

Regional Planning Commission

Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and St. Tammany Parishes

December , 2011



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DRA Announces Awards to Stimulate Job Creation - N.O. to Receive \$225,000

The Delta Regional Authority (DRA), a division of the U.S. Department of Commerce, leads with the mission of alleviating poverty in the eight-state Delta region. The organization receives funding from Congress to catalyze job creation and retention. The primary way that DRA accomplishes this task is through its State Economic Development Assistance Program (SEDAP).

This year DRA awarded \$9,866,420 through the SEDAP, with Louisiana receiving \$1,779,648, of which projects in New Orleans received \$225,000.

- ❖ Tulane's RiverSphere Center of Excellence for Sustainable Energy Systems will receive a \$150,000 grant
- ❖ The Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LaDOTD) will receive \$75,000 to support commercial development in the Lower 9th Ward.

The RiverSphere Center of Excellence for Sustainable Energy Systems will feature a 22,000 square foot facility located adjacent to the Mississippi River and the Port of New Orleans. The campus will house laboratories, administrative and exhibit space as well as a business incubator. RiverSphere will lead the development, testing and demonstration of renewable energy sources, particularly hydrokinetic power from the Mississippi River. The DRA grant will be used in combination with a \$3 million award from the U.S. Economic Development Administration and private funds for wharf improvements.

The project has already attracted the interest and support of several private developers and manufacturers of hydrokinetic turbines. "Having a facility like RiverSphere studying the impacts of turbines on the environment can help companies like ours reduce costs and reach commercialization sooner"



Magazine Street Repairs Completed

On Monday, October 10, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development celebrated the completion of roadway repairs on Magazine Street in New Orleans, from US 90B (Calliope Street) to Nashville Avenue. The repairs to Magazine Street are part of the South Louisiana Submerged Roads Program, a coordinated effort of the LaDOTD, Regional Planning Commission (RPC), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), New Orleans Department of Public Works, and New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board.

The \$6.7 million project consisted of patching, resurfacing, repairing curbs and installing new ADA handicap ramps. At some locations, storm water drain pipe repairs and other miscellaneous work occurred. The project was funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Emergency Relief program.

Speakers included DOTD Secretary LeBas, New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, State Representative Walt Leger, III, State Representative Neil C. Abramson, New Orleans Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Walter R. Brooks and Magazine Street Merchants Association board member and former president, Greg Dombourian.

“We are excited to see the completion of this project,” said New Orleans Regional Planning Commission Executive Director, Walter Brooks. “We are proud of the collaboration and partnership that has grown between the Submerged Roads Program and its local partners.”

“It was vital to the success of this project to partner with local businesses, be involved in the community, and

address any concerns that were brought up along the way,” LeBas said in a statement. “The collaborative work between federal, state, and local agencies has contributed to Magazine Street being completed ahead of schedule and under budget.”

The project team worked with local merchants by adjusting the construction schedule to accommodate busy shopping seasons. The project began January 2011 and was completed more than a month ahead of the November 2011 scheduled completion date and finished under-budget.

The \$118 million South Louisiana Submerged Roads Program is a comprehensive road repair program to repair and resurface roads damaged as a result of hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The project construction was divided into three phases to minimize impact on businesses and residents.

- Phase 1: US 90B to St. Andrew Street (0.68 mi)
- Phase 2: St. Andrew Street to Napoleon Avenue (1.79 mi)
- Phase 3: Napoleon Avenue to Nashville Avenue (1.05 mi).



From the left are: **Greg Dombourian**, board member, Magazine St. Merchants Assoc.; **Walter Brooks**, Executive Director, Regional Planning Commission; **Susan Guidry**, New Orleans Councilmember; **Mitch Landrieu**, New Orleans Mayor; **Sherri LeBas**, DOTD Secretary; State Representatives **Neil Abramson** and **Walt Leger**; and **Cedric Grant**, New Orleans Deputy Mayor

The International Facilities Management Association meets at the RTMC

The International Facilities Management Association (IFMA – New Orleans Chapter) and its partner, the International Interior Design Association (Delta Region Chapter), hosted their July 13th monthly meeting at the Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC). The IFMA, which is a member of the Regional Planning Commission's Emergency Preparedness Public-Private Partnership, comprises the largest and most widely recognized international association for professional facility managers, supporting more than 20,000 members in 78 countries.

