

District 1 Assessment and Gap Analysis

Goody Clancy

November 16, 2006

Recovery Assessment

This assessment was undertaken in October 2006 as part of the UNOP District 1 process by the Goody Clancy District Planning Team. It represents a snapshot of the district at that time and was intended to provide a basis the district planning process. This document has been used to inform planning recommendations for the district incorporated in the UNOP District 1 Recovery Plan but has not been comprehensively updated to reflect changes within the District or information that has emerged since October 2006. As change is occurring rapidly in the city, some of the information contained in this document may have been superceded by subsequent events. Where information has changed, this is reflected in the District 1 Recovery Plan that includes information updated to January 2007. This document does not integrate the many useful maps and additional graphics prepared by the UNOP citywide team that provide one source for information included in this document. These very useful maps are available separately. Several of them are incorporated in the District 1 Recovery Plan document.

I. Introduction to the District

District 1 includes the Central Business District (CBD), the Warehouse District and the French Quarter. Within the Planning District are three national historic districts: the Upper CBD, the Lower CBD, and the well known Vieux Carre. The overall boundaries are Esplanade Avenue to the north, the Mississippi River to the east, Rt-90 to the south, and Interstate 10/Iberville/Basin/N Rampart Street to the west. District 1 is one of the prime economic drivers of the region's economy with its array of tourist attractions, convention and sports facilities, and the regional headquarters of numerous national corporations. The French Quarter draws tourists from around the globe and is internationally known for its music, food, drink and cultural facilities. Fortunately, the Quarter—along with the Warehouse District—received very little flooding after hurricane Katrina while most other parts of the CBD received up to four feet of water.

OUR APPROACH TO THE DISTRICT RECOVERY ASSESSMENT

In approaching this first deliverable of a 2nd draft of a Recovery Assessment, we have sought to achieve a balance between:

- talking with the District 1 community – both individuals and organizations - both informally and through formal meetings about issues, needs, goals and priorities, in particular (list of main key people/groups follows this section)
- field work – both general observations and discrete survey elements – to see at first hand how District 1 appears, and how recovery needs to relate to it
- reviewing reports, background papers, plans and graphic data and other material which helps inform our

thinking

- the UNOP District Recovery Assessment and Planning Guide, and other client team guidance

.....all with a degree of analysis and interpretation – with a commentary on this where meaningful – to address the real needs in this study: optimum benefit to the residents, workers, businesses, visitors and the New Orleans sub-region as a whole in effecting as solid and timely a recovery of the central part of the city.

CONTENT

In addition to providing a list of key meeting participants, we have undertaken a sector by sector presentation of findings following the UNOP established Questionnaire template, and an introduction to our Gaps Analysis presented in relation to our initial overview of material we have reviewed and are providing attachments in the form of base plans being ‘raw’ data that our team has collected.

II. Recovery Assessment

A. DESCRIPTION OF RECOVERY ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGIES

In addition to the meetings listed below, we have established a ‘Steering Group’ to act as a ‘sounding board’ (which it was originally called). The steering group has come together through suggestions from the Downtown development District, French Quarter groups, those based in the various historic districts – and has also been made more inclusive by having others volunteer to be part of this informal group. The steering group has been meeting every 2-3 weeks, a pattern that will continue until the end of the study.

This group was formed in response to the District meeting held on 14 October.

The District Planning Team wishes to thank the following for their input into the Team’s understanding of the District, its residents, its businesses, and its institutions.

- Nathan Chapman, French Quarter
- Kurt Weigle + colleagues, Downtown Development District
- Ron Forman, Audobon Zoo
- Bill Borah, Planning activist
- Arthur Roger, Art Gallery owner
- Downtown Development District
- Pres Kabakoff, Economic Working Group (inc. D Volkes, A McDonald, et al)
- Yolanda Rodriguez and Ashleigh Gilbert, CPC
- District Steering Group, Review pre District 1 Meeting
- Donna Addkison
- Jay Weigle, Warehouse District
- Jim McNamara (former DDD), Rebecca Connell (Tulane), Aron Miscenich (BioInnovation Centre), Medical District
- Dr. Pierre Buekins and Dr. Tom Farmer (Tulane)
- Ray Manning

B. SECTOR BY SECTOR PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

We have based our sector analysis on the UNOP Questionnaire template supplied. This helps provide the range of findings we need to review in providing a platform for the rest of our study. A ‘commentary’ is supported by information from various sources, where possible, or referring to relevant sources where specific data has not been extracted at this stage. This process can continue to support our analysis.

HOUSING

What was Katrina’s impact on housing stock?

French Quarter (except for the very south-west corner) and eastern part of the District not affected physically by flooding, but some limited storm/rain damage.

Western part affected by up to 1 foot, or in some limited spots 1-2 ft of water, with associated storm/wind damage in parts.

Source: UNOP ‘Katrina Flood Depth’ Plan, City of New Orleans, anecdotal references

To what extent has the population returned?

