

**NEW
DIRECTIONS
2040**

The St. Tammany Parish
Comprehensive Plan



Final Report

Adopted May 2022



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INTRODUCTION

Since St. Tammany Parish adopted the New Directions 2025 Vision two decades ago, the region has experienced enormous disruptions: the costliest natural disaster in American history; the largest oil spill in American history; the deepest economic recession since the Great Depression; and today, the most devastating public health crisis in a century.

These "shock" events have tested the resilience of our region's social, economic and ecological fabric. Nevertheless, St. Tammany Parish has thrived in many ways. It has attracted large employers, developed high-quality public facilities, and grown in population. Its combination of ample, undeveloped land, proximity to the New Orleans and Baton Rouge job centers, highly rated public school systems, and beautiful natural environment make the Parish an attractive destination for those displaced by disaster, retirees, or people seeking a high quality of life for raising a family. In effect, St. Tammany Parish has assumed the role of "receiver community" – a place where people can restore their lives and build their future.

Yet, rapid growth has brought growing pains to St. Tammany Parish. Higher levels of activity have strained the Parish's ability to move vehicles, stormwater, and wastewater safely and efficiently. Dense subdivisions are being constructed further and further away from the Parish's historic population and economic centers, such as Slidell, Mandeville and Covington, "leapfrogging" undeveloped and agricultural lands.

New Directions 2040 is the opportunity for today's St. Tammany Parish residents and businesses to define what it becomes over the next twenty years. The process poses the question: "How can St. Tammany Parish continue to grow and develop while preserving a high quality of life; minimizing costs to existing residents, businesses, and the environment; and maintaining its unique character?"

The Role of the Comprehensive Plan

A comprehensive plan is a community's foundational policy document. Its primary role is to guide public and private decision-making about changes in the community's physical development.

Comprehensive plans cover the full geographic area of a jurisdiction and identify a vision and goals to achieve over a designated period of time. These goals may cover economic development, housing, and other development goals. Formulation of a comprehensive plan includes input from residents and a diverse group of stakeholders. Community members' ideas and expertise help to ensure that the plan's goals reflect the vision of local residents, businesses, and organizations. Comprehensive plans also provide a guide for future land use, development regulations and capital improvement plans, and serve as the basis for zoning, subdivision, and land use codes. Jurisdictions implement comprehensive plans because they provide guidance for the orderly growth, development and physical appearance of the area; analyze community needs and evaluate how competing interests can be balanced; and build consensus and commitment from elected and appointed officials all interested stakeholders.

St. Tammany Parish's Home Rule Charter legally requires that the Parish "prepare, enact, enforce and maintain comprehensive plans for the development of the Parish."¹ It includes "an overall plan for land use by public, commercial and residential interests; traffic and transportation issues; economic and demographic growth; water and drainage concerns."²

This legal requirement is explicitly and clearly stated in Louisiana State Law in LRS:33.106:

"a parish planning commission shall make and adopt a master plan for...(the) parish."³

Furthermore, the Land Development Code of St. Tammany Parish supports the state statute and grants the legal authority to the Planning Commission to adopt a master or comprehensive plan "including graphics, narrative description and policies to guide and accomplish the coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the Parish."⁴

New Directions 2040 is an update of the Parish's previously adopted comprehensive plan, New Directions 2025, a visioning process that the Parish Police Jury initiated in 1998 and adopted by resolution in December 1999.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide Parish officials in making decisions around land use, capital investments, and strategic direction. Instances of this decision making include:

- The Parish Council decisions on proposed new subdivisions and changes to zoning
- Planning Commission decisions on proposed new subdivisions
- Zoning Commission decisions on changes to zoning
- Board of Adjustment decisions to grant variances to the Unified Development Code or appeals to Planning and Development and Permitting Department decisions
- Parish Administration and Council annual budgeting for operating and capital expenditures

1 Section 1-04. General Powers. (B)

2 Section 4-07. Department of Development. (1)

3 Louisiana Revised Statutes 33:106

4 Code of Ordinance Section 120-51 (3)

How the plan was made

The vision, guiding principles, goals and strategies found within New Directions 2040 are the result of a 14-month-long, iterative process conducted collaboratively between: the Parish Administration; a Steering Committee of appointees representing every Parish council district; the Planning & Zoning Commission; dozens of civic, governmental and business organizations; and a public involvement process that garnered thousands of public comments.

Prior plans and studies adopted and accepted by the Parish and other local public agencies provided the foundation for updated comprehensive plan goals, policies, and strategies. In addition to New Directions 2025, these include:

- 2020 Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
- Thrive2023 Economic Development Strategic Plan
- 2017 Community Needs Assessment
- 2019 Adaptation Strategy (LASAFE)

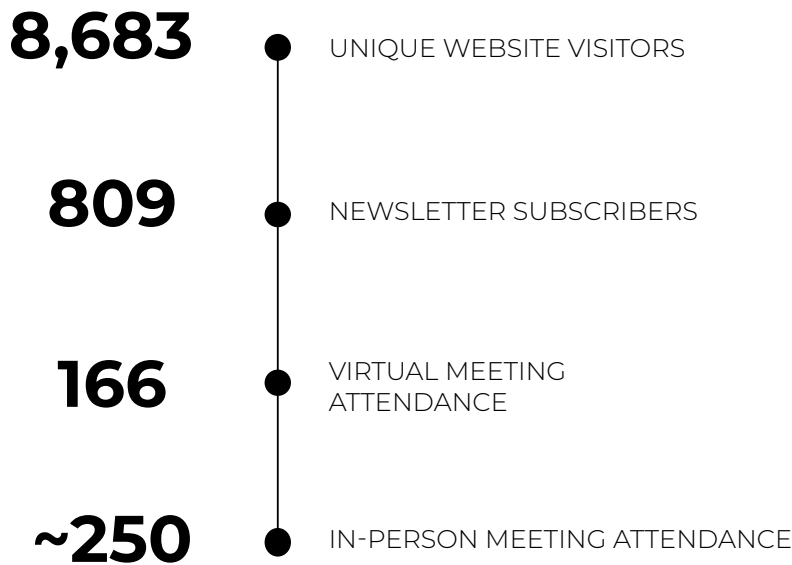
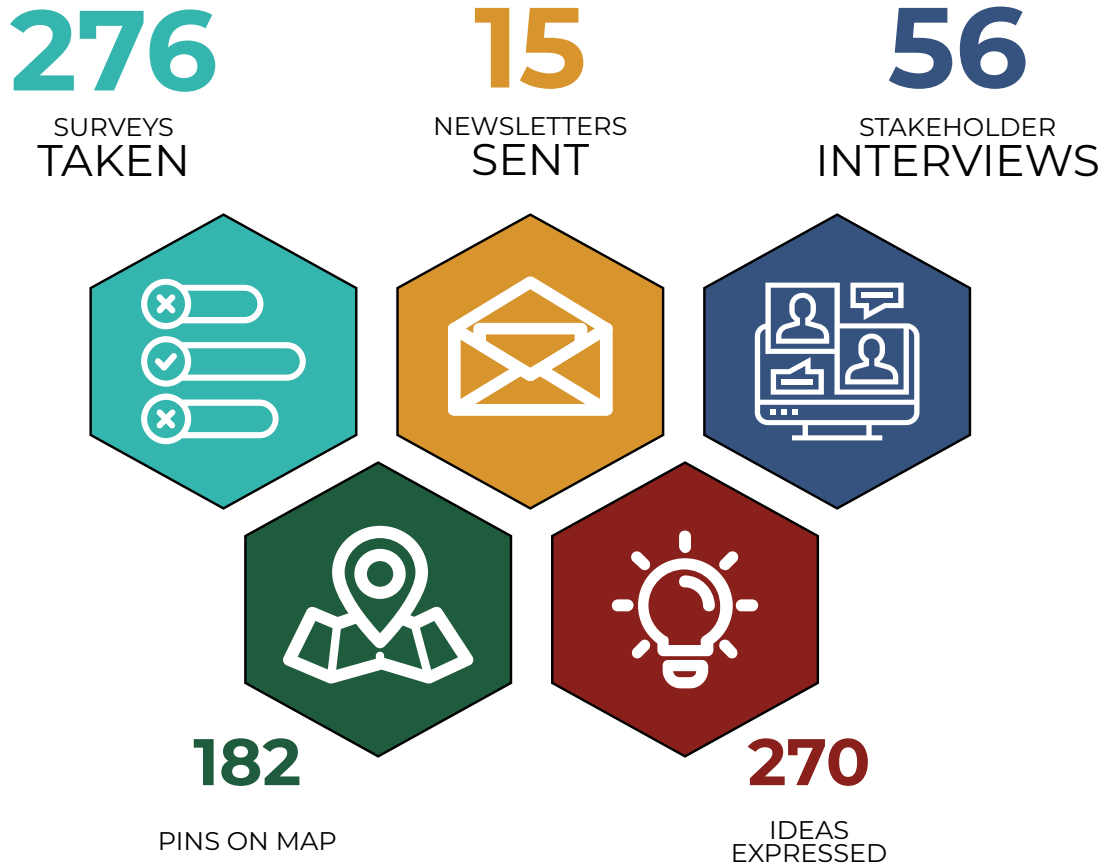
The Parish Council established a Steering Committee in fall 2020, which met five times during the process to guide the update process. Committee members served a critical role in bridging prior initiatives with the current update effort and providing perspectives into how current physical, political, and social conditions have evolved in recent decades.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, public involvement relied heavily on virtual engagement methods, including an informative project website featuring interactive tools, project documents, and recordings of previous meetings; a series of online public meetings held using videoconference “webinar” technology; and promotion of input opportunities, document availability, and awareness of planning issues via an email newsletter and Parish social media accounts.

In-person engagement events occurred during the visioning phase, in November 2020, at public markets and recreation areas, and again in June 2021 for a series of three growth scenario workshops.



Figure 1: Public Participation



Parish history and regional context

As the Pleistocene period ended about 11,000 years ago, glaciers retreating northward shaped the landmass we call St. Tammany Parish today. The Pearl, Bogue Chitto, and Tchefuncte Rivers then flowed and deposited sediments. Human settlement began in the area 8,000 years ago, and the Tchefuncte, Choctaw, Biloxi, Pensacola, Acolapissa, and Houma tribes resided in the region when European explorers and colonists first arrived at the turn of the eighteenth century. Following rebellion against Spanish authority, the independent West Florida Republic ruled the area for 74 days in 1810, before the United State annexed it. Governor William Claiborne drew the Parish boundaries and named it for Tamanend, a Delaware Indian chief. Descendents of Choctaw and other tribes continued to live in the parish through the twentieth century and today.

Until the late twentieth century, the Parish's land development largely followed a pattern of town and countryside. Country roads that often followed routes first established by indigenous peoples connected small villages through a countryside of open, longleaf pine woodlands, hardwood forests, marshlands, and farms. The compact street grids of Covington, Madisonville, Slidell and Mandeville developed around the Parish's historic transportation assets - water and rail - in the nineteenth century. These historic centers continue to serve as the Parish's civic and cultural hubs.

Beginning after the Causeway Bridge opening in 1956, and accelerating in the 1980s and 1990s, a third land use pattern grew rapidly: single-use suburbanization. In this pattern, undeveloped countryside became new subdivisions with dozens or many hundreds of single-family homes with on-site water and wastewater systems. This pattern of growth makes it necessary to drive longer distances to get between homes and schools, shopping centers and workplaces.

Tchefuncte Choctaw, Biloxi, Pensacola, Acolapissa, and Houma tribes inhabit the area



8000 BC to 1699 AD
First Nations

8000 BC
Earliest known settlement of area by prehistoric humans

1789
Camp Salmen Lodge and Francois Cousin House are built on Bayou Liberty, where bricks are manufactured to rebuild New Orleans after the fires of 1788 and 1794

1699-1810
Colonial Era

1748
Lacombe, established on Bayou Lacombe, becomes known as a refuge for runaway slaves

1699 AD
French explorer Pierre Le Moyné d'Iberville is the first European to visit the area, names Lake Pontchartrain after the Count de Pontchartrain, France's minister of finance under Louis XIV



1810
St. Tammany Parish was established out of the West Florida Rebellion against Spanish authority and was an independent nation for 74 days before US annexation. Governor William Claiborne draws the Parish boundaries and names it after Tamanend, a Delaware Indian chief.

1821

First steamboat crosses Lake Pontchartrain, marking the beginning of nearly a century of trips between New Orleans and the Northshore



1928

The first bridge constructed across Lake Pontchartrain opens, today the US Highway 11 Bridge



2016

Historic rainfall levels flood hundreds of properties in March and August



1995

Historic flood

1954

St. Tammany Parish Hospital established

1960s

Construction begins on Interstate 12

1969

Second Causeway Bridge span opens

1904

Folsom founded

1898

Pearl River founded

1938

Fontainebleau State Park established

1810-1956

Early American Era

1956-2020

Bedroom Suburb

1813

Covington founded

1834

Mandeville founded

1812

Louisiana becomes a state

1883

Slidell founded during the construction of a major new railroad from New Orleans to Meridian, MS.



1912

Town of Abita Springs chartered

1930s

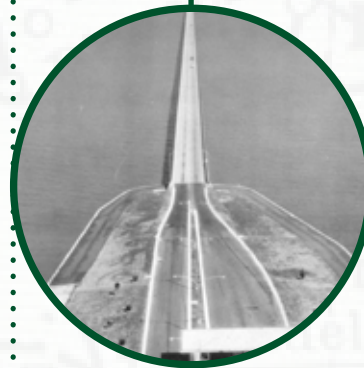
Majority of pine timber clear-cut for lumber production to supply the US and global markets.



1888

The East Louisiana Railroad connects New Orleans to Slidell, Lacombe, Mandeville, Abita Springs and Covington.

The Parish emerges as a health tourism destination, earning the nickname "the Ozone Belt."



1956

First span of Causeway Bridge opens

1936

Steamship service from New Orleans ends

1972

Zoning code enacted for St. Tammany Parish

2005

Hurricane Katrina floods coastal St. Tammany Parish

1999

Parish adopts Vision element of New Directions 2025

PARISH VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Parish vision articulates the St. Tammany Parish that residents, businesses, and stakeholders envision in twenty years, and the principles that will guide us there. The New Directions 2040 visioning process engaged hundreds of residents and Parish stakeholders in conversations about current challenges and opportunities to respond to them in the future. Activities included a series of in-person tabling events at markets and parks that followed state public health guidelines, virtual meetings, and online surveys, message boards, mapping tools that gathered several hundred responses, and over three dozen stakeholder interviews. The Parish published a draft vision statement, principles and goals in March 2020 and sought and incorporated feedback through the fall.

Vision Statement

“In 2040, St. Tammany Parish is a safe, thriving and healthy community. Residents take pride in the Parish’s good governance, beautifully preserved natural environment, resilient transportation network, and growing businesses, where everyone has the opportunity to enjoy an exceptional quality of life. Louisiana and surrounding Gulf Coast communities view St. Tammany as a leader in sustainable growth and living with water.”

Guiding Principles

1. We should foster a culture of excellent governance by building trusting relationships between residents, employers, property owners, municipalities, and regional and state partners.



St. Tammany is home to many civically active residents and businesses who care deeply about the Parish and its evolution. Public transparency will empower our community to hold decision makers accountable for sound governance, leading to trusting relationships.

- “Planning and zoning should reflect where we are as a community giving weight to the wishes and desires of existing residents.”
- “Would love to see representation of a diversified group of residents with integrity that lives in the unincorporated Parish to voice their ideas and input that will move the Parish in a positive direction which can have a strong positive impact for this generation and the generation to follow.”



2. Our land use and development should be efficient and sustainable.

This means meeting the needs of existing and future residents and businesses by using and conserving our many resources wisely.

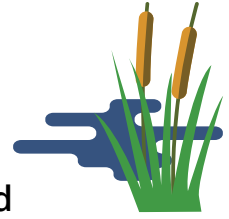
- “Don't try to grow so fast, we don't need to compete with New Orleans.”
- “We have a lot of small businesses, and other ideas of things that should open in our growing community, but we will need the infrastructure to support it.”
- “I'd like to see the road infrastructure updated before more subdivisions and apartments are approved.”
- “Address flooding and build responsibly to help prevent more flooding. For example, buildings in a flood zone should be raised homes, not slabs.”
- “Please make an inclusion of intentional greenspace and create a one-to-one replacement of trees with quality counterparts.”

3. Our infrastructure networks should be connected, reliable and resilient to safely and efficiently move water, people, freight, and other services.

These networks include our gray and green drainage systems, storm surge protection, roadway, electric, natural gas, water, wastewater, telecommunications, and railroad infrastructure.

- “We need to have more protections against storm surge.”
- “I would like to see Green Infrastructures implemented to handle natural hydrology.”
- “Public transportation, sidewalks, bike lanes and crosswalks. It's dangerous to move around without a car in most parts of the Parish, and keeps people from being able to get to work, recreation, or other places when they aren't using a car”
- “flooding is getting worse and increased, intense rainfalls are not helping.”

4. Our uniquely beautiful natural environment and resources should be protected through vigorous stewardship and sensitive development.



These include coastal wetlands, upland forests, bayous, rivers, and streams.

- “The Parish should purchase and set aside thousands of acres of undeveloped woodlands and wetlands, and designate them a permanent, perpetual nature reserve. If development continues at its current pace, we don't have any woods or wetlands left.”
- “The North Shore is loved for it's pine air and nature feel. Please don't allow it to become like the South Shore”

5. People from all corners of the Parish should have the opportunity to live healthy and prosperous lives.



Our communities should be attractive places that allow people to live healthy, enriched lives and reach their full potential.

- “I would like to see more affordable housing built. Even higher density projects like apartments, townhouses, and garden homes. It takes all walks of life to support our Parish, not just the super wealthy.”
- “I want to see more public recreation centers where people can spend quality time and are places for families and teenagers to hang out.”
- “More effort and dollars should be spent on communities in poverty, to improve housing, maintain structures and infrastructure, and create a better quality of life for people of color in our Parish.”
- “I want a place that attracts clean jobs (not more service industries and companies that destroy the environment) - I want my child to be able to live here AND have a good, clean high-tech job.”

A PREFERRED GROWTH PATTERN

Between 2000 and 2020, the population of the unincorporated Parish jumped from 141,132 to 206,581 - about 46%. Most of this growth occurred in the western part of the Parish, between US-190 and the Tangipahoa Parish border. This Plan's framework for development over the next 20 years assumes that the Parish will continue to grow its residential population and supportive civic, commercial, and other job-providing land uses that support it. The Plan anticipates between approximately 31,000 to 41,000 additional residents in unincorporated

St. Tammany Parish - or approximately 12,000 to 17,000 new residential units. While this is significant, it represents a slowed growth rate compared to the first two decades of the century.

During the summer of 2021, the Parish invited the community to consider how and where this residential growth ought to occur, through a series of public in-person and online Growth Workshops. Participants learned about how land is planned and developed in the Parish, and gave feedback on three different growth scenarios.

Figure 2: Population Change 2000-2020

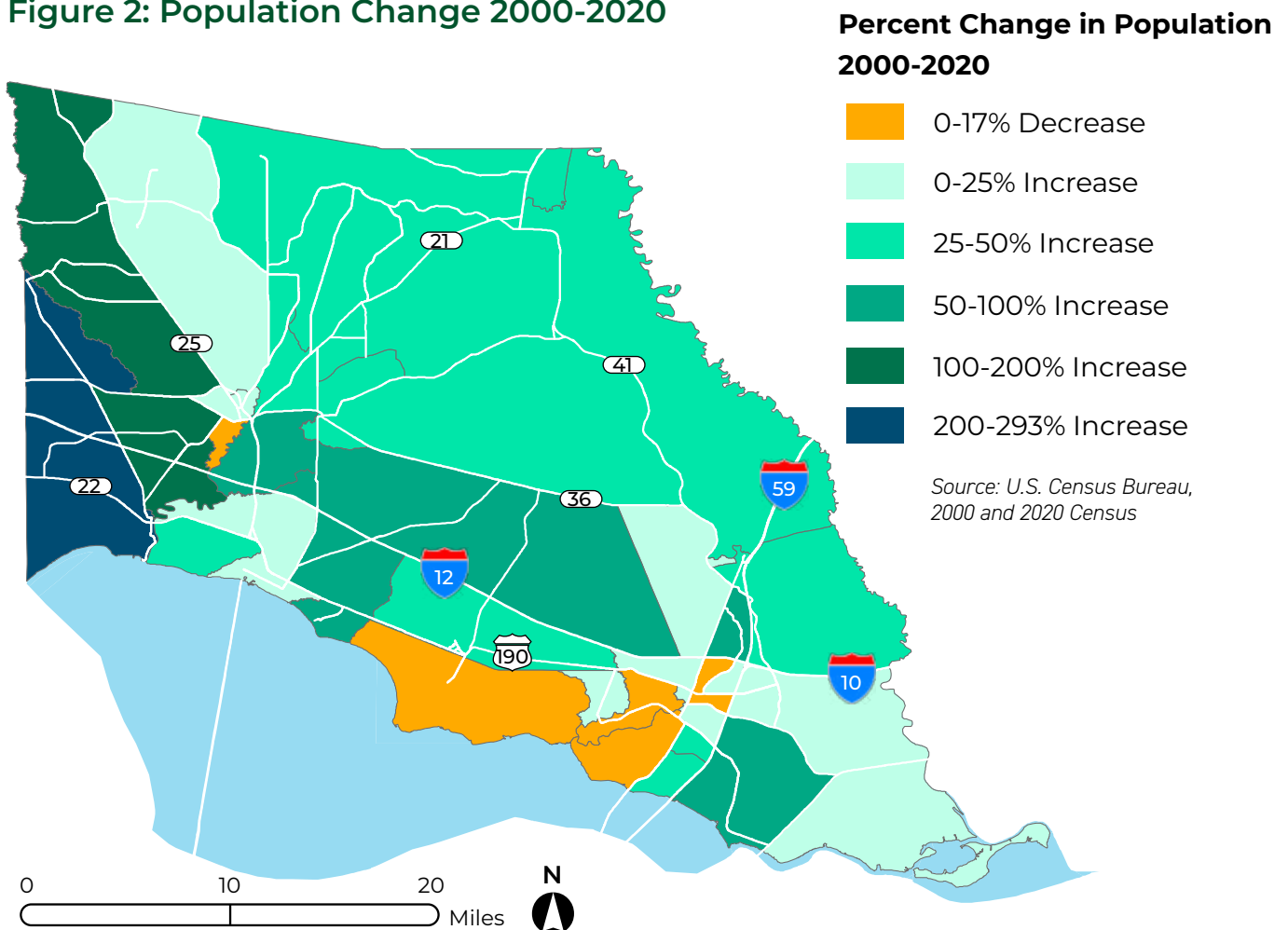
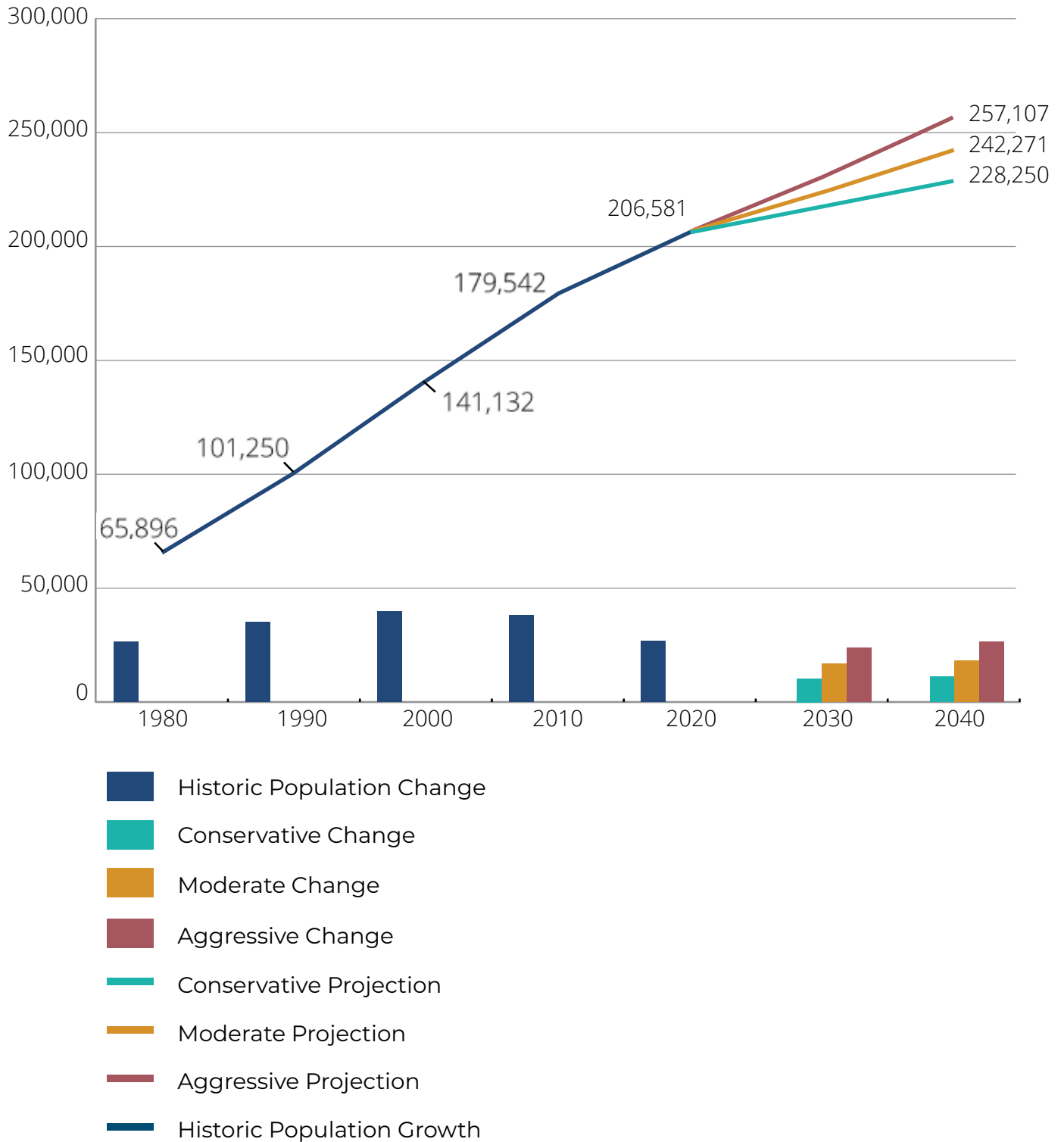
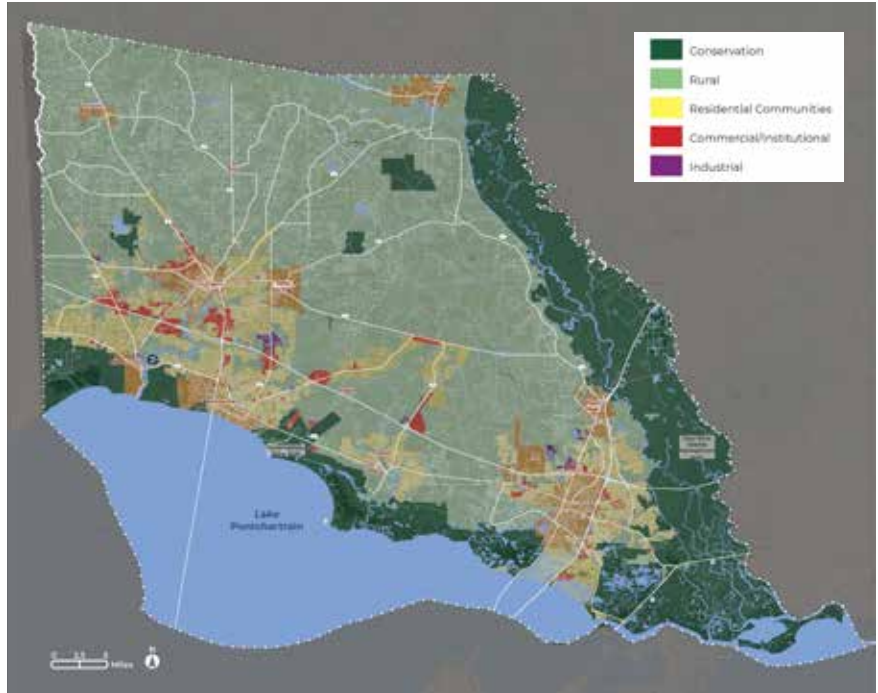


Figure 3: Population Growth Projections

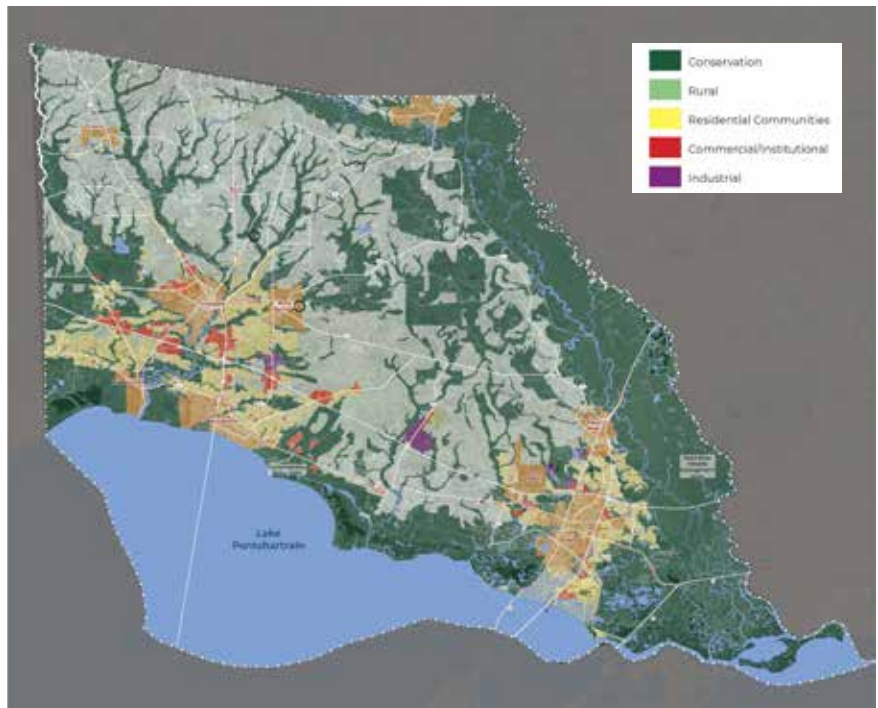


In the **Growth as Usual** scenario, no significant changes would be made to the way the Parish has grown in the last twenty years. This would continue development of residential subdivisions and Planned Unit Developments throughout the area south of the “urban growth boundary,” including areas within the Parish’s 100-year floodplain.



Growth as Usual Scenario

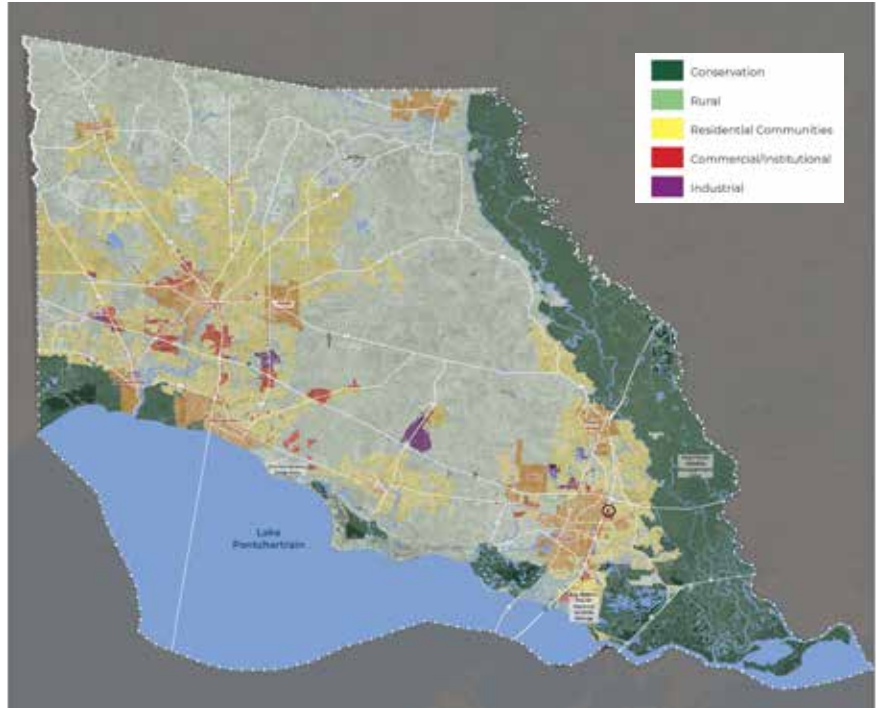
In the **Concentrate and Conserve** scenario, new residential growth was prioritized in undeveloped fragments of areas already served by public infrastructure and facilities, jobs, services, and amenities. Rural areas would be more easily within reach of current town centers. Furthermore, new development would occur only outside of the 100-year floodplain. The Parish would encourage the replacement of existing intense uses in the 100-year floodplain over time with less intense uses.



Concentrate and Conserve Scenario

In the **Space to Spread** scenario, new residential development is permitted throughout the Parish outside protected parks and wildlife management areas. This policy would require increased public investment in new infrastructure to serve farther-flung areas, such as widening roads and building new drainage facilities, and relies more on on-site wastewater management facilities.

In all scenarios, commercial and institutional uses are limited to a handful of existing and potential future job and service centers, which are oriented around future transportation improvements. And, existing industrial areas are preserved and new industrial uses are located away from residential neighborhoods.



Space to Spread Scenario

Table 1: Comparison of Growth Scenario Metrics

Growth Scenario	New Land Consumption	Average Annual Miles Driven per Household	Dwelling Units in Coastal Flood Risk Area
Growth as Usual	7,269 acres	22,086	13,035
Concentrate and Conserve	6,575 acres	20,513	10,152
Space to Spread	8,320 acres	22,181	9,609

Arriving at a Preferred Vision

The scenarios illustrated the tradeoffs in community costs and benefits that occur depending on the different patterns of growth and development, and informed determination of a shared vision for how growth ought to occur in the next twenty years.

In the **Space to Spread** scenario, most new residential neighborhoods are located far from existing neighborhoods. While this strategy limits activity in existing neighborhoods, it is costly, whether measured by land consumption; the number of miles households must travel to get to jobs, schools and services; or the large scale of new public infrastructure to serve a larger geographic area. This strategy also allows new development in waterway floodplains that flow through downriver communities.

In the **Concentrate and Conserve** scenario, existing neighborhoods gain more neighbors, but in exchange, enjoy greater, sustained re-investment in public infrastructure, such as roadway enhancements, drainage improvements, and new public facilities within easier access. This scenario also allows the conservation of more wetlands and land that is susceptible to flooding.

The planned growth patterns reflected in this Plan's Future Land Use Map (pages 16-17) seeks to balance these concerns. The Map encourages new development along strategic corridors that connect to job centers and other destinations, and supports infill development in partially developed areas, in coordination with necessary supportive infrastructure. It also designates Municipal Growth Management Areas around the Parish's largest incorporated areas.

"Concentrate all new subdivisions and high-rise living quarters in more rural, undeveloped, central regions of St. Tammany."

"I am expressly concerned if new building happens 'upstream' of us we are going to be flooded out."

"Please consider developing the infrastructure needed for these additional homes and citizens of our area first. Don't put the cart before the horse."

"Flooding is constantly on the minds of those of us who live near or on the bayous. "

"It should be a priority to allow the communities of Mandeville, Covington and Slidell to annex developed areas into their community where they will be better able to control land use with all of the other planning and zoning controls they use more effectively than the Parish is able to do."

PLAN ELEMENTS



1.

