

# Just and Sustainable

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Conferences, meetings, strategy sessions. New Orleans, Baton Rouge, Atlanta. Urban planning, public health, affordable housing, small business retention, and green building. Since September, Urban Conservancy staff have participated in countless discussions focused on rebuilding the city we love.

Throughout the process, we have met many wonderful people. We have heard literally hundreds of creative ideas for rebuilding New Orleans. But while ideas are important, something has been missing from the conferences, gatherings, committees, and from the official pronouncements of our elected officials.

What is missing is a vision of what sort of community we are striving to build. We have heard a lot about programs, policies, and initiatives. But a vision is not a laundry list of policies and programs.

In 1961, President Kennedy told the American public, "I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth." That is articulating a vision. Kennedy then left it up to others to figure out how to achieve the vision. But everyone knew the end goal.

To continue the analogy, New Orleans appears to have started a space program without any clear idea of whether we are sending a man to the moon or a probe to Pluto. Without a clear vision of the future city we are trying to build, much energy and important scarce resources could be wasted pursuing competing or incompatible goals.

As a step toward addressing this glaring gap, we would like to offer one possible vision for the future of New Orleans. We believe it has merit but we invite you to improve upon it or offer one of your own using the comment function below.

So to start the ball rolling, here is our vision:

*In 10 years, New Orleans will be a model for a just and sustainable community.*