



## **LOUISIANA SPEAKS**

**Our Voice. Our Plan. Our Future.**

**A LONG-TERM COMMUNITY PLANNING INITIATIVE OF THE LRA**

# **DOWNTOWN LAKE CHARLES CHARRETTE REPORT**

**PLANNERS:**

**DUANY PLATER-ZYBERK & COMPANY**



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- Each element, consists of:
- A simple **OBSERVATION**
  - A thorough **DISCUSSION**
  - One or more **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**SUMMARY** This plan proposes to revitalize Downtown Lake Charles by certain means, principal among which are the following:

- To reconnect the downtown with the lake by extending the urban fabric over the large and valuable stretches of waterfront that are currently dedicated to surface parking.
- To redesign the water's edge to be conducive to public use, while incorporating techniques for storm surge and flood mitigation.
- To bring a canal or water amenity to the existing commercial main street (Ryan St) thereby increasing its economic viability.
- To create predictable outcomes by means of a practical plan and code, thus enticing private developers to become active.
- To resolve access and other traffic problems, and to initiate an urban pattern that supports transit.
- To integrate several projects that were under consideration before the hurricane.
- To catalyze post-hurricane housing construction of a certain baseline quality.
- To achieve this quickly by taking advantage of opportunities created by the hurricane.
- To provide an urban downtown plan that works as a model for using environmental building techniques and protections recommended in the UDA Tool Kit and Pattern Book.



Major Randy Roach speaking



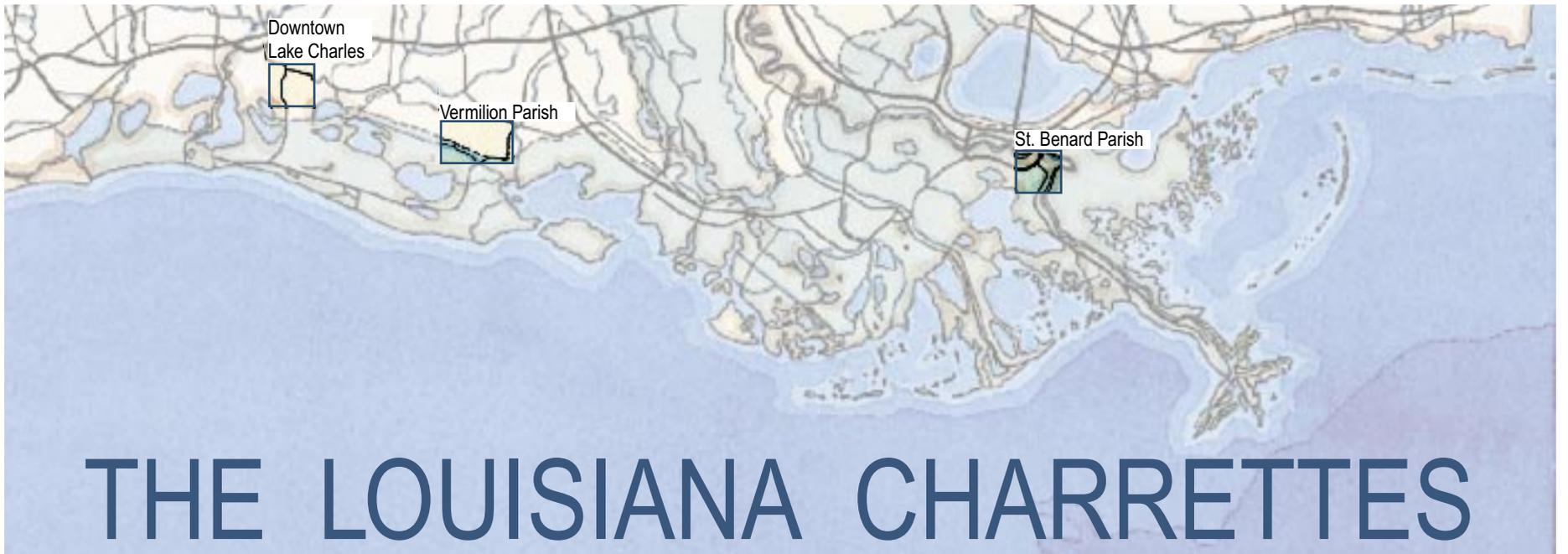
The charrette team at work



Andrés Duany presenting the plan



The City Council voting on the Resolutions



Responding to the devastation of hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Governor Kathleen Blanco created the Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) dedicated to rebuilding Louisiana safer, stronger and smarter. While the impacts of these two hurricanes catalyzed this mission, a comprehensive reform had been necessary prior to August 2005. The various cities, towns and landscapes along the southern Louisiana coast had already required reform in order to be competitive in the 21st century.

The LRA plan tackles the challenge of rebuilding on four scales. At the largest scale is a regional plan stretching from Texas to Mississippi. Calthorpe & Associates will execute this plan, and deliver it in Spring 2007. Informing this regional plan is this series of localized planning exercises at the scale of the parish or municipality,

which were held by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) during February and March 2006. Working along the coast from west to east, DPZ held design charrettes addressing the city of Lake Charles in Calcasieu Parish, three small towns in Vermilion Parish and suburban St. Bernard Parish. At the parish level, local planners have identified initiatives for both recovery and future growth, which DPZ coordinated into the charrette work. Combining the experiences at the charrettes with independent research, Urban Design Associates (UDA) will create a rebuilding “toolkit,” which will provide reconstruction advice at the scale of the individual building or house. The toolkit’s techniques and conclusions will be made widely available to communities along the coast.

The three charrettes summarized in the charrette reports address the range of typical conditions in areas affected by both Rita and Katrina, as well as specific conditions from the months immediately following the hurricanes. Furthermore, the communities engaged by charrettes, in the west, center and east of the state, are areas of distinct cultures and engage a range of situations, from the rural to the urban.

The first charrette created a comprehensive planning strategy for downtown Lake Charles, which, like many downtowns in the US, was undermined by the decentralized growth and the planning policies of the 1950s to 1970s. The second charrette focused on the agricultural area of Vermilion Parish. Vermilion’s parish seat, Abbeville, had deteriorated on account of a highway bypass and the beginnings of sprawl. The nearby small towns of Erath and Delcambre had severely flooded and provide typical examples of what is to be done under such

circumstances. Yet, these towns’ agricultural areas were not only heavily damaged by flooding, but also compromised by recent international trade agreements and long-standing business trends. For the third charrette, DPZ initially intended to focus on Arabi, which is situated close to New Orleans, and is representative of an urban neighborhood behind a levee. However, the planners expanded their scope to include the entire developed area of St. Bernard Parish, which was one of the most extensively damaged parishes in Louisiana.

All of these places had one thing in common. They were in damaged condition prior to the hurricanes. Despite its marvelous location on a lake immediately adjacent to the main artery of Louisiana (I-10), and its good quality inner-city neighborhoods, downtown Lake Charles was

still very much under-utilized. It was a downtown where not much happened unless a festival was in process. Vermilion Parish, with its hundreds of thousands of acres of agricultural land, had also been declining, with its rice-packing plants closing. The salinity of the soil caused by the hurricane was not the only problem, as CAFTA -- the Central American Free Trade Agreement -- essentially made the local agricultural industry uneconomical. Accordingly, the decline of local agriculture, along with the the spread of suburbia from Lafayette, encroached the much-loved Acadian landscape. Abbeville, the parish seat, had a downtown with virtually no commercial activity, despite a decade of “Main Street” programs; the towns of Erath and Delcambre faced aging populations, increased rentals, and little discernible new growth. This was perhaps due to the recurring flooding, which was not all due to hurricane activity. Finally, the neighborhoods of St. Bernard Parish, despite their great location in close proximity to New Orleans, had experienced no growth in the past ten years. This parish missed the greatest housing boom this nation has ever known, and was in decline long

before the hurricane.

The three areas selected for charrettes are locations that required a great deal of planning attention; attention that they may never have received, had it not been for the impact of the 2005 hurricanes. If the recommendations shown in this report are utilized and implemented, something positive may have emerged from the disaster.

Andrés Duany





**IT'S ALL COMING TOGETHER**

Neighborhood planning in South Louisiana is a critically important part of the recovery, but it's only one part. For the whole region to thrive, planning must occur at every level of recovery, with plans for buildings, neighborhoods, parishes and the whole South Louisiana region. The Louisiana Speaks effort works on all four levels, with planners working together to help the region recover from the storms and create a plan for sustained growth.



The Louisiana Speaks charrettes have been engaging residents to come up with rebuilding plans.



**BUILDING PLANNING**

Over the coming years, thousands of houses and businesses will be rebuilt in South Louisiana. To ensure that the structures you build today will be the foundation for tomorrow, they must be built safer, stronger, and smarter. This includes stormsafe techniques, sustainable design, “green” building design, and other innovative building technologies. All this information, plus best practices for community planning, will be provided in two widely distributed “tool box” booklets developed by Urban Design Associates. The first, an architectural Pattern Book, will be available online and at area retailers.



**NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING**

The architecture and planning firm Duany Plater-Zyberk has already worked with residents of several communities damaged by the hurricanes to come up with replicable rebuilding and improvement plans. Two of these innovative plans have already been adopted by local governments and are being moved forward. As more and more neighborhoods rebuild, they will serve as the “building blocks” for the parish and regional plans.



**PARISH PLANNING**

Beginning immediately after the hurricanes, planners worked with citizens and elected officials to identify priority projects for both recovery and future growth. Included in these projects are road repairs, water and sewer repairs and support for housing programs—features that will benefit all the neighborhoods in each specific parish. Many priority projects identified through this process will be incorporated into the scenarios created in the long-range regional planning process.



**REGIONAL PLANNING**

As all the other planning initiatives take shape, regional planning brings them all together. South Louisiana is more than just a collection of towns and cities. We are all connected, and our futures are intertwined through our wetlands, highways, and regional economies. The LRA is working with a team of top national and local experts, led by Calthorpe Associates and Fregonese Calthorpe Associates, to help create plans for future growth that balance our region’s safety, history, environment, social fabric, and economy.



## DOWNTOWN

# LAKE CHARLES

### **Lake Charles Before the Hurricane:**

*Population: 70,000  
Median household income: \$30,800  
Persons below poverty level: 20%  
Median housing unit value: \$72,000  
Housing Units: 31,500*

### **Lake Charles After the Hurricane:**

*Evacuees absorbed: 10,000  
Housing units destroyed: 24% (7,600)  
Housing units damaged: 60%  
Debris recovered: 5.73M cubic yards*

**Lake Charles**, located in southwestern Louisiana, is the seat of Calcasieu Parish and the fifth largest city in the state. Bisected by Interstate 10 (I-10), the city is 140 miles east of Houston and 120 miles west of Baton Rouge. The downtown is located on the Calcasieu River, which emerges into the large, attractive lake for which the city is named.

Governor Blanco's Louisiana Recovery Authority (LRA) commissioned the plan for rebuilding downtown Lake Charles as part of the Louisiana Speaks recovery efforts. A team from Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company orchestrated the plan, working through a public planning charrette that took place from February 4th to February 11th, 2006. During the charrette, eighteen designers worked in the presence of those who must make the planning decisions and those who will live in the communities designed. When the week concluded, the City Council, led by Mayor Randy Roach, approved a set of resolutions to activate the plan.

The charrette plan will enable the people of Lake Charles to take advantage of the creative possibilities that have arisen from the combination of the hurricane destruction and the federal funding that has become available for its mitigation. Most notably, the charrette plan for downtown Lake Charles shows that downtowns can find creative solutions to safeguard against storm surge and flooding, while also improving real estate value and development possibilities.

The charrette masterplan is confined to the Lake Charles downtown, as defined by I-10 to the north, Python Coulee to the south, Lake Charles itself to the west, and the approximate edge of the residential neighborhood to the east. This is an area of approximately 500 acres, comparable in size to the 1998 plan of Downtown Baton Rouge (also by DPZ) and about six times the size of the French Quarter of New Orleans.

