

Fairgrounds / Desaix Neighborhood



New Orleans Neighborhood Rebuilding Plan

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A. Neighborhood Rebuilding
Plan Overview

A1. Location and Brief Historic
Summary

The neighborhood as defined in this planning study is located between Esplanade Avenue, Moss Street on Bayou St. John, Florida Avenue and the I-610 corridor, and Broad Avenue. The City defines a rough edge along the north edge of the neighborhood, with a portion of St. Roch coming across the Florida Avenue / canal / railroad, although there is no direct connection. We recommend that the Fairgrounds / Desaix neighborhood map be redrawn to include all properties up to the definitive neighborhood edge represented by the canal / rail corridor. This neighborhood is between the Faubourg St. John neighborhood, City Park, the St. Bernard area across I-610, and the 7th Ward toward the River.

The Greater New Orleans Community Data Center (www.gnocdc.org) is an excellent source of information on the history and makeup of the neighborhood. The Fairgrounds / Desaix neighborhood (a.k.a. Broad) is a combination of residential blocks, a historic cemetery, several schools, and the New Orleans Fair Grounds at the center. Commercial establishments are concentrated mainly along Broad Avenue, Gentilly Boulevard near the Fair Grounds, and the spot of commercial at Esplanade and Mystery Street, which includes a restaurant, a coffeehouse, and a popular grocery/ deli. A portion of the neighborhood falls within the Esplanade Ridge National Historic District.

Before the European settlers, Native American peoples, the Choctaw and Houma,



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- a. District Map
- b. Spirit House- Sculpture on St. Bernard Avenue
- c. Luling Mansion
- d. Location Plan

- a. 1905 Map of Fairgrounds Area
- b. Fairgrounds Aerial
- c. Mystery Street- Market
- c. Detail of St. Leo Church



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the building from about 1880 to about 1900 and used it as their clubhouse (it is directly adjacent to the race track).

The New Orleans Fair Grounds is the only racetrack site in the Deep South that has been in continuous operation since before the Civil War (although it was shut down occasionally after hurricanes). The current building and track were constructed in 1852, on 400 acres of land. The original name was (ironically, just before the Civil War) the Union Race Course. This major venture changed the character of the swampy, agricultural area, as an influx of wealthy plantation owners, merchants, professionals and gamblers traveled to the track by horse drawn carriages.

New Orleans had become the “Heart of American Racing” by 1861. During the Civil War, various promoters used the track to attract spectators to baseball games, boxing matches, and bull and bear fights. According to GNOCDC, “the track’s name changed three more times from the Creole Race Course to Mechanic’s and Agricultural Fair Grounds and finally to the Fair Grounds.”

In recent years, the Fair Grounds has hosted the annual New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, the second largest draw of visitors to the City after Mardi Gras. The Jazz Fest is held at the end of April / beginning of May, and showcases local cuisine (including soul food), arts and crafts, and the vibrant music scene of the City and region. The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Foundation, Inc. sponsors the



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Jazz Fest as part of its mission “to promote, preserve, perpetuate, and encourage the music, art, culture and heritage indigenous to the New Orleans area,” a worthy goal, and after 36 years, a cherished tradition.

A2. Recovery Vision and Goals

The Fairgrounds / Desaix Neighborhood Rebuilding Plan provides a vision and framework for physical improvements to the neighborhood.

Vision

The Fairgrounds / Desaix neighborhood envisions itself as a desirable place to live, due to its location adjacent to historic neighborhoods, Bayou St. John, and City Park. The Fairgrounds, a large and intensive commercial attraction centralized in a primarily residential neighborhood, is important to the economic and cultural vision of the City, but as a part of the neighborhood's vision for itself, much work is needed. Fairgrounds / Desaix residents feel that their neighborhood has four different pieces that need to unite to form a more cohesive whole. The vision of a rebuilding plan starts simply - provide a safe, distinctive, functional neighborhood framework, with institutions and services on par with those of other areas within the City. The vision continues with residents participating actively in the planning process, and then contributing to its success through their involvement in the physical improvements. The vision is to create a sustainable, livable community, which respects history, nurtures diversity,



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and reinforces a vibrant culture that is worth passing along to the next generations of Fairgrounds / Desaix residents.

Neighborhood Recovery Goals

Rebuild the neighborhood to Pre-Katrina levels in some respects, but clearly to higher levels in others.

- Preserve the character, scale and sense of history of the neighborhood.
- Improve the fit of the residential neighborhood with the Fair Grounds through a re-design of perimeter landscape buffers, fencing, gates, lighting, etc.
- Improve the streets, sidewalks and infrastructure system serving Fairgrounds / Desaix, and implement solutions to specific traffic problems.

Provide affordable residential opportunities that will improve the neighborhood as a whole

- Maintain and enhance the predominantly single family and duplex housing pattern.
- Provide housing for mixed income levels, specifically incorporate housing ownership opportunities in the Desaix and Broad – Gentilly areas.

Design an improved civic environment of parks, schools, churches, and other community resources.

- Look for synergies in the creation of a one-stop community center, with the Langston Hughes school site and the existing Police Station / Training facility.
- Revive Stallings Park and Pool, create the



Moss St. / Bayou greenway, the Florida Ave. greenway, and landscape all important streets & neutral grounds.

- Address the former civic and commercial importance of Broad Avenue; improve spot commercial areas at Gentilly Blvd. & St. Bernard Avenue, and at Mystery Street.



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- a. Neighborhood Meeting at St. Leo Church
- b. Desaix Neighborhood Meeting
- c. Outreach Meeting in Baton Rouge
- d. Outreach Meeting in Atlanta

A3. Planning Process and Neighborhood Participation

The planning process consisted of significant research combined with multiple meetings in the Fairgrounds / Desaix neighborhood, with both small and large groups, over the period from May to September of 2006. In addition to the meetings in the neighborhood, outreach to the displaced residents of the flooded neighborhoods was conducted through joint meetings of the Neighborhood Rebuilding Plan Team. These were held in Baton Rouge, Atlanta, and Houston in August 2006. The planning meetings initially were the gathering of information and comments from residents. Later meetings typically consisted of the presentation of ideas or concepts, followed by feedback from the residents. These meetings primarily revealed a spirit of cooperation, although there were frustrations, fears and doubts expressed as well. Resident survey forms were distributed and collected to identify needs and to prioritize projects. In the end, this is a resident-driven plan for the people of Fairgrounds / Desaix. A list of participants in the planning process is being prepared and will be available upon request.

A4. Planning Efforts Pre-Hurricane Katrina

City of New Orleans Planning efforts pre-Hurricane Katrina generally addressed issues at the overall Planning District level more than at the neighborhood level. Planning efforts included the 1999 Land Use Plan, The New Century New Orleans Parks Master Plan of 2002, and the Transportation Master Plan of 2004.

A5. Recovery Projects Priorities

A project priorities survey was filled out by neighborhood residents. These surveys were used to include or exclude potential projects from itemization in section E2 below. More directly, these surveys were used to separate projects which could be placed into the Early Action Plan and Mid-Term Action Plan items of the Neighborhood Rebuilding Cost Matrix (see Item F. below). The resident surveys were distributed at meetings and returned in person or forwarded back to the planners. A three part hierarchy for projects was listed – Top Priorities, Secondary Priorities, and Lesser Priorities. It was interesting to note that although most residents were able to divide potential projects into the first two categories, very few listed items were selected as Lesser Priority.

- a. Neighborhood on Bayou St. John
- b. LSU Dental School in Moss Street
- c. Desaix/ St. Bernard Intersection
- d. Neighborhood Opportunity Map

B. Summary of Pre-Katrina Neighborhood Conditions (2000 Data, www.gnocdc.org)

B1. Household Characteristics

Population	8,850
Population (African American/Black)	69.0%
Housing Units, total:	3,315
Households, total:	2,983
Housing units vacant	10%
Households owner-occupied	44%
Households renter occupied	56%
Housing units built prior 1950	59%

B2. Age Distribution %

0-5 years old	7.0
6-11 years old	7.3
12-17 years old	8.0
18-34 years old	22.1
35-49 years old	23.0
50-64 years old	16.0
65-74 years old	7.7
75-84 years old	5.5
85 years old +	3.4

B3. Income Distribution & Employment

Average household income:	\$39,012
(Orleans Parish \$43,176)	
Household income under \$10,000:	15.5%
Household income over \$50,000:	19%
Percentage of residents employed:	54%

B4. Mobility and Transportation

Households with no vehicle available:	26%
Workers using public transportation:	14%

B5. Land Use and Zoning

See Map



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B6. Recreation and Open Space

See Map

B7. Architecture and Historic Preservation

(See map) Fairgrounds / Desaix is a locally designated historic district within the Esplanade Ridge National Historic District. Portions of the District are considered within the “full control” provisions of the New Orleans Historic Districts Landmarks Commission. The Esplanade Avenue fronting properties are subject to “full control.” The portion of the neighborhood south of the Fair Grounds, from Onzaga Street over to and including the St. Louis Cemetery, is under “partial control” where only demolition and demolition by neglect (blighted properties) are controlled, although the recommendations are still important to follow. The full text of the City’s Historic Preservation ordinance is available on the City’s Website.



d.



