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Study Title: Unified Development Code

Purpose: Revise Part II of the St. Tammany Parish Code of Ordinances as part of a Comprehensive Code Rewrite to establish a new Unified Development Code in which traditional zoning and subdivision regulations are combined with other parish development regulations including sign requirements, design guidelines, and water management to improve with review of development applications and permitting requirements, as well as advance the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

Public Notice:

10/25/2023; 11/01/2023

Planning Commission Hearing: 11/14/2023

Recommendation: Approve as written with a 6-month implementation period

Zoning Commission Hearing: 11/14/2023

Recommendation: Approve as written with a 6-month implementation period

Parish Council:

Recommendation:

Location: Parishwide

FINDINGS

- Context.* As the Parish grows, managing traffic, enhancing drainage, and promoting strategic growth has become increasingly more challenging. This is partially because the current development code was drafted with different challenges in mind (i.e.; more rural development standards) than those currently faced, and has become outdated. As a result, the Parish Council, the Planning and Zoning Commissions, and the public have become increasingly overburdened in their efforts to review, interpret, and anticipate the outcomes of land development processes. Streamlining, simplifying and improving overall code navigation to reduce permitting confusion, remove redundancy, and align application procedures and similar processes is an important first step to improving land management processed in St. Tammany Parish.
- What is a Unified Development Code (UDC)?* A Unified Development Code consolidates all local rules and regulations for land development in a single code, to make code updates, improvements, and applications simpler to consider, manage, and implement in response to changing conditions.¹
- Why are we doing a Comprehensive Code Rewrite? What is this?* When corrective amendments, an occasional new provision, and a history of piecemeal amendments over a long period of time start to make a local Code out of step with community objectives and comprehensive plan policies, a comprehensive rewrite of all local land development regulations may be needed. A comprehensive code rewrite includes dozens of corrective amendments, a substantial amount of new material, and a complete reorganization and reformat of local regulations. It also includes a comprehensive edit of all sections of the UDC to ensure consistent use of terminology, drafting conventions, and overall writing style.²
- Background: Building from and advancing previous efforts.*
 - 2017 Draft Code.* In 2017 the Parish developed a revised Code of Ordinances, including comprehensive amendments and reorganization of both Part I and Part II of the Code. The resultant draft Code was not adopted, yet offered significant insights into issues, challenges, and themes associated with the current code that warranted special attention. Proposed amendments discussed herein retain elements of this draft that elevated the need for standard consolidation, procedural clarity, and improved Code usability.

¹ Morris, Maya (2009). "Smart Codes: Model Land-Development Regulations." American Planning Association: Planning Advisory Service (PAS) Report 556. Pg 27 "Alternatives to Conventional Zoning and Subdivision Codes."

² Ibid.

- b. *Low Impact Development (LID) Guidebook*.³ Completed in October 2022 to support future development aligned with the Parish’s values, this Text Study aims to advance Low Impact Development standards through an incremental approach that best ensures adequate staff, resources, and systems are in place as policies and standards are continually adopted and advanced over time. To this effect the proposed UDC includes flexibility for on-site runoff improvements, requires developers to manage the “first flush” of rainfall, and includes specifications for parking lot and site landscaping to be functional green infrastructure (see low impact development standards in Sec. 900-6.8).
- c. *New Directions 2040 Comprehensive Plan*. The 2040 Comprehensive Plan includes updating the Unified Development Code as a priority action item in support of the Parish’s goal for “orderly, carefully planned, and predictable development.”⁴ This Text Study advances the following Plan Goals and Objectives:

Land Use and Development Goals and Strategies

Goal 1: Our land use, land development, and land redevelopment decision-making, policies, and processes will be fair, transparent, and accessible to all Parish stakeholders.

Goal 1 - Strategy 1: Update the Development Code to better explain the appropriate and permitted uses under different zoning districts.

Refer to Ch. 400 Zoning, including new permitted use charts in each zoning district category (residential, commercial, etc.) and specific use standards in Sec. 400-8. Use Standards.

Goal 2: New development and redevelopment will be orderly, carefully planned, and predictable.

Goal 2 – Policy 2: The Unified Development Code and Subdivision Ordinances shall be updated continuously to reflect updated Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and strategies.

Refer to Ch. 200 – Procedures, including new standards for zoning text amendments and area and mapping studies, as well as charts that explain decision-making authorities, notice requirements, and application procedures.

Goal 4: Land and buildings will be developed in ways that lower the risk and incidence of flooding and flood damages caused by rainfall and storm surge.

Goal 4 - Policy 1: Any development permitted in the Parish’s “area of special flood hazard” shall be “low impact,” employing systems and practices that use natural processes that promote infiltration, evapotranspiration, or use of stormwater in order to reduce flood risk and protect water quality.

Refer to Sec. 900-6 Drainage and Flood Prevention.

Goal 5: Adequate infrastructure and utilities will be available in areas permitted for new development.

Goal 5 - Policy 1: Parish decision makers, including the Planning Commission, Zoning Commission, Board of Zoning Adjustments, and the Parish Council, should consider the impact of proposed changes to existing land use regulation on traffic and drainage in adjacent areas.

