Lafitte Greenway Master Plan

City of New Orleans

Lafitte Greenway

This plan is for the design and development of all capital improvements associated with the Lafitte Greenway.

Lafitte Corridor Connection

Lafitte Greenway Master Plan

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Prepared for

City of New Orleans, Louisiana

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1

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Context & Scope
Regional Context
Local Context
Previous Studies/Plans
Project Vision, Approach and Goals

The Executive Summary Chapter includes overall project context and vision.

The purpose of this chapter is to outline the overall approach of the document and the goals identified for the Lafitte Greenway Master Plan.

Project Context and Scope

Project Context

The City of New Orleans owns most of a 3.1-mile linear right of way along a former shipping canal and railway that once connected the historic French Quarter to Bayou St. John. The right of way is unique in that it traverses a cross-section of the city that captures its 200-year settlement pattern, ranging from the colonial-era settlement of the Vieux Carré to the mid-20th-century suburban neighborhood of Lakeview. It has long been the objective of the City and community to convert this special right of way into a greenway, publicly accessible open space, recreation areas and other amenities. The project is one of Mayor Mitch Landrieu's "Committed Projects[1]." The community desires to place a bicycle and pedestrian trail at the heart of the Greenway to facilitate travel among diverse, adjacent neighborhoods.

Following Hurricane Katrina, development of the Lafitte Greenway re-emerged as a City priority. In early 2007, the Planning District 4 portion of the Unified New Orleans Plan listed the project as having high recovery value. In August 2007, the New Orleans City Council passed a resolution dedicating the remaining publicly owned land within the Lafitte Greenway Corridor "for the purpose of establishing a continuous public open space amenity or Greenway." In addition, the Lafitte Greenway Steering Advisory Committee (LGSAC) was created by the New Orleans City Council in 2007 to advise the City Council on matters relating to the planning and implementation of the Lafitte Greenway and includes members appointed by the Mayor; each At-Large Council member; Council members representing Districts A, B and C; and the Friends of Lafitte Corridor. This project will build upon past and current planning efforts and provide the detailed information needed to bring the Greenway and trail to life, while revitalizing the surrounding Corridor.

1 City of New Orleans, Louisiana. "Mayor Landrieu Outlines Committed Projects." 1 July 2011. <http://www.nola.gov/en/sitecore/content/Root/PRESS/City-Of-New-Orleans/All-Articles/MAYOR-LANDRIEU-OUTLINES-COMMITTED-PROJECTS.aspx> (August 2010).

Greenway and Corridor Definitions

The Lafitte Greenway is defined as a 3.1-mile-long strip of land bounded by Basin Street, Lafitte Street, N. Jefferson Davis Parkway and St. Louis Street and includes the entire St. Louis Street right of way between N. Jefferson Davis Parkway and Canal Boulevard. The Lafitte Greenway also includes the Greenway Park.

The Lafitte Corridor consists of the Lafitte Greenway and neighborhoods located within approximately one-quarter-mile distance of the Lafitte Greenway.

The Lafitte Greenway Park is approximately 16.5 acres within the Lafitte Greenway (former Louisiana Institute for Film Technology property) bounded by St. Louis Street, Claiborne Avenue, Lafitte Street, the Lemann Pool, the Housing Authority of New Orleans Sojourner Truth Community Center and Dorgenois Street. See pages 3 - 4.

Greenway Historic Context

The land now known as the Lafitte Greenway has been a prominent feature of New Orleans for centuries. In the 1790s, this land was excavated by the Spanish Governor Carondelet and the site was then known as the Carondelet Canal. The Carondelet Canal was originally a shallow and narrow canal spanning 15 French feet that became a key extension of Bayou St. John for maritime commerce into the community. By the early 1800s, the Carondelet Canal became a connection between the Bayou and the communities adjacent to the Mississippi River, serving as a drainage way and commerce route. The Carondelet Walk, adjacent to the canal, became a pedestrian promenade during the time the canal was being maintained.[2]

2 The historic context data was derived from research based on historic maps and the following previous plans:
Friends of Lafitte Corridor and Brown+Danos Landdesign, inc. *The Lafitte Greenway Master Plan: A Vision for the Lafitte Corridor. New Orleans, LA.* (Greater New Orleans Foundation, 2007).
Friends of Lafitte Corridor. *Lafitte Greenway: Sustainable Water Design. New Orleans, LA. (*Greater New Orleans Foundation, 2010.)

Additional maintenance and investment were required for the Carondelet Canal to stay a passage for water and commerce. Eventually the 15-foot canal became 50-60 feet wide with an embankment 30-40 feet to the southeast and a 60-foot embankment to the northeast. The development of the New Basin Canal in the early 1830s and the physical constraints of the existing Carondelet Canal led to the decline in commercial and maritime uses along the canal. Because the Carondelet Canal also took an overwhelming amount of dredging and maintenance, it became difficult and expensive to keep up, and, by 1899, the Carondelet Canal had limited use.

During the turn of the century, railroads became the preferred way of transport throughout the city and region. By the 1930s, the Carondelet Canal was the ideal alignment into the city for one of the newly installed rail lines. The Carondelet Walk remained a walking path, with passive gardens in the private properties adjacent to it.

During the early 20th century, the canal was filled, and the Carondelet Walk became Lafitte Street. The railroad ran along this site until the 1960s. There are still portions of the railroad that remain active today. During the mid-20th century, public housing sites and industrial buildings were established along the Greenway, disrupting the urban fabric of the neighborhoods. Later in the 1980s, lack of business activity, changing land use and the abandoning of industrial uses was a result of the decline in the Corridor's commercial activity. Recently, the many vacant industrial buildings were re-purposed as mixed residential and commercial investments, although some industrial buildings remain along the Greenway between N. Jefferson Davis Parkway and Carrollton.

The history of the Lafitte Greenway and Corridor displays the important role the Corridor has had in connecting the various neighborhoods and commercial nodes and in providing open space for community enjoyment. The investment by locals and the City in the maintenance and care of the Greenway has been critical to the success of its various phases. Physically placed to create connection from one side of New Orleans to the other, the Lafitte Greenway can continue to be an asset and connection that brings energy and resources to communities throughout the city.

Greenway Plan Scope

The Lafitte Greenway project scope includes the trail design for the entire 3.1-mile stretch of the Greenway and the Greenway Park. This document is intended to identify the trail location and alignment for the entire Greenway, while specifically focusing on the Greenway Park design.

This document will address the overall process, existing conditions and analysis, the community engagement process, programmatic uses appropriate for the Greenway, the Greenway design, and the general steps needed to operate and maintain the Greenway in the future. In addition to this document, the Lafitte Corridor Revitalization Plan[3] outlines the broader strategies related to compatible land uses and urban design, economic development strategies and transportation connections. Specific recommendations regarding land use, zoning, urban design, social equity, sustainability, public-private partnerships, capital investments, private market forces, economic development, infrastructure, parks and recreation, and transportation are included.

3 Design Workshop. *Lafitte Corridor Revitalization Plan*. City of New Orleans, March 2012. <http://lafittecorridorconnection.com/project-documents.html>.

Photo Credit: Design Workshop

The lake end of the Greenway still has an active rail line that runs adjacent to the Greenway

Regional Context

Figure 1: *Lafitte Greenway and Corridor Study area in regional context*

Data Source: Google Earth, 2011

Local Context

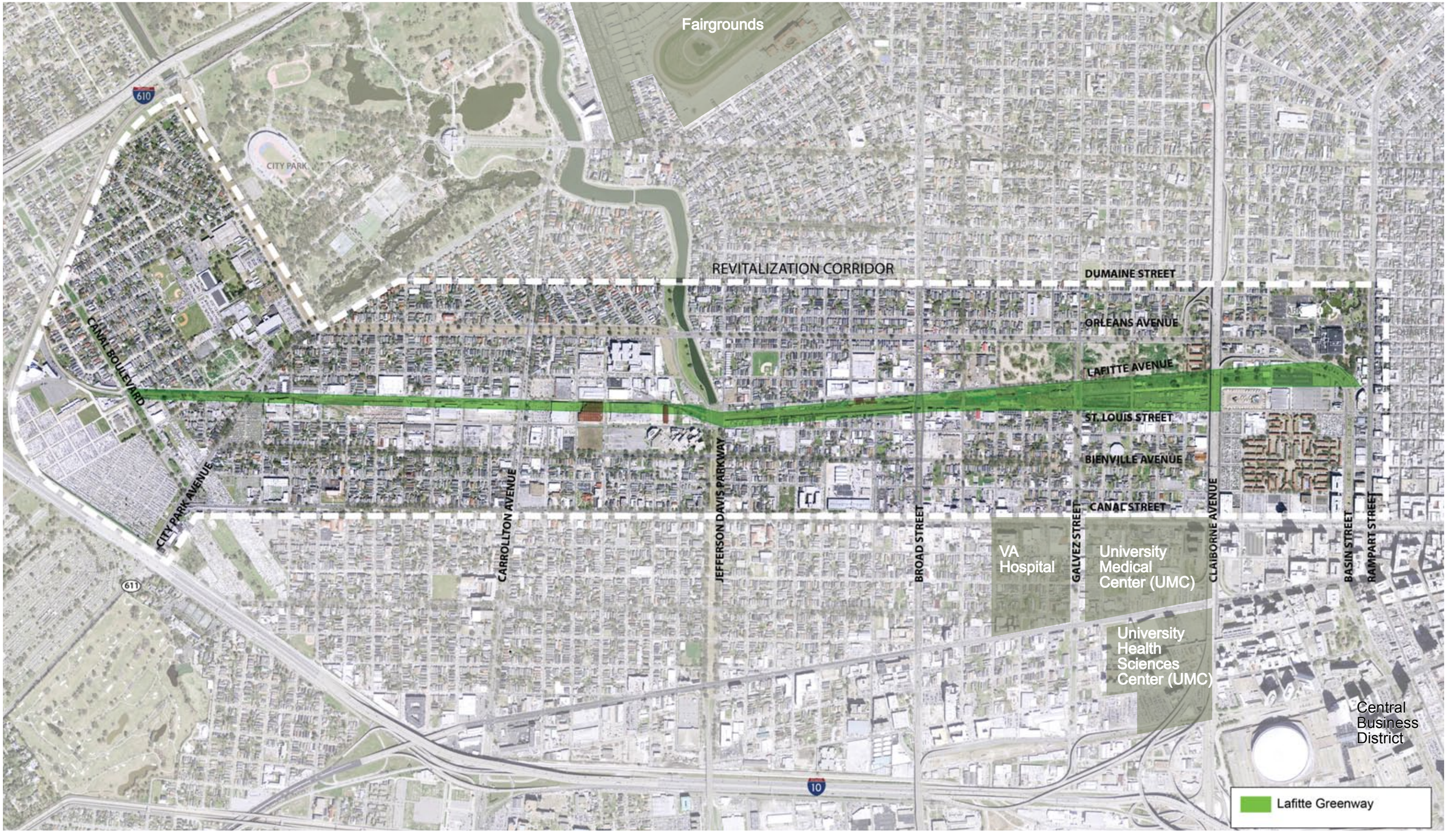


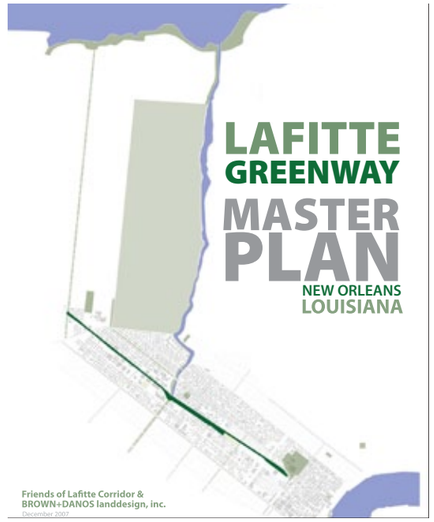
Figure 2: *Lafitte Greenway study area in local context*

Data Source: New Orleans Regional Planning Commission

Previous Studies/Plans

In 2006, the Bayou St. John Committee and the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation created the Bayou St. John Comprehensive Management Plan. The plan identifies sustainable methods to benefit Bayou St. John water quality, habitat management, recreational access and educational opportunities. Action items outlined in the Lafitte Greenway Management Strategy Report align with goals for the Lafitte Greenway and include methods to encourage biodiversity; create wetlands; promote recreational activities such as fishing, crabbing and canoeing; and educate the public about Bayou St. John culture and history.

Two studies related to the Lafitte Greenway Master Plan were conducted in 2007 and in 2010 by Brown + Danos landdesign and Waggonner + Ball Architects, respectively. The document titled, "The Lafitte Greenway: A Master Plan for the Lafitte Corridor," by Brown + Danos landdesign covered site/historical analysis and developed various alternative schematic plans for the Greenway. This was the first study of its kind that focused solely on the Lafitte Greenway. Waggonner + Ball Architects' document "Lafitte Greenway: Sustainable Water Design" developed strategies for sustainable water design within the Lafitte Greenway redevelopment. The study covered historical research, data collection/analysis and the development of an illustrative water design potential for the Greenway. Friends of Lafitte Corridor, the grassroots neighborhood organization to advocate for the Corridor's preservation, initiated both studies. Working closely with Brown + Danos, Friends of Lafitte Corridor members contributed content and developed design strategies for the first study and Friends of Lafitte Corridor secured funding to commission the second as a case-study applying general water management theories generated by Waggonner + Ball Architects "Dutch Dialogues" to a specific site. Both of these documents were carefully taken into account during the current planning process and where possible, elements from each plan were incorporated into the final vision for the Greenway.



2007 Brown + Danos landdesign, Friends of Lafitte Corridor

2010 Waggonner + Ball Architects', Friends of Lafitte Corridor

The planning and management plan documents in Table 1 were reviewed during the creation of the goals for the Lafitte Corridor. The review of previous plans establishes a strong foundation for the project that aligns the plan and design to the wants and needs of the City, community, stakeholders and neighborhood organizations.

Development Projects

The Lafitte Greenway is surrounded by existing and new developments and land uses that will affect the future of the Greenway. Developments such as the Lafitte Housing Development are currently underway and provide housing directly adjacent to the Greenway. Residents of the Lafitte Housing Development share the Greenway as part of their front porch and provide *eyes on the Greenway* that are essential to the Greenway's safety and viability. Surrounding land uses are extremely important to the successful use of the Greenway itself, where residents, business owners and the larger community can easily access it for recreation or travel to and from the French Quarter.

American Great Outdoors National Recreational Blueway Trails Initiative

Over the course of the planning process, federal staff visited New Orleans to promote various initiatives, including the American Great Outdoors (AGO) National Recreational Blueway Trails Initiative. The American Great Outdoors Report published in 2011 recommends the establishment of the AGO National Recreational Blueways Trails Initiative to increase access to recreation and to help communities enhance recreational opportunities in local waterways and adjacent green space.[4] The report defines a blueway as "a designated community-scale portion of river recognized as a destination for fishing, boating, wildlife watching and other recreation, which should get special attention for restoration and access." The report also discusses the importance of partnering with state, local and tribal governments and with the private sector to support community efforts. Investments from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) monies with federal grant programs to states for land acquisition should be coordinated among groups such as the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and the USFS Forest Legacy Program.

