

**SPATIAL
INFORMATION
DESIGN
LAB**

Justice

Re-

Investment

New

Orleans

Spatial Information Design Lab

Columbia University Graduate School of
Architecture, Planning and Preservation

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Aerial view from above Central City, New Orleans, September 2005.
Photo: U.S. Navy, Jeremy L. Grisham

Part 1 Mapping Incarceration

Since 2005, the Spatial Information Design Lab has been investigating the geography of incarceration in the contemporary United States. Building on work done jointly by the Council of State Governments, the JFA Institute, and the Justice Mapping Center, the Lab's mapping project seeks to focus research and policy attention on the conditions and needs of urban spaces with high rates of incarceration. Rather than examining only the punishment and rehabilitation of individuals, the research identifies particular places and emerging strategies for investing public resources in order to address the urban conditions from which prisoners come and to which most of them return.

A Call to Action

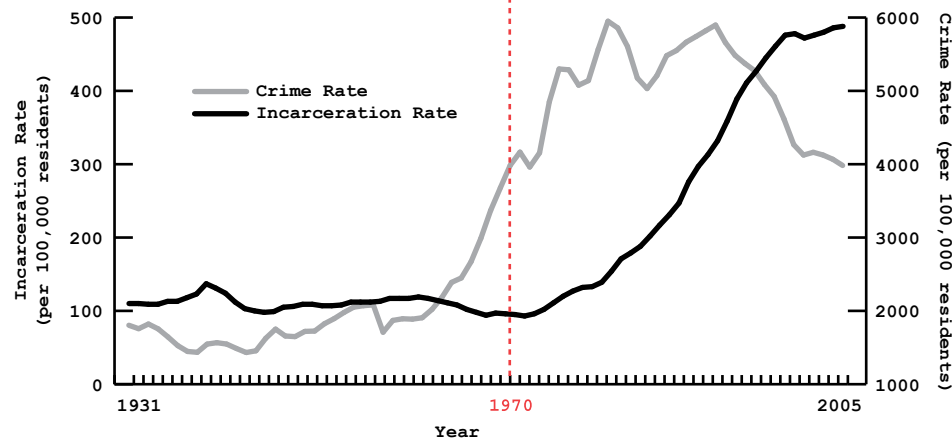
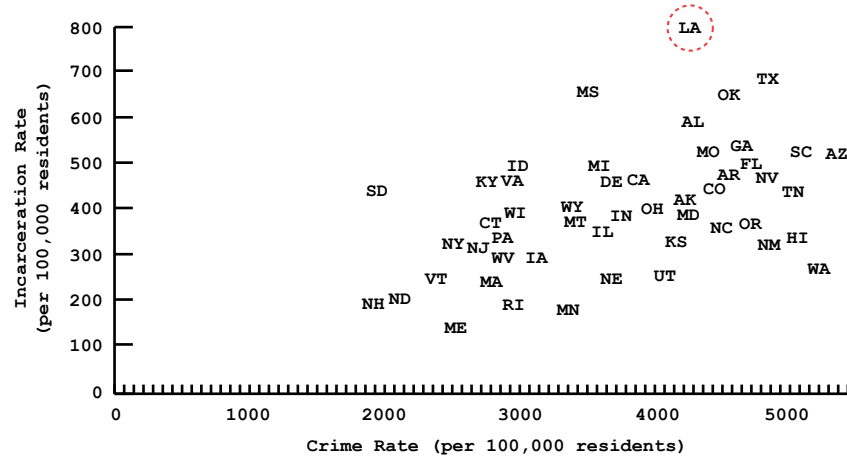
Hurricane Katrina exposed New Orleans' neglected physical infrastructure and ecological vulnerability. It also highlighted the fragility of civic institutions in the city's poorest neighborhoods, places in which social life is made even more unstable by the constant displacement and resettlement of people in the criminal justice system.

Weeks after the storm, the Spatial Information Design Lab transformed its analytic incarceration mapping project into an action-oriented proposal for Justice Reinvestment in New Orleans. This report and plan are the product of two years of research, countless conversations, and a network of local and national participants dedicated to creating a more just and sustainable future for New Orleans.

The Growth of Prisons

The United States has the highest rate of incarceration of any country in the world. Though it has only four percent of the world's population, the U.S. is home to one quarter of the world's incarcerated individuals.¹ Since 1970, the state

and federal prison population has grown eightfold to nearly 1.6 million. With another 723,000 people in local jails, a total of 2.3 million Americans are incarcerated. As a 2008 Pew Charitable Trust report documents, for the first time in the nation's history more than one in 100 American adults are behind bars.²



Top: Louisiana leads the nation in incarcerations. Source: FBI Uniform Crime Report and Bureau of Justice Statistics

Bottom: The crime rate in the U.S. has been falling since 1991 and is as low today as it was in 1970. In contrast, incarceration rates have climbed rapidly and continue to grow. Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics

From Crime Maps to Geographies of Incarceration

Crime maps are common instruments for policy makers and urban police forces pursuing tactical approaches to fighting crime. The places where crimes are committed cluster in so-called "hotspots" on which resources can be concentrated. The benefits of this approach are short-lived. The city spaces that are targeted may become safer, but too often crime incidents are simply displaced to other locations.

The geography of crime differs considerably from that of incarceration. When data about the residences of those admitted to prison are mapped, they show that a disproportionate number of the 2.3 million people in U.S. prisons and jails come from very few neighborhoods in the country's biggest cities.³

Prison admissions maps have the potential to guide urban designers, planners, and policy makers in pursuing strategic investments in infrastructure, social capital, and governance that could produce different patterns in our cities.

Million Dollar Blocks and Neighborhoods

In many places the concentration of prison admissions is so dense that states are spending in excess of a million dollars a year to incarcerate the residents of single city blocks or neighborhoods. Eric Cadora began to identify what are now known as "million dollar blocks" and "million dollar neighborhoods" to describe this pattern.⁴ The areas often show a high degree of poverty and disinvestment, as well as neglect of key civic institutions and urban infrastructure. Millions of dollars are spent on these neighborhoods, but not *in* them.⁵

Socio-Spatial Analysis of Incarceration

The U.S. Department of Justice reports yearly on the social and demographic statistics of incarceration. Its data reveal that high percentages of the people in American jails and prisons are people of color and male.⁶ Analysis of the statistics indicates that high percentages of incarcerated people have (or had) incomes that put them at or below the poverty line.⁷

Very little research, however, treats these statistics as indicative of an urban or spatial phenomenon. Using maps as tools, our research has focused on defining the spatial patterns that link poverty, racial segregation, and incarceration, and on investigating how their repeated coincidence takes on identifiable urban forms.⁸

These patterns suggest that policy responses to urban poverty and racial isolation have systematically abandoned the neighborhoods they were meant to address. This disinvestment has been matched by increased investments in the institutions of the criminal justice system, particularly jails, prisons, and other infrastructure of incarceration. Today, those institutions constitute the primary public investment in many of the nation's most distressed communities.

Infrastructure and Exostructure

Prisons act as part of the public infrastructure of cities. In some neighborhoods they are the best-funded and most significant government institutions. But unlike streets, utilities, communication networks, parks, hospitals, and schools, prisons are often located hundreds of miles away. Rather than directing resources toward the neighborhoods, prisons act more like urban exostructures, displacing investments to prison towns outside of the communities to which prisoners will return.

Reentry and Reincarceration

As prison costs have risen and policy makers look for ways to control them, they are increasingly paying attention to the 650,000 people who return home from prison each year. The process by which newly released prisoners reestablish their citizen status in the free world is known as “reentry.” Reentry is emerging as a primary site for intervention and innovation.⁹ Ninety-five percent of people sent to prison are eventually released, and data suggest that most of them return to the communities from which they came.¹⁰ But reentry is often troubled. Nationally about half of those who return home are readmitted to prison within three years of their release. This cyclical pattern—like a permanent migration in and out of our nation’s largest cities—is both costly and spatially concentrated.

Much of that pattern is generated, though, by surprising factors. Too often people return to prison or jail not because they have committed another crime in the ordinary sense of the word. Each year about 650,000 people are admitted to state prisons (about the same number being released). Between 50 and 65 percent of them are reincarcerated simply because their parole or probation has been revoked. Of that group, between half and two-thirds are returned to prison for technical violations (absconding from supervision or failure to show up for meetings with their parole officer; failure to pay supervision fees, restitution fees or fines; failure to attend treatment; drug use as detected by urine analysis; failure to maintain employment; or being arrested, but not convicted, for a misdemeanor or felony-level crime).¹¹

Beyond Criminal Justice

High incarceration rates take a dramatic toll not only on the prisoners who cycle back and forth between cities and remote prisons, but also on the urban communities from which they come.

Research conducted by Todd R. Clear suggests that communities can reach a tipping point beyond which increased incarceration undermines the local networks and infrastructure of everyday life.¹²

Once past that point, neighborhoods can enter a downward spiral where incarceration perversely leads to increased crime and juvenile delinquency, while damaging public health, housing values, and rates of political participation. Incarcerating people in larger and larger numbers dilutes even further the small crime reduction effect that is gained from incarceration, while increasing the costs.

The Vera Institute of Justice has reported that, although “increased incarceration rates have some effect on reducing crime,” accounting for about one quarter of the drop in crime during the 1990s, “continued growth in incarceration will prevent considerably fewer, if any, crimes than past increases did and will cost taxpayers substantially more to achieve.”¹³

Confronting Incarceration Growth

In 2004, state governments faced the worst budget shortfalls since World War II, with deficits totaling \$80 billion dollars. In most states, correctional spending was one of the costliest budget items, totaling over \$41 billion nationally. Research conducted by the Council on State Governments revealed that incarceration growth in states was driven largely by parole revocation and reincarceration, a phenomenon that stemmed from inadequate reentry planning. To cope with extreme fiscal circumstances and failing correctional systems, lawmakers in over twenty-two states passed sentencing reforms and policy changes that would begin to slow prison growth and reduce costs.

The widespread correctional policy changes that ensued led to the passage of the Second Chance Act in 2007, which established a national strategy

for prisoner reentry. If the money allocated from the Act is indeed appropriated, it will provide hundreds of millions of dollars in grants to effective programs. State and local governments are now searching for the best approaches to undo the costly economic and social consequences of mass incarceration.¹⁴

Justice Reinvestment

This report focuses on allocating public safety resources with a new approach, known as Justice Reinvestment, in which public officials identify ways to reduce the growth of the prison population and reinvest those savings in the parts of cities to which most people released from prison return.¹⁵ The states of Connecticut, Texas, Arizona, and Kansas have passed Justice Reinvestment laws. In Texas, for example, lawmakers created a \$241 million network of treatment and incarceration diversion programs rather than spending \$500 million on new prisons. Lawmakers in Kansas mandated a twenty percent reduction in parole revocations and set aside \$7 million for reinvestment in high incarceration communities.

The Council on State Governments has provided technical support to lawmakers in half a dozen other states considering similar justice reinvestment initiatives. Typical projects include introducing day reporting centers as alternatives to jails and prisons,¹⁶ promoting workforce development and job placement, providing drug treatment and other community-based programs to inmates and parolees, and strengthening family networks as people return home.¹⁷

An Urban Strategy

Until now, the institutions supported by Justice Reinvestment initiatives have remained largely within the orbit of criminal justice and correctional facilities. Although these service-oriented programs are crucial to the reduction of the over-reliance of incarceration and reincarceration, reentry planning must also tackle larger-scale urban problems. Failing schools, chronic unemployment, and laws preventing previously incarcerated people from receiving housing assistance or educational aid are typical of the obstacles facing those who return home from prison.¹⁸

Incarceration as an urban problem is particularly difficult to address because prisons are largely invisible institutions. Visualization of the spatial characteristics of incarceration is thus an important first step in implementing Justice Reinvestment strategies in neighborhoods at an appropriate urban scale. Recognizing the patterns of incarceration in million dollar blocks and neighborhoods reveals opportunities to disrupt the cycle of release and reincarceration.



Public hearing of the Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP) at the New Orleans City Council chambers, March 7, 2007.
Photo: Johnna Cressica Brazier

Part 2 Incarceration in New Orleans

Crime has been cited as a major social, political, and economic obstacle in the rebuilding of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. The Criminal Justice Leadership Alliance in Orleans Parish has proposed that the entire criminal justice infrastructure—not just policing—be rethought to establish a safer city.¹⁹ Some local officials have gone farther and suggested that criminal justice must be rethought not simply in the interest of crime control but as an essential component of the rebuilding process. While other public and social infrastructure like education, health, and housing are being radically transformed, and even linked to one another physically and programmatically, the criminal justice infrastructure has been largely ignored. Moreover, the city's planning process is neglecting to take into account the obstacles that mass-incarceration creates for neighborhood revitalization.

