

VOLUME 2
chapter



5

NEIGHBORHOODS AND HOUSING

GOAL	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
NEIGHBORHOODS		
1 <i>Enhanced character and livability for all neighborhoods, with investments to improve quality of life</i>	1.A. Tailor policies and programs to maintain and enhance the physical, economic social and cultural character and diversity of existing residential neighborhoods.	5.16
	1.B. Establish systems to enforce quality of life regulators and eliminate nuisance businesses.	5.19
	1.C. Develop a protocol for dealing with businesses that are incompatible with residences and with “nuisance businesses” while appropriately protecting due process.	5.19
	1.D. Fund and staff a system for proactive planning on the neighborhood and district level.	5.20
	1.E. Engage neighborhood residents businesses and other stakeholders in proactive planning connected to the citywide Master Plan and citywide policies	5.21
2 <i>Redevelopment of blighted and vacant properties in all neighborhoods, focusing strategies to meet the respective needs of stable, recovering, and revitalization neighborhoods.</i>	2.A. Accelerate redevelopment of blighted and vacant sites through a comprehensive blight elimination program under unified management.	5.24
3 <i>Access to retail and services for all neighborhoods</i>	3.A. Revitalize existing neighborhood commercial districts and create new, walkable mixed-use districts on under utilized commercial or industrial land.	5.30
	3.B. Launch a supermarket/grocery store recruitment program	5.34
	3.C. Include neighborhood commercial development in activities of the proposed economic development public-private partnership (PPP).	5.35

GOAL	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:
HOUSING		
4	<i>Reinvented housing policies to support quality neighborhoods and meet the diverse housing needs of all households</i>	<p>4.A. Create a New Orleans Housing Working Group to guide and coordinate City housing strategy. 5.35</p> <p>4.B. Provide resources to restore housing in all affected neighborhoods, with appropriate flood protection measures. 5.37</p> <p>4.C. Aggressively implement and enhance existing funded housing programs. 5.39</p> <p>4.D. Maintain and expand market-rate housing choices. 5.41</p> <p>4.E. Evaluate the full toolbox of housing production strategies as conditions warrant and as appropriate to particular neighborhoods. 5.41</p>
5	<i>High capacity public sector and neighborhood-based groups, such as neighborhood development corporations, to provide housing responsive to the changing housing needs of current and future residents</i>	<p>5.A. Provide training for city housing staff and for members of the Housing Working Group. 5.43</p> <p>5.B. Foster a network of strong neighborhood-based neighborhood development corporations through capacity building efforts. 5.43</p>



fact sheet

HOUSING

Pre-Hurricane Katrina Housing Facts (Census 2000)

- 215,091 housing units of which 188,251 were occupied
 - > 57% single family
 - > 23.2% of units in 2-4-family buildings
 - > 9.8% of units in buildings with 5-19 units
 - > 9.6% of units in buildings with 20 or more units
- 60% of housing units were built before 1960
- 46.5% of occupied units were owner-occupied
- 53.5% of occupied units were renter-occupied
- 32% of occupied rental units were low-cost, unsubsidized, market rentals
- Approximately 11% of total rental units were federally subsidized or in public housing (11,000 units)
- Approximately 9% of total rental units were rented with Section 8 vouchers (9,000)

Post-Hurricane Katrina Housing Facts Homeowner

- 61% of owner-occupied homes suffered major or severe damage from Katrina.
- 80% of homeowners with damaged homes received insufficient funds to cover rebuilding costs.
- Home values have increased while median household incomes adjusted for inflation have remained flat. In 2000, the majority of homes were valued below \$80,000. In 2006, the majority of homes were valued over \$100,000.

Rental

- 51% of renter-occupied housing suffered major or severe damage from Katrina.
- 80% of subsidized affordable housing suffered major or severe damage from Katrina.
- 40% increase in rents, and 26% increase in wages, 2005-2008.

Increase in costs

- Construction of a 1,300-square-foot energy-efficient house cost more than \$200,000 in 2009.
- Homeowner's insurance costs up 300%.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Pre-Katrina:

- New Orleans' 46% owner-occupancy rate was comparable to other cities in 2000:
 - > Atlanta – 40%
 - > Boston – 32%
 - > Dallas – 43%
 - > Houston – 45%
 - > San Francisco – 35%
- Most rental housing was in buildings containing 1-4 units.
- Many of the large-scale subsidized housing projects were poorly designed and managed, with a negative impact on surrounding neighborhoods.

Post-Katrina:

- Housing costs have increased and housing has become expensive for the some 49,000 households estimated to have incomes below 80% of the median income.
- Lack of sufficient funds for rebuilding has slowed recovery by many homeowners and the majority of small landlords.
- The 2008-2009 credit crisis may slow or eliminate financing for multifamily developments.

Sources: Brookings Institution/Greater New Orleans Community Data Center; Policy Link; US Census; New Orleans Redevelopment Authority

FINDINGS

- New Orleanians identify strongly with their neighborhoods and want to retain the city's unique qualities.
- Neighborhood conditions in 2009 vary considerably depending on the previous circumstances and degree of flood damage.
- New Orleans has many small commercial areas, but there is a lack of neighborhood-serving retail and services in many parts of the city.
- Blight is a critical problem, both in pre-storm disinvested neighborhoods and in neighborhoods still in recovery from the storm.
- Most of the city's housing stock is in one- to four-unit structures owned by families and individuals.
- The majority of funding made available for residential recovery has been targeted to individual homeowners or to large-scale, subsidized multi-family rental properties.
- Housing sale and rental prices increased substantially in the three years after the storm but prices moderated in 2009. Some costs, such as construction and insurance, remained significantly higher than before the storm.
- The number of non-subsidized and subsidized affordable housing units declined substantially after the storm, but some 8,000 federally-subsidized units are projected to open by 2012.
- Homelessness remains a serious problem.
- Neighborhood and housing development, blight removal, and housing programs are spread among numerous city agencies and authorities and are not effectively coordinated within New Orleans or in relation to state or federal agencies.
- Detailed data is not available on all segments of the housing market, including housing need, housing cost burden, affordability of non-subsidized units, and similar issues, but is being developed as of 2009.

CHALLENGES

- Creating an integrated housing policy that invests resources to enhance neighborhoods and to meet the diverse housing needs of all New Orleans households.
- Tailoring neighborhood planning and housing policies and resources to address a wide variety of neighborhood conditions.
- Developing, funding, staffing and implementing a comprehensive approach to blight eradication.
- Improving programs and technical assistance to assist owners in restoring housing, including small rental properties with 1-4 units.

Acronyms

To aid in reading this section, below is a list of acronyms used within the text:

AMI	Area Median Income	HDLC	Historic District Landmarks Commission
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer	HOME	Home Investment Partnership Program (federal)
CDBG	Neighborhood Development Block Grant (federal)	HRCN	Housing Resource Center Network
CIP	Capital Improvement Program	HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
CLT	Neighborhood land trust	LHFA	Louisiana Housing Finance Agency
CPC	City Planning Commission	NCDC	Neighborhood Conservation District Commission
CZO	Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance	NORA	New Orleans Redevelopment Authority
D-CDBG	Disaster Neighborhood Development Block Grant (federal)	OFICD	Office of Facilities, Infrastructure, and Community Development
DPW	Department of Public Works	PPP	Public-private partnership for economic development
EAH	Employer-Assisted Housing	RFP	Request for proposal
FANO	Finance Authority of New Orleans	UNO	University of New Orleans
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency	UNOP	Unified New Orleans Plan
GIS	Geographic information system		
GO Zone	Gulf Opportunity Zone		

A Introduction

New Orleans is famously a city of neighborhoods—crucibles of culture and cuisine, and networks of family roots. A vibrant network of grass roots activists emerged to rebuild the city in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Neighborhood protection, enhancement and revitalization is the cornerstone of New Orleanians’ vision for the city’s future. Investment in a high quality of life for all neighborhoods is also an economic development strategy, creating the foundation of inviting, safe, diverse and enjoyable places to live that will help retain and attract businesses and the labor force they need.

Strategies for neighborhood livability must be comprehensive and integrated, taking into account neighborhoods’ differing needs:

- Stable neighborhoods that need vigilance to maintain that stability
- Recovering neighborhoods that were doing well before the storm but are still working toward recovery
- Revitalization neighborhoods that faced challenges before the storm and, in some cases, also experienced storm-related damage.

Master Plan strategies to accelerate recovery and provide a foundation for continued enhancement of livability into the future focus on four key issues:

- **A comprehensive approach to eliminating blight.** New Orleans had over 20,000 blighted properties before Hurricane Katrina, with another 30,000–40,000 vacant or blighted properties added since the storm. This is a complex challenge of widespread patchwork blight combined with disinvestment that predates Hurricane Katrina. Because the scale of the problem is so great, the city needs a multifaceted but highly coordinated approach that combines traditional tools with innovative solutions.
- **Reinvention of the city’s approach to housing.** The city needs a housing policy focused on building neighborhood and neighborhoods rather than projects or developments—whether for market-rate

or below market rate housing. This will require a thorough understanding of the new dynamics of all segments of the New Orleans housing market since the storm; an inclusive approach to setting policy that reaches out to neighborhoods and housing professionals; a planning context that sets the physical framework for housing activities; and capacity building for both the public sector and neighborhood-based groups such as neighborhood development corporations. Housing policy should be multi-faceted taking into account the needs of residents who have returned since Hurricane Katrina, welcome and facilitate the return of former residents who wish to come back to the city, and welcome newcomers to New Orleans.

- **Enhancing neighborhood commercial districts and residents' access to retail and services.** Strategic location of civic uses to anchor local commercial areas, recruitment of supermarkets to better serve residents, provision for neighborhood corner stores where they are desired by residents, support for small business and merchants, and public investments that promote walkability can enhance neighborhood commercial areas.
- **Neighborhood-level plans and audits tailored to specific areas.** A system of district planners will work with residents, businesses and other stakeholders to create plans, coordinate implementation, and organize neighborhood process around development proposals.

B Recommendations

A recommendations **Summary** linking goals, strategies and actions appears below and is followed by one or more early-action items under the heading **Getting Started**. The **Narrative** follows, providing a detailed description of how the strategies and actions further the goals. Background and existing conditions discussion to inform understanding of the goals, policies, strategies and actions are included in Volume 3, Chapter 5.

Summary

■ **FIRST FIVE YEARS:** 2010–2014 ■ **MEDIUM TERM:** 2015–2019 ■ **LONG TERM:** 2020–2030

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE:
1. Enhanced character and livability for neighborhoods, with investments to improve quality of life	1.A. Tailor policies and programs to maintain and enhance the physical, economic social and cultural character and diversity of existing residential neighborhoods.	1. Use zoning to guide the scale and character of new in fill to fit in with the character of established residential areas.	CPC; City Council	First five years	CZO rewrite project	5.16
		2. Use zoning to ensure appropriate transitions between established residential areas and redevelopment of under utilized sites.	CPC; City Council	First five years	CZO rewrite project	5.17
		3. Create design guidelines to assist existing and new property owners in improving, expanding or constructing new development.	CPC through area plans; CPC and City Council through zoning	First five years (CZO); short to medium (area plans)	CZO rewrite project. Area Plans—see below	5.17

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014 **MEDIUM TERM:** 2015–2019 **LONG TERM:** 2020–2030

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		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE:
1. Enhanced character and livability for neighborhoods, with investments to improve quality of life	1.A. Tailor policies and programs to maintain and enhance the physical, economic social and cultural character and diversity of existing residential neighborhoods.	4. Explore adoption of incentive zoning to provide neighborhood benefits from large developments.	CPC	First five years	CZO rewrite project	5.17
		5. Continue to upgrade streetscapes of major streets	DPW	First five years	Bond funding; CDBG; federal transportation funds	5.18
		6. Create a program to notify property owners about their sidewalk maintenance responsibilities and offer a betterment program to promote sidewalk repair and maintenance in neighborhoods.	DPW	First five years	Staff time; fines	5.18
		7. Create sidewalk maintenance notification, enforcement and betterment programs.	DPW; possible small consultant contract	First five years	Staff time; general fund; CDBG	5.18
		8. Continue to support and promote a diversity of public social and cultural events throughout the city.	Mayor's Office	First five years	Staff time—various departments; neighborhood groups; non-profits	5.18
		9. Promote neighborhood associations and neighborhood activities to encourage neighborhood identity.	Mayor's Office; City Council; CPC	First five years	Staff time	5.19
	1.B. Establish systems to enforce quality of life regulations and eliminate nuisance businesses.	1. Create a ticketing system with fines for quality of life offenses.	Mayor's Office; City Council; Police Department	First five years	Staff time; fines	5.19
	1.C. Develop a protocol for dealing with businesses that are incompatible with residences and with "nuisance businesses" while appropriately protecting due process.	1. Convene meetings between business owners and neighborhood residents to seek resolution of issues.	CPC (District Planners)	First five years	Staff time	5.19
		2. Enhance industrial and commercial performance standards (limits on noise, dust, vibration and other impacts) in the zoning code.	CPC	First five years	CZO rewrite project	5.19

