

Huey P. Long Bridge expansion opens 9,000 acres to new development, new name



By [Andrea Shaw, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune](#)

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With the much-heralded \$1.2 billion modernization of the [Huey P. Long Bridge](#) complete and a business, education and recreation foundation in place in the [Avondale](#) area, one big question remains. Will they come to the West Bank?

The notoriously narrow Depression-era span had long stood as a physical and psychological barrier to linking both sides of the [Mississippi River](#), prompting a push from [Jefferson Parish](#) political, business and civic leaders since the 1970s to overhaul the structure. They argued its expansion was

critical to developing the western reaches of the West Bank, which holds Jefferson's last swath of fallow land.

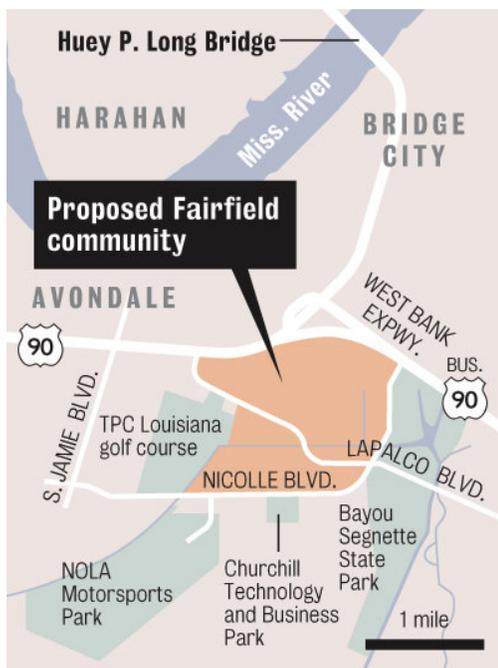
"For years, people on the east bank had a difficult time coming to the West Bank. This will open us up for commerce on both sides and should open up for further development," said state Sen. John Alario, R-Westwego.

Now that the [bridge is wider](#) -- the [ceremonies take place Sunday morning](#) -- the Huey P. can jump-start the area much in the same way the [Crescent City Connection](#) did for Algiers, Gretna and Terrytown in the late 1950s and 1980s. Realtor Don Randon said the initial opening of the former Mississippi River Bridge in 1958 signaled a new frontier on the West Bank. The parallel bridge that opened 30 years later was an even bigger boon.

"Retail flourished, housing expanded," he said. "What we're anticipating with the widening of the Huey P. Long Bridge is the traffic will open up the flood gates."

Said Jefferson Parish President [John Young](#): "The Huey P. Long Bridge is going to be to Jefferson Parish what the Superdome was to Poydras Street. The fact is, all of our raw undeveloped land lies on the West Bank. That's the future."

That future will be centered on a new community, one that officials [have dubbed Fairfield](#), containing a business park, school and recreational amenities. A design and marketing plan is being created to attract upscale residential, high-technology and light-industry developments to retain residents and diversify Jefferson's economy.



The framework is in place to build a desirable community, [Parish Council](#) Chairman [Chris Roberts](#) said. "There's a certain appeal to something being new, that has no history to it, that can be marketed and branded as a unique place with its own identity, that's fresh, that's a new start," Roberts said. "That's why we feel like the name change is an important component."

Wedged between the West Bank Expressway, U.S. 90 and Bayou Segnette, Fairfield is comprised of more than 9,000 acres belonging to a few prominent landowners. Among them are Buckner Barkley of Marrero Land and Improvement Association, NOLA Motorsports founder Laney Chouest, Joseph Marcello and Bruce Wainer. Most of the land is untouched -- some deemed wetlands -- except for a few pastures spotted with grazing cows. A major misconception, Randon said, is that most of the property is wetlands. About 95 percent of Marcello's 4,000 acres is dry, said Randon, who represents Marcello.

Randon said. "It's been protected by a levee and under a pump for 50 years," Randon said. "We have land that is developable without having to mitigate."

Before [Hurricane Katrina](#), Deloitte and Touche was commissioned to determine the parish's best prospect for growth. The consultants found that the Fairfield area was tops because the availability and price of land, access to major roads and minimum effect on surrounding areas, Randon said.

At first, the 2005 storm opened the doors to a massive residential development, when KB Home trumpeted plans to build almost 20,000 houses to replenish the region's decimated stock. Randon

said the firm was under contract to buy 2,000 acres from Marcello. Although the project never materialized, he said the company had been attracted to factors noted in the Deloitte study.

Parish officials weren't too disappointed with KB's departure. "Tract-home neighborhoods seem appealing in the beginning, can come in at a good price point, but from a longevity standpoint, they don't have a unique identity that allows it to have a useful life for an extended period of time," Roberts said.

He stressed that rather viewing KB Home's about-face as a missed opportunity, parish officials won time to shape an attractive, sustainable community. "When you start to develop it right and make it a newer community with one of the best schools that the parish has, with Taylor school, the tech park, NOLA Motorsports, all great anchors and attractions, it takes on its own identity," Roberts said.



The Huey P. Long Bridge expansion is expected to spur growth in the Churchill Technology Park, where JEDCO executive Director Jerry Bologna, left, discusses construction with facilities director Scott Rojas. Michael DeMocker, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune

Hints of what's to come are apparent. Signs touting property for sale are planted along Nicolle and Lapalco Boulevards. Construction abounds on Nicolle in the 70-acre Churchill Farms Technology & Business Park, already home to the Jefferson Economic

Development Commission. Buzzing go-karts and motorcycles [tear around the tracks at NOLA Motorsports](#). The TPC Louisiana golf course routinely hosts conventioners from New Orleans. Patrick F. Taylor Science & Technology Academy moves in August to a new \$35 million campus nearby.

"The vision is to develop this area as a mixed use, properly planned community with a mixture of residential and commercial, with all the appropriate buffers and zoning," said Jerry Bologna, executive director of the economic development commission. "We're seeing the landowners in this area start to position their properties for development."

Randon said he has met with parties interested in building an extended stay hotel and film industry representatives interested in a studio and sound stage. "It's sort of like a blank canvas with tremendous potential," he said. "Right now we are at the cusp of some great things that are going to happen."

JEDCO also is working with [Delgado Community College](#) to open a "river city" campus, which would specialize in maritime-related trades and instruct students in partnership with NOLA Motorsports about high-performance engines. Alario said the Legislature appropriated money this year for the school. "Here is a prime area to provide some educational opportunities," he said.

Meanwhile, JEDCO has been pitching the tech park to national and international site recruiters. Among the firms contacted is a medical device company in Buffalo, N.Y. "We've worked with a number of companies that we're in various stages of negotiating and trying to encourage them to make the move here," Bologna said.

But obstacles remain. Among them is the cost of raising the low-lying land to accommodate construction. JEDCO is filling the technology park property with dirt from the "pump to the river" drainage project in Harahan, saving \$1 million, Bologna said.

You have \$3 billion in capital investment coming into the area." -- JEDCO executive director Jerry Bologna.

The ability to provide "shovel ready" sites makes properties more attractive and cuts down on the cost and time to developers. "That's one of the challenges we have," Bologna said.

Some relief might be coming. [Proposed flood maps](#) could significantly lower the minimum flood elevations for some property owners. Raising the Lake Cataouache levee, along with other improvements in the West Bank hurricane protection system, will make it easier and less expensive to develop the land, Randon said.

After the marketing plan is wrapped up, the next step is to determine how much acreage is buildable and how much is wetlands, Young said.

Including the \$1.2 billion Huey P. Long Bridge expansion, more than \$3 billion in investments have been made in the area in the past few years. Dyno Nobel International, which already employs 440 people in the area, is [proposing an \\$850 million ammonia manufacturing plant](#) in [Waggaman](#), with 65 permanent jobs paying an average of \$55,000 a year. And Entergy Louisiana Inc. is spending \$750 million to [upgrade its Nine Mile Point facility](#).

"You have \$3 billion in capital investment coming into the area. You couple that with the tech park we hope is the catalyst for the commercial development around the area," Bologna said.

The parish has not given up on the [Avondale shipyard](#), once one of the largest employers in Louisiana, Young said. It is [scheduled to close later this year](#), but owner Huntington Ingalls Industries has announced it is seeking a partner to build infrastructure at the site for the oil and gas industry, to capitalize on exploration in the eastern Gulf of Mexico.

"That door hasn't closed yet," Young said. "All indications are they are predicting a boom in the offshore oil industry."