Social and economic viability of the city depends upon the creation of a new urban criminal justice strategy aimed at reducing incarceration rates and undertaking strategic interventions to improve the institutions and infrastructures that revitalize neighborhoods.

**Orleans Parish:
Neighborhoods and Incarceration**

Correlating prison admissions data from 2003 to 2007 with other urban data over the same four-year period, the Spatial Information Design Lab has produced a series of maps visualizing incarceration in Orleans Parish's seventy-three

NEIGHBORHOODS	% OF NEW ORLEANS POP. (2000)	NO. OF PRISON ADM. (2003)	% OF PRISON ADM. (2003)	PRISON EXPENDITURES (2003)
Lake Terrace/Lake Oaks	0.45%	0	0.00%	\$0
Lakeshore	0.75%	0	0.00%	\$0
Lakewood	0.36%	0	0.00%	\$0
Garden District	0.41%	0	0.00%	\$0
Warehouse District	0.17%	0	0.00%	\$0
City Park	0.34%	0	0.00%	\$0
Audubon/University	3.09%	2	0.14%	\$71,200
Lakeview	3.68%	3	0.21%	\$142,400
Touro	0.68%	1	0.07%	\$9,900
Village de L'Est	2.68%	8	0.56%	\$141,600
Aurora/Walnut Bend	3.30%	10	0.70%	\$346,100
Read Boulevard East	1.71%	6	0.42%	\$172,600
Marlyville/Fontainebleau	1.40%	6	0.42%	\$156,100
West Riverside	1.09%	7	0.49%	\$206,300
Milneburg	1.17%	8	0.56%	\$164,000
Bayou St. John	1.01%	7	0.49%	\$166,300
READ Boulevard West A	1.11%	8	0.56%	\$284,500
St. Anthony	1.10%	8	0.56%	\$289,800
Ponchartrain Park	0.55%	4	0.28%	\$73,900
Fillmore	1.45%	11	0.77%	\$167,300
Marigny	0.65%	5	0.35%	\$78,300
Gentilly Woods	0.91%	7	0.49%	\$174,100
READ Boulevard West B	1.99%	16	1.12%	\$244,300
Fairgrounds/ Broad	1.37%	11	0.77%	\$393,100
Vieux Carre	0.87%	7	0.49%	\$57,700
Algiers Point	0.49%	4	0.28%	\$123,000
Edgelake/Little Woods	9.20%	75	5.24%	\$2,687,300
Black Pearl	0.37%	3	0.21%	\$114,600
Parkview	0.24%	2	0.14%	\$87,000
Gentilly Terrace	2.19%	19	1.33%	\$478,200
East Carrollton	0.92%	9	0.63%	\$276,000
Tall Timbers/Brechtel	2.49%	25	1.75%	\$938,900
Uptown	1.38%	14	0.98%	\$649,300
St. Thomas Project	0.92%	12	0.84%	\$636,800
Mid-City	4.13%	54	3.77%	\$2,130,400
Pines Village	1.06%	16	1.12%	\$238,100
Broadmoor	1.50%	23	1.61%	\$639,400

Orleans Parish neighborhoods ranked from lowest to highest incidence of prison admissions, as measured by the ratio of percent of prison admissions to percent of total city population. Million dollar neighborhoods are highlighted in red.

neighborhoods. Like other cities in the United States, the maps reveal an uneven distribution of both prison admissions and prison expenditures across the city.

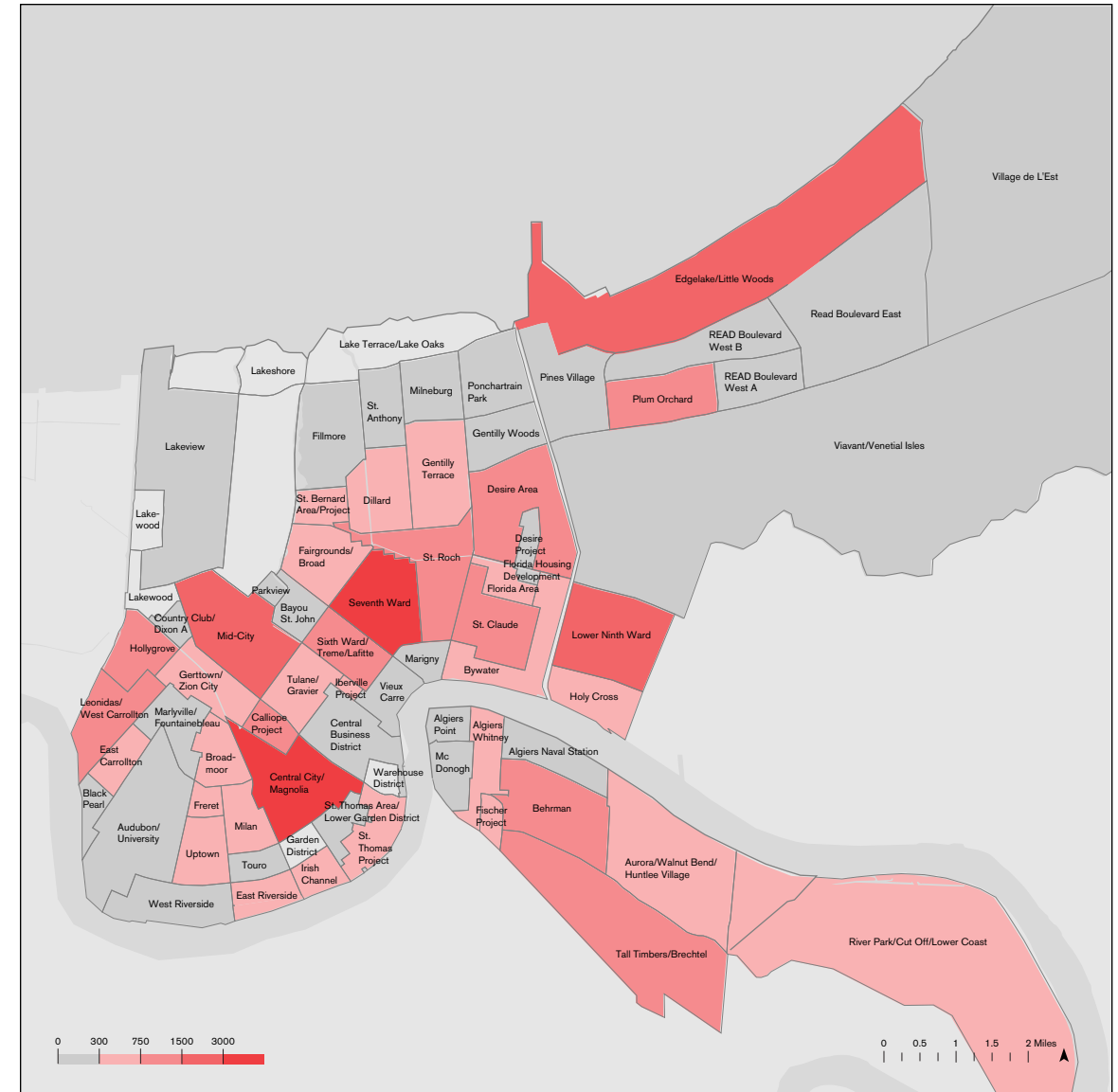
Both incarceration and prison expenditures are shown on the maps on a scale that moves from grey to bright red: the brighter the shade of red,

NEIGHBORHOODS	% OF NEW ORLEANS POP. (2000)	NO. OF PRISON ADM. (2003)	% OF PRISON ADM. (2003)	PRISON EXPENDITURES (2003)
Dillard	1.34%	22	1.54%	\$691,700
Bywater	1.06%	18	1.26%	\$517,600
River Park/Lower Coast	0.94%	16	1.12%	\$592,500
Algiers Naval Station	0.60%	11	0.77%	\$251,900
Plum Orchard	1.50%	28	1.96%	\$903,500
Country Club/Dixon A	0.37%	7	0.49%	\$106,700
East Riverside	0.68%	13	0.91%	\$688,400
Behrman	2.18%	43	3.00%	\$1,207,000
Milan	1.55%	31	2.16%	\$617,600
St. Roch	2.49%	50	3.49%	\$1,315,900
McDonogh	0.58%	12	0.84%	\$250,000
Florida Area	0.66%	14	0.98%	\$282,100
Gerttown/Zion City	0.98%	21	1.47%	\$580,300
Irish Channel	0.88%	19	1.33%	\$556,700
Desire Project	0.14%	3	0.21%	\$59,300
Hollygrove	1.44%	32	2.23%	\$763,500
Holy Cross	1.14%	27	1.89%	\$444,500
Leonidas/ West Carrollton	1.86%	44	3.07%	\$897,100
Tulane/Gravier	0.88%	21	1.47%	\$383,400
Seventh Ward	3.52%	84	5.87%	\$4,624,400
St. Bernard Area	1.33%	32	2.23%	\$715,900
St. Claude	2.43%	59	4.12%	\$1,401,500
Lower Ninth ward	2.91%	76	5.31%	\$1,553,100
Desire Area	0.79%	21	1.47%	\$787,900
Central Business District	0.37%	10	0.70%	\$126,900
Sixth Ward/Treme/Lafitte	1.84%	52	3.63%	\$1,276,500
Iberville Project	0.53%	15	1.05%	\$384,500
Central City/Magnolia	3.97%	115	8.03%	\$4,317,200
Fischer Project	0.42%	13	0.91%	\$651,400
Freret	0.51%	16	1.12%	\$286,000
St. Thomas/Lower Garden	0.79%	25	1.75%	\$203,600
Algiers Whitney	0.53%	17	1.19%	\$406,200
Viavant/Venetian Isles	0.34%	11	0.77%	\$178,400
Calliope Project	0.90%	43	3.00%	\$1,132,400
Florida Housing Dev.	0.33%	20	1.40%	\$422,800
CITY TOTAL	57.21%	1432	27.30%	\$41,916,900

the higher the number of incarcerated people and the larger the amount of money being spent on incarceration.

Aligning census data from 2000 with criminal justice and other urban data from 2003 provides a picture of Orleans Parish's pre-Katrina condition.²⁰

Since Katrina, a lack of accurate data about the returning population of the city has made analysis and mapping difficult. Although many organizations have estimated current populations, an updated census will only take place in 2010.²¹

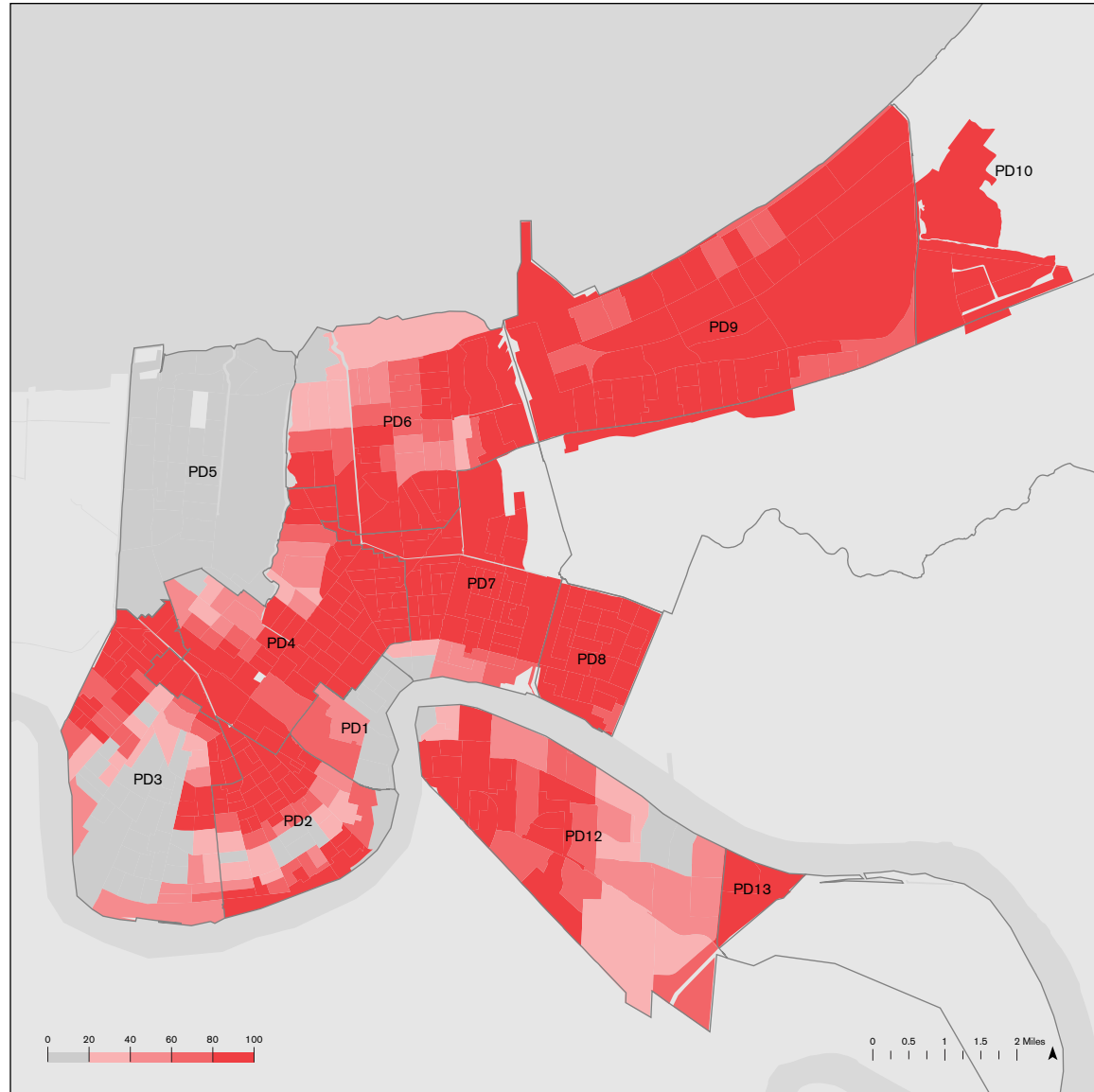


Orleans Parish, prison expenditures per neighborhood in thousands of dollars, 2003

