



PARISH OF JEFFERSON

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

JOHN F. YOUNG, JR.
PARISH PRESIDENT

December 12, 2012

Mitchell J. Landrieu
Mayor
City of New Orleans
1300 Perdido Street, 2nd Floor
New Orleans, LA 70112

Re: Livable Claiborne Communities

Dear Mayor Landrieu:

I share your commitment to preserving what is unique and important about our regional community while embracing aspirations for vibrant and sustainable neighborhoods to live, grow, and prosper. For Jefferson Parish, however, the transportation aspect of the recent Claiborne Avenue Corridor study raises the specter of serious regional impacts, and I would like to take the opportunity early in the study to voice some of the concerns of Jefferson Parish.

While I appreciate that federal guidelines dictate that more than one alternative must result from the study, the primary alternative that has been promoted in media reports, at regional presentations like the recent Biodistrict luncheon at the Hyatt, and even in meetings concerning the awarding of the grants, is the proposal to dismantle the elevated I-10 roadway from the Pontchartrain Expressway to Elysian Fields Avenue. This proposal is particularly concerning to Jefferson Parish for the following reasons:

- With this stretch of I-10 eliminated, hurricane evacuation would be problematic
- Access to and from the West Bank, where approximately 200,000 persons live in Jefferson Parish and numerous businesses thrive along the parish's major corridors, including the Harvey Canal, would be problematic, as would traffic congestion in Metairie if West Bankers must travel to the I-10/610 split for a limited access route and vie with East Bankers and other travelers in order to go to, or come from, I-10 east
- Whether federal and state governments have the huge amounts of funding to both tear down the elevated roadway and either revamp the I-10/610 split or build a third bridge over the river from Algiers to Chalmette that links a major corridor in West Jefferson with I-510, is highly questionable, and the fear is that the funds would be available to tear down the elevated roadway but not for the necessary improvements to compensate for its removal

I understand that transportation data is being collected and analyzed, including by the Regional Planning Commission, and I am confident that these concerns will be addressed. But as you know, technical input is only one part of a good planning process; another component is input from the persons and groups with a stake in the outcome. Given the potential, serious, regional transportation impacts resulting from the Claiborne Corridor study, Jefferson Parish's residents and businesses must be viewed as key stakeholders in this study and any future environmental impact or similar assessments of the corridor.

Thus, I was concerned to see the announcement for the "First Citywide Public Meeting," which has been touted as a meeting for regional input, appear only a week and a half prior to the December 8, 2012 meeting date at Dillard University. Further, the four other public meetings announced to date were scheduled at locations within the Claiborne study area. To provide similar convenience and accessibility to the residents and businesses of Jefferson Parish, public meetings also should be held in Jefferson and these meetings should be advertised widely and with timely notice. In short, the key stakeholders of Jefferson Parish and other entities in the region should be afforded legitimate opportunities for input.

Providing Jefferson Parish with greater participation, including representation on the Governance Committee for this study, has been discussed with Deputy Mayor Cedric Grant. I look forward to continued openness as we address the study's issues and find solutions that are in the best interests of our neighborhoods and the regional community.

Sincerely,

John F. Young, Jr.
Parish President

Cc: Elton M. Lagasse, Chairman and Councilman-At-Large, Division B
Chris Roberts, Councilman-At-Large, Division A
Ricky J. Templet, Councilman, District 1
Paul D. Johnston, Councilman, District 2
Mark D. Spears, Jr., Councilman, District 3
E. "Ben" Zahn, III, Councilman, District 4
Cynthia Lee-Sheng, Councilwoman, District 5
Billy Nungesser, Parish President, Plaquemines Parish
David Peralta, Parish President, St. Bernard Parish
Patricia Brister, Parish President, St. Tammany Parish
Walter R. Brooks, Executive Director, Regional Planning Commission
Cedric S. Grant, Deputy Mayor, City of New Orleans