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Introduction

A. The Primary Goal of the Peoples' Plan

The Peoples' Plan for Overcoming the Hurricane Katrina Blues: A Cooperative Approach to Promoting a More Vibrant, Sustainable and Equitable 9th Ward offers a comprehensive strategy for restoring and enhancing the quality of life within the neighborhoods comprising the city's 9th Ward to enable its former residents and business owners to return home and to attract others committed to participating in this unprecedented community-building process.

B. The Sponsor of the Peoples' Plan

The Peoples' Plan was developed at the request of the leadership of Louisiana ACORN, the state's largest citizen organization, which is committed to insuring that the residents of the 9th Ward, many of whom are ACORN members, have a strong voice in the planning, redevelopment, and governance of their community.

C. The Authors of the Peoples' Plan

The Peoples' Plan for the 9th Ward was prepared by a team of urban planning and design students from Cornell University, Columbia University, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, working under the direction of Dr. Richard Hayes, Director of Special Projects for ACORN Housing. The

majority of this work was carried out through a series of service-learning courses offered through these institutions. Funding for the research, planning, and design activities related to the production of this plan was provided by ACORN Housing and the above-mentioned universities.

D. Unique Qualities of the Peoples' Planning Effort

The Peoples' Plan differs from most other Post-Katrina recovery plans in four critical ways.

- 1) **This plan seeks to transform rather than restore the Ward to its Pre-Katrina state.** It seeks to promote changes that will alter the forces that left 40% of the Ward's former residents living in grinding poverty, 18% of its housing stock vacant, and dozens of its residents victimized by senseless street violence in the years before Hurricane Katrina.
- 2) **This plan's key findings are based upon extensive field research that document and explain current conditions.** The plan's major findings and planning recommendations are based upon primary research carried out, in the field, by more than eighty planning students and faculty from three of the nation's most-highly respected Research I universities. Our research included surveys of: around 3,000 building parcels; 380 local businesses; 28 parks, playgrounds, and open spaces; 13 community facilities; and miles of



neighborhood sidewalks, streets and other infrastructural elements.

- 3) **The plan's key findings and recommendations are based upon broad-based community input from local residents, business owners, and institutional leaders.** More than two hundred and twenty neighborhood residents, twenty business owners, and a dozen institutional leaders were interviewed as part of the planning process that produced this report. Specific proposals offered by these individuals were subsequently vetted at a series of community forums organized by staff from the Partnership, who attracted more than 450 local stakeholders.
- 4) **The plan is part of the Partnership's ongoing effort to enhance the organizing, planning, and development capacity of local institutions leading local recovery efforts.** ACORN Housing and its education partners are committed to assisting local residents and leaders in translating the specific revitalization projects contained in this document into reality through technical assistance.

E. The Organization of the People's Plan

The Peoples Plan is divided into five distinct parts.

- 1) **Part I** contains a four-page Executive Summary for those seeking to understand the plan's basic findings and major policy recommendations.

- 2) **Part II** outlines the plan's historical evolution and research methodology for those interested in learning more about the origins of the ACORN Housing/University Partnership and its basic planning philosophy and approach.
- 3) **Part III** summarizes the archival, Census, and physical conditions, resident interviews, and business inventory data supporting the plan's major proposals for those wishing to know more about the empirical foundations of the plan.
- 4) **Part IV** outlines the plan's five-year action strategy including more than fifty specific environmental, economic, housing, education, municipal service, and arts proposals designed to accelerate the Ward's revitalization process for those wishing to understand the plan's key planning, design, and policy-making proposals.
- 5) **Part V** offers a detailed implementation strategy focused on the creation of a high-capacity, Ward-based and resident-led community development corporation for those curious to learn more about the process by which this plan will be carried out.

