

## ATTACHMENT A

GOAL	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:	
<b>NEIGHBORHOODS</b>			
<b>1</b>	<b><i>Enhance character and livability for all neighborhoods, with investments to improve quality of life</i></b>	1.A. Tailor policies and programs to maintain and enhance the physical, economic, social and cultural character and diversity of existing residential neighborhoods.	5.16
		1.B. Establish systems to conduct code enforcement activities while providing low-income residents with resources that assist them to comply.	5.19
		1.C. Develop a protocol for dealing with businesses that are incompatible with residences and with “nuisance businesses” while appropriately protecting due process.	5.19
		1.D. Create a system for proactive planning on the neighborhood and district level.	5.20
		1.E. Engage neighborhood residents, businesses, and other stakeholders in proactive planning connected to the citywide Master Plan and citywide policies.	5.21
<b>2</b>	<b><i>Focus investment strategies to meet neighborhood needs and promote equity and access to opportunity.</i></b>	2.A. Continue redevelopment of blighted and vacant sites through a comprehensive blight elimination program under unified management. Establish neighborhood plans that direct investment strategies in each neighborhood. In neighborhoods and areas with limited market activity, focus on catalytic investments and community-based programs that benefit existing residents and increase access to opportunity.	
		2.B. In neighborhoods and areas with increasing market activity, prevent displacement of existing residents by providing home rehabilitation resources, and creating new affordable homeownership and rental housing units.	

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		2.C. In neighborhoods and areas with high levels of market activity and high home prices, preserve and expand affordable housing opportunities using all available tools.	
<b>3</b>	<b><i>Access to retail and services for all neighborhoods</i></b>	3.A. Revitalize existing neighborhood commercial districts and create new, walkable mixed-use districts along transit corridors and on underutilized commercial or industrial land.	5.30
		3.B. Continue to promote food access and health care access in all neighborhoods that lack these necessary services.	5.34
		3.C. Include neighborhood commercial development in activities of the proposed economic development public-private partnership (PPP).	5.35

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GOAL	POLICIES FOR DECISION MAKERS	FOR MORE INFORMATION, SEE PAGE:	
<b>HOUSING</b>			
<b>4</b>	<b><i>Reinvented housing policies to support quality neighborhoods, meet the diverse housing needs of all households, and support a range of rental and homeownership options for residents of all income levels</i></b>	4.A. Development Work Group	5.35
		4.B. Preserve existing supply and expand the total supply of affordable rental and homeownership opportunities throughout New Orleans.	
		4.C. Aggressively implement and enhance existing funded housing programs.	5.39
		4.D. Maintain and expand market-rate housing choices and housing supply.	5.41
		4.E. Prevent future displacement through development activities and continued study and policy review.	
		4.F. Enforce and promote fair housing policies throughout New Orleans.	
		4.G. Encourage sustainable design and infrastructure for all New Orleanians.	
		4.H. Increase accessibility for all, including residents with special needs.	
<b>5</b>	<b><i>High capacity public sector and neighborhood-based groups, such as neighborhood</i></b>	5.A. Provide professional development opportunities for city housing staff and for members of the Housing Working Group.	5.43

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<b>development corporations, to provide housing responsive to the changing housing needs of current and future residents.</b>	5.B. Work with non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA to continue to foster and tap into a network of strong neighborhood- based neighborhood development corporations through capacity building efforts.	5.43
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# fact sheet

## HOUSING

### Pre-Hurricane Katrina Housing Facts (Census 2000)

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

### Post-Hurricane Katrina Housing Facts

#### Homeowner

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

#### Rental

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

#### Increase in costs

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

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

#### Pre-Katrina:

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

#### Post-Katrina:

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

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

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### FINDINGS FROM 2009

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

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### CHALLENGES FROM 2009

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

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### FINDINGS IN 2016

- Between 2000 and 2015, New Orleans experienced substantial shifts in population, households, income, and housing. Among the significant changes are:
- The population decreased by 28%, and households decreased by 21%, with the average size of households dropping slightly by 6% from 2.48 people per household in 2000 to 2.33 in 2013.
- The African American population has declined 34% (112,315 African American residents) since 2000. In 2013, 60% of the city's population was African American, down from 67% in 2000.
- There was a significant decrease in the percentage of the under-18 population, while the portion of the population between 19 and 34 years old rose. As a result, the proportion of single households or households made up of unrelated people rose by 2%, the number of people living alone has increased by 6%, and the number of non-family households has increased by 7%.
- The city's poverty rate remains incredibly high at 28% compared to 15% nationally, an overall increase of 2% since 2000.
- Median household income remains unchanged since 2000, at approximately \$37,000 when adjusted for inflation.
- The proportion of high-income households increased dramatically, while the proportion of very-low income households rose slightly.
- Educational attainment increased, with a particularly sharp drop in the percentage of individuals who did not complete high school.
- Housing costs rose dramatically for both renters and homeowners. Home values have increased by 54%, and rents have increased 50%.
- Homeownership rates remained unchanged, decreasing from 46% to 45%, still well below the national average of over 60%.
- The figures below, selected from the vast amount of data gathered for HousingNOLA's Preliminary Report, provide a snapshot of the current state of housing in New Orleans. They illustrate the changing demographics that contribute to high housing demand, the challenges to affordability, and the lack of equity in housing for different populations.
- There is a demand for approximately 33,600 units (new construction and rehab) over the next 10 years in New Orleans.
- If homeownership and rental levels remain constant over the next 10 years, there will be an even split between new homeownership units (16,921) and rental units (16,672) needed.
- Highest homeowner/buyer demand will be families earning between \$29,717 and \$44,575 and more than \$44,575 for 2 bedroom and 3 bedroom units.
- Highest renter demand will be families earning less than \$11,143 and more than \$37,146, for 1 bedroom and 2 bedroom units.
- "Fair market rent" in New Orleans for a 1 bedroom apartment is \$767 monthly, or \$9,204 yearly.
- Median income in New Orleans is \$37,146; median rent is \$765; average home value is \$183,700.
- African American households disproportionately pay more of their income towards housing costs.
- More than 70% of all households pay one-third or more of their income towards housing costs.
- Between 2005 and 2015, the number of Housing Choice Vouchers given out by HANO has more than doubled.

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### CHALLENGES IN 2016

- Focusing on housing affordability with strategies for areas with lower market activity, increasing market activity, and high values with strong market activity.
- Preserving existing supply and expanding the total supply of affordable rental and homeownership opportunities throughout New Orleans.
- Preventing displacement of long-time residents due to rising housing costs.
- Enforcing and promoting fair housing policies throughout New Orleans.
- Encouraging sustainable design and infrastructure for all New Orleanians.
- Increasing accessibility for all, including residents with special needs.

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### Acronyms

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

<b>AMI</b>	Area Median Income	<b>HDLC</b>	Historic District Landmarks Commission
<b>CAO</b>	Chief Administrative Officer	<b>HOME</b>	Home Investment Partnership Program (federal)
<b>CDBG</b>	Neighborhood Development Block Grant (federal)	<b>HRCN</b>	Housing Resource Center Network
<b>CIP</b>	Capital Improvement Program	<b>HUD</b>	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
<b>CLT</b>	Neighborhood Land Trust	<b>LHFA</b>	Louisiana Housing Finance Agency
<b>CPC</b>	City Planning Commission	<b>NCDAC</b>	Neighborhood Conservation District Advisory Committee
<b>CZO</b>	Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance	<b>NOLABA</b>	New Orleans Business Alliance
<b>D-CDBG</b>	Disaster Neighborhood Development Block Grant (federal)	<b>NORA</b>	New Orleans Redevelopment Authority
<b>DPW</b>	Department of Public Works	<b>OFICD</b>	Office of Facilities, Infrastructure, and Community Development
<b>EAH</b>	Employer-Assisted Housing	<b>RFP</b>	Request for proposal
<b>FEMA</b>	Federal Emergency Management Agency	<b>UNOP</b>	Unified New Orleans Plan
<b>GIS</b>	Geographic information system	<b>OCD</b>	Office of Community Development
<b>GOZone</b>	Gulf Opportunity Zone		

### A Introduction

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

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

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

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



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**A comprehensive approach to eliminating blight.** New Orleans had over 20,000 blighted properties before Hurricane Katrina, with another 30,000–40,000 vacant or blighted properties added since the storm. The City has made tremendous progress in reducing blight, when the number of blighted units was reduced by over 15,000 from 2010 to 2015. Nonetheless, this complex challenge of widespread patchwork blight combined with disinvestment that predates Hurricane Katrina still remains. The city needs to continue with its multifaceted and coordinated approach that combines traditional tools with innovative solutions.

- **Reinvention of the city’s approach to housing.** The city needs a housing policy focused on building neighborhood and neighborhoods rather than projects or developments—whether for market-rate or below market rate housing. This will require a thorough understanding of the new dynamics of all segments of the New Orleans housing market since the storm; an inclusive approach to setting policy that reaches out to neighborhoods and housing professionals; a planning context that sets the physical framework for housing activities; and capacity building for both the public sector and neighborhood-based groups such as neighborhood development corporations. Housing policy should be multi-faceted taking into account the needs of residents who have returned since Hurricane Katrina, welcome and facilitate the return of former residents who wish to come back to the city, and welcome newcomers to New Orleans.
- **Enhancing neighborhood commercial districts and residents’ access to retail and services.** Strategic location of civic uses to anchor local commercial areas, recruitment of supermarkets to better serve residents, provision for neighborhood corner stores where they are desired by residents, support for small business and merchants, and public investments that promote walkability can enhance neighborhood commercial areas.
- **Neighborhood-level plans and audits tailored to specific areas.** **Neighborhood planning efforts** will work with residents, businesses and other stakeholders to create plans, coordinate implementation, and organize neighborhood process around development proposals.

## **B** Recommendations

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

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## Summary

**FIRST FIVE YEARS:** 2010–2014

**MEDIUM TERM:** 2015–2019

**LONG TERM:** 2020–2030

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE:
1. Enhanced character and livability for neighborhoods with investments to improve quality of life	1.A. Tailor policies and programs to maintain and enhance the physical, economic, social and cultural character and diversity of existing residential neighborhoods.	1. Use zoning to guide the scale and character of new in fill to fit in with the character of established residential areas, while accommodating an array of single- and multifamily housing options to meet the strong need for more housing units in New Orleans.	CPC; City Council	First five years	Staff time	5.16
		2. Use zoning to ensure appropriate transitions between established residential areas and redevelopment of underutilized sites.	CPC; City Council	complete	CZO	5.17
		3. Use zoning to ensure that appropriate infill sites of over 10,000sf and publicly-owned properties can be redeveloped with dense development that remains sensitive to the needs of surrounding neighborhoods. Large infill developments should also have inclusionary housing requirements for affordability if found feasible	CPC; City Council	First five years	HousingNOLA 10-Year Strategy and Implementation Plan	

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		4. Create design guidelines to assist existing and new property owners in improving, expanding or constructing new development.	CPC through area plans; CPC and City Council through zoning	complete	CZO	5.17
1. Enhanced character and livability for neighborhoods with investments to improve quality of life	1.A. Tailor policies and programs to maintain and enhance the physical, economic social and cultural character and diversity of existing residential neighborhoods.	5. Continue to develop and refine incentive zoning to provide neighborhood benefits from large developments.	CPC	First five years	Staff time	5.17
		6. Adopt mandatory inclusionary zoning as appropriate and feasible to housing and neighborhood needs.	CPC; City Council; Non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA and GNOHA, OCD	First five years	HousingNOLA 10-Year Strategy and Implementation Plan Housing for a Resilient New Orleans	
		7. Continue to upgrade streetscapes of major streets	DPW	First five years	Bond funding; CDBG; federal transportation funds	5.18
		8. Create a program to notify property owners about their side-walk maintenance responsibilities and offer a betterment program to promote sidewalk repair and maintenance in neighborhoods.	DPW	First five years	Staff time; fines	5.18
		9. Continue to support and promote a diversity of public social and cultural events throughout the city.	Mayor's Office, Arts Council New Orleans	First five years	Staff time-various departments; neighborhood groups; non-profits	5.18
		10. Promote neighborhood associations and neighborhood activities to encourage neighborhood identity.	Mayor's Office: City Council; CPC	First five years	Staff time	5.19
		11. Work with the Arts Council to enhance and expand the Percent for Art Program; adopt and promote policies and guidelines for a Percent for Art program for private developers	Arts Council New Orleans; City Planning; City Council; Mayor's Office	First five years	Staff time; grant funding	5.19

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<p><b>1.B.</b> Establish systems to conduct code enforcement activities while providing low-income residents with resources that assist them to comply. Enforce quality of life regulations and eliminate nuisance businesses.</p>	<p>1. Create a warning and ticketing system with fines for quality of life offenses.</p>	<p>Mayor's Office; City Council; Po- lice Department</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time; fines</p>	<p>5.19</p>
	<p>2. Create an improved Code Enforcement system that includes an established inspection regime and fine system for rental properties that are not up to code. Include mechanisms to help enable small and lower-income landlords to comply.</p>	<p>Mayor's Office; City Council; Code Enforcement; financial partners for loan provision and loan-loss reserve</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time - various departments; fines; loan-loss reserve resources</p>	
	<p>3. Prioritize and promote home repair for low-income and senior homeowners to help residents who do not have the means to repair their properties avoid displacement due to poor conditions or code enforcement fines.</p>	<p>Office of Community Development; Mayor's Office; City Council</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time- Office of Community Development; home repair partner organizations and CDCs</p>	

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<p><b>1. C.</b> Develop a protocol for dealing with businesses that are incompatible with residences while appropriately protecting due process.</p>	<p>1. Convene meetings between business owners and neighborhood residents to seek resolution of issues.</p>	<p>Neighborhood Engagement</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>5.19</p>
	<p>2. Ensure industrial and commercial performance standards (limits on noise, dust, vibration and other impacts) in the zoning code and city codes that are culturally and neighborhood appropriate.</p>	<p>CPC, City Council</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>5.19</p>

