



NEW ORLEANS PROPERTY

ACQUISITION & REDEVELOPMENT GUIDE

RESOURCES FOR SMALL-SCALE PROPERTY ACQUISITION, FINANCING, AND CONSTRUCTION IN NEW ORLEANS

prepared by



The **New Orleans Vacant Properties Initiative (NOVPI)**, a joint venture between Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC) and National Vacant Properties Campaign, began operations in January 2008. The initiative is working primarily with the City of New Orleans and the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA) to design, develop, and enhance land use programs and policies in a systematic, transparent, and socially equitable manner.

NOVPI also seeks to facilitate communication and collaboration among local leaders and community stakeholders to foster the development and implementation of land acquisition, management, alternative use, and disposition programs that will transform vacant, abandoned and blighted properties into neighborhood assets.

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New Orleans, Louisiana 70125

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supported by

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introduction



In April of 2009, statistical researcher Greg Rigamer with GCR & Associates confirmed that a startling 35 percent of unique addresses-- about 66,000 lots-- in New Orleans are vacant. "That is a colossal challenge for Orleans Parish," Rigamer said. "They're throughout the city, but Central City, the Lower 9th Ward, the Upper 9th Ward, Gentilly, Lakeview. These areas have significant vacancies."¹

Vacant properties represent a significant challenge for New Orleans' revitalization. Empty lots have been strongly correlated with increased rates of crime, violence, and public safety hazards. Indeed, one study found that gun assaults rose by as much as 22.4 percent with each new vacant property on a block.² Further, abandoned properties can stifle the revitalization efforts of neighborhoods by deterring new residents from moving in and by pulling down surrounding home values.³

New Orleans residents interested in purchasing a home within the city, or small-scale developers interested in developing a property are a critical piece of the city's revitalization. This guide is intended to support developers as they go through the development process to access the resources and programs they need to be successful.

Thank you for your work in revitalizing New Orleans.

how to use this guide



The guide contains many of the resources necessary for individuals or organizations to successfully navigate the acquisition process, find appropriate financing, and begin construction. However, projects rarely follow a linear path, and many developers find that they need to circle back to different parts of the process a number of times before reaching completion. Thus, this guide was prepared with hyperlinks in the table of contents to encourage users to click directly through to pertinent sections at times that are most useful.

Contact information for specific resources are listed directly on pages that outline their uses and restrictions for ease of use. Further, all contact information is again listed in the final section of this guide for easy reference.

Please be aware that individuals or organizations will be ineligible for some of the resources described in this guide. Please be sure to review eligibility specifications of each resource prior to applying.

1: acquisition



Long before Hurricane Katrina swept flood water into more than 80,000 homes New Orleans faced a serious blight problem due to population loss associated with trends toward suburbanization.⁴ This problem was amplified by the storm's destruction and the subsequent forced relocation of thousands of former residents.

Many New Orleans homes that stand vacant today are owned by people who have relocated outside of the city, some with intentions of coming back to their New Orleans property at some point in the future and others who no longer have plans of returning. The unexpected and sudden evacuation of many New Orleans property owners during Hurricane Katrina has resulted in some properties in the parish having unclear title ownership, unpaid property taxes, or other barriers to acquisition and rehabilitation.

There are a variety of technical and legal tools residents can use to navigate property acquisition in this challenging environment. The following chapter addresses some of the tools that can be used to acquire properties by either individuals or neighborhood groups.

1: acquisition

1.1 determining ownership

Determining property ownership of a vacant or intermittently occupied property can be difficult. In post-Katrina New Orleans, some property owners now live outside of Louisiana, some properties have been abandoned, some have been ceded to the state, and others have gone through foreclosure. Ownership of a given property could be in the hands of the homeowner, lender, servicer, real estate firm, investor, non-profit, or government entity. Due to frequent title changes, the records kept at the city sometimes need to be cross-referenced by more than one source in order to get the most accurate information about ownership.

Ownership information can be used by neighborhoods in order to determine accountability for a problem that has occurred at a vacant home, or for the general condition of the property, since owners bear the ultimate responsibility for their property.

title searches

There are a number of resources available to help determine ownership. The City of New Orleans has developed an online Geographic Information System (GIS) that allows users to search properties by address, property owner name, or tax bill number. The Board of Assessor's website allows users to search for tax records. The Louisiana Secretary of State Commercial Division Corporations Database is searchable by person, business, or specific document (see the following page for contact information).

Blight: An official legal designation for properties that are vacant, uninhabitable, and hazardous. A city administrative hearing officer must declare a property to be blighted. Thus, not all dilapidated properties are legally considered blighted.

1: acquisition

City of New Orleans GIS Property Viewer	
This website utilizes Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to allow users to search for and display information about real property parcels in the City of New Orleans.	
Website:	http://www.cityofno.com/pg-137-1.aspx
Information provided for free:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore the map and selected properties • Overlay map layers such as Zoning, Council Districts, Flood Zones, etc. • Retrieve Property and Assessor Characteristics for a property. • Retrieve Location Info for a property. • Retrieve the Permit History for a property.
Louisiana Secretary of State Commercial Division Corporations Database	
This website provides a searchable database of commercial enterprises registered with the state of Louisiana.	
Website:	http://www400.sos.louisiana.gov/app1/paygate/crpinq.jsp
Information provided for free:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization ID • Organization Name • Type of Entity • Status • Mailing Address • File Date • Registered Agent
Board Of Assessors	
This website provides a searchable database of parish-based assessor's records.	
Website:	http://www.opboa.org/Main/Home.aspx
Other Contact Information:	Parish of Orleans, 4E01 City Hall - Civic Center, 1300 Perdido Street, New Orleans, LA 70112 504-658-1300
Information provided for free:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner Information • Parcel Information • Certified Assessment Information • Values History • Property Description

title search options

1: acquisition

working with neighborhood organizations

Some New Orleans neighborhood groups have taken initiative in identifying vacant properties in their areas. These groups have often found innovative ways to organize blight mitigation task forces that can offer potential buyers the name of a specific property owner, as well as the history of property (for example, if the owner has plans of returning, or what kind of rehabilitation has been done to the property).

Some examples of neighborhood groups that have done excellent work in creating blight monitoring systems are the Beacon of Hope Resource Center in the Lakeview and Gentilly neighborhoods, as well as the Broadmoor Improvement Association.

Beacon of Hope Resource Center uses a highly engaged volunteer staff to monitor neighborhood properties, as well as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology to track blighted and vacant property in their community. Similarly, the Broadmoor Improvement Association has used mapping technology to locate vacant properties and to monitor their neighborhoods recovery.

A person interested in property acquisition may find it useful to contact the property area's neighborhood association to gain information about a potential development site or a property owner.

Broadmoor Improvement Association

4520 S. Derbigny Street
New Orleans, LA 70124
504.309.2561
504.333.6119 (fax)
www.broadmoorimprovement.com

Beacon of Hope Resource Center

145 Robert E Lee Blvd Suite 200
New Orleans LA 70124
504.309.5120
504.324.0487 (fax)
www.lakewoodbeacon.org

A list of New Orleans neighborhood associations can be found at www.npnnola.com.

