

# Regional Planning Commission

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

June 2013



## Feds commit \$175.4 million in FY 2012 for GNO transportation projects

In federal fiscal year 2012, the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration obligated \$175.4 million toward 100 transportation projects in the New Orleans Metropolitan Planning Area, which comprises Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles and St. John the Baptist parishes.

An obligation refers to the funding commitment made by a federal agency to cover the federal share of a project's capital or operating cost.

The largest project obligation in the New Orleans MPA was the MacArthur Interchange project (phase 1-westbound) on the West Bank of Jefferson Parish. The project received \$23.6 million through a combination of federal aid and state general funds. It involves the demolition of the existing Manhattan Blvd. westbound entrance ramp to the Westbank Expressway, construction of a new entrance ramp and construction of a new westbound exit ramp to the Harvey Tunnel and Peters Road.

Other significant highway investments include \$11.9 million for I-10 resurfacing in Orleans Parish and \$6.4 million for I-59 resurfacing in St. Tammany Parish. *Continued on page 2*

## RPC campaign urges pedestrians to "Strut Safely," motorists to "Brake it Down"

They are unmistakable in their short shorts, ruby red jackets, mustaches and tube socks, and their satirical style and self-deprecating dance moves make them favorites at local parades, charity and sporting events -- and even landed them a spot in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. More recently, the 610 Stompers employed their growing celebrity to call attention to an important public health issue in greater New Orleans: pedestrian safety.

*Continued on page 7*

### In This Issue

- 2 RPC holds DBE workshop
- 3 SEDAP funding awarded
- 4 University-industry collaboration
- 5 North Shore bike/ped improvements
- 6 Jeff. Parish creating bike master plan
- 7 St. Charles Parish road improvements
- 8 Tulane Ave. upgrades reviewed
- 9 St. John roadway improvements
- 10 Managing mobility
- 11 RPC helps CSX repower locomotive
- 12 RPC co-hosts Smart Growth speaker series
- 13 Emergency preparedness PPP
- 14 Around the RPC

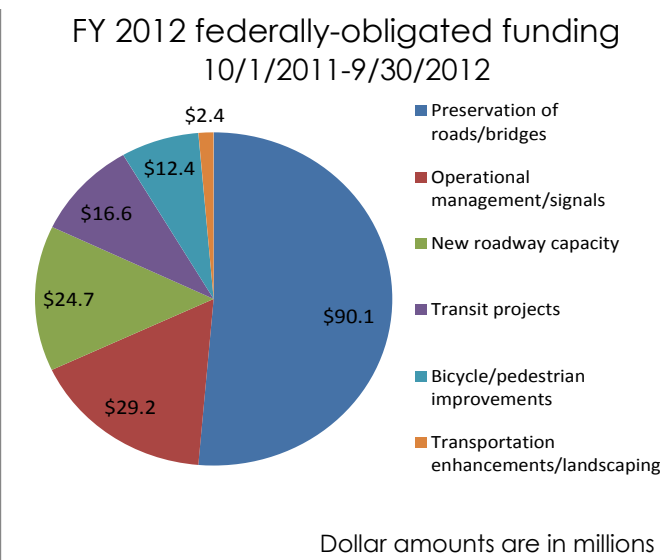


Federal obligations, continued from page 1

Key transit-related obligations include: \$6.3 million for capital, operating and planning assistance for transit providers in Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. James and St. John the Baptist parishes; \$3.9 million for track and cross-tie repairs on the St. Charles Avenue Streetcar Line; \$3.8 million for preventive maintenance and fuel; and \$1.6 million for transit vehicle replacement.

Additionally, \$400,000 was obligated as part of the FTA’s New Freedom Program to enhance job access for low-income residents and to remove barriers for the mobility-impaired, and \$500,000 was obligated for implementing various transit technologies aimed at improving operator safety and providing real-time passenger information.

Most of the transportation improvement projects (81 percent) were valued under \$3 million, reflecting a continued emphasis on roadway rehabilitation and transit system recovery following



Hurricane Katrina. Seventeen projects had net obligations ranging from \$3 million to \$10 million.