The downtown has an advantageous location astride I-10, which is the principal east-west artery of the entire Gulf Coast. The downtown is also located

directly on the scenic lakefront and is immediately surrounded by high-quality neighborhoods to the south and east, including several historic areas. Despite these great adjacencies, the downtown is nevertheless under-occupied and under-valued. A very high proportion of its real estate is vacant or abandoned, with much of the land allocated to open parking lots and in some cases even reverting to pasture.

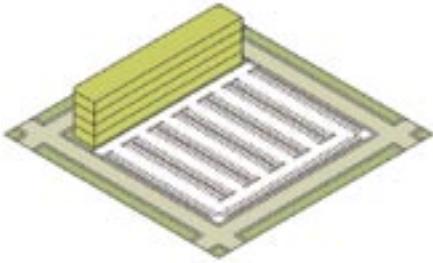
Like many American downtowns, Lake Charles was devastated by the centrifugal forces of suburban sprawl, but most of all, by the downtown planning policies of the 1960s and 1970s. Among these were the pedestrianization of the main street (already removed), the extensive demolitions in order to create parking lots that shredded the continuity of the urban fabric, and the introduction of suburban-style codes. The city is also stifled by a civic center complex, which blocks the city from the lakefront, and by Lakeshore Drive that does likewise.

The charrette masterplan looks to rectify these errors and provide the downtown with a masterplan encouraging mixed-use pedestrian-friendly development, and capitalizing on the downtown's terrific environment and regional location. The plans, codes and tools within this report will enable local planners and activists to move ahead with implementation.

The charrette team included:

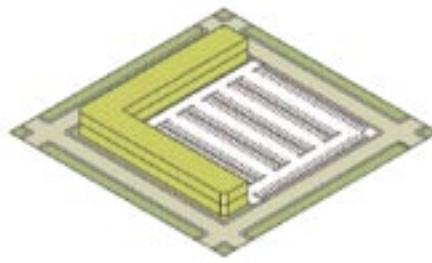
Senen Antonio, Eusebio Azcue, Katharine Burgess, Andrés Duany, Debra Hempel, Xavier Iglesias, Don Kendzior, Matt Lambert, Jorge Planas, Peter Quintanilla, Rachel Merson and Galina Tahchieva, of Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company; Steve Oubre and Kally Sere, of Architects Southwest; Bill Allison, Allison Anderson, Howard Blackson, Bruce Donnelly, Diane Dorney, Norman Garrick, David Goldberg, Susan Henderson, Robert Muhammad and James Wassell, consultants.

## DENSITY ANALYSIS



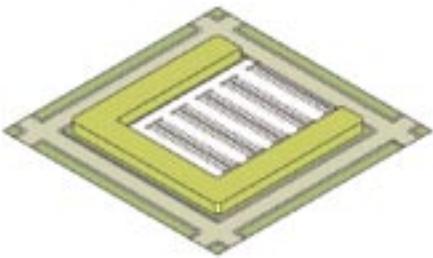
Perimeter Block 1 (1-A Street)  
Parking Provided: 329 Spaces

Residential Options: 329 spaces at 2 spaces/unit = 164 units  
164 units at 1,200 sf = 196,800 sf  
Commercial Options: 329 spaces at 1/300 sf = 98,700 sf



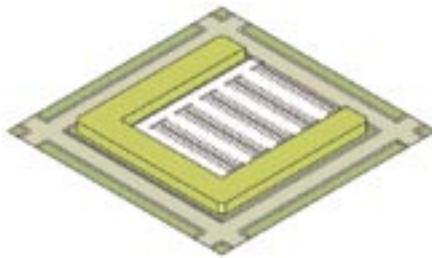
Perimeter Block 2 (2-A Street)  
Parking Provided: 246 Spaces

Residential Options: 246 spaces at 2 spaces/unit = 123 units  
123 units at 1,200 sf = 147,600 sf  
Commercial Option: 246 spaces at 1/300 sf = 73,800 sf



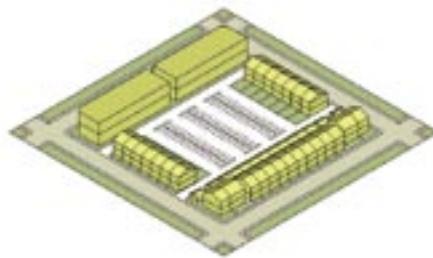
Perimeter Block 3 (3-A Street)  
Parking Provided: 171 Spaces

Residential Options: 171 spaces at 2 spaces/unit = 85 units  
85 units at 1,200 sf = 102,000 sf  
Commercial Options: 171 spaces at 1/300 sf = 51,300 sf



Perimeter Block 3 (3-A Street)  
Parking Provided: 590 Spaces

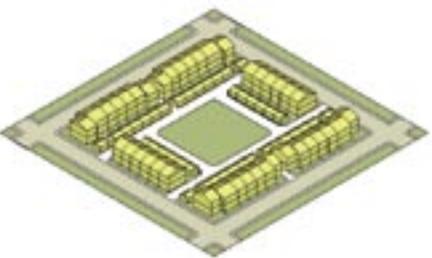
Residential Options: 590 spaces at 2 spaces/unit = 295 units  
295 units at 1,200 sf = 354,000 sf  
Commercial Options: 590 spaces at 1/300 sf = 177,000 sf



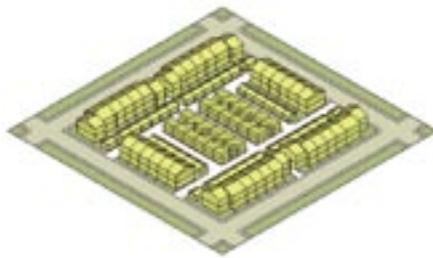
Block and Attached (Interior Parking)  
Parking Provided: 96 Spaces

Residential Options: 96 spaces at 2 spaces/unit = 48 units  
48 units at 1,200 sf = 57,600 sf

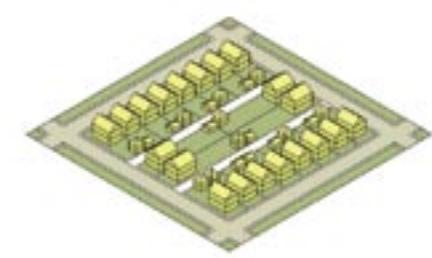
Commercial Options: 96 spaces at 1/300 sf = 28,800 sf



Attached Housing (Interior Park)  
Residential Lots: 1,072 sf / 24 (average lot width) = 44 units



Attached Housing (Interior Mews)  
Residential Lot: 1,680 sf / 24 (average lot width) = 70 units



Detached Housing (Alternative Four)  
Residential Lots: 1,040 sf / 50 (average lot width) = 20 units

These diagrams show what can actually be built on a typical block, given the available parking. The parking translates to density and building heights. The first three diagrams show surface parking with perimeter block buildings masking it on one or several sides. The fourth diagram shows a parking structure being "lined" on all four sides of the block. Other variations show combinations of apartments townhouses, mid-block mews, and single-family houses.

### OBSERVATION

The existing code of the downtown area of Lake Charles is not correctly calibrated to the city's practical density.

### DISCUSSION

Most American downtowns are saddled by codes that cause inadvertent suburbanization, or drastical over-zoning. Downtown Lake Charles is no exception. The code suburbanizes the city by requiring an over abundance of parking, while failing to require its masking from the pedestrian on the sidewalk. In retrospect, the code has fostered widespread building demolition.

Lake Charles is also over-zoned, as a result of a widespread and simplistic policy from the '70s, which attempted to make downtowns more attractive by making their land more valuable. This had the inadvertent effect of raising land values to the point of stifling development, leaving everyone waiting to sell for maximum profit. A large high-rise would allow a single developer to "win the lottery," by absorbing the available market for years while, leaving the rest of the land virtually fallow. The few high-rises and the many open lots of Lake Charles are a testament to the consequences of such a system.

Politically, it is not easy to properly rezone a downtown so that all lots can be developed or "filled in" to benefit all landowners (as opposed to the single "winner"). This requires demonstrating that the parking requirement and not the coded height or F.A.R. is a rational cap to density. The diagrams to the left show the parking count and the corresponding density and building heights. These diagrams are based on the typical square block of Lake Charles, and would be slightly different for the more common elongated block pattern of other cities.

The first three diagrams show surface parking with perimeter block buildings masking it on one, two and three sides (such buildings are called "liner" buildings). The masking building would create pedestrian-oriented A-streets, with the open sides acting as the B-streets. This demonstrates that, with surface parking as the control, it is not necessary to allocate more than four stories by code, and that, with three sides masked, buildings would not likely exceed two stories. The fourth diagram shows parking within a deck (usually no more than five stories) being masked on all four sides of the block. This tops out at four stories, with as many as 80 units/acre. Allowing more height would be unnecessary, as it would otherwise create taller buildings that would mask fewer sides of the block.

The subsequent diagram demonstrate a variety of residential building types, such as apartments with townhouses, townhouses with a mid-block garden, townhouses with mews units and single family houses on alleys. These variations (as would others that are not represented here) again show that it is not necessary to code the downtown area for more than four stories. Exceptions could be made for buildings with views on the proposed Civic Center land. The Civic Center will, for the first time, bring buildings to the lake view, and there should be a provision that permits as many as six stories.

From this analysis, the existing buildings and future civic buildings are exempt: existing buildings will be grandfathered by the code at whatever height they are, and civic buildings are varied so that they always require permitting by negotiation rather than by regulation.

### RECOMMENDATION

Recalibrate the downtown zoning to a practical density using parking capacity as the control.

PEDESTRIAN ANALYSIS



Two images of downtown: the one on the top depicts good frontages along Ryan Street; the other is an example of poor frontages along the same street.

**OBSERVATION**

Most of the downtown area of Lake Charles is not particularly attractive to pedestrians.

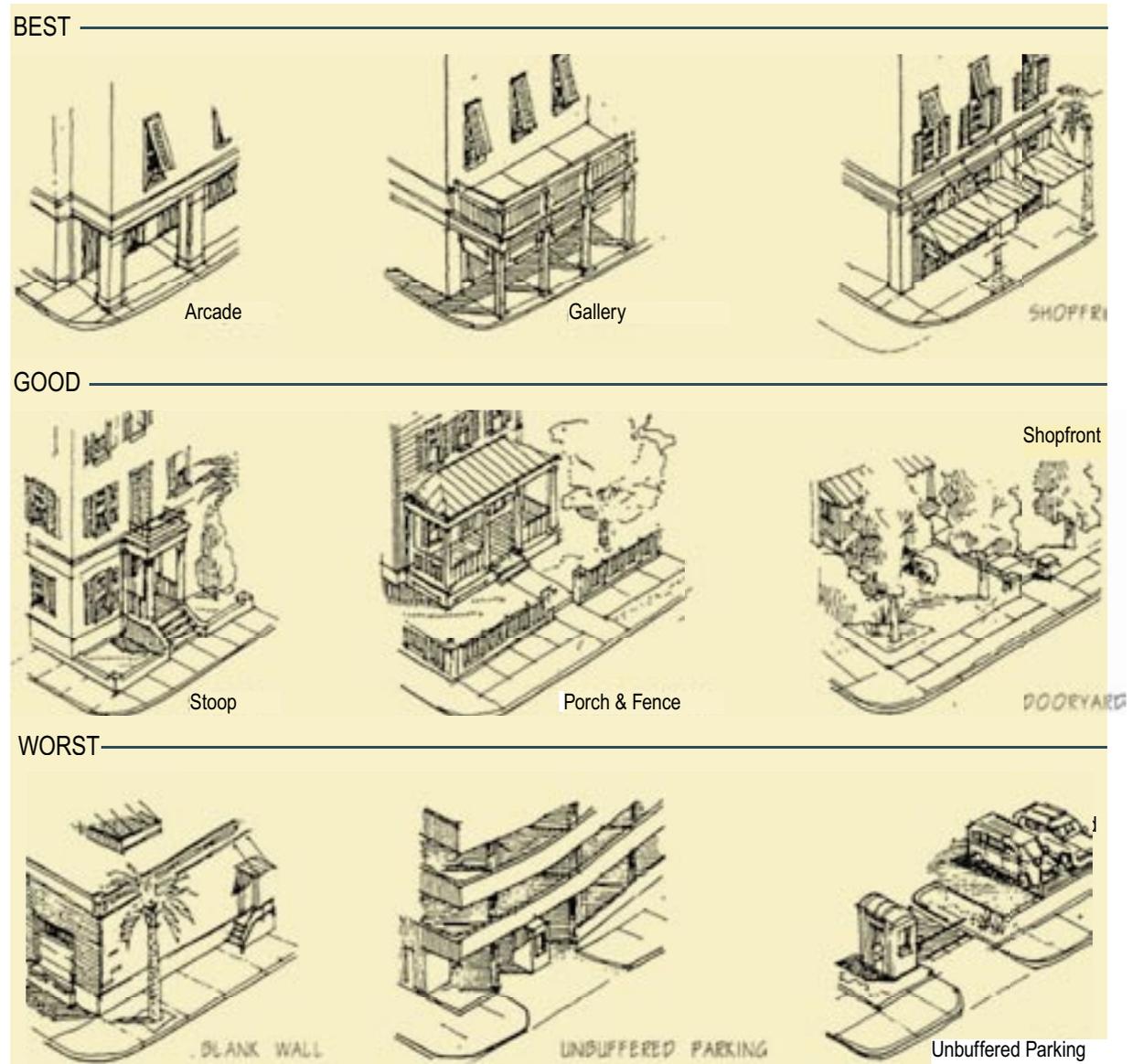
**DISCUSSION**

An environment conducive to pedestrian activity is the principal factor that grants urban areas a competitive advantage over newer suburban subdivisions, shopping centers and office parks. People shopping for dwellings and businesses looking for premises will choose the available suburban locations unless the downtown offers a viable pedestrian activity. Suburban developments have many advantages, but they are intrinsically unable to support active pedestrian life.

