

Office of Community Development

Disaster Recovery Unit

State of Louisiana

Division of Administration

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STATE NAMES CSRS INC. AS MASTER PLANNER TO OVERSEE DESIGN OF ISLE DE JEAN CHARLES RESETTLEMENT COMMUNITY

Next Phase of High-Profile Resilient Community Plan Begins Now

Louisiana's Office of Community Development is announcing that CSRS Inc. will serve as the master planner to design a new community for the residents of Isle de Jean Charles. The firm won a competitive proposal process as part of a project that continues to garner attention as the first federally funded, community-scale, climate-induced resettlement project.

The Isle de Jean Charles Resettlement Project will relocate the residents of an island community in coastal Terrebonne Parish to a resilient, permanent and historically contextual community about 40 miles north, a move necessitated by ongoing coastal land loss and a high degree of flood risk.

Selecting the master planning team for this resettlement project is a significant step forward in the state's collaborative and inclusive process with the Isle de Jean Charles community, most of whom are generational inhabitants of the beautiful but vanishing settlement.

OCD Resilience Policy & Program Administrator **Mathew Sanders** said his team is eager to work with CSRS Inc. and the Isle de Jean Charles stakeholders on the design for the new community, which will create a range of housing, educational and training opportunities for this at-risk population.

"CSRS has demonstrated a firm understanding of how to address the residents' employment, education, training, programming and community dynamics, in addition to housing design and homeownership models," Sanders said. "And equally important, CSRS grasps the need to take into consideration the

tribal history of the residents of Isle de Jean Charles, many of whom are American Indians, in a manner that is culturally appropriate.”

Sanders said he hopes the project will create an economically, environmentally, culturally and socially-sustainable model for community resettlement that can be scaled and replicated in the future—in Louisiana and elsewhere—as a prototype for other coastal communities facing the threat of rising seas, coastal erosion and land subsidence.

Master planning services include preliminary architectural design of the resettlement, including community meeting spaces, single-family and multi-family residences, civil works development plans and technical guidelines. Also under consideration—and dear to the hearts of residents—will be plans that address the future of the island, which continues to wash away.

To fund the project, the state won a \$92.6 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development as part of the National Disaster Resilience Competition in 2016. HUD allocated \$48.3 million to the resettlement project, with the balance going toward resilience initiatives in six coastal parishes in Louisiana. The grant is administered by the Office of Community Development, Disaster Recovery Unit, which actively and continually seeks input from residents, local governments and other stakeholders regarding needs of the resettled community.

To keep abreast of developments, please visit the resettlement’s **official website at IsleDeJeanCharles.la.gov**. OCD-DRU also maintains an Isle de Jean Charles social media presence that offers snack-able content on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

ABOUT CSRS Inc: CSRS Inc. is an architectural and engineering firm that specializes in facility and infrastructure program management; site design and surveying; and architecture and land planning services. Some of the firm’s notable roles and projects in the public and private sectors include program manager for the Recovery School District in post-Katrina New Orleans; development adviser for the LSU Foundation-Nicholson Gateway Development in Baton Rouge; and project manager/architect for Raising Cane’s nationwide restaurant development program. Founded in 1978 by civil engineer Michael B. Songy, P.E., PLS and three others, the company has offices in Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Lake Charles, Austin and Dallas. [Visit the company website](#) or contact CSRS Resilience Practice Lead Mark Goodson at 225.831.2211, for more information on the firm.

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