

HAMMOND MASTERPLAN

Property surrounding Hammond Airport

A VISION FOR THE CITY OF HAMMOND

“The City of Hammond’s vision is to continue its role as an expanding regional hub economic, transportation, higher, education and cultural activity while growing in a sustainable manner that respect our history, enhances our quality of life and creates a stronger, more complete community for all residents while maintaining our City’s character and appeal.”

1. Chapter 2: Land Use

Control Growth Around the Airport: The expansion of residential development around airport should be limited to avoid conflicts. Development around the airport should be carefully considered to provide for useful and compatible land uses that will create a diversified and more stable economy for Hammond.

2. Chapter 4: Transportation & Infrastructure

Creation of a new arterial loop roadway connection West University Ave to Airport Rd is a major recommendation to connect the distribution/warehousing and business park east of Hammond Airport to the highway system and to reduce truck traffic on downtown roads.

- Objective 4.8- Increase the capacity of Hammond Northshore Regional Airport to serve as an economic and transportation center through continued economic development partnerships and protection of approach zones from incompatible residential encroachment
 - Policy 4.8.1 – Identify land adjacent to the airport facilities that present opportunities for expansion and complimentary commercial and industrial development.
 - Policy 4.8.3 – Develop a coordinated land use, infrastructure, financing and airport facilities plan to increase airport related economic activity.

3. Chapter 5: Housing

In addition to the existing steady growth of the City, the impact of Hurricane Katrina has created a spike in population in Hammond. With I-12 now being perceived as the safe line for development, companies and governmental agencies are moving their services north of the interstate, including the military moving operations to the Hammond Airport. From 2000 to 2014, the rate of growth in the City of Hammond is expected to accelerate as people shift from southern parts of the State north to the I-12 corridor.

Community Concerns: Limit Residential Development around the Airport. The Hammond Airport in the eastern part of Hammond is an asset to the city, but surrounding land uses should be considered in terms of their compatibility with the airport’s potential to grow. Ideally, new development around the airport should benefit and enhance the Airport and its functions. Additional residential development could cause conflict if residents complain of noise and other impact from the airport.

- Objective 5.9 – Limit expansion of residential around the airport.
 - Policy 5.9.1 – Consider adopting an airport overlay zone or aviation easements to prevent the need for buy-outs of properties as the airport increases in size and capacity.

Memorandum

Date: October 26, 2020

To: City of Hammond, Louisiana

From: Jason King, AICP. Principal of Dover, Kohl & Partners

Subject: Hammond Comprehensive Plan Interpretation Related to the Property at the Southeast Corner of Vineyard Road and Industrial Park Road

City of Hammond,

We were asked to comment on the Comprehensive Plan's intent regarding a property at the southeast corner of Vineyard Road and Industrial Park Road. My understanding is that an applicant is proposing a medical distribution center for the site.

I am a Principal at Dover, Kohl & Partners and helped co-author the *Comprehensive Plan for Hammond* which was adopted by the City in 2011. The intention of the plan was to help communicate the City's vision to grow in a sustainable manner that respects the City's history, enhances the quality of life of residents, and creates a stronger, more complete community while maintaining the City's small town charm.

I have watched the City Council Special Meeting on October 19, 2020 and read the accompanying Staff Report. I understand that this is complex and contentious issue. Admittedly, it has been a long time since the plan was written. I defer to the City's judgement on this matter entirely. **However, I recommend that the site be considered for a zoning change to allow an industrial use.**

Analysis

Reviewing the Comprehensive Plan, we find the following sections especially pertinent, and in favor of **residential** development instead of industrial:

- Page 1.3 states "Encourage sustainable design that enhances and expands the existing community character and identifies Hammond as a special place."
- Figure 2.4, The Sector Map: The property is located within the area labeled "Tier 2- Development and Redevelopment Areas." Tier 2 is defined: "New Development and Redevelopment areas should be planned for future growth"

which includes suburban retrofit, new neighborhoods on existing infrastructure and new neighborhoods requiring new infrastructure.”