Land Use and Development

Figure 4: Existing Land Use Distribution



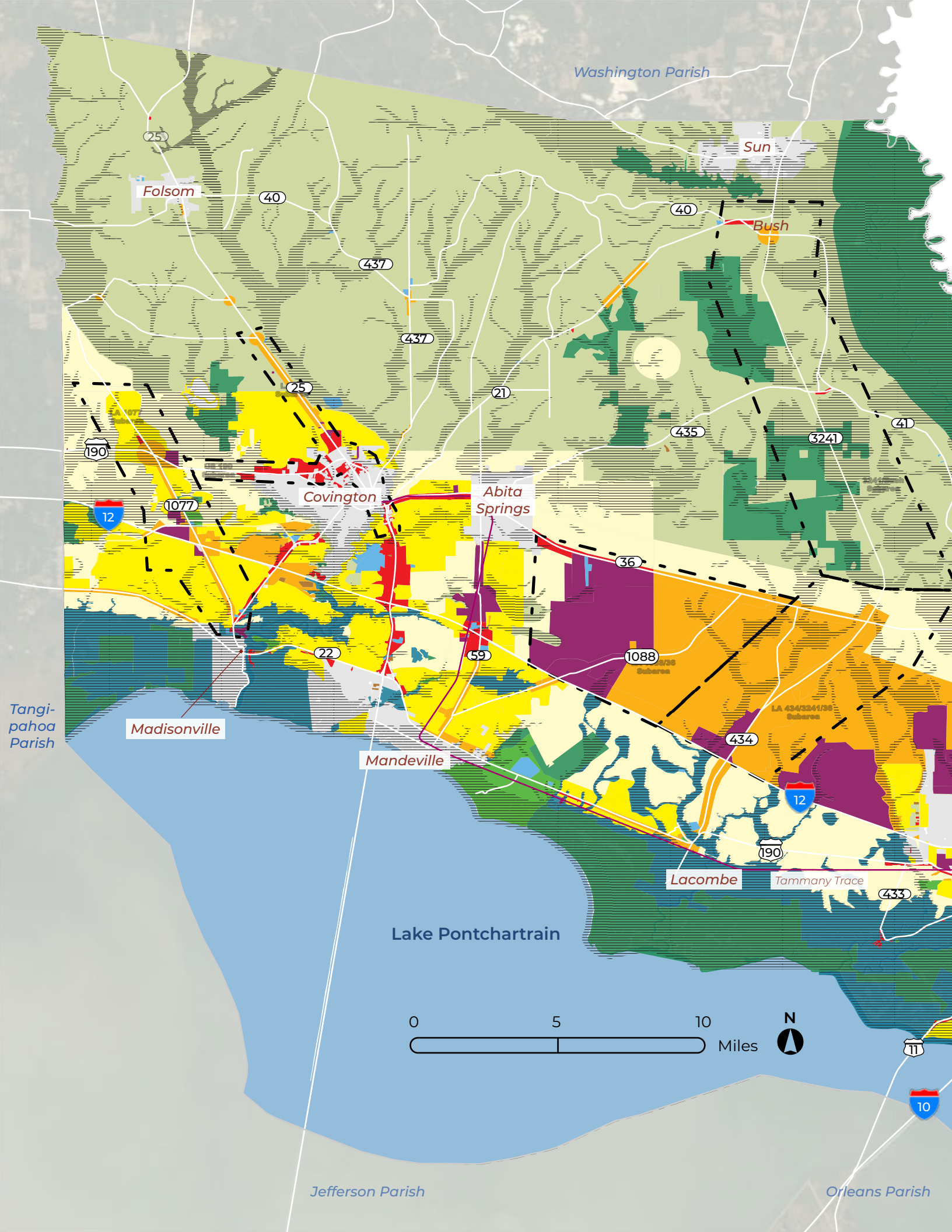


Facts, Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities

Key Facts and Trends

- Demand for residential growth remains strong; Since 2013, about 1,200 new single family homes were permitted on average each year, with the lowest in 2009 at just over 500 to the highest in 2020 at nearly 1,600.
- St. Tammany Parish homes are predominantly owner-occupied - 78.9%, compared to the statewide average of 66.5%.
- Commercial development permits have lagged residential permits during this time, and have not returned to pre-Great Recession pace.
- State- and Parish-owned parks and wildlife refuge areas include the Pearl River Wildlife Management Area, Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge, St. Tammany Wildlife Refuge, Lake Ramsay Savannah Wildlife Management Area, Fontainebleau State Park, Pelican Park, Camp Salmen Nature Park, Coquille Parks and Recreation, and Fairview-Riverside State Park.
- Several thousand acres of the Parish are pine wetland mitigation banks. These mostly privately-owned areas help compensate for wetland loss from development and other land uses. They provide wetland storage, reduce storm-water runoff, improve water quality and ground-water recharge,, protect rare species and habitats, and improve air quality.





Washington Parish

Folsom

Sun

Bush

Covington

Abita Springs

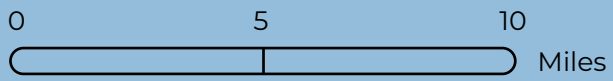
Madisonville

Mandeville

Lacombe

Tammany Trace

Lake Pontchartrain



Jefferson Parish

Orleans Parish

Tangi-
pahoa
Parish



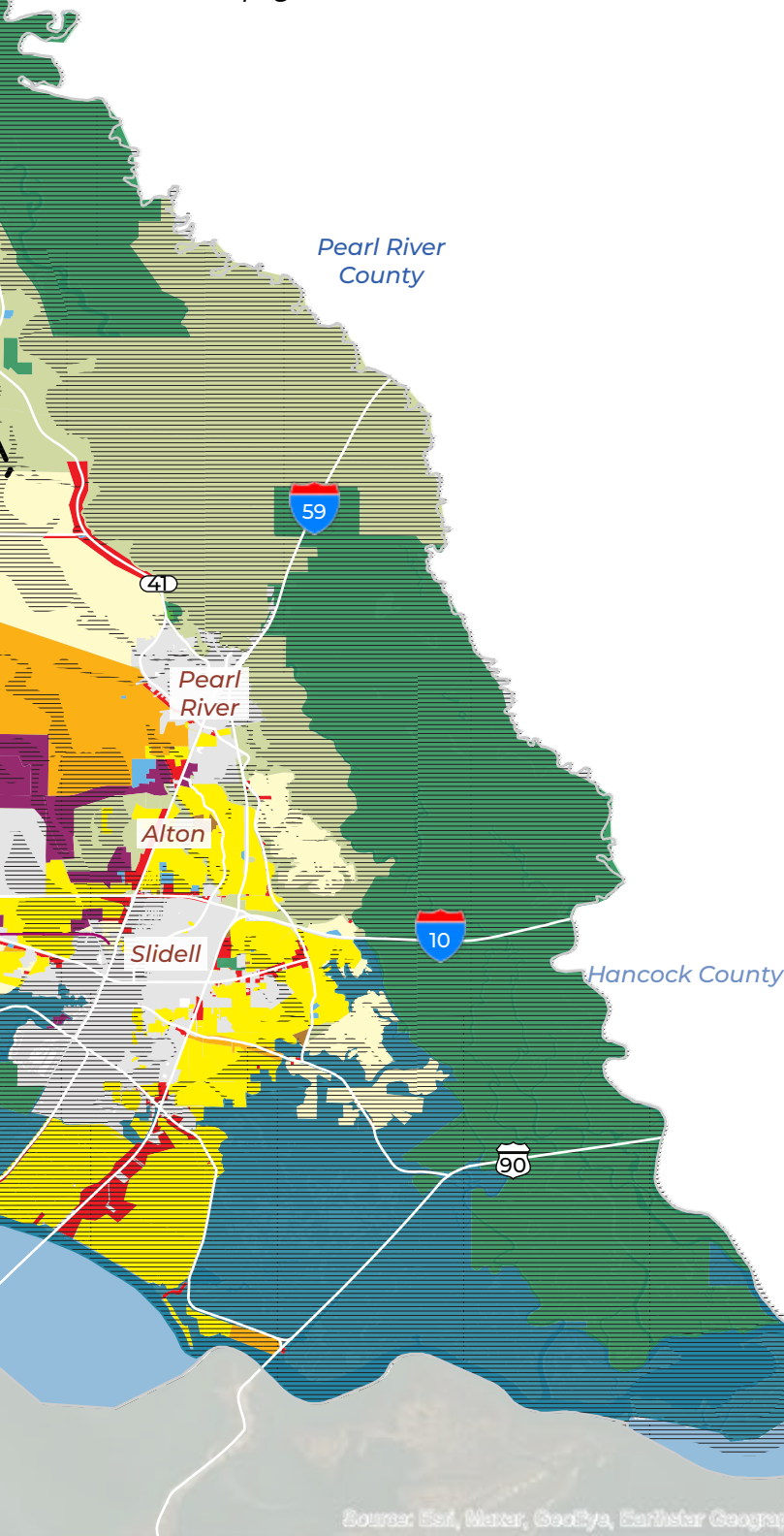
Figure 5: Future Land Use Map

The purpose of the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) is to provide decision makers and stakeholders with a tool for understanding our community's preferred pattern of growth.

Policies governing the Parish administration's usage of the FLUM are stated under Goal 2 of this section (page 22).

The Future Land Use Map illustrates St. Tammany Parish's patterns of historic settlement and preferred growth: an intertwined series of historic town centers, suburbanized corridors, and abundant countryside and wilderness. It shows generalized areas designated for future land uses by broad categories. Neither the FLUM nor this document constitute a "zoning" map or policy.

A high-resolution, annotated version of this map is available as a separate appendix to this report.



Future Land Use Categories

- Coastal Conservation
- Conservation- Protected
- Rural/Agricultural
- Parks and Open Space
- Low Intensity Residential
- Medium Intensity Residential
- High Intensity Residential
- Mixed Use
- Commercial
- Institutional
- Manufacturing and Logistics
- Special Flood Hazard Area
- Subarea Plan

Future Land Use Categories

This plan establishes several general categories for depiction of all lands within unincorporated St. Tammany Parish's boundaries in the Future Land Use Map. The term "intensity" is used frequently, and is defined as "the level of human impact on land and waters directly in use, on adjacent land and waters, and on areas beyond."

Conservation Protected areas are among the most ecologically sensitive in the Parish. Protected areas include public and private lands designated as parks, pine wetland mitigation banks, and habitat for endangered wildlife. Most types of development is generally prohibited in protected areas, but they may be used for regulated recreation or eco-tourism purposes.



Coastal Conservation areas are within the Parish's "coastal zone" (all areas south of Interstate 12, per Louisiana Revised Statute § 49:214.24) that are not currently developed with intense uses, and are within the 100-year floodplain. Coastal Conservation areas are critically important for a variety of fisheries and wildlife, essential to water quality and groundwater recharge, and should be conserved to ensure species and habitat sustainability. Coastal wetlands also serve as storm buffers, and help to minimize storm runoff and subsequent flood damage to area homes and businesses. The areas include undisturbed coastal marshes, swamps, and tidal wetlands and adjacent lands accommodating very low-intensity human land

uses - namely, highly dispersed residences, though low-impact agricultural, commercial, and public and institutional uses, such as recreation, tourism, research, and education may be appropriate.

Rural and Agricultural areas include mostly very low intensity uses in non-urbanized areas, such as agriculture, horse farms, timberlands, ranches, and very large single family lots typically larger than three acres. No large traffic generators or noisy or pollution causing uses are located in Rural and Agricultural areas. Low-capacity country roads—typically two-lanes—serve these areas. Septic systems and wells are typical. The Parish's abundant rural areas provide ample space for low-intensity uses, offering residents privacy and access to the outdoors. The countryside also fosters a number of commercial activities, such as production farms, horse boarding, and lumber harvesting. The Rural and Agricultural category includes these commercial uses, as well as small rural-serving businesses such as small groceries, gas stations, restaurants, and auto repair shops. St. Tammany's countryside supports a growing tourism industry, whose businesses in this area include bed and breakfasts, retreat centers, nature tours, and "u-pick" farms.



Residential areas include a wide range of residential neighborhoods with varying character, from older neighborhoods immediately outside municipal boundaries, to modern subdivisions, mobile home parks, mixed use villages in which neighborhood commercial and civic uses are within easy walking distance of homes. Residential areas include three subcategories: Low Intensity, Medium Intensity, and High Intensity. While the predominant use in Residential Neighborhoods is housing, supportive community uses - such as parks and recreational facilities, trails, small churches, small businesses, daycare centers, fire and police substations, neighborhood restaurants, and primary and secondary schools - are also located in Residential Neighborhoods. This broader mix of uses is more appropriate in higher intensity Residential Neighborhoods.

Low Intensity:

Predominantly single family, detached homes on very large lots. The lower residential density creates a more spacious character appropriate as a transition between the Parish's Rural or Conservation areas and more intense land uses. The dispersed development pattern makes public services and amenities less efficient and more expensive to provide, and so residents typically must travel farther to access them.



Medium Intensity:

Medium Intensity neighborhoods include a broader mix of large and small lots but remain predominantly, single-family detached homes. Attached homes such as townhomes and 2-unit homes, as well as assisted living centers

may fit into the character of Medium Intensity Residential Neighborhoods. The higher density of development makes central water and sewer more practical than on-site water and wastewater systems, and infrastructure like sidewalks, subsurface drainage, and street lighting are more common. These areas are appropriate buffers between Rural or Low Intensity Residential Neighborhoods and High Intensity Residential Neighborhoods or Commercial and Institutional areas.



High Intensity:

High Intensity Residential Neighborhoods are predominantly attached homes, such as townhomes, and multifamily developments, but may also include detached homes on very small lots and mobile home parks. These areas are appropriate to locate adjacent to or near Commercial and Institutional areas, and should not be located far from existing or planned urban infrastructure, including higher capacity roadways, central water and sewer, and job and activity centers.



Mixed Use areas are flexible and appropriate for higher concentration of residential and commercial uses, allowing shorter trips between destinations and opportunities for walkable, compact development patterns. Mixed Use areas are typically located at or near the Parish’s existing hubs of activity and intersections of major roads, as well as along major traffic corridors. Mixed Use areas may also include higher density residential uses, such as garden apartments and condominiums.



Commercial areas are concentrations of offices, retailers, services, and other employers that generate varying levels of traffic. They range from small clusters of neighborhood-serving uses such as personal care and convenience goods, to large-scale retail centers that employ hundreds and attract thousands of shoppers, to office complexes that employ workers commuting from around Southeast Louisiana and Mississippi. Higher density housing, such as garden apartments and condominiums, may also be located amid Commercial Areas with appropriate buffering to protect resident safety and health. Commercial use intensities correspond to the capacity of infrastructure available to support it.



Institutional areas provide adequate space in central, accessible areas for provision of public and public-serving facilities and services, such as large health care facilities, higher education campuses, and large fire and police stations.



Manufacturing and Logistics areas provide abundant space and access to infrastructure for a range of uses including advanced manufacturing, storage and distribution, maritime uses, and utilities. These uses serve important economic goals, including provision of living-wage jobs and contribution to a strong tax base. However, some of these uses can negatively impact surrounding communities through truck traffic, noise, and pollution. Manufacturing and Logistics areas are therefore located away from sensitive ecological areas and existing and planned residential areas, and should be located adjacent to high capacity transportation corridors.



The **Special Flood Hazard Areas Overlay** is the land in the floodplain subject to a one percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year, as established by current Federal Emergency Management Agency Flood Insurance Rate Maps, Flood Boundary Floodway Maps, and future amendments to them. Intense land use is discouraged in this area, as well as in areas with a significant amount of wetlands or repetitive property loss, though some may be appropriate for sensitive, low impact development due to circumstances such as proximity to existing activity centers and infrastructure.

Subarea Plans

Many parts of our Parish are expected to change quickly in the next twenty years, and require more careful planning. These include areas with:

- High market demand for residential, commercial, and manufacturing and logistics development;
- Critical and sensitive environmental resources;
- Underdeveloped transportation, drainage, and wastewater infrastructure

Additional land use and transportation planning beyond the scope of the New Directions should include:

- Close consultation with property owners, residents and businesses, elected officials, and state and local institutions and government agencies;
- Collection of the best available ecological data;
- Development scenario consideration

The Future Land Use Map indicates five subareas recommended for further, refined planning:

- LA 434/LA 3241/LA 36
- LA 3241/Bush
- LA 1077
- LA 1088/LA 36
- Covington Corridors (US 190 and LA 25)

1.

Land Use and Development Goals and Strategies

"Goals" are statements of desired outcomes. "Strategies" are methods for achieving goals.

Goal 1:

Our land use, land development, and land redevelopment decision-making, policies, and processes will be fair, transparent, and accessible to all Parish stakeholders.

Strategy 1:

Update the Development Code to better explain the appropriate and permitted uses under different zoning districts. This should include reducing the total number of zoning classifications.

Strategy 2:

Make land use studies, including hydrological and transportation studies, conducted by the Parish available in a public format.

Strategy 3:

Provide regular education to public boards, commissions, and representatives so they can make well-informed decisions.

Strategy 4:

Continue to provide adequate notification to adjacent residents and businesses in advance of Planning & Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustment meetings on decisions that will affect their neighborhood or property.

Strategy 5:

Educate the public about how taxation works in St. Tammany Parish.

Strategy 6:

Amend the plan regularly to reflect changes in conditions, public support, and state laws.

Goal 2:

New development and redevelopment will be orderly, carefully planned, and predictable.

Policy 1:

The Future Land Use Map contained within the Comprehensive Plan shall predominantly guide the assignment of zoning districts throughout the Parish.

Policy 2:

The Unified Development Code and Subdivision Ordinances shall be updated continuously to reflect updated Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and strategies.

Policy 3:

Parish staff and decision-makers shall reference the Future Land Use Map when considering changes to zoning designations, budgeting for capital improvements, and adoption of future plans and policies impacting land use in the Parish.



Goal 3:

The character of existing residential areas, expansive rural landscapes, and sensitive ecological areas will be preserved.

Strategy 1:

Locate manufacturing and logistics areas and other high intensity land uses at appropriate distances from Residential Neighborhoods, Conservation Areas, and sensitive ecological areas to create a gradual transition zone to minimize negative impacts.

Strategy 2:

Protect and preserve historic buildings, natural lands and wetlands, and waterways.

Goal 4:

Land and buildings will be developed in ways that lower the risk and incidence of flooding and flood damages caused by rainfall and storm surge.

Policy 1:

Any development permitted in the Parish's "area of special flood hazard" shall be "low-impact," employing systems and practices that use natural processes that promote infiltration, evapotranspiration or use of stormwater in order to reduce flood risk and protect water quality.

Strategy 2:

Elevate on piers where possible critical facilities that are located within the 100-year flood plain.

These are defined as those which provide essential services and functions, especially during and after a disaster, like hospitals, emergency shelters, assisted living centers, and police and fire stations.

Strategy 1:

Prevent intense new development and redevelopment in the Parish's "area of special flood hazard" unless extra environmentally sustainable mitigating steps are taken.

1.

Land Use and Development Goals and Strategies

"Goals" are statements of desired outcomes. "Strategies" are methods for achieving goals.

Goal 5:

Adequate infrastructure and utilities will be available in areas permitted for new development.

Policy 1:

Parish decision makers, including the Planning Commission, Zoning Commission, Board of Zoning Adjustments, and the Parish Council, should consider the impact of proposed changes to existing land use regulation on traffic and drainage in adjacent areas.

Strategy 1:

Locate new residential and commercial development within, adjacent to, or near existing towns and activity centers and associated infrastructure, services, and amenities.

Strategy 2:

Locate high intensity land uses adjacent to high capacity transportation corridors.

Strategy 3:

Update transportation and drainage impact fees to reflect current costs of public service.

Strategy 4:

Consider the creation of special development districts to raise funding for infrastructure in areas planned for new development.



Goal 6:

New development and redevelopment will be environmentally sustainable.

Strategy 1:

Promote, encourage and sometimes require sustainable stormwater-management techniques, such as pervious pavement and elevation on piers, in site planning and new construction.

Strategy 2:

Encourage the planting of wind-firm native tree species and work to eradicate non-native, invasive species.

Strategy 3:

Encourage traditional neighborhood developments featuring attractive, compact, walkable, mixed-use patterns throughout the Parish by maintaining zoning classifications and districts that permit traditional neighborhood development at various scales.

Strategy 4:

Minimize the amount of impervious surfaces on new development

Develop impervious cover regulations/restrictions for all new Parish development and require stormwater bill for impervious cover for all new development.

Explore parking alternatives, such as shared lots, public parking lots near popular commercial areas, and parking space maximums, to reduce the amount of paved surface in new development.

Strategy 5:

Offer incentives for developments, such as expedited permitting and discounted fees, that meet high energy efficiency standards and draw energy from renewable sources.

1.

Land Use and Development Goals and Strategies

"Goals" are statements of desired outcomes. "Strategies" are methods for achieving goals.

Goal 7:

Resilient building and land development practices will reduce or eliminate the potential impact of flood and wind hazards, particularly at critical facilities.

Strategy 1:

Update guidance in unified development code for permitted drainage and flood-mitigation measures, including green measures, and associated performance levels.

Strategy 2:

Encourage use of green infrastructure - including but not limited to bioretention facilities, rain gardens, vegetated rooftops, rain barrels and permeable pavements - that exceeds minimum requirements in private development through incentives.

Strategy 3:

Adopt green building practices in Parish government facilities, such as energy efficiency and "Living with Water" measures and proofs of concept.

Strategy 4:

Define "critical facilities" in the Parish Land Development Code to be inclusive of essential services, hazardous materials, and at-risk population facilities.

Strategy 5:

Invest in hardening of critical Parish facilities, including emergency shelters, through elevation of electrical systems, backup power sources, and additional flood-proofing measures.

Strategy 6:

Discourage or disallow slab-on-fill construction in the Parish's Area of Special Flood Hazard.

Strategy 7:

Encourage building to the 500-year floodplain height in the Parish's Area of Special Flood Hazard through the use of incentives such as discounted fees.

Goal 8:

A variety of safe, affordable, and attractive housing types will meet the needs of our diverse community.

Strategy 1:

Maintain zoning classifications for mixed-use development at various scales and intensities.

Strategy 2:

Invest in programs to support elevation of existing homes and properties vulnerable to flooding.

Strategy 3:

Continue efforts to ensure that renters and homeowners have access to healthy housing without the presence of housing quality problems. Educate landlords about required standards of quality in their rental properties and warn them about potential violations of fair housing rules.

Strategy 4:

Adopt a Property Maintenance Code with strict anti-retaliation provisions for St. Tammany Parish and allocate operating funds to conduct inspections of rental properties at tenants' request in the next 10 years, given current resource constraints that reduce the ability to add inspectors.

Strategy 5:

Support property owners who receive environmental fines and cannot afford to repair septic systems.

Strategy 6:

Work with non-profit partners to make a Home Repair Plan for the Parish that provides a dedicated home repair program for all areas of the Parish.

Goal 9:

Our building stock will be maintained in stable condition, with minimal vacant, blighted, or abandoned properties

Strategy 1:

Adequately fund code enforcement staff and operations to inspect and process code violations.

Strategy 2:

Encourage infill development on vacant lots in existing neighborhoods.

Strategy 3:

Encourage redevelopment and adaptive reuse of existing, vacant buildings.

2.

Mobility, Transportation, and Utilities

Facts, Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities

Mobility, transportation, and utility infrastructure and facilities include roadways, bridges, drainage systems, trails and paths, park-and-rides, railroads, maritime ports, airports, energy-distribution systems, wastewater facilities, drinking water facilities, and communications networks.

The Parish's Department of Public Works maintains 4,348 roadways (equivalent to 1,548 miles of roads) and 144 bridges in unincorporated areas of the Parish. Ongoing roadway improvement projects are visible on the interactive map on the [Progress page](#) on the Parish's website.

Traffic congestion demands improvements to connectivity of the roadway network, especially in the east-west direction. In 2017, the St. Tammany Parish Major Street Plan (Thoroughfare Plan) was drafted, yet not adopted. Conducting a complete update of the Major Street Plan is therefore a critical strategy within this Plan (Goal 1, Strategy 2).

The Major Street Plan should identify priority projects to fund with future public revenues. Table 2 lists funded, near-term construction projects in various stages of completion; these are also shown on the Future Land Use Map.





Table 2: Near term construction projects

Project	Cost Estimate	Status
Repave Sault Street from LA 1088 to US 190 and create enhanced turning lanes	\$2.6 million	Completion expected spring 2022
Widen Interstate 12 from four lanes to six lanes - Phase 1: LA 59 to US 190	\$55.1 million	Completion expected late 2022
Widen Interstate 12 from four lanes to six lanes - Phase 2: US 190 to LA 21	\$60.4 million	Completion expected late 2022
Widen Interstate 12 from four lanes to six lanes - Phase 3: LA 21 to LA 1077		
Widen Collins Blvd. overpass from Front Street to Lee Road (LA 437)		Construction expected to begin in summer 2022
Build Mandeville Bypass Road, a 3.5 mile, two-lane road connecting LA 1088 and US 190 with potential roundabouts, to access to Pelican Park		Property acquisition underway
Build divided, four lane Highway 3241 - Phase 1: LA 40/41 to LA 435 (5.5 miles)	\$55 million	Completion expected fall of 2023
Build divided, four lane Highway 3241 - Phase 2: LA 435 to LA 36 (8.2 miles)	\$75 million	Completion expected fall of 2023
Build roundabout at intersection of LA 22 and LA 1085	\$1 million	To be contracted in spring 2022
Widen LA 22 to three lanes from Bedico Creek to Pine Creek Drive	\$5.6 million	To be contracted in fiscal year 2023-2024
Build divided, four lane Highway 3241 - Phase 3: LA 36 to LA 434	\$80 million	To be contracted in fiscal year 2023-2024
Widen Interstate 12 from four lanes to six lanes - Phase 3: LA 21 to LA 1077	\$38 million	Contract date to be determined

2.

Mobility, Transportation and Utilities Goals and Strategies

"Goals" are statements of desired outcomes. "Strategies" are methods for achieving goals.

Goal 1:

A connected grid of roadways will reduce congestion and provide multiple routes to destinations.

Strategy 1:

Provide adequate funding for current "shovel-ready" projects.

Strategy 4:

Acquire land for future roadway development.

Strategy 2:

Update the Parish Major Street Plan that identifies high-impact projects to improve connectivity and reduce congestion.

Strategy 5:

Require new roads in developments to connect with roadways serving adjacent areas where feasible to improve network connectivity.

Strategy 3:

Maintain roadway infrastructure including pavement and markings, signals, signage, and associated drainage.

Strategy 6:

In new residential, commercial, and mixed-use developments, require walking and biking connections to existing, adjacent networks.

Goal 2:

Roadway function, design, and capacity will be compatible with and support existing and anticipated land uses in adjacent areas.

Strategy 1:

Enhance operations and improve traffic flow on corridors facing highest congestion.

Strategy 4:

Pursue MOU/CEA and other agreements with utility providers to develop roadways.

Strategy 2:

Expand capacity or flow of existing roadways to lower peak congestion.

Strategy 5:

Collaborate with the Regional Planning Commission to study anticipated changes in growth corridors and identify necessary transportation infrastructure enhancements.

Strategy 3:

Pursue transfer of key roadways from DOTD through Road Transfer Program when fiscally responsible.

Goal 3:

Parish rights-of-way will provide safe, accessible, and connected facilities for people to walk and bike to destinations.

Strategy 1:

Build sidewalks or shared use trails as part of the construction, reconstruction, or expansion of major and minor arterial and collector roadways that connect residential neighborhoods to destinations.

Strategy 2:

Retrofit existing, "incomplete" roadways with the construction of sidewalks, crossings, and bikeways.

Strategy 3:

Raise awareness and educate the public of other users right to the road, such as through "Share the Road" signage.

Strategy 4:

Adopt a "Complete Streets" policy and approach that requires future roadway projects to accommodate the needs of all road users, including people walking and biking.

Goal 4:

Our Parish and state-owned roadways will be safely operated, with fewer traffic crashes, injuries, and fatalities.

Strategy 1:

Regularly report and evaluate trends in roadway crashes, focusing on locations with concentrated incidents of resulting in serious injuries and fatalities.

Strategy 2:

Apply for Highway Safety Grants to fund projects to remediate safety challenges identified in crash analysis.

Goal 5:

The Tammany Trace will serve as the spine of a network of connected, off-street trails throughout the Parish.

Strategy 1:

Create a Parishwide comprehensive trails plan that identifies corridors connecting the Trace to surrounding destinations.

Strategy 3:

Improve safety and comfort for Trace users at intersections with major streets.

Strategy 2:

Extend the Tammany Trace to Heritage Park.

Strategy 4:

Promote existing bike-sharing businesses along the Tammany Trace.

2.

Mobility, Transportation and Utilities Goals and Strategies

"Goals" are statements of desired outcomes. "Strategies" are methods for achieving goals.

Goal 6:

Convenient transit and mobility services will be available to local and regional job centers, health care services, and other destinations to households without personal vehicles.

Strategy 1:

Continue to provide reliable demand-response public transit service through collaboration with service providers.

Strategy 2:

Support commuter rail connecting St. Tammany Parish from Slidell to the New Orleans Central Business District, Louis Armstrong International Airport, and Baton Rouge.

Strategy 3:

Maintain Park-and-Ride facilities and promote carpooling among commuters.

Goal 7:

Rail, maritime, and aviation systems will operate safely and efficiently to support freight and passenger movement within the Parish and across boundaries.

Strategy 1:

Grow the St. Tammany Regional Airport and maintain in a state of good repair.

Strategy 2:

Coordinate with Parish railroad owners and operators to ensure safe operations, particularly at roadway crossings.

Strategy 3:

Explore and promote opportunities for potential passenger transportation in Parish waterways.



Goal 8:

All Parish communities and businesses will enjoy reliable energy service from the Parish's energy grid, energy providers, and distributed energy resources.

Strategy 1:

Where feasible, bury electrical wires and consider requirements for in-ground utilities in new development to reduce risk of power loss during high wind storms.

Strategy 2:

Assess underutilized manufacturing and logistics areas for potential use as renewable energy sources.

Strategy 3:

Support energy self-generation through incentives and establishment of permitted usage for technologies such as solar energy storage, wind turbines, waste heat to power technologies, pressure reduction turbines, microturbines, gas turbines, and fuel cells.

Goal 9:

Affordable broadband internet service will be widely available throughout the Parish.

Strategy 1:

Partner with local internet service providers to apply for state grants funding infrastructure.

Strategy 2:

Coordinate with providers to build "fixed wireless" broadband facilities that extend the network connectivity to rural areas of the Parish.

3.

Living with Nature

Facts, Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities

Key Facts and Trends:

- St. Tammany Parish is a coastal community on the Gulf of Mexico and Lake Pontchartrain, one of the largest estuaries in the U.S. As a result, the Parish is subject to tropical storms, subsidence, and sea level rise.
- A U.S. Geological Survey study found a 25% loss in coastal wetlands in Louisiana from 1932 to 2016, making marsh areas one of the most critically threatened environments in the area.
- More rain falls on St. Tammany Parish and its northern Gulf Coast neighbors than almost anywhere else in the U.S.: approximately 64 inches a year. Climate scientists predict more frequent, more intense downpours over shorter time periods, due to a warming climate and Gulf of Mexico.
- Wetlands and surface water make up about half of the Parish's area. The southern half of is relatively flat and poorly drained largely due to its geology, topography and soil types. Elevations range from about 295 feet above sea level on the terrace upland to about three feet below sea level in former marshes drained for development along the lake.
- Almost 100 percent of drinkable water use comes from groundwater, with less than 1 percent withdrawn from surface water sources. Public supplies account for approximately 70 percent of water withdrawn with 28 percent for domestic use.
- On average, three to four hurricanes make landfall in Louisiana each decade, and due to the general size of a hurricane, the effects of climate change, and the size of Louisiana, if a hurricane affects the state, it will likely affect St. Tammany Parish.
- St. Tammany Parish has reported 36 tornadoes since 1989 and is likely to experience one tornado a year.
- With detailed data, proper planning and use of green infrastructure, the Parish will continue to grow and thrive while living with nature.
- St. Tammany Parish is responsible for a great proportion of Louisiana's biodiversity and supports more than 175 species of rare, threatened, and endangered species and natural communities (such as the Gopher Tortoise, *gopherus polyphemus*, pictured below, found only in Northshore parishes in Louisiana).





Threats and challenges:

- Tropical storms (hurricanes) and flooding, making up the majority of the disaster declarations, are the most severe hazards facing the Parish in terms of property damage and impact on the area's economy.
- Wetland loss, land subsidence, and sea level rise will exacerbate the tropical storms and flooding that challenge the area. Even strong, prolonged southeast winds can cause flooding and slow drainage of our rivers, resulting in more upstream flooding.
- Localized, repetitive flooding is a large threat to the Parish, and has a high risk to property damage and medium risk to people. Inland wetland loss has been a significant cause of rain-induced flooding.
- St. Tammany Parish is at high risk for tornadoes; the major threat in the Parish from tornadoes is property damage and injury.
- St. Tammany Parish is at high risk for fog; fog is responsible for more deaths each year than any other natural hazard. It can be a major problem on roadways that cross Lake Pontchartrain, such as the Causeway and other roads near the lake. Poor visibility causes traffic crashes, leading to injuries and deaths.
- In St. Tammany Parish there are approximately 16.7 extreme heat days per year, compared to 10.7 as a national median.

Heat coupled with other natural disasters can have major effects on communities.

Throughout the Parish, different communities have suffered from flooding caused by heavy rainfall and by coastal storms. Flood risk must be addressed for long-range plan growth and development of communities in St. Tammany, especially as the Parish receives households displaced from other flooded, coastal communities. It is also important to ensure that investment in storm surge protection is done equitably across the Parish in ways that focus on the most vulnerable areas and populations. The water systems within the Parish include Lake Pontchartrain, river, bayous, canals, ditches, retention and detention ponds which are inextricably connected to privately owned drainage infrastructure.



3.

Living with Nature Goals and Strategies

"Goals" are statements of desired outcomes. "Strategies" are methods for achieving goals.

Goal 1:

A robust, integrated system of publicly-owned, non-structural and structural flood protection and drainage infrastructure will minimize flash, riverine, and coastal flood risk and the frequency and severity of flood damage.

Strategy 1:

Create a Parishwide drainage master plan that identifies and prioritizes flood risk reduction projects - including flooding from flash, riverine, and coastal storm surge - that deliver the highest protection benefit against financial, social, and environmental costs. The plan should include updated hydrology and hydraulic studies of the Parish's watersheds, rivers, bayous, and other waterways.

Strategy 2:

Invest in the construction, preservation and maintenance of green infrastructure and natural barriers that protects human settlement while stabilizing natural systems, such as the New Orleans Land Bridge.

Strategy 3:

Obtain permission from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries' Scenic Rivers Program to comprehensively desnag navigable parts of rivers that serve critical drainage functions while preserving their ecological integrity.

Strategy 4:

Collaborate with federal, state, and private entities to leverage broader public funding opportunities.

Goal 2:

Viable examples of our critical and sensitive areas, including native plant and animal habitats, tree resources, and wetlands, will be conserved, protected, stable, and flourishing.

Strategy 1:

Identify, acquire and designate critical and sensitive natural areas as nature reserves, river headwaters, recreation areas, and wildlife conservation areas, through:

- Preserve undeveloped lakefront land adjacent to Mandeville as accessible park space.
- Designate the headwaters of Bayou Lacombe as a historic preserve.
- Restore LongLeaf Pine habitat where possible and maintain through prescribed fire
- Avoid and minimize new development in wetland areas.

Strategy 2:

Restrict development within proximity of critical and sensitive areas through appropriate designation of zoning.

Strategy 3:

Educate our communities, including households, officials, developers, builders, and business leaders, on the nature, status, and location of critical and sensitive areas and resources.

Goal 3:

Our waterways, watersheds, floodplains, and groundwater will be protected, maintained, and restored to maximize water quality and sustain a drinkable water supply.

Strategy 1:

Promote the reduction of water use by buildings and landscapes.

Strategy 2:

Avoid and minimize development of intense land uses in floodplains.

Strategy 3:

Minimize construction of impervious surfaces in new development and redevelopment to reduce stormwater runoff.

Strategy 4:

Participate in regional, state, and interstate planning efforts to properly manage watersheds that cross jurisdictional boundaries, such as the Louisiana Watershed Initiative.

Strategy 5:

Avoid damage to our marshes, sea-grass beds, and rangia clam areas in Lake Pontchartrain to promote water quality and important fisheries.

3.

Living with Nature Goals and Strategies

"Goals" are statements of desired outcomes. "Strategies" are methods for achieving goals.

Goal 4:

Our air quality will be healthy for all to breathe and our Parish's "carbon footprint" will be reduced.

