

# LOUISIANA COMMUNITY RESILIENCE INSTITUTE

April 14-15, 2016 | Baton Rouge, LA

**LSU Coastal Sustainability Studio**

LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY

FINAL REPORT

# LOUISIANA COMMUNITY RESILIENCE INSTITUTE

## SPONSORS

LSU Coastal Sustainability Studio  
Louisiana Sea Grant  
Kresge Foundation  
National Trust for Historic Preservation  
Chevron, Gulf of Mexico Business Unit

## PARTICIPANTS

### Mayors

The Honorable Frank P. Grizzaffi  
Mayor, Morgan City, LA

The Honorable Timothy Kerner  
Mayor, Town of Jean Lafitte, LA

The Honorable Robert Hardey  
Mayor, City of Westlake, LA

The Honorable Tommy Eschete  
Mayor, City of Thibodaux, LA

The Honorable Donald Villere  
Mayor, City of Mandeville, LA

The Honorable Mike Cooper  
Mayor, City of Covington, LA

## **Resource Team**

Keith Bowers, FASLA, RLA, PWS  
President and Founder, Biohabitats, Inc.

Will Bradshaw II  
President and Co-Founder, Green Coast Enterprises

Robin Keegan  
Director of Community Resiliency, GCR, Inc.

Marilys Nepomechie  
Associate Dean of Strategic Initiatives, Professor  
Florida International University

Kristin Ransom  
Coastal Management Specialist, The Baldwin Group  
NOAA Office for Coastal Management

Margaret Robinson, PLA, LEED AP  
Principal and Co-Founder, Asakura Robinson

## **LSU Coastal Sustainability Studio**

### **Executive Committee**

Jeff Carney, AICP  
Director, LSU CSS and Associate Professor, LSU School of Architecture

Robert Twilley, PhD  
Chairman, LSU CSS and Director, Louisiana Sea Grant

Jori Erdman, AIA, LEED AP  
Professor, LSU School of Architecture

John White, PhD  
Associate Director, Coastal Studies Institute and Professor, LSU School of the Coast

Clint Willson, PhD, PE  
Director, LSU Center for River Studies and Professor, LSU College of Engineering

### **Staff**

Mary Bergeron  
Assistant Director, LSU CSS

### **Research Fellows**

Traci Birch, PhD AICP  
Brendan Gordon

### **Students**

Ana Orosco  
Rajan Karmacharya  
Maureen Dowd

**6**  
**INTRODUCTION**

---

**11**  
**MORGAN CITY**

---

**17**  
**JEAN LAFITTE**

---

**23**  
**WESTLAKE**

---

**29**  
**THIBODAUX**

---



**35**  
**MANDEVILLE**

---

**41**  
**COVINGTON**

---

**46**  
**BEST PRACTICES**

---

**54**  
**EXAMPLES**

---

# INTRODUCTION



Participants in front of the University Lake, Baton Rouge, LA

**Front Row (Left to Right):**

Mayor Tommy Eschete, Traci Birch, Mayor Robert Hardey, Margaret Robinson, Robin Keegan, Kristin Ransom, Marilys Nepomechie

**Back Row (Left to Right):**

Mayor Frank Grizzaffi, Will Bradshaw II, Mayor Mike Cooper, Mayor Donald Villere, Keith Bowers, Jeff Carney

**Not Pictured:**

Mayor Timothy Kerner

The Louisiana State University (LSU) Coastal Sustainability Studio (CSS) is helping communities across the state understand how planning and urban design provide useful tools to improve economic, environmental, and social resilience. CSS is trans-disciplinary institute working directly with communities to envision and design sustainable systems that reduce vulnerability and improve quality of life. Through integrated design research, community outreach, and programming, CSS strives to expand the horizon of solutions to address the issues facing Louisiana residents.

The Louisiana Community Resilience Institute (LCRI) is an initiative of the Louisiana Resiliency Assistance Program, a CSS-led initiative that connects designers, scientists, coastal managers, and citizens in efforts to plan for climate change, hazard mitigation, and community development. LCRI is a program of closed-door workshops offering small groups of mayors from coastal communities a better understanding of resilient community design and planning. The mayors represent a diverse range of cities, and bring a variety of design, economic, and hazard mitigation issues to the table.

LCRI engages mayors and design and planning experts to discuss the challenges each community faces through the lens of resilient community design. The Institute is the culmination of several months of one-on-one engagement between CSS staff,

community leaders, and planning professionals to discuss real-world challenges and priorities, and to decide on a single issue to present at the workshop. This format encourages a high degree of participation and exchange between mayors, subject matter experts, and CSS staff. Each mayor presents a community development issue, which is analyzed by the other mayors and experts who, working together, discuss how planning and design tools can be used to solve the problem. The exchange sparks lively debate and leads to creative proposals for solutions.

Subject matter experts also make presentations on general principles of urban design, hazard mitigation, and community development, and have the chance to showcase their own work. Mayors and experts discuss general concepts and specific responses within each community, and explore considerations for how the public and private sectors can work together to improve conditions within each community. For each community, particular importance is placed on policies and design processes.

This document is the meeting summary of the 2016 Louisiana Community Resilience Institute, which was hosted by LSU CSS on April 14th-15th, 2016. This summary draws on the background LCRI briefing materials produced before the event, as well as presentations and comments made at the workshop.

# FINAL AGENDA

## Thursday April 14, 2016

Throughout the morning	Participants arrive in at the Lod Cook Hotel and Conference Center
12:30pm	Catered lunch with Opening Remarks <b>Jeff Carney</b> , LSU Coastal Sustainability Studio <b>Rex Caffey</b> , Louisiana Sea Grant <b>Stephen Beck</b> , LSU Office of Research and Economic Development
2:00pm	Resource Team Presentation: <b>Kristin Ransom</b> , NOAA
2:20pm	Mayor Case Study Presentation: <b>The Honorable Frank Grizzaffi</b> , Morgan City, LA
3:40pm	Break
4:00pm	Resource Team Presentation: <b>Keith Bowers</b> , Biohabitats Inc.
4:20pm	Mayor Case Study Presentation: <b>The Honorable Timothy Kerner</b> , Town of Jean Lafitte, LA
5:40pm	Break
6:15pm	Meet in the lobby of the Lod Cook Center to depart for reception
6:30pm	Cocktail reception at LSU President's House
8:30pm	Return to Lod Cook Hotel (LSU campus)



## Friday April 15, 2016

8:00am	Breakfast at Lod Cook Hotel and Conference Center
8:40am	Resource Team Presentation: <b>Marilys Nepomechie</b> , Florida Atlantic University
9:00am	Mayor Case Study Presentation: <b>The Honorable Robert Hardey</b> , City of Westlake, LA
10:20am	Break
10:40am	Resource Team Presentation: <b>Margaret Robinson</b> , Asakura Robinson Co.
11:00am	Mayor Case Study Presentation: <b>The Honorable Tommy Eschete</b> , City of Thibodaux, LA
12:30pm	Catered lunch with Presentation <b>Andrea Galinski</b> , Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority
1:30pm	Resource Team Presentation: <b>Will Bradshaw</b> , Green Coast Enterprises
1:50pm	Mayor Case Study Presentation: <b>The Honorable Donald Villere</b> , City of Mandeville, LA
3:10pm	Break
3:30pm	Resource Team Presentation: <b>Robin Keegan</b> , GCR, Inc.
3:50pm	Mayor Case Study Presentation: <b>The Honorable Michael Cooper</b> , City of Covington, LA
5:10pm	Session evaluation and closing remarks

## HOTEL

Lod Cook Hotel  
3848 W. Lakeshore Dr.  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

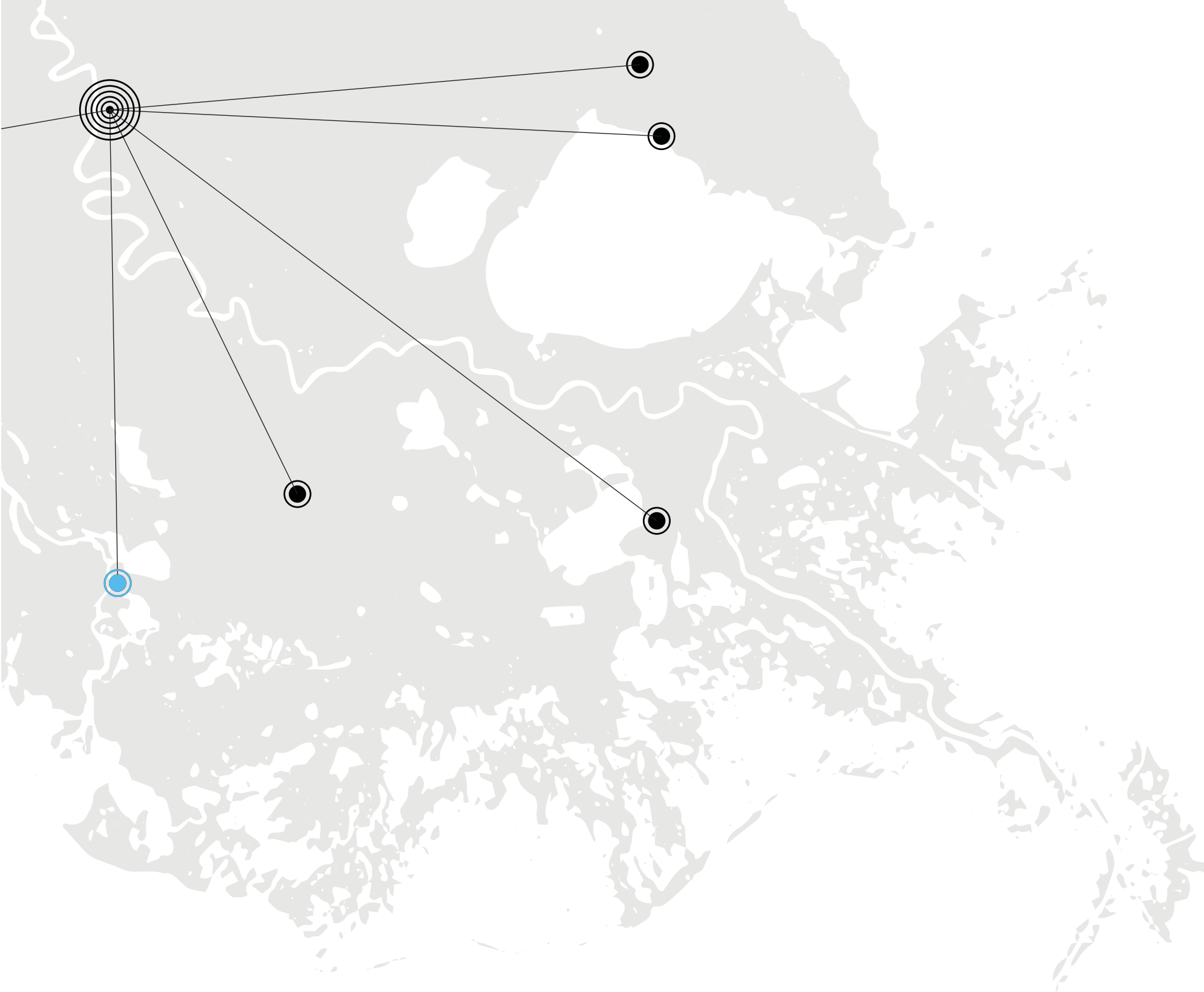
## MEETING SPACE

Lod Cook Conference Center  
3848 W. Lakeshore Dr.  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

## RECEPTION

LSU President's House  
2959 E. Lakeshore Dr.  
Baton Rouge, LA 70808





# MORGAN CITY

# MORGAN CITY

## THE HONORABLE FRANK GRIZZAFFI



Morgan City is the gateway to the Atchafalaya Basin, located on the banks of the Atchafalaya River, the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, and Lake Palourde. The city has a total area of 6.2 square miles, of which 6.0 square miles is land and 0.27 square miles, or 4.03%, is water. The area consists mainly of low coastal marshes with ridges of higher alluvial land along rivers and bayous, and has an average elevation of approximately seven feet. Morgan City is conveniently located near other major cities, including New Orleans (70 miles east), Baton Rouge (60 miles north), and Lafayette (60 miles west).

Morgan City is the southernmost community on the banks of the Atchafalaya River. While much of the state is experiencing severe coastal land loss, the area south of Morgan City is unique because it has nearly stable wetlands and a growing delta system. If the Mississippi River were to experience a major course change in the vicinity of the Old River Control Structure or Morganza Spillway, the main channel of the river would likely enter the Gulf of Mexico near Morgan City instead of New Orleans.

