

MAPPING OF NEW ORLEANS:



NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR REINVIGORATION IN THE FACE OF GOVERNMENT INACTION

city-works
TRANSFORMING NEW ORLEANS

May, 2008

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**by City-Works
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This project was made possible by a generous grant from the *blue moon fund*.

A 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, City-Works was created to promote the long-term sustainable rebuilding of New Orleans' community, economy, and built environment. City-Works communicates to a broad audience the importance of design in creating a vital and vibrant urban environment. Founded in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, we have worked city-wide with neighborhood organizations, developers, and city officials, along with architects and planners, to help forge lines of communication, talk about the importance of good design, and do the work necessary to successfully and sustainably restore and rejuvenate the city we love.

This Neighborhood Profiles Mapping Project was one of our early projects, and it continues to be a tremendously useful one to the entire New Orleans community. The goal of the Neighborhood Profiles Mapping Project is to gather and share information about neighborhood-based planning efforts in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina in such a way as to support and strengthen these grass-roots projects. This information is a resource to all stakeholders and helps integrate neighborhood efforts with each other and with non-profit groups and government agencies. The activities of New Orleans neighborhoods represent incredible ventures in democracy and planning. To better understand their rationale, scope, and potential, and to more fully appreciate their true value, we first need to have a basic understanding of them and why they were formed.

I. INTRODUCTION: PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

PROBLEM: INABILITY TO COMMUNICATE AND LACK OF NEIGHBORHOOD INFORMATION

In early September 2005 nearly eighty percent of Orleans Parish sat underwater – an area approximately eight times the size of Manhattan. As the floodwaters receded, one of the most significant challenges that faced the returning residents and government officials was the inability to effectively exchange information.

Communication systems had failed between government agencies, between government and citizens, and most significantly, between friends and neighbors. These failures of communication within government, corporate, neighborhood, and family structures created uncertainty that made a difficult situation worse. In the early days after Katrina, individual concerns were for immediate neighbors: who had returned on our blocks? Later, this question grew somewhat broader: what was the rate of return for people in our entire neighborhood? Governmental and non-governmental agencies began asking similar questions: city-wide, which neighborhoods were coming back and how should we distribute our recovery resources?

Neighborhood revival information was desperately needed at all levels. Individuals were choosing whether or not to rebuild their houses. School officials were determining which schools to re-open. Business owners were deciding to whether or not they should return. Government officials were prioritizing recovery efforts.

RISE OF NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS

In order to facilitate effective and efficient rebuilding of the city, reestablishing lines of communication was critical. The government continued to suffer catastrophic failures at all levels, and local individuals began to fill this void created by the absence of governmental leadership and support. Ordinary citizens began to work together to make the progress needed in their own neighborhoods, just as they rescued each other in small boats during the flood. They began the planning process for repairing their homes and neighborhoods, and they began sharing key bits of information with each other. Who are reliable contractors? What are good strategies

for dealing with insurers? How can we navigate the state buy-out and rebuilding program? Neighborhood organizations became a vital nexus in the exchange of useful information.

In November, 2005, the Bring New Orleans Back Commission, in conjunction with the Urban Land Institute issued a report that called for turning some areas of New Orleans into green space. That “green-dot” designation spurred an unintended consequence: being green-dotted catalyzed some of those neighborhoods to organize in order to ensure their return and their very survival. Signs immediately went up in front of houses and on neutral grounds declaring that those neighborhoods were coming back. Citizens wanted to make sure that their neighborhood had a future and had a voice in the city-wide discussion of rebuilding plans. Thus galvanized, neighborhood organizations took on a new and more active role in the planning process and the rebuilding decisions of the city.

CREATION OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILES MAPPING PROJECT

In the aftermath of the city’s flooding, there was a clear need for a tool to effectively communicate with neighbors and neighborhoods. Many questions remained. Individuals needed to know the name and contact information for their own neighborhood organizations. Neighborhood organizations needed to find out about adjacent ones. Associations also needed to consult other organizations city-wide to learn best practices for achieving their goals. City officials needed to contact neighborhood leaders. What neighborhood organizations exist? What are their boundaries? What are their primary concerns? In response to this confusion, City-Works created the Neighborhood Profiles Mapping Project. It overlays onto a city of New Orleans street map the areas covered by all the neighborhood organizations. Its accompanying data-file contains information on their leadership, history, membership, purposes, and neighborhood priorities. It has been used as a part of the recovery and rebuilding since it was first published. The City-Works map tool has helped empower and develop grassroots leaders by facilitating communication and providing essential information on the neighborhoods of New Orleans.