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014 **MEDIUM TERM:** 2015–2019 **LONG TERM:** 2020–2030

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		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE:	
1. Enhanced character and livability for neighborhoods, with investments to improve quality of life	1.C. Develop a protocol for dealing with businesses that are incompatible with residences and with “nuisance businesses” while appropriately protecting due process.	3. Change the code to tie alcoholic beverage outlet licenses to both location and operator / owner to require new approval at a transfer of operation or ownership.	CPC; City Council	First five years	Staff time	5.20	
		4. Disseminate information to neighborhood associations on potential legal approaches.	CPC	First five years	Staff time	5.19	
	1.D. Fund and staff a system for proactive planning on the neighborhood and district level.	1. Enhance the Comprehensive Planning Division with an Area Planning Program with district planners.	CPC	First five years with grant funding; thereafter permanent funding	General fund; CDBG planning funds; developer fees	5.20	
		1.E. Engage neighborhood residents, businesses and other stakeholders in proactive planning connected to the citywide Master Plan and citywide policies.	1. Create Area Plans for planning districts and neighborhoods.	CPC; neighborhood associations; District Councils (when formed)	First five years	CPC funded plans—general fund, CDBG, state and federal grants. Other funding for associations, <i>etc.</i> —Foundations, donations, university studios (in-kind), volunteers.	5.21
			2. Engage neighborhood groups and students to perform “Neighborhood Audits” of the public realm to aid in targeting resources for public improvements.	CPC (set framework, some coordination); neighborhood alliances and other non-profits; neighborhood groups; District Councils when formed	First five years	Volunteers; limited funding needed from donations, foundations	5.23
			3. Provide a structured Neighborhood Participation Program.	CPC; City Council (ordinance)	First five years	See Volume 2, Chapter 15 for details	5.23
	4. Hold public hearings, when needed, in the evening to enhance the opportunity for public participation.	CPC	First five years	Staff and commissioner time	5.24		

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014

MEDIUM TERM: 2015–2019

LONG TERM: 2020–2030

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE:
<p>2. Redevelopment of blighted and vacant properties in all neighborhoods, focusing strategies to meet the respective needs of stable neighborhoods, recovering neighborhoods, and revitalization neighborhoods.</p>	<p>2.A. Accelerate redevelopment of blighted and vacant sites through a comprehensive blight elimination program under unified management.</p>	<p>1. Coordinate and organize the blight eradication programs and activities of the several agencies involved in the Mayor's office—with a specific person reporting directly to the Mayor focused on this goal.</p>	Mayor's office	First five years	Staff time; general fund	5.24 - 5.25
		<p>2. Improve code enforcement activities.</p>	Safety & Permits	First five years	Staff time; enforcement fines	5.25
		<p>3. Aid NORA and related agencies where possible in increasing capacity to redevelop blighted and vacant properties.</p>	Mayor and Council; NORA funding applications	First five years	State and federal funding including stimulus funding; explore limited-period millage or bond for enforcement, land bank and redevelopment programs	5.25
		<p>4. Create a comprehensive city property information database that includes information on blighted and vacant properties as well as other data.</p>	Information Technology to expand on NORA project to be available to all relevant departments	First five years	D-CDBG; expand with grant or general fund; CDBG or general fund to sustain	5.26
		<p>5. Establish annual inspections for rental properties and for houses at time of sale.</p>	City Council (ordinance); Safety and Permits; Code Enforcement;	First five years	Fees to be paid by landlords and sellers	5.26
		<p>6. Establish a registry of properties vacant for six months or more.</p>	City Council (ordinance); Safety and Permits	First five years	General fund; fines for non-registration	5.26
		<p>7. Expedite procedures for site control of blighted and vacant properties, including the code enforcement lien foreclosure process.</p>	Mayor's Office; legislative delegation	First five years	Staff time	5.26

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014

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		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE:
<p>2. Redevelopment of blighted and vacant properties in all neighborhoods, focusing strategies to meet the respective needs of stable neighborhoods, recovering neighborhoods, and revitalization neighborhoods.</p>	<p>2.A. Accelerate redevelopment of blighted and vacant sites through a comprehensive blight elimination program under unified management.</p>	<p>8. Pursue land assembly to create larger, contiguous parcels for neighborhood amenities or efficient development, and to facilitate targeted block-by block redevelopment.</p>	<p>Mayor's Office; City Council</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>General fund (foregone income for limited period)</p>	<p>5.26</p>
		<p>9. Provide incentives, such as a limited-period tax abatement, to owners to assemble (including scattered site assembly) and redevelop sites in recovery and revitalization areas with reasonably strong markets.</p>	<p>City Attorney's Office; NORA</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time; D-CDBG; other federal funding</p>	<p>5.27</p>
		<p>10. Explore land readjustment as a land assembly and redevelopment option.</p>	<p>City Attorney's Office; NORA</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time; D-CDBG; other federal funding</p>	<p>5.27</p>
		<p>11. Work with neighborhood groups, non-profits and faith-based organizations establish Neighborhood Land Trusts to act as land banks and potential affordable ownership developers.</p>	<p>CPC; NORA; neighborhood and nonprofit groups</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time; D-CDBG; foundation funding</p>	<p>5.27</p>
		<p>12. Continue the Lot Next Door Program, including credits for fencing or landscaping adjacent properties.</p>	<p>NORA</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time; D-CDBG; other federal funding</p>	<p>5.27</p>
		<p>13. Explore the pros and cons of property tax initiatives or vacant property purchases to promote redevelopment of vacant properties.</p>	<p>Mayor's Office; City Attorney; Finance Department; City Council. Possible consultant contract</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time; general fund</p>	<p>5.28</p>
		<p>14. Require property liability insurance for all owners.</p>	<p>City Council (ordinance); Safety and Permits (enforcement)</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>5.28</p>
		<p>15. Place redevelopment covenants, design and performance standards, and any special use or other appropriate restrictions on properties sold at tax sales by NORA or other government entities for redevelopment.</p>	<p>CPC; NORA; City Attorney's office</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>5.28</p>

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014

MEDIUM TERM: 2015–2019

LONG TERM: 2020–2030

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE:
2. Redevelopment of blighted and vacant properties in all neighborhoods, focusing strategies to meet the respective needs of stable neighborhoods, recovering neighborhoods, and revitalization neighborhoods.	2.A. Accelerate redevelopment of blighted and vacant sites through a comprehensive blight elimination program under unified management.	16. Clarify through public process the criteria for historic property rehabilitation or demolition using the Neighborhood Character Area Study to inform decisions.	HDLG; NCDC	First five years	Staff time	5.29
		17. Use neighborhood audits (see above) to prioritize problem properties for code enforcement or demolition.	CPC (coordination); neighborhood groups; appropriate city agencies	First five years	Staff time; neighborhood volunteers	5.30
3. Access to retail and services from all neighborhoods	3.A. Revitalize existing neighborhood commercial districts and create new compact, mixed-use neighborhood centers on underutilized commercial and industrial land.	1. Fast-track the creation of a one-stop shop and comprehensive resource guide to opening and operating a small business in New Orleans.	Neighborhood Development Department; Economic Development Public-Private Partnership (PPP)	First five years	D-CDBG funds; PPP operational funds	5.30-5.32
		2. Facilitate "Rapid Reconnaissance Plans" for neighborhood commercial districts to identify and prioritize immediate needs.	CPC (template and coordination); business and neighborhood volunteers	First five years	CPC staff time; volunteers	5.32
		3. Locate civic uses within or adjacent to neighborhood commercial districts to serve as anchors when feasible.	CAO and CPC through Capital Improvement Program (CIP) process)	First five years	CAO, CPC, with other departments; variable funding depending on project	5.32
		4. Focus cultural uses, events and development opportunities to strengthen neighborhood commercial districts, where feasible.	CPC and Neighborhood Development	First five years	Staff time	5.33
		5. Promote the development of business or merchants' associations to serve as the voice of business owners in specific commercial districts.	Main Streets' Program; Cultural Products District programs; Neighborhood Development; economic development PPP; neighborhood associations and alliances	First five years	Staff time; volunteers	5.33

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014 **MEDIUM TERM: 2015–2019** **LONG TERM: 2020–2030**

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS					
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE:	
3. Access to retail and services from all neighborhoods	3.A. Revitalize existing neighborhood commercial districts and create new compact, mixed-use neighborhood centers on under utilized commercial and industrial land.	6. Create opportunities for context-sensitive commercial reuse of under utilized commercial buildings.	CPC/Council—appropriate zoning; CPC—Area Plans ; incentives such as TIF program	First five years	Staff time; TIF	5.33	
		7. Develop a façade improvement matching grant program or revolving loan fund for neighborhood commercial areas.	Neighborhood Development; PPP; Main Streets programs	First five years	CDBG; Main Street commercial partners	5.34	
		8. Develop design principles and standards for all districts that permit a mix of land uses and neighborhood commercial districts.	CPC	First five years	CDBG; Main Street commercial partners	5.34	
	3.B. Launch a supermarket/grocery store recruitment program.	1. Commission a market analysis for supermarkets stores with a plan illustrating the feasibility of potential sites.	Neighborhood Development with CPC; NORA	Neighborhood Development with CPC; NORA	\$35-40,000; General Fund; CDBG; Economic Development Administration or similar grant.	5.34	
		2. Identify incentives to attract supermarkets to under served areas of the city.	Neighborhood Development with CPC; NORA	Neighborhood Development with CPC; NORA		5.34	
		3. Implement the Fresh Food Retail Incentives Program	Neighborhood Development with CPC; NORA	Neighborhood Development with CPC; NORA		5.35	
	3.C. Include neighborhood commercial development in activities of the proposed economic development public-private partnership (PPP).	1. Establish a PPP group that would focus on marketing, programming and other approaches to revitalization of neighborhood commercial districts.	PPP	First five years	PPP funding	5.35	
	4. Reinvented housing policies to support quality neighborhoods and meet the diverse housing needs of all households.	4.A. Create a New Orleans Housing Working Group to guide and coordinate City housing strategy.	1. Bring together people knowledgeable about housing as a working group charged with advising on housing policy for the city.	Neighborhood Development Housing Policy office, with a diverse stakeholder group	First five years	Staff time	5.35 - 5.36
			2. Collect and analyze housing data to monitor the market and housing needs.	Housing Policy office; Greater NO Neighborhood Data Center	First five years	Staff time; foundation funding in first five years; eventual partial funding by the city from CDBG	5.36
3. Develop performance measures to monitor housing needs and the extent to which needs are being met for reporting in a monthly cross-agency meeting and annual public reporting.			Housing Policy Office	First five years	Staff time	5.36	

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014 **MEDIUM TERM:** 2015–2019 **LONG TERM:** 2020–2030

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE:
4. Reinvented housing policies to support quality neighborhoods and meet the diverse housing needs of all households.	4.A. Create a New Orleans Housing Working Group to guide and coordinate City housing strategy.	4. Create housing policies that build neighborhoods, meet housing needs for all New Orleanians, and attract private investment.	Housing Working Group	First five years	Staff time	5.36
		5. Establish an annual public meeting on housing policy and priorities.	Housing Working Group	First five years	Staff times	5.37
		6. Communicate local housing needs and priorities to state and federal housing agencies, as well as national non-profits, and work with LHFA to develop selection criteria for tax credit projects.	Mayor's Office; Housing Policy Office	First five years	Staff time	5.37
	4.B. Provide resources to restore housing in all affected neighborhoods, with appropriate flood protection measures.	1. Seek additional federal funding to close gaps between Road Home funding plus insurance and recovery needs for homeowners.	Mayor's Office; Neighborhood Development	First five years	D-CDBG; additional federal funds	5.37
		2. Support restoration of single-family housing and return to commerce of rental housing in 1 to 4 unit buildings, with appropriate flood protection measures.	Neighborhood Development; nonprofit housing organizations	First five years	D-CDBG; additional federal funds	5.38
		3. Monitor the progress of the Small Property Owners Road Home and facilitate technical assistance to property owners.	Neighborhood Development; nonprofit housing organizations through Housing Resource Center Network	First five years	Staff time; CDBG	5.38
		4. Identify key indicators of neighborhood revitalization, monitor the indicators and hold quarterly cross-agency Neighborhood Coordination Meetings.	Housing Policy Office (conveners); CPC, NORA, FANO, Neighborhood Development, enforcement agencies, <i>etc.</i>	First five years	Staff Time	5.38
		5. Continue to target strategic housing and neighborhood investments of public funds to the 17 Target Areas and 9 Housing Opportunity Zones identified by ORIFCD during recovery process.	OFICD; NORA; CPC	Ongoing	CDBG; D-CDBG; other federal funds; local bonds; other sources	5.38
		4.C. Aggressively implement and enhance existing funded housing programs.	1. Expend housing funding already allocated to the city as expeditiously as possible, using the advice of the Housing Working Group when it begins working.	Neighborhood Development; NORA	First five years	Staff time; D-CDBG
	2. Implement a system of performance standards and strict monitoring for developers, contractors and others who receive housing and neighborhood development funds from the City.		Neighborhood Development	First five years	Staff time	5.39