Incarceration Demographics

Before Hurricane Katrina, the State of Louisiana had both the highest incarceration rate in the nation and one of the most disproportionately black prison populations.²² New Orleans residents in particular, most of them African-

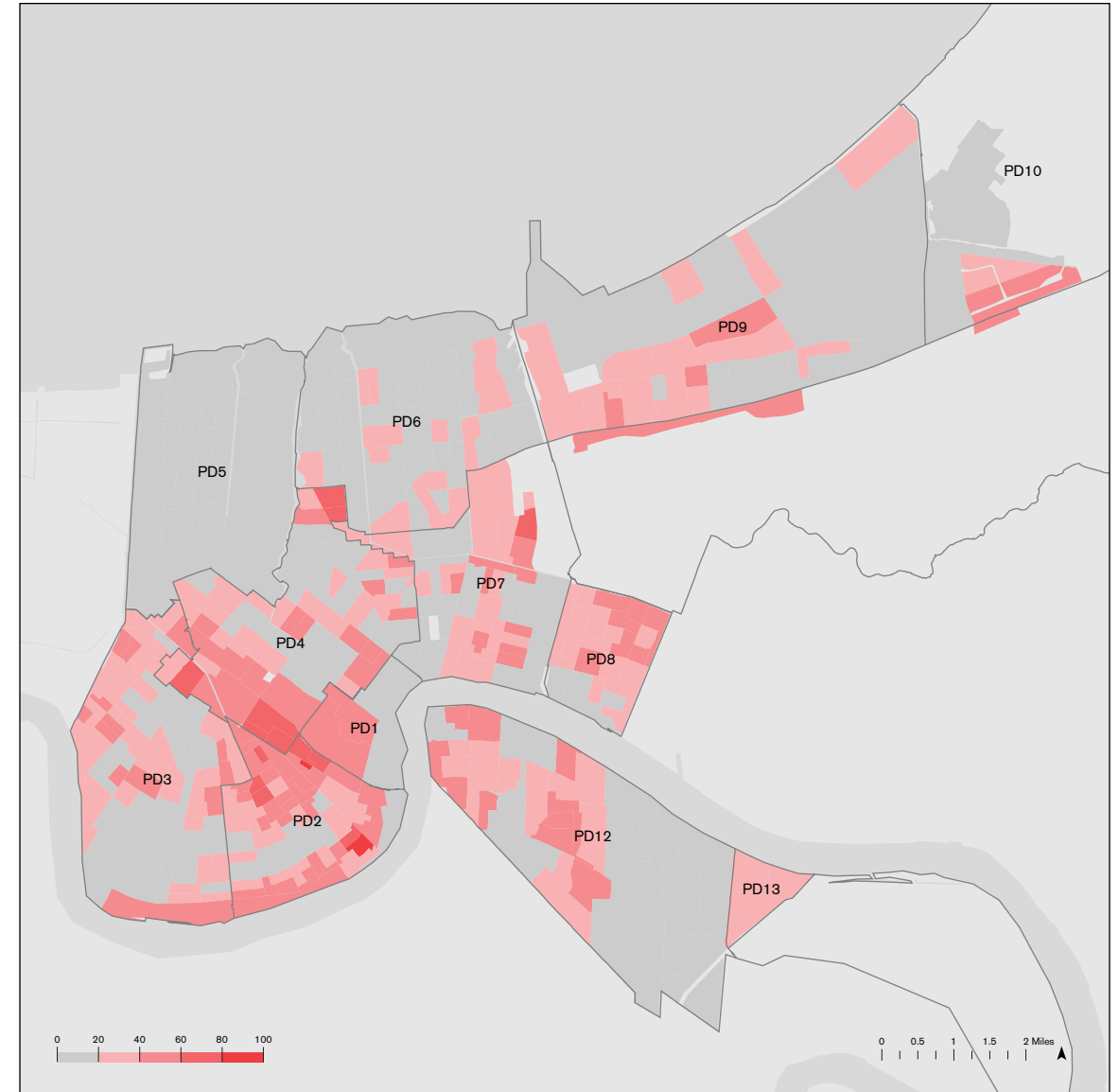
American, were migrating in large numbers between distant state prisons, local jails, and a few city neighborhoods.²³ In 2003, two-thirds of people admitted to prison were arrested for violations of parole, and nearly three-quarters of prison admissions were due for release in one to three years.



Percent persons of color per block group, 2000

In an effort to address the racial imbalance in the justice system, the repetitive cycle of incarceration and reincarceration, and to rethink prison spending as a state investment, the Governor convened a task force in 2003 to consider prison population reduction and high-reentry community investment strategies.²⁴

Hurricane Katrina halted the task force's efforts and intensified the pattern of migration that the criminal justice system had been supporting for years: large numbers of people, mainly poor and black, were displaced from the most distressed parts of the city.²⁵



Percent persons living in poverty per block group, 2000

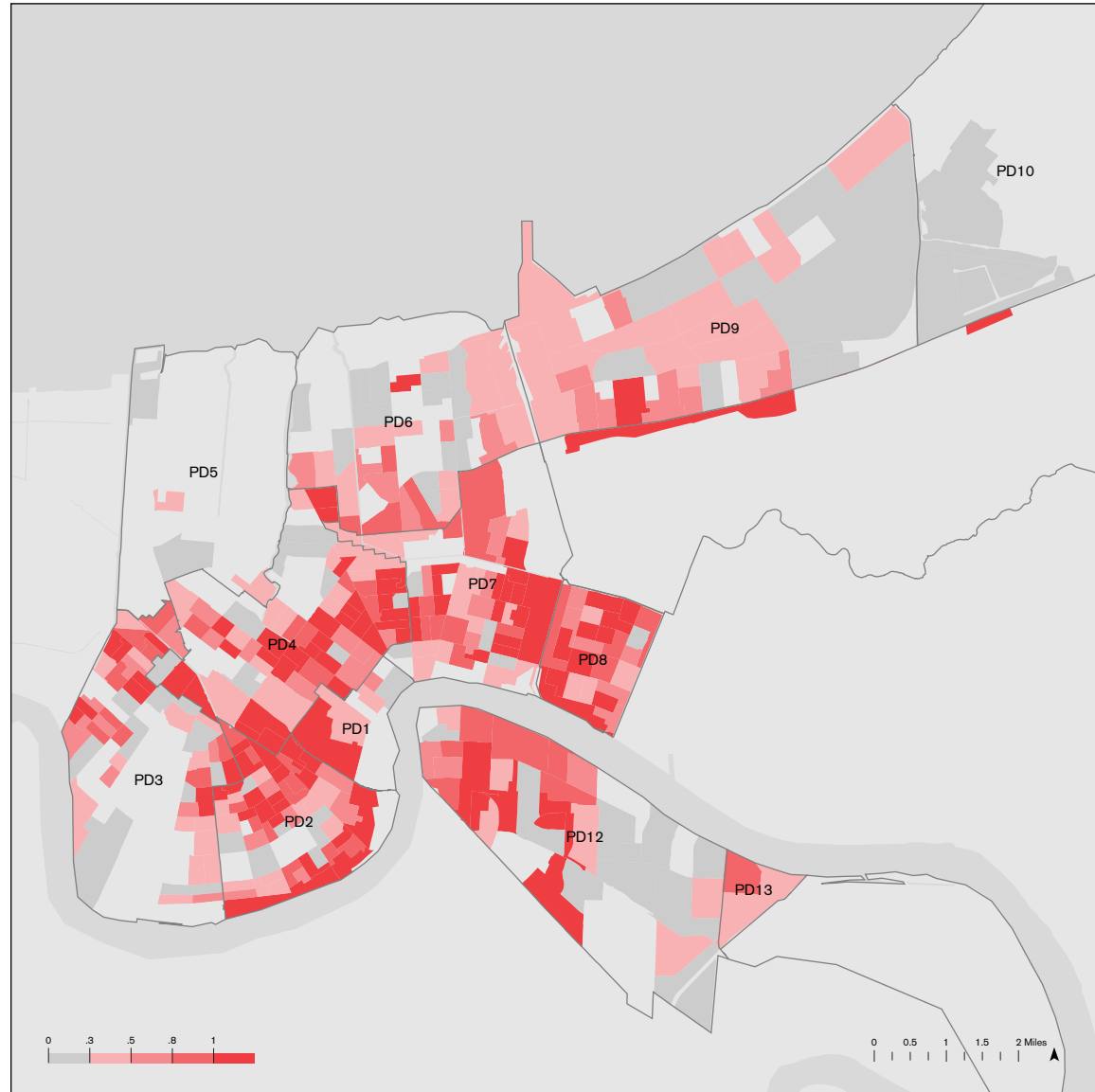
Costs of Incarceration

Orleans Parish was home to 485,000 people prior to Hurricane Katrina. In 2003, it cost \$42 million to incarcerate 1,432 of its residents.

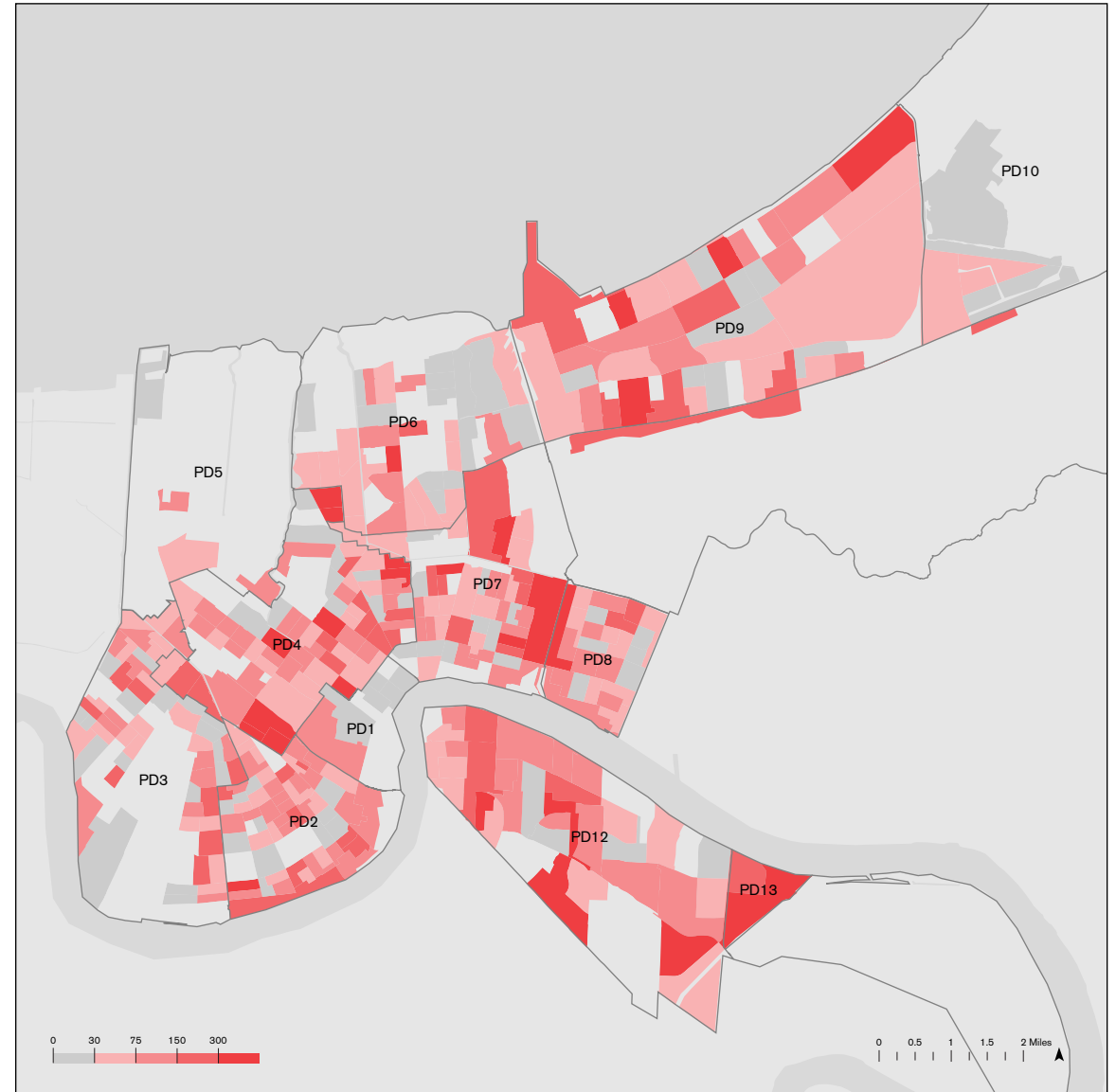
The maps and their resulting spatial statistics underscore the overlaps between incarceration,

poverty, and race in the city. Public spending on incarceration was disproportionately concentrated in Planning Districts (PDs) 2, 4, and 7. Census data from 2000 indicate that percentages of people of color and those living in poverty in PDs 2, 4, and 7 were consistently higher than the city wide averages.

