

# North Shreveport Regional Development Plan

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prepared for

**Shreveport Metropolitan Planning Commission**



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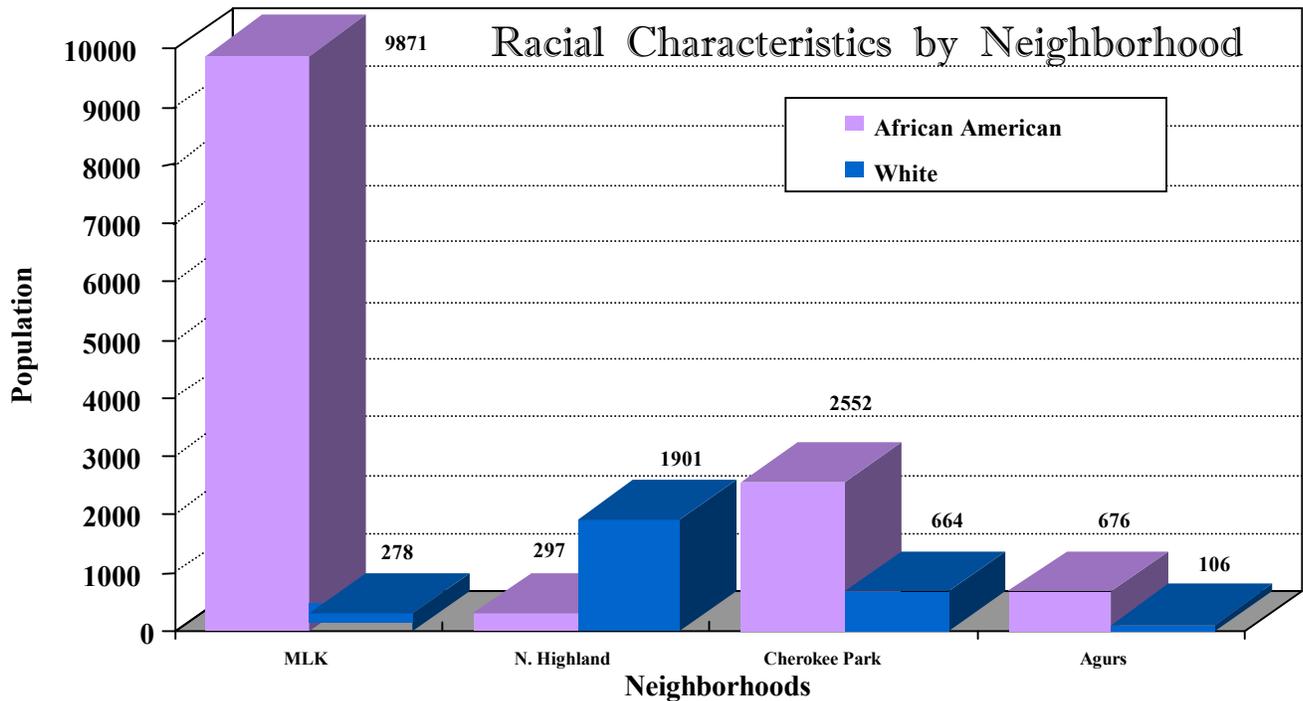
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# A Turning Point

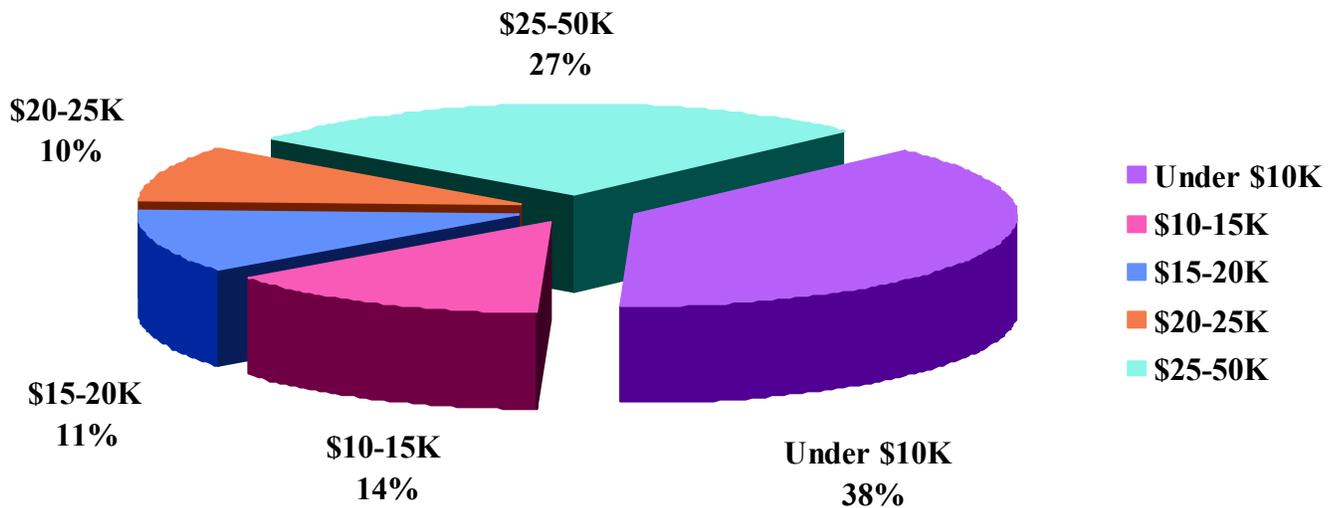
The City of Shreveport Metropolitan Planning Commission commissioned this plan as an outgrowth of a 1994 study of the Agurs area. This study pointed to the need for an integrated land use, neighborhood, and economic development strategy for the entire North Shreveport Area. For purposes of this study, North Shreveport is defined as an area bordered by Cross Bayou to the South; the Red River to the East; Cross Lake to the West; and Shreveport city limits to the North.

This area is more than 20 square miles and home for over 16,000 residents (1990 census). It contains four neighborhoods: Agurs, Cherokee Park, Martin Luther King, and North Highland (the Lakeview area will also be discussed, although it was not a part of the study area). All four neighborhoods are undergoing substantial change. In 1970, only the Cooper Road (now MLK) neighborhood was majority African-American. By 1990, 81.4% of the region were African-American:



North Shreveport has a young population. Over 41% of residents are under 22 years old. Only 13.5% are over 60. Only 6% receive Social Security. It is also a poor region. Over 73% of households have incomes of less than \$25,000 per year. While the Agurs area provides 25% of the manufacturing jobs in Shreveport, unemployment in the North Shreveport region is more than double the city's rate. The region's jobs are simply not going to the region's residents.

## Household Income – North Shreveport



North Shreveport has no single identity. While each neighborhood has a strong sense of purpose, there has been very little interaction between them. The result has been fragmentation and misunderstanding. Without a unified voice, North Shreveport has suffered. The region's physical and human resources are not being leveraged. Without a comprehensive strategy, North Shreveport will continue to remain a poor, neglected region. With a coordinated effort, implemented with close cooperation of all neighborhoods, North Shreveport can be a vibrant region with substantial growth potential.

This plan will focus on seven areas. These areas were deemed of critical importance by all four neighborhoods. A series of neighborhood meetings was held in late 1994 and early 1995. The first was a region-wide retreat attended by representatives from throughout the region. Ideas gathered from this session were discussed at meetings with each neighborhood group. With very little modification, these ideas were embraced by all four neighborhoods. Through this process, residents found they had much more in common with other neighborhoods than they realized. Residents were very focused on the seven identified areas, and all agreed to commit to addressing them. The seven areas are:

- **Strengthening neighborhood organizations;**
- **Creating a positive image**
- **Improving education and fostering lifelong learning;**
- **Job and business creation;**
- **Fostering positive neighborhood transition**
- **Conquering fear/reducing crime;**
- **Increasing individual responsibility; and**
- **Investing in the future of the entire region through comprehensive capital improvements**

This report will address each of these issues, and provide strategies for positive change. Each strategy will focus on the mission statement adopted at the retreat and ratified by each neighborhood:

*North Shreveport will become a safe, self-sustaining community where people will want to live, work, shop, and raise a family.*

Each issue will be discussed as it relates to the four individual neighborhoods, and then a strategy will be given to be implemented by the region as a whole. One thing was clear in the meetings and retreats that led to this plan: The region must work together as a whole to effectively address the critical issues facing each area.

The truth is, MLK's problems are Agurs' problems. Cherokee Park's problems are North Highlands' problems. If people in MLK don't have any opportunity for a meaningful job, they may very well turn to crime and victimize the very businesses in Agurs that need qualified employees.

If folks in North Highland drive to Bossier to shop, there will be fewer jobs and sales tax revenue to maintain their streets and drainage. If Cherokee Park residents move because of fear of crime, property values in Agurs will suffer. Each area affects all other areas. Only by working as a single, strong voice can North Shreveport achieve its mission.

# Uniting & Assisting Neighborhood Organizations

## Positive Change From Within

Strong, active neighborhood organizations are critical to the long-term health of North Shreveport. Positive change must come from within. The ability to secure resources to make improvement possible is directly dependent on united effort. The North Shreveport region is a mix of organized and unorganized organizations. MLK and Cherokee Park already have well-organized associations.

The Agurs area has an extremely active business association. North Highland and the Lakeview area need help. Although both have had organizations in the past, there is currently no ongoing effort. There is a definite need for a unified voice for North Shreveport.

An organization is needed that will represent the region and promote individual neighborhood organizations, educate residents on critical issues, and represent the entire region to address those issues. This umbrella organization will work to establish and/or strengthen neighborhood associations. It will have equal representation from each neighborhood.

There is already an ideal model for such an organization. The Mid-City Development Corporation in Baton Rouge has made a difference. Formed eight years ago and funded by Baton Rouge General Hospital and the City/Parish government, Mid City has had success in the following areas:

- Lowering crime and illegal drug activity;
- Removing blight and enforcing property standards;
- Encouraging home ownership and home improvement;
- Getting needed infrastructure improvements (street, etc.); and
- Promoting Economic Development;

Mid City started by hiring a bright, aggressive Executive Director and developing a detailed implementation plan. They then followed the plan. If they needed \$50,000 to make a project work, they got it. They made a plan, then they consistently worked the plan. There are many other examples.

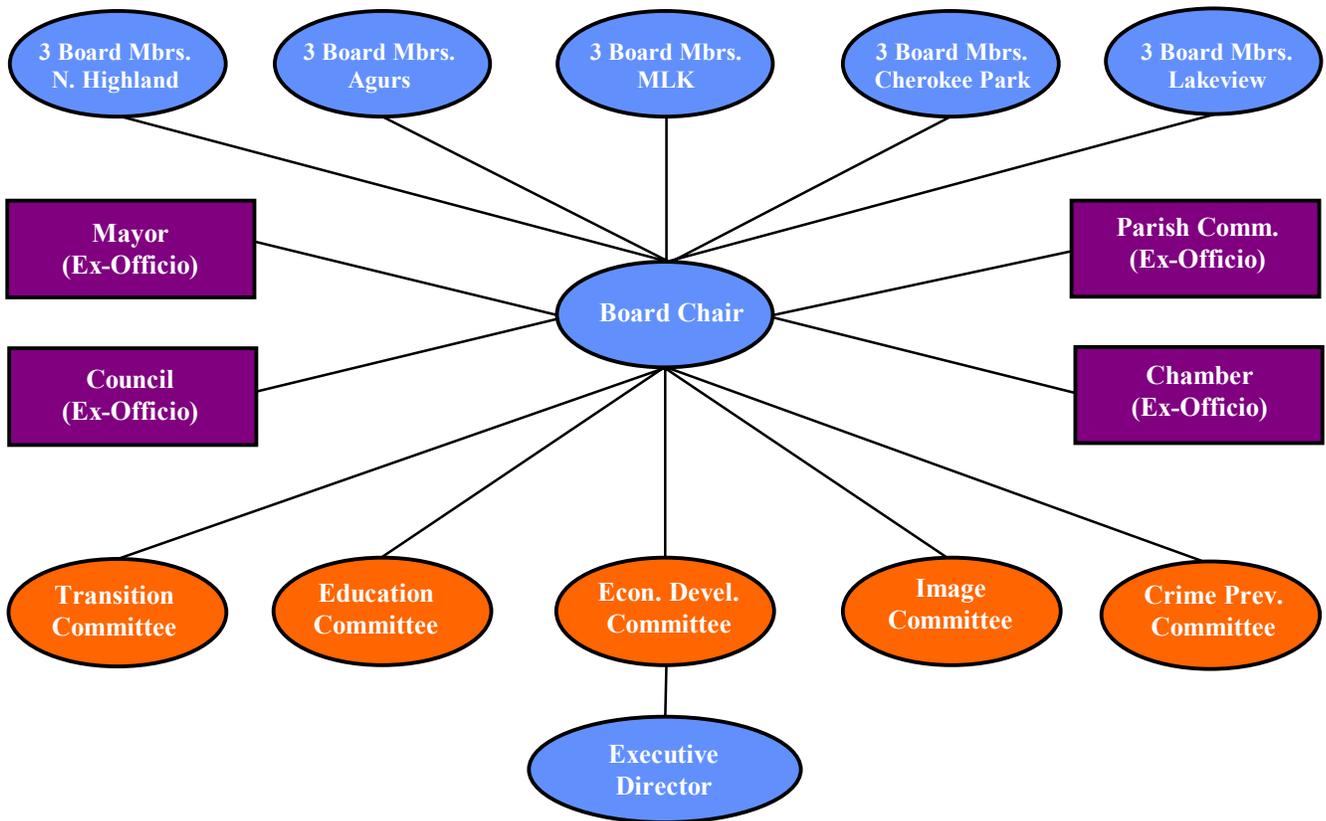
The South Dallas Development Corporation has brought new business, improved housing, and provided funding for capital improvements to what was once described as a “war zone”. They had a plan, were dedicated to the plan, and consistently worked the plan. They have produced results. So can we. **The answer is simple. Form a development corporation, adopt a plan, and consistently work the plan.**

## **North Shreveport Development Corporation**

North Shreveport Development Corporation (NSDC) would be a private, non-profit corporation operated by representatives of all North Shreveport neighborhoods. NSDC would:

- **Serve as a catalyst to unite the region, and devise creative solutions to the challenges facing the area;**
- **Represent the entire region to city, state, and federal government; and**
- **Oversee the implementation of all initiatives recommended in this report.**

The organization will be composed of a fifteen-member board, with three members from each neighborhood. The basic structure would be as follows:



## Proposed NSDC Organizational Structure

In MLK, Cherokee Park, and Agurs, the respective association officers would automatically serve on the board. For North Highland and Lakeview, the Metropolitan Planning Commission will appoint their board representatives until their own neighborhood associations are in place. Ex-Officio Board Members will represent the Mayor, City Council, Parish Commission, Parish Administrator, and Chamber of Commerce. The board will elect a chairman. The chairman will appoint committee chairs, one from each neighborhood represented.

A professional executive director should be hired as soon as possible. The executive director should have organizational leadership and development experience. He/she should be dynamic, aggressive, and dedicated to making a difference. The job of transforming North Shreveport will not be easy. The Executive Director must accept the challenge and be able and willing to get it done.

To effectively carry out its mission, NSDC should be funded at a minimum of \$255,000 per year. Funding should come from the following sources:

- Membership fees. NSDC will provide financial support to all neighborhood associations. Membership should be charged to each association. They will be responsible for collection of fees from individual residents/business owners.

**Investment: \$10,000/year**

- Corporate Investment. Major North Shreveport corporations and landowners should pledge support. This should be viewed as an investment--if North Shreveport is renewed, their investment will naturally increase in value.

**Investment: \$50,000/year**

- The City of Shreveport. Like major corporations, the City of Shreveport should invest in revitalizing this critical area. The investment should have specific, realistic, expectations such as 3 and 5-year tax revenue goals. The City should provide \$2 for every \$1 in private investment.

**Investment: \$120,000**

- The Caddo Parish Commission. The Parish Commission should play an active role in regional redevelopment. The health of Vivian, Oil City, and most of rural Caddo Parish is directly linked to the health of North Shreveport.

**Investment: \$75,000/year**

Specific projects may be funded through state and/or federal grants. The City of Shreveport has a part-time staff grant writer that could help identify and secure grant funding. As we will show, it is possible that the initial investment of \$255,000 could be leveraged to produce almost \$1,000,000 in additional program funding.

**NSDC will operate under the simple principle -- Working together, North Shreveport neighborhoods are much stronger than working alone.** Each neighborhood can address its own needs with the support of all other neighborhoods. **NSDC will:**

- Act as a **nonprofit developer and facilitator for implementation** of design and redevelopment efforts;
- Be a **clearinghouse for information and assistance** to neighborhood associations;
- Provide **funding to neighborhood organizations** for improvement programs;
- **Support infrastructure improvements** and public assets such as Downtown Shreveport Airport;
- **Encourage organization of neighborhood associations** in North Highland and Lakeside;
- **Develop strong, ongoing relationships** with the City, Parish, Metropolitan Planning Commission, Chamber of Commerce, School Board, and area Universities; and
- **Support North Market Street** as the area's major North-South economic and transportation corridor.

The following chapters form a plan of action for NSDC and its' member neighborhood organizations. If implemented fully, these

strategies and ideas will make North Shreveport a dynamic, successful, attractive region.

The implementation schedule in the summary shows the tasks, time frames, who is responsible, and cost for each initiative. **Each step is dependent on all others. Without enough investment, the steps will be done “piecemeal” and results will be mixed at best. The question is; Are five neighborhoods and 25% of Shreveport’s manufacturing jobs worth \$255,000?**

Community Development Corporations have been very successful in other cities. Shreveport’s only true CDC, Highland Area Partnership, has been limited only because support from the city has been limited. If both the private and public sectors do not fully support this effort, it will fail. North Shreveport has suffered from neglect. Without a full commitment, it will suffer much more, as will the entire city. As the old saying goes, “You can pay a little now or a lot more later.”

# Creating a Positive Image

## Truth vs. Perception

In the planning retreats and neighborhood meetings, one recurring issue stood clear: North Shreveport desperately needs to improve its image. The general consensus was that North Shreveport is perceived as an old, dirty, crime-ridden area. There was also agreement that this perception has some basis in that the area's appearance needs improvement. Many ideas were offered to change the situation, including:

- An area-wide trash pick-up;
- Community efforts to clean Twelve-Mile Bayou;
- Strict enforcement of property standards codes; and
- Holding a media day to promote beautification and crime-reduction efforts.

All these ideas have merit. The key to creating positive results rests in two areas: **action and communication**. North Shreveport must take action to improve its appearance and livability, and aggressively communicate those actions. North Shreveport has two types of customers: *Internal* and *External*. Both types need to be educated on the positive aspects (both current and planned) of the region.

*Internal Customers* are residents, stakeholders (landowners, business owners), and others with a vested interest in the region.

*External Customers* are potential investors (both local and non-local), local residents who do not live or work in North Shreveport, and visitors such as tourists and riverboat patrons.

# Image Campaign

NSDC should immediately begin an aggressive image campaign aimed at both customer groups. The effort should be based on the Highland area partnership's model. The campaign should include:

## ■ *Communication*

- *Publish a newsletter.* It must be sent to residents, area media, city and parish officials, potential investors, and stakeholders. The newsletter should explain the purpose and plan for NSDC and features of the "new" North Shreveport.
- Professional staff that could arrange media events touting progress in the region. Staff would also provide direct, ongoing communication with elected officials, economic development agencies, and the educational system about the activities and needs of the region.
- Citizens should be featured telling the positive features of living or working in North Shreveport. This peer element can be most effective in encouraging new residential and business investment in North Shreveport.

## ■ *Action*

- *NSDC should actively work toward more effective property standards.* Appearance counts. It should act as liaison between city and property owners to find solutions for substandard property issues. However, it should insist on enforcement when property blight is detracting from the desired image.
- *Encourage preventative measures, such as better land use and controls.*

- *Manage commercial appearance through signage and landscape concepts and controls.* These controls should be balanced to promote beauty and avoid discouraging growth.

Creating a positive image is not easy. North Shreveport must make a long-term commitment to this effort, and it must enlist assistance from the entire city.

# Improving Education & Fostering Lifelong Learning

## **An Undeveloped Infrastructure**

It is no coincidence that this chapter immediately precedes the chapter on jobs. According to the American Economic Development Council, well-educated work force is now the top concern of companies wanting to expand and/or relocate to an area. In many communities, the problem is a lack of educational infrastructure.

In North Shreveport, this is not the case. Within the North Shreveport region, there is a Technical College (Shreveport-Bossier Regional Technical College), a Community College (Southern University Shreveport-Bossier), and a Major Four-Year Institution (Louisiana Tech Professional Aviation).

North Shreveport has not leveraged these educational assets. NSDC should act as a catalyst to encourage partnerships between these institutions. It should also promote relationships between these institutions and area public schools. It should develop partnerships between educational institutions and businesses in the region. It should be a strong advocate, through each neighborhood, for improving primary and secondary schools.

