



Terrebonne Strong: Recovery Plan Community Meetings

RECCOMENDATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

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Executive Summary

This report breaks down the feedback received from the community meetings into parish-wide themes and community-specific issues and themes. The parish-wide themes cover issues that affect the whole parish, while community-specific issues are targeted to each community's needs. There were eight community meetings across the Parish with a total 219 attendees from the general public.

Parish-Wide Themes

Housing

Concern: Housing rebuilding slowed by lack of recovery funds

Flood insurance rates have increased significantly due to FEMA's current flood map, making it challenging for residents to be able to afford to live in their own homes. This is especially hard on the senior population, who can no longer work or are retired.

Potential Action: Collaborate with state to accelerate housing repair funding and meet the funding gap

There needs to be a way to bridge the gap between FEMA's requirements and insurance rates, so that people can continue living in their homes. The parish will work with the state to find funding opportunities to help residents afford flood insurance for their homes.

Concern: Acute lack of affordable housing
body

Potential Action: Seek funding to support the renovation/development of housing for low- & moderate-income households

body

Concern: Some housing at risk of both flooding and high winds, need to address both

Residents are struggling to rebuild because the required materials are too expensive. This is causing people to move to areas that have a lower flood risk. Also, members of the community who elevated their homes to meet FEMA requirements ended up losing their homes during Hurricane Ida, because the strong winds were more damaging than the water.

Potential Action: Mitigate housing for both risks through elevations, fortified structures, and stronger materials

The parish will coordinate with the state to find funding opportunities to obtain high quality materials that can be used to rebuild homes in the communities. Having more resilient housing will save money in the future, as residents in theory will not have to keep rebuilding their homes and applying for hurricane damage relief.

Public Facilities

Concern: Lack of recreational facilities and amenities

There is a lack of gyms to help keep the youth busy and active. This could be contributing to the high use of drugs in the younger generation of Terrebonne Parish.

Potential Action: Identify locations and funding opportunities for more recreational facilities

The parish will organize fundraisers to raise money for a gym (or multiple gyms). Having more recreational opportunities would encourage kids to get involved in sports and decrease the likelihood of using drugs in their free time.

Concern: Schools damaged and inoperable after Hurricane Ida

Many schools were damaged during Hurricane Ida and can no longer be used. Parents are having to send their children to schools almost 30 miles away.

Potential Action: Support school board to rebuild and repair resilient school facilities

Terrebonne Parish will work with the state to obtain funds to help rebuild the damaged schools and make them more resilient while doing so.

Concern: Lack of nearby temporary shelter and recovery center for severe weather events

Numerous people had their homes destroyed by Hurricane Ida and had no where to go. There is a need for a shelter and recovery center for the parish to assist those who need a safe place to sleep, eat, and receive medical attention.

Potential Action: Identify funding opportunities to develop a storm shelter for during and right after storms

The parish will work the state to apply for FEMA programs to fund hazard mitigation projects to build a shelter and recovery center for utilization. This would help lower the percentage of deaths and injuries that occur during severe weather events, especially with the elderly population who has a harder time leaving due to restrictions.

Concern: Extended closure or loss of key public services due to damaged public facilities

There are critical structures that need to remain open during and after severe weather events. Places like hospitals, grocery stores, and gas stations need to be reinforced so they can remain open and provide services.

Potential Action: Identify funding opportunities to harden key public facilities so they can re-open quickly after storms

The parish will apply for grants to take resilience measures to reinforce critical public facilities to help increase the likelihood they can remain open during or after tropical storms. People with medical ailments need to have access to medical care are all times, so hospitals and clinics would be a priority for reinforcement.

Utility Infrastructure

Concern: Increasing number of extended power outages for following severe weather events

There is a high quantity of power outages during severe weather events in Terrebonne Parish due to utility poles being knocked over from the intense wind speeds. The fallen poles cause residents to have no power for long periods of time, which becomes a safety hazard. During Hurricane Ida, power was cut off to all the Parish for an extended period.

Potential Action: Seek funding and partnerships for backup energy sources and to harden the electric grid

The parish will work with the state utility companies to take measures to harden the electric grid for the parish. This could be implementing better vegetation management, installing breakaway cables, or burying power lines.

Concern: Inadequate sewer system in some areas, especially with growing populations

Towns that are located farther north in that parish are experiencing rapid growth because they have lower flood risk levels. However, these communities do not have the proper infrastructure to support the influx of people.

Potential Action: Seek funding to expand and enhance sewer system, especially in growing areas

The parish will seek funding to expand and enhance the sewer system, especially in growing areas that need it the most. Having the proper infrastructure needed will make continued growth in the parish

Concern: Storm resilience of the potable water system

There is concern over the quality of the drinking water in Terrebonne Parish during storms. When the power gets knocked out, that water can not be treated and becomes a sanitation hazard, and then residents must boil their water before using.

