

Lake Street Overlay Study

And Reclassification

Feasibility Study and Proposed Regulations 2006

On behalf of: Calcasieu Parish
Police Jury

Prepared by: Division of Planning
and Development
James J. Vickers, Director
and Staff

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A feasibility study was conducted for the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury to evaluate the need to develop a zoning overlay for the future of Lake Street in South Lake Charles. Design factors and constraints were outlined, and suitable alternatives were presented. The alternatives were evaluated using a set of quantitative criteria, narrowing them down to one recommendation.

With the progression of residential development and a forecasted potential for commercial development to serve these residents, an overlay district with regulations could set in place the creation of a more harmonious mix of development.

Finally, we conclude that it is justified to take a proactive approach to zoning regulations to better protect and enhance the residential character of this corridor and allow designated areas to develop with a well-balanced method. A recommendation is warranted for an overlay district to be established for the Lake Street corridor.

LAKE STREET OVERLAY STUDY AND RECLASSIFICATION

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I. PURPOSE

A feasibility study was conducted to examine the existing land uses of certain designated parcels and determine whether any of these parcels located adjacent to Louisiana State Hwy 3092 (Lake Street) should be reclassified with a special overlay zone in defense of the existing residential land uses. On April 7, 2005, the Calcasieu Parish Police Jury authorized the Division of Planning and Development to conduct a feasibility study for a zoning overlay on Lake Street.

II. SCOPE

All land area inventoried in this study is an approximation. A boundary was established to facilitate a proposed overlay district and reclassification area. The land total is approximately 70 acres within the boundary. The boundary commences approximately 480 feet north of Ham Reid Road and extends south approximately 5,800 feet to Gauthier Road. The east and west boundary distance is 400 feet on both sides of Lake Street including the 90-foot right-of-way for Lake Street.

III. STUDY RESULTS

A. WINDSHIELD SURVEY

After conducting a windshield survey of the target area, the staff established that the developed uses adjacent to Lake Street represents 95% residential and 5% commercial.

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There are a total of 498 residential dwellings within 10 subdivisions constructed or being constructed in or around the proposed overlay boundary. A calculation of land acreage within the boundary was assessed and a count of all homes and businesses were obtained. There are three houses accounted for within the boundary. There are six commercial businesses adjacent to Lake Street. The following is a list of subdivisions and current businesses within or encroaching the boundary:

Subdivisions

- Hidden Oaks
- Highland Meadows
- Lake Oak Estates
- Lake Ridge Estates
- Lake Street Estates
- Lakelyn Estates #1, 2, 3
- Oxford Court (City)
- Spring Crossing
- The Trails
- University Place Part S (City)

Businesses

- Reina Vegetarian Clinic
- Emulsified Asphalt, Inc.
- Rebecca Hughes, CPA
- Sunshine Acres Nursery
- The Toy Shed
- Alfred Miller Construction Co.

Approximately, 36 acres of the study area is currently undeveloped and zoned C-1 (Light Commercial) and C-2 (General Commercial) with the potential for commercial development. The land use patterns in the area were inventoried and compared to existing land use classifications as set forth by the Calcasieu Parish Zoning Ordinance #3940.

Within the study area, is a 90 ft. right of way for Lake Street constructed of asphalt with open ditches. The Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) intends to install a traffic light at the intersection of Gauthier Road and Lake Street.

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When the proposed boundary was established, the following approximate acreage was accumulated by zone:

- The acres within the boundary: **Approx. 70 acres**
- The total acres undeveloped: **Approx. 60 acres**

Undeveloped Acres

Residential..... Approx. 14
Agricultural..... Approx. 10
Commercial..... Approx. 36

Developed Acres

Residential.....Approx. 0
Agricultural.....Approx. 6
Commercial.....Approx. 4

B. DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

The forecast along the Lake Street corridor depicts growth for commercial development at two intersections: (Gauthier Road and Lake Street) and (Ham Reid Road and Lake Street). The kind of commercial development potential is convenience service type businesses (i.e. service shops, convenience stores, etc.) similar to the businesses existing northward on Lake Street in the city limits of Lake Charles. Some points of interest considered in this study include:

- The Nelson District Overlay enacted in 2004, will be a catalyst for commercial development in the future. Nelson District is positioned west of Lake Street and within a mile.
- New home construction is apparent on Ham Reid Road and Lake Street.
- Growth directed southward is apparent with the influx of subdivisions.
- The expansion of Lake Charles city services is inevitable given the City of Lake Charles' goal to annex this area in the future for economic development.