F. The Relationship between the Peoples' Plan and Other Recently Completed and/or Ongoing Public Planning Processes

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The Peoples' Plan is a comprehensive plan for restoring the environmental integrity, economic vitality, and social and cultural life of the 9th Ward. It was produced at the request of Louisiana ACORN's leaders and members by planning students and faculty from Cornell University, Columbia University, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in collaboration with staff from ACORN Housing. The Partnership staff wishes to acknowledge the important contributions that Lambert and Associates have made to illuminating current conditions and future development possibilities for the 7th and 8th planning districts through their recently completed plans for these areas produced at the request of the New Orleans City Council.

While this plan has not been produced as part of the Unified New Orleans Plan process, its authors hope the economic, social, and physical development proposals included in this document are given serious consideration for inclusion in the 7th and 8th District Plans and City-Wide Comprehensive Plan being prepared by the neighborhood planners and district and city-wide consultants who are working under the supervision of Concordia Group, which is managing the UNOP planning process.

This plan will be shared with all residents, business owners, institutional leaders, and elected/appointed officials involved in 9th Ward recovery efforts. The plan will also be shared with non-profit and for-profit developers interested in promoting equity planning and development within the 9th Ward. Intermediaries such as the Enterprise Community, Local Initiative Support Corporation, Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, and Seedco will be given copies of the plan.

Regional and national lenders who have invested in the 9th Ward will receive copies of this document. Finally, local, state, regional, and national disaster relief and urban redevelopment agencies will be provided with a copy of the plan.

G. Acknowledgements

The authors of the plan wish to thank the many residents, business owners, and civic leaders of the 9th Ward who took time out of their busy schedules to share their ideas for improving their community with us. We also wish to thank the priests and nuns of Holy Angels Roman Catholic Church for their hospitality in hosting our students during our October fieldwork.

We also want to express our appreciation to the staff of Café Reconciliation, the Little Antioch Baptist Church, and Little Kim's Kitchen for feeding us during our multiple visits to New Orleans this fall. Furthermore, we wish to acknowledge the contribution made by the UNOP and Greater New Orleans Community Data Center websites to this effort. In addition, we wish to recognize the extraordinary commitment that planners, designers, and architects working for the city's non-profit organizations, private firms, municipal government agencies and area universities, especially the University of New Orleans and Tulane Universities, have made toward supporting resident-led recovery efforts in the city. Finally, the authors wish to recognize the heroic work undertaken by the members, leaders and staff of ACORN and ACORN Housing to promote an equitable and just New Orleans and the morale and financial support provided by Dean Mohsen Mostafavi, of

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Cornell University's College of Architecture, Art, and Planning whose support of this effort has never wavered.



History of the Plan

A. **Origins and Evolution of the Collaboration of ACORN Housing and the University Partnership, which led to:**

Several weeks after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita devastated the New Orleans levee system, causing 80% of the city's neighborhoods to flood; staff from the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN) began assisting individuals and families committed to returning to New Orleans in rebuilding their homes, communities, and lives.

Within weeks of the storm, ACORN launched the Katrina Survivors Association, which took legal action to prevent the city's bulldozing of several historic neighborhoods, including the Lower 9th Ward. The organization also sued FEMA, forcing the federal government to provide needed transitional housing and services to displaced families. Finally, ACORN launched the region's most ambitious non-profit house-gutting program that has already helped more than 2,000 homeowners prepare their homes for rehabilitation. Along the way, ACORN Housing Counselors have aided more than 10,000 families in exploring their housing options.

As ACORN became more deeply involved in post-disaster relief efforts, its leadership realized the need to work with local residents, business people, institutional leaders, and

elected officials to formulate and implement comprehensive recovery and revitalization plans.

In October of 2005, ACORN's National Staff contacted faculty from the graduate planning programs at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY and Cornell University in Ithaca, NY to request their assistance in supporting resident-led recovery planning efforts in New Orleans' Gentilly, New Orleans East, and 9th Ward neighborhoods.