Strategy 1:

Prioritize fuel-efficiency and emissions reduction when procuring Parish vehicles for fleet expansion or replacement.

Strategy 2:

Develop a strategy to install publicly-accessible electric vehicle refueling stations throughout the Parish, prioritizing high-traffic locations.

Strategy 3:

Support and promote mobility options that have a lower impact on air quality than personal vehicle usage, such as public transportation, private commuter shuttles, and carpooling.

Strategy 4:

Support use of innovative, renewable energy technologies and sources to minimize greenhouse gas emissions resulting from powering buildings through incentives.

Strategy 5:

Position the Parish to receive public and private investment in carbon sequestration technology projects .



Goal 5:

Existing onsite wastewater treatment systems will be upgraded and maintained to meet modern standards, preventing pollution of local water bodies.

Strategy 1:

Require homeowners with on-site septic systems to conduct proper operation & maintenance of their systems.

Strategy 5:

Educate homeowners in proper operation and maintenance of home septic systems.

Strategy 2:

Offer technical and financial support to low-income, elderly, and disabled homeowners, including mobile home owners, in need of maintaining or repairing septic systems.

Strategy 6:

Require private, centralized sewer system operators to maintain and update systems.

Strategy 3:

Encourage new development and redevelopment, and owners of existing property with septic systems, to connect to centralized sewerage systems.

Strategy 7:

Encourage new subdivisions to use wastewater treatment companies with favorable operating records from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality.

Strategy 4:

Identify all non-functioning sewage treatment and septic systems and assist in bringing them into compliance with existing standards.

3.

Living with Nature Goals and Strategies

"Goals" are statements of desired outcomes. "Strategies" are methods for achieving goals.

Goal 6:

Solid waste will be managed and reduced to minimize reliance on landfills, and recycling will be a common practice across the Parish.

Strategy 1:

Start a recycling program available for commercial, institutional, and residential properties.

Strategy 2:

Continue litter abatement through Keep St. Tammany Beautiful programs, including "clean sweeps" and litter-to-art programs.

Strategy 3:

Foster coordination between private solid waste services to reduce inefficient duplication of services in neighborhoods.

Strategy 4:

Establish public locations for households to dispose waste and continue to host hazardous waste collection.

Strategy 5:

Recycle natural storm debris into mulch for restoration projects and other public uses.

Goal 7:

Light and noise pollution will be minimal.

Strategy 1:

Consider adoption of a dark skies lighting policy that reduces light pollution, prioritizing regulation of intense land uses including commercial, institutional, and manufacturing and logistics.

Strategy 2:

Enforce and update, as needed, the Parish's Noise and Sound ordinance.



4.

People and Communities

Facts, Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities

- St. Tammany Parish is home to over 17,800 veterans – about one of every ten adults. About 9% of veterans earned income below the poverty line in 2018, and nearly one out of three veterans in the Parish live with a disability
- St. Tammany is one of the state’s wealthiest Parishes, yet approximately 12% of our people — almost 30,000 individuals - live below the poverty line, including 16% of all children
- According to the 2020 County Health Ranking Report, St. Tammany Parish ranks first in health factors, e.g. diet and exercise, access to care, social and economic factors, physical environment, etc. and second in health outcomes, e.g. length and quality of life.
- About 20,000 residents (mostly adults 18-65) do not have health insurance
- Access to health care for low-to-moderate income residents and residents in rural areas is a concern



4.

People and Communities Goals and Strategies

"Goals" are statements of desired outcomes. "Strategies" are methods for achieving goals.

Goal 1:

Our communities' landscapes, culture, history, and traditions will be preserved and strengthened.

Strategy 1:

Preserve and maintain the Parish's historical sites. In the near term, partner with Friends of Camp Salmen Nature Park to continue the restoration of Camp Salmen Lodge as a destination for multicultural heritage tourism.

Strategy 2:

Beautify Parish public rights-of-way through:

- Planting and maintaining native trees and landscapes
- Installing "Gateway" art and signage at Parish highway entrances
- Installing attractive, modern lighting in activity center rights-of-way and active open spaces, including the lakefront



Goal 2:

Our neighborhood design will support physical activity and healthy living for people of all ages and abilities, helping maintain our status as one of the state's healthiest communities.

Strategy 1:

Support family recreation activities through continued stewardship and expanded funding for enhancements of public recreational assets, including the Tammany Trace, St. Tammany Fishing Pier, boat launches, and Camp Salmen Nature Park.

Strategy 2:

Add bicycle parking provisions, requirements, and incentives to Unified Development Code for high-intensity commercial, institutional, and residential uses.

Strategy 3:

Build sidewalks or shared use trails as part of the construction, reconstruction, or expansion of roadways that connect residential neighborhoods to destinations, including major and minor arterial and collector roadways, and roadways within subdivisions.

Strategy 4:

Require the provision of accessible, active recreational spaces or facilities - such as playgrounds, trails, swimming pools, or ballfields - within large-scale residential and mixed use developments.

Strategy 5:

Strengthen accessible parking policies in the Unified Development Code, especially for health care and other institutional uses, by increasing the minimum required number of accessible off- or on-street spaces.

4.

People and Communities Goals and Strategies

"Goals" are statements of desired outcomes. "Strategies" are methods for achieving goals.

Goal 3:

Neighborhoods throughout the Parish will share high access to quality public facilities and services, including schools, public safety facilities, recreation facilities, and libraries.

Strategy 1:

Coordinate with and support St. Tammany Parish Public Schools in siting of new elementary and high schools.

Strategy 3:

Expand broadband and high speed fiber internet access throughout the Parish, focusing on unserved rural areas.

Strategy 2:

Coordinate with the Parish's Fire Districts to identify newly developed or other areas lacking adequate fire protection.

Strategy 4:

Expand parks and recreation facilities in areas with low standards of services.

Goal 4:

Our residents - particularly vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, elderly people living alone, and veterans - will have access to resources to ensure their health, safety, and basic needs.

Strategy 1:

Co-locate essential social services, including physical and mental health care, emergency housing, and education and employment assistance, to assist low- and moderate-income residents with unmet needs.

Strategy 3:

Strengthen temporary shelters and expand permanent, stable housing for people experiencing homelessness.

Strategy 2:

Continue to support SafeHaven in building a training and education center and crisis receiving center, and offering housing and veterans housing.

Strategy 4:

Strengthen the capacity of the Grants Department to apply for state, federal, and foundation grant opportunities to provide social services.

The background of the page is a photograph of a large, light-colored house built on stilts over a body of water. The sun is setting behind the house, creating a warm, golden glow. The water reflects the light from the sun. In the foreground, there are some tall grasses or reeds. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

Goal 5:

People of all ages and backgrounds will feel safe and secure in their homes, neighborhoods, and throughout the public realm.

Strategy 1:

Invest in projects, programs and policies that will reduce crime and injuries to the general public.

Strategy 2:

Provide and maintain adequate police, fire, and emergency medical facilities and services for all neighborhoods as the Parish develops and grows in population.

Strategy 3:

Ensure that new development and redevelopment does not price out and displace long-term residents, elderly and poorer residents.

5.

Business and Economy

Facts, Trends, Challenges, and Opportunities

- Nearly 13,000 businesses and employers provide about 87,000 jobs in St. Tammany Parish
- Between 2002 and 2018, St. Tammany gained over 35,000 jobs. Job growth was concentrated around the incorporated cities of Slidell, Covington, Pearl River, and Mandeville.
- Since 2000, the healthcare, retail, lodging and food service, and education sectors have been the Parish's largest employers, and provide over half of the Parish's jobs.
- Half of employed residents typically commute out of the Parish for work. The growing "work-from-home" trend accelerated the COVID-19 pandemic creates an opportunity for workers to live in St. Tammany Parish without commutes
- The Parish's proximity to two international airports, over 20 local airports, Interstates 10, 12, 59, and 55 make it strategically positioned to attract and grow transportation and logistics industries.
- Northshore Technical Community College is one of the ten fastest growing community colleges in the nation, and provides workforce training and transfer opportunities to students through over 100 degree and certificate programs



5.

Business and Economy Goals and Strategies

"Goals" are statements of desired outcomes. "Strategies" are methods for achieving goals.

Goal 1:

The Parish will designate adequate land served by supportive infrastructure for use by businesses and industries seeking to begin or expand.

Strategy 1:

Reserve land fronting existing, undeveloped corridors for commercial uses.

Strategy 2:

Maintain existing manufacturing and logistics areas, including Highway 59, and establish an industrial park around the interchange of Interstate 12 and Highway 434 or Highway 1088.

Strategy 3:

Maintain manufacturing and logistics uses and use designations in areas served by rail, maritime, and intermodal facilities.

Goal 2:

St. Tammany Parish will attract and grow businesses that expand the Parish's tax base and provide living wage jobs to residents of varying skill levels.

Strategy 1:

Collaborate with local economic development officials to develop formal programs establishing incentives for businesses that offer living-wage jobs to low- and moderate-skill workers and meet other Parish policy goals.

Strategy 2:

Recruit national employers, including federal government agencies, to locate facilities and offices in St. Tammany Parish.

Goal 3:

Local and small businesses will receive efficient and supportive Parish services.

Strategy 1:

Maintain affordable permit fees for small businesses to open, operate, and modify business operations.

Strategy 3:

Conduct an evaluation of Parish administration business practices, and institute reforms to improve efficiency.

Strategy 2:

Collaborate with local economic development partners to offer business case services to small, locally-owned businesses.

Goal 4:

A productive, educated, and competitive workforce will be available to current and potential businesses.

Strategy 1:

Collaborate with Northshore Technical Community College to increase public awareness and expand the reach of its programs and services.

Strategy 3:

Partner with educational institutions to explore establishment of an International baccalaureate program, to attract international companies.

Strategy 2:

Promote and work with large employers to organize job fairs that connect our workforce to local employment opportunities.

Strategy 4:

Actively promote opportunities for business and civic leadership to members of the Parish's racial and ethnic minority groups.

Goal 5:

The Parish will engage and coordinate closely with local, regional, and state economic development partners to unify and leverage resources.

Strategy 1:

Engage the Port of New Orleans to grow transportation, warehousing and logistics businesses in the Parish.

Strategy 2:

Collaborate with local, regional, and state economic development and tourism partners and officials to develop major event attractors, including an amateur athletics complex and a hotel adjacent to the Harbor Center.

IMPLEMENTATION AND ADMINISTRATION

The Implementation Table that follows identifies specific actions to be taken to implement the strategies and policies of each of the Comprehensive Plan Elements: Land Use and Development (LUD); Mobility, Transportation and Utilities (MTU); Living with Nature (LN); People and Community (PC); and Business and Economy (BE). The table is divided into two sections: 1) Near-term actions to be taken within the next five years to advance specific projects, policies and programs; and 2) Actions to be taken on an ongoing or annual basis. Each action identifies a responsible entity, funding source, and at least one Plan strategy the action fulfills. Because the Comprehensive Plan is a broad overview of Parish policy priorities, specific projects costs and tasks for each item are not included.

The primary implementing ordinances of the Comprehensive Plan are contained within Part II of the Parish's Code of Ordinances: the Land Development Code.¹ This includes regulations, standards and requirements intended to "promote the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the Parish."²

Monitoring Progress and Updating the Plan

To maintain New Directions usefulness to Parish decision-makers over time, the Planning & Development Department should conduct annual progress reports and communicate results to the Planning Commission, Parish Council, and public. These annual reports should consider:

- The Parish's progress in implementing the Plan
- Changes in conditions that form the basis of the Plan, such as those revealed in Parish hydrological or other environmental studies;
- Changes in community support for the Plan's goals and strategies;
- Changes in state laws pertaining to land use, transportation, environment, and economy;
- Identified areas of conflict

No more than once each year, the Planning Commission should consider amendments to the Comprehensive Plan's goals, strategies, Implementation Table, and Future Land Use Map, and hold one or more public hearings to solicit the opinions of citizens from throughout the community. If amendment is required, the Commission should prepare and recommend amendments or comprehensive revisions and readopt the Plan.

At least once every five years, the Planning Commission should conduct a thorough review, revision, and update of the Comprehensive Plan.

¹ Available at https://library.municode.com/la/st._tammany_Parish

² Section 130-1.(c)(1)

Table 2: Implementation Table

Actions	Responsible Entity(ies)	Funding Source	Relevant Strategies
Five Year Action Plan			
Facilitate process to update the Development Code through collaboration with key stakeholders, including builders, Fire Districts, and land use experts. At a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update zoning districts to clarify permitted uses - Reduce the total number of total zoning districts - Develop pervious cover requirements for new development. 	Planning & Development Department	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 1.1; LUD 2; LUD 3.1; LUD 4.1; LUD 6.3; LUD 6.4; LUD 7.1; LUD 7.4; LUD 8.1; LN 3.2;
Facilitate process to update Chapter 125: Subdivision Regulations through collaboration with key stakeholders, including builders, Fire Districts, and land use experts	Planning & Development Department	Parish Operating Budget	MTU 1.3; MTU 1.6;
Conduct study to recommend local regulations for low-impact development in flood-vulnerable areas	Planning & Development Department	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 6.1
Facilitate process to revise zoning designations of land fronting high capacity corridors to comply with the Future Land Use Map	Planning & Development Department	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 5.2
Update the Parish Thoroughfare Plan through collaboration with Regional Planning Commission and DOTD to recommend future alignments and priority expenditures for short- and long-term roadway improvements	Planning & Development Department	Parish Operating Budget	MTU 1.2; MTU 1.5; MTU 2.1; MTU 2.2; MTU 2.4
Conduct study of current development impact fees and adopted recommended updates to reflect new infrastructure needs and costs.	Planning & Development Department	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 5.3
Adopt a Property Maintenance Code with anti-retaliation provisions and allocate operating funds to conduct inspections of rental properties at tenants' request	Department of Health and Human Services	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 8.3
Conduct assessment of critical facility needs and allocate appropriate funding in annual capital budgets to upgrade existing facilities	Department of Facilities Management	Parish Capital Budget	LUD 4.2; LUD 7.5
Develop framework for granting development incentives based on Comprehensive Plan goals, including but not limited to tax abatements, payments in lieu of taxes, expedited permitting, and fee waivers.	Planning & Development Department	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 6.5; LUD 7.2; LUD 9.3; LUD 8.3; LN 4.4; PC 2.2; BE 1.1; MTU 8.3

Table 2: Implementation Table cont'd

Actions	Responsible Entity(ies)	Funding Source	Relevant Strategies
Five Year Action Plan (continued)			
Update internal staff reporting templates to address traffic and drainage impacts of proposed changes	Planning & Development Department	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 5.P1
Develop guide to taxation practices in St. Tammany Parish explaining how public services are funded	Planning & Development Department	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 1.5
Create a publicly accessible database of land use, transportation, and drainage studies through the Parish website	Public Information Department	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 1.2
Develop subarea plans for the following corridors: - LA 434/LA 3241/LA 36 - LA 3241/Bush - LA 1077 - LA 1088/LA 36 - Covington Corridors (US 190 and LA 25)	Planning & Development Department	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 5.1; LUD 5.2
Develop a bicycle master plan to guide development of a Parishwide network of bikeways and shared-used trails	Planning & Development Department	Parish Operating Budget	MTU 5.1; MTU 5.2; MTU 5.3
Update the population projections, future land use map, and implementation table for the Comprehensive Plan at a minimum of every five years	Planning & Development Department	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 1.1; LUD 1.2; LUD 1.3
Develop a parish-wide parks and recreation plan that identifies underserved areas and capital projects to expand offerings.	Planning & Development Department; Recreation Districts	Parish Operating Budget	PC 3.4
Allocate appropriate funding in annual operating budget to adequately cover Plan priorities	Parish President and Parish Council	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 7.5; LUD 9.1
Collaborate with non-profit partners to identify and repair homes of vulnerable residents, including elderly, disabled, and veteran homeowners.	Department of Health and Human Services	Federal Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Community Services Block Grants, and Rural Development Grants	LUD 8.5; LUD 8.6
Identify the Parish's Critical and Sensitive areas.	Planning & Dev.	Parish Operating Budget	LN 2.1

Table 2: Implementation Table cont'd

Actions	Responsible Entity(ies)	Funding Source	Relevant Strategies
Continuous/Annual Actions (continued)			
Promote and organize training and education sessions for Planning & Zoning Commission members through collaboration with RPC and American Planning Association Louisiana Chapter	Planning & Development Department	N/A	LUD 1.3
Coordinate the annexation of underutilized properties adjacent to incorporated areas with municipalities.	Planning & Development Department	N/A	LUD 5.1
Educate landlords about required standards of quality in their rental properties and warn them about potential violations of fair housing rules.	Department of Health and Human Services	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 8.3
Incorporate energy efficiency and stormwater management performance requirements into Parish building specifications in procurement for facility construction, renovation and maintenance	Department of Facilities Management	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 7.3; LUD 8.4
Apply for state, federal and philanthropic grants and disseminate opportunities through community outreach.	Department of Health and Human Services; Grants Department	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 3.2; 8.2; MTU 1.1; MTU 9.1;
Review and update current notification methods as new methods become available.	Planning & Development Department	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 1.4
Allocate appropriate funding in annual capital budgets to adequately cover Plan priorities.	Parish President and Parish Council	Parish Capital Budget	MTU 1.1; MTU 1.4;
Receive land donations and obtain conservation easements through collaboration with the Land Trust of Louisiana and other partners	Planning & Development Department	N/A	LN 2.1
Collaborate with the Regional Planning Commission to continuously update the St. Tammany Transportation Improvement Program to ensure consistency with the FLUM and improve existing roadways	Planning & Development Department	N/A	MTU 1.2
Coordinate educational awareness campaigns with local water quality advocacy organizations	Planning & Development Department	Parish Operating Budget	LN 2.3; LN 3.1; LN 5.5
Consider amendments to the Comprehensive Plan’s goals, strategies, Implementation Table, and Future Land Use Map	Planning Commission	Parish Operating Budget	LUD 1.6





**NEW
DIRECTIONS
2040**

The St. Tammany Parish
Comprehensive Plan

Parish Profile

MAY 2022



Cover Images Source: St. Tammany Parish Tourist and Convention Commission





Parish Profile

May 2022

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INTRODUCTION

Since St. Tammany Parish adopted the New Directions 2025 Vision two decades ago, the region has experienced enormous disruptions: the costliest natural disaster in American history; the largest oil spill in American history; the deepest economic recession since the Great Depression; and today, the most devastating public health crisis in a century.

This report, the New Directions 2040 Parish Profile, aims to provide stakeholders adequate context and understanding of the recent trends, current conditions, and future outlook for the parish's people, economy, and ecology, to aid informed decision-making during the planning process.

These "shock" events have tested the resilience of our region's social, economic and ecological fabric. Nevertheless, St. Tammany Parish has thrived in many ways. It has attracted large employers, developed high-quality public facilities, and grown in population. Its combination of ample, undeveloped land, proximity to the New Orleans and Baton Rouge job centers, highly-rated public school systems, and beautiful natural environment make the parish an attractive destination for those displaced by disaster, retirees, or people seeking a high quality of life for raising a family. In effect, St. Tammany Parish has assumed the role of "receiver community" – a place where people can restore their lives and build their future.

Yet, rapid growth has brought growing pains to St. Tammany Parish. Higher levels of activity have strained the parish's ability to move vehicles, stormwater, and wastewater safely and efficiently. Dense subdivisions are being constructed further and further away from the parish's historic population and economic centers, such as Slidell, Mandeville and Covington, "leapfrogging" undeveloped and agricultural lands.

New Directions 2040 is the opportunity for today's St. Tammany Parish residents and businesses to define what it becomes over the next twenty years. The process poses the question: "How can St. Tammany Parish continue to grow and develop, while preserving a high quality of life and minimizing costs to existing residents, businesses, and the environment?" This report, the New Directions 2040 Parish Profile, aims to provide stakeholders adequate context and understanding of the recent trends, current conditions, and future outlook for the parish's people, economy, and ecology, to aid informed decision-making during the planning process.

The Role of a Comprehensive Plan in St. Tammany Parish

A comprehensive plan is "the foundational policy document for local governments." Its primary role is to guide public and private decision-making about changes in the community's physical development.¹

Comprehensive plans cover the full geographic area of a jurisdiction and identify a vision and goals to achieve over a designated period of time. These goals may cover economic development, housing, and other development goals. Formulation of a comprehensive plan includes input from residents and a diverse group of stakeholders. Community members' ideas and expertise help to ensure that the plan's goals reflect the vision of local residents, businesses, and organizations. Comprehensive plans also provide a guide for future land use, development regulations and capital improvement plans, and serve as the basis for zoning, subdivision, and land use codes. Jurisdictions implement comprehensive plans because they provide guidance for the orderly growth, development and physical appearance of the area; analyze community needs and evaluate how competing interests can be balanced; and build consensus and commitment from elected and appointed officials all interested stakeholders.

Section 1-04 of the Parish Charter states, "The Parish shall prepare, enact, enforce and maintain a comprehensive plan for [its] development."

Section 120-51 of the Parish's Code Of Ordinances gives the Parish Planning Commission authority "to adopt a master or comprehensive plan or elements thereof, including graphics, narrative description and policies to guide and accomplish the coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the parish."²

1 American Planning Association. 2014. *PAS Quick Notes 52: The Local Comprehensive Plan*. Retrieved from: <https://www.planning.org/publications/document/9007647/>.

2 St. Tammany Parish Government. 2017. Home Rule Charter And Code Of Ordinances Parish of St. Tammany, Louisiana. Retrieved from: https://library.municode.com/la/st._tammany_parish/codes/code_of_ordinances

Section 120-89 provides that the zoning commission has power "to adopt a comprehensive plan designed to promote health and the general welfare, and to encourage the most appropriate use of land throughout the parish."³

The comprehensive plan will inform land use, policy, and investment decisions made by the Planning Commission, Zoning Commission, Board of Adjustments, Parish Council, and Parish President. Primary tools for implementing the comprehensive plan will include amendments to the Parish's Unified Development Code and Subdivision Regulations.

Prior Comprehensive Planning



New Directions 2025 is St. Tammany Parish's current comprehensive plan. It states a vision for future growth and development, defines land use policies and

principles to guide land use decisions that will fulfill the vision. The Parish Police Jury initiated the process in 1998 and, following engagement of 1,800 stakeholders in fifty meetings and a Steering Committee, approved the Vision Element in December 1999.

In 2001 and 2002, the Parish introduced the 2025 Land Use Plan and Transportation Plan, yet neither were formally adopted by ordinance. The Land Use Plan contained statements of principles and supportive policies to implement: (1) Land use considerations and recommendations; (2) Flood protection; (3) Transportation; (4) Tax base expansion and economic development; (5) Aesthetics; (6) Public facilities; (7) Sewerage and stream water quality; and (8) Incentives.

New Directions 2025 called for the Parish to allow amendments on an annual basis, and to update the plan in its entirety in intervals of no more than seven years.

3 *Ibid.*

"Force of Law"

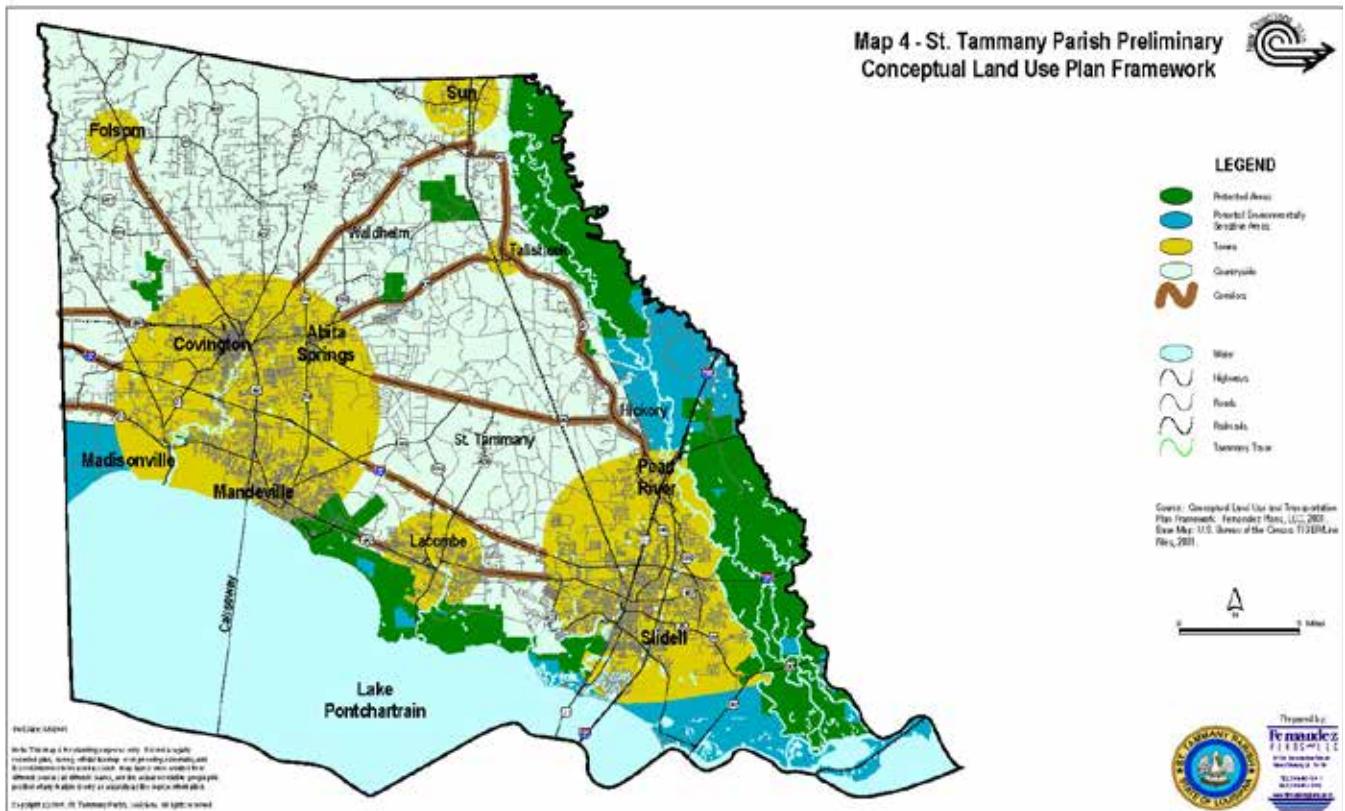
The Parish Charter authorizes enforcement of the comprehensive plan, and the 2025 Land Use Plan states that "The 2025 Land Use Plan and supporting statement of policies and principles, once adopted by the Parish Council, and implemented via the appropriate implementing ordinances, shall have the force of law." However, following adoption by the Planning Commission, the Parish Council did not adopt the Plan by ordinance, and the Parish has not been bound by law to follow it. A 2003 Bureau of Governmental Research report argued that "in order to achieve its vision, St. Tammany will have to transform radically its approach to land use and embrace planning principles that run contrary to current practices."⁴

"As a progressive and prosperous community, St. Tammany Parish respects and safeguards a desirable and sustainable quality of life and will continue to do so for this and future generations. In doing so, our parish will afford all residents the opportunity to live, learn, work, play, and retire in a vibrant and cohesive community that respects and balances our natural resources and environment with our human potential and needs. Our vision is grounded in the values we have established to guide our actions in furtherance of each element of our comprehensive plan, New Directions 2025."

- New Directions 2025 Vision Statement

⁴ Bureau of Governmental Research, "Slip-Sliding Away: The Challenge of Implementing St. Tammany's Vision for Growth Management" November 2003

Figure 1: Conceptual Land Use Plan Framework, New Directions 2025



New Directions 2025 Section III. Recommended Policies in support of the 2025 Land Use Plan and Principles to direct the preparation of ordinances for implementation of the Plan

I. General

A. Planning Process and Implementation Recommendations

- i. St. Tammany Parish uses a broad citizen-based democratic process to determine timing and sequence of development and to ensure that public facilities and services can support such development
- ii. Once adopted by the Parish Council, Land Use Plans and supporting policies and principles will have the force of law
- iii. The Parish should update the Comprehensive Plan to address major changes in demographics, land use, and transportation

B. General Parish-wide Land Use Recommendations

- i. The Parish shall encourage redevelopment within existing areas – incorporated or not
- ii. Incentives for the redevelopment of underutilized sites should be adopted

II. Land Use Considerations

A. Commercial and Institutional

- i. Commercial and institutional should be limited to concentrated focus areas; located on major highways or crossroads; and avoided in flood prone areas
- ii. The Parish should not permit “spot zoning”
- iii. “Big Box” retailers should be carefully sited and developers should pay costs associated with their impacts (on infrastructure, small business, etc.)

B. Industry

- i. Industrial uses should be located near Interstate Highway Systems
- ii. The Comprehensive Plan should define in detail transition uses and siting and performance standards for industrial use locations
- iii. Industrial uses should not be in flood prone areas, or in areas “where they would adversely affect drainage, water or

air quality, sensitive environmental areas and traffic”

C. Planned Districts

- i. Locations may contain a mix of use types
- ii. Planned Districts may overlap several individual property tracts but be planned with full consideration of all market factors, public policy and fiscal impacts, environmental impacts, and St. Tammany 6 community Vision and goals

D. Small Area Plans (SAPs)

- i. Should be conducted under the management of the Parish with multiple sources of funding for efforts

E. Recreational

- i. Priority for recreational services and facilities are given to locations close to residential areas and for remote locations best suited for passive recreation, hunting/fishing, and conservation
- ii. Small parks and rest facilities should be provided along the Tammany Trace and its future extensions along Scenic roadways

F. Residential

- i. The 2025 Land Use Plan is not a Zoning Plan and covers three broad categories of residential uses:
 - 1. Infill residential
 - 2. Planned residential/conservation: allows denser individual home sites, if a large percent of the total tract is left in agricultural or stormwater retention uses or undeveloped, in perpetuity
 - 3. Rural residential: The Parish should provide a wide variety of single-family residential with associated agricultural uses in rural areas
- ii. Survey results taken during the ND 2025 planning process show that over 50% of respondent preferred either “Rural Residential” (32%) or “Village and Town” (18%) living
- iii. Designation of residential areas should include considerations for employment

centers, the floodplain, market-based need for new residential areas, traffic impacts, density of existing residential development, etc.

G. Rural

- i. There is broad agreement across the Parish to preserve areas with rural character
- ii. Preservation of rural character may include landscape buffering along roadways, creation of parks, and improving infrastructure and design quality in rural areas

III. Other Significant Elements

A. Flood Protection

- i. Any development within the 100-year floodplain is required to use low impact development and flood protection strategies should be developed and implemented prior to permitting new development
- ii. The Parish should have a comprehensive and effective drainage plan that addresses surface water flow, storm water retention, etc.

B. Transportation

- i. The Parish must address transportation impacts of proposed developments, including transportation impacts across jurisdiction boundaries

C. Tax base expansion and economic development

- i. Most of the Parish's property tax and sales tax base are from commercial or industrial activities
- ii. Economic development locations are near crossroads of major highways and generally removed from existing residential or environmentally sensitive or flood-prone areas
- iii. Economic development opportunities for water and nature related tourism should be enhanced and preserved

D. Aesthetics

- i. Landscape buffers--including a 100-foot green buffer along interstate highways--

should be used to maintain a high quality appearance throughout the Parish

- ii. Lighting and signage should be regulated by appropriate ordinances

E. Adequate public facilities

- i. The Parish currently doesn't have the road network or other vital infrastructure to support significant growth – except perhaps within Covington, Mandeville or Slidell

F. Sewage and Stream Water Quality

- i. "Any development within the 100 or 200-year floodplain should be strictly controlled, and low impact development techniques required"
- ii. Measures should be taken to address poorly maintained or installed septic and individual sewage treatment systems
- iii. "Scientific studies (for example, resolutions supporting such a study of the upper Tchefuncte River have already been endorsed by both the St. Tammany and Tangipahoa Police Juries) will establish a base against which future land use activities can be evaluated"

G. Incentives

- i. The Parish should develop an incentive program for landowners and developers to comply with the land use plan
- ii. Examples of target objectives for incentives include redeveloping underutilized sites and creating/adding green space within new developments

Demographic Changes

80,000 New Neighbors

St. Tammany Parish is the New Orleans area's household growth engine. St. Tammany Parish's growth rate rivaled that of Jefferson Parish in the 1960s and 1970s, but did not begin outgaining the south shore "inner ring" suburbs until the 1980s, when south shore growth began to plateau.

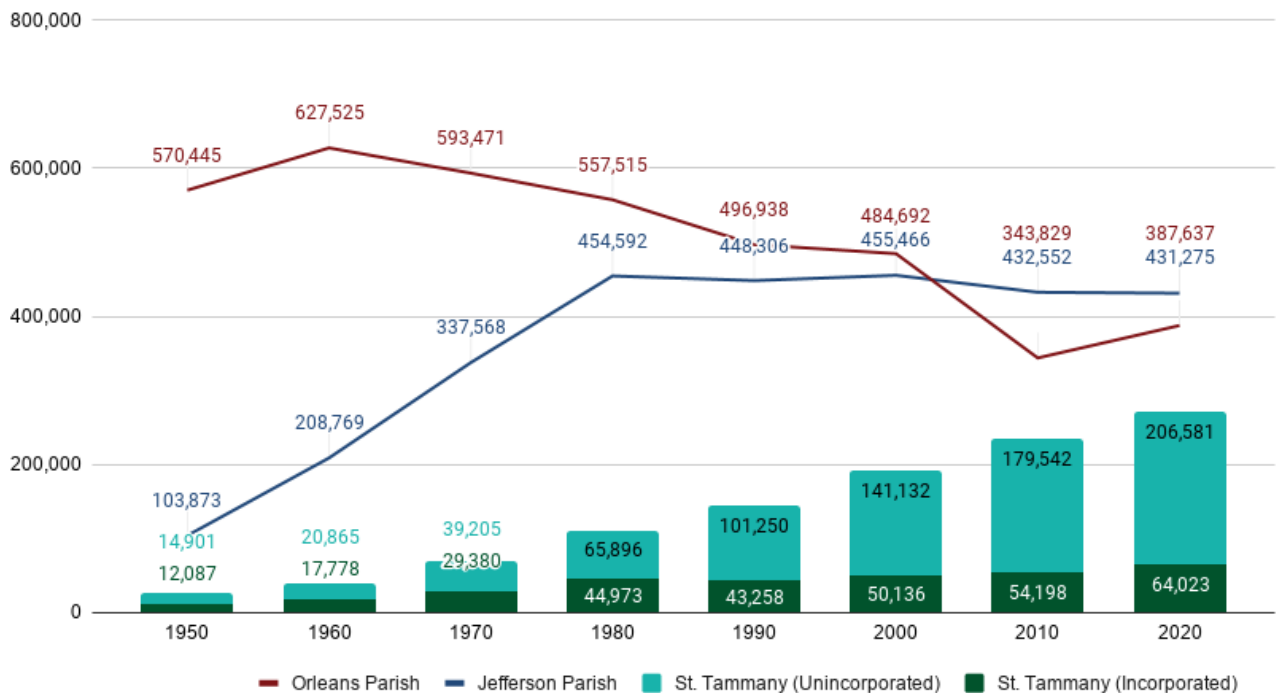
For much of the past two decades, St. Tammany Parish has been among the fastest growing parishes in the state. Between 2000 and 2020, the population grew by over 41%, from about 191,000 to approximately 271,000. During the same period, the state population grew by 7.2%. 82.5%



Source: St. Tammany Parish Tourist and Convention Commission

Figure 2: Population change

Source: Business Analyst. U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1980, 1990, 2000, and 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2020.



of this growth came from the unincorporated areas.

Following Hurricane Katrina, St. Tammany became the second largest parish to host evacuees, after Jefferson Parish. Many evacuees permanently relocated.