Though the exact percentage is unknown, the residential population of District 1 has largely returned. Based on FEMA damage inspections data, virtually all the buildings in the district received less than 25% structural damage. Since the Central Business District was the only neighborhood in this district to have housing units with more than 2' of flooding, residents in this area have "leased in" through September, 2006, 151 of the 152 trailers in the District. Given that 52% of the units that incurred 2' or more of flooding in this neighborhood have trailers in contrast with 6% citywide, it can be assumed that the majority of the residents in District 1 have returned to their property.

Source: City of New Orleans data, Citywide Team (categorizations as per available data). UNOP PDF maps and Report

What is the level of building permit activity?

Throughout the District, about 50% of the units with 2' or more of flooding have acquired building permits. Out of 4,465 occupied residential units (1,029 owner-occupied and 3,436 renter occupied) in District 1, only 143 permits have been issued. The majority of these are residential electrical permits, and there are some residential repair permits and one permit for residential demolition. Most of the electrical permits were obtained for the Central Business District, the majority of the repair permits were obtained in the French Quarter, and the demolition permit is in the Warehouse District. Interpretation from this data needs care as an abundance of building permits does not necessarily imply actual building activity and vice versa.

Source: UNOP PDF maps and Report

What is the observed level of renovation activity?

A handful of residential and commercial buildings in the French Quarter (FQ) are in the process of renovation with twelve renovation permits granted. Permit activity tails off in the CBD and Warehouse District where only four and one permit were granted, respectively.

Source: UNOP "Residential Demolitions...", City of New Orleans

Anecdotally, we are aware of many initiatives and proposed projects – at various levels of status – which reflect progress in recovery, too early to put any real analysis on this, save to say we are keenly looking at where there are 'hurdles to implementation', and what can be done about any identified as part of this output.

Source: Conversations with Steering Group members, and others and observations from field observations.

Are there "intent to return" data from previously conducted surveys?

To be evaluated with citywide information and further assessment.

Prior to Katrina was the neighborhood experiencing reinvestment activity?

Certain initiatives/projects were in various states of progress. We have become aware that a number have been resurrected (with different needs, objectives, timetables and processes for delivery), some are still 'on hold', and some have been dropped. This study will identify a prioritized list of projects to reflect future reinvestment activity. Unlike most of Orleans Parish, pre-Katrina, District 1 was showing modest signs of growth, with new projects planned, such as the Plaza Tower renovation (high rise condominiums in former office building), and Tulane's Rivershpere Museum and Research Center planned at the riverfront. Most of the projects are still planning to go forward, though somewhat delayed by Hurricane Katrina. Most of the projects are condominium complexes, for which lenders are requiring pre-sales, so these projects may or may not happen. Following is a list of currently planned projects, all of which were in the planning stages pre-Katrina, that would add over 2,000 new residences to the District 1 market:

New Construction:

- Vantage Tower, O'Keefe St. & Girod St.—219 residential condominiums

- Tracage, Annunciation St. & John Churchill Chase—133 residential condominiums
- Trump International Hotel & Tower, Poydras St.—67 floors

Renovations:

- Plaza Tower, Howard Ave. & Loyola Ave.—197 residential condominiums
- Audubon Bldg, Canal St.—102 residential condominiums
- 925 Common St.—107 corporate rentals
- American Bank Bldg, Carondelet St.—202 affordable rental units
- Woolworth Bldg, Canal St. & North Rampart St.—30 story residential condominium tower
- Krauss Department Store Bldg, Canal St.—250 residential condominiums

Following are new proposed projects, post Katrina:

- Geneva Tower, Fulton St.—250 residential condominiums
- Hotel Tower, Royal St. and Canal St.—2 dozen floors

Source: Discussions with Steering Group members/others and field observations.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION ISSUES

What is the level of demolition within local and or/National Register Historic Districts?

There was only one residential demolition permit issued in District 1 and it is in the Warehouse District. There are 72 buildings designated or nominated as “historic properties” by the City in District 1. According to the data we received in October, none of these properties have been the subject of exterior or interior demolition permits. See map “Building Permits, Historic Districts and Landmarks.”

Source: UNOP PDF map, NOLA GIS historic district and building files, city permits files, and Data Report

What were the pressures on districts prior to Katrina?

As with any urban area containing a mix of character areas and ‘roles’, there were significant pressures—particularly in the French Quarter—linked to management/maintenance, difficulty of satisfying codes/ordnances with re-use/refurbishment proposals. Similarly, in the Warehouse District, Lafayette Square, Picayune Place historic districts – where adaptive re-use, for which a market needs to be identified, along with the above issues creates pre-Katrina pressures, now exacerbated due to reduced market demand – although, in our view, with some other opportunities coming forth (eg a renewed focus on the role of the downtown area, and the vision for it). The CBD has suffered from some similar pre-Katrina pressures, these particularly affected now by reduced, or uncertain, market demand (eg reuse of former theatres). The old Civic Theater recently opened its doors as the newly renovated Civic Lofts, a adaptive re-use residential building. Post Katrina, there has been a hotel developer attempting to build a tower on the Canal St. edge of the French Quarter, at the corner of Royal St. and Canal Street. The project has met with opposition from preservationist groups that consider it to be out of scale with surrounding buildings. There is however, plenty of precedent for hotel towers on Canal Street.