C. PAST HISTORY

There have been four rezoning cases near or within the proposed boundary since 1997.

Currently, a development has been approved for the southwest corner of Ham Reid Road and Lake Street, “La Firm Place”, which uses a development mix consisting of commercial buildings ranging from Contemporary, Traditional, and French Country in exterior design. “La Firm Place” will have a convenience store, a restaurant, multi-family housing, and patio homes. In creating an overlay district for Lake Street and establishing a building theme, it is advisable to encourage the continuance of building themes to coincide with the approved themes for “La Firm Place” to allow consistency throughout the corridor.

IV. RECLASSIFICATION AREAS

Areas in close proximity to the proposed boundary were analyzed by zone and evaluated by development trends. Approximately 178 acres were found and determined that the zoning should be updated. The following illustrates these areas numerically as depicted on the proposed reclassification map:

- **Area #1**
Consists of approximately 70 acres of A-1 (Agricultural) zoned property. The property encompasses an established residential subdivision (Lakelyn Estates Part 1) that has approximately 85 houses. Proposed to reclassify to R-1 (Single Family Residential) to maintain residential character.

- **Area #2**
Consists of approximately 23 acres of A-1 (Agricultural) zoned property. The property includes one barn. Proposed to reclassify to R-1 (Single Family Residential).

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- **Area #3**
Consists of approximately 32 acres of A-1 (Agricultural) zoned property. The property consist of a 120 ft. utility right of way. Proposed to reclassify to R-1 (Single Family Residential).
- **Area #4**
Consists of approximately 9 acres of A-1 (Agricultural) zoned property. The property is undeveloped and adjacent to the residential subdivision (Highland Meadows) that has approximately 152 houses. Proposed to reclassify to R-1 (Single Family Residential).
- **Area #5**
Consists of approximately 2 acres of R-1 (Single Family Residential) zoned property. The property encompasses established residential development that has approximately 3 houses. Proposed to reclassify to I-1 (Light Industrial) for future development of adjacent industrial business.
- **Area #6**
Consists of approximately 32 acres of A-1 (Agricultural) zoned property. The property encompasses an established residential subdivision (Lake Oak Estates) that has approximately 2 houses and 1 manufactured home. Proposed to reclassify to R-1 (Single Family Residential).
- **Area #7**
Consists of approximately 10 acres of R-2 (Mixed Residential) zoned property. The property is currently undeveloped and has no houses. The property is located within the Lake Charles Regional Airport flight boundary. Proposed to reclassify to C-1 (Light Commercial).

IV. RECOMMENDATION

With the progression of residential development and a forecasted potential for commercial development to serve these residents, an overlay district with regulations could set in place the creation of a more harmonious mix of development. Also, with the City of Lake Charles working toward supplying sewer and water services to the residents of South Lake Charles coupled with a growing potential for commercial development, we conclude that it is justified to take a proactive approach to zoning regulations to better

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protect and enhance the residential character of this corridor and allow designated areas to develop with a well-balanced method. Staff recommends that a commercial overlay district be established for the Lake Street corridor and the reclassifying of properties located in the designated reclassification areas.

REGULATIONS

Lake Street Commercial Zoning District C-1 LD (Light Commercial – Lake Street District)

DEFINITIONS

In addition to the definitions in section 26-6 of the Calcasieu Parish Zoning Ordinance #3940, the following definitions shall apply to the Lake Street Overlay District and shall prevail in cases of conflict over definitions.

Alley: A dedicated public right-of-way having a required minimum width of twenty (20) feet and used to provide access to the rear or side of properties otherwise abutting a street.

Bakery: A place where products such as bread, cake, and pastries are baked or sold.