# Creating Partnerships

NSDC should take the following steps to strengthen education in the region:

- ***Bring Southern University and the Agurs Business Association together.*** Southern and Agurs do not have any relationship. Southern can help Agurs if it knows what skill sets are needed. Southern is already attempting to meet those needs with changes to its curriculum. It needs to communicate its' new offerings, and schedule classes so Agurs area employees can attend.
- ***Create partnerships between Southern and Vo-Tech and area secondary schools.*** Specifically, Southern and Vo-Tech need a presence at Green Oaks High School. Students need to know what is available and how they can qualify, financially and academically. By establishing a presence, Southern and Vo-Tech can produce a steady stream of qualified customers, while providing opportunity. Vo-Tech has a partnership with Parkway High in Bossier--they need one with their neighbor, Green Oaks.
- ***Establish relationships between Southern, Vo-Tech, and Louisiana Tech.*** Southern and Vo-Tech's administrators have never met with each other. Louisiana Tech and Southern both run aviation-related programs at Downtown Airport. These institutions should be brought together under a plan that leverages the strengths of each. Louisiana's higher education system may prevent formal joint programs. The institutions could at least develop an informal relationship designed around the needs of Agurs area businesses. Tech's professional aviation program and Southern's airframe and power plant program should be aggressively marketed.

- ***Push the Caddo Parish School Board to allow greater access to public schools for continuing education and community-related programs.*** North Shreveport schools are not fully utilized. NSDC could provide many adult educational programs through a partnership with Louisiana State University-Shreveport, which offers an excellent continuing education program. It could turn secondary schools into “lifelong learning centers”, featuring programs on community organization, land-use management, and entrepreneurship. The problem is facilities. NSDC should partner with the Highland Area Partnership and other grassroots organizations to push the Caddo School Board toward a progressive policy on school usage.

The challenge of providing quality educational opportunities is complex. There are no easy solutions. You have to start somewhere. The action items above are a start.

# Creating Jobs & Businesses

## The Primary Concern

Without question, the primary concern of all North Shreveport is jobs and economic opportunity. North Shreveporters want to be able to shop at home. They want a sense of community. They are concerned that their children will not be able to get and keep a good job. They want to take part in the entrepreneurial revolution, and need the training and assistance necessary to be successful.

North Shreveport holds several areas of economic opportunity. Agurs is one of the few active inner-city industrial areas left in the United States. According to the 1994 Agurs Area Development plan, the Agurs area has over 700 acres of vacant land with major infrastructure in place, ready for immediate development. Extension of Clyde Fant parkway to Jack Wells Boulevard will provide a direct route to much of this property.

As previously discussed, North Shreveport possesses significant educational assets that could be utilized to create economic growth. Southern University and Louisiana Tech University have a presence at the Downtown Airport. North Shreveport Industrial Park has anchor tenants and excellent infrastructure in place. The most important factor is that residents are unified in their resolve to support economic development in the region.

## A Three-Pronged Approach

NSDC should take a triad approach to economic development: 1) Develop a **targeted industry campaign** for the Chamber of Commerce and City to aggressively market Agurs/Downtown Airport and North Shreveport Industrial Park. 2) **Implement a retail development campaign.** And 3) **Develop a business incubator to encourage business creation and growth.**

This initiative should include:

- ***A targeted industry analysis and advertising campaign for Agurs and North Shreveport Industrial Park.*** NSDC should request funding from the City and/or Parish for a targeted industry analysis. This would identify industry “clusters” that would provide for collaborative efforts, customer base, or supplier networks to certain industry categories. Industries that may utilize Downtown Airport and the aviation programs should also be specified. Growth-oriented companies within these industries should then be targeted. When possible, redevelopment concepts should be explored.

An advertising campaign should be developed specifically for these businesses. This campaign should be conducted in concert with the NSDC image campaign. The City, Caddo Parish, Caddo-Bossier Port, SWEPCO, and Chamber must become partners. Each must aggressively follow up and work with Agurs landowners to offer the most attractive packages possible.

Progressive financing techniques, such as tax-increment financing, must be offered to make the area competitive. Follow the same steps for the North Shreveport Industrial Park. Kansas City Southern Railway offers opportunity for companies in the rail products industry. Southern University may also provide marketing opportunities. The key is to focus on the assets that can produce greatest leverage.

- ***A retail development plan that focuses on community centers.*** MLK, Cherokee Park, and North Highland each felt that a community retail center was needed. Such a center would feature locally owned businesses, including franchises.

Recreation-oriented businesses, such as movie theaters and skating rinks, were also requested. NSDC should work with the Chamber of Commerce and City to encourage formation of these centers. Redevelopment of older retail centers should receive primary consideration. There are many vacant retail buildings along North Market that could be utilized for locally owned retail. NSDC could help rebuild this “sense of community” through redevelopment of these areas.

- ***Create a Center for Entrepreneurial Development.*** The idea of a business incubator/entrepreneurial center has been discussed in Shreveport for many years. New efforts are underway to establish an entrepreneurial center at Southern University. Whatever the final form, a program to train residents with the hands-on “how to” of running a business is needed. NSDC should become a strong advocate for this effort.

Federal funding is available for such projects under certain conditions. The demographics of North Shreveport should lend themselves to this funding. The critical step, again, is to get it done. Members of the Agurs Business Association have a wealth of entrepreneurial experience. They should be asked to form an advisory committee to the incubator. In addition, available resources like the Chamber’s Service Corps of Retired Executives and Small Business Development Center at LSU-S should be utilized.

NSDC can be a catalyst and powerful voice for all of North Shreveport in getting the resources needed to facilitate growth.

# Fostering Positive Neighborhood Transition

## A Choice

In the introduction, we showed that North Shreveport's neighborhoods have undergone change. Transition itself is neutral. How transition is managed will determine whether it benefits or damages a neighborhood. Through the public input process, Cherokee Park, Agurs, and North Highland viewed transition as a threat.

Increased rental property and the resulting less stable/lower income occupants, infrastructure decay, and inconvenience caused by commercial/industrial growth are all seen as negatives. In Agurs, vacant industrial property is seen as a breeding ground for criminal activity and a strong drag on overall property values. All neighborhoods felt that public property was not adequately maintained.

MLK, however, views its' transition as positive. Crime rates there are lower. The MLK neighborhood association has united many residents to address problems. The recent reconstruction of Martin Luther King Boulevard has improved access.

## Taking Control

NSDC should help neighborhoods manage transition and emphasize its' positive aspects. Ideas and strategies will vary by neighborhood. Some common issues to be addressed are housing, public property, community centers, and the condition of North Market Street:

*NSDC should serve a catalyst for more ownership.* It should actively promote the

City's home loan programs, and serve as an information source for low-cost financing sources such as Fannie Mae. It should work with local financial institutions to purchase, rehabilitate, and sell older homes.

NSDC should also establish an awards program for improved home or business appearance. The individual neighborhood associations could administer the program. It would grant monthly prizes for most improved home/business appearance.

■ ***Work with individual neighborhood associations to establish clean-up days.***

The best way to keep public property clean is for residents to take responsibility. These should be promoted as opportunities to meet neighbors, have fun, and increase the appeal of the area. An example is Twelve-Mile Bayou. Cherokee Park residents have expressed interest in cleaning it up. NSDC should contact the City and arrange for supplies and assistance. Shreveport Green is a willing potential partner in these efforts. This partnership should be aggressively pursued.

■ ***Establish Community Centers.*** Community centers give neighborhoods a sense of "place". They provide space for association activities, youth programs, and adult learning, to name a few possible uses. NSDC should work with each neighborhood to acquire public funding for these centers. The centers could include satellite libraries (better access to libraries was requested by all neighborhoods). Existing vacant buildings should be renovated whenever possible.

■ ***Promote North Market Street as the Heart of North Shreveport.*** It is the primary transportation route, contains the vast

majority of retail centers, and serves as a gateway to downtown. The design element of this plan focuses on improvements to North Market and streets that intersect it. NSDC should work to ensure that all recommended improvements are implemented. It should lobby local, state, and federal officials to make and keep North Market a top priority.

NSDC can only make positive transition happen for the neighborhoods of North Shreveport if it can enlist strong commitment from the region's stakeholders.

# Conquering Fear/Reducing Crime

## A Bad Reputation

The worst perception North Shreveport has is one of rampant crime. Many area residents avoid North Shreveport altogether because of fear. Some of this reputation is based on fact. The Agurs Business Association was originally formed to combat crime. MLK has a long reputation as a haven for robbery, assault, and drive-by shootings. Unfortunately, although crime has been lowered significantly in recent years, the reputation persists.

Crime is still a problem, and probably will always be. It must be consistently attacked. When progress is made, that progress must be communicated clearly to begin reducing fear. Reduced fear leads to more legitimate activity. Legitimate activity discourages criminal activity. Crime is reduced again, and the cycle continues.

This cycle can go in either direction. If the battle against crime decreases, fear rises. Less legitimate activity leads to more criminal activity. It is up to the community to keep the battle going.

## On The Attack

NSDC should attack crime through these initiatives:

- ***Encourage neighborhoods to participate in programs such as Community Oriented Policing;*** Community Oriented Policing works. It brings police and citizens together. Citizens develop confidence in their police officers. NSDC can arrange COP events and encourage residents to attend.

- ***Develop a neighborhood-based Weed and Seed program.*** Set up a weed and seed organization, using programs from the Highland effort. Once the effort is up and running, apply for Federal Weed and Seed funding.
  
- ***Document types and location of criminal activity to evaluate the contribution of physical conditions (dilapidated houses/buildings) to crime.***
  
- ***Publicize reductions in the crime rate.*** Perception is the key--if people feel that North Shreveport is safe, they will want to live, work, and shop there. The facts must back up what is said. Once crime is reduced, NSDC should immediately publicize it. Hold a news conference, call the newspaper, have citizens interviewed on how safe North Shreveport really is. Crime is like a Cancer. Untreated, it will spread until it consumes the entire region. NSDC should constantly work with neighborhoods to stay on the attack against criminal activity.

# Promoting Individual Responsibility

## An Essential Choice

The action plan described in this report is dependent on the active support of all citizens. Nothing will change if individuals do not believe in and accept responsibility for doing the hard work required to build a new North Shreveport. This work often starts at their own home or business. Even the best landscaping and redevelopment zoning discussed in this plan will not be effective without active participation from each resident.

The principle that every person is responsible for his own actions and has an obligation to help his/her community was unanimously adopted by all neighborhood groups. Individuals taking responsibility are more likely to effectively maintain their property, further their education, become better spouses and/or parents, and care for their community. **Responsibility is an essential choice. It is critical to the future of North Shreveport.**

## Showing The Way

The most important way to instill individual responsibility is through strong neighborhood associations. Through involvement in these associations, residents can see the positive results of acting responsibly. NSDC can help in three ways:

- ***Develop a mentoring program.*** Neighborhood leaders should be identified and encouraged to become mentors. Neighborhood organizations should then identify individuals who have leadership potential and match them with the mentors in a structured program. The program could

benchmark the Leadership Shreveport-Bossier program. In Leadership Shreveport-Bossier, participants are shown needs in various areas of the community (i.e., law enforcement and social services) and encouraged to become involved in addressing those needs. The NSDC program could follow a similar format, with the addition of mentors to provide guidance and direction.

The program should focus on needs of each neighborhood in North Shreveport and how active involvement can address those needs. Mentors would attend each session of the program, and would be responsible for determining if their “students” are making progress. In addition to the group sessions, individual time will be scheduled for one-on-one mentoring. Individuals who successfully complete the program would be eligible to become mentors themselves.

- ***Implement a personal development seminar series.*** NSDC should work with North Shreveport area churches to develop a seminar series focusing on personal development. The biggest challenge will be getting those who need this information to participate. Churches can be a powerful ally in this effort. Other incentives can be offered, such as free dinners from North Shreveport restaurants. Once an individual completes the series, they should be given top consideration for leadership positions within NSDC and the neighborhood organizations.
  
- ***Create peer pressure through active communication.*** NSDC’s newsletter should highlight individuals who have cleaned up their homes, participated in a neighborhood effort, or any other act of responsibility. It should contact the area media and encourage news features on individuals who show

responsibility. As neighborhood organizations become more active, NSDC should consistently publicize their activities. It should encourage participation in neighborhood events by providing a calendar of events in its newsletter.

Increasing individual responsibility and developing leadership will not happen overnight. However, it is absolutely necessary for North Shreveport to realize its' potential as a dynamic, growing region.

# Investing in the Future

## Planning for Change

North Shreveport has not experienced the level of public and private sector investment evident in Southeast and Southwest Shreveport and North Bossier City. Changing this trend will take a concerted effort. North Shreveport must improve the quality of its environment and enhance its demographic profile in order to attract businesses. Comprehensive planning ideas that communicate a grand vision for North Shreveport are an essential part of this initiative. The ideas in this chapter are intended to serve as a design framework for setting priorities and moving toward further development of specific projects. In this chapter we will first explore general issues and ideas for improvements that impact the entire North Shreveport Planning Area. The next portion of this chapter is devoted to Market Street as a gateway. Public and private improvements are suggested to enhance this roadway as a center of activity for North Shreveport. Following this investigation are ideas more specific to the individual neighborhoods -- Agurs, Cherokee Park, MLK, North Highland, and Hearne Extension.

The ideas represented in the following analysis and concept drawings are a response to the neighborhood meetings, information provided by the Steering Committee, and issues expressed by citizens of North Shreveport. This document can serve as a guide for the NSDC to promote and further develop this work into a sustained comprehensive planning and implementation effort.

# North Shreveport Opportunities & Challenges

The planning team listened to what North Shreveporters envision in their future. We learned that the neighborhoods of North Shreveport have much in common. The planning team also looked at assets and liabilities that affect this vision that citizens painted for us. We see the possibilities. *North Shreveport is a sleeping giant. The vision is one of strong neighborhoods linked by parklands along waterways and greenbelt roadways.* This focus of capitalizing on the natural beauty of North Shreveport sets a stage for a better quality of life and instilling pride of place for residents of the neighborhoods of North Shreveport.

## Recreational Linkages

**Recreational linkages** are a public investment that can work as a catalyst for private sector investment in new and redeveloped residential and commercial ventures. **Extending the linear park concept to Cross Bayou and Twelve Mile Bayou** connects North and South Shreveport with a continuous park.

In addition, the **Riverfront Linear Park should be extended North along the Red River beyond the parkway terminus to the I-220 bridge.** This extension around the city owned 600 acres East of the downtown airport helps prepare this land for future development and assures the public of continued access to the river. This linear park development falls within the northern most limits of the area that can be developed by the Corps of Engineers for recreation as part of the Red River navigation project. Planning team members have recommended to City and Corps officials that this extension be added to the recreation plan to include bike paths and picnic facilities for the linear park North of downtown. This action will result in Federal funds to build and maintain these linear park improvements. The NSDC discussed in previous chapters of this plan can be the organization to follow through on opportunities such as the Corps funding to





assure that North Shreveport is not overlooked. Recreation linkages accomplished through the linear park development can also connect to proposed **Paul Lynch Regional Park**. This park has been a part of the city recreation master plan for many years. The concept is to develop this park in the McCain Creek area on flood plain land similar to the concept of Bickham Dickson Regional Park on the South end of the Riverfront Linear Park. The flood plain area East of the Cross Lake dam extends to Twelve Mile Bayou and connects to the McCain Creek area. This land is approximately 1200 acres on both sides of I-220 between Shreveport Blanchard Highway and Highway 1/71 (North Market). This entire flood plain area can become a park that serves recreational needs as well as a wetland preservation/research area. The funding of I-49 North of I-220 could include impact funds for the development of this regional park. NSDC can work to fulfill this opportunity for North Shreveport.

## Greenbelt Roadways



Other recreation linkages for North Shreveport include the concept of greenbelt **roadways**. These traffic arteries promote the idea of beautiful roadways and trees/forest/landscape buffers of residential areas that adjoin these roads. Commercial areas are made more appealing/marketable through the use of consistent landscape, signage controls, property standards and amenities such as bike paths. Roadways in North Shreveport recommended as greenbelts include:

- North Hearne/Jack Wells Boulevard Clyde Fant Parkway
- Wells Island Road (Future Parkway extension)
- Grimmet Drive/MLK Drive
- Shreveport/Blanchard Highway from North Hearne to MLK Drive
- I-220 from Cross Lake to Red River

- I-49 from Pine Hill Road to I-220 intersection.

These recreation linkages promote the idea of a “*String of Pearls*” along Shreveport’s Waterfront. The ideas for this recreation development are shown on maps of North Shreveport in this section.

## **I-49 North of I-220**

**I-49 North of I-220** is currently going through a public process to finalize the final alignment of this roadway. The current alignment through North Shreveport connecting to I-220 appears to anticipate the future extension of I-49 from I-220 to I-20. The current highway alignment will have adverse impact on the MLK neighborhood in the following ways:

- Current proposed right-of-way would likely displace residents on the East Side of the MLK neighborhood.
- Traffic noise problems for MLK neighborhood will be increased.
- Current alignment separates MLK from the Paul Lynch Park rather than allowing the regional park to serve as a stimulus for more private development in MLK adjacent to the park.
- The threat of I-49 extending from I-220 to I-20 will remain and be a deterrent to development that could occur along the East Side of Twelve Mile Bayou Linear Park.

A more favorable alignment for North Shreveport could be intersecting I-49 at I-220 and Highway 1/71 (North Market). This concept supports the idea of Market Street as a gateway. It also allows I-49 to have a more favorable impact on the MLK and North Highland Neighborhoods. The regional park will connect to MLK and can become a stimulus for new commercial center development and residential growth. Reinforcing North Market with this alignment will have positive impacts on commercial and cultural development that North Shreveport citizens want to fulfill their vision. NSDC can work to promote the best outcome for North Shreveport.

A quality outcome for North Shreveport will require strong advocacy and continued planning to understand how to avoid adverse consequences and how to capitalize on opportunities. This suggested alignment of I-49 through North Shreveport is shown on the Development Concept Targets map in this chapter.

## **Public/Private Transportation Linkages**

**Public/Private Transportation Linkages** for North Shreveport are one of the challenges to be explored as a means of connecting low-income residential areas to education and employment centers of North Shreveport. Cooperative efforts between the Businesses of Agurs and Neighborhood Organizations working through NSDC could result in innovative solutions to transportation needs identified in neighborhood meetings. A goal for the future is that residents of North Shreveport work in North Shreveport. One key to achieve this goal is to enhance the job creating ability of the Agurs business neighborhood. Public transportation provided by SPORTRAN fulfills some of the needs of linkage to education and employment centers of North Shreveport. However, providing other transportation alternatives such as a shuttle for low-income residents in the MLK area that work in Agurs, may be a worthwhile investment.

The possibility of a scenic railway along Shreveport's riverfront can also provide a possibility of light rail service to portions of North Shreveport. Existing tracks could provide a fun linkage to downtown and be one means of beginning to generate some tourism traffic for North Shreveport. The map in this section that shows NSRDP transportation arteries includes highlighting of the railroad tracks that connect to the riverfront and future railroad museum on Cross Bayou. Cities like Portland, Oregon have shown that you **can trade highway dollars for light rail dollars**. Further investigation is needed. NSDC can lead the further development of this idea.

## Commercial Centers

A concept to strengthen community and reinforce a sense of place is development of **Commercial Centers**. These areas concentrate shopping, restaurants, and entertainment into what can become the symbolic center of activity within a neighborhood or region. The existing strip commercial of North Shreveport dilutes the sense of neighborhood and contributes to deteriorating neighborhoods and negative impacts of outward growth of City. Well-conceived commercial centers that minimize parking and emphasize pedestrianism can be the key to quality redevelopment and expansion of the residential construction within the existing neighborhoods of North Shreveport. *Integrating these **Commercial Centers** with **recreational linkages** previously described can stimulate compact development and pedestrianism that are both important design qualities of a safe and secure place to live.* A tighter and stronger sense of community results in more involvement, more pride, more eyes watching public gathering places, and a better quality of life. Planning and design of our neighborhoods directly affect these positive outcomes.

The plan has identified several locations for Commercial Centers development. Neighborhood commercial centers would include the following:

### ■ **MLK Neighborhood**

- David Raines at Shreveport/Blanchard Road adjacent to the David Raines Park & Community Center
- Shreveport/Blanchard Road at MLK Drive and adjacent to Southern University
- MLK Drive adjoining future Paul Lynch Park

### ■ North Highland

- Market Street at MLK Drive and extending East along Grimmet Drive/Old Mooringsport Road can become a commercial center that can include high density residential connected to commercial with pedestrian pathways.

### ■ Cherokee Park/Agurs

- The Market Street area North of Barton Drive to Twelve Mile Bayou. Redevelop the strip center West of Market and expand to connect to Twelve Mile Bayou (this area could become the North Shreveport Regional Center.
- The intersection of North Hearne Boulevard and Grimmet Drive including the redevelopment/refurbishment of the existing shopping center at Freestate Boulevard and Hawn Street.

These Commercial Centers should become the focus of shopping and entertainment for North Shreveport and the communities to the North of Shreveport - Blanchard, Mooringsport, Oil City, Belcher, Gilliam, Hosston, Vivian, Rodessa, and Ida. I-49 North of I-220 will improve access to North Shreveport Commercial Centers. Improving quality, compact development, and enhanced access will improve the demographic profile of the area resulting in increased potential for private sector investment. It will take consistent focused effort to make this happen. NSDC can build and sustain momentum required to make things happen.

