



THE RACE to **Rebuild**



The Color of **Opportunity**

**AND
THE**

Future of New Orleans



Prepared by The Center for Social Inclusion: A Project of the Tides Center
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The Center for Social Inclusion

The Center for Social Inclusion (CSI) is a national policy advocacy organization. CSI's mission is to build a fair and just society by dismantling structural racism, which undermines opportunities for all of us. CSI partners with communities of color and other allies to create strategies and build policy reform models to promote opportunities by understanding the role that race plays in preventing them. With our partners we conduct applied research, translate it, teach our communities, inform the public, convene stakeholders, nurture multiracial alliances and support advocacy strategies.

Acknowledgments

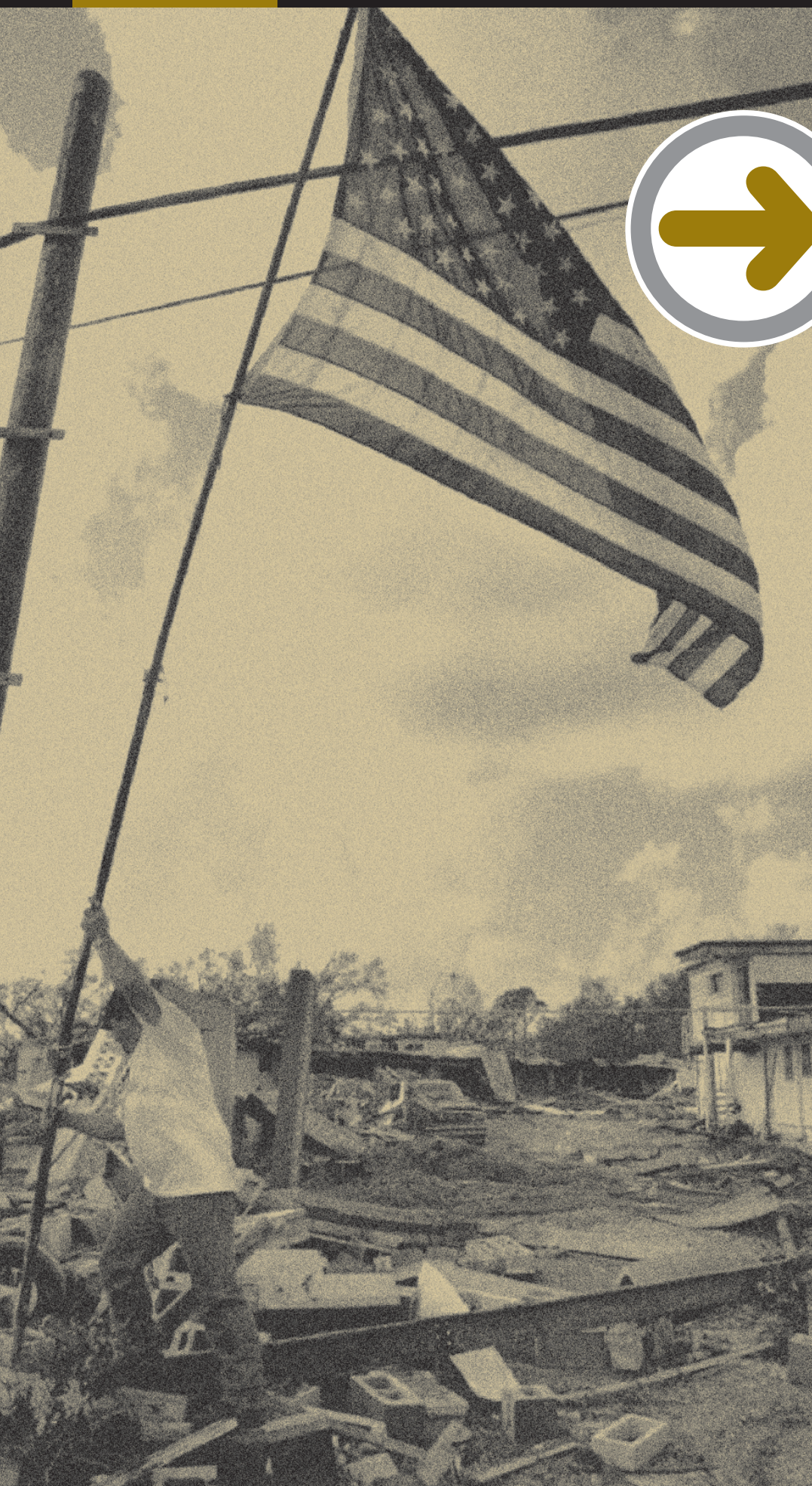
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- 2 From the Director**
- 3 Introduction**
- 4 Before New Orleans' Levees Failed**
- 8 Current Rebuilding Policies**
- 30 Recovering Our Communities**
- 40 Conclusion and Recommendations**
- 41 Appendices**



In order to solve a problem, we must know the problem. The problem in the Gulf Coast in August 2005 was not a hurricane. The levees broke and too many people were poor, sick and unable to flee. The “problem” is man-made, and this is good news. We can solve problems we create.

This report identifies the problem as our failure to invest in ourselves and each other through our government. It also identifies the role that race has played in driving the problem and detouring us from the solution. Race has been an architect of our institutions and systems. Race has built an unsound house that we all must live in, White and people of color. More often than not, people of color live in the basement, but even those in the master bedroom are confronted with the cracks in the walls. Understanding why Blacks were the faces of the abandoned and why they are having the most difficulty rebuilding their lives in the wake of the broken New Orleans levees, helps us see the problem and solve it. This problem is not just the Gulf Coast’s problem, it is our national



The broken levees flooded nearly 228,000 houses and apartments.*

problem. And solving it in the Gulf will help us bridge the gulf between people and opportunity.

This is a hopeful report, despite the challenges we face. Our current national policies are deepening the abyss. Yet, this report shows that by making different policy choices, paying attention to race, we can recover New Orleans and the nation.

Maya Wiley

Maya Wiley, Director

* Susan J. Popkin et al., The Urban Institute, “Rebuilding Affordable Housing in New Orleans: The Challenge of Creating Inclusive Communities,” January 2006, http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/900914_affordable_housing.pdf#search='228%2C000%20homes%20katrina



H

urricane season 2005, particularly Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma, pulled the curtain from our eyes and made

visible a serious problem. We are a wealthy and strong nation, but our infrastructure and public institutions are fragile and our opportunities – living wage jobs, affordable housing, quality education, health care and a safe environment – are shrinking.

New Orleans' broken levees are now a national metaphor for our collective vulnerability. Like too many of our cities and towns, the people of the New Orleans metropolitan area, before the 2005 hurricane season, were too poor or infirm, the area's levees too weak and unsound, its housing too expensive, its jobs too scarce, its health care too precious and its environment too compromised. Blacks, Latinos and Vietnamese were the most vulnerable and, therefore, the faces of poverty and abandonment the nation saw in August and September 2005 were largely theirs. And of course, those more fortunate, having the ways and means to evacuate, may have been relatively better off, but were still distressed, displaced and significantly dispossessed.

We have choices about how to respond. This report examines both the consequences of our current policy choices and what the consequences might be if we choose different policies. Currently, our federal government has largely responded to the devastation in the Gulf Coast with a relief model of policies

Like too many of our cities and towns, the people of the New Orleans metropolitan area, before the 2005 hurricane season, were too poor or infirm, the area's levees too weak and unsound, its housing too expensive, its jobs too scarce, its health care too precious and its environment too compromised.

and institutions. After examining the structural context within which New Orleans' residents and the nation lived prior to New Orleans' broken levees, this report examines *relief* policies, evaluating their impact by race. This report then turns to plausible results of a set of *recovery* policy choices in which we look to long-term building of a stronger, healthier New Orleans.

This report, like so many others, must rely on limited data and imperfect information. The point is not to identify all relevant, best or weakest policy options or to quantify exactly their impacts. But it is possible to evaluate possible trends and major impacts. Based on what we know from previous research and the context in which these decisions are made, we can identify the likely direction of the region based on rebuilding policies and the outcomes different policy choices would probably produce. It illuminates the policy imperative to restructure opportunity by taking race into account for a strengthened region. It also makes clear the central role the federal government must play to produce more and better opportunities for everyone.



One question regularly posed when over one hundred thousand, mostly Black, people were stranded and abandoned in appalling conditions in New Orleans was whether the faces of the abandoned exposed racism. The short answer is yes, but not in the way we typically think about racism. The way we have structured society – suburbanization, concentrated poverty and the fragmentation of and incapacitation of government – left people of color vulnerable before and after the levees failed. Race has played a central role in how we have structured our communities and nation. And all races, including Whites, are less likely to thrive today thanks to this “structural racism.”

Our communities are healthy or weak based on the job market, transportation, physical environment, services and amenities in or near them. Our national policies created isolated communities of color in the first place. National policies disinvested in them and choked them off from opportunities. Then we began to starve the federal government of resources to invest in communities, which hurts communities of color more, but harms opportunity for all communities. We now have a harder time competing in a globalizing economy and we reduce our civic and social capacity to develop our regions and the nation.¹

For many, this cycle of historical racism and present-day structural barriers to opportunity drives a misplaced belief that communities of color and people of color are a “problem” to be avoided. It also results in public support for reduction or elimination of resources for our public institutions, like schools, public

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transit, etc. because they are seen as inefficient or a waste of money. Flooded New Orleans challenges us to see that when we allow public systems to fail, eventually all communities will suffer, albeit unequally.

Black and other low-income communities of color are not accidental, but created by policy choices. Policies, particularly federal ones created a White middle class in the '40s, '50s and '60s, drove White suburban development and laid the foundation for the make-up of our vulnerable and racially identifiable communities across the country.

Prior to the broken levees, according to the 2000 Census, New Orleans' population was 67.3% Black, 26.6% White, 3.1% Latino and 2.3% Asian. The city was shrinking in population and opportunity. It was not always predominantly Black.

As the Brookings Institution has pointed out, in the first half of the 20th Century, New Orleans was a racially and culturally vibrant and heterogeneous city, despite its poverty. In the

¹ Manuel Pastor, Jr. et al., *Regions that Work: How Cities and Suburbs Can Grow Together* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

mid-1970s, if you were Black you probably lived in a community with or near Whites. There were no majority Black neighborhoods. Poverty was still too high, but was not concentrated in certain communities.

After 1970, segregation and concentrated poverty skyrocketed. In fact, New Orleans ranked 29th in the country based on 2000 Black/White racial segregation² and second among the 50 largest cities in the country based on the number of extreme poverty neighborhoods. The number of concentrated poverty (or extreme poverty) neighborhoods in New Orleans actually grew by two-thirds between 1970 and 2000, even though the poverty rate stayed about the same (26-28%).³

This happened in large part because half of the city's White population moved to the suburbs between 1970 and 2000. It is a shift that burdens economic growth and makes regional well-being more elusive. For example, the Census Bureau estimated that, in 2004, no population growth occurred in the New Orleans metropolitan region as a whole and the city lost over 22,000 residents.⁴

The nation's suburbs, including New Orleans', were constructed on policy choices, largely federal ones. Government-created incentives targeted Whites and subsidized their flight from cities, and their relocation to the suburbs.⁵ The process began with New

Deal legislation, like the National Housing Act of 1934, which created the agency that subsidized and insured private mortgages. Federally subsidized mortgage loans often required new owners to refuse to sell to Black people through racially restrictive covenants in deeds.⁶ By the 1950s, about half of all home mortgages were federally insured through the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Veterans Administration (VA), but only in segregated neighborhoods.⁷ The FHA's underwriting manual required a determination about the presence of "incompatible racial or social groups...".⁸ People of color were literally classified as nuisances, to be avoided along with "stables" and "pig pens."⁹ The FHA urged developers, bankers, and local governments to use zoning ordinances and physical barriers to protect racial homogeneity.¹⁰ This meant that Blacks had many fewer choices about where to buy a home and no federal support to help them buy homes, as Whites did.¹¹



When we disinvest in public infrastructure, communities suffer.

² CensusScope, "Segregation: Dissimilarity Indices," http://www.censuscope.org/us/rank_dissimilarity_white_black.html

³ Alan Berube and Bruce Katz, "Katrina's Window: Confronting Concentrated Poverty Across America," The Brookings Institution, October 2005, http://www.brook.edu/metro/pubs/20051012_concentratedpoverty.htm. Concentrated poverty neighborhoods (also referred to as extreme or high poverty) are census tracts where 40% or more of the population is living at or below the federal poverty line. Ibid.

⁴ The Brookings Institution, "New Orleans After the Storm: Lessons from the Past, a Plan for the Future," October 2005, The Brookings Institution, http://www.brook.edu/metro/pubs/20051012_NewOrleans.pdf

⁵ Ibid. at 51

⁶ Richard Thompson Ford, "The Boundaries of Race: Political Geography in Legal Analysis," 107 *Harvard Law Review* 449, 451 (1995).

⁷ David Rusk, *Inside Game/Outside Game: Winning Strategies for Saving Urban America* (1999), 86-88.

⁸ Michael H. Schill and Susan M. Wachter, "The Spatial Bias of Federal Housing Law and Policy: Concentrated Poverty in Urban America," 143 *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 1285, 1286-90 (1995).

⁹ Ford, 451 (citing Charles Abrams, *Forbidden Neighborhood: A Study of Prejudice in Housing* (1955), 231).

¹⁰ Rusk, 87 (citing Irving Welfeld, *Where We Live: A Social History of American Housing* (1988)).

¹¹ Maya Wiley and John A. Powell, "Tearing Down Structural Racism and Rebuilding Communities," *Clearinghouse Review*, 40, no. 1-2 (May-June 2006): 68.



The New Orleans that existed before the 2005 hurricane season suffered from the same suburbanization, shrinking tax base, racial isolation and environmental degradation that has become the trademark of suburbanization policies.

The now famous Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans is illustrative. Historically, it was undesirable land – a swamp – and the lower portion of a swath of slave plantations. Poor freed Blacks and immigrant laborers from Ireland, Germany and Italy, unable to afford housing in other areas of the city (higher areas), were forced to endure flooding and disease to live there.¹² Over time, suburbanization policies and racial preferences helped Europeans to move to more opportunity. Blacks did not have the same opportunities. Prior to the broken levees, the Lower Ninth Ward was almost exclusively Black and 36% of its residents poor.

So effective were federal incentives to suburbanize that by 1990, two-thirds of the nation's metropolitan population lived outside the central city in 168 census-defined metropolitan areas, compared to 1950, when 60% lived in the old central cities.¹³ Moreover, 152 new metropolitan areas sprang up during four decades of suburbanization.

Suburbanization policies, no longer explicitly racist, continued to drive suburbanization. The transportation block grants of the 1980s allowed states to use mass transit dollars to serve those living in distant suburbs commuting by train to the financial city centers, while leaving thousands of city center residents, standing on city

Two in ten households in the Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama areas hit hard by Hurricane Katrina had no car. People in the hardest hit areas were twice as likely as most Americans to be poor and without a car. Over one-third of New Orleans' Blacks did not own a car.

streets waiting for overcrowded buses.¹⁴

In urban areas, Blacks and Latinos comprise over 54% of transit users (62% of bus riders, 35% of subway riders, and 29% of commuter rail riders). Nationally, only about 5.3% of all Americans use public transit to get to work. Blacks are almost six times as likely as Whites to use transit to get around. Urban transit is especially important to Blacks where over 88% live in metropolitan areas and 53.1% live inside central cities. Nearly 60% of transit riders are served by the ten largest urban transit systems and the remaining 40% by the other 5,000 transit systems. In areas with populations from one million and below, more than half of all transit passengers have incomes of less than \$15,000 per year.¹⁵

Even in the 1990s, when certain federal highway funds were available on a flexible basis for states and regional localities to transfer from highway programs to public transit projects, only 12.5% of the money (\$4.2 billion of the \$33.8 billion available) was actually transferred for transit projects.¹⁶

These policies not only promoted and expanded racial segregation, they created an invisible wall separating Blacks and other communities of color from jobs, resources and services.

¹² Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, "Lower Ninth Ward Neighborhood Snapshot," Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, <http://www.gnocdc.org/orleans/8/22/snapshot.html>

¹³ Rusk, 67.

