



Executive Director's Report
December 11, 2007

Road Home Milestone



Friday, December 7, 2007

Blanco: Road Home has enough money to pay eligible

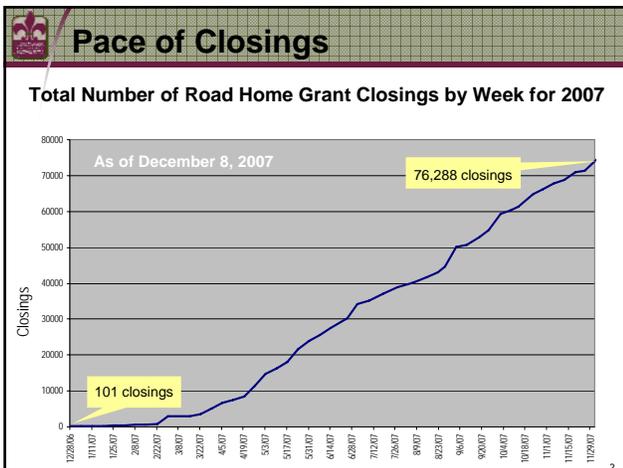
The Times-Picayune
Saturday, December 08, 2007

Road Home program can afford its grants
About 6,000 fewer applicants than expected meet deadline

In a swan song of sorts before she leaves office, Gov. Kathleen Blanco announced Friday that her signature hurricane relief program, the long-troubled Road Home, finally has enough money to cover all of its expected eligible applicants.

"This has been a long journey, but finally we're at the moment we've all been waiting for: The Road Home is fully funded," Blanco said.

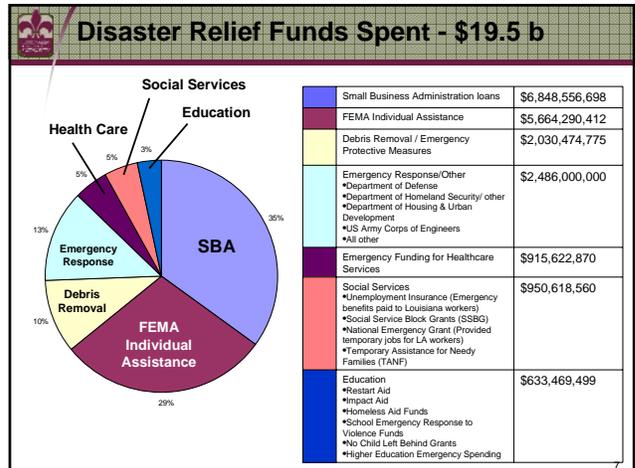
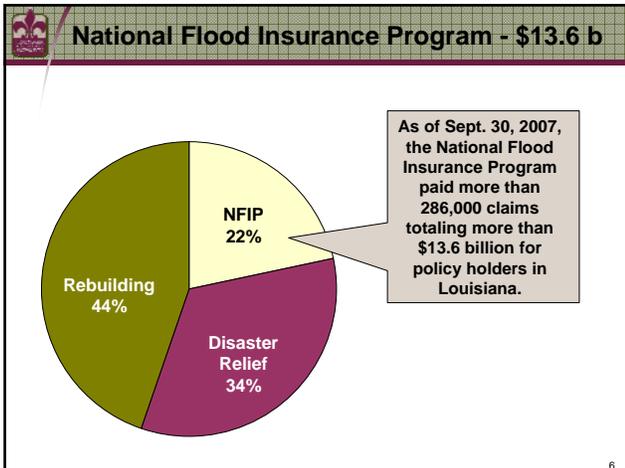
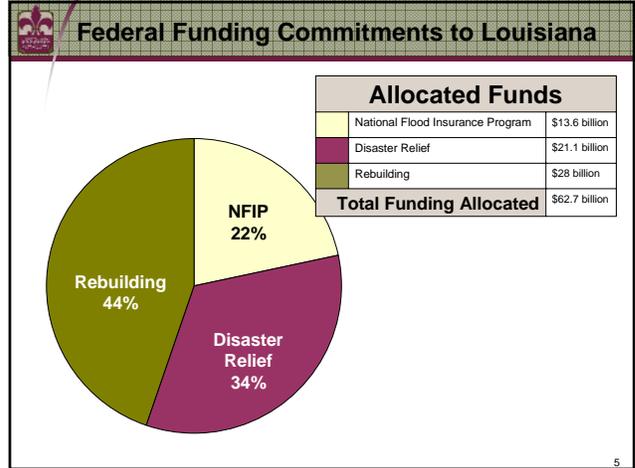
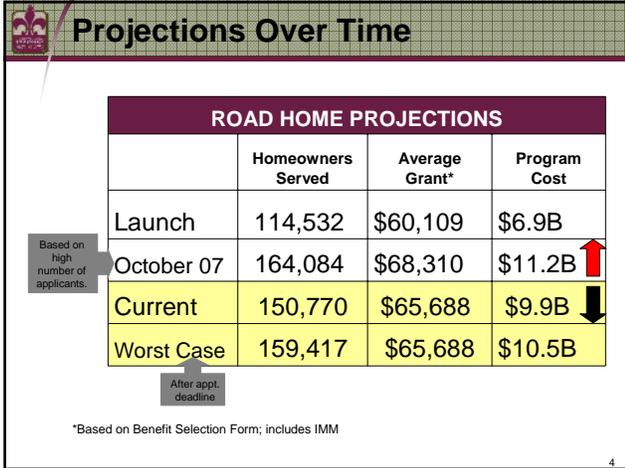
Friday, December 7, 2007 Governor Blanco announced that updated budget estimates show the Road Home Program is fully funded.