Planning District	% Total Admissions	% Total Population	% People of Color	% Living in Poverty
2	15	10	75	40
4	24	17	88	44
7	14	9	87	39
All	.3	100	73	28

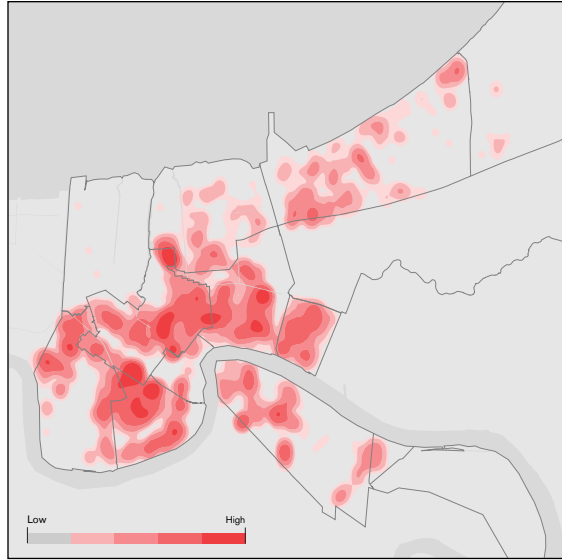


Percent adults admitted to prison per block group, 2003



Prison expenditures per block group in thousands of dollars, 2003

2003

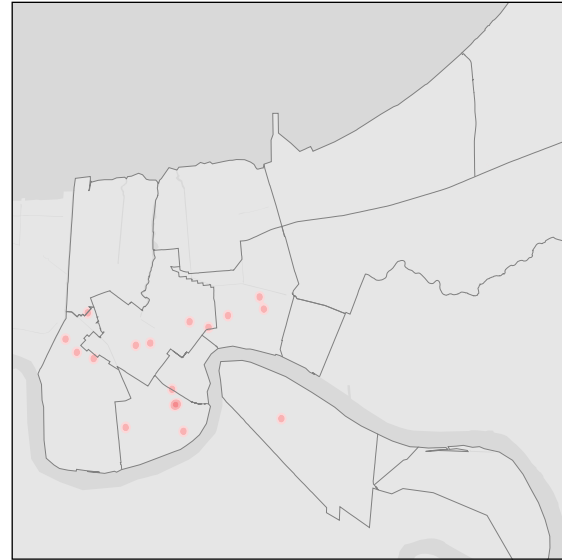


Prison admission density, 2003-2007

Data have been mapped to show the citywide density of prison admissions over four years. As of 2007, prison admissions had not yet returned to pre-Katrina levels, but they had been rising. In order to illustrate spatial density in these four maps, the data have been translated into density surfaces, where bright red indicates the highest density of prison populations.

Comparing prison admission density maps from 2003, late 2005, 2006, and 2007 reveals how incarceration patterns have shifted and intensified in some areas since Hurricane Katrina, while other areas have decreased in prison admissions. The most striking—if obvious—shift occurs in the 2005 map, just after Hurricane Katrina, when incarceration rates dropped nearly to zero in most areas of the city. The 2006 and

September - December, 2005

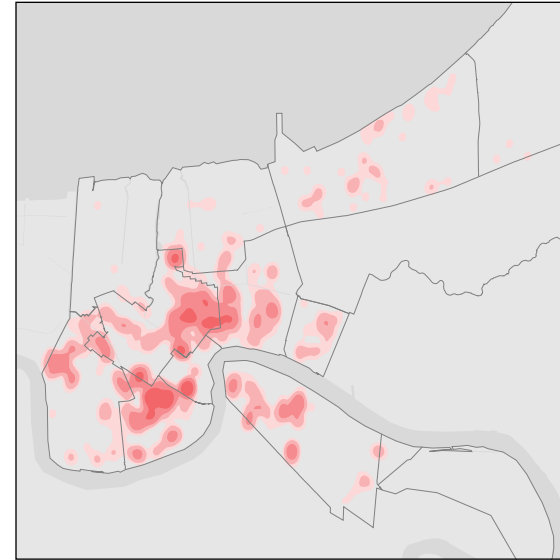


2007 maps clearly show that although some shifts in intensity have occurred, on the whole the reduction was short-lived.

The 2006 data show that incarceration rates began to rebound soon after Katrina. The spatial analysis reveals that incarceration shifted towards less damaged neighborhoods where people continued to live, and to which they had returned.

By 2007, the citywide incarceration rate was at 57 percent of its 2003 level, while the overall population was estimated at 71 percent of its pre-Katrina figure.²⁶ Incarceration rates, however, varied from neighborhood to neighborhood, and in some cases exceeded the corresponding rates of population return. Central City, for

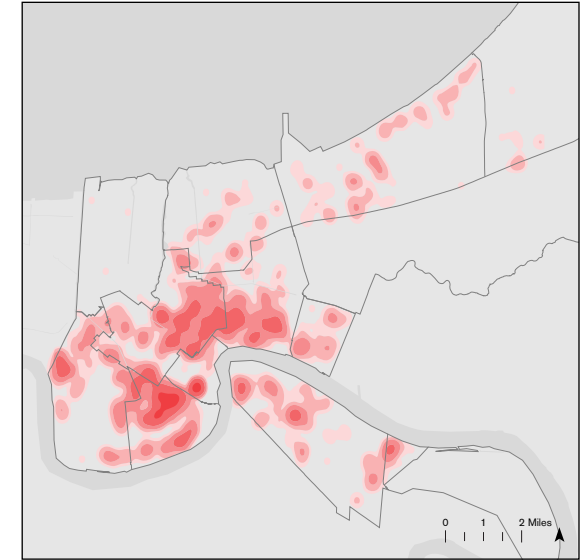
2006



example, had reached 82 percent of its pre-Katrina incarceration level in 2003, even though only an estimated 69 percent of its 2000 population had returned. By comparison, the badly damaged Lower 9th Ward showed prison admissions down 75 percent, although its population had fallen by an estimated 85 percent since 2000.

There are, no doubt, many ways to interpret the causes and factors underlying the fluctuations in rates of incarceration in Orleans Parish over this period. More importantly, although the particular neighborhoods facing the highest incarceration rates have shifted since 2005, the pattern remains the same as it was before Hurricane Katrina: a few neighborhoods continue to have disproportionately high numbers of residents

2007



sent to prison.

These data and maps suggest that there are a considerable number of questions left open in the recovery process. However, despite the prevalence of incarceration in certain neighborhoods, the city had not considered an attempt to reduce incarceration growth as a means of stabilizing affected communities within the neighborhood planning processes.

Seeking a Lower Baseline

Orleans Parish criminal justice agencies made their plan for the future of the city's justice infrastructure available to the public in the Justice Facilities Master Plan, released in September 2007.²⁷ The masterplan predicts that incarceration rates will return to pre-Katrina levels by 2017 and proposes refurbishing and expanding the city's jail to meet those demands.

In November 2008 Orleans Parish voters approved a bond initiative that included a last-minute provision introduced by the Sheriff to fund a portion of the construction costs for the first phase of the jail plan. \$41 million was allocated for the construction of a 1,500-bed jail that is primarily funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).²⁸ The jail would nearly double its current capacity, bringing the total to 4,000 beds, or 57 percent of the pre-Katrina level.²⁹ The latter phases of the masterplan, which have not yet been funded, call for the construction of an additional 3,500 prison beds. Prison reform advocates worry that expanding capacity in this way will create a financial incentive to jail more people.

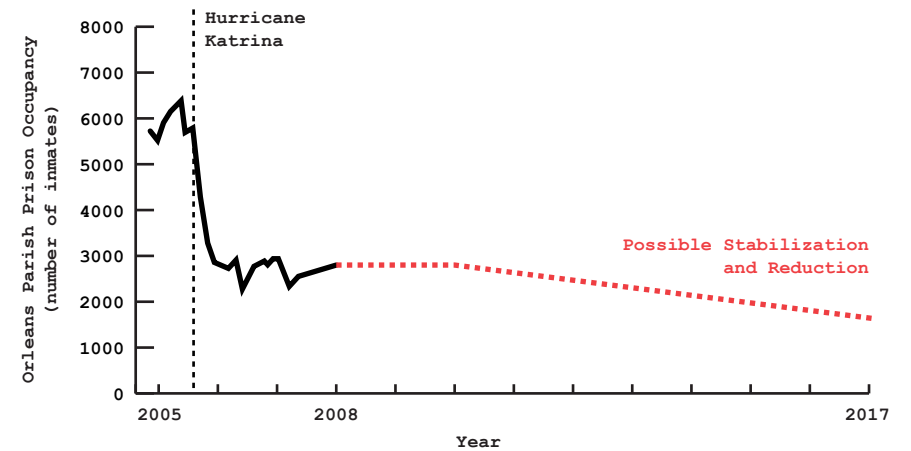
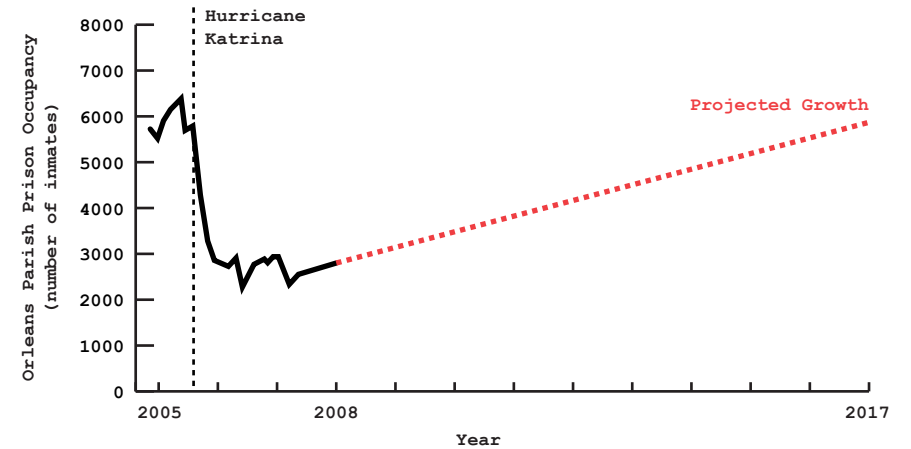
Justice advocates, public officials, and journalists have expressed varying opinions about the plan, arguing on the one hand that jail facilities damaged during the storm are in need of repair, and on the other that the expense of the facilities, especially their enlarged size, requires diverting funding from other crucial infrastructure and rebuilding priorities.

Adoption of the plan might suggest that New Orleans voters put building jails ahead of attempts to reduce incarceration levels. But this choice does not appear to be coordinated with the larger-scale rebuilding plans for the city. Neither the Unified New Orleans Plan (UNOP), which included citizen participation in the design process, nor the Office of Recovery Management's Target Area Development Plans, incorporated the jail plan into their proposals.

What if?

As Orleans Parish continues to recover and rebuild, will it reach or surpass its pre-Katrina incarceration rates, even as the overall city population stagnates at its current lower levels? Or can the city maintain and even reduce lower the incarceration rates that followed Hurricane Katrina?

Part three of this report suggests an alternative strategy for the city. What if Orleans Parish invested in communities rather than in jails? What if the city confronted the persistent pattern of migration back and forth between jail or prison and certain parts of the city? What sorts of projects could interrupt that cycle?