**Official Site of the National
Association of Realtors**
www.realtor.com

Multiple Listing Service (MLS)
www.mls.com

1: acquisition

1.2 acquiring a vacant property from an owner

For individuals or groups interested in purchasing a single property, the most straightforward strategy is purchasing directly from a homeowner. Many vacant properties have been listed by their owners for sale on commonly used real estate websites including Realtors.com and MLS.com. Similarly, real estate agents from credible firms are likely to have a listing of vacant properties for sale in New Orleans. These properties already have willing sellers and a set sale price, making them the easiest properties to acquire.

Individuals or groups unfamiliar with the homeownership process would benefit from attending a first-time homebuyer education program offered by many housing organizations within New Orleans. These courses typically offer twelve hours of instruction on the basics of working with a bank to get financing, pre-qualifying for a loan, reading and understanding a property purchase agreement, going through a real estate closing, obtaining proper insurance, and avoiding foreclosure. Fees vary by organization, and often have a sliding scale payment system. Information on specific homeownership courses can be found in the Resources section of this guide.

1: acquisition

1.3 purchasing vacant properties from a bank

Individuals, developers, neighborhood organizations, or community development corporations (CDCs) can negotiate with banks to purchase properties that have been repossessed. There are two common purchase methods, short sales and purchases of real estate owned properties.

If an individual successfully negotiates a short sale with a homeowner, they may reduce the amount of time the house remains vacant and may be able to eliminate potential damage to the home. In the case of an REO sale, an individual can purchase the bank-owned property for a negotiated price. Banks also sell REO properties through auction companies at private auctions.

steps to purchasing properties from banks

step 1: Determine property ownership using the methods described in an earlier portion of this guide. With a short sale, a bank will not be listed as the owner because the mortgage foreclosure process has not been completed. To negotiate a short sale, the prospective buyer will have to be familiar with the owner and their mortgage foreclosure status.

step 2: Make an offer. Banks often set unrealistic sale prices because they ignore market conditions, extreme disrepair or unsatisfied liens, such as unpaid property taxes or water bills. These unrealistic prices make acquisition and rehabilitation unaffordable for many community-based-organizations. For these reasons, an interested buyer must complete a thorough property inspection, market research, and obtain a title commitment. The potential buyer should approach the bank with these supporting materials to help negotiate a more realistic price.

Short Sale: A “short sale” occurs when the homeowner sells his or her house to a third party buyer before the mortgage foreclosure becomes final. The bank must approve the transaction if the purchase price is less than the amount owed on the mortgage.

REO Sale: A property is considered “Real Estate Owned” (REO) when a bank repossesses a home from its owner, typically in the case of a mortgage foreclosure. At that point, the property ownership will transfer back to the bank. Frequently, banks will try to sell the property immediately. In certain cases, the banks are unable to sell the property quickly to an individual owner due to factors such as a weak market or property condition.

*Please be aware that individuals or organizations will be ineligible for some of the resources described in this guide. Please be sure to review eligibility specifications of each resource prior to applying.

1: acquisition

1.4 purchasing properties from the city

The City of New Orleans conducts city-owned property sales through the New Orleans Redevelopment Administration (NORA). NORA was created to eliminate and prevent the spread of slums and blight in the City of New Orleans in accordance with Community Improvement Plans through real property acquisition, bond issuance, and support of neighborhood development.⁵

The City of New Orleans is currently working to clarify its legal ability to acquire abandoned or blighted property. More information regarding the City's acquisition authority will be available once the pending litigation is settled. In the mean time, the City offers vacant property for sale through two main mechanisms: The Lot Next Door Program (LND) and Requests for Proposals (RFP) on specific projects, both detailed below.*

1: acquisition

nora request for proposal (rfp)

As the public authority created under the laws of the State of Louisiana to promote neighborhood revitalization and community redevelopment, the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority has the purview to solicit applications for requests for proposal (RFPs). RFPs will represent individual projects and will state required deadlines, funds available to complete the project, as well as other project requirements. Applicants will be evaluated via a set of programmatic criteria using a predetermined score card. Finalists will also be subjected to a financial underwriting to determine the size and terms of assistance.

transfer of an adjudicated property from the city

The New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA) has received approximately 1,500 properties from the City that were adjudicated for failure to pay property taxes. However, neither the City nor NORA has marketable and insurable title to these properties due to the nature of the tax adjudication process. NORA is currently working pursuing legal action to make the properties eligible for title insurance.

To perform a search of adjudicated property, visit the Parish of Orleans Civil District Court Conveyance Office. The Conveyance Office is a government agency that registers all transfers of real estate and other land records in Orleans Parish.

NORA

Request for proposals can be found
[www.noraworks.org/
rfps.htm#ActiveRFP](http://www.noraworks.org/rfps.htm#ActiveRFP)

Parish of Orleans Civil District Court Conveyance Office

421 Loyola Avenue, Room 402
New Orleans, LA 70112
504.592.9100
504.592.9128 (fax)
www.orailescdc.com/regcon.shtm

1: acquisition

lot next door program

The Lot Next Door Program was created by the New Orleans City Council created to allow residents to purchase a NORA-owned property immediately next door to their own.

Beginning summer 2008, NORA sent notification letters by registered mail on a rolling basis to eligible homeowners. Letter recipients were determined based on the status of their city tax and homestead exemption records and whether they are adjacent to NORA-owned or potentially owned property .

To be eligible, Lot Next Door participants must:

1. Have a homestead exemption on your property
2. Live directly to the right or left of the property NORA owns
3. Currently comply with City building codes and health and safety ordinances on all properties you own in Orleans Parish
4. Be current on taxes on all property you own in Orleans Parish
5. Be prepared to pay NORA the appraised, fair market lot value plus legal fees and costs
6. Plan to hold ownership of the subject property for at least five years or pay a penalty.

growing home program

A second component to the Lot Next Door program is expected to be rolled out by mid-summer 2009. Through the Growing Home program eligible participants will receive credits, up to \$10,000, to reimburse for fencing and landscaping the lot next door. Improvements potentially eligible for credits include trees, native plants, raised planters, permeable paving and fencing.

New Orleans Redevelopment Authority

1340 Poydras Street, Suite 600
New Orleans, Louisiana 70112
504-658-4400
504-658-4551 (fax)
www.noraworks.org

Growing Home Program

NORA
1340 Poydras Street Suite 600
New Orleans, LA 70112
504.658.4431
504.658.4551 (fax)
<http://growinghomenola.org>

1: acquisition

project lien waiver

The City of New Orleans Project Lien Waiver was created to assist property owners in restoring blighted and substandard property to commerce. The Lien Waiver Committee works with the owners of blighted and substandard property in removing city code violation fines and liens that have been placed against their property, if they renovate it.

A lien waiver could be granted if a property owner meets one or more of the criteria below:

- Property has been renovated and is up to code
- Property purchased through expropriation by the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA)
- The lien was improperly assessed

To apply, contact the New Orleans Office of Public Advocacy to receive a lien waiver claim form. Participants will also need to bring the following documentation:

- Recent city tax bill obtained from the Treasury Department in Room 1W38 of City Hall
- Photographs of the property
- Letter from your lender that your loan would be approved if your property were lien-free
- Legal documentation transferring ownership to you or agreement to purchase
- HUD-1 settlement statement from when you purchased your property

Property Lien: If a property owner fails to maintain his or her own property in accordance with city codes, the owner can be fined by the city for violation of city codes. If the fines are not paid, they can become liens against the property. Liens are like mortgages and can be foreclosed upon.

