

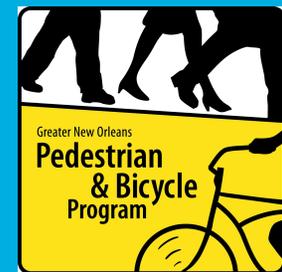
C'est Levee? Reinventing Our Levees

Levee Top Trails in Southeast Louisiana

Dan Jatres, Regional Planning Commission

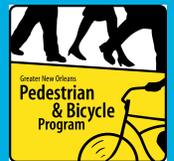
2008 National Trails Symposium

November 18, 2008



Agenda

- History, Planning and Development
- Construction
- Post-Katrina
- Future Growth
- Regional Connections



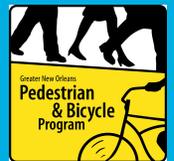
A Little History...

- Great Mississippi Flood of 1927
- Flood Control Act of 1928
 - Mississippi River and Tributaries Project
 - USACE constructs flood control
- Levee districts
 - Maintenance and operation



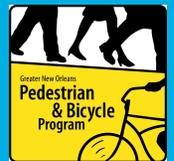
Mississippi River and Tributaries Project

- Eastbank
 - 190+ miles
 - Baton Rouge to Pointe à la Hache
- Westbank
 - 290+ miles
 - Simmesport to Venice
- Public right-of-way
 - Continuous linear green space
 - Maintenance paths seen as potential recreational facility