The bridge improvements allow officials to pitch the area as a key transportation hub with access to [Louis Armstrong International Airport](#), railroads and interstate highways. Young said Gov. Bobby Jindal [appointed him to the Interstate 49 task force](#) to assess the feasibility of improving that corridor from Lafayette to New Orleans. U.S. 90, which turns into the elevated West Bank Expressway, would be part of that thoroughfare.



The 20-minute drive to downtown New Orleans and 12 miles from Armstrong International sold Chouest on locating NOLA Motorsports off Nicolle Boulevard. The park serves a large national and international clientele, said general manager Wes Ratcliffe, general manager of the \$60 million NOLA Motorsports.

"If you look at a satellite view, this is uncharted territory," Ratcliffe said. "It's amazing because it's so close to everything."

We're right in the middle of everything from the airport to downtown."

Young said the 65,000-square-foot retail expansion of Elmwood Center on the east bank was made possible in part by the anticipated higher traffic count from the West Bank.

"All of the stars are aligned for us to really make the best of it," he said.

THE ADVOCATE

Jefferson officials hope wider Huey P. Long will encourage development on West Bank

[BY JEFF ADELSON](#)

When it was first built, the Huey P. Long Bridge carried with it the promise of providing the first direct link between the two banks of the Mississippi River, just upriver from New Orleans.

But almost seven decades later, a trip across the bridge is a stark example of just how much of a barrier the river can be.

As they drive onto the bridge in Elmwood, motorists leave a packed and bustling commercial corridor, densely filled with stores, restaurants and warehouses that line the heavily trafficked Clearview Parkway.

But upon exiting, they find themselves in the sleepy and sparsely developed neighborhood of Bridge City where small residential streets bear little relation to the energy and density just a river-crossing away. Beyond that, lies thousands of acres of vacant land, some of the last property in densely packed Jefferson Parish that has yet to be developed.

But with the completion of the bridge widening project being celebrated today, economic development officials hope to inaugurate a new era for that section of the West Bank, a future that they say will more closely bind the two sides of the river and become an engine for growth in a parish that's otherwise all filled up. That effort includes a rebranding of the area, which has been renamed Fairfield, and a major push to get businesses to consider locating on the West Bank.

"I think if you look at Jefferson Parish as a whole, you quickly discover the fact that the east bank is totally built out," said Jerry Bologna, executive director of the Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission. "Our real only opportunities for expansion and greenfield development lie on the West Bank."

But for years, the possibility of that development was stymied by the treacherous bridge that connected the two banks.

Prior to the widening project, the Huey P. Long presented serious "physical and psychological barriers" that kept people away, Parish President John Young said.

"It's such a hassle to go over that bridge and there's a lot of fear factor for a lot of people," said Young, who described the \$1.2 billion widening project as "one of the most important capital works projects we'll see in our lifetime."

Crews began working on the bridge expansion project — the largest transportation project in state history — seven years ago. During that time, they added width to the existing lanes and added a new lane in each direction with the goal of easing both congestion and the nerve-wracking drive.

Increased traffic counts across the bridge show that even before the official opening, that project has had an impact, Bologna said.

“As more people get rid of the psychological barrier the previous bridge posed, I think that’s going to increase traffic as well,” Bologna said.

That’s good for encouraging more commerce within the parish, said Councilman Paul Johnston, whose district includes Bridge City. Johnston said his wife made him drive every time it was necessary to cross the old bridge. Now, he’s hopeful the wider bridge will “bring an end to all that.”

“This new bridge is going to open up the West Bank to bigger and better things,” Johnston said.

Though the Huey P. Long was the first bridge to cross the river in the New Orleans area, and the only way to drive from one bank to the other without leaving Jefferson Parish, it never served to drive widespread economic development at its West Bank terminus.

While the bridge allowed continuous railroad traffic over the Mississippi, saving freight haulers from having to use barges to get their goods across the river, many continued to rely on the ferry system. That meant Gretna, seven miles and two bends of the river away from Bridge City, remained the center around which commerce and development grew on the parish’s West Bank.

Development then took a dramatic turn away from the West Bank altogether with the construction of Interstate 10 through Metairie. New projects sprung up along the new artery and spread from there.

Bridge City itself was established during the construction of the Huey P. Long, but development never spread far from the foot of the spans.

Officials are now banking on the undeveloped areas just beyond Bridge City to become the new center of development in the area.

That growth came as a number of projects, including the Churchill Technology and Business Park, the NOLA Motorsports Park and the JEDCO headquarters itself, have established anchors in the area.

“Knowing the project had commenced, that was the determining factor in us coming here,” Bologna said.

The first step in the process has been the rebranding of the area as Fairfield. Spanning about 9,000 acres in south of the Westbank Expressway from U.S. 90 to Bayou Segnette, officials say the prospect of building in an undeveloped part of the parish is a significant incentive to developers.

To further encourage projects, the parish has conducted surveys to identify wetlands in the area, saving developers the cost and time involved in that process.

The first phase of that process is complete, meaning much of that land is now marked out and ready for development, said Councilman Mark Spears Jr., whose district includes the area.

Consultants and researchers at the University of New Orleans are also working on a master plan for the area, a contrast East Bank neighborhoods that sprung up without such a guiding document.

“We have a blank slate,” Young said.



PRESS RELEASE
June 12, 2013

Opening Ceremonies for the Huey P. Long Bridge Widening Project set for this Sunday

Register for the Great Huey P. Long Bridge Run

(Avondale, La) -- It's a makeover six years in the works, and this weekend, thousands of locals will be ready for the big reveal. The Huey P. Long Bridge Widening Project is just days away from completion, and Jefferson Parish residents will celebrate the finale the best way they know how: with a big party!

It's no wonder that folks are so excited to finally set their sights towards the end of this \$1.2 billion project. It promotes increased traffic between the East and West Banks. While the business community has witnessed an interest in both the East Bank and West Bank, this project provides an opportunity for continued expansion and growth across our parish.



"This is truly an exciting time for our area," says Jerry Bologna, the executive director of the Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO). "The Huey P. Long Bridge has played a vital role in connecting our community over the years and the widening project will only strengthen the bond between the East and West Banks. This project signifies a future of stronger interconnectivity in Jefferson Parish throughout both the residential and business communities."

The Grand Opening Ceremony will kick-off June 16th with [The Great Huey P. Long Bridge Run](#), a 5K Run/Walk that gives participants the chance to "Geaux Over" the newly-completed landmark. Racers will be shuttled over to Bridge City on the West Bank for the start of the race. They'll take to the steel structure and finish on the East Bank just in time for the Grand Opening Ceremonies.

The festivities continue with a ribbon cutting ceremony, speeches from local and state officials, band performances, face painting and plenty of food and refreshments. Click [here](#) to register online and be one of the first people to run across the historic icon. You can also

register this week at Varsity Sports in Elmwood or on the day of the race.

The Huey P. Long Bridge opened in 1935, a well-designed link between the East and West Banks that still remains structurally sound more than 75 years later. In fact, the bridge is the only direct connection between both Mississippi River banks in Jefferson Parish. In January, the bridge was named a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark by the American Society of Civil Engineers. It joined the ranks of other iconic landmarks around the world, including the Eiffel Tower and the Panama Canal. Its storied history will be recognized at this Sunday's celebration.

Huey P Long Bridge Opening Ceremonies - Schedule of Events: SUNDAY, JUNE 16TH

6:00 a.m.	Packet Pick-up and Day-of Registration opens
6:30 a.m.	Starting line opens, shuttles start
7:30 a.m.	Packet Pick-up and Day-of Registration closes
8:00 a.m.	Start of the Huey P. Long 5K Bridge Run
10:30 a.m.	Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies
10:45 a.m.	Opportunity for the public to walk the bridge
1:00 p.m.	Bridge cleared

For more information about the Huey P. Long Bridge Run, visit <http://hueyprun.com> or take a look at the [Facebook Page](#). You can also email race@hueyprun.com or call (504) 669-1530 with questions.





PRESS RELEASE
June 19, 2013

Cordina New Orleans Cocktails Wins 2013 Lantern Award

Four Jefferson Parish organizations take home Louisiana Performance Excellence Awards

(Elmwood, La) -- From small startup to serious success story, [Cordina New Orleans Cocktails](#) has worked its way into the spotlight over the last several years, charming consumers with its unique spin on the classic margarita. The company, which manufactures frozen adult beverages in on-the-go pouches, has raked in a number of accolades since its inception in 2007. The company has received recognition for innovative packaging, creativity and entrepreneurship. Tuesday night, Cordina New Orleans Cocktails added another distinction to their trophy shelf: a 2013 Louisiana Lantern Award.