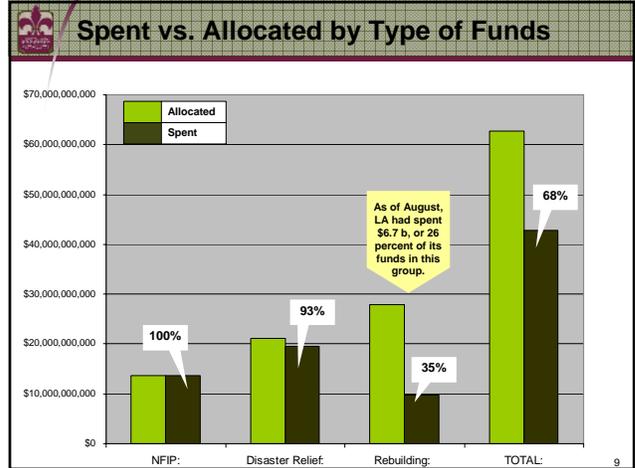
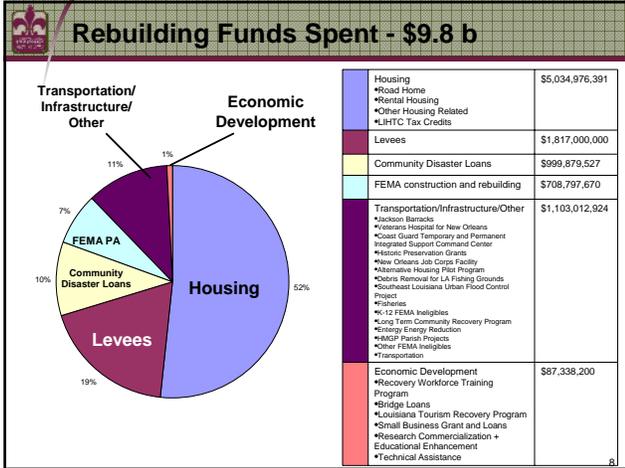



Current Program Data

As of December 5, 2007

Total Applications Received	229,340
Applications Declared Duplicate or Invalid	43,265
Applications Recorded (Eligible for an appointment)	186,075
Initial Appointments Held	167,156
Benefits Calculated	148,550
Benefit Options Letters Sent	136,347
Benefit Options Selected:	
Number of Option One Selections	105,540
Number of Option Two Selections	9,701
Number of Option Three Selections	2,658
Total Benefit Options Letters Returned by Homeowners	123,422
Files Transferred for Closing	95,903
Closings Scheduled	2,796
Closings Held	76,288





Louisiana Gives Thanks

This holiday season, Louisianians recognize we have much to be thankful for.