## Growth Management

**Managing growth** is an important concept for all cities and communities. It is impractical to think that outward growth result in progress and an improved financial status of a neighborhood or city. Outward growth does not generate the tax base to pay for the infrastructure required to accommodate this growth. Roads, utilities, schools, parks, police and fire protection are infrastructure that must expand with outward growth. The results of trying to keep up are

reduced services and a poorly maintained infrastructure. The key to reversing this trend is to *institute growth management policies that make rebuilding neighborhoods more economically viable than expanding the city outward*. Utilize incentives that produce desirable results for the city and economy such as mixed income neighborhood incentives and gated community disincentives (rich or poor enclaves are both undesirable). Impact fees can be assessed on new outward development to reflect the actual cost to the public. Outward expansion of commercial development helps fuel outward residential growth. Restricting commercial development that is chasing outward residential growth will slow outward expansion. The current rules of growth dictated by zoning policies continue to encourage this outmigration. The neighborhoods of North Shreveport, working together through NSDC, can set a different direction. Focusing on desirable outcomes for the future and working to achieve those outcomes will require setting new policies for growth. One way to focus on these desirable outcomes for the built environment is through the use of performance based zoning that shows public and private sectors what to expect and what they are investing in. Rules are based on achieving a place of quality through design parameters and not based on use restrictions.

The 1997 Waterfront Master Plan is a resource to be used with the North Shreveport Regional Development Plan. This plan sets forth principles, examples of performance standards, and processes that lead to effective growth management and organizational strategies. Among these principles are:

- Citizen ownership of ideas and results
- Promote compact development patterns
- Build wealth and opportunity for all citizens
- Each project addresses comprehensive issues
- Focus on sustained investment

- Expect a measurable return on public investment
- Clear consistent rules for development
- Build vision on our assets -- history, culture, and environment
- Don't solve a market within any one project
- Pedestrians come first
- Promote and enforce quality at every level

To fulfill the mission that *North Shreveport will become a safe, self-sustaining community where people will want to live, work, shop, and raise a family* requires a broad based understanding of the impacts of development on community values. It also requires an understanding of the limitations of public funds to compensate for the adverse impacts of little or no growth management. NSDC can become the advocate for growth management and continue to investigate through urban design ways to more efficiently develop the neighborhoods of North Shreveport. Work for outcomes that promote positive community values. Cities such as Portland, Oregon have demonstrated that growth management works. Setting forth a clear vision of growth may seem intimidating or appear to set more bureaucracy in the way of development. However, Portland has faster processing and less government rigmarole for development than most anywhere in the country. **A clear vision of how you intend to grow helps everyone.**

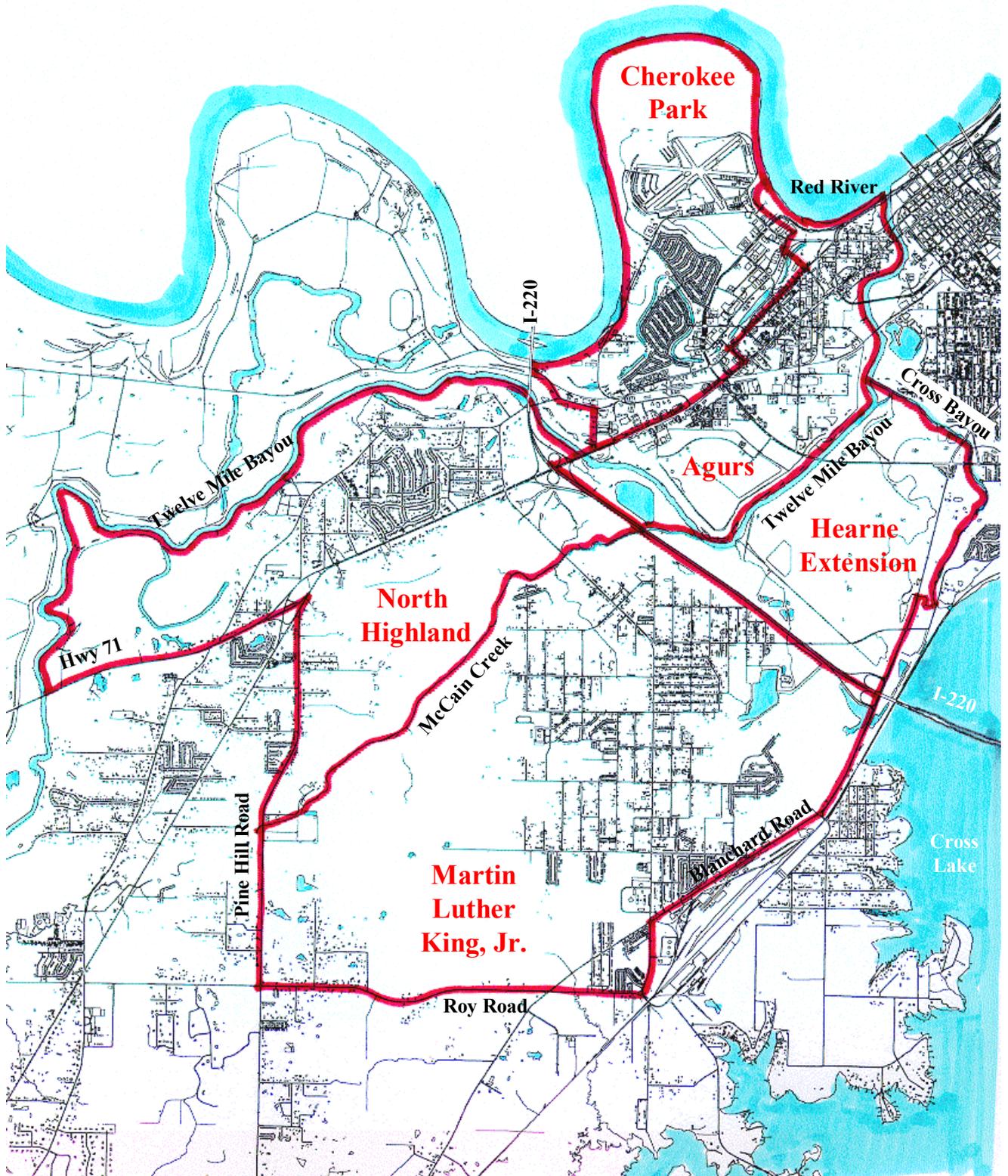
## **Adjust Confusing Parish & City Boundaries**

The model for North Shreveport is a resident population working in the employment centers of Agurs and the Central Business District. Agurs can become the primary job creator for North Shreveport with assistance from Southern University and Vo-Tech working cooperatively with the business community to provide a workforce with appropriate skills.

The Agurs Business Association has supported downzoning this business neighborhood to restrict Heavy Industry land use (I-2) and make Agurs more desirable for Light Industry (I-1), Business Park District (B-2A), and Community Business Districts (B-3). The 1994 Agurs Business Development Plan provided background for this North Shreveport Plan. The business growth development for Agurs is projected in the 1994 plan to be small manufacturers and small to medium size distributors and services companies with land needs of 2 - 5 acres. This projected focus on small business growth in North Shreveport can strengthen the role of neighborhood organizations and NSDC. Adjusting city and parish boundaries can enhance these efforts. Pockets of Agurs that have not been annexed into the City discourage development and create confusion over who will provide public services to this property. To further complicate recruiting industry to Agurs, a large amount of Agurs, approximately 640 acres is in Bossier Parish resulting in approximately \$1,000,000 per year in tax revenue to Bossier Parish. Simplify by changing parish boundaries to the center of the Red River and annexing Caddo Parish pockets of Agurs into the City. These political boundary disputes do not encourage private investment or a quality environment. NSDC can provide the sustained initiatives that will be required to see that governing bodies implement boundary changes and other cooperative agreements.

These general planning and design recommendations are intended to provide direction on issues and opportunities for the entire North Shreveport area. The following maps illustrate current conditions, assets, liabilities, and development concept targets.

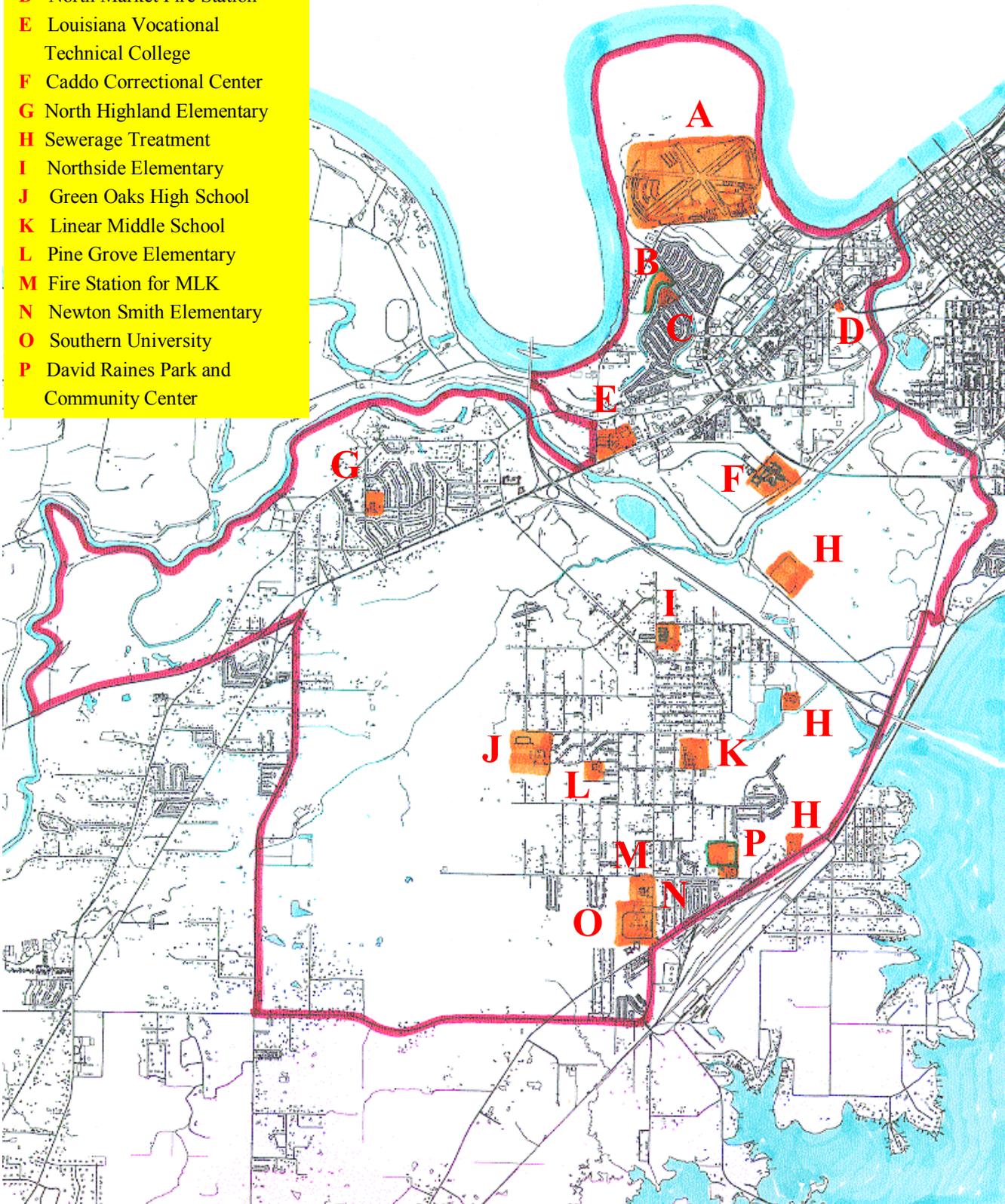
# NSRDP Neighborhoods



# NSRDP Public Facilities

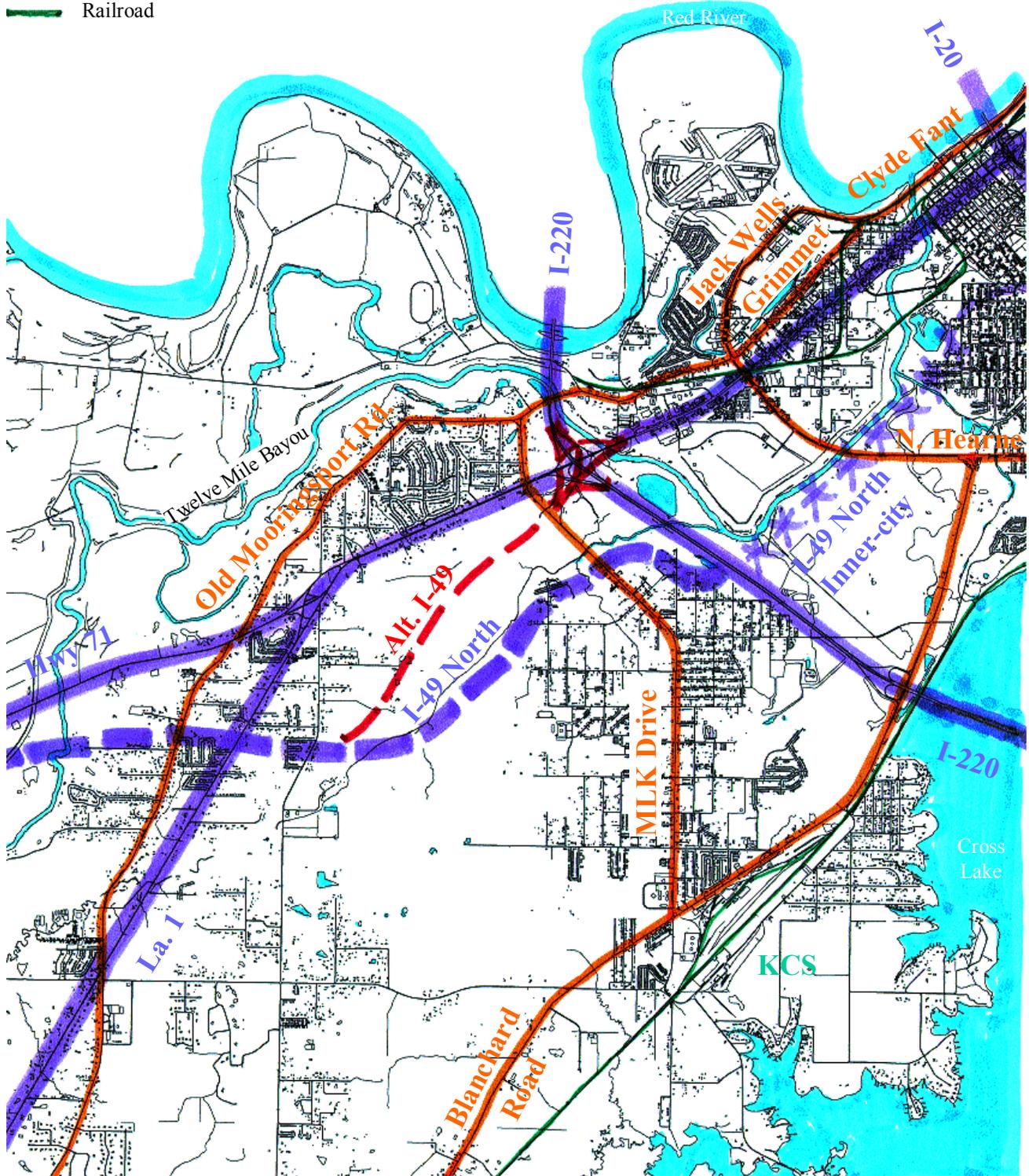
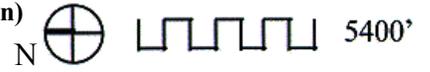


- A** Shreveport Downtown Airport
- B** Mamie Hicks Park
- C** Cherokee Park Elementary
- D** North Market Fire Station
- E** Louisiana Vocational  
Technical College
- F** Caddo Correctional Center
- G** North Highland Elementary
- H** Sewerage Treatment
- I** Northside Elementary
- J** Green Oaks High School
- K** Linear Middle School
- L** Pine Grove Elementary
- M** Fire Station for MLK
- N** Newton Smith Elementary
- O** Southern University
- P** David Raines Park and  
Community Center



# NSRDP Traffic Arteries

-  Primary Highways (through traffic)
-  Planned Primary Highway (I-49 North)
-  Alternate proposed route for I-49
-  Proposed Inner-city I-49 (recommend deletion from transportation plan)
-  Secondary Roadways (local traffic)
-  Railroad

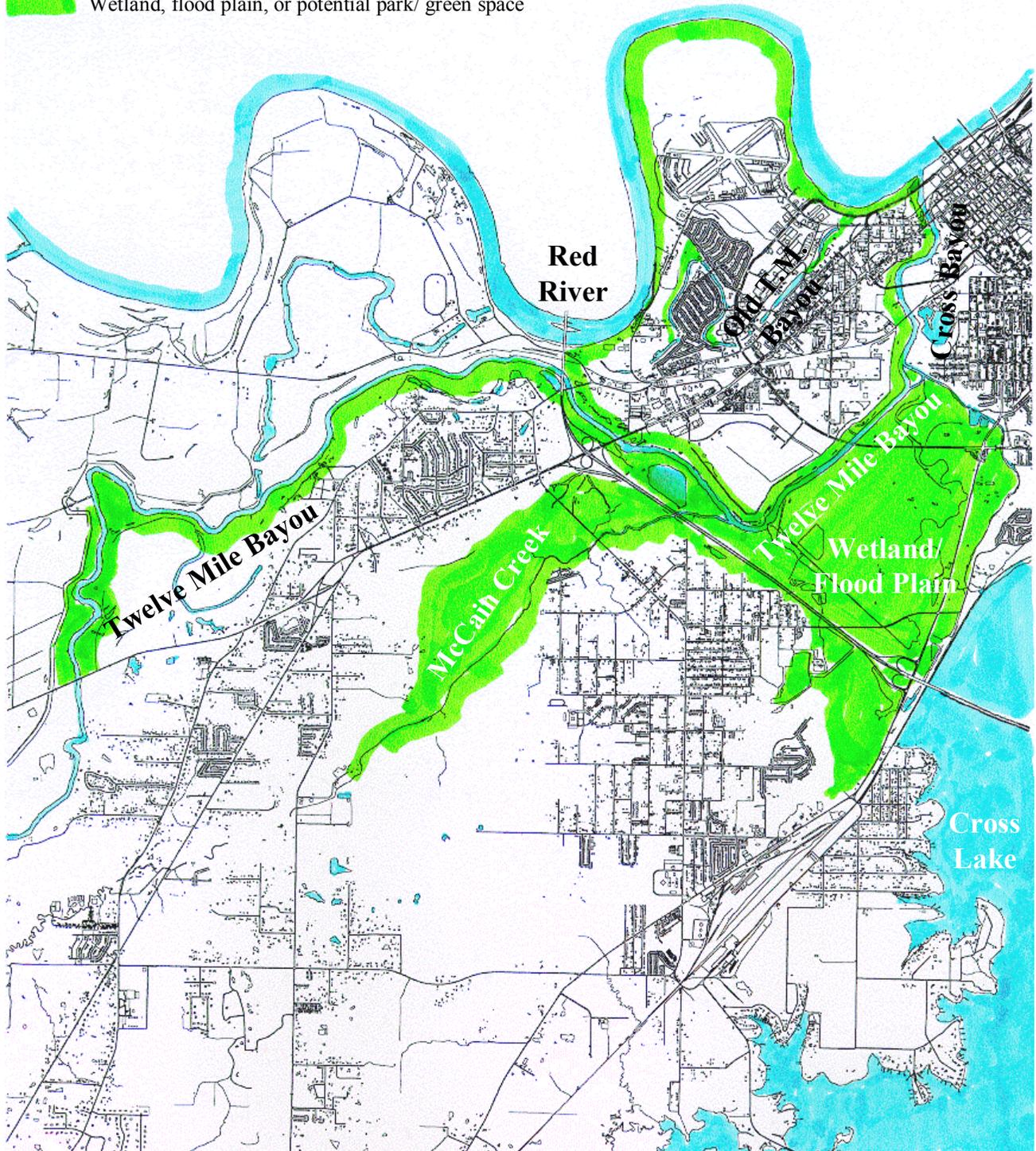


# Waterways of North Shreveport

 Primary waterways (rivers, bayous, and streams)