- Figure 2.11, Future Land Use Map: The property is located on land identified as “Low Density Residential.”
- Figure 3.10, Plan Areas Map: The Comprehensive Plan does not clearly make a specific proposal for this site unlike the many areas which were the subject of detailed illustrative master plans and renderings.

Reviewing the Comprehensive Plan, we find the following sections especially pertinent, and in favor of **industrial** development:

- Page 1.3 states “Identify and foster opportunities for expanded cooperation with the Parish, including intergovernmental and annexation agreements, to manage growth, promote economic development, create gateways that impart a positive image of the city, and form a rational city pattern.”
- Page 2.2 describes the sentiment of many community members that “Development around the airport should be carefully considered to provide for useful and compatible land uses that will create a diversified and more stable economy for Hammond.”
- Figure 2.10, Special Districts: The property is located adjacent to the “S-2: District (Hammond Airport).”
- Policy 4.8.1 states “Identify land adjacent to the airport facilities that present opportunities for expansion and complimentary commercial and industrial development.”
- Policy 4.8.2 states “Coordinate with Tangipahoa Parish to protect airport operations from land use encroachment that reduces the functionality and safety of long-term airport operations.”
- Figure 4.12, Proposed Street Atlas: The street atlas identifies Industrial Park Road as a “Commercial Street” and not “Residential.”
- Page 5.6 states “Limit Residential Development Around the Airport”

Conclusion:

Locally undesirable land uses need to be fairly and logically distributed. These uses range from the dramatic, like power plants and landfills, to the relatively mundane, like medical supply distribution centers. Most people agree that these facilities are necessary, but most people want them sited in someone else’s neighborhood. Most

people agree that these development projects provide valued local jobs and contribute to local property taxes, but they want them placed far from where they live. For this reason, unwanted neighbors typically locate where they encounter the least political resistance.

Objective regional criteria needs to be considered when siting undesirable land uses including existing land use patterns and transportation patterns. The site is located adjacent to the Hammond North Shore Regional Airport. The site is located on Industrial Park Road. Industrial growth should be located next to major facilities on roads designated for industrial uses. Louisiana and Tangipahoa Parish have identified and marketed this area for industrial uses because development of this kind is optimally located in locations like the southeast corner of Vineyard Road and Industrial Park Road. Although a rezoning is required rezonings are to be expected when specific conditions can be met. This is not an ecologically fragile area. This is not a site in the center of a historic district. There are many places in the City of Hammond that would be unsuitable for this project. This site is not one of them.

In the case of a distribution center, the concern over drainage problems, traffic problems, and quality of life problems is valid. These concerns must be mitigated through design. Flooding, traffic, light pollution, noise pollution, and other negative externalities can largely be handled through water retention facilities, setbacks, landscape buffers, and upgrades to the street network.

While we sympathize with the neighbors who are concerned about this project and while we absolutely support their efforts to represent their own best interest it would appear that this project, if properly designed, is unlikely to affect their health or lead to a reduction in home values. This project would not be so damaging to the lives of the people who live around it as to outweigh the value to the tens of thousands of people who live in the region. Facilities that are essential to the region and the state, must, ultimately, be located somewhere.

Thank you for your time.