¹⁴ Robert D. Bullard, "Addressing Urban Transportation Equity in the United States," 31 *Fordham Urban Law Journal* 1183, 1196 (October 2004).

¹⁵ Robert D. Bullard and Beverly Wright, "Legacy of Unfairness: Why Some Americans Get Left Behind," September 29, 2005, Environmental Justice Resource Center, <http://www.ejrc.cau.edu/Exec%20Summary%20Legacy.html>

¹⁶ Robert Puentes, "Flexible Funding for Transit: Who Uses It?" 1-2, May 2000, The Brookings Institution, <http://www.brook.edu/urban/flexfundingexsum.htm>

Nationally, only 7% of White households own no car, compared with 24% of Black households, 17% of Latino households, and 13% of Asian-American households. Two in ten households in the Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama areas hit hard by Hurricane Katrina had no car. People in the hardest hit areas were twice as likely as most Americans to be poor and without a car. Over one-third of New Orleans' Blacks did not own a car. Over 15% of New Orleans' residents relied on public transportation as their primary mode of travel.¹⁷

People with less means and no car did not benefit from public funds for transportation while those with some means did. Jobs followed suburbanization and those without cars could not follow the jobs. According to the Brookings Institution, in 1970, New Orleans had 54% of its region's population and 66% of its jobs. By 2000, it had only 36% of the region's population and 42% of its jobs.¹⁸

Highway dollars also drove the environmentally and financially unsustainable growth of sprawling suburbs, left cities weakened from a reduced tax base and contributed in myriad ways to environmental degradation through air and water pollution, consumption of open space and increased automobile use which, in turn, contributes to global warming, one of the explanations for the increase in the severity of our hurricane seasons.

In large part, the stresses on our communities through the high costs of services, the degradation of the environment, and the sorting and division of our people are driven by policies that started out as racist and have created structures

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicts eight to ten hurricanes in the North Atlantic Ocean this hurricane season. As many as a half dozen of them, NOAA says, may be at least category 3 hurricanes, like Hurricane Katrina. So, New York is New Orleans. Or could be.

that appear neutral, but operate to discriminate. This "structural racism" represents the racially-driven failure of the nation to invest in Blacks, Latinos, Native Americans and Asian Americans as important human resources for the country's future.

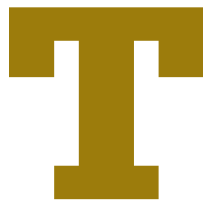
In fact, a calamity similar to New Orleans with similar faces of abandonment would befall any metropolitan area hit by a storm that tested its infrastructure and resilience. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicts eight to ten hurricanes in the North Atlantic Ocean this hurricane season. As many as a half dozen of them, NOAA says, may be at least category 3 hurricanes, like Hurricane Katrina. So, New York is New Orleans. Or could be. As climate change makes clear, what happens to one community can happen to all communities. Our fates are linked across neighborhoods, cities and across regions.

We compound these problems by reducing the resources and capacity of government to invest in communities and people. For example, in 2004, the richest 10% of Americans received tax cuts worth two times what the government would spend on job training, college Pell grants, public housing, low-income rental subsidies and child care.¹⁹ Our people, our communities and our nation cannot afford these cuts.

¹⁷ Bullard and Wright.

¹⁸ The Brookings Institution, "New Orleans After the Storm: Lessons from the Past, a Plan for the Future."

¹⁹ David Sirota, "Welcome to New Orleans," *In These Times*, 37, October 24, 2005.



he circumstances under which the state and city governments are developing and implementing policies to rebuild the Gulf Coast

region are incredibly difficult. Current rebuilding policies are well-intended and produced in very difficult circumstances. Both state and city policy-makers and employees were often themselves victims of the flooding or struggling to support family members whose lives were devastated. Moreover, the cupboard was bare in the city and state resources stretched very thin given the loss of revenue and the social demands caused by the flooding. City and state officials have been forced to work with uncertainty about the level and reliability of federal help.

This section of the report reviews the impact of the broken levees on the city and its residents. In evaluating the impact of current policies, this aims to illuminate not vilify. The unfortunate truth is, in evaluating the ability of New Orleans' residents to return, or people similarly situated to relocate to New Orleans, under current policies and funding, few communities can be expected to recover. Most of those who have returned, or will be able to return or relocate to the New Orleans metropolitan region, will be White and relatively well-off.

Across the city, neighborhoods are struggling to recover from unprecedented damage and destruction. Generally, those most significantly impacted by the current state of New Orleans are poor communities of color. Previous residents of neighborhoods such as the Lower Ninth Ward, Bywater, and Village de l'Est were the most vulnerable before the storm, and face the greatest challenges to return

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home and revive their communities. Wealthier districts with a larger White population, such as Lakeview, also face adversity and its residents have suffered tremendous loss. Relatively speaking, however, Lakeview residents have more opportunities to rebound from catastrophe because they had greater financial assets and relied less on systems likely to be disrupted by these horrible events, such as public schools and transportation.

The impact of destroyed housing, an economy struggling to recover, inadequate healthcare options, a limited public education system, and a hurricane protection system which may not be sufficient to withstand another assault, do not offer many New Orleanians sufficient opportunities to return. Furthermore, these indicators are all linked.

New Orleans Report Card: Overall Grades

Planning District	Overall Grade	Percent Non-White	Average Household Income
French Quarter/CBD	D+	20.64%	\$60,794
Central City/Garden District	D	72.51%	\$36,761
Uptown/Carrollton	C	52.55%	\$57,398
Mid-City	F	87.88%	\$27,015
Lakeview	D-	8.51%	\$73,716
Gentilly	F	73.57%	\$47,522
Bywater	F	88.30%	\$28,873
Lower Ninth Ward	F	96.99%	\$28,867
New Orleans East	F	90.47%	\$42,951
Village de l'Est	F	96.40%	\$36,856
Venetian Islands	F	47.05%	\$40,621
Algiers	C	69.82%	\$42,484
New Aurora/English Turn	D-	83.10%	\$62,939

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

It is not enough simply to ask the state and city to reopen all the public schools or bus routes and expect people to return. State and local government do not have the money. All aspects of the public infrastructure, including things such as housing, education, transportation, and health care services are essential to bring back New Orleans and make its region stronger.

The Recovery Report Card assigns an overall grade for each of the city's neighborhoods (listed by planning district) based on key indicators affecting New Orleanians' ability to return or relocate to a new New Orleans (utilities, economy, health, rental housing, owned housing, public education, and population). Each indicator has a numerical score based on the criteria used to determine the impact of rebuilding progress on the ability to return or relocate to New Orleans. The score is then converted into a letter grade. Letter grades are assigned for each score by ranges as indicated in the Grades and Score Ranges table.²⁰

As the report card on page 8 shows, no New Orleans neighborhood is doing well, though some are doing worse than others. Those with the highest overall grades – Uptown/Carrollton and Algiers – have high average household incomes

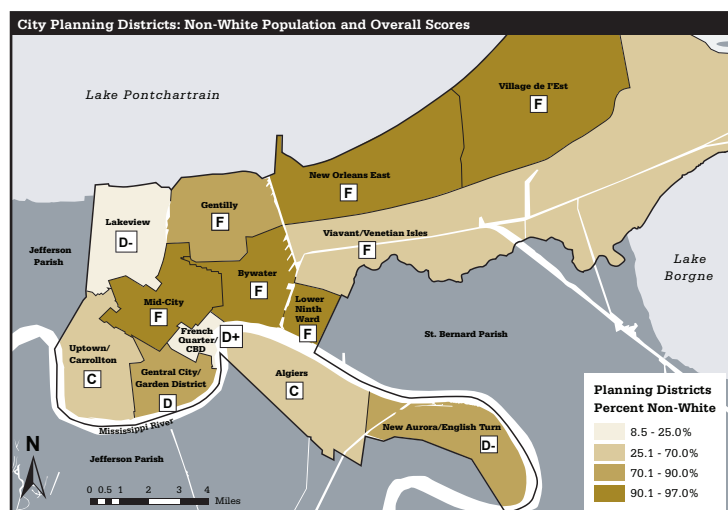
Grades and Score Ranges

A+: Score >97	A: 93 ≤ Score < 97	A-: 90 ≤ Score < 93
B+: >Score ≥ 87	B: 83 ≤ Score < 87	B-: 80 ≤ Score < 83
C+: 80 > Score ≥ 77	C: 73 ≤ Score < 77	C-: 70 ≤ Score < 73
D+: 70 > Score ≥ 67	D: 63 ≤ Score < 67	D-: 60 ≤ Score < 63
F: Score < 60		

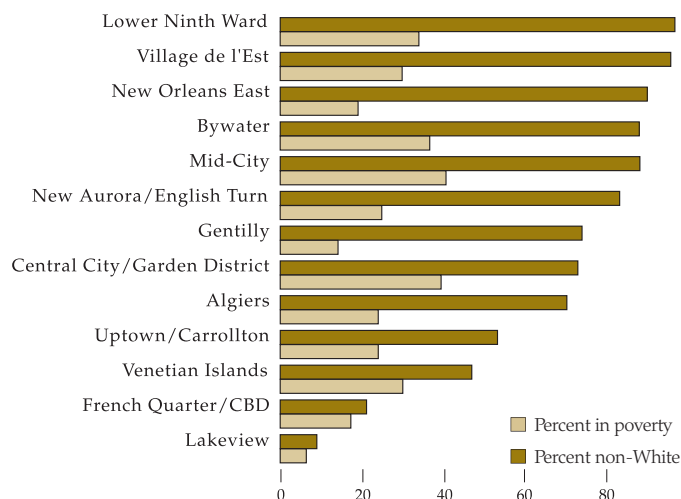
and high homeownership rates (86% and 98% respectively). Neighborhoods that are doing the worst (those with failing grades) are all majority communities of color, with the exception of Venetian Islands (47% non-White) and are failing across a majority of the indicators. Most of these are also largely poor neighborhoods. Areas like Lakeview and the French Quarter/Central Business District (CBD) are still faring poorly, but slightly better because of their higher grades for economy and housing. Lakeview and the French Quarter both have homeownership rates of over 90%.

As the rest of this section illustrates in more detail, the interconnection between housing, jobs, health, education, and physical infrastructure significantly impact the resilience of communities and the ability of New Orleanians, particularly Blacks, to return to the metropolitan region.

New Orleans Recovery Report Card Map



Percent non-White and in Poverty



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

²⁰ For a more detailed explanation of the grading system, see New Orleans Recovery Report Card: Methodology, Appendix A2.



HURRICANE PROTECTION

A National Science Foundation investigation found that some of New Orleans' levees began to fail before Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans.²¹ Not only that, the levees were never built to protect the city against a category 3 hurricane, which is exactly what Hurricane Katrina was when it hit New Orleans.²²

On July 11, 2006, the Army Corps of Engineers reported that the hurricane protection system surrounding Orleans Parish was fixed.²³ This system includes the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal, 17th St. Canal Interim Closure Structure, Orleans Ave. Interim Closure Structure, London Ave. Canal Interim Closure Structure, and New Orleans East contracts. Unfortunately, the current hurricane protection system will not protect New Orleans from a category 3 hurricane let alone a category 4 or 5 hurricane.²⁴ Experts at the University of California at Berkley report that the newly repaired levees are built with material of questionable resiliency and may be useless in stopping any hurricane from flooding the city again.²⁵

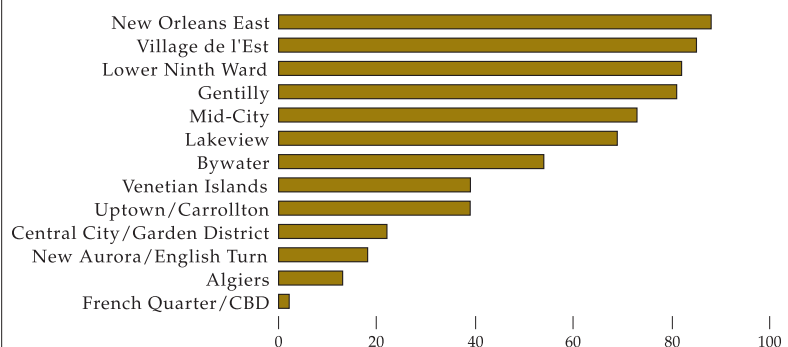
Many of the buildings in New Orleans are not capable of withstanding damage from the high winds of a category 5 hurricane, let alone the threat of flooding.²⁶ The cost of a system capable of protecting New Orleans from a category 5 hurricane is estimated at upwards of \$30 billion and could take decades to complete.²⁷

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Overall, the neighborhoods which saw the most severe damage were communities of color, and, for the most part, poor. Over 80% of all housing units in New Orleans East, Village de l'Est, and The Lower Ninth Ward sustained major or severe damage.

As before, people of color and low-income people will again be the most vulnerable to these dangers. If they return to their homes, they are more likely returning to areas more susceptible to flooding, to lack insurance coverage and to rely on damaged public infrastructure.

Percent of All Owner-Occupied Units Sustaining Major or Severe Damage



Source: Greater New Orleans Community Data Center (2006)

²¹ Ralph Vartabedian, "Experts Fault Repairs to New Orleans Levees; The corps' restoration project is using weak sand that will erode in a storm, investigators say," *Los Angeles Times*, A14, March 8, 2006.

²² Diane M. Grassi, "New Orleans Remains Problematic for Army Corps of Engineers," *Amherst Times*, July 19, 2006, http://www.amhersttimes.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2232&Itemid=27 (describing findings from the Army Corps's July 10, 2006 interim report).

²³ Army Corps of Engineers, Hurricane Protection System, Weekly Briefs, July 11, 2006, Army Corps of Engineers, <http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps/NEWS.HTM>

²⁴ Army Corps of Engineers, Hurricane Protection System, "Questions and Answers: Hurricane Recovery and Levee Issues," January 18, 2006, <http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps/Q&A01.htm>

²⁵ Vartabedian, A14.

²⁶ Nicole T. Carter, "New Orleans Levees and Floodwalls: Hurricane Damage Protection," CRS Report for Congress, September 6, 2005, Congressional Research Service, <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RS22238.pdf>.

²⁷ John Schwartz, "Full Flood Safety in New Orleans Could Take Billions and Decades," *New York Times*, November 29, 2005.

HOUSING

As the grade for housing availability suggests, no one is having an easy time returning to or relocating in the New Orleans area. And people from the hardest hit communities, mostly Black, are having the hardest time returning. Looking at housing opportunities, current rebuilding policies get a failing grade for facilitating the return of renters and a minimally adequate grade for facilitating the return of homeowners in Black communities, like Mid-City, Gentilly, Bywater, the Lower Ninth Ward and Village de l'Est.

Housing Grades

Planning District	Rental Housing	Owned Housing	Overall Housing	Percent non-White	Average Household Income
French Quarter/CBD	C-	A+	C+	20.64%	\$60,794
Central City/Garden District	D	A-	C-	72.51%	\$36,761
Uptown/Carrollton	F	B	D+	52.55%	\$57,398
Mid-City	F	C+	F	87.88%	\$27,015
Lakeview	F	C	D	8.51%	\$73,716
Gentilly	F	C	F	73.57%	\$47,522
Bywater	F	B	F	88.30%	\$28,873
Lower Ninth Ward	F	C	F	96.99%	\$28,867
New Orleans East	F	C-	F	90.47%	\$42,951
Village de l'Est	F	D+	F	96.40%	\$36,856
Venetian Islands	C	B-	C+	47.05%	\$40,621
Algiers	D-	A+	B	69.82%	\$42,484
New Aurora/English Turn	D-	A	B	83.10%	\$62,939

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

The rental housing score for each neighborhood is both a measure of damage done to rental housing and the impact of increased average rents since the flooding. Residents who will find it most difficult to return lived in neighborhoods which sustained substantial damage and already

Looking at housing opportunities, current rebuilding policies get a failing grade for facilitating the return of renters and a minimally adequate grade for facilitating the return of homeowners in Black communities.

had a large percentage of renters stretching to pay rent. For example, the poor and Black Lower Ninth Ward has a failing grade because it received low scores for rental housing (over 80% of rental units were damaged) and because of rent stress of previous residents (over 27% of pre-broken levees renters were paying over 50% of income towards rent). The wealthier French Quarter and Venetian Islands have a higher score because they sustained relatively little damage during the 2005 hurricane season.