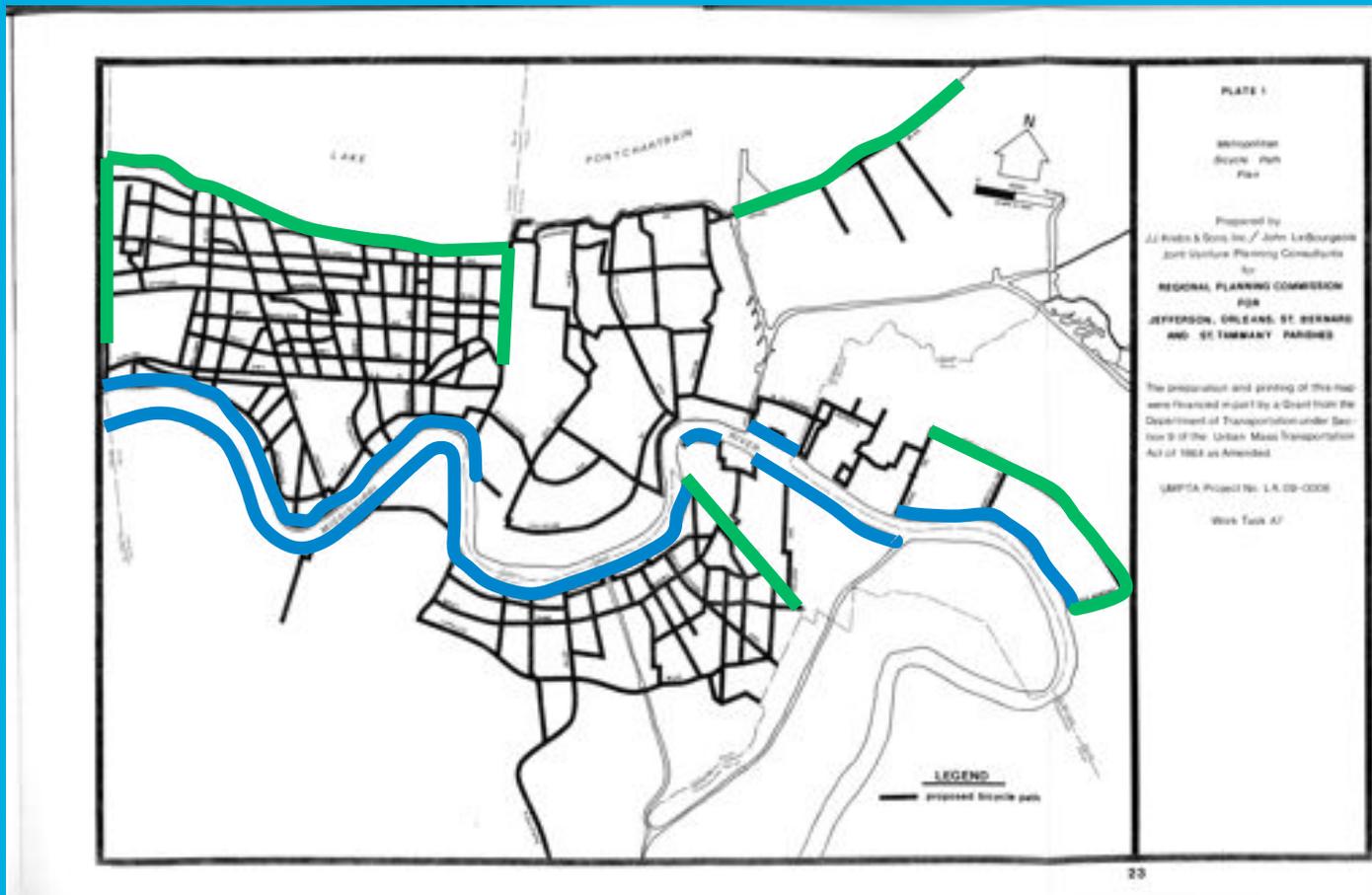


Early Planning

- First proposals: parish initiatives
 - Jefferson Parish Bicycle Path Plan, 1975
 - New Orleans Bikeways, 1976
 - Both plans included levee top paths
- Regional System
 - Metropolitan Bicycle Path Plan, 1977
 - Proposed a 3-parish network of 388 miles
 - Included 43 miles on Mississippi River levees



1977 Metro New Orleans Bike Plan



Barriers

- Funding
- Multiple Jurisdictions
 - Parishes
 - Levee districts
 - State of Louisiana
 - US Army Corps of Engineers
- Legal Issues
 - Authority to construct
- Access Issues
 - Port of New Orleans
 - Avondale Shipyards
- Property Rights



Overcoming Barriers

- Funding
 - Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA)
 - Transportation Enhancements
 - \$12m+ in 8 parishes in Mississippi River Levee Trails
- Multiple Jurisdictions
 - RPC became facilitator
 - USACE: Planning Assistance to States



Overcoming Barriers



- Legal Issues
 - LA Legislature: Servitude to levee districts
 - Corps: No Congressional authority or funding
- Access Issues
 - Move off the levee crown
 - Bridges
- Property Rights
 - Less of a problem in urban areas

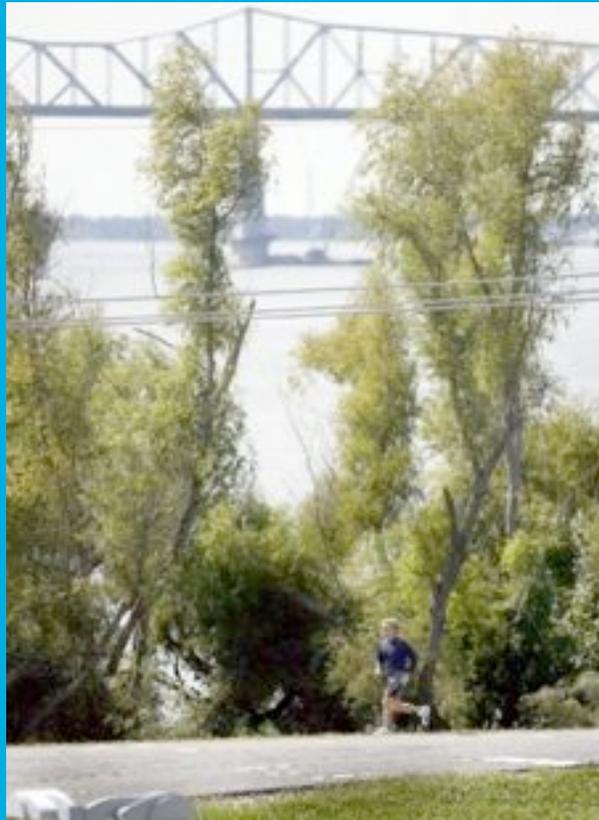


Construction

- Early-mid 90s
 - Jefferson and Orleans
- TE Funding
 - Parishes and levee districts provide local match (20%)
- Design
 - Corps contributes to planning and design
- NORBAC
 - Citizen involvement