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<p>1. Enhanced character and livability for neighborhoods, with investments to improve quality of life</p>		3. Disseminate information to neighborhood associations and business owners about potential legal approaches and inform all parties on what is currently allowed under the law.	CPC	First five years	Staff time	5.19
		4. Enhance the Comprehensive Planning Division with an Area Planning Program.	CPC	First five years	General fund; CDBG planning funds	5.20
	1.D. Fund and staff a system for proactive planning on the neighborhood and district level.	1. Create Area Plans for planning districts and neighborhoods.	CPC; neighborhood associations;	First five years	CPC funded plans— general fund, CDBG, state and federal grants. Other funding for associations, <i>etc.</i> — Foundations, donations, university	5.21
	1.E. Engage neighborhood residents, businesses and other stakeholders in proactive planning connected to the citywide Master Plan and citywide policies.	2. Engage neighborhood groups and students to perform “Neighborhood Audits” of the public realm to aid in targeting resources for public improvements.	CPC (set framework, some coordination); neighborhood alliances and other	Ongoing	Volunteers; limited funding needed from donations, foundations	5.23
		3. Provide a structured Neighborhood Participation Program.	CPC; City Council (ordinance)	Partially complete/First five years	Staff time. See Volume 2, Chapter 15 for details	5.23

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		4. Hold public hearings, when needed, in the evening to enhance the opportunity for public participation.	CPC	First five years/ ongoing	Staff and commissioner time	5.24

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GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE
<p>2. Focus investment strategies to meet neighborhood needs and promote equity and access to opportunity.</p>	<p>2.A. Continue redevelopment of blighted and vacant sites through a comprehensive blight elimination program under unified management. Establish neighborhood plans that direct investment strategies in each neighborhood. In neighborhoods and areas with limited market activity, focus on catalytic investments and community-based programs that benefit existing residents and increase access to opportunity.</p>	<p>1. Provide and expand home repair programs for low-income and senior homeowners and persons with special needs.</p>	<p>Office of Community Development</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Neighborhood Housing Improvement Fund; federal dollars; staff time</p>	
		<p>2. Explore increased investment in energy efficiency and weatherization for homeowners and Housing Choice Voucher tenants to reduce energy bills and increase sustainability.</p>	<p>Office of Community Development; HANO; Louisiana Housing Corporation; HousngNOLA; GNOHA</p>		<p>LIHEAP funds; Housing Choice Voucher Utility Allowances</p>	
		<p>3. Coordinate efforts of public agencies providing resources for housing development.</p>	<p>OCD, NORA, HANO, FANO</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>State and federal funding including; explore limited-period millage or bond for enforcement, land bank and redevelopment programs</p>	<p>5.25</p>
		<p>4. Continue to encourage and fund alternative land use programs to enable neighbors and community organizations to reuse vacant land for food access, stormwater management, economic development, and other community-beneficial purposes.</p>	<p>New Orleans Redevelopment Authority; City of New Orleans</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Publicly-owned and publicly-controlled properties</p>	



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	<p>5. Create a comprehensive city property information database that includes information on blighted and vacant properties as well as other data.</p>	<p>Information Technology to expand on NORA project to be available to all relevant departments</p>	<p>Complete: LAMA Server deployed across City government and NORA</p>	<p>D-CDBG; expand with grant or general fund; CDBG or general fund to sustain</p>	<p>5.26</p>
	<p>6. Establish annual inspections for rental properties and for houses at time of sale. Develop an improved Code Enforcement system to ensure that occupied rental properties are up to code.</p>	<p>City Council ordinance; Safety and Permits; Code Enforcement;</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Fees to be paid by landlords and sellers</p>	<p>5.26</p>
	<p>7. Establish a registry of properties vacant for six months or more, and work with community groups to track property conditions. .</p>	<p>City Council (ordinance); Safety and Permits</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>General fund; fines for non-registration, community grounds assistance</p>	<p>5.26</p>
	<p>8. Expedite procedures for site control of blighted and vacant properties, including the code enforcement lien foreclosure process.</p>	<p>Mayor's Office; legislative delegation</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>5.26</p>

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<p><b>2.</b> Redevelopment of blighted and vacant properties in all neighborhoods, focusing strategies to meet the respective needs of stable neighborhoods, recovering neighborhoods, and revitalization neighborhoods.</p>	<p><b>2.A.</b> In neighborhoods and areas with limited market activity, focus on catalytic investments and community-based programs that benefit existing residents and increase access to opportunity.</p>	<p>9. Pursue land assembly to create larger, contiguous parcels to facilitate targeted block-by-block redevelopment of housing and/or neighborhood amenities.</p>	<p>Mayor's Office; City Council, NORA</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>General fund (foregone income for limited period)</p>	<p>5.26</p>
<p><b>2.</b> Redevelopment of blighted and vacant properties in all neighborhoods, focusing strategies to meet the respective needs of stable neighborhoods, recovering neighborhoods, and revitalization neighborhoods.</p>	<p><b>2.A.</b> In neighborhoods and areas with limited market activity, focus on catalytic investments and community-based programs that benefit existing residents and increase access to opportunity.</p>	<p>10. Focus on catalytic investments in recreation, transit, quality jobs, and safety to improve residents' quality of life and ensure access to opportunity.</p>	<p>Mayor's Office, NORD, NORTA, NOLABA, GNO Inc.</p>	<p>First ten years</p>	<p>Federal funds, general fund, NOLABA funds</p>	
		<p>11. Provide incentives, such as a limited-period tax abatement, to owners to assemble (including scattered site assembly) and redevelop sites.</p>	<p>City Attorney's Office; NORA</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time; D-CDBG; other federal funding</p>	<p>5.27</p>
		<p>12. Continue the Lot Next Door Program, including credits for fencing or landscaping adjacent properties. Check with NORA on this</p>	<p>NORA</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time; D-CDBG; other federal funding</p>	<p>5.27</p>

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		13. Explore options pursuant to existing authorities under state law to identify and designate disinvested areas as tax increment financing districts for the purpose of directing long-term locally derived funding to support affordable housing investments, infrastructure upgrades, blight reduction efforts, and other public sector investments and initiatives.	Mayor's Office; City Attorney; Finance Department; City Council. Possible consultant contract	First five years	Staff time; general fund	5.28
		14. Explore the establishment of a low interest revolving loan fund for the acquisition and rehabilitation of blighted properties by city residents for use as a primary residence. Include a reasonable grace period so that these residents are not required to repay the loan before occupying the property. Partner with local banks to design the program and set eligibility standards.	OCD, local banks	First five years		
	2.B. In neighborhoods and areas with increasing market activity, prevent displacement of existing residents while continuing to invest in improvements.	1. Work with neighborhood groups, non-profits, faith-based organizations, and affordable housing developers to establish Neighborhood Land Trusts to act as banks and potentially create new opportunities for affordable ownership and rental housing.	CPC; OCD, HANO, FANO, NORA; neighborhood and nonprofit affordable housing groups such as HousingNOLA ; GNOHA, affordable housing developers	First five years	Staff time; D-CDB G; foundation funding; federal funds; Neighborhood Housing Improvement Fund	5.27

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<p>2. Create and expand home repair grant and loan programs targeted to help low-income and senior homeowners renovate their properties.</p>	<p>Office of Community Development, Mayor's Office, City Council, non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA and GNOHA</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time, foundation funding, Federal funds, NHIF funds</p>	
<p>3. Increase opportunities for small-to-medium-scale multifamily development that fits into neighborhood fabric to increase housing supply.</p>	<p>CPC; City Council</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	
<p>4. Require property liability and flood insurance for all owners.</p>	<p>City Council (ordinance); Safety and Permits (enforcemen</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>5.28</p>
<p>5. Place redevelopment covenants, design and performance standards, and any special use or other appropriate restrictions on properties sold at auction by NORA or other government entities for redevelopment. Include consideration of housing affordability impacts when disposing of any publicly owned or publicly controlled property.</p>	<p>NORA; City Attorney's office</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>5.28</p>
<p>6. Clarify through public process the criteria for historic property rehabilitation or demolition</p>	<p>HDLC; NCDAC</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time</p>	<p>5.29</p>
<p>7. Use neighborhood audits (see above) to prioritize problem properties for code enforcement or demolition.</p>	<p>CPC (coordination) ; neighborhood groups; appropriate city agencies</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time; neighborhood volunteers</p>	<p>5.30</p>

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	<p><b>2.C.</b> In neighborhoods and areas with high levels of market activity and high home prices, preserve and expand affordable housing opportunities using all available tools.</p>	<p>1. Utilize inclusionary zoning, as well as covenants or restrictions on publicly-owned and adjudicated properties, to facilitate the production of affordable housing in these high-opportunity areas.</p>	<p>CPC Office of Community Development, City Council, Mayors Office, non-profit housing advocates, such as HousingNOLA, Housing Working Group</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time, Housing Working Group assistance</p>		
		<p>2. Increase opportunities for large-scale multi-family development in areas adjacent to transit and commercial corridors and on 1-to-5 acre parcels of vacant land.</p>	<p>CPC, City Council, OCD, Housing NOLA, Housing Working Group</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time</p>		
	<p><b>2.D.</b> Encourage innovative, experimental and low-cost uses of vacant property, which is defined as property that contains a structure that: (1) Is without visible signs of continuous human habitation by persons legally entitled to be on the premises; and (2) Is substantially devoid of functional contents pertaining to the operations or activities customary to occupancy; or (3) Is unsecured, such that it is accessible without force to trespassers or other unauthorized persons, to enhance the likelihood that a vacant space will eventually find a permanent use.</p>	<p>1. Create a strategy for implementing temporary use projects initiated by active citizens, citizen-groups, and non-profit partners.</p>	<p>Mayor's Office, City Planning, NORA</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time</p>		
		<p>2. Work with relevant agencies, including NORA, to clear regulatory hurdles and create guidelines for implementing temporary interventions and projects throughout the city.</p>	<p>Mayor's Office, City Planning, NORA</p>	<p>First five years</p>	<p>Staff time</p>		

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GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE:
3. Access to retail and services from all neighborhoods	3.A. Revitalize existing neighborhood commercial districts and create new compact, mixed-use neighborhood centers on under utilized commercial and industrial land.	1. Fast-track the creation of a one-stop shop and comprehensive resource guide to opening and operating a small business in New Orleans.	Economic Development Public-Private Partnership (PPP)	First five years	NOLABA operational funds	5.30-5.32
		2. Include commercial districts in neighborhood and area plans to identify and prioritize immediate needs.	CPC (template and coordination); business and neighborhood volunteers	First five years	CPC staff time; volunteers	5.32
		3. Locate civic uses within or adjacent to neighborhood commercial districts to serve as anchors when feasible.	CAO and CPC through Capital Improvement Program (CIP process)	First five years	CAO, CPC, with other departments; variable funding depending on project	5.32
		4. Incentivize cultural uses, events and development opportunities to strengthen neighborhood commercial districts, where feasible while also supporting and encouraging long standing cultural uses and activities throughout all neighborhood districts, both commercial and residential.	CPC, Neighborhood Engage - ment Office, Office of Cultural Economy, cultural organiza - tions	Ongoing	Staff time	5.33

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		5. Promote the development of business or merchants' associations to serve as the voice of business owners in specific commercial districts.	Main Streets' Program; Cultural Products District programs; Neighborhood Engagement	First five years	Staff time; volunteers	5.33
		6. Create opportunities for context-sensitive commercial reuse of underutilized commercial buildings.	CPC/Council—appropriate zoning; CPC—Area Plans ; incentives such as TIF program	First five years	Staff time; TIF	5.33
3. Access to retail and services from all neighborhoods	3.A. Revitalize existing neighborhood commercial districts and create new compact, mixed-use neighborhood centers along transit corridors and on underutilized commercial and industrial land.	7. Explore options to create walkable, mixed-use environments with appropriately-scaled multi-family housing options in high-frequency housing options with bus and streetcar services.	CPC, City Council, Housing Working Group; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA; GNOHA assistance	First five years	Staff time	
		8. Explore increasing options for density and intensity of residential and mixed-use development within targeted areas that lie within a 30-minute transit-walk commute from major job centers, and integrating this strategy with inclusionary zoning to promote affordability in these transit-accessible areas.	CPC, City Council, non-profit housing advocates, such as HousingNOLA and GNOHA	First five years	Staff time	
		9. Continue façade improvement matching grant program or for neighborhood areas.	NORA; NOLABA; Main Streets programs	First five years	D-CDBG; Main Street commercial	5.34
		10. Develop design principles and standards for all districts that permit a mix of land uses and neighborhood commercial districts.	CPC	First five years	CDBG; Main Street commercial partners	5.34

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3.B. Continue to promote food access and health care access in all neighborhoods that lack these necessary services.	1. Commission a market analysis for supermarkets stores with a plan illustrating the feasibility of potential sites.	Economic Development, NOLABA	First five years	\$35-40,000; General Fund; CDBG; Economic Development Administration or similar grant.	5.34
	2. Identify incentives to supermarkets and health clinics to underserved areas of the city.	Economic Development, NOLABA, Health Dept	First five years		5.34
	3. Continue the Fresh Food Retail Incentives Program	NOLABA, Economic Development	First five years	D-CDBG	5.35
3.C. Include neighborhood commercial development in activities of the proposed economic development public-private partnership (PPP).	1. Focus on marketing, programming and other approaches to revitalization of neighborhood commercial districts.	NOLABA, Economic Development	First five years	NOLABA	5.35

GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE:

4. Reinvent housing policies to support quality neighborhoods and meet the diverse housing needs of all households.	4.A. Create a New Orleans Housing Working Group to guide and coordinate City housing strategy.	1. Coordinate housing development efforts with other place based and neighborhood development efforts through the Housing Working Group	Housing Working Group	First five years	Staff time	5.35 - 5.36
		2. Collect and analyze housing data to monitor the market and housing needs. Include information from the City's Consolidated Plan, the HousingNOLA 10-Year Strategy and Implementation Plan, and the Market Value Analysis, Housing for a Resilient New Orleans	Office of Community Development; non-profit housing advocates, such as HousingNOLA; The Data Center; Housing Working Group	First five years	Staff time; foundation funding in first five years; eventual partial funding by the city from CDBG	5.36
		3. Develop performance measures to monitor housing needs and the extent to which needs are being met for reporting in a monthly cross-agency meeting and annual public reporting.	Office of Community Development	First five years	Staff time	5.36
		4. Create housing policies that build neighborhoods, meet housing needs for all New Orleanians, and attract private investment.	Housing Working Group	First five years	Staff time	5.36



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		5. Establish an annual public meeting on housing policy and priorities.	Housing Working Group	First five years	Staff times	5.37
		6. Communicate local housing needs and priorities to state and federal housing agencies, as well as national non-profits, and work with LHC to develop selection criteria for tax credit projects.	Mayor's Office; Housing Policy Office; Housing Working Group	First five years	Staff time	5.37
		7. Prioritize repair, restoration and reuse of existing residential historic properties as a major part of the City's housing initiatives, reflecting the values of safe and stable historic neighborhoods.	OCD, Housing Working Group	First five years	Staff time	

