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## YOUR OPINIONS

### Get back to the basics to rebuild a port city

Returning from Memphis Saturday, Oct. 8, five weeks after swimming out of my flooded home in eastern New Orleans, I was shocked upon exiting the Vieux Carré ramp to find upside-down cars, a trashed RTA bus and an overturned Port-O-Let spilling into Basin Street. Additionally, Interstate 10 from the 17th Street Canal east, after nightfall, was completely dark.

Five months into the cleanup on many of the main thoroughfares there are still light standards, traffic signs and telephone poles askew. It will take six months to repair all the traffic signals, each having to go through some "stupid" bid pro-

cess. Just get it done!

Parking employees are furloughed, leaving only three to issue tickets and no one to tow illegally parked vehicles, creating major problems in the French Quarter. Surely revenue from towing these vehicles would cover the wages of the drivers.

Common sense seems to be in short supply. There is a yellow streak running down the backs of many of our politicians, afraid to speak the truth. Certain areas of the city will not be rebuilt. Case in point is eastern New Orleans. None of the major corporate players, i.e., hospitals, drug stores, gas stations, fast food outlets, or supermarkets is

rebuilding.

A displaced eastern New Orleans drug store manager told me that her corporation did not plan to reopen any units east of Press Street.

The constant harping on the revival of tourism as the hope and salvation of the city is nauseating. The greatest engine of economic revival for this region is the port system on the lower Mississippi River. This city was built as a trade center in 1718, and we should go back to basics.

**John T. Hyatt**

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