

## A NOTE TO THE READER

In response to the devastating impact of Hurricane Katrina, the Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP) took shape as one of the most intensive grassroots citywide planning initiatives ever undertaken for a great American city. Across New Orleans thousands of “citizen planners” worked with planning teams to become authors of their city’s future, contributing a rich and nuanced understanding of the needs and aspirations that should drive recovery. Planners drew on this inspiration to create frameworks for each of the city’s districts and to contribute to the formation of a citywide plan.

No national media coverage has succeeded in conveying the breadth or depth of the human and physical tragedy unleashed when the levees failed in New Orleans. The toll is easy to see, however, in the faces of residents—many of whom have not been able to return to their homes. Yet the city’s trial has come at a time of remarkable urban renaissance across America, when neighborhoods both within and outside urban centers have begun to emerge from decades of disinvestment. For New Orleans, this reversal of fortune brings with it an opportunity to address long-term challenges and to build a city of unmatched livability and economic opportunity.

Achieving this promise will demand more of the immense courage and commitment of people who have already contributed so much to rebuilding their city. Further struggle and opportunity lie ahead—perhaps none more essential than forging a new partnership among government, the private sector, institutions, and the community. Already experiencing rising real estate values, Bywater and Marigny can work with the City and these other partners to guide growth. Residents who participated in this planning process have identified many of the critical areas that new development will need to support—and protect: historic character; economic and social diversity; the charm of small commercial squares; and improved quality of life from a revitalized St. Claude Avenue, enhanced schools and public services, stronger pedestrian connections to the riverfront, and revived streetcar service.

It has become cliché to say that Katrina changed New Orleans forever. It is just as true, however, to say that this new era holds great promise for the city and for each of the distinctive neighborhoods that make up District 7.

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**Appendices** (available separately)

- > **Sounding board members**
- > ***A People’s Plan for Overcoming the Hurricane Katrina Blues: A Comprehensive Strategy for Building a More Vibrant, Sustainable and Equitable 9th Ward* (executive summary) prepared by the ACORN Housing/ University Partnership**
- > **Survey of Major Business Corridors, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, January 2007**
- > **Project Description Sheets**