Refer to sections in Chapters 800 and 900 listed herein, which add minimum criteria for waiver requests and processing requirements that account for additional consideration to impacts of proposed changes and the extent of decision-makers local authority: Sec. 800-2-2 (c) Planning Commission eligible waivers; 800-5 (C)(2) Waiver, lot depth; Sec. 900-2; Waiver, dead end streets;

³ St. Tammany Parish Low Impact Development Guidebook (October 2022). Accessed online via <
http://stp.gov.org/files/2023/PlanningandDevelopment/DocumentsandPDFs/LIDreport_2022.10.13_red.pdf> on 10/25/2022 and throughout the UDC rewrite.

⁴ New Directions 2040 – St. Tammany Parish Comprehensive Plan (May 2022). Page 22. Accessed online via <
http://stp.gov.org/files/2023/PlanningandDevelopment/DocumentsandPDFs/ND2040FinalReport_web.pdf> on 10/15/2023.

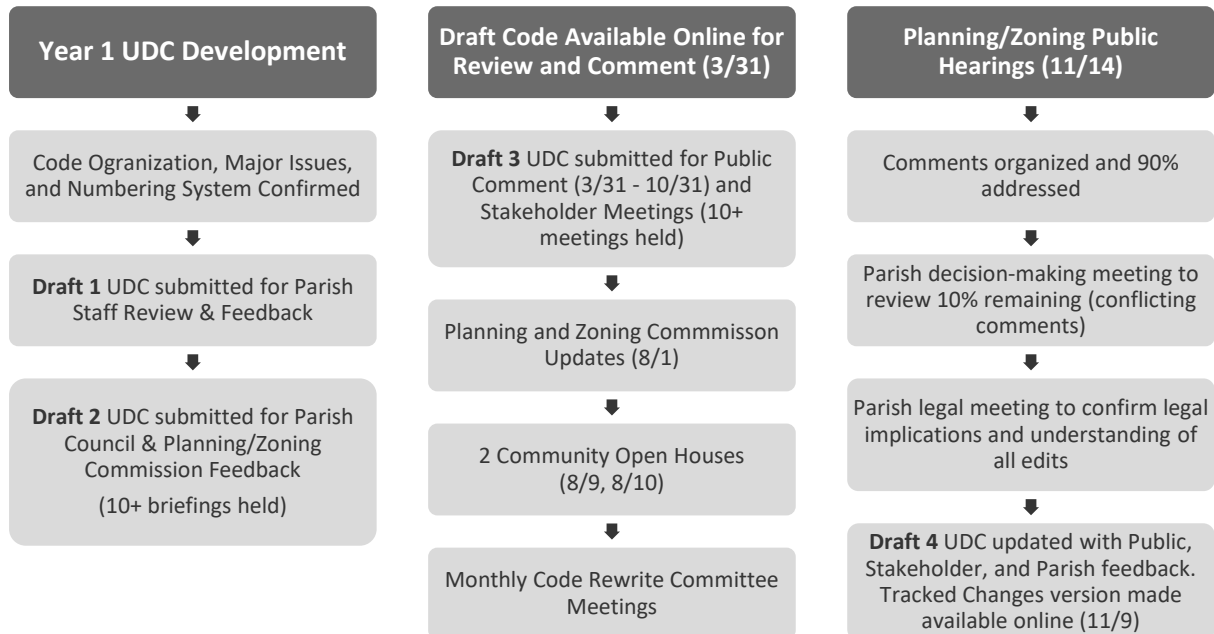
Sec. 900-6.3(F)(15) On site detention waiver; Sec 900-6.5 (D)(6) Administrative Waiver; Sec. 9006.8 – Standards for waivers for stormwater management requirements.

Goal 6: New development and redevelopment will be environmentally sustainable.

Goal 6 -Strategy 1: Promote, encourage and sometimes require sustainable stormwater-management techniques, such as pervious pavement and elevation on piers, in site planning and new construction.

Refer to Sec. 900-6.8 Low Impact Development Standards.

5. *UDC Development Process.* A high-level timeline of the UDC development process is illustrated below, with a summary of changes that resulted from comments provided thereafter.



- a. *An iterative development process.* While most comprehensive rewrites are characterized by a large code document being finalized and submitted for review and approval at the very end of the drafting process, the Parish Council, the Planning and Zoning Commissions, and the Parish Administration have taken extra care to share, distribute, and markup each UDC Draft in a recurring and transparent manner. For this reason, the code development process was repetitive in nature, intended to build from a solid organizational framework continuously improved from a series of peer reviews, beginning with Parish staff, then Commissioners and Councilmembers, and ending with the Public and community Stakeholders. The intent behind this community engagement process was to build consensus through early, often, and transparent communication throughout the drafting process. For example, Draft 3 of the UDC was available online for public comment for nearly 7 months, running concurrently with stakeholder meetings, open houses, and public hearings which were being held to discuss each proposed chapter to the code. Additionally, all changes made to Draft 4 as a result of public comment are tracked and currently shared online for the public’s awareness and reference.
6. *Summary of changes by Chapter.* See **Appendix A** for more detail on the relationship of proposed chapters to the current Code (Part II).

