

# North Wastewater Treatment Plant Buffer Area and Vegetative Plantings Project: Land Acquisition Summary

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SSO Program  
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This memorandum provides information regarding the process and metrics for the land acquisitions associated with the SSO Program North Wastewater Treatment Plant Buffer Area and Vegetative Plantings Project (NWWTP Buffer Project).

## Project History

### 2008-2012

The City-Parish is committed to reducing odors that affect the neighborhood near the NWWTP. In 2008, a Wastewater Master Plan was voluntarily developed which consisted of an assessment of the wastewater treatment plants and collection systems in order to plan for future flows/loads and future regulatory requirements through the year 2032. The Wastewater Master Plan also included an odor study, which included a computer model of the plant and the surrounding areas.

The study recommended odor improvement at the plant, including:

- Comprehensive odor control, which includes:
  - The creation of a buffer zone
  - Biotowers
- Replacement of gaseous chlorine with sodium hypochlorite
- Sludge digestion rehabilitation with gas utilization

The odor control improvements were designed to occur in a phased approach. Phase 1, which included site process improvements, cleaning, the installation of the biotower, and injection of odor control chemicals cost \$1.5 million and was completed in 2010. Since 2010, some elements of the chemical injection process have been modified based on observations of performance results. Injection of hydrogen peroxide to control odors into the force main feeding the NWWTP continues.

Phase 2, costing approximately \$7 million, includes the vegetative buffer zone and is being implemented via the NWWTP Buffer Project.

Phase 3, whose completion date was moved up with the 2013 EPA Consent Decree Modification from its long term Master Plan date, consists of process improvements that are currently under design. Still a part of the Master Plan, Phase 3 will provide overarching odor improvements to the plant and is expected to cost roughly \$4 million. Together, all 3 phases are expected to cost a total of \$12.5 million.

With the corrective measures these phases will bring, the model predicts that the presence of offsite odor would be reduced to 9 single hour exceedances in a year, corresponding to a 99.9% target.

In 2011, the City-Parish submitted a proposal for the NWWTP Buffer Project to the United States Environmental Protection Agency. The project was eventually incorporated into an agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Justice, and the Louisiana Environmental Action Network.

### 2013 to Present

On June 18, 2013 the Consent Decree settlement was executed by the judge, allowing the NWWTP Buffer Project to begin.

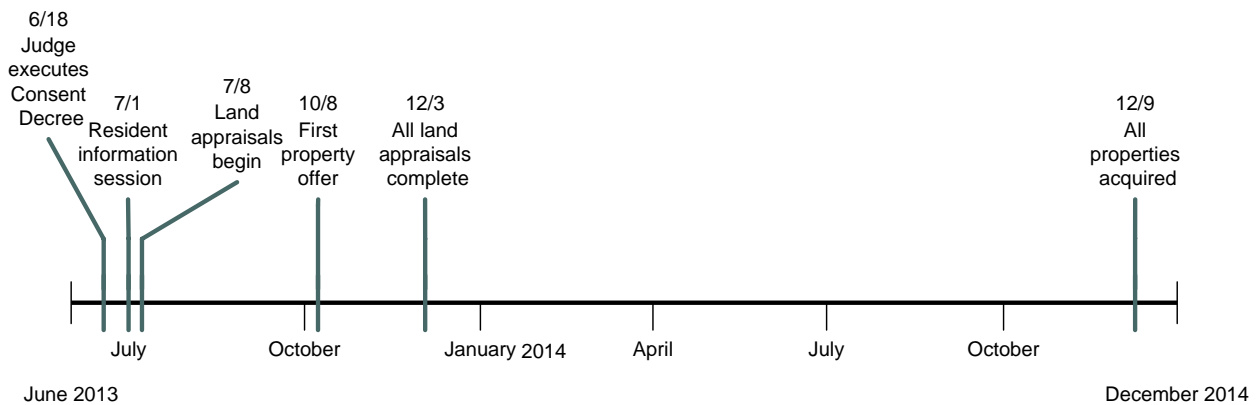
On July 1, 2013 a kick-off meeting was held at the Scotlandville Branch Library introducing the Relocation Agents to the affected residents.

Land appraisals began July 8, 2013. On December 3, 2013, the last appraisal was completed.

The first property offer was made October 8, 2013. The last property was acquired December 9, 2014.

Figure 1 provides this information in a timeline format.

