



CONNECTING PEOPLE + PLACES

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

A NEW ORLEANS METROPOLITAN AREA GUIDE TO TRANSPORTATION PLANNING



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Improvements to the Huey P. Long highway and rail bridge were proposed, analyzed and implemented through the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development. The \$1.2 billion expansion was completed in the summer of 2013.





CONNECTING PEOPLE + PLACES

Whether you're riding the bus along Magazine Street, driving the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway, taking the ferry to Chalmette or the streetcar to downtown New Orleans, running along the Mississippi River levee, or bicycling to work, the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) is working behind the scenes to help get you where you need to go.

More than 1.1 million people live and move across the region.

RPC is probably not an agency that is as familiar to you as your parish or municipal governing body or your local transit agency, but what we do profoundly affects your daily life as a resident of Greater New Orleans.

Our job is to develop, plan and facilitate – regionally, comprehensively and strategically – a metropolitan transportation vision. We are simultaneously engaged in economic and

environmental planning that helps to attract and retain jobs and promote a healthy, sustainable region. RPC's planning focus areas carry tremendous implications for our region, affecting everything from our ability to gain access to the goods and services that our families need, to the strength of our economy, the quality of our environment, and the health, safety and well-being of our communities.

The purpose of this guide is to introduce our agency, shed a light on how decisions are made, and show you how you can be part of this dynamic process. We want to hear from you. With competing needs and limited funding, our work is most effective with robust public involvement and support. We urge you to take part in the process and to make your views known. Consider this guide your first step in becoming acquainted with RPC – your regional planning organization.



WHO WE ARE

The Regional Planning Commission for Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Tammany and Tangipahoa parishes (RPC) is a 31-member board of local elected officials and citizen members appointed to represent you on regional issues. St. Charles and St. John the Baptist parishes participate as members of RPC's Transportation Policy Committee.

The board is supported by a professional staff with broad experience in urban and regional planning, community development, economics, engineering, geography and sustainable development, among other disciplines.

RPC is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for a six-parish region. Created by Congress in 1962, MPOs are transportation policy organizations that ensure federal dollars are spent within a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive planning process.

It is the job of RPC to develop a regional transportation vision, direct planning, allocate funds and engage the public and other stakeholders.

Working with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) and other stakeholders, RPC selects projects and sets priorities for the metropolitan urbanized area. We provide a platform for local governments, citizens and other partners to collaboratively address regional land use, transportation, economic and environmental issues.

The RPC board meets at 12:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month at the Regional Transportation Management Center, located at 10 Veterans Memorial Boulevard in New Orleans, LA.



CORE FUNCTIONS

Provide a setting for regional decision-making

Engage the public

Identify & evaluate transportation options using the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

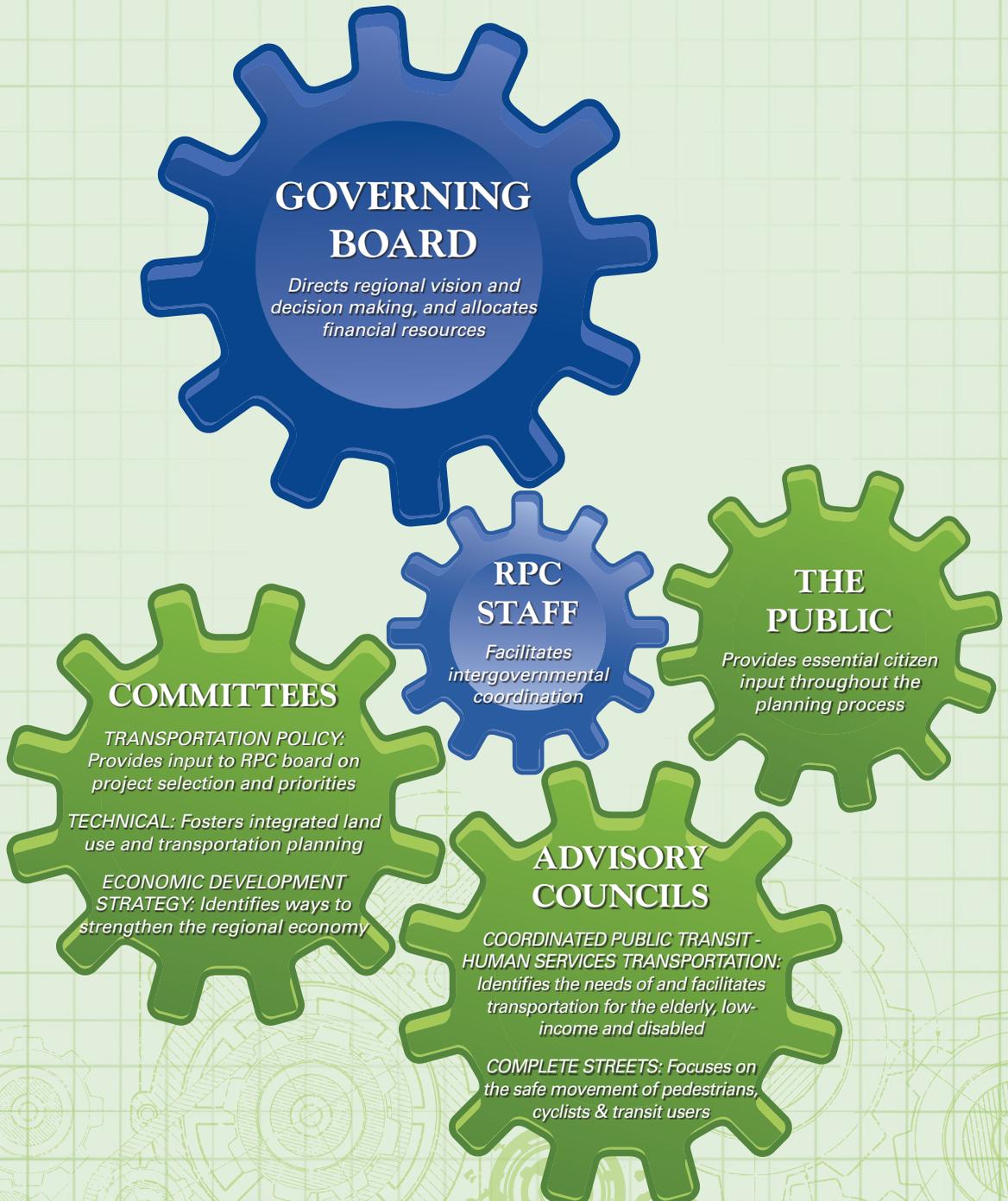
Maintain a long-term Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), prioritizing needed improvements of all types of transportation for the next 20+ years

Develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a short-term spending program for implementing transportation projects

HOW RPC WORKS

Working together to improve the region

The staff of the Regional Planning Commission facilitates intergovernmental coordination, directs planning resources and engages the board, committees, advisory councils, the public, and other stakeholders.





MOVING PEOPLE + MOVING GOODS

Moving people and products from here to there relies on many different channels. RPC is part of the network of facilities and agencies that work together to connect people, jobs, goods and services.

► MOVING PEOPLE

RPC strives for a balanced, efficient and sustainable transportation system, one that takes into account the needs of all users, including motorists, transit riders, pedestrians and bicyclists.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT + SAFETY

The Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) is a state-of-the-art facility employing Intelligent Transportation Systems technology and regional coordination to reduce traffic congestion, prevent accidents and shorten emergency-response time.



LADOTD traffic-management staff monitor conditions throughout the region using traffic cameras and vehicle detectors. The RTMC Control Room has access to nearly 100 cameras around Lake Pontchartrain and shares information with other control rooms across the state.

RPC works closely with LADOTD to maximize Intelligent Transportation Systems. Supplementing these efforts, RPC oversees a Congestion Management Process to mitigate regional congestion.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

RPC works with transit providers operating in the region, coordinating to ensure that public transportation serves the region's diverse needs in a seamless, cost-efficient, safe and environmentally-sound manner. We provide planning assistance to transit operators and ensure that plans and capital investments conform to the goals of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Additionally, through our work in Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation, RPC helps to ensure transportation access for the region's elderly, low-income and disabled populations.



PLANNING FOR PEDESTRIANS + BICYCLISTS

RPC's Pedestrian and Bicycle Program promotes walking and bicycling as healthy, viable and sustainable forms of transportation. We conduct workshops that promote community awareness and education, produce plans aimed at improving conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists, and channel money toward associated infrastructure investment. RPC has secured over \$40 million for pedestrian and bicycle projects since 1997. Many accommodations are integrated into general roadway rehabilitation projects, in keeping with RPC, municipal and state policies that strive for "complete streets" that accommodate all types of users.



AVIATION

There are seven airports operating in the New Orleans metro region. Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport (MSY) is the primary facility for commercial air traffic. The airport saw 4.31 million enplanements and 4.29 million deplanements in 2012.



MSY is supported by five general aviation facilities: Hammond Northshore Regional, New Orleans Lakefront, Slidell Municipal, St. John Parish and St. Tammany Regional airports. Additionally, Plaquemines Parish is home to Alvin Callender Field, a large military airport at the Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base in Belle Chasse.

MOVING GOODS

The products you use every day arrive as freight carried by rail, ship or truck, and sometimes by all three. RPC works with ports, railroads and trucking interests to invest in infrastructure and programs that improve the safety and efficiency of moving goods while lessening impacts on the environment and on other users of the transportation network.

