

**DUSPMIT**

**ASSESSING POST-KATRINA RECOVERY  
IN NEW ORLEANS**

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EQUITABLE REBUILDING**

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# DUSP MIT

## ASSESSING POST-KATRINA RECOVERY IN NEW ORLEANS

It has been more than three years since the levees broke and New Orleans was devastated by the floodwaters of Hurricane Katrina. While signs of progress in recovery and rebuilding abound—neighborhoods have started to revive, rebuild, and grow stronger; neighborhood institutions have returned to do business; and the festivals, food, music, and culture that make the Crescent City so unique continue to thrive—in many critical ways, the process of rebuilding has failed the citizens of New Orleans. To date, the laissez-faire approach to rebuilding has inhibited the pace of recovery and has heightened inequality—much of it racialized—in the city. Across the city and especially in the most devastated areas, the promised ‘cranes in the sky’ are few and far between. Literally and symbolically, these sites of recovery, rebuilding, and renewal reveal the failure of government to provide the most basic services to city residents and to support calls for increased transparency and inclusion. This devastatingly slow rebuilding means that three years after the storm, many aspects of New Orleans’ recovery have not appreciably improved since the immediate aftermath of Katrina.

In the recent aftermath of hurricanes Ike and Gustav, it is crucial now, more than ever, that rebuilding New Orleans remain in the national spotlight. With continuing threats of catastrophic storms, it is imperative that city, state, and federal government develop methods and test strategies for the equitable rebuilding of impacted regions.

It is time to revisit a strategy for rebuilding the city of New Orleans that emphasizes strong neighborhoods, equitable rebuilding, and responsive public and private institutions. Drawing on three years of research and engagement in New Orleans, students and faculty at MIT’s Department of Urban Studies and Planning (DUSP) have taken stock of the current status of rebuilding efforts. From this extensive research and work, we offer several findings and recommendations to guide a rebuilding strategy that emphasizes the city’s strengths and challenges its weaknesses. However, this report is not a comprehensive or systematic assessment of rebuilding efforts, and it does not touch on many critical recovery issues. Instead, it focuses on the view of rebuilding from the ground up—on the progress in rebuilding neighborhoods and the return of residents and the core businesses, facilities and services needed for a healthy community.

New Orleans’ weak municipal government capacity is a major challenge to the recovery process. This was evidenced by the \$168 million budget shortfall the city faced in the fiscal year of 2006 following the storm, and by the reliance on outside philanthropic funding to pay for formulation of the Unified New Orleans Plan. The city’s weak position is due to many factors, including a declining population and tax base, regional suburbanization, fragmented authority and mismanagement within city government and a state government dominated by rural and suburban interests with little incentive to help New Orleans address its fiscal problems. While this paper points out shortfalls in how the city has tackled recovery and rebuilding, we recognize that the city alone cannot overcome these problems. However, significant changes are required in the way the city government (and others) do business. It will require strong civic leadership, pressure and participation from all sectors of the city, financial, political and technical support

from state and federal government and a business and financial community willing to invest in the city.

We hope this information will support local activists in advocating for a better recovery strategy and more effective and responsive government and encourage political and business leaders to assert greater leadership in setting New Orleans on a strong path to equitable rebuilding.

### KEY FINDINGS:

1. Recovery has been largely led by neighborhoods and neighborhood-level institutions and organizations. Heightened competition between neighborhoods for limited resources has exacerbated **fractures across neighborhoods** that have long plagued the city and has frustrated the building of broad public will for comprehensive equitable recovery.
2. City government, private organizations, and non-profits have taken a **laissez-faire approach** to recovery and left most rebuilding decisions to individual residents, businesses and organizations. This approach ignores that viability is not an a priori condition but rather the result of collective actions by government, residents, businesses and civic institutions. Civic leaders in- and outside City Hall have largely abdicated responsibility for making difficult decisions about recovery and, in doing so, have exacerbated inequalities that existed before the storm. This remains the case, despite four major planning efforts and widespread citizen participation and activism.
3. Many recovery efforts, though well intentioned, have resulted in **competition among neighborhoods for scarce resources** and to prove their “viability,” rather than encouraging coalitions and partnerships across neighborhoods. The city itself has not established effective policies and systems to deliver services and resources across neighborhood boundaries on critical recovery needs.
4. Much of the recovery effort has focused on housing. While housing is clearly an immediate need, planning processes seldom addressed the core problem in sustaining most low-income neighborhoods, or in enabling dispersed residents to return—the **absence of living wage, high quality work**. It has also not coordinated the rebuilding of housing with re-establishing critical neighborhood scale goods and services such as schools, health and groceries.
5. The process of recovery has suffered from **poor communication** and responsiveness, especially between City Hall and neighborhoods. While communication is a challenge even for cities not stricken with disaster, City Hall has not responded with action to the unprecedented level of civic and neighborhood engagement. Similarly, while acknowledging the unprecedented scale of the Katrina disaster, interagency and intergovernmental cooperation and communication at all levels of government has been lacking.
6. Neighborhood- and community-level organizations suffer from **limited capacity**. The laissez-faire approach has placed recovery on the shoulders of neighborhoods and citizens, without providing them the means to achieve their goals. Community capacity-building and funding systems found in many other cities are absent from New Orleans.
7. **Strategic and coordinated planning and investment** has been absent, or has too often focused on **large projects** at the expense of smaller, more widespread, and fine-grained

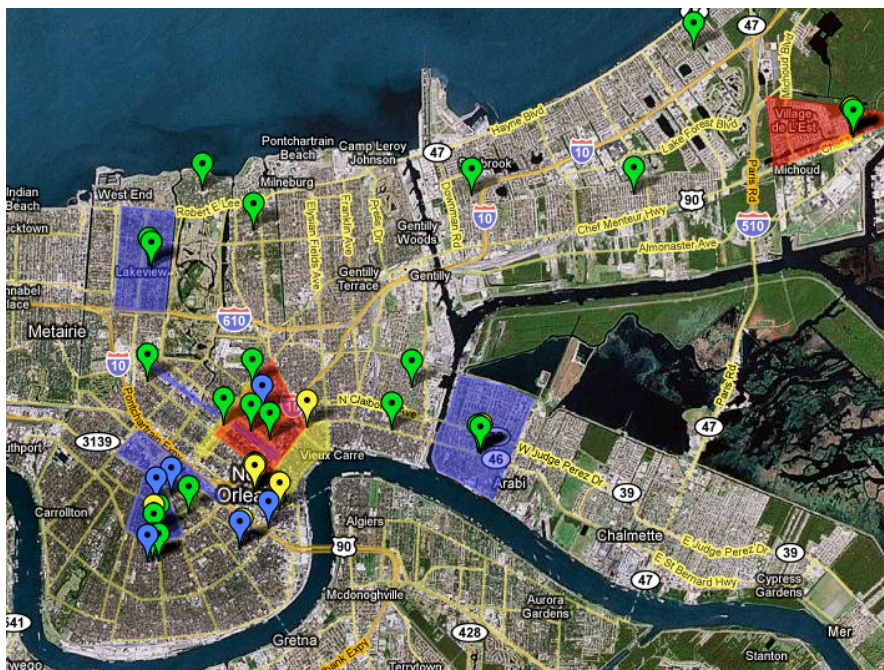
aspects of recovery that shape daily life and neighborhood viability. **Grocery stores, schools, playgrounds, local businesses, and neighborhood-level institutions** not only are important to recovery, they define New Orleans and color every aspect of citizens' conceptualization of the recovery process.

