Ascension Parish

Transportation Master Plan

November 2020

REGULAR MEETING
OF THE
COUNCIL
OF THE PARISH OF ASCENSION
GONZALES, LOUISIANA

JULY 16, 2020

The Council of the Parish of Ascension, Louisiana, met in regular session on Thursday July 16, 2020 6:00 p.m., by Video Conference, with Chairwoman Teri Casso presiding.

The following Council members were present:

Alvin Thomas	Joel Robert	Travis Turner
Corey Orgeron	Dempsey Lambert	Chase Melancon
Aaron Lawler	Teri Casso	John Cagnolatti
Dal Waguespack	Michael Mason	

Councilman Corey Orgeron led the prayer and the pledge.

In accordance with the amended Open Meetings Law for Virtual Meetings during the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Secretary red the agenda in its entirety.

School Superintendent David Alexander gave a presentation on the upcoming School Construction Bond Election.

Chairwoman Casso called for any public speakers to comment. There were two callers who wished to speak in support of the *Ordinance – to amend the Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance:*
Allison Delatte
Denise Drago

The thirty minute public comment period expired with no other email comments or callers.

CAO John Diez gave the President's Report. He reported a Flood Mitigation Grant in the amount of $1.6 million, the Parish President's litter initiative, a trip to Jefferson Parish to tour their pump station and recent employee achievements and award.

Before the Council voted on the Consent Agenda, Chairwoman Casso asked if anyone wished to remove any item for further discussion. Councilman Robert asked to remove items *v. Renewal of Master Contract for Professional Services between Ascension Parish Government and Unifirst of Baton Rouge for industrial uniforms, other clothing items and flat supplies for an additional year from 7/25/2020 through 7/25/2021, per fee schedule, aa. Approval to extend contract with GSA Engineering for Utilities General Engineering and Technical Services to August 3, 2021.* After those items were removed, a motion to approve the remaining consent agenda was offered by Councilman John Cagnolatti and seconded by Councilman Joel Robert. The Consent Agenda passed as follows:

a. Approval to excuse registration fees due to the Parish ($5.00) per child by Ascension Baseball Committee, Ascension Youth Softball, and Ascension Flight Soccer Club for 2020

b. Approval of Proposed Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan

c. Approval of Change Order #1 for the LA 73 at Henry Road Intersection Improvements

to increase the contract price by $13,600 for additional drainage pipe along Henry Road for future drainage connection

d. Approval of Change Order #2 for the LA 73 at Henry Road Intersection Improvements Project to increase the contract price by $13,260. for asphalt pavement patching at cross drain locations

e. Approval of Change Order #3 for the LA 73 at Henry Road Intersection Improvements to decrease the contract price by $5,123.57 for restocking of remaining storm sewer pipe and deduction of pipe from contract

f. Approval of Change Order 001 in the amount of $12,540.44 and 5 additional days Roddy Road (LA 935 to LA 621) Clearing and Grubbing Master Contract MA1701A for the removal of 4 additional trees that were near or in the right of way new contract amount of $374,275.44

g. Approval of Change Order 002 in the amount of $4,180.57 and 10 additional days Roddy Road (LA 935 to LA 621) Clearing and Grubbing Master Contract MA1701A for the removal of 2 additional trees that are near or in the right of way new contract amount of $378,456.01

h. Approval of Change Order 003 in the amount of $2,167.06 to provide for the installation and removal of temporary driveway for construction access Roddy Road (LA 935 to LA 621) Clearing and Grubbing MASTER CONTRACT MA1701A new contract amount $380,623.07

i. Approval of Change Order #1 for the LA 73 @ Oakland Drive to increase the contract price by $24,593.53 and to add 14 days to provide for additional saw cutting of pavement, square tube posts for street signs, and a stone replacement for a subbase failure new contract amount of $709,016.56

j. Request approval to extend the contact of eleven Contract Design Consultants through August 2021 in order to continue to provide services as part of the Move Ascension Program, and as provided for in their respective Master General Engineering Contracts)

k. Roads to be considered for acceptance into the Parish Maintenance System as follows:

Ascension Commerce Center
Industrial Drive.....5,153 feet
Luke Drive.....1,356 feet
Lyle Drive.....1,331 feet
Camellia Cove Subdivision
Camellia Cove Road.....477 feet
Madiens Blush Street.....289 feet
April Blush Avenue.....489 feet
Coral Delight Avenue.....266 feet
Germany Oaks Subdivision Phase 2
Park Oak Avenue.....2,011 feet
Nutall Oak Avenue.....556 feet
Cathedral Oak Drive.....908 feet
Jamestown Crossing 2nd Filing
White Ibis Avenue.....1,434 feet
Harrier Street.....594 feet
Avocet Drive.....1,244 feet
Reese Lane Subdivision
Reese Lane.....2,410 feet
Nicholas Street.....157 feet
Talon Industrial
Talon Drive.....1,541 feet
Carson Drive.....615 feet

l. Approval of agreement for State Project H.013850 Duplessis Rd. Widening (US 61 LA 73) between DOTD and Ascension Parish
m. Approval of Change Order MC04 Balancing Change Order for 2019 Asphalt Overlay Master Contract to deduct from the master contract $111,652.16 new master contract amount is $2,889,211.77
n. Approval of Substantial Completion for 2019 Asphalt Overlay Task 3
o. Approval of Substantial Completion for 2019 Asphalt Overlay Master Contract
p. Approval of Project Husky, REG Geismar, LLC for participation in the Industrial Tax Exemption Program under the Post Executive Order 2018 rules
q. Approval of Clover, Borne Technologies for participation in the Industrial Tax Exemption Program under the Post Executive Order 2018 rules
r. Approval to redeem $1,000,000 PAR amount of the $9,200,000 Ascension Parish Revenue Refunding Bonds
s. Renewal of Cooperative Agreement between Ascension Parish Government and LSU Agricultural Center to support and administer Louisiana Cooperative Units off campus and to assure continued informal educational programming from the LSU AgCenter. This agreement shall have a term of five (5) years
t. Renewal of Cooperative Agreement between Ascension Parish Government and the Board of Supervisors of Louisiana State University and A&M College represented by the LSU Agricultural Center to formalize the commitment of both the LSU AgCenter and Parish to ensure that the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service continues to provide 4H youth development programs that are both relevant and useful to all Louisiana citizens. Total amount of agreement shall not exceed $50,000.00
u. Renewal of Maintenance Agreement including mowing and litter pickup between Parish of Ascension and DOTD
v. Removed from Consent Agenda
w. Certificate of Substantial Completion Boone Construction Services Hope Villa Lift Station Project
x. Acceptance of lowest responsive bid for the Right to Act as The Official Journal for Ascension Parish Government Gonzales Weekly Citizen
y. Piggyback Purchase of (2) 2020 Ford F350 Chassis Trucks for Fire Protection District #2 Courtesy
Automotive Group, $62,335.75 each
z. Approval of State Contract purchase of Multimedia Equipment for the New Court House Crescent Multimedia Solutions, $796,110.02
aa. Removed from Consent Agenda
bb. Removed from Consent Agenda

AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASCENSION PARISH COUNCIL

Parish President Clint Cointment
Councilman Alvin “Coach” Thomas Jr.
Councilman Joel Robert
Councilman Travis Turner
Councilman Corey Orgeron
Councilman Dempsey Lambert
Councilman Chase Melancon
Councilman Aaron Lawler
Councilwoman Teri Casso
Councilman Dal Waguespack
Councilman John Cagnolatti
Councilman Michael Mason

ASCENSION PARISH MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

Former Councilman Oliver Joseph
Councilman Aaron Lawler
Former Infrastructure Division Director William Daniel
Department of Public Works Assistant Director Mike Enlow
Planning Director Jerome Fournier

STAKEHOLDERS

Ascension Parish School District
Ascension Parish Sheriff’s Department
Ascension Parish Chamber of Commerce
Ascension Parish Economic Development Council

CONSULTANTS

HNTB Corporation
Meyer Engineering
Franklin & Associates
Dr. Jim Richardson, LSU
CPEX / Fregonesse (Land Use Master Plan)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ascension Parish is entering a critical period of its history. Ascension Parish and its citizens have enjoyed population and economic growth. Since 2000, Ascension Parish has added more than 38,000 residents (approximately 2,500 annually). By 2042, the Capital Region Planning Commission (CRPC) projects that Ascension will add more than 87,000 new residents totaling a forecasted 2042 population of 203,000 residents.

To maximize the benefits from this growth and to continue to attract additional economic opportunities in the future, the transportation infrastructure across the parish must be comprehensive, multi-modal, and support the overarching vision that leadership has for the future.

*A **Transportation Master Plan** is a vision for future multimodal transportation and investment decisions.*

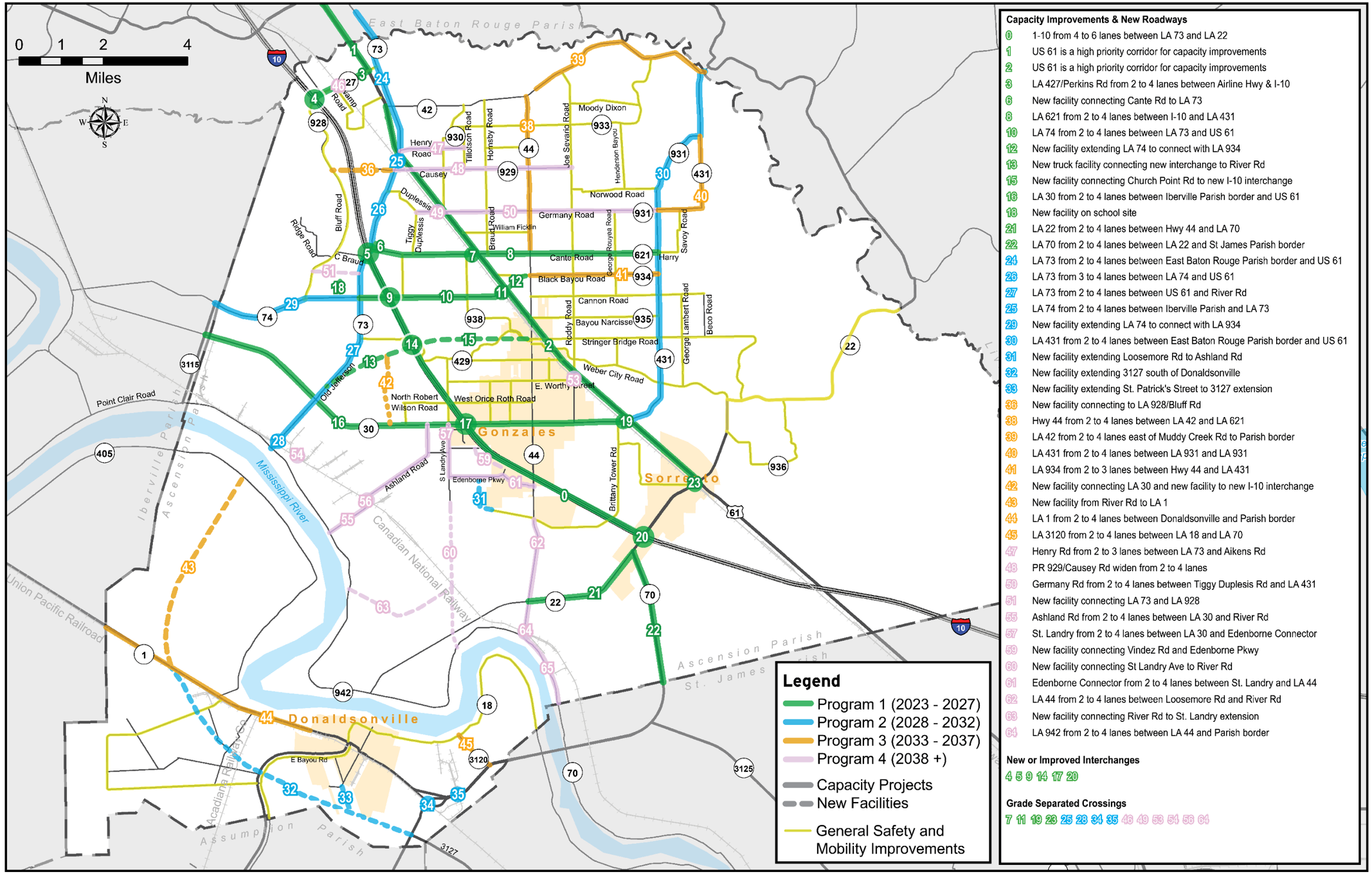
The Transportation Master Plan is made up of the following six chapters. Each chapter tells part of the story of Ascension's Transportation Master Plan.

Chapter	Summary
1. Moving to a Transportation System for All	The planning process brought together Ascension leadership, stakeholders and the public to develop a comprehensive transportation plan based on six guiding principles. • Improve transportation safety conditions. • Balance short-term and long-term needs and solutions. • Target corridor solutions over "hot-spot" nodes. • Support economic development and proactively guide growth in the parish. • Leverage available funding to provide the greatest return for the parish. • Improve connectivity and mobility. The transportation plan has been coordinated with the recently adopted Master Land Use Plan – Vision Scenario.
2. Understanding our Transportation Needs	Existing needs were summarized into four focus areas: reduce congestion, improve safety, enhance mobility and improve condition of infrastructure.
3. Developing a Connected Community	A combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis was used to develop, screen, and refine transportation solutions through a two-phase screening process, as well as, integrate previous transportation planning efforts and extensive coordination with Ascension leadership, stakeholders and the public.

Chapter	Summary
4. Our Path Forward	More than 100 transportation projects, totaling an estimated $1.25B in solutions were developed based on safety and capacity needs, new facilities to address congestion and economic development, and multimodal alternative options for an improved quality of life.
5. Making the Plan a Reality	All preliminary projects were prioritized based on LA DOTD state, CRPC regional and Ascension Parish local goals. Both technical analysis, stakeholder and public input were used to refine and prioritize projects into four programs between 2023 and 2045 based on existing needs, economic opportunities and partnerships. This process results in a transportation program shown on the next page.
6. Implementing our Shared Vision	Ascension Parish currently has $8M - $12M in annual transportation funding. This falls short of what would be considered an adequate transportation investment to put toward an estimated $1.25B transportation program. Based on a national peer comparison, adequate spending is likely closer to approximately $60M annually (in combination with LA DOTD funding) on transportation. This represents an annual transportation gap of nearly $40M when you include LA DOTD recent investments in the parish. Financing scenarios that focus on revenue generation are explored.

In summary, significant new funding will be required to deliver the Master Plan vision. Ascension Parish can use a variety of funding sources to develop the optimal mix to fund projects across the parish and state systems in programs 1 - 4.

In addition to implementing the recommended projects, several policies and planning considerations will help to achieve the overall vision. Several considerations that directly influence transportation include partnerships, access management, supporting street network, multimodal network, travel demand management, future transportation, and green infrastructure.



Capacity Improvements & New Roadways

0 1-10 from 4 to 6 lanes between LA 73 and LA 22
1 US 61 is a high priority corridor for capacity improvements
2 US 61 is a high priority corridor for capacity improvements
3 LA 427/Perkins Rd from 2 to 4 lanes between Airline Hwy & I-10
6 New facility connecting Cante Rd to LA 73
8 LA 621 from 2 to 4 lanes between I-10 and LA 431
10 LA 74 from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 73 and US 61
12 New facility extending LA 74 to connect with LA 934
13 New truck facility connecting new interchange to River Rd
15 New facility connecting Church Point Rd to new I-10 interchange
16 LA 30 from 2 to 4 lanes between Iberville Parish border and US 61
18 New facility on school site
21 LA 22 from 2 to 4 lanes between Hwy 44 and LA 70
22 LA 70 from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 22 and St James Parish border
24 LA 73 from 2 to 4 lanes between East Baton Rouge Parish border and US 61
26 LA 73 from 3 to 4 lanes between LA 74 and US 61
27 LA 73 from 2 to 4 lanes between US 61 and River Rd
25 LA 74 from 2 to 4 lanes between Iberville Parish and LA 73
29 New facility extending LA 74 to connect with LA 934
30 LA 431 from 2 to 4 lanes between East Baton Rouge Parish border and US 61
31 New facility extending Loosemore Rd to Ashland Rd
32 New facility extending 3127 south of Donaldsonville
33 New facility extending St. Patrick's Street to 3127 extension
36 New facility connecting to LA 928/Bluff Rd
38 Hwy 44 from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 42 and LA 621
39 LA 42 from 2 to 4 lanes east of Muddy Creek Rd to Parish border
40 LA 431 from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 931 and LA 931
41 LA 934 from 2 to 3 lanes between Hwy 44 and LA 431
42 New facility connecting LA 30 and new facility to new I-10 interchange
43 New facility from River Rd to LA 1
44 LA 1 from 2 to 4 lanes between Donaldsonville and Parish border
45 LA 3120 from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 18 and LA 70
47 Henry Rd from 2 to 3 lanes between LA 73 and Aikens Rd
48 PR 929/Causey Rd widen from 2 to 4 lanes
50 Germany Rd from 2 to 4 lanes between Tiggy Duplesis Rd and LA 431
51 New facility connecting LA 73 and LA 928
55 Ashland Rd from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 30 and River Rd
57 St. Landry from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 30 and Edenborne Connector
59 New facility connecting Vindez Rd and Edenborne Pkwy
60 New facility connecting St Landry Ave to River Rd
61 Edenborne Connector from 2 to 4 lanes between St. Landry and LA 44
62 LA 44 from 2 to 4 lanes between Loosemore Rd and River Rd
63 New facility connecting River Rd to St. Landry extension
64 LA 942 from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 44 and Parish border

New or Improved Interchanges

4 5 9 14 17 20

Grade Separated Crossings

7 11 19 23 25 28 34 35 46 49 53 54 56 64

Future mobility in the Parish will require a balanced multi-modal system that provides residents various travel options including vehicular, transit, bicycle and pedestrian options.

1 MOVING TO A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FOR ALL

Chapter 1 provides important transportation master plan foundation elements. These foundation elements include:

- An understanding of why Ascension Parish is embarking on a transportation master plan,
- The master plan development process
- Development of the master plan guiding principles,
- How the public was engaged,
- Building on historical and existing work, and
- Coordination with the concurrent Ascension Master Land Use Plan.

*A **Transportation Master Plan** is a vision for future multimodal transportation and investment decisions.*

Ascension Parish is entering a critical period of its history. Ascension and its citizens have enjoyed population and economic growth. Since 2000, Ascension Parish has added more than 38,000 residents (approximately 2,500 annually), according to the US Census Bureau. By 2042, the Capital Region Planning Commission (CRPC) projects that Ascension will add more than 87,000 new residents totaling a forecasted 2042 population of 203,000 residents.

To maximize the benefits from this growth and to continue to attract additional economic opportunities in the future, the transportation infrastructure across the parish must be comprehensive, multi-modal, and support the overarching vision that leadership has for the future.

Development and implementation of a transportation master plan demonstrates foresight and a proactive approach by the leadership of the parish.

Why do a Transportation Master Plan?

A Transportation Master Plan:

- Informs future land use decisions/policy
- The transportation master plan prioritization assures that limited resources are used wisely
- Positions the Parish to obtain additional local, state and federal funding
- Defines what is important to your residents and business owners
- Links Parish goals to regional and state goals
- Puts the Parish in the best position to achieve the desired quality of life
- Cultivates public trust and transparency

The purpose of the Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan is to:

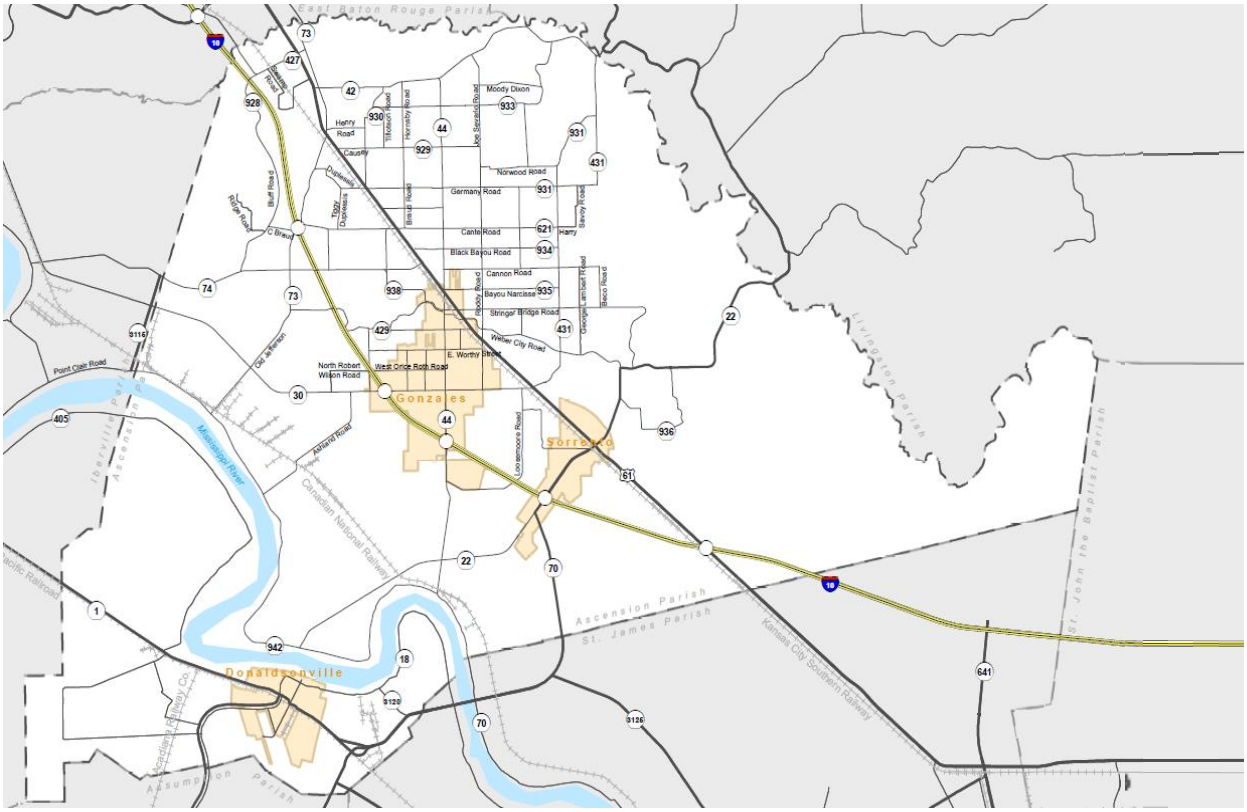
- Identify existing transportation infrastructure,
- Evaluate existing and future transportation needs,
- Provide recommendations that address prioritized transportation needs, and
- Determine what resources may be necessary and available to successfully implement those recommendations.

Ascension Parish is part of the federally designated Baton Rouge Urbanized Area. The Baton Rouge Capital Regional Planning Commission (CRPC), the metropolitan planning organization for the region, is responsible for transportation planning and the allocation of federal dollars for transportation projects within the urbanized area. To that end, this plan incorporates requirements and guidelines consistent with the expectations for a transportation plan. Attention to the CRPC planning process established a strong framework and foundation for transportation planning and decision-making within Ascension Parish.

1.1 WHAT IS THE STUDY AREA?

Ascension Parish, the study area for this plan, is located along the I-10 corridor in Southwest Louisiana within the Baton Rouge metropolitan area and between Baton Rouge and New Orleans. Ascension is approximately 303 square miles with a population of more than 121,000. There are three incorporated cities in Ascension Parish: Gonzales, Sorrento and Donaldsonville. The study area is displayed in Exhibit 1.

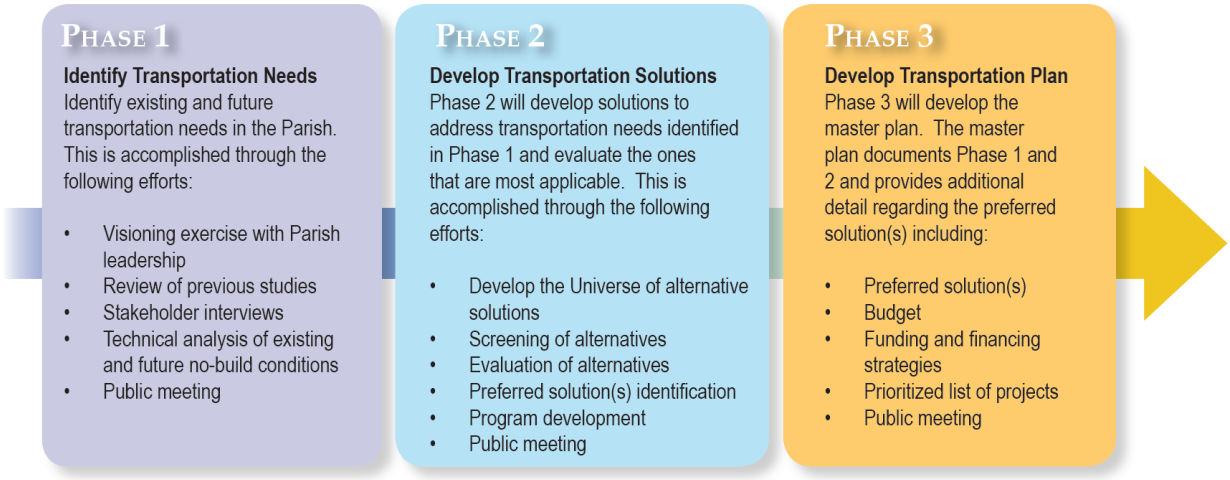
Exhibit 1: Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan Study Area



1.2 WHAT IS THE PLANNING APPROACH?

The Ascension Parish transportation master planning process includes three phases with community engagement occurring throughout the study. Each phase represents a critical step in the planning process to (1) identify the transportation needs, (2) develop transportation solutions, and (3) develop the transportation plan. This approach is shown in Exhibit 2.

Exhibit 2: Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan Approach



Phase 1 identified the existing and future no-build transportation needs. The transportation needs were formed from national, state, and regional parish transportation goals, previous studies, a visioning workshop with parish leadership, stakeholder interviews, and a technical analysis of current and future no-build conditions. Phase 1 serves as the guiding framework for Phase 2 transportation solutions.

Phase 2 of the Master Plan focused on developing potential solutions. Phase 2 began by qualitatively screening a broad categorical range of solutions against the study needs and goals in an initial high-level assessment. Types of solutions brought forward from the initial assessment became “reasonable alternatives” that were quantitatively tested using the Capital Region Planning Commission (CRPC) travel demand model (TDM). Reasonable alternatives are those improvements that are realistic to be implemented in Ascension Parish sometime in the future. During the process of this study, a Master Land Use Plan for Ascension Parish was simultaneously completed. As such, the preferred land use scenario from this planning process was used for modeling the network and the developed reasonable alternative solutions.

Phase 3 of the planning process focused on screening potential solutions, developing engineering cost estimates and project benefits, and prioritizing projects. The phase also considered key policy items and next steps for implementation of the Transportation Master Plan.

1.3 WHAT ARE THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES?

The project vision and goals for the Transportation Master Plan were developed in collaboration with Ascension staff, Ascension officials, stakeholder feedback and public input. A visioning workshop and stakeholder interviews were held early in the process to develop project goals and objectives. The complete Visioning Workshop Report is provided in Appendix 1. The following items were identified as guiding principles for the master plan.

- **Improve transportation safety conditions.**

  Participants saw safety as the highest priority and want to ensure that safety will continue to be a guiding factor in the Transportation Master Plan.

- **Improve connectivity and mobility.**

  Participants had a general goal of improving connectivity and mobility. This includes improvements to both local and regional travel.

- **Balance short-term and long-term needs and solutions.**

  Participants saw the importance of addressing short-term needs while also planning for future scenarios and guiding transportation development in the long-term.

- **Target corridor solutions over "hot-spot" nodes.**

  Participants understood improving one node only pushes traffic problems to another area. The group wanted to focus on fixing whole corridors to help move people throughout the parish.

- **Support economic development and proactively guide growth in the parish.**

  Participants want to encourage growth and economic development that will promote the Parish's long-term development and vision.

- **Leverage available funding to provide the greatest return**

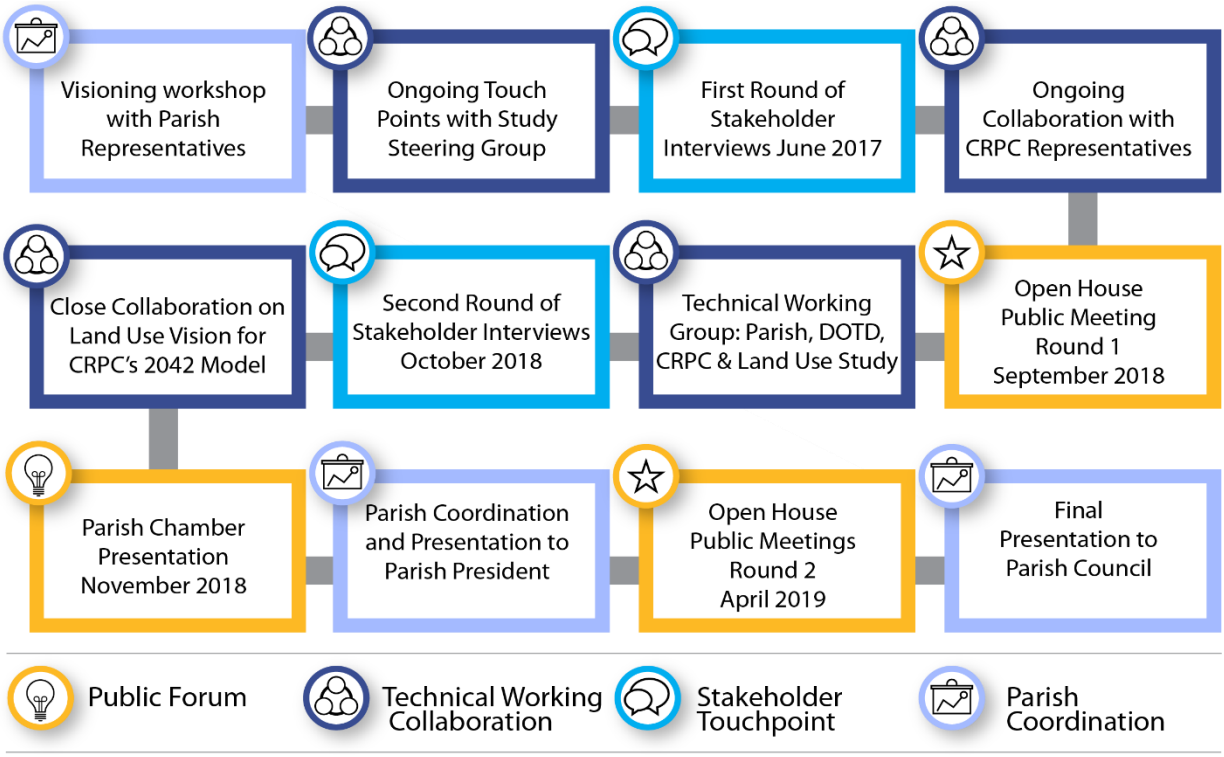
  Participants wanted to instill residents' confidence in officials and ensure that local tax payer dollars are being leveraged to provide the greatest return in transportation investment.

1.4 HOW WAS THE PUBLIC INVOLVED?

These principles were reaffirmed with the public and stakeholders throughout the planning process. Public involvement and stakeholder engagement were key components of the Transportation Master Plan. The public involvement strategy for the Master Plan included a visioning workshop, multiple rounds of stakeholder

interviews, two public meetings, several presentations to key organizations, and collaboration and data sharing with CRPC's *Move 2042* and the Parish Master Land Use Plan process. Exhibit 3 illustrates this in-depth involvement. Detailed summaries of both public meetings are included in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

Exhibit 3: Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan Public Engagement



In addition to public meetings, stakeholders were heavily relied upon to generate ideas, provide input, and discuss any transportation concerns facing their organization and/or community at large. In addition to coordination with LA DOTD, CRPC, and Ascension staff from several departments, stakeholder groups and interviews included:

- Ascension Economic Development Corporation (AEDC),
- Ascension Chamber of Commerce,
- Ascension Parish Public Schools and Gonzales Primary School, and
- Ascension Parish Sherriff's Department.

The first round of stakeholder interviews in June 2017, focused on defining transportation needs. Each group had multiple representatives attend the meetings, which generated positive discussion and identified transportation concerns facing their organization and/or the community at large. Key topics included the projected future growth in industrial facilities along the Mississippi River, the importance of schools coupled with the amount of traffic put on local roads as more schools are being developed, important locations for capacity improvements, and high priority safety concerns.

The second round of stakeholder interviews in October 2018, focused on reviewing draft solutions Key themes from the second round of stakeholder interviews included policy development and subdivision regulations, an emphasis on new I-10 interchanges, grade separation of railroad tracks, a focus on areas around planned school locations, and prioritizing capacity improvements on major corridors.

In addition to stakeholder interviews, a presentation was made to the larger Chamber membership in November 2018 at their monthly chamber lunch to receive feedback on the Master Plan. In general, feedback from the meeting was positive and the attendees indicated that transportation investments are needed.

1.5 PREVIOUS STUDIES

The vision of the master plan and proposed solutions were not only grounded in stakeholder and public involvement. A thorough review of existing planning documents and study outcomes was completed to provide background and historical information to the study team, document key findings and major recommendations to reduce repetitive work and ensure that Ascension goals align with state (LA DOTD) and regional (CRPC) transportation goals. A complete report of prior studies is included in Appendix 4.

Key findings demonstrate that population in Louisiana is projected to increase, especially in urbanized areas such as the Baton Rouge metropolitan area. Transportation facilities ranging from state highways to local roadways are feeling the impacts of this growth, and many corridors are falling behind in routine maintenance. The planning studies note that municipalities should incorporate a wider range of multimodal solutions to address the transportation impacts of population growth.

In addition, many municipalities in Louisiana wish to maintain the small-to-medium town living quality of life environments they currently enjoy, thus preserving their environmental and cultural heritage. To achieve this, the plans call for compact development and an emphasis on improving key transportation corridors providing local and regional connectivity. Prioritizing the protection and enhancement of neighborhoods over increased traffic capacity and speed is important within urbanized areas. The plans identify key transportation infrastructure projects to begin addressing these local and regional issues.

Planning Studies Indicated:

- Municipalities should incorporate a wider range of **multimodal solutions** to address the transportation impacts of population growth
- Many municipalities wish to **maintain the small-to-medium town living environments** they currently enjoy
- Prioritizing the **protection and enhancement of neighborhoods** over increase traffic capacity and speed is an important planning strategy within urbanized areas.
- Compact development and emphasis on key transportation corridors providing **local and regional connectivity**

1.6 CONCURRENT PLANS AND STUDIES

Quick Starts

The Move Ascension Initiative is a multi-million-dollar transportation infrastructure improvement program developed to safely move traffic within Ascension Parish. During the Master Transportation Planning Development phase, a list of Quick Start projects was identified and further separated into two phases. The Quick Start Projects, dubbed the Immediate Action Projects (IAP), were identified and further prioritized with the help of Ascension Parish's Program Management Consultant.

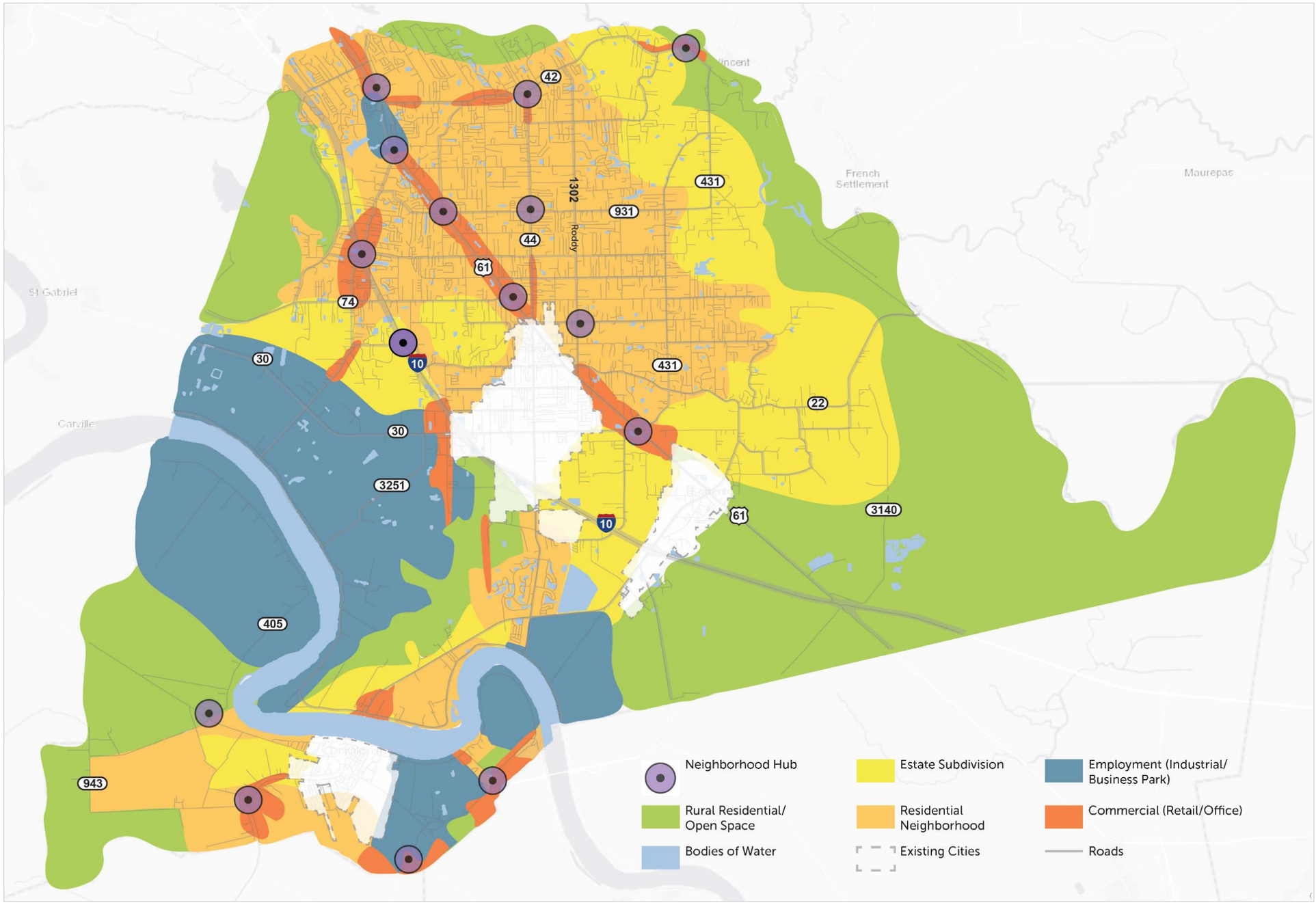
On August 17th, 2017 Ascension Parish President Kenny Matassa requested Parish Council approval to move forward with all pre-construction activities associated with Quick Start – Immediate Action Projects. On September 7, 2017, the first design task order was issued to begin work on the first of the Immediate Action Projects with a pre-construction deadline of December 2018. It is the goal of this administration to start construction activities on the IAPs by the first quarter of 2019. The Transportation Department has issued design task orders for 18 projects that are funded through to construction. To view the projects page to view all Move Ascension projects in addition to task orders issued for traffic flow improvements go to http://moveascension.com/.

Master Land Use Plan

Concurrent to the Transportation Master Plan, Ascension Parish drafted a Master Land Use Plan. The plan is a comprehensive land use plan for Ascension Parish that includes policy recommendations and implementation strategies to protect neighborhoods, identify places where growth makes sense, and make the parish more livable.

A high level of coordination between the two plans took place. This included incorporating the Land Use preferred Vision Scenario into the travel demand modeling used to evaluate transportation solutions. The Vision Scenario represents the preferred future land use plan identified by the community through the land use planning process in the development of the Master Land Use Plan. In addition, updates on the transportation planning process were made at all land use meetings and vice versa at transportation planning public meetings. The preferred land use "Vision Scenario" is provided in Exhibit 4 on the following page.

Exhibit 4: Ascension Parish Vision Scenario Land Use



The parish has several critical connections for residential, commercial, and freight access.

2 UNDERSTANDING OUR TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

Chapter 2 summarizes Phase 1 of the 3-Phase study process to identify the transportation needs of today and into the future.

Phase 1

Identify Transportation Needs

Identify existing and future transportation needs in the Parish. This is accomplished through the following efforts:

- Visioning exercise with Parish leadership
- Review of previous studies
- Stakeholder interviews
- Technical analysis of existing and future no-build conditions

Ascension Parish is entering a critical period of its history. The parish and its citizens have enjoyed population and economic growth. To maximize the benefits from this growth and to continue to attract additional economic opportunities in the future, the transportation infrastructure across the parish must be comprehensive, multi-modal, and support the overarching vision the parish leadership has for the future.

A thorough review was completed of existing and future conditions for the transportation network during Phase 1 of the Transportation Master Plan. Existing and future conditions of demographics, land use, zoning, environmental impacts, traffic, safety conditions, infrastructure condition, travel patterns, multi-modal use, and freight are included in a detailed transportation needs report included in Appendix 5.

Following the process of assessing current and future transportation needs, four primary focuses became clear for the parish. The leading focus areas for transportation solutions development included the following four items:

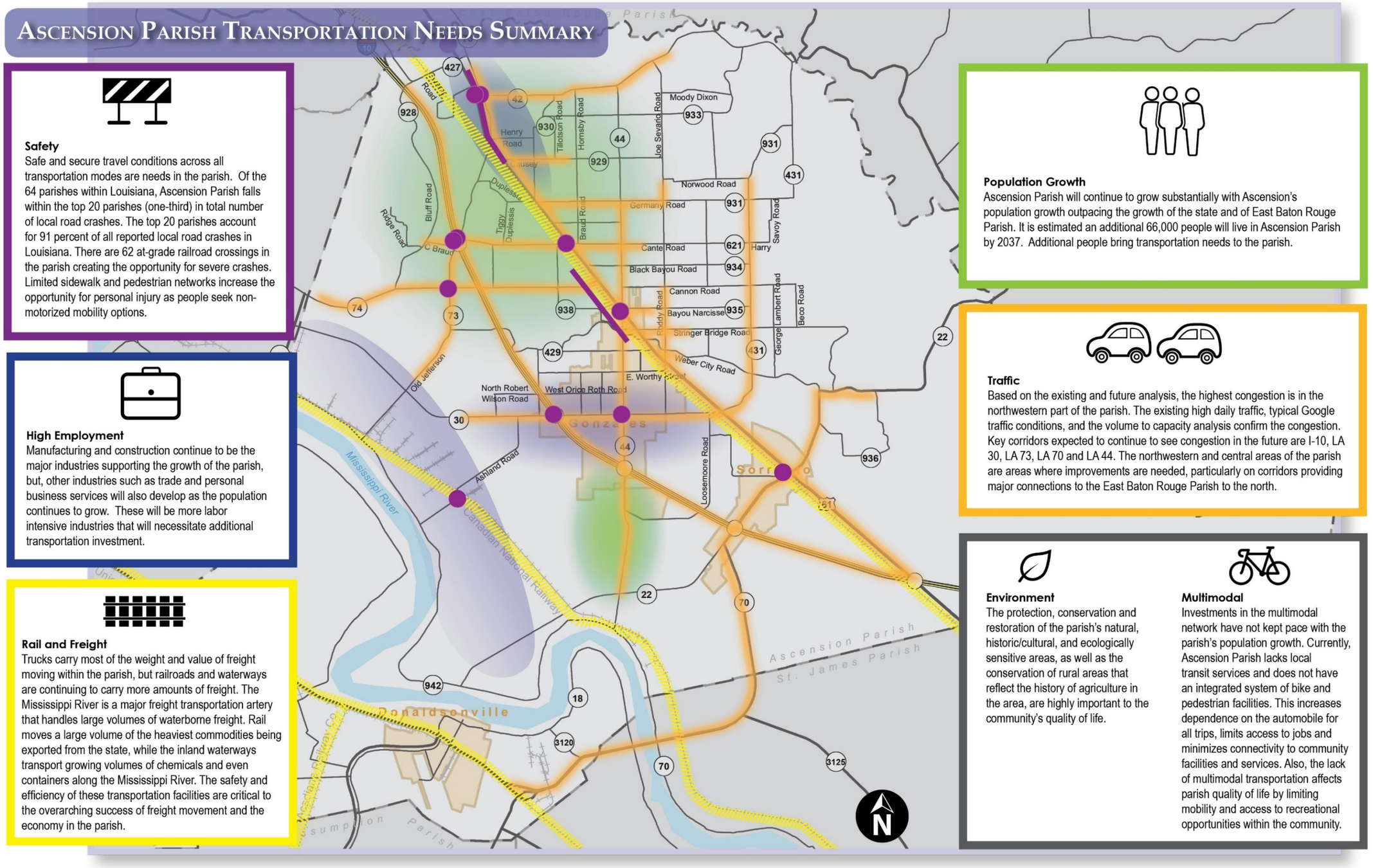
- Reduce congestion
- Improve safety
- Enhance mobility
- Improve condition of infrastructure

Additional detail on the previous four focus areas is included in Exhibit 5 on the following page. Also included is a snapshot of the fact sheet produced for Phase 1 of the Transportation Master Plan process (Exhibit 6).

Exhibit 5: Transportation Focus Areas

Transportation Focus Areas	Further Detail
Congestion Congestion and delays in traffic cost regional businesses, industries and commuters millions of dollars annually.	• Existing high traffic volumes and congestion located on primary state highways and local roads. • The parish is expected to grow by more than 87,000 new residents by 2042. • The parish is expected to experience a significant increase of 86,000 new employees by 2042. • Lack of multimodal options of walking, biking, transit contribute to congestion. • Congestion contributes to environmental impacts such as noise, water quality and air quality. • Congestion contributes to an unhealthy lifestyle. • Key stakeholders from the School District, AEDC, Chamber of Commerce and Sherriff's Department have identified a need. • Parish land use decisions impact congestion. • Congestion can negatively impact economic growth.
Safety Safety is critical to the quality of life of the parish.	• Ascension Parish is in the top 1/3 of most crashes in the state. • The large number of at-grade railroad crossings serving local businesses creates a safety concern. • Lack of a bicycle and pedestrian sidewalk creates a safety concern. • Key stakeholders from the School District and Sherriff's Department have identified a need.
Mobility Mobility is the connectivity and reliability of our multimodal trips.	• Lack of road connectivity to key areas such as the west bank area of Donaldsonville leads to congestion. • Lack of local street connectivity puts more pressure on the arterial street network to provide first and last-mile connections. • Residents and businesses depend on a transportation system that can be unreliable as to when and where congestion and safety issues arise, increasing the cost to do business in the parish. • Currently there is no public transportation. • Walking and biking trips are limited by a limited infrastructure. • Freight is vital to the local and regional economy and there are a number of freight bottlenecks. • Parish land use decisions impact mobility.
Infrastructure Condition The condition of the transportation system is crucial to the efficient flow of people and goods.	• Roads in the parish have substandard geometrics related to lane width, turn bays, ditches and other roadway infrastructure. • Deteriorating bridge and pavement conditions exist.

Exhibit 6: Transportation Needs Summary




An efficient and fair transportation system must serve diverse users and needs.

3 DEVELOPING A CONNECTED COMMUNITY

Chapter 3 summarizes Phase 2 of the 3-Phase study process to develop and evaluate solutions.

A combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis was used to develop, screen, and refine transportation solutions, as well as integration of previous transportation planning efforts and extensive coordination with:

- Parish staff
- City of Gonzales
- Capital Region Planning Commission
- Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
- Ascension Parish School District
- Ascension Parish Sheriff's Office
- Ascension Parish Chamber of Commerce
- Ascension Parish Economic Development Corporation
- Public input: Meetings on September 11, 2018, April 10, 2019 and April 11, 2019.

Phase 2

Develop Transportation Solutions

Develop solutions to address transportation needs identified in Phase 1 and evaluate the ones that are most applicable. This is accomplished through the following efforts:

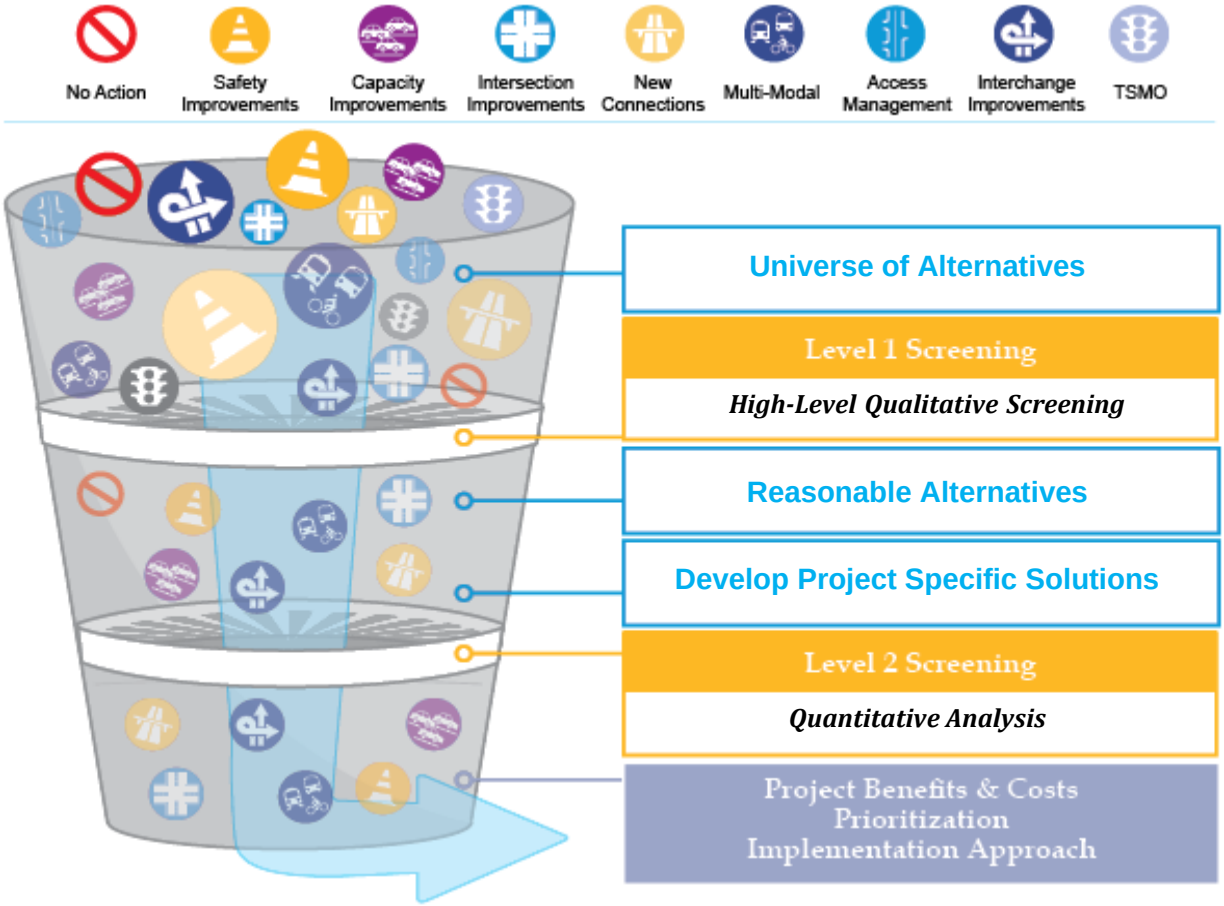
- Develop Universe of Alternatives
- Qualitative Level 1 Screening
- Select Reasonable Alternatives
- Establish Preliminary Solutions/Projects
- Conduct Quantitative Level 2 Screening
- Identify Preferred Solutions

3.1 LEVEL 1 SCREENING

The solution development process began with a "universe of alternatives" based on the identified needs. Alternatives underwent an initial high-level qualitative screening against guiding principles and planning goals. Additional detail on this process and each family of alternatives is included in Appendix 6.

The planning team gathered input on specific projects that the public would support based on the universe of alternatives. Preliminary solutions were developed to address existing congestion, projected congestion, high crash locations, and locally expressed desires. Preliminary project solutions were categorized into four types of projects including: safety and capacity projects, new facility projects, multimodal projects, and freight-specific projects. Preliminary project solutions are shown in Appendix 7. These preliminary projects (totaling nearly 100 projects) went through a robust screening process with Ascension leadership, Ascension staff, stakeholders, business representatives and the public.

Exhibit 7: Alternatives Development and Screening Process



3.2 LEVEL 2 SCREENING

The Level 2 screening utilized quantitative methods and relied heavily upon CRPC's 2042 Travel Demand Model (TDM). In coordination with the Ascension Parish Land Use Master Plan process, CRPC's 2042 TDM was updated with the preferred "Vision Scenario" which includes several mixed-use areas across the parish. The model was used to develop a future no-build baseline for comparison to build alternatives. Key performance measures including vehicle miles traveled, vehicle hours of travel, vehicle delay and volume to capacity (VMT, VHT, delay and V/C) ratios were compared across the parish.

Exhibit 8: Process for Determining Recommended Solutions

Freight is an important travel component of the Parish economy. Safe and efficient freight mobility along key corridors between the Mississippi River and I-10 is critical to the Parish economy.

4 OUR PATH FORWARD

Chapter 4 summarizes Phase 3 of the three-phase study process to develop the transportation master plan. The path forward describes how the proposed solutions were determined and outlines the transportation plan for Ascension Parish moving forward.

4.1 WHAT ARE THE PREFERRED SOLUTIONS?

The process outlined in Exhibit 8 helped guide the project team in determining the recommended set of transportation solutions for Ascension Parish. Recommended transportation solutions for Ascension Parish are categorized by safety and capacity improvements, new facilities and multimodal improvements. Each of the following sub-sections detail the recommended solutions and provides a summary of the anticipated benefits and costs of recommended solutions.

Phase 3

Develop Transportation Plan

Phase 3 provides additional detail about the preferred solutions as well as robust stakeholder and public engagement.

- Project Prioritization
- Transportation Program
- Identify Funding and Financing
- Public Meeting

4.2 SAFETY AND CAPACITY IMPROVEMENTS

Safety and capacity projects address several of the core needs identified in Chapter 2, Understanding our Transportation Needs. The technical analysis, staff input, and stakeholder feedback clearly indicated a need for additional roadway capacity and safety improvements throughout the parish. The planning team took a targeted approach at developing preliminary capacity solutions. The team developed and tested which roadways most need capacity improvements and where widening and reconstruction is feasible.

The Master Plan recommends several capacity improvements including widening roadways from two to three lanes, two to four lanes, and four to six lanes. Capacity projects that will transition corridors to three-lane roadways are recommended in commercial corridors with high levels of turning movements. Three-lane sections will minimize delays due to the back-up behind turning vehicles. Four-lane and six lane sections are recommended where additional capacity is either needed today or projected to be necessary in the future.

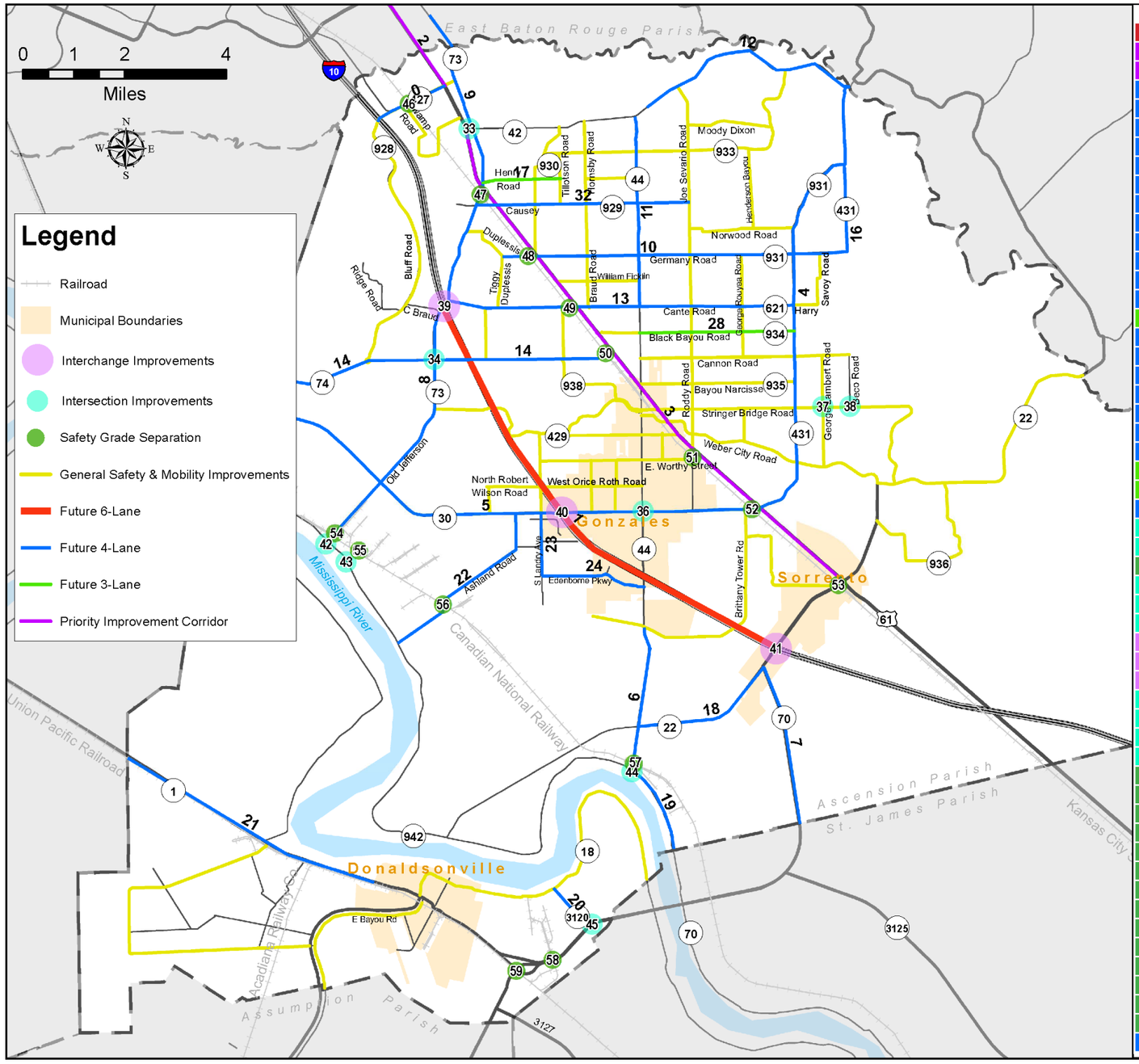
Safety and capacity projects also include interchange improvements, intersection improvements and grade separations for improved safety and freight movement. Approximately 60 capacity projects are recommended, in addition to nearly 40 corridors identified for safety improvements. The cost of the recommended safety and capacity improvement projects is $950,000,000 in 2019 dollars. Cost estimates are based on traditional sections for three-, four-, or six-lane sections. There is no commitment from LA DOTD to pay for any state improvements at this time.

In addition to base construction costs, a cost estimate for utility relocation, right-of-way acquisition, design services, environmental and planning were calculated based on a percentage of total construction costs. Additional construction and total project contingency are also included to determine a realistic 2019 base cost. Further detail including inflated costs based on program prioritization is included in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6. The recommended safety and capacity improvement projects are shown in Exhibit 10.

Exhibit 9: Safety and Capacity Costs (2019 Dollars)

Project Type	Owner	Capital Cost
Safety and Capacity Projects	State Road	$780,000,000
	Parish Road	$170,000,000
	Total	**$950,000,000**

Exhibit 10: Recommended Safety and Capacity Projects for Ascension Parish



No.	Project
SC-1	Interstate 10 between LA 73 and LA 22 widen from 4 to 6 lanes
SC-2	US 61 between East Baton Rouge Parish line and LA 427 capacity improvements
SC-3	US 61 between LA 427 and LA 22 capacity improvements
SC-4	LA 431 between Livingston Parish line and US 61 widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-5	LA 30 between Iberville Parish line and US 61 widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-6	LA 44 between Loosemore Road and River Road widen from 2 to 4 lanes b
SC-7	LA 70 between LA 22 and St. James Parish line widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-8	LA 73 between US 61 and River Road widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-9	LA 73 between East Baton Rouge Parish line and US 61 widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-10	Germany Road between Tiggy Duplessis Road and LA 431 widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-11	Hwy 44 between LA 42 and LA 621 widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-12	LA 42 between Muddy Creek Road and Livingston Parish line widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-13	LA 621 between Interstate 10 and LA 431 widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-14	LA 74 between Iberville Parish line and US 61 widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-16	LA 431 between LA 931 and LA 931 widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-17	Henry Road between LA 73 and Aikens Road widen from 2 to 3 lanes
SC-18	LA 22 between Hwy 44 and LA 70 widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-19	LA 942 between LA 44 and St. James Parish line widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-20	LA 3120 between LA 18 and LA 70 widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-21	LA 1 between LA 18 and LA 70 widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-22	Ashland Rd between LA 30 and River Road widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-23	South St. Landry Avenue between LA 30 and Edenborne Connector widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-24	Edenborne Connector between South St. Landry Avenue and LA 44 widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-28	LA 934 between LA 44 and LA 431 widen from 2 to 3 lanes
SC-30	Cannon Road between LA 44 and LA 431 widen from 2 to 3 lanes
SC-32	PR 929/Causey Rd between LA 73 and Joe Sevario Road widen from 2 to 4 lanes
SC-33	LA 42/US 61/LA73 intersection improvements
SC-34	LA 74 and LA 73 intersection improvements
SC-35	Grade separted crossing at Ashland Rd and railroad crossing
SC-36	Hwy 44 and LA 30 intersection improvements
SC-37	Church Point Rd and George Lambert Rd intersection improvements
SC-38	Church Point Rd and Beco Rd intersection improvements
SC-39	LA 73 and I-10 interchange and area improvements
SC-40	LA 30 and I-10 interchange and area improvements
SC-41	LA 22 and I-10 interchange and area improvements
SC-42	LA 942 and LA 73 intersection improvements
SC-43	LA 942 and Avenue East intersection improvements
SC-44	LA 942 and LA 44 intersection improvements
SC-45	3120 and LA 70 intersection improvements
SC-46	LA 427 and KC Southern railroad grade separated crossing
SC-47	LA 73 and KC Southern railroad grade separated crossing
SC-48	Germany Road and KC Southern railroad grade separated crossing
SC-49	LA 621 and KC Southern railroad grade separated crossing
SC-50	LA 74 and KC Southern railroad grade separated crossing
SC-51	Roddy Road and KC Southern railroad grade separated crossing
SC-52	LA 30 and KC Southern railroad grade separated crossing
SC-53	LA 22 and KC Southern railroad grade separated crossing
SC-54	LA 73 and Canadian National railroad grade separated crossing
SC-55	Avenue East Road and Canadian National railroad grade separated crossing
SC-56	Ashland Road and Canadian National railroad grade separated crossing
SC-57	Hwy 44 and Canadian National railroad grade separated crossing
SC-58	LA 70 railroad grade separated crossing
SC-59	LA 70 railroad grade separated crossing
SC-60	LA 427/Perkins Rd between Airline Hwy and I-10 from 2 to 4 lanes (includes segment of Bluff Rd)

4.3 NEW FACILITIES

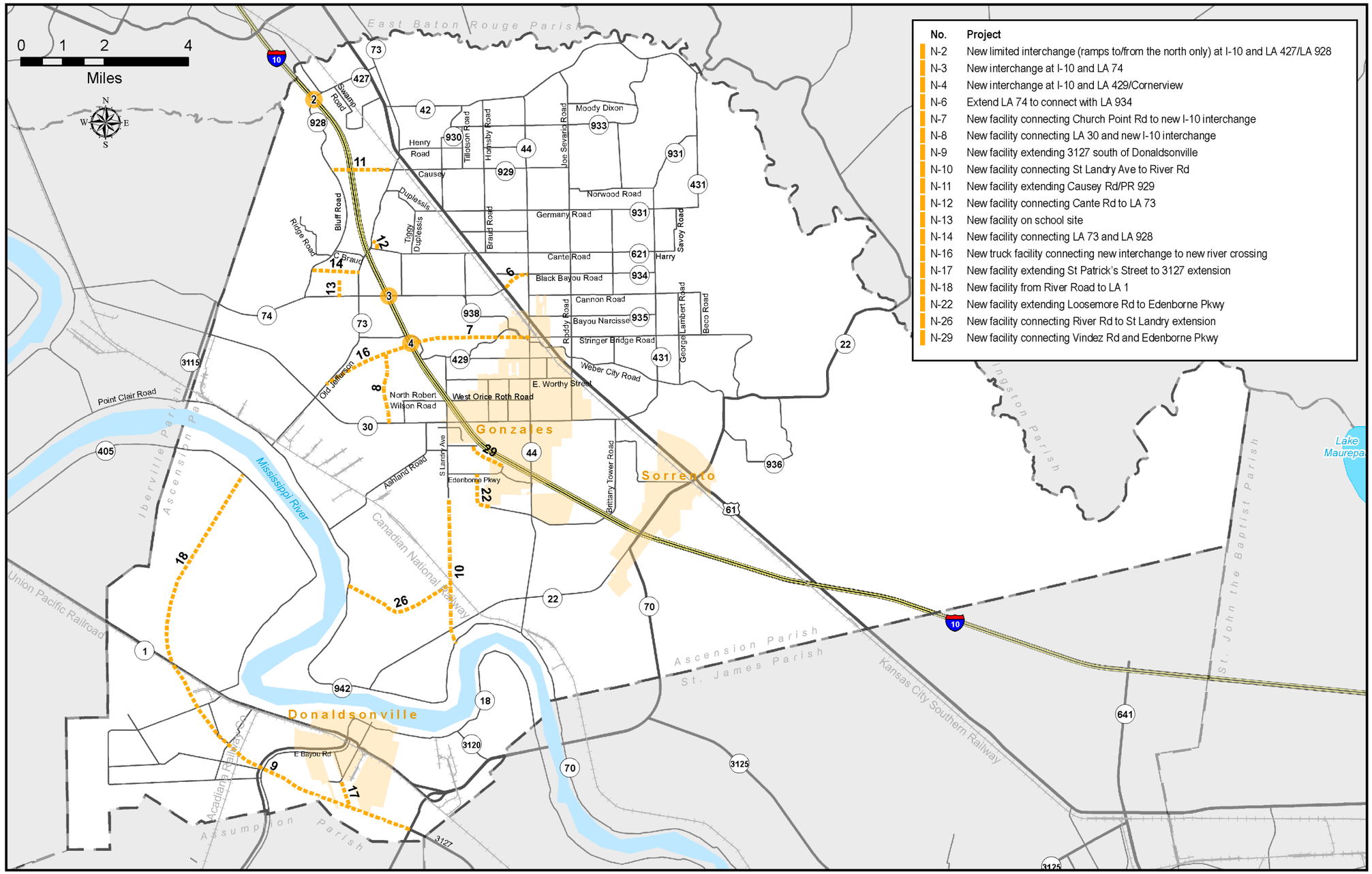
New facility projects address the core needs identified in Chapter 2, Understanding our Transportation Needs. These projects build out the transportation network to improve safety, congestion and mobility of the existing transportation network. The new facilities also provide new opportunities for economic development. The majority of new facility miles are proposed to open access to and within the West Bank of Ascension Parish. There is industrial growth projected in the area, and commercial and residential is also expected to continue. New facility projects also include new grade-separated interchanges on I-10. These new facilities will improve access, increase network redundancy for extreme events, reduce congestion and improve traffic flow on I-10. These potential locations were determined in coordination with LA DOTD.