4 American Trails. *Report on National Blueways Initiative*, AmericanTrails.org, June 2011. <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/water/AGO-national-blueway-trail-designation.html>.

Table 1: *Previous planning and management documents*

PLANNING DOCUMENTS	AUTHORS | SPONSORS	DATE	LINK
Report by Clifton James	Clifton James	1970	not applicable
1999 Land Use Plan	City of New Orleans	1999	http://cpc.nola.gov
2002 Parks, Recreation and Open Space Element of the Former New Orleans Master Plan	City of New Orleans	2002	http://cpc.nola.gov
Lambert Recovery Plan	City of New Orleans	2006	http://www.nolaplans.com/
Bayou St. John Comprehensive Management Plan	Bayou St. John Committee by Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation	2006	http://www.saveourlake.org/PDF-documents/habitat/BSJ_CMP.pdf
Unified New Orleans Plan	City of New Orleans	2007	http://www.unifiedneworleansplan.com/home3/
The Lafitte Greenway: A Master Plan for the Lafitte Corridor	Friends of Lafitte Corridor, Brown + Danos land design	2007	http://browndanos.com/
Lafitte Greenway: Sustainable Water Design	Friends of Lafitte Corridor, Waggonner + Ball Architects	2010	http://www.wbarchitects.com/urban-design/lafitte_Greenway_sustainable_water_design1/
Plan for the 21st Century: New Orleans 2030	City of New Orleans	2010	http://cpc.nola.gov

Table 2: *Development Projects*

DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS	DEVELOPER | AUTHOR	DATE	LINK
Lafitte Housing Redevelopment	HANO/Michael Willis Architects	2011	http://www.hano.org/index.php?q=node/65
Iberville Housing Redevelopment	HANO	Proposed 2012	http://www.hano.org/index.php?q=node/38
Mid-City Market	Sterling Properties	Proposed 2012	http://stirlingprop.catylist.com/jsp/listings/listing_overview.jsp?ID=55_10980905
Broad Streetscape Enhancements	City of New Orleans	2004	not available
Bio District	not available	2006	http://biodistrictneworleans.org/
University Medical Center (UMC)	LSU Health and others	Not available	http://www.newhospital.org/features.php
VA Site	US Veterans Administration	Not available	http://www.neworleans.va.gov
St. Margaret's Redevelopment of Mercy Hospital	Crescent Growth Capital	Proposed Date: not available	http://stmargaretsno.org/
Armstrong Park Redevelopment	not available	2011	not available

Project Vision, Approach and Goals

Vision

The Lafitte Greenway is part of Mayor Mitch Landrieu's "Committed Projects" to convert the 3.1-mile right of way into a greenway, publicly accessible open space, recreation areas and other amenities. At the heart of the Greenway is a bicycle and pedestrian trail that facilitates travel among diverse, adjacent neighborhoods.

The Lafitte Greenway vision is to provide a safe, publicly accessible open space that reflects the needs and desires of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Goals

- Play positive role in the regional water management for the area.
- Increase habitat for urban wildlife, reduce heat-island effect, and provide human comfort.
- Support community efforts for community gardens in the Lafitte Greenway.
- Reduce soil contamination in the Greenway.
- Buffer noise and light pollution along the Greenway.
- Use design methods and techniques that support LEED® and Sustainable Sites Initiative standards.
- Involve the community in the planning, design and implementation of the plan.
- Encourage multi-modal opportunities in the Greenway.
- Capitalize upon the rich history of the area and support the preservation and advancement of the cultural heritage of the Greenway's adjoining neighborhoods.
- Implement CPTED principles when designing the Greenway.
- Connect the Greenway to open spaces and the downtown of the City.

This document presents a vision for the entire Greenway and addresses signage, program, drainage, lighting, circulation and planting plans. Cost estimates, operations and maintenance, funding, and implementation strategies are also addressed at the conclusion of this document.

Challenge

The challenge for the Greenway Plan is to balance the needs and desires of all citizens of the community. In addition, while this plan presents the vision for the entire Greenway, the construction budget of $6.5 million is dedicated to the project. The challenge is to determine which portions of the Greenway are feasible to implement within this set amount of funds.

Figure 3: *Greenway vision looking toward Lake Pontchartrain from I-10*

Goals and Performance Measures

The Design Workshop Team was chosen by the City specifically for their comprehensive approach to planning and design using the four DW Legacy Design® categories: Community, Economics, Art and Environment. The evaluation of projects based on these four categories creates long-term, active, invested and sustainable projects.

At the heart of this approach are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Action-Oriented, Realistic and Time-Based) goals. SMART goals are focused around performance measures, which include research into the baselines, or as-is conditions, of the site and benchmarks for best practices. The performance measures system contains hundreds of possible performance measures for various goals from which the most pertinent categories where selected for the Greenway. These performance measures establish a set of criteria to evaluate alternatives and measure outcomes to confirm the success of the plan after it has been created and implemented.

These goals were based upon Critical Success Factors set by the City of New Orleans, evaluation of the project through the four DW Legacy Design® categories, feedback from the Lafitte Greenway Advisory Committee and input from stakeholders involved with the Greenway and Corridor. Goals were then refined based upon the feedback received by the community at Workshop 1 in August 2011. Further discussion of specific feedback received at this meeting is part of Chapter 3: Community Engagement.

The adjacent tables describe the goals and performance measures for the Lafitte Greenway Master Plan. Each goal has at least one performance measure. Further information on the goals, performance measures, baselines, benchmarks and strategies of this plan can be found in the Lafitte Corridor Existing Conditions Report.

Table 3: *Environment Goals and Performance Measures*

	GOALS	
ENVIRONMENT	**Green Infrastructure: Play positive role in the regional water management for the area.**	**Increase the percent of stormwater captured, retained and treated on site.** **Existing:** 0 percent of stormwater captured and treated in the Greenway. **Potential:** The goal is to capture 100 percent of stormwater on site. **Decrease the amount of impervious surfaces in the Greenway.** **Existing:** 42 percent of the Greenway is covered with impervious surfaces. **Potential:** By demolishing the existing structures and parking lots, the percent of impervious surface of the Greenway will be reduced. **Increase the quality of stormwater runoff.** **Existing:** Zero water quality treatment mechanisms exist in the Greenway. **Potential:** The Greenway vision includes a long linear rain garden in the alignment of the historic Frenchmen's canal and a bioswale along St. Louis Street. These two water quality treatment mechanisms will increase the water quality.
	Strategic Tree and Plant Placement: Increase habitat for urban wildlife, reduce heat-island effect, and provide human comfort.	**Use 100 percent native plant material in the Greenway.** **Existing:** There are currently no *programmed* native plants in the Greenway. Approximately 30 percent of all trees and plants that are naturally occurring on the Greenway are native. **Potential:** The Master Plan identifies the use of 100-percent native plant material. **Increase the percent of tree canopy.** **Existing:** The Greenway is currently covered with 3-percent tree canopy. **Potential:** With full build-out, the Greenway will have 62-percent tree canopy coverage. **Increase the number and diversity of trees in the Greenway** **Existing:** There are 927 trees in the Corridor. **Potential:** A total of 1,787 new trees and 23 different species are proposed for the Greenway.
	Community Gardens: Support community efforts for community gardens in the Lafitte Greenway.	**Increase the amount of community garden space in the Greenway.** **Existing:** There are currently zero community gardens in the Greenway. **Potential:** Three community gardens are planned for the preferred alternative.
	Urban Pollution: Reduce soil contamination in the Greenway.	**Reduce level 2 and 3 risk levels to level 1 or 0.** **Existing:** There are currently 78 percent of Level 1; 7 percent of Level 2, and 6 percent of Level 3 of risk levels in soil conditions. **Potential:** Remediation fencing and topsoil will be placed around all Level 2 and 3 areas in order to alert excavators to the presence of contaminants and reduce the potential risk levels.
	Urban Pollution: Buffer noise and light pollution along the Greenway.	**Reduce Noise levels** **Existing:** Noise levels of 72db-48db were recorded in the Greenway. **Potential:** The target for noise levels is 65 db which will be achieved by tree planting to buffer heightened noise along the Greenway.
	LEED® and SSI®: Use design methods and techniques that support LEED® and Sustainable Sites Initiative standards.	**Increase *pre-score* and *post-score* the Lafitte Greenway for Sustainable Sites and LEED®.** **Existing:** Post-score of the Greenway would be 78 and fall within the *Gold* certification with full build-out. **Potential:** Is it estimated that the Greenway could qualify to be a SITES project.

Table 4: *Community Goals and Performance Measures*

	GOALS	
COMMUNITY	**Community Involvement: Involve the community in the planning, design and implementation of the plan.**	**Ensure demographics of the people involved is proportionate to the demographics of the neighborhoods.** **Existing:** Population: 13,508 Median Age: 33 Percent Population < 18 years old: 34.5 percent
	Patterns of Mobility: Encourage multi-modal opportunities in the Greenway.	**Increase the percent of people biking that live in the corridor to 3.4 percent.** **Existing:** 9.1 percent of the Corridor population walks for transportation. 1.7 percent of the Corridor population uses bikes for transportation. **Increase the number of school children who walk to school.** **Existing:** 0 percent of students walk to school at Warren Easton High School as it is mandatory to ride the bus if you live over 10 blocks away. 10-15 percent of students walk to school from Lagniappe Academies. **Potential:** Schools in the Corridor can apply for Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) funding opportunities. The central mission of SRTS is to improve children's safety while walking and biking to school. Through participation in programs such as Safe Routes to Schools, the number of children who walk to school could increase.
	Cultural Heritage and History: Capitalize upon the rich history of the area and support the preservation and advancement of the cultural heritage of the Greenway's adjoining neighborhoods.	**Identify culturally significant buildings for adaptive re-use.** **Existing:** There are 34 culturally significant places identified within the Corridor (see page 12). **Potential:** By utilizing historic grants and new market tax credits, these culturally significantly places could be adaptively re-used.
	Greenway Safety: Implement CPTED principles when designing the Greenway.	**Decrease crosswalk distance between streets that cross the Greenway.** **Existing:** Crosswalk distance entering into the Greenway is between 37-183 feet. **Potential:** Decrease crosswalk distance by at least 10 percent. **Reduce vehicle speeds to a safe level on roads crossing the Greenway.** **Existing:** 10mph-45mph (road types and time of day) **Potential**: Speeds on roads crossing the Greenway should be reduced to at least 30 mph.
	Park and Open Space Opportunities: Connect the Greenway to open spaces and the downtown of the city.	**Increase percentage of people within a one-quarter-mile walking distance to open space or recreational opportunity to 100 percent.** **Existing:** 76 percent of people are within one-quarter-mile walking distance to a park. **Potential:** Following Greenway improvements, 100 percent of people in the Corridor will be within a one-quarter-mile walking distance of the Greenway.

Project Vision, Approach and Goals

Table 5: *Art Goals and Performance Measures*

	GOALS	
ART	**Public Art & Placemaking: Support public art through identity, character and funding opportunities.**	**Support from the City to budget at least 1 percent of the total construction budget to the arts.** **Existing:** There is currently no funding for art in the Greenway. **Potential:** Devote 1 percent of the current construction budget to art. **Increase graphic communication through signage along the Greenway.** **Existing:** No signage programs currently exist. **Potential:** A signage and wayfinding program is proposed for the Greenway.
	Art takes cues from the qualities of the Greenway and Corridor.	**Incorporate historic remnants, artifacts and alignments into the design.** **Existing:** Historic artifacts are found along the entire Greenway. **Potential:** Historic remnants such as the railroad will remain in place where possible. The designed rain garden is located within the historic alignment of the Frenchman's Canal.

Table 6: *Economics Goals and Performance Measures*

	GOALS	
ECONOMICS	**Fiscally Balanced Plan: Create a fiscally balanced plan that provides return on investment and minimizes costs of the plan and Corridor.**	**Maintain Greenway costs at average costs of maintenance for other Greenway plans.** Existing: N/A **Potential:** Greenway O&M costs are estimated at $1,560/acre.

2

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Existing Conditions Summary
Community and Demographics
Parks and Open space
Transportation
Safety
Drainage

The Analysis of Existing Conditions Chapter includes analysis of information collected in the Lafitte Corridor Existing Conditions Report.

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the key conditions in the Greenway that contribute to the design and planning effort of the Greenway.

The existing conditions analysis is based upon the Lafitte Corridor Existing Conditions Report inventory and metrics analysis. This document can be found at: *http://lafittecorridorconnection.com/project-documents.html*

Overview

Existing Conditions Summary

The Lafitte Corridor Existing Conditions Report and baseline metrics were created prior to this document and serve as a reference for current conditions of the Greenway. This section of the document covers a brief overview of the analysis but further understanding of the Greenway's existing conditions should be referenced in the Lafitte Corridor Existing Conditions Report[5].

Historic Maps of Lafitte Corridor

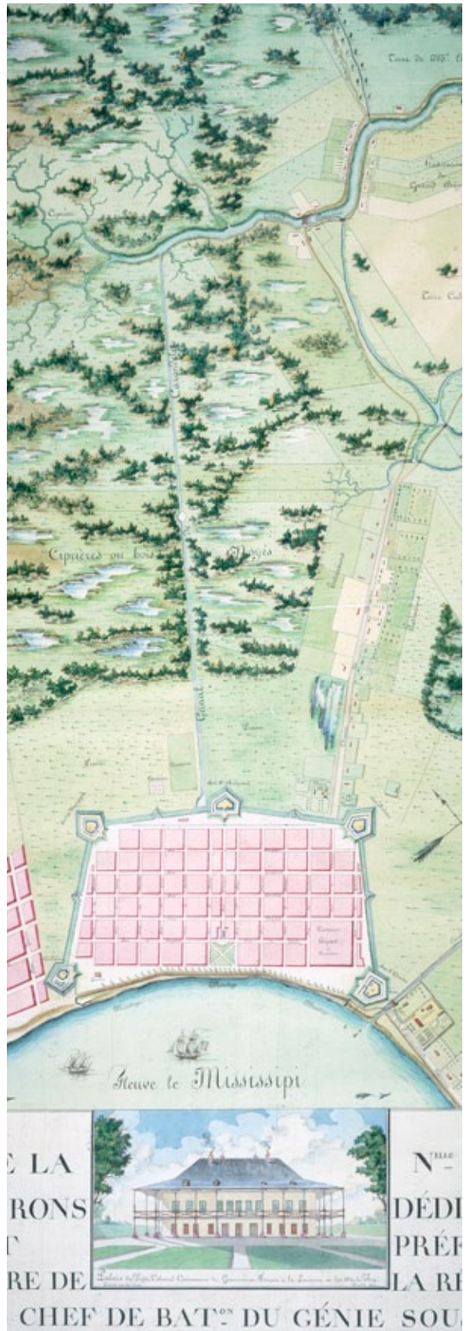
The Joseph Antoine Vinache map from 1830 shows that the Lafitte Greenway was once covered by a cypress forest and primarily marshland. Initial development along the Greenway involved the dredging of the Frenchmen's Canal and later the Carondelet Canal that connected Bayou St. John and provided transportation via waterway into the city of New Orleans.

Zimpel's map shows the The Lafitte Corridor as the Carondelet Canal with the beginnings of neighborhoods extending from the French Quarter.

The Hardee 1878 map shows early development along Bayou St. John and the resulting channelization due to pressures of increased urbanization. Parklands were established nearby including what is now known as City Park.