Catering and delicatessen services: To provide food service or a business that caters banquets and weddings.

Commercial area: A district composed of certain lands and structures used primarily to provide for the retailing of goods and the furnishing of selected services.

Convenience store: A store that is open long hours and that typically sells staple groceries, snacks, and sometimes gasoline.

Drive thru establishment: An establishment of the "drive thru" type is one, which accommodates patrons in automobiles from which the occupants may bank or conduct business of convenience.

Drug store: A store where prescriptions are filled and drugs and other articles are sold; a pharmacy.

Fix-it shop: A mercantile establishment for the retail sale of service repair excluding automobile repair shop.

Floor area: The sum of the gross horizontal area of the floor of the main building, but not including the area of roofed porches, terraces, or breezeways. All dimensions shall be measured between exterior faces of the walls.

Food service shop: A cafe, deli, coffee shop, sandwich shop, parlor or luncheonette, which offers food or beverages for purchase and consumption on the premises (no alcoholic beverages consumed on premises).

Funeral home: An establishment in which the dead are prepared for burial or cremation and in which wakes and funerals may be held.

Gas station: Any building or land used for the dispensing, sale, or offering for sale at retail of any automobile fuels including retail offering food or beverages including but not limited to other convenience goods.

Institution: A land used for hospitals, clinics or health service facilities.

Office, professional: The office of a physician, accountant, surgeon, dentist, attorney, architect, animal hospital, engineer, tax consultant, or other professional person who offers skilled services to his clients and who is not professionally engaged in the purchase or sale of economic goods.

Overlay district: Is a special zone that is drawn on a map outlining a significant resource. The resource could be an aquifer, a watershed, a shoreline, an historic area or a developing

length of road, which may consist of neighborhoods or business potentials commonly called in planning a "road corridor".

Public amenity: Something that contributes to physical or material enhancement of the property and increases attractiveness or value, especially of a piece of real estate or a geographic location for the community or the people as a whole such as a fountain, courtyard, outdoor patio, open air eating, public art, or park.

Public use: Any use operated by an agency of government or private entity, which provides a direct service to the public for police, fire, or public transportation facilities.

Park: A facility which provides recreational opportunities which has minimal impacts on the surrounding area and has ten (10) percent or less coverage of the parcel by impervious surfaces, such as parks or playgrounds.

Restaurant: An establishment, which is devoted to the selling and serving of food for consumption by patrons on the premises and shall include alcoholic beverages sold as an accompaniment to meals only.

Right-of-way: The area of land designated by grant, contract, deed or dedication from the owner, or acquired by use, maintenance or acquisitive prescription, for use as a street, alley or utilities, whether such area is owned by the public or other user in fee or as servitude.

Road corridor: A developing length of road, which may consist of neighborhoods or business potentials commonly called in planning a "road corridor".

Section: Those areas between road intersections designated for a separation within a road corridor.

Sign, monument: A freestanding structure erected for a site that is marked and preserved as a business and used for advertising, building identification, street address and/or operating information. Sign shall be made of similar exterior materials of the building advertised and be no more than eight (8) feet in height, eight (8) feet in length and two (2) feet in width.

Sign, wall: A sign painted on or attached to the face of a building or structure supported throughout its length by such building.

Street yard planting area: The front yard setback buffer area.

Studio: an office of an artist, musician, photographer, craftsman, writer, tailor, seamstress, accountants, architects, hairstylists, brokers, doctors, lawyers, engineers, insurance agents, or similar person.

PURPOSE AND INTENT

Zoning District C-1 LD (Light Commercial–Lake Street) is hereby created for the purpose of providing incentives to encourage infill development and redevelopment along Lake Street, improve the neighborhood characteristics of the area, and improve the overall quality of the surrounding community. The intent of this overlay district is to implement the community's vision for the area and to address the unique land development constraints along Lake Street. The standards contained herein will ensure that new development is compatible and enhances the appearance of the surrounding area. Redevelopment of existing buildings or projects will be required to comply with the applicable standards within the affected area only.

