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REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

Connecting People + Places in Southeast Louisiana

Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John, St. Tammany and Tangipahoa Parishes



The New Orleans Regional Planning Commission is pleased to present quarterly news, events, and project updates to a region-wide audience.

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Letter from the Director



As we enter a new year, the Regional Planning Commission staff will be embarking on a number of new initiatives and efforts across a number of current programs. In addition to our highway and transit planning programs, we will be continuing our efforts that support the implementation of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Working with our stakeholders and partners, RPC has applied for a number of planning grants that we believe will ultimately make this region cleaner, safer, and more economically competitive.

This has been accomplished in no small part by our dedicated staff that has undertaken extensive and targeted outreach to a myriad of stakeholders, local governments, non-profits, advocacy groups, economic development interests, and the public. That outreach has helped inform our understanding of the needs of both individual communities and, by identifying commonalities, plan for programmatic infrastructure investments and policies.

Consistent with congressional mandates, our aim is to develop specific planning products and outcomes that will lead directly and concisely to implementation. The overarching goal is to bring the policies promulgated in the plans to fruition as actionable projects based on data-driven analysis; the outcomes for which work to enhance the quality of life and economic vitality of our region while being mindful of our responsibilities for social equity and the natural environment.

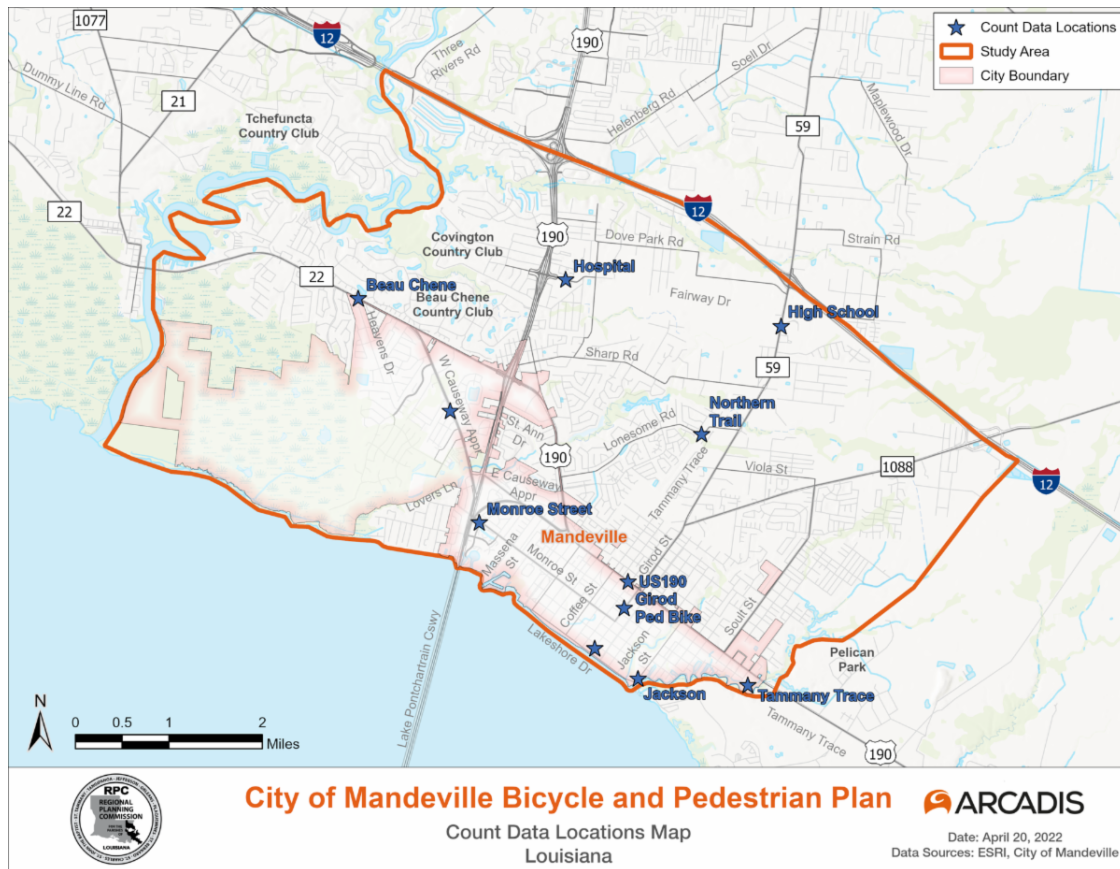
To that end, RPC continues to monitor funding and partnership opportunities for projects and programs RPC can help implement in our region. RPC staff continues to coordinate with local, state, and federal entities to review opportunities and eligibilities to receive discretionary grant funds for a number of initiatives promulgated in the IJJA.