FREIGHT TRUCKING

Interstates 10, 12, 55 and 59, along with major port and rail assets, make the region an important center of freight-trucking activity. RPC works with trucking representatives and LADOTD to improve efficiency and to mitigate the effects of freight trucking on the environment and on other users of the roads system.



MARITIME CARGO

There are four ports operating in the region: the Port of New Orleans, the Port of South Louisiana, the Port of St. Bernard, and the Port of Plaquemines. Together with the Port of Baton Rouge, they comprise the largest port complex by tonnage in the world. RPC assists regional port authorities by planning the landside transportation network that connects to regional, national and international population centers.



RAIL

Six Class I railroads converge in New Orleans. These railroads offer a combined connection to 132,000 miles of track across North America, while the publicly-owned New Orleans Public Belt Railroad serves as a terminal switching and consolidation entity on 27 miles of track along the Mississippi River. RPC is engaged in planning that will strengthen the region's role in rail-based freight transportation.



New Orleans is also a southern hub for passenger rail service. The city's Union Passenger Terminal is the busiest passenger rail station in the state. It serves as the terminus for three long-distance passenger rail lines operated by Amtrak that connect to Los Angeles, New York and Chicago. RPC is exploring the potential for commuter rail service between New Orleans and Baton Rouge.



Aerial view of Metairie, LA and the Causeway Bridge



RESILIENCE, SUSTAINABILITY + ECONOMIC COMPETITIVENESS

RPC is committed to promoting sustainability to ensure the long-term prosperity of our region. With our transportation program, we work with local government partners that regulate land use and zoning to coordinate development with regional transportation investments. RPC's economic development program promotes regional economic growth and competitiveness and fosters partnerships across parish boundaries. RPC's environmental initiatives facilitate the implementation of sustainable ideals. We also focus on preparing for future emergencies to ensure the enduring viability of our communities. In addition, we provide educational opportunities for our

partners, board members and community members on relevant topics, including climate change, urban design, storm water management, and best practices in land use and transportation integration.

Sustainability is the capacity to endure

A sustainable community is a healthy living environment that provides services and facilities for a diverse population, and economic security and opportunities for future generations.



Groundbreaking at Progressive Church's Family Life Center. Environmental issues at the site were addressed under RPC's Brownfield Redevelopment Program (above).



Attendees at a workshop hosted by RPC's Clean Fuel Partnership get an up-close look at a propane-powered vehicle (above).



ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

CLEAN FUEL PARTNERSHIP

SOUTHEAST LOUISIANA
CLEAN FUEL PARTNERSHIP



PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER FOR CLEANER FUEL
A STRONGER ECONOMY - A HEALTHIER COMMUNITY

RPC leads analysis of the regional transportation sector's impact on air quality. We also promote investment in more environmentally-sustainable fuels through the Southeast Louisiana Clean Fuel Partnership. This program provides education, technical assistance, funding information and other services for vehicle fleet managers and personnel interested in incorporating cleaner transportation options into their operations, improving our air quality and increasing the nation's energy independence.



Through the Southeast Louisiana Clean Fuel Partnership, RPC and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) helped CSX Corporation repower a large, conventional locomotive engine system with new GenSet ultra-low emission engine technology. The system reduces carbon emissions by 25 percent and oxides of nitrogen and particulate matter by more than 80 percent.

BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



Brownfield sites are abandoned, idled or underused industrial or commercial properties with real or perceived environmental contamination. Through grants from the EPA, RPC provides funding assistance and technical guidance to assist those interested in cleaning up and redeveloping Brownfield sites.

RPC also participates in the Louisiana Brownfield Association, a statewide non-profit dedicated to the promotion and revitalization of potentially-contaminated property.

RPC's Brownfield Redevelopment Program facilitates the reuse of idled and abandoned properties in our urban cores to reduce sprawl, utilize existing infrastructure, and revitalize communities.



The Falstaff Apartments opened in 2008 in a former New Orleans brewery that closed in the 1970s. RPC's Brownfield Redevelopment Program funded an environmental assessment of the property, used as a steel fabrication yard after brewery operations ended, helping to facilitate the sale and redevelopment of this long-shuttered landmark into a complex that includes market rate and affordable housing units and commercial space.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

RPC is the federally-designated Economic Development District (EDD) for Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and St. Tammany parishes. RPC's economic development team works with local partners to develop the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), a five-year document designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen the region's economy.

The CEDS strategy committee develops broad-based goals and objectives that result in a plan of action for regional economic growth. Those seeking financial assistance for projects from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) must demonstrate

how their proposals address the goals and objectives outlined in the CEDS.