The RPC works with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development and area transit agencies to prepare a list of projects in the New Orleans MPA for which federal funding is obligated each federal fiscal year.

RPC holds DBE workshop

The Regional Planning Commission hosted a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise workshop February 1st aimed at educating firm representatives about DBE certification procedures, team building, future work opportunities and consultant-selection processes. The workshop also covered the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development’s small business program.

Representatives of certifying agencies from the New Orleans region were on-hand to discuss requirements of the DBE program, which aims to level the playing field for firms owned by socially- and economically-disadvantaged individuals.

The event concluded with a roundtable discussion in which firm and governmental agency representatives spoke about their experience with the DBE program, along with the challenges and opportunities confronting DBE firms working in the regional transportation-planning arena.

The workshop additionally served as a networking opportunity for DBE and non-DBE firms that were able to connect and work on building stronger teams for future projects.

For more information about the RPC’s DBE program or to be notified about future DBE events, contact Nik Richard at [nrichard@norpc.org](mailto:nrichard@norpc.org).

## NOBIC and DDD receive State Economic Assistance Program funding

The New Orleans BioInnovation Center and Downtown Development District were among 14 entities selected from across Louisiana to receive project funding from the Delta Region Authority's 2012 State Economic Development Assistance Program (SEDAP).

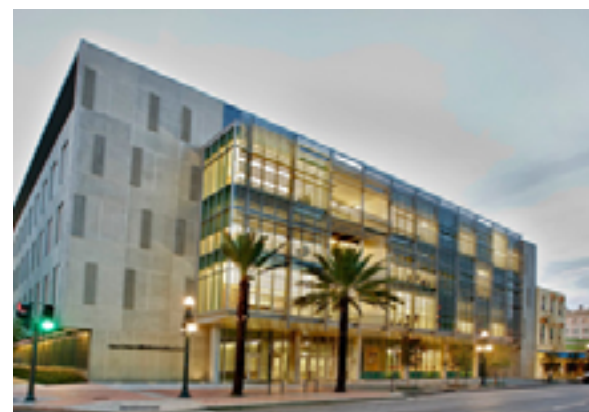
NOBIC was awarded \$70,000 to further the work of its commercialization team, which works to move scientific discoveries into the marketplace and has over the past two years provided technical assistance to more than 40 biotech start-ups. The team, comprising graduate and post-graduate fellows and interns from LSU, Tulane, Loyola and UNO, has assisted in the writing of five Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer grants totaling \$2.3 million. NOBIC's clients have additionally received over \$14 million in equity funding and created 47 full-time and 36 part-time jobs.

The DDD was awarded \$40,000 to aid in closing the financial gap for infrastructure and streetscape improvements on Girod Street. These improvements will support construction of the South Market District, a \$200 million in-fill development project that will transform several surface parking lots into a thriving, transit-oriented community adjacent to the newly-constructed Loyola streetcar line. The project, featuring 210,000 square feet of commercial and residential space, is expected to bring 293 permanent jobs and 500 housing units to downtown.

The Delta Regional Authority is a federal-state partnership that is congressionally mandated to create jobs, build communities and improve lives in the 252 counties and parishes that make up the Delta Region. The DRA invests in economically-distressed areas to promote job creation and retention with an emphasis on basic public infrastructure; transportation improvements that facilitate economic development; business development that emphasizes entrepreneurship; and job training.

The Regional Planning Commission serves as the local development district for Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines and St. Bernard parishes to the DRA. DRA will solicit applications for the FY 2013 SEDAP this spring, but the RPC works year-round to cultivate projects.

For more information, contact Amber Seely at aseely@norpc.org.



The NOBIC (left) and DDD were the two regional recipients of 2012 State Economic Development Assistance Program funding from the Delta Regional Authority. The DDD award will be used to improve Girod Street in support of the South Market District (see site plan above).

## RPC aims to "close the loop" between universities and industry

The Regional Planning Commission and Eva Klein & Associates -- a consulting firm focused on higher education and economic development -- are leading a study that will develop strategies for enhancing partnerships between the region's academic institutions and industry and among the universities themselves.