Families

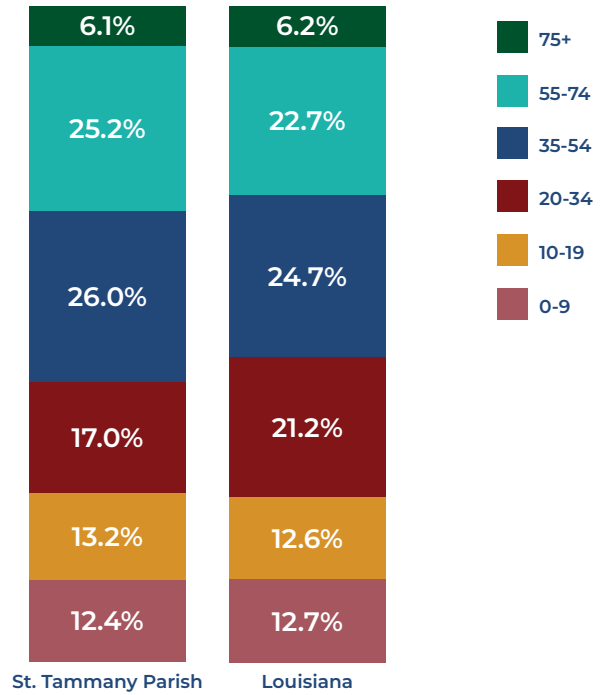
73% of households in the unincorporated parish are families, compared to 65% of Louisiana households. Of these, 47% have children (34.3% of all households). More than one-quarter of parish residents are below the age of 20, and over 30% of parish residents are over the age of 55, similar to the age distribution of Louisiana.

Race and Ethnicity

Racial demographics in the unincorporated parish have not changed substantially in the last twenty years. The majority of the unincorporated areas of the parish identifies as White (82.2%); 11.8% identify as Black, with 5.9% of total residents identifying as Hispanic. These figures reflect a

Figure 3: Distribution of Age in St. Tammany

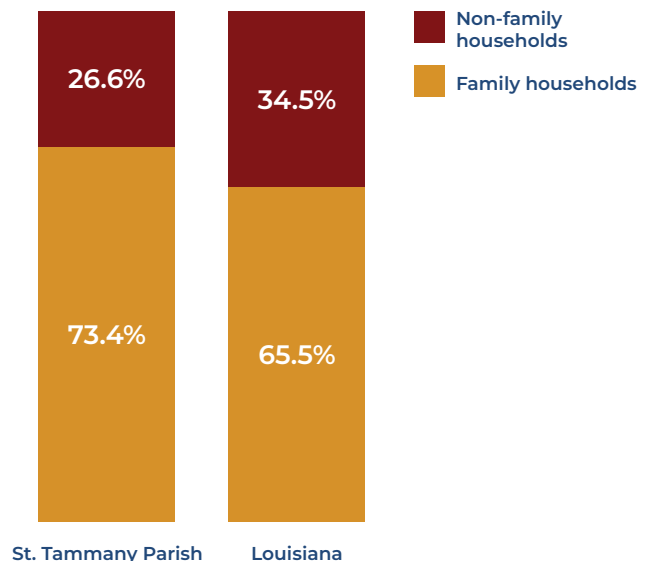
Source: Business Analyst. U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2020.



Source: City of Covington - Office of Cultural Arts & Events

Figure 4: Household Distribution in St. Tammany and Louisiana

Source: Business Analyst. U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2020.



much less racially diverse community than that of Louisiana as a whole, in which about 40% people identify as a race other than White.

Income and Education

St. Tammany Parish is the wealthiest in the state measured by per capita income (\$35,546) and the second wealthiest by median family income (\$69,307). About 17% of parish households earn less than \$25,000, 20% of households earn between \$25,000 and \$50,000, almost 30% of households earn between \$50,000 and \$100,000, and over a third of households earn more than \$100,000, with close to 10% of households earning more than \$200,000.

Over the past decade, levels of educational attainment in St. Tammany Parish have continued to improve. In 2010, 12.1% of the population did not have a high school degree and 20.5% had a Bachelor's degree. Comparatively, in 2020, 8.4% of the population did not have a high school degree and 22.7% had a Bachelor's degree. Levels

Figure 5: Median Household Income in St. Tammany and Louisiana

Source: Business Analyst. U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2020.

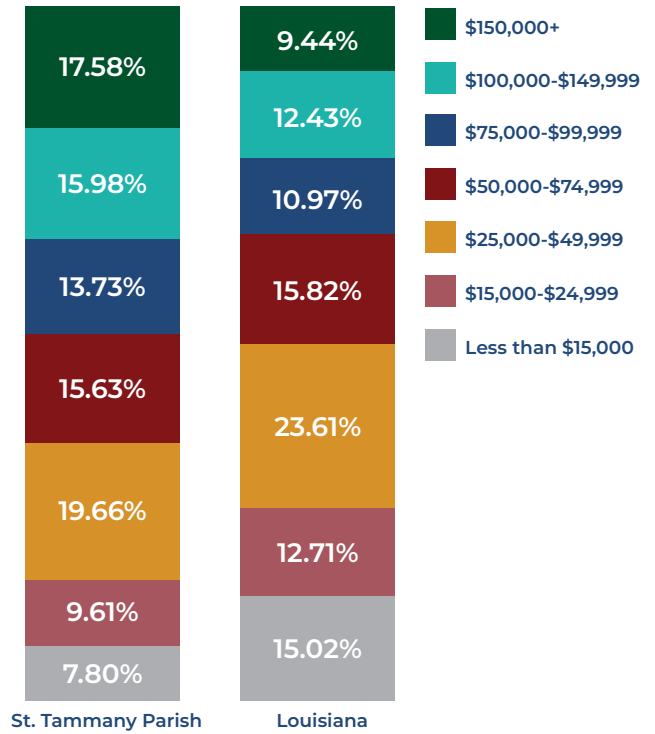
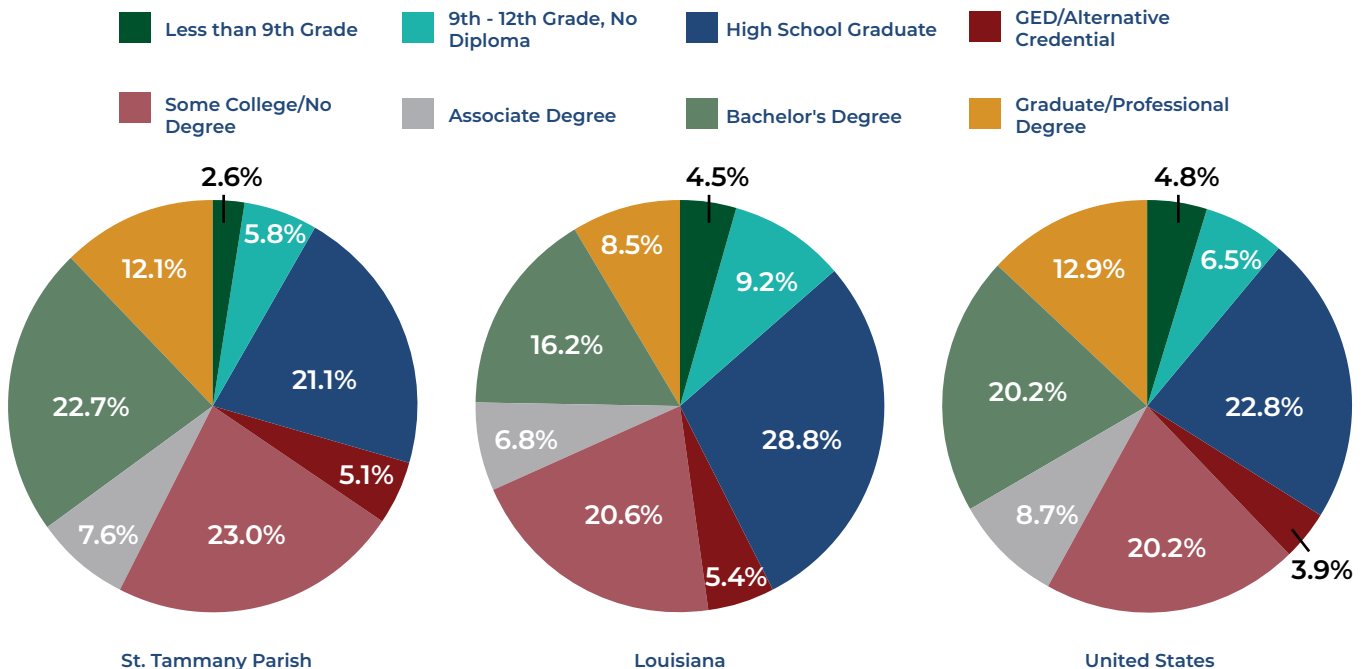


Figure 6: Educational Attainment in St. Tammany, Louisiana, and the US

Source: Business Analyst. U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2020.



of educational attainment in St. Tammany Parish are also higher than those of Louisiana and the U.S. average.

Poverty and Equity

Despite St. Tammany Parish being one of the wealthiest parishes in Louisiana, 11.5% of its population — or almost 30,000 individuals — are living in conditions below the poverty line.⁵

The poverty is not distributed equitably: 12.9% of the female population in the parish lives under poverty compared to 9.9% of the male population. 15.5% of children under 18 live under poverty compared to 10.6% of adults aged 18-64 and 8.7% of seniors. The most stark comparison, however is that of racial inequity. 9.7% of White parish residents live in poverty compared to 18.9% of Black residents and 21.8% of American Indian or Alaska Native residents.

Median rent paid in the parish is \$1,086, higher than both the state and national median, \$866 and \$1,062 respectively. Similarly, 46.1% of households pay 35% or more of their household income, again higher than both the state and national percentage, 45.4% and 40.5%.

This poses a challenge due to the flooding and natural disasters that the parish experiences. Preparing properties or upgrading assets to handle more repetitive flooding or natural disasters is an expensive endeavor. Cost of insurance, both household and business have increased nationally and within the parish. St. Tammany Parish saw a 150-175% increase in household insurance premiums, with coastal areas seeing the largest increases. Affording insurance that properly covers assets presents a burden to community members and may result in people opting out of insurance, which further complicates the ability for the community to prepare and bounce back from natural disasters.

Like most areas of the country, the parish is also seeing a rise in community members that are over the age of 50. Older residents are more likely to have mobility challenges. This can make it more challenging for them to prepare their property for hazards and evacuate when needed.

Older residents are also more likely to be on fixed incomes, which can make rising insurance costs and recovery efforts a significant financial burden.

Homelessness

According to the 2018 Louisiana Homeless Census Point-in-Time Count, there was a total of 132 persons who were considered homeless⁶ in St. Tammany Parish — 29 of which were unsheltered, 27 of which were in an emergency shelter, and 76 of which were in transitional housing. The number of persons identified as homeless has fluctuated between 2011 and 2018, reaching a peak of 170 in 2016. However, the number has decreased in 2017 and 2018 to 145 and 132, respectively.

Emergency and transitional housing are available for the homeless population. According to the count, there are 39 beds across three emergency shelters located in St. Tammany Parish that serve adult women, children, families, and domestic violence victims. There are also an additional 92 beds in transitional shelters in the parish that serve men.

The Northlake Homeless Coalition also has a Community Strategic Plan to end homelessness in place, with goals such as creating 117 new permanent housing beds for chronically homeless persons, increasing the percentage of participants in Continuum of Care (CoC)-funded transitional housing that move into permanent housing by 85%, and increasing the percentage of participants in all CoC-funded projects that are employed at program exit by 37% — with a target date of 2022 for all of these goals.

⁶ The US Department of Housing and Urban Development defines a person as homeless only when he/she resides in: 1) a place not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, abandoned buildings, etc., 2) an emergency shelter, or 3) a transitional housing program for persons who were unsheltered or residing in an emergency shelter prior to entering the program

Public Health

According to the 2020 County Health Ranking Report, St. Tammany Parish ranks first in health factors, e.g. diet and exercise, access to care, social and economic factors, physical environment, etc. and second in health outcomes, e.g. length and quality of life. In line with that data, 92.1% of the population has some form of health insurance coverage, exceeding the state and national averages of 91.1% and 90.8%. However, over 20,000 individuals living in St. Tammany remain uninsured, 18,263 of which are adults, 1,879 of which are under 19, and 261 of which are seniors.⁷

For behavioral health, the biggest takeaways is that the main reason why adults 18 and older did not receive mental health services was due to cost (43.6%) was followed by “can handle problem without treatment” (30.6%), and “did not know where to go for services” (26.9%). However, there has been a visible improvement in St. Tammany from 2015 to 2018, with sizeable increase in the ratio of mental health providers to residents (816:1 to 520:1) and a decrease in preventable hospital stays related to mental health (78 to 61). The parish's rate of obesity has gradually increased from 22.3% in 2004 to 30.8% in 2018.⁸ However, it remains lower than the Louisiana and US obesity rates, 36.8% and 42.4% respectively.

Additionally, a 2018 Community Needs Assessment report reveals that access to health care for low-to-moderate income residents and residents in rural areas is of particular concern. While residents in the parish generally have greater access to primary care physicians

⁷ 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

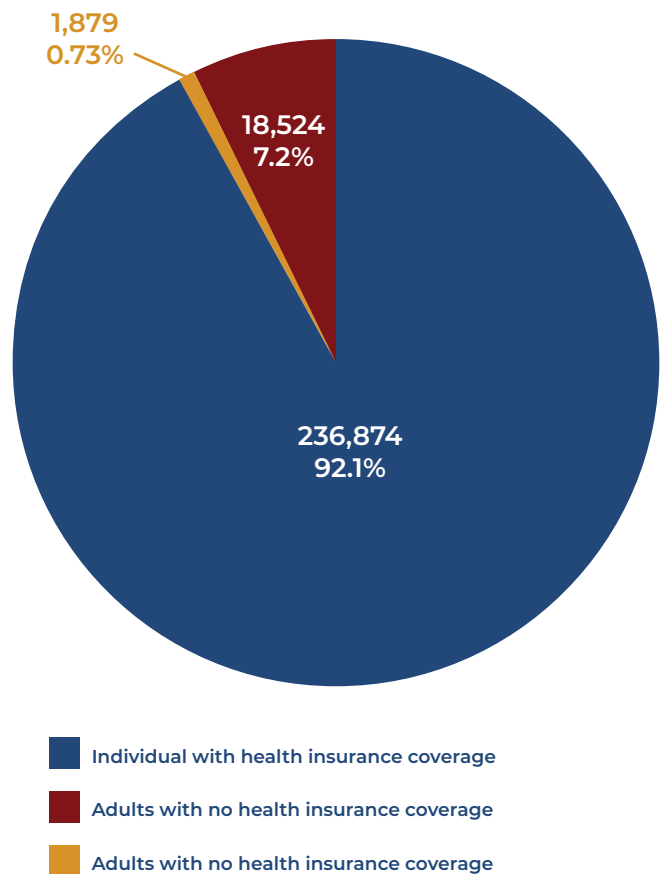
⁸ Center for Disease Control. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System. 2018.

compared to residents in most parishes in Louisiana, many of these doctors do not accept Medicaid.

BOTTOM LINE: St. Tammany Parish has a robust healthcare system and is considered one of the healthiest parishes in Louisiana. However, there is room for improvement when it comes to equitable healthcare access and mental health services.

Figure 7: St. Tammany Population with Health Insurance Coverage

Source: 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

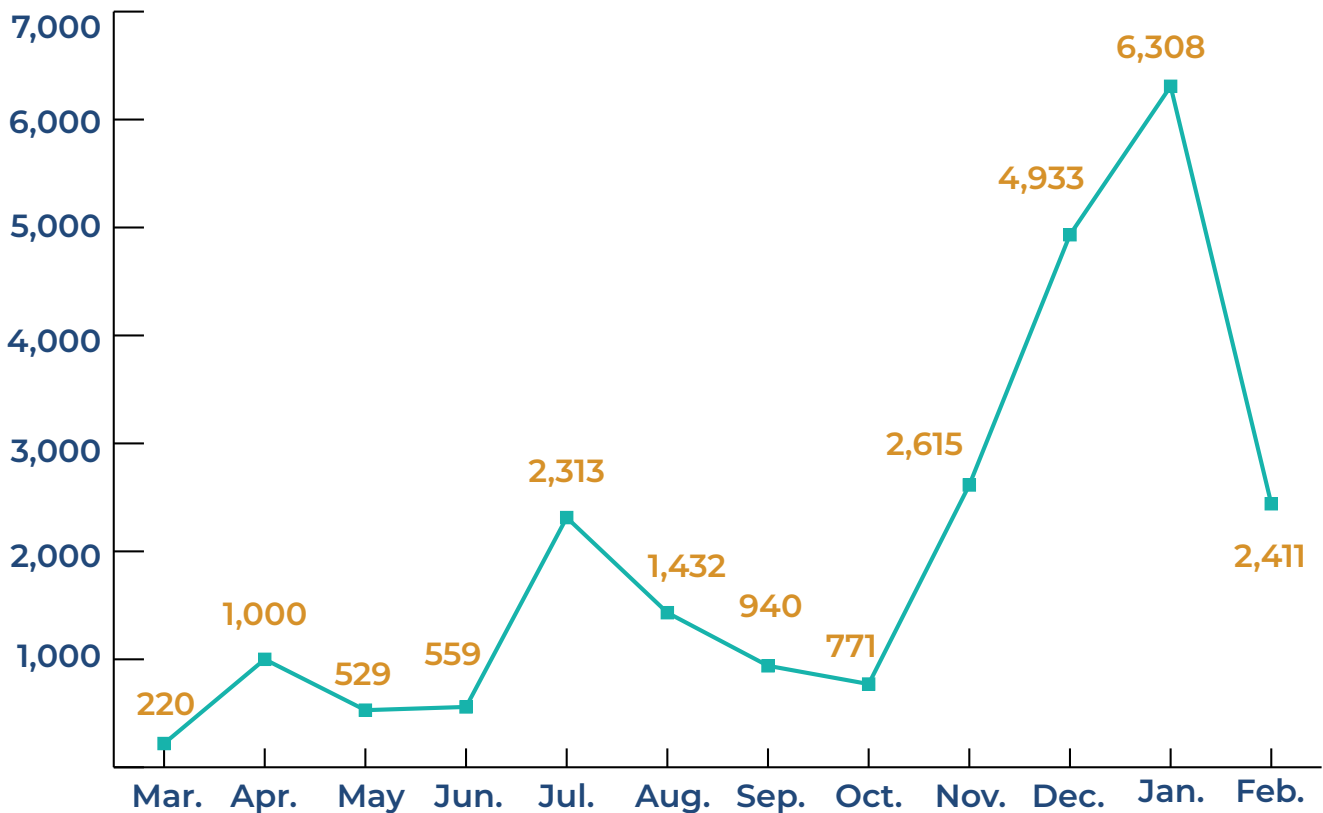


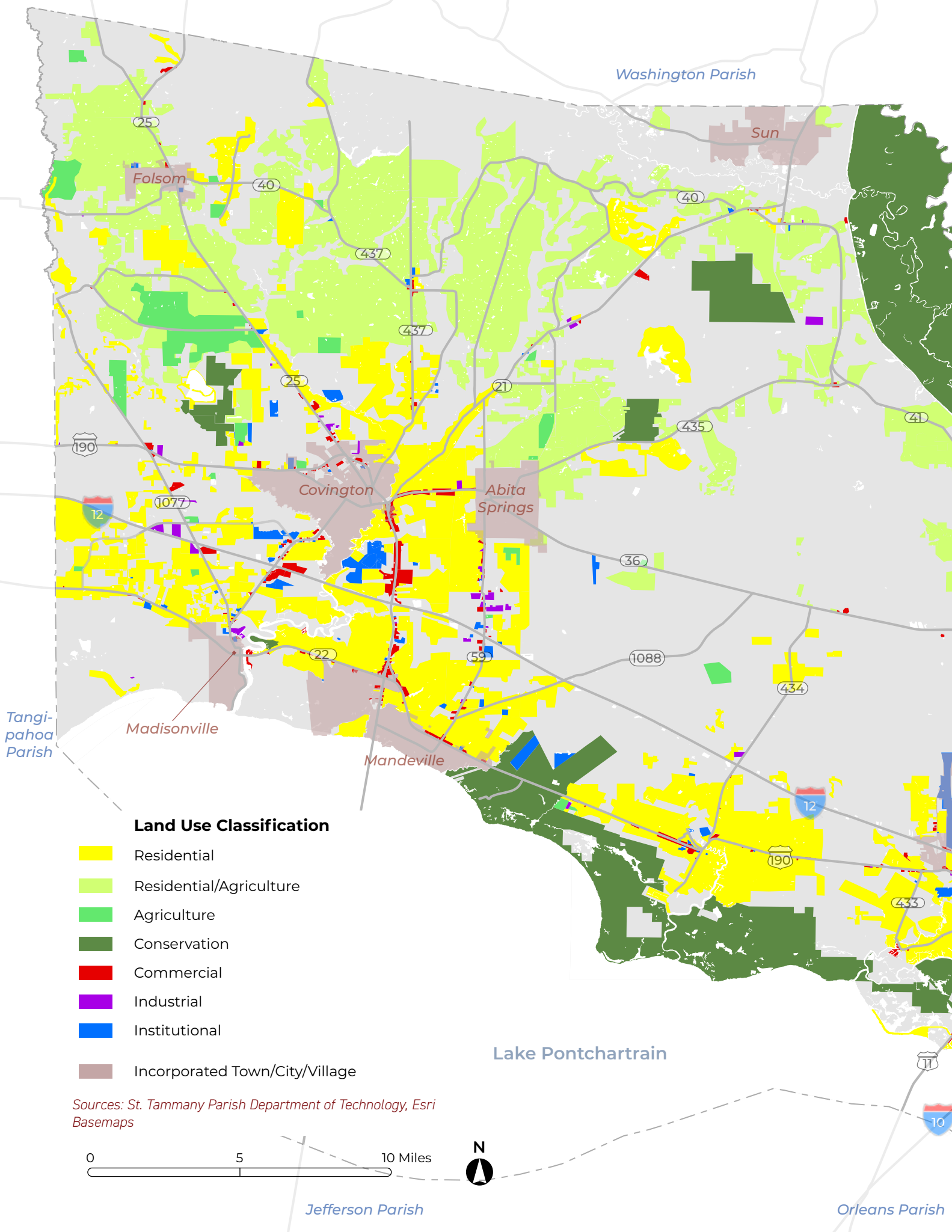
COVID-19 Cases

According to the Louisiana Department of Health, the first case of COVID-19 reported in St. Tammany Parish was on March 13, 2020. As of February 28, 2021, the parish has seen a total of 24,061 positive cases, with the largest peak in the month of January 2021 with a total of 6,308 new monthly cases. St. Tammany ranks 38th out of the 64 parishes in terms of number of COVID-19 cases per capita, indicating that it has controlled the spread better than other parishes. However, it ranks 5th when looking at total number of COVID-19 cases since March 2020. As of February 28, 2021, St. Tammany Parish has conducted 300,763 COVID-19 tests, indicating an average positivity rate of 8.0%.

Figure 8: Monthly COVID-19 Cases in St. Tammany Parish

Source: Louisiana Department of Health





Washington Parish

Sun

Folsom

Covington

Abita Springs

Tangipahoa Parish

Madisonville

Mandeville

Lake Pontchartrain

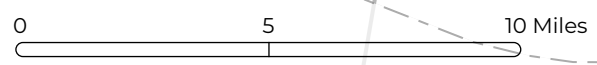
Jefferson Parish

Orleans Parish

Land Use Classification

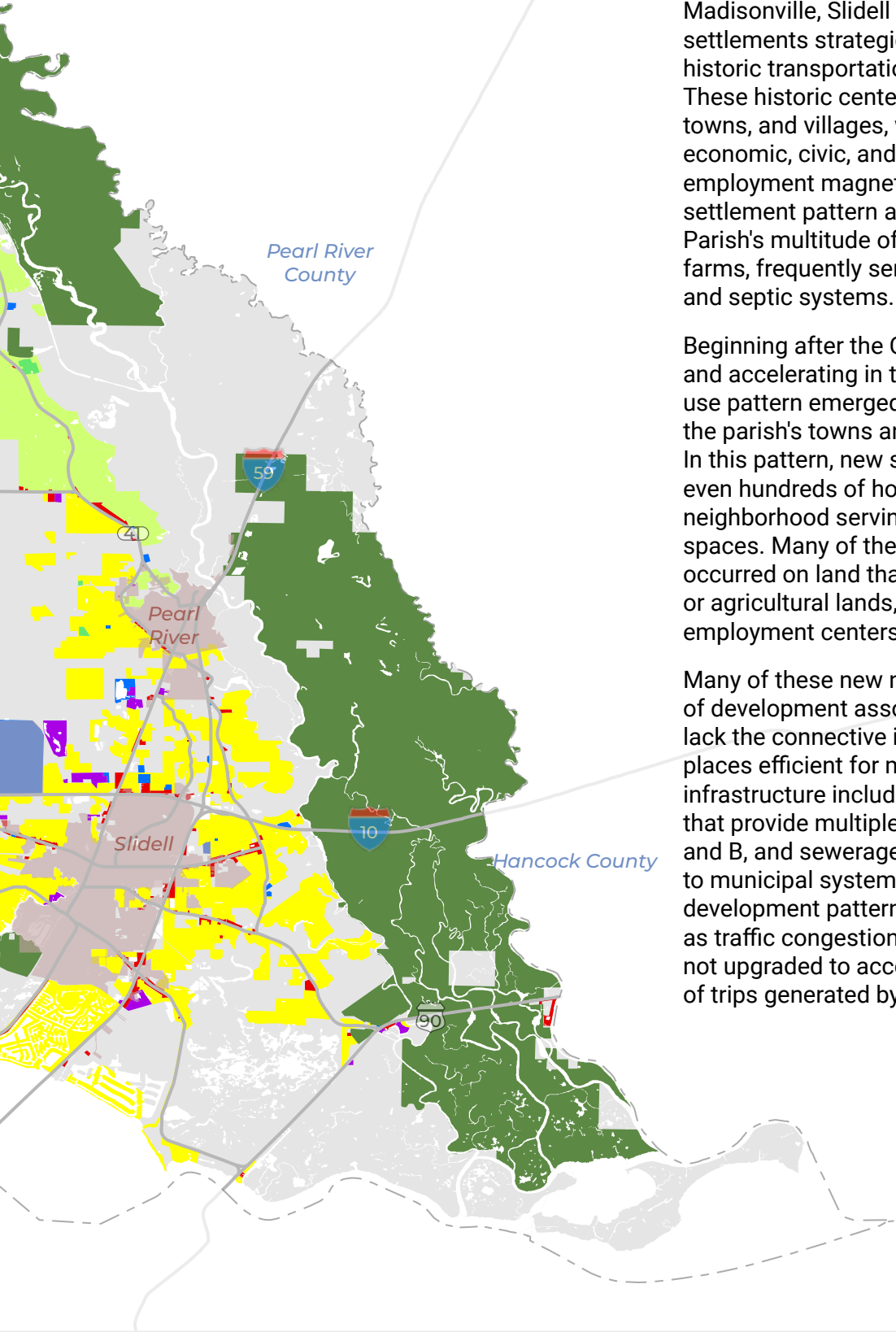
- Residential
- Residential/Agriculture
- Agriculture
- Conservation
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Incorporated Town/City/Village

Sources: St. Tammany Parish Department of Technology, Esri Basemaps



Land Use Trends

Figure 9: Existing Land Use



Historic land settlement in St. Tammany Parish (prior to the opening of the Causeway Bridge in 1956) largely fell into two categories. The well-connected, compact street grids and historic structures found today in downtown Covington, Madisonville, Slidell and Mandeville recall the urban settlements strategically located near the parish's historic transportation corridors - water and rail. These historic centers are today's incorporated cities, towns, and villages, which are hubs of the parish's economic, civic, and cultural institutions, and regional employment magnets. The second predominant settlement pattern abounds today in St. Tammany Parish's multitude of rural timberlands, ranches, and farms, frequently served by on-site fresh water wells and septic systems.

Beginning after the Causeway Bridge opened in 1956, and accelerating in the 1980s and 1990s, a third land use pattern emerged to become as predominant as the parish's towns and countryside: suburbanization. In this pattern, new subdivisions containing dozens or even hundreds of housing units, and in some cases, neighborhood serving uses such as recreational spaces. Many of these developments have occurred on land that was previously undeveloped or agricultural lands, with access to the region's employment centers.

Many of these new neighborhoods bring the intensity of development associated with urbanization, but lack the connective infrastructure that makes urban places efficient for moving people and services. Such infrastructure includes well-connected street grids that provide multiple routes to get between points A and B, and sewerage and water system connections to municipal systems. This fragmentation of development patterns can exacerbate problems such as traffic congestion, especially when roadways are not upgraded to accommodate the increased number of trips generated by new development.

Building Trends

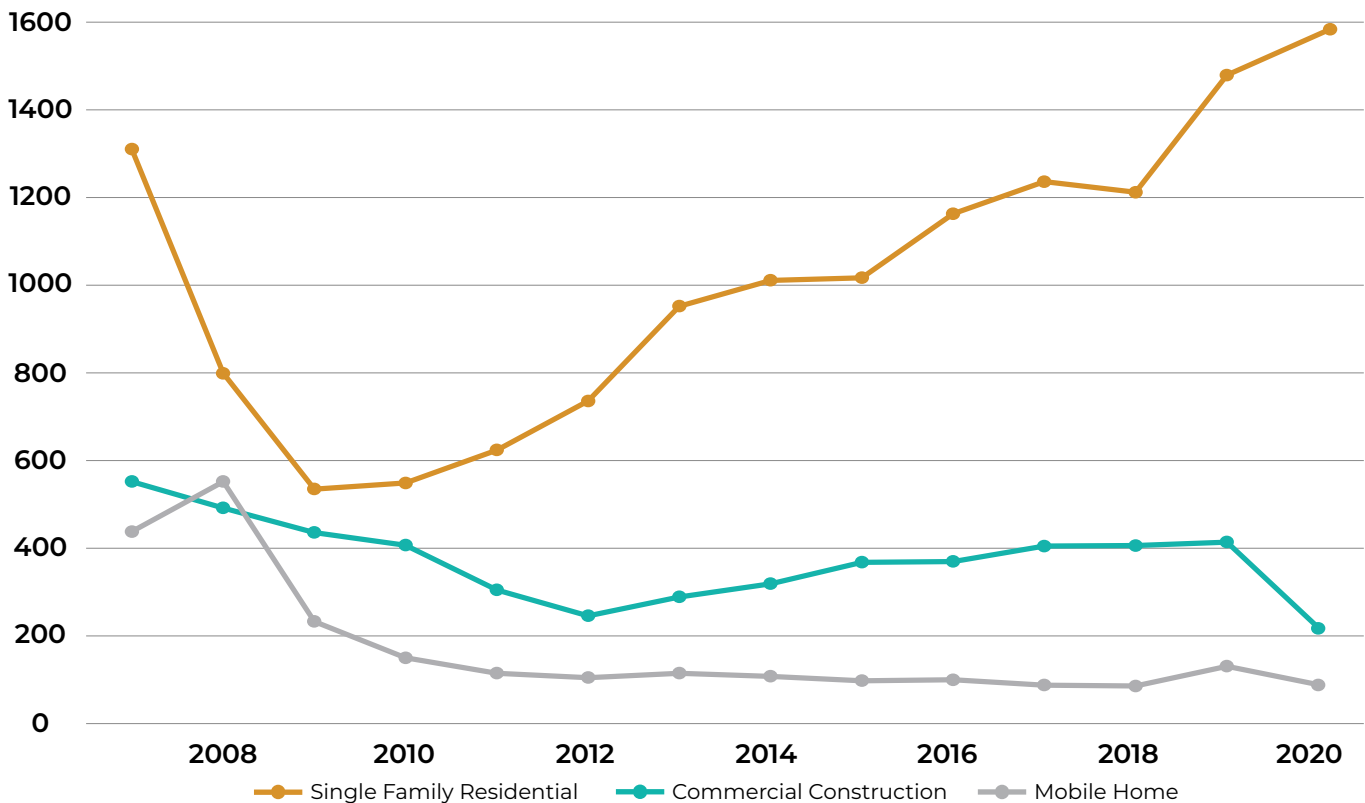
Parish permitting trends for new construction demonstrate a strong and consistently growing market for residential development coming out of the Great Recession (2007 to 2009). Since 2013, the parish has permitted construction of an average of 1,206 new single family homes each year, and permitted a high mark of nearly 1,584 in 2020. New mobile home construction/installation has been much less prevalent, but also more consistent year-to-year. During the same period, the parish permitted an average of about 100 new mobile homes per year.

The pace of commercial construction also fell during the Great Recession, yet took longer to recover than the residential market, and did not resume growth until 2013. Commercial permits grew slowly for the next six years, averaging 367 permits per year, until falling significantly in

2020 to 215. This decline may reflect weakening financial markets resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, or increased administrative processing times. The continued residential growth, however, suggests demand for commercial land uses supplying jobs and services will likely continue to grow.

Figure 10: Parish Building Permits Issued, 2008-2020

Source: St. Tammany Parish Department of Permits



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Tax Trends

In 2019, 68.7% of all parish revenues came from dedicated sales and use taxes (40.1%) and from general and special purpose property taxes (28.6%).⁹ A combination of grants, sewer and water fees, and investment earnings comprised the remaining share of revenues.

Sales Tax

The local sales tax rate varies according to location in St. Tammany Parish, due to, ranging from 4.25% to 5.25%. This includes:

- Sales Tax District No. 3, which charges 2% throughout the entire unincorporated parish (as of 1986) for building and maintaining roads, bridges, and drainage facilities. In 2005, residents voted to renew the tax to continue through 2031.
- The St. Tammany Parish school Board, which collects 2%
- Law Enforcement District, 0.25%
- Other tax increment financing districts for shopping centers ranging from 0.5% to 1%.

Two ¼ cent sales taxes – the St. Tammany Parish Jail and Parish Courthouse - expired in March 2018. A 4.45% state tax is levied in addition to the local sales tax, raising the total sales tax paid for most goods and services to between 8.7% and 9.7%. This range sits about or below the state combined sales tax average of 9.52%.¹⁰ The largest contributors to sales tax revenue in the parish are “big box” grocery, general merchandise, and building materials stores.

Figure 11 illustrates the change in sales tax revenue over time. A general upward trend reflects the growing number of residents, jobs and retailers in the parish, with a spike in 2006 showing recovery, rebuilding, and new building

⁹ Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the Year Ended December 31, 2019

¹⁰ *State and Local Sales Tax Rates, 2021*, The Tax Foundation, Accessed 24 Feb. 2021. Available at: <https://taxfoundation.org/2021-sales-taxes/>.

activity following Hurricane Katrina in 2005. The decline in revenue in 2018 and 2019 resulted from the expiration of the Jail and Courthouse taxes.

Property Tax

Dozens of special property districts have been established throughout the parish, including for fire, recreation, sewer and water, mosquito abatement, the Parish Library and the Parish Coroner. As a result, property tax rates vary depending on where in the parish a property is located. In 2019, 39 different tax districts comprised the parish (Figure 12). The parish-wide weighted property tax average for 2019 was 145.6 mils, the sixth highest in the state.¹¹

Property tax revenues tend to be more stable and less susceptible to changes in economic climate than sales taxes. The graph below illustrates a consistent gain in revenue due to parish growth, and a significant increase in revenue in 2008, likely due to a parish-wide reassessment of properties.

In spite of this growth, the expiration of the public safety taxes has lowered tax revenue to levels not seen since 2010.

¹¹ Louisiana Tax Commission Annual Report, 2019.