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- a. Flooded Neighborhood Aerial
- b. Damage Assessment Map
- c. Street Infrastructure Damage Map

C. Hurricane Katrina
Neighborhood Impacts

C1. Extent of Flooding

Properties along Esplanade and over to the south side of the Fair Grounds the least flooding, approximately 2 to 3 feet. Higher levels of flooding, from 3 to 5 feet, were reached in the balance of the neighborhood. The unfortunate exception was the residential section and LSU property between Desaix Boulevard and Florida Avenue, where 6 to 7 feet was recorded (see map).

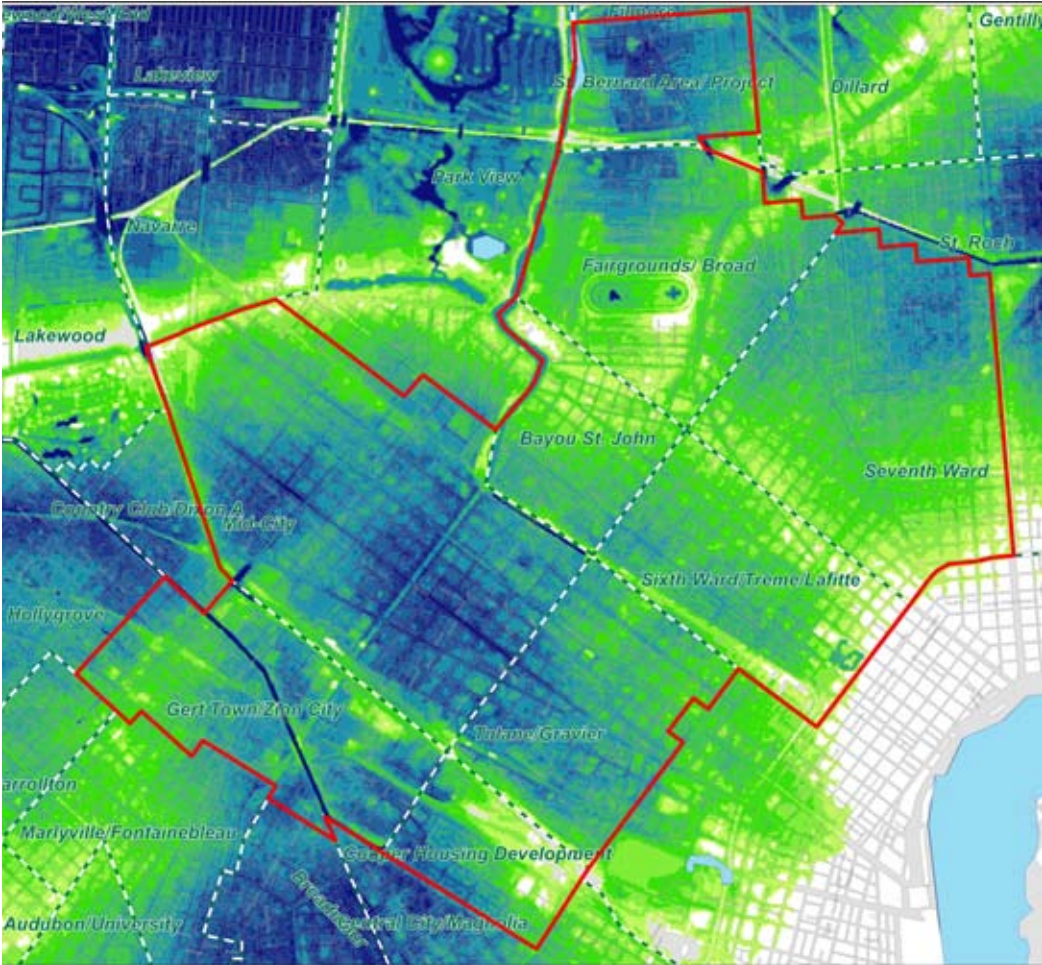
C2. Damage Assessment

The damage generally follows the flood levels above; however, there was damage from wind, fire and vandalism observed even in areas that were not flooded above the floor levels (see map).



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- a. District Floor Deph Map
- b. New Infill Housing Floor Level Requirements
- c. Base Flood Elevation Map
- d. Ground Elevation Map



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C3. FEMA Minimum Finish Floor Elevations

The process for determining floor level requirements is outlined in the figure at right. Note: existing housing that is designated by the City as historic may be exempted from a requirement to raise the floor level, even if the damage is greater than 50%. Consultation with the City's FEMA interpretations may be required on a case by case basis, unless explicit determinations are issued in writing.

INFILL HOUSING

PROCESS:

1. Obtain official base flood elevation map from city.
2. Have surveyor determine the elevation of your property.
3. Calculate required floor height for your proposed building.

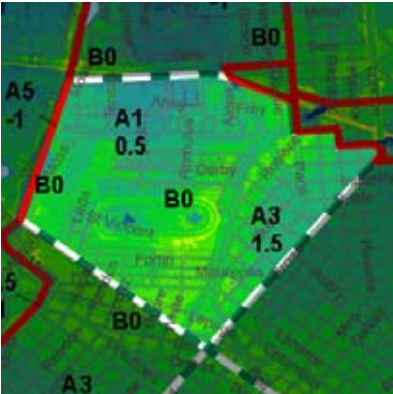
ie. Elevation of property = -3'
Base flood elevation = +1.5'
Required height = 3 + 1.5 = 4.5'



1984 BASE ELEVATION MAP

c.

- HOUSES MUST BE MIN. +2.5' ABOVE BASE FLOOD ELEVATION
- HOUSES MUST BE MIN. +1.5' ABOVE BASE FLOOD ELEVATION
- HOUSES MUST BE MIN. 0' ABOVE BASE FLOOD ELEVATION



GROUND ELEVATION MAP

d.

- GROUND LEVEL BETWEEN +6' AND +8'
- GROUND LEVEL BETWEEN 0 AND +6
- GROUND LEVEL HIGHER THAN -4 AND 0

D. Neighborhood
Rebuilding Scenarios

The Neighborhood Rebuilding Plan will generally follow the existing neighborhood urban plan and organization, with suggestions for improvements where necessary. There is to be special emphasis on restoring the built fabric of the neighborhood, and enhancing the quality of daily life in Fairgrounds / Desaix. The plan is based on commentary from the residents and observations by the professional planners. The historic urban and neighborhood structure of the area is generally sound, although the Fair Grounds presents some challenges, and certain streets need design modifications. The residents could again enjoy the urban pattern of their community with the following neighborhood-wide strategies and site-specific improvements.

- Repairs of damage to streets, sidewalks, lighting and utilities infrastructure, caused by flooding and heavy vehicles removing debris from the neighborhood.
- Rehabilitation of the historic structures in the neighborhood, including those that are blighted and abandoned, so that the basic historic character of Fairgrounds / Desaix can remain intact, and that displaced residents from the neighborhood may return to assist in the revival of the neighborhood.



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- a. Existing Historic Housing (before)
- b. Rendering of Infill Housing (after)
- c. Existing Housing (before)
- b. Rendering of Reconstruction of Housing to meet new floor levels (after)

- a. Mystery Streetb.
- b. Gentilli Boulevard Commercial
- c. Broad Avenue- Incompatible Commercial



a.



b.



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- Restoration of community, social and educational services so critical to a neighborhood where the majority of residents lived in poverty. Providing employment opportunities for returning Fairgrounds / Desaix residents is a critical goal in maintaining a rebuilding plan and achieving recovery.
- Continued monitoring of the reconstruction and improvements to the flood control system and structures in and around New Orleans, and to periodically and accurately report to the community on the status of the level of protection.

E. Neighborhood Recovery Plan

E1. Strategic Initiatives

The Fairgrounds / Desaix Neighborhood Recovery Plan proposes a series of strategic initiatives to address reconstruction of the damaged community assets:

Strategic Initiative No. 1: Fund and Manage Improvements to the Safety and Appearance of the Neighborhood
Promote requirements to gut and secure damaged homes, stabilize and begin to restore damaged historic houses, and the demolition of unsafe structures so long as they are not historic and beyond repair. Avoid inappropriate demolition of potentially salvageable older houses through consultation with the historic preservation resources within the community.

Assist and promote the past, current, and proposed neighborhood initiatives of community-based organizations. There are groups in various New Orleans neighborhoods that are raising funds in order to facilitate the clean-up and day-to-day maintenance of the neighborhoods. Organizations that address concerns facing residents, prospective residents and homeowners who have not yet decided to return, should be promoted and funded based on performance.

Community based organizations have provided valuable information to residents and act as a communication link between city

agencies in restoring services and utilities such as mail delivery, electricity, sewage and water, cable, telephone, debris and trash removal and educational seminars on mold remediation, contractor contracts, etc.

Block Captains - Continued Monitoring - Early on in the recovery process, Neighborhood and Civic Associations in Fairgrounds / Desaix started to organize blocks with corresponding block captains. Each block captain is responsible for the survey and assessment of post-Katrina conditions within the designated block. The goal is to cover 100% of the neighborhood with block captains. The conditions to be surveyed by block captains include houses that are gutted or not gutted, the listing of houses with unrepaired damage, sidewalk conditions, water lines, road issues, street lights, street signs, flooded cars, fire hydrants, catch basins and dead trees. Periodically, a report is compiled with all of the information and sent to various City agencies in order to facilitate improvements. The results of these surveys have proved to be an invaluable asset to this recovery plan. The information gathered by the block captains will continue to focus the needs and priorities of the community.