RPC commissions studies that help the region's economic development professionals analyze trends, explore possibilities and evaluate best practices to develop the local workforce, promote job creation, aid business attraction and retention, bolster local economic assets and mitigate challenges to economic success. RPC's economic development program is also the conduit for funding from sources including the Delta Regional Authority (DRA), the federal-state partnership working to stimulate economic development in the Mississippi River delta area, and it provides technical assistance to potential applicants in developing their DRA grant proposals.



RPC assisted the New Orleans BioInnovation Center (NOBIC, above) in procuring funding from the Delta Regional Authority. NOBIC assists biotechnology companies in commercializing biosciences research.

RPC assisted the Port of New Orleans in procuring funding from the Delta Regional Authority to help build the Nashville Marshaling Yard, part of the Napoleon Avenue Container Terminal, expanding the port's capacity for containerized cargo movement and storage (below).



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The Emergency Preparedness Public-Private Partnership leverages private sector resources to support emergency management in Southeast Louisiana. Additionally, the partnership encourages businesses to register with the Louisiana Business Emergency Operations Center (BEOC) for opportunities associated with rebuilding the region following disaster. Partners include local, state and federal agencies; professional trade associations; chambers of commerce; and economic development organizations.



Workers position girders across I-10 eastbound at Causeway Blvd. in Jefferson Parish as part of a ramp-construction project aimed at improving efficiency and safety at this heavily-traveled interchange.



The completed I-12 widening project in St. Tammany Parish allows for a more efficient commute.

RECOGNIZABLE IMPROVEMENTS

You may have noticed improvements to some of your favorite destinations. Or you may have noticed that your commute is just a little bit smoother or easier to reach by foot, bike or transit. We are constantly striving to make the region more efficient, more connected, more environmentally-sustainable and more beautiful. Here are just a few of the projects facilitated by RPC in the last few years.



Magazine Street and Esplanade Avenue were among the corridors that enjoyed extensive repair as part of a federally-funded program to repair and resurface roads damaged as a result of hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The South Louisiana Submerged Roads Program began in 2007 at the recommendation of RPC and LADOTD to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). It was later renamed Paths to Progress. The program invested more than \$100 million in repairs across more than 50 projects in Jefferson, Orleans and St. Bernard parishes.



Bicyclists take advantage of a newly-striped bike lane along Esplanade Avenue in New Orleans. Greater New Orleans benefits from hundreds of miles of pedestrian walkways and bikeways, including many that have been installed or improved since Hurricane Katrina. Many road projects have included bicycle lanes and ADA-compliant curbs in keeping with RPC, municipal and state Complete Streets policies and federal law.





Streetscaping, including new landscaping and crosswalks, have improved pedestrian, bicyclist and driver safety in the vicinity of the National World War II Museum and have served as critical components in the revitalization of several square blocks in New Orleans' Warehouse District.



The strategic expansion of The National World War II Museum campus has continued since the Museum's opening in 2000. The facility includes in-depth and interactive exhibits on all aspects of the war that changed the world™, including several pavilions, an entertainment venue, two restaurants, gift shops, and future plans for additional pavilions, a hotel, conference center and parking structure.



The bike lane along F. Edward Hebert Blvd. was Plaquemines Parish's first when it opened in 2013. It improves safety for all users of the road while promoting public health, social equity and environmental sustainability.

Roadside beautification programs continue across the region. New Orleans East visitors and residents enjoy a more aesthetically-pleasing commute.



The Louis Armstrong International Airport access road is often the first and last impression left on tourists. Improvements to traffic flow, along with new landscaping and lighting, have created a more pleasant experience.



The St. Charles East Bank Multi-Use Path atop the Mississippi River levee is well-used by walkers, runners and bicyclists. Stand-alone pathways like this one and the Tammany Trace offer important opportunities for transportation and recreation.



Dual cell reinforced concrete box culverts form the foundation of the Clearview/ Earhart drainage project, which mitigates flooding problems at this low-lying interchange.



RPC commissioned a feasibility and economic impact study for the Veterans Administration/University Medical Center hospital expansion. This complex replaces two hospitals flooded in 2005 and expands the footprint of New Orleans' BioDistrict from downtown into Mid-City.



Streetscape improvements, including landscaping and a bike lane, depicted in the renderings above, are planned for St. Claude Avenue in St. Bernard Parish.

Cyclists bike the 31-mile Tammany Trace in St. Tammany Parish.



St. Tammany Parish residents now enjoy an improved I-12 corridor from Airport Road to the I-59/I-12/I-10 interchange.





MAKING SENSE OF THE DOLLARS

RPC's primary source of transportation funding is the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), which oversees the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), among other branches.

Federal transportation money is authorized by Congress for USDOT, which allocates funds to various programs before redirecting those funds to state departments of transportation. The most recently authorized bill governing federal surface transportation spending was the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act, more commonly known as MAP-21. The bill, signed into law by President Obama on July 6, 2012, was the first long-term highway authorization bill enacted since 2005.

