

A photograph of the New Orleans skyline at sunset, with the sun low on the horizon behind several skyscrapers. The sky is filled with orange and yellow clouds, and the water in the foreground reflects the light. An orange arrow-shaped graphic points to the right, overlapping the skyline.

*FORWARD
TOGETHER 
NEW ORLEANS*

TRANSITION REPORT

MAYOR-ELECT LATOYA CANTRELL

LATOYA
CANTRELL



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LETTER FROM THE MAYOR-ELECT

On January 29, 2018, I stood in an auditorium before over one hundred volunteers and asked them to help me identify and craft real solutions that will truly keep us Moving Forward Together. I called on them to deliver a strategic plan with real, actionable steps and realistic ideas and approaches to get things done. I did not want a feel-good plan that would score quick political points without long-lasting change. I wanted to walk into office with a plan that had real substance, and that would raise the score on the quality of life for every New Orleanian.

Committees of community leaders, nonprofit advocates, persons home from incarceration, medical professionals, engineers, architects, law enforcement officials, educators, and small business owners brought their perspective and expertise to the table. Many of the participants stood on opposite sides of the aisle and looked at the solutions through different lenses, but after the dust settled and the smoke cleared, they presented recommendations that will ensure New Orleans is an equitable, coordinated, transparent, inclusive, modern, and accessible city. There were often varying opinions about the right solutions, but almost always consensus around the root challenges that our City and citizens face.

I am proud to receive the committees' recommendations and use them as the blueprint for going forward together for the next four years and beyond. This plan will inform our approach to Infrastructure, Public Safety, Economic Development, Neighborhood Stabilization, Healthy Families, and Government Operations, and range from immediate operational efficiencies to launching transformational initiatives that may take a decade to realize fully.

I want to extend my sincerest gratitude to the Transition Team members who dedicated their time, energy, and resources to this process. I could not have done this without my staff, consultants, advisors, co-chairs, subcommittee members, and the teams of analysts, scribes, facilitators, and interns who helped to bring this plan to life.

Finally, to my family, thank you for embarking on this journey with me. I promise to not lose focus on you as I focus on meeting the needs of the children and families of this City.

Happy Tricentennial New Orleans! We have our roadmap, now let's go Forward Together!

“ *I did **not** want a feel-good plan that would score quick political points without long-lasting change. I wanted to walk into office with a plan that had real substance, and that would **raise the score on the quality of life for every New Orleanian.**”*



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



This Transition Report will be used to guide the Cantrell Administration during its time in office. It is the culmination of a Transition process made possible by the dedicated efforts of hundreds of committed volunteers, staff, and consultants.

TRANSITION TEAM BACKGROUND

The work of the Forward Together New Orleans Transition ('Transition') Team was structured around the activities of its 22 subcommittees, which made up the six main committees: Infrastructure, Public Safety, Neighborhood Stabilization, Economic Development, Government Operations, and Healthy Families. Overseeing the work of the Transition were the three Honorary Co-Chairs: Dr. Norman C. Francis, Walter Isaacson, and Gayle Benson, and an Advisory Board composed of fifteen local leaders from a variety of sectors and industries. Each committee was led by Co-Chairs, who oversaw between three and five subcommittees that focused on specific topics and were supported by expert meeting facilitators and consultants. For three months, during the policy development phase of the Transition, each subcommittee met to discuss underlying issues, brainstorm solutions, vet ideas, and ultimately develop concrete, actionable recommendations. In total, more than 250 residents and friends of the City supported the Transition's work.

RECOMMENDATIONS OVERVIEW

The recommendations featured in this Transition Report were developed with an emphasis on bold ideas that would help transform our City. At the same time, they were developed while being realistic about the financial, political, and other constraints that exist. Many of the challenges we face were created over years—in some cases decades—and will not be fixed overnight. The recommendations featured in this report seek to strike a delicate, practical balance between investing in our long-term future and meeting our short-term needs.

As the subcommittees met and discussed their concerns and ideas, a number of common themes consistently emerged. These shared themes eventually morphed into the ideals that would inform the culture of the new administration – the values, attitude, and principles that would guide how the Cantrell Administration would approach governance.

Primarily, these themes are about safety and building trust with the City – trust that our homes and businesses are safe from flooding, our children are safe walking home from school, and our taxpayer dollars are being used efficiently and effectively. There was a recognition of the importance of having a positive relationship between

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

the people and their government, and of establishing an expectation that that government will be inclusive, equitable, and accessible.

Ultimately, quality of life was at the core of almost all of the topics that were discussed and the ideas that were proposed. Many of the recommendations fundamentally seek ways to include those who have been marginalized (e.g., people returning home from incarceration, disabled residents, and members of the LGBTQ community). The recommendations also focus on improving the ease of doing business in the City, making City services easier to navigate, and improving the affordability of our homes and the condition of our streets—which affects everyone, from seniors to students to young families and teachers.

Transparency and accountability were also common themes that were central to many of the recommendations. There was a particular emphasis on promoting these ideas in a meaningful and thoughtful way. Truly open and transparent government is not simply about making numbers available, but is about ensuring that what is measured is relevant, that information is easily understandable regardless of digital or English literacy, and that there are open lines of communication—both from the people to their City government and from the City government to the people—wherever they might be.

Another important theme that emerged was that the City must lead by example and exemplify meaningful, organizational and social change. These ideas included: investing in employees, staffing the right people for the right jobs, maintaining a long-term commitment to innovation, and promoting excellence and integrity. In addition, there is a focus on building a solid organizational structure that prioritizes both effectiveness and efficiency.

A government that is genuinely focused on people must be accepting of differences; compassionate toward our individual, daily realities; and committed to providing for the health and well-being of all of our residents, was also a guiding theme. Ultimately, the central theme that came up often was that New Orleanians should be able to thrive, not just survive.

Prominent across the recommendations was the recognition that how we present ourselves to the world will be our global identity and that the 300th Anniversary marks a new phase in New Orleans' long history. How we tell our own story going forward and how we share the unique culture that is New Orleans will define how we will move forward into the future—how we will move *forward together*.

“*Ultimately, the central theme that came up often was that **New Orleanians should be able to thrive, not just survive.**”*

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

The Forward Together New Orleans Transition (Transition) began its work in the Fall of 2017, shortly after Mayor-Elect LaToya Cantrell's successful election on November 18, 2017. Following two months of detailed planning and coordination, on January 29, 2018, the Transition began the next phase of its work with a kick-off meeting that featured the full Transition Team.

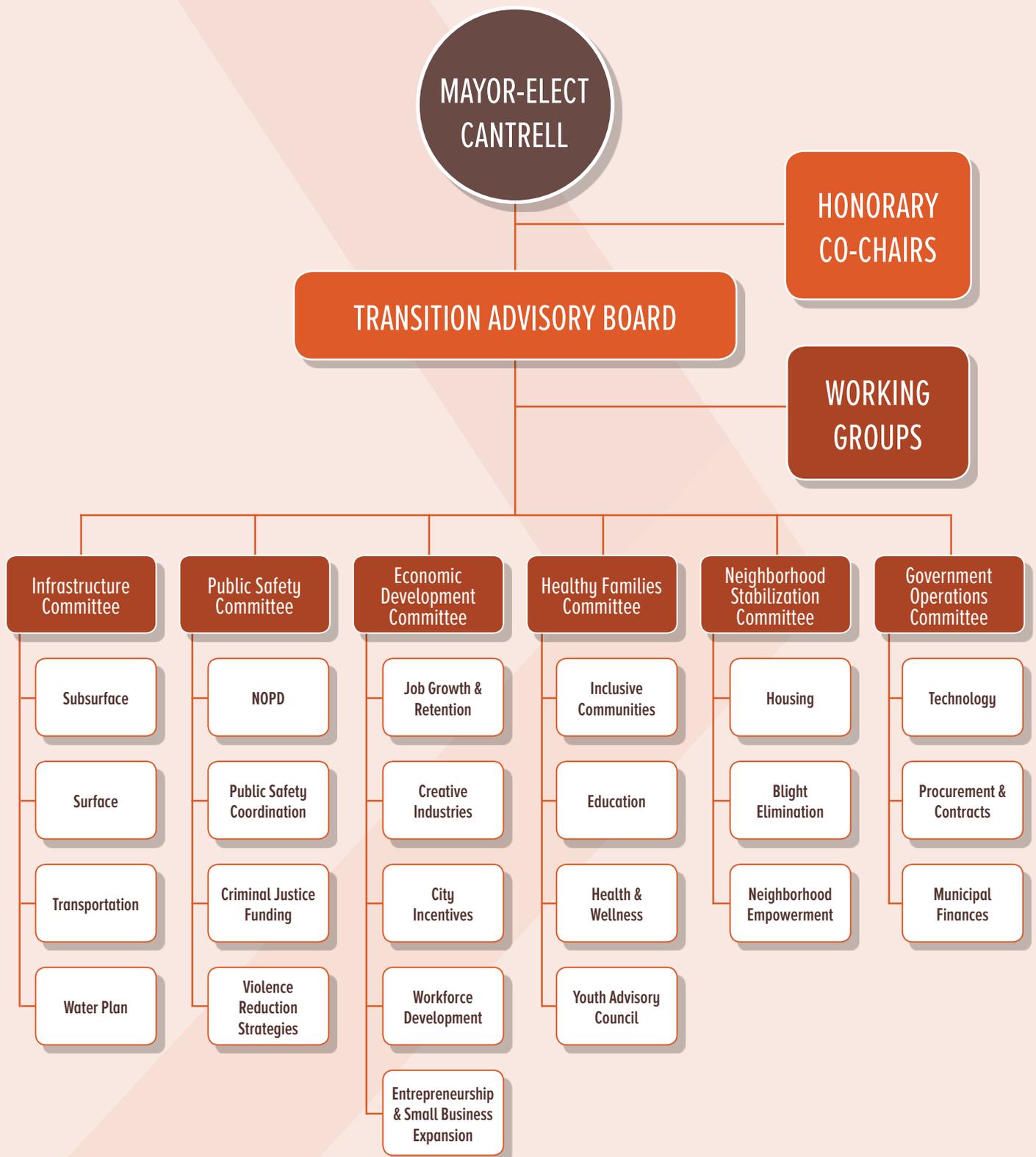
STRUCTURE OF THE TRANSITION TEAM

Consisting of more than 250 volunteers, staff, consultants, and interns, the Transition Team reflected a diverse cross-section of New Orleanians, who were dedicated to the City and to supporting the Mayor-Elect as she prepared

to govern. Providing insight and advice throughout the process was the Transition Advisory Board, which was made up of civic, business, and community leaders with deep expertise across a wide range of areas. The policy development core of the Transition Team was built around its 22 subcommittees, which were the foundation for the six larger policy committees: Infrastructure, Public Safety, Neighborhood Stabilization, Economic Development, Healthy Families, and Government Operations. An overview of the committee and subcommittee structure is provided in the figure to the right.

Each group of subcommittees was housed under a larger committee that was led by Co-Chairs with backgrounds and experience related to the topic of the committee. Each subcommittee was composed of community leaders

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

and subject matter experts experienced in areas related to the subcommittee's focus.

PROFESSIONAL MEETING FACILITATION AND CONSULTING STAFF

An important and innovative aspect of the Transition process was the use of a team of expert meeting facilitators and consultants, which included the Thomas Consulting Group, AMcorp International, and The Caulfield Consulting Group. They, in conjunction with a professional central office team, project managers, meeting facilitators, and policy analysts, added structure to the Transition process. This configuration freed the subcommittee members and Committee Co-chairs to focus on using their expertise to generate the policy recommendations that would become the foundation for the Mayor-Elect's policy platform.

HARVARD RESEARCH FELLOWS

In addition to the volunteers and professional staff who worked on the Transition Team, graduate students from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government and medical students from Harvard Medical School also made important contributions to the effort. Working in collaboration with the subcommittee members, the Harvard Research Fellows provided invaluable research support on a variety of topics, which ultimately became part of the subcommittees' recommendation reports.

COMMUNITY AND EXPERT OUTREACH

During the course of the Transition, in addition to the expertise brought by the members of the Transition Team, more than 70 community leaders and 191 subject matter experts were consulted. Representing government, non-profits, and the private sector, the group included policy analysts, business leaders, community advocates, and others who provided insight on a variety of topics.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The bulk of the policy development work was conducted at the subcommittee level. Each subcommittee was given a charge by the Mayor-Elect, which reflected her priorities in that particular area. The subcommittees met consistently over the course of three months, during

which they researched and discussed various policy solutions, and worked towards delivery of a final report to the Mayor-Elect. The reports contained their policy recommendations, which became the foundation from which the Mayor-Elect would draw when she developed the policy platform outlined in this document.

During the process, the subcommittees focused on producing recommendations that provide feasible, concrete, actionable steps that can be taken to address the most pressing issues facing our communities and our City. However, it should be noted that, while the subcommittees produced recommendations that would each be beneficial, the ability to implement them will be dependant on many factors, especially available funding. The subcommittees recognized the possibility that unforeseen factors may develop that may make it impossible or inadvisable for some of the recommendations to be implemented.

HOW THIS DOCUMENT IS ORGANIZED

This document is divided into six main sections, one for each of the Transition committees. Each section features the recommendations produced by the subcommittees that made up the larger committees. The beginning of each section features a context overview that provides background information on the issues and opportunities the subcommittees considered as they formed their recommendations. This is followed by information about each subcommittee's charge, members of the team, and a summary of the recommendations.

In cases where a subcommittee produced a large number of recommendations, they are divided into "Primary Recommendations" which were the highest priority ideas, followed by "Additional Recommendations" which were ideas that the subcommittee also thought were important, but were a lower priority than the "Primary Recommendations."

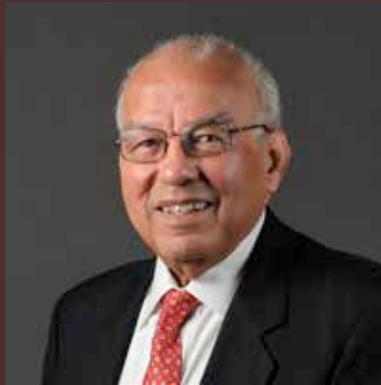
Following the summary of the recommendations are detailed descriptions of each idea, which give additional background around the issues that made the recommendation necessary. Also featured is the rationale and supporting data for why it is believed the recommendation is a good solution.

TRANSITION LEADERSHIP

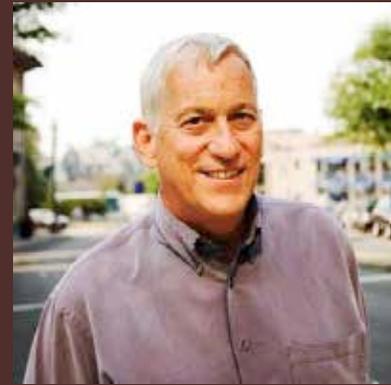
TRANSITION ADVISORY BOARD



GAYLE BENSON
Honorary Co-Chair



NORMAN FRANCIS
Honorary Co-Chair



WALTER ISAACSON
Honorary Co-Chair



KATHLEEN KENNEDY
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Willie Muhammad
Vincenzo Pasquantonio
Dana Peterson
Bonita Robertson
Matt Schwartz
Iam Tucker
Anamaria Villamarin-Lupin
David Williams

TRANSITION LEADERSHIP STAFF

John Pourciau, *Transition Director*
Michelle Thomas, *Lead Consultant (Thomas Consulting Group)*
R. Erich Caulfield, *Director of Policy Development (The Caulfield Consulting Group)*
Anita Tillman, *Senior Project Manager (AMcorp International)*
Alice Lee, *Transition Deputy Director*
Alana Harris, *Transition Administrator*
Justin Boone, *Transition Scheduler*

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE



COMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Most cities around the country rely on gravity for stormwater drainage. However, in New Orleans, this is not the case. As we are reminded every time it rains, our City is a geographic bowl: the majority of our land started below sea level and it sinks a little more each day. Unlike other cities, we cannot rely on gravity as a natural and cost-free means of drainage. Rather, we have to work to pump the water from our streets.

More than 100 years ago, engineering experts designed a state-of-the-art drainage system tailored to New Orleans' unique topography. That system set the drainage standard for low-lying countries around the world and continues to be effective today. But decades of deferred maintenance and inattention have left the aged infrastructure that makes up this system in poor condition.

Over the years, our geographic disadvantage has been compounded by leaking pipes and unrepaired pumps – a powerful combination that has resulted in potholes, boil water advisories, and frequent flooding. The deterioration of our infrastructure continues to deliver disruptive consequences for our City: school closures, impacted conventions, inflated utility bills, unreliable transit, and standing water threaten the vitality of our City.

This situation was not created overnight; it occurred over many years. To make a lasting change, we as a community need to shift how we think about water. The issue is not how we get rid of water; it is how we live with it and, ultimately, use it to our advantage. Indeed, solving the drainage problem will require more than new equipment or patched roads, although significant emergency repairs to the system are either complete or well underway.

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Rather, it will take a holistic approach that moves us from a basic emergency response posture to making forward-thinking infrastructure investments and creating proactive solutions around stormwater management.

As we look toward the future, there is a pressing need to further modernize our roads, transportation system, public works, and utilities. The approach we need will require: an assessment of our assets and resources, smart operational planning, appropriate funding, community involvement, high-functioning government agencies, and a long-term commitment to systemic change. Long-term success will depend on our ability to address the root causes of the challenges. The solutions will require feasible, forward-thinking projects and ideas that are designed to protect and preserve our City and create sustainable infrastructure for future generations.

COMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of the Infrastructure Committee was to evaluate the various proposals and plans that have been developed, consider innovative practices in infrastructure improvements, and develop a set of recommendations that will create sustainable, equitable

“Most cities around the country rely on gravity for stormwater drainage. However, in New Orleans, this is not the case.”

infrastructure systems that will improve our local and regional economies, improve the quality of life for all of our citizens, and enhance the safety and security of our beloved city. Additionally, this Committee devised funding strategies to implement an urban water plan and conducted a substantial review of the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans, the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority, and the Department of Public Works.

Committee Co-Chairs: Troy Henry and Bruce Thompson
Project Manager: Anita Tillman

SUBSURFACE SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

The importance of providing clean, pressurized water to the citizens of New Orleans cannot be overstated. Interrupted water service means schools close, caregivers miss work, conventions are cancelled, and the City’s ability to provide basic public safety services such as fire protection and health care is compromised. Water loss is often caused by unreliable power – the same factor that affects the ability of pumps to effectively drain stormwater from streets.

The Sewerage and Water Board (“SWBNO”) is the local agency tasked with the responsibility of cleaning, distributing, and draining water. It consists of three separate divisions: Water, Sewerage, and Drainage. The Water Division purifies water collected from the Mississippi River and pumps it throughout the City to be used as drinking water. The Sewerage Division removes wastewater from the City, treats it at one of two plants (the East Bank and West Bank have separate water treatment facilities), and pumps it back into Lake Pontchartrain. The Drainage Division uses a total of 120 pumps located in 24 pumping stations to remove stormwater from the city.

Importantly, the agency also generates its own power to operate the pipes, canals, pumping stations, and other infrastructure necessary to move water into and out of the City. The great majority of the infrastructure and equipment used by the SWBNO today was built in the early 1900s. Due to age and lack of consistent maintenance, much of it is in disrepair and is expensive to replace.

The August 2017 flooding events, and subsequent investigation of SWBNO operations, prompted an overhaul of SWBNO leadership and priorities. The City contracted with an emergency management team to oversee operations until an interim team was appointed. The agency currently is led by Interim Executive Director and a three-member executive transition team. The search for a permanent Executive Director will be conducted by an independent search firm, in conjunction with a Board of Directors ad hoc selection committee.

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

To make lasting changes in drainage and water systems, the City must change how it thinks about water. The issue is not how to get rid of water, it is how to live with it and, ultimately, use it to the City's advantage. Apart from investments in equipment, though emergency repairs to some parts of the system are underway, solving the drainage problem will require a holistic approach. This approach is a move away from focusing on emergency response to developing proactive solutions around stormwater management.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

This subcommittee was charged to develop actionable solutions to replace or update SWBNO systems, including funding strategies for proposed solutions.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Matt Butler
Vanessa Brown Claiborne
Lona Hankins
Mubashir Maqbool
Terrence Rice
Iam Tucker
Tommie Vassel
David Williams
Sanjay Seth*
Regan Smurthwaite*

**Harvard Research Fellow*

Subcommittee Facilitators/Analysts: Coleman Ridley and Christy Harowski

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Immediately develop a plan to diversify the SWBNO's power sources by shifting from a primary system of power generation to a primary system of power purchase, thereby realizing a cost savings of several million dollars annually and providing an economic benefit to the City through provision of reliable power and water. Within one year, begin to execute the diversification plan by relegating the existing SWBNO power plant to a backup/redundant power source and implementing a cost-effective plan to purchase reliable power.
- Develop a "signature water project" plan to provide East and West Bank water reliability by (1) ensuring completion and smooth startup of the Carrollton water towers and (2) connecting

the East Bank to the Algiers Water Plant, thereby supporting businesses and residents on both sides of the River by tapping into a water source with existing production capacity.

- Prioritize the modernization of the entire customer service experience, including billing, conflict resolution, and implementation of automated meter infrastructure.
- Develop a strategic and financial plan to repair the water filter gallery so that the SWBNO can deliver clean water to the residents of New Orleans at a high level of reliability.
- Develop an agency-wide Asset Management System to efficiently operate and maintain the SWBNO's infrastructure assets and business systems by capturing employee institutional knowledge and using it to create standard operating procedures, technical performance standards, and business process improvements.
- Renovate the SWBNO website to promote education, transparency, and easily accessible information for citizens and vendors, including a public-facing dashboard system with meaningful performance standards and reliability targets.
- Utilize professional financial consultants to perform an overall assessment of the funding necessary to (1) successfully complete capital infrastructure projects, (2) maintain agency cash flow, and (3) pay vendors promptly. In addition, recommend short and long-term strategies for accomplishing these objectives.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: While the SWBNO is composed of three separate "systems" – drainage, water, and sewerage – power is the single factor that affects them all. A single turbine-based power system generates the power to operate all water-related infrastructure, including pumps and pump stations. In other words, even if all of the City's catch basins were clean and pumps were working at full capacity, a failure in the power system would still prevent that infrastructure from operating, and New Orleans would experience flooding or boil water advisories.

