

Bayou Bienvenue Project Charter

1. Executive Summary

The Bayou Bienvenue Project is a collaborative effort to restore and enhance the Bayou Bienvenue Wetland Triangle (BBWT) in the Lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans. This initiative aligns the City of New Orleans (The City), the Water Institute (The Institute), National Wildlife Federation (NWF), Lower Ninth Ward Center for Sustainable Engagement and Development (CSED), and Nunez Community College (Nunez CC). The project integrates ecological restoration, community engagement, and sustainable development.

2. Project Overview

2.1 Project Summary

The Bayou Bienvenue Project aims to develop a Restoration Prioritization Plan (RPP) that aligns ecological, social, and economic priorities for the wetland area. This project will leverage funding from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to implement restoration prioritization, stakeholder engagement, and restoration design.

2.2 Project Goals, Outcomes, and Objectives

- Enhance wetland resilience through data-driven restoration planning.
- Engage local stakeholders to ensure alignment with community priorities.
- Develop and implement an RPP for BBWT.
- Facilitate structured decision-making with key partners.
- Provide capacity building for the Lower 9th Ward youth.

2.3 High-Level Scope

The project includes four major phases:

- 1. Project Charter and Engagement Plan Development (March 1, 2025 – May 30, 2025)**
 - a. Establish project objectives and team roles.
 - b. Plan for stakeholder workshops and engagement activities.
- 2. Planning and Feasibility (March 20, 2025 – December 31, 2025)**
 - a. Set decision context, provide project overview, and opportunities for stakeholders to participate. (Kickoff Workshop)
 - b. Build consensus on a holistic set of objectives. (Objectives Workshop)
 - c. Restoration Assessment Development (March 20-June 20, 2025)
 - d. Restoration Prioritization Plan Development (August 1, 2025 – December 31, 2025)
 - i. Draft and finalize the RPP.
 - ii. Produce supporting materials, including GIS maps.
 - iii. Ensure quality control and stakeholder review.
- 3. RFP and Procurement (January 1, 2026 – December 31, 2027)**
 - a. Develop draft RFP.
 - b. Review proposals.
 - c. Evaluate design plans.

Ongoing activities:

- Data management and GIS/maps production.
- Technical editing and quality control.

2.4 Deliverables

- Project Charter and Engagement Plan
- Stakeholder workshop reports
- Restoration Assessment
- Restoration Prioritization Plan (RPP)
- RFP

2.5 Success Factors

- Strong stakeholder engagement and build understanding of the importance and value of restoration in the surrounding community.
- Alignment of ecological, social, and economic goals.
- Effective project management and adherence to timeline and budget.
- Adoption of the RPP by key decision-makers and funding partners.

3. Project Organization

3.1 Organization Chart

The project is structured with a Core Planning Team and Stakeholder Groups:

- **Core Planning Team:** City of New Orleans, CSED, NWF, The Institute and Nunez Community College
- **Stakeholder Groups:** Local community organizations and community members. These groups could include Federal and state agencies, local neighborhood associations, coastal restoration non-profit organizations, economic development organizations, among others.

3.2 Roles & Responsibilities

- **The City of New Orleans:** Project management, supporting project efforts and collaboration, technical experts and restoration assessment.
- **CSED:** Drive community engagement and outreach, develop engagement plan
- **NWF:** Provide outreach and ecological expertise and support restoration planning, develop and write the Bayou Bienvenue Restoration Assessment.
- **The Institute:** Project coordination, workshop facilitation, implementation of a structured process to develop the Restoration Prioritization Plan, support in developing the draft RFP, review of RFP proposals, Data Management, Technical editing/Quality control.
- **Nunez Community College:** Provide meeting space and provide students for facilitation assistance, stakeholder engagement assistance, and project planning assistance.
- **Stakeholders:** Participate in workshops, provide input on restoration priorities.

Project Management

- **Lead:** The City of New Orleans Office of Resilience & Sustainability
 - Project oversight
 - Provide access to Department personnel to discuss the required services during normal working hours, as requested by the Contractors; and
 - Coordinate efforts between the project partners.
 - Provide fiscal administration of the project through review of invoices, documentation, interim deliverables, and final deliverables and payment of invoices as outlined in Article III.
- **Supporting:**

- The Institute will support The City with meeting coordination, agenda setting, noting, and deliverable coordination and review.

Project Charter

- **Lead:** The Water Institute
 - Defining and establishing project team objectives, roles and responsibilities of the project team, identify project milestones.
- **Supporting:**
 - The City, CSED, NWF and Nunez CC will provide review and revisions on the Project Charter.

Engagement Plan

- **Lead:** CSED
 - A plan for engaging the established internal and external stakeholder groups as well as working with trusted community voices to reach a broader public audience in the planning process. The plan will include a schedule for workshops and other key stakeholder engagement milestones as well as tactics for public communications and outreach.
 - Secure meeting locations.
 - Plan and organize meetings with Lower 9th Ward stakeholders.
 - Work with project partners to identify stakeholder participation.
 - Provide additional staff and volunteers for tours, field trips and project meetings.
- **Supporting:**
 - The Institute will support CSED in engagement through meeting coordination support, and engagement plan drafting.
 - The City, NWF and Nunez CC will provide guidance on public engagement plans and support meeting facilitation.
 - NCC will provide coastal studies majors for facilitation assistance and provide coastal restoration concentration students for stakeholder engagement assistance
 - Additional personnel support for Community meetings will be provided by NWF and Nunez CC.

