Where’s the Nagin plan? The New York Times columnists want to know. CNN runs commercials that ask the same question. They seem to have suggested in their weekend promos that New Orleans has received billions of dollars and there is no plan.

So, where's the plan?

The simple answer is there is no simple answer. The reality is that the plan is tied up in bank accounts and bureaucracies for away from the Crescent City.

Much has been made about Mayor Nagin’s Plan for New Orleans or lack thereof. So, where is it?

The truth is New Orleans, a city whose physical and financial infrastructure has been left to rubble, has not received a dollar of the so-called "billions of the federal money" - a notion promoted in the national media. The 6.4 billion allocated has not trickled down to the City. The 4.3
billion which Congress has just allocated is many months away from hitting
the New Orleans neighborhoods. The delay in many respects is complicated by
state policies and implementation of those policies designed to bring home
many of the former residents. Also, Mayor Nagin's Bring New Orleans Back
Commission created an initial plan that then became stalled in the city
election politics and posturing.

Very few know the intricacies of the planning better than Greg Meffert, the
Chief Technology Officer for the City of New Orleans. He has a very high
cabinet role in the Nagin administration. In referring to money allocated
to the City by the state and the federal government, according to Meffert,
"Outside the first little emergency money we got days after the storm, we
have not gotten the billions people think. We got a little for police,
hurricane supplies, cars, and such, but we have not yet received any of the
billions in those federal money appropriations and have received no money at
all for city planning or planners."

Yet, many are asking-you've got the money, so where's the plan?

Perhaps the question should be asked the federal government and the
state--where's the dollars--so New Orleans can create a plan?

The issue is so very complex. It involves reaching out to the population
now settled elsewhere. It includes getting the neighborhoods feedbacks and ensuring everyone has a voice. It also involves waiting for FEMA maps, levees to be completed and policies by Governor Blanco's Louisiana Recovery Authority and the President Bush's Donald Powell.

Fingers should not be pointed to one place alone. Facts even by the national media need to be right on such an important of an issue. It is as basic as the Golden Rule. Those with the money, make the rules. It's time for those other agencies to step up to the plate and let go some of that gold so the City of New Orleans can plan using real cash. Only then can it go about its business rebuilding a city who deserves better and faster from all.