Source: Discussion with Steering Group and others and field observations. UNOP PDF maps.

What was Katrina’s impact on historic areas?

Roughly 70% of District 1 sits within a local or national historic district. While most of the damage has occurred on buildings in the CBD which is outside of the historic district, Katrina has still taken a toll on the historic areas; the impact has been one of economic, rather than physical, damage. Previous pressures (as above) reinforced post-Katrina by cancelled conventions/conferences, reduced tourist visits, uncertainty and lack of market demand.

A developer has tried to gain approvals for a hotel tower on the edge of the French Quarter, at the corner of Canal

St. and Royal St. The developer has met with difficulties caused by a lack of staffing in the City Planning Commission, that is causing their projects' public hearings to be delayed at least 10 months or more. This lack of staffing is making it very difficult for any new projects to move forward, unless they are "as of right."

The merchants in the French Quarter and all of District 1 have suffered mightily from the lack of convention/tourist traffic. Some that had been there for decades have gone out of business, In other parts of New Orleans, the restaurants are holding their own, with more than 30 new restaurants opening in New Orleans as a whole, post-Katrina. Most of that business is from local residents. However, due to a lack of tourism from conventions, the French Quarter restaurants are suffering.

Source: Discussion with Steering Group and others and field observations.

Has new or proposed development been sympathetic to the characteristics of historic areas?

It is important not to generalize. We believe there has been some recent development, and there are proposed development examples which are relatively sympathetic to historic areas. However, there are poor examples too. This study can only assist in a limited way to set a framework for getting the balance right.

There are new towers planned or proposed in the Warehouse District and on the Canal Street edge of the French Quarter, that are considerably larger in mass and scale than surrounding historic buildings. However, all of the proposed projects make credible attempts to design a first floor pedestrian experience that relates to the historic setting, adding retail and other uses sympathetic to the pedestrian experience. These attempts to humanize the first floors of the towers, are considerably better than those of older existing hotel towers on Canal Street, built decades ago. Parking garages are included in the new proposed towers but, again, include ground-floor active uses to enliven the pedestrian experience.

Source: Anecdotal

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT/BUSINESS ACTIVITY

What was Katrina's impact upon major employers and commercial nodes within the District?

The impact was clearly devastating in terms of initial impact – for staff, markets, customers etc. Recovery, and its pace, has depended on a number of factors – many dependent on the above. Virtually none of the businesses received more than 2' flooding in the FQ or the WD but almost 40% of businesses in the CBD received up to 4' of flooding. Most famously, the Louisiana Superdome was significantly damaged by hurricane winds and was closed for many months. This forced the Saints football team to play outside of New Orleans and the cancellation of other events that have had a significant economic impact on the city. Adjacent to the Superdome, the Hyatt Hotel tower remains closed indefinitely and hundreds of other hotel rooms remain unoccupied. The Hornets Arena (basketball) suffered a similar fate. They played out of state for the first year after the storm, and have just recently returned to New Orleans.

Hotel rooms were initially occupied right after the storm for a few months with contractors and FEMA personnel. Since then, the lack of conventions, while the Convention Center was being renovated, has hurt many of the hotels in District 1. This is also true for all merchants and restaurants in District 1 that relied primarily on tourists for income.

The businesses that have come back the fastest are those related to recovery and rebuilding, such as engineers, architects, and contractors of various types. The banks appear to be doing very well. Thanks to insurance payouts, there have not been a large number of loan defaults. Most professional services companies are very busy and profitable—CPAs, attorneys, financial advisors. The medical community has suffered greatly from a lack of facilities and a loss of patients to the diaspora. There is a shortage of doctors and hospitals city-wide.

Whilst some ‘quick’ recoveries have been possible, many businesses face a somewhat uncertain current and future situation. We need to further investigate this as part of our ongoing work.

Source: Anecdotal/Observation UNOP District Data Report

What is the present condition of major employers in the District? Key commercial nodes?

Many are still in a ‘transition stage’. Recruiting, markets, future strategies are all issues. Shortage of tourist customers (whether residents, visitors, Business convention attendees, tourists etc.) are probably having the biggest impact on the ability to run businesses – paying rent, staff etc. along with access to other funds/grants that in healthier times may have been available. Many retail businesses and restaurants still operate with reduced hours and staff size. Within the CBD, where office vacancy rates were high pre-Katrina, the office vacancy rate is even higher post-Katrina.

The French Quarter has been particularly badly hit by lack of visitors/tourists and many of its key businesses such as antique shops. The art businesses within the warehouse district are similarly suffering – and Downtown, as with other retail businesses within District 1 are suffering considerable knock-backs, often of a cumulative nature.

Source: Anecdotal

Are commercial services (drug stores, grocery stores, etc.) readily available?

