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*Kesslie F. Carbo*

**Kesslie F. Carbo, Deputy Clerk**



# 2025 WEST BANK SMALL AREA PLAN



# Ascension Parish

## 2025

## West Bank Small Area Plan

Prepared for: Ascension Parish Planning Department



Prepared by: Bayou Rouge Environmental & Planning LLC

**BAYOU  
ROUGE** Environmental  
& Planning

*Plan adopted September 10, 2025*



The following resolution was offered and moved for adoption by Commissioner Max Nassar and seconded by Commissioner Randy Cloutre, Jr.

RESOLUTION OF THE ASCENSION PARISH PLANNING COMMISSION TO ADOPT  
THE 2025 WEST BANK SMALL AREA PLAN

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 17, Section 17-1 of the Ascension Parish Code of Ordinances creates the Ascension Parish Planning Commission and vests said commission with the responsibilities delineated in Louisiana Revised Statutes, Section 33:101 *et seq.*; and

**WHEREAS**, Article IV, Section 4-18 of the Ascension Parish Home Rule Charter references the adoption, amendment, and extension of an official plan for the physical development of the unincorporated areas of the parish and further provides for the creation of a planning commission to enact said plan in accordance with the laws of the State of Louisiana; and

**WHEREAS**, Louisiana Revised Statutes, Section 33:106 specifically grants a parish planning commission the authority to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the unincorporated territory of a parish; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2025 West Bank Small Area Plan is intended to capture the vision of Ascension's West Bank citizens and translate that vision into reality through the adoption and implementation of strategies that will guide future development; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2025 West Bank Small Area Plan includes twelve (12) chapters which set forth and include, but is not strictly limited to: the vision forward concerning land use on the West Bank of Ascension Parish; a current profile of the parish; land use designation considerations; housing and neighborhood service recommendations; transportation and mobility assessments and recommendations; drainage, floodplain management, and wastewater assessments and recommendations; recreation and open space recommendations; economic development and redevelopment recommendations; and a strategic implementation plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Ascension Parish Planning Commission, assisted by Bayou Rouge Environmental & Planning, has held community meetings to obtain public input in the creation of said plan; and

**WHEREAS**, it is the intention of the Ascension Parish Planning Commission that the 2025 West Bank Small Area Plan be incorporated into, and made a part of the 2019 Ascension Parish Master Land Use Plan as an update and supplement; and

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with Louisiana Revised Statute 33:108, a public hearing was properly noticed and held on September 10, 2025, and at such time the Ascension Parish Planning



Commission received comments from the public with regard to the 2025 West Bank Small Area Plan.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, by the Ascension Parish Planning Commission, that it does hereby adopt the 2025 West Bank Small Area Plan with all attachments, maps and reference made therein; and

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Ascension Parish Planning Commission Chairman is hereby authorized to file a copy of the 2025 West Bank Small Area Plan with the Office of the Ascension Parish Council, the governing authority for the Parish of Ascension, to record same with the Ascension Parish Clerk of Court, and to effectuate any other requirements set forth within Louisiana Revised Statutes, Section 33:101 *et seq.* as said requirements relate to the procedure for adopting and enacting a master plan.

This resolution having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: Michele Unitas, Mark Villa, Nicholas Miller, Wade Schexnaydre, Max Nassar, Randy Cloutre, Jr., Erik Jones

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

And the resolution was declared adopted on this, the 10<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2025.

  
WADE SCHEXNAYDRE, CHAIRMAN  
ASCENSION PARISH PLANNING COMMISSION



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# Acknowledgements

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Colby Brammer - Ascension Droneworks

A special thank you to each community member of the West Bank who contributed comments, took the survey, attended the workshops, and provided valuable feedback to the creation of this plan!





# INTRODUCTION

What is a Small  
Area Plan?

Plan  
Intergration



## Introduction

The West Bank of Ascension Parish is a place of deep cultural heritage, scenic landscapes, and untapped opportunity. The 2025 West Bank Small Area Plan (the Plan) builds on these strengths by setting a clear, community-driven vision for future development, investment, and quality of life improvements. This Small Area Plan was created to serve as a targeted planning framework that guides growth and infrastructure decisions within a defined area of the West Bank, shown in Figure 1.

While comprehensive in scope, the Plan operates at a more detailed, site-specific level than the broader 2019 Ascension Parish Master Land Use Plan. It responds directly to the Master Plan's call to proactively encourage desired development and public services west of Interstate 10 and throughout the West Bank.

Specifically, the Master Plan identified the West Bank as a strategic opportunity area, one where new infrastructure, including the proposed Highway 3127 Extension, can support reinvestment and long-term economic vitality. The Small Area Plan builds on this directive, offering a place-based strategy that reflects local input and provides a roadmap for responsible land use, transportation, infrastructure, and housing decisions.



Figure 1: Small Area Plan Boundary

By establishing a shared vision, identifying priority improvements, and linking planning to implementation, this document sets the stage for sustainable development and public-private coordination. As an adopted amendment to the Master Plan, the 2025 West Bank Small Area Plan will serve as a guide for future growth decisions in this area.

## What is a Small Area Plan?

Small area planning is the process of defining the character of a section of land at a more detailed level than would be found in a broader comprehensive plan, such as the Master Plan. Like a comprehensive plan, a small area plan is a long-range study of an area, with a 20–30-year forecast. This process allows stakeholders to address an area's unique issues with tailored solutions. The Small Area Plan is an aspirational, neighborhood-scale plan that defines a community's vision for the future as property ownership and land uses change over time.

The Plan also enables the Parish and local leaders to prioritize and coordinate capital projects and to set the stage for private investment. As an adopted amendment to the 2019 Ascension Parish Master Plan, this Plan serves as a guiding framework for future growth decisions and policy actions within the Small Area.

While there are several reasons for small area planning, one catalyst for the Plan is the proposed Highway 3127 Extension. This extension will connect Highway 3127 to Highway 308 in the first phase of construction and then extended to the Industrial Mega Park connecting to Highway 1 in Phase II. These proposed extensions are shown in Figure 1. The Small Area comprises 10,351

acres of unincorporated land, including land surrounding the proposed Highway 3127 corridor, on the West Bank of Ascension Parish, Figure 1. This new transportation corridor could catalyze development on the West Bank, and bring with it new investments such as housing, retail, office, and other complimentary land uses.

Other elements of land use that have arisen on the West Bank include major investments in large industrial-scale projects. Because this influx of projects will bring jobs to the West Bank, it would benefit the Parish to proactively plan for housing and services for a potential increase in population, commerce, and development related to these large projects. As new developments locate to the West Bank, quality of life and public safety should be at the forefront of planning for the built environment.

One of the overarching goals of the Master Plan calls for Ascension Parish to

*“Reinforce an employment corridor along the Mississippi River by encouraging growth west of Interstate 10 and throughout the West Bank.”*

For this reason, it is important that the Small Area Plan identifies future growth development patterns which are desirable and representative of the West Bank community's vision.





## Plan Integration

For this Small Area plan, the following local and regional plans were reviewed:

- 2019 Ascension Parish Master Land Use Plan
- 2016 Highway 3127 Corridor Feasibility
- 2025 Ascension Parish Long-Range Transportation Plan
- 2020 Ascension Parish Flood Plain Management Plan
- 2010 LA DOTD Complete Streets
- 2022 Capital Region Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan
- Capital Region Micro-Transit & Vanpool Feasibility Study
- Ascension Parish Unified Land Development Code
- 2023 CPRA Master Plan
- 2021-2025 Ascension Parish Tourism Strategic Plan

Plan integration is the process by which the Parish will coordinate a network of existing plans, studies, and regulations to create a framework for implementation. In other words, harmony amongst the various plans the Parish and region use should be addressed.



An aerial photograph of a wide river on the left, a multi-lane highway in the center, and a dense residential area with many trees on the right. The entire image is covered with a semi-transparent blue overlay. The sky is filled with white clouds.

# DEMOGRAPHICS

Population

Income

Housing  
Characteristics

## Demographics

This section gives an overview of demographic data within the Small Area. The latest population data along with data on age, housing, and income are assessed. This assessment provides a baseline for planning efforts and helps identify opportunities and challenges that may influence development and growth in the Small Area. The demographics presented include the entire Ascension Parish West Bank which comprises three census tracts; 309, 310.01, and 310.02, Figure 2.

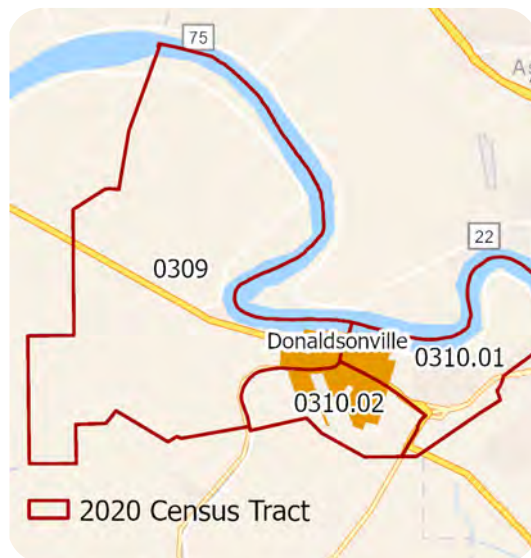


Figure 2: Relevant Census tracts

## Population

Over the last 23 years, the population on the West Bank has declined by 12.7%, Figure 3 (Census 2000, 2010, 2020, and 2023a). In contrast, Ascension Parish, including the incorporated cities of Gonzales, Donaldsonville, and Sorrento, has been one of the fastest growing parishes in Louisiana with a 68% population increase in the last 23 years.



Figure 3: Population trend chart



## Workforce

Residents on the West Bank in the prime working age demographic of 25-54 years old, make up 35% of the population, Figure 4 (Census 2020). Overall, the population is distributed well.

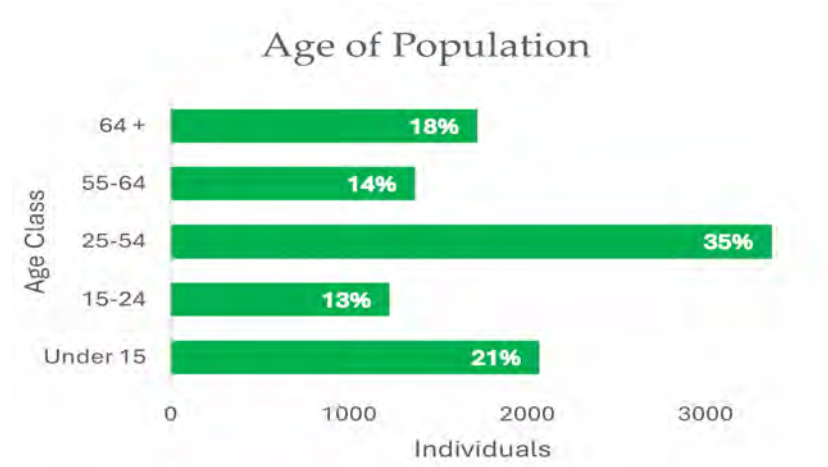


Figure 4: Population age

Currently, the work force is distributed between occupation types with the workforce split between white collar jobs (39%), blue collar (31.7%), and service jobs accounting for 29.3% of the jobs. The predominant industries on the West Bank are shown in Figure 5. There are an estimated 3,768 employees of the West Bank and 372 businesses (Esri 2025).

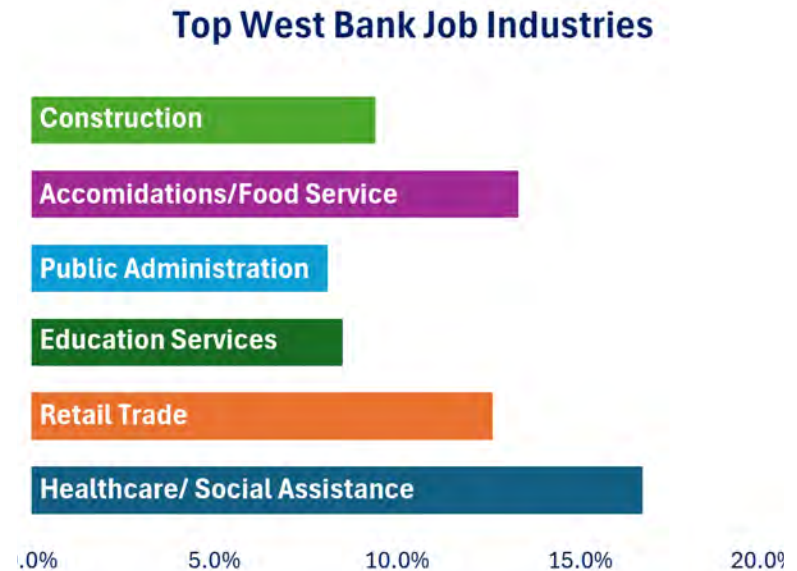
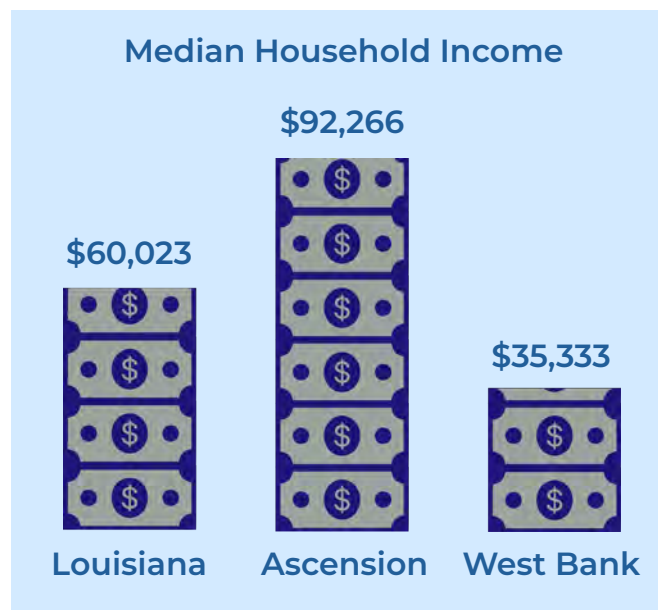


Figure 5: Top job industries

## Income

The median household income is \$35,333, compared to the entire Parish which is \$92,266 (Census 2023a). While Ascension Parish has consistently averaged a higher median income than Louisiana in past decades, the West Bank has consistently maintained a median income that is lower than both the Parish and the State. In fact, the most recent estimates from the 2023 American Community Survey 5-year data profiles show the greatest difference in median income with the West Bank being 89% lower than the Parish and 52% lower than the State.



## Housing Characteristics

There are an estimated 4,024 total housing units in the West Bank, 591 of which are vacant according to the 2023 ACS 5-year Housing Characteristic estimates. Across the three census tracts, the median home value of the West Bank ranges from \$181,100 to \$189,700, and gross rent ranges from \$646 to \$1,118 (Census 2023b). More than three out of four of the renters on the West Bank are cost burdened (78%), spending 30% or more of their household income on rent, Figure 6 (Census 2023b). Conversely, only 15% of West Bank homeowners are cost burdened.

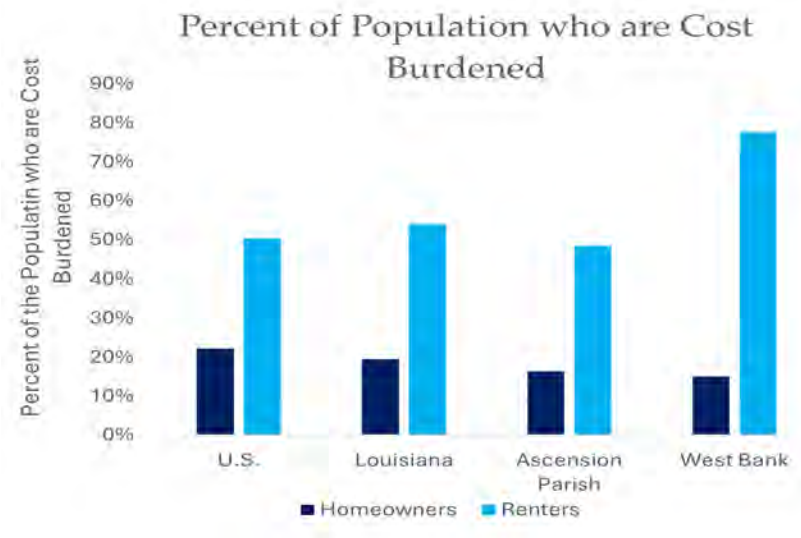


Figure 6: Cost burdened





# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community  
Needs Survey

Steering  
Committee

Community  
Workshops



## Community

The Small Area Plan was developed with community engagement as the foundation for future planning efforts. The planning team led with a commitment to an inclusive, transparent, and equitable process to ensure many viewpoints could be integrated into the plan.

To kick off engagement, a community needs survey was disseminated to residents on the West Bank as part of an effort to gather valuable input directly from the community. The purpose of the survey was to better understand residents' perspectives, priorities, and concerns regarding local development, services, and quality of life issues. The survey was open from March 17, 2025 to May 3, 2025.

Communication and outreach of the planning process, the community needs survey, and the public workshops were done through a variety of methods. These methods included social media blasts, posting flyers, news articles, announcements at public hearings, reaching out to the faith-based groups on the West Bank, and through the Ascension Listens Tour.

## Community Needs Survey Results

Who took the survey?

- 80% West Bank residents
- 68% Donaldsonville residents
- Balanced age range, slightly more 50+ than under 50
- 52% White, 44% Black/African American
- Nearly equal gender split

Quality of Life

Average rating: 2.6 out of 5

Top four priorities:

- Responsive government services
- Well-paying jobs
- Housing variety
- Protecting environmental quality



## Housing Preferences

Most desired housing types across all ages:

- Large lot single-family homes (56%)
- Small lot single-family homes (52%)
- Townhouses (36%)
- Mid-rise apartments (33%)
- Under 50 slightly favored mid-density options such as townhouses and mid-rise apartments
- Over 50 showed more interest in age-restricted and accessory dwelling units.

## Top Community Needs

- Small business development (83%)
- Health & family services (53%)
- Parks & recreation (54%)
- Affordable housing (48%)
- Alternative transportation options (33%)

## Infrastructure Priorities

- Drainage/stormwater (67%)
- Road safety & repairs (64%)
- Sidewalks/bike lanes (54%)
- Water quality & reliability (54%)
- Wastewater treatment (32%)

## Employment Opportunities Desired

- Skilled trades (81%)
- Professional services (66%)
- Industrial/manufacturing (52%)
- Arts & entertainment (53%)

## Recreation

- Walking trails
- Multi-use courts (pickleball, tennis)
- Indoor facilities (art, crafts)
- Playgrounds, kayaking, fishing were tied

The full survey results are in Appendix A.

**132**

**Survey  
Responses**



## Steering Committee

A Steering Committee was formed early in the planning process with a group of engaged community leaders who volunteered to serve. The members represented the following backgrounds:

- Residents
- Business Owners
- Economic Development
- Tourism and Small Business
- Elected Officials
- Parish Staff
- Housing Advocates
- Public Health
- Wetland/Watershed Science
- Developers
- Policy Makers
- Communications
- Transportation
- Engineering
- Parks and Recreation
- Urban Planning
- Landscape Architecture

Two steering committee meetings were held during the planning process. The steering committee identified issues and proposed

recommendations which reflected the interests of the people who live, work, own property, or visit the West Bank.

**Meeting 1** was held virtually on March 27th, 2025, where the committee was introduced to each other and given an overview of the plan purpose and the existing conditions within the Small Area. The community needs survey was announced to the group, with a call to action to disseminate the survey to their various networks on the West Bank.

The members discussed the various land uses, the upcoming economic development investments, the immediate need for housing, the long-term need for housing, and quality of life improvements. Creating a regional detention for stormwater was one of the big picture outcomes of the meeting that could facilitate appropriate growth.

A vision statement was presented to the steering committee for their input. This vision statement is an important aspect of any plan as it will set forth the goals and strategies of the community through a shared values connection. The first draft of the vision statement:





*“The vision for the Small Area of the West Bank is a desirable place for families to support a rural, close knit, high quality of life, with excellent economic opportunities, housing choice, and enjoyable parks and recreational facilities.”*

**Meeting 2** was held in-person on May 19, 2025, at the Ascension Parish Planning Commission meeting room. The steering committee was briefed on the survey results, comments from the public, and the land use visioning outcomes from the community workshop. The members were asked to give input on future land uses that could meet the needs of the community's vision, with a focus on the new Highway 3127 corridor.

Incentivizing appropriate development, preferably through the Planned Unit Development process, was one of the recommendations from this meeting. There was further discussion on regional stormwater detention and how it could align with recreational uses.



## Community Workshops

Two open-house community workshops were held during the duration of the Small Area Plan study. At the workshops, the public was able to learn about the project, provide input on the future growth of the small area, envision a variety of housing choices, and to speak with the Ascension Parish staff and consultants about the Plan. Workshop announcements included posting the flyers, social media posts on the Parish's digital platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, verbal announcements at the Planning Commission public hearings, and through our steering committee members.