The owned housing score is a measure of damage and recovery. It estimates rebuilding effort by the number of owner-occupied units sustaining major or severe damage and residential building permit data for the city. Village de l'Est, an almost all-Black community with a poverty rate approaching 30%, is given the worst score considering the staggering devastation in that area. The wealthy and White French Quarter, as well as the middle-class Black Algiers, saw significantly less damage, and so receive much better scores and, therefore, better grades.

The overall housing score is an average of the rental and owned scores, based on homeownership in each district. For example, New Aurora/English Turn has a 73% homeownership rate, so the overall score is closer to the owned score, while in the French Quarter, which has the lowest homeownership rate of 24%, the overall score is closer to the rental score.



Homeowners

While still difficult, especially considering costly elevation requirements, New Orleanians who owned their homes and had homeowner's insurance are more likely to recoup losses sustained during the 2005 hurricane season, due to rebuilding policies such as The Road Home Program.²⁸ The Road Home Program, developed by the Louisiana state government, does not address financial assistance to renters,²⁹ but offers financial assistance of up to \$150,000, in addition to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) aid and insurance recovery, to insured homeowners who wish to return and rebuild anywhere in Louisiana. Homeowner's insurance covers wind damage, but not water damage. Homeowners must carry additional insurance to be covered for flooding.

Many in New Orleans did not have flood insurance, including flood-ravaged areas like the Lower Ninth Ward. FEMA estimated that only about 40% of Orleans Parish homeowners had insurance coverage.³⁰ Many Lower Ninth Ward homeowners did not have flood insurance. The area was not listed as a "high-risk" flood district on federal insurance maps. In fact, this community is a few feet higher than most of the city.³¹

The uninsured, underinsured and renters are finding it difficult to rebuild homes and lives in New Orleans because, in part, they cannot pay for it. This is particularly true of Blacks and low-income people of all races.

New Orleans had an average rate of 47% homeownership before the levees failed. The highest percentages of owner-occupied units are in New Aurora/English Turn (73%), Gentilly (72%) and Lakeview (67%). Gentilly is a middle-class (\$47,522 average household income) community of color, while the other two are predominantly well-off White communities,

with average household incomes of \$62,939 and \$73,716. The French Quarter although predominantly White, had very low rates of homeownership (24%). Although renters, these residents were financially well-off. The average household income in this area was \$60,794.

Not all homeowners in New Orleans were wealthy. The Lower Ninth Ward, with a population over 90% Black, had a 54% homeownership rate before the levees failed, but was very poor. Over 34% of this planning district was living in poverty, and its average household income was under \$29,000. With the exception of Lakeview, predominantly White neighborhoods are on high ground and have high incomes. All predominantly White communities have higher rates of homeowner's insurance than predominantly people of color communities.

Percent in Poverty, non-White & Homeownership

New Orleans Planning District	Households	Average Household Income	Percent in Poverty	Percent non-White	Percent Owner-Occupied
Lakeview	12331	\$73,716	6.29%	8.51%	66.3%
New Aurora/English Turn	1701	\$62,939	24.80%	83.10%	73.2%
French Quarter/CBD	3905	\$60,794	17.26%	20.64%	23.8%
Uptown/Carrollton	28418	\$57,398	23.99%	52.55%	46.8%
Gentilly	15966	\$47,522	14.58%	73.57%	72.0%
New Orleans East	28199	\$42,951	18.90%	90.47%	55.5%
Algiers	20568	\$42,484	24.09%	69.82%	59.2%
Venetian Islands	1440	\$40,621	29.93%	47.05%	61.5%
Village de l'Est	3840	\$36,856	29.90%	96.40%	47.1%
Central City/Garden District	21324	\$36,761	39.51%	72.51%	26.4%
Bywater	16888	\$28,873	36.46%	88.30%	43.1%
Lower Ninth Ward	6803	\$28,867	34.42%	96.99%	54.1%
Mid-City	28233	\$27,015	40.51%	87.88%	31.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

²⁸ The Road Home Program, <http://www.road2la.org/default.htm>

²⁹ The Road Home Program, About the Road Home Program, "Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)," <http://www.road2la.org/about-us/faqs.htm>

³⁰ Reuters, "New Orleans residents lament lack of insurance," September 5, 2005, MSNBC.com, <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/9170157/>

³¹ Peter Whoriskey, "Risk Estimate Led to Few Flood Policies," *Washington Post*, October 17, 2005, [washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com), <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/10/16/AR2005101601209.html>

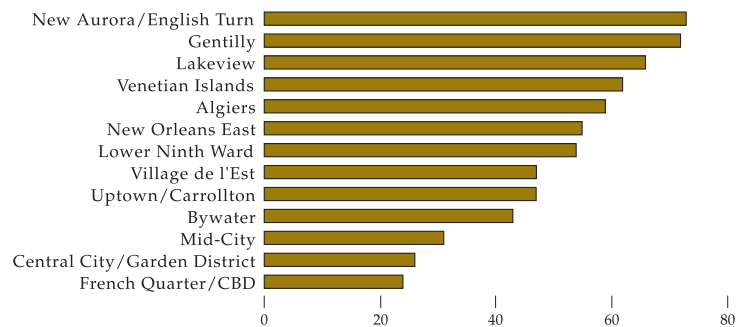
The uninsured homeowner, whose need is often greater than the insured homeowner, will receive less aid to rebuild. The Road Home Program, gives uninsured homeowners only 70% of what an insured homeowner would receive for the same property.³² This policy decision hurts several communities of color, particularly the Lower Ninth Ward, Mid-City, Village de l'Est, and Bywater, and makes it harder for their residents to return and rebuild. In these four districts, over 30% of owner-occupied units sustained major³³ or severe³⁴ damage. The Lower Ninth Ward lost almost 50% of its homes. The hardest hit community with a majority of White residents was the Venetian Islands, which is 53% non-White and lost almost a quarter of its owner-occupied units in this manner.

In the poverty-stricken Lower Ninth Ward, only 38% of homes sustaining major or sever damage were insured. In Mid-City, another poor, Black community hit hard by the storm, barely a majority (52%) of damaged homes were insured. Only two hard hit communities have significant insurance rates. Almost 80% of damaged owner-occupied homes in Lakeview, an upper-class White community, and New Orleans East, a middle-class community of color, were insured.

Communities of color faced the most damage to rental properties.³⁵ A devastating 91% of rental housing in New Orleans East sustained major or severe damage during the 2005 season. Rental properties in the Lower Ninth Ward (84% loss), Village de l'Est (76%), and Mid-City (61%) were also hit very hard. All four of these districts have a majority-people of color population and, aside from New Orleans East, a poverty rate of 30% or higher. On the other hand, the two areas with the least

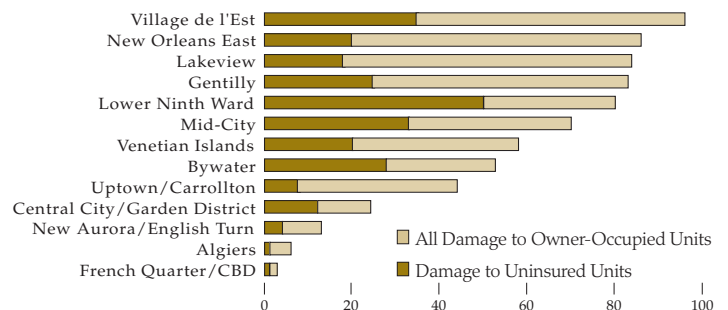
damage to rental housing were the majority White French Quarter (2% loss) and Venetian Islands (9%).

Percent Homeownership



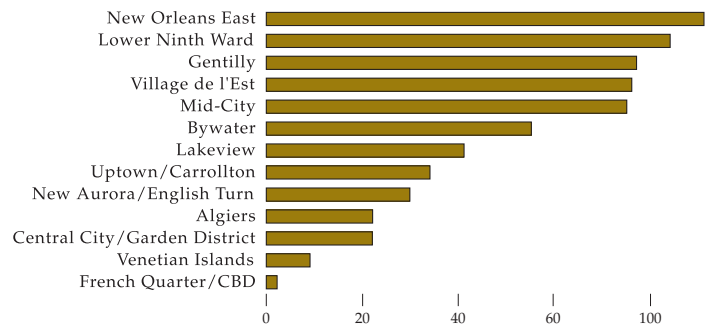
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

Percent Owner-Occupied Units Sustaining Major or Severe Damage



Source: Greater New Orleans Community Data Center (2006)

Percent of Rental Units Sustaining Major or Severe Damage



Source: Greater New Orleans Community Data Center (2006)

³² The Road Home Program, <http://www.road2la.org/default.htm>.

³³ Major damage: Area had 1-2 feet in flooding or FEMA inspection finds between \$5,200 and \$30,000 in damage.

³⁴ Severe damage: Area had over 2 feet in flooding or FEMA inspection finds over \$30,000 in damage.

³⁵ Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, "Current Housing Unit Damage Estimates: Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma," February 12, 2006, http://www.gnocdc.org/reports/Katrina_Rita_Wilma_Damage_2_12_06_revised.pdf



Mary's Story



MILES TO GO

before I **Rest**

**SLIDELL, LOUISIANA,
ST. TAMMANY PARISH**

On the evening of August 28, 2005, Mary, a 61 year-old French language teacher, was safely at her brother's house in Breaux Bridge, Louisiana (just outside of Lafayette). Days later, Mary met up with two of her sisters in Dallas. That is when she learned the extent of the devastation – 30 feet of storm surge dumping over 30 feet of water inland in south Louisiana, with water as high as 11 feet in some homes in Mary's Creole neighborhood.

Mary could not go home to see how much she had lost. The law and her trauma kept her away until almost two months after the flooding. To rebuild her life, she had a few days worth of clothes, her car, God and her family.

She got free counseling services at a church in Dallas, fighting against her upbringing which taught that counseling represented weakness. She heard first-hand accounts of her devastated home and community from her 31 year-old son, nephews and brothers, who had returned to Slidell. They sent video of her house – the house her parents lived in before her; the house she grew up in. Flood waters had reached 7 feet off the ground and 5 feet inside the house. All of her personal belongings, including 60 years worth of vital family records were lost. Mary was overwhelmed with grief for herself and for her community. Hers was one of the few houses on high ground. If she had 5 feet in her raised house, the other houses in the neighborhood must have been completely submerged with the massive flooding.

When she returned to her devastated home and distressed community, Mary went to the high school she worked in to check in. Mary had a note from her doctor indicating that she, like so many victims, was suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and stated that

Mary had no flood insurance and could only rebuild her house with the sweat equity of her family. She did not get a FEMA trailer until the end of February 2006, some six months after Katrina. Because she had no insurance and her family helped her for free, she could only work on the house on weekends. Her family members are forced to sleep in tents at night to help her rebuild.

she needed time off. She requested sick leave, which was denied. After 37 years of teaching in the Louisiana school system, Mary was forced to retire, just two years shy of full retirement.

Now, emotionally devastated, Mary had lost everything – her home, her community, her job and her health. She moved to Arlington, Texas to live with family and consider what to do. She had little control over her life.

She did not receive her first FEMA emergency money until January of 2006 (five months after the storm). Until then she had been living on her savings and the generosity of friends and family. Like so many victims of the flooding, FEMA originally rejected Mary's plea for help because her brother, who was temporarily living at the family home, had filed a claim with the same address.

Like so many people of color who owned their homes, Mary had no flood insurance and could only rebuild her house with the sweat equity of her family. She did not get a FEMA trailer until the end of February 2006, some six months after Katrina. Because she had no insurance and her family helped her for free, she could only work on the house on weekends. Her family members were forced to sleep in tents at night to help her rebuild.

Mary tried to get help from the Small Business Administration (SBA) to get her life back on track, but SBA too denied her loan because she did not have enough income. FEMA also denied her grant application. Survivors, by this time, had learned that they had to share information about how to fight for help from the federal government. Another survivor told her to appeal the denial of her grant because the federal government and insurance companies were told to deny all applications in the hopes that only a fraction of the people denied would appeal. Mary is now appealing her loan denials in hopes of getting the help she needs to rebuild her home and return from her displacement.



Renters

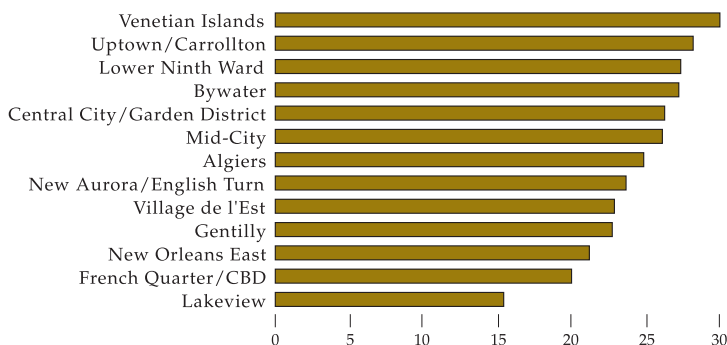
Before the levees failed, one in four New Orleans renters was paying more than 50% of his or her income towards rent, making it near impossible to pay for other living necessities. This demonstrates a shortage of affordable housing and living wage jobs.³⁶ The two communities with the highest percentages of this rent stress were Venetian Islands (30%) and Uptown/Carrollton (28%), two relatively wealthy and racially diverse

Percent Rent-Stressed, non-White and in Poverty

Planning District	Average Gross Rent	Percent of Renters Paying >50% of Income	Percent Non-White	Percent in Poverty
Venetian Islands	\$414	29.92%	47.05%	29.93%
Uptown/Carrollton	\$620	28.11%	52.55%	23.99%
Lower Ninth Ward	\$443	27.29%	96.99%	34.42%
Bywater	\$449	27.16%	88.30%	36.46%
Central City/Garden District	\$512	26.20%	72.51%	39.51%
Mid-City	\$432	26.06%	87.88%	40.51%
Algiers	\$519	24.80%	69.82%	24.09%
New Aurora/English Turn	\$374	23.60%	83.10%	24.80%
Village de l'Est	\$460	22.80%	96.40%	29.90%
Gentilly	\$546	22.67%	73.57%	14.58%
New Orleans East	\$535	21.15%	90.47%	18.90%
French Quarter/CBD	\$725	19.94%	20.64%	17.26%
Lakeview	\$754	15.39%	8.51%	6.29%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

Percent Rent-Stressed by Planning District



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

Damage to rental units and the shortage of rental housing has caused price gouging across the New Orleans metro region. Fair Market Rents (FMRs) rose by close to 40% from 2005 to 2006. The severe rises in rent make it near impossible for low-income people and, therefore, many Blacks to return.

neighborhoods. Both districts had average household incomes above \$40,000 and approximately 50% White population. Although Lakeview and the French Quarter/CBD have the highest average rents in the city, these communities have the smallest percentage of renters paying 50% or more of their income towards rent. These two communities have the largest White populations of all districts and are among the top three in terms of average household income.

Damage to rental units and the shortage of rental housing has caused price gouging across the New Orleans metro region. Fair Market Rents (FMRs) rose by close to 40% from 2005 to 2006.³⁷ The severe rises in rent make it near impossible for low-income people and, therefore, many Blacks to return. Again, residents of Venetian Islands, Uptown/Carrollton, Lower Ninth Ward, and Bywater are the most impacted.

In each of these four communities, over 27% of the population was already paying more than half of household income towards

Fair Market Rents for New Orleans MSA

	Efficiency	1-Bedroom	2-Bedroom	3-Bedroom	4-Bedroom
FY 2005	\$522	\$578	\$676	\$868	\$897
FY 2006	\$725	\$803	\$940	\$1,206	\$1,247
Increase (\$)	\$203	\$225	\$264	\$338	\$350
Increase (%)	38.89%	38.93%	39.05%	38.94%	39.02%

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

³⁶ U.S. Census Bureau (2000).

³⁷ Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, "New Orleans Fair Market Rent History," http://www.gnocdc.org/reports/fair_market_rents.html

rent. Aside from the Venetian Islands, these communities were less than 50% White. Of the four, Uptown/Carrollton had the lowest poverty rate, at almost 24%.

