

# POLICY AND CODE AUDIT REPORT

East Baton Rouge Parish and the City of Baton Rouge

**Final**

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By:

The Smart Growth Leadership Team:

Susan Weaver  
Jessica Cogan  
Deepak Bahl  
Chris Williamson

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## Executive Summary

The Smart Growth Leadership Institute (SGLI) and the University of Southern California (USC) funded by a grant from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are providing technical assistance to communities that have made a commitment to smart growth but are struggling with implementation, building support, identifying the most problematic policies, and other issues that typically accompany a major change in development practice. Baton Rouge was selected as one of nine candidate communities in the nation after an extensive application and review process. The project team composed of Jessica Cogan (SGLI), Susan Weaver (USC), Deepak Bahl (USC), and Chris Williamson (USC) reviewed both the policies and zoning codes of Baton Rouge and conducted an audit of the Unified Development Code to identify inconsistencies between smart growth policies and implementing codes. In March of 2004, the project team visited Baton Rouge, held meetings with stakeholders including developers, local political leaders, and planning staff, and presented preliminary findings to the Smart Growth Task Force. In this report, we present analysis, findings, and proposed recommendations based on our site visit, interviews, and feedback from the stakeholders and planning staff.

The following highlights our recommendations, listed under the appropriate smart growth principle:

### Principle 1: Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices

- The SGLI Team recommends that the Planning Commission only approve those subdivisions that have a grid street pattern or a pattern that creates multiple connections to adjacent areas, except in those situations where connectivity is physically impossible. The transportation network needs to be thought of as a web, accommodating many modes and various routes.
- Adopt a more differentiated street hierarchy using design to help control the volume and speed of traffic and to accommodate other modes of transportation. These street standards should be established to accommodate bicycle lanes throughout the parish and bus facilities (lanes and stops) along collectors.

### Principle 2: Mix Land Uses

- Build on the success of the Downtown Plan, *Plan Baton Rouge*. There is little doubt that this effort was a shining example of what could happen when the right people begin to consider creative solutions.
- We suggest establishing a Traditional Neighborhood overlay zone (or zones) to provide opportunities for the mixed-use and higher density development that best embodies smart growth principles. Such zones could be used to judiciously and incrementally allow higher density mixed-use development, and to provide a way

to transition automobile-oriented neighborhoods into smart-growth-friendlier ones as they age.

### Principle 3: Create a Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices

- We recommend revising the residential zones so that a range of housing types may be built within a single zone. Consider using average densities rather than restrictions on lot size to allow a limited number of smaller lots, zero lot line homes and townhouses in lower density residential zones to give older residents options to stay in their neighborhoods when they no longer need nor are able to afford or care for larger properties. Similarly, in zones where medium to high density is desired, allow various configurations of multi-family dwellings to be intermixed, e.g. zero lot line complexes, townhouses, and apartments. We recommend reconsidering the size limitations placed on garage apartments in single family residential zones. At a minimum such units should be sized to comfortably accommodate two adult residents.
- The balance between jobs and housing should be an explicit goal if Baton Rouge is serious about addressing traffic congestion. Mitigating traffic need not only be resolved through traditional transportation solutions. Land use patterns directly affect travel distances. The predominant land use patterns of jobs, homes, schools, and shops segregated over long distances exacerbates traffic congestion. In fact, housing situated in close proximity to job centers can reduce both the distance people must travel and the time spent doing it, which has the ancillary effect of improving quality of life.

### Principle 4: Create Walkable Neighborhoods

- To begin building a more walkable community, we strongly recommend that the street connectivity required by the UDC be required in all new development; that is to say no further waivers should be granted by the Planning Commission or Metro Council.
- Consider adopting a more differentiated street hierarchy. Street design can be used to effectively control vehicle speed and to enhance or encourage cycling and pedestrian activity even while providing an interconnected network or grid.
- Since long blocks are not conducive to walking, consider lowering the maximum block length (e.g. 500') in new development or setting a block perimeter maximum (e.g. 1600').
- Require crosswalks at all intersections.
- While there are wonderful old neighborhoods with sidewalks and significant tree canopies, for the most part, sidewalks throughout Baton Rouge are too narrow or do not connect to places people want to travel.

Principle 5: Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration

- We recommend that a grassroots organization be formed to take the case for smart growth to the community. Their first task should be to make the issues resonate within the community by focusing on the public's key concerns.
- We believe increased collaboration between the Department of Public Works and the Planning Department could result in a smarter development pattern and a more effective government.
- We suggest using fiscal impact studies to illustrate the benefits of smart growth development patterns.

Principle 6: Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place

- The older residential areas of BR have a landscape of tree-lined boulevards and beautiful neighborhoods that contribute to a distinctive character, but you need to build upon that character. We recommend the adoption of design standards. Well-designed neighborhoods attract shoppers, which attract retailers, which attract residents and a self-reinforcing vitality is set in motion.
- In order to strengthen historic district preservation efforts in Baton Rouge, we recommend that ways be explored to facilitate both the construction of new buildings and the adaptive reuse and reconstruction of old buildings to preserve the historic patterns in the downtown areas.

Principle 7: Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective

- Developers are looking for certainty and predictability, and the government can provide this at no cost by simply doing a better job at coordinating services and setting consistent policies. We recommend forming a group that is tasked with improving the entitlement and permitting process for projects that meet smart growth goals (for example, downtown housing projects) by identifying inconsistent policies and practices, and reconciling those differences.
- The most effective way to encourage the incorporation of smart growth principles in new development is to permit them 'by right,' that is without having to go through a conditional use permitting process. Along with codifying smart growth principles, we recommend devising a streamlined review process for affordable housing, brownfields, and adaptive reuse projects. Incentive programs should be devised to direct development where it should occur, that is where infrastructure exists and is underutilized or where it should logically be extended.

Principle 8: Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas

- Development should avoid natural areas and working lands. While open space requirements and rural/agricultural preservation zoning are good, the Team is concerned that the Plan does not indicate that there are development regulations offering protection to natural resource areas.

Principle 9: Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities

- Baton Rouge needs to develop a very real and concrete set of incentives to encourage infill and redevelopment. These incentives should be broadly publicized, perhaps by developing a smart growth incentives toolkit that can be both a brochure and a website.
- We recommend that an incentive package comprising a density bonus program and differential impact fee (and possibly fast-track permitting) be devised to encourage developers to build in existing communities rather than in the urban fringe.

Principle 10: Take Advantage of Compact Building Design and Efficient Infrastructure Design

- A clear development and redevelopment policy is needed. Baton Rouge can do a lot more to encourage compact development patterns. It seems very clear that new development is not achieving historic density patterns and new mixed-use development is scarce.
- We strongly suggest that higher density single-family residential development be accommodated. Traditional Neighborhood overlay zones (TNOs) and density bonuses could be used to increase the allowable densities in residential zones.

## Introduction

### Background

Smart Growth Leadership Institute, a project of Smart Growth America, was created by former Maryland Governor Parris N. Glendening to help state and local elected, civic and business leaders design and implement effective smart growth strategies. In September 2003, the SGLI, working under a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), issued an invitation to communities across the nation to apply for technical assistance in incorporating the concept of Smart Growth into their policy and implementation documents, building community support, identifying the most problematic policies, and other issues that typically accompany a major change in development practice. The ultimate goal of the project is to build on the experience gained in working with selected communities to develop a Smart Growth Toolkit that other communities can use to independently gauge how effectively they are facilitating smart growth. The Technical Assistance program provides assistance to communities that have made a commitment to smart growth but are grappling with the mechanics of moving from policy to practice. The team includes a group of experts from the University of Southern California and the University of Colorado.

The goal of the Technical Assistance program is to help communities identify and eliminate obstacles to smart growth by providing guidance in areas such as:

- ▶ Assessing codes and zoning ordinances to identify inconsistencies between "Smart Growth" policies and implementing codes that may still contain obsolete standards.
- ▶ Examining development approval processes to identify points in the process where redundant reviews can be eliminated, where timeframes can be shortened or where activities might be permitted to proceed concurrently.
- ▶ Identifying "smart sites" or potential locations for Smart Growth projects.
- ▶ Creating design standards and review protocol that will help achieve Smart Growth objectives and deal with prospective neighborhood opposition.

Our work with the selected communities is intended to inform the development of the "Smart Growth Implementation Kit." When fully developed, this kit will allow other communities around the nation to independently gauge whether their current policy and regulatory frameworks, their approval and review processes, and design standards encourage and support smart growth.



## Smart Growth Leadership Institute

In late 2003, SGLI selected nine communities, from more than 100 applicants, to receive implementation assistance. In addition to Baton Rouge, the communities selected were Anchorage, Alaska; Lawrence, Kansas; Lawrence, Massachusetts; Lithonia, De Kalb County, Georgia; Mount Joy Borough, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania; Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee; Orange County, Florida; and Richmond, California.

In early 2004, the Smart Growth Leadership Institute (SGLI) and Plan Baton Rouge agreed to work collaboratively on a review and audit of the 1992 Baton Rouge Horizon Plan and the Unified Development Code. This document represents SGLI's final report to Plan Baton Rouge by providing an assessment of the state of smart growth in Baton Rouge and recommendations on how policies and processes might be changed and improved.

### **Smart Growth Defined**

Smart Growth is defined by 10 principles:

- Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices
- Mix Land Uses
- Create Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices
- Create Walkable Neighborhoods
- Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration
- Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place
- Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective
- Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas
- Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities
- Take Advantage of Compact Building Design and Efficient Infrastructure Design

While this list of goals is broad, the core principals focus on the use of land: consumption, direction, density, form, and use. Smart growth is often understood as the opposite of sprawl, which is characterized as the predominant form of American land use. Where sprawl treats land as an unlimited commodity, smart growth sees land as a limited resource. Where sprawl develops at low density on raw land at the urban fringe (a pattern largely underwritten by government policy and practice), smart growth first directs growth to areas within the existing urban footprint (infill and redevelopment) and often seeks to permanently maintain open space at the urban edge. Sprawl develops at relatively low density with leap-frog development and separated land uses while smart growth emphasizes higher density with interconnected, compact, contiguous, and mixed-use development.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Jerry Weitz and Leora Waldner, "Smart Growth Audits." APA Planning Advisory Service Report No. 512 (November 2002), p. 2.

Perhaps a harbinger for Baton Rouge, beginning in the 1960's, new subdivisions began using more looping and branching designs with cul-de-sacs, T-intersections, and limited entry points.<sup>2</sup> While the intent was to slow traffic, eliminate through traffic, increase pedestrian safety, and create more identifiable communities, because they reduced connectivity between areas, the effect of these changes was perverse. They increased the number and length of automobile trips, decreased pedestrian options and safety, degraded air quality and public health, and increased infrastructure construction and maintenance costs. What were once considered “best practices” and widely promoted by the planning profession are now understood as sprawl inducing. The grid-based system, which was demonized as unsafe for children and monotonous, is now recognized as necessary for building socially cohesive, pedestrian-friendly communities.

Despite this recognition, the “sprawling” neighborhood is still a standard product of planning in most American cities. Local plans and codes often still remain in place to strictly segregate land uses even in those communities that have adopted smart growth goals and principles. This persistent gap between the intent to pursue smart growth and the ability to develop ‘smartly’ under the existing zoning codes and subdivision ordinances prompted the EPA to fund this project.

## **The Audit Process**

### **Audit Background and Documents Reviewed**

In 2001, Mayor-President Bobby Simpson established a Growth and Development Task Force, with two subcommittees – Application Review Process and Smart Growth, to review planning efforts through the City-Parish. The Application Review Process subcommittee completed its task by streamlining the application process for development.

The Mayor’s Smart Growth Task Force is the local sponsor of this audit process and hosted a three day site visit in March 2004 by the SGLI audit team: Jessica Cogan Millman, Susan Weaver and Chris Williamson.

To conduct the audit, the team used the Objectives from the 1992 Baton Rouge Horizon Plan (Plan), viewing them essentially as policies. The UDC, which combines earlier land development regulations and was adopted in 1996, was also reviewed.

The Horizon Plan has its roots in the 1973 formation of the Federation of Greater Baton Rouge Civic Associations (Federation). As in many other cities at the time, local residents felt a sense of powerlessness with respect to their relationship to city hall and the real estate development sector of 30 years ago. The impetus to require a parish-wide comprehensive plan was somewhat of a bottoms-up event rather than a top-down

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<sup>2</sup> Porterfield, G. and Hall, K. [A Concise Guide to Community Planning](#). (1995) New York: McGraw-Hill, p. 126.

planning mandate that is found in other states such as California and Florida<sup>3</sup>. The parish Plan of Government (similar to a charter) was amended by the voters in 1988 to require a comprehensive plan and consistency by most city and parish plans and programs. The Horizon Plan was completed in 1992 and has been regularly updated. Today, there is some concern that the UDC is not quite in alignment with the Horizon Plan and that the plan's policies may need some redirecting towards Smart Growth policies in order to avoid too much sprawl development and its associated costs.

### **Purpose of the Audits**

The goal of the project is not to state that Baton Rouge's planning and development policies are "wrong" or "right" with respect to municipal growth — the judgment about how to grow can only be made by the residents and their elected officials. Instead, these audits establish what the City-Parish has 'on the books' in relation to the commonly accepted principles of smart growth listed above.

The findings and conclusions that follow are those of the authors and are based on our review of the documents listed above and the site visit and meetings with local residents and officials that took place during the site visit in March 2004.

Our detailed findings are based only on the sources listed above. Since we were not able to review all of the planning documents that may apply and since our knowledge of the regional context is also limited, our comments are offered as a constructive and objective critique of how the City-Parish might speed implementation of the smart growth goals already incorporated into the Horizon Plan.

The report assumes the reader is familiar with the general geography of the city and parish and its local development, both historic and recent. The report also assumes the reader has a basic understanding of the planning and development process, the 1992 Horizon Plan, and the City-Parish's Unified Development Code.

## **The Audit**

Appendix I illustrates the policy and code audit process in a flow chart format. The full audit is a 14-step process that is the combination of the policy audit and the code audit. Appendix II contains the Policy and Code Audit for Baton Rouge.

### **Step 1: Smart Growth National Policy Template**

Step 1 of the policy audit comprised the development of a comprehensive list of "best practices" or widely accepted smart growth policies, focusing primarily on land use and

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<sup>3</sup> Based on a speech given by Elliot Atkinson, Jr. to the 2001 National APA conference entitled "A Comprehensive Land Use Plan: Its Grass Roots Creation, Implementation, and Saving." Pg. 4.

related topics. We culled 61 Smart Growth Policies from a variety of APA documents and from the publications of Smart Growth America.<sup>4</sup> These policies can be found in Appendix II and are called the Smart Growth Template. The policies are organized under the 10 smart growth principles, mentioned on page 2 of this report.

These 10 smart growth principles serve six goals:

**Neighborhood livability:** The central goal of any smart growth plan is the quality of the neighborhoods where we live. They should be safe, convenient, attractive, and affordable. Sprawl development too often forces trade-offs between these goals. Some neighborhoods are safe but not convenient. Others are convenient but not affordable. Too many affordable neighborhoods are not safe. Careful planning can help bring all these elements together.

**Better access, less traffic:** One of the major downfalls of sprawl is traffic. By putting jobs, homes and other destinations far apart and requiring a car for every trip, sprawl makes completing everyday tasks an onerous chore. Smart growth's emphasis on mixing land uses, clustering development, and providing multiple transportation choices helps us link trips more efficiently, manage congestion, pollute less and save energy. Those who want to drive can, but people who would rather not drive everywhere or don't own a car have other choices.

**Thriving cities, suburbs, and towns:** Smart growth puts the needs of existing communities first. By guiding development to already built-up areas and in places where the local government has already made significant infrastructure investments, new investments can be made in transportation, schools, libraries and other public services in the communities where people live today. This is especially important for neighborhoods that have inadequate public services and low levels of private investment. It is also critical for preserving what makes so many places special—attractive buildings, historic districts and cultural landmarks.