Louisiana Economic Development (LED) presented Cordina with the award at a special reception at Governor Bobby Jindal's home Tuesday evening. The Louisiana Lantern Awards provide an opportunity for the state to celebrate manufacturers from each district across Louisiana. The winning companies showcase a contribution to the Louisiana economy and to their local communities through employee growth, increase in revenue, facility expansion and community engagement.

The [Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission \(JEDCO\)](#) nominated Cordina New Orleans Cocktails for the District 1 award this year.

The beverage business competed with companies from a five-parish region to eventually emerge the winner of the prestigious state award.

Cordina New Orleans Cocktails, pioneered by brothers Sal and Antonio LaMartina and close friend Craig Cordes, came into existence on a beach. When the three friends tried to enjoy frozen margaritas, sand and sunshine proved a poor combination for sipping summer drinks out of a regular cup. The pre-mixed drinks melted quickly. When a child carrying a juice pouch crossed their path just moments later, the wheels of entrepreneurship began turning.

Two years later, the entrepreneurs moved the company into a 6,000-square foot facility in Kenner and went to work producing their portable drinks in environmentally-friendly pouches. In 2011, the company outgrew its facility and moved to Elmwood. Today, the Cordina line is available in 44 states in the U.S. and five foreign countries

with eight flavors on the shelves. It now has 135 employees and is on track to bring in more than \$18 million in revenue in 2013 with no signs of slowing.

Not only does this powerhouse manufacturer provide a continual boost to the Jefferson Parish economy, but the founders of the company remain champions of the entrepreneurial movement happening in the region. In 2013, Cordina was the title sponsor of JEDCO's first-ever Jefferson Parish-based [pitch competition](#) for local entrepreneurs. The event, held during New Orleans Entrepreneur Week, attracted more than 115 people to support four up-and-coming businesses in the area. Cordina directly contributed to the prize package with a major donation and opportunities for mentorship.

"Cordina New Orleans Cocktails is highly deserving of the 2013 Lantern Award," says JEDCO Executive Director Jerry Bologna. "The company exemplifies all of the qualities of a successful manufacturer. With strong growth in both sales and employment, this innovative business continues on a fast-paced track to outperform itself every year. I look forward to watching the company grow and find success in Jefferson Parish in the future."

"Cordina New Orleans Cocktails is an inspiration to entrepreneurs in Jefferson Parish," says Jefferson Parish President John Young. "This company has not only proven itself as one of our Jefferson Parish success stories, but Cordina continues to give back to the region it calls home. This nationally recognized company embodies the true spirit of Jefferson Parish, working diligently to improve the economy through hard work and community engagement. The three men behind this innovative idea are truly deserving of such a prestigious award."

Cordina co-founder and CEO, Sal LaMartina, accepted the award on behalf of the company. He was presented with a custom-built, hand crafted copper Lantern constructed with Louisiana cypress by Bevolo Gas and Electric Lights of New Orleans. For more information on the Louisiana Lantern Awards, [click here](#).

Four Jefferson Parish organizations were also recognized at the Governor's Mansion Tuesday. Jefferson Parish Community Development, Jefferson Parish Community Action Programs, Jefferson Parish Business and Career Solutions Center and the Jefferson Parish Animal Shelter were all Level 1 Louisiana Performance Excellence Award recipients.

The 2012 Louisiana Quality Foundation Awards are given to both for-profit and non-profit Louisiana organizations in the areas of manufacturing, service, healthcare, education and the public sector. Using the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence, these organizations have a proven record of improving results, reaching goals and becoming more competitive through a focus on innovation management, intelligent risk and strategic priorities, social media, operational effectiveness and work systems and core competencies. To learn more about the Louisiana Quality Foundation Award, [click here](#).



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THE ADVOCATE

LED honors area manufacturers

BY TIMOTHY BOONE

Advocate business writer

June 18, 2013

The best manufacturing companies in Louisiana were awarded the 2013 Lantern Awards during a private reception Tuesday at the Governor's Mansion.

The awards are presented to businesses in each of the state's Regional Planning and Development Districts who demonstrate excellence in manufacturing and outstanding service to their communities.

Area Lantern Award winners were:

MORAN PRINTING INC.: The 130-year-old Baton Rouge company won in the capital region. It operates a large commercial and digital printing facility and a warehousing and distribution center off Florida Boulevard.

BIG EASY BLENDS: The 6-year-old New Orleans company won in the southeast region. It sells premixed cocktails in pouches — sort of like a juice box for adults — designed for sipping on the beach or by the pool.

HIGH TECH COMPONENTS INC.: The 26-year-old Broussard business won in the Acadiana region. It manufactures, repairs and stocks components for the petrochemical industry.

DOW CHEMICAL CO.: Its St. Charles Operations in Hahnville won in the bayou region. The 47-year-old petrochemical manufacturing complex makes products that go into thousands of household, consumer and business items, from plastics and insecticides, to jet fuel and toothpaste.

Louisiana Economic Development introduced the Lantern Awards in 1979. Award winners receive lanterns handcrafted and donated by Bevolo Gas and Electric Lights of New Orleans, the oldest and largest copper gas lantern manufacturer in the U.S.

Jefferson begins branding process for Fairfield

POSTED: 10:53 AM Thursday, June 6, 2013

BY: [Jessica Gonzalez, Reporter](#)

TAGS: [Alario Center](#), [Avondale](#), [development](#), [Digital Engineering](#), [Fairfield](#), [JEDCO](#), [Jefferson Parish](#), [Jerry Bologna](#), [Jessica Gonzalez](#), [NOLA Motorsports Park](#), [Ross Linder](#), [Terri Wilkinson](#), [TPC Louisiana](#), [University of New Orleans](#), [Wendell Dufour](#), [West Bank](#)

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As the \$1.2 billion Huey P. Long expansion project is set to wrap up this month, plans are in the works to create a cohesive identity for one of the last large swaths of undeveloped land on the West Bank.



Jefferson Parish government has designated 9,000 acres of near Avondale as Fairfield. Its borders are U.S. Highway 90 to the north, the Lake Catouache levee to the south, Bayou Segnette State Park to the east and the St. Charles Parish line to the west.

Jefferson Parish Planning Director Terri Wilkinson explained that the transformation of Fairfield from a virtually unknown wooded area to a hot spot for development is an ongoing process. Rebranding is the first phase. She expects to see comprehensive planning for the area — in terms of land use, transportation and infrastructure — begin next year.

But before those milestones can be reached, the rebranding process must transpire.

Since January, Wendell Dufour, urban planner in residence and director of the Division of Planning and Engineering at the University of New Orleans, and Ross Liner, an urban planner with Digital Engineering and Imaging in Kenner, have been drafting a rebranding and marketing plan to help shape the identity of Fairfield.

“The area is vastly undeveloped, and I think there’s a lot of opportunity there,” Dufour said.

One of the goals, he said, is for future development to match existing “well-planned, high-end developments” like TPC Louisiana, NOLA Motorsports Park, Churchill Technology Park and the Alario Center.

To craft this rebranding effort, Dufour and Liner have been meeting with the various stakeholders in the area, which includes several private property owners interested in putting their land into commerce and Jefferson Parish government. Jerry Bologna, executive director of the Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission, said landowners include JEDCO, Joseph Marcello’s Marsh Investment Corp., and NOLA Motorsports owner Laney Chouest.

“At this point, no development project is really taking place,” Bologna said. “It’s just been a group of landowners in Avondale who control this large swath of land and want to really map out the any future development.”

Dufour explained that in urban planning, rebranding is done at the initial stage of a project to help “create a sense of place.” Part of the process, he said, is to identify the property’s natural assets.

“We’re looking at the key characteristics of the area and how those can correspond with names,” Dufour said. “The benefit is that it creates a sense of place, a uniqueness that people can identify with, whether they’re moving to the area or starting a business.”

Liner said that because the 9,000 acres has so many different owners, the possibilities for future land use are endless. But these issues aren’t being handled during the initial rebranding effort.

Liner said he and Dufour hope to have the rebranding plan completed by the end of June. It will include recommendations for transitional and long-term actions to jumpstart construction.

