

SWOT identified in 4/3/18 Ascension Parish Master Land Use Plan Stakeholder Committee discussion.

Strengths and Weaknesses are internal. Opportunities and Threats are external.

Ascension Parish Strengths

- Education
- Waterways for transportation
- Good public safety
- History
- Developable land
- Chemical companies/industry cluster/manufacturing
- Parish is a friendly place to do business
- Corridor for industry—river, rail and deep-water access
- Energy resources – gas, electricity
- Community strength/willingness to help each other in times of disaster

Ascension Parish Weaknesses

- Floodplains and wetlands
- Poor drainage
- Poor road infrastructure/construction
- Lack of public sewer system
- Public water is not available to all
- Traffic
- Fear of change
- Organizational weaknesses – no capital improvement plan, no sewer plan.
- Public perception that the parish has cash that it doesn't have—public trust in finances is low
- Not able to align plans
- Can't stick to a plan--we keep starting over and "band-aiding" instead of real planning
- No institutional follow-through
- Not working together
- Lack of housing diversity
- Lack of access to affordable housing
- In some parts of the parish there is a sense of entitlement to do things even if they negatively affect others
- Lack of alternatives to driving and lack of amenities like sidewalks, walking, biking, and culture that other areas have
- River separates us – if there had been a bridge between Darrow and Donaldsonville, we'd be more connected. There's a perception that the sides are isolated.
- Eroding our culture by letting things like the ferry go away
- Lose young employees to Houston where they can find walking and biking opportunities
- No connectivity to next development

Ascension Parish Opportunities

- Passenger rail
- Job growth – opportunities for industry such as the chemical industry to come in
- Diversification of employment base
- Centrally located between Baton Rouge and New Orleans and sit on both sides of the river
- Land availability, especially on the west bank
- Commercial business development-retail, support services for industry, movie industry
- Tourism—two major plantations, Lamar Dixon, Cabela's.
- The LA 1 corridor – major industries are located there. Ascension could be a residential community on both sides of the river.
- The biggest economy in the state is the water economy but Ascension is not yet participating in it
- Recreation on waterways
- Tax dollars from industry, as long as they are spent wisely

Ascension Parish Threats

- EPA regulating discharge into waterways
- Stormwater coming to Ascension from neighboring parishes
- Hurricanes
- Workforce development – not enough qualified people. Has impacted the ability to expand Ascension's chemical industry which is competing with other states
- Schools—when a neighboring parish gets a new industry, people will move here and send their kids to school here so the burden falls on Ascension.
- TIFs--because it leaves parish on the hook for services without taxes
- Inadequate diverse housing
- Lack of education in certain industries (skilled labor)
- Disparity in school support
- Neighboring parishes
- Qualified workforce
- Water/flooding
- Most roads are state highways
- Not tapping into women in the workforce