**Shared benefits:** Sprawl leaves too many people behind. Divisions by income and race have allowed some areas to prosper while others languish. As basic needs such as jobs, education and health care become less plentiful in some communities, residents have diminishing opportunities to participate in their regional economy. Smart growth enables all residents to be beneficiaries of prosperity.

**Lower costs, lower taxes:** Sprawl costs money. Opening up green space to new development means that the cost of new schools, roads, sewer lines, and water supplies

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<sup>4</sup> A policy is defined as here as an active verb statement that implements one or more aspects of a more abstract goal or vision, but not so specific as to be cast as part of an annual department level work plan or capital improvement program. For example, a goal or vision might be to “have sustainable economic development.” This is too broad to be a policy. At the other extreme, a statement like “create and market tax incentives to attract one Fortune 500 headquarters in the next 10 years” is too specific; it reads more like an objective of a specific department and staff in a fixed time frame (an action item in the Horizon Plan format). In between these two statements would be a policy statement such as “Develop programs to expand the range and type of employers.”

will be borne by residents throughout metro areas. Sprawl also means families have to own more cars and drive them further. This has made transportation the second highest category of household spending, just behind shelter. Smart growth helps on both fronts. Taking advantage of existing infrastructure keeps taxes down. And where convenient transportation choices enable families to rely less on driving, there's more money left over for other things, like buying a home or saving for college.

**Keeping Open Space Open:** By focusing development in already built-up areas, smart growth preserves rapidly vanishing natural treasures. From forests and farms to wetlands and wildlife, smart growth lets us pass on to our children the landscapes we love. Compact development patterns allow communities to provide more parks that are conveniently located and bring recreation within reach of more people. Also, protecting natural resources will provide more healthful air and cleaner drinking water.

## **Step 2: Baton Rouge Local Profile**

Step 2 of the Policy Audit required that the team identify smart growth policies from the Horizon Plan. The team found the Plan's objectives to be most similar to the template policies.

There are about 250 objectives (depending on how many are counted as duplicates) under the following 16 headings that correspond to smart growth related sections of the Horizon Plan:<sup>5</sup>

1. Land Use - Urban Development
2. Land Use - Economic Development
3. Wastewater Objective and Policies
4. Solid Waste Objectives and Policies
5. Drainage Objectives and Policies
6. Air Quality
7. Water Quality
8. Land Resources
9. Sensory/Aesthetics
10. Preservation of Rare and Endangered Plants and Wildlife
11. Recreation and Open Space
12. Housing
13. Public Services
14. Public Buildings
15. Health and Human Services
16. Transportation

For purpose of the audit, we focused primarily on Land Use, Housing, and Transportation objectives with some review of Public Buildings, Public Services, Wastewater, Conservation and Environmental Resources, and Recreation and Open Space objectives.

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<sup>5</sup> The 16 sections are grouped into seven elements: 1) Land Use; 2) Transportation; 3) Wastewater, Solid Waste and Drainage; 4) Conservation and Environmental Resources; 5) Recreation and Open Space; 6) Housing; and 7) Public Services, Public Buildings, Health and Human Services.

### **Step 3: Outcome of the Horizon Plan Policy and Smart Growth Policy Template Match Process**

The matching of Baton Rouge Horizon Plan objectives and our national level Smart Growth Policy Template is admittedly a somewhat subjective process based more on the intent of the statements rather than on the actual wording itself. We define a ‘good match’ as intent and language that are about 75% similar. Or, said another way, about 3 out of 4 persons would agree that the two statements are essentially the same. A partial match ranges from 25% to 75% agreement. A non-match may have some similarity in topics, but is below 25% in overall agreement of intent.

Appendix II displays the template elements included under each smart growth principle. The Horizon Plan matches are shown in the adjacent column. Good matches are highlighted in green, while partial matches are shaded yellow. The third column indicates how the template elements are addressed by the UDC. Those which are not mentioned in the UDC are highlighted in aqua.

Discussion of the findings for the policy match is presented below under the 10 smart growth principles.

#### Principle 1: Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices

##### *Findings*

The Horizon Plan contains policies that intend to: link land use and transportation choices at the local and regional levels; encourage the formation of vanpools and carpools; provide transportation choices to densely populated areas as well as major employment centers; and change roadway design standards to support transit and non-automotive modes. While it is commendable that these policies are included in the plan, our site visit tour and meetings indicate that in fact improvements are needed to better link land use and transportation policy decision-making. Baton Rouge does not presently have a balanced transportation system. More attention should be paid to non-auto modes of transportation.

Policies encouraging transit-oriented and transit friendly developments, public transit use by integrating multimodal use, connectivity, and location of new development, especially government buildings, in areas supported by a balanced transportation network are addressed to some degree through the Horizon Plan. It is our perception that the lack of strong policies in this area is mostly due to the lack of a comprehensive public transit/transportation system in Baton Rouge.

No matches were found for the following template policies:

- Offer Transit Oriented Development promoting incentives such as down payment assistance, reduced transit passes, and location efficient mortgages.

- Grant density bonuses in transit or mixed use districts.<sup>6</sup>
- Address jobs and housing balance.
- Plan and/or maintain high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes along the main commute corridors of Interstate Routes and freeways.

### *Recommendations*

It is not realistic to recommend the building of a comprehensive transit system; however, a land use pattern that can accommodate pedestrians and other non-motorized modes is entirely appropriate. In fact, Baton Rouge should encourage a development pattern that can easily accommodate transit in future years. Being transit ready should be a goal for Baton Rouge.

A key to pedestrian and transit friendly development is connectivity. The SGLI Team recommends that the Planning Commission only approve those subdivisions that have a grid street pattern or a pattern that creates multiple connections to adjacent areas, except in those situations where connectivity is physically impossible. To continue to approve new development with limited access only encourages traffic congestion on arterials and makes non-automotive trips longer and less pleasant. The transportation network needs to be thought of as a web, accommodating many modes and various routes. Further, the use of small area modeling could be a very effective tool to encourage a grid street pattern, especially if linked to fiscal impact studies. Fiscal impact studies, conducted by urban economists, examine the costs associated with road construction and maintenance in relation to the taxes generated by anticipated development patterns. Once the cost-benefit ratios associated with various transportation networks are identified, citizens and their elected officials can make informed decisions. In general, such studies have shown that sprawling patterns are inefficient and that taxpayer dollars used to improve the transportation network are ineffective if new development continues to overly rely on the arterials.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, the balance between jobs and housing should be an explicit goal if Baton Rouge is serious about addressing traffic congestion. Mitigating traffic need not only be accomplished through traditional transportation solutions. Land use patterns directly affect travel distances. The predominant land use patterns of jobs, homes, schools, and shops segregated over long distances exacerbates traffic congestion. In fact, housing situated in close proximity to job centers can reduce both the distance people must travel and the time spent doing it, which has the ancillary effect of improving quality of life.

Baton Rouge should not only encourage the location of job centers in areas proximate to housing but should also consider developing programs that entice people to live near their

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<sup>6</sup> The City of Vancouver, WA, offers density bonuses and relief from transportation impact fees for projects in its transit oriented district. For details see Section 20.550.010 of the Vancouver Municipal Code accessible at <http://www.ci.vancouver.wa.us/vmc/default.shtm>.

<sup>7</sup> For an excellent discussion about the fiscal consequences of sprawl see *Investing in a Better Future: A Review of the Fiscal and Competitive Advantages of Smarter Growth Development Patterns* by Mark Muro and Rob Puentes (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institute Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, March 2004).



work. The Maryland “Live Near Your Work” Program is a great example. Through this program, the State contributed \$1,000, the employer contributed \$1,000, and the local government contributed \$1,000 to be used for a down payment or closing costs associated with the purchase of a home near the employee’s office. This is often incentive enough for people interested in entering the home ownership market as well as for those people interested in making a housing location change.

### Principle 2: Mix Land Uses

#### *Findings*

Baton Rouge should be proud of their efforts to revitalize downtown. New projects that enhance downtown’s cultural amenities and multifamily housing options are examples of the City’s commitment to bringing downtown back. The Horizon Plan also does much to encourage the mixing of uses at the building, site and neighborhood levels. But there is little support for these policies in the Unified Development Code. In practice, land use designations are so narrowly defined that the resulting zoning outside the downtown core looks very much like spot zoning, and home/office use in residential areas is severely restricted.

#### *Recommendations*

Build on the success of the Downtown Plan, *Plan Baton Rouge*. There is little doubt that this effort was a shining example of what could happen when the right people begin to consider creative solutions.

The Planning Department should engage in a process to map areas where new development should be mixed use, rather than separate and distinct uses. In addition to mixing uses on the site scale and neighborhood scale, Baton Rouge should consider expanding and emphasizing a vertical mix of uses within buildings. This type of development should be encouraged beyond downtown and particularly in growth centers.

### Principle 3: Create Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices

#### *Findings*

Partial matches can be found in the following policy areas: provide for a wide range of housing types; meet housing needs for all income groups; and meet or exceed the regional fairshare housing allocation for both market rate and affordable housing. While the Horizon Plan recognizes the importance of affordable housing, there does not appear to be a comprehensive strategy to provide affordable housing options near job centers and most new residential subdivisions offer housing in very narrow range of prices so that residents are generally of the same income level.

The Horizon Plan does not mention accessory housing units; live/work units; minimum lot sizes (although this can be found in the UDC); flexibility in housing sizes (although this can be found in the UDC); mixed income housing developments; and traditional neighborhood residential patterns to accommodate multiple housing types.

*Recommendations*

The SGLI Team encourages Baton Rouge to better integrate jobs and housing by mixing land uses within districts. We also recommend that a variety of housing types and sizes be allowed within zoning districts so that people can find suitable, affordable housing close to their work.

Principle 4: Create Walkable Neighborhoods

*Findings*

The Horizon Plan does much to establish a trail system or other non-motorized public access to amenities. There are at least six policy statements contained in the Transportation, Land Use and Recreation and Open Space chapters of the Plan. Partial matches can be found for requiring sidewalks on both sides of the street and the connection of sidewalks to amenities such as parks and open space. But for all this, outside the downtown core Baton Rouge is not a very walkable place – the sidewalks are narrow, the blocks are long, cul de sacs are common, crosswalks are infrequently provided.

*Recommendations*

While there are wonderful old neighborhoods with sidewalks and significant tree canopies, for the most part, sidewalks throughout Baton Rouge are too narrow or do not connect to places people want to travel. During our tour through a new residential development, we saw a family walking on a sidewalk but they were forced to walk single file, or one person walked on the grass in order to proceed side by side. UDC requirements should be strengthened and enforced to support the policies contained in the Horizon Plan. Specific recommendations on improving walkability are made below in the section which reviews the UDC (page 18).

Principle 5: Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration

*Findings*

The Horizon Plan contains many policies that encourage stakeholder participation, but it falls short on truly strengthening state, metro, and regional institutions to facilitate multi-jurisdictional decision-making and problem solving. We did not see evidence that Baton Rouge had incentives for the adoption of comprehensive plans and Capital Improvement Plans prior to the imposition of local land use regulations and controls.

*Recommendations*

Baton Rouge is not unique with respect to interagency cooperation. Every jurisdiction we visited could benefit from enhanced coordination and collaboration at all governmental levels. On the local level, we believe, increased collaboration between the Department of Public Works and the Planning Department could result in a smarter development pattern and a more effective government.

Principle 6: Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place

*Findings*

The Horizon Plan excels in this area. In fact, as we undertook this audit, we realized that our policy template was lacking in a few areas. Consequently, we decided to include two Baton Rouge objectives in our policy template: 1) Public and private development should improve the character of existing neighborhoods, avoiding or removing factors that cause instability or create barriers, and enhancing the sense of neighborhood identity; and 2) Neighborhoods should include places for interaction among residents, such as parks, community centers, schools, commercial areas, churches and gathering places.

*Recommendations*

Many areas of Baton Rouge exude the charming, distinctive character of great Southern cities. The older residential areas of BR are lined with moss draped trees and distinctly Southern architectural styles. But as a consequence of recent development patterns, Baton Rouge's character is at a neighborhood scale, not at a community scale. During our visit we heard concerns that new commercial development, in particular, was not always in keeping with the image Baton Rouge wishes to maintain. While commercial developers will frequently argue that the imposition of design standards will chill the market, and cause them to build elsewhere, many communities are finding the opposite to be true. Well-designed commercial districts attract shoppers, which attract retailers, and a self-reinforcing vitality is set in motion. Developers' concerns about the added time costs of design review can be allayed by ensuring the approval process is well defined and consistently applied. A decade ago, the city of Santa Barbara, California, applied some of the most stringent design standards in the country to new development in its then declining downtown district and required developers to accommodate community amenities in their plans. State Street now is a highly desirable and profitable retail location, packed with shoppers year round. Cities often get what they are bold enough to demand. The Team recommends continuing efforts to improve and enhance the unique identity of Baton Rouge.

Principle 7: Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective

*Findings*

The Team looked for policies that encourage the consistency among local government regulations, local actions and the comprehensive plan. The Horizon Plan does contain a policy that promotes economic development through the provision of capital improvements and public services but this is only a small portion of what we would like to see in the Plan.

*Recommendations*

Developers are looking for certainty and predictability, and the government can provide this at no cost by simply doing a better job at coordinating services and setting consistent policies. We recommend forming a group that is tasked with improving the entitlement and permitting process for projects that meet smart growth goals (for example, downtown

housing projects) by identifying inconsistent policies and practices, and reconciling those differences.

Principle 8: Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas

*Findings*

The Horizon Plan contains policies that establish open space and farmland protection programs. Open space requirements, rural/agricultural preservation zoning are all good. The Team is concerned that the Plan does not indicate that there are development regulations offering protection to natural resource areas.

*Recommendations*

If development regulations do not exist, they should be drafted. The Pinelands (NJ), Montgomery County (MD), and Metro Seattle-King County (WA) Transfer of Development Rights programs stand as excellent examples of agricultural lands, natural resource and open space preservation programs.<sup>8</sup>

Principle 9: Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities

*Findings*

The Horizon Plan encourages infill by providing infill and redevelopment incentives and also encourages the use of existing infrastructure over building new infrastructure. These policies look great on paper, but it is unclear to what extent incentives are being provided and if the policy of encouraging the use of existing infrastructure is being followed by Parish agencies. A partial match was found for regulations that promote greyfields redevelopment for housing and/or mixed use.

Initially, the Horizon Plan did not address “brownfields.” There is now a program in place to promote redevelopment of these areas. Also, the City- Parish provides an economic development incentive through a tax relief program known as the Enterprise Zone Program.

However, sprawl generating subsidies (for example, funds for suburban highway and road construction and water and sewer facilities) are not discouraged and regional tax-based sharing approaches are not supported

*Recommendations*

Baton Rouge needs to develop a very real and concrete set of incentives to encourage infill and redevelopment. These incentives should be broadly publicized, perhaps by

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<sup>8</sup> Detailed descriptions of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) and Density Transfer Charges (TDCs) are given in Beyond Takings and Givings by R. Pruetz (Marina Del Rey, CA: Arje Press, 2003). See also *TDRs and Other Market-Based Land Mechanisms: How They Work and Their Role in Shaping Metropolitan Growth* by William Fulton et al (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution Center on Urban and Metropolitan Policy, June 2004) available in PDF at [http://www.brookings.org/dybdocroot/urban/pubs/20040629\\_fulton.pdf](http://www.brookings.org/dybdocroot/urban/pubs/20040629_fulton.pdf).

developing a smart growth incentives toolkit that can be both a brochure and a website.

Principle 10: Take Advantage of Compact Building Design and Efficient Infrastructure Design

*Findings*

The Horizon Plan does address the desire to design infrastructure to be compatible with land use goals. The Plan also contains one policy that encourages shared parking. There are a number of policies that promote the adaptive reuse of buildings.

Attention is also given to ensuring that existing neighborhood intensity is preserved and intensity provided in new development.

*Recommendations*

Baton Rouge can do a lot more to encourage compact development patterns. It seems very clear that new development is not achieving historic density patterns and new mixed use development is scarce. A clear development and redevelopment policy is needed. This policy can also encourage the continued revitalization of downtown Baton Rouge.

