

Jefferson EDGE 2020 FLOOD PROTECTION Status Report 2: October, 2009

Prepared by JEDCO and GCR & Associates, Inc.

JEDCO
Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission



Flood Protection

In response to concerns about quality of life in Jefferson Parish and its impact upon the community's economic competitiveness, JEDCO initiated the Jefferson Edge 2020 Quality of Life initiative. This initiative has produced eight "strategic implementation plans" which include a series of action items to address particular quality of life issues. Implementing the action items requires the total cooperation and keen interest of all involved, including JEDCO, the Jefferson Parish government, numerous other entities, and frequently State and Federal agencies. In 2008, JEDCO retained GCR & Associates, Inc. to prepare semiannual reports outlining the status of each of these action items and overall progress toward implementation.

The following table summarizes the progress made toward each of the external flood protection (E) and internal flood protection (I) action items.

E = External Flood Protection I = Internal Flood Protection

Action ID #	Action Item	Progress as of October 2009		
		Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress
E1	Advocate for additional federal funding for 100 year flood protection			
E2	Advocate for reduced local share of the cost of 100 year protection			
E3	Explore alternative means of financing local component of 100 year protection			
E4	Push for federal authorization and funding of a polder system of compartmentalized flood protection			
E5	Advocate for expanded Corps of Engineers oversight and reform			
E6	Make a renewed call for 500 year protection			
E7	Initiate a public outreach campaign to keep the public informed about external flood control projects			
I1	Secure additional funding through the SELA program to implement SELA-authorized projects			
I2	Seek federal funding for automated climber screens for the pump stations			
I3	Work with federal government to obtain funding to improve "local" drainage system in Jefferson			
I4	Work with the Army Corps of Engineers to authorize Hoey's Basin pump to the river and work with Congress to secure funding			

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						Progress as of October 2009		
Action ID #	Action Item	Original Timeline	Accomplishments/Benchmarks Met	Next Steps	Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress	
E1	Advocate for additional federal funding for 100 year flood protection	Secure funding in 2008	Action complete. For more information, refer to March, 2009 status update.	No further action needed				
E2	Advocate for reduced local share of the cost of 100 year protection	Pass legislation in 2008	Action complete. For more information, refer to March, 2009 status update.	No further action needed				
E3	Explore alternative means of financing local component of 100 year protection	Secure agreement and pass legislation in 2008	Action complete. For more information, refer to March, 2009 status update.	No further action needed				
E4	Push for federal authorization and funding of a polder system of compartmentalized flood protection	Complete study in 2008; secure Congressional authorization and funding by 2011	The Corps' final Louisiana Coastal and Restoration Report was submitted to Washington in early September. This report included only a cursory reference to compartmentalization in a section on "Other Plans and Studies Related to LACPR". It may be possible to for the Jefferson Department of Public Works to study a "pilot polder" plan, creating interior flood walls along Interstate 10.	Explore potential funding methods to study "pilot polder" plan, including through Parish funding and hazard mitigation grant funding. Coordinate with Flood Protection Alliance, La. CPRA, and regional and local levee boards to generate interest in and funding for this concept.				
E5	Advocate for expanded Corps of Engineers oversight and reform	Pass legislation in 2008	<p>The La. CPRA has articulated a detailed Corps reform agenda and is actively seeking support from the state's congressional delegation.</p> <p>The White House Council on Environmental Quality and the Office of Management and Budget have formed a Gulf Coast Interagency Working Group. This group will catalog existing coastal protection and restoration efforts and develop recommendations for improving coordination of efforts among agencies at the federal and state level. La. CRPA is hopeful that this working group's findings will incorporate many of its recommendations for improvements in Corps operations and coordination in coastal protection efforts.</p> <p>According to Senator Landrieu's office, legislation concerning Corps reform will be contingent upon recommendations from the Gulf Coast Interagency Working Group and the Interagency Oceans Policy Task Force.</p>	Continue to monitor progress of La. CPRA's advocacy with Louisiana's congressional delegation. Continue to monitor the progress and recommendation of Gulf Coast Interagency Working Group and Oceans Policy Task Force.				