*Visioning Exercise Dot Map*



*Community Workshop 1 Flyer*



*Interactive housing choice visioning exercise*

**Community Workshop 1** was held on April 30, 2025, a Wednesday night, at Lowery Middle School. This location was selected for its central location within the unincorporated area of the West Bank and as a public gathering place, the facilities were ADA compliant and child friendly. Thirty-two people, not including Ascension Parish staff, elected officials, and consultants, attended Workshop 1. Representatives from the Capital Region Planning Commission were also in attendance, bringing transportation resources from the Commuter Krewe program.



*Community Workshop 2 Flyer*

**Community Workshop 2** was also held at Lowery Middle School on June 9, 2025, a Monday evening. This event was attended by 24 people. At this workshop, the Small Area Plan elements were presented on posters, with opportunities to provide input on the Plan priorities. Staff and consultants were available to answer questions and facilitate input through discussions and comment cards. SULLA consultants were present with small business resources at the workshop.



*Community Workshop 2 Plan Element Displays*



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# **PLAN ELEMENTS**

**Land Use**

**Transportation**

**Infrastructure**

**Housing**

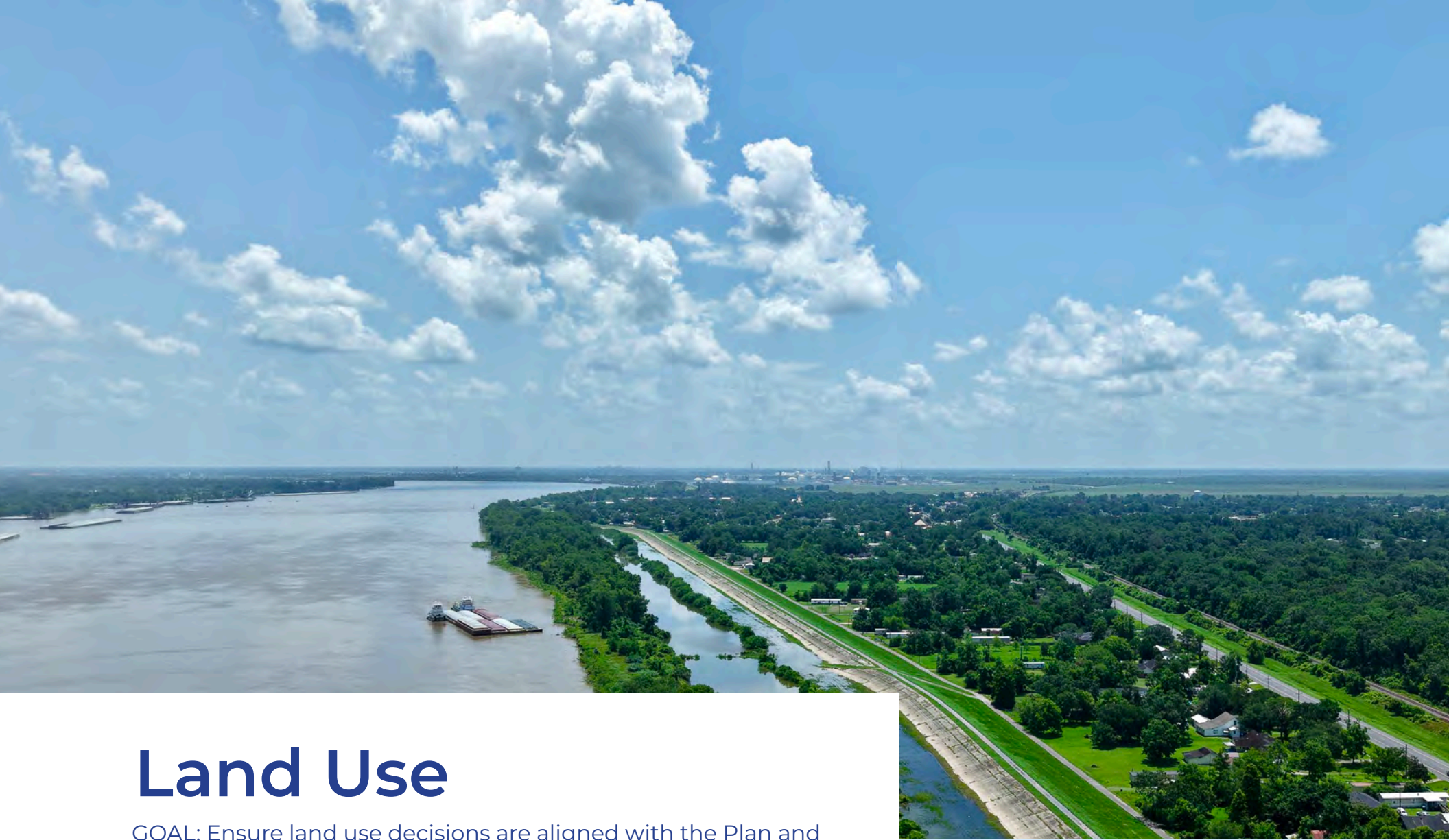
**Parks and Recreation**

**Economic Development**

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# Land Use

GOAL: Ensure land use decisions are aligned with the Plan and the community's vision.

*"We don't have a lot of choices when it comes to shopping, eating out, entertainment and buying or building a home."*

*"The sense of community. The small and tight knit feel; everyone knows everyone. We have a lot of small-town pride, and we show lots of love, especially when it comes to the children."*

*"The rural feel, combined with a sense of independence. Multicultural communities that are not made up of one demographic."*

*"A large scale planned unit development like the new development on Highway 44 and 30, including a grocery store."*

## Plan Elements

The elements of a Small Area Plan are intended to provide a framework to guide development, land use, and infrastructure improvements within a specific community or neighborhood. These elements include land use, transportation, infrastructure, housing, parks and recreation, economic development, and implementation

Together, the elements offer a detailed vision that reflects local needs and priorities while aligning with broader parish goals. Planners, developers, residents, and local officials can use these elements as a roadmap to ensure that growth is sustainable, context-sensitive, and consistent with the community's long-term vision of the Small Area and potential new commercial corridor.

### Land Use

This element of the Small Area Plan addresses how Ascension Parish will guide the vision of the community through effective land use planning. While this plan is not a regulatory document, it does provide guidance to land use decisions which in turn affect all other elements included in the document. The parish's regulatory systems such as zoning, subdivision, and land development ordinances are one of many tools to implement land use policy. To better understand land use, historical and current uses are explained and along

with data, inform future predictions of growth development patterns.

### Historical Land Use

The human land use patterns of the West Bank of the Parish have been influenced by its historical development, first with the indigenous settlements of three main tribes, the Houma, the Bayougoula, and the Acolapissa going back thousands of years. These tribes settled near natural levees along the Mississippi River and its bayous, where the land was used for hunting, gathering, and early forms of agriculture. Supported by the rich alluvial soil, beginning in the late 1700's and early 1800's, European colonization brought large scale farming and plantations throughout the West Bank.



*Sugar cane is the dominant agriculture in the small area.*





Donaldsonville was established in 1805 with agriculture driving the economy. The city's strategic location on the Mississippi River facilitated its growth as a commercial hub. Over time, sugarcane cultivation flourished and to this day it has defined the rural character of the area. Post-World War II Era marked population growth on the West Bank, followed by a petrochemical plant expansion, and then a population decline in the 2000's.



*Image of Palo Alto, on the National Historic Register*

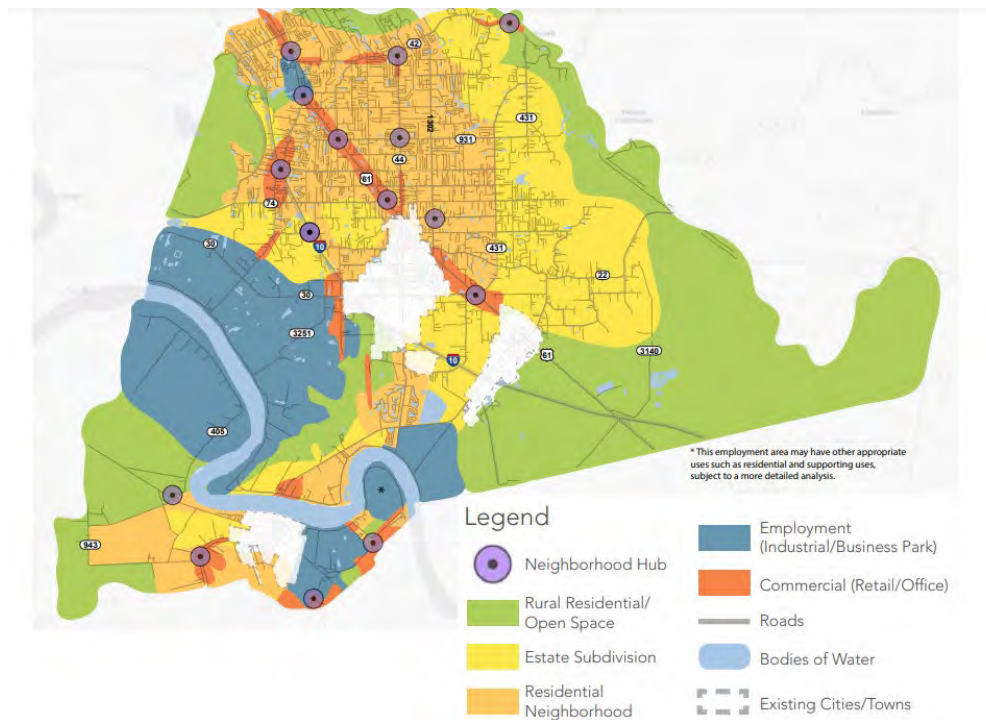
Palo Alto Plantation, located within the Small Area and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, is an antebellum mansion offering historical insights into the area's plantation economy. Purchased in 1867, Palo Alto is still owned by the Lemann family and used as a bed and breakfast and event venue.



## Future Land Use

The Master Plan Vision Map envisions most of the future land use in the Small Area as residential neighborhood. There are three envisioned neighborhood hubs within the Small Area: the westernmost hub is located at Highway 308

near Bayou Lafourche at the proposed Highway 3127 extension intersection, another is at the intersection of Highway 3127 and Highway 70, and the easternmost hub is located at the intersection of Highway 70 and Highway 3120, Vision Map and Figure 7.



2019 Master Plan Vision Map

## Commercial Hubs

As an alternative to the neighborhood hubs proposed in the Master Plan, this Plan presents five commercial hubs that are centered around existing or proposed intersections, Figure 7. Three of the identified commercial hubs are identified as neighborhood hubs in the 2019 Vision Map.



Figure 7: Proposed Commercial Hubs

## Growth Development

Identifying future growth development needs helps us understand how different areas could evolve and where future development should be directed. It identifies areas for residential expansion, commercial activity, job concentration, green space preservation, and neighborhood connectivity, Figure 8. This supports smarter planning decisions by balancing growth with community needs. The following growth development categories were identified:

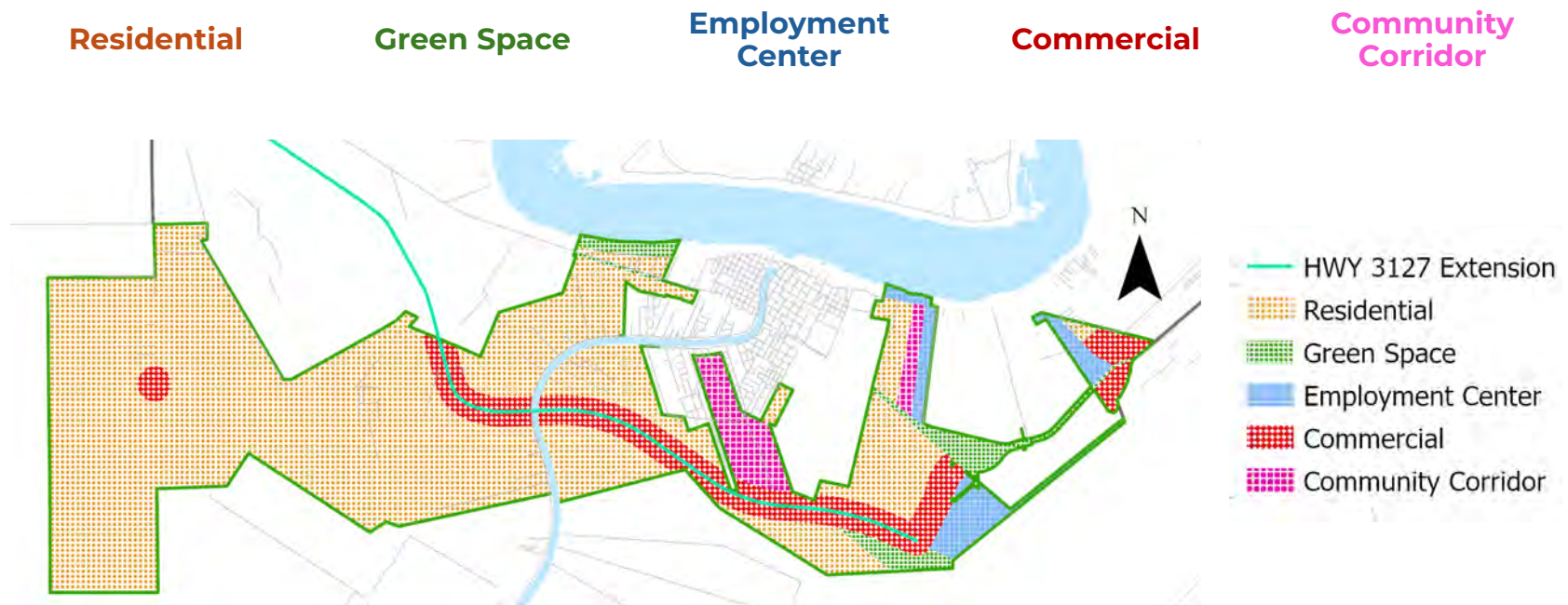
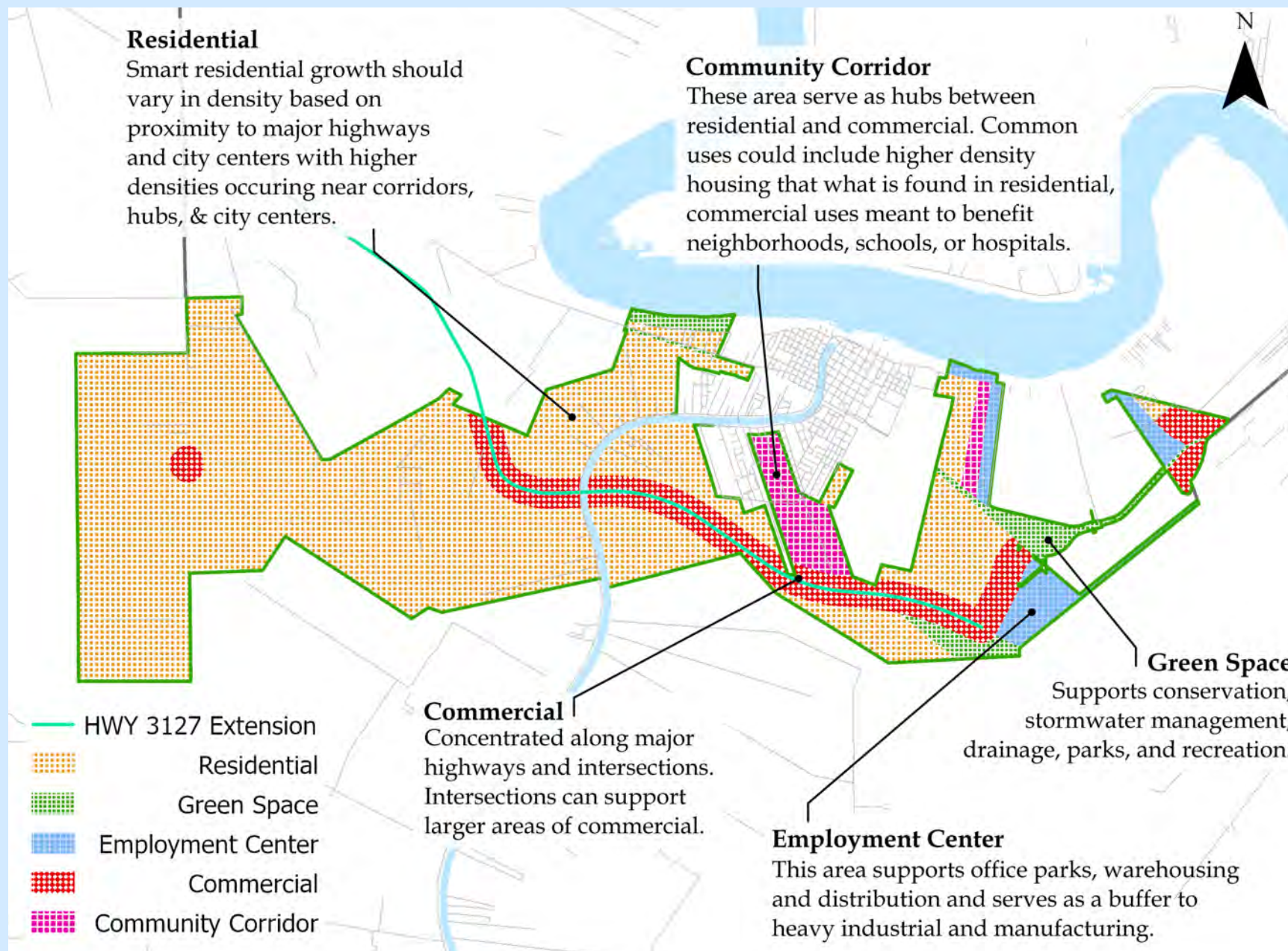


Figure 8: Growth Development

The growth development map should evolve over time, keeping true to the overall community vision, but adjusting to new neighborhood plans, unforeseen opportunities, and minor adjustment needs that will arise.





## Residential

Traditional neighborhoods for low density housing with options for townhomes, starter homes, garden homes, and zero lot line developments in appropriate areas, such as those close to retail and office uses.

### Character

Building forms are characterized by single family detached homes and where appropriate, duplexes, townhomes, and small-scale multifamily homes, compatible with the scale and character of the neighborhood.

Parks and public space that encourage outdoor recreation, social connections, and a sense of belonging are focal points. The design of Residential areas should include a connected street network with consideration for pedestrians and bicyclists and streets designed to reduce travel speeds.



## Growth Development Guidance

### Pattern

Detached and attached residential

### Residential Density

1-4 homes per acre

4-8 homes per acre near commercial areas or special considerations

### Public Space and Parks

Neighborhood parks, programmed parks, community centers near commercial areas, and recreation fields

### Height

1-2 stories, 3 near commercial areas

### Parking

Mainly off street in driveways, garages, parking areas



## APA Recommendation for Rural Residential

**Smart Growth Principles:** In rural residential planning, applying Smart Growth principles is crucial due to high costs of infrastructure, ensuring each dollar achieves greater impact.

**Remove Regulatory Obstacles:** Local jurisdictions should identify and eliminate barriers to establishing accessory dwelling units (ADUs), whether attached or detached.

**Diverse Housing Choices:** Rural areas need diverse housing choice, various sizes and price points, to accommodate shifting demographics and meet the needs of residents, including seniors, people with special needs, and young families.



*Lower density away from commercial*



*Higher density near commercial areas*



*Rural Estate Subdivision using clustering*



*Clustered small lot subdivision*



## Commerical

This area supports retail, multi-family, and service uses along major roads. Commercial areas should be designed to balance vehicle access, while serving nearby neighborhoods with pedestrian access and alternative modes to promote connectivity.

### Character

Building forms may be characterized by a linear pattern of small to medium sized retail along the frontage of roadways. Larger building forms should be located at intersections. Landscaped greenbelts can serve as buffers from the road, creating a more inviting shopping experience. When commercial areas are near residential, they should avoid high intensity uses, such as large-scale warehousing, industrial uses, and high-rise multi-family.



## Growth Development Guidance

### Pattern

Linear pattern of medium density and shopping areas

### Residential Density

4-20 homes/units per acre. Density can be incentive in certain areas.

### Public Space and Parks

Neighborhood parks, community centers, and indoor recreation facilities

### Height

1-3 stories, 4 stories in certain incentive areas when located near employment centers or outskirts of community corridors

### Parking

Mainly off street in well-lit and landscaped parking areas. Shared parking agreements are encouraged.

## Rural Commercial Best Practices

Limit square footage of commercial buildings.

Parking should be placed to the side and rear of commercial buildings.

Require connections between adjacent commercial uses, separation of driveways, and limit curb cuts.

Setbacks should be uniform, with a green belt of landscaping to separate the road from the commercial business.



*Linear commercial type development*



*Multi-family developments near jobs and services*



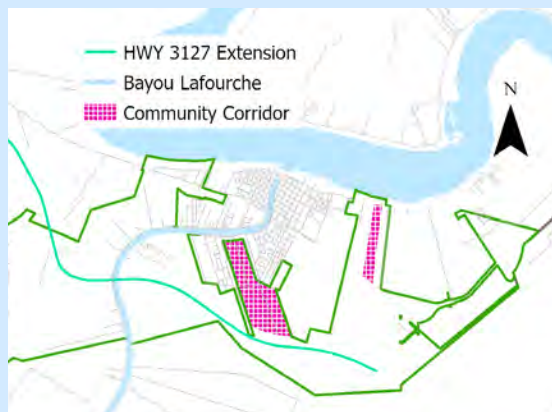
*Landscaping, walkways, lighting and seating for commercial*

## Community Corridor

This area integrates residential and light commercial uses near existing neighborhoods. These areas are intended to support walkable neighborhoods that are linked to retail and professional services but at a smaller scale and intensity than a commercial corridor.