But power generation is costly, and the system is old, poorly maintained, and inefficient. Diversifying SWBNO's

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE



power system by purchasing power, instead of generating it, will improve reliability and ultimately result in significant cost savings for the agency.

Recommendation: 1) Immediately develop a plan to diversify the SWBNO's power sources by shifting from a primary system of power generation to a primary system of

power purchase, thereby realizing a cost savings of several million dollars annually and providing an economic benefit to the City through provision of reliable power and water. 2) Within one year, begin to execute the diversification plan by shifting the existing SWBNO power plant to a backup/ redundant power source and implementing a cost-effective plan to purchase reliable power.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Generating 25Hz power – which is what SWBNO assets require to function – requires a lot of equipment that is difficult to maintain or repair due to its age and condition. Getting the system to a basic level of functionality post-August 5 has been expensive and time-consuming, and is not a long-term fix. Continuing the practice of pricey short-term repairs to generate unreliable power is neither efficient nor effective. Modernizing the system to a power-purchasing model is a major project, but a smart investment for New Orleans' future.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: This past winter, the City's inability to provide water pressure to hotels, restaurants, and convention-goers due to a freeze made national news. Unfortunately, drops in water pressure are not news to the residents of New Orleans, who experience such drops and the resulting boil water advisories on a too-frequent basis. Construction on two water towers that should provide enough pressure in an emergency to prevent boil water advisories in most of the City is underway. But the old pipes have so many leaks that by the time water moves from the Carrollton plant all the way to downtown, a significant amount of pressure is lost.



INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE



There is an opportunity, however, to provide reliable water between the Algiers plant and downtown New Orleans via a pipe under the Mississippi River – thereby enhancing the reliability of constant water on both sides of the River, regardless of weather or infrastructure emergencies.

Recommendation: Within one year, begin to develop a “signature water project” plan to provide East and West Bank water reliability by (1) ensuring completion and smooth startup of the Carrollton water towers and (2) connecting the East Bank to the Algiers Water Plant, thereby supporting businesses and residents on both sides of the River by tapping into a water source with existing production capacity.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The Algiers plant currently generates 15 million gallons of water a day. But it has the capacity to produce 30 million gallons a day, which is enough to service both the downtown/Central Business District (CBD) area and Algiers. The downtown/CBD areas are particularly susceptible to water shortages due to their distance from the Carrollton plant – and when those areas lose water or water pressure, it affects the City’s ability to attract and retain the visitors and businesses that help drive New Orleans’ economy. Connecting those areas to a closer, more reliable water source is a viable solution that supports businesses and residents on both sides of the River.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: Continual Sewerage & Water Board (SWBNO) billing inaccuracies are negatively impacting both the agency’s customers and its ability to collect revenue and maintain appropriate cash flow. These inaccuracies are caused by a number of issues, including a lack of staffing to read all of the meters on a monthly basis, a technology system that relies on human input, and the lack of a conflict resolution system. There is a need to update the system to improve the overall customer engagement process.

Recommendation: Prioritize the modernization of the entire customer service experience, including billing, conflict resolution, and implementation of automated meter infrastructure.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Accurate customer billing is currently a significant challenge at the SWBNO. Revenue has suffered because customers receive inaccurate bills and, as a result, stop paying. The stop-gap fix of asking customers to “pay what you think you owe” is not an effective solution. Hiring and retaining meter readers and staff to address conflict resolution has also been a challenge. Automating and modernizing the system will address these issues.

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: The water filter gallery is a critical asset that cleans water pumped in from the Mississippi River before it is distributed as drinking water. The gallery is old, however, and needs to be repaired. Since it is an absolute necessity for providing clean drinking water to citizens, deferred maintenance on this piece of equipment can not be allowed.

Recommendation: Develop a strategic and financial plan to repair the water filter gallery so that SWBNO can deliver clean water to the residents of New Orleans at a high level of reliability.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The water filter gallery is still functional, but requires a substantial amount of maintenance and power to operate in its current state. Power and weather emergencies pose a threat to its continued operation (during last winter's deep freeze, cleaning the gallery on a nightly basis required almost the entire amount of water available in the City). The gallery will not continue to function efficiently or effectively without significant repair or replacement.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: The hard-working Sewerage & Water Board (SWBNO) employees who have overseen maintenance and operation of assets from pipes to pumping stations have a wealth of institutional knowledge. To modernize and plan for asset management, that knowledge needs to be captured and used to improve the agency. Improvements should be presented in a way that is easily accessible and understandable by both current and future staff. There is a need to develop a comprehensive source of operating, technical, and business instructions/guidelines for SWBNO assets that can be used to introduce efficiencies, conduct financial planning, and help right-size the agency.

Recommendation: Develop an agency-wide Asset Management System to efficiently operate and maintain SWBNO's infrastructure assets and business systems by capturing employee institutional knowledge and using it to create standard operating procedures, technical performance standards, and business process improvements.

Rationale/Supporting Data: There exists no written source of standard operating procedures or technical

guidelines for SWBNO assets as they exist today. Instead, many long-term SWBNO employees are the sole source of knowledge on particular assets – e.g., how to repair a particular turbine or ensure a pumping station does not overheat. Nor does there exist a system for reviewing or streamlining business operations. This knowledge is invaluable and must be captured and transformed into standards for business and operating procedures.

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: Public perception of the Sewerage & Water Board (SWBNO) is poor, in part due to a lack of transparency on the agency's website. The SWBNO website should be a place where citizens and vendors can easily access their accounts, pay bills, track service requests, and find information for important points of contact within the agency. There is an opportunity for the website to be used as a tool to provide regularly updated information on the status of all SWBNO systems and progress toward meaningful performance goals.

Recommendation: Renovate the SWBNO website to promote education, transparency, and easily accessible information for citizens and vendors, including a public-facing dashboard system with meaningful performance standards and reliability targets.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The existing website can be hard to read and navigate, and does not provide updated information in a usable format. In addition, it does not currently allow customers to track service requests or bills, allow vendors to track project information or payment status, or contain contact information for outward-facing SWBNO personnel. A website renovation would be beneficial and could be accomplished quickly, at a relatively low cost.

RECOMMENDATION #7:

Context: While the Sewerage & Water Board (SWBNO) retains a firm to perform financial audits on an annual basis, there is no comprehensive, forward-looking strategic plan on how to fund upcoming projects, maintain cash flow, or pay vendors in a timely manner. A wholesale analysis of the universe of projects, funding sources, and payment systems would help determine project order and feasibility.

Recommendation: Utilize professional financial consultants to perform an overall assessment of the

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

funding necessary to (1) successfully complete capital infrastructure projects, (2) maintain agency cash flow, and (3) timely pay vendors. In addition, recommend short and long-term strategies for accomplishing these objectives.

Rationale/Supporting Data: SWBNO receives funding from a variety of sources, including millages, bonds, grants, and federal funds such as those from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Community Development Block Grants. A comprehensive analysis of the agency’s financial status, the funds available for recommended projects, and the funds necessary for cash flow and vendor payments, would serve as the foundation for developing a short-term and long-term financial strategy.

SURFACE SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

The Department of Public Works (DPW) is responsible for “surface” infrastructure. It operates and maintains 1,547

miles of streets, 149 bridges, 68,000 catch basins, 54,000 streetlights, and 1,200 miles of drainage pipes. DPW staff are tasked with street maintenance and repairs, creation and replacement of all street and traffic signs and signals, enforcement of the parking and traffic camera programs, and engineering and implementing capital improvement projects. The Department generates a significant amount of revenue – between \$40 and \$50M a year from parking enforcement. It relies heavily on Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation and Public Assistance funding for its capital budget.

Among DPW’s most critical responsibilities is oversight and implementation of the Comprehensive Capital Improvement Program (CCIP): a 200-project, \$2.4B infrastructure program that must be completed by 2023 in order for the City to receive the full FEMA reimbursement amount. The CCIP is the most comprehensive infrastructure program that New Orleans has seen in a generation. Its success will be dependent on the ability of

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS (DPW) OPERATES AND MAINTAINS



1,547
miles of streets



149
bridges



68,000
catch basins



54,000
streetlights



1,200
miles of drainage pipes

THE STREET MAINTENANCE DIVISION DOES SO WITH



35
full-time employees



down from 300
pre-Katrina



\$4–5M
approximate budget



compared to \$35M
estimate needed

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

DPW and SWBNO to effectively collaborate and manage the projects in partnership with the private sector. DPW is also the face of the City on street-related issues. It communicates construction schedules, street closures, and green infrastructure projects to residents. As a result, accountability and transparency are key to the success of this department.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to develop actionable solutions to improve roads and bridges throughout the City, along with funding strategies to implement the proposed solutions. Additionally, this subcommittee conducted a substantial organizational review of the DPW in order to make recommendations for operational and organizational improvements.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Kevin Ferguson
Louis Livers
John Shires
Keely Thibodeaux

Subcommittee Facilitators/Analysts: Coleman Ridley and Christy Harowski

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve DPW management structure by funding and filling two Deputy Director positions, using one for Comprehensive Capital Improvement Program oversight and the other to manage departmental operations.
- Ensure successful and timely implementation of the Comprehensive Capital Improvement Program by creating a functional program management system that utilizes the expertise of local program management firms in partnership with a small team of experienced internal staff.
- Rebuild and appropriately fund DPW's Street Maintenance Division.
- Re-establish the City's Utilities Department to oversee management and enforcement of all utility franchise agreements, including electric, gas, cable, and telecommunications.
- Consolidate all drainage-related responsibility under the authority of the SWBNO and all surface paving responsibility under the authority of the DPW. Ensure both agencies receive appropriate resources and funding during the transfer of roles,

in order to effectively execute their respective tasks.

- Develop a comprehensive asset management plan to identify and budget for long-term, preventative maintenance of City streets, bridges, equipment, and facilities.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: DPW is a large department, with approximately 225 direct employees and many more contract laborers and staff. It is responsible for implementation of the City's largest capital projects, maintenance of streets and bridges, and operation of the Traffic and Parking Divisions (which are major revenue generators). Currently, the Director provides direct oversight to seven division heads – with no intermediate level of management. As a result, the position requires almost constant attention to daily operational issues.

This current organizational structure does not reflect an efficient management model. There is a need to build in an intermediate level of management that would allow the Director to focus on leadership, policy, and high-level departmental issues; provide a full-time position dedicated to implementation of the Comprehensive Capital Improvement Program; and create a point person for resolution of daily operational issues – thereby increasing the efficiency and productivity of the Department as a whole.

Recommendation: Improve DPW management structure by funding and filling two Deputy Director positions, using one for Comprehensive Capital Improvement Program oversight, and the other to manage departmental operations.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The management structure within DPW is not commensurate with the number of large, complex projects for which the Department is responsible. While the divisions are staffed with knowledgeable, hard-working personnel who help the City run on a daily basis, larger projects – such as the Comprehensive Capital Improvement Program, or the Catch Basin Emergency Repair Program – suffer from lack of management-level personnel and coordination. This has resulted in existing staff being asked to perform

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functions for which they are neither trained nor qualified. Parking and adjudication activities currently consume 50 percent of the DPW Director's time. Moving this function to the proposed Office of Transportation will allow DPW to make infrastructure a priority and devote more resources to the CCIP and overall maintenance.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: DPW is responsible for implementing the most comprehensive infrastructure program New Orleanians have seen in a lifetime. The program has a total budget of \$2.4B, includes over 200 individual projects, and requires coordination with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Sewerage & Water Board (SWBNO), and local utilities. The majority of the work must be complete, per FEMA grant agreements, by 2023. However, the program rollout to date has been slow – largely due to a limited number of staff with experience in program management at this scale. To ensure successful completion of this citywide program and full reimbursement from FEMA, DPW must implement a functional program management system.

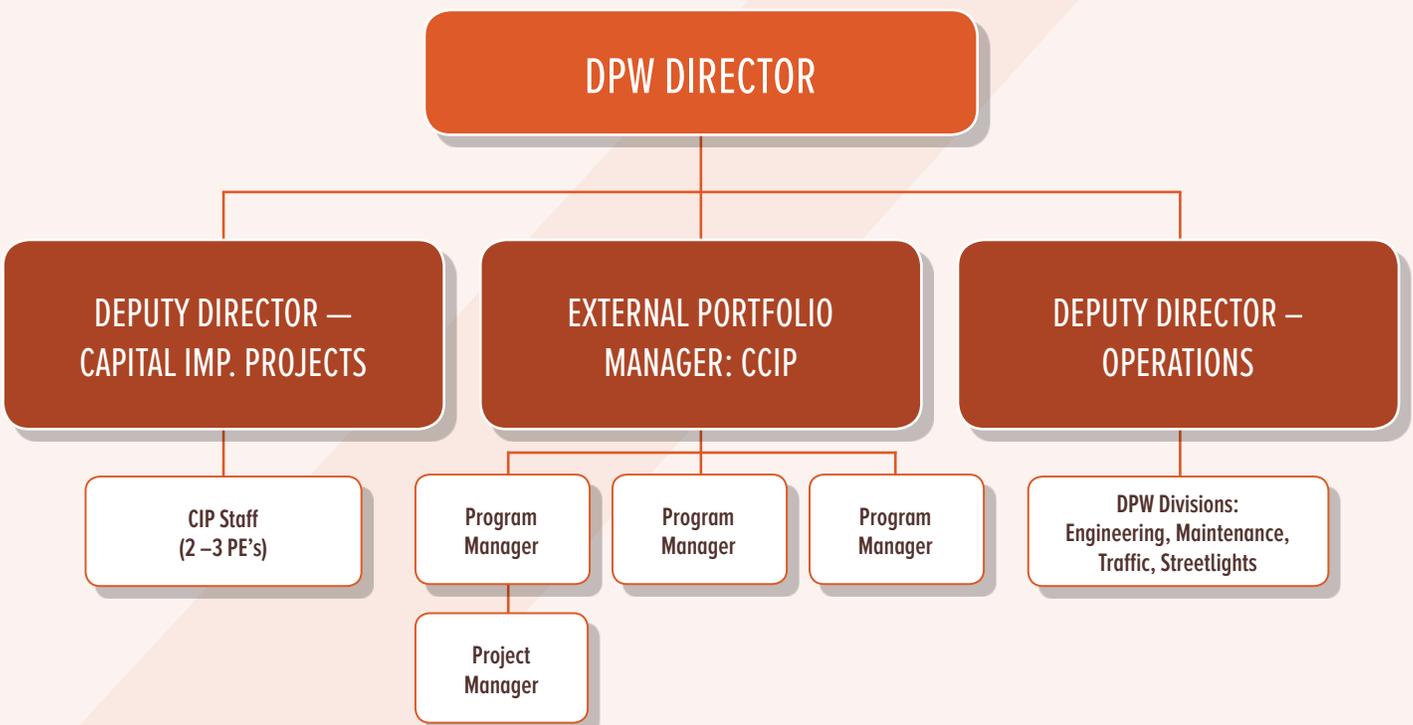
Recommendation: Ensure successful and timely implementation of the Comprehensive Capital

Improvement Program by creating a functional program management system that utilizes the expertise of local program management firms in partnership with a small team of experienced internal staff:

Rationale/Supporting Data: If the City fails to complete the projects incorporated in the scope of the Comprehensive Capital Improvement Program by 2023, there is a chance that FEMA will not reimburse the full grant amount of \$1.3B. Projects are moving slowly now for a variety of reasons, including incorporation of new green technology, environmental reviews, and a lack of coordination between DPW and SWBNO on project design. But the biggest impact is lack of experienced program management that can guide the process from start to finish. The recommended model is intended to allow local firms with the requisite expertise to assume responsibility for implementation, with oversight from DPW staff on grant compliance, and design approvals.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: DPW is responsible for maintaining 1,547 miles of streets and 149 bridges. It does so with a Street Maintenance Division staff of approximately 35 full-time maintenance workers (down from 300, pre-Katrina) and



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a budget of approximately \$4-5M (as compared to the \$35M it estimates is needed). Existing staff turnover is high, and the Department pays three times the cost of a full-time employee for contracted laborers.

Street maintenance is a top priority for citizens, and preventative street maintenance will become more and more critical as roads are repaired under the Comprehensive Capital Improvement Program.

Recommendation: Rebuild and appropriately fund DPW's Street Maintenance Division.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The City's street maintenance laborers currently earn \$18,000 - which ranks them the lowest among City employees. These low wages, combined with grueling work, have resulted in a 27 percent turnover rate within the Division. These laborers' responsibilities include, but are not limited to, operating street sweepers and vacuum trucks; repairing potholes and signage; cleaning catch basins, and routine street maintenance. To supply necessary staffing, the City uses contract laborers at 3 times the cost of internal staff. The Bureau of Governmental Research has reported that close to a total of \$8.5M exists in the City budget for use on street maintenance. Rebuilding an in-house Street Maintenance Division and funding it with all available street-related money is a cost-effective start to long-term planning for preventative street maintenance.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: The City currently has the ability to regulate – and earn revenue from – utility franchise agreements. But, no central point of oversight or enforcement exists, and therefore many utilities operate outside of City regulations and at no cost. As a result, public rights of way are cluttered with unpermitted poles, illegal pavement cuts on City streets, and unrealized revenue. Of particular note is the proliferation of small cell towers or antennas, which are increasingly used for wireless service in cities (and a number of which have been installed illegally in the French Quarter in the past). Other cities have modernized franchise agreements to capitalize on this technology and significant revenue source, having done so with appropriate design standards and fees.

Historically, this regulation and enforcement function fell on the Utilities Department, which is now defunct (although it still exists in the City Charter). The existing

Utilities Regulation Office currently uses the majority of its budget to procure contracted experts to advise the City Council on utility regulation issues.

Recommendation: Re-establish the City's Utilities Department to oversee management and enforcement of all utility franchise agreements, including electric, gas, cable, and telecommunications.

Rationale/Supporting Data: There has been a proliferation of illegal paving cuts, cable poles, and antennas around the City. Efforts to enforce existing regulations have not been coordinated within City government, resulting in a free-for-all atmosphere and a missed opportunity to generate revenue. Research on comparable cities has shown the importance of getting ahead of rapidly developing technology to create a better telecommunications structure and a better aesthetic on City property – both of which will improve citizen quality of life. Significant recurring revenue opportunities exist on which the Department could capitalize through policy enforcement and updated fee structures.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: In 1993, DPW and SWBNO entered into a cooperative endeavor agreement designed to divide responsibility between the two agencies for operation and maintenance of drainage infrastructure. DPW was given oversight of “small pipe” infrastructure, i.e., catch basins and pipes under 36 inches, while SWBNO retained responsibility for pipes over 36 inches, canals, and pumps. The deal arose from a funding dispute around a failed drainage millage. Twenty-five years later, the agreement has proven inefficient and ineffective – and “small pipe” drainage continues to lack funding.

Similarly, although DPW has the staff and expertise to handle surface paving projects, SWBNO continues to re-pave roads after making cuts to perform underground drainage work. There is a lack of communication and coordination between the agencies in both areas, which has resulted in redundancy, and delay on many infrastructure projects. There is an opportunity to assign each agency the full responsibility for drainage and surface pavement in a “fair trade” which could improve accountability and performance.

Recommendation: Consolidate all drainage-related responsibility under the authority of the SWBNO and all

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surface paving responsibility under the authority of DPW. Ensure both agencies receive appropriate resources and funding during the transfer of roles, in order effectively to execute their respective tasks.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The division of drainage and paving responsibilities between DPW and SWBNO is inconsistent with the missions of each agency. SWBNO, per its enabling legislation, is responsible for the City’s drainage – this should include all drainage assets, from catch basins to pump stations, so that sole authority and accountability falls within the SWBNO. Likewise, DPW is the department tasked with street maintenance: it should have sole responsibility for designing specifications and performing work on pavement.

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: DPW is responsible for an incredible array of City assets, from streets and bridges to traffic signals and street lights, yet no comprehensive inventory of these assets exists. A full inventory of the status of these assets and their current short and long-term funding is critical for use in developing a plan to proactively maintain and repair all assets on a long-term basis. Proactively planning for long-term maintenance, from both a funding and operations standpoint, could help prevent basic infrastructure from decaying due to lack of maintenance and will preserve the improvements currently underway.

Recommendation: Develop a comprehensive asset management plan to identify and budget for long-term,

preventative maintenance of City streets, bridges, equipment, and facilities.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The state of much of the City’s infrastructure is in poor condition because of deferred maintenance due to lack of funding over the past 50 years. Pothole-ridden streets are a detriment to the quality of life of citizens and speak volumes about the viability of New Orleans to potential businesses and residents.

URBAN WATER PLAN SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

In the years since its publication, the Urban Water Plan’s key concepts are now understood more widely than ever. Water can overwhelm New Orleans’ systems (as seen on August 5, 2017), usually resulting in demand for increased drainage capacity. The increased drainage leads to imbalances in groundwater, which creates and exacerbates subsidence and causes damages to roads, utilities, and buildings. The infrastructure that does exist is walled off from public life, separating people from the water, and offering none of the aesthetic or ecological benefits that could be part of living with water. The Urban Water Plan adds “internal water management” to the Multiple Lines of Defense Strategy (a methodology to design flood control and wetland restoration in coastal Louisiana) coast-to-city approach: slow the water down, store it and re-use it, and then drain that which the landscape cannot safely accommodate.