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Progress as of October 2009							
Action ID #	Action Item	Original Timeline	Accomplishments/Benchmarks Met	Next Steps	Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress
E6	Make a renewed call for 500 year protection	Complete study in 2008; secure Authorization and funding by 2011	<p>The Corps' final Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Report was submitted to Washington in early September. Public commentary that included significant criticism from the La. CPRA and the National Academy of Sciences was incorporated into the final document as an appendix. The plan is currently under review by the Department of the Army and is expected to be approved by the Corps leadership and sent to Congress in early 2010.</p> <p>This document, known as "the 500 year plan" will be the basis for funding authorizations and the selection and implementation of flood protection projects to provide protection from a 1 in 500 year storm.</p>	While a final draft version of the plan has been completed, there are substantial concerns about its format and recommendation. Monitor the revision and adoption process and work to incorporate the modifications suggested by La. CPRA and the National Academy of Sciences into the final, adopted document.			
E7	Initiate a public outreach campaign to keep the public informed about external flood control projects	Unveil website and issue newsletter in 2008	JEDCO is spearheading the production of a custom publication, "Jefferson Life Magazine", which highlights a different quality of life initiative every issue. "Jefferson Life Magazine" is mailed to select households and is available at multiple pick-up points around Jefferson Parish. The fall, 2009 issue includes a number of articles on the status of flood protection initiatives in Jefferson. This action item is not marked as complete because continued public outreach is essential throughout the life of the Jefferson EDGE initiative.	Identify preferred media and outline a schedule for continued outreach on flood protection in the coming years.			

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Action ID #	Action Item	Original Timeline	Accomplishments/Benchmarks Met	Next Steps	Progress as of October 2009		
					Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress
11	Secure additional funding through the SELA program to implement SELA-authorized projects	Secure funding by 2009	Action complete. For more information, refer to March, 2009 status update.	No further action required			
12	Seek federal funding for automated climber screens for the pump stations	Secure funding by 2009	Jefferson Parish included this item in a federal appropriations request. Language for federal funding for neighborhood drainage improvements and climber screens in Jefferson Parish are included in H.R. 2996 currently being considered by the U.S. House and Senate. Additionally, automated climber screens are currently being installed with federal funds at two pump stations: Westminster and Parish Line.	Work with Louisiana's congressional delegation to ensure that this funding is included in the final version of H.R. 2996 and is passed by Congress and signed into law			
13	Work with federal government to obtain funding to improve "local" drainage system in Jefferson	Secure authorization and funding by 2011	Jefferson Parish is in the process of developing a parish-wide Subsurface Drainage Master Plan. The Master Plan is being funded through local funds, and projects identified within the Master Plan will be funded from local resources as funds become available. No large scale local, state, or federal funding source has been identified. The Master Plan will help to make the case for externally or locally generated funding for a comprehensive upgrade to local drainage infrastructure.	Complete Subsurface Drainage Master Plan and identify local, state, and/or federal resources to support infrastructure improvements.			
14	Work with the Army Corps of Engineers to authorize Hoey's Basin pump to the river and work with Congress to secure funding	Complete study in 2008; secure authorization and funding by 2009	<p>Despite unanimous support among the state's congressional delegation and the chair of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, the conference committee that produced the combined version of the House and Senate Energy and Water appropriations bill did not include funding for the "Pump to the River".</p> <p>There is the possibility that State officials (i.e. La. CPRA) can prevent the Corps from building the cheaper flood protection outlined in the "Option 1" plan for improving the outfall canals. By preventing the construction of Option 1, La. CPRA may compel the Corps to seek additional federal funding for "Option 2a." In addition to building more robust flood defenses at the mouth of the 17th Street Canal (and other outfall canals in New Orleans) Option 2a would also fund the Pump to the River.</p> <p>To address this uncertainty, the Corps has stated that it intends to build Option 1 infrastructure in a way that can be adapted to Options 2 or 2a in the future.</p>	Support congressional delegation and La. CPRA efforts to pressure the Corps and Congress to authorize Option 2a for Hoey's Basin and protection of the outfall canals.			