Almost half (48%) of Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) units, affordable housing units built through this important federal program, were in New Orleans East.³⁸ These 1,385 units accounted for 11% of rental units and 5% of all housing units in this area. Considering over 90% of rental units in New Orleans East sustained damage during the 2005 hurricane season (the largest percentage for any planning district), it is fair to say many of

LIHTC Units Pre-Broken Levees

New Orleans Planning District	Pre-Katrina LIHTC Units ³⁹	Percent of Total Rental Units	Percent of Total Housing	Percent in Poverty	Percent non-White
New Orleans East	1385	11.04%	4.92%	18.90%	90.47%
Village de l'Est	410	20.30%	10.74%	29.90%	96.40%
Venetian Islands	410	74.41%	28.63%	29.93%	47.05%
Central City/Garden District	335	2.14%	1.57%	39.51%	72.51%
Mid-City	193	1.01%	0.69%	40.51%	87.88%
Algiers	170	2.03%	0.83%	24.09%	69.82%
Gentilly	108	2.39%	0.67%	14.58%	73.57%
Uptown/Carrollton	100	0.66%	0.35%	23.99%	52.55%
New Aurora/English Turn	81	17.76%	4.76%	24.80%	83.10%
Bywater	68	0.71%	0.40%	36.46%	88.30%
Lower Ninth Ward	68	2.18%	1.00%	34.42%	96.99%
French Quarter/CBD	49	1.65%	1.26%	17.26%	20.64%
Lakeview	0	0.00%	0.00%	6.29%	8.51%

Source: Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

these affordable units were lost, further hurting communities of color.

Public housing also was hard hit by New Orleans flooding. Before Katrina, 5,100 families were living in New Orleans' ten public housing complexes.⁴⁰ Storm damage forced the closing of all but three of these facilities: Guste (Melpomene), Fischer, and St. Thomas housing projects. One year later, only 1,000 units have reopened in damaged developments. Four of the seven closed housing projects are scheduled for permanent demolition and plans are to replace them with mixed-income housing, only a small fraction of which will be dedicated to low-income residents.⁴¹ While mixed-income housing is a good policy choice, the overall reduction in affordable housing for low-income people is a tremendous mistake. Based on the high rates of rent stress, New Orleans needed many more units of affordable housing before the levees broke. Of the remaining three projects, only the Iberville complex is currently being repaired, while Desire and Florida "may require demolition" according to the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO).⁴²

The poor, and generally Black, people who lived in public housing complexes before the levees broke currently have little chance to return to an affordable living situation. The decision to destroy four (and possibly six) of the city's ten housing projects severely compromises the right of these New Orleanians to return in the short term and long term, once again illustrating the disadvantages of being poor.

³⁸ Department of Housing and Urban Development, LIHTC Database, <http://lihtc.huduser.org/>

³⁹ Data gathered by Zip Code. A Zip Code was determined to be representative of a planning district if its center falls within the planning district.

⁴⁰ Gwen Filosa, "Displaced residents file suit: Local, federal housing agencies face civil rights allegations," *Times-Picayune*, June 28, 2006.

⁴¹ Camille Whitworth, "Four Housing Projects To Be Torn Down," June 15, 2006, WDSU.Com, <http://www.wdsu.com/news/9377298/detail.html>

⁴² Housing Authority of New Orleans, "Post-Katrina Frequently Asked Questions," <http://www.hano.org/FAQ072006.pdf>



UTILITIES

According to the July 17, 2006 City of New Orleans Situation Report,⁴³ the majority of New Orleans has full gas, electricity, and potable water services. As a result, almost all communities have a high grade for utility service, which is important to recover and support the ability of people to return or locate in these areas.

Utilities Grades

Planning District	Utilities	Percent Non-White	Average Household Income
French Quarter/CBD	A+	20.64%	\$60,794
Central City/Garden District	A+	72.51%	\$36,761
Uptown/Carrollton	A+	52.55%	\$57,398
Mid-City	A+	87.88%	\$27,015
Lakeview	A+	8.51%	\$73,716
Gentilly	A+	73.57%	\$47,522
Bywater	A+	88.30%	\$28,873
Lower Ninth Ward	C+	96.99%	\$28,867
New Orleans East	A+	90.47%	\$42,951
Village de l'Est	A+	96.40%	\$36,856
Venetian Islands	A+	47.05%	\$40,621
Algiers	A+	69.82%	\$42,484
New Aurora/English Turn	A+	83.10%	\$62,939

Source: City of New Orleans Situation Report (July 17, 2006),
U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

Glaringly, the Lower Ninth Ward, the area with the largest people of color population (only 3% White), remains the only planning district without full utilities across all three services - gas, electricity, and potable water. Although New Orleans East has 99% of its utilities, this neighborhood, as well as the Lower Ninth Ward, experienced a slower recovery of utilities than any other area in the city. While the availability of utilities alone will not rebuild the city, it is an important step.

⁴³ City of New Orleans, Mayors Office of Communications, "Situation Report for New Orleans," July 17, 2006, City of New Orleans, <http://www.cityofno.com/portal.aspx?portal=1&load=~ /PortalModules/ViewPressRelease.aspx&itemid=3645>

ECONOMY

New Orleans' economic picture is precarious and its recovery and improvement depends greatly on many factors, including transit and child care services. Everyone benefits from these types of infrastructure, but for Blacks in particular, it can mean the difference between work at a living wage and unemployment. Not surprisingly then, an examination of the restoration of jobs, their location, transit and child care, demonstrates that, once again, it is significantly more difficult to return to New Orleans if you are Black and that it is still very difficult for everyone.

Economy Grades

Planning District	Economy	Percent Non-White	Average Household Income
French Quarter/CBD	B-	20.64%	\$60,794
Central City/Garden District	C	72.51%	\$36,761
Uptown/Carrollton	C	52.55%	\$57,398
Mid-City	F	87.88%	\$27,015
Lakeview	D	8.51%	\$73,716
Gentilly	D-	73.57%	\$47,522
Bywater	D	88.30%	\$28,873
Lower Ninth Ward	F	96.99%	\$28,867
New Orleans East	F	90.47%	\$42,951
Village de l'Est	F	96.40%	\$36,856
Venetian Islands	D-	47.05%	\$40,621
Algiers	A-	69.82%	\$42,484
New Aurora/English Turn	D	83.10%	\$62,939

Source: Greater New Orleans Community Data Center (2006), New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (2006), U.S. Census North American Industry Classification System (2004), U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

The numeric score for the economy is a measure of estimated damage to commercial structures, the impact of the current state of public transportation, and availability of child care. The communities of color in the Lower Ninth Ward, New Orleans East, Village de l'Est, and Mid-City were all hit hard by the levee failure. This damage is likely a reason for the current lack of child care facilities in these areas, which severely disadvantages those who wish to enter the workforce but are responsible for small children. Furthermore, before the levees failed, residents of the Lower Ninth Ward and Mid-City, relied heavily on public transit and were the least likely to have access to a car. The current state of the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority (NORTA) system creates additional challenges for these two poor communities, both of which have an average household income of under \$29,000 and high poverty rates.

Algiers, a middle-class community of color, was among the least hard hit by the broken levees and has the highest percentage of open child care centers. Its residents also relied less on public transit before the flooding because households were more likely to have a car.



JOBS

As stated earlier, before the levees failed, most of the jobs in the New Orleans metropolitan region were located in the suburbs.

The three planning districts with the most jobs prior to the levee failures (Garden District, French Quarter, and Uptown/Carrollton) suffered little storm damage relative to other areas. The next two largest job centers (New Orleans East and Mid-City), however, sustained substantial flooding. While data for Orleans Parish is unavailable,⁴⁴ according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, by June 2006, 70% of pre-broken levees jobs had returned to the New Orleans Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA).⁴⁵ Much of this recovery is due to the tourism and oil and gas sectors. Almost 80% of tourism jobs have returned and there are 20% more oil and gas jobs than before the levees failed. Unfortunately and predictably, the city of New Orleans is seeing a slower recovery than its surrounding suburbs.⁴⁶

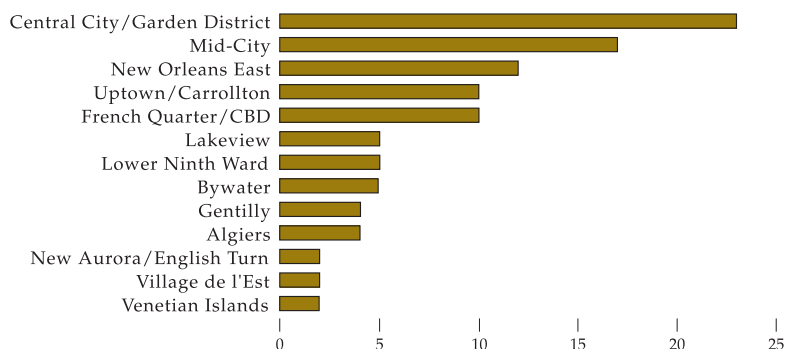
TRANSIT

The New Orleans economy is dependent on the revitalization of an infrastructure conducive to business and job growth. Part of this infrastructure is public transit. The NORTA plans to continue to use traditional sources of revenue (sales and hotel taxes) to run operations. This means that NORTA is underfinanced. Estimated tax receipts for 2006 are only \$9.9 million, which is about 16% of the \$59.4 million in estimated tax receipts for 2005.⁴⁷

To assist economic recovery, FEMA offered a subsidy of \$47 million to NORTA. The subsidy was originally set to expire on June 30, 2006, but FEMA extended it to November 30, 2006 and will pay an additional \$20.5 million. The first part of this subsidy, which allowed free travel on any of the local bus or streetcar lines, ended on August 9, 2006. As a result, fares have returned to their pre-flooding levels, to ease NORTA off FEMA subsidy by the end of hurricane season.

The NORTA website⁴⁸ reports 31 of its previous 57 routes operational.⁴⁹ According to 2000 Census Data,⁵⁰ the communities of Bywater, Central City/Garden District, and Mid-City are the most dependent on public transit, with 17.71%, 16.90%, and 16.75% of workers using public transit to commute to work, respectively, before the levees failed. Therefore, residents from these areas are most affected by the reduced NORTA capacity. Residents' ability to return is diminished if they relied on public transit before the levees broke and would have reduced access to public transit if they returned.

New Orleans Businesses Pre-Broken Levees: Percent of Orleans Parish Businesses



Source: U.S. Census North American Industry Classification System (2004)

⁴⁴ Due to Hurricane Katrina, the Louisiana Occupational Information System has removed employment data for individual parishes in the MSA from its website.

⁴⁵ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Table 1: Civilian labor force and employment by state and metropolitan area," Bureau of Labor Statistics, <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/metro.t01.htm>

⁴⁶ Peter Henderson, "New Orleans regains 70 pct of jobs since Katrina," Reuters Foundation, <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/N26240017.htm>

⁴⁷ Bring New Orleans Back Commission, Infrastructure Committee, Public Transit Presentation, <http://www.bringneworleansback.org/Portals/BringNewOrleansBack/Resources/Public%20Transit.pdf> (last updated Feb. 22, 2006).

These three planning districts are home to large communities of color and have the highest percentages of people living in poverty across the city.

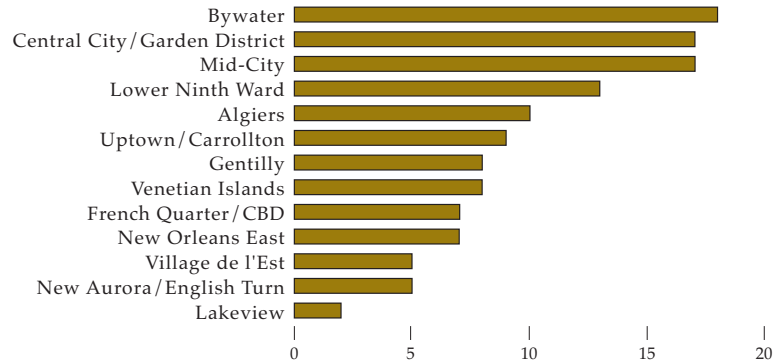
Conversely, the communities of Lakeview, New Aurora/English Turn, and Village de l'Est were the least reliant on public transit, at 1.57%, 5.37%, and 5.48%, respectively. While Lakeview and Village de l'Est were hard hit by flooding, public transit would be a less significant factor in residents' considerations about returning. Lakeview and New Aurora/English Turn were New Orleans' wealthiest planning districts before the levees broke, with average household incomes of \$73,716 and \$62,939, respectively, while the poorer Village de l'Est had an average of \$36,856 and faced a poverty rate of almost 30%. Lakeview was the only one of these three districts with a majority White population (over 91%).

Percent of Workers Using Public Transit to Commute, non-White and in Poverty

New Orleans Planning District	Percent of workers using public transit to commute	Percent Non-White	Percent in Poverty
Bywater	17.71%	88.30%	36.46%
Central City/Garden District	16.90%	72.51%	39.51%
Mid-City	16.75%	87.88%	40.51%
Lower Ninth Ward	12.54%	96.99%	34.42%
Algiers	10.47%	69.82%	24.09%
Uptown/Carrollton	8.76%	52.55%	23.99%
Gentilly	8.02%	73.57%	14.58%
Venetian Islands	7.77%	47.05%	29.93%
French Quarter/CBD	7.24%	20.64%	17.26%
New Orleans East	6.96%	90.47%	18.90%
Village de l'Est	5.48%	96.40%	29.90%
New Aurora/English Turn	5.37%	83.10%	24.80%
Lakeview	1.57%	8.51%	6.29%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

Percent of Workers Using Public Transit to Commute by Planning District



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

⁴⁸ New Orleans Regional Transit Authority, "RTA Resumes Collecting Fares on All Buses and Streetcars for the First Time Since Hurricane Katrina," August 9, 2006, <http://www.norta.com/>

⁴⁹ Amy Liu, Matt Fellowes, and Mia Mabanta, "Special Edition of the Katrina Index: A One Year Review of Key Indicators of Recovery in Post-Storm New Orleans," August 2006, The Brookings Institution, http://www.brookings.edu/metro/pubs/200512_katrinaindex.htm

⁵⁰ Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, "Transportation comparison for parishes within the Greater New Orleans Area," http://www.gnocdc.org/xls/par_transportation.xls



David's Story



BRINGING BACK

the **Music**

GENTILLY, ORLEANS PARISH

On August 26, 2005, David was playing his upright bass on stage with some of the world's greatest jazz musicians. Two days later his life would be turned upside down. On August 28, 2005, he evacuated from New Orleans on a flight to Houston, Texas. Out of harm's way, through televised accounts, he witnessed the destruction of his beloved city and suffering of his fellow New Orleanians, stranded in the flood waters. David is one of the lucky ones. His new home in Gentilly, on higher ground, suffered moderate roof damage and only 3 to 4 inches of flood water, although many personal belongings, still waiting to be unpacked, were damaged. By the end of October, David could have returned home. But practically and emotionally it made no sense. "Eighty percent of the city was gone and there was no power. Without people why stay? Every professional I played [music] with was gone. There was no community, there was nothing to earn a living from. It's just that abrupt, you have life ... you don't have life."

For eight months, David moved around between friends and family in Atlanta, Georgia and then eventually to a hotel. His new

“Do you sell your house? Well, that depends on if the city is likely to flood again. We know we’ll get another hurricane. What we don’t know is if the levees will hold the water back.”

mortgage business in New Orleans East, which was taking off before the flooding, suffered a huge financial loss.

With his business at a standstill and fewer New Orleans gigs, which were dependent on tourism and local jazz patrons, his ability to earn a living has been difficult and uncertain.

The broken levees also created uncertainty and a safety concern. “Do you sell your house? Well, that depends on if the city is likely to flood again. We know we’ll get another hurricane. What we don’t know is if the levees will hold the water back.” No one knew what the next step was going to be. “Until the levees are fixed, your next thought goes to whether there is some semblance of life in the city.”

Asked what made him come back, David said New Orleans provided his core, his vision for life. “I could only regain that core and begin to heal by coming back to my city, my home.” Almost a year after the devastation, David continues to slowly rebuild his life and help bring jazz back to the Big Easy.