In that spirit, more than 8,400 citizens signed a letter to President Bush, Congress and the American people, thanking them for all they have done and will do for the state of Louisiana.

As we enter the holiday season, Louisiana's progress and recovery are being celebrated by the people of the state. The spirit of thanksgiving is a time to reflect on the many ways in which the state has been helped and supported by the federal government and the American people. The Louisiana Recovery Authority is proud to have been able to help the state in many ways, and we are grateful for the support of the federal government and the American people. We are also grateful for the support of the Louisiana people, who have shown such resilience and strength in the face of adversity. We are confident that the state will continue to recover and thrive, and we are grateful for the support of the federal government and the American people.

Click here to sign a letter that will be sent to Congress and the Bush Administration thanking them for supporting Louisiana's recovery efforts.

No N.O. Presidential Debate

A Federal Selection Committee rejected New Orleans' bid to host a 2008 Presidential Debate, saying the city is not "sufficiently recovered."

The word was that New Orleans wasn't ready. That's not the issue. They weren't ready for us.

Dr. Norman Francis
Chairman, Louisiana Recovery Authority

South Cameron Hospital Opens

Cameron Parish's only hospital opened its doors to patients Monday, November 26th

The South Cameron Memorial Hospital was rebuilt in one year with \$26 million in private, federal and state funding, including \$4 million in CDBG funds.



American Press
CLIB • MONROE • LAKE CHARLES • MONROE • BOSS FORT • MONROE

November 26, 2007

Lone Cameron hospital opens doors

The doors are open and patients are receiving care at Cameron Parish's only hospital again just over two years after Hurricane Rita left it in ruins.

The first two patients were seen Tuesday in South Cameron Memorial Hospital's emergency room, said Rita T. Simon, hospital administrator. The hospital officially opened on Monday.

"We are so pleased to be open and to once again offer around-the-clock health care services to the people of Cameron Parish," she said. "Our doors right now are for the emergency room and getting patients treated there."

Simon said it took about a year to rebuild the 25-bed acute-care hospital. She said it was done with \$26 million in state, federal and private funding.

"It took a little longer than we anticipated due to all the new building codes we had to comply with," she said. "Right now, we are 10 percent more than we needed over and through the hospital, including construction of sewage and parking."

She said a grand opening is being planned. Cameron Parish District Attorney Jennifer A. Jones said further President Obama is expected to attend.

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Board Members Honored

New Orleans City Business' Top 20 Most Powerful People



Dr. Norman Francis Kim Boyle Boydie Bollinger

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Board Members Honored

Family Service of Greater New Orleans Outstanding Persons




Alex Johnson
Walter Leger

2007 Grambling University Alumni Hall of Fame Inductee



Virgil Robinson, Jr.

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Board Members Honored

Community College of Allegheny County's New President



Alex Johnson

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Board Member Testifies before Senate Subcommittee

Kim Boyle testified Monday, December 3, before the U.S. Senate Homeland Security Subcommittee on Disaster Response

Boyle focused on ways to improve access to and the delivery of health care and social services to those displaced from their homes after a disaster.

She called for a reform to federal law that would designate major disasters as "catastrophes" and afford states automatic waivers of certain cost-sharing burdens, allowing for quicker response and recovery.

Louisiana Senator Mary Landrieu chaired the event.



Louisiana Speaks Wins Emmy

"Louisiana Speaks: Our Voice, Our Plan, Our Future" Documentary Awarded 2007 Suncoast Regional Emmy for Excellence in Service Programming



Congress Overrides WRDA Veto

The Water Resources Development Act of 2007 Provides \$7 billion for Louisiana projects, including \$3.6 billion for hurricane protection projects

- ✦ The bill provides \$2 billion for Louisiana Coastal Area Ecosystem Restoration (LCA), benefiting about two dozen coastal wetlands.
- ✦ Expedites closure of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO).
- ✦ Authorizes \$886 million for Morganza to the Gulf - levees, locks and other systems through Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes that will protect more than 120,000 people and 1,700 square miles
- ✦ Expedites authorization of projects recommended by the comprehensive coastal protection plan

FEMA funds Hazard Mitigation

35 severe repetitive loss properties in Orleans and Jefferson Parishes to be rebuilt with \$6.2 million from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grants Program.