CHAPTER 100 ADMINISTRATION

- a. Places all provisions related to the administration and enforcement of the UDC in one place, consolidating current Chapter 100 - In General and Chapter 130 - Unified Development Code, Article I - Administration.

- b. Clarifies the powers, roles, and responsibilities of decision-making entities, agency heads, or UDC administrators (i.e., Parish Council, Director of Department of Planning and Development, Board of Adjustment, etc.).
- c. Merges the powers of the current Planning Commission and Zoning Commission into one public body: the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- d. Houses the following three additional administrative elements: enabling provisions of the Regional Planning Commission; municipal interface provisions; and comprehensive definitions of terms for entire UDC.

CHAPTER 200 PROCEDURES

- a. Consolidates all development application procedures in one new Chapter.
- b. Includes general procedures related to public notice, public hearings, and application completeness review.
- c. Includes specific procedures for each type of development application such as zoning map changes, text amendments, sign permit applications, landscape permit applications, variances, etc.
- d. Consolidates all application-specific approval criteria.
- e. Clarifies the level of review required by each agency for each type of development application. *See Exhibit 200-1 below.*
- f. Renames the “Administrative Use Permit” to “Development Plan Review” and outlines approval process.
- g. Outlines process for conditional use requests within any zoning district, with approval criteria related to impacts on neighboring properties and consistency with adjacent development.
- h. Clarifies Planning and Zoning Commission’s authority to approve conditional uses.
- i. Relocates Finance and Economic Development Districts not having an impact on development standards or permitting to Part 1, Chapter 2 - Administration, Article XI – Special District Budgets so to align relevant information.
- j. Retitles Article XI “Special District Budgets” to “Special Districts” and treats elements like board creation, boundaries, authority and budgets comprehensively.

Exhibit 200-1 Summary of Application Types and Approval Process

Application Type	Public Hearing Required	Review Body				Procedures Reference
		Department of Planning and Development	Planning and Zoning Commission	Parish Council	Board of Adjustment	
Comprehensive Plan Amendments	Yes	R	D			Sec. 200-3.1
UDC Text Changes	Yes	R	RR	D		Sec. 200-3.2
Zoning Map Changes	Yes	R	RR	D		Sec. 200-3.3
Conditional Uses	Yes	R	D	A		Sec. 200-3.4
Planned Unit Developments (PUD)	Yes	R	RR	D		Sec. 200-3.12
Planned Corridor Developments	Yes	R	D	A		Sec. 200-3.6
Development Review	No	D	A			Sec. 200-3.5
Signage Plan	No	D*	A			Sec. 200-3.11
Landscape Plan	No	D	A			Sec. 200-3.7
Land Clearing	No	D	A			Sec. 200-3.8
Variances	Yes	R			D	Sec. 200-3.9
Administrative Decision Appeals	Yes				D	Sec. 200-3.10
Minor Subdivisions	Yes/No	R/D	D	A		Sec. 800-2.2
Major Subdivisions	Yes	R	D	A		Sec. 800-3
<p>KEY: R = Review, RR = Review & Recommend, D = Final Decision, A = Appeal *Stand-alone signage plans, not part of a larger development approval, are reviewed and approved by the Department of Permits and Inspections</p>						

CHAPTER 300 BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION

- a. Adapted from Chapter 105 - Buildings and Construction, amended to reflect updated numbering and UDC conventions.
- b. Includes updated fee information for permits based on recently enacted fee changes effective August 11, 2022.

CHAPTER 400 ZONING

*Note: Refer to **Appendix B** for a comparison of recommended district changes (i.e. Proposed Zoning Districts to Current Zoning District conversions).*

- a. Adapted from Chapter 130 - Unified Development Code.
- b. Contains all zoning district requirements including permitted land uses and bulk and yard requirements per district as well as a section outlining minimum requirements for specific uses parish-wide (e.g., standards for manufactured homes, solar farms, day care centers, etc.).
- c. Consolidates Estate Districts into one zoning district with the same bulk and yard requirements.
- d. Renames residential districts to simplify and more directly imply intended development patterns.

- e. Renames certain commercial districts to improve long-term mapping and to imply intended development patterns more directly.
- f. Deletes the non-mapped RBG Riverboat Gaming District and HC-5 Highway Commercial District.
- g. Deletes the Regional Business Center (RBC) Overlay, the Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND), and the Entertainment Overlay Districts, which are no longer necessary given updates to commercial zoning districts, the inclusion of conditional uses, and amendments made to the Planned Unit Development District.
- h. Includes Permitted Use Charts for all Districts (see excerpt from **Exhibit 400-1** below) and Site & Structure Standards Charts (see **Exhibit 400-2** below) for all Districts except Industrial Districts.
- i. Changes Planned Unit Development (PUD) District requirements to only accommodate innovative, high-quality site and building design that is otherwise not possible through the application of existing standards prescribed in the UDC. Proposed requirements include (but are not limited to):
 - A site must contain a mix of residential and commercial uses.
 - The plan approach must include environmentally sensitive design and be diverse and include variation in uses, structures, setbacks, open space, etc.
 - The site must be 30 or more acres in size.
 - The site must be properly located with respect to interstate, major highways, and major arterial streets so as not to create major shifts of traffic generation to intermediate collectors and/or minor streets or include transportation system improvements to manage the new demand.
- j. Places prohibition of residential uses in industrial districts.
- k. Clarifies how buffers, landscaping, and setbacks apply in industrial districts.
- l. Contains use-specific performance standards for several use types including short-term rentals, heliports, and solar farms, etc.

