

Louisiana Recovery & Rebuilding Conference

November 10-12, 2005

Preliminary Report: Day 2

November 11, 2005
New Orleans, LA

More than 600 participants gathered on November 11 to continue an innovative, highly participatory, statewide design and planning meeting—the Louisiana Recovery and Rebuilding Conference. The goal of this three day forum is to give the people of Louisiana an opportunity to voice their opinions and values regarding recovery and rebuilding after hurricanes Katrina and Rita. During day two of the meeting, participants heard from national and local experts and were asked to develop principles intended to help Louisiana take the first steps towards creating a “better, safer, and stronger” region in the areas impacted by Katrina and Rita. Governor Blanco, the Louisiana Recovery Authority, the American Institute of Architects, the American Planning Association, the American Society of Civil Engineers, and the National Trust for Historic Preservation were the primary sponsors of the meeting.

Participants continued to listen to and question national experts (many based in Louisiana), hold discussions at their tables, and propose and prioritize initial recovery and rebuilding principles. The reverse side reports on the principles that participants authored and prioritized for day two.

The following core themes emerged from the initial principles that conference participants created and prioritized on days one and two:

Create a single, comprehensive, and compelling plan that offers leadership to everyone involved in restoring and rebuilding.

Create infrastructure to support recovery, restore confidence, enhance quality of life, and respond to and withstand future disasters:

- Category 5 protection levels—key elements include improved levees, restored wetlands, and independent authority to insure ongoing maintenance and funding
- Improved services such as regional transit, communications, energy, and similar elements
- Sustainable, equitable, and transparent approaches to rebuilding and future development

Promote economic growth and bring the benefits to everyone in the region:

- A diverse economy encompassing traditional and emerging industries, supported by respect for the region’s historic character and innovative funding strategies, incentives, and public/private partnerships
- A foundation for growth including quality education and job training, housing, transportation, and similar elements available to everyone in the region regardless of income
- Equity that includes living wages and career tracks, benefits to everyone in the region, and long-term economic opportunity

Participants on Day Two

Gender

Female	42%
Male	58%

Primary Role in Rebuilding Process

Leader in civic, community, church or faith based org.	20%
Architect, planner, or other design professional	37%
Educator or school admin.	6%
Public official or gov. employee	12%
Corporate/Business rep.	16%
Healthcare professional	4%
Committed citizen	5%

Where Do/Did You Live in

Louisiana?

Orleans Parish	44%
Jefferson Parish	8%
St. Tammany Parish	7%
St. Bernard Parish	2%
Plaquemines Parish	1%
River parishes	2%
Baton Rouge/Florida parish region	13%
Southwest Louisiana	2%
Acadiana and Southwestern parishes	5%
Central or Northern parishes	1%
Do not live in Louisiana	15%

Initial Infrastructure Principles

(prepared and prioritized by conference participants)

1. Rebuild a reliable and safe regional levee system to a Category 5 protection level
2. Restore coastal wetlands concurrent with levee restoration project (Category 5)
3. Provide affordable, insurable and sustainable housing
4. Develop and improve a regional transportation system that includes inter-city rail, is affordable and accessible, and can be used for evacuation
5. Respect and maintain the architecture, cultural heritage, human-scale design and personality of traditional Louisiana neighborhoods in rebuilding efforts
6. Implement a decision-making process that is transparent and inclusive at the regional and community level
7. Ensure the performance of critical communications, transportation, and energy infrastructure systems during disasters and recovery
8. Based on input from all key stakeholders, create a series of comprehensive and integrated regional land use plans that will effectively guide all recovery and reconstruction efforts
9. Establish centralized levee board and ensure transparency of all operations
10. Apply the fundamental principles of sustainable development in all building efforts
11. Create a comprehensive plan for management of hazardous waste and environmental contamination that ensures environmentally responsible future development

Initial Economic Development Principles

(prepared and prioritized by conference participants)

1. Redesign public & trade education systems to meet the needs of traditional and emerging needs
2. Provide an essential foundation for economic growth through good quality housing, transportation, utilities, and other similar elements
3. Accountability, transparency, integrity, equity and efficient government processes must be part of all economic development efforts
4. Recovery should be an engine for the local economies, with contracts for local firms and suppliers and jobs and training for local workers
5. Diversify the economy and focus on the industries that pay livable wages and have viable career paths: nurture traditional industries and industries of innovation
6. Employ innovative funding strategies, including federal and state tax incentives and tax credits for home owners and business
7. Prioritize funding and relief for local and family-owned businesses; incubate and grow local businesses, esp. small businesses
8. Economic development must include ALL Louisiana residents
9. Recognize the economic benefits of protecting and restoring our cultural and architectural legacy
10. Market the region's recovery including positioning Louisiana as a leader in best practices in disaster recovery
11. Encourage sustainable businesses including those working with the waste/debris stream and renewable energy sources
12. Create a single comprehensive economic development plan
13. Explore all opportunities for public-private partnerships
14. Include the non-profit sector in economic recovery efforts

About the Louisiana Recovery and Rebuilding Conference

The conference is presented by The American Institute of Architects (AIA), in collaboration with the American Planning Association (APA), and co-sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NHTP) and the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE).

-more-

Media contacts for the sponsor organizations:

Scott Frank (AIA)
240-305-5891 (c)
sfrank@aia.org

Roberta Rewers (APA)
312-786-6395
rrewers@planning.org

Erin Angell (NTHP)
202-588-6141
erin_angell@nthp.org

Joan Buhrman (ASCE)
571-213-3812 (c)
jbuhrman@asce.org