There are 18 recommended new facility projects across the parish. The cost of the recommended new facility projects is $283,000,000 in 2019 dollars. Cost estimates for new facilities are based on traditional sections for two-, three-, or four-lane roadway sections and new interchanges. In addition to base construction costs, a cost estimate for utility relocation, right-of-way acquisition, design services, environmental and planning costs were calculated based on a percentage of total construction costs. Additional construction and total project contingency is also included to determine a planning-level 2019 base cost. Further detail including inflated costs based on program prioritization is included in Chapter 5 and Chapter 6. The recommended new facility projects are shown in Exhibit 12.

Exhibit 11: New Facilities Costs (2019 Dollars)

Project Type	Owner	Capital Cost
New Facility Projects	State Road	$117,000,000
	Parish Road	$166,000,000
	Total	**$283,000,000**

Exhibit 12: Recommended New Facility Projects for Ascension Parish



4.4 MULTIMODAL IMPROVEMENTS

An efficient transportation system must serve diverse users and needs. A complete transportation system not only provides adequate vehicular access and freight movement, but also provides bus and transit options with sufficient "first-and-last mile" connections for those who want the option to live a car-free lifestyle or reduce reliance upon automobiles. To keep up with the national trends and meet the desires of upcoming generations, Ascension Parish must lay the groundwork for a multimodal mobility network.

Ascension Parish should implement the following multimodal transportation strategies:

- Create an active transportation network
- Develop public transit and ride-share services
- Support the development of passenger rail service
- Explore emerging technology-based transportation solutions (e-scooters, e-bikes and shared-use vehicles)

Create an Active Transportation Network

Developing an active transportation network throughout Ascension Parish is recommended to improve mobility for people who walk, bike and use other non-motorized forms of travel including wheelchairs, scooters and bicycles. A sufficient network of trails, sidewalks, and paths is not only supportive of recreational activities, but also serves as a foundation for transit and other mobility options. An active transportation network has several benefits, as shown in Exhibit 13.

Exhibit 13: Active Transportation Network Benefits

Health	• Builds physical activity into daily life
Mobility	• Increases transportation options • Provides access to motorized modes • Reduces congestion by taking cars off the streets
Community	• Builds community cohesion and creates social connections • Promotes more compact, multi-modal communities • Increases safety with more eyes on the streets
Economic	• Affordable, low-cost mode that can reduce household transportation costs • Supports small businesses and tourism that depend on walkable environments
Equity	• Improves accessibility for children, elderly, low-income, visually impaired and physically challenged persons who cannot drive

Sidewalk Network

Sidewalks should be incorporated into all new streets where feasible and retrofitted into existing areas where gaps diminish pedestrian mobility. Sidewalks should be prioritized in locations that serve schools, park and recreation facilities, major activity centers, business districts and connections to other modes of transportation. Sidewalk capital costs are included in safety and capacity project costs where applicable.

Ascension should continue to build-out the sidewalk network and encourage communities including Gonzales and Donaldsonville to fill sidewalk gaps; particularly those that connect to key community centers and destinations. Ascension should continue the existing practice of developing sidewalks with new subdivisions and strategically incorporate a sidewalk network in identified areas of mixed-use based on the Master Land Use "Vision Scenario."

Bicycle Network

Bicycle facilities planned for Ascension Parish are based on the recommendations from the Louisiana State Bicycle Map. Identified facilities include shared lanes (no special provisions), marked shared lanes, marked shared lanes or shoulders, paved shoulders, bicycle lanes, buffered bicycle lanes, and separated bicycle lanes. Exhibit 14 shows the recommended bicycle facilities by miles and estimated cost. Nearly 70 miles of separated bike lanes (off-street shared-use path) and nearly 80 miles of on-street bike lanes are recommended for the parish. These facilities will serve as the backbone to the bicycle network in the parish. Other recommended bicycle facilities including shared lanes and paved shoulders will help link bicyclists to the backbone routes.

Exhibit 14: Proposed Ascension Bicycle Facilities

Type	Total Miles in Parish	Estimated Cost
Marked Shared Lane/Shoulder	17	$142,000
Bike Lane	77	$2,964,000
Separated Bike Lane	69	$18,009,000
Total	**233**	**$21,139,000**

Note: Louisiana State Bicycle map also includes 31 miles of paved shoulders in Ascension Parish. Roadways with shared lane facilities (nearly 40 additional miles) will also require approximately $25,000 in signage.

A more detailed analysis of the proposed bicycle facilities should be completed to identify priority corridors and determine where facilities could be integrated into the existing road network and where facilities should be implemented as part of a planned roadway project. The bicycle facility network should be strategically designed so that it is seamlessly connected to other modes of existing and planned transportation in the parish.

Recreational Trails

The Master Plan recommends the development of a Mississippi River walking and biking path atop the levee through Ascension Parish on the east bank. The 17-mile trail would provide a recreational amenity for the parish that would ultimately connect to the levee trails in Baton Rouge and St. Gabriel. Potential trail heads and access points to the river trail are recommended where roadways with proposed bicycle facilities intersect with the river corridor, including LA 44, LA 22, Ashland Road an LA 73.

The 2019 cost to build a 10-foot wide trail along the 17-miles of river is estimated to cost about $6.8 million depending on U.S. Army Corp of Engineer design and construction requirements. Trail construction could be phased by smaller segments to allow implementation over time.

Active Transportation Recommendations:

- Detailed analysis of the proposed bicycle facilities to identify priority corridors.
- Create a network of active transportation facilities to provide parish-wide connectivity.
- Prioritize connections to central locations, activity generators and other modes of transport.
- Prioritize complete streets to fully accommodate walking and biking.
- Include bicycle and pedestrian facilities in reconstruction, resurfacing, and capacity projects.
- Require new development to fund multimodal transportation investments.

Develop Public Transit and Ride-Share Services

Today, almost all trips made in the parish require a personal vehicle. However, regional and local transit options can help the parish become less auto dependent and save money by reducing congestion, wear on infrastructure, and individual household transportation costs. Investing in a public transportation system would improve regional connectivity and make traveling within the parish more accessible to employment centers, shopping districts and other destinations.

Park and Ride Facilities

Park and ride facilities allow commuters to leave their personal vehicles for the day and transfer to a fixed-route bus service. Park and ride facilities help concentrate transit demand in areas with lower-density development patterns, increasing the cost effectiveness of transit services. Park and ride facilities also provide a meeting place for carpooling and formalized vanpools. Park and rides in Ascension Parish should be located near I-10 interchanges to serve as the foundation for improved regional mobility. The facilities should be conveniently located near an interchange, provide ample parking, shelters for transit service and staging areas for vanpool services. Additional amenities (restrooms, bicycle parking, lockers, etc.) should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. One or two park and ride locations should be sufficient. Potential locations include I-10 and LA 22, LA 44, LA 30, or LA 73. A park and ride at the I-10 interchange with LA 30 should be a priority because it is in a central location and is along a proposed fixed-route shuttle service and proposed express bus route.

Commuter Express Bus Service

Commuter express bus service provides a comfortable, safe and convenient transportation option along a fixed route with limited stops to minimize travel times. This type of service typically connects suburban and outlying areas like Ascension Parish to the central business district (downtown Baton Rouge). Service is designed for traditional weekday commutes but can also

serve reserve commute and nontraditional work hours depending on demand. This type of service reduces cars on the road and helps alleviate regional traffic congestion.

The Master Plan recommends a new commuter express bus route that transports riders from planned park and ride facilities along the I-10 corridor to job centers in East Baton Rouge including the Baton Rouge Heath District and downtown Baton Rouge. Over time, additional destinations could be served (universities, regional shopping centers, airport, etc.) with express bus service. A typical commuter service may make two or three morning trips and three or four late afternoon or evening trips. Service frequency, increased number of trips, high amenity coach buses, extended service span and reverse commute stops would all improve the service level and attractiveness of any commuter express bus route. Ascension could also explore other private operators, including coach bus operators for this service. Coach bus service helps elevate the profile of express service and provide riders additional amenities desired for longer express trips. Any commuter service would likely be coordinated and managed by Capital Area Transit System (CATS).

The I-10 commuter express bus service is estimated to cost $230,000 annually in 2019 costs to operate a basic commuter service with two morning trips and two afternoon trips to Baton Rouge and two afternoon/evening trips to Ascension with no stops on the reverse commute. Upfront capital costs to purchase buses and shelters is estimated at $1.52 million. A premium service that would include additional frequencies and accommodate reverse commute trips throughout the day and evening is estimated to cost $450,000 annually to operate with a capital cost investment of $2.92 million. The capital costs may not be required if contracted with an existing transit provider that already has buses that could be used for the service.

Transit Shuttles

Currently, the only transit service in the parish is within the City of Gonzales, a demand response system for elderly and disabled residents. Transit shuttles can be used for short trips to and from commercial districts, employment, or serve as first-and-last mile connections, such as to the proposed rail station or proposed park and ride facilities along I-10. Transit shuttles can be used to operate fixed-route service or used for a flex route within a designated area. If Ascension prefers fixed-route service, several routes could operate from downtown Gonzales and/or the future passenger rail center in Gonzales. The three routes shown are estimated to cost between $160,000 and $550,000 annually to operate, depending on the level of service provided. This cost is in addition to a capital investment between $300,000 and $350,000 for vehicles and shelters. In addition to fixed-route services, several municipalities and transit agencies across the country are experimenting with micro transit services. These services use technology such as GPS and real-time requests for drop-offs and pick-ups to generate the most efficient shared ride trips for defined service zones. Any pilot for demand-response service (or development of a traditional fixed-route service) should be coordinated with CATS.

Support the Development of Passenger Rail Service

Rendering of proposed passenger rail station in Gonzales
Source: Gonzales Passenger Rail Station Master Plan, ARUP

The Baton Rouge to New Orleans (BR-NO) corridor is a proposed intercity passenger rail corridor for service paralleling the congested I-10 corridor. The 80-mile corridor includes a proposed station in Gonzales. The BR-NO service is expected to be an attractive alternative for commuters going to work and for business and pleasure travelers to conveniently travel between Baton Rouge and New Orleans but could also be utilized by Ascension Parish residents. It is expected to generate local benefits for station communities by supporting land use and economic development plans.

The proposed station in Gonzales is on North Bullion Avenue between East Railroad Street and East Ascension Street in downtown (based on the 2018 City of Gonzales conceptual station master plan). Continued parish support for the implementation of the BR-NO corridor with a station in downtown Gonzales is recommended. Ascension should work with CATS and the City of Gonzales on a parish-wide transit system and local bicycle and pedestrian improvements that would support commuter rail service and station in the parish.

Transit and Ride-Share Recommendations:

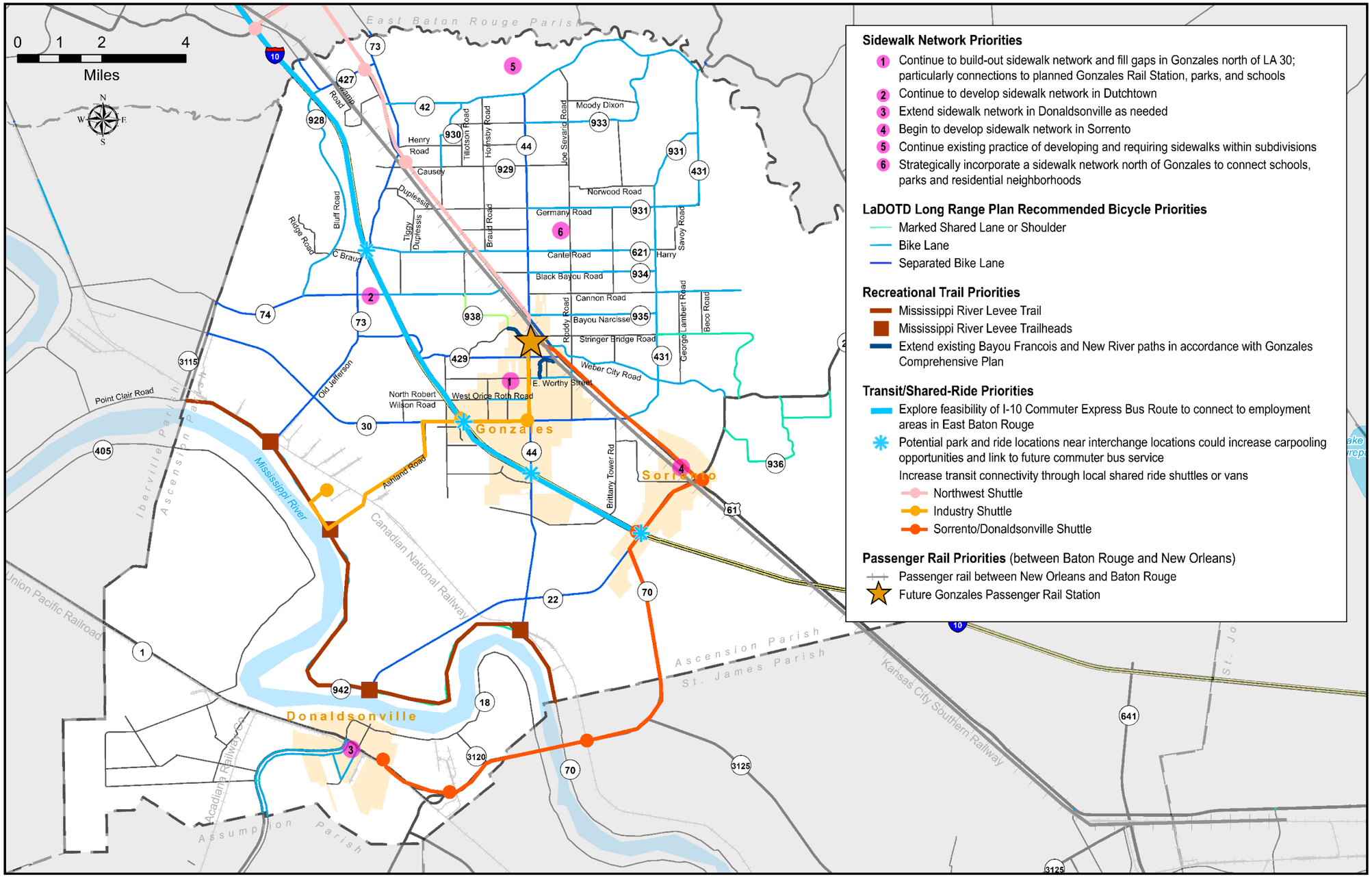
- Implement park and ride facilities to allow commuters to carpool/vanpool or transfer to transit services.
- Coordinate with CATS to assess feasibility of a commuter/express transit service.
- Evaluate transit shuttles for fixed route or demand-response services.
- Require new development to fund multimodal transportation investments.
- Continue support for a Gonzales station with the implementation of the BR-NO corridor.

Explore Technology Based Transportation Solutions

Emerging technology is playing a greater role in the movement of people and freight and there are several emerging solutions in addition to traditional fixed-route transit. Ascension should continue to explore (in coordination with CATS) demand-response routes, micro transit, partnerships with Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) such as Uber and Lyft, and autonomous vehicle (AV) shuttles as there will be future solutions that will help address future transportation needs.

The proposed multimodal, pedestrian, and bicycle improvements recommended for the parish are shown in Exhibit 15.

Exhibit 15: Recommended Multimodal Improvements for Ascension Parish




New transportation infrastructure will open new opportunities for the Parish and its residents.

5 MAKING THE PLAN A REALITY

Chapter 5 describes how projects were prioritized based on CRPC's regional transportation goals, technical analysis, and stakeholder input and identifies the future transportation program.

5.1 HOW WERE THE PROJECTS PRIORITIZED?

Ascension cannot implement all recommended projects from Chapter 4 immediately due to limited funding and staff resources. Therefore, a specialized prioritization tool was used to rank projects by assessing benefits, costs, project readiness, and how the projects align with goals. Exhibit 16 shows the various criteria included in the prioritization tool.

Exhibit 16: Prioritization Tool Evaluation

Evaluation Group / CRPC Goal	Evaluation Factor	Metric
Total Estimated Capital Cost	Utilities, Right-of-Way, Engineering, Environmental, & Construction	$ (in Dollars)
Safety and Security	Fatalities (2012 – 2016)	Y/N
Congestion Relief	Existing Volume to Capacity	Ratio
	Future Volume to Capacity	Ratio
Preventative Maintenance	Asset Condition	Qualitative Rating
Supports Land Use Goals & Vision	Project supports future land use vision; including mixed-use areas	Yes/No
Supports Future Economic Growth	Project supports existing and future development and growth	Yes/No
Increase Connections	Overlaps with Bicycle Network	High/Medium/Low
	Opportunity for Sidewalk Construction	Yes/No
Improve Access	Improve Access for Future Development	Yes/No
	Supports Freight Network	High/Medium/Low
Increase Multi-Modal Options	Aligns with Transit Goals	Yes/No
Environment & Quality of Life	VMT Reduction	Rating (1 – 5)
Cost Sharing	Partnership Potential	High/Medium/Low
Project Readiness	Qualitative Project Readiness	Rating (1 – 5)

Example: I-10 Capacity Improvement

When all projects are ranked with even ratings, I-10 ranks as the parish's tenth priority. However, when projects were more heavily weighted for existing needs, safety, and asset condition, I-10 moved up in the overall project ranking to second in priority. Putting a higher weight on existing safety and congestion allows the Parish to address needs on existing corridors before investing in new corridors.

Not all evaluation factors are equal, and weighting allowed criteria (shown in Exhibit 16) to better align with the parish goals and immediate needs. The prioritization plan weighs existing safety and capacity needs within the parish with greater urgency than the other evaluation factors for the first five-year program (Program 1). Programs 2 and 3 emphasize economic and partnership opportunities for the parish, and Program 4 contains all remaining projects. Due to the importance of safety and the understanding that several roadways without planned capacity improvements require safety widening and improvements, a line item for safety projects is included in each of the four programs. This prioritization plan is shown in Exhibit 17.

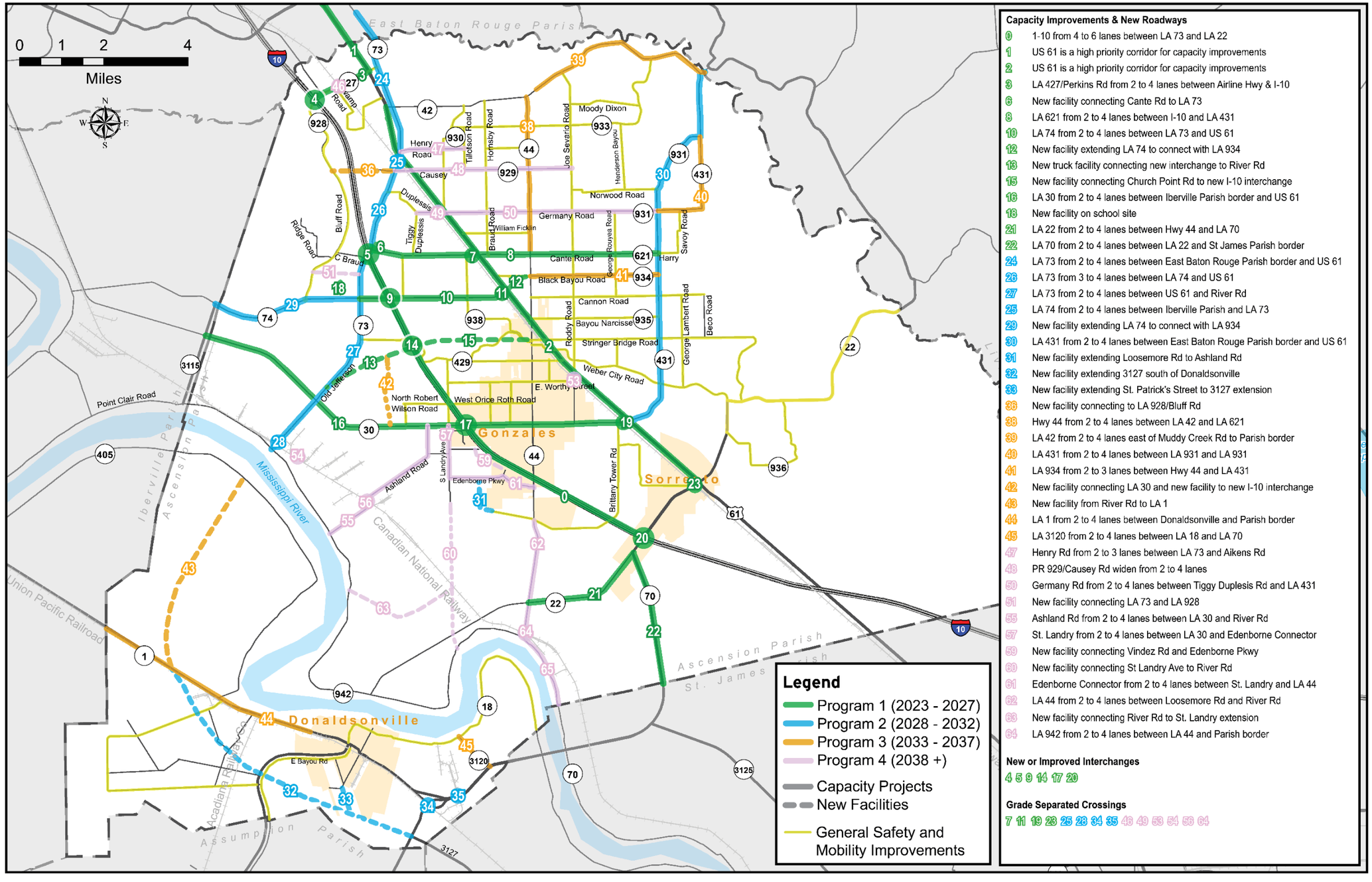
Exhibit 17: Ascension Parish Project Prioritization Plan

Note: Program 1 begins in 2023 as the *Move Ascension* program is planned through 2022.

5.2 WHAT IS THE PRIORITIZATION?

Recommended projects by program are shown in Exhibit 18. Each program is subsequently described. The master plan is a living document. Projects in any program can move up or down based on a wide range of circumstances. In fact, the parish should update this master plan approximately every five years.

Exhibit 18: Recommended Projects by Program



Program 1 (2023 - 2027) Overview

Program 1 focuses on existing and future safety, congestion and roadway maintenance. These projects, shown in Exhibit 18 in green, correlate with many of the parish's most important corridors in the central core. These are project corridors and locations that already have high traffic volumes, activity, and congestion. Example corridors are:

- Primary congested corridors (I-10, Airline Hwy, LA 30, LA 621)
- New interchanges to help mobility and provide better access to I-10 (Bluff Road, LA 74, and Cornerview)
- Improved nodes and grade separation at locations of safety concern (I-10/LA 30 interchange, I-10/LA 73 interchange, and LA 22/KC Southern Railroad)

Program 2 (2028 – 2032) Overview

Program 2 focuses on economic opportunities and partnership opportunities within the parish. Economic opportunities are existing and new roads that provide access to new development opportunities and improve mobility and connectivity within the parish. Partnership opportunities represent projects where additional investment can be leverage including state roads or projects that would invoke local private partnerships. These projects are shown in Exhibit 18 in blue. These projects are focused on key north/south and east/west corridors that support Program 1 improvements. Example corridors are:

- Connections to Program 1 improvements including LA 74, LA 73 and LA 431/931
- Major new connection on the West Bank to extend LA 3127 to improve freight and industrial traffic movement

Program 3 (2033 – 2037) Overview

Program 3 also focuses on economic opportunities and partnership opportunities within the parish similar to Program 2. Economic opportunities are existing and new roads that provide access to new development opportunities and improve mobility and connectivity within the parish. The same focus as Program 2 is carried an additional five years due to the demand of needed transportation enhancements. Shown in Exhibit 18 in orange, these projects are heavily focused in Donaldsonville as well as the north side of the parish where growth is expected to occur. Example projects are:

- Improvements to Hwy 1 and a new connection to River Road in the West Bank. Also, the extension of Hwy. 3127 and new road to the river will provide new industrial job growth.
- On the north side of the parish, the key corridor of Highway 44 will be expanded.

Program 4 (2038+) Overview

Program 4 collects all the remaining projects that were not identified in Programs 1 through Program 3. These are still important projects that were either identified through the technical analysis or were identified by a stakeholder or the public.

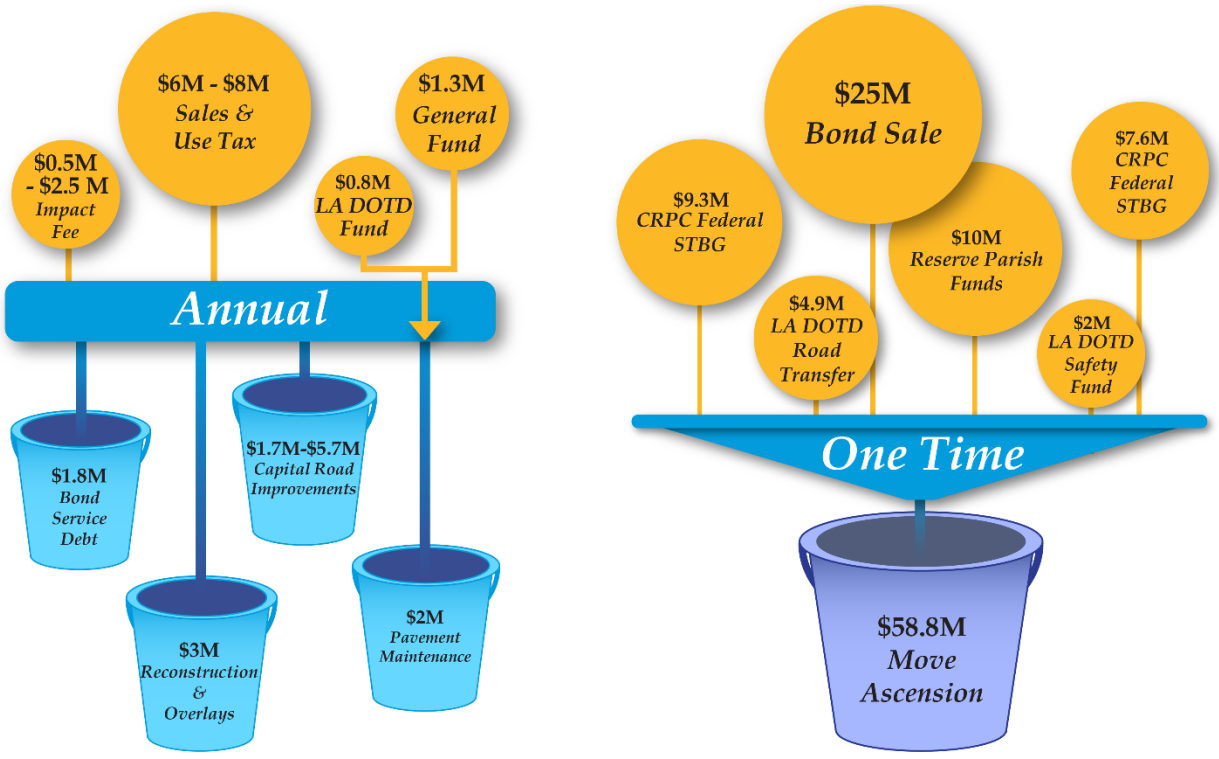
6 IMPLEMENTING OUR SHARED VISION

Chapter 6 identifies how much funding Ascension Parish currently has and the funding gap.to pay for the transportation program. A range of funding options are provided for discussion. Three financing scenarios are provided for illustrative purposes. Finally, a set of policies are recommended to advance implementation of the program.

6.1 HOW MUCH MONEY DO WE HAVE?

Ascension Parish has approximately 1,070 centerline miles of parish roads, spread across 292 square miles. As a result, much of existing transportation funds collected from the ongoing sales and use tax and dollars directed to transportation from the General Fund go toward maintenance and bond service dept. Exhibit 19 shows existing transportation funding sources in both annual revenue as well as one-time revenues allocated to the *Move Ascension* program. The spending buckets in the graphic only represent parish spending and do not include LA DOTD investment within the parish. At present, the parish has approximately eight to twelve million dollars per year to spend on transportation capital projects. In order to realize the full benefits of the projects discussed in this plan, the parish will need substantially more funding for transportation.

Exhibit 19: Existing Annual Transportation Parish Funding

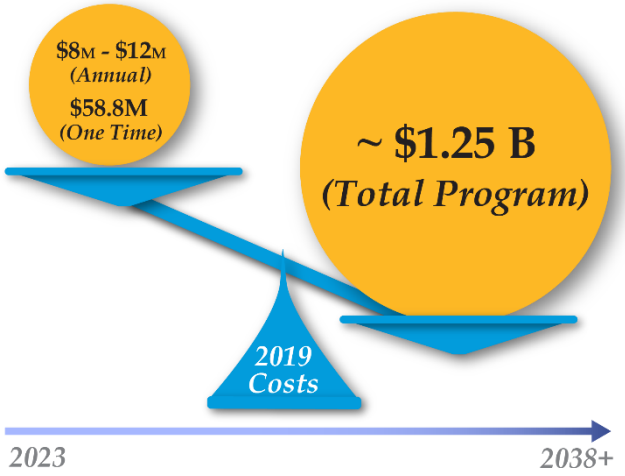


Note: Transportation Impact Fee revenues are pooled within three zones and can only be used in those zones.

6.2 HOW MUCH DO WE NEED TO SPEND ON TRANSPORTATION?

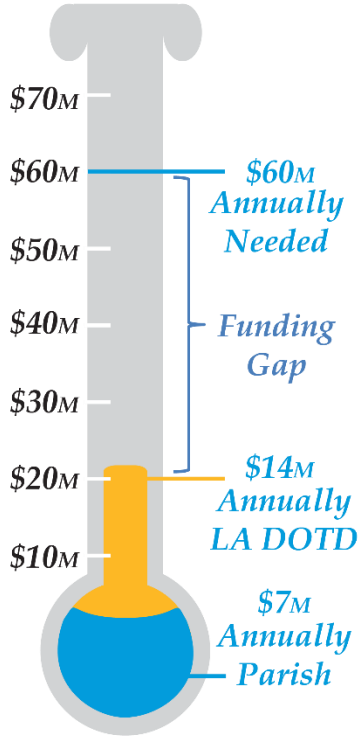
Additional funding revenues are necessary to realize the full benefits of the proposed transportation system. At present, the parish has approximately eight to twelve million dollars annually to spend on transportation capital projects. However, the program cost of all projects recommended totals approximately $1.23 billion in capital costs. Furthermore, the existing funding gap is magnified once project costs are inflated to estimated year of expenditure, totaling $1.58 billion. However, only 30 percent of total program cost falls on parish facilities.

Exhibit 20: Total Program Cost ($2019)



Across the country, state and local governments spent approximately $525 per capita on highways and roads in 2015; Louisiana spent $486 per capita.[1] This per capita figure represents a climate when most states acknowledge they are not keeping up with transportation needs. In keeping with these figures, and in line with capital projects identified and recommended in this plan, Ascension Parish requires approximately $60 million be spent annually within the parish (in 2019 dollars) to fund improvements. Current parish and LA DOTD funding within the parish varies year-to-year, however, approximately $10 to $20 million is being spent annually on average on capital improvements within the parish. This equates to an annual funding gap of about $40 million annually, not including maintenance costs.

Exhibit 21: Capital Funding Gap



Note: LA DOTD spending based off 2018-2019 letting.

[1] Urban Institute, State and Local Finance Initiative, 2015 https://www.urban.org/

In addition to capital expenditures, the parish transportation system also requires upkeep and continual reinvestment through operating and maintenance costs. Parish-facility annual maintenance needs are likely to total $33.5 million based on a cost estimate of $15,000 per lane mile. Exhibit 22 accounts for total state and parish existing lane miles, proposed road miles that are transferred from state to parish ownership, recommended capacity improvements, and recommended new facility projects.

Exhibit 22: Anticipated Annual Maintenance Investment (2019)

Owner	Center Line Miles	Lane Miles	O&M Cost
State Roads	259	612	$9,186,000
Parish Roads	1,089	2,234	$33,512,000
Total	**1,348**	**2,847**	**$42,698,000**

Note: Operations & Maintenance costs are based on $15,000 per lane mile ($2019)

Ascension Parish's current population is approximately 123,000 and is expected to grow by more than 80,000 people by 2042 according to CRPC. As population increases, capital spending should increase as well as maintenance and state of good repair spending as the parish should anticipate more usage and wear and tear on the network.

6.3 WHERE DO WE FIND MORE MONEY?

To make the Transportation Master Plan a reality, the parish must secure additional transportation funding. There are several revenue sources that the parish can use to potentially pay for the transportation Master Plan improvements. Some sources are more appropriate for capital costs, while others are more appropriate for ongoing operating and maintenance costs. Both funding streams are equally important. As the parish expands the transportation network and invests in capital projects, a substantial amount of operating and maintenance funds will be required to protect the parish's initial investment and ensure state of good repair.

The following sections provide a summary of potential funding opportunities including: general funds, sales tax, property tax, tolling, special purpose district, road user charge, grant opportunities, and LA DOTD's road transfer program. These revenue sources are identified for use by the parish, however, to achieve the Transportation Master Plan vision, Ascension Parish will likely require some level of partnership with LA DOTD. This document does not address potential funding sources or tactics for expanding LA DOTD's budget. At present, local government and municipalities are not authorized to levy taxes on motor fuels, that ability is reserved for the state. As recently as March 2018, state representatives rejected a proposed constitutional amendment to remove the existing ban keeping local governments from levying taxes on motor fuels. Additionally, the Louisiana Constitution (Article VII. § 5) states that "no parish or municipality may impose a license fee on motor vehicles." This authority is reserved for the state. As such, Ascension cannot impose a motor fuel tax or license fee, however, support for these types of initiatives at the state level is included in the funding recommendations at the end of this chapter.

Parish General Fund

Overview: The general fund is the primary operating fund of the parish. The General Fund's primary sources of revenue are from ad valorem and sales tax collections, representing over 60-percent of annual projected resources for the fund.

Predictability: For the fiscal year 2019, general fund revenues were projected to decrease by approximately $115,000. This decrease is mainly due to the decrease in intergovernmental grants and miscellaneous revenues.

Benefits: The primary benefit of the general fund is a stable funding source for transportation. However, the parish's budget is set on an annual basis and the portion of funds allocated to transportation is prone to variation based on parish leadership and immediate goals. Parish general funds would allow certainty in implementation and may advance specific high-priority projects for the project.

Impacts: Assuming that general fund resources are not redirected from another use to transportation, taxes and parish revenues would need to increase to expand the parish's general fund budget. Additionally, securing full funding of large capital investments in timely fashion may be difficult due to changing financial or political conditions. Appropriations typically specify how money is spent, limiting ability to respond to changing traveler or project needs.

Vehicle Licensing Tax / Registration Fees & Taxes

Overview: Louisiana constitution does not allow parishes to impose a license or registration fee, but it does allow a licensing tax (Article VII. § 5). It states that "no parish or municipality may impose a license fee on motor vehicles." This authority is reserved for the state. The difference between a fee and tax is based on the purpose of the revenue. A tax is a levy collected for general governmental services where a fee is specifically applied for the use of a service.

Predictability: Revenues are generally very predictable and stable. If connected and autonomous vehicle adoption impacts car ownership (fewer cars per household), revenue predictability would be impacted.

Benefits: Easy to administer fee or tax with existing methods. Fee or tax could be set at locally acceptable levels.

Impacts: Would be a new revenue source for local transportation needs. Collection is typically done annually, so citizens pay the fee in a lump sum.

Sales Tax

Overview: A charge levied on the sale of products at the point of sale expressed as a percentage of the total sale price.

Predictability: A general sales tax would produce revenue in proportion to consumer sales and changing economic conditions may increase or decrease available funds due to changes in economic activity. Revenues will be quite sensitive to prevailing economic conditions.

Benefits: Tax impact spread over large number of items/people, including non-local goods and users. Additionally, while revenues will fluctuate, a sales tax could be a reliable source of revenue, depending on the millage, to generate a substantial amount of revenue for transportation needs.

Impacts: Revenues are not directly related to actual highway use or benefit and revenues may be diverted to other uses. A dedicated tax will ensure funds are used for transportation.

Property Tax

Overview: Property taxes are the most universal local revenue source in the United States. They are ideal for funding local governments because they tax immovable assets such as land or buildings.

Predictability: One of the most stable revenue sources for local governments.

Benefits: Property taxes are a reasonable funding source for transportation and transit as accessibility is a basic factor in property valuation, and transportation services are public services that provide public benefit.

Impacts: Disparities may arise when dollars are focused in certain growth areas within a jurisdiction and other areas do not feel they reap their justified benefits.

Tolling

Overview: A direct user fee that a driver pays to gain access to new or improved transportation facilities, such as roadways, bridges and tunnels. The toll rate charged can vary based on factors such as vehicle classification (e.g., passenger car versus truck), length of trip, method of payment (e.g., cash, toll tag or license plate video toll), frequency of use, and, in some instances, time of day. Louisiana constitution states that toll revenues can only be used for the toll facility (LA Rev. Stat. Ann. §48:1261).

Predictability: Rates can be set to accurately reflect costs associated with actual highway use and vehicle classification. Revenues generated may vary from projections due to traffic diversions to toll-free routes or fluctuations in economic conditions.

Benefits: Fee charged is directly related to actual roadway use or benefit; state residents and taxpayers that do not use the roadway do not pay for its improvements. Revenues generated by the facility are directly used to operate, maintain and improve the facility over the long-term.

Impacts: Fees charged may be higher than other funding methods since directly related to actual roadway use. Travel diversions to alternate toll-free routes may reduce traffic and revenues along a specific facility, raising less revenue than projected.

Special Districts

Overview: A special district is a specific group of properties within a district boundary that benefit from the special services provided by the district and owners of the properties pay a special assessment. Districts are created by local governmental entities for a specific geographic area to fund and provide services such as utilities, hospitals, water conservation, fire control, new

development and transportation facilities. Depending on their purpose, these districts can levy property tax, sales tax or other user fees within the district, and may issue debt to generate revenue to fund improvements. Examples of special purpose districts are transportation development districts and economic redevelop zones.

Special Districts: A specific group of properties within the district benefits from the special services provided by the district and owners of the properties pay a special assessment. All assessments must be made in an equal and uniform manner based on the benefits received (public services such as water, fire protection, police, etc.)

Community Redevelopment Zone: Community development agencies create transportation redevelopment zones to incentivize transportation redevelopment that supports economic activity and growth in property values. The agency than collects the portion of increased property tax revenue generated by the transportation project, by taking the difference between site's predevelopment and post development tax revenues.

Predictability: Fees or tax rates can be set by enabling legislation and/or vote of district's landowners. Revenues generated may vary from funding projections due to fluctuations in property values or sales of goods and services within district. The risk here is that the tax increment is based on projections of valuation and property owners can challenge the assessment after improvements have been made. If final costs are higher than original estimates, property owners may challenge it, therefore the original estimates should be on a conservative side. If the project changes from its original description as part of the owner notification, resulting in lack of benefit to certain owners, the owners who are not benefitted are not required to pay the assessments.

Benefits: Landowners and/or users within the district area that directly benefit from the project pay for the improvements. Broad local/regional authority and flexibility can be provided to achieve funding for improvements.

Impacts: It can be more cumbersome to form and administer a special district. With some types of fees or taxes, burden is on local landowners and non-local users may not pay for use of facility and improvements. The risk with special assessment districts is that property owners can challenge the assessment after improvements have been made. If final costs are higher than original estimates, property owners may challenge it, therefore the original estimates should be on a conservative side. If the project changes from its original description as part of the owner notification, resulting in lack of benefit to certain owners, the owners who are not benefitted are not required to pay the assessments. The risk with transportation districts is that the tax increment is based on projections of valuation. Growth may not occur in special district as planned or revenues may fluctuate due to economic conditions.

Increasing Funding Recommendations:

- Identify best and preferred funding option for residents and businesses
- Advocate for Parish funds from General Fund be re-directed to transportation
- Accelerate funding through a bond measure
- Support any state discussions to remove ban on locally levied motor fuel taxes and vehicle registration taxes/fees
- Require new development to fund multimodal transportation investments
- Support increased state transportation funding to support Ascension projects on the State system
- Consider advancing a transportation sales tax for local referendum

6.4 WHAT IS OUR FUNDING AND FINANCING PLAN?

While the parish's investment strategy focuses on first maintaining and operating the existing transportation system, the remaining funds are used for capital improvements or enhancements to build toward the Master Plan vision. Implementation of the full Master Plan vision will require additional funding and a financing plan to accelerate program delivery.

Using the policy direction and investment priorities of the Master Plan, every year the parish should prepare a capital improvements program (CIP) as the near-term investment program of the parish. The CIP should be reviewed by parish council annually.

Bonding

Large capital programs typically require financing(s) to generate the upfront proceeds to fund a large bundle of projects. States and local governments utilize traditional debt financing instruments to accelerate projects and leverage future revenues. States and local governments commonly issue General Obligation (GO) bonds, backed by the full faith and credit commitment of the borrowing entity. Revenue bonds are also one of the most common methods of financing transportation projects for many state and local governments. These tax-exempt bonds are payable from a pledge of the proceeds against a specific tax, such as sales tax, gasoline tax, a special assessment, or ad valorem (property) tax levied at a fixed price. Unlike general obligation bonds and their unlimited ability to raise taxes, with these bonds, the issuer is limited by the specific source for the revenue to pay the bonds. Special district finance tools include tax increment financing (TIF) or special assessments that can be utilized to enable development and redevelopment projects and support local economic development.

The use of State-issued GARVEE bonds can serve as an alternative or in addition to potential general obligation or revenue bonding. Because GARVEE bonds are issued against future federal appropriations, they do not constitute a general obligation for the state, and therefore not be counted toward the state's debt limits. Transit agencies can also borrow against future Federal-aid funding using the Grant Anticipation Notes (GANs) funding mechanism.

Toll agencies frequently issue toll revenue supported bonds to construct and maintain roadways. These bonds can either utilize a net or gross revenue pledge to establish the flow of funds and revenue use priority as part of the financing agreements. Under a net toll revenue pledge, the project is a stand-alone facility and does not require any revenue or credit support; gross toll revenues first fund all O&M and lifecycle costs before repaying debt holders. With a gross toll revenue pledge, the public entity "guarantees" or pledges other available revenue sources (i.e., property tax, motor fuel excise tax, sales and use tax, vehicle registration and permit fees, etc.) to fund any O&M and lifecycle costs that are unable to be funded from toll revenue. Debt service coverage ratio (ratio of annual net or gross revenue to the annual debt service) is the primary metric used to measure the amount of debt a toll road project can support.

Overview: Bond purchasers give a government unit money in return for a legally binding commitment to repay the funds on a definite schedule and usually at a fixed rate.

Predictability: Available funding and borrowing costs are dependent upon the creditworthiness of the municipality. Market appetite for bonds may fluctuate depending on economic conditions.

Benefits: Bonding can accelerate design and construction of a project. Bonding can also be used for large program initiatives such as *Move Ascension* or the future transportation programs outlined in this plan. Additionally, municipalities typically receive good rates if they are in good credit standing.

Impacts: Interest paid on bonds is funded from future revenues and therefore impacts the overall program. However, the interest expense is partially offset by the inflation that occurs as revenues are accumulated to fund project costs under a pay-as-you-go basis.

States can also capitalize their State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) to facilitate transportation projects funding. SIBs function as revolving funds that, much like banks, can offer loans, loan guarantees, standby lines of credit, letters of credit, certificates of participation, debt-service reserve funds, bond insurance, and other forms of non-grant assistance to public and private sponsors of Title 23 highway construction projects or Title 49 transit and rail capital projects. The most common form of debt is direct loans. Under a direct loan, the partner helps finance part of the project with upfront proceeds. The loan can have level priority with other debt types — or the partner can take a subordinate role and allow other, more traditional financing sources to have a higher priority and payback. By assuming lower priority, the subordinate loan helps the project achieve overall financing at a lower cost than traditional methods.

Illustrative Master Plan Implementation Framework

The Master Plan vision identifies over $1 billion of transportation needs on the local and state systems. Ascension Parish will need to identify new funding sources and use a combination of pay-as-you-go funding and financing to deliver the program. As the following table illustrates, the total program identifies $1.23 billion in current year dollars (2019) and $1.58 billion with 2% inflation applied to the year of expenditure.

Exhibit 23: 2019 and Year of Expenditure (YOE) Program Costs

	Parish		LA DOTD		Cumulative Parish & State
Owner	**2019 $**	**YOE $**	**2019 $**	**YOE $**	**YOE $**
Program 1 (2023-2027)	$60 M	$67 M	$420 M	$472 M	$540 M
Program 2 (2028-2032)	$80 M	$100 M	$192 M	$239 M	$878 M
Program 3 (2033-2037)	$62 M	84 M	$175 M	$240 M	$1,202 M
Program 4 (2038-2042)	$136 M	$206 M	$111 M	$168 M	$1,577 M
Total	$337 M	$457 M	$897 M	$1,119 M	$4,197 M

The following graphs depict the program costs based on the timing of each program.

Exhibit 24: Annual Forecast of Program Costs – Parish System Costs

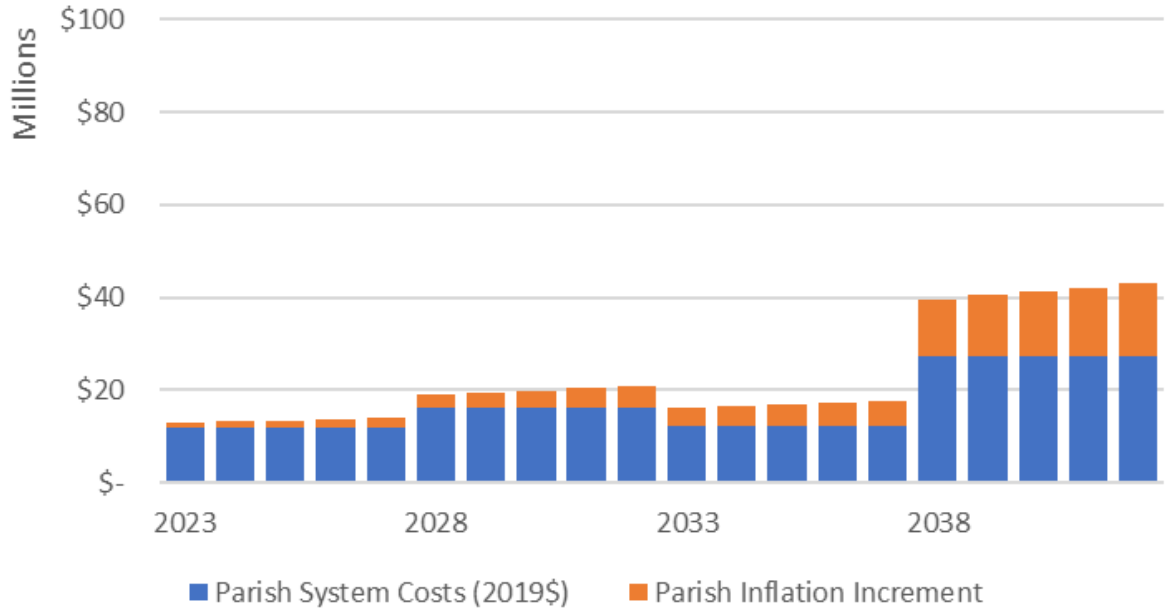
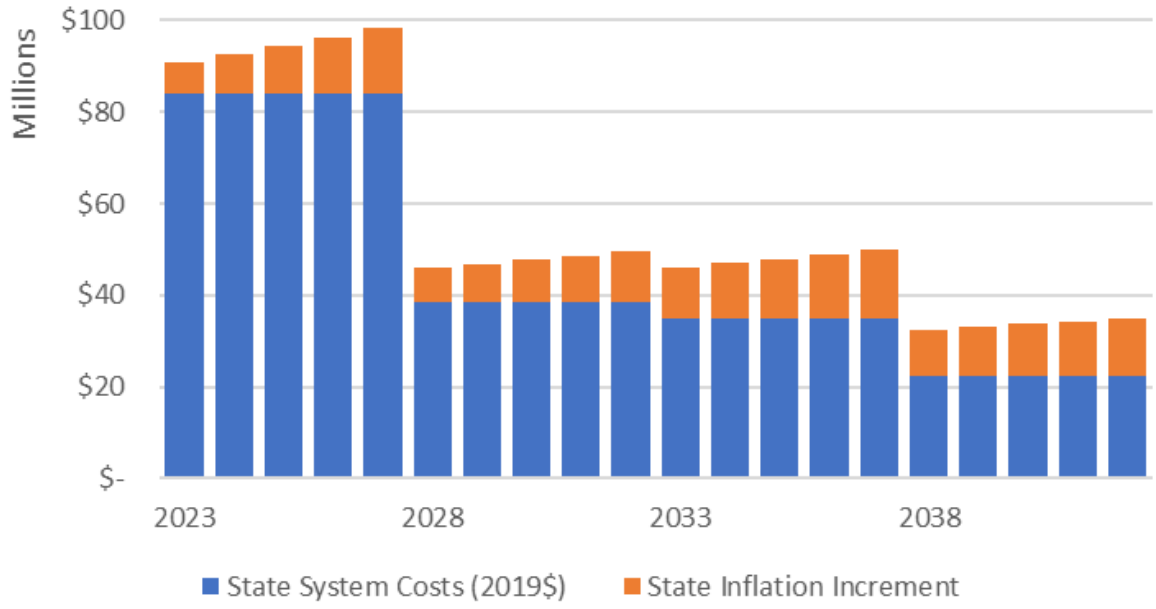


Exhibit 25: Annual Forecast of Program Costs – State System Costs

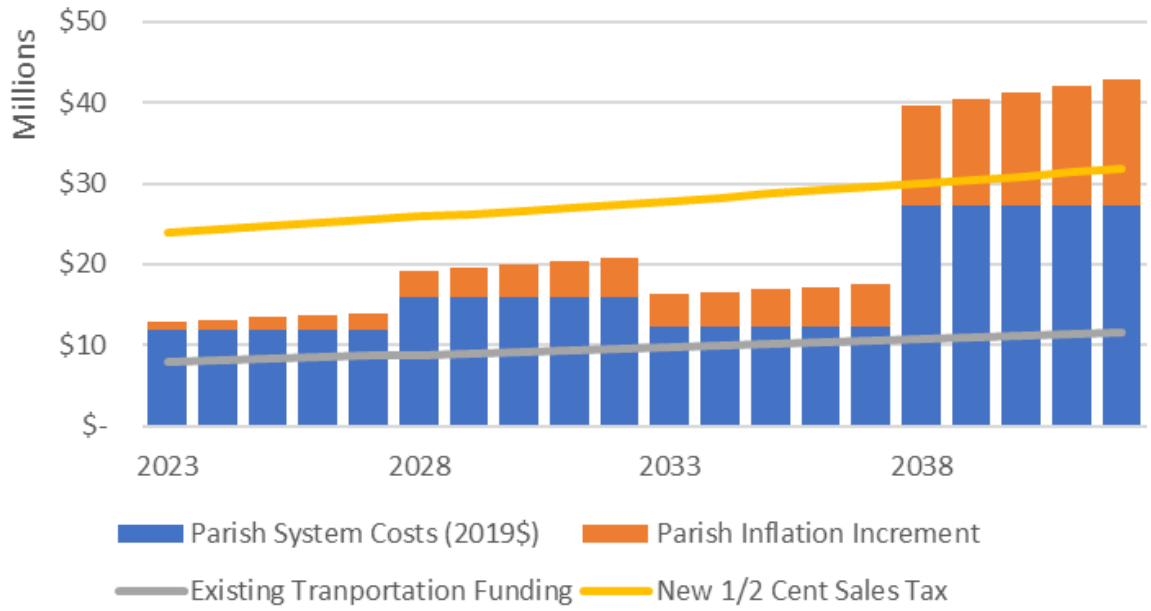


In order to illustrate the order-of-magnitude funding requirement that can deliver the new capital program, three scenarios were analyzed to test the ability to deliver the transportation programs with a new revenue source and periodic financing. For illustration purposes, the scenarios look at utilizing a ½ cent sales tax (assumed to deliver $24 million in year one) or 1 cent sales tax (assumed to deliver $48 million) with 1.5% annual growth. A sales tax option is only used for illustration purposes as further discussion is required regarding the best funding mechanism for the parish.

The scenarios are described below:

- **Scenario 1 -** Use ½ Percent Sales Tax to Fund All Parish System Costs
- **Scenario 2 -** Use ½ Percent Sales Tax to Fund Programs 1-3; Ascension Funds Parish System and 20% of State
- **Scenario 3 -** Use 1 Percent Sales Tax to Fund Programs 1-3; Ascension Funds all Parish and State costs

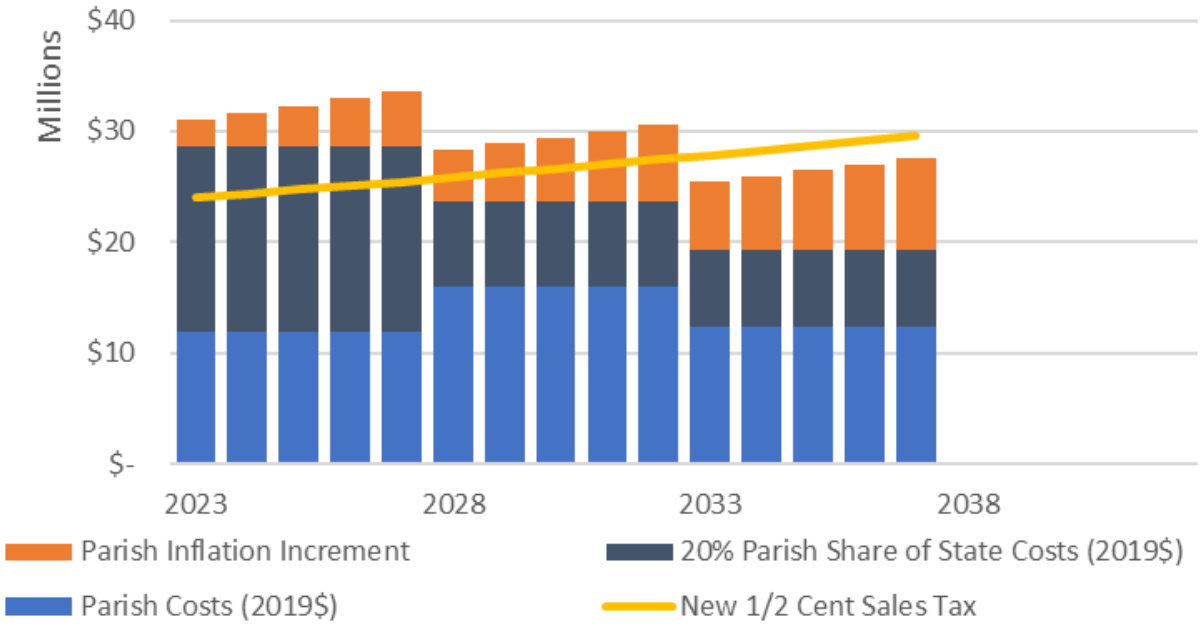
Exhibit 26: Scenario 1 Program Phasing Analysis – Parish System Costs



Scenario 1 - Use ½ Cent Sales Tax to Fund All Parish System Costs Summary:

- Tax can fund all 4 programs on the parish system
- No financing is needed
- In aggregate, $555 million in revenue versus $457 million in inflated costs over the 20 years
- Excess revenues in 2023-2037 can support project costs beyond 2038

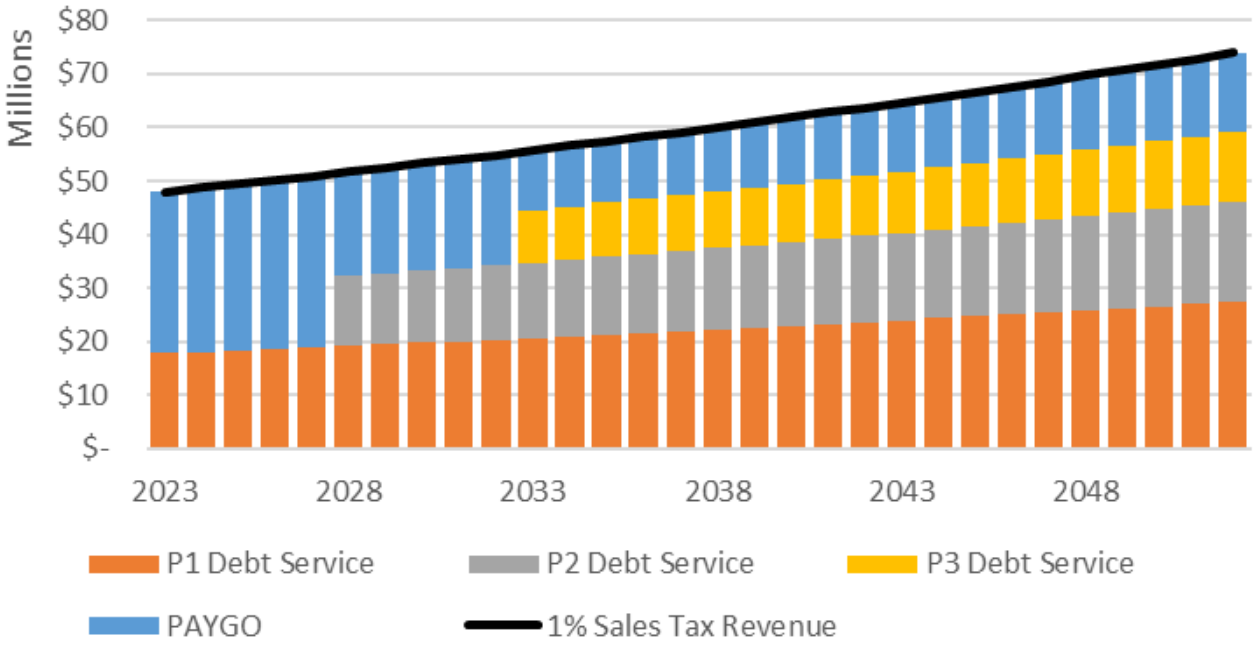
Exhibit 27: Scenario 2 Program Phasing Analysis – Parish Funding Commitment



Scenario 2 - Use ½ Cent Sales Tax to Fund Programs 1-3; Ascension Funds Parish System and 20% of State Summary:

- ½ cent sales tax will fund all projects on the parish system and 20% of State projects
- Requires bond issuance(s) to manage small cashflow shortfalls (capital funding shortfall of $52M); bond payback would extend beyond 2038
- State's ability to separately fund its 80% share of state system project costs is highly speculative (completion of full plan is out of Ascension's control)

Exhibit 28: Scenario 3 Program Phasing Analysis – Implementation Simulation with Financings



Scenario 3 - Use 1 Percent Sales Tax to Fund Programs 1-3; Ascension Funds all Parish and State Costs Summary:

- Evaluates ability of 1 Percent tax to fund the Master Plan vision without relying on State funds
- Ascension would still pursue other local, State and federal funding to reduce Ascension's commitment
- Financings would be required to produce the upfront funding required for the programs
- Programs 1 & 2 can be fully financed and Program 3 could be 75% financed with 2033-2038 (PAYGO proceeds after 2038 could be utilized to complete remaining Program 3 & 4 costs)
- Note: planning level financial analysis using present value calculations with assumptions of 1.25x coverage and 3.50% rate for simulation

Summary of Funding Analysis

Significant new funding will be required to deliver the Master Plan vision. Ascension Parish can use a variety of funding sources to develop the optimal mix to fund projects across the parish and state systems in programs 1-4. If the State can contribute considerable money towards projects in Ascension, then Ascension's funding requirement would be reduced. As Scenario 3 illustrates, it would take approximately $50 million per year (or 1% sales tax) in new funding to fund nearly all of Programs 1-3 ($1.2 billion in year of expenditure).

6.5 HOW DO WE PROTECT OUR INVESTMENT?

Ascension Parish would like to invest in transportation over the next few decades to improve safety, mobility, economic condition and overall quality of life in the parish. As a result, it's important for the parish to maximize the public dollars spent on transportation. Performance measurement will help the parish monitor the progress of the plan over time and make necessary changes.

Performance Measurement

Performance monitoring and reporting is the regular measurement, analysis, and reporting of the results of projects, programs, and policies. It should be an integral part of the parish's approach to delivering the Transportation Master Plan, and offers several benefits:

- **Direction**: Performance measurement reveals whether parish activities are achieving the strategies and principles set forth in the Transportation Master Plan. If they are not, the process gives decision makers the information they need to change course.
- **Accountability**: Citizens can judge how well the parish is delivering public services and whether those services are creating value for the public. Additionally, the parish can use performance measurement data to improve efficiency within departments.
- **Motivation**: Seeing progress toward goals can energize staff, decision makers, and the public.
- **Communication**: The results of a performance measurement system can form the basis of a discussion among community stakeholders, and elected officials about the progress toward achieving the vision of Ascension Parish.
- **Trust and Transparency:** Performance monitoring and reporting demonstrates to stakeholders and the public a level of trust and transparency with the master plan.
- **Funding**: The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) ACT, the federal transportation bill passed in 2015, requires performance monitoring and reporting as a condition for federal grants, and requires state and regional funding agencies like CRPC to begin using performance monitoring as part of their funding allocation and grants processes.

A performance plan will identify trigger points and improvement thresholds when parish transportation improvements are needed. The parish should coordinate with CRPC on the performance of the transportation network and determine when recommended improvements are needed.

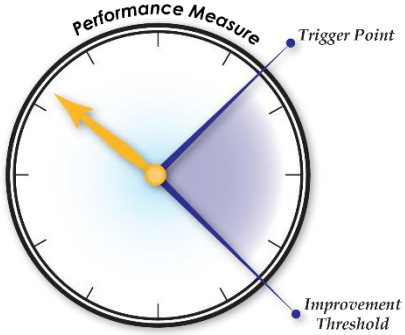


Exhibit 29 is an example of a performance triggers table. A table like this one should be developed for the Ascension Transportation Program to track progress of the plan since external variables may impact the transportation system and change project prioritization.

Exhibit 29: Corridor Performance Triggers Example

Performance Factors	How it is Measured	Goal	Planning Trigger	Trigger
System Reliability	Average speeds	LOS D speed	< 50 mph (LOS E/F)	< 40 mph (LOS E/F)
	Travel time	LOS D travel time	< 50 mph (LOS E/F)	< 40 mph (LOS E/F)
Congestion Reduction	Duration of congestion (LOS E/F) during the day	<1 hour per weekday	Sustained 2 hours per weekday	Sustained 3 hours per weekday
	Average time to clear traffic incident	35 minutes	45 minutes	460 minutes
	Interchange delay	70 seconds (mid LOS D) – 2 int.	85 seconds (mid LOS D/E) – 2 int.	120 seconds (mid LOS E/F) – 2 int.
	Arterial delay	LOS D	40% FFS, LOS E annually	30% FFS, LOS E annually
Infrastructure Condition	Highway pavement condition (PL-1 Best to PL-3 Worst)	85% good condition	<75% good condition (PL-1)	<65% good condition (PL-1)
	Bridge condition (0 to 9)	Average 6 rating	Average condition rating below 5	Average condition rating below 4
,Safety	Number of fatalities and disabling injuries (K + A)	Reduce by 2% annually	1% increase annually (3-year avg.)	3% increase annually (3-year avg.)
	Crash rate	Statewide average	1-1.5 of statewide average	>1.5 of statewide average
	Number of commercial vehicle fatalities	Reduce by 2% annually	1% increase annually (3-year avg.)	3% increase annually (3-year avg.)
Customer Service	Percent of customer satisfaction	75% satisfaction	70% customer satisfaction	65% customer satisfaction
	Percent of customers satisfied with transportation options	75% satisfaction	70% customer satisfaction	65% customer satisfaction
	Percent of customers satisfied with non-motorized options	75% Satisfaction	70% customer satisfaction	65% customer satisfaction
Environmental Sustainability	Number of transit passengers	Significant increase	30% increase	45% increase
	Transit ridership per mile per hour of service	Significant increase	30% increase	45% increase
	Utilization of existing P&R lots	Increasing trend	30% increase	45% increase

Source: I-35 Corridor Optimization Plan, KDOT, 2013.

Recommendation

The Parish should develop a performance monitoring plan to measure the plans progress over time and make necessary changes. Develop a Transportation Committee that meets quarterly and develop a performance monitoring plan in concert with the committee.

6.6 WHAT POLICIES ARE NEEDED?

In addition to implementing the recommended projects, several policies and planning considerations will help the parish achieve their overall vision. Several considerations that directly influence transportation include partnerships, access management, supporting street network, multimodal network, travel demand management, future transportation, and green infrastructure.

Policy Consideration 1 – Partnerships

Many of the proposed transportation solutions involve other agencies such as CRPC, LA DOTD, CATS as well as others. A primary tool in Louisiana is the LA DOTD Voluntary Road Transfer Program. The program's intent is to right-size the state highway system as several state-owned facilities do not operate as highways and may be better served by management from the parish. The program benefits local parishes by providing immediate capital assistance, greater authority in prioritization and funding allocation, authority to regulate traffic, and the ability to implement local plans (such as this master plan) with less dependency on the State. The Road Transfer Program can also be used as a local match to federal grant dollars.

Example – LA Road Transfer Program & I-10 Corridor

Four corridors prioritized in Program 1 of this plan are identified as proposed corridors for transfer to Ascension Parish by LA DOTD. One of the corridors, LA 74, is a high-priority corridor for the Parish. Other corridors, not identified for road transfer, will be implemented in collaboration with LA DOTD. For example, I-10 is a LA DOTD facility, but if the Parish provides local dollars in support of the project, interchange planning and construction may progress more quickly.

Today, private partners are also included in the partnership discussion in delivering transportation solutions. Developing strong partnerships, at the federal, state, regional, and local levels will be vital to a successful Transportation Master Plan.

Recommendation

Utilize public and private partnerships to progress Parish priorities and project implementation. In addition to working with public and private partners to identify funding and progress project implementation, the Parish should also work more closely with CRPC to include projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the region, along with planning and clearance approvals necessary for construction.

When working with private partners, the Parish should reference LA DOTD's Public Private Partnership Guidelines:

http://wwwsp.dotd.la.gov/Inside_LaDOTD/Divisions/Administration/LTA/Misc%20Documents/Public-Private%20Partnership%20Guidelines.pdf

Policy Consideration 2 – Access Management

Access management is a set of techniques that state and local governments use to control access to highways, major arterials, and other roadways. The benefits of access management include improved movement of traffic, reduced crashes, and fewer vehicle conflicts.

A range of access management principles can be applied to roadways of all types, ranging from fully access-controlled facilities, such as freeways, to those with little or no access control, such as local streets. The benefits of access management are achieved by limiting new vehicular access points and working to close and consolidate existing access, while also paying careful consideration to the interaction between automobile access points and multimodal access points along a corridor.

Analysis of access-related crashes has revealed that driveways and minor uncontrolled intersections (such as intersections with roads and driveways that serve adjacent properties) can be especially dangerous locations for pedestrians and bicyclists. These entries and exit points can be managed by carefully planning their location, complexity, extent (i.e., types of turning movements allowed), and if appropriate, use of medians or other schemes that facilitate or prohibit access to the roadway.