To be successful, pedestrian environments must be mixed-use, with residences, shops and workplaces, as well as entertainment venues that enables the area to become a relatively complete 24-hour city. Beyond the program, the street must be designed to calm traffic and be visually interesting.

Many studies have uncovered the attributes of an interesting streetscape. There is consensus that one of the most important aspects is the frontage. A frontage is the way in which a building meets the sidewalk on its first floor — i.e. the stimulus that the pedestrian walks past. There is a gradation regarding what frontages are most attractive and which are least. The most attractive by far are shopfronts, followed by dwellings with short setbacks equipped with stoops or porches, then followed by houses with deep common lawns (which are neutral). Finally there are the progressively negative blank walls, parking garages and open parking lots.

A cursory survey of downtown Lake Charles shows that there are few of the better frontages and many of the worst. This is a legacy of the misguided planning policies of the '60s and '70s that promoted massive building demolition to create parking, followed the theory that parking would allow downtowns to



This diagram shows typical pedestrian frontages, ranging from the most pedestrian-friendly to the least pedestrian-friendly.

## PEDESTRIAN ANALYSIS

compete with the suburban shopping centers. In fact, downtowns can never compete with suburban shopping centers on the basis of the former doing what the latter does best — providing parking. Downtowns compete only where they have the advantage of an active pedestrian life. Even where downtown Lake Charles has good frontages, they are discontinuous and are constantly interrupted by parking lots, blank walls, etc. Starting with its existing assets, the downtown must be woven together again.

The charrette team executed a comprehensive frontage study to determine the allocation of the best and worst frontages (see graphics). The analysis rated the pedestrian experience based on comprehensive observation using the array of typical frontages diagrammed below. Yellow denotes the best ones, orange denotes the good ones, and the blue denotes the poor ones--those which are unlikely to be willingly experienced by pedestrians. Derived from this pedestrian analysis, the designers created a proposed allocation of A-streets and B-streets. The proposed masterplan will mandate that the A-streets be infilled by the highest - quality of frontage, while the less-attractive B-streets allow for

an immediate allocation of the proportion of poor frontages that are inevitable in an automobile-based society. The B-streets may subsequently be developed as A-streets at a later phase, when all the downtown land is sufficiently valuable to warrant such a change.

This pedestrian analysis becomes the basis of the regulating plan, which is supported by the proposed form-based code. The code and plan will promote the creation of a pedestrian-friendly downtown, and support the actions proposed by the A & B street grid.

### RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the regulating plan and Smart Code (further discussed later in this document) to enforce the “A & B Street” grid.



This pedestrian analysis of the frontages in the downtown shows a rating of pedestrian experience based on comprehensive observation using the typical frontages of A-1.1. Yellow denotes the best frontages and the good ones, the orange denotes the acceptable, and the blue denotes the poor ones, which are unlikely to be willingly used by pedestrians.



Derived from the pedestrian analysis A-1.3, this diagram shows the proposed allocation of A-streets in yellow and B streets in blue. The proposed Code and Regulating Plan (See Element I-1) will encourage the A streets to be in the first phase and supported by best-quality frontages. The B-streets following or allowing the allocation of poor frontages are also inevitable.

## INITIAL MASTERPLAN

### OBSERVATION

The downtown requires a plan or code that provides the kind of predictable outcome essential to attracting real estate investment. Also, any new plans should take advantage of the downtown's principal amenity - its waterfront.

### DISCUSSION

Upon arrival, the charrette team encountered plans for projects that had been under consideration since before Hurricane Rita. Having efficiently overcome the clean-up and infrastructure problems cause by the storm, the city and planning board of Lake Charles were intent on proceeding with these prior plans. These plans included the creation of a wetlands museum called America's Wetland Discovery Center (AWDC), the construction of a set of canals similar to the San Antonio Riverwalk, a possible new casino, the refurbishment of the Civic Center, an improved waterfront park associated with the removal of the highway called Lakefront Drive, and a connection to North Lake Charles and the Calcasieu River. All of these plans were incorporated into the charrette team's new masterplan.

Also considered were the FEMA Recovery Projects relevant to the downtown plan. In addition to designing, redesigning and integrating as many of these projects as possible, the plan produced by the charrette team added a substantial proposal for the Civic Center area as well as a general strategy for revitalizing the existing urban fabric. The master plans are not regulatory documents; rather, they illustrate the desired outcome to be fostered by the actual regulatory documents, principal among them are the Regulating Plan and the Code.

The team produced several versions of the plan, all of which use similar strategies to revive the Lake Charles downtown. However, while the most ambitious plans suggest the addition of canals downtown, others offer planning strategies which would be easier and less costly to implement. These three plans are explored on the following pages.

Six months after the initial charrette, the team returned to further refine the plan selected. This "final plan" is introduced in the subsequent section of this report.

### RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a new Lake Charles masterplan to encourage development, following the proposed Regulating Plan and Code.



Illustrative Masterplan for Downtown Lake Charles.

INITIAL MASTERPLAN



This diagram shows the existing buildings in the Lake Charles downtown.



The proposed buildings shown along the A-Grid only. This version shows the casino option instead of the canal.



The existing and proposed buildings together: a potential scenario for Downtown Lake Charles Circa 2020.

## INITIAL MASTERPLAN - MAIN STREET CANALS



### OBSERVATION

The retail on Ryan Street is not supported by the principal amenity of the region, which is the lakeshore.

### DISCUSSION

Ryan Street is Lake Charles' traditional Main Street. It was still viable as late as the '70s, but began to decline when new suburban shopping centers undermined it. An ill-conceived pedestrianization program, accompanied by widespread demolitions in order to accommodate parking, further destroyed its vitality. Today, with very few exceptions (an excellent gym, a few restaurants and cafes) there is very little to draw pedestrians downtown. Many storefronts are empty, and most are underutilized as offices.

Prior to the charrette, the City Council had conceived a bold plan to bring the lakefront to the main street by digging a pair of canals modeled after the very successful San Antonio Riverwalk. The plan created two cul-de-sacs of water, surrounded by ill-defined open spaces and very suburban building types. Canal systems can be problematic if not well-executed. Issues that can arise in Lake Charles include stagnant water, underutilized frontage, high speed roads impeding pedestrian traffic to the lake front and other connectivity problems.

The charrette made counterproposals to address these issues. The first involved creating a hydrologically viable canal loop. The design would be urban

along its trajectory, and therefore similar to that in San Antonio, but also much like the streetscapes of Amsterdam. The canal would reach Ryan Street, creating a stunning view directly upon the entrance from I-10. Yet, although this plan is the best of the three proposed plans in terms of supporting Ryan Street, it may be undermined by the location of underground cable infrastructure. Accordingly, a back-up plan was developed, which shortens the canal loop to avoid the infrastructure and incidentally maintain a hotel which is on the site. Both of these man-made islands are made larger (and their valuable real estate increased) when the dirt that is removed is re-deposited eastward to a permitted bulwark line which is well into the lake. This is a less difficult project which would institute redevelopment by creating very attractive real estate. However, the plan does not support the retail on Ryan Street adequately and it is therefore recommended that, despite the greater difficulty, the extended canal be implemented. Note that both of these proposals remove the highway (Lakefront Drive) which separates the park from the waterfront. The principal waterfront would be to the South, with the Civic Waterfront Proposals.

There is an alternative. In the event that a casino decides to locate downtown—and this was a distinct, and desired, possibility during the charrette—an additional plan is provided. This plan, which accommodates the casino, appears in all the plan illustrations. The casino was designed in consultation with two casino experts and it approximates a workable plan – including two hotel towers and a “gaming room” at the center of everything. The plan promotes a casino embedded in traditional urban fabric, sharing its visitors and perhaps its cafes with the downtown. In return, the patrons of the casino would have a wider experience with shops, restaurants and a waterfront, all of which has been proven to extend the stay of such tourists.

The implementation of the larger canal or the embedded casino would require a concerted act of will by the Mayor and City Council, with the funding derived from the establishment of a TIF district. Moreover, a large proportion of the land is currently under municipal ownership and its sale would raise the funds for the infrastructure modification. The tax profile of the Gulf Opportunity Zone would add substantially to the financial viability of this project.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Create a TIF district to support this project, and clear the constraints to the sale of municipal land. Recruit experienced downtown developers by means of an RFP.



This canal reaches to Ryan Street, creating a stunning vista. Like the San Antonio Riverwalk, this would create a regional draw for both tourist and shoppers.

## INITIAL MASTERPLAN - MAIN STREET CANALS

### PRE-CHARRETTE DOWNTOWN CANAL PLAN



This plan, prepared by Lake Charles leadership prior to the charrette, was the first to examine the possibility of canals extending towards downtown, yet it models the canals on suburban cul-de sacs. The charrette team continued using the canal concept, but radically changed the design to extend the canals into the downtown's urban fabric, and activate Ryan Street.

### CHARRETTE PLAN - WITH FULL CANALS



This plan is the most ambitious of the three created by the charrette team. The key feature is the long canal loop that reaches Ryan street, supporting it. The plan creates a great deal of valuable real estate on the island, but could prove expensive, as it requires the rerouting of major underground infrastructure and the removal of an existing hotel.

### CHARRETTE PLAN - WITH PARTIAL CANAL



This back-up plan features a short canal, which avoids the underground infrastructure and incidentally maintains the lone hotel on the site. Though this is a more feasible project than the first design, it does not support the retail on Ryan Street sufficiently. On the basis, the charrette team recommended that the extended canal be attempted.

### CHARRETTE PLAN - WITH PARTIAL CANAL



This plan illustrates how the canals can be created. Both of the canal plans create islands that can be made larger and more valuable as the removed fill is re-deposited westward. This is feasible because

### CHARRETTE PLAN - WITHOUT CANALS

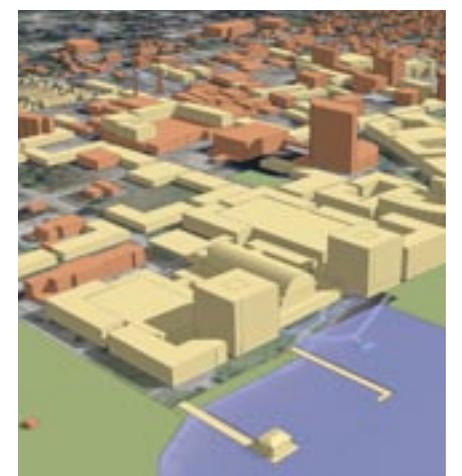


The third plan offers the most modest proposal, and includes a downtown casino, rather than a canal scheme. This casino, which was designed in the presence of two casino experts, includes two hotel towers and a "gaming room" at the center. However, although the programming is conventional, the casino is embedded into the downtown's urban fabric and supports itself by sharing its visitors, and perhaps its cafes, with the downtown.