By considering the physical value of properties and the intellectual value of the employees who work in those properties, managed by IFMA members, they are demonstrating the importance placed on emergency preparedness and business continuity planning. The RPC's commitment to its public-private partnerships and emergency preparedness and business continuity planning allows organizations like the IFMA to exchange updates and share best practices that address public safety in our region.



The IFMA and the International Interior Design Assoc. prepare for their July meeting at the RTMC.

A key component of the RPC's public-private partnership work is identifying private sector resources that support public safety in southeast Louisiana, without adding capital and operating costs to the government. If you would like more information about any of RPC's public-private partnership initiatives, please contact Chris Laborde at 504-483-8540 or claborde@norpc.org.

RPC Supports Children and Disasters Initiatives

The Regional Planning Commission has partnered with the University of New Orleans and Save the Children to address initiatives that better prepare our region's children for disasters. Three separate forums have been conducted with organizations that work to improve the safety and welfare of children. Most recently, the Louisiana Department of Education has begun investigating the potential for a disaster preparedness curriculum that could be included in K-12 schools throughout the state.

Issues that are being addressed by this partnership include:

- How to get schools, hospitals, daycare centers, ready to take care of kids when disaster strikes?
- Do fire and police know what day cares and schools are in the area in case of a HAZMAT incident?
- How do all members of the community, including non-English speakers, get information in emergencies?
- Are we using faith-based organizations effectively during disasters?
- Can we develop an effective disaster preparedness curriculum in K-12 schools in Louisiana?

In addition to supporting an effective curriculum for kids, the RPC's Emergency Preparedness Public-Private Partnership continues to identify opportunities to leverage its work with that of the private and non-profit sectors that support emergency managers and other first responders in southeast Louisiana.



From left are: John Kiefer, PhD, UNO; Alessandra Jerolleman, Save the Children; Dexter Accardo, St. Tammany Parish Emergency Manager and Chris Laborde, RPC staff.

New Orleans Named “Bronze” Bicycle Friendly Community By League of American Bicyclists



Mayor Mitch Landrieu recently announced that the city of New Orleans has been recognized by the League of American Bicyclists’ as a Bronze Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) in their Fall 2011 awards announcement.

“The League congratulates New Orleans and all of our BFC winners for implementing successful, long-term bicycle plans and programs that provide quality of life improvements for their citizens,” said League President Andy Clarke. “Even in tough economic times it is clear that cities are choosing investment in bicycling as a key to building the places people want to live, work and visit.”

The BFC judges were particularly impressed with New Orleans’ large bicycling population, education efforts, a bicycle network that has more than tripled in size in the last three years and the strong bicycle culture seen in events like the Bicycle Second Line.

Department of Transportation and Development, Bike Easy, Louisiana Public Health Institute, Entergy Corporation, the Prevention Research Center, AARP, and New Orleanians from across the city has worked tirelessly towards the goal of a bicycle friendly New Orleans.

Complete Streets policy, we will create a healthier, more sustainable and more prosperous future for all New Orleanians.”

The BFC program is revolutionizing the way communities evaluate their quality of life, sustainability and transportation networks, while allowing them to benchmark their progress and work toward improving their bicycle-friendliness. The application to become a BFC is rigorous and an educational tool in itself; currently 190 of the 490 total applicants have received a BFC four-year designation. The renewal process and four levels of the award – platinum, gold, silver and bronze – provide a clear incentive for communities to continuously improve.

To apply or learn more about the free BFC program, visit the League online at bikeleague.org/community.