The World Atlas of 1908 illustrates the basic pattern of development that is still visible in New Orleans today. In less than 100 years, the area that was historically a cypress forest and marshland had quickly transformed into suburban development

Joseph Antoine Vinache | 1830



Data Source: The Historic New Orleans Collection

Zimpel | 1834

Data Source: The Historic New Orleans Collection

Hardee | 1878

Data Source: The Historic New Orleans Collection

World Atlas | 1908

Data Source: The New Encyclopedic Atlas and Gazetteer of the World

5 Design Workshop. *Lafitte Corridor Existing Conditions Report*. City of New Orleans, November 2011. <http://lafittecorridorconnection.com/project-documents.html>.

Orleans bi-directional canal

Greenway study area

Operational railroad

View to Downtown

Existing railroad

All photography source: Design Workshop

Community and Demographics

Analysis

Neighborhoods

The Lafitte Greenway passes through seven New Orleans neighborhoods including Navarre, Mid City, Bayou St. John, Lafitte, Tulane/Gravier, Tremé and Iberville. The design of the Greenway responds to the various demographics of each neighborhood as they vary widely from one end of the Greenway to the other in age, income and home ownership.

Population

Currently, the Corridor has a population of approximately 13,508 people[6] and can potentially serve all residents within one-quarter-mile of the Greenway. The Corridor does not have a singular census tract and was determined based on an approximation from the Corridor boundary. The 2010 Census Profile was developed by Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI).

*Median Age**

The median age of residents in the Lafitte Corridor is approximately 33 years old. Nearly 35 percent of the population is under 19 years old, with almost half being between the ages of 0-9 years old. The median age of residents of the Corridor suggests the Tremé, Lafitte and Tulane neighborhoods will attract a younger population and the users near Mid-City, Navarre and Bayou St. John will attract an older population of users (ages 36 and 45).

*Historic Sites and Landmarks**

According to an on-the-ground survey of cultural landmarks and historic sites by Michael Willis and Associates, there are 34 identified cultural sites in the Corridor that could be potentially linked to the Greenway. These range from historic buildings and sites to community resources. In addition, sites within the Greenway could have interpretive value as an asset to the user experience.

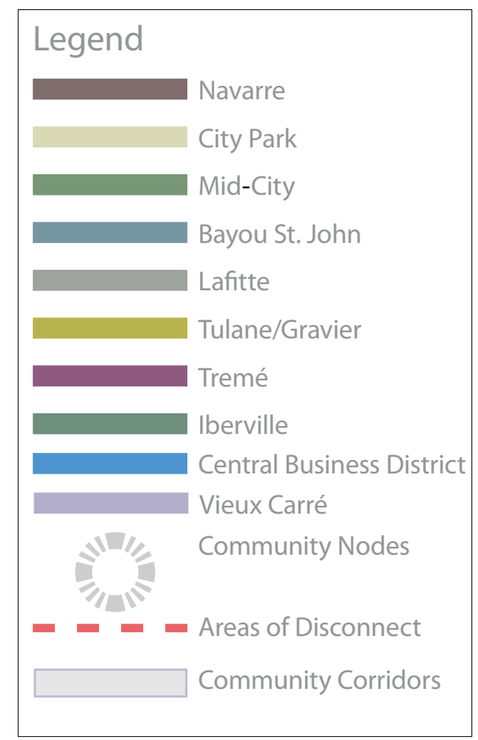
*Existing and Future Land Use**

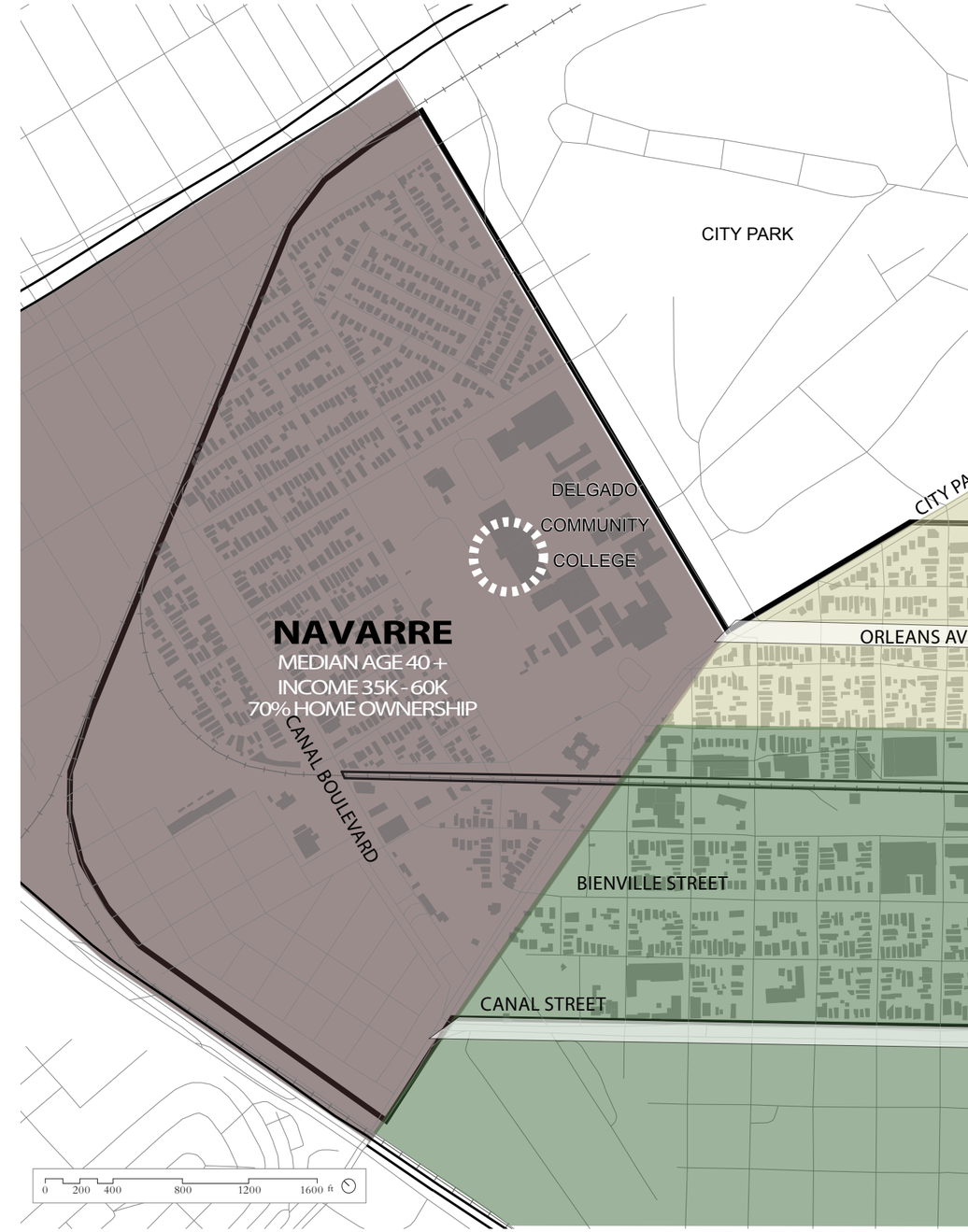
The Lafitte Greenway is bordered by a horizontally mixed-use Corridor that crosses numerous land-use types varying from residential to commercial to industrial. The intricacies of the land uses adjacent to the Greenway will reveal a dynamic edge as one travels along the Greenway. The future land use suggests that a large portion of the land adjacent to the Greenway will be designated mixed-use or medium-density residential housing near the Lafitte neighborhood. This could potentially result in a higher capture area for visitors using the Greenway.

* Additional maps can be found in the Lafitte Corridor Existing Conditions Report.

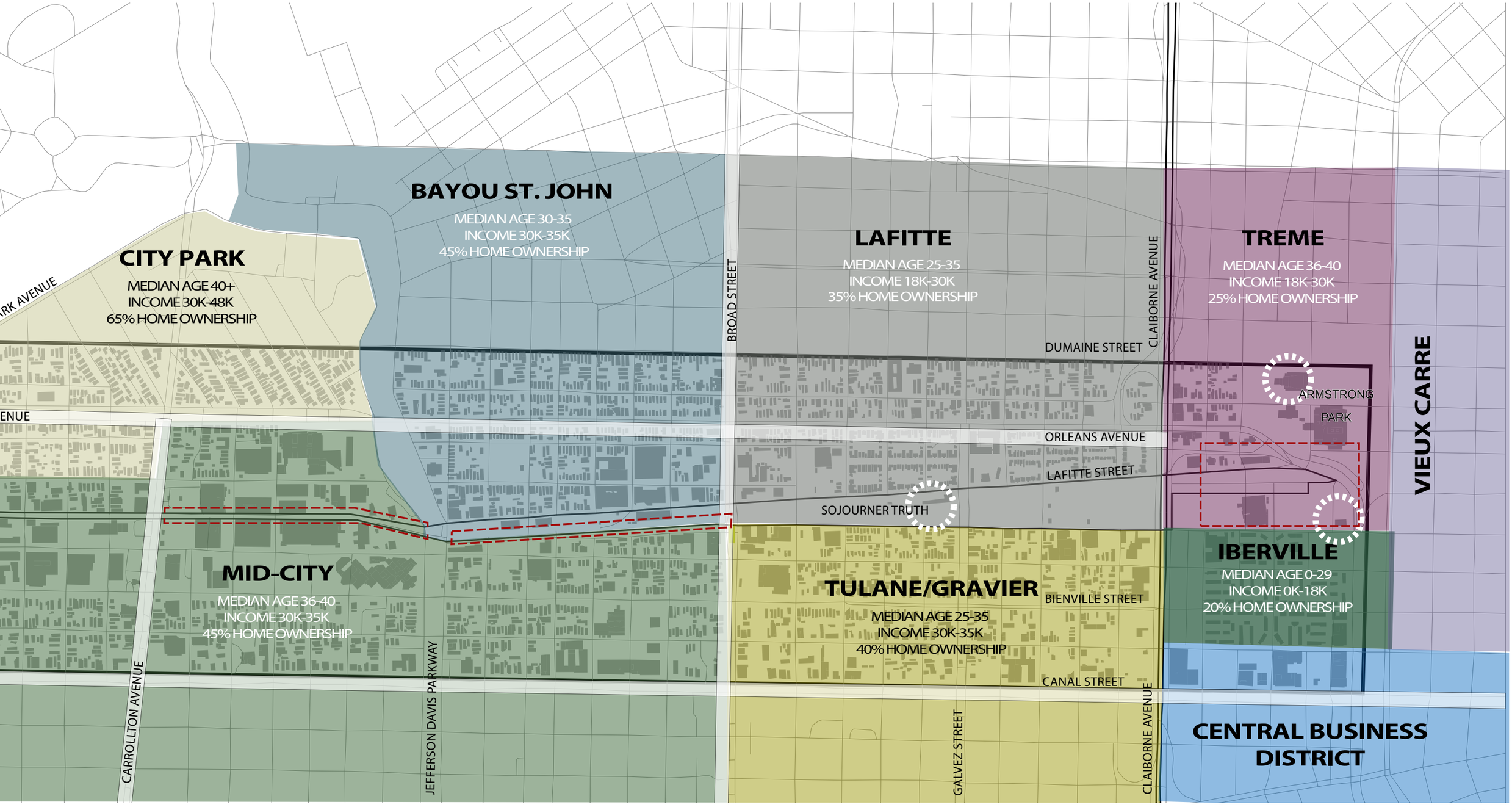
Land Use . . . . . p. 16
Future Land Use . . . . . p. 18
Median Age . . . . . p. 120
Historic Sites and Landmarks. . . . . p. 102

6 U.S. Bureau of the Census. "2010 Census of Population and Housing, ESRI 2010 Total Population." ESRI (July 2011).





Community and Demographics



Data Sources:
New Orleans Regional Planning Commission: Buildings
LAGIC: Railroad
Atlas: The Louisiana Statewide GIS: Roads, Land/Water
ESRI: Demographics

Parks and Open Space

Analysis

The potential success of the Greenway is not just creating green space for users in the community but connecting the Greenway to existing facilities and supplementing deficiencies in park and open space within the Corridor. Appropriate park programming elements were assessed based on standards by the National Recreation and Park Association and Time Saver Standards for Landscape Architecture.

Heat-Island Effect*

Heat-island effect is the warming of urban areas due to increased impervious surfaces and a small percentage of tree canopy. The table in the Existing Conditions document describes the temperature taken in June of 2011 at various points along the Greenway. The Greenway provides an opportunity to use trees and vegetation to reduce heat-island effect and increase urban wildlife habitat.

Tree Canopy*

In 2009, the Friends of Lafitte Corridor conducted a tree inventory[7] and located 927 trees along the 3.1-mile Greenway. The data includes tree location, species, trunk diameter, ratings for locations, condition and a general grade of good/fair/poor. This data was compiled and used as part of the inventory and analysis in the Lafitte Corridor Existing Conditions Report that assessed tree count and tree canopy.

A current aerial mapping showed that only 3 percent of the Greenway is covered by tree canopy, which represents an extraordinarily low amount of coverage. American Forests recommends an overall canopy of 40 percent, which is the target coverage for the Greenway. In addition, they recommend 15 percent coverage for business districts. With the full build-out, the Greenway will have 62 percent tree canopy, exceeding the suggested amount of 40 percent.

7 Friends of Lafitte Corridor, 2009. "*Tree Inventory*"<http://folc-nola.org/greenway/tree-inventory/> (August 2011).

Community Gardens*

There is one grocery store within the Corridor and six community gardens within a one-quarter-mile walking distance of the Corridor. Of the six, there are two community gardens in the Corridor owned by First Grace United Methodist Church and Tremé Jazz.

Walking Distance*

In the Corridor, over 76 percent of the residents are within a one-quarter-mile walking distance of a park or open space area. After the construction of the Greenway, 100 percent of the population in the Corridor will be within walking distance to the Greenway.

Park Programming*

On average, parks in the Corridor have between two to four different program elements at each park. Not only do the parks range in overall quality, individual program elements in the park range from brand new to non-functional. An on-the-ground study was completed of park program facilities in the Corridor in June of 2011.

Parks and Open Space*

The Corridor is served by several parks and open spaces including Lemann Playground, Carondelet Canal Park, Easton Playground, Armstrong Park and public open spaces known as neutral grounds. A large portion of residents are within one-quarter-mile walking radius to these parks, but they lack sufficient facilities and active programming.

* Additional maps can be found in the Lafitte Corridor Existing Conditions Report.