FIRST FIVE YEARS: 2010–2014

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GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE:
<p>4. Reinvented housing policies to support quality neighborhoods and meet the diverse housing needs of all households.</p>	<p>4.C. Aggressively implement and enhance existing funded housing programs.</p>	<p>3. Strengthen the City's home repair program through technical assistance to property owners, staff training, program marketing, and contractor certification.</p>	<p>Neighborhood Development; Housing Resource Center Network</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time; CDBG; federal HOME funds;</p>	<p>5.39</p>
		<p>4. Establish a One-Stop Homeownership Center.</p>	<p>Neighborhood Development</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time; CDBG; general fund</p>	<p>5.39</p>
		<p>5. Monitor the status of affordable homeownership programs to appropriately target funds.</p>	<p>Neighborhood Development; Housing Working Group</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time; federal HOME funds</p>	<p>5.40</p>
		<p>6. Support development of supportive and transitional housing for homeless or at-risk households.</p>	<p>Neighborhood Development; UNITY of New Orleans and member non-profits; NORA</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Federal McKinney grants for transitional and supportive housing for homeless persons; federal project-based vouchers for supportive housing; stimulus funding</p>	<p>5.40</p>
		<p>7. Pursue additional housing funds if needs continue after expenditure of current funding.</p>	<p>Neighborhood Development; NORA</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Potential sources: additional GO Zone tax credits and mortgage revenue bonds; five-year increase in HOME and CDBG funds; project based vouchers for supportive housing</p>	<p>5.40</p>
		<p>8. Monitor the performance of the Housing Resource Center Network (HRCN) after it is in operation.</p>	<p>Neighborhood Development; NORA</p>			<p>5.40</p>
	<p>4.D. Maintain and expand market-rate housing choices.</p>	<p>1. Provide zoning for a wide range of market rate housing choices.</p>	<p>CPC; City Council</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Current CZO project</p>	<p>5.41</p>
		<p>2. Preserve the diversity of housing types within New Orleans Neighborhoods (singles, doubles, multi-family, etc.)</p>				<p>5.41</p>
	<p>4.E. Evaluate the full toolbox of housing production strategies as conditions warrant and as appropriate to particular neighborhoods.</p>	<p>1. Assess the value of management bonds to ensure appropriate management of multi-family developments.</p>	<p>CPC and City Council (zoning); Housing Working Group; Housing Policy Office</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Current CZO project; staff time</p>	<p>5.41</p>
		<p>2. Transfer of development rights and incentives zoning in suitable locations and market conditions.</p>	<p>CPC and City Council (zoning); Housing Working Group; Housing Policy Office</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Current CZO project; staff time</p>	<p>5.42</p>
		<p>3. Develop local affordable housing trust fund.</p>	<p>CPC and City Council (zoning); Housing Working Group; Housing Policy Office</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Current CZO project; staff time</p>	<p>5.42</p>
		<p>4. Develop employer-assisted housing programs.</p>	<p>CPC and City Council (zoning); Housing Working Group; Housing Policy Office</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Current CZO project; staff time</p>	<p>5.42</p>

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS					FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE:
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES		
5. High capacity public sector and neighborhood-based groups, such as neighborhood development corporations, to provide housing responsive to the changing housing needs of current and future residents	5.A. Provide training for city housing staff and for members of the Housing Working Group.	1. Send staff to national housing conferences; organize staff participation in webinars and similar activities; provide informational materials and training for the Working Group.	Neighborhood Development; Housing Policy Office	First five years	Seek foundation funding in the first five years; budget (CDBG) for training in the medium to long term	5.43	
	5.B. Foster a network of strong neighborhood-based neighborhood development corporations through capacity building efforts.	1. Facilitate training for non-profits who already produce or could have the capacity to produce housing.	Neighborhood Development	First five years	CDBG; foundations; national neighborhood development programs, such as Local Initiatives Support Corp.	5.43	

Getting Started

These items are short-term actions that can be undertaken with existing funding, or relatively little expenditure, and will help lay the groundwork for the longer-term actions that follow.

- Incorporate development standards and design guidelines in zoning to guide the character of infill development in existing neighborhoods.
- Coordinate all enforcement and blight eradication programs from the Mayor’s office to provide high-priority attention.
- Create a Housing Working Group with diverse stakeholders to advise on City housing policy and strategy.
- Seek additional federal funding for blight eradication and redevelopment activities.
- Create performance standards and strict monitoring of recipients of City housing and redevelopment funds.
- Create a comprehensive property database for use by all City departments.
- Collect and analyze housing data to monitor the market and needs for all types of housing.
- Notify property owners of their obligation to maintain sidewalks.

Narrative

Below is a more detailed narrative of the various goals, strategies and actions highlighted in the “Summary” chart.

1. NEIGHBORHOODS

GOAL 1

Enhanced character and livability for neighborhoods, with investments to improve quality of life

1.A Tailor policies and programs to maintain and enhance the physical, economic, social and cultural character and diversity of existing residential neighborhoods.

The diversity of New Orleans neighborhoods must be respected when new development is proposed for infill, for under utilized sites on the edges of neighborhoods, or for public facilities and investments. This means that new development and redevelopment should be designed and tailored to the physical environment, preserving the general scale and character of existing residential areas. This does not mean that infill development must copy older architectural styles but that it must fit into the existing neighborhood and the way it addresses the street and its neighbors.

Neighborhood character is not simply a function of the privately-owned buildings and lots along streets. The “public realm”—sidewalks, streets, and public spaces—contribute to the function, safety, and attractiveness of neighborhoods. While many New Orleans neighborhoods are outfitted with sidewalks, pedestrian-scale lighting and street trees, others have no sidewalks and no trees. Property owners are technically responsible for sidewalk installation and upkeep, which can account for the variable conditions to be found across the city. In practice, the City’s streetscape projects on major streets, some of which are underway as this plan is being written, include sidewalks, trees, and pedestrian amenities paid for through funds available to the Department of Public Works or other entities such as the Downtown Development District. Another variable on residential streets is the drainage system. Many residential streets have curbs and hard drainage infrastructure, while others have drainage swales or small ditches. As discussed in later chapters, natural drainage can be beneficial—but it also can be made attractive as well as functional. The public realm also includes publicly-owned parking areas, plazas and parks. The design and maintenance of these areas is crucial to an attractive public realm. Design principles for neighborhood commercial areas can be found later in this chapter.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Use the zoning ordinance to guide the scale and character of new infill development to fit in with the character of established residential areas and to ensure appropriate transitions from those areas to redevelopment of under utilized sites on neighborhood edges.*

Who: CPC, City Council

When: First five years

Resources: CZO rewrite project

Zoning should set parameters on infill development so that desired neighborhood character—whether existing or identified in a neighborhood-based plan—remains consistent with neighborhood expectations. Where a variety of scales, building types, and housing unit types may coexist within a few blocks or even on the same block, base zoning that recognizes this heterogeneity will make it easier for property owners to improve and, within limits, expand their property as a matter of right. The current zoning code makes many buildings unnecessarily nonconforming, sometimes creating a burden on property owners. However,

the diversity of housing types in older neighborhoods means that it is unlikely that all non-conformities can be eliminated, because that would require such a permissive zoning district that the majority of property owners would be unlikely to accept it.

2. *Use the zoning to ensure appropriate transitions between established residential areas and redevelopment of under utilized sites.*

Who: CPC; City Council

When: First five years

Resources: CZO rewrite

Also, the zoning ordinance under preparation in association with this Master Plan will include development standards to guide development. Additional design principles and guidelines can be developed through specific area or neighborhood plans and as part of site master plan design guidelines for redevelopment of larger sites. Non-conformity based on use can be regulated by requiring new permission for the non-conforming use when there is a change of tenant or owner.

3. *Create design guidelines to assist existing and new property owners in improving or expanding buildings, or in constructing infill development.*

Who: CPC through area plans; CPC and City Council through zoning

When: First five years (CZO); short to medium (area plans)

Resources: CZO rewrite project; area plans

Design guidelines for neighborhoods or for particular neighborhood character types can promote compatible design. Although this is a particularly important issue for neighborhoods in historic districts and is discussed in Chapter 6 – Historic Preservation, it is also worthwhile for other neighborhoods. The need for design guidance in building elevated structures is especially important to creating attractive neighborhoods as property owners rebuild. Experience in other communities has shown that even voluntary guidelines, when well-presented and communicated to property owners, architects, and developers, can result in more compatible design. These guidelines should not prescribe architectural styles but rather focus on compatibility in terms of bulk, height, orientation on the lot and similar issues.

The Planning Commission could provide seed funding through a competitive grant process and a framework for neighborhood associations and similar groups to work on guidelines of this type, assisted by universities and professional organizations. This could be part of an area plan, or a stand-alone project, in which case the Commission could establish procedures for incorporating the design guidelines into regulations, if desired. A number of cities set aside some CDBG funds or grant funds every year for small grants to neighborhood groups for planning or localized projects.

4. *Explore adoption of an incentive zoning program to encourage provision of neighborhood benefits from large developments.*

Who: CPC

When: First five years

Resources: CZO rewrite project

Incentive zoning is a method for communities to leverage private investment for neighborhood benefits. It allows a developer to build a somewhat larger, higher-density project than would be permitted under existing zoning. This encourages compact development as part of an overall smart growth strategy. In exchange, the developer provides something that is in the neighborhood's interest that would not otherwise be required (e.g., open space, streetscape improvements, special building features, like public plazas, public art, affordable housing, etc.). Incentive zoning is typically associated with more urban corridors, transit access areas, and development nodes and is most successful in areas with strong markets. One of the first

incentive zoning programs was established in New York City to gain public plazas and other public spaces in large development projects. Chicago's list of public benefits linked to additional floor area includes parks and public plazas, wide sidewalks, arcades, water features, green roofs, off-site contributions to open space, streetscape, transit station improvements, concealed parking—among others. In downtown Minneapolis, the amenity list also includes benefits such as public art, energy efficiency, through-block connections, and street-level retail. The City Planning Commission's zoning subcommittee should evaluate the potential for implementing incentive zoning in the stronger market areas of the city to attract benefits valuable to New Orleans.

5. *Continue to upgrade the streetscape of major streets with public funding and in coordination with commercial corridor revitalization plans and Main Street programs.*

Who: DPW with planning review from CPC

When: First five years

Resources: Bond funding; CDBG; federal transportation funds

The \$13 M Canal Street streetscape project completed since Hurricane Katrina will soon be joined by an Oak Street streetscape project and, in 2010, commencement on 22 streetscape projects with \$20 M in CDBG funds in Gentilly, New Orleans East, the Lower 9th, Uptown, and Lakeview. Streetscape improvements and maintenance should be a continuing program.

6. *Create a program to notify property owners about their sidewalk maintenance responsibilities and offer a betterment program to promote sidewalk repair and maintenance in neighborhoods.*

Who: DPW

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time; fines

Public funding for neighborhood streets is currently focused on urgently-needed roadway rebuilding and repair. Many property owners do not know that they are responsible for the sidewalks in front of their property. Annual notification in the property tax bill or other City communication should also include information on required standards for sidewalks that contractors must meet if property owners wish to contract for repairs. Liens or payments on the property tax bill could be used as enforcement mechanism.