Looking toward future development, one thing Liner and Dufour said will spur interest in the area is the completion of the West Bank portion of the Hurricane Risk Reduction System. Federally mandated building elevation requirements vary drastically across the 9,000 acres of land. Dufour said that when the updated federal flood risk maps that determine building elevations are adopted and finalized by the parish, some parts of Avondale could see a reduction in these requirements.

For those looking to develop the area, that translates to a potential savings in building costs. The lower the elevation, the less money needed for to raise the land with infill.

The potential elevation reduction paired with a completed Hurricane Risk Reduction System should attract prospective developers, Dufour said.

Reporter Jessica Gonzalez can be reached at jessica.gonzalez@npg.com.

Developers size up Fairfield's potential

POSTED: 03:08 PM Thursday, June 13, 2013

BY: [Jessica Gonzalez, Reporter](#)

TAGS: [Fairfield](#), [Huey P. Long](#), [Jefferson Parish](#), [Jessica Gonzalez](#), [Terri Wilkinson](#)

As the \$1.2 billion Huey P. Long expansion project is set to wrap up this month, plans are in the works to create a cohesive identity for one of the last large swaths of undeveloped land on the West Bank.

Jefferson Parish government has designated 9,000 acres of near Avondale as Fairfield, with hopes of raising its profile among potential developers. Its borders are U.S. Highway 90 to the north, the Lake Catouache levee to the south, Bayou Segnette State Park to the east and the St. Charles Parish line to the west.

Jefferson Parish Planning Director Terri Wilkinson explained that the transformation of Fairfield from a virtually unknown wooded area to a hot spot for development will be an ongoing process, with rebranding as the first phase. She expects comprehensive planning for the area — in terms of land use, transportation and infrastructure — to begin next year.

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Looking toward future development, one thing Liner and Dufour said will spur interest in the area is the completion of the West Bank portion of the Hurricane Risk Reduction System. Federally mandated building elevation requirements vary drastically across the Fairfield site. Dufour said that when the updated federal flood risk maps that determine building elevations are adopted and finalized by the parish, some parts could see a reduction in these requirements.

For those looking to develop the area, that translates to potential savings in construction costs. The lower the elevation, the less money needed to raise the land with infill. But despite the reduction in elevation requirements, FEMA's new maps still designate the area as a high-risk zone.

Commercial real estate broker Jack Stumpf said low-lying land was a deal breaker the early days of the TPC Louisiana for residential developers, who were discouraged by the cost to build up the area around the golf course.

After the rebranding effort, the second phase of the Fairfield development process will be to determine the wetlands status of the property. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will decide which portions of the property can be developed and how much fill is needed to bring these areas to an acceptable elevation.

"There are going to be problems, and we realize that the area hasn't taken off because of these problems," Stumpf said. "But looking at the TPC, (Churchill Business Park), NOLA Motorsports ... good things are happening there. So if we can work something out with the upgrades going on with the levee system, the corps may change the (wetlands) designation for that area and we won't need as much fill."

Developer Bruce Wainer, of Wainer Brothers, owns about 700 acres of land in Fairfield. Like Stumpf, he said he's aware of the hurdles to development elevation requirements can create.

"There are certainly challenges in terms of base flood elevations, but we certainly have a ways to go until we can get to that point," Wainer said.

But he said the wait might be worth it for those looking for new development opportunities on the West Bank.

"To have a master planned community on the last undeveloped bit of land in Jefferson Parish is certainly intriguing," he said.

Opinion: Fairfield strategy can fit elsewhere

POSTED: 09:28 AM Wednesday, June 19, 2013

BY: [CityBusiness Editorial](#)

TAGS: [economic development](#), [Fairfield](#), [Huey P. Long Bridge](#), [investment](#), [Jefferson Parish](#), [New Orleans](#), [real estate](#)

[1](#)

A \$1.2 billion upgrade of the Huey P. Long Bridge puts countless white-knuckle crossings of the 78-year-old span in the rear view mirror and allows motorists and others to look ahead to the economic potential that the wider, modern bridge offers.

While significant evidence of its impact already exists in the fleshed out Elmwood Shopping Center, additional investment is in store for the east and west banks. It is encouraging to see that Jefferson Parish officials and economic development experts are carefully crafting future plans and thus paving the way for what's likely to be expanded business and real estate opportunities.

The ongoing process to promote Fairfield, 9,000 acres of private property near Avondale, for future development is particularly promising. The various landowners involved are benefitting from a parish-backed branding and planning strategy that will ultimately produce potential uses for the property complementary to existing development in the area.

A mix of commercial and residential projects is anticipated, with developers counting on revised flood maps and a recently completed West Bank flood protection system to lower the cost of site preparation.

The approach gives Fairfield and its property owners the best chance of attracting meaningful projects while responding to demand in the real estate marketplace. And it's worth considering for other parts of Jefferson Parish that, while not undeveloped like Fairfield, could benefit from a branding and planning process.

A similar method could be applied to blighted areas to explore options for long-lasting remediation. It could also be used to seek solutions where commercial interests conflict with neighboring residential desires. For areas in constant flux, such as Veterans Boulevard, there's a chance to bring stability.

The prospects for Fairfield are certainly bright and within the reach. But to see one corner of Jefferson Parish flourish while other areas fail to realize their potential would be most unfortunate.

The benefit of creative vision is that it often can be expanded, and Jefferson Parish has the opportunity to do just that and spur more growth for its surging economy.



The *Supporting Business and Industrial Development Since 1946*
COMMUNIQUE

JUNE 2013 • VOLUME 22, No. 11

THE HARVEY CANAL INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

LeBas: Join In Huey Celebration

DOTD Secretary Sherri LeBas on May 15th invited Harvey Canal Industrial Association President's Banquet celebrants to join her and others in a 5-K run/walk and ribbon cutting ceremony June 16th for the newly rebuilt and widened \$1.2 billion Huey P. Long Bridge.

LeBas was the keynote speaker for the banquet at the Boomtown Casino and offered an interesting look at her \$1.9 billion, 4,500 employee department. She also touched on the Huey P. Long project, the Crescent City Connection bridges without tolls, the Peters Road Extension, the Belle Chasse Tunnel/Bridge project and the fate of the Algiers-Canal Street ferry.

LeBas: Join In Huey Celebration continued on page 4

Jeff's \$1 Billion Project

On April 17th, Governor Bobby Jindal – along with Dyno Nobel Americas President Daniel McAtee and Cornerstone Chemical CEO Greg Zoglio – announced the companies will invest a combined \$1.025 billion for a new ammonia production facility and related upgrades in Waggaman.

Incitec Pivot Ltd., the Australia-based parent company of Dyno Nobel, will invest \$850 million to build the ammonia plant, providing a commercial foundation for Cornerstone to continue its planned investment of \$175 million in maintenance, upgrades and infrastructure expansion at its site over a six-year period. The new Dyno Nobel plant will produce 800,000 metric tons of ammonia per year at Cornerstone Chemical's Fortier Manufacturing Complex on the west bank of the Mississippi

Jeff's \$1 Billion Project continued on page 5

Soileau Installed as President

Laurie Soileau, Vice President and Retail Support Specialist for IBERIABANK, was installed on May 15th as the 67th President of the Harvey Canal Industrial Association for the 2013-2014 term. The event was held at Boomtown Casino with a cocktail reception kicking off the evening.

Soileau was sworn in by HCIA Past President Andy Wilkinson. In her acceptance speech, Soileau highlighted

Soileau Installed as President continued on page 7

\$8 Million Announced for 4th Street Bridge

Sharing concerns for the recent failures of the 4th Street Bridge, members of the HCIA Board met with Jefferson Parish Council Chairman Chris Roberts and State Representative Bryan Adams to seek assistance from the State Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) to help fund a long-term solution to the bridge situation.

\$8 Million Announced for 4th Street Bridge continued on page 6



Keynote Speaker DOTD Secretary Sherri LeBas (center) visits with outgoing HCIA President James Hines and new President Laurie Soileau

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, June 6th, 2013 @ the Four Columns 11:30 a.m. Networking – 12:00 Business Lunch



GUEST SPEAKER: Michael J. Anderson,

Special Agent in Charge (SAIC) of the FBI's New Orleans Division

Come and meet Agent Anderson who was assigned to the New Orleans office a little less than a year ago. Prior assignments included the FBI Headquarters liaison to numerous investigations, including Operation Wrinkled Robe, a New Orleans-based judicial corruption case. Following that assignment, Mr. Anderson re-wrote the FBI's Public Corruption Field Guide.