### MODELS - CHARRETTE PLAN WITHOUT CANALS

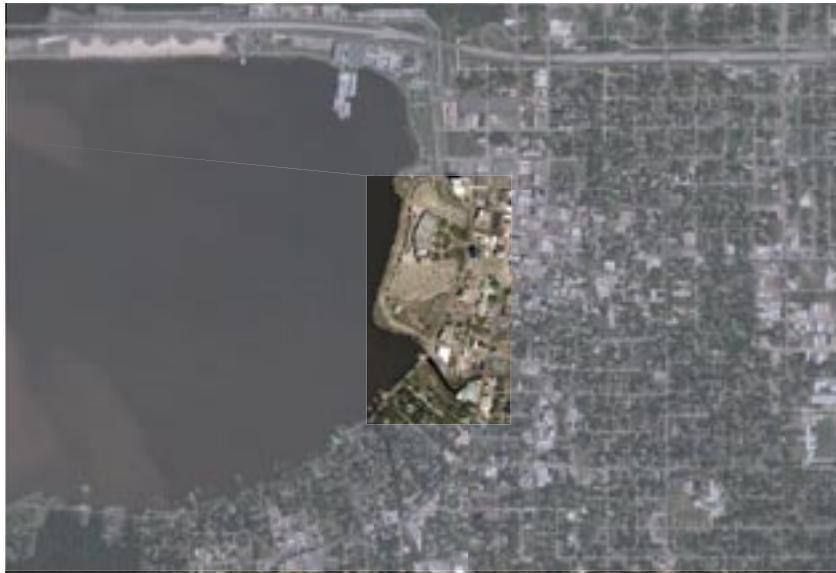


Westward view of proposed casino



Eastward view of proposed casino and marina next to staging area.

INITIAL MASTERPLAN - CIVIC CENTER IMPROVEMENTS



**OBSERVATION**

The area around the Civic Center is the most valuable land of the downtown and it is currently underutilized.

**DISCUSSION**

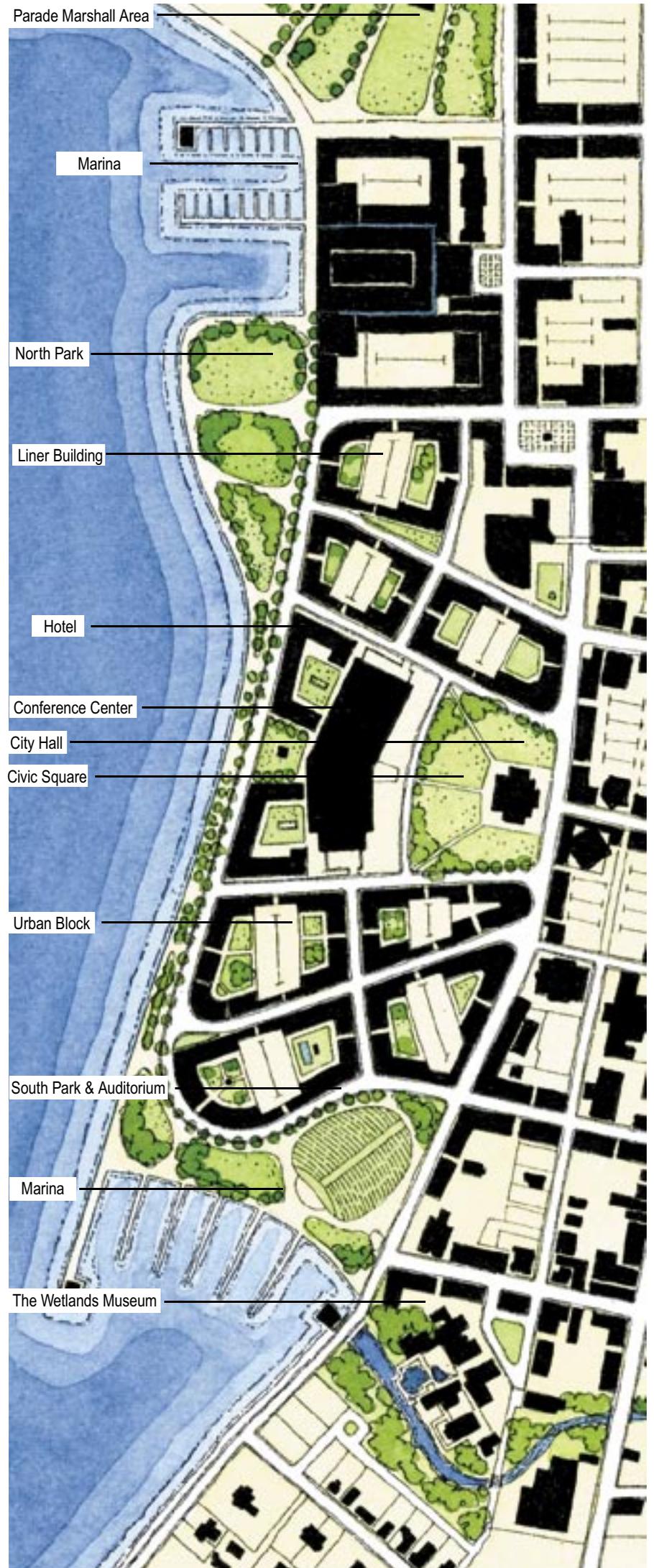
At the time of its construction, the Civic Center was a great improvement over the petroleum tank farm that it replaced. The landfill that it was built upon is currently restricted to its current use by state legislation. This must be changed in order to revive the downtown of Lake Charles, because as presently sited, the Civic Center and its parking lot separate the downtown from its principal amenity, which is the waterfront. Furthermore, the waterfront is severely underutilized because it is not supported by the kind of uses that could give it life.

The Civic Center is currently considered to be a dated facility requiring renovation. This creates an opportunity for rethinking its design, as well as its role as part of the downtown. The Center's enormous surface parking lots, which surround the Civic Center and waste valuable waterfront area, could also be re-envisioned.

While the demolition of the building is being considered, the charrette proposals consider that to be out of the question. The building may be too small to be a modern convention center, but it would be a magnificent conference center if associated with attached hotels. Even the building's aesthetic is neutral and pleasant enough to sustain a transformation into a "green" building with louvers between the columns and a "green" roof overflowing with vegetation.

The potential of the Civic Center lies in the transformation of the enormous amount of land currently wasted by open parking lots. The site could accommodate nine city blocks and a grand civic square. Furthermore, the blocks, being near the waterfront, might prove valuable enough to justify building parking garages shared with the the conference center. It is envisioned that most of the blocks would be residential rentals and condominiums, but the two blocks immediately to the west of the civic center would be prime locations for first-rate hotels enjoying views on one side and direct attachment to the Civic Center on the other. Between the hotels, a gap would allow important rooms in the Civic Center to retain their view of the lake.

The restaurants, cafes and shops associated with the Civic Center and the hotels should open towards the waterfront, making it a grand, walkable esplanade (P-3.2). To the north and south of the Esplanade, new parks would allocate less open space than currently exists, but it would be more



This drawing illustrates the redesigned civic center; the main text and subsequent illustrations will provide more information about its components.



## INITIAL MASTER PLAN - CIVIC CENTER IMPROVEMENTS



informally. At the southern shore, at the mouth of Python Coulee and to the lee of the prevailing winds from the northwest, is a municipal marina that could provide income to the city as well as liveliness to the waterfront. The entire length of the waterfront would be detailed for mooring, as is the habit during the periodic festivals, but the wind conditions would not allow permanent mooring.

On the other side of the Civic Center (to the east), the new blocks would define a formal civic square. The buildings along it could be detailed to match the Civic Auditorium in its “green” incarnation. This handsome and unified square should reserve a site for a new City Hall, which would replace the office building that currently fulfills the role inadequately.

The festivals that currently occur on these parking lots could continue within the square and on the many new streets, much as they do in New Orleans. The marshalling grounds for parades would be the area to the north of the “island,” reserved for this purpose. These improvements would be funded by the sale of the valuable land, currently under municipal or state ownership. Such a transaction would require overturning the original state legislation that originally created the landfill.



### RECOMMENDATIONS

The first step for improvement requires the release of the current site development restraints, which will require modification of state legislation. This should be pursued simultaneously through the creation of a private public partnership agreement and a request for proposals through national advertising. As the Gulf Opportunity Zone tax incentives would be very useful for this kind of commercial development, and as the legislation has a sunset, there is a premium in executing this part of the plan as expeditiously as possible. Flood mitigation and storm surge techniques should be utilized carefully and creatively to address the 10’ floor line.



A drawing of the esplanade with two hotels masking the existing Civic Center. The gap between the two hotels is a plaza corresponding to the window at the middle of the civic center, preserving its view. The proximity of the hotel’s cafes restaurants and shops would support the use of the waterfront esplanade. Parts of the esplanade would be detailed for temporary docking.

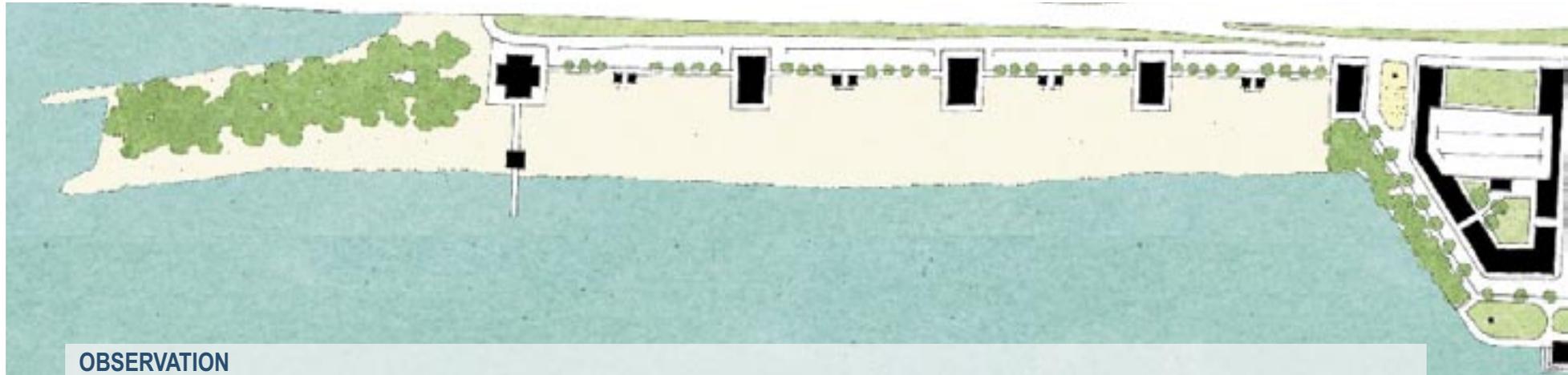


A drawing of the new civic square bounded by the existing Civic Center on the center-right and new residential buildings on the left. The proposed square is the correct proportion for the type, and large enough to accommodate a future city hall that can be dignified and civic in nature. Use of retail space needs to be considered carefully so it will not deplete the commercial energy of Ryan Street and the lakefront esplanade.



These renderings, produced during the charrette, show the waterfront promenade (above) and the Civic Center square (below).

## REVISED MASTERPLAN

**OBSERVATION**

Six months after the charrette, the design team revisited Lake Charles to finalize the plan. The final document ties the downtown urban fabric to the lake, offering a continuous public servitude along the lakefront.

**DISCUSSION**

The final plan both capitalizes on Lake Charles' lakefront location, and allows for the more expeditious and affordable implementation, as the plan does not involve the construction of canals. The continuous public lakefront is a crucial element in the revised master plan, and is poised to become the City of Lake Charles' principal urban amenity.