#### **Step 4: Smart Growth Code Template**

The Smart Growth Code Template comprises the elements most commonly found in smart growth-friendly codes and ordinances. They focus primarily on land use and transportation. The list was compiled from a survey of model codes from various organizations<sup>9</sup> and adopted 'smart growth' codes of communities around the country.

#### **Step 5: Review of Unified Development Code (UDC)**

The Smart Growth Code Template was used to conduct the review of the UDC. Specifically we were looking both for those codes that support and those that hinder realizing the policies adopted in the Horizon Plan.

#### **Step 6: Outcome of Smart Growth National Template to Unified Development Code Match Process**

The table in Appendix III depicts the code audit results in tabular form. As with the policy audit, the detailed code audit findings are organized by the 10 smart growth principles.

##### Principle 1: Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices

###### *Findings*

The UDC does not address the provision of transportation alternatives.

###### *Recommendations*

Traffic congestion and air quality concerns really require the City-Parish not only to accommodate but encourage a wider range of transportation modes.

The first step in achieving this is to adopt a more differentiated street hierarchy using design to help control the volume and speed of traffic and to accommodate other modes of transportation. These street standards should be established to accommodate bicycle lanes throughout the parish and bus facilities (lanes and stops) along collectors. A graphic example of one model hierarchy is provided as an appendix to this report.

Since the availability of bicycle parking facilities (both short-term and secured), locker rooms for use by cyclists, runner, or walkers, sheltered bus stops, and park-and-ride facilities increase the use of alternative transportation modes and reduce reliance on single-occupant cars, developers of commercial and industrial properties should be encouraged to provide these amenities. Reductions in on-site parking requirements should be granted in consideration, because the limited availability of parking in turn reinforces the incentive for using these alternate modes.

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<sup>9</sup> The American Planning Association, the Local Government Commission, the Institute of Transportation Engineers, and Smart Growth America.

In all new residential development, developers should be required to provide sidewalks, bicycle lanes and transit stops (as appropriate). To reinforce these efforts to encourage alternate mode use, transit service providers accommodate bicycles on their vehicles to alleviate long-distance connectivity issues.

Increasing the allowable densities in residential areas will help support an expanded transit system. Though we heard that currently transit has little support in Baton Rouge, it is important that the City/Parish start to build for the future by reserving room in public rights-of-way for transit lanes on City/Parish and State routes. Attitudes change, and as private vehicle use becomes more expensive or less convenient, transit will become more attractive. As noted above, intermodal connectivity is crucial to increased use of alternatives to the single-occupant automobile.

### Principle 2: Mix Land Uses

#### *Findings*

Land uses are well integrated in most commercial zones, and a mix of uses is allowed in Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) and Small Planned Unit Developments (SPUDs). Within the residential zones, however, uses are strictly segregated, with separate zones established for various types of housing (town houses, zero lot line homes, apartments), so that much of the city resembles a zoning patchwork quilt. Few conditional uses are allowed in residential zones. Home occupations are allowed, but no employees other than members of the resident family are allowed to work on site and no retail business is to be conducted on the premises.

#### *Recommendations*

Changes in technology have changed the nature of work since the adoption of use-segregated zoning patterns. Though there are still some uses that need to be separated from residential and commercial uses, by and large the type of work predominate in 21st century American cities can take place in close proximity to where we live and shop. Performance zoning, form based zoning or a hybrid of the two better suits today's knowledge-based economy than the strict use-segregation, which was devised when manufacturing --often noisy and noxious -- was the predominant activity.<sup>10</sup>

The new economic structure allows us to hearken to the patterns of older cities and town, ones that make it possible for people to walk or bike from home to shopping, services or work rather than having to drive. To begin to reestablish these vibrant and highly livable settings, we suggest adopting a two-pronged strategy to integrate various housing types and compatible commercial land uses into suburban residential areas. As noted above, for newly developing areas, we recommend that the residential zones be revised to allow a mix of housing types within neighborhoods.

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<sup>10</sup> A good example of a form based code is provided by the Columbia Pike Form Based Code adopted by Arlington, VA, in 2003. Information on this code can be found at <http://www.columbiapikepartnership.com/scripts/runisa.dll?m2.131816:gp:576375.8888:72080+L2/+E+109>.

For established neighborhoods, we suggest establishing a Traditional Neighborhood overlay zone (or zones) to provide opportunities for the mixed-use and higher density development that best embodies smart growth principles. Such zones could be used to judiciously and incrementally allow higher density mixed-use development, and to provide a way to transition automobile-oriented neighborhoods into smart-growth-friendlier ones as they age. Several such overlays could be adopted to reflect different density scenarios and various live-work options. We believe that these overlays are critical to developing a clear plan to reintegrate mixed development and overcome the patchiness of existing land use. In addition, these overlays would provide developers with a combination of flexibility and certainty that will encourage creative approaches to rebuilding walkable neighborhoods.

### Principle 3: Create Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices

#### *Findings*

Residential zones are defined by the specific type of housing and density allowed:

#### Rural District Zones:

- RE/A 1 – Residential Estate/Agriculture One District, 1 du/ac.
- RE/A 2 – Residential Estate/Agriculture Two District, 1 du/ 2 ac.
- RE/A 3 – Residential Estate/ Agriculture Three District, 1 du/ 3 ac.

#### General Residential District Zones:

- A1 – Single Family Residential, 4.1 du/ ac
- A2 – Single Family Residential, 5.8 du/ac
- A2.1 – Zero Lot Line Residential District, 7.9 du/ac
- A2.5 – Town Homes District, 5.8 du/ac
- A2.6 – Zero Lot Line Residential District, 11.5 du/ac
- A2.7 – Single Family Residential District, single family detached dwellings at a maximum density of 7.3 du/ac.
- A3.1 – Limited Residential District, multi-family and institutional residential uses with a maximum density of 11.4 du/ac
- A3.2 – Limited Residential District, 17.5 du/ac
- A3.3 – Limited Residential District, 29.3 du/ac
- A4 -- General Residential District, 43.6 du/ac (no rezonings to this classification have been permitted since June 1999, but extant areas continue to carry this zoning)
- A5 -- Hi-Rise Apartment District, 87.1 du/ac (this classification is only available in Regional Growth Centers)

Additionally, minimum lot area and lot width are established for each general residential zone. Unless these zones are applied to very small areas or individual parcels, these existing regulations prevent mixing of housing types within neighborhoods. The lot size requirements tend to reduce the range of house sizes that will be built in any given neighborhood and this in turn limits the range of affordability.



Garage apartments are allowed in the A2 Single Family zone (limited to 500 square feet in size) and Neighborhood Commercial zone (no stated size limitation), and may provide some options for elders to age in place, or for those who need or want small rental residences.

We found there are no provisions for the inclusion of smaller, more affordable homes in new developments. Often called 'work force housing,' these homes are within the financial reach of low and moderate income families. Often these homes are developed in cooperation with a local non-profit or housing authority and offered to qualified buyers at lowered interest rates. Frequently conditions are placed on the resale of these homes to preserve their affordability in subsequent sales. Developers who include such affordable units in their developments are generally awarded density bonuses that allow them to build more market-rate units than would otherwise have been permitted.

We were pleased to find that residential uses are allowed in most commercial zones.

#### *Recommendations*

To increase the probability that people can remain in their neighborhoods as their housing needs change, we recommend revising the residential zones so that a range of housing types may be built within a single zone. Consider using average densities rather than restrictions on lot size to allow a limited number of smaller lots, zero lot line homes and townhouses in lower density residential zones to give older residents options to stay in their neighborhoods when they no longer need nor are able to afford or care for larger properties. With good design, these homes can blend seamlessly into single-family neighborhoods.

Similarly, in zones where medium to high density is desired, allow various configurations of multi-family dwellings to be intermixed, e.g. zero lot line complexes, townhouses, and apartments.

We recommend reconsidering the size limitations placed on garage apartments in single family residential zones. The limitation might be keyed to the size of the lot in question. At a minimum such units should be sized to comfortably accommodate two adult residents.

Relatively affordable market-rate units can be integrated into neighborhoods by allowing or requiring smaller lots to be interspersed throughout tracts. Requiring an affordable homes component in large developments helps ensure that workers at all income levels can find homes near their work, and that retirees with lowered or fixed-incomes can remain in the community as they age. Various incentive programs can be devised to encourage the inclusion of low- and moderate income housing. These range from density bonuses to tax relief.

Principle 4: Create Walkable Neighborhoods

*Findings*

The downtown and close-in areas of Baton Rouge are more conducive to walking than the outlying and newer ones, where longer blocks, cul-de-sacs, and curvilinear street patterns prevail. Though the UDC requires that principal existing streets be extended through new developments, waivers are routinely granted. As a result, street connectivity and walkability are gravely compromised.

We also found only a few street classifications – major, minor, boulevard and alleys are defined. Minimum widths are set without regard to the desired vehicle speeds. Streets in residential subdivisions are required to be 27 feet wide, while those in commercial and industrial areas are to be no less than 27 feet wide. No provisions are made for bicycle lanes or facilities.

Though subdivision block lengths are limited, the maximum is set at 1,500 feet, which is more than a quarter-mile. The UDC requires sidewalks on both sides of the street and a minimum width of 4 feet. Crosswalks are required near the center of blocks on which schools are located, but other than requiring a minimum width of 10 feet, no other standards are established, e.g. striping, pedestrian activated signals, or lighting. Rolled curbs and gutters appear to be allowed on minor streets. Scale and quality of street lighting are not addressed.

The careful consideration given to preserving and enhancing the ‘urban forest canopy’ and ‘vegetative cover’ within the City and Parish contributes to a pedestrian-friendly environment.

Off-street parking is required for all new development. In certain commercial and manufacturing zones, parking may be provided off-site, but must be within 800 feet of the new building. Property owners may jointly own and develop parking lots, under certain conditions. For buildings constructed prior to 1998, off-site parking spaces may be leased as long as they are within 800’ of the building and do not account for more than 50% of the required parking. Shared parking may be taken into account in establishing the number of spaces new development must provide, but on-street parking may not. Requirements are set by use as detailed in Section 17.8. Exceptions to the parking standards are granted for the C5 zone (Business District), where all uses except gaming are exempt. Parking lots may be situated between the street and the building front except when within 50 feet of single-family residential zoning, and in this case front yard parking is limited to 3 cars.

*Recommendations*

To begin to build a more walkable community, we strongly recommend that the street connectivity required by the UDC be required in all new development; that is to say no further waivers should be granted by the Planning Commission or Metro Council. The lack of connectivity forces all traffic to use a restricted number of routes. This not only

causes unnecessary traffic congestion problems, but contributes to elevated air pollution. It might also raise some serious public safety issues related to safe and efficient evacuation in emergencies.

We also recommend requiring streets to be designed for specific speeds to effectively limit both traffic volume and flow to levels compatible with the predominant uses in each neighborhood. Speed limits of 25 mph are recommended both in residential neighborhoods and commercial districts where pedestrian traffic is desired.

Consider adopting a more differentiated street hierarchy. Street design can be used to effectively control vehicle speed and to enhance or encourage cycling and pedestrian activity even while providing an interconnected network or grid.

Since, long blocks are not conducive to walking, consider lowering the maximum block length (e.g. 500') in new development or setting a block perimeter maximum (e.g. 1600'). The current maximum is quite long. Also, sidewalks should be required in all zones.

Where sidewalks are currently required, the width is set at 4 feet, which is narrower than is generally considered conducive to walking. We recommend increasing the width to a minimum of 5 feet so that two people can comfortably walk side by side or pass one another.

Require crosswalks at all intersections. Where block faces are long and street speeds are less than 45 miles-per-hour, require mid-block crossings as warranted, e.g. where intersection crossings are more than 600 feet apart. Provide adequate marking and lighting of all crosswalks to ensure pedestrian safety. Consider the installation of pedestrian-activated signals at key mid-block crossings (e.g. schools, libraries, parks) where traffic volume will not allow adequate time for pedestrians to cross safely, or where pedestrians will have to wait longer on average than 30 seconds for a traffic break sufficient to allow safe crossing.

Prohibit the use of rolled curbs on all streets to increase the separation of cars and pedestrians and to increase pedestrian safety and consider requiring street lighting in all residential and commercial districts to increase pedestrian activity and safety. We further recommend that for any street reconstruction, no rolled curbs be allowed.

As the UDC already acknowledges, street plantings help create community character, soften the urban setting, provide environmental benefits, and generally make a community more enjoyable to live in. Require that planting strips between the street and sidewalk be provided as a buffer between pedestrians and automobiles. This will encourage walking, particularly in those areas where traffic speeds are faster. The width of the planting strip can be varied with the type and intensity of use within a zone. Landscaped medians can provide visual relief on heavily trafficked streets and a safety zone for pedestrians crossing these streets. Specific trees can be required to help ensure that sidewalks will not be subject to lifting or other tree-root related damage.

Allow on-street and other public parking to be considered in calculating parking requirements and adopt an in-lieu fee that will allow developers in commercial and mixed-use districts outside the C5 zone to reduce the number of spaces they provide by paying into a fund established to provide centrally located lots. These lots might be either publicly or privately owned. Strategically located lots allow for the more efficient provision of parking and encourage people to park once and walk between various destinations. This has a dual effect of promoting more healthful active-lifestyles while reducing auto-exhaust emissions that contribute to poor air quality and elevated rates of respiratory disease. It also serves to increase pedestrian traffic along commercial thoroughfares, which helps to build and maintain vibrant shopping and entertainment districts.

Where on-site parking is required, require it to be situated at the rear of the property, accessed either by a driveway or an alley. Require that building fronts orient to the street and the sidewalk. Front yard parking emphasizes the automobile and establishes a hostile environment that discourages pedestrians and cyclists. It encourages drivers to hop-scotch from one destination to another rather than parking once and walking to adjacent destinations. This is true even in strip malls or power centers, because shoppers find it easier -- and in some cases safer -- to park multiple times within the same parking lot than to negotiate a sea of cars on foot to get from one store to another.

#### Principle 5: Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration

##### *Findings*

The Plan of Government and UDC establishes the composition, organization and powers of the Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment to serve both the City and Parish of Baton Rouge. Standard provisions are made for public notice and hearings. An appeals process is established for each type of action.

##### *Recommendations*

During our site visit, we heard that efforts are being made to include the community in planning and design issues, but that attracting and retaining the public's attention is difficult. We heard that the public impression is "the Horizon Plan is dead – it's not being implemented." But the considerable enthusiasm and energy that has fueled the successful implementation of the downtown plan is still in evidence and can be used to focus public attention on smart growth initiatives and their community-wide benefits.

We recommend that a grassroots organization be formed to take the case for smart growth to the community. Their first task should be to make the issues resonate within the community by focusing on the public's key concerns.

While often associated with design issues, smart growth is also about fiscal responsibility (i.e. providing adequate public services at a minimum price) and improving transportation options by reducing the need for automobiles. Since both taxes and

transportation were identified during our visit as hot-button issues, we suggest using them to revitalize general public awareness of and enthusiasm for the Horizon Plan.

Once reestablished, sustain momentum for the Horizon Plan by organizing a parish-wide charrette, or workshop, to deal with the broad-brush issues. Then hold smaller meetings at the neighborhood level to allow people to focus on the finer-grained details of integrating smart growth principles into their neighborhoods.

We further suggest using fiscal impact studies to illustrate the benefits of smart growth development patterns. In other communities, these are sometimes funded by the city or an independent special-purpose agency, such as a transportation foundation. Such a study would be useful in justifying the imposition of impact fees for traffic improvements.

#### Principle 6: Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place

##### *Findings*

This principle is not explicitly addressed by the UDC except for the Urban Design Overlay District One (Section 8.220). In this district, the intent is to avoid “functional and architectural incompatibility of buildings and services.” Section 4.2 implies that, for the rest of the city and the parish, the character of development within any particular subdivision will be a matter of discussion between the developers and the Planning Commission staff and any design standards will be imposed and enforced by deed restrictions or covenants.