Cost: \$25 per person – Please pay at door. Contact HCIA (504) 367-1721

River in Jefferson Parish.

The project will create 65 new direct jobs by employing 60 new personnel at Cornerstone Chemical and another five at Dyno Nobel, which is owned by Australia-based Incitec Pivot Ltd. LED estimates the project will result in another 477 new indirect jobs, for a total of more than 540 new jobs. Salaries for the new direct jobs will average more than \$55,700 per year, plus benefits, and the project will retain 441 existing Cornerstone jobs. In addition, Dyno Nobel estimates construction employment will peak at 750 jobs over the three year construction period.

Gov. Jindal said, "Dyno Nobel's new ammonia facility in Jefferson Parish is proof of Louisiana's outstanding business climate, top notch workforce and first class energy infrastructure—including our state's affordable and abundant supply of natural gas. Louisiana is uniquely positioned to provide major supplies of natural gas to critically important energy and chemical manufacturers, and more and more companies are taking notice and investing right here in our state. But they're not just coming here for our resources. Companies from around the globe are locating operations in Louisiana because they recognize we have a world class workforce capable of getting results. We're confident that this new facility will help us continue to build on our state's energy and chemical manufacturing legacy, all while we move our economy forward by providing more great jobs for our people."

Dyno Nobel will develop the anhydrous ammonia plant on a site where an ammonia plant previously operated before closing more than a decade ago. Cornerstone already produces acrylonitrile, melamine and sulfuric acid at the Waggaman complex, and the ammonia plant will be integrated with Cornerstone's existing infrastructure.

"Incitec Pivot Limited and its U.S.-based operations, Dyno Nobel, are pleased to announce the construction of a world-class ammonia facility in Waggaman, Louisiana," said Incitec Pivot Managing Director and CEO James Fazzino. "This plant will set a new standard in clean, effi-



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cient ammonia production and will provide a significant economic benefit to the state and regional communities. We are honored to be a part of the Waggaman, Jefferson Parish and Louisiana communities."

Dyno Nobel will begin construction in the second quarter of 2013, with initial ammonia production beginning in mid-to-late 2016.

"We are excited to welcome the investment by Incitec Pivot to Louisiana," said Zoglio, the Cornerstone Chemical CEO. "The U.S. Gulf Coast economic model has changed due to the advent of advanced drilling and extraction techniques and the associated impact on natural gas pricing."

LED's Business and Expansion Retention Group, or BERG, began discussing the project with Incitec Pivot Limited and Cornerstone Chemical Company in April 2011 and has been working closely on the project with JEDCO, the Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission, and

Greater New Orleans Inc., or GNO Inc. To secure the project, the state will offer a competitive incentives package that will include the Industrial Tax Exemption and Quality Jobs programs for Dyno Nobel. Cornerstone Chemical will receive a Modernization Tax Credit of \$3 million, payable in five annual installments, along with the services of LED FastStart®, the nation's top-ranked state workforce training program. Cornerstone Chemical is also expected to utilize the Industrial Tax Exemption and Quality Jobs programs.

"After an extensive and competitive international site selection process, we are thrilled to see this project come to fruition," said JEDCO Executive Director Jerry Bologna. "In terms of capital investment, this represents the largest project this organization has ever had the pleasure to work on. This investment will be a tremendous boost to the economic development of Jefferson Parish and highlights the diversity of our industries."

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FEATURE

Louisiana to be home to \$850 million ammonia plant

Dyno Nobel America will begin building an \$850 million ammonia production facility at Cornerstone Chemical Co.'s Fortier Manufacturing Complex in Waggaman, La.

The new anhydrous ammonia plant will be built on a site where an ammonia plant once operated more than a decade ago. Dyno Nobel's new facility will be integrated with Cornerstone's existing infrastructure. This major partnership will create a combined investment of more than \$1 billion. The new ammonia facility will provide a commercial foundation for Cornerstone to continue a planned investment of \$175 million in maintenance, upgrades and infrastructure expansion over a six-year period.

The combined investment will create 65 new direct jobs at an average salary of \$55,700 and will retain 441 jobs at Cornerstone. It will also employ more than 470 people indirectly. In addition, Dyno Nobel estimates construction employment will peak at 750 jobs over the three-year construction period.

The Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) has worked closely with Jefferson Parish leaders and Greater New Orleans Inc. to prepare an incentive package for the project. The negotiations will result in \$45 million in revenue to the parish over the company's first 20 years of operation.

Jefferson Parish continues to remain the economic engine of the region with a distinct competitive advantage found in its transportation assets, proximity to the Mississippi River and reliable work force.

Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal said, "Dyno Nobel's new ammonia facility in Jefferson Parish is proof of Louisiana's outstanding business climate, top-notch work force and first-class energy infrastructure — including our state's affordable and abundant supply of natural gas. Louisiana is uniquely positioned to provide major supplies of natural gas to critically important energy and chemical manufacturers, and more and more companies are taking notice and investing right here in our state. But they're not just coming here for our resources. Companies from around the globe are locating operations in Louisiana because they recognize we have a world-class work force capable of getting results."

Greater New Orleans Inc. President and CEO Michael Hecht said, "This announcement proves again that Louisiana's combination of unparalleled logistics, Top 10 business climate and affordable natural gas makes it an unbeatable location for large industrial projects."

The new Dyno Nobel plant will also incorporate state-of-the-art technology to produce the lowest air pollution of any ammonia facility to date. This will become



JEDCO, in conjunction with Gov. Bobby Jindal (speaking at podium), Jefferson Parish President John Young, the Parish Council and Greater New Orleans Inc., welcomed Dyno Nobel America and Incitec Pivot Ltd. to Jefferson Parish during a recent press conference. Photo courtesy: JEDCO.

the benchmark for other ammonia plants around the world.

"Incitec Pivot Limited and its U.S.-based operations, Dyno Nobel, are pleased to announce the construction of a world-class ammonia facility in Waggaman, Louisiana," said Incitec Pivot Managing Director and CEO James Fazzino. "This plant will set a new standard in clean, efficient ammonia production and will provide a significant economic benefit to the state and regional communities."

"We are excited to welcome the investment by Incitec Pivot to Louisiana," said

Construction will begin in the second quarter 2013, with initial ammonia production beginning in mid to late 2016.

Greg Zoglio, the Cornerstone Chemical CEO. "The U.S. Gulf Coast economic model has changed due to the advent of advanced drilling and extraction techniques and the associated impact on natural gas pricing. Incitec Pivot's foresight of this paradigm shift, coupled with the brownfield offering by Cornerstone Chemical and project support provided by the State of Louisiana, will allow the resurgence of world-class ammonia production in the state."

Construction will begin in the second quarter 2013, with initial ammonia production beginning in mid to late 2016. Hiring of plant management will take place in 2014, followed by additional hiring as the commissioning of the plant approaches in 2016. The new Dyno Nobel plant will produce 800,000 metric tons of ammonia per year in Jefferson Parish.

For more information, visit www.dynonobel.com or call (800) 732-7534.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Productivity growth: it's time to bite the bullet

PUBLISHED: 03 Jun 2013 00:05:00 | UPDATED: 03 Jun 2013 10:39:02 PUBLISHED: 03 Jun 2013 PRINT EDITION: 03 Jun 2013



From left, Chris Bradley of McKinsey, GE Australia CEO Steve Sargent, Ian Thomas of Boeing and Roy Green of the University of Technology Sydney. **Photo: Peter Braig**

Peter Roberts

When James Fazzino was confronted with a massive difference in the cost of building a new ammonia plant in Australia and the United States, he reacted immediately.

The chief executive of Incitec Pivot took advantage of 40 per cent lower costs and a more responsive regulatory environment in Louisiana to build a new plant while at the same time launching a productivity offensive in his Australian operations.

But instead of stripping cost from his local plants, the fertiliser manufacturer invested in staff training to allow those on the shop floor to drive continuous improvement.

“Productivity is all about a culture change,” Fazzino told *The Australian Financial Review/GE Australia* 2.0 round table on infrastructure.

“Among the smartest people we have got are the people who do the work. Either you let those people be a force for good or a force for evil.”

Fazzino admits his approach “put costs back in” to his local business initially rather than taking it out. But now after training, staff are given the tools to improve work processes, which also means making their own jobs easier.

Four per cent of employees are involved in leading self-directed work teams to solve business problems.

The role of management was also turned on its head, from directing work to supporting productivity improvement.