Strategic Initiative No. 2: Maintain Communication, Dialogue and Monitoring with City/ State Agencies for Continued Improvements to Utilities and Streets

Throughout the recovery process the Infrastructure Committee has kept in

constant communication with City officials to identify locations of leaking water supply pipes, leaking fire hydrants, missing street lights and other community deficiencies that need to be addressed for reconstruction. It is imperative that this community initiative continue in order to keep a constant watch and pressure for action and improvements.

Strategic Initiative No. 3: Promote and Monitor the Reconstruction of Community Facilities
Schools and community facilities are crucial for the reconstruction of Fairgrounds/Desaix. It is of utmost importance that funding for the reconstruction of schools, fire station and potential police substation be made available.

Strategic Initiative No. 4: Continue Participation in District-Wide Recovery Efforts
Neighborhood improvements cannot survive if limited to the boundaries of the specific neighborhood. The recovery of the adjacent neighborhoods will have a direct and positive impact on Fairgrounds / Desaix, and will translate into a faster recovery and increased property values for residents. It is important for adjacent neighborhoods to communicate with each other, and that Fairgrounds / Desaix remain engaged in the overall District 4 recovery efforts.



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- a. LSU Dental School
- b. Moss Street and Bayou at LSU
- c. Florida Avenue Greenway at LSU
- d. Diagram of 200 feet park at LSU connecting Moss and Florida Avenue Greenways

**Strategic Initiative No. 5:
Implement Housing Recovery
Initiatives**

It is important to implement housing recovery initiatives that will encourage the local neighborhood to actively participate in the reconstruction process of the properties on the street where they live, on their blocks and in their neighborhoods. Private citizen activity will be the most important driving force in the recovery of each of the neighborhoods of the District. The City of New Orleans, in order to provide the required assistance and incentives to these private citizens, should implement the housing reconstruction programs described in Item E2e. – Housing and Historic Preservation.

**Strategic Initiative No. 6: Identify
and Promote Early Action Projects**

Early action projects serve to generate community confidence through the commitment of the public sector to invest in the community, such as the street and infrastructure work, and reconstruction of various community facilities identified below. Beyond public sector funds, the community must continue the task of identifying adaptive reuse for major facilities that will not be reconstructed to house the functions that existed prior to Hurricane Katrina. Many of these are under private or institutional control, and alternatives are still being considered. Opportunities for early action on adaptive reuse of such facilities are critical to encourage and promote for their synergistic effects.

**Strategic Initiative No. 7: Promote
and Monitor the Implementation
of Key Recovery - Redevelopment
Parcels and Projects.**

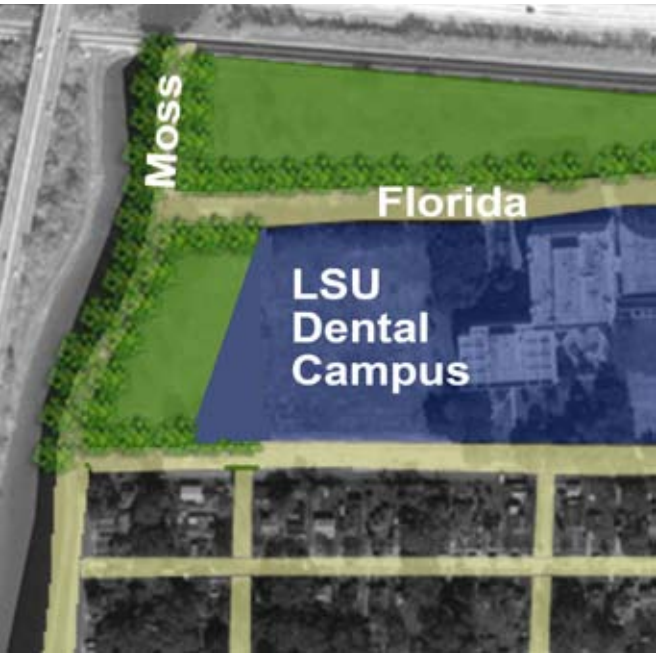
The long term recovery of the neighborhood and District 4 will require that the key recovery/ redevelopment projects be monitored and implemented on an early basis. These projects include the 2 greenway projects, the One-Stop Community Center concepts, the street and traffic redesign projects, the LSU Dental School property development master plan, and others described below.

E2. PLAN ELEMENTS

E2a. Key Development Parcels

The LSU Dental School property: This 22 acre property was redeveloped as housing for the US Navy during WW II. Then Loyola University opened a dentistry school on the site, which was taken over by LSU, and the large new school building was constructed in 1972. Other non-descript 1 story buildings remain on the site, and will likely be removed. The school itself is likely to reopen in 2007, according to neighborhood sources although no official statement was available, nor was rehabilitation begun by the date of this report. The residents of the adjoining properties would like to see the school return, but would like to be updated on the master plan for the property. Specifically, opportunities have been identified to improve the fit of the institution with this corner of the residential neighborhood.

One of the goals of the Fairgrounds / Desaix Neighborhood Plan is the creation of the 2 greenways that connect as they wrap around the corner of Moss and Florida, at the LSU parcel (see Parks, Open Space and Landscape below). There was a consensus that an appx. 200’ landscaped park dedication on Moss Street would allow this connection of greenways to attain a park-like quality. The second objective will be to require that LSU accommodate all parking on site, so that the parking area across Florida Ave. can be removed, and the greenway become a true community asset. A third objective would be to allow connectivity across the east end of the parcel at the extension of Castine Street. This would consist of a re-opening of the Castine Street, or at least a pedestrian and bicycle connection that would provide access to the Florida Ave. greenway system. This will reconnect the otherwise isolated residential properties at Wilshire, Chalfant, Portage and Frey Streets to have some direct access back to the larger neighborhood along Desaix Blvd. Implementation of these suggestions would create a win-win situation between residents and the LSU Dental School, by improving a relationship with the community which was already a positive one.



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- a. Perimeter Wall at Fairgrounds
- b. Detail of Gatehouse restoration
- c. Fairgrounds Main Entrance
- d. Fairgrounds Area



a.



b.



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The New Orleans Fair Grounds – improving neighborhood fit: A number of suggestions to improve mutual coexistence were discussed with residents of the adjoining neighborhood. Many of the residents who provided input to the plan have lived in the area for many years. They are clearly aware of both conflicts and opportunities for improvement, several of which are addressed already in agreements between the Fair Grounds and the City, and await implementation. The general issue is that most events held at the Fairgrounds cause a human flood to inundate the neighborhood, a great inconvenience to some and opportunity to others. There are also issues of acoustics, security, trash and service traffic.

The suggestions are summarized as follows:
1.Prepare a Fair Grounds Master Plan with special focus on perimeter improvements, vehicular access and parking, as a central document to address as many of the individual problems and solutions as possible. Central to the success of this plan will be the involvement of residents of the immediate surrounding blocks.

2.Improve the frontage of the property with buffer landscaping. The historic gates are fortunately receiving a quality restoration. Beyond that, it is hoped that the appearance of a sea of asphalt can be screened with a lush garden and trees that create a distinctive impression on Gentilly Boulevard. If well executed, the entire neighborhood across Gentilly will benefit from the appearance of a large urban greenspace, even though

perhaps only the first 50 to 80 feet is used for the buffer. The Fair Grounds will benefit from the distinctive image created, similar to most other great race tracks around the country.

3.In addition to the frontage, the balance of the perimeter needs to be addressed with improvements to the buildings, walls, fences, and landscaping that abut the residential streets. The desolate appearance at night created from the inert perimeter is a concern. Well-designed lighting would be a huge improvement, as would the occasional window from a service or security office. The dead end at Castiglione is of particular concern for its late night use and speeding cars. The objective should be to create a pleasant pedestrian path along the perimeter.

4.A vehicular access and parking plan is critical to minimize ongoing disputes with the neighborhood. As additional facilities are being developed on the property, issues of carrying capacity, both human and vehicular, must be clearly addressed for both regulatory authorities and the neighbors. Are additional on-site structured parking solutions anticipated, and if so, what will the impacts to the neighborhood be?

5.Jazz festival traffic control, parking and shuttle service plans, as well as clean-up after the events, should be improved.

6.Considering a servicing plan for the variety and size of events that will occur, operational scenarios to minimize adverse effects



- d3. Traffic Calming on Adjacent Streets
- d4. Perimeter Improvements
- d6. Langston Hughes School Site

e.



