WILL SUNSET'S TOWN CENTER BE?

A:
Napoleon Avenue & Marie Street — ***54%***

B:
Around Napoleon Avenue & the old rail corridor — ***11%***

C:
Napoleon Avenue & Duffy Avenue — ***34%***

HOW WILL SUNSET'S TRANSPORTATION NETWORK LOOK?

A:
Basic improvements to the existing street grid; bike lanes on Duffy Avenue & Napoleon Avenue;

8%

B:
Comprehensive network of bike & pedestrian trails; Complete Street treatment on Duffy Avenue & Napoleon Avenue;

73%

C:
Connection of isolated subdivisions into the Town's street grid; access management on Duffy Avenue;

19%

HOW WILL THE DUFFY AVENUE CORRIDOR DEVELOP?

A:
Duffy Avenue remains in residential use.

4%

B:
Neighborhood commercial infill diversifies Duffy Avenue. The corridor features residential and small scale commercial development.

15%

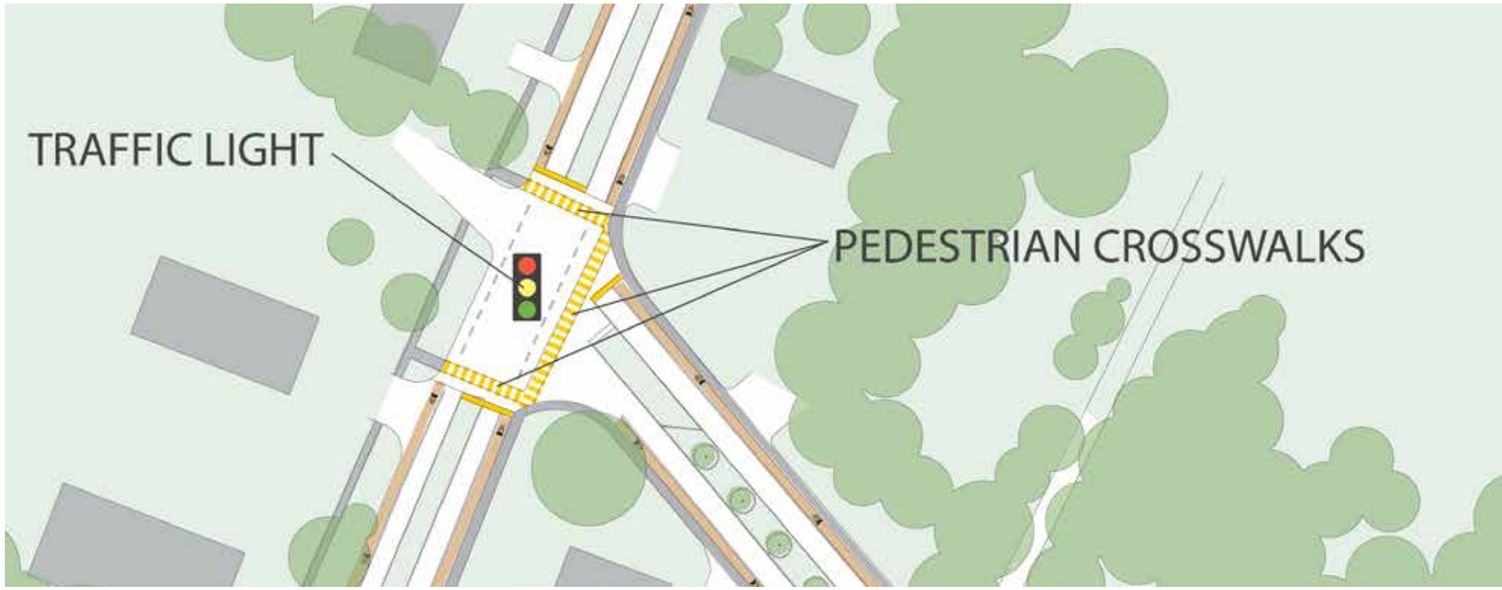
C:
Medium to large scale commercial development on Duffy Avenue incrementally replaces existing residential uses.

81%

HOW WILL THE INTERSECTION OF DUFFY AVENUE AND NAPOLEON AVENUE BE IMPROVED?