Morgan City's importance as an industrial center and its relatively stable environment provide advantages for future development. However, there are important economic, demographic, and environmental issues to be considered in order to maintain long-term sustainability and resiliency to potential natural and man-made events.

### Contact Information:

Mayor Frank P. Grizzaffi, III  
512 First Street  
Morgan City, LA 70380  
985-385-1770  
[f.grizzaffi@cityofmc.com](mailto:f.grizzaffi@cityofmc.com)

## CASE STUDY

The City's historic land use pattern is shaped by the waterways that define its boundaries. From the historic riverfront, a consistent grid was established that contains much of the City's traditional development. While the southern and western portions of the City are fully developed, most of the northern and eastern portions remain in their natural state. This is in part because of the low elevation of the land as it moves away from the Atchafalaya, and the tendency of this area to flood during storm events. The lack of developable land has limited development potential in the community.

New proposed levees set the stage for development along the Lake Palourde waterfront. The case study area is approximately 322 acres, all but 32 acres of which will be included within the levee system that will prevent flooding in the north and east portions of the City. This area represents both opportunities and challenges to future growth. Development of this site may provide new housing, mixed use, and recreational opportunities. The goal is to encourage significant private sector development for a variety of uses that will contribute to the overall improvement of area conditions, including the economy, safety, and overall quality of life.

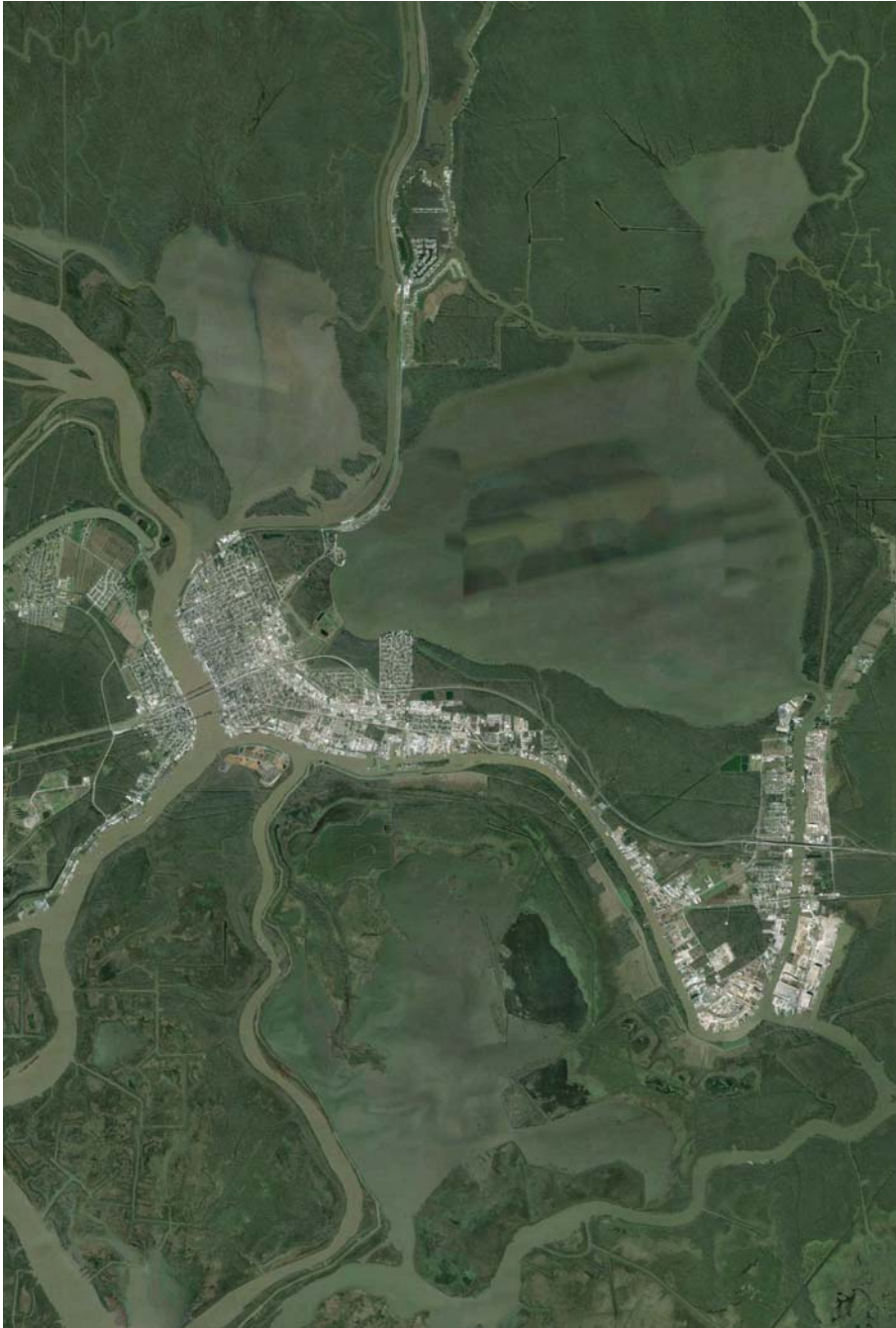
Development plans must take into consideration environmental constraints, both existing and anticipated, to promote long-term sustainability and resilience. Developers have already expressed interest in the site, and once levees are complete development will occur with to without action from the City. In order to guarantee high quality development that recognizes the vulnerability of Morgan City and does not repeat past mistakes, updated ordinances and design guidelines are needed.

## DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. How can Morgan City ensure the development of this large parcel is consistent with past planning efforts and floodplain management requirements while also providing for sustainable future growth?

2. How does the development potential of this parcel attract private investment and a mix of uses that complement adjacent residential, commercial, and institutional development along major corridors?
3. What design criteria/guidelines should be considered to ensure that development of the site meets community needs?
4. What impacts should Morgan City anticipate the new development to have on existing transportation and recreational facilities? How can these impacts be mitigated?





## QUESTIONS RAISED

- Is there a market study of the city to determine a need for the proposed development? There was a concern that the lack of development, and the long time period it has taken Berwick to build out may indicate a lack of demand.
- What is the planning/regulatory landscape in the city? Are there ways to update antiquated ordinances to guarantee quality development on the site?
- What kinds of incentives does the city have in place to entice developers, encourage economic development, and connect this site with the rest of the community?
- If the target population is young families with children, what types of amenities are considered for the site? Amenity packages may include
  - Walkable/bikeable features within the site as well as to nearby commercial, retail, etc.
  - Parks and recreation opportunities
  - Connectivity to the downtown and other neighborhoods, and/or
  - Higher densities with more open space which can improve stormwater management and provide attract younger families with children.
- Is there a consideration of mixed use within the site, including commercial, residential, institutional, etc.?
- What can the city contribute to building connections between this and other neighborhoods? Thoughts included greenways or other amenities that build overall connections and improve quality of life throughout the community.
- How will the city engage the larger community in a discussion of this site and future development within the city?

# RECOMMENDATIONS

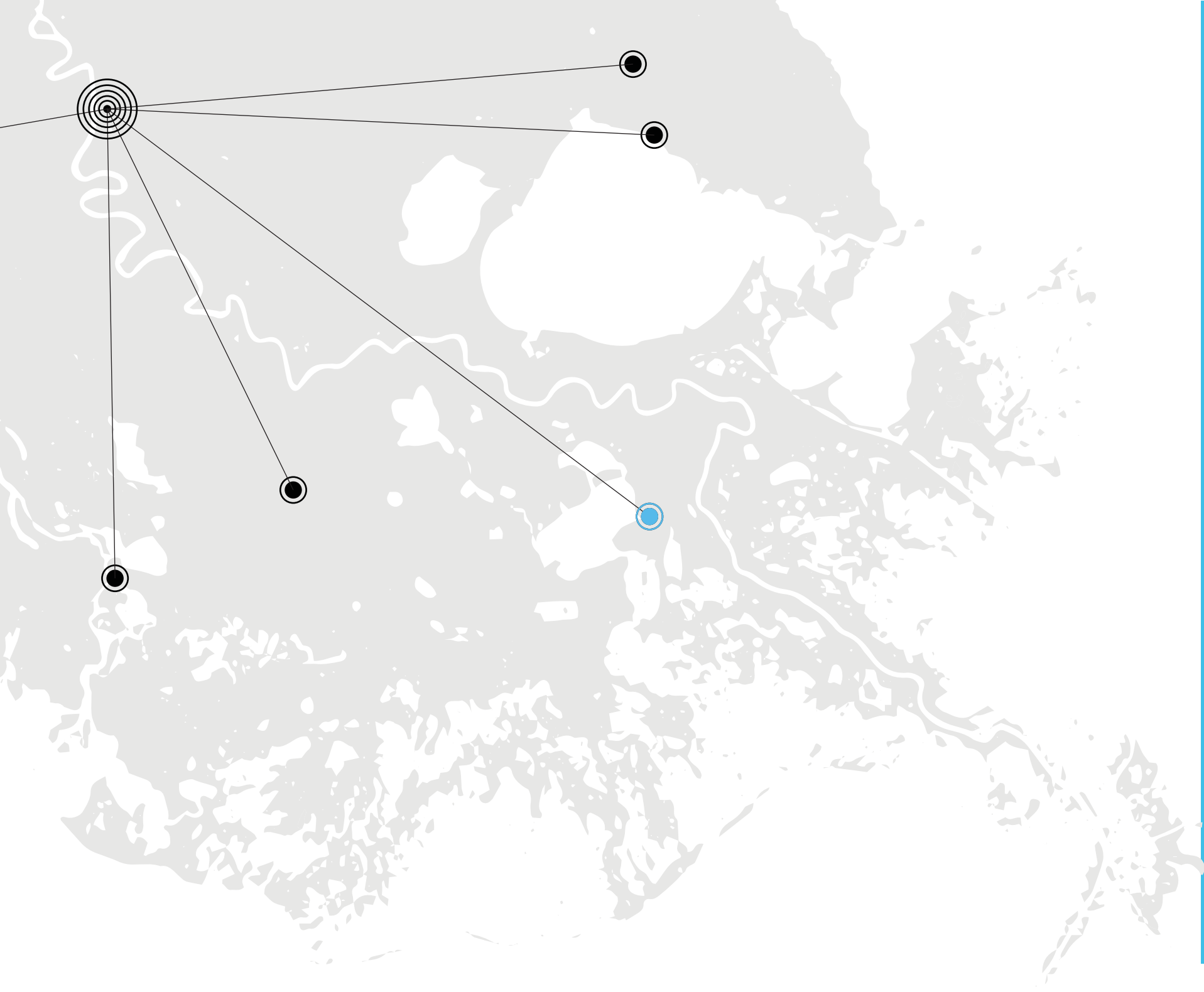
2016 Louisiana Community Resilience Institute, Final Report

- Conduct a market study on demand for new housing in the city and parish, as well as one that identifies demand within the target market the city is trying to attract (i.e. families with children). Once this demand is identified, the city can work closely with the developer to achieve its goals.
- Consider a master site plan of the property, as well as one for the entire community. Ideally the site plan could build off of the citywide guiding principles.
- Consider higher density, more open space, greater use of green infrastructure on the site. This may include conservation designs, low impact development, and a range of other techniques that help reduce flooding and water quality issues while creating an attractive development within the city.
- There is a need for planning tools & ordinances well in advance of the development of the site. Consider a traditional neighborhood development (TND) ordinance (see Thibodaux and Mandeville codes for examples), mixed use zoning options, updated landscaping regulations that focus on stormwater, and modified subdivision regulations to allow cluster development, non-traditional infrastructure, and other amenity provisions.
- There are challenges to predicting the effects of climate and environmental change while balancing the immediate city needs that should be considered.
- Consider public/private partnerships to achieve development goals and guarantee the city doesn't bear the cost of infrastructure for the site, which should be the responsibility of the property owner.
- Potential resources the City might engage:
  - South Central Planning: Planning capacity and best practice guidance
  - Center for Planning Excellence: Site planning and toolkits
  - LSU CSS: Design, community engagement, and site-specific research
  - Louisiana Sea Grant: Site-specific scenario planning
  - LA CPRA: Flood risk and resilience viewer
  - NOAA: Site planning scenario tools



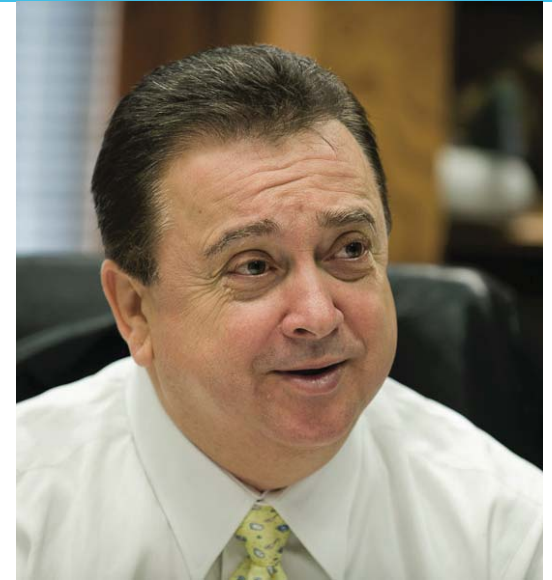






# JEAN LAFITTE

## THE HONORABLE TIMOTHY KERNER



Jean Lafitte is a town in Jefferson Parish in south east Louisiana. The city sits on Bayou Barataria and the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway. While the city has an average elevation of approximately three feet. According to the United States Census Bureau, the town has a total area of 6.3 square miles, of which, 6.0 square miles of it is land and 0.3 square miles, or (4.47%), is water. Jean Lafitte is conveniently located near other major cities, including New Orleans (22 miles north), Houma (62 miles southwest), and Baton Rouge (100 miles northwest).