The Bicycle Friendly Community, Bicycle Friendly State, Bicycle Friendly Business and Bicycle Friendly University programs are generously supported by program partners Bikes Belong and Trek Bicycle’s One World, Two Wheels Campaign. To learn more about building a Bicycle Friendly America, visit <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/>

The League of American Bicyclists promotes bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation, and works through advocacy and education for a bicycle-friendly America. The League represents the interests of America’s 57 million bicyclists, including its 300,000 members and affiliates. For more information or to support the League, visit www.bikeleague.org.

“I am committed to making our city more bicycle and pedestrian friendly.”
- Mayor Mitch Landrieu

“Since Katrina, the city has quadrupled its miles of bikeways, and we will continue to include bikeways as part of major road projects. We are planning for the Lafitte Greenway which will increase bicycle activity throughout our city. We know that a bicycle-friendly city is a healthier and more accessible city” said Mayor Landrieu.

These awarded communities now bring the total of BFCs across the country to 190 in 46 states. The BFC award recognizes New Orleans’ commitment to improving conditions for bicycling through investment in bicycling promotion, education programs, infrastructure and pro-bicycling policies.

A broad coalition of partners, including the city of New Orleans, the Regional Planning Commission, Louisiana

“We are thrilled by the bronze designation,” said Jamie Wine, Executive Director of Bike Easy. “This is a milestone as we move towards becoming the most bicycle friendly city in America. Bike Easy’s goal is to make bicycling easier, safer and more fun and this designation shows that we are moving in the right direction.”

The City already has plans on improving its BFC designation in the coming years.

“The City Council has set an ambitious goal of a Gold designation by 2018,” said District C Councilmember Kristin Gisleson Palmer. “As chair of the Transportation Committee, I look forward to working with Mayor Landrieu and my colleagues on the Council to further improve bicycling in New Orleans. By committing ourselves to implementing the transportation recommendations of the New Orleans 2030 Plan, including adoption of a

The Regional Planning Commission (RPC) is a great place to meet and discuss the issues that face our region. We are continually working to build relationships with local stakeholders and the communities we serve. Below are highlighted some of the recent activities and projects at the RPC.

Monticello Drainage Canal Meeting



(Left to Right) **Cedric Grant**, Deputy Mayor - City of New Orleans; **John Young**, Jefferson Parish President; **Jimmy Fitzmorris**, Jimmy Fitzmorris and Associates; **Susan Guidry**, New Orleans City Council; **Cynthia Lee-Sheng**, Jefferson Parish Council; **Walter Brooks**, Executive Director - Regional Planning Commission

Optimizing Blight Strategies - Deploying Limited Resources in Different Neighborhoods Housing Markets



(Left to Right) **Kathryn L.S. Pettit**, Senior Research Associate, The Urban Institute; **Allison Plyer**, Deputy Director - Greater New Orleans Community Data Center

Award Presentation - Jefferson Parish Canal Design Competition



(Left to Right) **Reda Youssef**, Jefferson Parish - Capital Projects Coordinator; **Randy Nicholson**, Jefferson Parish - Streets Director; **Rubye Noble**, President - Beautification Committee; **John Young**, Jefferson Parish President; **Patricia Besselman**, Chair - Jefferson Parish Canal Design Competition; **Kazem Alikhani**, Jefferson Parish Public Works Director; **Lynda Nugent Smith**, Jefferson Community Foundation; **David Andignac**, Jefferson Business Council and Foundation

RPC's Clean Fuel Partnership Electric Vehicle Network Meeting



Steve St. Angelo with Leaf Electric Vehicle.



William Hegman with Telsa Electric Vehicle.