### Character

These are local activity nodes often composed of a mix of uses to provide access to services and goods. Typically, these nodes are walkable and convenient to adjacent neighborhoods. Frequently, community corridors will include civic uses, dining options, local businesses, and public space. They may include an anchor such as a grocery, a health and wellness center, or a community facility catering to the immediate needs of residents.



## Growth Development Guidance

### Pattern

Lower to moderate intensity single use & mixed-use buildings.

### Residential Density

4-12 homes/units per acre. Additional density can be incentivized.

### Public Space and Parks

Neighborhood parks, small plazas, community centers, and pocket parks.

### Height

1-3 stories

### Parking

Shared parking is encouraged. Mainly off street in well-lit and landscaped parking areas. Parking reductions can be allowed in certain incentivized areas.



*Landscaping, walkways, lighting and seating for commercial*



## Employment Center

These are target areas for light manufacturing, office parks, warehousing and distribution, which supports the industrial areas and serves as a buffer to heavy industry. These areas typically do not contain residential uses.

### Character

Building forms are predominantly characterized by large campuses which spur innovation and well-paying jobs. Industry should be sensitive to surrounding context. Impacts to sewer, stormwater facilities, and roadway capacities must be carefully weighed. The scale and intensity of uses within Employment Centers, should be screened with landscaped buffers, specifically near residential and commercial areas. Access to transportation is required and so employment centers should be located near major roadways and rail.



*Warehouse and distribution*

## Growth Development Guidance

### Pattern

Buildings at a variety of scales and sizes.

### Residential Density

n/a

### Public Space and Parks

Landscaped buffers, green space, stormwater features

### Height

1-4 stories

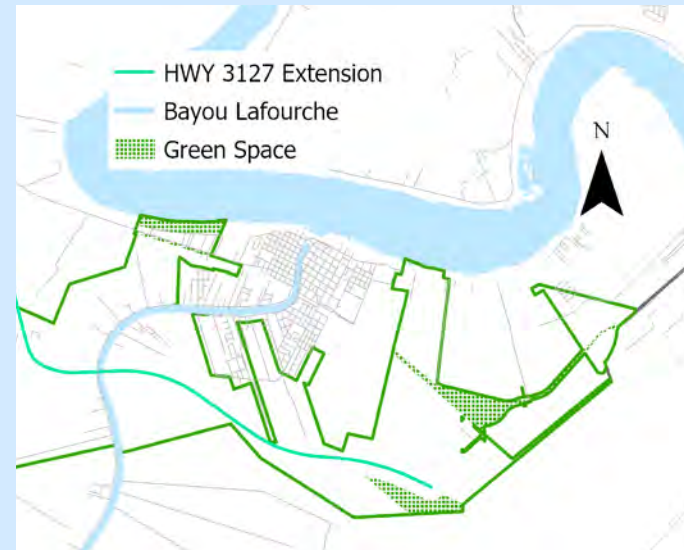
### Parking

Shared parking is encouraged. Mainly off street in well-lit and landscaped parking areas. Parking reductions can be allowed in certain incentivized areas.

## Green Space

This area includes public parks, greenways, undeveloped natural areas, and recreational land. Open space is intended to preserve natural landscapes, support stormwater management, and enhance public access to recreation.

These areas can also include recreation fields as well as playgrounds. Large road rights-of-way have been included in this category as these areas can be used for stormwater management.



*Stormwater feature with recreation options.  
Photo Credit: Tally Landscape Architects*

### **Rural Greenspace Best Practices**

**Identify and map areas for green space in rural areas.**

**Use greenspace and greenways as a strategy to connect residents to parks and recreation.**

**Incentivize developers to set aside greenspace in exchange for clustering and density bonuses.**

## Zoning and Regulatory Overview

Zoning and subdivision regulations play an important role in catalyzing economic development. Careful design of these regulations can add value by providing predictability in the development process for both existing neighborhoods and incoming developers. A key factor in minimizing the developer's risk is to outline the community's priorities in a plan, and use the development codes to allow certain developments, by right.

The Parish's zoning code regulates the following:

- Establishment of districts (residential, commercial, industrial etc.)
- Specific uses within the districts (single family, retail, office etc.)
- Minimum lot size
- Density (housing units per acre)
- Building height
- Yard setbacks
- Buffer requirements
- Rural character
- Minimum parking requirements

There are eight different zoning districts throughout the Small Area, Figure 9. Conservation is the largest zoning district and is over twice the size of the second largest district, Rural, Table 1.

Currently, this district consists largely of active agricultural fields with patches of rural residential areas scattered throughout and an undeveloped forested area in the southwestern most corner. The rural area is similarly comprised of mainly active agricultural fields with residential developments predominantly concentrated along Bayou Lafourche and near the City of Donaldsonville and undeveloped forested area in the southwestern most corner. The rural area is similarly comprised of mainly active agricultural fields with residential developments predominantly concentrated along Bayou Lafourche and near the City of Donaldsonville and undeveloped forested patches on the east end of the district.

Zone	Acres
Conservation	5,043
Commercial Crossroads	12
Heavy Industrial	83
Mobile Home Recreational Vehicle	8
Medium Industrial	202
Mixed Use Corridors	1,281
Rural	1,951
Medium Industrial	1,256

Table 1 Zoning Area





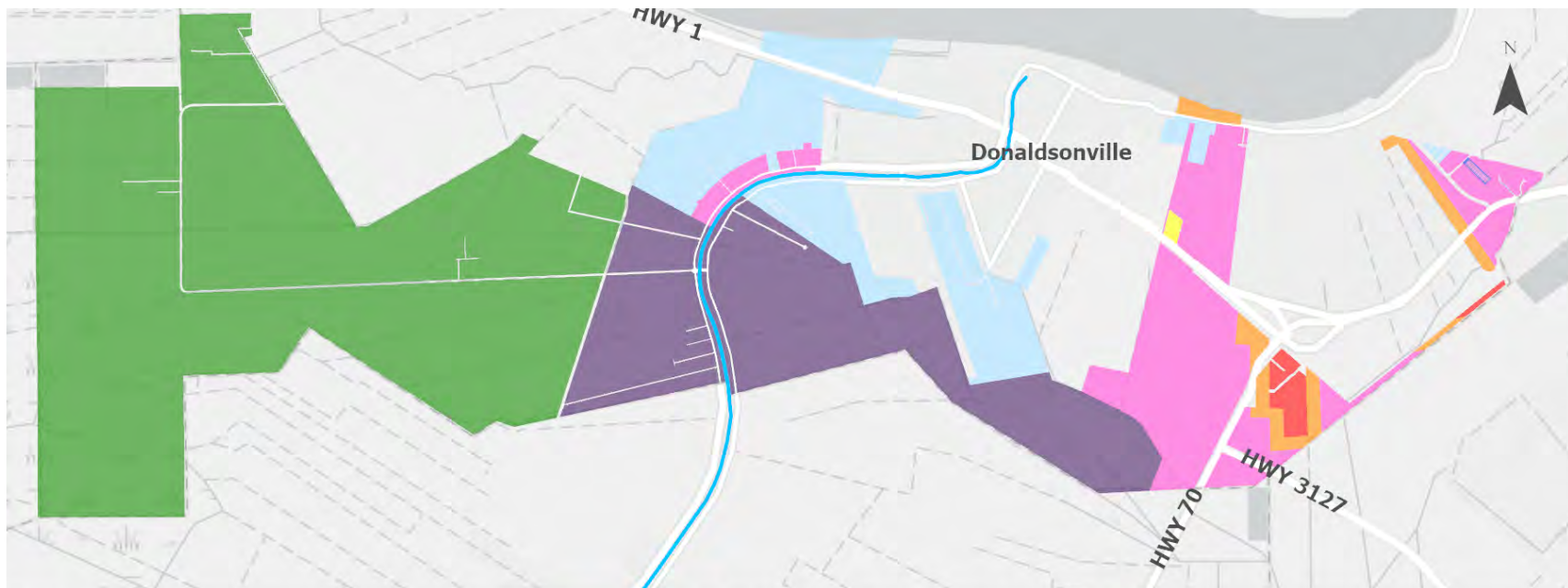


Figure 9: Zoning Map

## Rural Planning

Rural planning can benefit the West Bank community by preserving open space, managing infrastructure costs, reducing land use conflicts, and maintaining a distinct sense of place that reflects local heritage and natural assets. As the rural population evolves due to new jobs, and transportation access improves, such as the new Highway 3127 extension, the need for rural planning becomes more pronounced.

Stakeholders identified the need for retail services, diverse employment opportunities, small business development, and a variety of housing choices to serve the local needs without having a long commute to urban areas. Best practice guidelines encourage clustering development at key highway intersections and nodes near existing developments.



*Highway 1 Looking south, quaint rural character*

## Overlays

In planning, an overlay is a special zoning tool used to add an extra layer of regulations or incentives on top of the existing or “base” zoning rules. Overlays are applied to a specific geographic area as a flexible way to address context-sensitive planning needs without completely rewriting the zoning code.

### Key characteristics:

- Overlays do not replace the underlying zoning (residential, commercial, etc.)
- They do add specific goals or protections, such as floodplain restrictions, historic preservation, or affordable housing incentives.
- They can also include design guidelines such as height limits, units-per-acre incentives, or restrictions beyond what is normally required in zoning.

The Small Area currently has no overlays, however, ideas from the steering committee have suggested that an incentivized overlay could benefit the area as it is developed.



## Incentivized Overlay Policies

Incentivized overlay policies encourage developers to provide a public service in exchange for zoning-based incentives. The public service can include affordable housing units, public open space or parks, green buildings, sidewalk connections, and pedestrian friendly open streets. In exchange, the local governing body can allow increases in density and number of units per acre, additional building height, reduced parking requirements (when using a shared parking agreement), and expedited permitting and approvals or a combination of these trade-offs. One of the challenges for the local governing body is to balance the cost-benefit of incentives versus public service. Challenges for the developer can include reduced returns on investment and/or long-term maintenance commitments.

The community needs survey did identify a need for housing for senior citizens on the West Bank. An incentivized overlay can specifically request set-aside, age-restricted housing. Age-restricted housing, such as senior housing or communities for residents aged 55 and older, is commonly included as a targeted public benefit within incentive zoning frameworks. Seniors frequently fall into low-income categories due to a combination of factors related to retirement,

employment opportunities, savings, and social policies. Low-income status among seniors significantly affects their quality of life, limiting their access to quality housing, healthcare, nutrition, and social engagement, ultimately reducing overall health and well-being. Ascension Parish could incentivize age restricted housing to address this low-income disparity. By taking this approach the Parish could:

- Address demographic needs, particularly in areas with aging populations.
- Increase local housing diversity and ensure availability of suitable housing options for older adults.
- Proactively manage land use and service demand patterns, as senior housing typically requires different infrastructure and service provisions.





### Age-Restricted Overlay Examples

Several local governments have used incentivized zoning overlays to promote age-restricted housing. Here are some notable examples:

In April 2025, South Windsor Connecticut considered a new overlay zone to permit age-restricted housing of 55+ on a 56-acre site. The proposed Buckland Gateway South Zone would allow up to 4.5 units per acre, with a minimum of 15% designated as affordable housing for low-income families for at least 40 years.

New Orleans established the St. Bernard Avenue Overlay District to promote affordable housing, particularly for senior citizens. This overlay provides density and height bonuses for developments that include affordable housing units, thereby incentivizing the construction of senior-friendly residences in targeted areas.

### PUD, SPUD, and TND

The Parish offers three master-planned zoning districts that provide developers design flexibility in exchange for creative concepts not typically allowed under standard zoning:

- Planned Unit Development (PUD): Minimum 20 acres

- Small Planned Unit Development (SPUD): 2 to 20 acres
- Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND): Minimum 50 acres

These districts follow a two-step approval process, a concept plan and final development plan, and allow for design elements such as:

- Preservation of natural areas
- Creation of common open space
- Efficient use of land through compact infrastructure networks
- Aesthetics and increased landscaping
- Mix of different uses
- Non-vehicular circulation

PUD, SPUD, and TND are not intended to bypass zoning or subdivision regulations. Oversight mechanisms include a required pre-application meeting, staff review of concept plans, and public hearings. A key advantage of these districts is predictability for both developers and surrounding communities.

PUDs can also be paired with incentivized overlays to secure public benefits—such as affordable housing, open space, or community facilities—which are formalized in the PUD agreement or ordinance.



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# Transportation

GOAL: Ease of access to goods, services, jobs, and commerce.

*"Traffic is not bad except at work times."*

*"Less traffic except from 4-5:30 pm on Highway 1 from White Castle. Hopefully the bypass will help."*

*"Less traffic congestion. Close to my work, my family and my friends. People fled to Ascension for the wide open space and big lots of the east bank, now that is over congested, and this can become what was sought after there. But we must get it right."*



## Transportation

Transportation planning will play a vital role in shaping the character and daily experience of communities within Ascension Parish's West Bank. Residents consistently expressed a strong desire to preserve the area's low traffic volumes, and overall ease of mobility that distinguishes the area from the more congested urban areas such as Baton Rouge and the East Bank of the Parish. As the West Bank grows, maintaining the ease of mobility will be challenging without thoughtful land-use coordination, multi-modal facilities, and connectivity within and between residential and commercial districts.

This chapter outlines a transportation vision grounded in these priorities. It includes strategies to manage future growth while minimizing traffic impacts, enhance roadway safety, and explore opportunities for alternative modes of transportation, such as walking, biking, and public transit, where appropriate.



*Rendering of rural complete streets elements. Image courtesy of Federal Highway Administration's Complete Streets for Rural Communities*

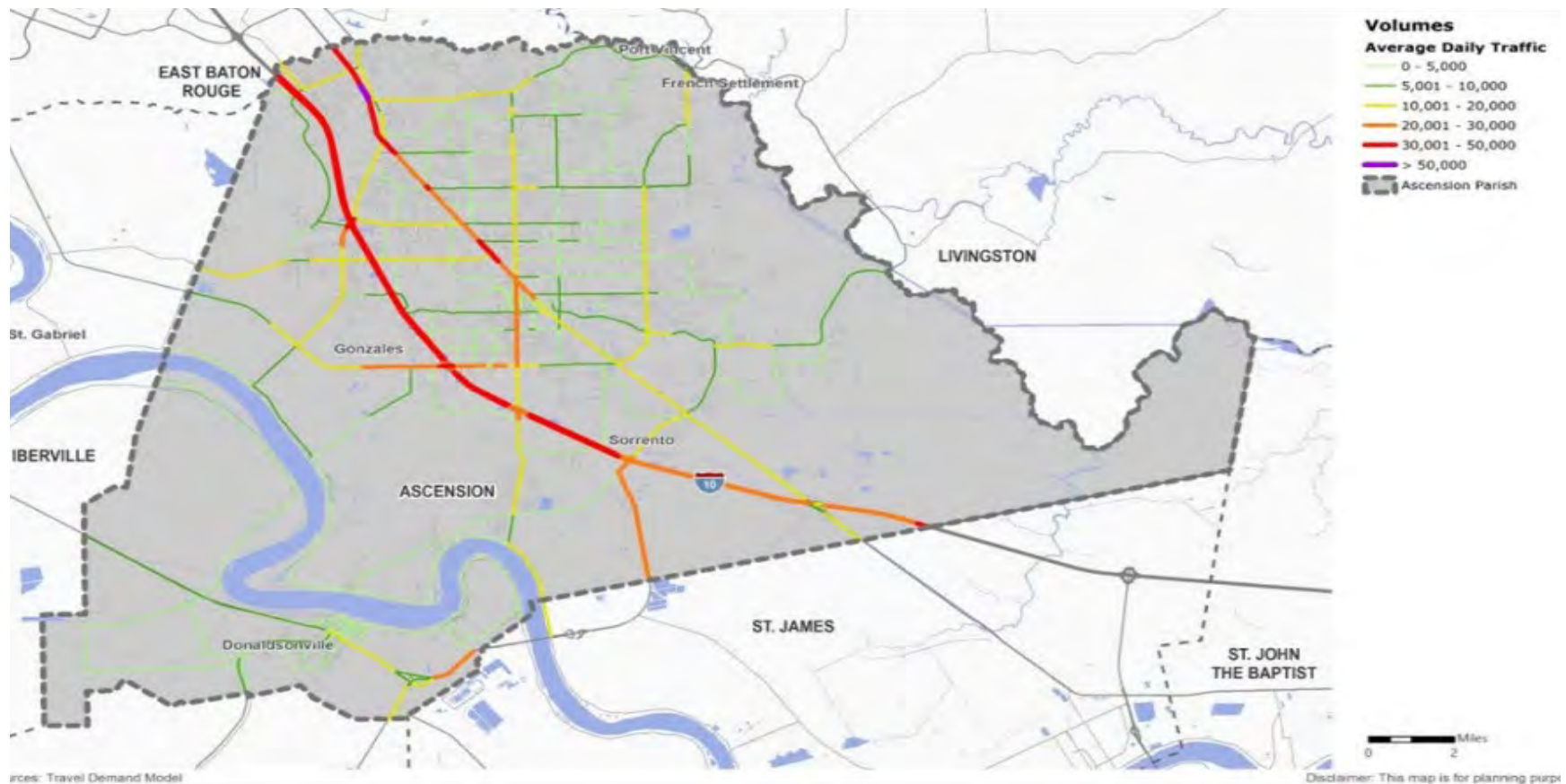
**Context Sensitive Solutions** is an approach to transportation planning and road design that carefully considers the surrounding environment, community character, and the intended function of the roadway. Rather than applying a one-size-fits-all solution, it tailors transportation improvements to fit the local context which can be rural, suburban, historic, or residential.

## Existing Transportation Conditions

The automobile is the primary means of transportation on the West Bank, with 71.8% of workers driving to work alone, and an average commute time of 40-44 minutes (ESRI 2025a). On the West Bank, **25% of households** do not have an available vehicle, which is high compared to

the parish at 4%, the state, which is 8.3%, and the national which is 8.7% (Census 2023b).

Traffic and congestion in Ascension Parish are shown in the 2020 pre-covid traffic volume map with few locations on the West Bank experiencing high traffic volumes.



*Image of 2020 Pre-Covid Traffic Volumes Image Courtesy of Neel-Schaffer from the 2024 Ascension Parish Long-Range Transportation Master Plan*

The Union Pacific (UP) railroad corridor within the planning area, has been identified by stakeholders as a potential barrier to future development due to limited crossing points and the physical separation it creates between land use areas. Rail lines can restrict connectivity, hinder access to potential commercial and residential sites, and complicate

infrastructure extensions. To address these connectivity challenges, the Plan recommends coordination with Union Pacific and relevant transportation agencies. The 2021 Union Pacific Railroad Public Projects Manual is a resource to guide communities in implementing projects that involve railroad property.



*At grade crossing example (Image courtesy of UPRR)*



*Grade separated overpass (Image courtesy of UP)*

Grade crossing and grade separation projects can improve access to areas near railroad tracks. A grade crossing is any public or private roadway that is within the railroad's property and crosses the track. New crossings are challenging, and for each new crossing, UP requires a community to identify three existing crossings for closure. Every effort should be made to use the existing crossings or find alternative access points. Grade separation projects consist of an underpass or an overpass, however, according to the 2021 manual, the UP does not allow underpass structures. A crossing study should be conducted to determine the most feasible options for additional required railroad crossings and new potential highways.



## Future Transportation Planning

The proposed Highway 3127 Extension project is one of many transportation initiatives proposed to alleviate traffic on the West Bank. While the West Bank may not see the volume of traffic congestion that major highways on the East Bank do, there is still considerable traffic during morning and evenings when the local plants and schools let out. Proposed economic development on the

West Bank will exacerbate these existing traffic problems if not proactively addressed. There are several future transportation projects proposed within this plan and within the Ascension Parish Long Range Transportation Master Plan, these are listed in Table 2 and shown in Figure 10. As these initiatives progress, the Parish can coordinate active transportation infrastructure such as multi-use paths and sidewalks.