After the initial Lake Charles charrette, there was an evolution in the design of the waterfront plan, based on new developments such as the casino's decision not to relocate downtown. Moreover, downtown leadership opted to eliminate the canals, in order to begin implementing the masterplan with minimal cost and infrastructure challenges. An additional parcel was also added in the northwest portion of the lakefront, expanding and complementing the parcel previously designed. As a result of these changes, the design team submitted a new master plan to the City's attention. This master plan is an illustrative drawing that is representative of the ideal scenario for this most valuable portion of the City.

The most important element of the plan is the continuous servitude along the lakefront. From a development and urban design standpoint, the specific goals that will be accomplished with the public servitude include the creation of a vibrant public area along the water and the extension of the value of the waterfront into the downtown. These goals can be achieved by maintaining an active flow of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic, as well as connecting the waterfront with the rest of the urban fabric by means of east-west oriented public thoroughfares. The master plan shows a continuous driveway designed carefully as a "necklace" of public spaces and promenades, fronted by dense urban buildings accommodating commercial uses such as cafes, shops and restaurants along the ground level and multi-family or hotel units above.

The typical section of the envisioned public servitude generally covers a minimum of 60 feet and includes a wide sidewalk (minimum of 15 feet width) along the buildings' frontage, two-way vehicular road (mini-

mum of 30 feet), with parallel parking, ideally on both sides, and to the west along the water a continuous pedestrian promenade (minimum of 15 feet width), which may be flanked by palm trees on both sides. The specific design of the servitude may vary in character or detailing along the waterfront, but the ultimate intention is to provide the opportunity for a grand esplanade belonging to the whole downtown and City of Lake Charles, and becoming the City's signature urban amenity.

The activities and commercial uses for this area need to be selected very carefully so they do not deplete the energy of Ryan Street but complement its recovery. The development along the waterfront should be fully integrated with the rest of the Downtown and the parcels should not be designed independently and in isolation and built as "pods" of separate development. Rather, they should be considered blocks of mixed-use continuous fabric.

The new masterplan also includes a new harbor in the northeast corner of the lake, oriented to offer optimal views. To the west, a public beach offers an additional chance for residents and visitors to enjoy the waterfront. Five pavilions, connected by a tree-lined walkway, activate the beach and offer public space and commercial services to visitors.

Liner buildings wrap courtyards and parking decks, which can be constructed gradually, as the downtown real estate gains value and accelerated development becomes feasible. Buildings constructed could include hotels, live/work units and apartment buildings.

Ultimately, the plan will enable downtown Lake Charles to become a mixed-use, 24-hour city with residents able to easily access their retail needs, and public civic space, within walking distance of their homes. The lakefront public promenade will also allow Lake Charles to gain prominence as a regional destination, and should draw new residents and visitors from across Louisiana and Texas.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Adopt the revised master plan, regulating plan and code to jumpstart development in downtown Lake Charles.



REVISED MASTERPLAN



This diagram shows the existing buildings in the Lake Charles downtown.



This diagram shows the infill (denoted in yellow) proposed by the revised master plan.



A view towards the Lake shows the existing buildings and the proposed infill with the downtown gracefully connected to the lakefront.



This view focuses on the waterfront parks, connected by the continuous public servitude along the lakefront.

## HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS



Sector	Project Name	Recovery Value	Cost Estimate
Housing & Community Dev.	Lake Charles Downtown Revitalization	High	120,000,000
Economic & Workforce Dev.	Create a Lake Charles Main Street Program	Moderate	78,000
Economic & Workforce Dev.	Design a Traditional Building Certification Prog.	Moderate	200,000
Economic & Workforce Dev.	Establish a Cultural & Heritage Tourism Initiative	Moderate	1,728,000
Environmental	Create Lake Charles Riverwalk	Moderate	11,000,000
Transportation & Infrastructure	IH-10/Ryan Street Exit and Downtown Access	Moderate	8,000,000
Environmental	America's Wetland Discovery Center	Low	16,722,720

These FEMA Parish Planning projects also support the Charrette proposals.

### OBSERVATION

The existing intersection between I-10 and the downtown is confusing and dysfunctional to the point that it undermines commercial activity.

### DISCUSSION

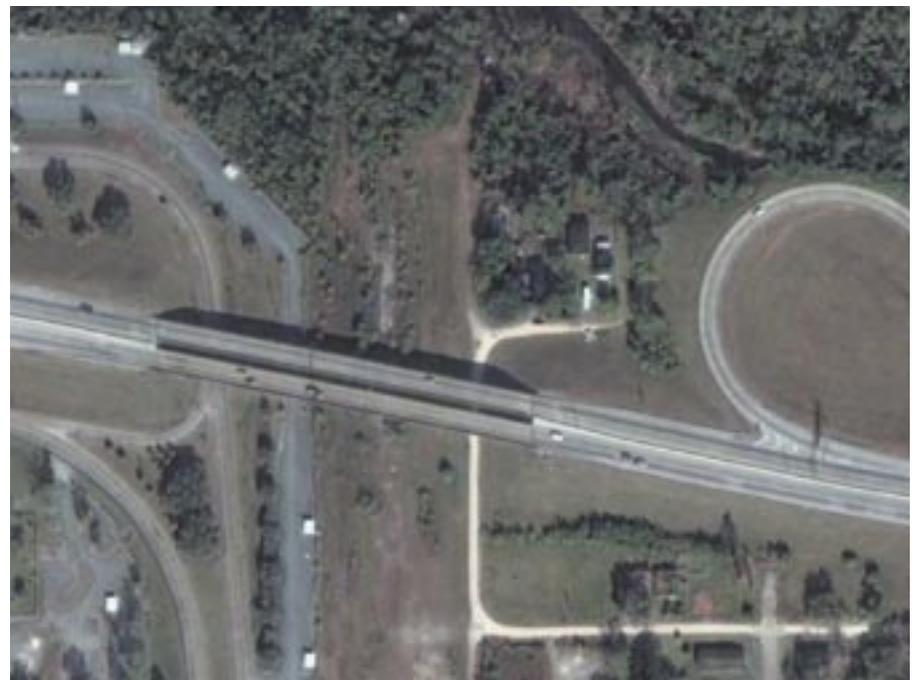
Downtown Lake Charles is exceedingly well-located. It is immediately adjacent to Interstate 10, the principal thoroughfare of the Gulf Coast that connects all of the major cities of Louisiana and Texas to Mississippi. Such close proximity to I-10 would normally provide the commercial enterprises of downtown with economic support. However, it is very difficult to exit the interstate, and, once this is achieved, drivers are subjected to very circuitous loops en route to downtown. Indeed, when approaching from the west, the Lake Charles exit appears well before the downtown is visible. When approaching from the east, the downtown has to be overshoot by a loop in the opposite direction by more than two miles. It is no wonder that downtown retail is moribund while other, much worse retail locations to the north and far south of I-10 are more successful. Moreover, I-10 is a barrier which creates a hostile pedestrian zone on either side, and isolates North Lake Charles. If a future transit station is built on the I-10 corridor, the dead zone will make pedestrian access difficult.

The solution to this problem is deceptively simple: the one-way loop must be shortened and traffic brought to signalized intersections that download traffic to the local road grid, especially Ryan Street (P-4.3). There is a great deal of overlap between the existing and proposed condition. Signage designating the Main Street as a separate entity is also important to the retail health of the downtown, so it should not be expensive to execute. This should be relatively economical as far as DOTD projects go.

### RECOMMENDATION

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

Rationalize the I-10 ramp system by eliminating the Front Street on-ramp and the Ryan Street loop ramp. Build new off ramps from the east and the west. Build continuous frontage roads from Enterprise to Ryan. Make the Lakeshore loop two-way. Provide four traffic signals: two at Front Street and two at Ryan Street. Take the diagram provided and submit it to the Louisiana Department of Transportation. Attempt this with the funding available for emergency evacuation.



Note the existing and proposed conditions above and below respectively. What is missing from the aerial drawing is the mile-long loop to the west (to be located to the right of the aerial). Note that the one-way loop is perfectly compatible with existing traffic flows; also, the four traffic signals are perfectly ordinary on-grade devices. These are essential to affect the transition from highway to service road-street grid. This project is urgent as the vitality of the first commercial steps depends on it.

SPECIAL PROJECTS: NORTH LAKE CHARLES LAKEFRONT AND WETLANDS CENTER



An aerial of the north Lake Charles lakefront, and a rendering of the proposed North Lake Charles plan.



An aerial and rendering of the proposed plan for the America's Wetland Discovery Center (AWDC)

Prior to the charrette, there were two special projects under consideration. The charrette team both critiqued these projects and included them in the master plans; full analysis is below.

**OBSERVATION**

The north Lake Charles waterfront must be developed in a manner complimentary to the downtown master plan. Such a development could be the first step of the recovery of all of north Lake Charles.

**DISCUSSION**

Ryan Street should be upgraded and extended to the river, so that it terminates at a riverfront marina. The area between the highway and the railway should be made available for development, but only for big-box retail such as outlet centers. All smaller shops, offices, condominiums, and apartments must be directed to the urbanized downtown to the south.

The large open area north of the railway, northwest of the downtown, should be retained for a municipal golf course to be built by the developers of the proposed casino. The land could be donated to them for such purpose on the condition that it be built as and remain a public course. Because this is not an urgent project, the City should pursue it only after the downtown and the lakefront work is under way or completed.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Council and Mayor should fund a study to determine whether Ryan Street should be connected with the Enterprise Boulevard/Fitzenreiter Road extension. Because the city should only pursue this project on the heels of the downtown and lakefront redevelopments, it should defer funding decisions until it has been able to recover on those investments and build upon its development experience.

**OBSERVATION**

America's Wetland Discovery Center (AWDC) and the Riverfront Development on North Lake Charles should be incorporated into the master plan.

**DISCUSSION**

The AWDC is at the point of preliminary architectural design. Currently, its design calls for a series of pavilions perched over water just outboard of the waterfront drive. This is very dramatic location, but it is could be problematic for two reasons. First, the facility's location over clear water could make it difficult to demonstrate a wetland. Additionally, the location discourages visitors from contributing to the commercial and cultural life of downtown.

During the charrette, designers found an alternative location at the southern terminus of Ryan Street on Python Coulee. At this site, the facility would be at the base of the commercial street and would serve as an anchor, extending the street's range. This relocation would also neatly complete a pedestrian loop- trajectory that connects Ryan Street with the lakefront Esplanade, the two primary entertainment-retail venues. Ultimately, this location would allow the AWDC to be more widely visited and would benefit the rest of downtown. Furthermore, if the buildings (using the existing pavilionized design) were to be located on the abandoned industrial sites to the north of the coulee, a campaign of wetlands restoration could be executed on the open site to the south.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The AWDC should proceed with fundraising as before . The new site does constitute an additional cost but perhaps ownership could be traded with some of the valuable land opened by the urbanization of the Civic Center.

## TRANSPORTATION POLICY AND TRANSIT



### OBSERVATION

The downtown transportation system requires adjustment and expansion.

### DISCUSSION

Downtown Lake Charles has a street network in place that can support a vibrant, walkable community. Much of the area retains the original layout of small blocks with streets maintaining a connected grid system; many of them are narrow enough to provide a traffic calming effect. Furthermore, the downtown is adjacent to attractive neighborhoods within easy walking distance.