Meeting to Prepare for Storms in Louisiana



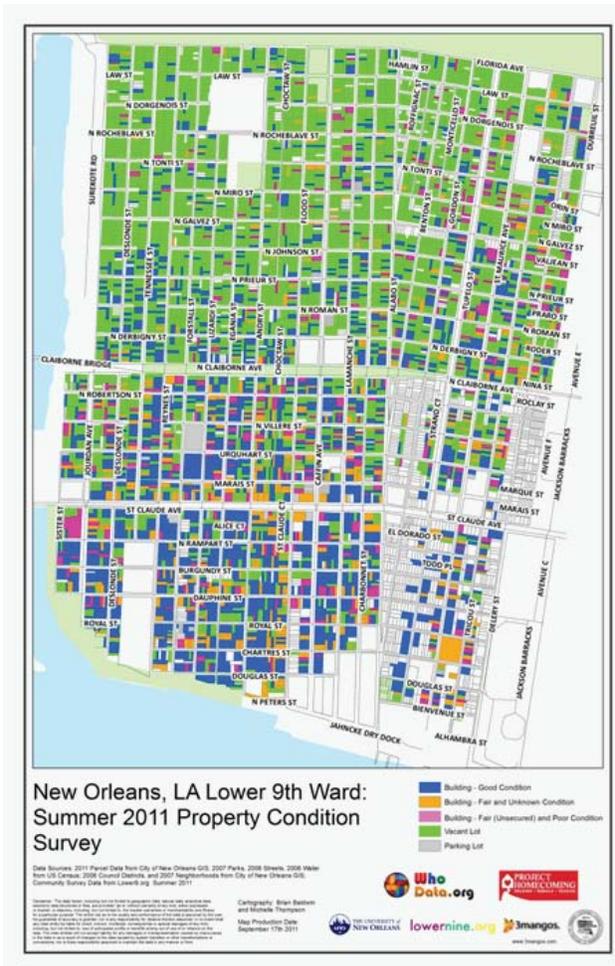
(Left to Right) **Peggy Poche**, Hazard Mitigation Outreach Coordinator - Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness; **John Kiefer**, Associate Professor and Director, MPA Program in the Department of Political Science, University of New Orleans

WhoData.org Exemplifies Collaborative Data Sharing

Through collaborative work with the Regional Planning Commission (RPC), GISCorps, numerous neighborhood organizations and volunteers, WhoData.org was launched in February 2011. WhoData.org is an Internet mapping service that allows people and organizations to contribute and track information on the progress and potential of New Orleans' neighborhoods. Through an auspicious collaborative data sharing process, which includes the city of New Orleans, WhoData has successfully mapped building conditions in several Orleans Parish neighborhoods at the parcel or lot level.

"WhoData.org is a public participation geographic information systems (PPGIS) program that will encourage our students to work closely with community-based organizations and municipal leaders to integrate neighborhood and regional data for mutual understanding and access," says Michelle Thompson, University of New Orleans, Assistant Professor, Department of Planning and Urban Studies and WhoData program manager.

The website features online mapping tools that allow residents and organizations to assess neighborhoods, highlight blighted properties, create their own maps and share information with the public. Lynn Dupont, Principal Planner and GIS Coordinator for the RPC, believes that the data display on



the site should help eliminate some of the redundant data-gathering efforts that have occurred in the past while providing a categorization methodology that allows all users to track rebuilding efforts and analyze changes. A key feature that the website includes is publicly available survey data that can be downloaded in Excel format from WhoData.org and joined to the City's GIS parcel layer.

Empowering individuals and organizations with mapping and analysis tools has proven successful; WhoData.org has already exceeded one million unique hits since its launch. Input from users and partners have proven valuable in addressing the concerns of transparency and expanding data resources desired by the City's 'Citizen Participation Program' initiative. Such data collaboration allows WhoData.org to provide pertinent information for organizations and individuals interested in measuring the progress of economic and community development throughout New Orleans.

WhoData.org is open to any organization that wishes to participate.

To learn more about WhoData.org or
how to get involved visit:

<http://planning.uno.edu/whodata>
or contact

Dr. Michelle Thompson at: mmthomp1@uno.edu or 504-280-6593.

National Cooperative Highway Research Program Survey

The New Orleans region and the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) in its capacity as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) were recently selected to participate in a national best practices survey by the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP). The survey seeks to identify how metropolitan areas can better predict transportation needs contingent on land development and specifically how regional planners work to protect the ability of transportation corridors to move people and goods in the face of unforeseen land development.