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The Urban Water Plan’s analyses, principles, and project concepts were used in the development of the City’s application to the National Disaster Resilience Competition (NDRC), resulting in an award of over \$140M for projects like the Mirabeau Water Garden (also funded through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)). The NDRC award is one of the major funding sources available for implementation of the Urban Water Plan’s strategies and principles, along with HMGP, FEMA, and other funds for reconstruction of streets and public infrastructure. The estimated cost of the Urban Water Plan is \$6.2B over 50 years. However, the estimated positive economic impact of the plan due to reduction in flood damages, reduced cost of subsidence, lower insurance premiums, higher property values, and greater economic growth amounts to approximately \$23.3B.

The work to implement the principles and projects within the Urban Water Plan has been widespread. It includes New Orleans Redevelopment Authority’s (NORA) program to use vacant lots for rain gardens and other water management demonstration projects. It also includes the Sewerage and Water Board’s green infrastructure plan, resulting from the EPA consent decree, which committed the City’s utility to implementing the Living with Water principles from the Urban Water Plan. The Greater New Orleans Foundation (GNOF)’s Urban Water Series started educating the public about green infrastructure and stormwater management in 2013 through community workshops. In 2016, GNOF and the City of New Orleans partnered on Urban Water Series technical master classes which have brought global, national, and local experts to showcase their expertise and lead workshops for the region’s water professionals. The founding of the Water Collaborative of Greater New Orleans in 2014 provided an umbrella organization that brings together individuals, businesses, nonprofits, and institutions from multiple sectors to work together on the implementation of sustainable water management practices, signaling growing awareness, engagement, and active participation across the region.

Finally, the City’s updated building code mandates stormwater plans for certain sites and projects and requires redevelopment and new developments to manage the first 1.25” of stormwater that falls on their properties, which are huge steps in implementing “living with water” principles.

The main challenges in the next several years will be to implement the major projects that have been planned and funded, while planning additional projects and programming opportunities; regaining the public trust in water management systems so that additional funding can be identified; growing and spreading water management principles across City departments; and engaging the entire city in a widespread effort to change how New Orleanians live with water.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

This subcommittee was charged with assessing the Water Plan, researching potential funding streams, and developing a funding strategy for the implementation of the Water Plan.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Amer Tufail
Dana Eness
Aron Chang
David Waggonner
Arthur Johnson
Mark Davis
Jeff Hebert
Connie Uddo

Subcommittee Facilitators/Analysts:

Ella Delio, Allison DeJong & Allison Acosta

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Identify and implement a range of projects using unencumbered funds to demonstrate the potential for Urban Water Plan principles to reduce flooding and benefit neighborhoods.
2. Strengthen the Office of Resilience and Sustainability (ORS) and ensure that the role ORS has played continues, particularly promoting cross-collaboration among departments and providing technical assistance to front-line employees.
3. Undertake a review of all Recovery Road Program capital projects that are not yet under construction and amend scopes of work to include additional specific fixes (e.g., open catch basins) to address groundwater, subsidence, and other water management principles.
4. Exercise a suite of options that will provide funding to allow the City to systematically implement key aspects of the Urban Water Plan.
5. Establish a community-based planning and

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implementation process to develop additional water management projects for the medium and long-term, engaging local institutions, businesses, and residents to create shared value.

6. Develop and implement a public campaign to promote living with water by engaging residents around neighborhoods, institutions, infrastructure, culture, recreation, and tourism. Ensure that the campaign connects and publicizes high visibility projects that bring together institutions, neighborhoods, and green infrastructure professionals.
7. Establish green infrastructure and urban water management career pathways.
8. Become a leading voice in coastal affairs.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: With existing projects in the pipeline for the Gentilly Resilience District, there is an opportunity to extend the resilience and sustainability principles behind these projects to other areas in the City. Some projects have already gone through initial stages of design, while other project types, such as green schoolyards, have been piloted by partners. Many of these projects can be implemented quickly, building confidence that these approaches are safe, beautiful, and effective.

Recommendation: Identify and implement a range of projects using unencumbered funds (potentially including but not limited to Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance (FEMA PA) funds from the Municipal Auditorium and Desire Florida Community

Center, FEMA HMGP from Home Elevations, Community Development Block Grant (D-CDBG) from the Iberville Soft Seconds program, and Capital Improvements and Infrastructure Trust Fund) to demonstrate the potential for Urban Water Plan principles to reduce flooding and benefit neighborhoods. These initial projects are easy to implement and efforts can commence today with the land, stakeholders, partners, and resources available. These projects will complement existing HMGP and NDR investments, such as the Gentilly Resilience District, with an emphasis on:

- Stormwater retention at schools, parks, and playgrounds (with these locations serving as sites for community education) -- \$3 to \$4M
- One or more street adaptations in prominent locations that advance best practices and technologies for surfaces, utilities, catch basins and drainage pipes, hydrology, subsurface, transportation, and safety -- \$2 to \$5M
- Increase the stormwater storage capacity of City Park and disconnect City Park drainage conduit into Lakeview, by dredging lagoons and creating stormwater wetlands and retention areas -- approximately \$20M

These initial projects will be a first step towards realizing the principles of the Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan. These projects are highly visible and clearly demonstrate how new approaches benefit communities, provide data to improve future planning and projects, build public/private partnerships in their implementation, and help grow workforce development efforts.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Despite current green infrastructure investments (including HMGP, NDR, and those by NORA, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs)), there is not public awareness of these efforts as part of a broader transformation in how the City relates to water. Coordinating a set of projects for maximum visibility and impact in the short term can help change that. There are several community- and NGO-led projects throughout the City that can serve as inspirations, including schoolyards



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and playgrounds or streetscapes. These projects have taken too long to implement and have required NGOs and other implementers to take on significant risk to get them done. Project implementation and outreach have also been fragmented -- more collaboration can provide economies of scale, shared expertise and equipment, and coordinated branding and messaging. The floods of August 2017, and the public outcry during and after, exemplify some of the dynamics around public perception of water. Those include fear, trauma, mistrust, and uncertainty about the future. There is a need to take positive actions, as a community, that build trust and support the belief that there can be effective collaboration to address flooding.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: Historically, most City employees were not aware of how to integrate sustainability and resilience principles into their work. Moreover, there was no system for coordinating the increasing number of resilience and sustainability projects that were coming to the City through the federal funds that were awarded.

“*City systems must also shift from just catch basins, pipes, and pumps to a more holistic, green infrastructure and gray infrastructure system.*”

City systems must also shift from just catch basins, pipes, and pumps to a more holistic, green infrastructure and gray infrastructure system. Only with the design of a complex municipal drainage system has the City been able to develop on what was previously uninhabitable wetlands. Unfortunately, this single approach to water management coupled with the spread of impervious surfaces has only increased the City's susceptibility to flooding from regular rain events. The very pumping system that works to keep us dry is also hastening subsidence, exacerbating cracking foundations,

'rollercoaster roads,' and crumbling infrastructure. In the past three years, the Office of Resilience and Sustainability started to address these problems. It has made progress in this time especially when the ORS was housed under the Chief Administrative Officer's office which provided them with better ability to coordinate across departments. However, there is still a lot of work to do to change the status quo.

The Office of Resilience and Sustainability has served the following functions:

- managed various grants from federal government and philanthropic partners
- provided technical assistance services which have helped change and improve how government functions with regard to environmental, sustainability, and resilience matters
- ensured design quality across capital projects via the Resilience Design Review Committee, a committee of various departments including the Department of Public Works (DPW), Capital Projects, the Project Delivery Unit (PDU) of Capital Projects, Safety and Permits, Parks and Parkways, and others

An example of inter-agency collaboration which has resulted in innovative green infrastructure projects is between the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority and ORS. Putting this office under the CAO's office expedited critical projects and helped overcome barriers related to bureaucratic silos. While the ORS has been effective in collaborating, staff capacity is limited at times given the numerous functions that they fulfill and projects on which they work.

Recommendation: Strengthen the Office of Resilience and Sustainability (ORS) and ensure that the role that ORS has played continues, particularly promoting cross-collaboration among departments and providing technical assistance to front-line employees. ORS staff should include a Subsidence, Subsurface, and Groundwater Manager. The Office should establish metrics and monitoring for sustainable surface water, groundwater management, and subsidence control, and ensure that these principles are embedded within all City departments and agencies.

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Rationale/Supporting Data: Historically, Given the vulnerabilities that the City has, as well as the opportunities that arise from these vulnerabilities, sustainability and resilience principles need to be embedded in every aspect of how residents live. Strengthening the ORS will help promote these principle and ensure that the City is able to not only survive but thrive with water.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: The Recovery Roads program is an unprecedented opportunity to implement sound water management measures on a large scale and within a short timeframe. Several City departments, including PDU, DPW, and the Sewerage and Water Board (SWBNO), are working with FEMA to plan a large, comprehensive program; however, a lack of coordination on the water management elements of these projects erodes public confidence and squanders the best opportunity to address water management throughout the City with existing funding. Many communities have achieved measurable results by managing water through combinations of gray and green infrastructure, and offer case studies to guide strategies appropriate for the City.

Recommendation: Undertake a review of all Recovery Road Program capital projects that are not yet under construction and amend scopes of work to include additional specific fixes (e.g., open catch basins) to address groundwater, subsidence, and other water management principles.

Rationale/Supporting Data: By making small, but important, changes to the scope of existing projects, the City can gain tremendous benefits around water management without using any additional funding.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: New Orleans is at increased risk of flooding due to induced subsidence, decades of deferred improvements and maintenance in its water management system, and chronic underfunding of this public infrastructure. There is a growing appreciation for the need for a more professional, integrated, value-driven approach to managing the City's water. This is evidenced by the development the increasingly robust plans (e.g., City Master Plan, Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan, and City Resilience Plan). In turn, this has spawned greater civic engagement and outside interest in the City's

efforts to cope with longstanding drainage problems and its adaptation. That work has helped establish that the estimated \$3-6 billion cost of implementing the Urban Water Plan would be more than offset by \$10 billion in avoided costs across the metro area, including \$8 billion in avoided flood losses and \$2.2 billion in avoided subsidence damage.

The Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan contains a wealth of information and analysis that supports both the risk and value-driven aspects of an integrated approach to managing water in the City and metro area.

Recommendation: Identify a suite of options that will allow the City to systematically implement key aspects of the Urban Water Plan and to secure the objectives of a community that is less flood-prone, more insurable, and capable of attracting the investments that will allow the community to grow.

1. Pursue federal forgiveness on the SELA co-payment loan to free up approximately \$8M per year.
2. Plan a pathway to a stormwater parcel fee to fund water management, informed by research of the Bureau of Governmental Research, with the goal of raising approximately \$115M per year.
3. Develop a credit system to incentivize green infrastructure and provide relief for low-income property owners to offset their parcel fee.
4. Increase the use of flexible finance vehicles such as grants, revolving loan funds, and public/private partnerships.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The effective management of stormwater is essential to the prosperity and well being of the City and its residents. The costs of implementing and maintaining an improved system, however, will be significant. Implementing the ideas described above will help provide funding and support the renewal of the City's critical infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: Implementing the Urban Water Plan requires buy-in and investment at all scales and across all neighborhoods. Involving citizens and a wide range of organizations in planning and implementation can build that buy-in, align and scale existing efforts, and result in a community-driven vision for resilience and "living with water." Many organizations and individuals, both inside and outside of government, have been working

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to realize projects both big and small over the last 10 years, from the Gentilly Resilience District to installing residential rain gardens. Also, there is a robust network of water professionals, businesses, and nonprofits who have often collaborated. However, existing efforts are often disconnected and require implementers to compete for limited resources. Efforts need to be scaled up significantly. There is an opportunity to improve the diversity in those who are involved in existing efforts (i.e., by race, income, and sector).

Recommendation: Establish a community-based planning and implementation process to develop additional water management projects for the medium and long-term periods, engaging local institutions, businesses, and residents to create shared value.

Involve the entire community in defining what “living with water” will mean for New Orleans through planning and implementation of transformative projects.

- Set targets and define objectives
- Outline project types and programs (with overall framing and timing)
- Convene potential project partners: explore funding availability, projects in progress, scaling, and both short-term and long-term opportunities
- Establish project coalitions and implementation plans
- Implement projects and programs

This process and resulting projects and programs are built on four principles: Slow, Store, Drain, and Community-based Planning. The results of community-based planning will include 1) neighborhood green infrastructure plans and 2) a waterways plan, which will outline projects for future funding opportunities.

Rationale/Supporting Data:

More must be done to engage communities around water management and what they want to see built in their neighborhoods.

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: Current branding/ messaging for water, flooding, resilience, and infrastructure projects is fragmented – making it difficult for citizens

to connect the dots, see an overarching trajectory, or find ways to engage. Urban and coastal issues are also disconnected.

There is already a wide range of stakeholders, both public and private, who share key vocabulary and concepts: e.g., living with water, slow-store-infiltrate. There is also growing news coverage and public awareness of water as an issue of broad civic importance, like crime, housing, or education. There is little coordination of messaging and branding, whether we’re talking about signage for green infrastructure or connecting water infrastructure projects to other community priorities. Also, overly technical language often does not speak to the general public in effective and meaningful ways.

The language used by water and planning professionals -- such as “living with water” or “stormwater retention” -- either have very little meaning or mean different things to most citizens. There is widespread dissatisfaction with the City’s drainage infrastructure, distrust of public agencies, and there is a belief that more can be done.

Recommendation: Develop and implement a public campaign to promote living with water by engaging neighborhoods, institutions, infrastructure, culture, recreation, and tourism. Ensure that the campaign connects and publicizes high visibility projects that bring together institutions, neighborhoods, and green infrastructure professionals.

Organize a campaign that fosters learning, civic dialogue, celebration, collaborative action, and shared accountability towards living with water. The campaign may include:

“*Water has the potential to unite all of us, both negatively, as many residents experienced after August 5th, and positively.*”

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- a series of high-visibility, place-based events around the City celebrating waterways, waterfronts, and water resources
- powerful graphics and evocative messaging, branding that speaks to and enriches the identity of the City, and that extends beyond a single administration
- resources on water issues and projects that can be shared by a wide range of stakeholder groups
- overhauling customer service and public interfaces regarding water, flooding, and environment (should include specific issues, such as catch basins)
- addressing natural and botanical elements, including trees and other ecological systems, that are part of public and private properties and are critical for improved water management functions

The campaign should build positive perception of government action and accountability regarding water. The campaign should build public awareness, engagement, and stewardship mindsets. The campaign should speak to local (residents, businesses, institutions, visitors), national, and international audiences through news media and social media. It should also speak to recent investments and projects already underway.

The campaign should also change perception of water resources and what it means to live in a Delta city, in a way that recognizes the vulnerability, shared risks, shared ownership, and attaches it to the beauty of places, local ecosystems, and culture – not a message of doom nor false positivity, but one that is about adaptation, learning, action, and celebration.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The fundamental issue of living with water touches all areas of life in New Orleans, and as such, it should not be compartmentalized in certain agencies, organizations, companies, and neighborhoods. Water has the potential to unite all of us, both negatively, as many residents experienced after the August 2017 floods, and positively, in the pride that all should share in the ecology and culture of living with water. Organizing a campaign will help elevate the conversation around water and bring us together around our shared environment and opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION #7:

Context: \$200-\$300M will be spent on the City's public green infrastructure projects within the next four years. Moreover, changes to the building code now require more sustainable stormwater management practices, which will lead to the growth of the green infrastructure economy. There is an opportunity to ensure that the jobs and contracts coming out of these public and private sector projects can go to some of the 42% of African American men who are unemployed and to minority-owned businesses, which only get 2% of all sales receipts in the Greater New Orleans area.

Preliminary findings in the City's Equity Report show a disparity between contracts going to minority and women-owned firms vs. white male-owned firms, particularly in the private sector. At the same time, there is a dire shortage of qualified contractors with entry- to mid-level skills within the green sector that must be addressed.

Gaining skills in green infrastructure will be useful not just in New Orleans but in other cities where green infrastructure projects are being installed.

The City's Resilience Strategy and Equity Report, and structural changes to departments including the Office of Supplier Diversity and the Network for Opportunity (now merged with the New Orleans Business Alliance) demonstrate a keen interest and acknowledgment of the need to address inequities in access to opportunities.

Efforts are underway by the Office of Resilience and Sustainability, Office of Supplier Diversity, New Orleans Business Alliance, and Greater New Orleans Foundation (GNOF) to define and establish green infrastructure career pathways. This includes plans for convening employers, training/education providers, as well as working with the Water Environment Federation to expand the National

“*\$200-\$300M will be spent on the City's public green infrastructure projects within the next four years.*”

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Green Infrastructure Certification Program (NGICP), which the City and the SWBNO have subscribed to, but which is currently geared more towards mid-skilled workers. The NGICP needs to expand to low-skilled workers as well as businesses.

Training programs that include green infrastructure-related skills are already being offered by nonprofits Louisiana Green Corps and Groundwork New Orleans.

The BuildNOLA program, run by the Office of Supplier Diversity, exists and is being transitioned to the New Orleans Business Alliance. There needs to be better awareness of this program among private companies and nonprofits.

Despite some success stories and indicators of improved conditions within City procurement and contracting processes, the statistics (which show enduring disparities when tracking employment levels, median incomes, and sales receipts according to race) point to the urgency and need for dedicating significant dollars to workforce development.

Recommendation: Establish green infrastructure and urban water management career pathways. Identify the relevant technical and soft skills, and expertise needed for vocational, workforce and entrepreneurial pathways to meaningful work within the green sector. Integrate the career pathways into City employment and training systems. Accelerate the deployment of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) NDRC \$3M in Workforce Development Funds to provide training/apprenticeships for entry-level workers who will construct, operate, and maintain green infrastructure projects.

Create a pathway for disadvantaged contractors and job seekers to a) learn about stormwater management; b) acquire relevant skills; c) engage in supervised practicum training within the sector, while acquiring relevant certification; d) engage in paid apprenticeships with private sector and City agencies; and e) obtain employment and/or win contracts for work within the green sector.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The job and business opportunities within water management and green infrastructure are potentially some of the largest sources of new job growth for the region over the next several

years. Making sure that everyone in the City has access to these jobs and contracts is critical to making the water sector equitable and sustainable.

RECOMMENDATION #8:

Context: Water does not stop at the parish line, and the “multiple lines of defense” system works when all lines of defense are built up and valued. There is an opportunity to engage on issues related to the coast, and in doing so for New Orleans to improve its protection systems, build goodwill with partners, and encourage the development of water management systems outside the levee walls.

Some parish presidents have seats on the board of the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA), while others are represented through regional structures. New Orleans has strong representation on the Regional Planning Commission (RPC). The decisions about spending on CPRA’s Annual Plan (components of the Coastal Master Plan) are approved by the board; similarly, transportation funding is apportioned by the RPC. The City has considerable power to ensure that these funds are spent with water management needs in mind. By working together the entire region has the potential to benefit.

Recommendation: Orleans Parish should become a leading voice in coastal affairs. The City should send senior representatives to attend the Parishes Against Coastal Erosion (PACE) and CPRA board meetings and work with other Orleans Parish officials to encourage the Regional Planning Commission to engage on coastal and urban water management issues.

Historically, Orleans Parish has not fully engaged in coastal affairs in comparison to neighboring parishes like Jefferson and St. Bernard. Orleans Parish should become more deeply involved as a participant and leader in coastal discussions, linking coastal problems and solutions to urban contexts.

The future of the Parish is fully intertwined with that of the Delta. The Delta region faces tremendous challenges, and Orleans has to be a driver of positive change and collaboration. Orleans also has a strong voice on a national and international level, which can bolster the region’s ability to communicate shared concerns and needs more effectively to each other and to rest of the world.

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By becoming a stronger regional partner in coastal affairs, New Orleans will have a stronger voice for the coastal issues that impact us and that could drive economic vitality over the coming decades. The City can also lend support, expertise, and build a stronger regional coalition with neighboring parishes.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Restoring Louisiana's coast is the State's greatest challenge and threatens its residents' way of life. New Orleans needs to be a leader in not just urban water management, but in coastal affairs. The coastal environments, both inside and outside of Orleans Parish, are critical habitat for the ecological systems that surround us as well as the strongest defense against rising seas and storm surge. Every levee that is built or maintained is strengthened by natural systems, and New Orleans should be a leader in the charge to repair and defend the coast.

TRANSPORTATION SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

As New Orleans turns a historical page, its approach to transportation must be forward thinking. Issues such as the "last-mile" of truck transport to the port, the Convention Center Boulevard redesign, and the International Airport flyover, are key to the economic viability of the City. Uniform design standards, comprehensive street planning, and cross-departmental coordination of everything above and below the streets affects every facet of transportation. Innovations such as permeable pavement positively impact stormwater management. Promoting biking and walking leads to improvements in public health. Ferry connection and rapid transit expand the City's ability to be a regional employment center. Advances in traffic signalization lead to improvements in emergency response and overall public safety. Driverless, electric, and hybrid vehicles are no longer concepts and are bringing forth cleaner air and energy efficiency. The traditional public transit model is being revolutionized by advances in technology that provide alternative options such as using transportation network companies (ride sharing) to not only get to work but also as medical and ambulance transit.

There are specific projects that the Mayor needs to have visibility on, such as the redevelopment/repurposing of existing airport terminals, port access (the last mile), traffic issues, and control of trains. There are other issues

that the Mayor needs to have a leading voice on, such as regional coordination with neighboring parishes, and establishing interregional service between New Orleans and Baton Rouge.

There are a large number of transportation-related departments, agencies, and private interests involved in managing, planning, financing, implementing, and evaluating transportation programs and projects within the City of New Orleans. There are multiple sources of existing and potential funding from City, State, regional, federal, potential organizations, public-private partnerships, NGOs, and foundations.