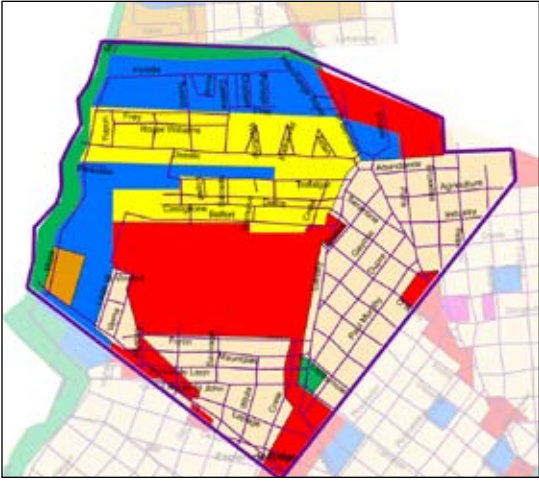
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- a. Diagram of Gentilly Boulevard/ St. Bernard Avenue Commercial Triangle
- b. Photo of Commercial Triangle
- c. Photo of Commercial Triangle
- d. Existing Land Use Plan
- e. Proposes Land Use Plan

on the neighborhood should be clearly communicated. How are service vehicles to approach the site, and at what hours? How and where are garbage / sanitation pick-ups to occur?

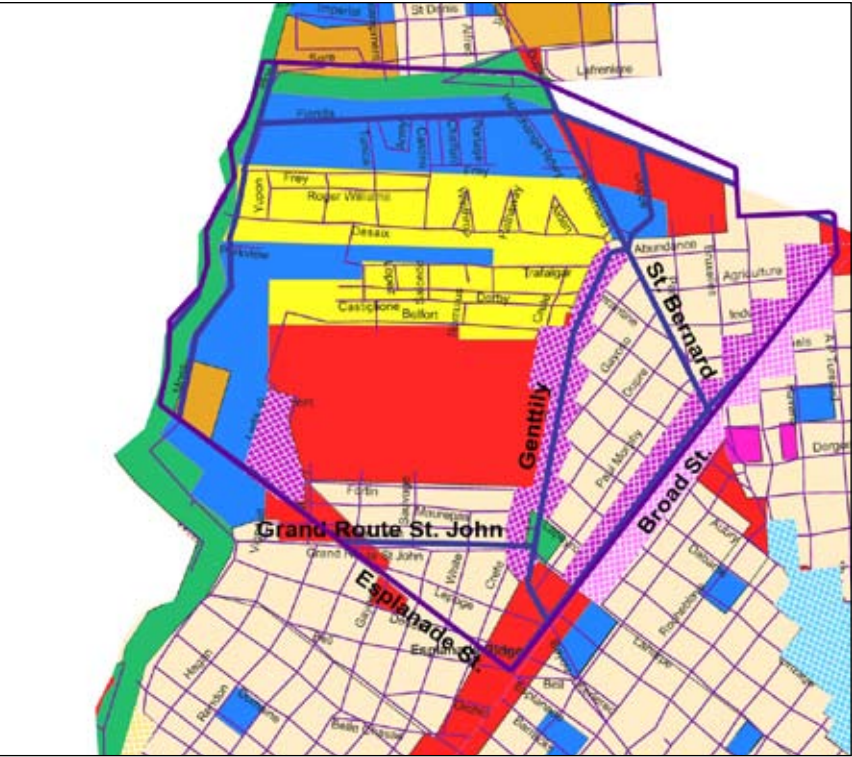
7. Some concern was expressed regarding seasonal employees who reside on-site, and come and go via service entry gates on Trafalgar Street. Occasions when these temporary employees loiter at the gates have been reported, which should be addressed operationally.

The Gentilly Blvd. / St. Bernard Commercial Triangle (with the Nelson School): The only large commercial parcels exist at this triangular area formed by the two highest traffic streets within the neighborhood and are important to redevelop cohesively to support the needs of the neighborhood. Although they surround the now reopened Nelson School site, these commercial properties could be planned for redevelopment together in a very creative way. There are design opportunities to synergize these properties with the greenway behind them. Connecting the greenway across St. Bernard Avenue, Paris, and Gentilly with pedestrian bridges will be expensive, it would be preferable to bring the pedestrian path to the Desaix Circle and back to the greenway again on the other side, thereby improving the front sides of the triangle. There are individual parcels across Gentilly and St. Bernard that should be brought into this small commercial district plan as well. Including the Nelson School in the planning

process will be the key to the success of this small district.

E2b. Land Use and Zoning
The Fairgrounds / Desaix neighborhood is a historic, culturally rich resource to the City of New Orleans, for which Land Use and Zoning are highly critical. The framework provided by neighborhood architecture and culture could be easily disrupted by overdevelopment or inappropriate development. Fairgrounds / Desaix would suffer if redeveloped hastily and without the strong participation of its residents, both displaced and present.

Land use changes anticipated include minor issues to bring designations current with institutional uses such as the LSU Dental School. No additional high-density residential is desired along Moss Street due to the already high traffic volume for the small scale of the street (and soon the added pedestrian intensity proposed for the Bayou greenway).



e.

- Residential - Single-Family
- Residential - Single/Two Family
- Residential - Multi-Family
- Residential/Marine Commercial
- Commercial
- Industrial/Vacant Industrial
- Institutional/Public and Semi-Public
- Non-Urban/Wetland/Undeveloped Area
- Parkland/Recreation/Open Space
- Proposed Commercial
- Proposed Commercial

- a. Gentilly Boulevard - neighborhood Scale Commercial
- b. Gentilly Boulevard/ Bayou Road Historic Residential
- c. Esplanade Avenue
- d. Proposed Commercial Corridors with Historic Overlay

Existing Commercial

Commercial with Historic Overlay



d.



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The New Orleans Zoning Code is an overly complicated document. A full rewrite of this code, as many other Cities have recently undertaken is highly recommended. A strong citizen participation element needs to be incorporated into the regulations. Significant doses of language simplification, and visualization diagrams communicating the impacts of the zoning should be incorporated.

Several areas within Fairgrounds / Desaix are suggested for urban design changes that will improve the historic character and function of the neighborhood. For these areas, the specific studies should proceed first, and the impact to land use and zoning be made an element of the study. Examples include the Desaix Circle reconstruction (see Transportation & Public Transit), and the Commercial Triangle described above.

In the cases of historic road corridors such as Esplanade, Broad, Gentilly / Bayou Road, etc. specific zoning regulations should be written that dovetail uses and intensities with the requirements that come from being located within a Historic District, or a potentially historic district. For Esplanade, residents prefer that the residential character and use not give way to further commercial and business uses – only light intensity offices should be allowed, and no demolition of historic residential properties for offices should be permitted. One exception may be at the Mystery Street spot commercial area, where there may be two or three additional

properties that could switch from residential to commercial, if a detailed plan meets the approval of adjacent property owners.

The Broad Avenue corridor is relatively intact as a business zone, although the aforementioned light industrial interrupts the portion close to Lafitte, which should revert to neighborhood commercial. It is recommended that the neighborhood strongly support the Main Street Initiative for Broad initiated by the Faubourg St. John Neighborhood Association.

The Gentilly corridor could apply a Historic Preservation overlay to qualifying existing buildings to allow neighborhood commercial or mixed use for the purpose of preserving historic scale and character. Small scale businesses can form a buffer to residential blocks and provide economic infusion. Parking is always the key issue to be resolved. On-street parking solutions are needed as existing buildings in historic areas seldom provide sufficient on-site parking. Zoning to promote residential above business would be one excellent solution.

The balance of the Fairgrounds / Desaix neighborhood should remain strictly residential. The existing Historic District should be studied to be brought under the “full control” of the HDLC (with the older blocks considered for expansion into the Historic District). Bayou Road is a slice of history and culture weaving together neighborhoods

from the Vieux Carre to the 7th Ward and into Fairgrounds / Desaix. Opportunities for pedestrians and bicycles should be amplified. A specific problem exists at the bend where Bayou Road becomes Gentilly Boulevard – the right-of-way should be increased at this bend to allow sufficient space for a sidewalk, the oak trees and a guardrail to fit within the space – slowing traffic will be critical at this point.

E2c. Parks, Open Space and Landscapes

Rehabilitate Stallings Park in the context of its immediate setting: This Park was very popular prior to Katrina, and with its swimming pool, the envy of adjoining neighborhoods. The park is less than a full block however, so the redesign should include a specific plan for the streetscape surrounding the park to be elegantly designed. The issue of parking around the park is contentious. The Lapeyrouse / Gentilly / Broad triangle, including the park, represents an opportunity to create a specific plan for this tightly knit mix of uses in a corner of the historic neighborhood.

Moss Street – Bayou St. John Greenway project: A Moss Street greenway on Bayou St. John is important to the identity and urban design of Fairgrounds / Desaix. Further, the Bayou St. John greenway should extend into the two other neighborhoods on either side, Faubourg St. John and the St. Bernard Area. The greenway will consist of underground



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- a. Stallings Playground connected to neighborhood Streets
- b. Proposed pedestrian/Bicycle entry to city park at Desaix Boulevard
- c. Moss Street on Bayou (existing)
- d. Rendering of Bayou Greenway on Moss Street (proposed)
- e. Neighborhood greenways and Historic Sites

utilities, shoreline stabilization, landscape, lighting, and a pathway for bicycles and pedestrians along the street (as shown on the rendering).