#### **KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Focus on **rebuilding equitably** across the city, between and within neighborhoods.
2. Promote **planning that takes politics and market forces into account and presses for investment targeted to the greatest areas of need, not a laissez faire approach that leaves neighborhoods to fend for themselves.**
3. Strengthen and institutionalize **communication between neighborhoods organizations, city government, state agencies and key civic organizations, especially for coordinating rebuilding actions.**
4. Invest in **building a strong community development system with civic and public institutions that support and finance neighborhood rebuilding by community-based organizations.**
5. **Target and coordinate investments,** and expand the focus on and investment in smaller-scale, neighborhood-level projects that ensure basic quality of life.
6. **Keep New Orleans on the national agenda.** No city has bootstraps big enough to recover from a disaster of this magnitude on its own. New Orleans needs help from the federal government and national non-profits—not to mention the state of Louisiana—to successfully continue the process of recovery.

## OVERVIEW OF DUSP RESEARCH AND PROJECTS IN NEW ORLEANS

Faculty and students of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT have been engaged in New Orleans' recovery and rebuilding efforts at many levels since shortly after the storm. From courses on economic development and community planning to internships with the Office of Recovery and Redevelopment Administration (ORDA) to research on community rebuilding and recovery, public housing redevelopment, school rebuilding, and cultural recovery efforts, DUSP faculty and students have worked with residents, community and activist organizations, and the city to help rebuild the physical, cultural, institutional, economic, and social elements of the city's fabric. In addition, numerous DUSP alumni have settled in New Orleans to continue work that they began while pursuing degrees in Urban Planning. The DUSP presence and impact continues to grow in New Orleans. This section highlights and summarizes the content and scope of DUSP's work in New Orleans.<sup>1</sup>



### DUSP Projects and Research in New Orleans

Blue: student-initiated projects and research

Yellow: class projects

Red: professor and faculty research, consulting, and projects

Green: student theses and other research

**NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED RECOVERY** DUSP has worked extensively with New Orleans neighborhoods and neighborhood-level organizations, including Broadmoor, Holy Cross, Lakeview, Village de L'Est, Mid-City, the French Quarter, the Lower Ninth Ward, and Tremé. It also has engaged in planning initiatives on the Freret Street Corridor, Broad Street, the Bayou Road Cultural Corridor, and in East Biloxi, Mississippi.

<sup>1</sup> For further information about DUSP's work in New Orleans and the rest of the Gulf Coast, please see Appendix 1, visit the DUSPatNOLA Wiki online at <http://nola.mit.edu>, or contact Professor Karl Seidman at [seidman@mit.edu](mailto:seidman@mit.edu).

- Early after Katrina, DUSP students surveyed the recovery needs of grassroots organizations and provided periodic reports to foundations about funding needs.
- In Broadmoor, students have helped develop program and funding proposals to re-open Keller Library; to redevelop the Bohn Ford Building; and to develop community plans for the re-opening of Wilson School. Students have also worked on civic engagement research that highlighted participatory planning efforts in Broadmoor.
- DUSP students have worked on community mapping and advocacy efforts in Gert Town; green corridor plans for the Lafitte Gateway; and an award-winning development plan for the reuse of the Franz Building on Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. in Central City.
- Student teams worked on business and economic development projects and commercial corridor planning with community based organizations in Village de L'Est; Mid-City, Tremé, Faubourg St. John, and Tulane-Gravier; and in Jefferson Parish with the University of New Orleans (UNO) Department of Urban and Regional Planning.

**ISSUE-BASED RECOVERY** DUSP students and faculty also have worked on rebuilding issues that cross neighborhood and city boundaries, including environmental justice, sustainable rebuilding, and affordable housing issues. Several student projects have supported communication and civic engagement on these and other recovery issues:

- Students assisted the People's Hurricane Relief Fund on media communications and a strategy for communicating with displaced residents.
- Students continue to work with local activists on city and coastal issues such as flood protection, citizen participation, and environmental racism.
- Students are collaborating with other departments at MIT to document civic engagement needs in New Orleans and to help organizations address their civic engagement challenges with the use of innovative media tools.

**CITY-LEVEL RECOVERY** Supported by DUSP, the MIT Community Innovators Lab (CoLab) and the MIT Public Service Center (PSC), DUSP students interned at ORDA during the summer of 2007 and helped develop plans for the 17 Target Recovery Areas.

- Students helped create GreeNOLA, a sustainability plan for the city with recommendations for green building, energy production and distribution, and coastal protection.
- Students worked with the New Orleans Neighborhood Development Collaborative (NONDC) to create a policy fellowship program to research best practices on affordable housing and community development.
- DUSP and UNO students worked with the New Orleans Mayor's Office of Economic Development to create plans for a Digital Media Center and small business incubator project.

Several Masters theses and current PhD dissertation research address citywide and neighborhood-level recovery. These theses have studied the implementation of rebuilding plans, disparities in food access and the ability of neighborhood markets to address these disparities, the impact of school reopening on residential rebuilding, and the effect of civic engagement efforts on promoting educational equity.

Through this research, practice, and engagement with local residents, business owners, non-profit groups and city officials, DUSP faculty and students have gained insights into the rebuilding process, which are highlighted in the following section.



## KEY FINDINGS

Critical shortfalls in the recovery efforts to date have perpetuated an inequitable and inefficient rebuilding process. The current landscape of New Orleans shows that while many residents have returned to rebuild, many areas devastated by the storm continue to be largely barren and lacking in city services. Even areas of the city where residents have begun to return and rebuild face an uphill battle in terms of realizing city, state and private sector investment and support in rebuilding. Many promises have been made and few have been realized across the city. The following findings identify these critical shortfalls and opportunities for a new approach to rebuilding that focuses on **equity and stronger public and civic leaderships rather than relying on market-based responses, which have thus far reinforced inequity.**

**RECOVERY HAS BEEN NEIGHBORHOOD LED.** Right after the Storm, dozens of local organizations convened survivors of the storm and plotted strategies to restore housing, schools, health services, to clean up piles of debris, and to contact other survivors scattered throughout the country. Sparked by provocative recommendations to shrink the city's footprint soon after the storm, neighborhoods across the city organized and initiated their own recovery and rebuilding plans to prove their viability. Several foundations supported these efforts by funding community design and planning processes encouraging residents to envision how their neighborhood would recover. Armed with more-or-less comprehensive community rebuilding documents, neighborhoods are now trying to implement their visions. Several of these efforts have been successful with a significant impact on neighborhood rebuilding and participation (e.g., Broadmoor and Village de L'Est). Many neighborhoods have embraced the opportunity to think differently about their neighborhoods and have worked to create sustainable rebuilding plans (e.g., Holy Cross) and work across neighborhood boundaries (e.g., Holy Cross and the Lower Ninth Ward) on issues that affect all residents.