Office of Public Advocacy

City Hall
1300 Perdido Street, Room 1W09
New Orleans, LA 70112
Phone Number: 311
[www.cityofno.com/Portals/
PublicAdvocacy/portal.aspx](http://www.cityofno.com/Portals/PublicAdvocacy/portal.aspx)

1: acquisition

purchase tax sale deed at tax sale

The City's Finance Department holds regular public sales of adjudicated properties. The purchaser pays only the taxes due and then must quiet the title in court.

The City of New Orleans Tax Sale is conducted in the fall of every year. The sale is held online at the New Orleans Tax Sale website exclusively. Properties listed for sale on the New Orleans Tax Sale website will be subject to a blind bidding process. That is, participants submit their individual bids without knowledge of the value of the competing bids on the property. Throughout the tax sale period, individuals may submit bids on properties, and the winners will only be determined after the close of the tax sale.

Rather than bidding on the dollar amount of the purchase price of a property, participants will bid on percent ownership of a property. The bidder willing to pay full purchase price for the least percentage ownership will be the successful purchaser. For instance, if the total delinquency owed on a property is \$1,000, that purchase amount will never change. Rather an individual may bid \$1000 for 100% of ownership of that property, and another individual may submit a bid of \$1000 for only 85% ownership of that property. In this instance, the individual bidding \$1000 for 85% ownership would be the successful purchaser, having bid on a lower percentage ownership of the property. The former owner has three years to redeem the property (18 months if the property is blighted or abandoned) by paying the purchase price (including costs), a five percent (5%) penalty, and one percent (1%) interest per month from the date of the tax sale until redeemed.

Tax Sale: A tax sale refers to the sale of the tax deed for a property by a taxing authority or a sheriff to recover delinquent taxes. Tax deeds for properties that have tax delinquencies are sold to the public for the amount of delinquent taxes due plus accrued penalties, interest, and costs. Louisiana law stipulates that the tax deed is sold at tax sale to the purchaser willing to bid on the least percent ownership of property.

New Orleans Tax Sale.Com
866.493.7410
support@neworleanstaxsale.com
www.neworleanstaxsale.com

1: acquisition

purchase tax sale deed at tax sale , cont.

A tax sale deed is what is purchased at a tax sale. This represents a legal interest or 'stake' in the property; and is not equivalent to a title for the property. At the end of the redemption period, if the property owner has failed to redeem the property from the tax sale purchaser, it may be within the legal rights of the tax sale purchaser to file suit for title. However, there may be variations based on the individual situation with each property, so it is best to research and consult with a legal professional further on the rights and obligations of a tax sale purchaser regarding the post-redemptive period.

The percent interest represents the percent interest in the property you would be entitled to on the tax sale deed. In the event that the property owner were to redeem the property, after you purchased it with a 50% interest in the property, that property owner would still be responsible for paying you the full purchase price (what you paid for it at tax sale), as well as the appropriate fees and interest. As to how the percent interest would affect the process in the event that the property owner does not redeem within the 3-year or 18-month period (depending on whether the property is blighted or abandoned), it may be best to consult with a legal professional on that matter. Further, anything less than 51% interest in a property would not constitute the majority interest or 'stake' in a property, which may be another matter to discuss with a legal professional .

1: acquisition

1.5 acquiring a foreclosed property

In September 2008, Orleans Parish ranked 200th in a RealtyTrac survey of foreclosure filings out of a total 3,141 U.S. counties.⁶ In July 2008 alone, Orleans Parish foreclosure filings were reported on 239 properties, an increase of 241 percent from June 2008 and a 123 percent increase from July 2007. The relatively high rate of foreclosures stands in stark contrast to previous months of relatively low foreclosure rates for the City of New Orleans and could signify that the city may be less immune to the effects of the national housing crisis than real estate experts previously thought.

Unlike other parts of Louisiana, which experienced a proliferation of sub-prime mortgage products leading to a rise in delinquencies and foreclosures, New Orleans, with its devastation and loss of assets, was not a sub-prime target. Prior to Katrina, New Orleans was considered an “FHA town”. But the devastation from Katrina resulted in loss of jobs, family, homes and dislocation. Without income and located far from their homes, many people in New Orleans saw their properties go into foreclosure. Unfortunately, the City believes that the number of homes currently owned by banks, or in the process of foreclosure, is a small percentage of the number of delinquent, potentially foreclosable properties.

The City has numerous properties in substantial disrepair for which banks are unwilling to foreclose upon due to fear that they will not be able to dispose of them. Currently, the City is working to obtain national Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) funds that will allow it to partner with banks and strategically select properties for acquisition and redevelopment in selected target areas⁷.

Office of the Civil Sheriff
403 Civil Courts Building
421 Loyola Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70112
504.523.6143
[www.civilsheriff.com/
RealEstateSales.asp](http://www.civilsheriff.com/RealEstateSales.asp)

1: acquisition

sheriff sale

The Office of the Civil Sheriff is the official auctioneer for Civil Court ordered sales in Orleans Parish. Ownership of property, either real estate or movables, can be jeopardized by a money judgment or by a delinquent payment on a loan. When the interests of a borrower and/or other defendants in a property are foreclosed, the property is sold to satisfy the debt at a sale called a public auction.

The Office of the Civil Sheriff holds a real estate auction every Thursday at noon unless otherwise advertised in the lobby of the Civil District Courthouse located at 421 Loyola Avenue at Poydras Street.

Each property and its auction date is advertised in the Times Picayune, the official newspaper of record, thirty (30) days before the auction and again on Monday, the week of the auction. Properties are also advertised in a second publication like The Louisiana Weekly newspaper to run concurrently with those ads run in the Times Picayune. Upcoming lists of properties for sale are available in the Real Estate Division of the Sheriff's Office three (3) weeks prior to the actual auction of a piece of property and on its website under the heading, "Real Estate Sales Lists."

1: acquisition

sheriff sale, cont.

There are two kinds of bids on a foreclosed property. When the sale is with appraisal the bid must open at two thirds (2/3) of the appraisal and must satisfy any superior claims. If 2/3 of the appraisal results in an opening bid insufficient to cover the costs and commission, then the opening bid will be raised to reflect those expenses.

When the sale is "without" appraisal the bid must cover any superior claims plus the costs and commission. Usually this is a relatively low amount between two and five thousand dollars. No access in to the foreclosed home is allowed prior to the auction. The sale is not officially completed until the entire purchase price is paid in full. All property is sold "As Is Where Is."

Upon successfully bidding on the property, the successful bidder must immediately provide the Sheriff ten percent (10%) of the purchase price paid in cash, money order, official, cashiers or certified check (no personal checks are accepted), plus their name, address, phone number, marital status and social security number. With some properties the entire amount must be paid in cash and this will be specified in the advertisement prior to the auction. The balance must be paid within thirty days after the sale unless the terms of the sale require the full purchase price at the time of the successful bid. Failure to meet this deadline may result in the property being reset for a second auction. Should the second auction result in a lesser sales price, the first bidder may lose all or part of his deposit.

The property deed will be transferred to the new owner no less than fifteen (15) days after paying the balance of the purchase price. Payment of the balance by certified funds results in delivery of the deed sooner.