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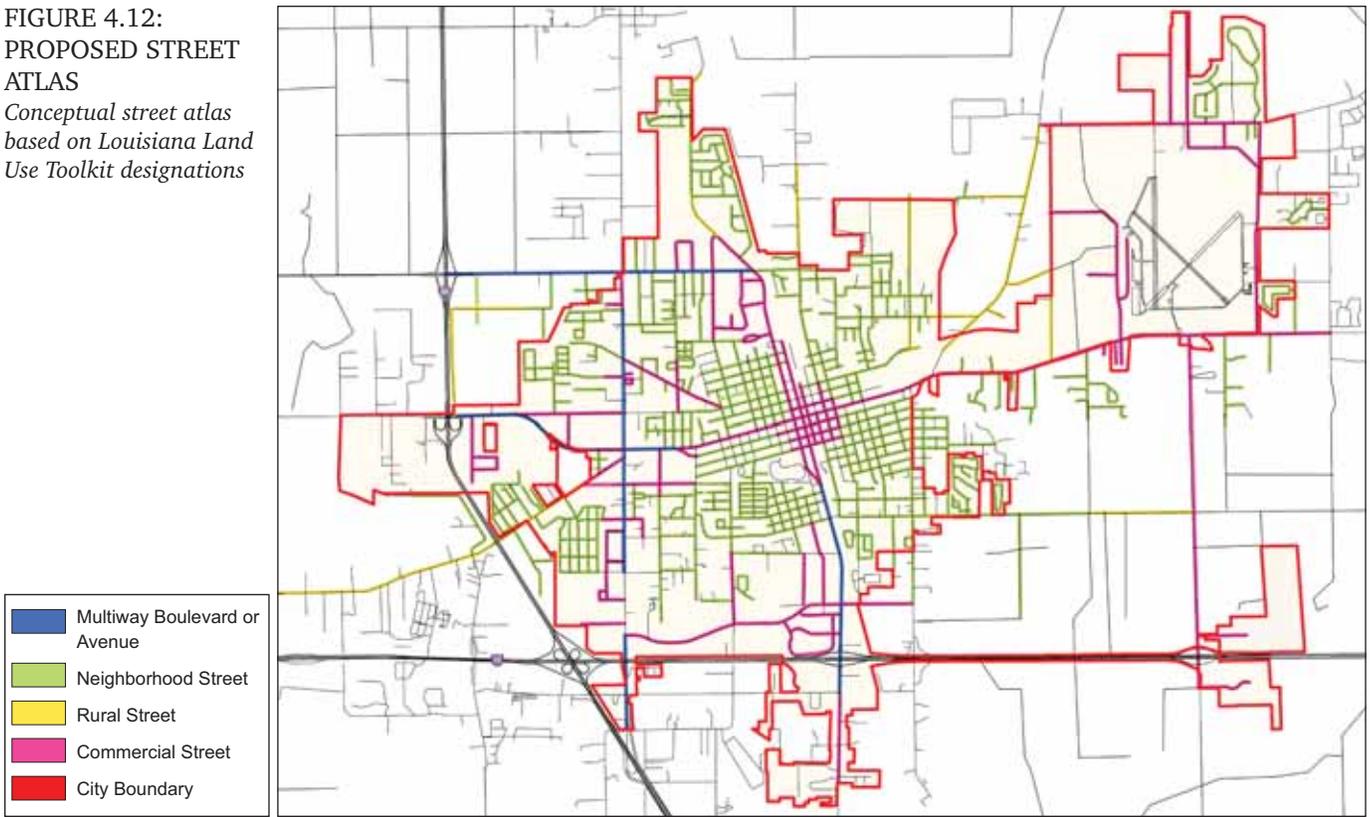
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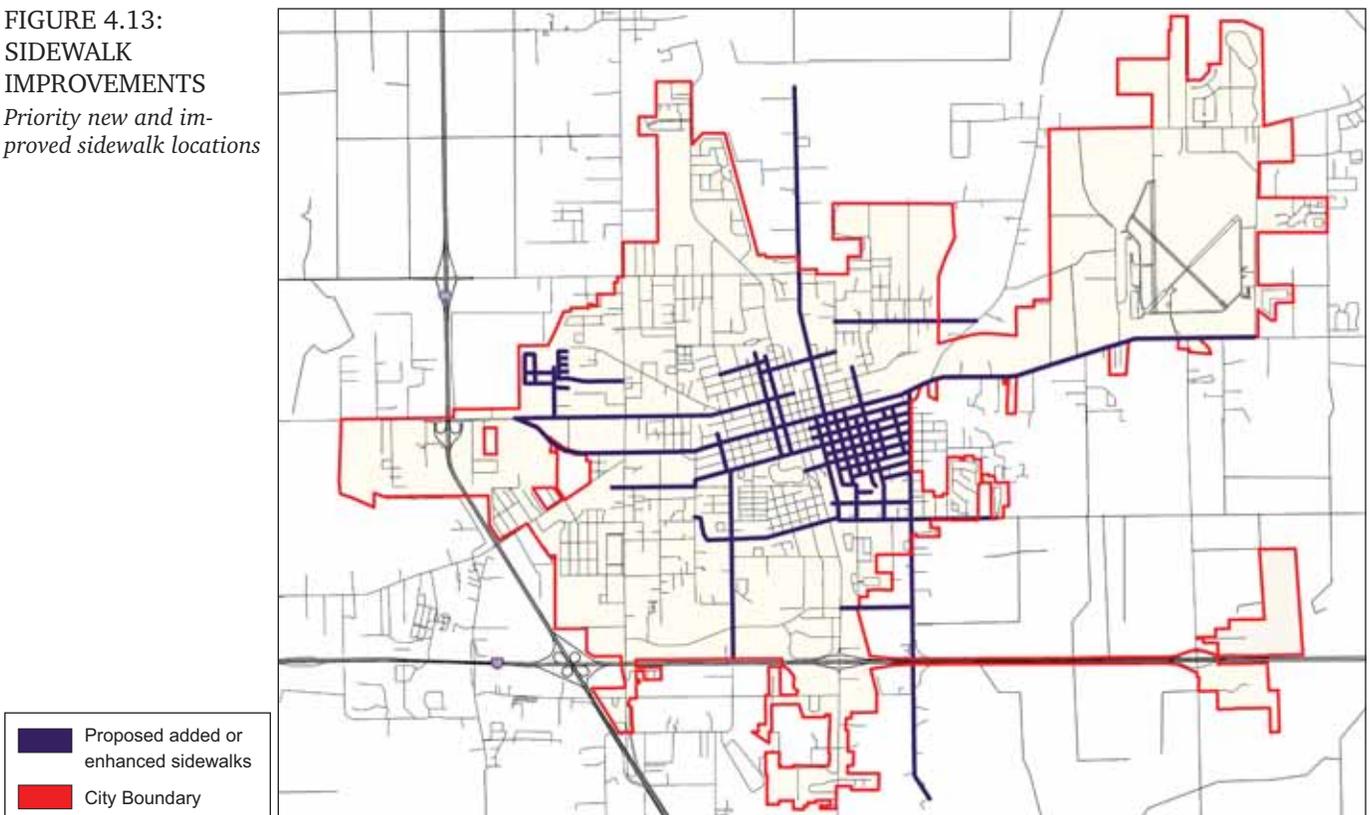
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**FIGURE 4.12:
PROPOSED STREET
ATLAS**
*Conceptual street atlas
based on Louisiana Land
Use Toolkit designs*