BOUNDARIES

The Lake Street District consists of those lands within boundary commencing 480 ft. north of the intersection of Ham Reid Road extending south to Gauthier Road in Calcasieu Parish. The boundary is 5,800 ft. in length and four hundred (400) feet in depth from the right of way on both sides of the road.

PERMITTED USES

Business and professional offices; institutions; churches; parks, bakeries; catering and delicatessen services; clinics; convenience stores; day cares; drug stores; fix-it shops; food service shops; funeral homes; gas stations; nurseries (horticultural); personal service shops; ponds; public uses; restaurants (alcoholic beverages consumed on premises); and studios.

NONCONFORMING USES (STRUCTURES)

All current residences and businesses located within the boundary of the Lake Street District are exempt from complying with the overlay district regulations, except: a) when a residential use converts or is replaced with a business type use or; b) when an existing business is damaged, destroyed, repaired or renovated to 50% or more of the market value of the structure.

ZONING

All parcels subdivided or unsubdivided within the boundary of the Lake Street District shall be zoned C-1 (Light Commercial), but regulated pursuant to permitted uses set forth in these regulations and further herein described as C-1 LD (Light Commercial Lake Street District). There shall be no adjustments within the Lake Street District except when approved as an Alternative Design.

1. ***Alternative Design*** - Alternative design solutions may be submitted to the Division of Planning and Development when it is found that the literal interpretation of this ordinance causes an undue hardship or may impede the objectives of the proposed development. Alternative designs may apply only to site planning difficulties (i.e., setbacks, landscaping, architectural design guidelines, parking, etc.)
2. ***Alternative Request*** - There will be two types of request for alternative designs to the Lake Street District Overlay considered. Type one will consist of a Minor and type two a Major.
 - a. Minor: A request made for changes in development standards such as building setbacks, parking, landscaping, etc. that do not vary more than 20% of the required development standards.

- b. Major: A request made to enlarge the boundary of the District, a request to establish a specific use that is not allowed within the particular section of the District, modifications to the architectural theme or when any variance request for development standards exceed 20% of the required development standards.
3. ***Alternative Design Review Process*** - The review of Minor or Major request will be as follows:
 - a. Application must be made with the Division of Planning and Development. The Director of Planning and Development will determine when an application is complete.
 - b. In the case of a Minor request, upon the determination of a complete application a 7-day review period will ensue. At the end of the 7-day review period the Director of Planning and Development will issue in writing an approval, conditional approval, or disapproval of the application.
 - c. In the case of a Major request, upon the determination of a complete application a 14-day review period will ensue. Once determined complete, the application will be forwarded to the Lake Street District Overlay Review Team and within 14-days or less the Director of Planning and Development will issue in writing an approval, conditional approval, or disapproval of the application.
 - d. In the case of a Minor request, the Director of Planning and Development will make the final decision.
 - e. In the case of a Major request, the Lake Street District Overlay Review Team will make the final decision.
 - f. The Fourteenth Judicial District Court is the proper forum for any aggrieved party of any decision made by the Director of Planning and Development or the Lake Street District Overlay Review Team.
4. ***Lake Street Overlay Review Team*** - The Lake Street District Overlay Review Team shall consist of the following members:
 - a. Director of Planning and Development
 - b. Police Jury member, District Six
 - c. Police Jury member, District Seven
 - d. Two (2) Planning and Zoning Board members, Ward Three

CONFLICT

Where the provisions of the Lake Street District conflict with other applicable restrictions of the Calcasieu Parish Code of Ordinances, the provisions of this section shall prevail.

PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Property development regulations shall apply to any proposed development located within the boundary limits of the district and all development shall comply with the regulations of the underlying zoning districts, except where modified as follows for the Lake Street District:

1) **Setbacks, Maximum Heights, and Access**

- a. All buildings included in the overlay district along the Lake Street District must be set back a minimum distance of thirty (30) feet from the right of way line of Lake Street.
- b. Maximum height on all buildings 35 feet.
- c. No building or parking is allowed within the thirty (30) foot building setback except for public amenities.