A pedestrian / bicycle entrance to City Park: This feature was requested to be considered at the west terminus of Desaix Boulevard. Currently, the Park is fenced along the east side, and a non-vehicle entrance at Desaix Boulevard could enhance the Bayou Greenway as an extension of City Park.

The Florida Avenue Greenway is a potential community park which will help reestablish residential property value in the area. A goal secondary to the public recreation space will be to plant a bosque of trees at I-610 for acoustic and visual buffering. See also the Commercial Triangle discussion above regarding connectivity, and the LSU Dental School section under key parcels regarding the suggested park frontage at that parcel, where the Bayou Greenway and Florida Avenue greenway come together.

The Langston Hughes School site and playgrounds: This school is not currently opened, and is recommended below to act as the temporary police training facility until it reopens. At either end of the school site are recreational fields – the westernmost is a New Orleans Recreation Department property, and the other is part of the school site. There are two important details to consider. There are two dedicated pedestrian

paths from Desaix that connect through the residential lots to these parks, that should be reopened and identified with signage. The second opportunity is the fact that Trafalgar Street is extra wide for its usage – this means the park and school sites could expand as the street section is reduced – introducing the possibility of expanded play areas, perpendicular or diagonal parking, additional landscaping, etc.

Create other green spaces within the community, wherever possible: This should include the acquisition of properties for the creation of small pocket parks particularly suited to small children. School playgrounds and fields should be developed for joint use by the community when school is not in session.

Landscaped Boulevards: Fairgrounds / Desaix has several potentially beautiful landscaped boulevards - Gentilly, Paris, Esplanade, Desaix, and St. Bernard Avenue The Village of Boulevards, as it were. The neutral grounds and sidewalks along these corridors should all be replanned by landscape architects to maximize the aesthetic opportunities.



e.

- a. Desaix/ Gentilly/ St. Bernard Intersection (existing)
- b. Bus and Intersection Map
- c. Bicycle Lanes Map
- d. Typical Bikeway
- e. Desaix Circle, 1950's aerial
- f. Desaix Circle, recent aerial
- g. Desaix circle, proposed reconstruction diagram



a.



b.

- Bus Routes
- Intersection improvements



c.



d.

E2d. Transportation and Public Transit

Existing road corridors are generally discussed in the Land Use / Zoning, and Parks, Open Space sections above.

The Desaix Circle reconstruction project:

This is the most significant element of the transportation component that is suggested for re-design and reconstruction. Historically, this intersection was a square plaza where carriages meandered freely. With the advent of the automobile, a circular green was added at the center, and finally a full traffic circle evolved. As Gentilly Boulevard and St. Bernard Avenue became wider with heavier traffic in the early 1960's the circle gave way to a crossing intersection. The intersection is further complicated by the facts that (1) Desaix Boulevard makes a fifth connection; (2) all of the roads are wide boulevards; (3) left turns are provided for, with in some cases two options for left turns; and (4) nearly 30 individual traffic lights are required throughout the intersection. This plan recommends a traffic plan that would design a functional and more aesthetic solution, that would have the added benefits of improving traffic flow while reducing speeds (see diagram at left). Pedestrian crossings should be designed back from the circle entry / exit points somewhat for pedestrian safety.



e.



f.



g.



a.



b.



c.

- a. Housing at Desaix Boulevard
- b. Historic Houses on Broad Avenue
- c. Neighborhood Housing

Other Major Street Intersection Improvements: In addition to the Desaix Circle, the plan has identified several intersections in the neighborhood for a series of upgrades to improve safety and traffic functionality. Other intersections identified on the map should proceed immediately to retrofit traffic control systems, redesign turn and through lanes if required, improve signage and lighting, and install well-marked pedestrian crosswalks.

Install bus stop shelters & benches appropriate to neighborhood. Bus stop shelters can pay for themselves if contracted with an advertising company. Generally these are not attractive and generic, which is not appropriate for the neighborhood. A bus shelter architectural competition, sponsored by local businesses, could provide custom designed, neighborhood appropriate shelters and allow some discreet advertising.

Bicycle Transportation Plan: Our own observations indicate a variety of opportunities to add dedicated, marked bicycle lanes on through roads in the Fairgrounds / Desaix Neighborhood. On Esplanade, the width is acceptable for one traffic lane, a bike lane, and one parking lane, all the way to Bayou St. John. One important detail in the creation of bicycle lanes is sufficient width – 6 feet is minimum and an extra foot can add safety to situations where active on-street parking (at retail,

schools, etc.) causes frequent opening of car doors. Other opportunities for bike lanes in the neighborhood include Gentilly Road, St. Bernard Avenue, Paris Avenue and Desaix Boulevard.

Tie neighborhood to city-wide Urban Transportation Plan: The potential impact of the items described above points out the importance of updating City-wide transportation plans in a comprehensive manner. Now that the Neighborhood Rebuilding Plans are complete, a review of their recommendations will suggest some opportunities that may not have been considered to date, and coordination across all districts will be required.

E2e. Housing and Historic Preservation

**Neighborhoods Rebuilding Plan
Proposed Housing Initiatives**

A number of housing initiatives are proposed as part of the Neighborhoods Rebuilding Plan and are presented in the overall policy element of the plan and issued under separate cover. Below is a summary of these policies.

LOT NEXT DOOR

The principal thrust of redevelopment programs and policies that encourage the speedy redevelopment of neighborhoods must match various government powers and financing tools to the local housing and real estate market conditions.

encourage the redevelopment of homes and residential lots that fall into public ownership.

The “Lot Next Door” program is one of a series of proposed housing policies that have been developed as part of the Neighborhoods Rebuilding Plan and takes direct aim at some particular market hurdles that slow the redevelopment of many of these properties.

In its simplest form the Lot Next Door program will offer homeowners who are committed to redeveloping their homes, the ability to purchase publicly owned adjoining properties prior to these properties being offered to any other buyers.

This option would be provided should the property end up in public ownership either through the adjudication process or through the sale of the property to a public entity through the Road Home or other public acquisition program.

**ELDERLY MODERATE INCOME
CONDOMINIUM ROAD HOME TIE-IN**

It has become quite apparent through the neighborhood planning process that senior households, which have some of the strongest ties to the community and have expressed some of the strongest voices for rebuilding and returning to the City, also face some of the most significant challenges in redeveloping or rebuilding their homes.

a high concentration of elderly homeowners (Lower Ninth, Pontchartrain Park, and Lakeview) that sustained substantial damage and which will require the demolition and reconstruction of many homes.

Historically, the challenges of dealing with contractors, permit inspectors, lenders, etc. have proven particularly difficult for elderly households after they have experienced similar trauma.

Additionally, there are a substantial number of areas of the City including Lakeview and areas of Gentilly, where rebuilding homes with damage in excess of 50 percent will require the total reconstruction at three feet above grade or the Base Flood Elevations, whichever is greater. Many of these homes will have to be raised close to one story making them a difficult housing product type for people with physical frailties.

Elderly homeowners are clearly a special group with specific needs, and currently there are no programs targeted to this subgroup of homeowners.

A targeted elderly homeowner program, which will allow elderly households to tie their Road Home grant to senior specific elevator multi-story condominium projects to be developed throughout the City, is needed.

There has been wide support for dedicated

A key question will be how to most effectively

First, there are many areas of the City that had

a.- b. Historic Craftman -Style Houses
c. Historic Houses in Esplanade Ridge Historic District



a.



b.



c.

multi-family senior housing product in many parts of the City, but particularly in areas where younger homeowners have aging parents living nearby.

In some cases, there may be a need to increase the grant amount or provide a low interest loan to the household if there is a gap between the value of the buyout (and insurance proceeds) and the market value price of the condominium unit.

One caution in the multi-story condominium option is that the scale of any such projects must respond to and integrate with the scale of the surrounding neighborhoods.

USE OF SECOND GENERATION FUNDS AND EXPANSION OF HOME PURCHASER ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

One of the principal issues that has come up repeatedly in neighborhood meetings is how properties that end up in public ownership either through the adjudication or buy back process are going to be resold in the marketplace.

While the Lot Next Door program provides one method for recycling lots in the market, there are going to be numerous lots that are not acquired by next door neighbors that are going to have to be sold to third party purchasers.

Assuming that there are few new regulations associated with developing housing (i.e.,

some requirement that certain units must be homeownership vs. rental) it is likely that the value placed on many properties for sale will determine how quickly that property will be rebuilt for housing.

Additionally, and realistically, there are a variety of neighborhoods throughout the City where reducing the cost of a lot or unit to essentially zero will not be enough to ensure the redevelopment of the property. These are generally those neighborhoods prior to Hurricane Katrina where land values were quite low and homes were not built unless there was significant targeted public assistance related to construction.

Given the different market factors influencing the redevelopment of housing in different neighborhoods, there are a variety of strategies that will have to be employed with regard to the sale of lots acquired through the acquisition program on the open market. These strategies include the following.

- Recycle second generation proceeds from higher income neighborhood property sales to properties in neighborhoods where values are lower. This will ensure that more housing redevelopment dollars will follow to low-income areas than could otherwise have been imagined prior to Katrina.
- Sell adjacent lots and blocks of lots in public ownership to experienced for-profit and not-for-profit developers when not purchased through the Lot Next Door program.