The people of Jean Lafitte value the area's rich history, lush natural environment, and casual working waterfront. Jean Lafitte is located along Bayou Barataria very close to the open waters and brackish lakes and bays that connect to the Gulf of Mexico, making coastal flooding from high winds and storm surge a serious threat to the community. The communities of the Barataria Basin are not protected by a federal levee system. Wetlands provide nearly all the protection from storm surge, with only a few areas benefiting from short, disconnected lines of low levees.

The state's coastal master plan includes building a ring levee for the communities along Bayou Barataria, but it is not expected to be completed until at least 2032. While a new ring levee will help reduce the frequency of flooding, it will not completely remove Jean Lafitte's risk of flooding. Jean Lafitte must proactively reduce risk and increase its resilience under an environmentally and economically uncertain future.

### Contact Information:

Mayor Timothy P. Kerner  
2654 Jean Lafitte Blvd.  
Lafitte, LA 70067  
504-689-2208  
[townhall@townofjeanlafitte.com](mailto:townhall@townofjeanlafitte.com)

## CASE STUDY

Jean Lafitte has a plan for a series of ring levees to protect this and neighboring communities along the peninsula from flooding. The need for the levee has become more crucial due to man-made flooding protection around nearby communities. The construction of new and larger levees exacerbated the flooding in Jean Lafitte beyond historic levels during Hurricane Isaac in August 2012.

In 2012, the LA CPRA unanimously voted to pass the 2012 Coastal Master Plan. Jean Lafitte's proposed 100-year ring levee was included in the Phase 1 projects, putting it in the 2012-2030 plan for completion. The plan calls for significant investments in ring levees to be spent by 2032. This means that the community will be protected from storm surges caused by hurricanes, but with a plan horizon of 18 years, it could be some time before Jean Lafitte sees complete levee construction.

As the town moves forward, there are a range of considerations to take into account. First, in large part the town is defined by its very close connection to the water. With sea walls and ring levees installed issues of land use and change must be considered. If there is no longer direct access (in some cases) to the waterfront, where can land uses such as boat docks be located to maintain the community's distinct character. Further, ring levees also have the unintended consequence of drowning wetlands as water can no longer sheet across the surface. Creating open water within levees meant to protect from flooding is not ideal. Therefore, there are considerations of how to enhance existing wetlands to encourage more efficient stormwater management.

## DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. What is the most valuable aspect of the community? How will levees change this? What are other considerations?
2. How will land use change within the levees? How will land use outside of the levees need to change to accommodate community character and culture?
3. How can wetland areas within the proposed ring levees be enhanced to make them sustainable and efficient stormwater management tools?
4. What other considerations are there when building the ring levees? How can Jean Lafitte encourage or incentivize hazard mitigation before damages are incurred?





## QUESTIONS RAISED

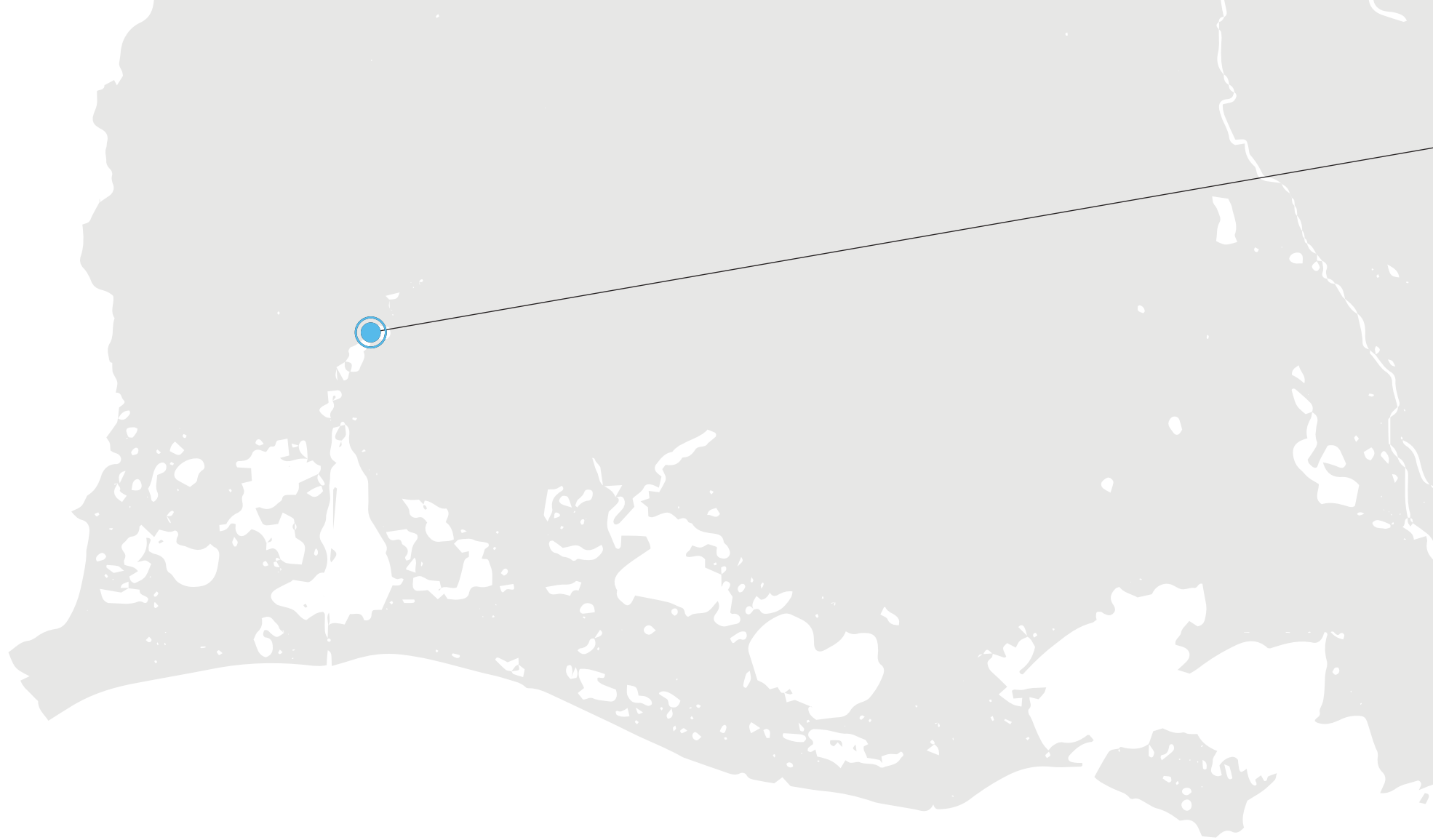
- Are people willing to live with levees and seawalls? There was a concern that the construction of these types of barriers would dramatically change community character.
- Are there alternatives to levees that would be less disruptive to the ecosystem?
- How will the city engage the property owners in a discussion of maintaining ecological connections when the levees are built?
- How determines the levee standards? Will the levees be certified to improve flood insurance rates in the community?
- What are the future plans for development/land use within the levees? Will these allow more areas to be developed that might be vulnerable to future flooding?
- Are there additional funding opportunities (e.g. federal grants, state coastal restoration funds, or local sources) that can be used to enhance the ecological functions of the landscape within the levees?

# RECOMMENDATIONS

2016 Louisiana Community Resilience Institute, Final Report

- Conduct a comprehensive water resource management plan for land both within and outside of the ring levees. This should include ecologists, engineers, planners, etc., who can consider how much the landscape will change within the levees, and identify best practices to help mitigate these impacts.
- Engage community members in a discussion of water resource planning and management to identify community priorities and balance development pressure.
- Consider ecosystem services associated with retention ponds and enhanced wetlands within ring levees to provide stormwater attenuation, water quality treatment, and wildlife habitat benefits.
- Work with land owners to maintain ecological connections between wetlands and leveed areas to prevent ponding and open water within the levees that might threaten development during normal rain events.
- Given the fact that country lot sizes might not be defensible, consider some areas with higher density to maintain open space and implement green infrastructure projects within leveed areas.
- Future challenges associated with climate and environmental change should also be considered.
- Potential resources the Town might engage:
  - New Orleans Regional Planning Commission: Planning capacity and best practice guidance
  - Center for Planning Excellence: Community planning and toolkits
  - LSU CSS: Design, community engagement, and site-specific research
  - Louisiana Sea Grant: Site-specific scenario planning
  - NOAA: Site planning scenario tools







# WESTLAKE

## THE HONORABLE BOB HARDEY



Westlake is a city in Calcasieu Parish in southwestern Louisiana. The city sits on the banks of the Calcasieu River where it converges with Lake Charles. According to the United States Census Bureau, Westlake has a total area of 3.71 square miles, of which 3.65 square miles is land and 0.05 square miles, or 1.49%, is water. Annexation has expanded the city limits to encompass approximately 5 square miles. The area consists mainly of mixed pine and hardwood forest with ridges of higher land along rivers, and has an average elevation of approximately fifteen feet above sea level. Westlake is conveniently located near major cities, including Lake Charles (2 miles east), Beaumont, TX (58 miles west), and Lafayette (75 miles east).

Westlake is a quiet, suburb of Lake Charles. While much of the industrial development in the area is located on unincorporated Parish land, the city of Westlake works closely with industry to ensure a higher quality of life for residents. The waterfront in Westlake is unique because it has higher elevation than areas across the river, reducing threats from storm surge flooding.

Westlake's importance as an industrial and population center, as well as its higher elevation and stable environment provide advantages for future development. However, there are important economic, demographic, and environmental issues to be considered in order to redevelop the historic downtown into a resilient and sustainable core for visitors and city residents.

### Contact Information:

Mayor Robert "Bob" Hardey  
1001 Mulberry Street  
PO Drawer 700  
Westlake, LA 70669  
337-433-0691  
[mayor@cityofwestlake.com](mailto:mayor@cityofwestlake.com)



The City's historic land use pattern was primarily shaped by its access to the Calcasieu River and Lake Charles. These waterways and access to the Gulf of Mexico established the city as a hub for major industrial development. From the riverfront, a consistent grid was established that is still evident through much of the City. The case study area encompasses the historic core along the banks of the Calcasieu River, extending west approximately four blocks between the railroad corridor and Sulphur Avenue. While this area once comprised the entirety of the city, today development has moved north and west and what is left is a mix of residential and small-scale industrial with vacant structures and lots throughout. In particular, there are several large vacant parcels, one of which is immediately adjacent to the River and is available for development.

Redevelopment of this site is important to provide opportunities for economic development in the city. Westlake is surrounded by industry and casinos, but receives few of the economic benefits because they are outside the city limits. However, there are attractions that bring people into the city, and there is an opportunity to provide additional amenities to expand the economic base and stabilize its economic outlook. The presence of vacant riverfront property in less flood prone areas provides opportunities for redevelopment that could make this area a destination.