Tree Inventory . . . . . p. 88
Heat Island Effect . . . . . p. 86
Community Gardens . . . . . p. 132
Walking Distance . . . . . p. 80
Park Programming . . . . . p. 82
Parks and Open Space . . . . . p. 76

Legend

- Community Gardens
- Hop Scotch
- Trails
- Tennis
- Open Lawn
- Baseball Field
- Playground
- Restroom Facility
- Trees (Greenway Area)
- Access Deficiency
- Recreation/Open Space

Parks and Open Space Analysis Map

Data Sources:
New Orleans Regional Planning Commission: Buildings, Parks
LAGIC: Railroad
Atlas: The Louisiana Statewide GIS: Roads, Land/Water

Drainage

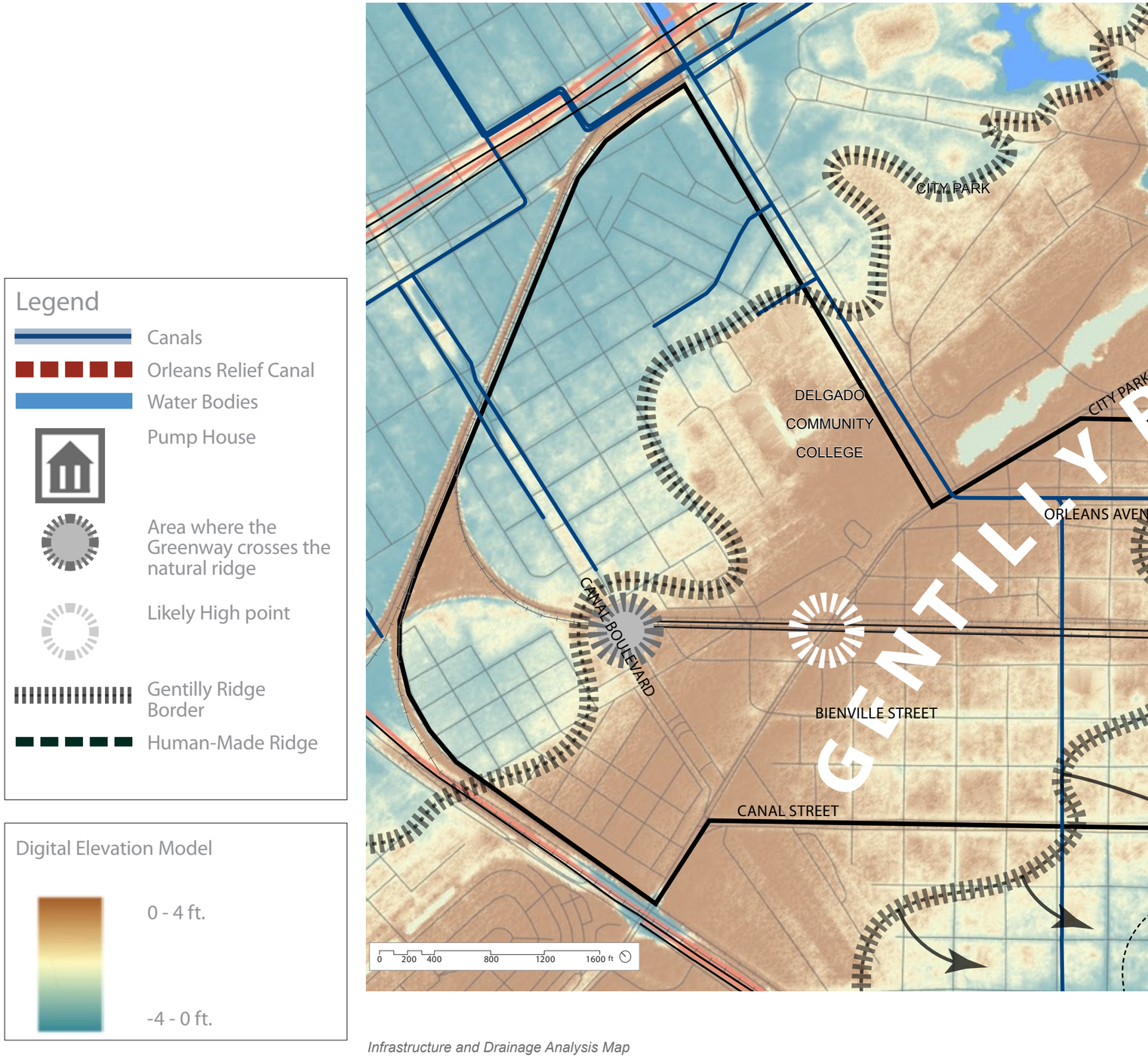
Analysis

Analysis of Digital Elevation Model[8] data shows the relationship between topographic features that form the basis of development in New Orleans as well as subsided lowland areas previously associated with Bayou Saint John. Construction activity associated with the bayou and the rail line are also clearly visible.

The Digital Elevation Model reveals that the Greenway itself is the high point in the Corridor, presumably due to the previous use as a rail line. Because of the elevation change from the crest of the Greenway to the low points in the Corridor, the drainage patterns in the Corridor show that water flows away from the Greenway.[9]

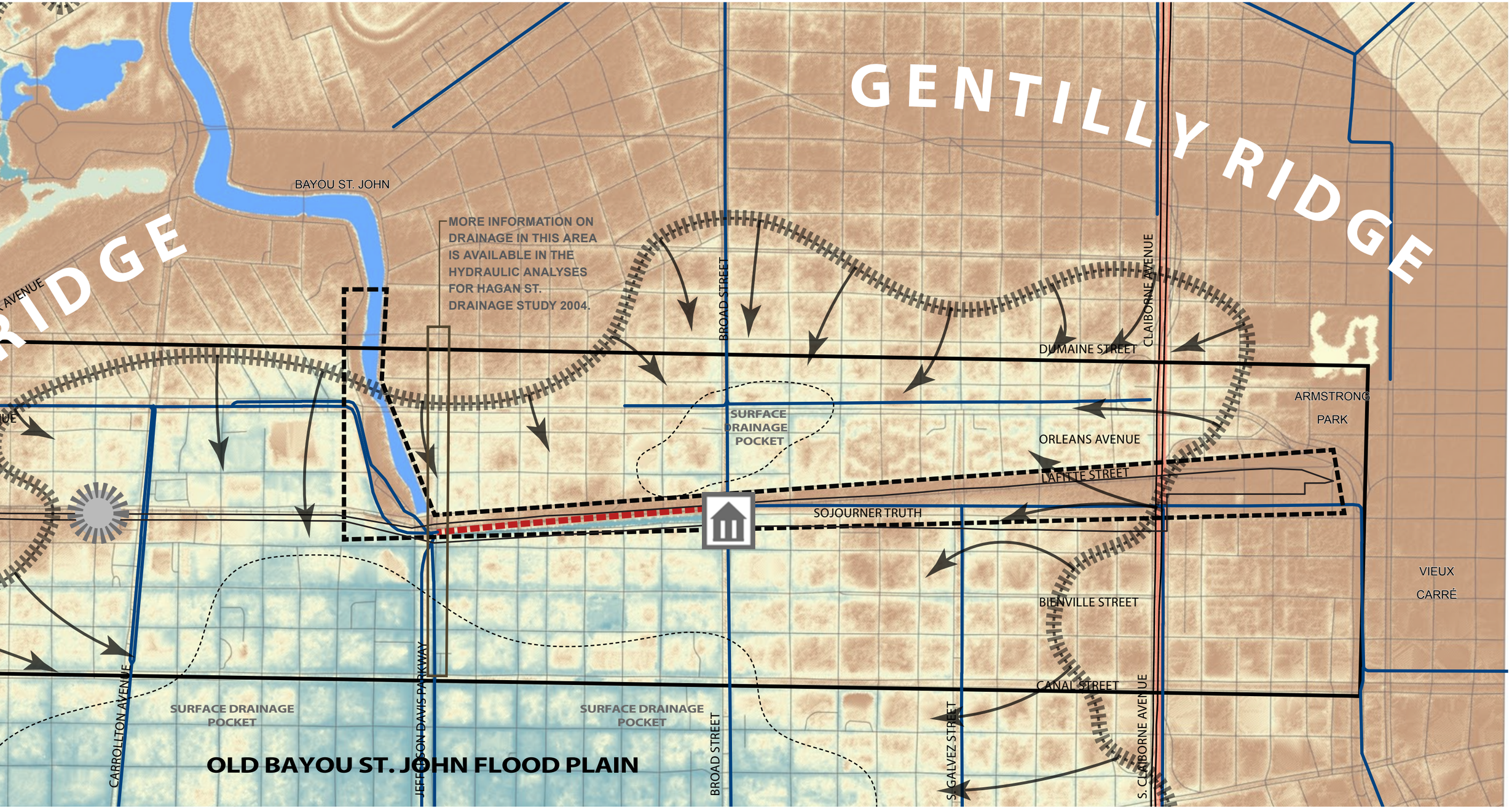
The Hydraulic Analyses for Hagan Street Drainage Study[10] was created in 2004 and should be referenced when assessing drainage near the Greenway and Hagan Street. This document provides further analysis and information in this area as it relates to drainage near Hagan Street.

The analysis suggests making drainage improvements throughout the Corridor and interpreting stormwater management to trail users on the Greenway.



Infrastructure and Drainage Analysis Map

8 *Atlas: The Louisiana Statewide GIS.* "GIS Data: Roads, Land/Water, Digital Elevation Model," (July 2011).
9 *Design Workshop.* Lafitte Corridor Existing Conditions Report.
10 Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans. *Hydraulic Analyses for Hagan Street Drainage.* (New Orleans, June 2004).



Sources:
New Orleans Regional Planning Commission: Buildings
LAGIC: Railroad
Atlas: The Louisiana Statewide GIS: Roads, Land/Water, Elevation

Transportation

Analysis

Streets Intersecting the Lafitte Greenway

Twenty-two streets intersect the proposed Lafitte Greenway over its 3.1-mile length from Louis Armstrong Park to Canal Boulevard. Of these 22 streets, 14 are classifiable (in traffic engineering terms) as *local*– characterized by a two-lane cross section and daily traffic volumes of fewer than 5,000 vehicles - with stop sign traffic control at most intersections and used primarily for short segments of longer trips – typically as feeders (or distributors) to/from other routes.

The local streets typically have on-street parking, with sidewalks on both sides. In the former industrial zone (around one block or 350-400 feet) to either side of the proposed Greenway, a number of the local streets have an *open drainage* cross section (a legacy of the industrial or railroad land uses in the past) and lack in curb, gutter, sidewalk and possibly proper pavement subgrade.

Eight of the 22 streets intersecting the proposed Lafitte Greenway are classifiable as *collector* or *arterial* routes. These classifications are characterized by traffic volumes over 5,000 daily vehicles (and more typically 12,000-40,000 daily vehicles) and by their use as the primary route for most of any given trip. All eight collector and arterial routes crossing the proposed Lafitte Greenway have a multi-lane cross section with a center neutral ground.

Streets Parallel to the Proposed Lafitte Greenway

The Lafitte Greenway is flanked by two collector streets. One-to-two blocks south of the Lafitte Greenway, Bienville is a four-lane divided street with a neutral ground that extends from N. Claiborne Avenue to City Park Avenue. Orleans Avenue, also a four-lane divided street with neutral ground, is one-to-three blocks north of the Lafitte Greenway and extends from Louis Armstrong Park to City Park Avenue.

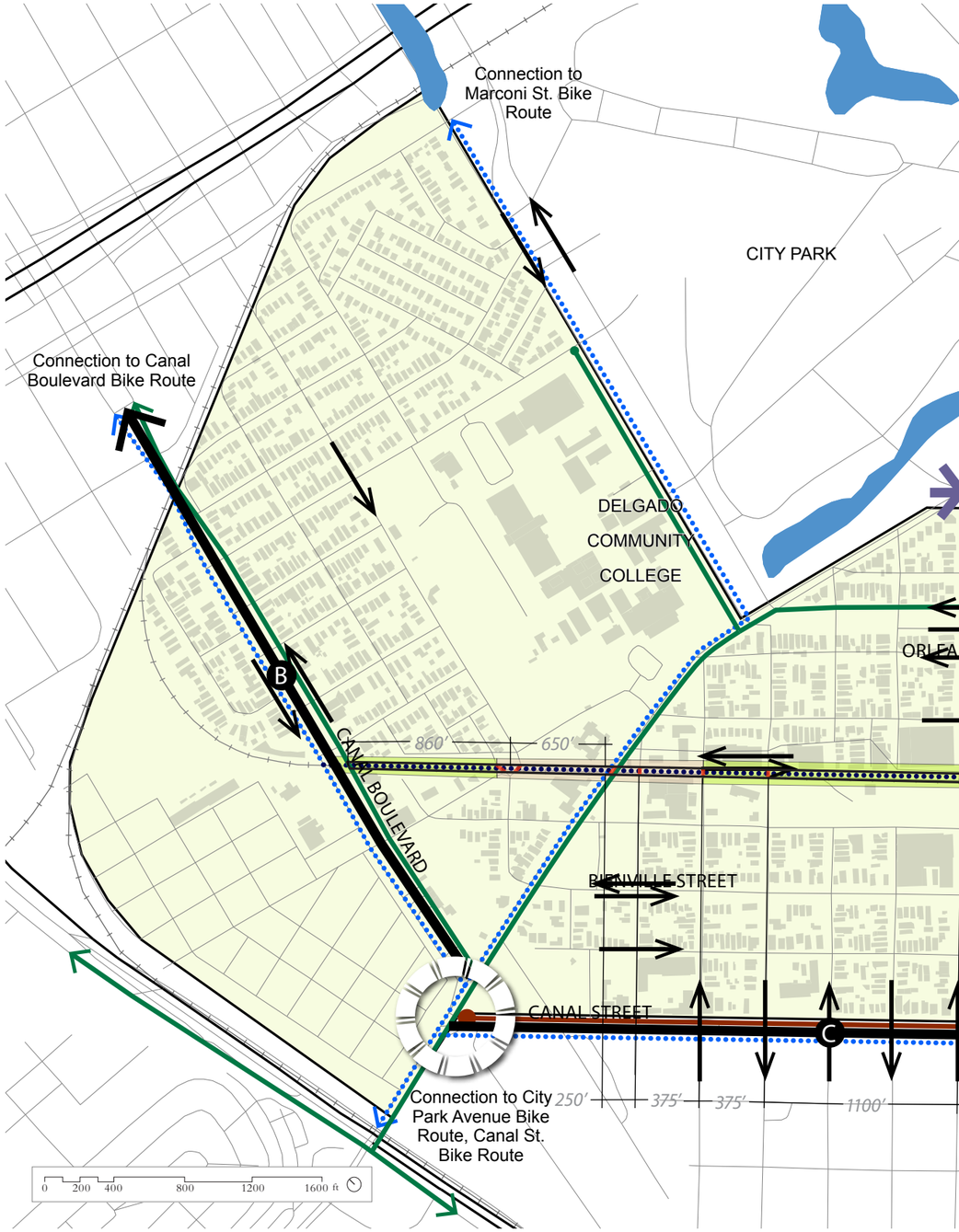
Legend

- Primary Nodes
- Secondary Nodes
- Dead-End Traffic
- Thru Road
- No Frontage Roads along Greenway
- 1 Frontage Road along Greenway
- 2 Frontage Roads along Greenway
- Directional Traffic
- Vehicular Circulation
- Streetcar Route
- Bus Route
- Proposed Bicycle Route
- Existing Bicycle Route

