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New Orleans is Climate Conscious Crescent City

Holy Cross District to be National Model of Sustainability, Historic Preservation

NEW ORLEANS, La. — New Orleans' Holy Cross Neighborhood and the Lower Ninth Ward are embarking in a unique chapter to preserve history, incorporate sustainable design and return the community to its former state. From March 10-20, *Historic Green* is hosting its second "Spring Greening" event to rebuild a sustainable New Orleans.

"In the more than three years since Hurricane Katrina devastated much of the Gulf Coast, many have wondered how they could help beyond assisting the initial relief efforts in the affected areas," said Pam Dashiell, director of the Lower 9th Ward Center for Sustainable Engagement and Development in New Orleans. "We're leading a unique grassroots effort to go the next step to rebuild this historic landmark – this time green."

As one of the hardest hit areas of the entire Gulf Coast in August 2005, the Holy Cross Historic District became submerged in 10 feet of water for three weeks following the storm – caused by a massive levee break nearby. Nearly 6,000 residents were displaced, and numerous schools, churches and businesses were destroyed or severely damaged.

During these 11 days, hundreds of students and young professionals in the construction industry will converge on New Orleans—bringing their energy and ideas to help the people of the Lower Ninth revitalize their community. Architects, engineers, planners, landscape architects, interior designers and contractors will work hand-in-hand with neighborhood residents on their historic houses, parks, playgrounds and community centers.

"Today, most homeowners have been unable to completely rehab their flood-damaged houses, which remain in a state of disrepair," said Dashiell. "And yet, an amazing rebirth is underway, led by the Holy Cross residents themselves. In March, this community will continue taking the necessary steps to become a national model of sustainability."

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According to Dashiell, the plan details 12 specific projects that together will help transform this historic district into the nation's first Zero Carbon Community. Among these projects are:

- Design and construct a new LEED® Platinum facility to house the new offices of The Lower 9th Ward Center for Sustainable Engagement & Development (CSED)
- Implementation of the St. Claude Initiative: the clean-up and beautification of a major New Orleans corridor bordering Holy Cross and the rest of the Lower Ninth Ward
- Renovate several sustainable historic homes in the Holy Cross Neighborhood
- Partner with Lower Ninth Ward homeowners to green their properties: weatherization, radiant barriers, widespread installation of compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs)
- Demonstrate green home deconstruction and material reuse
- Re-establish green spaces such as parks, playgrounds and community gardens throughout the Lower Ninth Ward
- Design and install demonstration rain gardens throughout the Lower Ninth Ward
- Conduct educational workshops throughout the 11-day period to train residents and volunteers on the tenets of sustainable preservation
- Provide Holy Cross Neighborhood/Lower Ninth Ward tours
- Restore a tupelo cypress ecosystem at Bayou Bienvenue and "green up" public spaces around the bayou

Historic Green is the first national project to integrate sustainable practices with preservation of a historic community. The project will increase energy efficiency throughout the community; enhance the community by focusing on quality of life, housing and transportation; protect the wetlands; and help create the nation's first carbon-neutral community.

Primary event partners for *Historic Green* are the U.S. Green Building Council, The Salvation Army of Greater New Orleans and the National Trust for Historic Preservation. For more information about *Historic Green's* 2009 "Spring Greening" event, visit the project web site at www.HistoricGreen.org, or contact Ryan Evans at press@historicgreen.org or call (913) 209-9400.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *Members of the media are welcome to attend the 11 day 2009 Historic Green "Spring Greening" event to obtain interviews and photos/video footage. To arrange interviews with key representatives and volunteers of the project, please contact Ryan Evans at (913) 209-9400 or email press@historicgreen.org.*

2009 Historic Green "Spring Greening"

Historic Green is about the possibilities. About knowing a place; respecting its rich heritage for future generations; and seeing the promise of sustainability to create healthier, safer, more livable communities. "Historic Green" represents a blending of the past, the present and the future.

What was, meets what could be.

New Orleans' Holy Cross Neighborhood and the Lower Ninth Ward offer one path to "sustainable preservation". Nowhere else could it happen on such a scale as here – an entire community brought to its knees in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Struggling to recover and rebuild. To restore in a way that makes it even better than before.