CHILD CARE

In addition to quality public transit, access to quality child care services nurtures economic growth and sustainability by enabling those with young children to enter the workforce. As of July 20, 2006, 58 child care centers were open in New Orleans, while 213 remained closed.⁵¹ The communities of the Lower Ninth Ward, Village de l'Est, Venetian Islands, and New Aurora/English Turn remain without any open child care centers. Not until July 2006 did New Orleans East see its first open child care center since the flooding. The large majority (almost 80%) of pre-broken levees child care centers are open in Algiers, which experienced relatively little damage during the 2005 hurricane season.

The districts with the most child care centers include the largely poor and majority-people of color communities of Mid-City and the Lower Ninth Ward, which have 34 and 21 closed facilities, respectively. The middle-class and majority-Black New Orleans East has the highest number of closed centers, at 45. The capacity of parents living in these areas to work is severely limited by the lack of local child care options. In Uptown/Carrollton, a neighborhood with the fourth-highest average household income and a 47% White population, 25 child care centers still remain closed. It, however, is tied with Algiers for the most open facilities, with 15 open child care centers.

Percent Open Child Care Centers

Child Care Centers			
New Orleans Planning District	Closed	Open (n)	Open (%)
Lower Ninth Ward	21	0	0.00%
Village de l'Est	7	0	0.00%
Venetian Islands	7	0	0.00%
New Aurora/English Turn	8	0	0.00%
New Orleans East	45	1	2.17%
French Quarter/CBD	2	2	50.00%
Lakeview	8	2	20.00%
Gentilly	16	2	11.11%
Mid-City	34	3	8.11%
Bywater	20	6	23.08%
Central City/Garden District	16	12	42.86%
Uptown/Carrollton	25	15	37.50%
Algiers	4	15	78.95%

Source: Greater New Orleans Community Data Center (2006)

⁵¹ Agenda for Children, "Open and closed child care centers in Orleans Parish as of July 20, 2006," Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, http://www.gnocdc.org/maps/orleans_child_care.pdf

HEALTH

The health situation in New Orleans is bleak for everyone. The majority of hospitals remain closed, while open hospitals are understaffed. Therefore, most communities have a failing grade for health care.

The only districts with hospitals nearby are French Quarter/CBD, Central City/Garden District, Uptown/Carrollton, and Algiers. Still, these communities are well below pre-broken levees capacity.

Health Grades

Planning District	Health	Percent Non-White	Average Household Income
French Quarter/CBD	F	20.64%	\$60,794
Central City/Garden District	F	72.51%	\$36,761
Uptown/Carrollton	D	52.55%	\$57,398
Mid-City	F	87.88%	\$27,015
Lakeview	F	8.51%	\$73,716
Gentilly	F	73.57%	\$47,522
Bywater	F	88.30%	\$28,873
Lower Ninth Ward	F	96.99%	\$28,867
New Orleans East	F	90.47%	\$42,951
Village de l'Est	F	96.40%	\$36,856
Venetian Islands	F	47.05%	\$40,621
Algiers	F	69.82%	\$42,484
New Aurora/English Turn	F	83.10%	\$62,939

Source: Louisiana Hospital Association (August 7, 2006), U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

As of August 7, 2006, only three of the city's nine hospitals were open⁵² - Children's Hospital (in Uptown/Carrollton), Touro Infirmary Hospital (Central City/Garden District), and Tulane University Hospital & Clinic (French Quarter). These three hospitals provide a meager 27 emergency room beds⁵³ for the whole city.

Research has shown that the location of healthcare facilities in a region impacts access to services.⁵⁴ Proximity is particularly important for those communities with the greatest need, such as the extremely poor, who often lack health insurance. The location of these facilities severely disadvantages the majority-people of color communities of New Orleans East, Gentilly, and New Aurora/English Turn, as well as the 91% White Lakeview area. Citizens from these neighborhoods will have to travel for miles for emergency medical care.

Status of City's Hospitals as of August 7, 2006

Open Hospitals	Closed Hospitals
Children's Hospital	Lindy Boggs Medical Center
Touro Infirmary Hospital	Medical Center of Louisiana-Charity Campus
Tulane University Hospital & Clinic	Medical Center of Louisiana-University Campus
	Memorial Medical Center
	Methodist Hospital
	Veterans Affairs Medical Center

Source: Louisiana Hospital Association (August 7, 2006)

⁵² Louisiana Hospital Association "Hospital Status Report," <http://www.lhaonline.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=273>

⁵³ City of New Orleans, "Situation Report for New Orleans," July 17, 2006.

⁵⁴ Sara McLafferty and Sue Grady, "Prenatal Care Need and Access: A GIS Analysis," *Journal of Medical Systems*, 28, no. 3, (2004): 321-333.



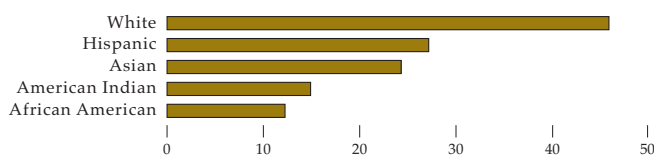
EDUCATION

Pre-flooding, over 80% of K-12 students in New Orleans were enrolled in public schools. Children of color who attended public schools before the levees failed have been less able to return to New Orleans than White students.

Almost half (46%) of White students in K-12 public education were able to make it back to the classroom for the 2005-2006 school

Children of color who attended public schools before the levees failed have been less able to return to New Orleans than White students.

Percent of Students Returned for 2005-2006 School Year



Source: Louisiana Department of Education

year, while a little over one in ten (12%) of Black students have returned.⁵⁵ This disparity led to an 8% increase (from 3% to 11%) in representation of Whites in public schools. Conversely, the percent of Black students, who had the lowest rate of return of any racial/ethnic group, fell from almost 94% to below 83%.

The report card grade for education is a measure of a neighborhood's ability to provide K-12 options. An area's pre-flooding reliance on the New Orleans public education system, provides an estimate of how disadvantaged the children in each community are given the current state of that system.

Less than one-third of K-12 students in Lakeview, the wealthiest (\$73,716 average household income) and Whitest (over 91%) planning district, were enrolled in New Orleans' public schools. Lakeview, therefore, receives a high score not because there are many operational schools in the area but because only 33% of the students in the area relied on public education, by far the lowest rate across the city. Given the relative wealth of the residents of Lakeview and their ability to opt into private education, their educational opportunities are greater and, therefore, their ability to return to New Orleans is greater.

Public Education Grades

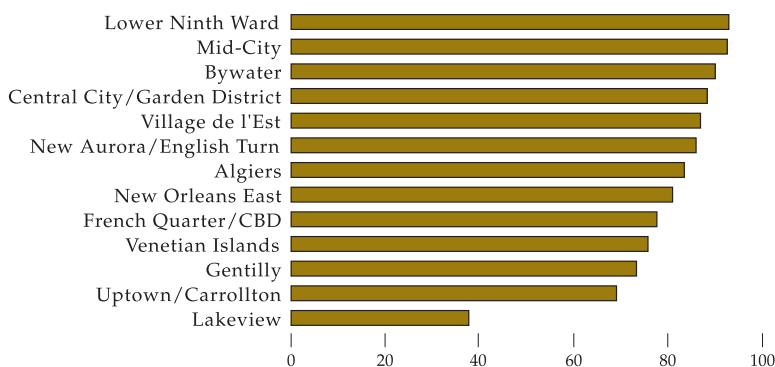
Planning District	Public Education	Percent Non-White	Average Household Income
French Quarter/CBD	F	20.64%	\$60,794
Central City/Garden District	F	72.51%	\$36,761
Uptown/Carrollton	D-	52.55%	\$57,398
Mid-City	F	87.88%	\$27,015
Lakeview	B-	8.51%	\$73,716
Gentilly	F	73.57%	\$47,522
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Source: Greater New Orleans Community Data Center (2006), U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

⁵⁸ Louisiana Department of Education, "LEA and School Level: Public Student Counts and Percentages,"

<http://www.doe.state.la.us/1de/pair/1489.html#hurricane>

Percent of K-12 in Public School



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

On the other hand, over 90% of K-12 students living in the Lower Ninth Ward, Mid-City, and Bywater were in public schools. These three districts are the poorest with \$28,867, \$27,015, and \$28,873 average household income, respectively. Additionally, over 90% of the population in each of these planning districts is non-White (the three rank among the top five districts in this category). Because these communities relied heavily on public education, the state of the system makes it more difficult for residents to return.

Only 25 public schools were open as of June 21, 2006, and an additional 30 are scheduled to open in Fall 2006.⁵⁶ Of these 55 public schools, 25 will be independently-run charter schools. The majority of schools set to open this fall will be in the Mid-City, Garden District, and Uptown/Carrollton planning districts. No schools will be open in Lakeview, the Lower Ninth Ward, New Aurora/English Turn, Venetian Islands, or Village de l'Est.

⁵⁶ Greater New Orleans Community Data Center, "Open schools in Orleans Parish," http://www.gnocdc.org/maps/orleans_schools.pdf



Janine's Story



Making the Grade

MID-CITY, ORLEANS PARISH

Born and raised in New Orleans, Janine, an attorney, mother of five, and grandmother of one, evacuated her cherished hometown to stay with family in Atlanta. With a few days worth of clothes, she, her five children and her granddaughter, joined six other evacuees in her sister's house. Janine remained there for ten months before deciding to return to New Orleans because "there's no place like home."

Four of Janine's children were still school-aged. Like many New Orleans parents, Janine has had a tough time figuring out how to get her kids into a decent school. No information and a broken system made Janine's efforts difficult. Janine had nothing but her instincts from 11 years of teaching. "My son, who's 15, is going to return to St. Augustine Catholic School. My 13-year old, who is beginning high school, will attend Warren Eastern because it's a charter school now and I know the principal who's now at Warren Eastern. ... For my youngest, who is five, I have applied for him to attend ISL [the International School of Louisiana]."

It is impossible to know which schools will work and which will not. "Because I don't feel comfortable about what's going on with the system at this point, I'm actually following the administrators that I know. You can't identify what schools are parts of what system. There's the Orleans Public School District, Orleans Parish Charters, Orleans Private Charters, Algiers Charter, the Recovery School District... Unless you can print off a list from a website, you can't even begin to understand who's operating from where."

Public education systems are struggling in many parts of the country. Janine was disappointed with the school district in Georgia, and made the difficult decision to send her second oldest daughter to Iowa in

“All of the failing schools are now part of the state recovery school district, and that school district has not hired for the coming school year. In the schools in the Black neighborhoods, where many of the poorest children go, the same thing is happening. [The school districts] have not taken this opportunity to make a change, to make things equal.”

the middle of the last school year. “She’s going to stay there for her senior year... She likes the curriculum choices and time and attention she gets from teachers, which she didn’t have in Louisiana or Georgia.”

Like so many New Orleanians, as well as national observers, Janine sees the aftermath of the failed levees as an opportunity to create better public education for New Orleans’ kids. “Post Katrina could only help the situation. That school system needed to be dismantled.”

So far, little seems to have gotten better, and it is unclear what the vision is for changing public education in the long run. “All of the failing schools are now part of the state recovery school district, and that school district has not hired for the coming school year. In the schools in the Black neighborhoods, where many of the poorest children go, the same thing is happening. [The school districts] have not taken this opportunity to make a change, to make things equal.”

While she struggles to ensure that her children get a decent education, Janine also struggles to support them. Janine continues to practice law, but is only able to get work piecemeal to make ends meet. She did not own a home before the levees broke and cannot afford to rent in New Orleans today. She and her family are living in a friend’s home until she can secure her own place.

Despite the difficulties of returning, Janine believes in the city. “People need to come home. People need to come back... For those who loved the city, they need to come back. We are the only ones who can make it better. Come home and let’s make it better.”



While the road to recovery is a winding one, and many factors uncertain, there are a range of policy options proposed by experts which are not currently part of the recovery plan and which could make a significant difference in the strength of that recovery and the strengthening of the metropolitan region. They also provide policy models for strengthening all communities and suggest a vibrant and important role for a responsive and resourced federal government. This section examines these policy options.

HOUSING

Without affordable housing, regional economies suffer, as do a region's people. In New Orleans, much of the affordable housing sustained major or severe damage during the 2005 hurricane season. Furthermore, the price of housing stock that survived the flooding has shot up.

Rents

Affordable housing is crucial for economic viability of a city and region. Without it, it is difficult for people to live near and access the job market. As an interim step, repairing and

Status of Public Housing

Open Public Housing Complexes ⁵⁷	Closed Public Housing Complexes
Guste (Melpomene)	Desire
Fischer	Florida
St. Thomas	Lafitte*
	Iberville
	C.J. Peete (Magnolia)*
	B.W. Cooper (Calliope)*
	St. Bernard*

*planned to be permanently destroyed
Source: NOLA.com

reopening public housing to help low-income people return home, is important. The units lost impact thousands of families. Equally important, is replacing and expanding the number of lost low-income rental and affordable units to facilitate the return or relocation of Black people to the New Orleans region.

Inclusionary Zoning

Zoning policy is a powerful way to spur affordable and mixed-income housing development. Inclusionary zoning policies require a certain percentage of all new housing developments to be affordable. From the Lake to the River, a coalition of New Orleans advocacy groups, proposed adopting an inclusionary zoning ordinance that would require any development of over 5 units to set aside 20% of the total units to low- or very low-income households, 20% of total units in 6 to 20 unit developments for households under 60% of the median income for metropolitan New Orleans, and in 20 plus unit developments, 5% for households under 30% of the median income and 15% for households under 60% of the median income.⁵⁸

From 1990-2000, over 42,000 new housing units were constructed in the New Orleans MSA, which consists of Jefferson, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany Parishes.⁵⁹ Of these, almost 5,000 units reside in 158 multi-family structures with five or more units. Assuming the next decade sees only half of the same growth, a policy requiring 20% of these units to be set aside for low-income families would generate almost 500 new affordable

⁵⁷ NOLA.com, "Public Housing Status Report," http://www.nola.com/katrina/pdf/111505_NO_Public_housing.pdf

⁵⁸ From the Lake to the River: The New Orleans Coalition for Legal Aid & Disaster Relief, "An Alternative Vision for Rebuilding, Redevelopment, and Reconstruction" (2005), http://www.fromthelaketotheriver.org/files/final_report_11.29.pdf

⁵⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, "Housing Units Authorized By Building Permits," <http://www.census.gov/const/www/C40/table3.html>

housing units. If growth over the next decade is 75% of the 1990-2000 rate, the same policy would create an estimated 740 new units.

A regional inclusionary zoning ordinance, like that recommended by From the Lake to the River, for new developments in the New Orleans metropolitan area, would create significant opportunity for low-income people and people of color. Creating inclusionary housing regionally, not just within the city, would create affordable housing opportunities and connect these communities to higher-wage jobs, located and growing in the suburbs, and to quality services and amenities.

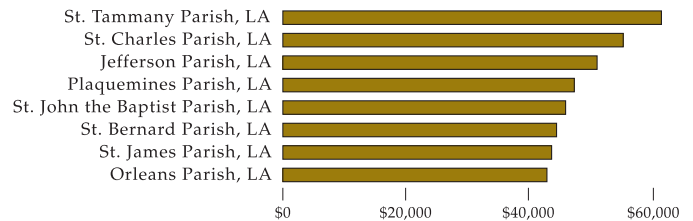
Low Income Housing Tax Credits

Over 60% of Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) units in the New Orleans MSA were located in Orleans Parish. Another 28% were in Jefferson Parish. While it is important to rebuild the affordable housing infrastructure in New Orleans for those who wish to return, there should be an expansion of the LIHTC program in the surrounding suburbs, where there is more job growth and higher wages. This policy of integration would bring economic opportunity to many who are currently trapped in high-poverty areas in New Orleans, most of whom are people of color.

EDUCATION

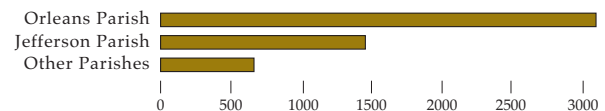
Education, like much of the social infrastructure of a community, is both critical to its growth and the opportunities of its people. It is also an important factor families must consider in deciding whether to return or relocate to a new New Orleans. Adding to the difficulty policy-makers face in restructuring and reviving a school system are questions about how much and how rapidly the new New Orleans population will grow and where it will be.