II. HOW THE PROJECT WORKED

To create the map, City-Works first had to gather existing data on New Orleans' neighborhood organizations. The New Orleans City Planning Commission provided City-Works with pre-storm lists covering Orleans Parish that had not been updated in many years. To augment this information, the Preservation Resource Center shared their most recent neighborhood organization list. With this as a base, City-Works began to build the database. We then started the effort to determine which organizations still existed and what new organizations had formed after Katrina. City-Works spent hundreds of volunteer hours attending meetings, driving through neighborhoods looking for postings of organizations' gatherings, and perusing newspaper listings for announcements for and mentions of meetings. This initial effort created a comprehensive list of 390 neighborhood organizations, many of which, we suspected, were defunct even before the storm. We are currently tracking 270 organizations. To find the many new organizations, volunteers went to countless meetings to spread the word of our project. At those meetings we were able to identify many new leaders and develop contacts for new organizations. Some leaders of existing and new neighborhood organizations heard of the mapping profiles project and contacted us. In total, we have found 28 new neighborhood organizations that have started since the storm.

INITIAL SURVEY AND MAP OF ORGANIZATIONS

With this initial list of contact information, we conducted a survey of neighborhood organizations through both in-person and phone interviews of key decision makers within the organization. Usually this was the person listed as the organization president or chairperson. We asked about their leadership, their meeting schedule and location, basic contact information as well as their key priorities. This initial phase of interviews was done in the early summer of 2006. To provide structure, we grouped these organizations by planning district. We also identified the organizations by their primary function: typical neighborhood organization, economic focus, security focus, umbrella group or special focus. A copy of the survey questions asked can be found as appendix A to this paper.

With the results of this survey, and through the generosity of grants from the American Institute of Architects, *blue moon fund*, and the Greater New Orleans Foundation, we were able to create our first neighborhood map. We used Geographic Information System (GIS) software to organize the information and display it graphically. City-Works distributed the map to all the verified neighborhood organizations and governmental organizations involved in the recovery. We also posted it as well as an accompanying database of contact people on our website at www.city-works.org, so that it would be available for free to the general public.

FIRST UPDATE OF THE MAP

In the spring of 2007, students from Tulane University's Center for Public Service updated the initial lists and re-surveyed neighborhood associations. Students asked our list of contacts questions about the organizational capacity and their participation in the Unified New Orleans Planning (UNOP) process (see Appendix B). We also assigned the students with the difficult task of finding rumored organizations we had not yet been able to contact. Many of the untraceable organizations that existed prior to the storm were located in severely flooded areas, such as New Orleans East. In all, Tulane University students contributed over two hundred and seventy-five hours of work to the project and were able to augment our list with 25 organizations they were able to find. City-Works added the data from this survey to the GIS tool.

MAINTENANCE AND NEXT PLANNED UPDATE OF THE MAP

City-Works relies on neighborhood organizations to help us maintain the information they have entrusted to us, as this information is very dynamic and frequently changes. As such, we request that any errors found in either the map or the database be reported to City-Works via e-mail at info@city-works.org. We are also planning to conduct another update of the map in the summer of 2008, to make sure we have the latest information on the neighborhood organizations of New Orleans. In the upcoming survey, we plan to ask questions about the organizations' past and current projects.

One of the many exciting aspects of the growing strength of neighborhood organizations is their development of special projects. For example, Neighborhood Empowerment Network Association (NENA), a Lower 9th Ward organization helped over 1,000 homeowners navigate

the complicated Road Home application process as well as several other case management intake functions for the neighborhood. Another example of neighborhood entrepreneurship in the face of government inaction is the Mid-City Neighborhood Organization. They started an “Old Building” resource center for materials and knowledge in their neighborhood. Instead of relying on government funding and assistance, they are being creative in their financing, using donations and sales and rental revenue to keep the project afloat. In the future, City-Works plans to gather data on this sort of entrepreneurial activity sponsored by neighborhood organizations: these projects highlight the gaps in governmental and private-sector activity and the corresponding, albeit varying, responsiveness of neighborhood organizations.

III. FINDINGS

THE NUMBERS

The total number of neighborhood organizations that we currently have in our database is 390. We have been able to contact 270 of those organizations, including 28 new organizations that have formed since Hurricane Katrina, and they have completed our surveys and provided us with up-to-date information. Remaining are 99 organizations which are listed on paper or have been said to exist but have not been located. We must therefore assume that they are either defunct or do not have the capacity to respond to our inquiries. Of the 390 organizations in our database, several existed independently before the storm but have since been absorbed into larger neighborhood organizations. For example, Citizens of Upper Broadmoor has been folded into the Broadmoor Improvement Association.

THE BOUNDARIES

In our survey, we asked organizations to state the boundaries of the area they covered. These boundaries are determined and reported by the organizations themselves. As a result, some neighborhood boundaries overlap; some regions of the city have more than one neighborhood organization claiming them. In a few cases, such as Bywater, rival organizations, due to historic in-fighting, claim to represent the same area. In addition to these self-designated

neighborhoods, the City of New Orleans designates 73 areas as official “Neighborhoods”. It is important to note that those city-sanctioned neighborhoods bear little relation to the self-created neighborhood organizations. Furthermore, the City also divides its map into 13 planning districts. Many of the neighborhood organizations were not even aware of these official neighborhood and planning district boundaries until they began participating in the government-led planning processes. Since the storm, neighborhood organizations have become much more aware of these planning jurisdictions. The City-Works map includes the planning district lines of demarcation as well as the neighborhood organizations’ self-designated boundaries.