The project, *Closing the Loop on University-Industry Collaboration for Innovation*, carries two overarching goals:

- 1) Creating a dynamic online inventory of university-based assets, organized by industry sector, that will enable users to search for relevant curricula and programs; and
- 2) Enhancing pathways of collaboration between regional universities and industry sectors being targeted by the region's economic development agencies.

Members of a project working group, comprising representatives of economic development organizations, universities and industry, along with other invited participants, took part in a series of workshops and presentations held in January designed to further the goals of the initiative. The five sessions, facilitated by Eva Klein, president of Eva Klein & Associates, and W. Mark Crowell, executive director and associate vice president for innovation partnerships and commercialization at the University of Virginia, were:

- *Innovation U: Enhancing the university's role in innovation-based economic development*, which focused on forging innovation partnerships between universities and industry beyond the formal transfer of intellectual property, and best practices for making innovation a core feature of the university culture;
- *NCAM: Organizing for the next generation of accomplishments in STEM education*, which addressed strategies for enhancing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education to meet the needs of advanced manufacturing;
- *Tulane Riverfront Campus: A university-industry dialogue about expanding R&D and business partnerships for coastal restoration and protection*, about the emerging industry taking shape around coastal restoration and protection, with an emphasis on research and development partnership opportunities;

• *Student experiential education programs: Another pathway for university-industry collaborations*, which explored ways that expanding opportunities for work-study and other experiential learning programs might be an important pathway for collaboration between institutions and industry; and

• *Enhancing life sciences collaborations: What does industry need from universities*, about ways of strengthening ties between industry and universities involved in life sciences research and development. This session featured two speakers with substantial experience in the academic and industrial realms. Robert Zivin is a research associate professor and senior fellow at the University of Miami, Miller School of Medicine, where he is responsible for identifying and promoting technology commercialization opportunities between faculty and industry. Zivin formerly held high-level positions with Johnson & Johnson and Merck. Christopher Yochim is director of external relations strategic partnering and business development at AstraZeneca.

Once a draft final report on the study is completed, working group participants will be convened again to develop priority actions and to discuss next steps. Klein will present on project outcomes at the March RPC board meeting.

For more information, contact Amber Seely at aseely@norpc.org.



Eva Klein, left, and W. Mark Crowell facilitated a series of workshops in January focused on strategies for enhancing partnerships between the region's academic institutions and industry. Photos courtesy of scup.org and innovation.virginia.edu.



## Study finds value in downtown Covington bike plan

An RPC-sponsored feasibility study completed in January concludes that the addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities along North Jefferson Avenue in downtown Covington would provide the city and surrounding communities with valuable transportation and recreation opportunities.

The proposal, which consultants describe as an important step toward linking the city's fragmented bicycle and pedestrian network, tentatively calls for installing new bicycle and pedestrian accommodations along North Jefferson between East Boston and Columbia Streets. These facilities would eventually connect to the Tammany Trace along 26th Avenue. *Continued on page 9*



A conceptual drawing of a hypothetical shared-use path separated from traffic along one side of North Jefferson Avenue in Covington. Image courtesy of Richard C. Lambert consultants.

## Mandeville bike/ped improvements identified

Improvements at two key sites in Mandeville would improve connectivity of the city's bicycle and pedestrian network, an RPC-sponsored study concludes.

The study, completed in December by Meyer Engineers, specifically focuses on improving bicycle and pedestrian connections between two parts of the city divided by the Causeway.

It identifies the intersection of Monroe Street and the North Causeway approach as a choke point, and the West Causeway approach corridor as problematic, and recommends projects to improve circulation and safety. *Continued on page 11*

## Slidell study targets neighborhood-park connections

A study is underway that aims to enhance connections between Slidell's Olde Towne neighborhood and Heritage Park. The project takes a complete streets approach that emphasizes pedestrian, bicycle and motor-vehicle safety.

It builds on a 2011 transportation enhancement grant awarded to the City of Slidell that will improve the pedestrian environment and facilitate better connectivity within Olde Towne. It also complements an ongoing study that is examining ways to improve bicycle linkages between the 31-mile Tammany Trace and Heritage Park.

Currently, an active rail line and Front Street (U.S. 11) - a high-traffic, four-lane roadway - limit pedestrian and bicycle access between Olde Towne and the park.