Potential Action: Develop strategies to harden and improve the potable water system

The parish will work to develop strategies to harden and improve the potable water system to be better prepared during severe weather events. This will ensure that residents can have clean and safe water during power outages.

Concern: Many streets and neighborhoods prone to flooding in intense rainfall events

During heavy rain events, many of the streets flood due to excess water. Improvements are needed for the drainage system in Terrebonne Parish to help redirect the water flow outwards or temporarily contained.

Potential Action: Develop local drainage solutions to reduce flooding

Nature-based solutions can be used to help control flooding. Detention ponds could store the water temporarily and culverts could be built to redirect the water to a better area.

Concern: Limited high-speed internet access in some locations

There is limited high-speed internet access in some areas of Terrebonne Parish, making it hard for residents to effectively communicate. This is especially a problem after severe weather events that cause extended power outages, preventing residents from communicating with people outside of the area to let them know they are safe.

Potential Action: Identify opportunities to improve and expand broadband services in target areas

The parish could identify potential opportunities to supply more high-speed internet access for all of Terrebonne Parish.

Roads and Bridges

Concern: Unsafe intersections and roadways

Many residents have voiced their concerns about the safety of some roads and intersections in Terrebonne Parish. Lack of proper signals has caused many accidents and unkept roads have prevent travel.

Potential Action: Develop a comprehensive roadway safety improvement program

The parish could develop a comprehensive roadway safety improvement program to help decrease the number of accidents and make residents feel safer when driving.

Concern: Bridges in need of repair and traffic safety improvements

The people of Terrebonne Parish expressed their concerns with many of the bridges in the area. At the community meetings, it was mentioned that people have been moving out of Terrebonne Parish because of the unsafe bridges and how they affect travel.

Potential Action: Identify funding opportunities to repair/replace bridges and enhance safety

Identifying funding opportunities will be crucial to being able to successfully repair and replace the bridges in the parish. Having quality and convenient routes of travel could also incentivize people to move to or remain in the parish.

Economy and Jobs

Concern: Lack of local job opportunities for younger workers, many seek work elsewhere

Residents have voiced how there is a lack of well-paying job opportunities for younger workers in the parish, so they are moving to places that have them. This is creating an age in place, where there is a very low population of younger people in the area. This is making it harder for towns to continue growing and creating financial stress.

Potential Action: Identify opportunities to expand local workforce and related training programs

The parish will identify opportunities to expand the local workforce and related training programs to get the younger generation to want to stay in the area.

Concern: Many existing businesses have experienced losses due to COVID-19 and Hurricane Ida

As a result of Hurricane Ida and COVID-19, many business owners in the parish have experienced severe financial loss. During these events, residents did not have the extra money to be spending on local businesses because there were periods of people not being able to work. This caused financial stress for business owners and potential customers.

Potential Action: Identify more recovery funding opportunities to support local and small business recovery

The parish will identify more recovery funding opportunities to support local and small business recovery. Supporting local businesses will be essential for the continued growth of Terrebonne Parish and help relieve some of the financial burden business owners have experienced.

Concern: Need to attract new businesses and investments to the Parish

There is a need to attract new businesses and investments to Terrebonne Parish. It was brought to attention at the community meetings that many towns do not have basic services for residents. People voiced the need for grocery stores, gas stations, and urgent cares in their community so they do not have to travel to Houma for everything.

Potential Action: Identify incentivizes for local entrepreneurs and business expansion/relocation

The parish will work to incentivize local entrepreneurs and businesses to expand or relocate to Terrebonne Parish. Providing incentives would hopefully bring back basic services to the communities.

Concern: Many commercial corridors and downtown have seen decline

Downtown Houma has experienced a decline in

Potential Action: Develop downtown revitalization plan to drive reinvestment in downtown and key commercial corridors

Body

Environment and Natural Areas

Concern: Continuing coastal restoration is key to the long-term success of Terrebonne Parish
The coast is a critical component of Louisiana’s economy and way of life.

Potential Action: Identify projects that will protect water quality and wildlife habitat and developed areas

Body

Concern: Natural environment is an asset to increase visitors and investment

Body

Potential Action: Build assets like fishing piers and pavilions to attract visitors to the area

Body

Concern: Maintenance and improvement of bayous and waterways

Body

Potential Action: Identify funding opportunities to improve the bayous’ health and function

Body

Community-Specific Issues & Themes

Meeting #1 – Pointe Aux Chenes/Montegut (08.17.2022)

Approximate Number of General Public Attendees: 23

- Need to repair the schools
- Need a place for the community to gather, like the old KC building
- Make repairs on Montegut bridge at highway 55 and 58
- Need facilities for residents like a gas station, grocery store, and urgent care
- Need to prioritize getting people back in their homes

Meeting #2 – Gray/Schriever (08.23.2022)

