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### **CPEX Awarded \$1M to Help Rebuild Louisiana Communities**

*Baton Rouge Organization Leads Effort to Reduce Flood Risk to Infrastructure,  
Communities in Louisiana*

BATON ROUGE (April 9, 2018) – The Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX) has been awarded over \$1M in philanthropic and federal grants to help reduce flood risks to communities in coastal Louisiana and the capital city region. The award indicates an increasing awareness of environmental changes and the impact of coastal loss on our communities. With this funding, CPEX will lead the effort to build resilience to flood risks and minimize the destructive impact of storm surge, heavy rains and flooding throughout the entire state and region.

“We have ample evidence demonstrating that business-as-usual is not going to work to address the challenges we face today – much less those we will face in the future,” says Camille Manning-Broome, CPEX Senior Vice President and incoming President and CEO. Manning-Broome, who will oversee the million dollar initiative, will bring together local, national and international leaders to address the challenges from frequent heavy rainfall, sea level rise, aging and overwhelmed infrastructure, deep social inequities, and dwindling financial resources.

CPEX received funding from the McKnight Foundation, The Kresge Foundation, and Walton Family Foundation, as well as the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)’s Coastal and Ocean Climate Applications Program for work that will continue into 2020. “CPEX’s multidisciplinary approach...is precisely what is needed to combat the challenges presented by our changing environment,” says Lois DeBacker of The Kresge Foundation.

Major projects supported by this funding include --

- **Pre-Disaster Recovery Plan:** Developing a resilience strategy prior to disaster for the town of Jean Lafitte and lower Jefferson Parish (in partnership with UNO CHART and LSU Sea Grant) that will enable the town to use recovery resources to rebuild infrastructure and maximize community benefits.
- **Community-Level Nonstructural Projects:** Creating a process to evaluate community-level nonstructural projects, such as elevation, land use regulations, flood-proofing and other flood risk mitigation, based on restoration priorities.

- **Flood Risk Reduction Toolkit:** Working with the State of Louisiana Silver Jackets team including U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Terrebonne Parish to provide a toolkit that will outline best practices in land use and housing development to achieve flood risk reduction.
- **Flood Risk Reduction Workshops:** Facilitating workshops in partnership with the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation to engage local leaders in data-driven discussions of flood risk challenges and adaptation solutions, including green infrastructure, stormwater management, elevation design and other measures that can be implemented at the community and regional scales to reduce risks associated with living in a floodplain.

CPEX has long worked to implement more proactive planning to address growing flood risk – not just in our coastal parishes, but throughout the state. Manning-Broome acknowledges, “In order to remain viable, communities will have to adopt new and innovative approaches to managing risk. This is how communities adapt. These are the kinds of places that will thrive in the next decade and the next century.”

The stakes of this effort can’t be overstated--land loss, growing flood risk, and changing weather patterns all threaten the vibrant communities that make up our state. CPEX’s ongoing body of work is essential to addressing these challenges and ensuring that vulnerable communities in our region continue to thrive.

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Center for Planning Excellence is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit planning organization serving communities throughout the state of Louisiana. Recognized as an authority in one of the world’s most climate-vulnerable locations, CPEX staff have presented on evidence-based, people-focused resilience and adaptation planning at conferences from Scotland to the Netherlands and will present to peer experts in South Africa and Germany later this year. CPEX has advised local city and parish leaders across the state, as well as Louisiana’s Governor’s office and the state’s congressional delegation on incorporating resilience-building strategies into funding requests and policy language. [www.cpex.org](http://www.cpex.org)