New Orleans' Recovery as of December 2006

New Orleans has always been and remains one of the world's most intriguing cities and special destinations. These are the latest facts on its recovery:

Population:

According to the City Council of New Orleans – the table below illustrates the current and projected populations for the City of New Orleans and the metropolitan area:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parishes</th>
<th>Pre-Katrina</th>
<th>1-Jul-06</th>
<th>1-Jan-07</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orleans</td>
<td>484,674</td>
<td>235,000</td>
<td>255,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>455,466</td>
<td>450,000</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plaquemines</td>
<td>26,757</td>
<td>22,000</td>
<td>25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Bernard</td>
<td>67,229</td>
<td>19,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Charles</td>
<td>48,072</td>
<td>55,000</td>
<td>60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John the Baptist</td>
<td>43,044</td>
<td>49,000</td>
<td>55,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Tammany</td>
<td>191,268</td>
<td>235,000</td>
<td>240,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangipahoa</td>
<td>100,588</td>
<td>112,000</td>
<td>115,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Metro Area</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,417,098</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,177,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,270,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tourism Statistics:

- The tourism industry is the largest employer in the metropolitan New Orleans area and the second largest industry in the state of Louisiana. It includes hotels, restaurants, retail, sporting arenas, music venues, museums, galleries and theaters, destination management companies and tour operators.

- As the economic engine of New Orleans, tourism accounts for 35% of the City of New Orleans' annual operating budget - $210 million paying for jobs, safety, transit, etc.

- Without the money engineered by New Orleans tourism, the state would have to raise an additional $3,000 on every family in Louisiana in taxes to cover the deficit.
- The Ernest N. Morial Convention Center is the single most important manufacturing plant in the state, producing an enhanced quality of life.

- Tourism generates $5 billion in visitor spending and more than $250-300 million in tax revenues.

- The hotel tax provides $10.5 million to the Orleans Parish Public Schools operating budget and is the funding source of the bonds for the Superdome and the Convention Center.

- Since Hurricane Katrina, Louisiana has lost more than $1 billion. Every 3 months results in a net loss of a $1.25 billion buying cycle in New Orleans.

- An average convention delegate generates $1,500 for the local economy during his or her stay. Convention visitors stay longer in hotels, entertain more in restaurants and spend more money in retail shops in the French Quarter and along the Magazine Street corridor.

- 2004 was a record breaking year for New Orleans tourism with 10.1 million visitors. We were on pace to exceed those numbers in 2005. We will have a more accurate measure of 2006 visitors when research begins in the fall.

**Restaurants:**

The Louisiana Restaurant Association (LRA) says the current status of New Orleans restaurants is improving. LRA reports that there are 1,562 (out of 3,414) restaurants open in the metro area. The organization also reports that the local restaurant industry could immediately employ another 3,000 people if they were available. There have been 65 brand new restaurants opened in the city that were not established before Katrina, and they are thriving.

**Hotels:**

Currently there are 180 metro area hotels and motels in operation with 28,500 rooms in inventory. In Orleans Parish there are 21,000 rooms in inventory and pre-Katrina there were 27,000 rooms. Also prior to Katrina, there were 265 hotels with an inventory of 38,338. **Harrah's Hotel** and the **Avalon Hotel** in New Orleans East are now open. The **Ritz-Carlton** has re-opened (Dec. 1) and the **Hyatt Regency** New Orleans will re-open in the fall of 2007. **Hotel Monaco** is slated to re-open as the Homewood Suites and The Fairmont will re-open after major construction in the future. New Orleans Hotel and Lodging Association expects to surpass 30,000 available rooms by the beginning of 2006.

**Flights:**

Prior to Katrina, Louis Armstrong International Airport had 162 flights daily, servicing 42 cities with 20,676 seats. As of December 2006, the airport will service 109 daily flights and 12,842 seats to 32 cities. Operating airlines include: Air Canada, Air Tran, American West, American Airlines, Delta Airlines, Frontier Air, Jet Blue, Midwest, Northwest Air, Southwest Airlines, United Airlines and U.S. Airways.
Public Transit:

Twenty-eight bus lines are running, providing an average of 23,000 rides daily. While the St. Charles Avenue streetcar line was hard hit, its cars are in operation on Canal Street downtown, ready to treat visitors to that classic experience.

The entire Riverfront line, Canal Street line and its Carrollton spur are operational. The Riverfront line features a LIFT friendly car – painted blue. Portions of the St. Charles line, in particular, within the Central Business District downtown, looks to be operational again by late 2006 or early 2007. The entire line, extending up Carrollton Avenue from St. Charles Avenue, may be fully operational by the end of 2007.

FEMA is no longer paying to keep the transportation free – fares are $1.25 each way, although FEMA has come through with funding to help repair the St. Charles Streetcar line and replace flooded streetcars and buses.

Transportation transfers are $.25; one-day passes are $5.00 and three-day passes are $12--see the RTA website for a list of vendors www.norta.com under the vendors link.

*The blue ADA-accessible streetcar is not operational at this time.

The Convention Center:

The Convention Center is fully renovated and operational. November marked the completion of the Morial Convention Center’s $60 million renovation as it welcomed the largest 2006 citywide convention, the 25,000 person National Association of Realtors from November 10-13. The Center’s grand reopening was commemorated with the International Workboat Show, from November 29-Dec 1, as the final 357,524 square feet of exhibit space and 41 meeting rooms reopened. Three of the Center's 12 halls opened in February followed by 5 more exhibit halls in June; the return of the final four exhibit halls in November brings the Center back to full operational capacity.

The Port of New Orleans.