The logical crossing point for pedestrians and bicyclists is the signalized intersection of Fremaux Avenue (U.S. 190) and Front Street; however crossing by foot and bicycle is discouraged at this intersection by turning vehicles and a dearth of crosswalks and other pedestrian amenities. The expansive width of the roadway further challenges pedestrian and bicyclist crossing. *Continued on page 11*

## Jefferson Parish developing bicycle master plan

The Regional Planning Commission and Jefferson Parish government are working to make the parish more bicycle-friendly.

A team of consultants led by GCR Inc. has been hired to develop Jefferson Parish's first bicycle master plan. The planning process started in the fall and public meetings were held in January, inviting the public to weigh in on key issues including where parish residents currently bicycle, where they would like to bicycle and what promotes and prevents bicycling in Jefferson Parish. Public input is also being solicited through a survey found on the project website, [www.jeff-parishbikeplan.org](http://www.jeff-parishbikeplan.org).

In addition to identifying existing conditions for bicyclists, this project will develop a proposed network of bikeways, recommend a priority list of capital projects, create bikeway standards, and suggest improvements to land use and transportation policies to better facilitate bicycling. Ongoing programs will be recommended to implement the goals of the Bicycle Master Plan over the next ten years, along with a process to monitor progress.

This planning process also aims to educate the public on the anticipated benefits of improving bicycling conditions, including improved public health and safety, increased property values, reduced traffic congestion and air pollution, and expanded transportation options for all parish residents.



A rendering of a hypothetical bike and pedestrian path along an existing railroad right-of-way adjacent to Belle Chasse Highway in Gretna. Image courtesy [www.jeffparishbikeplan.org](http://www.jeffparishbikeplan.org).

"The Jefferson Parish Master Bike Plan will lay the foundation for better bicycle planning in the state," said RPC Principal Planner Karen Parsons. "It will be the first comprehensive bike plan for an urbanized area of Louisiana in the post-war automobile era, and it will address multiple goals of improved safety, access and health. The RPC is excited to support this significant planning effort."

The plan is expected to be completed by the end of June. Once finalized, consultants will work with the Jefferson Parish Planning Department to schedule a public hearing on adding the plan as an amendment to the transportation element of the parish's comprehensive

plan. The plan will then be considered by the Planning Advisory Board and forwarded to the Jefferson Parish Council for review and adoption.

Ultimately, the document will be presented to the Regional Planning Commission for review and inclusion in the RPC's regional non-motorized plan.

For more information, contact Karen Parsons at [kparsons@norpc.org](mailto:kparsons@norpc.org).

The Jefferson Parish bike master plan "will be the first comprehensive bike plan for an urbanized area of Louisiana in the post-war automobile era."

-RPC Principal Planner Karen Parsons



# St. John road projects aim to improve safety, capacity along U.S. 61



The intersection of U.S. 61 and Belle Terre Blvd. in LaPlace.

Work is moving forward on two projects aimed at improving traffic capacity, flow and safety along U.S. 61 in LaPlace.

Buchart Horn Inc. has completed design work on one of the projects, which will widen U.S. 61 at its intersection with Belle Terre Blvd.

It will also add a raised median, curb and gutter and include signal improvements.

The project is expected to be let for construction in June.

Still under design by Buchart Horn is a project to widen Hemlock Street at its intersection with U.S. 61. As part of that project, designated turning lanes will be installed to encourage safer and more efficient traffic flow.

The projects are aimed at increasing traffic capacity, flow and safety along an important parish corridor.

It will replace the existing shoulder with a travel lane, allowing drivers to make left turns from two lanes turning north onto Belle Terre.

## Stompers, continued from page 1

The New Orleans metro region is plagued by higher-than-average rates of crashes involving pedestrians. The 610 Stompers’ pedestrian-safety campaign, sponsored by the Regional Planning Commission and created by marketing firm Keating Magee, officially ran from September through November. It included radio spots; a website, [www.brakeitdownnola.com](http://www.brakeitdownnola.com); and billboards, banners, and sidewalk graphics urging drivers to “brake it down” and stop for pedestrians at crosswalks, and reminding pedestrians to “strut safely” by using crosswalks.