Commercial services are generally available to those living or working downtown. There is a full service pharmacy and drug store conveniently located at the nexus between downtown and the French Quarter (Royal and Iberville). The most significant gap in District 1 is the lack of full-service or medium-size specialty grocery store. Residents do have the option of grocery shopping at Walmart nearby in the lower Garden District but some residents complain of its overwhelming size, impersonal character and poor-quality produce. Warehouse District residents reported driving many miles to do their weekly grocery shopping. Needless to say, restaurants, cafes, convenience stores, dry cleaners, etc. are plentiful in the FQ and CBD, less so in the Warehouse District.

Source: Discussion with District Meeting #1 attendees and field observations.

Based on outreach, has business recovered for district retailers and restaurants?

While most restaurants, bars, galleries and tourist-dependant businesses have reopened in the core of the FQ, business has yet to return to normal and profits are down significantly. Businesses at the edge of the French Quarter and in other parts of downtown have yet to reopen; along Canal Street east of Rampart Street are mostly open, while west of Rampart there are still numerous vacant storefronts, including a handful in the process of renovation. Besides the lack of customers, businesses of all types are having trouble finding and keeping employees because of the lack of available housing.

Source: Discussion

Has there been major development activity or development interest in the District?

Developer interest was initially slow to come back to District 1, there is now significant movement in the CBD and Warehouse District. Owners of the Hyatt Regency New Orleans, for example, are developing plans for a “\$715 million, 20-acre multi-use center and park that will include a refurbished Hyatt hotel, the National Jazz Center, a new city hall, civic courthouse, amphitheater, and residence buildings.” (Architectural Record, June 2006). Additionally, based on promotional signs posted at vacant parcels, there are proposals for both high-rise residential condo towers and mid-rise loft projects in multiple locations in the S. Rampart Street area and in the Warehouse District. See list in sections above.

Source: Architectural Record, discussion with District Meeting #1 attendees and field observations.

TRANSPORTATION/TRANSIT CONDITIONS

To what extent has transit service been restored to the District? Is it widely utilized?

Most bus routes through District 1 are in operation though their frequency has been reduced significantly. The Canal Street and Waterfront streetcar lines are fully operational but, again, with reduced frequency. The St. Charles streetcar is still not running. In consequence, bus and streetcar ridership citywide has dropped to 13% of the pre-Katrina levels even though the RTA—via a grant from FEMA—provided free transit services for nearly a year after the storm.

Source: UNOP RTA Post-Katrina Bus Routes and field observations and the Brookings Institute Katrina Index report from October 2006

What is the condition of major thoroughfares? To the extent that this information can be readily collected, what is the condition of minor arterials and local streets?

All streets in District 1 appear to be in decent condition, probably no worse than before the storm. Sidewalks and curbs are currently being rebuilt on Canal Street, causing some disruptions to traffic flow. District 1 streets and sidewalks are generally in better condition than the rest of the city, both before and after Katrina. Before Katrina, nearly the entire city needed street repairs, with potholes being commonplace, due to poor soils. Some street signs are still missing, but compared with other parts of the City, District 1 is far above the norm.

Source: Field observations

What is the condition of ancillary transportation infrastructure such as street signs, traffic signals, etc.?

All appear to be working and in decent condition. However, some damaged street signs, fallen, damaged, or broken traffic signals, and other signs of damage on major thoroughfares such as St. Charles Ave., Magazine St., and minor arterials and local streets are still visible.

Source: Field observations

What is the current status of the pedestrian realm?

Sidewalks throughout District 1 are in good shape and received little damage after the storm. Those along Canal Street are being rebuilt with corner bulb-outs and new street trees. The path system along the riverfront was undamaged as well.

Source: Field observations

Are alternate (non-automobile) forms of transportation readily available and accommodated?

For public transportation services, see above. There are no separate facilities for bicyclists in District 1 with the exception of the waterfront path that connects the French Market area to the Aquarium. The 2005 Draft New Orleans Metropolitan Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan indicates no planned bike facility in the District, though there is a phased intention to bring more bike racks to parts of the FQ and the CBD. The Riverfront Charrette held in 2004 and the Riverfront Vision 2005 recommends a linear park on the riverfront with increased access for pedestrians and bicycles.

Source: Field observations and Regional Planning Commission's pedestrian/bike report

INFRASTRUCTURE, PUBLIC WORKS AND DEBRIS REMOVAL CONDITIONS

Have all essential city services (trash, water, sewer, power, etc.) been restored to the District? If not, what is the timetable for their return?

Services came back fairly quickly to District 1, with all services working by November 2005. There have been some scattered reports of low water pressure, particularly in the French Quarter and Warehouse District. French Quarter residents also remain concerned about garbage collection. Other parts of the city have only recently received potable water and electricity.

Source: Anecdotal and discussion at District Meeting #1

What is the quality of City services in the District, such as water pressure and frequency of brown outs?

As above, water pressure is a key issue (identified by French Quarter residents as one of the key 5 concerns as a priority for action they have). Parts of the CBD and Warehouse District have periodically experienced low water pressure, when the Sewerage & Water Board is repairing or maintaining the water system, but this is rare and is always preceded by a notice to building owners, how then notify building tenants/occupants. There have been no brown outs since power was restored to District 1 in late 2005.

