

# Growth Management Strategy ULDC Diagnostic Review

Ascension Parish, LA | September 30, 2021



Bret Keast, AICP | CEO & Owner

Tareq Wafaie, AICP | Project Manager

# Tonight's Agenda

- Project Overview
- Growth Management Summary
- ULDC Critique and Recommendations
- Phase 2 implementation overview
- Q&A



# Project Overview

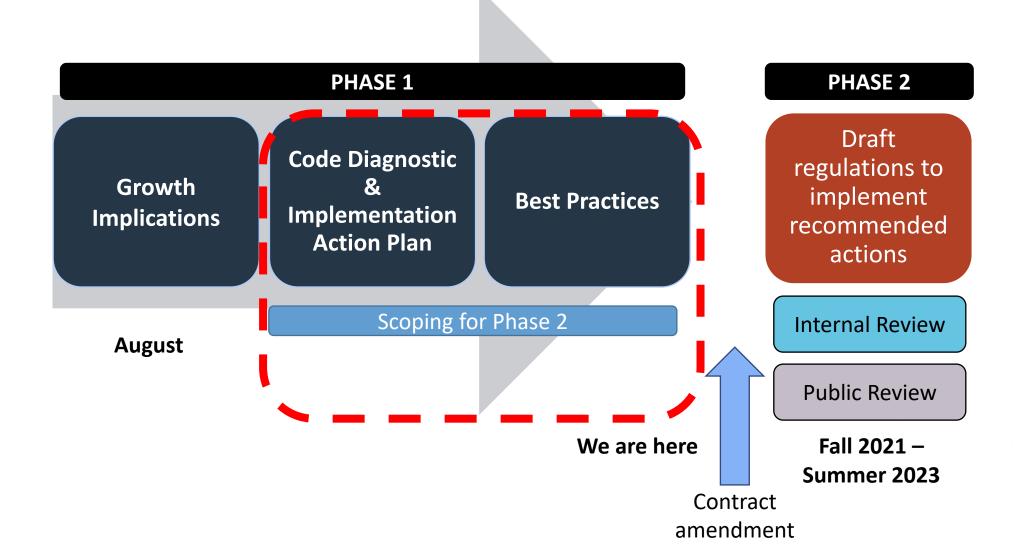
### **Project Description and Goals**

- Consider growth management policies appropriate for the Parish
- Critique code for effectiveness at managing growth
- Identify gaps, overlaps, and inconsistencies among Parish policies and ordinances as they relate to growth management
- Incorporate best practices into growth management recommendations
- Prioritize targeted code updates to implement policies prior to expiration of 9-month moratorium



### Project Overview

### **Project timeline**



# Finding the "Sweet Spot"

**NO GROWTH** 

Difficult to manage

Negative economic impacts

**Unrealistic** 



**Protect community** assets and character

Direct growth to appropriate areas

Economic benefits without budget depletion

#### **UNCHECKED GROWTH**

### **Decreased quality of life**

- Traffic issues
- Drainage issues

Parish budget impacts

Politically unpopular

# Growth Management Recap

- The Parish has experienced a lot of growth over the last decade (18%)
- The pattern of recent growth has included disconnected residential developments that have not taken advantage of the Parish's natural assets
- Capital Regional Planning Commission estimates 52,000 people / 22,500 housing units by 2042
- Limited available land to accommodate growth if excluding municipalities, agriculture, open space, wetlands, and flood hazard areas
- Strengthening standards in those areas is crucial to the Parish's future



## Growth Management Recap

# What are the benefits of Growth Management?

- The Parish has an available holding capacity, managing within that capacity is essential
- Less far-flung infrastructure means less expense by Parish to maintain
- Rural and natural resources preservation focused areas of development
  (Neighborhood Hubs) means better
  preservation of natural & rural areas
- Development that is sensitive to natural features helps mitigate flood risk





