

RESILIENT AND ADAPTIVE REGIONAL ECONOMIES

René Pastorek, AICP
-- former Planning and Zoning Director, St. John Parish

Wednesday, October 23, 2024
NADO Annual Training Conference



BACKGROUND

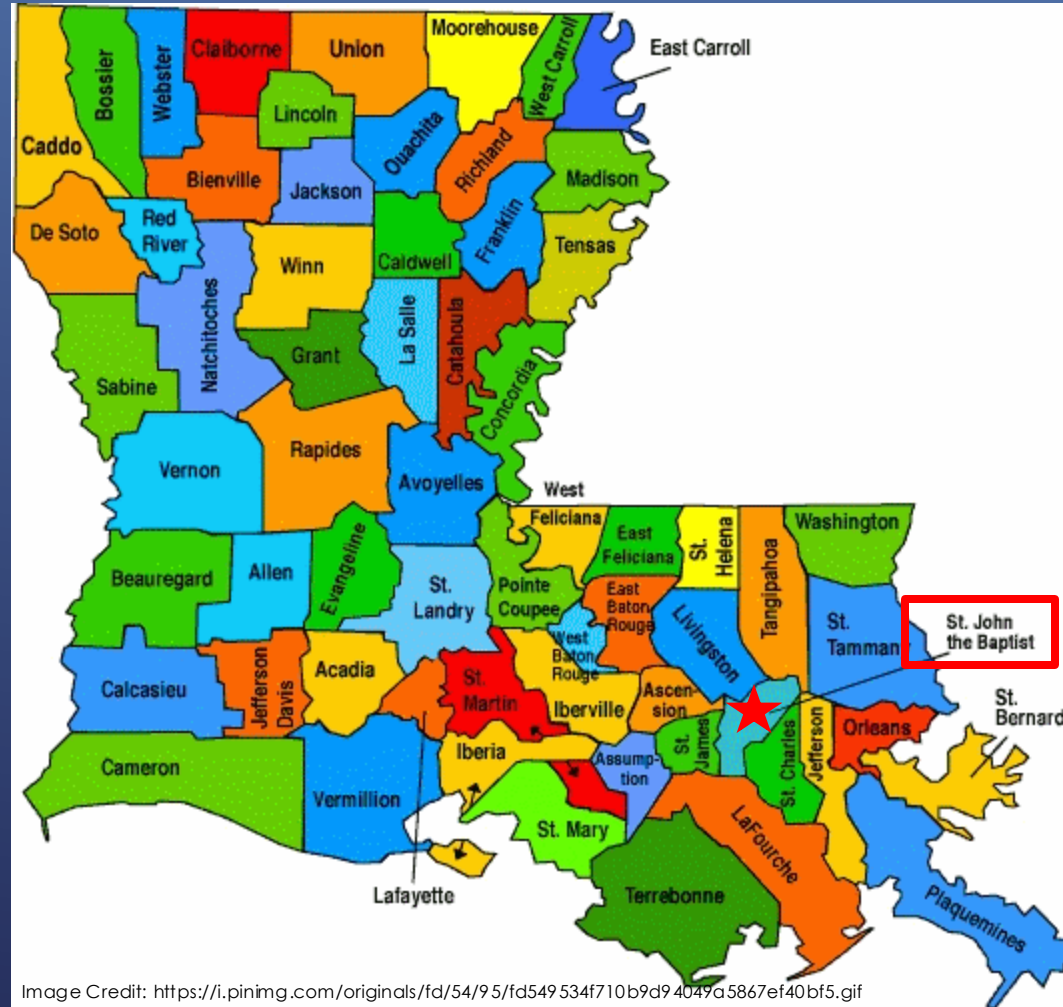
- ▶ Response to climate change requires action at all levels of government.
- ▶ Rural planning departments have clear disadvantages (funding, power, etc.)
- ▶ Unique advantages can be leveraged.



Source: http://education.mnhs.org/sites/default/files/styles/research_item_lg_image/public/images/nl/7-14_0.jpg?itok=BCnGV17A

BACKGROUND

- ▶ Location
- ▶ Demographics
- ▶ Historic Risk



BACKGROUND

- ▶ St. John Parish is nearly 70% wetlands.
- ▶ Lack of infrastructure can lead to shock and stress.



BACKGROUND

- ▶ Devastated by Hurricanes Ida in August 2021 and Isaac in 2011.
- ▶ President Biden speaks in Cambridge neighborhood about need for resilient recovery.