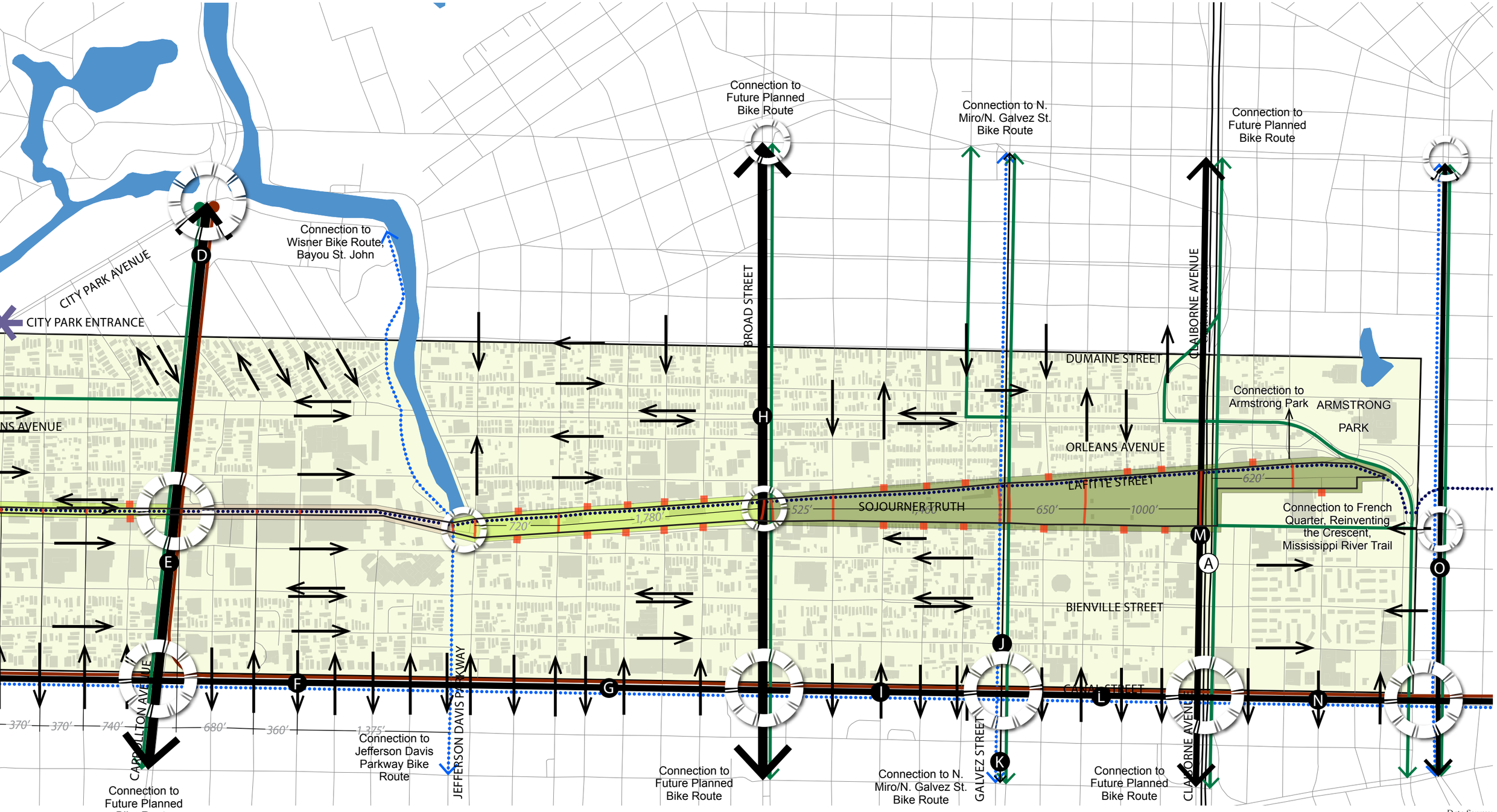
A	115,115 ADT I-10, Canal to Orleans (2010)	I	22,387 ADT Canal, Broad to Galvez (2008)
B	19,531 ADT Canal, I-160 to City Park (2005)	J	5,135 ADT Galvez, Canal to Bienville (2008)
C	15,570 ADT Canal, City Park to Carrollton (2007)	K	5,094 ADT Galvez, Tulane to Canal (2008)
D	31,331 ADT Carrollton, Orleans to Esplanade (2005)	L	20,828 ADT Canal, Galvez to Claiborne (2008)
E	40,613 ADT Carrollton, Canal to Orleans (2005)	M	19,767 ADT Claiborne, Canal to Orleans (2007)
F	15,775 ADT Canal, Carrollton to Jeff Davis (2007)	N	20,622 ADT Canal, Claiborne to Rampart (2008)
G	15,720 ADT Jefferson Davis Parkway to Broad (2007)	O	15,464 ADT Rampart, Canal to Orleans (2008)
H	42,951 ADT Broad, Esplanade to Canal (2004)		

*ADT = Average Daily Traffic

Note: With few exceptions, the sidewalk conditions are in poor to average condition.



Transportation Analysis Map



Data Sources:
New Orleans Regional Planning Commission: Buildings, Average Daily Traffic Counts
LAGIC: Railroad
Atlas: The Louisiana Statewide GIS: Roads, Land/Water

Transportation

Both of these collector streets flanking the proposed Lafitte Greenway are signalized at their intersections with the crossing collector or arterial streets (N. Claiborne Avenue, N. Galvez Street, N. Broad Street, N. Jefferson Davis Parkway, N. Carrollton Avenue and City Park Avenue).

Several factors – signals at intersecting collector and arterial streets, on-street parking, at least partial tree canopy and generally dense fronting development – contribute to controlled vehicle speeds on these collector streets flanking the proposed Lafitte Greenway.

Bike Circulation*

The Lafitte Greenway intersects five bike routes and will connect to these and the proposed regional bike networks. Based on the 2005 New Orleans Bike Master Plan, 1.2 percent of the population uses a bike as a means of transportation to and from work. Based on the 2000 Census, 1.7 percent of people in the Corridor bike to work. The percentage of people walking was 9.1 percent according to the 2005-2009 American Survey 5 Year Estimates. Also, refer to the Regional Bike Network identified by the Regional Planning Commission in the Appendix.

Vehicle Speeds*

Speeds in the Corridor range significantly with the lowest recorded speed being 10 mph to the highest being 45 mph, based upon various road types and time of day. The City has recently adopted a Complete Streets Ordinance that may reduce speeds. Refer to the Lafitte Corridor Revitalization Plan for recommendations regarding speed for streets intersecting the Greenway.

Walk Score*

The Walking Score is a measure of the amount of amenities (restaurants, coffee, grocery stores, shopping, schools, parks, books, bars, etc.) accessible within a specific walking distance and is a number between 0 and 100. Walking Scores were calculated at www.walkscore.com in August of 2011 and the description of Walk Scores is as follows:

Walk Score	Description
90 - 100	Walker's Paradise: Daily errands do not require a car.
70 - 89	Very Walkable: Most errands can be accomplished on foot.
50 - 69	Somewhat Walkable: Some amenities within walking distance.
25 - 49	Car-Dependent: A few amenities within walking distance.
0 - 24	Car-Dependent: Almost all errands require a car.

The neighborhoods with the greatest walkability were found in Mid-City, Bayou St. John and Tulane/Gravier, followed by Tremé, Lafitte and Navarre. In general, the neighborhoods surrounding the Greenway are rated *somewhat walkable*, which means that some amenities are within walking distance. With the introduction of the Greenway and additional amenities, the walk score can be significantly increased.

Access Points*

As mentioned previously, 22 streets intersect the proposed Lafitte Greenway over its 3.1-mile length from Louis Armstrong Park to Canal Boulevard. Users of the Greenway will have to cross a street on an average of seven times per mile. The average length between access points is 300 feet. Safety and signalization at these crossings is discussed in the Park Design chapter of this document.

Transit*

Bus routes operated by the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (NORTA) serve the proposed Lafitte Greenway on all of its intersecting arterial or collector streets except N. Jefferson Davis Parkway. Typically on these bus routes, the existing stops are near the intersections of the route and the two collector streets (Bienville Street and Orleans Avenue). In addition, the N. Broad Street route has stops at Lafitte Street and St. Louis Street.

The City Park/Museum branch of the Canal Streetcar line crosses the proposed Lafitte Greenway Corridor on N. Carrollton Avenue. This streetcar route provides direct service (i.e., without connection or transfer) between the City Park and Museum area to downtown New Orleans, via N. Carrollton Avenue and Canal Street.

*Additional maps can be found in the Lafitte Corridor Existing Conditions Report in the Appendix.

Bike Circulation . . . . . p. 50
Vehicle Speeds . . . . . p. 142
Walk Score . . . . . p. 46
Parade Routes. . . . . p. 56
Access Points . . . . . p. 48
Transit Routes . . . . . p. 44

Friends of Lafitte Corridor Walk, 2009

All photo credits: Design Workshop

Friends of Lafitte Corridor Walk, 2009

3

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Workshop 1 – August 2011

Community Workshop 2 – November 2011

Community Workshop 3 – October 2012

The Community Engagement Chapter includes summaries from the three public workshops held during the planning and design process for the Lafitte Greenway and Corridor.

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight the key findings from these public meetings and describe how this feedback was incorporated into the planning and design process.

Community Workshop 1 – August 2011

Purpose

The purpose of Workshop 1 was to present preliminary project vision, concepts, goals and objectives and to collect input on these items.

The focus of Workshop 1 was to get feedback on potential programming for the Greenway and begin developing potential strategies for the location.

Outreach

Community outreach and engagement for Workshop 1 of the Lafitte Greenway Project began in early June of 2011. The approach was comprehensive and inclusive of all segments of the New Orleans community, with specific focus on those neighborhoods and organizations within the identified Corridor. We began with the neighborhood and community organizations with direct interactions with the Greenway and surrounding uses. Efforts were then expanded to those with a critical or relative interest in the project. Many of these meetings included key City departments and officials and other organizations with interest in the Greenway and Corridor.

Prior to Workshop 1, the consultant team produced and distributed 10,000 door hangers, recorded and conducted 5,593 Robo-calls, prepared and sent a total of 7,171 E-Blast communications via Constant Contact, mailed over 400 pieces of correspondence to business members, conducted phone calls to community leaders, and effectively networked with and received invaluable support from key City staff and active community organizations to produce a diverse and well-attended turn-out throughout the week.

Process

Workshop 1 included public meeting presentations, focus group discussions, topical discussions, chip games and open studio. Each of these events was created to target-specific audiences of community members to get a broad range of input about the Greenway and Corridor.

Two kick-off public meetings were held on August 15, 2011 at Grace Episcopal Church and Sojourner Truth Community Center. These public meetings presented the overall scope and goals for the Greenway and Corridor; obtained interactive polling feedback from the community on goals, program and concerns for the projects; and allowed for open public comment on analysis materials completed prior to the workshop.

During the week of Workshop 1, an open studio was held each day where the design and planning team worked. Open studio was open for the general public to drop in, ask questions, play the chip game, and observe the materials that the design and planning team was producing.

Each day a chip game (see next page) was played both in the morning and afternoon. The chip game provided an opportunity for participants to *design* where various program activities and quantity of facilities should occur in the Greenway and discuss ideas and concerns for the Greenway with the design team.

The week-long workshop wrapped up with an open house public meeting at Delgado College where the work produced at the workshop was presented. The purpose of this meeting was to get feedback from the public on the proposed program for the Greenway, share analysis and design ideas generated during the workshop, and get feedback on the priorities for the Greenway.

Focus Groups

Focus groups were held to get feedback on various topics related to the development of the Corridor and Greenway. The purpose of these focus groups was to get key stakeholders together to discuss topics related to their interests or work. The stakeholders were identified through previous meetings conducted in the Corridor with individuals implementing activities related to the topics. The topics included Recreational Activities and Programming; Corridor Education; Employment and Jobs Opportunities; Greenway Arts and Interpretation; Transportation; Stormwater and Infrastructure; Land Use and Urban Design; Housing and Economic Development Strategies; and Financing, Operations and Maintenance.

Topical discussion were also planned around the above topics. The purpose of these topical discussions was to enable interested citizens to gather with the design team to discuss their concerns and ideas about a specific topic. Each focus group included a presentation made by a subject expert discussing this project's approach to the topic, current issues and opportunities at the City level around the topic, and best management practices about the topic. Discussions following the presentation focused on concerns, ideas and opportunities for implementation of the topic through this project.

Community Charrette

Community Charrette

Photo credits: Design Workshop

Chip Game pieces and game board

Chip Game played by Corridor community members

Photo credits: Design Workshop

Table 7: *Park Amenities Matrix*

	RECOMMENDED PARK AMENITIES CALCULATION BASED ON CORRIDOR POPULATION			GREENWAY NEED	GREENWAY PLAN
	National Standard (based on Time Saver Standards and NRPA)	National Standard Suggested Amount	Existing in Corridor	Chip Game Suggested Amoung (Average)	Greenway Plan
Amphitheater			0	0.5	1
Athletic Field	1/5000 people	2.7	0	0.5	4
Baseball/ Softball	1/2000 people	6.8	9	1.4	3
Basketball Courts	1/1000 people	13.5	3	1.6	4
Bocce Ball			0	0.5	6
Chess/Checker Tables			0	0.6	12
Children's Pool			0	0.3	1
Community Garden	1 acre/3000 people	6.2 acres	4 gardens	2.6 acres	3 gardens
Contemplation Space			0	0.1	1
Dog Park			0	0.5	1
Football	1/8000 people	1.7	0	1.0	1.5
Frisbee Golf			0	0.1	0
Horseshoes	1/2000 people	6.7	0	0.6	6
Kayak/Canoe			0	0.3	1
Kick Ball			0	0.1	1
Multi Court	1/2000 people	6.7	0	0.4	0
Open lawn			0	1.6	4
Open Water			2.5 acres	3.3	0
Orchard			0	2.3	2
Parking for recreation			0	22	0
Picnic Shelters			0	1.9	13
Playground	1/1000 people	13.5	10	1.4	2
Public Art/Historical Markers			0	6.0	10
Skate Park			0	1.5	1
Soccer	1/8000 people	1.7	0	0.3	10
Swimming Pool			2	0.4	0
Tennis Courts	1/2000 people	6.74	21	1.1	2
Trail			.5 miles	1.5 miles	3.1 miles
Tree grove			0	2.6	8
Volleyball	1/2000 people	6.74	0	2.8	6
Wetlands			0	1.1	0

Chip Game

The chip game is a collaborative exercise which allowed the community to suggest what types of park facilities and landscape treatments they felt were appropriate to the Greenway. Members of the community gave input regarding the placement of facilities which will help to shape the future of the Lafitte Greenway. Twice a day (in the morning and in the afternoon), visitors to the workshop were able to play the chip game and the consultant team compiled the results.

The foundation of the game was developed through recommendations for area space standards for outdoor recreation facilities by Time Saver Standards for Landscape Architecture[11] and National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA)[12] based on the Corridor population of 13,508. The chart to the left shows either the surplus or deficit of programmatic uses that the Time Saver Standards suggests. The chip game allowed the consultant team to develop a local program for the Corridor which could also be used as a guide for a local program for the City of New Orleans.

The chip game was also played by various stakeholder groups of the Lafitte Greenway including the Friends of Lafitte Corridor, Lafitte and Iberville community members, and students at Warren Easton High School and Cabrini Elementary School.

11 Nadine Post and Jim Bessent. *Time Saver Standards for Landscape Architecture.* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1988), Figure 210-24.

12 James D. Mertes and James Hall, *Park Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines.* (National Recreation and Park Association, 1995).