## Growth Management Recap

### **How can the ULDC Manage Growth?**

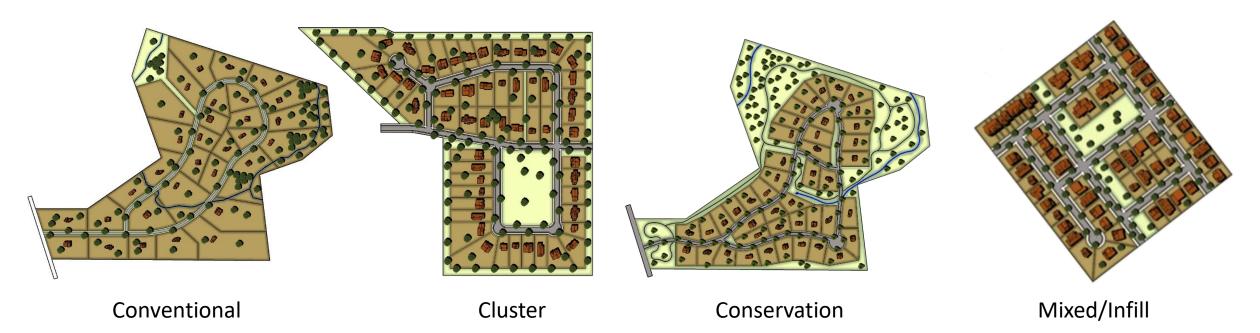
- Requiring or encouraging mixed-use
- Setting the intensity of new developments with open space requirements or incentives
- Establishing lot sizes that discourage sprawl
- Setting decision criteria for rezonings and other development applications
- Requiring adequate public facilities be in place for future growth areas
- Preserving natural and rural areas



# ULDC Critique and Recommendations

**Recommendation**: Rework residential zoning districts for more permanent open space with density bonus in return.

- Retain 3 current Rural, Conservation, and Residential Medium district standards as 3 development options within the RM district
- Add Countryside, Rural, and Estate districts
- Conventional, Cluster, Conservation, and Mixed/Infill



Land Use Plan Designations	Current District	Proposed Zoning Districts	Development Options	Waste water	Min. Lot Area	% Open Space <sup>1</sup>	Max. Density <sup>2</sup>	% Bonus³
Rural Residential / Open Space	New	Countryside	Conventional	Private	20 acres	0%	0.05	N/A
	New		Conservation	Private	18,000 SF	95%	0.1	50%
	New	RR, Rural Residential	Conventional	Private	5 acres	0%	0.2	N/A
	New		Cluster	Private	2 acres	40%	0.3	50%
Estate Subdivision	Conservation	RE, Estate Residential	Conventional	Private	1 acre	0%	1.0	N/A
	Rural		Cluster	Community	19,000 SF	35%	1.4	40%
	New		Conservation <sup>5</sup>	Public	7,000 SF	70%	1.6	60%
Residential Neighborhood	Medium Res.	RM, Medium Residential	Conventional	Community	14,520 SF	0%	2.8	N/A
	New		Cluster <sup>4</sup>	Public	6,500 SF	25%	4.5	60%
	New		Conservation <sup>5</sup>	Public	4,500 SF	35%	5.5	96%
	New		Mixed / Infill <sup>6</sup>	Public	2,500 - 4,000 SF	20% - 40%	7.0 – 9.5	150% - 240%

