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Ninth Ward residents say show us the money; City Hall says gladly



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New Orleans - A group of 9th ward residents is calling on the city's inspector general to open an investigation specifically on the pace of recovery in that neighborhood. They believe their community is being shortchanged when it comes to recovery dollars.

"I always said that we were treated like stepchildren down here," said Henry Irving, Senior, who has lived in the 9th ward since the 1950s."

Residents point to a fire station that's operating out of a trailer and the fact that the community only has one school. Because of the growing discontent over rebuilding, the group, "A Community Voice," said six weeks ago it requested that Inspector General Ed Quartreveaux investigate.

Quatreveaux told FOX 8 News that he received a general complaint from 9th ward residents about recovery projects and people around the city have similar complaints. As a result, Quartreveaux said, "We have for the first project of 2011 to review recovery management citywide."

The Nagin administration said it understands why people are perturbed by the pace of the recovery.

Spokeswoman Ceeon Quiett said in a statement, "The frustration of the citizens in the 9th Ward today about the recovery investment in their community is understandable. It is because of their voices and plight to return home that Mayor Nagin returns to Washington D.C. tomorrow, as not only the Mayor of this city, but the Chair of a National Committee of Mayors from across the country to make changes to the Stafford Act, that guides this country's response to disasters and recovery. Expediting funding to cities to speed up the recovery process; removing funding caps, that do not address billion dollar damages, like we experienced after Hurricane Katrina; and providing more assistance to families for housing and other needs are just some of the many recommendations to change the policies that drive emergency funding and recovery in this country. Although the City of New Orleans did not have a "blue print" on how to rebuild this city after Hurricane Katrina and the failed federal levees devastated our community, after funding was approved by at the federal level, funding was then sent to the State of LA for approval. After these processes, thus far, the City of New Orleans has invested \$21.2 million dollars for facility rebuilding and \$26.4million for street work, to date. This does not include increased project worksheets that are awaiting approval in at the federal level."



9th Ward recovery money probe

Video 1 of 1
All Video



(Kevin Henry, FOX 8 News)

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