Access management tools include:

- Reduction in overall number of access points to reduce opportunity for conflict between automobiles, transit, and non-motorized users. This may include driveway closure or consolidation and restrictions on driveway and access point spacing.
- Optimum location of transit stops relative to sight distance, intersections, non-motorized crossings and access points. When planning for future multimodal improvements, access is a key consideration.
- Connection of key gaps in non-motorized facilities to promote safe, off-street movements and facilitate a multimodal environment.
- Proper spacing of access points along the same side of the street and from access points on the opposite side of the street particularly spacing between intersections and other access points. This is key for the parish to consider when improving the configuration of existing nodes, such as highly congested segments near I-10 interchanges.
- Geometric design of physical barriers to restrict certain turning movements (usually left turns). This includes designing access points for “right-in/right-out” only, raised medians that prevent cross-traffic movements, or design for auxiliary turn lanes including exclusive left or right and two-way left.

- Restricted-movement and alternative designs for intersections including J-turns, median U-turns, quadrant roadways, or roundabouts.
- Shared access systems (connections between land uses, shared driveways, frontage roads or rear services drives). Parallel, lower speed one-way or two-way "frontage" roads are often used to reduce conflict points in areas of heavy traffic.

Example – Airline Highway

New striping to provide left-hand turn lanes, a raised divider, and "right-out" only movements from the Cox Center on Airline Highway helps to reduce conflict points, improve safety and help traffic flow. Airline Highway, in addition to many other Ascension Parish roads, have several access points that could be removed or consolidated.

A corridor access management approach involves seeking an appropriate balance between the safety and mobility of a roadway facility with the access needs of adjacent land uses. Access management considerations will be required by any federally funded state highway project that involves new construction or reconstruction. Access management should also be considered on any parish project that includes major rehabilitation, roadway widening projects, or new facility construction.

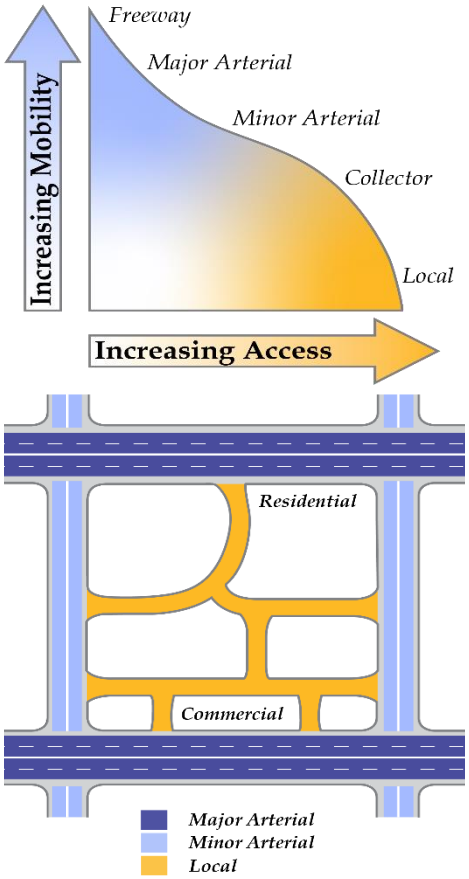
Recommendation

Develop an Access Management Plan that set standards for access management of various modes of transportation. Formally adopt the Plan and include reference to standards and requirements in the Parish Code of Ordinances.

A formal Access Management Plan that sets requirements through the Code of Ordinances will guide development in a way that ensures safe and efficient operations for all modes. LA DOTD discusses access management on their website and should be used as a reference when developing the parish plan.

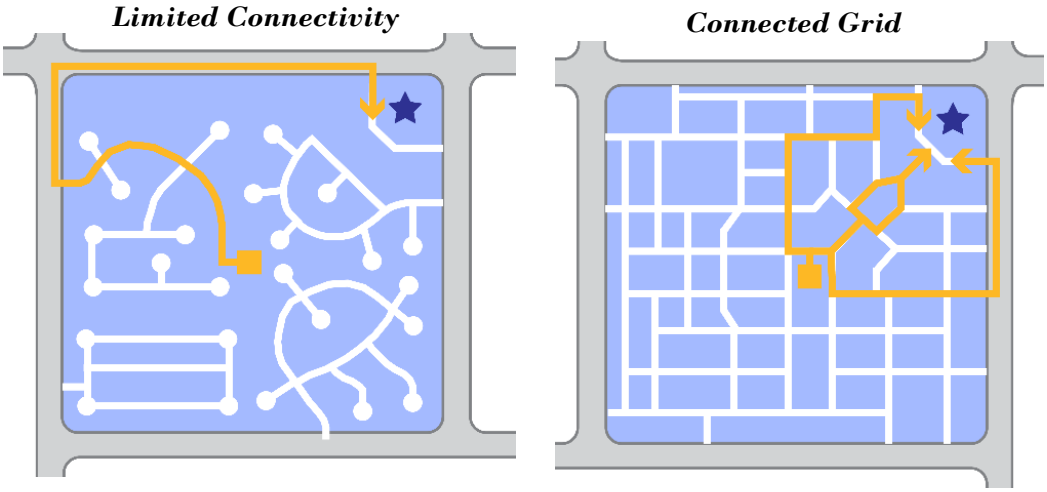
Policy Consideration 3 – Supporting Street Network

The parish has allowed development to occur in an uncontrolled pattern, along major arterial roadways. In the absence of a sufficient supporting network of local and collector streets, arterial roadways are used for direct site access. The resulting proliferation of driveways and poor access management creates unsafe conditions. Strip development leads to greater distances between land uses and thereby increases dependence on driving. Providing an adequate network of local and collector roadways and promoting internal connections between land uses will allow vehicles to circulate within neighborhoods and centers rather than on the arterial system.



A well-designed transportation network includes a wide range of facility types (sometimes referred to as functional classifications) ranging from limited access facilities (interstates and some expressways) to local and collector roads (subdivision or neighborhood streets). Arterial and local roads support short distance trips and provide access to freeways and expressways which support longer distance travel. Access design, number of travel lanes, signalization, cross section, and multimodal accommodations should be right-sized to the facility type.

Connectivity is also key to a supporting street grid as no single roadway can provide utility without the addition of connecting roadways. Ensuring all roads connect, rather than dead-end, will improve arterial operations, allow traffic to be more evenly distributed, and help the network operate at a high level of service. Effective connectivity also ensures a repetitive network which is particularly important during extreme events such as weather events or states of emergency.



Example – Prairieville Primary School

Prairieville Primary School has several adjacent residential streets (to the north and east). However, families on these streets are unable to directly access the school. Instead, all traffic is funneled to and from Hornsby Rd or LA 44 to Parker Rd/LA 933. If the street network was better connected with an internal grid, traffic accessing the school would be more dispersed, resulting in less congestion on Parker Rd/LA 933.

A network grid system is an important feature of a connected network because it manages mobility by providing alternative routing to a destination. A grid system allows drivers to take an alternative route due to construction, extreme congestion, or roadway incidents and to avoid bottlenecks. Alternative routes are extremely important to emergency response services and in times of natural disasters or extreme events. This can be accomplished by requiring a minimum of two access points to all new subdivisions.

Recommendation

Establish and support the development of connectivity throughout the transportation system.

Require connectivity in new developments through appropriate codes and ordinances to improve connectivity, repetition, and efficient operations of the transportation system. Proper enforcement of relevant codes and ordinances is key to improving the network over the long-term. For example, the Parish should better enforce the current requirements that require all new subdivisions to provide access points for future development.

Ensure that all levels of government are educated about the importance of connectivity and a supporting street network. In addition to providing new connections identified in the recommended projects, look for areas where small connections (for any variety of modes) could greatly improve mobility in the area. Ensure that proper connections for pedestrians and bicycle facilities are also prioritized.

Policy Consideration 4 – Multimodal Network

An efficient and fair transportation system must serve diverse users and needs. A complete transportation system provides adequate vehicular access and freight movement in addition to bus and transit options, sufficient "first-and-last mile" connections, and the option to live a car-free lifestyle or reduce reliance upon automobiles. Multimodal options support travel demand management objectives, are good for air quality, promote healthy and active lifestyles, and provide affordable and equitable mobility choices.

"Complete Streets" is a way of thinking about transportation that designs streets for users of all ages and physical abilities and allows for multiple modes of transportation, so that all users are all able to move safely along and across streets. The City of Gonzales introduced Complete Streets concepts in their comprehensive plan and codified Complete Streets requirements tailored to different roadway types in their subdivision regulations. Gonzales' regulations illustrate that Complete Streets concepts are not only for urban environments but are relevant to most roadway facility types.

Example – LA 42 Complete Streets

LA 42 was one of the first large scale projects to integrate a Complete Streets approach after LA DOTD's policy adoption. The 3.7-mile project (between Airline Highway and LA 44) will widen the roadway from two to four lanes to a four-lane separated roadway. Traffic in each direction will be separated by an 18-foot grass median to improve vehicular safety. To meet the needs of pedestrians, a six-foot sidewalk will be constructed on the north side of the roadway and a ten-foot bicycle/pedestrian shared-use path will be located on the south side of the roadway.

LA DOTD has adopted a Complete Streets Policy with the purpose to "create a comprehensive, integrated, connected transportation network for Louisiana that balances access, mobility and safety needs of motorists, transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians of all ages and abilities, which includes users of wheelchairs and mobility aids." Complete Streets concepts can be right-sized to fit state highway facilities as well as arterial and local parish roads.

Recommendation

Formalize a Complete Streets policy for the Parish and develop a sidewalk and trails hierarchy plan to supplement LA DOTD's planned bicycle facility network.

Complete Streets and multiuse-friendly corridors will help to foster a transit-friendly environment which has many positive externalities. The network should consider and aim to provide connecting linkages to key bicycle corridors identified by LA DOTD for separated or protected bicycle facilities. Once the groundwork is laid, the Parish can work to implement multimodal and transit projects identified in Chapter 4 of this plan.

Policy Consideration 5 - Transportation Demand Management

Ascension's vision will require an integrated, strategic approach to transportation that manages current and future transportation assets to maximize mobility, increase access and support growth and development. Transportation Demand Management (TDM) tools are often used to expand mobility and access, improve travel choices, and support continued growth and development.

TDM strategies aim to change a person's travel behavior (how, when, and where people travel) to increase mobility, road and parking cost savings, safety, energy conservation, and pollution emission reductions.

TDM tools include:

- Ridesharing and commuting programs
- Improving multimodal options, connectivity, and amenities
- Subsidized public transportation pass programs
- Paid parking
- ITS solutions include mobile and social applications and wayfinding tools
- Higher-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes
- Tolling, congestion pricing, or road-space rationing
- Flexible work schedules and telecommuting
- Active traffic management

Example – CRPC Commuter Carpool Program

Carpooling is a great way to get more cars off the roads while still facilitating trips to and from work. CRPC supports the "Commuter Krewe of Louisiana" program that helps bring coworkers and neighbors together to commute to work. The program includes an on-line matching system to help bring people together with similar commute patterns.

Recommendation

Work with CRPC on metropolitan-wide TDM strategies and initiatives. Work with LA DOTD on corridor-specific TDM strategies and tools.

Work with business influencers to promote CRPC TDM programs including the Commuter Krewe of Louisiana program. Stay involved as other CRPC TDM strategies and programs take effect. Consider also working with LA DOTD on primary congested corridors to influence traveler behavior. Key corridors likely include Airline Highway and I-10. Implementing the recommended multimodal improvements will also support TDM efforts.

Policy Consideration 6 – Future Transportation

Communities all over the country are dealing with an unprecedented amount of potential change as they plan for their transportation needs between now and 2050. An integral component of upcoming change is likely to include the deployment of automated, connected, electric and shared-use vehicles and complementary technologies. As these technologies begin to appear on publicly owned roads in significant numbers, those who own and operate the roads need to be prepared for their impacts. These emerging technologies will impact every aspect of transportation infrastructure, including operations, construction, maintenance and information technology. Preparing for a future of emerging transportation technologies will require LA DOTD and its communities, including Ascension Parish, to develop new policies, programs and partnerships, address rapidly changing technologies and maintenance, manage and analyze new data from a variety of new sources, and address the funding needs associated with both the implementation of new roadside and backend technologies and the impacts these new vehicles may have on funding. These new policies, programs and partnerships don't stop at the DOTD and will also be required by CRPC and Ascension. All entities will need to develop and implement a plan to address the impacts of this paradigm shift in mobility.

Example – Morning backups, wrong-way drivers, pedestrian safety, emergency vehicle signal priority, and traffic congestion. Every community faces these transportation challenges. In Tampa, Florida the Tampa Hillsborough Expressway Authority is using the technology of connected vehicles and smart infrastructure to address every day transportation problems.

Ascension Parish will someday also utilize technology to address everyday transportation problems. Technology advancements provide solutions to transportation problems that are cost effective and sustainable.

THEA Connected Vehicle Pilot

Recommendation

Ensure that Ascension Parish and CRPC representatives are included in any discussions developing around emerging technologies with LA DOTD.

LA DOTD is a likely leader for the state in evaluating emerging technologies. This will include policies, programs and potential partnerships. It is key that the Parish focus on current needs but also properly prepare for future technology.

Policy Consideration 7 – Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure is a planning and design approach to managing stormwater, the urban heat island effect, health, and air quality based on an approach to water management that protects, restores, or mimics the natural water cycle. Roads and other paved surfaces collect pollutants such as oil, toxic chemicals, and heavy metals, and increase the volume and speed of stormwater runoff. In addition to the harmful effects these pollutants can have on natural systems, stormwater entering the parish's drainage system can overtax the system during high rain events. Using best practices for green infrastructure along roads and in parking lots not only reduces runoff into storm sewers by allowing storm water to permeate into soil, but also filters pollutants to improve the quality of runoff entering streams and rivers and provides a level of resiliency with within the transportation system. In the example below, a conventional approach to a parking lot design is shown on the left, and an "enhanced stormwater" design on the right. The enhanced design has a similar planted area, but its curb has gaps to allow stormwater to flow into the planted area to be captured, filtered, and held by the soil and plants instead of piped to containment or treatment areas.

Examples of green infrastructure tactics include:

- Planting appropriate trees and native vegetation
- Restoring wetlands
- Minimizing impervious pavement when possible such as green alleys and green school yards
- Utilizing pervious pavements when possible

Example – East Baton Rouge Parking Lot

The Baton Rouge Magnet School utilizes pervious paving and swales to catch and filter parking lot runoff. This allows groundwater to recharge through pervious concrete.

Recommendation

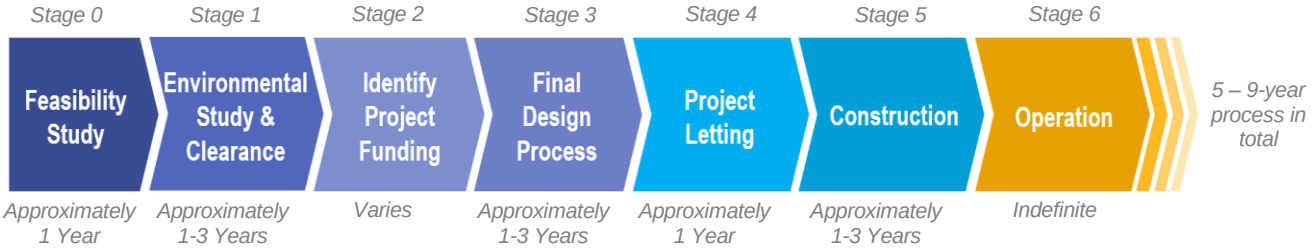
Utilize green infrastructure best practices when possible for transportation improvements.

The Parish should adopt green street standards to provide additional benefits for stormwater management and promote permeable pavement and landscape options that improve water quality and reduce runoff.

6.7 WHATS NEXT?

Once the parish council completes and adopts the Transportation Master Plan, the public will expect the parish to deliver the recommendations outlined in the plan. Plan implementation is the responsibility of the Public Works and will require further planning to prepare for initial program implementation. Primarily, if no funding sources or additional parish revenues for transportation projects are identified, the Plan cannot be implemented, making identifying these sources an integral first step.

Exhibit 30: LA DOTD Project Timeline



The first program of the Transportation Master Plan is scheduled to begin in 2023 and should include the following tasks:

TASK 1 – POLICY CONSIDERATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Several of policy considerations and recommendations require a more detailed plan, policy, or ordinance to support the Transportation Master Plan. Below are the next steps related to each policy consideration.

- **Partnerships** – Public and private partnerships will be required to move this program forward. Work more closely with CRPC to include prioritized projects in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Consider formalizing public-private partnership guidelines.

- **Access Management** – Develop an Access Management Plan that set standards for access management of various modes of transportation. Formally adopt the Plan and include reference to standards and requirements in the Parish Code of Ordinances.

- **Supporting Street Network** – Better enforce the current requirements that require all new subdivisions to provide access points for future development and properly enforce relevant codes and ordinances to improve the network over the long-term.

- **Multimodal Network** – Formalize a Complete Streets policy and develop a sidewalk and trails hierarchy plan to supplement LA DOT's planning bicycle facility network.

- **Travel Demand Management (TDM)** – Coordinate and support CRPC's work on metropolitan-wide TDM strategies and initiatives.

- **Future Transportation** – Have a seat at the table or send a regional representative to any LA DOTD planning discussions focused on emerging technologies.

TASK 2 – PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Move projects through project development and necessary clearances (inclusion into CRPC's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), environmental clearance, etc.). Coordinate with CRPC and LA DOTD and develop an implementation plan for specific Program 1 projects. LA DOTD's project development process can take 5-9 years as shown previously in Exhibit 30. Work with LA DOTD to put identified Program 1 projects on a fast track to get them ready for 2023 to 2028 implementation time frame.

TASK 3 – IDENTIFY FUNDING SOURCES

Based on the financial scenarios and funding sources identified in this plan, the parish should identify the preferred funding scenario and take steps towards initiation. In addition to identifying sustainable, long-term funding, the parish should coordinate with LA DOTD on federal grant opportunities for project-specific funding. In addition to INFRA (previously FASTLANE) and BUILD (previously TIGER) grants, the US DOT has other grant programs including the Competitive Highway Bridge Program (CHBP) program. These grants are the USDOT's approach to funding national transportation infrastructure.

Appendix

Ascension Parish

Transportation Master Plan

APPENDIX 1
TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN VISIONING WORKSHOP SUMMARY

Ascension Parish, Louisiana

June 01, 2017

HNTB

1. VISIONING WORKSHOP SUMMARY

Ascension Parish is entering a critical period of its history. The Parish and its citizens have enjoyed population and economic growth. To maximize the benefits from this growth and to continue to attract additional economic opportunities in the future, the infrastructure across the Parish must be comprehensive, multi-modal, and supportive of the overarching vision the Parish leadership has for the future. To develop a transportation master plan and an implementation strategy for that plan demonstrates foresight and a proactive approach by the elected leadership of the Parish.

The future of transportation mobility and safety is traveling at the speed of technology and innovation. The first step in developing a transportation master plan was to conduct a Visioning Workshop. The Transportation Master Plan Visioning Workshop brought together members of the Parish Council, Planning Commission, staff, and consultant team on February 10, 2017.

The purpose of the Visioning Workshop was to clearly define and document the goals and objectives of this Master Plan, and develop a transportation plan that meets the long-term needs of the Parish. A complete agenda of the Workshop is included in Attachment A: Workshop Agenda.

At the Workshop, participants were encouraged to think comprehensively about how transportation impacts the Parish's quality of life. A complete list of participants is included in Attachment B: Workshop Participants. HNTB used a six-step Visioning Model to guide this process:

Step 1: Define the Problems
Step 2: Develop Goals and Supporting Measures
Step 3: Define Success
Step 4: Identify Implementation Threats and Opportunities
Step 5: Identify Solutions
Step 6: Develop Action Plan

The remaining document summarized the workshop discussions.

1.1 DEFINE THE PROBLEMS

Potential transportation problems were discussed with the group as a part of the prepared presentation. A full presentation is included in Attachment C: Workshop Presentation. Problem categories include:

- **Traffic congestion**
- **Safety**
- **Condition of infrastructure**
- **Mobility**
- **Multi-modal options**
- **Economic growth**

Traffic congestion includes capacity problems along the arterials and local roads in the Parish. Safety includes all users of the transportation network including motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists. Condition of infrastructure includes the state of pavement, lights, signals, etc. Mobility encompasses the ease of travel within the Parish, across the Parish, or across or along specific corridors. Multi-modal options may be related to vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians, transit services, or the lack thereof. Economic growth was discussed as being related to the success of the transportation network to support significant planned industrial expansion and prosperity for all Parish residents.

Workshop attendees identified several problems that affect transportation. The problems discussed were:

- **Unbounded growth and development impacts**
  Some saw Highway 30 as an obstacle to growth and many were concerned about the future impacts of industrial growth and general development in unplanned areas. The lack of coordination of land use planning is a barrier in the current process.

- **Local coordination with key stakeholders**
  Inadequate communication and coordination was identified as an area for improvement. For the Transportation Master Plan to be adopted and implemented, key issues from stakeholders such as the sheriff, school district, utilities, and others must be included in the process and collaborate toward to the preferred solutions.

- **Lack of information and data about the network**
  There is currently a gap in the data about the local roadway network such as level of service (LOS), pavement conditions, and evacuation routes are not clear or identified.

- **Funding and resource limitations**
  There was concern about the available resources to fund improvements to the transportation network. There was consensus that more information was needed on alternative funding sources such as safety dollars, transfer programs, and how to leverage local funds to obtain additional funding.

- **Extreme congestion along main corridors**
  Traffic congestion was a point of emphasis in the Visioning Workshop. Much of the congestion is along the state highways within the Parish.

- **Lack of planning tools**
  The Parish currently does not have a current transportation or land use master plan. The Planning Commission is inhibited by the lack planning tools at their disposal. Land use planning does not currently follow a process that is partnered with transportation planning.

- **Lack of technology enhancements**
  Technology enhancements and intelligent transportation system (ITS) strategies that can improve traffic operations are absent within the Parish. The Parish would also benefit from more comprehensive and improved database management.

Large blank parish maps were provided to the participants and each person was encouraged to place dots on the map to indicate areas of concern based on the following categories:

- Traffic Congestion
- Safety
- Condition of Infrastructure
- Mobility
- Multi-Modal Options
- Economic Growth
- Development Impacts

The exercise allowed the project team to gather an inventory of where problems occur, and the type of problem by location. The data from this exercise is summarized in Figure 2 on the following page. Pictures of the original maps from the dot exercise are included in Attachment D.

Figure 2 shows that most problems identified in the Visioning Workshop are in the north-west part of the Parish. Corridors with many problems include LA 30, LA 44, LA 74, Airline Highway, and nodes along I-10.

Figure 1: Parish Map

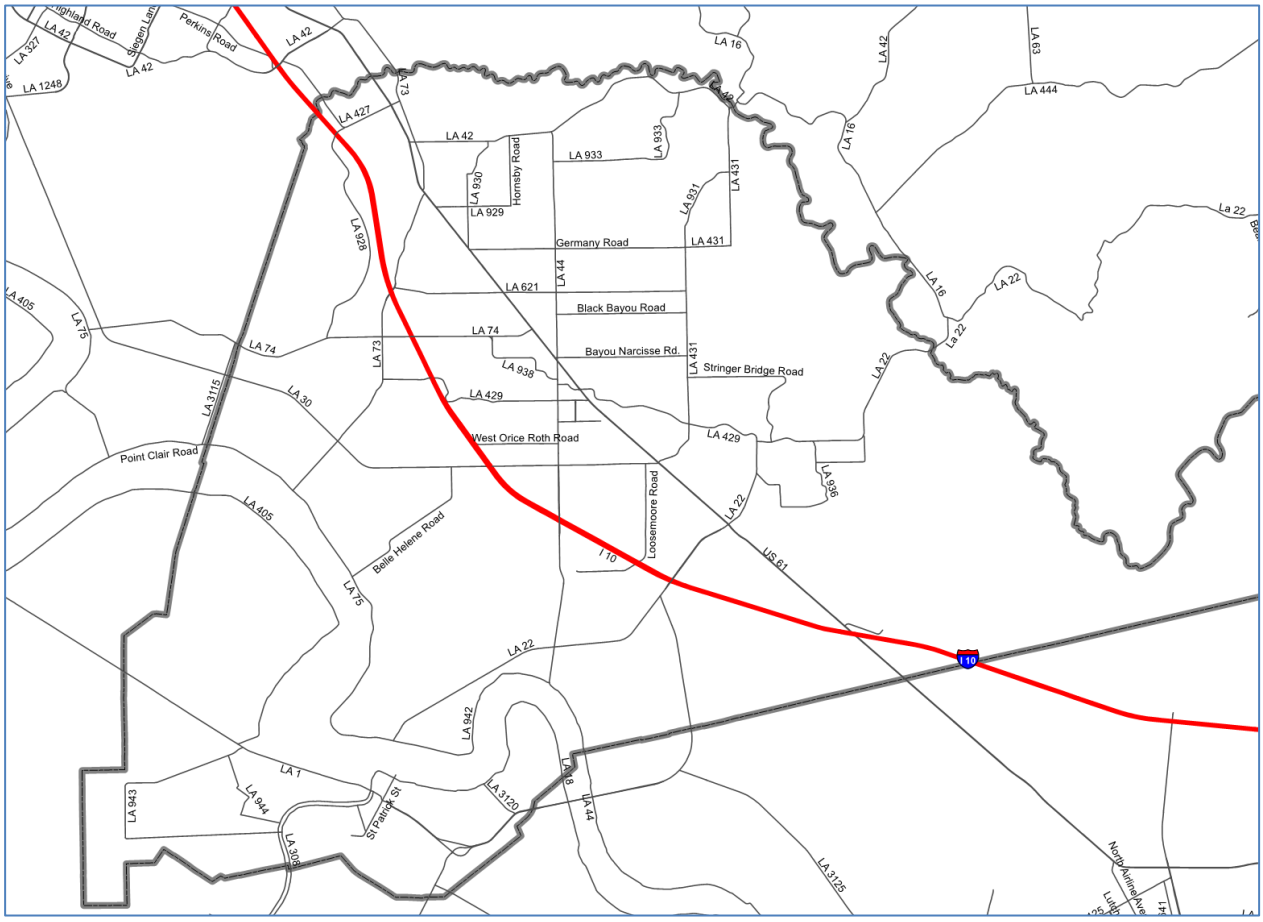
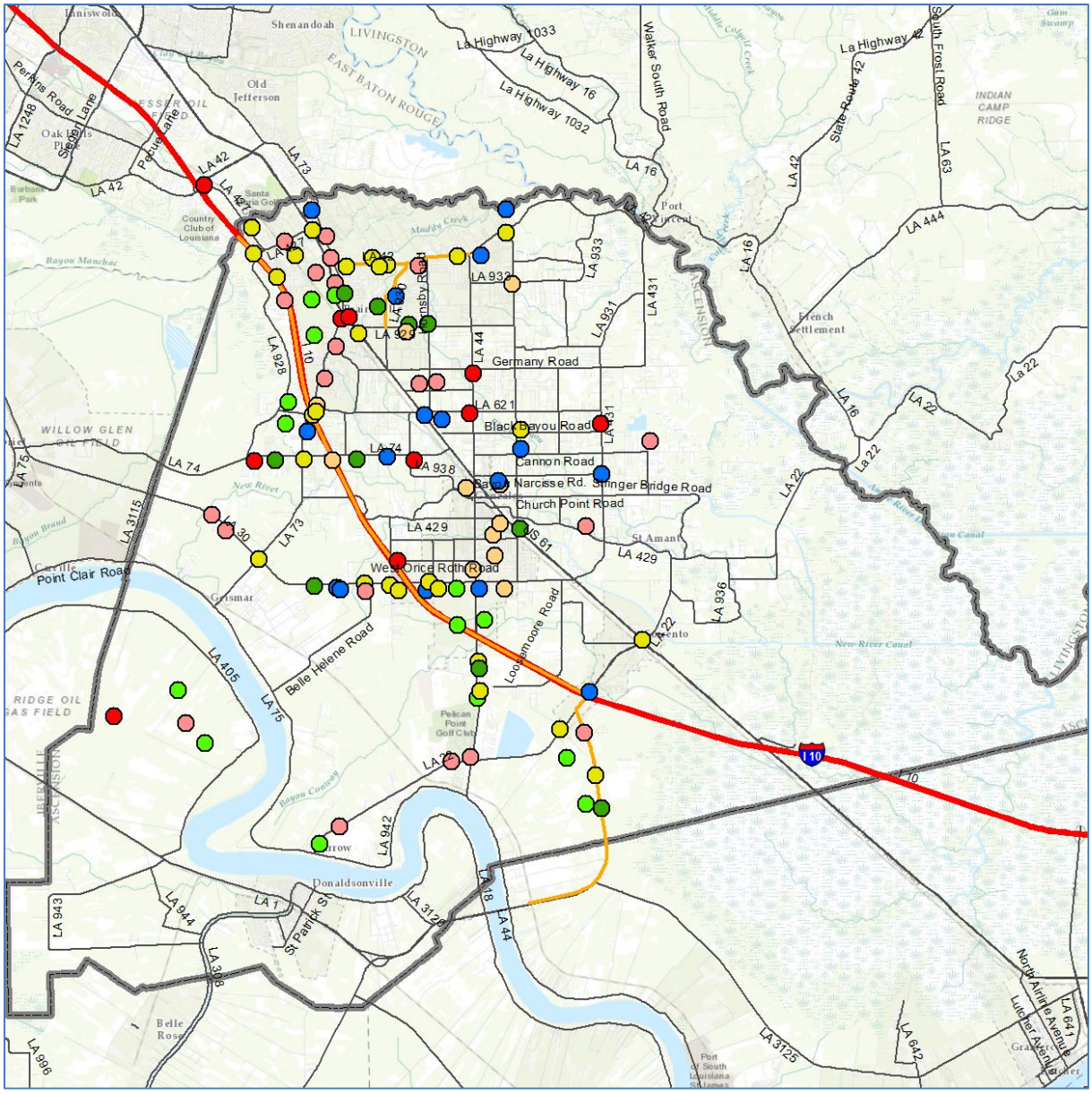


Figure 2: Identified Problems



1.2 DEVELOP GOALS & SUPPORTING MEASURES

Goals and supporting measures provide much needed structure to the transportation plan. SMART goal setting creates verifiable trajectories towards a certain objective, with clear milestones and an estimation of the goal's attainability. The Workshop participants discussed the components of SMART goals and framed their goals around SMART criteria described below.

SMART – What do I want to accomplish, why, what are the requirements, and what are the constraints?
MEASUREABLE – How will progress be measured, and how will I know when the goal is accomplished?
ACHIEVABLE – How can the goal be accomplished, and what logical steps should be taken?
RELEVANT – Is this a worthwhile goal, is this the right time, are the resources available, and is the goal in-line with long-term objectives?
TIME-BOUND – How long will it take to accomplish, when is the completion due, and when can work be done on this goal?

After the SMART goal concept was defined, the Workshop attendees discussed potential Plan goals.

- **Balance short-term and long-term needs and solutions.**
  Participants saw the importance of addressing short-term needs while also planning for future scenarios and guiding transportation development in the long-term.

- **Target corridor solutions over "hot-spot" nodes.**
  Participants understood that improving one node only pushes traffic problems to another area. The group wanted to focus on fixing whole corridors to help move people throughout the Parish.

- **Support economic development and proactively guide growth in the Parish.**
  Participants wanted to encourage growth and economic develop within the Parish in a responsible manner that is well thought out and has a long-term vision.

- **Improve transportation safety conditions.**
  Participants saw safety as the highest priority and want to ensure that safety will continue to be a guiding factor in the Transportation Master Plan.

- **Leverage available funding to provide the greatest return for the Parish.**
  Participants wanted to instill residents' confidence in Parish officials and ensure that local tax payer dollars are being leveraged to provide the greatest return in transportation investment.

- **Improve connectivity and mobility.**
  Participants had a general goal of improving connectivity and mobility. This includes residents moving within the Parish and other traveling through or into the Parish.

1.3 DEFINE SUCCESS

Defining success is important to know what success looks like. Success can be defined at the end of the Master Plan, after initial Quick Start projects are implemented or longer term. Success was envisioned through an exercise where participants generated desired media "headlines". Some of the representative headlines created by the Workshop attendees are annotated below. All the headlines created are attached in Attachment E.

Headline themes presented were Ascension Parish . . .

- Implements Short-Term Projects
- Improved Traffic Flow/Congestion
- Roadway Project Implemented Under Budget and Ahead of Schedule
- Improved Traffic Operations to Reduce Delay
- Transportation Plan Develops Blueprint for Smart Growth

The headlines were visionary and showed that the community leaders were ready to take action, plan strategic projects, and begin with implementation.

1.4 IDENTIFY IMPLEMENTATION THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

After defining goals and envisioning success, participants brainstormed threats inherent to meeting project goals. Through this exercise, the Workshop team developed a thorough list of both threats and potential opportunities. Potential threat and opportunity families included political, environmental, social, technological and financial. Key threats and opportunities from the Visioning Workshop are listed on the following page.

1.4.1. Threats

- Air quality impacts and non-attainment
- Environmental regulations and impacts
- Funding sources and available resources
- Local politics
- Development patterns and connectivity
- ROW limitations
- Parish-wide sewer plan and funding opportunities
- No change advocates
- Unsupportive regulations and statues of planning priorities
- Lack of understanding of processes and unknown constraints
- Regional coordination and interdependencies
- Natural disasters

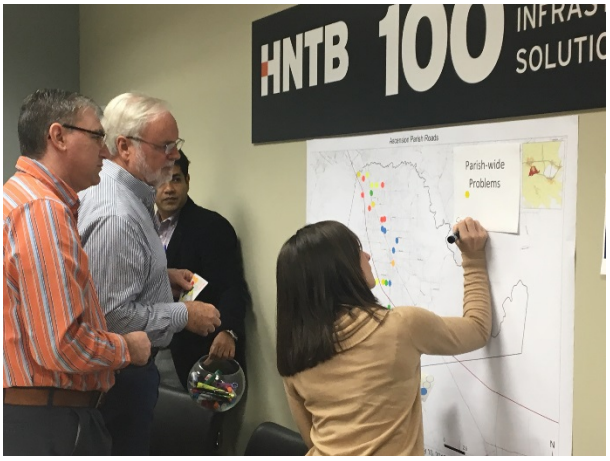
1.4.2. Opportunities

- Clarify local needs, requirements and processes
- Economic development and job creation
- Federal investments in industry and infrastructure
- Trade networks
- Tax and fees structured to address local needs
- Political desire to amend problems
- Ascension Parish leadership communication with delegation
- Leverage funding sources and new funding opportunities
- Federal Transportation Bill
- Inland port opportunities
- Extensive pipeline network
- Public education and outreach on project development processes
- Transportation development incentives
- Connecting the East and West Banks
- Zoning that attracts industry

This exercise allowed the project team to have a clear understanding of the barriers to success and opportunities to be considered in the Transportation Master Plan can take advantage of. Themes that were included in both threats and opportunities are financial, political, and technical in nature.

1.5 IDENTIFY SOLUTIONS

Families of solutions were presented by the project team to encourage participants to think comprehensively about a variety of potential solutions. Solution categories were discussed and the participants located where they thought solutions may work well in a mapping exercise like that of the problem definition.

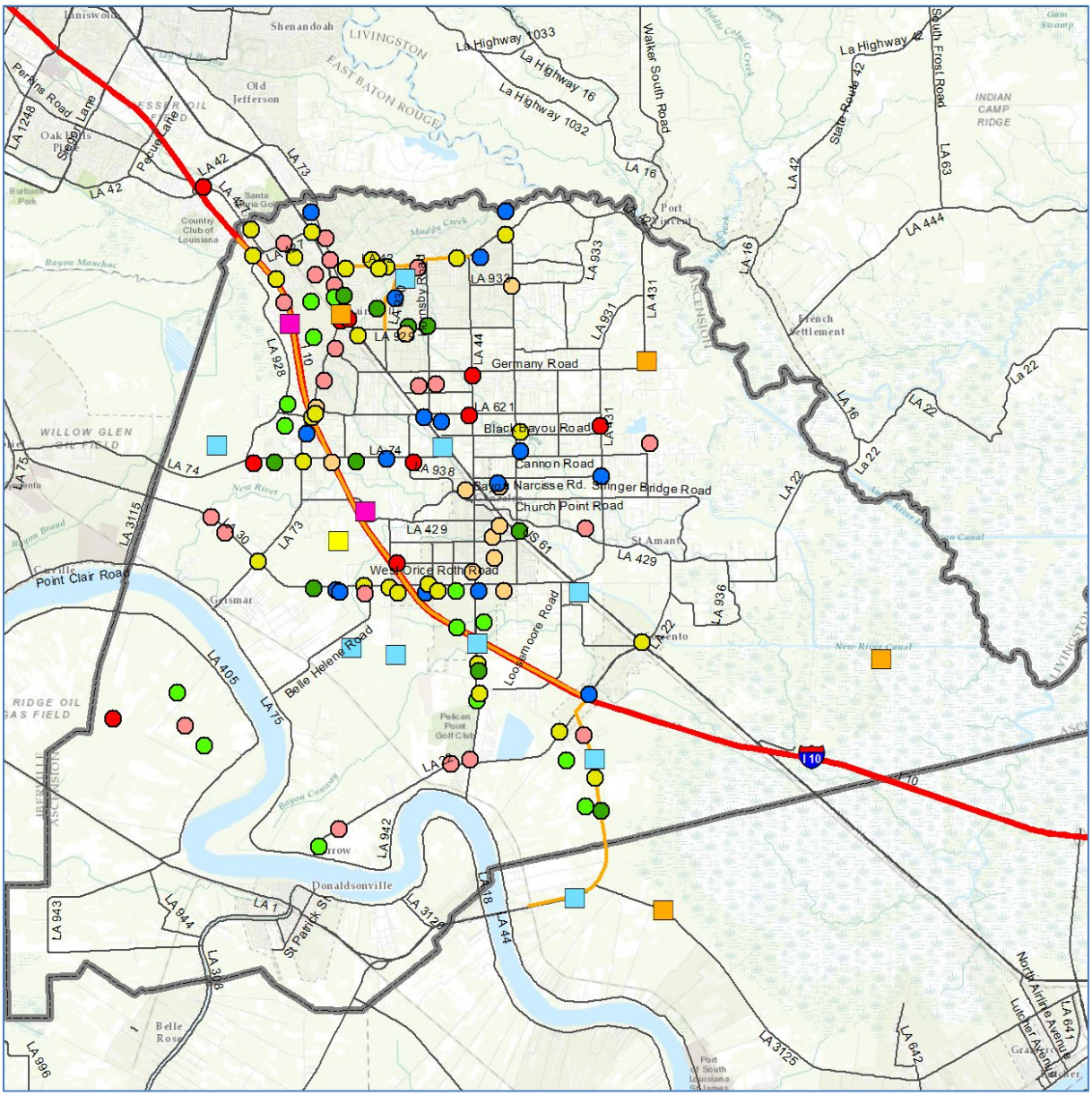


Families of solutions presented include the following:

- Corridor and intersection capacity enhancements
- Improving roadway alignments
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- Multimodal solutions (freight, bicycle, transit, pedestrian, etc.)
- Demand management and land use tools

Throughout discussion and the mapping exercise, participants brought up a number of potential solutions. Solutions discussed ranged from contra-flow lanes to fiber optic and data collection enhancements. Other solutions included signal optimization, multi-modal options, on-demand services, roadway improvements, and added capacity. Figure 3 illustrates the families of solutions identified by the participants.

Figure 3: Identified Solutions



1.6 DEVELOP ACTION PLAN

The Workshop concluded by creating an action plan to promote the success of the Plan and continual cooperation and communication among all parties. Two main follow-up tasks as an outcome of the Workshop and preliminary planning included implementing a steering committee (3-6 members) and formalizing a list of stakeholders to meet with early in the process. Several additional action items were identified during discussion with participants for both the Quick Start task and Transportation Master Plan.

Based on what was heard during the Visioning Workshop, the project team will begin the planning process by quantitatively and qualitatively assessing the needs of the Parish, analyze the future no-action scenario, develop the universe of alternatives, determine the preferred transportation solutions, and outline project programming possibilities.

1.7 PARKING LOT

Several items were placed into the "parking lot" during the Visioning Workshop. These are items that the group did not have time to discuss, but were important enough to circle back to during the planning process of the Transportation Master Plan.

- School Board coordination and agreements
- Local road safety program and data (workshop on February 23rd)
- DOTD Road Transfer/Swap Programs
- Criteria and methodology for Quick Start Projects
- Project development process
- Governor's task force report brief
- Restore Act funding opportunities
- Explore alternative delivery options
- Parish-Wide (East Bank) sewer plan
- Development of the steering committee
- Project delivery workshop

1.8 SUMMARY

The Workshop concluded on a positive note where Parish representatives confirmed that the project was headed in the right direction. They all felt that progress was made and that the Visioning Workshop was a success.

ATTACHMENT A: Workshop Agenda

Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan

MEETING AGENDA

HNTB Engineers Architects Planners

Date:	February 10, 2017	**Time:**	8:00 - 1:00 CST
Subject:	Visioning Workshop	**Location:**	HNTB 10000 Perkins Rowe, Ste 640, Baton Rouge

Attendees:

Councilman Aaron Lawler
Councilman Johnny Cagnolatti
Councilman Bill Dawson
Councilman Daniel Satterlee
Planning Director Jerome Fournier
Zoning Official Lance Brock
Planning Commission Chairman Matt Pryor
Planning Commissioner Julio Dumas
Parish President Kenny Matassa
City of Gonzales Chief Engineer Jackie Baumann
DPW Assistant Director, Capital Projects, Mike Enlow
DPW Director Bill Roux
Ascension Parish CAO, Ken Dawson
Ascension Parish, Mark DeBosier

HNTB Staff

John Basilica
Kate Prejean
Atri Sen
Buck DeFee
Jeffrey Burst
Elizabeth Bauman
Ananth Prasad
Scott Russell
Kip Strauss
Lauren Reiman

Agenda Items:

8:00 am **WORKSHOP INTRODUCTION**
— Welcome
— Workshop purpose
— Self-introductions and expectations
— Review agenda

8:15 am **PROJECT OVERVIEW**
— Quick Start
— Master Plan

8:25 AM **DEFINE THE PROBLEMS**
— Identify transportation problems

8:55 AM **DEVELOP GOALS & SUPPORTING MEASURES**
— Define "SMART" goals
— Brainstorm success measures
— Refine and confirm success measures

9:25 am **DEFINE SUCCESS**
— Discussion of what success will look like
— Headline exercise

Ascension Parish GEC MEETING AGENDA

— Group and confirm success definitions

10:10 am **BREAK (10 min)**

10:20 am **IDENTIFY IMPLEMENTATION THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES**
— Introduce threats and opportunities concept
— Brainstorm threats and opportunities
— Prioritize Top 5 of each

11:05 am **IDENTIFY SOLUTIONS**
— Transportation solutions overview
— Identify transportation solutions (Parish map & flip chart)
— Prioritize and confirm solutions

11:50 am **BREAK TO GET LUNCH (working lunch)**

NOON **DEVELOP ACTION PLAN**
— Discuss areas of focus/specific actions
— Identify actions that are realistic, short term and actionable
— Prioritize and confirm "quick start" actions

12:35 pm **CONFIRM NEXT STEPS/OPEN DISCUSSION**
— Summarize discussion themes, key decisions and follow-up actions
— Identify items for further discussion/investigation
— Open discussion

1:00 pm **MEETING ENDS**

ATTACHMENT B: Workshop Participants

Attendees:

Councilman Aaron Lawler
Councilman Johnny Cagnolatti
Councilman Bill Dawson
Councilman Daniel “Doc” Satterlee
Planning Director Jerome Fournier
Zoning Official Lance Brock
Planning Commission Chairman Matt Pryor
City of Gonzales Chief Engineer Jackie Baumann
DPW Assistant Director Mike Enlow
DPW Director Bill Roux
Ascension Parish CAO Ken Dawson
Ascension Parish, Mark DeBoisser
Ascension Parish President, Kenny Matassa
John Basilica, HTNB
Kate Prejean, HNTB
Atri Sen, HNTB
Buck DeFee, HNTB
Jeff Burst, HNTB
Elizabeth Bauman, HNTB
Ananth Prasad, HNTB
Scott Russell, HNTB
Kip Strauss, HNTB
Lauren Reiman, HNTB

ATTACHMENT C: Workshop Presentation

Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan

Visioning Workshop

HNTB

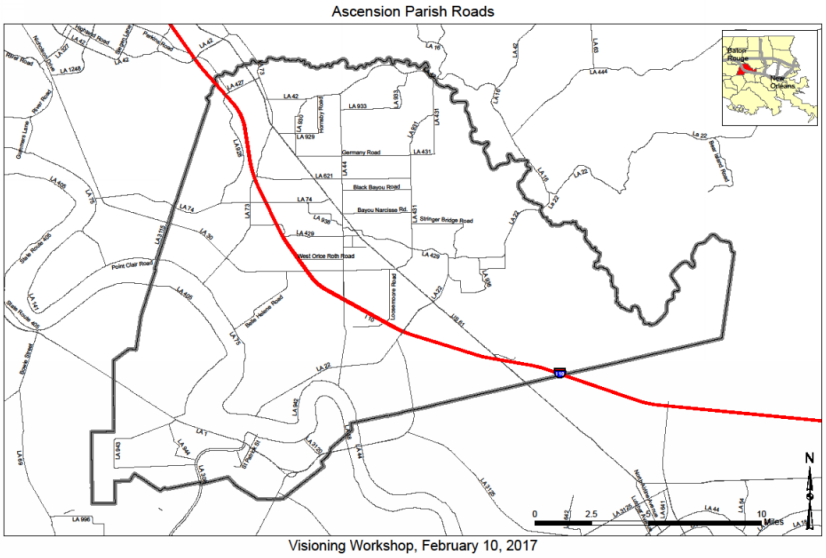
February 10, 2016

Agenda

- 8:00 AM WORKSHOP INTRODUCTION
- 8:15 AM PROJECT OVERVIEW
- 8:25 AM DEFINE THE PROBLEMS
- 8:55 AM DEVELOP GOALS & SUPPORTING MEASURES
- 9:25 AM DEFINE SUCCESS
- 10:10 AM BREAK
- 10:20 AM IDENTIFY IMPLEMENTATION THREATS & OPPORTUNITIES
- 11:05 AM IDENTIFY SOLUTIONS
- 11:50 AM BREAK TO GET LUNCH (working lunch)
- 12:00 PM DEVELOP ACTION PLAN
- 12:35 PM CONFIRM NEXT STEPS/OPEN DISCUSSION
- 1:00 PM MEETING ENDS

HNTB

Project Overview



Define the Problems

- Traffic Congestion
- Safety
- Condition of Infrastructure
- Mobility
- Multi-modal options (Complete Streets)
- Economic Growth
- Development Impacts

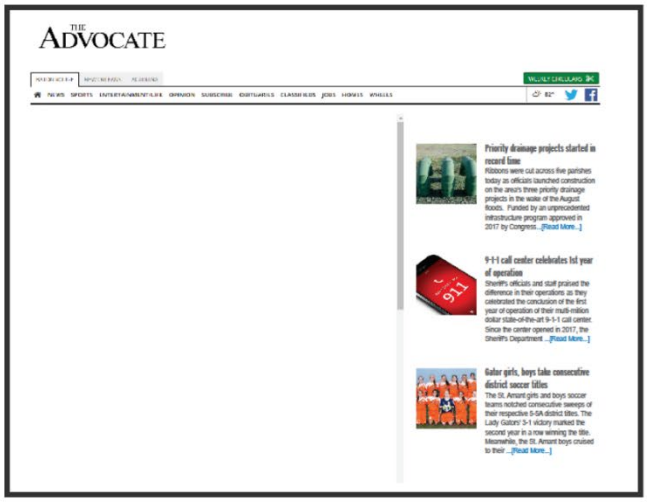
Develop Goals & Supporting Measures

SMART Goals - Transportation Master Plan

SMART	•What do I want to accomplish? •Why do I want to accomplish this? •What are the requirements? •What are the constraints?	
MEASURABLE	•How will I measure my progress? •How will I know when the goal is accomplished?	
ACHIEVABLE	•How can the goal be accomplished? •What are the logical steps I should take?	
RELEVANT	•Is this a worthwhile goal? •Is this the right time? •Do I have the necessary resources to accomplish this goal? •Is this goal in line with my long-term objectives?	
TIME-BOUND	•How long will it take to accomplish this goal •When is the completion of this goal due? •When am I going to work on this goal?	

HNTB

Define Success



Break

Identify Implementation Threats & Opportunities

- Political
- Environmental
- Social
- Technological
- Financial

Identify Solutions

Families of Solutions

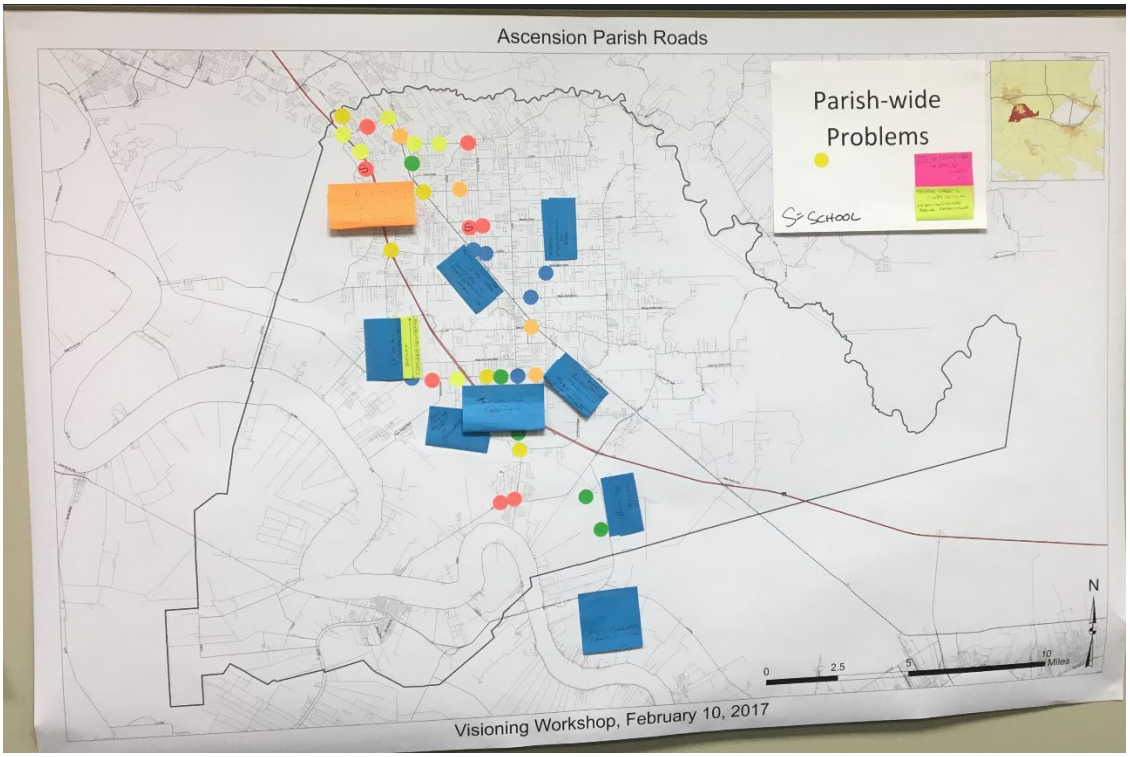
- Corridor and Intersection Capacity
- Improving Road Alignment
- Intelligent Transportation Systems
- Multimodal (Freight, Bicycle, Pedestrian, etc.)
- Demand Management / Land Use

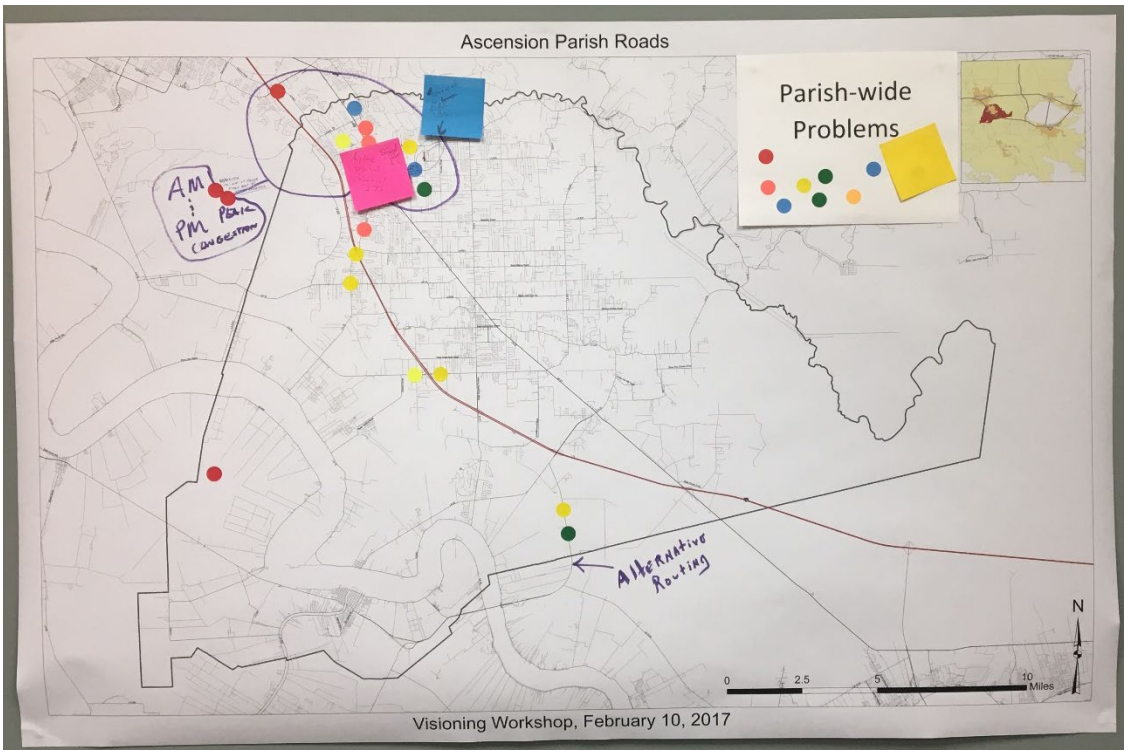
Lunch

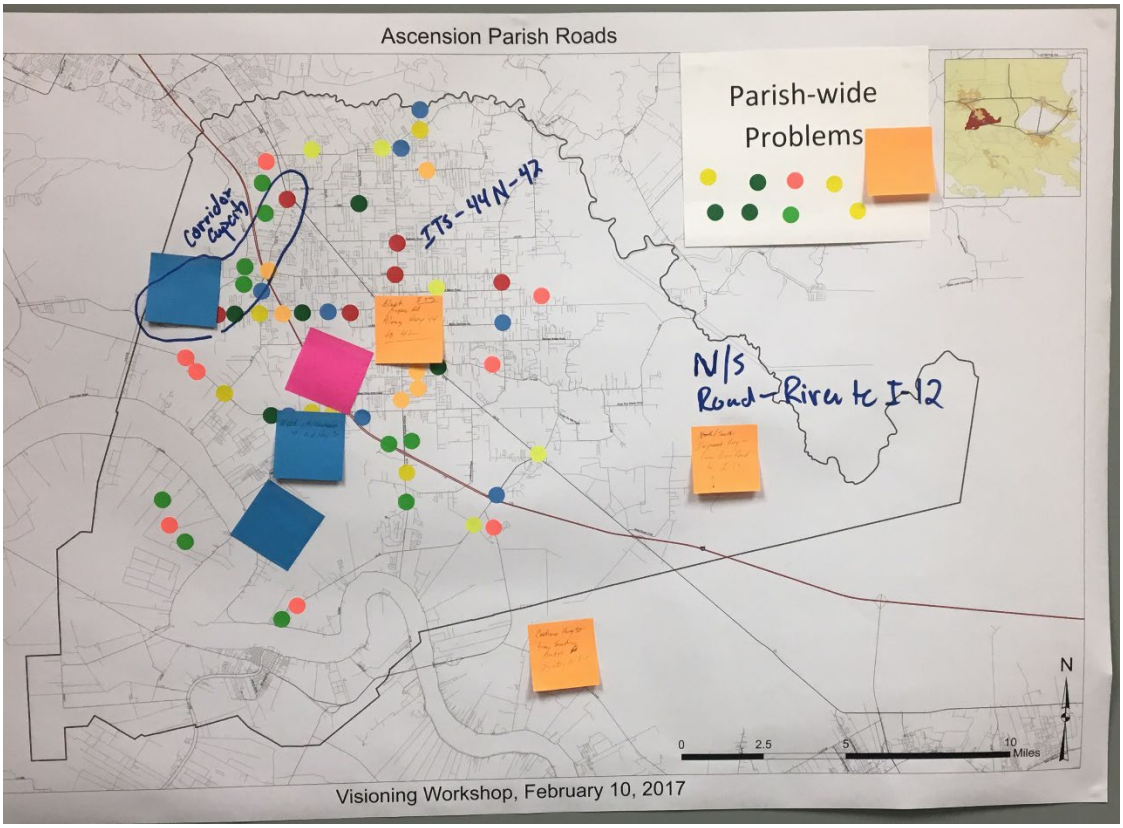
Develop Action Plan

Confirm Next Steps / Open Discussion

ATTACHMENT D: Defining the Problem Maps






Ascension Parish Roads
Parish-wide Problems
Corridor Capacity
ITS - 44 N - 47
N/S Road - Rivr to I-12
N
0
2.5
5
10
Miles
Visioning Workshop, February 10, 2017

ATTACHMENT E: Headline Exercise

List of headlines from workshop participants:

"Ascension Parish begins aggressive plan to solve traffic jam; plan will be cost neutral to taxpayers and have short – and long term measurable benefits."

"Ascension Parish Establishes Short and Long Term Plans for Transportation Infrastructure!" – May 2017

"Ascension Parish Breaks Ground on First of Many Road Projects" – October, 1st 2017

"Ascension Improves Traffic Flow!" – January 2018

"Ascension Parish Roads – Under Budget, Faster Than Promised" – December 31, 2017

"Ascension Parish President Cuts Ribbon on LA 73 Widening" – 2020

"I-10 Widened from Hwy 73 to Highland Road" – 2021

"LADOTD to synchronize traffic lights on Airline Hwy – eliminate traffic delays." – June 17, 2017

"Ascension Parish Receives $60M for Road Improvements from MPO" – June 2017

"6 Local Ascension Parish Roads Begin Widening for Safety Improvements" – July 2017

"I-10 from Sorrento to Highland Widening Starts" – October, 2017

"Ascension Parish Leads the Way in Growth and Growth management" – February 10, 2020

"LA Hwy 42 Complete in Ascension Parish" – April 1, 2020

"Ascension Parish, LADOTD Breakground on Hwy 42 Widening Project" – March 15, 2017

"Ascension Parish Approves New Master Plan" – August 1, 2017

"LA Hwy 30 Improvements Begin in Ascension Parish" – September 1, 2017

"Ascension Parish Growth Summit Announced" – June 1, 2017

"Traffic moving well in Ascension" – December 2018

APPENDIX 2
TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN
PUBLIC MEETING #1 SUMMARY

Ascension Parish, Louisiana

September 11, 2018

HNTB

1. PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

A public meeting was held on Tuesday, September 11th, 2018 in the gymnasium of the Lamar Dixon Expo Center. The purpose was to provide the public a general project overview, to share conceptual planning work accomplished to date, and to collect attendee feedback on additional roads and intersections to consider in the transportation master plan.

1.1 PROMOTION

Meeting promotion began two weeks in advance through non-paid modes including push-cards and a press release.

1.2 PRESS RELEASE

The release text was placed on Ascension Parish's letterhead by the Parish Communications officer. The press release was emailed to the following six local news outlets on Wednesday, September 5th: Gonzales Citizen & Donaldsonville Chief, The Advocate, WAVB TV, WBRZ TV, BRproud – Fox TV. The press release is included in Appendix 2 of this document.

1.3 MEETING FLYER

A flyer (shown at right) was produced and provided to the client in PDF, JPG and hard copy formats. The digital flyer was provided to Ascension Parish Communications on Wednesday, September 9th to post on the Parish website and distribute through the Parish's social media channels.

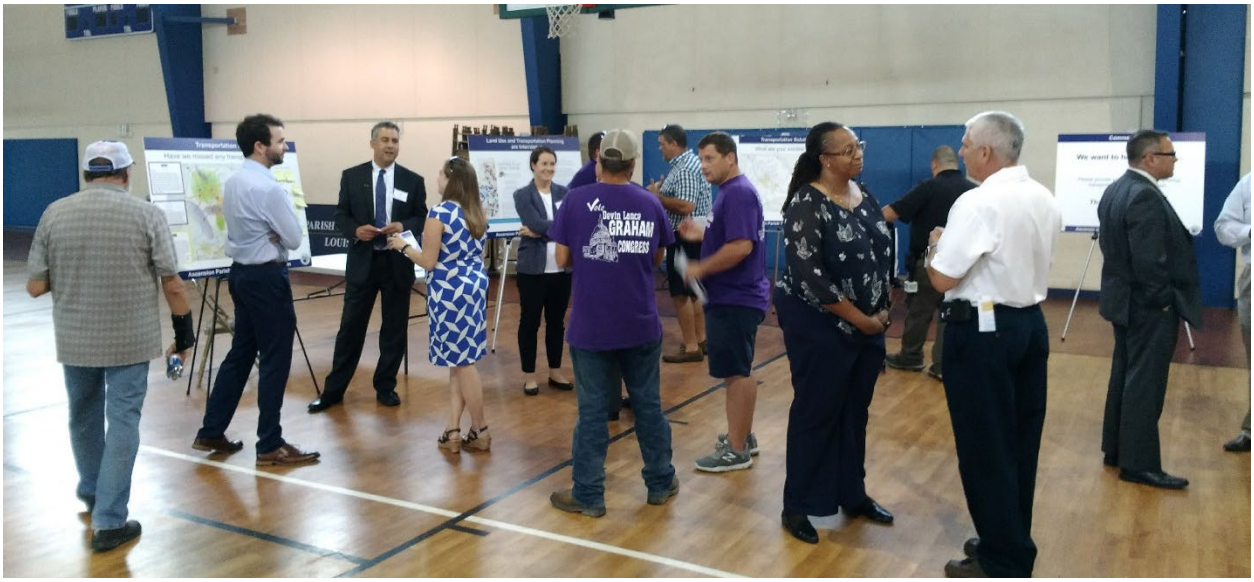
Digital flyers were also provided to the Center for Planning Excellence who promoted the event through their stakeholder contact list for the Ascension Parish Land Use Plan project (taking place simultaneously to the Transportation master Plan.)

A supply of post-card size flyers was produced and distributed on September 6th as follows:

- Three of four public libraries accepted flyers: The Main Library (Gonzales), Geismar Branch, and Donaldsonville Branch. They were placed on or near community bulletin boards or brochure racks, if present.
- A member of the Lamar Dixon Gymnasium office staff accepted a stack for distribution to other employees and friends.
- Flyers were provided to the Parish Council Secretary for distribution at the Parish Council meeting in Donaldsonville on the afternoon of September 6th
- Supplies were provided to the desk clerks at the offices of the Director of Planning Jerome Fournier and Parish Engineer Mike Enlow for distribution to their networks.
- On the morning of September 11th, cards were delivered to CRPC staff during the MPO's monthly Transportation Advisory Committee meeting in Baton Rouge who announced the meeting.

1.4 VENUE

The Lamar-Dixon Expo Center Gymnasium was selected as the event venue due to its central location for east-bank residents of the parish. Yard signs labeled "public meeting" were used to guide drivers from the Expo Center main gates to the gymnasium.



1.5 MEETING FORMAT

The meeting was planned and provided as a "drop-in" open house event between 4:00 and 7:00 PM. Staff guided guests through the exhibits arranged on easels in a semi-circle in the gym. A pre-meeting was held at 3:00 PM for elected officials, affording them an opportunity to meet with consultants and receive a briefing prior to the arrival of the public. Many stayed to speak with their constituents.

1.6 EXHIBIT BOARDS

Nine exhibit boards were displayed on easels at the event. The first two provided an overarching framework for the process: what is and why complete a transportation master plan. The next two listed the goals – identified earlier in the process by Ascension parish stakeholders – and described the transportation planning process. Next was a board acknowledging and promoting the Parish's Land Use Master Plan process which is running concurrently. Parish officials and the planning teams believe it is important to recognize the interrelationship between land use and transportation infrastructure.
The next two boards featured maps of the parish roadway network and invited attendees to jot down their concerns on "sticky" notes and affix them to the board, or to simply draw directly on the board with colored markers. These two boards and their corresponding public input will be described in greater detail below.

Exhibits of the boards are included on the following pages.

Transportation Plan Vision

A **Transportation Master Plan** is a vision for future multimodal transportation investments

Ascension Parish leadership and community stakeholders have a vision for the future of transportation. The goals include improving **safety, congestion, mobility and road conditions,** while addressing short-term and long-term needs, supporting economic development and maximizing use of available funding.

