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Transportation Safety and Access: A Case Study of the St. Claude Bridge in New Orleans

Earthea Nance

The University of New Orleans

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Using University-Community Partnerships to Improve Transportation Safety and Access

by

Earthea Nance, PhD, PE, CFM

Asst. Professor of Environmental Plng. & Hazard Mitigation

University of New Orleans

Presented at the 2013 DRU Conference

New Orleans

March 20, 2013

Outline

1. The Community-University Concept
2. The UNO Master's in Urban and Regional Planning Practicum
3. Results of the St. Claude Bridge Project
4. Building Momentum
5. Conclusions

Community-University Concept

- ❖ Encourages researchers and community members to cooperatively construct solutions appropriate to specific contexts and situations.
- ❖ Brings the resources of universities together with the most pressing issues communities now face.
- ❖ Benefits both campus and community.
- ❖ Community engagement works best when it is linked to the university's core mission of knowledge building.

UNO MURP Practicum

- ❖ Serves as the capstone course of the Urban and Regional Planning Master's degree.
- ❖ Requires graduate students to produce professional work for a local client.
- ❖ An opportunity to engage with communities on issues that are important to them.
- ❖ A memorable experience for our students.
- ❖ Topics have included economic development, environmental hazards, affordable housing, recreation planning, transportation, zoning and land use, and historic preservation.

Connectthe 9

Bridging St. Claude for All Users



THE UNIVERSITY of
NEW ORLEANS

Final report and slides delivered to the community in hard copy and electronically, also posted online at: transportation.uno.edu/publications

Connect the 9



Photos by Kirk Hunter

Bridging St. Claude for All Users



MURP 6720 | Instructor: Earthea Nance, PhD, PE, CFM | May 9, 2012.

Shari Ambruster | Emille Bahr | Molly Brackin | Jonathan Dodson | Lawrence Guimont IV |
Kirk Hunter | Kimberly Hymel | Mariana Marmol | Sophie O'Neill | Nikolaus Richard |
Jonathan Rutherford | Aaron Ryan | Melanie Sand | Scott Weston.

Public notice from the
New Orleans City
Council Transportation
Committee announcing
the presentation by
UNO students and two
community
representatives .

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

APRIL 24, 2012

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Transportation Committee will hold its regular scheduled meeting on **Tuesday, April 24, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.** in the City Council Chamber on the first floor of City Hall. The items offered for the Transportation Committee consideration is presented subject to the chairperson's approval. City Council Transportation Committee meetings are generally accessible to persons with disabilities. People in need of certain accommodations such as sign language interpreter may be provided service with 24 hours prior notice by calling (504) 658-1095 / Voice or (504) 658-4020 / TTY.

Agenda item(s) are as follows:

Dr. Earthea Nance and University of New Orleans Students to present their project "Connect the 9" on transportation alternatives for improved bike and pedestrian access across the St. Claude Bridge. The project is on behalf of the St. Claude Bridge Safety and Access Committee which is working in conjunction with the 9th Ward Center for Sustainable Engagement and Development (CSED). (The presentation will be approximately 30 minutes.)

If you have any questions regarding this information, please contact me at 504-658-1030 or Rekitta A. Peters at 504-658-1105/office or 504-201-6965/cell.

CITY COUNCIL TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

COUNCILMEMBER KRISTIN GISLESON PALMER, CHAIRPERSON

COUNCILMEMBER SUSAN G. GUIDRY

COUNCILMEMBER CYNTHIA HEDGE MORRELL

COUNCILMEMBER STACY HEAD, ALTERNATE

POSTED: April 23, 2012

Letter from New Orleans City Council to the President & CEO of the Port of New Orleans requesting collective action by all responsible parties.

June 18, 2012

Mr. Gary LaGrange
President & CEO, Port of New Orleans
P.O. Box 60046
New Orleans, LA 70160

Dear Mr. LaGrange,

We are writing to express our concern regarding the conditions of the St. Claude Avenue Bridge which spans the Industrial Canal connecting the Upper and Lower 9th Wards. A study "Connect the 9: Bridging St. Claude for All Users" initiated by the Lower 9th Ward Center for Sustainable Engagement and Development (CSED) and led by Dr. Earthea Nance with students of the University of New Orleans' Masters of Planning and Urban Studies Program points out the egregious conditions of the bridge - specifically the bicycle lane and accompanying pedestrian walkway. Tulane Prevention Resource Center has posted the study online which you may download at <http://goo.gl/2pnlN>.

Though remediation of the pedestrian stairwell helped to temporarily improve the safety conditions after a toddler fell in December 2008 (as reported in the *Times-Picayune*, Martha Carr, "Toddler Falls through railings on St. Claude Bridge in 9th Ward"), the report indicates that bridge conditions are still dangerous and more attention is needed.

The Port of New Orleans and those Cc'd were identified as responsible parties for aspects of the upkeep and maintenance of the bridge. We would like everyone to come together to discuss how to fix this. The report includes both short and long-term recommendations for improving bridge safety.

We appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson
Council President

Stacy Head
Council Vice President

Susan G. Guidry
Councilmember District "A"

Diana Bajoie
Councilmember District "B"

Kristin Gisleson Palmer
Councilmember District "C"

Cynthia Hedge-Morrell
Councilmember District "D"

Jon D. Johnson
Councilmember District "E"















Conclusions

1. Success was associated with adherence to the community-university concept, which requires full-fledged partnership among equals and continued engagement.
2. The student's report brought great momentum to the community's efforts.
3. Faculty continue to be engaged with this community even though the students have graduated.

Thank You

E-mail: eanance@uno.edu
Web: www.chart.uno.edu
www.plus.uno.edu