<p>4. Reinvent housing policies to support quality neighborhoods and meet the diverse housing needs of all households, and support a range of rental and homeownership options for residents of all income levels.</p>	<p>4.B. Preserve existing supply and expand the total supply of affordable rental and homeownership opportunities throughout New Orleans. Provide resources to restore housing in all affected neighborhoods, with appropriate flood protection measures.</p>	1. Seek additional federal funding to close gaps between Road Home funding plus insurance and recovery needs for homeowners.	Mayor's Office; OCD, Housing Working Group, GNOHA	First five years	HUD and Local funds	5.37
		2. Support restoration and development of a diverse array of homeownership and rental housing typologies for residents of all income levels, based on an annual housing market analysis to assist in setting priorities.	OCD; nonprofit housing organizations	First five years	CDBG; NHIF; additional federal funds;	5.38
		3. Identify key indicators of housing affordability needs and neighborhood revitalization, monitor the indicators and hold quarterly cross-agency Neighborhood Coordination Meetings.	OCD (conveners); CPC, NORA, FANO, HANO, enforcement agencies, etc.	First five years	Staff Time	5.38
		4. Explore processes to direct publicly owned and adjudicated property, which is defined as property of which tax sale title is acquired by a political subdivision (La. R.S. 47:2196) toward affordable and mixed-income housing development in high-value, high-opportunity neighborhoods and in areas near high-frequency transit corridors.	Office of Community Development; City of New Orleans; Housing Working Group	Ongoing	Publicly-owned and publicly-controlled property resources; staff time	

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5. Work with public agency partners that own property to develop a process to reserve land for affordable housing on properties eligible for disposition.	Office of Community Development; Housing Working Group; HANO; OPSB; other public agencies that dispose of property	First five years	Staff time; publicly owned and adjudicated properties	
6. Encourage infill development of affordable housing within high-opportunity neighborhoods	CPC, City Council	First five years	Staff time	
7. Enable new large multi-family developments of 75 units or more to be built in high-opportunity neighborhoods and in areas that have access to jobs, neighborhood services, and high-frequency transit lines	CPC, City Council, OCD	First five years	Staff time	
8. Implement an inclusionary zoning ordinance including both mandatory and voluntary approaches focusing in areas of opportunity, especially along transit lines, in concert with existing and expanded incentive zoning and development cost offset mechanisms in order to leverage maximum investment in the development of affordable housing.	City Council; CPC; Office of Community Development	First five years	Staff time; outside consultant assistance; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA; GNOHA assistance, external funding	
9. Develop and implement policies based on the findings of a workforce housing strategy that includes details on workforce housing incentives, business community engagement, and Employer Assisted Housing best practices.	City of New Orleans; City Council; Office of Community Development	First five years	Staff time; GNO Inc. assistance; NOLA Business Alliance assistance; non-profit housing advocates, such as HousingNOLA; GNOHA assistance	
10. Study all zoning barriers to the production of affordable housing and implement policies to remove these barriers.	CPC; City of New Orleans; City Council; Housing Working Group	First five years	Staff time, GNO Inc., Housing NOLA	
11. Work with the Orleans Parish Assessor or Housing Working Group to implement best practices for predictable and reasonable tax valuation for affordable housing multi-family properties.	Orleans Parish Assessor	First five years	Staff time; non-profit affordable housing advocates, such as HousingNOLA and GNOHA assistance; Louisiana Housing Alliance assistance	

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	12. Revise public development incentive programs (PILOT, RTA, TIF, etc.) to include goals for affordable housing development	City Council, OCD, Housing Working Group	First five years	Existing and potential economic development programs	
	13. Dedicate a fixed percentage of general revenue derived from developer and permitting fees, code enforcement proceeds, and other local revenue streams to affordable housing initiatives in furtherance of the <i>Housing for a Resilient New Orleans</i> and <i>HousingNOLA 10-Year Strategy and Implementation</i> plans.	City of New Orleans	First ten years	Developer and permitting revenue; code enforcement revenue; other local revenue streams	
4.C. Aggressively implement and enhance existing funded housing programs.	1. Expend housing funding already allocated to the city as expeditiously as possible, using the advice of the Housing Working Group.	Office of Community Development; NORA; Housing Working Group	First five years	Staff time; CDBG; HOME funds; HOPWA funds; ESG funds; NHIF funds	5.39
	2. Implement a system of performance standards and strict monitoring for developers, contractors and others who receive housing and neighborhood development funds	OCD	First five years	Staff time	5.39
	3. Strengthen the City's home repair program through technical assistance to property owners, staff training, program marketing, and contractor certification.	Neighborhood Development; Housing Resource Center Network	First five years	Staff time; CDBG; federal HOME funds;	5.39
	4. Work with non-profit affordable housing advocates, such as GNOHA, HousingNOLA, and Own the Crescent to promote homeownership access for low-to-moderate income residents.	Office of Community Development OCD, non-profit affordable housing advocates, such as GNOHA, HousingNOLA	First five years	Stafftime; CDBG; general fund	5.39
	5. Monitor the status of affordable homeownership programs to appropriately target funds.	OCD; Housing Working Group	First five years	Staff time; federal HOME funds	5.40

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	6. Support housing for homeless or at-risk households.	OCD; UNITY of New Orleans and member non- profits; NORA, HANO, FANO	First five years	Federal McKinney grants for permanent supportive housing for homeless persons; federal project-based vouchers for supportive housing; stimulus funding	5.40
	7. Pursue additional housing funds if needs continue after expenditure of current funding.	OCD; NORA	First five years	Potential sources: additional tax credits and mortgage revenue bonds; five-year increase in HOME and CDBG funds; project based vouchers for supportive housing	5.40
<b>4.D. Maintain and expand market-rate housing choices and housing supply.</b>	1. Provide zoning for a wide range of market rate housing choices.	CPC; City Council	Continuous	Staff time	5.41
	2. Preserve the diversity of housing types within New Orleans Neighborhoods (singles, doubles, multi-family, etc.)	CPC; City Council	Continuous	Staff time	5.41
	3. Ensure that neighborhood infill is encouraged and includes opportunities for small multi-family developments of 3-10 units to promote an array of housing choices.	CPC; City Council	First five years	Staff time	
	4. Study historic densities in New Orleans neighborhoods to ensure that zoning does not prohibit densities that match neighborhood historic fabric. Focus particularly on ensuring availability of small multi-family rental and ownership options.	CPC; City Council	First five years	Staff time	

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	5. Create opportunities for mixed-use and multi-family development along commercial corridors and high-frequency transit corridors, and consider intensification of existing mixed-use and multi-family districts, with particular focus on areas with strong access to jobs and opportunity.	CPC; City Council	First five years	Staff time	
	6. Work with the Housing Working Group and The Data Center to monitor housing supply and demand and develop strategies to ensure that constrained supply does not overly impact affordability and increase cost burdens.	CPC; City Council; Housing Working Group; The Data Center	First five years	Staff time	
	7. Explore zoning options for second main use dwelling units (or mother-in-law suites) to increase density with market rate housing units in appropriate neighborhoods.	CPC, City Council	First five years	Staff time	
4.E. Prevent displacement through development activities, continued study, and policy review.	1. Utilize the existing Neighborhood Housing Trust Fund for homeowner and renter rehabilitation to create neighborhood stability across the City, and explore opportunities for expanding and renewing this important millage.	CPC and City Council (zoning); Housing Working Group; Housing Policy Office	First five years	Current CZO project; staff time	5.42
	2. Study and create a loan fund/ loan loss reserve program to assist homeowners with property rehabilitation and encourage reuse of vacant lots by current residents and pre-storm residents.	Office of Community Development; Housing Working Group	First five years	Philanthropic funding and resources; credit union assistance; Housing Working Group assistance; staff time	
	3. Conduct targeted outreach to Senior, Disabled, and Veteran homeowners who qualify for Special Assessment Levels / Freezes in all neighborhoods.	City of New Orleans, Orleans Parish Assessor	First five years	Staff time; Assessor staff time; external volunteer time	

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	4. Provide an analysis of public funding and policy through the use of an Affordable Housing Impact Statement.	City Council	Ongoing	Staff time	
	5. Explore additional property tax relief for low-income homeowners facing increases in property assessments, based on how long they have lived in their home and their income.	City of New Orleans; NORA	First five years	Staff time; potential tax relief costs	
	6. Investigate tax relief measures for investors who agree to preserve and create affordable rental units.	OCD, City Council, CPC	First five years	Staff time; potential tax relief costs	
<b>4.F.</b> Enforce and promote fair housing policies throughout New Orleans.	1. Use the City's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing process to standardize strategies to address barriers to fair housing in the City's Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO)'s Housing Plans and Capital Fund Plan.	Office of Community Development; HANO; fair housing organizations	First five years	Staff time	
	2. The New Orleans City Council should draft and pass an ordinance that requires transparency and accuracy in background checks used to secure public and private rental housing.	City Council	First five years	Staff time	
<b>4.G.</b> Encourage sustainable design and infrastructure for all New Orleanians.	1. Develop a strategy and identify funding sources to create an affordable abatement program to address home health issues including mold and lead-based paint.	Office of Community Development	First five years	Staff time; City and external funding sources	
	2. Create a centralized information hub to coordinate energy efficiency programs from utility companies, the City, and the State of Louisiana.	Office of Community Development		Staff time, database / Web development resources	

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	3. Support GNO, Inc. the Coalition for Sustainable Flood Insurance, and other groups in their advocacy efforts to provide more affordable flood insurance rates through the 2017 reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).	City of New Orleans	First five years	Staff time	
	4. Continue to develop and advocate for strategies to address high homeowner and flood insurance costs for low-income families in New Orleans.	City of New Orleans; Housing Working Group	First five years	Staff time	
	5. Support the implementation of the <i>Resilient New Orleans</i> plan by furthering the following strategies: investing in household financial stability; building social cohesion; reducing property owners' risk by investing in water management strategies; and improving the redundancy of energy infrastructure.	City of New Orleans; NORA	First five years	NDRC funds; assistance from non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA; additional federal funds	
	6. Take proactive measures to improve the New Orleans Community Rating System in order to lower insurance costs.	City of New Orleans	First Five Years	Staff time. NDRC.	
<b>4.H.</b> Increase accessibility for all walks of life, including special needs residents.	1. Work with the Advocacy Center to pursue additional funds to pay for home modifications to increase accessibility for homeowners and renters with special needs.	City of New Orleans; Advocacy Center	First five years	Staff time; external funding resources	
	2. Enforce the existing requirement that all public agencies providing housing programs or services should produce materials in Spanish and Vietnamese and have a language access plan in place.	City of New Orleans; HANO; NORA	First five years	Staff time; translation resources	

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3. Explore additional services aimed at those with mental illness or drug addiction.	City of New Orleans, service providers, supportive housing partners	First five years	Staff time; external funding resources	
4. Draft and pass an ordinance removing questions about prior criminal convictions ("banning the box") on applications to live in publicly funded housing developments and units operated by private landlords, or at minimum only allow consideration of criminal convictions (not arrests).	City Council	First five years	Staff time	
5. Prioritize and target limited funding for high-risk special needs populations to produce 1,500 housing opportunities for these populations.	OCD, Advocacy Center	First five years	Staff time; Federal funds, other external funding resources	



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GOAL	RECOMMENDED STRATEGY	RECOMMENDED ACTIONS				
		HOW	WHO	WHEN	RESOURCES	FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE PAGE:
5. Work with HousingNOLA to continue to tap into a network of high capacity public sector and neighborhood-based groups, such as community development corporations, to provide housing responsive to the changing housing needs of current and future residents	5.A. Provide professional development opportunities for city housing staff and for members of the Housing Working Group.	1. Send staff to national housing conferences; organize staff participation in webinars and similar activities; provide informational materials and training for the Working Group.	Office of Community Development	First five years	Seek foundation funding in the first five years; budget (CDBG) for training in the medium to long term	5.43
	5.B. Foster a network of strong public sector partners and community development corporations through capacity building efforts.	1. Support non-profit affordable housing advocates, such as HousingNOLA, HUD, and Enterprise Community Partners to create a robust capacity building training program that is outcomes-based and includes a support system for CDCs, a certification for CDCs, and a systems analysis to identify gaps and redundancies in the nonprofit sector.	OCD Office of Community Development	First five years	CDBG; foundations; Enterprise; HUD; non-profit affordable housing advocates, such as HousingNOLA	5.43
		2. Increase production efficiency and organizational capacity among government partners (Finance Authority of New Orleans, HANO, NORA, City of New Orleans, Louisiana Housing Corporation), non-profits (housing counseling agencies and advocates), and developers to promote affordable unit production.	FANO, HANO, NORA, City of New Orleans, LHC, non-profits, developers	First five years	Housing Working Group, non-profit affordable housing advocates, such as HousingNOLA, One Table, staff time	

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### Narrative

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

## 1. NEIGHBORHOODS

### GOAL 1

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

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

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

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

##### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

1. *Use the zoning ordinance to guide the scale and character of new infill development to fit in with the character of established residential areas, while accommodating an array of single and multi-family housing options to meet the strong need for more housing units in New Orleans.*

**Who:** CPC, City Council

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** staff time

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Zoning should set parameters on infill development so that desired neighborhood character— whether existing or identified in a neighborhood-based plan—remains consistent with neighborhood expectations. Where a variety of scales, building types, and housing unit types may coexist within a few blocks or even on the same block, base zoning that recognizes this heterogeneity will make it easier for property owners to improve and, within limits, expand their property as a matter of right. However, the diversity of housing types in older neighborhoods means that it is unlikely that all non-conformities can be eliminated, because that would require such a permissive zoning district that the majority of property owners would be unlikely to accept it. Given current issues with constrained housing supply pushing up prices in many neighborhoods and a particularly constrained rental market, the CZO should accommodate small multi-family development in older neighborhoods and infill areas within limits. Base zoning categories should not be so restrictive as to prohibit common small multi-family types such as the 4-unit shotgun development.

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

**Who:** CPC; City Council

**When:** complete

**Resources:** CZO *rewrite*

Additional design principles and guidelines can be developed through specific area or neighborhood plans and as part of site master plan design guidelines for redevelopment of larger sites. Non-conformity based on use can be regulated by requiring new permission for the non-conforming use when there is a change of tenant or owner.