STRENGTH OF ORGANIZATIONS

The City-Works’ surveys gathered a great deal of data that may actually be good measures of the strength of these neighborhood organizations. Helpful measures include: age of the organization, frequency of meetings, history of their surveying their own members, hosting of a website, participation in Unified New Orleans Planning (UNOP), connections with other organizations, incorporation status, budget, and capacity for paid staff. A more subjective measure that may also be highly indicative of organizational strength is the visibility of the group: posting of signs on the neutral grounds, distribution of newsletters, popularity of listserves, and mentions in newspapers and on other media outlets. We, at City-Works, also often commented that one of the best subjective measures was our ease in contacting the organization.

City-Works found one tempting measure that should never be used alone as a sign of strength: size. Number of members is an unreliable data point because it is self-defined. Some neighborhood organizations automatically call all residents in their area members; others only consider residents who are dues-paying or actively participating in meetings or projects to be members. In addition, varying geographical neighborhood sizes make membership rosters impossible to compare as measures of organizational strength.

Clearly, the mere existence of a neighborhood organization does not indicate its efficacy in meeting its goals, nor do some of our objective measures of strength. For example, a neighborhood organization with a very narrow focus, such as a security association, may not fare

well against a number of our measures, but may indeed be fulfilling its own objectives. On the other hand, neighborhood organizations, especially ones geared towards the recovery, do seem to be growing substantially stronger since the storm. The twin issues of efficacy and strength certainly warrant greater study.

UMBRELLA ORGANIZATIONS

A phenomenon closely related to the strength of neighborhood organizations is the emergence of umbrella organizations. These organizations, often led by a board comprised of members from each of the smaller neighborhood organizations in the area, pursue goals which are structured around the agendas of the participating organizations.

Some umbrella organizations, such as the Algiers Council of Neighborhood Presidents, the Eastern New Orleans Advisory Commission, and Carrollton-Audubon Renaissance, Inc, existed pre-Katrina. In general, these organizations were formed to work towards more coordinated neighborhood security and revitalization and to support the smaller organizations in the area with a unified voice.

However, several highly active umbrella organizations have formed after the storm, all with the main focus on the recovery and rebuilding process. Because the planning process was organized and carried out planning district by planning district, many of these new umbrella organization boundaries closely resemble those of the planning districts. Formed both to voice the collective concerns of the neighborhood organizations under their aegis as well as to get best information to their constituents, these new umbrella organizations have maintained a relatively high profile in New Orleans. Two good examples of how neighborhood organizations came together to form umbrella groups are the Gentilly Civic Improvement Association (GCIA) and District Five Neighborhood Recovery Group.

In particular, the Neighborhoods Partnership Network (NPN) has worked to serve as a clearing house for information and has hosted a number of forums and meetings for neighborhood organizations throughout the city. Their website, e-newsletter, and newspaper have served to help keep neighborhood organizations and neighborhood leaders apprised of recovery efforts.

Although some in the neighborhoods represented by these umbrella organizations may not feel they are evenly represented, these new alliances and the efforts of neighborhood organizations to work together in other parts of the city are very positive. Barriers have come down in many cases throughout the city, allowing groups to form alliances that may not have been possible before the storm. In the downtown area, a largely unflooded portion of the city, the French Quarter citizens groups and the Warehouse residents rarely worked together. After Katrina, these groups are meeting on a regular basis, at last getting together neighborhood advocates to work together harmoniously. These relationships are tenuous after the storm and should be encouraged through collective projects and technical assistance.

PARTICIPATION IN UNOP

The Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP) was the public-private planning process established by Greater New Orleans Foundation, at the request of the New Orleans Mayor, City Council, and City Planning Commission. UNOP was intended to address New Orleans' infrastructure needs, as well as neighborhood land-use and repopulation strategies, while synthesizing myriad independent grassroots planning efforts. As a quantifiable measure of action, 73% of respondents for the neighborhood organizations polled stated that they participated in Unified New Orleans Planning (UNOP) District Planning meetings, and 65.9% responded that they had participated in the UNOP Community Congress meetings. Sixty-five percent of the respondents representing these organizations attended both. Several of the respondents who didn't participate in UNOP reported that they are focused on single issues, such as security, and had no reason to participate in the recovery planning process. These high participation rates are due to the concerted efforts of the UNOP district planners to get grass root neighborhood organizations to participate in the process. UNOP placed high priority on citizen involvement to legitimize the recovery plans.