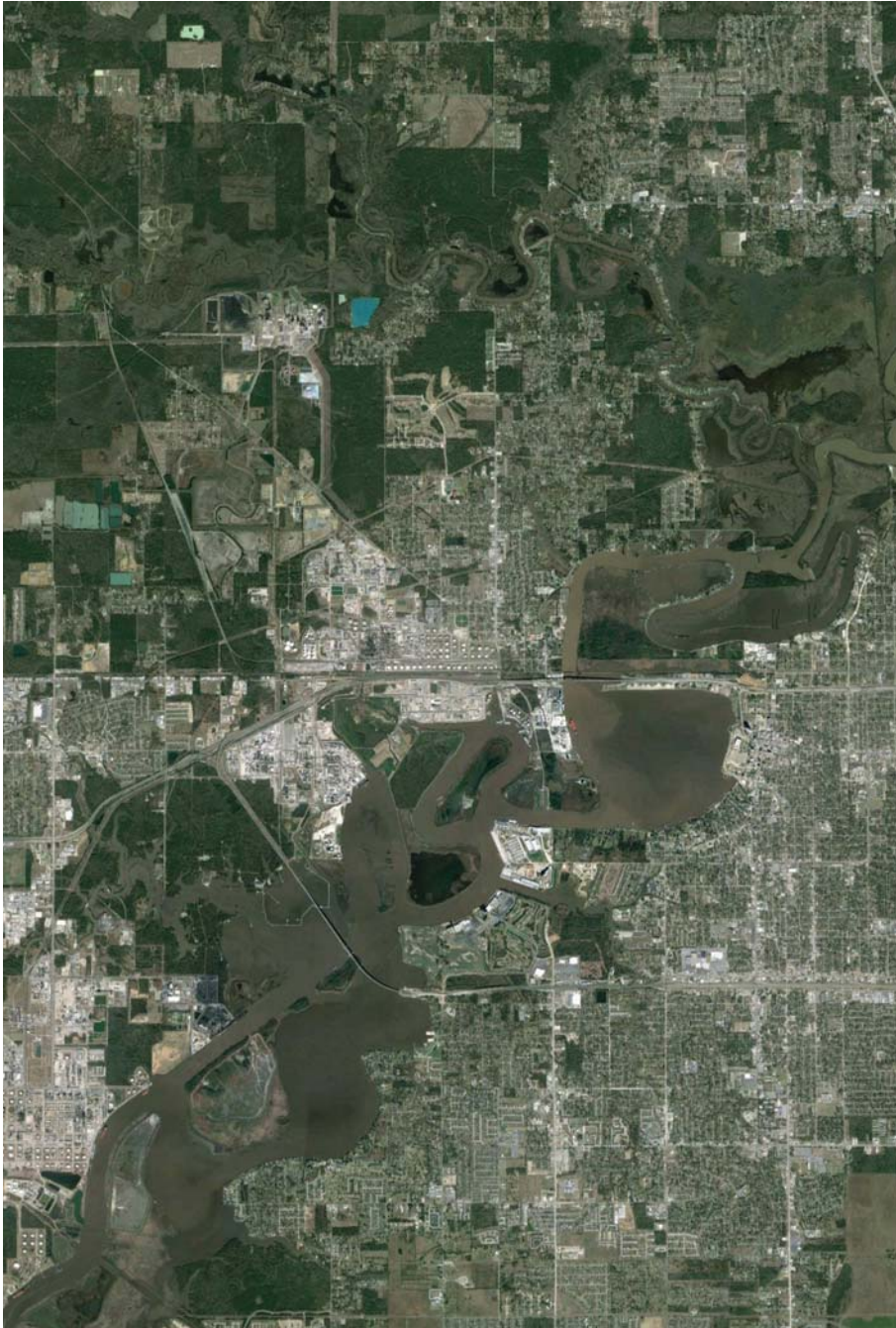
Mixed use development with some combination of commercial and residential would create the ideal scenario envisioned by community and city officials. Direct access to the Isle of Capri along Miller Street, as well as a wide right-of-way and existing commercial zoning could help this corridor to develop into a more walkable destination area. A major challenge for redevelopment is that the site is not along a major transportation corridor. That said, expansion of Sulphur Avenue will provide enhanced infrastructure and access.

## DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. How can Westlake attract private developers to the project sit and the city?

2. What type of development is best suited for the site? How much and what type of additional market research or planning should be done in advance to share with potential developers?
3. What are strategies for vacant land along the riverfront as well as vacant structures and land further inland?
4. What unique ways can Westlake encourage redevelopment of the Miller Street corridor? What are the issues that need to be addressed since the area is not along a major transportation corridor?





## QUESTIONS RAISED

- What kind of planning, ordinances, or incentives are in place to encourage developers to this area?
- Are there any programs (e.g. Louisiana Main Street program, Louisiana Cultural District program, Tax Increment Financing [TIF]) that the city participates in that could encourage develop along Miller Street?
- What is the market value of existing infrastructure on site?
- What kind of services are available to waterfront and/or boat users along this stretch? Is there a need for services and access?
- Are there opportunities to involve the oil & gas industry in the planning process to generate ideas about the property or help pay for community planning and redevelopment efforts?

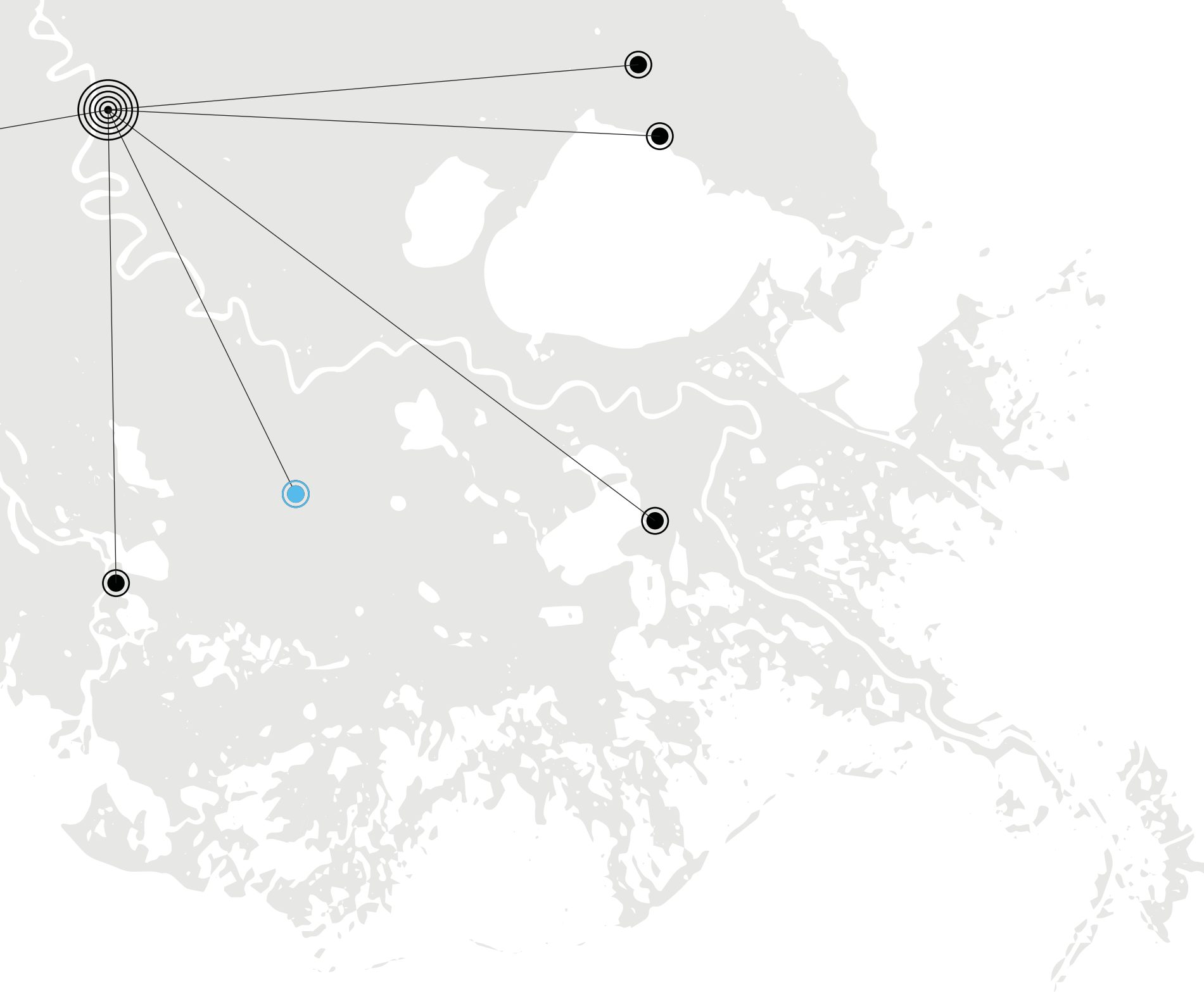
# RECOMMENDATIONS

2016 Louisiana Community Resilience Institute, Final Report

- Conduct a waterfront master plan for the entire district that focuses on access and placemaking.
- Engage community members in a discussion of waterfront access, active and passive recreation options, mixed use development, housing choice/variety, and connectivity.
- In particular, engage industry in a discussion of a mix of uses that would be most desirable to their employees. This target market may be most likely to live in the district due to temporary work assignments, etc.
- Prioritize maintaining a connection to the water. Building housing or other structures directly on the water will break up access, and reduce the overall of the property. Look into the possibility of the City purchasing the land right along the waterfront to make sure this area remains accessible.
- Look into participating in the Louisiana Main Street program (Miller Street) and/or having the area declared a certified Cultural or Historic district to incentive development within the district.
- Focus on the redevelopment of Miller Street as a promenade to move people from the Isle of Capri through to the new development district. Consider connectivity to key locations (waterfront, schools, casino, etc.), streetscaping (tree planting, sidewalk connectivity, street/sidewalk furniture, building facades, etc.), and a complete streets approach that makes the corridor inviting to all types of users.
- Consider establishing a TIF zone along Miller to pay for the public improvements along Miller Street and the waterfront.
- Adopt a Traditional Neighborhood Development Ordinance to encourage unified and dense development within the district. May consider Thibodaux's or Mandeville's ordinances as models.
- Potential resources the Town might engage:
  - LSU CSS: Design, community engagement, and site-specific research
  - Louisiana Office of Cultural Development, Division of Historic Preservation: Cultural district establishment, Louisiana Main Street Program
  - Calcasieu Parish Planning & Zoning: Planning capacity, coordination







# THIBODAUX

## THE HONORABLE TOMMY ESCHETE



Thibodaux is a city in Lafourche Parish in south central Louisiana. The city sits on Bayou Lafourche, which is a historic channel of the Mississippi River. The city has an average elevation of approximately 13 feet. According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 5.47 square miles of land. Thibodaux is located in the heart of Bayou Country, near other major cities including Baton Rouge (68 miles north), New Orleans (60 miles east), and Lafayette (98 miles west).

The Lafourche Parish's motto is "Feeding and Fueling America," and this is evident when you look at the parish's major industries. Agriculture and oil and gas production are the primary economic drivers in the parish. Located in northwest Lafourche, Thibodaux is in the center of government. The city has maintained a steady population for the past three decades. Thibodaux is a principal city of the Houma–Bayou Cane –Thibodaux Metropolitan Statistical Area.

Thibodaux has evolved from its earliest rural days into a destination for education, business, and cultural tourism. While other portions of southern Lafourche have lost population due to the impacts of storms and coastal land loss, Thibodaux's population and economy has remained stable. As land loss and storm impacts continue to impact the southern portion of the state, Thibodaux is likely to absorb some of this migration. Further, Thibodaux offers business opportunities and workforce development opportunities to support Louisiana's major industries.

### Contact Information:

Mayor Tommy Eschete  
310 West 2nd Street  
P.O. Box 5418  
Thibodaux, LA 70302  
985-446-7218  
[teschete@ci.thibodaux.la.us](mailto:teschete@ci.thibodaux.la.us)

Louisiana Highway 20 divides the city roughly in half, running north-south from the Mississippi River in Vacherie to Schriever before it turns east and ends in Gibson. This heavily traveled corridor provides a direct route between Thibodaux and Houma. Historically, the corridor accommodated a range of uses including civic, residential, commercial, and industrial between Bayou Lafourche and the Terrebonne Parish line. While development closest to the Bayou maintained a fairly dense historic pattern, development south between Gerald T. Peltier and the Parish line was predominantly large-scale commercial, strip shopping, with some industrial.