- Re-sell properties at fair market value and reduce price of lots only when very specific policy objectives are being met, such as providing for mixed-income housing in a neighborhood.

HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS

There are a number of general and specific housing development and policy considerations within the historic neighborhoods of New Orleans that received significant damage in Hurricane Katrina. The challenges of rebuilding are particularly severe in those historic neighborhoods where a significant number of low and moderate income households resided prior to the storm.

The City of New Orleans, prior to Hurricane Katrina, generally made \$25,000 soft second mortgages available through the HOME program to write down the cost of acquisition for eligible families in Community Development neighborhoods throughout the City.

However, even before the storm, this amount was generally not enough to cover the gap in funding that was required to rehabilitate units that were historic structures and required special consideration. Typically construction costs related to historic buildings is as much as 30 percent above non-historic new construction, and while the City made exceptions and increased the maximum funding available in some cases due to historic considerations, given the limited

funds available, the increase in funding for historic units meant that fewer units would be rehabilitated overall.

Today, rapid escalation in construction costs in the post-Katrina period which has further eroded the degree to the \$25,000 fills gaps in funding for new construction, let alone more costly historic rehabilitation.

There is a need for targeted programs for areas such as the Gentilly to Broad area of Fairgrounds / Desaix for expanded historic and blighted housing gap funding in order to insure the long term health and character of these unique neighborhoods.

Assuming that the gap for new home construction (maintaining affordability for low and moderate income families) now stands at \$30,000, the amount required for the restoration of a historic home could be in excess of \$50,000 (covering the additional cost of not only that portion addressed by the \$30,000 in new construction but a widened gap associated with the entire unit reconstruction).

While gap financing of \$50,000 per unit or \$5.0 million for every 100 blighted units of historic housing is quite significant, it is difficult to see how the historic fabric of many low and moderate income neighborhoods will be maintained without the provision of this funding. Otherwise, the character of many neighborhoods will be placed at risk by displacement of the neighborhood's low and moderate income residents or the



a.



b.



c.

- a. St. Leo's Church
- b. Historic House on Broad Avenue
- c. Luling Mansion adjacent to Fairgrounds
- d. Historic District Map

further erosion of a neighborhood's historic character.

Currently, no gap funding program is addressing this challenge, and without additional use of CDBG funds to fill these gaps, the historic and community fabric of many of the historic moderate income neighborhoods of New Orleans stands too shredded.

Changes in the Road Home and other gap funding efforts should take into account the historic nature of portions of the Fairgrounds / Desaix neighborhood, among others, and make enhanced funding available which will allow the neighborhoods to retain their historic character while concurrently continuing to serve moderate and low income households.

Other Considerations – Preservation of Historic Housing

In the historic sections of Fairgrounds / Desaix, with a high percentage of historic building stock in the National Register and Local Historic Districts, and also in the Gentilly to Broad area currently outside of the Historic District but likely eligible for inclusion, the following are priorities:

Minimize demolition of historic structures that are in need of repairs (even if substantial). There should be no rush to demolish historic or potentially historic homes that are in need of repairs. Historic and potentially historic homes not proceeding immediately to rehabilitation should be referred to the following programs

to be developed.

Structural stabilization of endangered historic housing: Emergency repairs are necessary on dozens of historic houses that will not last through the next hurricane, even if it is mild. Roof repairs, structural x-bracing, perimeter closure to seal off from vandals and homeless individuals are all key to the preservation of these often irreplaceable structures. A detailed emergency preservation study should be commissioned from preservation organizations such as the Preservation Resource Center and the Tulane University School of Architecture Preservation Studies Program. These groups, with their networks of students, and knowledgeable local professionals, would be valuable partners with a neighborhood non-profit advocacy group to obtain funding to carry out the needed stabilization work.

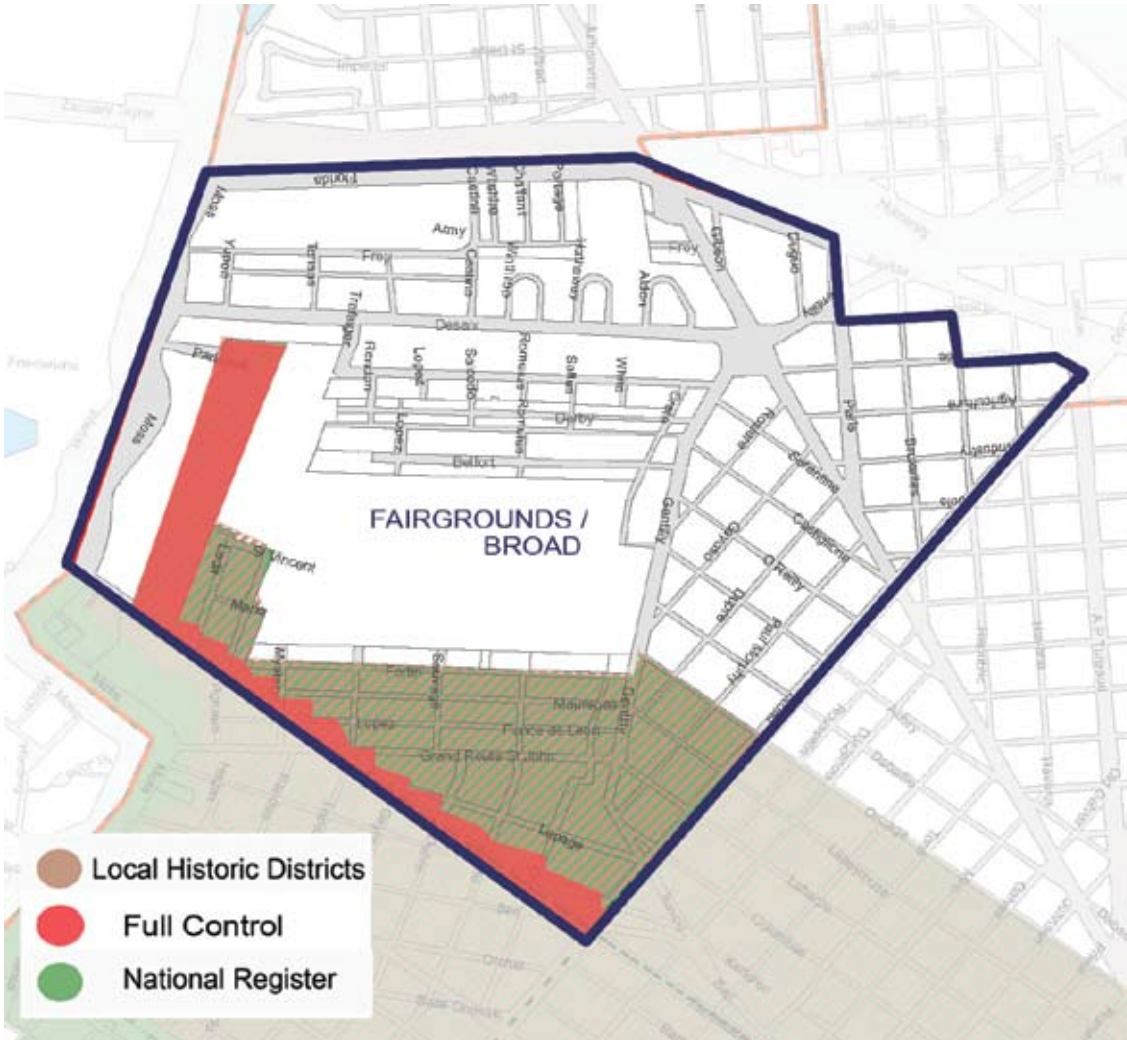
Fund advanced design guidelines for infill construction. The purpose of this critical item is provide direction and education - to maximize compatibility with the existing typologies in the historic district. In particular, modular housing, which may be economically feasible initially, may devalue adjoining properties if not well-designed for the neighborhood. At the other extreme, custom infill projects should avoid trying to be too innovative in architectural expression while missing points of inspiration from the surrounding buildings. While imitation is not appropriate due to possible confusion about what is old and what is new, extreme

differentiation can devalue historic properties if too extreme. Because the line between innovation and alienation can be a fine one in historic districts, the development of guidelines and case studies for individual neighborhoods is critical. Again, the same organizations mentioned above should be able to assist with these guidelines.

Esplanade Ridge Historic District – consider change to “full control” from “partial control” – this will require community meetings and education regarding the long term benefits to neighborhood property values. Full funding of the HDLC to greater than Pre-Katrina levels is also critical to maintain historic districts with integrity. Currently, just the Esplanade fronting properties are “Full Control”.

Housing Assistance Center
Fairgrounds / Desaix has prioritized the increase of home-ownership as a goal for the neighborhood, particularly in the Gentilly to Broad section, and in the areas around Desaix Blvd. Active support is needed to assist in the inception of a “one-stop” housing assistance center for the benefit of neighborhood residents. The Housing Assistance Centers will provide expedited services for permits, fees, inspections and general management assistance. This agency could be included within plans for the One-Stop Community Center described in the next section.

E2f. Utilities and Municipal Services



d.

- a. Existing Street Conditions
- b. Visual Blight caused by electric lines
- c. Landscaping opportunity at Paris Avenue
- d. Landscaping opportunity at Desaix Boulevard



a.



b.



c.



d.