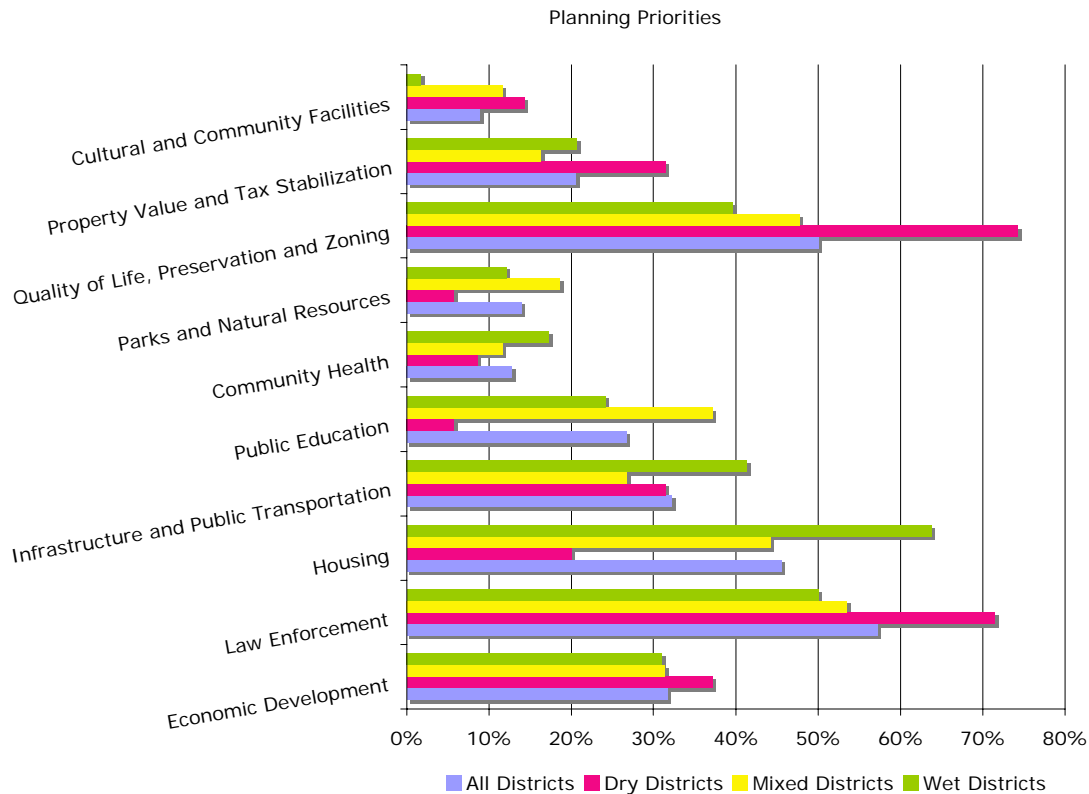
PRIORITIES OF ORGANIZATIONS

In our survey of each organization, leaders were asked to list their organizations' top three recovery priorities. To aggregate and clearly show the data collected, we used the existing planning district lines to group the neighborhood information. While we did not ask the leaders

to rank those priorities, several instructive patterns in their responses emerged. While the top concerns city-wide were law enforcement and housing, priorities varied by planning district.