FIGURE 1. PROJECT ACQUISITION TIMELINE



### Project Information

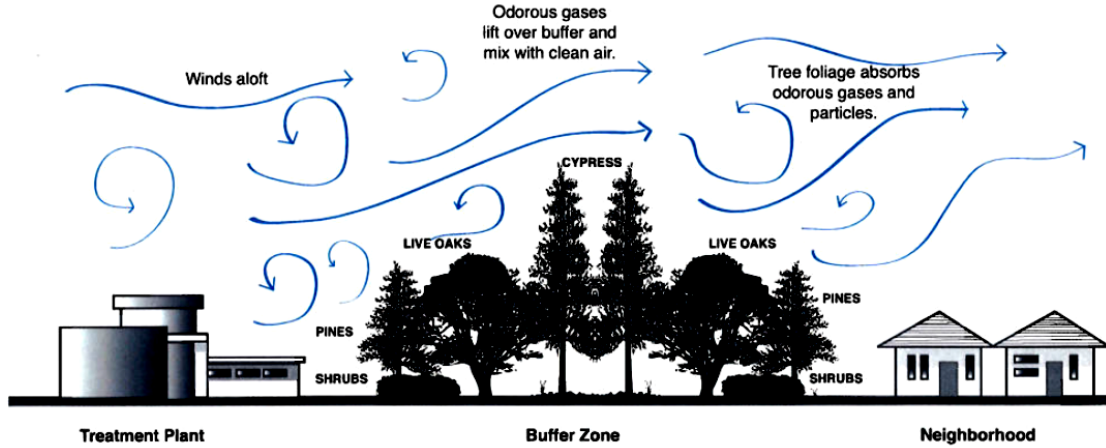
On June 18, 2013 the NWWTP projects’ were added to the Consent Decree by the 2013 Consent Decree Modification. The NWWTP Buffer Project’s completion is a **mandatory** element of the SSO Program in order to meet the elements of the Consent Decree.

The NWWTP is a critical element of the City-Parish’s sewer system as it processes up to 130 million gallons of wastewater a day from the northern portion of the parish.

### Project Purpose

The NWWTP Buffer Project takes into account future odor impacts to homeowners in the area. A vegetative buffer zone forces odors carried by wind upward, dispersing them at a higher altitude. Additionally, the plants themselves absorb odors. This concept is illustrated in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2: BUFFER ZONE AT WORK



The vegetative buffer zone also acts as a visual buffer, enhancing the area’s aesthetics by masking the view of the NWWTP.

### Location

Located in Districts 2 and 10, the NWWTP Buffer Project is east and northeast of the NWWTP, and west of Avenue K. The NWWTP is located north of Southern University near the bank of the Mississippi River. An aerial of the project location is provided in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3. PROJECT LOCATION



## Cost

The buffer project’s cost is approximately \$7 million. In addition to appraisals, acquisitions, and relocations, the project included:

- Asbestos remediation,
- House demolition,
- Buffer design, and
- Buffer installation.

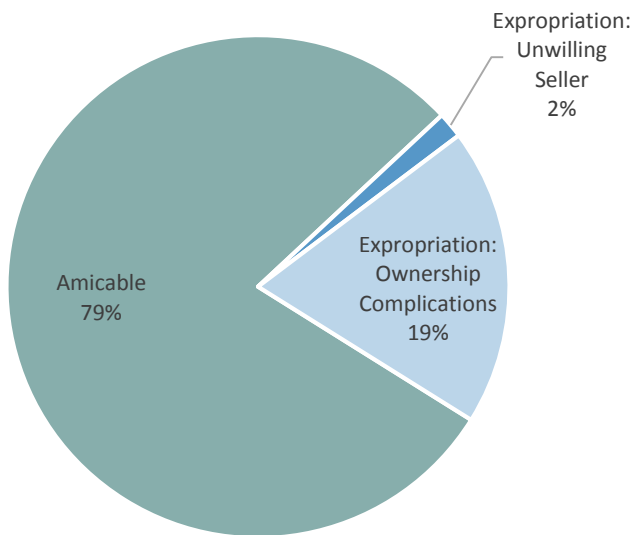
## Project Status

All 60 properties have been acquired. Asbestos remediation is underway with 12 houses being fully remediated. Demolitions are expected to begin in the first quarter 2015 upon the successful relocation of the remaining residents. Afterward, a fence will be constructed to separate the buffer from the neighborhood. Plantings will then begin. The project is expected to be completed in third quarter 2016.

## Project Impacts to the Surrounding Community

Information regarding the project’s acquisition and relocation impacts follow.

FIGURE 4: ACQUISITION TYPE



### Acquisitions

60 properties were required to be acquired for the NWWTP Buffer Project to occur. Of the 60 properties:

- 47.5 were amicably acquired.
- 12.5 were expropriated.
  - 11.5 were expropriated due to complications of ownership such as multiple owners. Without expropriation, a clear title would not have been obtained.
  - Only 1 individual did not wish sell their property.

Figure 4 shows that over 75% of the properties were amicably acquired. Note one property was 50% amicably acquired and 50% expropriated, thus the 0.5s above.

Acquisitions of property cleared liens, judgments, and mortgages. Numerous successions were performed to obtain clear titles. Property owners were provided assistance in completing those things and in most cases, without having any upfront costs for completing them.

### Relocations

Properties were valued by 2 different appraisers; the highest appraisal amount was offered to the owner. Residents relocated to a place of their choice as long as the replacement home met established standards.

All residents that needed handicap accessibility in their homes received it at no expense to them.

Of the 60 properties, 36 were occupied and required relocations. 34 relocations are complete and 2 remain.

3 affected residents used their rental assistance payment as a down payment on a house transitioning them from renters to owners. This is visualized in Figure 5.

Relocations were handled by the following relocation agents:

- Lacy Baaheth, *Lacy Baaheth Real Estate*
- Effie Carter, *Carter Realty*
- Agnes Chamber, *Agnes Chambers Realty*
- Ruba Thomas Anderson, *Ruba Thomas Owner*

The companies of the 4 agents are all City-Parish local and may be classified as small, minority, and woman-owned businesses.

FIGURE 5: RELOCATIONS