Top: Projected growth in jail occupancy from Criminal Justice Facilities Master Plan indicates a return to pre-Katrina levels of incarceration by 2017. Source: redrawn from illustration in Justice Facilities Master Plan

Bottom: Possible reduction in jail occupancy based on a strategy to reduce current levels of incarceration while establishing a safer city with targeted new investments. Source: SIDL



View from O.C. Haley Boulevard towards Central Business District
Photo: Alexandre Galbiati

Part 3 Justice Reinvestment in Central City

In July 2006, a team of students and researchers from the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation conducted fieldwork in New Orleans with the aim of identifying a pilot site for exploring Justice Reinvestment strategies.

Guided by prison admissions maps, the team engaged in a variety of onsite research, attending planning meetings, conducting site surveys of million dollar neighborhoods, and making maps, drawings, photographs and diagrams. Exploring possible partnerships, the team presented its findings to community leaders, local groups, non-profit organizations, and government officials.

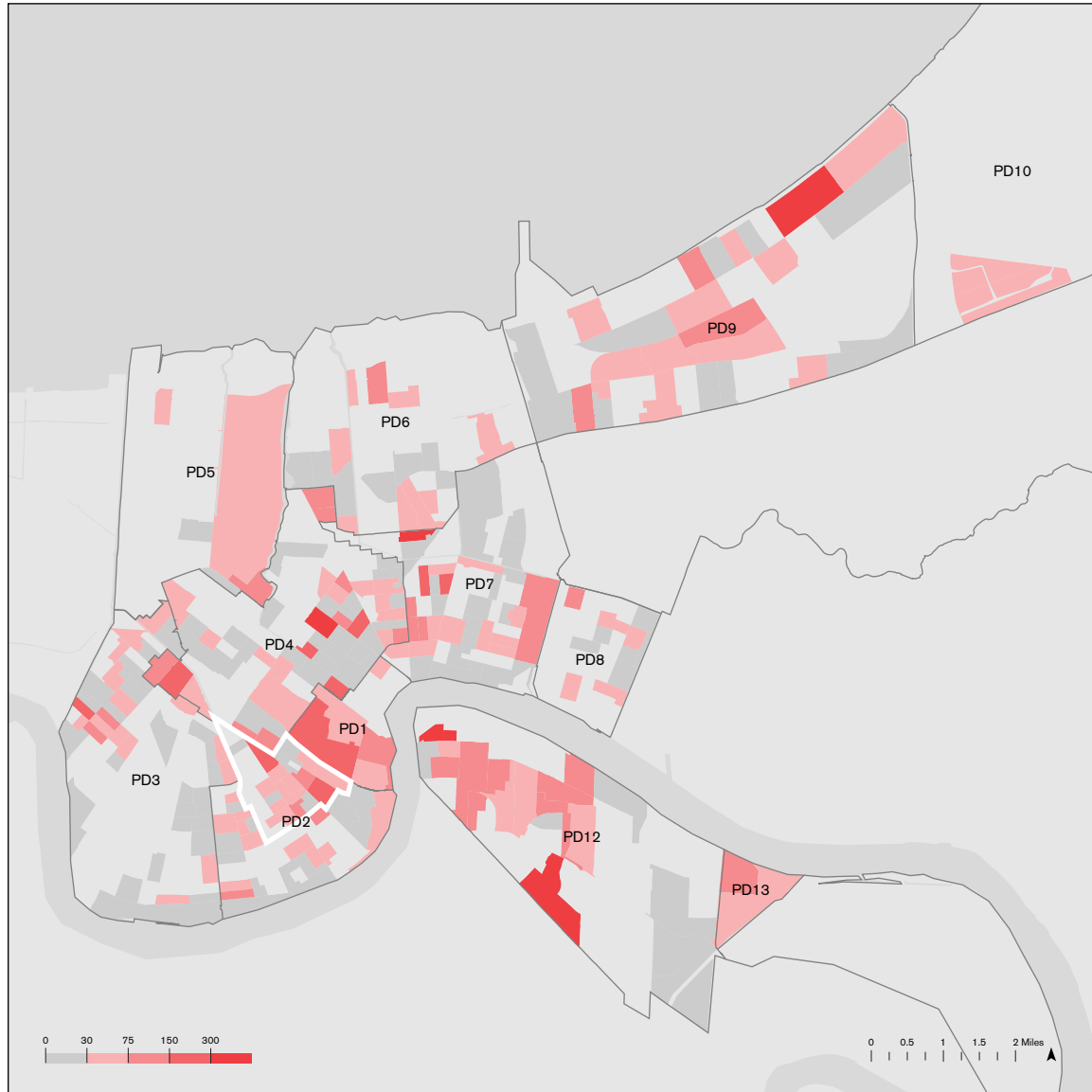
In the course of this research, the neighborhood of Central City emerged as a prime candidate for Justice Reinvestment efforts. The team focused on sites that had high incarceration rates, less serious damage from Hurricane Katrina, and a significant number of returning residents. Maps suggested what residents of the neighborhood already knew: large numbers of African-American residents were cycling in and out of prison. Central City was a place of concentrated poverty, under-performing schools, limited access to health care, few job opportunities, disinvestment, and a crumbling infrastructure. At the same time, the neighborhood's strong social networks, community groups, and not-for-profit organizations were already addressing the effects of incarceration, whether or not they were dealing with the issue directly.

A Million Dollar Neighborhood

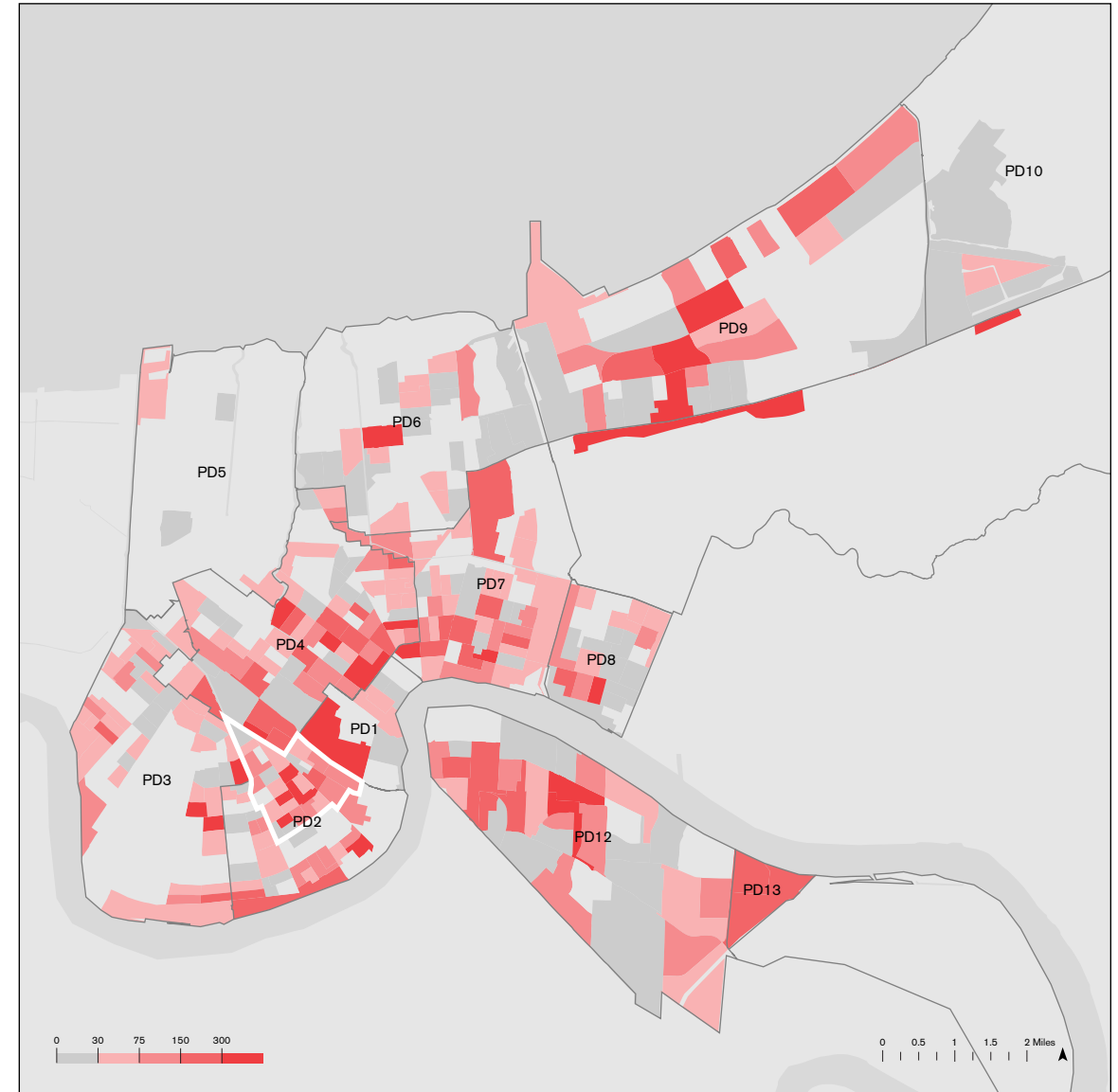
Since at least 2003—the beginning of our data set—Central City has been home to a disproportionate share of people in prison (see map on page 15). Even as population numbers plummeted after Hurricane Katrina, people from Central City continued to represent about eleven percent of Orleans Parish prison population and

about four percent of its total population. In 2006, about half of Central City's population had returned but the disproportionate ratio of prison population to total population remained constant. New prison admissions data indicate that this phenomenon continues today. In 2006 and 2007, the neighborhood still displayed the highest

concentrations of prison admissions in relation to the total population in all of Orleans Parish. By 2007, Central City's population was estimated at 69 percent of its pre-hurricane level, yet public spending on incarceration had reached 82 percent of its pre-Katrina level, totaling \$3.5 million.



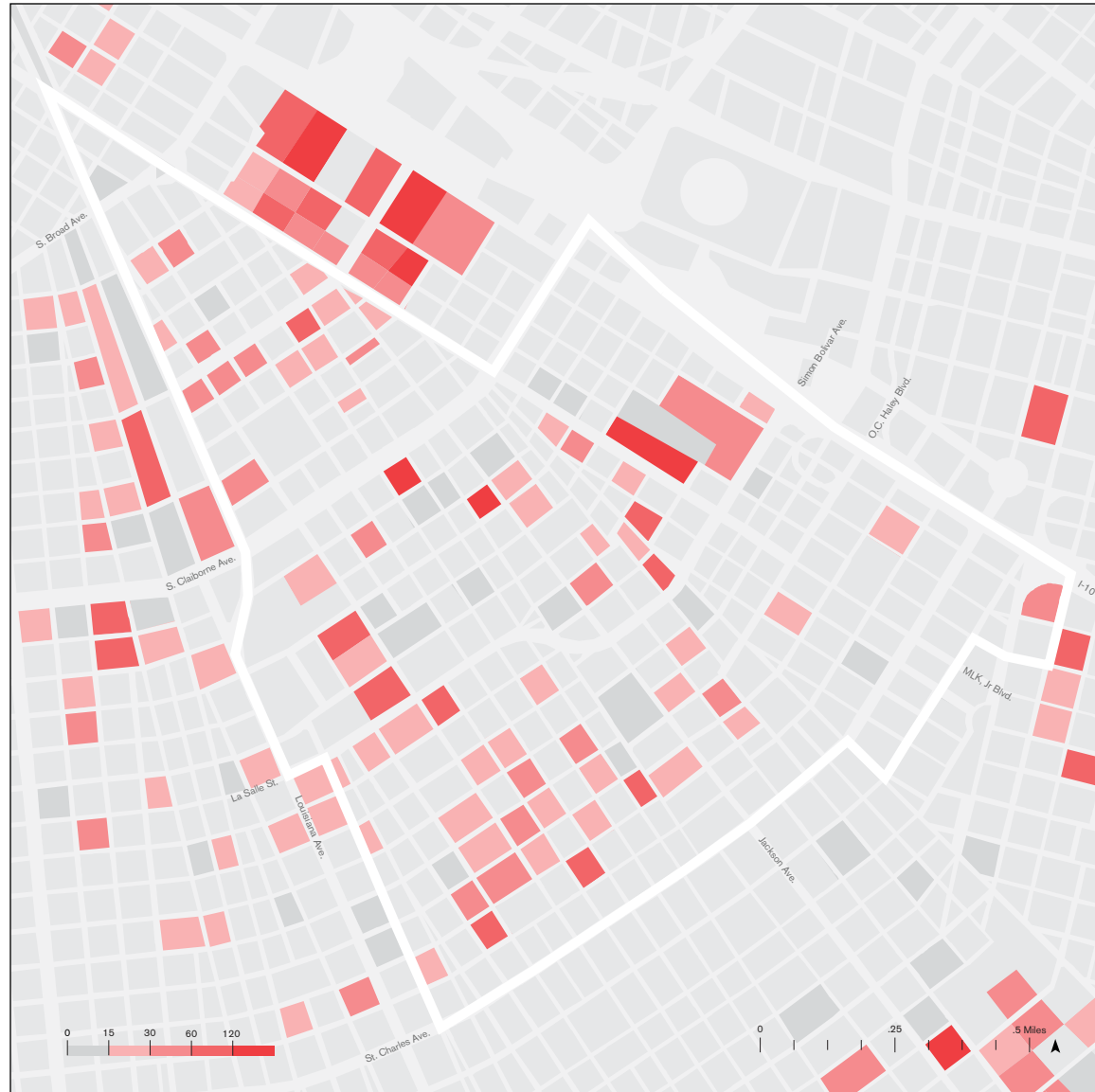
Prison expenditures per block group in thousands of dollars, 2006
Central City is highlighted in white on maps in this section.