As always, we look forward to working with our Board members, in appreciation of their leadership, guidance, and service; our partner agencies at the local, state, and federal levels, and the residents of our region who makes us unique in America.

City of Mandeville Bike and Ped Feasibility Study Underway

The Regional Planning Commission, in coordination with the City of Mandeville, is conducting a feasibility study for the purposes of developing a Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan for the City of Mandeville. The final product will include recommended actions and strategies for improving mobility for active transportation users within the City of Mandeville, prioritizing safety, connectivity, and implementation feasibility. These recommendations will include both a program of potential infrastructure projects and a collection of model policies and ordinances.

The City of Mandeville last updated their Comprehensive Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in 2012, and since then, many of the recommendations have been implemented, and traffic conditions and land use conditions have changed. Because of this, the city and the Regional Planning Commission believe an updated plan is necessary to continue improving the transportation network's safety, accessibility, and connectivity. The project goals align closely with the planning priorities outlined in the Regional Planning Commission's Metropolitan Transportation Plan and will assist the city in achieving their desired transportation network. For more information on this project, please reach out to Nelson Hollings at nhollings@norpc.org.



SAFETY TRAIN IS PULLING INTO THE STATION!

RPC Awarded Additional Funds for Impaired Driving Proven Safety Countermeasure




Building upon past success of the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission (LHSC) funded Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) the RPC received additional funds to continue to expand the program on both the North and South Shore. For fiscal year FFY2023, the RPC plans to hold four SBIRT implementation trainings, two on the north shore, and two on the south shore with the goal of continuing to integrate the program into university, community college, and high school counselling departments. SBIRT is recognized by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration as a proven safety countermeasure to reduce the incidence of impaired driving. For more information on RPC's SBIRT program, please contact Nelson Hollings at nhollings@norpc.org.



Alcohol Screening Questionnaire

***AUDIT (World Health Organization, 2001)**

Alcohol use can affect your health and can interfere with certain medications and treatments. Please help us provide you with the best medical care by answering the questions below. We ask everyone who receives care these questions. Your answers will remain confidential so please be honest.

One drink equals:  12 oz. beer  5 oz. wine  1.5 oz. liquor (1 shot)

Circle one response that best describes your answer to each question:

1. How often do you have a drink containing alcohol?	Never	Monthly or less	Two to four times a month	Two to three times a week	Four or more times a week
2. How many drinks containing alcohol do you have on a typical day when you are drinking?	Zero to two	Three or four	Five or six	Seven to nine	Ten or more
3. How often do you have six or more drinks on one occasion?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
4. How often during the last year have you found that you were not able to stop drinking once you had started?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
5. How often during the last year have you failed to do what was normally expected of you because of drinking?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
6. How often during the last year have you needed a first drink in the morning to get yourself going after a heavy drinking session?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
7. How often during the last year have you had a feeling of guilt or remorse after drinking?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
8. How often during the last year have you been unable to remember what happened the night before because of your drinking?	Never	Less than monthly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily or almost daily
9. Have you or someone else been injured because of your drinking?	No		Yes, but not in the last year		Yes, in the last year
10. Has a relative, friend, doctor, or other health care worker been concerned about your drinking or suggested you cut down?	No		Yes, but not in the last year		Yes, in the last year

0 1 2 3 4

For Clinician

Patient ID:	I 0-7	II 8-15	III 16-19	IV 20-40
Date of Screen:	Clinician Name:			
AUDIT Zone:	Clinician Action:			