Keypad Polling Summary

A significant community engagement technique used at Workshop 1 included polling of participants with keypad polling devices that were used at both kick-off meetings and the final open house. Participants were asked questions with predetermined numbered options displayed on a screen and chose their preferences using a handheld voting device with corresponding numbers. The same questions that were presented at the community meetings were also put up online for participants to provide feedback even if they were not able to attend a workshop.

Kick-Off Meeting

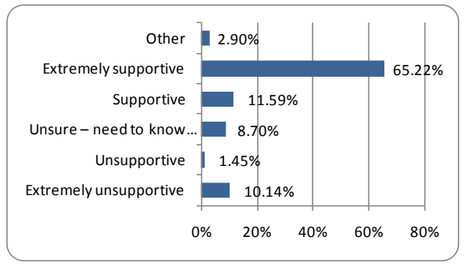
At the kick-off meeting, questions centered around three major topics: interest in the Greenway, goals for the Greenway and Corridor, and programming for the Greenway.

Support for the Greenway was very high with over 75 percent of participants supportive or extremely supportive of the Greenway concept. Responses indicated that over 60 percent of people would use the Greenway once a week or more frequently for activities such as pleasure bicycle riding, pleasure walking, or travel to and from places. Other uses of the Greenway that received high feedback included uses for visiting friends, recreational activities, fitness walking and sightseeing.

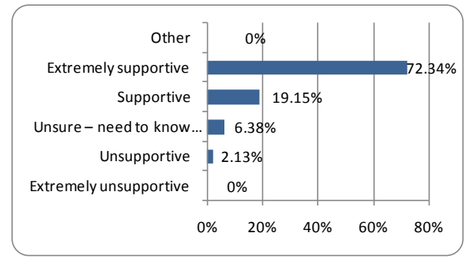
The overall programing preferences for the Greenway included passive recreation, long-term operations, infrastructure and active recreation. Responses varied between the locations of the polling. At the Sojourner Truth meeting, active recreation received higher priority, while at the Grace Episcopal Church meeting, passive recreation and operations received higher priority.

Results

Initially, how supportive are you of the Greenway concept?

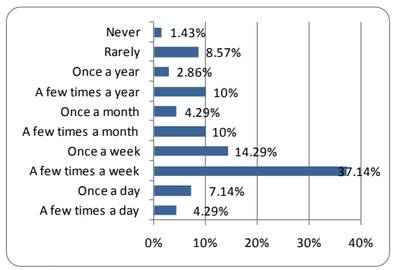


Mid City Meeting

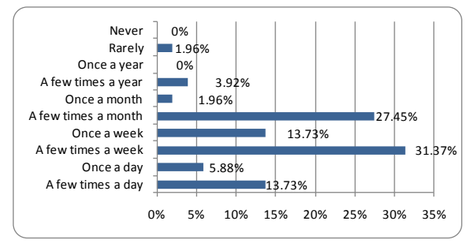


Sojourner Truth

How often do you think you will use the Greenway?

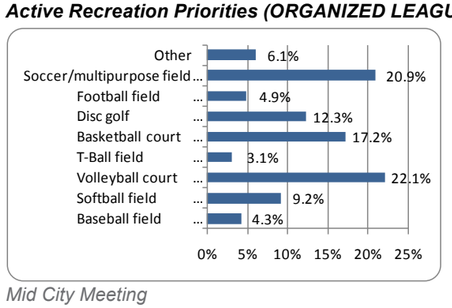


Mid City Meeting

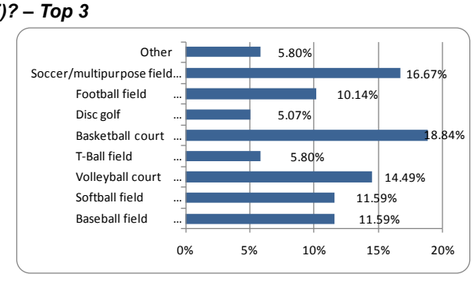


Sojourner Truth

Active Recreation Priorities (ORGANIZED LEAGUE)? – Top 3

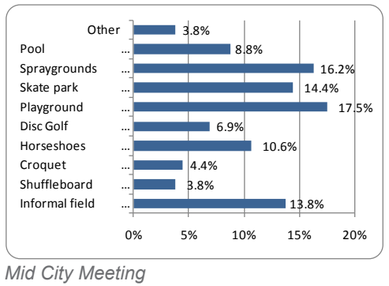


Mid City Meeting

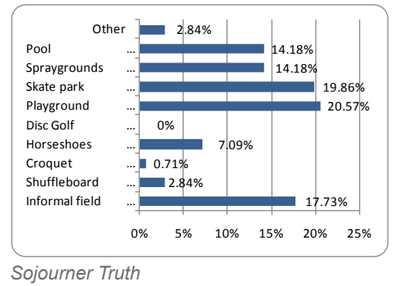


Sojourner Truth

Active Recreation Priorities (INFORMAL)? – Top 3



Mid City Meeting



Sojourner Truth

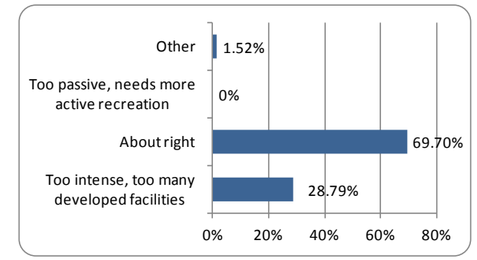
Public Open House

At the public open house, questions centered around where programmatic uses should be located throughout the Greenway and through what design inspirations the Greenway should follow.

The public was given choices on where to locate various program elements, such as volleyball courts and skateparks, and vote on their location. Two alternatives were also presented on the overall trail design concept.

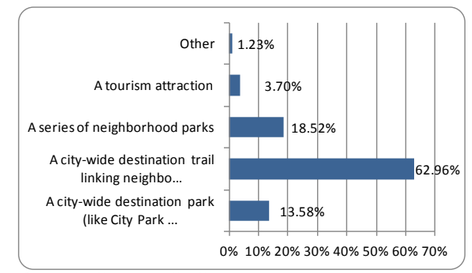
Results

I believe the development program for the Greenway is:



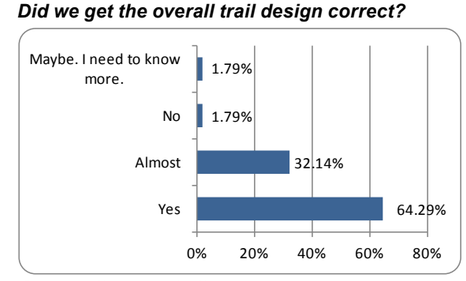
Delgado Community College

I see the Greenway and Greenway Park as:



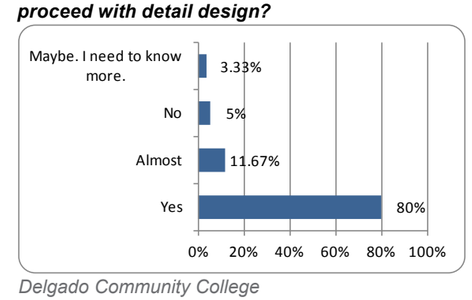
Delgado Community College

Did we get the overall trail design correct?



Delgado Community College

Do you believe the Greenway design is ready to proceed with detail design?



Delgado Community College

Grace Episcopal Community Meeting

Participants place comments on Alternative 1 Master Plan, Public Open House, Delgado Community College

Summary

In terms of attendance, approximately 80 to 100 people attended each of the three community meetings held at the beginning and end of the week. An average of 15 to 20 people were at the daily workshops and participated in the chip game. Residents expressed appreciation for the process which asked for their input and then allowed them to see the results of their work at the end of the week. This process has proven to be most effective in generating community input and involvement.

Chip Game, Warren Easton High School

Public Open House, Delgado Community College

All photo credits: Design Workshop

Community Workshop 2 – November 2011

Purpose

The purpose of Workshop 2 was to present a refined Lafitte Greenway Master Plan vision, get feedback on design concepts for the Greenway and present principles for the Lafitte Corridor Revitalization Plan. The public meetings included an open-house format with Greenway alternatives, design concepts, Corridor systems analysis and recommendations.

The focus of Workshop 2 was to finalize a Greenway preferred alternative and confirm principles for recommendations for the Corridor.

Outreach

Community outreach and engagement for Workshop 2 of the Lafitte Greenway Project commenced in November of 2011.

Community outreach was further expanded from the groups identified for Workshop 1 to also include potential sources of in-kind support for the greenway. Strategic relationships with leaders within the surrounding areas of the greenway were established to assist in the distribution of door-hangers and notices to local residents. In total, there were approximately 4,000 Robo-calls made, 11,197 emails sent via Constant Contact and 10,000 door-hangers distributed to support Workshop 2.

Process

Workshop 2 included two public meeting presentations held on November 16 and 17, 2011 at Grace Episcopal Church and Sojourner Truth Community Center, respectively. These public meetings presented the Greenway alternatives, discussed stormwater principles for the Greenway and presented Corridor systems analysis and recommendations principles; obtained interactive polling feedback from the community on program and design alternatives and Corridor principles; and allowed for open public comment on materials hanging on venue walls.

The community was also presented with improvements that could be made within the budget allocated for the Greenway.

Outcomes

A major part of the workshop included polling of participants with keypad polling devices.

At the second community meeting, questions centered around three major topics: Greenway program alternatives, Greenway design concepts and principles for the Corridor recommendations. Responses relating directly to Corridor principles and recommendations are included in the Lafitte Corridor Revitalization Plan.

Keypad Polling Summary

Two alternatives for the Lafitte Greenway Master Plan were presented at the community meeting. Community members voted on which option they preferred based on two different design concepts. Refer to Chapter 4, Conceptual Development for the plans that were presented. The plan titled Alternative 3 in this document was the preferred alternative voted by the community.

Refer to Chapter 5 - Park Design for the finalized alternative, which is a combination of Alternative 2 and Alternative 3, based upon feedback by the public.

Initial Improvements

Elements of the plan that could be included in the initial improvements were also presented at the second community meeting. Citizens expressed their concern for safety of the Greenway and their strong support for lighting. See Chapter 5: Park Design in the cost estimate section for the items included in the initial improvements phase.

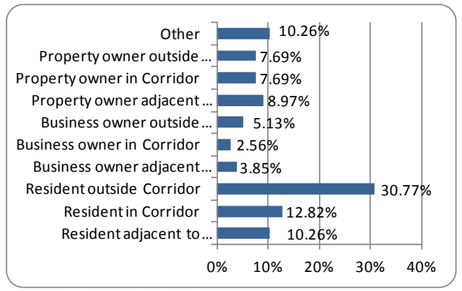
Community Meeting 2, Grace Episcopal Church

Community Meeting 2, Sojourner Truth

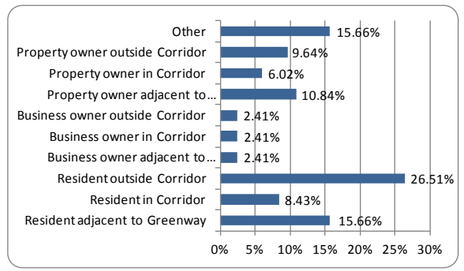
All photo credits: Design Workshop

Results

Your Interest in the Greenway? (Select all that apply) (multiple choice)

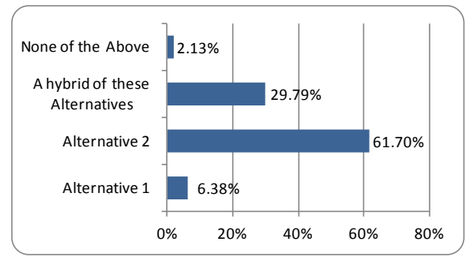


Grace Episcopal Meeting Results

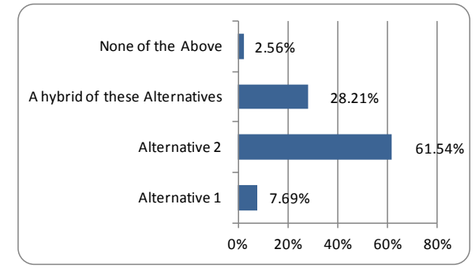


Sojourner Truth Meeting Results

The Alternative I like best is: (Choose one) (multiple choice)

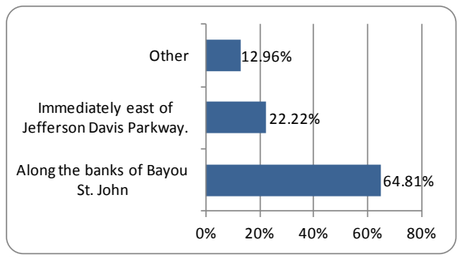


Grace Episcopal Meeting Results

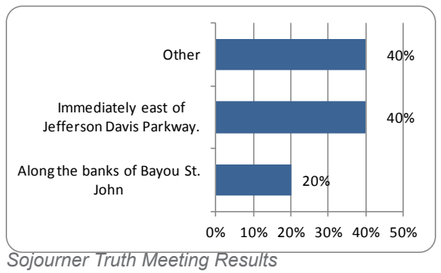


Sojourner Truth Meeting Results

The location I prefer for the contemplative space is: (Choose one) (multiple choice)

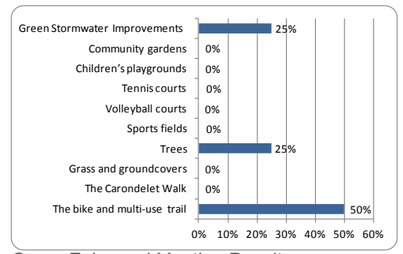


Grace Episcopal Meeting Results

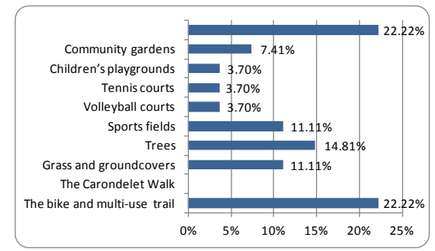


Sojourner Truth Meeting Results

If limited funds are available, what would be your priorities for improvement in the Greenway:

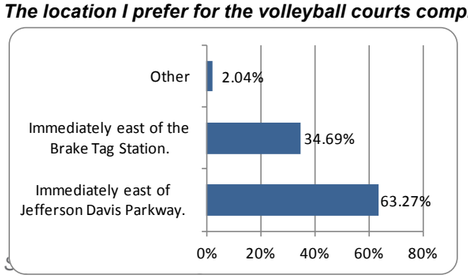


Grace Episcopal Meeting Results

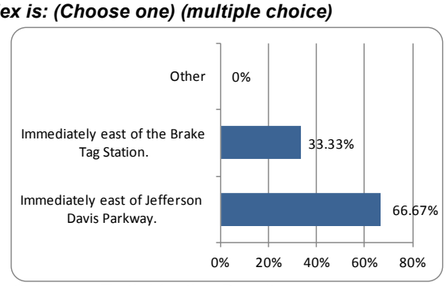


Sojourner Truth Meeting Results

The location I prefer for the volleyball courts complex is: (Choose one) (multiple choice)