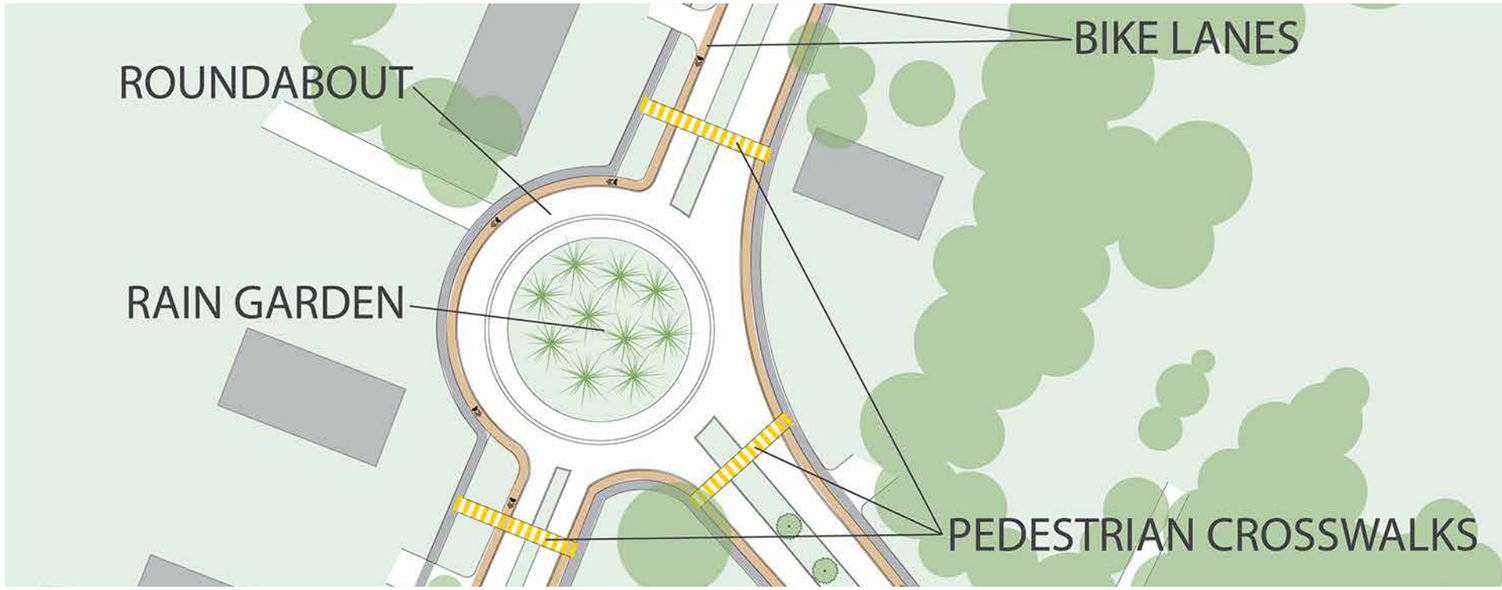
A:
Three way traffic light & crosswalks

8%



B:
Roundabout & crosswalks

92%



WHAT HOUSING TYPES SHOULD FUTURE RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT FEATURE?

A:
Detached single-family residential units on medium to large lots infill, as well as new subdivisions on the town outskirts

12%

B:
Detached single-family residential units and town houses on medium to small lots within the town limits

42%

C:
Detached single-family residential units and town houses on medium to small lots, and apartment buildings for independent living in the Town's core area

46%

HOW WILL THE UNDERUTILIZED LAND BETWEEN THE RAIL CORRIDOR AND CASTILLE STREET BE USED?

A:
Residential infill

8%

B:
Town plaza with a weekly farmer's market

52%

C:
Public park with children's playground

40%

WHERE WILL PLAY FIELDS, SPORT FACILITIES BE?

A:
Large playfield on the town property behind the Sunset High School building

52%

B:
Public Pool and small playfields behind the Sunset High School building

16%

C:
Small sport courts and fitness equipment on the town property on Anna Street

32%

WHERE WILL HERB AND RUBBOARD FESTIVAL BE HELD?

A:
Small Herb Festival and Rubboard Festival in the existing Town Park

23%

B:
Herb Festival and Rubboard Festival dispersed over Town in the existing Town Park and next to the rail corridor

12%

C:
Bigger Herb Festival and 2-day Rubboard Festival behind the old Sunset High School building

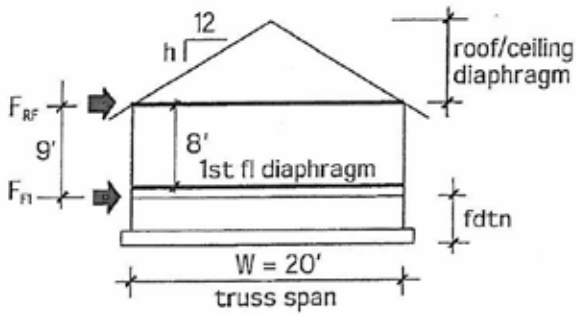
65%

5. APPENDIX B: STABILITY DESIGN TABLES FOR WIND LOADS

The source for Appendix C, Stability System Design Tables for Wind Loads, is "The Companion Manual to the Windstorm Mitigation Manual for Light Frame Construction", December 1999.

Img. 1.1.1: The comprehensive planning process

Stability System Design Tables



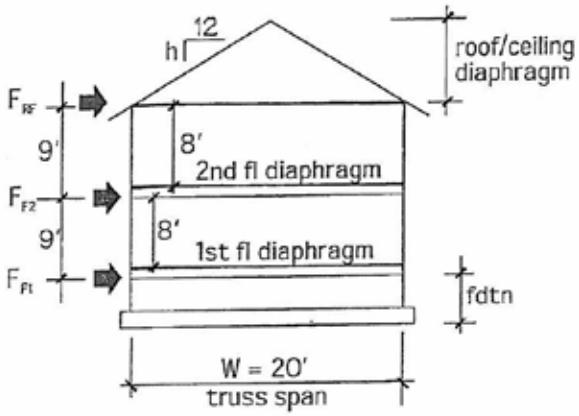
Wind Perpendicular to Roof Ridge

Roof Slope	Lateral Wind Load to Diaphragms LB/FT of Length							
	Fastest Mile Wind Speed (MPH)							
	80		90		100		110	
h	F_{RF}	F_{F1}	F_{RF}	F_{F1}	F_{RF}	F_{F1}	F_{RF}	F_{F1}
3	79	191	109	261	124	299	151	364
4	83	195	105	248	130	305	157	370
5	98	210	124	266	152	328	185	398
6	122	234	155	297	190	366	231	444
7	151	263	192	334	237	413	287	500
8	184	296	233	376	288	463	348	561
9	222	334	281	424	347	523	421	634
10	261	373	331	474	407	583	494	707
12	318	430	403	546	497	672	602	815

1. Wind loads are based on ASCE:7-93 for "Main Wind Force Resistance System (MWFRS)."
2. For 10" floor to ceiling height, multiply above values by 1.25.
3. See Figure 1 in Chapter 5 for method of calculation.