USDOT AT A GLANCE

FHWA

Federal Highway Administration



Highways, bridges and tunnels

FTA

Federal Transit Administration



Urban mass transportation

FAA

Federal Aviation Administration



Civil aviation

FRA

Federal Railroad Administration



Passenger and freight rail systems

PAST FUNDING + IMPROVEMENTS

Over the 13-year period that ended with fiscal year 2011, a total of \$3.34 billion was channeled through the RPC into regional transportation projects. **Recently, in 2011 and 2012, \$413.3 million was committed toward 171 transportation projects.** A few projects included in this tally were:

- The new Loyola Streetcar Line from the Union Passenger Terminal to Canal St.
- Track and cross-tie repairs on the St. Charles Streetcar Line
- I-59 resurfacing
- New entrance/exit ramps on the Westbank Expwy.
- I-10 widening from Veterans Blvd. to Clearview Pkwy.



- 27% New Capacity
- 29% Maintenance & Preservation
- 0.8% Enhancements/Landscaping
- 4.2% Pedestrian & Bicycle
- 27% Transit
- 12% Operational Management & Signals

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Extensive consultation between the MPO and LADOTD takes place in developing the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), the chief legal document reflecting the resources, planning process and selection of projects for the region over the next 30 years. RPC also prepares a shorter-term Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which details funding and programming for the next four to five years. This document contains projects drawn from the MTP and are selected based on need, merit and the ability of the state and region to finance the improvements. The TIP is widely distributed for public review and comment and is presented to the region's Technical Advisory Committee for review, comment and concurrence.

One of the most significant trends in transportation planning practice and policy is a shift away from maximizing personal mobility in favor of optimizing accessibility. This means that the primary measure of the effectiveness

of a transportation system is how easily one can gain access to basic needs, such as jobs, recreation and other amenities, as opposed to how far and how quickly one can travel. RPC's transportation planning philosophy and process emphasize accessibility, safety, system preservation, livable communities, environmental sustainability and the efficient, economic movement of people and goods.

Traditional federal funding sources can be augmented by short-term boosts in funding. These non-recurring revenues can take the form of emergency relief funds, stimulus programs such as TIGER, or local bond initiatives. It is up to RPC to balance traditional funding sources with non-recurring monies while exploring alternative funding strategies. Louisiana's Transportation Mobility Fund and Transportation Trust Fund allow for public-private partnerships, bond issuance and toll extensions as just a few possibilities for future project funding.



PROJECT EVALUATION PROCESS

Selected projects that come to RPC undergo a six-step evaluation process approved by LADOTD. Following each of the steps, the projects must receive federal and state approval.

1

STEP 1: FEASIBILITY STUDY

A potential project requires an evaluation to determine if it can be completed and how it can benefit the community. The report describes general aspects of the project such as its purpose, design and budget.

2

STEP 2: ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

The environmental analysis determines the social, economic, and environmental impacts on the community. All environmental work is carried out in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. The results are then presented for public review and comment.

3

STEP 3: COST ESTIMATION

Cost is an important factor in deciding whether a project advances. Federal, state and local funding agencies consult with RPC on the funding sources needed to finance the project.



4

STEP 4: PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING

The project is turned over to LADOTD which oversees design and engineering. The work is reviewed for compliance with state and federal design standards.

5

STEP 5: FINAL DESIGN

After an in-depth review of the preliminary engineering plans by LADOTD headquarters and district offices as well as involved local agencies, the final architectural and engineering plans are prepared.

6

STEP 6: CONSTRUCTION

LADOTD uses a bidding process to select a contractor to complete the project. A bid package consisting of a detailed set of plans is advertised and the job is awarded to the most qualified bidder.

RPC works closely with LADOTD and municipal and parish departments of public works to analyze each project in the implementation pipeline. Our periodic reviews take into account the status of environmental clearances, surveys, rights-of-way and utilities before final plans are approved and a let date is set.



REGIONAL FACTS

POPULATION*

| | | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|-------|
| 443,522 | Jefferson Parish | 7 |
| 348,829 | Orleans Parish | |
| 23,042 | Plaquemines Parish | 4 |
| 35,897 | St. Bernard Parish | 7 |
| 52,780 | St. Charles Parish | |
| 22,102 | St. James Parish | 5 |
| 45,924 | St. John the Baptist Parish | 1,908 |
| 233,740 | St. Tammany Parish | 48 |
| 121,097 | Tangipahoa Parish | 22.6 |
| 1,326,933 | TOTAL | 163 |

*2010 Census

TRANSPORTATION

| |
|---|
| Airports serving commercial, general aviation and military |
| Ports |
| Railroads connecting to 132,000 miles of track across North America |
| Ferry crossings |
| Miles of federal-aid-eligible roads |
| Total fixed-route transit lines |
| Million annual fixed-route transit trips |
| Miles of bikeways |