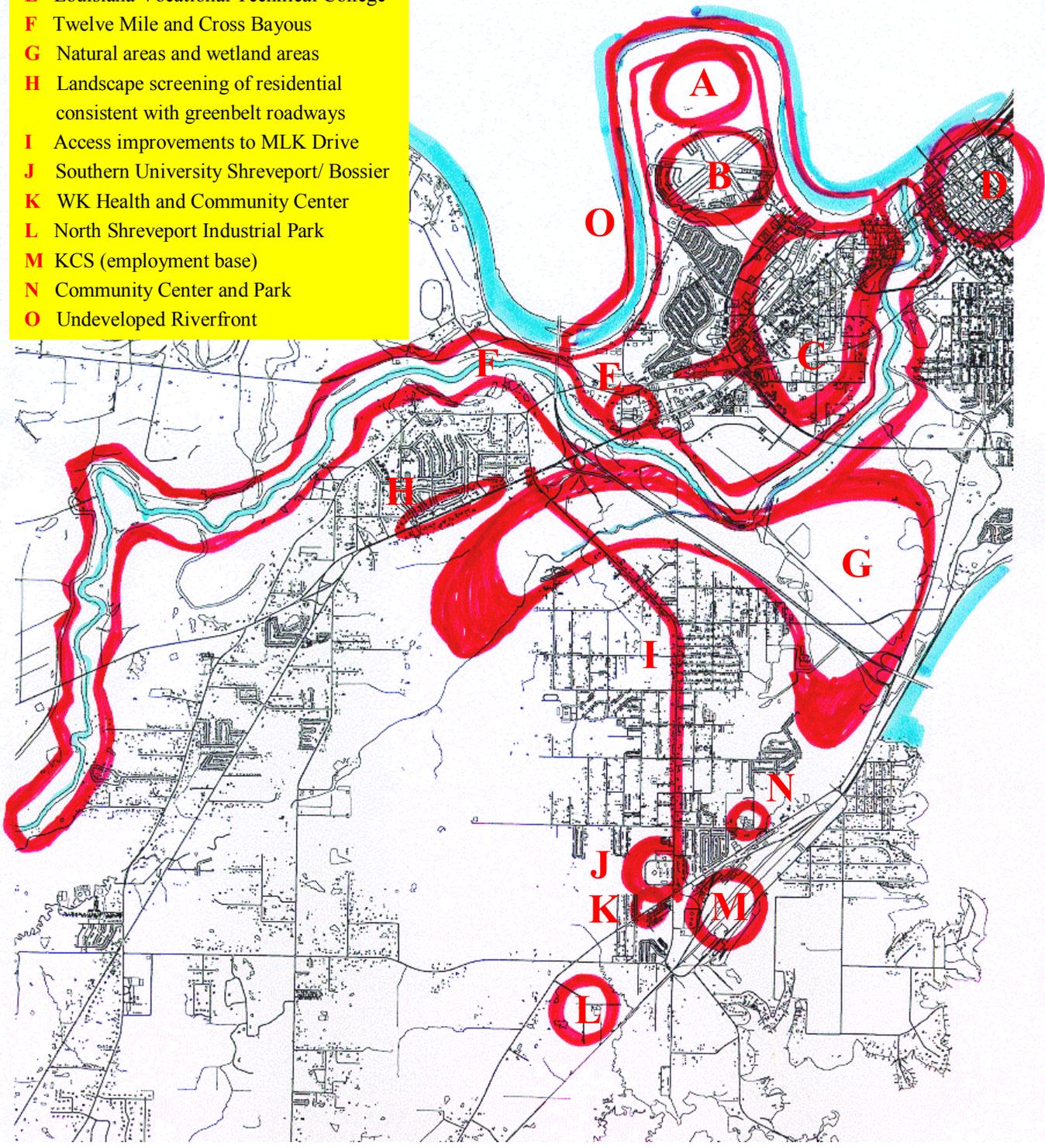
 Wetland, flood plain, or potential park/ green space



# NSRDP Assets to Build On

General **natural assets** include a hilly topography, forests and waterways

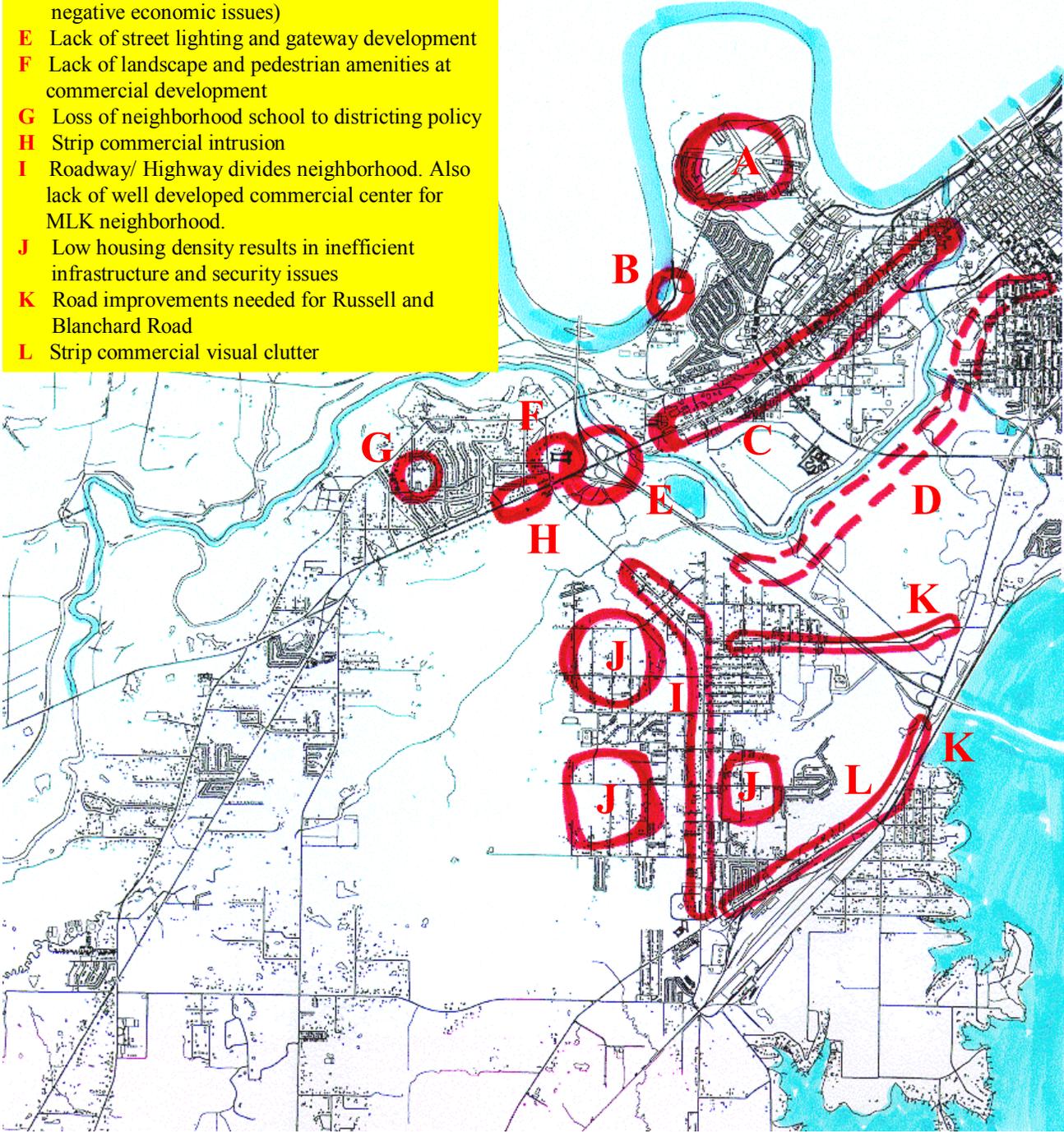
- A** 600+/- acres of city owned land
- B** Downtown Airport
- C** Industry, Technology, and Business Park
- D** Adjacency to CBD
- E** Louisiana Vocational Technical College
- F** Twelve Mile and Cross Bayous
- G** Natural areas and wetland areas
- H** Landscape screening of residential consistent with greenbelt roadways
- I** Access improvements to MLK Drive
- J** Southern University Shreveport/ Bossier
- K** WK Health and Community Center
- L** North Shreveport Industrial Park
- M** KCS (employment base)
- N** Community Center and Park
- O** Undeveloped Riverfront



# NSRDP Liabilities

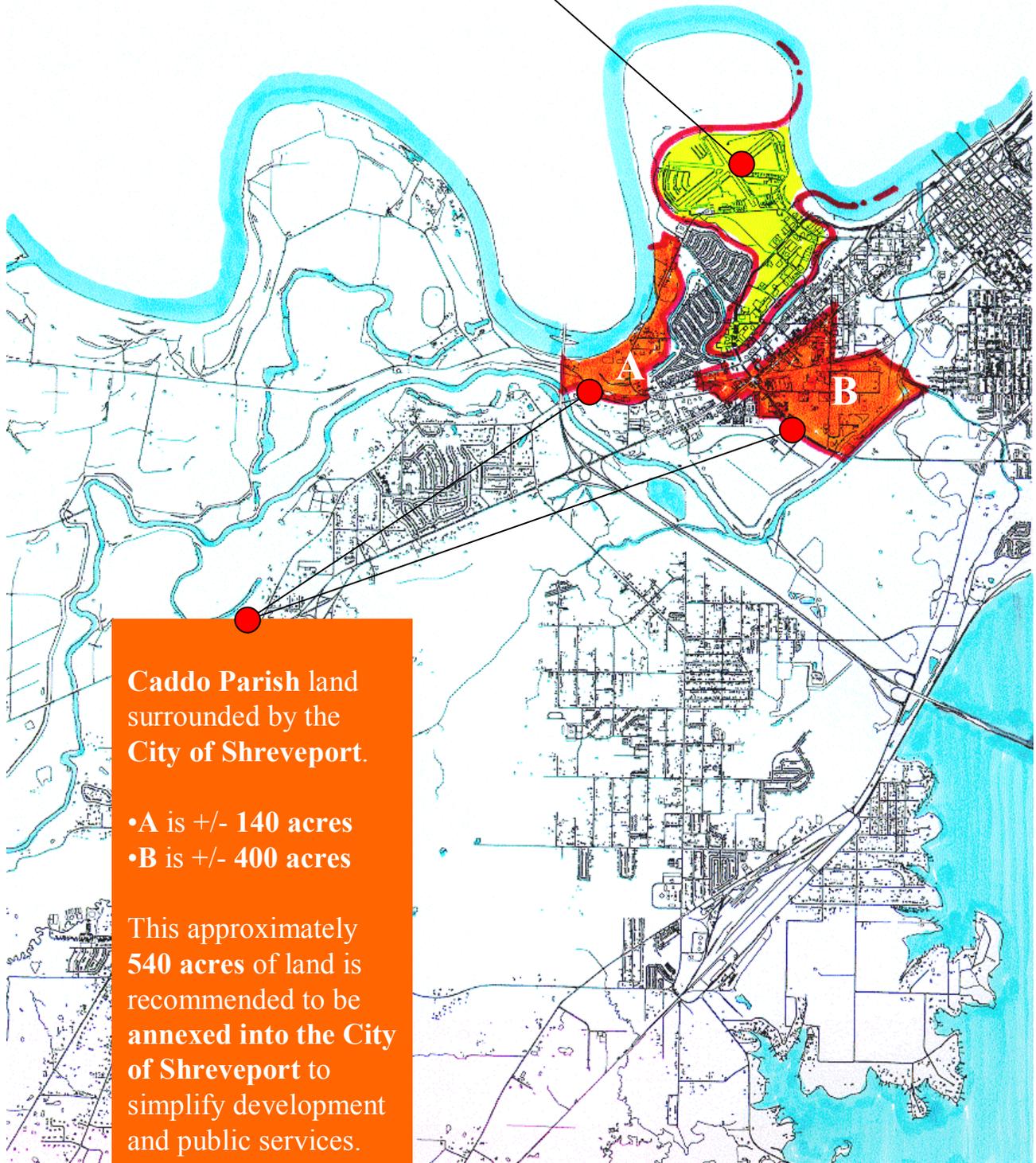
General liabilities include perceptions as a high crime area, school districting (absence of true neighborhood schools), and property standards

- A** Underutilized downtown airport
- B** Wells Island Road lost to river
- C** Visual clutter (signage, parking, land use compatibility)
- D** Possible I-49 inner-city (wetland, low income neighborhood, historic preservation, and negative economic issues)
- E** Lack of street lighting and gateway development
- F** Lack of landscape and pedestrian amenities at commercial development
- G** Loss of neighborhood school to districting policy
- H** Strip commercial intrusion
- I** Roadway/ Highway divides neighborhood. Also lack of well developed commercial center for MLK neighborhood.
- J** Low housing density results in inefficient infrastructure and security issues
- K** Road improvements needed for Russell and Blanchard Road
- L** Strip commercial visual clutter



# Boundary Confusion

Approximately **640 acres** of **Bossier Parish** land that is recommended to become part of **Caddo Parish** to simplify development and public services



**Caddo Parish** land surrounded by the **City of Shreveport**.

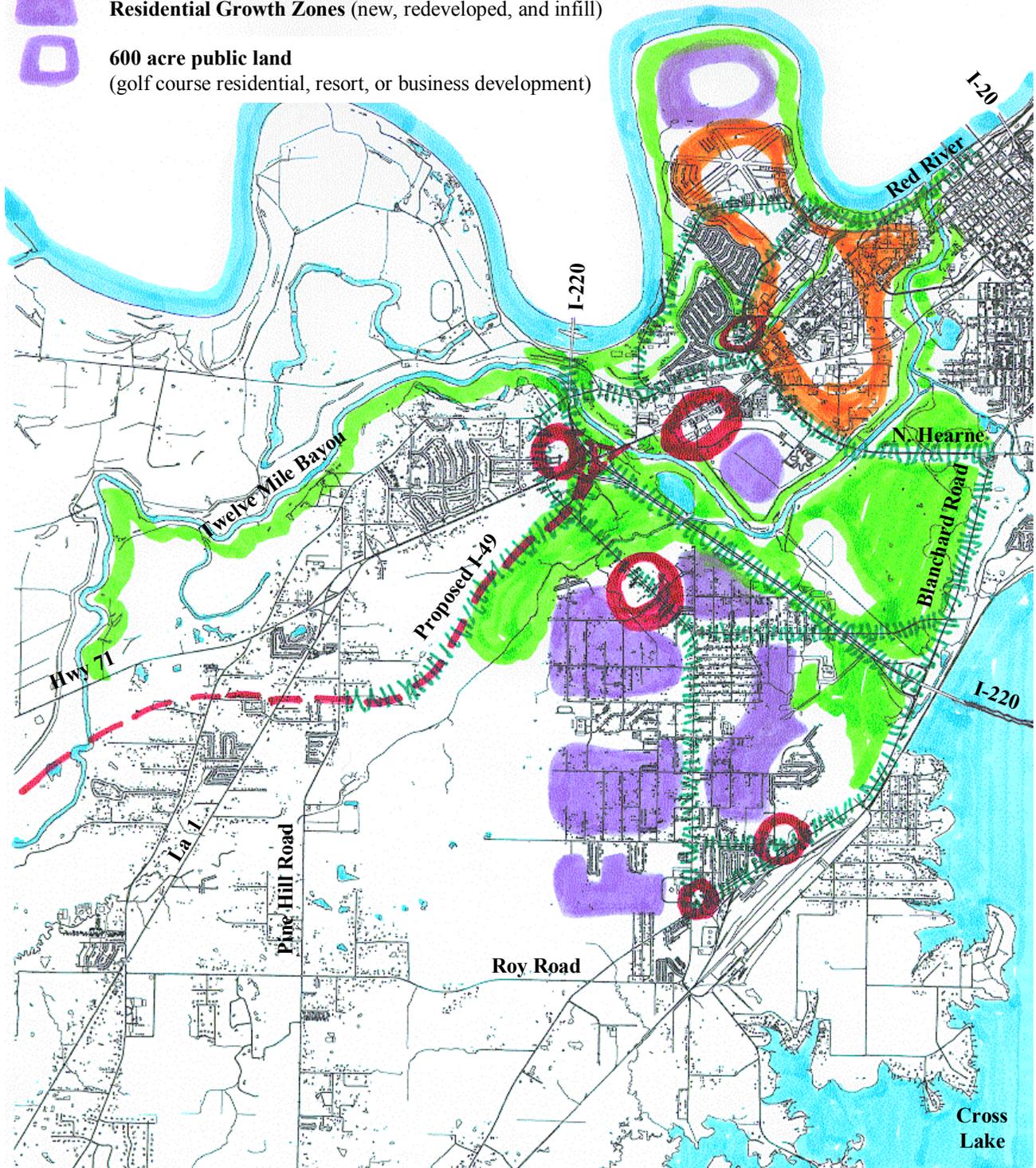
- A is +/- 140 acres
- B is +/- 400 acres

This approximately **540 acres** of land is recommended to be **annexed into the City of Shreveport** to simplify development and public services.

# Development Concept Growth Zones

-  Linear park and regional park development
-  Commercial Centers (new and redevelopment)
-  North Shreveport Greenbelt Roadway System
-  Agurs Business, Industry, and Technology Park
-  Residential Growth Zones (new, redeveloped, and infill)
-  600 acre public land  
(golf course residential, resort, or business development)

N   5400



# Market Street Gateway



Market Street is the primary business artery for North Shreveport. In the 1994 Agurs Area Development Plan a recommendation was made to improve the visual appeal of North Market and develop concepts appropriate for the “main street” of North Shreveport and a gateway to downtown. Quality public and private improvements are important marketing tools for attracting new business.

In this section of the development plan we will identify opportunities and constraints along North Market from I-220 to Cross Bayou. General concepts for public and private improvements are presented through maps and sketches following the evaluation.

## Opportunities and Constraints



•Market Street at I-220

•Entry to Vo-Tech from Market Street



Market Street as a gateway has strong portal symbols at each end -- bridges and views at Twelve Mile Bayou on the North and Cross Bayou on the South. There are also traffic nodes where roadways cross Market Street. These intersections offer opportunities for enhancement as gateway elements (i.e., I-220, North Hearne, and Common Street). This gateway stretch of Market Street (approximately 3 miles) has two different characters. The area from **I-220 to North Hearne** is characterized by generous building setbacks of grassed areas, signage clutter, and predominantly commercial/retail land use. The area from **North Hearne to Cross Bayou** is of older character. Setbacks range from none to generous. This character also includes visual clutter (e.g., outdoor product displays, deteriorating buildings, poor parking configurations, lack of signage controls, and lack of maintained green space), and predominantly industrial support businesses.



- + Large trees along roadways add amenity and allow views to businesses
- + Islands at intersections are opportunities for color planting



•Market Street at I-220

- Large expanses of paving adjacent to roadways is unsafe and visually unappealing



There are a number of assets along North Market that should be enhanced as improvements are planned and implemented. The following is a listing of **assets to build on**:

- + Cross Bayou and Twelve Mile Bayou have natural beauty that should be preserved through park development. The bridges over the bayous are wonderful transitions. Agurs and Cherokee Park are practically surrounded by water (only 1000 feet of the 11 mile perimeter boundary is land). Maybe this area could become referred to as **“Agurs Island”**.
- + Vo-Tech is a public asset that is in need of landscape and amenity upgrades.
- + Roadway widths and access.
- + Large trees and pockets of green space with trees in several locations.
- + Several businesses have lawn, trees and other landscape amenities in front of their business and parking to the side or rear of buildings.
- + Areas of generous setback have good “greenbelt potential”
- + Vacant land and vacated buildings are opportunities for new development.
- + Views to the Central Business District driving South.
- + The character and variety of the older buildings between North Hearne and Cross Bayou.
- +/- Variety of building setbacks near Cross Bayou.

There are also a number of liabilities or constraints that should be improved in redeveloping North Market as a gateway. The following observations are problems to overcome:

- Nonconforming parking lots with no landscape provisions
- Property standards of buildings and sites



- Outdoor product display looks like storage
- Signage
- Lack of streetscape
- Traffic signal mounting and overhead

- Outdoor product and equipment displays should be improved and in some instances eliminated (guidelines and design criteria would help)
- Outdoor advertising clutter from both on premise and off-premise signs
- Appearance and quality of street lighting
- Appearance of overhead utilities and screening of electricity substation
- Neglect of small old cemetery at Common Street intersection.
- General lack of greenspace and roadway landscaping.