Prison expenditures per block group
in thousands of dollars, 2007

Shifting Patterns of Incarceration

Although Central City maintained consistent incarceration rates on the whole, within the neighborhood spatial patterns of incarceration shifted as a result of the storm. The southeast corner of Central City was not flooded at all, while flood levels reached heights of six feet in the northwest part called the Hoffman Triangle. High

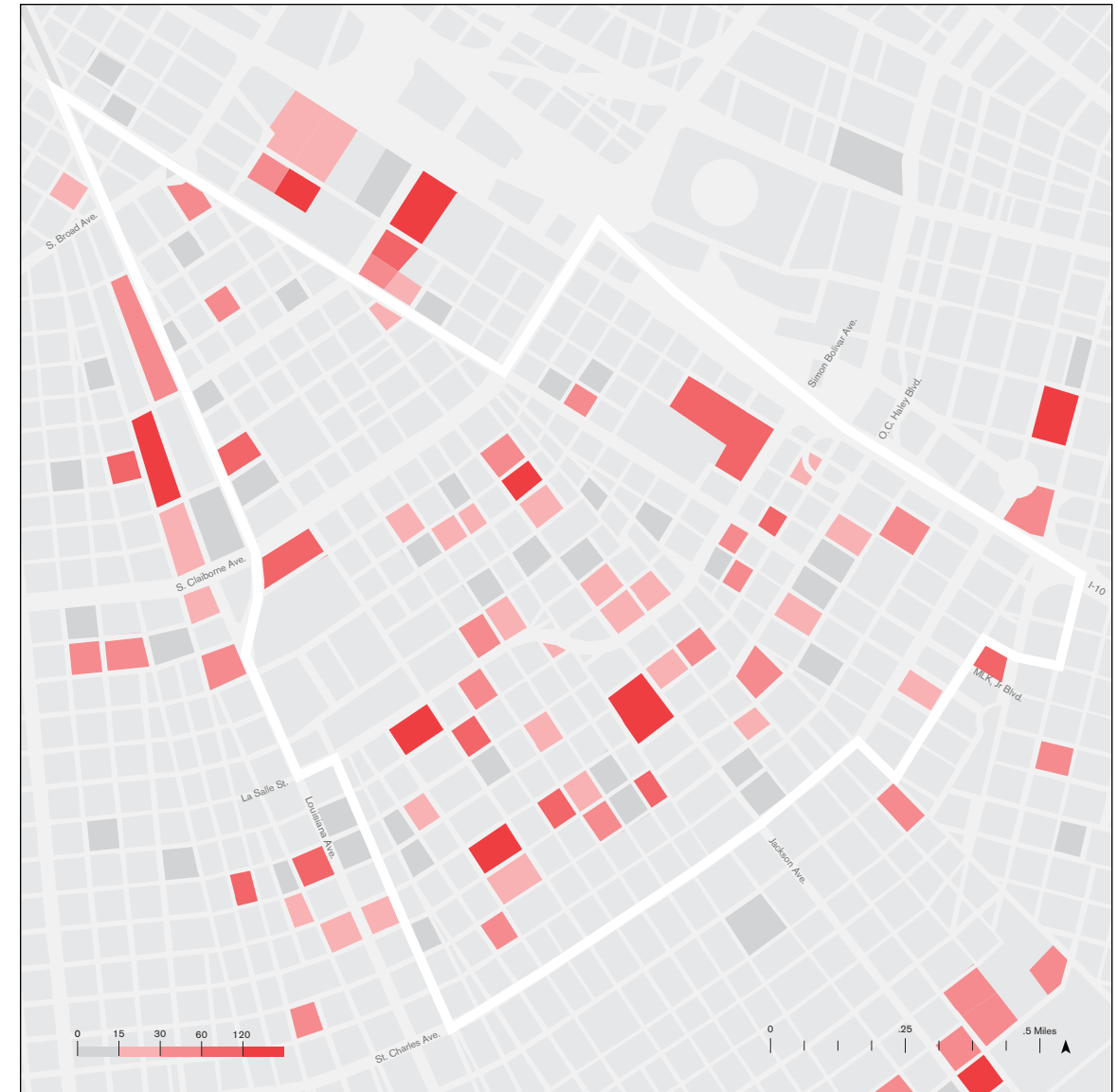


Central City, prison expenditures per block in thousands of dollars, 2003

levels of flooding made this part of the neighborhood uninhabitable, resulting in a decrease in incarceration.

experienced increases in public spending on incarceration.

Conversely, the blocks around Oretha Castle Haley Boulevard and Jackson Avenue in Central City's core sustained less damage and



Prison expenditures per block in thousands of dollars, 2007



Disinvestment is visible in many storefronts along O.C. Haley Boulevard, a Central City thoroughfare. It is being reinhabited and revitalized by many of the neighborhood's community organizations (see asset map on pages 34 and 35).

Photos: Alexandre Galbiati

Forms of Disinvestment

In the late 1960s and 1970s, Central City was the site of major urban demolition and building projects that changed the quality of its boundaries and its connections to other neighborhoods. Its northeastern border was established in 1975 with the construction of Interstate 10 and the Louisiana Superdome, a 72,000-seat stadium. These structures isolate the neighborhood from the adjoining Central Business District, and from Treme and Lafitte further to the north. Until the 1970s, Treme, Lafitte, and Central City had been centers of African-American business and culture in the city.

Despite Central City's proximity to the Central Business District and tourist attractions, prior to Hurricane Katrina nearly half of its residents lived below the poverty line (see map on page 15). The area surrounding O.C. Haley Boulevard in Central City has shown signs of revitalization, yet the overall pattern of public and private disinvestment is visible in the abandoned storefronts and houses lining the neighborhood's streets and in the disrepair of public parks and recreational spaces.

Some forms of neglect are less visible, however. In 2003, all but one of the public schools in Central City were rated as either "unacceptable" or "under warning" in terms of the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act. Approximately 60 percent of the people admitted to prison from New Orleans were between the ages of 20 and 24, and 46 percent of the Central City residents had no high school diploma.³⁰ In too many cases, public education was serving as a pipeline to prison rather than, as a public asset.

All three public housing projects in the vicinity of Central City—the C.J. Peete Homes, the B.W. Cooper Homes, and the William J. Guste Houses—were underfunded by the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) before Hurricane Katrina. After the storm, the C.J. Peete and B.W. Cooper Homes were closed and condemned, barring many evacuated residents from returning to their city and neighborhood. The housing projects are now being redeveloped as mixed-income developments, which will inevitably displace some of the former residents.

Asset Mapping

Despite, or perhaps because of, these challenges, Central City has an extraordinarily active and diverse array of community-based organizations. These groups provide services related to justice, health, philanthropy, civics, recreation, faith, education, arts, housing, and economics. Their projects range from afterschool programs and cultural events to juvenile justice services and local food establishments. All of them have been forced to grapple with the causes and impacts of high levels of incarceration.

Mapping the locations of Central City's organizations and businesses, researching their missions, and meeting with them was an initial step towards understanding their functions in the community. Although the success and failure of the work of each organization should be evaluated on its own terms assessing what might be common to all in terms of the needs of residents affected by incarceration was at the heart of our project. This technique is called "asset mapping."



- Open Asset
- Closed Asset
- Target Recovery Area
- Justice Reinvestment Corridor

0 .125 .25 Miles

EXISTING JUSTICE REINVESTMENT ASSETS ACTIVE IN CENTRAL CITY, MARCH 2007

JUSTICE

- 1 Catholic Charities*
- 2 Family & Friends of LA's Incarcerated Children
- 3 Juvenile Justice Program of Louisiana
- 4 Juvenile Regional Services
- 5 Safe Streets Strong Communities
- 6 Youth Empowerment Project

HEALTH

- 7 Booker T. Washington School Based Clinic
- 8 Central City Mental Health Clinic
- 9 Edna Pilsbury Clinic
- 10 Family Dental Clinic
- 11 Guste Home Clinic
- 12 NOLA Mission + Homeless Clinic
- 13 REACH NOLA
- 14 Senior Citizen Center
- 15 Tulane Community Health Center *On the Road*

PHILANTHROPY

- 16 Baptist Community Ministries*
- 17 Open Society Institute*

CIVIC

- 18 Allie Mae Williams Multi-Service Center
- 19 Central City Partnership
- 20 Central City Renaissance Alliance
- 21 Urban Impact Community Center

RECREATION

- 22 A.L. Davis Playground Park
- 23 Parkway Partners
- 24 Taylor Center Park
- 25 Van McMurray Park

FAITH

- 26 Berean Presbyterian Church
- 27 Castle Rock Com. Church
- 28 God Who Cares Tabernacle
- 29 Israelite Baptist Church
- 30 Living Witness Ministries + Kids Cafe
- 31 Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
- 32 New Hope Baptist Church
- 33 St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

EDUCATION

- 34 1st Steps Child Development Center
- 35 Berean Head Start
- 36 Booker T. Washington High School
- 37 Café Reconcile
- 38 Carter Woodson Middle School
- 39 Central City Head Start
- 40 Clear Head Learning Center
- 41 St. John Community Center + Childcare
- 42 Dr. MLK Jr. Charter School
- 43 Dryades YMCA
- 44 Florence Chester Elementary School
- 45 High School Signature Center
- 46 John Hoffman Elementary School
- 47 Kids Camera Project*
- 48 KIPP School Central City
- 49 LA Dept. of Ed. Afterschool Tutoring
- 50 MLK Head Start
- 51 Recovery School District*
- 52 Safe & Smart Afterschool/Summer Camp
- 53 Sylvania Williams Elementary School
- 54 Thomy Lafon Elementary School
- 55 William J. Guste Elementary School
- 56 Youth Multi Media Center
- 57 The Corps Network*

ARTS

- 58 Ashé Cultural Arts Center

HOUSING

- 59 B.W. Cooper Homes
- 60 C.J. Peete Homes
- 61 New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity*
- 62 Neighborhood Development Foundation*
- 63 N.O. Neighborhood Development Collaborative*
- 64 William J. Guste Houses

ECONOMIC

- 65 Central City Economic Opportunity Corporation
- 66 Good Work Network
- 67 Hope Credit Union
- 68 O.C. Haley Business Association*

not located in Central City or no permanent physical space

Left: Proposed Justice Reinvestment Corridor extends the city's Target Recovery Corridor along O.C. Haley Boulevard, Jackson Avenue, and La Salle Street, connecting existing neighborhood assets.

Top: Target Recovery Areas and proposed Justice Reinvestment Corridor superimposed on prison expenditure map, 2007.