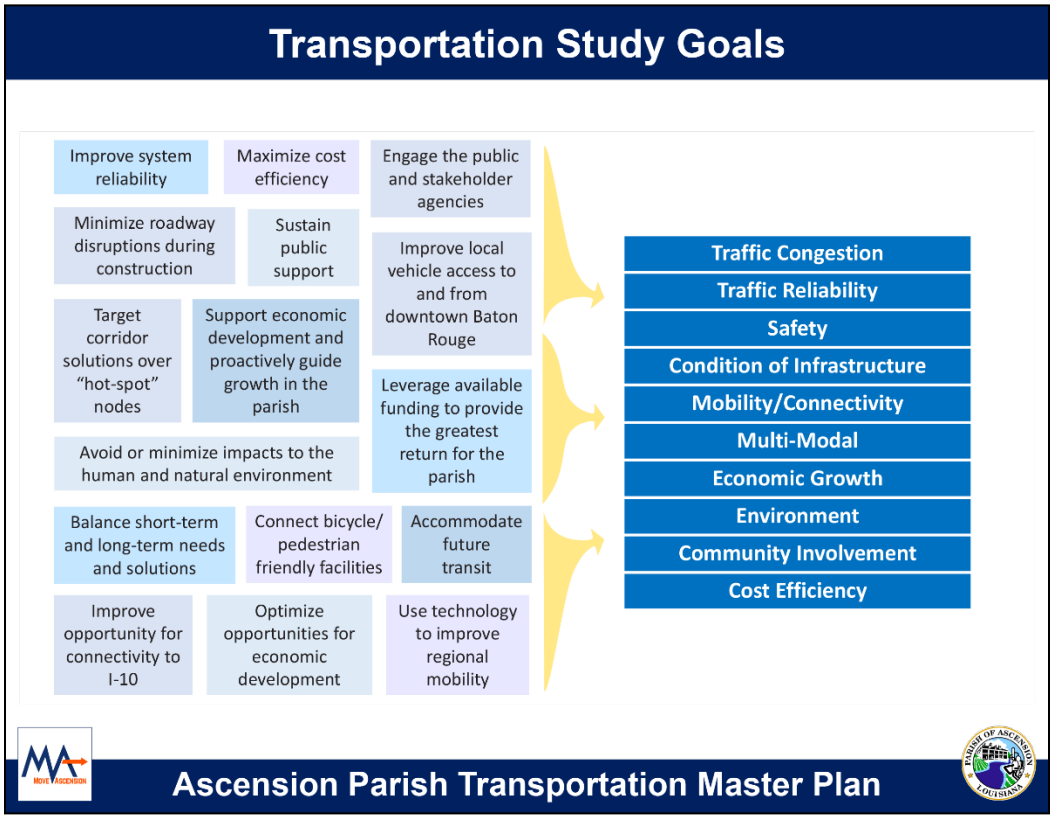
Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan

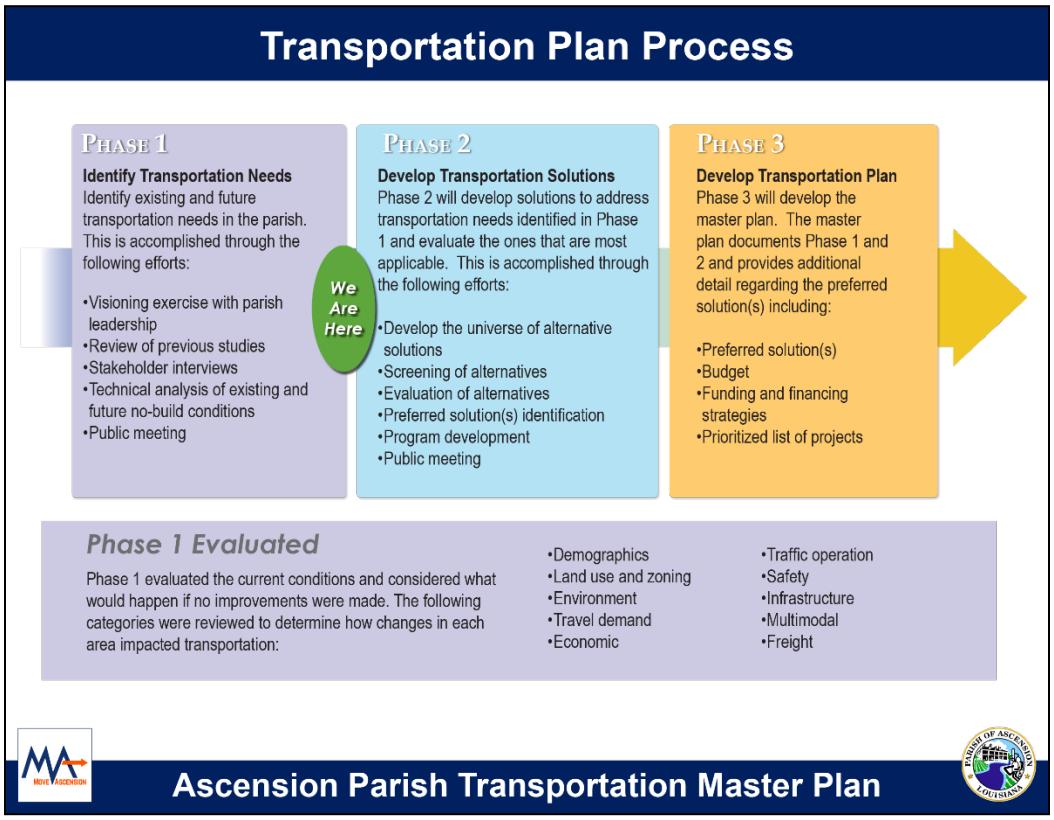
Why do a Transportation Plan?

A **Transportation Master Plan**...

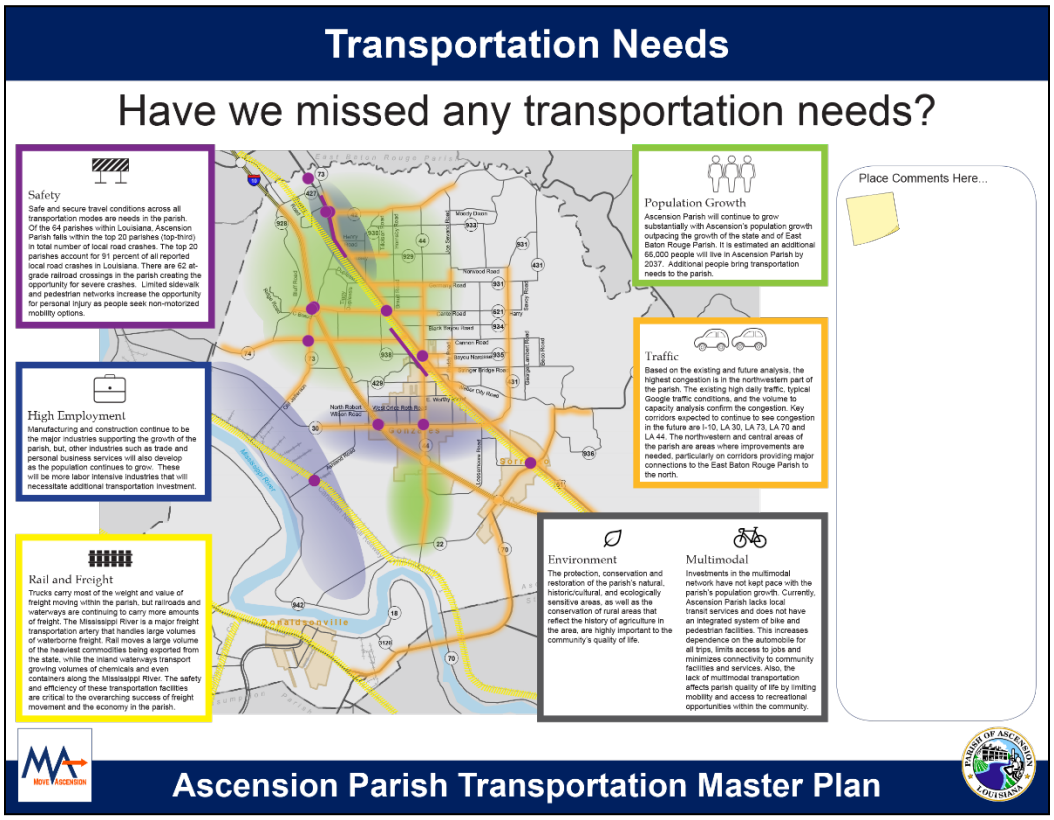
- Informs future land use decisions.
- Assures that limited resources are used wisely.
- Positions the Parish to obtain additional local, state and federal funding.
- Defines what is important to your residents and business owners.
- Links Parish goals to regional, state and federal goals.
- Puts the Parish in the best position to achieve the desired quality of life.
- Cultivates public trust and transparency.

Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan


Transportation Study Goals
Improve system reliability
Maximize cost efficiency
Engage the public and stakeholder agencies
Minimize roadway disruptions during construction
Sustain public support
Improve local vehicle access to and from downtown Baton Rouge
Target corridor solutions over "hot-spot" nodes
Support economic development and proactively guide growth in the parish
Leverage available funding to provide the greatest return for the parish
Avoid or minimize impacts to the human and natural environment
Balance short-term and long-term needs and solutions
Connect bicycle/ pedestrian friendly facilities
Accommodate future transit
Improve opportunity for connectivity to I-10
Optimize opportunities for economic development
Use technology to improve regional mobility
Traffic Congestion
Traffic Reliability
Safety
Condition of Infrastructure
Mobility/Connectivity
Multi-Modal
Economic Growth
Environment
Community Involvement
Cost Efficiency
Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan

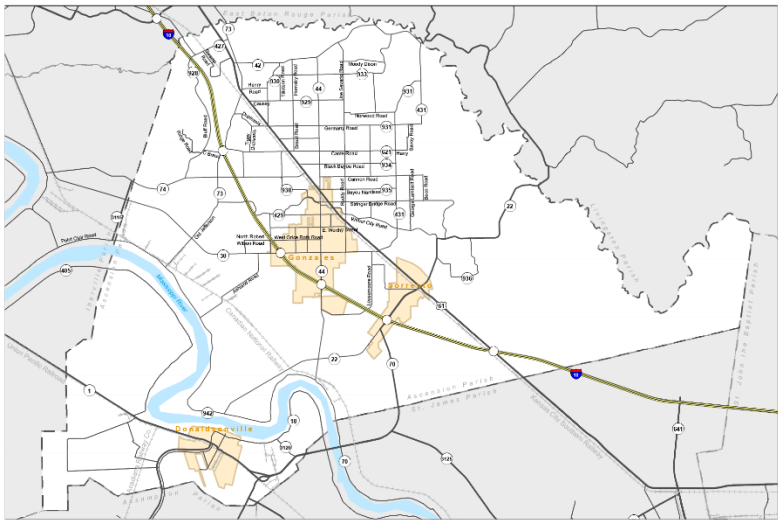

Transportation Plan Process
Phase 1
Identify Transportation Needs
Identify existing and future transportation needs in the parish. This is accomplished through the following efforts:
•Visioning exercise with parish leadership
•Review of previous studies
•Stakeholder interviews
•Technical analysis of existing and future no-build conditions
•Public meeting
We Are Here
Phase 2
Develop Transportation Solutions
Phase 2 will develop solutions to address transportation needs identified in Phase 1 and evaluate the ones that are most applicable. This is accomplished through the following efforts:
•Develop the universe of alternative solutions
•Screening of alternatives
•Evaluation of alternatives
•Preferred solution(s) identification
•Program development
•Public meeting
Phase 3
Develop Transportation Plan
Phase 3 will develop the master plan. The master plan documents Phase 1 and 2 and provides additional detail regarding the preferred solution(s) including:
•Preferred solution(s)
•Budget
•Funding and financing strategies
•Prioritized list of projects
Phase 1 Evaluated
Phase 1 evaluated the current conditions and considered what would happen if no improvements were made. The following categories were reviewed to determine how changes in each area impacted transportation:
•Demographics
•Land use and zoning
•Environment
•Travel demand
•Economic
•Traffic operation
•Safety
•Infrastructure
•Multimodal
•Freight
Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan


Land Use and Transportation Planning are Interrelated
Please share your input at a
MASTER PLAN OPEN HOUSE
Ascension Parish Master Land Use Plan
Wednesday, September 26
Gonzales Civic Center
219 South Irma Blvd, Gonzales, LA
Thursday, September 27
Lowery Elementary School
2389 Hwy 1 South, Donaldsonville, LA
Drop in any time between 5:30 and 8 pm.
Presentations will be given at 6 and 7 pm.
Open houses are the same format, so please pick the one most convenient for you!
Your Voice Matters.
Join us to review and provide input on potential scenarios for the future of Ascension Parish. Scenarios help depict the story of how choices we make today will impact how the parish looks in the future. Four scenarios showing different types of growth will be explained by the planning team based on the previous community workshop results and outreach.
Attendees will review each scenario and have the opportunity to comment on the key themes and components they like and dislike.
We hope you will share your thoughts with us! All are welcome to attend.
www.ascensionmasterplan.com
About the
ASCENSION PARISH MASTER LAND USE PLAN
The Ascension Parish Master Land Use Plan is a community-driven planning process that will direct future growth in Ascension Parish. This parish-wide planning project asks you to decide what kind of parish you want to live (or do business) in. Through mid-2019, the parish and planners will gather residents' ideas and feedback through several public workshops, open houses, small group meetings, and interviews with community leaders and stakeholders.
Ascension Parish needs this master land use plan because the parish continues to grow with the highest population growth rate in the state. This plan will help parish officials direct the growth and ensure new development meets the needs of current and future residents.
The first step in the master plan is to develop a shared vision, based on input gathered from Ascension residents and stakeholders across the parish. This vision will show how residents and stakeholders want the parish to look and feel in the next 20 or 30 years. Guided by this vision, the Ascension Parish Master Land Use Plan will concentrate on how land is developed or redeveloped, the types of housing available in the parish, recreation and open space needs, and how to create a stronger economy with more good jobs. It will build on previous plans and also incorporate recommendations from other plans happening now in Ascension Parish, including how to improve transportation, and how to better manage stormwater.
In 2019, the vision will inform a draft Master Land Use Plan and implementation policies, and public meetings will continue for residents to give their feedback on the draft plan.
Comprehensive planning for the future will protect neighborhoods, identify places where growth makes sense, and make the parish more livable. It will enhance Ascension Parish's quality of life and environment for both existing and future residents.
More information, including about upcoming meetings, is available at
ascensionmasterplan.com.
Please sign up for updates!
Ascension Parish Master Land Use Plan
Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan


Transportation Needs
Have we missed any transportation needs?
Safety
Safe and secure travel conditions across all transportation modes are needs in the parish. Of the 64 parishes within Louisiana, Ascension Parish falls within the top 20 parishes (top-third) in total number of local road crashes. The top 20 parishes account for 91 percent of all reported local road crashes in Louisiana. There are 62 at-grade railroad crossings in the parish creating the opportunity for severe crashes. Limited side-walk and pedestrian networks increase the opportunity for personal injury as people seek non-motorized mobility options.
High Employment
Manufacturing and construction continue to be the major industries supporting the growth of the parish, but, other industries such as trade and personal business services will also develop as the population continues to grow. These will be more labor intensive industries that will necessitate additional transportation investment.
Rail and Freight
Trucks carry most of the weight and value of freight moving within the parish, but railroads and waterways are continuing to carry more amounts of freight. The Mississippi River is a major freight transportation artery that handles large volumes of waterborne freight. Rail moves a large volume of the heaviest commodities being exported from the state, while the inland waterways transport growing volumes of chemicals and even containers along the Mississippi River. The safety and efficiency of these transportation facilities are critical to the overarching success of freight movement and the economy in the parish.
Population Growth
Ascension Parish will continue to grow substantially with Ascension's population growth outpacing the growth of the state and of East Baton Rouge Parish. It is estimated an additional 66,000 people will live in Ascension Parish by 2037. Additional people bring transportation needs to the parish.
Traffic
Based on the existing and future analysis, the highest congestion is in the northwestern part of the parish. The existing high daily traffic, typical Google traffic conditions, and the volume to capacity analysis confirm the congestion. Key corridors expected to continue to see congestion in the future are I-10, LA 30, LA 73, LA 70 and LA 44. The northwestern and central areas of the parish are areas where improvements are needed, particularly on corridors providing major connections to the East Baton Rouge Parish to the north.
Environment
The protection, conservation and restoration of the parish's natural, historic/cultural, and ecologically sensitive areas, as well as the conservation of rural areas that reflect the history of agriculture in the area, are highly important to the community's quality of life.
Multimodal
Investments in the multimodal network have not kept pace with the parish's population growth. Currently, Ascension Parish lacks local transit services and does not have an integrated system of bike and pedestrian facilities. This increases dependence on the automobile for all trips, limits access to jobs and minimizes connectivity to community facilities and services. Also, the lack of multimodal transportation affects parish quality of life by limiting mobility and access to recreational opportunities within the community.
Place Comments Here...
Donaldsonville
Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan

Transportation Solutions

What are your solution ideas?



Place Comments Here...

Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan

Comment Table

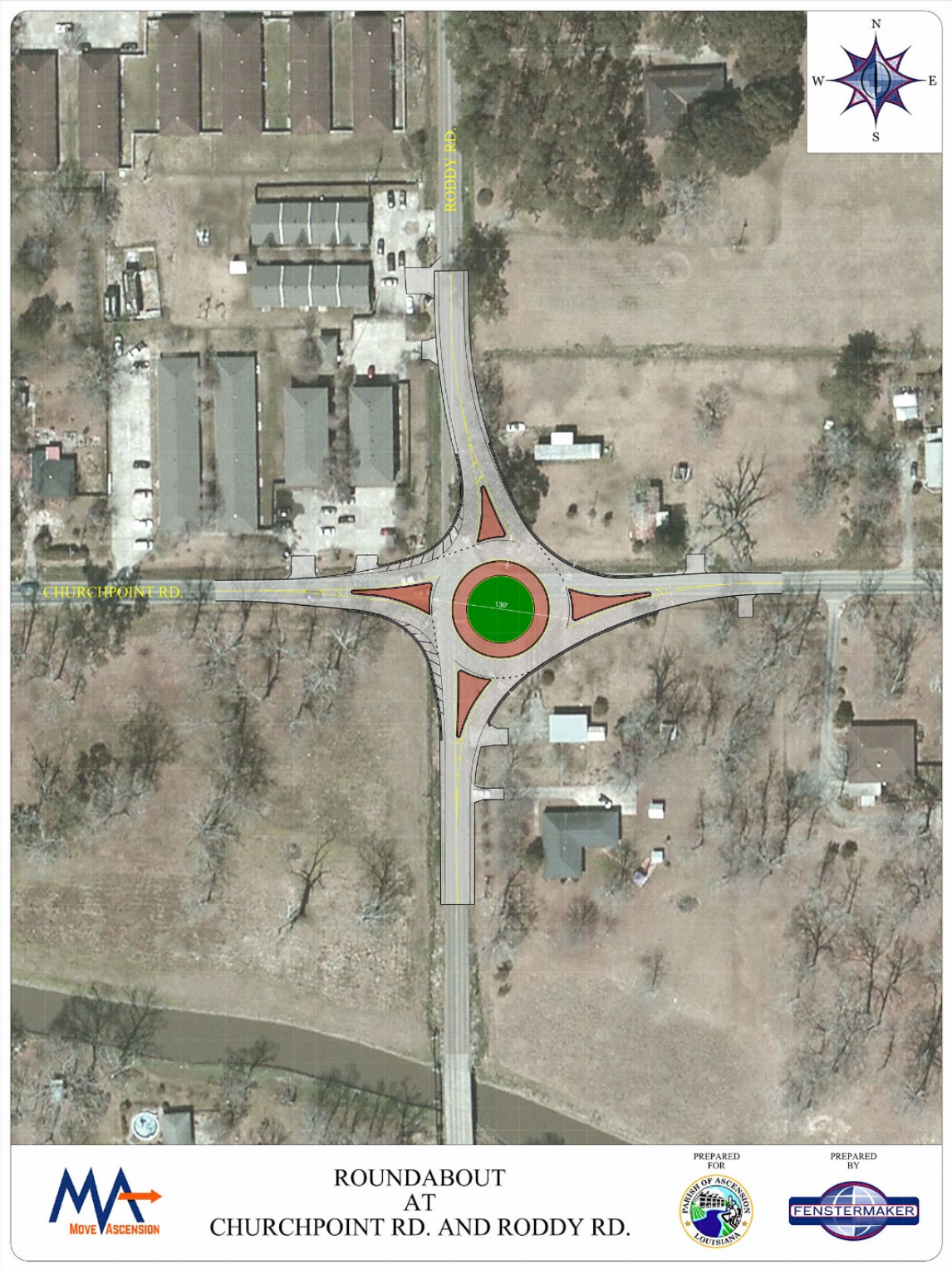
We want to hear from you...

Please provide your comments for improving transportation in Ascension parish.

Thank you for coming.

Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan

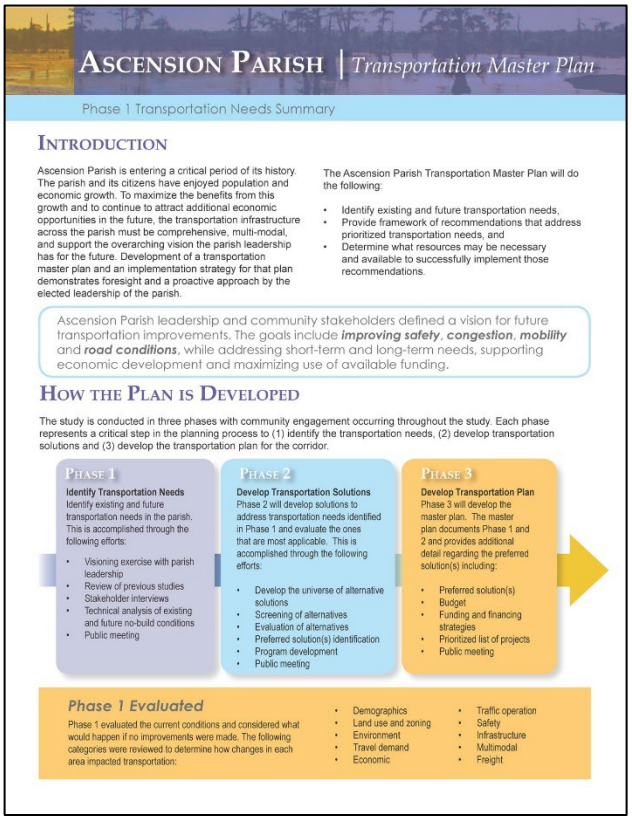
An additional board displayed a proposed roundabout design for the intersection of Roddy Road and Church Point Road.



1.7 FACT SHEET

A four-page fact sheet provided a summary of the transportation plan process and on the reverse side a diagrammatic map illustrating areas of transportation improvement needs. Much of this fact sheet content also appeared on the exhibit boards, so meeting attendees had something meaningful to take home for further review.

<u>Handout: Cover Page</u>
The meeting handout provided a take-home overview of the project. The cover page describes the three-phase approach. This public meeting occurred between phases one and two.



ASCENSION PARISH | *Transportation Master Plan*

Phase 1 Transportation Needs Summary

INTRODUCTION

Ascension Parish is entering a critical period of its history. The parish and its citizens have enjoyed population and economic growth. To maximize the benefits from this growth and to continue to attract additional economic opportunities in the future, the transportation infrastructure across the parish must be comprehensive, multi-modal, and support the overarching vision the parish leadership has for the future. Development of a transportation master plan and an implementation strategy for that plan demonstrates foresight and a proactive approach by the elected leadership of the parish.

The Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan will do the following:

- Identify existing and future transportation needs,
- Provide framework of recommendations that address prioritized transportation needs, and
- Determine what resources may be necessary and available to successfully implement those recommendations.

Ascension Parish leadership and community stakeholders defined a vision for future transportation improvements. The goals include ***improving safety***, ***congestion***, ***mobility*** and ***road conditions***, while addressing short-term and long-term needs, supporting economic development and maximizing use of available funding.

HOW THE PLAN IS DEVELOPED

The study is conducted in three phases with community engagement occurring throughout the study. Each phase represents a critical step in the planning process to (1) identify the transportation needs, (2) develop transportation solutions and (3) develop the transportation plan for the corridor.

PHASE 1
Identify Transportation Needs
Identify existing and future transportation needs in the parish. This is accomplished through the following efforts:
- Visioning exercise with parish leadership
- Review of previous studies
- Stakeholder interviews
- Technical analysis of existing and future no-build conditions
- Public meeting

PHASE 2
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- Preferred solution(s)
- Budget
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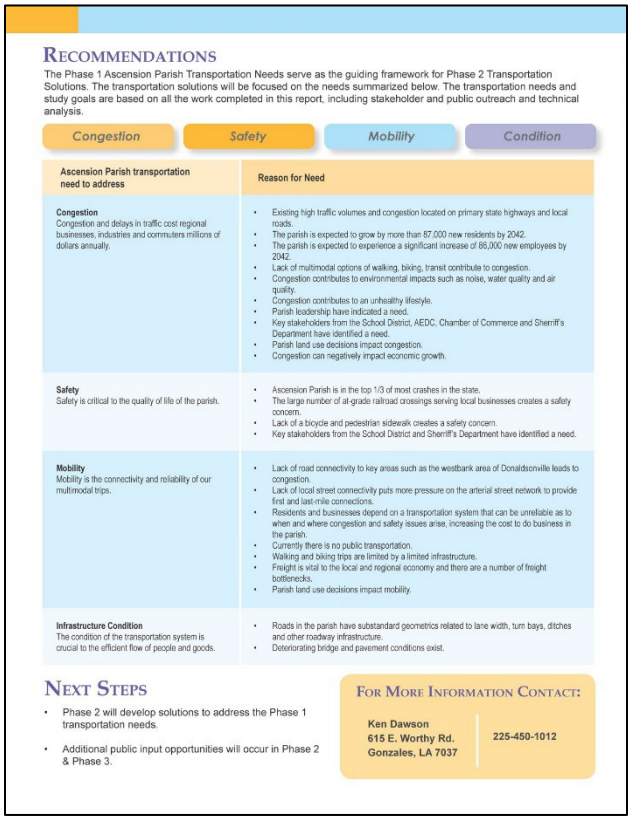
Phase 1 Evaluated
Phase 1 evaluated the current conditions and considered what would happen if no improvements were made. The following categories were reviewed to determine how changes in each area impacted transportation:
- Demographics
- Land use and zoning
- Environment
- Travel demand
- Economic
- Traffic operation
- Safety
- Infrastructure
- Multimodal
- Freight



RECOMMENDATIONS

The Phase 1 Ascension Parish Transportation Needs serve as the guiding framework for Phase 2 Transportation Solutions. The transportation solutions will be focused on the needs summarized below. The transportation needs and study goals are based on all the work completed in this report, including stakeholder and public outreach and technical analysis.

Congestion | *Safety* | *Mobility* | *Condition*

Ascension Parish transportation need to address	Reason for Need
Congestion Congestion and delays in traffic cost regional businesses, industries and commuters millions of dollars annually.	• Existing high traffic volumes and congestion located on primary state highways and local roads. • The parish is expected to grow by more than 87,000 new residents by 2042. • The parish is expected to experience a significant increase of 86,000 new employees by 2042. • Lack of multimodal options of walking, biking, transit contribute to congestion. • Congestion contributes to environmental impacts such as noise, water quality and air quality. • Congestion contributes to an unhealthy lifestyle. • Parish leadership have indicated a need. • Key stakeholders from the School District, AEDC, Chamber of Commerce and Sheriff's Department have identified a need. • Parish land use decisions impact congestion. • Congestion can negatively impact economic growth.
Safety Safety is critical to the quality of life of the parish.	• Ascension Parish is in the top 1/3 of most crashes in the state. • The large number of at-grade railroad crossings serving local businesses creates a safety concern. • Lack of a bicycle and pedestrian sidewalk creates a safety concern. • Key stakeholders from the School District and Sheriff's Department have identified a need.
Mobility Mobility is the connectivity and reliability of our multimodal trips.	• Lack of road connectivity to key areas such as the westbank area of Donaldsonville leads to congestion. • Lack of local street connectivity puts more pressure on the arterial street network to provide first and last-mile connections. • Residents and businesses depend on a transportation system that can be unreliable as to when and where congestion and safety issues arise, increasing the cost to do business in the parish. • Currently there is no public transportation. • Walking and biking trips are limited by a limited infrastructure. • Freight is vital to the local and regional economy and there are a number of freight bottlenecks. • Parish land use decisions impact mobility.
Infrastructure Condition The condition of the transportation system is crucial to the efficient flow of people and goods.	• Roads in the parish have substandard geometrics related to lane width, turn bays, ditches and other roadway infrastructure. • Deteriorating bridge and pavement conditions exist.

NEXT STEPS

- Phase 2 will develop solutions to address the Phase 1 transportation needs.
- Additional public input opportunities will occur in Phase 2 & Phase 3.

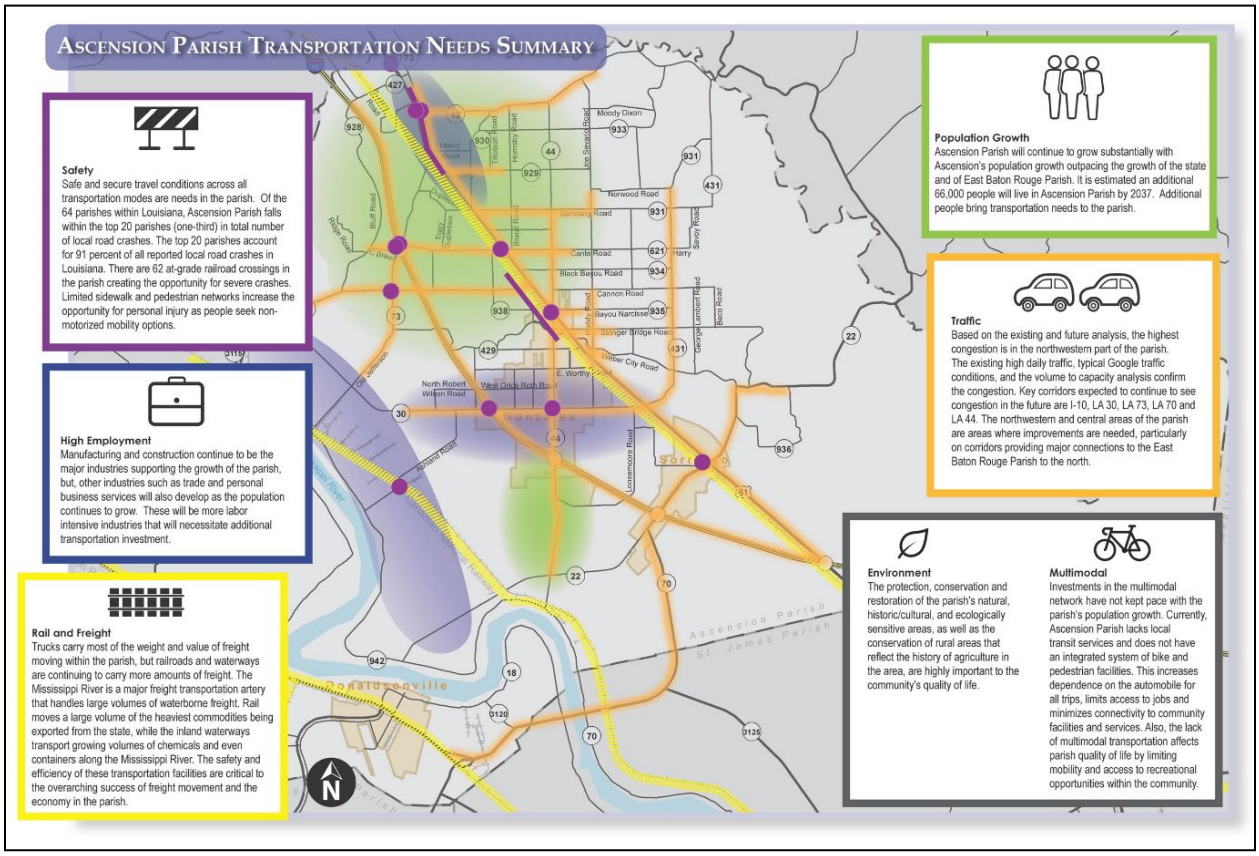
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Ken Dawson
615 E. Worthy Rd.
Gonzales, LA 7037
225-450-1012

<u>Handout: Back Page</u>
The back page lists needs identified during phase 1 that are slated to be addressed by the plan. A contact with the Parish (Parish Administrator Ken Dawson) is provided as a source of additional information.

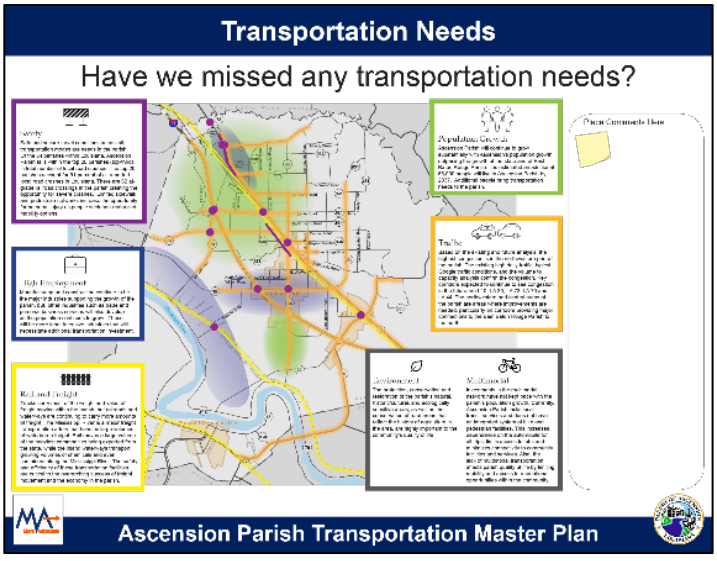
Handout: Center Page

The center fold provides a thematic map of specific parish concerns identified by stakeholders during phase 1 of the project.



1.8 PUBLIC FEEDBACK

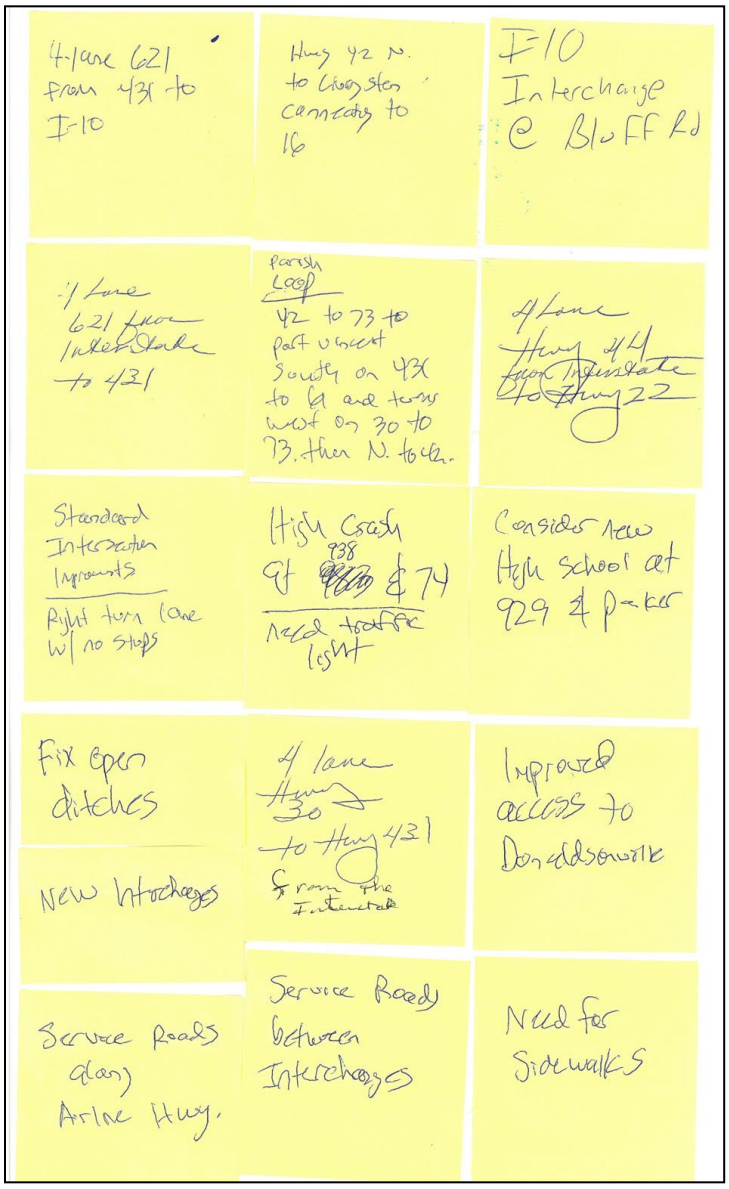
All comments received during this public meeting were written as "sticky" notes on exhibit boards six and seven, or as drawings on those boards. Questions and comments were also heard directly by the planning consultants as they conversed with meeting attendees.



Board 6: Transportation Needs

Public Comments

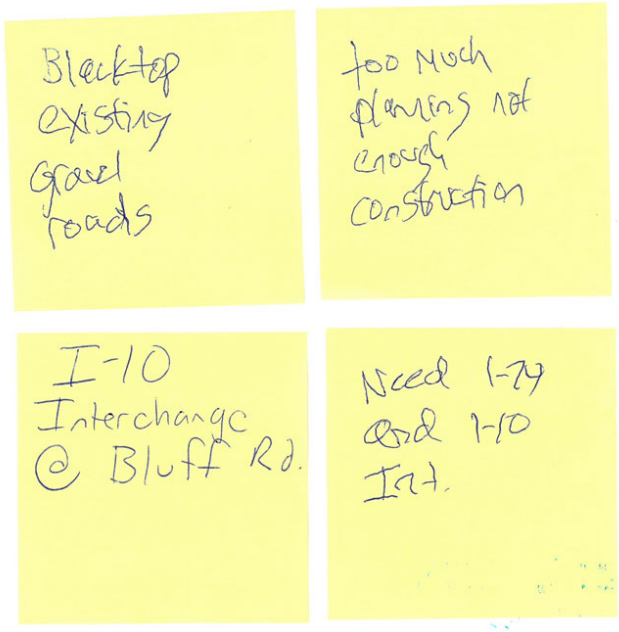
- 4-lane 621 from 431 to I-10
- Hwy 42 N. to Livingston connecting to (Hwy) 16
- I-10 interchange at Bluff Rd.
- 4-lane 621 from Interstate to 431
- Parish loop: 42 to 73 to Port Vincent; south on 431 to 61, and turns west on 30 to 73. Then north to 42
- 4-lane Hwy 44 from Interstate to Hwy 22
- Standard intersection improvements; right turn lane with no stops
- High crash at 938 & 74; need traffic light
- Consider new high school at 929 and Parker
- Fix open ditches
- New interchanges
- 4-lane Hwy 30 to Hwy 431 from the Interstate
- Improve access to Donaldsonville
- Service roads along Airline Hwy.
- Service roads between interchanges
- Need for sidewalks

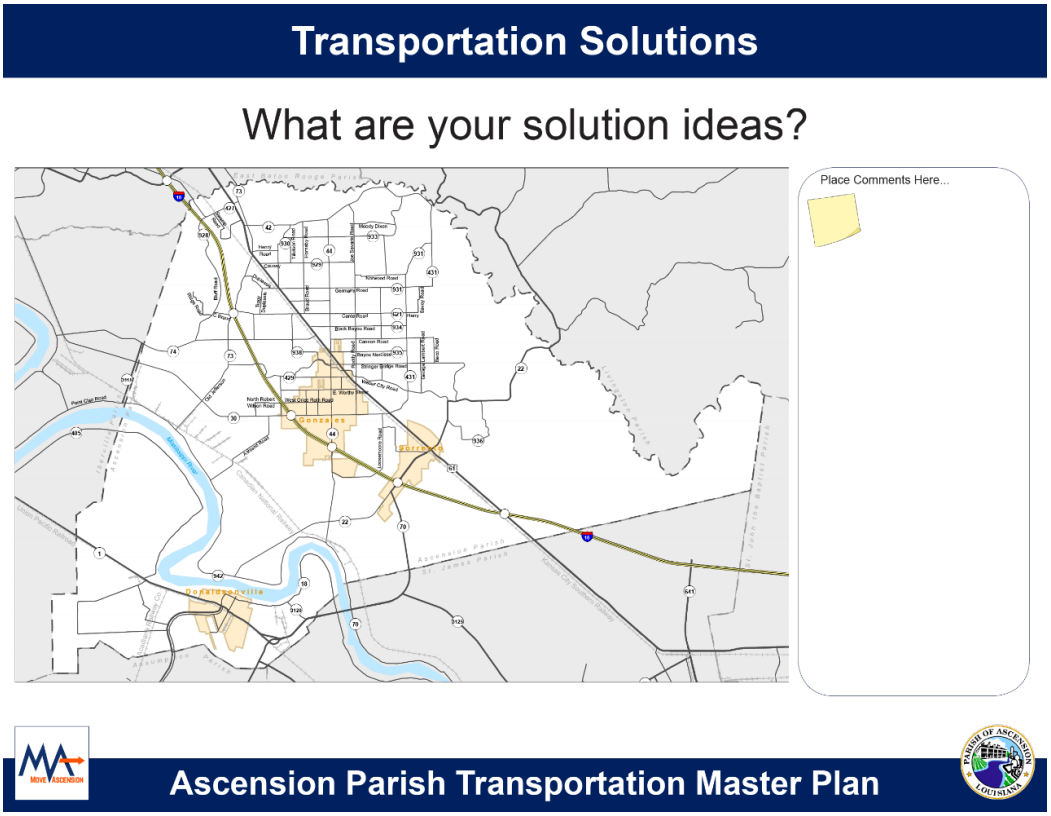


Board 7: Transportation Solutions

Public Comments

- Blacktop existing gravel roads
- Too much planning, not enough construction
- Need I-74 and I-10 interchange
- I-10 interchange at Bluff Road

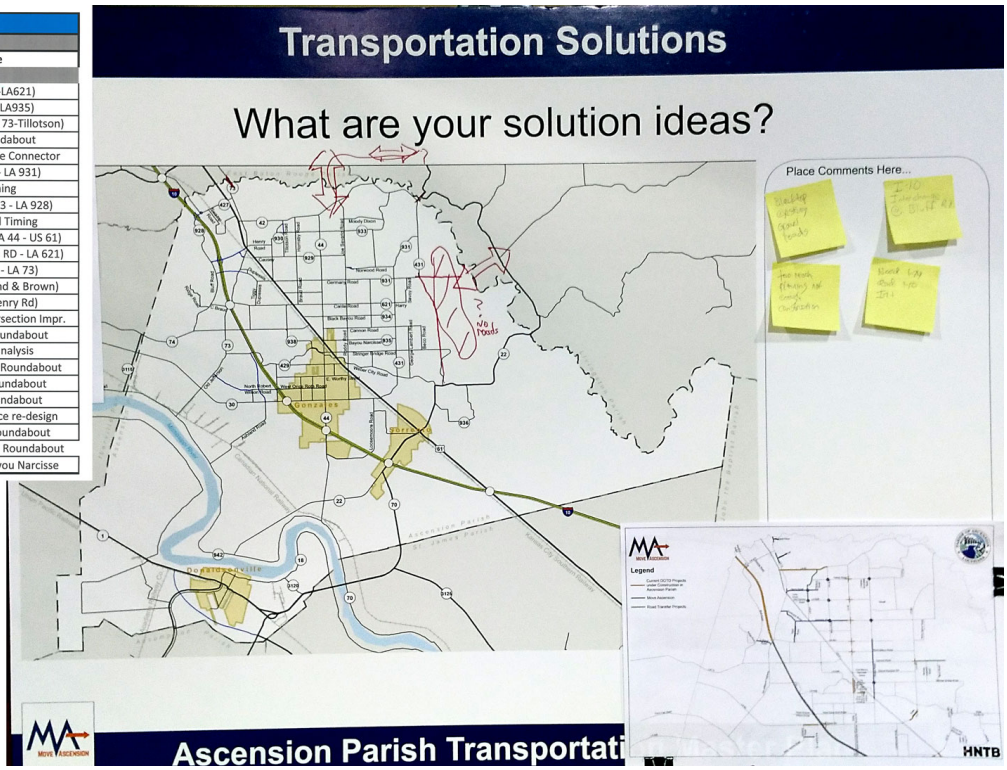




1.9 MAP NOTATIONS

The transportation solutions board served as a means of public comment and feedback. Colored markers were provided, encouraging attendees to draw on the map indicating their ideas – most of which featured proposed new road segments connecting existing routes. Below is the whole board, and specific portions examined more closely. The list affixed to the left side of the board identifies current Move Ascension roadwork projects. These are also depicted on the inset map affixed to the bottom, right corner of the display board.

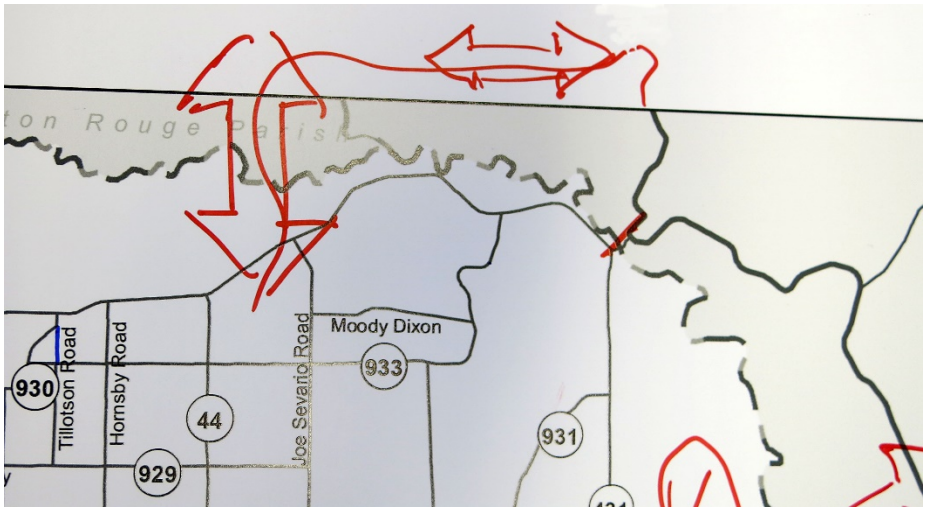
Move Ascension	
CDC	Project Name
T. Baker Smith	Roddy Road (LA935-LA621)
Shread (SKA)	Roddy Road (US 61-LA935)
GSA	Henry Road Widening (LA 73-Tillotson)
Buchart Horn	PR 929/Parker Roundabout
Volkert	Ashland Rd -St.Landry Ave Connector
SJB	Roddy Road (LA 933 - LA 931)
Neel-Shaffer	US 61 Signal Timing
Hartman	C Braud Widening (LA 73 - LA 928)
Neel-Shaffer	LA 1 / LA 3089 Signal Timing
Evans-Graves	Germany Rd Widening (LA 44 - US 61)
Meyer Engr	Tiggy Duplessis (Duplessis RD - LA 621)
Meyer Engr	Duplessis Rd. (US 61 - LA 73)
Neel-Shaffer	LA 73 Turn Lanes (Oakland & Brown)
GSA	LA 73 Turn Lanes (Henry Rd)
Evans-Graves	US 61 & Germany Rd Intersection Impr.
BKI	PR 929 @ Braud Rd Roundabout
Neel-Shaffer	Ashland Rd Traffic analysis
T. Baker Smith	Braud Rd @ Germany Rd Roundabout
Shread (SKA)	LA 930 @ Henry Rd Roundabout
Volkert	PR 929 @ LA 930 Roundabout
T. Baker Smith	LA 930 Pipeline Avoidance re-design
Buchart-Horn	Roddy Rd. @ LA 931 Roundabout
Fenstermaker	Roddy Rd @ Chuirchpoint Roundabout
T. Baker Smith	Babin Rd bridge over Bayou Narcisse



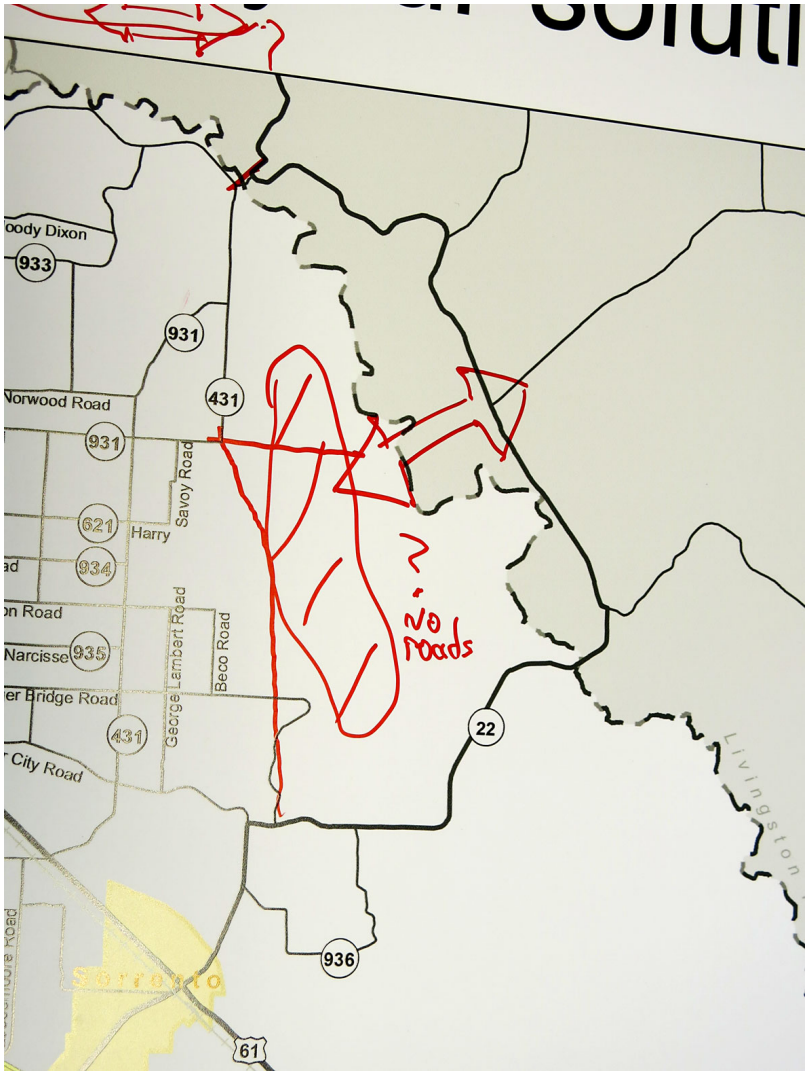
A loop or bypass is proposed in blue around the back (southwest) side of Donaldsonville. This would connect Hwy. 1 with Hwy. 70, crossing Bayou Lafourche.

At the northwest corner of the parish in Prairieville, the image at left captures numerous street connections desired by meeting guests:

1. An extension of Tillotson Rd. across Parker Rd. to join A N White Rd.
2. An extension of Henry Rd. west from downtown Prairieville to a new interchange at Interstate 10 and continuing east to intersect with Bluff Rd.
3. Connect Hwy. 73 at Duplessis Rd. west beneath I-10 to connect with Bluff Rd.
4. Add an I-10 interchange for Bluff Rd, and a roundabout at the intersection of Bluff and Perkins Rd.
5. A new north-south connection of Joe Severio Rd. across the Amite River into Livingston Parish joining 4-H Club Rd.



In north, central Ascension parish, this image illustrates that connection of Joe Severio Rd. across the Amite River into Livingston Parish joining 4-H Club Rd. Also, a connection to Hwy. 16 in Livingston parish (which does exist) is drawn in.



In east Ascension parish, this drawing depicts an extension of Hwy. 444 from Livingston parish across the Amite River and joining E-W Hwy 431.It also laments the lack of roads in this area of the parish. It was explained that the reason for this is that much of this area north of Hwy. 22 is floodplain of the Amite River.

1.10 ROUNDABOUT BOARD

A conceptual roundabout design for the intersection of Churchpoint Road and Roddy Road was displayed. Fenstermaker staff indicated that public feedback favored the idea, with one person expressing concern about the roundabout's ability to handle traffic volumes and maintain throughput.

1.11 ATTENDEES

The open house meeting was attended by thirty-eight members of the public or public servants. Nine professional consultants attended, two of these from other related projects. Sign-in sheets are in Appendix 1.

1. JoAnn Dawson
2. Kim Christy
3. Ray Hartley
4. Council Member (10) John Cagnolatti
5. Ruth Phillips
6. Jeff Pettit
7. Roy Favret
8. Council Member (6) Randy Clouatre, Sr.
9. Mayor, City of Donaldsonville, Leroy Sullivan
10. Council Member (7) Aaron J. Lawler
11. State Representative (88) Johnny Berthelot
12. State Representative (59) Tony Bacala
13. State Representative (81) Clay Schexnayder
14. Council Member (11) Benny Johnson
15. Council Member (2) Bill Dawson
16. Tim Banker
17. Ryan Percle
18. Kimberly Koehl
19. Delia Phillips
20. Darian Graivshark
21. Jerome Fournier, Planning Director
22. David Mitchell
23. Barker Dirmann
24. Wade Petite
25. Joel Robert
26. Elisha Hayzlip
27. Peter Franklin
28. Devin L. Graham
29. Timmy Brignac
30. David Oubre
31. Kathy Goppelt, RPEC Member
32. Lou Goppelt
33. Pong Wu, CRPC
34. Stacy Schliewe

Other Public Officials Present (who did not sign in):

1. Parish President Kenny Matassa
2. Martin McConnell, PIO
3. Ken Dawson, Chief Administrative Officer
4. Michael Enlow, Parish Engineer

<u>Project Staff (9)</u>

HNTB:

Kip Strauss
Lauren Reiman
Jeffrey Burst
Bryan Jones

Fenstermaker:

Bliss Bernard

Franklin Associates:

James Taylor
Antonio Carriere
Ted Devall

Center for Planning Excellence:

Lauren LaFitte Marschall

1.12 PUBLIC SIGN IN SHEETS

Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan

Public Open House
September 11, 2018, 4 – 7 PM
Lamar-Dixon Expo Center – Gymnasium

	Name	Representing (Neighborhood or Agency)	Email
1.	JoAnn Dawson	CoonTrap Rd.	jodawson38@yahoo.com
2.	Kim Christy	Prairieville	kimjchristy@ydnos.com
3.	Ray Hartley		rhartley@meyer-el.com
4.	JOHN CAGNOLATTI	Ascension Parish Council	jcagnolatti@apgov.us
5.	Ruth Phillips	SJB	ruth.phillips@sjbgroup.com
6.	Jeff Pettit		jpettit1979@icloud.com
7.	ROY FAVRET	citizens	RFAVRE1@LSU.EDU
8.	Randy Clouatre Sr.	Ascension Parish Council	r.clouatre@apgov.us
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			

Your email address will only be used to keep you informed of this project.

	Name	Representing (Neighborhood or Agency)	Email
1.	JAMES TAYLOR	FRANKLIN ASSOC	james@franklinassoc.com
2.	Lauren Reiman	HNTB	lreiman@hntb.com
3.	Bliss Bernard	Fenstermaker	Bliss@fenstermaker.com
4.	JEFF BURST	HNTB	jburst@hntb.com
5.	LaurenMarschall	CPEX	lmarschall@cpex.org
6.	Antonio Carriere	Franklin Assoc	Antonio@Franklinassoc.com
7.	Ted R. Sewall	Franklin Assoc	ted@franklinassoc.com
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			

	Name	Representing (Neighborhood or Agency)	Email
1.	LEROY SULLIVAN	CITY OF DONALDSONVILLE	mayorofc@donaldsonville.brcoxmail.com
2.	Aaron J. Lawler	Prairieville	alawler@apgov.us
3.	Johnny Berthelot	STATE REPRESENTATIVE	jpberthelot@eatel.net
4.	TONY BACALA	State Rep.	tbacala@legis.la.gov
5.	Clay Schexnayder	State Rep	Schexnayder2010@hotmail.com
6.	Benny Johnson	Ascension Parish	bjohnson@APGov.net
7.	BILL DAWSON	"	
8.	Tim Banker	Ascension	tbanker4@eatel.net
9.	RYAN PERCLE	GSA	ryan.percle@gsaengineers.com
10.	Kimberly Koehl	GSA	Kimberly.Koehl@gsaengineers.com
11.	Delia Phillips	Prairieville	deliaibp@cox.net
12.	Darian Graivshark	Gonzales Weekly Citizen	dgraivshark@weeklycitizen.com

	Name	Representing (Neighborhood or Agency)	Email
1.	JEROME FOURNIER	Ascension Parish	JFournier@APGOV.US
2.	David Mitchell	The Advocate	dmitchell@theadvocate.com
3.	Barker Dirmann	Ascension Chamber	bdirmann@ascensionchamber.com
4.	Wade Petite	pelican post	jwpetite@gmail.com
5.	Joel Robert	the people	joelmichaelrobert@gmail.com
6.	ELISHA HAYDEN		
7.	PETER FRANKLIN		pjf4u@yahoo.com
8.	DEVIN LANCE GRAHAM	Ascension	dlgraham96@gmail.com
9.	Timmy Brignac	Lake	TJBRIGNAC@gmail.com
10.	David Dubre	Prairieville	djoubre@eatel.net
11.	Kathryn Goppelt	Gonzales	goppeltfamily@gmail.com
12.	Don Goppelt	"	"

	Name	Representing (Neighborhood or Agency)	Email
1.	Peng Wu	CRPC	pwu@crpcla.org
2.	Stacy Schliewe	Rep. Garret Graves	Stacy.schliewe@mail.house.gov
3.			
4.			

1.13 PRESS RELEASE

Parish of Ascension

OFFICE of COMMUNICATIONS

KENNY MATASSA
Parish President

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 27, 2018

MEDIA CONTACT:
Contact: Martin McConnell
Email: MMcConnell@apgov.us
Phone: (225) 450-1138

ASCENSION PARISH TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN
PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULED

Ascension Parish Government will host a public meeting in September to solicit input on identifying transportation needs for inclusion in a transportation master plan.

The meeting will take place on Tuesday, September 11, 2018 from 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm at Lamar-Dixon Expo Center Gymnasium, 9039 S. St Landry Ave., Gonzales.

This is part of the "Move Ascension" initiative, a multi-million dollar construction project designed to improve transportation parish-wide over the next 25-years. The Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan will identify existing and future transportation needs, provide recommendations that address prioritized transportation needs, and determine what resources may be necessary and available to successfully implement those recommendations.

The goals of the long-range transportation plan are to improve safety, congestion, mobility and road conditions for all users while addressing short-term and long-term needs, supporting economic development and maximizing use of available funding.

"Move Ascension is designed to work in collaboration with the recently announced state highway improvements to provide capacity upgrades for parish corridors that see high usage," said Parish President Kenny Matassa.

This is the first of two planned public meetings for the Transportation Master Plan.

###

P. O. Box 1659, 615 E. Worthey Rd., Gonzales, Louisiana 70707
Telephone (225) 450-1130 – Fax (225) 450-1145 – www.ascensionparish.net – facebook.com/ascensiongov

APPENDIX 3
TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN PUBLIC MEETING #2 SUMMARY

Ascension Parish, Louisiana

April 10 & 11, 2019

HNTB

1. PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

Two public meetings were held on the evenings of Wednesday, April 10 and Thursday, April 11, 2019 to provide the public a project overview, to share transportation planning work accomplished to date, and to collect feedback on proposed improvements in the draft transportation master plan. Two meetings featuring identical content were held so that communities on both sides of the Mississippi River would be served. The first meeting was held in the Donaldsonville Courthouse and the second in the Ascension Parish Government Complex.

1.1 PROMOTION

Meeting promotion began more than three weeks in advance through non-paid modes including a press release, website and social media posts, push-cards and posters.

1.2 PRESS RELEASE

The press release text was placed on Ascension Parish's letterhead. It was emailed to the Ascension Parish Public Information Officer on Monday, March 18th, who forwarded it to the following six local news outlets: Gonzales Citizen & Donaldsonville Chief, The Advocate, WAVB TV, WBRZ TV, BRproud – Fox TV. The press release is included in Appendix 2 of this document.

1.3 MEETING FLYER

A flyer (shown at right) was produced and provided to the client in PDF, JPG and hard copy formats. The digital flyer was provided to Ascension Parish Communications on March 18, 2019 to post on the Parish website and distribute through the Parish's social media channels. Digital flyers were also provided to the Center for Planning Excellence who promoted the event on March 26th through their stakeholder contact list for the Ascension Parish Land Use Plan project (a study taking place concurrently with the Transportation Master Plan.)

A supply of 700 post-card size flyers was produced and delivered to the Ascension Parish Communications Officer on March 25th. A list of suggested delivery points was also provided, including libraries, the public meeting venues, and previously contacted project stakeholders listed below.

Ascension Parish Libraries
http://main.ascension.lib.la.us/
Angelle Deshautelles, Director

Gonzales Branch (main)
708 South Irma Blvd.
Gonzales, LA 70737
(225) 647-3955
Christopher Achee

Galvez Branch
40300 Hwy. 42
Prairieville, LA 70769
(225) 622-3339
Stephanie Mayeux

Donaldsonville Branch
500 Mississippi St.
Donaldsonville, LA 70346
(225) 473-8052
Dionne Laborde

Dutchtown Branch
13278 Highway 73
Geismar, LA 70734
(225) 673-8699
Carrie Goodall

Chamber of Commerce
Sherrie Despino, Kevin Hardy (Shell Oil)
1006 W. Highway 30
Gonzales, LA 70737

AEDC
Lisa Laws, Kate MacArthur
Ascension Economic Development Corp.
6767 Highway 22-A, Sorrento, LA 70778
Sorrento, LA

Ascension Parish Public Schools
Chad Lynch, Kennie Ridgdell
Ascension Parish School Board Office
1100 Webster Street
Donaldsonville, LA 70346
225.391.7000

Sheriff's Office
Col. Robert Webre (Chief Deputy), Lt. Laura Gremillion (communications), Sgt. Jared Mullins (traffic), Cpt. Joey Mayeaux (traffic), Kyle Hanna (enforcement / administration)
Parish Administration Building
Gonzales, LA 70737

Parish Council
Cinnamon McKey, Council secretary
CMcKey@apgov.us

ASCENSION PARISH GOVERNMENT COMPLEX
615 E. Worthey Road
Gonzales, LA 70737
Katie Cassard, Administrative Specialist
(225) 450-1012
KCassard@apgov.us

DONALDSONVILLE COURTHOUSE
300 Houmas Street
Donaldsonville, LA 70346

Posters were provided for display on easels in each of the two meeting venues.

1.4 VENUES

The first of two public meetings was held at the Parish Courthouse in Donaldsonville to serve residents of the west bank of the river. The courthouse is located in the historic downtown and is a well-known, easy to find landmark.

The second of two meetings was held at the Ascension Parish Government Complex located at 615 E. Worthey Road in Gonzales. This venue is also a well-known community landmark located across the street from East Ascension High School and is convenient to residents of the more populous east bank of the Mississippi River in Ascension parish.

1.5 MEETING FORMAT

The meetings were planned and provided as "drop-in" open house events between 5:00 and 7:00 PM. Staff guided guests through the exhibits arranged on easels in a semi-circle in the gym. A pre-meeting was held at 4:00 PM for elected officials at each location, affording them an opportunity to meet with consultants and receive a briefing prior to the arrival of the public. Some officials stayed to speak with their constituents.

1.6 EXHIBIT BOARDS

Eighteen exhibit boards were displayed on easels at both events, arranged in a circle, and attendees were guided by them in a clockwise manner. The first boards were reused from the round #1 meeting and provided an overview of the purpose and goals of a Transportation Master Plan for the Parish. Subsequent boards displayed the three phases of the process, acknowledged the relationship between land use planning and transportation planning, and restated the needs and transportation deficiencies identified earlier in the project. The bulk of the new exhibit boards displayed new information including prioritized lists and maps of improvement projects, anticipated benefits from implementing the improvements, identified potential sources of funding, and estimated costs for implementing the plan. Because the information was displayed on exhibit boards and also available via the Parish website, a meeting handout was not offered.
www.ascensionparish.net/downloads/pio/041219Ascension_Transportation_boards.pdf


rojects
Land Use Master Plan - Vision
Transportation Needs
rtation Master Plan


Next Steps
Transportation Needs

1.7 PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Comment forms and a comment box to collect them were provided at each public meeting. A total of eleven public comments were received, plus two additional comments on index cards. The written comments are transcribed below.

Mayor Sullivan of Donaldsonville

Hwy 3089 and Marchon Drive is currently 3-lane. We desire for it to be restored to 4-lane.

- I am in favor of a bypass around Donaldsonville. (map item #9)
- I like the extension project. (map item #17)
- I like the proposed shuttle service to Donaldsonville from a future passenger rail depot in Gonzales.
- I agree with Hwy 3127 being prioritized. (map item #32)

Wayne Letville

- Good to see all of the planned projects. However, the time required to complete these will fall far from the time of need. Some of these should have already been completed. Thrown in the need for a 3rd bridge of the Mississippi River and this adds to the problem

Michelle Helfinch

- With the number of subdivisions being built on Hwy 44 between I-10 and River Road, why are there no improvement projects to address issues with Hwy 44 until Phase 4 of the program?
- There is also added traffic due to the neighboring chemical plants and refineries in the area. Has this been taken into account?

Blaise Babin

- Make sure to review plan often. A plan in a desk drawer is a waste of paper.

Carrie LeBlanc

- Communication about the core group of people involved in the initial survey should be public knowledge and included on your presentation board. It's hard to know if all needs of the parish were addressed. How are we to know that the people giving the information weren't cherry picked?
- Also, [Hwy] 44 can't support the increase of traffic from Conway, Pelican Point and River Road. This should happen now, not in Phase 4.
- Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Gasper Chivici

- Traffic congestion is a problem in Ascension only during peak traffic hours. Most of the traffic is generated by plant workers and school traffic / drop-offs.
    1. Staggering the start/end work and school times could help.
    2. Require or incentivize plant workers to use buses
- Traffic congestion during summer months is much less of a problem, so school traffic has to be a major reason for the congestion we see. Too many high-school students drive to school.
- Require freshman and sophomores to rideshare or bus. Allow only juniors and seniors (or only seniors) to bring a vehicle.

Kim Christy

- Neighborhood roads are bumpy and have potholes. Where is the maintenance plan for these?

Honora Buras

- Add R/R station for Prairieville Hwy 73 / US 61
- Add roundabout at 73/61
- Add roundabout at I-10/621/73
- No connector road between 929 and Bluff Rd.
- (Map #36 on Recommended Projects by Program)
- (Map #11 on Recommended Projects – New Facilities.
    - This is wetlands and not needed.
- Yes to connecting Bluff Rd. to I-10!
- Airline Hwy. needs to be controlled access with service roads. No red lights. No stupid 3rd lane.
- Get someone to set a time for all existing traffic signals to be relevant to traffic at all times of day.
    - Or better yet…roundabouts everywhere!
- Where do you envision map #19 (connector from 44 to BR line) going This is also all wetlands. Do not put "conceptual" lines on maps (#11 above too) if no idea where it is actually going or why.

Kathryn Goppert

- What roads are being considered for the Road Transfer with the State?
- Who is on the steering committee?
- What would the $ [cost] be if we included inflation?
- Has DOTD promised funds for projects in Ascension?

Debbie Vickers

- Concerned about how the roads and transportation projects would be funded.
- Do not like the idea of a "Special Purpose District" to fund projects.
- Also, not a fan of a "Road User Charge".
- Would agree to look at a "toll", but need SPECIFICS about what road, bridge, etc. and how much the toll [costs], who collects it, etc.
- Do love the addition of space throughout the parish for bike riders! (bicycles)
- The railway transportation between New Orleans and Baton Rouge is definitely something to look at. However, more specifics are needed. Who will pay for this, is it feasible in our area with all the "wet" land, would people actually use it, etc.
- I would like all projects to be cost effective. Taxpayers need every dollar to be spent wisely.

Aaron Chaisson

- Henry Rd. should not be 4 lanes. Hwy. 929/Causey should be 4 lanes. 929/Causey is more logical east-west connector because it connects to Airline Hwy., Hwy 44, and to Joe Sevario Rd.. This would be a more logical road to 4-lane than Henry which does not connect to any major roadway. 929/Causey could continue as 4 lanes when it crosses Airline and connect to the new proposed road that goes to I-10 (map #11).
- This is also a better option because the car pool line for Prairieville Middle is on Hwy 930, not Henry. If you flow traffic down Henry to take a right on 930, the school is on the left. Cars attempting to turn left into carpool will back up traffic. It is better to funnel those vehicles down 925 to make a left on 930.
- There are also concerns with right of way issues on Henry that would make it difficult if not impossible to 4 lane.
- The intersection of 73 and Henry should be a roundabout, not a left turn lane from Hwy 73. The intersection will be dangerous as proposed when trying to turn left from Henry onto Hwy. 73.

Anonymous

- Safety and capacity improvements (map #41) grade separation and (map #51) interchange improvements – are happening now!
- New Facilities map #11 does not do anything to relieve congestion and cuts right through the wetlands.

1.8 ATTENDEES

The Donaldsonville open house meeting was attended by ten persons and the Gonzales meeting attended by forty-five, plus elected officials and consultants. Seven professional consultants for the project attended, plus one at each meeting from CPEX representing the land use plan.