Exhibit 400-1: Permitted Uses: Residential Districts

Use Category Specific Use	Residential Zoning Districts											Use Standards
	E	R-1	R-2	L-1	L-2	S-1	S-2	TF	M-L	M-M	M-H	
Residential												
Community Home	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	Section 400-8.J
Day Care Home	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*							
Dwelling, Single-Family	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P			
Dwelling, Two-Family								P	P			
Dwelling, Multiple-Family									P	P	P	
Nursing Home									P	P	P	
Townhouse									P	P	P	
Agricultural and Open Space												
Agriculture, Household	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	Section 400-8.B

Farm	P	P	P	P*	P*							
Farm Stand	P	P	P	P*	P*							
Greenhouse	P	P	P	P*	P*							
Nursery	P	P	P	P*	P*							
Family-Owned Cemetery	P	P	P									Section 400-8.H
Utilities												
Community Central Water Treatment Facilities	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	
Stormwater Retention or Detention Facility	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	
Small Wireless Facility	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	P*	

Exhibit 400-2: Site & Structure Standards: Residential Districts

Site & Structure Standards	Residential Zoning Districts										
	E	R-1	R-2	L-1	L-2	S-1	S-2	TF	M-L	M-M	M-H
Lot Area (Min)*	7 acres	5 acres	3 acres	1 acre	0.5 acre	11,000 sf	7,500 sf	Res.: 7,500 sf Nonres: 12,500 sf	Res: 20,000 sf Nonres: 6,000sf	Res.: 20,000 sf Nonres: 6,000sf	Res.: 20,000 sf Nonres: 6,000sf
Density: Lot Area per Dwelling Unit (Min)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	7,500 sf per 1 unit	4,000 sf per 1 unit	2,500 sf per 1 unit	1,500 sf per 1 unit
Lot Width (Min)	300'	300'	200'	150'	100'	90'	75'	75'	N/A	N/A	N/A
Front Yard (Min)	50'	50'	50'	50'	30'	30'	20'	30'	25'	25'	25'
Side Yard (Min)	15'	15'	15'	15'	10'	10'	7.5'	10'	10'	10'	10'
Corner Side Yard (Min)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	20'	15'	10'	20'	20'	20'
Rear Yard (Min)**	25'	25'	25'	25'	25'	25'	25'	25'	25'	25'	25'
Lot Coverage (Max)	50%	50%	50%	60%	60%	60%	60%	50%	50%	50%	50%

Height (Max)**	35'	35'	35'	35'	35'	35'	35'	45'	45'	60'	60'
<p>* The lot area requirements as described in Exhibit 400-2 shall be applicable to residential uses only. Where nonresidential uses are permitted, the minimum lot area requirement for nonresidential uses shall be 40,000 square feet, unless otherwise stated in the table, and except that public utility facilities may be located on lots of lesser area with administrative approval by the Director of the Department of Planning and Development.</p> <p>** Properties with frontage on Lakeview Drive are subject to additional rear yard requirements per Section 400-2.2.G.4.e.</p> <p>*** Uses incidental to farming, such as silos, windmills, etc., and any other non-habitable structure (e.g., radio, TV tower) may exceed this height limitation; provided one foot of setback is provided for every one foot over 45 feet from existing dwellings or residences and/or property lines. In addition, properties in the M-M and M-H Districts are subject to additional height restrictions per Section 400-2.4.B.4.e.ii and Section 400-2.4.C.4.e.ii.</p>											

CHAPTER 500 NONCONFORMITIES

- a. Consolidates all standards related to nonconforming situations and vested rights.
- b. Adds specifications around the restoration, and expiration of nonconforming uses and treatment of existing legally nonconforming use sites.
- c. Consolidates standards related to the development of nonconforming lots from subdivision regulations.
- d. Allows development on substandard lots ONLY IF all setback requirements are met.
- e. Requires resubdivision of contiguous lots in common ownership (which would bring the lot into conformance with minimum lot size requirements of base zoning district) when developer wishes to build across lot lines or apply for resubdivision.