On November 7th - 9th, these two institutions joined with ACORN, Louisiana State University, several City Council Members, and State Representatives to organize the Rebuilding New Orleans Conference, which was held at LSU's Alumni Center in Baton Rouge. More than fifty long-term ACORN members spent two days discussing alternative redevelopment strategies with an equal number of scientists, architects, city planners, and urban policy-makers. The key policy recommendation that emerged from this conference was a decision to focus on policies, procedures, programs, and activities designed to insure individuals and families the "right to return."

In January of 2006, students and faculty from Pratt, Cornell, and LSU were joined by others from the New Jersey Institute of Technology, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and the University of California at Berkeley in carrying out more than a dozen planning and design projects in the Gentilly, New Orleans East and 9th Ward neighborhoods



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while also mobilizing campus volunteers to advance ACORN's house-gutting activities.

In the summer of 2006, nine graduate planning students from Cornell University worked with six graduate planning and architecture students from Pratt Institute as they participated in a jointly-funded summer internship program to support ACORN's ever-expanding community planning and development efforts in the Gently, New Orleans East, and 9th Ward neighborhoods. Among the projects completed by these students were:

- An analysis of the role adjudicated (tax foreclosure) properties might play in the initial phase of the city's recovery process;
- An exploration of alternative designs for low-density and energy-efficient affordable housing for the 9th Ward; and
- An investigation of emerging "Principles of Good Practice for Participatory Neighborhood Planning."

B. Responding to the Unified New Orleans Plan's Request for Qualifications for Neighborhood Planners and District Consultants:

As the graduate planning and architecture students participating in ACORN's Rebuilding New Orleans Summer Internship began their work, they noticed a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) announcement issued by the Greater New Orleans Community Foundation, in cooperation with the City of New Orleans, for consultants and firms interested in

preparing neighborhood plans as part of a comprehensive planning process to be undertaken by the City of New York.

The development of a new comprehensive plan was viewed as a necessary requirement to attracting the significant public and private dollars needed to rebuild the city.

With the encouragement of staff from the Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP), the quasi-public entity established to manage the development of the comprehensive plan, ACORN Housing asked their university partners to work with them in submitting a response to this competitive RFQ. Just days before the submission deadline, ACORN Housing was joined by Cornell University, Pratt Institute, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Columbia University, and Louisiana State University to form the ACORN Housing and University Partnership submission of a formal proposal in response to the RFQ.

The ACORN Housing and University Partnership's major selling points for our selection as neighborhood planners and district consultants were the; 1.) the richness and depth of the network's community organizing, neighborhood planning, architectural/urban design, disaster planning and project management experience; 2.) ACORN's significant membership base within the city's more heavily flood-damaged areas; 3.) ACORN's extensive network of 109 offices in communities serving as so-called "receiver" cities for displaced New Orleanians; and 4.) the Partnership's commitment and experience in highly-participatory forms of resident-led planning, design, and development.



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C. The Selection of ACORN Housing and the University Partnership as the UNOP District Consultant for the 7th and 8th Districts:

In July of 2006, ACORN Housing and the University Partnership were notified of their selection as District Consultants within the Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP) process from a highly-competitive national field that included 68 private planning and design firms. Subsequent to the selection as District Consultants, ACORN Housing and the University Partnership, the only non-profit organization chosen by UNOP, was the overwhelmingly choice of 7th and 8th District residents to oversee and manage the development of the comprehensive recovery plans for these two historic areas comprising the 9th Ward. As part of the UNOP process, ACORN Housing and the University Partnership were asked

Current Participants in ACORN Housing-University Partnership



to collaborate with EDAW Associates, a well known Atlanta-based planning firm, and John C. Williams Architects, a highly regarded New Orleans-based design firm, in preparing these plans.