Donaldsonville Attendance

1. Leroy Sullivan, Mayor of Donaldsonville
2. Tina Brito, In the Know: Ascension
3. Oliver Joseph, Councilman
4. Murphy Pauter
5. Chabry Marks
6. Kim Marousek, CRPC
7. Adam Tatar, CRPC
8. Johnathan Charbonnet, Atlas Technical
9. Kenny Matassa, Parish President
10. Melissa Sullivan
11. Doug Sullivan?

Public Officials Present:

1. Parish President Kenny Matassa
2. Martin McConnell, PIO
3. Michael Enlow, Parish Engineer

<u>Project Staff (8)</u>

HNTB:

Kip Strauss
Lauren Reiman
Dan Tanner
Jeffrey Burst

Center for Planning Excellence:

Edward Anthony (Wednesday)

Franklin Associates:

James Taylor
Ted Devall
Johnathan Hill

Gonzales Attendance

1. Sonya Washington
2. Ravi Ponnapureddy, CRPC
3. Wade Petite, Pelican Post
4. Blynn Fontenot, Methanex
5. Geff Pettit
6. Peyton Grant, BRGMC
7. Tom Buras, White Rd. Community
8. David Oubre
9. Goel Robert, Dist. 2
10. Mike Latiolais
11. Mike Lambert, Mayor of Sorrento
12. Michael Mason, Dist. 2
13. Matt Franklin
14. Dawn Sholmire, LaDOTD
15. Tina Brito, In the Know: Ascension
16. Kim Christy
17. Ken Dawson, APG
18. Deborah Grant, BR General
19. Martha Collins, APG
20. Teresa Robert, APG
21. Chase Melancon
22. John Cagnolatti, Councilman
23. Martin McConnell, APG
24. Kenny Matassa, Parish President
25. Blaise Babin
26. Wayne Litello
27. Paul Goodwin
28. Aaron Chaisson, Planning Commission
29. B.J. Aguillard
30. Gasper Chifici
31. David Mitchell, The Advocate
32. Debbie Vickers
33. Carrie LeBlanc, Leadership Ascension
34. Michelle Helfrich, Leadership Ascension
35. Chris Haftek, Leadership Ascension
36. Antione Lacey, NBC 33 TV
37. Tracy Browning, Ascension Tourism
38. Julio Dumas, Planning Commission
39. Barker Dirmann, Ascension Chamber
40. Dal Waguespack
41. Tromeka Washington
42. Daniel “Doc” Saterlee, Council D 4
43. Murphy Pawter
44. Roy Keller
45. Honora Buras
46. Kathryn Goppert
47. Pong Wu, CRPC

Public Officials Present:

1. Parish President Kenny Matassa
2. Martin McConnell, PIO
3. Michael Enlow, Parish Engineer

<u>Project Staff (8)</u>

HNTB:

Kip Strauss
Lauren Reiman
Dan Tanner
Jeffrey Burst

Franklin Associates:

James Taylor
Ted Devall
Kyla Collier

Center for Planning Excellence:

Lauren LaFitte Marschall

1.9 PUBLIC SIGN IN SHEETS

Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan
Public Open House
April 11, 2019 5 – 7 PM
Ascension Parish Government Complex

	Name	Representing (Neighborhood or Agency)	Email
1.	Sonya Washington	Neighborhood	
2.	Ravi Ponnapureddy	CRPC	RPonnapureddy@crpcla.org
3.	Wade Petite	Pelican Post	info@pelicanpostonline.com
4.	Glynn Fontenot	Methaney	
5.	Jeff [illegible]		
6.	Peyton Grant	BRAMC	
7.	Tom Buras	White Rd. Community	spritzer@eatel.net
8.	David Oubre	73 + Alice Brand - Prairieville	djoubre@eatel.net
9.	Joel Robert	District 2	joelmichaelrobert@gmail.com
10.			

	Name	Representing (Neighborhood or Agency)	Email
1.	Mike Latiolais	Concerned Citizen	LATCH722@EATEL.NET
2.	Mike Lambert	Mayor Town of Sorrento	mayor@sorrentola.gov
3.	Michael Mason	District 11	michaelmasonfordistrict11@gmail.com
4.	Matt Franklin	Lake Summerset	matthew-franklin@outlook.com
5.	Dawn R. Sholmire	LaDOTD	dawn.sholmire@la.gov
6.	Tina Brito	InTheKnow: Ascension Parish	intheknowap@gmail.com
7.	Kim Christy		Kimjchristy@yahoo.com
8.	Ken Dawson	Ascension Parish	kdawson@apgov.us
9.	Deborah Grant	Baton Rouge General	debgrant76@gmail.com
10.	Martha Collins	Ascension Parish	mcollins@apgov.us
11.	Therese Robert	" "	teerobert@gmail.com
12.	Chase Melancon	Concerned Citizen	chasem_lsu@yahoo.com

	Name	Representing (Neighborhood or Agency)	Email
1.	James Taylor	Franklin	
2.	Kyla Collier	Franklin	
3.	Ted Duvall	Franklin	
4.			

	Name	Representing (Neighborhood or Agency)	Email
1.	JOHN CAGNOLATTI	ASCENSION PARISH COUNCIL	jcagnolatti@apgov.us
2.	MARTIN McCONNELL	ASCENSION PARISH GOV'T	
3.	KENNY MATASSA	APG	
4.	Blaise Babin	Citizen	N/A
5.	Lauren Marschall	CPEX	lmarschall@cpex.org
6.	Wayne Lirette	CITIZEN	
7.	~~Michelle~~ Paul R. GOODWIN	CITIZEN	prg217@gmail.com
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	Name	Representing (Neighborhood or Agency)	Email
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2.	Michelle Helfrich	Leadership Ascension	
3.	Chris Haftek	Leadership Ascension	
4.	Antrone Lacey	NBC 33 Local	
5.	Tracy Browning	Ascension Parish Tourism	
6.	Julie Dumas	Planning Commission	
7.	Barker Dirmann	Ascension Chamber	
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4.			

Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan

Public Open House
April 10, 2019 5 – 7 PM
Ascension Parish Courthouse, Donaldsonville

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	Name	Representing (Neighborhood or Agency)	Email
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3.			

1.10 PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MARCH 20, 2019

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(225) 450-1138

ASCENSION PARISH TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN FINAL PUBLIC MEETINGS SCHEDULED

GONZALES and DONALDSONVILLE – Ascension Parish will host a pair of final public meetings in April to solicit public input on the preliminary transportation master plan. This work is part of the "Move Ascension" initiative, a multi-million-dollar construction program and plan designed to improve parish-wide transportation safety and mobility.

Wednesday, April 10 @ 5 – 7 pm
DONALDSONVILLE COURTHOUSE
300 Houmas Street
Donaldsonville, LA 70346

Thursday, April 11 @ 5 – 7 pm
ASCENSION PARISH GOVERNMENT COMPLEX
615 E. Worthey Road
Gonzales, LA 70737

Ascension Parish and its study partners have been working collaboratively to craft a document that addresses the Transportation Plan's guiding principles:

- Improve transportation safety conditions.
- Balance short-term and long-term needs and solutions.
- Target corridor solutions over "hot-spot" nodes.
- Support economic development and proactively guide growth in the Parish.
- Leverage available funding to provide the greatest benefit for the Parish.
- Improve connectivity and mobility.

Members of the community are invited to attend either of these public meetings which will contain identical information. You will see preliminary recommended transportation projects that will support a transportation vision in the Parish for the next 25 years. Meetings are "open house" style. There is no formal presentation. You are welcome to stop by anytime between 5:00 and 7:00 PM to review the materials and speak with members of the study team.

###

P. O. Box 1659, 615 E. Worthey Rd., Gonzales, Louisiana 70737
Telephone (225) 450-1130 – Fax (225) 450-1145 – www.ascensionparish.net – facebook.com/ascensiongov

APPENDIX 4
SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS PLANS

Ascension Parish, Louisiana

HNTB

PURPOSE OF SUMMARY

A review of existing planning documents pertaining to the State of Louisiana, Baton Rouge metropolitan area and Ascension Parish was performed. The goal was to provide a literature review of key studies and projects considered by the study team to have the greatest applicability to the Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan.

Potential Benefit to the Ascension Parish Master Plan Development

The planning documents offer several benefits to the Ascension Parish Master Plan study team with the development, recommendations and implementation of a Parish Transportation Plan. These benefits include:

- The Parish should align with state, regional and local transportation goals,
- These studies provide background information on historical, ongoing and future related transportation planning, and
- These studies provide the history, key findings, and major recommendations of transportation improvements in the Parish.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The review of planning documents pertaining to the State of Louisiana, Baton Rouge metropolitan area and Ascension Parish ranges from Long Range Transportation Plans to Comprehensive Plans and Zoning maps. These plans were prepared as early as 2011 and some are still ongoing today.

Key findings from these plans demonstrate that population in Louisiana is projected to increase, especially in urbanized areas such as Baton Rouge. Transportation facilities ranging from state highways to local roadways are feeling the impacts of this growth, and many corridors are falling behind in routine maintenance. The planning studies note that municipalities should incorporate a wider range of multimodal solutions to address the transportation impacts of population growth. In addition, many municipalities in Louisiana wish to maintain the small-to-medium town living environments they currently enjoy, including environmental and cultural heritage. In order to achieve this, the plans call for compact development and an emphasis on key transportation corridors providing local and regional connectivity. Prioritizing the protection and enhancement of neighborhoods over increased traffic capacity and speed is an important planning strategy within urbanized areas. The plans identify key transportation infrastructure projects to begin addressing these local and regional issues.

ORGANIZATION

This memorandum is organized into one- to two-page summaries of each previous or ongoing planning effort that is considered to influence the Ascension Parish Transportation Plan. **Table 1** shows the projects that the study team selected for literature review.

Table 1: Previous and Ongoing Related Projects

Project	Project Name	Project Sponsor
1	Baton Rouge MTP 2037	The Capital Region Planning Commission & Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
2	Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan	Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
3	Move 2042	Capital Regional Planning Commission
4	Capital Regional Industry for Sustainable Infrastructure Solutions (CRISIS)	Baton Rouge Area Chamber, the Greater Baton Rouge Industry Alliance and the Center for Planning Excellence
5	Ascension Parish Comprehensive Plan	Ascension Parish
6	Ascension Parish Zoning Map, 2017	Ascension Parish Council
7	Gonzales Comprehensive Plan	City of Gonzales
8	Louisiana Freight Mobility Plan	Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development
9	Quick Starts	

The project summaries are organized as follows:

- **Project Number**– Each document is numbered for ease of reference to Table 1.
- **Project Title** – The name of the project document.
- **Project Sponsor** – The agency or person responsible for conducting the project.
- **Date/Last Updated Date** – The most recent date available for the study and its findings.
- **Status** – The phase the project is currently within.
- **Relevant Files Available** – Applicable documents or web sites available for the project for further information.
- **Project Purpose** – A brief purpose statement for the project.

- **Project Summary** – A summary of the history/background, key findings, and recommendations as a result of the study.
- **Benefit to Ascension Parish Master Plan Development** – How the study benefits or may benefit the operational characteristics of the Ascension Parish Transportation Study.

PREVIOUS AND ONGOING RELATED STUDIES

The following sections of the technical memorandum provide one- to two-page project summaries of each previous or ongoing study considered to be beneficial to the Ascension Parish Transportation Study.

BATON ROUGE MTP 2037, *METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN*

Project Number: 1

Project Sponsor: The Capital Region Planning Commission

Date/Last Updated Date: 2013

Status: Study Complete

Relevant Files Available: Baton Rouge MTP 2037, Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Project Purpose: The Metropolitan Transportation Plan was developed as a Long-Range Master Plan with the purpose of identifying the transportation needs of the community over the next 25 years. Priority transportation development programs and improvement projects are identified along with future land use trends. Coordinated strategies are needed to balance infrastructure investments with funding sources and to provide essential facilities for the continued mobility and vitality of residents.

Project Summary (Background, Key Findings, Recommendations):

The MTP 2037 is guided by six overarching goals:

1. Enhance transportation system mobility and accessibility for all roadway users and modes,
2. Enhance regional connectivity and economic vitality,
3. Enhance environmental quality and public safety,
4. Support local values and preserve existing community resources,
5. Provide a transportation planning process that informs and involves the public as well as elected officials,
6. Develop and long range regional transportation plan that is financially feasible.

Benefit to Ascension Parish Master Plan Development:

The MTP 2037 identifies Existing and Committed projects within the Baton Rouge MPO study area. The roadway projects specifically pertaining to Ascension Parish include:

1. Intersection improvements at LA 621/ LA73 at I-10,
2. Center turn lane for LA 73 from US-61 to I-10,
3. Roundabout on LA 42 at LA 431,
4. Intersection improvement at LA 429/LA 3038 at LA 44,
5. Turn lanes on LA 934 at KA 431 and LA 44 at LA 934, and
6. Turn lanes US 61 at LA 427.

LOUISIANA STATEWIDE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Project Number: 2

Project Sponsor: Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD)

Date/Last Updated Date: 2015

Status: Study Complete

Relevant Files Available: Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD)

Project Purpose:

The Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan is an update of the 2003 plan, and looks ahead to 2044 seeking to address the current and future transportation needs of the state. The goals of the transportation plan are to provide a high quality of life and strong economy within Louisiana. The transportation plan addresses the funding needs and policies related to all modes of transportation within the state. These needs translate into approximately $56 billion in funds, largely to aid with state highway and bridge preservation. Moderate growth is expected in Louisiana in the future, and small to medium town living environments are preferred, according to surveys distributed for the purposes of this study. As such, maintaining existing infrastructure is a priority, along with the expansion of highway capacity.

Project Summary (Background, Key Findings, Recommendations):

The *Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan* recommendations are related to policy, funding and programming-related initiatives for each transportation mode. The DOTD seeks to promote the benefits of multimodal transportation and encourage all Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) to develop multimodal long-range transportation plans. The DOTD will continue to implement complete streets policies,

encouraging alternate transportation modes and connections to biking and walking trails. The DOTD seeks to gain support for the funding of state freight railroads. Related to highways, the DOTD seeks to utilize federal funds for preservation repairs, and is working to implement a statewide ITS plan. The plan will help the flow and necessary provisions related to trucking within the state. The DOTD will coordinate with local governments as sources of alternative funding because tax revenues and licensing fees may result in a budget shortfall for long-term transportation needs.

Benefit to Ascension Parish Master Plan Development:

Budget shortfalls will create a greater reliance on local funding for Ascension to meet transportation needs. Of statewide residents surveyed as part of this study, only 28 percent agree that the current roadway systems are in good condition. The Statewide Transportation Plan has identified priority megaprojects to address transportation needs. In Ascension Parish, the widening of I-10 from 4 to 6 lanes has been identified as one such project. The Ascension Parish Master Plan Development should encourage infrastructure improvements that are sustainable long term. DOTD is currently partnering on other state route improvements within the Parish as part of the Move Ascension Quick Start Program. More detail can be found in summary #9 Quick Starts.

MOVE 2042

Project Number: 3

Project Sponsor: Capital Regional Planning Commission

Date/Last Updated Date: Ongoing

Status: Phase 4 of 6 (Public Outreach, Round 2)

Relevant Files Available: Move 2042

Project Purpose:

Move 2042 is produced by the regional MPO, the Capital Regional Planning Commission, and is an update to the Baton Rouge MTP 2037. The plan is expected to be adopted in January of 2018. The MPO Serves the following five parishes: Ascension Parish, East Baton Rouge Parish, West Baton Rouge Parish, Iberville Parish, and Livingston Parish. The plan is guided in part by a transportation policy committee. The plan serves as the blueprint for regional transportation projects that get federal funding. Transportation projects must be in the MPO's LRTP to receive federal funding.

Project Summary (Background, Key Findings, Recommendations):

Traffic congestion relief is a priority to the MPO as traffic impacts economic vitality and ability to attract new businesses. The MPO seeks to work with the state and each Parish to craft a plan to address these issues. Move 2042 will assess how to effectively spend state and federal transportation funds.

Benefit to Ascension Parish Master Plan Development:

As an update to the Baton Rouge MTP 2037, Move 2042 will benefit the Ascension Parish Master Plan Development by providing the most up-to-date data driving the transportation projects in the region. The plan only includes the projects that can reasonably be expected to have adequate funding. In order for a project to receive federal funding, it must first be reviewed and agreed upon by the MPO. The Ascension Parish Master Plan study should have goals that are aligned with the 2042 goals and the team should work in concert with CRPC regional mobility plans and create close working relationships to address transportation needs on a regional scale.

CAPITAL REGIONAL INDUSTRY FOR SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTIONS (CRISIS) – CAPITAL REGION MOBILITY STRATEGY

Project Number: 4

Project Sponsor: CRISIS Coalition, formed by the Baton Rouge Area Chamber, the Greater Baton Rouge Industry Alliance and the Center for Planning Excellence

Date/Last Updated Date: 2016

Status: Initial Briefing

Relevant Files Available: Capital Regional Industry for Sustainable Infrastructure Solutions (CRISIS) – Capital Region Mobility Strategy

Project Purpose:

The Capital Regional Mobility Strategy was developed by CRISIS, a group of industry leaders providing a voice to address the Baton Rouge Area's near term transportation crisis. The strategy seeks to address the mobility considerations of 1. Infrastructure performance, 2. Travel options, 3. Resiliency and preparedness, 3. Regional competitiveness and 4. Land use and Urban form.

Project Summary (Background, Key Findings, Recommendations):

Four priority projects were developed to help relieve Capital Region traffic congestion:

1. New River Crossing South of I-10 (with LA-30 widening),
2. I-10 Widening through Baton Rouge,
3. Ascension Commuter Route (I-10 or Airline),
4. Increase Use of US 190 Bridge (BUMP or North Bypass).

Benefit to Ascension Parish Master Plan Development:

The Capital Regional Mobility Strategy is a step towards working cooperatively toward the creation of a regional mobility strategy and is being developed with consideration for the Move 2042 long range plan as another method of project evaluation. The Ascension Parish Master Plan study team should work in concert with regional mobility plans, such as Move 2042 and this Capital Regional Mobility Strategy to address transportation needs on a regional scale.

THE ASCENSION PARISH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Project Number: 5

Project Sponsor: Ascension Parish

Date/Last Updated Date: 2011

Status: Not Adopted

Relevant Files Available: The Ascension Parish Comprehensive Plan & PLAN Ascension Public Plan

Project Purpose:

The master plan establishes the community's vision for the future and strategizes how best to achieve that vision. Transportation needs and goals are a large part of the comprehensive planning process – the largest concern relating to traffic congestion in the Parish. An in-depth public engagement process used to identify community values and needs for inclusion in the Ascension Parish Comprehensive Plan. The process included many outreach opportunities for citizens, stakeholders, businesses and community leaders.

Project Summary (Background, Key Findings, Recommendations):

The Ascension Parish Plan identified 16 Plan goals. The transportation goal was to "Provide safe, efficient travel throughout the parish—that accommodates automobiles

as well as other modes of travel." To achieve this goal, the following policies were established:

1. Small roads and driveways that do not receive a minimum level of public use should be analyzed by the Parish Council and determined if they should be removed from the parish's maintenance responsibilities (ownership reverts back to owners) so as to focus parish efforts and funding on roads that benefit most of the residents.
2. Any road-widening in the outlying areas of the parish should be designed to preserve the parish's rural character.
3. The parish will promote connecting key missing links between major existing roads, and require multiple access and connectivity from future development but allow exception if an alternative pedestrian/bike route is available.
4. Significant modifications to existing commercial developments should require compliance with both pedestrian and vehicular connectivity standards and requirements.

The study found five conditions influencing traffic congestion in the Parish:

5. Numerous "missing links" where the traditional parish grid street system does not connect, forcing traffic onto fewer routes,
6. Traditional rural roads now serving higher levels of traffic,
7. Numerous cul-de-sac and single access developments that do not permit "back way" connections and require residents and services to use major thoroughfares,
8. Numerous driveways and commercial / business accesses on major thoroughfares that slow down traffic,
9. Lack of signalization, monitoring and studying.

Benefit to Ascension Parish Master Plan Development:

The Master Plan should review and incorporate, where appropriate, any transportation planning work completed in the Comprehensive Plan. Some of the key transportation elements included:

1. Prioritize a transportation network that protects and enhances neighborhoods and the environment over fast traffic flow and plentiful capacity.
2. Except for key new connections, prioritize the maintaining and maximizing of existing parish roads before widening or building significant new capacity.
3. Address key roadway connections/gaps to disperse traffic over a well-developed grid network of narrower, safer roads rather than concentrate traffic on fewer very wide roadways.

4. Require new development to fund multimodal transportation investments to address its transportation impacts and achieve regional mobility and growth management objectives over concerns of private property rights and limited regulation.
5. Prioritize complete streets (for new construction) and maximize travel choices, even if roadway projects become more expensive.

ASCENSION PARISH ZONING MAP

Project Number: 6

Project Sponsor: Ascension Parish Council

Date/Last Updated Date: 2017

Status: Completed

Relevant Files Available: Ascension Parish Zoning Map

Project Purpose: Zoning is the way local governments control the physical development of land and the kinds of uses for each individual property.

Project Summary (Background, Key Findings, Recommendations):

Much of Ascension Parish land is dedicated to conservation (located primarily on the eastern and western perimeter of the Parish) and rural land uses. Heavy industry land uses are concentrated adjacent to the Mississippi River, southwest of the urbanized area. The majority of urbanized land is zoned medium intensity (RM), with mixed use corridors running through the Parish – primarily along US-61 and US-44 (Burnside Ave).

Benefit to Ascension Parish Master Plan Development:

Parish zoning can be used to plan a transportation system that is coordinated with a land use plan. The Parish zoning map should be modified after the transportation plan is completed to achieve the goals identified in the transportation plan.

GONZALES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Project Number: 7

Project Sponsor: City of Gonzales, Louisiana

Date/Last Updated Date: 2015

Status: Adopted

Relevant Files Available: Gonzales Comprehensive Plan

Project Purpose:

The Gonzales Comprehensive Plan provides a vision for the future of the City of Gonzales by coordinating land use and long range transportation. The following mobility guidelines were developed during Plan development with citizen and stakeholder input:

- Improve traffic flow throughout the city,
- Improve streets to include pedestrian facilities,
- Make streets safe and friendly for all modes of transportation,
- Understand the needs of all communities in Ascension.

Project Summary (Background, Key Findings, Recommendations):

The priority transportation initiatives of the Gonzales Comprehensive Plan are to plan for connectivity by reserving necessary right-of-way, to require connectivity in new developments, reduce the number of dead end streets, and to adopt a complete streets policy to promote all modes of transportation for all people. Gonzales developed a Master Street Plan to prepare for future roadway facilities needed to meet projected growth. The Gonzales Comprehensive Plan also takes a regional look at transportation concerns to coordinate with regional planning efforts. A Gonzales rail station along the Baton Rouge-New Orleans rail line is part of the plan for regional connectivity.

Benefit to Ascension Parish Master Plan Development:

I-10 passes through Gonzales and connects to Baton Rouge and New Orleans. This major international market corridor has been identified in regional plans as in need of improvements, experiencing increased traffic growth as high as 106% since 1998. The Gonzales plan recognizes the need to coordinate with other regional plans to address these concerns, and the need to implement "traffic operational improvements" to increase efficiency in the roadway system. The Plan seeks to address some of the congestion concerns through better connectivity and walkability. Many types of transportation connections are needed to make this vision a reality.

LOUISIANA FREIGHT MOBILITY PLAN

Project Number: 8

Project Sponsor: Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development

Date/Last Updated Date: 2015

Status: Adopted

Relevant Files Available: Louisiana Freight Mobility Plan

Project Purpose: The Louisiana Freight Mobility Plan is a US Department of Transportation (US DOT) MAP-21 compliant document that provides a 25-year perspective on freight needs and issues in the State. The goals developed in the plan are in line with the 2015 Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan (STP). Freight assets in Louisiana include those of aviation, waterway and port assets, railroad assets, highway assets, and pipeline assets.

Project Summary (Background, Key Findings, Recommendations):

Freight related industries are expected to grow in Louisiana, much of the growth occurring in energy related fields. The biggest freight-related challenges facing Louisiana are the delay, safety and access concerns of highways. In addition, pavement and bridge maintenance are concerns as increases in truck size and weight limits play a toll on infrastructure. The Freight Mobility Plan calls for improved incident management strategies, the increase of truck parking, and for increased funding support of all freight assets.

Benefit to Ascension Parish Master Plan Development:

Population is expected to increase across the state in the coming decade; the projected change in population within Ascension Parish from 2010 to 2040 is as high as 50%-100%, according to Woods and Poole Inc., 2014. I-10 in the Baton Rouge region and through Ascension Parish experiences severe congestion. To address the challenges of freight transportation, DOTD established a freight advisory committee. The Ascension Parish Master Plan development should be aware of these freight-related mobility challenges and coordinate to address regional transportation needs. Ascension Parish freight related projects identified in the Plan include:

- I-10 from LA 42 to LA 74, Widen 4 to 6 lanes & new interchange
- I-10 from LA 74 to LA 22, Widen 4 to 6 lanes
- Ascension/ Livingston Parkway Connector, NE Ascension Parish to SW Livingston Parish, New 2 lane road w/ bridge
- LA 30/LA 431, LA 30/431 Commercial-industrial loop (includes LA 30 to LA 492 section from 2008)
- LA 73 to I-10, Industrial Access: I-10/LA 429
- Ascension/ Livingston Parkway Connector, NE Ascension Parish to SW Livingston Parish

APPENDIX 5
TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN
PHASE 1 - TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

Ascension Parish, Louisiana

October 2017

HNTB

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

A **Transportation Master Plan** is a vision for future multimodal transportation and investment decisions.

Ascension Parish is entering a critical period of its history. The Parish and its citizens have enjoyed population and economic growth. Since 2000, Ascension Parish has added more than 38,000 residents (approximately 2,500 annually) according to the US Census Bureau. By 2042, The Capital Region Planning Commission (CRPC) projects that Ascension will add more than 87,000 new residents for a forecasted 2042 population of 203,000 residents. To maximize the benefits from this growth and to continue to attract additional economic opportunities in the future, the transportation infrastructure across the parish must be comprehensive, multi-modal, and support the overarching vision the parish leadership has for the future. Development of a transportation master plan and an implementation strategy for that plan demonstrate foresight and a proactive approach by the leadership of the parish.

The purpose of the Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan is to:

- identify existing transportation infrastructure
- evaluate existing and future transportation needs,
- provide a framework of recommendations that address prioritized transportation needs, and
- determine what resources may be necessary and available to successfully implement those recommendations.

Ascension Parish is part of the federally designated Baton Rouge Urbanized Area. The Baton Rouge Capital Regional Planning Commission (CRPC), is responsible for transportation planning and the allocation of federal dollars for transportation projects within the urbanized area. To that end, this plan incorporates requirements and guidelines consistent with the expectations for a transportation plan. Attention to the CRPC planning process will establish a strong framework and foundation for transportation planning and decision-making within Ascension Parish. CRPC is currently working on Move 2042, an update to their Long-Range Transportation Plan. The Plan is expected to be adopted in early 2018.

The format of the Transportation Master Plan, and the process by which it was developed, is prescribed by federal legislation known as the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient, Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). Long-Range Transportation Plans (LRTP) are required to have a planning horizon of 20 or more years. This time frame provides a basic structure and overall goal for meeting the long-term transportation needs for the community. Since many factors influence the Master Plan development, such as demographics, forecasted revenue, and project costs, change over time, it is recommended that Transportation Master Plans be updated at least every five years.

Why do a Transportation Master Plan?

- Informs future land use decisions
- Assures that limited resources are used wisely
- Positions the Parish to obtain additional local, state and federal funding
- Defines what is important to your residents and business owners
- Links Parish goals to regional and state goals
- Puts the Parish in the best position to achieve the desired quality of life
- Cultivates public trust and transparency

This document provides background information and data to understand the transportation needs for Ascension Parish (parish). The needs are formed from:

- National, state, regional and local transportation goals,
- Previous studies,
- Visioning workshop with parish leadership,
- Stakeholder interviews, and
- Technical analysis of current and future no-build conditions.

The transportation needs phase is critical to identifying what the current transportation problems are and what they will be in the future if no additional investments are made. Once the transportation needs are understood, potential solutions to address existing and future transportation needs within the study area can be developed.

1.2 STUDY AREA

Ascension Parish is the study area for this plan. The parish is located along the I-10 corridor in Southwest Louisiana, within the Baton Rouge metropolitan area and between Baton Rouge and approximately 50 miles from the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. Ascension Parish is approximately 303 square miles with a population of 119,455 (2015). There are three incorporated cities in Ascension Parish: Gonzales, Sorrento and Donaldsonville. The study area is displayed in

1.3 VISIONING WORKSHOP

In February 2017, Ascension Parish leadership took part in a Visioning Workshop for the Master Plan. The purpose of the Visioning Workshop was to clearly define and document the goals and objectives of this Master Plan to guide the development of an implementable transportation plan that meets the long-term needs of the parish. Current transportation challenges and potential transportation needs were discussed with the group as a part of the Visioning Workshop. The primary transportation problem areas were identified as:

- Traffic congestion
- Safety
- Condition of infrastructure
- Mobility
- Multi-modal options
- Economic growth

Based on the primary transportation problem areas, workshop attendees identified several constraints to good transportation as:

- **Unbounded growth and development impacts**
  Some saw Highway 30 as an obstacle to growth and many were concerned about the future impacts of industrial growth and general development in unplanned areas. The lack of coordination of land use planning is a barrier in the current process.
- **Local coordination with key stakeholders**
  Inadequate communication and coordination was identified as an area for improvement. For the Transportation Master Plan to be adopted and implemented, key issues from stakeholders such as the sheriff, school district, utilities, and others must be included in the process to collaborate toward the preferred solutions.
- **Lack of information and data about the network**
  There is currently a gap in the data about the local roadway network such as level of service (LOS), pavement conditions, and identified evacuation routes.
- **Funding and resource limitations**
  There was concern about the available resources to fund improvements to the transportation network. There was consensus that more information was needed on alternative funding sources such as safety dollars, transfer programs, and how to leverage local funds to obtain additional funding.
- **Extreme congestion along main corridors**
  Traffic congestion was a point of emphasis in the Visioning Workshop. Much of the congestion is along the state highways within the Parish.

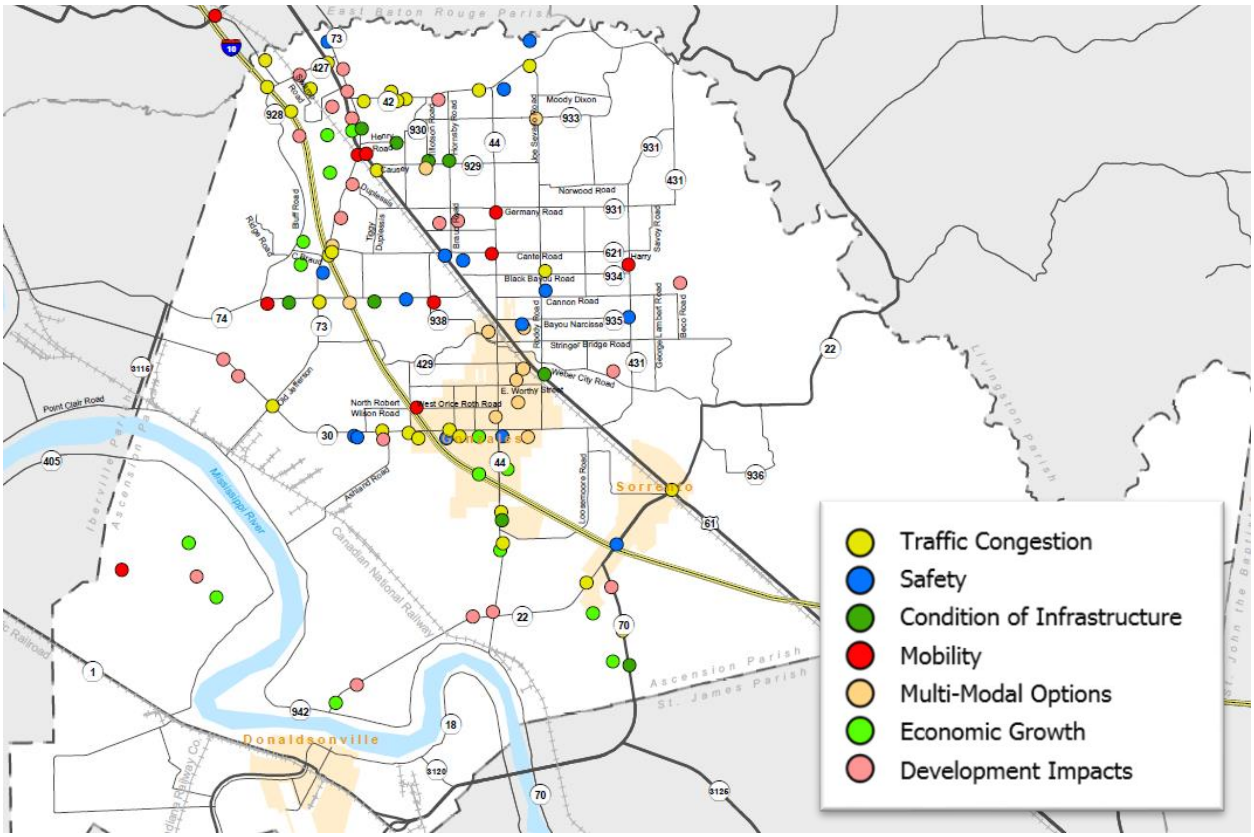
- **Lack of planning tools**
  The Parish currently does not have a current transportation or land use master plan. The Planning Commission is inhibited by the lack of planning tools at their disposal. Land use planning does not currently follow a process that is partnered with transportation planning.

- **Lack of technology enhancements**
  Technology enhancements and intelligent transportation system (ITS) strategies that can improve traffic operations are absent within the Parish. The Parish would also benefit from more comprehensive and improved database management.

Based on the primary transportation problem areas identified and the constraints to good transportation, the Parish leadership were provided the opportunity to identify specific areas of concern based on the color-coded categories shown to the right.

A snapshot of the data from this exercise is summarized in Figure 1 which shows that most needs identified in the Visioning Workshop are in the northwest part of the parish. Corridors with many needs include LA 30, LA 44, LA 74, Airline Highway, and I-10.

Figure 1: Visioning Workshop: Areas of Concern



Source: June 1, 2017 Visioning Workshop Summary

Once transportation problem areas were identified, the parish leadership identified potential Master Plan goals.

- **Balance short-term and long-term needs and solutions.**
  Participants saw the importance of addressing short-term needs while also planning for future scenarios and guiding transportation development in the long-term.

- **Target corridor solutions over "hot-spot" nodes.**
  Participants understood improving one node only pushes traffic problems to another area. The group wanted to focus on fixing whole corridors to help move people throughout the Parish.

- **Support economic development and proactively guide growth in the Parish.**
  Participants want to encourage growth and economic development that will promote the Parish's long-term development and vision.

- **Improve transportation safety conditions.**
  Participants saw safety as the highest priority and want to ensure that safety will continue to be a guiding factor in the Transportation Master Plan.

- **Leverage available funding to provide the greatest return for the Parish.**
  Participants wanted to instill residents' confidence in Parish officials and ensure that local tax payer dollars are being leveraged to provide the greatest return in transportation investment.

- **Improve connectivity and mobility.**
  Participants had a general goal of improving connectivity and mobility. This includes residents moving within the Parish and other traveling through or into the Parish.

These plan goals will be used to define the study transportation goals.

1.4 PLAN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

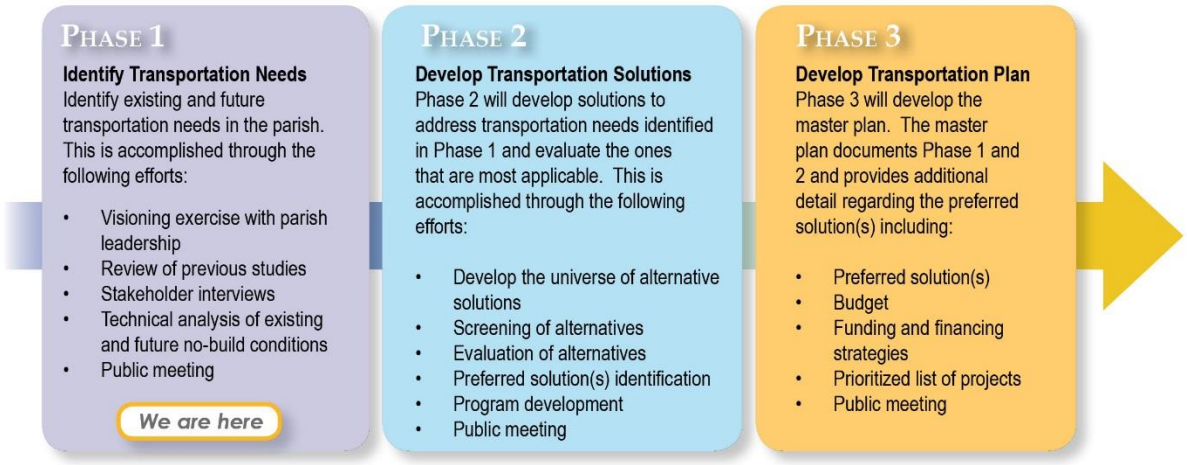
The Transportation Master Plan development process is being conducted in three phases with community engagement occurring throughout the phases. Each phase represents a critical step in the planning process to (1) identify the transportation needs, (2) develop transportation solutions, and (3) develop the transportation plan for the Parish. The phases of the study are described below and shown in
Figure 2.

- **Phase 1 – Identify Transportation Needs**. The purpose of Phase 1 is to identify existing and future no-build transportation needs in the parish. This is accomplished through the following efforts:
    - Visioning Workshop with Parish leadership
    - Review of previous studies
    - Stakeholder interviews
    - Technical analysis of existing and future no-build conditions
    - Public meeting

- **Phase 2 – Develop Transportation Solutions**. The purpose of Phase 2 is to develop solutions to address transportation needs identified in Phase 1 and evaluate the solutions that are most applicable. This is accomplished through the following efforts:
    - Universe of alternative solutions
    - Screening of alternatives
    - Evaluation of alternatives
    - Preferred solution(s) identification
    - Program development

- **Phase 3 – Develop Transportation Plan**. The purpose of Phase 3 is to develop the master plan. The master plan documents Phase 1 and 2 and provides additional detail regarding the preferred solution(s) including:
    - Preferred solution(s)
    - Budget
    - Funding and financing strategies
    - Prioritized list of projects
    - Project triggers
    - Monitoring program

Figure 2: Study Process



1.5 OUTREACH & COMMUNICATION

Stakeholder interviews were performed during Phase 1 of the study. Stakeholders include parish organizations who are directly involved and/or will be directly impacted during the development and implementation of the transportation plan and resulting projects. Stakeholder interviews are an effective step in understanding community concerns, specific issues and the sometimes-competing priorities of different community advocates or organizations.

The study team conducted stakeholder interviews in June 2017 with identified community leaders and groups to seek input into the Transportation Master Plan planning process. The groups helped identify specific transportation problem areas and overarching transportation issues. Interviews were conducted with the Ascension Economic Development Corporation, Ascension Chamber of Commerce, Ascension Parish Public Schools and Gonzales Primary School, and the Ascension Parish Sherriff's Department.

Each agency had multiple representatives in attendance which generated positive discussion and helped to identify transportation concerns facing their organization or the community. Ascension Parish is characterized as a bedroom community with traffic entering and exiting daily. Growth is occurring on the north and west side of the parish. More than one group mentioned the LADOTD projects not yet completed. The study team mentioned the *Move Ascension* Program to get State projects implemented.

Overall, the stakeholder groups identified key focus areas as: safety, roadway capacity, economic development, industrial facilities, and schools. Some of the groups discussed key routes or corridors to be improved to address traffic congestion and meet the needs of the projected increase in population.

MOVE ASCENSION

The Move Ascension initiative is a derivative of the Master Plan planning process focused on moving key transportation safety and capacity projects forward to pre-construction/ construction activities.

Other key issues identified from these interviews include:

- Industrial facilities and plants along the Mississippi River generate a great deal of traffic, particularly at shift change. Shell, Oxy and BASF have staggered shift times to reduce congestion. The ongoing Shell plant expansion alone requires 1,500 daily contractors through 2018, while they have 6,700 full-time employees + 400 contractors during normal operations. Shell considered an incentive program to encourage use of company provided transit or park and ride facilities, but it wasn't widely accepted, since based on employee feedback, most employees desire to have personal vehicles for flexibility reasons.
- Schools in the area generate significant traffic on local roads and new schools are being constructed, which will generate additional traffic. Traffic to Dutchtown High School, on the west side of the east bank of the parish, is estimated to be about 2,000 vehicles a day, contributing to congestion. Bus transportation is critical for the schools and getting kids to/from school. School crossings are also a concern, more pavement markings are needed.
- Capacity improvements are needed on I-10 as well as on several major corridors to relieve use of the smaller local streets. Some of the key corridors identified included:
    - LA 30. One of today's biggest transportation problems, CRPC is planning an environmental study of the corridor in 2017/2018. The study will need to focus on what are barriers to economic growth, non-attainment air pollution credit costs and wetland mitigation costs.
    - Problem interchanges identified: Hwy 30 at Hwy 73; Hwy 30 at I-10; I-10 at Hwy 73; I-10 at Hwy 22.
    - Hwy 941 at Hwy. 74.
    - Germany, Henry, Cary and Roddy Roads all need safety widenings. Construction of any project should be coordinated with Industrial facilities and their construction plans.
    - Bluff Drive was also mentioned as needing to be extended to River Road.
- Transit or bike/pedestrian concerns were a lower priority.
- Safety is a concern with the 3-lane or 5-lane roads with the dedicated center turn lane. These "suicide lanes" are unsafe and promote unsafe driver actions.
- The Chamber and AEDC identified air quality as an item of concern. The long-term rail transit commuter line would be a benefit.
- Roundabouts were noted as positive by several to accommodate greater numbers of vehicles through intersections.

2.0 BACKGROUND

Existing planning documents for Louisiana Department of Transportation & Development (DOTD), CRPC, and Ascension Parish were reviewed. The goal was to review key studies and projects and apply that information and knowledge to the Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan.

The planning documents offer several benefits including:

- The Parish should align with national, state, regional and local transportation goals,
- These studies provide background information on historical, ongoing and future related transportation planning, and
- These studies provide the history, key findings, and major recommendations of transportation improvements in the parish.

Key findings from these plans demonstrate population in Louisiana is projected to increase, especially in urbanized areas such as Baton Rouge. Transportation facilities ranging from state highways to local roadways are experiencing the impacts of this growth, and many corridors are falling behind in routine maintenance. The planning studies note municipalities should incorporate a wider range of multimodal solutions to address the transportation impacts of population growth. In addition, many municipalities in Louisiana wish to maintain the small-to-medium town living environments they currently enjoy, including environmental and cultural heritage. To achieve this, the plans call for compact development and emphasize key transportation corridors providing local and regional connectivity. Prioritizing the protection and enhancement of neighborhoods over increased traffic capacity and speed is an important planning strategy within urbanized areas. The plans identify key transportation infrastructure projects to begin addressing these local and regional issues.

Planning studies indicated:

- municipalities should incorporate a wider range of **multimodal solutions** to address the transportation impacts of population growth
- many municipalities in Louisiana wish to **maintain the small-to-medium town living environments** they currently enjoy
- prioritizing the **protection and enhancement of neighborhoods** over increased traffic capacity and speed is an important planning strategy within urbanized areas.
- compact development and emphasize key transportation corridors providing **local and regional connectivity**

Louisiana State Vision and Goals

The Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan Update (2015) was created by the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) as a 30-year investment and policy plan to create the well-connected, and community-friendly transportation system that the state needs to compete in the global economy and to provide improved mobility for residents.

The Plan outlines five goals that are driven by the vision and are consistent with the US Department of Transportation's (USDOT) national goals. Objectives were established to define how each goal is to be accomplished. Many of these objectives are matched with numeric performance targets.

- **Goal 1: Infrastructure Preservation and Maintenance** - Preserve Louisiana's multi-modal infrastructure in a state-of-good-repair through timely maintenance of existing infrastructure.

- **Goal 2: Safety** - Provide safe and secure travel conditions across all transportation modes through physical infrastructure improvements, operational controls, programs, and public education and awareness.

- **Goal 3: Economic Competitiveness** - Provide a transportation system that fosters diverse economic and job growth, inter-national and domestic commerce, and tourism.

- **Goal 4: Community Development and Enhancement** - Provide support for community transportation planning, infrastructure, and services.

- **Goal 5: Environmental Stewardship** - Ensure transportation policies and investments are sensitive to Louisiana's environment, history, and culture.

Ascension's transportation goals should be consistent with the state's transportation goals.

CRPC Regional Vision and Goals

The Capital Regional Planning Commission's current Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is for the horizon year 2037. CRPC is currently working on an update to the long-range transportation plan called MOVE 2042. This plan is expected to be adopted in early 2018, and will be used in Phase 2 and 3 of the Master Plan.

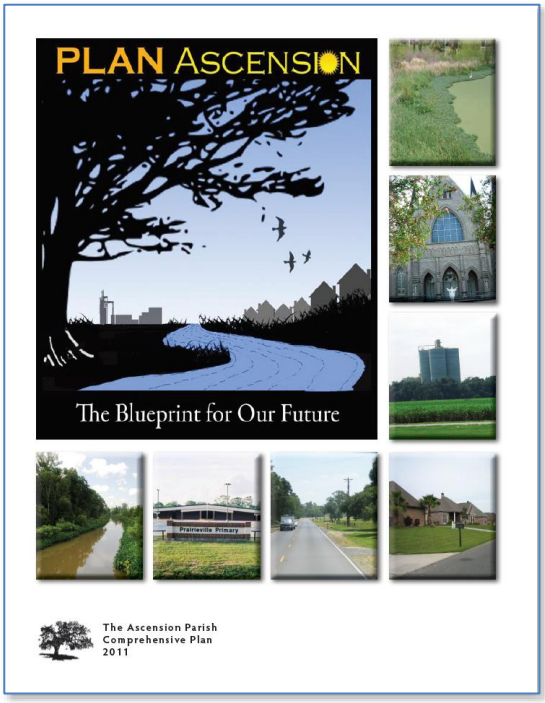
MOVE 2042's plan focuses on both short-term and long-term transportation improvements in the urban areas of Ascension, East Baton Rouge, Iberville, Livingston, and West Baton Rouge parishes. It is both data-driven and considerate of public and stakeholder input. The MOVE 2042 Plan Vision and goals are:

1. **Congestion** - reduce congestion and travel time delays
2. **Safety and Security** - improve safety and security for all users, both motorized and non-motorized.
3. **Maintenance** - maintain existing transportation systems
4. **Public Transportation** - enhance/support public transportation
5. **Walking and Biking** - enhance/support walking and biking
6. **Air Quality, Environment and Public Health** - consider how transportation, planning, investment, policies and programs affect the health of people and the environment, including air quality, physical activity, and natural resources.
7. **Freight** - improve freight mobility
8. **Land Use and Transportation/Context Sensitive Solutions** - better link land use patterns decisions with transportation infrastructure decisions and locations.
9. **Economic Vitality** - support economic vitality and promote regional economic efficiency.
10. **Technology** - use technology to improve regional mobility.
11. **Resiliency** - Plan for the ability to prepare for and adapt to changing conditions and to rapidly recover from disruptions.
12. **Education and Public Outreach** – An informed public is the key to transportation planning that has a broad base of support.

Ascension's transportation goals should be consistent with the region's transportation goals.

Ascension Parish Vision and Goals

In 2011, Ascension Parish completed the Plan Ascension, The Blueprint for our Future comprehensive plan. Although the comprehensive plan was not adopted by the parish, the plan does provide useful information that can be useful in this study.



Plan Ascension is intended to capture the vision of the parish's citizens and translate that vision into reality through the adoption and implementation of strategic actions that will guide long-term future investment and development. Plan Ascension included an extensive public engagement process to identify community values and describe a parish vision.

- Transportation specific goals and main policies
- Interrelationship of land use and transportation
- Road standards and improvements
- Access management
- Transit
- Regional roadway planning
- Walking and bicycling
- Funding transportation investments
- Transportation specific strategies and actions

The information contained in the 2011 Comprehensive Plan has been reviewed and incorporated into this Transportation Master Plan planning process.

3.0 DEFINING THE NEEDS

The following section provides the technical analysis performed in Phase 1 while defining the transportation needs. When defining the existing transportation needs, future no-build transportation needs were also identified

Defining the transportation needs was performed for the following 10 disciplines:

- Demographics
- Land Use and Zoning
- Environment
- Travel Demand
- Economic
- Traffic Operation
- Safety
- Infrastructure
- Multimodal
- Freight

Each section is set up the same with an introduction & background related to the discipline, a summary of the data & methodology used to analyze the discipline, a summary of existing conditions, future no-build conditions and the key take-a-way in a conclusion.

3.1 DEMOGRAPHICS

3.1.1. Introduction & Background

The following section reviews demographic data for Ascension Parish and the State of Louisiana. This section reviews statistics on population, employment, housing and education and shows how Ascension Parish compares to the rest of the State of Louisiana in these categories.

3.1.2. Data & Methodology

Census 2000 and 2010, American Community Survey (ACS) 2015, and Capital Region Planning Commission (CRPC) data were collected for the Parish and for the state of Louisiana. The CRPC projects demographic information from 2017 to 2037 for an eleven-parish region. Collecting and reviewing information on past, present and future years will provide clarity about how the parish is evolving compared to the rest of the state.

3.1.3. Existing Conditions

General demographic information is shown in the Demographic Information Table in the exhibits. The table shows how Ascension Parish compares to the rest of the state of

Louisiana regarding population, employment, housing and education. The parish's 45 to 54 age group saw the most significant growth in total population, with an increase of 66 percent from the year 2000 to 2015, which represents an annual simple growth rate of 4.4%. However, citizens ranging from 55 to 74 years of age saw the greatest percent growth from the year 2000 to 2015 at 120 percent. All age groups in Ascension Parish saw a minimum growth of over 27 percent from 2000 to 2015 compared to the rest of the state of Louisiana where ages 19 and under, and 35 to 44 saw a net decline in population. The parish also experienced a 29 percent increase in employment in that time frame, compared to only eight percent for the state.

Approximately 87 percent of the 115,000 population (2015 Census) in Ascension Parish lives in the three incorporated communities of Gonzales, Sorrento and Donaldsonville. The amount of owner-occupied housing units increased by 47 percent between 2000 and 2015. Renter-occupied housing increased by 66 percent, though it's worth noting that the total amount of renter housing is significantly less than owner-occupied. School aged enrollment increased by 45 percent over the 15-year period. The increase in housing coupled with school aged enrollment signifies a healthy increase of young people moving into the parish. This is not the case for the rest of the state of Louisiana, where the school enrollment declined from 2000 to 2015. The displacement of many Louisiana citizens due to Hurricane Katrina is a significant reason for the statewide decline in population and school enrollment. Ascension Parish appears to have rebounded remarkably from the disaster.

The increase in housing coupled with school aged enrollment signifies a healthy increase of young people moving into the parish.

The 2015 minority population within Ascension Parish (29.9 percent) reflects an increase of six percent from the year 2000, while the 2015 minority population of the state of Louisiana (40.5 percent) increased three percent from the year 2000. During this same time, the parish saw a one percent decline in poverty, resulting in 11.8 percent of the population being below the poverty level in 2015. In comparison, 19.8 percent of the state's 2015 population was below the poverty level, which was a 0.2 percent increase from the year 2000. The number of disabled persons in the parish did increase by 35 percent, which could be partly associated with the aging population. It is a predominantly English-speaking area with less than two percent of the parish population above the age of five speaking English "less than very well" for both 2000 and 2015.

3.1.4. Future No-Build Conditions

Table 1 shows projections from the CRPC, indicating that total population, employment and housing units will increase through the year 2037 and 2042. All three categories appear to be increasing at a rate of approximately 2.8 percent per year over the next 20 years.

Table 1: Ascension Parish Demographic Projections

Socioeconomic Variable	2017	2037	Growth	Annual Growth	2042[1]
Population	120,278	186,661	55%	2.2%	203,051
Households	42,504	65,993	55%	2.2%	NA
Employment	44,736	71,298	59%	2.4%	131,094

Source: CRPC

[1] CRPC is currently working on the draft Move 2042 Long-Range Transportation forecasts in the fall of 2017. These forecasts have not been officially adopted.

3.1.5. Conclusion

Even though the total population of Louisiana increased, the population of younger citizens has been in decline from 2000 to 2015. Ascension Parish has seen its population, employment, housing and education increase among all age groups. The transportation system will have to consider accommodations for disabled citizens, since that portion of the population also increased. If CRPC projections hold, improvements to parish and local jurisdiction transportation facilities will need to be planned to account for the increase in citizens on the roadways.

Ascension Parish has seen its population, employment, housing and education increase among all age groups.

3.2 LAND USE AND ZONING

3.2.1. Introduction & Background

The following section outlines the existing zoning and future land use for Ascension Parish. Land use and transportation have a direct link with each other because wherever development occurs, there must be a transportation network to access it. The development type will also influence the planning for transportation accommodations. For example, high density residential areas may have the opportunity to add amenities for transit service.

3.2.2. Data & Methodology

The parish's existing zoning map (2016) and future land use map (2010) were referenced from Ascension Parish's Comprehensive Plan. Both maps were compared to one-another to understand future development's compatibility with existing zoning. An inventory of the number of community and public facilities was gathered using Ascension Parish's mapping website.

3.2.3. Existing Conditions

Figure 3 shows the existing zoning conditions within Ascension Parish. The parish has three incorporated areas within its boundaries: Donaldsonville, Gonzales and Sorrento. The majority of the parish's outer limits are reserved for conservation (natural areas) and heavy industry. Heavy and medium industry is the driving economic activity surrounding the Mississippi River. Moving toward Baton Rouge, the existing land use shifts to rural, suburban, and medium density residential areas. Higher density and mixed-use development are prominent around the Highway 61 corridor.

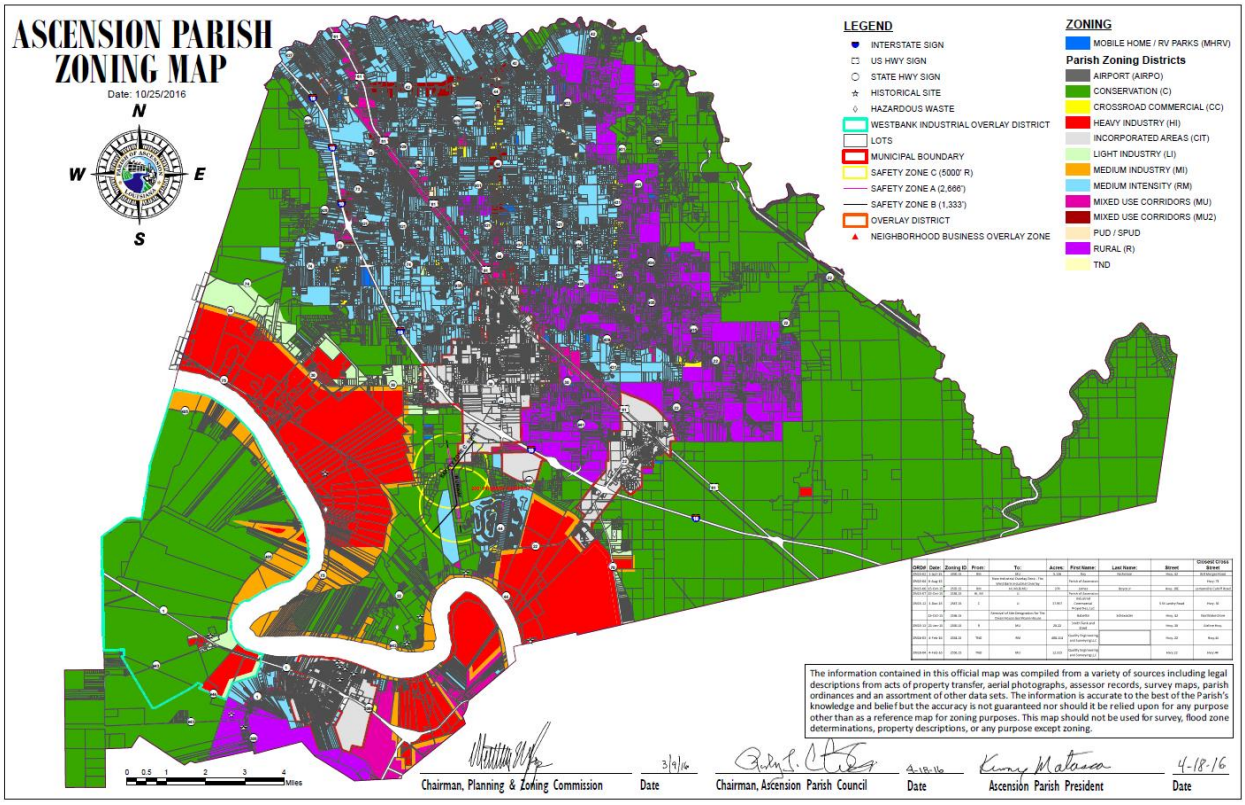
There are a variety of community and public facilities in the parish. The major facilities are shown in the attached Exhibit 1: Major Community and Public Facilities and the type and total number in the parish are listed below in Table 2.

Table 2: Community and Public Facilities

Community/Public Facility	Number in the Parish
Airports	8
Churches	88
Cemeteries	26
Civic buildings	31
Historical sites	27
Fire dispatch locations	24
Libraries	4
Medical facilities/Hospitals	13
Parks and recreation facilities	37
Police stations	9
Post Offices	9
Private schools	12
Public schools	28
Museums	3

Source: Ascension Parish GIS

Figure 3: Ascension Zoning Map

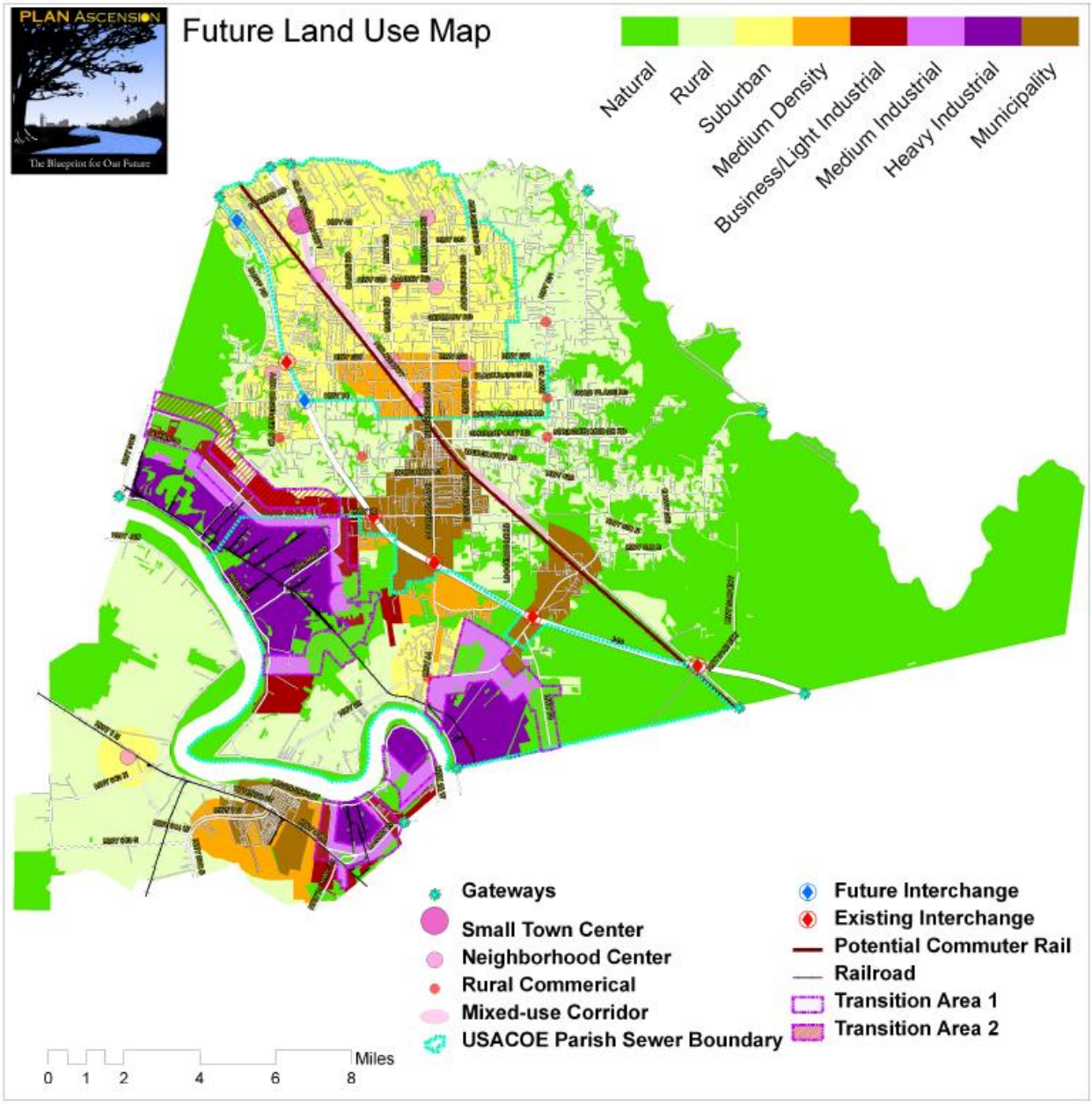


Source: Ascension Parish, 2016

3.2.4. Future No-Build Conditions

Figure 4 shows the future land use for Ascension Parish. Most of the future land use designations on the map are consistent with the current zoning regulations. The comprehensive plan emphasized the importance its citizens placed on maintaining the rural qualities of the parish while focusing development in areas where infill is possible. Therefore, to promote infill, the plan states that development is prohibited in areas without proper existing sewer lines. Figure 4 shows how future land use and zoning interact with one another. The chart identifies the appropriate zoning for the designated land use. This is done to ensure that both are compatible with each other.

Figure 4: Ascension Future Land Use Map



Source: Plan Ascension Comprehensive Plan, 2011

3.2.5. Conclusion

To identify if alternative modes of transportation, such as transit, are suitable for an area, it is important to account for the existing and future land use. Areas of high density residential, mixed use and/or commercial are prime candidates for transit services such as regional bus or bus rapid transit (BRT). It is also important to acknowledge re-emerging forms of transportation, such as the bicycle, and provide appropriate facilities in areas

suited for it. The progress of planned development will be severely hindered if multimodal transportation improvements are not considered.

3.3 ENVIRONMENT

3.3.1. Introduction & Background

Ascension Parish covers approximately 303 square miles, and the topography of the parish is relatively flat. Approximately half of the parish is comprised of forestland, wetland, or water; and a little more than 40 percent is urbanized. The remainder is in agriculture use, most of which is cultivated cropland and pasture. Extensive lowland areas (5 feet or less above sea level) occur in the natural east-southeast portion of the parish, while the more developed northern portion reaches elevations of 20-25 feet above sea level. The parish's natural and cultural resources are important to the local communities of the parish. As such, the 2011 Ascension Parish Comprehensive Plan included goals and strategies that reflect the value that the community places on these resources.

3.3.2. Data & Methodology

The inventory of environmental resources existing in the parish includes data collected from online information provided by federal and state resource agencies including:

- US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS),
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA),
- US Geological Survey (USGS),
- US Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS),
- US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA),
- National Park Service (NPS),
- Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (LDNR),
- Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ), and the
- Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF).

In addition, the Ascension Parish GIS General Map was reviewed, as well as the individual websites of the three incorporated municipalities of Gonzales, Sorrento, and Donaldsonville.

3.3.3. Existing Conditions

The environmental resources and conditions currently existing in Ascension Parish are described in the following text.

Agriculture / Farmland

The existing farms and agricultural areas in Ascension Parish produce food sources, such as sugar cane, fruit, cattle, and some vegetables. According to the NRCS Web Soil Survey website, "prime farmland" soils cover most of the southwest quarter of the parish, where cultivated cropland dominates the area on the south and west side of the Mississippi River.

Importance – Agriculture supported the early growth of the region and continues to be an important basic industry for the parish. Federally-sponsored or funded projects are required to comply with the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) and perform a Farmland Conversion Impact Rating analysis when farmland is to be converted to other uses.

Waterways, Wetlands, and Water Quality

The natural areas of the wetlands and the riparian corridors of the waterways (rivers, bayous and canals) in the parish serve important functions, such as drainage and groundwater recharge (attached in Exhibit 2: Water Resources and Flood Zones). In addition, these resources provide recreation, such as boating, fishing and hunting for the region.

The largest waterway in the parish is the Mississippi River, which divides the parish into two regions, with approximately 80 percent of the land lying east of the river and the remainder west of the river. The land east of the Mississippi River drains to the Amite River, which forms the northeast and east parish boundary. Bayou Manchac forms a portion of the north boundary of the parish and connects with the Amite River. Other major waterways within the parish include the New River, Alligator Bayou, Black Bayou, Bayou Francois, Bayou Narcisse, Bayou Conway, and Bayou Lafourche.

Most of the areas of the parish designated on the land use map as "Natural" occur in the southeast portion of the parish. This area is lower in elevation and naturally collects the runoff that flows southeasterly across the parish. The USFWS National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps show this area as mostly Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland, with

some scattered areas of Freshwater Emergent Wetland (attached in Exhibit 2). In addition, the Spanish Lake Basin (along the northwest parish boundary) is an extensive backwater swamp of the Mississippi River, designated as mostly Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland, with two areas shown as lakes. Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetlands also occur along the southwest boundary of the parish.

A portion of Ascension Parish is located within the designated Coastal Zone of Louisiana (attached in Exhibit 2). The current Coastal Zone Boundary includes the far southeast portion of the parish and the area adjacent to the west side of the Amite River. All the Coastal Zone area in the parish is within the 100-year floodplain and is designated as Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland.

Importance – Activities that involve the placement of dredged or fill material in jurisdictional waterways or wetlands will require a Section 404 Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) New Orleans District. In conjunction with Section 404 permitting, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality requires a Section 401 Water Quality Certification, to determine whether an activity will impact established water quality standards as a result of sediment or chemical pollutants. If a project involves construction of any structure in or over the navigable Mississippi River, Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act requires a US Coast Guard Bridge Permit.

Areas designated within the Coastal Zone are subject to Coastal Zone Management policies, which require a special Coastal Use Permit from the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources Office of Coastal Management (OCM) for activities within those designated areas.

Floodplains

The base 100-year floodplain is an estimation of the area that would be flooded by a rain event having a one percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year. According to the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), with an effective date of August 16, 2007; approximately 63 percent of Ascension Parish is within the latest 100-year flood zone designations (attached in Exhibit 2).