5. APPENDIX B: STABILITY DESIGN TABLES FOR WIND LOADS

Stability System Design Tables



Wind Perpendicular to Roof Ridge

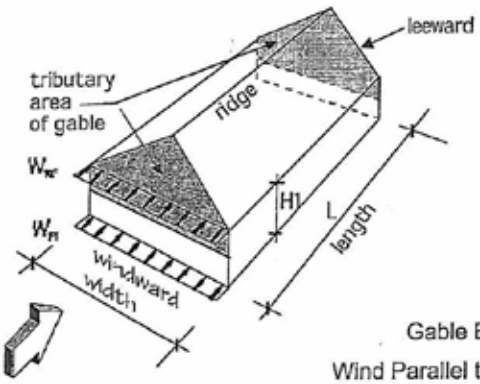
Roof Slope	Lateral Wind Load to Diaphragms LB/FT of Length											
	Fastest Mile Wind Speed (MPH)											
	80			90			100			110		
h	F_{RF}	F_{F2}	F_{F1}	F_{RF}	F_{F2}	F_{F1}	F_{RF}	F_{F2}	F_{F1}	F_{RF}	F_{F2}	F_{F1}
3	95	304	418	120	384	528	148	474	652	179	573	788
4	98	306	419	124	387	530	153	479	657	185	578	793
5	113	321	435	144	407	550	178	503	681	214	607	822
6	141	349	463	177	441	585	219	545	723	266	661	877
7	172	381	495	217	481	625	268	594	773	326	721	937
8	189	399	514	239	505	650	296	624	803	358	754	971
9	227	436	551	287	552	697	354	682	862	428	825	1042
10	268	476	590	340	605	750	418	744	923	507	903	1119
12	357	565	679	396	661	806	487	813	992	590	986	1202

1. Wind loads are based on ASCE:7-93 for "Main Wind Force Resistance System (MWFRS)."
2. For 10" floor to ceiling height, multiply above values by 1.25.

Stability System Design Tables

F II 20'

1 STORY



Gable End Wall

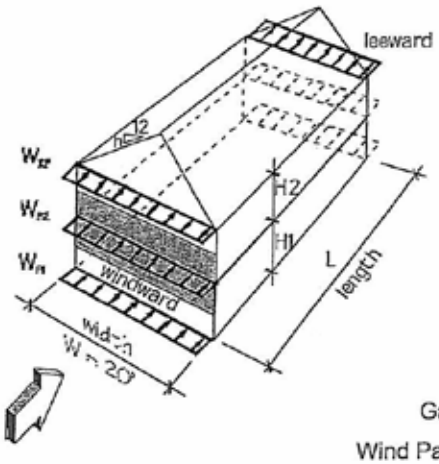
Wind Parallel to Ridge of Roof

Roof Slope	Lateral Wind Load to Diaphragms LB/FT of Length							
	Fastest Mile Wind Speed (MPH)							
	80		90		100		110	
h	W_{RF}	W_{F1}	W_{RF}	W_{F1}	W_{RF}	W_{F1}	W_{RF}	W_{F1}
3	95	186	121	236	149	291	181	353
4	103	193	130	245	161	303	195	367
5	110	201	140	255	173	315	209	367
6	118	208	150	265	185	327	224	396
7	125	216	160	274	196	338	238	410
8	133	223	169	284	208	350	252	424
9	140	231	178	293	220	362	267	439
10	148	239	188	303	232	374	281	453
12	164	254	208	323	257	399	311	483

1. Table based on ASCE:7-93 wind requirements for MWFRS.
2. H1 = 9FT based on 8FT floor to ceiling weight. If 10FT floor to ceiling height, multiply Table values by 1.25.
3. L = 60 FT was used for Tabled values.

5. APPENDIX B: STABILITY DESIGN TABLES FOR WIND LOADS

Stability System Design Tables



F II 20

2 STORY

Gable End Wall

Wind Parallel to Roof Ridge

Roof Slope	Lateral Wind Load to Diaphragms LB/FT of Length											
	Fastest Mile Wind Speed (MPH)											
	80			90			100			110		
h	W_{RF}	W_{F2}	W_{FDTN}	W_{RF}	W_{F2}	W_{FDTN}	W_{RF}	W_{F2}	W_{FDTN}	W_{RF}	W_{F2}	W_{FDTN}
3	100	264	355	126	334	450	156	413	555	189	498	670
4	109	271	362	137	343	457	169	426	568	205	513	685
5	117	280	370	1147	353	468	182	439	581	220	529	700
6	125	288	379	159	366	481	196	453	595	238	548	720
7	133	296	387	169	376	491	209	465	608	253	563	735
8	144	307	398	182	390	505	224	482	625	271	582	754
9	152	316	407	193	400	516	237	495	638	287	597	770
10	161	325	416	204	412	527	252	509	652	304	613	785
12	178	342	433	226	433	549	279	536	679	337	645	817

1. Table based on ASCE:7-93 wind requirements for MWFRS.
2. H1 = H2 = 9FT based on 8FT floor to ceiling height. If 10FT floor to ceiling height, multiply Table values by 1.25.
3. L = 60 FT was used for Tabled values.

