

INTO THE BLUE₂₀₅₀

Global. Water. Capital.

Baton Rouge and the Capital Region possess a tremendous environmental and economic asset in our freshwater resources. If we act now in a collaborative effort, grounded in wise and thoughtful planning, we can increase the value of these assets to realize their full potential for contributing to our quality of life, economic well being, and overall prosperity. This pursuit was the justification for empaneling the Into the Blue 2050 Focus Group.

On October 1, 2014, led by the Environment & Health Council of Louisiana (E&HCL) and The Water Institute of the Gulf (The Water Institute), a focus group of nearly forty community leaders from across the Capital Region convened to hone this vision, and develop principles and objectives that would catalyze and guide this initiative to better capitalize on the region's significant water assets.

This document encapsulates the fundamental elements of Into the Blue 2050 that resulted from the focus group, and can be referenced for both guidance and inspiration in the design of future projects, studies, and innovations that stem from this effort.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

VISION

To drive the Baton Rouge area's emergence as an economic, cultural, social and sustainable global water capital.

Value

The Capital Region's water resources have economic, recreational, environmental and social value that far exceeds their monetary value.

Identity

From the Mighty Mississippi to one of the nation's best aquifer systems, the Capital Region's water resources are integral to our identity and must be embraced and promoted.

Responsibility

To capitalize on and sustain the value offered by the region's water assets for generations to come, as individuals and organizations we must realize what we have and be vigilant stewards of these uniquely valuable resources.

Education

Informing the public and key stakeholders about the opportunities and challenges involved in how we utilize our water resources and how our actions can affect their quantity and quality is fundamental to building momentum.

Leadership

To make a real impact, the effort to embrace and nurture water-related opportunities must be adopted and championed by community and political leaders and decision makers.

Decisions

Management of our water resources should be based on sound science and government policies, incorporating broad stakeholder input and acceptance.

Adaptation

Just like water, strategies related to capitalizing on our water resources must be fluid — capable of evolving as circumstances change.

OBJECTIVES

A regional reputation

The Baton Rouge Area will become globally recognized as a water capital: a hub for coastal and water-based knowledge, technology and scientific output, as well as a community of connected, clean waterways that enhance the region's quality of life.

A clean, long-term, sustainable supply of water

The Capital Area will sustain an abundant supply of high-quality water from multiple sources for a diversity of purposes including residential, natural, industrial, commercial, recreational and transportation-related uses.

A water-based economic hub

Baton Rouge area-based businesses, organizations and governmental bodies will incubate, commercialize and export water-based solutions while managing local rivers, lakes, canals and bayous, and enabling our maritime assets to take advantage of global opportunities.

Informed and engaged stakeholders

Citizens of the Capital Region will be alerted and engaged on key issues and decision makers will maintain collaborative and inclusive planning processes so that the region's citizenry and industries understand and cherish the benefits of wise management of our unique water resources.

A deep bench of water-aware business, civic and political leaders

Baton Rouge will cultivate a diversity of water-aware business, civic and political leaders to advance the Into the Blue 2050 vision. These leaders will understand the cause and work to build consensus and ownership among stakeholders across all sectors.

An H2O state of mind

Area citizens already enjoy high-quality drinking water, water-based recreational opportunities and water-based economic assets such as our many industries and the country's furthest inland deepwater port with access to the Gulf of Mexico. We will nurture a mindset of respect and personal responsibility for our water resources in order to expand these opportunities, increase awareness and appreciation of our water assets and further instill the idea that our water resources set us apart — that they truly shape how we live, work and play, that they serve as an important source of pride for our community, and that they offer the region an incredible opportunity for prosperity and growth.



PARTICIPANTS

E&HCL and The Water Institute would like to thank the following individuals for their leadership and participation in the Into the Blue 2050 Focus Group. While the contents of this document are based on discussions from the focus group, participation in the event does not necessarily equate to an endorsement of all the ideas presented here by every individual or his/her organization.

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