2) **Building/Landscape**

- a. **Front Yard Setback**-30 feet
- b. **Corner Lot Front Yard Setback**-30 feet for both streets
- c. **Side Yard Landscaped Buffer**- 10 feet
- d. **Front Yard and Rear Yard Landscaped Buffer**- 15 feet
- e. **Corner Lot Front Yard Landscaped Buffer**- 15 feet for both streets

3) **Floor Area**

- a. None
- b. Outdoor Seating Areas: only fifteen percent (15%) of the outdoor seating area of the buildings gross floor area.

4) **Parking**

- a. All required parking spaces for the principal use must be located on the rear or side of the principal structure. No parking spaces shall be located within the front yard setback. All developments located on corner lots shall comply with the thirty (30) foot setback on both streets.

- b. All parking lots must have a concrete curb configuration. Shared parking areas and driveways are encouraged. Parking lot improvements are to:
 - 1. Reduce environmental effects of run-off
 - 2. Reduce heat generated from pavement
 - 3. Enhance aesthetic appeal of area
 - c. Rear service road (Alleys) - Parcels providing access through a rear service road shall be a minimum of twenty (20) feet wide, subject to utility easements to be approved by the Parish Engineer. The road must be unencumbered, built to Parish standards, and not used for any other purposes.
- 5) **Buffer requirements** - When a business is constructed within the boundary of the Lake Street District, a solid six (6) foot wood or masonry fence must be installed on the designated lot line where contiguous to R-1 (Single Family Residential) or R-2 (Mixed Residential) lots with a minimum fifteen (15) foot setback for the rear yard buffer, ten (10) foot for the side yard buffer and fifteen (15) foot setback for the front yard buffer, landscape included.
- 6) **Signage**
- a. The Calcasieu Parish Ordinance shall govern the maximum number, height, and area, and the location of freestanding signs.
 - b. Notwithstanding any other provision to the contrary, only Monument Signs or Wall Signs are allowed in the Lake Street District. Only one (1) Monument Sign is allowed per entrance or driveway. One (1) Wall Sign is permitted for each building.
 - c. A Monument Sign or Wall Sign may not flash, blink or fluctuate and may not be animated. No internal illumination is allowed.
- 7) **Pedestrian Circulation**
- a. A paved, ADA (American Disabilities Act) compliant walkway shall be provided from all adjacent public sidewalks to all entrances used by the general public.
 - b. Benches and trash receptacles shall be provided as follows. One bench and trash receptacle per building.
 - c. Walkways traversing vehicular use areas shall be constructed of pavers, brick, decorative concrete, or similar pavement treatment (other than paint or striping) to indicate the pathway is intended for pedestrians.

8) Quality Development Standards

a. **Public Amenities:** Businesses locating within the Lake Street District shall provide a minimum of one (1) of the following five public amenities, which shall have a French Country, Contemporary, or Traditional theme and be incorporated within the 30-foot front yard setback and the Lake Street Road right of way.

1. Public art;
2. Outdoor seating or outdoor furniture with umbrellas for open air eating;
3. Outdoor patio, courtyard or plaza;
4. Water feature/fountain/use of retention area as a focal point;
5. Parks, squares or other public open spaces. Public open spaces shall be at least one hundred (100) feet by fifty (50) feet and are encouraged at intersections.

b. **Architectural Design Guidelines: (French Country, Contemporary, and Traditional)** - *The following general architectural design guidelines shall apply a French Country, Traditional or Contemporary styled building:*

1. All roofing materials are limited to Architectural Asphalt Shingles, Standard Seam Copper, Slate (or imitation slate) or Clay Tile.
2. Roofs will have a minimum six (6) foot on twelve (12) foot pitch.
3. All exterior wall materials are limited to brick, vinyl, hardy plank or stucco. No aluminum or metal siding except where applicable (i.e. soffit, gable end, facial board).
4. All exposed portions of chimneys must be brick or stucco. Chimney caps are required with no exposed spark arrestors. Chimney materials will be brick, copper, bronze color, slate, or flagstone.
5. Storage sheds must be attached to the building and will be constructed of the same materials as the building. No prefab, freestanding structures will be permitted.
6. All air-conditioning compressors will be screened and located in the rear and;
7. Refuse collection must be kept in a dumpster enclosed by a six (6) foot wood, or masonry fence. Dumpsters may not be located in building setback areas or landscape buffer areas.