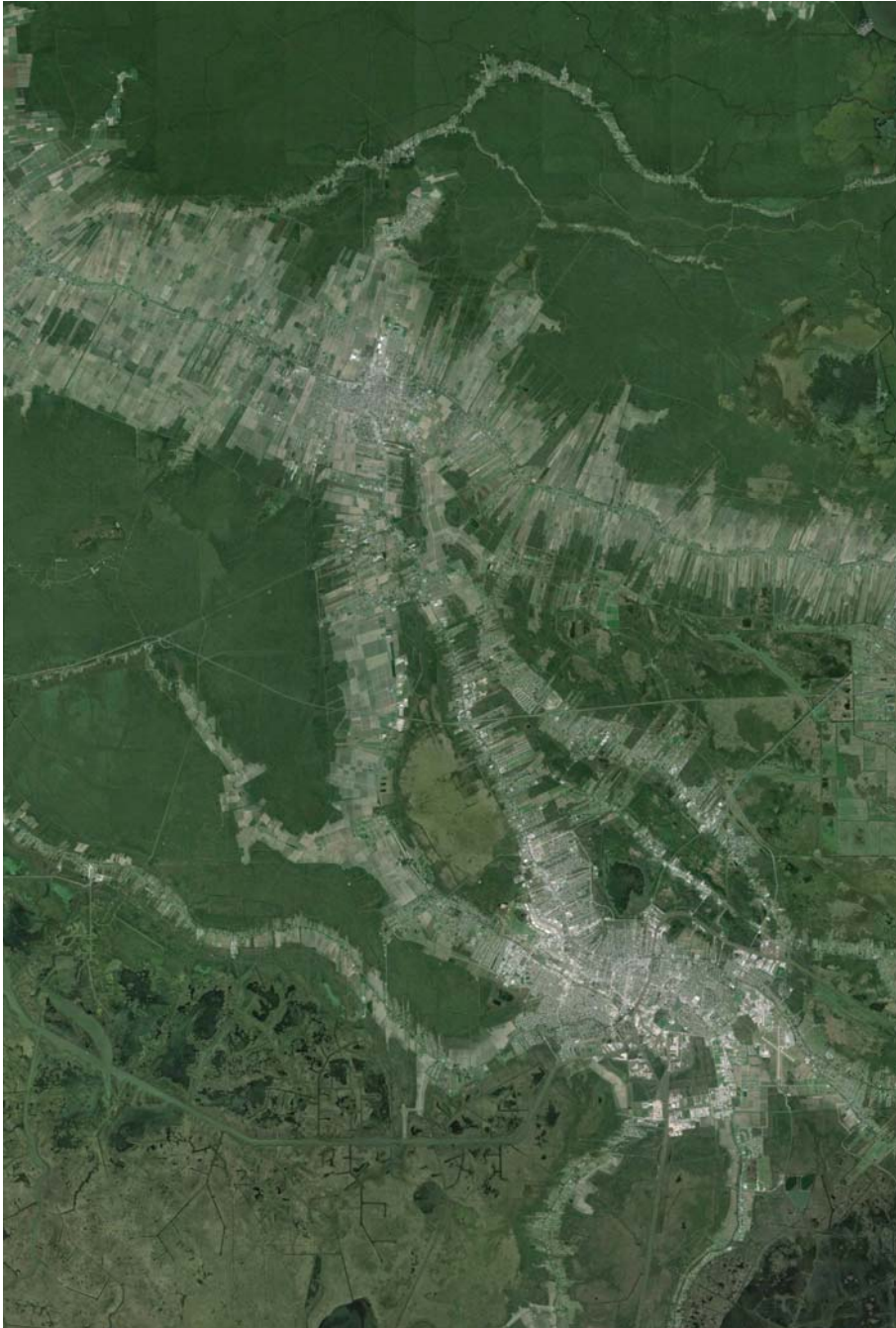
The case study looked at a one-mile stretch of LA Highway 20 between Gerard T. Peltier and the Parish line. The area was home to several large-scale regional commercial uses, including three regional car dealerships. Due to changing retail patterns and vacant land available nearby, these businesses relocated, and in most cases the structures and lots remain empty. As businesses close, others have deteriorated, making leasing difficult and reducing commerce along the corridor in spite of high traffic volumes. Further, there is street flooding during heavy rains because of a disconnect between surface and subsurface drainage and an abundance of impervious coverage.

The redevelopment of the LA Highway 20 corridor provides opportunities to achieve a combination of environmental and economic goals. Redevelopment considerations include improvements to the gateway entrance of the city, addressing large-scale commercial lots from both an economic and environmental angle, and encouraging economic development in the area. The city's goal is to work with property owners and invest limited funds to attract anchor commercial development to serve as the catalyst for corridor redevelopment.

## DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. What kind of investment and/or incentives can the city use to encourage private development in the corridor?
2. What kind of design and development standards should the city set for these large parcels to make them viable without making regulations too stringent to attract developers?
3. What type of stormwater management and green infrastructure projects could be implemented to reduce impervious surfaces and alleviate flooding issues that may detract from redevelopment?
4. How can the community work with Lafourche Parish on the southern end of the corridor to ensure shared services and benefits from redevelopment?





## QUESTIONS RAISED

- What are the biggest challenges in the corridor? Are the challenges uniform throughout, or is it possible to break the corridor into separate, more manageable pieces, for redevelopment consideration?
- Would the City consider subsidizing the demolition of some of the old buildings to create greenfield sites in the corridor that may be more attractive to developers?
- Are property owners open to new or creative approaches to redevelopment? Would they consider donating long vacant space to pop-ups, art installations, or other temporary measures that would create interest and 'buzz' in the area.
- Who are the residents in the neighborhood? How can they be engaged in the process and have their needs considered?
- Who are the community partners? Is there a possibility of working with Rouse's and/or Nicholls State University on large-scale food and arts programming? Are there other possibilities for public-private partnerships?
- How can the City build on proposed infrastructure improvements such as the traffic circle at Gerald T. Peltier to rethink streetscaping?



# RECOMMENDATIONS

2016 Louisiana Community Resilience Institute, Final Report

- Conduct design charrette to engage the community in potential enhancements for the corridor that would encourage redevelopment and opportunities for creative entrepreneurship.
- Divide the corridor into sections and consider different redevelopment scenarios based on infrastructure, buildings, character, etc. It is likely that there would be a natural tapering of activity from north-to-south, which could help drive the redevelopment considerations.
- Consider appropriate design typologies, uses, and green infrastructure for this corridor - and a community of this size. Make sure that ordinances and regulations allow and incentivize the desired types of development moving forward. This may require an update of existing ordinances and other development regulations.
- Consider public-private partnerships to address the larger structures. This may include building social incubator spaces (e.g. New Orleans' Propeller), or even working with property owners to demolish some of the more onerous buildings/sites to make them more attractive to developers.
- Reimagine how the large buildings and parking lots might be used on a temporary basis to bring people and vitality to the corridor. This might include events such as food truck rodeos, food or art pop-ups, small festivals, farmers markets, etc. or even giving space to artists or local food groups for several months at a time.
- What are some of the long-term options related to the local food movement that might be tapped into? Commissary kitchens, urban agriculture, farmers markets, and pop-ups were all mentioned as options.
- Build on proposed street investments for maximum enhancement of the corridor to encourage pedestrian/bike access and improved streetscaping.
- Potential partnerships:
  - Nicholls State University: John Folse culinary institute - local food efforts
  - LSU CSS: Design, community engagement, and planning efforts
  - Thibodaux Main Street Program: Event planning and outreach
  - Rouse's Supermarkets: Resources and partnership on local food efforts







# MANDEVILLE

# MANDEVILLE

## THE HONORABLE DONALD VILLERE

**Contact Information:**

Mayor Donald Villere  
3101 E Causeway Approach  
Mandeville, LA 70448  
985-626-3144  
[DVillere@cityofmandeville.com](mailto:DVillere@cityofmandeville.com)

Mandeville is a city in Tammany Parish. The population was 11,560 at the 2010 census. The city sits on Lake Pontchartrain, and has an average elevation of approximately seven feet. According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 6.8 square miles, of which 6.7 square miles is land and 0.12 square miles, or 1.55%, is water. Mandeville is conveniently located near other major cities, including New Orleans (35 miles south), Hammond (31 miles west), and Baton Rouge (72 miles west). Mandeville is part of the New Orleans–Metairie–Kenner Metropolitan Statistical Area.

In 1956, the first span of the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway opened. A second span was added in 1969. The new road spurred the growth of Mandeville as a commuter suburb for people working in New Orleans. This trend increased in the 1980s and 1990s, further integrating Mandeville into the New Orleans metropolitan area. Today, St. Tammany Parish is among the fastest growing areas in the state. Since the 1960 Census, Mandeville has experienced a sevenfold increase in population.

Mandeville's waterfront location means there is an increased risk of storm-related flooding. The city experienced significant damage during Hurricanes Katrina (2005) and Isaac (2012). In the aftermath, the city is more proactive in its efforts to not just recover, but to enhance what was already a very livable community. This includes encouraging the elevation of structures above minimum BFE, and implementing incentive programs to encourage safe rebuilding in flood prone areas of the city.

North Causeway Blvd. and Louisiana Highway 190 roughly divides the city in half, running north-south from Lake Pontchartrain to Covington. The corridor accommodates a wide range of uses, including institutional and civic, residential, commercial, and industrial. There is a major commercial center at the intersection of North Causeway and LA 190 that services residents of the city and people passing through on their way to or from New Orleans. This case study focused on the development within the four corners, which includes big box retail, large-scale strip shopping centers, office uses, and small-scale commercial.

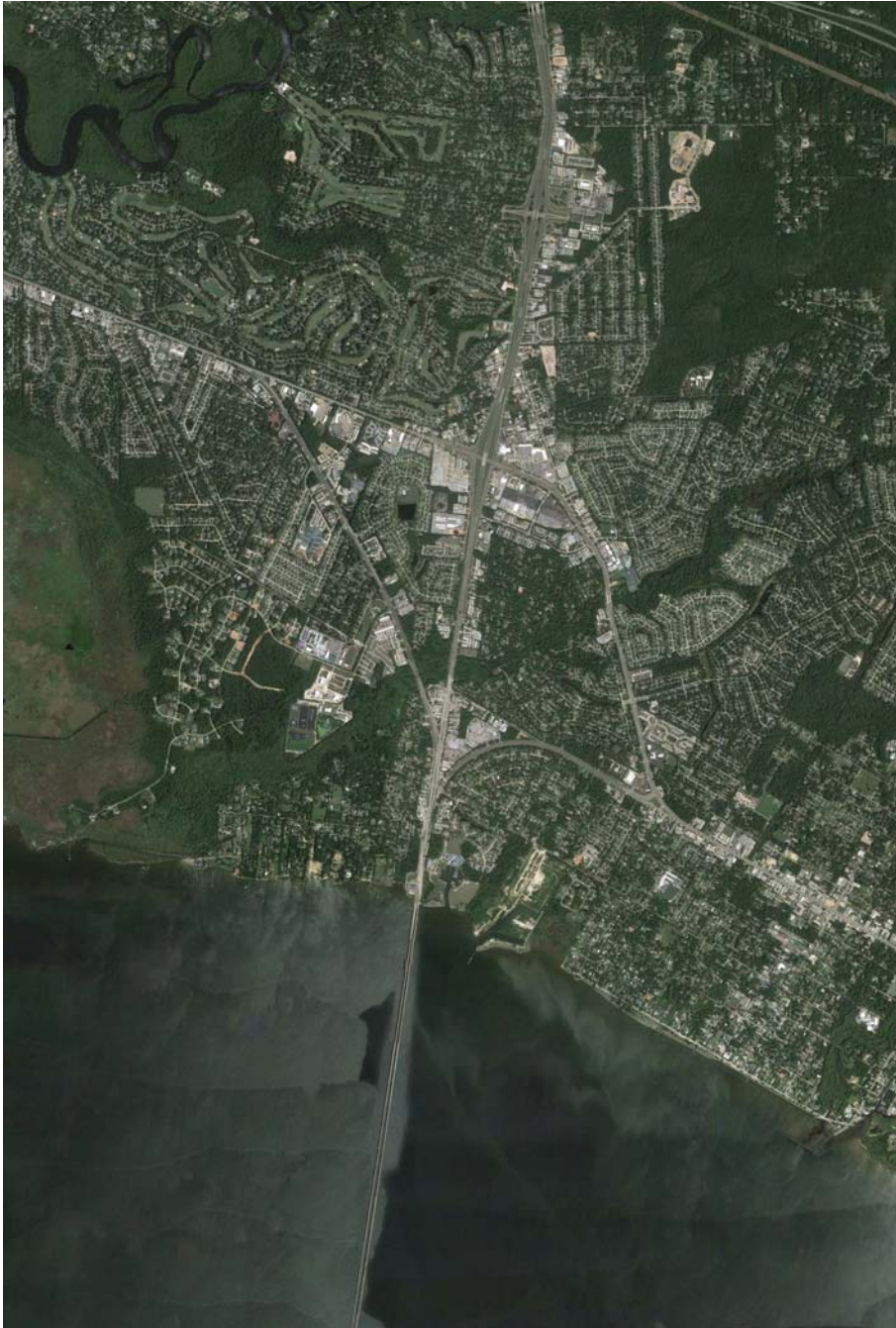
While this location is already a destination, there are challenges associated with its present condition. Large shopping centers are in need of significant upgrades. There are vacancies in stand alone and shopping center storefronts. The area is only accessible by car, although much of the rest of the city is bike and pedestrian friendly. The city has actively worked with property owners to bring commercial centers into compliance with city design guidelines. However, this area requires a more coordinated approach to encourage a cohesive town center. Immediately adjacent are unincorporated areas that are likely to be annexed soon due to a lack of utility/safety service from the parish.