City programs including streets, public transit, ferries, traffic signalization and control, aviation, public and private vehicle management, are an ongoing mostly seamless process of City government from one administration to the next over the last 45 years. Public policy with respect to the City transportation system has varied to some extent, with greater emphasis on the application of transportation data analysis during the more recent City administrations. Availability of federal and local sources of funding has also varied with the national and local economies, as well as with public transportation policy. Federal transportation funds will likely be more limited during the current federal administration, while the growing strength of the local economy and real estate will provide increased tax revenue and other sources of potential transportation program funding.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

This subcommittee was charged with developing strategies and recommendations to provide equitable access to public transportation options for all New Orleanians. Further, this subcommittee was to assess regional coordination efforts and make recommendations on strategies to improve planning and coordination across transportation modes throughout the region.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Calvin C. "Trey" Fayard, III
Keith Holt
Lee Jackson
Michael Kearney
Ti Martin
Vincenzo Pasquantonio
Alex Posorske
Shawn Wilson

INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE



Subcommittee Facilitators/Analysts: Robert Tannen and Norma Jean Mattei

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement the RTA's Strategic Mobility Plan – the City's long-term transit plan – with a focus on short-term achievable action items and tangible improvements in transit service and access. This could also greatly benefit New Orleans East and Algiers and will set up New Orleans transit for success over the next four years.
- Launch a legacy project that takes the first steps toward a regional transit network to include rapid transit and interregional transit.
- Create a Mayor's Office of Transportation – properly staffed and led by a director who reports to the Mayor - focused on guiding the administration and coordinating all aspects of transportation and improving the movement of people, goods, and services.
- Facilitate the hiring of an executive management team at the Regional Transit Authority (RTA).

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- Amend the City of New Orleans CAO Policy Memorandum #134, 'Complete Streets Program' to:
 - Focus on improving health and economic equity
 - Set higher standards for street designs that are safe and accessible for people of all ages and abilities for all travel modes -- walkers, bikers, transit riders, and drivers
 - Create comprehensive plans for walking, biking, and transit networks that integrate with one another and connect people to job centers, parks, schools, healthy food outlets, churches, and more
 - Integrate best water management practices into street design, building, and repairs, which will reduce flooding and subsidence while extending the life of the streets
 - Include more robust public participation and accountability mechanisms
- Combine the community vision with technical expertise to create a detailed map of future bikeways, design guide, and prioritization framework known as the New Orleans Bikeway Blueprint.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: Equitable transportation means that residents can access economic opportunity and essential services in a reasonable amount of time – no matter what mode of transportation they rely on or in what neighborhood they live. Implementing the RTA's Strategic Mobility Plan is the most practical way to get the transit system up to speed and build the public trust needed for further improvements. Further, transit-reliant New Orleans East and West Bank residents will not face a severe handicap in accessing economic opportunity in the New Orleans region.

Recommendation: Implement the RTA's Strategic Mobility Plan – the City's long-term transit plan – with a focus on short-term achievable action items and tangible improvements in transit service and access. This could also greatly benefit New Orleans East and Algiers and will set up New Orleans transit for success over the next four years.

The RTA's Strategic Mobility Plan – finalized in late 2017 – contains 129 specific recommended action items to comprehensively improve transit over the next 10-15 years. The City should lead the charge to this needed system upgrade by prioritizing the implementation of the items that are most necessary to long-term success and the items that can have the greatest short-term effect. There are 35 total items, but the most important items are:

- Prioritize a Comprehensive Operating Analysis (COA) of the RTA system with recommendations for a community-supported network redesign in the next three years.
- Use the COA to determine what is working and what is not all over the City, but, especially in New Orleans East and Algiers. Evaluating ridership will allow the RTA to better plan routes and dedicated buses in order to get residents to jobs in Orleans, St. Bernard, and Jefferson Parishes more quickly.
- Pilot transit priority treatments along one or more transit routes (ideally the #94 Broad which connects New Orleans East and Gentilly to the rest of the City).
- Prioritize tangible improvements on the Broad/Gentilly/Chef high capacity corridor that will help New Orleans East residents get to the rest of the region more quickly.
- Establish policies to encourage more affordable housing in new developments along identified high capacity transit lines.
- Jumpstart the installation of new shelters and seating at bus stops.
- Create an online dashboard that shares up-to-date RTA performance data, especially around Mobility Plan metrics.
- Make the General De Gaulle routes the pilot for implementation of the "Select" routes of premium transit, that call for a secondary set of branded transit lines with 15-minute frequency during morning and afternoon rush periods.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Better access to improved public transportation is a must for a more equitable New Orleans. The RTA's Strategic Mobility Plan is a comprehensive roadmap for how to get there. The Plan has just been passed and is a perfect guide for the administration to use to improve New Orleans transit. The average New Orleanian with a car can reach 86 percent of the region's jobs in 30 minutes or less. But the average transit-reliant New Orleanian can only reach 11 percent of those jobs in the same time period. In a city with a high

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poverty rate and high rate of households without a car, this unequal access to economic opportunity must be improved if all residents are to share in forward progress.

New Orleans East and West Bank residents currently face long, unreliable, and inconvenient transit trips. Buses serving New Orleans East and Algiers are consistently among the worst on-time performers in the system. That is unacceptable if New Orleans is to be an equitable city. That is especially true as more and more residents are being priced out of more central locations. Circumstances for residents can and will be made tangibly better by implementing the above action items.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: The New Orleans economy does not stop at the parish line and neither should its transit line. Rapid and truly regional transit can boost the economy and provide equitable access to opportunity for all residents. To the extent that public

private partnerships can be leveraged for regional and interregional service, the Mayor's office could explore those opportunities. Historically, there has been a limited level of cooperation and coordination between New Orleans and surrounding parishes. With projected changes to the federal cost-sharing model, regional coordination is vital for Orleans Parish to maintain and increase funding opportunities.

Recommendation:

- Launch a legacy project that takes the first steps toward a regional transit network to include rapid

“Better access to improved public transportation is a must for a more equitable New Orleans.”



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transit and interregional transit.

- Plan to take tangible steps toward rapid regional transit by laying the groundwork to connect New Orleans residents with job opportunities in Jefferson and St. Bernard parishes and attracting new business and economic development to the region as a whole. Specifically:
 - Implement quarterly meetings between transit providers in the region (within 12 months)
 - Ensure the RTA's Comprehensive Operating Analysis also includes Jefferson Parish and St. Bernard (12-18 months)
 - Develop cost and revenue sharing agreements for cross-parish service
 - Forge cooperation among the three parishes to finish engineering and service planning for four regional corridors:
 - Airport/Veterans/Tulane/New Orleans Central Business District (CBD)
 - Jefferson Highway/Claiborne
 - West Bank Expressway
 - St. Claude corridor to Chalmette
- Cooperatively implement a pilot program on at least one of those corridors. The Jefferson Highway/Claiborne corridor may have the most potential with the backing of Ochsner.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Available jobs in the region are split almost equally between Orleans and Jefferson parishes, with a small amount in St. Bernard Parish. Real progress cannot be made on this issue without better regional connections. Mistrust and unfair policies have

held the City back from this for many years. With the momentum of the RTA's Strategic Mobility Plan, a similar process taking place throughout 2018 in Jefferson Parish, and the growing realization from regional business interests that this issue must be solved, the time is ripe to commit New Orleans to a path of rapid and regional transit.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: There is currently an Urban Mobility Coordinator that is housed in the Mayor's Office of Resilience and Sustainability. This position addresses issues related to transportation. However, there is a need for greater coordination around transportation in all of its major forms.

Recommendation: Create a Mayor's Office of Transportation – properly staffed and led by a director who reports to the Mayor - focused on guiding the administration and coordinating all aspects of transportation and improving the movement of people, goods, and services.

The Office is designed to act as a coordinating and control point for the various areas of transportation to include: 1) public transit, 2) taxis and for-hire services, 3) aviation, 4) the port, 5) mass transit, 6) ferries and nautical traffic, 7) bicycles, 8) pedestrians, 9) parking and 10) traffic management and control. This will ensure scarce resources are deployed to improve the role of transportation in supporting economic and workforce development, health equity, accessibility compliance, reduction of household costs, and other priority values.



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As transportation underlies many of the important issues facing New Orleans today, creation of the Office of Transportation will have positive overlap with many other important areas, especially stormwater management/development of green infrastructure for streets; affordable housing/reduction of household costs (combined housing and transportation); coordination of land use; transportation-related planning; and plans and projects related to the Port, airports and rail.

Rationale/Supporting Data: While substantial progress has been made in improving walking, biking, and transit in New Orleans, the most consistent stumbling block to achieving equitable mobility options is a lack of dedicated staff resources. In 2015, the Resilient NOLA Strategy recommended the creation of an Urban Mobility Coordinator position, and it was widely applauded when the position was created and filled in 2016. Proof of concept for the position was achieved almost immediately, and the task list and demands on the position, including many in the list below, overwhelmed the capacity of any one person. The current Urban Mobility Coordinator has been instrumental in the launch of the Blue Bikes bike share program, improving grassroots community engagement in street design, coordinating internal processes to improve street safety, and much more. However, there is so much more to be done. Additionally, activities surrounding parking enforcement and adjudication require 50 percent of the Department of Public Works Director's time. Moving this function away from DPW will allow the Director to be laser-focused on operations and the Comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan.

The list of potential responsibilities for the Mayor's Office of Transportation includes:

- coordinating all relevant departments and agencies that impact transportation and mobility (the list can sometimes exceed 20 City-affiliated entities);
- effectively engaging community members and stakeholders, from the grassroots level to major businesses, in mobility decision-making;
- overseeing programs like Complete Streets, The Big Jump, and Blue Bikes New Orleans;
- managing relationships with the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority, the New Orleans Regional Planning Commission, and other transportation-related boards and commissions;
- playing an oversight role to ensure the New Orleans RTA, associated contractors, and regional

transit agencies are effectively serving the people of New Orleans;

- coordinating across departments to administer traffic safety education programs and communications;
- developing community leadership and grassroots capacity for participating in transportation decision-making, especially in low-income and communities of color that have been historically disinvested;
- tracking and assisting in the implementation of the Americans with Disability Accessibility plan;
- ensuring integration of green infrastructure and stormwater management features into street projects; and
- working to create a collective strategic vision for mobility that prioritizes equity, setting up performance measures, and regularly reporting on success in implementation.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: Following the 2005 floods, the contracted operator quickly restored basic capacity and brought a basic level of service back to the communities. They also oversaw some operational improvements. The current contract with the operator gives unprecedented control of the transit system to a private company. Without an executive management structure in place at the RTA to serve the public interest, there is little oversight, allowing a private company to set the priorities and standards of service.

Recommendation: Facilitate the hiring of an executive management team at the Regional Transit Authority (RTA). An executive management team would be in charge of overseeing the overall strategic direction of the RTA as well as provide oversight for all contracted operations. This team should be well-versed in transit, financial, and legal best-practices. They should also be committed to fostering public trust and operating transparently.

Rationale/Supporting Data: There is an immediate need to institute an Executive Management Team at the RTA. The implementation of this team will foster more transparency and oversight, which increases public trust and provides a point of continuity across board and mayoral administrations. There is a need for a team of transit professionals that is able to provide the necessary expertise to carry out the Strategic Mobility Plan. The current lack of designated leadership impacts the RTA Board of Commissioners' ability to influence and affect

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operations. The RTA Board of Commissioners has neither the time nor is it structured to oversee a contracted operator on a full-time basis. Although performance indicators exist in the current contract, there is no full-time professional oversight assuring compliance. Having an executive management team in place will provide a needed oversight framework, ensuring compliance with the performance indicators outlined in the current contract as well as integrating best practices moving forward.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: Biking and walking benefit health, the economy, quality of life, and the resilience of the local environment. Being physically active 30 minutes a day reduces risk of heart disease, diabetes, and other diseases. Access to multiple transportation options in historically underserved low-income neighborhoods, including many communities of color, reduces health disparities and costs for families.

Bike commuting leads to fewer sick days, with businesses often seeing improved sales next to bike lanes and traffic calming measures. Cities promoting bike infrastructure also see property values increase and attract more young people.

New Orleans has over 120 miles of bikeways and is consistently ranked in the top ten among large cities for number of commutes made by bicycle. There is a \$4M line item included in current bond funds for bolstering Complete Streets. CAO Policy Memo #134 contains the basic framework and goals to build from. Initial steps to operationalize the Complete Streets Program within City government have shown promise and continuing these efforts would be beneficial.

Recommendation: Amend the City of New Orleans CAO Policy Memorandum #134, 'Complete Streets Program' 4 to:

- Focus on improving health and economic equity
- Set higher standards for street designs that are safe and accessible for people of all ages and abilities for all travel modes -- walkers, bikers, transit riders, and drivers
- Create comprehensive plans for walking, biking, and transit networks that integrate with one another and connect people to job centers, parks, schools, healthy food outlets, churches, and more
- Integrate best water management practices into street design, building, and repairs, which will reduce flooding and subsidence while extending the life of the streets

- Include more robust public participation and accountability mechanisms

Rationale/Supporting Data: Streets built to be shared improve equity, as is recognized in the Resilient New Orleans Strategy and #EquityNewOrleans. Roughly half of unemployed, working-age, African-American men do not have regular access to a vehicle. With almost 20 percent of New Orleans households having no access to a motor vehicle, improved mobility options can better connect people to jobs, parks, schools, and healthy food. Of note:

- Average household cost of car expenses in the U.S. is \$708 per month.
- 36 percent of New Orleans residents live in high-poverty census tracts, yet 67 percent of crashes involving people walking and biking happen in these areas
- New Orleans still lags the nation in number of adults receiving the recommended amount of physical activity, and income and level of education have a huge bearing on the likelihood of experiencing diabetes, heart disease, asthma and other chronic diseases.

The revised Complete Streets Program would better: promote economic development; reduce the number of traffic crashes; improve public safety; increase mobility options and consumer choice; foster more livable communities; encourage healthier lifestyles; improve air quality; create accessible and efficient connections between home, school, work, recreation, places of worship and retail destinations; promote geographic, socio-economic, and health equity; and develop a balanced street ecology for sustainability and resilience.

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: Improve the City's economy, public health, social equity, community cohesion, and quality of life by allowing people of all ages and abilities to easily and safely reach their everyday destinations by bicycle on a connected network of low-stress and protected bikeways.

Recommendation: Combine the community vision with technical expertise to create a detailed map of future bikeways, design guide, and prioritization framework known as the New Orleans Bikeway Blueprint. Create a community-led vision for a connected network of low-stress bikeways by engaging community members from across the City and region, with a focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion. Combine the community vision

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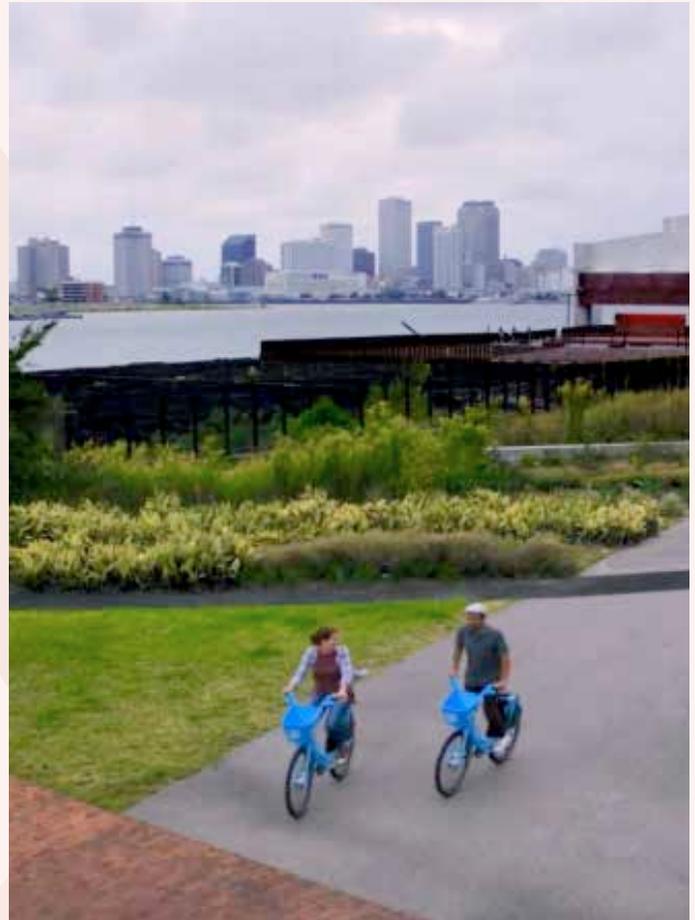
with technical expertise to create a detailed map of future bikeways, design guide, and prioritization framework known as the New Orleans Bikeway Blueprint.

The Bikeway Blueprint must integrate bikeways into pedestrian and transit networks, be accompanied by educational efforts, support and include stormwater management concepts where applicable, and be deeply coordinated with land-use planning and zoning.

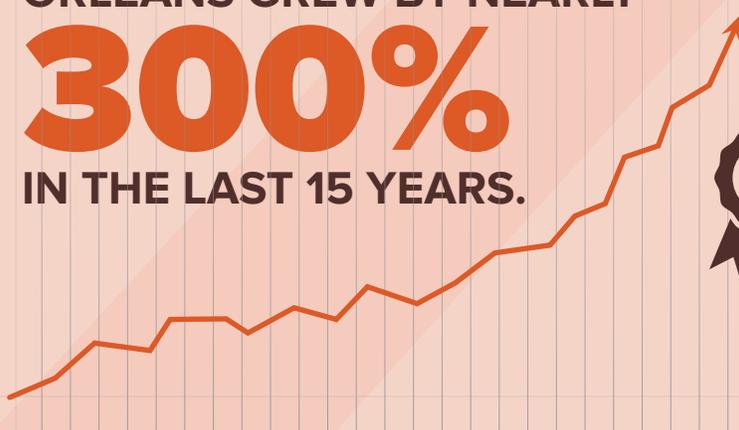
Rationale/Supporting Data: Biking in New Orleans is on a solid foundation. With over 120 miles of bikeways, the City is off to a fantastic start to building the network. Moving forward, to ensure the City is serving the largest amount of people possible and prioritizing the people who need transportation options the most, New Orleans needs a plan for the bikeway network. There are still too many instances of bike lanes that end at dangerous intersections or that do not connect people to destinations. With scarce resources, it is also important to prioritize biking investments, and the process of creating the Bikeway Blueprint will allow the community to guide those investments while also finding the biggest “bang for the buck” projects.

The growth in biking in New Orleans in the last 15 years has been tremendous (almost 300 percent), and currently, 3.6 percent of people ride their bike to work, which puts New Orleans at 6th highest in the country among big cities. Unfortunately, crash rates are still far too high, and

Orleans Parish ranks #1 in Louisiana for the most bicycle-involved crashes.



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PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Public safety is a top priority for every New Orleanian. The City relies on all of the agencies within the criminal justice system - police, courts, prosecution, jail, and public defense - to keep us safe. Historically, the justice system has not delivered desired outcomes. High rates of arrest and incarceration have not eliminated violent crime and a new approach is much needed.

Over the past 10 years, New Orleans has become smarter as a city when it comes to criminal justice. New practices have been introduced: for example, summonses to reduce unnecessary incarceration. The City is working better as a cohesive system and coordinating efforts across the board. Progress has been made towards total compliance with the consent decrees that were needed to improve the police department and the conditions in jail.

The City now has a foundation to build upon to realize its vision of a coordinated, transparent, ethical, and constitutional criminal justice system that delivers safety, fairness, and equitable outcomes for every citizen. Some of the gains that have been recently achieved are still fragile or need to be tweaked or expanded. New thinking is also needed to tackle some of the most dire problems, especially violent crime.

In particular, what is needed is a restructuring of some of the City's most entrenched practices, such as the bail, fees and fines system that costs New Orleans more than the revenue it generates. There is also a need to more effectively coordinate agencies and share data. In addition, there is a pressing need to develop and institutionalize a holistic and sustainable violent crime reduction strategy that reduces the human, fiscal, and social costs that prevent the City from reaching its full potential. Without effective public safety, no city can thrive, but, with it, there is unlimited opportunity.

COMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of the Public Safety Committee was to maximize the City's investments in public safety and criminal justice by developing recommendations for comprehensive improvements to both the strategies and tactics used across the entire criminal justice system in order to make New Orleans a safe city.

Committee Co-Chairs: Nathalie Simon, Norris Henderson, and Jam Tucker

Project Managers: Maria Montero and Anita Tillman



PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

NOPD SUBCOMMITTEE

COMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Over the past three decades, the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) has suffered from a reputation as a troubled agency, marred by a number of well-publicized, high-profile investigations, lawsuits, and controversies. The Department lurched from crisis to crisis, periodically introducing reforms. However, the institutional changes needed to transform the Department to a constitutional standard were persistently lacking.

In 2012, the City of New Orleans entered into a Consent Decree, requiring the NOPD to comply with a federal mandate and oversight to meet the standard of constitutional and ethical policing. The NOPD has made significant progress and is on track to achieve substantial Consent Decree compliance by later this year.

While Consent Decree compliance has not been easy or inexpensive, it has provided substantial gains which model best practices in constitutional policing, including the most robust body-worn camera program of similar cities in the nation; incorporation of community policing into NOPD's mission; and effective and proactive accountability measures. The Department has expanded the use of specialized teams, such as the Crisis Intervention Team and Force Investigation Team, and developed a unique peer intervention program, Ethical Policing is Courageous (EPIC). Additionally, the deployment of trauma-informed policing strategies has transformed the way NOPD responds to domestic violence and sexual assault offenses.

Due to these efforts, the NOPD has received national attention for its initiatives, hosting police departments from all over the country to train here in crowd control, consent decree compliance, peer intervention, and other progressive programs.

Despite these advances in reform, significant obstacles and complexities still exist. A hiring freeze led to an

almost crippling staffing shortage. While the recruitment process has been streamlined and applications are at an all-time high, bottlenecks in the Civil Service hiring process slow down hiring, producing chronic shortfalls of the projected officer numbers required to maintain public safety. Currently, only 3 percent of applicants successfully make it through the process. In 2017, NOPD experienced its lowest attrition rate in 20 years; nevertheless, retention concerns remain.