“Raising awareness of state laws and pedestrian safety is one of many strategies we are taking to reduce the number of people involved in crashes,” said Dan Jatres, RPC pedestrian and bicycle program manager. “The 610 Stompers were the perfect spokesmen for this campaign, delivering a simple and memorable message.” Jatres added that the campaign has generated lots of positive feedback and that the RPC hopes to partner with the Stompers on future efforts.

For more information, contact Dan Jatres at [djatres@norpc.org](mailto:djatres@norpc.org).



# Proposed Tulane Ave. upgrades garner public support

Proposed upgrades designed to address operational deficiencies, enhance inter-modal relationships and improve pedestrian and bicycle safety along an important stretch of Tulane Avenue were generally well-received by those in attendance at a public meeting on the project.

The changes, proposed by the City of New Orleans and the Regional Planning Commission, in cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development and the Federal Highway Administration, are currently under environmental review. They would affect the stretch of Tulane Ave. (U.S. 61) between South Carrollton and South Claiborne avenues, just north of the New Orleans Central Business District and crossing through the burgeoning medical district.

The project would incorporate complete streets concepts to transform the auto-centric corridor into one that better facilitates transportation for all modes, including walking, bicycling and transit.

Recommended improvements include: reducing the roadway from six to four travel lanes and increasing lane width; adding dedicated bike lanes; incorporating wider medians; adding turn lanes at key intersections; and improving the overall streetscape while retaining existing parking lanes.

A total of 46 people attended the meeting, held at the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority headquarters on Canal Street. Attendees included members of the general public, public officials and members of the project team.

Participants offered input into project

alternatives and were able to review renderings and design materials, ask questions and learn about the environmental assessment process. Public comments submitted at the meeting and through mail were generally supportive of the proposed upgrades.

Although a small number of respondents expressed concerns that the changes would lead to increased traffic congestion, most indicated that the project would improve safety, aesthetics and facilitate redevelopment along the corridor.

For more information, contact John King at [jking@norpc.org](mailto:jking@norpc.org).

Most indicated that the proposed project would improve safety and aesthetics and facilitate redevelopment along Tulane Avenue.

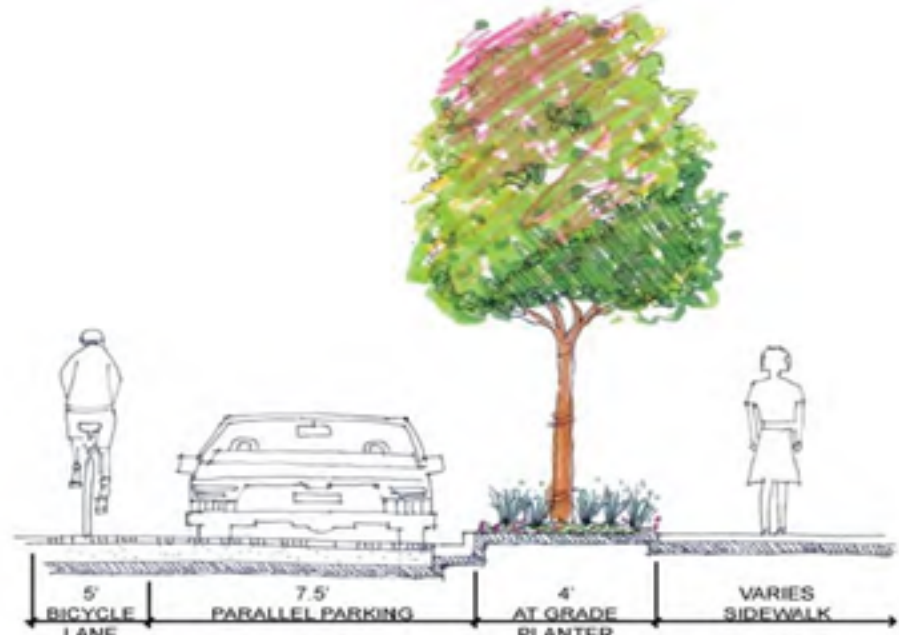


Image courtesy of URS

## La. 52 work moves into environmental stage

A proposed project aimed at improving traffic flow and safety for all users – drivers, pedestrians and cyclists – along the Paul Maillard Road/Louisiana Highway 52 corridor in St. Charles Parish has moved into environmental review, the next step toward construction.

