

Jefferson EDGE 2020 **BEAUTIFICATION** Status Report 1: March, 2009

Prepared by JEDCO and GCR & Associates, Inc.

JEDCO
Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission



Beautification

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 seven "strategic implementation plans" to date 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 beautification (B) action items.

B = Beautification

Action ID #	Action Item	Progress as of March 2009		
		Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress
B1. BOULEVARDS INITIATIVE				
B1a	Devise detailed cost estimates, a financing strategy, and an implementation schedule for boulevards initiative			
B1b	Systematically upgrade infrastructure along the Parish's major boulevards			
B1c	Implement a gateway improvement program with a principal emphasis on the corridors abutting the airport			
B1d	Create a small grant program to fund landscape improvements to older commercial properties			
B1e	Sponsor a design and engineering competition to devise interim aesthetic improvements to open drainage canals			
B1f	Work with utility providers to screen major utility infrastructure throughout the Parish			
B2. ENHANCE LAND USE POLICIES AND REGULATIONS				
B2a	Revise the Envision Jefferson 2020 Comprehensive Plan to include an urban design element			
B2b	Comprehensively re-write the Parish's zoning ordinance			
B2c	Enact interim improvements to Parish codes and land use regulations			
B2d	Ensure the even application and vigorous enforcement of existing zoning regulations			
B3. INCREASE COMMUNITY AWARENESS OF AND INVOLVEMENT IN BEAUTIFICATION				
B3a	Formalize a lasting public partnership with civic groups and other non-profits to plant additional trees in residential neighborhoods			
B3b	Initiate a public outreach campaign to inform residents of on-going beautification initiatives			
B4. PROVIDE ADDITIONAL PUBLIC ART				
B4a	Develop a formal program for incorporating public art into public works projects			
B4b	Coordinate with the state and New Orleans Public Belt Railroad to install decorative lighting on the Huey P. Long Bridge			

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Action ID #	Action Item	Original Timeline	Accomplishments/Benchmarks Met	Next Steps	Progress as of March 2009		
					Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress
B1 Implement a comprehensive "boulevards initiative" to systematically upgrade major thoroughfares							
B1a	Devise detailed cost estimates, a financing strategy, and an implementation schedule for boulevards initiative	Issue RFP in late 2008, early 2009; complete project in 2009	Jefferson Parish has developed the boulevards initiative feasibility/cost estimate and is devising a financing strategy. The Parish has hired a consultant to assist with the Requests For Proposals (RFP) preparation. Additionally, an initial planning meeting was held in early February in which JEDCO and several Parish departments including Planning, Public Works, Drainage, and Parkways discussed the research required for this project. By the end of March, the group will meet again to examine research results and begin crafting a detailed blueprint for the funding and implementation of the boulevards initiative.	Issue RFP in early-mid 2009; complete project in 2009			
B1b	Systematically upgrade infrastructure along the Parish's major boulevards	Secure local funding and pursue external funding in 2009; secure inter-agency agreements in 2009; issue bids and initiate project in 2010; complete phase one by 2015	<p>In February 2009, representatives from several Parish agencies and departments met to discuss the planning of this initiative. The group is scheduled to meet again by the end of March to review research results and to devise funding and implementation strategies and schedules.</p> <p>The Parish has identified the following thoroughfares as "immediate needs" boulevards, i.e., projects that should be addressed first:</p> <p>Eastbank:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jefferson Highway from Causeway to the Orleans Parish line - David Drive from Veterans to West Napoleon - Severn Avenue from West Esplanade to the I-10 Service road - Citrus from Dickory to Elmwood Park Boulevard <p>Westbank:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lapalco Boulevard from Barkley Drive to Brooklyn Avenue - Gretna Boulevard from Canal to Redwood - Behrman Highway from Belle Chasse Highway to the Orleans Parish line <p>Greg Cantrell, Inc. has been issued the task of developing the plans for Jefferson Highway and Lapalco Boulevard.</p>	Secure local funding and pursue external funding in 2009; secure interagency agreements in 2009; issue bids and initiate project in 2010; complete phase one by 2015			