The newly-formed partnership, as well as the fifteen other consulting groups selected to assist UNOP in preparing the city's comprehensive plan, were given approximately six months to devise professional quality post-disaster recovery plans for their assigned neighborhoods to address the following issues:

- **Housing, architecture, and historic preservation;**
- **Flood protection and environmental management (including natural hazards);**
- **Restoration of basic utilities and other vital municipal services; and the**
- **Provision of human services and re-opening of critical community facilities**

Surprisingly, UNOP's letter of understanding with its District Consultants and Neighborhood Planners (scope of services) did not require them to address such issues as:

- **Health care and emergency medical services**
- **Public safety and disaster preparedness**
- **Building codes and design**



- **Transportation and public transit**
- **Economic and workforce development**
- **Land use policies and zoning**
- **Institutional development (educational, cultural, and religious)**

The community residents, ACORN Housing staff, and university personnel involved in the development of the 7th and 8th District plans were expected to prepare a series of four major reports, i.e., deliverables, during the fall and winter months of 2006 for local residents, business people, institutional leaders and elected officials to review. The preliminary and final drafts of the 7th and 8th District Recovery Plans were expected to reflect citizen feedback on these reports and be submitted to UNOP on December 15th and January 15th.

The first-phase report presented the Partnership's proposed work plan, organizational structure, and comments on the citizen participation element of the UNOP process, and was submitted, on time, on September 15th. As the Partnership was preparing the final elements of its second-phase report analyzing the adequacy of past physical plans for the districts, identifying critical recovery opportunities and challenges, and presenting a comprehensive vision, overall development goal, and specific development objectives for the district, Project Leaders were notified by fax that there had been a necessary "re-alignment" of District Consultants, necessitating the

termination of ACORN Housing and the University Partnership's services. Notwithstanding their termination, the participating planning and design professionals, who were preparing the second phase report for the 7th and 8th Districts, forged ahead to submit their report, on time, on October 19.

D. The Termination of ACORN Housing and the University Partnership as District Consultants

Little warning was given to ACORN Housing and the University Partnership regarding our possible termination by UNOP as District Consultants. The rationale offered by the Concordia Group, the consulting firm managing the Unified New Orleans Plan process, was an alleged conflict of interest involving ACORN Housing. According to UNOP, ACORN's positive response to a July 2006 invitation by the City of New Orleans to bid on 129 long-term tax adjudicated properties (i.e., abandoned parcels and buildings acquired by the City when their previous owners failed to pay their real estate taxes) placed them in a position of being both "planners" and "developers," thereby conveying to this non-profit housing group an unfair advantage. In the UNOP press release announcing their decision, Concordia staff claimed the City had just recently become aware of this situation and were compelled by the need to maintain both the perception and reality of objectivity and fairness within the UNOP process to remove ACORN Housing and the University Partnership as District Consultants.

The participants in ACORN Housing and the University Partnership found UNOP's decision and rationale to be



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entirely inappropriate given the facts. First, the UNOP Selection Panel was fully informed of ACORN Housing's efforts to secure site control of these parcels as future sites for affordable housing units within the 9th Ward. The ACORN Housing and University Partnership's formal response to UNOP's Request for Proposals clearly stated this fact on page 10.

Second, one of the ACORN Housing and University Partnership's central arguments supporting their designation as District Consultants was that the team that they had assembled combined the knowledge and skills of grassroots organizers, community planners, affordable housing developers, architects/designers, and project managers.

Third, while ACORN Housing had, at the time of its termination by UNOP, submitted a bid to acquire 129 parcels as future sites for affordable housing, it had not received clear title from the city for any of these properties. This would, in fact, not occur until after the group completed its service as District Consultants.

Fourth, while UNOP was citing an "alleged" conflict of interest on the part of ACORN Housing, it did not appear to have an explicit policy on this topic.

Fifth, if, in the absence of an existing conflict of interest policy, UNOP wished to assert one, a reasonable person would expect them to apply this standard to all of the District Consultants, Neighborhood Planners, and Participating Sub-Contractors participating in this process.