3. *Use zoning to ensure that appropriate infill sites of over 10,000 square feet and publicly-owned properties can be redeveloped with dense development that remains sensitive to the needs of surrounding neighborhoods. Large infill development should also have inclusionary zoning requirements for affordability if found feasible.*

**Who:** CPC and City Council

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** HousingNOLA 10 Year Strategy and Implementation Plan

The zoning ordinance should ensure that redevelopment of large underutilized sites is feasible by creating opportunities for adaptive reuse of existing structures, and multi-family and mixed-use development of appropriate scales on large vacant parcels. Transitions should include landscape requirements and stormwater management requirements to ensure that larger developments do not create adverse visual or flooding impacts on existing neighborhoods. Planned-unit development options of different minimum areas should be considered for sites over one acre in size.

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

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

**When:** complete

**Resources:** CZO *rewrite project*; area plans

Design guidelines for neighborhoods or for particular neighborhood character types can promote compatible design. Although this is a particularly important issue for neighborhoods in historic districts and is discussed in Chapter 6 – Historic Preservation, it is also worthwhile for other neighborhoods. The need for design guidance in building elevated structures is especially important to creating attractive neighborhoods as property owners rebuild. Experience in other communities has shown that even

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voluntary guidelines, when well- presented and communicated to property owners, architects, and developers, can result in more compatible design. These guidelines should not prescribe architectural styles but rather focus on compatibility in terms of bulk, height, orientation on the lot and similar issues.

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

5. *Continue to develop and refine an incentive zoning program to encourage provision of neighborhood benefits from large developments.*

**Who:** CPC

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** staff time

Incentive zoning is a method for communities to leverage private investment for neighborhood benefits. It allows a developer to build a somewhat larger, higher-density project than would be permitted under existing zoning. This encourages compact development as part of an overall smart growth strategy. In exchange, the developer provides something that is in the neighborhood's interest that would not otherwise be required (*e.g.*, open space, streetscape improvements, special building features, like public plazas, public art, affordable housing, *etc.*). Incentive zoning is typically associated with more urban corridors, transit access areas, and development nodes and is most successful in areas with strong markets. One of the first incentive zoning programs was established in New York City to gain public plazas and other public spaces in large development projects. Chicago's list of public benefits linked to additional floor area includes parks and public plazas, wide sidewalks, arcades, water features, green roofs, off-site contributions to open space, streetscape, transit station improvements, concealed parking—among others. In downtown Minneapolis, the amenity list also includes benefits such as public art, energy efficiency, through-block connections, and street-level retail. The City Planning Commission's zoning subcommittee should evaluate the potential for implementing incentive zoning in the stronger market areas of the city to attract benefits valuable to New Orleans. The highest priority in establishing incentive zoning should be to specifically study its potential to facilitate affordability through an inclusionary housing strategy.

6. *Adopt mandatory inclusionary zoning if found to be feasible by a study conducted by national experts.*

**Who:** CPC, City Council, non-profit affordable housing advocates, such as HousingNOLA, GNOHA, OCD

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** HousingNOLA 10 Year Strategy and Implementation Plan for a Resilient New Orleans

Mandatory inclusionary zoning is a national best practice in housing affordability strategies. Like incentive zoning, inclusionary zoning policies can offer a range of

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benefits to developers, such as added density, reduced parking requirements, expedited permitting, and other incentives, in return for including a percentage of affordability-restricted housing units in their development projects. Currently, HousingNOLA, the City Planning Commission, the Office of Community Development, local housing experts, and local developers are participating in a study to examine the housing market and submarkets in New Orleans to understand which types of developments and which areas can best accommodate mandatory inclusionary zoning. The results of this study will lead to a set of recommendations to be adopted through a CZO revision.

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

**Who:** DPW with planning review from CPC

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Bond funding; CDBG; federal transportation funds

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

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

**Who:** DPW

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time; fines

Public funding for neighborhood streets is currently focused on urgently-needed roadway rebuilding and repair. Many property owners do not know that they are responsible for the sidewalks in front of their property. Annual notification in the property tax bill or other City communication should also include information on required standards for sidewalks that contractors must meet if property owners wish to contract for repairs. Liens or payments on the property tax bill could be used as enforcement mechanism. To help incentivize compliance, the City could work with the Arts Council New Orleans to generate a list of local artists who can work with property owners to create original artworks that also satisfy sidewalk maintenance requirements.

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

**Who:** Mayor's office, Arts Council New Orleans

**When:** First five years

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

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

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

**Who:** Mayor's Office; City Council; CPC

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time

The Neighborhood Participation Program described in Volume 2, Chapter 15 will give

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neighborhood groups an incentive to organize and be involved.

11. *Work with the Arts Council to enhance and expand the Percent for Art Program; adopt and promote policies and guidelines for a Percent for Art program for private developers.*

*Who: Arts Council New Orleans, City Planning, City Council, Mayor's Office*

*When: First five years*

*Resources: Staff time, grant funding*

Public Art and civic design help improve the character and quality of the built environment and are critical elements in maintaining and promoting sense of place and civic pride in residents. A robust public art and civic design program attracts visitors and will make New Orleans internationally recognized as a city that values public art. Working closely with the Arts Council New Orleans, the City can expand the existing Percent for Art Program to include private development, creating a trust for public art and civic design that can be used towards strategic investments in art and design improvements that are aesthetically excellent and functional.

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

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

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

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

*When: First five years*

*Resources: Staff time; fines*

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

2. *Create an improved Code Enforcement system that includes an established inspection regime and fine system for rental properties that are not up to code. Include mechanisms to help enable small and lower-income landlords to comply.*

*Who: Mayor's Office; City Council; Code Enforcement; financial partners*

*When: First five years*

*Resources: Staff time; fines; loan-loss reserve or loan program*

The creation of an improved Code Enforcement system for occupied rental property inspections is a necessary step given that many New Orleanians currently are living in substandard housing conditions. Currently, the rental registry process is under study with housing advocates and landlords to determine how a system can be created that is not overly financially burdensome, yet enables inspectors to check on whether buildings are up to code to ensure that residents are not living in conditions that are dangerous to their



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safety or health. In addition, a loan-loss reserve and loan program are being established to assist lower-income and smaller landlords comply with the need to bring their buildings up to code. Once this process is complete, the City Council will adopt the results of the rental registry group findings.

3. *Prioritize and promote home repair for low-income and senior homeowners to help residents who do not have the means to repair their properties avoid displacement due to poor conditions or code enforcement fines.*

*Who: Office of Community Development; Office; City Council*

*When: First five years*

*Resources: Staff time; federal funds; partner CDCs*

Code enforcement is a vital tool, but increasing property taxes, homeowners' insurance, and flood insurance costs have stretched many residents' means and left them without the ability to make necessary repairs to their homes. To avoid penalizing low-income and elderly residents excessively with code enforcement fines that they do not have the means to pay, home repair programs for these residents must be prioritized and expanded.

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

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

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

*Who: Neighborhood Engagement*

*When: First five years*

*Resources: Stafftime*

Residents and the business owners can be brought together to see if better ways to manage business activities can mitigate or eliminate adverse impacts on residents. Examples would be changes to truck routes or parking and prohibition of truck idling, landscape or other buffers, installation of cut-off lighting that illuminates only business areas, and so on. Neighborhood Engagement staff could help with these meetings.

2. *Ensure industrial and commercial performance standards (limits on noise, dust, vibration and other impacts) in the zoning code and city codes are culturally and neighborhood appropriate.*

*Who: CPC, City Council*

*When: ongoing*

*Resources: staff time*

Performance standards (limits on impacts such as noise, dust, vibration, and so on) can be changed in the zoning code or other city ordinances. A culturally appropriate sound ordinance will allow for cultural traditions to continue while still providing protection for neighbors. The city can help find an appropriate site within the city limits and assist in business relocation. State and federal regulators can be brought in to deal with pollution and similar issues under their jurisdiction. The master plan land use map and the associated zoning code can make the use nonconforming so that the use cannot continue after the current enterprise leaves. Occupancy permits and business licenses could be subject to sanctions in the case of proven criminal activity.

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3. *Disseminate information to neighborhood associations and business owners about ~~on~~ potential legal approaches and inform all parties on what is currently allowed under the law.*

*Who:* CPC

*When:* First five years

*Resources:* Stafftime

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

Proper City officials, either from the appropriate City Council District, the Neighborhood Engagement Office, or the Office of Cultural Economy may first attempt to bring the business owner together with residents and/or the police department to see if a mutually acceptable solution can be reached. New actions are possible under the Louisiana Public Nuisance Law, the New Orleans Noise Control Program and Littering Ordinance, and the Louisiana Alcoholic Beverage Control Law. The burden of proof lies with those who wish legal action to be taken against a business. The Tulane Public Law Center has created a step by step guide to the requirements and actions under the four laws named above.<sup>3</sup>

### **1.D Create a system for proactive planning on the neighborhood and district level.**

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

1. *Enhance the Comprehensive Planning Division of the CPC with an Area Planning Program.*

*Who:* CPC

*When:* First five years

*Resources:* General fund; CDBG planning funds

The city should provide dedicated staff planners for the creation of area plans who could bring other specialized skills, such as urban design or transportation planning.

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

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



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- > Convening meetings for developers or other project proponents to meet with neighborhood stakeholders.
- > Providing staff analysis and opinions to the Planning Commission on an area's issues.

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

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

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

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

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

*Who:* CPC; neighborhood associations

*When:* First five years

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

In many cities, individual plans are prepared for planning districts or neighborhoods according to a framework developed by the city's planning department and then they are adopted by the planning commission and the City Council as official parts of the city's master plan. With the present document, New Orleans will have a Master Plan that covers the entire city and provides policy direction for revitalization, preservation, development and growth.

The Planning Commission can adopt criteria and procedures for submission and approval of area plans as part of the Master Plan. The UNOP district plans and existing or in-process neighborhood plans would be suitable for this process.

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

The City Planning Commission recognizes a need for increased neighborhood and civic engagement. There are multiple tools that can be deployed to help facilitate civic engagement. First, the district planners as outlined in this chapter and the chapter on the Neighborhood Participation Program would work with

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neighborhoods and business interests in the various districts, helping them to look forward, define goals of the neighborhood and create area plans. Area plans further refine the objectives and recommended actions for a particular neighborhood or district. Finally, the Neighborhood Participation Program as passed by the 2008 Charter Amendment would provide a structure method for local interests to be informed about proposed projects. Volume 2, Chapter 15 explains the basic guidelines of a Neighborhood Participation Program in more detail.

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

- > **Initiation of the area plan.** A neighborhood association or other organized group of residents and stakeholders can request that Commission staff prepare a plan, provide funding to hire an outside consultant to prepare the plan, hire their own consultant (or seek assistance from universities or similar sources), or even organize themselves to prepare the plan themselves. The CPC can prioritize which areas are most in need of new plans or which existing plans are most suitable for adoption as part of the Master Plan. The Planning Commission, the City Council or the Mayor can also request that a plan be prepared. In order for a plan to be adopted, the Planning Commission staff will need to approve the boundaries of the planning area, and the basic structure of the plan.
- > **Public participation.** The planning process will need to be overseen by a stakeholder committee representing all affected interests and include at least three public workshops or meetings. The first public meeting must be towards the beginning of the planning process, to elicit ideas for the future of the neighborhood or district. The second public meeting must present interim ideas for the plan for feedback. The third public meeting must occur when a full draft of the plan is available, so that the public can review it and provide comments.
- > **Elements of the plan.** The area plan must conform to the goals and policies of the City's adopted Master Plan. At a minimum, the area plan conditions, including zoning and other regulations; overall goals; housing; public realm (parks and public spaces, including sidewalks); mixed-use or nonresidential areas, including market support; urban design; circulation, parking and transportation. Other relevant sections can be added at the discretion of the planning group. An implementation plan must be required that identifies actions, responsible parties, proposed time line and potential funding sources.
- > **Adoption.** In order for the plan to be adopted as part of the City's Master Plan, the plan must be reviewed by Commission staff (if they did not prepare it directly) for conformity with area plan guidelines and for conformity with the overall goals and policies of the citywide Master Plan. If Commission staff did not prepare the plan, they might ask for changes to make the area plan consistent with the City's Master Plan and capital plan. Then the area plan will be submitted to the City Planning Commission for a public hearing and adoption. After adoption by the Planning Commission, a similar submission with a public hearing should be made to the City Council for adoption as an official part of the Master Plan, during the annual master plan amendment process.

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

**Who:** CPC (set framework, some coordination); neighborhood alliances and other non-profits; neighborhood groups

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Volunteers; limited funding needed from donations, foundations

Neighborhood Audits provide information and promote priority-setting about how to target resources for public improvements. The Planning Commission can work with Neighborhoods Partnership Network, UNO students, neighborhood associations or other groups to develop a consistent format for neighborhood based inventories of the condition of sidewalks, streets, lighting, street trees, drains, blighted properties, and so on. Regularly scheduled annual Neighborhood Audit Walks, in which neighbors walk a particular route and note issues of concern, would be a way to make this a consistent process. With today's handheld computers, it can also be easy to enter information into a spreadsheet, obviating the need to enter data later. Neighbors could then prioritize the issues that need attention. Although some of this is going on in an informal way throughout the city, there is no formal mechanism to provide this information to the city and to integrate it into the planning process for public improvements. The City must also be willing to respond to neighborhood groups about progress being made on neighborhood priorities, including explanations of any barriers to implementation.

3. Provide a structured Neighborhood Participation Program.

**Who:** CPC, City Council (ordinance)

**When:** ongoing

**Resources:** Staff time (See Volume 2, Chapter 14 for details)

The 2008 master plan charter amendment mandates a neighborhood public participation process related to land use and development decisions. Volume 2, Chapter 14 of this plan discusses this requirement and guidelines for a Neighborhood Participation Program structure in more detail.

\*Note: The NPP has been implemented and may be further refined.

4. Hold public hearings on development projects and planning issues in the evening, when needed, to enhance the opportunity for public participation.

**Who:** CPC

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff and Commissioner time

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

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## Focus investment strategies to meet neighborhood needs and promote equity and access to opportunity

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As New Orleans moves from a city in active recovery from Hurricane Katrina to a city working toward equity and resilience for all of its residents, a new focus on strategic investment has emerged that takes into account neighborhoods' individual needs and focuses on using data, community engagement, and neighborhood typologies to recommend customized interventions for each area. The *Resilient New Orleans* plan; the *HousingNOLA 10-Year Strategy and Implementation Plan*; and the *Housing for a Resilient New Orleans* strategy all call for utilizing tools like the *Market Value Analysis* and the *HousingNOLA* neighborhood typology to understand what policies and investments will best benefit neighborhoods and create a stronger outcome for the city as a whole.

### 2.A In neighborhoods and areas with limited market activity and more vacant property, focus on catalytic investments and community-based programs that benefit existing residents and increase access to opportunity.