The east and southeast portions of Ascension Parish have historically experienced extensive flooding, because of the low topographic relief in these areas. The southern half of the parish contains land situated at 15 to 20 feet above sea level along the Missouri River east banks, gradually sloping down to five feet and lower toward extensive backwater swamp areas to the east and southeast. The northeast and northwest portions

of the parish experience flooding from overflows of the Amite River and Bayou Manchac. Levees currently exist on each side of the Mississippi River, and in the eastern part of the parish along portions of White Cypress Canal, Sevario Canal, and the New River Canal. There are three key drainage pump stations in the Parish:

- Marvin Braud Pump Station connected to Marvin Braud North and West levee reaches
- Sorrento Pump Station connected to the Sorrento ring levee, and
- Henderson Bayou Pump station near Henderson Bayou

Importance – The parish requires that any fill deposited in the 100-year floodplain must be offset (mitigated) by removing an equal volume of soil in an area to preserve the flood capacity. A floodplain development permit is required from the Ascension Parish Floodplain Management Office to prove that a construction project will have no adverse impact to the floodplain and no increase (no-rise) to the base 100-year flood elevation. Activities involving floodplain fills in the Coastal Zone will also require a Coastal Use Permit from the OCM.

Natural Communities

According to the LDWF, significant natural communities within Ascension Parish include bottomland hardwood forests, cypress swamps, and cypress-tupelo swamps. These natural communities, which are important to the residents, provide habitat for several species of fish and wildlife, and are located primarily in the southeast portion and northwest corner of the parish.

Importance – Conservation of sensitive natural communities is a strategy included in the Ascension Parish Comprehensive Plan. Coordination with the LDWF will be required for projects that have the potential for adverse impacts to sensitive natural communities to determine measures for avoidance, minimization, conservation, or mitigation.

Threatened and Endangered Species

A review of the USFWS database indicated that there is no Designated Critical Habitat for any federally listed threatened or endangered species within Ascension Parish. However, the parish is within the range of four federally listed threatened or endangered species that could be found in the Mississippi River (and other large rivers), and include the following: the threatened Alabama Heelsplitter (*Potamilus inflatus*), the threatened

Atlantic Sturgeon (Gulf subspecies) (*Acipenser oxyrinchus =oxyrhynchus desotoi*), the endangered Pallid Sturgeon (*Scaphirhynchus albus*), and the threatened West India Manatee (*Trichechus manatus*).

The LDWF database includes the Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalu*) as a state-listed endangered species that can nest in cypress trees. The federally listed species noted above are also included on the state list.

Importance – The USFWS regulates the protection of federally listed species and their sensitive habitats. Projects that have the potential for adverse impacts to threatened or endangered species require consultation with the USFWS, and with the LDWF on a state level, to determine measures for avoidance, minimization, conservation, or mitigation.

Parks, Recreation Areas, and Trails

A Parks Master Plan was prepared for Ascension Parish in 2006, which included an inventory of existing parks and recreation facilities. The parish provides and maintains 80 acres of neighborhood parks (average size of 5 acres) and 80 acres of community parks (average size of 15 acres). There are also approximately 28 public school grounds in the parish that can also serve as parks or recreation areas.

Paula Park in Prairieville

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) refers to publicly-owned land from parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges (and land from historic sites) as "Section 4(f) properties", as described in Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act of 1966. In addition, any public park or recreation land that has used funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for acquisition or development is protected under Section 6(f) of the LWCF Act. The National Park Service's LWCF website indicated that Section 6(f) funds were used for some of the parks and recreations areas in the parish.

The parks and recreation resources located within the three incorporated municipalities of Gonzales, Sorrento, and Donaldsonville are noted in Table 3 below. The remainder of the resources are located in the unincorporated communities of the parish. Exhibit 1 in the attachments shows the locations of some of the major parks and recreation areas; however, not all of those listed in Table 3 are included on the exhibit. All the resources in Table 3 are assumed to be Section 4(f) properties, and those that are applicable to Section 6(f) are noted.

Table 3: 4(f)/6(f) Parks and Recreation Areas in Ascension Parish

Name	4(f) / 6(f)	Incorp. Area / Unincorporated	Name	4(f) / 6(f)	Incorp. Area / Unincorporated
Oak Grove Park	4(f) / 6(f)	Unincorporated	**Jambalaya Park & Pool**	4(f)	Gonzales
Oak Lane Memorial Park	4(f)	Unincorporated	**Gonzales Municipal Park**	4(f) / 6(f)	Gonzales
Paula Park	4(f)	Unincorporated	**Tee Joe Park**	4(f)	Gonzales
Keystone Park	4(f)	Unincorporated	**St. Amant Recreation Park**	4(f)	Unincorporated
Prairieville Park	4(f) / 6(f)	Unincorporated	**Laurel Ridge Boat Launch**	4(f)	Unincorporated
Southwood Park & Playground	4(f) / 6(f)	Unincorporated	**Geismar Community Center**	4(f)	Unincorporated
Butch Gore Memorial Park	4(f) / 6(f)	Unincorporated	**Jackie Robinson Memorial Park**	4(f)	Unincorporated
Duplessis Park / Youth Legacy	4(f)	Unincorporated	**Lamar Dixon Sports Complex**	4(f)	Unincorporated
J Leo Stevens Park	4(f) / 6(f)	Unincorporated	**Ascension Civic Center**	4(f)	Sorrento
Spray Park	4(f)	Gonzales	**Modeste Park & Playground**	4(f) / 6(f)	Unincorporated
Gonzales City Room Field	4(f)	Gonzales	**Hillaryville Park**	4(f)	Unincorporated
Bergeron-Gaudin Park	4(f)	Gonzales	**Darrow Community Center**	4(f)	Unincorporated
Woodman of the World Park	4(f)	Gonzales	**Abend Community Park**	4(f)	Unincorporated
Veterans Memorial Park	4(f)	Gonzales	**Lemannville Park**	4(f)	Unincorporated
Ascension Parish Skate Park	4(f)	Gonzales	**Ascension Fairgrounds**	4(f)	Donaldsonville
Burnside Park	4(f)	Gonzales	**Bicentennial Jazz Plaza**	4(f)	Donaldsonville
Gonzales Civic Center	4(f)	Gonzales	**Crescent Park**	4(f)	Donaldsonville
George Washington Carver Park	4(f) / 6(f)	Gonzales	**Lowery Park & Playground**	4(f)	Unincorporated
Kidz Kove	4(f)	Gonzales			

Sources: Ascension Parish GIS General Map; Cities of Gonzales, Sorrento and Donaldsonville; National Park Service – Land and Water Conservation Fund

A small portion of the Maurepas Swamp Wildlife Management Area, managed by the LDWF is located in the undeveloped southeast corner of the parish. (The applicability of Section 4(f) for this area is not determined in this report.)

Maps and data for recreational trails were not readily available during the data gathering task for this report. However, the Ascension Parish Comprehensive Plan indicated that only a few trails/multi-use paths exist within the parish. Several of the parks within the parish have walking paths or trails within their boundaries. In addition, a few bicycle paths exist within or adjacent to city parks and along bayous in Gonzales.

Importance – Any unavoidable conversions of Section 4(f) park or recreation land to a transportation use will require an alternatives analysis and approval of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), or a *de minimis* determination (if impacts are minimal), as well as mitigation or enhancement measures. Any unavoidable acquisition of 6(f) properties must be mitigated with replacement land of equal or greater value in character and utility. Section 4(f) and 6(f) applicability should be verified in subsequent phases that require more detailed information.

According to the Ascension Parish Comprehensive Plan, trails should be incorporated into all new street and roadway plans and retrofitted into existing areas, as appropriate. Considerations should include access to schools, major activity centers, and transit.

Historic and Cultural Resources

The strong cultural heritage of Ascension Parish has shaped the characteristics of the region. Part of that heritage is the agricultural plantation tradition, as well as structures and sites that have been conserved over the centuries. A review of the Ascension Parish Comprehensive Plan and the parish GIS mapping database (attached in Exhibit 1: Major Community and Public Facilities) found the following cultural and historic sites listed in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP):

- L'Hermitage Plantation
- Bittersweet Plantation
- Ashland Belle-Helene Plantation
- Donaldsonville Historic District
- Bocage Plantation
- Galvez Town Site
- Houmas House
- Ascension Parish Court House, Square and Jail
- Landry Tomb
- Fort Butler
- Palo Alto Plantation

In addition, the following historic structures listed in the NRHP exist within the parish:

- Ascension Church
- Ashland Building
- Bel House
- Sisters of Charity Church
- Dixon (Moore) House
- Evan Hall Slave Cabins
- Helvetia Dependency
- Jacob (Nassar) House
- Lemann Store
- Lousteau House
- Mulberry Grove
- Palo Alto Dependency
- Parish Hall
- Robert Penn Warren House
- Rome House
- St. Emma

Recorded archaeological sites are not made available to the public and are not included in this inventory, at this time. Archaeological resource data will be identified in a subsequent phase of the project when that level of detail becomes necessary.

Importance – Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) requires Federal agencies to identify and evaluate historic properties that may be affected by a federally funded or sponsored project. Historic/cultural sites listed in, or eligible for listing in the NRHP are considered Section 4(f) resources. If impacts occur to these resources, the provisions of Section 4(f) will apply, as discussed in the parks and recreation areas section above. The Ascension Parish Comprehensive Plan includes strategies for assuring that impacts from new development on historic resources are minimized through compatible land uses and design, and are conserved and maintained over time, helping the community retain its character and identity.

Hazardous Materials and Waste Sites

A database search was conducted to determine the presence of hazardous and/or solid waste sites within Ascension Parish. A review of data collected from EPA hazardous material databases and from information provided on the US Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) NEPAssist website indicated that there are no Superfund Enterprise Management System (SEMS) "Superfund" sites on the National Priority List (NPL) within the parish. However, three Superfund sites were formerly listed on the NPL, but have been deleted from the NPL because of remedial procedures. These sites are still included on the Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) and the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) lists (Exhibit 3: Environmental Protectiona Agency (EPA) Regulated Hazardous Materials Sites).

Most of the sites listed in the TRI database are also listed in the TSCA database, and most of these hazardous sites are located in the Geismar industrial area on the east side of the Mississippi River (Exhibit 3 attached). The TRI and TSCA sites include industrial plants that produce hazardous materials such as petrochemicals, nitrogen fertilizers, methanol, ethylene, vinyls, and polymers. These same sites are also listed on EPA's Integrated Compliance Information System for Air (ICIS-AIR) regarding potential air pollutants. The LDEQ regulates these facilities for hazardous materials.

The EPA's mapping database also showed several hazardous material sites listed as Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) sites. Many of these sites are considered Small Quantity Generators (SQGs) or Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generators (CESQGs), and include facilities dealing with auto repair or maintenance, medical waste, pharmaceuticals, metals, paints, solvents, dry cleaning, and building materials. A few of the RCRA sites are designated as Large Quantity Generators (LQGs) dealing with chemical production, and are also on the TRI and TSCA lists.

The LDNR Strategic Online Natural Resources Information System (SONRIS) database was also reviewed. The website identified a solid waste disposal site, BFI Colonial Landfill, located near the south end of the parish, and several oil and gas wells scattered throughout the parish.

The interactive mapping of the LDEQ contained database information for Underground Storage Tanks (USTs) scattered in the northeast portion of the parish, one of which is a Leaking Underground Storage Tank (LUST).

Importance – All the hazardous material sites listed on the TRI and TSCA lists are likely to be considered a high risk for contamination and should be avoided, if possible. Most of the RCRA SQGs, CESQGs, and USTs would likely be considered a low or moderate risk for contamination.

Air Quality

The Clean Air Act requires the USEPA to set National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for maximum allowable concentrations of six "criteria air pollutants" in outdoor air (carbon monoxide, lead, ground-level ozone, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter, and sulfur dioxide). The two main sources of air pollution within Ascension Parish are automobile exhaust and industrial activity.

There are 29 chemical plants located in the parish and all are regulated by the LDEQ for air quality standards.

The most recent USEPA list by parish for nonattainment/maintenance status of all criteria pollutants, indicated that Ascension Parish was re-designated (in March 2017) from the previous "nonattainment" status to "maintenance" status for the criteria pollutant 8-Hour Ozone (2008 Standard). The parish is in "attainment" status for all other criteria pollutants.

Importance – The parish is promoting a development pattern that will allow more convenient and frequent use of alternative modes of transportation by residents, including walking, bicycles, and transit. This will result in fewer vehicle miles traveled and less exhaust emitted, thereby maintaining USEPA air quality standards.

3.3.4. Future No-Build Conditions

Natural environmental resources would continue to exist and would mature over time, if developmental pressures increase and may experience some negative impacts from these pressures. Although development will likely continue, it will be in accordance with the parish's comprehensive plan, which outlines goals and strategies to protect and conserve the parish's sensitive environmental resources, while controlling development and striving for a balance between the two. Impacts to farmland, waterways, wetlands, floodplains, natural communities, and threatened or endangered species would require proper planning, permitting, and appropriate mitigation to assure those impacts are minimized.

The parish would most likely expand their parks and recreation system to meet future needs, and historic resources would continue to be added to the NRHP list. Hazardous material facilities would continue production, as long as there is a demand; however, federal and state regulations would continue to be enforced to control contamination risks. The state and parish would continue to comply with regulations for automobile exhaust and industrial pollutants to keep air quality conditions in attainment.

3.3.5. Conclusion

The environmental resources of Ascension Parish are important to the residents. The protection, conservation, and restoration of the parish's natural, historic/cultural, and ecologically sensitive areas, as well as the conservation of rural areas that reflect the history of agriculture in the area, are highly important to the community's quality of life. These concepts are reflected in the environment-related goals, strategies, and policies of the Ascension Parish Comprehensive Plan and should be important considerations in the planning of the future transportation system.

3.4 ECONOMIC

3.4.1. Introduction & Background

Ascension Parish is in the "growth" zone of Louisiana

Ascension Parish is in the "growth" zone of Louisiana. The three parishes of Ascension, East Baton Rouge, and Livingston have grown much faster than the rest of the state. In 1970 these three parishes accounted for 1 in every 10 persons living in Louisiana. Presently, these three parishes account for 1 in every 6.5 persons living in the state, and, by 2030, it is estimated that these three parishes will account for 1 in every 6 persons living in Louisiana. Ascension Parish's growth has outperformed the other parishes within this growth zone, especially since 2000. Increases in the population in a parish, along with the expected growth in employment, will increase the demand for travel. Enhancements in the travel corridors will also accelerate the economic growth in a region. The rapid growth in people and jobs in Ascension Parish has pushed the parish into a catch-up mode. The transportation plan will address existing needs of the transportation facilities and will accommodate and facilitate future growth.

3.4.2. Data & Methodology

The economic analysis starts with understanding demographic and employment information for Ascension, East Baton Rouge, and Livingston parishes. These three parishes are the focus of the analysis since people may live in one parish and work in another parish. There is a great deal of population flow from Ascension Parish to East Baton Rouge Parish and vice-versa for work, shopping, and entertainment. Population data comes from the U.S. Census, the Louisiana Division of Administration, and the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Transportation Plan developed by the CRPC. Employment data came from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Louisiana Workforce Commission, and estimates contained in the Baton Rouge MTP, 2037. Information regarding density of location and flows of traffic came from the American Community Survey, part of the U.S. Census. Projections are the work effort of the study team as well as projections included in the Baton Rouge MTP, 2037.

3.4.3. Existing Conditions

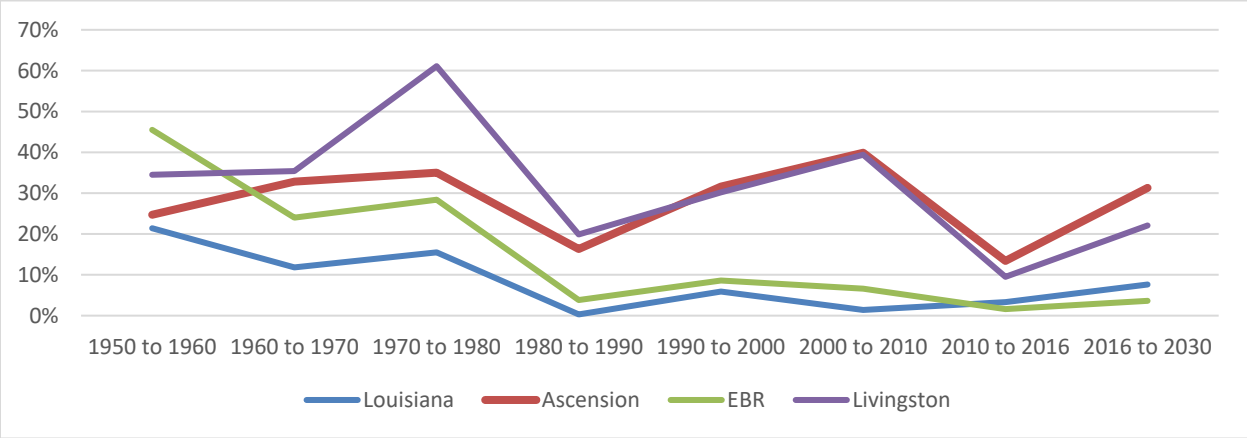
Ascension Parish has more than doubled in population since 1990 while the state's population has grown by just over 10 percent and East Baton Rouge's population has grown by about 18 percent. Ascension Parish has 120,278 in population (CRPC 2017). Employment has grown by 211 percent in Ascension Parish from 1990 to 2016 while,

statewide, employment has grown by 23 percent and in East Baton Rouge, employment has grown by 40.5 percent. In 2016, jobs in Ascension Parish amounted to almost 44,000 compared to about 21,000 in 1990. Ascension Parish has grown extraordinarily rapidly over the last 25 years and this growth of population and employment has created a very vibrant economy in Ascension Parish, but it has also created a need for transportation services to accommodate what has already happened and what is forecasted in terms of population, school age children, new businesses, and employment.

Population Growth in Ascension, East Baton Rouge, and Livingston

As shown in
Figure 5, population has grown substantially in the three-parish area of Ascension, East Baton Rouge (EBR), and Livingston. All three parishes are noted since people live, shop, and work in different parishes and travel between the three on a regular basis.

Figure 5: Growth in Ascension, EBR, and Livingston Parishes Population



Source: US Census

Density of Working Age and School Age Population

The working age population is concentrated in the northern part of the parish and to the east of Interstate 10. The school age population density is overlaps the density of the working age population. The traffic congestion is concentrated to the east of Interstate 10 and in the northern part of the parish and traffic flows relate to where people primarily live and work in the Ascension Parish area. Transportation improvements will be focused in this area.

Employment in Ascension and Surrounding Parishes

Employment numbers in Ascension, EBR, and Livingston Parishes as well as Louisiana are shown in Table 4. Employment has grown at a higher rate in these three parishes than in other parts of the state. Ascension Parish has grown more rapidly than East Baton Rouge and Livingston. This indicates future transportation investments will be required.

Table 4: Employment in Ascension, EBR, and Livingston Parishes

Region	1990	2000	2010	2016	2030 Projection
Louisiana	1,546,820	1,865,148	1,827,497	1,896,641	1,968,401
Ascension	**20,753**	**29,910**	**35,329**	**43,923**	**57,661**
EBR	191,327	246,703	252,293	268,702	286,178
Livingston	8,684	15,095	22,123	26,068	30,716
Tri-parish	220,764	291,708	309,745	338,693	374,556

Source: Louisiana Workforce Commission

Manufacturing and construction are the major economic drivers in Ascension Parish. These industries respond to global economic conditions as well as the ability of the state to accommodate the activity. These industries have been dominant in Ascension Parish and are projected to remain dominant for at least 20 years. Other industries such as wholesale and retail trade and personal and business services will grow with the population and be supportive of the population. The manufacturing industry will be located mainly along Highway 30, but the other industries, such as trade and services, will be located throughout the parish and in line with the population in the parish.

Economic Drivers in Ascension Parish

Manufacturing and construction have been the economic drivers in Ascension Parish for the last four decades and will remain the drivers for the next two to three decades. The business plans for these industries are related to factors outside the control of the parish. These factors will be the global price of energy, the supply of energy inputs, global economic conditions and growth opportunities, a viable workforce, the cost of doing business in the United States compared to other countries, state economic development policy, and available sites for further development as well as transportation alternatives. Outside economic factors will primarily determine the growth of these industries, but state and local policies will also play a role. Furthermore, local, transportation options and alternatives are factors that need to be considered.

Trade and services and other non-manufacturing businesses will support industries and may develop in Ascension Parish as its population continues to grow. In the past, these businesses have affected the traffic flows and traffic needs in Ascension Parish, and they will continue to have an impact into the future.

3.4.4. Future No-Build Conditions

As noted previously, increases in the population in the parish, along with the expected growth in employment, will increase the demand for travel. Enhancements in the travel corridors will also accelerate the economic growth in a region. With the population growth that has occurred in Ascension Parish and the growth that is expected to occur over the next 20 to 25 years, it is important to use the no-build growth scenario as a benchmark of what the parish might look like without any planned improvements and how it would hinder the parish's growth opportunities.

Increases in the population in the parish, along with the expected growth in employment, will increase the demand for travel.

3.4.5. Conclusions

The population and employment in Ascension Parish will continue to grow substantially with Ascension's employment growth and population growth outpacing the growth of the state and of East Baton Rouge Parish. In addition, Ascension may attract additional movement into the parish given the extensive flooding in Livingston Parish in 2016 and it will take several years for Livingston Parish to get back to a more normal development pattern. Manufacturing and construction continue to be the major industries that will support the growth of the parish, but, other industries such as trade and personal business services will also develop in the parish as the population continues to grow. These will be more labor-intensive industries and will necessitate additional transportation investment.

3.5 TRAFFIC

3.5.1. Introduction & Background

Existing and future traffic operations are of particular interest in the Transportation Master Plan. During the Visioning Workshop, participants identified "extreme congestion" as a primary concern in Ascension Parish. This Transportation Master Plan will help to plan and balance immediate transportation concerns with long-term transportation needs.

3.5.2. Data & Methodology

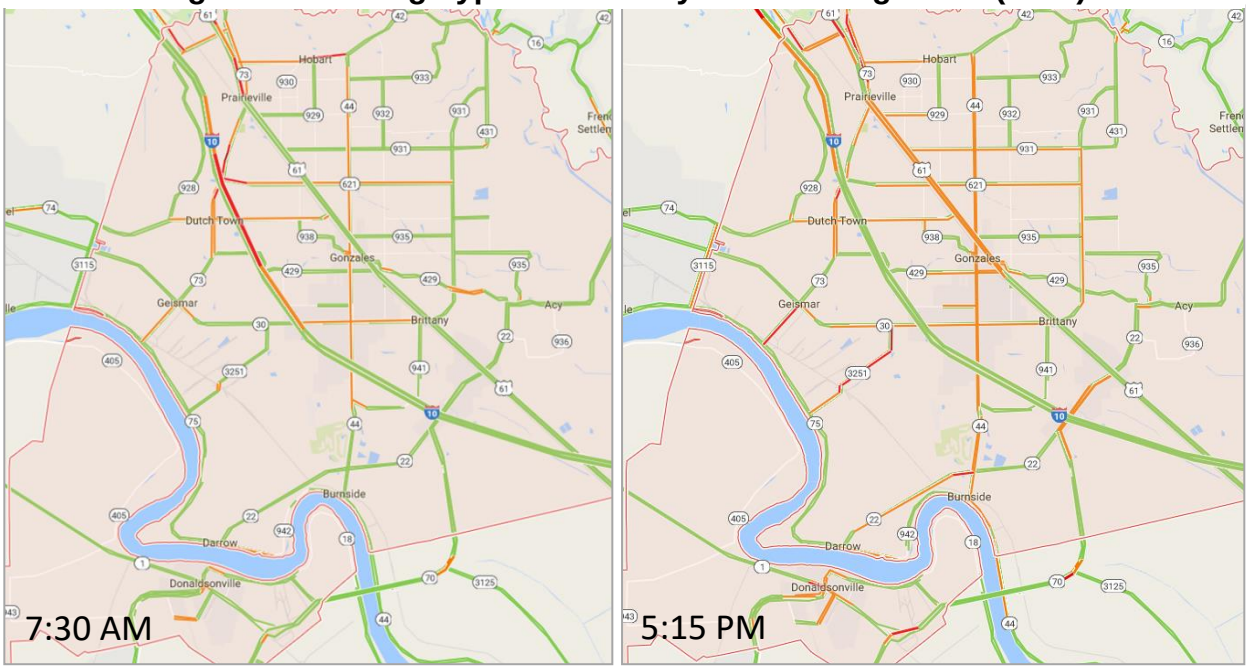
The traffic analysis used data collected from Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD), the Ascension Parish Major Street Plan, CRPC, Travel Demand Model, and Google Maps. The existing analysis inventoried annual average daily traffic (AADT), number of lanes, functional classification, and posted speeds. Existing AADT was analyzed for 2016 volumes. The primary source of traffic count data was LADOTD. When 2016 counts were absent or determined to be invalid due to a technology malfunction or abnormal roadway activity, growth rates from nearby segments were applied to previous counts from 2013. The 2037 future traffic no-build analysis was completed in the travel demand model (Section 3.8), discussed in a separate section of this report.

3.5.3. Existing Conditions

Existing annual average daily traffic was developed from LADOTD traffic counts for the major roadway segments in Ascension Parish. Exhibit 4: 2016 Existing Daily Traffic Volumes in the attachments shows the most used corridors are Interstate 10 and the northern portion of Highway 61 (Airline Highway). Other corridors with an existing AADT of greater than 20,000 vehicles per day include LA 42, LA 73, LA 30, and LA 70.

Google Maps data was used to determine the AM and PM peak hours based on typical weekday traffic congestion. The determined peak hours of travel and congestion are 7:00 to 8:00 AM and 5:00 to 6:00 PM based on visual inspection. As shown in Figure 6 below, Interstate 10 experiences the greatest congestion in the AM peak with some other congested corridors including LA 73, LA 621, LA 44, and Highway 61 (Airline Highway). In the PM peak, congestion is in the southbound direction on Interstate 10 on the northwest side of Ascension Parish due to people leaving the Baton Rouge area. Heavier congestion is also experienced in the PM peak hour on several of the same local and parish roads as in the AM peak.

Figure 6: Existing Typical Weekday Traffic Congestion (2017)



Source: Google

2013 data from the five-year American Community Survey was used to show existing home to work traffic flows to and from Ascension Parish. Commuting patterns indicate that over half (53 percent) of workers commute and stay within Ascension Parish. Approximately 41 percent of workers travel from Ascension Parish to East Baton Rouge Parish. Similarly, of commuters traveling to Ascension Parish, most trips originate in East Baton Rouge Parish (73 percent). These movements correlate with the congestion seen on Interstate 10 and other corridors in the northwestern part of Ascension Parish, adjacent to East Baton Rouge Parish.

3.5.4. Future No-Build Conditions

The future no-build conditions were developed using the CRPC travel demand model. A review of future traffic conditions and patterns is discussed in the travel demand, Section 3.8.

I-10 congestion in Ascension Parish

3.5.5. Conclusion

Based on the existing analysis, the parish experiences the highest congestion in the northwestern part of the parish during the AM and PM peak hours. This is confirmed with the high daily traffic, typical Google traffic conditions, and the volume to capacity analysis. The northwestern part of the parish is a key area for improvement, particularly on corridors providing major connections to the East Baton Rouge Parish to the north.

3.6 SAFETY

3.6.1. Introduction & Background

A safe transportation network is a high priority for Ascension Parish, CRPC, and the LADOTD. An important part of identifying transportation needs is measuring the safety of the Ascension Parish transportation network. Safety for all modes is important to the Parish including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, rail, and freight transportation.

3.6.2. Data & Methodology

The safety analysis used data collected from LADOTD as well as Ascension Parish for a five-year period (2012 to 2016). The existing analysis combined the state and parish level data into one dataset. The combined dataset was used to determine total existing vehicle crashes by year, crash type, crash severity, fatalities, at-grade rail crashes, and crashes

involving trucks. Separately, state data was used to analyze intersections with high crashes and screened for collision type, crash severity, and crash type. Parish data with local road data was not used for the intersection analysis as the data did not contain geo-location information.

The future no-build analysis projected the total vehicle crashes out to the 2037 future no-build year based off the travel models forecasted percent increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The increase in VMT between the existing and future no-build year was derived from the CRPC travel demand model.

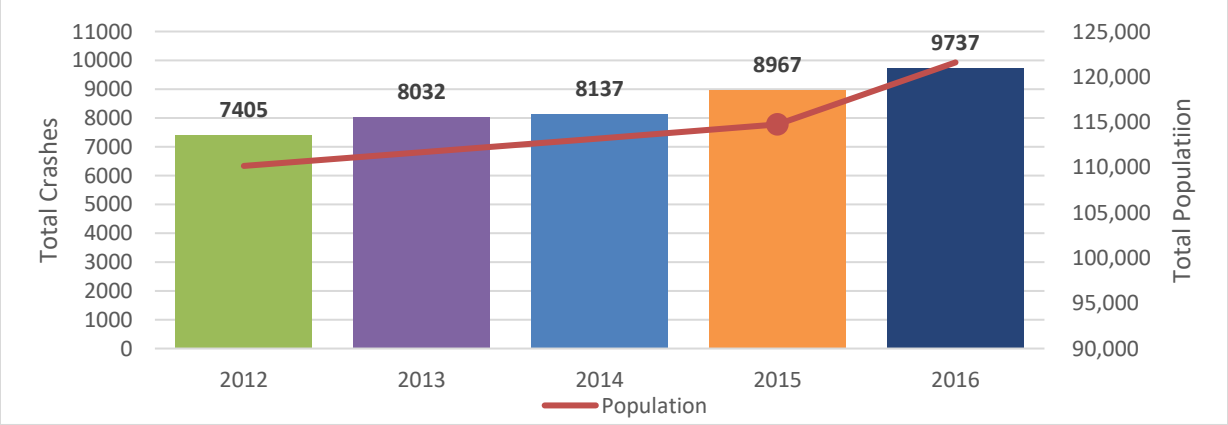
3.6.3. Existing Conditions

Ascension Parish is ranked 17th worst in the total number of vehicle crashes out of 64 parishes in the State. Within the parish there are 813 miles of roads and highways. Of these, approximately 559 (69 percent) are owned and maintained by local governments. The remaining 254 miles (31 percent) of roads are maintained by LADOTD.

Total Crashes by Year

As shown in Figure 7 below, crashes have increased each year from a low of 7,400 in 2012 to a high of 9,700 in 2016. This represents a total crash increase of 31 percent and an annual increase of about 6.3 percent. Population is shown on the chart as well; the increase in crashes has a similar trendline to that of population.

Figure 7: Total Ascension Parish Crashes by Year and Parish Population

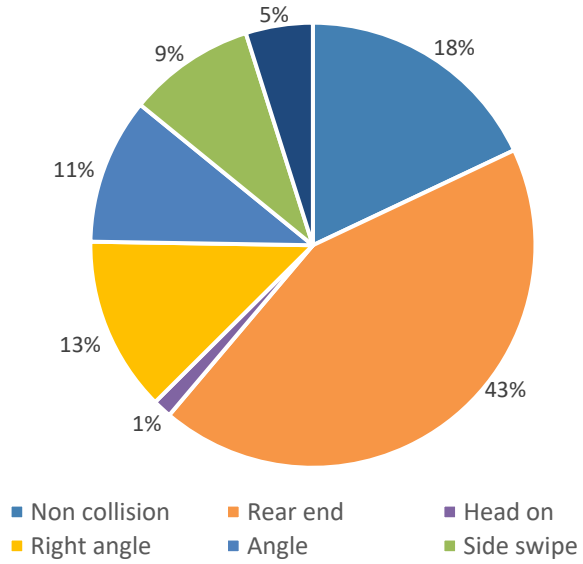


Source: LADOTD Crash Database

Crash Type

Crash types of seven categories were analyzed, Figure 8 shows the results. Rear end collisions accounted for over 40 percent of all crashes in the five-year period. Followed by angle and right angle turning crashes, which when combined, accounted for almost 25 percent of all collisions. Rear end crashes are more prevalent when congestion is present.

Figure 8: Five-Year Crash Type for State and Local Crashes



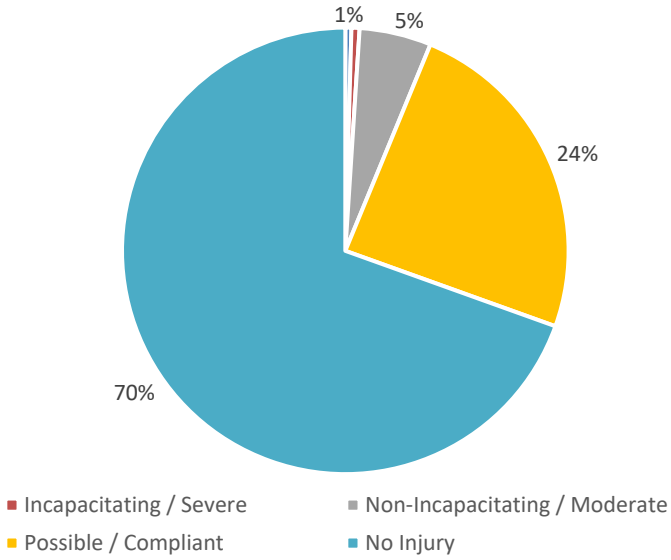
Source: LADOTD Crash Database (2012-2016)

Between 2012 and 2016, 31 crashes occurred in Ascension Parish that involved a Railway Vehicle at the intersection of a road with a railway. Of the 31 crashes involving an at-grade railway crossing, the majority were low in severity with 68 percent being possible injury or no injury. Two crashes over the five-year period resulted in a fatality.

Crash Severity

The State of Louisiana defines crash severity by five separate categories. Within Ascension Parish over 90 percent of all crashes have no injuries or only possible injuries. Over the study period, there were 283 fatal crashes within the parish, accounting for 0.44 percent of all accidents. This equates to a fatality every 10 days over the five-year study period. Figure 9 shows the breakdown of crash severity.

Figure 9: Five-Year Crash Severity for State and Local Crashes



Source: LADOTD Crash Database (2012-2016)

Trucks were involved in approximately 1,700 crashes (four percent of total crashes) between 2012 and 2016. Over 90 percent of those crashes had no injuries or possible injuries. Twenty-one of the crashes involving trucks were fatal, which accounts for just over one percent of the total crashes involving trucks.

Fatal Crashes

Fatal crashes are distributed evenly across much of the parish, with no singular hotspots easily identifiable. Geo-locations for local parish roads crash data were not available; however, the Ascension Parish Local Road Safety Profile, dated January 2017 indicates fatalities occurred on Joe Sevario Road, Merritt Evans Road, Diagle Road, Muddy Creek Road, and River Highlands Drive local roads between 2010 and 2014. Only one crash occurred on each of these local roads, totaling five fatalities on local roads between 2010 and 2014.

Over 50 percent of all fatal crashes are non-collision crashes, meaning they involved only one vehicle. Data on alcohol and drug involvement in crashes shows alcohol use was identified in only eight percent of all fatal crashes. Drug use wasn't a cited factor in any fatal crashes. Exhibit 5: 2012 to 2016 Safety attached at the end of this document shows safety information from 2012-2016.

Intersections & Primary Local Corridors

An intersection analysis was completed to identify the ten intersections with the most crashes within the parish. This analysis was only completed on state routes as those contained geo-location information, and the local data was unable to be geo-located. The analysis was based on crashes within a 400-foot radius of each state route intersection. For years 2012 to 2016 the intersections with the highest number of crashes are included below:

1. Interstate 10 southbound ramp terminal at LA 73 (333 crashes)
2. US 61 and LA 44 (279 crashes)
3. LA 44 and LA 30 (258 crashes)
4. US 61 and LA 427 (234 crashes)
5. LA 74 and LA 73 (194 crashes)
6. LA 73 and LA 42 (186 crashes)
7. Interstate 10 southbound ramp terminal at LA 30 (185 crashes)
8. Interstate 10 northbound ramp terminal at LA 73 (184 crashes)
9. US 61 at LA 73 (181 crashes)
10. US 61 and LA 621 (157 crashes)

Local Road Safety Profile

The LADOTD Local Technical Assistance Program's Local Road Safety Program published the Ascension Parish Local Road Safety Profile in January 2017. The profile provides stakeholders with information to evaluate road safety needs within the parish more easily and efficiently. The data in the profile was compiled using crash data and other roadway data available from state resources. The initial screening in Ascension Parish included 586 routes with reported crashes. Of the 586 total routes, 44 routes represent 49 percent of all crashes in the parish over a 5-year period. The 44 routes contained a minimum of 12 crashes in 5-years. The five roads with the most crashes include Roddy Road, Highway 929, Churchpoint Road, Germany Road, and Joe Severio Road.

The five roads with the most crashes include Roddy Road, Highway 929, Churchpoint Road, Germany Road, and Joe Severio Road.

3.6.4. Future No-Build Conditions

The total crashes were projected for the 2037 future no-build year based off the percent increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Existing VMT in 2017 is 3.4 million from the model and future VMT is projected to be 5.1 million. This result in a 47 percent increase

in VMT (1.9 percent annually) which equates to a forecasted 14,313 annual crashes in 2037 (an increase in roughly 4,500 crashes).

3.6.5. Conclusion

Of the 64 parishes within Louisiana, Ascension Parish falls within the top 20 parishes (one-third) in total number of local road crashes. The top 20 parishes account for 91 percent of all reported local road crashes in Louisiana. Ascension Parish is similar to the statewide averages of crash type, but roadway departure rates (vehicles that cross an edge line or otherwise leave the roadway) are approximately 1.74 times higher than the state average. Safety improvements should be focused on the top ten identified intersections (all located along state roads), the most heavily traveled state routes, and top five identified and local roads. The most heavily travel state routes include I-10, Highway 61 (Airline Highway), LA 42, LA 30, and LA 70. The top ten local corridors include Roddy Road, Highway 929, Churchpoint Road, Germany Road, and Joe Sevario Road.

3.7 ROADWAY INFRASTRUCTURE

3.7.1. Introduction & Background

The infrastructure assessment includes the state of the pavement, sidewalks, bridges, drainage structures and railroad crossings. There is currently a lack of available data related to infrastructure throughout the Ascension Parish, but by reviewing the CRPC's Metropolitan Transportation Plan and understanding the transportation impacts, fundamental needs can be identified for key areas.

3.7.2. Data & Methodology

Data from the CRPC and from Ascension Parish Local Road Data (Fugro results) were reviewed to assess the infrastructure needs of the parish. The needs of the infrastructure are based on the current condition of the transportation assets.

3.7.3. Existing Conditions

There are approximately 1,900 miles of local public roads in the parish, 93 percent of those are asphalt paved. Many of the roads are in good to fair condition, but 13 percent of the roads are in poor to very poor condition. The existing conditions of the roads also considers the capacity needs of the roads and bridges. Capacity is covered in more detail in the Traffic Operations section of the report.

Over 350,000 feet of sidewalk has been recorded within the parish. See Exhibit 6: 2016 Sidewalks in the exhibits at the end of this document for existing 2016 sidewalk locations. The full condition of the sidewalks including condition and grade was not collected as part of this study or included in data reviewed as part of this effort. Also, there may be issues with connectivity that should be addressed to create complete, safe systems.

There are approximately 90 sets of ADA ramps along these sidewalks. Approximately half the ramp sets are fitted with ADA compliant mats, known as truncated domes, to alert visually impaired people of the change in surface type at the interchange. The Local Public Agency program with LADOTD is working to help agencies with their ADA transition plans to ensure that individuals with disabilities are not excluded from programs, services and activities (pedestrian facilities). Each agency is to complete a self-evaluation and develop a transition plan for ADA facilities.

Approximately 120 local bridges are identified on 98 individual roadways. Eighteen of those bridges are posted for weight limits, requiring only vehicles under certain weight limits to be able to cross. These bridges are shown in Exhibit 7: 2016 National Bridge Inventory Maximum Load in Metric Tons (attached at the end of this document). All bridges have railings or walls to protect the motoring public when driving. There are three bridges subject to navigation control.

The parish uses open ditches and swales for water runoff near roadways.

3.7.4. Future No-Build Conditions

Strong development in the parish is anticipated to continue. Without any modifications or additional infrastructure projects, the existing infrastructure will not be able to support transportation goals. Even while continuing to comply with federal and state regulations, additional projects will be needed to repair and rehabilitate failing infrastructure. The posted bridges may have to be closed if rehabilitation or replacement projects are not completed. Additional projects may also need to be completed as their condition deteriorates due to continued use.

The ADA transition plan will be required to describe the methods the Parish will use to make access to their facilities possible, to include ADA ramps, sidewalks, crosswalks, etc. It will also provide a schedule for making the access modifications, which can be over time but does have to address all deficiencies through either ADA only projects or other infrastructure projects which will incorporate ADA plans. The projects that will be identified and developed through this plan will work to reduce the deficiencies identified in the existing conditions.

3.7.5. Conclusion

The existing infrastructure throughout the parish will deteriorate as it is continually used, if not rehabilitated or replaced. The congestion along the major routes will continue to take a toll on the pavement and bridge conditions. The Parish will need to continue to invest in maintenance projects to support the infrastructure, but they will also have to make one-time investments on certain roads and bridges to maintain safety and route connectivity for the traveling public.

ITS strategies would be beneficial for the parish, but the infrastructure to support these solutions is not readily in place.

3.8 TRAVEL DEMAND

3.8.1. Introduction & Background

The CRPC Travel Demand Model was adopted in 2013 to support the Baton Rouge Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2037 and was used as the fundamental tool to estimate future travel demand and traffic conditions. The travel estimates from the Travel Demand Model (TDM) were used to identify projected deficiencies in the region's transportation system.

3.8.2. Data & Methodology

The CRPC Travel Demand Model was developed in TransCAD and follows the traditional four-step process: trip generation; trip distribution; mode choice; and trip assignment. It reflects the most up-to-date short-term and long-term transportation projects in the Baton Rouge region, as well as the most recent population and employment forecasts from the CRPC.

The modeling area of CRPC Travel Demand Model consists of only five parishes, but includes Ascension Parish, hence it is deemed suitable for the analysis. The five parishes in the CRPC model are Ascension, East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, Iberville and Livingston. The Mississippi River Westbank in Ascension Parish is not included in the CRPC 2037 model but will be included in the updated MOVE 2042 model that will be used in Phase 2 and 3 of the study.

To use the CRPC Travel Demand Model for traffic analysis, a variety of model inputs and assumptions were reviewed and updated accordingly. These are discussed below.

Model years and time periods

The CRPC model has a base year of 2010 and includes three horizon years – 2017, 2027 and 2037. The travel demand models reflect the assumptions of future land use, population and employment forecasts, and other transportation investments identified as part of Baton Rouge MPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2037 for the horizon years.

The CRPC TDM was developed as a time-of-day model with following time periods:

- Morning Peak Period (AM): 6:00 AM to 9:00 AM
- Midday Period (MD): 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- Afternoon Peak Period (PM): 3:00 PM to 6:00 PM
- Nighttime Period (NT): 6:00 PM to 6:00 AM

Roadway Network Update

The CRPC regional travel demand model includes the roadway network and transit network (transit routes and stops). The roadway network covers all regionally and locally important roads and the committed and planned roadway improvements identified for the future horizon years. Since the existing year is 2017, the 2017 network was reviewed to confirm that the major roadways, speeds and number of lanes match those that currently exist within the Ascension Parish area. Google maps was used to check the number of lanes, and the posted speeds were used to check the speeds in the network. If any differences were found, the values were revised in the network model accordingly.

To prepare the Future No-Build scenario, the 2037 model network was revised with the changes made to the existing network including speed, number of lanes and inclusion of any missing roadways. In addition, the planned and committed capacity projects that were identified by the parish, were verified to ensure they were included in the 2037 model. As a result, the following projects were required to be coded in the 2037 No-Build network:

- LA-42 widening from 2 to 4 lanes between US-61 and LA-44
- I-10 widening from 4 to 6 lanes between Highland and LA-73
- New connector - W Edenborne Pkwy Rd to St. Landry
- New connector - Ashland Rd to St. Landry connector
- St. Landry – widen to 2 lanes

Socioeconomic Data

The CRPC model's socioeconomic data (population, household and employment) is presented in Table 5. It shows a growth of 55 percent in population and households and 59 percent in employment between 2017 and 2037 for the Ascension Parish region. The annual growth of the socioeconomic variables based on these forecasts is between 2 and 2.5 percent.

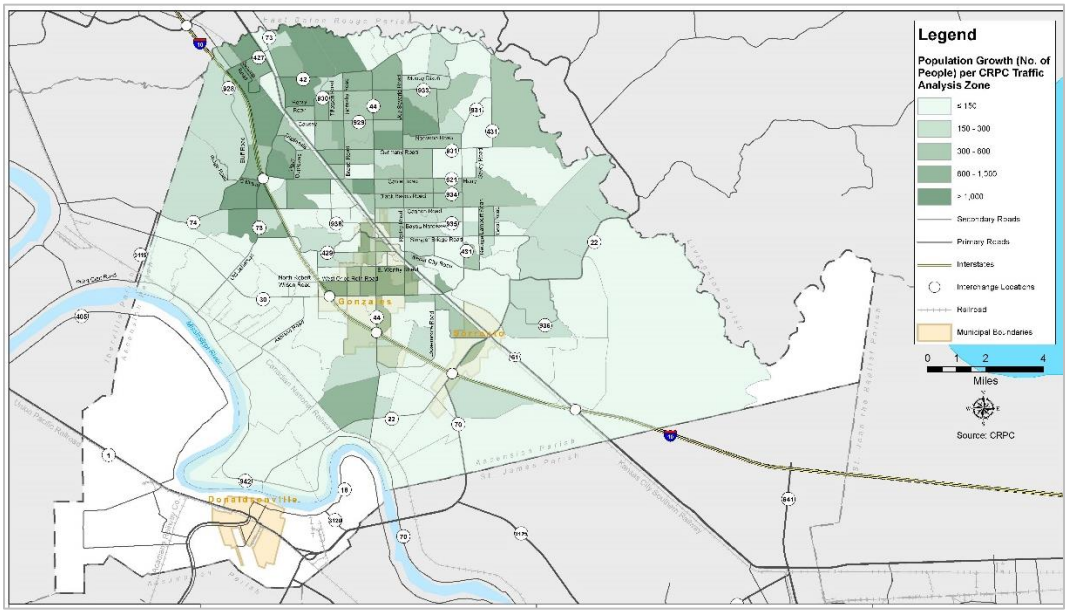
Table 5: Ascension Parish Population, Household and Employment Forecasts

Socioeconomic Variable	2017	2037	Growth	Annual Growth
Population	120,278	186,661	55%	2.2%
Households	42,504	65,993	55%	2.2%
Employment	44,736	71,298	59%	2.4%

Source: CRPC

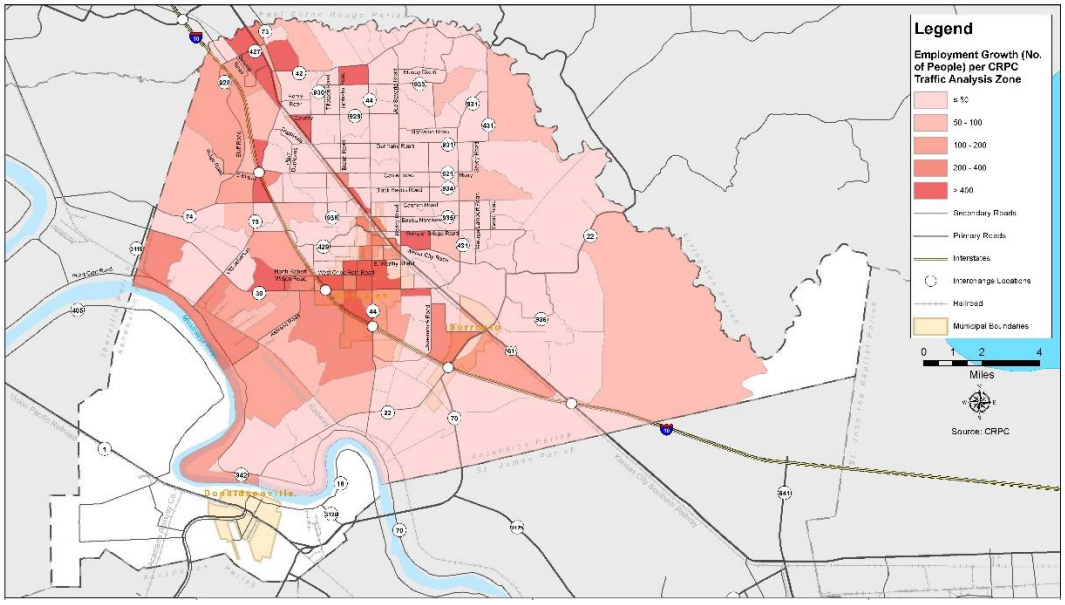
The growth of the population and employment from 2017 to 2037 within Ascension Parish is shown in Figure 10 and Figure 11, respectively.

Figure 10: 2017 to 2037 Population Growth



Source: CRPC
Full size Exhibit 8 is located at the end of this document

Figure 11: 2017 to 2037 Employment Growth



Source: CRPC
Full size Exhibit 9 is located at the end of this document

Model Runs

The travel models were run once the necessary revisions were made to the inputs of 2017 and 2037 models. The 2017 model run results were reviewed to ensure they reflect an accurate level of service on the major roadways. The 2037 model run results are discussed below and provide forecasted transportation impacts and levels of congestion within the Ascension Parish in the future.

3.8.3. Existing Conditions

The 2017 model results were not used to identify the existing conditions. See Section 3.5 for information on existing roadway conditions. The travel pattern was observed from the 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey Commuting Flows Data and presented in Table 6 and Table 7 below.

Table 6: Existing Work Trips from Ascension Parish (Home Location)

Work Location	Trips	Percentage
Ascension Parish	23,783	53%
East Baton Rough Parish	18,231	41%
Iberville Parish	1,699	4%
Livingston Parish	619	1%
West Baton Rough Parish	261	1%
Total	**44,593**	**100%**

Source: CRPC

Table 7: Work Trips to Ascension Parish (Work Location)

Home Location	Trips	Percentage
Ascension Parish	23,783	72%
East Baton Rough Parish	5,350	16%
Iberville Parish	617	2%
Livingston Parish	3,002	9%
West Baton Rough Parish	216	1%
Total	**32,968**	**100%**

Source: CRPC

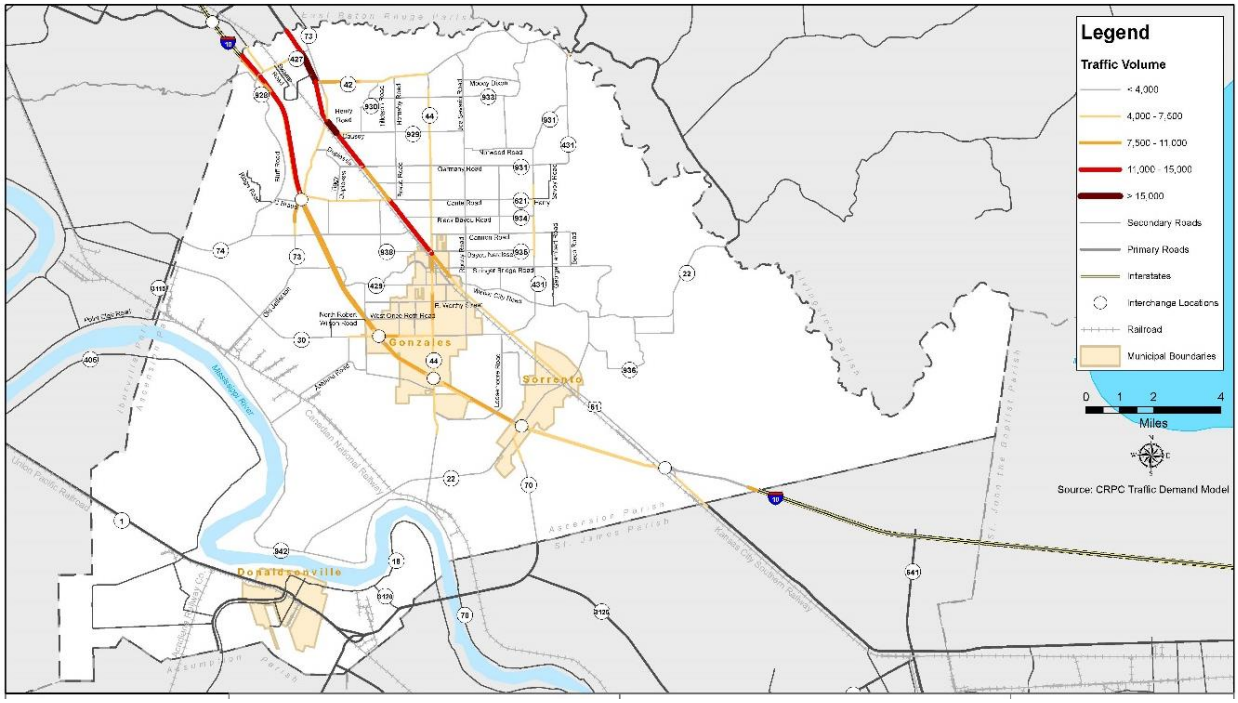
3.8.4. Future No-Build Conditions

The output of the 2037 No-Build model run provided an estimate of Future No-Build conditions. The results were summarized for the AM and PM peak period and presented in this section. Future 2037 No-Build daily traffic volumes are shown in Exhibit 10. 2037 No-Build AM and PM peak period volumes are shown in Exhibits 11 and 12 respectively.

Projected AM and PM Peak Period Volumes

2037 projected AM and PM peak period volumes are shown in Figure 12 and Figure 13, respectively. The figures highlight roadways with projected increased volumes.

Figure 12: 2037 AM Peak Period Volumes

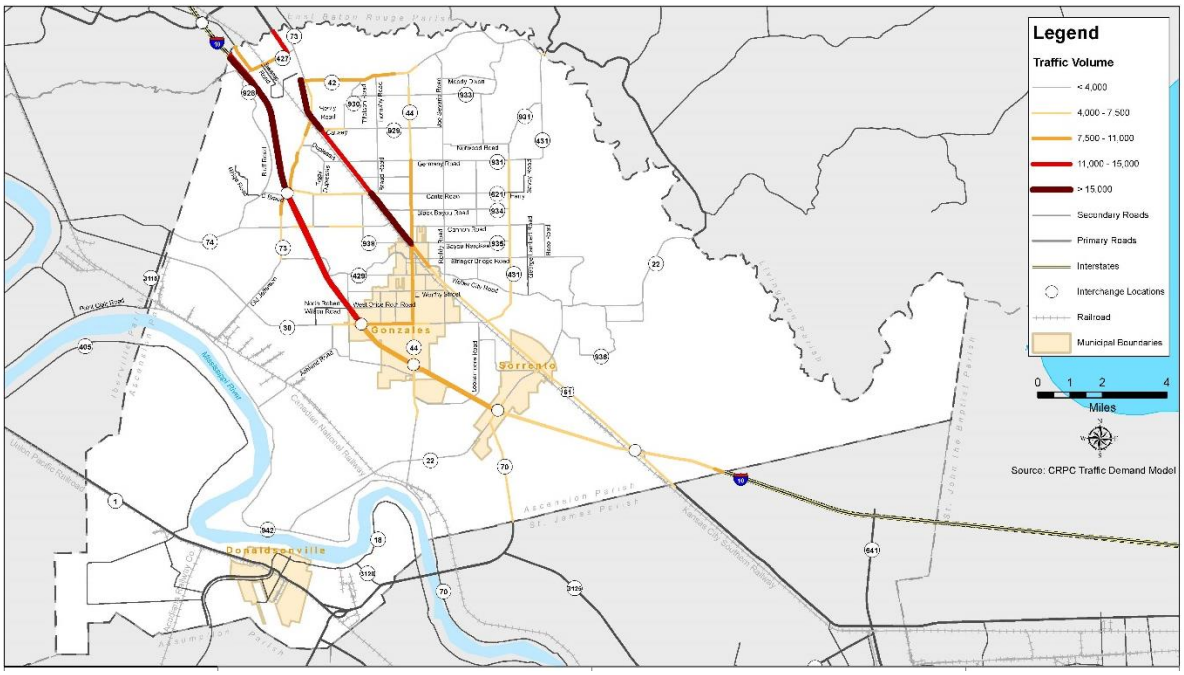


Source: CRPC Travel Demand Model
Full size Exhibit 11 is located at the end of this document

As seen in Figure 12, there is more AM peak hour traffic traveling north from Ascension Parish in the AM peak period. The highest volume is on I-10 and US-61. The peak hour traffic volume on I-10 is between 11,000 and 15,000 vehicles north of LA 73 and between 7,500 and 11,000 vehicles, south of it. Most of the segments on US 61 have traffic volume between 11,000 and 15,000 vehicles north of LA 935 and a few segments have volume greater than 15,000 vehicles. LA 42 and LA 44 have volume between 4,000 and 7,500 vehicles. Most of the other roads carry less than 4,000 vehicles in the AM peak period.

As seen in Figure 13, there is more traffic traveling from north to Ascension Parish in the PM peak period. As in the AM peak period, the highest volume is on I-10 and US-61. In general, however, there is more volume in the PM peak period compared to the AM peak period for any segment. The volume on I-10 is greater than 15,000 north of LA 73, between 11,000 and 15,000 from LA 73 to LA 30, and between 7,500 and 11,000, south of LA 30. Most of the segments on US 61 have volume greater than 15,000 north of LA 935, and a few segments have volume between 11,000 and 15,000. South of LA 395, it has volume between 7,500 and 11,000. LA 42 and LA 44 have volume between 7,500 and 11,000. LA 431 has volume between 4,000 and 7,500. Most of the other roads carry less than 4,000 volumes in the PM peak period.

Figure 13: 2037 PM Peak Period Volumes

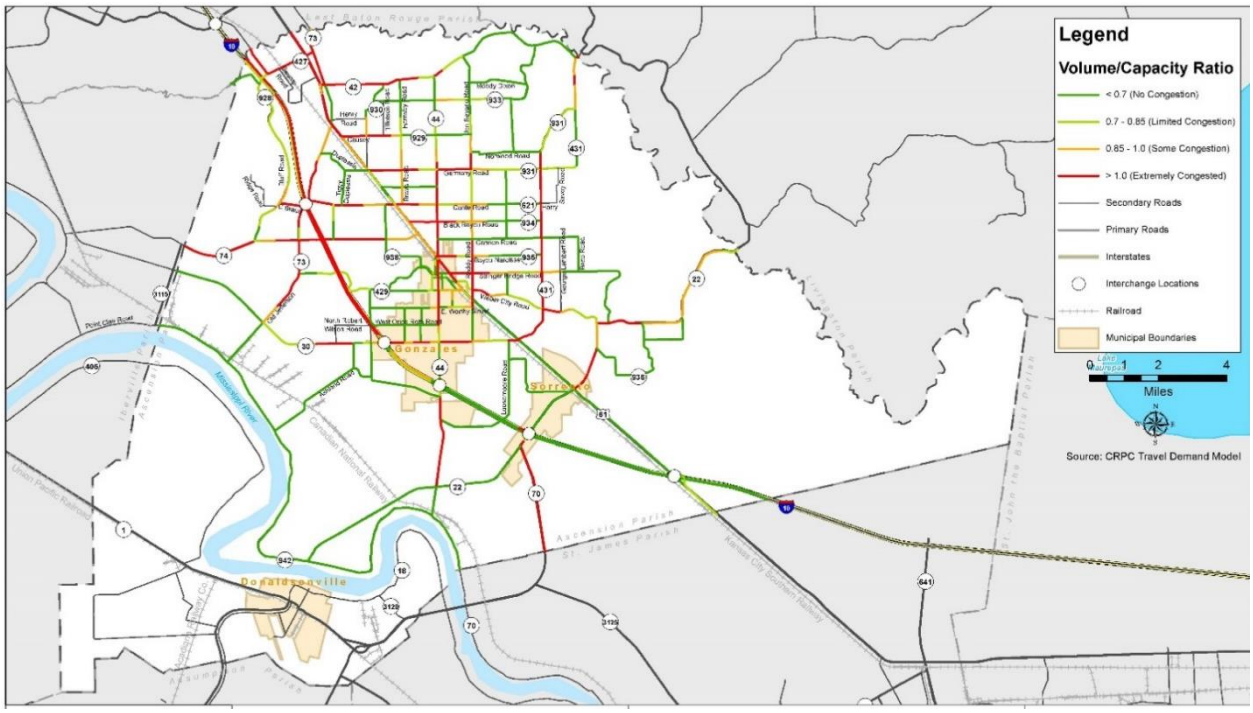


Source: CRPC Travel Demand Model
Full size exhibit is located at the end of this document

Projected AM and PM Peak Period Congestion

The peak period congestion is represented by volume to capacity (V/C) ratio for roadway links. Figure 14 and Figure 15 show the volume to capacity ratio for the AM and PM peak periods respectively.

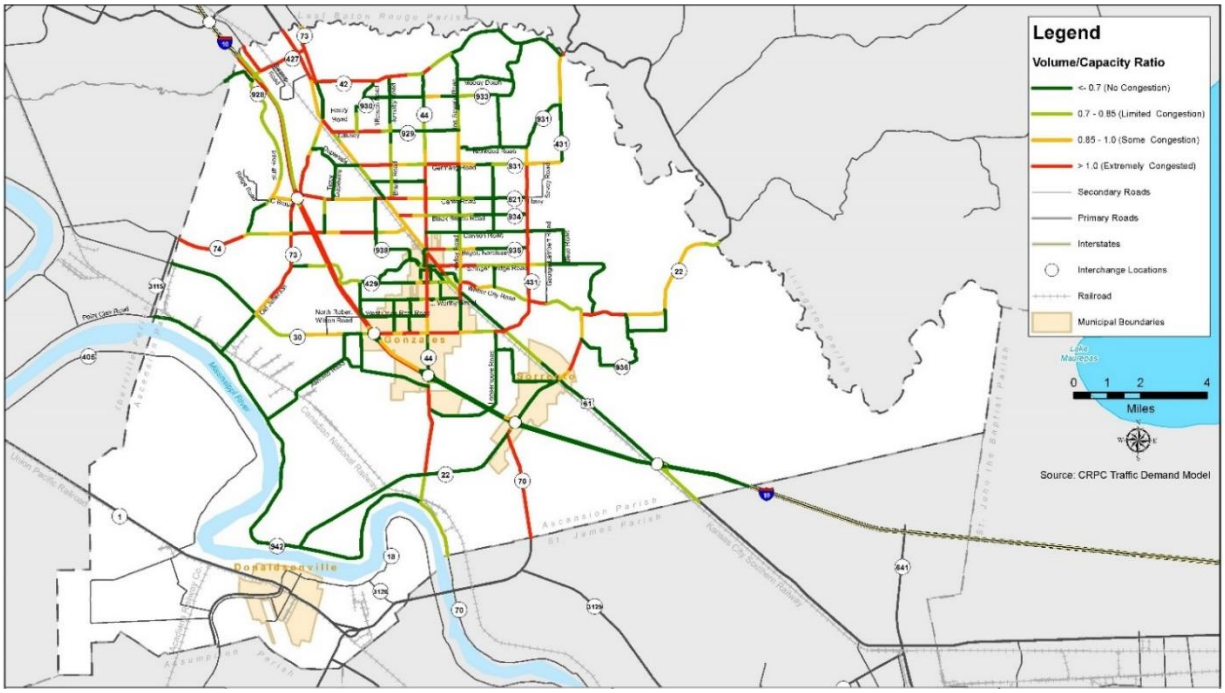
Figure 14: 2037 AM Peak Period Congestion



Source: CRPC Travel Demand Model
Full size exhibit is located at the end of this document

Figure 14 shows that in the AM peak period, the section of I-10 is extremely congested from LA 30 to LA 73 in both directions, and from LA 73 to the Ascension Parish boundary in the eastbound direction. Other major corridors with extreme congestion are LA 74, LA 44 and LA 431. LA 30 and LA 42 have a few portions with extreme congestion while others with some or limited congestion. Most other segments have limited or no congestion.

Figure 15: 2037 PM Peak Period Congestion



Source: CRPC Travel Demand Model
Full size exhibit is located at the end of this document

Figure 15 shows that in the PM peak period, the section of I-10 is extremely congested from Ascension Parish boundary to LA 73 east bound, and LA 73 to LA 30 in both directions. Other major corridors with extreme congestion are LA 74, LA 44 and LA 431. LA 30 and LA 42 have a few portions with extreme congestion while others with some or limited congestion. Most other segments have limited or no congestion.

Travel Measures of Effectiveness

The travel measures of effectiveness (MOEs) considered were vehicle miles traveled (VMT), vehicle hours traveled (VHT) and vehicle hours delay (VHD). The MOEs were estimated for Ascension Parish in the Future No-Build scenario and are summarized in Table 8: Ascension Parish Measures of Effectiveness.

Table 8: Ascension Parish Measures of Effectiveness

MOE	2017	2037	Growth	Annual Growth
VMT	3,447,836	5,069,393	47%	1.9%
VHT	81,526	127,832	57%	2.3%
VHD	20,100	36,869	83%	3.1%

Source: CRPC

As shown in Table 8, there is significant increase in the VMT, VHT and delay in Ascension Parish between 2017 and 2037. The VMT within increases by 47 percent and VHT increases by 57 percent. This is due to the unmet demand in the future year which causes the regional delay to grow to 83 percent for all the vehicles traveling in Ascension Parish.

3.8.5. Conclusion

There is significant growth in Ascension Parish as seen by the growth in population and employment in the future. Review and analysis of the model results show that due to the increased volume, most of the major facilities will experience a very high level of congestion and increased delays. Without any improvements in the future, there will remain unmet demand. To address the deficiencies identified in the region, the Parish would need to invest in major capacity improvements.

3.9 MULTIMODAL

3.9.1. Introduction & Background

The existing multimodal transportation network was inventoried and evaluated for Ascension Parish to gain an understanding of the alternate transportation choices available to residents and workers within the parish. The multimodal analysis includes a review of transit, bicycle and pedestrian modes.

3.9.2. Data & Methodology

Data was gathered from a variety of sources to assess the existing conditions and future needs of the multimodal transportation network. The data and methodologies used to evaluate transit and bike and pedestrian modes are discussed below.

Transit

The existing conditions analysis inventoried the existing transit services in Ascension Parish including traditional services such as local and regional bus, and non-traditional services like Uber and Lyft. To determine a need for transit services, demographic data from the 2015 ACS 5-year estimates (American Community Survey 2015 5-year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau) was analyzed.

The future no-build conditions analysis included reviewing all local and regional plans relevant to transit, including the CRPC 2037 MTP the New Orleans and Baton Rouge Passenger Rail plans, and Gonzales' Comprehensive Plan (Gonzales Comprehensive Plan, August 2015). It also considered current funding levels and programming.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

Analysis of the existing bicycle and pedestrian conditions included an inventory of sidewalk and bicycle infrastructure in the parish communities. The investigation also included an examination of existing parish and community regulations and constraints regarding bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Additional research included crash data from the Louisiana State University Crash Data Reports (2012 to 2016) (Gonzales Comprehensive Plan, August 2015).

A review of relevant state, regional and local plans and regulations formed the foundation for assumptions used in the future no-build conditions along with current funding levels and regulations.

3.9.3. Existing Conditions

Transit

Ascension Parish does not have existing fixed-route or on-demand transit services. The nearest transit system to the parish is the Capital Area Transit Systems (CATS), which serves East Baton Rouge Parish. The nearest CATS routes are about 4 to 5 miles outside Ascension Parish, including Routes 57 and 58 which provide service to Cortana Mall in Baton Rouge.

The Capital Area Agency on Aging (CAAA) provides on-demand elderly and disabled transportation within Ascension Parish to places such as senior centers, medical appointments and social service agencies.