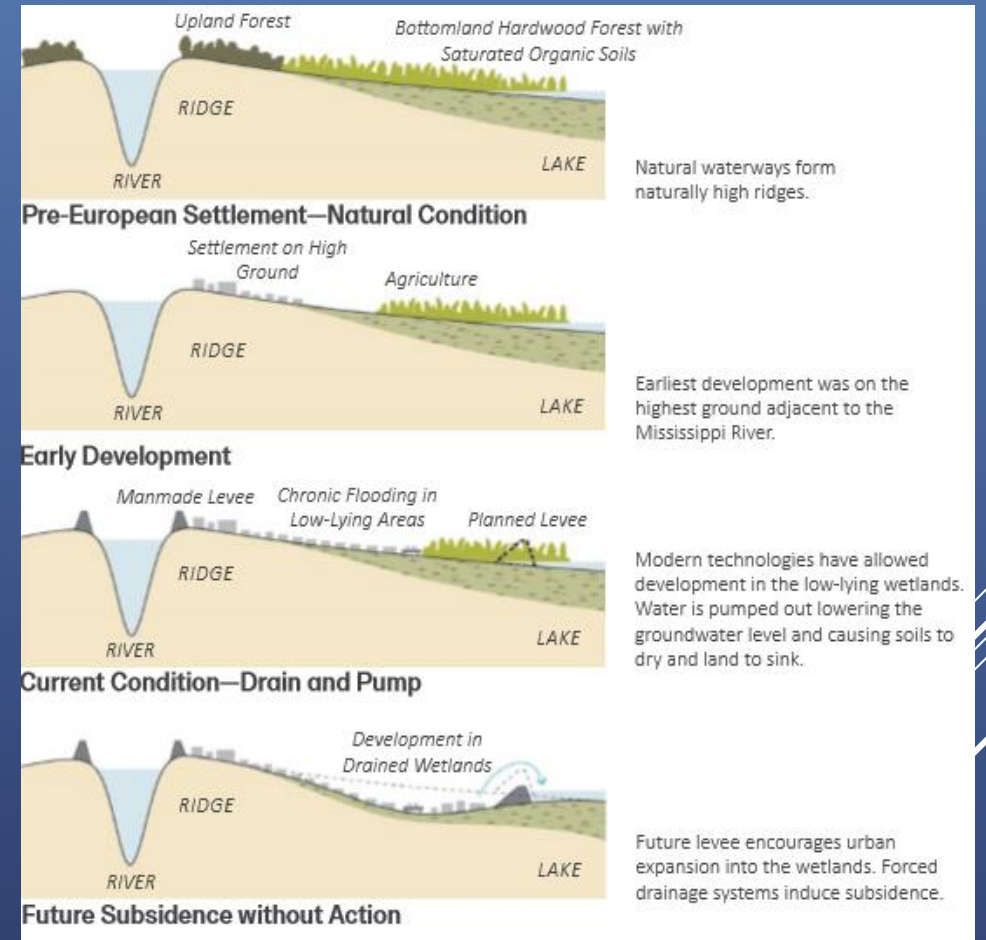
STJOHNSTRONG



BACKGROUND

- ▶ Major investment in federal structural protection sparked the need to rethink infrastructure and development in the Parish.

Westshore Lake Pontchartrain Levee (1.2B)



BACKGROUND

- ▶ Louisiana Strategic Adaptations for Future Environments (LA SAFE) planning process helped show large public support for coastal and environmental resilience.

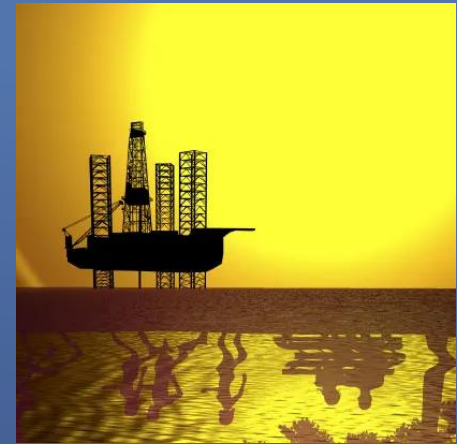
LA SAFE Airline
and Main
Complete
Streets (\$6M)



- ▶ State provided \$6M for pilot project to showcase resilience principles.

BACKGROUND

- ▶ Other sources of local funds begin to accrue for coastal and resilience projects.
- ▶ Funding sources have very specific criteria for projects.
- ▶ The Parish had no defined strategy or capacity to expend these funds.



GOMESA

\$10M by 2044



RESTORE Act

\$1.3M by 2031

PLANNING AND ZONING DEPARTMENT

- ▶ Charged with administering land development regulations.
- ▶ Oversees master planning process for the Parish.
- ▶ No unified effort to address risk and resilience.