- ✦ 6 homes are first to receive FEMA HMGP Funds in Orleans Parish; 29 homes in Jefferson Parish also funded.
- ✦ Homes will be rebuilt to newest building codes and one foot above Advisory Base Flood Elevation (ABFE).
- ✦ 1,700 homes in Louisiana are classified as "severe repetitive loss homes," suffering damages of \$1,000 or more on at least four occasions or more than 50% of their value on at least two occasions.
- ✦ More than \$1 billion in hazard mitigation funds also being made available to homeowners who have applied to the Road Home program.
- ✦ A congressionally mandated study revealed mitigation saves an average of \$4 for every dollar spent.

The LRA's Achievements

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Residents Returning

- ✦ Analyzed and documented federal funding inequities in Congress' 2005 CDBG allocation and made the case for \$4.2 billion more in housing and infrastructure funding
- ✦ Designed and secured funding for the Road Home Program. To date, 76,288 homeowners have received Road Home grants. A total of \$4.8 billion has been distributed
- ✦ When a shortfall for the Road Home was identified because of FEMA had underestimated the number of major or severely damaged houses in Louisiana, we made the case for an additional \$3 billion of federal funds
- ✦ Provided oversight, monitoring and problem-solving as Road Home encountered implementation problems
- ✦ Designed the "Piggyback" and Small Rental programs to rebuild high-quality, affordable rental properties
- ✦ Secured funds for a \$75 million FEMA Alternative Housing Pilot Program for Louisianians living in FEMA trailers
- ✦ Created the utility rate relief program, to ensure that residents and businesses returning to New Orleans didn't face catastrophic insurance rate hikes

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Schools Reopening

- ✦ Invested \$200 million in school repairs, providing funding to fix damages FEMA declared ineligible for reimbursement.
- ✦ Supported creation of New Orleans' Recovery School District
- ✦ Helped bring teachers to New Orleans by securing state and private funding for New Leaders for New Schools and Teach For America
- ✦ Brought Global Green and Department of Energy in to help build cost-effective, energy-efficient measures into new schools

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Getting Back To Work

- ✦ Designed and recommended programs to invest \$350 million in economic development, including Small Firm Loan and Grant Program, Technical Assistance for Small Businesses and a sector-based workforce training program. 97% of grantees have submitted an application for second payment and 73% of loan requests have been funded and cleared
- ✦ Created and recommended marketing dollars to support Louisiana's \$9 billion tourism industry
- ✦ Worked to allocate GO Zone bonds to ensure funds went to projects in areas most affected
- ✦ Created \$19 million fisheries infrastructure program and documented inequities in fisheries funding awarded to Louisiana

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Recovery Dollars Flowing



- ✦ Louisiana has secured a total of \$7.1 Billion in levee funding
- ✦ Saved Louisiana \$1 billion by identifying and publicizing the federal government's failure to waive a required 10% match for critical infrastructure projects. Congress then reversed that decision
- ✦ Supported a \$200 million project to restore the Jackson Barracks military base, thereby encouraging rebuilding of St. Bernard Parish and the Lower 9th Ward
- ✦ Provided research and advocacy for WRDA bill, which provides \$7 billion for crucial water resources projects in Louisiana

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Caring for Louisianians' Health



Fought to make sure a Veterans Affairs Hospital would be built in Louisiana, specifically downtown New Orleans



Fought to secure short term health care funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Hospitals

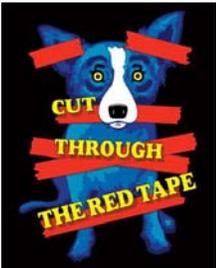


Invested nearly \$4 million in CDBG funds to rebuild South Cameron Memorial Hospital in Southwest Louisiana

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Reducing Red Tape

- ✦ Identified problems with FEMA Project Worksheets and brought them to President Bush's attention in August 2006, prompting FEMA to create a more streamlined process and speeding up approval of \$2 billion in recovery projects
- ✦ Secured more than 14 editorial endorsements from local and National newspapers (including, New York Times, Washington Post, Los Angeles and USA Today) in support of eliminating the 10% cost share requirement for critical infrastructure. Resulting legislation cut a substantial amount of red tape and saved Louisiana \$1 billion