PRIORITIES ACCORDING TO FLOODING STATUS

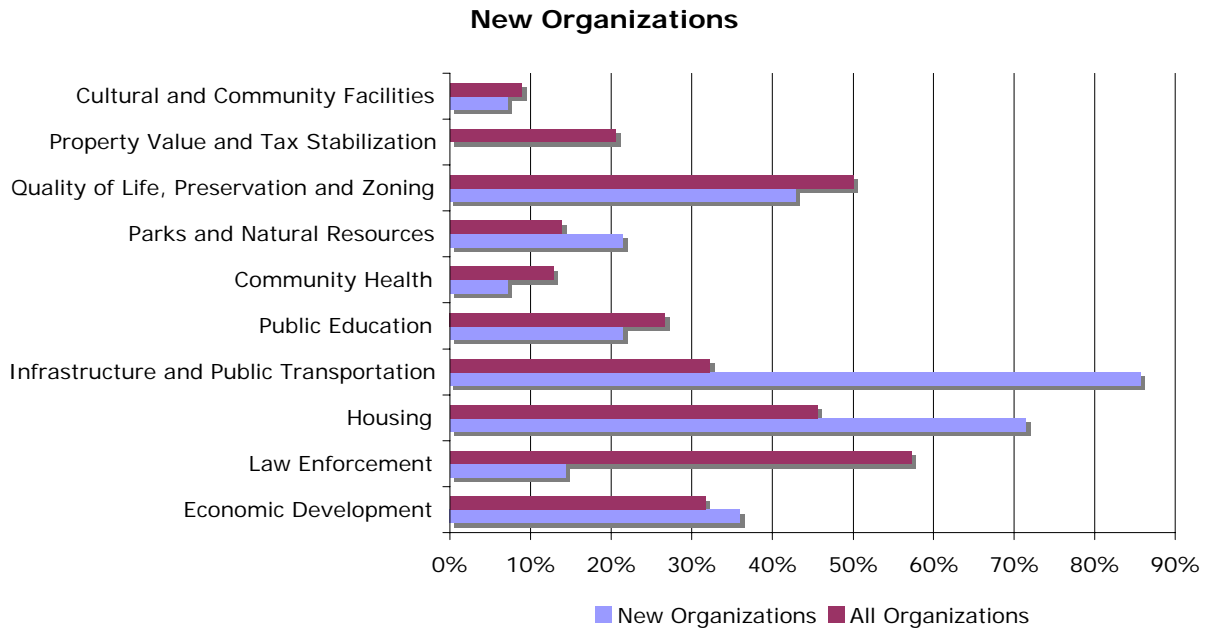
Our surveys indicated an interesting trend of planning priorities based on flood levels in participating neighborhoods. To illustrate these differences, we separated the planning districts into three groups based on their relative levels of flooding. Group One (which we call Dry) largely did not flood (Planning Districts 1, 12 & 13). Group Two (Mixed) had mixed flooding – some portions not at all, some parts moderate, and some sections fairly deep (Districts 2, 3, 4, & 7). Group Three was largely inundated by water (Districts 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 & 11). Raw data broken down by planning district is attached to the end of this document as Appendix C. These groupings allow us to see general trends. The priorities of each of these groups varied based on whether or not the area sustained flooding. Those that did not flood were less concerned with housing and more concerned with quality of life and law enforcement issues. Those that flooded deeply were very concerned with housing issues. Given how the floodwaters destroyed the housing stock, these findings are not surprising.



The numbers on the graph indicate the percentage of respondents who chose a particular planning priority.

PRIORITIES ACCORDING TO AGE OF ORGANIZATION

A pattern in the rankings also emerged based on the age of the organization. Based on their stated priorities, new organizations differed greatly from organizations in existence before the storm. This indicates that the new organizations are not like those who came before them. They were created after the storm in response to a perceived lack of adequate representation in rebuilding discussions. The concern that neighborhood voices were not being heard prompted residents to work with their neighbors in a way that they had not before. Organizations that existed before Katrina (Old) were focused on Law Enforcement and Quality of Life. Neighborhood organizations formed after the storm (New) were overwhelmingly concerned with Infrastructure and Public Transportation, as well as with Housing.



The overlap of priorities of the Wet and New organizations revealed another interesting data point: all but one of the 28 new organizations were formed in flooded sections of the city.

IV. ANALYSIS

Clearly, the need for neighborhood organizations was strongest in the flooded areas. Those areas experienced the worst communication and information failures, and at every level. They also had the most basic need: to make sure that their neighborhoods survived. Their priorities were the most urgent, in particular the pressing need for housing. Most new neighborhood organizations formed there. Beyond that, however, many pre-existing neighborhood organizations, representing wet and dry areas of town, were significantly reinvigorated after the storm.

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS AS LOCAL PSUEDO-GOVERNMENTS

Neighborhood organizations were created and galvanized due to failures of government at great distances. In countless ways, government at the federal, state, parish, and city levels failed the residents of New Orleans' neighborhoods. Individuals needed to organize at truly the most local level to make sure that the most local needs were addressed. The neighborhood organizations

helped individual residents make choices about returning and rebuilding by providing them with critical information. Many neighborhood organizations became information networks and resource centers for their constituents. The organizations also became the residents' representatives at the parish and city level in the planning process for recovery. They ensured that the most local interests were represented in the planning process.

Some neighborhood organizations replaced many of the services of the city. They both advocated for the aid of the city's residents and carried out some basic functions. Groups like NENA in the Lower 9th Ward have very publicly pushed for the return of gas, electric, and telephone service, as well as safe, potable water. Other organizations have demanded faster debris removal. Some organizations like the Hollygrove Neighbors Association, Gentilly Civic Improvement Association, Broadmoor Improvement Association, and the Lower Gentilly Neighborhood Association advocated for "quick-start" rebuilding of local schools in their area. All across the city, members of neighborhood organizations, such as the Claiborne-University Neighborhood Association, made their own street signs and stop signs. While government agencies at all levels squabbled over who would pay the bills of recovery, local neighborhood organizations took action.

Highly organized neighborhood organizations actually confronted the city on what they thought were catastrophic decisions related to the recovery. In New Orleans East, the Mary Queen of Vietnam Community Development Corporation successfully shut down the Chef Menteur landfill, which the city had re-opened, despite violations of EPA regulations, to take in hurricane debris. The Broadmoor Improvement Association responded to the mayor's Bring New Orleans Back Commission report that green-dotted their neighborhood with a highly visible "Broadmoor Lives" campaign. They have both built capacity, hired full-time staff, and developed two of the most successful neighborhood organizations in the city in order to guarantee the survival of their neighborhood, rebuild, and take care of their local neighborhood's many interests.