- In Village de L'Est, under the leadership of the Mary Queen of Vietnam Church and its new Community Development Corporation, residents have rebuilt most of the community's single-family homes; an unsafe landfill has been shut down; new senior housing and urban farms are under development; businesses have returned to the two main commercial districts; and a new health center and charter school are being planned.
- In Holy Cross, residents have envisioned post-Katrina recovery as an opportunity to rebuild a sustainable, green community. Partnerships with Global Green and the Preservation Resource Center highlight the community's commitment to preserving their history and enabling residents to return to a safer, greener, and more sustainable community with energy efficient housing and community spaces and reclaimed natural sites and expanded bike transportation.
- In Broadmoor, residents' participatory planning efforts have reinvigorated a community; residents have raised \$2 million to renovate Keller Library as both a library and community center, and are moving forward with plans to develop an Educational Corridor and to renovate Andrew H. Wilson School.

**NEIGHBORHOOD LED RECOVERY HAS BEEN INEQUITABLE AND HAS REINFORCED HISTORIC RACIAL AND ECONOMIC DISPARITIES.** Racial and economic inequality was endemic in New Orleans prior to Katrina encompassing education, health, environmental justice, employment and income. A few facts show the depth of these problems. Prior to the storm, New Orleans had a forty percent literacy rate and over fifty percent of African American ninth graders were not

expected to graduate high school in four years. Poverty and low-wage employment was concentrated among African-Americans: Eighty four percent of poor New Orleans residents (earning less than \$16,000/year for a family of three) were African-American and nearly forty percent of the city's African-Americans were poor. Thirty five percent of African-American households did not have access to a car compared to fifteen percent for white ones. Crime, mostly related to drug dealing, was a serious problem; New Orleans' murder rate was among the highest in the nation in the mid-1990s.<sup>2</sup>

The storm brought these issues out in the open, but the underlying problems have been there for a long time. Consequently, higher-income and white neighborhoods, for the most part, suffered less flooding and have been able to more readily repopulate and rebuild, while neighborhoods with the highest percentages of African-American residents lag behind the city's pace of recovery (Table 1).<sup>3</sup> Over one third of the city's neighborhoods have fewer than 50 percent of households returned post-Katrina. As has been well-documented, the neighborhoods that suffered the most damage and that received less attention and resources to rebuild or that have been unable to organize to prove their viability, are lower income and primarily African-American.

<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>% African-American*</b>	<b>% White*</b>	<b>% Asian*</b>	<b>Population June 2005**</b>	<b>Population August 2008**</b>	<b>% Re-Populated**</b>
<b>New Orleans</b>	<b>66.6%</b>	<b>26.6%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>203,457</b>	<b>146,174</b>	<b>71.8%</b>
Desire Area	94.1%	3.5%	0.2%	1,419	456	32.1%
Filmore	56.9%	36.4%	1.6%	2,831	1,354	47.5%
Gentilly Woods	68.4%	24.8%	2.7%	1,512	764	50.5%
Holy Cross	87.5%	9.4%	0.2%	2,240	774	34.6%
Lakeview	0.7%	94.0%	0.7%	4,711	1,912	40.6%
Little Woods	86.1%	9.8%	0.9%	16,504	8,907	54.0%
Lower Ninth Ward	98.3%	0.5%	0.0%	5,363	601	11.2%
Milneburg	75.4%	17.7%	0.7%	2,273	1,008	44.3%
Pines Village	87.5%	9.7%	0.3%	1,864	862	46.2%
Plum Orchard	93.1%	4.4%	0.1%	2,488	1,210	48.6%
Ponchartrain Park	96.7%	0.6%	0.1%	1,024	389	38.0%
Read Blvd. West	79.8%	16.2%	0.8%	2,107	1,104	52.4%
St. Anthony	58.0%	29.8%	4.0%	2,450	1,088	44.4%
St. Bernard Area	97.8%	1.1%	0.0%	1,936	446	23.0%
St. Roch	91.5%	3.9%	0.2%	4,735	2,804	59.2%
Village de'lest	55.4%	3.6%	37.1%	3,948	2,322	58.8%
West End	1.7%	90.6%	1.6%	2,711	1,218	44.9%
West Lake Forest	95.3%	2.0%	0.4%	3,822	1,276	33.4%

Note: The neighborhoods listed do not include all New Orleans neighborhoods, but rather those that show less than 60% re-population rate according to the current data.  
 \*Based on 2000 Census  
 \*\*Number of households that received mail in June 2005 and June 2008.  
 Source: Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, June 2008 (www.gnocdc.org)

Many of these neighborhoods have not seen city or outside investment since Katrina and continue to struggle in their rebuilding efforts. This lack of attention and investment continues to

<sup>2</sup> Dyson, Michael Eric. 2006. *Between Hell and High Water*. New York: Basic Civitas.

<sup>3</sup> For a more complete picture of neighborhood repopulation, see Appendix 2.

exhibit a racially charged recovery process and the city has done little to use rebuilding to address historical disparities in terms of race and class.

Faced with limited resources, the city is focusing its investments into 17 targeted zones. While these investment zone projects are critical for the neighborhoods where these projects are sited, in many cases they reinforce disparities by targeting areas with strong rebuilding momentum. There has been insufficient attention to targeting public investment to reverse these inequalities and to coordinate city investments and services to effectively catalyze rebuilding in neighborhoods by helping to establish “market” confidence in rebuilding. While it is impossible to apply equal attention and funding to all areas of the city, the city has not focused and coordinated attention on areas that had historic disparities.

The resulting pattern of rebuilding is a worsening of already extensive inequality in access to employment and the foundations for viable neighborhoods. Access to groceries is a case in point. New Orleans experienced a decline in supermarkets before Katrina with one supermarket per 12,000 people in 2005, versus one per 8,800 nationally. By 2007, there was only one supermarket per 18,000 residents with most stores in the higher income neighborhoods along the Mississippi river.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the greatly reduced levels of public transportation limit access to jobs for the many poor and African-American residents who do not own cars.

**CITY GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN A LAISSEZ-FAIRE APPROACH TO REBUILDING.** City government has taken a less proactive and more market-driven approach to rebuilding that, as noted above, has largely reinforced inequitable recovery patterns. This market-driven approach rose quickly after the storm, when residents and neighborhoods were told they must prove their viability, and has continued at every level of recovery and rebuilding, at both the city and state level.

- Soon after the storm, neighborhoods were frequently told by political leaders that they had to prove their viability to ensure that they would have city services. This approach ignores that viability is not an a priori condition but rather the result of collective actions by government, residents, businesses and civic institutions. Leadership, especially by public sector, is critical to create conditions for viability.
- In the summer of 2007, neighborhoods were charged by the Recovery School District to prove their need for a public school. Regardless of resources, neighborhoods were tasked with documenting the need for a school with population statistics and resident support and with developing extensive proposals to rebuild their schools. This approach forfeited the potential to use school reopening decisions to lead neighborhood recovery. It also contrasts with the Archdiocese of New Orleans’ fairly rapid decisions on which schools to reopen—decisions which lead to increased residential rebuilding in the immediate neighborhood surrounding opened catholic schools<sup>5</sup>. Analysis of the Archdiocese of New Orleans’ actions demonstrate that while overall rates of rebuilding in the neighborhoods surrounding the schools are relatively constant, their rebuilding patterns are distinct. Residential

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<sup>4</sup> Jeffrey E. Schwartz, *Making Groceries: Food, Neighborhood Markets and Neighborhood Recovery in Post-Katrina New Orleans*, MIT Masters Thesis, June, 2008.

