

September 15, 2006

Dear Residents of Lafitte:

We know that people are anxious to come home, and how difficult the past year has been. Our two non-profit, mission-driven organizations, want to do everything we can to bring you home to New Orleans as quickly as possible.

We are just getting started on a long term initiative to build 1500 homes and apartments in the communities of Tremé/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier. All former residents of Lafitte will have the opportunity to come back, either to new apartments and homes on the Lafitte site or to apartments or homes in the surrounding communities of Tremé and Tulane/Gravier. We will be building 900 subsidized, affordable homes, the same number as in Lafitte before the storm. There will be no reduction in the number of subsidized housing units available. Everybody will have the opportunity to come home.

Please have a look at the enclosed newsletter for more information about the Home Building Plan, including details about two Public Workshops we will be holding in early October. For those of you who are in New Orleans or nearby, we hope that you can join us. We also hope you'll take a moment to send us your feedback using the enclosed form.

We are humbled by this opportunity to work with you, the residents, to develop a shared vision for a new and stronger community for all.

Sincerely,

James R. Kelly
President
Providence Community Housing

Chickie Grayson
President
Enterprise Homes, Inc.

Providence Community Housing (Providence) is a Catholic housing initiative formed in response to the devastation caused by Katrina. Our members include Catholic Charities and Christopher Homes, and our neighborhood sponsors include St. Peter Claver/Ujamaa, St. Joseph's/Tulane-Canal CDC and Reconcile New Orleans.

Enterprise brings over 20 years of experience in creating decent affordable homes and rebuilding 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.

Help Us Create A Home Building Plan That Works For You

Your opinions and ideas are critical to the success of the Home Building Plan. The only way the Plan can meet your needs is if you tell us what your needs are. Please take a minute to complete this **Feedback Form** and send to us by mail, fax, email or phone as soon as possible. **All information you provide will be kept strictly confidential.**

1. Do you want to come home to New Orleans?

(Please circle your response)

Yes / No / Maybe

2. If you plan to come home, how many bedrooms will you need? (Please circle your response)

1 / 2 / 3 / More than 3 bedrooms

3. When you return, how many children (school age and younger) do you expect will be living with you?

(Please circle your response)

0 / 1 / 2 / 3 / More than 3

4. Do you have any specific needs you can tell us about? (Please check off all that apply)

- Child care
- Elderly care
- Disabled care
- Job training
- Other needs? (please write any additional needs in the space below)

5. What are the 3 things you liked best about the Tremé/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier neighborhood? (These are things that you would like to see as part of the redeveloped neighborhood.)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

6. What are the 3 things you liked least about the Tremé/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier neighborhood? (These are things that you would prefer not to see as part of the redeveloped neighborhood.)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

7. Any other opinions/ideas?

What is the best way to stay in touch with you and other members of your household?

Please let us know by filling in the contact information below.

	Main Contact	Second Contact	Third Contact
First & Last Name			
Current Phone			
Other Phone (e.g., cell phone and/or phone of family member)			
Email Address			
Mailing Address			
City, State			
Zip Code			

Please mail, fax, email, or phone your feedback as soon as possible to:

Home Building Plan
1000 Bourbon Street, PMB #278
New Orleans, LA 70116

Fax: (225)248-9599
Email: info@providencech.org

Toll-free number: 1(888)429-2499
Local number: (504)889-3686



Homebuilding Plan for Tremé/Lafitte & Tulane/Gravier



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A Commitment to Build 1500 Homes

New Orleans has a major housing shortage and creative solutions are needed quickly. Providence Community Housing and Enterprise have teamed up to develop a Home Building Plan to help bring people back to the Tremé/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier neighborhoods.

The goal of the Plan is to build at least 1500 units of housing in the Tremé/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier area to meet the needs of a broad range of households, including seniors and families.



Photo of Lafitte taken by one of the residents from the back driveway.

A number of people have asked us, "What is happening to Lafitte"? In June 2006, the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) announced their decision to demolish Lafitte. This was because of the extensive repairs needed to bring the development up to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Housing Quality Standards and to meet City code compliance. Additional information about this decision is included on the inside pages of this newsletter.