Recommended Shear (pounds per foot) for Horizontal APA Panel Diaphragms for Wind or Seismic Loading

Panel Grade	Minimum Nominal Panel Thickness (Inch)	Common Nail Size	Minimum Nail Penetration in Framing (Inches)	Minimum Nominal Width of Framing Members (Inches)	Framing Species: Specific Gravity = 0.49 joists, rafters, truss top chords; Southern Pine, Larch, Douglas Fir-Larch, Microflanges of "I" Joists (factor = 1.0)					Framing Species: Specific Gravity 0.49>G = 0.42 joists, rafters, truss top chords; S-P-F, HEM - FIR (factor = 0.82)				
					Blocked Diaphragms				Unblocked Diaphragms	Blocked Diaphragms				Unblocked Diaphragms
					Nail Spacing @ Panel Edges [a]				All Configurations	Nail Spacing @ Panel Edges [b]				All Configurations
					6"	[b] 4"	[b] 2-1/2" [c]	[c] 2" [c]	6" [h]	6"	[b] 4"	[b] 2-1/2" [c]	[c] 2" [c]	6" [h]
APA RATED SHEATHING APA RATED STURDI-FLOOR and other APA grades except Species Group 5	3/8"	6d[e]	1-1/4	2	185	250	375	420	125	150	205	310	345	105
				3	210	280	420	475	140	175	230	345	390	115
		8d	1-1/2	2	240	320	480	545	160	200	265	395	450	135
				3	270	360	540	610	180	225	295	445	500	150
	7/16"	8d	1-1/2	2	255	340	505	575	170	210	280	415	475	140
				3	285	380	570	645	190	235	315	470	530	160
	15/32"	8d	1-1/2	2	270	360	530	600	180	225	295	435	495	150
				3	300	400	600	675	200	250	330	495	555	165
		10d[d]	1-5/8	2	290	385	575	655	190	240	320	475	540	160
				3	325	430	650	735	215	270	355	535	605	180
	19/32"	10d[d]	1-5/8	2	320	425	640	730	215	265	350	525	600	180
				3	360	480	720	820	240	295	395	595	675	200
APA STRUCTURAL I grades	3/8"	8d	1-1/2	2	270	360	530	600	180	225	295	435	495	150
				3	300	400	600	675	200	250	330	495	555	165
	15/32"	10d[d]	1-5/8	2	320	425	640	730	215	265	350	525	600	180
				3	360	480	720	820	240	295	395	595	675	200

(a) Species specific gravity = G

(b) Space nails maximum 12 in. o.c. along intermediate framing members (6 in. o.c. when supports are spaced 48 in. o.c.).

(c) Framing at adjoining panel edges shall be 3-in. nominal or wider, and nails shall be staggered where nails are spaced 2 inches o.c. or 2-1/2 inches o.c.

(d) Framing at adjoining panel edges shall be 3-in. nominal or wider, and nails shall be staggered where 10d nails having penetration into framing of more than 1-5/8 inches are spaced 3 inches o.c.

(e) 8d is recommended minimum for roofs due to negative pressures of high winds.

(f) Table modified by author. Taken from *APA Design/Construction Guide - Diaphragms*, 1991, pg. 6.

(g) Nail spacing at edges other than diaphragm boundries (all cases) and continuous panel edges parallel to load (cases 3 & 4) shall be permitted to use 6", 4", and 3" instead of 4", 2" & 2-1/2" respectively.

Notes: Design for diaphragm stresses depends on direction of continuous panel joints with reference to load, not on direction of long dimension of sheet. Continuous framing may be in either direction for blocked diaphragms.

5. APPENDIX C: ECONOMIC INCENTIVES

Economic Incentives

In order to attract new economic development for Sunset, foster existing businesses, and create a diverse, local and resilient economic base for Sunset the Town will facilitate economic and fiscal policy incentives. Incentives used to implement economic development strategies to attract, retain or grow businesses come in a variety of shapes, flavors and sizes. A shortage of incentives or programs is usually not much of a concern. The primary concern becomes selecting the right ingredients from the available menu of options to create the best fit for the situation. Too many communities attempt to shotgun prospects with their entire arsenal of enticement goodies only to learn later that a rifle shot would have been more effective, less costly and a lot cleaner. The shotgun strategy also communicates that a community is either relatively new at the economic development process or that is has not learned important lessons from prior experience. In either case it communicates a level of immaturity that business prospects will either avoid or exploit to their own advantage.

This does not mean that local communities such as Sunset should not build as strong an arsenal of economic development tools as possible. It does mean, however, that the community should be judicious and strategic in their use, particularly when there is a real cost incurred or liability assumed by the community. These could materialize in a number of forms such as foregone tax revenues, infrastructure investments or contractual obligations (i.e. long term leases or loans). All of these have the unfortunate potential of creating questionable financial obligations for future generations of leaders and citizens in the community.

Initiatives or programs that encompass one or more incentives designed to enhance a local community's business prospects are typically elements of a gap financing strategy. The "gap" as such is usually the difference between the total cost of carrying out a project or individual transaction and the amount of conventional private sector sources would be willing and able to finance. The gap must then be filled by a mix of non-private or non-conventional resources that could be drawn from an array of public/government or nonprofit/philanthropic sources. Depending on the size and nature of the gap, the gap-fillers might be numerous and somewhat eclectic.