The RPC-funded review will assess the effects of a slate of improvements proposed along the 2.6-mile, two-lane state roadway connecting River Road (La. 18) and U.S. Highway 90. The road, an important corridor running through St. Charles Parish that is now a mix of residential, industrial, commercial and agricultural uses, has no shoulder or turn lanes. The only pedestrian accommodations take the form of an intermittent sidewalk running along one side.

The environmental assessment will include inventorying and assessing the impacts on sensitive ecosystems; an analysis of existing and projected traffic patterns; compiling relevant socioeconomic data; an analysis of alternatives outlined in the project feasibility study; and soliciting public input on proposed alternatives.

The RPC considers the roadway improvements important to bolstering safety and helping to attract investment along the corridor, a critical transportation link connecting St. Charles Parish to the greater New Orleans metro region.

The proposed project works in conjunction with a broader effort taking shape in St. Charles. The parish has been awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to craft a revitalization plan that focuses on the corridor as an anchor for revitalizing the surrounding neighborhoods.

## Review to begin for I-310 work

The Regional Planning Commission is initiating an environmental assessment for a project to improve traffic safety and reduce congestion at the high-traffic U.S. 90/I-310 interchange in St. Charles Parish.

Traffic safety improvements are needed at the signalized intersection of southbound I-310/LA 3127 and eastbound U.S. 90 to reduce the adverse effects of vehicles, especially large trucks, turning across the U.S. 90 superelevation.

Additionally, current conditions complicate emergency evacuations due to storms or industrial accidents, especially for traffic traveling north and west.

For more information, contact John King at [jking@norpc.org](mailto:jking@norpc.org).



La 52, circa 1950. Image courtesy St. Charles Parish government.

## Covington, continued from page 5

The feasibility study, performed by Richard C. Lambert Consultants, is an early step toward moving the potential project toward construction. Next, the proposed project must go through a detailed design, engineering, and environmental review process.

The recently-completed study included an inventory of existing conditions and sensitive environmental areas, and the

development of conceptual designs and preliminary construction cost estimates.

The cost of the project would vary based on the design ultimately selected, but preliminary estimates pegged construction costs at around \$2.4 million.

For more information, contact Karen Parsons at [kparsons@norpc.org](mailto:kparsons@norpc.org).

## Managing mobility: RPC works to improve transportation access for elderly, low-income and disabled

Most people know by now that the U.S. population is aging rapidly. By 2025, it is projected that more than 62 million Americans will be 65 or older, and Louisiana expects to see its share of that graying tsunami. Less well-known is that a disproportionate share of Louisiana's population is also disabled. In 2009, 15 percent of the state population was disabled, compared with 13.5 percent nationwide.

To help address regional mobility needs and challenges for disabled, low income and elderly Louisianans, the Regional Planning Commission is participating in a state workgroup established by House Concurrent Resolution No. 181 to further discussions and planning for improved transit efficiency for these populations.

"The time is ripe to confront and resolve imbedded impediments that mire transit service and increase the cost of mobility," said RPC Principal Planner Karen Parsons.

The RPC's Coordinated Human Services Transportation Committee (CHSTC) has helped to identify local obstacles to transportation efficiency that require statewide coordination to resolve. The committee meets quarterly and is one of several standing RPC citizen advisory committees.

"There is a critical need to address mobility for the growing population of elderly, low income and disabled citizens, and this committee is able to delve into the daily and very real problems a commuter faces," said Jason Sappington, RPC program manager for the CHSTC Advisory Committee.

State workgroup participants include representatives of 22 state agencies that receive federal or state funding for human services transportation, along with for-profit and non-profit service providers. Some of the major players include the Department of Health and Hospitals, Department of Veterans Affairs, Department of Transportation and Development, the Louisiana Workforce Commission, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services and AARP.