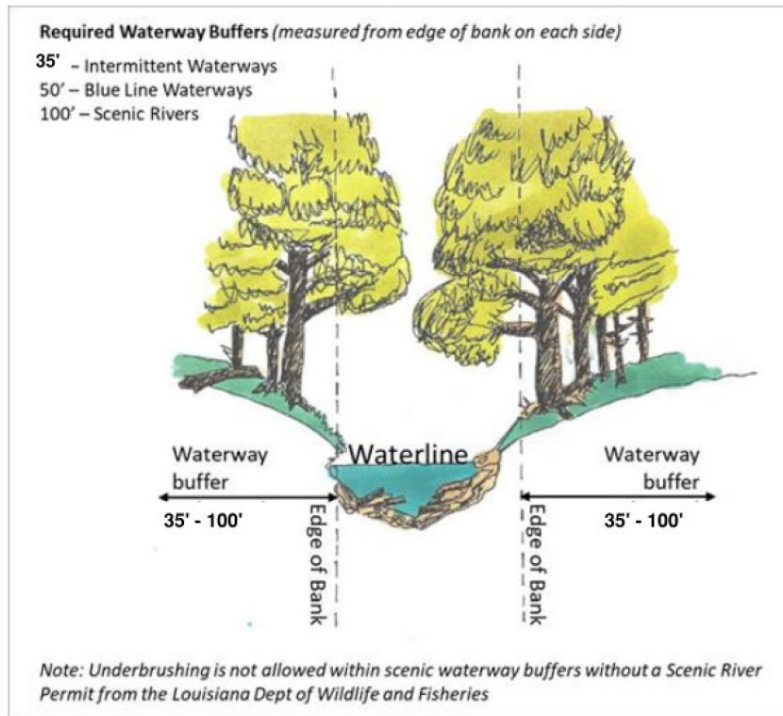
CHAPTER 600 GENERAL DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

- a. Incorporates general development standards from previous Chapter 130 - Unified Development Code, Article VI Supplemental Standards including site design standards such as lighting, signage, off-street parking, landscaping, land clearing and tree preservation, as well as special standards for certain accessory uses.
- b. Establishes content neutral sign regulations.
- c. Clarifies measurement and placement of sight triangles.
- d. Incorporates low impact development standards into parking and landscaping requirements, including references to **Sec. 900-6.8 Low Impact Development Standards**.
- e. Provides updated land clearing regulations with predevelopment standards associated with the timing and degree to which land can be cleared for development and establishes the requirement for preservation of natural vegetation.
- f. Provides updated tree preservation requirements, incentivizing the preservation of live oak, cypress and other heritage trees.
- g. Adds new graphics, charts and tables to improve code usability. See **Exhibit 600-3-1 and Exhibit 600-3-5** for examples (*below*).
- h. Requires a 50' Natural Area be preserved, where trees and shrubs shall remain undisturbed on all sides of new subdivision developments over 5 acres or 25 lots.
- i. Adds a Natural Area Incentive which rewards developers in the S-1 and S-2 residential districts a maximum total 20% lot area reduction based on the percent of additional natural area preserved on site.
- j. Provides regulations for landscaped areas located along street, side and rear property lines, and within parking lots.
- k. Establishes requirements to select native tree species.

Exhibit 600-3-1 Summary of Land Clearing, Buffer, and Landscaping Requirements.

Requirement Criteria: Land Use, Lot Size and Number of Lots	Land Clearing Permit	Tree Survey	Planting Plan	NAT & LA Areas	Mitigation Plan	Natural and Landscaped Area Size
Residential						
Duplex - Lot ≥ 0.5 acres	Y	Y	Y	LA	Y	Commercial Landscape Standards 600-3.4.D
Single-Family - Lot ≥ 5 acres outside a platted subdivision	Y	N	N	NAT	Y	25' street & 50' side and rear buffer on each individual lot
Subdivision with 6 to 24 lots and ≥ 5 acres	Y	N	N	NAT	Y	25' street buffer & 50' Natural Area preserved along rear and sides of subdivision (outside of lots)
Subdivision ≥ 25 lots	Y	Y	N	NAT	Y	50' Natural Area preserved around entire subdivision (outside of lots).
Multifamily (3+ units)	Y	Y	Y	LA	Y	Commercial Landscape Standards 600-3.4.D
Nonresidential						
Forestry/Agriculture ≥ 5 acres	Y	N	N	NAT	Y	NAT
Commercial	Y	Y	Y	LA*	Y	Commercial Landscape Standards 600-3.4.D
Medical	Y	Y	Y	LA*	Y	Commercial Landscape Standards 600-3.4.D
Institutional	Y	Y	Y	LA*	Y	Commercial Landscape Standards 600-3.4.D
Parks/Recreation	Y	Y	Y	LA*	Y	Commercial Landscape Standards 600-3.4.D
Industrial	Y	Y	Y	LA*	Y	Commercial Landscape Standards 600-3.4.D
Where "Y" = Yes, Required and "N" = Not applicable						
"LA" = Landscaped Areas.						
"NAT" = Natural Areas						
*Mitigation is applicable to all types of property upon which landscaping or preservation is required as per Section 600-3.2(D) & 600-3.3(E) .						
Waterway Buffers apply to all property types per Sec. 600-3.2(E)						

Exhibit 600-3-5 Required Waterway Buffers.



CHAPTER 700 COASTAL MANAGEMENT

- Adapted from the current Chapter 110 Coastal Zone Management Regulations.
- Incorporates new standards for shoreline stabilization and land reclamation.
- Changes largely carried over from work performed between LA DNR and STP Environmental in 2023.
- Includes Coastal Zone Management Program regulations.