- Signage Clutter
- Overhead power lines on wood poles
- Lack of streetscape trees and other amenities

- Unattractive product display
- Lack of streetscape tree planting and screening of service yard
- Overhead power lines and lack of updated street lighting



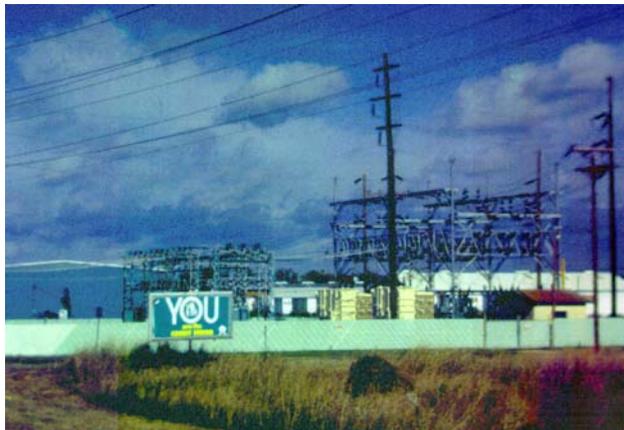


# Opportunities & Constraints (continued)

- Parking configurations
- Signage clutter
- Street lighting character
- Overhead power lines and poles



- Lack of screening for industrial parts storage and trucking operations
  - Overhead power lines and poles
- + Open land area for future business development



- Screening of electrical substation can be improved

- Signage Clutter -
- Building quality -
- Billboards -
- Overhead power lines -

Green space development potential +





## Opportunities & Constraints (continued)

- Fencing
- Lack of landscape
- Building quality
- Parking configuration

+ Setback and green space potential



- Lack of streetscape planting
- Power poles and overhead lines

+ Potential of rail line connector to CBD



- Signage clutter
- Parking configuration
- Lack of landscape
- Property standards

- Signage clutter -
- Lack of streetscape planting -
- Building quality -
- Overhead electrical on wood poles -
- Streetscape lighting -

Good potential for landscape/ tree planting +





## Opportunities & Constraints (continued)

- + Good quality building
- + Landscaping can be enhanced with streetscape tree planting
- Overhead electrical lines and typical street lighting



- Signage clutter
- Lack of landscape
- Overhead electrical and wood power poles
- Property standards

+ View to downtown



- Property standards (demolishing this building and clearing the site will make space available for new business)
- Possible environmental issues

+ Good location for new business



- Pavement condition and parking configuration
- Poor display quality (appearance is more like an outdoor storage yard than sales display)
- Vehicle display
- Lack of landscape/ streetscape
- Power poles

+ Pawn shop building adds interesting character to the streetscape



## Opportunities & Constraints (continued)

- + Good character building that adds to streetscape interest
- + Good green space development potential
- Poor parking configuration
- lack of streetscape landscaping



- + Good concept for a gasoline station
- + Generous green space that can be improved by adding streetscape trees and other landscaping to screen industrial building behind the site



- Parking configuration
- Lack of streetscape landscaping and trees
- Overhead power lines
- Signage



- Traffic signal clutter
- Equipment display clutter and lack of setback
- Lack of streetscape landscaping
- Lack of street lighting character



## Opportunities & Constraints (continued)

- + Quality and character of masonry industrial building
- Parking configuration
- Lack of landscaping
- Overhead power lines



- +/- No setback
- + Interesting building contribution to the streetscape
- + Landscaping could be better developed with streetscape trees
- + No parking in front of building



- Parking configuration
- Signage
- Lack of streetscape landscaping



- + Building is well maintained
- Power poles, overhead lines, and street lighting
- Parking configuration
- Signage clutter



## Opportunities & Constraints (continued)

- Parking configuration
  - Signage
  - Lack of landscape
- + Good potential for landscape improvements



- Parking configuration
  - Signage quality
  - Lack of landscaping
  - Overhead electric lines and wood poles
- + Buildings diagonal to Market Street provide good landscaping potential



- Parking configuration
  - Signage clutter
  - Overhead power lines
- + Landscape potential with diagonal orientation to Market Street



- + View to downtown
- Overhead power lines and wood poles
  - Traffic signal mounting
  - Lack of streetscape planting and updated street lighting

# Concepts

The concepts for improving North Market are based on creating a positive impression for Market Street drivers (visitors and regulars). The following are criteria developed from public meetings to guide concept development:

- The driver arriving from I-220, or passing under I-220 should feel they have entered a special place. The same should be true at Cross Bayou.
- The driver should feel they are in a clean, safe community that values nature and takes pride in its appearance.
- Signage should be easy to read, consistently located and not overwhelming in size or information.
- Billboards should only be used to promote the Agurs/North Shreveport area, not specific products or businesses.
- Street lighting should light the roadway without glare from fixtures.
- Landscaping should not obstruct views to businesses.
- Building and parking lot lighting should be creative and enhance buildings and landscaping.
- Parking lots should be landscaped to minimize the adverse visual impact of large parking lots.
- Buildings and signs should be of quality materials (long term vs. short term).
- Major intersections that connect to other through traffic arteries should be easily identifiable as gateway intersections.
- Traffic signals should be design coordinated with street lighting to help unify the gateway street character.
- Electric utilities on wood poles should be located underground or rerouted behind businesses.

- Street light poles and fixtures should help define the character of Market Street Gateway.
- Roadways, curbs, and bikeways or sidewalks should be in good repair and well maintained.

The design concepts for North Market shown on the following pages in a series of sketches of various details and roadway areas. The concept components can be identified as follows:

## Gateway Parks & Traffic Nodes

- **Twelve Mile Bayou** can become a linear recreational park that connects North Shreveport to the rest of the City. The intersection of Twelve Mile Bayou, Market Street, I-220, and future I-49 is an appropriate location for a gateway park for North Shreveport and downtown. Recommended improvements include:
  - Trees planted in a grove configuration in ramp areas of I-220 (Crepe Myrtles or other flowering trees)
  - Enhanced views to the bayou
  - No billboards or outdoor advertising at the gateway
  - Street lighting in the same character as new lighting for Market Street
  - Pathways
  - Color planting

- The green area at the southeast corner of North Hearne and North Market looks like a park



- **North Hearne and Market Street** intersection is a node where traffic can go West to other parts of Shreveport or East to Clyde Fant Parkway. The green space and trees at the Southeast corner of this intersection are a good symbol for a gateway. Consideration should be given to designating this land as a public park and adding additional understory planting. Monument signs or public art are suitable in this green space to designate entry to Agurs,

Cherokee Park, and the Riverfront. Traffic signals should be mounted from poles to match the character of new lighting for Market Street. Fencing of private property fronting on gateway roads such as Market Street should be prohibited. The message sent by these fenced properties is clear -- stay out, this is not a safe place. Outdoor display should be controlled or reviewed by a Market Street Architectural Review committee. The intersection can also be enhanced by small grove style planting of flowering trees to match the proposed planting at I-220. Private sector reinvestments to improve or rebuild businesses at this intersection are challenges for NSDC. Major intersection lighting should be of greater intensity than roadway lighting. Uplighting trees and lighted gateway signage can also distinguish this as a gateway intersection.

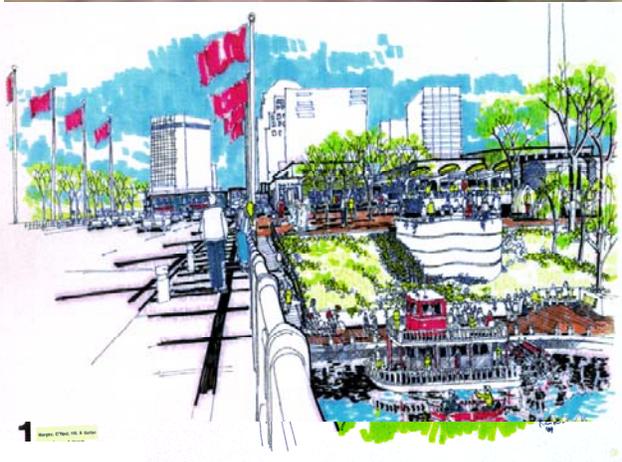
- Existing landscape at the northeast corner of Common and North Market Streets



- **Common Street and Market Street** is another traffic node intersection for East and through traffic. New traffic signal standards and underground or relocated electric lines would improve image. The existing business (Alloy Piping Products) at the northeast corner of the intersection has a grassed lawn and large trees that make a very positive statement. The southeast corner is an old cemetery site that should be maintained and landscaped. It is an unusual landmark for North Market that can become an attractive symbol to identify this intersection. The West Side of the intersection where portable buildings are displayed presents a poor image. Products displayed outdoors along Market Street should be minimized or eliminated. When display is permitted only a few samples should be displayed in a quality manner with appropriate lighting and landscaping. The appearance of a product storage yard is not acceptable for gateway roadway and is not good marketing for these businesses. Heavy landscape screening or

garden walls of masonry should be used to screen large quantities of products such as portable buildings or construction equipment.

This intersection should also be landscaped with flowering trees of the same specie as I-220 and North Hearne.



■ **Cross Bayou and Market Street/Spring Street** is another park environment gateway opportunity. This gateway is also a part of the proposed linear park system for North Shreveport that connects to the Riverfront. Maintaining the natural environment of Cross Bayou and refurbishing the bridges to include new lighting and possibly flag poles or monuments will define this part of Market Street. Proposed railroad museum improvements South of the bayou and other development potential are shown in the 1997 Waterfront Master Plan and the 1997 Railroad Museum Master Plan. The proposals for North Shreveport and Cross Bayou/ Riverfront should be coordinated through NSDC initiatives to assure that North Market and North Shreveport are not overlooked in developing both sides of Cross Bayou.

- Tree lined roadways of large trees such as River Oak with low limbs trimmed to 12 feet above the ground so views to businesses or “monument signs” will not be obstructed.
- Low planting such as ground cover or wildflowers that will not obstruct view.
- Create green setbacks where possible. Remove concrete paving where parking lots adjoin the street and establish landscape areas and drives to parking. Some businesses where buildings are not set back from the road and have nonconforming parking will require creative solutions. Consider eliminating parking in front of these businesses to establish landscape areas.

- Street lighting and traffic poles should be coordinated in style and finish. Street lighting fixtures should utilize new developments in outdoor lighting that provide higher efficiency and quality. Some fixtures allow for customizing features/ details at little or no additional cost. Market Street lighting should have its own unique character.

## Commercial Centers

Recreational/Park improvements and greenbelt roadways will provide a better image for North Shreveport. These public improvements should be accomplished as a part of a strategy to upgrade private sector property adjacent to these improvements. To demonstrate how this could work, the planning team has explored ideas for the underutilized age worn shopping center West of Market Street near I-220.

- Expansion and renovation of this center are part of a comprehensive **strategy to improve the North Shreveport demographic profile** to appeal to private sector.
- **Redevelop the center to include a portion as an enclosed mall** with movie theaters, restaurants, and shops. Identify appropriate anchor tenants.
- **Orient redeveloped center to Twelve Mile Bayou** with plaza overlooks and walkways. Outdoor spaces should be suitable for parties and other gatherings.
- **Upgrade the parking lot** by resurfacing and provide tree landscape throughout. Also upgrade parking lot lighting.
- Provide a more **ceremonial entry drive** and **quality signage** at Market Street.
- Improve the quality of buildings in front of the center with landscape and/or building renovations.

- Develop **additional residential sites along the bayou** behind the center and construct pedestrian path linkages. Current land use behind the center is industrial. Consider including elderly housing (independent living, assisted living and nursing home) as part of the center. Some health care facilities may also be appropriate in this center.

## Landscaping

- **Streetscape public improvements** should consist of tree planting to provide unity to this three-mile gateway roadway. Large growing deciduous trees that provide good fall color and seasonal variation in the character of Market Street. Green space along the roadway could be planted with wildflowers similar to Youree Drive. Intersection nodes and gateway parks can be defined with flowering trees such as Crepe Myrtle, Red Bud or Crab Apple.

- **Businesses along the roadway** should be encouraged to provide seasonal color landscaping and maintenance of yards and public areas in front of their business. Strategies should be devised to assist Market Street businesses to eliminate nonconforming parking along the street and install landscaping. These strategies may include assistance, such as low interest loans, grants, or bond issue improvements. Strategies could also include enforcement of property standards, or a special landscape/sign ordinance for a Market Street Gateway Overlay District that has sunset provisions for full compliance.

## Signage

- **Controlling business on premise signage and billboards** is a difficult challenge. Monument signs have a positive impact on the streetscape and are easy to see as you approach a business. However, many businesses feel they need a tall sign to let people know their choices from a great

distance. As every business fights for their piece of the sky the resulting visual pollution numbs the sign impact and helps make the entire street somehow less marketable and less shopper appealing. Reducing the signage pollution will require an on-going effort on the part of NSDC to provide education about proper signage and the economic value of coordinating monument & building signs for the entire Market Street Gateway.

- To address business outdoor advertising concerns a business menu/logo signage system could be incorporated with the greenbelt concept for Market Street. These signs could appear at traffic node intersections to identify businesses between these major intersections. Leasing space on these signs could provide revenue to help maintain the Market Street Gateway.

## **Parking & Drives**

- There are numerous drives and parking lots along Market Street Gateway that are in disrepair or non-conforming. In many instances, cars back into the street. The poor general condition of private sector drives and parking increase accident potential along Market Street. These conditions also contribute to the lack of visual appeal of the streetscape. NSDC and a Market Street Committee of the Agurs Business Association can work together to develop strategies that will encourage businesses to participate in improving their property. There are several property owners that are leading the way with facade and landscape improvements. Consistent encouragement and steady progress will result in more property owners joining the "band wagon."
- NSDC should provide design assistance to show how to improve current adverse conditions.

## Street Lighting

- Street lighting is an important element in establishing character of a roadway. There are a variety of fixtures and poles used to light Market Street (cobra head lights on wood or steel poles and another style fixture on steel poles). The Agurs Market Street Committee and NSDC should evaluate new developments in street lighting and select a fixture with low glare and wide distribution. Street lighting should not adversely impact residential areas near the roadway.

## Power Lines

- The electricity substation on the East Side of Market Street and North of North Hearne could be screened with more landscaping and masonry fencing. Work with SWEPCO to provide a higher quality appearance than the current fencing.
- Relocating the lower level power lines and removing the wood poles can enhance the appearance of Market Street as a gateway. Rerouting these lines behind businesses or locating the lines underground along the roadway will have a positive impact. The steel truss structures for power lines cannot reasonably be considered for relocation. However, the right-of-way for these lines is a grassed area and suitable for roadway trees. These trussed structures could possibly be painted and/or lighted artistically.

## Infill Development

- Several abandoned and substandard buildings along Market Street should be demolished and foundations and parking lots removed in preparation for new business development. Addressing these and other property standards, issues will require assistance from the city.

- Efforts should be made to recruit new businesses to Market Street that are “main street” type businesses. Businesses that do not improve the appearance of Market Street do not help improve the desirability of North Shreveport. Market Street **infill development** should be managed to achieve desired results. NSDC can fulfill that role.

## Market Street Gateway Investments

- I-220/Twelve Mile Bayou Park
- Cross Bayou Park
- North Hearne at Market
- Common Street at Market
- Greenbelt Roadway
  - I-220 to North Hearne
  - North Hearne to Common
  - Common to Cross Bayou
- Commercial Center Mall
- Street Lighting

### Public Investment

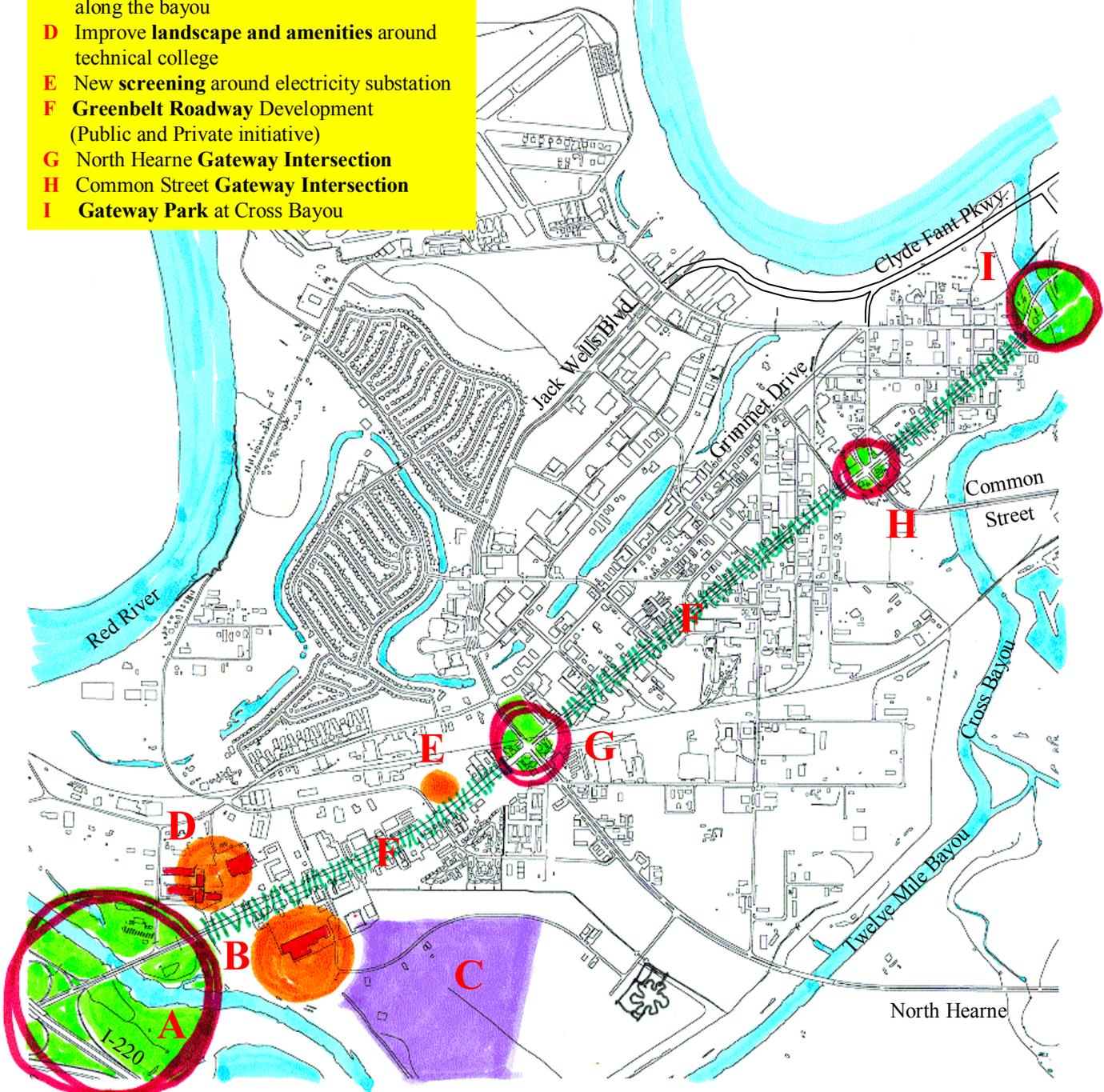
### Private Investment

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
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# North Market Street Gateway

N   1800'

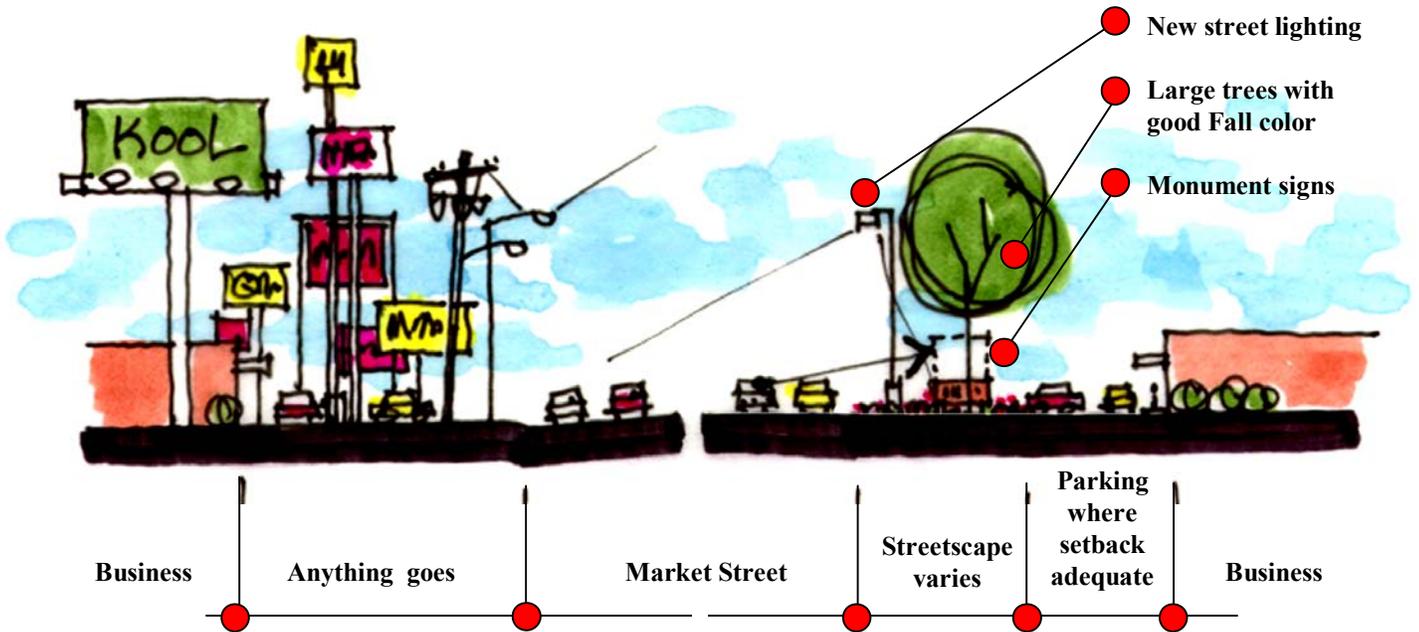
- A** Gateway Park at I-220, Market St., and Twelve Mile Bayou
- B** Renovate, expand and orient **commercial center** to the bayou and Market Street
- C** **New residential development** connected to **commercial center** by pedestrian paths along the bayou
- D** Improve **landscape and amenities** around technical college
- E** New **screening** around electricity substation
- F** **Greenbelt Roadway Development** (Public and Private initiative)
- G** North Hearne **Gateway Intersection**
- H** Common Street **Gateway Intersection**
- I** **Gateway Park** at Cross Bayou



