

PhD. Lake Douglas
Louisiana State University
Robert Reich School of Landscape Architecture
Baton Rouge, LA 70803

RE: Lafitte Corridor Enhancement Project

The urban canopy surrounding the length of this linear bike and walking trail is a real mixed bag of tree species. The most common desirable species, which should come as no surprise, are the live oaks, crape myrtles, and bald cypress trees. The trees in this project area have seen little to no maintenance, and for the most part are in fair to good condition. The site does have numerous volunteer trees growing along fence lines and under power lines as to be expected. Some of these volunteers should be protected and remain on this site. Others should be removed to allow for proper growth habits. I would strongly encourage a meeting with all parties involved to discuss these findings and suggestions before any work is started.

The first thing that needs to be accomplished is the removal of all the trees that have been deemed dead or in poor condition. This should be followed by identifying which trees whether desirable or not need to be removed based on proximity to demolition and construction site. Then remove those trees that you have determined will not survive. After removals are completed start to address protecting the trees that will remain and enhance this development. Adjustments will have to be made via (Canopy Pruning, Root Pruning, and fencing) around the trees to prevent damage during the construction process. Most trees on this site have an abundance of deadwood in the canopies as a result of poor maintenance. This should be addressed with proper pruning to enhance this site and remove the threat of insects and disease reducing the health of these trees. Random soil samples should be evaluated by a lab to check for PH levels and soil fertility. Based on the results we should know what, if any, thing needs to be done to improve the soil conditions.

Some of these trees identified in our survey having an overall rating of **Fair** now, as they become larger their health will deteriorate. This is a result of their present condition being **Good**, but the location the tree is in is sub-par. Some of these trees are small enough to relocate at a minimum expense, and other could be helped by moving the obstruction that will hinder the tree's future growth. Some examples of the obstructions I am referring to are fencing, utility poles, and concrete. With a little effort in the planning stages these trees can remain on the site and add value shade and beauty to this site. Another problem identified in the more mature trees was the active presence of Formosan termites. Those mature trees that have active termites and are on the To-Be-Protected list should be treated with a termiticide. These trees might have to be treated repeatedly until all evidence of activity is gone. Additionally, some trees that were either planted or allow to grow along these fence lines demonstrate symptoms of herbicide damage. Not sure how this issue can be resolved or who is applying the herbicide.

The Tree Planting phase should be approached as an opportunity to introduce more Southern Louisiana native species. Too many projects try to introduce non-native species that have very little chance for success. The placement of the trees will be just as important and the species selected. Those trees planted close to the Bike/Walking trail should be deciduous. This will allow for shade during the warmer months and in the fall and winter months when the leaves have dropped,

providing the maximum amount of exposure to sunlight. All evergreen trees should be planted on the perimeter to provide a sight and sound barrier. Some of the young existing trees that need to be transplanted can be moved to their new location in the landscape design and protected during the demolition and construction phases.

If you have any further questions I can be reached at..... Office
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Sincerely,

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