However, certain aspects prohibit the downtown from functioning as a walkable community and a true center for the surrounding neighborhoods and the parish as a whole. The main problems are the following:

- a. Some important thoroughfares are really highways and not streets. In particular, Lakeshore Drive is designed for moving traffic at high speeds, creating a barrier to the lake, which is neither safe nor pleasant for the pedestrian.
- b. There is wasted space on the streets. Some of the thoroughfares have extra lanes that provide more vehicle travel capacity than necessary. In these situations, certain lanes could be assigned to on-street parking.
- c. The only way to get downtown is by car. There is no provision for the transit system that a modern downtown should have.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Provide Ryan Street and the other pedestrian sheds with bus stops and bus service to the following:

- a. The major shopping areas such as the power center at Highway 14, the Prien Lake Mall, the Southgate Mall and the Cottage Shops
- b. The medical centers, including Christus-St. Patrick, Moss Regional Memorial, the Health Unit, and the Lifeshare Blood Center
- c. Employment and service centers such as Chenault Air & Industrial Park and the West Calcasieu industries
- d. Educational centers, such as McNeese University, SOWELA Tech, and the Delta School of Business.
- e. Cultural entertainment centers such as the Civic Center, the AWDC, the Central School, the IMCAL Museum, the Children's Museum, and the various theaters within shopping centers.
- f. Employers should enter into agreements with the transit system to encourage park and ride, carpooling and van pooling. Under the amendment to

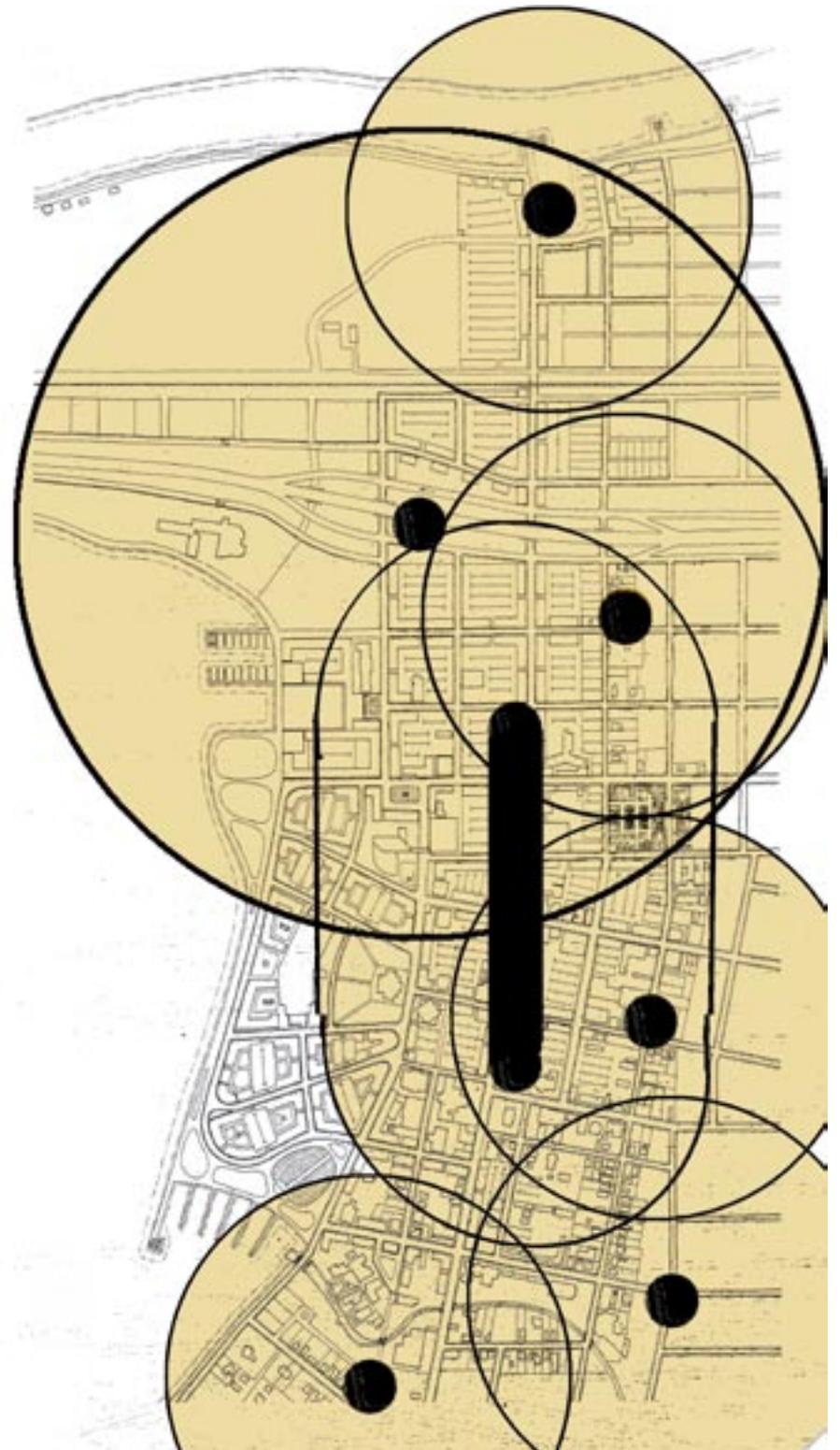
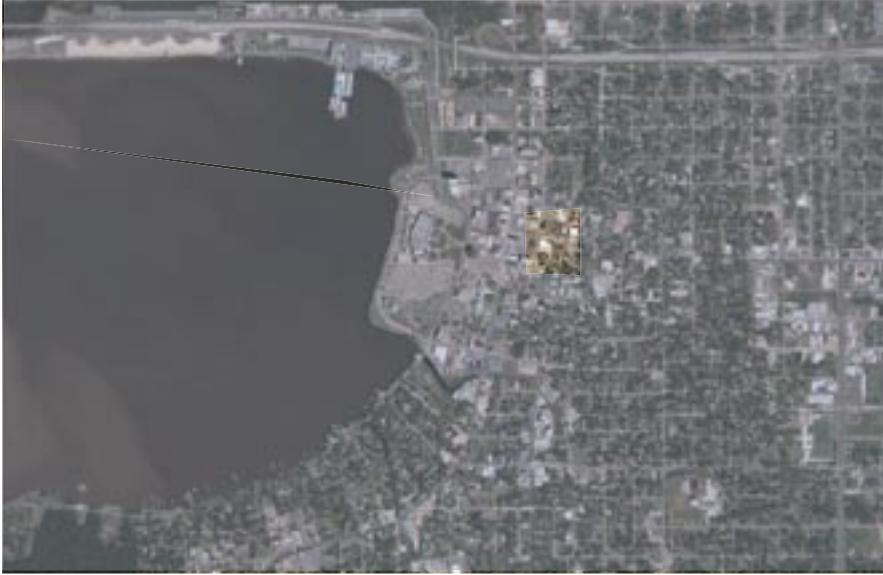


Illustration showing the elongated pedestrian shed generated by Downtown Lake Charles. This along with the smaller circular pedestrian sheds is around 5 minute walk. The bigger shed, generated by transit stop is a 10 minute walk.

Internal Revenue Code Section 132 (f) (4) made by Title IX, section 910, of TEA-21, the Commuter Choice Initiative allows virtually any employer to offer their employees a choice between compensation and "qualified transportation fringes" which included transit, vanpool or qualified parking benefits.

HOUSING OPTIONS



The proposed builder square on Hodges Street showing the diversity of building types including Katrina cottage, livework units, and the new and efficient mews units.

**OBSERVATION**

Lake Charles has lost over 7,000 houses due to the hurricane. They must be replaced expeditiously and affordably.

**DISCUSSION**

Lake Charles, like other regional cities after the hurricane, requires a location wherein the housing types produced by the various builders are available for viewing. Such a place would enable homebuyers to see the available products in an easy and competitive situation, ultimately increasing choice and keeping prices low.

The Louisiana Recovery Authority has created a Housing Resource Center, which will advise and direct those with lost and damaged properties to available funding. It will serve as a “one-stop center” for those looking to rebuild. It would make sense if the Recovery Center were to be associated with the Housing Center.



The Katrina Cottages pictured above, designed by Allison Anderson and Steve Oubre, were designed in a contemporary style, and in the Louisiana vernacular.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

There is an empty block available relatively close to the downtown, that could serve in such capacity. A site plan for it has been designed, which could be a model for future disasters (P-6.1). Jump-starting this initiative would require a private sector or a public-private sector partnership. There is one under construction in Ocean Springs, Mississippi.



An existing plan for an emergency housing community.



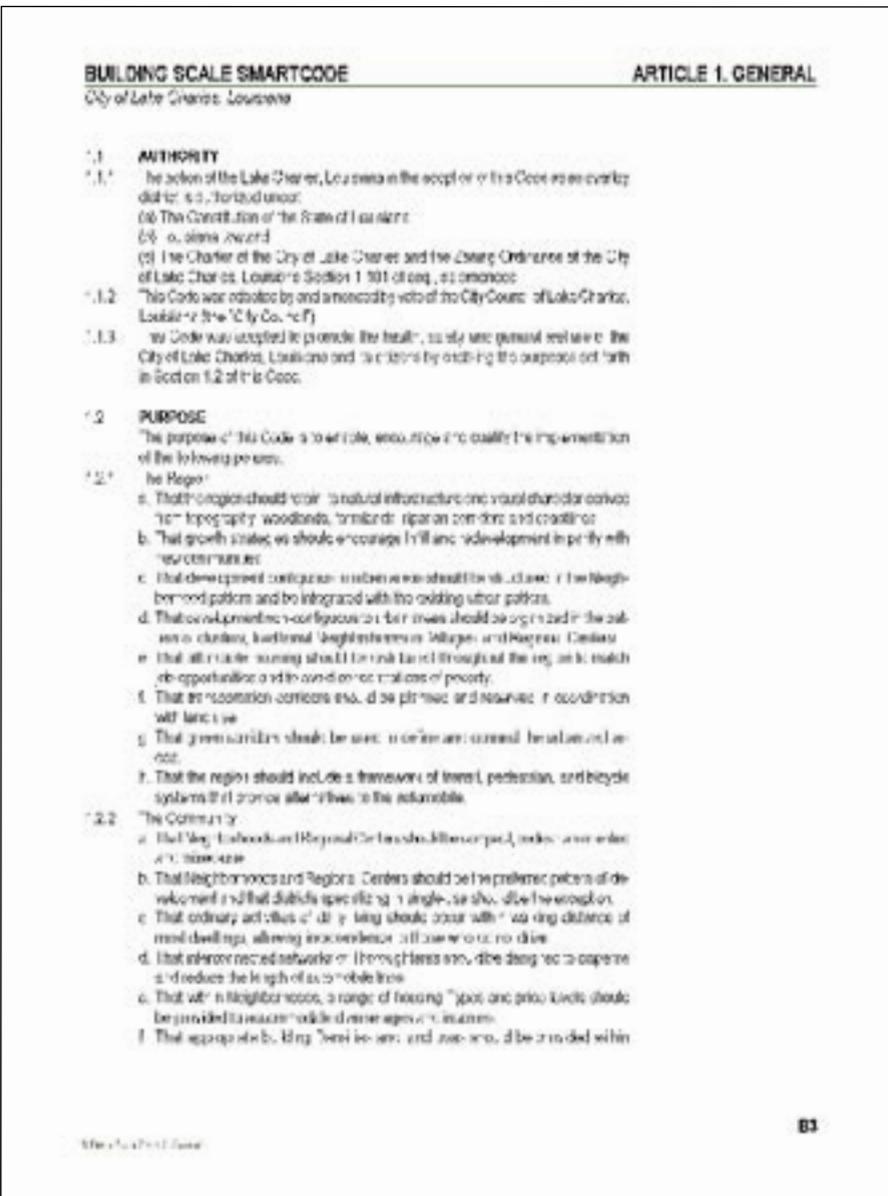
The modified version of the plan to the left includes public space that takes advantage of the site’s waterfront location.

## CODING AND ZONING REFORM

Most of the elements of the Lake Charles master plan are activated and regulated by a proposed Regulating Plan and its associated SmartCode. The Regulating Plan (T-1-1) indicates the various zones applied to the downtown. The lighter shade indicates an area of less intensity. The more intense zone supports the centers of the Pedestrian Sheds (T-5.4). The darker shade indicates an area of most intensity, which is along the waterfront. These are expanded within the text of the Code. The Code itself enables the Master Plan (P1) by assuring specific outcomes.