NECESSARY ALLIANCES

The decentralized nature of early recovery made it necessary for disparate groups to align themselves for a more common good. Although tightly-focused neighborhood organizations

grew stronger in order to promote their most localized issues, they also recognized that organizations on the most local level sometimes needed to widen their view and reach out -- hence the growth of new alliances and umbrella organizations. We found a variety of reasons for this new-found, broader cooperation. While organizations at the most local level are the most personal and can be quickly responsive to individuals' needs, they indeed have a hard time getting certain jobs done. There is an economy of scale with the umbrella groups. These larger associations can speak with a more forceful voice. Some associations came together out of regionalism in New Orleans, to make sure their region got as much attention and resources as other regions of the city.

Some groups that historically were at odds were forced to work together during the UNOP process because they were in the same planning districts. Adjacent neighborhoods representing vastly different socio-economic groups found themselves at the same table, pushed together by a need to work towards recovery. As the leader of one of the Garden District neighborhood organizations explained to us when she was surveyed, "Even though we did not sustain flooding, we know that in order for us to prosper, the other areas in our district needed our support." This alliance is remarkable because centuries old socio-economic lines have been crossed where groups are working together, even if for a short period of time. These alliances were created both out of self interest and for the greater good.

The formation of unlikely alliances indicates a movement towards a collective good, recognizing that the work done together can in some cases be more powerful than individual neighborhood efforts. This testifies to the new attitudes held by many residents. This subtle shift towards a more collective good may have its roots in a joint fear of failure, or it may indicate that guards have been removed allowing information, if not resources, to move better between different groups.

GREATER CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Our survey of neighborhood organizations found a per-capita increase in membership levels after the storm, compared with numbers before the storm. Pre-Katrina, the population of New Orleans was 450,000; of that, 37,103 people were members of neighborhood organizations. In August,

2006, the Greater New Orleans Community Data Center in conjunction with the Brookings Institution calculated the city's population to be 223,000, while our survey found 31,520 to be members of neighborhood organizations. Per-capita, 8.2% of New Orleanians belonged to neighborhood groups before the storm; afterwards, 14.1% belonged to them. This represents an astounding 72% increase in membership in neighborhood organizations. Clearly, these are not pristine numbers. As we stated earlier, membership is unevenly defined among the associations. Individuals may be members of more than one organization, especially when the boundaries overlap. For example, a person may join their neighborhood's security association and also be affiliated with their broader-purposed neighborhood organization working towards rebuilding and other quality of life issues as well as the umbrella organization which covers their area.

Still, this increase in per-capita membership represents an important trend in the "social capital" of New Orleans. In her groundbreaking *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jane Jacobs (1961) identifies social capital as "that intricate web of human relationships built up over time – that provides mutual support in time of need, ensures the safety of streets, and fosters a sense of civic responsibility." In New Orleans there is a new recognition that individuals can and will have a major impact on the rebuilding of their city by being active participants in the process. They are part of something important and profound. Individuals here can have real influence by simply showing up -- moving back and becoming part of the recovery. By joining a neighborhood organization, they leverage that power and help guarantee that their neighborhood and city survive and have a say in their own futures. While some people may be working to recreate our city the way it was before the storm, others are aiming for a vastly improved New Orleans. This reinvigorated social capital has made an immense difference in the repopulating and, to the extent it has been done, rebuilding the city.

The ongoing Citizen Participation Process being discussed in City Planning and by non-profit groups like Committee for a Better New Orleans/Metropolitan Area Committee (CBNO/MAC) and NPN has the potential to encourage this trend of building on active social capital in New Orleans.

V. SUGGESTION FOR ACTION

Neighborhood organizations have moved from organizations established to keep undesirable activity out, to organizations that proactively seek solutions to their problems. They educated themselves about rebuilding problems as well as strategies for advocating change to their governmental representatives. As a result, they no longer passively wait for government to solve problems; they take action and demand that others do as well.

There are functions, however, that the neighborhoods need from government. City-Works suggests that New Orleans create an Office of Neighborhoods at City Hall to provide the interface for neighborhoods as they rebuild their communities. It should be fully funded to address the following tasks – with sufficient time to incubate the office, allowing it to achieve some successes quickly and visibly:

- serve as a neighborhood technical assistance center to encourage neighborhood clean-ups, graffiti abatement, beautification, and community-building projects. Our neighborhoods need to be able to better coordinate volunteers and host productive community improvement activities, not just meetings
- foster information sharing among neighborhood organizations, umbrella groups, and their individual members. The City-Works Mapping Project is an important first step and is fully available for use by the city, all neighborhood organizations, and the general public. To encourage information sharing, City-Works is making the GIS level files available to individual neighborhood organizations.
- facilitate citizen input and participation in all aspects of city government. This will be the Citizen Participation Plan as it is developed over the next year. Part of the participation in government should be alleviated by providing residents with information on how to navigate city and parish government. Information sharing is vital for the success of neighborhoods and the city as a whole. It also goes a long way in removing the frustrations of the residents and business owners.