<sup>5</sup> Based on a recent MIT Master Thesis, *Answering the Bell: Rebuilding New Orleans Around Neighborhood Schools* by Seth Knudsen

redevelopment in substantially flooded neighborhoods was concentrated in the immediate vicinity of schools that reopened and away from schools that remain closed.

The increased competition between neighborhoods for scarce resources and the inequitable playing field in which they compete, perpetuates inequalities after the storm. This market-driven approach ignores the critical role city and state government has in providing basic services and infrastructures, and ignores the fact that city investment decisions are often catalytic - shaping where and how the private market-based investments occur. Even in the 17 targeted investment zones, the city has looked to private investors and neighborhood organizations to lead investment in these areas, with the majority of targeted projects being designated as Re-New projects, as opposed to two Re-Build zones and six Re-Develop Zones that require large scale investment and development, and therefore receiving comparatively little in funding and administrative support from the city. Neighborhoods are therefore being asked to not only spearhead their own recovery, but to fund it as well.

When neighborhood activism has demonstrated commitment and action to rebuild, the city has yet to make good on its promise to residents. For example, city assistance for projects in Re-New zones has been poorly communicated and slow, with city-level bureaucracy hampering even those projects for which neighborhoods have successfully secured funding.

- Broadmoor, having secured \$2 million from the Carnegie foundation in the summer of 2007 for the redevelopment of Keller Library, has been hampered by city-level bureaucracy and politics. Although a recently posted sign at Keller Library promises its re-opening, work on the library has yet to begin more than a year after Broadmoor held a ground-breaking ceremony attended by the Mayor.

This market-driven approach pretends that neighborhoods can be rebuilt relying mainly on the benevolence of private foundations. The reliance on private funding not only perpetuates an inequitable recovery process, it also adds to the disorganized and slow pace of recovery because each neighborhood project needs to find and assemble funds from any available private sources. This laissez-faire approach reinforces historic inequalities in the city and produces limited progress, as neighborhoods do not have the capacity to organize and seek funding for their own recovery. It also perpetuates the deep political fractures across neighborhoods that have plagued community groups in New Orleans for decades and that have prevented the forging of the broad political will needed to achieve massive reinvestment and comprehensive equitable rebuilding. More than anything, New Orleans community organizations needed a unified plan and the tools and resources to collaborate in pressing for critical state and federal support, such as the federal and state support urgently needed to rebuild affordable housing at the scale required to bring back the tens of thousands of displaced residents who did not own a home. Without that level of aid, it is difficult to imagine how many of the poorest neighborhoods can come back.

**RECOVERY EFFORTS CONTINUE TO BE HINDERED BY POOR COMMUNICATION AND COORDINATION.** Poor communication and coordination between the city recovery agency and neighborhood organizations has been a barrier to rebuilding. Organizations working with ORDA on targeted recovery projects have often cited poor communication as one of the major impediments to progress. Even those neighborhoods that have been successful in gaining access

to ORDA and city officials note that their proactive initiatives have often been hampered by the city.

- For example, despite being named one of the target areas for reinvestment, progress on redeveloping the Bayou Road Cultural and Historic Corridor has been hampered by poor communication regarding funding and project support.

Communication across city departments has hampered many projects from proceeding, as streamlined communication between critical city departments has yet to occur.

Furthermore, the communication that has occurred with organizations in the 17 targeted project areas has been consistently vague and untimely. Neighborhood organizations reported receiving little information about investment zone planning and funding, and reported that communication with the city has been inconsistent. Clear goals for these projects were not communicated with neighborhoods. No system of accountability has been developed to ensure neighborhoods that progress is being made on city projects and programs for target areas. Neighborhoods also have little sense of who they should communicate with and neighborhood liaisons are lacking. This poor communication both between city departments and with neighborhoods has exacerbated the already slow delivery of resources to the communities.

Not only has communication with neighborhoods and organizations in the target areas been poor, but communication with other neighborhoods is lacking. Residents in neighborhoods that are not included in the targeted investment plan have little access to ORDA and therefore are less able to determine how to move forward on projects. It is unclear what types of support they will receive from the city. Neighborhoods are therefore left to believe that rebuilding will be up to them and that redressing the inequalities that existed before the storm is not a priority for the city in its rebuilding plans.

**COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS HAVE LIMITED CAPACITY AND RESOURCES.** The neighborhood organizations that emerged and strengthened after the storm, despite their leadership and successes, have limited resources and capacity to implement rebuilding plans. Consequently, their modest efforts often have limited impact, as evidenced by the rise of neighborhood markets organized to increase residents' access to fresh food. With little economic and administrative capacity, most of these markets organized by neighborhood organizations operate only once a month and are struggling to supply fresh produce and food to the community. While these food markets, as well as the increased number of art markets, have had an important symbolic and psychological impact on rebuilding, they are not a solution to supplying healthy food for the city as they cannot meet the demand<sup>6</sup>. Beyond food markets, neighborhoods do not have the capacity to seek funding and rebuild on their own. They cannot provide their own city services. They cannot provide their own public schools. They cannot provide their own fire and police stations. Yet, as the city itself has not attended to these needs, many neighborhood organizations are attempting to seek funding to attend to their lack of fresh produce, put up their own street signs, partner to create charter schools, and raise funding to rebuild a fire or police station. At the same time, residents are looking to the city to rebuild public institutions and infrastructures to support

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<sup>6</sup> Based on the MIT Master Thesis, *Making Groceries: Food, Neighborhood Markets, and Neighborhood Recovery in Post-Katrina New Orleans*, Jeff Schwartz.

their personal decision to return and rebuild their homes.<sup>7</sup> Simply put, while these efforts are commendable, the majority of neighborhood organizations do not have the capacity to undertake these jobs. In comparison with other cities, neighborhood development organizations in New Orleans are small and have less experience in developing affordable, housing, community services and supporting local businesses and economic development.

Moreover, New Orleans, unlike other cities, lacks strong public-private partnerships and funding systems to develop the capacity of community-based organizations and to finance affordable housing, community facilities and other community development projects and programs. The lack of a strong community development system has contributed to slower recovery and mitigates the potential contributions of New Orleans' growing neighborhood activism and organizations.

However, the unprecedented civic engagement across the city, as evidenced in the growing number of neighborhood organizations, is something that neighborhood organizations themselves can continue to foster and support. They can continue to document local needs and bring these to the attention of the city. They can continue to support activism and engagement at the neighborhood level. They can continue to keep residents informed about rebuilding issues and important city planning initiatives. There is now a fertile opportunity to transform these fledgling community organizations into the type of effective neighborhood rebuilders found in other parts of the country. Among other roles, these organizations might operate Neighborhood Resilience Centers, to coordinate rebuilding and provide a focal point for neighborhood re-entry services to residents<sup>8</sup>. Seizing this opportunity will require leadership and coordinated support from the city, state, foundations and private sector in the form of funding for more staff, administrative and technical support, formats for institutionalized citizen participation, and the type of coordinated system to finance neighborhood rebuilding projects found in other cities.