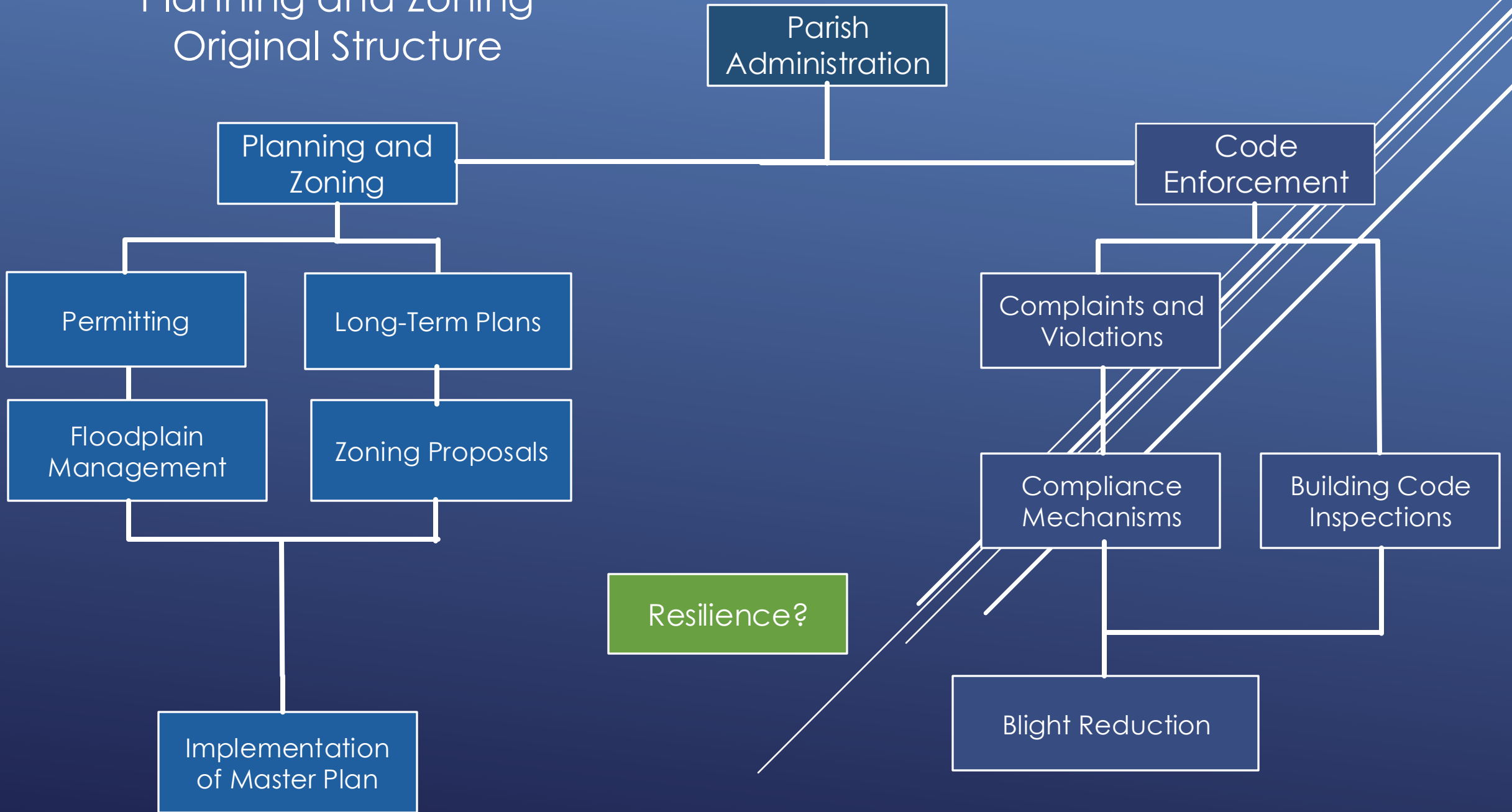
St. John the Baptist

Comprehensive Land Use Plan

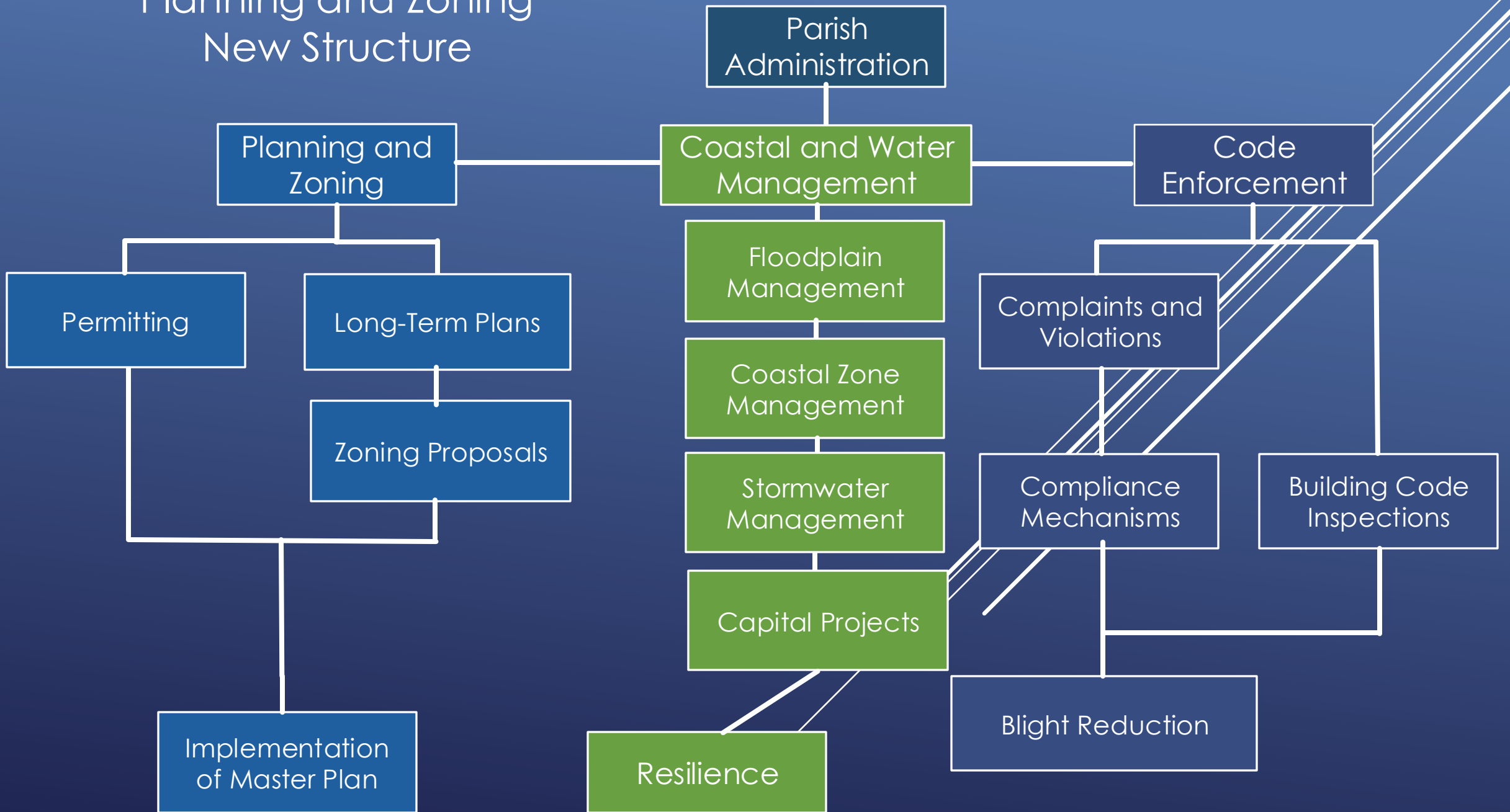
One Parish, One Future

January 2014

Planning and Zoning Original Structure



Planning and Zoning New Structure