1: acquisition

2.6 purchasing property from national sources

department of housing and urban development programs

In order to obtain control of vacant houses, neighborhood stakeholders can purchase houses owned by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Homes that have a FHA-insured mortgage and go through the mortgage foreclosure process become HUD owned homes. Anyone, including individuals, block clubs, neighborhood organizations, faith-based organizations, and CDCs, may purchase a house owned by HUD.

A HUD home is a 1 to 4 unit residential property acquired by HUD as a result of a foreclosure action on an FHA-insured mortgage. HUD becomes the property owner and offers it for sale to recover the loss on the foreclosure claim.

HUD Homes are initially offered to owner-occupant purchasers (people who are buying the home as their primary residence). Following the priority period for owner occupants, unsold properties are available to all buyers, including investors.

All properties available for purchase by the public are offered for sale at Internet listing sites maintained by management companies under contract to HUD. Any real estate broker registered with HUD may submit an offer and contract to purchase on your behalf. HUD pays the real estate broker's commission, if included in the contract.

1: acquisition

department of housing and urban development programs, cont.

Process for Purchasing:

- **Step 1:** Find a home. HUD posts homes available for purchase at the link listed below. Prospective buyers may search for homes by address, city, county, zip code, or price range.
- **Step 2:** Find a broker. A HUD-registered broker working on behalf of the prospective purchaser must place all bids.
- **Step 3:** Place a Bid. To place a bid on a property, a prospective buyer must have the “earnest money deposit” and a prequalification letter or proof of funds for a cash sale. The earnest money deposit amount depends upon the sale price. For sales up to \$49,999, the deposit is \$500. For sales \$50,000 and up, the deposit is \$1,000. HUD does not offer financing for home purchases. Potential buyers must secure their own financing.

A prospective buyer that will live in the purchased HUD home as their primary residence may take advantage of a priority period during which they will have the option to purchase the home before a prospective investor. This “owner-occupant” priority period lasts for the first ten days after HUD posts the property on the website. Any other prospective buyer is considered an “investor” and may purchase a home after the first ten-day priority period.

For a winning bid, the bid must exceed the minimum acceptable amount, also known as the “threshold,” and must be the highest among the placed acceptable bids for that property.

To search for available HUD homes, click <http://hud1.towerauction.net/LA.htm>

To find a HUD-registered broker, click <http://hud1.towerauction.net/e2/broker/LA.htm>.

1: acquisition

neighbor next door sales programs

The Neighbor Next Door initiatives are a collection of FHA's home sales programs designed to help communities and promote homeownership. The initiative is designed to encourage renewal of revitalization areas by providing law enforcement officers, firefighters, emergency medical technicians and teachers an opportunity to purchase homes in these communities. HUD provides a substantial incentive in the form of a fifty percent discount off the list price of eligible properties.

For more information about the Neighbor Next Door Sales, click www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/reo/goodn/gnndabot.cfm

dollar homes

HUD's Dollar Homes initiative helps local governments to foster housing opportunities for low to moderate income families and address specific community needs by offering them the opportunity to purchase qualified HUD-owned homes for \$1 each.

For more information on HUD Dollar Homes, click www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/reo/goodn/dhmabout.cfm.

Dollar Homes are single-family homes that are acquired by the Federal Housing Administration (which is part of HUD) as a result of foreclosure actions. Single-family properties are made available through the program whenever FHA is unable to sell the homes for six months.

By selling vacant homes for \$1 after six months on the market, HUD makes it possible for communities to fix up the homes and put them to good use at a considerable savings. The newly occupied homes can then act as catalysts for neighborhood revitalization, attracting new residents to an area.

Local governments can partner with local nonprofit homeownership organizations or tap into existing local programs to resell the homes to low- and moderate-income residents of the community.

1: acquisition

sales to non-profit organizations

FHA offers community and faith-based nonprofit organizations the opportunity to purchase HUD homes at discounts up to 30 percent under the direct sales program. With this discount, local nonprofit organizations invest in their communities through property rehabilitation and resell to first time homebuyers and low to moderate-income families. FHA also offers nonprofit agencies favorable FHA insured mortgage financing terms and opportunities for down payment assistance programs.

For more information on HUD sales to non-profit organizations, click www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/np/np_home.cfm.

To search for available Fannie Mae homes, click www.homepath.com.

fannie mae

In order to obtain control of vacant houses, neighborhood stakeholders can purchase houses owned by the Federal National Mortgage Association (Fannie Mae). Homes that have a mortgage in which Fannie Mae is the primary investor and go through the mortgage foreclosure process become Fannie Mae owned homes. Anyone, including individuals, block clubs, neighborhood organizations, faith-based organizations, and CDCs, may purchase a house owned by Fannie Mae.

Process for Purchasing :

Step 1: Find a home. Homes available for purchase are posted on the link listed below. Prospective buyers may search for homes by city, zip code, or price range.

Step 2: Contact the listed broker. Local brokers sell Fannie Mae homes. Fannie Mae lists the broker name and contact information in the information posted through the online listing above. Contact the broker to initiate the purchasing process.

2: financing



In acquiring legal ownership of a vacant property, it will likely be necessary to obtain financing. Types and sources of financing will vary with the scale and complexity of a project. Further, in the current down-market, many of the common avenues for pursuing financing may be closed, even to those with sterling credit and excellent portfolios of previous work.

In this chapter, some of the most common sources for acquisition and rehabilitation financing are presented. No matter what financing you obtain, your lender should work with you throughout the property acquisition or construction process. Thus, establishing a good working relationship with a lender early in the process is can be very useful. This chapter will provide information about different types of loans, as well as information on different financing options available to individuals and groups interested in property acquisition.

2.1 loans types

Recent upheaval in the national credit markets means that guidelines for lending money and the types of loans available are changing all the time. However, there are several types of mortgage terms that can be helpful in financing a real estate project. Further, a discussion with a qualified lender in appropriate for choosing the product appropriate for each developer and project.

FHA loans: These are mortgages that are insured by the federal government through the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). The fact that the loans are insured by the government makes lenders feel more comfortable loaning money to buyers.

VA loans: The Veterans Administration guarantees loans for veterans, service people and their spouses, making it possible for them to secure loans with favorable terms.

203K loans: This type of mortgage includes funds for the purchase of the property as well as for its renovation. Borrowers have six months after taking out the loan to complete work on the property. The work scope, contractor and expenses must be approved by the lender and will be monitored.

Reverse Mortgage: A reverse mortgage is a special type of mortgage for persons 62 years of age and older who own their homes. It allows a borrower to turn the value of their home into cash without having to make monthly repayments and without jeopardizing their rights to your home. In addition, they do not have to pay back the reverse mortgage loan for as long as they live in their home.

For more information on loan types, please see the following websites:

- FHA loan: <http://www.fha.com/>
- VA loan: www.valoans.com/?cid=1002
- 203K loan: www.fhainfo.com/fha203k.htm

2: financing

soft second mortgages

The Pathway to Homeownership Soft-Second Mortgage Loan Program is a 'gap' financing home mortgage program with three separate pools of funds from which soft-second loans can be made to finance the purchase or renovation of housing primarily in the Housing Opportunity Zones (spread throughout the city, these include sections of eastern New Orleans, Lakeview, Carrollton, Gentilly, Uptown, Central City, the Holy Cross neighborhood and parts of the 6th, 7th, 8th and lower 9th wards). The funds are intended to serve households of various incomes and homeownership needs.