Some areas continue to face challenges of limited housing market activity and large numbers of vacant properties. In these areas, strategies should include improving conditions of homes through homeowner rehabilitation funds and implementing basic health and safety standards for rental properties. With limited market interest, and high levels of vacant lots, exploring alternative land uses as well as low-cost methods of transferring vacant lots to neighborhood residents can generate stability and a sense of ownership and possibility. Many of these neighborhoods are isolated and have limited access to amenities. Neighborhood revitalization efforts should focus on catalytic investments that increase access to quality jobs, recreation, transit, and increased safety.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Provide and expand home repair programs for low-income and senior homeowners and persons with special needs.*

**Who:** Office of Community Development

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time; Neighborhood Housing Improvement Fund; general fund

Resource low-income and senior homeowners through a home repair program to ensure that residents are able to maintain their current assets; focus these repair programs particularly in areas that currently have little market activity but are adjacent to neighborhoods that currently have increasing values and rising amounts of new development. These programs will help prevent “displacement by neglect” and ensure that homeowners are able to realize value from their assets while enjoying a better quality of life.

2. *Explore increased investment in energy efficiency and weatherization for homeowners and Housing Choice Voucher tenants to reduce energy bills and increase sustainability.*

**Who:** Office of Community Development; HANO; LHC; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA/GNOHA

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** LIHEAP; Housing Choice Voucher utility allowances

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Work with HANO, LHC, non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA and GNOHA to explore opportunities for low-income homeowners and renters to enjoy the benefits of energy-efficient properties and lower utility costs as a strategy to increase affordability. Giving landlords of Housing Choice Voucher properties the option to increase their take-home rent and decrease their utility allowance based on proven weatherization measures that lower utility bills is a win-win; it increases New Orleans' sustainability, avoids contributing to climate change, and increases the resilience of our housing stock and our voucher holders.

3. *Coordinate efforts of public agencies providing resources for housing development.*

**Who:** OCD, NORA, HANO, FANO

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** State and federal funding; explore limited-period millage or bond for enforcement, land bank and redevelopment programs

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

4. *Continue to encourage and fund alternative land use programs to enable neighbors and community organizations to reuse vacant land for food access, stormwater management, economic development, and other community-beneficial purposes.*

**Who:** NORA; City of New Orleans

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Local, state and federal funding; publicly-owned and publicly controlled properties

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

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

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

**When:** Complete

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

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

6. *Establish annual inspections for rental properties and for houses at time of sale. Develop an improved Code Enforcement system to ensure that occupied rental properties are up to code.*

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

**When:** First five years

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

New Orleans is a majority-renter city; as of 2015, 55% of households in New Orleans rent their homes. Providing safe, quality, affordable rental housing is thus a critical priority for New Orleans residents. In many communities, Code Enforcement systems are used to monitor the physical condition of rental units. Such programs ensure rental units meet minimum health and safety standards by requiring landlords to register their properties, and allow them to be periodically inspected for compliance with applicable codes. The Code Enforcement system and associated inspections provide a proactive method for addressing deteriorating housing conditions. This preventative approach is in direct contrast with more typical code enforcement practices, in which code violations are only identified during construction projects or following a complaint. Currently, housing advocates are working with local rental property owners to devise a system that will be sustainable and self-funding.

7. *Establish a registry of properties vacant for six months or more, and work with community groups to track property conditions.*

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

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** General fund; fines for non-registration; community group assistance

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

**Who:** Mayor's Office; legislative delegation

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Stafftime

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

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



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City to place redevelopment covenants on properties sold at tax sales.<sup>5</sup>

9. *Pursue land assembly to create larger, contiguous parcels to facilitate targeted, block-by-block redevelopment of housing or neighborhood amenities.*

**Who:** Mayor's Office; City Council; NORA

**When:** First five years

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

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

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

10. *Focus on catalytic investments in recreation, transit, quality jobs, and safety to improve residents' quality of life and ensure access to opportunity.*

**Who:** Mayor's Office, NOLABA, GNO Inc..

**When:** First ten years

**Resources:** Federal funds, general funds, NOLABA funds

Catalytic investments in transit, access to healthy food and healthcare, quality schools, parks and recreation, and job-generating economic development projects can help shift the market dynamic in areas with lower market activity and provide a focus for future development opportunities. Ensuring that all residents have access to opportunity, with quality jobs, schools, and public transportation within reach, is a critical component of citywide equity and resilience strategies.

11. *Provide incentives, such as a limited-period tax abatement, to owners to assemble and redevelop sites.*

**Who:** City Attorney's Office; NORA

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Stafftime; D-CDBG; other federal funding

In areas with limited market activity, a limited-period tax abatement can act as an incentive for investors to assemble and redevelop sites. These tax abatements should be separate and distinct from tax abatements offered to promote affordable rental development, or to prevent homeowner displacement, which are both more important in strong-market areas with rapidly increasing property values.

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

**Who:** NORA

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Stafftime; D-CDBG; other federal funding

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



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13. Explore options pursuant to existing authorities under state law to identify and designate disinvested areas as tax increment financing districts for the purpose of directing long-term locally derived funding to support affordable housing investments, infrastructure upgrades, blight reduction efforts, and other public sector investments and initiatives.

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

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time; general fund

In order to move long-vacant and blighted properties into the market, New Orleans should explore the potential of using the property tax system as a way to incentivize development. Studies that examine and model the likely effects of these concepts within the New Orleans context should be undertaken. One option is to designate disinvested areas as tax-increment financing (TIF) districts that reinvest tax revenues from local development into affordable housing, infrastructure improvements, and blight reduction efforts that facilitate additional investment. A study should be conducted to determine what areas would be eligible for TIF creation, what level of revenue TIFs would generate for local opportunities, and how TIF creation would affect the City's general fund, including expenses foregone due to substitute outlays from TIF funds in public sector investments.

14. Explore the establishment of a low interest revolving loan fund for the acquisition and rehabilitation of blighted properties by city residents for use as a primary residence. Include a reasonable grace period so that these residents are not required to repay the loan before occupying the property. Partner with local banks to design the program and set eligibility standards.

**Who:** OCD, local banks

**When:** First five years

### **2.B In neighborhoods and areas with increasing market activity, prevent displacement of existing residents while continuing to invest in improvements.**

Neighborhoods that are experiencing increasing market activity and rising housing prices demand a different targeted investment strategy than neighborhoods with little market activity. In order to continue increasing residents' quality of life while simultaneously promoting mixed-income, diverse neighborhoods that have room for residents of all income levels, strategies in these neighborhoods should focus on preventing displacement of existing residents while continuing to invest in public improvements.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

1. *Work with neighborhood groups, non-profits, faith-based organizations, and affordable housing developers to create new opportunities for affordable ownership and rental housing.*

**Who:** CPC; NORA; neighborhood and nonprofit groups; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, GNOHA and HousingNOLA, affordable housing developers

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time; D-CDBG; foundation funding; federal funds; NHIF funds

New opportunities for affordable homeownership and affordable rental housing are critical to include in neighborhoods that are experiencing increases in value and housing prices. Integrating affordability-restricted development into neighborhoods

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where, on average, income levels are high or rising has proven to be an effective way to ensure generational benefits for residents. In a city that depends on culture bearers, tourism and hospitality workers, and musicians to create and maintain its nationally-recognized cultural economy and prominence, providing affordable living in areas of high opportunity is imperative. Both homeownership and rental units are needed; placing long-term or permanent affordability restrictions through unit preservation strategies and community land trusts is one way to make sure that units in these high-opportunity neighborhoods do not “age out” of the system and become market-rate.

2. *Create and expand tax abatement and home repair grant and loan programs targeted to help low-income and senior homeowners.*

**Who:** Office of Community Development; Mayor’s Office; City Council; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA and GNOHA

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time; foundation funding; federal funds; NHIF funds

Programs that enable low-income and senior homeowners to remain in neighborhoods with rising value are essential to the creation of a more equitable city. Tax abatements can prevent residents with lower income levels and seniors on fixed incomes from being displaced by increasing property tax burdens that occur as properties in their neighborhoods increase in value. The increased burden of flood and homeowner insurance costs since Hurricane Katrina makes property tax increases even more difficult to accommodate for low-income and senior residents. In addition, home repair grant and loan programs can help seniors and lower-income residents maintain their properties so that these residents are less likely to sell their properties when offers begin to come in. Both of these strategies can help maintain neighborhood diversity and enable wealth creation for low-income and senior residents.

3. *Increase opportunities for small-to-medium-scale multifamily development that fits into neighborhood fabric to increase housing supply.*

**Who:** CPC; City Council

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time

New Orleans’ historic core, historic urban, and smaller-scale post-war residential neighborhoods tend to be some of the highest-opportunity and highest-value neighborhoods, as shown in the *HousingNOLA 10-Year Strategy and Implementation Plan* and the *Market Value Analysis* conducted for the City by The Reinvestment Fund (TRF). Allowing more small-to-medium scale multifamily development in these areas is critical to ensure that more residents can benefit from access to jobs, schools, and services that already exist in these growing neighborhoods. Small-scale multifamily that should be allowed as-of-right as neighborhood infill may include such historically-consistent typologies as a 3-to-4 unit complex on a typical single residential lot; medium-scale multifamily should be allowed as an 8-to-10 unit complex on the equivalent of two typical single residential lots in these older neighborhoods. Zoning regulations and design guidelines should be developed to ensure that these smaller-scale multifamily properties are consistent with neighborhood character, bulk, and setbacks, but should not be specifically designed to exclude these historic typologies that are critical to continuing to expand housing supply. Zoning categories that allow only one-to-two-family development should be deeply re-examined and potentially replaced with new guidelines that allow multi-family development based on sensible bulk and yard regulations.

4. *Require property liability insurance for all owners.*

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

**When:** First five years

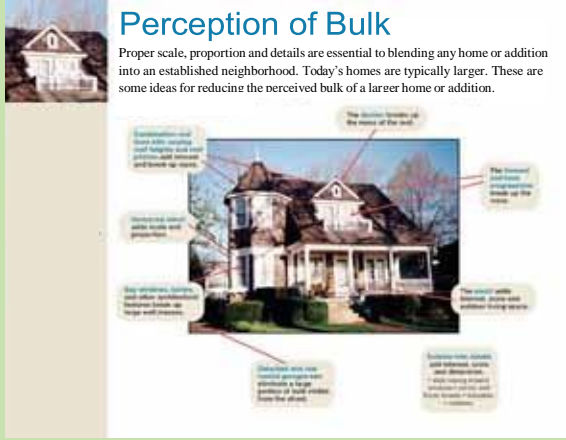
**Resources:** Staff time

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

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### VOLUNTARY DESIGN GUIDELINES: NEIGHBORHOOD FIRST

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



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

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

5. *Place redevelopment covenants, design and performance standards, and any special use or other appropriate restrictions on vacant or blighted properties sold at tax sales, by NORA or other entities for redevelopment. Include consideration of housing affordability impacts when disposing of any publicly-owned or publicly-controlled property.*

**Who:** NORA; City Attorney's Office

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Stafftime

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

6. *Clarify through public process the criteria for historic property rehabilitation or demolition.*

**Who:** HDLC; NCDAC

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Stafftime

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

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

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

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

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time; neighborhood volunteers

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

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

### **2.C In neighborhoods and areas with high levels of market activity and high home prices, preserve and expand affordable housing opportunities using all available tools.**

A study by Harvard professors Raj Chetty and Nathaniel Hendren in 2015 showed that a child's ZIP code when growing up reliably predicts their future earning levels; children who grew up in lower-income ZIP codes earned less as adults than children who were able to move from a lower-income to a higher-income ZIP code. Creating mixed-income neighborhoods with multiple types of living opportunities, and bringing affordability-

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restricted units into higher-income neighborhoods, is thus extraordinarily important to achieving long-term equity outcomes. Finding ways to integrate affordability-restricted units and multiple types of housing options into strong-market areas of the city will create long-term equity and resilience outcomes.

### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Utilize inclusionary zoning, as well as covenants or restrictions on publicly-owned and adjudicated properties, to facilitate the production of affordable housing in these high-opportunity areas.*

*Who: CPC; City Council; Office of Community Development; Mayor's Office; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA; Housing Working Group*

*When: First five years*

*Resources: Staff time, possible outside consultant, Housing Working Group assistance*

Inclusionary zoning and inclusionary housing policies should be adopted based on the results of a feasibility study conducted by national experts – see more information about this recommendation in this volume, Section 4. Inclusionary zoning as well as affordability covenants or restrictions on publicly-owned and adjudicated properties in high-opportunity areas can combine to produce substantial new affordability-restricted housing supply, and remove the need for affordable housing developers to compete with market-rate developers for scarce vacant properties in these strong-market neighborhoods.

2. *Increase opportunities for large-scale multi-family development in areas adjacent to transit and commercial corridors and on 1-to-5-acre parcels of vacant land.*

*Who: CPC; City Council; Office of Community Development; Mayor's Office; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA; Housing Working Group*

*When: First five years*

*Resources: Staff time, possible outside consultant, Housing Working Group assistance*

The *HousingNOLA 10-Year Strategy and Implementation Plan* calls for prioritizing large-scale (75+ unit) multi-family affordable developments within high-opportunity neighborhoods, rather than following the existing trend of placing these developments at the fringes of the city, far from jobs and services. Properties that can accommodate these types of developments in high-opportunity areas include areas along transit corridors and commercial corridors, and larger parcels of vacant property that are often between 1 and 5 acres. Current Planned-Unit Development and adaptive reuse regulations make redevelopment of 1-to-5 acre vacant land parcels more difficult, while zoning regulations are often too restrictive to allow larger developments even on high-frequency transit corridors that front major streets. Opportunities for these types of large-scale multi-family development in the city's core areas, within a 30-minute transit-walk commute of major job centers, should be increased.

### **2.D Encourage innovative, experimental and low-cost uses of vacant properties to enhance the likelihood that a vacant space will eventually find a permanent use.**

1. *Create a strategy for implementing temporary use projects initiated by active citizens, citizen groups, and non-profit partners.*

*Who: Mayor's Office, CPC, NORA*

*When: First five years*

*Resources: Staff time*

2. *Work with relevant agencies, including NORA, to clear regulatory hurdles and create guidelines for implementing temporary interventions and projects.*

*Who: Mayor's Office, NORA*

*When: First five years*

*Resources: Staff time*

Temporary approaches help mobilize limited resources to bring vacant land back to productive use by allowing for low-cost pilot testing of larger initiatives. Temporary interventions can drive innovation, working as catalysts in demonstrating opportunities for citizens and other non-municipal actors to get involved. Since they are short-term and reversible it can have major impacts on citizen agency and neighborhood improvement in the short and long term.