10 Years of Growth



- By 2005
 - 43.5 miles built
 - 83.1 miles planned
- On-street facilities through New Orleans urban area
- Ferry system connects Eastbank and Westbank



Post-Katrina

- Challenges
 - Unresolved issues
 - New issues
- Opportunities
 - Expanded system
 - Surge in public interest



Post-Katrina Challenges



- Unresolved Issues
 - Funding
 - Jurisdictions
 - Legal Issues
 - Access Issues
 - Property Rights
- New Issues
 - Storm damage
 - Levee lifts
 - USACE timelines



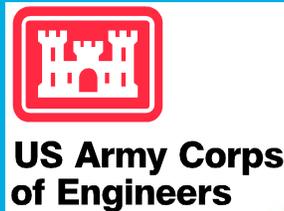
Levee Lifts

- Levee Construction
 - Repairing Katrina damage
 - Raising levees to authorized height
 - Correcting structural problems
 - Raise levees to Cat-5 protection
- Largest challenge facing the levee trails
- Corps resisted replacing trail sections they remove
 - Not authorized or funded by Congress



New Partnerships

- DOTD, USACE, and RPC
- Corps will replace trail in Orleans and Jefferson
- Future trail segments in conjunction with Corps projects
 - DOTD provides gap funding
- Adjusted construction timelines
- Asphalt all weather access roads for maintenance and inspection
 - Possible solution for Lakefront



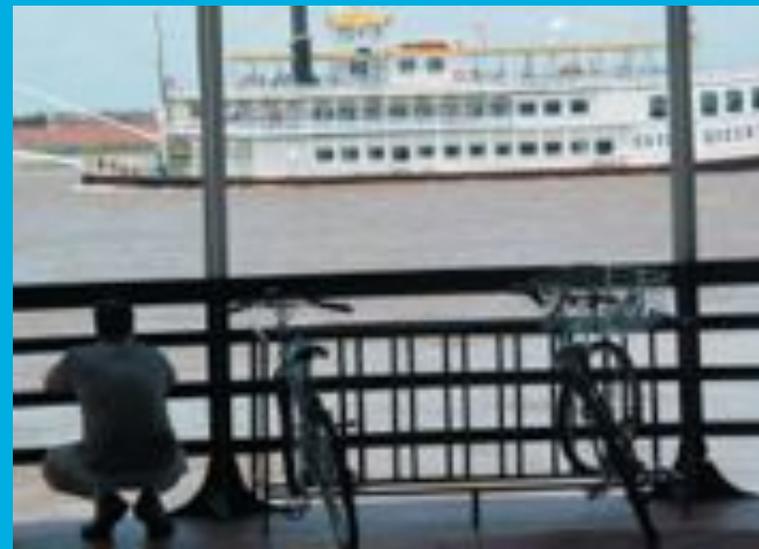
Post-Katrina Opportunities

- Extensive community planning: bike/ped a common theme
- Quality of life
- Economic development
- Public support
- Political support



Future Plans

- Eastbank
 - Baton Rouge to New Orleans
 - Feasibility study beginning soon
- Westbank
 - Talk of similar feasibility study
- Construction
 - Projects funded in Jefferson, St. Bernard, St. Charles and St. John Parishes
- Planning
 - Plaquemines and St. Charles
- Regional connections
 - New Orleans on-street routes
 - Jefferson: River to Lake
 - Ferry network





Southeast Louisiana Levee Top Trails

Contact Information

Regional Planning Commission

Greater New Orleans Pedestrian & Bicycle Program

Dan Jatres

Pedestrian & Bicycle Programs

504.568.6608

djatres@norpc.org