Figure 11: Parish Government Tax Revenue, 2002-2019 (millions)

Source: Comprehensive Financial Reports, 2010 and 2019

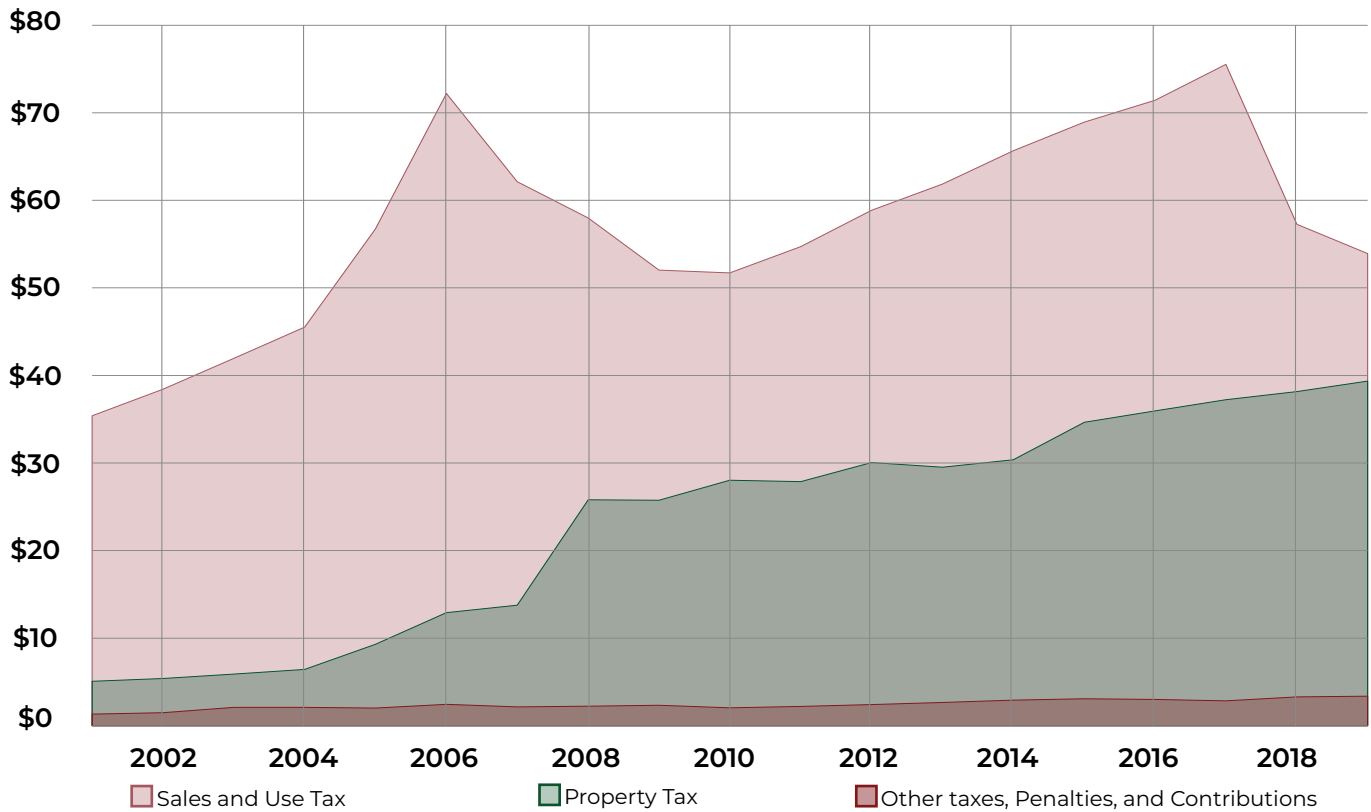
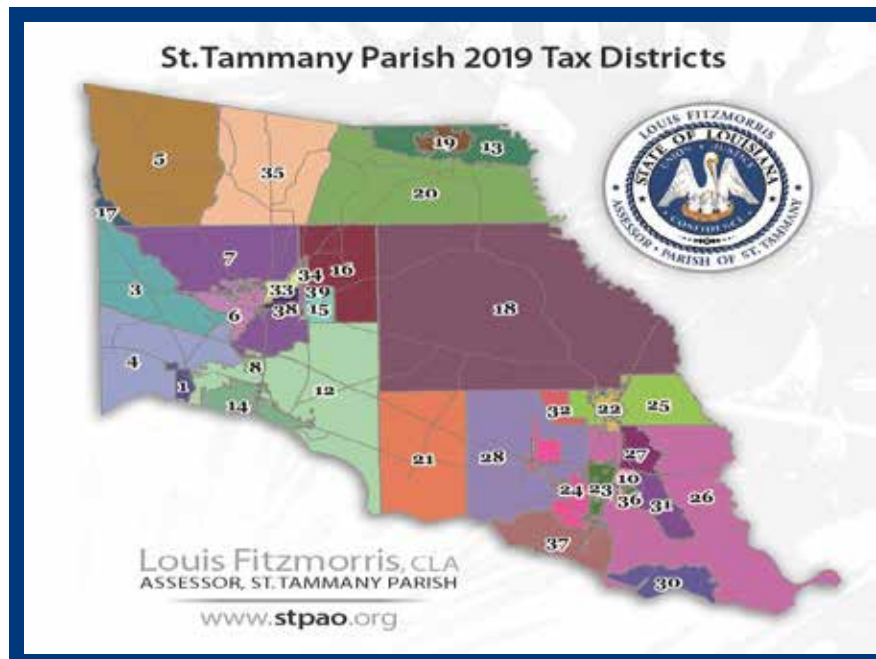


Figure 12: St. Tammany Parish 2019 Tax Districts

Source: St. Tammany Assessor's Office



10,000 Years of Land Use

Tchefuncte Choctaw, Biloxi, Pensacola, Acolapissa, and Houma tribes inhabit the area



1702
Acolapissa tribe displaced from Bay St. Louis migrates to Bayou Castine, and begins trade with New Orleans settlers in later decades

1748
Lacombe, established on Bayou Lacombe, becomes known as a refuge for runaway slaves

1821
First steamboat crosses Lake Pontchartrain, marking the beginning of nearly a century of trips between New Orleans and the Northshore



8000 BC to 1699 AD
First Nations

1699-1810
Colonial Era

1810-19
Early Amer

8000 BC
Earliest known settlement of area by prehistoric humans

1699 AD
French explorer Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville is the first European to visit the area, names Lake Pontchartrain after the Count de Pontchartrain, France's minister of finance under Louis XIV

1813
Covington founded

1812

1834
Mandeville founded



1883
Slidell founded during the construction of a major new railroad from New Orleans to Meridian, MS.

1810
St. Tammany Parish was established out of the West Florida Rebellion against Spanish authority and was an independent nation for 74 days before US annexation. Governor William Claiborne draws the parish boundaries and names it after Tamanend, a Delaware Indian chief.

1928

The first bridge constructed across Lake Pontchartrain opens, today the US Highway 11 Bridge



2016

Historic rainfall levels flood hundreds of properties in March and August



1954

St. Tammany Parish Hospital established

1960s

Construction begins on Interstate 12

1969

Second Causeway Bridge span opens

1904

Folsom founded

1938

Fontainebleau State Park established

1898

Pearl River founded

1956
African Era

1956-2020
Bedroom Suburb

1912

Town of Abita Springs chartered



1888

The East Louisiana Railroad connects New Orleans to Slidell, Lacombe, Mandeville, Abita Springs and Covington

1936

Steamship service from New Orleans ends



1956

First span of Causeway Bridge opens

2005

Hurricane Katrina floods coastal St. Tammany Parish

2000

Parish adopts Vision element of New Directions 2025

20,000 New Homes

Nearly one of every four homes in unincorporated St. Tammany Parish today was built this century. Homebuilders have created about 20,000 new housing units in unincorporated St. Tammany since 2000, up to 82,000 total.

Nearly 15% of all land in unincorporated St. Tammany Parish is residential in use. An additional 14% of land is inhabited agricultural land. For every 100 homes, 79 are detached, single-family homes - a higher share than in Louisiana overall (65%). Of the other 21, 9 are multifamily, 9 are mobile homes, and 3 are townhouses or duplexes.

St. Tammany Parish homes are predominantly owner-occupied - 78.9%, compared to the state average of 66.5%.

Many of these new homes continue the predominance of single-use, low-density, automobile-oriented development patterns. The lack of mixed-use development and walkable areas make residents more dependent on vehicles for traveling to work, school, commerce, recreation, and other destinations.

Recent studies such as the 2017 Community Needs Assessment and Assessment of Affordable Housing, have found some challenges in the housing market. A lack of quality, affordable housing, few multifamily housing options, and strict lending standards make it harder for renters to access homeownership. The reports also found that the private sector faces several challenges to develop new, affordable and mixed-income housing stock: High land costs, development moratoriums, lack of land zoned for multifamily, minimum lot size requirements, lack of sewer- and water-served lots, and wetlands each make housing development expensive and difficult. Moreover, the low supply of rental housing and increasing demand has led to increasing rental prices.

Single-family home built 1950



Source: Keller Williams

Mobile home built 1990



Source: Keller Williams via MLS

Single-family home built 2007



Source: Gulf South Real Estate Information Network

Single-family home built 2002



Source: Gulf South Real Estate Information Network

Single-family home built 2014



Source: Keller Williams via MLS

Apartments built 2010



Source: Chapel Creek Key Management Company

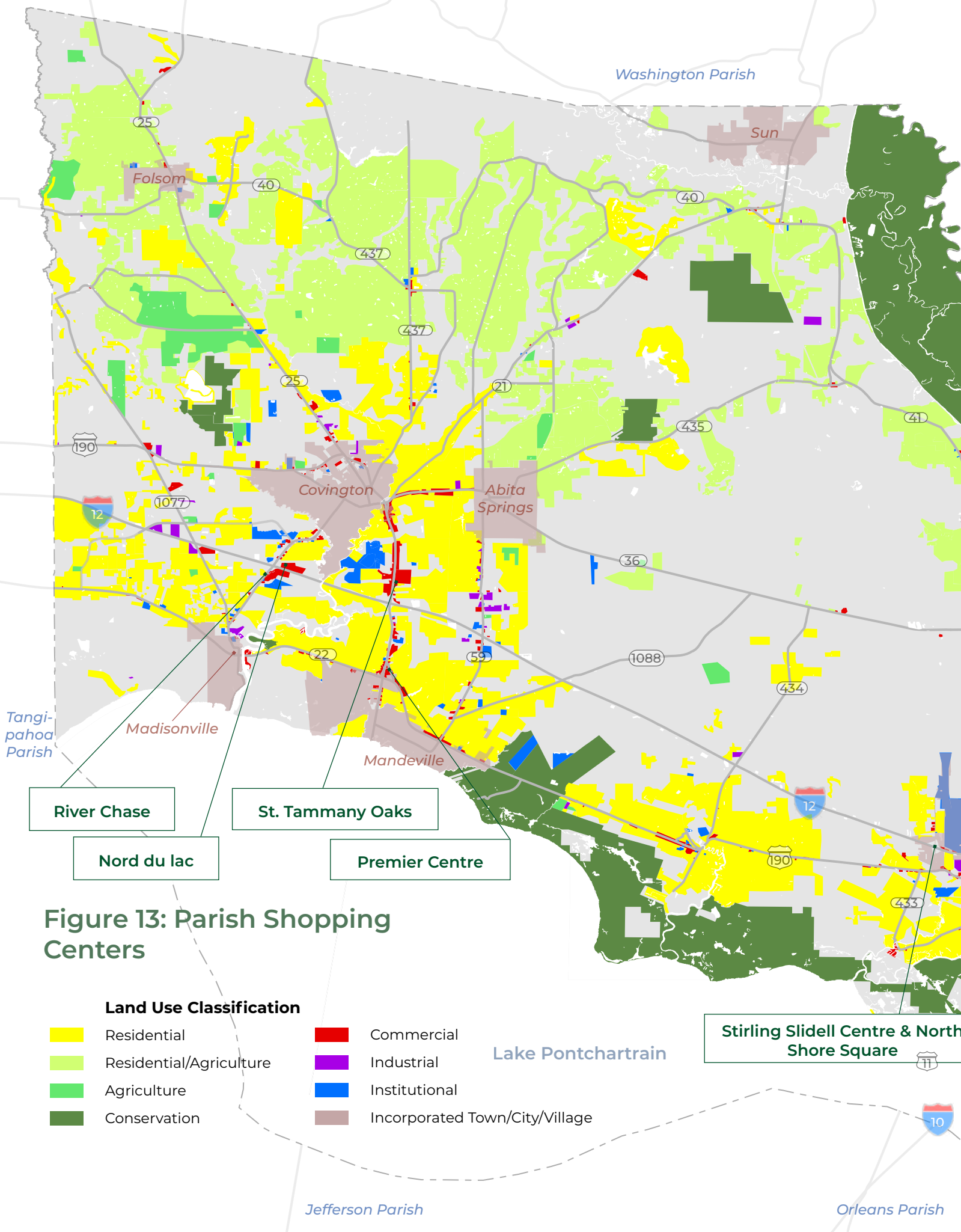


Figure 13: Parish Shopping Centers

Land Use Classification

- | | |
|--|--|
| Residential | Commercial |
| Residential/Agriculture | Industrial |
| Agriculture | Institutional |
| Conservation | Incorporated Town/City/Village |

River Chase

St. Tammany Oaks

Nord du lac

Premier Centre

Stirling Slidell Centre & North Shore Square

Commercial & Retail

Commercial uses are concentrated most heavily along a handful of corridors in St. Tammany Parish outside its historic towns. Highway 190 between Mandeville and Covington and Highway 21 south of Covington each feature a mix of heavy commercial, "big box" retail shopping centers, a wide variety of services, including health care and construction, and dining establishments. These corridors contain some of the parish's largest shopping centers, including St. Tammany Oaks and Premier Centre on 190, and Nord du Lac and River Chase on 21. These latter two centers and Stirling Slidell Centre, and

Fremaux Town Center in incorporated Slidell comprise over 2.1 million gross leasable area constructed since 2000.¹²

As of 2017, supply of retail sales in St. Tammany Parish exceeded total demand among residents by about \$251 million – \$4.24 billion in annual sales compared to \$3.99 billion in demand. This indicates that commuters and visitors from outside the parish are supporting the local retail economy to a partial extent, and that retail uses are largely saturated. One notable exception is the food and beverage store category; in 2017 sales in this category fell \$46 million short of estimated residential demand, suggesting that some residents are shopping for groceries outside the parish - perhaps during work commutes.¹³

Protected

The Parish is also home to many publicly-accessible parks and wildlife refuge and management areas. These include Fontainebleau and Fairview-Riverside State Parks, Pearl River and Lake Ramsay Savannah Wildlife Management Areas, Big Branch Marsh and Bogue Chitto National Wildlife Refuges, and the Tammany Trace Hike and Bike Trail. In addition, there are several wetland banks that protect over 12,000 acres in the Parish in which some are open to the public.

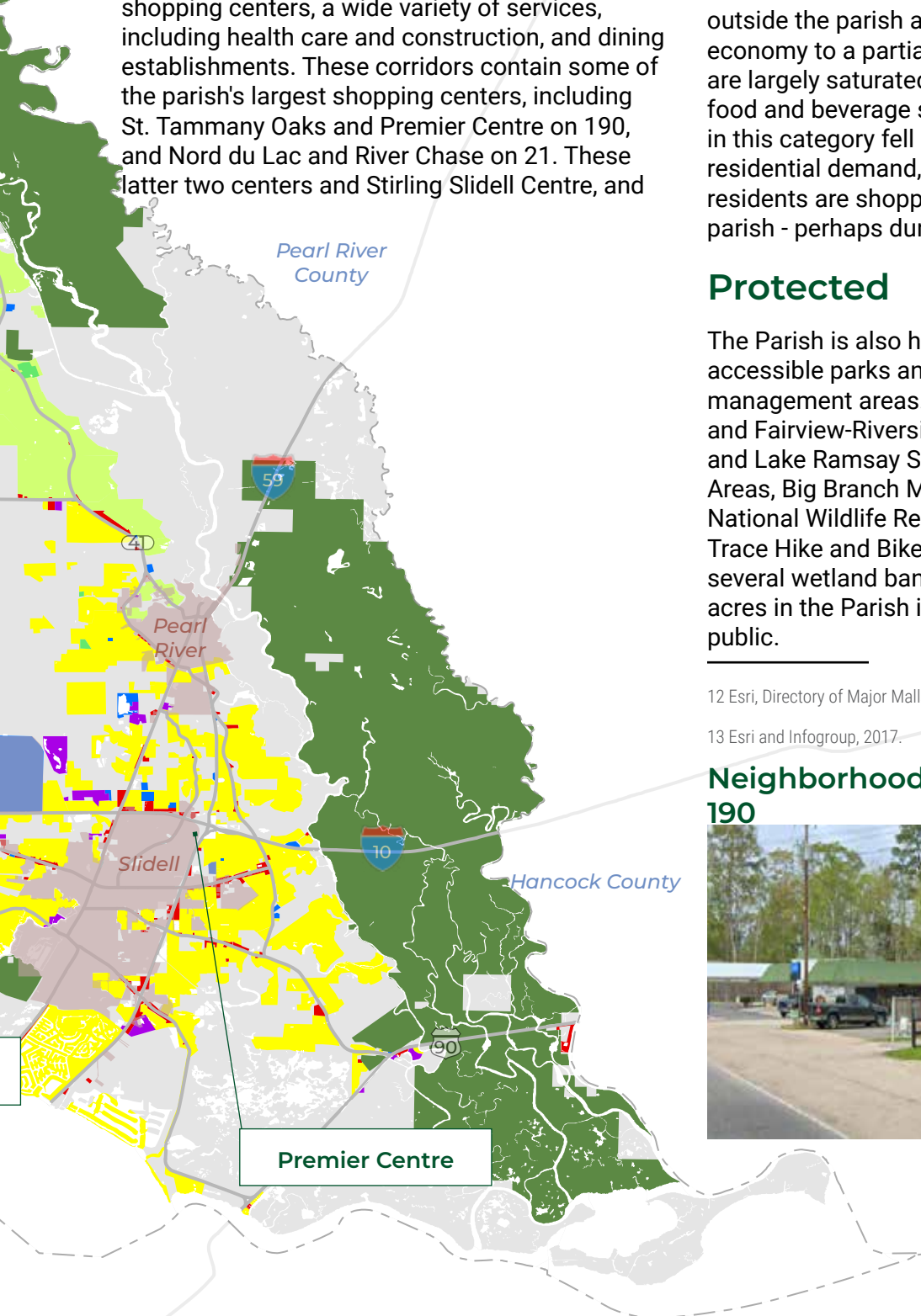
¹² Esri, Directory of Major Malls, Inc. (July 2020).

¹³ Esri and Infogroup, 2017.

Neighborhood retail in Lacombe on US 190



Source: Google Streetview, 2020





Source: *St. Tammany Parish Tourist and Convention Commission*

ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

Located in southeastern Louisiana on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain, St. Tammany Parish is at the nexus of land and water. In fact, 25% of the parish is made up of water – including 280 square miles of Lake Pontchartrain, one of the largest estuaries in the U.S. – and the parish's landscape and people have been shaped by this relationship. Historically, industries that relied on large waterways such as shipbuilding, lumber, brick manufacturing, paper making, and agriculture flourished in the parish. In 1956, after the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway was constructed, the parish became a suburb community to New Orleans as many commuted into work. This proximity spurred economic growth, particularly in southern, more poorly drained parts of the parish. Balancing environmental and conservation challenges and remarkable opportunities that St. Tammany has to offer is important as the parish grows.

To address environmental challenges and goals, a basic knowledge and understanding of the ecology and geomorphology of St. Tammany Parish is critically important.

Essentially a Gulf coastal community, St. Tammany, unlike any other parish in the state, possesses a coastal charm similar to beach-front communities further east.

Predominant natural habitats range from intermediate to fresh marsh on the lake front to longleaf pine wetland savannas in the south to upland longleaf woodlands in the hilly northern part of the parish. Divided only by sandy, spring-fed streams and large cypress and hardwood-dominated rivers.

Ecoregions

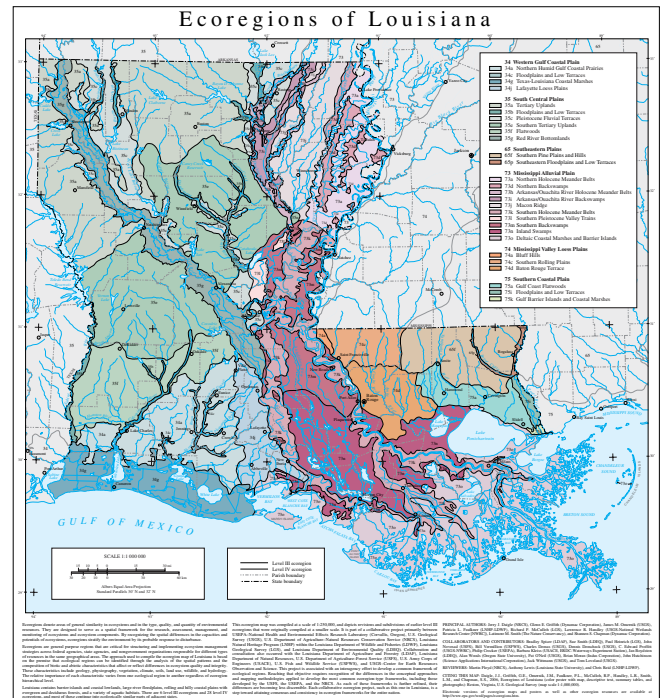
St. Tammany Parish is an area geologically shaped by water. Elevations range from about 295 feet above sea level on the terrace upland to about three feet below sea level in former marshes along the lake. The parish consists of three main U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Level III Ecoregions. Ecoregions denote areas of general similarity in ecosystems and in the type, quality, and quantity of environmental resources.¹⁴ The southern edge of the parish along Lake Pontchartrain is part of the **Mississippi Alluvial Plain**, a riverine ecoregion extending from southern Illinois to the Gulf of Mexico. The sub-ecoregion present in St. Tammany Parish associated with this ecoregion is the deltaic **Coastal Marshes** and is dominated by fresh to brackish marshes. Vegetation within this ecoregion can tolerate saline water and includes saltmarsh cordgrass, black needlerush, and coastal saltgrass with a few isolated occurrences of black mangrove. The soils, which are periodically or permanently inundated by water, are mucky surfaced Histosols containing high percentages of organic deposits. Like a sponge, these soils will shrink when drained, making these areas susceptible to land subsidence and erosion. When left undisturbed, these fringe wetlands act as a buffer by absorbing excess water, which helps moderate flooding and tidal inundation during storm events.¹⁵

Over half of the parish is within the **Southern Coastal Plain** ecoregion – predominantly flat plains within the Gulf and Atlantic coast lowlands. There are three sub-ecoregions within this ecoregion in the Parish – the largest of which is the **Gulf Coast Flatwoods**. The

14 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2006, Level III ecoregions of the continental United States (revision of Omernik, 1987): Corvallis, Oregon, USEPA–National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory, Map M-1, various scales.

15 Daigle, J.J., Griffith, G.E., Omernik, J.M., Faulkner, P.L., McCulloh, R.P., Handley, L.R., Smith, L.M., and Chapman, S.S., 2006, Ecoregions of Louisiana (color poster with map, descriptive text, summary tables, and photographs): Reston, Virginia, U.S. Geological Survey (map scale 1:1,000,000).

Figure 14: St. Tammany Parish has three Level III Ecoregions and six Level IV sub-ecoregions



Source: LA SAFE, *St. Tammany Parish Adaptation Strategy* (2019)

Flatwoods are made up of nearly level terraces formed from historic alluvial deposits. The soils are mixed of poorly to moderately drained Entisols, Alfisols, and Ultisols with silty and fine sandy loam surface layers. St. Tammany is on the western boundary of the Gulf Coast Flatwoods and as a result has more state- and globally-rare species than any parish in Louisiana and is part of a recognized global hotspot for biodiversity in the southeast U.S. In the past this area was longleaf pine dominated and was a mix of woodlands and savannas that experienced periodic disturbance from fire every 1-4 years. Essentially a grassland with trees, the savannas were comprised of many grasses, sedges and wildflowers, including several species of carnivorous plants, such as pitcher plants.

A large percent of the longleaf pine savanna habitats have been lost by removing the fire cycle

The Nature Conservancy manages over 5000 acres of rare pine savanna habitat including 500 acres adjacent to the Lake Ramsey Wildlife Management Area



Source: *The Nature Conservancy*

from the ecosystem and from converting lands to agriculture or developed areas. There are a few remnant savanna areas within the parish including The Nature Conservancy's Talisheek Pine Wetland Preserve. The preserve illustrates how biodiverse savanna habitats and associated upland areas in the parish are, and hosts over 30 rare plants and many rare animals including the federally threatened gopher tortoise. Longleaf pine savannas are among the most diverse and most threatened habitats in North America, with only 1% to 5% of the original acreage estimated to remain nationally.¹⁶ Much of the Gulf Coast Flatwoods have evolved into mixed forest, been converted to pine plantations, agriculture, or been developed.

The second sub-ecoregion in the Southern Coastal Plain is **Floodplains and Low Terraces** associated with the Pearl River in St. Tammany Parish. The area is composed of alluvium and terrace deposits of sand, silt, clay, and gravel, along with other organic deposits. The soils are mostly loamy Entisols. The area is an important wildlife habitat, and is dominated by bald cypress, water tupelo and oak species in bottomland hardwood forests and swamps. The Pearl River Floodplain has been identified as ecologically-important by The Nature Conservancy and natural resource agencies and is critically important

¹⁶ The Nature Conservancy, "Talisheek Pine Wetlands Preserve," accessed on October 1, 2020.

<https://www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/places-we-protect/talisheek-pine-wetlands-preserve/>

for many rare and declining species, such as Threatened Ringed Map Turtle and Gulf Sturgeon, and Swallowtailed Kite. It is also a state hot-spot for migratory birds as revealed on Dopler radar. The third sub-ecoregion is located in a small coastal area in the southeast corner of the parish called **Gulf Barrier Islands and Coastal Marsh**. The ecosystem is formed from sediments of the Pearl River and Mississippi deltaic deposits and includes freshwater and brackish marsh, dunes, beaches and barrier island habitats. The hydric soils are Histosols and Entisols with mucky surfaces.¹⁷

The northern section of the parish corresponding with the highest elevations is within the **Southeastern Plains** ecoregion. Within this area are two sub-ecoregions, the **Southern Pine Plains and Hills** and the **Southeastern Floodplains and Low Terraces** corresponding with the Pearl and Bogue Chitto rivers. The Southern Pine Plains and Hills historically included longleaf pine woodlands, interrupted by streams and rivers with mixed loblolly pine-hardwood forests. Now most of the longleaf pine forests have been replaced by mixed forests and loblolly pine plantations and livestock farms. The upland soils are mostly well drained Ultisols and Alfisols.¹⁸

BOTTOM LINE: St. Tammany Parish is incredibly diverse with many ecologically-significant habitat types. Large areas of the eastern and southeastern portion of the parish are protected public lands. These areas correspond with critically important marsh, bottomland and swamp areas. In addition, there are several thousand acres of mostly non-public pine wetland mitigation banks protecting exceptionally diverse and threatened components of our natural heritage. Collectively these wetlands and low lying areas will always be important to protect however, the way the uplands are developed will determine how the system functions into the future.

¹⁷ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2006, Level III ecoregions of the continental United States (revision of Omernik, 1987): Corvallis, Oregon, USEPA-National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory, Map M-1, various scales.

¹⁸ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 2006, Level III ecoregions of the continental United States (revision of Omernik, 1987): Corvallis, Oregon, USEPA-National Health and Environmental Effects Research Laboratory, Map M-1, various scales.

Soils, Land, and Drainage

Drainage in St. Tammany Parish is directly linked to soils, landform, topography and elevation. Four main general soil types are found within St. Tammany Parish according to the USDA Soil Survey in 1990.

The soil group making up the largest portion of the parish is loamy soils on broad stream or marine **terraces**. These largely correspond to the Gulf Coast Flatwoods Sub-Ecoregion of the Parish. Over 55% of the parish is made up of these soils, most of which are wet and poorly-drained due to slow permeability (percolation) and flat topography. They experience regular flooding following rainfall events limiting some land use types. The largest population growth in the Parish is in this area.

Loamy soils associated with **upland** terrace areas make up 15% of the land area of the parish and occur in the Southern Pine Plains and Hills Sub-Ecoregion. Much of that is woodland, pastureland, and cropland.

Floodplain soils make up 15% of the parish and are mainly loam-based soils corresponding to floodplains and drainageways and occur in the Floodplains and Low Terraces and Southeastern Floodplains and Low Terraces sub-ecoregions. These areas are frequently flooded by overflow and runoff from the upland areas which has increased as the parish has developed lands and added more impervious surfaces.

Lastly, **marsh and swamp** soils make up over 12% of the parish, occurring in the Gulf Barrier Islands and Coastal Marsh and Deltaic Coastal Marsh and Barrier Islands Sub-Ecoregions. These soils are very poorly drained, are flooded or ponded most of the time, and include high amounts of organic content due to lack of decomposition.¹⁹

19 Larry Trahan et al., "Soil Survey of St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana," Soil Survey of St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana § (1990), pp. 1-9.

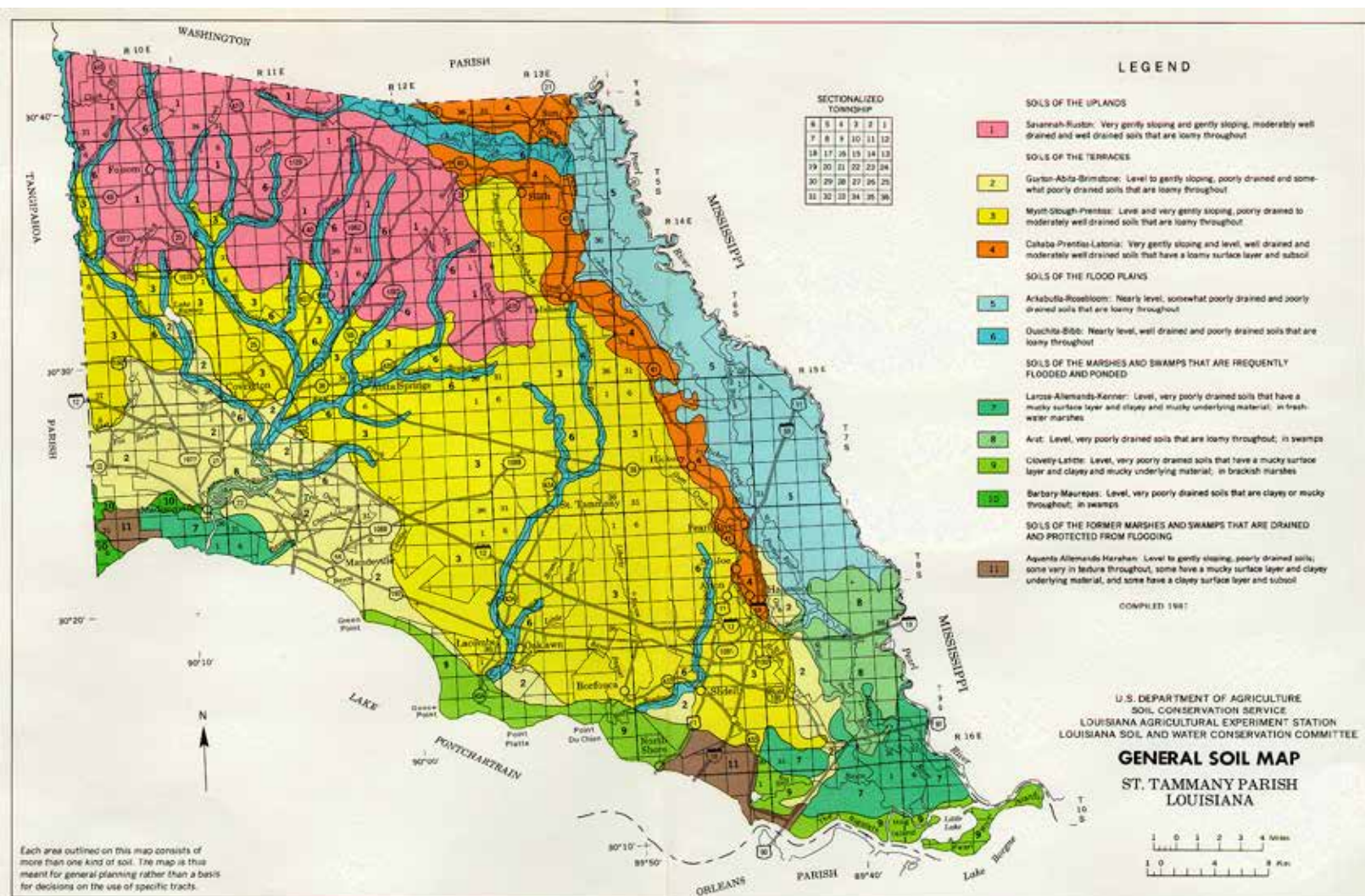
The terraced landmass of the parish was formed during the Pleistocene period, when glaciers covered the land during North America's most recent Ice Age - up to 11,700 years ago. Over the years, St. Tammany Parish has been shaped by water, specifically the Pearl, Bogue Chitto, and Tchefuncte Rivers, and the sediment deposits that accompany those waterways. This ever changing landscape has experienced accretion and erosion of lands, but as storms grow in intensity and with sea level rise land loss may occur at higher rates. A decrease of approximately 25% of the 1932 to 2016 coastal wetlands in Louisiana have been detected making these marsh areas one of the most critically threatened environments in the United States.²⁰

The soils with the highest potential of subsidence have high organic content and correspond to wetlands and marshes in the parish. If these areas are deprived of water or drained, they shrink and the land mass lowers in elevation. Most of these soils occur along Lake Pontchartrain, around Eden Isle, in the Pearl River watershed, and in isolated occurrences along tributaries and freshwater wetlands. Although wetland loss and soil subsidence has slowed relatively compared to loss rates in the 1990s, these resources are at high risk as the climate changes, storms increase in intensity, and sea levels rise.

BOTTOM LINE: Flatland soils with slow permeability and low percolation characteristics formed on level or low elevation areas comprise a large portion of the southern half of St. Tammany Parish. In addition, much of our coastal and lakefront areas have organic soils with high subsidence potential if they do not retain their moisture. Combined with sea-level rise, these conditions make rapid drainage following rainfall or storm events difficult. Creative ways to work with our natural environment are needed to facilitate growth in this region.

20 B. R. Couvillion, H. Beck, D. Schoolmaster, and M. Fischer. "Land area change in coastal Louisiana 1932 to 2016: US Geological Survey Scientific Investigations Map 3381." Pamphlet (2017). <https://doi.org/10.3133/sim3381>.

Figure 15: General Soil Map (1990) provided by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service.



Source: Louisiana Online Soil Survey Manuscripts, available at: https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_MANUSCRIPTS/louisiana/index.html

Wildlife

St. Tammany Parish is situated at the intersection of the land and water, influenced by major river systems, the longleaf pine ecosystem, estuarine conditions of Lake Pontchartrain, and the marine influences from the Gulf of Mexico. The overlapping habitats and environmental conditions foster diverse groups of plants and animals. Lake Pontchartrain is one of the largest estuary systems in the U.S. providing critical nursery and habitat for marine animals and birds. According to iNaturalist, a citizen science application that allows people to record wildlife and plant observations, 3,505 different species of organisms have been recorded with over 36,600 observations taken thus far. This makes up 13% of all observations and 38% of total species recorded so far across Louisiana. Observations include both terrestrial and aquatic species. This database highlights some of the species that are seen on a more regular basis in the parish.

St. Tammany Parish also provides habitat to rare species that are on federal threatened and endangered lists managed by the Ecological Services Program of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). There are 17 threatened and endangered species in the parish and one critical habitat type.²¹

²¹ US Fish and Wildlife Service, "IPaC: Information for Planning and Consultation," accessed October 01, 2020, <https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/location/WAJYLZBPB5D0PM4FCZDTWCUSEI/resources#endangered-species>

Threatened and Endangered Species



Photo: USFWS/Flickr (CC BY 2.0)

Threatened and Endangered Species of St. Tammany Parish

The parish is in the range of 17 threatened and endangered species and has one critical habitat type. Source: USFWS

1. Mammal, Threatened, West Indian Manatee, *Trichechus manatus*
2. Bird, Proposed Threatened, Eastern Black Rail, *Laterallus jamaicensis* ssp. *Jamaicensis*
3. Bird, Threatened, Piping Plover, *Charadrius melodus*
4. Bird, Threatened, Red Knot, *Calidris canutus rufa*
5. Bird, Endangered, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, *Picoides borealis*
6. Bird, Threatened, Wood Stork, *Mycteria americana*
7. Reptile, Threatened, Black Pine Snake, *Pituophis melanoleucus lodingi*
8. Reptile, Threatened, Gopher Tortoise, *Gopherus polyphemus*
9. Reptile, Endangered, Hawksbill Sea Turtle, *Eretmochelys imbricata*
10. Reptile, Endangered, Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle, *Lepidochelys kempii*
11. Reptile, Endangered, Leatherback Sea Turtle, *Dermochelys coriacea*
12. Reptile, Threatened, Loggerhead Sea Turtle, *Caretta caretta*
13. Reptile, Threatened, Ringed Map Turtle, *Graptemys oculifera*
14. Amphibian, Endangered, Dusky Gopher Frog, *Rana sevosia*
15. Fish, Threatened, Atlantic Sturgeon (gulf Subspecies), *Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*
16. Clam, Threatened, Inflated Heelsplitter, *Potamilus inflatus*
17. Ferns and Allies, Endangered, Louisiana Quillwort, *Isoetes louisianensis*



Photo: Wikimedia Commons

There is one federally listed critical habitat within the parish for the threatened fish species the Atlantic Sturgeon (Gulf- subspecies) and includes portions of Lake Pontchartrain and the Pearl River. St. Tammany Parish also is within the Mississippi Flyway for migratory bird species. Of the bird species that migrate through the areas, 47 are of particular concern according to the USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern. St. Tammany Parish has conserved some of its lands as wildlife habitat including Bogue Chitto National Wildlife Refuge, Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge, Pearl River Wildlife Management Area, St. Tammany Wildlife Refuge, Abita Creek Flatwoods Preserve, the Three Rivers Conservation Easement, and Lake Ramsey Savannah Wildlife Management Area.