Redevelopment considerations include improvements to the gateway entrance of the city, integrating more bike and pedestrian connectivity within the site and between neighborhoods, and a mix of uses to that enhances the character of the city. The city has a history of creative partnerships to achieve its goals, and is interested in continuing these efforts to enhance development at this location.

## DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. How can Mandeville best guide development or redevelopment of individual parcels within the study area to enhance the overall appearance of this large site?
2. How can the city create a destination in the sense of local tourism or a new town center that sustains or enhances the character of Mandeville, particularly as commercial development moves out of harm's way?
3. How can bike and pedestrian access between adjacent neighborhoods, commercial centers, and within commercial developments be strengthened to improve connectivity?
4. How should the city approach the annexation areas that are likely to come into the city soon?





## QUESTIONS RAISED

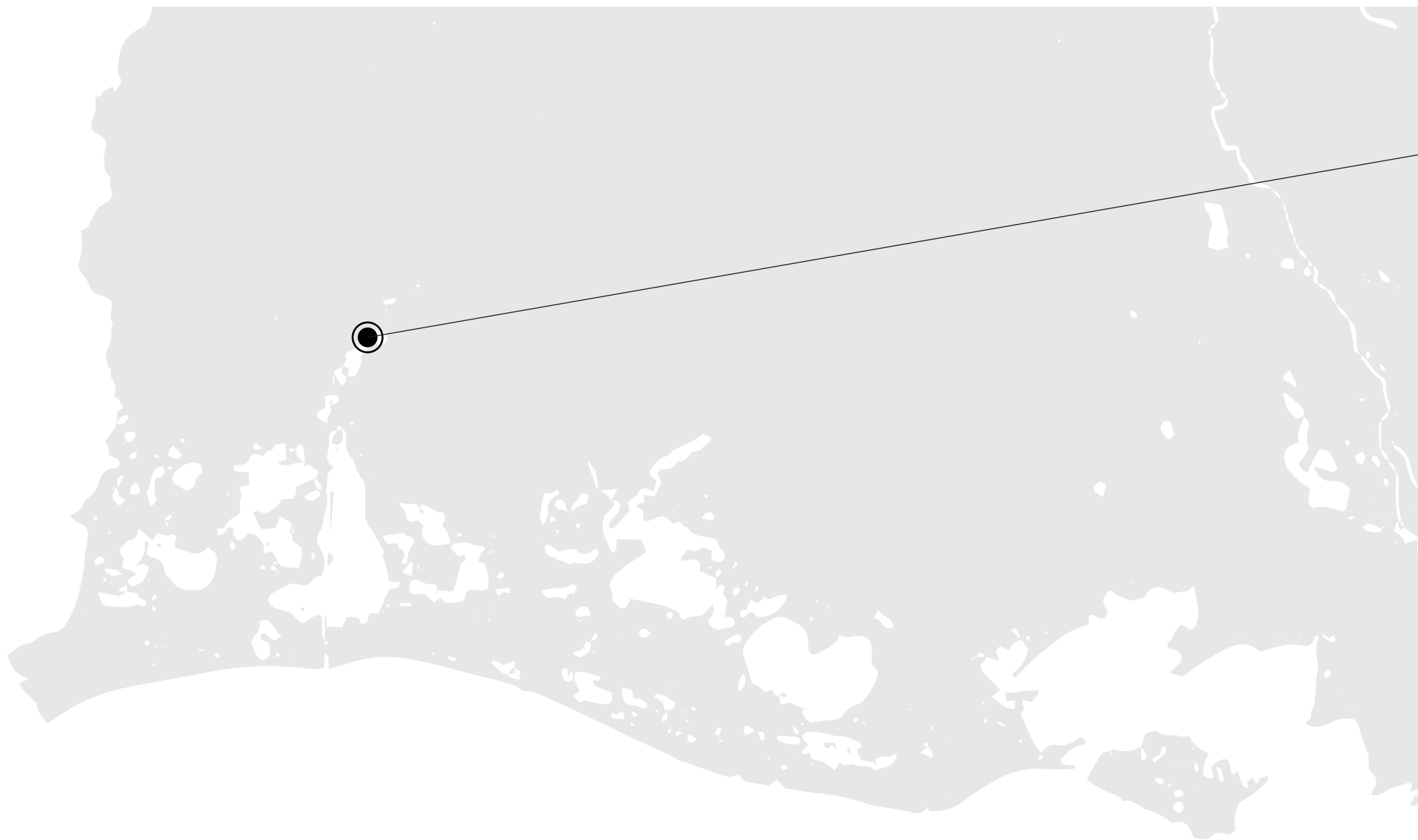
- Has the city considered high density, mixed use, and/or residential development in the area to break up the commercial and make it a multi-use destination?
- Has Mandeville engaged brokers to approach property owners about coordinated planning for the area? There may also be an opportunity to engage these owners in a visioning process.
- Are there opportunities for engaging other sectors such as civil engineering, public health, or others to encourage bike and pedestrian access?
- Are private property owners amenable to working with the city to upgrade these centers? Are there opportunities to implement incentives that would accomplish the city's redevelopment goals?

# RECOMMENDATIONS

2016 Louisiana Community Resilience Institute, Final Report

- Conduct a strategic traffic access plan for the intersection that includes links for bikes from throughout the city, and connections to adjacent neighborhoods that may direct traffic to the site without directing it through the busiest intersections.
- Consider driving future development towards mixed use rather than purely commercial. This will help to make the area a destination and pay for the amenities that the city would like to see as this area transitions to a town center node.
- Engage community members (included those within potential annexation areas) in a discussion of mixed use development, housing choice/variety, and connectivity. This may take the form of a design charrette or a more traditional small- area planning process.
- Work with land owners to create a vision for the corridor, and implement incentive programs that would help to achieve this vision.
- Future challenges associated with climate and environmental change should also be emphasized, as this area is safer for future development.
- Potential resources the Town might engage:
  - St. Tammany Parish Planning Commission: Planning capacity and community outreach to annexation areas
  - LSU CSS: Design, community engagement, and site-specific research









# COVINGTON

# COVINGTON

## THE HONORABLE MIKE COOPER



### Contact Information:

Mayor Mike Cooper  
317 N. Jefferson Avenue  
Covington, LA 70433  
985.892.1811  
[mayorcooper@covla.com](mailto:mayorcooper@covla.com)

Covington is a city in St. Tammany Parish in south east Louisiana. The city sits at the fork of the Bogue Falaya, Abita Springs, and Little Tchefuncte rivers. While the city has an average elevation of approximately 26 feet, the presence of these rivers means that the community is susceptible to flooding. According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 8.2 square miles, of which 8.0 square miles is land and 0.23 square miles, or 2.6%, is water. Covington is conveniently located near other major cities, including New Orleans (40 miles south), Hammond (25 miles west), and Baton Rouge (65 miles west).

St. Tammany Parish is among the fastest growing areas in the state, and as the center of government Covington has grown significantly as well. The city has experienced a steady increase in its population that far exceeds averages for the metropolitan region (New Orleans) and the state. Since the opening of the Lake Ponchartrain Causeway and increased development in the 1970s, the average population increase has been approximately 7.5% each decade.

Covington's historic District of St. John is the business and entertainment heart of the city. Covington's urban form began at the Columbia Street Landing on the Bogue Falaya River and expanded outward along the west bank of the river. Each square in the historic core has a central core accessible by a 20-foot alley connecting two streets. The alley in one square runs north-south, while the adjacent square runs east-west. These ox-lots, many of which are now used for parking, were intended to stable oxen and other draft animals when farmers had to travel to town to sell their crops. It is this unique design that played a significant role in Covington's placement on the National Register of Historic Places.

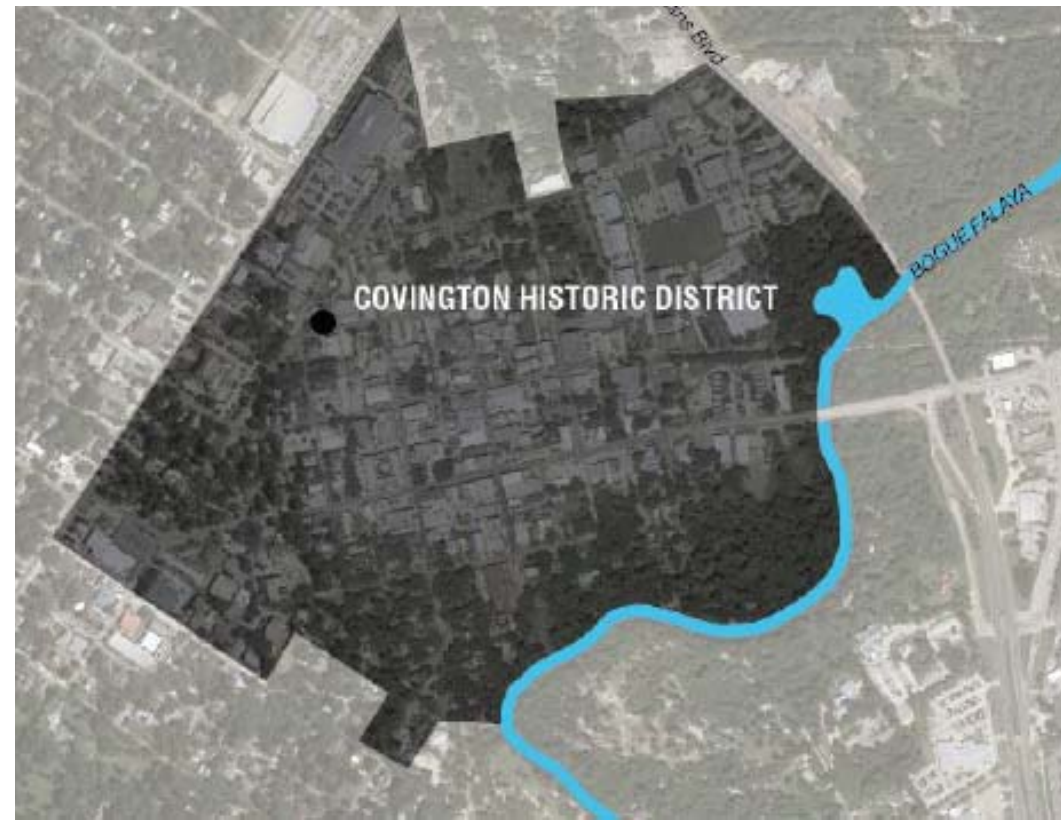
While downtown Covington is an award-winning asset, residents, business owners, and public officials have identified issues of connectivity and pedestrian safety as key priorities for the future. Improved connectivity would benefit the many shops and galleries downtown, move people safely between key nodes, and encourage more walking and biking within and between neighborhoods. The project has high potential, but awkward and difficult spaces present a challenge.

Boston Street is the main thoroughfare, and is heavily traveled with no designated on-street parking. While there is some commercial in this corridor, most is located along streets lateral to Boston. Lee Lane is historically known for cottage boutique shopping and is one of the earlier retail areas to develop. Two blocks down Boston from Lee Lane is Columbia Street, which has evolved into a hub for events, shopping, and dining. One block further is the Southern Hotel. While Lee Lane is only three blocks away, the walk is not comfortable, nor pedestrian friendly. The city has installed new sidewalks, planters, and improved striping at crosswalks for a safer pedestrian environment – yet the safety issues remain.

The city has undertaken numerous studies and plans addressing key locations within the district. While each has addressed specific problems, none have looked at the entire district from a connectivity and walkability perspective. Further, there are key issues such as the awkward connection between the end of the Tammany Trace and the trailhead that require attention. While all of the pieces are in place for the community to thrive, officials recognize a need to knit them all together to maintain Covington's charm.

## DRIVING QUESTIONS

1. How can north-south connections between areas south of Boston Street (e.g. Bogue Falaya Park) and the downtown area be enhanced, both physically and functionally? How can east-west connections be enhanced?
2. How can Covington resolve issues of safety and connectivity along Boston Street given constraints of current development and state control of the roadway?
3. What design criteria/guidelines should be considered to move people safely between the end of the Tammany Trace and the trailhead? How can this area be enhanced to encourage walkability and continued growth?
4. How can the city manage the need for parking and disinclination to walk distances, while ensuring success for local businesses? What has worked elsewhere?