New Orleans MSA Average Household Income in 2000



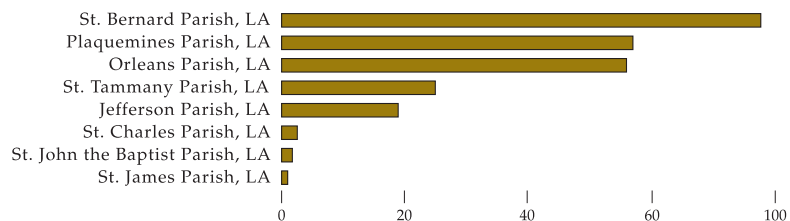
Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

LIHTC Units in 2003



Source: Greater New Orleans Community Data Center (2006)

Percent of Housing Units with Major or Severe Damage



Source: Greater New Orleans Community Data Center (2006)



Bringing back the schools is dependent on bringing back people and vice versa.

Unfortunately, prior to the failure of the levees, the New Orleans public education system was one of the poorest performing in the country. During the 2004-2005 school year, 63% of schools in the New Orleans Public School System (NOPS) were “academically unacceptable.” Only 8% of schools across Louisiana were academically unacceptable.⁶⁰ New Orleans’ schools had the seventh-highest drop-out rate in the nation. At the end of the school year in 2005, 35% of schools did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLBA).⁶¹ Under the NCLBA, those schools showing no improvements after four years could be shut down or reconstituted under a restructuring plan by the state.⁶²

Public education in New Orleans was 93% Black and only 4% White.⁶³ Its students were also largely poor. Seventy-four percent of Black students and 40% of White students were eligible for free or reduced price lunch.

After flooding destroyed New Orleans, in November 2005, the state passed legislation to make it easier for the state to take over local schools. As a result, the state took control of over 107 of the lowest performing public schools in Orleans Parish. These schools are now controlled

by what is called the Recovery School District (RSD). The RSD is administered by the Louisiana Department of Education (LDE) and subject to the authority of the Louisiana Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE).

On June 7, 2006 the RSD issued a “Phase 1” plan that details which schools will be opened in Fall 2006 and how those schools will be operated.⁶⁴ The proposed plan identifies an additional 32 school facilities (adding to the current 25 schools reopened) that could be repaired for the 2006-2007 school year and that could provide the capacity required for 34,000 anticipated students by January 2007.⁶⁵ All schools will be open access and have no selective admissions requirements, including the charter schools.⁶⁶

The system is complicated by three other types of public schools in Orleans Parish: Type 3 & 4 charter schools that are authorized by the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB), public schools operated by the OPSB and Type 2 charter schools that report directly to the (BESE).⁶⁷

The state will not be able to manage directly all schools and is discussing private subcontracting to run all the schools it now controls.⁶⁸

The LDE has committed to provide free

⁶⁰ Louisiana Department of Education, “Recovery School District Legislatively Required Plan,” June 2006, <http://www.louisianaschools.net/lde/uploads/8932.doc>

⁶¹ No Child Left Behind is an education reform effort that President Bush proposed his first week in office and that Congress passed into law on January 8, 2002.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) – the main federal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school. NCLB is built on four principles: accountability for results, more choices for parents, greater local control and flexibility, and an emphasis on doing what works based on scientific research. U.S. Department of Education, No Child Left Behind, <http://www.ed.gov/nclb/landing.jhtml>

⁶² Louisiana Department of Education, “Recovery School District Legislatively Required Plan.”

⁶³ Ibid., 8-9.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ As of May 2006, there were 9,340 students attending schools in Orleans Parish. Louisiana Department of Education, “Reconciliation of Public School Student Counts,” 37, <http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/uploads/8965.pdf>

⁶⁶ Louisiana Department of Education, “Recovery School District Legislatively Required Plan.”

⁶⁷ Charter school type varies according to status (startup versus conversion school), governing authority and funding. For a detailed information on different charter types, see Louisiana Department of Education, “BESE Charter School Overview,” <http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/bese/1611.html>

⁶⁸ Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, “Reopening as a Charter School,” 10 (2005), <http://www.centerforscri.org/pubs/restructuring/KnowledgeIssues2Chartering.pdf>

transportation to eligible Orleans Parish students so that they can access the Orleans Parish public school of their choosing, even if the school is located in a different neighborhood.⁶⁹ Because many low-income New Orleanians do not have access to a car and public buses are not running on all former routes, free transportation may be critical to promote access to schools.

The Bring New Orleans Back Education Committee recommended an “Educational Network Model,” to allow for school flexibility, create a lean district office focused on academic standards and performance monitoring, and encourage accountability. In the city’s model, multiple providers operate individual schools that then band into networks based on some similarity such as provider, neighborhood, or school mission. Network managers would monitor schools and facilitate the exchange of best practices. The district office would focus on overall strategic issues, not school management.⁷⁰ The state and city plans do not change the level of financing for public education.

Because, currently, charter schools are the dominant model for the new system, it is important to review the research on their success. The charter school model allows schools to set their own courses, activities and rules. Also, charter schools are able to hire their own teachers and at their own standards (which sometimes do not meet state certification standards). Advocates say this flexibility promotes innovation and accountability by giving parents and teachers more control.

Opponents argue that charter schools are no more effective than traditional public schools.

Although there is conflicting research⁷¹ on the ability of charter schools versus public schools to improve student scores, a comprehensive study of Los Angeles and San Diego schools by the Rand Institute entitled *Charter School Performance in Urban Districts: Are They Closing the Achievement Gap* (2005), suggests that achievement scores in charter schools are keeping pace with, but not exceeding, those in public schools and are not consistently producing improved test scores for children of color above and beyond traditional public schools. According to the Rand report, they have achieved some cost savings while emphasizing other subjects such as Art and Foreign Languages.⁷²

Because charter schools are schools of choice, it is important to consider the potential negative consequences of further stratifying a historically racially stratified and poor system such as New Orleans. For instance, the potential inability of poorer citizens to access these schools because of residential location leaves “the choice” to attend a charter school without adequate transportation options an improbable opportunity. In addition, there are concerns about whether low-income families, disproportionately Black, will have sufficient information to effectively make the “consumer” choice about where to send their children. Parents with greater economic means may be more likely to take advantage of choice, unintentionally promoting racial segregation.

⁶⁹ Louisiana Department of Education, “Recovery School District Legislatively Required Plan.”

⁷⁰ Bring New Orleans Back Education Committee, “Rebuilding and Transforming: A Plan for Improving Public Education in New Orleans,” January 17, 2006, <http://bringneworleansback-education.org/>

⁷¹ American Federation of Teachers, “Charter School Achievement on the 2003 National Assessment of Educational Progress”, (2004) <http://www.aft.org/pubs-reports/downloads/teachers/NAEPCharterSchoolReport.pdf>; Caroline M. Hoxby, “A Straightforward Comparison of Charter Schools and Regular Public Schools in the United States,” September, 2004.

⁷² Ron Zimmer and Richard Buddin, “Charter School Performance in Urban Districts,” Rand Institute Working Paper, July 2005, http://www.rand.org/pubs/working_papers/2005/RAND_WR282.pdf



The city's and state's steps to improve the education will all face the same challenges of financing if the tax base does not recover and do so in a way that is more productive than before. Return requires both that students' families find housing and that qualified teachers can find housing. Once again, jobs, housing and transit are all important for helping to recover New Orleans' educational opportunities.

To promote genuinely equal educational opportunity, lessons from schools implementing an economic integration plan may be helpful. Under the economic school integration model, using a system of public school choice, officials ensure that school student populations have no more than 50% eligible for free or reduced-price lunch (below 185% of the poverty line) and that a majority of students come from middle-class households. Studies and test scores have shown that disadvantaged students do markedly better in middle-class schools. In an economically integrated school, low-income students in middle-class schools have three advantages, expectations that college is in their future, parents who have the resources to be active

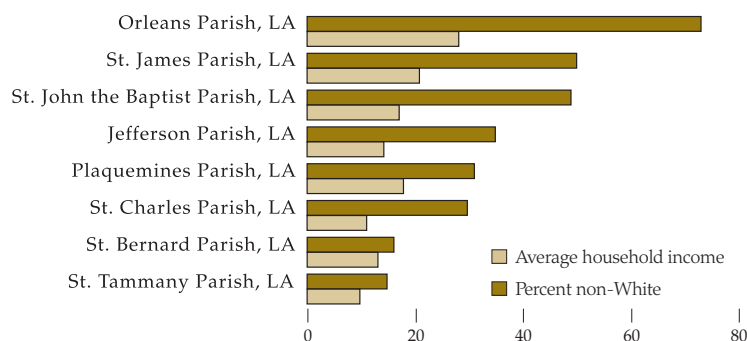
Income and Percent in Public School, in Poverty, White and Homeownership

Parish	Percent in Public School	Average HHI	Percent in Poverty	Percent White	Percent Owner-Occupied
Jefferson	63.90%	\$51,064	13.7%	65.5%	63.9%
Orleans	81.90%	\$43,176	27.9%	26.6%	46.5%
Plaquemines	85.50%	\$46,904	18.0%	68.7%	78.9%
St. Bernard	71.50%	\$44,672	13.1%	84.3%	74.6%
St. Charles	85.90%	\$55,345	11.4%	70.5%	81.4%
St. James	80.30%	\$43,870	20.7%	49.8%	85.6%
St. John the Baptist	67.50%	\$46,181	16.7%	51.0%	81.0%
St. Tammany	80.50%	\$61,565	9.7%	85.3%	80.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

In Raleigh, North Carolina, using this socio-economic integration model, district SAT scores are well above the state and national average and climbing. Part of Raleigh's success and, indeed, North Carolina's success is that the public schools are organized by metropolitan region, so that cities and their suburbs (where a majority of middle-income families reside), make the economic integration plan possible.

New Orleans MSA Percent non-White and in Poverty in 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

in their schools, and teachers who are more qualified than high-poverty schools are able to attract.

In Raleigh, North Carolina, using this socio-economic integration model, district SAT scores are well above the state and national average and climbing. Part of Raleigh's success and, indeed, North Carolina's success is that the public schools are organized by metropolitan region,⁷³ so that cities and their suburbs (where a majority of middle-income families reside),

⁷³john a. powell, Rebecca Reno, and Jason Reece, Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race & Ethnicity, Ohio State University, "Economic Segregation Challenging Ohio's Public Schools," November 2005, <http://kirwaninstitute.org/documents/FinalEconSegregationReport.pdf> (citing Alan Finder, "As test scores jump, Raleigh credits integration by income," *New York Times*, September 25, 2005.).

make the economic integration plan possible. In many cities, this model could not work without access to suburban schools. Because people of color are more likely to be low-income and Whites more likely to be middle-income, this type of integration also promotes greater racial integration and social cohesion.

This model of creating a regional school district and creating economically balanced schools is one that policy-makers might consider for restoring and improving educational opportunity for all children in the region.

TRANSIT

A quality public transit system is critical to a metropolitan region's economy and the well-being of its people. It creates jobs and connects people to jobs and employers to the work force. It improves productivity by reducing commute times and brings customers to business and retail centers. It also helps to sustain the environment.⁷⁴

It benefits everyone, but is critical for poor people and communities of color, a vital part of any economy, to get to where the decent jobs are. These jobs are increasingly in suburbs where housing is too expensive for those who need the jobs.⁷⁵ Also, business benefits by tapping this work force it otherwise could not access.

Every city needs quality transit.

In the case of the New Orleans metropolitan region, it is indispensable if New Orleans is to recover. It would enable displaced New Orleanians to return and rebuild their lives and social networks. This is especially true for Black New Orleanians, who were more likely to rely on public transit than any other group, including poor Whites. Seventy-six percent of Black households in the metro region and 34% in Orleans Parish had no car prior to the flood.⁷⁶ The four most transit dependent neighborhoods before the levees failed were Bywater, Mid-City, Central City/Garden District, and the Lower Ninth Ward – three of which were almost exclusively Black neighborhoods.⁷⁷ High-poverty areas in Orleans Parish (67% Black) and St. James Parish (49% Black) had the highest percentages of untapped labor.⁷⁸ Transit inadequacy is a significant reason that unemployment rates are so high in communities of color around the country.⁷⁹

With much of New Orleans' traffic infrastructure, such as vital roads and bridges, severely damaged and still in need of repair,⁸⁰ public transit is even more urgent in the metropolitan region. It would make the region safer by improving any future evacuation efforts.⁸¹

⁷⁴ The National Business Coalition for Rapid Transit, "The Economic Importance of Public Transit," November 3, 2003, http://www.apta.com/research/info/online/economic_importance.cfm

⁷⁵ John W. Frazier et al., *Race and Place: Equity Issues in Urban America* (Westview Press 2003), 246.

⁷⁶ The Brookings Institution, "New Orleans after the Storm: Lessons from the Past, a Plan for the Future."

⁷⁷ U.S. Census Bureau (2000).

⁷⁸ The New Orleans Job Initiative, "Making Connections: A Regional Workforce, Labor Supply Audit," Summary Presentation for the Community Audit Advisory Group of the Regional Workforce Partnership, March 2003, <http://www.doleta.gov/USWORKFORCE/communityaudits/docs/Files%20for%20CA%20Website/LA-New%20Orleans/LA-New%20Orleans-Other-Supply%20Audit%20Presentation.ppt>

⁷⁹ Bullard and Wright.

⁸⁰ "Asphalt jungle: crumbling infrastructure is slowly being fixed," New Orleans CityBusiness, June 7, 2006, <http://www.neworleanscitybusiness.com/viewFeature.cfm?recid=445>

⁸¹ Alan Berube and Stephen Raphael, "Access to Cars in New Orleans," Prepared for the Brookings Institution Metropolitan Policy Program Katrina Index (using data from the U.S. Census of Population and Housing, 5% Public Use Microdata Sample, 2000), http://www.brookings.edu/metro/20050915_katrinacarstables.pdf



Because New Orleans has little money for transit and cannot build a new system immediately to accommodate a constantly changing population, it needs a short-term strategy and a long-term vision. The Bring New Orleans Back (BNOB) Infrastructure Committee recommended bus services based on current and near-term service levels, bus re-fleeting, providing commuter transit with the suburbs and Baton Rouge, and the use of FEMA emergency funding to keep the New Orleans bus system running.⁸²

An important piece of a short-term plan is connecting the returning or new city population, particularly poor ones, to job centers in the suburbs. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports that 70% of jobs in the metropolitan statistical area have returned.⁸³ While BLS does not report the data by parish, most of these jobs are likely to be in the suburbs of New Orleans, not the city. The suburbs had many more of the regional jobs before the levees failed and received less flooding than the city.⁸⁴ Bus routes could reflect this reality and improve the ability of Blacks in particular, to return, by helping them access jobs in the region.

This cannot be done without federal resources for a regional bus system with the ability to expand to meet population demands over the next two to three years, until the local and state economy are strong enough to support the system. Current economic estimates assume this

will be 2008.⁸⁵

The BNOB Infrastructure Committee also identified long-term goals for New Orleans public transit. They recommended a regional transit system that serves all New Orleanians, with a focus on commuter transit and tourist transit (routes between the Central Business District and the New Orleans International Airport) at an estimated cost of \$3.3 billion.⁸⁶ It did not identify connecting communities of color, and historically poor communities, as an explicit goal.

In the long term, assuming continued growth in the areas high in job growth before the levees failed, transit would target St. Tammany Parish, where job growth was 431% between 1970 and 2000, Jefferson Parish which had 157% job growth, and St. Charles which climbed by 148%. In Orleans Parish, job losses were double the rate of population losses.⁸⁷

Other metropolitan regions have improved their economies and the well-being of poor people through regional public transit strategies.⁸⁸ For example, in Oakland County, California, community and regional government collaborated to create a business village around the underused Fruitvale transit station to make it more attractive and increase ridership, as well as to create more amenities and housing for the local community.⁸⁹

⁸² Bring New Orleans Back Commission, Infrastructure Committee, Public Transit Presentation, <http://www.bringneworleansback.org/Portals/BringNewOrleansBack/Resources/Public%20Transit.pdf> (last updated Feb. 22, 2006).