Streets / sidewalks / street lighting / water-sewer / storm drainage system / fire hydrants & lines - repair and reconstruct: Issues to consider in the execution of this work begin with compatibility with the historic neighborhood. Tremé would be well served to use pavements that are visually compatible with a historic district such as concrete with exposed aggregate (accomplished through surface-washing prior to curing). Standard asphalt would not be appropriate in some areas of Fairgrounds / Desaix, such as the Mystery Street area and Grand Route St. John. These areas should have carefully designed brick pavers or concrete paving materials (including sidewalks).

Street lighting alternatives must be evaluated for historic compatibility. Sidewalks are an important issue with respect to integration with drainage and accessibility. While “bump-outs” at corners might be the standard approach in most urban residential areas, in New Orleans this should be considered on a case by case basis.

Drainage patterns and inlet designs are a key consideration, as are the need to provide for wheelchair-accessible curb cuts on new sidewalk construction. The typical metal-edged sidewalk corners will have to become a thing of the past in most cases, due to the Americans With Disabilities Act.

A sophisticated civil engineering plan for the

streets of the neighborhood will be required, and coordination with all infrastructure disciplines will be required.

Landscape rehabilitation / replacement – ROW & neutral grounds: There is some concern in the City of New Orleans government over the continued use of Live Oak trees (*Quercus Virginiana*), due to the problem of the root systems damaging streets, sidewalks and utility lines. There may be ways to minimize this concern, through design and maintenance. First, professional landscape architects and arborists should be involved in all public sector landscape projects on City land. Live Oaks are an iconic part of the City’s image, and it would be unfortunate to erase all use of oaks as a general policy. The design of curbing and planting containment areas, along with scheduled maintenance of these valuable trees, should minimize most of the problems. A wide variety of plant materials indigenous to the general area should be used, as opposed to exotic plant materials.

Intersection signalization & crosswalks – repair / reconstruct. To encourage pedestrian and bicycle safety, major street intersections in the neighborhood must be upgraded to current public works and traffic design standards. The impetus to reconstruct the Desaix Circle is specifically the chaotic nature of the intersection created when the circle was eliminated, and the five streets were allowed to intersect. There are over 20 individual traffic lights at the intersection.

Cars caught in the neutral ground are a frequent and awkward occurrence. The Circle is the best design from a pedestrian and aesthetic point of view, and likely can be designed to satisfy traffic engineers.

Electric, communications and cable utilities – reorganize lines underground where possible: This issue has been raised not so much by the neighbors, who may have acclimated over the years to seeing these cables, but primarily by the planners and visitors to the neighborhood. An amazing tangle of overhead lines proliferates throughout, and in particular locations can degrade the visual and photographic appreciation of the historic streetscape.

Tie neighborhood to City-wide Fire & Emergency Response Plan: A goal of the Neighborhood Rebuilding Plan is to identify the distribution and linkage of first responders across the City. Part of emergency response is also an evacuation plan. Each neighborhood should also implement a Neighborhood Evacuation Plan complete with strategies for those who are not mobile and need to be identified for assistance.



a.



b.



c.

E2g. Community Facilities and Human Services

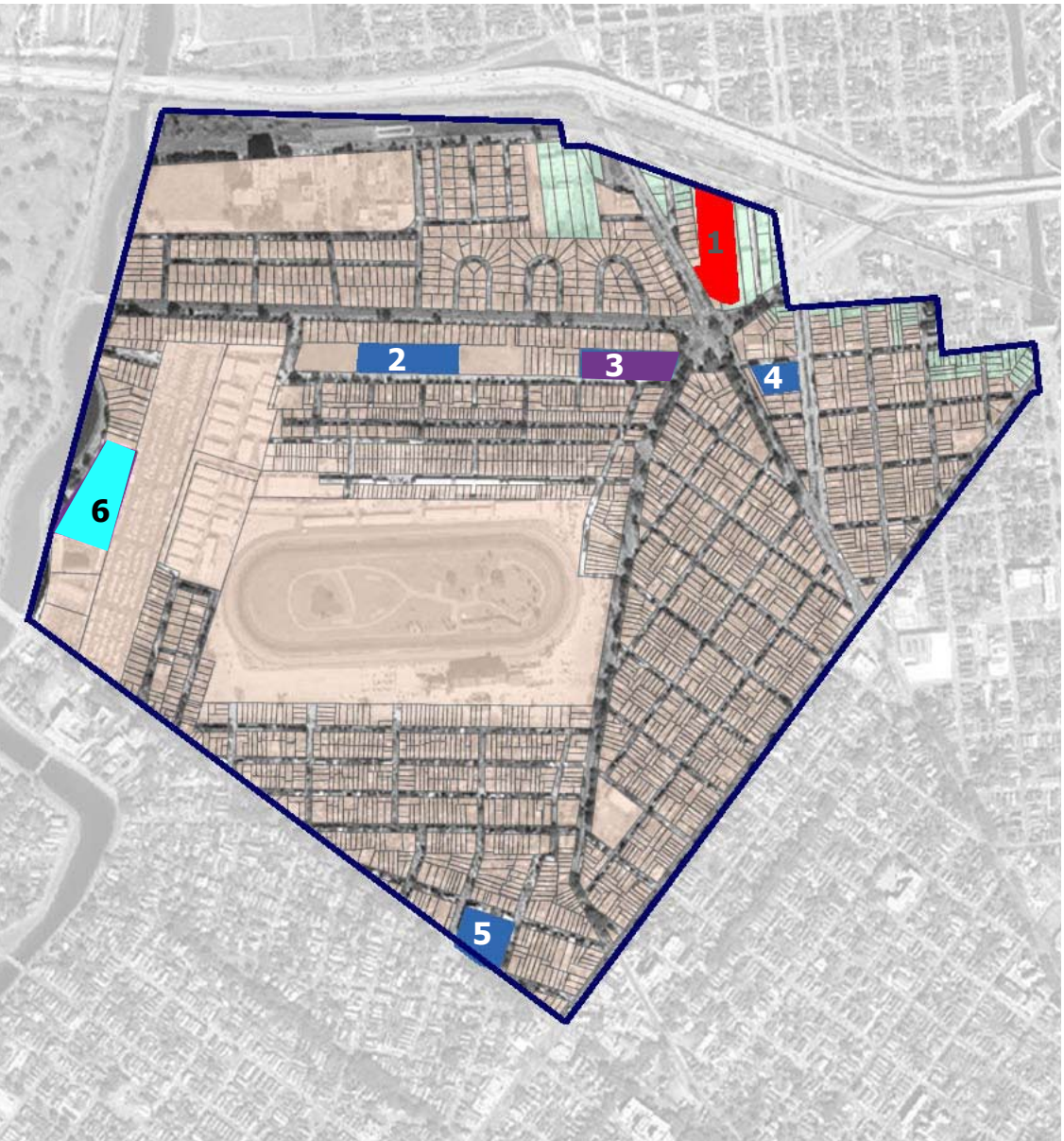
Schools: Faith-based and/or Public – reopen or transitional use – do not leave vacant. Generally, this theme was repeated in several neighborhoods.

One-stop community center in the Moss Street Police facility: Residents generally felt that a One-stop Community Center of sufficient size to meet the needs of the neighborhood was needed. The Langston Hughes site was studied for that purpose, but visibility of the site is hidden, and access is available only from a residential back street. The Police Station facility on Moss Street has two components, a substation, and a training facility that occupies the 2 story former Veteran’s Hospital. The Moss Street location, while not central to the neighborhood, is prominent and identifiable. The thought process was as follows: A bayou-fronting location for a police training facility, when a more generic site would be preferable, suggested a possible relocation. The Langston Hughes site is not slated to reopen soon, and the residential neighborhood is somewhat under-protected by the watchful eyes of residents, as only a few have returned to this heavily flooded area. The park and school sites now are visited by people from outside the neighborhood, often late at night. The police training facility temporarily relocated there would have the use of one or sometimes both of the fields and the school buildings until such

time as the school returns. Thereafter, the training function could relocate permanently to another inexpensive site, and the one-stop community center, or at least some of the functions therein, could remain. The current police training site has open space for recreation and some parking, and could be prepared for basic use with a moderate budget for repairs. The services needed by the neighborhood would include a Health and Counseling Center; Multi-Generational Youth & Elderly Center; Vocational Training Suite; and Child Care Center, Code Enforcement Office; etc. The Police substation is already in place, and will remain. None of these services is currently available at sufficient levels. It is the intention that several aspects would reestablish in larger, more appropriate facilities in the form of funding for programs, as appropriate sites are identified.

Commercial revitalization program – façade improvements: This feature is one that is typically used in older urban neighborhoods where a jump-start is needed for a struggling commercial corridor. Matching grant monies are made available for well-designed improvements to storefronts – historic compatibility would be required in historic districts.