**FIGURE 4.13:
SIDEWALK
IMPROVEMENTS**
*Priority new and im-
proved sidewalk locations*



Question:

In the City's Master Plan, Figure 2.11 – Future Land Use Map shows the property in question as “residential”. What has changed, or why should the property now be “light industrial”?

Response from Jason King at Dover, Khol, & Partners:

Hammond City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to clarify. Firstly, let us reiterate that we defer to the City Council and Staff's expert, local, and up-to-date information. Secondly, yes, the Future Land Use Map (Figure 2.11) does identify the property as “Residential” and we understand the dilemma this poses. However, in multiple places in the Comprehensive Plan, the Plan discusses the goal of economic development, the need to limit residential around the airport, the intention that Industrial Park Road be used for industry, and, quite specifically, how “Development around the airport should be carefully considered to provide for useful and compatible land uses that will create a diversified and more stable economy for Hammond” (Page 2.2).

I recommend that the City consider the Future Land Use map a living document, subject to update when an application fulfills Plan principles. It would appear to us (admittedly from a distance) that the medical distribution center fulfills Plan principles. As a matter of custom and practice, a City's Future Land Use Map designations change often, but it is rare that Plan principles are changed. I would suggest, then, that the Future Land Use Map is a tool that facilitates Plan principles.

That said, there is quite a bit in the plan which talks about “maintaining the city's small town charm” and “quality of life for residents.” We could conclude that difficult decisions like this are the reason for City Councils and, unfortunately, Master Plans can only provide limited guidance. However, it would appear that the City's “small town charm” and “quality of life” will only be minimally affected by locating industry near the airport while the Plan goal of economic development will be substantially advanced. We therefore recommend updating the Future Land Use map to reflect an Industrial use and accommodate this applicant.

Respectfully,
Jason King
DK&P