Wildlife viewing deck at the Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge.

Although many of the above species are either transitory or are aquatic species, the future land use of the parish will affect these organisms. For instance, all the waters of the parish drain to Lake Pontchartrain and then to the Gulf of Mexico. Assuring the responsible treatment of stormwater can help reduce point and non-point source water contaminants from entering those waterways, thereby improving the health of aquatic ecosystems and animals.

BOTTOM LINE: St. Tammany Parish is home to abundant wildlife habitat, which land development can harm to varying levels.

Important critical and sensitive areas need to be identified to conserve these species in the Parish.



Source: Wikimedia Commons

Water Resources

St. Tammany Parish is no stranger to rain, storms, and flooding. The parish has relatively high rates of annual precipitation of approximately 64 inches from predominantly rain and hail.²² According to the NOAA Statewide Precipitation Ranks, Louisiana has reported above average precipitation for the past 5 years. More intense downpours over shorter time periods are expected to occur more frequently in the parish.²³ This increased frequency could challenge stormwater infrastructure in the parish so even a relatively minor storm could result in flooding if infrastructure gets overwhelmed with more frequent storms.

Wetlands and surface water make up about half of the parish's area.²⁴ Seven main watersheds with associated subwatersheds are in St. Tammany Parish. The main surface water bodies include the Tchefuncte River, Bogue Falaya River, Abita River, Bayou Lacombe, Bayou Bonfouca, Bayou Liberty, Bogue Chitto River, Pearl River, and Lake Pontchartrain. The National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps four main wetland categories in the parish: Estuarine and Marine Deepwater Wetlands, Estuarine and Marine Wetlands, Freshwater Emergent Wetlands, and Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetlands (Figure 16). The parish is rich in wetlands associated with large water bodies from the estuarine wetlands along Lake Pontchartrain to the large swath of freshwater forested/shrub wetland associated with the Pearl and Tchefuncte Rivers.

Another important wetland feature for the parish is the New Orleans East Land Bridge, a relatively narrow 12 mile strip of marshlands between Lake Pontchartrain and Lake Borgne. This area is critical in maintaining the estuarine conditions

of the Lake Pontchartrain and to protect the mainland from large storm events. According to an engineering study by Ben C. Gerwick, Inc., by 2060 subsiding land and sea level rise will totally submerge the land bridge.²⁵ There has been an active effort to restore and create more marshland in this area to preserve its function into the future.

In addition to the NWI wetlands, many of the soils in the Parish are hydric and recognized as jurisdictional wetlands by the US Army Corps of Engineers, including seasonally-wet longleaf pine savannas. Impacts to these wetlands require mitigation to compensate for the loss of wetland functions and processes in the occurring watershed. Several remnant pine savannas are being restored and maintained in nine wetland mitigation banks totalling approximately 13,000 acres. Some of these are publicly-accessible including The Nature Conservancy's Lake Ramsay Savanna and Abita Creek Flatwoods Preserves.

In addition to surface water resources, St. Tammany Parish has groundwater and aquifer resources that are used for public and domestic use mainly coming from the Chicot, Evangeline and Jasper equivalent aquifer systems. Almost 100% of the water use comes from groundwater, with less than 1% withdrawn from surface water sources.²⁶ Public supplies account for approximately 70% of water withdrawn with 28% for domestic use.²⁷ Well-registration records from the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) show that there are approximately 10,866 active wells screened in the aquifers in St. Tammany Parish, about 9,740

22 John M. Grymes III, "Precipitation Patterns Over the Bayou State," Louisiana Agriculture 54, no. 4 (Fall 2011): 26-27.

23 "St. Tammany Parish Adaptation Strategy - April 2019" (St. Tammany, LA: LA Safe, Louisiana's Strategic Adaptations for Future Environments, 2019), p. 42.

24 2020 St. Tammany Parish Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update, p. 1-2.

25 "New Orleans East Land Bridge Study LPV 111 to Chef Menteur, Chef Menteur to Rigolets - December 2012" (Feasibility study by Ben. C Gerwick, Inc.)

26 Sargent, B.P., 2007, Water use in Louisiana, 2005: Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development Water Resources Special Report no. 16, p. 133

27 Jason M. Griffith., "Water Resources of St. Tammany Parish Fact Sheet 2009-3064," U.S. Geological Survey, in cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, version 1.3 (2017), p. 1.

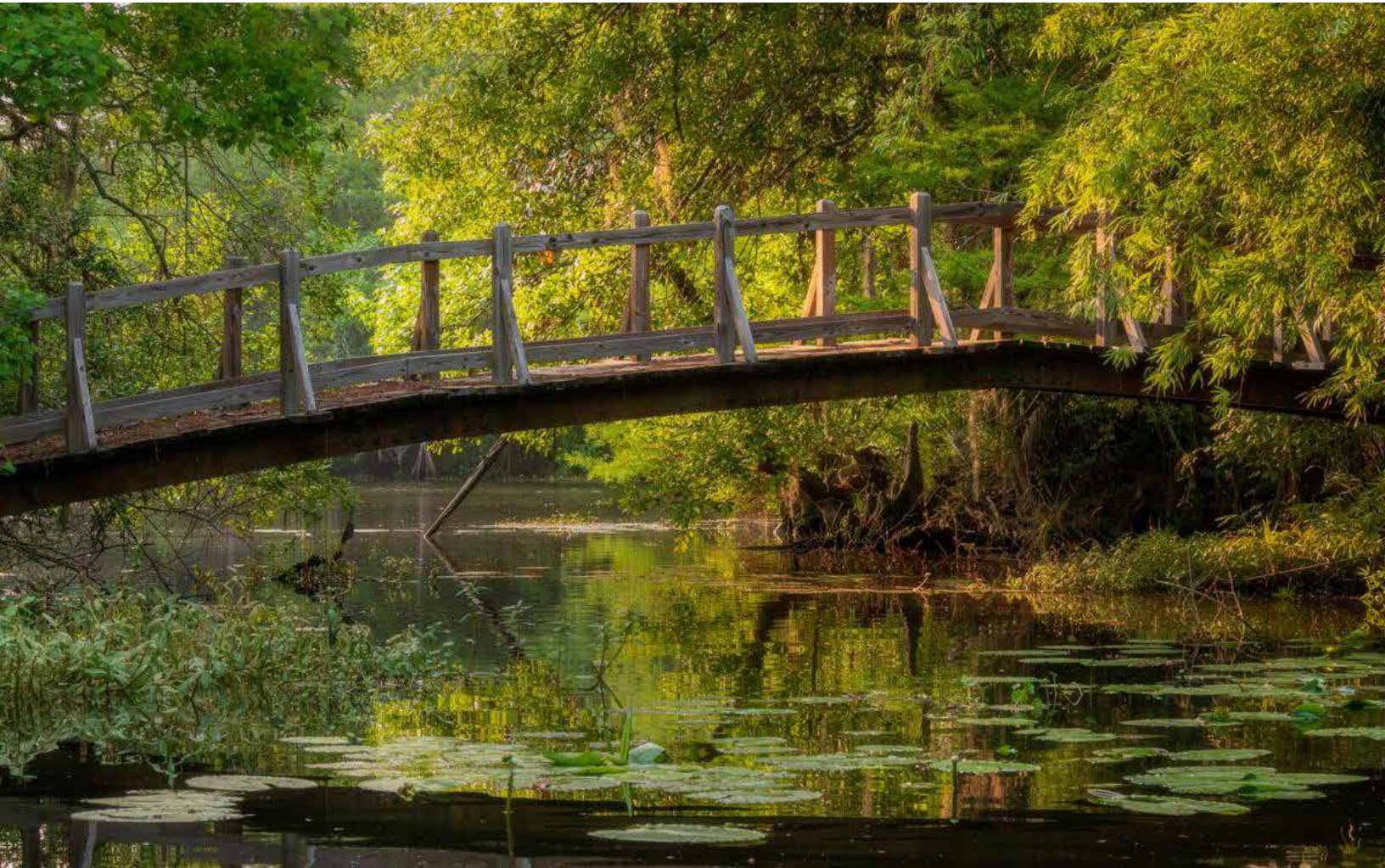
domestic, 657 public supply, 431 irrigation, and 38 industrial wells.

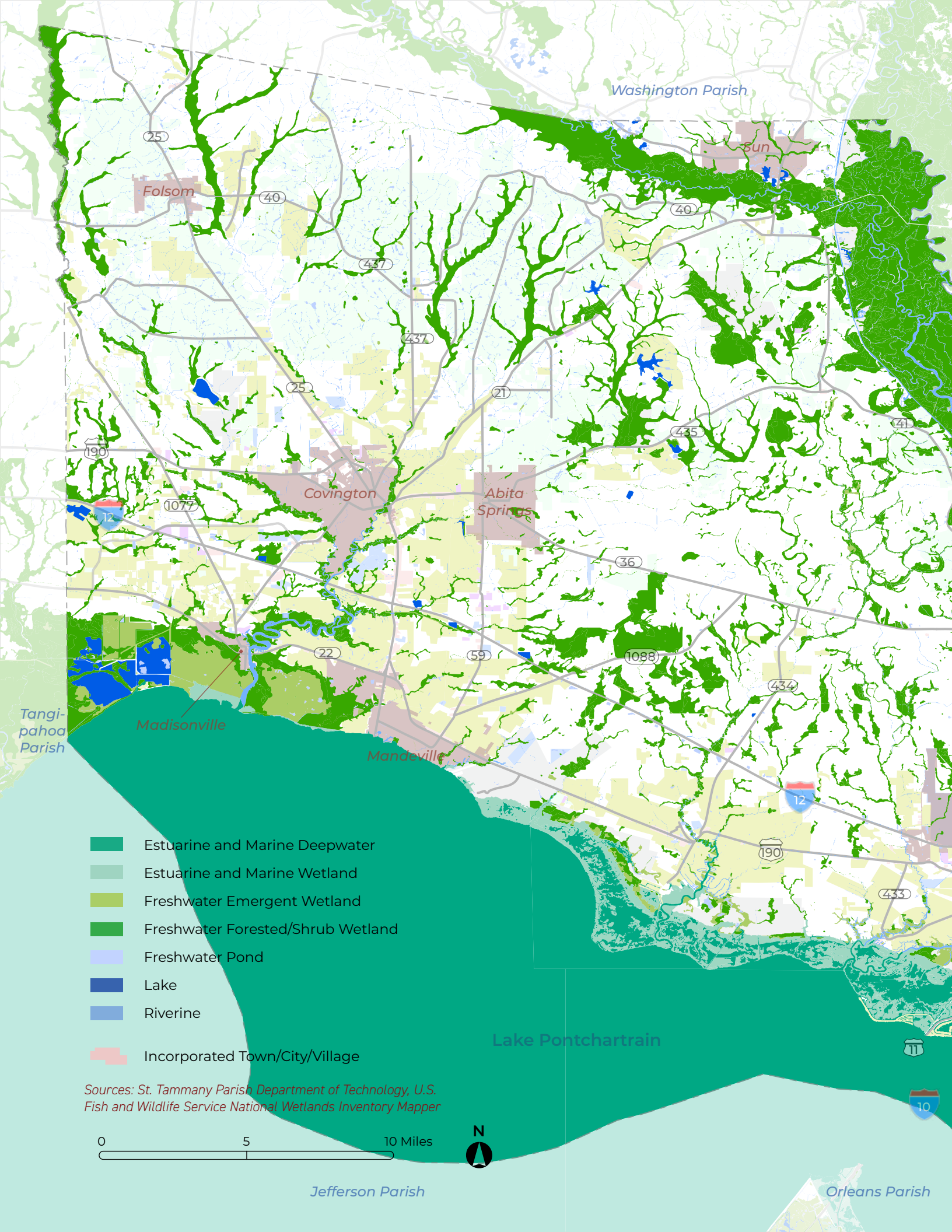
Recharge to the aquifers is from rainfall, drainage overlying aquifers, and seasonal input from rivers. Discharge from the aquifers is by natural flow into rivers, leakage into underlying aquifers, and withdrawal from wells. St. Tammany Parish has low to moderate recharge potential, where the potential increases in the northern lands of the parish. Upper reaches of the rivers provide a fresh water source, but depending on the current climate conditions may experience salt water intrusion.

BOTTOM LINE: Water is a critical asset to the parish, for drinking water, wildlife habitat, recreation and aesthetic value. Many wetland areas are protected and provide important ecological services such as increased ground-water recharge and reduced storm-water runoff. Water can also be a flood threat. The parish's close relationship with water and its ability to live with nature will shape its future growth and development.

Abita River

Source: Edward Estapa, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Scenic Rivers Photo Contest





- Estuarine and Marine Deepwater
- Estuarine and Marine Wetland
- Freshwater Emergent Wetland
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland
- Freshwater Pond
- Lake
- Riverine
- Incorporated Town/City/Village

Sources: St. Tammany Parish Department of Technology, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory Mapper

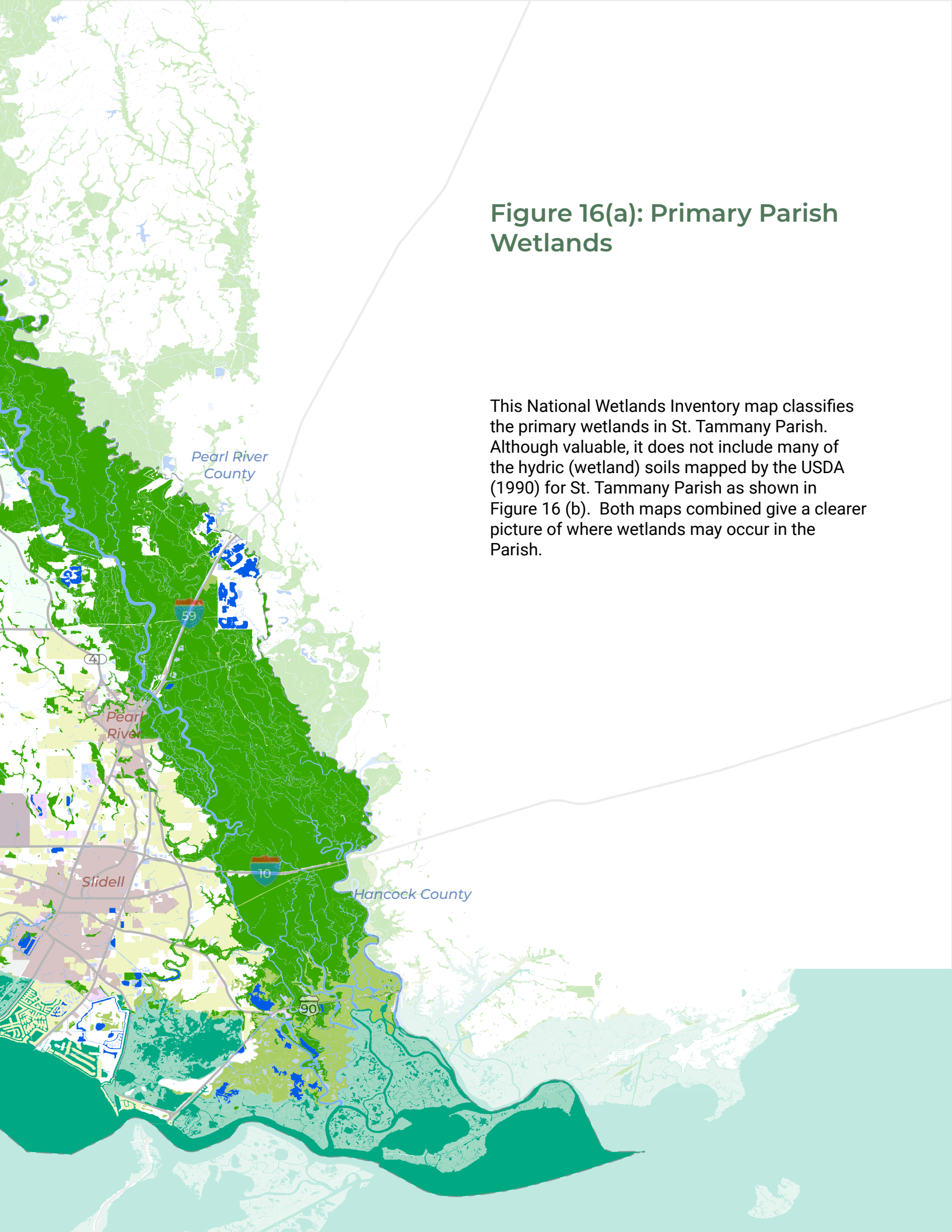


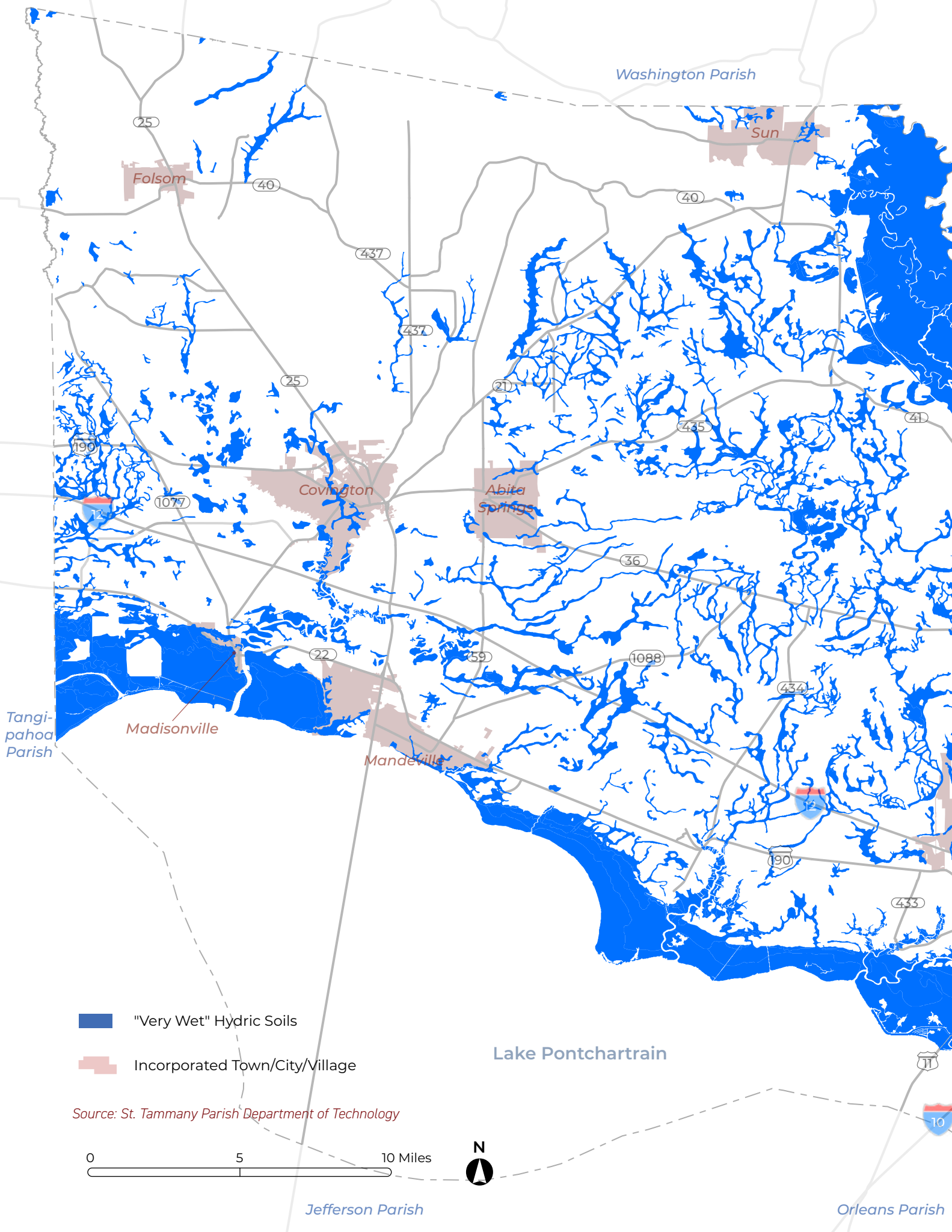
Jefferson Parish

Orleans Parish

Figure 16(a): Primary Parish Wetlands

This National Wetlands Inventory map classifies the primary wetlands in St. Tammany Parish. Although valuable, it does not include many of the hydric (wetland) soils mapped by the USDA (1990) for St. Tammany Parish as shown in Figure 16 (b). Both maps combined give a clearer picture of where wetlands may occur in the Parish.





- "Very Wet" Hydric Soils
- Incorporated Town/City/Village

Source: St. Tammany Parish Department of Technology

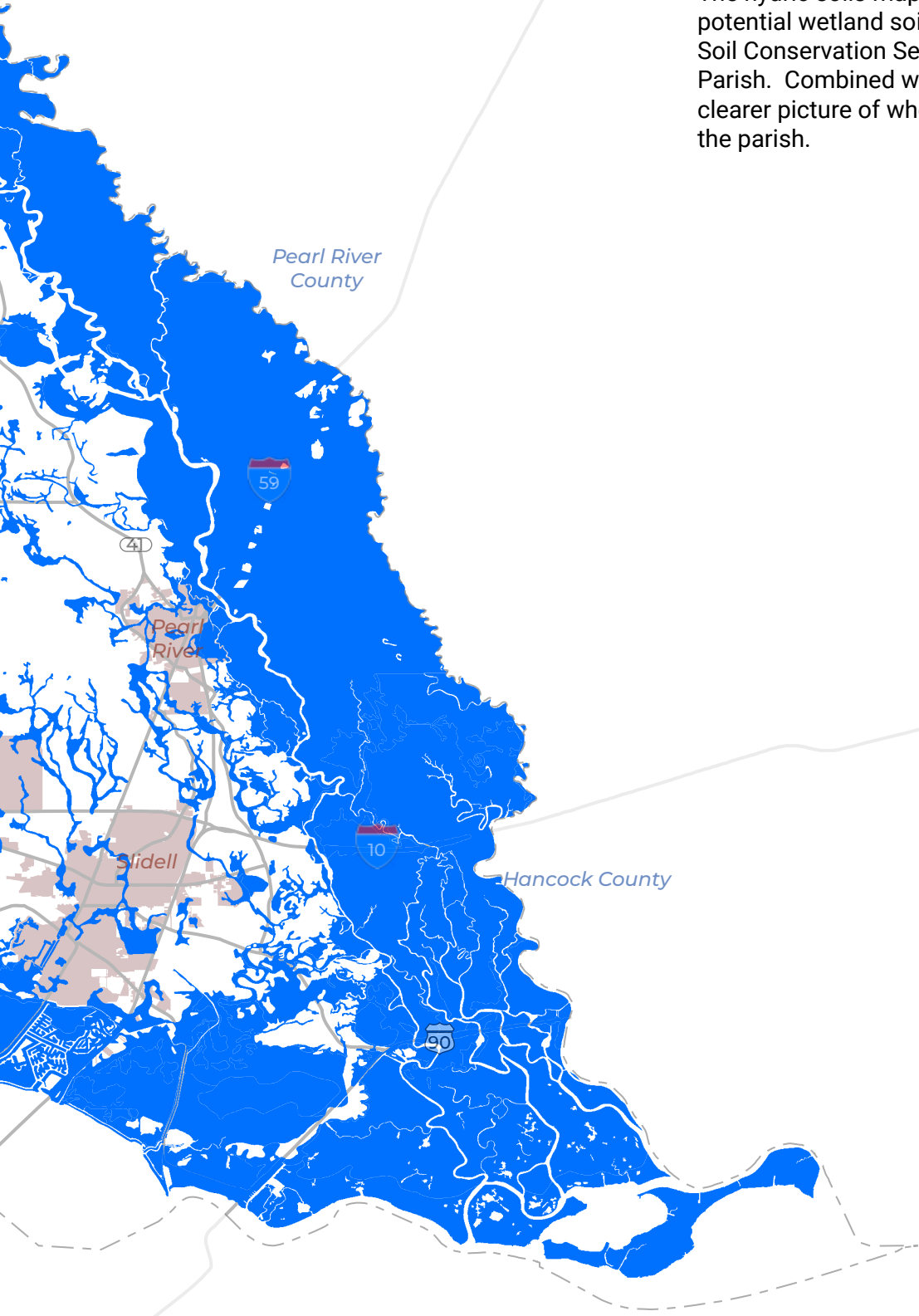


Jefferson Parish

Orleans Parish

Figure 16(b): Hydric Soils

The hydric soils map shows the location of potential wetland soils as mapped by the USDA Soil Conservation Service for St. Tammany Parish. Combined with Figure 16(a) it gives a clearer picture of where wetlands may occur in the parish.



Natural Hazards

St. Tammany Parish's 2020 Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update helps the parish take action to reduce or eliminate the long-term risk of hazards to life and property. It finds that 23 Presidential Disaster Declarations have occurred in St. Tammany Parish since 1965. Tropical storms, hurricanes, and flooding make up the majority of them, and are the most severe hazards in terms of property damage and impact on the area's economy. The parish's situation near the Gulf Coast make it vulnerable to tropical cyclones. These systems gain strength and energy as they pass over the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico and dissipate as they make landfall. The lack of buffering coastal land to dissipate resulting results in flooding of over 15 feet above the normal sea level during some events. The LASAFE, St. Tammany Adaptive Strategy mapped the flood and storm risk for the parish looking at the CPRA Medium Flood Risk Scenario Modeling data, and the FEMA DFIRM 100-year floodplain. It found that 11 percent of the population lives in high risk areas, 27 percent in medium risk areas, and 62 percent in low risk areas

Riverine flooding and flash flooding (as opposed to coastal flooding) occur when more stormwater enters the drainage system than it can convey. **On average, major river flooding occurs once every three years.** St. Tammany Parish's watersheds all drain to Lake Pontchartrain, Lake Borgne and eventually the Gulf of Mexico.

Flooding is dependent on three factors: precipitation, conditions in the watershed, and conditions in the drainage channel. Watershed conditions can affect flooding; for example smaller watersheds can flood more quickly than large ones, but larger watersheds can experience longer effects of flooding. In addition, the slope of land and type of ground cover also affects flooding. **Because the parish is relatively flat and is rapidly developing, it experiences two types of flooding: long-lasting flooding from large rivers and flashy stormwater flooding when runoff overloads the local drainage system.**

In 2009 FEMA released preliminary Flood Insurance Rate Maps to update the current maps in use since 1989. Overall the extent of the floodplain mapping did not increase greatly; however the new mapping did greatly expand the high velocity wave action area (V Zone). The FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) remain in the Preliminary phase. The Preliminary FIRM will become the future FIRM when FEMA issues a Letter of Final Determination. Right now the Preliminary FIRM can be used to regulate development, but cannot be used to rate flood insurance, which continues to follow the older, effective FIRM.

FEMA's maps do not account for localized stormwater flooding (under 1 square miles in size), which occurs regularly and sometimes repeatedly to certain areas throughout the parish. Work orders to clean and remove debris from ditches have overwhelmed the Parish Public Works Department. In September 2020, news accounts from the Lacombe area reported prolonged standing water in areas that used to drain more rapidly after rain events. The community attributed the flooding to ditches and local drainage ways that need to be cleared of debris and other obstructions.

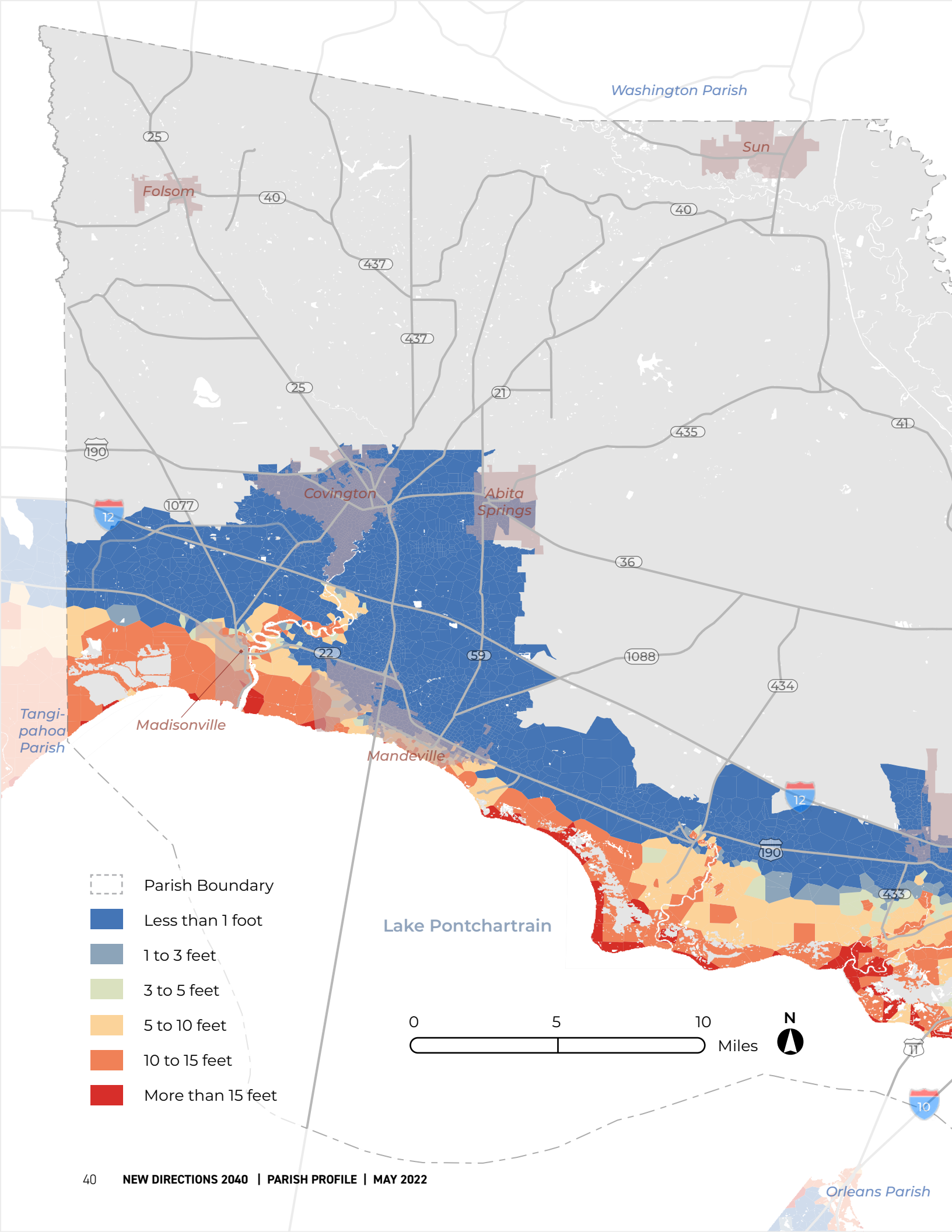
Flooding takes a toll on communities not only from the effects of the flood water and contamination that it harbors, but also the after effects of mold, mildew and the long term psychological impact of having lives altered and important keep-sakes damaged. Flood Factor, an online resource that uses the First Street Foundation Flood Model combined with a flood risk analysis that looks at all major flood types including rain, riverine, tidal and storm surge, predicts that flood risk will increase for Louisiana over the next 30 years. **It predicts that Louisiana properties at risk for substantial flooding will grow by approximately 70 percent during this time.**

St. Tammany Parish is also at high risk for tornadoes. The parish has experienced 36 tornadoes since 1989 and is likely to experience one tornado a year. Most violent storms don't result in major damage, injuries or death, but there have been a few violent tornadoes across Louisiana, ranking it 13th in the nation for deaths as a result of tornadoes. The major threat in St. Tammany Parish from tornadoes is property damage and injury.

BOTTOM LINE: Flood risk in Louisiana is high based on analysis on past, present and future flood risk information and should be a significant driver in determining land use patterns within St. Tammany Parish. It's important, however, to develop responsibly in upland areas to not burden the lowland areas that are more susceptible to flooding.



Source: David Grunfeld; NOLA.com



Washington Parish

Sun

Folsom

Covington

Abita Springs

Madisonville

Mandeville

Lake Pontchartrain

Orleans Parish

Tangipahoa Parish

-  Parish Boundary
-  Less than 1 foot
-  1 to 3 feet
-  3 to 5 feet
-  5 to 10 feet
-  10 to 15 feet
-  More than 15 feet

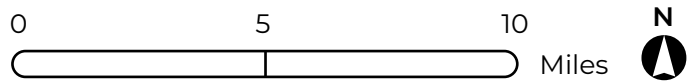
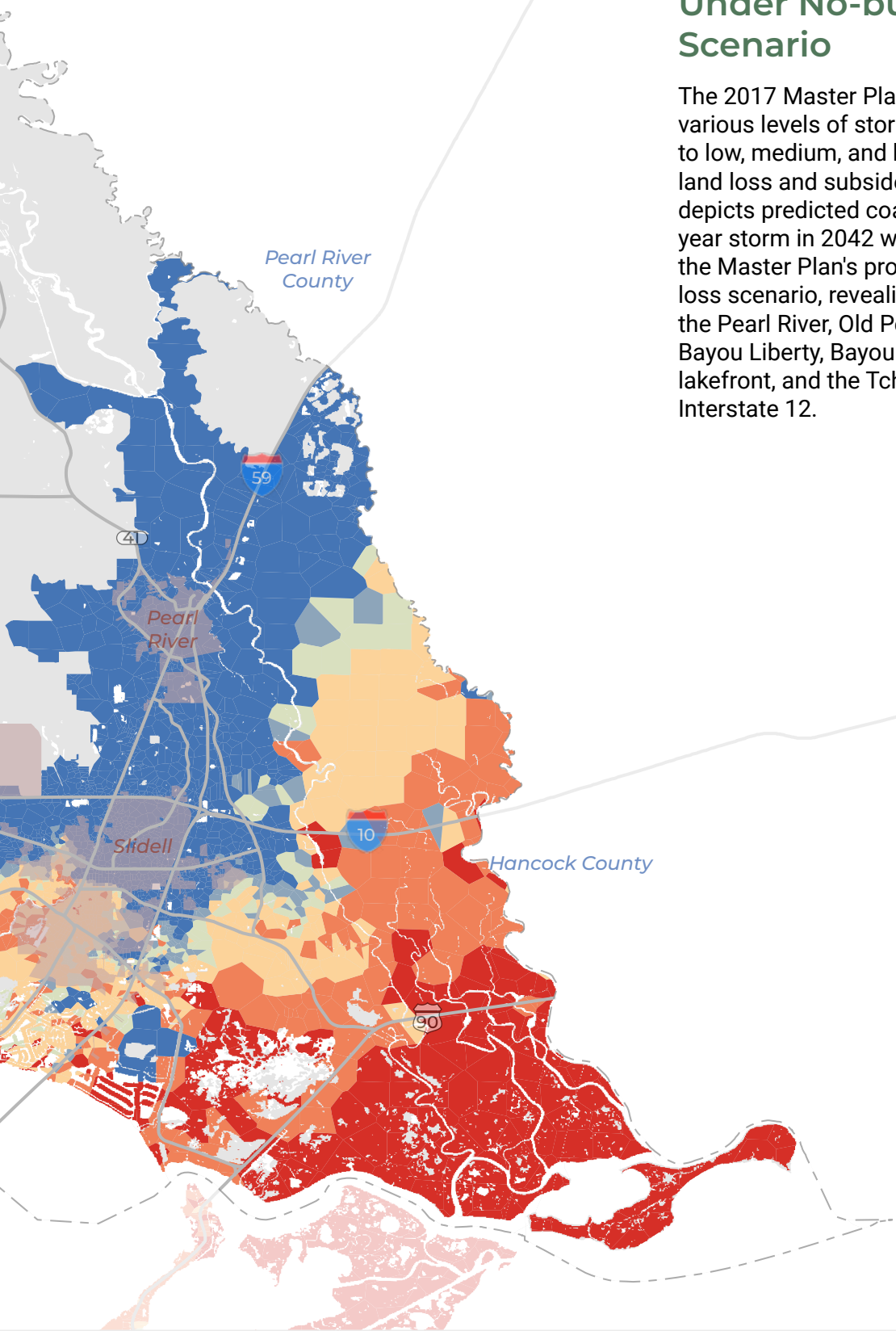


Figure 17: 2040 Coastal Flood Risk for 1-100 Year Storm Under No-build, Medium Scenario

The 2017 Master Plan modelled the impact of various levels of storms in the future according to low, medium, and high forecasts of coastal land loss and subsidence. The map shown depicts predicted coastal inundation of a 100-year storm in 2042 without implementation of the Master Plan's projects under a medium land loss scenario, revealing vulnerabilities around the Pearl River, Old Pearl River, Bayou Bonfouca, Bayou Liberty, Bayou Lacombe, the Mandeville lakefront, and the Tchefuncte River up to Interstate 12.