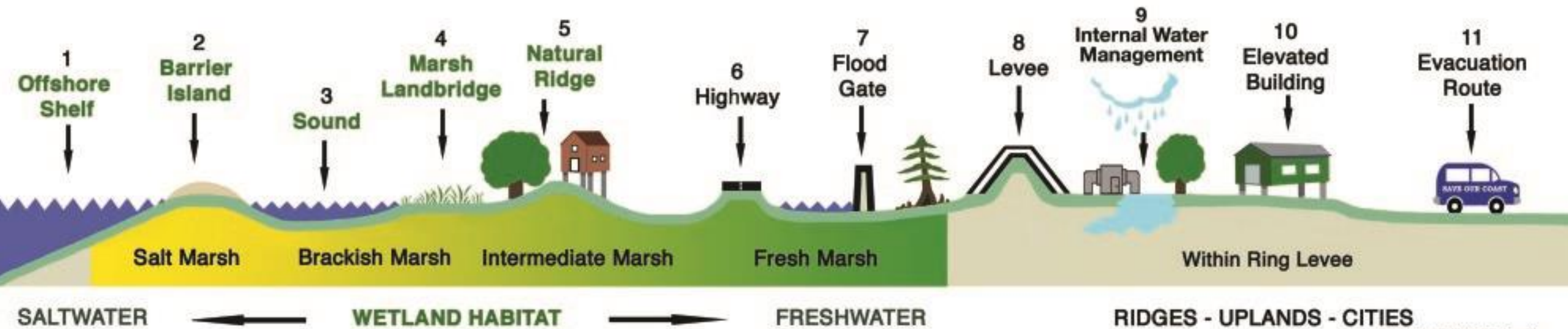
COASTAL AND WATER MANAGEMENT DIVISION

- ▶ Floodplain management, coastal zone management and MS4 compliance
- ▶ Develop policy and project proposals
- ▶ Manage all coastal fund sources and local funds
- ▶ Advocate at state and federal level



