

Belle Chasse

Louisiana

Location: New Orleans, Louisiana
Type: Redevelopment
Year Design: 2000
Status: Under Construction
Size: 138 Acres
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In an effort to improve the quality of life for military personnel and establish sustainable development practices for the Navy, the New Orleans Naval Complex takes a unique approach by selecting as its model the traditional neighborhood structure. This plan establishes a community by offering a complete network of streets and pathways that seamlessly interconnect throughout the base. In addition, the required elements-- a daycare center, elementary school, commissary, and management office-- are designed as a main street, forming a neighborhood center.

The plan's design includes a series of hierarchical spaces that range from public to private. The size of the space and the degree to which the space is surrounded by buildings dictates the level of privacy it provides. Within the neighborhoods, a standard open space type called a "close" is used to focus building groups. By standardizing the dimensions of the space and the module with which the housing is designed, the plan allows the Navy to provide market-competitive housing for its personnel. In addition, because the designs allow the module of housing to take on the form of a single-family, duplex, or row house, the Navy can accommodate the internal rank structure and marital status of base personnel. Each close serves as the focus for a particular group, providing its members with a unique sense of place within the overall community.

When completed, the design will set the standard for military base renovations. The architecture and modular nature of the buildings permits the application of this type of site planning in all regions of the country.