Source: Anecdotal, Discussion at District Meeting # 1.

Is there still visible debris in the District? How effective and reliable is garbage pickup?

No flood-related debris: building rubble is accumulated in certain areas, along with evidence of the somewhat patchy nature of trash removal. In fact, the trash collection service is half or less often of what was occurring pre-Katrina, and it shows. There is a tendency for trash to sit on sidewalks for periods of time. Service in the CBD and French Quarter used to be twice daily. Now it is once daily or less often. The trash collection companies are suffering from lack of staff, and the city has lacked funds to restore service to pre-Katrina levels.

Source: Field work observation

FLOOD PROTECTION

How much flooding did the District experience from Katrina? Which areas or Neighborhoods were particularly hard hit?

East of St. Charles and Royal, there was virtually no flooding after Hurricane Katrina. In fact over 90% of the French Quarter received no standing water; only the four or five most southwesterly blocks received up to 2' of water. In the CBD, most buildings received 1'-3' to the west of Carondelet Street. The most significant flooding—up to 4' of water—occurred at the west end of Poydras Street as it approaches the I-10 overpass.

Source: UNOP “Katrina Flood Depth”, City of New Orleans

Based on information in the Citywide Baseline Recovery Assessment, what is the status of pump facilities serving the District?

Pump facilities are being repaired and improved throughout the city. This work is not complete at the time of this writing. Repairs will take another six months to complete, with upgrades to the pumping system taking years to complete.

What is the condition of storm drains? Are they in need of repairs?

Storm drains are inadequate in many parts of the City. District 1 is on higher ground than the rest of the city, so capacity of the drains and pumps does not have to be as great as in lower lying areas. For this reason, storm drains are generally functioning as they should. The storm drain system everywhere in the city is very old and was in the process of repair and upgrade pre-Katrina. This work has stopped since Katrina, but is expected to resume once funding is secured for the entire sewerage and water system citywide.

Based on information in the Citywide Baseline Recovery Assessment, is the District at risk for flooding due to the construction of flood gates at the mouths of drainage canals?

New flood gates are planned at the mouths of drainage canals, which will reduce the number of water bodies (and therefore amount of water) that penetrates the city during a storm surge. These flood gates will reduce the likelihood of flooding. The timetable for completion is years away.

Has the area experienced subsidence through the years?

According to land surveyors, the entire city has experienced at least 1 foot to 2 feet of subsidence in the last 50 years. All benchmarks are in the process of being recalibrated, and all pre-Katrina surveys are therefore, suspect. All properties need to be re-surveyed and new base flood elevations established.

How well suited is the architectural stock to withstand flooding (e.g. slab or pier construction, height of standard building elevation)?

Most buildings downtown sit at an elevation that precludes significant flooding in the case of a future hurricane event. Buildings in District 1 do not need to be raised.

Source: UNOP “Base Flood Elevation” Map

Did the District experience flooding prior to Katrina, such as during the May 8, 1995 flood?

No.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Have key public safety facilities, such as police stations and fire stations been restored to the area? If not, what is the timetable for their return?

The main Police precinct in the French Quarter is operating. Residents have raised concerns about fear of being on the streets in the French Quarter in the evenings. Many businesses in the FQ want to see enhanced security, and an important issue is achieving consensus to enable a BID type process to enable extra policing within the FQ. The DDD do arrange additional policing in downtown. There also appears to be the remains of a military police base presence in Downtown. As of September 2006, there were three operational fire stations in District 1, at 200 S. Robertson, 317 Decatur, and 449 Esplanade.

Source: Discussion at Steering Group meetings and District Meeting # 1, UNOP “Location of Closed and Operational Fire Stations” PDF map

Was the District plagued by crime before Katrina? Has crime—and violent crime in particular—returned since Katrina?

Crime has fluctuated in past decades, as it has in the whole City. In the 1980’s and early in Mayor Marc Morial’s administration (early to mid 1990’s), crime was rising. After a grassroots demonstration at City Hall following a particularly gruesome series of murders in the French Quarter, Marc Morial hired a new police chief, Pennington, who was charged with re-vamping the entire police department, and reducing crime. After consultants were hired to advise on law enforcement, new policies were put in place, wages raised, and the police force enlarged. New Orleans then saw the greatest decrease in crime ever seen in any American city. It was widely admired as a model for crime reduction. Since Chief Pennington ran against Mayor C. Ray Nagin and lost, he left the city, and crime is once again on the rise. Further complicating matters, the city is attracting criminals from other states who are attracted by the ease of getting construction work and being paid in cash. The number of criminals that are imprisoned in New Orleans, and then extradited to their home states because they broke probation, has tripled since pre-Katrina, even though the population of the city is just over half of what it was pre-Katrina.

Times Picayune and City Business articles

EDUCATION AND HEALTH CARE SERVICES

Have schools and health care facilities re-opened since Katrina?