George Rodrigue ©

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Community and Regional Planning



- ✦ Created and secured private funding for the Louisiana Speaks Plan, including 100 action items and 10 priorities developed with input from 27,000 Louisianians. Louisiana Speaks was honored with four awards at the Louisiana Chapter of the American Planning Association. The Louisiana Speaks Documentary also won a regional Emmy award for outstanding Public Service Broadcast
- ✦ Secured Rockefeller Foundation resources for the Unified New Orleans Plan and secured consensus among Mayor, Council and New Orleans Foundation for implementation plan
- ✦ LRA Support Foundation funded planning efforts in Lake Charles, Vermilion Parish, St. Bernard Parish, and Cameron Parish
- ✦ Guided passage of legislative resolution to establish Office of State Planning and Long-Term Community Planning Task Force

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Planning for the Future



- ✦ Developed hundreds of policies to establish recovery and rebuilding programs that will result in a safer, stronger, smarter Louisiana
- ✦ Encouraged parishes to adopt FEMA's Advisory Base Flood Elevations, adopted by all coastal parishes
- ✦ Supported building code passage and funded code enforcement efforts with \$11 million in CDBG funds and \$14 million in HMGP funds
- ✦ Designed and funded \$200 million Long-Term Community Recovery program to allow parishes to rebuild public infrastructure and plan for future disasters
- ✦ Developed proposal for a "Catastrophic Annex" to the Stafford Act to benefit Louisiana and other communities hit by future disasters

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Communicating Progress and Needs of Recovery



- ✦ Kept Louisiana's recovery in the forefront of local and national media
- ✦ Brought to light funding inequities later independently confirmed by The U.S. Government Accountability Office, The Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government and the Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana
- ✦ Provided critical information about the status of Louisiana's recovery to legislative and congressional committees, state and national organizations and the general public
- ✦ Documented and reported the amount of appropriations received by Louisiana by category and tracked spending patterns over time
- ✦ Teamed with LouisianaRebuilds.info to provide critical information to evacuees
- ✦ Sponsored public meetings with local officials, business owners, fisherman and others to answer questions about recovery programs
- ✦ Earned a local, state and national reputation for possessing the best and most up-to-date information on Louisiana's Recovery. The LRA is routinely quoted in major publications, presentations and government reports
- ✦ Provided a forum for transparency through public meetings

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What's Next for the LRA?

The Strategic Plan for FY 08/09 outlines the major work and significant projects the LRA plans for the next one to two years



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Secure Funding for Recovery and Rebuilding

- ✓ Secure remaining federal funding for the Road Home Program Shortfall
- ✦ Secure funding for additional federal needs, including levee and coastal protection funds, additional assistance for rental housing development, and a National Catastrophe Fund
- ✦ Develop and advocate for state recovery legislation and funding priorities for 2008
- ✦ Work to match local and state recovery projects with available private funding sources
- ✦ Coordinate with media allies on our state and federal priorities to continue to maintain public support.



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Identify, Prioritize and Address Critical Short-Term Recovery Issues

Housing:

- ✦ Assist in the development and approval of parish redevelopment and disposition plans for as many as 20,000 properties to be acquired through the Road Home Program
- ✦ Determine gaps for single family housing through the Road Home Homeowner Assistance program
- ✦ Roll out remaining rental housing program funds to meet needs in the most impacted parishes
- ✦ Oversee implementation of pilot first-time homebuyer program and seek additional funds for the program's expansion
- ✦ Continue to develop and advance policy to help displaced families transition out of temporary housing and return home
- ✦ Link displaced families with rental housing funded through the rental funding programs
- ✦ Identify supportive services as they relate to homeowners with disabilities faced with repairing or rebuilding

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Identify, Prioritize and Address Critical Short-Term Recovery Issues

Infrastructure:

