

Office of Community Development
State of Louisiana
Division of Administration

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



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COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATION

GOV. EDWARDS CELEBRATES THE FIRST GROUP OF RESIDENTS TO MOVE INTO NEW HOMES AT THE NEW ISLE RESETTLEMENT

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Today, Gov. John Bel Edwards was joined by state and local leaders as well as representatives from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to celebrate the first group of former residents of Isle de Jean Charles who received the keys to their new homes at The New Isle resettlement community near Schriever, Louisiana in Terrebonne Parish. A total of 12 new homeowners were included in this first phase and ultimately, the community will consist of 37 homes for former residents. Approximately 96 residents will move to The New Isle, mostly by the end of the year.

The New Isle represents a first-of-its-kind government effort to resettle residents from areas suffering from the adverse impact of climate change, including more frequent and severe hurricanes, storms and constant flooding, to higher and safer ground. Isle de Jean Charles, an island located about 40 miles south of the new site, has experienced a 98 percent loss of land since 1955 and is at greater risk every year.

“Today is a new day for the proud residents of Isle de Jean Charles as they take ownership of their new homes in a safer and more resilient community,” said Gov. Edwards. “Getting to this day has not been easy, but I’m grateful to the tribal leaders, the residents, HUD, the Office of Community Development led by Pat Forbes, and everyone whose hard work made this day possible. To understand how a once sprawling and vibrant community of thousands of acres has dwindled to little more than a few hundred is to understand the real consequences of climate change. The residents of Isle de Jean Charles did not want to leave their island; on the contrary, the island left them. They deserved and needed help, which is why our state invested

years of planning, outreach, design and construction into The New Isle resettlement community. This is a nationally and internationally observed and eagerly awaited event for us all.

“Coastal Louisiana is experiencing subsidence, relative sea level rise and coastal land loss faster than anywhere in the country. Fortunately, we're on the leading edge of resilience-building approaches to adaptation, drawing on innovative science and technology right here in Louisiana.”

From its inception, the resettlement effort has focused on developing a secure place for residents to live that reflected the island community's unique culture, history and diversity, which consists mostly of people of American Indian heritage.

Guided by the wishes of the Isle de Jean Charles residents, in 2018 the state purchased the 515-acre tract of high ground located about 40 miles north of the island. In close collaboration with the residents, the state then designed and built The New Isle community, which includes single-family homes; an event space where residents can hold powwows, festivals and other cultural events; as well as a market and community center.

The resettlement is funded through a \$48 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as part of the 2016 National Disaster Resilience Competition. Louisiana's winning application included the Isle de Jean Charles resettlement and the \$40 million [LA SAFE](#) program, which supports resilience initiatives in six coastal parishes.

Homes at The New Isle are available to those who live on the island and those displaced since Hurricane Isaac's landfall in 2012 ([Option A](#)). Those displaced before Isaac also can rejoin the Isle de Jean Charles community by building their own homes on free lots ([Option B](#)).

For more information, visit IsledeJeanCharles.la.gov.