CHAPTER 800 SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

- Consolidates and streamlines subdivision standards, processes, and submittal requirements to support more effective and straightforward application and approval processes.
- Modifies the classification of types of subdivisions and clarifies which types require public hearing and review by the Planning and Zoning Commission, and which can be approved administratively by the Director of the Department of Planning and Development.
- Clarifies categories for review and approval and includes information on where to file applications, how to determine application completeness, and processes for interdepartmental review.
- Refers to Definitions moved to Chapter 100 - Administration, public notice procedures outlined in Chapter 200 - Procedures, and infrastructure standards in Chapter 900 - Infrastructure.
- Removes "industrial exception" review category, which would be processed as a minor subdivision.
- To better clarify the subdivision process including when the public hearing takes place in the approval process.
 - Renames the "Tentative" process for major subdivisions to "Concept Plan."
 - Renames the "Preliminary" process for major subdivisions to "Final Plat."
 - Renames the "Final Plat" approval to "As Built Plan" approval.
 - Authorizes the Director of the Department of Engineering to approve As Built Plans and accept (and release) warranty obligations once all terms are addressed (See **Sec. 800-3.5 As Built Plan Approval and Warranty Obligation.**)

CHAPTER 900 INFRASTRUCTURE

- a. Consolidates and organizes the standards and regulations for infrastructure required for land development within the Parish.
 - b. Adds details, specifications, and clarity to parishwide infrastructure requirements.
 - c. Includes standards for streets, waste, and wastewater systems (moved from Part I, Chapter 40 - Utilities of the current code), drainage, sidewalks, greenspace, and bikeways and trails.
 - d. Includes standards adapted from current Chapter 115 - Drainage and Flood Control and outlines requirements for drainage, fill, flood prevention and mitigation, stormwater management and discharge control, and development regulations for properties in floodplains.
 - e. Includes minimum standards for sidewalks and bike trails when made a part of an application.
7. *Online Comments submitted between 3/31 - 10/31: How many and what were the major themes?* Public comments on Draft 3 of the UDC (dated March 31) were collected and incorporated into Draft 4 in coordination with Parish staff. Eighty-three total (83) comments were received from thirty-five (35) residents. Areas of concern included:
- Drainage, floodplain management, and wetland preservation.
 - Zoning and permit approval process, specifically short-term rentals and subdivisions regulations.
 - Tree preservation.
 - Public meeting processes.
 - Code enforcement.

Each comment was addressed, and a response from the Project Team is available as part of the UDC comment Resolution Matrix.

8. *Major Themes from the Public, Code Rewrite Committee, and Stakeholder Groups.* Major themes across Public Comments online, Stakeholder Groups, and the Code Rewrite Committee are summarized in more detail below, including divergent perspectives, compromises, and decisions made to advance the UDC in support of a more sustainable St. Tammany Parish:
- a. *Manufactured Housing Overlay (MHO) and Rural Overlay (RO).* Over the course of this project, there was much debate over the treatment of the existing Manufactured Housing and Rural Overlays, specifically regarding the use of the overlays to permit the placement and location of mobile homes (a permitted use in the MHO) and short-term rentals (a permitted use in the RO). On March 31, 2023, the Parish posted Draft 3 of the UDC, which proposed to remove the RO and replace the MHO with a Manufactured Home District. In keeping with best practices, this would have permitted mobile homes and short-term rentals in existing base zoning districts by-right or through the issuance of a conditional use permit, coupled with use standards included in **Sec. 400-8**. However, debate over the use of conditional use permits, standards, and siting requirements often fell short of arriving at a solution that all (or a majority) agreed with.
- To avoid choosing a path forward that could undermine the successful adoption of the UDC, all agreed this decision-making would benefit from a mapping analysis that would assess where these uses are currently located, their impacts to neighboring structures, and recommendations based on trends and additional community outreach and education specific to these topics. For these reasons, Draft 4 of the UDC (posted online), reinserts the Rural Overlay and Manufactured Housing Overlay until such time as these processes and existing conditions can more thoroughly be assessed and explained, wherein a clearer path forward should emerge that addresses community concerns.
- b. *Infrastructure.* Infrastructure remained an ever-present theme of UDC comments and feedback. Unfortunately, such feedback was often at both ends of the spectrum: either requesting more robust and restrictive standards or requesting standards be reduced to ensure the construction industry that has driven growth in St. Tammany Parish continues into the future. In support of issue resolution, significant time and effort was spent by the Parish to genuinely understand perspectives, support compromise, and help all stakeholders articulate their concerns in a nonconfrontational manner.

It is important to note that: (1) the Parish values all concerns shared and acknowledges they represent the lived experience of residents, civic leaders, and developers whose livelihood and quality of life are affected by amendments proposed and (2) the Codes is intended to be a living document, updated and amended as community values change and evolve. This proposed Code is not the last opportunity to resolve long-standing issues associated with infrastructure, but represents a critical step in creating a usable and clear code from which to continuously advance goals of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

The proposed UDC aims to create a balance between opposing perspectives, compromising where the public's interest is not impacted significantly and retaining new standards that will support the future development and character of the Parish. Over the course of the public comment period, significant edits to Ch. 900 occurred largely due to overly specific procedures originally being included in Draft 3 in response to requests for enhanced predictability and detailed procedures. While much of the proposed Code has been retained to achieve this goal, some areas were overly detailed and for this reason were mutually agreed to not be codified. Of note, it is the intention of the Parish to incorporate these standards into a technical companion manual to the Code, where such detailed procedures and decision-making is more appropriate and in keeping with best practice.