⁸³ Henderson, "New Orleans regains 70 pct of jobs since Katrina."

⁸⁴ The Brookings Institution, "New Orleans after the Storm: Lessons from the Past, a Plan for the Future" (citing Bureau of Economic Analysis, County Income and Employment Summary 1970–2000).

⁸⁵ Kevin F. McCarthy et al., Rand Corporation, "The Repopulation of New Orleans After Hurricane Katrina," March 15, 2006, http://www.rand.org/pubs/technical_reports/2006/RAND_TR369.pdf (citing Kermit Baker, "Economic and Construction Outlook, in the Gulf States after Hurricane Katrina").

⁸⁶ Bring New Orleans Back Commission, Infrastructure Committee, Public Transit Presentation.

⁸⁷ The Brookings Institution, "New Orleans after the Storm: Lessons from the Past, a Plan for the Future," (citing Bureau of Economic Analysis, County Income and Employment Summary 1970–2000).

⁸⁸ Manuel Pastor, Jr. et al., *Regions That Work: How Cities and Suburbs Can Grow Together*, 170; Funders' Network, "Community Development and Smart Growth," Translation Paper No. 13 (2003), 5–7; Angela Glover-Blackwell and Rhadika K. Fox, "Regional Equity and Smart Growth: Opportunities for Advancing Social and Economic Justice in America," Translation Paper No. 1, 2d. ed., (Funders Network, 2004), http://www.fundersnetwork.org/usr_doc/Regional_Equity_and_Smart_Growth_2nd_Ed.pdf

⁸⁹ Funders' Network, "Community Development and Smart Growth," 5–7.

Transit works hand-in-hand with housing, jobs and the environment.⁹⁰ Therefore, a regional transit strategy should include planning with these elements, as well as racial equity and poverty alleviation concerns.

ENVIRONMENT

Wetlands

Coastal wetlands are beautiful and bio-diverse. They also act as a sponge, forming a natural protective barrier from storm flooding. Studies show that as little as one square mile of wetlands can absorb a foot of storm surge.⁹¹ For years, scientists have warned that we pay too high a price for destroying our coastal wetlands. The wetlands protection of New Orleans has been disappearing at a rate as high as 39 square miles a year.⁹² Scientists calculate that barrier islands, another important storm barrier, will disappear by 2050.⁹³ These lost wetlands and islands were all that stood between New Orleans and the open ocean.⁹⁴

New Orleans is sinking three feet per century—eight times faster than the worldwide rate.⁹⁵ However, this sinking did not begin in earnest until the second half of the twentieth century, when we began to manage the Mississippi river, diverting its soil creating sediments from wetlands.⁹⁶ The Mississippi

river's freshwater also helped reduce soil erosion and sea level rise. Levee construction has also contributed to the loss of wetlands.⁹⁷

An array of policy proposals tackle how best to rebuild New Orleans, taking into account the fact that it is sinking and the need for sustainable solutions. Three general models currently exist: 1) the Netherlands model with its complex construction of levees and dams; 2) the Venician model of water flow through the city, depositing sediments to offset erosion; and 3) allowing nature to help restore the wetland buffers between sea and city.⁹⁸ Some of the suggested solutions are hybrids combining aspects of more than one of these categories. One example is protection of population centers and wetlands restoration outside of the city to moderate storm surges; and, in some areas, elevation of buildings to encourage and manage retreat from the coastline.⁹⁹

The consultants hired by BNOB argue that, while wetlands restoration is a good idea outside of the city, New Orleans itself is too close to the surface of the water table so that wetlands within the city are not as effective.¹⁰⁰

In 1998, the state pulled together the Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Task Force, to examine wetlands losses and propose solutions that balanced public

⁹⁰ Manuel Pastor, Jr. et al., *Regions That Work: How Cities and Suburbs Can Grow Together*.

⁹¹ Glen Martin, "Wetland Restoration Seen As Crucial: Delta's marshes, islands form buffers against storm surges, scientists say," *San Francisco Chronicle*, September 5, 2005, <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2005/09/05/MNG69EIHUK1.DTL>

⁹² Editorial, "Creating a Sustainable and Desirable New Orleans," *Ecological Engineering* 26 (2006): 317; "The Neglect of Infrastructure in the Gulf Coast and America: Increasing Vulnerability for All," Gulf Coast Revival Fact Sheet, http://linkedfate.org/documents/Factsheet%20D_Infrastructure%20and%20Katrina2.pdf (citing Joel K. Bourne, Jr., "Gone with the Water," *National Geographic Magazine*, 88-105, October 2004, <http://magma.nationalgeographic.com/ngm/0410/feature5/index.html?fs=www7.nationalgeographic.com>).

⁹³ "New Orleans...the New Atlantis?" *Science Monthly*, January 21, 2000, <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2000/01/000121071306.htm>

⁹⁴ Editorial, "Creating a Sustainable and Desirable New Orleans"; "The Neglect of Infrastructure in the Gulf Coast and America: Increasing Vulnerability for All," Gulf Coast Revival Fact Sheet (citing Bourne, "Gone with the Water.").

⁹⁵ "New Orleans...the New Atlantis?"

⁹⁶ Editorial, "Creating a Sustainable and Desirable New Orleans."

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 317.

⁹⁸ John Bohannon and Martin Enserink, "Hurricane Katrina: Scientists Weigh Options for Rebuilding New Orleans," *Science* September 16, 2005, 309. no. 5742: 1808-1809.

⁹⁹ G. Edward Dickey and Leonard Shabman, "Making Tough Choices: Hurricane Protection Planning After Katrina and Rita," *Resources for the Future*, no. 160 (Winter 2006): 31, <http://rff.org/Documents/RFF-Resources-160-Katrina.pdf>

¹⁰⁰ American Planning Association, "Q & A on Rebuilding New Orleans," April 5, 2006, <http://www.planning.org/katrina/wrtqanda.htm>



will and environmental protection.¹⁰¹ The task force proposed a comprehensive \$14 billion plan to save the Louisiana coasts, called Coast 2050 (now modified into a plan called the Louisiana Coastal Area project). Because wetlands restoration was considered one of the best and cheapest protections against hurricane flooding, it was a key component of the proposal.¹⁰²

The plan was never significantly funded. It did produce a pilot study which began in 2000, to divert part of the Mississippi river downstream of New Orleans. This has produced a rise in land levels of about 1 centimeter per year. This, its supporters argue, is enough to offset rising sea levels.¹⁰³

If the task force's full plan were to be implemented, wetlands restoration with all its benefits, economic, social and environmental would strengthen the area. It would also make the area safer and more pleasant place to live, though it would not prevent storms or storm damage. No hurricane protection system will. Its benefits will take decades to be fully realized.¹⁰⁴ But that should not argue against actions that will promote our well-being and protect us.

Perhaps what is most important, all these possibilities carry an array of impacts much broader than the natural environment. These choices would allow or encourage new patterns of economic activity and change where and how people live and work. Done properly, wetlands restoration can reduce risk, improve the

environment and promote a sustainable economy. Seeing the connections with people will implicate housing as well as economic issues, ensuring that all communities derive benefits from the investment in wetlands restoration and distribute any burdens fairly.

Soil Cleanup

Broken levees in New Orleans did not just devastate lives, they stirred the toxic soup that existed in much of the industrialized region and deposited chemicals and toxins on the land. As Professor Robert Bullard reports, "Sediments of varying depths were left behind by receding Katrina floodwaters primarily in areas impacted by levee overtopping and breaches."¹⁰⁵ As the Natural Resources Defense Council has reported, a significant number of communities were left with mud and muck contaminated with arsenic, diesel fuel, benzo(a)pyrene, and lead.¹⁰⁶ Many communities tested by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have levels so high as to indicate a need for soil removal.

The EPA claims that while some sites within New Orleans have unsafe thresholds of these chemicals, many more do not. As a result, it has claimed that a need for widespread testing and soil removal and remediation is not indicated. According to the BNOB's Sustainability Subcommittee, this conclusion is based on improperly low standards. The EPA's conclusion is based on safe levels of these contaminants for emergency responders who would not have

¹⁰¹ J. Bohannon and M. Enserink, 1808-1809.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ G. Dickey and L. Shabman, 31.

¹⁰⁵ Robert D. Bullard, "Let Them Eat Dirt: Will the 'Mother of All Toxic Clean-Ups' Be Fair," April 14, 2006, http://www.ejrc.cau.edu/Let_Them_Eat_Dirt.pdf

¹⁰⁶ Gina Solomon and Miriam Rotkin-Ellman, "Contaminants in New Orleans Sediment: An Analysis of EPA Data," Natural Resources Defense Council, February 2006.

prolonged contact with the contaminants. According to BNOB's subcommittee, "To date, EPA has not assessed sediment sampling data using long-term residential standards. These latter standards reflect long-term exposure typical to a family residing at the contaminated property. Consequently, contamination levels that are acceptable for short-term exposure by emergency responders are not necessarily at safe levels for habitability."¹⁰⁷

Both the BNOB and a variety of environmental and community groups are calling for an aggressive, federal plan for monitoring, remediation, and redevelopment of soil contaminated properties. Professor Bullard has suggested creation of a government grant program that would pay homeowners \$2,000-\$3,000 to test and clean up contamination in their yards.

By adopting an aggressive testing and cleanup program, those considering returning or relocating to the New Orleans area could be assured of its environmental safety. The costs of any long-term and wide spread health problems would be averted and economic growth would be supported.

Remembering that low-income communities and communities of color suffer from both higher socioeconomic stress and greater environmental exposures to air toxins, hazardous wastes, and other environmental insults means these communities need attention.¹⁰⁸ A December 2005 Associated Press

Both the BNOB and a variety of environmental and community groups are calling for an aggressive, federal plan for monitoring, remediation, and redevelopment of soil contaminated properties.

study based on EPA data showed Blacks are 79% more likely than Whites to live in neighborhoods where industrial pollution is suspected of posing the greatest health danger. The EPA has both stopped looking to see whether race impacts environmental degradation and make fair its regulatory enforcement across all communities. It has also reduced its annual collection of pollution emission data that researchers, communities, and industries use to monitor firm-level environmental performance. Furthermore, a 1992 National Law Journal study showed that EPA gave White communities faster action and better results, with stiffer penalties for polluters, than did Black and other communities of color, even accounting for income.¹⁰⁹

This suggests that the EPA must do better for communities of color, but also must do more to monitor and clean up environmental hazards if New Orleans is to be an attractive, healthy, safe place to live. We must see the connections between people, housing, the environment, the economy and long-term health of a place and the nation.

¹⁰⁷ Jeffrey Thomas, "Environmental Health Issues and Suggested Policies in Developing the New Orleans Master City Plan," on behalf of the Sustainability Sub-Committee, Bring New Orleans Back City Planning Committee, <http://www.bringneworleansback.org/Portals/BringNewOrleansBack/portal.aspx?tabid=127>

¹⁰⁸ Manuel Pastor, Jr. et al., "In the Wake of the Storm: Environment, Disaster and Race after Hurricane Katrina," Russell Sage Foundation, July 2006, 17.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.



We are not just rebuilding the Gulf Coast. We are rebuilding the nation. The Gulf Coast was vulnerable before the levees broke because, as a nation, we have been pulling resources out of the public sector and, therefore, communities. The most obvious example of this are 2004 tax cuts for the wealthiest 10% of the nation worth twice what the government would spend on job training, public housing, child care, etc. What this represents is a disinvestment in our people and our communities and an investment in the country's top earners who have received 49% of the increase in aggregate real wages. The middle class in this country is shrinking. Opportunity is becoming scarcer. The federal government created the middle class. It can reinvigorate opportunity, but only if we invest in the federal government and only if the federal government is responsive to our needs.

The way to determine our needs and to build opportunity is to examine the most vulnerable among us, all too often, low-income people of color, determine their structural barriers to opportunity and change those barriers. Our support for New Orleans' recovery requires our support for federal capacity to intervene and the demand that it do so. It also requires that the federal government take seriously policy proposals that will improve the grades New Orleans will receive for recovery for all of its former residents.

These policies include:

1) rebuilding and developing more affordable housing, and connecting it to jobs, education and transit opportunities; requiring and providing incentives to private developers to develop low-income and affordable units in their multi-dwelling developments;

2) creating a regional education system that intentionally creates socio-economically balanced schools;

3) creating a regional public transit system that connects city neighborhoods to job centers in suburbs and considers creating development clusters of affordable housing and businesses around transit hubs;

4) restoring wetlands along the lines already developed by Louisiana's own task force;

5) significantly greater monitoring and soil removal and treatment by the EPA, with particular attention to hard hit communities; and

6) planning all of these as steps in relationship to one another, recognizing that each step will impact the other.

People's well-being, housing, schools, the environment, the economy and healthy growth of the region are all connected. Policy-makers must recognize this and create institutional linkages to plan, monitor and alter plans in each of these areas so as to produce the right outcome – opportunity for all to live life well and in harmony.

If we do not follow these policy recommendations, which are supported by research and experience and proposed by a variety of experts in their fields, we will continue to see failing grades for rebuilding New Orleans and the Gulf Coast region and probably little improvement in opportunity more broadly. If we adopt and pursue these policy proposals, we will see a more invigorated, renewed region and will have strengthened our collective capacity to support each other, by enabling the federal government to produce better opportunities for all of us.



42 Recovery Report Card

43 Report Card Methodology

48 Report Card Map

**APPENDIX A1****NEW ORLEANS RECOVERY
REPORT CARD****NEIGHBORHOOD DEMOGRAPHICS**

	Overall	Utilities	Economy	Health	Rental Housing	Owned Housing	Overall Housing	Public Education	Population	Percent Non-White	Average HHI
French Quarter/CBD	D+ 68%	A+ 100%	B- 82%	F 20%	C- 73%	A+ 99%	C+ 79%	F 56%	5,970	21%	60,794
Central City/Garden District	D 66%	A+ 100%	C 76%	F 33%	D 64%	A- 92%	C- 72%	F 50%	48,327	73%	36,761
Uptown/Carrollton	C 74%	A+ 100%	C 74%	D 67%	F 54%	B 86%	D+ 69%	D- 61%	67,083	53%	57,398
Mid-City	F 49%	A+ 100%	F 59%	F 0%	F 20%	C+ 78%	F 38%	F 48%	80,909	88%	27,015
Lakeview	D- 62%	A+ 100%	D 66%	F 0%	F 47%	C 73%	D 64%	B- 82%	25,897	9%	73,716
Gentilly	F 56%	A+ 100%	D- 61%	F 0%	F 19%	C 74%	F 58%	F 59%	41,196	74%	47,522
Bywater	F 54%	A+ 100%	D 66%	F 0%	F 35%	B 83%	F 56%	F 49%	42,984	88%	28,873
Lower Ninth Ward	F 46%	C+ 79%	F 56%	F 0%	F 13%	C 75%	F 46%	F 48%	19,515	97%	28,867
New Orleans East	F 51%	A+ 100%	F 57%	F 0%	F 7%	C- 73%	F 44%	F 54%	79,808	90%	42,951
Village de l'Est	F 50%	A+ 100%	F 57%	F 0%	F 20%	D+ 69%	F 43%	F 51%	12,912	96%	36,856
Venetian Islands	F 60%	A+ 100%	D- 61%	F 0%	C 76%	B- 81%	C+ 79%	F 57%	3,643	47%	40,621
Algiers	C 75%	A+ 100%	A- 90%	F 50%	D- 63%	A+ 98%	B 84%	F 53%	55,857	70%	42,484
New Aurora/English Turn	D- 60%	A+ 100%	D 64%	F 0%	D- 61%	A 96%	B 86%	F 52%	5,672	83%	62,939
New Orleans Average	D 66%	A+ 98%	D 67%	F 13%	F 42%	B- 83%	D 63%	F 55%			

Grades and Score Ranges

A+: Score>97	A: 93≤ Score<97	A-: 90≤ Score<93
B+: >Score≥87	B: 83≤ Score<87	B-: 80≤ Score<83
C+: 80>Score≥77	C: 73≤ Score<77	C-: 70≤ Score<73
D+: 70>Score≥67	D: 63≤ Score<67	D-: 60≤ Score<63
F: Score<60		

APPENDIX A2

NEW ORLEANS RECOVERY REPORT CARD: METHODOLOGY

Overview

This document outlines the methodology for the Center for Social Inclusion's Report Card on the recovery efforts in New Orleans, LA following the 2005 hurricane season.