By far, the most prolific provider of incentives, programs and enhancements is the federal government, particularly through agencies such as the Small Business Administration (SBA), Economic Development Administration (EDA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce, the Rural Development Authority of USDA and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Although agency programs originate and are centrally managed by the D.C. "Mother-ship," individual program delivery and implementation is driven from networks of local, district and regional offices maintained by each agency. In some cases the agency's primary point of contact for some programs is an office of state government or an individually chartered non-governmental organization or NGO. Knowing the pecking order within an agency's food chain is very important to successful use of their programs and incentives.

Exhibit 1 summarizes a menu of tools, enhancements and incentives that can be used as part of gap financing strategies. This is not an exhaustive listing since new programs for specifically targeted populations are always

Gap Financing Tools, Enhancements and Incentives

Program/Resource	Type	Possible for Sunset	If Not, Why?
Federal Programs			
Small Business Administration			
• 7(a) Loan Guaranty Program	Loan	Yes	
• 7(a) Low Doc Program	Loan	Yes	
• 7(a) SBA Express Program	Loan	Yes	
• 7(a) CAPLines Program	Loan	Yes	
• 7(a) Minority & Women's PreQual	Loan	Yes	
• 504 Certified Development Company	Loan	Yes	
• MicroLoan Program	Loan	Yes	
• Small Business Investment Company	Loan	Yes	
• Surety Bond Program	Performance Bond	Yes	

Appendix C, Exhibit A - 1

Gap Financing Tools, Enhancements and Incentives

Program/Resource	Type	Possible for Sunset	If Not, Why?
U.S. Department of Treasury			
• Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI)	Debt/Equity/ Tax Credits	Possibly	Need a bank or other entity as sponsor
U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development			
• Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program	Equity/ Grant	Yes	Pass-thru from state (LAOCD)
• Brownsfields Economic Development Initiative (BEDI)	Equity/ Grant	Yes	
U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development			
• Business & Industrial Guaranteed Loan Program (B&I)	Loan	Yes	

Appendix C, Exhibit A - 2

5. APPENDIX C: ECONOMIC INCENTIVES

Gap Financing Tools, Enhancements and Incentives

Program/Resource	Type	Possible for Sunset	If Not, Why?
U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development			
•Intermediary Relending Program	Loan/ RLF	Not Now?	Need Separate Nonprofit as RLF
•Rural Business & Enterprise Grants Program	Grant/ Equity/ RLF	Not Now?	Need Separate Nonprofit to Receive and Serve as RLF
U.S. Department of Commerce			
•Economic Development Administration (EDA)			
•Economic Adjustment Public Works Grant	Grant/ Equity/ RLF	Yes	Infrastructure Improvements/ Construction and Loans

Appendix C, Exhibit A - 3

Gap Financing Tools, Enhancements and Incentives

Program/Resource	Type	Possible for Sunset	If Not, Why?
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services			
• Community Services Block Grant Program	Equity/ Grant/ RLF	Not Now?	Need Separate Nonprofit to Receive
Federal Home Loan Bank System (FHLB)			
• Community Investment Program (CIP)	Loan/ Rate Discount	Depends	Works through FHLB Member Banks
Federal Tax Credit Incentives			
•Historic Tax Credits (HTC's)	Equity	Not Now	Need Certified Historic District
• Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC's)	Equity	Yes	

Appendix C, Exhibit A - 4

Gap Financing Tools, Enhancements and Incentives

Program/Resource	Type	Possible for Sunset	If Not, Why?
State Programs			
Louisiana Economic Development Corporation (LEDC)			
• Musical and Theatrical Production Tax Incentive – 25 to 35% tax credit on qualified production or infrastructure development expenses with additional credits available for payroll and transportation	Equity/ Tax Credit	Yes	
• Sound Recording Investment Tax Credit – 25% refundable tax credit for qualified production expenditures on state-certified recording projects	Equity/ Tax Credit	Yes	
• Quality Jobs Program – up to 6% rebate on annual payroll for up to 10 years and either a 4% sales/use tax rebate on capital expenses or 1.5% investment tax credit for qualifying	Tax Rebate	Yes	

Appendix C, Exhibit A - 5

Gap Financing Tools, Enhancements and Incentives

Program/Resource	Type	Possible for Sunset	If Not, Why?
State Programs			
Louisiana Economic Development Corporation (LEDC)			
• Industrial Tax Exemption – 100% property tax abatement for up to 10 years on manufacturer's new investment and annualized capital additions	Tax Exemption (Property & Equipment)	Yes	
• LA Film Tax Credit Program – 30% tax credit from qualified motion picture production costs and additional 5% payroll tax credit for in-state	Equity/Tax Credit	Yes	
• Enterprise Zone - $2,500 tax credit for each certified net new job created and either 4% sales/use tax rebate on capital expenses labor or 1.5% refund on capital investment	Equity/Tax Credit	Yes	

Appendix C, Exhibit A - 6

5. APPENDIX C: ECONOMIC INCENTIVES

Gap Financing Tools, Enhancements and Incentives

Program/Resource	Type	Possible for Sunset	If Not, Why?
State Programs			
Louisiana Economic Development Corporation (LEDC)			
• Digital Media Tax Incentive Program – 35% tax credit for in-state labor plus 25% credit for eligible production expenses	Equity/Tax Credit	Yes	
• Tax Exempt Bond Financing	Debt	Yes	