New crime-fighting initiatives, including partnerships with other law enforcement agencies, have achieved results. However, these are difficult to scale given resources, operational capacity, and Consent Decree considerations. Investments in technology and analytics have been made and deployed, but further resources and training

“*New crime strategies created a basis for optimism in 2017, as there was a decrease in both murders and armed robberies; however, overall violent crime has increased over the past eight years.*”

are needed to maximize efficiency and effectiveness throughout the Department. Complicating matters further is crime. New crime strategies created a basis for optimism in 2017, as there was a decrease in both murders and armed robberies; however, overall violent crime has increased over the past eight years.

Without question, the NOPD has embarked on an institutional transformation and has made and is continuing to make significant changes. These recommendations are intended to provide a clear pathway to sustain culture change, rebrand and strengthen the connection of the NOPD to the New Orleans community, and maximize both personnel and technological capacity to reduce violent crime.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to assess the current state of the NOPD, particularly as it relates to NOPD leadership, the recruitment, retention and deployment of officers; innovative solutions and technologies that could serve as a force multiplier; improving relationships within neighborhoods and communities across the City; and ensuring continued compliance with the Consent Decree.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

John Casbon
David Flemings
Bill Hammack
Michael Hecht
Mary Howell
David Kerstein
Andre Menzies
Greg Rusovich
Tania Tetlow

Subcommittee Facilitators/Analysts: Dr. Peter Scharf and Dr. Sonita Singh

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop and implement a Comprehensive Strategic Communications Plan, with in-kind and other assistance of the hospitality/tourism industry and other appropriate organizations, to improve the perception and penetration of the NOPD in the community using a well-developed strategic marketing, re-branding, and messaging campaign that: 1) establishes NOPD's status as a national leader in ethical and intelligent policing; 2) increases branding, recruitment, and retention; 3) increases access to critical NOPD information and progress; and 4) sustains advances resulting from the Consent Decree.

- Embrace innovative practices and promote career development and advancement opportunities. Begin a rebranding campaign highlighting NOPD as a nationally recognized leader in ethical and intelligent policing in order to attract high-quality applicants and improve NOPD morale, thereby increasing retention, and improving public perception.
- Explore partnerships to assist in a strong and aggressive NOPD marketing strategy leveraging the institutional, intellectual, and financial capital from New Orleans' hospitality industries and other appropriate organizations.
- The rebranding and marketing campaign should

overlap with recruitment and retention efforts, including maximizing the EPIC brand (Ethical Policing is Courageous).

- Launch outreach efforts to businesses, organizations, and institutions to actively improve community relationships and public perception.
- Inform the public not only of NOPD's progress and advances but also the public's role in helping NOPD maximize its efficiency and efficacy (e.g., use of online reporting of non-emergency crimes, non-emergency call numbers, traffic accident response, tip hotlines).

Enhance and modernize the Human Resources and Recruitment organizational structure and functions to increase recruitment and retention by: 1) developing a strategic, innovative, and technology-assisted recruitment plan which streamlines and accelerates the hiring pipeline at each stage and identifies strategies for attracting larger pools of highly qualified recruits; 2) creating clear career paths for officers via improvements in professional training opportunities, promotion schemes, compensation, and incentive structures; and 3) developing an institutionalized system of using officer feedback to actively improve the workplace climate.

RECRUITMENT FUNCTIONS:

- Increase and professionalize NOPD recruitment efforts in conjunction with New Orleans Police and Justice Foundation (NOPJF) leadership.
- Demonstrate proficiency in recruitment and retention.
- Professionalize recruitment and background investigations, considering internal or third-party providers who have proven models and experience with high clearance of backgrounds, for either part or the whole process.
- Better define job descriptions and develop performance metrics for every position.
- Accelerate digitization of the written police test.
- Expedite the contract on national testing centers for police exams.
- Immediately perform a comprehensive review of NOPD engagement with Civil Service and develop recommendations to better facilitate Civil Service processes such as two-bundled test dates monthly until national testing is available, quicker elimination of unqualified candidates on the front end, and increased testing for promotion.
- Consult with a team of experts from model departments, the International Association of

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Chiefs of Police (IACP), and the Southern Institute of Policing, on best practices with regard to background investigation processes, including an analysis of low passage rates.

- Evaluate barriers to hiring locals, including Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) anti-poaching rules, in addition to the analysis of low passage rates.
- Improve utilization and capacity of the Officer Assistance Program, not only in response to incidents but as a mechanism to support officer health and wellness.

RETENTION FUNCTIONS:

- Develop and actively advertise transparent and consistent mechanisms for upward mobility, including professional training opportunities (both local and nation-wide), and increased Civil Service testing mechanisms for promotion.
- Review and implement comprehensive incentive tools to increase recruitment and retention (i.e., tax breaks, free tuition, early child care subsidy, or ‘take-home’ patrol cars, housing/mortgage programs such as the Officer Next Door, relocation costs, one-time out of town recruitment bonus, etc.). The City should also increase use of recruitment pay/bonuses.
- Strongly consider recommendations proposed in the study performed to improve NOPD recruitment titled ‘Law Enforcement Recruitment in the 21st Century’.
- Review the Civil Service’s ‘Pay Plan Initiative’ every four years.
- Provide a safe place for officers to be heard regarding complaints, chronic concerns, unfair treatment, etc.
- Institutionalize an exit interview system using either an internal or 3rd party entity.
- Use annual reviews as an opportunity to improve the workplace.
- Explore the strategic engagement or bonus pay for near-retirement officers and scale/maximize ‘Police Reserves’.
- Learn from and replicate best practices from successful law enforcement recruitment and retention efforts by other law enforcement agencies.

Use strategic deployment to enhance and expand NOPD’s ability to reduce violent crime by: 1) increased ‘regionalization’ through multi-parish/multi-jurisdictional intelligence sharing; 2) scaling and expanding specialized, proactive, violent crime reduction units and collaborative programs such as the Multi Agency Gang (MAG) Unit, the

Homicide Unit (includes completion of the lab, Homicide Unit assessment and resulting recommendations), the Tactical Intelligence Gathering and Enforcement Response (TIGER) Unit, and Summer Heat programs, while maintaining compliance with constitutional standards and community trust; 3) further expansion of ‘civilianization’ efforts to free up police personnel; and 4) prioritizing and expanding community policing, particularly as staffing increases.

- Increase technological support of specialized crime units and the Crime Center.
- Pool the resources of neighboring parishes, state, and federal entities to maximize both staffing and intelligence to increase crime-fighting capacity. Regionalization should be supported by technology, i.e., linked crime cameras/data/Crime Center.
- Rebuild critical units, such as the Homicide Unit including timely completion of the assessment and implementation of the resulting recommendations.
- Expedite timely construction of NOPD’s Crime Lab and immediately implement interim, short-term solutions by utilizing and staffing local and regional crime labs, i.e., Jefferson Parish Sheriff’s Office (JPSO) and Louisiana State Police (LSP).
- Align NOPD with national, proven, effective crime-fighting strategies.
- Develop a scorecard for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations produced by the Berkshire report. (The Berkshire report is a series of best-practice recommendations developed by experts from a granular study of NOPD’s organizational and capacity needs given it is in a staffing crisis)
- Increase the proactive focus on violence against children and domestic violence as important strategies to reduce domestic homicides, murders of children, and to prevent future cycles of violence by children exposed to violence in the home.

Enhance and expand NOPD’s technology and innovation strategy as a force multiplier through the: 1) establishment of an intelligence-led policing core, combining an increased number of crime analysts, enhanced data collection, and a crime lab; 2) phased-in execution of the Superintendent’s Technology Improvement Program (SuperTech) in order to: maximize Department based efficiencies/effectiveness, advance reporting capabilities, enhance automated controls, and improve systems integration for more streamlined and resilient operations;

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3) development of policing-oriented technology capacity including crime cameras and predictive analytic capacity; and 4) assurance of the technology plan's compliance with constitutional policing and accepted privacy standards.

- Institutionalize an 'Intelligence-focused Technology Core' responsible for the scope, mechanisms, and roll-out of an NOPD technology-focused crime intervention platform with multi-parish/multi-jurisdictional relationships.
- Hire, train, and retain technology-savvy crime analysts to expand NOPD's analytic capacity with advanced methods such as geo-mapping, modeling, etc.
- Expand and increase technological support of specialized crime units and task forces.
- Expedite timely construction of NOPD's Crime Lab and immediately explore short-term, interim solutions by utilizing and staffing local and regional crime labs, i.e., JPSO and LSP.
- Explore opportunities to maximize use of the Crime Center, including coordination and integration with other data sources that help fight crime; staff and scale the Center appropriately.
- Continue and expand 'Safe Cam Enhancements,' including coordination with the Crime Center, which allows residents and businesses to partner with NOPD in the fight against crime, by providing real-time and recorded citizen camera footage that will help to establish leads, identify perpetrators, and prosecute criminals.
- Further explore 'regionalization' of law enforcement technologies, with local, state, and federal authorities whereby regions have the capacity to share and analyze data across boundaries.
- Develop MOUs and partnerships for a regionalization model with surrounding parishes and other law enforcement agencies in compliance with Consent Decree requirements.
- Continue to actively engage with the "Crime Tech Task Force" which is a partnership of the New Orleans Business Council and GNO Inc., in order to implement technology-based efficiency improvements for NOPD. Projects to-date have put the equivalent of more than 40 NOPD officers back on the streets.
- Aggressively implement SuperTech priorities/tracks with an emphasis on the Forms, Records and Learning Management Solutions.
- Further explore and implement technology and analytics as crime-fighting tools.

Work diligently towards 'Total Compliance' with the Consent Decree. Follow this effort with the rapid institutionalization of an internal monitoring oversight body, including continuance and funding of the Compliance Bureau, compliance audits, and ongoing trainings for all related agencies to embed a culture of sustained constitutional policing standards.

- Highlight the importance of continuity of leadership at NOPD, which has been key to the high fidelity of Consent Decree compliance and expediting its completion.
- Execute the current plan to reach substantial compliance as rapidly as possible.
- Develop and create a strategic plan to sustain gains from the Consent Decree and transition from an active monitoring stage to an internal, on-going, self-monitoring stage
- Provide for ongoing Civil Rights training, including refresher (booster) for both existing and incoming officers.
- Work with existing City organizations to enhance oversight and on-going monitoring.
- Review the role of the Independent Police Monitor (IPM) to potentially provide a bridge to post-monitoring progress.

SUMMARY OF ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Joint Recommendation with the Violence Reduction Strategies Subcommittee

- Expedite the construction of the NOPD's crime lab to more quickly and effectively solve past crimes and deter future crimes.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: NOPD has a historically negative reputation built over decades in the wake of a number of high-profile incidents and systemic failures resulting in federal criminal prosecutions, civil lawsuits, and the Consent Decree. In general, the community is not fully aware of the Department's dramatic changes and accomplishments over the past few years. This includes the institutional commitment NOPD has extended to adopt and sustain Consent Decree-derived changes—resulting in national attention as experts in Consent Decree compliance, crowd control, and peer intervention—as well as innovative projects

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which NOPD has initiated and developed to increase efficiency and effectiveness.

Recommendation: Develop and implement a Comprehensive Strategic Communications Plan, with in-kind and other assistance of the hospitality/tourism industry and other appropriate organizations, to improve the perception and penetration of the NOPD in the community using a well-developed strategic marketing, re-branding, and messaging campaign that: 1) establishes NOPD's status as a national leader in ethical and intelligent policing; 2) increases branding, recruitment, and retention; 3) increases access to critical NOPD information and progress; and 4) sustains advances resulting from the Consent Decree.

- Embrace innovative practices and promote career development and advancement opportunities. Begin a rebranding campaign highlighting NOPD as a nationally-recognized leader in ethical and intelligent policing in order to attract high-quality applicants and improve NOPD morale, thereby increasing retention, and improving public perception.
- Explore partnerships to assist in a strong and aggressive NOPD marketing strategy leveraging the institutional, intellectual, and financial capital from New Orleans' hospitality industries and other appropriate organizations.
- The rebranding and marketing campaign should overlap with recruitment and retention efforts, including maximizing the EPIC brand (Ethical Policing is Courageous).
- Launch outreach efforts to businesses, organizations, and institutions to actively improve community relationships and public perception.
- Inform the public not only of NOPD's progress and advances but also the public's role in helping NOPD maximize its efficiency and efficacy (e.g., use of online reporting of non-emergency crimes, non-emergency call numbers, traffic accident response, tip hotlines).

RATIONALE/SUPPORTING DATA: NOPD has received substantial positive recognition from national police organizations such as the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) and International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), as well as other police departments around the country for its EPIC program. In addition, the Department is widely recognized for its accomplishments and skill in crowd control, as well as its leading role in implementing and managing department-wide body-

worn cameras. The Department has also made significant progress towards compliance with the federal court Consent Decree, which is recognized as the most comprehensive Consent Decree in the nation.

However, community attitudes and perceptions towards the NOPD have fluctuated. The Crime Coalition Citizen Satisfaction Survey has reported variations of overall satisfaction with the NOPD over the past decade, with the average over that time hovering just above half (53.5 percent). In 2016, satisfaction was at its highest at 64 percent; in 2017, there was a 13-point dip indicating 51 percent citizen satisfaction. In another survey performed by the Consent Decree monitor, 51 percent responded that they agreed or strongly agreed when asked 'I am satisfied with the way NOPD officers do their jobs'.

This disconnect occurs as NOPD is nearly 95 percent compliant with the Consent Decree, suggesting there is an important need to rebrand the organization and take steps to ensure that the community, future NOPD recruits, and potential businesses seeking to establish companies in the City, are aware of the many positive changes which have taken place within the NOPD in recent years.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: NOPD has experienced net gains in recruiting, improvements in numbers recruited, and increases in recruit quality. The Department is still lacking the adequate number of officers that it needs for an effective community policing and a satisfactory violent crime response. There are still significant bottlenecks in the application process. In 2017, there was an astounding number of applicants (7,450 received) but under 3 percent made it through the application process, most failing at the point of the structured interview or final background check.

Policing is a specialized, high-stress field which leads to inherently high attrition rates across the nation. New Orleans is no exception. Attrition is a chronic issue due to the presence of danger, irregular hours, injury, and persistent stress. Although NOPD's attrition is the lowest in 20 years, and the Consent Decree monitor's survey data suggests improvements in morale over the past year, the Department lacks a systematic strategy to understand forces driving attrition or to address it at the organizational level.

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A modern Human Resources (HR) department and recruitment strategy that uses best practices and high-impact marketing strategies to promote NOPD as an attractive, innovative, ethical department is needed. This department could promote career development, quality training and supervision, and advancement opportunities. It could also focus on recruitment of quality applicants with attention to diversity, including local residents, youth, and women. A modern HR function could also decrease the time needed to enter into NOPD service, improving on bottlenecks in the process.

In order to retain officers, the Department would advance workplace quality and job satisfaction by providing quality training and supervision, a clear and incentivized NOPD career path with opportunities for advancement and training, and ongoing attention and efforts to improve working conditions; this could include employee assistance programs and support services for officers and their families.

Recommendation: Enhance and modernize the Human Resources and Recruitment organizational structure and functions to increase recruitment and retention by : 1) developing a strategic, innovative, and technology-assisted recruitment plan which streamlines and accelerates the hiring pipeline at each stage and identifies strategies for attracting larger pools of highly qualified recruits; 2) creating clear career paths for officers via improvements in professional training opportunities, promotion schemes, compensation, and incentive structures; and 3) developing an institutionalized system of using officer feedback to actively improve the workplace climate.

Recruitment functions:

- Increase and professionalize NOPD recruitment efforts in conjunction with New Orleans Police and Justice Foundation (NOPJF) leadership.
- Demonstrate proficiency in recruitment and retention.
- Professionalize recruitment and background investigations, considering internal or third-party providers who have proven models and experience with high clearance of backgrounds, for either part or the whole process.
- Better define job descriptions and develop performance metrics for every position.
- Accelerate digitization of the written police test.

- Expedite the contract on national testing centers for police exams.
- Immediately perform a comprehensive review of NOPD engagement with Civil Service and develop recommendations to better facilitate Civil Service processes such as two-bundled test dates monthly until national testing is available, quicker elimination of unqualified candidates on the front end, and increased testing for promotion.
- Consult with a team of experts from model departments, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), and the Southern Institute of Policing, on best practices with regard to background investigation processes, including an analysis of low passage rates.
- Evaluate barriers to hiring locals, including Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST) anti-poaching rules, in addition to the analysis of low passage rates.
- Improve utilization and capacity of the Officer Assistance Program, not only in response to incidents but as a mechanism to support officer health and wellness.
- Strongly consider recommendations proposed in the study performed to improve NOPD recruitment titled 'Law Enforcement Recruitment in the 21st Century.'

Retention functions:

- Develop and actively advertise transparent and consistent mechanisms for upward mobility including professional training opportunities (both local and nation-wide) and increased Civil Service testing mechanisms for promotion.
- Review and implement comprehensive incentive tools to increase recruitment and retention (i.e., tax breaks, free tuition, early child care subsidy, or 'take-home' patrol cars, housing/mortgage programs such as the Officer Next Door, relocation costs, one-time out-of-town recruitment bonus, etc.). The City should increase use of recruitment pay/bonuses.
- Strongly consider recommendations proposed in the study performed to improve NOPD recruitment titled 'Law Enforcement Recruitment in the 21st Century.'
- Review the Civil Service's 'Pay Plan Initiative' every four years.
- Provide a safe place for officers to be heard regarding complaints, chronic concerns, unfair treatment, etc.
- Institutionalize an exit interview system using an internal or 3rd party entity.

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- Use annual reviews as an opportunity to improve the workplace.
- Explore the strategic engagement or bonus pay for near-retirement officers and scale/maximize 'Police Reserves'.
- Learn from and replicate best practices from successful law enforcement recruitment and retention efforts by other law enforcement agencies.

Rationale/Supporting Data:

- **Recruitment:** The Berkshire Report suggested that NOPD needs between 1393-1484 commissioned officers to meet operational standards, though the force currently stands at approximately 1200 officers. NOPJF has made strong strategic advancements, but there is an urgent need to institutionalize and professionalize enhanced measures and provide solutions to bottlenecks to reach this hiring goal. In the spirit of continuous improvement, innovative recruitment strategies, in conjunction with enhanced/streamlined Civil Service processes, are needed.
- **Retention:** Attrition is a major cause of workforce gaps faced by NOPD. While intense bottlenecks slow the recruitment process, the lack of proper incentives, workplace issues, and upward mobility profoundly affect retention. Overall, NOPD dropped from 1,414 officers in 2010 to 1,145 in 2014, a decrease of almost 20 percent. In 2016, the agency fell 23 percent short of the aim of 150 new hires by 2016. This shortfall, along with 109 separations, yielded a net gain of 7 for 2016, and a net gain of 24 in 2017.
- **Additional supporting data:**
 - NOPD's target is 1,425 officers.

- There was an average net loss per year of 63 officers from 2010 to 2015. However, in 2016, NOPD experienced a net gain of 7 officers, followed by a net gain of 24 officers in 2017. They are projected to net 75 officers in 2018, contingent upon concurrent recruitment classes. If trends stay consistent, it is on track to lose less than 85 officers this year.
- There were 77 NOPD separations in 2017, which is the lowest level in past 20 years.
- Increase in Federal Law Enforcement hiring of 12 percent.
- 15 percent increase in pay for all commissioned officers was approved.
- Federal funding for Law Enforcement has decreased dramatically from \$2.8B in FY2000 to a proposed \$274M in FY2018.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: NOPD's crime-fighting capacity is met with a number of workforce challenges, both in terms of the quality (training, expertise, cultural competency) and quantity of officers. It is essential that the Department increase its crime-fighting capacity while maintaining constitutional policing standards. Intelligence-led analytic capacity has generated specific, measurable reductions in crime rates and helped in addressing threats and the activities of criminal organizations.

Recommendation: Use strategic deployment to enhance and expand NOPD's ability to reduce violent crime by: 1) increased 'regionalization' through multi-parish/multi-jurisdictional intelligence sharing; 2) scaling and expanding specialized, proactive, violent crime reduction units and collaborative programs such as the Multi Agency

“Overall, NOPD dropped from 1,414 officers in 2010 to 1,145 in 2014, a decrease of almost 20 percent. In 2016, the agency fell 23 percent short of the aim of 150 new hires by 2016. This shortfall, along with 109 separations, yielded a net gain of 7 for 2016, and a net gain of 24 in 2017.”

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Gang (MAG) Unit, the Homicide Unit (includes completion of the lab, Homicide Unit assessment and resulting recommendations), the Tactical Intelligence Gathering and Enforcement Response (TIGER) Unit, and Summer Heat programs, while maintaining compliance with constitutional standards and community trust; 3) further expansion of ‘civilianization’ efforts to free up police personnel; and 4) prioritizing and expanding community policing, particularly as staffing increases.

- Increase technological support of specialized crime units and the Crime Center.
- Pool the resources of neighboring parishes, state, and federal entities to maximize both staffing and intelligence to increase crime-fighting capacity. Regionalization should be supported by technology, i.e., linked crime cameras/data/Crime Center.
- Rebuild critical units, such as the Homicide Unit, including timely completion of the assessment and implementation of the resulting recommendations.
- Expedite timely construction of NOPD’s Crime Lab and immediately implement interim, short-term solutions by utilizing and staffing local and regional crime labs, i.e., Jefferson Parish Sheriff’s Office (JPSO) and Louisiana State Police (LSP).
- Align NOPD with national, proven, effective crime-fighting strategies.
- Develop a scorecard for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations produced by the Berkshire report. (The Berkshire report is a series of best-practice recommendations developed by experts from a granular study of NOPD’s organizational and capacity needs given it is in a staffing crisis)
- Increase the proactive focus on violence against children and domestic violence as important strategies to reduce domestic homicides, murders of children, and to prevent future cycles of violence by children exposed to violence in the home.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Given the shortage of staff and high crime rates, a strategic transformation is needed towards more specialized, intelligence-led, crime-reduction units and programs.