Ascension Parish does not have existing fixed-route or on-demand transit services. The nearest CATS routes are about 4 to 5 miles outside Ascension Parish.

At the time of this analysis, transportation network companies (TNC's), like Uber and Lyft, are both operating in the parish. Lyft only provides service to some areas of the parish with a focus on East Baton Rouge Parish. Uber provides service to the entire parish.

Intercity bus service in Ascension Parish is provided by Greyhound with a stop in Gonzales serving a route between New Orleans and Baton Rouge. Greyhound stations

in New Orleans and Baton Rouge allow for transfers to several different routes, opening up a number of destinations from Gonzales.

Demographic data, summarized in Table 9, was reviewed to understand the potential need for transit within the parish. The parish is experiencing rapid population growth with a 12 percent increase between 2010 and 2015. This growth will continue to place greater pressure on existing modes of transportation and will increase the need and desire for alternative transportation options. Population density (396 residents per square mile) and job density (117 jobs per square mile), as shown in Table 9, indicate that the parish is population and jobs-rich compared to the Baton Rouge region and the state. A large portion of Ascension Parish residents drive alone to work (86.4 percent, which may be due to a lack of other transportation options and the high vehicle ownership in the parish (2.0 percent have no vehicle available). Finally, the average commute for the parish is 30.4 minutes, which is higher than both the Baton Rouge region and the state, indicating longer travel distances and/or increased congestion in the parish.

Table 9: Existing Parish Demographic Data

Geography		Ascension Parish	Baton Rouge MSA	Louisiana
Population Density (pop./sq. mile)		395.69	203.60	106.34
Job Density (jobs/sq. mile)		117.10	89.39	44.40
Commute to Work (%)	**Drove Alone**	86.4%	84.3%	82.4%
	Carpool	8.2%	9.1%	9.8%
	Transit	0.1%	1.0%	1.4%
	Walk	1.1%	1.7%	1.9%
	Other/Work at Home	4.1%	3.8%	4.6%
% no vehicle available		2.0%	2.3%	3.4%
% Population growth (2010 to 2015)		+12%	+4%	+4%
Average Commute Time (minutes)		30.4	26.5	25.1

Source: American Community Survey 2015 5-year Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau, and 2010 5-year CTPP jobs data

The high commute times highlighted in Table 9 are potentially due to the large amount of commuting outside the parish by those who live in the parish (53 percent), with 66 percent of those travelling to East Baton Rouge Parish. In the reverse direction, approximately 36 percent of those who work in Ascension Parish live outside the parish indicating a larger flow out of the parish to work than into the parish. This may indicate a need for commuter-based transit services.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

Ascension Parish does not have a parish-wide system of connected bike and pedestrian facilities. The existing road system with open roadside ditches can make it costly and difficult to construct new bicycle and pedestrian paths along local roadways.

The existing sidewalk network is shown in Exhibit 6: Sidewalks at the end of this document. The sidewalk network in Ascension Parish is generally limited to Gonzales, Donaldsonville and Dutch Town. The existing sidewalks within the parish are intermittent, but provide a foundation to build off and create an expanded pedestrian network. A few subdivisions in the parish have pedestrian systems consisting of sidewalks or recreational paths, however, these systems are internal to the subdivisions and do not extend out into local public roads.

The existing bicycle transportation network in Ascension Parish is limited to a few bike lanes and trails including a half-mile long striped bike lane along Irma Boulevard in Gonzales, near East Ascension High School and recreational trails along Bayou Francois and New River.

The existing sidewalks within the Parish are intermittent, but provide a foundation to build off and create an expanded pedestrian network.

Existing crash rates for bicycle and pedestrian transportation between 2012 and 2016 are summarize in Table 10. While all fatalities should be highlighted as a priority, between 2012 and 2016 the parish exhibited similar or slightly smaller crash fatality rates for bicycle and pedestrian crashes compared to the state.

Table 10: Existing Crash Rates, 2012 to 2016

Type	Ascension Parish		Statewide	
	Total	Per 1,000	Total	Per 1,000
Pedestrian	12	0.105	564	0.122
Bicycle	2	0.017	103	0.022

Source: Louisiana State University, Louisiana Crash Data Reports, 2012-2016

3.9.4. Future No-Build Conditions

Transit

To develop future no-build assumptions, the analysis considered existing conditions and reviewed several local, regional and statewide plans regarding transit.

The CRPC plan recommends an overhaul of CATS hub and spoke system to a more efficient grid system or transition to multiple hub system. However, there are currently no major plans to introduce or extend CATS into Ascension Parish.

The proposed New Orleans to Baton Rouge Passenger Rail service would travel between the two cities twice a day with intermediate stops in suburban Baton Rouge, Gonzales, LaPlace, suburban Kenner (Airport) and Jefferson Parish. Gonzales received a $50,000 grant from FRA to pay for the design of the station. The City of Gonzales has already purchased the land for the proposed station and survey/land use work has begun.

The Gonzales Comprehensive Plan makes several recommendations for transit including industrial employment shuttles, shopper shuttles and transit to and from the new rail station. The plan does not specify or designate funding for these transit initiatives.

Based on the plans and research detailed above, along with current funding levels and interviews with parish staff, the following assumptions define the future no-build conditions for transit in Ascension Parish. By 2037, no substantial changes will occur to existing transit/CATS service in or near the parish. Greyhound, Uber and Lyft are expected to continue to service the parish. New transit services planned but unfunded by 2037 include the passenger rail line between New Orleans and Baton Rouge with a station in Gonzales, and a vanpool or employment shuttle on LA-30.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation

A variety of plans and regulations helped guide the development of the future no-build conditions related to bicycle and pedestrian transportation, including:

- CRPC Non-Motorized Plan: Provides detailed design guidelines for municipalities in the region. The plan does not contain specific future projects (Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, Capital Region Planning Commission. October 2009).

- LADOTD Complete Streets Policy: Signed in 2010, this state policy requires provisions for all users integrated into project development for the entirety of all the projects through design features. On all new and reconstructed roadway projects, DOTD will provide bicycle recommendations appropriate to the context of the roadway. The policy is designed so that if the addition of bike or pedestrian facilities is burdensome on the cost of the project that an exception can be granted (Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development Complete Streets Policy. 2010).

- Louisiana Bicycle Long Range Plan: The state bicycle plan recommends bicycle improvements to state highways 73, 61, 44, 429, 30 and 22 (Bicycle Long Range Plan: Recommended Bike Facilities. LADOTD).

- Gonzales Comprehensive Plan: The plan recommends adoption of a local complete streets policy along with an overarching policy goal of increasing bicycle and pedestrian connectivity.

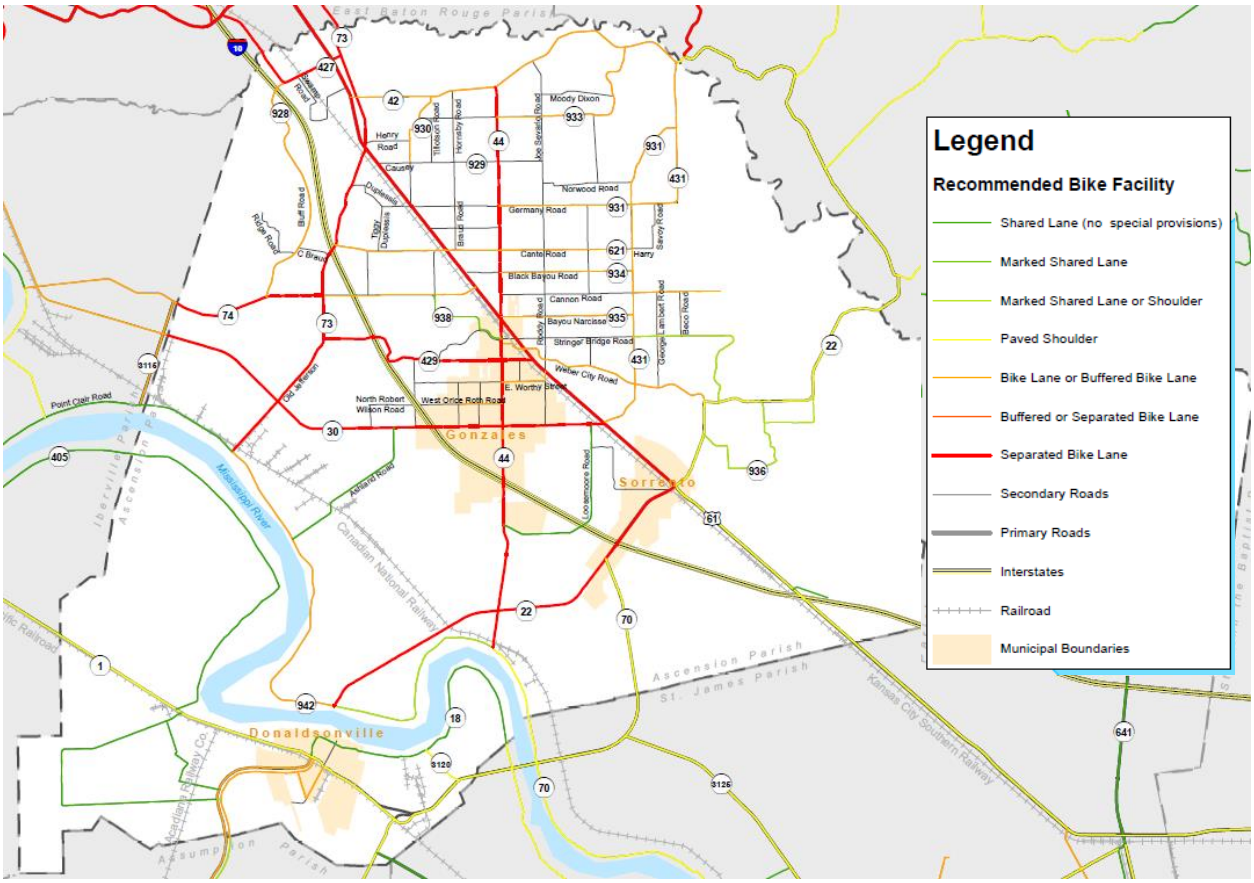
- Gonzales Master Bike Plan: Currently under development with the National Park Service.

- Parish Subdivision Code: The Ascension Parish subdivision code requires pedestrian systems for all major subdivisions (Subdivision Regulations. Parish of Ascension: Office of Planning and Development).

- Gonzales Zoning Code: The recently adopted zoning code requires sidewalks along public street frontage (Chapter 22: Zoning. Gonzales – LA – Zoning Code. 2016).

Figure 16 shows the recommended bicycle plan from the LADOTD State Bicycle Plan.

Figure 16: Recommended Bicycle Facilities



Source: LADOTD State Bicycle Long Range Plan

The future no-build conditions for bicycle and pedestrian transportation assumes limited investments as required by local development regulations. The future conditions include a multi-use path along LA-44 based on the LADOTD complete streets policy. By 2037, Gonzales city staff expect increased pedestrian facilities in downtown along with bicycle and pedestrian paths between the rail station and LA-44.

3.9.5. Conclusion

Investments in the multimodal network have not kept pace with the parish's population growth. Currently, Ascension Parish lacks local transit services and does not have an integrated system of bike and pedestrian facilities. This increases dependence on the automobile for all trips, limits access to jobs and minimizes connectivity to community facilities and services. Also, the lack of multimodal transportation affects parish quality of life by limiting mobility and access to recreational opportunities within the community. The future no-build scenario is not expected to be substantially different from exiting conditions given the lack of funding currently dedicated to multimodal transportation within the parish.

Investments in the multimodal network have not kept pace with the parish's population growth.

The bullets below summarize the key multimodal needs and opportunities:

- Parish population growth will continue to place greater pressure on the existing transportation network, creating a need to invest in alternative mode options.
- The substantial number of Ascension Parish residents commuting to work in East Baton Rouge/West Ascension may signal a need for commuter-based transit services and an opportunity to coordinate with CATS.
- The large concentration of jobs in the parish may present an opportunity to provide shuttle-based transit services.
- The proposed intercity passenger rail project between New Orleans and Baton Rouge with a stop in Gonzales will increase the need for first mile, last mile connections in the parish including local transit and bike and pedestrian connections.
- The existing pedestrian networks within the incorporated communities present a base to build the parish's bike and pedestrian network.

- Opportunities exist to incorporate bike and pedestrian accommodations as roadways are reconstructed. These corridors will provide parish-wide connectivity and help connect subdivisions with internal pedestrian facilities.

3.10 FREIGHT

3.10.1. Introduction & Background

The existing multimodal freight transportation network was inventoried and evaluated for Ascension Parish to gain an understanding of the priority freight corridors in the area and how local businesses are relying on those corridors.

3.10.2. Data & Methodology

Data was gathered from a variety of sources to assess the existing conditions and needs of the multimodal freight transportation network in the parish. Information for this section of the report was gathered from sources including Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Energy Information Administration, Truck Smart Parking Services (TSPS), and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

3.10.3. Existing Conditions

Roadways

Exhibit 15: 2012 Annual Truck Tonnage (attached) illustrates existing freight flows in the parish. Interstate 10 is the main freight corridor moving goods through the parish, with smaller volumes of goods being transported on state and parish roadways that provide direct access from the interstate to freight generating facilities throughout the parish.

There are two areas within the parish providing truck parking spaces. Trucks can park at the Supreme Inn and Suites, located on Highway 30 on the western perimeter of Gonzales. The other location for trucks to park in the parish is a Chevron gas station located on State Highway 22 in Sorrento.

Waterways

The Mississippi River is a major freight transportation artery that handles large volumes of waterborne freight. The waterway is designated as a marine highway M-55, which runs from Lake Michigan at Chicago, Illinois to New Orleans, Louisiana. The major ports near Ascension Parish include Baton Rouge, South Louisiana, New Orleans, and Plaquemines. Major truck bottlenecks at several points along the waterway cause

significant congestion. The increased use of the M-55 corridor as an alternative freight route can contribute to reduced emissions, lower maintenance costs, and improved highway safety.

Pipelines

The parish and region's high concentration of chemical, oil, and gas pipeline infrastructure is quite established. Most pipelines are underground, where they are more protected from the elements and have minimal interference with surface transportation issues.

Railroads

Four railroads operate within Ascension Parish: Union Pacific Railroad (UP), Kansas City Southern Railway (KCS), Canadian National Railway (CN), and Acadiana Railway Company (AKDN) which leases the Thibodeaux Industrial Lead from UP as shown in Exhibit 16: Existing Ascension Parish Rail at the end of this document.

UP owns and operates 9.5 miles of single-mainline track, 3.6 miles of siding track, and a yard at Donaldsonville within the parish called the Livonia Subdivision. Within the parish boundaries, UP also owns, and operates 2.85 miles of the Thibodeaux Industrial Lead south of the Mississippi River. Along these track limits the mainline runs through two towns: McCall and Donaldsonville.

Table 11 lists the rail crossing information for the parish which was gathered from the FRA Grade Crossing Inventory.

KCS operates trains on a 19-mile single-mainline track with 1.1 miles of sidings within the Parish (New Orleans Subdivision) through the towns of Prairieville, Gonzales, Sorrento, Barmen, and McElroy. Based on a map review, there does not appear to be any major KCS customers within the Parish, although there are a few industry tracks that feed local business.

CN runs trains north of the Mississippi River through the towns of San Gabriel and Geismar, within the Baton Rouge Subdivision and along a 14.6-mile single-mainline track with many industry tracks for major national and international industries (Shell, BASF Corporation, Praxair, Univar USA, Occidental Chemical Corporation, etc.) and a rail yard east of Geismar within the Parish.

Table 11: Rail Crossings

Railroad	Miles of single track	Miles of siding track and location	Number of trains a day	#of grade crossings	Type of warning	# of incidents between 1975-2016	Non-Fatal injuries	Fatal injuries
Union Pacific (UP)	9.5	3.6 miles Donaldson and Livonia Subdivision	16	20	4 Active 3 Passive	36	15	2
AKDN (owned by UP)		2.85 Thibodeaux Industrial lead	2					
Kansas City Southern (KCS)	19	1.1 New Orleans Subdivision	6	25	17 Active 2 Passive	80	57	8
Canadian Northern (CN)	14.6	lots of tracks to industrial facilities and railyard east of Geismar	2 west of Geismar 8 east of Geismar	17	4 Active 1 Passive	29	9	0

Source: Federal Railroad Association

Quiet zones are locations where, based on FRA criteria, trains are not required to sound horns due to certain infrastructure improvements in place. There are not any quiet zone locations within Ascension Parish per the FRA quiet zone database.

3.10.4. Future No-Build

A potential intercity passenger rail and commuter service between Baton Rouge and New Orleans would operate on the KCS New Orleans Subdivision. This service is currently in the initial stages of planning development. The Louisiana State Rail Plan (Louisiana State Rail Plan, June 2015, prepared for Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development) also mentions a New Orleans – Baton Rouge – Lake Charles – Houston passenger rail route that would use the same KCS line. Exhibit 17: Baton Rouge to New Orleans Proposed High Speed Rail (attached) shows the proposed high-speed rail route.

Freight truck volumes are expected to grow across the nation and Ascension Parish will handle some of that growth. Much of this growth will be in the form of through freight truck traffic on I-10. Although I-10 will transport most of the goods moving through the parish, major highways such as US highway 22 and County Road 30 that provide freight access to many of the region's water port facilities and industries will be key freight corridors. As industry grows along the Mississippi river, freight between these industries and I-10 will also grow. Exhibit 18: 2045 Annual Truck Tonnage (attached) shows future truck tonnage.

3.10.5. Conclusion

Trucks carry most of the weight and value of freight moving within the parish, but railroads and waterways are continuing to carry more amounts of freight. Rail moves a large volume of the heaviest commodities being exported from the state, while the inland waterways transport growing volumes of chemicals and even containers along the Mississippi River. Freight mobility is important to the parish economy. The safety and efficiency of these transportation facilities are critical to the overarching success of freight movement in this region.

4.0 TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

4.1 TRANSPORTATION NEEDS SUMMARY

This section summarizes the transportation needs identified from the Phase 1 work. The transportation needs are formed from, national, state and regional parish transportation goals, previous studies, visioning workshop with parish leadership, stakeholder interviews, and technical analysis of current and future no-build conditions. The Phase 1 Ascension Parish transportation needs serve as the guiding framework for Phase 2 transportation solutions. In addition to the transportation needs, transportation study goals are also identified from the Phase 1 work. The primary transportation needs in the Parish are:

- Congestion
- Safety
- Mobility
- Condition

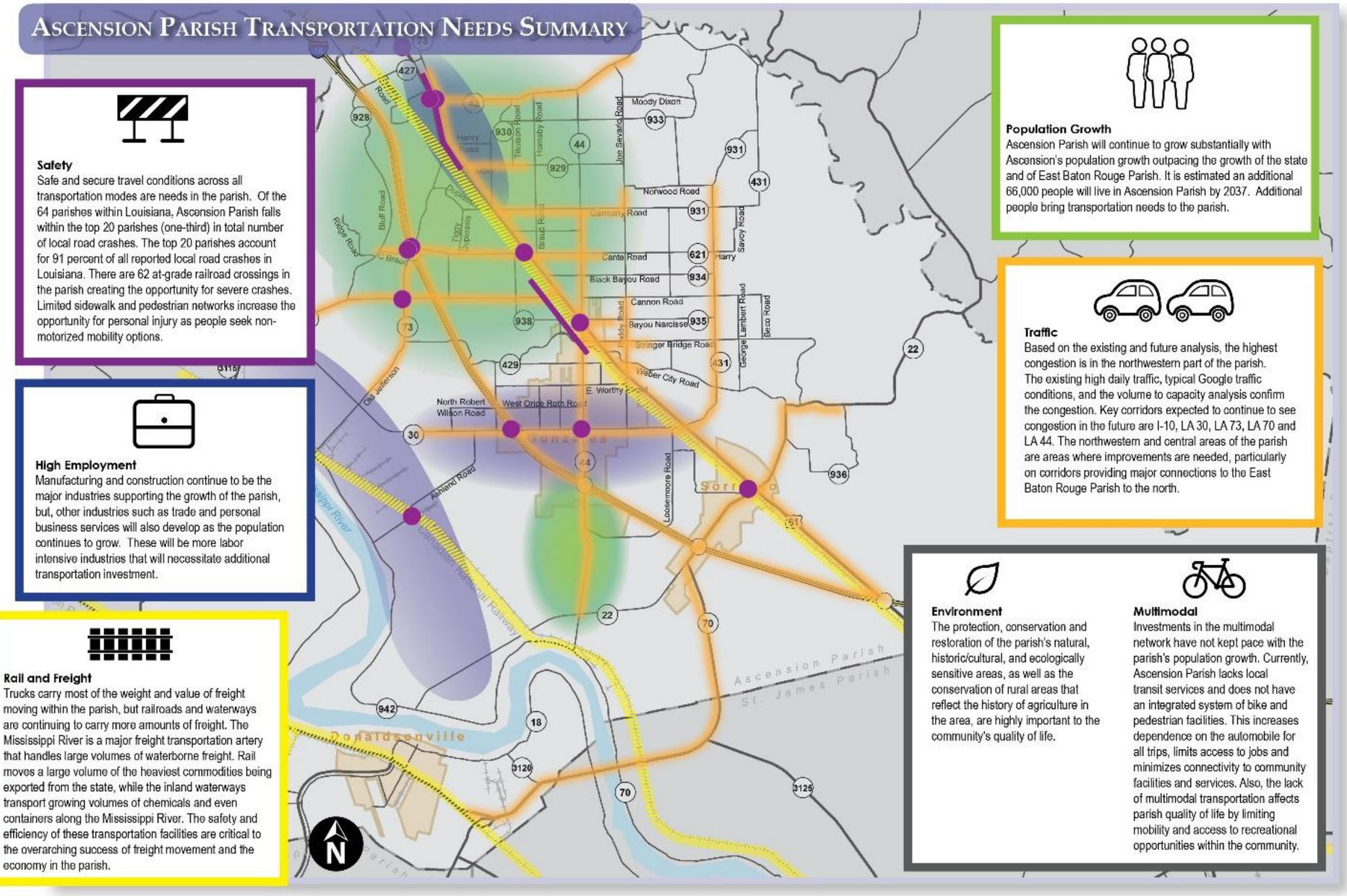
Each of these four transportation needs and the reason for the need is defined in greater detail in Table 12.

Table 12: Transportation Needs Table

Ascension Parish transportation need to address:	Reason for Need
Congestion Congestion and delays in traffic cost regional businesses, industries and commuters millions of dollars annually. The following transportation needs were identified.	• Existing high traffic volumes and congestion located on primary state highways and local roads • The Parish is expected to grow by more than 87,000 new residents by 2042. • The Parish is expected to experience a significant increase of 86,000 new employees by 2042. • Lack of multimodal options of walking, biking, transit contribute to congestion. • Congestion contributes to environmental impacts such as noise, water quality and air quality • Congestion contributes to an unhealthy lifestyle. • Parish leadership have indicated a need • Key stakeholders from the School District, AEDC, Chamber of Commerce and Sherriff's Department have identified a need. • Parish land use decisions impact congestion • Congestion can negatively impact economic growth.
Safety Safety is critical to the quality of life of the parish.	• Ascension is in the top 1/3 of most crashes in the state. • The large number of at-grade railroad crossings serving local businesses creates a safety concern. • Lack of a bicycle and pedestrian sidewalk creates a safety concern. • Key stakeholders from the School District and Sherriff's Department have identified a need.
Mobility Mobility is the connectivity and reliability of our multimodal trips	• Lack of road connectivity to key areas such as westbank area of Donaldsonville leads to congestion. • Lack of local street connectivity puts more pressure on the arterial street network to provide first and last-mile connections. • Residents and businesses depend on a transportation system that can be unreliable as to when and where congestion and safety issues arise, increasing the cost to do business in the parish. • Currently there is no public transportation • Walking and biking trips are limited by a limited infrastructure. • Freight is vital to the local and regional economy and there are a number of freight bottlenecks. • Parish land use decisions impact mobility
Condition The condition of the transportation system is crucial to the efficient flow of people and goods.	• Roads in the parish have substandard geometrics related to lane width, turn bays, ditches and other roadway infrastructure. • Deteriorating bridge and pavement conditions exist

Figure 17 provides a conceptual graphic of the parish summarizing the transportation needs. The figure does not show all the needs but provides a summary of the key transportation needs.

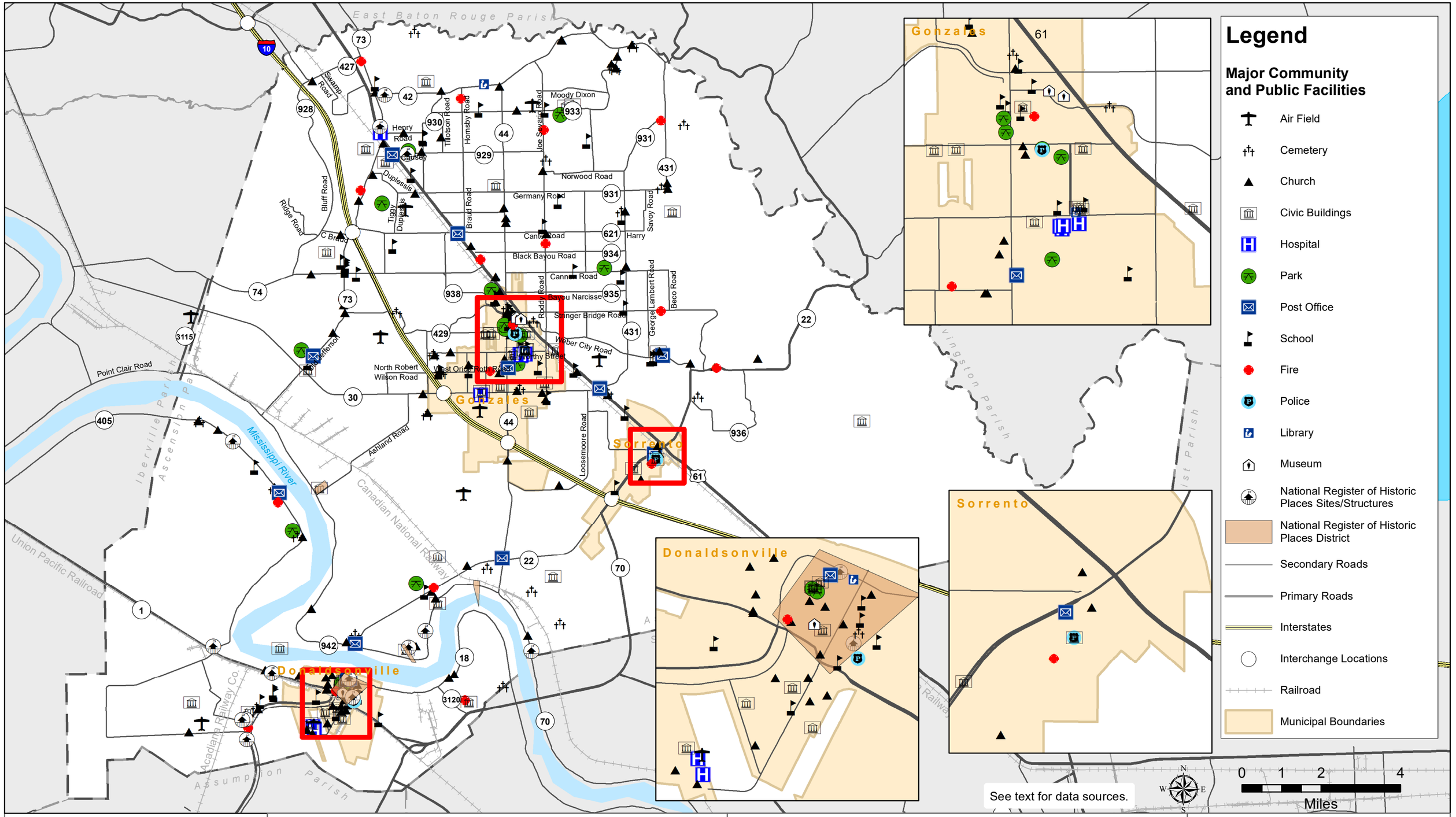
Figure 17: Transportation Needs Summary



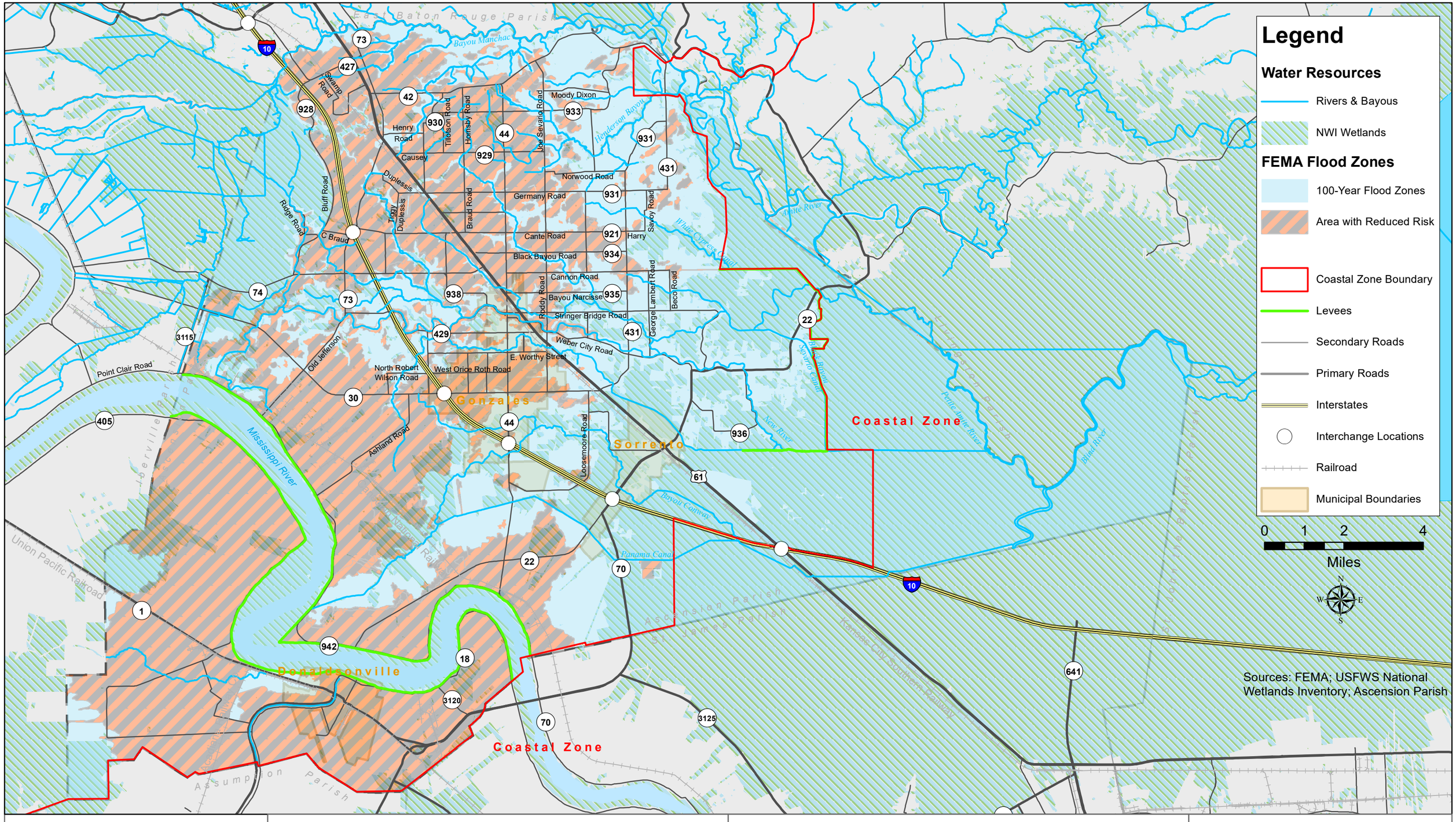
4.2 STUDY GOALS

While the primary transportation needs in the Parish have been identified as traffic congestion, safety, mobility and condition, the Master Plan will also incorporate study goals into the study process. Input sought from Ascension Parish leadership, stakeholders and the public have been incorporated to develop goals and guiding principles. A listing of the study goals is presented below. The following study goals will provide guidance for the alternatives development process:

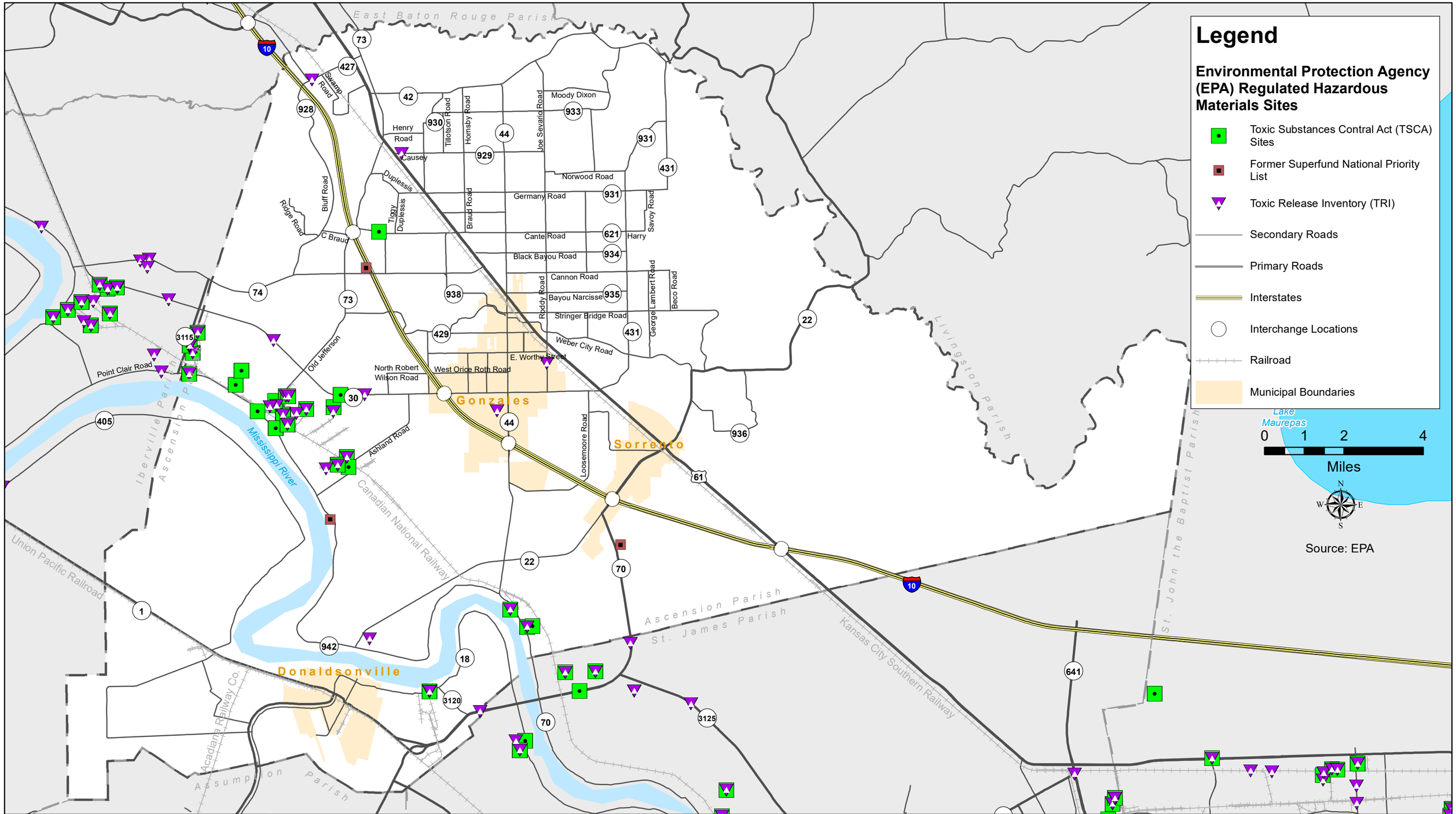
1. Improve system reliability
2. Minimize roadway disruptions during construction
3. Maximize cost efficiency
4. Optimize opportunities for economic development
5. Balance short-term and long-term needs and solutions
6. Target corridor solutions over “hot-spot” nodes
7. Support economic development and proactively guide growth in the parish
8. Improve opportunity for connectivity to I-10
9. Improve local vehicle access to and from downtown Baton Rouge
10. Leverage available funding to provide the greatest return for the parish
11. Avoid and/or minimize impacts to the human and natural environment
12. Engage the public and stakeholder agencies
13. Use technology to improve regional mobility
14. Connect bicycle/pedestrian friendly facilities
15. Accommodate future transit
16. Sustain public support



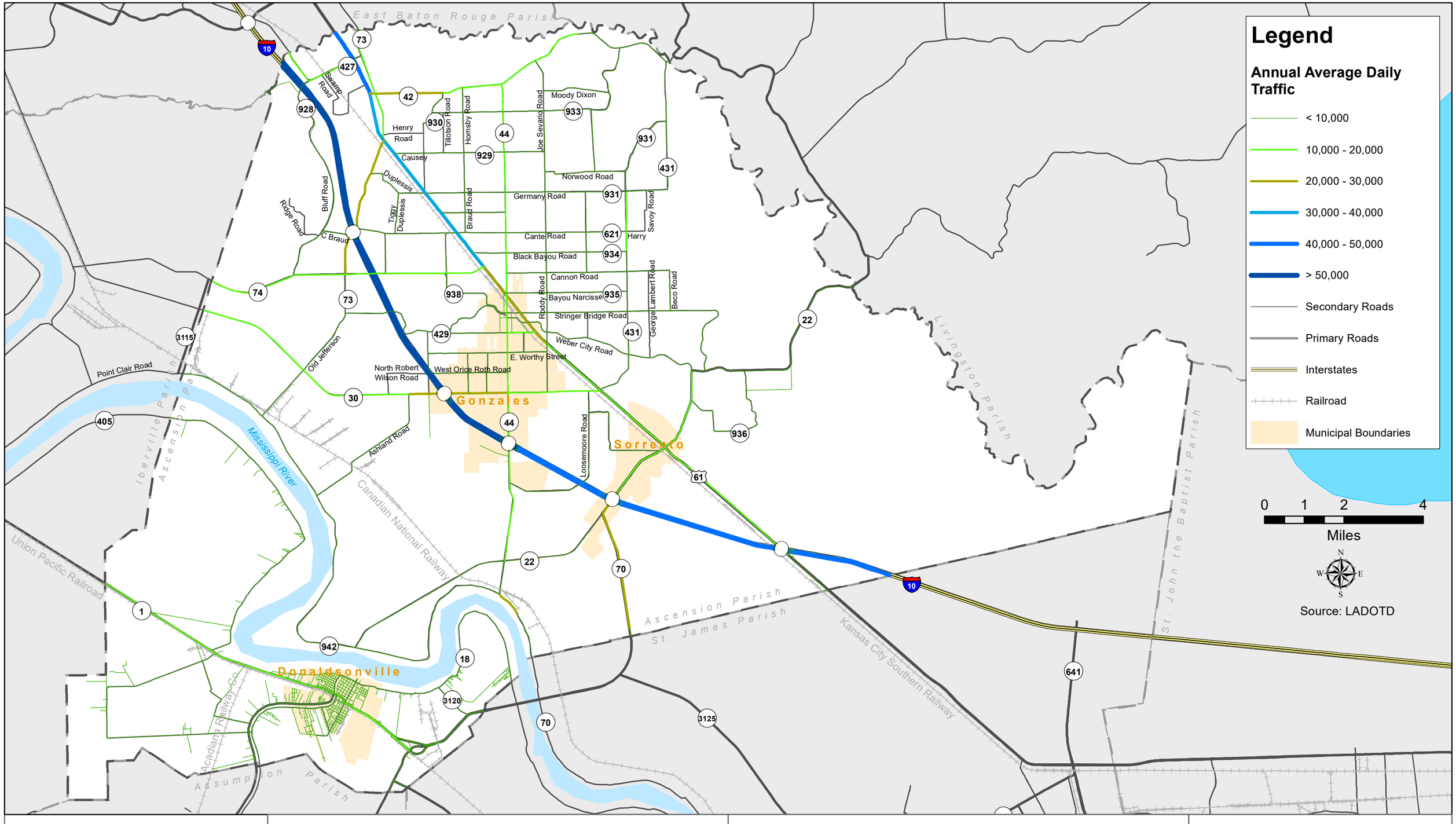
PARISH OF ASCENSION LOUISIANA HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	Major Community and Public Facilities	Exhibit 1



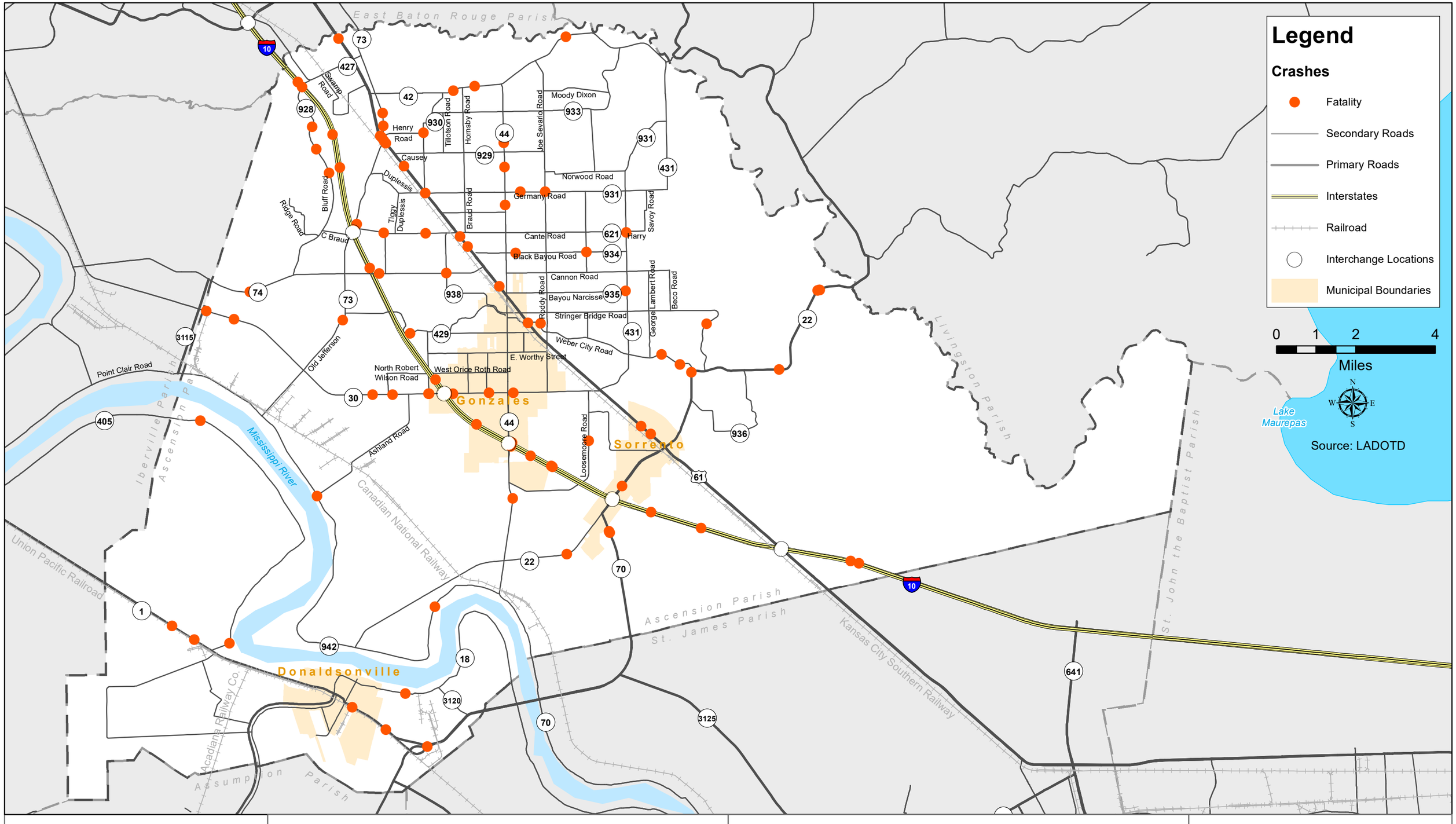
HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	Water Resources and Flood Zones	Exhibit 2



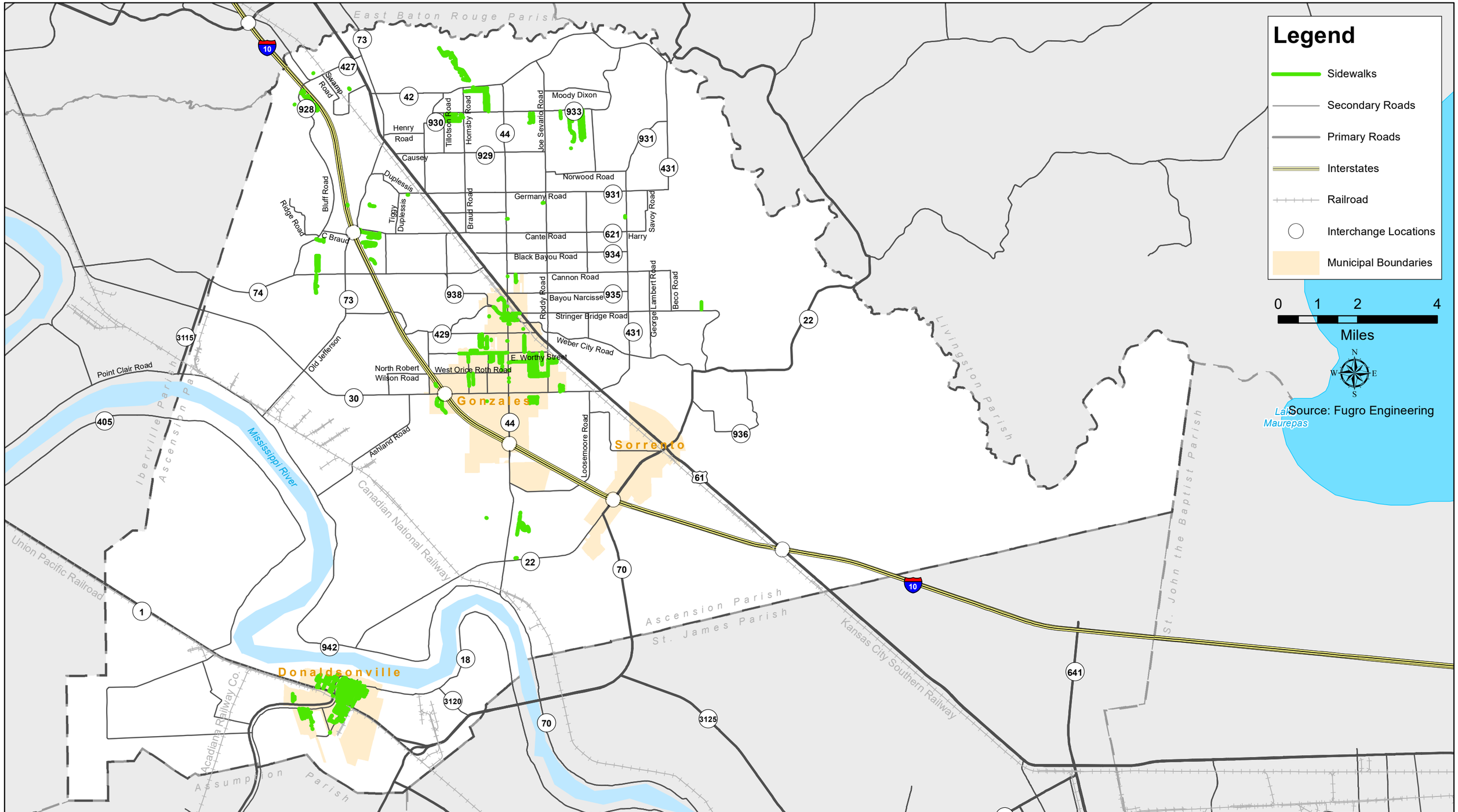
PARISH OF ASCENSION LOUISIANA HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Regulated Hazardous Materials Sites	Exhibit 3



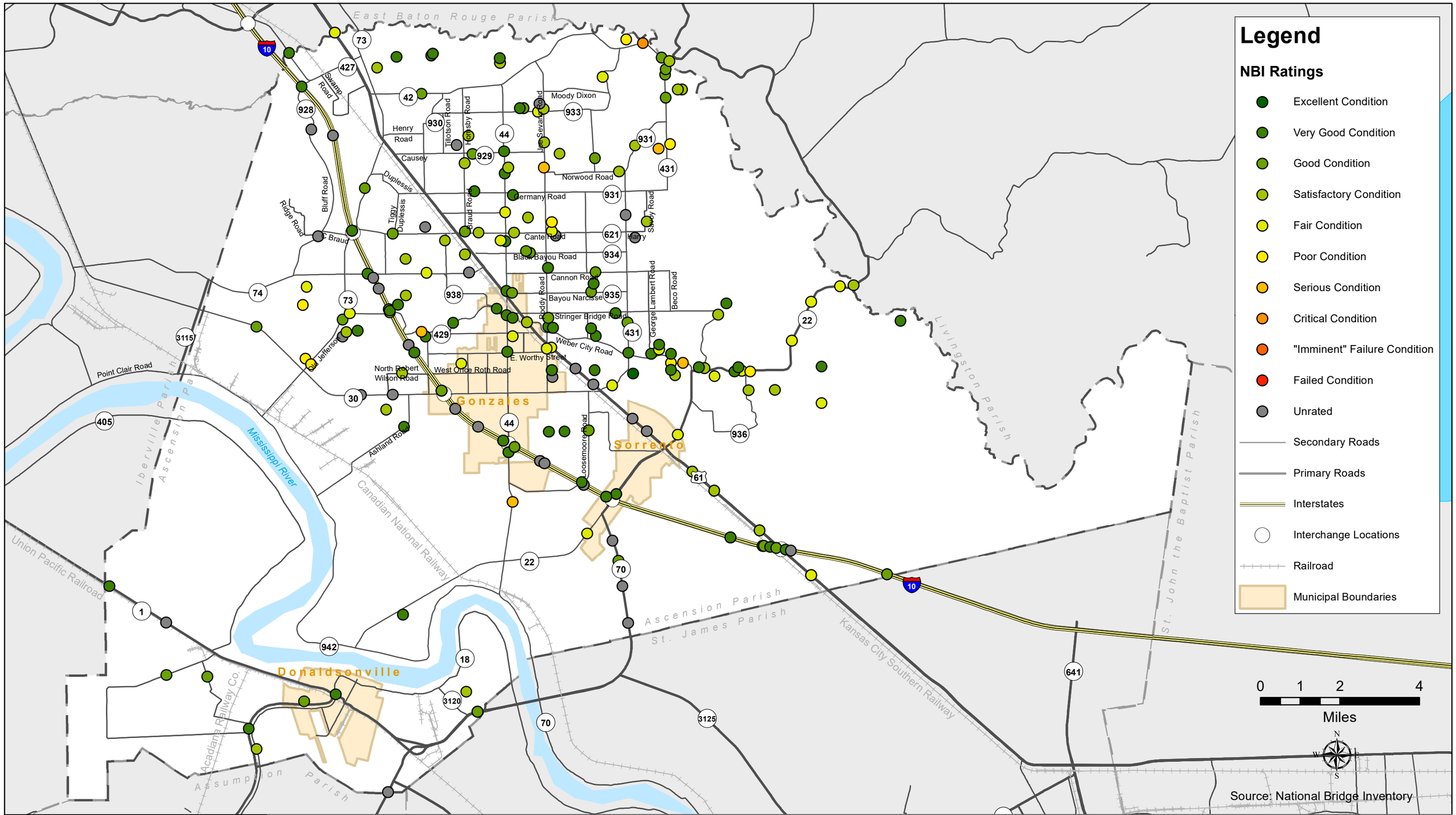
HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	2016 Existing Daily Traffic Volume	Exhibit 4



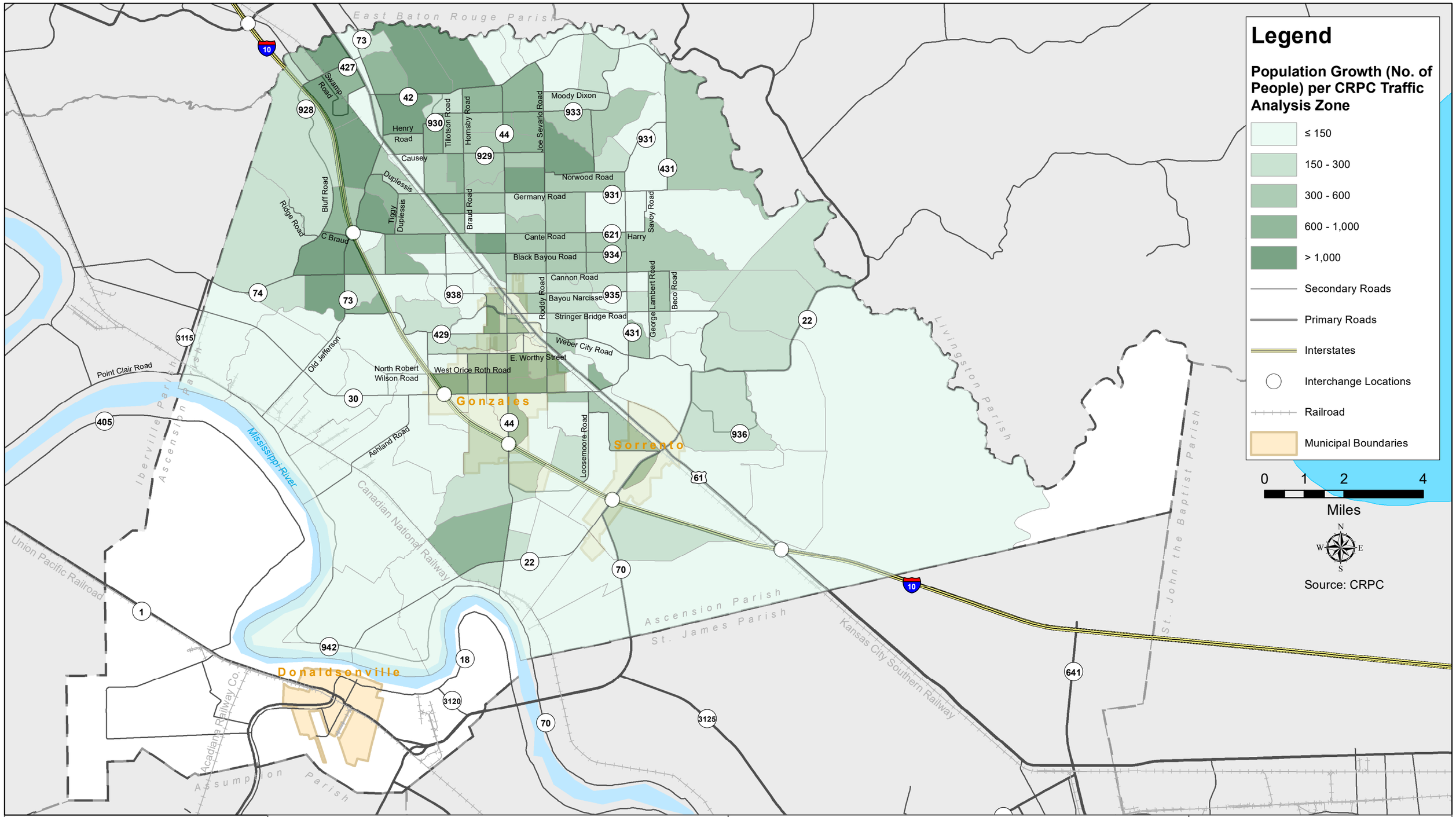
PARISH OF ASCENSION LOUISIANA HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	2012 - 2016 Safety	Exhibit 5



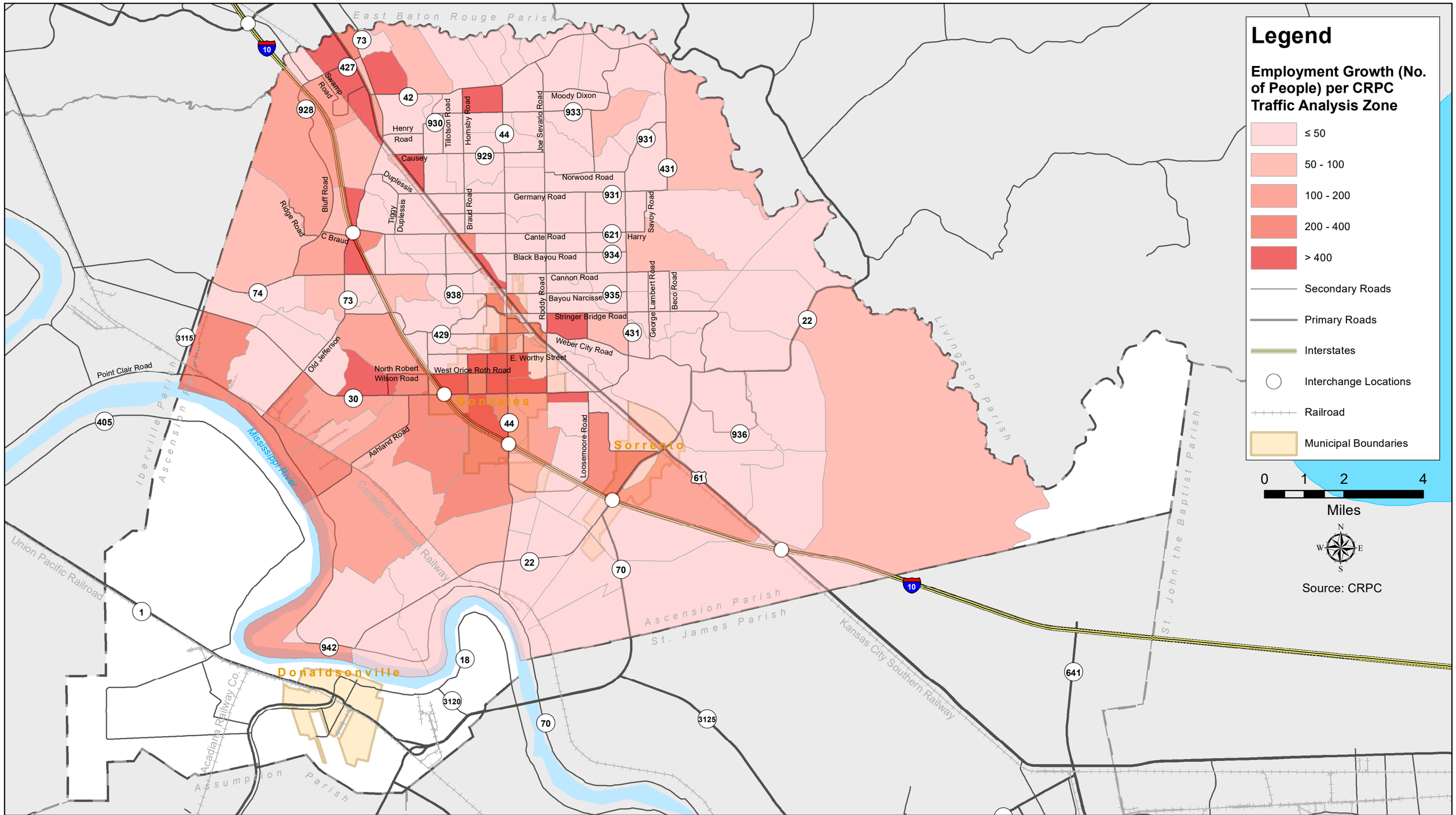
PARISH OF ASCENSION LOUISIANA HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	2016 Sidewalks	Exhibit 6



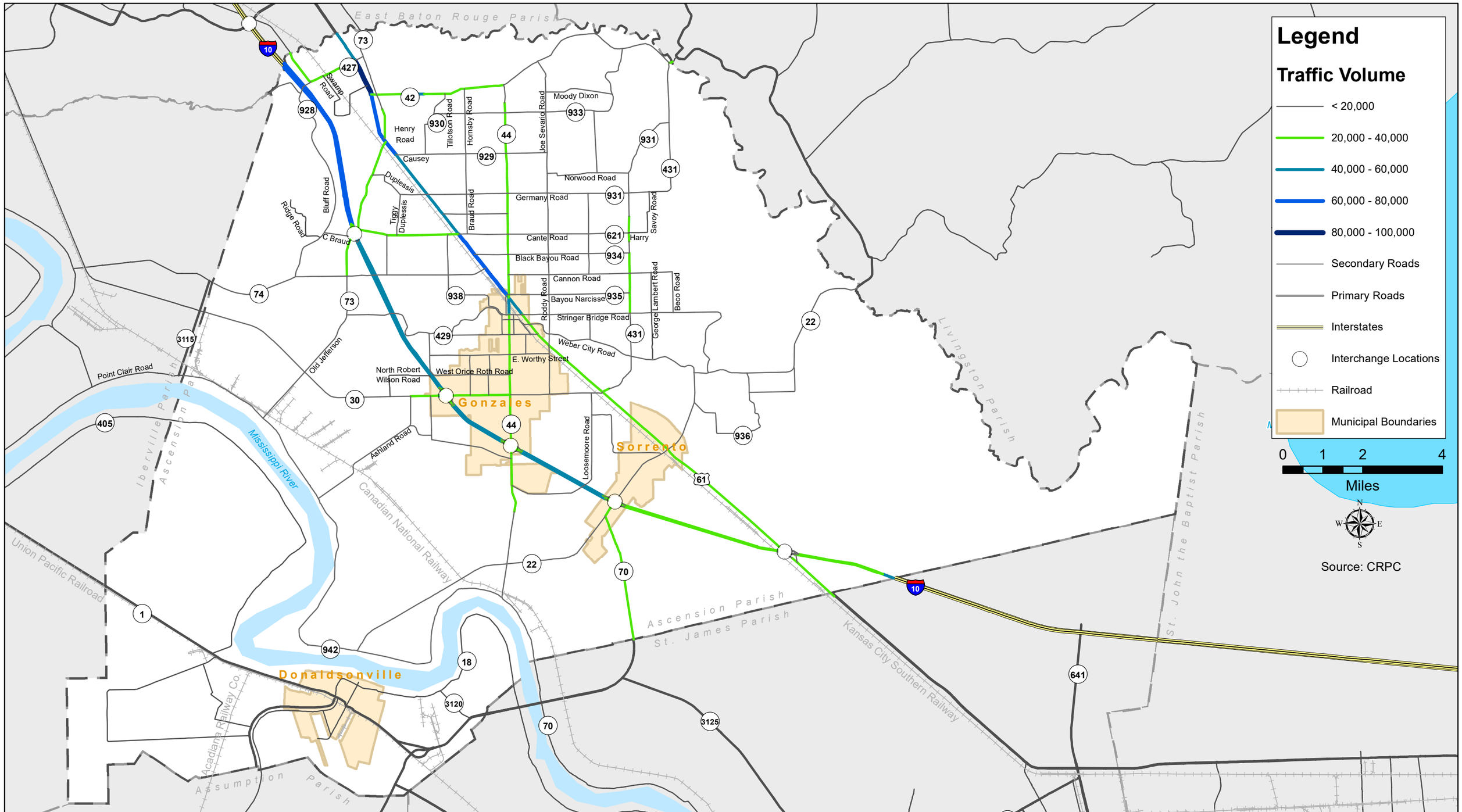
HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	2016 National Bridge Inventory Maximum Load in Metric Tons	Exhibit 7



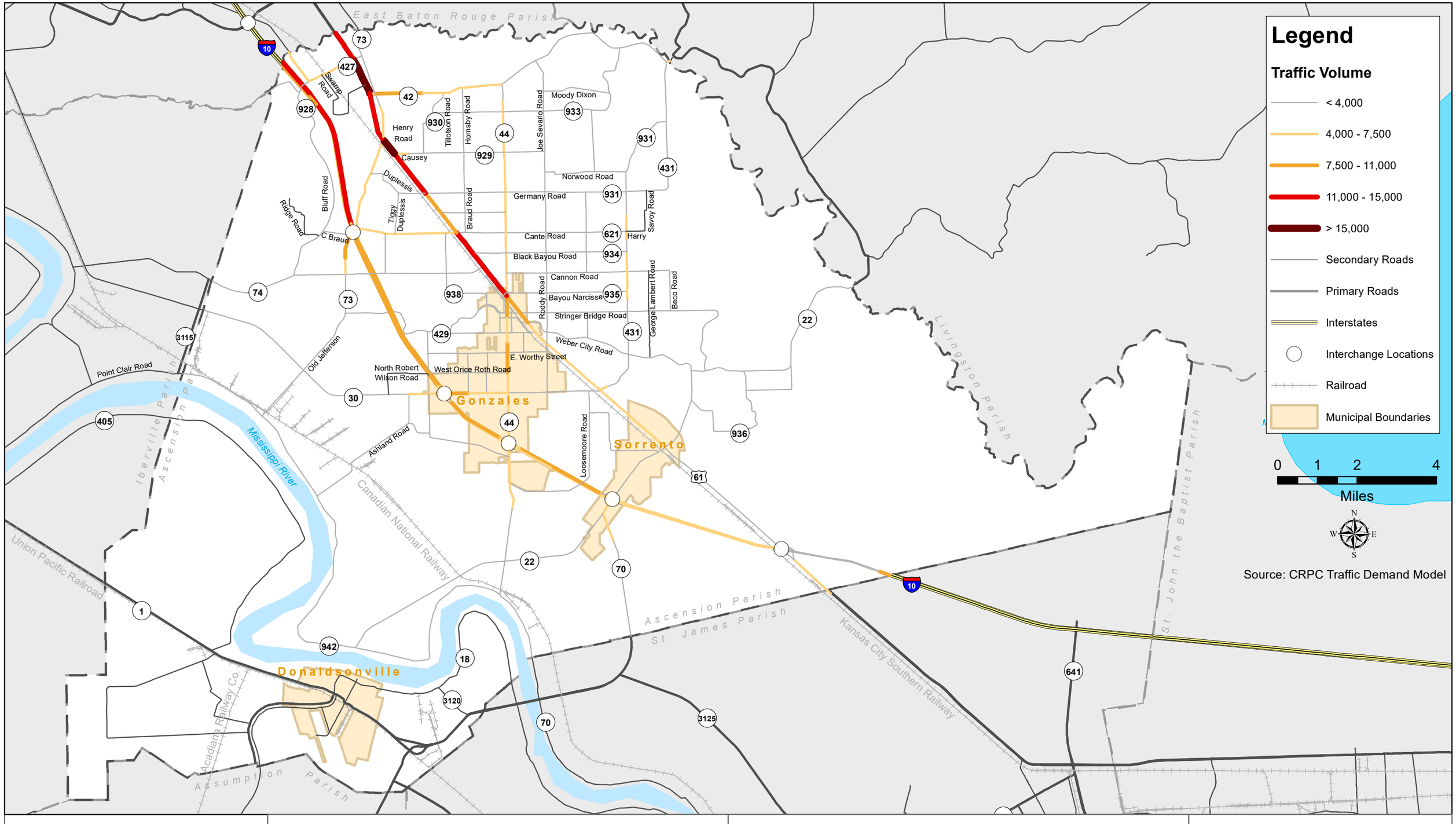
HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	2017 to 2037 Population Growth	Exhibit 8