Restoration Assessment

- **Lead:** NWF

- Collect and synthesize the available technical studies and data for the Central Wetlands Unit and identify gaps and uncertainties.
- Collect and synthesize available social science data, including oral histories, advocacy efforts, academic studies, significant media coverage
- Work with CSED to compile a catalogue of proposed, planned and implemented restoration projects in the area, and relevant resources constraints for those activities.
- Assess existing studies, data, and restoration plans, which will be synthesized into a summary of the current conditions and the range of potential future conditions for the restoration in BBWT.
- Compile all findings, plans, and assessments to produce a Restoration Assessment.
- **Supporting:**
 - The City, CSED will provide personnel support in the development of the Restoration assessment summary by assisting NWF in compiling a catalogue of proposed, planned and implemented restoration projects in the area, and relevant resources constraints for those activities a (e.g., sediment availability, land-ownership issues, funding).
 - The Institute will provide feedback on the restoration assessment, and review as part of the development of the RPP.
 - NCC will provide coastal restoration concentration students to assist in any project planning.
- **Restoration Prioritization Plan (RPP)**
 - **Lead:** The Institute
 - Incorporate information from the restoration assessment to develop a long-term vision for Bayou Bienvenue.
 - Define restoration goals and objectives for Bayou Bienvenue through an objectives setting workshop held with the project team and stakeholders.
 - Work with the City, CSED, NWF, and stakeholders to identify the restoration opportunities and strategies for Bayou Bienvenue, and the alternative paths available that would result in achieving the established objectives. The team will facilitate a workshop with internal and external stakeholders to brainstorm strategies. This will include opportunities to build upon or leverage existing efforts and initiatives.
 - Identify priority restoration actions that consider:

- Current conditions
- Ecological impact
- Community impact
- Implementation challenges
- Cost-effectiveness
- Timeline for implementation
- Write and design comprehensive restoration prioritization plan and identify Phase 1 implementation activity(ies)
- **Supporting:**
 - The City, CSED, NWF, Nunez CC:
 - Participate in workshops to develop and build consensus on objectives for BBWT restoration.
 - Provide requested data and draft text to support the development of the RPP.
 - Review and support for finalization of the RPP.
 - NCC will provide coastal restoration concentration students to assist in any project planning.

RFP and Procurement:

- **Lead:** City of New Orleans
 - Provide the information regarding procurement procedures necessary to develop the RFP
 - Leads the RFP Process, review and finalization of the RFP, selection of the implementing agency/organization, contracting and oversight
- **Support:**
 - The Institute:
 - Draft development of an RFP that will include the development of qualification requirements and minimum scope of work requirements, RFP schedule, and selection process outline.
 - The Institute will assist in monitoring/ technical review of 60% of engineering and design documents.
 - CSED will support The City and The Institute in developing RFP scope, schedule and selection processes

- NWF will support monitoring and technical review of the 30% engineering and design.
- NCC will provide coastal restoration concentration students to assist in any project planning.

4. Project Plan

4.1 Timeline & Major Milestones

- **Q1 2025:** Project initiation, charter drafting
- **Q2 2025:** Project charter finalization, Restoration assessment drafting, Kickoff workshop
- **Q3 2025:** Objectives setting workshop, Restoration activities refinement workshop,
- **Q4 2025:** RPP drafting, review, and finalization

- **Q1 2026:** RFP drafting, bid solicitation and review
 - Upon completion of procurement documents, route to approvals and advertisement set up – roughly 2 weeks.
 - Advertisement is 30 days.
 - Selection committee is 2 weeks after completion of advertisement.
- **Q2 2026:** RFP contract initiation
 - Within 10 days after selection, contracting kickoff meeting is held with selected firm for contract negotiation.
- **Q3 2026:** 45% E&D completed
- **Q4 2026:** 60% design finalization

4.2 Resource Plan

The project team will leverage technical expertise, community partnerships, and funding support to execute project tasks effectively.

4.3 Quality Plan

Deliverables will undergo internal quality and technical editing review, stakeholder validation, and expert peer review before finalization.

5. Project Considerations

5.1 Risks

- **Stakeholder Coordination:** Potential challenges in achieving consensus across diverse groups.
- **Funding and Resources:** Availability of financial support for long-term restoration efforts.
- **Legal Uncertainty:** Landowner considerations
- **Environmental Variability:** Climate impacts and unforeseen ecological changes affecting project outcomes.

5.2 Risk Mitigation

- Regular stakeholder engagement and adaptive planning.
- Diversified funding strategies and grant applications.
- Coordinated discussions with landowners and consideration in the restoration selection process.