Map ID	Alternate Plan ID	Description	Timeframe	Length (Miles)
A	1408*	LA 1 @ LA 3089, Intersection improvement, Study	Long-term	–
B	1205*	LA 308 @ LA 3089, Signal retiming	Long-term	–
C	1415*	LA 3089 @ LA 945 (St Patrick St.), Intersection improvement, Study	Long-term	–
D	1206*	LA 70 @ LA 3089, Roundabout with additional turn lanes	Long-term	–
E	1007*	LA 945, LA 3089 to LA 308, Overlay	Short-term	2.3
F	1008*	LA 943, LA 3089 to LA 1, Overlay	Short-term	7.7
G	1118*	LA 3127: NEPA & Energy Pkwy, LA 70 to LA 1, Roadway extension and overpass bridge	Medium-term	8.6
H	N/A	Connection from Schexnayder Road across HWY 1 connecting to the new HWY 3127 Extension	Conceptual	2.0
I	N/A	Connection from St Patrick St. to the new HWY 3127 Extension	Conceptual	0.8
J	N/A	Connection from the 945 Loop to the new HWY 3127 Extension	Conceptual	0.3
K	N/A	Abandoned rail bike path **	Conceptual	3

*\*Listed in the Ascension Parish Long Range Transportation Master Plan 2024 / \*\* Listed in the Ascension Parish Active Transportation Network*

*Table 2: Potential transportation projects*



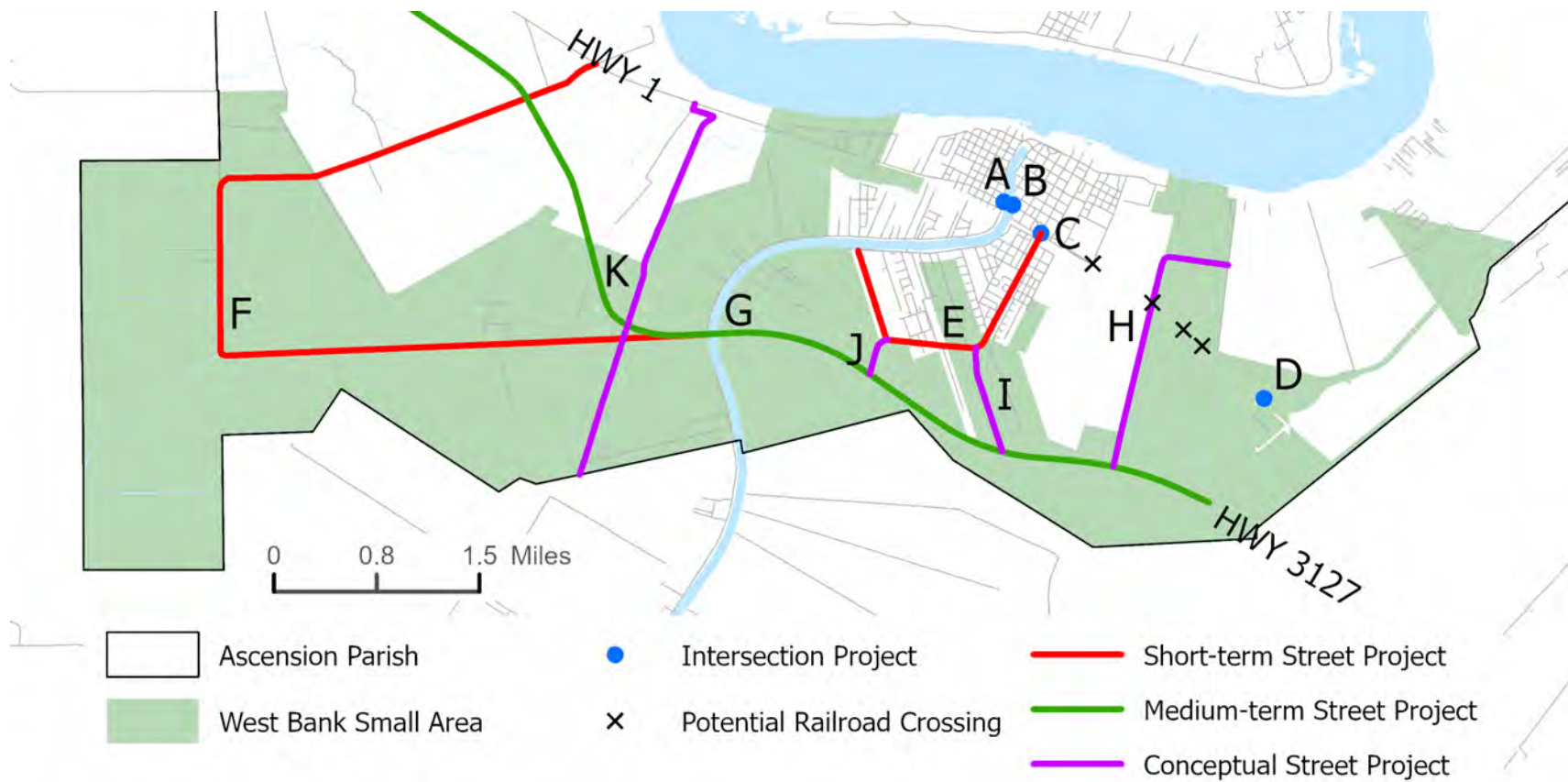


Figure 10: Future Transportation Projects

## Active Transportation Networks

The Ascension Parish Active Transportation Network Plan (2025) outlines a plan to expand sidewalks and multi-use paths to enhance walking and biking throughout the parish. The Plan aims to improve safety, promote equitable transportation options, and support community connectivity by using utility corridors, drainage laterals, levees, and abandoned rail tracks. Prioritized areas include those with high poverty rates and crash hotspots, helping to position the parish for future funding opportunities and infrastructure integration.

This plan includes initiatives to enhance active transportation infrastructure on the West Bank. A key proposal is converting approximately three miles of abandoned rail track beginning in Donaldsonville, tracking through the west side of the Small Area and continuing into Assumption Parish. A rail to trails conversion could utilize this abandoned track into an off-road bike path, improving connectivity to community landmarks such as the levee, Lowery Park, Downtown Donaldsonville, and Lowery Middle School.



*Image of the abandoned rail line connecting to the active UPRR line*



As the bike path extends southward into Assumption Parish, this could foster regional collaboration and connectivity. Additionally, integrating this path with a proposed Mississippi River levee trail on the West Bank, which would link Donaldsonville's Historic District to the broader Parish network.

The Active Transportation Network Plan identifies benefits of an active transportation network which include:

- Increases transportation options
- Builds physical activity into daily life
- Provides access to motorized modes of transportation (transit, ride-share, etc.)
- Reduces congestion by being able to select a different mode of travel
- Builds community cohesion and creates social connections
- Promotes more compact, multi-modal communities
- Affordable, low-cost mode that can reduce household transportation costs
- Supports small businesses and tourism that depend on walkable environments
- Equity within the community



*Bike riders on the levee path in Baton Rouge. Image courtesy of East Baton Rouge Pedestrian Bicycle Master Plan*

The Active Transportation Network Plan also includes a pedestrian and bicycle crash heat map showing high concentrations of serious and fatal incidents from 2014 to 2023; the intersection at Highway 3089 and Highway 70 show notable pedestrian safety concerns.

## Carpool/Vanpool/Micro-transit

With the high number of households on the West Bank with no car available, and the high commute times, alternative transportation methods such as vanpool, carpool, and micro-transit could be implemented in the future as the Small Area develops. These alternative transportation services reduce individual transportation costs by sharing rides, which is especially helpful in areas where traditional public transit isn't financially viable due to low population density, such as the West Bank.

The Capital Region Planning Commission issued the Capital Region Micro-Transit and Vanpool Feasibility

Study on these alternative transportation methods for the Baton Rouge metropolitan area.

The report aims to guide decision-makers on implementing flexible, cost-effective micro-transit and vanpool services that can close transportation gaps, enhance equity, and support economic growth in communities not well served by traditional transit such as the West Bank community. The report identifies the West Bank in the top 10 zip codes for micro-transit likelihood of use.

The Commuter Krewe program, managed by the Capital Region Planning Commission in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, aims to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality in the Baton Rouge area, including Ascension Parish. It offers services such as carpool and vanpool matching, employer services and support, telecommuting resources, and an Emergency Ride Home program.

Commuter Krewe incentivizes alternative transportation modes and can assist in collecting and analyzing employee data to determine which services are best suited for a specific area or employer. Currently, they have partnered with City of Gonzales to set up a Park and Ride at the Lamar Dixon Expo Center. As jobs grow on the West Bank, the Parish can partner with Commuter Krewe in identifying and supporting locations to implement vanpool, carpool, or micro-transit. By reducing the number of single occupancy cars on roads and highways, the West Bank can maintain the low traffic volumes that the community values. <https://www.commuterkrewe.la/>



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# Infrastructure

GOAL: Sustainable systems that support current needs and anticipates future growth.

*"Drainage first, then infrastructure, and build baby build!"*

*"Over allocation of resources and money on the development of the east side of the Parish with total disregard to the West Bank constituents and taxpayers."*

*"We need regional detention to address drainage and incentivize housing development."*



## Infrastructure

The Infrastructure element addresses the core systems needed to support this rural area of the West Bank. This includes drainage and floodplain management, water lines, sewer, and broadband. Though most of the Small Area is undeveloped,

there are intermittent areas currently serviced for multiple utilities with capacity and opportunities for expansion. This section outlines existing conditions and proposes improvements to ensure reliable, efficient, and future-ready infrastructure.



*Image of a regional detention area with recreation incorporated into the design*

## Drainage

The West Bank is split into two USGS defined watersheds (HUC 10s) that are split by Bayou Lafourche: 080930201 and 080930101, Figure 11. Drainage west of Bayou Lafourche predominantly drains south and west while drainage on the east side of Bayou Lafourche drains south. There are over 175 miles of waterways on the West Bank, including natural and constructed waterways. Approximately 75 miles of those waterways

are within the Small Area. The West Ascension Gravity Drainage District No. 1 handles the routine maintenance of the drainage on the West Bank.

Most of the land within the Small Area is outside of a FEMA flood zone. The largest flood zoned area within the Small Area is zoned Conservation and has a land use vision of Rural Residential/Open Space which can limit future development.

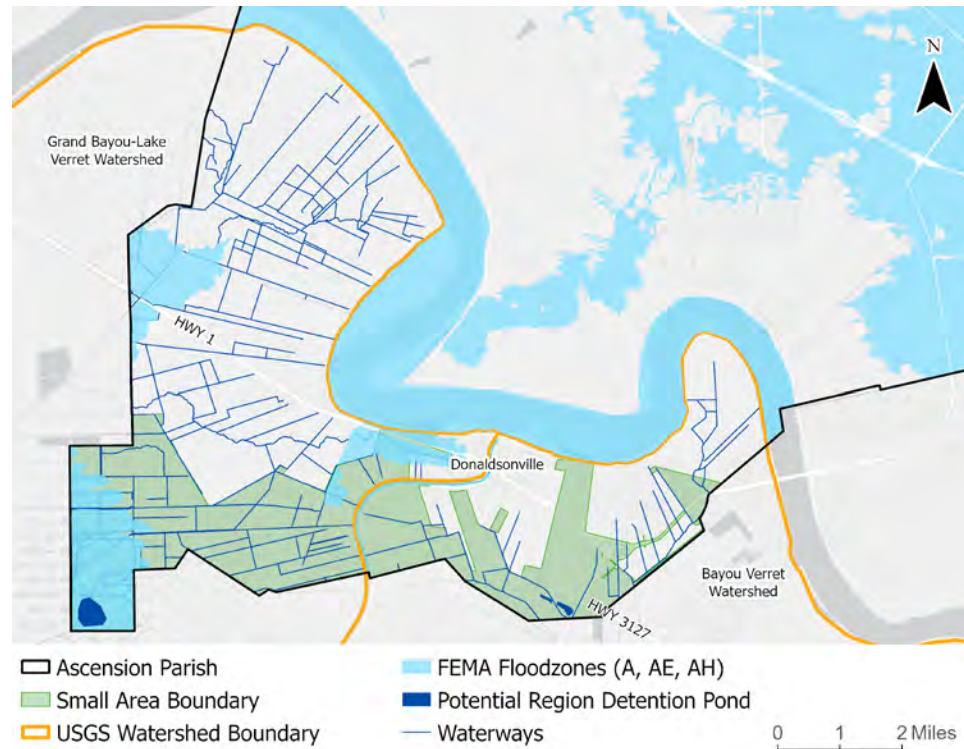


Figure 11: FEMA Floodplains and HUC 10 watersheds boundaries



## Utilities

The City of Donaldsonville sewer system serves the residents and businesses within the city limits and some areas outside of their jurisdictional boundary. There are existing sewer force mains extending from the City, south to the Evangeline Drive and Cy Bean Road areas and into the Small Area, Figure 12.

Donaldsonville has agreements in place to treat the wastewater of the Ascension schools on the West Bank and additional partnering opportunities could be explored to capitalize on existing capacity and expand if needed. As the Small Area develops, coordinating with Donaldsonville to utilize and, if necessary, expand this infrastructure could support efficient growth.

Leveraging existing sewer capacity reduces the need for redundant systems, while also generating additional revenue for the city through utility fees, creating a mutually beneficial outcome for both Donaldsonville and the expanding community. In a neighboring parish, developers of the Sugar Hill Crossing Subdivision in St James worked with the city to implement this exact initiative.

The City of Donaldsonville also provides natural gas within their city limits and surrounding areas. Outside of the city limits and within the Small Area there are existing natural gas lines serving homes

along Highway 943, Highway 1 South and Highway 308 along Bayou Lafourche, along Highway 1 from the City to Guedry Lane, along Highway 18 from the City to Schexnayder Road, along Highway 1, and in the Loop 945 area outside of the City limits, Figure 12.

Although not shown in Figure 12 most of the adjoining spur roads are also served by the City. As with the existing sewer infrastructure, leveraging the existing natural gas infrastructure can promote smart growth, benefiting both the City and the new developments.

There are two water storage tanks located within the Small Area, the Palo Alto tank owned by Assumption Parish, west of Bayou Lafourche, which has a 150,000-gallon capacity and the Highway 70, 400,000-gallon capacity tank owned by St. James Parish. The sewer mains, sewer lift stations, and sewer force mains are on the eastern end of the West Bank.





- |   |                      |   |                                   |
|---|----------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
|   | Ascension Parish     |   | Donaldsonville Sewer Force Mains* |
|  | West Bank Small Area |  | Donaldsonville Natural Gas*       |
|  | Donaldsonville       |  | Water Storage Tank                |
|  | Bayou Lafourche      |   |                                   |

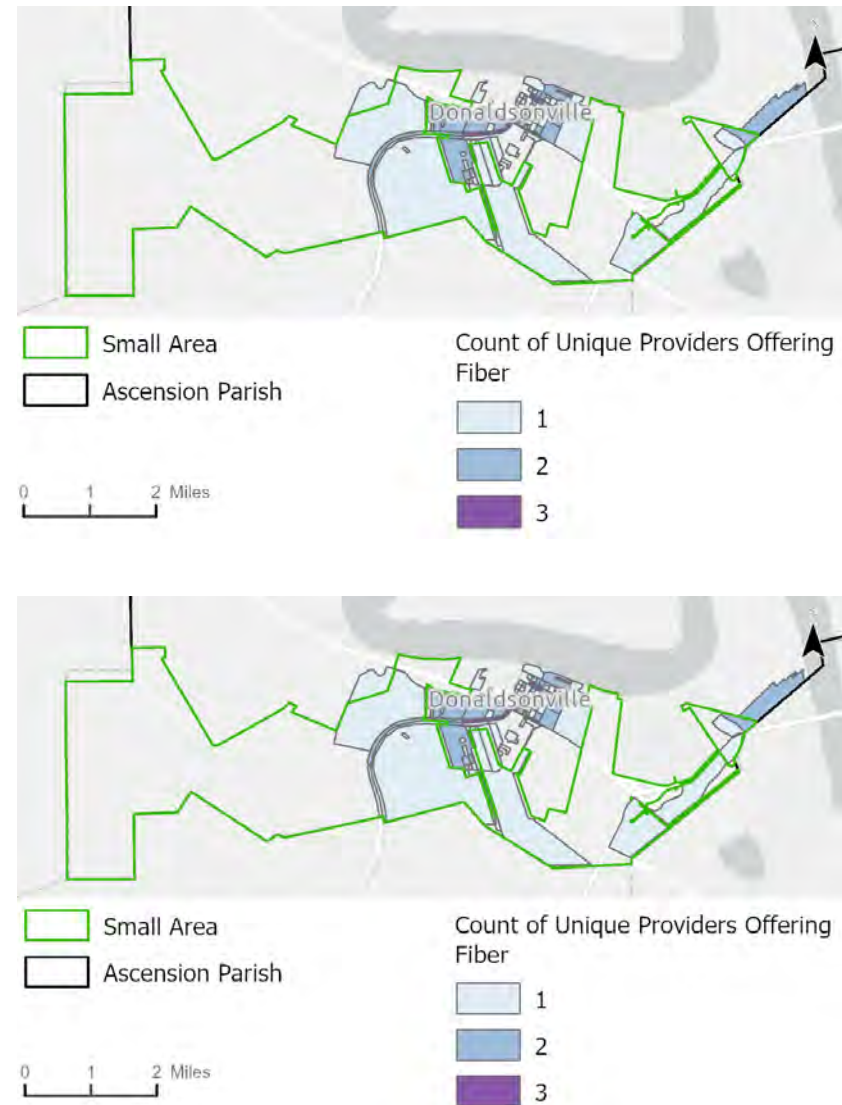
Figure 12: Infrastructure map

The majority of the West Bank is well served for broadband internet in the existing residential areas, according to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) data collected for 2024. Most areas on the West Bank have at least one cable or fiber internet provider, Figures 13 and 14.

There are some areas where fiber or cable is not currently available. This may be in agricultural areas or industrial areas where data may be sparse. Satellite internet from carriers such as Starlink, Hughesnet, or Viasat are available in areas that are not currently wired, though these options can be more expensive or slower than wired connections.

### Utilities and Public Safety

Enhancing public safety and preventing crime should be addressed on the West Bank as growth and development occur. Strategic utility and infrastructure investments such as improved lighting on streets, public spaces, and parks are keys to neighborhood safety.



Figures 13 and 14: Distribution of broadband cable and fiber providers



## Impact Fees

Impact fees are a land use tool where charges are imposed on new development to help pay for the infrastructure and public services required to support that growth. They can affect growth and development in numerous ways including:

### **Infrastructure Funding Without Raising Taxes**

Developers, rather than existing taxpayers, pay for the added demand on roads, schools, water, sewer, fire protection, and parks. This helps maintain service levels as communities grow.

### **Encourages Efficient Land Use**

Promotes more thoughtful, long-range planning by steering growth to areas with existing infrastructure which in turn discourages sprawl.

### **Predictability for Developers**

When clearly defined, impact fees can offer transparency in development costs and help developers plan better.

In Ascension Parish, developers are required to pay transportation impact fees. These fees differ significantly between the East and West Banks, primarily due to variations in development patterns, population trends, and infrastructure needs. By maintaining lower impact fees than the East Bank, the Parish aims to reduce barriers to development, attract investment, and revitalize the West Bank community.

It is required by Ascension Parish to re-evaluate transportation impact fees annually. According to the Parish ordinance, the Transportation Impact Fee Schedule must be adjusted each July 1st based on the average percentage change in the Engineering News-Record Construction Cost Index from the preceding two years.



## Fee Collection Rates

**East Bank:** As of August 2024, the East Bank collects 100% of the calculated transportation impact fees.

**West Bank:** The West Bank collects 35% of the calculated fees. This reduced rate aims to encourage development in an area experiencing population decline and lower median incomes.

## Sample Fee Comparison

Land Use Type	East Bank Fee (100%)	West Bank Fee (35%)
Single-Family <2,000 sq ft	\$3,912	\$1,369
Single-Family 2,000–2,999 sq ft	\$4,269	\$1,494
Multi-Family Dwelling	\$2,229	\$780
Retail (per 1,000 sq ft)	\$4,059	\$1,421
Fast Food Restaurant (per 1,000 sq ft)	\$13,439	\$4,703
General Office (per 1,000 sq ft)	\$6,268	\$2,194

Source: Ascension Parish Transportation Impact Fee Schedule, effective August 2, 2024

Table 3: Impact fee schedule







# Housing

GOAL: Safe, equitable, and resilient housing.

*"Housing is another major issue; there is not enough quality housing available."*

*"I enjoy the country living. I'm renting and want to potentially buy a home out here."*

*"Regular subdivisions, affordable lots, and builders to develop subdivisions. Not overly small housing or overly large lots."*



## Housing

During the community engagement process, residents consistently expressed a strong preference for maintaining the area's low-density and rural character. Feedback emphasized the value of the small-town atmosphere, quiet neighborhoods, and low traffic volumes, all of which reflect a desire to preserve the existing pattern of single-family homes on larger lots.

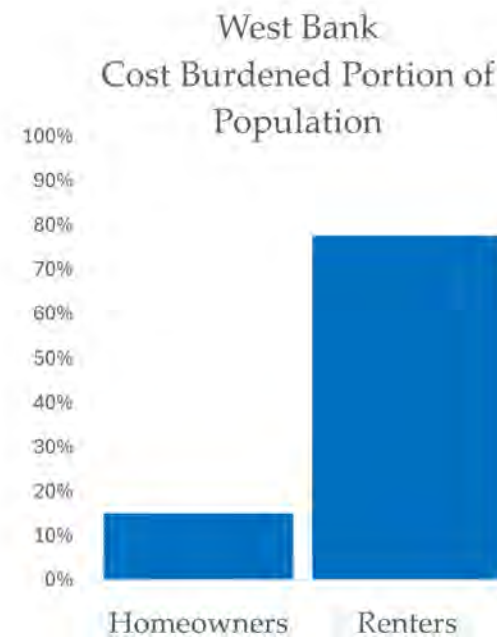
There was support for higher-density housing types, such as multifamily developments and townhomes, near the Prevost Memorial Hospital and along the proposed Highway 3127 Corridor. Residents expressed the need for appropriately sized apartments and housing choice to address the needs for seniors, young residents, people with disabilities, and moderate-income households.