By using intelligence-led policing, redistribution of staff, and powerful analytics, the City has seen improved outcomes for focused problems. The TIGER Unit decreased armed robberies by 9 percent in 2016 and 20 percent in 2017, with the intention of expanding to other

violent crimes. The Summer Heat program was also highly effective.

Rates of child abuse and domestic violence are historically high. Increased capacity and effective intelligence sharing could interrupt and mitigate early exposure to violence, which is known to increase the risk that children will eventually become violent themselves.

Additional supporting data:

- Murder rates increased from 150 in 2014 to 176 in 2016 and dropped to 157 in 2017.
- More than 50 people were murdered in the first quarter of 2018.
- There are fewer than five total crime analysts within NOPD operational units.
- The murder clearance rate is less than 50 percent.
- There is a Homicide Unit assessment currently underway by the Institute for Justice and Bureau of Justice Assistance (includes assessment, best practices, staffing, metrics, and recommendations).
- There is an unsustainable caseload for the Child Abuse Detective Unit of more than 100 cases a year, including child homicides.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: Fiscal and training barriers, along with some operational resistance to innovation and change, permit continuance of antiquated mechanisms of data gathering, analysis, information sharing, and operations. Operating with legacy data platforms serves to maintain the status quo in Police Districts. Integration with other databases is hindered because of lack of data integration and interoperability capacity.

NOPD has an opportunity to be built into a technology-focused innovation hub that integrates intelligence-led policing with efficient operations, thereby reducing costs, improving the quality and scope of policing, and sustaining a commitment to constitutional policing through ongoing training and leadership oversight.

Recommendation: Enhance and expand NOPD’s technology and innovation strategy as a force multiplier through the: 1) establishment of an intelligence-led policing core, combining an increased number of crime analysts, enhanced data collection, and a crime lab; 2) phased-in execution of the Superintendent’s Technology Improvement Program (SuperTech) in

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order to: maximize department based efficiencies/ effectiveness, advance reporting capabilities, enhance automated controls, and improve systems integration for more streamlined and resilient operations; 3) development of policing-oriented technology capacity including crime cameras and predictive analytic capacity; and 4) assurance of the technology plan's compliance with constitutional policing and accepted privacy standards.

- Institutionalize an 'Intelligence-focused Technology Core' responsible for the scope, mechanisms, and roll-out of an NOPD technology-focused crime intervention platform with multi-parish/multi-jurisdictional relationships.
- Hire, train, and retain technology-savvy crime analysts to expand NOPD's analytic capacity with advanced methods such as geo-mapping, modeling, etc.
- Expand and increase technological support of specialized crime units and task forces.
- Expedite timely construction of NOPD's Crime Lab and immediately explore short-term, interim solutions by utilizing and staffing local and regional crime labs, i.e., JPSO and LSP.
- Explore opportunities to maximize use of the Crime Center, including coordination and integration with other data sources that help fight crime; staff and scale the Center appropriately.
- Continue and expand 'Safe Cam Enhancements,' including coordination with the Crime Center, which allows residents and businesses to partner with NOPD in the fight against crime, by providing real-time and recorded citizen camera footage that will help to establish leads, identify perpetrators, and prosecute criminals.
- Further explore 'regionalization' of law enforcement technologies, with local, state, and federal authorities whereby regions have the capacity to share and analyze data across boundaries.
- Develop MOUs and partnerships for a regionalization model with surrounding parishes and other law enforcement agencies in compliance with Consent Decree requirements.
- Continue to actively engage with the "Crime Tech Task Force" which is a partnership of the New Orleans

Business Council and GNO Inc., in order to implement technology-based efficiency improvements for NOPD. Projects to date have put the equivalent of more than 40 NOPD officers back on the streets.

- Aggressively implement SuperTech priorities/ tracks with an emphasis on the *Forms, Records and Learning Management Solutions*.
- Further explore and implement technology and analytics as crime-fighting tools.

Rationale/Supporting Data: A large number of police person-hours are wasted due to the lack of state-of-the-art technological tools commonly used to improve the fundamental daily tasks, such as data gathering and analyses of critical crime data essential to accelerate crime-fighting.

Additionally, there is a critical need to enhance, automate, and modernize NOPD's existing technological structure and functions regarding the following domains:

1. Report writing and analysis;
2. Routine communication tasks;
3. Intelligence-Led Policing;
4. Violence Reduction Programming initiatives;
5. Investigative information sharing;
6. Patrol allocation;
7. Case clearance improvement efforts; and
8. Scheduling.

“Recent efforts made in conjunction with the Crime Tech Task Force have saved an estimated annual equivalent of 22,500 to 45,500 hours of patrol.”

NOPD has limited technology and analytic capacity compared to other agencies its size. However, recent efforts made in conjunction with the Crime Tech Task

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Force have saved an estimated annual equivalent of 22,500 to 45,500 hours of patrol. Retooling NOPD's core technology and innovation in intelligence-led policing may increase crime-fighting capacity, public trust, and realize significant cost savings.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: Significant Consent Decree progress has been demonstrated as judged by statements from monitors, outside observers, and NOPD leadership. Progress includes a high level of engagement and buy-in from NOPD leadership, improvements in constitutional policing requirements, reduction in complaints and offenses by NOPD officers, increases in measured citizen approval, and increases in innovative civil rights programming, (e.g., EPIC (Ethical Policing is Courageous)). However, it remains a challenge to see the extent to which constitutional policing gains can be maintained over time in the absence of federal court Consent Decree Monitoring support. The extent to which constitutional standards and practices will be maintained and the degree to which culture change has been truly institutionalized are, in part, unknown. It is imperative that the NOPD creates a sustainable pathway to assure continued compliance with constitutional policing, Consent Decree, and civil rights mandates.

Recommendation: Work diligently towards 'Total Compliance' with the Consent Decree. Follow this effort with the rapid institutionalization of an internal monitoring oversight body, including continuance and funding of the Compliance Bureau, compliance audits, and ongoing trainings for all related agencies to embed a culture of sustained constitutional policing standards.

- Highlight the importance of continuity of leadership at NOPD, which has been key to the high fidelity of Consent Decree compliance and expediting its completion.
- Execute the current plan to reach substantial compliance as rapidly as possible.
- Develop and create a strategic plan to sustain gains from the Consent Decree and transition from an active monitoring stage to an internal, on-going, self-monitoring stage.
- Provide for ongoing Civil Rights training, including refresher (booster) for both existing and incoming officers.
- Work with existing City organizations to enhance oversight and on-going monitoring.

- Review the role of the Independent Police Monitor (IPM) to potentially provide a bridge to post-monitoring progress.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The anticipated completion of active Consent Decree monitoring creates important challenges related to sustaining an ethical culture within the Department and assuring that there is no regression in terms of mandates for constitutional policing established under the Consent Decree.

As NOPD approaches 95 percent compliance and plans to enter the 2-year monitoring phase of the Consent Decree, the fact remains that the compliance process represents a very costly burden to the City. The mandate to rapidly institutionalize and sustain the highest levels of constitutional policing is of the highest priority and will require a dedicated monitoring body and regular audits.

- There has been a reduction in use-of-force complaints.
- The Department has seen improvements in quality of officers hired.
- Lawsuits have been reduced.

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: New Orleans has been without a dedicated crime lab since Hurricane Katrina. Rectifying this situation and ensuring the speedy construction of a crime lab can help bring NOPD important technologies to help in the fight against gun violence. A higher solve rate of violent crime in New Orleans will lead to more efficient prosecution of violent offenders and will increase the trust that the public, victims, and witnesses have in the NOPD's ability to solve these crimes.

NOPD is able to receive DNA and ballistic testing from external partners, but the current process is not as efficient as it would be with a dedicated NOPD crime lab. This has created a backlog of violent crime investigations and distrust in the NOPD's ability to effectively and efficiently solve violent crimes.

Recommendation: Expedite the construction of the NOPD's crime lab to more quickly and effectively solve past crimes and deter future crimes. (joint recommendation with the Violence Reduction Strategies Subcommittee). In particular:

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- Investigate whatever may be slowing down the construction process and expedite the process in any way possible.
- Review potential interim options, such as partnering with the State which could provide resources/staffing to local law enforcement agencies in order to expand NOPD’s capabilities, prior to the opening of a new crime lab facility.
- Ensure NOPD is fully staffing its technical contribution to the Louisiana State Police.

Rationale/Supporting Data: A fully dedicated and modern crime lab will expedite and improve NOPD’s efforts to investigate and timely solve violent crimes in New Orleans. Such a facility is absolutely necessary. New Orleans is 10th in the US for the highest rate of homicide. With more than 50 people murdered in the first quarter of 2018 and the homicide clearance rates at less than 50 percent, a major refocusing of the NOPD violent-crime reduction strategy is needed to reverse these trends.

The Department of Justice’s National Institute of Justice notes “Research shows clearly that the chance of being

caught is a vastly more effective deterrent than even draconian punishment.”

The absence of a dedicated crime lab has forced NOPD to rely on external law enforcement agencies for assistance. This creates delays and inefficiencies in applying technological innovations to New Orleans’ gun violence reduction efforts and leads to a lack of confidence in the public (including from witnesses and victims) in the NOPD’s ability to efficiently and effectively solve violent crimes.

A 2017 study found that the capacity to perform DNA testing alone increases the probability of detecting criminal behavior and ‘reduces recidivism within the following year by as much as 43 percent.’

VIOLENCE REDUCTION STRATEGIES SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Violence and specifically gun violence, in New Orleans is a tragedy with complex origins which has plagued the City in its current form for the last 50 years. The depth of the



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challenge is hard to overstate:

- New Orleans has had 150 or more murders every year since 1972.
- The City has ranked in the top five nationally for murder rate over the last 30 years and has ranked 1st or 2nd nationally in 18 of the past 24 years.
- Roughly 90 percent of New Orleans murder victims each year are killed via firearm; thus, murder reduction strategies are synonymous with gun violence reduction strategies.

The City of New Orleans implemented NOLA for Life in 2012 to serve as the City's murder reduction strategy. While gun violence fell initially under this program, these results were not sustained:

- The average number of people shot per year in New Orleans fell from roughly 575 per year from 2010 to 2012, to roughly 500 per year in the three years from 2013 to 2015.
- This modest initial drop has not been sustained; nearly 590 people have been shot in New Orleans in each of the past two years.

Research demonstrates that programs which do not address gun violence's *proximate causes*, or those with inadequate resources, are incapable of producing the necessary results over the *long term*. An overreliance on short-term solutions and utilization of under-funded programs not directly connected to the goal of violence reduction may have contributed to NOLA for Life's limited effectiveness over a longer period of time.

Only a *data-driven* program with a *laser-like focus on violence reduction and clearly established metrics* for how that objective can be accomplished will work in the long term. This cannot be done easily or quickly and will require a deliberate and sustained effort for a permanent long-term solution.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to assess all of the current municipal and community-based violence reduction programs/services, especially NOLA for Life, and create evidence-based recommendations for violence reduction and community restoration, including considerations for the use of social impact bonds.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Darlene Cusanza
Tamara Jackson
Melissa Sawyer
Nakita Shavers
Oliver Thomas

Subcommittee Facilitators/Analysts: Jeff Asher and Nicole Hershey

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement a violence reduction program with a laser focus on gun violence reduction. The reduction would be achieved primarily through prevention-based social programs, delivered to high-risk individuals. This program would be a complement to enforcement-related activities (see NOPD recommendations) and reentry efforts. The program should take a comprehensive, integrated approach and should focus on transparency, accountability, and outcomes. It should also include broad-based stakeholder input and community ownership and participation in the implementation of the program.
- Designate a senior official to oversee and coordinate the City's gun violence reduction programs and policies.
- Develop a multi-year funding model that incorporates diverse funding streams in order to ensure the sustainability of the City's violence reduction strategy beyond the Cantrell administration.
- Create a gun violence reduction working group to further refine and enhance the City's overall approach to sustainably reducing violence. This working group will include broad-based stakeholder participation and community ownership.
- Expedite the construction of the NOPD's crime lab to more quickly and effectively solve past crimes and deter future crimes. (joint recommendation with the NOPD subcommittee)
- Establish an independent, integrated panel, based on the national best practice model in Milwaukee, made up of community leaders, experts in criminology, law enforcement, and the City government that will evaluate the entire homicide clearance process over the long term.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: NOLA for Life has been strongly branded and is well-known as the City’s anti-gun violence program. However, after achieving initial success in reducing homicides, the program’s initial gains have not been sustained over time. In addition, the success of the public relations related to this initiative is not consistent across all segments of the community, as there is distrust and frustration among many community groups who are familiar with the initiative.

Recommendation: Implement a violence reduction program with a laser focus on gun violence reduction. The reduction would be achieved primarily through prevention-based social programs, delivered to high-risk individuals. This program would be a complement to enforcement-related activities (see NOPD recommendations) and reentry efforts. The program will take a comprehensive, integrated approach by including support services such as job readiness/career training, educational support, mentorship, crisis intervention for mental health/substance abuse, and domestic violence support. It should focus on transparency, accountability, and outcomes. It will also include broad-based stakeholder input and community ownership and participation in the implementation of the program.

Rationale/Supporting Data: A 2017 review of NOLA for Life concluded that “Reductions in firearms violence were initially demonstrated in 2013 and 2014 after the implementation of (Group Violence Reduction Strategy), however were not sustained beyond that time period.” While NOLA for Life’s beginning was associated with a decline in gun violence in New Orleans, that decline has not continued over the past 36 months. Additionally, there is not sufficient

data to support the effectiveness or return on investment (ROI) in programs that are currently funded by the City and aimed at violence reduction.

Approximate number of shooting victims per year:

- 2010 – 575
- 2011 – 593
- 2012 – 559
- 2013 – 463
- 2014 – 541
- 2015 – 492
- 2016 – 588
- 2017 – 589

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: The Group Violence Reduction Strategy has been credited with a drop in gun violence in New Orleans starting in 2013. Additionally, there are strong community-based organizations in New Orleans that have credibility in the community and proven track records of success. If these organizations were funded adequately and received necessary technical assistance and support, they would be able to have a greater impact on reducing gun violence than they do currently. As part of a new program, there could be a strong oversight component that helps to identify individuals at high risk, measures the program’s impact on gun violence reduction, and ensures the program’s resources are being used efficiently. Introducing a central position to coordinate both funding and program implementation has tremendous potential to improve the impact of existing resources.

“ A 2017 review of NOLA for Life concluded that “Reductions in firearms violence were initially demonstrated in 2013 and 2014 after the implementation of (Group Violence Reduction Strategy), however were not sustained beyond that time period.”

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Recommendation: Designate a senior official to oversee and coordinate the City's gun violence reduction programs and policies.

Rationale/Supporting Data: NOLA for Life's success in 2013 and 2014 showed that City policy could drive down gun violence in New Orleans; however, the program's lack of sustainable results is evidence that a different model is needed.

A 2017 review of NOLA for Life found that through the Group Violence Reduction Strategy "firearms violence experienced a substantive and statistically significant reduction early in the post-intervention period, with diminished returns over time." While the strategy's reliance on indictments and call-ins "likely had the most imperative effect on firearms violence," the effort "seemingly became more difficult and less focused over time."

Given that research showing focused strategies are most effective in reducing gun violence, a new violence reduction program that takes the idea of delivering focused interventions and applying social -- rather than law enforcement -- interventions as the primary lever could be effective. Leadership in this effort will be important to its success.

NOLA for Life has been managed primarily through the Office of Criminal Justice Coordination and the Health Department since the private (grant) funding for the Innovation Delivery Team tapered off. As such, it is critical that the a new entity be created that is sustainably funded and has the resources, capacity, expertise, and centralized leadership required to oversee the success of the violence reduction strategy.

A public-private partnership may be the best strategy for ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of this critical work. Additionally, a public-private partnership will ensure that this work is not politicized, thereby mitigating the need for future administrations to create brand new initiatives that "throw the baby out with the bath water" every four to eight years.

The Office of Criminal Justice Coordination manages a budget of \$5.7M with 10 full-time employees in 2018. Partnership with this office could provide some of the budget and staffing support needed by the new senior official.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: NOLA for Life began almost exclusively through grant funding. Total funding for the program has never exceeded \$7.5M per year and total general fund expenditure has never exceeded \$2.5M per year. This is an insufficient level of funding to invest in violence reduction in New Orleans given the scope of the problem. Moreover, an over-reliance on grant funding limits the long-term sustainability of violence reduction programs and should be avoided. An ongoing challenge with truly reducing violence in New Orleans over the long term has always been that there is not a plan to ensure that effective interventions are funded adequately and sustained beyond individual administrations. The creation of a sustainable public-private partnership will finally solve this challenge.

Recommendation: Develop a multi-year funding model that incorporates diverse funding streams in order to ensure the sustainability of the City's violence reduction strategy beyond the Cantrell administration.

Rationale/Supporting Data: There is an opportunity within City government to ensure that entities such as the New Orleans Recreation Development Commission (NORDC) and Job1 are supporting violence reduction efforts by making programs and opportunities available and accessible to the most high-risk individuals across the age continuum. In order to ensure that this work continues through successive administrations, it is crucial to create an entity that has the expertise, capacity, and funding model necessary to continue critical violence reduction interventions for years to come. Ending New Orleans' reign as one of America's murder capitals will require the investment of significant and sustained financial resources. Funding for this initiative should be diverse and focus on identifying sources that can be renewed for multiple years. Establishing a public-private partnership as a primary funding source is likely necessary. GRYD (<http://grydfoundation.org/>) in Los Angeles is an example of a similar public-private partnership. Local examples should also be examined for viability.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: It is essential that gun violence reduction programming have strong oversight and measurable, sustainable success. It is also critical that the program is not just a City government initiative, but that the community is an integral part of the process as well.

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Recommendation: Create a gun violence reduction working group to further refine and enhance the City’s overall approach to sustainably reducing violence. This working group will include broad-based stakeholder participation and community ownership.

Rationale/Supporting Data: NOLA for Life’s success in 2013 and 2014 showed that City policy could indeed drive down gun violence in New Orleans, yet the program’s lack of sustainable results is evidence that a different model is needed. The working group will be tasked with ensuring the City’s violence reduction strategy is maintaining a laser-like focus on murder, and that mechanisms are in place to adequately measure progress. Incorporating strong community representation in the group will help ensure it has public support and improve its chances for success.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: NOPD is able to receive DNA and ballistic testing from external partners, but the current process is not as efficient as it would be with a fully dedicated, modern NOPD crime lab, and has created a backlog of violent crime investigations and distrust in the NOPD’s ability to effectively and efficiently solve violent crimes.

Recommendation: Expedite the construction of the NOPD’s crime lab to more quickly and effectively solve past crimes and deter future crimes. (This is a joint recommendation with the NOPD subcommittee). In particular:

- Investigate whatever may be slowing down the construction process and expedite the process in any way possible.
- Review potential interim options, such as partnering with the State which could provide resources/staffing to local law enforcement agencies in order to expand NOPD’s capabilities, prior to the opening of a new crime lab facility.
- Ensure NOPD is fully staffing its technical contribution to the Louisiana State Police.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The absence of a dedicated crime lab has forced NOPD to rely on external law enforcement agencies for assistance. This creates delays and inefficiencies in applying technological innovations to New Orleans’ gun violence reduction efforts and leads to a lack of confidence in the public (including from witnesses

and victims) in the NOPD’s ability to efficiently and effectively solve violent crimes.

A crime lab, and particularly local DNA and ballistics testing capability, is sorely needed. DNA testing can be useful for solving crime, but also has strong deterrent value. A 2017 study found DNA testing increases the probability of detecting criminal behavior and “reduces recidivism within the following year by as much as 43 percent.”

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: NOPD has concentrated efforts on increasing the percentage of homicides it solves, but the current rate of homicide clearances is still below the national average. An external review process can help ensure leadership is effective, best practices are being followed, and non-law enforcement investments that may lead to more solved homicides are identified.

Recommendation: Establish an independent, integrated panel made up of community leaders, experts in criminology, law enforcement, and the City government that will evaluate the entire homicide clearance process over the long term. The panel will focus on improvements that will increase the clearance rate by examining, among other aspects the following:

1. The NOPD’s Homicide Unit
2. Victim/witness support practices
3. The use of technology to solve crimes

Rationale/Supporting Data: The formation of this panel models a national best practice as seen with the Milwaukee Homicide Review Commission (MHRC). The MHRC is “a program that attempts to reduce homicides and non-fatal shooting and provides a multidisciplinary and multi-agency homicide review process” and was rated effective in 2014 by the Department of Justice.

While the national average homicide clearance rate for a city was 57 percent in 2016, NOPD reported a homicide clearance rate of under 30 percent. Despite reports that the clearance rate improved in 2017, it is still below the national average for a city. An external review of the NOPD homicide unit is currently underway. The panel should consider the review results and continue to evaluate the clearance efforts over an extended period of time in order to ensure success.

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The Department of Justice’s National Institute of Justice notes “Research shows clearly that the chance of being caught is a vastly more effective deterrent than even draconian punishment.”

PUBLIC SAFETY COORDINATION SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

In the minds of countless New Orleanians, the City’s most pressing, existential threat is public safety. Within a state

based out of the Mayor’s office. Despite the progress the OCJC and CJC have made in recent years, persistent challenges remain, and New Orleans is at risk of backsliding on criminal justice reforms due to inconsistent implementation and insufficient accountability. Moreover, juvenile justice has oft been left out of coordination efforts and leadership-level decision making at a systems level. Considering the juvenile system’s role as a feeder into the criminal justice system, there is a pressing need to break the cycle of incarceration.