# North Market Streetscape Improvements

## Existing

## Proposed



Business

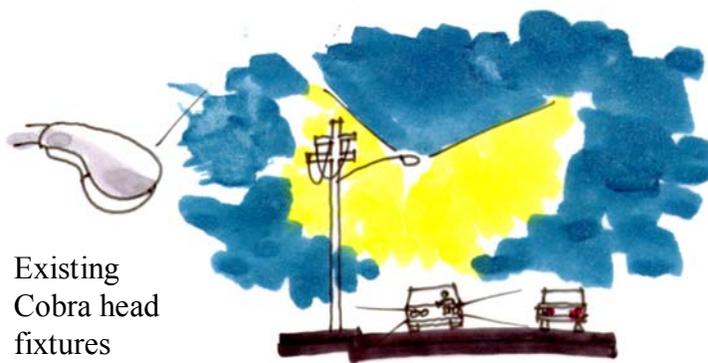
Anything goes

Market Street

Streetscape varies

Parking where setback adequate

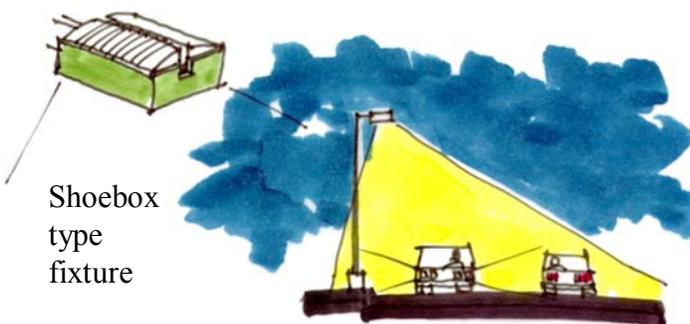
Business



Existing Cobra head fixtures

## Current Street Lighting

- Poor beam control lights up the sky and other unattended places (**inefficient**)
- Poor character and high glare factor
- Inconsistent pole mounting

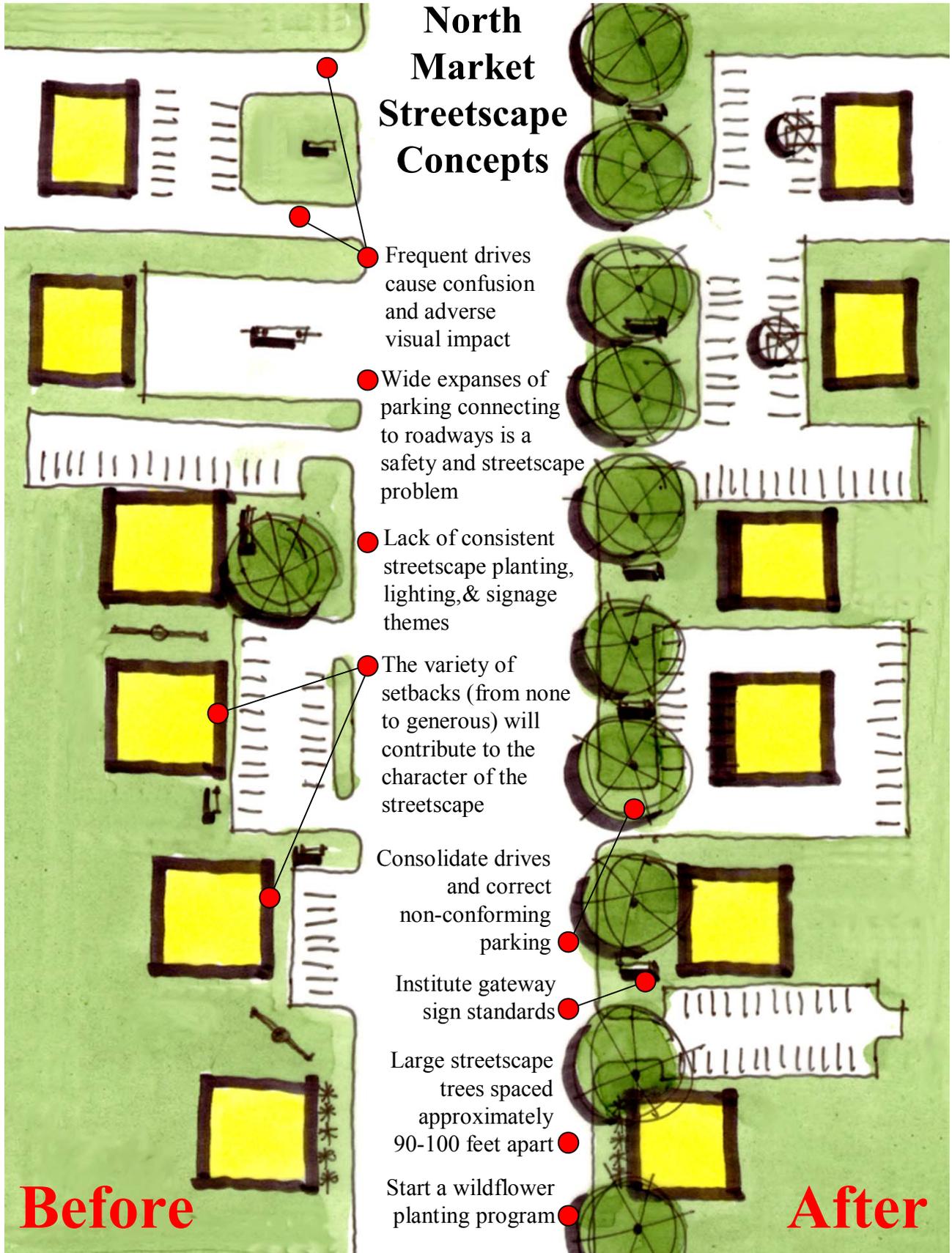


Shoebox type fixture

## Recommended Street Lighting

- + Good beam control available to light the roadway efficiently
- + Greater spacing / fewer fixtures due to higher efficiency
- + Good character and low glare factor
- + Color options and customizing options

# North Market Streetscape Concepts



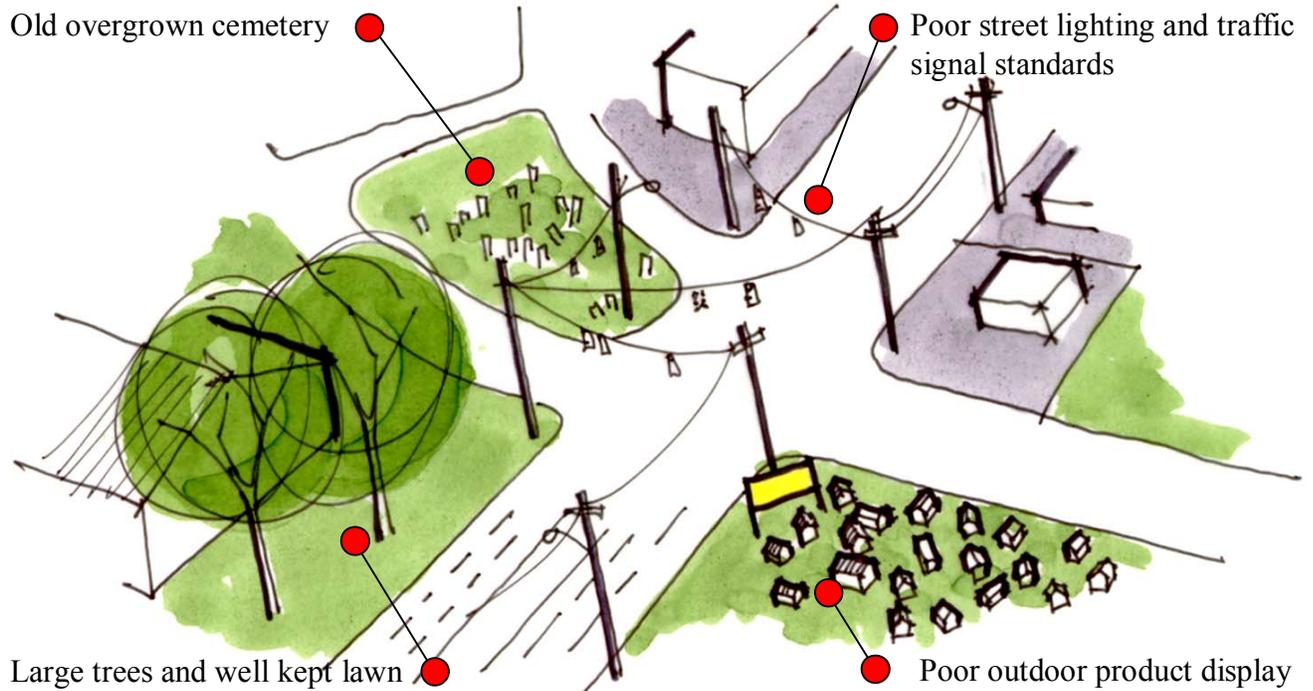
- Frequent drives cause confusion and adverse visual impact
- Wide expanses of parking connecting to roadways is a safety and streetscape problem
- Lack of consistent streetscape planting, lighting, & signage themes
- The variety of setbacks (from none to generous) will contribute to the character of the streetscape
- Consolidate drives and correct non-conforming parking
- Institute gateway sign standards
- Large streetscape trees spaced approximately 90-100 feet apart
- Start a wildflower planting program

**Before**

**After**

# North Market Street Gateway Improvements

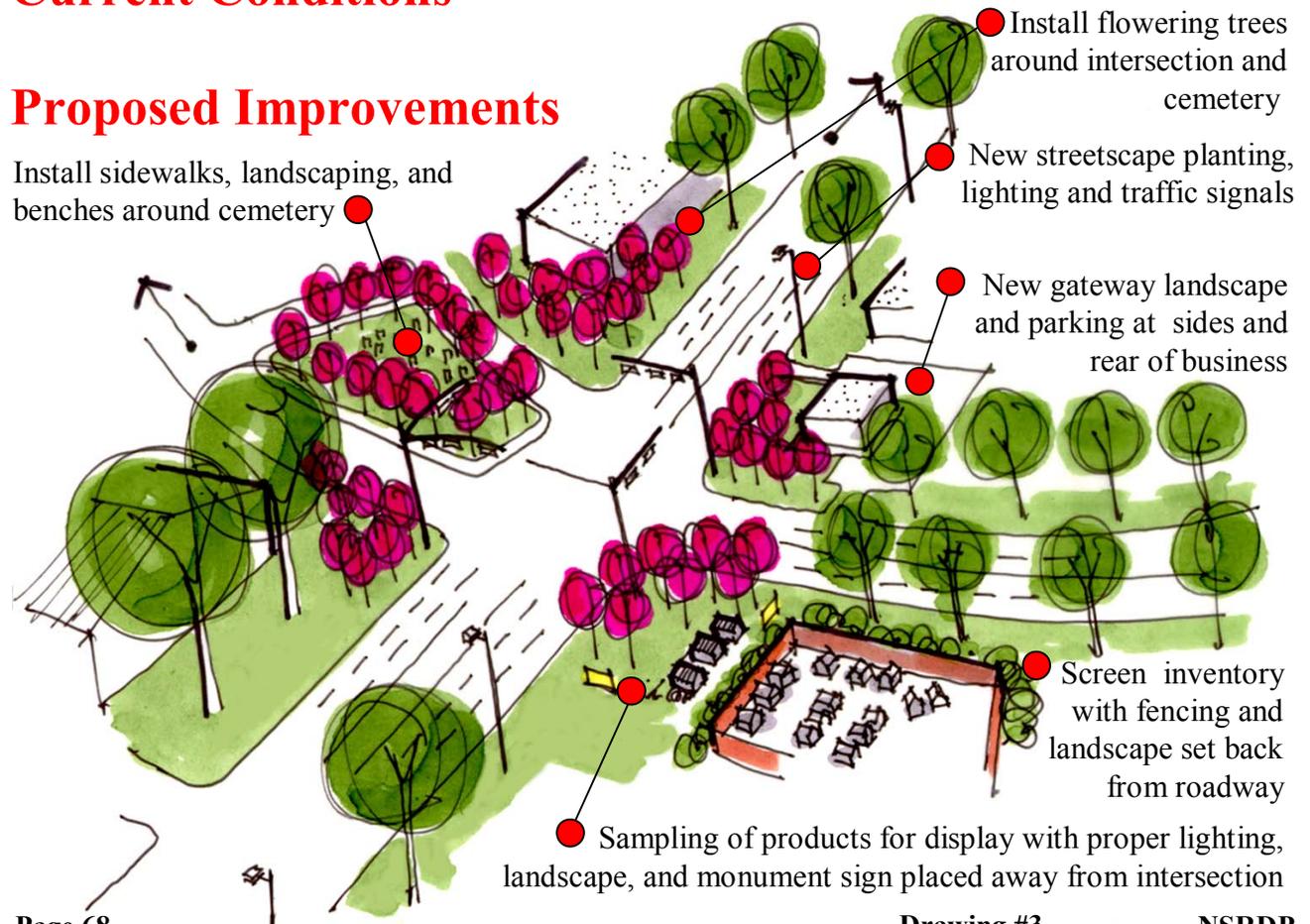
## Common Street Intersection



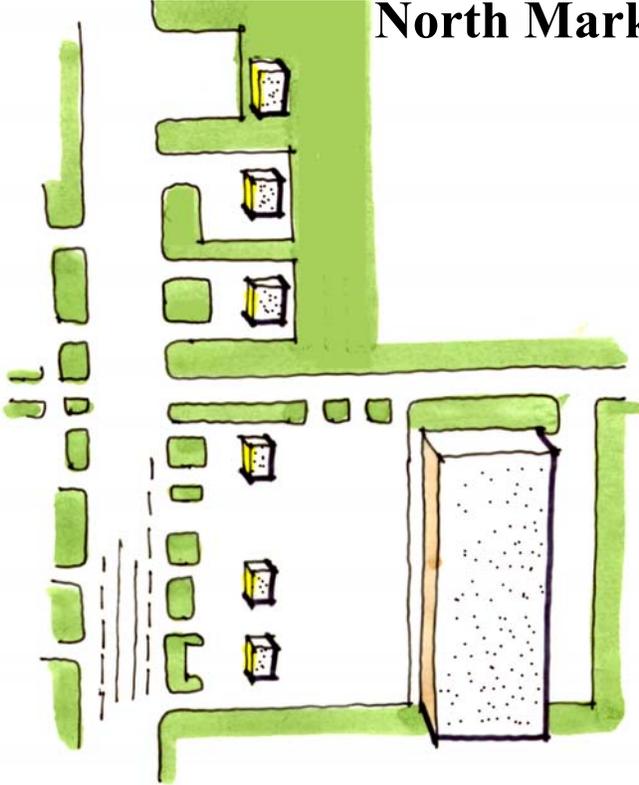
## Current Conditions

## Proposed Improvements

Install sidewalks, landscaping, and benches around cemetery



# North Market Streetscape Improvements



## Current Conditions

The existing roadway has an excessive number of driveways, lack of landscape, signage clutter, large expanses of paved parking in poor repair, inconsistent street lighting, and a number of buildings in need of renovation or demolition.

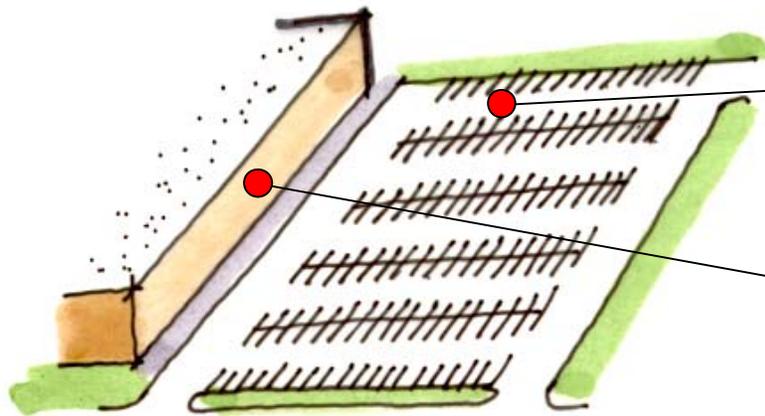


## Recommended Improvements

**A revitalized streetscape can focus on the following:**

- A tree planting program to plant large trees that add Fall color and unity to the streetscape and;
- Reducing and consolidating driveways to provide more green space and better visual organization along the roadway and;
- Consolidating parking and encouraging connected parking lots along the front and rear of businesses and;
- Instituting gateway sign standards such as monument signs and roadway information signage and;
- Establishing a wildflower program for North Market Street.

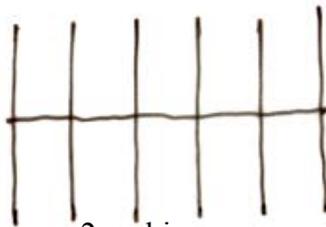
# North Market Street Gateway Concepts



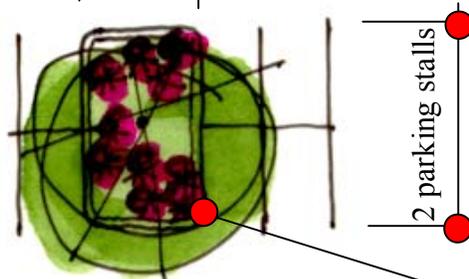
Existing large parking lots are void of landscape and uninviting to customers of old retail centers

The lack of amenity and landscape contributes to the tired run-down appearance of these facilities

Plan view of existing

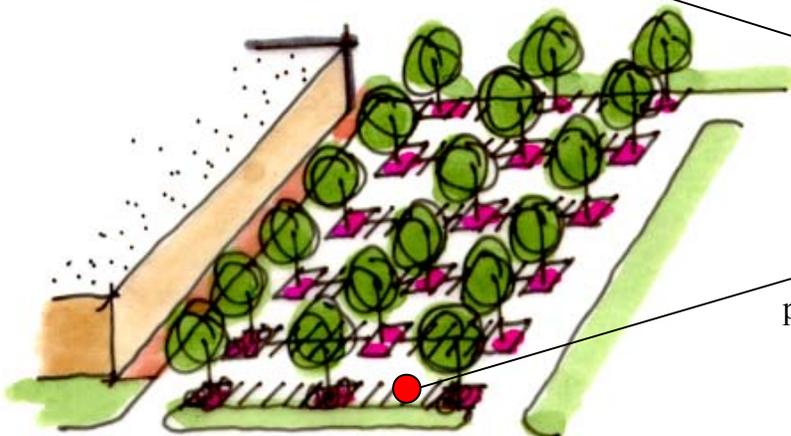


Plan view of proposed



## Typical Existing Parking Configuration

## Proposed landscaping of Parking Lots

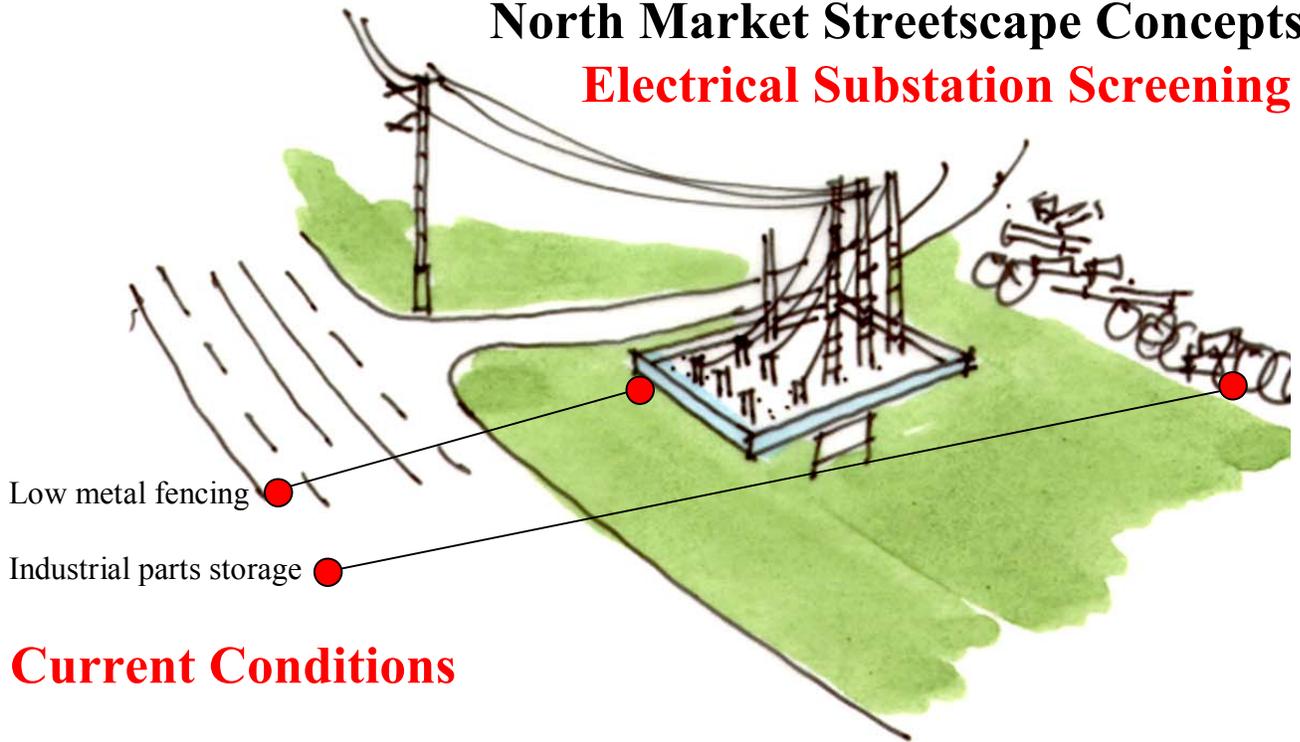


Installing trees and ground cover in parking lots will improve the image of existing retail centers