This feedback reinforces the need for a deliberate, place-based growth strategy within the Small Area, that aligns housing policy with both market conditions and community values. Future planning and zoning actions should emphasize stability in established neighborhoods, while exploring opportunities for incremental diversification of housing. Any density increases should be tied to existing infrastructure and utility capacity to make efficient use of resources.

## Housing Cost Burden

A household is considered cost-burdened when it spends more than 30% of its income on rent and utilities. A severely cost-burdened household spends more than 50% of its income on these expenses.

Cost-burdened households and low-income renters and homeowners must make significant sacrifices to pay for housing, leaving minimal funds for other necessities such as medical care, transportation, childcare, and food. The majority (78%) of West Bank renters are cost burdened, but only 15% of homeowners fall into this category.



Figures 15: Distribution of cost-burdened households

The Capital Area Finance Authority, (CAFA) is a bond finance authority dedicated to strengthening the Capitol Region by providing financial resources for the following initiatives:

- Commercial development
- Public infrastructure
- Affordable housing
- Community-focused nonprofit initiatives

Many of CAFA's programs support first-time home buyers by offering down payment and closing cost assistance, along with soft second mortgages. These soft seconds help bridge the affordability gap, enabling buyers who can manage monthly payments but lack upfront funds to purchase a home. In well-structured programs like CAFA's, they are a critical tool for expanding homeownership.

Beyond housing, CAFA also finances commercial and economic development projects that strengthen communities. Eligible projects include public works, water and wastewater infrastructure, civic and social service facilities, healthcare centers, nursing homes, and more.



## Housing Choice

The demographic diversity of the West Bank points to the need to provide life cycle housing. Life cycle housing is a concept designed to allow people to live in the same neighborhood through all phases of life. Multi-family, townhomes, and some compact single-family homes can be designed for a household's entire life cycle. The table below identifies and describes housing choices that were listed as a priority throughout the community engagement.

### Small lot single family



Many residents of the West Bank will be seeking a single-family housing option. There is an opportunity to develop new single-family homes on lots under 5,000 square feet in size. Small lot single family designs include homes oriented around a communal courtyard or cottage-style homes. Others are designed in more traditional patterns. These smaller lot single-family homes would be primarily owner occupied.

### Multi-family



Multi-family housing has become stigmatized as only a low-income rental housing type. However, several successful multi-family developments in the capital region, at a range of price points and scales, are helping to break this stigma. As American demographics shift to declining household sizes, aging populations, and rising home costs, multi-family options are needed on the West Bank.

### Townhomes



Townhomes, two to three stories tall, are designed to fit well in many types of residential neighborhoods, particularly as a transition to multi-family and commercial developments. This type of housing can also be clustered around environmental constraints such as floodplains or on small parcels that do not support single family homes. Townhomes can vary in design and architectural style and may be either owner or renter occupied.



## Alternative Housing Types

In addition to the common housing choices above, alternative and new housing types were identified during the community engagement process.

### Accessory Dwelling Units



An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is a smaller, self-contained residential unit located on the same lot as a detached single-family home. ADUs may be created by converting part of an existing home, adding to it, or constructing a separate structure. Also known as granny flats and mother-in-law homes, ADUs offer flexible housing options. They can accommodate multi-generational family members, such as aging parents, a young adult with disabilities, or be rented out to generate supplemental income, helping offset housing costs.

### Tiny Home Village



A Tiny Home Village is a planned community composed of small, standalone residential units, clustered together on a shared parcel of land. These villages are designed to offer affordable, efficient, and often transitional or supportive housing in a compact, community-focused environment. They can also be integrated into a PUD, SPUD, or TND, especially where traditional zoning would prohibit them. By allowing them in a planned development with HOA oversight, Tiny Home Villages can meet many needs.

### Missing Middle



The “missing middle” refers to housing types between detached single-family homes and large apartment buildings in terms of scale and density. Homes such as duplexes, triplexes, live/work units and small apartment buildings are middle type housing. They are “missing” because of exclusion from outdated zoning and land use policies that prioritize single-family homes. These housing types fit well into walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods.

Manufactured housing is a recognized, single-family type of development that must adhere to the National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974 (Frantz 2024.) Recreational Vehicles are not regulated as housing at the federal or state level, leaving local code to permit and regulate them under special conditions. Community input for this plan recognized these alternative housing types as filling a gap in housing choice.

Manufactured housing and recreational vehicle parks can serve important roles in the developing industrial areas of the West Bank, particularly where labor demand is high and traditional housing is limited or expensive.



**Workforce Housing:** They provide affordable and flexible housing options for workers, especially those employed in construction, energy, or manufacturing sectors who may be temporary, seasonal, or lower-income.

**Proximity to Jobs:** Locating these parks near industrial zones reduces commute times and transportation barriers, improving worker reliability and reducing traffic congestion.

**Economic Support:** They can help stabilize local labor markets by offering immediate housing solutions to temporary workers needed for industrial growth and infrastructure projects.



*Images of manufactured homes and a recreational vehicle park*

Proper planning, zoning and subdivision regulations are essential to ensure manufactured and recreational vehicle parks meet health, safety, and community standards and do not create long-term land use conflicts or strain local infrastructure.

Modular homes, another alternative housing type, are prefabricated structures, built in standardized sections, or modules, in an off-site factory. These modules are then transported to the final site and assembled on a permanent foundation. Modular homes have the benefit of faster construction, quality control, reduced material waste, and customizable designs.

Some lenders and appraisers still treat modular homes with outdated bias, even though they are essentially indistinguishable from site-built homes once complete. Permitting and local codes are also lagging in areas making this housing type out of reach in some areas.

Meeting the goal of safe, equitable, and resilient housing requires more than land use and location. Broader factors such as lack of transportation, access to healthy food, and isolation from community services need to be considered. Placing housing in areas without access to essential services like healthcare, grocery stores, and parks, exacerbates health and income disparities. Ignoring the socioeconomic drivers of health risks can place people in harmful living conditions.



*Image of a modular home construction*



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# Parks & Recreation

GOAL: High quality, connected parks, greenspace, and recreational facilities for all citizens.

*“...A well-maintained pool could serve multiple purposes beyond recreation—it could provide swimming lessons led by certified lifeguards, offer job and volunteer opportunities for youth through lifeguard training programs, and create a safe, structured space for families to gather...”*

*“Special needs parks for children and adults, and a community building for use by residents.”*

*“A fishing pond with a walking trail would be a nice touch.”*



## Parks and Recreation

The National Recreation and Park Association Standards is a widely referenced source for guiding park planning in communities. They recommend approximately 6.25 to 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 population as a level of service baseline, and to include different types of parks (neighborhood, community, regional). While this is a starting point, adjustments are often necessary based on the local context.

The American Planning Association Planning Advisory Service Memo “Standards for Outdoor Recreational Areas,” provides guidance on determining appropriate levels of service for parks and recreation facilities within a community. The memo suggests a community establish their own level of service through a master park planning

process. A widely accepted land use principle is that most residents should live within a half-mile walking distance of a neighborhood park or recreation facility. This standard is used to ensure accessibility and promote equitable distribution of parks within a community.

While there are no parks within the Small Area, the West Bank is home to several Parish parks. These include:

- Abend Community Park and Playground
- Frank Sotile Pavilion
- Lemenville Park and Playground
- Modeste Park and Playground



*Swimming and indoor recreation facilities were highly desired in the community needs survey*



## Bayou Lafourche

The headwaters of Bayou Lafourche start in Donaldsonville. Bayou Lafourche is approximately 106 miles starting in Donaldsonville and flowing into the Gulf of Mexico. Although the bayou has been cut off from the Mississippi River by a protective levee system, pumps are in place sending water from the Mighty Mississippi into the bayou.

A new Bayou Lafourche pump station has been under construction and is currently projected to be completed and operational in the summer of 2027. This new pump station will have a capacity of 1,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) alongside the existing 500 cfs station, tripling the capacity for fresh water entering Bayou Lafourche. This increase in flow

will combat saltwater intrusion and help provide fresh drinking water to over 300,000 residents in Ascension, Assumption, Lafourche, and Terrebonne parishes (CPRA 2022).

The tranquil waters of Bayou Lafourche make it an ideal waterway for recreation such as fishing, bird watching, kayaking, boating, and paddleboarding. Although Bayou Lafourche is currently listed as impaired for Primary Contact Recreation (swimming) according to the EPA How's My Waterway tool, once the new pump station is active the increase in volume and flow from the new pump station will help improve water quality.



*Kayakers enjoying water access*

The Small Area has no public access to Bayou Lafourche. The nearest public access is a single lane boat launch in the City of Donaldsonville along Highway 308, but there are no public facilities or parking at this space. The Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District has land within the City of Donaldsonville and plans in place to build public access facilities. Much of the Small Area along Bayou Lafourche is built out as single-family

homes, creating a barrier to public access. There is undeveloped property near the intersection of Highway 308 and Highway 943 that could make a practical space for a waterfront observational area. A waterfront observation area would provide the public with access to fishing, birdwatching, serve as an educational space, and could also function as an emergency response space when needed.



*Melodia Boat Launch and Observation Deck (Image courtesy of Bayou Lafourche Freshwater District)*





# Economic Development

GOAL: Healthy, sustainable, and diverse economy.

*“Some challenges the West Bank face are that we lack jobs, we need more food places and grocery markets, and we need to bring back the fair for our youth.”*

*“There’s a noticeable lack of a strong business community and limited resources for entrepreneurs, making it difficult to attract and sustain local businesses.”*

*“They talk about plants coming to the West Bank, but don’t you think that men and women need to be in training now, not later, so you can’t say they don’t want to work?”*



## Economic Development

Economic development refers to the process by which a region improves the economic well-being and standard of living of its people, typically through job creation and strategic community investments. Outcomes of economic development include numerous benefits such as:

- growth in personal income
- improvements in infrastructure
- stronger tax base
- educational opportunities
- access to healthcare

Community-desired employment opportunities were identified in the survey and include skilled trades, professional services, industry and manufacturing, and arts and entertainment. To meet these desires, the Parish should ensure land uses are available to meet the needs of the economy that is desired by the residents.

### Retail leakage

The concept of retail leakage can be directly tied to land use policies. Retail leakage refers to the situation where the local demand for retail goods and services exceeds the supply available within a given trade area. In other words, residents are spending money outside their immediate community because their local retail options do

not meet their needs. This lost spending is the leakage.



*A small business village (Image courtesy of Tionesta Market Village)*

Input from West Bank residents indicates a need for more retail uses that are convenient to residential areas. More clothing stores, grocery stores, entertainment venues, and dining options were consistently mentioned in the community needs survey, pointing to possible retail leakage. Land use policy influences retail leakage through:

### **Zoning Restrictions**

- Strict zoning that segregates residential from commercial uses can increase retail leakage.
- If commercial land is limited or not allowed near residential neighborhoods, residents must travel further or order online, to meet their retail needs, causing leakage.

### **Accessibility and Connectivity**

- Land uses that encourage walkability and easy access to retail reduce leakage by facilitating local shopping.
- Poorly connected land uses force residents to shop elsewhere, increasing leakage.

### **Anchor Land Uses**

- The absence of anchor stores like department stores, grocery stores, or big-box retailers affects leakage. Anchor stores

can attract consistent foot traffic which supports surrounding retail when they are connected.

Unlike economic growth, which focuses on increasing gross domestic product, economic development emphasizes broader social progress through the concept of quality of life. Quality of life is closely tied to investments in economic development, as higher incomes and better public services contribute to improved health, education, and overall well-being of a community. Effective economic policies can reduce poverty and enhance opportunities.

Ascension Parish is prioritizing economic development on the West Bank through the Industrial Overlay District and the River Plex Mega Park of Louisiana. According to the 2019 Master Plan, the West Bank holds approximately 17,000 contiguous acres of industrial land within the Industrial Overlay district.

In late 2024, large industrial projects were in the planning stages on the West Bank. The influx of new jobs has the opportunity to increase the demand for housing, transportation needs, and public services within the Small Area.



## Certified Sites

According to the Louisiana Economic Development's site selection GIS maps, there are five certified sites within the Small Area with two more within the West Bank parish boundary and others nearby along the Mississippi River corridor, Figure 16. Certified sites are large parcels of land that are preemptively qualified for large-

scale industrial or commercial developments. These parcels of land have been vetted for title work, environmental studies, soil analysis, and zoning. In other words, these sites are considered "development ready" and risk free for a 180-day turnaround based on the due diligence that was done ahead of marketing the site.



Figure 16: LED development-ready certified sites around the Small Area



Large industrial sites are viewed as standalone employment centers, but when strategically planned and integrated into the local economic fabric, they can serve as powerful catalysts for small business growth. According to the American Planning Association's report, Sustainable Urban Industrial Development, there are several steps a community can take to ensure a diversified and resilient economy in response to industrial development. These include:

- Identifying local supply chain linkages and procurement opportunities.
- Creating business incubators to spur startups tailored to industrial needs.
- Aligning zoning and infrastructure to attract diverse small business.
- Job training, workforce upskilling, and community outreach to ensure local residents are ready to participate.

The survey identified small business development as the top community need for the West Bank. The presence and planned expansion of major industrial operations in Ascension Parish can be leveraged to grow small business and entrepreneurship.

Ascension Parish is home to high-performing public schools, strong academics, higher-than-average test scores, solid graduation rates, and proven success in opening post-secondary and career pathways. According to the school district's website, Ascension Public Schools is one of the largest school districts in Louisiana, and the largest to consistently maintain an "A" rating in the Louisiana Department of Education's accountability system.

The district is the largest employer in the parish with approximately 3,500 employees, including 2,000 teachers. It enrolls over 24,000 students in 32 schools and 3 programs. The district's schools that are in or near the Small Area include:

Donaldsonville Primary School  
Lowery Elementary School  
Lowery Middle  
Donaldsonville High

Donaldsonville High has recently added dual enrollment and adult education workforce training center at their campus. The center was created by renovating an unused wing of the high school into a facility offering adult education, job-readiness training, and trade programs. River Parish Community College faculty teach these courses onsite.



River Parishes Community College is a public, open-admission, two-year institution within the Louisiana Community and Technical College System. Their mission is to partner with regional communities and businesses in the River Parishes to provide workforce training, certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees that prepare students for academic success and career readiness. Their newest location will be within the Small Area, near Prevost Hospital, and is a catalyst project for the community. This expansion is a response to the growing industry and future jobs within the RiverPlex MegaPark, the West Bank Industrial Overlay District..

River Parish Community College's "Build Your Future" initiative offers four technical training tracks:

- Process Technology
- Welding
- Instrumentation & Electrical
- Industrial Maintenance & Millwright

These programs are specifically designed to meet local industrial workforce needs, including those related to the forthcoming Hyundai Steel mill. The programs emphasize hands-on, certification-based training and are supported by accessible campuses and strong local partnerships. Throughout the community engagement, trade skills and high

paying jobs were of top concern for residents on the West Bank. This new facility can serve as a pathway for residents to gain the skills needed to access the jobs coming from local industry and keep those dollars in their community.



*Skilled trades was identified as a top priority for job training*

Coordinating with the West Bank schools should be done effectively and consistently as the Small Area Plan is implemented. Effective coordination with the education system can be done by:

#### Sharing Data

- Enrollment forecasts, school capacities, attendance boundaries
- Planned developments, housing unit projections, demographic trends
- Transportation data such as bus routes, safe walk zones, sidewalk gaps

#### Aligning Land Use and Zoning with Educational Needs

- Identify land for future school sites
- Coordinate joint-use public facilities (playgrounds, meeting space etc.)

#### Integrating School Facilities into Infrastructure Planning

- Plan for safe school access such as sidewalks and bike paths.
- Coordinate utility and road upgrades with school construction timelines.
- Anticipate traffic impacts from school sites such as carlines and circulation



*Welding students at the Donaldsonville/River Parish Community College Partnership (Image courtesy of River Parish Community College)*



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# IMPLEMENTATION

Goals

Action Items

Implementation  
Matrix

## Implementation

Implementation is the critical bridge between planning and action. Coordination across agencies, stakeholders, and the community will ensure the plan's goals become tangible improvements to the West Bank. This will include aligning land use regulations, funding infrastructure investments, and creating development incentives which are outlined throughout the plan. Equally important is the need for continuous monitoring and updates to the plan. Annual metrics and performance indicators should be done and reported to the community. To ensure the plan stays relevant, periodic updates, typically in 5–7-year increments will be required. Updates ensure the plan is responsive to changing conditions, such as demographic shifts, economic trends, or unseen development pressures.

For the Small Area, implementation must be guided by clear and structured strategies and action items, which are listed in the matrix table below.

Implementation Matrix			To Be Completed and Updated Annually	
Strategy	Action Item	Time Frame	Department	Status
<b>Goal 1</b> <b>Land Use: Ensure land use decisions are aligned with the Plan and the community's vision.</b>				
Preserve and enhance the rural, small-town atmosphere by prioritizing low-density to medium-density development throughout the Small Area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adopt the Small Area Plan as an amendment to the Parish's Master Land Use Plan.</li><li>• Update the Small Area Plan, typically on a 5–7-year cycle or if major changes are anticipated.</li><li>• Encourage clustered developments in strategic areas near existing infrastructure to encourage preservation of open and green spaces.</li></ul>			





<p>Encourage medium-density land uses, both commercial and residential, in areas that capitalize on new opportunities from the proposed Highway 3127 extension and the influx of new jobs from the industrial development on the West Bank.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate zoning changes in targeted areas along the proposed Highway 3127 Corridor using the growth development map as a guide. Prioritize medium density housing in areas within a defined radius of employment centers to facilitate housing/jobs proximity and reduce transportation strain.</li> <li>• Facilitate zoning changes in targeted areas along the proposed Highway 3127 Corridor using the Growth Development map as a guide.</li> <li>• Prioritize medium density housing in areas within a defined radius of employment centers to facilitate housing/jobs proximity and reduce transportation strain.</li> </ul>			
<p>Support the growth of small, local businesses that fit the rural character and meet the community needs, avoiding large-scale commercial or industrial developments, near residential uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a new rural zoning or overlay district tailored for low-impact, small-scale commercial uses (e.g., local markets, service shops,) that fit the rural context in form, scale, and use. Include design standards to preserve rural aesthetics.</li> <li>• Identify elements that promote the Small Area's community character and establish design standards and guidelines to preserve rural aesthetics. These elements could include farm land vistas, architectural details, landscaping, and open space.</li> <li>• Limit heavy industrial uses in the small area by using the growth development map as a guide. Ensure industry is well-buffered from residential uses.</li> </ul>			



Encourage appropriate commercial development centered around existing community hubs like Donaldsonville and ensure connectivity to those hubs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan and implement road connections, bike lanes, and sidewalks that connect surrounding neighborhoods and commercial areas to Donaldsonville and other local hubs, reducing vehicle dependence and supporting local business foot traffic.</li> <li>• Direct capital improvements such as drainage, sewer, lighting, and utilities to designated commercial areas and existing infrastructure to ensure these areas are development-ready and attractive to investors.</li> <li>• Create and publish a developer's toolkit that outlines the Parish's development process and procedures.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Goal 2</b></p> <p><b>Transportation: Ease of access to goods, services, jobs, and commerce.</b></p>				
Maintain low traffic volume by managing development density, encouraging connectivity, and providing alternative transportation options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods as the preferred development standard in appropriate areas.</li> <li>• Require bicycle and pedestrian facilities on new and existing developments.</li> <li>• As part of the update to the Long-Range Transportation Plan, identify locations where achievable connections can be made to improve the street grid.</li> </ul>			



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that continued development of sidewalk and crosswalk improvements occur with other road improvements where opportunities to enhance the pedestrian environment exist.</li> <li>• Review and update the Parish's current sidewalk policy to include developing a dedicated funding source for sidewalk maintenance and enhancement.</li> </ul>			
Continue to improve road safety and connectivity for residents while minimizing infrastructure changes that could lead to increased traffic congestion or disrupt the rural character.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the LSU Center for Analytics and Research in Transportation Safety to establish annual transportation safety metrics for the West Bank of Ascension Parish.</li> <li>• Focus on low-cost, high-impact transportation safety interventions such as signage, rumble strips, lighting at intersections, and targeted shoulder widening.</li> <li>• Prioritize intersection improvements over road widening and capacity improvements. Intersection upgrades could include projects such as roundabouts or signal timing.</li> <li>• Update land development codes to require internal and external street connections between developments to prevent sprawl effects from suburbanization of the Small Area.</li> <li>• Use traffic-calming tools that fit rural aesthetics and scale, such as landscaped chicanes, narrow travel lanes, and gateway signage at community entrances to slow speeds without urbanizing roadways.</li> </ul>			