c. Exterior of Buildings

1. Earth tone colors shall be encouraged for the base building color. The same base building color may be used for the entire structure.
2. All entries used by the general public shall be easily identifiable and integrated into the building architecture.
3. All roofing materials and colors shall compliment the base building materials and color.
4. Loading docks, dumpsters, outdoor storage areas, compactors, and similar areas shall be screened from view from adjacent properties and public streets. Screening material and method shall be consistent with the architecture of the building and/or equivalent landscaping.

d. Lighting

1. All freestanding poles and wall mounted exterior light fixtures shall be decorative and limited to a maximum height of eighteen (18) feet. Pole lighting prohibited within fifteen (15) feet of a residential property line.
2. Lighting mounted on buildings or fences shall be no more than seven (7) feet above the ground.
3. Pole lighting is allowed in parking areas. Pole lighting is limited to eighteen (18) feet in height and must be located no closer than fifteen (15) feet from the property line.
4. Any external lighting must be oriented inward toward the development or structures to minimize intrusion into surrounding property.

(9) Prohibitions - The following elements shall be prohibited: neon lights and colors, high intensity, metallic or fluorescent colors, mirror or solar glass with a reflectivity or opacity greater than sixty percent (60%).

(10) Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) - A minimum of one (1) CPTED principle from each category below shall be incorporated into site design for all development.

- a. **Reduce Opportunities**
- b. **Creating an atmosphere that does not encourage or invite unlawful activity can reduce criminal opportunities.**

Strategies would include:

1. Well lighted public outdoor areas and pedestrian walkways.
2. Well lighted parking areas.
3. Direct general public access from all parking areas.
4. Signs directing general public to entrances for general public.
5. Easily identifiable store entrances.
6. Difficult roof accessibility.
7. "Call-out" pay phones only under surveillance.

c. **Visibility in and around the business area will help to reduce crime.**

Methods would include:

1. Store windows facing all parking areas.
2. Interior shelves and displays not exceeding five (5) feet in height.
3. Well lighted interior/exterior spaces.
4. Building-mounted lighting installed on all exterior walls, especially at delivery/service and entrances for general public.
5. Clear visibility maintained from the store to the street, parking areas, pedestrian walkways, and passing vehicles.
6. All entrances and exits under visual or electronic surveillance.
7. Landscaping, buildings, walls and fences, which do not create hiding places or hinder visibility.

d. **Territorial Reinforcement** - Physical features can be used to distinguish private areas from public spaces. Residential areas should be designed to indicate they are off-limits to the general public. Methods to differentiate private areas from public spaces include:

1. Landscaping, special pavement, and low fences.
2. Public spaces identified by welcome, directional, marquee, or similar signs.
3. Wrought iron, aluminum picket or similar non-opaque decorative gates used to identify entrances into private residence.

LANDSCAPING

1. Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to protect and enhance the Lake Street District's environment, economic and aesthetic resources consistent with the goals of the Lake Street District regulations, thereby promoting public health, safety and general welfare of the citizens and contributing to the quality of life by encouraging a high level of design in development. Further, the standards and requirements of this plan seek to promote the preservation, protection and Enhancement of nature in the Parish, and nature's unique features with particular emphasis on the urban forest canopy and vegetative cover of the land.

2. **Applicability of landscape requirement** – The provisions of this plan shall apply to:

- a. All new development within the Lake Street Overlay District.
- b. When an existing use converts or is replaced with a new type of use or when the existing use is damaged, destroyed, repaired or renovated to fifty (50) percent or more of the assessed market value of the structure.
- c. The street yard planting area shall contain shrubs and non-turf ground cover planting. Shrub and ground cover planting must cover forty (40) percent of the street yard planting area. Generally, shrubs and ground covers should be planted in masses of one type per mass and in sufficient numbers to create beds or “drifts” of plants.
- d. Sight triangle area: No planting or ground cover in sight triangle areas shall exceed twenty-four (24) inches in height at maturity.