<sup>1.</sup> Common open space in entire development

<sup>2.</sup> Dwelling Units per Acre

<sup>3.</sup> Compared to conventional

<sup>4.</sup> Cluster allows single-family and townhouse

<sup>5.</sup> Conservation allows single-family, duplex, and townhouse

<sup>6.</sup> Mixed/Infill allows single-family, duplex, townhouse, and triplex

# Visualizing Density



20 acre



5 acre



1 acre

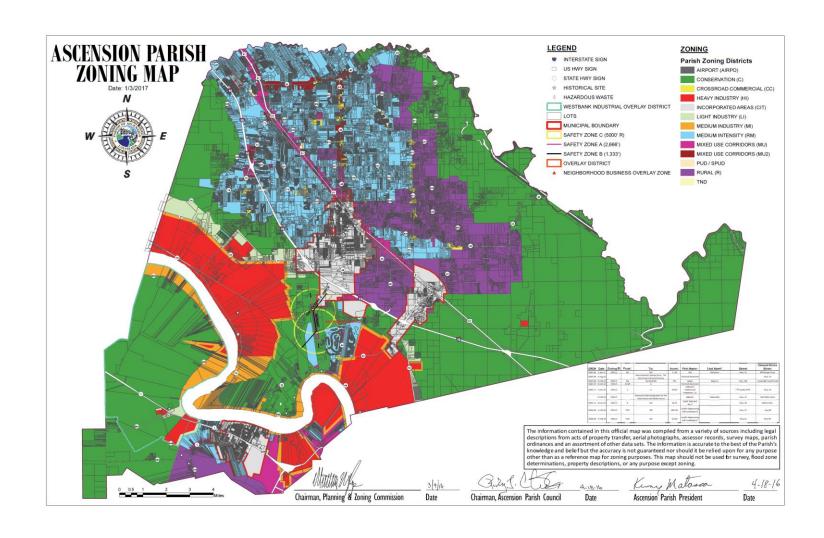


14,000 square feet



2,500 square feet

Wherever the proposed Countryside district is applied in the green area would effectively prevent all but the least dense development



Land Use Plan Designations	Current District	Proposed Zoning Districts	Development Options	Waste water	Min. Lot Area	% Open Space <sup>1</sup>	Max. Density <sup>2</sup>	% Bonus³
Rural Residential / Open Space	New	Countryside	Conventional	Private	20 acres	0%	0.05	N/A
	New		Conservation	Community	18,000 SF	95%	0.1	50%
	New	RR, Rural	Conventional	Private	5 acres	0%	0.2	N/A
	New	Residential	Cluster	Private	2 acres	40%	0.3	50%
Estate Subdivision	Conservation	RE, Estate Residential	Conventional	Private	1 acre	0%	1.0	N/A
	Rural		Cluster	Community	19,000 SF	35%	1.4	40%
	New		Conservation <sup>5</sup>	Public	7,000 SF	70%	1.6	60%
Residential Neighborhood	Medium Res.	RM, Medium Residential	Conventional	Community	14,520 SF	0%	2.8	N/A
	New		Cluster <sup>4</sup>	Public	6,500 SF	25%	4.5	60%
	New		Conservation <sup>5</sup>	Public	4,500 SF	35%	5.5	96%
	New		Mixed / Infill <sup>6</sup>	Public	2,500 - 4,000 SF	20% - 40%	7.0 – 9.5	150% - 240%

<sup>1.</sup> Common open space in entire development

<sup>2.</sup> Dwelling Units per Acre

<sup>3.</sup> Compared to conventional

<sup>4.</sup> Cluster allows single-family and townhouse

<sup>5.</sup> Conservation allows single-family, duplex, and townhouse

<sup>6.</sup> Mixed/Infill allows single-family, duplex, townhouse, and triplex

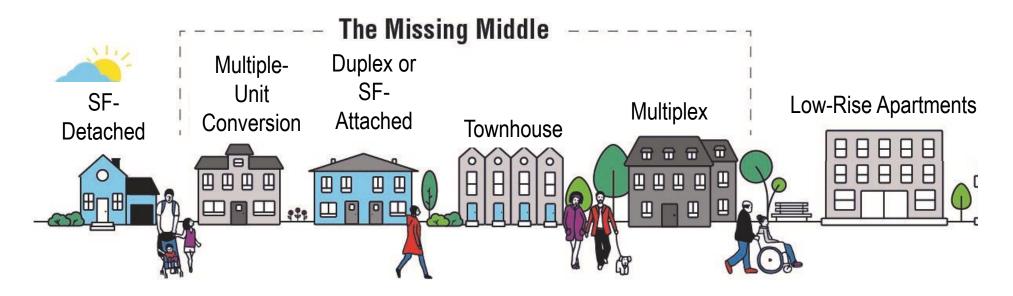
### **Potential ULDC Amendments:**

- Modify Table A: Permitted Uses by District to show which uses are allowed in the various development options
- Overhaul Table B: Site Requirements by District related to maximum densities, minimum open space, and permitted housing types
- Ensure each district purpose statement clearly relates to the intended goals within that district
- Reconcile Park / Open Space Requirements Sections in Subdivision and PUD/SPUD provisions
- Provide illustrations to show development types

### Encourage Additional Housing Types

Recommendation: Encourage housing types that allow more compact development but not at the expense of existing character.