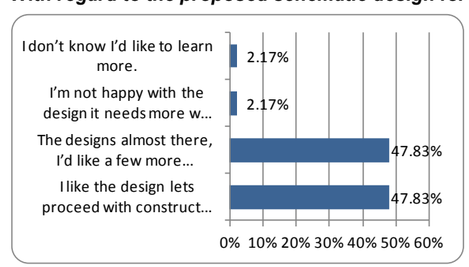


Grace Episcopal Meeting Results

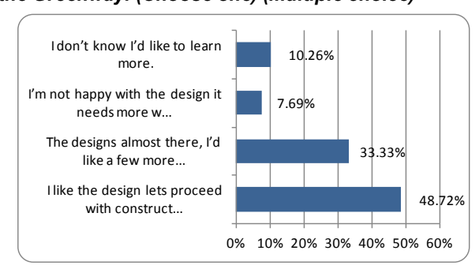


Sojourner Truth Meeting Results

With regard to the proposed schematic design for the Greenway: (Choose one) (multiple choice)

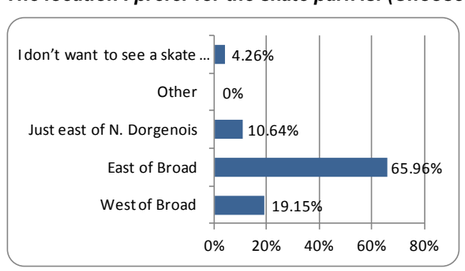


Grace Episcopal Meeting Results

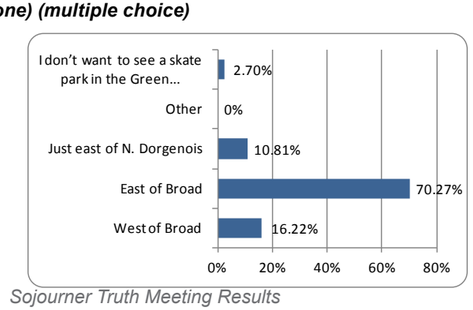


Sojourner Truth Meeting Results

The location I prefer for the skate park is: (Choose one) (multiple choice)

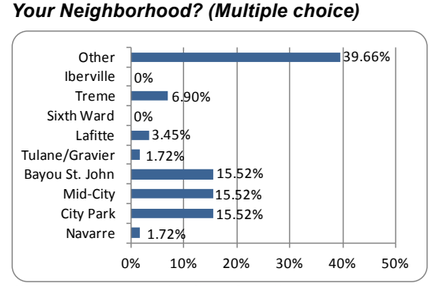


Grace Episcopal Meeting Results

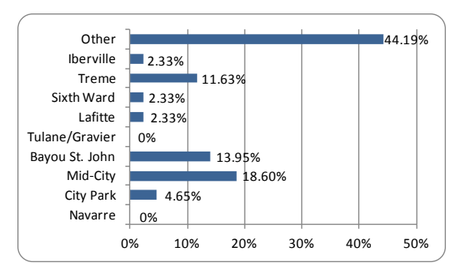


Sojourner Truth Meeting Results

Your Neighborhood? (Multiple choice)



Grace Episcopal Meeting Results



Sojourner Truth Meeting Results

Summary

Attendance at Community Meeting 2 was similar to that at Community Meeting 1. Surprisingly, almost 40 percent of the attendees were from outside the Corridor at the Sojourner Truth meeting and 44 percent of attendees at the Grace Episcopal meeting. The median age of attendees is reflective, however, of the median age of the population of the Corridor.

Participants felt that Alternative 2, as illustrated in Chapter 4, reflected what they would like to see in the Greenway, although almost 30 percent said they would like to see a hybrid of the two alternatives. This was taken into consideration for the development of the Preferred Alternative. Participants were strongly supportive of green stormwater improvements, trees, and the bike and multi-use trails at the Grace Episcopal Church meeting. Feelings were divided at the Sojourner Truth meeting, with members being very supportive of all recommended programmatic uses.

In general, the community was strongly supportive of the design, with almost half of participants eager to move into the construction documents phase. All comments from both of the community meetings were taken into account as the design moved forward into its final phase.

Community Workshop 3 – October 2012

Purpose

The purpose of Workshop 3 was to review the preliminary Greenway construction documents and full drafts of the Lafitte Greenway Master Plan, the Lafitte Corridor Revitalization Plan, and the Lafitte Greenway Management Strategy Report.

The focus of Workshop 3 was to gain public support for the project as it moves forward into final construction documents and implementation.

Outreach

Community outreach and engagement for Workshop 3 of the Lafitte Greenway Project commenced in October 2012. Prior to Workshop 3, the consultant team produced and distributed 10,000 door hangers, recorded and conducted 4,000 Robo-calls, and sent 3,155 E-Blast communications via Constant Contact.

Process

The final workshop featured an open house and a community presentation. The meeting was held on October 9 at Sojourner Truth and then on October 11 at First Grace United Methodist Church. The open house offered large map displays, detailed images with information, drafts of the Lafitte Greenway Master Plan and the Lafitte Corridor Revitalization Plan, and an available team member from Design Workshop to answer any questions. The community presentation prompted discussion focused on specific design elements and other items considered for inclusion with equal consideration given to the Greenway's available budget.

In order to gauge the level of support for proceeding forward with constructing the Greenway, a piece of tape was placed on the ground with one end stating "Go" and the other side stating "Delay." All of the participants except for one person stood on the "Go" end, indicating nearly 100-percent support. The person who did not respond favorably stated that they did not like recommendations for private development around the Greenway.

Outcomes

At Workshop 3, questions centered around the placement of pedestrian and automobile crossings, the cost of tree planting in the overall budget, fencing, the potential for funding from the City of New Orleans Hazard Mitigation program, parking on and near the Greenway, drainage compliance with the 10-year storm requirement, what agency would be responsible for maintaining the Greenway, visible signage and way-finders, references to the current City Zoning Ordinance and the Greenway recommendations, the Greenway's support for economic development and the start of construction.

Summary

Attendance for the two Workshop 3 meetings totaled 128, with 64 persons attending each day. Residents were informed that the City and their environmental consultant are working with the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality toward an approved site remediation plan. In addition, they were informed that no additional cultural districts, economic incentives for development along the Greenway, or TIF's (Tax Increment Financing) had been proposed. They learned that the Lafitte Greenway Master Plan calls for the long-term removal of City facilities within the Greenway and that construction documents would be made available to the public, along with updates of the current maintenance and operations plans.

Other issues discussed included concern about meeting the potential deadline for spending the grant funds, prepping of the site before construction and negotiations with the railroad to complete the rest of the Greenway from N. Alexander Street to Canal Boulevard. Striping of the crosswalks, blighted and abandoned housing, revitalization of adjacent parks and the potential for minority contracting were also discussed. Individuals were encouraged and pleased with the direct responses to their questions. They were notified that the next step was to present the Lafitte Greenway Master Plan and Lafitte Corridor Revitalization Plan to the City Planning Commission for adoption. In addition, the design team will address remaining comments on the Preliminary Design and then proceed into Final Design.

Community Support for Constructing the Greenway

All photo credits: Design Workshop Team

Community Workshop 3, First Grace United Methodist Church

All photo credits: Design Workshop Team

Community Workshop 3, Sojourner Truth

All photo credits: Design Workshop Team

Community Workshop 3, Sojourner Truth

All photo credits: Design Workshop Team

Community Support for Constructing the Greenway

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4

CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

Design Concepts
- History
- Greenway
- Planting

Greenway Alternative 1
Greenway Alternative 2
Greenway Alternative 3
Logo Concepts

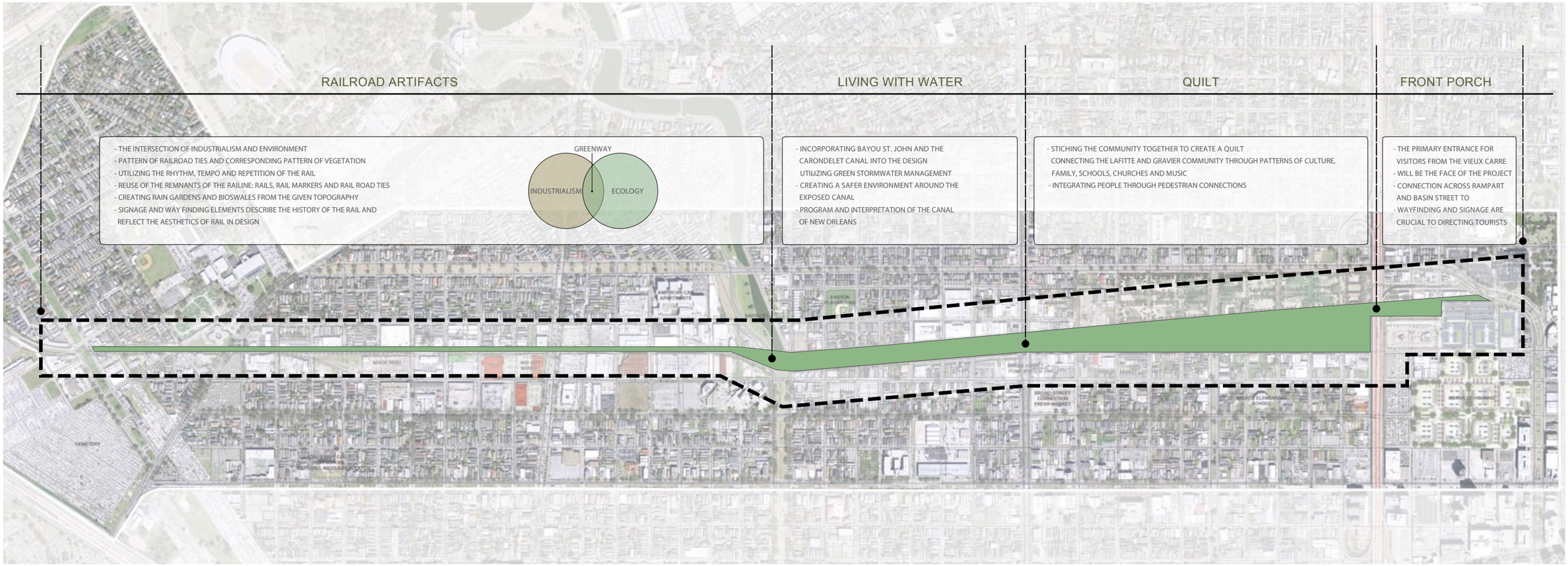
The Conceptual Development Chapter includes the conceptual design elements that were created to provide inspiration to the design of the Greenway. In addition, this chapter includes the logo concepts for the Greenway.

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the design concepts and programming for each design alternative for the Greenway.

Design Concepts

In terms of landscape architecture, a design concept refers to an idea and/or inspiration that is conveyed in physical or representational form. The Lafitte Greenway design concept is derived from the history, ecology and physical make-up of the Greenway and Corridor. It is used as a framework for guiding the design process and a means of exploring design through a larger, unifying network of ideas.

Four initial concepts that derive from historical uses of the Greenway (*Railroad Artifacts*, stormwater management *Living with Water,* stitching communities together *The Quilt,* and the relationship of the neighborhoods to the Greenway the *Front Porch*) were developed for the overall design. The diagram below shows the initial conceptual development that informed design decisions throughout the entire process.

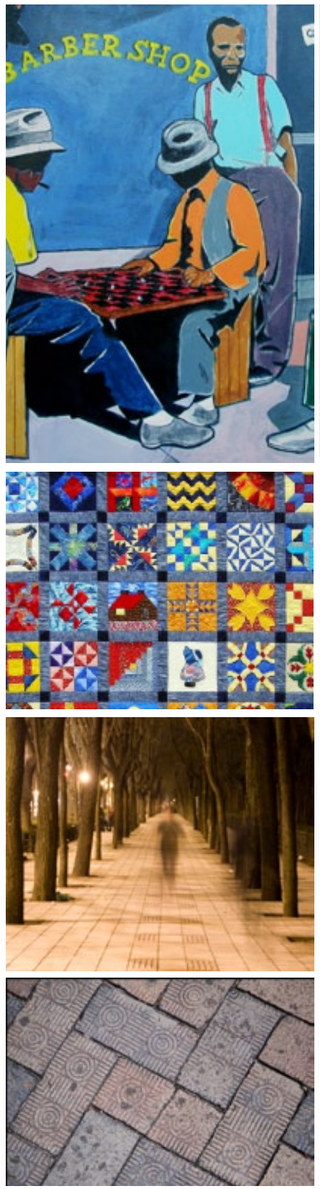


Aerial Data Source: New Orleans Regional Planning Commission

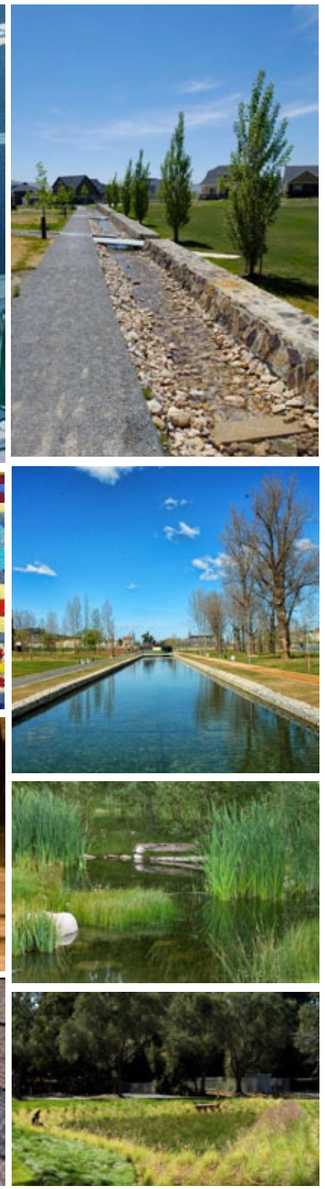
The Second Line

Front Porch

Quilt



Living with Water



Nature in Order

Railroad Artifacts

Imagery

The inspiration imagery to the left illustrates the concepts of The Second Line, Front Porch, Quilt, Living with Water, Nature in Order and Railroad Artifacts.

The Second Line and Nature in Order are conceptual design ideas that drive the design of the entire Greenway and are not limited to specific geographic regions as are the other four concepts: The Front Porch, Quilt, Living with Water and Railroad Artifacts. This concept is referred to as the *Lafitte Suite*, the idea that one overarching concept is applied to the entire Greenway.

All Photo Credits: Design Workshop Team

Design Concepts: History

The land contained in the Lafitte Greenway has been utilized in many different ways over the course of time. Originally the land was called by the French *Ciprieres au Bois* or Cypress Forest. Much of the Corridor lies below the Metairie Ridge and was swamp or bottomland forest. It is likely that the lands of the Lafitte Greenway were once entirely forest lands.

Bayou St. John and its tributary streams provided major travel routes from Lake Pontchartrain into the new city. The French at first excavated from this swamp the French Canal, a watercourse 15 French feet in width. Over time this canal was widened to create the Carondelet Canal of approximately 50 French feet in width. Along the Carondelet Canal were tow paths, labeled in historic plats as the Carondelet Walk.

With time railroads that entered the city generally paralleled the Carondelet Canal. The canal was filled in and the forests, which formerly occupied the Greenway property, were eliminated. The rail yard was expanded with at least a dozen rail lines.

The rail yards also disappeared with time, and, as buildings leveled, Lemann Playgrounds No. 1 and No. 2 were constructed on either side of N. Claiborne Avenue to provide play space for segregated neighborhoods.