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Progress as of March 2009							
Action ID #	Action Item	Original Timeline	Accomplishments/Benchmarks Met	Next Steps	Action Item Complete	Substantial Progress	Little/No Progress
B1c	Implement a gateway improvement program with a principal emphasis on the corridors abutting the airport	Secure local funding and pursue external funding in 2009; secure inter-agency agreements in 2009; initiate project in 2010; complete by 2013	<p>The Jefferson Parish Public Works – Streets Department has made significant progress with this initiative. The Department has initiated the planting of flora along I-10, is in the design and construction phase of landscaping and signage for all Parish entry points, has started the application process for a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) grant through the Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), has prepared and issued bid requests for local roads, and is working with DOTD for the permitting and approval necessary to issue bid requests for State routes.</p> <p>Additionally, representatives from several Parish agencies and departments met in February 2009 to discuss the planning of this initiative. The group is scheduled to meet again by the end of March to review research results and to devise implementation strategies and schedules.</p>	Secure interagency agreements in 2009; initiate project in 2010; complete by 2013			
B1d	Create a small grant program to fund landscape improvements to older commercial properties	Complete project design and solicit applications in 2009; initiate matching grant program in 2010 and annually thereafter	<p>Although this initiative addresses older commercial properties, the Parish will begin the process by first identifying all subdivision entrances needing improvement. The identification process is scheduled to be completed in March 2009. Once the identification process is complete, the Parish will notify subdivision leaders of its recommendations. The Planning & Parkways Departments will then meet to determine the most effective identification process for commercial properties in need of landscape improvements. JEDCO has applied to the Greater New Orleans Foundation for a \$50,000 grant to be used as matching funds for this initiative.</p>	Complete project design and solicit applications in 2009; initiate matching grant program in 2010 and annually thereafter			
B1e	Sponsor a design and engineering competition to devise interim aesthetic improvements to open drainage canals	Issue RFP and award grant in 2009; begin implementing recommendations in 2010	Representatives from JEDCO and the Parish's Planning and Parkways Departments attended a planning meeting in February 2009 to review this initiative. A follow-up meeting is scheduled for March when the group will solidify its blueprint for the implementation of this item.	Issue RFP and award grant in 2009; begin implementing recommendations in 2010			

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B1f	Work with utility providers to screen major utility infrastructure throughout the Parish	Identify funds in 2009/2010; secure agreements with utility providers in 2010; initiate improvements in 2011	The Jefferson Parish Public Works, Planning, and Parkways Departments met with Entergy in December. Entergy has agreed to provide the Parish with a comprehensive inventory of the major utility infrastructure throughout Jefferson Parish. This initiative will be launched in mid-2009.	Identify funds in 2009/2010; secure agreements with utility providers in 2009/2010; initiate improvements in 2011			
B2 Significantly enhance both the content and the enforcement of the Parish's land use policies and regulations							
B2a	Revise the Envision Jefferson 2020 Comprehensive Plan to include an urban design element	Identify funds in 2008; issue RFP and award contract in 2009; complete element in 2009	Representatives of JEDCO, the Jefferson Parish Planning Department and other Parish entities met in late January to discuss the revision of the Envision Jefferson 2020 Comprehensive Plan. The group is scheduled to meet again by the end of March to solidify the implementation and scheduling timetable.	Identify funds in 2009; issue RFP and award contract in 2009; complete element in 2009			
B2b	Comprehensively re-write the Parish's zoning ordinance	Identify funds in 2008; issue RFP and award contract in 2009; adoption of new ordinance by year end 2010, beginning 2011	Representatives of JEDCO, the Jefferson Parish Planning Department and other Parish entities met in late January to discuss the revision of the Parish's zoning ordinance. The group is scheduled to meet again by the end of March to solidify the implementation and scheduling timetable.	Identify funds in 2009; issue RFP and award contract in 2009; adoption of new ordinance by year end 2010, beginning 2011			
B2c	Enact interim improvements to Parish codes and land use regulations	Identify gaps and weaknesses in present regulations; adopt amended, interim regulations in 2008 and 2009	Representatives of JEDCO, the Jefferson Parish Planning Department and other Parish entities met in late January to discuss interim improvements to the Parish's codes and land use regulations. The group is scheduled to meet again by the end of March to solidify the implementation and scheduling timetable.	Identify gaps and weaknesses in present regulations; adopt amended, interim regulations in 2009			
B2d	Ensure the even application and vigorous enforcement of existing zoning regulations	Ongoing; strive for Greater predictability starting in 2008 and 2009 as regulations are amended and coordination is enhanced	Representatives of JEDCO, the Jefferson Parish Planning Department and other Parish entities met in late January to discuss enforcement of existing zoning regulations. The group is scheduled to meet again by the end of March to solidify the implementation and scheduling timetable.	Ongoing; strive for greater predictability starting in 2009 as regulations are amended and coordination is enhanced			