- Allow diversity of housing types in Cluster, Conservation, and Mixed/Infill development types
- Provide design standards for housing types to minimize impact and possible community pushback



# Encourage Additional Housing Types

### Sample from Zachary, Louisiana

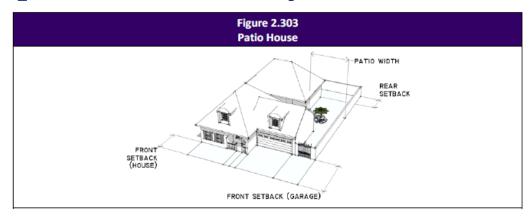
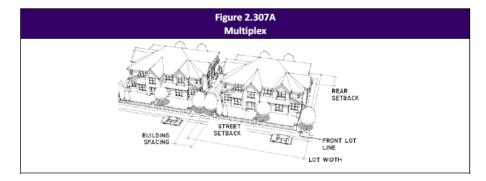


Table 2.303 Patio House Lot and Building Standards					
Development Type	Patio House				
Lot Area Group	Small Average Large				
Pct. In Group	25	50	remainder <sup>1</sup>		
Min. Site Area per Group (sf.)	25,000				
Min. Lot Area per du (sf.)	4,640	5,000	5,450		
Min. Lot Width per du (ft.)	50	55	60		
Min. Front Setback (House / Garage <sup>2</sup> ) (ft.)	12 / 20				
Min. Building Separation (ft.)	10				
Min. Patio Area <sup>3</sup> (sf.)	930 / 48	1,000 / 48	1,000 / 48		
Min. Patio Width (ft.)	20	20	22		
Rear Setback (House / Garage⁴) (ft.)	10				
Max. Height (ft.)	28				
Max. Building Coverage Ratio	50% 48% 48%				

#### TABLE NOTES:



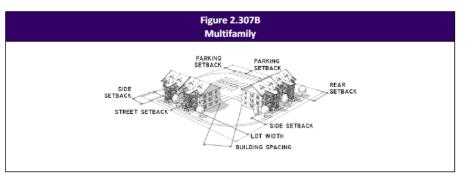


Table 2.307 Multiplex and Multi-Family Lot and Building Standards					
Development Type Multiplex Multiplex					
Min. Site Area per Building (sf.)	8,000	15,000			
Min. Lot Area per du (sf.)	2,000	1,800			
Min. Lot Width per Building (ft.)	80	100 <sup>1</sup>			
Min. Street Setback <sup>2</sup> (ft.)	20	30			
Min. Rear Setback (ft.)	15	30			
Min. Building Separation (ft.)	15	30			
Parking Setback from Street Curb (ft.)	20	parking not permitted in street yard			
Parking Setback from Rear and Side Lot Lines (ft.)	2.5	8			
Max. Height (ft.)	35	50			

See Section 2.203, Residential Lot Averaging and Distribution of Averaged Lots, subsection C.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Setback from right-of-way to garage front when the garage faces the street instead of an alley.

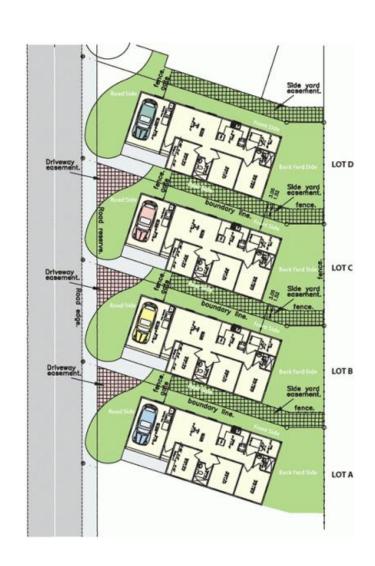
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>The patio area is a rectangle having minimum area and width that is a basic yard, but does not count all the yard area. This ensures a useable principal outdoor space.