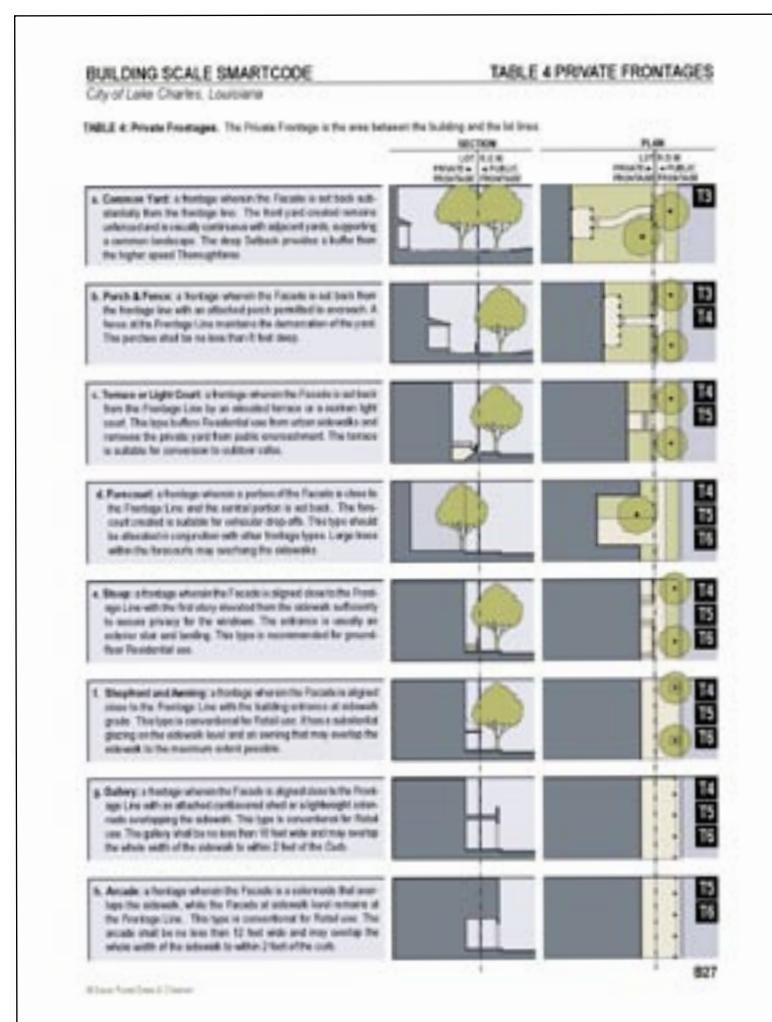
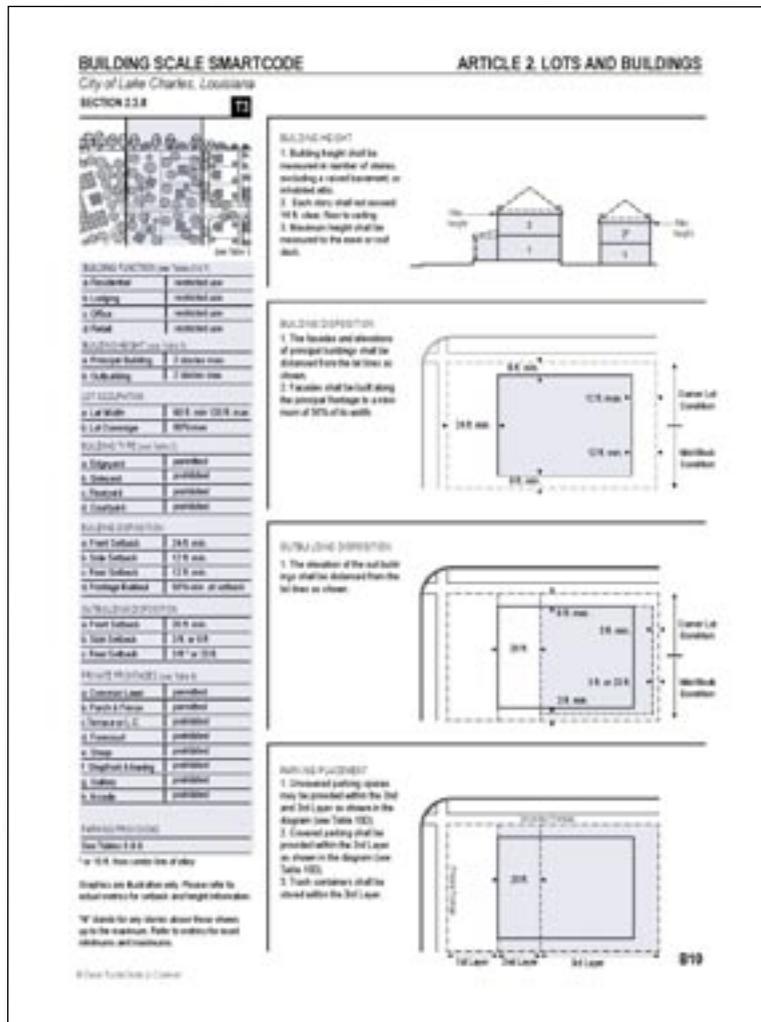
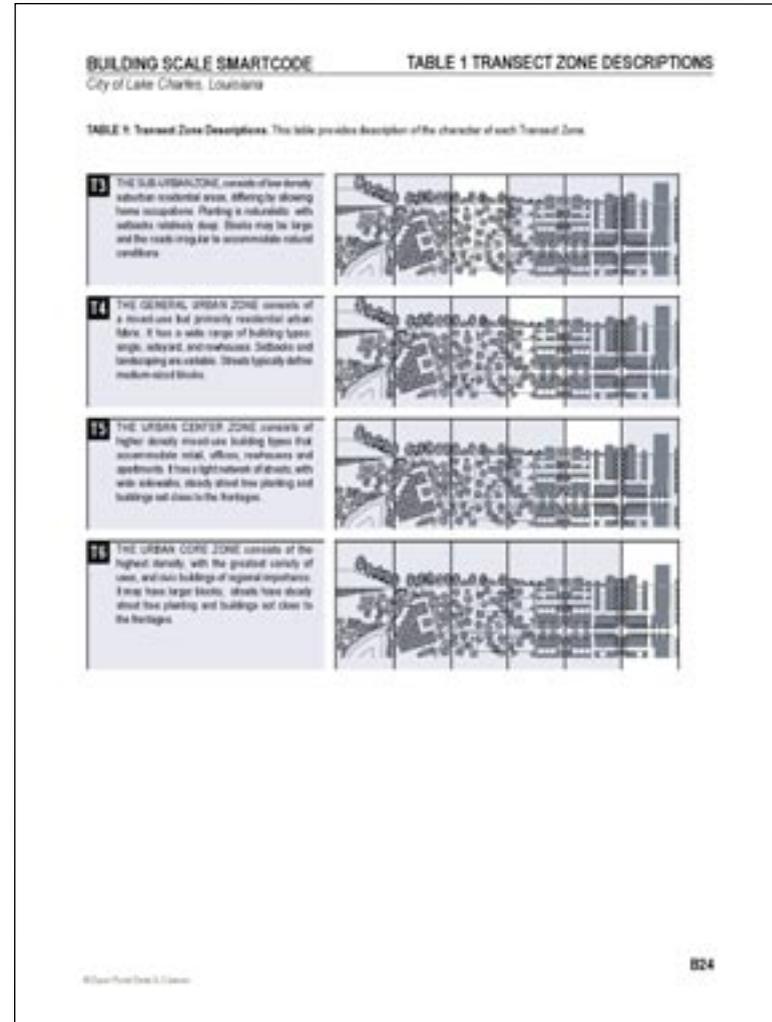
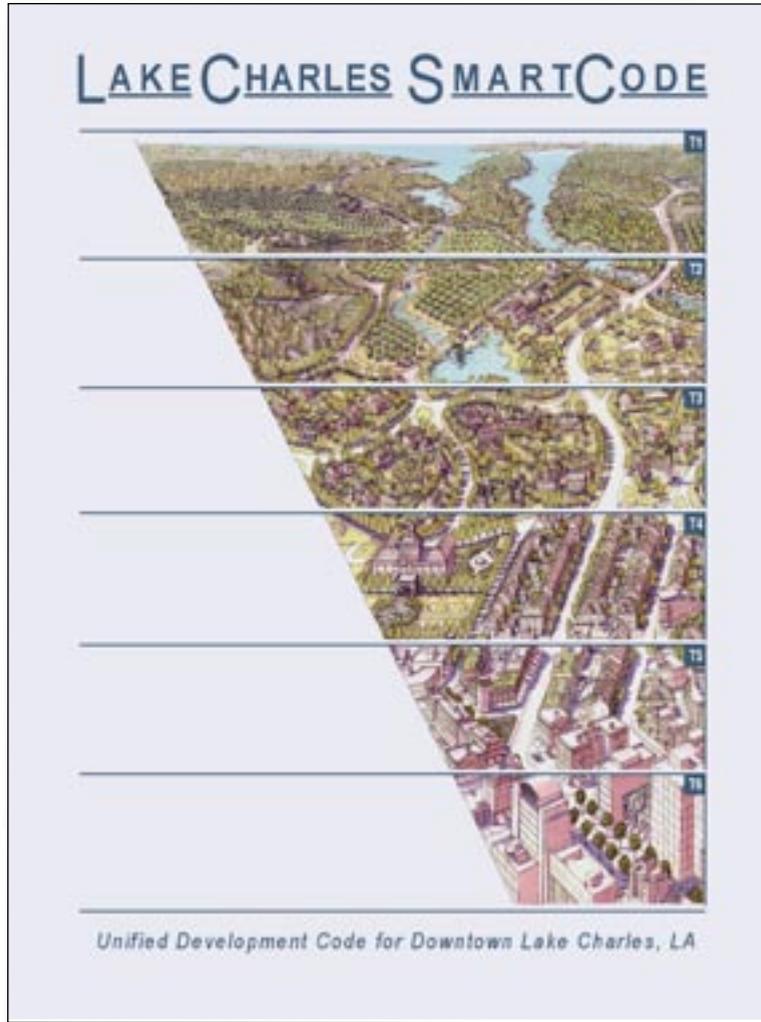
A SmartCode is a type of land development ordinance that unifies zoning, subdivision regulations, urban design and basic architectural standards into one compact document. Also referred to as a “form-based code,” SmartCode addresses the physical form of building and development. Each zone has a graduated set of standards. This SmartCode has been calibrated for Lake Charles downtown and embedded into the City’s zoning code ordinances. Upon recommendation by the Lake Charles Downtown Development Authority, City Council adopted this SmartCode on May 3, 2006. The code and plan can later be adjusted based on direct practical experience. Eventually, Lake Charles will require a complete SmartCode, with all the T-Zones, in order to affect the remainder of the city.

- CIVIC OPEN SPACE
- T3 - SUBURBAN
- T4 - GENERAL URBAN
- T5 - URBAN CENTER
- D - DISTRICT
- CIVIC



A page from the proposed code

The proposed regulating plan



Pages from the proposed Lake Charles Smart Code.

## LAKE CHARLES RESOLUTIONS

The Lake Charles City Council immediately passed nine resolutions following the final presentation of the charrette on February 11, 2006. Mayor Randy Roach drafted them in consultation with the Council. Their example served as a model for the next two charrettes held in St. Bernard Parish and Vermilion Parish.

Resolution Number: 34-06

A resolution to the Planning Commission requesting approval of a proposed amendment to the existing Zoning Ordinance which provides for an expedited appeal procedure regarding administrative interpretation on application of rules and regulations to any project authorized by a Major or Minor Conditional Use Permit.

WHEREAS, the existing zoning ordinance currently provides for an appeal procedure regarding administrative interpretation on application of rules and regulations to any project authorized by a Major or Minor Conditional Use Permit; and

WHEREAS, in many instances, new development, renovation or rehabilitation requires expedited appeal procedures in order to facilitate the process.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA, in Special session convened, that:

SECTION 1: All of the above and foregoing is hereby made a part of this resolution.

SECTION 2: The City Council of the city of Lake Charles, Louisiana, hereby requests the Planning Commission to approve a proposed amendment to the existing zoning ordinance which provides for an expedited appeal procedure regarding administrative interpretation on application of rules and regulations to any project authorized by a Major or Minor Conditional Use Permit.

At a meeting of the City Council on 2/11/2006, this Resolution was adopted by the following vote:

For: A.B. Franklin, Mike Huber, Rodney Geyen, Dana Carl Jackson, David R. Perry, Marshall Simien and Stuart Weatherford

Resolution Number: 35-06

A resolution expressing appreciation to the Baton Rouge Area Foundation and Louisiana Recovery Authority for selecting the city of Lake Charles for participation in the series of charrettes conducted by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) in connection with the development of a long-term recovery plan for communities impacted by Hurricanes Rita and Katrina.