7. *Create sidewalk notification, enforcement and betterment programs. Another approach is to offer a betterment program.*

Who: DPW; possible small consultant contract

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time; general fund; CDBG

In a betterment program, property owners are assessed all or partial costs for the installation of new sidewalks or repair of existing sidewalks. The work is done by the City and the betterment fee is typically calculated using a formula that takes into account the length of frontage and the size of the lot, and assessed through the property tax bill. The program could be voluntary—in which case a majority of property owners along a street would agree to pay the fee and petition the City to get on the list. The program could also be initiated by the City when sidewalk installation or upgrades are needed to meet code requirements or as part of a broader project. The fees to be paid could vary according to whether the project was resident-initiated (in which case the residents could be asked to pay the entire cost) or city-initiated (in which case the costs could be shared). The legislation creating the City's security and neighborhood improvement districts could also be amended to allow temporary increases in the fees charged to each property owner in order to pay for sidewalks.

8. *Continue to support and promote a diversity of public social and cultural events throughout the city.*

Who: Mayor's office

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time - various departments; neighborhood groups; non-profits

Neighborhood character is cultural as well as physical. Many cultural activities are rooted in specific neighborhoods and support for activities and events can strengthen neighborhood identity, enhancing safety and neighborhood cohesion.

9. *Promote neighborhood associations and neighborhood activities to encourage neighborhood identity, sense of ownership, and advocacy.*

Who: Mayor's Office; City Council; CPC

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

The Citizen Participation Program described in Volume 2, Chapter 15 will give neighborhood groups an incentive to organize and be involved.

1.B Establish systems to enforce quality of life regulations and eliminate nuisance businesses.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. *Create a ticketing system with fines for quality of life offenses such as littering and illegal dumping, junk cars, lack of mowing, noise, and so on.*

Who: Mayor's Office; City Council; Police Department

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time; fines

Many communities have developed ticketing systems with fines for quality of life offenses.¹ Not only do these programs improve neighborhood conditions, there is considerable evidence that they also help cut crime. The funds from the fines can help pay for increased police time. In the long term, after recovery, New Orleans may want to consider the model from Charleston, SC, which has established a "Livability Court" to handle quality of life offenses, so they do not get delayed in the general court system with other offenses.²

1.C Develop a protocol for dealing with businesses that are incompatible with residential uses and neighborhood complaints about "nuisance businesses" while appropriately protecting due process.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Convene meetings between business owners and neighborhood residents to seek resolution of issues.*

Who: CPC (District Planners)

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

Residents and the business owners can be brought together to see if better ways to manage business activities can mitigate or eliminate adverse impacts on residents. Examples would be changes to truck routes or parking and prohibition of truck idling, landscape or other buffers, installation of cut-off lighting that illuminates only business areas, and so on. CPC planners assigned to Planning Districts could help with these meetings. **(See Strategy 1.C below for more information on implementing a system of District Planners.)**

¹ For example, Buffalo, NY found that ticketing for quality of life offenses cut crime, "Quality-of-life policing helps cut crime in Buffalo's Northeast District," *Buffalo News*, July 31, 2008

² www.charlestoncity.info/dept/content.asp?nid=703

2. *Enhance industrial and commercial performance standards (limits on noise, dust, vibration and other impacts) in the zoning code.*

Who: PPP

When: First five years

Resources: CZO rewrite project

Performance standards (limits on impacts such as noise, dust, vibration, and so on) can be enhanced within the zoning code. The city can help find an appropriate site within the city limits and assist in business relocation. State and federal regulators can be brought in to deal with pollution and similar issues under their jurisdiction. The master plan land use map and the associated zoning code can make the use nonconforming so that the use cannot continue after the current enterprise leaves. Occupancy permits and business licenses could be subject to sanctions in the case of proven criminal activity.

3. *Change the code to tie alcoholic beverage outlet licenses to both location and operator/owner to require new approval at a transfer of operation or ownership.*

Who: Mayor's office

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time - various departments; neighborhood groups; non-profits

Neighborhood residents sometimes find that businesses located in residential areas cause problems by attracting or facilitating crime or by other adverse impacts on neighborhood life. A particular focus of concern has been businesses that sell alcohol and permit criminal activity to occur. A change in the code to tie licenses for alcoholic beverage outlets to the location and the owner or operator would make it possible to require new approval of alcoholic beverage licenses when there are new operators or owner

4. *Disseminate information to neighborhood associations on potential legal approaches.*

Who: CPC

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

It is also the case that neighborhood residents can disagree on what constitutes a “nuisance” and on expectations for activities in areas where businesses are located in close proximity to residences. This is particularly the case in disputes revolving around noise and activities related to music clubs, restaurants, and similar businesses. The rights of business owners also need to be respected in these disputes.

When the CPC is able to assign planners to each Planning District, that planner can serve as the point person for these complaints. The planner should become familiar with the law regarding public nuisances of various types and the steps that neighborhood residents may take if they wish to pursue action against a business they regard as a nuisance. The District Planner may first attempt to bring the business owner together with residents and/or the police department to see if a mutually acceptable solution can be reached. New actions are possible under the Louisiana Public Nuisance Law, the New Orleans Noise Control Program and Littering Ordinance, and the Louisiana Alcoholic Beverage Control Law. The burden of proof lies with those who wish legal action to be taken against a business. The Tulane Public Law Center has created a step by step guide to the requirements and actions under the four laws named above.³

1.D Fund and staff a system for proactive planning on the neighborhood and district level.

³ <http://www.law.tulane.edu/assets/0/260/262/8171BA98-8CBE-4BDF-B788-1BFB69A87ACB.pdf>

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Enhance the Comprehensive Planning Division of the CPC with an Area Planning Program, hire district planners, and secure permanent funding for these positions.*

Who: CPC

When: First five years with grant funding; thereafter permanent funding

Resources: General fund; CDBG planning funds; developer fees

The city should provide dedicated staff planners for Planning Districts who could bring other specialized skills, such as urban design or transportation planning. As of 2009, planner positions have been funded for a limited time. Permanent funding will be needed in the future.

The district planners would be responsible for coordinating city activities across departments in each neighborhood and for being the liaison between the city and the neighborhood. They would work with residents, neighborhood associations, business and commercial property-owners, institutions, and other stakeholders in each district. Their responsibilities would include:

- > Liaise with neighborhood groups involved in the proposed Neighborhood Participation Program on district-wide planning issues.
- > Keeping district stakeholders informed about private and public developments, physical improvements, regulatory changes and similar activities that affect the district.
- > Keeping the Planning Commission and other city departments informed about issues and concerns in the district.
- > Coordinating activities of separate city departments in the district.
- > Working with stakeholders on creating Area Plans, either directly or by overseeing and participating in planning processes led by entities other than the Planning Commission.
- > Convening meetings for developers or other project proponents to meet with neighborhood stakeholders.
- > Providing staff analysis and opinions to the Planning Commission on district issues.

1.E Engage neighborhood residents, businesses and other stakeholders in proactive planning connected to the citywide plan and citywide policies.

As part of the recovery process, neighborhood and district recovery plans were created under the auspices of the Neighborhood Rebuilding (Lambert) planning process and the Unified New Orleans Plan process. These plans were focused on recovery and rebuilding, particularly in order to secure funding, and, as noted in the Volume 3 context discussions, were consulted at the beginning of this planning process as a foundation for this plan. However, the planning horizon of the Master Plan is twenty years. Although many recovery projects are still in process and the city faces challenges, many observers have noted that New Orleans' recovery in terms of re-population and investment has exceeded expectations. The recommendations below provide mechanisms for integrating existing or future neighborhood plans that meet Master Plan criteria into the Master Plan itself through the annual amendment process, and guidelines for creating a range of potential area plans for Planning Districts, neighborhoods, and smaller areas, such as neighborhood commercial areas. These recommendations provide planning options with differing levels of support and funding from CPC staff, as well as differing levels of detail appropriate to a variety of planning needs—a planning toolbox available to the CPC and to neighborhood stakeholders over the long term. Not all would be suitable for adoption into the city's official master plan.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Create Area Plans for planning districts and neighborhoods.*

Who: CPC; neighborhood associations; District Councils (when formed)

When: First five years

Resources: CPC funded plans - general fund; CDBG; state and federal grants. Other funding for associations etc. foundations, donations, university studios (in-kind), volunteers.

In many cities, individual plans are prepared for planning districts or neighborhoods according to a framework developed by the city's planning department and then they are adopted by the planning commission and the City Council as official parts of the city's master plan. With the present document, New Orleans will have a Master Plan that covers the entire city and provides policy direction for revitalization, preservation, development and growth. The Planning Commission can adopt criteria and procedures for submission and approval of area plans as part of the Master Plan. The UNOP district plans and existing or in-process neighborhood plans would be suitable for this process.

The City Planning Commission's Administrative Rules, Policies and Procedures contains a section on "Local Renaissance District Policy" that sets forth procedures and criteria for creation and adoption of a Renaissance District Plan. (Before Hurricane Katrina, two such plans were completed, one for the Lower Garden District and one for New Orleans East.) These procedures are similar to the framework recommended below for Area Plans that could be suitable for adoption as part of the Master Plan. Amendment of this policy to conform to the framework suggested below would provide the CPC with sufficient oversight of these plans, while allowing for flexibility in funding and execution of the plans. The District Councils proposed later in this plan as the vehicles for the Neighborhood Participation Program would need to be included in the process of initiating and approving these plans.

The City Planning Commission recognizes a need for increased neighborhood and civic engagement. There are multiple tools that can be deployed to help facilitate civic engagement. First, the district planners as outlined in this chapter and the chapter on the Neighborhood Participation Program would work with neighborhoods and business interests in the various districts, helping them to look forward, define goals of the neighborhood and create area plans. Area plans further refine the objectives and recommended actions for a particular neighborhood or district. Finally, the Neighborhood Participation Program as passed by the 2008 Charter Amendment would provide a structure method for local interests to be informed about proposed projects. Volume 2, Chapter 15 explains the basic guidelines of a Neighborhood Participation Program in more detail.

The framework for creating and adopting Area Plans can be based on the steps below.

- > **Initiation of the area plan.** A neighborhood association or other organized group of residents and stakeholders can request that Commission staff prepare a plan, provide funding to hire an outside consultant to prepare the plan, hire their own consultant (or seek assistance from universities or similar sources), or even organize themselves to prepare the plan themselves. The CPC can prioritize which areas are most in need of new plans or which existing plan are most suitable for adoption as part of the Master Plan. The Planning Commission, the City Council or the Mayor can also request that a plan be prepared. In order for a plan to be adopted, the Planning Commission staff will need to approve the boundaries of the planning area, and the basic structure of the plan.
- > **Public participation.** The planning process will need to be overseen by a stakeholder committee representing all affected interests and include at least three public workshops or meetings. The first public meeting must be towards the beginning of the planning process, to elicit ideas for the future of the neighborhood or district. The second public meeting must present interim ideas for the plan for feedback. The third public meeting must occur when a full draft of the plan is available, so that the public can review it and provide comments.
- > **Elements of the plan.** The area plan must conform to the goals and policies of the City's adopted Master Plan. At a minimum, the area plan must include sections on existing

conditions, including zoning and other regulations; overall goals; housing; public realm (parks and public spaces, including sidewalks); mixed-use or nonresidential areas, including market support; urban design; circulation, parking and transportation. Other relevant sections can be added at the discretion of the planning group. An implementation plan must be required that identifies actions, responsible parties, proposed time line and potential funding sources.

- > **Adoption.** In order for the plan to be adopted as part of the City's Master Plan, the plan must be reviewed by Commission staff (if they did not prepare it directly) for conformity with area plan guidelines and for conformity with the overall goals and policies of the citywide Master Plan. If Commission staff did not prepare the plan, they might ask for changes to make the area plan consistent with the City's Master Plan and capital plan. Then the area plan will be submitted to the City Planning Commission for a public hearing and adoption. After adoption by the Planning Commission, a similar submission with a public hearing should be made to the City Council for adoption as an official part of the Master Plan, during the annual master plan amendment process.

RICHMOND'S NEIGHBORHOODS IN BLOOM (NIB) PROGRAM

After a long history of scattering funds across a large number of high-poverty neighborhoods and seeing very few positive results, the City of Richmond, VA, decided in 1999 to target its resources to a few carefully chosen neighborhoods. The resources included the bulk of the City's federal entitlement funds (CDBG and HOME) as well as significant amounts of capital-improvement dollars and other resources (*e.g.*, aggressive code enforcement and accelerated vacant and abandoned property disposition). This initiative—Neighborhoods in Bloom—focused significant resources on seven neighborhoods with the goal of achieving a critical mass of public investment needed to stimulate self-sustaining, private-market activity there. LISC (Local Initiatives Support Corporation), through local neighborhood development corporations, aligned its grants and loans with those of the city. The program focused on improving existing owner-occupied units, rehabilitating blighted properties, and constructing new housing to create mixed-income homeownership opportunities.