All former residents of Lafitte will have the opportunity to come back, either to new apartments and homes on the Lafitte site or to apartments or homes in the surrounding communities of Tremé and Tulane/Gravier. The team is committed to building 900 subsidized homes, the same number as in Lafitte before the storm. **There will be no reduction in the number of subsidized housing units available.**

What Are Your Housing Needs?

The best home building plans are created together with the people who will be living in those homes. As a result, hearing input and advice from residents is critical and we are counting on your participation.

Everyone who reads this newsletter is encouraged to complete and return the enclosed Feedback Form. Follow-up phone calls will be made to all former residents of Lafitte using the contact information provided by the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO).

Four public events will be held in New Orleans during the first week of October to help develop this Home Building Plan: one "Kick-off" public workshop on Tuesday, October 3, 2006 and one "Wrap-up" public workshop on Saturday, October 7, 2006. There will also be an opportunity for the public to "Drop in to talk to the Home Building Team" on the evenings of Wednesday, October 4 and Thursday, October 5. We recognize that it will be a challenge for many residents to participate. As a result, bus transportation will be provided to Lafitte residents in Baton Rouge, and smaller meetings and workshops will also be held in cities outside New Orleans to provide as many opportunities as possible for residents to be involved.

The first part of this plan is happening quickly because the application deadline for one important source of state and federal money to help rebuild homes is October 20, 2006.

Workshops & Open Houses

Tues., Oct. 3, 2006	Kick-off Public Workshop 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.
Wed., Oct. 4, 2006	Open invitation to drop in and talk to Home Building Team 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.
Thurs., Oct. 5, 2006	Drop in to talk to Home Building Team 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.
Sat., Oct. 7, 2006	Wrap-up Public Workshop (light lunch provided) 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location of All Meetings	St. Peter Claver School (1020 North Prieur Street) Ujima Building (1019 North Prieur Street)
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Who Is Leading This Effort?

Providence Community Housing and Enterprise. You can find more information on both organizations at the following websites:



www.providencech.org



www.enterprisecommunity.org

For questions or to request another Feedback Form, please contact us:

Home Building Plan
1000 Bourbon Street, PMB #278
New Orleans, LA 70116

Fax: (225)248-9599
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All information you provide will be kept strictly confidential.

Frequently Asked Questions

When can we come home?

Providence/Enterprise is working hard to get people home as soon as possible. Our commitment to the residents of Lafitte/Tremé and Tulane/Gravier is to aggressively work to identify and build as many units of housing as possible. There are many hurdles to get over before all 1500 units of housing will be ready for people to move in. As long as those hurdles are overcome, we expect all units to be ready within the next 3 to 5 years. Our immediate efforts are focused on rebuilding housing on at least 200 properties throughout the Tremé and Tulane/Gravier neighborhoods. Three modular homes have already been built by Ujamaa Community Development Corporation, one of our partners (see photos on next page). A number of units of senior housing at St. Ann's (total of 45 units pre-Katrina) and St. Martin Manor (total of 170 units pre-Katrina) could be available soon if repairs are completed quickly.

What is happening to Lafitte?

In June 2006, the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) announced their decision to demolish Lafitte. HANO stated that this was due to the extensive repairs needed to bring the development up to the U.S., Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Housing Quality Standards and to meet City code compliance. A number of housing advocates disagree with HANO's decision. This issue will most likely be resolved through the legal process.

Was Providence/Enterprise part of HANO's decision to demolish Lafitte?

No. Providence/Enterprise was not involved in any way in the decision to demolish Lafitte. Providence/Enterprise got involved to ensure that the residents of Lafitte, and the communities of Tremé and Tulane/Gravier, have a voice in the rebuilding of their neighborhoods.

How did this project come about?

Both Providence and Enterprise believe that rebuilding homes can help strengthen whole neighborhoods. Having learned of HANO's decision to demolish Lafitte, Providence/Enterprise talked to HANO about having a nonprofit organization take a lead role in redeveloping the housing to ensure that the site and the overall program would provide

housing for low-income families. HANO agreed and, as a result, this Home Building Plan includes one-for-one replacement of existing public housing units in the area.