ADAPTATION TOOLS

MULTIPLE LINES OF DEFENSE STRATEGY



© Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation

ADAPTATION AT MULTIPLE SCALES



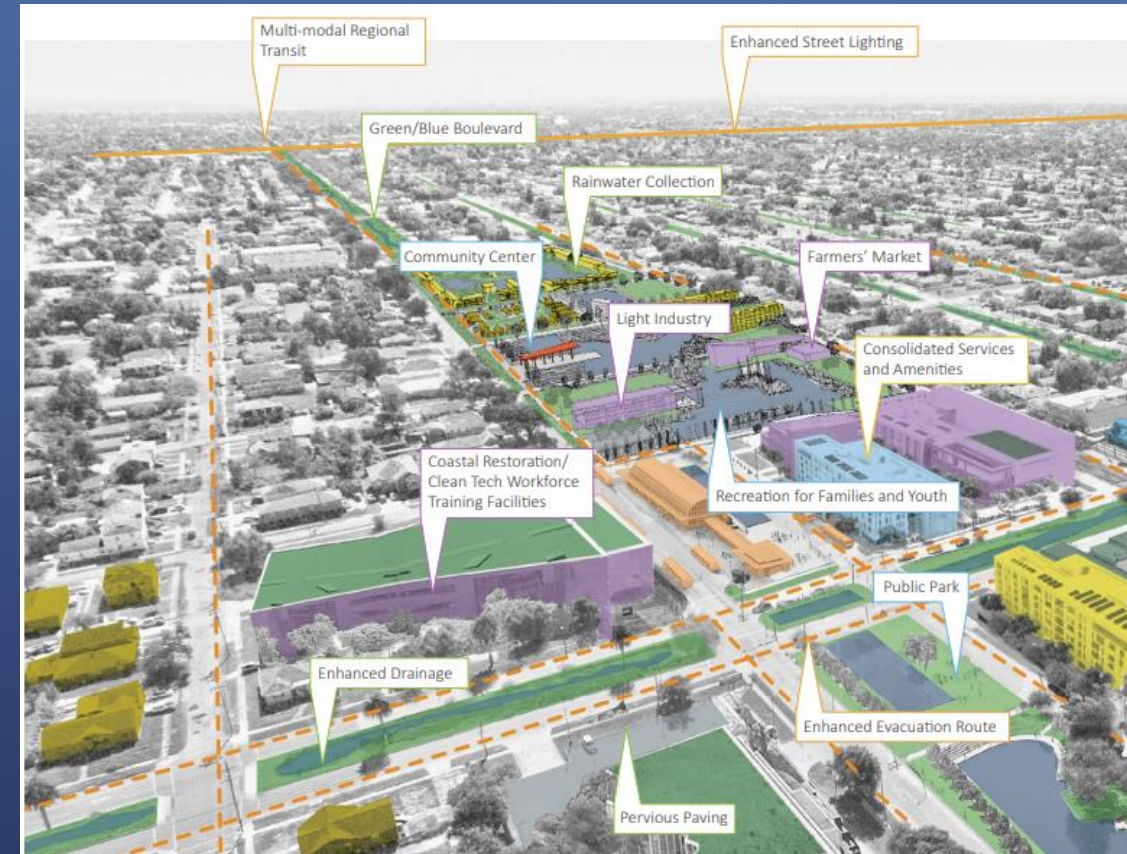
ADAPTIVE PLANS AND POLICIES



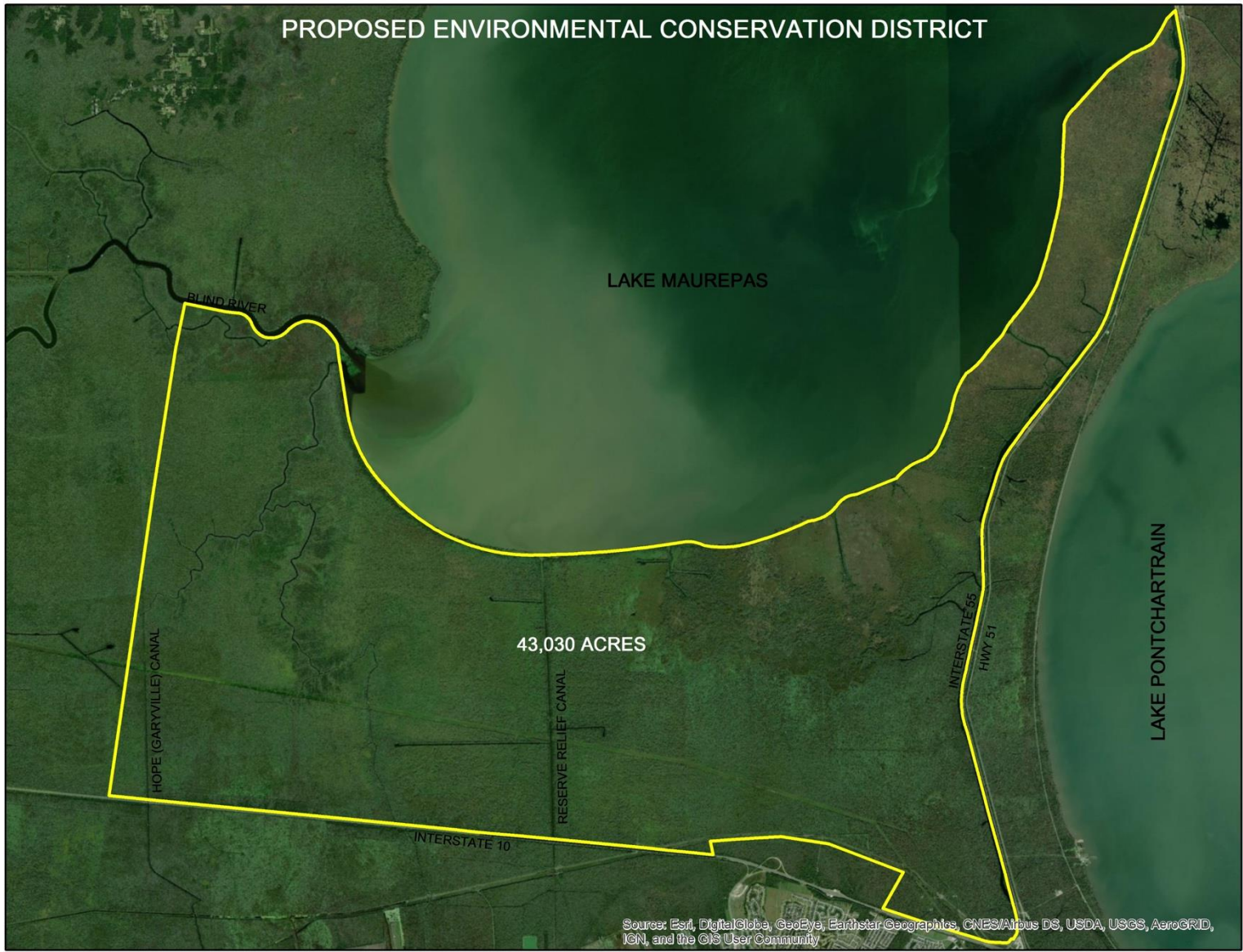
- Plans
- Permits
- Ordinances/Regulations
- Zoning Districts
- Advocacy

