

The Providence/Enterprise Partnership with the Lafitte/Treme Community

Providence Community Housing (Providence) and Enterprise have been selected by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) to help plan a new community on and around the site of the Lafitte public housing development, a 27.5 acre parcel in the historic Treme/Lafitte neighborhood of New Orleans. We are humbled by this opportunity to work with the residents of the development and the Treme community to develop a shared vision for a new and stronger community for all.

Commitment to the Community

Providence and Enterprise will work closely with Lafitte and Treme residents to plan a vibrant community that is equitable, affordable and sustainable and which delivers on this commitment:

- Absolute opportunity for the 865 families and individuals who lived in the Lafitte development before Katrina to return to better quality homes and a healthier neighborhood.
- 900 subsidized homes, the same number as in the Lafitte development before the storm, integrated in mixed-income communities on and around the site
- Resident participation in planning and developing a more vibrant community.

Outreach and Assistance to Residents

Providence/Enterprise has committed \$2,500,000 in private funds to provide case management, counseling, and direct assistance to Lafitte families living locally, as well as those in cities such as Houston, Baton Rouge, Atlanta and Memphis. Thanks to a recent award from the city, we are committing approximately 200 adjudicated properties in the neighborhood for immediate development of affordable housing for former families and children. Through our affiliates, we will provide within a year one hundred and fifty apartments for elderly former residents in the surrounding communities. We will aggressively explore additional opportunities for residents to return to New Orleans during redevelopment.

A Stronger Community that Reflects the Residents' Vision

Redevelopment planning will start first with resident engagement. The shared vision will also reflect the priorities that local neighborhood groups have expressed through recent meetings and the current community planning process.

- A community of choice for New Orleans residents with a mix of incomes.
- Services for families, including health care, youth programs and formal job training.
- Better school and educational options for neighborhood families and children
- Walkable access to shops, community centers and recreational opportunities.
- Sustainable development that is safer, healthier and more resource efficient.

Questions and Answers

What do you mean by an “absolute opportunity” for former residents to return?

All 865 former residents of Lafitte will have an opportunity to come back, if they so choose, either to the new apartments and homes on site or to the apartments and homes in the surrounding communities. They will have an opportunity to choose the best housing option for themselves and their families. Some may be able to own their homes. Our partners and social service providers will work with each resident to discuss the best option for his or her family, and to seek their thoughts and suggestions as we proceed with redevelopment planning.

What is the possible size and scope of the redevelopment?

We look forward to working with residents and community members immediately on the development of a comprehensive detailed plan. Initial research supports the possibility of a new Lafitte with roughly 600 homes and apartments on the existing site and up to 900 additional homes and apartments in the surrounding Treme and Tulane/Gravier neighborhoods. The first priority is the redevelopment of the 900 subsidized units into larger, family-friendly designed apartments.

What assets does this mission-based partnership bring to the community?

Providence/Enterprise combines unsurpassed local credibility (having served the community since 1727), and the technical expertise and access to financial resources necessary to carry out a planning and redevelopment of this magnitude in a timely, efficient and equitable manner.

In addition to the 200 adjudicated properties from the City of New Orleans, Providence/Enterprise has obtained a capital commitment of up to \$20 million in loans to acquire other sites in connection with the redevelopment. These resources will facilitate a more timely and efficient development schedule than would otherwise be possible. Providence/Enterprise plans to secure housing tax credits and block grants funds available from the State of Louisiana and other resources from HANO and HUD.

Who else will be assisting you as you begin the planning and redevelopment with Lafitte residents and the Treme community?

We are fortunate to have a number of partners and collaborators who are excited about working with the residents and us as we move forward. Our growing list includes: the AFL-CIO Investment Trust, JPMorgan Chase, Fannie Mae, Tulane School of Architecture, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, New Orleans Habitat for Humanity, and NeighborWorks America®. We look forward to working with our sponsors, with HANO, HUD, the Louisiana Recovery Authority, the Louisiana Housing Finance Agency, the City of New Orleans, church and community-based housing providers, and neighborhood groups.

Why do HUD and HANO plan to demolish the Lafitte complex?

After much study, HANO has come to the conclusion that Lafitte needs to be demolished due to the extensive repairs needed to bring the development up to HUD's Housing Quality Standards and to meet City code compliance. A number of housing advocates disagree with HANO's demolition plan. This issue will most likely be resolved through the legal process. Providence/Enterprise will focus their energies on planning with residents the redevelopment. We will work to bring residents back as soon as possible to homes and apartments that are respectful of their dignity and where they can begin to heal from the wounds of Katrina.

About the Partners

Providence Community Housing is the Catholic housing initiative formed in response to the devastation caused by Katrina. The organization's mission-based members represent the largest private providers of community services (Catholic Charities) and affordable housing (Christopher Homes) in the City. Other neighborhood-based sponsors – St. Peter Claver/UJAMAA, St. Joseph's/Tulane-Canal CDC and Reconcile New Orleans – have earned respect for their community development and housing efforts over the years. Providence's list of local affiliate members also includes Mary Queen of Vietnam CDC, the Hispanic Apostolate, and the Sisters of the Holy Family. These organizations provide housing, senior services, youth services, childcare, case management, mental health counseling, health care, education and job training. All of these services are critical to providing assistance to the families as they recover from the hurricane and begin new lives filled with dignity and hope.

Enterprise is a leading provider of development capital and expertise needed to create decent, affordable homes and rebuild communities. Our mission is to see that all low-income people in the United States have the opportunity for fit and affordable housing and to move up and out of poverty into the mainstream of American life. Enterprise has raised and invested \$7 billion in equity, grants and loans to support the creation of 190,000 affordable homes, and is currently investing in communities at a rate of \$1 billion a year. We bring more than 20 years of experience in successful redevelopment of public housing and large-scale mixed-income housing, including more than 20 HOPE VI or public housing mixed finance housing developments. Enterprise has been actively engaged with local partners, including community-based organizations and the City of New Orleans, since the days after Katrina and has committed substantial resources to help with the recovery effort.

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