Promote non-motorized transportation such as safe walking and biking paths that complement the rural landscape and improve public access to key community destinations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify priority destinations and conduct bike/walk audits to inventory missing sidewalks, unsafe crossings, lack of signage or lighting, and gaps in informal trail connections.</li> <li>• Implement a rails to trails project for the abandoned rail line.</li> <li>• Develop a “Safe Routes to Public Places” initiative with the state, focused on safety-oriented pedestrian and bicycle improvements which connect neighborhoods to schools, parks, and community facilities.</li> </ul>			
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Goal 3</b>  <b>Housing: Safe, equitable, and resilient housing.</b></p>				
Ensure land uses are available which can support housing choice, such as starter homes, townhouses, garden homes, and modular units, to meet the diverse needs of residents, particularly first-time homebuyers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct a housing needs assessment to determine the amount, location and condition of both rental and ownership housing on the West Bank.</li> <li>• Allow “missing middle” housing types, and accessory dwelling units (ADUs) that blend into the rural fabric, support affordability, and provide options for multi-generational households.</li> <li>• Support the development of housing through the following development code adjustments for projects that construct a certain threshold of housing units:</li> </ul>			



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced lot sizes (reduction of yard setbacks for flexibility for smaller lots)</li> <li>• By-right zoning for missing middle housing (duplexes/townhomes/tri/quadplexes) reducing the barriers for these much-needed unit types</li> <li>• Offer density bonuses to developers of major subdivisions, PUD, SPUD and TND's who set aside units for townhomes, starter homes, income targeted homes for first time homebuyers, or 55+ age restricted.</li> <li>• Provide resources and technical assistance for rehabilitation of existing houses including services to age in place.</li> <li>• Partner with CAFA and other financial institutions to promote homeownership and provide downpayment assistance to first-time homebuyers. Host a housing resources event.</li> <li>• Proactively address blight and code enforcement. Link needs with resources.</li> </ul>			
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Protect existing rural neighborhoods in the Small Area from conversion to high-density developments and high intensity industrial uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow medium density residential and low-rise multi-family uses along the new Highway 3127 Corridor.</li> <li>• Encourage developers and applicants to hold community meetings for any rezonings in the Small Area that are high density or high intensity and within a certain radius of residential uses, prior to the public hearings.</li> <li>• Prevent spot zoning by using the growth development map as a guide and require a plan amendment when the rezoning is in conflict with the map.</li> <li>• Require landscaped buffers when adjacent uses are incompatible.</li> </ul>			
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Goal 4</b>  <b>Economic Development: Healthy, sustainable, and diverse economy.</b></p>				
Foster small-scale, neighborhood-serving businesses and family-oriented commercial services that enhance local quality of life without large-scale commercialization.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with local banks, chambers, and economic development agencies to offer grants, low-interest loans, and business coaching for entrepreneurs looking to open or expand small businesses.</li> <li>• As the plan develops, allocate funding for façade improvements and enhancements of commercial areas; targeting small, local business.</li> </ul>			





Promote agri-tourism, local crafts, and cultural heritage events that align with the rural identity and history of the West Bank.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designate small public spaces or partner to use underused parcels where local artists, food vendors, and local entrepreneurs can operate on weekends, after hours or seasonally.</li> <li>• Market these events with Ascension Tourism and the local chambers.</li> </ul>			
Align workforce development and job opportunities that keep residents and dollars local while creating a complete community and a closed West Bank economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with River Parish Community College and Louisiana Workforce Commission to bring their resources and programs to the Small Area.</li> <li>• Ensure local ordinances allow appropriate home-based businesses, and flexible workspaces.</li> <li>• Focus on resources and technical assistance for traditionally underserved small business entrepreneurs such as veterans, minority and women owned start-ups. Partner with the Microbusiness Enterprise Corporation of Ascension to link resources with needs.</li> <li>• Implement a “Buy West Bank” day to promote local business and improve connections to the East Bank.</li> </ul>			



## Goal 5

### Infrastructure: Sustainable systems that support current needs and anticipate future growth.

Upgrade and expand essential utilities and drainage infrastructure to support existing residents and controlled growth without compromising rural aesthetics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the cost benefit when requiring closed drainage systems, curb and gutter, underground utilities, and street lighting in rural areas. Explore grant opportunities and funding opportunities to offset these costs.</li> <li>• Require undergrounding of utilities in key visual corridors or new residential clusters when financially and technically feasible.</li> <li>• Develop a Capital Improvements Plan with a rural infrastructure focus.</li> <li>• Limit infrastructure and utilities from being extended into conservation/hazard flood zones.</li> </ul>			
Ensure equitable investment in infrastructure for the West Bank to address current deficiencies and improve quality of life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritize infrastructure investments that reflect equity by serving existing residents, as well as planned growth boundaries.</li> <li>• Provide resources and technical assistance to encourage energy efficient and hazard resilient infrastructure.</li> </ul>			
Provide reliable, modern, infrastructure investments that are aligned with community needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify gaps based on service reliability, capacity constraints, public health, and community input, especially in underserved areas.</li> <li>• Identify broadband gaps and deserts. Pursue state and federal funding (e.g., BEAD, USDA ReConnect, GUMBO) to support fiber and wireless</li> </ul>			



	<p>broadband deployment. Partner with broadband providers to ensure affordable and scalable service options for all residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure public areas such as libraries, recreation and community centers offer free and secure wifi.</li> <li>• Modernize stormwater and drainage systems using green infrastructure.</li> <li>• Retrofit problem flood areas with bioswales, detention basins, and low-impact development solutions.</li> <li>• Complete a regional detention study for the West Bank/Small Area for feasibility, sizing and location. Evaluate the opportunity for co-location with public land such as a park, or utility corridor.</li> </ul>			
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Goal 6</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Parks and Recreation: High quality, connected parks, greenspace, and recreational facilities for all citizens.</b></p>				
<p>Develop and maintain accessible parks, trails, and recreation facilities that serve families and youth of all abilities, emphasizing natural, outdoor activities consistent with the rural environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a park and recreation master plan.</li> <li>• Inventory existing youth programs, recreational spaces, and community centers to inform investments and needs for parks and recreation. Identify geographic and programmatic gaps.</li> </ul>			





Expand youth programs and community centers to provide safe, structured activities and encourage healthy lifestyles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner with schools, faith-based organizations, and nonprofits to deliver structured after-school and summer programs at existing sites. Include transportation support to ensure access for rural or low-income families.</li> <li>• Conduct a health needs assessment.</li> <li>• Create a small grants program to help local nonprofits or community groups expand or launch youth-focused services, such as mentorship, health education, or recreation.</li> </ul>			
Create a network of connected parks and amenities in the Small Area for West Bank residents and visitors to enjoy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase bike and pedestrian access to the Mississippi River and levee trail.</li> <li>• Require new subdivisions and developments to connect to parks when adjacent. Identify crosswalk needs to link park connections for pedestrians and bicyclists.</li> <li>• Create a blue way for kayaking on Bayou Lafourche.</li> </ul>			



An aerial photograph of a railway track stretching into the distance, flanked by dense green trees and fields. In the background, a body of water is visible under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The entire image has a blue color overlay.

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An aerial photograph of a vast agricultural landscape, likely a cornfield, with a prominent grid of roads and field boundaries. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter. The sky is filled with large, white, fluffy clouds.

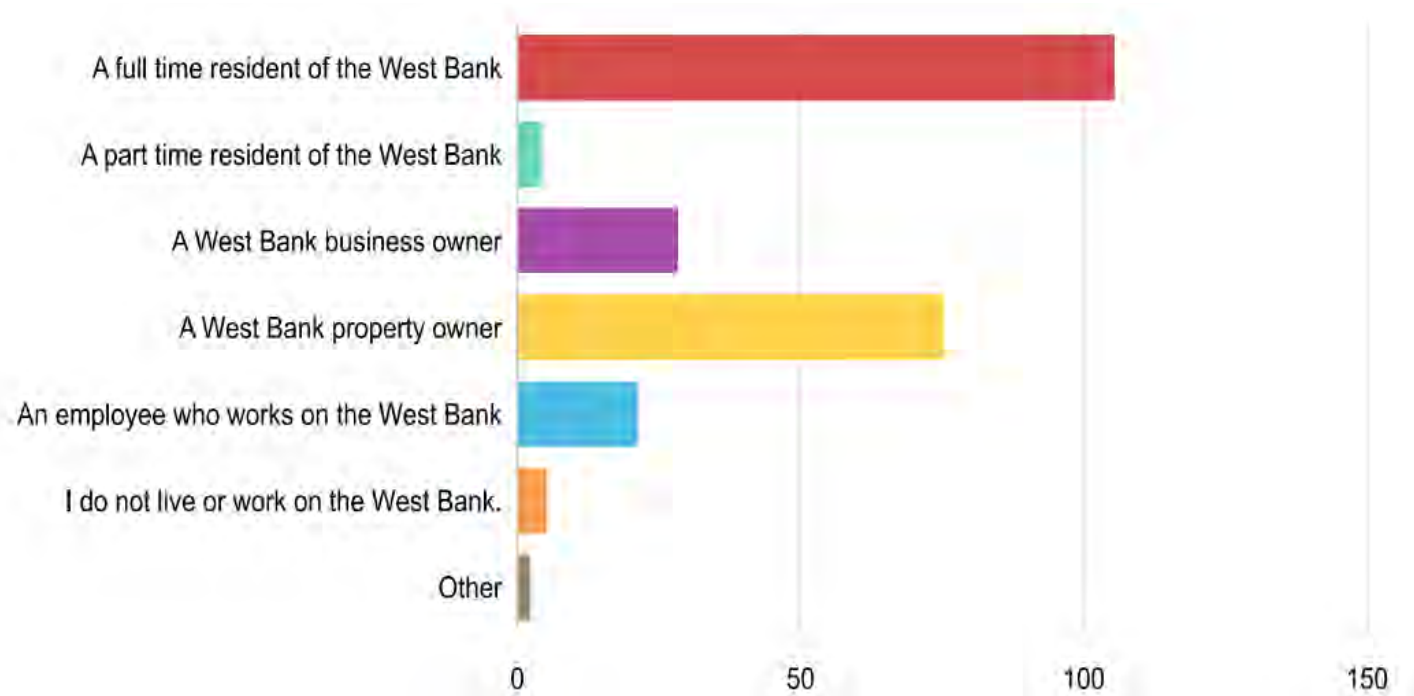
# APPENDIX A

Full Survey Results

## Survey Results

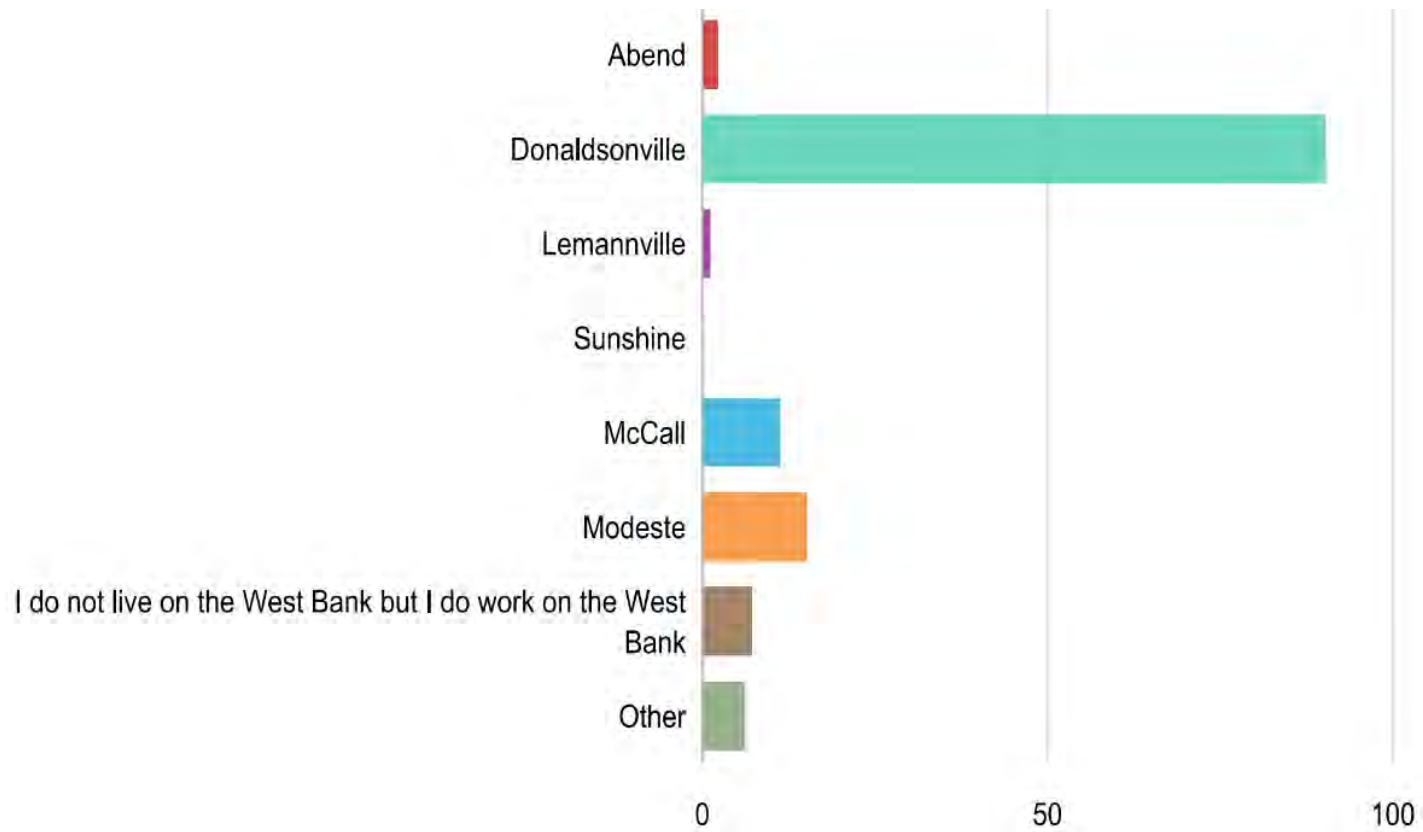
### 132 Responses

How would you describe yourself and your ties to the West Bank?





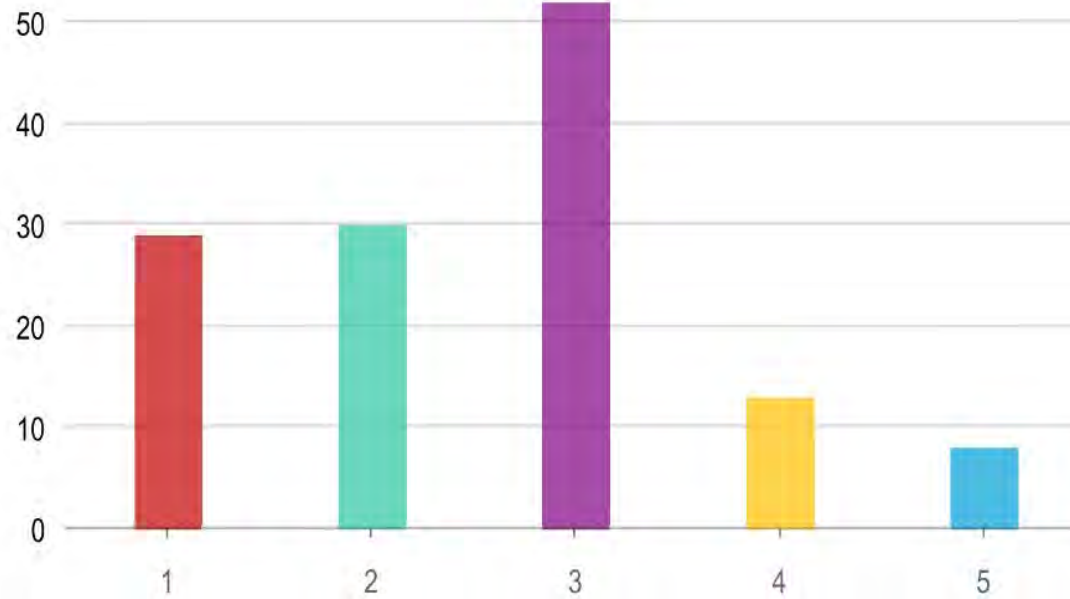
What area of the West Bank do you live in?



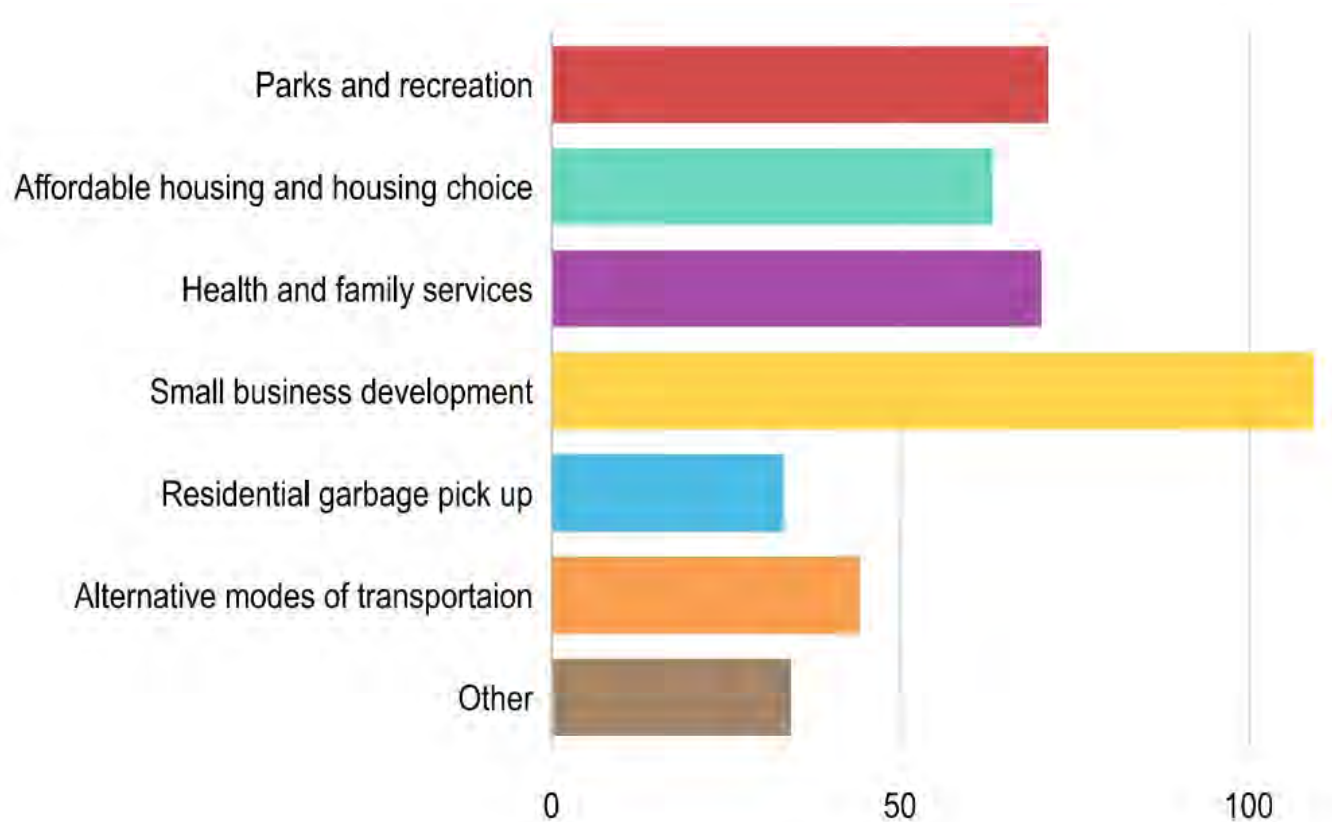
How would you rate your overall quality of life on the West Bank?