Setback from rear lot line to garage when the garage is accessed from an alley.

# Encourage Additional Housing Types

#### **Potential ULDC Amendments:**

- Modify Table A: Permitted Uses by District to reflect permitted housing types allowed in the various development options
- Overhaul Table B: Site Requirements by District related to minimum and maximum setbacks, building heights, and permitted housing types
- Modify both tables to account for alternative housing types such as zero lot line, patio home, and multiplex
- Combine townhouse provisions from Subdivision Regulations with other housing types into a consolidated ULDC
- Provide illustrations to show housing types

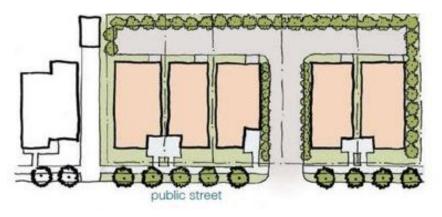


### Incentivize Infill Development

- Infill is "the use or reuse of vacant lots in areas that have already been developed"
- Makes more efficient use of existing infrastructure
- Curbs sprawling development into the periphery of already urbanized or urbanizing areas in the Parish
- Can result in a bonus for the developer in terms of density, intensity, housing types, or nonresidential uses
- Require infill to respect context and surrounding character

**Recommendation**: Incorporate provisions that incentivize infill development.





### Incentivize Infill Development

### **Potential ULDC Amendments:**

- Modify Table A: Permitted Uses by District to potentially allow additional uses for infill development than typically allowed
- Overhaul Table B: Site Requirements by District related to provide an infill development type (along with conventional, cluster, conservation, and planned)
- Adjust bufferyard requirements specific to infill
- Consider adjusting parking requirements for constrained sites
- Allow additional density or uses where consecutive lots are assembled

## Consider Adequate Public Facilities

- Ensure that growth only occurs where adequate wastewater and roads exist or *will soon* exist
- Parish must have adopted levels of service for facilities for which it wants to require adequacy (Already has LOS of D for Roads; no LOS for sewer)
- If the road or wastewater line would be unable to maintain the adopted level of service, then the proposed development cannot take place unless developer pays for the upgrade
- Encourages connected rather than leapfrog development

Recommendation: Incorporate adequate public facilities requirements so that the timing of growth takes place in a controlled, rational manner that is fiscally sustainable.

#### **Master Plan Recommendations**

- Direct new development toward areas where there are adequate roads to accommodate growth, and scale new streets to fit their surroundings to promote safety and attractiveness.
- coordinate with the school district on the location of schools in areas with adequate transportation infrastructure.

## Consider Adequate Public Facilities

### Sample from Calcasieu Parish Code

- Applies to water, wastewater, drainage, fire protection, and roads
- Applicant must provide documented, verifiable evidence that the subject property can be served by adequate public facilities and services prior to occupancy and use of the proposed development at adopted level-of-service standards

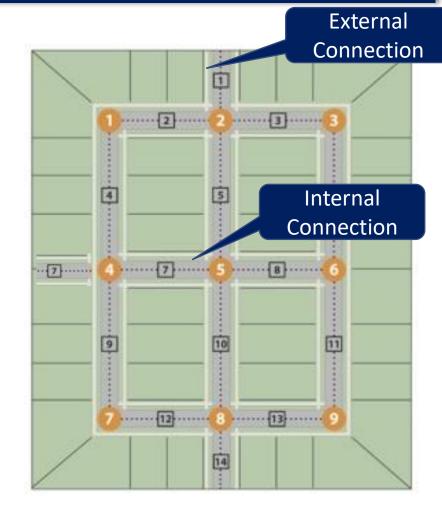
### **Potential ULDC Amendments:**

- Adopt Level-of-Service for sewer as a Parish policy
- Modify subdivision regulations to include adequate public facility provisions