On October 4th, 2011 an NCHRP study group of nine industry professionals met with representatives from RPC and LaDOTD at the Regional Transportation Management Center to discuss how the New Orleans region addresses this issue. The NCHRP study group was composed of representatives from Washington State Department of

NCHRP has titled their survey “Risk-Based Forecasts of Land Volatility for Corridor Management and Sustainable Communities.”

Transportation (WSDOT), New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT), Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), and the University of Virginia (UVA).

The NCHRP survey team expects their work to better enable officials to identify corridors subject to risk of development, to reduce the costs to localities, and to aid in the development of long-range corridor plans by identifying the factors that contribute most to land use volatility and through methods, models, and data used to forecast land use for access

management and transportation network sustainability. They expect to complete their regional visits by the end of 2011 and publish the results of their work by 2012.

Administered by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) and sponsored by the member departments (i.e., individual state departments of transportation) of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) was created in 1962 as a means to conduct research in acute problem areas that affect highway planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance nationwide.



Federal City Traffic Study

The Regional Planning Commission recently completed a Congestion Management Systems Planning and Traffic Impact Analysis for the Federal City Complex located in the Algiers neighborhood of New Orleans. The purpose of this work was to specifically address the need for safer and more efficient ingress and egress at the future gated entrance to the Federal City compound on Opelousas Avenue.

In order to evaluate the need for traffic improvements new building uses and descriptions were analyzed in conjunction with the three intersections which provide connectivity from the new Opelousas Avenue entrance to the surrounding area. These intersections are:

- Opelousas Avenue at Behrman Avenue
- Opelousas Avenue at Whitney Avenue
- Whitney Avenue/LB Landry Avenue at Newton Avenue.

Based on the results of the analyses performed it was determined that

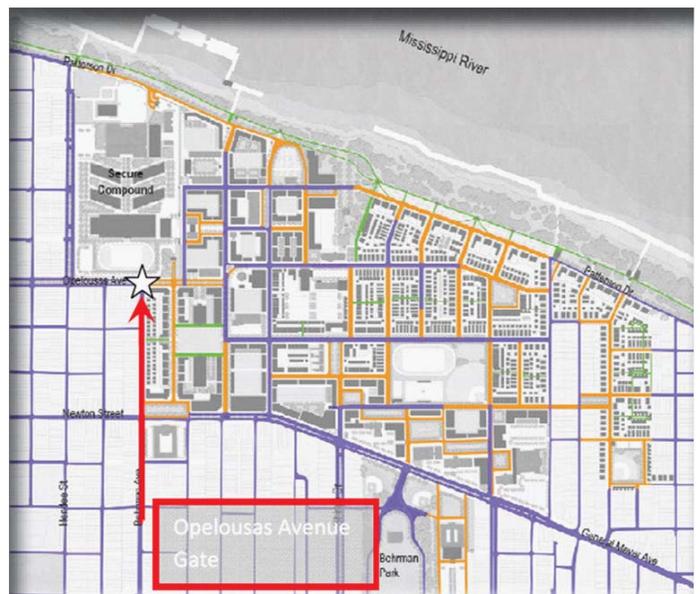
The goal of Federal City is to create state of the art facilities that will attract thousands of federal and private sector workers during the next ten years. The construction of new facilities at Federal City will provide its tenants with energy and maintenance efficient facilities and the latest hurricane and flood protection factors and standards. Under this concept, the State of Louisiana has committed to contribute to the capital costs of this installation in return for the economic and social benefits of retaining and expanding the number of workers in the DOD, Federal, and “spin off” civilian organizations that would occupy the Federal City.

during future conditions the intersections of Opelousas at Behrman Avenue along with the intersection of Whitney Avenue/LB Landry Avenue at Newton Street will operate at LOS (Level of Service) C or better. However, the intersection of Opelousas Avenue at Whitney Avenue will operate at LOS F once future conditions are in place during peak traffic periods.

