

Office of Community Development
State of Louisiana
Division of Administration

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**STATE ACCEPTING PUBLIC COMMENTS, PROVIDING PUBLIC HEARING ON
TWO PLANS FOR LONG-TERM RECOVERY AT THE NEW ISLE**

The Louisiana Office of Community Development-Disaster Recovery is accepting **public comments** and providing a **public hearing** on an amendment to the state's action plan for administering the National Disaster Recovery program, which resettled the residents of Isle de Jean Charles. The state also proposes a Sustainability Plan to help the new community establish long-term resilience and recovery.

The formal 14-day public comment period **begins Oct. 23 and ends at 5 p.m. Nov. 7**. The public hearing will take place at **10:30 a.m. Oct. 31, 2024**, at The New Isle Community Center located at 301 Jean Charles Blvd. in Gray, Louisiana, 70359.

BACKGROUND In 2016, as part of the Louisiana Office of Community Development-Disaster Recovery's winning application to the National Disaster Resilience Competition, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded the state of Louisiana \$48.3 million in Community Development Block Grant funds for the Resettlement of Isle de Jean Charles. Isle de Jean Charles is an island in Terrebonne Parish that, like much of coastal Louisiana, is rapidly disappearing into the Gulf of Mexico due to coastal erosion and sea level rise. Residents of this region, predominantly of American Indian ancestry, represent an incredibly unique and diverse culture of people who have lived here for hundreds of years. However, their land is now open water.

LOCD-DR Executive Director Gina Campo said, "The state of Louisiana has developed and implemented a structured and voluntary retreat from Isle de Jean Charles that is thoughtful and equitable. From the beginning, our resettlement goals have been safety, collaboration, preservation and sustainability. We are at a juncture where the future of the new community depends on the implementation of long-term recovery planning for the day when the state no longer manages The Resettlement. The two plans now open for public comment—NDR APA 8 and the Sustainability Plan—will make that possible."

NDR APA 8 proposes to achieve the long-term resiliency and recovery goals of the resettlement project by establishing a **new eligible activity** to address several challenges encountered in developing this large and complex project. These challenges relate to the eligibility of some project activities and the timeline

for certain project activities to meet a national objective, as provided in CDBG–NDR Notice (81 FR 36557). The state is also addressing identified challenges associated with maintaining the affordability of The New Isle homes for resettled residents.

In response to the challenges raised by the state, HUD granted a waiver and alternative requirements to allow the state to resolve these challenges via a Federal Register Notice effective Jan. 29, 2024 (89 FR 3942). The FRN creates the **IDJC Resettlement Project** as a new eligible activity. This new eligible activity described in APA 8 includes two components:

- 1) The creation of a Residential Assistance Fund; and
- 2) The acquisition, infrastructure, housing, economic development and public service activities described in HUD-approved NDR APA 5.

In addition, the **Sustainability Plan** for the Fund provides:

- An estimate of the amount of taxes and insurance required for each home per year;
- A detailed description of the process and timeline for The New Isle residents to pay for housing costs that were once covered by the Fund, after their assistance from the Fund has ended (i.e., reaches five years of assistance or maximum amount set by the State) and/or the State concludes its use of the Fund;
- A description of other financial resources, if any, that will be available to support beneficiaries with housing costs after the State concludes use of the Fund;
- A detailed description of how the State will inform beneficiaries about the Fund, terms and conditions for Fund assistance, and the beneficiaries' financial responsibilities after assistance from the Fund ends; and
- How the State will detect and prevent fraud, waste, and abuse in the administration and use of the Fund.

The use of the Fund to cover costs necessary to achieve the long-term resiliency and recovery goals of the project and ensure the affordability and sustainability of New Isle NDR APA 8 and the Sustainability Plan are available at doa.la.gov/doa/ocd/policy-and-reports/apa/ or by calling 225.219.9600.

Members of the public can submit comments in several ways (**note NDR in the subject line**):

- Emailing them to ocd@la.gov;
- Mailing them to Disaster Recovery Unit, P.O. Box 94095, 70804-9095, Attn: Janice Lovett; or
- Faxing them to the attention of Janice Lovett at 225.219.9605

At the end of the official public comment period, the state will submit the plans to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for approval.