In the 1960s, New Orleans like many American cities forced interstate highways through the heart of the city. The live oak-lined N. Claiborne Avenue, once a vibrant African-American retail district, was in large measure destroyed.

In 2005, Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans — destroying many of the play elements of Lemann Playgrounds No. 1 and 2. The land that is now the Lafitte Greenway was utilized to house temporary trailers (FEMA trailers) to house the residents of the surrounding neighborhoods.

Cypress Forest + Frenchman's Canal

Cypress Forest + Frenchman's Canal + Carondelet Walk

Cypress Forest + Frenchman's Canal + Carondelet Walk + Orleans Relief Canal + Railroad

Brown Danos Plan Trail

Aerial Data Source: New Orleans Regional Planning Commission

Waggonner Ball Plan Water Elements

Design Workshop Concept Plan

Design Workshop Concept Plan + Cypress Forest

Culmination of historical influences

Aerial Data Source: New Orleans Regional Planning Commission
Historic Survey Data Source: City of New Orleans

In early 2006, a group of citizen activists formed the Friends of Lafitte Corridor. In 2007, the Friends of Lafitte Corridor put forth a plan by Brown + Danos landdesign to construct a trail from Basin Street to Canal Boulevard. This same group sponsored the Waggonner-Ball plan in 2010 which proposed extensive use of the Greenway property for stormwater management.

In 2010, Design Workshop was retained by the City of New Orleans to prepare a revitalization plan for the Greenway and prepare a master plan and construction documents for the Greenway. The public engagement process revealed a great deal of interest in active recreational programming in the Greenway. A design charrette was held which developed an initial master plan diagram.

The uses and activities of these periods in time provide fertile ground for design inspiration.

Design Concepts: Greenway

Imagery

The inspiration imagery to the right illustrates ideas for the vision of the Greenway. Parks such as the Highline in New York City are drawn upon for idea generation for how an old railroad line could be transformed into a public open space.

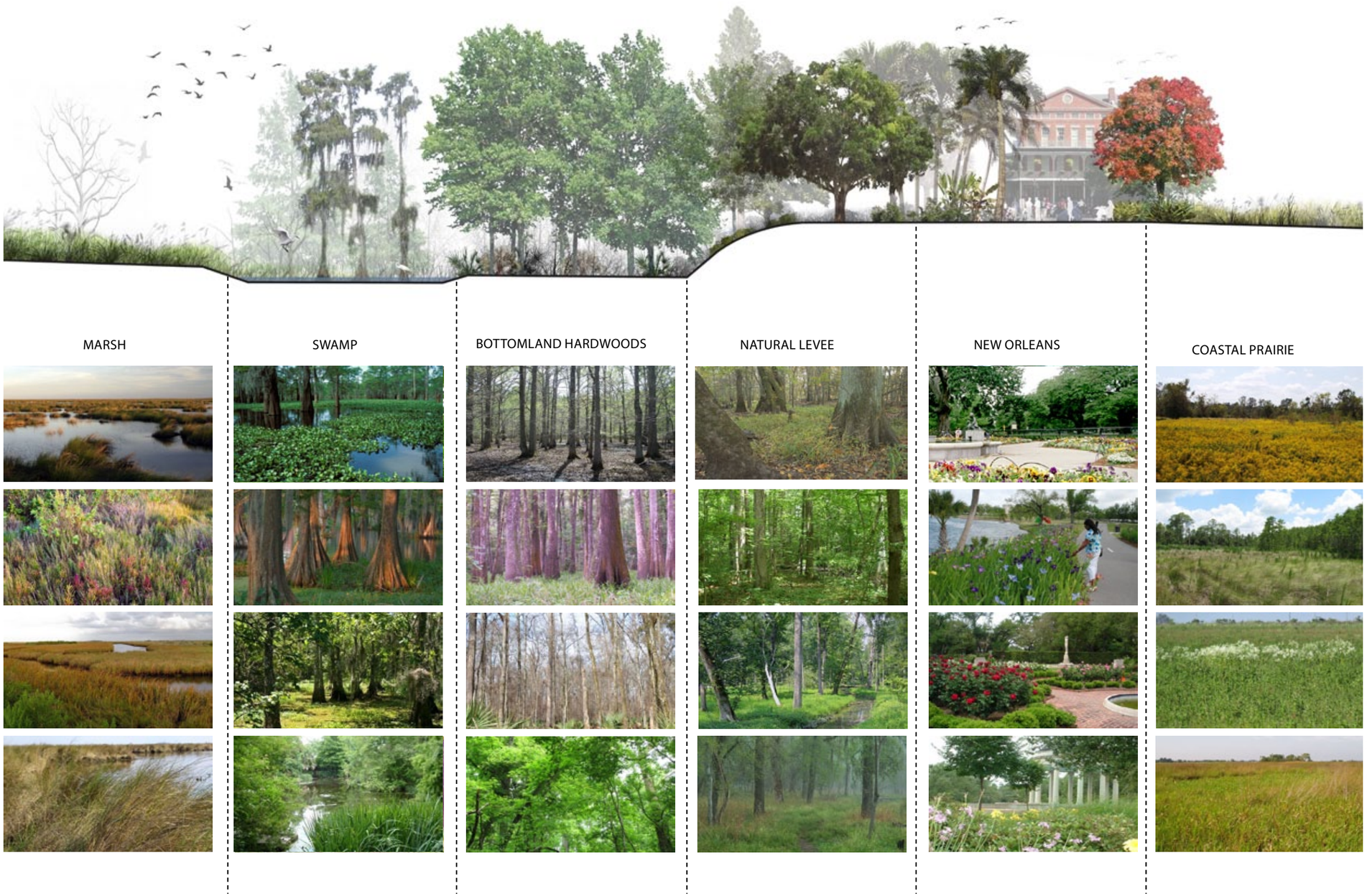
Greenway Character Board

Design Concepts: Planting

Imagery

The overarching planting plan design concept for the Lafitte Greenway balances wildlife habitat, ecosystem restoration and environmental protection within the context of an urban greenway. These concepts can be accomplished by the use of appropriately placed native Louisiana plants and native vegetation communities within and around the Lafitte Greenway. Native plants that represent the native communities that were historically found in, or in proximity of, New Orleans are planned.

The planting plan for the Lafitte Greenway Corridor uses native plant species that are representative of existing southern Louisiana plant communities, such as marsh, bottomland hardwoods, natural levee and coastal prairie communities. Historically, marsh, bottomland hardwoods and natural levee communities were crossed by the construction of the railroad corridor. The lower, wetter plant communities of marsh and bottomland hardwood were the two most prevalent habitats along both sides of the railroad corridor with areas of higher elevation supporting a natural levee vegetation component. The railroad corridor itself may have supported at least some partial components of the coastal prairie community. Woody species typical of these natural plant communities are planned for the Lafitte Greenway.



All Photo Credits: Design Workshop Team

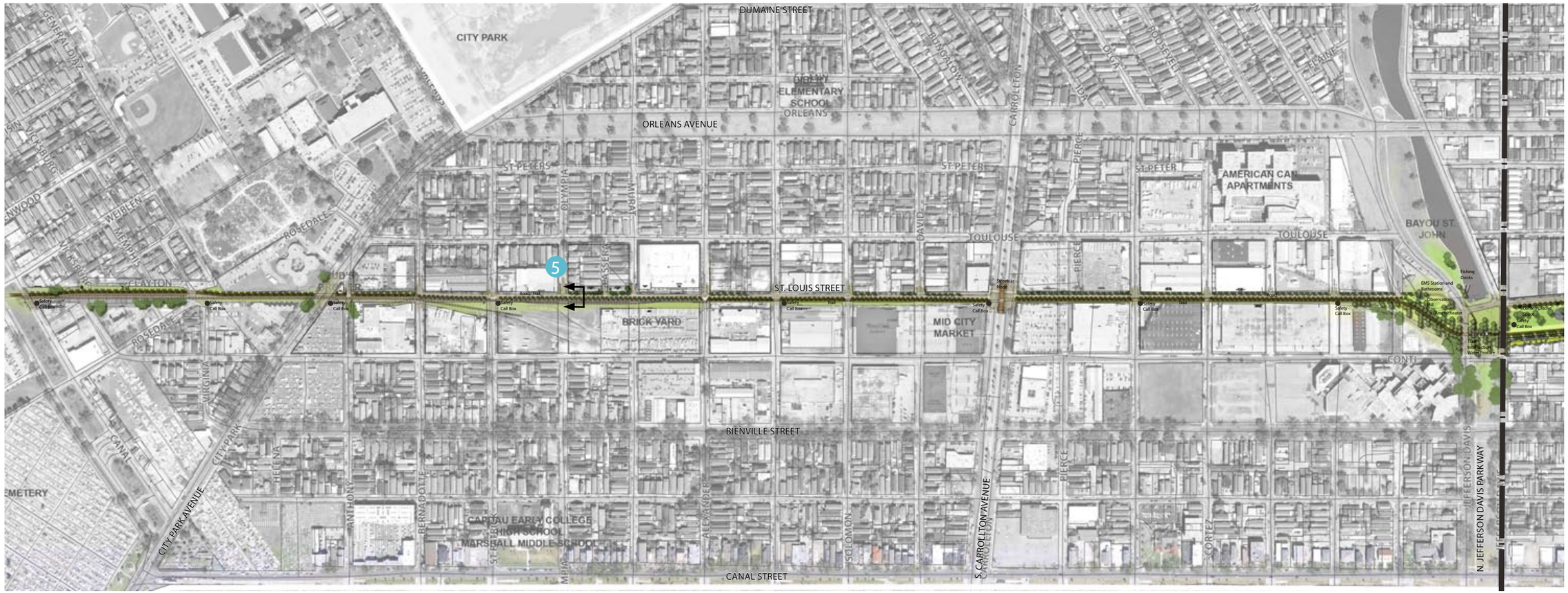
Native Plant Communities of the Greenway

Lafitte Greenway Master Plan Alternative 1

During Workshop 1, a plan was developed with the following programmatic uses:

- Restaurant
- Bocce and Horseshoes
- Playgrounds
- Lawn
- Basketball Court
- Multi-Purpose Recreation Fields
- Picnic Shelters
- Splash Pad
- Community Gardens
- Tether Ball
- Stage
- Pavilion
- Tennis Courts
- Orchard
- Washers
- Skate Spots
- Dog Park
- Volleyball Courts
- Marching Band Practice Lawns
- Contemplative Space
- Fishing Docks
- Observation Hill
- Amphitheater
- Safety Features
- Parcourse

Planned uses of the Greenway respond to the needs of the adjacent communities, schools and interests surrounding the Greenway in the Corridor. Trail alignment options, planting schemes and signage were among the aspects of the Greenway that were analyzed during the first charrette.

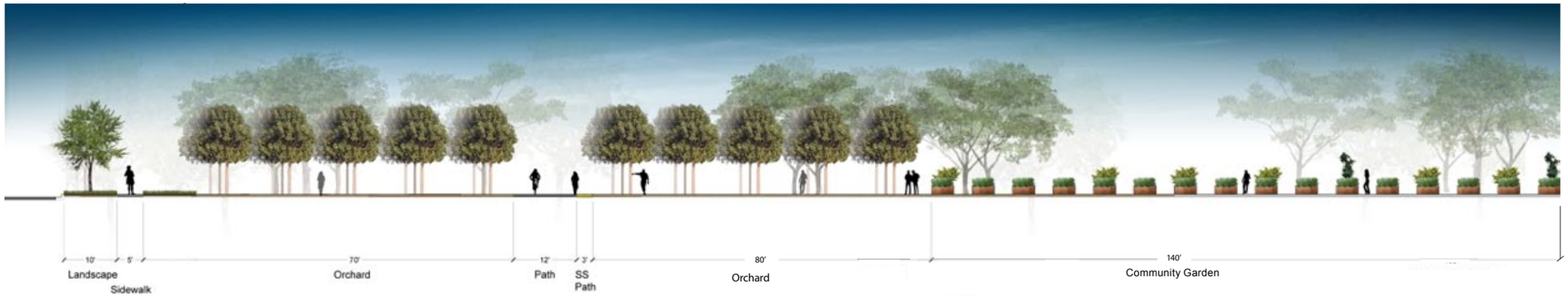


Alternative 1 Plan

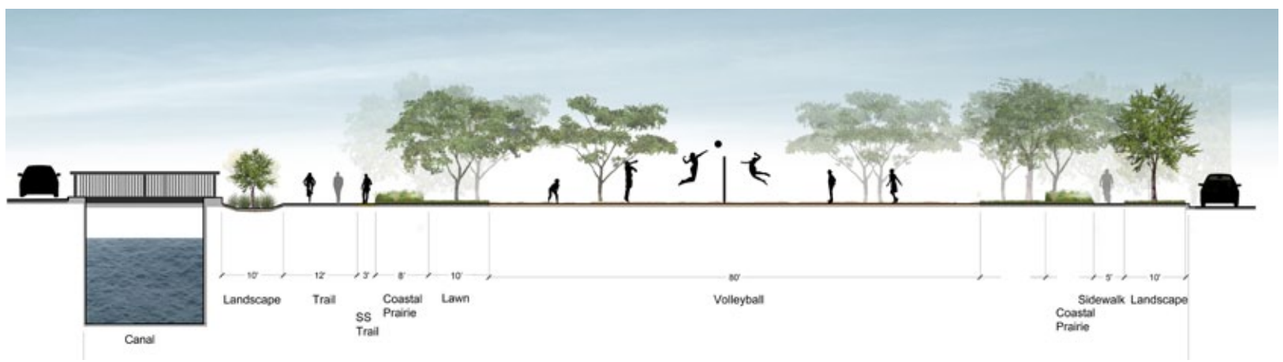
Sections: Alternative 1

The longitudinal sections of the Greenway show the relationship of the trail to the planned programmatic uses of the Greenway such as community gardens, horseshoes and volleyball.

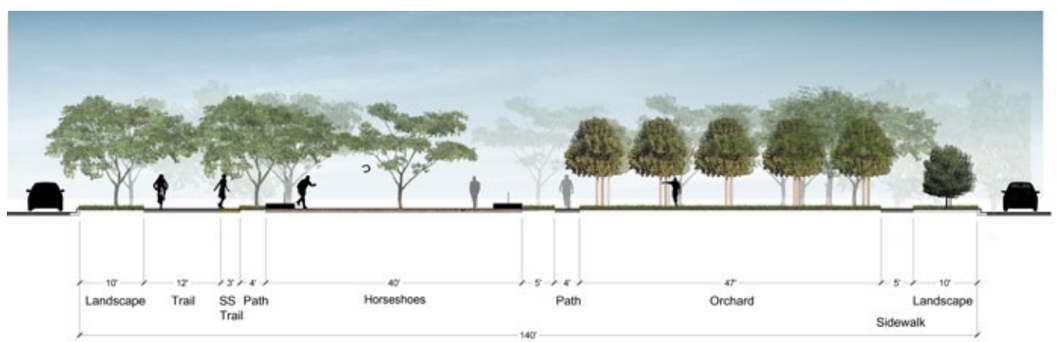
The sections are referenced on the Lafitte Greenway Master Plan Alternative 1 on page 38.



1 *Greenway between N. Galvez Street and Johnson Street*



2 *Greenway between N. Gayoso Street and N. Salcedo Street*



3 *Greenway between N. Rocheblave Street and N. Dorgenois Street*