The First Time Homebuyer Fund offers soft-second mortgage loans up to \$65,000 and a closing cost assistance grant up to \$10,000 for a homebuyer who has not owned a principal residence within the last three (3) years or is a single parent who no longer owns a home because of a divorce. This fund is intended to serve low to moderate-income families who are purchasing homes in the Housing Opportunity Zones.

The Finance Authority is not a lender but a conduit for the bond money that supports the first mortgages. The Finance Authority works with approved banks who make loans and administer the funds.

It is important to realize that the soft-second mortgage program is available to all New Orleans residents at or below 120% of the area median income. This might be a higher income bracket than many people expect.*

Please see below for a the income parameters for the program:

1 person	2 person	3 person	4 person	5 person	6 person	7 person	8 person
\$50,280	\$57,360	\$64,560	\$71,760	\$77,520	\$83,280	\$89,040	\$94,680

Soft Second Mortgage: A soft second mortgage is a forgivable loan that allows an applicant to purchase a home she or he otherwise could not afford. The soft second is provided as a zero interest, forgivable loan to cover the difference in the purchase price and what the buyer otherwise could borrow. Soft seconds are forgivable after a specified period of time.

Soft Seconds Mortgage Program

Finance Authority of New Orleans
618 Baronne Street
New Orleans, LA 70113-1004
504.524-.533
877.524.5533 (toll free)
www.financeauthority.org

*Please be aware that individuals or organizations will be ineligible for some of the resources described in this guide. Please be sure to review eligibility specifications of each resource prior to applying.

Tax Credit for Home Buyers

1201 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
www.federalhousingtaxcredit.com/2009/home.html

2: financing

2.2 incentives for home acquisition

federal tax credits for buying a home

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 offers first-time home buyers an income tax credit of up to \$8,000 for homes bought between January 1 – December 1, 2009. This tax credit can provide the purchaser with a cash refund on their next tax return, meaning that a person with a \$2,000 tax obligation for 2009, will not only not pay this, but will also receive \$6,000 back in cash.

A first-time homebuyer is defined as a buyer who has not owned a principal residence for three years prior to the purchase. The tax credit equals 10% of the home's purchase price up to a maximum of \$8,000, and the home can be new or a resale.

Individuals with annual incomes of up to \$75,000 and couples with annual incomes up to \$150,000 are eligible.

2.3 incentives for renovation

property tax abatement for renovation

The Restoration Tax Abatement program is one of the most accessible incentives for buyers. The program provides five-year property tax abatement for the expansion, restoration, improvement and development of existing commercial structures and owner-occupied residences. If his application is approved, the owner can renovate the property and its assessed value will be frozen at the pre-renovation assessment for five years.

The assessed taxes will be based on an assessed valuation of property prior to beginning of improvements. Equipment that becomes an integral part of that structure can also qualify for this exemption. The program does not exempt the acquisition cost of the structure.

Commercial property owners and homeowners must expand, restore, improve or develop an existing structure in Downtown Development Districts, Economic Development Districts or Historic Districts; properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places are also eligible.

To apply, fill out an Advance Notification form at the state's online business incentive management website, Fastlane. The form should be filed before any construction activity, as some local governments may not be conducive to granting requests for this tax exemption if the project has already begun.

**Louisiana Department of
Economic Development**
Office of Commerce and
Industry
Financial Incentives Division
P.O. Box 94185
Baton Rouge, LA 70804
225.342.5398
www.louisianaeconomicdevelopment.com/opportunities/incentives--programs/restoration-tax-abatement.aspx

Fastlane website, click
[https:// fast lane . louisiana-economicdevelopment.com/](https://fastlane.louisiana-economicdevelopment.com/)

2: financing

federal tax credits for renovation

The federal government offers an income tax credit for substantially renovating a historic building, but the property must be – at least in part - income generating. For example, for a person living in a single-family residence in a historic district and undertaking a significant renovation project, the project IS NOT eligible for the federal income tax credit. However, a person who owns a shotgun double, lives on one side and rents the other side out, IS eligible because the property generates income. Likewise, the rehabilitation of a rental property or commercial building is an eligible project.

There are two things to consider with the federal tax credit: First, one must own the property for 5 years after taking the credit. Therefore, a project such as buying a fixer-upper, renovating it and then selling it is not eligible. Second, the renovations one completes on the property must comply with a pre-approved renovation plan using historically sensitive materials and renovation methods. To claim the federal tax credit, one must first have submitted plans for renovation that were pre-approved by the Department of the Interior.

Currently, the tax credit equals 26% of the amount of eligible expenses for renovating the property according to certain guidelines that impact both interior and exterior work. However, when the GO-ZONE stimulus plan expires at the end of December 2009, the rehab tax credit will likely be reduced to the pre-Katrina level of 20%.

Tax Credit: A tax credit is not money up front nor is it a grant. The tax credit is awarded upon completion of the project and is a direct, dollar for dollar, reduction in the amount of money a taxpayer must pay in taxes for a given year. It's much better than a deduction, which only reduces a taxpayer's income and may or may not put him in a lower tax bracket.

For details on the Federal www.crt.state.la.us/hp/federalrehabilitation09.aspx

To compare state and federal, residential and commercial tax credits for renovation and to get a better idea about which might fit your needs, click www.crt.state.la.us/hp/taxincentives.aspx

2: financing

state income tax credits for renovation

The State of Louisiana offers a state income tax credit for homeowners as well as for owners of commercial properties who improve their buildings. The cost of the improvements must exceed \$20,000 and the building must be in a designated Historic, Cultural, Downtown Development, or Main Street district; or the property must be at least 50 years old and vacant and blighted prior to renovation.

To be eligible for the 25% State Tax Credit:

- The work is carried out on a building which has been determined to be a Qualified Residence
- The building is rehabilitated according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation
- The costs of the rehabilitation exceed twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000)
- The rehabilitated building is the owner's primary residence
- The work is primarily rehabilitation and not remodeling

The credit is worth up to 25% of what one spends (depending on your income), up to a maximum, and it is deducted from what one owes in state income taxes.

**Louisiana Department of
Culture, Recreation, and
Tourism Office of Historic
Preservation**

Capitol Annex Building
1051 North Third Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802
P.O. Box 44247
Baton Rouge, LA 70804
225.342.8160
225.219.0765 (fax)
hp@crt.state.la.us
hwww.crt.state.la.us/

For details of the state income credit's program, click www.crt.state.la.us/hp/stateresidential09.aspx

2.4 special incentives for energy efficiencies

tax credits for installation of renewable energy systems

In 2008, the State of Louisiana instituted an income tax credit program to encourage residents to install renewable energy systems, such as solar panels or windmills. The program offers participants a state income tax credit equal to 50% of the cost of buying and installing the system, up to a maximum of \$12,500 per system.

state rebates for improving home energy efficiency

The State of Louisiana offers a rebate to homeowners who improve the energy efficiency of their homes. Called HERO (for Home Energy Rebate Option), the program offers a maximum rebate of \$2000 (equal to 20% of funds expended) for homeowners who improve the energy efficiency of their existing homes by at least 30% as determined by a pre-renovation and post-renovation inspections by a certified energy rater.

federal tax credits for installation of renewable energy equipment

The government offers a federal tax credit equal to 30% of the cost of purchasing and installing renewable energy equipment. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 extended the credit so that equipment put in place between now and December 31, 2016 is eligible.