INDUSTRY

Top regional industries by jobs:*

- Tourism and hospitality
- Healthcare and biosciences
- Architecture, construction, and engineering
- International trade and logistics
- Oil and gas production
- Higher education
- Aerospace and advanced manufacturing
- Food manufacturing, including fishing
- Creative media and design
- Petrochemicals and plastics
- Green technology and environmental services

*Based on 2011 figures

PUBLIC TRANSIT OPERATORS



The Regional Transit Authority is the largest public transit operator in the region, operating streetcars and buses in New Orleans and Kenner. Jefferson Transit provides fixed-route and paratransit service in Jefferson Parish. St. Bernard Urban Rapid Transit provides service primarily along the Judge Perez Drive and St. Bernard Highway corridors. River Parishes Transit Authority in St. John and St. Charles Parish, and goSTAT in St. Tammany Parish, offer demand-response service. Ferry service offers pedestrian and vehicular crossing of the Mississippi River.



Interchange at I-10 and Airline Highway in Orleans Parish



DID YOU KNOW?

▶ The 24-mile Causeway is one of the world's longest bridges, and the longest bridge over water. The Jiaozhou Bay Bridge in China, completed in 2011, measures 26 miles, but only 16 miles run over water.

▶ Opened in 1935 and designated a Historic Civil Engineering Landmark by the American Society of Civil Engineers, the Huey P. Long Bridge is one of fewer than 250 ASCE landmarks in the world. It shares this prestigious designation with the Eiffel Tower, the Panama Canal, and the United States Capitol Building. Prior to the Huey P., railroad cars were ferried across the river.

▶ New Orleans is a leader in active transportation (bicycling and walking), with some of the highest rates of walk- and bike-commuting in the South.

▶ The Crescent City Connection is the fifth-longest cantilever bridge in the world and is the farthest downstream bridge on the Mississippi River.

▶ The first ferry in the region began traveling between New Orleans' Jackson Square and Algiers in 1827. Before bridges were constructed in the 20th century, ferries were the dominant form of transportation across the Mississippi River.

▶ The St. Charles Streetcar Line is the oldest continuously-operated passenger street railway in the world. It has been in continuous operation since 1835, with service being disrupted only by Hurricane Katrina. The St. Charles streetcar and the San Francisco cable cars are the nation's only mobile national monuments.

▶ The New Orleans region is one of the nation's foremost international trade hubs, thanks to its expansive ports complex, vast inland waterway network, and robust system of Class I railroads, airports, interstate highways and pipelines.



▶ Louisiana's lower Mississippi River is the world's busiest port complex and waterway. It moves about 500 million tons of cargo and more than 11,000 ocean vessels each year.

▶ The Port of South Louisiana, stretching across St. Charles, St. John the Baptist and St. James parishes, is the nation's top port by tonnage, with a throughput of more than 212 million tons of cargo annually, including 60 percent of all grain in the U.S.

▶ The New Orleans region is home to the second largest number of Class I railroads in the U.S. The Huey P. Long rail bridge provides one of only five railroad crossings over the Mississippi River.

▶ The Port of New Orleans ranked second among all U.S. international water ports by weight of shipments handled in 2008, when the port handled 98 million tons of goods, or about 6 percent of the total U.S. international waterborne tonnage.

▶ The Port of New Orleans is also a world leader in coffee imports and features 14 coffee warehouses, modern bulk processing operations, more than 5.5 million feet of storage space and six roasting facilities in a 20-mile radius.

▶ Once the widest street in the world, Canal Street was named for a canal that was planned for, but never built, on the street's dividing median or neutral ground. Today, the median is used by the recently-restored Canal Street Streetcar Line.

▶ The total mileage of canals above and below ground in New Orleans exceeds that of Venice, Italy.

Sources: www.nola.com, www.prd1.doa.louisiana.gov, www.dotd.la.gov, www.norta.com, www.50states.com, www.experienceneworleans.com, www.portno.com, Louisiana Economic Development, U.S. Department of Transportation



GET INVOLVED

WE NEED YOUR HELP

RPC extends an open invitation to residents of the region to assist us in developing regional transportation opportunities. Public and advisory committee meetings are held regularly to solicit input from those affected by projects and those who would like to see transportation-related improvements in their areas. We make a special effort to reach out to traditionally underserved communities, including minority and low-income communities.



▶ The Public Involvement Plan is a dynamic document with one goal: to allow the public opportunities to influence decisions throughout the planning process. Fill out the form on page 29 and check the box marked “Send me RPC’s current Public Involvement Plan” to receive more information.

▶ The public is kept abreast of projects through RPC’s website, www.norpc.org, where links to newsletters, news releases, technical studies, plans and requests for proposals can be found.

DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

RPC regularly engages and assists Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), small firms owned by socially- and economically-disadvantaged individuals, including racial minorities and women. We offer seminars to discuss public contracting procedures and partnership opportunities. We also maintain – and routinely exceed – an annual DBE contracting goal. RPC follows all federal and state laws and guidelines for procurement, in accordance with the regulations of the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). Contact RPC’s DBE liaison officer for more details.



DISABILITY + LANGUAGE ACCOMMODATIONS

RPC meetings are conducted in handicap accessible locations and materials can be provided in accessible formats and in languages other than English.

If you would like accessibility or language accommodation, please contact RPC at (504) 483-8535 or rpc@norpc.org.

TITLE VI NOTICE

The Regional Planning Commission (RPC) fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes, executive orders, and regulations in all programs and activities.

RPC operates without regard to race, color, national origin, income, gender, age, and disability. Any person who believes him or herself or any specific class of persons to be subjected to discrimination prohibited by Title VI may by him or herself or by representative file a written complaint with the Louisiana Department of Transportation (LADOTD).

LADOTD’s Title VI Program Manager may be reached via phone at (225) 379-1923. A complaint must be filed no later than 180 days after the date of the alleged discrimination. Complaint forms may be obtained in person at 10 Veterans Memorial Boulevard, New Orleans, LA 70124, or on our website at www.norpc.org.

Shipping containers at the Port of New Orleans





TELL ME MORE

If this guide has piqued your curiosity for transportation and other regional planning topics, check the appropriate boxes below and return this postage-paid card by mail to RPC.

- Add my name to your newsletter mailing list.
- Send me RPC's current Public Involvement Plan.
- Send me RPC's current Unified Planning Work Program.
- Send me RPC's current Metropolitan Transportation Plan.
- Send me RPC's current Transportation Improvement Program.
- I would like additional copies of this guide.
- Send me information about _____.

Name _____

Title/Affiliation _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone (optional) _____

Office Phone (optional) _____

Mobile Phone (optional) _____

E-mail address (optional) _____



TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

This guide is one component in a larger effort to encourage greater public awareness of and involvement in the regional planning decision-making process. Comments and suggestions for improving RPC's public involvement activities are always welcome. Call, fax, e-mail or send your comments to:

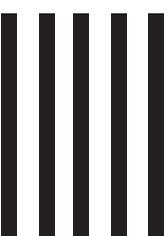
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ACRONYMS, ABBREVIATIONS + DEFINITIONS

ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act: Federal civil rights legislation designed to ensure access for those with physical or mental impairment.

CEDS - Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: A five-year document designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic road map to diversify and strengthen regional economies.

Class I railroads: The nation's largest freight railroads, based on operating revenue.

Coordinated Human Services Council: A group of stakeholders that includes representatives of public transit agencies and private providers of transportation to the low-income, disabled and elderly that meets quarterly and serves as a subcommittee to the RPC Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The council's primary role is to update, maintain and determine how best to implement the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, a strategy for facilitating transportation access to everyday needs among transportation-disadvantaged populations.

Complete Streets: Streets designed and operated to enable safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

Complete Streets Advisory Committee: A group of citizen representatives that addresses projects and policies that affect bicycle, pedestrian and transit users. The committee meets quarterly and serves as a subcommittee to the RPC Technical Advisory Committee.

CMP - Congestion Management Process: Addresses congestion-related issues on the highway system using a set of technical tools and locally determined performance measures.

DBE - Disadvantaged Business Enterprise: The DBE program strives for equal opportunity in transportation contracting markets, addresses the effects of historic discrimination in transportation contracting, and promotes increased participation in federally funded contracts by small, socially and economically disadvantaged businesses, including minority- and women-owned enterprises.

USDOT - U.S. Department of Transportation: The federal agency with responsibility for highways, mass transit, aviation, rail and ports. The DOT includes the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, among other branches.

EDA - U.S. Economic Development Administration: A division of the U.S. Department of Commerce that leads the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness and preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy.

EDO - Economic Development Organization: RPC is the locally-designated Economic Development Organization for Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and St. Tammany parishes, as determined by the Economic Development Administration (EDA).

EJ - Environmental Justice: The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of laws, regulations, and policies.

EPA - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: The federal regulatory agency responsible for administering and enforcing federal environmental laws.

FAA - Federal Aviation Administration: A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation charged with regulating and developing civil aeronautics.

FHWA - Federal Highway Administration: A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers the federal-aid highway program, providing assistance to states to construct and improve highways, urban and rural roads and bridges.

FRA - Federal Railroad Administration: A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that enforces rail safety, administers railroad assistance programs and conducts research and development in support of improved railroad safety and national rail policy.

FTA - Federal Transit Administration: A branch of the U.S. Department of Transportation that administers federal funding to transportation authorities, local governments, and states to support a variety of locally planned, constructed and operated public transportation systems throughout the U.S.