- c. *Planned Unit Developments or PUDs.* There is a well-established history in St. Tammany Parish of utilizing the PUD overlay to increase residential density. While clustered development has positive outcomes for the environment, public feedback elevated the need to re-connect PUDs with their intended purpose, which is to advance more innovative development approaches that are not currently permitted in any existing zoning district in the Code. For this reason, the proposed code maintains that a PUD is a “flexibility lever” for great ideas that are by their very nature “out of the box,” and adds standards to this effect to avoid misuse of this district in the future.
- d. *Conditional Uses.* Conditional Uses were historically utilized in St. Tammany Parish, but were removed from the Code in 2007 (Council Series No. 07-1548). Without appropriate standards and conditions, Conditional Use approvals can become arbitrary and capricious, and open the Parish, it's civic leaders who serve on boards and commissions, and the public to costly ligation, time lost, and limited progress made. However, with clear criteria, a limited number of land uses that can be permitted as a conditional use, and a clear process for such approvals; conditional uses can create much needed authority to consider very site specific circumstances and impose conditions to reduce or mitigate negative impacts to nearby properties. Limited land use activities allowed upon conditional use approval include:
 - *Home Office or Occupation uses* when services involve instruction to more than 1 person at a time for a hobby-oriented activity like music, art, or dance.
 - *Restaurant, dine-in with lounge* in the NC-2, GC-1, GC-2, and PBC districts.
 - *Atomic generating plant, chemical processing plant, concrete or asphalt batching plant, (permanent), and shipbuilding and repair uses* in the I-3 Heavy Industrial District.
 - Permanent occupancy of a site by *seasonal produce stands* (other than seafood peddlers and Christmas tree sales) in the MHO District.

Refer to Chapter 200 – Procedures, for more information on the Conditional Use approval criteria and decision-making processes, and Ch. 100 for definitions related to Conditional Uses. As proposed, Conditional Uses are tied to the structure and are transferable from one owner to another, so long as conditions notated on the approved plat or survey are maintained in conformance.

- e. *Tree preservation and land clearing.* Many comments and concerns were voiced regarding the preservation of the Parish's tree canopy, natural landscape, and heritage trees (trees which are 18 inches or greater dbh and Grade B or better). These comments were often coupled with concerns over extensive land clearing practices for residential subdivisions, and the negative flooding impacts and stormwater runoff associated with new development. The proposed Code addresses these concerns in tandem through the implementation Natural Area requirements, which require the preservation of a 50' area around new subdivisions in its natural state to both retain the tree canopy and provide enhanced water storage capacity between new development

and existing adjacent uses. Land clearing, tree preservation standards and processes have also been strengthened in response to these concerns and in accordance with best practices.

9. A final draft of the Unified Development Code (including changes tracked) is available online at <http://stp.gov.org/files/Departments/Planning/UDC/2023.11.09-UDC-Ch.100-900-Tracked.pdfv> for the public and Planning Commission to review all changes that have been made as a result of public and stakeholder input.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Rename and reorganize existing Part II – Land Development Code (LDC) of the St. Tammany Parish Code of Ordinances to establish a Unified Development Code within Part II, in which traditional zoning and subdivision regulations are combined with other parish regulations such as sign requirements, design guidelines, and water management to assist with review of development applications and permitting requirements.
2. Update standards within and across Part II: Unified Development Code—consistent with Parish Administration, Parish Council, the Planning and Zoning Commission, public and stakeholder feedback, and best planning and engineering practices—to streamline, simplify and improve overall code navigation in support of reducing permitting confusion, removing redundancy, and aligning application procedures and similar processes, consistent with the Proposed draft UDC dated November 2023 and included herein as **Appendix C**.
3. Relocate existing Finance and Economic Development Districts not having an impact on development standards or permitting to Part 1, Chapter 2 - Administration, Article XI – Special District Budgets; retitle Article XI. “Special District Budgets” to “Special Districts;” and treat elements like board creation, boundaries, authority and budgets comprehensively, consistent with the proposed changes included herein as **Appendix D**.

APPENDIX A: RELATIONSHIP TO CURRENT ORDINANCE

The following table outlines where sections of the current code broadly fit into the Draft Unified Development Code. Note that many proposed chapters contain amended language and do not necessarily contain the sections in the current code verbatim. The proposed chapters contain amended language to consolidate repetitive language in the current code or additional language to help simplify requirements.

NEW CHAPTER

CURRENT ORDINANCE

Chapter 100 Administration

Chapter 100 General Administrative Provisions
Chapter 120, Article II Regional Planning Commission
Chapter 120, Article III Parish Planning Commission
Chapter 120, Article IV Parish Zoning Commission
Chapter 130 Unified Development Code, Article I In General
Chapter 130 Unified Development Code, Article II Administration and Enforcement
Chapter 125 Subdivision Regulations, Article I Definition of Terms

Chapter 200 Procedures

Chapter 130 Unified Development Code, Article II Administration and Enforcement
Chapter 125 Subdivision Regulations, Article IV Standards of Design

Chapter 300 Buildings and Construction

Chapter 105 Buildings and Construction

Chapter 400 Zoning

Chapter 130 Unified Development Code, Article IV Zoning Districts
Chapter 130 Unified Development Code, Article V Overlays
Chapter 130 Unified Development Code, Article VII Minimum Standards for Specific Uses