**STRATEGIC AND COORDINATED INVESTMENT IN KEY FACILITIES PROMISES TO STIMULATE THE RETURN OF RESIDENTS.** Strategic and coordinated investment in anchor facilities has the promise to stimulate the return of residents. As noted throughout these research findings, key facilities such as grocery stores, police and fire stations, public schools, and health care services assure residents that their basic needs will be supported by the city. Having taken a laissez-faire approach to rebuilding, the city has avoided the classic chicken-and-egg problem of what to do first in order to help residents, business and non-profit organizations return. Having public schools and grocery stores open in the neighborhoods demonstrates to residents that if they return and rebuild, as the city has encouraged them to do, they can live in functioning and even thriving neighborhoods, rather than in neighborhoods where they have to drive to get basic necessities and drive their children to school in another neighborhood. Beyond basic facilities, neighborhoods need streetlights and police protection. The city, with state and federal government support, must provide these basic facilities and infrastructures for residents to

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<sup>7</sup> Based a recent MIT Master Thesis, *Answering the Bell: Rebuilding New Orleans Around Neighborhood Schools* by Seth Knudsen

<sup>8</sup> This idea was proposed by DUSP Head Lawrence J. Vale in *Restoring Urban Vitality*, in E.L. Birch and S.M. Wachter, *Rebuilding Urban Places After Disaster*. A NRC is much like the role embraced by the strongest new community organizations like the Mary Queen of Vietnam CDC and Broadmor Improvement Association Development

continue to rebuild and re-inhabit their neighborhoods. The impact of these core services on rebuilding is demonstrated by the Catholic school system in which the Archdiocese of New Orleans prepared a master plan for which schools would reopen five months after Katrina. Neighborhoods in which Catholic schools reopened had much higher residential rebuilding rates than neighborhood in which schools did not reopen<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Rebuilding rates were based on residential building permits issued. Three neighborhoods in which schools reopened had average rates twice that of control neighborhood without reopened schools with a 1/10 mile radius and 36% higher within ¼ mile.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MOVING FORWARD

In the three years since the storm, widespread neighborhood activism and participation have led recovery and rebuilding. However, city government and political leaders have failed to actively support residents' efforts. Poor communication and coordination have hampered neighborhood recovery and rebuilding efforts. Key facilities and public institutions have not been re-opened in many neighborhoods. The city's laissez-faire approach to recovery and rebuilding has ignored the fact that neighborhoods have limited capacity and resources and that government has a critical role to play in rebuilding. The following recommendations are intended to **focus rebuilding efforts on establishing strong neighborhoods, promoting equitable recovery that addresses historic racial and economic disparities, and building responsive public and private institutions.**

**MAKE EQUITABLE RECOVERY A CITY AND STATE PRIORITY.** New Orleans' city government and business leadership, like many other cities, has historically focused on big projects and on generating investment in its central business district and major tourism destinations. **A key lesson from other cities is that safe, healthy and vibrant neighborhoods attract residents, businesses and investment and are critical to revitalization of the entire city.** As noted heavily throughout DUSP's research and work in New Orleans, pre-Katrina inequities have only deepened since the storm. **A commitment to rebuilding New Orleans neighborhoods in an equitable way must be recognized as critical to the overall city revitalization of the city and needs to guide city and state recovery and rebuilding efforts.** An alternative to the laissez-faire approach is a coordinated and strategic commitment to promote neighborhood viability. This strategy would recognize that neighborhood viability is not a fixed condition that needs to be proven by residents but is the result of collective decisions and actions by residents, businesses, government, and non-profit organizations. City government can lead this collective response and provide the catalyst for other parties to return and invest by coordinating its response to reopen schools, restore basic services, and rebuild infrastructure. Moreover, it can target these investments where the market is not supporting grassroots rebuilding efforts and where a catalyst for rebuilding is most needed. The impact of leadership in restoring core neighborhood services is demonstrated by the city's Catholic school system. The Archdiocese of New Orleans prepared a master plan for reopening schools five months after Katrina. Neighborhoods in which Catholic schools reopened experienced much higher residential rebuilding rates than neighborhoods in which a school did not reopen—twice as high within a one tenth mile radius of the school and thirty six percent higher within one quarter mile.

This priority must be adopted across departments, and city officials must work beyond their own representative areas to ensure that the city as a whole is prioritizing investments to advance equitable recovery. Federal, state and private philanthropic efforts also need to support and emphasize this goal. Furthermore, a public commitment to rebuilding equitably can shape the focus of future public-private partnerships. This goal could be pursued by establishing benchmarks and coordinated city/state plans to achieve key recovery outcomes in poorer and more damaged neighborhoods, such as reopening schools, health clinics and grocery stores and achieving sixty percent or greater repopulation.

**EMPOWER PLANNING AND ENHANCE CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS.** New Orleans is in continued need of planning. Local universities and planners continue to do critical work guiding



recovery. A master planning process is about to begin. A movement to give the master plan the force of law will be up for vote in fall 2008. These plans need to take in account of how both political and market forces can guide rebuilding. **At the city level, increasing the capacity of the City Planning Commission and ORDA is critical for goals of rebuilding equitably to be met.** Already spread thin, the City Planning Commission should be deeply supported with adequate staff and funding, and planning should be empowered in the city. Coordinating the new master plan and zoning ordinance with current neighborhood plans and grassroots initiatives, and addressing issues that cut across neighborhood boundaries are roles that only the city can play. The equitable allocation of limited resources, the provision of city services and the distribution of rebuilding efforts must be discussed at the city level if rebuilding is to focus on an equitable recovery. Neighborhoods cannot be expected to undertake these tasks nor do they have the capacity to do so. **Progressive city-level planning, with continued citizen participation, needs to be institutionalized and sustained.**

**STRENGTHEN COMMUNICATION.** Establish formalized mechanisms for ongoing communication among ORDA, the City Planning Commission, and neighborhood organizations. The rising citizen participation effort in the city should be formalized and adopted so that citizen participation is institutionalized from this point forward. It is critical to foster continued communication with neighborhoods, both to inform the city master plan and to strengthen coordination with neighborhood organizations' implementation projects. Residents need to be assured that their voices and efforts will continue to be heard and that there will be a seat at the table for them in determining their futures. Adopting the citizen participation plan alerts residents that the city will listen to their voices. Mechanisms to strengthen ongoing communication include establishing neighborhood councils, as exist in other cities, and holding regular meetings between a team of city department heads and neighborhood organizations to review progress on key rebuilding projects and issues.

Additionally, as observed throughout DUSP's research and work, cross-departmental communication has hampered neighborhood rebuilding. **Strengthening communication between city-level departments and with neighborhoods and residents is critical for recovery to proceed.** Developing formalized channels of communication and eliminating institutional and bureaucratic barriers will support both city and neighborhood recovery efforts.

**INVEST IN BUILDING STRONG CIVIC AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS TO SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD REBUILDING.** Another critical need is to strengthen the institutional capacity and support for rebuilding at both the city level and within neighborhoods. City, state and civic leaders can draw on the experience of other areas that have built strong community development systems. Massachusetts, for example, has invested heavily in building the capacity of community development corporations through providing operating grants, extensive technical assistance and multiple financing programs. A consortium of banks created an intermediary to channel private tax credit investments and loans to affordable housing, community facilities and economic development. State tax laws have directed insurance industry investment into community reinvestment projects.