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## Access to retail and services from all neighborhoods

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### 3.A Revitalize existing neighborhood commercial districts and create new compact, mixed-use neighborhood centers along transit corridors and on underutilized commercial and industrial land.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

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

**Who:** OCD Department; Economic Development; NOLABA

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** D-CDBG funds; PPP operational funds

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

\*Note: The One Stop Shop has been implemented.

2. *Create a template for surveys of commercial corridors in the short term for neighborhood commercial districts that have received special designations and more developed Area Plans in the medium term.*

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

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** CPC staff time; volunteers

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

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

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

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

**When:** First five years

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

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

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

4. *Incentivize cultural uses, events, and development opportunities to strengthen neighborhood commercial districts, where feasible, while also supporting and encouraging long standing cultural uses and activities throughout all neighborhood districts, both commercial and residential.*

**Who:** CPC, Neighborhood Engagement Office, Office of Cultural Economy, cultural organizations

**When:** Ongoing

**Resources:** Stafftime

In New Orleans, music, art, and traditional/indigenous cultural activity are firmly rooted in neighborhoods. To allow for these cultural traditions and expressions to survive and grow, cultural spaces and businesses must be preserved in both commercial and residential areas. In addition, cultural businesses and events bring vitality to neighborhood commercial areas and can effectively anchor these districts. Galleries, music venues, artists' studios and workshops, and similar businesses can help attract customers from beyond the immediate neighborhood, helping to support other small businesses, as do events such as monthly gallery walks, festivals, and so on. Promotion of New Orleans' nineteen Cultural Products Districts can stimulate development of cultural businesses and activities in neighborhood commercial corridors. *(See Volume 3, Chapter 5 for more information on*

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**Cultural Products Districts.)** Local governments who designate the Cultural Products Districts are required to report on the impact to their neighborhood annually.

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

**Who:** Main Streets' Program; Cultural Products District programs; Neighborhood Engagement;

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time; volunteers

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

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

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

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time, TIF

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

7. *Explore the creation of walkable, mixed-use environments with appropriately-scaled multi-family housing options along "high-frequency" transit corridors with bus and streetcar services.*

**Who:** CPC; City Council; Housing Working Group; assistance from non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA/GNOHA

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time, possible outside consultant, Housing Working Group assistance

Promoting dense development near high-frequency transit corridors provides multiple benefits: first, it increases housing choices with access to multiple transportation options, and second, it promotes the sustainability of public transit by adding new potential ridership. The strategy should decrease minimum lot areas and decrease parking minimum standards within 500 feet of major transit corridors to allow denser, walkable development in residential areas and higher-intensity mixed-use development along corridors. "High-frequency" transit corridors include bus and streetcar services and should be defined as transit service with headways of 20 minutes or less, including areas where two lines combine to provide 20-minute-or-less headways.

8. *Explore increasing options for density and intensity of residential and mixed-use development within targeted areas that lie within a 30-minute transit-walk commute from major job centers, and integrating this strategy with inclusionary zoning to promote affordability in these transit-accessible areas.*

**Who:** CPC; City Council; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA/GNOHA

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time

Targeted areas within a 30-minute transit-walk commute of major job centers should be identified for increased density and intensity of development to allow significant large multi-family development of affordable and mixed-income units. These areas should be located in high-opportunity neighborhoods as defined in the *HousingNOLA* typology and should be in areas that have underutilized property (particularly underutilized industrial



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and vacant property) outside of established smaller-scale neighborhoods. These areas should be integrated with inclusionary zoning, if found feasible, to promote development of affordable units within these transit-accessible areas.

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

**Who:** NORA; NOLABA; Main Streets programs

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** CDBG; Main Street commercial partners

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

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

**Who:** CPC

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** CDBG; Main Street commercial partners

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

### **3.B Continue to promote food access and health care access in all neighborhoods that lack these necessary services.**

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

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

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<sup>6</sup> James Miara, "Retail in Inner Cities," *Urban Land* (January 2007), pp.98–105; see also [www.icic.org](http://www.icic.org).

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### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

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

**Who:** Economic Development; NOLABA

**When:** First five years

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

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

2. Identify incentives to attract supermarkets and health care clinics or providers to underserved areas of the city.

**Who:** Health Department, Economic Development; NOLABA

**When:** First five years

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

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

3. Continue the Fresh Food Retail Incentives program.

**Who:** Economic Development;

**When:** First five years

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

### 3.C Include neighborhood commercial development in the activities of the New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA).

#### RECOMMENDED ACTION

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

**Who:** NOLABA, Economic Development

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** NOLABA funding

This initiative could include:

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

## 2. HOUSING

### GOAL 4

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

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New Orleans needs a multi-faceted approach to restoring existing housing and developing new housing that meets the needs of a diverse population. Currently, the New Orleans housing market is increasingly unable to provide a sufficient supply of quality, affordable units. With home prices and rents going up and wages stagnant, cities have several potential policy choices: they can increase income, increase housing supply, or increase subsidies for housing. The City of New Orleans has already made efforts to increase wages where possible; now, housing supply, housing subsidy, and other policies that can increase affordability are paramount.

Lack of affordable, quality housing means that, as of 2015, over 70% of all New Orleans pay more than one-third of their income in housing costs – an incredible number of our city’s residents pay more than the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development recommends. The city is evenly divided between homeowners (47%) and renters (53%), but renters disproportionately pay more of their income towards housing costs. In 2013, 58% of (46,433) households spent more than one-third of their income towards housing costs, and 37% (29,271) paid more than half of their income towards housing costs. New Orleans ranks second in the nation for the percentage of renters paying more than half of their income on housing. While population growth, economic development, and housing are inextricably linked and market conditions are dynamic, and close monitoring of the housing sector will continue to be required, affordability is clearly a predominant challenge to address through increased housing supply and more tools that create affordability-restricted units for low-to-moderate income residents.

- 4.A Guide and coordinate City housing strategy through a Housing Working Group that includes the City Planning Commission, the Office of Community Development, the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority, the Housing Authority of New Orleans, the Finance Authority of New Orleans, non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA, the Greater New Orleans Foundation, Foundation for Louisiana, a representative of OneTable, and two other rotating members selected by the permanent Working Group members for two-year terms.**

### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

1. *Coordinate with key housing stakeholders as described in 4.A. as a working group charged with advising on housing policy for the city.*

*Who: OCD Housing Working Group*

*When: First five years*

*Resources: Stafftime*

The Housing Working Group shall include the City Planning Commission, the Office of Community Development, the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority, the Housing Authority of New Orleans, the Finance Authority of New Orleans, *non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA, the Greater New Orleans Foundation, Foundation for Louisiana, a representative of OneTable, and two other rotating members selected by the permanent Working Group members for two-year terms.* Meetings of the Housing Working Group shall take place on a quarterly basis or more frequently, and shall be convened by the Office of Community Development with assistance from *non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA.* Selection of rotating Housing Working Group members will be based on a transparent application process that includes an evaluation rubric that demonstrates experience

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with housing policy and/or development. Rotating Housing Working Group members may not serve more than two consecutive two-year terms. Non-consecutive terms are allowed. Rotating members shall include housing providers (for profit and nonprofit); bankers; realtors; local housing economy researchers; tenant and homeowner beneficiaries of housing programs; housing advocates; neighborhood associations. It should meet quarterly to receive a report on the local housing market and housing needs, housing production, and the progress of publicly-funded programs and to discuss and recommend housing policy for the City. The Housing Working Group would be advisory only, with final decision-making power resting with the City.

2. *Collect and analyze housing data to monitor the market and housing needs. Include information from the City's Consolidated Plan, the HousingNOLA 10-Year Strategy and Implementation Plan and the Market Value Analysis*

**Who:** Office of Community Development; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA; The Data Center; Housing Working Group

**When:** First five years

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

Monitor all segments of New Orleans' housing market quarterly, including market-rate rental and for-sale units, subsidized units, vouchers, waiting lists, and identification of strong and weak sub markets. Make this information publicly available. The City should have ongoing regular access to good housing, employment and income data in order to understand affordability needs, including data made available through the annual HousingNOLA report card process. Although the city itself may not be collecting and creating the data sets itself, it should contribute to the funding, in order to be able to influence the kind of data and analysis produced.

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

**Who:** OCD

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time

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

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

**Who:** Housing Working Group

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time

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

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

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*neighborhood, business and other groups.*

**Who:** Housing Working Group

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Stafftime

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

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

**Who:** Mayor's Office; Office of Community Development; Housing Working Group

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Stafftime

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

7. *Prioritize repair, restoration and reuse of existing residential historic properties as a major part of the City's housing initiatives, reflecting the values of safe and stable historic neighborhoods.*

**Who:** Office of Community Development; Housing Working Group

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Stafftime

### **4.B Preserve existing supply and expand the total supply of affordable rental and homeownership opportunities throughout New Orleans.**

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

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

**Who:** Mayor's Office; OCD; Non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA/GNOHA

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** D-CDBG; additional federal funds

Homeowners whose insurance and Road Home proceeds were insufficient to rebuild their homes after Hurricane Katrina had to find other resources as best they could to fill this gap, do partial work only, or wait as they pursue more resources. Many homeowners faced additional challenges such as contractor fraud, a high-cost environment, inability to access additional credit or insurance, and title problems that delay or deny funding. Elevation of homes can be particularly costly in relation to the funds available. Some D-CDBG money has been allocated to assist property owners whose insurance and Road Home proceeds and borrowing capacity has not made it possible for them to rebuild.

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Soft-second loans and the “Welcome Back Home Fund” administered by the New Orleans Finance Authority are expected to be available starting in 2009. Additional funding for rebuilding would benefit the city as a whole by accelerating rehabilitation of damaged properties. FEMA hazard mitigation programs can be a source of funding for some costs, such as elevation of houses. GNOHA Road Home Liaison case management services are working to close Road Home gaps.

*(See Volume 2, Chapter 12–Adapt to Thrive.)*

2. *Support restoration and development of a diverse array of homeownership and rental housing typologies for residents of all income levels, based on an annual housing market analysis to assist in setting priorities.*

**Who:** OCD; nonprofit housing organizations

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** D-CDBG; NHIF; additional federal funds

The housing market analysis mentioned in Section 4.A should be used to adjust zoning regulations, subsidy priorities through the City’s Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan, and other regulations to support development of a diverse array of housing types for both homeownership and rental. The HousingNOLA annual report card information and the Office of Community Development’s analysis should be used to determine how subsidy can be best targeted to address outstanding needs, and what zoning regulations need to be altered to support affordability.

3. *Identify key indicators of housing affordability needs and neighborhood revitalization, monitor the indicators and hold quarterly cross-agency Neighborhood Coordination Meetings.*

**Who:** Housing Policy Office (conveners); CPC; NORA; FANO; OCD; enforcement agencies, Housing Working Group; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** staff time

Investments and policies related to affordable housing investment and neighborhood revitalization should be coordinated across all agencies and departments through regularized ‘Neighborhood Coordinating Meetings’ that include the CPC, NORA, FANO, OFICD (or a successor OCD department), the Housing Policy Director, and other departments that target resources to neighborhood recovery efforts. These meetings could be coordinated or included within meetings of the Housing Working Group.

4. *Explore processes to direct publicly-owned and adjudicated property toward affordable and mixed-income housing development in high-value, high-opportunity neighborhoods and in areas near high-frequency transit corridors.*

**Who:** Office of Community Development; Mayor’s Office; Housing Working Group

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** staff time

High-opportunity neighborhoods can be defined using information from the HousingNOLA 10-Year Strategy and Implementation Plan, the City’s AFFH process, and the Market Value Analysis. Directing publicly-owned property toward

production of affordable and mixed-income housing in these areas will help ensure



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that residents of affordable housing have access to good jobs, recreational assets, services, schools, and businesses, and ensure that housing segregation is not furthered through the location of affordable developments.

5. *Work with public agency partners that own property to develop a process to reserve land for affordable housing on properties eligible for disposition.*

**Who:** Office of Community Development; Mayor's Office; Housing Working Group; Orleans Parish School Board; Housing Authority of New Orleans

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** stafftime; publicly-owned and adjudicated properties

Large sites owned by the Orleans Parish School Board, the Housing Authority of New Orleans; and the City of New Orleans, if no longer needed for their public purposes and eligible for disposition, are prime opportunities for the development of affordable and mixed-income housing. The City should work with *non-profit affordable housing advocates such as*, HousingNOLA and public agency partners to establish a process for prioritizing affordable housing development as a preferred use when disposing of public property and determine how properties can be legally reserved for developers who plan to accomplish this important public purpose.

6. *Encourage infill development of affordable housing within high-opportunity neighborhoods.*

**Who:** CPC, City Council

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Stafftime

Infill development of affordable housing is important to ensure that affordable housing residents have access to neighborhood amenities and are able to benefit from the dense, walkable fabric of many of our historic and postwar neighborhoods. Regulations that inhibit infill development of affordable housing should be studied and changes, and public land and certain subsidy funds should be leveraged to promote infill development.

7. *Enable new large multi-family developments of 75 units or more to be built in high-opportunity neighborhoods and in all areas that have access to jobs, neighborhood services, and high-frequency transit lines.*

**Who:** CPC, City Council, OCD

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** stafftime

Large multi-family development should be permitted along major transit lines with high frequencies (20 minute headways or less, including combined headways of two or more lines on the same route). While not all sites are suitable for large multi-family or mixed-use development, bulk, yard, and minimum lot size regulations should be designed to allow these developments to occur in areas with strong access to jobs and amenities. Upzoning and allowing increased intensity in Master Plan categories to allow larger-scale development along transit corridors and on 1-to-5 acre vacant sites should be considered.

8. *Implement an inclusionary zoning ordinance including both mandatory and voluntary approaches focusing in areas of opportunity, especially along transit lines, in concert with existing and expanded incentive zoning and development offset mechanisms in order to leverage maximum investment in the development of affordable housing*

**Who:** CPC; City Council; OCD

**When:** First five years

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*Resources: Staff time, non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA and GNOHA, external funding*

Mandatory inclusionary zoning is a national best practice in housing affordability strategies. Like incentive zoning, inclusionary zoning policies can offer a range of benefits to developers, such as added density, reduced parking requirements, fee waivers, and other incentives, in return for including a percentage of affordability-restricted housing units in their development projects. Currently, the Mayor's Office, HousingNOLA, the City Planning Commission, the Office of Community Development, local housing experts, and local developers are participating in a study to examine the housing market and submarkets in New Orleans to understand which types of developments and which areas can best accommodate mandatory and voluntary inclusionary zoning.