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New Safety Coordinators

RPC added two new safety coalition coordinators this year. Melissa Guilbeau is now leading the New Orleans Regional Traffic Safety Coalition and April Higgins is leading the North Shore Regional Safety Coalition. They are welcome additions and are doing great work to make our roadways and communities safer! If you would like more information about the coalitions, please visit <https://www.norpc.org/transportation/committees/safety-coalition/>

Distracted Driving Contest Results

In September, the state's nine traffic safety coalitions held a distracted driving video contest for middle and high school students, with cash prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place for 6th-8th grade and 9th-12th grade. Two winners were from the New Orleans region! 3rd place in 6th-8th grade went to two young ladies at Andrew Jackson Middle School in Chalmette. 3rd place in 9th-12th grade went to six young men at St. Augustine High School in New Orleans.



RPC Awarded Brownfield Assessment Grant



St. Bernard Parish, many of which have yet to recover from Hurricane Katrina's catastrophic flooding in 2005.

Earlier this year, the Regional Planning Commission was thrilled to learn that it had won a highly competitive Brownfield Assessment Grant from the Environmental Protection Agency. This \$500,000 grant will be used to support the redevelopment of blighted and neglected properties in

RPC recently completed a competitive bid process for environmental services under this grant. We are pleased to announce that Leaaf Environmental, based out of Gretna, Louisiana, will be our prime consultant for this award.

We look forward to working with Leaaf Environmental, the St. Bernard Economic Development Foundation, the Meraux Foundation, and the rest of our community partners to support the redevelopment of brownfield sites in St. Bernard Parish.

If you would like to learn more about brownfield grant funds, please contact RPC Brownfield Coordinator Adam Tatar, atatar@norpc.org.

Paratransit Study Wrapping Up

The RPC and Texas Transportation Institute (TTI) are wrapping up a deep dive into our regional paratransit system, with the goal of identifying opportunities to improve service and decrease costs. Paratransit (or "dial-a-ride" services) provide public transportation to those who are elderly, disabled, or otherwise unable to ride traditional transit buses.



TTI has spent the year analyzing our paratransit system and begun to suggest improvements such as how to better allocate dispatcher duties and better align vehicle supply with customer demand throughout the week.

TTI's final report will be presented to the project steering committee on January 18th in the RPC

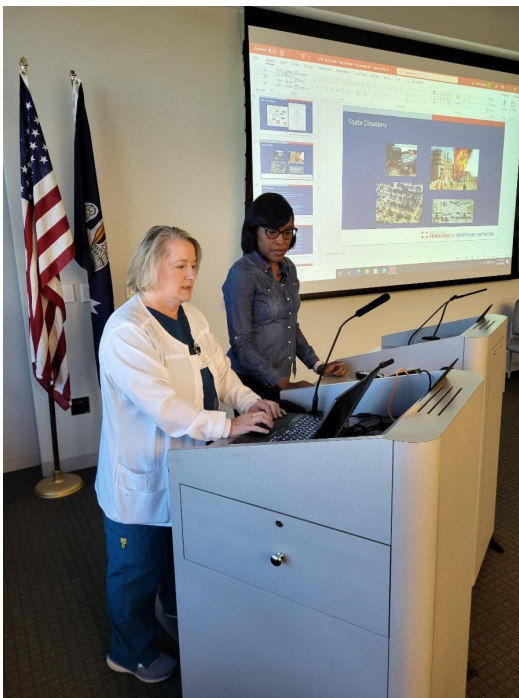
Conference Room.

Broadband Efforts In Our Region



The RPC is involved in the statewide broadband effort. Currently, work is focused on developing a statewide digital equity plan to inform future infrastructure implementation. This plan is integral to closing the digital divide and achieving the goal of digital equity. Collaboration among a diverse group of stakeholders is necessary for the most effective and inclusive digital equity plan. We ask that people [take the speed test](#) and [complete a short survey](#) regarding their experience with broadband and digital equity. Paper surveys are available if needed. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact Elizabeth Morris at emorris@norpc.org.