After five years, a detailed study, funded by the Federal Reserve Bank and using both quantitative and qualitative methods, showed that the targeted strategy worked. House prices in the NiB communities grew 10 percent faster over the project period than the city average. The investments also had a spillover effect on nearby areas, which similarly benefited from higher-than-average house price appreciation. The study also quantified the benefits of the strategy and found that the increase in property taxes in these neighborhoods, if projected over a 20-year period, would cover the city's \$15 million investment.

www.scribd.com/doc/1401230/US-Federal-Reserve-nib-research

2. *Engage neighborhood groups and students to perform "Neighborhood Audits" of the public realm to aid in targeting resources for public improvements.*

Who: CPC (set framework, some coordination); neighborhood alliances and other non-profits; neighborhood groups; District Council when formed

When: First five years

Resources: Volunteers; limited funding needed from donations, foundations

Neighborhood Audits provide information and promote priority-setting about how to target resources for public improvements. The Planning Commission can work with CityWorks, Neighborhoods Partnership Network, UNO students, neighborhood associations or other groups to develop a consistent format for neighborhood based inventories of the condition of sidewalks, streets, lighting, street trees, drains, blighted properties, and so on. Regularly scheduled annual Neighborhood Audit Walks, in which neighbors walk a particular route and note issues of concern, would be a way to make this a consistent process. With today's handheld computers, it can also be easy to enter information into a spreadsheet, obviating the need to enter data

later. Neighbors could then prioritize the issues that need attention. Although some of this is going on in an informal way throughout the city, there is no formal mechanism to provide this information to the city and to integrate it into the planning process for public improvements. The City must also be willing to respond to neighborhood groups about progress being made on neighborhood priorities, including explanations of any barriers to implementation.

3. *Provide a structured Neighborhood Participation Program.*
Who: CPC, City Council (ordinance)
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time (See Volume 2, Chapter 15 for details)

The 2008 master plan charter amendment mandates a neighborhood public participation process related to land use and development decisions. Volume 2, Chapter 15 of this plan discusses this requirement and guidelines for a Neighborhood Participation Program structure in more detail.

4. *Hold public hearings on development projects and planning issues in the evening, when needed, to enhance the opportunity for public participation.*
Who: CPC
When: First five years
Resources: Staff and Commissioner time

Many citizens cannot attend public hearings held during the working day because they cannot leave their jobs during that time. It is common practice in larger cities to schedule public hearings when there is strong public interest in projects.

GOAL 2

Redevelopment of blighted and vacant properties in all neighborhoods, including accelerated redevelopment of flooded neighborhoods

As described in Volume 3, Chapter 5, in 2008 the City began refocusing and reorganizing housing code enforcement and other blight eradication strategies and allocated significant D-CDBG funds to eliminating blight. While the City is beginning to take steps to enhance success in attacking blight and increasing redevelopment, the multiple agencies, programs, and approaches to blight eradication and redevelopment remain inadequately funded and coordinated. The scale and critical role of blight eradication and redevelopment in the future success of New Orleans require an integrated approach and more staff and funding.

2.A Accelerate redevelopment of blighted and vacant sites through a comprehensive blight elimination program under unified management that coordinates the efforts of city agencies.

While New Orleans' blight challenge is unique in scale because of the damage from flooding, many cities have been facing the problem of vacancy and blight. Successful best practices identified by the National Vacant Properties



Land readjustment is an innovative tool can accelerate redevelopment of significantly blighted areas.

Campaign combine comprehensive code enforcement tools and strategies with neighborhood rebuilding through rehabilitation and redevelopment.⁴ These practices include:

- Access to a sufficient variety of strategies and regulatory, civil and criminal tools to promote and enforce compliance.
- Identification of the right remedy for the circumstances of each property and each neighborhood. A one-size-fits-all approach will not be successful.
- Unified or closely coordinated management of code enforcement activities.

The emphasis during the next decade (2010–2020) should be to remove blight and stabilize neighborhoods, which will serve as the foundation for yet more future growth and development in the second decade (2021–2030). All efforts and resources should be carefully coordinated to enhance current code enforcement, blight removal, and redevelopment efforts.

The simplest way to remove blight is for government to purchase properties, wipe out any liens, and then sell or donate the properties for redevelopment by new owners. The scale of the problem in New Orleans makes that a prohibitively expensive solution. A combination of strategies, with a strong emphasis on code enforcement, must be pursued. In New Orleans's special conditions, promoting voluntary compliance by homeowners with few resources also needs attention.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Coordinate and organize the blight eradication and redevelopment programs and activities of the several agencies involved in the Mayor's office to give this initiative the highest priority.*

*Who: Mayor's Office
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time; general fund*

Centralize coordination of blight elimination and redevelopment activities in the Mayor's office, to clarify roles, ensure that the CPC, NORA, the code enforcement agencies, and HDLC all work together in a coordinated way, and make regular public reports on progress.

2. *Improve code enforcement activities.*

*Who: Safety and Permits
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time; general fund*

- > Use an open and public process to establish clear criteria for targeting blight-removal and code enforcement activities.
- > Establish performance standards to monitor progress at the city and neighborhood levels.
- > Create an ordinance requiring that properties that have been vacant for six months or more register with the city or face a fine.
- > Establish annual inspections for rental properties and for houses at time of sale, to be funded by landlords and sellers through fees.
- > Review how the existing code enforcement fine schedule performs to determine if higher fines are merited for failure to comply with code standards, including building codes.

3. *Aid NORA and related agencies where possible in increasing capacity to redevelop blighted and vacant properties.*

*Who: Mayor and City Council; NORA funding applications
When: First five years
Resources: State and federal funding including stimulus funding; explore limited-period millage or bond for enforcement, land bank and redevelopment programs*

⁴ www.vacantproperties.org

Substantially increase staff and funding for NORA and other relevant agencies. Although additional, non-recurring funding has been allocated to the enforcement agencies and NORA, resources for blight remediation remain very constrained given the extent of the challenge. Even with streamlined processes, gaining title to blighted property can be extremely time consuming. Allocate additional funding for expansion of code enforcement sweeps, for occupied as well as vacant buildings. Fines and other revenues received as the result of code enforcement activities should be used to fund code enforcement. Similarly, NORA and other agencies should receive program revenues to support their activities. Although bond issues for operational expenses are not allowed, it may be possible to structure a bond to provide additional funding for a specified period to support more staff and funds for accelerated code enforcement, blight removal and redevelopment.

4. *Create a comprehensive city property information database that includes information on blighted and vacant properties as well as other data.*

Who: *Information Technology to expand on NORA project to be available to all relevant departments*

When: *First five years*

Resources: *D-CDBG; expand with grant or general fund; CDBG or general fund to sustain*

NORA has funding to create a property database for its work. However, city agencies in general lack a comprehensive property database linked to GIS, which is a basic planning and neighborhood development tool. Information is currently available only on the basis of individual parcels, so staff cannot analyze overall patterns of land use, value, and so on. Comprehensive, GIS-based property information systems should be made available not only for properties of interest to NORA, but for all properties and for all city agencies. Much of this information should eventually be made available to the public in a data warehouse on the City's web site.

5. *Establish annual inspections for rental properties and for houses at time of sale.*

Who: *City Council (ordinance); Safety and Permits; Code Enforcement*

When: *First five years*

Resources: *Fees to be paid by landlords and sellers*

6. *Establish a registry of properties vacant for six months or more.*

Who: *City Council (ordinance); Safety and Permits*

When: *First five years*

Resources: *General fund; fines for non-registration*

7. *Expedite procedures for site control of blighted and vacant properties.*

Who: *Mayor's Office; legislative delegation*

When: *First five years*

Resources: *Staff time*

Streamline the code enforcement lien foreclosure process, waving liens and/or establishing low reserve prices, for code enforcement auctions in order to expedite passage of properties in violation with clear title to new owners.

- > Use by NORA of the streamlined quiet title procedure for tax adjudicated properties.
- > Amendment of Louisiana law to allow immediate foreclosure on liens after the City records them; to make tax sale and adjudication a judicial process; to allow the City to place redevelopment covenants on properties sold at tax sales.⁵

8. *Pursue land assembly to create larger, contiguous parcels for neighborhood amenities or efficient*

⁵ Bureau of Governmental Research, *Mending the Urban Fabric – Blight in New Orleans, Part II: Procedures for Successful Redevelopment* (April 2008).

redevelopment, and to facilitate targeted, block-by-block redevelopment.

Who: Mayor's Office; City Council

When: First five years

Resources: General fund; (foregone income for limited period)

Land assembly to create larger developable parcels and clusters of individual scattered lots creates the opportunity for economies of scale in redevelopment and where appropriate, land suitable for parks or other neighborhood amenities, multifamily housing, and commercial uses.

9. *Provide incentives to owners to assemble sites in recovery and revitalization areas with reasonably strong markets.*

Who: City Attorney's Office; NORA

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time; D-CDBG; other federal funding

Small incentives in reasonably strong markets can attract private investment. Incentives could include a tax abatement for a defined period. Major public investments can then be focused in the more difficult and weaker-market areas.

10. *Explore land readjustment as a land assembly and redevelopment option.*

Who: City Attorney's Office; NORA

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time; D-CDBG; other federal funding

The pattern of vacancy and blight in some areas of the city inhibits recovery and revitalization. **(See Volume 3, Chapter 5 for more information on current blight and vacancy conditions.)**

Land readjustment is a strategy in which landowners pool their land and temporarily give control to a government agency, developer, or trust. That entity then takes steps to make redevelopment easier and more efficient, such as redividing the land. Then the land is reassembled and the original property owners get it back in proportion to their original property interests. This land assembly tool can accelerate redevelopment of significantly blighted areas. It is likely to be easiest in commercial areas, but should be explored for residential areas as well. Legislative changes may be needed to make this strategy viable.

11. *Use neighborhood-based organizations, including faith-based organizations, to establish neighborhood land trusts as vehicles for land banking and interim uses while appropriate redevelopment options are identified, and for preserving housing affordability.*

Who: CPC; NORA: neighborhood and nonprofit groups

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time D-CDBG; foundation funding

Neighborhood land trusts are well known as a strategy for creating affordable housing and ensuring its continued affordability, where the land remains the property of the trust which leases it to the purchaser of the house on the land. Neighborhood-based land trusts could also serve an important role in maintaining vacant land that is not quickly redeveloped; establishing interim or permanent neighborhood uses for the land, such as neighborhood orchards and s; and working with the planning department, nonprofit organizations and others to develop plans that meet neighborhood needs for the vacant land. The Ford Foundation is working with the City as of mid-2009 to develop support for a neighborhood land trust initiative to create affordable homeownership.

12. *Coordinate a variety of strategies and tools to accelerate land disposition and redevelopment Continue the Lot Next Door program, including credits for fencing or landscaping adjacent vacant*

properties.

Who: NORA

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time; D-CDBG; other federal funding

The Lot Next Door program, a program administered by NORA which offers vacant properties to abutting property owners at a low price, has attracted some interest, but some abutters are reluctant to pay the price. As an alternative, abutters who fence, landscape and maintain adjacent properties for a period of years could be given credits to eventually gain title to the land.

13. Explore the pros and cons of property tax initiatives or vacant property surcharges to promote redevelopment of vacant properties.

Who: Mayor's Office; City Attorney; Finance Department; City Council; Possible consultant contract

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time; general fund

In order to move long-vacant and blighted properties into the market, New Orleans should explore the potential of using the property tax system as a way to incentivize development. Studies that examine and model the likely effects of these concepts within the New Orleans context should be undertaken.

- > A split-rate (two-rate) property tax structure in revenue neutral, but taxes land at a higher rate than the improvements to land and could motivate owners of vacant properties to make improvements or sell to a private or public entity for redevelopment. It is structured to function as an incentive for infill development and to build and maintain improvements. A number of Pennsylvania jurisdictions have two-rate site value tax systems and Pittsburgh's revitalization since 1980 has been partially attributed to its two-rate system. The benefits of a split-rate system (also called a land valuation tax) also include capture of the value that public investments in infrastructure and facilities bring to nearby land. [Footnote with reference: For more information on land valuation tax systems see Jeffrey P. Cohen and Cletus C. Coughlin, "An Introduction to Two-Rate Taxation of Land and Buildings," Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Review, 87(3), May/June 2005, pp. 359-74 at www.research.stlouisfed.org/publications/review/05/05/CohenCoughlin.pdf, www.urbantools.org and www.lincolnst.edu.
- > Surcharges on vacant or blighted property may promote sales or development. Washington, D.C., doubled the tax rate on unoccupied residential buildings and vacant lots in March 2009, and then replaced this initiative in September 2009 with a more targeted higher tax rate to apply only to blighted properties. There was some evidence that the tax rate had incentivized redevelopment of buildings that had been vacant for many years. However, whether this could be successful under New Orleans conditions would need to be investigated.
- > Limited-period property tax abatements (for five years, for example) could be combined with surcharges or offered independently in designated areas to incentivize redevelopment of blighted properties.