Federal tax credits for improving home energy efficiency

A federal tax credit is available for energy efficiency products installed in existing homes between January 1, 2009 – December 31, 2010. The credit 30% of the cost of the equipment up to a maximum of \$1500.

For more information about the renewable energy credit, please contact:

LA Department of Revenue
PO Box 201
Baton Rouge, LA 70821-0201
225.219.0067 Ext.4
www.revenue.louisiana.gov/

For more information about the HERO program, please contact:

**Technology Assessment Division
Louisiana Department of Natural Resources**
617 North Third Street
PO Box 94396
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9396
225.342.1399
225.342.1397 (fax)
techasmt@la.gov
<http://dnr.louisiana.gov/sec/execdiv/techasmt/programs/residential/hero/index.htm>

For more information on federal tax credits for renewable energy equipment, please contact:

U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20585
1.800.dial.DOE
202.586.4403 (fax)
www.energy.gov/taxbreaks.htm

2: financing

2.5 special incentives for historic preservation

matching grants for renovation in a main street district

Formerly called Façade Grants, Redevelopment Incentive Grants are awarded once a year to property owners of residential, commercial or mixed-use buildings in designated "Main Street" areas who have applied for the grants. Grants can be used to improve both the interiors and exteriors of buildings as long as the renovation conforms to historic guidelines. Grants equal \$2500 for small projects and \$10,000 for large ones, and require the property owner to spend a matching amount on the improvement.

historic district renovation

The Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC) is the City's regulatory agency for local historic districts outside of the Vieux Carre. Established in 1976, this agency provides the staff and office space for the two Commissions, the New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission and the Central Business District Historic District Landmarks Commission.

preservation easement program

PRC's Preservation Easement Program makes it possible for owners of historic buildings to gain a tax advantage by donating the façade of the property to the PRC. The PRC's Preservation Easement Committee meets monthly to consider façade donation applications. Applicants pay an application fee to have their proposed donation reviewed and considered, and then pay a donation fee if the proposal is accepted.

For details about the matching grant and to find out if your building is located in a designated Main Street area, please contact:

Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism

Office of Historic Preservation
Michael Wyatt, Main Street Design Coordinator,
mw Wyatt@crt.state.la.us
225.342.6762
www.crt.state.la.us/hp/facadegrants.aspx

The Historic District Landmarks Commission

1340 Poydras St., Suite 1152
New Orleans, Louisiana 70112
504.658.7040
504.658.3802 (fax)
www.cityofno.com/portal.aspx?portal=99

For more information on the Preservation Easement Program, please contact:

Preservation Resource Center

Leah Tubbs, Coordinator
504.636.3054
ltubbs@prcno.org
www.prcno.org/

2: financing

2.6 predatory lending and contractor fraud

Over the last several years, our nation has made enormous progress in expanding access to capital for previously under served borrowers. Despite this progress, however, too many families are suffering today because of a growing incidence of abusive practices in a segment of the mortgage lending market. Predatory mortgage lending practices strip borrowers of home equity and threaten families with foreclosure, destabilizing the very communities that are beginning to enjoy the fruits of our nation's economic success. It is important to be a aware of some of the most common predatory lending schemes. A list of these can be found in the resource section.

Unfortunately, the New Orleans recovery has also made residents vulnerable to contractor fraud and fake insurance schemes. There are legal advocacy groups within the city that can work with residents who have been taken advantage of via contractor or insurance fraud.

For more information on predatory lending, please visit:

The Center for Responsible Lending
click www.responsiblelending.org/

For more information on predatory lending, insurance or contractor fraud assistance, please contact:

Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center

228 St. Charles Ave. Suite 1035
New Orleans, LA 70130
504.596.2100
877.778.2100 (toll free)
504.596.2004 (fax)
www.gnofairhousing.org/index.html

National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA)

1101 Vermont Ave NW, Suite 710
Washington DC 20005
202.898.1661
202. 371. 9744 (fax)
nfha@nationalfairhousing.org
www.nationalfairhousing.org/

3: construction



Whether your redevelopment involves renovation, new construction or both, its success is dependent upon finding the right professionals for your project, developing clear and thorough plans, and understanding early on the regulations that will apply to your project.

Renovating an existing building – be it historic or not – presents a variety of challenges that new construction does not. Whereas new construction is highly predictable, renovation requires contractors to assess existing conditions and make the best possible recommendations about how to deal with them.

Nonetheless, there are more similarities between the two approaches than there are differences. Both types of construction require the work to conform to the zoning of the particular lot (i.e. no multi-family houses in area zoned for single family residences), to honor setback requirements established by the zoning code, and, if in a historic district, to conform to the design guidelines of the Historic District Landmarks Commission or Vieux Carre Commission. Moreover, all construction must conform to the city's building code, whether a renovation or new construction.

Some designers and contractors specialize in renovations, other in new construction, so it will be important to choose a professional who has experience with the kind of work you foresee. Professionally drawn or stamped plans will be necessary for all new construction projects and any renovations which include an addition and/or changes to the foundation.

Preservation Resource Center's
Click [http://groups.yahoo.com/
group/preserveneworleans/](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/preserveneworleans/)

3.1 hiring contractors

finding the right professionals

The post-storm building boom has led many professional and non-profit groups to reach out to consumers to educate them about the home building and renovation process and to protect them from predatory contractors. There are several tried and true approaches to getting the names of reputable designers and builders to work on your new construction or rehabilitation project:

1. Word of mouth

Your friends, neighbors and associates have likely all had experiences which they can share, and their "word of mouth" is often the compile a list of designers and contractors to interview about your project. If the work that they undertook was primarily repairs and updating, they may not have worked with an architect at all but may have relied solely on the expertise of an experienced renovation contractor. These are professionals who will know how to anticipate some of the problems that can crop up during a renovation and will understand the eccentricities of working in older homes.

2. Online discussion groups

After Hurricane Katrina, many organizations and neighborhood groups established online discussion groups which cover topics of interest to members ranging from tips on contractors and trades people to garbage collection service. Post a simple request for names of reputable contractors or architects and you may get dozens of answers. If your neighborhood does not have an egroup that you can participate in, consider joining the Preservation Resource Center'.

3. Web sites

The American Institute of Architects (AIA), New Orleans Chapter can provide helpful information about choosing an architect who will be appropriate for the type of project you have in mind. Their website includes an interactive search feature which yields a list of architects to contact based on the criteria you provide.

To find an experienced contractor online, the best source of information is the Home Builders Association of Greater New Orleans. The non-profit organization has hundreds of members, including a “Remodeler’s Council” composed of professionals who specialize in home renovation. The Council membership list is a resource for consumers searching for a contractor and its “Remodeling Guide” is designed to help consumers avoid many pitfalls of renovation.

The Louisiana Rebuilds web site has a terrific online contractor rating guide. It scores general contractors as well as trades people, based on reviews by clients. Another plus of the site is the contractor guide which covers essential topics like how to go about hiring a contractor, how to determine if your contractor is properly licensed, and how to avoid contractor fraud.

The Louisiana State University AgCenter web site also offers excellent information about how to find construction pros and tips for planning and enacting construction projects, with extensive assistance on how to work with professionals.