The level of engagement and participation at the neighborhood level is unprecedented in New Orleans. Residents are informed and engaged in the recovery and rebuilding process and this

energy should be harnessed and supported. Strong grassroots community-based organizations need city-level intermediaries with financial and knowledge resources, training and skill development to seek private investment, and a coordinated public-private partnership to effectively fund rebuilding and neighborhood development projects to ensure the continued success of their efforts. Capacity-building support for neighborhood organizations over the next several years needs to include funding for staff, administrative and technical support, and small grants for implementing modest scale recovery projects. This approach should also help neighborhoods aggregate funding and gain access to other forms of capital, incentives, and investments. A summit of state, city and private sector leaders should be held to hammer out the details of a private-public system to support and fund neighborhood rebuilding and capacity-building. National community development intermediaries, drawing on successful models from other cities can provide expertise, staffing and funding to help design and implement such a system.

Now more than ever, in the face of an economic slowdown and uncertain capital markets, New Orleans needs a first class community development capacity-building and financing system if it is to translate the new civic activism in the city's neighborhoods into more equitable and substantive rebuilding. **Rebuilding key institutions and infrastructures** to ensure that residents have access to schools, health care, fresh food, and public transportation is another way of supporting neighborhood recovery. These initiatives will also help to **spur private investment by demonstrating the city's commitment to rebuilding**. As advocated above, strong leadership and collaboration from the state, city and private sector is needed to lay the foundation for such a system and to capitalize on federal tax incentives and the resources of national community development intermediaries.

**KEEP NEW ORLEANS ON THE NATIONAL AGENDA.** The work of organizations such as Levees.org and the Equity and Inclusion Campaign of the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation has helped to keep New Orleans on the national agenda. Since a new federal administration holds promise to refocus energies, attention and leadership on New Orleans, working with both potential presidential candidates is critical to continued attention and support for addressing New Orleans' continued struggle to rebuild. Establishing ties to other communities, such as those in the Mid-West who faced extensive flooding this summer, helps bring attention to how the issues faced in New Orleans are national issues that affect other cities and other citizens across the country. As another hurricane season continues, and as news of flood wall leaks spreads, the city continues to be vulnerable. **Keeping New Orleans in the national spotlight is the only way to ensure that much needed federal funding and support will continue.**

Finally, Katrina was both a human and a natural disaster. The initial storm and the initial failure of the levees are now three years in the past. However, the human disaster, in many ways, continues to unfold. The failures by the city, state, and federal government to act, both on August 29, 2005 and now, highlight the impact of continued disinvestment in the nation's cities. Post-Katrina New Orleans highlights all of the issues that every city in American is struggling with: high crime rates, poor infrastructure, strained racial and economic relationships, disinvestment and segregation, poor civic engagement, low levels of trust in government policies, and increasing inequity. Moreover, New Orleans is a bell weather of things to come as

the nation and the world face increasing uncertainty in the wake of climate change. The fate of New Orleans is a critical project for this nation to restore the health of a city and region with great historic, cultural and economic value. It also provides an opportunity to reconsider and establish a new federal policy and national public-private partnership to reinvest in our urban neighborhoods as cornerstones of healthy, equitable and environmentally sustainable cities.

## **APPENDIX 1: DUSP IN NEW ORLEANS**

The following section details more extensively DUSP's research and work in New Orleans. Please visit the DUSPatNOLA Wiki online at <http://nola.mit.edu>, or contact Professor Karl Seidman at [seidman@mit.edu](mailto:seidman@mit.edu) for further information.

**NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED RECOVERY** In the months following Katrina and continuing through June 2006, DUSP students surveyed the activities and recovery needs of grassroots organizations and provided periodic reports to inform foundations and national philanthropic organizations about funding needs. During the spring of 2006 and again in spring 2007, students participated in CityScope, led by Professors J. Phillip Thompson, JoAnn Carmin, and John Fernandez, a course focused on early recovery efforts and neighborhood-based planning.

Since the fall of 2006, DUSP students have worked extensively in the Broadmoor neighborhood. In Broadmoor, students have helped develop program and funding proposals to re-open Keller Library as a library and community center and to redevelop the Bohn Ford Building. Students also assisted Broadmoor in developing a land trust and developing commercial finance plans. Student work in Broadmoor also focused on developing a proposal to re-open Wilson School and the link Wilson School and Keller Library through an Educational Corridor that would serve the entire community.

Extensive research on civic engagement and community-level planning efforts has also focused on neighborhoods such as Holy Cross, Lakeview, Village de L'Est, and Tremé, as well as on specific planning initiatives such as the Freret Street Corridor and Bayou Road Cultural Corridor. Community mapping and advocacy efforts in Gert Town have also been supported by DUSP students. Working with a variety of stakeholders, DUSP students developed the vision for greening the Lafitte Greenway. The reGrow vision for Lafitte Corridor includes turning the former Carondelet Canal into an active greenway for collecting storm- and grey-water runoff, and creating bicycle lanes, a jogging path, basketball courts, and other venues for physical activity and leisure. Additionally, reGrow called for developing amenities centered on the cultural and socioeconomic history of the neighborhoods bordering the Lafitte Corridor.

DUSP students also participated in preparing a development plan for the reuse of the Franz Building in Central City and won first place in the Chase Community Development Grant competition for this proposal, securing a \$25,000 prize for Good Work Network to seed the project's implementation. Students proposed redeveloping the Franz Building into a neighborhood business incubator and offices for Good Work Network. The project placed first in the competition securing a \$25,000 prize for Good Work Network to seed project implementation.

Student teams have also worked on business and economic development projects with New Orleans community based organizations including program design for a facade improvement financing program for Village de L'Est; market and financial analysis for a new grocery store in the Lower Ninth Ward; and analysis of financing needs for arts-related businesses. Working with Vietnamese-American residents in Village L'Est, students helped assess financing and business development needs and a business strategy for the Mary Queen of Vietnam Church to

address these needs. They also helped to evaluate options and make recommendations for a business improvement district. Students have also worked on an urban Main Streets-style project for redeveloping Broad Street, working with stakeholders from Mid-City, Tulane-Gravier, Tremé, and Fauborg St. John neighborhoods.

Additionally, student teams have helped create a technical assistance plan to re-establish Dunbar's Restaurant at its original Freret Street location and worked with SEEDCO Financial Services to develop an assessment of restaurant recovery needs and recommendations on financing and technical assistance products for recovering restaurants. Students worked with the Retail development Task Force of the Mayor of New Orleans to develop a financial plan for a business improvement district in the French Quarter and with Citizens United for Economic Equity to develop an implementation plan for a start-up minority business investment fund.

Additionally, students have participated in courses focused on recovery efforts outside of New Orleans. During the spring of 2008, a site planning course in Biloxi, Mississippi helped develop sustainable rebuilding plans that focused on mitigating future flood and storm damage, enabling residents to return to their homes and community, and helping planners and residents develop alternatives to current market-based rebuilding plans. Students also partnered with planning students at the University of New Orleans' Department of Urban and Regional Planning and the Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission (JEDCO) to develop recommendations on the use of CDBG economic recovery funds for business recovery and economic development in Jefferson Parish and to design a technology seed capital fund.