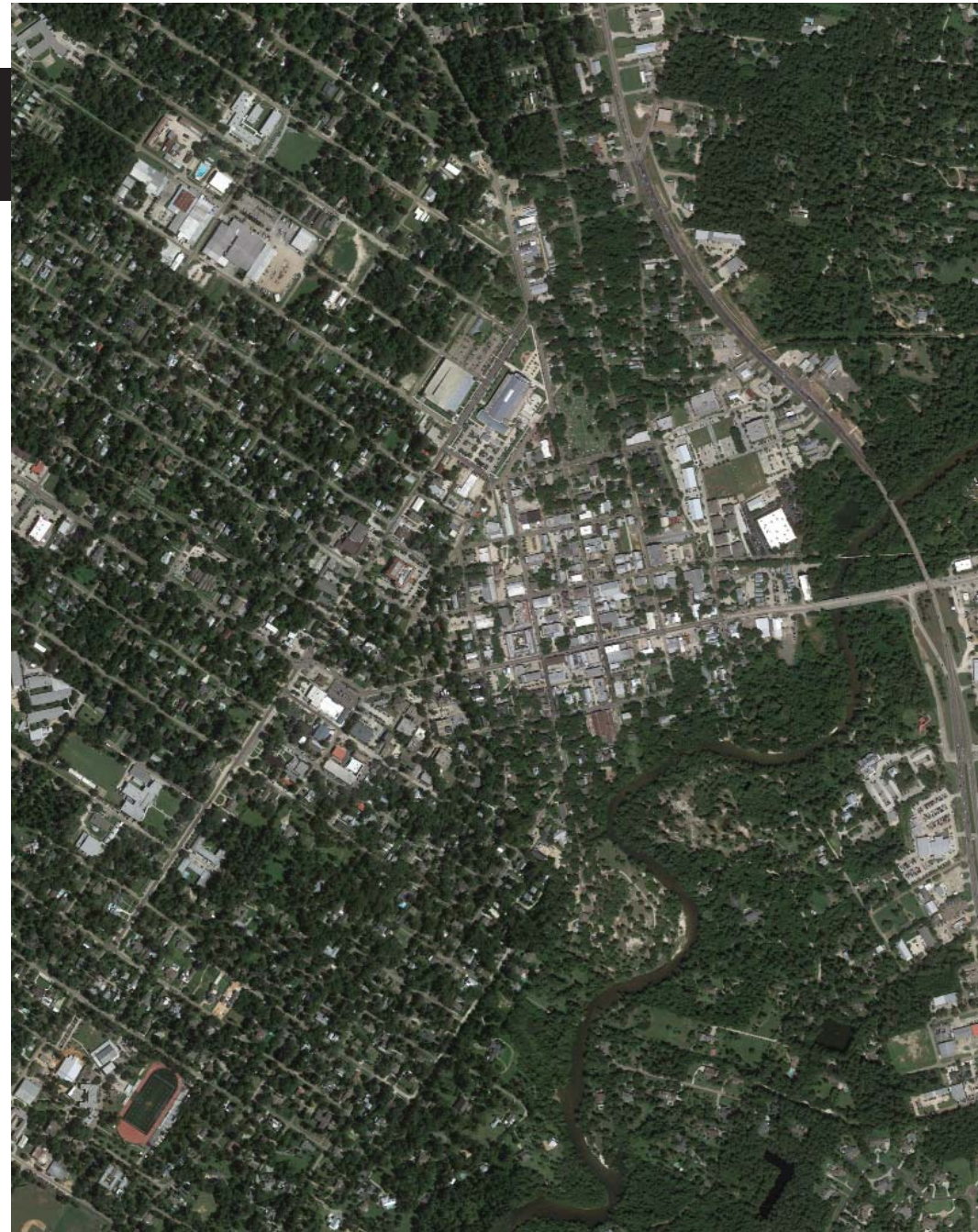
## QUESTIONS RAISED

- Has there been any consideration of linear park and or extensive tree planting in through the downtown area?
- Can you use the ox lots for stormwater management as well as parking?
- What kind of amenities are available to bikers and pedestrians along this stretch? Is there a need for services and access?
- Are there opportunities to involve business in the planning process to generate ideas about the property or help pay for community planning and connectivity efforts?

# RECOMMENDATIONS

2016 Louisiana Community Resilience Institute, Final Report

- Consider a 'street signature' to artificially connect the trailhead to the trail. This may include traffic calming measures, street furniture, planting, paving and other distinct amenities to reduce speed and visually connect .
- Look at regulations from Massachusetts that lay out standards for bike boulevards through small towns.
- Organize regular events between the trail and trailhead space to get people used to this area being multi-use. Might include days where the street is closed and used by kids, music festivals, etc. .
- Consider how Florida street might be enhanced and serve as a catalyst to spur growth and activity. .
- Consider opportunities for stormwater management throughout the downtown area. These can provide dual benefits of reduced flooding and amenities for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Consider car free days downtown to reduce traffic congestion and speed.
- Potential resources the City might engage:
  - New Orleans Regional Planning: Best practice guidance
  - LSU CSS: Site-specific design and community engagement







# BEST PRACTICES

# BEST PRACTICES

Photo: Bundoran Farm, Charlottesville, VA



## CONSERVATION DESIGN

Conservation design is a controlled-growth approach that allows for development while maximizing an area's natural features. This includes preserving open space, protecting farmland and wildlife habitats, and maintaining hydrologic features to preserve water quality and reduce flooding. Conservation designs set aside land in permanent easement. The remaining land is usually developed at higher densities, often allowing the same or more lots on less area. Typically, conservation designs protect 40% - 50% of the available land. The management and ownership of the land are often formed by a partnership between private land owners, conservation organizations, and local government.

This type of development is becoming increasingly more relevant as land development at the urban edge has been identified as the leading cause of habitat fragmentation and loss. This loss is directly related to the endangerment and extinction of a range of wildlife species. Further, as development moves closer to areas that were historically avoided (e.g. wetlands, lowlands, slopes, etc.), conservation design can help reduce flooding and other hazard impacts. This achieved by identifying the ecologically sensitive and valuable areas and setting them aside, while building housing and other types of development around these sensitive areas. Density, lot size, housing type, and amount of protected area is dependent on the landscape and type of development.

The biggest advantage of conservation development is its ability to protect species and ecosystems, preventing further habitat fragmentation and loss. Through careful study of the site, development impacts to both wildlife and stormwater retention can be mitigated. There are also economic advantages to these developments. Conservation design allows developers to make themselves distinct in a competitive housing market, and market studies show that these developments tend to appreciate faster than their conventional counterparts.





Photo: Wetland bioswale in New Orleans' City Park parking lot

## LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

Low Impact Development (LID) is the general term used to characterize an array of site planning, design and pollution prevention strategies that when combined create a more economically sustainable and ecologically functional urban landscape. LID uses a decentralized approach to managing stormwater by creating water quantity and quality filtration functions in all aspects of the landscape and infrastructure. Using a LID approach, stormwater is managed within a development site, and the rate and volume of pre-development stormwater reaching receiving waters is unchanged or improved. Calculations are based on native soils and vegetation. LID principles complement, and sometimes replace, traditional stormwater management systems, which historically moved stormwater off-site with curbs, pipes, ditches and ponds.

Core principles of LID include: 1) conserving natural areas wherever possible, 2) minimizing development impact on hydrology, 3) maintaining water on the development site, and 4) using a series of best practices throughout to detain as much water as possible close to the source. LID practices are site specific, determined by the location's land use, hydrology, soil type, climate, and rainfall patterns. There are

many variations of LID practices, and some may not be suitable for a given site. Many are practical for retrofit or renovation projects, as well as new construction. Frequently used practices include:

- Bioswales - Landscape elements that remove silt and pollution from runoff.
- Rain gardens - Small detention and infiltration areas that use native vegetation to reduce stormwater on-site.
- Cisterns and rain barrels - waterproof receptacles for catching rain water.
- Green roofs - A roof covered with vegetation that absorbs water and insulates.
- Porous paving - Materials that allow stormwater to pass through the paved surface into the soils below.

LID has multiple benefits, such as protecting animal habitats, improving management of runoff and flooding, and reducing impervious surfaces. LID also improves groundwater quality and increases its quantity, which increases aesthetics, therefore raising community value. LID can also be used to eliminate the need for stormwater ponds, which occupy expensive land. Incorporating LID into designs enables developers to build more homes on the same plot of land and maximize their profits.

# BEST PRACTICES

Photo: Baton Rouge Lakes Master Plan, Baton Rouge, LA



## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Stormwater runoff occurs when rain flows over hard surfaces such as roads, driveways, and parking lots, instead of soaking into the ground. Stormwater runoff collects pollutants as it flows to the storm sewer system and is discharged to local waterways without treatment. Historically, municipalities have managed stormwater utilizing “gray” infrastructure practices made up of gutters, basins, and pipes that transport stormwater quickly to local waterways. As municipalities struggle to maintain aging stormwater infrastructure and development creates more hard surfaces, the result is frequent flooding and non-point source pollution degrading local water quality.

Green infrastructure refers to the interconnected network of green space that preserves natural or semi-natural systems and provides assorted benefits to human populations. Locally, green infrastructure systems involve a deliberate effort to utilize ecosystem functions to provide primary stormwater management and a wide range of secondary benefits. For example, preserving floodplains can reduce flood risk and simultaneously improve water quality, recharge groundwater, support fish and wildlife, and provide recreation and tourism benefits. While value and function of traditional gray infrastructure can be expected to depreciate over time, many green infrastructure solutions can appreciate in value and function over time as soils and vegetation generate or regenerate. Green infrastructure can generally be categorized into three major objectives: improved stormwater management, reduced costs, and enhanced individual and community well-being.

Green infrastructure is often used interchangeably with the term “low impact development”, but there are nuanced differences. Low impact development (LID) is an approach to land management that aspires to restore or maintain predevelopment hydrological conditions, while green infrastructure refers to the techniques used to implement LID.



Photo: Multi-benefit park project with wetland treatment for parking lot runoff, recreational trail, and habitat enhancement in Denver, CO

## WETLAND ENHANCEMENT

A wetland is a marsh-type area with saturated soils and water-loving plants. Wetlands provide wildlife habitat and serve as natural storage and filtration for stormwater runoff. Wetland enhancement is the increase of one or more of the functions performed by the landscape beyond the original natural conditions on a former, degraded, or naturally functioning wetland site. The purpose is to increase the capacity of specific functions, such as habitat for endangered species or stormwater management, to achieve a desired end goal.

Most wetland enhancement work includes small structures built to add water or regulate water levels in an existing wetland. Subsurface and surface drains and tiles are plugged. Concrete and earthen structures—usually dikes or embankments—are built to trap water. These practices maintain a predetermined water level in an existing wetland. Adjustable outlets allow water levels to fluctuate during different seasons or storm events. Enhancement also includes planting native wetland vegetation to supplement native habitats, and control of invasive species to enhance local ecosystems.

All communities need to control costs, improve efficiency, and provide quality services. Water-related services, including water quality protection and stormwater management, represent a significant portion of local budgets. Wetlands, though best known for their natural beauty and wildlife habitat values, also naturally provide many water management services. Protecting and enhancing wetlands can contribute to a community's economic health, public safety, and quality of life in the following ways:

- Reduced flooding - The most significant social and economic benefit that wetlands provide is flood control. Strategic wetland enhancement can protect human health and property and reduce the stress on other flood control infrastructure.
- Improved water quality - Unlike open waterways, wetland plants thrive on the nutrients contained in stormwater runoff. Wetland plants remove pollutants such as nitrogen and phosphorous, and heavy metals are trapped in wetland soils.
- Increased hunting, fishing, and recreation - Wetlands everywhere provide important leisure opportunities such as canoeing and boating, bird watching, swimming, and hunting.

# BEST PRACTICES

Photo: Festival in the Habersham Town Center - Beaufort, SC



## TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Traditional neighborhood development (TND) refers to development of a complete neighborhood or town using a variety of housing types, land uses, and activity centers. TNDs incorporate a range of housing choices, a network of well-connected streets and blocks, a variety of public spaces, and should have amenities such as stores, schools and places of worship within walking distance of residences. TND projects incorporate many different architectural styles and are not exclusively traditional in aesthetic. The following are commonly found in a TND:

- Parks, schools, civic buildings, and commercial establishments located within walking distance of homes
- Residences with narrow front setbacks, front porches, and detached rear garages or alley-loaded parking
- Network of streets and paths suitable for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles
- Narrower streets with crosswalks, landscaping, and traffic-calming measures
- In-scale development that fits the local context

TND is a complex undertaking and most developers choose the more familiar suburban, auto-oriented development model. However, suburban-style developments do little to encourage economic diversity, utilize existing infrastructure efficiently, minimize traffic congestion, and create cohesive community centers. The adoption of a design-based TND ordinance that supplements a community's conventional zoning ordinance is one way to make the process easier for developers and the community. TND ordinances place emphasis on the physical arrangement of buildings and spaces rather than the uses contained within, and establish the criteria for reviewing and approving these types of development.