“*In the minds of countless New Orleanians, the City’s most pressing, existential threat is public safety.*”

that simultaneously boasts one of the nation’s highest incarceration rates and the highest wrongful conviction rate, the New Orleans criminal justice system is at a critical transition point. Criminal justice system leaders must determine how it will keep citizens safe, while also ensuring that all who encounter the system are treated in a manner that reflects a commitment to equity and justice.

As such, it is vital that the criminal justice and public safety entities in New Orleans coordinate with one another - sharing information and working together - to develop system-level responses to public safety challenges and ensure the consistent application of justice. However, coordination is impeded by significant structural challenges, including outdated technology infrastructure, independently-elected actors lacking alignment and shared metrics, and insufficient accountability due to diversified funding sources.

Coordination activities are run through two groups – the Criminal Justice Council (CJC) – composed of representatives from entities across the system – and the Office of Criminal Justice Coordination (OCJC) –

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of the Public Safety Coordination subcommittee was to take a comprehensive look at all departments and agencies that are part of the Orleans Parish public safety and criminal justice system. This review was to include resources (human, financial, physical, and technological), service delivery models, communications, and information sharing. The subcommittee delivered a set of recommendations that will greatly improve service delivery while creating better equity in the distribution of resources.

Given the wide scope of the charge and the reality that any efforts to reform the justice system or improve the safety of the city cannot happen in a silo, it was determined that recommendations should focus on structural improvements to the process and entities responsible for coordination.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Clifton Davis III
Betty Dimarco
Chris Reade
Nia Weeks
David Williams

Subcommittee Facilitators/Analysts: Blake Stanfill and Isaac MacDonald

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Renew efforts around criminal justice coordination.
2. Strengthen technology infrastructure and provide implementation support.
3. Fight for a transparent and accountable criminal justice system.

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4. Take effective action to improve services for juvenile offenders in the City.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: In recent years, New Orleans has made significant strides on criminal justice reform. However, the system needs better and more effective coordination. Coordination is acutely difficult because independent criminal justice actors have their own perspectives and metrics for success. This leads to materially negative and different outcomes for many who interact with the criminal justice system. Additionally, poor coordination creates expensive and wasteful redundancies and inefficiencies. To avoid backsliding on existing reforms and create a cost-effective system that works together to keep the city safe. There is a need to restructure the Office of Criminal Justice Coordination (OCJC) to renew its focus on coordination. With unambiguous attention to solving inter-agency issues and ensuring that new policies and

approaches are adopted across the system, the OCJC could become a more powerful coordinating entity, building system-level responses to pressing criminal justice and public safety challenges.

Recommendation:

- Restructure Office of Criminal Justice Coordination (OCJC) to focus on coordination rather than programming.
- Expand the Criminal Justice Council.
- Elevate the stature of Director of OCJC.
- Ensure that criminal justice reforms are adopted across the system.
- Dedicate resources to solving challenges to inter-agency cooperation.

The Office of Criminal Justice Coordination should coordinate with all criminal justice actors and should be a clearinghouse for public reports and information. Criminal justice and public safety actors should look to the head of the OCJC as a powerful resource who sets priorities and solves specific inter-department or agency issues. The OCJC and Criminal Justice Council must be at the center

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of efforts to improve criminal justice and public safety outcomes while addressing system-wide challenges such as the over-incarceration of youth and low-risk offenders, persistent ethnic and racial disparities, and the smooth reintegration into society of people returning home from incarceration.

Rationale/Supporting Data:

- There have been significant efforts at the state and local level to put in place policies to reduce inequities and injustices in the justice system (State: Justice Reinvestment Initiative, Raise the Age; Local: Policing Alternatives for Youth Ordinance, Justice and Safety Challenge Grant). However, these efforts are at risk of backsliding without excellent coordination around implementation and clear mayoral leadership.
- The Criminal Justice Council bylaws are outdated, with two spots for municipal and traffic court, a lack of representation from a mental health organization or department, and over-specificity on which community organizations can represent specific causes. This is an easy fix.
- Of the OCJC's 16 positions, only five are dedicated to coordination despite its prominence in the title.
- Incarceration is a very expensive form of rehabilitation, and alternatives to detention have been shown to have just as good, if not better, outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: Integrated technology and accessible data are the bedrocks of any functioning and transparent criminal justice system in the 21st century. While meaningful strides have been made in technology infrastructure and inter-agency data sharing, there is an opportunity to strengthen software solutions that will encourage easier access to information, eliminate process inefficiencies, and foster seamless coordination amongst various public safety stakeholders. To stay in line with national trends, requires securing staff who can interpret and analyze data and who can facilitate technology implementation and training.

Recommendation:

- Invest in tech solutions to support coordination, leveraging existing investments in the Orleans Parish Information Sharing and Integrated Systems program (OPISIS).
- Assess progress against the Systems for Information Sharing strategic plan and continue progress.
- Hire staff that can take data and turn it into information.

- Support training and implementation with funding allocated for that purpose.

New Orleans should have a public safety ecosystem where all stakeholders have timely access to accurate data and information that is used to facilitate just outcomes in an integrated criminal justice system.

Rationale/Supporting Data:

- The need for improved information-sharing systems was articulated in every stakeholder interview conducted by this subcommittee.
- The technology and information-sharing infrastructure in Orleans Parish is outdated compared to neighboring parishes.
- Given the interplay and connectivity between system actors, any system upgrades will require coordinated action.
- Modernizing the criminal justice system with software technology and data warehousing will improve the experiences of all actors within the system – judges, administrators, lawyers, law enforcement, media, and defendants – getting everyone the information they need when they need it.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: New Orleans should fund proven programs and services for its citizens. Despite New Orleans spending hundreds of millions of dollars funding public safety and criminal justice entities, the system fundamentally lacks the accountability and transparency the citizens of New Orleans deserve. Through the existing coordinating entities, there is an opportunity to prioritize establishing performance indicators, system-wide and entity-specific, that are reported on to the public. For coordination and policy work to be effective, and to hold independent entities accountable, it is vital that these indicators then inform the budget request process to the City Council.

Recommendation: Fight for a transparent and accountable criminal justice system, establishing trust and consistency by establishing shared indicators that are involved in the budgeting process and accessible to the people of New Orleans.

New Orleans' criminal justice and public safety system should be driven by shared indicators with individual actors that are incentivized financially to work together and advance shared priorities. The Office of Criminal Justice Coordination should have a seat at the table

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during the budgeting process, using data to assess the effectiveness of programs and interventions and provide insight to the City Council.

Rationale/Supporting Data:

- The criminal justice and public safety system suffers from a lack of clear data and indicators to assess and understand the impact of the system and of themselves as individual actors.
- Federal courts have already found that the City’s fines and fees assessments are unconstitutional and create a conflict of interest for the judiciary. This creates a significant opportunity to play a leadership role as the courts rethink their funding models. There is a unique opportunity to ground the discussion in data, with the goal of improving oversight and coordination among system actors.
- Independently elected actors are more likely to work as members of a system when there are incentives to do so (and disincentives not to).
- Accurate and frequently-updated data must be the foundation of any efforts to improve the public safety or criminal justice systems due to the polarized nature of the conversation.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: New Orleans requires an effective strategy to prevent young offenders from engaging in repeat offenses and entering the adult criminal justice system. There is an opportunity to work with community partners (schools, child welfare, social services, Juvenile Court) to implement an evidence-based strategy to proactively address violence and incarceration risks. An effective juvenile justice thought leader and innovator who can help connect New Orleans communities, schools, and

services is required in order to keep at-risk youth in the community and out of detention.

Recommendation: Play an active role in New Orleans based Juvenile Justice reform by hiring a juvenile justice policy advisor and innovator to support efforts linking community, educational, and juvenile justice organizations. The goal of the position is to keep high-risk youth in the community and advise investment in alternatives to detention.

Rationale/Supporting Data:

Improvement in services will result in a safe, smart, cost-effective, and fair juvenile justice support network which will protect youth, families, and the community through linking support services. In addition:

- There is a need for increased knowledge, expertise, and experience related to the care of juvenile offenders.
- The adult criminal justice system is not structured to effectively rehabilitate youth. According to a 2015 report by the Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ), 47.5 percent of youth released from Louisiana’s juvenile justice custody return to custody within three years.
- Evidence-based alternatives to detention have been shown to be effective at achieving public safety and rehabilitation outcomes.
- The Youth Study Center (YSC) is at capacity, highlighting the need for alternatives to detention.
- Current programs run by the Juvenile Court lack sufficient funding to ensure sustainability, and violence-reduction programs offered by the city through NOLA for Life (Midnight Basketball, Ceasefire) do not have dedicated spaces for juveniles, making

“According to a 2015 report by the Louisiana Office of Juvenile Justice (OJJ), 47.5 percent of youth released from Louisiana’s juvenile justice custody return to custody within three years.”

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them unreliable alternatives to detention.

- There has been significant legislative progress, such as the Raise the Age Act at the State level and the New Orleans Policing Alternatives for Youth (PAY) Ordinance. Both are in the process of being implemented and require oversight and implementation support from the Mayor's Office.

Detention is costly and ineffective:

- It costs approximately \$498/day to house one youth in the Youth Study Center, whereas alternative programs in New Orleans cost between \$125-\$225/day (Mendel, Richard. No Place for Kids. Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2011, No Place for Kids).
- Alternative programs piloted by the New Orleans Juvenile Court have seen positive early results, but have yet to be scaled or fully evaluated due to lack of long-term funding.
- Detention is the front door of the juvenile justice system and a pathway to incarceration. "The vast majority of studies find that incarceration is no more effective than probation or alternative sanctions in reducing the criminality of adjudicated youth, and a number of well-designed studies suggest that correctional placements actually exacerbate criminality." (Public Opinion Polling on Juvenile Justice in America. The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2014).

Voters and Politicians support alternatives:

- In a national poll, voters say "families, schools, and Social Service Agencies should handle low-level offenses, and the Justice System should be involved only with more serious offenses" at a proportion of 81 percent – 17 percent for non-violent offenses, like damaging school property or acting out.
- Policing Alternatives for Youth (PAY) Ordinance, which provides officers the option to issue a warning or summons instead of detention depending on the severity of a case, was unanimously approved by the City Council.
- *Raise the Age Legislation* received strong support in the Louisiana legislature.
- In the People's Budget, run by the Committee for a Better New Orleans, citizens on average suggested increasing funding to the Youth Study Center by 88 percent, which was analyzed as an expression of a "desire to keep juvenile offenders out of Orleans Parish Prison and provide more and better rehabilitation programs for juvenile offenders."

(*People's Budget Report 2017*. Committee for a Better New Orleans, 2017).

The proposed recommendations have been shown to be effective

In the National League of Cities report (2017) "Lessons Learned: Mayoral Leadership for Juvenile Justice Reform" they state five key policy shifts that led to measurable progress, from mayoral action, including:

- making public statements that prioritize juvenile justice reforms;
- directing limited city resources to achieve these priorities;
- convening local stakeholders to develop and implement reforms;
- working with police leaders to review and revise arrest policies and practices; and
- supporting additional appropriate community-based alternatives.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE FUNDING SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

The City's criminal justice system relies in part on fines and fees imposed on criminal defendants to fund its operations. This funding structure is not sustainable for New Orleans. It incentivizes the use of money bail and various fines and fees that detrimentally impact poor residents of New Orleans. Overall, defendants and their families paid \$9M in 2015 to cover these costs, even though the majority of those who come through the system are often too poor to hire an attorney. These costs also disproportionately impact communities of color. For example, black defendants paid 84 percent of bond premium and bond fees in 2015. People who cannot pay often spend time in jail as a result. In 2015, over 558 people were held in jail on any given day because they were unable to pay either bail or conviction fines and fees. These practices contribute to New Orleans' high incarceration rate, which is still 1.5 times the national average.

Meanwhile, this system does not make New Orleans safer. Research demonstrates that when people who present minimal risk of failing to appear in court or of committing a new crime are held in jail for just three days, they become almost 40 percent more likely to commit a new crime when released.

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This system is also fiscally ineffective. In 2015, the City spent more money incarcerating people who could not pay either bail or conviction fines and fees (\$6.4M), than was raised in revenue from these same fines and fees (\$4.5M).

Tremendous opportunity exists to rethink these practices and re-envision the current funding structure. Jurisdictions across the country are wrestling with similar issues, creating an array of models to be drawn from, including places as close as St. John the Baptist and St. Charles parishes, but also Georgia, Alabama, Texas, and Missouri. The City is also the focus of multiple lawsuits that challenge bail and conviction fines and fees practices. Federal Courts have already found that the current fines and fees assessments are unconstitutional and create a conflict of interest for the judiciary branch. Now, there is an opportunity to act before being ordered to do so by federal courts.

New Orleans has already done a lot to rethink its bail and fines and fees practices with the creation of pretrial services, a municipal bail ordinance, efforts to increase releases on recognizance instead of money bail, and warrant clinics to recall outstanding fines and fees warrants. There is also a new State law requiring an “ability to pay” assessment prior to imposing fines and fees.

The issues created by the bail, fines and fees system are the result of the City’s funding structure, not the doing of individual agencies or decision makers. New Orleans needs a cohesive approach that simultaneously advances policy and structural solutions, and seeks improvements across all criminal courts as well as in State law.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to develop actionable recommendations to reform the fee and fine structure of the criminal justice system, including bail reform.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Marjorie Esman
Jennifer Medbery
Colin Reingold
William Snowden
David Williams

Subcommittee Facilitator/Analyst: Mathilde Laisne

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Improve public safety by eliminating the practice of detaining people pretrial because they are poor.
2. Increase public safety by eliminating the practice of charging fines and fees to people who are unable to pay due to poverty.
3. Create a Taskforce to develop a new funding structure that does not rely on user-generated revenue to fund criminal justice agencies.
4. Modernize communication and payment tools to improve efficiency and effectiveness in courts and lessen the burden on defendants and the broader public.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: New Orleans has long led the nation in jail incarceration rates. At the same time, New Orleans continues to struggle with crime, and heavily relying on incarceration has not made the City safer. One major driver of incarceration that does not improve public safety is money bail. For years, the City has imposed financial bail on people who are arrested. How much money someone has access to determines whether they can be released pretrial. It makes residents less safe since higher risk defendants can be released if they have money while lower risk but poorer defendants languish in jail. This system is also costly to the City and taxpayers who pay for lengthy jail stays for people who do not pose a risk.

“*In 2015, over 558 people were held in jail on any given day because they were unable to pay either bail or conviction fines and fees.*”

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Recommendation: Improve public safety by eliminating the practice of detaining people pretrial because they are poor.

Poverty should not be a factor in determining who should be jailed pending trial. New Orleans can be made safer, fairer, and more cost-effective if there is a focus on people who pose a risk to public safety, or a risk of missing court, and an end to unnecessarily detaining people who pose little risk but are poor. When a risk exists, it can often be managed through simple solutions, for example, reminder calls, which means that detention pretrial in certain cases can be the exception rather than the rule.

1. Sustain current efforts of the MacArthur Safety and Justice Challenge (the Safety and Justice Challenge is a multi-year national investment from the MacArthur Foundation to rethink the way America thinks about and uses local jails. In 2016, New Orleans was one of just 11 cities to receive funding to implement a strategic plan to reduce the jail population.)
2. Retain subject matter expert(s) to analyze data on jail population and propose attainable benchmarks and a timeline to safely reduce and ultimately eliminate unnecessary pretrial detention due to poverty.
3. Focus pretrial detention decisions on risk of failing to appear and committing a new crime by:
 - Encouraging adherence to the risk assessment and release/detention recommendations;
 - Establishing a policy to consistently release low-risk defendants on their own recognizance (ROR) or on a nominal bond of \$1 if they are restricted from receiving a ROR under State law;
 - Expanding pretrial services to misdemeanors;
 - Evaluating the use of pretrial conditions such as drug-testing and their cost-effectiveness; and
 - Partnering with the Supreme Court and Criminal District Court to provide education and leadership training to the judiciary about best practices in pretrial release decisions.
4. Create an NOPD policy or municipal ordinance to mandate the use of a municipal charge upon arrest when available (as opposed to a state misdemeanor charge), making more of these minor cases eligible for a summons and subject to release under the bail ordinance.
5. Eliminate financial bonds in juvenile court so risk, rather than money, can determine who gets released and who is detained.

6. Advocate for changes in state law to:
 - Eliminate restrictions on release on recognizance (ROR) to prevent the continued detention of defendants who have been found to pose little risk simply because they cannot pay money bail; and
 - Authorize a system of cash deposit in Orleans Parish that would allow defendants to post bail with a refundable deposit of no more than 10 percent of the bail amount with the court for an administrative fee.

Rationale/Supporting Data:

The New Orleans jail continues to be filled with people who are held pretrial, not because they have been found to pose a risk, but because they cannot pay bail of various amounts. Numerous steps have already been taken by courts and other agencies to assess people for risk and reduce the number of people who are held solely because they are poor (creation of Pretrial Services, increase in release on recognizance, participation in Safety and Justice Challenge). These efforts have proven successful at reducing detention for low-risk defendants without hurting public safety, but they need to be solidified and expanded.

In 2015, 3 out of 10 jail beds on any given day were occupied by people incarcerated for more than two days, simply because they could not afford bail.

Bail disproportionately impacts people of color, who paid 84 percent of bail premiums and bail fees in 2015.

When held 2-3 days, low-risk defendants are almost 40 percent more likely to commit new crimes before trial than equivalent defendants held no more than 24 hours.

Jurisdictions across the country, most recently in New Jersey, are able to reform their bail systems without increasing crime, and in some cases even reduce it.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: Defendants are charged various fines and fees throughout the life of their case, usually without consideration for what they can afford. These fines and fees can be counterproductive when imposed on poor residents of New Orleans. They create barriers that make it harder for people to live a productive life and avoid future criminal justice involvement.

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Recommendation: Increase public safety by eliminating the practice of charging fines and fees to people who are unable to pay due to poverty.

The City can improve public safety and fairness by eliminating the practice of imposing fines and fees on defendants who are too poor to pay. By doing so, it will help people exiting the criminal justice system succeed and live a productive life, making all communities safer.

1. Facilitate implementation of the provisions in Act 260 of the 2017 Regular Session, Louisiana Legislature, effective August 1, 2018, which includes a requirement to assess people's ability to pay prior to imposing fines and fees and the option for the court to waive fines and fees for indigent defendants by:
 - Advocating that the State legislature preserve the provisions in New Orleans, in felony cases, and working with Criminal District Court to implement the content of the law. If the law is repealed or implementation is delayed, the provisions may be implemented through court policy; and
 - Creating provisions that mirror Act 260 for municipal and traffic cases (through City ordinance) and for State misdemeanor charges (through court policy).
2. Evaluate community service as an alternative to fines and fees assessments for indigent defendants, including how to use community service in a way that

sets defendants up for success, avoids additional hardship for poor defendants, and decouples use of community service from court funding.

3. Explore proven and innovative alternatives to fines and fees and community service, including scaling fines and fees based on ability to pay.
4. Create a court policy or municipal ordinance to recall fines- and fees-related warrants that are five years old or more and to send notice to defendants informing them of fines- and fees-related warrants that are less than five years old and of steps they can take to resolve the matter.
5. Develop a new process to treat municipal offenses like traffic tickets instead of a lengthy court process that may include exposure to jail time for minor offenses.
6. Eliminate fines and fees assessments at sentencing in Juvenile Court.

Rationale/Supporting Data: When fines and fees are imposed on poor people, they can destabilize their lives at a crucial time when they are trying to reenter society. By eliminating fines and fees for poor people, it would improve public safety without reducing accountability. In 2015, Municipal Court and Criminal District Court ordered New Orleans residents to pay \$3.8M dollars in conviction fines and fees.



3 out of 10 jail beds on any given day were occupied by people who couldn't pay bail

**LESS THAN
\$100,000**

Bail disproportionately impacts people of color

who paid
84%
of bail premiums
and bail fees in
2015

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85 percent of defendants are deemed too poor to hire a lawyer.

Fines and fees disproportionately impact Black residents who were charged 69 percent of assessed fines and fees in 2015.

In 2015, Municipal Court and Criminal District Court issued 4,000 arrest warrants in relation to fines and fees. 536 people were arrested solely for fines and fees warrants.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: Criminal justice agencies are funded in part by fines, fees, and costs imposed on criminal defendants. These fees are creating barriers to successful reentry for defendants, while providing little stability for agencies whose budgets are vulnerable to variations in the amounts assessed. Federal courts have found that having local courts rely on these fees as a source of revenue is creating a conflict of interest for judges.

Recommendation: Create a Taskforce to develop a new funding structure that does not rely on user-generated revenue to fund criminal justice agencies.

1. The Taskforce will be responsible for exploring options for other funding sources (including a review of best practices in other jurisdictions) and/or reinvestment of cost-savings that can be used to alleviate revenue losses as fines and fees assessments decrease.
 - The Taskforce should include representatives of all criminal justice agencies, public policy experts, and financial and/or accounting experts.
 - The Taskforce should request an audit of all expenses in connection to fines and fees assessments, collections, and enforcement by every criminal justice agency.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Criminal justice agencies derive a portion of their revenue from fees and fines imposed on defendants. There needs to be a deliberate shift to a funding structure that is more sustainable and allows criminal justice agencies to carry out their important missions free of conflicts of interest.

In 2015, the City of New Orleans spent \$6.4M incarcerating people who could not pay bail or conviction fines and fees, but only raised \$4.5M in revenue from these fees.

Relying on defendants to help fund the City's criminal justice agencies is not good public policy. User-generated revenues are unreliable and put agencies in a difficult situation of pursuing their public interest mission while needing to raise revenue from defendants. Putting together a Task Force will allow the City to generate concrete ideas to shift away from user-generated revenue and support a more sustainable funding structure to the benefit of all criminal justice agencies.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: Court requirements such as repeated court appearances and fines and fees payments can destabilize defendants' lives. Most notably, it can be a challenge for defendants to remain employed while complying with these requirements.