The following recommendations have, therefore, been made to improve the level of service at the intersection of Opelousas Avenue and Whitney Avenue. If the proposed traffic control measures are taken, it is estimated that the intersection of Opelousas Avenue at Whitney Avenue will operate at LOS B during peak hour future conditions.

1. a new roadway extension be constructed from the current end of Opelousas onto Federal City;
2. installation of signage;
3. installation of traffic signals;
4. coordination of signal timing; and
5. installation of additional turn lanes.

For more information about this study, please contact Jason Sappington at 504-483-8507 or jsappington@norpc.org.



Inland Waterway Container Transport

The Regional Planning Commission, in partnership with the Gulf Coast Center for Evacuation and Transportation Resiliency, recently completed a feasibility study for Inland Waterway Container Transport (IWCT) in the region. The study was initiated due to continued growth in freight movements within the U.S land transportation network, to the point where alternative means of adding capacity to the network need to be investigated. Market demand factors such as door-to-door and just-in-time delivery have contributed to the strong growth in both road and rail transport sectors. This heavy reliance on ground transport has resulted in increased roadway congestion, worsened bottlenecks throughout the road network, road deterioration, air pollution, highway accidents, and fuel consumption. The integration of the inland waterway network into our current

intermodal transportation system could serve as an alternative to long haul freight movements and alleviate some of these negative impacts.

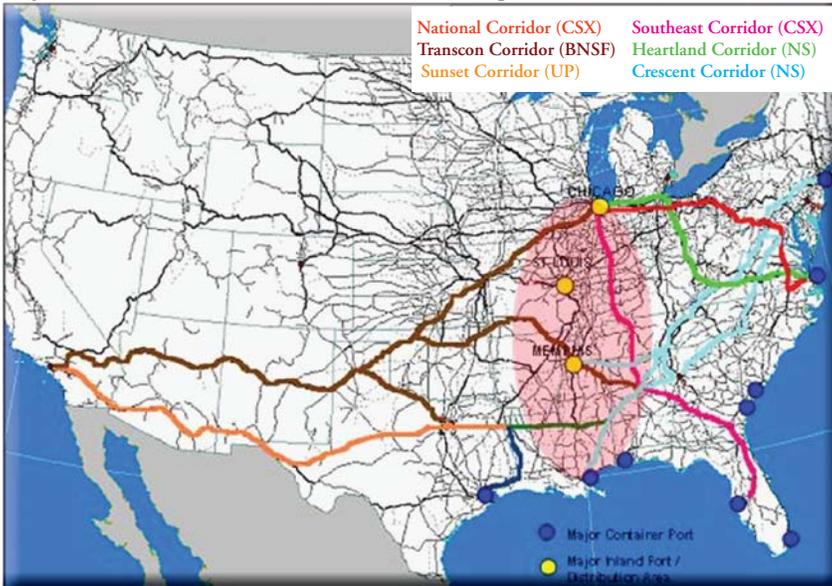
The U.S. Department of Transportation and the Maritime Administration (MARAD) have recently placed new importance on shifting freight movements, particularly containers, to the nation's waterways by creating a priority federal program: North American Marine Highways. MARAD hopes to demonstrate that the nation's inland waterways can serve as an additional transportation system for container transport to relieve congestion and reduce demand on landside intermodal connectors and highway infrastructure.