“We have found our leadership team have become coaches rather than doers,” he says.

“What we are finding is problems are being solved a hell of a lot lower in the organisation and that then frees leadership to actually work on the strategic things.”

Solving the productivity challenge

Fazzino’s focus inside his business to solve the productivity challenge was a key outcome of the AFR round table, one of four supported by GE. GE Australia chief executive Steve Sargent told the round table the company had introduced its own self-directed work teams to its new oil and gas maintenance facility in Perth.

“The aviation industry has been using them for a long time so we have been applying them across this industry.

“We introduced self-directed work teams and got a 16 per cent productivity improvement.”

But this experience is not being replicated across the economy, even as a fading outlook for commodity prices returns the focus to productivity. Australia’s productivity growth has dropped from the 2.0 per cent a year seen in the 1990s to less than 0.5 per cent.

“You have always got to take cost out,” Ian Thomas, president of Boeing Australia, told the round table.

“We do that in a variety of ways, but you also have to put costs into the company and we do that through technology, innovation and investment in training our people.”

Boeing has spent \$25 million on research with CSIRO, which has helped the local operation to be a company centre of excellence for composites manufacturing. This had made Melbourne the company’s only source for moveable trailing edges such as wing flaps and ailerons for the composite 787 aircraft.

Workforce relationship

However, adopting new manufacturing technologies was within management control, while other issues were not.

“Let’s say that over the last three or five years there hasn’t been a lot of ability on the part of management or businesses to deal with the flexibility issue a great deal,” Thomas says.

“High cost, declining productivity, workforce inflexibility are not issues on their own, but when you combine them you begin to have competitive issues.”

Thomas says the company enjoyed a very strong relationship with its workforce and an ongoing dialogue with union leadership.

More important was a dialogue with the people on the shop floor, he says. “Get the employees to own the outcome and then you can really get ahead.”

University of Technology Sydney dean of business Roy Green says there were always costs to be removed, but the reality was Australia was a high-cost economy and would be for some time.

“Ultimately we have to understand what are the differentiators that we have in Australia that make us competitive as a high-cost economy, just as others have done in other parts of the world.

“That is really the challenge for us.”

Scandinavian comparison

Green points to the Scandinavian countries which, like Australia, have relatively small populations and are positioned alongside major markets in Europe just like, in Australia’s case, Asia. Scandinavia's were powerhouse economies and had created large global manufacturing companies, whereas Australia had mining businesses and banks.

Chris Bradley, principal of consultancy McKinsey, chipped in to disagree that Australia’s lack of global manufacturers was an issue, with the country making a lot of money from its involvement in the gas sector, for example.

“If you look beyond the emotive view, my sense is putting tags on some companies and saying this is a good type of activity and this is a bad type ... well, I am not sure that is 100 per cent helpful,” says Bradley.

Green responded boundaries between manufacturing and services were blurred and there were many avenues for niche manufacturing in Australia, including by multinationals such as Boeing.

“The fact is, we need to make our way in the world as a knowledge-based economy.

“We need to add knowledge to our natural resources but also to other areas in which we have an existing or potential competitive advantage. That is how we will create value.”

Bradley says that a focus on manufacturing and on the workforce too often became a debate about the country’s industrial relations framework.

“The productivity debate too often becomes about managing within an existing paradigm,” he said.

“If you look at the difference between the performance of a 4G mobile network versus the old 2G, that is actually the real action.

“So the question is how Australia can be nimble and make the kind of business model changes that we have to make.”

Technology change

Technology change involving the first stages of computerisation was widely seen as a productivity driver in the 1990s, with members of the round table predicting that mobile and hand-held devices and communications were poised for another era of productive change.

GE's Sargent says mobile computing and low-cost telecommunications are creating a tectonic change in business.

"Combine that with the cloud where you are getting lower-cost, more efficient data storage and better security," he says.

"Combine that with low-cost sensors and the trick is how do you aggregate the data that is meaningful to drive human behaviour and productivity?"

GE's global marketing head Beth Comstock joked at a recent Sydney breakfast meeting that the company's engines would soon be "tweeting" their condition to ground crews as they came into land at Sydney Airport.

But Boeing's Thomas says that era is all but here. Modern aeroplanes such as the 787 and 777 have about 8 million lines of computer code and are "flying data buses".

"They do preventative maintenance and every minute they are in the air they are transmitting to the ground crew for re-scheduling, for fuel burn, for stores, for what needs to be changed and what does not.

"When you combine the software end with the people end with the digital component, it is really powerful."

Not producing graduates

McKinsey's Bradley says the question for management was how to harness the huge amounts of data and analyse it using mathematical equations to give useful results. This could be taking data about consumer purchasing and turning it into instructions on what size packages of tomato sauce to put on the shelves.

"I think the leverage of management is actually increasing.

"What we are seeing with analytics gives me hope there is a whole other cusp of innovation on the way."

UTS's Green says Australia's business schools were "probably not" producing graduates equipped to deal with the twin challenges of data analytics and getting the best from their people. Business deans had been debating the merits of a focus on narrow technical skills and those that were needed for the future.

In Green's international study with the London School of Economics, *Management Matters*, Australia's managers were seen as middling in quality. The biggest deficiency was in people skills and the management attribute of "instilling a performance mindset".

"We're doing our best as business educators for a world that is passing us by," says Green.

"The future is ... giving our students the cross-boundary skills of leadership, communication, collaboration, problem solving and critical thinking."

Australian talent in demand

However, local management was seen as having strengths, with Bradley suggesting that Australian talent was always in demand within firms such as McKinsey.

Also, Thomas described his Australian team as the best he had ever worked with and Incitec Pivot's Fazzino suggested that Australian management is far from an impediment.

“The Australian culture is very non-hierarchical and we are prepared to be hands on and get involved,” says Fazzino.

“That’s actually a plus.”

One area where there was agreement that management was lagging was in the public sector, with McKinsey’s Bradley saying the private sector had been the focus for the round table discussion because that was where productivity could be measured.

“There is a third of our economy where we don’t measure productivity and that is the public sector,” Bradley says.

He said we didn’t know what the cost was for a unit of educational achievement, or for an additional unit of health.

Public sector

Bradley says the most important thing government could do was, rather than implementing a new program directed at business, institute measures within the public sector so a process of improving productivity could begin.

“The maths are very clear based on where the government’s starting point is, which is inefficient, versus the private sector, which is a lot more efficient.

“The government’s track record of setting up proper market conditions so that companies feel the bunsen burner [of competition]has been effective.

“But the government’s record of positive interventions in productivity is quite poor.”

UTS’s Green was a member of South Australia’s Public Sector Performance Commission, which developed performance score cards and instituted multi-disciplinary teams. But there are powerful interest groups within the public system.

“It was kind of like a meteor,” says Green.

“It was fabulous for the six months while we ran the show, and then we left and not much has happened since.”

Government’s role

Incitec Pivot’s Fazzino says there was more government could do for business, again citing his Louisiana ammonia plant experience. There, Governor Bobby Jindal became personally involved, cancelling his meetings to work with Fazzino and bringing in department heads as they were relevant.

“The environmental standard in Louisiana is actually higher than here but the mindset of the bureaucracy over there was saying ‘we want to create jobs; let’s help Incitec Pivot meet our standards’.

“We got it approved in six months.”

However, those at the round table caution against hopes for major impact from the actions of government. Government's role was to set the right environment through industry policy and to streamline regulation and taxation.

“But business has got to get on with it,” says Thomas. “We cannot wait for people to give us solutions.

“It may be a sad commentary on the fact that business has, to some degree, given up on the ability of government to have a positive influence.”

UTS's Green says one issue reducing the influence of government is a constant chopping and changing of business programs and policies.

However, members of the round table were generally optimistic that Australian business could tackle its problems.

McKinsey's Bradley says the many forces currently buffeting business, including digitisation, analytics, smaller-scale manufacturing, energy demand and the rise of China, were generally positive.

“I am very confident that Australia has the right stuff.

“Is dealing with some of the forces going to produce structural changes, like Ford?

“Absolutely. But that is life and we've all got to respond to the forces we face.”



Dear JEDCO Supporters,

It is my pleasure to present the [2012 JEDCO Annual Report](#) to you. In it, you will find an overview of our services and highlights of the exciting successes we achieved last year in our ongoing efforts to positively impact the thriving Jefferson Parish economy.