9. *Develop and implement policies based on the findings of a workforce housing strategy that includes details on workforce housing incentives, business community engagement, and Employer Assisted Housing best practices.*

**Who:** *City of New Orleans; City Council; Office of Community Development*

**When:** *First five years*

**Resources:** *Staff time; GNO Inc. assistance; NOLA Business Alliance assistance; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA/GNOHA assistance*

Employers are an important constituency in housing discussions, particularly around affordability, because their workforces often need an array of housing options available at various income levels. Tourism and hospitality employers, hospitals and health care employers, and other sectors all employ workers who may be priced out of the local housing market if current trends continue. HousingNOLA and GNO Inc. are working together to develop a workforce housing strategy that includes an examination of nationwide best practices, including incentives, business engagement, and Employer Assisted Housing. The City and the Office of Community Development should examine these workforce housing recommendations when available and participate in policies and programs designed to further the availability of workforce housing.

10. *Study all zoning barriers to the production of affordable housing and implement policies to remove these barriers.*

**Who:** *City of New Orleans; City Council; Office of Community Development; Housing Working Group*

**When:** *First five years*

**Resources:** *Staff time; GNO Inc. assistance; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA assistance*

The CPC should work with the Housing Working Group and *non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA* to study potential zoning barriers to affordable housing development and implement policies to remove these barriers.

11. *Work with the Orleans Parish Assessor's Office to explore and implement best practices for predictable and reasonable tax valuation for affordable housing multi-family properties.*

**Who:** *Orleans Parish Assessor's Office; City of New Orleans*

**When:** *First five years*

**Resources:** *Staff time; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as HousingNOLA/GNOHA assistance; Louisiana Housing Alliance assistance*



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The City and the Orleans Parish Assessor's Office should work with non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA/GNOHA and LHA to develop a reasonable formula for tax valuation of affordable housing multi-family properties, including adjustments based on the percentage of affordability and the resulting anticipated cash flow-based valuation of the project.

12. *Include provisions within existing or planned private sector development support programs (PILOTs, bond support, HUD grant loans, other economic development incentive programs) that incentivize developer applicants to make affordable housing investments.*

**Who:** City Council; Office of Community Development; Housing Working Group

**When:** Begin studying now; implement in next 5-10 years

**Resources:** Existing and potential economic development programs

Existing and potential economic development incentive programs should include some additional incentives that can create additional affordable housing investment within programs that receive City funds, tax abatements, low-interest loans, or other investments. All City incentives should be studied and coordinated to see which can be altered to help meet the need for affordable housing options.

13. *Dedicate a fixed percentage of general revenue derived from developer and permitting fees, code enforcement proceeds, and other local revenue streams to affordable housing initiatives in furtherance of the Housing for a Resilient New Orleans and HousingNOLA 10-Year Strategy and Implementation plans.*

**Who:** City of New Orleans

**When:** Begin studying now; implement in next 5-10 years

**Resources:** Developer and permitting revenue; code enforcement revenue; other local revenue streams

A percentage of revenue streams related to the development and building process (permitting and developer fees, code enforcement revenue, other revenue streams) should be dedicated to affordable housing initiatives in order to provide additional local funds to meet the need for affordability.

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

#### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. *Expend housing funding that has already been allocated to the City as expeditiously as possible.*

**Who:** NORA; Office of Community Development; Housing Working Group

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time; D-CDBG; HOME funds; ESG funds; HOPWA funds; NHIF funds

The City should provide adequate staffing to oversee program implementation, monitor the effectiveness of these programs, and identify remaining program and funding needs in advance of the expenditure of current funding. Programs include homeownership development, rental development, owner occupied and rental property repair funds for elderly and disabled persons, and home buyer assistance, including closing financing gaps due to insufficient Road Home and insurance proceeds.

2. *Implement a system of performance standards and strict monitoring for developers, contractors and others who receive housing and neighborhood development funds from the City.*

**Who:** OCD

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Stafftime

Performance standards, regular progress reports before payment, and site visits to

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projects should be established and city staff assigned to monitor progress. Reports on performance and progress should be made at the monthly cross-agency meetings above.

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

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

**Who:** OCD; Housing Resource Center Network

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Stafftime; CDBG; federal HOME funds

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

4. *Work with non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA, GNOHA and Own the Crescent to promote homeownership access for low-to-moderate income residents.*

**Who:** Office of Community Development; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA/GNOHA and Own the Crescent

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Stafftime; federal funds; non-profit developers; housing counselors; philanthropic funds and down payment assistance programs

Promoting homeownership for low-to-moderate income residents and first-time homebuyers helps stabilize neighborhoods and encourage wealth creation. The Office of Community Development should continue working with non-profits and housing counseling agencies to fund, promote, and develop new affordable homeownership opportunities.

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

**Who:** OCD; Housing Working Group

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Stafftime; federal HOME funds

Continue to increase affordable homeownership opportunities for all households below 120 percent of AMI. The data and market analysis to be performed for the Housing Working Group will provide information on the segments of the population that can support homeownership on current income but need down payment or closing costs assistance. First-time home buyer training and programs for moderate-income households should be expanded in order to help more households in the city's workforce become homeowners.

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

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

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Stafftime; Federal funds

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

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

**Who:** OCD; NORA

**When:** First five years

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

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

### 4.D Maintain and expand market rate housing choices and housing supply.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

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

**Who:** CPC; City Council

**When:** Continuous

**Resources:** Staff time

New Orleans is one of the fastest-growing cities in America. Evidence shows the growing population is not just the result of returning residents after Hurricane Katrina, but also an influx of new residents, many of whom have higher income levels and can support higher housing costs than long-time New Orleans residents. Creating a diversity of market-rate housing choices and expanding housing supply will ensure that neighborhoods are able to welcome new residents without pricing out residents who have been in New Orleans for decades, or for their entire lives. The *HousingNOLA 10-Year Strategy and Implementation Plan* estimates that 33,600 new housing units in total (including affordable and market-rate units) will be needed over the next 10 years, or approximately 3,360 units per year. However, in the year between June 2015 and May 2016, the city added only 2,229 housing units. Increasing opportunities for building smaller-scale dense infill in neighborhoods and larger-scale multi-family in targeted areas will help meet demand.

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

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housing stock. Some mixed-income housing of this type is beginning to enter the market on Tulane Avenue and other developments are in the planning stages.

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

**Who:** CPC; City Council

**When:** Continuous

**Resources:** Staff time

Maintaining a diversity of housing types throughout the City is a top priority for New Orleanians. In addition to providing resources for rehabilitation and repair, and zoning standards that allow infill development to reflect this diversity, the City should study the possibility of adopting design standards that encourage neighborhood compatibility while still allowing for diverse types of neighborhood infill that match neighborhoods' historic fabric, including small multi-family development. For example, design standards that might apply to multifamily developments could focus on quality design, neighborhood compatibility based on the building envelope (bulk and height) rather than onerous minimum lot area and unit per acre regulations, and enhanced security.

3. *Ensure that neighborhood infill is encouraged and includes opportunities for small multi-family developments of 3-10 units to promote an array of housing choices.*

**Who:** CPC; City Council

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** CZO; Staff time

Small multi-family development is an integral part of many of New Orleans' historic neighborhoods. While two-family shotguns are an extremely common typology, 3-unit, 4-unit, and even 10-unit structures are not uncommon to see sprinkled throughout neighborhoods' historic fabric. These typologies are less common, but still extant, in parts of post-war suburban-style neighborhoods. Many of these small multi-family structures, while not out of scale or character for their neighborhoods, offer a high number of units per acre and can be an important source of quality rental housing. Regulations that rely more on building envelope and form (bulk and height), and less on minimum lot area and units-per-acre regulation, can promote additional neighborhood infill options. The CPC should study ways to alter the CZO to encourage these multi-family opportunities in ways that are consistent with the character of neighborhoods, with the goal of increasing market-rate housing supply.

4. *Study historic densities in New Orleans neighborhoods to ensure that zoning does not prohibit densities that match neighborhood historic fabric. Focus particularly on ensuring availability of small multi-family rental and ownership options.*

**Who:** CPC; City Council

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time

"Neighborhood character" is a malleable concept and can sometimes be used as a way to reject denser development options that may still be consistent with

neighborhoods' historic housing stock and population size. The CPC should study

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the diverse housing options available in neighborhoods and ensure that the CZO does not unduly prohibit housing types that are common in the historic stock, particularly small multi-family typologies.

5. *Create opportunities for mixed-use and multi-family development along commercial corridors and high-frequency transit corridors, and consider intensification of existing mixed-use and multi-family districts, with particular focus on areas with strong access to jobs and opportunity.*

**Who:** CPC; City Council

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time

Commercial corridors and transit corridors are ideal places to allow multi-family development in order to provide residents with access to multiple transportation modes and walkable urban environments. The CPC should ensure that the CZO allows for multi-family development adjacent to these assets, and existing mixed-use and multi-family districts should potentially be intensified in areas that have strong access to jobs and opportunity, in order to promote increased housing supply in areas outside of the small-scale neighborhood fabric of our historic and suburban neighborhoods.

6. *Create opportunities for mixed-use and multi-family development along all commercial corridors and high-frequency transit corridors, and consider intensification of existing mixed-use and multi-family districts, with particular focus on areas with strong access to jobs and opportunity.*

**Who:** CPC; City Council

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time

Commercial corridors and transit corridors are ideal places to allow multi-family development in order to provide residents with access to multiple transportation modes and walkable urban environments. The CPC should ensure that the CZO allows for multi-family development adjacent to these assets, and existing mixed-use and multi-family districts should potentially be intensified in areas that have strong access to jobs and opportunity, in order to promote increased housing supply in areas outside of the small-scale neighborhood fabric of our historic and suburban neighborhoods.

7. Explore zoning options for a second main dwelling unit (mother-in-law suite) to increase density with market rate housing units in appropriate neighborhoods.

Who: CPC; City Council

When: First five years

Resources: Staff time

### **4.E Prevent displacement through development activities and continued study and policy review.**

Due to rising rents, home prices and insurance costs, along with a changing demographic make-up, New Orleans' population is shifting. As a result of Hurricane Katrina and the federal levee failure, many people remain displaced. The city's African American population has declined more than 100,000 since 2005, and African American neighborhoods have been the slowest to return. The disaster-related displacement has further exacerbated tensions between residents who were able to return and higher-income newcomers. Rents and home prices are escalating in

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neighborhoods across the city, but especially in historic neighborhoods that are close to job centers and have historically housed New Orleans' working class.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTION**

1. *Utilize the existing Neighborhood Housing Trust Fund for homeowner and renter rehabilitation to create neighborhood stability across the city, and explore opportunities for expanding and renewing this important millage.*

**Who:** City Council (zoning); Housing Working Group; Office of Community Development

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** staff time

The City of New Orleans' Neighborhood Housing Improvement Fund (NHIF) historically collected a .91 mill tax. The city projects that \$2.5 million will be available in 2016. NHIF funds can fill a gap generated by decreased federal funding to support ~~for~~ homeowner and renter rehabilitation in order to create neighborhood stability across the city. The Office of Community Development and the City of New Orleans should work with the Housing Working Group to determine how the NHIF can be expanded with new sources of funding and have its millage renewed upon expiration.

2. *Study and create a loan fund / loan loss reserve program to assist homeowners and small landlords with property rehabilitation and encourage reuse of vacant lots by current residents and pre-storm residents.*

**Who:** Office of Community Development; City of New Orleans; Housing Working Group

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Philanthropic funding and resources; credit union assistance, staff time

Assisting homeowners and small landlords with property rehabilitation loans can help keep existing residents in their homes and allow them to benefit from neighborhood improvements and increased amenities being created, rather than being bought out for relatively low prices because they cannot afford to upkeep their properties due to increased other costs (e.g. property taxes and insurance).

3. *Conduct targeted outreach to senior, disabled, and veteran homeowners who qualify for Special Assessment Levels / Freezes in all neighborhoods.*

**Who:** City of New Orleans, Orleans Parish Assessor

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time; Assessor staff time, external volunteer time

According to the Orleans Parish Assessor's Office, homeowners who are 65 years of age or older, have a permanent disability, or are the documented surviving spouse of a member of the armed forces or Louisiana National Guard killed in action, missing in action, or a prisoner of war may qualify for a Special Assessment Level (SAL) if they meet certain conditions. The Special Assessment Level places a "freeze" on the property's assessed value, even though the appraised value may continue to fluctuate with the market. As of 2015, approximately 18,360 homeowners are eligible to participate in the Senior Tax Abatement program offered by the Orleans Parish Assessor. Outreach should be conducted by the City, the Assessor, and external volunteers to ensure that senior and disabled homeowners are aware of and able to apply for these assessed value freezes.

4. *Provide an analysis of public funding and policy through the use of Affordable Housing Impact Statements.*



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*Who:* City of New Orleans; City Council; CPC

*When:* First five years

*Resources:* Staff time

The CPC and New Orleans City Council have completed an Affordable Housing Impact Statement (AHIS) Study to examine how an AHIS can be used in New Orleans to evaluate the impacts that government processes and actions have on the supply and affordability of housing in New Orleans. The City Council should implement an AHIS process in accordance with the results of the CPC's study.

5. *Explore additional property tax relief for low-income homeowners facing increases in property assessments, based on how long they have lived in their home and their income.*

*Who:* City of New Orleans; City Council; CPC

*When:* First five years

*Resources:* Staff time; forgone tax dollars

While tax abatements for seniors and the disabled currently exist, New Orleans should also explore property tax relief for low-income homeowners who fit neither of these categories but have their tenure threatened by increases in property tax assessments. An example program can be found in the City of Philadelphia, which offers discounts on real estate taxes to homeowners whose property assessments more than tripled in value from 2013 to 2014. The program, called the "Longtime Owner Occupants Program" (LOOP), was created in 2013 following a citywide reassessment of property values, which led to increases in many long-time homeowners taxes. To be eligible: The owner must have lived in the property as a primary residence for over 10 years; The home must be either single family or a multifamily property with no more than three units; The property cannot already receive a separate tax abatement, with some exceptions; The real estate taxes must be paid in full; and the homeowner's household income must be below 150% of Area Median Income, based on household size. New Orleans should look at instituting a similar program to enable low-income homeowners to continue to afford their monthly housing costs and reduce instances of displacement.