The study analyzed successful IWCT systems in Europe and existing IWCT

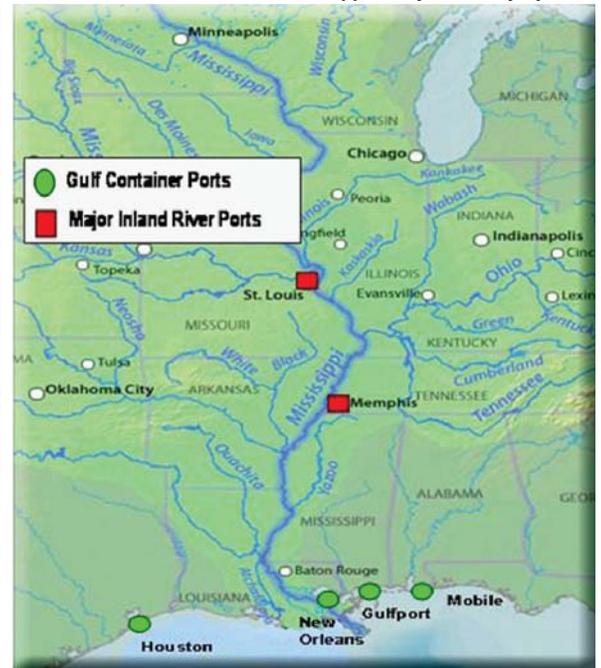
services in select U.S. locations. Further, it assessed the feasibility of IWCT within the Mississippi River trade corridor. It also explains the challenges and limiting factors which have inhibited the development IWCT to date. Finally, the study examines the differences between IWCT development in the US and in Europe, where IWCT is a small but rapidly growing and successful sector of certain freight networks. Based on the analysis and findings, the study seeks to guide policy and future investment decision-making. The study also highlights the resiliency factors associated with inland waterway transportation at the local, state and national levels.

For more information about this study, please contact Karen Parsons at 504-483-8511 or kparsons@norpc.org.

Major Corridors and Container Ports in the U.S. reaching Mid-America



Mississippi Valley Waterway System



The RPC is a 26-member board of local elected officials and citizen members of the greater New Orleans metropolitan area. The RPC provides an open forum where elected officials and community leaders of the five member parishes (Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard and St. Tammany) come together, in partnership, to discuss how regionalism can promote the general welfare and prosperity of the entire region.

Officers: Kevin Davis
Chairman
Craig Taffaro
1st Vice Chairman
John Young
2nd Vice Chairman
Mitchell Landrieu
Secretary
Billy Nungesser
Treasurer

Jefferson Parish	Orleans Parish	Plaquemines Parish	St. Bernard Parish	St. Tammany Parish
John Young <i>Parish President</i>	Mitchell Landrieu <i>Mayor, City of New Orleans</i>	Billy Nungesser <i>Parish President</i>	Craig Taffaro <i>Parish President</i>	Kevin Davis <i>Parish President</i>
Chris Roberts <i>Councilmember-at-Large</i>	Eric Granderson <i>Councilmember-at Large</i>	vacancy <i>Council Chairman</i>	Frank Auderer, Jr. <i>Councilmember at Large</i>	Steve Stefancik <i>Councilmember</i>
Michael S. Yenni <i>Mayor, City of Kenner</i>	Jacquelyn B. Clarkson <i>Councilmember-at Large</i>	Keith Hinkley <i>Councilmember</i>	Ray Lauga, Jr. <i>Councilmember</i>	R. Reid Falconer <i>Councilmember</i>
John F. Stumpf, Jr. Lee Giorgio	Ronald Carrere, Jr. Jeffrey Schwartz	Bill Bubrig James Hufft	Charles Ponstein David Munn	Richard P. Kelley James Smith

La. Dept. of Transportation and Development: Sherri LeBas, *Secretary*

Transportation Policy Committee:

John Morrow <i>N.O. Public Belt Railroad</i>	Barbara Major <i>Regional Transit Authority</i>	Cathy Gautreaux <i>La. Motor Transport Assoc.</i>	Freddy Drennan <i>Mayor, City of Slidell</i>
Carlton Dufrechou <i>Greater N.O. Expwy. Comm.</i>	Iftikhar Ahmad <i>N.O. International Airport</i>	V.J. St. Pierre, Jr. <i>St. Charles Parish President</i>	Donald Villere <i>Mayor, City of Mandeville</i>
Ryan Brown <i>Jeff., Dept. of Transit Adm.</i>	Pat Gallwey <i>Port of New Orleans</i>	Natalie Robottom <i>St. John Parish President</i>	

Executive Director: Walter R. Brooks



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