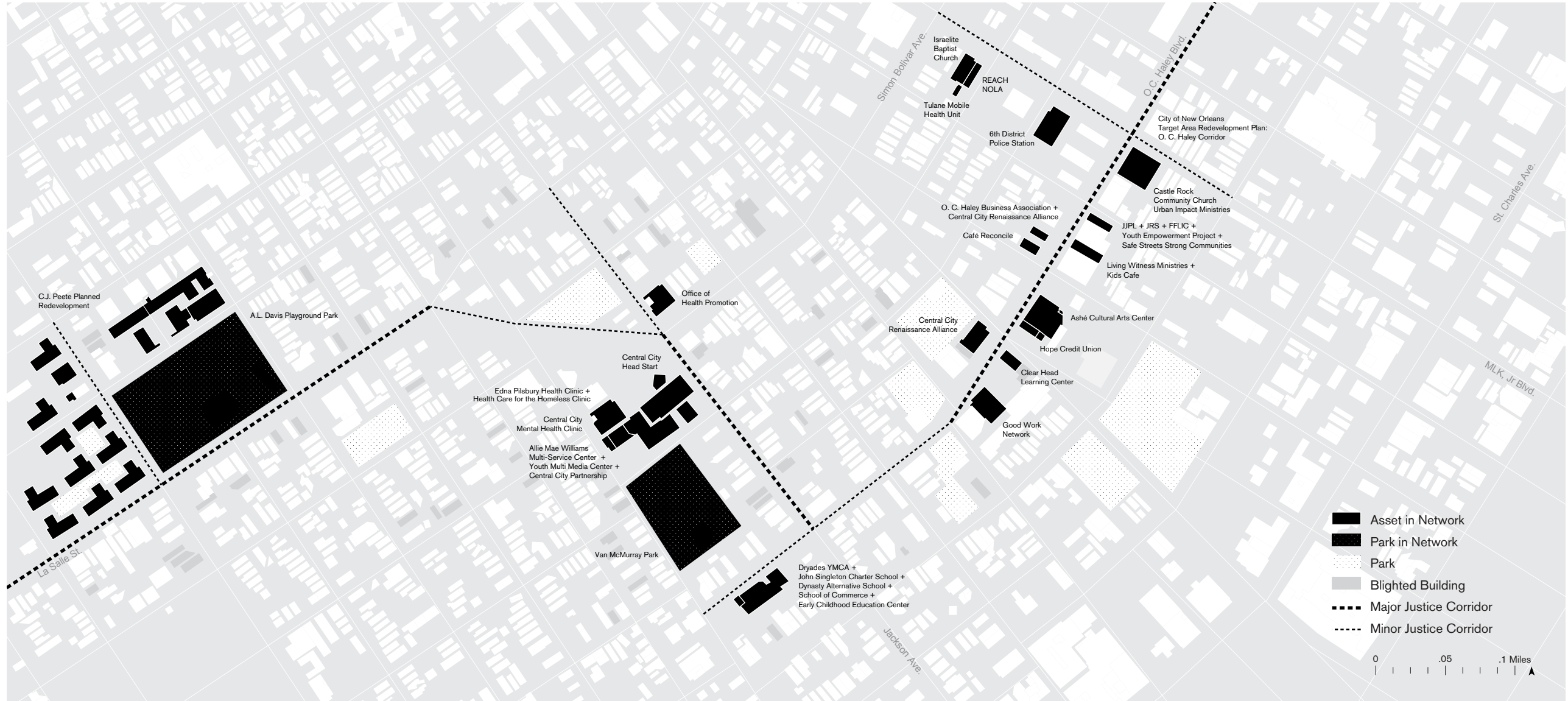
Establishing a Justice Reinvestment Network

The asset mapping process revealed three concentrations of activity around O.C. Haley Boulevard, Jackson Avenue and the C.J. Peete Homes (see map below). This area coincides with some of the highest concentrations of incarceration expenditures in Central City in

2007 (see map on pages 38 and 39). An urban corridor links these assets along a central axis running from the intersection of O.C. Haley and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevards south to Jackson Avenue, then west along La Salle Street to Jackson Avenue, then west along La Salle Street to C.J. Peete. The corridor is home to a diverse array of active neighborhood organizations, including clusters of small justice-reform and

social-service groups, an arts and culture center, a café that acts as a training facility for youths recently released from prison, a community health clinic, a newly-established charter school, and faith-based organizations. Yet despite their physical proximity, many of these groups worked in near-total isolation from one another.

Groups working citywide on health, education, community service, and economic development were invited to think about expanding their existing programs to new locations in Central City. They were encouraged to examine how their missions could fit into the creation of a broad-based Justice Reinvestment network that could provide opportunities both for reentering



Proposed justice reinvestment corridor, Jackson Avenue and O.C. Haley Boulevard

individuals and for members of the community at large who, by proximity and association, are affected by incarceration. Through the examination of maps like the one below, participating organizations came to understand the overlap between their work in a specific field (e.g. health and education) and the issue of justice reform and specific need of residents in

this neighborhood.

A Justice Reinvestment proposal for Central City was presented by the Spatial Information Design Lab to the New Orleans City Council in July 2007. The plan expands on the three recovery and rebuilding plans developed by the City of New Orleans and its residents: the Bring

New Orleans Back Commission, Lambert, and Unified New Orleans Plans. These three plans were consolidated into 17 Target Recovery Plans by the Office of Recovery Management, including two located in Central City. A Justice Reinvestment network would benefit from and reinforce these existing plans. The city is currently proposing \$1.3 million in improvement

and development projects along the stretch of O.C. Haley Boulevard north of Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. By extending the Target Area corridor past M.L.K. Boulevard to the south, the Justice Reinvestment network could connect these improvements to those areas of the neighborhood with the highest incarceration rates.





Assets activated in Central City Justice Reinvestment network. On this page, clockwise from top left: Ashé Cultural Center, Café Reconcile, Van McMurray Park, Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana, Tulane Community Health Center *On the Road*, Allie Mae Williams Multi-Service Center.

Assets on this page, clockwise from top left: Hope Community Credit Union, Youth Empowerment Project, Edna Pilsbury Clinic and Central City Mental Health Clinic, C.J. Peete Community Center, Good Works Network, Dryades YMCA.

Activating a Justice Reinvestment Network

Over the course of this work, the Spatial Information Design Lab team organized a series of meetings with dozens of local organizations. The discussions centered on ways that community groups could, within the limits of mandates not obviously related to criminal

justice, nevertheless begin to consider the issues of incarceration and reentry already facing some of their constituents. Many of these groups have worked successfully in Central City for decades, while others from outside the neighborhood were seeking local partners. The networking project brought together groups and residents around a common purpose: to create a safer, healthier,



Network wheel displaying institutions and organizations in Justice Reinvestment Initiative for Central City. Red: network participants. Black: potential network participants. Photo on facing page shows SIDL meeting with Network participants March 2008.

and more just community in Central City. Once formalized, a Justice Reinvestment network creates opportunities not only for people returning home from prison, but also for other members of the community. The ambition is to eliminate disruptive cycles of incarceration and reincarceration, while simultaneously revitalizing Central City and retaining its residents.

Dozens of organizations within and outside Central City have joined the Justice Reinvestment network. To enhance communication and

supplement face-to-face meetings, social networking tools on Facebook designed by the Spatial Information Design Lab are bringing unexpected participants into discussions. Reducing gaps between local and distant actors, this online environment gives all its participants the opportunity to shape project development and the ability to spread news rapidly. As participation continues to expand, social networking software can become a powerful tool for sharing information and coordinating Justice Reinvestment projects in Central City.

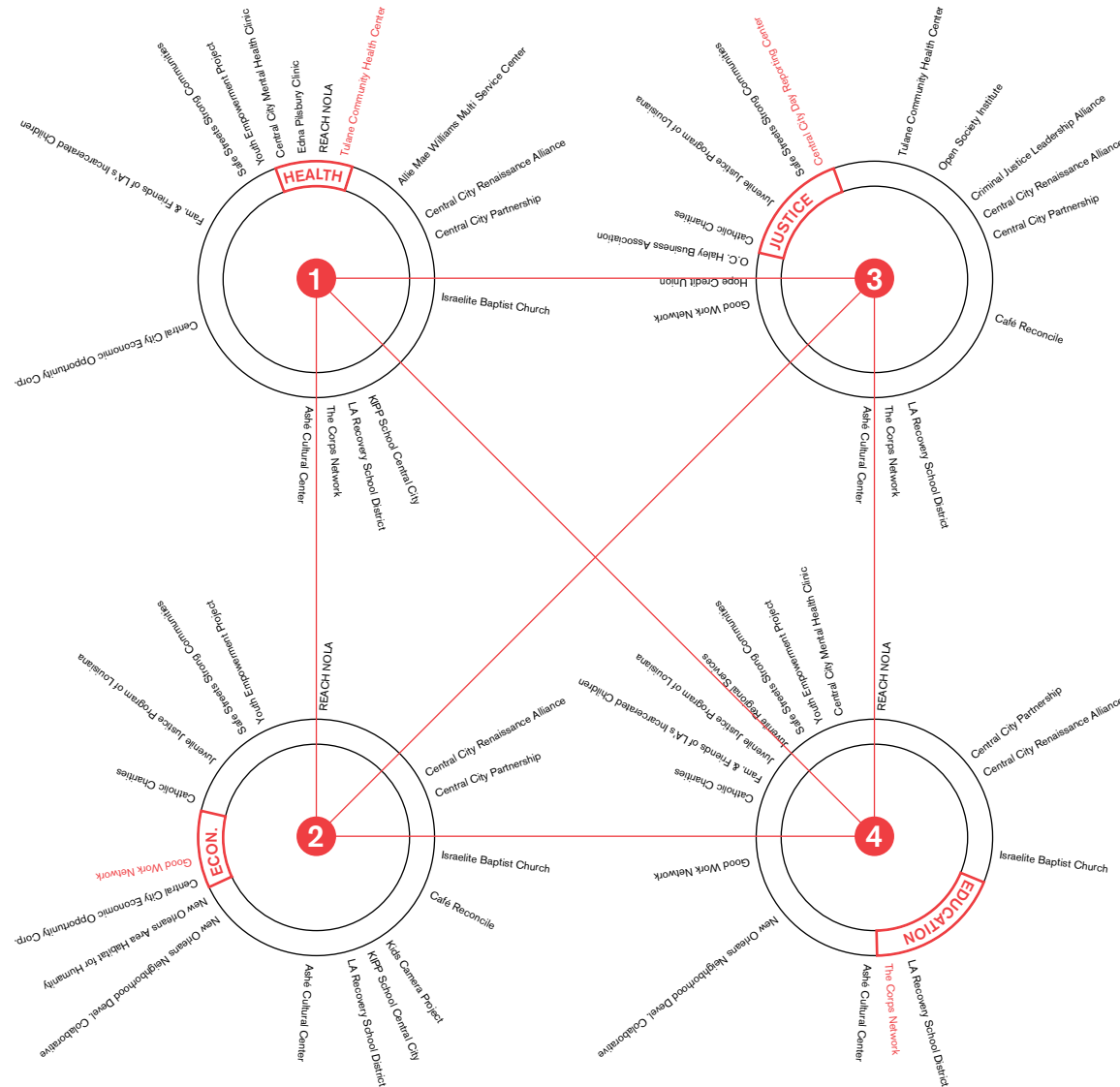


Clockwise: Norris Henderson, Safe Streets/Strong Communities; Cory Turner, Day Reporting Center; Reed Dixon, Conservation Corps of Greater New Orleans; Reverend Emanuel Smith, Israelites Baptist Church; Betty Gene Wolf, Target Recovery School District; Barbara Lacen-Keller, Central City Partnership and Office of Stacy Head, New Orleans City Council, District B.

Pilot Projects

The networking meetings organized by the Spatial Information Design Lab resulted in the establishment of four pilot projects that, when fully implemented, will form the first active hubs of the community-based Justice Reinvestment network. The pilot projects exemplify a dual

approach to Justice Reinvestment that addresses prisoner reentry and provides alternatives to incarceration, while also addressing the institutional needs of other community residents. Ideally, these and other programs would be funded, in part, by the reinvestment of savings gained through the reduction of revocations and reincarceration.



Each Pilot project activates a different potential group of network assets: 1. Tulane Community Health Center *On the Road*, 2. Construction Mentoring Program, 3. Central City Day Reporting Center, 4. Conservation Corps of Greater New Orleans

The four pilot projects have been established independently and are currently supported by a diverse array of public and private sources. They will be seeking additional Justice Reinvestment funds in order to expand their programs specifically for projects which overlap with issues of criminal justice reform, the needs of people returning home from prison, and especially their families. Although each of the projects originates in the expertise of a single sector—health, justice, economic development, housing, education—the programs break down the usual silos, overlap to reinforce one another, and create a network. Each pilot project includes a cross-section of organizations in the Justice Reinvestment network, and together build an interconnected, multi-sector, spatially dispersed project. The resulting neighborhood investment is larger than the size and costs of its parts.

1. Tulane Community Health Center *On the Road*

The Tulane Community Health Center *On the Road* project provides weekly health services to Central City residents through a mobile medical unit, addressing the acute health needs of the population regardless of insurance coverage or ability to pay. The unit operates out of the parking lot at Israelites Baptist Church and partners with the church to connect people and resources. The goal is to provide cost-effective, neighborhood-based preventive primary care that is relevant and responsive to the needs of Central City residents.

2. Construction Mentoring Program

The Good Work Network, a small business incubation program for low income residents, primarily women and people of color, is creating a construction mentoring program. Using a new tax credit program for large developers who agree to mentor small developers, the program will assist formerly incarcerated people to create

their own contracting firms. Possible partners for the construction mentoring program include the New Orleans Neighborhood Development Collaborative, Café Reconcile, and the Conservation Corps of Greater New Orleans.

3. New Orleans Day Reporting Center

A day reporting center opened February 2, 2009, funded by the Louisiana Department of Corrections and the Louisiana Office for Addictive Disorders. It provides an alternative sentencing program for people with substance-abuse problems or other treatment needs. Participants live at home and come daily to a community-based center for drug rehabilitation, education, jobs, and community service. As a result of the Justice Reinvestment networking initiative, the planners of the Day Reporting Center decided to locate the project on the border of Central City in order to maximize its local effectiveness.