These facts shed serious doubt on UNOP's conflict of interest claims regarding ACORN Housing. Those participating in the ACORN Housing and University Partnership planning efforts in the 9th Ward believe UNOP chose to react to political pressures generated by a small number of citizen organizations representing gentrifying areas of the 9th Ward, who were alarmed by ACORN Housing's inclusionary approach to planning, which seeks to advance equity-promoting policies and programs that would enable all former residents of the community -- regardless of their racial and class status -- to return to the 9th Ward. Interviews with more than two hundred residents revealed significant racial and class antagonism by Caucasians living in the Holy Cross, Bywater, and Merigny neighborhoods. A vocal minority from these areas were hostile to the notion of providing public assistance for poor and working class families to return to the city.

By reacting to the xenophobia of a small number of 9th Ward residents channeled through a handful of neighborhood associations, UNOP effectively cancelled the franchise of the hundreds of 9th Ward residents, the majority of whom are people of color, who voted in favor of ACORN Housing and the University Partnership's participatory approach to neighborhood planning. In doing so, UNOP has generated new questions regarding the basic fairness and integrity of their process, especially among people of color who have, in large numbers, chosen to not to participate in the process. This raises a question regarding how seriously one should take a comprehensive planning process for a city whose pre-hurricane population was 58% African American when very few members of this community have been given the

opportunity to participate in the planning process and one of the city's and region's largest citizens' organizations representing this constituency has been eliminated as District Consultants.

E. Our Decision to Complete a Comprehensive Recovery Plan for the 9th Ward in spite of UNOP's Re-Alignment Decision.

UNOP's decision to replace our Partnership as the District Consultants for the 9th Ward prompted a serious debate regarding our continued work in New Orleans. Without UNOP's official sponsorship and financial support, what legitimacy would any plans we developed have and how would the non-profit housing organization and academic units meet the costs related to producing a comprehensive recovery plan for these two important areas? In the days following our termination as District Consultants, the professionals, faculty, and students participating in this project discussed these issues. After considerable conversation and intense debate, all of the institutions participating in ACORN Housing and the University Partnership decided to continue to work on the plan until its completion.

Our decision to complete this document was based upon several factors. First, we felt a deep obligation to our clients – the residents, business owners, institutional leaders, and elected officials of the 9th Ward, who had lost so much at the hands of Hurricane Katrina – and who, nonetheless have participated in large numbers in our March 2006 Community Planning Forum, September and October District Planning Meetings, and Resident and Business Interviews, which we

recently completed. These individuals have been faithfully waiting for the kind of assistance Americans have come to expect from caring neighbors and their government to enable them to “come home” and we did not wish to abandon them as FEMA and the Bush Administration have done.

Second, we believed the primary (first-hand) data that our Partnership has painstakingly and systematically collected in the field was critical to preparing a thoughtful recovery plan. Following the example of one of the founders of the modern town planning movement, Patrick Geddes, to “Survey before plan,” we realized that the extensive fieldwork data that the students and faculty participating in this project have collected was much more extensive than that possessed by any other planning and consulting firm participating in the UNOP process, enabling us to prepare proposals that addressed --in a much more nuanced manner -- the unique planning challenges and opportunities present in the Post-Katrina 9th Ward.

Third, we believe that public debate involving a diverse set of committed stakeholders enhances the quality of urban and regional plans. Adherents to Paul Davidoff's notion of advocacy planning that makes a strong argument in favor of the value of producing and considering multiple plans for a community, especially those prepared for non-governmental community organizations representing often-marginalized groups, we believe that this plan, produced at the request of ACORN Housing by students and faculty of three of the nation's most highly-ranked research universities, has a contribution to make to the development and implementation plans for the 9th Ward that will enhance the urban

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environment, invigorate the neighborhood economy, and strengthen citizen involvement in place-making and governance.