14. Require property liability insurance for all owners.

Who: City Council (ordinance); Safety and Permits (enforcement)

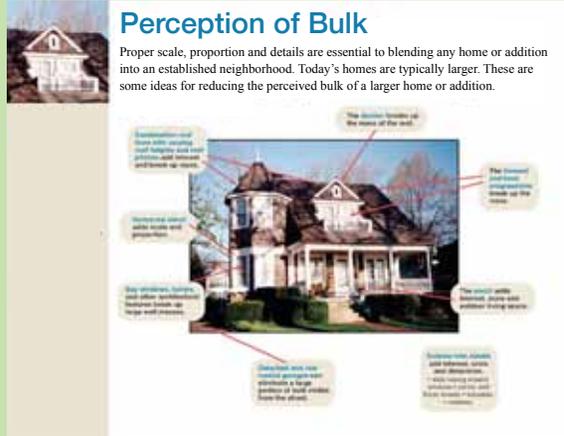
When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

Requiring property liability insurance also encourages owners to make decisions about their property, rather than leaving it vacant for an extended period.

VOLUNTARY DESIGN GUIDELINES: NEIGHBORHOOD FIRST

An example of effective voluntary efforts is the workbook created by Neighborhood First, a citizens' group in the Chicago suburb of Naperville. The group was founded as an educational nonprofit by builders, architects and citizens and is supported by both the City of Naperville and the local chamber



of commerce. The group prepared an award-winning booklet with simple illustrations that takes builders, property owners, designers and citizens through the process of understanding the character of a particular neighborhood and street, with special attention to what constitutes more harmonious and less harmonious relationships among houses, relationships to the street, and so on. The workbook also provides advice on ways to design additions and renovations to provide the desired space without impinging on the character of the street and neighborhood.

Despite the fact that compliance is entirely voluntary, the booklet has had a significant impact. The City hands out the workbook at all pre-demolition meetings with builders and owners. The group influenced over 250 projects in four years and presents workshops for builders and City staff. The City also collaborates with City staff on an annual design award, with city residents voting on the finalists. More information is available at www.neighborhoodfirstinc.org.

15. *Place redevelopment covenants, design and performance standards, and any special use or other appropriate restrictions on vacant or blighted properties sold at tax sales, by NORA or other entities for redevelopment.*

Who: CPC; NORA; City Attorney's Office
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time

Government's purpose in selling adjudicated properties back to the private sector to see those properties redeveloped to make positive contributions to neighborhoods or commercial areas. It is therefore important that buyers of these properties be required to show progress towards redevelopment within a certain period, such as two years, and that good design standards be part of the sales agreement. NORA requires demonstration of financial capacity, includes reversion clauses in its sales agreements, and is beginning to attach design guidelines to the RFPs that it is issuing, initially working with neighborhood groups. Ideally, the development of these design guidelines should be led by planning commission staff in collaboration with neighborhoods. The City and NORA should also require bidders to demonstrate good stewardship of their currently owned properties.

16. *Establish and maintain clear and transparent criteria for identifying vacant or blighted properties with historic or neighborhood fabric value for rehabilitation rather than demolition, as well as criteria for demolition. (or Clarify through public process the criteria for historic property rehabilitation or demolition using the Neighborhood Character Area Study to inform decisions.)*

Who: HDLC; NCDC
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time

The passage in 2008 of Chapter 28 of the city code clarified the criteria for health and safety takings. Similarly, demolition criteria should be established that include assessing the rehabilitation potential of demolition candidates for historic value as a structure or as a contribution to neighborhood fabric and the ensemble of buildings on a block. The list

GROCERY STORE RECRUITMENT: ST. PETERSBURG (FL)

Goal: recruitment of a grocery store, post office or bank to the Midtown neighborhood

Strategies:

- Market analysis demonstrated sufficient demand at target site but perceptions of neighborhood a problem
- City wants to resolve perception issues
- Market data and economic data made available

City Leadership:

- City established Neighborhood Redevelopment Area
- Direct recruitment by city mayor
- Financial incentives:

- > New Market Tax Credits
- > Federal Home Loan Bank EDGE Grant
- > CDBG funds/land write-down
- > Office of Neighborhood Service grant

Project Results:

- \$9.2 million project
- 47,000 sf retail center
- 38,000 sf grocery
- City Business Assistance Center—technical assistance for small retail tenants
- Funds for build-out of small tenant spaces

of demolition candidates are now listed on the city web site for review. To encourage the retention of as much of New Orleans’ architectural heritage as feasible, the City should identify those properties with special historic character that should be renovated rather than demolished. The Neighborhood Character Studies prepared for the Master Plan can inform this process. Also, the HDLC has FEMA data that can help in making those determinations, and the preservation neighborhood and neighborhood associations should also be included in the development of criteria. Salvage and deconstruction opportunities should be identified for those properties that will be demolished. Once the criteria are agreed upon, there should be fewer disputes about demolition decisions. A separate program should be developed to fund restoration efforts on buildings deemed suitable for rehabilitation and, where appropriate, to relocate historic structures to selected areas to recreate the pattern of housing development in the neighborhoods. Funds have been allocated to NORA for historic building rehabilitation. **(See Volume 2, Chapter 6 – Historic Preservation for more information).**

17. Use neighborhood audits (see above) to prioritize problem properties for code enforcement or demolition.

Who: CPC (coordination); neighborhood groups; appropriate city agencies

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time; neighborhood volunteers

Partner and collaborate with other groups to accelerate blight eradication and redevelopment. Establish a formal process for neighborhood associations to prioritize code enforcement and/or demolition and submit them to the city and to perform neighborhood audits of needed public improvements and problem properties. Blighted properties and conditions have the most impact on neighbors and neighborhoods, who know first-hand if criminal activity or inappropriate behavior is occurring in or around derelict properties. There should be an easy and transparent formal process for neighborhoods to prioritize what blighted properties should be targeted for code enforcement and/or demolition. Some neighborhood groups already do this but a standardized process is process for submitting priorities and receiving information on where the neighborhood list stands in terms of citywide priorities.

The Neighborhood Audit recommendation in the Neighborhoods section of this chapter (**see Strategy 1.D, above**) would be an appropriate vehicle for this task. The CPC district planner could work with a representative of the code enforcement department to create a form that includes check off criteria, a photograph, and any other information that the City needs in order to assign enforcement priority. After neighborhoods submit their lists, there should be a meeting with the CPC district planner and a representative of code enforcement to discuss the likely schedule for action.

DESIGN PRINCIPLES FOR NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

Mixed-use or commercial blocks:

- Building entrances should be oriented to the street.
- Blocks with commercial uses should have a consistent street edge.
- Commercial uses in general should be built to the sidewalk edge or with small setbacks of 5 to 15 feet for cafés, benches or small open spaces. Larger setbacks may be suitable to create plaza-like spaces that accommodate street furniture, street trees or wider sidewalks.
- Street-level façades should include active uses, such as residential entrances; shops, restaurants, and cafés; services for the public or for commercial offices, such as fitness centers or day care centers; neighborhood spaces, such as exhibition or meeting space; art exhibition space/display windows; commercial lobbies and front doors.
- Where there are residential uses over retail, separate street-level lobbies for residential entrances should be created.
- Office uses should be discouraged from occupying extensive ground-floor frontage.
- Ground floor nonresidential uses should have clear windows



to provide transparency (at least 50 percent) and provide articulation and details to provide interest at the human scale.

- Corners should be emphasized with buildings, ideally with taller elements such as towers, turrets and bays, or with open spaces that include public art, fountains, or other attractions. Parking lots, loading areas, or service areas should not be located at corners.
- Variations in height and architectural elements such as parapets, cornices and other details should be used to create interesting and varied roof lines and to clearly express the tops of buildings.
- Drive-through facilities should be discouraged. If necessary, they should be permitted only at the rear of the building.
- Awnings and canopies should be encouraged to provide shelter and enliven ground floor façades.
- Driveway turnaround and vehicle drop-off facilities should be avoided because they create obstacles and safety

issues to continuous pedestrian ways.

- Loading and other service areas should ideally be inside the building and screened from adjacent residential areas.
- Blank walls should be avoided along all streets and pedestrian walkways.
- Parking:
 - > Shared parking should be encouraged instead of on-site parking minimums for each lot; ideally, parking should be managed for the entire commercial district.
 - > Locate surface parking preferably to the rear and secondarily to the side of buildings.
 - > Parking lots along the street should be small and few in number and visually and functionally separated from the sidewalk by walls, fencing and/or landscaping.
 - > Parking lots should include trees that, at maturity, will shade 50 percent of the lot.
- Streetscape:
 - > Sidewalks should be wide enough to allow at least two people to walk together.
 - > Pedestrian lighting should use low-intensity, pedestrian-scale light standards, and distribute light evenly, so that there are no areas of intense shadows.
 - > Way finding signage should be created as a system, with simple, legible design.
- Public spaces:
 - > Public spaces should be surrounded with uses that create an active environment throughout the day and evening and increase safety for park and plaza users. Examples include shops, cafes and other public uses that enliven the street.
 - > Public spaces should be located to provide multiple points of entry and be designed to allow passers-by to see into the space.
 - > Public spaces should provide many seating opportunities as well as other amenities such as plantings, public art, fountains, lighting, trash receptacles, and other elements to welcome and encourage use.
 - > Activities should be programmed for public spaces.



GOAL 3

Access to retail and services from all neighborhoods

3.A Revitalize existing neighborhood commercial districts and create new compact, mixed-use neighborhood centers on under utilized commercial and industrial land.
RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Fast-track the creation of a one-stop shop and comprehensive resource guide to opening and operating a business in New Orleans.*

Who: Neighborhood Development Department; Economic Development; PPP

When: First five years

Resources: D-CDBG funds; PPP operational funds

While work is reportedly proceeding on this process, it should be fast-tracked and put into operation as soon as possible.

2. *Facilitate Rapid Reconnaissance Plans to be implemented by volunteers in the short term for neighborhood commercial districts that have received special designations and more developed Area Plans in the medium term.*

Who: CPC (templet and coordination); business and neighborhood volunteers

When: First five years

Resources: CPC staff time; volunteers

Simple Rapid Reconnaissance Plans should be undertaken for neighborhood commercial districts that have received special designations, such as Cultural Products Districts. **(See Volume 3, Chapter 5 for more information on Cultural Products Districts.)** With Planning Commission staff oversight, these Reconnaissance Plans should be based on a common, simple template that can be used by business and neighborhood volunteers and organizations (or students or others from whom they can obtain free or low-cost assistance) to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (“SWOT” process) and prioritize the needs in their districts. The Planning Commission should then coordinate dissemination of the results of these Reconnaissance Plans to city departments (for use in developing work plans), economic development entities, cultural entities, and other groups to help attract attention to the opportunities in these districts.

More sophisticated Area Plans, either stand alone or within larger neighborhood or district plans, can also be prepared for commercial districts. Central to these plans should be a market analysis that includes an evaluation of how the district fits into the broader network of commercial districts within the city. The plans should include robust neighborhood participation events and coordination with Main Street programs—which provide resources for the comprehensive redevelopment of historic, neighborhood-scale commercial areas—neighborhood associations, Stay Local (a New Orleans-based organization that promotes locally-owned businesses) and other appropriate groups. The plans should include analysis of markets; transportation, circulation and parking; urban design; development opportunities; management issues; and impacts on and transitions to adjacent residential areas.