Average

2.6

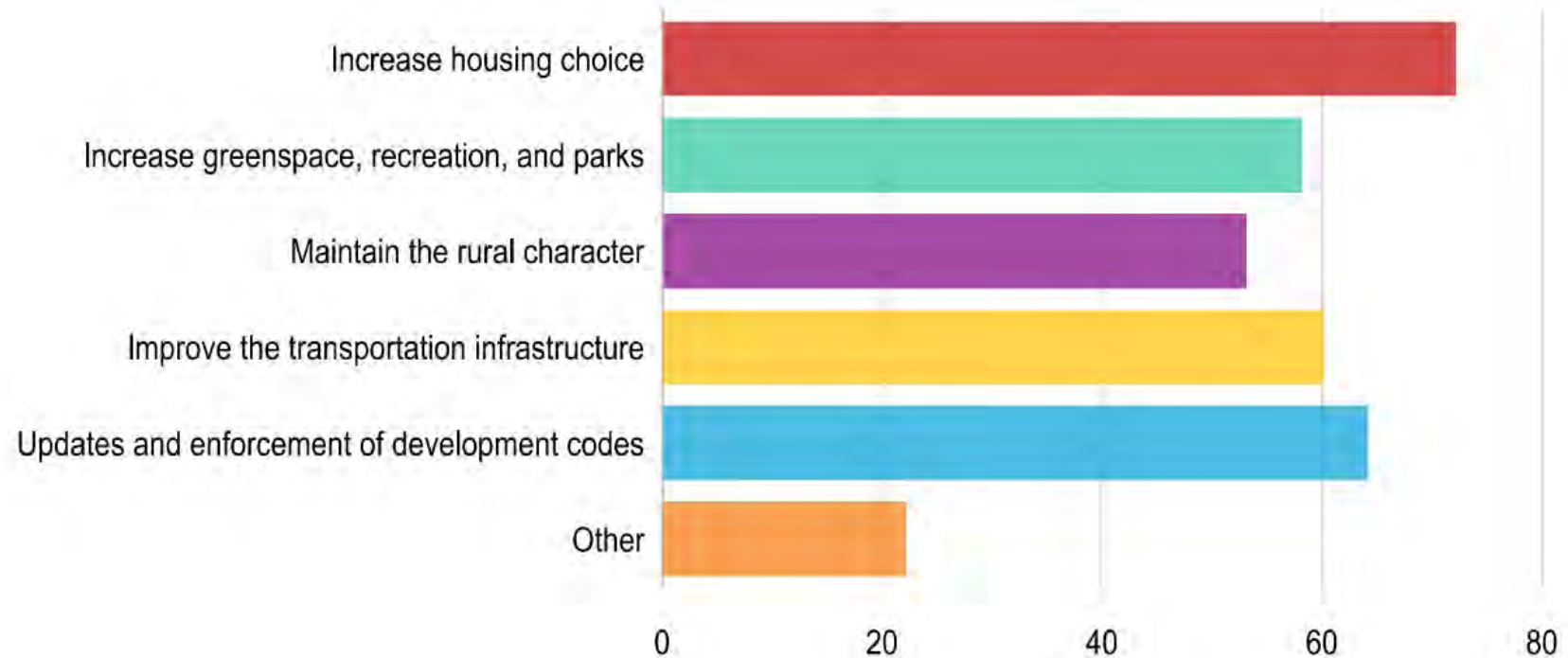


What services should the Parish prioritize on the West Bank?

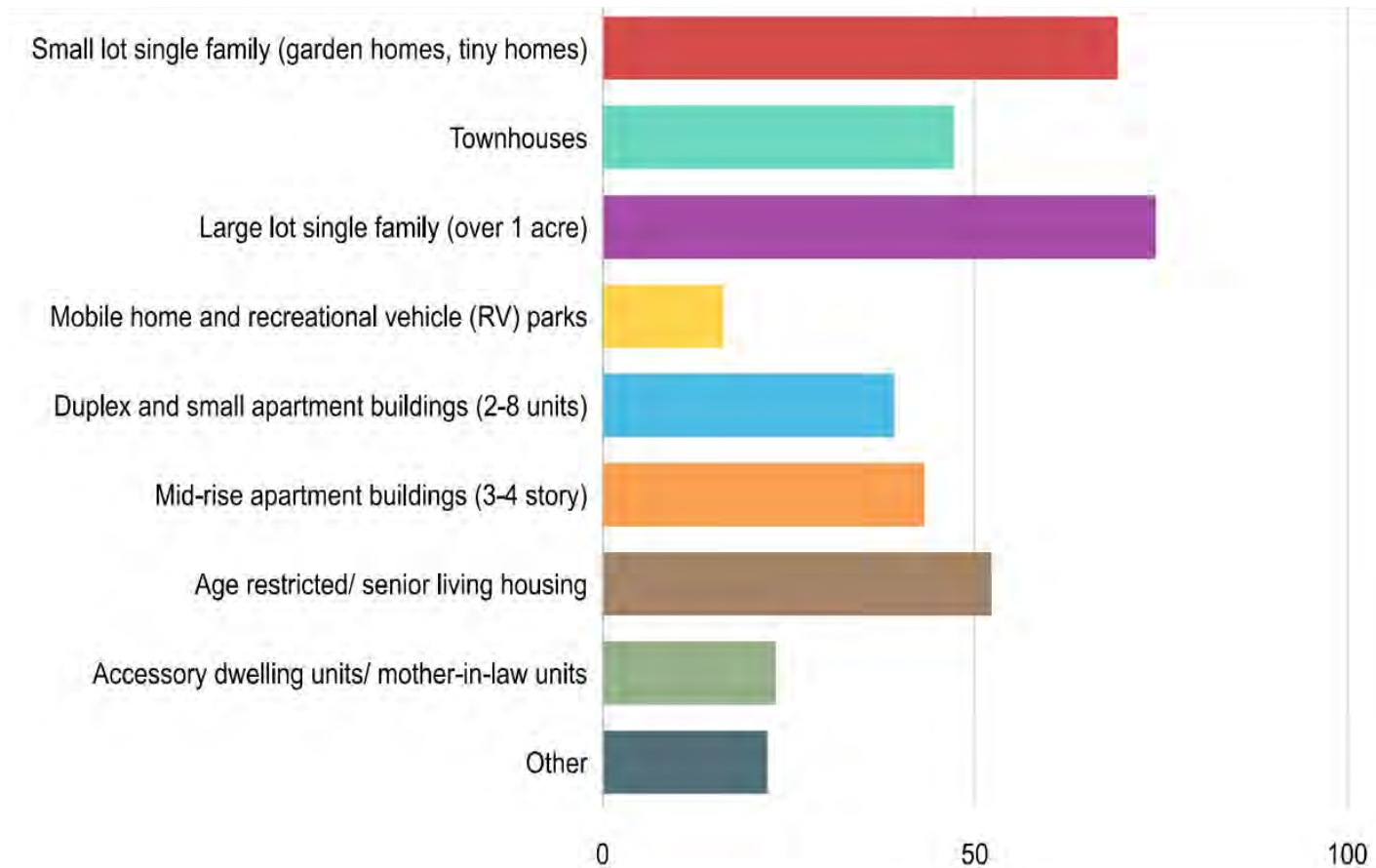




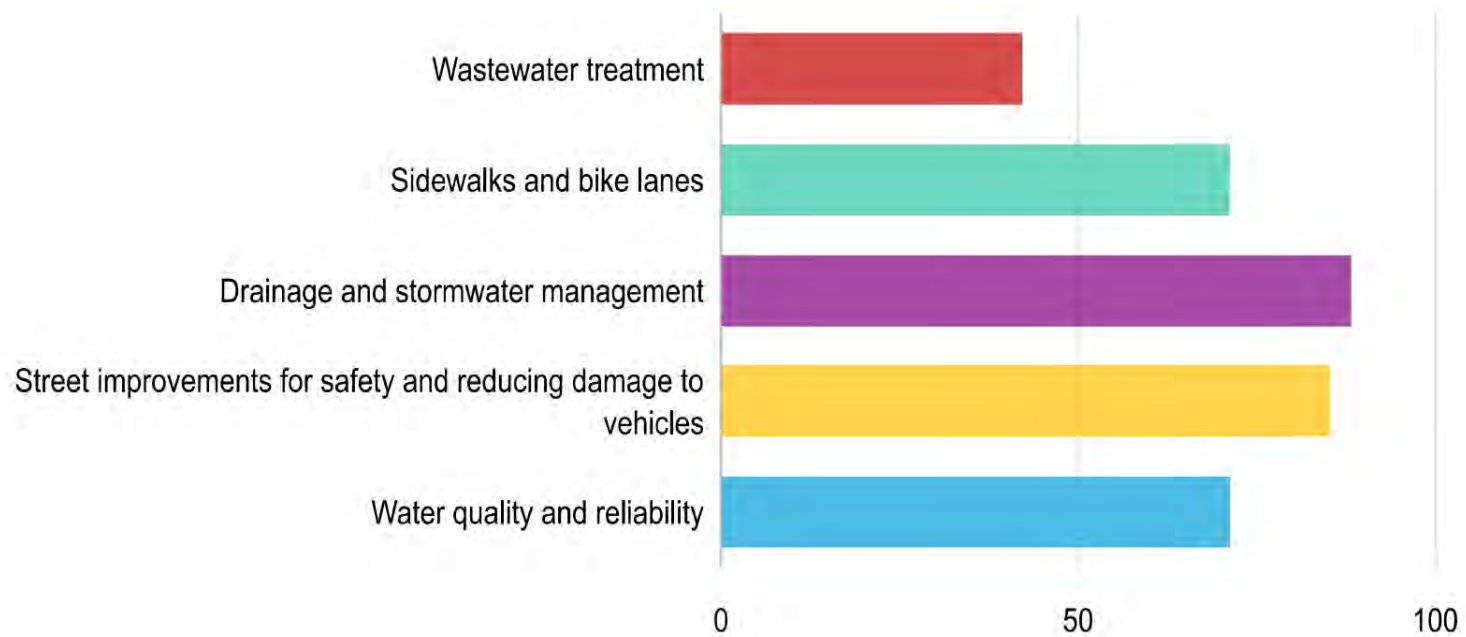
What approach do you think is needed to address potential growth on the West Bank?



Are there any options for housing that you feel are needed on the West Bank?



What infrastructure should the Parish prioritize on the West Bank?





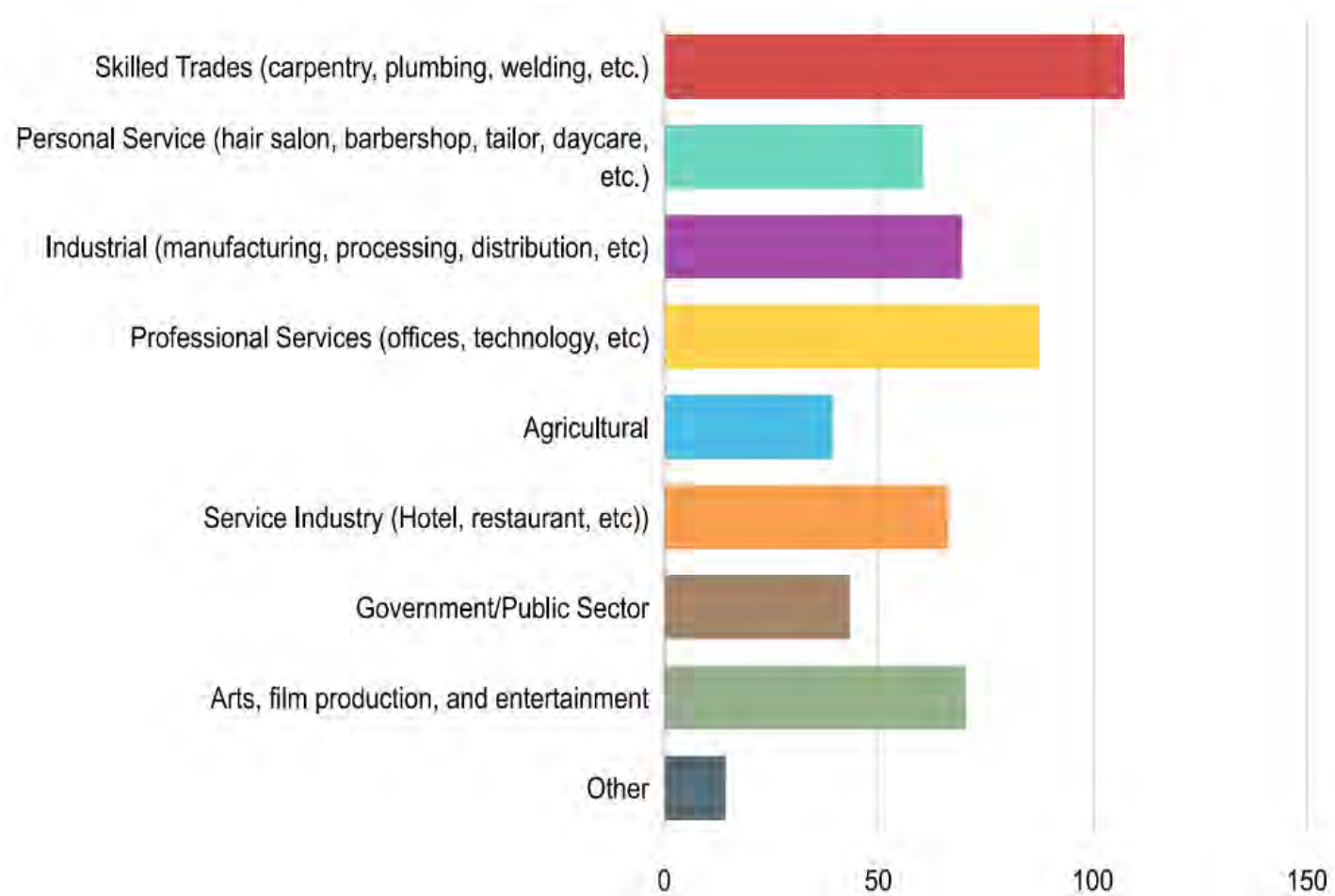
Describe what you enjoy about the West Bank?



## What challenges does the West Bank face?

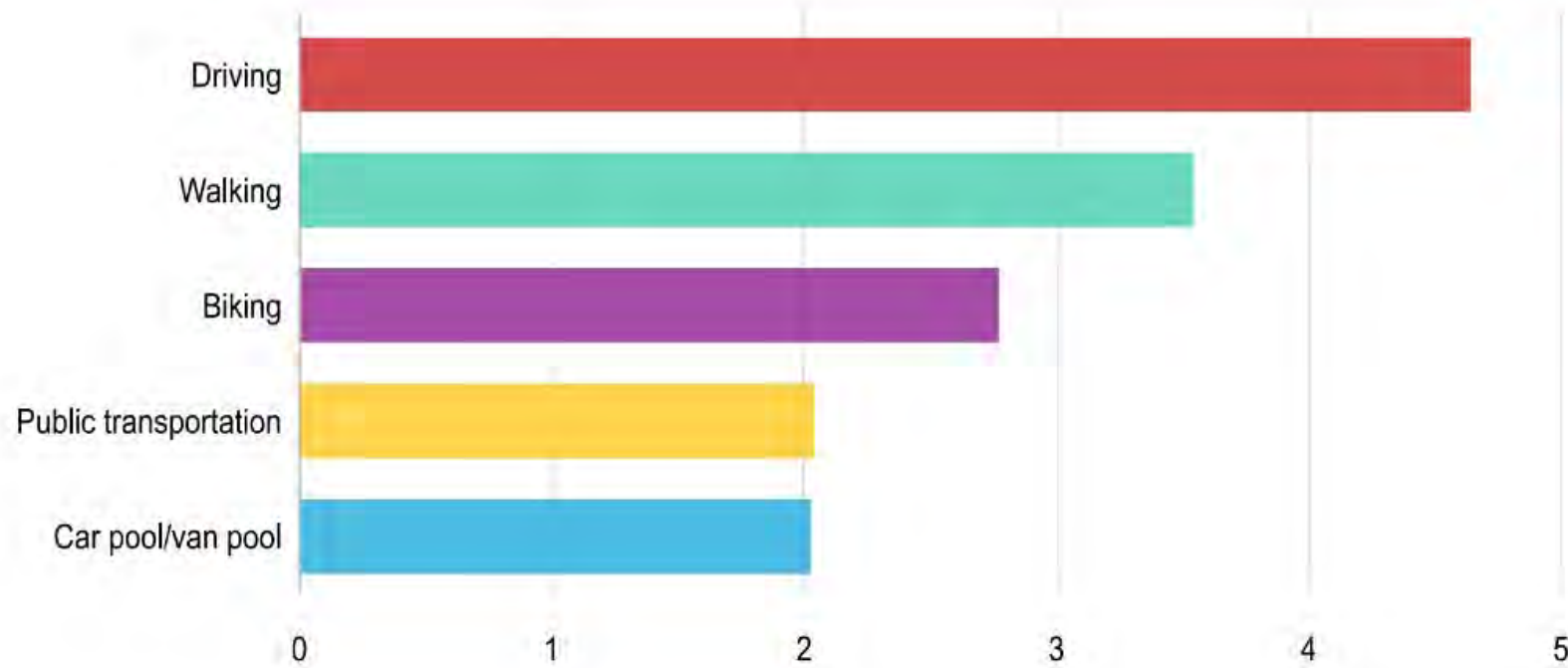


What type of jobs should be encouraged on the West Bank?

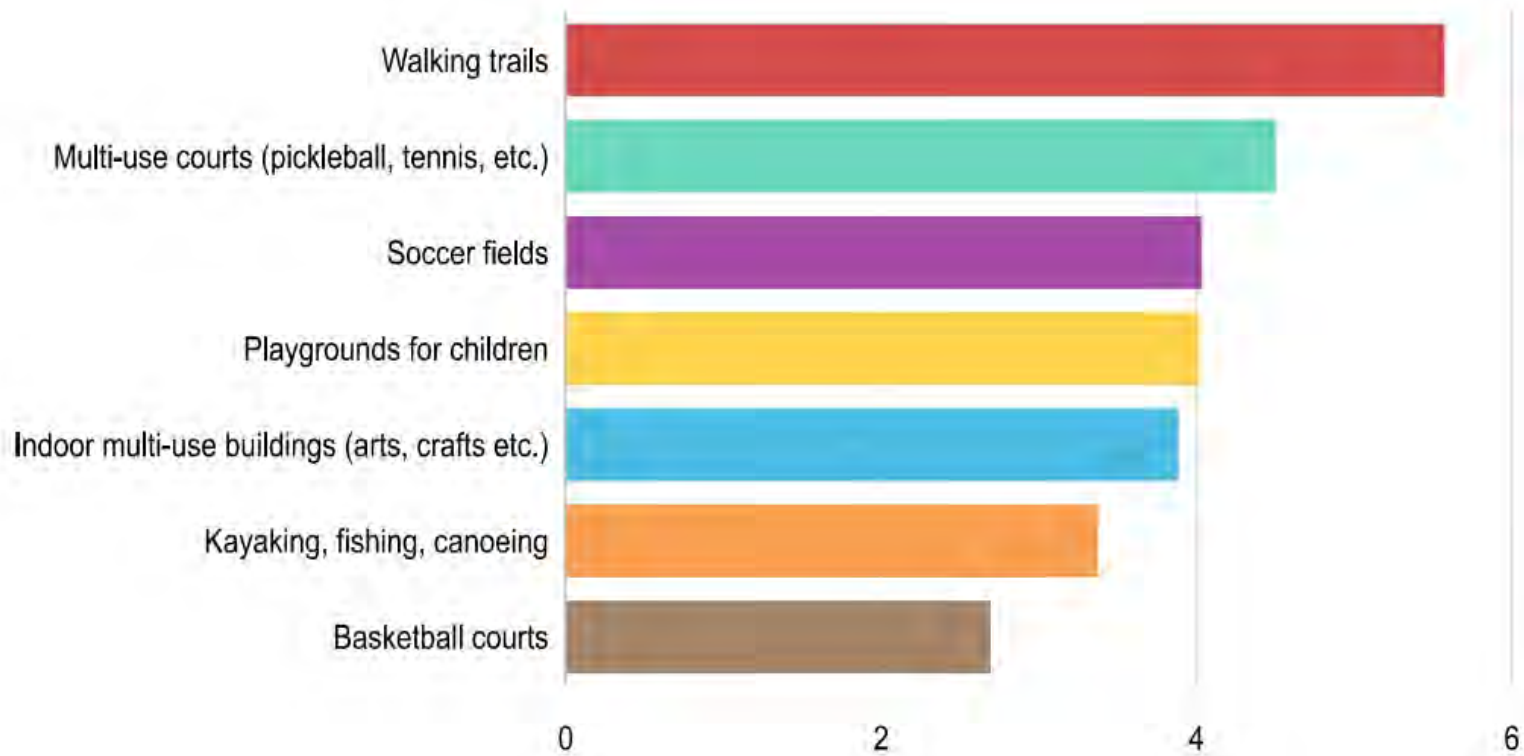




What modes of transportation are important to you?



What types of recreational facilities would you like to see added to the West Bank?

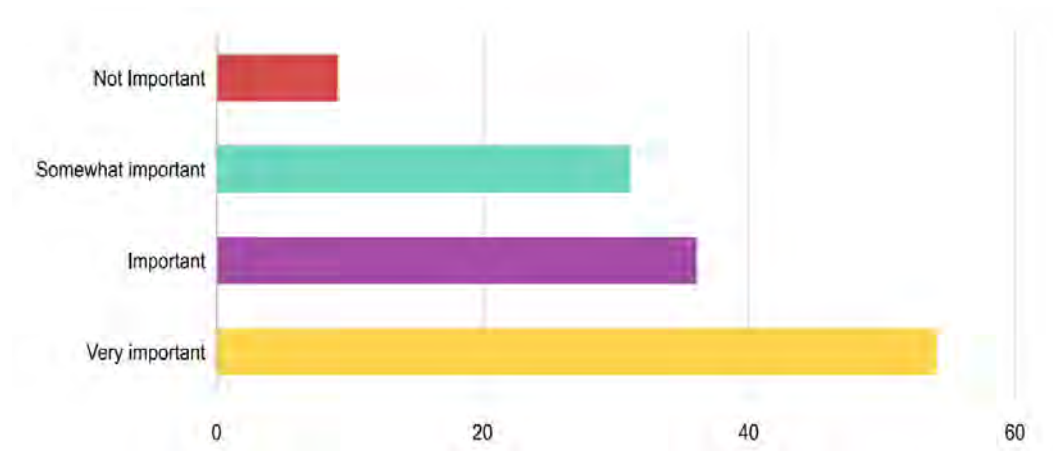


Is there another recreational facility that you would like to see that was not mentioned in the previous question?