Fourth, as urban planning professionals and scholars committed to inclusive and participatory approaches to urban planning, design, and management, we did not want to legitimize UNOP's decision to disregard the overwhelming wishes of the majority of 9th Ward residents, who had voted as part of their citizen participation process, to have ACORN Housing and the University Partnership prepare the recovery plan for this historic neighborhood. Withdrawing from the planning process in response to a small number of complaints from community-based organizations with extremely small memberships that do not reflect the 9th Ward's ethnic, racial, religious, and income diversity, in our opinion, would be pandering to the fears of those who do not wish to bridge the clear racial and class divide that St. Claude Avenue represents. Alternatively, we hope to see the kind of "beloved community" that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. discussed and which, we believe, the overwhelming majority of the 9th Ward's residents fervently desire.

Fifth, the warm welcome that our students and faculty received from the residents of the 9th Ward during our visits to their homes, FEMA trailers, schools, businesses, and churches during the week of October 25th through October 29th highlighted the extent to which the residents of this important community have been ignored by recent planning efforts. Quoting one resident, *"Hey, we have all kinds of people touring our neighborhood, taking pictures of our community. Hell, for a while, we even had buses carrying tourists coming through here. But*

you and your students are the first group that have gotten out of their vehicles to talk to us, to hear our story. We hope you can get somebody to listen."

We present this plan on behalf of the more than two hundred and thirty families who took time away from their home restoration and child/elder care activities to share their hopes and dreams of a fully-restored and improved 9th Ward with us in the hope that somebody in City Hall, Baton Rouge, and the Congress will LISTEN! Seventeen months after Hurricane Katrina, thousands of the 9th Ward's residents are waiting to come home! We think it is about time that we, as a nation, took the necessary steps to make it possible for them to do so!



Research Methodology

A. Overview

Our research methodology was designed to generate valid and reliable data upon which to base our planning, development, and design recommendations. We selected a research design that incorporated a wide range of quantitative and qualitative methods to insure optimally accurate, valid, and reliable findings. By involving long-term residents and leaders, in a highly participatory manner, in the development of our research design, survey instruments and data analysis, we enhanced our data analysis with the experiences, knowledge and insights that Clifford Geertz called “local knowledge.” The experience and voice of long-term community residents and leaders participating in our recovery planning should prepare them for future engagement on other neighborhood and city-level planning processes.

B. Our Planning Orientation

The primary goal of our Partnership’s recovery efforts in the 9th Ward was established during the Rebuild New Orleans Conference, held November 7-9, 2005 and organized by ACORN’s Katrina Survivors’ Association in cooperation with the universities participating in the Partnership as well as several local City Council Members and State Representatives. At this meeting, fifty long-term ACORN members, who were displaced from the city’s Gentilly, New Orleans East, and 9th

Ward neighborhoods, made a strong and powerful argument in favor of recovery policies and programs designed to preserve the right to return to the city for individuals and families regardless of their economic status.

In the Spring of 2006, the ACORN Housing/ University Partnership undertook a series of preliminary planning projects aimed at identifying environmental enhancement, economic development, affordable housing, and open space projects designed to accelerate the recovery of the most heavily-damaged areas of the 9th Ward. In March of 2006, more than two hundred and fifty current and former residents of the 9th Ward provided detailed feedback on more than a dozen potential redevelopment projects produced by students from several of the Partnership’s member schools. These residents also re-affirmed the importance of the “right to return” during an interactive plan review meeting (charette) held at the Holy Angels Roman Catholic Church Complex on St. Claude Avenue.

In July of 2006, ACORN issued Rebuilding After Hurricane Katrina: ACORN Planning Principles, which presented the following nine values upon which future recovery plans and strategies should be based.