Appendix C, Exhibit A - 7

Gap Financing Tools, Enhancements and Incentives

Program/Resource	Type	Possible for Sunset	If Not, Why?
Local/Municipal Programs			
• Tax Increment Financing (TIF)	Revenue Diversion	Not Now	Need to Establish TIF District
• Business Improvement District (BID)	Revenue Enhancement	Not Now	Need to Establish BID
• Property Tax Abatement	Revenue Delay/ Enhancement	Yes	
• Municipal Bonds •General Obligation •Revenue	Debt	Yes?	City's Bonding Capacity
• Land Acquisition	Development Control	Yes?	Negotiated Purchase /Expropriation

Appendix C, Exhibit A - 8

Gap Financing Tools, Enhancements and Incentives

Program/Resource	Type	Possible for Sunset	If Not, Why?
Local/Municipal Programs			
• Fee Waivers/Deferrals	Revenue Delay/ Enhancement	Yes?	If Allowed Under City Charter
• Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)	Debt	Yes?	Need Separate Entity to Operated
• Main Street Program	Development Guidance	Yes?	Apply to State CRT
• Restoration Tax Abatement	Tax Deferral	Yes?	

Appendix C, Exhibit A - 9

being added and existing programs are either being eliminated or modified out of existence.

The SBA, for example, offers a variety of loan programs that can be tailored to the needs, size and life-stage of a local business. Tapping these programs is usually more effective when the loan application and business plan have been reviewed by a technical assistance provider such as the Small Business Development Center at UL Lafayette and the loan is underwritten by an SBA preferred lender. SBA loans are all guaranteed loans originated and funded by private lenders. In the event of default, the lender is largely protected from loss by the SBA guarantee. Banks with SBA lending experience in the St. Landry/Lafayette area include HomeBank, St. Landry Homestead FSB, MidSouth Bank, American Bank & Trust, Merchants & Farmers and IberiaBank. Sunset businesses that want to take advantage of SBA loans should become acquainted with their specific requirements by visiting the agency's website (SBA.gov) and familiarizing themselves with the loan officers at the local banks who are primarily responsible for SBA lending. It might also be productive and useful for the Sunset Business and Merchants' Association to host a series of seminars where representatives from the SBDC and one or more SBA lenders could present information on programs of most interest to the local community. Exhibit 2 presents a detailed summary of SBA's major loan programs.

The EDA is a relatively small agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce which focuses its resources on regional and local economic development. It does this primarily through a

5. APPENDIX C: ECONOMIC INCENTIVES

SBA U.S. Small Business Administration

QUICK REFERENCE TO SBA LOAN GUARANTY PROGRAMS

Program	Maximum Loan Amount	Percent of Guaranty	Use of Proceeds	Maturity	Maximum Interest Rates	Guaranty Fees	Who Qualifies	Benefits to Borrowers
7(a) Loans	$5 million	85% guaranty for loans of $150,000 or less; 75% guaranty for loans greater than $150,000 (up to $3.75 million maximum guaranty)	Term Loan. Expansion/ renovation; new construction, purchase land or buildings; purchase equipment, fixtures, lease-hold improvements; working capital; refinance debt for compelling reasons; seasonal line of credit, inventory or starting a business	Depends on ability to repay. Generally, working capital & machinery & equipment (not to exceed life of equipment) is 5-10 years; real estate is 25 years.	**Loans less than 7 years:** $0 - $25,000 Prime + 4.25% $25,001 - $50,000 P + 3.25% Over $50,000 Prime + 2.25% **Loans 7 years or longer:** 0 - $25,000 Prime + 4.75% $25,001 - $50,000 P + 3.75% Over $50,000 Prime + 2.75%	**(No SBA fees on loans of $150,000 or less approved in FY 2015.)** Fee charged on guaranteed portion of loan only. $150,001-$700,000 = 3.0%; $700,000-$1,000,000 = 3.5%; plus 3.75% on guaranty portion over $1 million, less than 12 months .25% Ongoing fee of 0.519% on loans over $150,000.	Must be a for-profit business & meet SBA size standards; show good character, credit, management, and ability to repay. Must be an eligible type of business. Prepayment penalty for loans with maturities of 15 years or more if prepaid during first 3 years. (5% year 1, 3% year 2 and 1% year 3)	Long-term financing; Improved cash flow; Fixed maturity; No balloons; No prepayment penalty (under 15 years)
7(a) Small Loans Is any 7(a) loan $350,000 and under, except the Community Advantage and Express loans	$350,000	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a) Plus, all loan applications will be credit scored by SBA. If not an acceptable score, the loan can be submitted via full standard 7(a) or Express.	Same as 7(a)
SBA*Express*	$350,000	50%	May be used for revolving lines of credit (up to 7 year maturity) or for a term loan [same as 7(a)].	Up to 7 years for Revolving Lines of Credit including term out period. Otherwise, same as 7(a).	Loans $50,000 or less; prime+ 6.5% Loans over $50,000; prime + 4.5%	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a)	Fast turnaround; Streamlined process; Easy-to-use line of credit
SBA Veterans Advantage 10/01/14 - 09/30/15	Processed under SBA*Express* $350,000	Same as SBA*Express*	Same as SBA*Express*	Same as SBA*Express*	Same as SBA*Express*	No guaranty fee. Ongoing fee of 0.519% on loans above $150,000.	Same as 7(a) Plus, small business must be owned and controlled (51%+) by one or more of the following groups: veteran, active-duty military in TAP, reservist or National Guard member or a spouse of any of these groups, or a widowed spouse of a service member or veteran who died during service, or a service-connected disability.	Same as SBA*Express* No guaranty fee
	Processed under 7(a) $5 million	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a) except guaranty fee for non SBA*Express* loans will be reduced by 50%. Ongoing fee of 0.519% on loans above $150,000.		Same as 7(a) but with a reduced guaranty fee.
CapLines: 1. Working Capital; 2. Contract; 3. Seasonal; and 4. Builders	$5 million	Same as 7(a) .	Finance seasonal and/or short-term working capital needs; cost to perform; construction costs; advances against existing inventory and receivables; consolidation of short-term debts. May be revolving.	Up to 10 years, except Builder's CAPLine, which is 5 years	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a) Plus, all lenders must execute Form 750 & 750B (short-term loans)	1. Working Capital - (LOC) Revolving Line of Credit 2. Contract - can finance all costs (excluding profit). 3. Seasonal - Seasonal working capital needs. 4. Builder - Finances direct costs when building a commercial or residential structure
Community Advantage Mission-focused lenders only. Expires 03/15/17	$250,000	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a)	Prime plus 6%	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a) Plus lenders must be CDFIs, CDCs or micro-lender targeting underserved market