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B3 Increase community awareness of beautification efforts and elicit further community involvement								
B3a	Formalize a lasting public partnership with civic groups and other non-profits to plant additional trees in residential neighborhoods	Development of Co-operative endeavor in 2008/2009; initiate tree planting program in 2009	Jefferson Parish will make lasting partnerships with civic groups and other non-profits during the implementation of Action Item B1d (subdivision entrance improvements). While working with the subdivision leaders, the Jeffers Parish Department representatives will encourage tree-planting in residential areas.	Development of Cooperative endeavor in 2009; initiate tree planting program in 2009				
B3b	Initiate a public outreach campaign to inform residents of on-going beautification initiatives	Develop website and newsletter layout in 2008/early 2009. Unveil in 2009	<p>Jefferson Parish has made significant progress with the public outreach campaign. JEDCO launched its first commercial, "Jefferson Parish: Opportunity Lives Here", on January 19, 2009 and will release its second on March 9th. Over the coming year, the commercials will air over 3,000 times. JEDCO has also scheduled approximately 2,000 public service announcements that will run on WWL, WDSU, WGNO, FOX and COX. Additionally, JEDCO unveiled the www.opportunityliveshere.com website in February 2009. In place of the newsletter previously planned, JEDCO is producing a custom publication, "Jefferson Life Magazine", which will highlight a different quality of life initiative every issue and will include information updates for all the initiatives. "Jefferson Life Magazine" will be mailed to select households and will be made available at multiple pick-up points around Jefferson Parish. The first edition of "Jefferson Life Magazine" will highlight beautification and is scheduled to be released in April 2009 with two additional magazines following later in the year.</p> <p>Additionally, Jefferson Parish has produced two brochures; one an informational brochure highlighting the CPZ Veterans Boulevard beautification efforts and the other, a "Parkways" brochure emphasizing beautification activities parish-wide and promoting the following Jefferson Parish programs: Parkway Sponsorship, Thoroughfare Adoption and Tree Donation. The first brochure was sent via e-mail to all JEDCO and Chamber of Commerce recipients and in the near future, both brochures will be mailed to every Jefferson Parish household and business as a water bill insert.</p>	Release the first edition of "Jefferson Parish Magazine" in late April 2009 and two subsequent issues later in the year				

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B4 Provide additional public art installations throughout Jefferson Parish								
B4a	Develop a formal program for incorporating public art into public works projects	Develop program and secure funding in 2008, 2009; Initiate program in 2009, 2010	Jefferson Parish has received much positive feedback for its "Call to Artists" released January 7th in which sculptors were requested to submit completed pieces or conceptual designs to the Parish by February 27th. Submissions will be reviewed by a committee composed of a landscape architect, civic leaders and members of Parish Administration. Nine of the selected sculptures will be placed at designated intersections along the Veteran's Corridor while the other six will be placed on Westbank thoroughfares.	Sculpture selection February 27, 2009; sculpture placement 2009-2010				
B4b	Coordinate with the state and New Orleans Public Belt Railroad to install decorative lighting on the Huey P. Long Bridge	Initiate outreach in 2008 and 2009; install lighting before completion of bridge widening in 2013	During the 2007 Regular Legislative Session, Congressman Scalise sponsored HCR#280 requesting that the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LADOTD) study the feasibility of lighting the Huey P. Long Bridge. The HCR passed both the House and Senate. Since this time, the LA DOTD has contracted with APEX Engineering, an electrical engineering firm, to prepare a report comparing the cost of installation and maintenance of different types of bridge lighting including lighting similar to the Crescent City Connection and wash lighting which would light from the ground up. Apex's preliminary report is due in March with the final report expected in July. The biggest obstacle to this project will be securing funding for the installation and maintenance of the lighting.	Review feasibility studies and designs; secure funding for installation and maintenance				