Prior to Katrina, District 1 had two public schools, M.L. King Middle Extension and L E Rabouin Career Magnet. Rabouin High School is currently open and the status of the other is unknown. Prior to Katrina, the health care facilities in District 1 were Tulane Hospital, Medical Center of Louisiana-Charity, Louisiana State University Medical Center, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and Paragon Long Term Acute Care Hospital. Currently, only Tulane Hospital is open. The effect is a dramatic reduction of beds, from 1276 pre-Katrina to 102 currently. There are almost no mental health care beds available anywhere in the city.

Source: UNOP PDF Maps and “Health Care Facilities” Reports

Based on the Citywide Recovery Assessment, are any other educational or health facilities scheduled to be re-opened in the future?

Tulane Hospital, Louisiana State University, Charity Hospital, and the Veterans Affairs Medical Center are planning to build new, parts of their new complexes will be shared by the 4 institutions, particularly the infrastructure needed to re-build these complexes in an efficient and technologically current manner (heating and cooling plants, electrical plant, telecommunications equipment rooms, etc).

What is the present condition of these facilities? What was their condition prior to Katrina?

These facilities had been aging prior to Katrina, and in need of modernization, just to stay current with medical practice and research in the 21st century. Tulane and LSU are always competing for research dollars, quite successfully, which put development pressure on the physical plant. Most of this development pressure was being absorbed by current facilities, but to face the new demands of medicine and research, expansion is needed. There are plenty of parking lots and vacant land in and near the medical district, which will facilitate the needed expansion. Katrina has precipitated a great deal of planning, design, consolidation, and new construction that would not have happened for many years, if ever. The BioInnovation Center, a collaboration between all of the medical institutions, is now a reality, and was in the works before Katrina. The storm has concentrated and accelerated all of the efforts in the medical district. Funds must be raised to make these dreams a reality. The State has already funded the design and reconstruction of the VAMC and the LSU facilities, and that work is underway. Tulane, noted above, is already open, and has largely repaired and remediated the problems caused by Katrina.

Are educational and health facilities conveniently located for those without access to an automobile?

Residents living throughout District 1 are relatively well served by Tulane Hospital, the only one open within the district. . While it is a short walk to/from the Canal Streetcar line and multiple RTA bus routes, the reduced frequency of the transit service makes it far more difficult for those without access to vehicles to reach the hospital. Schools within District 1, pre-Katrina, include the St. Louis School, the Creative Arts School, the Rabouin Career Management High School, and a branch of the University of New Orleans. Just west of the district, across I-10 is the Urban League Street Academy and the New Orleans Center for Health Careers. Additionally, as many as nine new public school-based healthcare clinics are planned in Orleans Parish, funded by a grant received by the Louisiana Public Healthcare Institute. These will serve the student population of the public schools, and will each serve more than one school. It is anticipated that one or two of these will be located in District 1.

Source: Universal Wall Map and UNOP “RTA Post Katrina Bus Routes”, City of New Orleans

OTHER COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Have other community facilities, such as libraries and community centers, been re-opened since Katrina?

Libraries and community centers were badly damaged during Katrina or by looting in the aftermath, and most have not reopened, awaiting repairs and mold remediation. Many were suffering from deferred maintenance pre-Katrina. The main branch of the public library on Loyola Avenue is open, as an emergency center for the SBA, where people can go to apply for loans, or check on the status of loan applications.

What is the status of the District’s “green infrastructure” such as park maintenance, street tree canopy?

Because only a small portion of District 1 remained under water for long periods of time, street trees and park spaces appear to be in good shape. Palms on Canal Street have since been replaced with the recent streetscape project.

Source: Field observations

Were parks and community facilities conveniently located and relatively abundant prior to Katrina? What was their pre-Katrina condition?

Parts of District 1 are lacking the appropriate acreage of parks for a district of significant density. The French Quarter has only Jackson Square (primarily an ornamental park for quiet reflection), the open space on the waterfront and a small neighborhood park at the corner of Dauphine and Barracks Street. The Warehouse District

has the Mississippi River Heritage Park, and a privately-owned and maintained green space across the street from the Convention Center at Chase Street. Likewise, the core of the CBD—other than Lafayette Square—includes no public spaces, only small privately-owned plazas adjacent to office buildings.

Source: Universal Wall Map and Field Observation

Based on information in the Citywide Baseline Recovery Assessment, what is the timetable for additional community facilities to be restored?

The City is overwhelmed with utility infrastructure needs and budget crises, so there is no timeline for community facilities restoration at this time. All of City Hall's energy is focused on raising the federal funds needed for electricity, water, sewer, transit, and street repairs. Non-profits (Parkway Partners and the DDD) are raising funds from foundations, donations, and federal reconstruction funds as well, to repair parks and other community facilities. However, a comprehensive list of these proposed projects is not readily available. It is not clear at this time what and when community facilities will be repaired and re-opened.

