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

Earthea Nance
The University of New Orleans

Follow this and additional works at: http://scholarworks.uno.edu/dru2013

Recommended Citation
http://scholarworks.uno.edu/dru2013/11
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.

Source: Silka and Renault; Caragianes, 2006: 171-173, 180
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.
Final report and slides delivered to the community in hard copy and electronically, also posted online at: transportation.uno.edu/publications
Public notice from the New Orleans City Council Transportation Committee announcing the presentation by UNO students and two community representatives.
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 9th: 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/2pnlh.

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 Co’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,

Jaquelyn Brechtel Clarkson
Council President

Stacy Head
Council Vice President

Susan G. Guidry
Councilmember District “A”

Diana Euggle
Councilmember District “B”

Kristin Cicaron Palmer
Councilmember District “C”

Cynthia Hodge-Marvell
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