U.S. Small Business Administration
10 S. Howard Street, Suite 6220
Baltimore, MD 21201

Baltimore District Office
(410) 962-6195
www.sba.gov/md

Information current as of October 2014
SBA Programs and services are provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.
See the SOP for the most up to date detailed information

SBA U.S. Small Business Administration

QUICK REFERENCE TO SBA LOAN GUARANTY PROGRAMS

Program	Maximum Loan Amount	Percent of Guaranty	Use of Proceeds	Maturity	Maximum Interest Rates	Guaranty Fees	Who Qualifies	Benefits to Borrowers
International Trade	$5 million	90% guaranty (up to $4.5 million maximum guaranty) (Up to $4 million maximum guaranty for working capital)	Term loan for permanent working capital, equipment, facilities, land and buildings and debt refinance related to international trade	Up to 25 years.	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a) Plus, engaged or preparing to engage in international trade or adversely affected by competition from imports.	Long term financing to allow small business to compete more effectively in the international marketplace
Export Working Capital Program	$5 million	90% guaranty (up to $4.5 million maximum guaranty)	Short-term, working-capital loans for exporters. May be transaction based or asset based. Can also support standby letters of credit	Generally one year or less, may go up to 3 years	No SBA maximum interest rate cap, but SBA monitors for reasonableness	Same as 7(a)	Same as 7(a) Plus, need short-term working capital for exporting.	Additional working capital to increase Export sales without disrupting domestic financing and business plan
Export *Express*	$500,000	90% guaranty for loans of $350,000 or less; 75% guaranty for loans greater than $350,000	Same as SBA*Express* plus standby letters of credit	Same as SBA*Express*	Same as SBA*Express*	Same as 7(a)	Applicant must demonstrate that loan will enable them to enter a new, or expand in an existing export market. Business must have been in operation for at least 12 months (though not necessarily in exporting).	Fast turnaround; Streamlined process; Easy-to-use line of credit
504 Loans Provided through Certified Development Companies (CDCs) which are licensed by SBA	504 CDC maximum amount ranges from $5 million to $5.5 million, depending on type of business.	Project costs financed as follows: CDC: up to 40% Lender: 50% (Non-guaranteed) Equity: 10% plus additional 5% if new business and/or 5% if special use property	Long-term, fixed-asset loans; Lender (non-guaranteed) financing secured by first lien on project assets. CDC loan provided from SBA 100% guaranteed debenture sold to investors at fixed rate secured by 2nd lien.	CDC Loan: 10- or 20-year term fixed interest rate. Lender Loan: Unguaranteed financing may have a shorter term. May be fixed or adjustable interest rate	Fixed rate on 504 Loan established when the debenture backing loan is sold. Declining prepayment penalty for 1/2 of term.	.5% fee on lender share, plus CDC may charge up to 1.5% on their share. CDC charges a monthly servicing fee of 0.625%-1.5% on unpaid balance Ongoing guaranty fee is 0.9375% of principal outstanding. Ongoing fee % does not change during term.	Alternative Size Standard: For-profit businesses that do not exceed $15 million in tangible net worth, and do not have an average two full fiscal year net income over $5 million. Owner Occupied 51% for existing or 60% for new construction	Low down payment - equity (10,15 or 20 percent) (The equity contribution may be borrowed as long as it is not from an SBA loan) Fees can be financed. SBA /CDC Portion: Long-term fixed rate Full amortization and No balloons
Non-7(a) Loans Microloans Loans through nonprofit lending organizations;	$50,000	Not applicable	Purchase machinery & equipment, fixtures, leasehold improvements; working capital; etc. Cannot be used to repay existing debt.	Shortest term possible, not to exceed 6 years	Negotiable with intermediary. Subject to either 7.75 or 8.5% above intermediary cost of funds.	No guaranty fee	Same as 7(a)	Direct loans from nonprofit intermediary lenders; Fixed-rate financing; Very small loan amounts; Technical assistance available

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This is an overview and does not include full policy and procedures. See the current Lender and Development Company Loan Programs SOP 50 10 5 (G) for more details.