## PLANNING FOR CONNECTIVITY

In urban design, connectivity is essential. Cities and neighborhoods that increase connectivity between people, places, and the things they need become more vibrant and healthy. Connectivity refers to the directness of links and the density of connections within a network. A well connected network has many short links, numerous intersections, and few dead ends. Good connectivity provides easy access to key destinations for pedestrians, cyclists, drivers, and all users regardless of mode, age, or physical ability. Well-designed transportation networks promote healthy communities and reduce traffic congestion by offering viable alternatives to driving.

While streets should be designed for all users, too often they are designed only for fast moving cars and heavy traffic. However, communities across the country are striving to 'complete' the streets. Today, transportation planners and engineers are working with land-use experts and urban designers to build roads that are safer, more accessible, and easier for all members of the community. In the process they are creating what are called "complete streets." Complete streets use the entire right-of-way to enable safe access to the transportation network, which may include sidewalks, safe crosswalks,

bicycle facilities, bus lanes and transit stops, narrower travel lanes, median islands, and more. There is no singular design prescription for complete streets. Just like each community, each street is unique and responds to its community context. A complete street in a rural area will quite look different from one in an urban area, but both are designed to ensure safety and convenience for everyone in the community.

Beyond improving the transportation network, complete streets can provide the following benefits:

- Economic development: Streets create marketable value for adjacent private property. Complete streets increase economic viability by improving access for more people, thus increasing the potential number of customers for businesses.
- Transit-oriented development: Complete street policies go hand-in-hand with transit-oriented development (TOD). In a TOD, land uses and infrastructure are arranged to encourage transit use while accommodating a range of transit options. TOD and completes have successfully been combined to revitalize entire commercial districts.

# BEST PRACTICES

Photo: Conversion of a former car dealership to a local brewery - Wake Forest, NC



## ADAPTIVE RE-USE

Vacant and abandoned properties may vary in frequency and condition depending on individual conditions, but nearly every community deals with their adverse impacts. Properties that are not inhabited for extended periods of time can begin to negatively impact adjacent occupied properties. While the vacancy and abandonment of properties is largely unpreventable due to the range of causes, there are effective efforts that can curbing their negative effects.

When properties become unused or abandoned, adaptive re-use can breathe new life and serve as a catalyst for economic development. Adaptive re-use refers to the process of conserving and rehabilitating obsolete or historic buildings from their original or most recent use to a new use. Along with other practices such as brownfield reclamation, adaptive re-use is a key factor in land conservation and urban redevelopment. While there is nothing new about converting a structure from one use to another, there is a gaining recognition that converting old buildings to new uses is cheaper than demolishing and rebuilding. Oftentimes, re-using existing building stock lowers material, transport and energy consumption and pollution. Further, there are often a range of financial incentives available to increase the use of older sites within established communities.



Photo: Project Storefronts provides artists access to empty retail spaces in New Haven, CT

## CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

Creative placemaking partners community members from public, private, and non-profit sectors to strategically shape the physical and social character of a neighborhood, town, city, or region around arts and cultural activities. Creative placemaking animates public and private spaces, rejuvenates structures and landscapes, improves local business viability and public safety, and brings diverse people together to inspire and be inspired.

In turn, creative places foster entrepreneurs and cultural industries that generate jobs and income, spin off new products and services, and attract and retain unrelated businesses and skilled workers. Together, creative placemaking focuses on community livability and economic development. Livability outcomes include improved public safety, community identity, environmental quality, increased affordable housing and workplace options for creative workers. Economic development outcomes include arts and cultural investments that help capture a higher share of expenditures from local income. Re-using vacant space generates local property and sales tax revenues that can be devoted to streets, lighting, sanitation, greenery, and police and fire.

Instead of a single arts center or a cluster of large arts and cultural institutions, creative placemaking encourages a more decentralized series of spaces acting as creative incubators. In this way arts and culture exist alongside industry, retail businesses, and housing - often occupying buildings and lots that had been vacant and under-used. In this way arts and cultural activities make substantial contributions to local economic development, livability, and cultural industry competitiveness. The best examples of creative placemaking involve strategic collaborations across agencies, levels of government, and sectors that tailor programs to specific community needs.

In large cities and small towns, these hubs may reflect the ethnic or historical character of place and invite residents and visitors alike to visit, patronize, and enjoy. Often, in smaller towns, traditional cultural practices and landscapes are transformed into distinct cultural destinations. Events such as festivals and pop-ups can revive empty downtowns or commercial corridors and attract regional visitors. Large cultural institutions, often inspired by their smaller counterparts, are increasingly engaging in creative placemaking.

# EXAMPLES

## CONSERVATION DESIGN

### Regional

The Sanctuary Residential and Commercial Developments, Mandeville, LA  
[www.sanctuaryofficepark.com](http://www.sanctuaryofficepark.com)

Bedico Creek Preserve, Madisonville, LA  
[www.livebedico.com](http://www.livebedico.com)

Wildwood Subdivision, Carriere, MS  
<http://www.wildwoodsubdivisionms.com>

### National

Lake Cook Courts, Highland, IL  
[www.cdfinc.com/Project?project\\_id=102](http://www.cdfinc.com/Project?project_id=102)

Bundoran Farm, Charlottesville, VA  
[www.explorebundoranfarm.com](http://www.explorebundoranfarm.com)

Creek Wood and North Field, Chapel Hill, NC  
[www.chapelhillnc.com/CreekwoodOverview](http://www.chapelhillnc.com/CreekwoodOverview)

## LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

### Regional

Episcopal High School, Baton Rouge, LA  
[danabrownassociates.com/project/episcopal-stormwater-management-plan](http://danabrownassociates.com/project/episcopal-stormwater-management-plan)

Tricentennial Place, New Orleans City Park, New Orleans, LA  
[www.neworleanscitypark.com/the-green-of-city-park](http://www.neworleanscitypark.com/the-green-of-city-park)

Florida Water Star Program  
[www.floridawaterstar.com](http://www.floridawaterstar.com)

### National

Metro Blooms Great Streets Project, Minneapolis, MN  
[metroblooms.org/projects/commercial-projects](http://metroblooms.org/projects/commercial-projects)

Tabor to the River: Brooklyn Creek Basin Program, Portland, OR  
[www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/47591](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/47591)

Tree Pittsburgh Urban Forestry Program, Pittsburgh, PA  
[www.treepittsburgh.org](http://www.treepittsburgh.org)



## GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

### Regional

Baton Rouge Lakes Master Plan, Baton Rouge, LA  
[www.batonrougelakes.org/baton-rouge-lakes-project](http://www.batonrougelakes.org/baton-rouge-lakes-project)

Marais des Cannes, Lafayette, LA  
[www.maraisdescannes.wordpress.com](http://www.maraisdescannes.wordpress.com)

Gentilly Resilience District, New Orleans, LA  
[www.nola.gov/resilience/gentilly](http://www.nola.gov/resilience/gentilly)

### National

Alachua County Green Infrastructure Program, Alachua County, FL  
[www.alachuacounty.us/Depts/EPD/Documents/Land/CFTop10.pdf](http://www.alachuacounty.us/Depts/EPD/Documents/Land/CFTop10.pdf)

Rain to Recreation, Lenexa, KS  
[www.lenexa.com/raintorecreation/index.html](http://www.lenexa.com/raintorecreation/index.html)

Walkable Watershed, Richmond, VA  
[www.gicinc.org/projectbellemeade.htm](http://www.gicinc.org/projectbellemeade.htm)

## WETLAND ENHANCEMENT

### Regional

Batture Lands Wetlands Reserve Enhancement, State of Louisiana  
[www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/la/programs/?cid=nrcs141p2\\_015683](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/la/programs/?cid=nrcs141p2_015683)

Sheldon Lake Prairie Wetland Restoration, Houston, TX  
[tcwp.tamu.edu/wetland-restoration/sheldon-lake-prairie-wetland-restoration-project](http://tcwp.tamu.edu/wetland-restoration/sheldon-lake-prairie-wetland-restoration-project)

Delta National Forest, Sharkey County, MS  
[www.ducks.org/mississippi/mississippi-projects/delta-national-forest-fordice-tract-wetlands-enhancement-project](http://www.ducks.org/mississippi/mississippi-projects/delta-national-forest-fordice-tract-wetlands-enhancement-project)

### National

Walter Giacomini Ranch Restoration, Marin County, CA  
[www.nps.gov/pore/learn/management/planning\\_giacomini\\_wrp\\_restoration.htm](http://www.nps.gov/pore/learn/management/planning_giacomini_wrp_restoration.htm)

Watsonville Sloughs Farm Enhancement Project, Santa Cruz, CA  
[www.watsonvillewetlandswatch.org/restoration\\_projects.htm](http://www.watsonvillewetlandswatch.org/restoration_projects.htm)

Stormwater Ecological Enhancement Project, Gainesville, FL  
[natl.ifas.ufl.edu/seep.php](http://natl.ifas.ufl.edu/seep.php)

# EXAMPLES

## TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

### Regional

River Ranch, Lafayette, LA  
[www.riverranchdev.com](http://www.riverranchdev.com)

Walnut Grove, Lake Charles, LA  
[walnutgrovetnd.com](http://walnutgrovetnd.com)

Perkins Rowe, Baton Rouge, LA  
[www.perkinsrowe.com](http://www.perkinsrowe.com)

### National

Mount Laurel, Birmingham, AL  
[www.mtlaurel.com](http://www.mtlaurel.com)

Habersham, Beaufort, SC  
[www.habershamsc.com](http://www.habershamsc.com)

Locust Town Center, Locust, NC  
[www.locusttowncenter.com](http://www.locusttowncenter.com)

## PLANNING FOR CONNECTIVITY

### Regional

Tammany Trace, St. Tammany Parish, LA  
[www.tammanytrace.org](http://www.tammanytrace.org)

Better Block Baton Rouge, Baton Rouge, LA  
[www.cpex.org/better-block-br](http://www.cpex.org/better-block-br)

Lafitte Greenway, New Orleans, LA  
[www.lafittegreenway.org](http://www.lafittegreenway.org)

### National

Bike Cleveland, Cleveland, OH  
[www.bikecleveland.org/](http://www.bikecleveland.org/)

Bicycling Ann, Arbor, MI  
[www.michigan.gov/documents/mdot/MDOT\\_InfographicAnnArbor\\_465396\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdot/MDOT_InfographicAnnArbor_465396_7.pdf)

American Tobacco Trail, Durham, NC  
[www.triangletrails.org/american-tobacco-trail](http://www.triangletrails.org/american-tobacco-trail)

## ADAPTIVE RE-USE

### Regional

Rouse's Market, New Orleans, LA  
[www.williamsarchitects.com/rouses---baronne-street](http://www.williamsarchitects.com/rouses---baronne-street)

Crescent Park, New Orleans, LA  
[www.reinventingthecrescent.org/](http://www.reinventingthecrescent.org/)

Saik Hotel, Hammond, LA  
<http://www.hollyandsmith.com/portfolio/project/saik-hotel-adaptive-reuse>

### National

White Street Brewing Company, Wake Forest, NC  
[capitalareapreservation.com/th\\_gallery/dino-radosta-mauer-architecture-kusan-construction-company/](http://capitalareapreservation.com/th_gallery/dino-radosta-mauer-architecture-kusan-construction-company/)

1810 West Broad, Richmond, VA  
<http://www.comarchs.com/portfolio/adaptivereuseandinfill/1840westbroad.html>

The Yard, Phoenix, AZ  
<http://www.brickandwest.com/the-yard.html>

## CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

### Regional

Shreveport Common  
[www.shreveportcommon.com/](http://www.shreveportcommon.com/)

Art Garden, Jackson, MS  
[www.msmuseumart.org/index.php/visit/artgarden](http://www.msmuseumart.org/index.php/visit/artgarden)

NUNU Collective, Arnaudville, LA  
<http://www.nunucollective.org/>

### National

Downtown Pathways, El Paso, TX  
<https://www.arts.gov/exploring-our-town/downtown-pathways>

Activating Vacancy, Dallas, TX  
[activatingvacancy.bcworkshop.org/](http://activatingvacancy.bcworkshop.org/)

Project Storefronts, New Haven, CT  
[www.projectstorefrontsnewhaven.com/](http://www.projectstorefrontsnewhaven.com/)