CITY-SCALE POLICY: LA SAFE

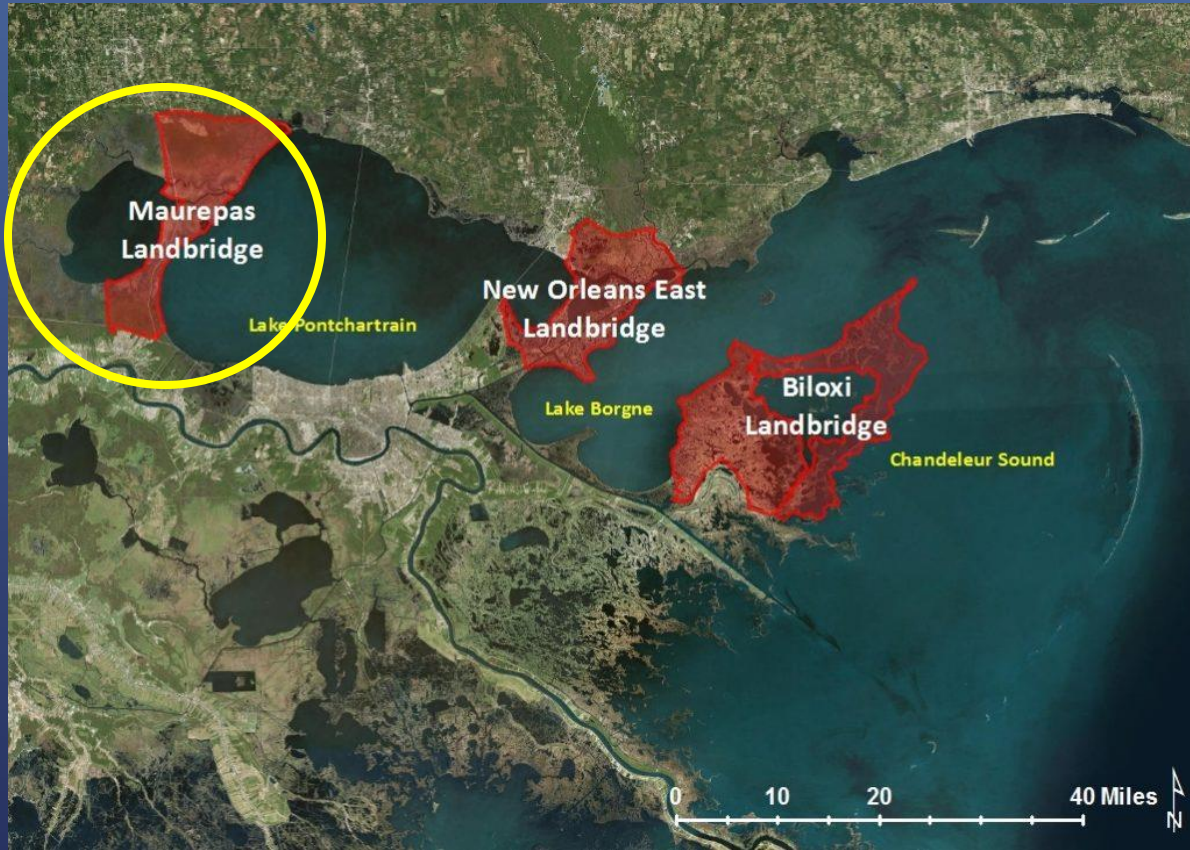
- ▶ LA SAFE planning process
- ▶ Strategic development
- ▶ Adapt to environmental conditions now and in the future



CITY-SCALE POLICY: ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION DISTRICT



REGIONAL-SCALE PLANNING



- Series of landbridges in the Pontchartrain Basin
- Provide risk reduction for interior populations
- Maurepas Landbridge is one of the landbridges

REGIONAL-SCALE PLANNING



- Manchac Landbridge Master Plan
 - Master plan of entire Manchac Landbridge
 - Conservation and recreation projects for future investment



REGIONAL-SCALE POLICY



- Engage state and federal legislatures
- Council resolutions and letters of support