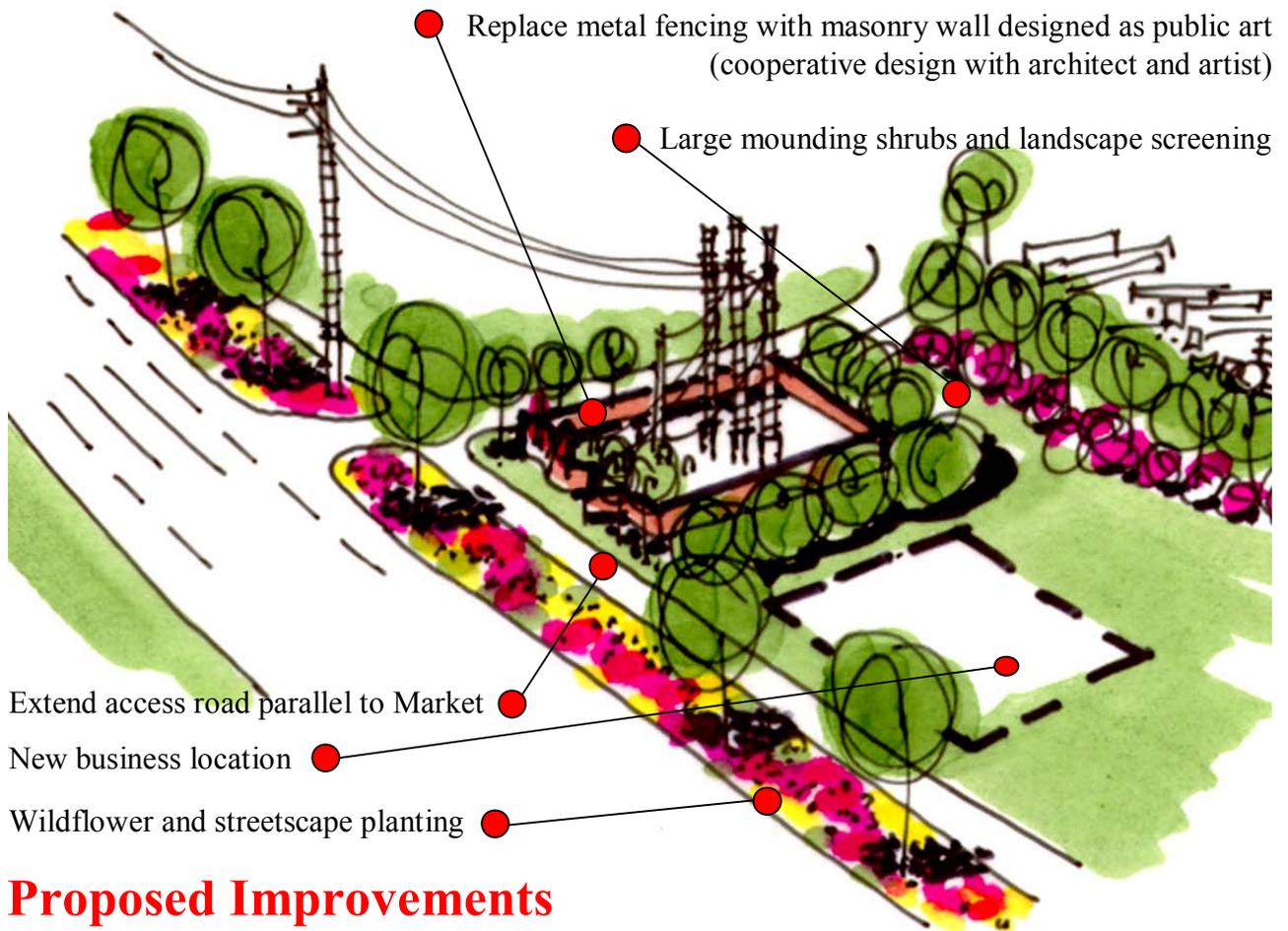
Allow for reduction in required parking or shared parking scenarios as a trade for effective parking lot landscaping

# North Market Streetscape Concepts

## Electrical Substation Screening



## Current Conditions



## Proposed Improvements

# Agurs/Cherokee Park

The neighborhoods of Agurs and Cherokee Park have confusing boundaries that are not recognized by residents and businesses. There is one elementary school, a fire station, and common commercial/business centers for both these neighborhoods. The planning team has combined the issues and strategies for these two neighborhoods. The combined areas will be referred to as “*Agurs Island*”. Included is the Agurs Business Area, Cherokee Park Residential Area, Highland Park Residential Area, and potential new residential areas targeted in this plan (Refer to Agurs/Cherokee map). This area is bounded by Red River on the East, Cross Bayou on the South, and Twelve Mile Bayou on the West and North. One short part of this boundary ( $\pm 1000$  feet) is by I-220.

“*Agurs Island*” has the physical and human resources to begin a successful development / redevelopment initiative.

- The river and bayous
- The downtown airport
- A strong manufacturing business base (+6,000 jobs or 25% of Shreveport manufacturing jobs)
- Open land for new business
- Adjacency to the Central Business District with a daytime population of  $\pm 8,500$  people
- Adjacency to Riverfront entertainment and festival areas
- The people resources of the Agurs Business Association
- The people resources of the Cherokee Park Neighborhood association

The initiatives for “*Agurs Island*” are important for the growth and development of all North Shreveport. The other neighborhoods of North Shreveport should take an interest in these efforts, support the initiatives, insist on quality, and use “*Agurs Island*” success as a part of the strategy for building successful surrounding neighborhoods. This connection should take place using NSDC that has equal board representation from all North Shreveport neighborhoods.

Several of the initiatives for Agurs have been discussed in other parts of this plan. For example: Market Street Gateway and recreational linkages are discussed in the preceding chapters. The following ideas are intended to provide a neighborhood focus on projects that are part of a larger context.

## Greenway Roads

- **Jack Wells Boulevard/North Hearne** will see increased traffic when the connection to Clyde Fant Parkway is completed. This traffic will likely include tourist visiting the riverfront, local traffic bypassing downtown, and Agurs employees that live in the southern parts of the city. Concepts should be developed to improve this roadway as a greenbelt. This should include appropriate landscape, street lighting, bike paths, and maintenance. It will become part of the “**Greenbelt Roadway System**” for North Shreveport. This idea will succeed if businesses along Jack Wells and North Hearne become proponents. Approaching the downtown Riverfront Clyde Fant Parkway presents a beautiful image for Shreveport and “*Agurs Island*”.
- Grimmet Drive is Main Street for many Agurs businesses. This road also connects to North Highland and to MLK Drive. The streetscape of Grimmet Drive should have landscape, signage, parking, and property standards that will be supported by business. Grimmet can become a greenbelt roadway without the level

of landscaping and streetscape development of Market Street. Arriving at a tree planting and maintenance program that is a public/private venture can be developed through the NSDC.

- Airport Drive and Wells Island Road are recommended for greenbelt development. Clyde Fant Parkway is planned to connect to Airport Drive in the future. A portion of Wells Island Road has been lost to Red River in recent years and should be considered for rebuilding as part of the North Shreveport Greenbelt Roadway system. These improvements should be planned to occur as part of a development strategy for the Downtown Airport and property East and West of the airport that is both publicly and privately owned.

## Linear Park Development

- The concept of a linear park around “*Agurs Island*” improves public access to the river and bayous. This idea is an extension of the existing linear park from downtown South to Bickham Dickson Park. It is also part of creating a recreational park linkage from North Shreveport to South Shreveport. In the chapter on investing in the future suggestions were made on how these parks could be funded through Federal programs. Public investment in these parks should be part of a strategy for attracting private sector investment.
- Between Cherokee Park and Highland Park is an old river bayou that could also be developed as part of “*Agurs Island*” linear parks (Refer to Map). This park can be designed to connect to the River and link two residential areas with commercial development in Freestate.

## Community Center

- The residential areas of Agurs island are in need of a community center with library, recreation, and meeting space. Current plans to enclose a park shelter in Mamie Hicks park will not adequately address neighborhood needs. During the Cherokee Park neighborhood meeting the planning team discussed with residents how surrounding a park with residences contributes to a safe park environment. Open views from streets and constant casual neighborhood observation of parks keep them safe. Observation of Mamie Hicks Park is limited. Enclosing the open park shelter will further reduce visibility into the park from Mayfair Street and likely result in a park that is less safe. The shelter will also be more restricted in time of use. Residents of the neighborhood could be better served by following through on their own idea of extending more public use of Cherokee Park Elementary School as a Community Center. Perhaps city bond issue funds could provide enhancements to the School that could better serve as a Neighborhood Center. NSDC can help the neighborhood organization provide the sustained effort to fully explore this idea.

## New Development

- Agurs could be promoted for new business and development in many ways. For example, is it a Business Neighborhood? A Business & Technology Park? An Industrial Park? Or a way of life? Promoting the area for new business is in part communicating a vision of what the area will become. The planning team recommends recruiting and cultivating small business and clean industry to fill vacant lots between businesses and redevelop substandard or poor quality facilities. The public amenities (parks and greenbelt roadways) will enhance recruitment and quality.

## What to do with the Airport Property?

- Additional residential development is needed to attract many of the commercial businesses that North Shreveport residents would like in the commercial centers. This development should be targeted at improving the demographic profile of North Shreveport. Two potential sites are identified on the “*Agurs Island*” map.
- The 600 acres of land East of the Downtown Airport is a tremendous opportunity for North Shreveport. If the land is used for residential development or resort/golf course/residential the results will help improve the market for commercial business that will raise the quality of life in North Shreveport. If the land is used as a Technology Park, jobs may be created, but the homes for the new jobs will likely be in other parts of Shreveport. The mission for this plan includes a goal that people who work in Agurs will live in North Shreveport. NSDC should focus on desirable outcomes in advocating uses for this land that allow North Shreveport to catch up with the rest of Shreveport and North Bossier. If the land development is structured appropriately to provide income for the Airport Authority the income could be leveraged 9 to 1 for improvements to the downtown airport. A comprehensive strategy can produce a significant return on investment for the public.

# Agurs/ Cherokee Park “Agurs Island”

N   3000'



- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>A</b> Linear park around “Agurs Island”       | <b>E</b> New residential development                                  | <b>H</b> North Market Street Gateway (refer to North Market Street chapter) |
| <b>B</b> Future 600+/- acre development          | <b>F</b> Greenbelt Roadway- N. Hearne/ Jack Wells/ Clyde Fant Parkway | <b>I</b> Paul Lynch Park south of I-220                                     |
| <b>C</b> Linear park along Old Twelve Mile Bayou | <b>G</b> Greenbelt Roadway- Grimmet Drive                             | <b>J</b> Future Parkway extension- stabilize river bank                     |
| <b>D</b> Possible Scenic Rail routes             |   |   |

# Martin Luther King, Jr. Neighborhood

The MLK neighborhood according to 1990 census figures is approximately 11,000 people living in approximately 3,060 housing units of the 3,560 total existing units (avg. 3.65 persons per household). Approximately 63% of the occupied units are owner occupied. Residents of MLK do not agree with the census count and believe at least twice as many people reside in MLK as reported in the census count (over 22,000). The neighborhood is reported by residents to be the second largest African-American community in the country.

There are three elementary schools; a middle school, a high school, and Southern University, located in the neighborhood. Residents are proud that this is one of a few neighborhoods that can boast that a child can begin his education at head start and finish with a college degree without leaving the community.

MLK is a mixed income neighborhood. One segment of the population is educators, business owners, and professionals. Another segment, approximately one-third, lives at poverty levels. The \$1,034 average monthly income per household reflects this disparity. The life style differences are evident in the homes throughout the neighborhood. There are paved, well-maintained streets with newer brick homes. There are also streets that are unkempt with vacant boarded up wood frame houses. Approximately 500 housing units were vacant in 1990. There are property standards issues that residents would like corrected as a part of neighborhood improvement.

There have been infrastructure improvements to MLK in recent years. The most evident is the widening of MLK Drive as a five-lane roadway. Voters have approved expansion of David Raines Community Center. There have been some private sector initiatives, particularly Willis Knighton's Health Center, that are attempting to provide services that will make the neighborhood more desirable for private investment. The residents care about their neighborhood and have worked through an active neighborhood organization to improve perceptions of MLK as an unsafe place. There is an entrepreneurial spirit that exists in MLK. It needs to be nurtured and focused on ideas and vision that build the neighborhood as a quality environment.

MLK is home for 35 churches that serve this community. At the neighborhood meeting residents expressed that there are perhaps too many churches. There was also concern that preachers do not focus enough energies on building the neighborhood and community. Similar perceptions exist concerning the role of Southern University and Vo-Tech. There was a general feeling expressed in the public meeting that both are good institutions that could do more to further the growth and development of MLK and its residents.

The character of MLK is a combination of spread out rural living and a few more concentrated areas of suburban residential streets. The neighborhood is the size of a small town without a center of activity. The improvements to MLK have improved access but have divided the neighborhood. There is little commercial investment and any that occurs is likely to become strip development. Strip commercial does not efficiently use public resources nor build the critical mass needed to create a **Commercial Center**.

There are a number of design ideas for MLK that will enhance the neighborhood and manage growth. These ideas are intended to produce long term sustained investment and an improving quality of life.

## **Recreation**

- Creating more recreation and quality-of-life improvements will attract residents with more disposable income that will attract more commercial business. Park development in North Shreveport has not kept pace with other parts of the City. This may be due to population densities or other socio-economic reasons. MLK and North Shreveport are blessed with beautiful land (trees, rolling hills, waterways, and wetlands) that are natural for park development in North Shreveport as part of a strategy for economic development. The maps and diagrams throughout this plan suggest linking MLK to the rest of the City through park linkages. Some funds for I-49 improvements should be directed into park development for North Shreveport to mitigate the visual and noise pollution of the highway. Developing Paul Lynch Regional Park and a linear park along McCain Creek/Twelve Mile Bayou should finally happen if the neighborhoods of North Shreveport and NSDC work to make it happen. Through good design and strategic planning the land adjacent to the parks will be attractive to real estate/business development.

## **Promote Compact Development**

- Increasing residential density in MLK will improve the sense of community and neighborhood security. The strategy is to redevelop certain targeted areas and add new streets and housing that result in more compact development and pedestrian friendly neighborhoods connected to recreation and/or commercial centers. Compact development patterns use public infrastructure more efficiently and cost effectively.

## Commercial Centers

- Restricting growth areas and preserving forest and wetlands will result in more cost effective use of public resources and improved development quality.
- Developing commercial centers instead of a strip development will make MLK a more livable place. The result will make MLK more desirable than other neighborhoods of the city whose residential areas are being adversely impacted by strip commercial development. Containing commercial growth is not easy, but it will be worth it. Cooperative efforts and thoughtful planning are keys. Three commercial centers are proposed for MLK -- one at MLK & Paul Lynch Park, one at Blanchard Road and MLK Drive, and one at David Raines Road & Blanchard Road. These centers should encourage shared parking and pedestrianism.

## Greenbelt Roadways

- MLK Drive is in need of amenities. Develop the roadway as part of a greenbelt system for North Shreveport. This greenbelt should show off North Louisiana trees and provide sound buffers that will encourage residential development within approximately 100 feet of the roadway. Bike paths could also be included. This concept combined with commercial centers at each end of MLK Drive will improve residential development patterns. This greenbelt roadway will connect to Grimmet Drive and other greenbelts of North Shreveport.
- Blanchard Highway should also be considered as a greenbelt. This roadway is targeted for improvements in the current transportation plan. Tree planting and bike paths could connect to wetland park areas proposed for Hearne Extension. Approach KCS about tree planting and landscaping along their property on the West Side of Blanchard Road as part of public and private improvements to this roadway.
- Russell Road has some of the characteristics of a greenbelt. This approach to MLK

neighborhood is through the wetland area of Hearne Extension. The roadway should be improved, but the character maintained as a beautiful roadway through a wetland park. Bike paths or lanes should be part of the roadway improvements.

- A greenbelt David Raines Road from Blanchard Road to MLK Drive as a greenbelt will provide additional linkage amenities for local neighborhood traffic.

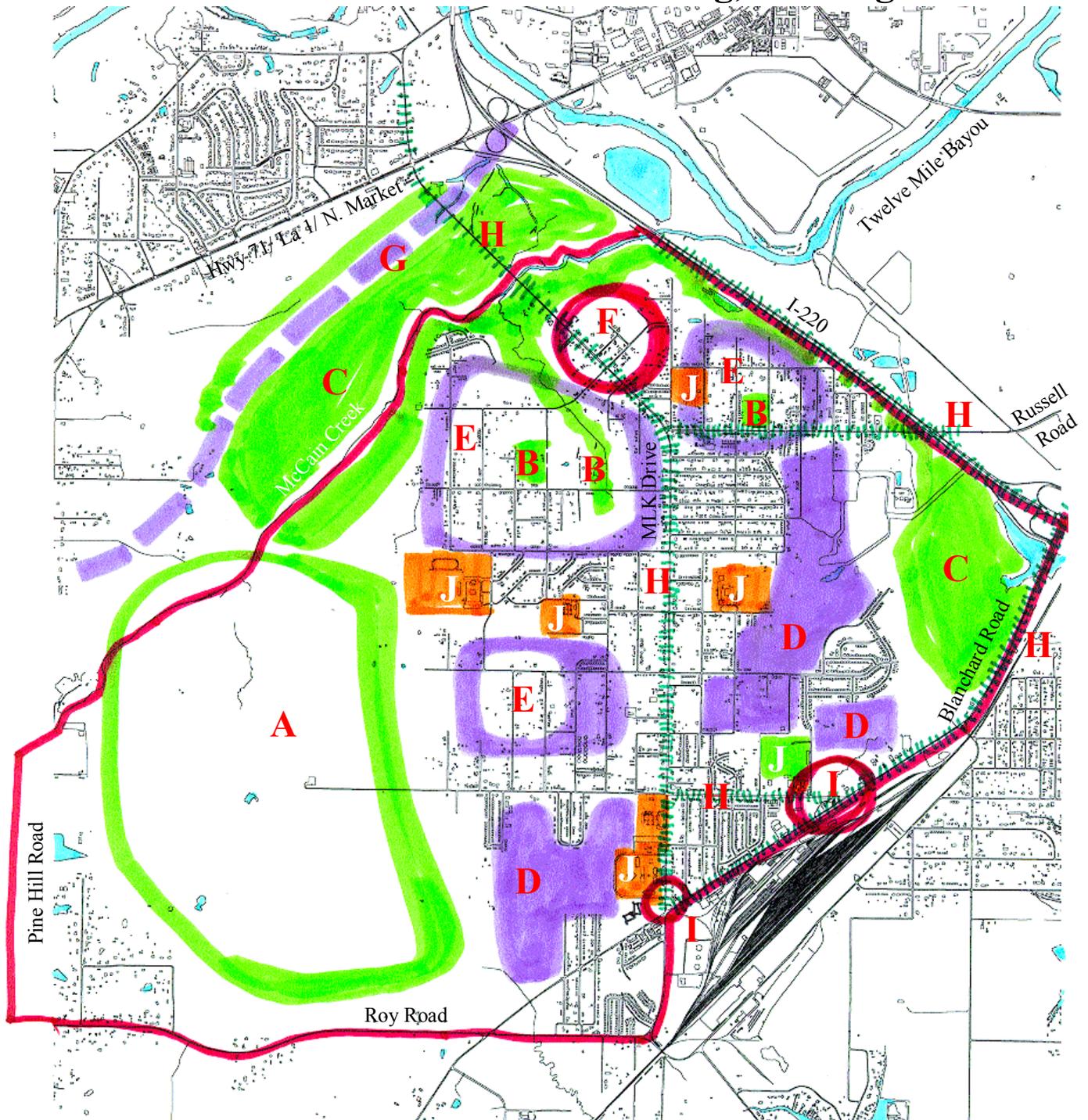
## Property Standards

- The MLK Neighborhood Organization with the help of NSDC should continue to push for property standards enforcement. The 500 vacant housing units should be renovated or demolished. When the city has a lien against property, the liens should be exercised and the property taken. This approach of property assembly can be part of a redevelopment strategy that prepares land for new owners that build homes and improve the tax base. It could also result in NSDC or MLK Neighborhood Organization taking the role of a non-profit developer.