WHEREAS, the mission of the Louisiana Recovery Authority is to plan for Louisiana's future and to coordinate across jurisdictions, support community recovery and resurgence, and ensure integrity and effectiveness while working in collaboration with local, state, and federal agencies. The Louisiana Recovery Authority is also addressing short-term recovery needs while simultaneously guiding the long-term planning process;

WHEREAS, the Baton Rouge Area Foundation established the Louisiana Recovery Authority Fund to finance the development of an informed, equitable strategy for recovering our region's physical, social, and economic infrastructures and will provide external resources and support for the Louisiana Recovery Authority's efforts to implement its vision and mandate;

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Recovery Fund will be used for the following purposes: policy research, issue analysis, local and regional planning support, policy development and leadership, assistance in the development of long term community planning, identification of best practices, communication

of information about key public policy issues, and gathering of public input on policy and planning issues; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the city of Lake Charles expresses appreciation to the Baton Rouge Area Foundation and Louisiana Recovery Authority for selecting the city of Lake Charles for participation in the series of charrettes conducted by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) in connection with the development of a long-term recovery plan for communities impacted by Hurricanes Rita and Katrina.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA, in special session convened, that:

SECTION 1: All of the above and foregoing is hereby made a part of this resolution.

SECTION 2: The City Council of the city of Lake Charles, Louisiana, hereby expresses appreciation to the Baton Rouge Area Foundation and Louisiana Recovery Authority for selecting the city of Lake Charles for participation in the series of charrettes conducted by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) in connection with the development of a long-term recovery plan for communities impacted by Hurricanes Rita and Katrina.

SECTION 3: The Clerk of the Council is hereby authorized and directed to forward a copy of the foregoing resolution to the Baton Rouge Area Foundation and the Louisiana Recovery Authority.

WHEREAS, the mission of the Louisiana Recovery Authority is to plan for Louisiana's future and to coordinate across jurisdictions, support community recovery and resurgence, and ensure integrity and effectiveness while working in collaboration with local, state, and federal agencies. The Louisiana Recovery Authority is also addressing short-term recovery needs while simultaneously guiding the long-term planning process;

WHEREAS, the Baton Rouge Area Foundation established the Louisiana Recovery Authority Fund to finance the development of an informed, equitable strategy for recovering our region's physical, social, and economic infrastructures and will provide external resources and support for the Louisiana Recovery Authority's efforts to implement its vision and mandate;

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Recovery Fund will be used for the following purposes: policy research, issue analysis, local and regional planning support, policy development and leadership, assistance in the development of long term community planning, identification of best practices, communication of information about key public policy issues, and gathering of public input on policy and planning issues; and

WHEREAS, the city Council of the city of Lake Charles expresses appreciation to the Baton Rouge Area Foundation and Louisiana Recovery Authority for selecting the city of Lake Charles for participation in the series of charrettes conducted by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) in connection with the development of a long-term recovery plan for communities impacted by Hurricanes Rita and Katrina.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA, in Special session convened, that:

SECTION 1: All of the above and foregoing is hereby

made a part of this resolution.

SECTION 2: The City Council of the city of Lake Charles, Louisiana, hereby expresses appreciation to the Baton Rouge Area Foundation and Louisiana Recovery Authority for selecting the city of Lake Charles for participation in the series of charrettes conducted by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) in connection with the development of a long-term recovery plan for communities impacted by Hurricanes Rita and Katrina.

SECTION 3: The Clerk of the Council is hereby authorized and directed to forward a copy of the foregoing resolution to the Baton Rouge Area Foundation and the Louisiana Recovery Authority.

At a meeting of the City Council on 2/11/2006, this Resolution was adopted by the following vote.

For: A.B. Franklin, Mike Huber, Rodney Geyen, Dana Carl Jackson, David R. Perry, Marshall Simien and Stuart Weatherford

Resolution Number: 36-06

A resolution to Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) expressing our appreciation for the energy and effort which they have devoted to the development of design concepts and the development standards for the commercial and residential development of the downtown area of the city of Lake Charles and in creating design standards for the Southwest Louisiana Affordable Housing Initiative.

WHEREAS, the City Council of the city of Lake Charles expresses its appreciation to Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) for the energy and effort which they have devoted to the development of design concepts and the development standards for the commercial and residential development of the downtown area of the city of Lake Charles and in creating design standards for the Southwest Louisiana Affordable Housing Initiative;

WHEREAS, the design team of Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company are looking into small houses that would be permanent housing for those displaced by the recent hurricanes, rather than FEMA trailers which will only be used for short-term purposes, thus allowing more people to stay in our area rather than move to other areas.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA, in Special session convened, that:

SECTION 1: All of the above and foregoing are hereby made a part of this resolution.

SECTION 2: The City Council of the city of Lake Charles hereby expresses its appreciation to Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) for the energy and effort which they have devoted to the development of design concepts and the development standards for the commercial and residential development of the downtown area of the city of Lake Charles in creating design standards for the Southwest Louisiana Affordable Housing Initiative.

SECTION 3: The Clerk of the Council is hereby authorized and directed to forward a copy of the foregoing resolution to Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company.

At a meeting of the City Council on 2/11/2006, this Resolution was adopted by the following vote:

## LAKE CHARLES RESOLUTIONS

For: A.B. Franklin, Mike Huber, Rodney Geyen, Dana Carl Jackson, David R. Perry, Marshall Simien and Stuart Weatherford

Resolution Number: 37-06

A resolution by the City Council endorsing the design concepts and the development standards developed by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) for the commercial and residential development of the downtown area of the city of Lake Charles and establishing a suggested time line for implementation of this plan as part of a long term recovery plan for the city of Lake Charles and requesting that the Downtown Development Authority recommend a plan for implementation to the City Council.

WHEREAS, the city of Lake Charles was chosen to host a series of charrettes from February 6 through February 11, 2006 to provide a forum for ideas for city leaders and residents and to offer instant feedback to planners and help build a consensus for the plan;

WHEREAS, Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ), experts in regional design, who presented a plan to the city of Lake Charles in a Special Meeting held by the Lake Charles City Council on February 11, 2006; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the city of Lake Charles hereby endorses the design concepts and development standards developed by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) for the commercial and residential development of the downtown area of the city of Lake Charles and the suggested timeline for implementation of this plan as part of a long-term recovery plan for the city of Lake Charles.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA, in Special session convened, that:

SECTION 1: All of the above and foregoing are hereby made a part of this resolution.

SECTION 2: The City Council of the city of Lake Charles hereby endorses the design concepts and development standards developed by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) for the commercial and residential development of the downtown area of the city of Lake Charles and the suggested timeline for implementation of this plan as part of a long-term recovery plan for the city of Lake Charles.

SECTION 3: The Clerk of the Council is hereby authorized and directed to forward a copy of the foregoing resolution to Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company.

At a meeting of the City Council on 2/11/2006, this Resolution was adopted by the following vote:

For: A.B. Franklin, Mike Huber, Rodney Geyen, Dana Carl Jackson, David R. Perry, Marshall Simien and Stuart Weatherford

Resolution Number: 38-06

A resolution to the Southwest Legislative Delegation and Governor Kathleen Blanco requesting an amendment to LA RS 33:4699.1 et seq. which provides for commercial development, including gaming, on all publicly owned property on the lakefront of Lake Charles in accordance with a plan adopted by the City Council and subject to approval of a majority of the qualified electors of the municipality who vote in the election.

WHEREAS, the mission of the Louisiana Recovery Authority is to plan for Louisiana's future and to coordinate across

jurisdictions, support community recovery and resurgence, and ensure integrity and effectiveness while working in collaboration with local, state, and federal agencies. The Louisiana Recovery Authority is also addressing short-term recovery needs while simultaneously guiding the long-term planning process;

WHEREAS, the Baton Rouge Area Foundation established the Louisiana Recovery Authority Fund to finance the development of an informed, equitable strategy for recovering our region's physical, social, and economic infrastructures and will provide external resources and support for the Louisiana Recovery Authority's efforts to implement its vision and mandate;

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Recovery Fund will be used for the following purposes: policy research, issue analysis, local and regional planning support, policy development and leadership, assistance in the development of long term community planning, identification of best practices, communication of information about key public policy issues, and gathering of public input on policy and planning issues;

WHEREAS, the city of Lake Charles was chosen to host a series of charrettes from February 6 through February 11, 2006 to provide a forum for ideas for city leaders and residents and to offer instant feedback to planners and help build a consensus for the plan;

WHEREAS, Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ), experts in regional design, presented a plan to the city of Lake Charles in a Special Meeting held by the Lake Charles City Council on February 11, 2006;

WHEREAS, the City Council of the city of Lake Charles endorsed by resolution the design concepts and development standards developed by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) for the commercial and residential development of the downtown area of the city of Lake Charles and the suggested timeline for implementation of this plan as part of a long-term recovery plan for the city of Lake Charles.

WHEREAS, LA R.S. 33:4699.1 et. seq., as currently written, imposes certain use and procedural restrictions which make the implementation of the design concepts and development standards developed by Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) for the commercial and residential development of the downtown area of the city of Lake Charles, endorsed by the City Council, impractical. Accordingly this statute(s) should be amended to add a section or provisions which provide for commercial development including gaming, on all publicly-owned property on the lakefront of Lake Charles in accordance with the plan developed by DPZ and endorsed by the Lake Charles City Council.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA, in Special session convened, that:

SECTION 1: All of the above and foregoing are hereby made a part of this resolution.

SECTION 2: The City Council of the city of Lake Charles, Louisiana, hereby supports and requests an amendment to LA R.S. 33:4699.1 et. seq. which provides for commercial development, including gaming, on all publicly owned property on the lakefront of Lake Charles in accordance with a plan adopted by the City Council and subject to approval of a majority of the qualified electors of the municipality who vote in the election.

SECTION 3: The Clerk of the Council is hereby directed to forward a copy of this resolution to the Southwest Louisiana

Delegation and to Governor Kathleen B. Blanco, Governor of the State of Louisiana.

At a meeting of the City Council on 2/11/2006, this Resolution was adopted by the following vote:

For: A.B. Franklin, Mike Huber, Rodney Geyen, Dana Carl Jackson, David R. Perry, Marshall Simien and Stuart Weatherford

Resolution Number: 39-06

A resolution to the Downtown Development Authority requesting development of proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to add a new section establishing design standards for the development of properties in accordance with the Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) plan for redevelopment located within the areas defined as the Downtown Development District or as said district may be amended by future action of the City Council.

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Recovery Authority has assembled a team of world-renowned urban planners to aid in the recovery of the regions affected by recent hurricanes: Calthorpe Associates, Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company (DPZ) and Urban Design Associates (UDA);

WHEREAS, a significant aspect of DPZ's work is its innovative use of planning regulations, including the urban and architectural codes that accompany each design. Tailored to the individual project, the codes address the manner in which buildings are formed and located to ensure that they create useful and distinctive public spaces. Local architectural traditions and building techniques are also codified within the regulations;

WHEREAS, the Downtown Development Authority's focus is aligned with Urban Design Associate's focus on the creation of urban space in three dimensions, with a full understanding of the role that architectural form, details of buildings, and character of streetscapes play in creating and reflecting the values of diverse, economically successful, human-scale, and ecologically respectful communities; and

WHEREAS, Calthorpe Associates' design philosophy focuses on creating communities that are diverse, mixed-use, and pedestrian friendly. The firm places a special emphasis on fostering neighborhoods that provide a range of housing in close proximity to shopping, jobs, recreation, and transit -- walkable communities that offer realistic housing and transportation choices.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF LAKE CHARLES, LOUISIANA, in Special session convened, that:

SECTION 1: All of the above and foregoing is hereby made a part of this resolution.

SECTION 2: The City Council of the city of Lake Charles, Louisiana, hereby requests the Downtown Development Authority to develop a proposed amendment to the zoning ordinance to add a new section establishing design standards for development of properties in accordance with the SmartCode principles and to develop a pattern book of these design/development standards to guide development within the established downtown lakefront development district.