##### *Recommendations*

Expand the use of design overlays in established districts. Community workshops can be held to set district boundaries and define the image each neighborhood/district wishes to project. Design guidelines can then be adopted to guide new development, infill and redevelopment so they enhance and protect the character of the area. The Planning Commission is currently conducting a Community Planning Process to facilitate this effort. Façade improvement incentives (such as low cost loans, out-right grants, sales or use tax abatements, relief from property taxes for the value of improvements) can be used to speed progress toward cohesive design goals in older neighborhoods.<sup>11</sup>

In order to strengthen historic district preservation efforts in Baton Rouge, we recommend that ways be explored to facilitate both the construction of new buildings and the adaptive reuse and reconstruction of old buildings to preserve the historic patterns in the downtown areas. One way might be to establish an urban zoning overlay, such as that established in Nashville, Tennessee. Through this mechanism, the City of Nashville is working to preserve the character of its pre-1950 districts by harking back to site development standards of the period rather than imposing the modern, more automobile-oriented configurations. Context is used to determine setbacks, parking location and parking requirements.

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<sup>11</sup> Examples of the kinds of incentives offered for the Columbia Pike, Arlington, VA can be accessed at <http://www.co.arlington.va.us/forums/columbia/implementation/economic.htm>.

Principle 7: Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective

*Findings*

The UDC lays out the administrative mechanisms for project review and approval in Chapters 3 and 4. It appears that the approval process for small parcels (under 2-1/2 acres) on which no conditional uses are proposed will follow a predictable course. Any planned community, however, will be subject to either a Planned Unit Development (PUD, for parcels 20 acres or greater in sized) or a Small Planned Unit Development (SPUD, for parcels 2-1/2 acres up to 20 acres) review process. Smart growth projects are likely to fall into either a PUD or SPUD category. The review process for either category is essentially negotiation process that can be unpredictable, lengthy and costly for not only the developers but for the public sector as well. Furthermore anecdotal evidence suggests that development standards are not uniformly applied to both large and small parcel projects.

*Recommendations*

The most effective way to encourage the incorporation of smart growth principles in new development is to permit them 'by right,' that is without having to go through a conditional use permitting process. The uncertainty associated with conditional use permits imposes risk-associated costs on development. When coupled with a lengthened approval process, this may discourage developers from the outset. Writing codes to smart growth standards ensures to the greatest extent possible that they will be implemented consistently over time and through successive administrations.

Though smaller parcels (under 30,000 square feet) do not undergo Planning Commission review, it is imperative that the Permitting Department consistently hold them to the same development standards as larger parcels.

Along with codifying smart growth principles, we recommend devising a streamlined review process for affordable housing, brownfields, and adaptive reuse projects. Incentive programs should be devised to direct development where it should occur, that is where infrastructure exists and is underutilized, or where it should logically be extended.

As it is now, smart growth projects are hard to do in Baton Rouge. The UDC should be revised to make the most desirable development the easiest to accomplish.

Principle 8: Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas

*Findings*

Open space is addressed in Chapter 12 of the UDC, where standards are set for the provision of sites for parks and schools. The planning responsibility for parks and schools rest with other agencies, and these documents were not reviewed.

Neither farmland protection nor environmental conservation is addressed in the UDC.

*Recommendations*

No specific recommendations are made, however we feel that at a minimum documents which regulate the development of parks and the preservation of open space and environmentally sensitive areas should be referenced.

Principle 9: Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities

*Findings*

This issue is not addressed in the UDC, however we heard in our interviews that the ability of developers to build private systems in areas unserved by municipal sewer and water limits the ability of the city and parish to use infrastructure expansion restrictions as a policy tool.

*Recommendations*

We recommend that an incentive package comprising a density bonus program and differential impact fee (and possibly fast-track permitting) be devised to encourage developers to build in existing communities rather than in the urban fringe. This package should be referenced in the UDC.

Make it easier and more profitable to build where builders can connect to the existing systems, and easier and more profitable still to build where there is excess capacity (e.g. downtown infill and redevelopment projects).

Principle 10: Take Advantage of Compact Building Design and Efficient Infrastructure Design

*Findings*

While sewer and water infrastructure is extended only to contiguous areas, development of private systems is allowed in outlying ones if built to DPW standards to facilitate future tie-in.

Roads are extended to all new development, regardless of whether connectors are shown on the major street plan. It is our understanding that the requirement for subdivision connectivity is frequently waived in response to citizen requests.

The UDC does not specifically address or facilitate redevelopment and infill.

*Recommendations*

The linchpin for smart growth is compact development, which requires building to higher densities. Far from reducing urban impacts on land and environmental resources, low density development actually increases them by requiring urban uses to occupy more land than is needed. The grid-patterned streets, pedestrian and cyclist amenities associated with smart growth provide options for people to get out of their cars, but if the distances between home, work, and recreation are still great, those options are effectively foreclosed. Without higher density, housing choice and affordability may be severely limited.

We strongly suggest that higher density single-family residential development be accommodated. Traditional Neighborhood overlay zones (TNOs) and density bonuses could be used to increase the allowable densities in residential zones.

Density does not have to look dense. Allowing various housing styles to be built within the same area can result in highly attractive neighborhoods. The mix of housing options is needed to accommodate the varied needs and changing preferences of residents in all stages of life.

Not only will edging toward higher density result in more livable, walkable neighborhoods, it will minimize the construction and maintenance costs of the capital improvements -- roads, water and sewage facilities -- needed by new development. It will also allow for more efficient police and fire protection.

In addition to cutting transportation infrastructure costs, adopting a more compact development form will start to build the population concentrations necessary to support transit services. Typically, densities of 4 to 6 dwelling units will only support minimum bus service (1 bus/hour), while densities of 7-8 units per acre will support 30-minute headway service. Urban rail service, with trains running 5-minute peak headways, requires at least 9 units per acre.



## **Step 7: Comparing the Policy Matches with the Code Matches**

Appendix II shows which smart growth policies included in the Horizon Plan are supported by provisions in the UDC. In most cases there is little or no support given.

In general, the Horizon Plan put in place many policies that support smart growth. There is, as noted above, an opportunity for incorporating additional smart growth elements. Unfortunately, there is little in the UDC to ensure that most of principles supported by the Horizon Plan will be implemented and funded.

### Provide a Variety of Transportation Choices

Though the Horizon Plan contains policies that address development along transportation corridors, expansion of the public transit system, provision of bicycle and pedestrian linkages, these issues are not addressed in the UDC. While it is true that development codes generally do not deal with regional transportation issues, they do set the standards for the streets that comprise the regional network. We recommend that the UDC be revised to establish street standards that accommodate pedestrians, bicycles and public transit facilities. We also recommend designating transit oriented development zones.

### Mix Land Uses

The Horizon Plan supports the concept of mixing land uses, and the UDC provides for mixed uses in the downtown areas. However in general, land uses are strictly segregated except in PUDs and SPUDs. No provisions are made for Traditional Neighborhood Districts, Live/Work Districts or Transit-Oriented Districts. We recommend that consideration be given to 1) adopting a more flexible zoning system for newly developing areas and 2) using overlay districts to incrementally transition older districts from single-use to mixed-use.

### Create Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices

The UDC has multiple policies addressing housing opportunity, diversity, and affordability. The codes contained in the UDC, however, limit the variation within subdivisions by setting lot size and density limits. No provisions are made for including workforce housing, and accessory units are generally not allowed. As recommended made above, we suggest that the UDC be revised to permit the development of a range of housing types and sizes within neighborhoods, and that incentives be designed to encourage this.

### Create Walkable Neighborhoods

While Horizon Plan policies call for parishwide linkages for bicyclists and pedestrians, little attention is paid to these issues in the UDC. While the codes do require sidewalks in subdivisions, as noted above, the standard width is narrower than is generally thought to be conducive to walking. In general, we would recommend the streetscape – roads,

curb cuts, sidewalks, building orientation, landscaping, street lighting, crosswalks, and system connectivity – be considered and designed as a whole from the pedestrian point-of-view so that the end product not only accommodates walking but encourages it.

#### Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration

Recommendations regarding this principle are found above.

#### Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place

The Horizon Plan contains numerous policies that support this goal, however it is paid little attention by the UDC. We recommend defining an urban zoning overlay to preserve areas of historical and architectural significance and distinctive district design overlays for newly developing areas.

#### Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair and Cost Effective

As noted above the most effective way to encourage the incorporation of smart growth principles in new development is to permit them ‘by right.’ The uncertainty associated with conditional use permits imposes risk-associated costs on development. The Horizon Plan calls for the updating and streamlining of the zoning ordinance to reduce regulatory complexity, among other things. Codifying smart growth principles would be a good first step in the right direction.

#### Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas

The Horizon Plan gives reasonable attention to the preservation of open space, farmland, and natural areas. Since the topic is not broached at all by the UDC, we recommend that at a minimum the documents which regulate the development of parks and the preservation of open space and environmentally sensitive areas be referenced, putting developers on notice that these topics are taken seriously by the city-parish.

#### Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities

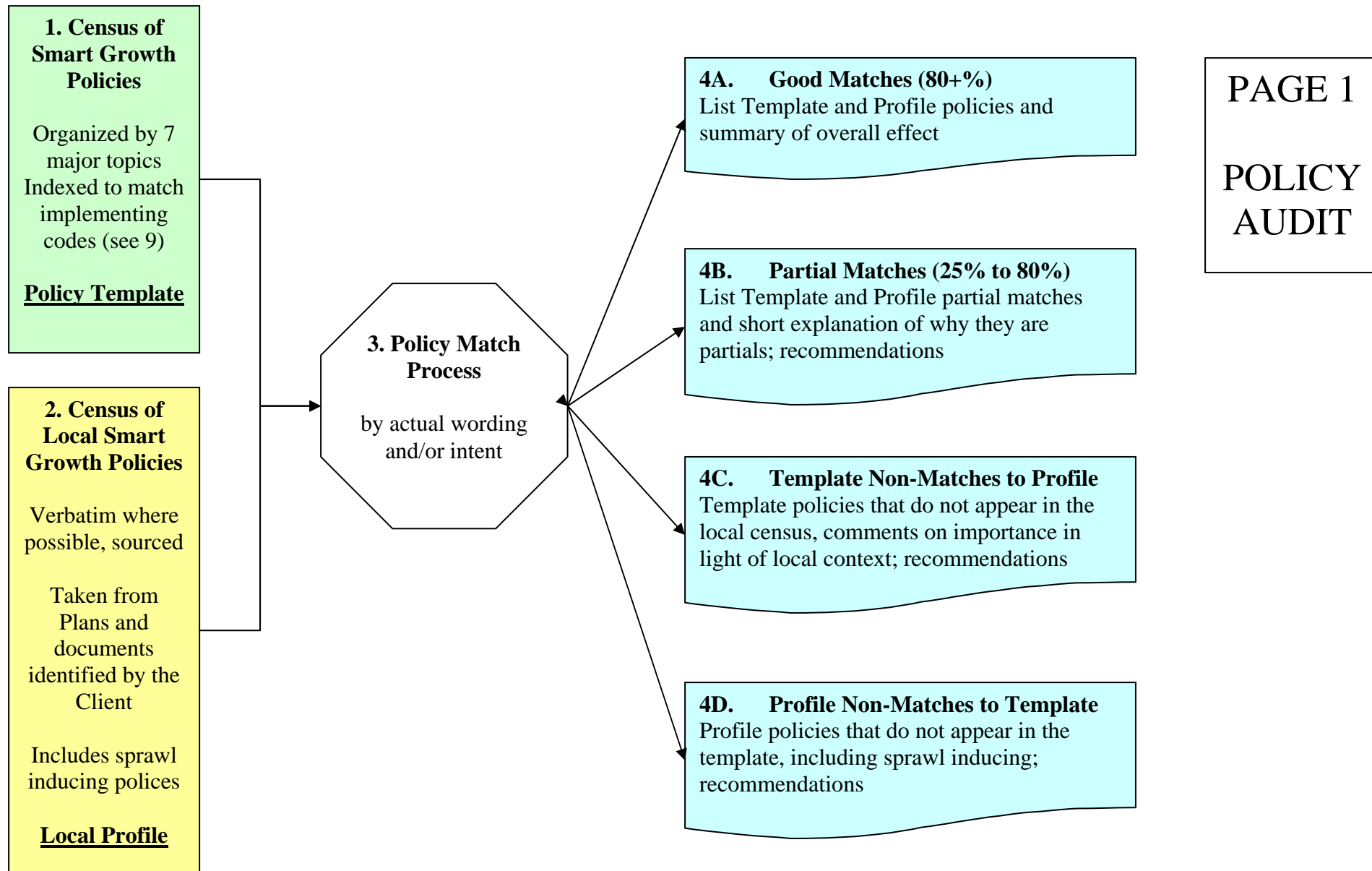
Again, while the Horizon Plan has multiple policies promoting redevelopment, adaptive reuse of properties, and the rational infrastructure expansion, none of these topics is evident in the UDC. As noted above, we recommend that the supportive incentives called for in the Horizon Plan be referenced or included in the UDC.

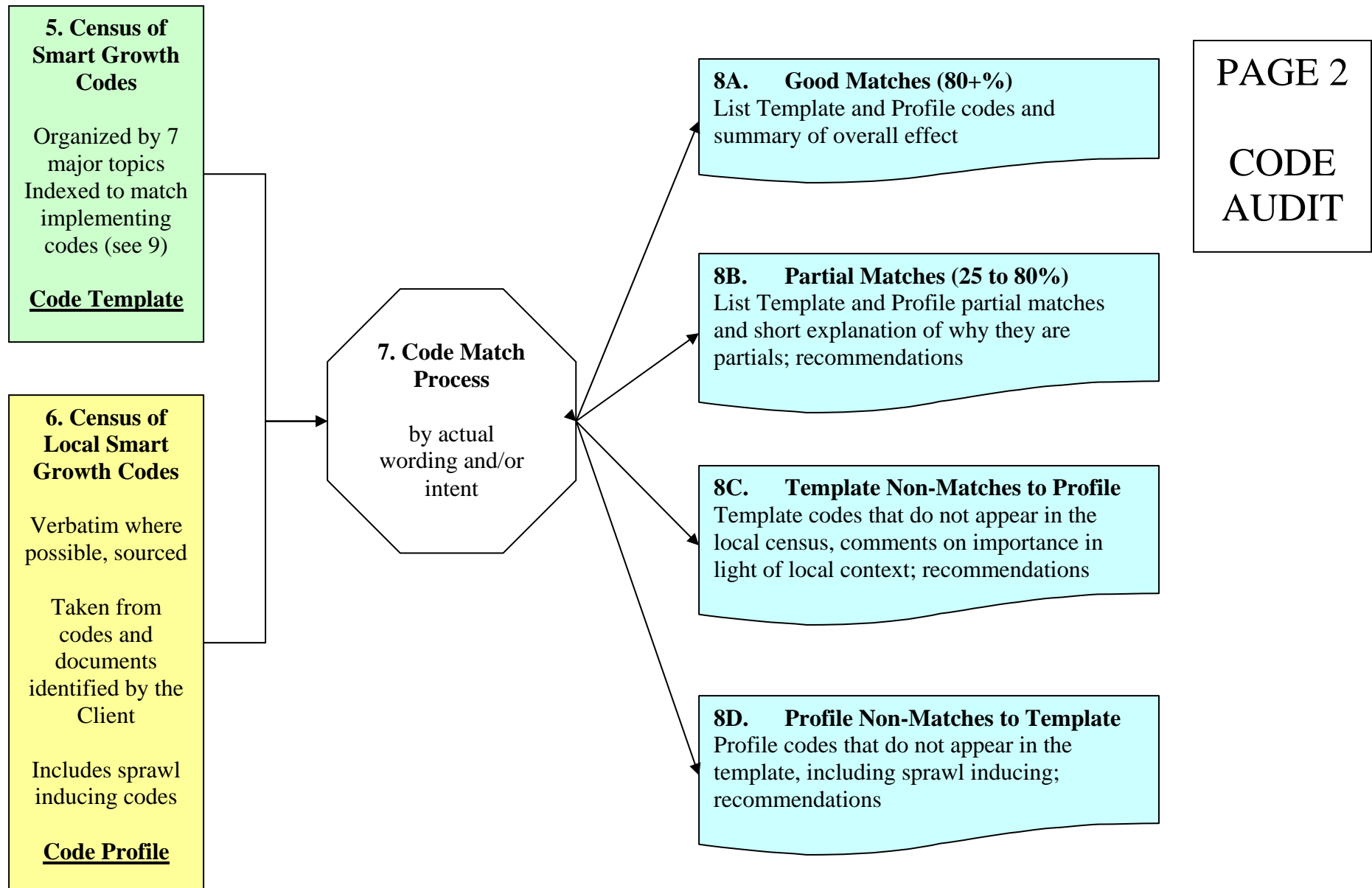
#### Take Advantage of Compact Building Design and Efficient Infrastructure Design

