



Recreation and Open Space Element

The Horizon Plan was adopted by the Metropolitan Council in 1992 as the comprehensive land use and development plan for City of Baton Rouge and East Baton Rouge Parish. The plan includes numerous Goals, Objectives and Policies within seven different areas of emphasis, called "elements."

The Horizon Plan includes the following seven elements: Land Use; Transportation; Wastewater, Solid Waste and Drainage; Conservation and Environmental Resources; Recreation and Open Space; Housing; and Public Services, Public Buildings, and Health and Human Services. This Information Bulletin examines the Recreation and Open Space Element of the Horizon Plan.

The purpose of the Horizon Plan's Recreation and Open Space Element is to provide recommendations that will enhance the development of an effective recreation and open space plan through the year 2010, and which will be compatible with the area's land use patterns and other aspects of area development. The recreation and open space goals and objectives, as well as any other issues identified by the citizens and public officials, were used as the framework for developing recommendations for implementation actions.

Development of the Recreation and Open Space Element involved an extensive public participation process to obtain information for the citizens, City-Parish officials, and State and Federal agencies. The public participation process ensured the development of a responsive program which maintained consistency with goals and values of the community.

Two neighborhood planning meetings were held in each of the sixteen planning districts established for the Horizon Plan. These meetings provided an opportunity for citizens to state their concerns and identify issues relating to Recreation and Open Space in their district, as well as Parish-wide. The issues identified at the neighborhood planning meetings provided the basis for formulating the goals, objectives and recommendations.



Major updates of the Horizon Plan are required every five years. The purpose of these updates is to accommodate changes in growth and development for the City-Parish. Part of the 1997 Five-Year Update included amendments to the land use categories to delete the Open Space land use category and to create the Residential Estate/Agriculture (RE/A) as a new land use category. The Open Space category was confusing and often did not guide growth and development in an appropriate manner. The new land use category of Residential Estate/Agriculture (RE/A) was developed to address some of the goals detailed in the Horizon Plan Recreation and Open Space Element.

The purpose of the RE/A category is to provide for residential development in rural areas while preserving the integrity of agricultural areas or environmentally sensitive regions such as aquifer recharge areas; wetlands and flood prone areas; rare wildlife and/or plant populations and habitat; recreation areas; and/or scenic vistas for recreational; scenic, and public service purposes. Incentives are provided to encourage residential development either on large lots or as "cluster" subdivisions. These subdivisions would include preservation of these areas while allowing for an efficient plan of development based upon groupings of structures. During 1997, parcels previously identified as Open Space were revised to one of the other land use categories or to the new category of RE/A.

Goals, Objectives and Action Items

Goals are broad and general statements of desired future conditions that aid and guide the decision-making process.

Objectives are specific statements about future conditions or results that should be achieved in order to attain the Goals that have been set. Objectives are worded so that their achievement can be measured. Action Items are specific recommendations, plans and standards that are used in making decisions about future actions and programs. Action Items become the specific guidelines for implementing the Comprehensive Plan.



The Recreation and Open Space Element involves four goals that address the collaborated implementation of the program strategies. These Program and their goals are as follows:

Goal R1: Identify, protect, and enhance the natural and built environment for the health and enjoyment of the communities.

Goal R2: Coordinate acquisition, development, and use of public open spaces and recreational facilities with public and private stakeholders.

Goal R3: Enhance design of open spaces and public facilities through design guidelines and other means.

Goal R4: Promote the development and maintenance of healthy, safe, enjoyable, and economically secure community.

Action Items

Action Items serve as strategies for implementation of the comprehensive plan. They are assigned to various City-Parish Lead Agencies that use them as a method for addressing the Goals, Objectives and Policies of the Horizon Plan.

There are 32 Action Items assigned to the Recreation and Open Space Elements that are grouped into 5 programs: (1) Planning and Development, (2) Operation and Maintenance, (3) Administration and Coordination, (4) Funding, and (5) Supporting programs (Greenlink, Pedestrian and Bikeway). To give an illustration, an example from each programs is listed below with the number of Action Items within each program and the Lead Agencies responsible for them.

1. Planning and Development Program

- 5 Action Items
- 3 Lead Agencies: Baton Rouge Recreation & Park Commission, Downtown Development District, and Department of Public Works.
- **Action R1.E: Riverfront Master Plan.** Implement and maintain the Riverfront Master Plan as an identity feature for Baton Rouge.

2. Operations and Maintenance Program

- 8 Action Items
- 4 Lead Agencies: Baton Rouge Recreation & Park Commission, Planning Commission, YMCA and Department of Public Works.
- **Action R2.B: Open Space Acquisition.** Coordinate open space transfer, trade, or other exchange between BREC and other public agencies.

3. Administration and Coordination Programs

- 9 Action Items
- 3 Lead Agencies: Baton Rouge Recreation & Park Commission, Planning Commission, and Department of Public Works.
- **Action R3.A: Review Existing Ordinances.** Review existing ordinances and guidelines and modify as appropriate and in accordance with the Horizon Plan, continuing updates and other programs as established as a result of these efforts.

4. Funding Programs

- 7 Action Items
- 3 Lead Agencies: Baton Rouge Recreation & Park Commission, Planning Commission, and Department of Public Work.
- **Action R4.D: Est. Fund For Donations.** Establish a special fund for donations to the park system to be used on a Parish-wide basis to offset acquisition, operating, and maintenance costs. The fund could only be used for purchase or provide supplemental O&M funds for recreation facilities identified in Horizon Plan or the continuing Advance Planning Process. Public agencies which could have access to these funds would include City Parish Departments and BREC. (Policy R8.A)

5. Supporting programs (Green Link, Pedestrian, and Bikeway)

- 3 Action Items
- 1 Lead Agency: Planning Commission
- **Action T8.B: Update Ped & Bikeway Plan.** Periodically update the Comprehensive Short Range Pedestrian and Bikeway Plan for East Baton Rouge Parish, including incorporation of the proposed Greenlinks System.

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