## Require Street Connectivity

- Internal connectivity requires connected new local and collector streets within a subdivision
- External connectivity requires that the subdivision connect to existing streets outside its boundaries
- Helps to ensure that new subdivisions are developed in closer proximity to one another and prevents "bottlenecks" during high traffic periods
- Introduce a connectivity index (ratio of links to nodes)

**Recommendation**: Adopt street connectivity standards for new developments.



## Require Street Connectivity

### Sample from Lafayette City-Parish Code

- Connectivity ratio of 1.0 to 1.6 depending on district
- Does not apply to conservation development types

### **Potential ULDC Amendments:**

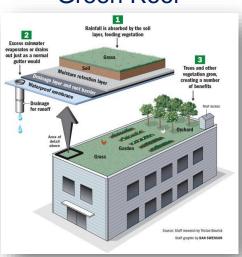
 Modify Subdivision standards to incorporate the connectivity ratio based on zoning district and/or development type

### Encourage Low-Impact Development

- Low-Impact Development integrates natural systems and practices that use or mimic natural processes that result in the retention, infiltration, evaporation, or use of stormwater to protect water quality and manage water.
- Relates to growth management by providing a natural way to ease the burden on expensive water treatment facilities

**Recommendation**: Incorporate Low-Impact Development provisions to minimize runoff and associated pollution by natural means, close to where it is generated.

#### Green Roof



#### **Bioswale**



#### Cistern



### Encourage Low-Impact Development

### **Example from Jefferson Parish**

- An applicant for site plan review may use LID best management practices (BMPs) to meet stormwater management, landscaping, buffering, screening, and tree preservation requirements
- LIDs must have capacity to retain and filter the first 1 ¼" of rainfall
- Incentives
  - Decrease minimum setback to accommodate LID features
  - Increase maximum gross floor area
  - Reduce required parking by 25%
  - Waive landscaping requirements in order to accommodate LID features



### Encourage Low-Impact Development

### **Potential ULDC Amendments:**

- Incorporate LID principles into landscaping and bufferyard standards and drainage requirements
- Allow (or incentivize) use of pervious pavement in parking areas to minimize runoff volume
- Allow green roofs as open space in TND standards, and in remainder of ULDC
- Allow storage and re-use of stormwater or partially treated "production water" for irrigation purposes
- Consider "menu of options" approach

# Other Recc's to Manage Stormwater and Sewer

- Coordinate ULDC standards with drainage requirements and design criteria
- Establish fill requirements
- Coordinate regional detention areas
  - Consolidate detention facilities for efficiency
- Establish stormwater management areas
  - E.g., 20% or more of a major subdivision must be set aside for natural treatment of stormwater
- Create incentives to improve sewer, manage traffic and flood zones, and address school capacity issues
- Property tax millage to buy property for stormwater facilities, recreation, and other public lands



# Other Recommendations

# Organization and Structure

### Q: How should the updated ULDC be organized?

**A**: In the manner in which the code is most often used:

- What is my property zoned?
- What uses are permitted?
- Where and how much can I build?
- What building or site design standards are required?
- What are the steps in the process?
- From whom do I receive approval?
- How are things measured or defined?

**Recommendation**: Organize development regulations in an intuitive order in the form of a Unified Code.



**Casual Users** 

### Organization and Structure

#### **EXISTING STRCUTRE**

Appendix I - Zoning Tables

II- Development Code

III - Master Plan And Land Use Plan

**IV - Subdivision Regulations** 

V - Drainage

VI – PUD Code

VII - TND Code

VIII - Mobile Home Park Regulations

IX - Recreation Vehicle Park Regulations

X - Fire Hydrant Code

XII - Fees

XIII - Major Street Plan

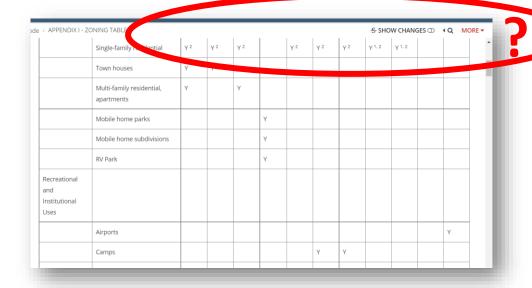
XIV - Subdivision Construction Specifications

