

City continues to show signs of growth

[Rick Hohlt](#), *Publisher*

04-01-2009

The ongoing revitalization of Ruston's downtown area is a testament to the strength of the local economy.

Other areas of the country are seeing the markets for new construction and credit drying up, yet areas of our city are booming with new and existing business growth.

One of Ruston's most well loved and well cared for areas is its downtown. The district, which offers shopping, restaurants, business offices and residential areas, is the envy of surrounding cities and towns.

It has been a labor of love for several city officials and residents; without their dedication and hard work, downtown Ruston easily could be the dark and deserted place that characterizes the downtown area in many other cities.

We all benefit from the work of those who are committed to creating a vital downtown. At this point in time, Ruston seems to be going through a growth spurt, as several new restaurants and businesses move into downtown.

But growth and development isn't centered in downtown alone. New buildings and businesses are popping up in other sections of the city, as well. Former NBA star and area businessman Karl Malone is investing in a 32-acre commercial development property at the corner of La. 33 and Kentucky Avenue. North Village Plaza will be a commercial mall with a pond, walking trail, playground and amphitheater.

Other businesses are expanding, renovating or locating here for the first time, all of which will reshape the face of Ruston as we know it.

City leaders have been diligent in planning the development of the city carefully and with input from residents. But, we all have a role to play in the continued success of our local businesses and vibrant downtown. Shopping locally has never been more important. To show local investors we appreciate the work they're doing, we must support their businesses.

Even in light of the global financial crisis, local people have found a way to make progress. We are fortunate to live in a place that is moving forward at a time when many businesses and industries are slowing or shutting down completely.