Chapter 500 Nonconformities

Chapter 130 Unified Development Code, Article III Nonconformities

Chapter 600 General Development Standards

Chapter 130 Unified Development Code, Article VI Supplemental Standards
Chapter 130 Unified Development Code, Article VII Minimum Standards for Specific Uses
Chapter 130 Unified Development Code, Article VII, Division 2 Land Clearing Permit

Chapter 700 Coastal Management

Chapter 110 Coastal Zone Management Regulations

Chapter 800 Subdivision Regulations

Chapter 125 Subdivision Regulations

Chapter 900

Chapter 30 Parks, Recreation and Scenic Neighborhoods, Article XIV Tammany Trace
Chapter 40 Utilities
Chapter 115 Drainage and Flood Control
Chapter 125 Subdivision Regulations, Article III Street Regulations
Chapter 125 Subdivision Regulations, Article IV Standards of Design
Chapter 125 Subdivision Regulations, Article VI Traffic Impact Analysis
Chapter 125 Subdivision Regulations, Article VII Studies, Plans, and Review Procedures
Chapter 130 Unified Development Code, Article VII, Division 45 Sidewalk Standard

APPENDIX B: ZONING DISTRICT CONVERSION TABLES

Recommended Residential Districts	
Proposed Zoning District	Current Zoning District
E Estate District	E-1 Estate District E-2 Estate District E-3 Estate District E-4 Estate District
R-1 Rural Residential District	A-1(D) Suburban District
R-2 Rural Residential District	A-1A(D) Suburban District
L-1 Large Lot Residential District	A-2(D) Suburban District
L-2 Large Lot Residential District	A-3(D) Suburban District
S-1 Suburban Residential District	A-4(D) Single-Family District
S-2 Suburban Residential District	A-4A(D) Single-Family District
TF Two-Family Residential District	A-5(D) Two-Family Residential District
M-L Low Multi-Family Residential District	A-6(D) Multiple-Family Residential District
M-M Medium Multi-Family Residential District	A-7(D) Multiple-Family Residential District
M-H High Multi-Family Residential District	A-8(D) Multiple-Family Residential District

APPENDIX B: ZONING DISTRICT CONVERSION TABLES *(Continued)*

Recommended Commercial Districts	
Proposed Zoning District	Current Zoning District
NC-1 Neighborhood Office District	NC-1 Professional Office District
NC-2 Neighborhood Commercial District	NC-2 Indoor Retail and Service District NC-3 Lodging District NC-4 Neighborhood Service and Institutional District
GC-1 General Commercial District	NC-5 Retail and Service District
GC-2 Public, Cultural, and Recreational District	NC-6 Public, Cultural, and Recreational District
PBC Planned Business Campus District	PBC-1 Planned Business Campus PBC-1 Planned Business Campus
Same District Title	HC-1 Highway Commercial District
Same District Title	HC-2 Highway Commercial District
Same District Title	HC-2A Highway Commercial District
Same District Title	HC-3 Highway Commercial District
HC-4 Highway Commercial District	HC-4 Highway Commercial District HC-5 Highway Commercial District
PUD Planned Unit Development District (existing properties subject to respective approvals by Parish Council)	PUD Planned Unit Development Overlay District

APPENDIX B: ZONING DISTRICT CONVERSION TABLES *(Continued)*

Recommended Specialized Districts	
Proposed Zoning District	Current Zoning District
MOCD Medical Office or Clinic District	MD-1 Medical Residential District MD-2 Medical Clinic District
MHD Medical Hospital District	MD-3 Medical Facility District
MRD Medical Research District	MD-4 Medical Research District
Same District Title	PF-1 Public Facilities District
Same District Title	PF-2 Public Facilities District
Same District Title	CBF-1 Community-Based Facilities District
Same District Title	ED-1 Primary Education District
Same District Title	ED-2 Higher Education District
Same District Title	AT Animal Training/Housing District
Deleted (limited properties impacted)	RBG Riverboat Gaming District RBC Regional Business Center Overlay EO Entertainment Overlay
PUD Planned Unit Development District (existing properties will convert to PUD Districts while subject to the originally approved final development plan)	TND-1 and TND-2 Traditional Neighborhood Development Zoning District
Same District Title	MHO Manufactured Housing Overlay RO Rural Overlay

Recommended Industrial Districts	
Proposed Zoning District	Current Zoning District
Same District Title	SWM-1 Solid Waste Management District
Same District Title	SWM-2 Solid Waste Management District
Same District Title	I-1 Industrial District
Same District Title	I-2 Industrial District
I-3 Heavy Industrial District	I-3 Heavy Industrial District I-4 Heavy Industrial District
Same District Title	AML Advanced Manufacturing and Logistics District

APPENDIX C
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS
TO
PART II: LAND DEVELOPMENT CODE
ST. TAMMANY CODE OF ORDINANCES
(dated November 2023)

APPENDIX D
PROPOSED AMENDMENTS
TO
PART 1, CHAPTER 2 – ADMINISTRATION
ARTICLE XI – SPECIAL DISTRICT BUDGETS
ST. TAMMANY CODE OF ORDINANCES