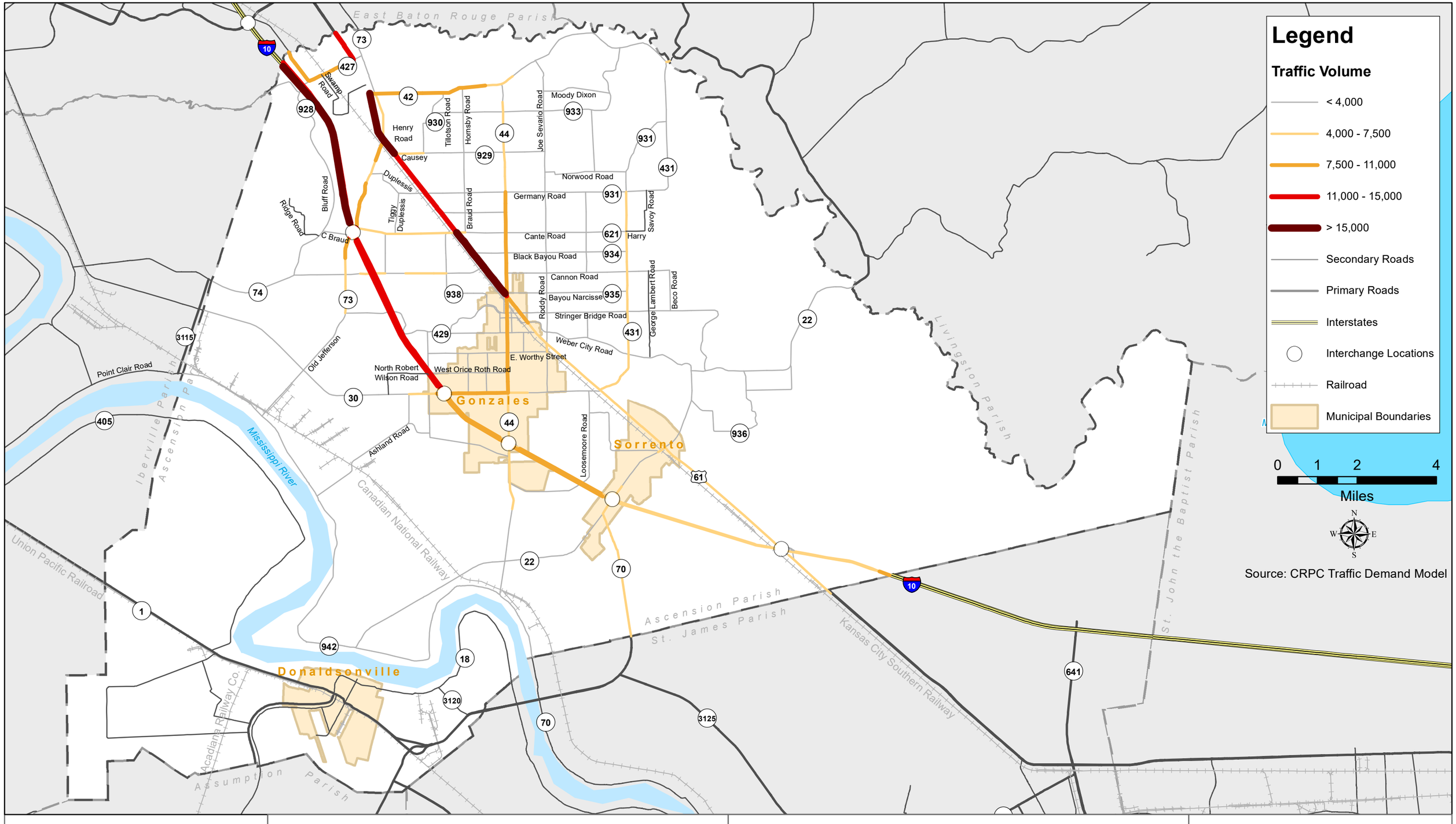
HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	2017 to 2037 Employment Growth	Exhibit 9



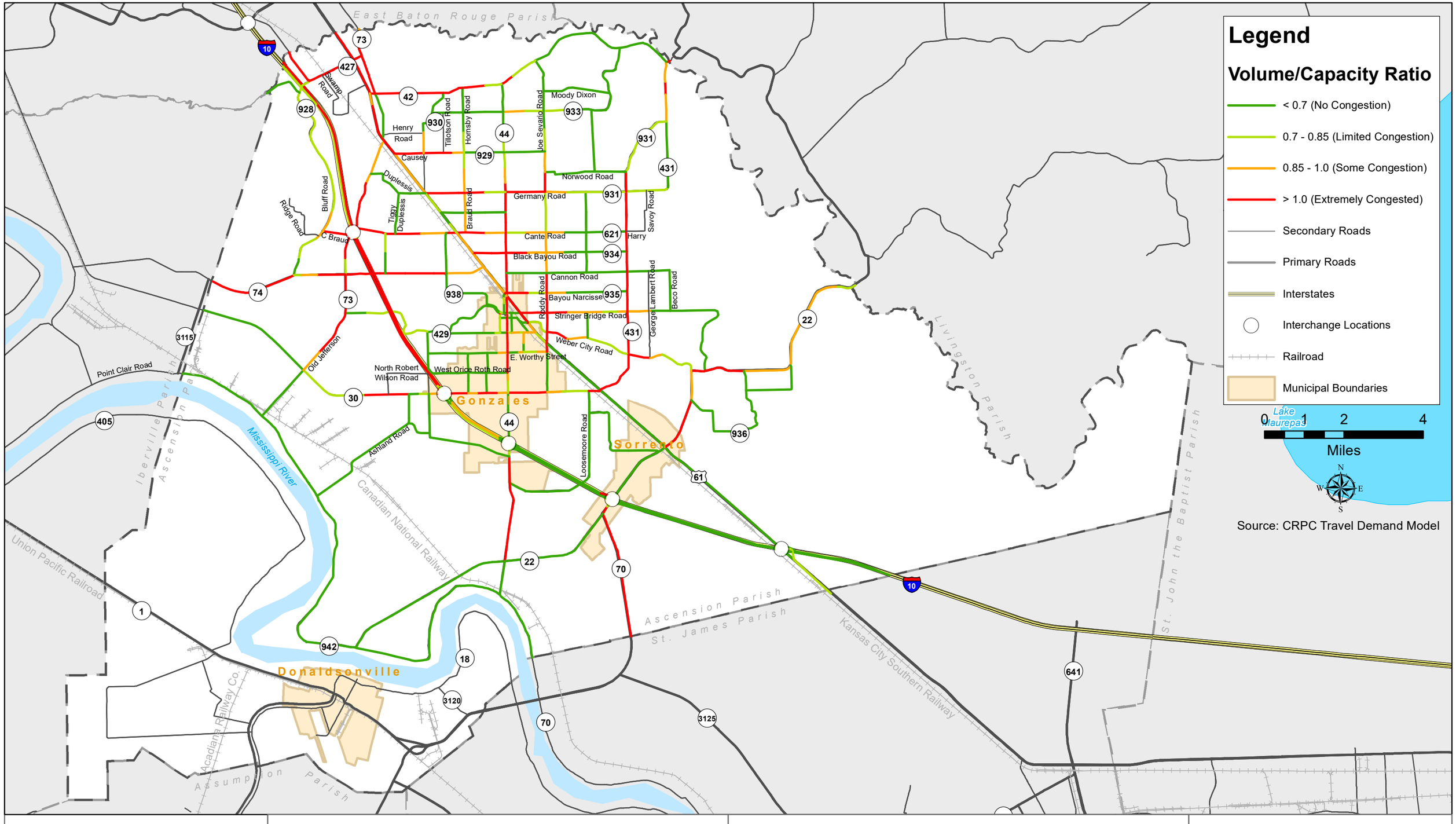
HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	2037 No-Build Daily Traffic Volumes	Exhibit 10



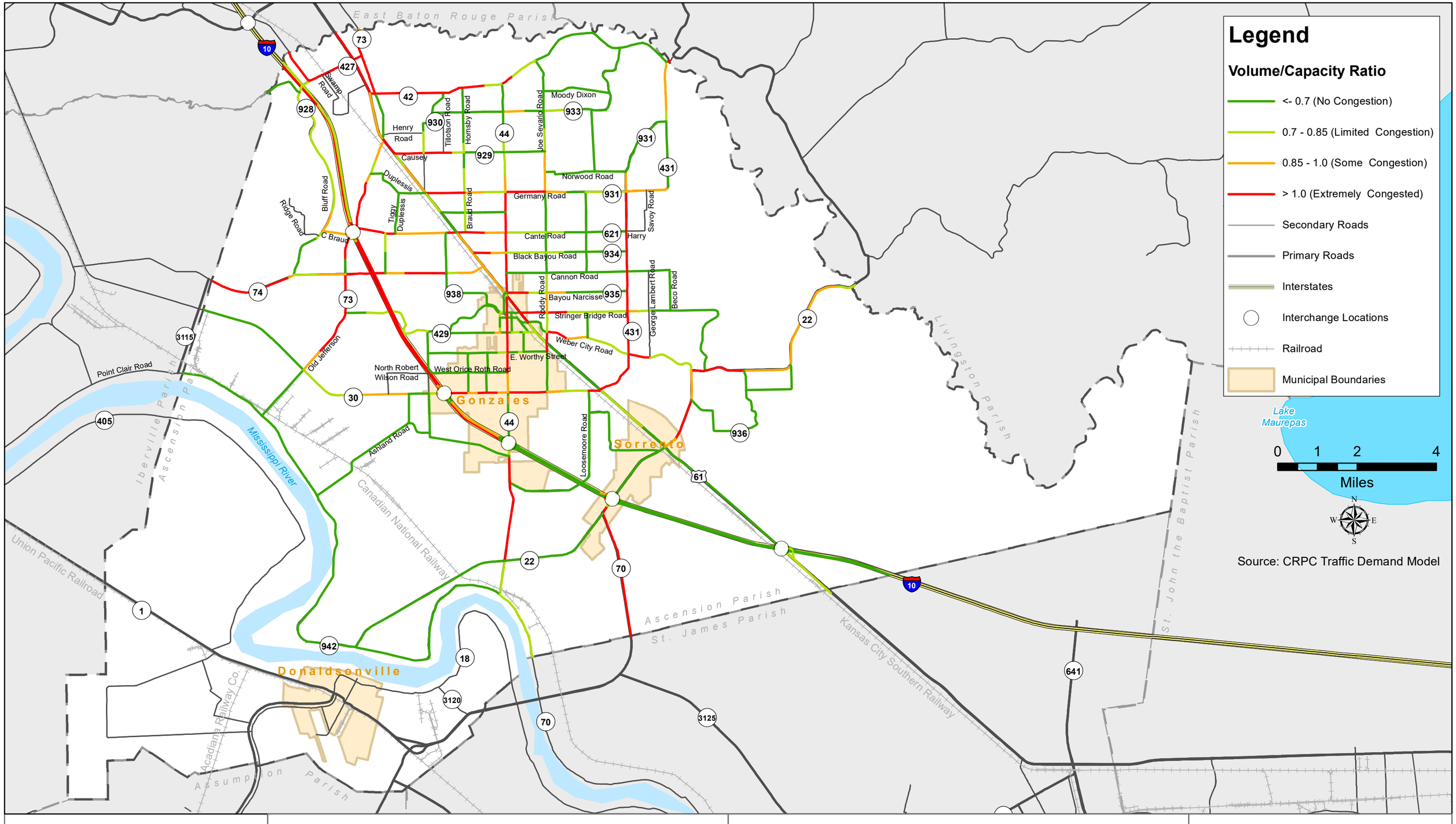
HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	2037 No-Build AM Peak Period Volumes	Exhibit 11



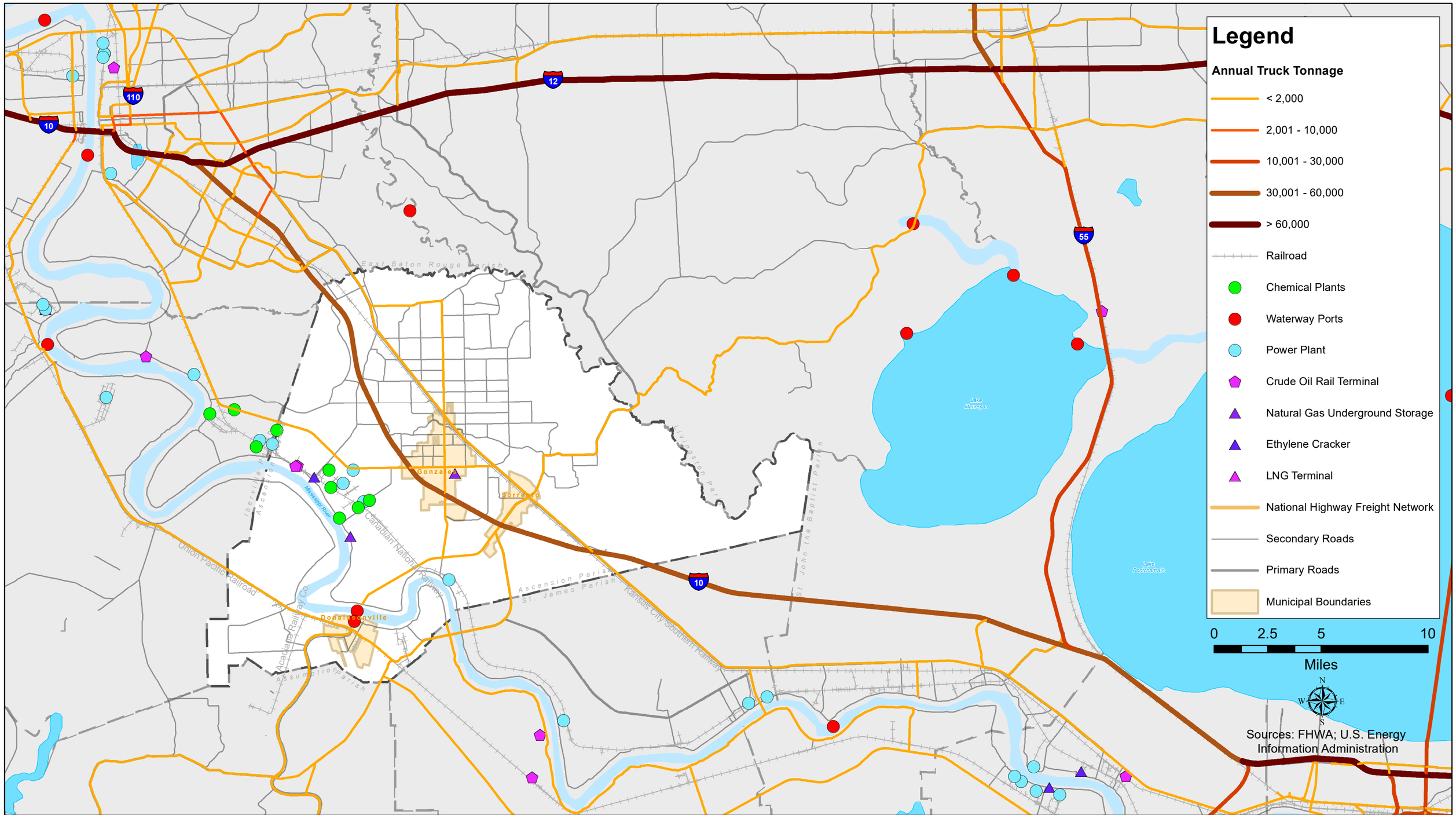
PARISH OF ASCENSION LOUISIANA HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	2037 No-Build PM Peak Period Volumes	Exhibit 12



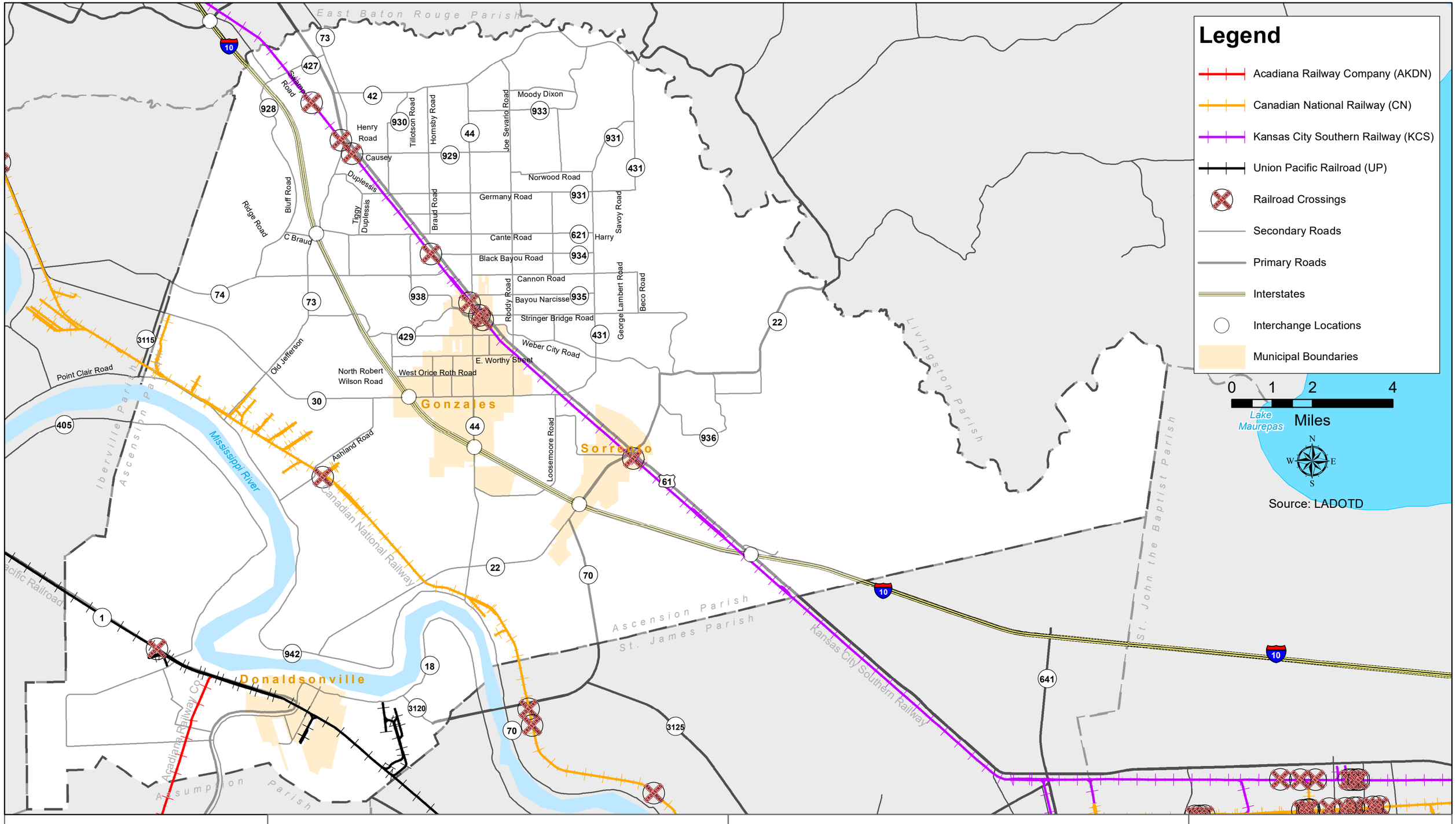
PARISH OF ASCENSION LOUISIANA HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	2037 No-Build AM Peak Period Congestion	Exhibit 13



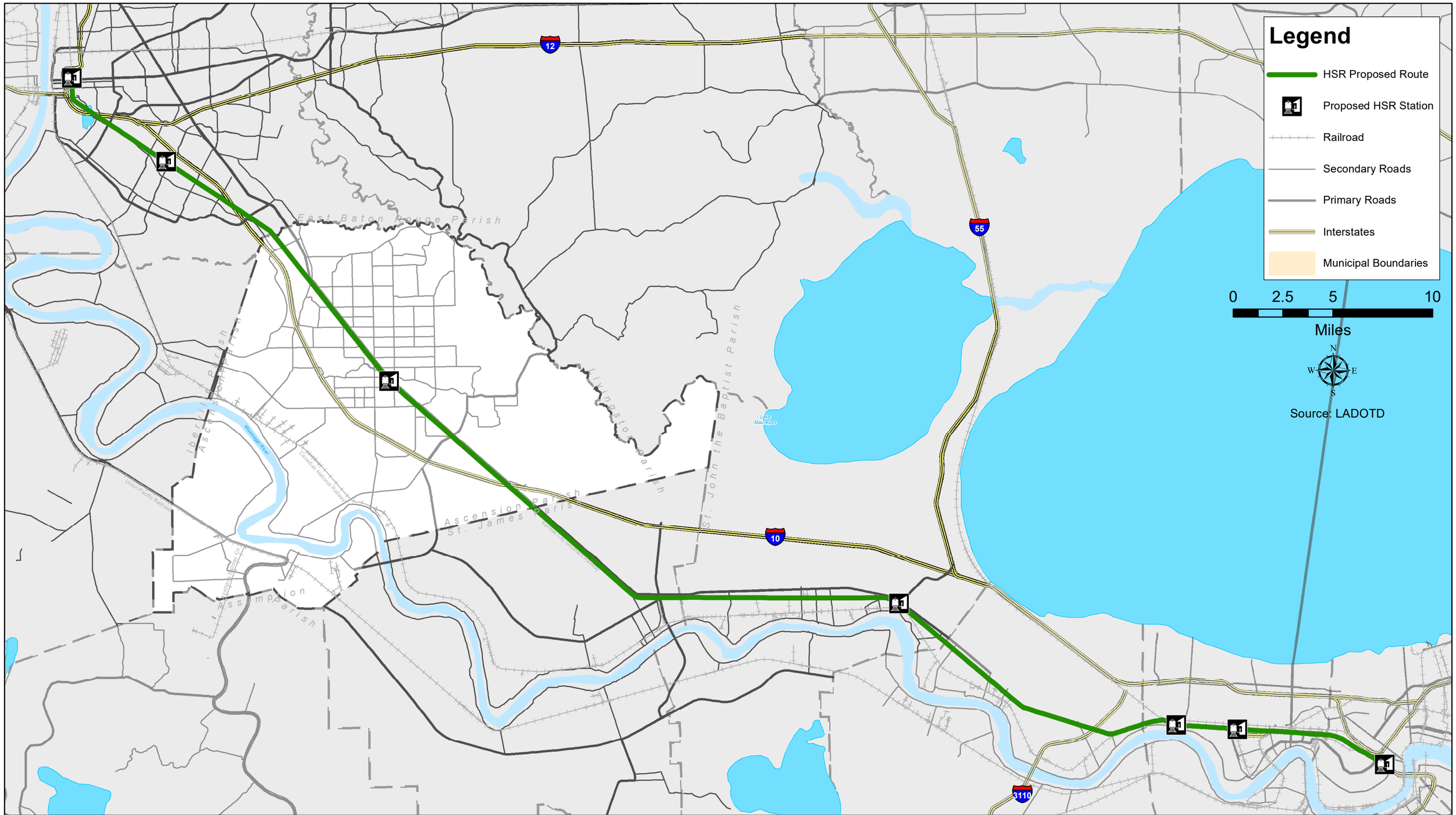
HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	2037 No-Build PM Peak Period Congestion	Exhibit 14



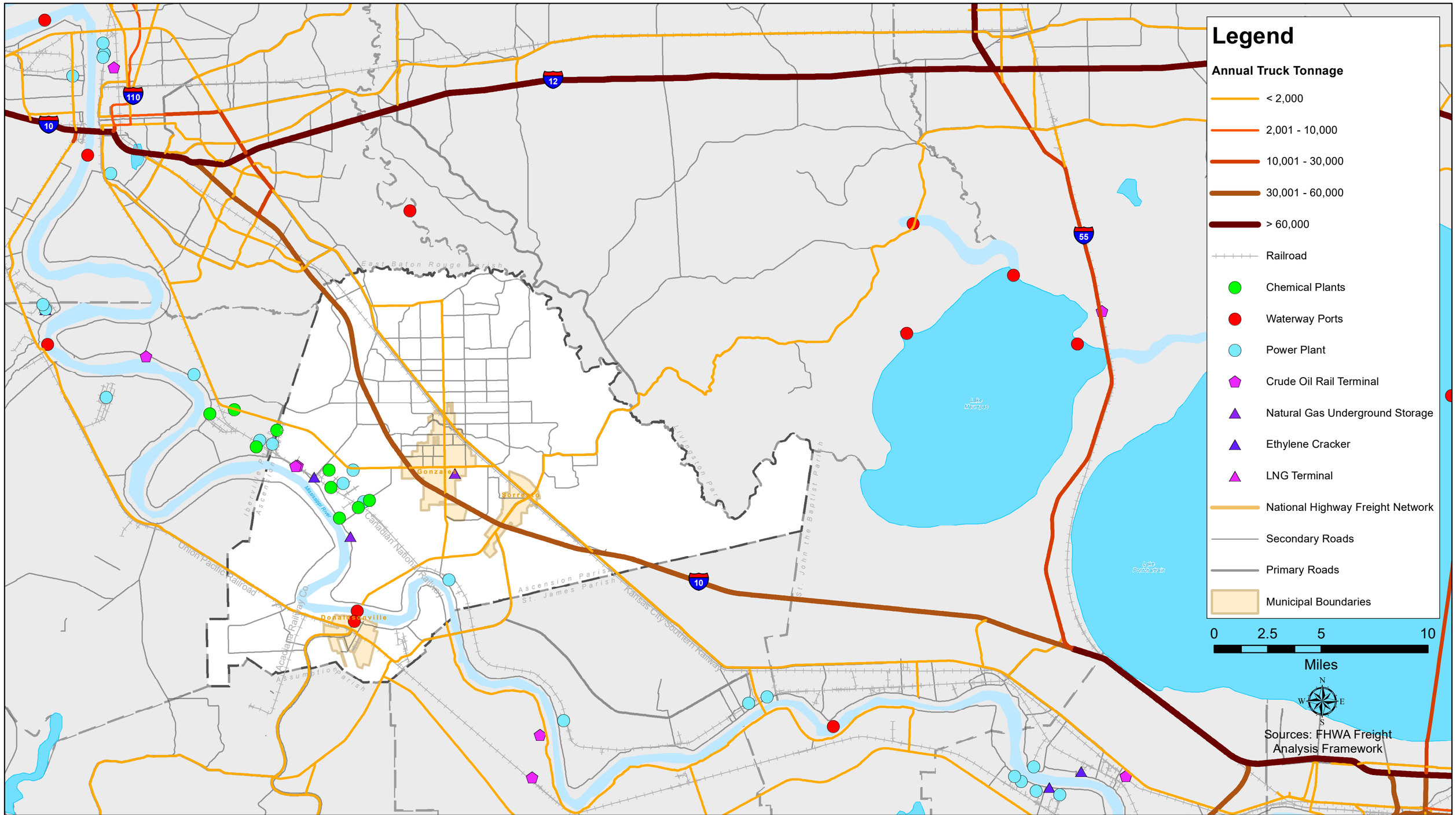
PARISH OF ASCENSION LOUISIANA HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	2012 Annual Truck Tonnage	Exhibit 15



PARISH OF ASCENSION LOUISIANA HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	Existing Ascension Parish Rail	Exhibit 16



PARISH OF ASCENSION LOUISIANA HNTB	Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	Baton Rouge to New Orleans Proposed High Speed Rail	Exhibit 17



HNTB

Ascension Parish
Transportation Master Plan

2045 Annual Truck Tonnage

Exhibit 18

Appendix - General Demographics for the State of Louisiana and Ascension Parish

Demographic Characteristics	Louisiana				Ascension Parish			
	2000 Census[1]	2015 ACS[2]	% Increase/ Decrease	Amount Increase/ Decrease	2000 Census[1]	2015 ACS[2]	% Increase/ Decrease	Amount Increase/ Decrease
Total Population	4,468,976	4,625,253	3.50%	156,277	76,627	114,738	49.74%	38,111
Sex								
Male	2,162,903	2,261,156	4.54%	98,253	37,710	56,848	50.75%	19,138
Female	2,306,073	2,364,097	2.52%	58,024	38,917	57,890	48.75%	18,973
Age								
Under 5 years	317,392	309,966	-2.34%	-7,426	6,258	8,466	35.28%	2,208
5 to 9 years	336,780	313,613	-6.88%	-23,167	6,407	9,085	41.80%	2,678
10 to 14 years	347,912	307,533	-11.61%	-40,379	6,484	9,217	42.15%	2,733
15 to 19 years	365,945	306,642	-16.21%	-59,303	6,213	8,061	29.74%	1,848
20 to 24 years	325,571	347,558	6.75%	21,987	4,957	6,669	34.54%	1,712
25 to 34 years	601,162	657,818	9.42%	56,656	11,715	16,093	37.37%	4,378
35 to 44 years	691,966	567,501	-17.99%	-124,465	13,259	16,933	27.71%	3,674
45 to 54 years	586,271	623,114	6.28%	36,843	9,804	16,277	66.02%	6,473
55 to 59 years	208,761	310,296	48.64%	101,535	3,312	6,972	110.51%	3,660
60 to 64 years	170,287	268,643	57.76%	98,356	2,326	5,539	138.13%	3,213
65 to 74 years	282,925	354,872	25.43%	71,947	3,384	7,297	115.63%	3,913
75 to 84 years	175,328	186,401	6.32%	11,073	1,939	3,226	66.37%	1,287
85 years and over	58,676	71,396	21.68%	12,720	569	903	58.70%	334
Median Age	34.0	36.1	6.18%		32.0	34.8	8.75%	
Minority Population	37.5%	40.5%	3.0%		23.8%	29.9%	6.1%	
Population below Poverty Level	19.6%	19.8%	0.2%		12.9%	11.8%	-1.1%	
Total Disabled Population	646,920	677,157	4.67%	30,237	9,665	13,049	35.01%	3,384
Speak English less than "very well"	116,907	124,820	6.77%	7,913	1,249	1,843	47.56%	594
Urban Population [3]	3,245,665	3,385,049	4.29%	139,384	57,427	99,574	73.39%	42,147
Rural Population [3]	1,223,311	1,240,204	1.38%	16,893	19,200	15,164	-21.02%	-4,036
Total Employment	1,592,357*	1,724,973**	8.33%	132,616	25,355*	32,671***	28.85%	7,316
Housing								
Total Population in Occupied Housing Units	4,333,011	4,496,904	3.78%	163,893	75,981	113,957	49.98%	37,976
Average Household Size	2.62	2.60			2.85	2.84		
Total Housing Units	1,847,181	1,999,855	8.27%	152,674	29,172	43,255	48.28%	14,083
Owner Occupied Housing Units	1,125,135	1,727,919	53.57%	602,784	21,955	32,259	46.93%	10,304
Renter-Occupied Housing Units	530,918	271,936	-48.78%	-258,982	4,736	7,851	65.77%	3,115
Population in Same Residence for 5 or More Years	2,452,282	3,079,013	25.56%	626,731	41,944	83,293	98.58%	41,349
Education								
School Enrollment (Age 3+)	1,271,299	1,183,921	-6.87%	-87,378	21,867	31,602	44.52%	9,735
Education Attainment (Population 18 and over)								
Less Than High School Diploma	25.6%	16.9%	-8.6%		21.3%	12.2%	-9.1%	
High School Graduate	32.1%	33.6%	1.5%		40.9%	34.7%	-6.1%	
Some College or Associates Degree	25.6%	29.0%	3.4%		24.6%	29.6%	5.0%	
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	16.8%	20.5%	3.7%		13.2%	23.5%	10.2%	

1 - Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

2 - Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011-2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

3 - 2015 Urban and Rural Population based on 2010 Percentages

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 County Business Patterns.

**Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 County Business Patterns.

***Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Economic Census, 2012 Economic Census of Island Areas, and 2012 Nonemployer Statistics.

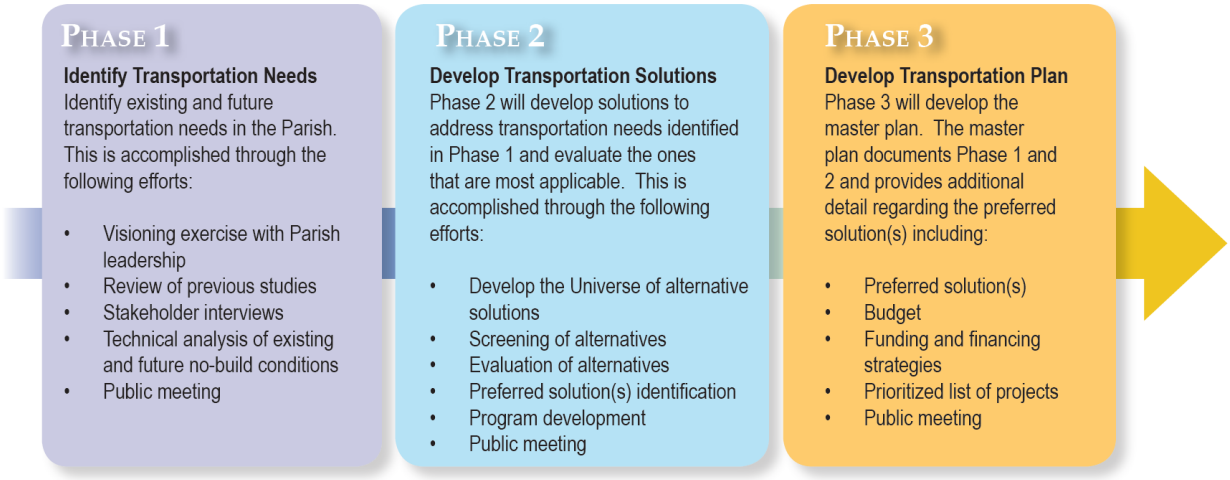
APPENDIX 6
EVALUATION METHODOLOGY, PERFORMANCE METRICS, AND ALTERNATIVES

Ascension Parish, Louisiana

HNTB

1. INTRODUCTION

The Ascension Parish transportation master planning process includes three phases with community engagement occurring throughout the study. Each phase represents a critical step in the planning process to (1) identify the transportation needs, (2) develop transportation solutions, and (3) develop the transportation plan for the Parish.

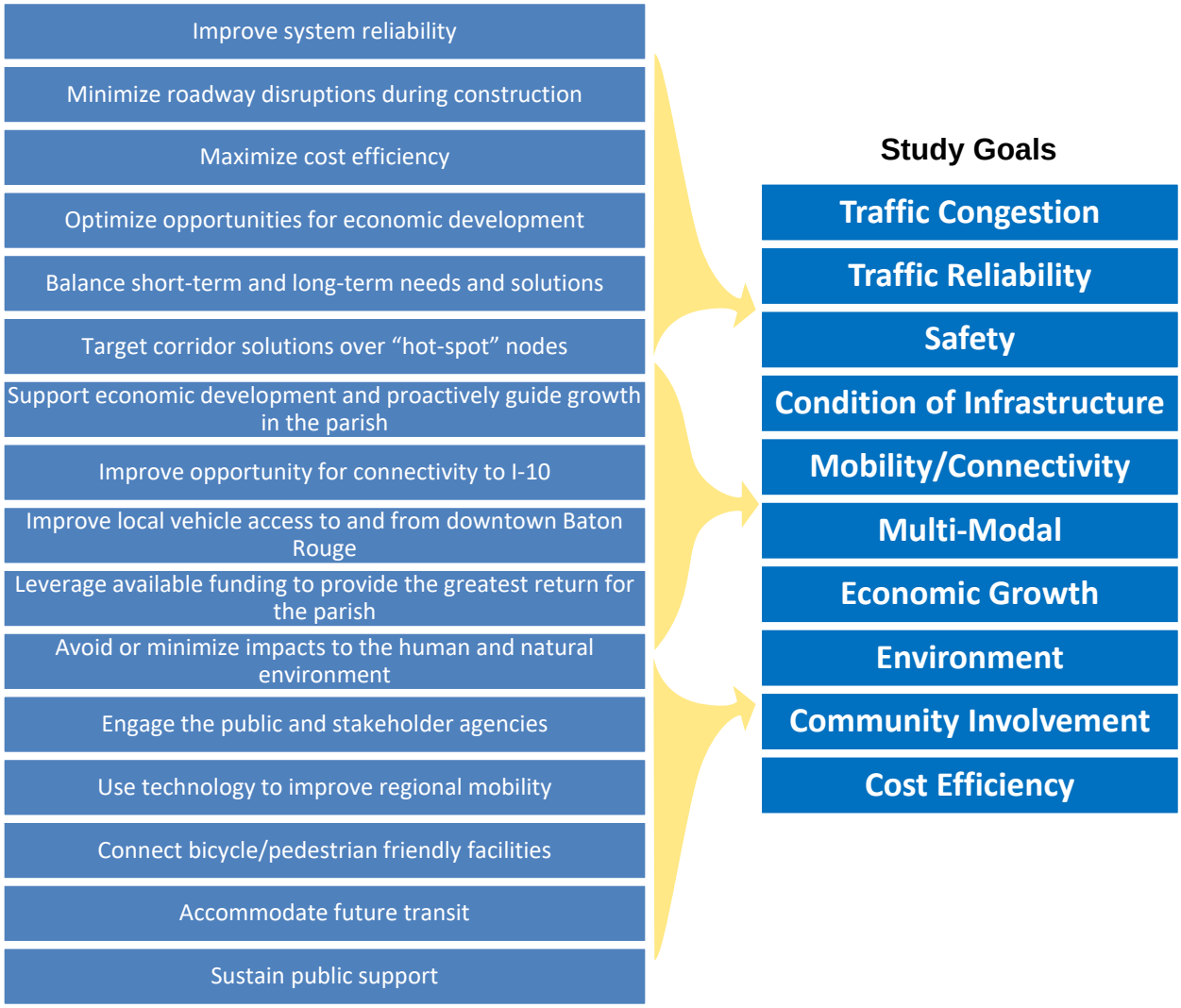


The Phase 1 Draft Transportation Needs report was submitted to the Parish in October 2017. Phase 1 identified the existing and future no-build transportation needs. The transportation needs were formed from national, state, and regional parish transportation goals, previous studies, a visioning workshop with parish leadership, stakeholder interviews, and a technical analysis of current and future no-build conditions. Phase 1 serves as the guiding framework for Phase 2 transportation solutions. In addition to the transportation needs, transportation study goals are also identified from the Phase 1 work. The primary transportation needs in the Parish are to:

- Reduce Congestion
- Increase Safety
- Enhance Mobility
- Improve Infrastructure Condition

While the primary transportation needs in the Parish have been identified as traffic congestion, safety, mobility and condition, the Master Plan will also incorporate study goals into the planning process. Input sought from Ascension Parish leadership, stakeholders and the public have been incorporated to develop goals and guiding principles. A listing of the study goals is presented on the following page.

The following study goals will provide guidance for the alternatives development process, as developed by input from Ascension Parish leadership, stakeholders and the public:



2. PHASE 2 APPROACH

The evaluation in the Phase 2 - Transportation Solutions will include qualitative and quantitative analysis. The evaluation is performed in two parts as described below.

2.1 PART 1 – UNIVERSE OF ALTERNATIVES SCREENING

Part 1, a qualitative assessment, will start with the development of a universe of alternatives and screen the alternatives based on the alternatives' ability to meet the Phase 1 transportation needs and study goals. The Part 1 qualitative evaluation criteria are based on Phase 1 transportation needs and study goals.

Part 1 – Qualitative Evaluation Criteria

- **Traffic Congestion –** Investment in the transportation system to reduce travel delay.
- **Traffic Reliability –** Strategies designed to mitigate traffic congestion due to non-recurring causes, such as crashes, disabled vehicles, work zones, adverse weather events, and planned special events.
- **Safety –** Improves safety for all modes and all users.
- **Condition of Infrastructure –** Investment in the existing roadway and bridges to maintain and preserve the existing system.
- **Mobility/Connectivity –** Improvements that enhance the efficient movement of people and goods, and ease of travel, through improved network connectivity.
- **Multi-Modal** – Improvement in modes of transportation other than single occupancy vehicles (SOVs) such as transit, bicycle and pedestrian.
- **Economic Growth** – Transportation investments to induce economic growth opportunities.
- **Environment** – Improvements that avoid or minimize negative environmental impacts.
- **Cost** – Relative cost of improvements.
- **Public Support** – The public, stakeholders, and steering committee support the improvements.

Each of the universe of alternatives and the No-Build Alternative will go through an initial screening. A Consumer Reports-style qualitative rating system will be used in which each alternative is rated subjectively by the study team in relation to the other alternatives regarding the alternatives' ability to meet the study goals. The rating system is comprised of the following.

Meets Study Goals	●
Somewhat Meets Study Goals	◑
Does Not Meet Goals	○

High Cost Relative to Other Improvements	**$$$**
Medium Cost Relative to Other Improvements	**$$**
Low Cost Relative to Other Improvements	**$**

Table 1 is an example of the initial screening evaluation.

Table 1: Initial Screening Example

	Evaluation Crieria									
	Traffic Congestion	Travel Reliability	Safety	Condition of Infrastructure	Mobility	Multi-Modal	Economic Growth	Environment	Cost	Public Support
Future No-Build										
Alternative A										
Alternative B										

This initial evaluation process will screen out some of the universe of alternatives in Part 1. Remaining alternatives will become the reasonable alternatives evaluated in Part 2.

2.2 PART 2 – REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES SCREENING

Part 2, a quantitative assessment, will evaluate and screen the reasonable alternatives for Ascension Parish. The screened alternatives from Part 2 will become the preferred alternatives that will be incorporated into the Master Plan. In Part 2, detailed, location specific improvements will be identified. These improvements will undergo an evaluation based on the performance measures and targets shown in Table 2.

The Capital Region Planning Commission (CRPC) travel demand model (TDM) will be used to evaluate three land use scenarios. However, the Parish is simultaneously completing a Master Land Use Plan. If the study process is complete in time, the preferred land use scenario from this planning process will be used for the future-build alternative in the TDM used to develop future volumes. The future no-build and future build years for this plan is 2037. The future no-build model will include all committed projects developed to-date by the Parish.

Table 2: Part 2 Evaluation Performance Measures and Targets

Study Goal	Performance Measure	Target
Traffic Congestion	Level of Service (LOS) at signalized study intersections	≥ LOS D
	Vehicle Hours Delay (VHD) within study area and Parish-wide	Build < FNB
Traffic Reliability	Travel Time Index (TTI) within study area Truck Travel Time Index (TTTI) within study area	Build < FNB
Mobility/ Connectivity	Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) / Vehicle Hours Traveled (VHT) within study area and Parish-wide	Build < FNB
Safety	Number of Conflict Points within study area	Build < FNB
Condition of Infrastructure	Asset Condition Parish-wide	Satisfactory or Above
Multi-Modal	Road miles with more than one mode (sidewalk, bicycle, or transit) Parish-wide	> One Mode
Economic Growth	Qualitative assessment	Supports smart economic growth
Environment	Fatal Flaw Assessment / Significant Impacts	Minimal or No Impacts

Note: Future No-Build (FNB)

The study performance measures gauge the alternatives' effectiveness in fulfilling the identified goals. Performance measures were identified from the LADOTD and CRPC's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) where applicable.

3. POTENTIAL UNIVERSE OF ALTERNATIVES

The initial alternatives represent the universe of alternatives for Ascension Parish based on needs identified in Phase 1 of the master planning process. The universe of alternative solutions are broad and all-inclusive of potential project types or tools that the Parish would consider implementing. Examples of alternative transportation tools are organized in "families of solutions" below. However, other improvements may be identified through stakeholder and public input. The study team will use the knowledge gained in Phase 1 work in addition to meetings with the Steering Committee and the public to evaluate the universe of alternatives compared to the study goals to screen the alternatives.

A list of the No-Build and Build universe of alternative families of solutions is provided below.

- **No-Build -** No modifications to the transportation system would occur other than continued normal maintenance and operations and any already committed projects.
- **Safety Improvements** – Safety improvements are applicable to all modes and would be targeted on specific corridors or intersections. Alternatives may include:
    - Reducing posted speed
    - Improving Lighting
    - Improving Signage and pavement marking
    - Shoulders and shoulder improvements
    - Auxiliary lanes
    - Lane widening
- **Capacity Improvements** – Additional capacity may be considered on I-10 or on arterials in the Ascension Parish transportation network. Alternatives may include:
    - New roads
    - Additional mainline lanes
    - Additional arterial lanes
    - Additional or extended two-way left turn lanes
- **Intersection Improvements** – Intersection improvements enhance capacity, operations and safety. Intersection improvements include:
    - Intersection capacity improvements
    - Auxiliary turn lanes
    - Auxiliary turn bay lengths
    - Improved traffic signal timings and phasing
- **Expanded Network Connections** – Supporting roadway network improvements to improve connectivity, access, and mobility. Improvements may include:
    - Expanded existing routes
    - New links and connectors in key development areas

- **Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO) Improvements** – Improvements encompassing a broad set of strategies to optimize the safe, efficient and reliable use of existing and planned transportation infrastructure for all modes. TSMO strategies include:
    - New signals
    - Signal removal
    - Signal optimization
    - Signal progression
    - Incident management
    - Intelligent Transportation System Management / emerging technologies
    - Advanced Traveler Information
    - Peak period restrictions
    - Dynamic lane and speed signals
    - Truck parking and management
    - Park and ride lots
    - Peak shoulder running

- **Multimodal Solutions** – Improvements addressing and improving mobility throughout Ascension that provide alternatives to personal vehicles. Improvements include:
    - Bicycle improvements (on-street and off-street)
    - Ridesharing
    - Pedestrian improvements
    - Transit improvements
    - Crossing improvements

- **Access Management** – Access management is a set of techniques that state and local governments use to control access to highways, major arterials, and other roadways. The benefits of access management include improved movement of traffic, reduced crashes, and fewer vehicle conflicts. Access management principles are applicable to roadways of all types, ranging from fully access-controlled facilities, such as freeways, to those with little or no access control, such as local streets. Successful access management, managed by change in access density, seeks to simultaneously enhance safety, preserve capacity, and provide for pedestrian and bicycle needs. Access management principles include:
    - Access spacing
    - Signal Spacing
    - Driveway spacing
    - Safe turning lanes
    - Median treatments
    - Right-of-way management
    - Accommodations for large vehicles
    - Guidelines

- **Interchange Improvements** – Ramps and interchange design play an important role in the safety and operations of the I-10 corridor. Improvements to the existing interchanges will be explored (I-10 and Hwy 73, I-10 and LA 30, I-10 and LA 44, I-10 and LA 22, and I-10 and Hwy 61). Alternatives may include:
    - New interchanges
    - Improvements to the existing interchanges
    - Improvements to ramp and terminal design/operations

- **State of Good Repair** – State of good repair may be defined as a state of condition in which an existing bridge, roadway or other necessary transportation infrastructure is performing as designed within its service life. Considerations include:
    - Bridge condition
    - Roadway condition
    - Traffic signal condition
    - Sidewalk condition

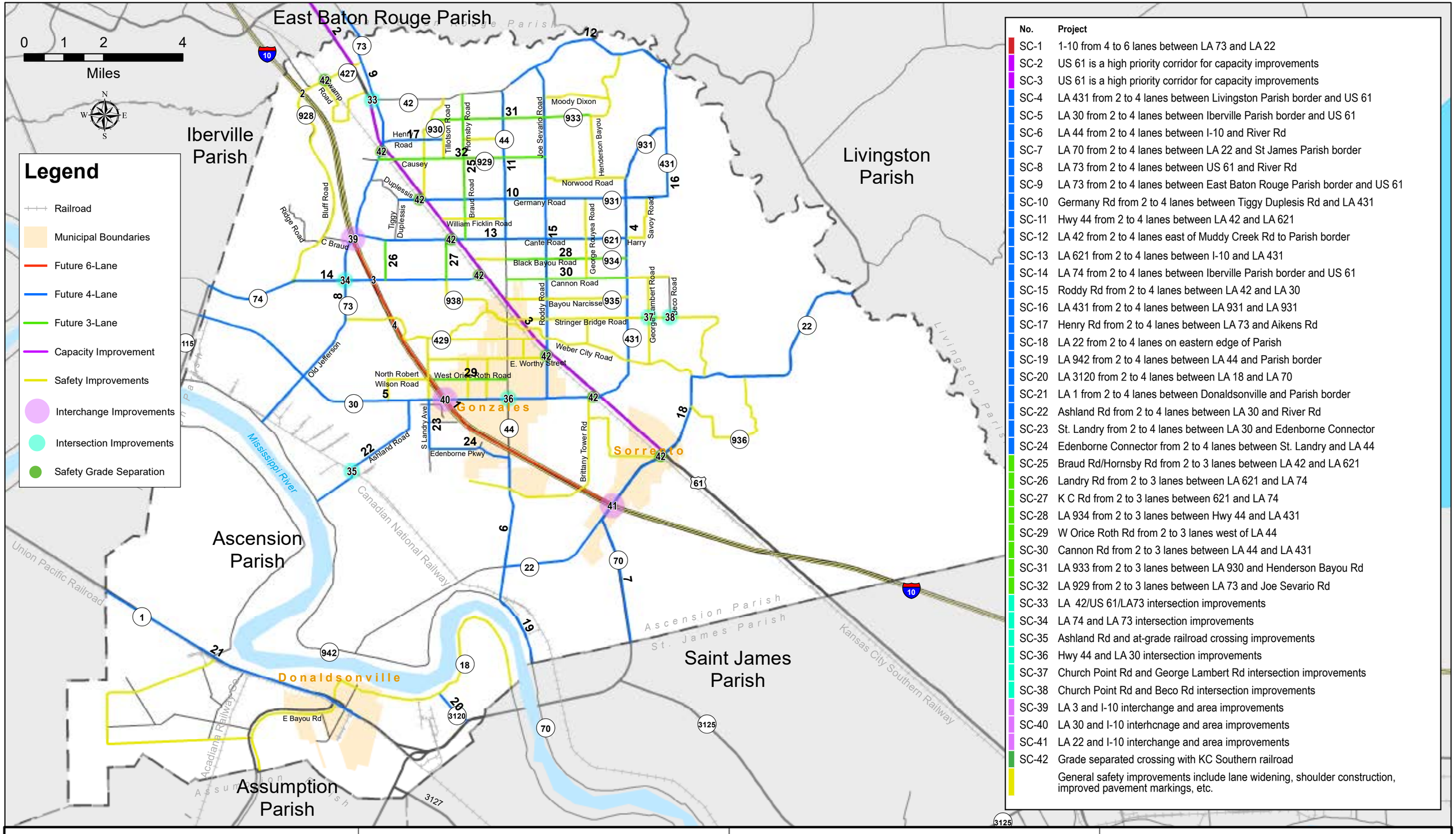
- **Non-Recurring Congestion and Safety Problems** – Non-recurring congestion and safety problems are mainly caused by construction, accidents, broken down vehicles, debris on the roadway, and other incidents which temporarily and abruptly disrupt the normal flow of traffic. Solutions may include:
    - Crash investigation sites
    - Portable incident screens
    - Accessible shoulders/alternating shoulders

- **Other** – Other non-infrastructure solutions may have a positive impact on the Parish's transportation network operations and safety. Solutions may include:
    - Travel Demand Management strategies
    - Land use strategies
    - Parking strategies
    - Regulatory strategies
    - Subdivision regulations
    - Corridor preservation
    - Road transfer
    - Cross sections/standards for development types and functional classification

APPENDIX 7
PRELIMINARY PROJECT SOLUTIONS

Ascension Parish, Louisiana

HNTB



No.	Project
SC-1	1-10 from 4 to 6 lanes between LA 73 and LA 22
SC-2	US 61 is a high priority corridor for capacity improvements
SC-3	US 61 is a high priority corridor for capacity improvements
SC-4	LA 431 from 2 to 4 lanes between Livingston Parish border and US 61
SC-5	LA 30 from 2 to 4 lanes between Iberville Parish border and US 61
SC-6	LA 44 from 2 to 4 lanes between I-10 and River Rd
SC-7	LA 70 from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 22 and St James Parish border
SC-8	LA 73 from 2 to 4 lanes between US 61 and River Rd
SC-9	LA 73 from 2 to 4 lanes between East Baton Rouge Parish border and US 61
SC-10	Germany Rd from 2 to 4 lanes between Tiggy Duplesis Rd and LA 431
SC-11	Hwy 44 from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 42 and LA 621
SC-12	LA 42 from 2 to 4 lanes east of Muddy Creek Rd to Parish border
SC-13	LA 621 from 2 to 4 lanes between I-10 and LA 431
SC-14	LA 74 from 2 to 4 lanes between Iberville Parish border and US 61
SC-15	Roddy Rd from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 42 and LA 30
SC-16	LA 431 from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 931 and LA 931
SC-17	Henry Rd from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 73 and Aikens Rd
SC-18	LA 22 from 2 to 4 lanes on eastern edge of Parish
SC-19	LA 942 from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 44 and Parish border
SC-20	LA 3120 from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 18 and LA 70
SC-21	LA 1 from 2 to 4 lanes between Donaldsonville and Parish border
SC-22	Ashland Rd from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 30 and River Rd
SC-23	St. Landry from 2 to 4 lanes between LA 30 and Edenborne Connector
SC-24	Edenborne Connector from 2 to 4 lanes between St. Landry and LA 44
SC-25	Braud Rd/Hornsby Rd from 2 to 3 lanes between LA 42 and LA 621
SC-26	Landry Rd from 2 to 3 lanes between LA 621 and LA 74
SC-27	K C Rd from 2 to 3 lanes between 621 and LA 74
SC-28	LA 934 from 2 to 3 lanes between Hwy 44 and LA 431
SC-29	W Orice Roth Rd from 2 to 3 lanes west of LA 44
SC-30	Cannon Rd from 2 to 3 lanes between LA 44 and LA 431
SC-31	LA 933 from 2 to 3 lanes between LA 930 and Henderson Bayou Rd
SC-32	LA 929 from 2 to 3 lanes between LA 73 and Joe Sevario Rd
SC-33	LA 42/US 61/LA73 intersection improvements
SC-34	LA 74 and LA 73 intersection improvements
SC-35	Ashland Rd and at-grade railroad crossing improvements
SC-36	Hwy 44 and LA 30 intersection improvements
SC-37	Church Point Rd and George Lambert Rd intersection improvements
SC-38	Church Point Rd and Beco Rd intersection improvements
SC-39	LA 3 and I-10 interchange and area improvements
SC-40	LA 30 and I-10 interhcnage and area improvements
SC-41	LA 22 and I-10 interchange and area improvements
SC-42	Grade separated crossing with KC Southern railroad
	General safety improvements include lane widening, shoulder construction, improved pavement markings, etc.

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MOVE ASCENSION

Ascension Parish
Transportation Master Plan

Preliminary Safety & Capacity Projects

Exhibit
1

East Baton Rouge Parish

0 1 2 4
Miles

N W E S

Legend

- Railroad
- Municipal Boundaries
- New Facility
- New River Bridge
- New Interchange

No.	Project
N-1	New Mississippi River bridge
N-2	New limited interchange (ramps to/from the north only) at I-10 and LA 427/LA 928
N-3	New interchange at I-10 and LA 74
N-4	New interchange at I-10 and LA 429/Cornerview
N-5	Extend LA 928 from LA 74 to River Rd
N-6	Extend LA 74 to connect with LA 934
N-7	New facility connecting Church Point Rd to new I-10 interchange
N-8	New facility connecting LA 30 and new I-10 interchange
N-9	New facility extending 3127 south of Donaldsonville
N-10	New facility connecting St Landry Ave to River Rd
N-11	New facility extending LA 929/Alice Braud Ln to LA 928/Bluff Rd
N-12	New facility connecting Cante Rd to LA 73
N-13	New facility connecting C Braud Rd and LA 74
N-14	New facility connecting LA 73 and LA 928
N-15	New facility extending 3127 to Iberville Parish border (to potentially connect to LA 69)
N-16	New truck facility connecting new interchange to new river crossing
N-17	New facility connecting LA 3089 to new facility
N-18	New facility from new river crossing to LA 1
N-19	New facility extending LA 44 to Parish border
N-20	New facility extending Henry Rd to Joe Sevario Rd
N-21	New facility extending LA 429 to LA 30
N-22	New facility extending Loosemore Rd to Edenborne Pkwy
N-23	New facility extending LA 70 to LA 44
N-24	New facility extending LA 30 to LA 22
N-25	New facility extending LA 431
N-26	New facility connecting River Rd to St. Landry extension
N-27	New facility connecting LA 3127 extension to LA 1
N-28	New facility connecting Ashland Rd and St Landry
N-29	New facility connecting Vindez Rd and Edenborne Pkwy

Iberville Parish
Ascension Parish
Livingston Parish
Saint John the Baptist Parish
Saint James Parish
Assumption Parish

Gonzales
Sorrento
Donaldsonville

Mississippi River
Canadian National Railway
Union Pacific Railroad
Kansas City Southern Railway
Acadiana Railway Co.

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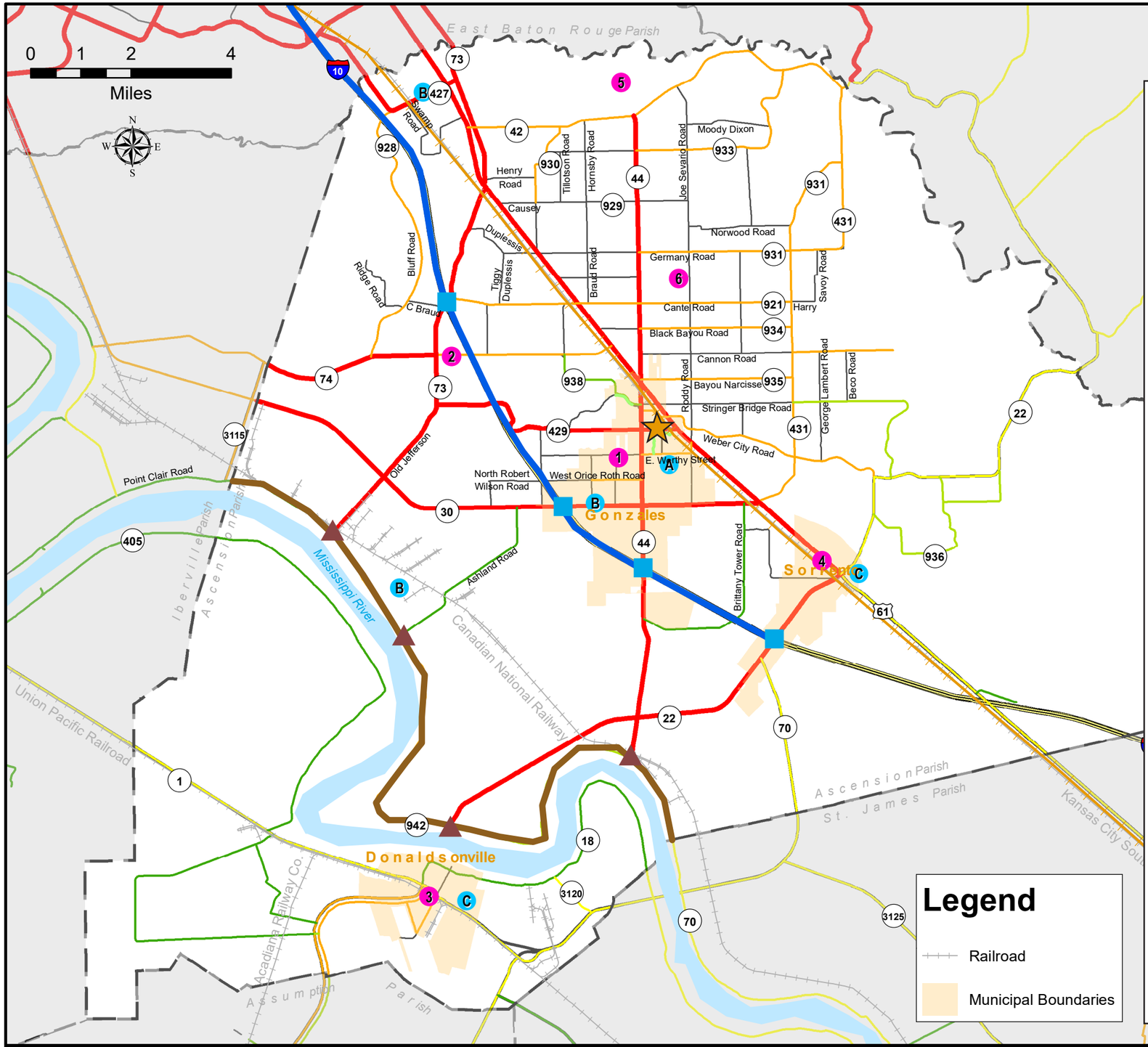
MOVE ASCENSION

Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	Preliminary New Facility Projects	Exhibit 2



Sidewalk Network Pirorities

1. Continue to build-out sidewalk network and fill gaps in Gonzales north of LA 30; particularly connections to planned Gonzales Rail Station, parks, and schools
2. Continue to develop sidewalk network in Dutch Town
3. Extend sidewalk network in Donaldsonville as needed
4. Begin to develop sidewalk network in Sorrento
5. Continue existing practice of developing sidewalks with new subdivisions
6. Strategically incorporate a sidewalk network north of Gonzales to connect schools, parks and residential neeighborhoods

LaDOTD Long Range Plan Recommended Bicycle Priorities

- Shared Lane (no special provisions)
- Marked Shared Lane
- Marked Shared Lane or Shoulder
- Paved Shoulder
- Bike Lane or Buffered Bike Lane
- Buffered or Separated Bike Lane
- Separated Bike Lane

Recreational Trail Priorities

- Mississippi River Levee Trail
- Mississippi River Levee Trailheads
- Extend existing Bayou Francois and New River paths in accordance with Gonzales Comprehensive Plan

Transit/Shared-Ride Priorities

- Explore feasibility of I-10 Commuter Express Bus Route to connect to employment areas in East Batton Rouge
- Potential park and ride locations near interchange locations could increase carpooling opportunities and link to future commuter bus service
- Increase transit connectivity through local shared ride shuttles/vans
  - **A** - Regional bus, local shuttles to serve new rail station and downtown Gonzales
  - **B** - Explore shared ride shuttle or van service to areas of concentrated employement (industry along river, LA 30 and NW corner of the Parish)
  - **C** - Over the longer term explore opportunities to provide shuttle/van service to Donaldsonville and Sorrento

Passenger Rail Priorities (between Baton Rouge and New Orleans)

- Passenger rail between New Orleans and Baton Rouge
- Future Gonzales Passenger Rail Station

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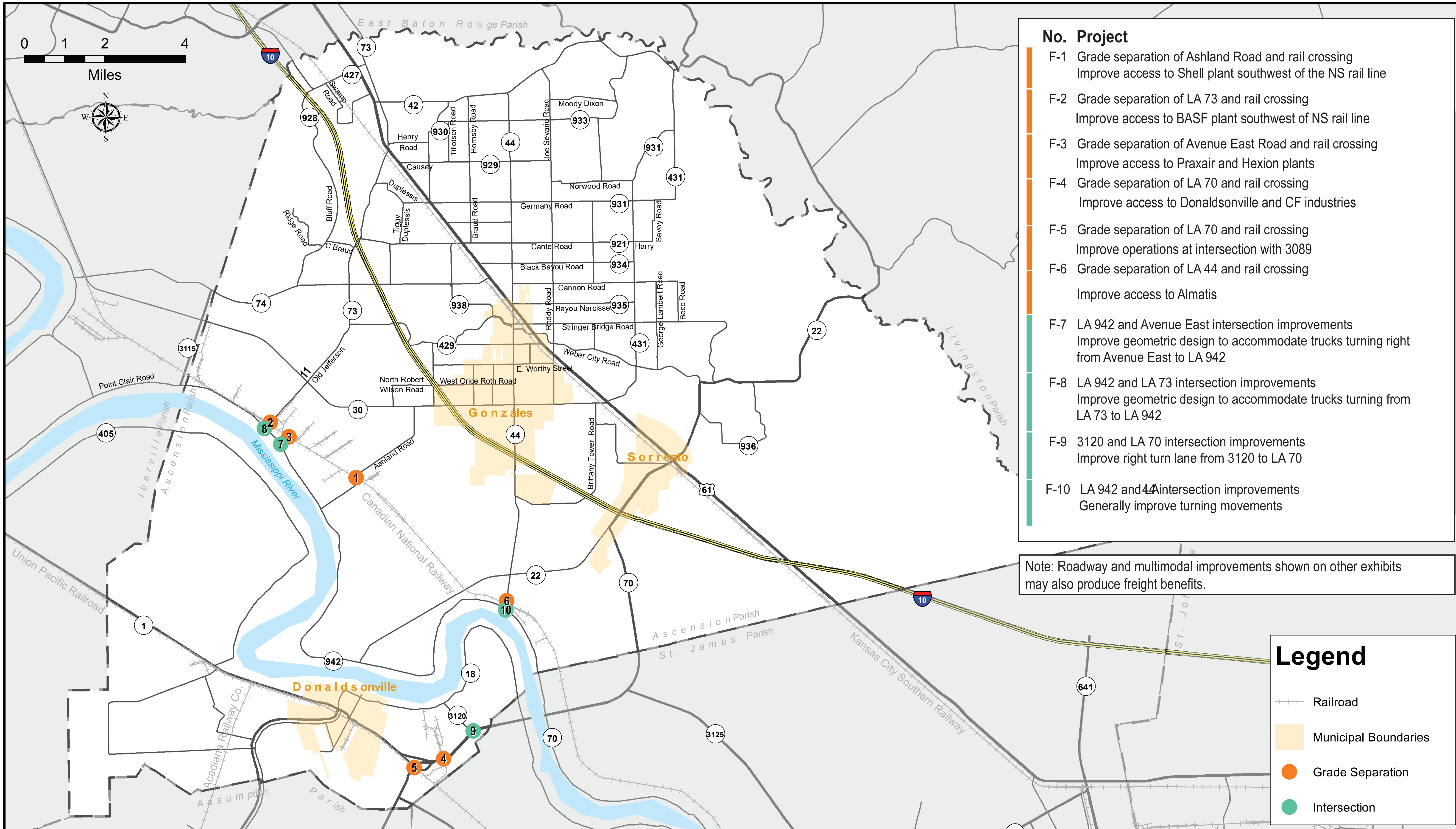
MOVE ASCENSION

Ascension Parish Transportation Master Plan	Preliminary Multimodal Projects	Exhibit 3



No.	Project
F-1	Grade separation of Ashland Road and rail crossing Improve access to Shell plant southwest of the NS rail line
F-2	Grade separation of LA 73 and rail crossing Improve access to BASF plant southwest of NS rail line
F-3	Grade separation of Avenue East Road and rail crossing Improve access to Praxair and Hexion plants
F-4	Grade separation of LA 70 and rail crossing Improve access to Donaldsonville and CF industries
F-5	Grade separation of LA 70 and rail crossing Improve operations at intersection with 3089
F-6	Grade separation of LA 44 and rail crossing Improve access to Almatis
F-7	LA 942 and Avenue East intersection improvements Improve geometric design to accommodate trucks turning right from Avenue East to LA 942
F-8	LA 942 and LA 73 intersection improvements Improve geometric design to accommodate trucks turning from LA 73 to LA 942
F-9	3120 and LA 70 intersection improvements Improve right turn lane from 3120 to LA 70
F-10	LA 942 and 44 intersection improvements Generally improve turning movements

Note: Roadway and multimodal improvements shown on other exhibits may also produce freight benefits.

HNTB MOVE ASCENSION

Ascension Parish
Transportation Master Plan

Preliminary Freight
Projects

Exhibit
4