Total general cargo shipments for the first eight months of 2006 are up 9.5 percent overall compared to year-ago figures and the Port's five-year average. The numbers areboosted by a nearly 38 percent gain in traditional breakbulk cargo imports.

Breakbulk cargo is loose cargo shipped on pallets or cartons and stowed in a vessel's hold as opposed to containerized or bulk cargo. Iron and steel, natural rubber, forestry products and precious metals are the Port's leading breakbulk commodities.
The Port recently welcomed back three home-ported cruise lines to New Orleans - an event heralded by tourism officials. Norwegian Cruise Lines returned Oct. 15 with its Norwegian Sun to sail seven-day Western Caribbean cruises and Carnival Cruise Line returned with its Fantasy barely two weeks later to resume four- and five-day Western Caribbean itineraries. Royal Caribbean Cruise Line returned with the Grandeur of the Seas Dec. 2 for seven-day Western Caribbean sailings and the Carnival Triumph will begin homeport operations from New Orleans in August.

December will be a busy month for cruise vessels in New Orleans with 23 ship calls and about 95,000 passengers. Among those cruise ship calls will be three cruises of the Golden Princess. Princess Cruise Lines is testing the market in New Orleans and the Port hopes to convince them to establish regular cruising from the city.

In 2007, the Carnival Triumph will mark the New Orleans cruise industry's full return to pre-Katrina status with four home-ported cruise ships in the Crescent City.

To spur continued growth in the local cruise industry, Port officials recently opened the new $37 million Erato Street Cruise Terminal and Parking Garage. The 90,000 square-foot terminal and 1,000-vehicle parking garage is located adjacent to the existing Julia Street Cruise Terminal, which was recently renovated. The Erato Street Terminal eases transportation and parking experiences for cruise passengers. With an eye toward the future, Port officials are also in the process of expanding its cruise ship capacity in the Bywater area of New Orleans. The Port's Poland Avenue Wharf will be converted to a cruise ship terminal to allow the Port to host three of the industry's largest ships simultaneously. The project is currently in the engineering and design phase.

Superdome and Arena:

The state has fast-tracked efforts to restore the Superdome to pre-hurricane conditions in time to host a capacity crowd by September. The Superdome will add a significant number of improvements while under construction, giving the fans a newer, brighter facility. The New Orleans Saints won against the Atlanta Falcons on Sept. 25 in the first event scheduled for the Louisiana Superdome since Katrina. The saints will play all eight regular season games in the Dome this season. As of December 11th, the New Orleans Saints have a winning record of 9-4 placing the team at the top of the NFC South Division and second ranked in the entire NFC Division. The Saints have announced sell-out season ticket sales, a total of 70,003. The season opener happened on September 25 with the Saints beating the Atlanta Falcons. The New Orleans Arena is fully functional and re-opened in March 2006.

The New Orleans Bowl, the AllState Bayou Classic (Southern Univ. vs. Grambling State), the LHSAA State Farm Superdome Classic (state high school football championships) and the Allstate Sugar Bowl Football Classic (LSU vs. Notre Dame on Jan 3, 2007) all return this season.
At the end of the 2007 college football season, the Superdome will be the first stadium to host three major postseason games: the New Orleans Bowl, the Allstate Sugar Bowl Classic and the BCS National Championship Game.

**2008 NBA All-Star** events will be held in New Orleans, with the All-Star Game at the **New Orleans Arena**.

**Local Businesses:**

According to statistics from the Louisiana Department of Economic Development as reported by the *Times Picayune* on April 16, 2006, out of 81,000 local businesses in 10 parishes affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, 62,300 have reopened. According to the LDED, 17,716 of Orleans Parish's businesses have reopened. The Louisiana Tax Free Shopping Refund Center is also open at the Riverwalk on Thursdays and Fridays from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**Shopping:**

Major urban shopping destinations in the city include:

- The Shops at Canal Place
- The Riverwalk
- Jax Brewery
- Royal Street and other French Quarter antiques
- Miles of eclectic shops on Magazine street
- Boutiques, art galleries and shops are open throughout the city.

**Cultural Institutions:**

- All major museums have re-opened including:
  - New Orleans Museum of Art
  - Besthoff Sculpture Garden
  - The Ogden Museum of Southern Art
  - National World War II Museum
  - Contemporary Arts Center
  - Louisiana Children's Museum
  - Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra
  - New Orleans Ballet

**Hospitals:** As reported by the Louisiana Hospital Association, 11 of a pre-Katrina 17 acute care hospitals are reopened in Orleans and Jefferson parishes.

- **Orleans Parish:**
  - Children's Hospital
  - Elmwood Hospital (replaces Charity)
  - Touro Infirmary
  - Tulane University
Jefferson Parish:
- East Jefferson General
- Kenner Regional
- Lakeside Hospital
- Meadowcrest Hospital
- Oschner Clinic Foundation
- Omega Hospital
- West Jefferson Medical Center

Local Colleges.

University of New Orleans, Tulane University, Loyola, Dillard, Xavier, Delgado Community College, Southern University at New Orleans, Southeastern Louisiana University, Our Lady of Holy Cross College, Nunez Community College and Louisiana Technical College are all open. Tulane officials say the reopening of just their campus alone brought back 25,000 students.

The New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation promotes the city as a leisure tourism destination throughout the year and places special emphasis on developing visitation during the traditionally slow travel periods of summer and the weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Annually, NOTMC's marketing campaigns include strategic print, broadcast, and Internet advertising and public relations. For more information, please call 504-524-4784, or visit our websites – www.NewOrleansOnline.com, www.NewOrleansMuseums.com and soon, www.HearNewOrleansMusic.com.

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