**ISSUE-BASED RECOVERY** DUSP students and faculty have additionally worked on critical rebuilding issues that cross neighborhood boundaries. This research and work has focused on environmental racism and injustice issues and sustainable rebuilding efforts across the city, as well as affordable housing issues. Students have also assisted the People's Hurricane Relief Fund with media communications; developing a strategy for communicating with displaced residents and organizing the group's national communications work to generate a plan for Diaspora organizing, including participation in the Unified New Orleans Plan process. DUSP students organized a workshop series held at the People's Environmental Center (PEC) in Tremé that covered housing rights, environmental contamination, soil remediation and safe indoor cleanup for returning residents. Students also worked with a team of architects to design a soil remediation demonstration garden at the PEC, to identify low-cost soil remediation technologies, and connect the designers and PEC staff with environmental scientists who have tested these technologies in low-income neighborhoods. DUSP students also organized a three-day idea- and resource-sharing event in January 2006 called "Making It Happen," that brought together New Orleans planning practitioners and experienced community development leaders from across the country to address recovery and rebuilding challenges.

Currently, students continue to work on civic engagement issues with local activists, including Finding Our Folk, Levees.org, the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation's Equity and Inclusion Campaign, Neighborhood Partnership Network, the Katrina Information Network, and the Young People's Project on issues such as continued citizen participation, flood protection, community mapping initiatives, legislative advocacy, and environmental racism. Students are

collaborating with other departments at MIT to document civic engagement needs in New Orleans and to help organizations address their civic engagement challenges with the use of innovative media tools.

**CITY-LEVEL RECOVERY** Supported by DUSP, the MIT Community Innovators Lab, and the MIT Public Service Center, DUSP students interned at the Office of Recovery and Redevelopment Administration (ORDA) during the summer of 2007 and helped develop recovery plans for the 17 targeted recovery areas that ORDA designated as areas in which to invest public, long-term recovery funding. Students also helped to create a sustainability plan for the city, GreenNOLA, which includes recommendations for green building, energy production and distribution, waste and recycling, transportation, climate change, environment, and coastal protection and environmental justice.

DUSP students also worked with the New Orleans Neighborhood Development Collaborative (NONDC) to create a policy fellowship program to research best practices on affordable housing and community development and with the Neighborhood Housing Services on affordable housing issues. Housing policy analysis, conducted by DUSP students, helped affordable housing advocates get a voice in housing policy decisions and provided on-going communication of critical housing policy information to community members across barriers of culture, language, and literacy. Students worked with the New Orleans Mayor's Office of Economic Development, creating a financing plan for a Digital Media Center and a financing plan for a small business incubator project.

**RESEARCH** Additionally, many of the theses written by DUSP Masters students, and much of the current dissertation research by DUSP PhD students focuses on citywide and neighborhood-level recovery efforts. This research, further detailed below, demonstrates the importance of strong public action and the significance of comprehensive planning for rebuilding communities equitably.

**MASTERS' THESES** In the past three years, numerous DUSP Masters students have chosen to focus their research for their theses on recovery efforts in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. The range of this work is wide, focusing on neighborhood-based recovery to rebuilding the public and private school systems to comparing the influence of professional training on recovery planning.

Masters student Kiara Nagel's thesis, *Understanding Place after Katrina: Predatory Planning and Cultural Resistance in New Orleans' Tremé Neighborhood* (2006), focused on initial recovery efforts, analyzing the tensions between a neighborhood's recovery of its culture and heritage and predatory planning and development.

In *Building Community Capacity in the Rebuilding of New Orleans: The Role of Philanthropic Funders Post-Katrina* (2007), Jainey Bavishi explored the potential role of funders in New Orleans to strengthen community capacity in low-income and minority neighborhoods. Her research showed that many communities were being overlooked by the market-driven response and that significant informational and capacity gaps existed in these neighborhoods. Her

findings also highlight the importance of technical assistance and intermediary organizations in bridging these gaps.

Jessica Berman-Boatwright's thesis, *Planners, Architects, and Landscape Architects Designing New Orleans: Disciplinary Differences in Developing the Unified Plan* (2007), explores the effect of professional training and education on planning and citizen participation planning, as demonstrated in the Unified New Orleans Planning process.

Dulari Tahbilda's thesis, *Whose City? Whose Schools? A Case Study of Civic Engagement and Planning "From Below" to Promote Educational Equity in New Orleans Public Schools* (2007), analyzes civic engagement movements from below as residents attempt to actively participate in decisions that affect their local public schools. Her research demonstrates three key lessons about civic engagement after a disaster: 1) that opportunities for collaboration between communities and the government are easily missed; 2) that residents struggling to rebuild find their survival connected to and dependent on how public institutions and infrastructures are rebuilt; and 3) that when "citizens discover that their values are not incorporated into the 'official' recovery and rebuilding plan, a political will to create an alternative plan may emerge" (Tahbilda, 2008).

In 2008, four Masters students focused their research on recovery efforts in New Orleans. Oreoluwa Alao's research, *Rebuilding Plan Implementation in New Orleans, LA: A Case Study of Freret Street Commercial Corridor and Bayou Road Cultural Corridor* (2008), identified key issues in neighborhood recovery efforts. Analyzing the implementation of recovery projects in the Freret Street Corridor and the Bayou Road Cultural Corridor, she recommends that developing internal organization at the neighborhood level, building partnerships and networks across sectors, and developing mechanisms for better coordination across city departments will improve implementation efforts in targeted development projects.

Seth Knudsen's thesis, *Answering the Bell: Rebuilding New Orleans Around Neighborhood Schools* (2008), brought attention to the importance of rebuilding neighborhood institutions, such as elementary schools, to support recovery and return. His research found that neighborhood elementary schools are an especially important tradition in New Orleans, given the city's historically low rates of automobile ownership and drastically reduced public transportation access and service in the wake of Katrina. His findings demonstrate that as the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Orleans Parish School Board begin to implement a new School Facilities Master Plan for Orleans Parish, officials and citizens should carefully consider the potential impact of reopened and landbanked/repurposed facilities on neighborhoods still trying to recover from Katrina. His research on the Archdiocese of New Orleans, who laid out their master plan for schools less than six months after the storm, indicates that the decisions about which schools to reopen appear to have had an effect on rebuilding in their surrounding neighborhoods. While overall rates of rebuilding in the neighborhoods surrounding the schools are relatively constant, their rebuilding patterns are distinct. Residential redevelopment in substantially flooded neighborhoods tends to be concentrated in the immediate vicinity of schools that have reopened, and away from schools that remain closed.

David Quinn's Master of Architecture thesis, *Modeling the Resource Consumption of Housing in New Orleans Using System Dynamics* (2008), and his website nolamaterial.com, analyze New Orleans' urban metabolism during recovery and rebuilding.

Jeffrey Schwartz's research focuses on the food access and the neighborhood food markets in his thesis, *Making Groceries: Food, Neighborhood Markets, and Neighborhood Recovery in Post-Katrina New Orleans* (2008). His research highlights how the market-driven recovery efforts have exacerbated pre-Katrina inequities in food access and proposes that the city attend to pre-Katrina inequities by supporting locally driven efforts, such as the grassroots momentum to establish neighborhood food markets.

