

THE TRUST *for* PUBLIC LAND

CONSERVING LAND FOR PEOPLE



JEFFERSON PARISH: *Greenprint for Growth*

Even before Hurricane Katrina altered the physical, social, and economic landscape of coastal Louisiana, Jefferson Parish community leaders were already dealing with population loss, a rise in crime, and a business slowdown. In 2003, the parish adopted its first comprehensive master plan to re-imagine the community's future, tackling transportation, business retention, and natural resource protection, among many other goals. Hurricane Katrina interrupted the parish's momentum, but new partners and new funding helped bring the plan—and the community—back to life.

TPL's role

Drawing on funding from the Johnson & Johnson Foundation set aside for recovery efforts in southeastern Louisiana, The Trust for Public Land helped Jefferson Parish create a community Greenprint.

Initiated in 2007, the Greenprint proposed an implementation strategy for the parks and recreation element of the parish's comprehensive plan. The Greenprint identified areas where new parks could meet gaps in recreational services, create an interconnected system of walking and biking trails, improve access to the waterfront, and protect and restore wetlands outside the levee system.

The parish's planning department wanted to involve as many individuals and organizations as possible: TPL helped community leaders ensure that all voices were heard. A steering committee guided the overall Greenprint process, while a stakeholder committee—including business leaders, landowners, neighborhood groups, agency representatives, environmental organizations, and urban planners—identified goals and

objectives. TPL's GIS experts translated the Greenprint goals into "opportunity maps" that highlighted areas for conservation that best met the community's needs. Stakeholders then used these maps to create action plans for implementing the Greenprint.

Project highlights

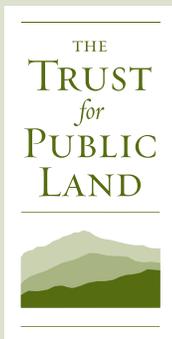
Southeastern Louisiana's ecology, history, and economy presented unique challenges to the Greenprint team. Previous governmental efforts meant some large landowners were wary that the Greenprint process would target their lands and force them to relinquish private holdings for public purposes. To address these concerns, TPL worked with landowners to craft language that respected private interests, ensuring that lands prioritized for conservation in the Greenprint would be protected only through a willing-seller program. TPL's Greenprint team also worked with business leaders to attract and retain businesses by identifying areas for recreation and beautification within commercial corridors.

Results

In October 2009, the Jefferson Parish Council approved the Greenprint as the recreation element of its comprehensive plan, making implementation of the Greenprint goals official parish policy. According to Ed Durabb, director of the planning department, the Greenprint helps the community move past basic recovery toward acquiring lands for parks and preserving wetlands—thereby supporting healthy ecosystems and outdoor recreation. The Greenprint also calls for the redevelopment of the levee system to include bike and pedestrian trails, expanded waterfront access, and reintroduction of native vegetation to improve water quality.

"The Greenprint process is our first opportunity to look holistically at what the parish needs through the eyes of the clients for this process—the citizens of Jefferson Parish."

—Ed Durabb, director,
Jefferson Parish Planning Department



The Trust for Public Land conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens, and other natural places, ensuring livable communities for generations to come.

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