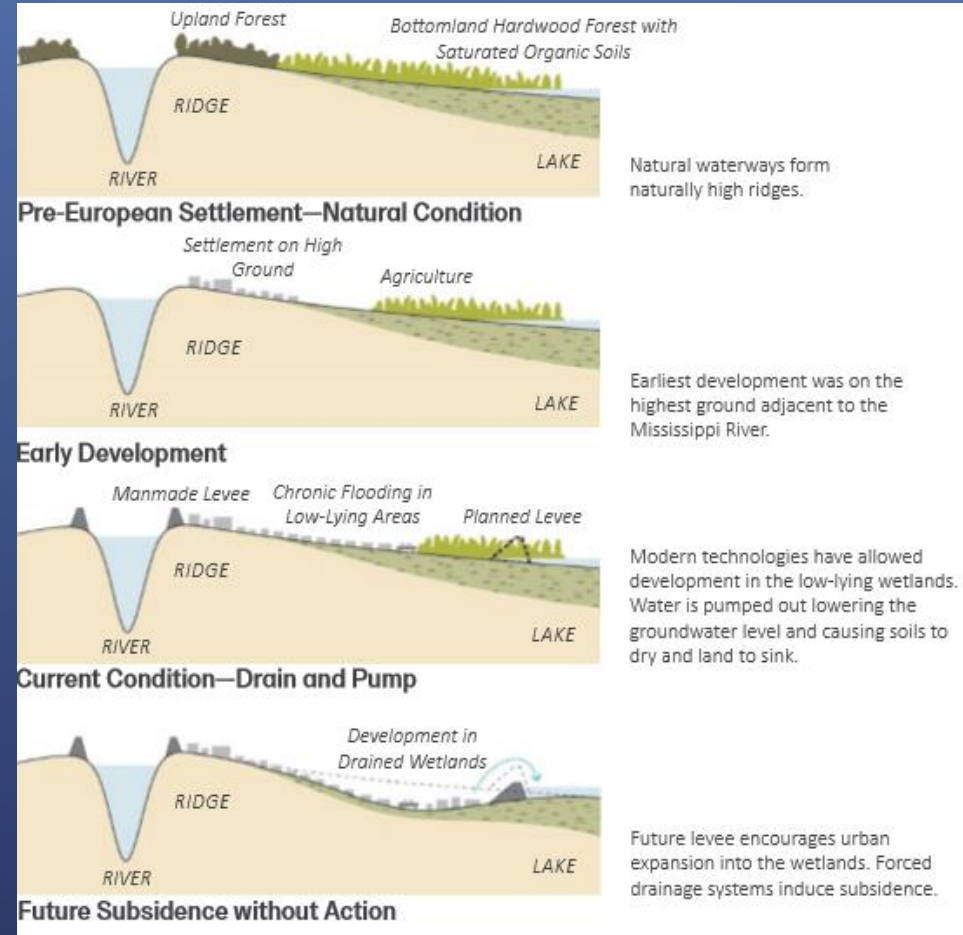


- ▶ Levee
- ▶ Lake Pontchartrain Shoreline Protection
- ▶ Complete Streets
- ▶ Transportation Center
- ▶ Greenway
- ▶ Gateways

ADAPTATION PROJECTS

REGIONAL-SCALE PROJECTS

▶ Westshore Lake Pontchartrain Levee (\$1.2B)



REGIONAL-SCALE PROJECTS

Lake Pontchartrain Shoreline Protection Project

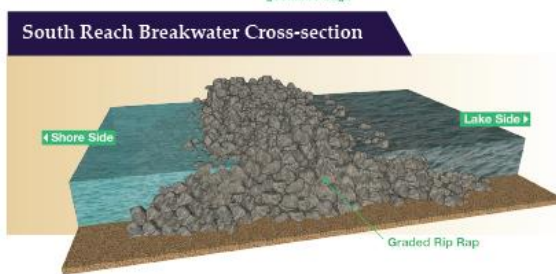
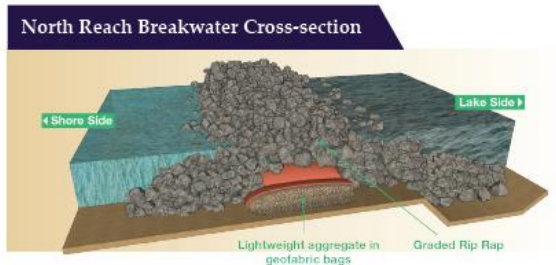
Lake Pontchartrain's shorelines have been retreating under the combined impacts of historical logging, soft soils, and wind-driven waves. As the shoreline retreats, the risk of flooding increases and the wetland habitat is lost.

To reduce the impacts of this erosion to its people and infrastructure, St. John the Baptist Parish is designing breakwaters at two locations in Lake Pontchartrain: south of Pass Manchac and south of Frenier Landing.



HDR Engineering Inc.

*Please note: These dates are our best estimate and may change due to numerous factors.



- Established priorities for protection
- Working to design and construct shoreline protection project

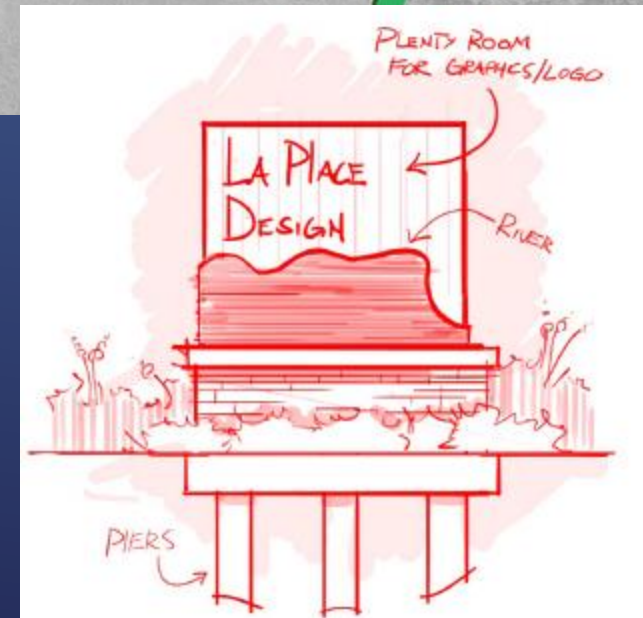
REGIONAL-SCALE PROJECTS

- ▶ Manchac Greenway Master Plan
- ▶ Regional bike/recreation trail
- ▶ Long-term regional partnership
- ▶ Ecotourism: bike trails, boat launches, and natural conservation projects