Approximate Number of General Public Attendees: 41

- Need more streetlights, signage, speed bumps, and maintenance to make the streets safer
- Drainage canal and ditch maintenance
- Citing owners of abandoned homes
- Improve potable water quality and create a public sewer system
- Implementing a drug awareness program
- Install sand pick up stations and sidewalks on Highway 316
- Look into using the old Andrew Price School for senior housing
- Need a public use multipurpose community center and senior center in Gray
- Conditions of the roads on Highway 311 need improvement
- Corner of St. Bridget and 24 S and N and 311 needs traffic lights (lots of accidents)
- Address heavy flooding in West Park, highway 316 Bayou Blue
- Drainage (tiny culverts) needed at St. Bridgette Church
- Widen Hwy 311 and Hwy 316
- Address the flooding on Johnson Ridge parish servitude between 227 and 229 Johnson ridge)
- Job training facility closer to highway 24 in Gray

Meeting #3 – Grand Caillou/Dulac (08.29.2022)

Approximate Number of General Public Attendees: 46

- Need Grand Caillou Elementary School opened soon
- Recreation facilities needed for younger generation to discourage drug and alcohol use and keep kids healthy by being active
- The pumping station on Shrimpers Row floods and needs to be replaced
- The Dulac water tower is destroyed and needs to be replaced
- Lower Shrimpers Row Road by the water tower needs to be elevated because it fills like a bowl in flooding events
- Bayou Guyen "culvert bridge" needs work
- Widening of Shrimpers Row or studies done on how to make the area better
- There is too much vegetation on Mayfield Road covering the shoulder and making travel dangerous
- The bayous need to be dredged because there is an overgrowth of water lilies, which is leading to fish kills
- Need a grocery store, fueling stations, cultural museum, health clinics, and shrimp and seafood processing plant
- Need affordable living for seniors
- Increased police presence
- Bridge needed at Duquet Bayou
- Address abandoned boats

Meeting #4 – Chauvin (08.31.2022)

Approximate Number of General Public Attendees: 9

- Rebuilding/repairing the fire stations
- Need publicly accessible storage units for residents to temporarily store their items to prevent further damage during storms
- Need increased police/security presence post storm
- Need new bridges in Chauvin
- Place for locals to sign up to work for companies inflowing in to help with financial burdens

Meeting #5 – Houma (09.1.2022)

Approximate Number of General Public Attendees: 38

- Need more resilient schools
- Emergency shelters and public storage for hurricanes
- Need better access to internet
- Repair damages to Prospect Road and Highway East Main Street
- A better drainage system and vegetation management
- Need more ADA compliance with businesses
- Repair the Parish Fence
- Address the situation with residents not being able to return to their homes still to collect their belongings
- Adding a permanent pump station to St. Louis Canal roadway
- Address roadway flooding in the area surrounding Willie Lou Road
- Adding more safety features to the retention ponds to make it safer for children
- Removing debris on the road from the Ashland Landfill
- Widen the one lane in Downtown Houma to two lanes

Meeting #6 – Theriot/Dularge (09.07.2022)

Approximate Number of General Public Attendees: 26

- People will be homeless once FEMA leaves
- Redesigning the Houma Navigational bridge and Dularge Over Pass
- Address the safety concerns with the bridges, because it is causing people to leave (Dulac Ponton, Houma Nav, Dularge Overpass)
- Need a grocery store, urgent care, restaurants, retail stores
- Opportunity to turn Falgout Canal into a tourist destination for fishing
- Potential splash park for kids in Crozier Park
- Need an urgent care for the community to assist with the elderly
- Tree stump at Williams St and Hwy 315 cracked the road so only one lane can be used, which is a safety issue
- Widening or adding shoulders to Bayou Dularge for safety
- Williams pump station is not large enough to maintain water during rain events
- Near the High Ridge Library, there is no safe means of egress due to flooding
- Dularge Loop easily floods and holds water for an extended period
- Pipeline to POC or for emergency permit
- Dredge Prevost Canal
- Hydraulic study to move water outward
- Removing abandoned vessels from waterways and fines
- Extending sewer lines to lower lying areas and maintaining them
- Creating public space and boat launch that can host fishing tournaments and other events that bring in people who spend money and invest in the local communities

Meeting #7 – Gibson/Black Bayou (09.13.2022)

Approximate Number of General Public Attendees: 18

- Transportation to evacuate during storms
- Shelter of last report - potential use Greenwood middle school
- Concerns about group sites to identify locations prior to a storm
- Need public transportation
- Littering and illegal dumping
- Restricting the flow of water in upper Terrebonne Parish to slow the water down in the southern part of the parish
- Need parks for young people in Gibson - Divine Gym
- Tourism opportunities surrounding healthy marshes
- Vegetation management of water lilies
- The boat landing/launch is privately owned but could be purchased by the parish and upgraded
- Need for facilities like grocery store, laundry, schools, trade school
- Look into scenic byway designation to encourage businesses to come to the area
- EMS is not connected to a local service like the fire station
- Mentoring program or summer program for the youth

Wrap Up - Meeting #8 – Houma (09.21.2022)

Approximate Number of General Public Attendees: 18

- Presentation and summary over all the feedback received at each meeting