American Institute of Architects (AIA)

New Orleans Chapter
504.525.8320
www.aianeworleans.org/

Home Builders Association of Greater New Orleans

2424 North Arnoult Road
Metairie, Louisiana 70001
504.837.2700
504.837.4663 (fax)
www.hbagn.org

Louisiana Rebuilds

877-527-3284
www.louisianarebuilds.info/

Louisiana State University AgCenter

6901 Press Drive, Bldg 30B
New Orleans, LA 70126
504.284.5564
504.284.5559 (fax)
www.lsuagcenter.com/en/family_home/home/design_construction/

3: construction

planning the project

The architect or designer interprets your wishes and converts them to drawings which the contractor then enacts. That is why it is important that you are as clear with your architect and contractor as possible about your vision for the project and the budget available for realizing it.

Throughout the plan development process, the architect must take into consideration not only your vision and budget, but also city building codes and, if your home is located in a local historic district, historic district guidelines. In historic districts, all demolitions, new construction and renovations must first pass review by the Historic District Landmarks Commission or (if in the French Quarter) Vieux Carré Commission before the Office of Safety and Permits will issue a building permit.

You and your design or construction professional may go through more than one round of plan revisions before you settle on a plan that suits your needs and likely fits within your budget. But once the plans are complete and all aspects of your choices are defined, it is time to submit them to a contractor for a bid.

If you have identified a single contractor with whom you want to work or if you have previous experience with a contractor you trust, then you may consider simply negotiating a price for executing the plans. More commonly, you will have narrowed your list of prospective contractors down to no more than three and you will submit your plans to all three to bid on. When bids are in, it is essential that you (and your architect if you have engaged him or her for a full suite of services) review each one carefully to ensure that each one covers everything in the plans before choosing a contractor.

The Historic District Landmarks Commission

1340 Poydras St., Suite 1152
New Orleans, Louisiana 70112
504.658.7040
504.658.3802 (fax)
www.cityofno.com/pg-99-1-hdlc.aspx

Vieux Carre Commission

334 Royal St.
New Orleans, LA 70130
504.658.1420
504.658.6742 (fax)
www.cityofno.com/pg-59-1-vieux-carre-commission.aspx

taking the first steps

Before your project receives a permit, there are key steps to take to protect your investment in your renovated property.

1. Get an elevation survey

If you plan to renovate and the property was more than 50% damaged in Hurricane Katrina, you will need a flood elevation survey to prove that the height of the first floor exceeds the Base Flood Elevation required by FEMA. If it does not, it will be necessary to raise the house to meet the standard. For new construction, a survey is also required.

2. Treat for mold

If you are renovating and your home flooded in a recent storm, mold may be growing on the interior, presenting health problems and making your home difficult to sell in the future. A variety of treatments to eradicate mold are available and the Louisiana State University AgCenter offers information about the most effective on their website.

3. Treat for termites

Both Formosan termites and subterranean termites are a threat to homes in South Louisiana's moist environments. Local pest control companies provide services ranging from soil treatment to baiting to tenting.

4. Get the right insurance

Depending on the funding source for your renovation, you may have already been required to obtain special insurance that covers your property while it is under renovation or construction. "Builder's Risk" insurance is used to cover losses during the renovation phase of your home and can be obtained through your insurance broker.

For more information on termite treatment, click www.lsuagcenter.com/en/environment/insects/Termites/

Even if you are not in an area prone to flooding and even if your lender does not require it, flood insurance has become a must in the New Orleans community. Many neighborhoods which flooded in Hurricane Katrina were well above sea level where flood insurance was not required. Due to the uncertain nature of the area's flood protection system while it is being repaired and improved, it makes sense to pay a few hundred dollars per year for flood insurance to protect your investment. Again, your insurance broker can assist you with the purchase of this type of insurance.

5. Test for lead paint

Lead poses serious health hazards to children as well as adults over time if it is ingested. Possible problems include brain damage and neurological deficits.

Therefore, it is important to know if lead paint is present in your soil or home before embarking on a new construction or rehabilitation project, as digging, demolition, sanding, scraping and other common activities can easily release lead particles in the air or causes chips to fall on the floors.

Before 1978, lead was used as an additive of paint, so most homes built prior to that date contain some lead paint. As long as the paint surface is intact, it poses little threat. But once the paint begins to chip or flake, the paint particles can be accidentally consumed. Worse, if lead paint surfaces are dry sanded, small particles of lead paint can get in the air and be breathed in.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission has posted an exhaustive article about testing for and dealing with lead paint in the home environment. Also the City of New Orleans web site has a page which describes the lead paint ordinance in effect since 2001 and what steps must be followed to comply with it.

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Office of Information and Public Affairs

4330 East West Highway

Bethesda, MD 20814

www.cpsc.gov/CPSCPUB/PUBS/5054.html

3: construction

work in progress

Even the best planned projects sometimes encounter time and cost overruns due to unforeseeable complications. A “change order” is a written agreement which is issued when such a circumstance arises and is, in essence, an addendum to the contract.

When your contractor notifies you of an unexpected condition, he/she should discuss possible remedies and you two should agree on a cost and time frame for the remedial work. The agreement will be put in writing as a change order and should be signed by both you and our contractor BEFORE the work is done. A contractor should not perform extra work without your consent, then expect to be paid for it. The process for handling change orders should be part of the contract you sign with the contractor.

A change order is also appropriate should you change your mind about a detail or specification of the project. You might decide to upgrade your cabinets or eliminate your whirlpool bath, both of which alter the amount of work the contractor has to do and the money he/she must spend. Again, the amount of increase or decrease and the time it will add or subtract to enact the change should be agreed upon in writing PRIOR to the change taking place.

Just as the contractor has responsibilities to you, you have responsibilities to the contractor. The best thing you can do is to make decisions required by the contractor as quickly as possible and to change your mind as seldom as possible. Indecision costs the contractor time and interrupts the work flow.

3: construction

You should also plan to make site visits to the project as often as needed to stay abreast of the developments, but not so often that you are taking up too much of the contractor's time. If you notice something that doesn't look quite right to you, the best practice is to contact the contractor to point it out, rather than tell the workers in the field.

at project conclusion

At the end of your project, your contractor will expect you to carefully review the work in place and prepare a punch list. Usually, you get just one opportunity to list the items that need to be repaired or adjusted, so a thorough review is important.

If you are concerned that you might miss something important, you may want to consider hiring a professional home inspector to review the project at the end. These pros are trained to spot problems, test systems and more. A professional inspection is extremely thorough and will yield a list of items to discuss with the contractor. An abundance of home inspecting companies can be found online.