## Moving Forward

This planning process is just the beginning of a sustained effort to improve MLK and North Shreveport. The opportunities and potential exist. Continue design and strategic planning as a means to attract and assemble private investors. The MLK Neighborhood Organization and NSDC can make things happen!

# Martin Luther King, Jr. Neighborhood



- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>A</b> No growth zone- forest area  | <b>D</b> New residential development zone   | <b>G</b> Suggested I-49 alignment to intersection with I-220 |
| <b>B</b> New neighborhood park  | <b>E</b> Infill residential zone  | <b>H</b> Greenbelt Roadways                                  |
| <b>C</b> New Paul Lynch Regional Park (refer to Agurs, N. Highland, & Hearne Extension) | <b>F</b> New Commercial Center with pedestrian connections and views to regional park | <b>I</b> Commercial Center development                       |
|   |   | <b>J</b> Refer to Public Facilities Map                      |

# North Highland

Residents of North Highland feel that their neighborhood has become transitional in part due to government policies. For example, the Caddo School Board divided North Highland at Poleman Road into separate school districts as part of a consent decree. The result is that North Highland Elementary School is no longer the focus of the neighborhood. Residents expressed that this has had both good and bad consequences. It helped stimulate white flight to Blanchard and property values have been reduced, but this has allowed more young families to purchase housing.

Most of North Highland is a reasonably compact neighborhood in rolling wooded terrain. Yards and landscape are mostly well maintained. Residents have a history of organizing for specific causes but do not have an active neighborhood organization. Key issues include:

- How to remedy substandard property
- There is need for a neighborhood park
- Gateway improvements at the entry to North Highland
- Traffic signal improvements on North Market
- Finding issues that will stimulate the neighborhood organization and get new residents involved.
- How does North Highland help promote all of the assets and potential of North Shreveport to Government and Chamber officials?
- Street maintenance and repair

North Highland makes a favorable impression as a residential area. Traffic arriving into Shreveport on Highway 71 from the North is

greeted with a landscaped divided highway and residences that are screened with generous landscape. The impression is consistent with a greenbelt roadway. The impression changes near the intersection of Market (Highway 71) and MLK Drive. Strip commercial has begun moving North and is helping erode the value of the residential area adjacent to it.

North Highland residents are on average older and more affluent than residents of the other North Shreveport neighborhoods are. The attendees of the neighborhood meeting indicated a high degree of support for helping North Shreveport move forward together. There are several design and planning issues that can improve the North Highland Neighborhood.

## **Parks**

- Establishing a neighborhood park on the school grounds of North Highland Elementary can provide a recreational focus and a common ground for the entire neighborhood.
- Explore a long term initiative to extend North Shreveport linear park development along Twelve Mile Bayou. Improve Old Mooringsport Road as a greenbelt roadway that connects to parkway development along Wells Island Road. These two projects should be connected to an economic strategy for North Shreveport in order to receive funding. The impact, however, will enhance the desirability of North Shreveport as a place to live, work, and raise a family.
- Much of the proposed Paul Lynch Regional Park will be located within the North Highland boundaries. The neighborhood should support this project and its funding as part of I-49 development. This is an opportunity for North Shreveport to have a regional park similar to South Shreveport. Activities could include sports fields, equestrian trails, a lake and boat launch into

Twelve Mile Bayou, picnicking, and more. The park can help provide a sound buffer from I-49 for North Highland and MLK neighborhoods.

## **Commercial Center**

- Efforts should be made to stop sprawling strip commercial development along Market Street. This is a growth management tactic to restrict outward growth. The existing commercial strip center is in need of landscape amenity to improve its desirability. Additional commercial business demand should be met in and around this existing center. More pedestrian friendly solutions can be explored through cooperative efforts that include NSDC, North Highland Neighborhood Organization, private sector, and the Metropolitan Planning Commission. Development demand can be met between Ravendale Road and I-220. Both are recommended as part of the Greenbelt Roadway System. This land is on top of a hill, and parallel to I-220 with potential good visibility from an I-49/I-220/Highway 71 intersection.

## **I-49**

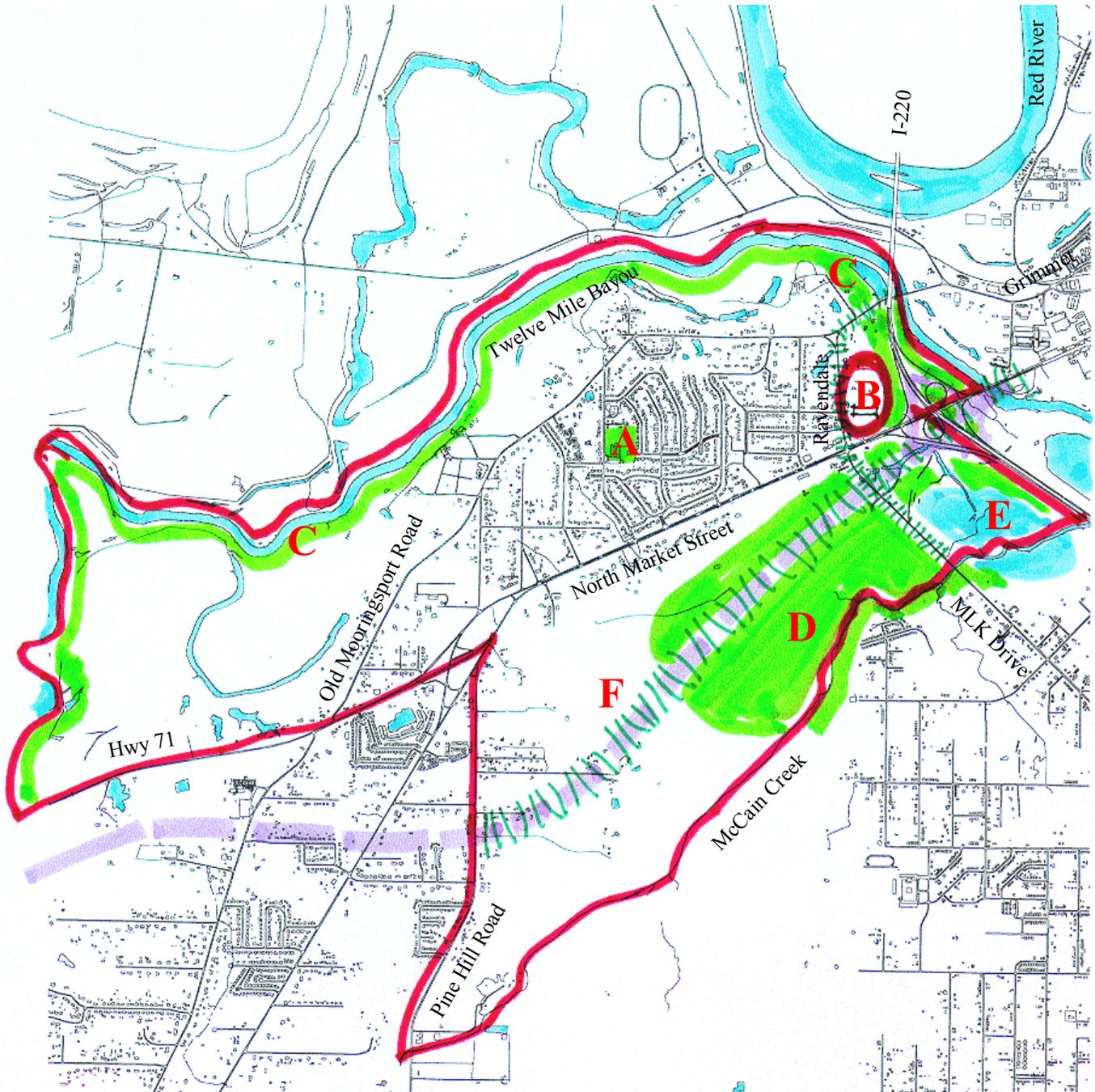
The alignment of I-49 has consequences on North Shreveport. North Highland and all of North Shreveport should work together to aim I-49 at the I-220/Hwy. 71 intersection and eliminate consideration of a connector artery from I-220 to I-20. Through traffic provides little benefit to the economy and potentially causes more problems for adjacent neighborhoods. Cars add to the economy of a neighborhood when they go by shops and businesses. Market Street needs a stimulus that can be provided by aligning and designing I-49 to the advantage of North Shreveport.

Proponents of a through city route are generally supportive of outward city migration and truck routing through the center of the city. Both are negative impacts on Shreveport.

The I-49 and I-220 routes within North Shreveport are indicated on the map as greenbelt roadways. Both routes through the area are within or adjacent to wetlands or flood plains that do not readily support development. The alignments through North Shreveport should be free of billboards and become a **beautiful gateway** into Shreveport that helps buffer residential areas from highway noise pollution.

The time for North Highland to become an advocate for quality growth of North Shreveport has arrived. All the neighborhoods of the planning area have common issues. What is good for one is good for all.

# North Highland



**A** Develop Neighborhood Park at elementary school or other central location

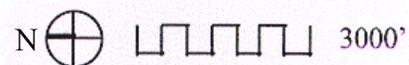
**B** Commercial Center developed east along Ravendale Drive with more pedestrian amenity

**C** New Linear Park along Twelve Mile Bayou

**D** New Regional Park with equestrian trails, paths, picnicking, camping and ball fields

**E** New lake

**F** Suggested I-49 alignment to intersect with I-220 and Market Street



# Hearne Extension

The 1990 census shows no population for the Hearne Extension area. The boundaries are Shreveport Blanchard Road and Cross Bayou on the West and South; Twelve Mile Bayou and McCain Creek to the East; and I-220 to the North. This land is about 90% wetlands and flood plain below the Cross Lake dam. The average elevation is approximately 160 feet above sea level. The spillway elevation of Cross Lake is 171. The following are suggestions for this land area.

## Wetlands Research Park

- This land area can become an asset to North Shreveport as a wetland research and wildlife area that connects to Twelve Mile Bayou Linear Park and Paul Lynch Park. The total land area is approximately 1000 acres. There are several oil and gas wells in the area, a sewerage disposal pond, a small area of industrial use, and commercial development, at the Blanchard Road/North Hearne intersection. Developing land for other uses requires large amounts of land fill and diminished capacity of the flood plain.

## Greenbelt Roadways

- The roadways through Hearne Extension Wetlands can be dedicated as part of a North Shreveport Greenbelt Roadway system that includes bike lanes, signage control, and wetland preservation. These roadways include North Hearne, Shreveport/Blanchard Road, Russell Road, and I-220. The sand and gravel excavations visible from I-220 should be screened with natural planting and trees.

## I-49 Inner City

- The inner city route proposed for I-49 through this wetland area will adversely affect potential recreational use. It will also diminish potential for residential development along the East bank of Twelve Mile Bayou

due to noise pollution. There is little if any commercial value to be gained by an off ramp at North Hearne. The travel distance for through traffic going North and South using the proposed inner city route is approximately nine miles compared to thirteen miles using the I-220/3132 Loop. Through traffic from the North going East and West is obviously better served by the loop. The negative consequences of this proposed section of I-49 are not worth the cost, added traffic congestion, and other negatives associated with this inner city route. Remove this routing from the current transportation plan and re-align the connection of I-49 to I-220 to occur at Market Street where measurable positive impacts will result.

# Hearne Extension



# Summary/NSDC Implementation Schedule

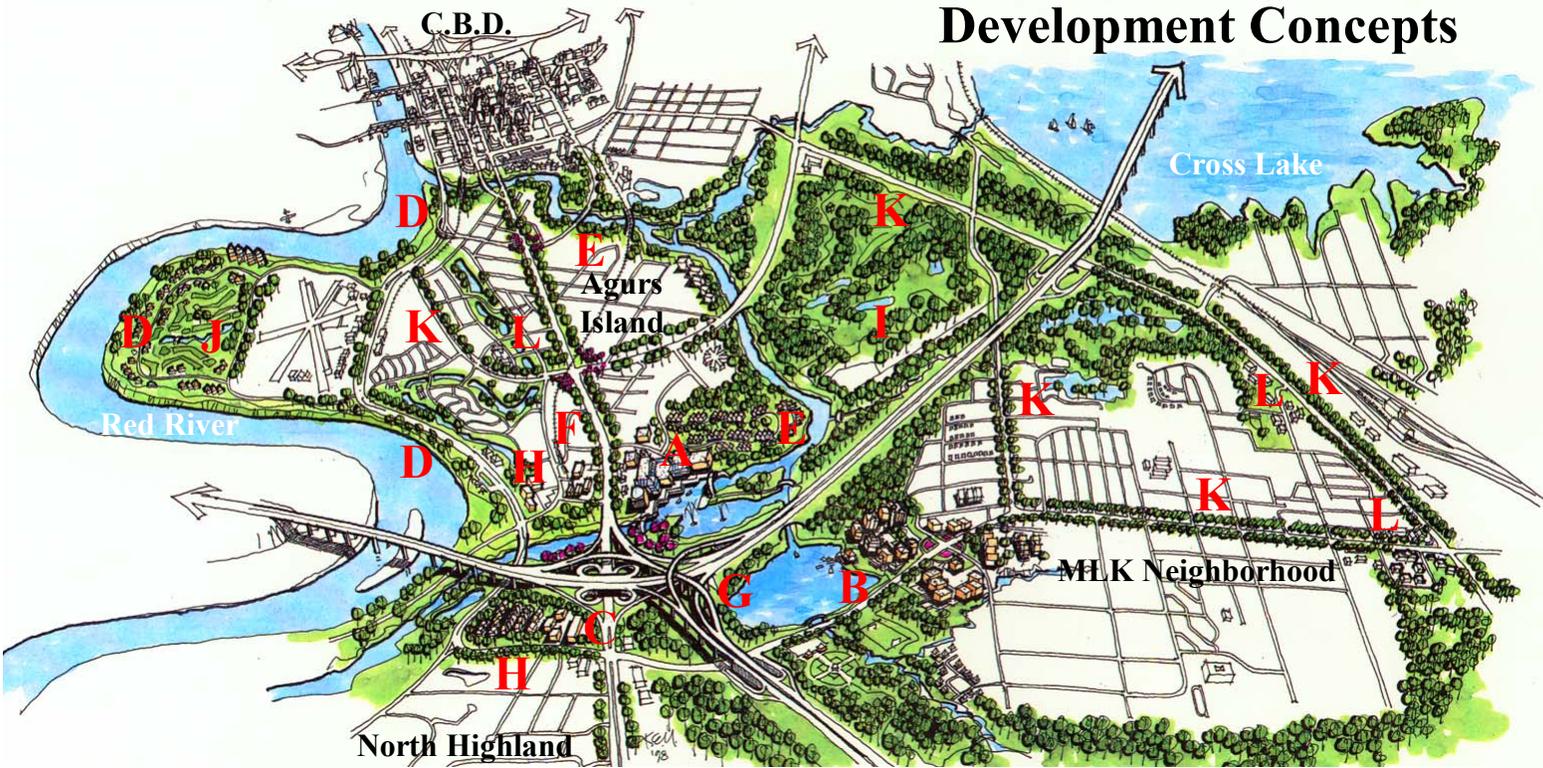
North Shreveport has potential to be a vibrant region. Improved housing, cleanliness, substantial retail activity, job growth, and cultural/educational opportunities are all within reach. The citizens of North Shreveport have created this plan; their ideas were the basis for it. Now, they will be responsible for implementing it.

North Shreveport Development Corporation will not magically appear. A group of people must roll up their sleeves and get to work. After public input and adoption, a committee of three representatives from each neighborhood should be chosen to work with the Metropolitan Planning Commission. This group will serve as the nucleus for NSDC. They should immediately meet with City and Parish officials.

A detailed implementation schedule follows. It shows what should be done, by when, who would be responsible, and how much it will cost. If it is followed, it will produce results. **Within two years, following the plan could produce almost \$1 Million in additional program funding.**

North Shreveport is not in a vacuum. It must ask for support from the entire community. The entire community must realize that as North Shreveport goes, so goes ALL of Shreveport. **They must adopt the plan and consistently work the plan.** It is possible! North Shreveport *can* realize its vision of having a “safe, self sustaining community where people will want to live, work, shop, and raise a family.”

# Development Concepts



- A** New regional shopping/ residential development connected to new Twelve Mile Bayou Linear Park
- B** New MLK Neighborhood Commercial Center connected to Paul Lynch Park
- C** Expanded North Highland Commercial Center to include new moderate intensity residential development
- D** New Red River Linear Park developed to I-220 bridge
- E** New Cross Bayou/ Twelve Mile Bayou Linear Park
- F** North Market Gateway Street development
- G** Recommended I-49 Gateway Interchange
- H** New Parkway extension north connected to MLK Boulevard
- I** Developed Paul Lynch Park expanded to include wetlands on both sides of I-220
- J** Approximately 600 acre development on public land east of Downtown Airport
- K** Greenbelt Roadways
- L** Neighborhood Commercial Centers



North Shreveport Development Corporation Implementation Schedule							
Task	Start Date	Who Responsible	Complete Date or Frequency	Revenue	Year Expenditure	One-Time Expenditure Sponsors	One-Time Expenditure Others
Amend and Adopt Plan	2/1/98	MPC/Neighborhoods	2/7/98				
Appoint Board and Committees	2/7/98	MPC/Neighborhoods	2/14/98				
Establish Organization	2/14/98	Board of Directors	5/15/98			\$5,000	
Secure Funding Commitments	2/14/98	City	5/15/98	\$120,000			
	2/14/98	Parish	5/15/98	\$75,000			
	2/14/98	Major Stakeholders	5/15/98	\$50,000			
	2/14/98	Residents	8/31/98	\$10,000			
Hire Executive Director (E.D.)	4/15/98	Board of Directors	5/15/98		\$50,000		
Hire Administrative Assistant	4/15/98	Board of Directors/E.D.	5/15/98		\$25,000		
Begin Committee Meetings	6/1/98	Committee Chairs/E.D.	Monthly		\$1,200		
Publish Newsletter	7/1/98	Image Committee/E.D.	Monthly		\$10,000		
Media Events Promoting NSDC	7/15/98	Image Committee/E.D.	Quarterly		\$5,000		
Manage Land Use/Property Standards	8/1/98	Image Committee/E.D.	Ongoing		\$5,000		
Partnership--Southern/Agurs	8/1/98	Education Committee/E.D.	Ongoing		\$5,000		
Partnership--Southern/Vo-Tech and area Secondary Schools	9/1/98	Education Committee/E.D.	Ongoing		\$5,000	\$5,000	
Partnership-Southern, Vo-Tech, and Louisiana Tech	9/1/98	Education Committee/E.D.	Ongoing		\$5,000	\$5,000	
Promote "Lifelong Learning Centers" (Partnership-School Board & LSU-S)	9/1/98	Ed. Committee/Board/E.D.	Ongoing		\$5,000	\$5,000	
Agurs Target Industry Analysis	9/1/98	Eco. Development Committee/E.D.	11/1/98				\$30,000
Agurs Advertising Materials	11/1/98	Eco. Development Committee/E.D.	12/1/98				\$30,000
Agurs Marketing Campaign	12/1/98	Eco. Dev. Committee/E.D. Chamber/SWEPCO/City	Ongoing		\$20,000		
N. Shreveport Park Target Analysis	12/1/98	Eco. Development Committee/E.D.	2/1/99				\$30,000
N. Shreveport Park Ad Materials	2/1/99	Eco. Development Committee/E.D.	4/1/99				\$30,000
N. Shreveport Park Ad Campaign	4/1/99	Eco. Dev. Committee/E.D. Chamber/SWEPCO/City	Ongoing		\$20,000		
Retail Development Plan	5/1/99	Eco. Development Committee/E.D.					\$50,000
Retail Recruitment Campaign	7/1/99	Eco. Dev. Comm./E.D. Chamber/SWEPCO/City			\$15,000		
Incubator/Entrepreneurial Center	8/1/99	Eco. Development Committee/E.D.	Ongoing				\$300,000
Advocate and Promotion of Home Ownership Programs	8/1/99	Transition Committee/E.D.	Ongoing		\$5,000		
Improvement Awards Program	8/1/99	Transition Committee/E.D.	Ongoing		\$5,000		
Establish Clean-Up Events	8/1/99	Transition Committee/E.D.	Ongoing		\$7,500		
Advocate for Community Centers & N. Market St. Improvement	8/1/99	Transition Committee/E.D.	Ongoing		\$5,000		
Community Oriented Policing Events	8/1/99	Crime Prev. Committee/E.D.	Ongoing		\$1,000		
Establish Weed and Seed Program	8/1/99	Crime Prev. Committee/E.D.	Ongoing		\$15,000		\$500,000
Criminal Activity Documentation	8/1/99	Crime Prev. Committee/E.D.	Ongoing		\$2,000		
Evaluation/Advocate Crime Deterrent	8/1/99	Crime Prev. Committee/E.D.	Ongoing		\$2,000		
Mentoring Program	8/1/99	Board/E.D.	Ongoing		\$2,000		
Personal Development Series	8/1/99	Board/E.D.	Ongoing		\$15,000		
<b>TOTALS</b>				<b>\$255,000</b>	<b>\$230,700</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>\$970,000</b>