Map of Lafitte/Tremé and Tulane/Gravier area footprint.

Why is Providence/Enterprise not opposing the decision to demolish Lafitte?

When HANO announced their decision to demolish Lafitte, the Providence/Enterprise team had a choice — either spend time fighting the decision (which in our experience could significantly delay opportunities for residents to come home), or accept the decision and focus on the rebuilding of Lafitte. We decided it was more important to take the next step and start rebuilding the community for the residents.

Where will the new homes be built?

The 1500 homes that are part of the Home Building Plan will be built on many different sites in the Tremé and Tulane/Gravier communities, including Lafitte. Some of these sites have been acquired already, some will be acquired in the future. Because the Lafitte site is large, a significant number of new housing units will be located there. It is critical that decisions about the number and location of the housing units be informed by ideas and suggestions from residents and the local community. This will be an important item for discussion at the October 3 and October 7 public workshops (see additional details about these workshops on the front page of this newsletter), and so we hope many residents will attend.

Who is paying for the rebuilding?

Providence/Enterprise has a capital commitment of up to \$20 million in loans to acquire sites in the community for building homes. Catholic Charities, another partner in the Home

Building Plan, has committed \$2.5 million in private funds to provide case management and counseling to Lafitte families living locally, as well as in other cities (e.g., Houston, Baton Rouge, Atlanta and others). Providence/Enterprise is also working to secure low-income housing tax credits, block grants and other financing from state, federal and private sources to ensure the success of the Home Building Plan and to speed up your return.

Is there a broader community vision?

A number of priorities for the future of New Orleans communities have been expressed through recent meetings and the current community planning process, including:

- Services for families, including health care, youth programs and job training.
- Better school and educational options for neighborhood families.
- Walkable access to shops, community centers and recreational opportunities.
- Sustainable development that is safer, healthier and more resource-efficient.

Through the process of developing this Home Building Plan, our team will collaborate with these other planning efforts and then work to ensure that the Plan helps to achieve the housing and community development goals of residents.

Can you tell me who I can contact to arrange getting my belongings?

You can contact HANO to arrange to get your belongings. The HANO phone number is (504)235-9038.

What should I do about my lease? Should I renew it?

In a recent letter, HANO advised residents to continue to stay in the city that you currently live and continue to receive housing assistance. Their letter also said that:

- Residents should NOT move out of their current unit without consulting the local housing authority that issued their voucher; and
- **Leaving a unit without following proper checkout procedures is considered abandonment and could result in termination of your assistance from HUD.**

What is a modular house?

On August 7, the first two homes in Providence's pilot modular housing program were placed on lots owned by Ujamaa Community Development Corporation. The lots, located at 1806 and 1810 Dumaine in Tremé, were previously abandoned. Modular housing is one of several housing production methods the Providence/Enterprise team is exploring to deliver new homes in the Tremé/Lafitte and Tulane/Gravier area. Other options being considered include Katrina Cottages and panelized housing.

ACT Helpline

Throughout September, an organization called ACT (All Congregations Together) will be working to get in contact with all former residents of Lafitte, including those relocated in other cities across the country. ACT is a nonprofit, faith-based organization that has been working in New Orleans for 15 years to empower citizens. ACT will be using the latest contact information contained in HANO's records.

If you have updated contact information for yourself and/or other Lafitte residents, we would appreciate it if you let us know by calling the toll-free number for the Home Building Plan: 1 (888)429-2499, or (504)889-3686.

In order to help former Lafitte residents plan for the future, Providence/Enterprise will be developing a system to provide support to each former Lafitte household as they decide their future housing needs. This support system, which will start this fall, includes working with each resident to discuss the best option for her or his family, and answering the types of questions asked above. **Please make sure you include your most recent contact information on the Feedback Form so that we can be in touch with you when the resident support program is ready to go.**

In the meantime, if you have questions about your lease, you can contact HANO at (504) 235-9038.



Ujamaa CDC has constructed three of these modular homes in Tremé. Ujamaa also worked with students at Tulane University to develop the prototype house. These photos were taken on August 7, 2006.