4: resources

ACORN Housing Corp
2609 Canal Street
New Orleans, LA 70119
504.267.7133
504.371.5178 (fax)
www.acornhousing.org

**American Institute of Architects (AIA)
New Orleans Chapter**
1000 St. Charles Avenue
New Orleans, LA 70130
504.525.8320
www.aianeworleans.org

Broadmoor Improvement Association
4520 S. Derbigny Street
New Orleans, LA 70112
504.309.2561
504.333.6119 (fax)
www.broadmoorimprovement.com

Catholic Charities Archdiocese of New Orleans
1000 Howard Avenue, Suite 1000
New Orleans, LA 70113
504.523.3755
504.523.2789 (fax)
ccano@archdiocese-no.org
www.ccano.org

Center for Responsible Lending
302 West Main Street
Durham, NC 27701
919.313.8500
www.responsiblelending.org

Civil District Court (CDC)
Clerk of Court
421 Loyola Avenue, Room 402
New Orleans, LA 70112
504.592.9100
504.592.9128 (fax)
www.orleanscdc.com

Consumer Credit Counseling
1215 Prytania St. Suite 424
New Orleans, LA 70130
866.889.9347
www.cccsno.org

**Database of State Incentives for
Renewables & Efficiency (DSIRE)**
225.219.0067
www.dsireusa.org

**Desire Community Housing
Corporation**
4298 Elysian Fields Ave
New Orleans, LA 70122
504.284.3844

**Enterprise Corporation of the
Delta**
1726 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd.,
Suite 202
New Orleans, LA 70113
504.587.7709
rbell@ecd.org
www.ecd.org

4: resources

Family Resources of New Orleans

817 N. Claiborne Ave
New Orleans, LA 70116
504.822.8519
504.821.5260 (fax)
www.familyresourcesofno.org

Fannie Mae – Southeastern Headquarter

950 East Paces Ferry Road, Suite 1800
Atlanta, GA 30326-1161
404.398.6000
www.fanniemae.com

Federal Housing Tax Credit

1201 15th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
www.federalhousingtaxcredit.com

Finance Authority of New Orleans (FANO)

618 Baronne Street
New Orleans, LA 70113-1004
504.524.5533
www.financeauthority.org

Greater New Orleans Fair Housing Action Center

228 St. Charles Avenue, Suite 1035
New Orleans, LA 70130
504.596.2100
504.596.2004 (fax)
www.gnofairhousing.org

Growing Home NOLA

1340 Poydras Street Suite 600
New Orleans, LA 70112
504.658.4431
504.658.4551 (fax)
www.growinghomenola.org

Home Builders Association of Greater New Orleans

2424 North Arnoult Road
Metairie, LA 70001
504.837.2700
504.837.4663 (fax)
www.hbagno.org

Home Energy Rebate Option

617 North Third Street
LaSalle Building
Baton Rouge, LA 70802
225.342.4500
225.342.5861 (fax)
[http://dnr.louisiana.gov/sec/
execdiv/techasmt/programs/
residential/hero](http://dnr.louisiana.gov/sec/execdiv/techasmt/programs/residential/hero)

Housing Authority of New Orleans

4100 Touro Street
New Orleans, LA 70122
504.670.3300
504.286.8788 (fax)
www.hano.org

Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC)

1050 South Jefferson Davis Pkwy,
Suite 211
New Orleans, LA 70125
225.389.0083
225.389.0085 (fax)
www.lisc.org

4: resources

Louisiana Economic Development (LED)

1051 North Third Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5239
800.450.8115
www.ledlouisiana.com

Louisiana Office of Historic Preservation

Capitol Annex Building
1051 North Third Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802
P.O. Box 44247
Baton Rouge LA 70804
225.342.8160
225.219.0765 (fax)
hp@crt.state.la.us
www.crt.state.la.us

Louisiana Rebuilds

877.527.3284
www.louisianarebuilds.info

Louisiana Secretary of State

Twelve United Plaza
8585 Archives Ave.
Baton Rouge, LA 70809
www.sos.louisiana.gov

LSU Ag Center

6801 Press Drive, Bldg. 30 B
New Orleans, LA 70126
504.284.5564
504.284.5559 (fax)
www.lsuagcenter.com

Neighborhood Development Foundation of New Orleans

4000 Bienville Avenue, Suite A
New Orleans, LA 70119
504.488.0155
504.483.6764 (fax)
www.ndf-neworleans.com

Neighborhood Housing Services of New Orleans, Inc.

4528 Freret Street
New Orleans, LA 70115
504.899.5900
504.899.6190 (fax)
www.nhsnola.org

Neighborhoods Partnership Network

4902 Canal Street, Room 301
New Orleans, LA 70119
504.940.2207
www.npnnola.com

4: resources

New Orleans City Hall

1300 Perdido Street
New Orleans, LA 70112
www.cityofno.com
City Hall Operator:
504.658.4000
Code Enforcement Department:
504.658.4300
Department of Environmental Affairs:
504.658.4070
Department of Public Works:
504.658.4000
Health Department:
504.658.2500
Historic District Landmark Commission:
504.658.7040
Housing Department:
504.658.4200
Mayor's Office:
504.658.4900
Mayor's Office of Public Advocacy:
504.658.4000
Rodent, Mosquito and Termite
Control: 504.658.2400
Safety and Permits Department:
504.658.7130

New Orleans Municipal Code

www.municode.com/resources/gateway.asp?pid=10040&sid=18

New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA)

1340 Poydras Street, Suite 600
New Orleans, LA 70112
504.658.4400
504.658.4551 (fax)
www.noraworks.org

New Orleans Tax Sale.Com

866.493.7410
support@neworleanstaxsale.com
www.neworleanstaxsale.com

New Orleans Vacant Properties Initiative (NOVPI)

1707 L St NW
Suite 1050
Washington, DC 20036
202.207.3355
www.vacantproperties.org

Official Guide to Doing Business in Louisiana

<http://businessguidelouisiana.com/>

Office of the Civil Sheriff

421 Loyola Avenue
403 Civil Courts Building
New Orleans, LA 70112
504.523.6143
www.civilsheriff.com

Orleans Parish Board of Assessors

4E01 City Hall - Civic Center
1300 Perdido Street
New Orleans, LA 70112
504.658.1300
www.opboa.org

Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans

923 Tchoupitoulas Street
New Orleans, LA 70130
504.581.7032
prc@prcno.org
www.prcno.org

4: resources

Sulli Educational Services

4224 Florida Ave Suite#7
Kenner, LA 70065
504.464.6224
504.305.2227 (fax)
www.conchitasulli.com

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

4330 East West Highway
Bethesda, MD 20814
301.504.7923
301.504.0124 (fax)
www.cpsc.gov

U.S. Department of Energy

1000 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20585
800.342.5363
202-586-4403 (fax)
www.energy.gov/taxbreaks.htm

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

451 7th Street S.W.
Washington, DC 20410
202.708.1112
www.hud.gov

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

ENERGY STAR Hotline
1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20460
888.782.7937
[www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?
c=products.pr_tax_credits](http://www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=products.pr_tax_credits)

Vieux Carre Commission

334 Royal St.
New Orleans, LA 70130
504.658.1420
504.658.6742 (fax)
[http://www.cityofno.com/pg-59-1-
vieux-carre-commission.aspx](http://www.cityofno.com/pg-59-1-vieux-carre-commission.aspx)

504ward Business Development

638 Camp St.,
New Orleans, LA 70130
504.304.3294 (fax)
<http://www.504ward.com/>

5: appendix

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2. <http://www.theneworleansinstitute.org/news/post/257/UPENN-When-more-lots-are-vacant-in-neighborhood-crime-rises>
3. Temple University Center for Public Policy and Eastern Pennsylvania Organizing Project, "Blight Free Philadelphia: A Public-Private Strategy to Create and Enhance Neighborhood Value," Philadelphia, 2001.
4. http://gnocdc.s3.amazonaws.com/reports/Katrina_Rita_Wilma_Damage_2_12_06___revised.pdf
5. http://www.noraworks.org/about_nora.htm
6. http://www.cityofno.com/Portals/ORM/Resources/NO_NSP_Final_Report10509.pdf
7. <http://www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/communitydevelopment/programs/neighborhoodspg/>