**PHD RESEARCH** Current DUSP PhD students are also engaged in research in New Orleans. Will Bradshaw, co-founder and President of Green Coast Enterprises, is focusing on rebuilding sustainable houses and neighborhoods. Green Coast Enterprises builds storm resistant, environmentally friendly buildings, develops innovative housing solutions for low-income communities, and works to generate profits from energy efficient and sustainable housing. Leigh Graham has worked on recovery issues in New Orleans and throughout the Gulf Coast. Her work has focused on the redevelopment of the Lafitte housing development and she has worked with the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Fund. Leigh's dissertation is also focused on recovery efforts in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. Anna Livia Brand's research has thus far focused on civic engagement at the neighborhood level. She has conducted interviews throughout neighborhoods in New Orleans and is researching how neighborhood resiliency and recovery efforts have led the city-wide recovery. Her work focuses on the cultural resiliency of the city and the tensions that arise from a market-driven, neighborhood level recovery.

**DUSP FACULTY** Many DUSP faculty members continue to be involved in research and work in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast. As coordinator of MIT's "Resilient City" project and co-editor of the book *The Resilient City: How Modern Cities Recover from Disaster*, Department Head and Professor Larry Vale has been an invited speaker at a variety of academic and professional conferences that have assessed the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. In July 2006, Prof. Vale gave the keynote talk at the New Orleans APA's "Planners Resource Day" conference held in New Orleans. More recently he contributed a chapter on "Restoring Urban Viability" to Eugenie Birch and Susan Wachter, eds., *Rebuilding Urban Places After Disaster: Lessons from Hurricane Katrina*, as well as an op-ed in the Boston Globe and other commentary about rebuilding New Orleans. Prof. Vale has also helped to coordinate a series of interdisciplinary forums on "Big Questions After Big Hurricanes" held at MIT during fall 2005 and made available on video via MIT World.

Professor Karl Seidman has led numerous courses in New Orleans. Prof. Seidman has provided training to the Mary Queen of Vietnam Community Development Corporation on program planning design and technical assistance on their small business development, commercial district marketing and urban farming projects. Prof. Seidman and DUSP graduate student Uyen Le have conducted industry research and market analysis for the National Association of Vietnamese-American Service Agencies to identify business development opportunities and inform the implementation of the Access to Equity microenterprise development program in



Biloxi, New Orleans, and Houston. In February 2007, Prof. Seidman and DUSP graduate student Ben Dookchitra prepared a software tool to help businesses, business technical assistance providers and neighborhood organizations evaluate the market support for different type of retail businesses.

Professor J. Phillip Thompson PhD students Will Bradshaw and Leigh Graham worked with Enterprise Community Partners and Providence Community Housing to develop affordable housing development strategies, options and opportunities. Will Bradshaw helped write a proposal that led to Solidarity Housing Corporation (a partnership of Providence and the AFL-CIO Investment Trust Corporation) acquiring 197 city-adjudicated properties in the Tremé, Sixth Ward, and Tulane/Canal neighborhoods.

Professor Xavier de Souza Briggs wrote an article on rebuilding after Katrina for the American Sociological Association's (ASA) City and Community journal and organized a roundtable session at the 2006 ASA annual meeting on the lessons for Katrina rebuilding from the federal Moving to Opportunity Program.

## APPENDIX 2

<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>% African-American*</b>	<b>% White*</b>	<b>% Asian*</b>	<b>Population June 2005**</b>	<b>Population August 2008**</b>	<b>% Re-Populated**</b>
<b>New Orleans</b>	<b>66.6%</b>	<b>26.6%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>203,457</b>	<b>146,174</b>	<b>71.8%</b>
Bayou St. John	67.8%	26.7%	0.9%	2,292	1,921	83.8%
Broadmoor	68.2%	25.8%	0.6%	3,139	2,551	81.3%
Central City	87.1%	9.9%	0.6%	8,175	6,405	78.3%
City Park	9.4%	81.9%	1.4%	1,670	1,534	91.9%
Desire Area	94.1%	3.5%	0.2%	1,419	456	32.1%
Dillard	88.4%	6.9%	0.3%	2,608	1,728	66.3%
Dixon	94.9%	3.2%	0.1%	631	453	71.8%
Fairgrounds	69.0%	26.0%	0.2%	3,091	2,843	92.0%
Filmore	56.9%	36.4%	1.6%	2,831	1,354	47.5%
Freret	82.6%	13.5%	0.4%	1,014	671	66.2%
Gentilly Terrace	69.7%	24.9%	0.5%	4,417	3,380	76.5%
Gentilly Woods	68.4%	24.8%	2.7%	1,512	764	50.5%
Gert Town	94.5%	2.9%	0.5%	1,513	1,411	93.3%
Hollygrove	94.7%	2.6%	0.1%	2,751	1,772	64.4%
Holy Cross	87.5%	9.4%	0.2%	2,240	774	34.6%
Lakeshore/Lakevista	0.6%	93.8%	2.1%	1,608	1,424	88.6%
Lakeview	0.7%	94.0%	0.7%	4,711	1,912	40.6%
Lakewood	1.7%	94.0%	1.2%	786	590	75.1%
Little Woods	86.1%	9.8%	0.9%	16,504	8,907	54.0%
Lower Ninth Ward	98.3%	0.5%	0.0%	5,363	601	11.2%
Mid-City	64.3%	23.2%	1.2%	6,634	4,652	70.1%
Milan	73.8%	21.6%	1.0%	3,452	2,720	78.8%
Milneburg	75.4%	17.7%	0.7%	2,273	1,008	44.3%
Pines Village	87.5%	9.7%	0.3%	1,864	862	46.2%
Plum Orchard	93.1%	4.4%	0.1%	2,488	1,210	48.6%
Ponchartrain Park	96.7%	0.6%	0.1%	1,024	389	38.0%
Read Blvd. East	73.3%	16.6%	6.8%	3,099	2,162	69.8%
Read Blvd. West	79.8%	16.2%	0.8%	2,107	1,104	52.4%
Seventh Ward	93.6%	3.0%	0.1%	6,470	4,665	72.1%
St. Anthony	58.0%	29.8%	4.0%	2,450	1,088	44.4%
St. Bernard Area	97.8%	1.1%	0.0%	1,936	446	23.0%
St. Claude	90.5%	6.9%	0.2%	4,490	2,957	65.9%
St. Roch	91.5%	3.9%	0.2%	4,735	2,804	59.2%
Treme/Lafitte	92.4%	4.8%	0.1%	3,556	2,520	70.9%
Tulane/Gravier	78.2%	13.5%	5.0%	1,830	1,215	66.4%
Village de'lest	55.4%	3.6%	37.1%	3,948	2,322	58.8%
West End	1.7%	90.6%	1.6%	2,711	1,218	44.9%
West Lake Forest	95.3%	2.0%	0.4%	3,822	1,276	33.4%

Note: The neighborhoods listed do not include all New Orleans neighborhoods, but rather a sample of neighborhoods that had some or extensive flooding due to Hurricane Katrina.

\*Based on 2000 Census

\*\*Number of households that received mail in June 2005 and June 2008

Areas shaded have less than 60% of their pre-Katrina household population

Source: Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, June 2008 ([www.gnocdc.org](http://www.gnocdc.org))