Many other community and cultural facilities in Fairgrounds / Desaix need financial support and technical assistance, some of them located in historic structures. St. Leo Catholic Church is an example, with a very open policy of community interaction



- 1. Nelson Elementary School
- 2. Langston Hughes Elementary
- 3. Milne School for Girls
- 4. St. Leo the Great School
- 5. McDonough #28 Middle School
- 6. Police Station and Training Facility

- Schools currently open
- Schools opening later in 2006
- Schools currently closed

d.

a. Mc Donough 28 Middle School
b. Milne School for Girls



a.



b.

that helped significantly by hosting meetings for this neighborhood planning process. Landmarks like this magnificent church create a civic presence so important to the neighborhood and promote visitation to help bring economic development, employment, and positive street activity back to the neighborhood. The Milne Girls School is run by a convent based in Mississippi, and it is still uncertain whether this facility will reopen. According to neighbors, the program was well run by the Sisters; however, if the property is sold, there is a concern that another type of social program be inserted without neighborhood input. This site should stay on the radar for a community use facility that has a good fit with the neighborhood, or should return to housing.

Fairgrounds / Desaix as a neighborhood of Public Art: To accompany the aforementioned idea of a Village of Boulevards, the Arts Council of New Orleans should be funded to commission public art as part of street reconstruction projects. This concept is inspired primarily by the resounding success of artist John Scott’s “Spirit House” sculpture in the St. Bernard Avenue neutral ground at the Desaix Circle intersection. In addition several other pre-existing cultural organizations could be empowered to continue their good works on matching funds basis.

F. Implementation and Funding Strategies- FUNDING MATRIX

The connection between the Neighborhoods Rebuilding Plan and potential funding sources is graphically represented by the Implementation Priority Matrix. The costs estimates are provided on an order-of-magnitude basis. As such, variations as to the scope of the project could result in variations in the final cost of construction.

In the process of cost analyses, consultations were carried out with the City of New Orleans Public Works Department to identify general cost guidelines typically used for the calculation of street improvements and reconstruction. Other sources of cost identification included the Means Cost Data and our team’s professional experience inside and outside New Orleans.

No single source of funding or financial plan will be capable of dealing with the capital improvement needs for total redevelopment and reconstruction of all the neighborhood projects and needs. However, the funding matrix included in this report shows different funding sources that could be made available for specific projects and it should be expected that layering of multiple sources of funding will be required in most cases. The ability to

obtain these funds will rest with the City of New Orleans and neighborhood groups and advisory committees.

Each matrix matches proposed projects with potential funding sources identified through the planning process and while not exhaustive in its scope, it serves as a guide to where funds could originate. Substantial financial commitments by federal and state entities are a vital ingredient in the recovery effort and will provide the necessary economic infrastructure to attract the private investment required to create stable and vibrant communities.

Each funding matrix, based upon consultation with neighborhood residents through the community meeting process, also ranked projects based upon priority of need with regard to recovery: “Early Action/Critical”; “Mid-Term/Needed”; and “Long Term/Desired”. This ranking provides a general guide as to what communities believe are the most important priorities with regard to revitalization and redevelopment.

Finally, there are a variety of items or initiatives listed on the funding matrix where a capital cost can not be attached or determined without further study, but the community believed needed to be a central

part of the plan. These include:

- Undertaking specific further studies to determine the actual cost to governmental entities for certain public/private initiatives (for which we have noted the cost of the study);
- Housing initiatives for which there may be dollars already allocated through the Road Home, LIHTC, private funding sources, or other sources but where the additional gap in funding is impossible to determine at this point;
- Other policies, including land use and zoning regulations, which the community believed to be in the short and long term interest of the community; and
- Recurring operations (i.e., expanded police patrols, library operations, park operations, etc.) that either tie to certain capital improvements or are important to the health of the community through the expansion of existing services.

NEIGHBORHOODS REBUILDING PLAN FAIRGROUNDS/DESAIX IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITY MATRIX																						
PROJECTS & PHASE			POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE(S)																			
			CRITICAL (1) NEEDED (2) DESIRED (3)	FEMA	CDBG/LRA	OTHER HUD	USACE	CITY CIP	SWB	LHFA	HANO	HOME	EDA	TIF/GO BONDS/NMTC	BID	SPECIAL TAXING DISTRICT	FHWA/FTA	LDOT	PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS	ORLEANS LEVEE BOARD	OTHER GOVERNMENT & NGOs	CAPITAL FUNDING NEED/GAP
Early Action Plan																						
Capital Projects																						
Streets / sidewalks / street lighting / storm drainage - repair / reconstruct	1		•	•				•														\$29,700,000
Landscape rehab / replacement - ROW & neutral grounds	1			•		•																\$1,350,000
Intersection signalization & crosswalks - repair / reconstruct	1		•	•																		\$320,000
Fire hydrants & lines – repair / expand distribution	1		•	•				•														\$380,000
Electric, communications and cable utilities – reorganize lines underground where possible	1			•		•													•			TBD
Bus stop shelters & benches – appropriate to neighborhood	1			•		•													•			\$120,000
Commercial revitalization program – façade improvements	1			•		•						•	•									TBD
Restore Desaix Circle - Intersection Improvement Project	1		•	•		•																\$3,400,000
Renovate Stallings Playground including open recreation and ball fields, swimming pool	1		•	•		•											•		•			\$2,000,000
Develop one-stop community center at Police Training Facility	1		•	•		•											•		•			TBD
Install traffic calming on Castiglione, Trafalgar Streets, Florida Ave.	1			•		•																\$90,000
Fairgrounds - perimeter improvements project (study cost)	1			•															•			\$60,000
Historic District – consider change to “full control” from “partial control” (study cost)	1			•															•			\$20,000
Tie neighborhood to city-wide Urban Transportation Plan (study cost)	1			•												•	•		•			TBD
Subtotal: Capital Projects																						\$37,440,000
Recurring Operations																						
Enhance police protection	1																					
Tie neighborhood to city-wide Fire & Emergency Response Plan	1																		•			
Parks and Greenway maintenance	1																					
Housing Initiatives & Other Policies																						
Schools: Faith-based and/or Public – reopen or transitional use – do not leave vacant	1																					
Fund structural stabilization of endangered historic housing	1																					
Infill housing in abandoned / blighted properties	1																					
Move Police Training Facility to Langston Hughes School temporarily	1																					
Minimize demolition of historic structures	1																					
Support grant to save historic materials for reuse	1																					
Lot Next Door program (right of first refusal)	1																					
Fund affordable home ownership programs	1																					
Fund advanced design guidelines for infill construction	1																					
Fairgrounds perimeter buffering – visual & acoustic	1																					
Fairgrounds service entrances – minimize traffic & security impacts	1																					
Landscape buffer at frontage of Fairgrounds	1																					
Broad St. Corridor: Support Main Street Initiative	1																					
Mid Term Plan																						
Capital Projects																						
Add marked bicycle lanes on key roadways where space permits	2			•		•																\$60,000
Neighborhood-specific street signage / way-finding / historic markers	2			•		•																\$350,000
Moss Street – Bayou St. John Greenway project	2		•	•		•	•										•		•			\$1,500,000
Rehabilitate Langston Hughes Elementary	2		•	•													•		•			\$6,000,000
Florida Ave. Greenway improvement project including heavy landscape I-610 buffer	2			•		•											•		•			\$1,500,000
Subtotal: Capital Projects																						\$9,410,000
Housing Initiatives and Other Policies																						
LSU property bayou frontage: 200' dedicated green space buffer	2																					
Remove parking for LSU and keep on-site if possible	2																					
Study feasibility of connecting Bayou Greenway under I-610	2																					
Gentilly Blvd. commercial redevelopment for historic overlay only	2																					
Mystery Street spot commercial improvement	2																					
Revisit zoning for improved commercial at Paris Ave and Gentilly (adj. to Nelson School)	2																					
Long Term Plan																						
Capital Projects																						
Connection to City Park at Desaix Bridge – bicycle / pedestrian entrance	3			•		•																TBD
Subtotal: Capital Projects																						\$0
CAPITAL PROJECTS TOTAL																						\$46,850,000

Neighborhood Rebuilding Plan

KEY PLAN

- Municipal / Government
- Commercial
- Neighborhood Business District Overlay
- Religious / Churches
- Education / Schools
- Recreational / Parks
- Greenways
- Proposed Fairground Perimeter Improvements
- Community Centers
- Historic Streetscapes and Markers

SITE SPECIFIC CAPITAL PROJECTS

- 1- Restore Desaix Circle - Intersection Improvement Project
- 2- Renovate Stallings Playground including open recreation and ball fields, swimming pool
- 3- Traffic calming on Castiglione, Trafalgar St, Florida Ave.
- 4- Fairgrounds perimeter improvements project
- 5- One-stop community center at Police Training Facility
- 6- Move Police Training Facility to Langston Hughes School (temporary)
- 7- Broad St. Corridor: Main Street Initiative
- 8- Moss Street – Bayou St. John Greenway project
- 9- Florida Ave. Greenway improvement project
- 10- LSU property bayou frontage: 200' dedicated green space buffer
- 11- Remove parking for LSU and keep on-site if possible
- 12- Gentilly Blvd. commercial redevelopment for historic overlay only
- 13- Mystery Street spot commercial improvement
- 14- Improve commercial area at Paris Ave. & Gentilly Blvd.
- 15- Connection to City Park at Desaix Bridge – bicycle / pedestrian entrance

