

Message from Mayor Dan Hollingsworth



Most of us know from experience...that if you don't know where you are going...you could end up in a place you don't want to be.

To cultivate growth and preserve those things we love about our city, change those things we need to change, and embrace new ideas to improve our quality of life, we need a long range plan. That is the reason why we are launching Ruston 21, our city's uniquely tailored community planning process...to address our needs and aspirations well into the 21st Century.

Ruston 21 will involve citizens from throughout our community, as well as experts in the field, working together to build consensus in creating a roadmap for planned growth. It will be a citizen driven plan for this and future city administrations.

Our citizens will benefit through the identification and development of new opportunities across the spectrum of our population and neighborhoods, while preserving what is best about Ruston. By planning, we will cut down on wasted time and effort, and avoid duplication of services. The result will be cost savings in precious tax revenues, while emphasizing investment in improvements for the future instead of just patching what has been passed down to us.

Ruston 21 will evaluate the assets we have, what we want our community to be, and ways to achieve our goals. It will look citywide at residential development and neighborhoods, recreation planning, transportation issues, economic development, infrastructure concerns, our quality of life, and working collaboratively with La Tech University.

Delivery of our community roadmap, consisting of a Capital Improvements Plan, Economic Development Plan, and new Zoning and Land Use Improvements, is scheduled for early 2010. Our work begins now and starts with the end in mind, which is a plan that makes sense to each of us and our families.

For this reason, citizen involvement is critically important to the success of Ruston 21. While internet access at the City of Ruston website will make it easy to express your thoughts, we always want to keep in touch personally.

We cannot emphasize too strongly that we want to hear from our citizens. Our Board of Aldermen and I invite our city residents to come together for COMMUNITY VISIONING DAY on Tuesday, November 11, 2008 in the Ruston Civic Center. There will be two sessions...you may choose to come at 9 AM or to the 5:30 PM session. Your attendance is vital...your ideas...your thoughts about our city are needed and are critical to the success of this project. So please plan to come.

In the creation of our community vision, we will ask three questions that will guide us:

1. What do you find special about the character of Ruston?
2. What changes should we consider to improve our community?
3. What would we like Ruston to be known for in the future?

This is an exciting time for Ruston. By cultivating our present assets, and planting some new ideas to take deep root and bloom, we all can be confident that being a city that plans for the future will be a city that works for all of us.