3. *Locate civic uses within or adjacent to neighborhood commercial districts to serve as anchors.*

Who: CAO and CPC through Capital Improvement Program (CIP process)

When: First five years

Resources: CAO, CPC, with other departs; variable funding depending on project

The City can help bring customers to commercial districts by locating civic uses such as libraries, police and fire stations, schools, clinics, and similar facilities in commercial districts. This strategy is already underway in the City's 17 Recovery Target Areas. **(See Volume 3, Chapter 5 for more information and a map of the 17 Target Areas.)** The Mid-City library, opened after Hurricane Katrina in previously used commercial space in a retail-office facility on Carrollton Avenue, is well situated along a major street car line and within a neighborhood commercial district. The Norman Mayer library will be rebuilt near the new neighborhood center proposed at Gentilly and Elysian Fields. Other efforts underway include renovation of the Sanchez Center in conjunction with a new neighborhood center in the Lower Ninth Ward, the Keller Neighborhood Center at Magnolia and Felicity located near the Oretha Castle Haley recovery zone, and NORA's future office building on O.C. Haley Blvd. New or renovated public facilities should be pedestrian-friendly and compatible with surrounding development, for example, locating parking to the side or rear of the building and providing windows and articulation on the street façade.

The disposition of publicly-owned properties, including schools, that are located in or near commercial districts, should be preceded by an evaluation of potential uses and urban design strategies that can contribute to strengthening the commercial district. The school district should work with the CPC and the neighborhood to plan for preferred outcomes. If disposition and private-sector development of the property is desired, the school district should prepare an RFP that provides criteria for the desired range of uses and the urban design strategy preferred. Transfer to other public entities should also require a commitment to suitable urban design strategies.

4. *Focus cultural uses, events, and development opportunities to strengthen neighborhood commercial districts, where feasible.*

Who: CPC and Neighborhood Development

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

Artists are known for their propensity to create neighborhood clusters of activity. In New Orleans, many traditional arts and cultural expressions are historically rooted in neighborhoods. Cultural businesses and events bring vitality to neighborhood commercial areas and can effectively anchor these districts. Galleries, music venues, artists's studios and workshops, and similar businesses can help attract customers from beyond the immediate neighborhood, helping to support other small businesses, as do events such as monthly gallery walks, festivals, and so on. Promotion of New Orleans' nineteen Cultural Products Districts can stimulate development of cultural businesses and activities in neighborhood commercial corridors. **(See Volume 3, Chapter 5 for more information on Cultural Products Districts.)** Local governments who designate the Cultural Products Districts are required to report on the impact to their neighborhood annually.

5. *Promote the development of business or merchants' associations to serve as the voice of business owners in specific commercial districts.*

Who: Main Streets' Program; Cultural Products District programs; Neighborhood Development; Economic Development; PPP; neighborhood associations and alliances

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time; volunteers

A business or merchants' association organizes business owners to identify and prioritize the issues of most concern to them and serves as the voice and advocate for business interests in a neighborhood district. The existence of such organizations is also beneficial both for the city and neighborhood residents during neighborhood and commercial district planning processes.

6. *Create additional opportunities for context-sensitive commercial development in buildings historically used for commercial purposes.*

Who: CPC, City Council (appropriate zoning); CPC - Area Plans; incentives such as TIF program

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time, TIF

Develop and implement an incentive program to rehabilitate or replace existing commercial buildings provided that they contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood. Work with the neighborhood to identify restrictions and incentives to promote specific compatible commercial activity.

7. *Develop a façade improvement program for neighborhood commercial areas.*

Who: Neighborhood Development; PPP; Main Streets programs

When: First five years

Resources: CDBG; Main Street commercial partners

Funds were allocated in the 2009 OFICD budget for façade improvement programs. Successful models for this kind of program typically involve provision of free design assistance and matching funds for construction of the improvement, or a very low or no interest revolving loan fund. The City can contract with architects or with design schools to provide a pool of designers to be assigned to façade projects, or alternatively, from which the property owner can choose.

8. *Develop design principles and standards for all districts that permit a mix of uses and neighborhood commercial districts to be included in the zoning ordinance for public and private development, and more detailed guidelines for the public realm (streets, streetscape, public spaces, etc.) through area plans.*

Who: CPC

When: First five years

Resources: CDBG; Main Street commercial partners

Design principles for neighborhood commercial districts are based on the human-scaled, fine-grained physical environment found in successful traditional commercial districts in New Orleans. These principles have also proven to be successful around the country in redevelopment of suburban-style commercial strips and shopping centers, where people are looking for pedestrian-friendly environments in their shopping experience, even if they initially arrive by car.

3.B Launch a supermarket/grocery store recruitment program.

Several New Orleans neighborhoods are under served by fresh food outlets, grocery stores and supermarkets. **(See Volume 3, Chapter 5 for more information.)** A program to recruit supermarkets in key locations will have the added benefit of attracting other neighborhood-serving retail and services. NORA's commercial revitalization program would be an excellent vehicle for this program.

The Institute for a Competitive Inner City, led by Michael Porter of Harvard Business School, has found in several studies that lower-income neighborhoods are very under served by all kinds of retail. Households of modest means have significant purchasing power in the aggregate. Cities like Columbus (OH), San Diego, Denver, and Oakland have increased grocery and other retail offerings in urban neighborhoods by active recruitment.⁶

⁶ James Miara, "Retail in Inner Cities," *Urban Land* (January 2007), pp.98-105; see also www.icic.org.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Commission a market analysis for supermarkets with a plan that illustrates the feasibility of potential sites.*

Who: Neighborhood Development with CPC; NORA

When: First five years

Resources: \$35 - 40,000; General Fund; CDBG; Economic Development Administration or similar grant

A market analysis should be prepared for use in soliciting development of grocery stores.

2. *Identify incentives to attract supermarkets to under served areas of the city.*

Who: Neighborhood Development with CPC; NORA

When: First five years

Resources: General fund; CDBG; Economic Development Administration or similar grant

Incentives could include fast-track approvals, fee waivers, grants and loans, land assembly and land discount, site preparation assistance, and operational incentives through programs such as the Enterprise Zone program.

3. *Implement the Fresh Food Retail Incentives Program.*

Who: Neighborhood Development with CPC; NORA

When: First five years

Resources: General fund; CDBG; Economic Development Administration or similar grant

3.C Include neighborhood commercial development in the activities of the proposed economic development public-private partnership (PPP).

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. *Establish a section that would work to organize neighborhood commercial district businesses and implement a variety of approaches, programming, and marketing designed to revitalize the neighborhood commercial districts.*

Who: PPP

When: First five years

Resources: PPP funding

This initiative could include:

- > Helping to organize merchants' or business associations
- > Re-establishing the City role in the New Orleans Main Street Program, and strengthening the program. **(see Volume 3, Chapter 5 for more information on New Orleans Main Street program.)**
- > Supporting the development of arts and cultural programs, exhibits, and farmers' markets in neighborhood commercial districts.
- > Providing limited public funding to support initiatives to encourage residents to shop at locally owned stores.
- > Support the development and capacity of farmers markets to increase access to fresh, local foods; to build neighborhood; and to support local agriculture and economic development.

2. HOUSING

GOAL 4

Reinvented housing policies to support quality neighborhoods and meet the diverse housing needs of all households

New Orleans needs a multi-faceted approach to restoring existing housing and developing new housing that meets the needs of a diverse population. Population growth, economic development, and housing are inextricably linked and market conditions are dynamic. Close monitoring of how the housing sector is recovering will be required, and housing priorities and policies will need to quickly adapt to these changing conditions.

4.A Create a New Orleans Housing Working Group to guide and coordinate City housing strategy

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Bring together people knowledgeable about housing as a working group charged with advising on housing policy for the city.*

Who: Neighborhood Development Housing Policy office, with a diverse stakeholder group

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

The working group should include representatives of key city agencies; housing providers (for profit and nonprofit); bankers; realtors; local housing economy researchers; tenant and homeowner beneficiaries of housing programs; housing advocates; neighborhood associations (through the District Council system proposed for formal citizen participation). The City's housing policy staff should coordinate the working group. It should meet quarterly to receive a report on the local housing market and housing needs, housing production, and the progress of publicly-funded programs and to discuss and recommend housing policy for the City. The Housing Working Group would be advisory only, with final decision-making power resting with the City.

2. *Collect and analyze housing data to monitor the market and housing needs.*

Who: Housing Policy Office; Greater NO Neighborhood Data Center

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time; foundation funding in first five years; eventual partial funding by the city from CDBG

Monitor all segments of New Orleans' housing market quarterly, including market-rate rental and for-sale units, subsidized units, vouchers, waiting lists, and identification of strong and weak sub markets. Make this information publicly available. As a beginning, the Greater New Orleans Neighborhood Data Center has a grant to provide housing data and analysis starting in late 2009, but the City should have ongoing regular access to good housing, employment and income data in order to understand affordability needs. Although the city itself may not be collecting and creating the data sets itself, it should contribute to the funding, in order to be able to influence the kind of data and analysis produced.

3. *Develop performance measures to monitor housing needs (housing for elderly, disabled, low- and moderate-income workforce, homeless persons, and so on) and the extent to which those needs are met (overall housing costs as percent of income for rental, for-sale, repair and rehabilitation, etc.)*

Who: Housing Policy Office

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

The City should identify and annually update the need for affordable rental and for-sale housing and progress being made towards meeting these needs. This information should include units produced by program, units in process, funds expended, and a schedule for future production. This standardized set of measures should be reported monthly in a cross-department housing meeting to coordinate activities and identify challenges to timely implementation.

4. *Create housing policies that build neighborhood, meet housing needs for all New Orleanians, and attract private investment.*

Who: Housing Working Group

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

Based on the housing market and income data and the analysis of housing needs in the City, as well as the resources available and potentially available, create priorities for investment as market conditions change and as appropriate to specific neighborhoods that work together to benefit residents across income and age groups, serve the city's workforce, and support the local economy.

5. *Establish an annual public meeting on housing policy and priorities and regular communication with neighborhood, business and other groups.*

Who: Housing Working Group

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

On an annual basis, the City and the Housing Working Group should facilitate a public meeting to review progress made (per the performance measures) and next year priorities. The City should establish a process, working with the working group, for shifting financial resources, if needed, to address the gaps in meeting the housing needs of certain households. The City should also develop a detailed information dissemination and feedback program on housing and neighborhood development issues. The District Council structure for citizen participation discussed in **Volume 2, Chapter 15** would be an appropriate vehicle for bringing these issues to neighborhood-based groups, but business, institutions, non-profits and other groups should also be part of a communications plan because of the importance of housing for the workforce and strengthen communication between city departments, neighborhood organizations, and residents.

6. *Communicate local housing needs and priorities to state and federal housing agencies, as well as national non-profits, and work with LHFA to develop selection criteria for tax credit projects.*

Who: Mayor's Office

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

With better information and clear policies in place, the City will be able to advocate effectively to state and federal housing agencies, national non-profits and others to target resources to the type and amount of housing and housing programs needed, the locations where needed, and with the design standards and management appropriate for New Orleans neighborhoods.

4.B Provide resources to restore housing in all affected neighborhoods, with appropriate flood protection measures.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Seek additional federal funding to close gaps between Road Home funding and recovery needs for homeowners.*

Who: Mayor's Office; Neighborhood Development

When: First five years

Resources: D-CDBG; additional federal funds

Homeowners whose insurance and Road Home proceeds were insufficient to rebuild their homes after Hurricane Katrina had to find other resources as best they could to fill this gap, do partial work only, or wait as they pursue more resources. Many homeowners faced additional challenges such as contractor fraud, a high-cost environment, inability to access additional credit or insurance, and title problems that delay or deny funding. Elevation of homes can be particularly costly in relation to the funds available. Some D-CDBG money has been allocated to assist property owners whose insurance and Road Home proceeds and borrowing capacity has not made it possible for them to rebuild. Soft-second loans and the "Welcome Back Home Fund" administered by the New Orleans Finance Authority are expected to be available starting in 2009. Additional funding for rebuilding would benefit the city as a whole by accelerating rehabilitation of damaged properties. FEMA hazard mitigation programs can be a source of funding for some costs, such as elevation of houses. **(See Volume 2, Chapter 12-Resilience.)**

2. *Support restoration of single-family housing and return to commerce of rental housing in 1- to 4-unit buildings, with appropriate flood-protection measures.*

Who: Neighborhood Development; nonprofit housing organizations

When: First five years

Resources: D-CDBG; additional federal funds

Gap funding mentioned above for homeowners will help restore single family housing in areas like New Orleans East, Gentilly and Lakeview that were particularly hard hit by flooding. The City should also monitor the progress of the revised Small Property Owners Road Home program by reviewing on a quarterly basis the status of the applications, loans, and expenditure of funds. The City should work closely with the new administrator of this program to identify ways that the City can assist in accelerating the restoration of as many of these units as possible, for example by providing technical assistance to property owners to expedite the financing and rehabilitation of small rental properties.