C. OVERALL CONCLUSIONS REGARDING PACING OF RECOVERY AND IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL NEEDS

Our overall feeling is that New Orleans, before Katrina, was suffering from many of the same type of problems as many other urban centers in the US (disinvestment, loss of employment sectors, need for infrastructure and amenity improvements) – also with a strong ‘overlay’ of particular problems in New Orleans (linked to many complex issues to do with history and governance, for example). Compared with other major US cities, the wages are lower, and historically, there have been higher percentages of the population living below the poverty line. In 2000, the average household income of those living within District 1 was \$21,677. On top of that, the devastating affect of the hurricane has led to significant further challenges – but combined with creating some opportunities (see Vision section of our Report), As such, there is a move towards recovery which has caused many pre-Karina initiatives to be accelerated (out of necessity), put on a ‘back burner’ (to varying degrees) or completely re-appraised. The pace of recovery is therefore mixed, and this study will help identify where future actions/funding etc. are best directed to re-accelerate that pace of recovery.

III. Gaps Analysis

In the limited time available, and in seeking to get the balance right as set out initially, we have focused our Gaps Analysis on a few key documents, in particular, the suite of reports issued under the Bring New Orleans Back (BNOB) ‘banner’.

We draw a few summarizing conclusions from this review – some pointing to gaps, others dwelling on key elements of the work undertaken:

- it is key for the process to build on work already undertaken, with whatever weaknesses such work may contain (if indeed it does) given the time and pace of such preparation
- the BNOB work was produced by a highly qualified group of contributors – who’s conclusions must be ‘taken note of’ at least, and addressed/taken forward in many cases – recognizing that the BNOB work was product of a ‘time and place’ – and therefore many aspects have ‘moved on’
- we intend to build on this, retaining a balance between strategic or overarching type conclusions and more specific projects/initiatives identified
- we particularly want to further review and advance the economic and real estate considerations that must underpin recovery, and see this as a priority
- we need to ensure any apparent (now) gaps from the Urban Planning Committee Action Plan are followed by the further identification of Action Priorities arising from the advanced list of needs, goals and vision which underpin this work
- a key feeling is that as there is no ‘Lambert Plan’ (or equivalent) for District 1, there is no overarching planning effort which addresses the needs and opportunities for this key district

Other essential material we are continuing to identify as important in contributing to our recovery planning work is published by:

- The Brookings Institute (various titles)
- Tulane University Prevention Research Centre (What do New Orleans residents want in their Neighborhoods?)
- Current/recent work being undertaken by the Downtown Development District

DETAILED ASSESSMENT OF INDIVIDUAL PLANNING EFFORTS USING GAPS ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

A. SUMMARY OF CUMULATIVE GAPS IN PREVIOUS PLANNING EFFORTS AND IDENTIFICATION OF ELEMENTS VALUABLE TO UNOP DISTRICT PLANS

*Draft List of Central Business District & Vieux Carre
Planning Studies for Planning District 1 (1A & 1B)*

Vieux Carre:

1. Study of the Proposed Riverfront and Elysian Fields Expressway and an Alternative Proposal –Tulane – 1965
2. An Evaluation of the Effects of the Proposed Riverfront Expressway on the Vieux Carré, New Orleans, Louisiana – Marcou – 1966
3. An Evaluation of Economic and Social Effects of the Proposed Riverfront Expressway – Hammer, Green, Siler—1966

4. Vieux Carré Historic District Demonstration Study –BGR – 1968
 - a. Legal and Administrative Report
 - b. New Orleans Central Business District Traffic Study
 - c. Technical Report on the effects of the Proposed Riverfront Expressway
 - d. Summary Report-Evaluation of the Effects of the Proposed Riverfront Expressway
5. Vieux Carré Commission Critical Analysis of Historic Demonstration Study—VCC—1968
6. Jackson Square, Washington Artillery Park, French Market Workshop—Cashio, Cochran, Sullivan-1972
7. Whither the Vieux Carré—Henry—1973
8. Report 1970-1974 Vieux Carré Commission- City of NO-1974
9. Son et Lumiere? -?- 1975
10. Code Analysis for Historic Structures,—Comprehensive Planning Assoc-- 1976
 - a. Vol I Building Types, Code Analysis and Recommendations
 - b. Vol II Code review
11. A Plan for Revitalization Bourbon Street—Marks, Lewis, Torre Assoc—1977
12. Vieux Carré Truck Bypass – Urban Transportation and Planning Assoc.—1980
13. Vieux Carré 1961-1981—Loyola –1982
14. Bourbon Street Mall: Enhanced Marketability—UNO—1983
15. Revitalizing the Iberville Strip—Tulane—1984
16. Facing Change in the French Quarter of New Orleans: Trends and Developments – UNO –1984
17. French Quarter Entrance Treatment & Directional Signage –1988
18. Findings and Recommendations -- Vieux Carré Task Force—1992
19. Changing Land Use in the Vieux Carre – UNO – 1992
20. VC Task Force, Managing Buses information packet -- 1993
21. Vieux Carre Management Challenges and Responses (VC Task Force) – 1993
22. North Rampart Street Land use Study, Council Resolution R-92-460 – 1993
23. Bus traffic in the Vieux Carre – City of NO joint depts.’ study – 1996
24. New Orleans Master Plan, April 1999, NO City Planning Commission
25. Issues Paper (draft) for Economic Development, Tourism, Historic Preservation and Arts & Culture of New Orleans Master Plan – March 2001 (draft)
26. New Orleans Master Plan – Arts & Culture, Tourism Management, Historic Preservation, Economic Development – September 2002 (draft)
27. New Century New Orleans Master Plan—Parks, Recreation, and Open Space, 2002—NO City Planning Commission
28. Riverfront Charrette—AIA New Orleans—2004
29. Riverfront Vision 2005—NO City Planning Commission
30. Vieux Carre Residents Plan – Eplin – Sandy Miller
31. Armstrong Park Plan(s) – N.O. Jazz Nat’l Hist Park – EDAW
32. Armstrong Park Charrette NO Jazz Nat’l Hist Park – AIA
33. Armstrong Park Charrette – Tulane – Mac Heard
34. Vieux Carre Demonstration Study – 8 Volumes – 1964
35. Jackson Square, French Market, Moonwalk – 1972