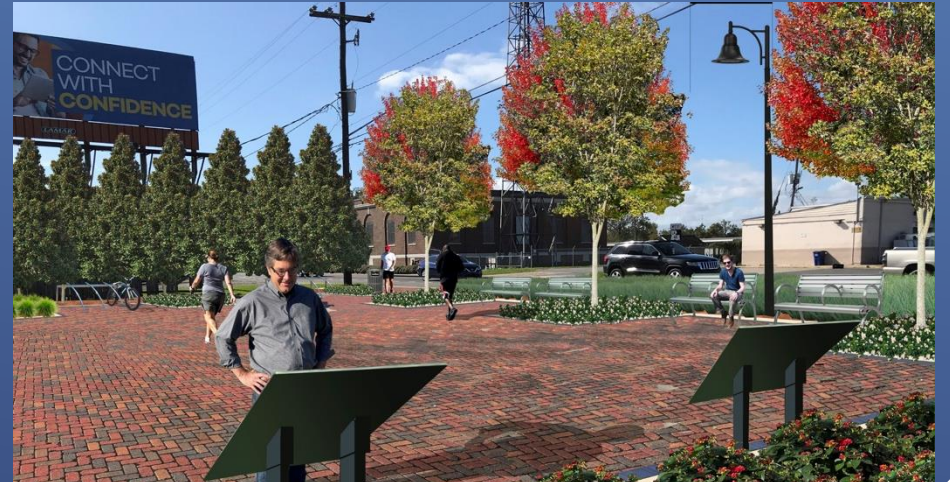
REGIONAL-SCALE PROJECTS

- ▶ I-10 Gateway Corridors
- ▶ Increase visibility, aesthetics and drainage at both intersections
- ▶ Attract more businesses and tourists



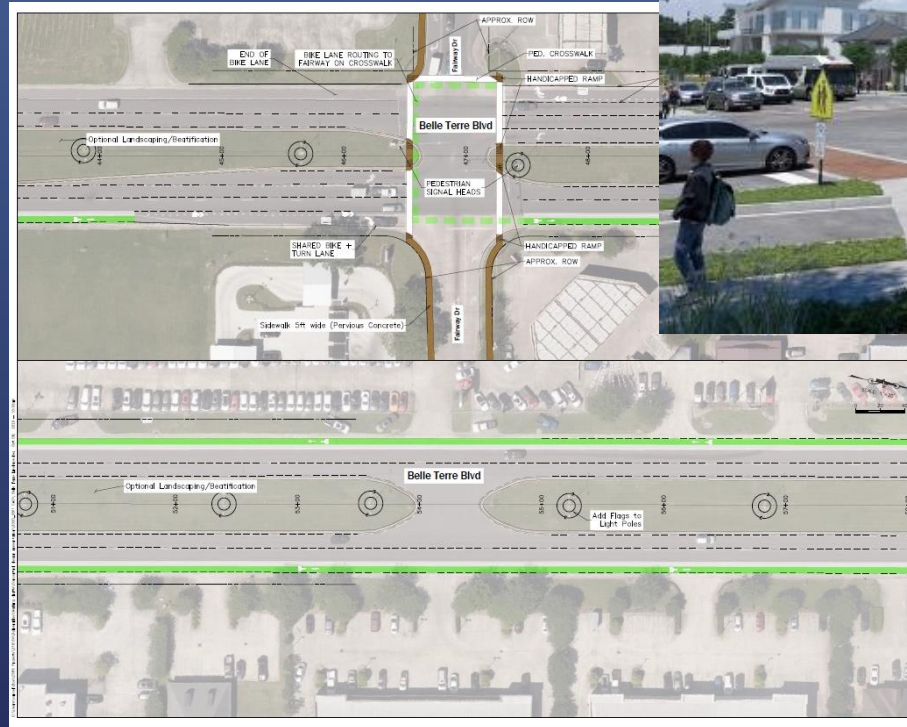
CITY-SCALE PROJECTS

- ▶ First LA SAFE project is funded: Airline and Main Complete Streets (\$6M)
- ▶ Near main intersection in LaPlace
- ▶ Stormwater management, bike lanes, and improved drainage



CITY-SCALE PROJECTS

- ▶ Belle Terre Streetscape and Stormwater Enhancements
- ▶ \$4M in infrastructure improvements
- ▶ Bicycle, sidewalk and green infrastructure



CITY-SCALE PROJECTS

- ▶ LaPlace Multi-Modal Transportation Center Plan
- ▶ Completed in 2019
- ▶ Implementation is underway
- ▶ Next step: design and construct the train station