Purpose: To track progress of the New Orleans recovery effort as it relates to the ability of New Orleanians to return home to particular areas of the city. In general, the Report Card compares the current situation to that before the 2005 hurricane season.

Geography: The Report Card focuses on recovery efforts in Orleans Parish. The analysis is broken down by planning district.¹

Categories

The overall grade for each location is an average of six categorical grades: Utilities, Economy, Health, Housing, Hurricane Protection, and Education. Each category will be described in detail below.

OverallScore =	$\frac{\text{UtilityScore} + \text{EconomyScore} + \text{HealthScore} + \text{HousingScore} + \text{EducationScore}}{5}$
-----------------------	--

Letter grades are assigned for each Score by the following ranges:

A+: Score>97	A: 93≤ Score<97	A-: 90≤ Score<93
B+: >Score≥87	B: 83≤ Score<87	B-: 80≤ Score<83
C+: 80>Score≥77	C: 73≤ Score<77	C-: 70≤ Score<73
D+: 70>Score≥67	D: 63≤ Score<67	D-: 60≤ Score<63
F: Score<60		



APPENDICES

Utilities:

This score is based on electricity, gas, and drinking water availability:

UtilityScore =	$\frac{\text{ElecScore} + \text{WaterScore} + \text{GasScore}}{3}$
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The percentage of each Zip Codeⁱ with access to each utility was gathered.ⁱⁱ

The coverage for these three utilities was averaged.

ElecScore =	% of area with access to electricity
WaterScore =	% of area with access to potable water²
Gas Score =	% of area with access to natural gas

Housing:

The housing score is a weighted average of sub-scores for rental housing and owner-occupied housing:

HousingScore = $W_{\text{rental}} * \text{RentalScore} + W_{\text{owner}} * \text{OwnerScore}$	
W_{rental} =	% of rental housing units pre-Katrina
W_{owner} =	% of owner-occupied housing units pre-Katrina

Weights are based on the percentage of each area using each type of housing based on 2000 census data.ⁱⁱⁱ The *RentalScore* is an estimate of the percentage of each area pushed out of rental housing by damage to rental units and the increase in area rents. The number of units sustaining “Major” or “Severe” damage is available from the GNOCDC.^{iv} The change in Fair Market Rents (FMR) was used to estimate the increase in rents.^v For each unit size (Efficiency, 1-Bedroom, 2-Bedroom, 3-Bedroom, and 4-Bedroom), the percentage change from FY2000 to FY2006 was determined. The *AvgIncrease* is the average of each of these percentage changes.

AvgIncrease =	$\frac{\text{effInc} + 1\text{brInc} + 2\text{brInc} + 3\text{brInc} + 4\text{brInc}}{5}$
For example: effInc =	$\frac{\text{effFMR}_{2006} - \text{effFMR}_{2000}}{\text{effFMR}_{2000}}$

Given this average increase in rents across Orleans Parish, the percentage of renters pushed out of the market was estimated. A renter was considered to be pushed out of the market if he or she was paying less than 50 percent of income towards rent in 2000 and more than 50 percent in 2006. The former data were available from the 2000 census.^{vi} Assuming no increase in income, any individual paying 30 percent or more of income for rent in 2000 would now be paying more than 50 percent.

totalRentalUnits =	number of rental units in 2000
already50pct =	number of rental units priced at 50% or more of income in 2000
paying50pct =	estimated number of rental units priced at 50% or more of income in 2006
pctPushedOut =	$\frac{\text{paying50pct} - \text{already50pct}}{\text{totalRentalUnits}}$
affordable =	1 - pctPushedOut

¹ Data gathered by Zip Code. Zip Code was determined to be representative of a planning district if its center falls within the planning district.¹

For the zip code 70117, which spans the Lower 9th Ward and Bywater, information was available for each planning district individually.

² Potable water is not available for “a small portion” of the Lower 9th Ward, so 75 percent coverage was assumed for the entire area.

Of undamaged rental units, presently-available affordable units were estimated by multiplying the number of units by the *affordable* variable. *RentalScore* is the percentage of the original number of rental units this quantity represents.

damagedRentalUnits =	# of “Major” or “Severely” damaged rental units
undamagedRental =	totalRentalUnits-damagedRentalUnits
affordableRental =	undamagedRental*affordable
RentalScore =	$\frac{\text{affordableRental}}{\text{totalRentalUnits}}$

OwnedScore estimates the progress of rebuilding owner-occupied units. The number of homes sustaining “Major” or “Severe” damage is available from the GNOCDC.^{vii} To estimate progress, the assumption is made that the acquisition of a residential building permit is an indication of repair. This estimation also assumes that the proportion of repairs made in each neighborhood is equal to the distribution of hurricane damage (i.e. if a 15% of New Orleans’ damaged homes were in a particular neighborhood, this model assumes 15% of residential building permits will be for that neighborhood).

totalOwnedUnits =	number of owner-occupied units in 2000 in each area
damagedOwned_i =	number of units damaged in Hurricane Katrina in each area
pctOfDamage_i =	$\frac{\text{damagedOwned}_i}{\sum_i \text{damagedOwned}_i} = \text{for each area, the percentage of total damage sustained}$
resPermits =	number of residential building permits granted by the City of New Orleans since Katrina
estBuildingPermits_i =	pctOfDamage_i * resPermits
unrepairedHomes_i =	damagedOwned_i – estBuildingPermits_i
OwnedScore =	$1 - \frac{\text{unrepairedHomes}}{\text{totalOwnedUnits}}$

Economy:

This score is based on returning businesses, open child care centers, and access to public transportation:

EconomyScore =	$\frac{\text{ChildCareScore} + \text{JobScore} + \text{PTScore}}{3}$
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The child care score is the percentage of centers currently open. To get these values, a map of planning districts was overlaid on top of a map^{viii} of open and closed centers.

ChildCareScore =	$\frac{\text{\# of currently open child care centers}}{\text{\# of pre-Katrina open child care centers}}$
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The jobs score is an estimate of the jobs lost due to damaged infrastructure and regained during recovery. The base assumption is damage sustained to commercial buildings is equal to that sustained to residential buildings in each area, which translates to job loss. (i.e. if 40% of an area’s housing was lost, it’s assumed 40% of the commercial buildings, and jobs, were lost as well.) While employment is not available for each planning district, it is for the New Orleans MSA.^{ix} In June 2005, 209,573 of the MSA’s 650,400 total jobs were located in Orleans Parish, or 32.22%. Assuming this same distribution for June 2006 (the latest employment data available), 143,131 of the MSA’s 444,200 jobs are in New Orleans. To estimate recovery, the percentage of jobs returned is multiplied by the percentage of buildings lost.



APPENDICES

estBuildingDamage =	$\frac{\text{damagedRentalUnits} + \text{damagedOwned}}{\text{totalRentalUnits} + \text{totalOwnedUnits}}$
pctJobsInNO₂₀₀₅ =	$\frac{\text{jobsInNO}_{\text{June2005}}}{\text{jobsInNOMSA}_{\text{June2005}}}$
estJobsInNO₂₀₀₆ =	$\text{pctJobsInNO}_{2005} * \text{jobsInNOMSA}_{\text{June2006}}$
pctNOJobsRecovery =	$\frac{\text{estJobsInNO}_{2006}}{\text{jobsInNO}_{\text{June2005}}}$
estPctJobLoss =	$\text{estBuildingDamage}(1 - \text{pctNOJobsRecovery})$
JobScore =	$1 - \text{estPctJobLoss}$

To determine the population most affected by the progress made in rebuilding the public transportation system, the percentage of employed individuals in each planning district using public transportation to get to work (according to the 2000 census*) is multiplied by the percentage of New Orleans public transportation routes that remain closed.^{xi} This results in a value representing the percentage of each planning district disadvantaged by the current state of the public transportation system. For example, if 20 percent of an area relied on public transportation to get to work and only 50 percent of the city's public transportation is intact, $0.20 * 0.50 = 0.10 = 10\%$ of this area's working population is classified as disadvantaged. The public transportation score is the percentage of the population *not* disadvantaged.

pctPTopen =	$\frac{\text{\# of currently open routes}}{\text{\# of pre-Katrina routes}}$
pctPTuse =	% of working population using public transit to get to work
pctDisadvantaged =	$(1 - \text{pctPTopen}) * \text{pctPTuse}$
PTScore =	$1 - \text{pctDisadvantaged}$

Health:

The health score is determined by hospital status. A determination was made as to how many hospitals were open^{xii} within one mile of each planning district. To get these values, a map of planning districts was overlaid on top of a map of open and closed hospitals. The same information was then gathered for closed hospitals.^{xiii}

OpenHospitals =	# of open hospitals within one mile
ClosedHospitals =	# of closed hospitals within one mile
HealthScore =	$\frac{\text{OpenHospitals}}{\text{OpenHospitals} + \text{ClosedHospitals}}$

Open Hospitals ^{xiv}	Closed Hospitals
Children's Hospitals Touro Infirmary Hospital Tulane University Hospital & Clinic	Lindy Boggs Medical Center Medical Center of Louisiana-Charity Campus Medical Center of Louisiana-University Campus Memorial Medical Center Methodist Hospital Veterans Affairs Medical Center

Education:

Similar to the public transportation score, the education score looks at which communities rely heavily on public education and uses this as a measure of how public school reconstruction impacts each community. The percentage of the K-12 population in public schools for each planning district (from the 2000 census^{xv}) is multiplied by the percentage of open public schools.^{xvi} This gives the percentage of disadvantaged students for each planning district. The education score is the percentage of the population not disadvantaged.

PctPublic =	% of the K-12 student population in public schools
PctOpenPublic =	$\frac{\text{\# of currently open K-12 public schools}}{\text{\# of pre-Katrina K-12 public schools}}$
PctDisadvantaged =	PctPublic*(1 – PctOpenPublic)
EducationScore =	1 – PctDisadvantaged

ⁱ Greater New Orleans Community Data Center (GNOCDC), <http://www.gnocdc.org/>

ⁱⁱ City of New Orleans, Mayors Office of Communications, Situation Reports, <http://www.cityofno.com/>

ⁱⁱⁱ GNOCDC, "Housing & Housing Costs," http://www.gnocdc.org/xls/nbhd_housing.xls

^{iv} GNOCDC, "Current Housing Unit Damages,"

http://www.gnocdc.org/reports/Katrina_Rita_Wilma_Damage_2_12_06___revised.pdf

^v GNOCDC, "New Orleans Fair Market Rent History," http://www.gnocdc.org/reports/fair_market_rents.html

^{vi} GNOCDC, "Housing & Housing Costs," http://www.gnocdc.org/xls/nbhd_housing.xls

^{vii} GNOCDC, "Current Housing Unit Damages,"

http://www.gnocdc.org/reports/Katrina_Rita_Wilma_Damage_2_12_06___revised.pdf

^{viii} GNOCDC, "Open and closed child care centers in Orleans Parish,"

http://www.gnocdc.org/maps/orleans_child_care.pdf

^{ix} North American Industry Classification System, <http://censtats.census.gov/cbpnaic/cbpnaic.shtml>

^x GNOCDC, "Orleans Parish: Transportation," http://www.gnocdc.org/xls/par_transportation.xls

^{xi} New Orleans Regional Transportation Authority, <http://www.norta.com/>

^{xii} Louisiana Hospital Association, "Hospital Status Report," <http://www.lhaonline.org/>

^{xiii} City of New Orleans Department of Health, "New Orleans Health Department report June 7, 2006,"

<http://www.cityofno.com/Portals/Portal48/portal.aspx>

^{xiv} Louisiana Hospital Association, "Hospital Status Reports," <http://www.lhaonline.org/>

^{xv} GNOCDC, "Orleans Parish Educational Attainment," http://www.gnocdc.org/xls/nbhd_edattainment.xls

^{xvi} Louisiana Department of Education, "Public School – Multiple Statistics,"

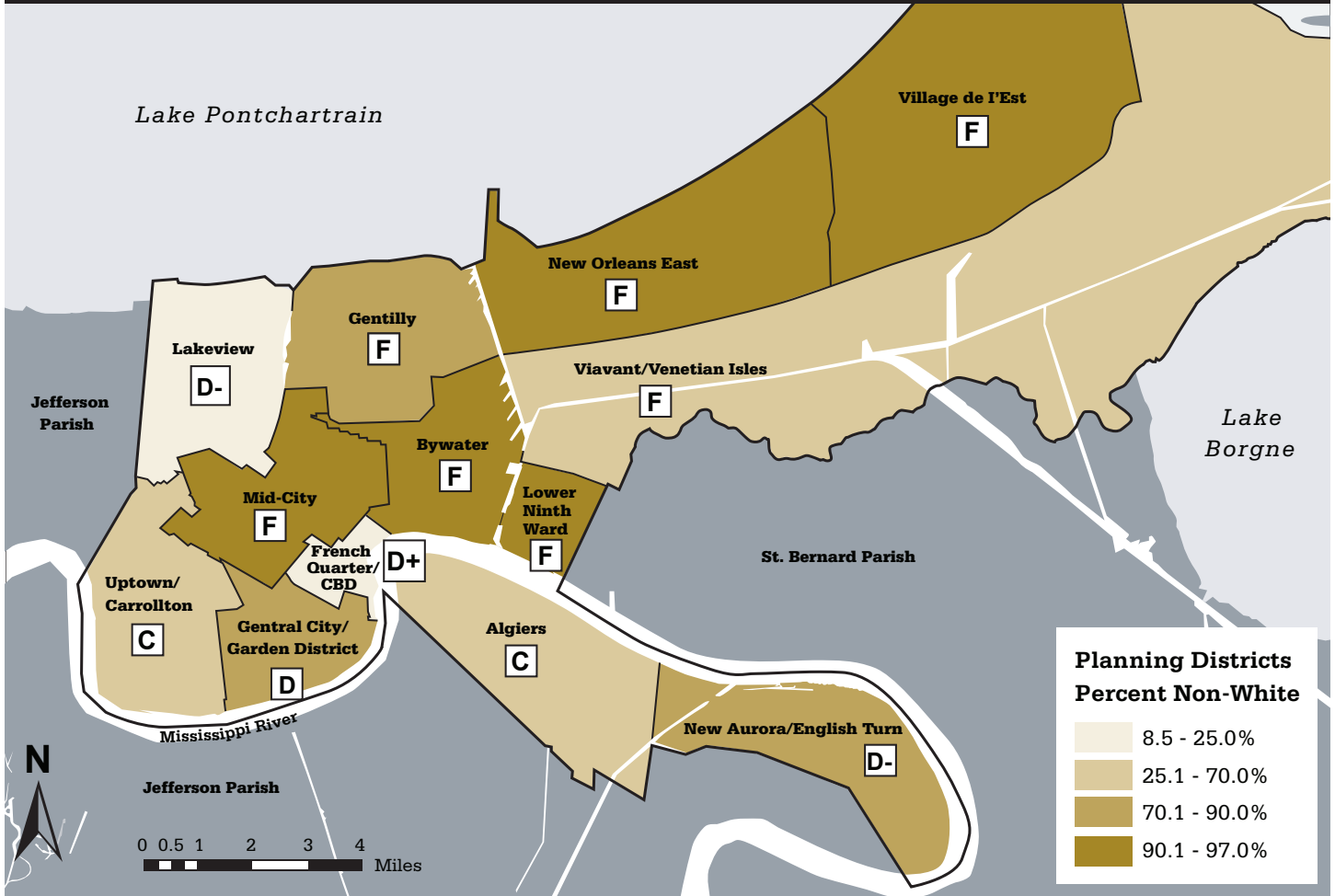
<http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/pair/1489.html#hurricane>



APPENDIX A3

**NEW ORLEANS RECOVERY
REPORT CARD MAP**

City Planning Districts: Non-White Population and Overall Scores





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