GIS - Geographic Information System: Computerized data management system designed to capture, store, retrieve, analyze and display geographically referenced information.

GOHSEP - Governor's Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness: Coordinates all statewide disaster declarations authorized by the governor.

goSTAT - St. Tammany Parish Public Transit: St. Tammany Parish's public transit operator.

ISTEA - Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991: Federal law passed by Congress covering federally funded highway and transit programs for the period 1992-1997.

ITS - Intelligent Transportation System: Improves transportation safety and mobility and enhances productivity through the integration of advanced communications technology into transportation infrastructure and vehicles.

JARC - Job Access Reverse Commute: FTA grant program that assists states and localities in developing new or expanded transportation services that connect low income persons to jobs and other employment related services.

JeT - Jefferson Parish Public Transit: The public transit operator serving the urbanized portion of Jefferson Parish and that also provides service to New Orleans and the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport.

LADOTD - Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development: Works to deliver transportation and public works systems that enhance quality of life and facilitate economic growth.

MAP-21 - the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act: Signed into law in 2012, it was the first long-term federal transportation bill enacted since 2005. It authorized \$105 billion for surface transportation programs for fiscal years 2013 and 2014.

MPA - Metropolitan Planning Area: Federally approved transportation planning boundary of an MPO.

MPO - Metropolitan Planning Organization: A federally-mandated body responsible for the transportation planning and project selection in a region. The governor designates an MPO in every urbanized area with a population of more than 50,000. RPC is the MPO for Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Tammany and Tangipahoa parishes.

MSA - Metropolitan Statistical Area: A core area containing a substantial population nucleus, together with adjacent communities having a high degree of social and economic integration with that core.

MTP - Metropolitan Transportation Plan: The region's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), updated every 4 years, that identifies and prioritizes transportation improvements for the next 20+ years.

NAAQS - National Ambient Air Quality Standards: Caps set by the EPA for ground-level particulate matter, carbon monoxide and ozone.

NEPA - National Environmental Policy Act of 1969: Federal legislation that requires an evaluation of the environmental impacts of any project using federal money or needing federal approval.

RPC - Regional Planning Commission: A platform for local governments, citizens and stakeholders to collaboratively address regional land use, transportation, environmental and economic issues.

RPTA - River Parishes Transit Authority: The public transit operator serving St. Charles and St. John parishes.

RTA - Regional Transit Authority: The public transit operator that provides service in New Orleans and Kenner.

RTMC - Regional Transportation Management Center: A state-of-the-art facility employing Intelligent Transportation Systems technology and regional coordination to reduce traffic congestion, accidents and emergency-response time.

SAFETEA-LU - Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act, a Legacy for Users: Federal law passed by Congress covering federally funded highway and transit programs for the period FFY 2005-2009.

SBURT - St. Bernard Urban Rapid Transit: St. Bernard Parish's public transit operator.

SHSP - Strategic Highway Safety Plan: A major component and requirement of the federal highway safety improvement program, developed and coordinated by LADOTD in a cooperative process with local, state, federal, and private sector stakeholders.

Smart Growth: A set of policies and programs designed to protect, preserve and economically stimulate established communities while protecting valuable natural and cultural resources and limiting sprawl.

STIP - State Transportation Improvement Program: Statewide prioritized program of transportation projects covering a period of four years consistent with long-range statewide, metropolitan and transportation improvement plans.

STP - Surface Transportation Program: A category of FHWA funds that may be used by states and localities for projects on any federal-aid highway, bridge projects on any public road, transit capital projects, and intracity and intercity bus terminals and facilities.

TAC - RPC Technical Advisory Committee: A regional group of stakeholders comprising representatives of public works and planning departments, transit operators, and representatives from port, bridge, airport and railroad interests, along with representatives of federal housing, transportation and safety agencies, that meets on a quarterly basis to review proposed amendments to the MTP and TIP, to discuss projects of regional significance and to share best practices.

TEA-21 - Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century: Federal legislation approved in 1998 that authorized federal surface transportation programs for a six-year period.

TIP - Transportation Improvement Program: The region's short-term transportation spending program that identifies, prioritizes and allocates funding for transportation improvements to begin over a 1 to 5 year period.

TITLE VI - Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964: Prohibits discrimination in any program receiving federal assistance.

TPC - RPC Transportation Policy Committee: Provides input to the RPC board on project selection and priorities.

TSM - Transportation System Management: Strategies to enhance the capacity and efficiency of the existing transportation network through techniques such as improved signalization and channelization.

UPWP - Unified Planning Work Program: RPC's transportation planning work program for the upcoming year, updated annually.

UZA - Urbanized Area: Consists of a central core and adjacent densely settled territory that contains at least 50,000 people.





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