As I look back to 2012, I am proud to say that it was a very successful year for JEDCO. We worked with international, national and local companies to meet their needs, welcomed new business to the region, assisted in the creation of new jobs and continued to provide quality services to our business community. Our economic wins were plentiful; from the grand opening of the NOLA Motorsports Park to an assurance that the Smoothie King international headquarters will move back to Jefferson Parish this summer, we are thrilled to tell you that it was a very busy and productive year.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the newly appointed executive director of JEDCO. I am honored to have been chosen for this position. Before taking on this role, I was a deputy director of the organization, overseeing responsibilities in a number of different departments. During more than a decade at JEDCO, I have been committed to improving the economic landscape of Jefferson Parish.

As we move forward, I can assure you that I will remain dedicated to making Jefferson Parish the preferred location for business and job growth. We will continue to better the economy through retention and creation of quality jobs, entrepreneurship and investment in Jefferson Parish.

We have two different digital versions for your viewing. Click [here](#) to access the flip-page version of the Annual Report. If you prefer to view our report as a PDF, you can click [here](#).

Thank you so much for your continuing support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jerry Bologna', written in a cursive style.

Jerry Bologna
JEDCO Executive Director





Jefferson Parish economic development agency issues report, and other parish politics links



The Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission, JEDCO, has issued its 2012 annual report. (*Nola.com* | *The Times-Picayune archive*)

Print



By Manuel Torres, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune.

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on May 31, 2013 at 7:51 AM, updated May 31, 2013 at 9:28 AM

- The Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission approved or closed 16 loans last year, helping projects with a combined value of \$7.6 million, according to the agency's 2012 annual report. JEDCO also helped local businesses enroll in state tax incentive programs for projects that will create 902 new jobs and retain 2,843 jobs, according to the report. The agency posted a flip-page version and a PDF version of the report on its Web site.



PRESS RELEASE
June 06, 2013

Jefferson Parish Schools Rank Among Best High Schools of 2013

The good news just keeps on coming for three Jefferson Parish schools. Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies, the Patrick F. Taylor Science and Technology Academy and Thomas Jefferson High School were ranked among the top 2,000 schools in the country, according to Newsweek and The Daily Beast. Just last month, all three schools were recognized on the U.S. News and World Report list of “2013 Best High Schools.”

Haynes Academy was ranked number 77, moving up more than 130 spaces from its spot on the 2012 list. The Patrick F. Taylor Science and Technology Academy came in at number 193 and Thomas Jefferson in Gretna was ranked number 596. The schools were ranked on a variety of factors, including the average SAT and ACT scores, the number of students taking advanced courses, graduation rate and the rate of college acceptance.

“This is just one more excellent achievement to add to the long list of successes these schools have already accomplished,” says JEDCO Executive Director, Jerry Bologna. “The schools that made this list are indicators of the progress Jefferson Parish has made on an educational level. It is wonderful to see the strides that are being made to enhance the educational experiences for our young people in this area. I am thrilled to see that what our educators are doing in right here in Jefferson Parish is creating an impact throughout the entire country. I am so proud of the accomplishments of these schools, the educators and the students. You are all truly deserving of this prestigious recognition.”

Plans are in place to move the Patrick F. Taylor Science and Technology Academy from its current home on Jefferson Highway to a state-of-the-art facility in the Churchill Technology and Business Park by the start of the 2013-2014 school year. The new school, which is geared towards students with plans to pursue careers in science and technology, boasts three major classroom buildings, robotics and biotech laboratories and a large cafeteria. Located directly across the street from the JEDCO Administrative offices, the 102,000-square foot facility will provide students with the tools they need to prepare for the careers of their choosing.

To see the full 2013 Best High Schools list, click [here](#).



PRESS RELEASE
June 20, 2013

JEDCO Seeks Small/Growth Business Development and Enterprise Manager

The Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) is currently seeking a Small/Growth Business Development and Enterprise Manager. The mission of this position is to create jobs and new investment through the provision of entrepreneur assistance and **Business Innovation Center** services.

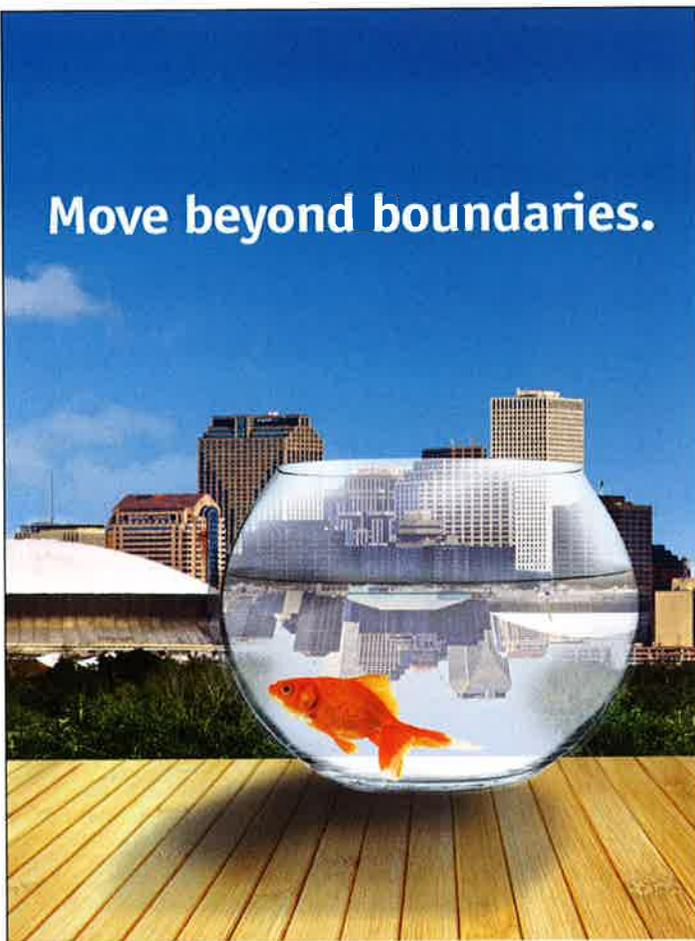
ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:

- Develop a program of innovation for local entrepreneurs including partnerships with local universities, entrepreneur organizations, roundtable exchanges and award competitions
- Provide access to and coordinate resources, including mentoring, financing, legal expertise, necessary for entrepreneurial growth
- Develop and maintain policies for the entrance and exit of Business Innovation Center (BIC) tenants and the operation of the BIC
- Market, lease and manage the BIC to maintain full occupancy
- Counsel BIC tenants both directly and indirectly via in-house staff, consultants, community resources, seminars and other methods
- Continuously evaluate the operations and effectiveness of the BIC in relation to JEDCO's goals, economic trends, preferred market niche and national profiles to develop and maintain plans for improvement in physical plant and operations
- Seek additional grant and funding opportunities to support the BIC and small business growth
- Execute special projects assigned by Executive Director or Deputy Director

REQUIREMENTS:

- Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Finance, Economic, Accounting or a closely related field
- Five to seven years' experience in finance or business management with at least two years in a supervisory position
- Experience in marketing, including web-based and the use of social media, finance, administration and management, especially of real estate assets
- Quantifiable successes in coaching, mentoring or advising small or emerging businesses
- Must possess strong interpersonal, written and oral communication skills
- In-depth knowledge of region's entrepreneurial community, network and resources for business development

Interested applicants should email resume to hr@jedco.org or mail to 700 Churchill Parkway Avondale, La 70094.



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JEDCO Innovation Center Has Global Focus

JEDCO's Business Innovation Center opened on April 1st at Churchill Technology & Business Park on the Westbank of Jefferson Parish. With access to JEDCO's resources and expertise, early-stage growth businesses can benefit from locating within the Business Innovation Center or by participating remotely in the incubator program. The center's focus is to drive the development of technology-based companies with a niche in import/export management, freight forwarding, custom brokering, international consulting, distributing and manufacturing.

The Business Innovation Center is designed to assist in the development of business start-ups and early-stage companies by providing them with the advantage of lower operating costs, interaction with other entrepreneurs and direct interaction with business experts and resources. The center provides the space, services and assistance needed to help overcome the initial challenges faced by new businesses.

"The incubator is much more than a facility," said JEDCO Executive Director Lucien Gunter. "It is an integrated program designed to connect entrepreneurs with the resources they need to grow and prosper."

The center's goal is to drive the development of technology-based companies

Office space within the Business Innovation Center will be offered to tenants at a fraction of the market-rate cost. JEDCO can also design multiple configurations of larger offices for expanding businesses.