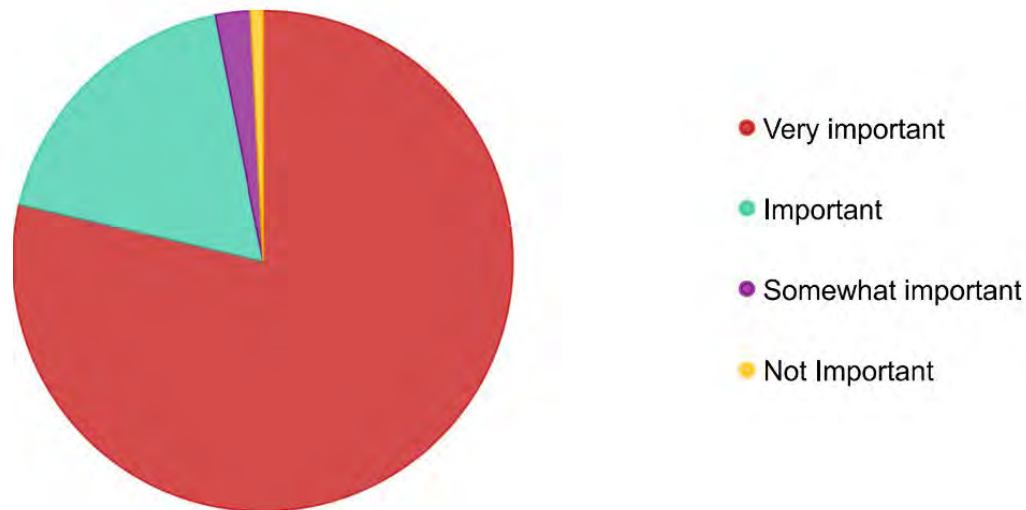




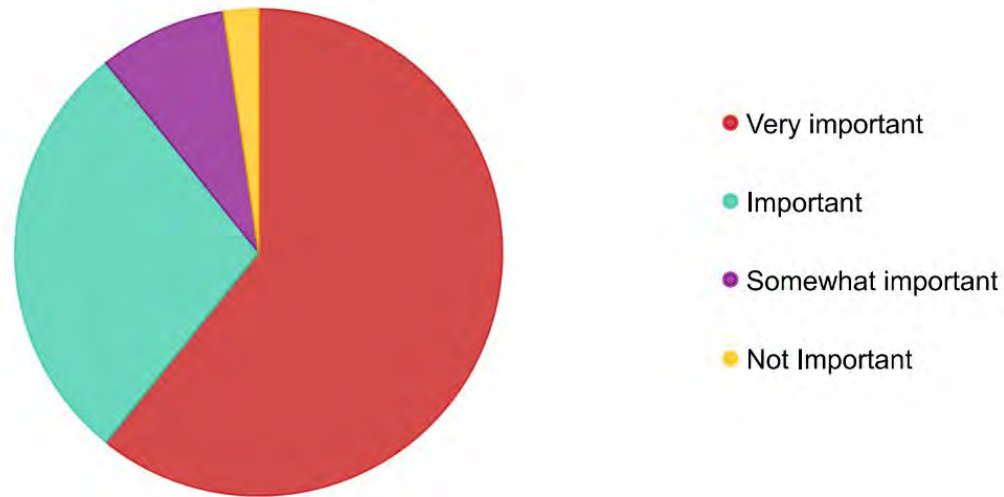
How important are the following quality of life factors for living on the West Bank?  
Rural Setting



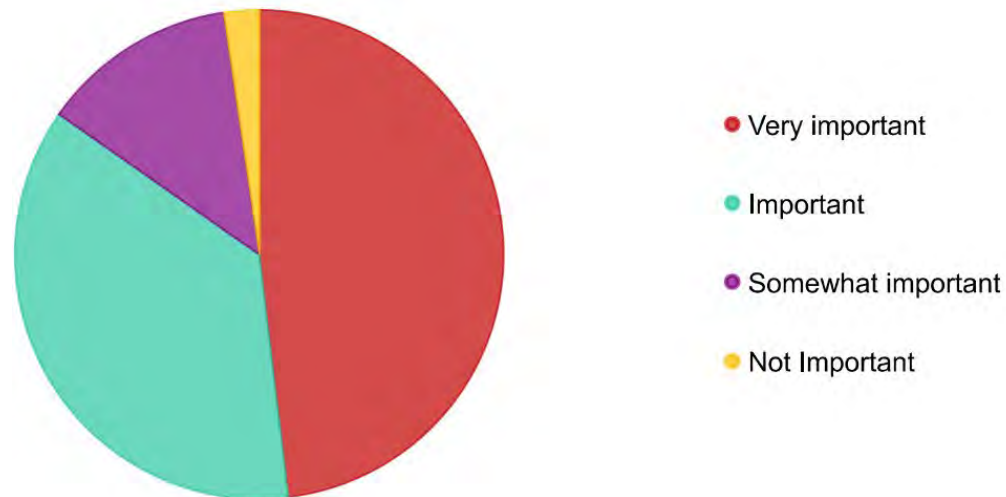
Well paying jobs



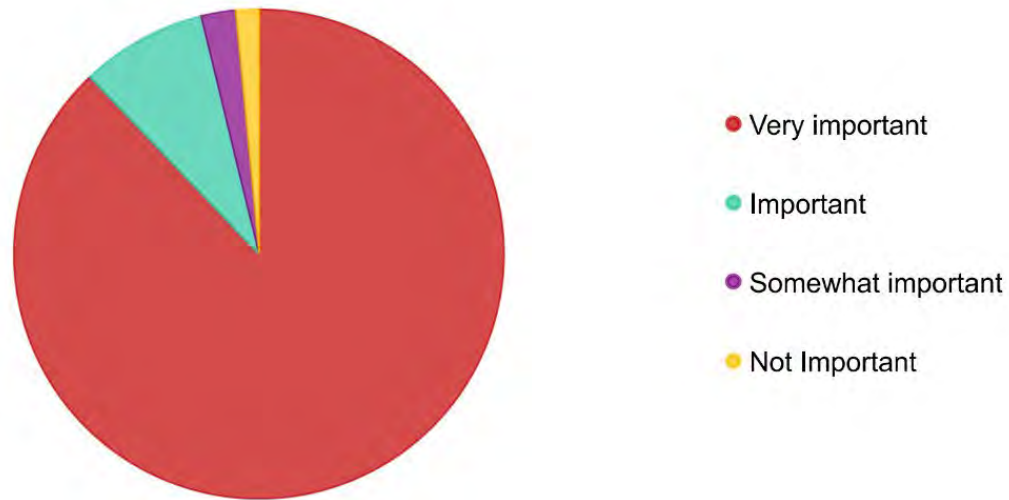
### Easy commute and low traffic volume



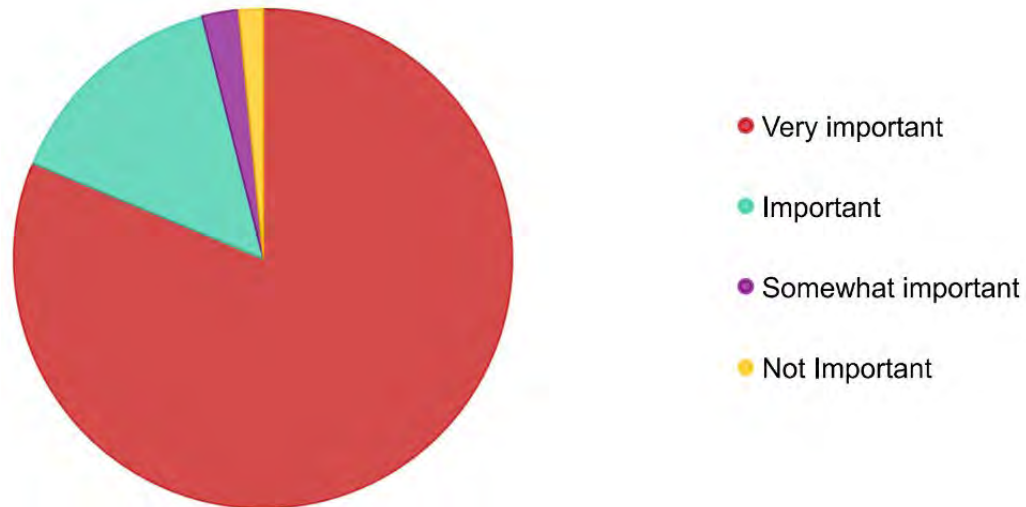
### Good parks and recreation options



### Desirable schools

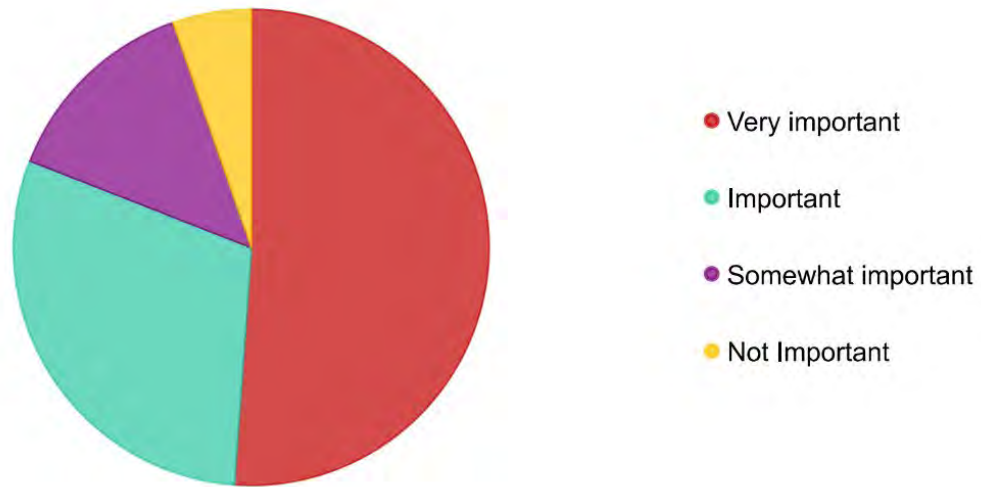


### Responsive government services

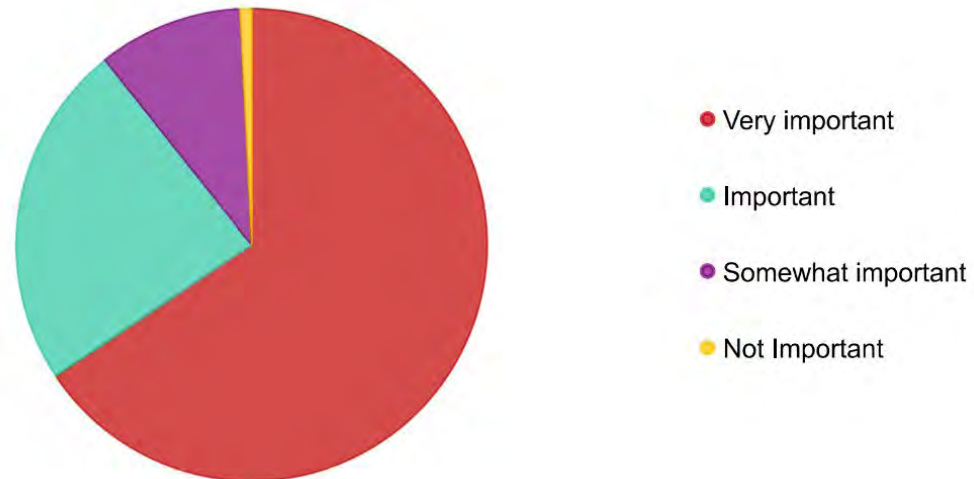




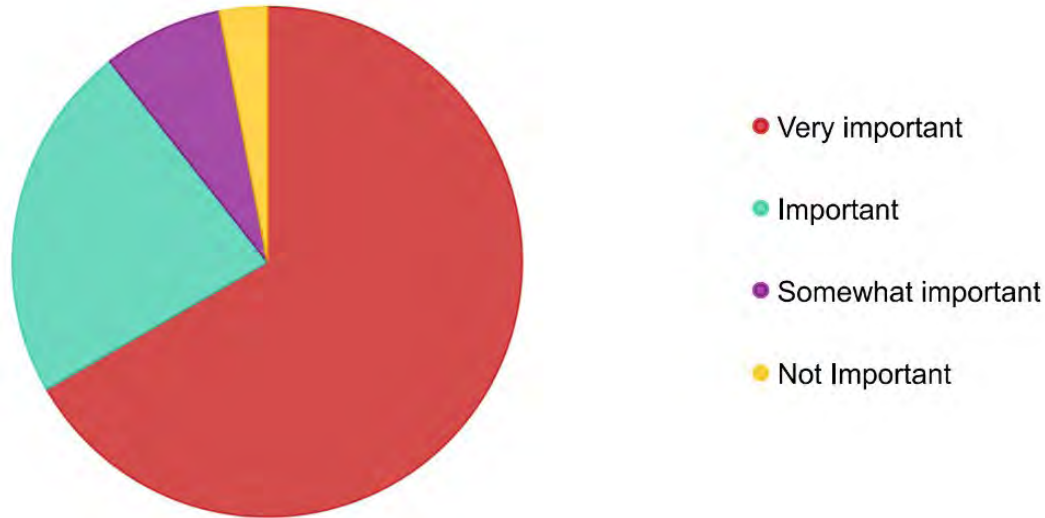
### A variety of housing



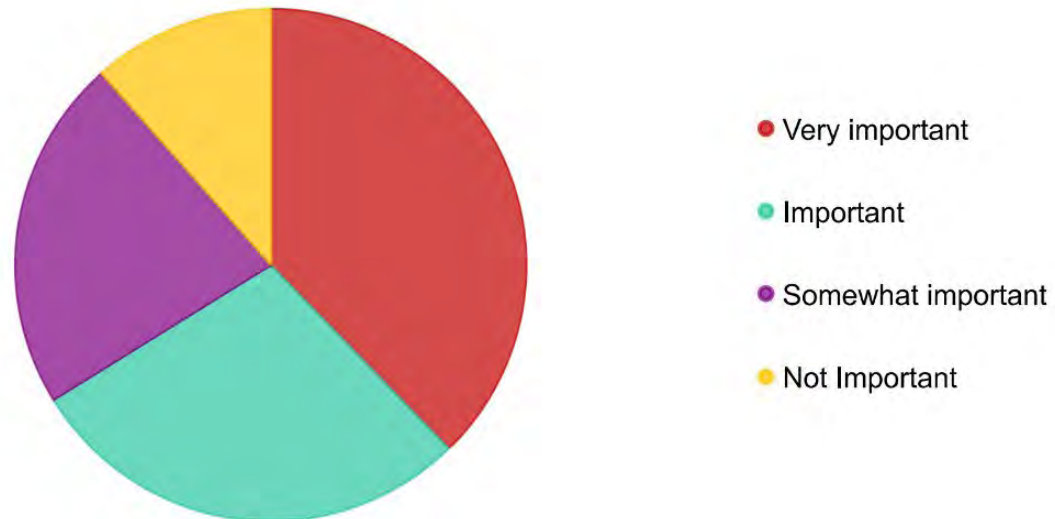
### Retail, shopping, and dining choices



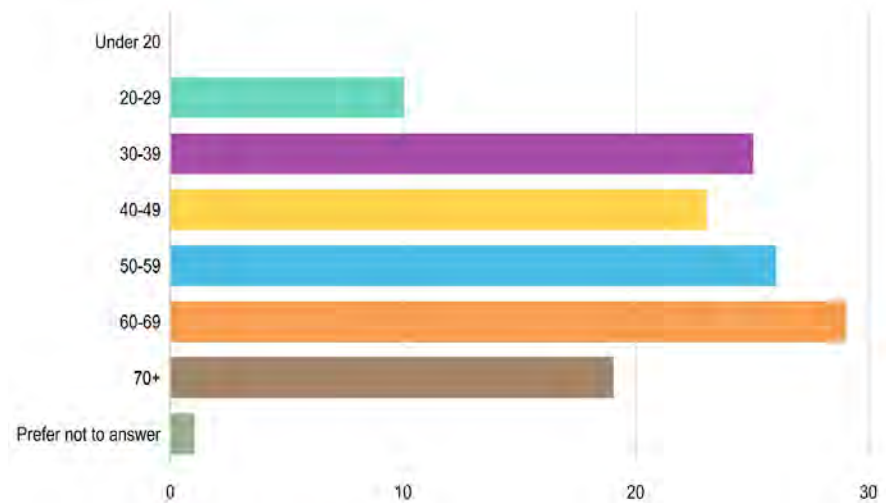
### Protecting environmental quality (air, soil, and water)



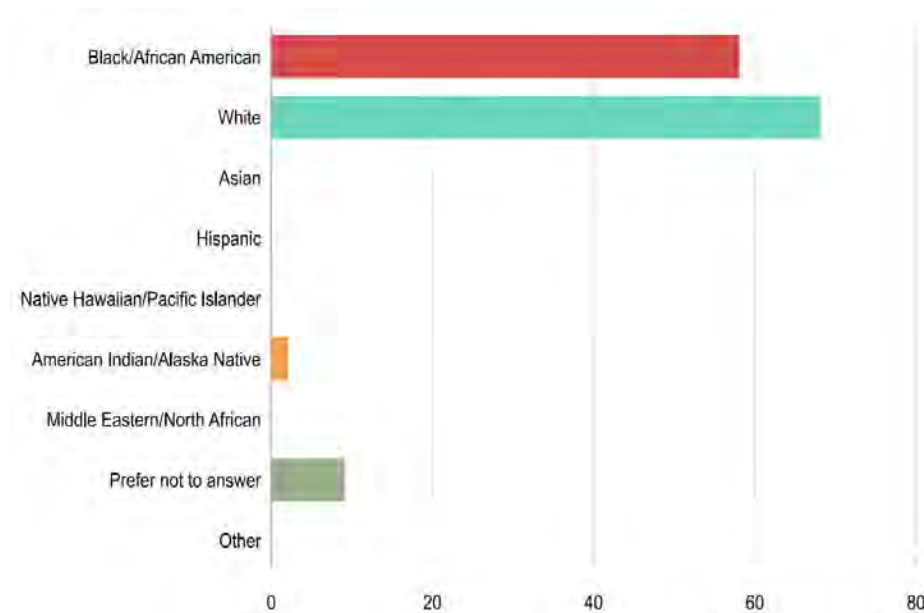
### Tree canopy and shade



What is your age group?

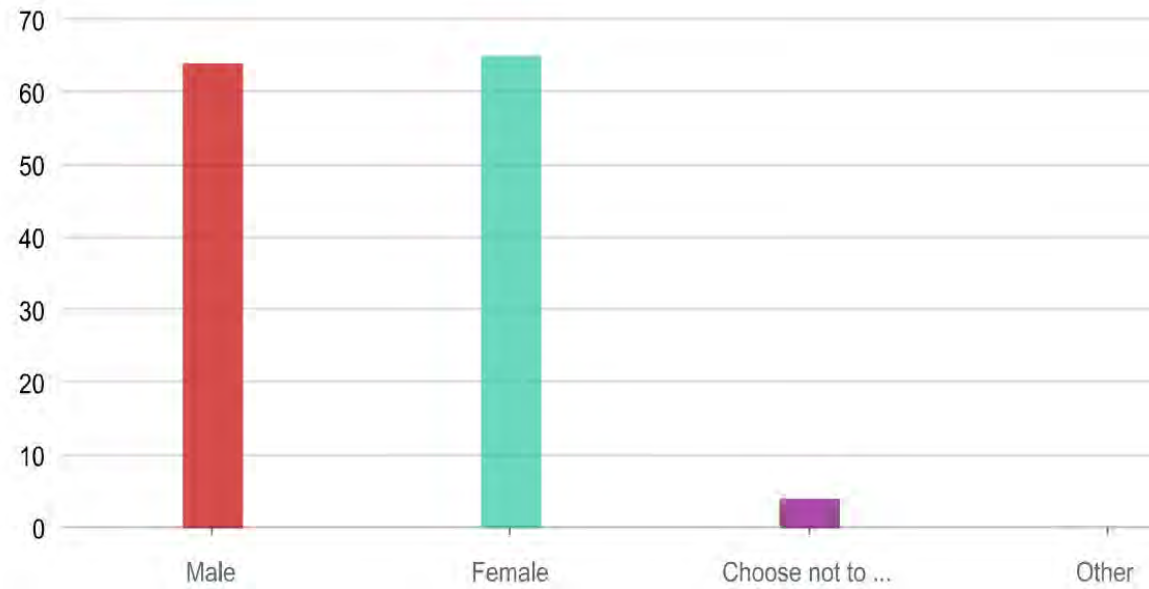


What is your race and/or ethnicity?





What is your gender?



Is there any other input you would like to add to the 2025 West Bank Plan?