- ✦ Assist in the rebuilding of public infrastructure by helping local governments navigate through bottlenecks in the FEMA Public Assistance program
- ✦ Ensure schools and medical facilities are rebuilt following the best design and community access goals
- ✦ Conduct a feasibility study for the rail project between New Orleans and Baton Rouge recommended by the Louisiana Speaks plan
- ✦ Lead and coordinate the efforts to implement the transportation goals outlined in the Louisiana Speaks Regional Plan and the Louisiana Statewide Transportation Plan



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Identify, Prioritize and Address Critical Short-Term Recovery Issues

Economic and Workforce Development:

- ✦ Determine the ongoing needs of business recovery and recommend programs and funding to address those critical needs
- ✦ Oversee the launch of additional business assistance programs
- ✦ Develop and implement additional policies and programs to address the workforce shortages in the most impacted parishes of Southwest and Southeast Louisiana
- ✦ Launch a fisheries infrastructure redevelopment program and direct small firm loans and grants to the assistance of fishermen
- ✦ Continue to market and re-brand Louisiana as a tourism and convention destination
- ✦ Develop ongoing programs for the improvement of commercialization of university research and development in the most impacted areas as part of their economic recovery goals
- ✦ Promote the development of innovative technologies in all industries, including traditional industries

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Identify, Prioritize and Address Critical Short-Term Recovery Issues

Insurance:

- ✦ Direct the implementation of hazard mitigation programs to prevent future damages from storms, and communicate their long term importance to the insurance industry
- ✦ Support the development and implementation of an insurance solutions agenda, including advocacy for a National Catastrophe Fund
- ✦ Educate insurance and reinsurance markets on Louisiana's recovery mitigation efforts, new state building codes and their effort on reducing risk in Louisiana.

Education:

- ✦ Monitor and champion the reform efforts of the Recovery School District of Orleans Parish
- ✦ Monitor the reconstruction of damaged schools and ensure available CDBG reconstruction funds are directed where the need is the greatest
- ✦ Support initiatives that will help attract and retain highly qualified school teachers and principals in most affected areas

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Identify, Prioritize and Address Critical Short-Term Recovery Issues

Health Care:

- ✦ Work with state and federal agencies to support construction of the joint Veterans Affairs and state academic medical center in downtown New Orleans
- ✦ Work with Department of Health and Hospitals and federal officials to ensure implementation of medical home delivery system model in New Orleans and Southwest Louisiana
- ✦ Bolster the healthcare workforce through federal and state programs
- ✦ Work with state and federal agencies to ensure that mental health and other human services are provided to evacuee families

Environmental and Coastal Protection:

- ✦ Ensure all marine debris from the hurricanes is safely removed by FEMA under a mission assignment
- ✦ Monitor and champion the coastal protection and restoration efforts in partnership with the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, ensuring adequate levee protection now and fully completed system by 2011 that is fully funded by the federal government



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Rebuild Louisiana in Accordance with Louisiana Speaks and Smart Growth Principles

- ✦ Work with the Legislature and Governor to support and institutionalize effective state land use planning efforts
- ✦ Support local government implementation of the parish recovery plans
- ✦ Implement the recommendations of the Louisiana Speaks plan
- ✦ Provide monitoring to ensure state, local and federal programs are consistent with Louisiana Speaks and Parish Rebuilding Plans



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Provide Oversight and Accountability

- ✦ Monitor the audit findings of the Legislative Auditor, HUD, the GAO, and other organizations overseeing the use of recovery funds
- ✦ Regularly report expenditures of federal and state recovery funds including the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Louisiana Land Trust, Small Business Administration and National Flood Insurance Program
- ✦ Work with the Attorney General's Task Force to track cases of hurricane fraud and ensure the prosecution of those stealing federal and state resources or preying on citizens during their recovery efforts
- ✦ Oversee agencies current use of funds and implementation of recovery programs



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Communicate Progress, Status and Needs of the Recovery

- ✦ Share the status of the recovery with the public and the media using external, objective benchmarks and indicators
- ✦ Schedule regular meetings with local recovery officials, advocates, faith-based groups and non-profits to share progress, needs and status, communicate a unified message, assess needs, and report back to staff
- ✦ Maintain regular interaction with national and local editorial boards on recovery status and ongoing challenges
- ✦ Use research and outreach to continue to keep Hurricane Rita's challenges at the forefront of recovery's programs and debate



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