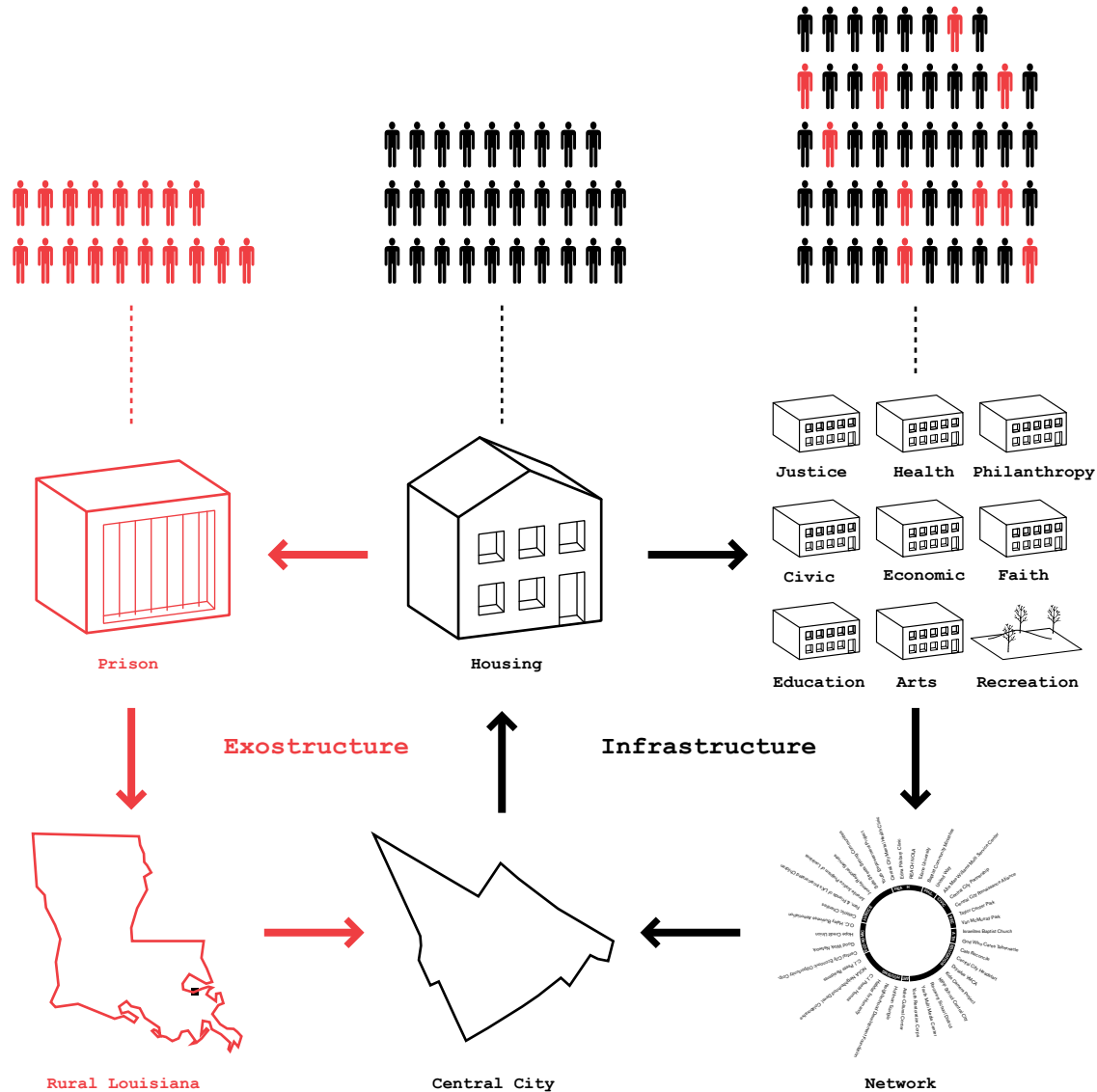
4. Conservation Corps of Greater New Orleans

The Conservation Corps of Greater New Orleans (CCGNO) is a Civic Justice Corps project coordinated by the Corps Network in Washington DC. The Conservation Corps works with young adults in service-learning projects focusing on environmental restoration, energy conservation, and historic preservation and restoration. Many of the participants have already become entangled in the courts or the criminal justice system, and CCGNO works to change the basic terms of that entanglement by linking youth, employers, justice agencies, and educational institutions in entirely new ways. One of CCGNO's programs, Limitless Vistas, trained students in mapping the Central City neighborhood, block-by-block, in an effort to support restoration.

Two Cycles: Two Futures

Justice Reinvestment offers an alternative to the current cycle of incarceration and return in Orleans Parish. Two choices confront residents, community groups, and government officials as they continue to rebuild the city. They can deepen the current dependence on a criminal

justice exostructure that siphons money and jobs away from their own neighborhoods and toward prison communities hundreds of miles away, or they can reinvest public resources in neighborhood institutions and infrastructure, networking existing assets and building new ones. All citizens have something at stake in the outcome of this decision.



This diagram describes two options for criminal justice infrastructure in the city: 1. as an exostructure, cycling people and money from their neighborhood to prison and back; or 2. as an infrastructure, which keeps people and money in their neighborhood by investing in alternatives to incarceration, education, arts, economic development, health, recreation and beyond.

Conclusion

The introduction of a geographic or spatial dimension into the analysis of mass incarceration is important because it identifies specific places in need of attention that might be invisible to policy makers, urban designers and planners. Central City, New Orleans is one such place. Detailed maps at the neighborhood scale allow the identification of local institutions and infrastructures where the need for improvement is greatest.

Guided by what prison admissions data and maps made visible—consistently high levels of and public spending on incarcerating residents of Central City from 2003-2007—the Spatial Information Design Lab worked to create a neighborhood-based network to catalyze a Justice Reinvestment Initiative. The four pilot projects which have emerged, exemplify ways in which targeted investments will benefit the entire neighborhood including people coming home from prison. More projects can grow out of these pilot initiatives and leverage other public and private investments to contribute to the ongoing rebuilding of the city.

The Justice Reinvestment Initiative is a work in progress. As a next step, the Central City network needs to formalize, coordinate, and evaluate the impacts of these overlapping projects, and enable the multiple groups to continue programming projects and strategies. During this process, the network should strengthen its collaboration with the New Orleans City Council's Criminal Justice Leadership Alliance, which brings together local government officials and experts to promote correctional policy reform. The network should also select and identify an organization or leader to take ownership, and guide and coordinate the process of creating and implementing an

expanded Justice Reinvestment plan. The City Council could adopt policies that lead to reduced growth in City jail and State prison populations and expenditures. Guided by the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, cost savings from the correctional system could be channeled into investment in Central City as well as other million dollar neighborhoods in New Orleans.

By integrating justice reform efforts and community-based participatory programming to coincide with and reinforce the city's rebuilding efforts, the success of a Justice Reinvestment project in Central City could promote safety, social justice, urban, economic and social revitalization, and also serve as a model for other million dollar neighborhoods in Louisiana and nationwide.

Network Participants

Economic

Central City Economic Opportunity Corporation
2020 Jackson Ave New Orleans, LA 70113

*Good Work Network
1824 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd New Orleans, LA 70113
www.goodworknetwork.org

Hope Credit Union
1726 Oretha C Haley Blvd New Orleans, LA 70113
www.hopecu.org

O.C. Haley Merchants and Business Association
1614B Oretha Castle Haley Blvd New Orleans, LA 70113
www.ochaleyblvd.org

Justice

*Families and Friends of
Louisiana's Incarcerated Children (FFLIC)
1600 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd New Orleans, LA 70113
www.FFLIC.org

*Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana (JJPL)
1600 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd New Orleans, LA 70113
www.jjpl.org

*Juvenile Regional Services
1820 St. Charles Ave Suite 205, New Orleans, LA 70130
www.jrsla.org

*Safe Streets / Strong Communities
1600 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70113
www.safestreetsnola.org

*Youth Empowerment Project
1604 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd New Orleans, LA 70113
www.youthempowermentproject.org

Health

Central City Mental Health Clinic
2221 Philip St. New Orleans, LA 70113

Edna Pilsbury Health Clinic
Healthcare for the Homeless Program
2222 Simon Bolivar Ave. New Orleans, LA 70113
REACH NOLA
www.reachnola.org

*Tulane Community Health Center
611 N. Rampart St. New Orleans, LA 70112
*Tulane Community Health *On the Road*
1430 Tulane Ave. SL-16, New Orleans, LA 70112
2100 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. (Fridays, 8:30am-4:30pm)
www.tuchc.org

Philanthropy

*Baptist Community Ministries
400 Poydras Street, Suite 2950 New Orleans, LA 70130
www.bcm.org

*Open Society Institute, After Prison Initiative
400 West 59th Street, New York, NY 10019
www.soros.org

Civic

*Allie Mae Williams Multi-Service Center
2020 Jackson Ave. New Orleans, LA 70113

*Central City Partnership
2020 Jackson Ave. New Orleans, LA 70113
www.centralcitypartnership.org

Central City Renaissance Alliance
1809 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70113
www.mycra.org

*Criminal Justice Leadership Alliance

Faith

Catholic Charities
2407 Baronne St. New Orleans, LA 70113
www.ccano.org

God Who Cares Tabernacle
P.O. Box 57954 New Orleans, LA 70157

*Israelites Baptist Church
2100 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70113
www.israelitecamp.com

Living Witness Church of God in Christ
www.livingwitnesscogic.org

Education

Café Reconcile
1631 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70113
www.cafereconcile.com

Central City Headstart
2020 Jackson Ave. New Orleans, LA 70113

*Conservation Corps of Greater New Orleans
4240 Canal St. New Orleans, LA 70111

*The Corps Network
666 Eleventh St. NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20001

Dryades YMCA
P.O. Box 58217 New Orleans, LA 70156
www.dryadesymca.com

Kids Camera Project
www.kidcameraproject.org

KIPP School Central City
2625 Thalia St. New Orleans, LA 70113
www.kippcentralcity.org

*Louisiana Recovery School District
New Orleans Central Office
1641 Poland Avenue New Orleans, LA 70117
www.rsdl.net

Art

Ashe Cultural Center
1712 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. New Orleans, LA 70113
www.ashecac.org

Community Development Through Music, CulturePAC
4900 Laurel Street New Orleans, LA 70115
www.rhythmconspiracy.com

Housing

Neighborhood Development Foundation
4000 Bienville St. Suite A, New Orleans, LA 70119
www.ndf-neworleans.com

Neighborhood Housing Services of New Orleans
4700 Freret St. New Orleans, LA 70115
www.nhsnola.org

New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity
7100 Saint Charles Ave. New Orleans, LA 70118
www.habitat-nola.org

New Orleans Neighborhood Development Collaborative
1055 St Charles Ave. Suite 120, New Orleans, LA 70130
www.nondc.org

The C. J. Peete Redevelopment
www.nondc.org

Urban Strategies
1415 Olive St. Suite 209, St. Louis, MO 63103
www.urbanstrategiesinc.org

*Active Participants in Justice Reinvestment Network

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8. See: *The Pattern* (GSAPP/SIDL, 2008) for documentation of this phenomenon in four U.S. cities. Analysis of data from Phoenix, Wichita, New Orleans and New York City, and other cities, revealed that high incarceration neighborhoods, community districts, and census blocks are overwhelmingly populated by people of color and people living in poverty.
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10. Petersilia, Joan, *When Prisoners Come Home: Parole and Prisoner Reentry* (Studies in Crime and Public Policy) (Oxford University Press, 2003).
11. "Unlocking America: Why and How Reduce America's Prison Population" JFA Institute, Nov 2007 pg 23 <<http://www.jfa-associates.com>>
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13. Public Safety Performance Project, "Public Safety, Public Spending: Forecasting America's Prison Population, 2007-2011," 2006 pg 24. <<http://www.jfa-associates.com>>
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19. Established in the fall of 2007, the Criminal Justice Leadership Alliance joined with the Vera Institute of Justice to create a fair, efficient, accountable, and effective criminal justice system in New Orleans. Initiatives prioritized by the Alliance include providing a range of sentencing options (for example, community service, drug treatment and job training) for individuals who do not pose a threat to public safety, enhancing inter-agency procedures between the New Orleans Police Department and the District Attorney's Office that support early case screening, and developing a problem-solving, community-based approach to municipal offenses.
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Data Sources

Prison Admissions Data 2003 provided by:
Justice Mapping Center and JFA Institute.

Prison Admissions Data 2006, 2007 provided by:
Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections.

All other data from 2000 Census unless otherwise noted.

The data source agencies are not responsible for the accuracy of the maps or the conclusions of the authors, who themselves take sole responsibility.

Credits

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Deborah Grossberg Katz
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Intern: Alexandre Galbiati

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