Contaminated Areas

Louisiana has a total of 15 Superfund sites on the Environmental Protection Agency's National Priorities List for cleanup. Two of these Superfund sites are within St. Tammany Parish: Bayou Bonfouca, and Madisonville Creosote Works. South Shipbuilding in Slidell was listed as a Superfund site but was released from the program in 1998 after cleanup. It is being monitored to this day.

Bayou Bonfouca, located in Slidell, is a 54-acre site that housed the American Creosote Works Inc., a wood-treating facility that used a black, tar-like chemical called creosote to preserve wood. After many environmental violations since opening in 1882, the industry was closed in 1972 and the EPA started clean-up. The EPA has dredged the site, removed and treated contaminated groundwater, and removed creosote oil. The EPA still monitors groundwater and is still extracting contaminated water.

The Madisonville Creosote Works is another Superfund site just outside Madisonville city limits that treated wood with creosote. The 29 acre site opened in 1956 and closed 30 years later. The EPA has treated contaminated soils and removed groundwater to mitigate the environmental damages. The groundwater is still being monitored and cleaned by the agency.

Directly adjacent to Bayou Bonfouca, South Shipbuilding was a Superfund site bordered to the north and west by Bayou Bonfouca, to the east by a forested parcel, and to the south by a residential community of Slidell. It is only 1.8 miles downstream of the Bayou Bonfouca Superfund site and is approximately 56-acres; the property is part of Port of Slidell. Barge/ship manufacturing and repair activities occurred there from 1919 to 1993, the site went through multiple ownerships during that time. The contamination at the site was concentrated in the impoundments, ponds, and associated sediment that supported ship building and repair. The site was cleaned, capped and taken off the Superfund program's National Priority List in 1998. The EPA just completed its fifth Five Year review of the site in 2019; the area is currently awaiting a Ready-for-Reuse proposal.²⁸

²⁸ EPA. Environmental Protection Agency. Accessed October 16, 2020. <https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/SiteProfiles/index.cfm?fuseaction=second.cleanup>.

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NORTHSHORE
TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE



Source: Chenevert Architects

ECONOMIC TRENDS

and operates the pier through the Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism.

St. Tammany Parish is one of the wealthiest Parishes in Louisiana. However, according to a report developed by the St. Tammany Parish Department of Health and Human Services, the lack of middle-skill jobs in Parish limit income potential. Many jobs in the Parish tend to be low-wage, and commuting outside the Parish is necessary to find well-paying jobs. Additionally, when higher wage jobs are available, workers and students are not always prepared for them. A Community Needs Assessment developed by the Parish in 2018 stated that although St. Tammany will see its largest job growth by the year 2027, in order to fully support the Parish's workforce, these jobs would need to be at least middle-skill and higher-wage job opportunities. The following section identifies the economic and commuting trends for residents of the Parish alongside employment trends for the Parish.

Economic Opportunity & Mobility

In 2018, 100,529 parish residents were employed. Over 75% of these employees lived in unincorporated areas. Comparatively, in 2002, there were only 63,327 employed parish residents, indicating growth of almost 60% of working parish residents, a steep increase when compared to a population growth of only 27.2%. In the last two decades, more and more employees, whether they work in the parish or not, have found St. Tammany Parish an attractive place to live in.

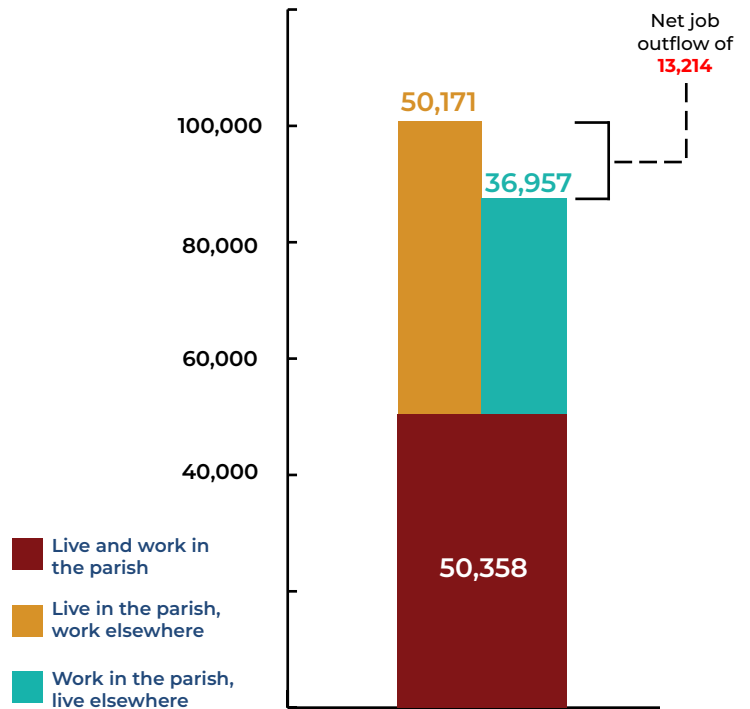
Simultaneously, local jobs in the parish have outgained population generally, and more specifically, the growth in employed parish residents. In 2002, there were 52,195 jobs located within parish boundaries, which have since grown by over two-thirds to 87,315 in 2018.

However, despite this growth in parish jobs, half of employed residents commute out of the parish for work. Located between New Orleans, Hammond, and Picayune, St. Tammany Parish offers its residents access to numerous large employment centers, which might be one of the reasons many residents choose to reside in the parish with its quality healthcare and school systems whilst still commuting outside of the parish for work.

In 2018, over a third of parish residents (35.3%) commuted less than 10 miles to reach their place of employment while 15.6% had a commute of over 50 miles. However, with the normalization of "work-from-home" culture because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent stay-at-home orders, these numbers are expected to change drastically in the coming year, potentially

Figure 18: 2018 Employment Inflow/Outflow

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies. LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.



permanently as more and more people are able to work from home.

As of January 2021, according to the Google COVID-19 Mobility Report, travel and mobility to places of work has decreased by 23% compared to January 2020, although a stay-at-home order has not been effect in St. Tammany Parish since May 15, 2020, illustrating the longer term effects of the pandemic on commuting trends.

In the past two decades, the number of older employed residents has more than tripled. Almost one in four (24.4%) employed residents in the parish is 55 or older, ompared to the state rate of 21.8%. In 2002, a little more than 12% of employed residents were 55 or older. This slightly surpasses Louisiana's employment-population ratio of persons aged 55 and older, which stands at 21.8%. This trend highlights a growing aging workforce that may foretell a wave of retirements and demand for services such as health care and housing appropriate for aging households.

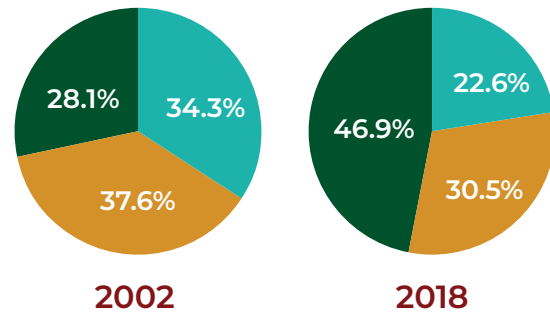
Wages for residents and employees of the parish have also increased significantly in the last two decades. The median household income rose by 33%, from \$50,415 in 2002 to \$67,054 in 2018. Comparatively in Louisiana, median household income rose from \$34,008 to \$49,973 during the same time period. However, jobs in St. Tammany tend to pay less than jobs in neighboring parishes. 25.7% of jobs in the Parish paid less than \$15,000 per year, compared to 24.2% and 23.7% in Orleans Parish and Jefferson Parish, and 60.2% paid less than \$40,000, compared to 58.0% and 58.7%, respectively. As previously mentioned, the parish ranks first in the state in per capita income and second in median household income, and has consistently ranked in the top five parishes since 2010.

BOTTOM LINE: The data presented underscores the importance of quality transportation infrastructure and services to link residents to job opportunities, which are in much greater supply on the southshore, but also suggests that the parish lags surrounding parishes in offering quality job opportunities.

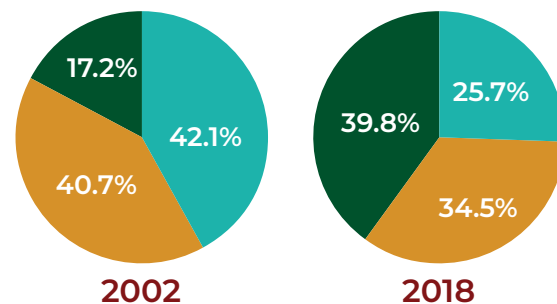
Figure 19: Proportion of Jobs by Earnings in St. Tammany Parish in 2018

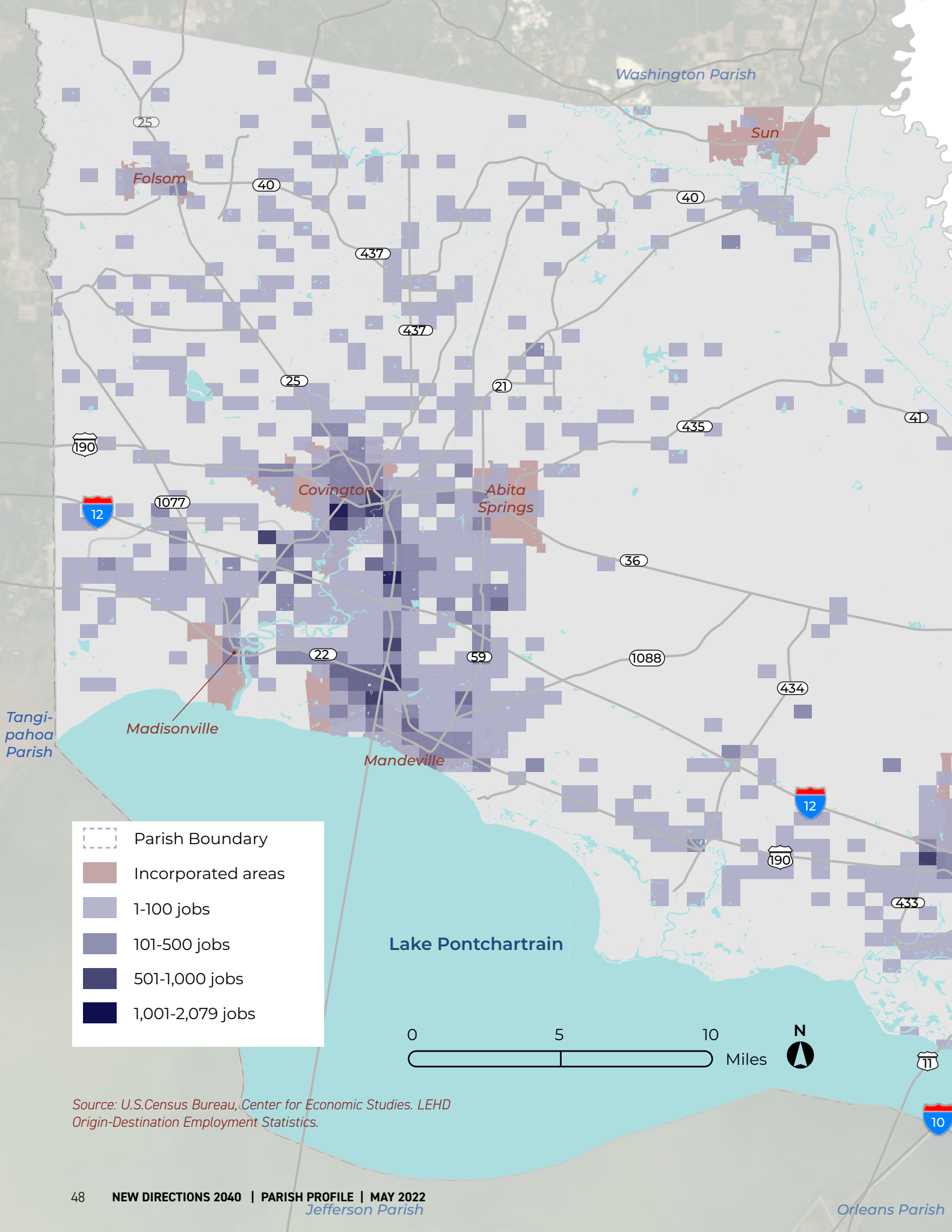
Source: U.S.Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies. LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

Employed Residents



Employed in Parish





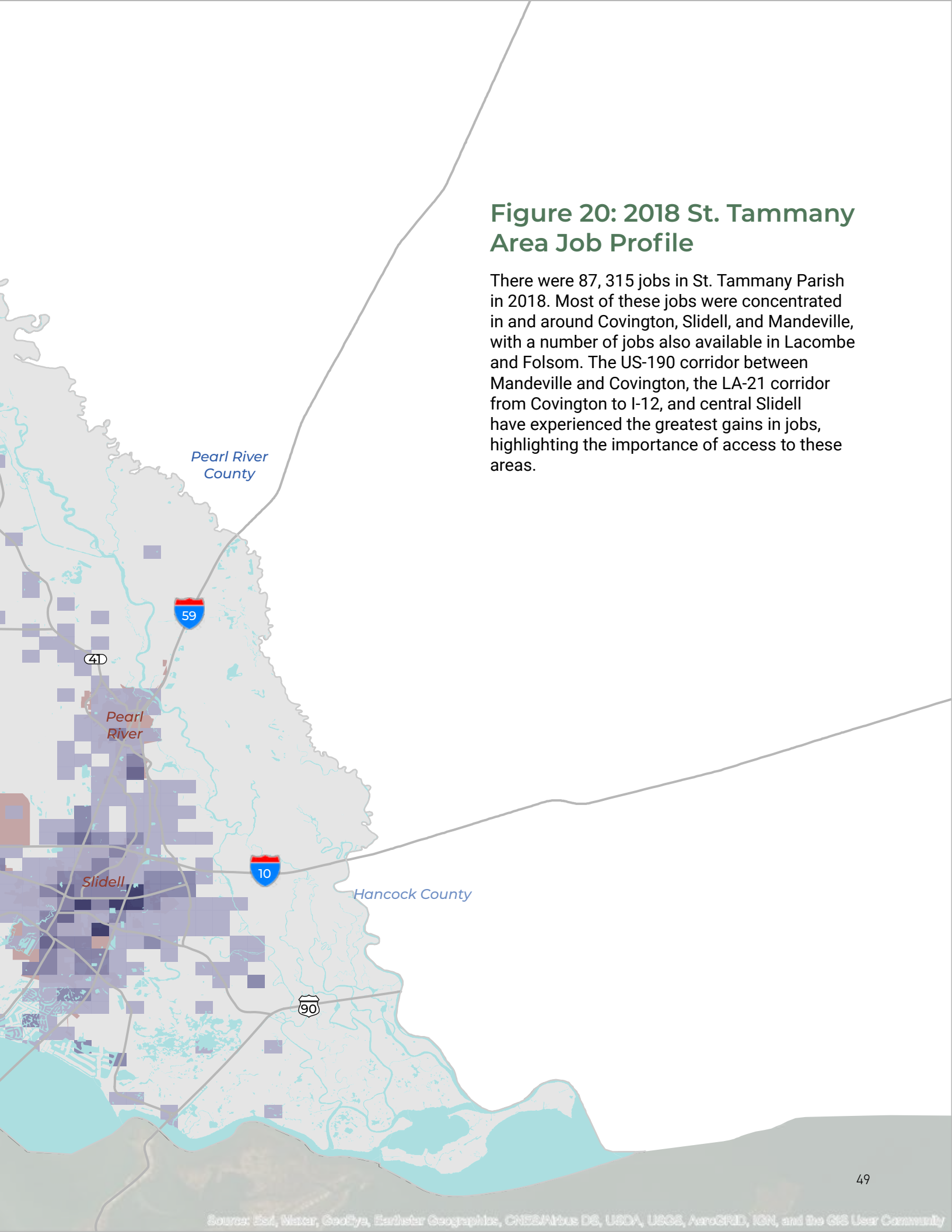
	Parish Boundary
	Incorporated areas
	1-100 jobs
	101-500 jobs
	501-1,000 jobs
	1,001-2,079 jobs

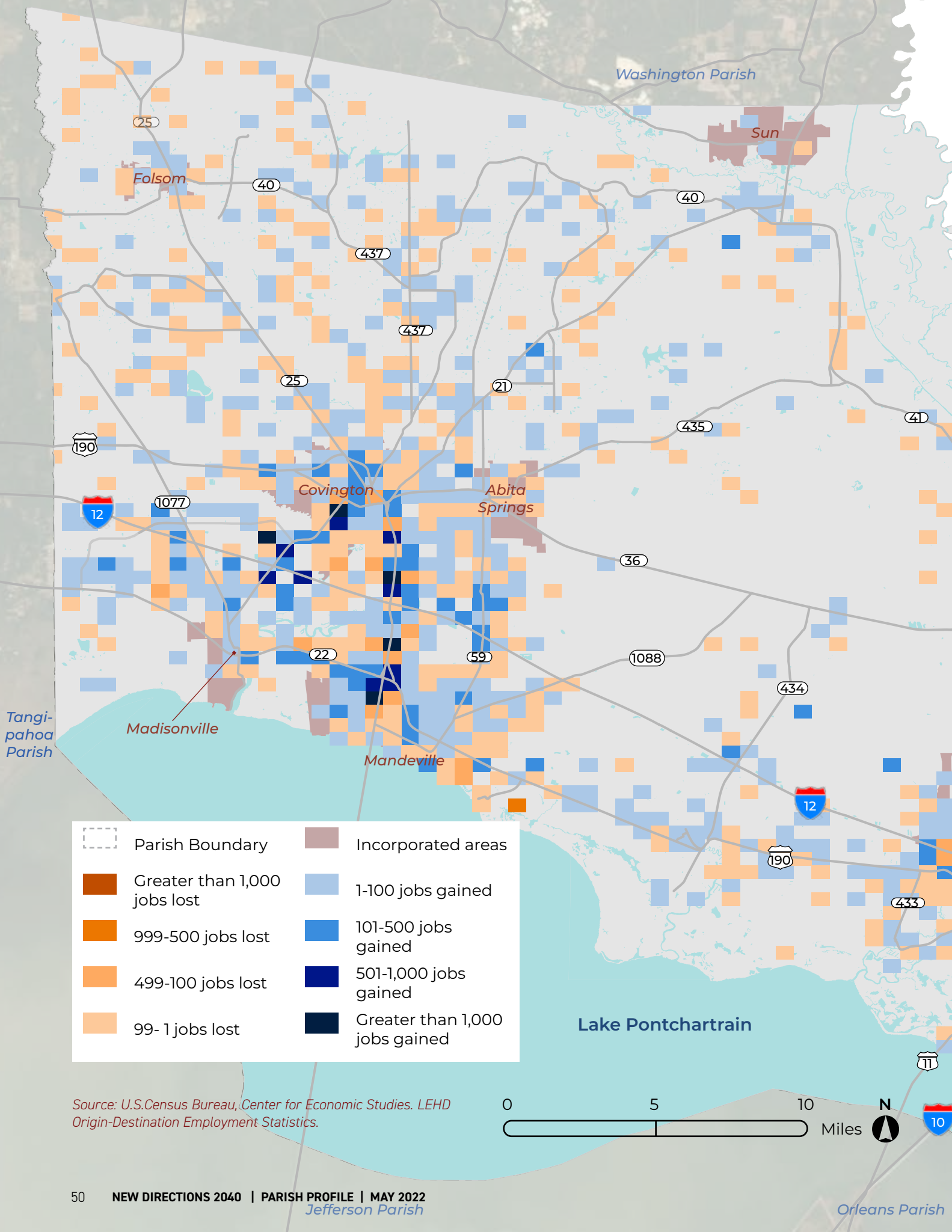


Source: U.S.Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies. LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

Figure 20: 2018 St. Tammany Area Job Profile

There were 87,315 jobs in St. Tammany Parish in 2018. Most of these jobs were concentrated in and around Covington, Slidell, and Mandeville, with a number of jobs also available in Lacombe and Folsom. The US-190 corridor between Mandeville and Covington, the LA-21 corridor from Covington to I-12, and central Slidell have experienced the greatest gains in jobs, highlighting the importance of access to these areas.





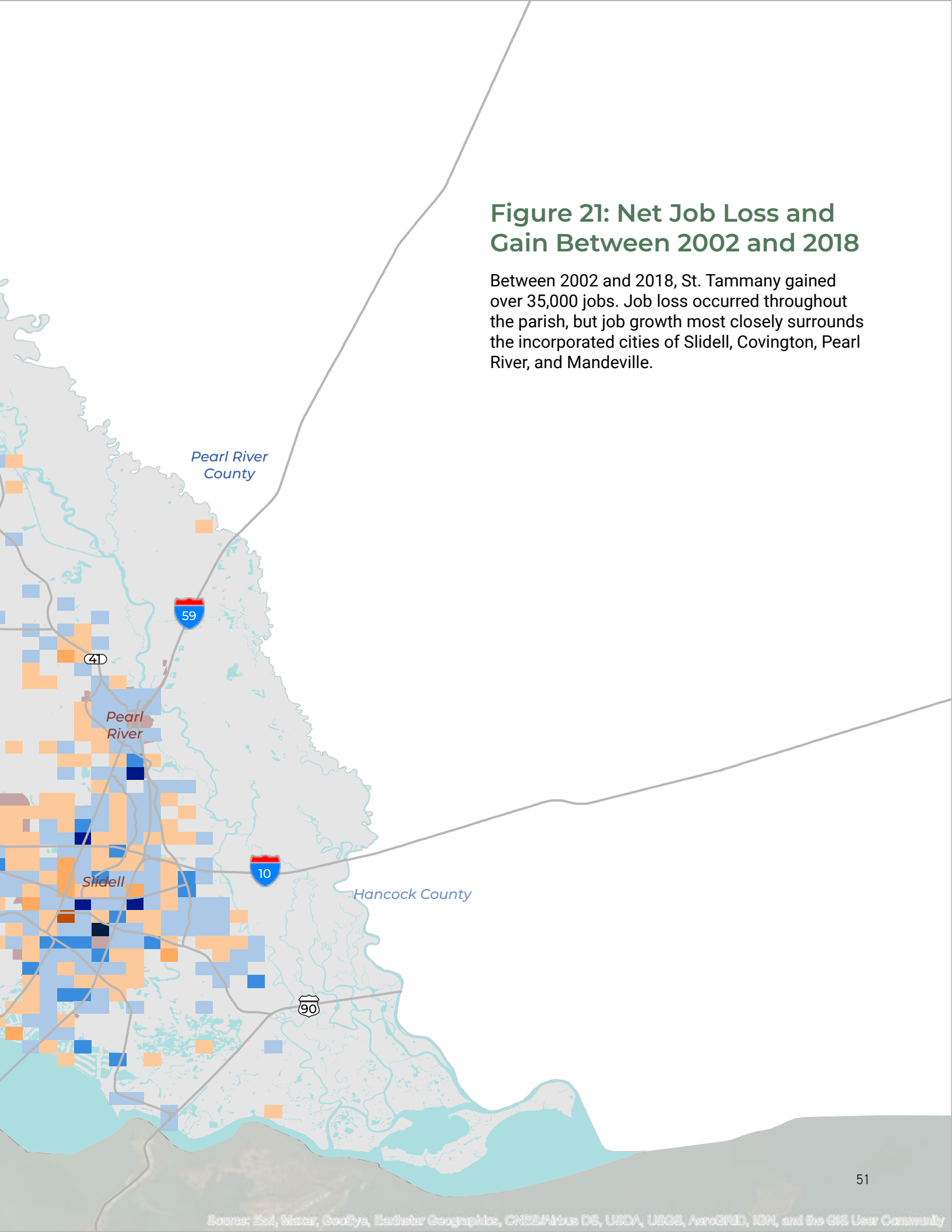
	Parish Boundary		Incorporated areas
	Greater than 1,000 jobs lost		1-100 jobs gained
	999-500 jobs lost		101-500 jobs gained
	499-100 jobs lost		501-1,000 jobs gained
	99- 1 jobs lost		Greater than 1,000 jobs gained

Source: U.S.Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies. LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.



Figure 21: Net Job Loss and Gain Between 2002 and 2018

Between 2002 and 2018, St. Tammany gained over 35,000 jobs. Job loss occurred throughout the parish, but job growth most closely surrounds the incorporated cities of Slidell, Covington, Pearl River, and Mandeville.



Employment Opportunity

The parish is home to a myriad of different industries, from agriculture to construction to manufacturing to healthcare. However, the largest concentration of jobs reside in Health Care and Social Assistance (17.7%), Retail Trade (14.1%), Accommodation and Food Services (12.3%),

and Educational Services (8.3%). These four industries make up over half of the jobs located in the parish. In the last two decades, the largest growth in jobs have been in the Educational Services sector (871%), the Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction sector (423%), the Transportation and Warehousing sector (305%), and the Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation sector (120%). Only three sectors have seen a small decline: Utilities, Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting, and Real Estate Rental and Leasing.

Figure 22: Jobs by Industry Sector in St. Tammany Parish for 2002 vs. 2018

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies. LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics.

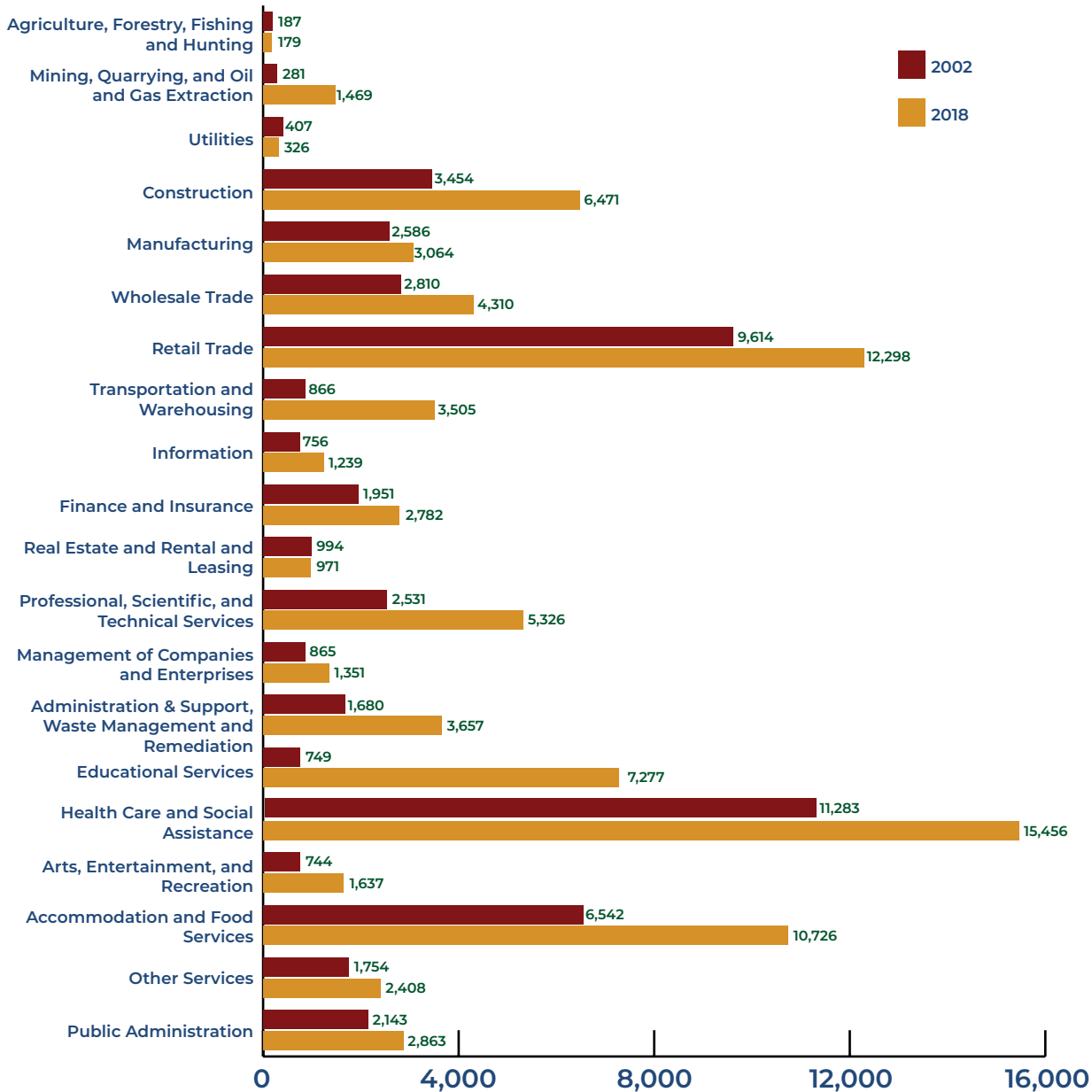


Figure 23: Top 10 Employers* in St. Tammany Parish in 2018

Source: St. Tammany Corporation

Company	Employees	Location	Industry
St. Tammany Parish School System	5,971	Multiple	Educational Services
St. Tammany Parish Hospital	1,611	Covington	General Medical & Surgical Hospitals
Ochsner Medical Center-Northshore	1,359	Slidell	General Medical & Surgical Hospitals
Home Health of St. Tammany Hospice	1,000	Covington	Home Health Care Services
Slidell Memorial Hospital	959	Slidell	General Medical & Surgical Hospitals
Textron Systems Marine & Land Systems	901	Slidell	Military Armored Vehicle, Tank & Tank Component Manufacturing
Lakeview Regional Medical Center	740	Covington	General Medical & Surgical Hospitals
Covington Behavioral Health	500	Covington	Psychiatric & Substance Abuse Hospitals
Gilsbar, Inc.	495	Covington	Insurance Agencies & Brokerages
Associated Wholesale Grocers	434	Pearl River	Toy & Hobby Goods & Supplies Merchant Wholesalers
Northlake Behavioral Health System	330	Mandeville	General Medical & Surgical Hospitals
Tulane Regional Primate Center	320	Covington	Research-Development in Biotechnology

*Governmental offices, law enforcement entities, fire departments, retailers, and restaurants have not been included on this list.

Not only did the number of jobs in St. Tammany increase by 67.3% from 52,195 to 87,315 between 2002 and 2018, but job industries became more diversified. The Educational Services (+6.9%), Transportation and Warehousing (+2.3%), and Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services (+1.3%) sectors each gained greater shares of the employment base, while the Retail Trade (-4.3%), Health Care and Social Assistance (-3.9%), and Manufacturing (-1.5%) sectors each declined relative to other industries between 2002 and 2018.

Approximately 12,898 businesses are located in the parish.²⁹ Hospitals, both general medical and surgical hospitals as well as psychiatric and substance abuse hospitals, account for six out of the ten top employers for the Parish, employing almost 5,500 people.

THRIVE 2023, the parish's five-year economic development strategic plan, states that the parish could be uniquely competitive for jobs,

29 Business Analyst. U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2020.

private investment, and specialized training and education in these areas. Service industries have dominated the St. Tammany Parish economy such as retail trade, health care, and food services because the parish has been flouted as a tourist destination.

However, there are large opportunities to focus on transportation and logistics as one of the growing industries in the parish. St. Tammany's proximity to vital infrastructure access points, including two international airports, over 20 local airports, and a number of major interstates including I-10, I-12, I-59 and I-55 is a huge asset. In addition, the Northshore Technical Community College, one of the 10 fastest growing community colleges in the nation, graduates more than 300 students annually in transportation related programs.³⁰

BOTTOM LINE: The parish is quickly growing and diversifying its job base, but needs to focus on a long-term strategy for attracting the right economic investment in order to continue to support its growing population.

30 St. Tammany Corporation. 2021. Transportation. Retrieved from <https://sttammany.org/transportation/>

SPOTLIGHT

St. Tammany Corporation and *THRIVE 2023*

After the St. Tammany Parish Development District rebranded itself as the St. Tammany Corporation, the lead economic development organization for St. Tammany, in 2018, the EDC adopted *THRIVE 2023* – a 5-year comprehensive economic development strategic plan – in February 2019. *THRIVE 2023* was created as a roadmap to shape job creation and capital investment for St. Tammany Parish. The Corporation’s vision is to strategically align the economic landscape throughout the Parish to be the destination of choice for highly-skilled talent and business formation, attraction, expansion, and retention, addressing many of the current existing gaps.



The Corporation developed *THRIVE 2023* with five pivotal pillars for the strategy and for their work as an organization:

- **Transformational** – St. Tammany Corporation intends to build relationships with business and industry that transforms the capacity of St. Tammany as a business destination.
- **Honest** – St. Tammany Corporation will clearly articulate their scope, services, value, and impact as an economic development organization.

- **Results-driven** – St. Tammany Corporation strives to produce results-driven work by using data to best understand the Parish’s existing conditions and to create a program of work that results in a more competitive community for business, industry, and talent.
- **Intentional** – St. Tammany Corporation aims to be intentional with their initiatives, programs, resources, and capacity to encourage opportunities for sustainable economic growth.
- **Vital** – St. Tammany Corporation is vital to the maintenance and growth of the quality of life in the Parish and serves as the “truth teller” of the economic vitality of the Parish.
- **Engaged** – St. Tammany Corporation must engage directly with all relevant partners and understand economic development industry trends, threats, and best practices.

Key recommendations such as creating harnessing location and innovation as key drivers of success, developing a comprehensive business retention and expansion program, leveraging technology and research assets surrounding the parish, and forming a coalition to conduct an asset review of entrepreneurial activities in the parish, where opportunities and challenges exist.

BOTTOM LINE: *THRIVE 2023* was an important step in helping develop the vision for the economic development landscape of St. Tammany and set a strong foundation for the role St. Tammany Corporation can play in growing jobs and attracting talent and investment to the region. How the plan is implemented, especially in light of COVID-19 and accompanying mitigation measures, will determine how successful the plan can be. This will largely be determined by how collaborative efforts amongst elected officials, business owners, and the public will be.

The Economic Impacts of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected St. Tammany Parish's economy and labor force. According to the Louisiana Workforce Commission in January 2020, the unemployment rate in St. Tammany was 4.8% and subsequently peaked to 15.1% in April and then dropping to a low of 5.9% in September. As of December 2020, the unemployment rate in St. Tammany is at 4.7%, lower than pre-pandemic rates and much lower than the December 2020 statewide average of 7.2%.

Consumer spending in Louisiana decreased following school closures in late March. As of November 2020, it has surpassed pre-COVID-19 levels, increasing by 20.1% compared to January 2020.

According to a report developed by St. Tammany Corporation, small businesses were one of the most badly hit economic engines for St.

