

CHAPTER 4*Vision and goals***Vision**

District 6 contains many distinct neighborhoods, each with its own characteristics. Both before and since the storm, district residents relate closely to the identities of their home neighborhoods, often linked directly to its history and the character of its residential architecture. Residents also revere the many shared characteristics of the district—convenience to the central areas of the city, jobs, and entertainment; access to the lake and large areas of parkland; convenience retail within walking distance of their homes; an attractive, almost suburban landscape of predominantly single-family homes on small well-landscaped and maintained lots; and a street network featuring landscaped neutral grounds that tie the district together. The district is home to several major institutions that contribute to its identity and vitality.

Residents generally share a vision for the future of the district that is much like the place that was severely damaged by the storm. But they have also embraced modest but important changes. They desire to create a new Town Center serving as a civic and retail hub of the community that, along with a residential component, will strengthen the district's identity and provide enhanced services and amenities. They seek to expand housing options for seniors—including assisted living and other independent-living choices—who do not wish to return to single-family homes but do wish to stay in the district. Residents also view enhanced flood protection, improved public schools, and timely repair of streets and infrastructure as key elements of the district's recovery strategy. Many residents also recognize the potential for partnerships with local institutions to work jointly toward their vision.

Goals

Discussions with District 6 residents reveal both strong attachments to the district and uncertainty about its future. Some residents have placed the primary focus on how they can return to their home and community. Many other former and current residents, however, are trying to assess the likely pace of recovery and rebuilding before they make long-term personal and financial commitments to returning. Uncertainty about the future appears to be an important factor driving the pace of recov-

ery in District 6. Residents are encouraged to make commitments to returning themselves as they see positive actions unfold—such as decisions by friends and neighbors to return or rebuild, emerging proposals for new development, or public, institutional or private-sector commitments to new development and infrastructure. But where residents encounter continued uncertainty—a lack of concrete commitments about recovery projects, spiraling utility costs and other challenges—they remain “on the fence” or determined to rebuild elsewhere. Therefore a critical factor in the success of rebuilding efforts within District 6 appears to be the degree to which current, former, and potential future residents have confidence that recovery efforts within the district will succeed. Consequently, short-term goals for the next 12 months focus on reducing uncertainties where possible and continuing to actively engage the community in planning for a future that closely aligns with its goals. Longer-term recovery goals focus on implementation of improved flood protection, infrastructure, public services, and other initiatives that continue momentum toward fully implementing the district vision.

Based on this understanding, the district’s goals are defined as follows:

- **Establish a conveniently located community information/planning center to provide advice/information to residents on a wide variety of issues.**
- **Establish a district advisory committee to provide community input to ongoing planning and development efforts.**
- **Revise zoning to provide enhanced development controls consistent with the community-developed plan.**
- **Advance a plan to restore public schools.**
- **Create a plan for repair of street infrastructure, including phasing.**
- **Establish and implement a strategy for reuse of all public school sites not reopening.**
- **Create a strategy for establishing partnerships with institutions for rebuilding.**
- **Improve the district’s flood protection.**
- **Improve infrastructure and public services including schools.**
- **Redevelop the commercial center at Elysian Fields/Gentilly Boulevard as a new Town Center that includes retail, restaurants, community facilities, civic uses, and potentially residential use.**
- **Implement major initiatives identified in prior planning efforts, including the Lambert Advisory planning process and the Gentilly Charrette.**