

Lakeside Urbanization

It sits about eight miles from the center of New Orleans bordering Lake Pontchartrain and was named Metairie, which translates to small tenant farm, by the French explorers who settled there in the 1720s. Native Americans also populated the area and created a trade route with the French settlers along a natural levee that survives to this day as Metairie Road.



Photo left: Sun rises over the shore of Lake Pontchartrain at its border with Metairie. The Lake Pontchartrain Causeway Bridge is visible at the far horizon. Photo right: Three Lakeway dominates this view of the Metairie business district.

Metairie remained largely an agricultural area with its original settlers becoming tenant farmers and sharecroppers until urbanization began to take hold in the early 20th century. By the 1940s, the pace of urbanization accelerated with New Orleans growing rapidly as a city and Metairie offering a nearby alternative where larger plots of affordable land were available. With much of Metairie's land consisting of cypress marshes and swamps, its growth would have been limited were it not for the development of efficient pumps that could drain the water and send it into Lake Pontchartrain.

Double life

While Metairie grew into one of the early suburban areas surrounding New Orleans, it also formed its own business district. Today it is considered to be a part of the Greater New Orleans Region combined statistical area with a population over 1.3 million. Metairie seems comfortable as a home that embraces upscale residential neighborhoods, television and radio station transmitter facilities, a restaurant district, office buildings and one of the most successful shopping malls in the New Orleans metropolitan area. Metairie is densely populated, encompassing only 22 square miles, yet it has managed to avoid the impression of a compressed city environment or the feeling that it is simply a suburban "bedroom community" for neighboring New Orleans. It does convey a family-friendly urban atmosphere and conducts its own Mardi Gras in a somewhat less spirited approach than the more famous celebrations that take place in New Orleans.



Photo left: Three Lakeway offers immediate access to the Lake Pontchartrain Causeway Bridge as it enters and exits Metairie. Photo right: The Lake Pontchartrain Causeway Bridge carries more than 40,000 vehicles daily between Metairie to the south and Mandeville, Louisiana to the north.

At the center

Metairie's business district lies along the south shore of Lake Pontchartrain and Three Lakeway is the tallest building of a three-building complex that forms Lakeway Center. The Lake Pontchartrain Causeway, the world's longest continuous bridge over water, connects Mandeville, Louisiana on the northern point of the Lake to Metairie 24 miles to the south in the shadow of the Three Lakeway 34-story mixed-use skyscraper.

Constructed in 1987, Three Lakeway is the home address for a government agency, a hotel and several engineering, business and healthcare service firms. As the healthcare firms began to occupy increasing space in the tower, with the dense population of employees and visitors, elevator delays began to cause congestion in the lobby. In addition, both the healthcare and government tenants required more stringent access control. According to Wendell LeBlanc, manager of property engineering, "After studies were conducted on the current elevator system it was determined that the original design of the elevators for the office tower were not sufficient for the dense population and occupancy levels we experience today, and that a modernization of the existing system alone would not provide the necessary improvements needed in performance." ►





Photo left: PORT card readers are used to offer personalized Schindler elevator service for tenants while providing customizable access control within Three Lakeway. Photo right: Polished stone on the walls and floor of the elevator bank in the lobby of Three Lakeway creates a dramatic entrance.

- “We knew that implementation of a modern dispatch system would be necessary to relieve the congestion at Three Lakeway so we began the task of looking into the various systems offered today.” said LeBlanc. “After touring and operating the different systems offered, Schindler’s PORT Technology stood out as offering the biggest improvement to the existing system.”

The new PORT at the lake

LeBlanc added, “The implementation of Schindler’s PORT destination-dispatch system resolved the frequent problem of the cabs making

entirely too many stops as they proceeded up and down the Three Lakeway tower, thus making the performance of the system very slow. PORT Technology also provided relief to the crowding issue that became a daily morning occurrence in the main lobby elevator bank. In addition, we are utilizing the PORT card readers with a fob-type media to provide access for tenants on our passenger elevators. On the service cab we employ the same fob media in order to exercise the access control system provided by destination dispatching and achieve the necessary high level security required by our tenants.”

General Manager Jody Castle stated, “We needed to begin modernizing our elevator cars but removing one of them from service would have been too disruptive and simply out of the question. As a solution, we installed Schindler’s PORT Technology on all six of the passenger cars in a phased modernization process and the improvement in performance was immediate and dramatic from day one. With this highly advanced destination-dispatch technology, we removed one car at a time for modernization with minor loss of efficiency. Our tenants are pleased with the level of security, our visitors reach their destination floors much faster and, needless to say, building management is delighted.”



Fast Facts — Three Lakeway

Stories 34

Height 403 feet, 13th tallest building in New Orleans region

Square feet 1,389,405

Constructed 1987

Elevators Six passenger, one service

Mixed use Hotel, office, restaurant

The elevator bank at the 30th floor of Three Lakeway projects a clean, contemporary décor. A Schindler PORT terminal can be seen on the wall to the right.



Lakeway Center was recently acquired by The Feil Organization, which owns other properties in the immediate area. Feil has earned a 40-year reputation for job creation and investment as they met the needs of significant urban growth

in the greater New Orleans market. Lakeway Center offers 1.2 million square feet of premium Class A office space and enjoys over 94 percent occupancy and the highest commercial rents in the region. ■