RPC Hosts Emergency Preparedness and Slow Down, Move Over Media Event



Yvette Legendre (left), LA Emergency Response Network (LERN), and Jovan Bernard, LA Department of Health, highlighted Medical and Health responses



The RPC hosted a AAA travel safety media event at the Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC) on Monday, November 21. The focus of the event was travel safety during the holidays, with an emphasis on Slow Down, Move Over laws associated with vehicles on the side of the road.

Participants included (from left): Chris Laborde, RPC; Chris Morvant, LA Department of Transportation & Development (LA DOTD); Dr. Jonathan Schoen, University Medical Center (trauma center); SGT Dustin Dwight, LA State Police (Troop B); Don Redman, AAA;

to Large Scale Emergencies and Natural Disasters at the Nov 17 meeting of the RPC's Emergency Preparedness Public-Private Partnership.

Kevin Mollow, Motor Assistance Patrol (MAP); and Justin Rowell, United Towing.

RPC Staff Member Participates in Bryan Bell Metropolitan Leadership Forum

Elizabeth Morris, an Economic Development Coordinator and Transportation Planner here at RPC, took part in Committee for a Better New Orleans' Bryan Bell Metropolitan Leadership Forum this fall. The 9-week forum brought together emerging leaders from across New Orleans to learn about issues facing the City and to discuss potential solutions, all through the lens of equity. For more information on the Forum please see <https://www.cbno.org/forum>



2022 LA APA Award Winners

The Louisiana Chapter of the American Planning Association held its annual conference November 9-11, 2022 at Gallier Hall in New Orleans. Awards were given for outstanding work in multiple categories. Of note is the Planning Excellence Award for Process given to RPC's New Links Public Transit Operations Analysis and Network Redesign. Sam Buckley, a Senior Transportation Planner at RPC, was the Project Manager for this project and was deservedly recognized at the event. He managed this complex and important effort in collaboration with the Regional Transit Authority, Jefferson Parish Transit, the City of New Orleans, and Ride New Orleans. New Links assessed needs, conducted extensive public outreach, and made recommendations for the future of transit in our region. Many of these recommendations are being implemented today.

Sam was also named the Chapter Volunteer of the Year. As the Metro New Orleans APA President, he was heavily involved in setting up the conference theme (Building our Collective Future/Planning and Public Health), building a strong slate of speakers, and coordinating multiple conference details to benefit all participants.

Congratulations also to St. Bernard Parish for winning the Planning Excellence Award for Plan Implementation. In 2017 RPC assisted the parish in creating the St. Bernard Bikeway and Pedestrian Plan. Thanks to the dedication, perseverance, and leadership in the Parish,

many elements of the plan have come to fruition, including the three-mile Mississippi River Levee Trail between Valero Refinery and Violet, LA, the 40 Arpent Trail between LA 47 and Violet, St. Bernard Highway (LA 46) Bikeway Project, and the St. Bernard Signing and Striping Project including wayfinding signage for bicyclists.



Receiving the **Planning Excellence Award for Plan Implementation** for projects funded and implemented from the **2017 St. Bernard Parish Bikeway and Pedestrian Plan Update** is from left: Richard Poche, GIS Manager, Howard Luna, Councilman District C, Deborah Fagan, Deborah Jan Fagan Planning Services, and Whitney Hoffman Sayal, Louisiana American Planning Association Chapter President. St. Bernard President Guy McInnes and RPC citizen member Susan Klees were unable to attend the award ceremony but were instrumental in successful execution of each project.



Receiving the **Chapter Volunteer of the Year** award is Sam Buckley, RPC Transportation Planner with Whitney Hoffman Sayal, Louisiana American Planning Association Chapter President.



Receiving the **Planning Excellence Award for a Process** for the **New Links Plan** to redesign the transit network across St. Bernard, Orleans and Jefferson Parishes is Jeff Roesel, RPC Executive Director, Ashleigh Duarte, RTA Planning, Whitney Hoffman Sayal, Louisiana American Planning Association Chapter President, Elizabeth Stancioff, RTA Planning, Sam Buckley, RPC Senior Transportation Planner, Vivek Shah, RTA Planning, and RTA Board member Fred Neil, Jr

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