#### A BETTER STRUCTURE

Chapter 1. General Provisions

- 2. Zoning Districts and Dimensional Standards
- 3. Use Standards
- 4. Building and Site Design Standards
- 5. Subdivisions and Public Improvements
- 6. Open Space and Environmental Management
- 7. Development Review Bodies
- 8. Development Review Procedures
- 9. Nonconformities
- 10. Word Usage & Definitions

### **User-Friendliness**



#### UNIFIED DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE

Parapet means a low protective railing or wall along the edge of a

TITLE XV: LAND USAGE (Harrisburg Unified Development Ordinance (UDO)) > Chapter 141: Building and Site Design > § 141.02 Building and Site Design > § 141.02 Building and Mixed Use

- 4. Varied rooflines and parapet heights:
- Changes in materials;
- 6. Corner elements; ro
- Juliet balconies; of
- 8 Other features that the Director approves
- b. The false second story is not required to be under-roof or habitable but the facade shall extend a minimum of eight feet above a typical first story to allow the addition of elements described in 4.a above and create the appearance of a second story. Buildings with three tenants or more many include single-story segments for a maximum of 30 percent of the facade to create diversity in the building height. A specific minimum building height is not required.



illustrations, graphics, and tables.

User Friendly Enhancements

**Recommendation**: Clearly articulate all requirements

without ambiguity and subjectivity and provide clear

- Integrate Tables A and B directly into the Code
- Maintain a deliberate and consistent hierarchy & numbering system
- Use fonts, styles, and tabs to establish visual hierarchy
- Keep similar provisions together
- Clearly assign duties ("The Planning Director shall..." instead of "The Parish shall...")
- Turn guidelines or policies into standards, or remove from the ULDC

## Clarity and Accuracy

### Conflicts, Duplications, and Inconsistencies

- 17-2017, Light industrial (LI), lists procedural and design standards while other purpose statements (correctly) do not
- 17-2043-B, Standards for Small Wireless Facilities in the Rights-of-Way in the Parish of Ascension Parish Government, has its own set of definitions consolidate all definitions
- Duplicate or conflicting definitions for: abutting, access, accessory use, acre, alley, antenna, appeal, applicant (And that's just the "A"s!)
- Some provisions in Subdivision Regulations seem out of place: Townhouse lot areas and widths, tree requirements that aren't part of ROW, etc.

## Streamlining and Modernization

### Procedural Streamlining

- Allow administrative approval when appropriate, as Council sees fit
- Staff can administer the ULDC, if standards are clearly articulated

### Reduce Reliance on PUD/SPUDs

- Uncertain outcomes for applicant and neighbors
- Time is money
- Integrate common PUD/SPUD standards into ULDC to allow them "by-right"

### Legal Issues

- Reed v. Gilbert Signs cannot be regulated by the content or purpose (e.g., "commercial signs")
- Statutory amendments as necessary
- Integrate good ideas from **Overlay Districts** for use in other areas as appropriate
- Publish an interactive, user-friendly, online code level-up customer service
- Integrate and cross-reference applicable development provisions in Parish Code