- 1) A **resident-driven process** that actively involves local business owners, institutional leaders, elected officials and, most importantly, ALL community residents regardless of race, income, or age, at each and every



- step in the planning process from problem identification to program evaluation.
- 2) A **historically-informed** model of neighborhood planning that identifies goals, policies, strategies, and action plans and builds upon the rich cultural history of New Orleans and previous planning efforts.
 - 3) An **empirically-based** planning approach that uses a careful and systematic analysis of the best available environmental, economic, and social data.
 - 4) A **sustainable** approach to neighborhood planning that emphasizes the importance of the environment.
 - 5) A **collaborative** approach to planning and development that emphasizes the importance of public and private partnerships to mobilize public resources with leverage from the private market.
 - 6) A **participatory** approach that encourages and supports participation by local and displaced residents by arranging for participation in remote locations, providing day care during sessions along with additional support when necessary to encourage the active participation of residents.
 - 7) A process committed to following **principles of good practice for post-disaster recovery planning** that has emerged from other successful efforts.

- 8) A process that **presents information honestly and objectively**, without the use of jargon, and employs appropriate visual materials whenever possible to make data accessible to all residents.
- 9) A process that is **sensitive to the difficulties that residents have endured in their survival and recovery** while moving the planning process forward toward positive outcomes.

C. Research Activities

The research findings and planning recommendations presented in this document are based upon data generated through the following research activities.

- 1) **Archival Research** was completed, which focused on the ecological, economic, and social history of the City of New Orleans, the State of Louisiana, and the Gulf Region. These investigations included a detailed study of twenty-nine historic plans designed to enhance the quality of life within the Crescent City.
- 2) **Census Data** describing population, employment, income, and housing trends in the 9th Ward and the City for the period from 2000 through 2006 were collected and analyzed.
- 3) **Building and Site Conditions** within the 9th Ward were surveyed, in detail, on a sample basis. From October 25-29, 2006, approximately 3,500 parcels were surveyed by twenty two-person teams of undergraduate and graduate planning students, who



evaluated more than four dozen specific characteristics of each building to determine their structural integrity, estimate their rehabilitation costs, and establish the extent to which they were being improved. The Partnership's student volunteers surveyed 15% of all of the parcels in the study area using a carefully designed clustered and stratified sample protocol developed by Dr. Rebekah Greene of Columbia University's Earth Institute.

- 4) **Community Facilities Survey** was completed in early September to establish the conditions and operating status of fifteen schools, health facilities, and community centers located within the 9th Ward.
- 5) **Playgrounds, Parks, and Open Space Inventory**-Partnership Faculty completed a detailed physical inspection of 28 city-owned playgrounds, parks, and open spaces, including several "City Beautiful Era" residential boulevards, to document their facilities, maintenance levels, and current use levels.
- 6) **Local Business Surveys** of four of the 9th Ward's most important commercial corridors were completed to determine the level of business activity. Five two-person teams completed this inventory of local business establishments on October 11-12 and October 25-29, 2006. Businesses located on Elysian Fields, St. Claude, Claybourne, and Galvez St. were visited to determine what products and services they offered, evaluate the extent of the damage they suffered, establish if they were open, and measure the level of business they were conducting as well as employment they were maintaining.
- 7) **Resident Interviews** were conducted with residents from more than two hundred and thirty households. Ten two-person teams completed these interviews using a semi-structured instrument that featured both closed and open-ended questions. The interview schedule used by the surveyors was designed to elicit resident feedback on the following broad themes:
 - a) Overall quality of neighborhood life, community strengths, and areas in need of improvement Pre-Katrina;
 - b) Current living conditions, re-building progress, and intent and ability to return to the 9th Ward Post-Katrina;
 - c) Perceptions of neighborhood recovery needs; and
 - d) Redevelopment preferences and future visions for the redevelopment of the neighborhood.
- 8) **Community Leaders' Interviews** were conducted with representatives of eight of the 9th Ward's largest community-based organizations to elicit their views regarding existing neighborhood conditions, preferred redevelopment strategies, and recommended revitalization projects.



D. Data Analysis

Residents of the 9th Ward, who attended the first two District 7 and 8 Meetings organized as part of the UNOP process, provided Partnership staff with feedback on a significant portion of these data. ACORN leaders from the 9th Ward provided Partnership staff with feedback on their preliminary data analysis, overall development goal and specific objectives prior to the plan's finalization.