- work closely with the city's Economic Development Office or proposed public/private partnership to aggressively pursue and support retail and business investment along the commercial corridors of our neighborhoods. These new businesses will improve the quality of life for the residents who live near these now shuttered storefronts and empty lots. Vibrant commercial corridors, large and small, create good jobs, lead to safer neighborhoods, and provide access to goods and services for nearby residents, rather than leaking the economic activity to other areas. Economic development activity needs to fit the scale of the commercial corridors and should prioritize local businesses, business retention and expansion.
- provide technical assistance to build capacity of Business Improvement Districts and Community Development Corporations, especially to help them access and properly spend sources of federal money. We need to jump-start the micro-economies of our neighborhoods.

The City of New Orleans can use Boston, Portland, and Chicago as models in creating this new neighborhoods development office. If set up and run properly, it can be a real catalyst for the rejuvenation of our city's neighborhoods and can maximize and leverage the strength and successes of our neighborhood organizations.

VI. CONCLUSION

In an environment where the people of New Orleans have suffered catastrophic failures of government at all levels, grassroots neighborhood organizations have produced many of our heroes and leaders. The organizations and their leaders have advocated and rebuilt. They have become key centers of information exchange. They have represented their constituents in the planning process. They have organized, financed, and completed projects without government assistance. Even in April, 2006, when City-Works initiated the Neighborhood Profiles Mapping Project, it had become increasingly clear that such a decentralized process was in many ways problematic for neighborhoods and for the city-wide planning and recovery effort as a whole.

The decentralization of information also seemed to create another layer of social inequity and parochialism by forcing neighborhoods to rely on their own very localized resources in the

planning effort. Finally, the neighborhood-based process seemed incongruous with the massive scale of the crisis. Neighborhood associations were organizing and planning not because neighborhoods were the most or only appropriate geographic unit for a planning response to the devastation, but because city- and state-led processes had stalled. At some point, an official planning process would reemerge to handle regional issues like transportation, economic development, and hurricane preparedness. When that happened, we wanted to be sure that neighborhood planning efforts would be recognized by and easily integrated into the larger-scale planning processes.

The Neighborhood Profile Mapping Project began simply with the goal of creating an up-to-date, comprehensive contact list of neighborhood organization representatives. In lieu of a centralized process, we could at least centralize information. Sharing the results of our surveys with neighborhood organization representatives empowered them to network with each other and coordinate their projects. Such information has been used by planners and service-providers in the non-profit and government sectors to direct resources. It is continuing to help all those engaged in planning, from city and state government to the neighborhood associations themselves.

City-Works believes planning should be an opportunity to create equal access to resources, and we hope that our map is helping to equalize and ease the distribution of information and resources. We also strongly believe that neighborhoods are integral to the fabric of New Orleans' culture and economy. Clearly, the neighborhood leaders and organizations have been tremendously responsive in the face of disaster, and have grown stronger in this time of need. Without governmental leadership, money, and structural support, however, they simply do not have the capacity to get certain projects done. Now is the time for the government to fulfill its role of protecting and serving its citizens here in New Orleans.

Acknowledgements:

City-Works would like to acknowledge *blue moon fund* for making this project possible.

The original project was conceived by Terri Dreyer, Daniel Winkert and Zac Youngerman. Without their direction and coordination and the help of City Planning Commission, the Preservation Resource Center, and the dozens of volunteers to collect existing and new data, the original map would not have been possible. We are thankful for their efforts and those of all the many volunteers and Neighborhood Association presidents and leaders who helped us for our list and map.

We would also like to acknowledge Sarah Elise Lewis, co-founder of Common Knowledge in New Orleans, who provided guidance and suggestions for major sections of this paper for which we are very thankful. Tulane University Center for Public Service students also provided assistance not only on the surveys of neighborhood organizations, but in the management of the information.

Appendix A

Original Survey Questions

CityWorks Neighborhood Organization Survey

Dear Neighborhood Organization Representatives:

Thanks for assisting CityWorks create a comprehensive database and mapping tools for citizens, non-profits, and government agencies to better contact and serve New Orleans valued neighborhood organizations. You can view our progress at www.city-works.org.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact us at (504)754-1427 or email at info@city-works.org. Please send completed surveys to CityWorks, 841 Carondelet Street, new Orleans, LA 70113.