# How do we get there?

**Phase 2 - implementation** 

## ULDC update project

### What it is...

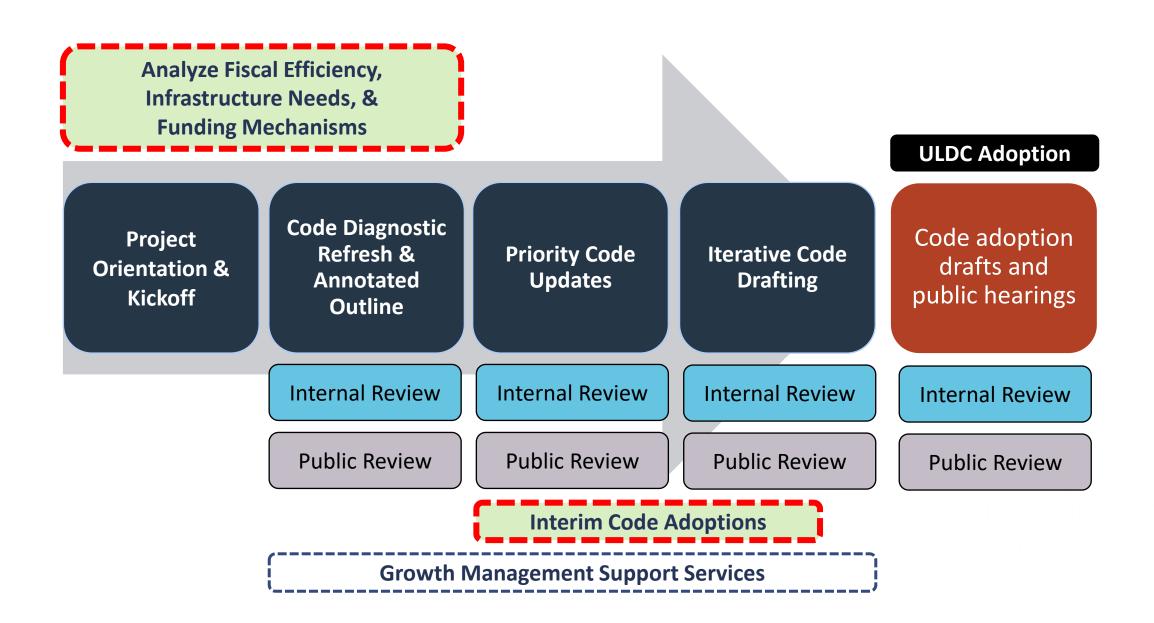
- Targeted ordinance amendments to implement Parish growth and infrastructure policies
- Standards for maintaining the Parish quality of life
- Standards for preserving rural character
- Ordinance for dividing land and reworking zoning districts
- Procedures for development approvals

### What it is NOT...

- A Master Land Use Plan update
- A Parish-wide remapping process
- Engineering or technical design standards
- Building code
- Specific development plan for a project



### Phase 2 – Proposed Scope of Work



# Public Engagement Process

- Code Advisory Committee (CAC)
- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
- Stakeholder Interviews
- Reception and Briefings for Parish Council, P&Z, BOA
- Community Surveys
- Community Meetings
- Interactive Project Website





### Infrastructure Analysis

### **Five-part analysis**

- Initiation and acquire and review data
- Prepare fiscal efficiency of land uses for the Parish
- Analyze existing Parish infrastructure funding programs
- Evaluate Parish Capital Improvement needs and identify appropriate funding mechanisms
- Evaluate and recommend infrastructure funding options

### Carson Bise II, AICP Infrastructure & Fiscal Analysis

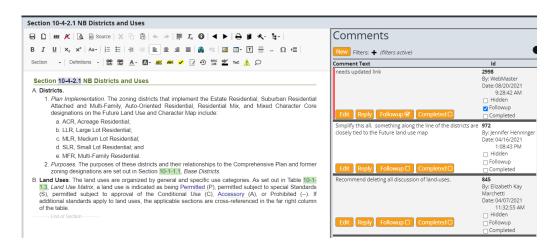


# The Drafting Process

- We draft in the cloud! (enCodePlus)
- We draft in iterations (contents TBD)
  - Module 1 → review and comment
  - Module 2 → review and comment
  - Consolidated draft 

    review and comment
  - Code adoption

Final ULDC published online on a user-friendly platform that is easy to maintain





# Considerations when adopting new tools

- Build where infrastructure allows don't build where it doesn't
- Build where nature allows don't build where it doesn't
- Mandates, incentives, or a mix?
- Will the tool result in **context-sensitive growth** within urbanized/suburban/rural areas?
- Prioritize tools near- and long-term (and VERY NEAR – before moratorium expires)
- Administration and enforcement tools are effective if consistently applied

# THANK YOU!

Ascension Parish, LA | August 2021



Ricky Compton @ apgov.us | 225.450.1454



Bret Keast, AICP | CEO & Owner

Tareq Wafaie, AICP | Project Manager