3. *Monitor the progress of the Small Property Owners Road Home Program and facilitate technical assistance to property owners.*

Who: Neighborhood Development; nonprofit housing organizations through Housing Resource Center Network

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time; CDBG

Continue to target strategic housing and neighborhood investments of public funds to the 17 Target Areas and 9 Housing Opportunity Zones identified by OFICD during the recovery process. Many of the target areas will require continued and substantial public investment to stabilize the area and to serve as a catalyst for private investment. The City should identify key indicators of stabilization and monitor each target area for these indicators. Examples of key indicators include: home mortgage approval rates, value of home mortgages, number

of building permits, number of businesses, reported crime rates, and so on.⁷ As these target areas improve, the next set of investments should be focused on the neighborhoods immediately surrounding the target areas to reinforce and bolster previous private investments, eventually expanding further over time.

4. *Identify key indicators of neighborhood revitalization, monitor the indicators and hold quarterly cross-agency Neighborhood Coordination Meetings.*
Who: Housing Policy Office (conveners); CPC; NORA; FANO; Neighborhood Development; enforcement agencies, etc.
When: First five years
Resources: staff time

These neighborhood investments should be coordinated across all agencies and departments through regularized ‘Neighborhood Coordinating Meetings’ that include the CPC, NORA, FANO, OFICD (or a successor Neighborhood Development department), the Housing Policy Director, and other departments that target resources to neighborhood recovery efforts. To the extent possible, new infill housing should be encouraged near existing homes and residential properties and not in isolated locations on vacant blocks.

5. *Continue to target strategic housing and neighborhood investments of public funds to the 17 Target Areas and 9 Housing Opportunity Zones Identified by OFICD during the recovery process.*
Who: Housing Policy Office (conveners); CPC; NORA; FANO; Neighborhood Development; enforcement agencies, etc.
When: First five years
Resources: staff time

4.C Aggressively implement and enhance existing funded housing programs.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Expend housing funding that has already been allocated to the City as expeditiously as possible.*
Who: NORA; Neighborhood Development
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time; D-CDBG

Special allocations of disaster-related funds exceed the City’s annual entitlement funding for HOME and CDBG by a multiple of at least four times. These funds should be expended as quickly as possible to get the money into neighborhoods to restore and improve housing, to leverage additional funds in related construction activities and bank loans—and to provide jobs. The City should provide adequate staffing to oversee program implementation, monitor the effectiveness of these programs, and identify remaining program and funding needs in advance of the expenditure of current funding. Programs include owner occupied and rental property repair funds for elderly and disabled persons and home buyer assistance, including closing financing gaps due to insufficient Road Home and insurance proceeds.

2. *Implement a system of performance standards and strict monitoring for developers, contractors and others who receive housing and neighborhood development funds from the City.*
Who: Neighborhood Development
When: First five years
Resources: Staff time

Performance standards, regular progress reports before payment, and site visits to projects should be established and city staff assigned to monitor progress. Reports on performance and

⁷ See George Galster, Chris Hayes and Jennifer Johnson, “Identifying Robust, Parsimonious Neighborhood Indicators”, *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 24:265-280 (2005).

progress should be made at the monthly cross-agency meetings above.

3. *Strengthen the City's home repair program.*

Who: *Neighborhood Development; Housing Resource Center Network*

When: *First five years*

Resources: *Staff time; CDBG; federal HOME funds*

Individual homeowners and small property owners often have no experience with rehab or contractors. The City should enhance its existing programs to provide direct technical assistance to property owners. Additional funding, training of staff, marketing of the program, and certification of licensed contractors are also recommended. A HUD consultant is currently working with the City to develop an internet application process and selection criteria that focuses on the city's identified target areas. This will help expedite the application and review processes.

4. *Establish a One Stop Homeownership Center.*

Who: *Neighborhood Development*

When: *First five years*

Resources: *Staff time; CDBG; general fund*

Many cities have established one-stop centers for all programs available to homeowners and home buyers to serve as a clearinghouse for all homeownership issues. The numerous homeownership programs funded by the City and the State and administered by different agencies create a confusing array of bureaucratic programs to navigate for owners and potential owners. A One-Stop Homeownership Center can expedite access to these programs, accelerating resettlement. Staff can identify the program most appropriate to the owner or home buyer, and refer them to the appropriate representative. This center should also include referrals to programs related to homeownership readiness (such as credit counseling), financial literacy, Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), foreclosure prevention, contractor assistance, etc. As of mid-2009, the Greater New Orleans Foundation and the City are discussing funding of such one-stop center.

5. *Monitor the status of affordable homeownership programs to appropriately target funds.*

Who: *Neighborhood Development; Housing Working Group*

When: *First five years*

Resources: *Staff time; federal HOME funds*

Continue to increase affordable homeownership opportunities for all households below 120 percent of AMI. The City currently has over \$100,000,000 in state and local funding for homeownership programs targeted at a variety of households including families with incomes below 80 percent AMI, households with incomes at 80–120 percent of AMI, first time home buyers, and the elderly/disabled. The City should monitor the status of each of these programs to ensure funding is targeted to households with the greatest need. If the grant/loan per homeowner averages \$40,000, approximately 2,500 homeowners can be served with existing funding. The data and market analysis to be performed for the Housing Working Group will provide information on the segments of the population that can support homeownership on current income but need down payment or closing costs assistance. First-time home buyer training and programs for moderate-income households should be expanded in order to help more households in the city's workforce become homeowners. According to city staff, residents with incomes at 80–120 percent of AMI have the most difficulty finding homes within their price range.

6. *Support the development of supportive and transitional housing for residents who are at risk of homelessness and/or are living in substandard housing.*

Who: *Neighborhood Development; UNITY of New Orleans and member non-profits; NORA*

When: *First five years*

Resources: *Staff time; CDBG; federal HOME funds*

UNITY of Greater New Orleans is coordinating the development of housing opportunities for the most vulnerable populations. Vouchers are a primary source of housing for this population. UNITY has an initiative to develop about 500 units of supportive housing in mixed-income developments. The City should actively encourage and support the delivery of these units where possible.

7. *Pursue additional state and federal supplemental funding to address any identified housing needs in New Orleans after current funding is expended.*

Who: *Neighborhood Development; NORA*

When: *First five years*

Resources: *Potential sources: additional GO Zone tax credits and mortgage revenue bonds; five-year increase in HOME and CDBG funds; project based vouchers for supportive housing*

Should the data and affordability analysis to be provided to the Housing Working Group indicate further need for affordable housing funding, the City should seek additional funding beyond annual entitlement funding. Possible supplementary monetary incentives include additional GO Zone tax credits for a period of five years; an allocation of GO Zone Mortgage Revenue Bonds to promote homeownership and rental housing in the GO Zone; an increase in HOME and CDBG funds for a five year period; project-based Permanent Supportive Housing vouchers for households in need of supportive housing.

8. *Monitor the performance of the Housing Resource Center Network (HRCN) after it is in operation.*

Who: *Neighborhood Development; NORA*

When: *First five years*

Resources: *Staff time*

The Housing Working Group should receive information on the performance of the HRCN and make recommendations for any needed improvements. Clients of the HRCN should be asked to complete evaluation forms about their experience in the center.

4.D Maintain and expand market rate housing choices.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Provide a wide range of market-rate housing choices, with amenities, that reflects the increased diversity of ages, household types and backgrounds in the city, while maintaining the land use guidelines in the Master Plan.*

Who: *CPC; City Council*

When: *First five years*

Resources: *Current CZO Project*

A housing market study prepared for this plan indicates that a large proportion of moves within and to New Orleans within the next decade will be made by people with smaller households that want an urban, multifamily living experience. They seek walkable neighborhoods with amenities nearby and will not be looking for detached single family homes. Identification of mixed-use areas allowing higher-density housing through the land use plan and zoning will make it possible to diversify the city's housing stock. Some mixed-income housing of this type is beginning to enter the market on Tulane Avenue and other developments are in the planning stages.

2. *Preserve the diversity of housing types within New Orleans neighborhoods (singles, doubles, multifamily, etc.).*

Who: CPC; City Council

When: First five years

Resources: Current CZO Project

Maintaining a diversity of housing types throughout the City is a top priority for New Orleanians. In addition to providing resources for rehabilitation and repair, and zoning standards that allow infill development to reflect this diversity, the City should adopt design standards for rehabilitated or new housing that receives public dollars. For example, design standards that might apply to multifamily developments would focus on quality design, neighborhood compatibility, and enhanced security.

4.E Evaluate the full toolbox of housing production strategies for deployment as conditions warrant and as appropriate to particular neighborhoods.

As the Housing Working Group (*see Strategy 4.A, above*) has access to detailed housing market and housing needs data and develops priorities to meet city housing needs, and as neighborhood resettlement and revitalization proceeds, the working group should begin evaluating which housing tools should be used in New Orleans, including:

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Management bonds to ensure appropriate management of multifamily developments.*

Who: CPC; City Council (zoning); Housing Working Group; Housing Policy Office

When: First five years

Resources: Current CZO Project; staff time

The City could establish a requirement for management bonds for owners of multifamily developments, so that there would be resources to correct problems in case of failures to maintain the property well, to take reasonable measures to ensure security and deter crime, and so on.

2. *Transfer of development rights and incentives zoning in suitable locations and market conditions.*

Who: CPC; City Council (zoning); Housing Working Group; Housing Policy Office

When: First five years

Resources: Current CZO Project; staff time

Transfers of development rights provide additional development capacity in a desired location by transferring it from a location where it is not desired to preserve scale or historic character for other reasons. Incentive zoning provides a limited amount of additional density to developers in return for a range of neighborhood benefits. The benefits could include parks, a percentage of permanently affordable units, and other options as discussed earlier. Both of these tools function better in strong market areas.

3. *Develop local affordable housing trust funds.*

Who: CPC; City Council (zoning); Housing Working Group; Housing Policy Office

When: First five years

Resources: Current CZO Project; staff time

A local Affordable Housing Trust Fund can receive on-going revenues from dedicated sources of funds such as real estate recording fees, state or federal government funds, and private and non-profit contributions through grants. The Housing Trust would be governed by an appointed board representative of city agencies, service providers, housing advocates, private industry, neighborhoods and others. It would be appropriate to include members of the Housing Working Group on this board to ensure a linkage between the policy directions established by the Working Group and the priorities for expenditure of funds recommended

GOAL 5

High capacity public sector and neighborhood-based groups, such as neighborhood development corporations, to provide housing responsive to the changing housing needs of current and future residents

5.A Provide training for city housing staff and for Housing Working Group members.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Send staff to national housing conferences; organize staff participation in webinars and similar activities; provide informational materials and training for the Working Group.

Who: Neighborhood Development; Housing Policy Office

When: First five years

Resources: Seek foundation funding in the first five years; budget (CDBG) for training in the medium to long term

Staff training should include collaboration with the CPC for better understanding of neighborhood planning objectives, as well as focus on performance standards and monitoring. Housing Working Group members will need training to understand complex affordable housing funding sources and options. (See Strategy 4.A above for more information on forming a housing working group.)

5.B Foster a network of strong neighborhood-based groups, such as neighborhood development corporations, to provide housing responsive to the changing housing needs of current and future residents.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Facilitate training for non-profits who already produce or could have the capacity to produce housing.

Who: Neighborhood Development

When: First five years

Resources: CDBG; foundations; national neighborhood development programs, such as Local Initiatives Support Corp.

The task of rebuilding New Orleans' neighborhoods is monumental and will require the coordinated efforts of the public, private and non-profit sectors. The non-profit sector (e.g., neighborhood-based organizations and neighborhood development corporations) currently lacks the capacity to expeditiously develop housing and other neighborhood amenities. The City should target a portion of its annual entitlement funds for capacity building activities and approach foundations and neighborhood development intermediaries (e.g., Local Initiatives Support Corporation [LISC], Enterprise, NeighborWorks, etc.) for additional assistance, including training for neighborhood-based organizations. The goals of this training include: creating neighborhood-level capacity to identify, prioritize, and assist with implementation activities with most impact in that neighborhood, for example, developing neighborhood associations where they do not exist; and (2) building the capacity of local nonprofits to increase their housing production efforts. Alternatively, the City could provide funding through an RFP process to non-profits and ask them to seek foundation funding as a match for public funds for capacity training. The Housing Resource Center Network under development as this plan is completed may fulfill the goal of training existing non-profit technical assistance providers, but this would be only one aspect of the program recommended here, which is more focused on strengthening organizations that actually provide housing units.