Organization Information

Date of Survey: _____

Official Name of Organization: _____

Prior or Other Names: _____

Current (mailing) Address: _____

Meeting Place Address (if different): _____

Contact Person and Position: _____

Phone Number(s): _____

Email Address: _____

Additional Contact Person: _____

Phone Number(s): _____

Email Address: _____

Founding Year of Organization: _____

Frequency and Times of Meeting: _____

Legal status of organization, for instance LLC or a 501(c)(3): _____

Number of Members pre- and post-Katrina:

Pre: _____ Post: _____

Geographic Area/Neighborhood(s) the Organization Represents:

CityWorks Neighborhood Organization Survey

Please name the significant physical features of the community, i.e., historic landmarks, natural features, commercial thoroughfares, gathering places:

Other neighborhood groups to which the organization is connected:

Has the organization conducted a survey of local residents? Y N

From the list of ten (10) planning priorities listed below, the highest three (3) that have emerged from group discussions are

1. Economic Development
2. Law Enforcement
3. Housing
4. Infrastructure and Public Transportation
5. Public Education
6. Community Health
7. Parks and Natural Resources
8. Quality of Life, Preservation and Zoning
9. Property Value and Tax Stabilization
10. Cultural and Community Facilities

CityWorks Neighborhood Organization Survey

Current Planning

Is the organization working with any design professionals, architects or planners?

N Y

If "Yes," Please Continue to Next Page.

The City Planning Commission requires that each of the following areas is addressed in the recovery plan/document for each neighborhood. Do you know if the neighborhood recovery plan developed by the planners in your neighborhood currently addresses each of the following elements? (Please answer "yes", "no", or "I don't know.")

A. A background/introductory section which lists neighborhood boundaries and participants in planning meetings, explains the planning process and its goals, and provides an overview of pre-Katrina planning documents.

YES NO Don't Know

B. A profile of the physical and social conditions of the neighborhood.

YES NO Don't Know

C. An identification of the neighborhood's needs and priorities among the following categories:

- | | | | |
|---|-----|----|------------|
| • Housing, Architecture and Historic Preservation | YES | NO | Don't Know |
| • Protection from Floods and other Natural and Man-Made Hazards | YES | NO | Don't Know |
| • Utilities & Municipal Services | YES | NO | Don't Know |
| • Human Services & Community Facilities | YES | NO | Don't Know |

D. Rebuilding scenarios/possibilities including the neighborhood's preferred scenario.

YES NO Don't Know

E. An implementation strategy which details the sequence of actions in the rebuilding process in the areas of funding, zoning and permitting, and policy - including the opportunities for and barriers to success in each of the areas.

YES NO Don't Know

Appendix B

Updated Survey Questions

Survey Questions to include in Neighborhood Survey

Name of Organization: _____

- 1- Did your neighborhood association participate in either the district planning meetings, or any of the three city-wide community congresses?

District Planning Meetings	YES	NO
Community Congress	YES	NO

- 2- Do you feel that your neighborhood concerns were heard by the UNOP Process?

YES NO Don't Know

- 3- Has your organization discussed starting a Community Development Corporation or a CDC?

YES NO Don't Know

- 4- Are there efforts or concerns that you would like the Preservation Resource Center Neighborhood Council to know about?

YES NO Don't Know

If YES: What is the best way from the PRC to contact you?

- 5- Has your organization hired professional staff?

YES NO

Appendix C

Survey Data

Priority	Priority by Planning Districts												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Economic Development	6	13	4	6	2	7	4	2	6	1	5	2	5
Law Enforcement	13	14	19	9	5	10	4	1	13	0	12	0	2
Housing	4	12	8	14	6	17	4	3	9	2	2	1	10
Infrastructure and Public Transportation	4	5	8	8	7	10	2	2	5	0	6	1	12
Public Education	0	14	6	5	1	4	7	1	5	3	1	1	3
Community Health	0	2	0	6	0	2	2	0	5	3	3	0	1
Parks and Natural Resources	2	4	6	6	5	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3
Quality of Life, Preservation and Zoning	11	9	19	8	10	9	5	0	4	0	13	2	6
Property Value and Tax Stabilization	1	4	8	1	3	4	1	0	5	0	8	2	0
Cultural and Community Facilities	4	2	3	5	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1

UNOP Questions	All Organizations Surveyed			
	No	Yes	Don't Know	Total Surveyed
Participation in district planning meetings	21	58	0	79
Participation in community congress	27	51	1	79
Concerns were heard by UNOP	18	50	10	78
Discussed starting a Community Development Corporation	58	18	2	78

City Planning Commission Questions	All Organizations Surveyed			
	No	Yes	Don't Know	Total Surveyed
Background and planning process goals	30	39	21	90
Profile of physical and social conditions	34	49	7	90
Identification of neighborhood needs and priorities	36	46	8	90
Rebuilding scenarios and possibilities	35	46	9	90
Implimentation Strategy	49	32	9	90