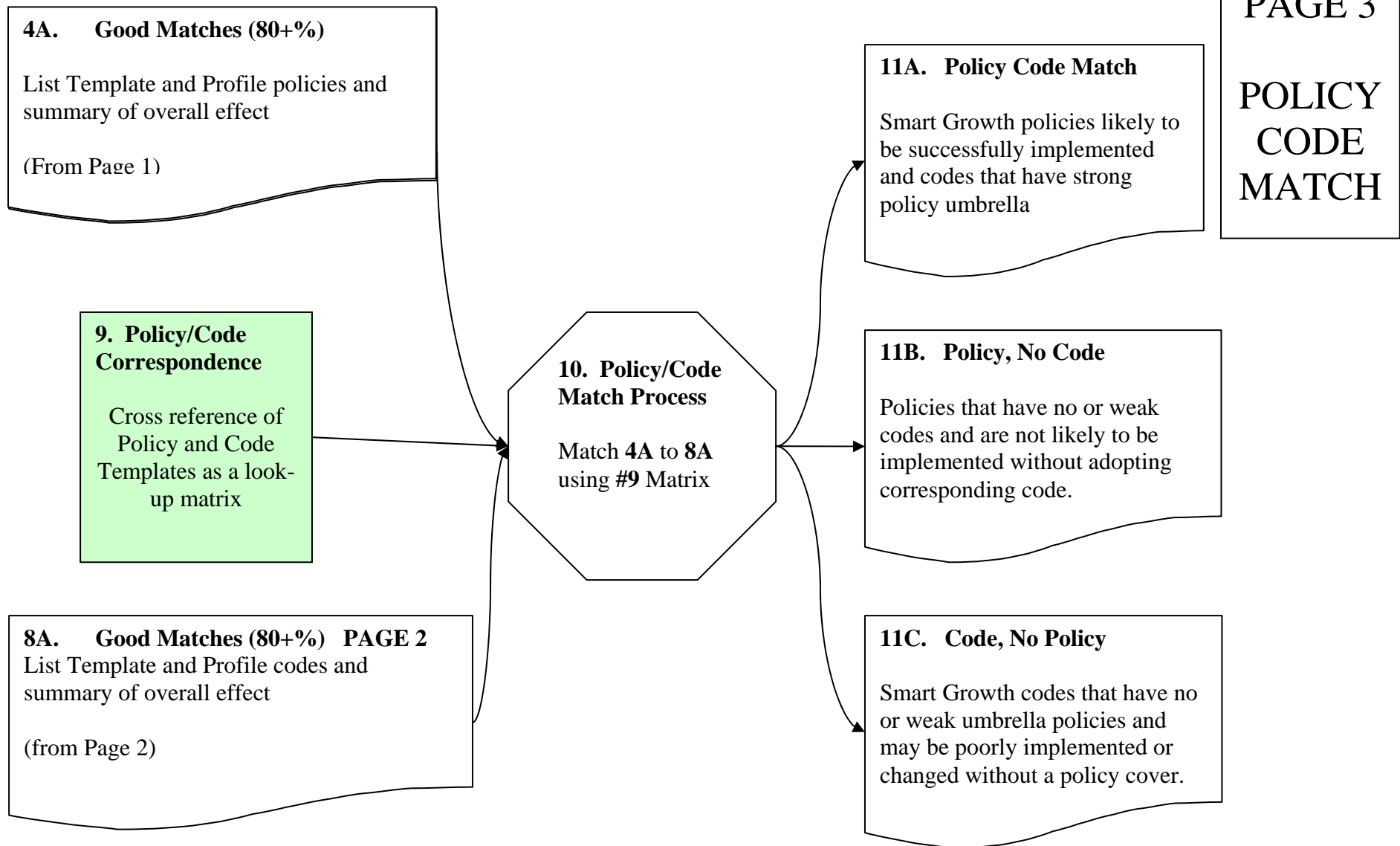
The Horizon Plan only contains good matches for 3 of the 9 items listed under this smart growth principle, though there are partial matches for 2 more. The only item addressed by both Horizon Plan and the UDC is shared parking. In general, while the Horizon Plan supports redevelopment, it does not promote the compact building patterns that typify smart growth, nor do the standards set in the UDC. The requirements set for minimum

lot sizes and maximum densities set the stage for sprawl, and the tendency to grant waivers from street connectivity requirements exacerbates all of the problems associated with sprawl. We strongly recommend that the city-parish consider revising the UDC to permit increased density. We also recommend that no more waivers from street connectivity be granted. Until the city-parish reestablishes the 'parishwide web' of streets, sidewalks, bike lanes and transit routes, people will have few options but to drive their cars on the already congested arterials, and the experience of other cities has shown that merely building freeways will not alleviate congestion on the arterials. Alternative surface routes must be provided.

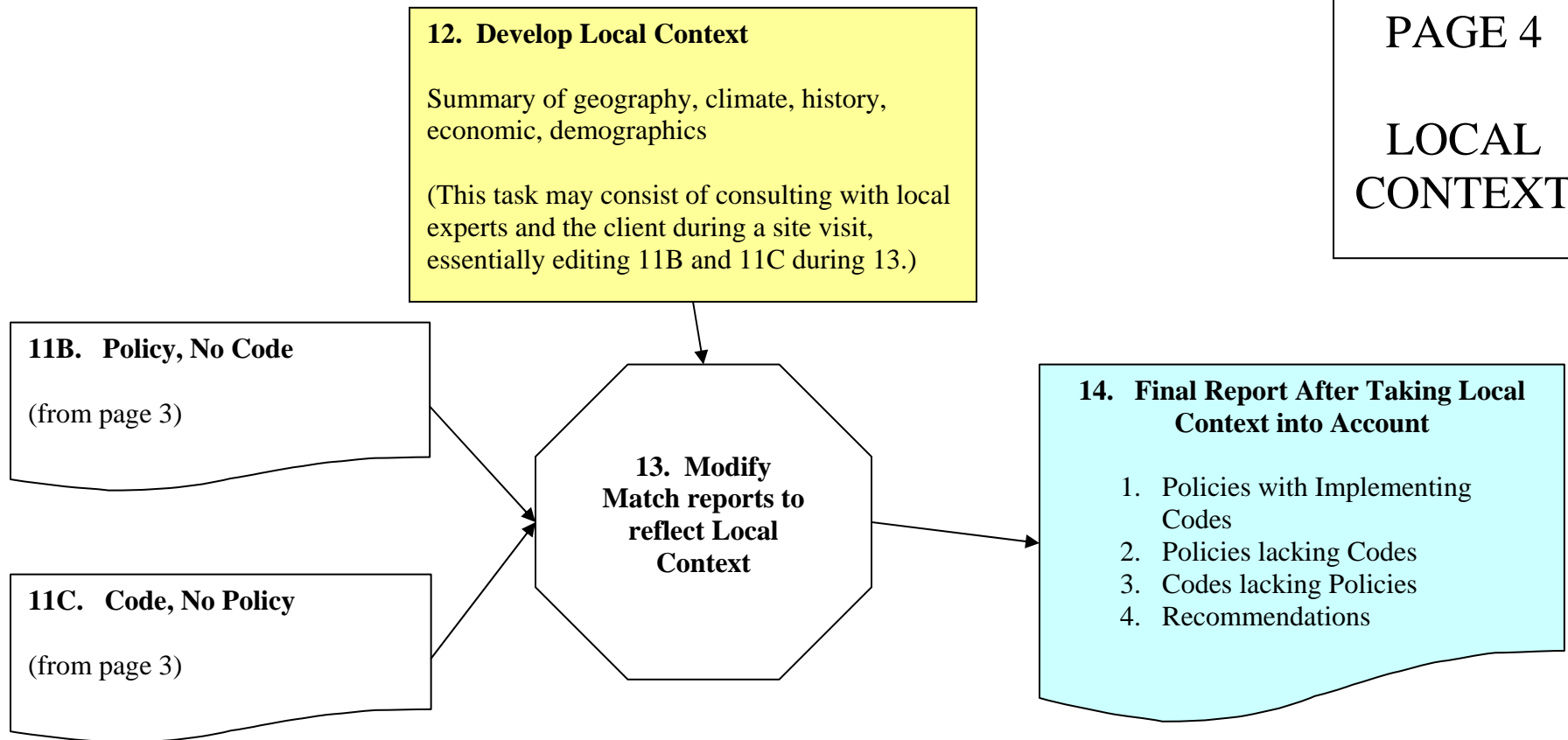
## **Appendix I: Policy and Code Match Process**







PAGE 4  
LOCAL  
CONTEXT



Document prepared for Client

Task specific to each Client

Internal process with working files only

One-time preparation with updates



## **Appendix II: Policy and Code Match**

SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE		HORIZON PLAN	UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
Provide A Variety of Transportation Choices		Provide A Variety of Transportation Choices	Provide A Variety of Transportation Choices
1	Encourage transit-oriented and transit friendly developments	(LU3.1) Encourage quality development and redevelopment along major transportation corridors. (T5.3) The CTC should develop an efficient and attractive public transit system which accommodates the transit service demand at major activity centers.	Transit corridors, transit-related public improvements are not addressed in the UDC.
2	Offer TOD-promoting incentives such as down payment assistance, reduced transit passes, and location efficient mortgages.		Not addressed in UDC.
3	Grant density bonuses in transit or mixed use districts		Not addressed in UDC.
4	Address jobs and housing balance in the General Plan		Not addressed in UDC.
5	Link land use and transportation choices at the local and regional levels.	(LU3.2) Consider transportation impacts of land use and development in review of proposed zoning changes and subdivisions. (T3.6) Require traffic impacts on affected transportation facilities be considered in zoning changes, etc. (T2.1) The transportation plan should provide sufficient flexibility to accommodate future changes in land use planning, and to permit periodic updating due to unforeseen changes, conditions, and needs.	Not addressed in UDC.
6	Encourage public transit use by integrating multimodal use and connectivity (Park and Ride lots, transit centers, etc.)	(T6.3) The City-Parish should seek opportunities for re-establishment of rail passenger service to and from Baton Rouge.	Not addressed in UDC.
7	Plan or maintain high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes		Not addressed in UDC.

SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE		HORIZON PLAN	UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
Provide A Variety of Transportation Choices		Provide A Variety of Transportation Choices	Provide A Variety of Transportation Choices
8	Encourage the formation of vanpools and carpools	(T5.5) Where appropriate, new development should be encouraged to provide bus pullouts, bus shelters and other transit-related public improvements. An incentive program for employers should be developed to increase transit usage, as well as carpools and vanpools.	Not addressed in UDC.
9	Provide transportation choices to densely populated areas as well as major employment centers	(T1.1) Offer efficient accessibility to the more densely populated areas of the Baton Rouge metropolitan area, as well as major traffic generators. (T5.1) Provide public transportation services as an alternative to the automobile, and as an important service for the transportation-disadvantaged segments of the Parish's population. (T5.2) Provide public transit in major transit demand corridors, and provide convenient transfers between transit and other travel modes. (T5.3) Develop an efficient and attractive public transit system which accommodates the transit service demand at major activity centers. (LU3.3) Provide a parishwide linkages for bicycles and pedestrians. (R4) Provide Parishwide linkages. (PS1.3) Ensure that public services are reasonably accessible to all areas of the parish. (HH 2.4) Efficient public transportation services for accessibility to health and human services.	Transit corridors, transit-related public improvements are not addressed in the UDC.

SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE

HORIZON PLAN

UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE

	Provide A Variety of Transportation Choices	Provide A Variety of Transportation Choices	Provide A Variety of Transportation Choices
10	Change roadway design standards to support transit and non-automotive modes.	(T8.4) Bicycle safety should be considered in designing and implementing traffic operations improvements. (T9.2) Pedestrian safety should be considered in designing and implementing roadway improvements, including the provision of safe access and mobility for the physically handicapped.	No requirements are established for bicycle lanes, parking, or other facilities. Explicit widths are set for residential, commercial and industrial streets; design speed standards are not used.
11	Locate new development, especially public, in areas supported by a balanced transportation network.	(T3.2) The transportation system should be designed to maximize the use of existing roadways and minimize disruption to established and desired development patterns. (T1.2)The transportation system should be developed to integrate and coordinate the multiple modes of transportation. (LU3.1) Encourage quality development and redevelopment along major transportation corridors. (T5.3) Develop an efficient and attractive public transit system which accommodates the transit service demand at major activity centers. (T5.5) Encourage bus pullouts, bus shelters and other transit-related public improvements.	Not addressed in UDC.

SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE

HORIZON PLAN

UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE

Mix Land Uses		Mix Land Uses	Mix Land Uses
1	Designate appropriate areas for mixed-use developments		
2	Encourage mixing of uses at building, site, and neighborhood levels	(LU2.5 and LU11.1) Provide a variety of neighborhood support land uses including shopping, parks, schools and churches. (LU10.5) Encourage a mix of land uses which contribute to a balanced economic base. (LU2.4/LU11.4/12.3/13.3) Promote adaptive reuse of buildings.	Section 8.216; PUDs are available on parcels 20 acres or larger. SPUDs (Section 8.217) are also established for smaller parcels of 2.5 acres up to 20 acres. PUDs are permitted in nearly all zones. SPUDs are only allowed in districts A1 thru C-AB-1.
3	Allow for home/office use in residential areas		
4	Encourage residential uses in the downtown districts	(LU1.4) Promote redevelopment and revitalization of Downtown as a major focal point of the identity for Baton Rouge.	Residential uses are allowed in the downtown districts.

SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE		HORIZON PLAN	UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
Create A Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices		Create A Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices	Create A Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices
1	Allow for accessory housing within single-family residential zoning districts		Garage apartments are allowed in the A2 Single Family Residential District (one unit no greater than 500 s.f. per parcel on parcels over 10,000 s.f.) (Section 8.202) No accessory buildings may be used for residential purposes (Section 9.106)
2	Provide for a wide range of housing types	(H1.5) Promote the development of alternative housing concepts in the public/private sectors as a strategy to provide additional affordable housing. (H3.1) Promote availability of diverse housing opportunities for the elderly.	No codes are established to promote the development of low-income and moderate-income housing.
3	Meet housing needs for all income groups	(H1.3) Increase public awareness of available housing opportunities for low-income and moderate income residents. (H1.4) Promote the availability of funding, both public and private, for all types of housing. (H1.5) Promote the development of alternative housing concepts in the public/private sectors as a strategy to provide additional affordable housing. (H2.2) Support efforts to increase the availability of affordable housing in the private sector.	Within the double bind of minimum lot size and maximum density, the range of lot sizes may only be theoretically wide. With 11 residential zoning districts established, there is probably wider variation between districts than within subdivisions.
4	Allow live/work units		Not addressed in the UDC.
5	Meet or exceed the regional fairshare housing allocation for both market-rate and affordable housing	(H1.2) Secure a commitment of City-Parish government to support a comprehensive and coordinated publicly assisted housing strategy.	Not addressed in the UDC.

	SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE	HORIZON PLAN	UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
	Create A Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices	Create A Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices	Create A Range of Housing Opportunities and Choices
6	Allow minimum lot-sizes low enough to accommodate all income groups		Minimum lot sizes are established for 11 residential districts. Parcels of 2,000 s.f. are allowed in A2.5 (Townhouse) District; 3,800 s.f. lots are allowed in A2.6 (Zero Lot Line) District and A3.1 (Limited Residential) District.
7	Allow local zoning flexibility in housing sizes (smaller dwelling units)		No minimum size is set for dwelling units, but minimum lot sizes and maximum density requirements limit variation in housing unit size within zones.
8	Encourage mixed income housing developments		Not addressed in the UDC.
9	Encourage traditional neighborhood residential patterns, such as diverse housing types- large family homes, cottages, boarding houses, duplexes and small apartments, in new ways such as town homes, condominiums and apartments		No provisions are made for traditional neighborhood districts. Accommodation of variety of housing types in PUDs or SPUDs may be allowed, but is not addressed in the UDC.
10	Encourage live-work homes, which need zones to permit businesses to operate from home, unlike "home occupations" must allow office use by non-residential employees and visitors, except retail, and include everything from professional to small manufacturing that can be located at home		No provisions are made for live-work districts. Home occupations are defined in Chapter 2; no changes to residential character of building, no signage allowed, no shop or store on premise, no non-resident employees, no equipment that is not customarily found in a SFD.

SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE		HORIZON PLAN	UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
Create Walkable Neighborhoods		Create Walkable Neighborhoods	Create Walkable Neighborhoods
1	Allow for reduction of street widths to promote walkability and bike friendliness		Six classifications are established: Major Street/major parish road, subdivision streets, turning circles, alleys and boulevards. Street widths are established by classification. A minimum r.o.w. of 50' is established for new subdivision roads; minimum r.o.w. of 80' is established for new roads not in subdivisions; minimum 100' r.o.w. is established for boulevards.
2	Adopt traffic-calming measures and pedestrian-controlled traffic signals to encourage bike and pedestrian friendliness		Not addressed in the UDC.
3	Regulate curb cuts		Not addressed in the UDC.
4	Require sidewalks required on both sides of the street	(T9.1) Construction of sidewalks should be required as part of street construction for development in areas with expected pedestrian traffic. (T9.3) Addition or reconstruction of sidewalks in existing areas with pedestrian traffic should be addressed in capital improvements programming	Sidewalks required in subdivisions. May be required along major streets. Required on both sides of street except when waived at the discretion of the Planning Director along single-loaded streets, which have lots on one side only, (13.5.I).
5	Connect sidewalks to amenities such as parks and open space	(LU3.3) Provide parishwide linkages for bicycles and pedestrians. (R4) Provide parishwide linkages.	Not addressed in the UDC.



HORIZON PLAN		UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE	SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE
Create Walkable Neighborhoods		Create Walkable Neighborhoods	Create Walkable Neighborhoods
6	Establish a trail system or other non-motorized public access to amenities	(LU3.3) Provide a parishwide linkages for bicycles and pedestrians. (T8.1) Bicycle and pedestrian routes should be separated along route segments with significant pedestrian use. (T8.2) Consider right-of-way provisions for bikeways as identified in the proposed bikeway system plan and the Green link concept plan. (T8.3) Bicycle routes and parking facilities should be provided to link neighborhoods and major activity centers such as employment sites, shopping centers, educational institutions and recreational and cultural attractions. (T9.4) The City-Parish should plan and develop a trail system master plan for a uniform network of interconnecting trails integrated with recreation areas, parks, open spaces, schools residential and commercial areas. (R4) Provide parishwide linkages.	Not addressed in the UDC.

SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE		HORIZON PLAN	UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration		Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration	Encourage Community and Stakeholder Collaboration
1	Support and implement incentives for adoption of comprehensive plans and Capital Improvement Plans prior to imposition of local land use regulations and controls.		Not addressed in the UDC
2	Strengthen state, metro, and regional institutions to facilitate multi-jurisdictional decision making and problem solving.	(LU4.2) Neighborhood groups should have input to the decision-making process in City-Parish government as it affects their areas and the overall community. (T1.3) Planning should be coordinated through a cooperative effort between the responsible local, state and federal agencies.	Not addressed in the UDC
3	Provide a process for public participation in drafting and adopting the General Plan and supporting ordinances.	(LU 1.1) Foster participation by residents in local government decision-making and in the social, cultural and recreational activities of the community. (H5.3) Establish a public participation process for receiving citizen input on parish-wide or district-wide issues.	Not addressed in the UDC

	SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE	HORIZON PLAN	UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
	Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place	Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place	Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place
1	Public and private development should improve the character of existing neighborhoods, avoiding or removing factors that cause instability or create barriers, and enhancing the sense of neighborhood identity (BR)	(LU1.3) Protect and enhance the integrity and character of existing business, commercial and residential areas. (LU4.1) Public and private development should improve the character of existing neighborhoods, avoiding or removing factors that cause instability or create urban barriers, and enhancing the sense of neighborhood identity. (LU4.4) Residential neighborhoods should be protected from encroachment of incompatible activities or land uses. (LU9.1) Protect and enhance the aesthetic and visual quality of the parish. (LU9.2) Establish urban design guidelines. (R1) Improve the Overall Parishwide Image. (H4.5) Promote beautification efforts within neighborhoods. (H4.6) Ensure that buffer zones are established to protect neighborhoods from encroachment by commercial and industrial development. (PB1.1) Use public building construction projects as opportunities to direct and redirect the growth of the city and parish. (PB2.1) All public buildings should be examples of design excellence and should enhance the environment in which they are located. (LU9.3/10.3) Protect the integrity and character of commercial and residential areas. (E5.1) Promote public health and welfare through beautification and enhancement of the landscape for human use. (E5.2) To enhance the visual quality and character of the community.	Not explicitly addressed in the UDC, however common open space is required in PUDs.

	SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE	HORIZON PLAN	UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
	<b>Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place</b>	<b>Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place</b>	<b>Foster Distinctive, Attractive Communities with a Strong Sense of Place</b>
2	Neighborhoods should include places for interaction among residents, such as parks, community centers, schools, commercial areas, churches and other gathering places. (BR)	(LU4.3) Neighborhoods should include places for interaction among residents such as parks, community centers, schools, commercial areas, churches and other gathering places. (R6) Improve the community's knowledge of facility and program availability. Protect and preserve historically significant elements of the community. (LU2.3)	Not addressed in the UDC

	<b>Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective</b>	<b>Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective</b>	<b>Make Development Decisions Predictable, Fair, and Cost Effective</b>
1	Consistency between local government regulations, local actions and the comprehensive plan.	(LU10.1) Promote economic development through provision of capital improvements and public services.(LU1.2) Update and streamline the Zoning Ordinance to reduce regulatory complexity, encourage economic development and quality of life, and control administrative and development costs.	UDC establishes the Planning Commission Powers and Duties, the Zoning Board of Adjustment, and the hearings and appeals processes for both.
		(D7) Promote intergovernmental coordination when state or federal projects impact local, area, and regional stormwater management.	Not addressed in UDC.

	SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE	HORIZON PLAN	UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
	Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas	Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas	Preserve Open Space, Farmland, Natural Beauty and Critical Environmental Areas
1	Establish guidelines to regulate development in critical areas such as wetlands, fish and wildlife conservation areas, frequently flooded areas, and geologically hazardous areas	(LU6.3) Identify and minimize exposure to natural hazards in developing areas including floodplains, faults and subsidence areas. (LU15.3) Identify natural hazards in developing areas including floodplains and fault zones.	Not addressed in UDC.
2	Establish codes to guide environmentally compatible development in coastal communities		Not addressed in UDC.
3	Establish mechanisms such as transfer of development rights (TDR) and financial incentives to protect, preserve, and maintain natural assets		Not addressed in UDC.
4	Establish open space and farmland protection programs	(LU5.1) Preserve open space and aquifer recharge areas and prime agricultural areas. (LU5.2) Establish required open space standards for residential and commercial development. (LU6.1) Protect important prime agricultural areas. (LU6.2) Identify, protect and enhance important natural features for recreation and open space development. (LU15.2) Strengthen and enforce rural zoning to promote compatible land use and preservation of prime agricultural land. (E4.1) The City-Parish should promote the protection, maintenance, preservation, and enhancement of land resources and natural features of East Baton Rouge Parish. (R2) Establish required Open Space Standards. (R3) Identify, protect and enhance important natural features for recreation and open space.	Not addressed in UDC.

SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE		HORIZON PLAN	UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities		Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities	Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities
1	Promote brownfields redevelopment for housing and/or mixed-use		Not addressed in UDC
2	Establish minimum clean-up standards associated with brownfield proposed land uses		Not addressed in UDC
3	Establish land use strategies and incentives for redevelopment of brownfields	(H2.1) Actively solicit innovative programs for redevelopment of existing neighborhoods	Not addressed in UDC
4	Establish regulations that promote greyfields redevelopment for housing and/or mixed-use	(LU2.1) Redevelop and revitalize declining neighborhoods. (LU2.2) Redevelop vacant and dilapidated commercial areas. (LU12.1) Redevelop targeted declining neighborhoods. (LU12.2) Redevelop targeted vacant and/or dilapidated commercial areas. (H2.1) Actively solicit innovative programs for redevelopment of existing neighborhoods (H2.3) Promote the public and/or private rehabilitation of existing housing within the parish (H2.4) Facilitate the identification and removal of deteriorated housing that cannot be rehabilitated.	Not addressed in UDC
5	Establish an urban growth boundary		Not addressed in UDC
6	Establish tax credits/incentives or other policies to encourage infill over greenfield development	(LU13.2) Provide infill development and redevelopment incentives in targeted residential neighborhoods. (LU2.610.2/11.3) Offer infill and redevelopment incentives in residential and commercial areas. (LU11.4) Promote adaptive reuses of buildings.	Not addressed in UDC

SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE		HORIZON PLAN	UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities		Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities	Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities
7	Discourage sprawl generating subsidies (such as funds for suburban highway and road construction, water, and sewer facilities and service) in place of structured incentives for urban infill or TOD		Not addressed in UDC
8	Encourage regional tax sharing to discourage fiscalization of land use and destructive sales tax competition		Not addressed in UDC
9	Regulations that support land reuse and require new urban growth to be coordinated with provision of infrastructure capacity	(LU15.1) Consider infrastructure and public service impacts of land use and development in review of proposed zoning changes and subdivisions. (H4.2) Ensure that new subdivisions are developed in accordance with appropriately defined standards with supporting infrastructure. (PS 1.2) Develop public service facilities that are consistent with land use and transportation plans. (LU14.1) Regulate the size and scale of development. (LU14.2) Review and maintain the appropriate laws and ordinances already existing for providing and expanding urban services.	Not addressed in UDC

SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE		HORIZON PLAN	UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities		Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities	Strengthen and Direct Development Towards Existing Communities
10	Favor the use of existing infrastructure over new and new development either is self-paying or consciously subsidized	(LU3.2) Consider transportation impacts of land use and development in review of proposed zoning changes and subdivisions. (LU14.2) Review and maintain the appropriate laws and ordinances already existing for providing and expanding urban services. (H4.4) Ensure maintenance of public infrastructure of neighborhoods. (LU15.4) Ensure the continuing operation and adequate maintenance of existing public services and facilities. (R7) Ensure the continuing operation and maintenance of existing programs and facilities.	Not addressed in UDC
11	Encourage infill development with specific zoning ordinances.	(LU2.6/10.2) Offer infill and redevelopment incentives in residential and commercial areas. (LU 7.1/10.4) Redevelop and revitalize Downtown. (LU11.3) Offer infill development and redevelopment incentives in targeted residential and commercial areas. (LU13.2) Provide infill development and redevelopment incentives in targeted residential neighborhoods.	Not addressed in UDC



SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE		HORIZON PLAN	UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
Adopt Compact Building Patterns and Efficient Infrastructure Design		Adopt Compact Building Patterns and Efficient Infrastructure Design	Adopt Compact Building Patterns and Efficient Infrastructure Design
1	Allow for reduction in parking requirements in TODs		Not addressed in UDC.
2	Utilize the full development capacity (density or floor area ratio)		
3	Reduce parking requirement or parking maximums		Not addressed in UDC.
4	Provide for shared parking	(T4.1) Require new development to provide adequate off-street parking, including consideration for use of shared or joint-use	Shared parking for non-simultaneous uses is allowed; parking requirements are determined for both and the greatest use requirement applies. (17.3.D) No provisions are made for jointly owned off-site parking facilities, and no parking requirement reductions are granted for on-street parking.
5	Allow for conversion of existing underutilized and/or abandoned non-residential sites into housing and/or mixed-use developments	(LU 2.4/11.4/12.3/13.3) Promote adaptive reuse of buildings.	Not addressed in UDC. Must conform with existing zoning.
6	Establish minimum densities for higher density development	(H4.1) Ensure current Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations support the preservation and creation of neighborhood intensity.	No minimum densities are established, rather maximum densities are set.
7	Encourage reduced lot guidelines to encourage higher density	(H.4.2) Ensure current Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations support the preservation and creation of neighborhood intensity.	Minimum lot sizes are established for all zones.
8	Allow density bonuses along transit corridors		Not addressed in the UDC.

SMART GROWTH TEMPLATE	HORIZON PLAN	UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT CODE
Adopt Compact Building Patterns and Efficient Infrastructure Design	Adopt Compact Building Patterns and Efficient Infrastructure Design	Adopt Compact Building Patterns and Efficient Infrastructure Design
<p>9</p> <p>Connect infrastructure decisions to land use planning</p>	<p>(LU8.1) Consider stormwater management in development process. (LU8.2) Consider drainage and flooding impacts of land use and development in review of proposed zoning changes and subdivisions. (LU8.3) Development of a Master Drainage Plan that is compatible with the Horizon Plan. (LU8.4) Design adequate storm water facilities to accommodate anticipated runoff year storm. (WW4) Develop a Comprehensive Wastewater Master Plan with provision of wastewater facilities in underserved areas of the parish. (PS1.1) Promote public service facilities as an integrated system of service delivery. (PS1.2) Develop public service facilities that are consistent with land use and transportation plans. (PS1.4) Coordinate public services with the public school system when such services are compatible.</p>	<p>Not addressed in the UDC.</p>

## **Appendix III: Code Audit**

Connectivity/Circulation						
1.00	Alleyways	Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
1.10	Are alleyways allowed?	Yes				Require alleys and limit number of curb cuts allowed on streets.
1.20	Are there restrictions on their use?				None explicitly stated	
1.30	Are width standards established?	Yes			Minimum r.ow. 20' - 18' paved concrete cartway. (13.5.E)	Use should dictate width. In commercial zones, alleys can function as drive aisles for off-street parking lots and as fire lanes.