The workgroup first convened in 2011 to discuss broad problem areas around transportation access and to develop strategies for addressing them. Subsequent sessions have given rise to consensus on priority actions, including establishing standards for data use and distribution, communications, fuel and insurance, and developing a comprehensive database of service providers.

Workgroup members are optimistic that eventually Mobility Councils will be formed on the state or regional level to facilitate coordination among the various providers and that a One Call, One Click system will be instituted to route riders to the appropriate provider to meet their needs. These types of initiatives have proven successful in other states.

Ultimately, improved coordination will mean lower costs for transportation providers and better service for the public.

For more information, contact Jason Sappington at [jsappington@norpc.org](mailto:jsappington@norpc.org).



Photo of Jefferson Transit Mobility Impaired Transportation Service bus courtesy of Jefferson Transit



## RPC helps CSX repower locomotive with lower-emissions technology

CSX Corporation has repowered a locomotive housed at its Gentilly Yard in New Orleans to run on new, ultra-low emission engine technology. The GenSet technology replaces a large, conventional engine system with three smaller engines that allow the locomotive to use only the energy it needs to pull its load.



CSX's GenSet locomotive

The retrofit, largely funded through a more than \$1 million grant awarded to the Regional Planning Commission's Clean Fuels Partnership by the EPA, is expected to reduce the locomotive's carbon emissions by 25 percent and nitrogen oxide and particulate matter emissions by more than 80 percent. CSX anticipates fuel savings from the new engine system of 15,000 gallons a year, with projected annual cost savings of over \$50,000.

For more information, contact Rebecca Otte at [rotte@norpc.org](mailto:rotte@norpc.org).

**Mandeville, continued from page 5**  
Study recommendations include:

- The installation of a bicycle and pedestrian crossing across La. 22 near Mary Queen of Peace Church and Dalwill Drive to link the residential area with schools, churches and commercial areas;
- A two-stage pedestrian and bicycle signal to facilitate crossing while reducing vehicle delay;
- An asphalt path, separated from motor-vehicle traffic, on the north side of the West Causeway approach, extending roughly 1 mile between Moores Road to Shadow Oak Lane; and
- Intersection improvements, high-visibility crosswalks and on-street pavement markings at the intersection of Monroe Street and the West Service Road to reduce conflicts between pedestrians, bicyclists and cars.

The report is intended to supplement Mandeville's bicycle and pedestrian plan, first adopted in 1998 and updated in

2007. Several projects recommended by that plan have been implemented, but barriers to connectivity remain.

The RPC, in conjunction with the City of Mandeville and the Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission, which operates the Causeway, are working on a funding strategy that could tap federal, state and local funds to pay for the projects.

For more information, contact Karen Parsons at [kparsons@norpc.org](mailto:kparsons@norpc.org).

**Slidell, continued from page 5**  
The study will involve an analysis of existing traffic conditions, recommendations for improvement alternatives and detailed conceptual plans. Improvements considered will include enhanced traffic signal timing and coordination and the installation of pedestrian signals, crosswalks, striping and signage. Potential landscaping and water-mitigation measures will also be evaluated.

Representatives from the City of Slidell, LaDOTD and the RPC will form the core project management committee.

For more information, contact John King at [jking@norpc.org](mailto:jking@norpc.org).

## RPC co-sponsors Smart Growth lecture series



Shoup



Ewing



Dunham-Jones

The paradox of free parking. Retrofitting suburbia. The vital links between land use and transportation. These topics and more were covered as part of the 2012 Smart Growth speaker series, sponsored by the Regional Planning Commission, the University of New Orleans Transportation Institute, the Urban Land Institute of Louisiana, the American Planning Association of Louisiana, and the New Orleans Downtown Development District.

The series kicked off in March with Donald Shoup, economist and UCLA professor of urban planning and noted expert on parking policy. Shoup presented his argument, laid out in detail in his book *The High Cost of Free Parking*, that free parking lies at the root of many urban ills, including pollution, traffic congestion and sprawl.

The following month, Reid Ewing, professor of city and metropolitan planning at the University of Utah, discussed best development practices, including the role of land use decisions in determining transportation options and related topics from his book *Best Development Practices: Doing the Right Thing and Making Money at the Same*

*Time*. Stephen Villavaso, principal at Villavaso & Associates, provided some local context by presenting an overview of planning and development practices in Louisiana.