6. *Investigate tax relief measures for investors who agree to preserve and create affordable rental units.*

*Who:* OCD; City Council; CPC

*When:* First five years

*Resources:* Staff time; potential tax relief costs

Affordable rental units are some of the most-needed housing resources in New Orleans today; according to the *HousingNOLA 10-Year Strategy and Implementation Plan*, 58% of New Orleans renters spend more than one-third of their income on housing costs, and 37% pay more than half of their income towards housing costs. This means that more than half of New Orleans renters are paying too much for housing. Providing tax abatements to investors who agree to preserve and create affordable rental housing may be a less expensive way of directing local resources toward the construction and rehabilitation of affordable rental units.

### 4.F Enforce and promote fair housing policies throughout New Orleans.

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The Fair Housing Act of 1968 prohibits racial discrimination in housing and provides protections for people seeking to rent or buy a home, secure a mortgage, or purchase homeowners insurance. The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, family status and national origin. Orleans Parish provides additional protections against discrimination for additional groups based on sexual orientation, gender identification, marital status, age and creed. Fair Housing is guided by laws such as the Fair Housing Act, but as with all laws, the enforcement and spirit of the law goes beyond the law.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

2. *Use the City's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing process to standardize strategies to address barriers to fair housing in the City's Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, and the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO)'s Housing Plans and Capital Fund Plan.*

**Who:** OCD; City Council; CPC, HANO, fair housing organizations

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time

The AFFH rule provides additional requirements for Federal grantees to further the purposes of the Fair Housing Act. Any entity that administers HUD funding is required to complete an Assessment of Fair Housing in order to access federal funds, and if an entity does not comply with the requirement they risk having their federal funds withheld. In 2016, New Orleans became one of the first cities in the country to complete its AFFH Plan. This process will allow the City to examine patterns of integration and segregation; identify racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty and disparities in access to opportunity; and assess disproportionate housing needs. The AFFH process follows a four-step process: 1. Data and AFFH Assessment Tool – HUD provides data and an assessment tool to understand fair housing issues in New Orleans; 2. Analysis – City of New Orleans completes and submits an AFFH Plan to HUD. 3. Review and Response - HUD reviews each AFFH Plan within 60 days, and either approves or denies the AFFH Plan. 4. Incorporation - Goals identified in the AFFH Plan must be incorporated into strategies and actions of the Consolidated Plan, Annual Action Plan, Public Housing Plan and Capital Fund Plan. The new process will create an opportunity for further collaboration between the City of New Orleans, HANO, and housing stakeholders in New Orleans. The AFFH rule is an opportunity for proactively assessing and implementing programs that promote integration, while also detailing real barriers within New Orleans that are discriminatory or violating the Fair Housing Act.

3. *The New Orleans City Council should draft and pass an ordinance that requires transparency and accuracy in background checks used to secure public and private rental housing.*

**Who:** City Council

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time

Background checks run by landlords often cause denial of housing due to an arrest record without any convictions, which may violate fair housing law. Requiring transparency in background checks so that landlords must provide applicants with a copy of their background check if it is used to justify denying housing will assist in ensuring that discriminatory behavior cannot pass unchecked.

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### **4.G Encourage sustainable design and infrastructure for all New Orleanians.**



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Climate change increases the frequency and intensity of storm events, and the increasing rate of coastal land loss in Louisiana poses significant danger to the New Orleans region. In order to create a more resilient New Orleans, sustainable infrastructure and design principles will continue to play a role in mitigating risk, decreasing environmental impact and reducing energy costs for New Orleans residents. In the housing arena, sustainable design principles should ensure that all residents have access to a healthy living environment that efficiently uses resources over time and reduces the potential for flood damage from rainfall events.

### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

1. *Develop a strategy and identify funding sources to create an affordable abatement program to address home health issues including mold and lead-based paint.*

**Who:** Office of Community Development

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time; City and external funding sources

Data indicates that there are far too many toxic living spaces in New Orleans. Estimates from the last American Housing Survey in 2011 showed that more than 2,000 rental units in New Orleans had mold infestations. Mold infestation can lead to and exacerbate asthma, which is the third leading cause of hospitalization for children in the state of Louisiana. It can also suppress the immune system and cause other serious health conditions. Lead-based paint poses another serious health risk in the city. A 2013 study by Tulane University found that nearly two-thirds of New Orleans homes and yards have dangerous levels of lead according to federal standards. Since the biggest indicator of high lead content is the age of a home, New Orleans residents are disproportionately at risk due to the city's large amount of older housing stock. Finding funds to remediate these conditions and alleviate their potential health impacts will enable New Orleans residents to live healthier, safer lives.

2. *Create a centralized information hub to coordinate energy efficiency programs from utility companies, the City, and the State of Louisiana.*

**Who:** Office of Community Development

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time; database/Web development resources

In 2014, 74% of Entergy customers reported having difficulty paying their energy bill. While New Orleans energy rates are comparatively low to the rest of the country, bills are the highest in the nation as a result of high consumption. Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) make up half the energy bills in New Orleans, with historic structures more likely to lose energy. Nearly 40% of our housing stock was built before 1950. Energy efficiency and weatherization programs can help retrofit older homes and address these issues; given that programs are offered by the City of New Orleans, the State of Louisiana, and utility companies, homeowners can be unaware of what benefits are offered through each program and how the programs relate. A centralized hub of information would help ensure that the programs can benefit those who need them most.

3. *Support GNO, Inc. the Coalition for Sustainable Flood Insurance, and other groups in their advocacy efforts to provide more affordable flood insurance rates through the 2017 reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).*

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**Who:** *City of New Orleans*

**When:** *First five years*

**Resources:** *Staff time*

The Coalition for Sustainable Flood Insurance (CSFI) will lead the national effort to reauthorize the National Flood Insurance Program for a full five-year reauthorization through 2022. CSFI will focus on reforms to rate structures, reforms to the mapping process, and administrative reforms. CSFI will also seek to preserve several key provisions in the Homeowner Flood Insurance Affordability Act, including the preservation of grandfathering, ensuring the sales trigger is not put into law, and the continued allowance for the reimbursement of policy holders and communities for successful FEMA map challenges. The City of New Orleans should support efforts to ensure that flood insurance remains affordable for local property owners.

- 4. Continue to develop and advocate for strategies to address high homeowner and flood insurance costs for low-income families in New Orleans.*

**Who:** *City of New Orleans; City Council; Housing Working Group*

**When:** *First five years*

**Resources:** *Staff time*

Flood insurance is a significant cost for many households and is likely to grow in the future. New Orleans can help advocate for and implement efforts such as the Community Rating System, a voluntary incentive program for communities that “recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed minimum NFIP requirements.” New Orleans is a CRS community currently at Class 8, entitling NFIP policyholders to a 10% premium discount. Other neighboring communities have made stronger efforts to increase their class rating. Terrebonne Parish and Jefferson Parish hold Class 6 ratings (20% discount), and St. Tammany Parish holds a Class 7 rating (15% discount). New Orleans, as a national leader in water management, could conceivably improve its class by tailoring its resilience activities to earn CRS points. Improving to a Class 6 community like Jefferson Parish could save NFIP policyholders hundreds of dollars each year. Additional strategies for reducing flood insurance costs for residents should also be researched and pursued.

- 5. Support the implementation of the Resilient New Orleans plan by furthering the following strategies: investing in household financial stability; building social cohesion; reducing property owners’ risk by investing in water management strategies; and improving the redundancy of energy infrastructure.*

**Who:** *City of New Orleans; NORA, Housing Working Group*

**When:** *First five years*

**Resources:** *NDRC funds; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA assistance; additional federal funds*

The *Resilient New Orleans* plan includes elements of sustainable infrastructure planning that will benefit homeowners and renters in New Orleans, including building financial stability, reducing flood risk, and creating new energy systems that are less likely to fail in disaster events. Housing strategies should support and integrate with these elements of the *Resilient New Orleans* plan as necessary.

- 6. Take proactive measures to improve the New Orleans Community Rating System in order to lower insurance costs.*

**Who:** *City of New Orleans*

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*When: First five years*

*Resources: Staff time, NDRC*

### 4.F Increase accessibility for all walks of life, including special needs residents.

New Orleans has long struggled to provide services to its most vulnerable residents. Across the board, people with special needs who fit into multiple categories of special needs populations, or those who do not have organizations specifically working with them, experience immense difficulty finding adequate services. Our special needs services system, like most other systems, has silos that need to be further broken down to address the needs of all of New Orleans most vulnerable citizens. Individuals with special needs face many of the same housing issues as low-income New Orleanians: paying too much in rent or on a mortgage and living in neighborhoods with limited access to services. However, individuals with special needs also face additional barriers and require additional supportive services in order to thrive. Further, these populations are more at risk of not having safe and affordable housing options. Special needs populations that require special attention in housing policy and program efforts include: the homeless population; veterans; minority populations with language barriers; persons living with HIV/AIDS; the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) population; formerly incarcerated residents; persons with disabilities (mental and physical); the elderly; at-risk youth (ages 16-24); and domestic violence victims.

#### **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

1. *Work with the Advocacy Center to pursue additional funds to pay for home modifications to increase accessibility for homeowners and renters with special needs.*

*Who: City of New Orleans; Advocacy Center*

*When: First five years*

*Resources: Staff time; external funding resources*

Homeowners and renters with special needs often lack resources for home modification to accommodate disabilities. Funding new programs to assist these homeowners and renters to modify their homes will help improve residents' quality of life and housing accessibility. There is no complete count of Americans with Disability Act (ADA) accessible rental properties, so it is difficult to understand the full supply within the city. However, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina's flooding, many owners faced requirements to elevate their units. Many did not also ensure that the newly elevated units were also handicap accessible. Since there is limited information on available units, those that are known tend to have higher rents, due to the demand. In addition, the City of New Orleans provides NHIF funds for home modifications for homeowners in partnership with the Advocacy Center, but there are no funds available for rental modifications.

2. *Enforce the existing requirement that all public agencies providing housing programs or services should produce materials in Spanish and Vietnamese and have a language access plan in place.*

*Who: City of New Orleans; HANO; NORA*

*When: First five years*

*Resources: Staff time; translation resources*

New Orleans is home to robust Asian and Hispanic communities that continue to face challenges in accessing services and participating in government programs due to language barriers. New Orleans' Hispanic population is 5% of the total population (18,984

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people), while New Orleans Asian American community is 3% of the total population (10,822 people). According to the 2013 American Community Survey, 54% of Vietnamese and 44% of Hispanic households are estimated to speak English “less than well.” Overall, there is a lack of information posted in languages other than English and a limited availability of translation services in New Orleans. Entities that offer these resources need additional support for advertising their available services within the city.

3. *Explore additional services aimed at those with mental illness or drug addiction.*

**Who:** City of New Orleans; service providers; supportive housing providers

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time; external funding sources

Examine additional supportive services and gaps in the provision of services to residents with mental illness and drug addiction, including availability of supportive housing and provision of health services near supportive housing locations.

4. *Draft and pass an ordinance removing questions about prior criminal convictions (“banning the box”) on applications to live in publicly funded housing developments and units operated by private landlords, or at minimum only allow consideration of criminal convictions (not arrests).*

**Who:** City Council

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time

The formerly incarcerated face challenges with securing housing from both private landlords and subsidized housing. Private landlords in New Orleans commonly do background checks, which limits New Orleanians with criminal records in finding a place to live. Formerly incarcerated individuals are not a protected class under the Fair Housing Act, which leaves them vulnerable to discrimination. Ex-offenders are forced to either lie on applications, live with family members or live on the street. In addition, many private landlords run background checks that look at arrest records, not just convictions. Arrest records provide no indication that a person was guilty of any crime and should not be considered as a factor in applications for rental housing.

5. *Prioritize and target limited funding for high-risk special needs populations to produce 1,500 housing opportunities for these populations.*

**Who:** City of New Orleans; Advocacy Center

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Staff time; federal funds; external funding resources

There are robust non-profit supportive services for people with disabilities in New Orleans, but securing permanent supportive housing remains a challenge. Housing Choice Vouchers were secured after 2005 for residents with disabilities, but all have been utilized. The Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) vouchers have been successful in securing housing, but there are too few vouchers to meet the demand, leaving people with disabilities stuck on waiting lists and in nursing homes rather than living independently. On-site supportive service providers who work hand-in-hand with property managers are vastly superior to any kind of off-site counselors or case managers in terms of their ability to keep people housed, paying their rent, and healthy.

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### GOAL 5

## ATTACHMENT A

Work with Non-Profit Affordable Housing Advocates such as, HousingNOLA to continue to tap into a network of high capacity public sector and neighborhood-based groups, such as community development corporations, to provide housing responsive to the changing housing needs of current and future residents.

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

#### RECOMMENDED ACTION

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

**Who:** Office of Community Development

**When:** First five years

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

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

### 5.B Foster a network of strong public sector partners and community development corporations, to provide housing responsive to the changing housing needs of current and future residents.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

1. Support non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA, HUD, and Enterprise's efforts to create a robust capacity building training program that is outcomes-based and includes a support system for CDCs, a certification for CDCs, and a systems analysis to identify gaps and redundancies in the nonprofit sector.

**Who:** Office of Community Development

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** CDBG; foundations; Enterprise; HUD; non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA

The City's Office of Community Development should collaborate with non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA, HUD, and Enterprise to help build a capacity building training program to support local CDCs, including a certification for CDCs and an identification of gaps and redundancies in the community development sector. While CDCs have been a critical part of New Orleans' recovery and providing affordable, quality housing in many neighborhoods, the recovery funding stream has been almost entirely expended, leading some CDCs to close down or merge with other organizations due to lack of funds. Remaining CDCs must work to become competitive on a statewide and national basis for scarce funding sources, necessitating a training program for working with complicated, layered funding structures and creating organizational sustainability.

2. Increase production efficiency and organizational capacity among government partners (Finance Authority of New Orleans, HANO, NORA, City of New Orleans, Louisiana Housing Corporation), non-profits (housing counseling agencies and advocates), and developers to promote affordable unit production.

**Who:** Office of Community Development, FANO, HANO, NORA, LHC, non-profits

**When:** First five years

**Resources:** Housing Working Group, OneTable, non-profit affordable housing advocates such as, HousingNOLA, staff time

## **ATTACHMENT A**

Strong organizational capacity and partnerships oriented toward increased affordable unit production will be very important in order to maximize the number of affordable housing opportunities created for low-to-moderate-income New Orleans residents. The OneTable system of coordinated development funders is one step toward creating this cohesive, unified system, but more recommendations should be developed around how New Orleans' housing providers, funders, and public sector partners can efficiently come together to rehabilitate and construct units at a rapid pace.