Tammany. Small business revenue has struggled to improve, hovering between 35% and 55% lower than January 2020 levels from August through December. As of December 2020, total small business revenue in St. Tammany was down more than half of its January 2020 levels, indicating that recovery was still too far away.

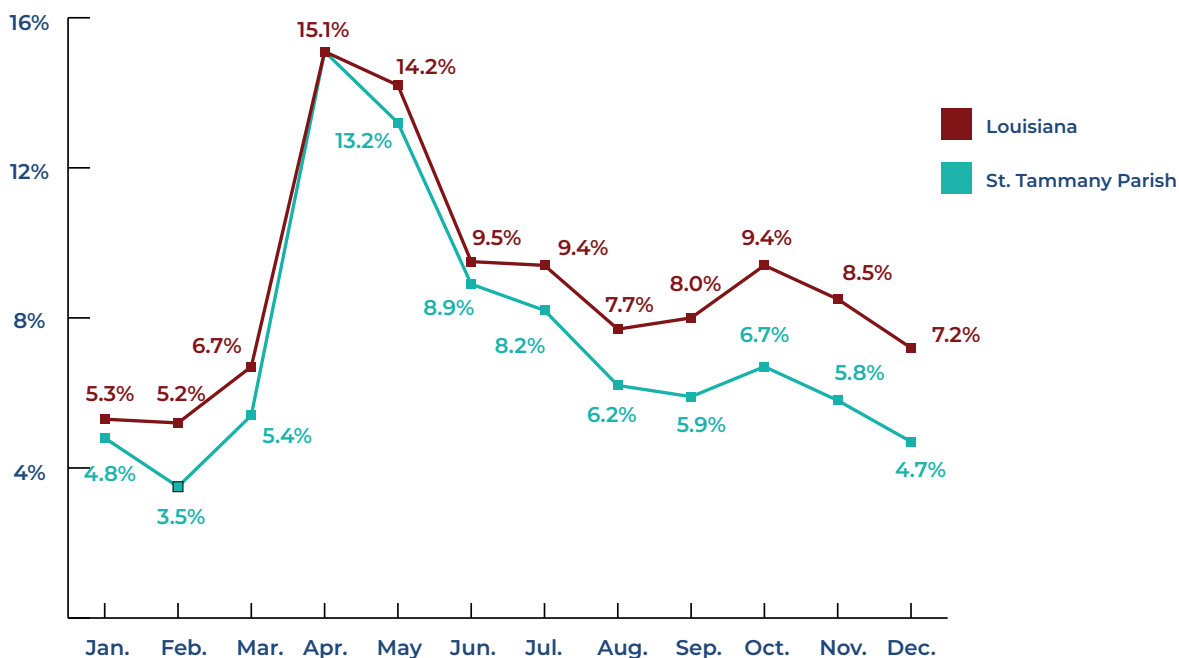
Comparatively, consumer spending has recovered more quickly and steadily. In April 2020, consumer spending decreased to -42.7% when compared with January 2020 levels, but as of December 2020 had increased to 16.7% higher than January 2020 levels.

According to data from the Louisiana Workforce Commission, St. Tammany's labor force contracted from 119,335 in December 2019 to 114,458 in December 2020, a difference of 4,887 jobs, a stark difference when recalling how St. Tammany was the only parish in the top 7 most populous parishes in Louisiana to experience employment growth between March 2019 and March 2020.

BOTTOM LINE: Compared to the state and neighboring parishes, St. Tammany has fared well when it comes to the economic impacts of COVID-19; however, the parish needs to create long-term, adaptive solutions in order to sustainably recover.

Figure 24: 2020 Unemployment Rates in St. Tammany Parish and Louisiana

Source: Louisiana Workforce Commission





Source: NOLA.com | The Times Picayune

INFRASTRUCTURE & FACILITIES

St. Tammany Parish's infrastructure systems have been challenged to keep up with rapid growth and development. Many recent investments in the infrastructure systems have been reactive to issues and problems in the systems, addressing failures and repairs as they present themselves as opposed to addressing long term system upgrades and capacity improvements. This has led to traffic congestion, flooding from inadequate drainage systems, and polluted surface water from decentralized sewer systems.

Infrastructure

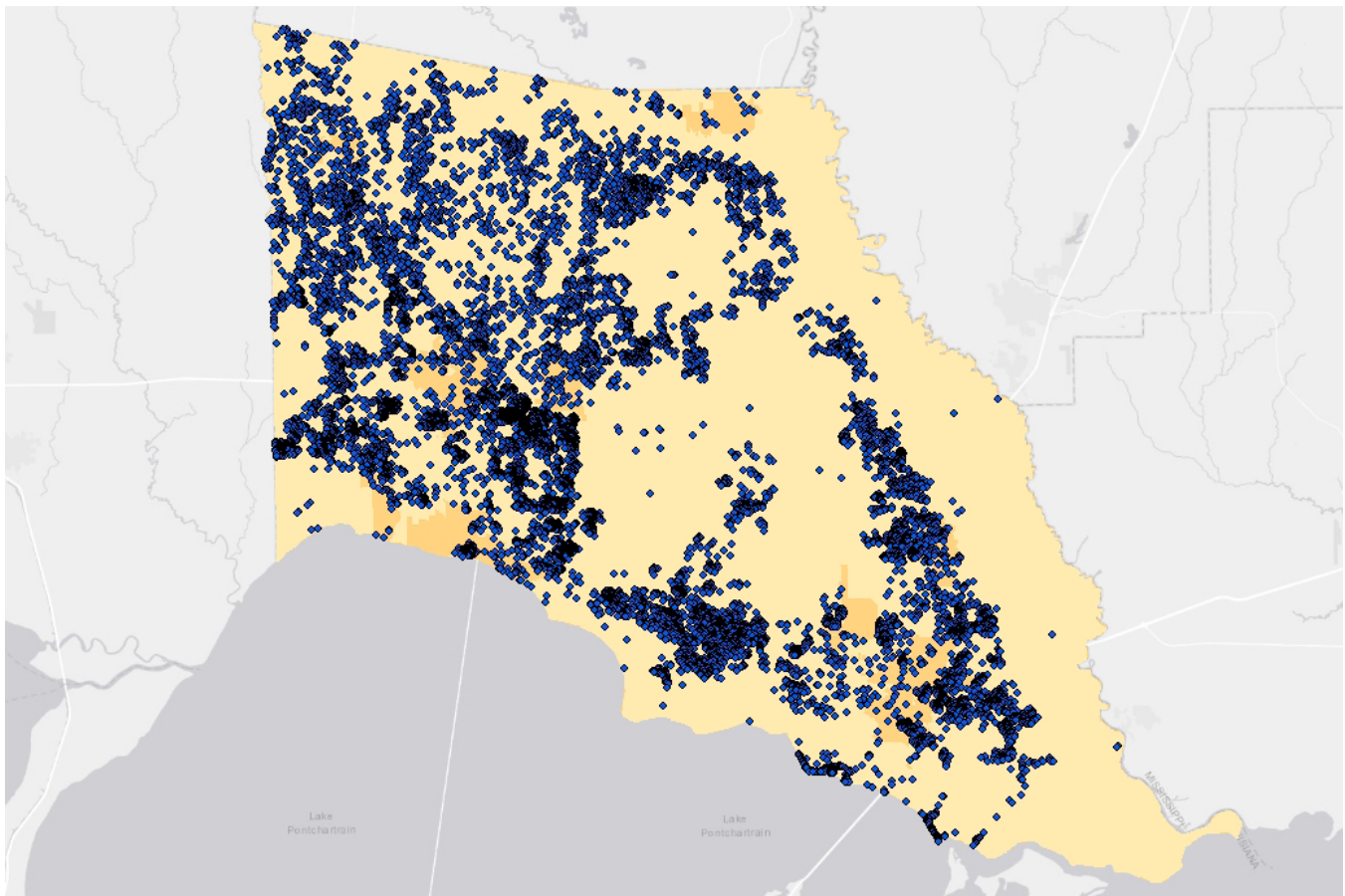
Water

Water service in St. Tammany Parish is provided by a combination of public systems, private companies, and domestic wells. Unincorporated parts of St. Tammany Parish receive water service from either Tammany Utilities or private companies, or on-site domestic groundwater wells. The main water service providers include Tammany Utilities, Utilities Inc, Magnolia Water, and Resolve. Over 99% of domestic and public water supply in St. Tammany Parish comes from groundwater aquifers. Approximately 10,900 ground water wells are active in St. Tammany Parish. Approximately 900 wells are for public supply and approximately 10,000 wells are domestic.

Tammany Utilities operates 38 groundwater wells, forming 17 public water systems, that provide water service to approximately 14,600 customers in unincorporated areas. Since 2011, Tammany Utilities has experienced about 27% growth in the number of customers served. Tammany Utilities is primarily funded by taxes and user fees, however, parish officials have reported a lack of available funding to keep up with the rapid rate of development.

Figure 25: Map of All Water Wells in St. Tammany Parish

Source: St. Tammany Parish GIS Database



Wastewater

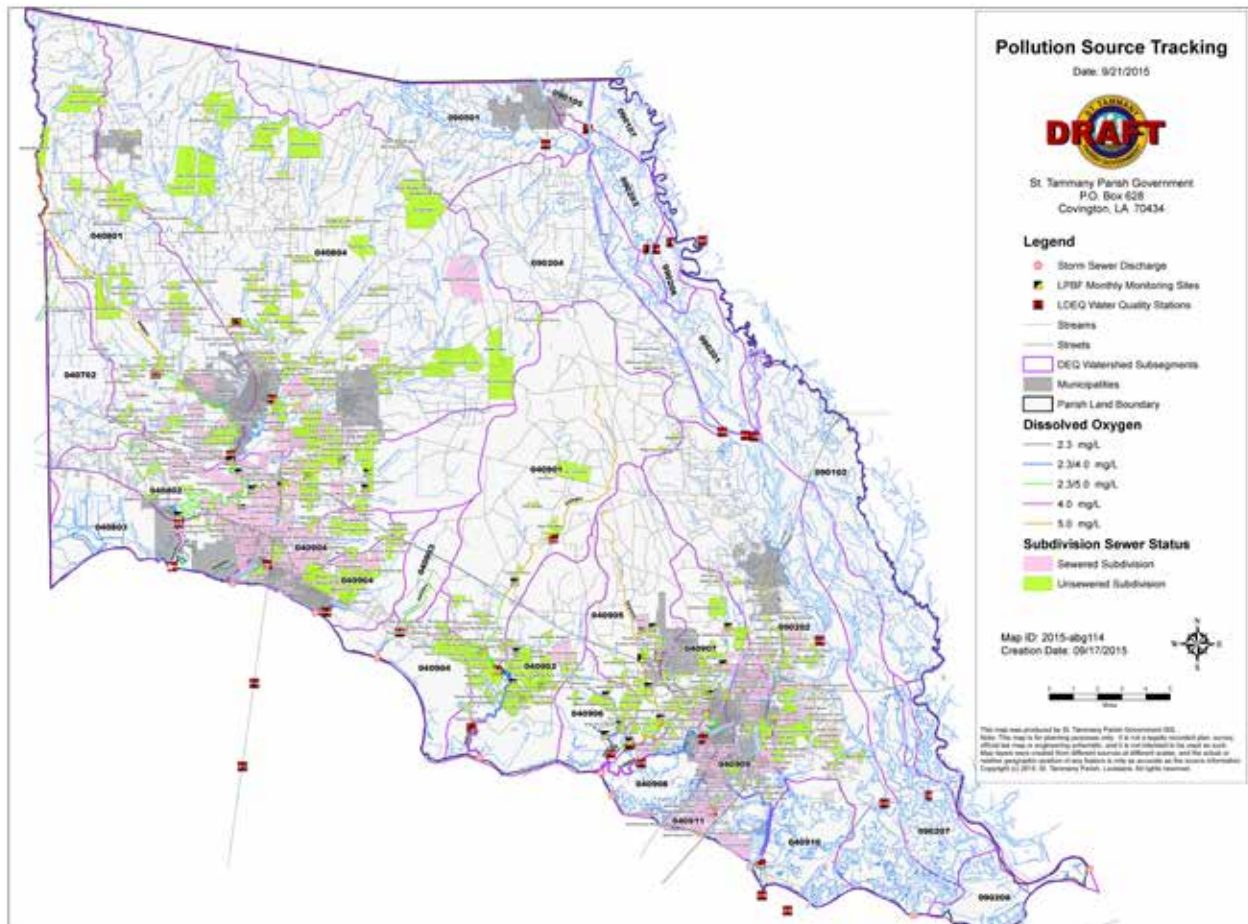
Either public or private companies, or onsite treatment or septic systems provide sewer service. Tammany Utilities operates 220 sewer lift stations and 45 wastewater treatment facilities to provide service to approximately 14,600 residents in the unincorporated areas of the Parish. Rapid population growth has led to decentralized sewer systems in unincorporated parts of the Parish which has caused a decline in the surface water quality in the Parish. Thousands of individual aerated treatment units and septic tanks are operated and maintained on-site by the homeowner, and often do not receive proper

maintenance. Many of these systems are old, inadequate, in poor condition, and not designed to meet today's more stringent design standards. The Parish's Department of Environmental Services has a limited capacity to monitor and inspect the onsite treatment systems.

St. Tammany Parish estimates 35,000 homes are in unsewered subdivisions, and the Louisiana Department of Health estimates a total of 65,000 unsewered homes in the parish, including rural homes.

Figure 26: Map of Sewer Service Areas

Source: St. Tammany Parish Department of Environmental Services



Flood Protection

St. Tammany Parish is facing increasing flood risks from storm and tidal surges, fluvial sources (riverine), and pluvial events (intense rain). The St. Tammany Parish Levee, Drainage, and Conservation District was created during the 2014 state legislative session to construct, maintain, and operate flood control works related to hurricane protection, tidewater flooding, saltwater intrusion, and conservation. The Levee, Drainage, and Conservation District is composed of 9 appointees from various communities throughout the Parish.

In March 2020, a Coastal Protection Gap Analysis was performed for the state's Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) and the St. Tammany Parish Government to review past coastal protection studies and projects so that recommendations for further studies or projects can be made. Possible mitigation actions proposed in the Gap Analysis include restoration projects (bank stabilization, hydrologic restoration, marsh creation, living shorelines, shoreline protection, terracing, vegetative planting), non-structural projects (non-residential floodproofing, residential elevation, residential voluntary acquisition), structural protection projects (earthen levee, concrete T-wall, floodgate, ring pumps inside enclosed levees), and watershed projects (flooding associated hurricane storm surge, flooding associated from extreme rainfall events, flooding associated with the Pearl River waterway system in east St. Tammany Parish).

CPRA's 2017 Coastal Master Plan proposes two levee systems to provide protection in St. Tammany Parish. The Lake Pontchartrain Barrier includes closure gates and weirs to an elevation of 2 feet NAVD88 across the passes at Chef Menteur and the Rigolets to reduce storm surge risk within the Lake Pontchartrain Basin. The Slidell Ring Levee System includes the construction of 31,000 feet of levee and 14,500 feet of T-wall to an elevation of 16 feet NAVD88 for storm surge risk reduction around Slidell. Non-structural projects in St. Tammany Parish in the CPRA 2017 Master Plan include floodproofing of 375 non-residential structures, elevation of

4,605 residential structures, and 889 voluntary acquisitions.

Since Hurricane Katrina made landfall in 2005, St. Tammany Parish has mitigated approximately 450 homes either through elevation or acquisition utilizing both the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program.

Figure 27 shows a conceptual complete levee protection system for the St. Tammany Parish coastal zone that encloses gaps of structural protection in the Parish per the Gap Analysis. Figure 28 shows the shoreline protection and restoration features that are in the CPRA 2017 Masterplan as well as potential shoreline protection, living shoreline and marsh creation projects identified in the Gap Analysis. Following the Gap Analysis project feasibility analyses and conceptual engineering designs will be performed.

In addition to mitigating the physical risks associated with flooding, rising flood insurance costs threaten many communities where flood insurance coverage is required as a condition to mortgages. Rising flood insurance costs also threaten local economies and real-estate markets as properties lose their resale value. **Implementing higher regulatory floodplain standards and participating in the Community Rating System allows St. Tammany Parish to mitigate the impact of rising flood insurance costs.**

Figure 27: St. Tammany Parish Conceptual Levee System from Gap Analysis

Source: St. Tammany Parish Coastal Protection Gap Analysis, Neel Schaffer (March 2020)

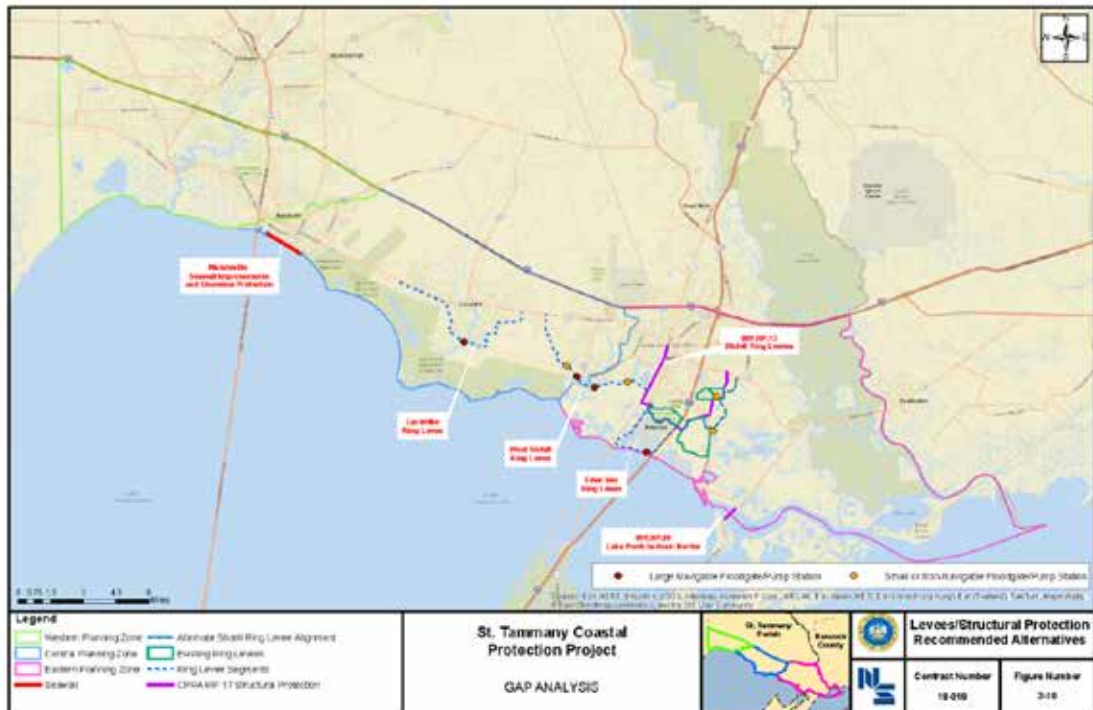
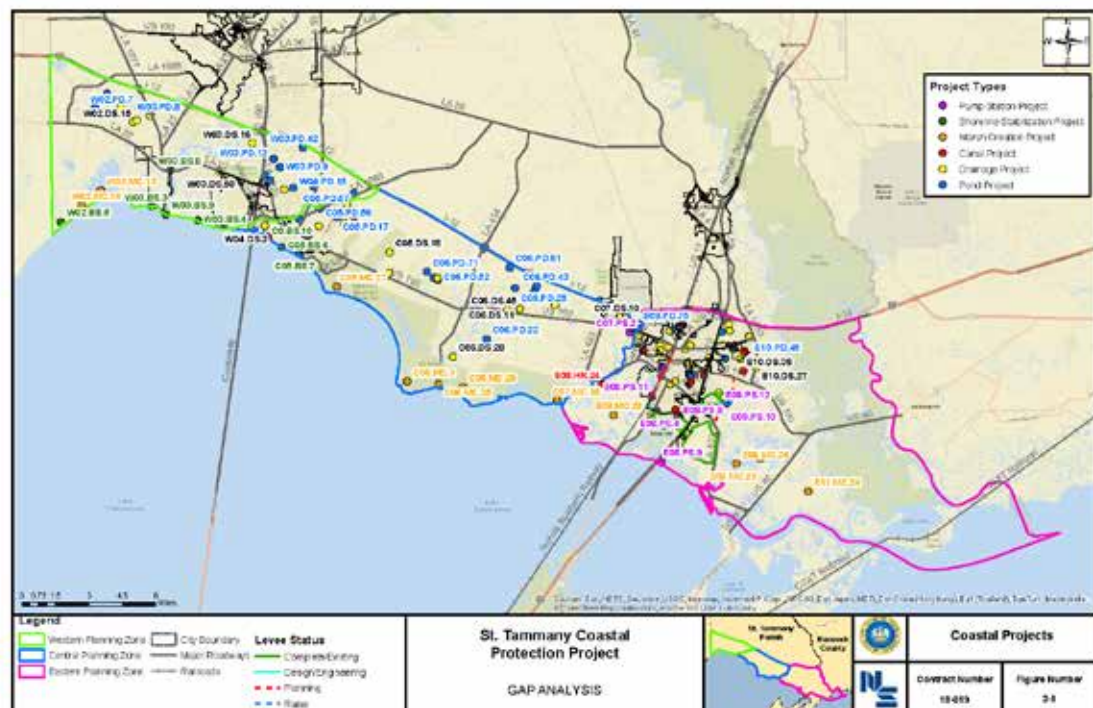


Figure 28: CPRA 2017 Master Plan Projects and Proposed Gap Analysis Projects

Source: St. Tammany Parish Coastal Protection Gap Analysis, Neel Schaffer (March 2020)



Transportation

Significant growth in St. Tammany Parish has created the need to alleviate traffic congestion by increasing connectivity of the roadway network, especially in the east-west direction. In 2017, the St. Tammany Parish Major Street Plan was conducted to refine the parish's local and regional transportation needs, identify environmental resources in the area to avoid, and create an outline to meet mobility needs. The Plan includes proposed increases in east-west connectivity in the Parish, extending Harrison Avenue to LA36, extending the Mandeville Bypass to US 190, and generally providing additional connectivity. The Major Streets Plan draft creates potential alignments of new corridors to relieve congested areas while avoiding, to the greatest extent possible, known conflicts of homes, water features, slopes, poor soils for road construction, and floodplains.

The Parish's Department of Public Works maintains 4,348 roadways (equivalent to 1,548 miles of roads) and 144 bridges in unincorporated areas of the Parish. Ongoing roadway improvement projects are visible on

Lake Pontchartrain Causeway



Source: Flickr [[@glennaa](#)]

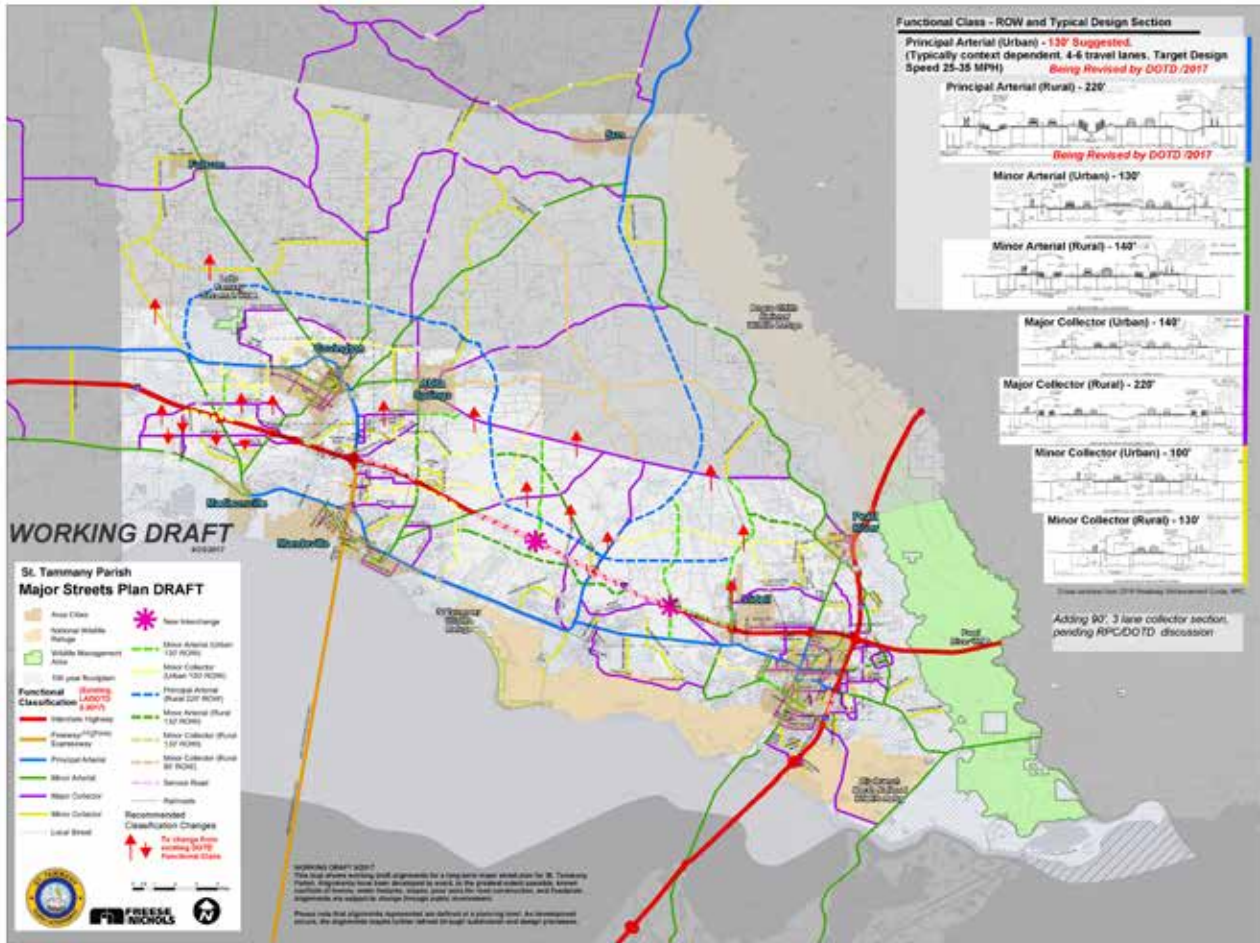
US 90 enters the state of Louisiana across the East Pearl River from Pearlington, Mississippi.



Source: [AARoads](#)

Figure 29: St. Tammany Parish Major Streets Plan (Draft)

Source: St. Tammany Parish Department of Planning and Development



the interactive map on the [Progress page](#) on the Parish's website.

Communications

Some of the most popular internet providers in St. Tammany Parish include Spectrum, AT&T, Viasat, and HughesNet. Most residents in St. Tammany Parish have the option to choose between two or more internet providers which allows customers to have more competitive rates. Generally, communication companies have not had any problems keeping up with the rate of growth in the Parish.

Electrical Power

Electrical power providers in St. Tammany Parish include Cleco, Entergy, and Washington-St. Tammany Electric (WSTE). Electric power

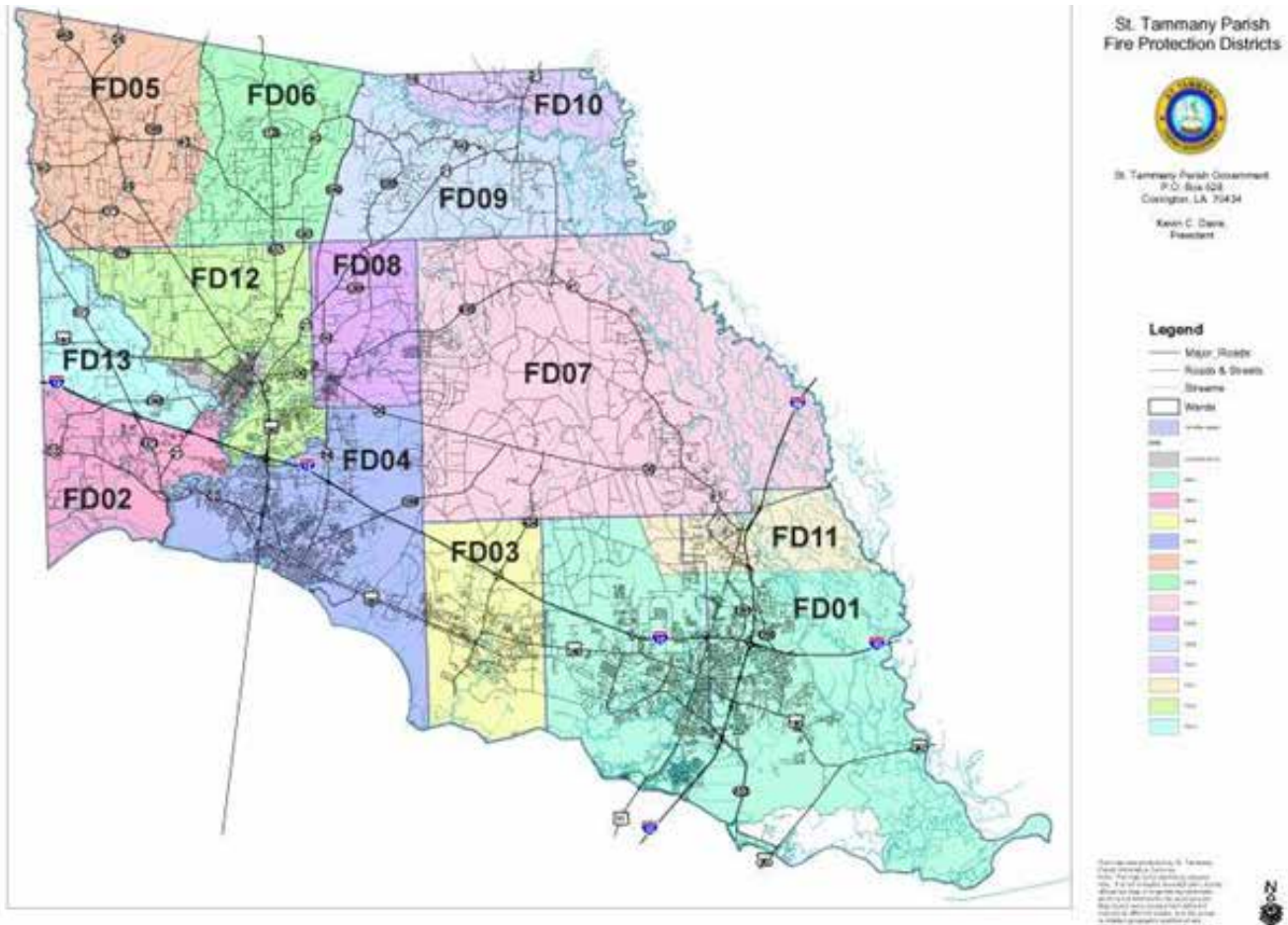
providers have not had any problems keeping up with the rate of growth in the Parish.

Gas

Gas Providers in St. Tammany Parish include Atmos Energy, Ferrellgas, Louisiana Gas Service Co, CenterPoint Energy, and Kinder Morgan. Generally, natural gas providers have not had problems keeping up with the rate of growth in the Parish.

Figure 30: St. Tammany Fire Districts

Source: [Mandevillefire.com Fire Stations & Service Area](#)



Community Facilities

Education

St. Tammany's public school system educates 39,000 students and employs 5,971 people in 55 schools. Within the Parish school district there is 1 early childhood center, 25 elementary schools, 8 middle schools, 13 junior high schools, and 8 high schools. 18 different sports and over 100 clubs and organizations are offered at the public schools for students to participate in. Graduation rates within the Parish's 8 public high schools range from 72.8 to 87.2 percent, which is comparable to the state's average graduation rate of 80 percent. Local, state, and federal funds create the \$439 million General Fund Budget for the public school system. In 2019 the Louisiana Department of Education gave the St. Tammany Parish School District a letter grade of B, with individual school grades ranging from A to C throughout the Parish.

The Northshore Technical Community College (NTCC) in Lacombe is the only college located in St. Tammany Parish. NTCC provides workforce training and transfer opportunities to students by offering over 100 degree and certificate programs. In the 2019-2020 academic year Northshore Technical College served 9,732

students and employed 101 full-time faculty positions.

Public Safety

St. Tammany Parish's Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness responds to any natural or technological emergency that occurs within St. Tammany Parish. The Parish has 19 stationary and 16 portable generators are maintained to support emergency operations. The Parish's Emergency Operations Center is located in the heart of Covington.

Fire Protection

St. Tammany is divided into 13 fire districts and the Covington Fire Department.

Sheriff's Office

The St. Tammany Parish Jail has a capacity of 1,192 beds to house inmates, pre-trial, and adjudicated offenders. The Jail offers comprehensive rehabilitative programs designed to provide life-skills, education, and coping skills to reintegrate the offenders into society. The Sheriff's Office also includes a SWAT team, marine patrol, dive team, and air wing.

Coroner's Office

The Office of the Coroner provides forensic pathology practices for St. Tammany Parish. The Coroner's Office consists of an Investigation Department, Pathology Department, and Mental Health Services Division. Responsibilities of the Coroner's Office include investigating and

determining the cause and manner of death, and providing forensic DNA analyses for all law enforcement agencies within St. Tammany.

Libraries

The St. Tammany library system includes 12 branch libraries across the Parish, with 2 branches located in Slidell, 1 branch in Pearl River, 1 branch in Lacombe, 2 branches in Mandeville, 1 branch in Madisonville, 3 branches in Covington, 1 branch in Folsom, and 1 branch in Bush. The Library Board of Control consists of seven members that are appointed by the Parish President and Parish Council. While the library system primarily depends on public funding to maintain its operations and services, the St. Tammany Library Foundation non-profit organization seeks private sector support from corporations, community groups, philanthropic organizations, and individual donors to develop and enhance the library system. Other non-profit organizations that support the Parish's libraries include the Friends of the Slidell Library and the West St. Tammany Friends of the Library.

Government Buildings

St. Tammany Parish's Department of Facilities Management is responsible for maintaining nearly 40 facilities throughout the Parish. All Parish facilities are kept clean and all mechanical, electrical, plumbing and security systems are well maintained to provide a safe and functional working environment for the Parish Administration. Parish government facilities are comprised of approximately 731,000 square feet of building space and include the Justice Center, St. Tammany Parish Jail, the Towers Building, Koop Drive Complex, Tyler Street Complex, St.

Tammany Regional Airport, Public Works barns, and two Tammany Utilities facilities among other buildings.

Parks and Recreation

St. Tammany Parish owns and maintains many blueways, byways, and trailways for residents to appreciate the Parish's natural beauty. An abundance of parks and playgrounds throughout the Parish also provide residents and visitors opportunities to enjoy the outdoors.

Tammany Trace

In December 1992, St. Tammany Parish purchased the abandoned Illinois Central Railroad corridor. Aided with grants and federal dollars, St. Tammany Parish government has asphalted 31 miles and remodeled railroad trestles to create an hike and bike trail that stretches from downtown Covington, through Abita Springs, Mandeville, and Lacombe, and ends in Slidell, where a connection with over 6 miles of interpretive trails within Camp Salmen Nature Park in Slidell opened in 2020.

Camp Salmen Nature Park

Camp Salmen Nature Park consists of 130 acres where visitors can enjoy the Parish's natural flora and fauna. The St. Tammany Parish government purchased the property in 2004 with federal and state funding to preserve the historical, cultural, biological, and archaeological legacies of the Parish. Camp Salmen offers visitors miles of nature trails where deer, migratory and residential birds, reptiles, and lush abundant plant life can be observed throughout the year.

St. Tammany Fishing Pier

After the Interstate 10 Twinspan bridges over Lake Pontchartrain were destroyed in Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the Parish decided to repurpose the structure for public use. Local, state, and federal funds were used to open the 650-foot long pier in June of 2012. Visitors can enjoy the pier without having to pay an entrance fee to sight-see or catch fish and crabs. Some of the most popular catches at the pier include Red Drum, Atlantic Croaker, Black Drum, Sheepshead, Gafftopsail Catfish, Southern Flounder, Spotted Sea Trout, and Blue Crab. St. Tammany maintains

Figure 31: Map of Tammany Trace

Source: Tammanytrace.org Maps



Source: [Camp Salmen Nature Park Online Photo Gallery](http://CampSalmenNaturePark.org)



Source: [St. Tammany Parish Fishing Pier Online Photo Gallery](http://StTammanyParishFishingPier.org)