CBD:

Unknown date (being checked)

1. Acres of Diamonds – DDD – Gregson et al
2. Warehouse Dist/Lafayette Sq. Strategic Plan – St. Louis group
3. ULI Downtown Plan
4. ULI Canal Street Plan – 1998
5. Ramoart Street Plan – UNO – Billy Fields
6. Crossroads of Jazz/Linear Park Plan(s) – DDD
7. Canal Streetcar Plan(s) – Burk Kleinpeter et al

8. Desire (St. Claude) Streetcar Plan
9. ULI Demonstration Study
10. CBD Traffic Light Plan – Frederick R. Harris
11. Louisiana Passenger/Commuter Rail Service Plan
12. St. Charles St. Transit Improvement Plan – DDD
13. Lafayette Mall Plan – DDD- Hewitt Washington
14. Citywide Revised Traffic Light Plan – RPC et al
15. Iberville Housing Project Study – ULI et al
16. Loyola Ave. Charrette – Tulane – Grover Mouton et al
17. Mississippi River Bridge Study
18. Under-The-Bridge Coalition Study
19. South Rampart Street: New Orleans Downtown Jazz & Entertainment District—Univ. of New Orleans College of Urban and Public Affairs – Fall 2003
20. Riverfront Charrette—AIA New Orleans—2004
21. Riverfront Vision 2005—City Planning Commission
22. New Orleans Center Smart Growth Charrette—AIA New Orleans—May 2005

Pre 1999 (passing interest only)

23. Community Renewal – CPC et al - 1968-70
24. Growth Management Plan – Wallace McHarg 1975-76
25. Warehouse District Study – PRC – Jim Amadal 1982
26. N.O. East Light Rail Study – Gannett Fleming (Apfel) – 1986
27. NOUPT Plan – Apfel – 1987
28. Growth management Plan Update – Wallace Roberts Todd 1987
29. Central Riverfront Study – Dock Board – Wilber Smith – 1989-91
30. New Century New Orleans Plan – CPC – 1991
31. Strategic Policy Plan for the Riverfront – Jim Amdal – 1992-94
32. Legacy Plan for the Homeless – AIA – June 1996 – May 1997
33. CBD Lighting Study – DDD – Amdal & Stewart – Dec. 1997
34. District 1 Land Use Charrette Plan – Villavaso – 1998

Post 1999 (main focus)

35. Pathways Plan – WABA – Amdal & Trapolin 2000
36. Comprehensive Zoning Plan – CPC et al – 2001
37. CBD Historic District Expansion Plan – 2002 CBDHDLIC et al
38. New Orleans Center Charrette – Main St. Program – 2003
39. New Century New Orleans Transportation Plan – 2004
40. Canal Street Vision and Development Strategy – DDD – 2004
41. CBD Airport Light Rail Study – 2004-06
42. Riverfront Plan – 2005
43. Action Plan for New Orleans: The New American City, BNOB Commission – January 11, 2006
44. Draft New Orleans Metropolitan Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, Regional Planning Commission – September 2006

This list is being added to by DDD/FQ/Warehouse District representatives, Executive Summaries being provided and some hard copies of information, where available.

SUMMARY OF RECOVERY ASSESSMENT DATA COLLECTION EFFORTS

We are continuing to assess and interpret survey work provided by the City Government or via the UNOP process. There is also a significant level of interpretation that we have been able to 'capture' on such work through our discussions and 'sounding board' meetings. This assessment will help inform our Recovery Scenarios as part of the next stage of work.

RAW DATA FROM FORMAL SURVEYS FOR SUBMISSION TO DISTRICT LIAISON

The attached GIS based data provides the initial basis of additional collected data for a key segment of District 1 that we are particularly focusing on – the South/North Rampart Street and Medical District area, covering building condition and building scale. This, along with additional physical/design assessment and future economic assessment will help shape a plan for the area which we have already started testing with our 'sounding board'.

In addition, we attach a review of Building Permit activity in the whole District to help inform our understanding of the potential and status of future schemes, as well as where concentrations of activity appear to be focused.