2.00 Bicycle/Multi-use trail facilities		Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
2.10	Are bicycle lanes required?		No			Provide for a network of bicycle routes, lanes, or shared-use trails to promote bicycle use in all zones.
2.20	Are bicycle lanes accommodated?		No			Bicycle lanes can be retrofitted by changing the way on-street parking is accommodated.
2.30	Is bicycle parking required?		No			Require bike parking facilities in commercial and industrial projects to encourage the use of bikes as alternative transportation. Provide for both short and secured long-term parking within convenient distances of building entrances, varying standards with use type.
2.40	Are standards established for bicycle lane width?		No			On new roads, a minimum lane width of 6' is suggested. A minimum width of 5' is suggested for retrofits. Where a shared lane for bikes and parking is provided, a minimum total lane width of 12' (7' for parking and 5' for bikes) is suggested.
2.50	Are standards established for bicycle lane surface?		No			Grade differences between gutter pans and street surface should be eliminated. Uniform, smooth surfaces should be specified.
2.60	Are standards established for separation of bike lanes from motorized vehicle lanes?		No			
2.70	Is a multi-use trail provided for or planned?		No			

3.00 Parking standards		Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
3.10	Is on street parking allowed?	Yes			However, no provision is made for allowing on-street parking to reduce the number of off-street spaces required.	Among other benefits, on-street parking encourages pedestrian traffic, and can act as a buffer between pedestrians and moving vehicles. Design is important.
3.20	What relationship is dictated between parking spaces and the street?				In certain zones, parking is prohibited w/in 10' of the r.o.w. line of any street.; on-street parking configurations are not addressed. (17-13.E)	Avoid diagonal parking on streets with bike lanes or routes and on heavily travelled streets.
3.30	Are there provisions for shared parking?	Yes			For non-simultaneous uses, parking requirements are determined for both and the greatest use requirement applies. (17.3.D)	Shared parking should be encouraged.
3.40	Are there provisions for joint parking?		No			Joint parking should be considered where conditions warrant.
3.50	What basis is used to establish parking requirements?				Off-street parking requirements are listed in the code (17.8)	Zone and use specific parking requirements should be established and should take transit facilities into consideration.
3.51	District type?		No			
3.52	Building type?		No			
3.53	Use?	Yes				
3.60	Are minimum requirements set?	Yes				
3.70	Are maximum requirements set?		No			
3.80	Are there provisions that allow reductions in requirements along transit routes?		No			Reductions for transit availability should be allowed.
3.90	Are reductions allowed in exchange for bike parking?		No			

4.00 Street hierarchy				Comments	Suggested Standards
4.1	What street hierarchy is in place?			Six classifications are established: Major Street/major parish road, subdivision streets, turning circles, alleys and boulevards.	Divisions within categories will permit a finer grained street system (e.g. differentiate between various widths of arterials, major and minor collectors, commercial and residential local streets).
4.11	Are design speed standards used?		No	Street speed limit is considered in establishing intersection sight distances (Appendix A, p. 6) and the minimum design requirements for driveways (Appendix A, p. 7).	Use design speed standards to establish pedestrian and bicycle friendly environments. Designing streets for higher speeds encourages speeding even through lower speed limits are set and often necessitates retrofitting traffic calming features.
4.12	What standards are set for width, intersection and corner radii for neighborhood access streets?			Streets in subdivisions - minimum r.o.w. 50'; parish roads not in new subdivisions - min. r.o.w. 80'; turning circles r.o.w. 30'X90'. (13.2.D); alleys minimum r.o.w. 20'; boulevards in r.o.w. 100' (13.2.F). Minimum street intersection curb radius returns - 25'.	Vary required r.o.w. to reflect the nature of the district (see street widths below). Consider using design speeds of 25 mph for residential access streets.
4.13	What standards are set for width, intersection and corner radii for neighborhood connector streets?			Major street and major parish road rights-of-way are designated on the major street plan. The minimum r.o.w. is 80' (Appendix A); radius returns not defined.	Tighter curb radii shorten pedestrian crossings and require vehicles to make turns at lower speeds. Limit curb radii to 4 to 15 feet. Require a 25' clear zone to accommodate the wider turning radii required by emergency vehicles. Consider using design speeds of 30 mph for residential connectors and streets in commercial and industrial zones.

4.00 Street hierarchy					Comments	Suggested Standards
4.14	What standards are set for width, intersection, and corner radii for regional access streets?			DNA	These are not addressed in the UDC.	Where wider streets are desired, require center medians to maintain a pedestrian-friendly environment. Consider using design speeds of 40 mph on major collectors and 30 mph on minor collector streets. Arterial design speeds should be no greater than 50 mph for 4- and 6-lane streets, and 45 mph for 2-lane streets.

5.00	Street pattern	Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
5.10	What block lengths are dictated?				A maximum block length of 1500' is established. (13.1.A)	Excessively long blocks discourage pedestrian traffic. Limit block perimeters (e.g. 1600 ft.). Limit block face lengths (e.g. 500 ft.)
5.11	Do these differ by zone?		No			
5.12	Are cul de sacs allowed?	Yes				Limit use of cul de sacs, and limit length (e.g. to 300') when they are allowed. Where allowed, consider requiring pedestrian and bicycle access between adjoining neighborhoods.
5.20	Are there provisions to ensure street connectivity between neighborhoods?	Yes			Section 13.3 requires new development to 'make provisions for the continuation of the principal existing streets in adjoining areas...' However, in practice waivers are routinely granted.	Require mid-block pedestrian passages in commercial and mixed-use zones (e.g. at 250' maximum intervals).



7.00 Streetscape features		Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
7.01	Are crosswalks allowed?			DNA	Crosswalks are not addressed in the UDC.	Crosswalks should be allowed, and required on long blocks to provide access to commercial areas, schools, places of worship, transportation and recreation facilities.
7.02	Are pedestrian controlled crosswalk signals required?			DNA		Crosswalk signals increase pedestrian safety and encourage walking.
7.03	Is landscaping of medians or curbsides required?					Landscaping softens the street environment and makes it more attractive to pedestrians.
7.11	Are sidewalks allowed?	Yes				Sidewalks promote walking and contribute to pedestrian safety.
7.12	Are sidewalks required?	Yes			Yes, in subdivisions. May be required along major streets.	Sidewalks should be required in urban and suburban areas to provide for pedestrian safety.
7.13	Are sidewalks required on both sides of street?	Yes			Except along single-loaded streets, which have lots on one side only at the discretion of the Planning Director (13.5.I).	Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of the street in commercial and industrial zones, and on at least one side of internal residential subdivision streets.
7.14	Is a minimum sidewalk width established?	Yes			Minimum 4' width set. (13.6.I)	Sidewalk minimums should take into account the nature of the street and the anticipated volume of pedestrian traffic.
7.15	Is a maximum sidewalk width established?		No			
7.16	Do sidewalks provide access to amenities such as parks and open space?		No			Pedestrian facilities should provide uninterrupted routes to public amenities such as parks, libraries, schools, etc.

7.00 Streetscape features	Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
7.20 Are standards set for curb cut frequency?		No			Limiting curb cuts limits the potential conflict between pedestrians and vehicles, and increases pedestrian safety.
7.30 Are impervious surfaces minimized?		No			
7.40 Are provisions made for street lighting?	Yes			Section 14.46	
7.50 Are provisions made for traffic calming?		No			Where street design speeds encourage speeding, traffic calming features should be allowed to create conditions conducive to walking and bicycling, and to discourage the routine use of local residential streets by through traffic.
7.60 Are different streetscape features applied to different districts (e.g. transit districts)?			DNA		

8.00	Transit Zones	Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
8.10	Are transit zones specifically established?		No			
8.11	How is their location determined?			DNA		
8.12	Are park-and-ride facilities provided for?		No			
8.13	Is a nodal-approach or a systems-approach used (I.e. transit oriented development or transit corridors)?			DNA		
8.14	Are HOV lanes in use or planned?		No			

Infrastructure						
9.00	Infrastructure	Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
9.10	Are impact fees established for new development?					Where impact fees are established, lower fees should be established where excess infrastructure capacity exists to encourage compact development.
9.11	Schools?					
9.12	Water?					
9.13	Sewers?					
9.14	Park facilities?					
9.20	Are differential impact fees established to encourage infill or brownfield development?					Infill and brownfield development should be encouraged in areas where unused public facility capacity exists. Fees in these areas should be lower than those imposed on greenfield developments. Differential impact fees are justified by the cost of providing increased capacity and concomitant service and maintenance costs to extensions.

9.00	Land Subdivision	Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
9.11	Are a wide range of lot sizes allowed within each zone?		No		Both maximum density(Chapter 8) and minimum lot sizes are established (Chapter 11).	Establishing large minimum lot sizes effectively precludes a mix of housing types and affordability levels within neighborhoods.
9.12	Are a wide range of lot sizes allowed within each subdivision?		No		Within the double bind of minimum lot size and maximum density, the range of lot sizes may only be theoretically wide. With 11 residential zoning districts established, there is probably wider variation between districts than within subdivisions.	Allowing a wide range of lot sizes permits a variety of housing type and range of affordability which facilitates residents' remaining in their neighborhoods as their needs and circumstances change (life cycle planning).
8.20	Are various parcel configurations allowed?		No		Minimum frontages are established; side lot lines that are perpendicular to straight street lines or radial to curved street lines are required in most instances.	Dictating large minimum frontage requirements contributes to sprawl. Allowing various parcel configurations and clustering of structures promotes the efficient use of space and limits infrastructure requirements.

Zoning						
10.00	Use (Zoning) Districts	Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
10.10	Is development allowed in floodplains?	Yes			But only with review and approval of Floodplain Administrator.	
10.11	Under what conditions?				Specific standards must be met (15.18).	
10.21	Are minimum lot sizes established?	Yes			Chapter 11.	Large minimum lot sizes discourage a mix of uses, and contribute to sprawling land use patterns.
10.22	Are maximum lot sizes established?		No			
10.23	Are small single-family lots permitted?	Yes			In A2.1 (zero lot line) - 5,500 s.f., A2.5 (townhouse) - 2,000 s.f., A2.6 (zero lot line) - 3,800 s.f.	
10.24	Are Rural Residential, Residential Estate, or Suburban Residential lots of an acre or more allowed?	Yes			RE-A1 max density 1 du/ac, cluster development is permitted.	
10.30	Are residential uses encouraged in the CBD or other business/commercial districts?	Yes				Allowing a full mix of compatible development provides for round-the-clock use of the CBD and other business and commercial districts.
10.40	Are distinctions made between infill or brownfield and greenfield development?		No			Infill and brownfield development should be encouraged using mechanisms such as transferable density credits, streamlined permitting, reduced development fees.
10.50	Are density standards established?	Yes				
10.60	Are second units allowed?		No		(9.106)	Second units can provide affordable life-cycle housing options for extended families.

10.00	Use (Zoning) Districts	Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
10.61	By right?			DNA		
10.62	By use permit?			DNA		
10.70	Are manufactured homes allowed in all zones?			DNA	Not specifically prohibited in the UDC.	Manufactured housing can expand affordable housing options.
10.71	By right?			DNA		
10.72	By use permit?			DNA		
10.80	Are minimum residential square-footages established?		No			Minimum residential square-footage requirements may preclude building affordable housing.
10.90	Is fast-track permitting provided for accessory units?		No			

Special Use Districts						
11.00	Mixed-Use Districts	Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
11.10	Are provisions made for Mixed-Use districts?		No		But mixed uses are allowed in GOL, GOH, NC (with CUP), CBD, LC1, LC2, LC3, HC1, and HC2.	
11.11	Do set-back requirements severely limit lot usage?		No			
11.12	Do Floor Area Ratios severely limit lot usage?			DNA	FARs are not established by the UDC except for PUDs and SPUDs.	
11.13	Are building frontage standards established?	Yes				
11.14	Is vehicular and pedestrian connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods required?	Yes			But in practice, waivers are generally granted that thwart the intent of the UDC.	
11.15	Are density bonuses granted in mixed-use zones?		No			
11.16	What parking standards apply?				Parking determined by use.	

11.00	Mixed-Use Districts	Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
11.16	Are parking standards customized for zone?		No			
11.16	How?			DNA		
11.16	Are there provisions for shared parking?	Yes				
11.16	Is centralized parking allowed?	Yes				
11.17	What standards are set for development scale or design elements?	Yes				
11.18	Do landscaping standards preclude efficient lot usage?		No			
11.19	Is private open space required?					
11.20	Is consideration given to open space connectivity?		No			
11.21	What uses are permitted in open space areas					
11.21	By right?					
11.21	By use permit?					
11.30	Are view corridors considered?		No			
11.40	Are provisions made for cluster development?					
11.50	Are compatibility standards established?					
11.51	For home occupation?					

11.00	Mixed-Use Districts	Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
11.52	For commercial ventures?					
11.53	Do safety codes (primarily fire codes) restrict or effectively disallow commercial or home occupation uses?					
11.54	Is consideration given to the zone's relationship to other zones?					
11.55	Are restrictions placed on signage?	Yes				
11.56	Are space ratios (e.g. residential square footage to work area) established?		No			
11.57	Is the number of employees per square foot of work space regulated?					
11.58	Are there provisions for transitions between zones?					
11.59	Are there provisions for design compatibility with adjacent structures?					
11.60	Are there provisions for the preservation of historic structures?					



12.00 Live-Work Districts		Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
12.10	Are provisions made for Live-Work districts?		No		Except for home occupations, no explicit mention is made of live-work arrangements. While residential uses are allowed in most commercial zones, no residential use (other than quarters for watchmen or caretakers) is allowed in industrial zones.	

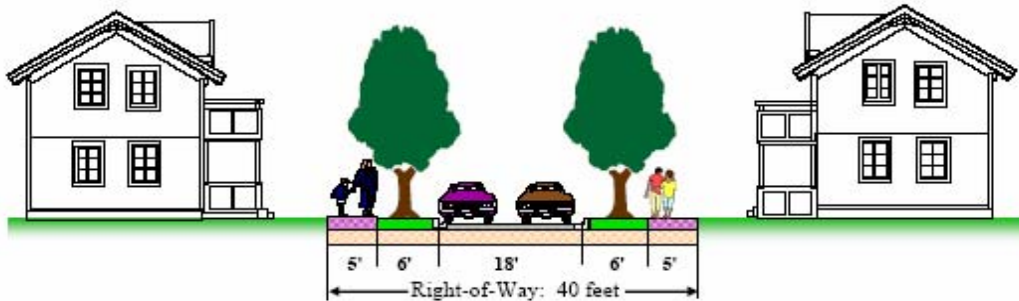
13.00 Planned Unit Development (PUD)		Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
13.10	Are provisions made PUDs?	Yes			Section 8.216; PUDs are only available on parcels 20 acres or larger. SPUDs (Section 8.217) are also established for smaller parcels of 2.5 acres up to 20 acres. PUDs are permitted in nearly all zones. SPUDs are only allowed in districts A1 thru C-AB-1.	
13.20	Is block length regulated?		No		Street plans determined as part of final development plan.	
13.21	Are vehicular or pedestrian connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods required?				Not in practice.	
13.30	Are there set back requirements that effectively preclude certain uses?				Setbacks determined as part of final development plan.	
13.31	Are second units allowed?		No			
13.31	By right?					
13.31	By use permit?					

13.00	Planned Unit Development (PUD)	Yes	No	DNA	Comments	Suggested Standards
13.32	Are manufactured homes allowed?				No indication that they are not.	
13.32	By right?					
13.32	By use permit?					
13.40	Are standards set for development scale or design elements?	Yes			Height restrictions apply in relation to abutting districts; FAR is established for both residential and non-residential uses.	
13.50	Is private open space required?		No		Green common open space is required.	
13.51	Is consideration given to open space connectivity?		No			
13.60	Are provisions made for cluster development?		No		However density and lot dimensions are set as part of the development plan and may allow for cluster development.	
13.70	Are home occupation or commercial ventures allowed in these zones?	Yes			If allowed by the underlying zoning. Home occupations are allowed as accessory uses in districts A1, A2, A3. (9.101).	
13.70	By right?	Yes				
13.70	By use permit?					
13.71	Are compatibility standards established for home occupation or commercial ventures?	Yes			Defined in Chapter 2; no changes to residential character of building, no signage allowed, no shop or store on premise, no non-resident employees, no equipment that is not customarily found in a SFD.	
13.72	Do safety codes (primarily fire codes) restrict or effectively disallow commercial or home occupation uses?		No			
13.73	What parking standards apply to home occupation or commercial uses?		No		No non-resident employees allowed.	