Ellen Dunham-Jones, professor of architecture and urban design at Georgia Tech and author of the best-selling book *Retrofitting Suburbia: Urban Solutions for Redesigning the Suburbs*, closed out the lecture series in July. Referencing local examples, Dunham-Jones outlined strategies for redeveloping abandoned strip centers, moribund shopping malls and other underperforming elements of the contemporary American landscape.

Also on-hand at this session were architect Steve Oubre, principal at Architects Southwest, and Jefferson Parish Planning Director Terri Wilkinson.

Oubre, who was behind the mixed-use development The Village of River Ranch in Lafayette and whose current focus is on other New Urbanist projects in the South, spoke about the importance of retaining local culture in redeveloping the suburbs. Wilkinson talked about the logistical and procedural hurdles

involved in redeveloping a suburban area, using her experience with Fat City in Metairie as an example.

For more information, contact Meredith Soniat at [msoniat@norpc.org](mailto:msoniat@norpc.org).

The RPC will continue the Smart Growth speaker series in conjunction with UNO in late 2013 or early 2014.



# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

The Regional Planning Commission's emergency preparedness public-private partnership brings together regional emergency managers, State Police, the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness, utilities, transportation agencies, medical agencies, the National Weather Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, universities, professional trade associations and chambers of commerce, to support emergency management in Southeast Louisiana. For more information, contact Chris Laborde at [claborde@norpc.org](mailto:claborde@norpc.org).



The Regional Planning Commission has partnered with Save the Children and the University of New Orleans to better prepare children for disasters. In the above photo, Olayeela Daste, of the Agenda for Children (second from right) highlights key concerns at a recent Save the Children forum, while Erin Kopaigorodsky, Save the Children's Louisiana director of programs (second from left), and Jeff Ciabotti, the organization's national director of programs and partnerships (center), listen in.

## AROUND THE RPC

Previous page: 1. State Police Troop B Commander, Major Carl Saizan, from left, Captain Mark Richards, and Trooper Nick Manale of Troop L presented to the RPC Board of Commissioners in August, addressing re-entry and credentialing issues following disasters; 2. Representatives from the Corps of Engineers and National Weather Service speak about keeping southeast Louisiana residents safe from storms; 3. From front to rear, Robert Williams (New Orleans Urban Area Security Initiative), Darryl Delatte (third from front, GOHSEP), Tommy Naquin (Atmos Energy), Randy Springer (Ochsner Health System), Barton Howard (Rouse Enterprises), and Jon Luther (Home Builders Association of Greater New Orleans) participate in a discussion about using private-sector resources to support emergency management; 4. From front, Tim Erickson (National Weather Service), Elvin Thibodeaux (Cox Communications), and Ricky Landry (Louisiana Retailers Association) take part in a conference call with Ira Tannenbaum, director of public-private initiatives for New York City's Office of Emergency Management, on how New York uses organizations as "force multipliers" to engage the city's more than 200,000 businesses during emergency situations.



## Change of command

Chris Dodt (left) accepts the motorist's assistance patrol radio from Rachel East, outgoing supervisor of the Traffic Management Center, during a ceremonial change of command held August 10th. Chris has worked at the TMC since 2009, previously serving as senior operator.

## Seeping in



In May, the Regional Planning Commission, with assistance from the City of New Orleans and Bayou Land RC&D, hosted a day-long stormwater best management practices planning and design workshop. Led by Eric Strecker of Portland, Oregon-based Geosyntec Consultants, and Dana Brown of Dana Brown & Associates, the workshop covered trends in stormwater management, reducing the impacts of development, and constraints and opportunities presented by site locations. It also included a visit to Tricentennial Place (above), the City Park rain garden that captures 100 percent of the runoff from the adjacent parking lot.



# 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.

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

## Transportation Policy Committee:

Jeff Davis <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>
<i>Greater N.O. Expwy. Comm.</i>	Ifikhar 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>	Mike Cooper <i>Mayor, City of Covington</i>

**Executive Director:** Walter R. Brooks



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