The Business Innovation Center is ideally located within the 500 acre Churchill Technology & Business Park in close proximity to railways, interstates, international airlines and shipping ports, which provides a natural advantage for distribution, inbound/outbound cargo for storage and container handling, as well as light manufacturing. Located at the hub of the largest intermodal transportation system in the South, Churchill and the Business Innovation Center are just 20 minutes outside of downtown New Orleans.

The Business Innovation Center is based on the success of the original JEDCO program which, since its inception in 1987, has hosted over 250 companies creating over 7,670 jobs for Jefferson Parish.

"Our goal is to enable companies with high growth profiles to realize their potential. The Innovation Center helps local businesses grow from the ground up," Gunter said.

According to the National Business Incubation Association, three out of five new business start-ups fail within the first five years. However, four out of five new businesses that start in an incubator program succeed within five years.

If your new business needs to move ideas, products and services into the global economy, look no further than JEDCO's Business Innovation Center. Applications can be accessed at www.jedco.org.



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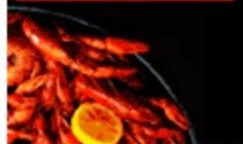
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POSTED: 10:53 AM Thursday, June 6, 2013
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As the \$1.2 billion Huey P. Long expansion project is set to wrap up this month, plans are in the works to create a cohesive identity for one of the last large swaths of undeveloped land on the West Bank.



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Timing, finances align to trigger Stewart deal

Acquisition delay allows both companies to pare down debt

By Jennifer Larino
Managing Editor
jennifer.larino@nopg.com

SERVICE CORP. INTERNATIONAL and Stewart Enterprises Inc. have toyed with the idea of an acquisition for years now, but analysts say a favorable financing environment and successful efforts to lower debt at both companies likely closed the deal.

Service Corp. agreed on May 29 to acquire Jefferson-based Stewart Enterprises for \$13.25 per share in a deal totaling \$1.4 billion including debt. The acquisition will combine two of the largest death care services businesses in the country, bringing the operation of 515 cemeteries and 1,635 funeral homes in the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico under one company.

This isn't the first time Service Corp. has made a play to acquire Stewart Enterprises. The Houston-based company offered to pay \$11 per share for the company in 2008, a deal later pulled in the midst of the financial crisis.

A.J. Rice, an analyst with financial services firm UBS, said the two companies currently find themselves in a much more favorable lending environment and with healthy balance sheets, making the timing for the acquisition ideal.

He noted that both companies walked away from the 2008 offer aiming to lower debt and wait until financing terms were more favorable. Stewart's long-term debt totaled \$322.9 million in the three months ending Jan. 31, down from \$450.1 million during the same period in 2008.

"Service Corp. has indicated for some time that if Stewart was interested in pursuing a transaction, they were still interested as well," Rice said. "They would talk about that at conferences. It really boiled down to when Frank Stewart and the management decided was a good time to sell."

Frank Stewart, the company's chairman, controls 35 percent of the voting rights of the company and has agreed to

back the transaction.

Clint Fendley, an analyst with Davenport Co., said Service Corp. appeared willing to pay well for Stewart properties. Its offer is a 10 percent premium on the 30-day average price of Stewart shares, which was \$8.97 on May 23.

Fendley noted 69 of the 515 Stewart locations are so-called "combination" properties, housing a cemetery and a funeral home. Combination properties typically drive more revenue because they offer complete services in one location, a factor that may have pushed Service Corp. to be more aggressive in its offer, he said.

"That's really a key for the industry," Fendley said.

Rice said the deal will be a boon for shareholders on both sides of the table. Service Corp. expects to generate \$60 million in annual cost savings from the combined companies to be realized over a two-year period after the closing date.

The companies expect to close on the transaction as early as the end of the year.

Rice said the biggest savings will be from consolidating and reducing overlap in corporate management as well as improving purchasing power and efficiencies in sharing staff and equipment such as vehicles among the combined company's vast network of funeral homes.

"They can get leverage on the corporate infrastructure, but then they also have so much overlap in key markets as well," Rice said.

Fendley said regulators will most likely force the combined company to sell off funeral homes and cemeteries in markets where they will own a large share of area death care facilities. But Fendley said Service Corp. may not sell some of its own properties given its high share of Stewart combination facilities.

"It could be that Service Corp. will have the flexibility to look at it and say 'OK, we know in that city Stewart really has the best property,'" Fendley said. "It may not be a divestiture of Stewart property alone."

Rice expects shareholders and regulators to approve the deal. He pointed to Service Corp.'s \$865 million acquisition of Alderwoods Group Inc. in 2006 as reason to believe regulators will give the final nod. •

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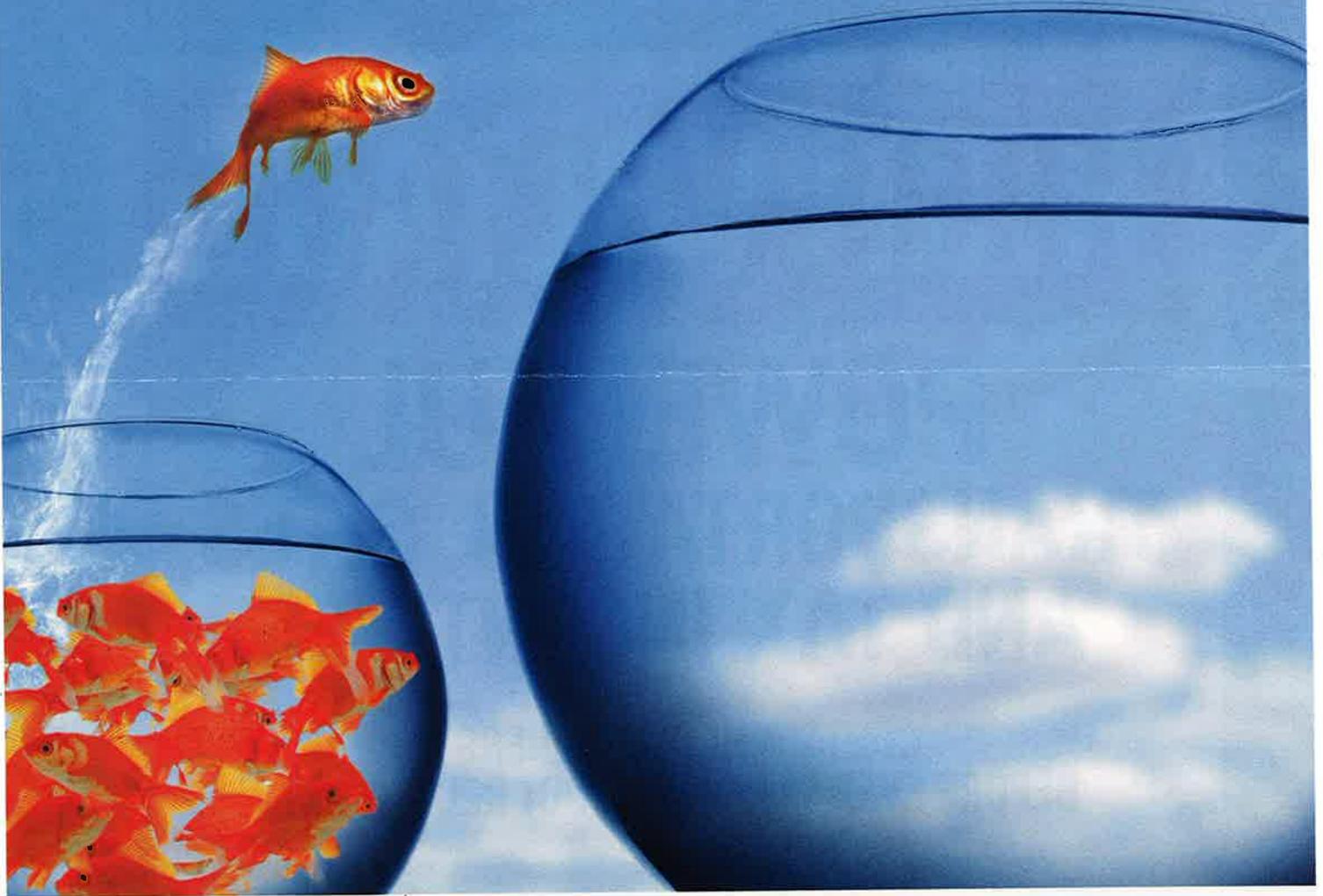
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