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variety of targeted grants that are intended to provide the necessary leverage to move projects forward. Their Public Works grants, for example, are never large enough to fund the cost of an entire project, but just enough to fill a stubborn budget gap. For Sunset, an EDA grant might be helpful in funding portions of infrastructure enhancements, particularly those that have the potential of creating new or retaining existing jobs or attracting new capital investment. The EDA has historically also provided seed grants to local communities to fund the creation of a Revolving Loan Fund (RLF). These grants have typically been in the range of $300,000 to $500,000 and can be made directly to the municipality or to a separate non-profit NGO (usually a 501(c)3) chartered with the sponsorship of the town and other local stakeholders. Included among the local stakeholders would be one or more banks which could provide loan underwriting and servicing expertise as well as matching funds to increase the pool of loanable resources or agreements to be a loan participant for some borrowers. RLF loans are usually gap loans with second or third lien status, so participating banks have to understand community-based lending and have the necessary risk tolerance. An RLF in Sunset could, for example, limit its scope of lending to new and existing businesses in the Town's central core. This would help leverage limited resources and serve as a local incentive to attract and retain businesses.

The State of Louisiana through Louisiana Economic Development (LED) also offers a variety of programs and financial incentives to attract, retain and grow businesses. In some cases these state programs piggy-back or work together with federal programs, particularly in the area of business lending. Two such offerings are the MicroLoan and Contract Loan programs. Many of the other financial incentives are offered through a mix of tax credit initiatives are offered for targeted business sectors such a film and digital media. These credits are direct deductions from a firm's Louisiana income tax liability which can have significant financial impacts for the company as a whole and individual projects undertaken in the state. Although the state gives up receiving tax revenue for the credits granted, the offsetting benefits are usually measured in jobs created or retained and net new private capital investment in the state. Businesses located in Sunset or those considering the town as a possible place to operate could very well take advantage of these tax credit incentives. This might be particularly true for enterprises focused on the visual or performing arts. Depending on the situation and financial need, the credits could either be retained by the business within the targeted sector or sold to a local investor within the community such as a local bank.

Federal and State incentives are often linked to one or more locally-based tools or programs to create leverage and ensure that financing gaps are filled to complete a project but also to provide for its financial sustainability going forward. This may, for example, involve the local municipality creating a TIF (Tax Increment Financing) District (also known as a Louisiana Economic Development District), a BID (Business Improvement District) or both as a strategy to capture tax revenues which can be specifically dedicated to the provision of targeted services within the geographically designed districts, the servicing and retirement of bonded indebtedness for capital improvements, the funding of special events and a wide range of other purposes.

In addition to TIF's and BID's, local municipalities may also create "Community Development Districts" (CDD's). The State Legislature

authorized the creation of these districts in 2001 (LAR.S.9039.11 et.seq.) as a method to manage and finance basic infrastructure projects for community development through the levy and collection of special assessments. CDD's have a wide range of powers and authority to carry out targeted improvements and infrastructure additions that can enhance a community's quality of life and thus its attractiveness as a place to live, work and conduct business. CDD's, for example, have the power to borrow money, issued bonds and other financial instruments to raise capital; to levy special assessments as may be authorized; to charge, collect and enforce fees and other user charges; and to exercise the power of expropriation in accordance with state statute and with the approval of the governing body of the parish that enacted the ordinance establishing the district.

Local municipalities such as Sunset may also use the forgiving or deferral of fee or tax collections as a means of incentivizing a business location decision. In most small communities fees and local property taxes are typically low and thus cumulatively do not amount to much of an incentive. However, their abatement or deferral for a five to ten year period might provide just the nudge a business needs to finalize its location decision. Property tax abatements and restoration tax abatement must be authorized by the governing authority of the local jurisdiction and approved by the State Bond Commission. Both are usually for an initial five year period with the option to extend for up to another five years. The tax abatement can apply to the entire assessed value of the asset (usually real property), while the restoration abatement applies to the value increment represented by the owner's out-of-pocket capital improvement expenditures. The latter is particularly useful to execute rehabilitation and redevelopment projects focused on eradicating blight and revitalizing residential neighborhoods and commercial business districts.

Use of such tax forgiveness incentives should be used judiciously and carefully weighed against local revenue and budget impacts on the municipality and their real and verifiable benefits with respect to jobs created or retained and net new private investment brought to the community. Rarely should tax abatements be offered on the front end of a potential project. They should generally be reserved for later in the negotiations process to secure an agreement to move forward. Tax savings are only one of many factors considered and they are usually in the second tier of the prospective business' wish list. Forgiving taxes for one very often has the effect of shifting the burden to another or creating a deferred tax obligation (IOU) to be paid by a future generation of leaders and tax paying citizens. It is good to consider generational equity when these and many other incentives are used to accomplish short term strategic economic development objectives.

It is also important to consider the size, scale and scope of a project when using certain tools and incentives since many are accompanied by a myriad of rules, regulations and compliance and reporting requirements. These inevitably require more management and staff time and may well call for retaining specialized accounting or legal assistance. In either case there is a real cost to the organization using a program to receive benefits and incentives. It should also be noted that in the event of non-compliance, the incentive granting entity or jurisdiction may have the right and legal ability to "clawback" what it has given away as part of its effort to attract or retain business. This too is a potentially costly process (i.e. litigation, etc.) and something that attracts unfavorable press coverage.