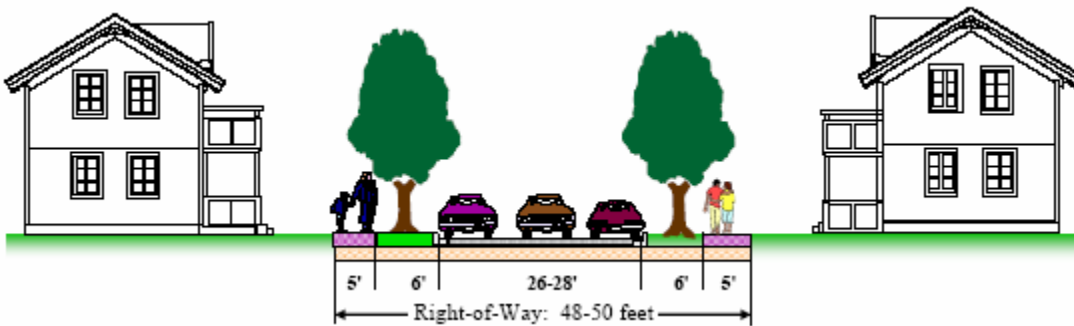
<b>13.00 Planned Unit Development (PUD)</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>DNA</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Suggested Standards</b>
13.73	Do parking standards effectively preclude home occupation or commercial use?			DNA	UDC parking standards apply.	
13.80	Is consideration given to the zone's relationship to other zones?	Yes				
13.81	Are there requirements to provide a mix a housing affordable to all income levels within PUDs?		No			

<b>14.00 Traditional Neighborhood Districts</b>		<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>DNA</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Suggested Standards</b>
14.10	Are provisions made for Traditional Neighborhood districts (TND)?		No			

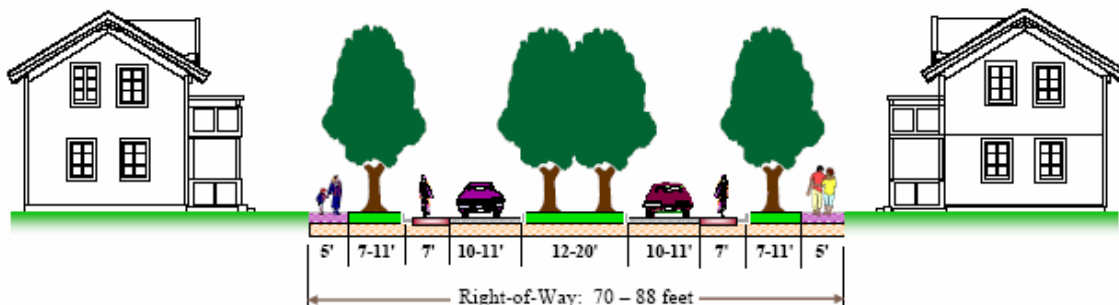
## **Appendix IV: Model Street Hierarchy**



Lane to provide access to single family homes. Designed for average speed of 15 mph. May be supported by alleyway in rear.

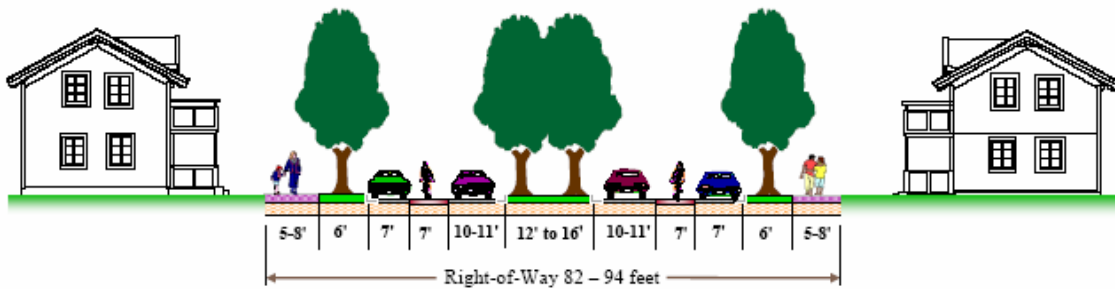


Street to provide access to single family homes. Designed to accommodate speeds up to 20 mph.

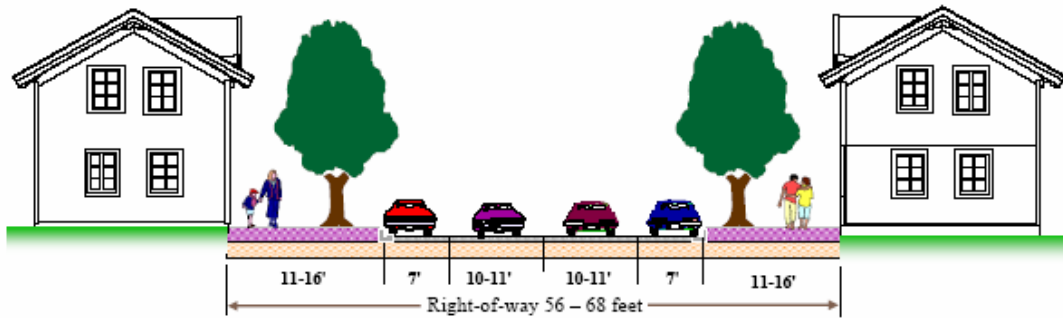


Avenues through mixed residential/commercial districts to connect centers. Designed for speeds up to 35 mph. Accommodates bike lanes or parking but not both.

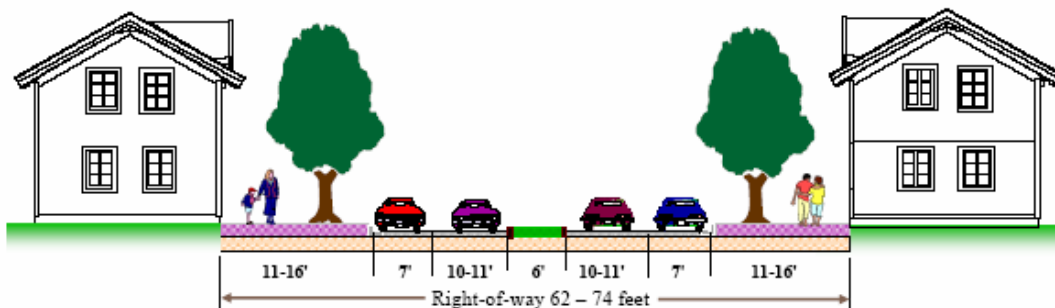
Source: Dan Burden, *Street Design Guidelines for Healthy Neighborhoods*, Sacramento, CA: Local Government Commission, 1999.



Avenue for use in mixed-use (residential/commercial) districts with both on-street parking and bike lane to connect centers. Designed for speeds up to 35 mph.

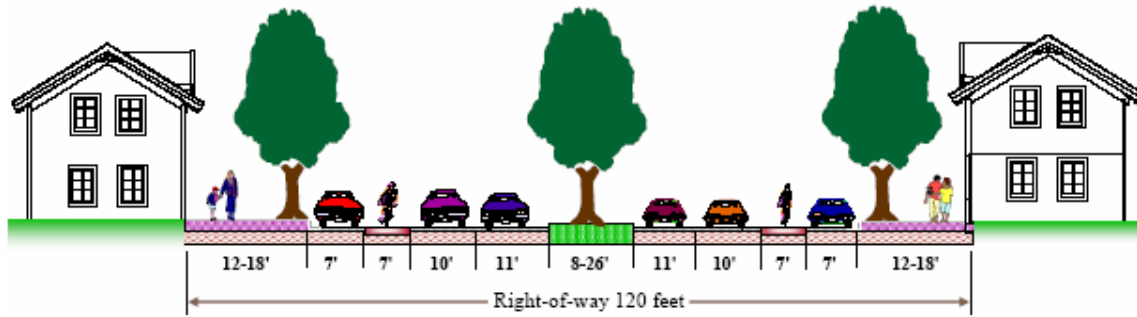


Main street in commercial and mixed-use districts with on-street parking. Designed for speeds up to 25 mph.

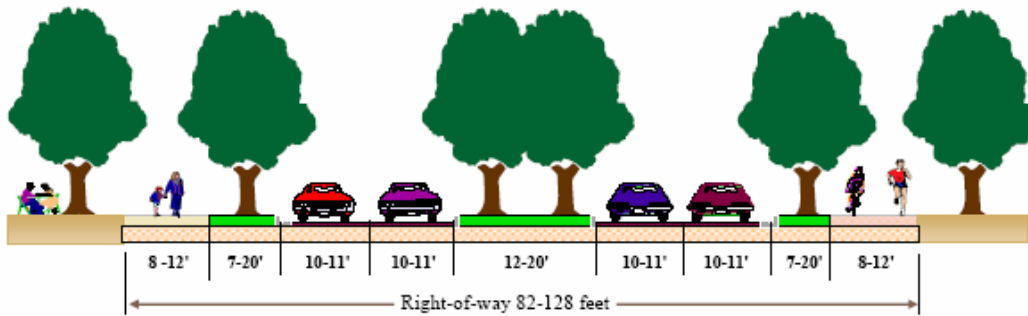


Main street in commercial and mixed-use districts with on-street parking and median. Designed for speeds 20-25 mph.

Source: Dan Burden, *Street Design Guidelines for Healthy Neighborhoods*, Sacramento, CA: Local Government Commission, 1999.



Boulevard designed for speeds of 30-35 mph. For use in mixed-use and commercial areas, and to carry regional traffic.



Parkway designed to bring traffic into developed areas from rural or natural areas. Because it is designed to support speeds ranging from 45-55 mph, it is not appropriate for developed areas.

Source: Dan Burden, *Street Design Guidelines for Healthy Neighborhoods*, Sacramento, CA: Local Government Commission, 1999.

## **Addendum: Response to Public Comments**

Comment 1(Received from an unidentified commenter):

The graphics displaying typical street standards in the Model Street Hierarchy section are confusing. The last two pictures show street standards for commercial and mixed-use districts, but still have a house icon on each side.

Response to Comment 1:

The particular hierarchy included in the report was presented for illustrative purposes only, and as it was taken from another source, the image could not be changed. There are many other street standard schemes that might be used as templates from which to build a customized hierarchy for use in Baton Rouge. The important aspects of any street hierarchy illustrations are the right-of-way and carriage widths, parking arrangements, the location and width of sidewalks, bike lanes and landscape strips, and the orientation of buildings to the street.

Comment 2 (Received from Z. David DeLoach):

Sidewalks are typically built by the City/Parish on roads which eventually are turned over to the State. Once the State takes the road, the sidewalks fall into disrepair, and in many cases are removed if any road work is done. A good example is Bluebonnet Blvd. between I-10 and Perkins. There were good sidewalks which would allow a person to walk to the business along Bluebonnet. Most of those sidewalks were removed during a road construction project by the State. DPW also feels sidewalk width of 4 ft. is sufficient, since they are only supposed to be used for walking. It is actually illegal to ride a bike along a sidewalk.

Response to Comment 2:

Sidewalks are an essential element of smart growth plans because they not only allow but encourage pedestrian activity. We would suggest that the City/Parish pursue an intergovernmental agreement with the State of Louisiana to ensure that sidewalks built along roads eventually taken over by the State, such as Bluebonnet Blvd., remain in place and be properly maintained.

We still maintain that the minimum sidewalk width should 5-feet. In mixed-use and commercial areas, sidewalks should range between 6 and 12-feet. These are widely accepted standards. They are not intended to permit bicycles to use the sidewalks, but to permit people to walk comfortably side-by-side, and for walkers to pass by strollers or wheelchairs without having to step off the sidewalk.

Comment 3 (Received from Z. David DeLoach):

Enforcement is very difficult and in many cases non-existent. The Bluebonnet corridor is another good example. The first “Overlay District” in the Parish was established as UDD 1 along Bluebonnet between Jefferson Highway and Gail Dr. (Near I-10). After almost a year of negotiation, study, public meetings, etc., a set of guidelines were established to direct the types of development which would take place in this corridor, which had been carved through



the middle of a residential neighborhood. I was an initiator of this project and a participant in the development of the guidelines.

Immediately the lines establishing the boundary of the corridor were challenged, and were actually sent by the Planning Commission to the Council to make the determination about the expansion, after the UDD 1 was established by law. The lines have not been changed as of yet, but there have been several attempts.

When the construction began, the developers began to whittle away at the rules, trying to place a building a foot into the buffer areas, using lighting which is out of compliance, and failing to install the required landscaping. The Permitting, Enforcement, Parish Attorney's office, and Tree and Forestry office have been aware of many of these violations and have admitted that there are violations, but are quick to say it is very difficult to "force" a developer to comply, because the rules are not clear enough.

Each of these departments was party to the development of the rules, and now they can not enforce the rules because they are not specific enough and are subject to interpretation.

For over one year there has been an effort to have developments in the UDD 1 brought into compliance, and only recently has there been any positive move made by one developer. Did you know that by the admission of one department head it takes over nine months to get a violation corrected?

Without a strong set of clear rules, developers have free reign to build, and force the City Parish, to either fight or allow the developer to interpret as they see fit. This causes developments to be presented to residents looking one way, with all the amenities presented as the development plan was conceived, only to have the development turn out quite different.

As long as the residential community sees itself as the party who must force the City Parish to enforce rules which are presently on the books, as long as developers can present a quality development to a Civic Association, only to create a different product, as long as residents can see themselves as carrying the burden of the developers disregard and uncaring attitudes, the residents will continue to fight against many of the ideas presented in this document. Only when the development community can guarantee what they show is what will be constructed, will the residential community come together in support of Smart Growth.

Response to Comment 3:

We believe that codifying smart growth principles is the only way to ensure that these standards are applied consistently over time. While guidelines may be established to confine project approval negotiations within certain parameters, once those negotiations have been concluded and the project is approved, the conditions of approval are no longer 'guidelines' but requirements that must be enforced by building and planning officials.

Enforcement of regulations is a critical element of any planning effort. Once a plan has been presented and approved, only very minor changes should be allowed at the staff level without opening up the plan once again to public scrutiny. Developers who do not follow approved construction plans or adhere to the conditions of project approval must be required to bring their construction into compliance. Laxity in enforcement, for whatever reason, encourages

developers to defy the rules under the belief that” it is easier to ask for forgiveness than to ask for permission.”

Comment 4 (Received from Z. David DeLoach):

Plan Baton Rouge should be more involved in the controversial development schemes in this Parish and take a stand to send a message about which way we want our Parish and neighborhoods to go, and take a more active role in seeing to enforcement of the development rules. It will be only with a helping hand that the political will to establish these rules and enforce them be generated.

Response to Comment 4:

In our report, we recommended that a grassroots organization be formed to take the case for smart growth to the community. It is possible that the mission of such an organization might also include “watchdog” duties.

Comment 5 (Received from Dana Brown):

The most important comment I have to make is regarding the structure of the document. I don't wish the team to restructure it completely, but rather expand or revise the Executive Summary. The recommendations related to each Smart Growth Principle are very clearly organized and written. The more specific UDC recommended changes shown in the tables at the back of the document are very important -- but a bit difficult to grasp. I suggest grouping the more than 30 items (some are repetitive) into categories, such as:

Infill Development

Pedestrian Access/Walkability

Street Hierarchy/Connectivity/Streetscape Design Development Lots Setbacks & other requirements (including maintenance of property)

Open Space/Landscaping

Response to Comment 5:

While we appreciate the comments related to the form of the report, the requested changes are beyond the scope of this project.

Comment 7 (Received from Dana Brown):

Also, is it possible for the team to identify not only those recommendations which are not covered by the UDC (the tables show this), but also what should be the means of addressing those issues? -- incorporate into the UDC, create another mechanism (I hope not), incorporate the recommendation into some other regulations (not just the Planning Commission's UDC)-- like the Master Streets Plan, DPW maintenance plans, etc.

Response to Comment 7:

Due to the budgetary constraints of the project, the only documents reviewed were the Horizon Plan and the Unified Development Code. As we noted in the report, there are other documents that are relevant and will need to be examined, and perhaps revised, for consistency. These are tasks which will have to be undertaken by the City/Parish.

Comment 8 (Received from Dana Brown):

I would also suggest the team consider strengthening and emphasizing the need for implementing traffic impact fees, and expanding or increasing other impact fees.

Response to Comment 8:

We understand that a traffic impact fees ordinance is being considered by the City/Parish. When carefully researched and well-crafted, such ordinances can be very effective in directing growth and building efficient infrastructure systems. As we noted in the report, differential fee structures are a particularly effective way to discourage leap-frog development, and to encourage development in contiguous areas and in areas where underutilized infrastructure exists. Infill development, for example, might be exempted from or pay substantially lower impact fees for sewers, streets, and schools.