Recommendation: Modernize communication and payment tools to improve efficiency and effectiveness in courts and lessen the burden on defendants and the broader public.

Defendants have to comply with various court requirements during the life of their case. These requirements are often burdensome and inflexible and lead to negative outcomes for courts, such as high numbers of defendants who fail to appear. By modernizing communication and payment tools, the City can improve the delivery of services and improve outcomes for courts to the benefit of the broader public.

1. Implement a text reminder system to remind defendants of their upcoming court date and inform them of failures to appear in court and steps they need to take.
2. Allow defendants to check-in by phone or text for court dates that do not involve core court proceedings (for example, fines and fees payments, drug test results, or proof of participation in treatment).
3. Develop solutions, including technological solutions, to help defendants get information on their outstanding fines and fees and facilitate payment, such as the ability to pay fines and fees online or at remote locations.
4. Develop a solution to allow the courts' information technology (IT) systems to automatically recall warrants related to fines and fees when they turn five years old.

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

5. Ensure that warrants are logged into the system in a way that allows NOPD to know what the warrant is for.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Technology can be employed to modernize communication and payment tools in order to help defendants comply with their court obligations while minimizing disruptions to defendants' lives and improving outcomes for the courts.

In the first half of 2017, the failure to appear rate in Municipal Court was just over 45 percent. In the first half of 2017, the failure to appear rate in Criminal District Court was just over 25 percent.

“*In the first half of 2017, the failure to appear rate in Municipal Court was just over 45 percent. In the first half of 2017, the failure to appear rate in Criminal District Court was just over 25 percent.*”

NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

New Orleans' neighborhoods are the heart and soul of the City. Each with its own unique character and architecture, together they give rise to New Orleans' vibrant culture. Fundamentally, neighborhoods represent the intersection of housing and people—structures and community. In order for neighborhoods to truly thrive, both aspects need to be addressed and supported.

A survey of housing in New Orleans reveals that many New Orleanians face severe housing affordability challenges (over 60 percent of renters currently spend too much of their income on housing, according to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) standards). This affordability issue is further compounded by decreasing resources from the federal government to address these challenges. To help ensure that New Orleans remains affordable for those who help make the City special (e.g., artists, musicians, service industry workers), there is a pressing need to find ways to create and maintain affordable housing.

An area that closely relates to the creation of affordable housing is the issue of blight. Over the last eight years, New Orleans has made significant progress in addressing blight, having eliminated at least 15,000 blighted properties, leading to one of the largest reductions of any city in the country. However, there remains a need to address the issue, as many neighborhoods still have a large number of abandoned properties. Many of these properties have complex financial and title-related issues that will require creative solutions to move them back into commerce. Many residents have expressed a strong desire to have input into this process and to participate in the redevelopment of the areas where they live.

This kind of engagement can often be made easier through involvement in neighborhood associations. The City's Neighborhood Engagement Office (NEO) has been active in engaging residents and providing useful information on a variety of topics. As the City looks to further empower its communities, strengthening and developing neighborhood associations will play a critical role. An important component of this process is

reimagining the NEO, which has an opportunity to move beyond informing residents of what is happening in their area and toward actively building strong, connected neighborhood organizations.

New Orleans has made important progress in improving aspects of its neighborhoods and how it engages residents. However, true success will rest on the City's ability to make sure that all of its neighborhoods are well-maintained, with strong, organized voices and a connection to the City and surrounding businesses and institutions.

COMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of the Neighborhood Stabilization Committee was to develop a set of recommendations that leverages national best practices and new, innovative approaches to ensure that every neighborhood in New Orleans is vibrant and well-maintained. It also examined ways to promote strong, positive relationships among residents, local businesses, and City government. To accomplish this, the Committee focused its efforts on affordable housing, blight elimination, and developing/strengthening positive institutional relationships within neighborhoods.

Committee Co-Chairs: Alexandra Miller and Minh Nguyen
Project Manager: Morgan Valerie

“*Fundamentally, neighborhoods represent the intersection of housing and people—structures and community.*”

HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

In a 2017 Enterprise Poll of 500 likely voters, New Orleans voters identified housing as a leading issue of concern,

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second only to public safety. As housing costs across the City have increased, concern about decent, safe, and affordable housing has risen to prominence among the many residents who made this City great. Existing housing plans have quantified this housing crisis and the cost burden for average New Orleanians, with many renters currently paying more of their income for housing than notoriously expensive cities like New York City or San Francisco. Among Southern cities, only Miami ranks above New Orleans in cost.

The data demonstrates that a firefighter and teacher, together with their three children, may pay more than 50 percent of their household income on housing, leaving little else for education, groceries, and all the other family necessities. Existing housing plans reveal that the overwhelming greatest housing needs are for families in similar income brackets and below.

To meet this challenge will require a wide reaching approach that ranges from internal organization and streamlining services, to improving incentive packages for developers. There is a pronounced need to increase funding for affordable housing, in the context of shrinking federal funds (despite level administrative requirements and increased housing needs). Success will also require grappling with the displacement of generations of New Orleanians from historically African-American neighborhoods.

Given limited funding, the solutions most likely to be implemented would need to be budget neutral and the City would need to identify strategic vehicles to leverage housing policy to meet these overwhelming needs. There is no silver bullet to solve New Orleans' housing crisis. Therefore, the City will need to make use of all of the tools in the housing policy toolbox.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of the Housing Subcommittee was to further develop a set of existing recommendations for increasing and preserving the availability of affordable housing. In particular, it focused on a first-time homeowner tax abatement; incentives for the development and preservation of affordable housing; and enforcement of requirements attached to the incentives. In addition, this subcommittee identified tools and strategies that should be used to enforce minimum housing standards.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Maxwell Ciardullo
Curtis Doucette, Jr.
Fred Tombar, III
Andre Lewis
Alexandra Miller
Vincenzo Pasquantonio

Subcommittee Facilitator/Analyst: Monika Gerhart

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase local funding for affordable housing through expanding use of general obligation bonds and increased short-term rental revenues to deepen annual investments in the local housing trust fund (NHIF).
- Expand Short-Term Rental (STR) regulations to include an eightfold increase in revenue generation to fund affordable housing strategies; the funding would come from platform licensing and increased booking fees. The City would require the platforms themselves to hold licenses to operate in the City of New Orleans. Regulations would also include an “identity of interest” policy, as well as data sharing by platforms to include discrimination complaints and homestead exemption requirements.
- Stem gentrification by working across agencies and better leveraging land owned by the School Board, City, Housing Authority; adjudicated property; and other publicly owned land to be reserved for affordable housing. In addition, track and geographically analyze non-housing funding to help better understand neighborhood investments that contribute to rising prices, so that simultaneous interventions can help people keep the homes they have. Also, institute a property tax freeze or deferral for low-income homeowners to help long-time New Orleanians to keep their homes.
- Improve habitability of occupied rental homes by introducing affirmative inspections for occupied rentals which would also help stabilize neighborhoods, raise property values, and improve aging housing stock.
- Maximize land use and zoning to meet housing goals through improving the packaging of affordable housing incentives across agencies, and assigning a staff person to coordinate and provide developers with predictable, comprehensive options to maximize usage. In addition, support passage of

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a Smart Housing Mix policy, and prioritize transit-oriented development in incentive packages and the zoning code.

- Appoint a Director of Housing Policy to advance the City's policy goals; move certain grant programs from the Office of Community Development (OCD) to the Health Department; expand tenants' rights for renters in City-funded units; introduce staggered terms for new Housing Authority board appointments; and improve data collection.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: Existing housing plans have quantified the housing crisis and the cost burden for average New Orleanians. With federal resources projected to continue to diminish, quantifiable housing goals will be difficult to meet without increased revenues. In an effort to improve the production and rehabilitation of housing that is affordable to working and low-income families there needs to be a focus on non-federal funding sources that cost less to administer.

Recommendation: Increase local funding for affordable housing through expanded use of general obligation bonds and increased short-term rental revenues to deepen annual investments in the housing trust fund (NHIF).

Rationale/Supporting Data: The affordable housing need is increasing, yet federal funding to the programs that have traditionally facilitated the production of affordable housing is decreasing. General Obligation bonds can bring a new and reliable source of funding to offset the uncertainty of federal sources. The short-term rental market is expanding rapidly and to the detriment of affordable housing. An additional tax on short-term rentals will allow the City to use the growth of the market to counter its deleterious effects and find a healthy balance for the market

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: With an increase in tourism each year in New Orleans, visitors have increasingly turned to short-term rentals as an option for lodging. This new market competitor has allowed local residents and out-of-town investors to invest in the housing market and increase

their income. However, short-term rentals have also significantly altered the housing market by reducing the number of homes available to long-time residents.

Recommendation: Expand Short-Term Rental (STR) regulations to include an eightfold increase in revenue generation to fund affordable housing strategies; the funding would come from platform licensing and increased booking fees. The City would require the platforms themselves to hold licenses to operate in the City of New Orleans. Regulations would also include an "identity of interest" policy, as well as data sharing by platforms to include discrimination complaints and homestead exemption requirements.

Rationale/Supporting Data: STRs are occupying housing stock that could otherwise be occupied by long-term renters and increasing housing pressure in in-demand neighborhoods. While the number of permits per host is not limited, the best currently available statistics show that more than half of all permitted STRs are run by hosts with more than one permit. Evidence suggests a correlation between the rapid increase of STRs in some neighborhoods and the loss of affordability in those same neighborhoods. In addition, there are currently no penalties for platforms that violate their agreement with the City. With single hosts accounting for multiple properties, some hosts not having proper permits or abusing their term limits, it is difficult to remediate all of the issues that arise without full cooperation of platforms or legal action being taken. In terms of revenue potential, STR fees only bring in \$300K per year, with a \$1 fee per booking, per night from platforms. However, this amount has the potential to greatly impact affordable housing if it is increased and the taxes are dedicated to the Neighborhood Housing Improvement Fund (NHIF).

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: Gentrification of neighborhoods that were historically home to people of color is something that is happening in many cities across the country, including New Orleans. Although it has been shown to increase the property tax base those areas, it has also contributed to the housing crisis that is being experienced by many working and low-income families.

Recommendation: Stem gentrification by working across agencies and better leveraging of land owned by the School Board, City, Housing Authority; adjudicated

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property; and other publicly owned land to be reserved for affordable housing. In addition, track and geographically analyze non-housing funding to help better understand neighborhood investments that contribute to rising prices, so that simultaneous interventions can help people keep the homes they have. Also, institute a property tax freeze or deferral for low-income homeowners to help long-time New Orleanians to keep their homes.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Gentrification has created inequitable outcomes for New Orleanians, displacing some while profiting others. New Orleans' cultural economy and hospitality industry, among other important industries, rely on the availability of affordable housing that allows access to jobs and services. Neighborhood preservation is critical to ensuring that New Orleans residents can benefit from new services and public investment without being displaced by rising property values.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: Many New Orleanians rent, yet an unregulated market has in some cases benefitted absentee or negligent landlords, to the detriment of family health. Currently, there is coordination among the non-profit sector working to care for families displaced by substandard housing and there are units that are already subject to some inspection requirements (e.g., Housing Choice Voucher participant units). However, Statewide law fails to provide adequate protections and the City would benefit from stronger local regulations.

Recommendation: Improve habitability of occupied rental homes by introducing affirmative inspections for occupied rentals which would also help stabilize neighborhoods, raise property values, and improve aging housing stock.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Many New Orleanians are renters, but many live in substandard housing with few options. In the 2015 American Housing Survey, thousands of units were reported with leaks, rodents, holes, mold, and other violations and over 4,000 renter families had asthmatic children in the home. Introducing inspections would have a pronounced effect in improving conditions in many units.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: There is no silver bullet to solve New Orleans' housing crisis. However, land use and zoning are essential tools in the housing policy toolbox and the City will not succeed without them. In too many instances the City misses opportunities to expand affordability in the private market. By better aligning land use and planning efforts New Orleans can create a predictable, transparent mechanism to incentivize new construction of affordable housing.

“*Gentrification has created inequitable outcomes for New Orleanians, displacing some while profiting others.*”

Recommendation: Maximize land use and zoning to meet housing goals through improving the packaging of affordable housing incentives across agencies, and assigning a staff person to coordinate and provide developers with predictable, comprehensive options to maximize usage. In addition, support passage of a Smart Housing Mix policy, and prioritize transit-oriented development in incentive packages and the zoning code.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Current efforts do not maximize resources to meet the housing need. Packaged, predictable incentives are needed to produce market-driven, affordable housing. Multiple studies have demonstrated how New Orleans could do better; there is an opportunity to create a more comprehensive and coordinated package of incentives.

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: The City could, via executive action, take several steps to improve efficacy, advance regulatory compliance, reduce risk, and strengthen the City's ability to serve the people that need it most.

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of its administrative hearings section so that more blight cases could be heard. The reorganized Code Enforcement and Hearings Bureau (CEHB) now has dedicated staff for researching real estate ownership of blighted properties, preparing cases for legal actions, as well as a legal team that files foreclosures on properties eligible for sheriff's sale. Continuing in 2010, the City announced a blight reduction strategy with a goal of reducing blighted addresses by 10,000 by 2014, which the City exceeded. This strategy introduced a streamlined

Recommendation: Appoint a Director of Housing Policy to advance the City's policy goals; move certain grant programs from the Office of Community Development (OCD) to the Health Department; expand tenants' rights for renters in City-funded units; introduce staggered terms for new Housing Authority board appointments; and improve data collection.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Taken together, the above steps would bring dedicated staff attention to developing effective housing policy. They would also free up the Office of Community Development (OCD) to focus more intently on priority issues and improve quality of life issues for renters.

BLIGHT ELIMINATION SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

In 2010, UNO estimated that over 25 percent of housing units across the City were blighted. At the time, property maintenance was regulated by different departments, depending upon if there was a structure present on the parcel: Code Enforcement was responsible for inspecting blighted properties and the Environmental Health agency was responsible for inspecting overgrown lots. These two organizations were merged to improve coordination and efficiency. In addition, the City improved the capacity

code enforcement process backed by the threat of foreclosure, as well as new redevelopment resources. Implementation of this strategy required coordination among at least a half-dozen departments and monitoring of the newly developed initiatives.

Concurrently, there was deep public dissatisfaction with the City's blight programs and frustration with the opacity of blight enforcement. To address these concerns, the Office of Performance and Accountability developed BlightSTAT. Modeled after the PerformanceStat programs pioneered by Baltimore Mayor (and later Maryland Governor) Martin O'Malley, BlightSTAT brought personnel together from across agencies to account for their performance according to objective metrics in front of City management and the public. This intervention was closely tailored to the City's needs at the time: accountability, transparency, coordination, and goodwill with the public. The intervention introduced transparency in a program where previously there had been none; code enforcement inspections increased five-fold in 10 weeks with no additional investments in staff or technology.

With the reorganization of the department and this new system in place, blight was reduced by at least 15,000 addresses from September 2010 to February 2015, a 35

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percent decrease, according to estimates created using United States Postal Service data and property condition surveys from the University of New Orleans.

Although the City has made significant strides on addressing blight, there is still a great deal that needs to be done. Currently, there are approximately 40,000 properties in the City that are blighted. In the coming years, the City will need to remain vigilant in tackling this issue.

(Note: information above was taken from reports created by Public Financial Management (PFM)).

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to identify ways to scale up existing blight remediation programs like Green and Clean, a program that provides for blight remediation and fencing on vacant lots and Mow to Own, an initiative that allows owners of adjacent blighted property to take ownership of such properties if they maintain them. It also developed recommendations for

addressing residential lot maintenance and commercial blight elimination-related issues.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Rashida Ferdinand
Willie Calhoun
Darrick Lebeouf
Julius Kimbrough
Liana Elliot
Silvie Senauke*
Christine Koh*

**Harvard Research Fellow*

Subcommittee Facilitator/Analyst: Atianna Cordova

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Institute collaborative practices that unite different stakeholder agencies. This includes creating a coordinated office, including at minimum representatives from Code Enforcement, the New



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Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA), the Finance Department, the Office of Community Development, the Office of Economic Development, and the Police Department, to improve the City's ability to successfully move properties out of blighted status. This improvement would result from increasing collaboration and cooperation among the many City agencies and departments whose work touches on blighted properties.

- Develop a model for identifying and categorizing blighted properties to facilitate targeted intervention responses for different types of need. This includes: defining different categories of blight (i.e., physical, financial, vacant, occupied, abandoned, property owner in financial need, rental); defining specific mechanisms and tools for addressing each category, and developing a blight index tool and score that can identify under which category each property falls.
- Implement changes that strengthen NORA's authority and land bank functions. These changes would involve State-level legislative updates that would allow NORA to clear titles for properties it acquires, empower it to selectively sell properties to buyers based on criteria beyond highest bidding price, and allow alternative strategies for disposition of or maintenance of properties, such as community gardens, urban farms, or drainage parks.
- Convene an advisory board to research and consider a variety of legislative changes, based on blight elimination best practices used in other cities. (e.g., create a city-level vacant property registry and explore methods to abate back property taxes and financial fines/fees from violations).
- Develop a communications strategy to provide residents a better understanding of what blight is, how it is dealt with by the City, what their rights and responsibilities are, the status of blight in their neighborhoods, and what resources they can turn to for further support and information. The strategy should include a suite of explainers and infographics to clarify blight terminology and processes.
- Develop a program that provides community members with the resources and training needed to address blight and drive development in their area. In addition, conduct neighborhood level assessments of community members' skill sets and their desired goals and provide tools, programming, and other resources needed to help them bridge the gaps.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: Although there is informal communication among many of the departments that deal in blight elimination, such as the Office of Community Development (OCD) and the Economic Development Office (ED), there is limited formal collaboration. BlightSTAT, the City's main formal structure for coordination and communication, has served as a useful venue for driving towards resolution of code violations (and as a model across the country for demanding accountability). However, it does not emphasize what happens to blighted and vacant properties after they have been clearly identified and the City has taken responsibility. Resolving blight is as much about disposing of these properties as it is about acquiring them, and, currently, there is limited coordination around disposition efforts.

There is an opportunity for a more coordinated strategy for moving vacant properties to disposition (based on areas where economic development and sale of properties can work hand-in-hand) and for aggregating different departments' tools to support owners facing code violations who want help.

Recommendation: Institute collaborative practices that unite different stakeholder agencies. This includes creating a coordinated office, including at minimum representatives from Code Enforcement, the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA), the Finance Department, the Office of Community Development, the Office of Economic Development, and the Police Department, to improve the City's ability to successfully move properties out of blighted status. This improvement would result from increasing collaboration and cooperation among the many City agencies and departments whose work touches on blighted properties.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The City in many cases has been unable to reliably return blighted properties to commerce. Code Enforcement and each independent department have developed their own mechanisms, strategies, and tools, but there is little formal coordination. One of the major inhibitors to returning properties to commerce is the need for economic and community development that makes these properties valuable;

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such efforts are strengthened by disparate departments working in tandem.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: In some instances, the Office of Code Enforcement has worked with Security and Neighborhood Improvement Districts to solicit community prioritization regarding which properties will receive debris clearing/grass cutting. There are also programs, like Green and Clean, or services from the Office of Community Development, that have been utilized at times to address the needs of specific categories of blighted properties. The City has been able to move many properties to be ready for sale.

With different strategies and tools being applied in an ad-hoc fashion, there is no way to prioritize or sort the long list of blighted properties that the City is currently responsible for maintaining. As such, there is little in the way of strategic planning around these properties. Properties are remaining unsold for long periods of time, preventing revitalization of neighborhoods.

Recommendation: Develop a model for identifying and categorizing blighted properties to facilitate targeted intervention responses for different types of need. This includes: defining different categories of blight (i.e., physical, financial, vacant, occupied, abandoned, property owner in financial need, rental); defining specific mechanisms and tools for addressing each category, and developing a blight index tool and score that can identify under which category each property falls.

Rationale/Supporting Data: There is currently no differentiation among the many different blighted properties of which code enforcement and other departments are aware. Developing the model will enable the City to use targeted methods to address the specific needs of each blighted property. These methods will increase the number of properties returning to commerce. In turn, neighborhoods will feel more vibrant. Residents will contribute their valuable local knowledge to help the City prioritize which properties to address how and when, increasing public trust in the blight remediation process. As new properties become blighted, they will be rapidly categorized and directed to the most appropriate resolution trajectory. Even more, associated departments and offices will be able to make better strategic planning decisions because they will have a

fact-based understanding of the most pressing blight-related problems.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: The New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA) currently serves some functions of a land bank (i.e., having multiple or large areas of land that are held for future development) and has succeeded in selling many properties it acquired through Road Home, as well as had success with its Lot Next Door program. However, it is not currently empowered to clear titles for foreclosed properties it might acquire, restricting its ability to assist in returning properties to commerce.

Recommendation: Implement changes that strengthen NORA's authority and land bank functions. These changes would involve State-level legislative updates that would allow NORA to clear titles for properties it acquires, empower it to selectively sell properties to buyers based on criteria beyond highest bidding price, and allow alternative strategies for disposition of or maintenance of properties, such as community gardens, urban farms, or drainage parks.

Rationale/Supporting Data: In 2016 there were approximately 1000 properties that failed to attract attention from buyers. Implementing these changes will put NORA in a stronger position to move blighted properties back into commerce. This also provides an opportunity to help ensure that legacy New Orleans residents do not become displaced.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: The City incurs additional cost in covering maintenance and processing fees for properties as they move them through the blight process. While there are several departments that work to remediate, move, or handle these properties, it takes dedicated resources, research, and time to appropriately access each situation.

Recommendation: Convene an advisory board to research and consider a variety of legislative changes, based on blight elimination best practices used in other cities. (e.g., create a city-level vacant property registry and explore methods to abate back property taxes and financial fines/fees from violations).

Rationale/Supporting Data: The process of moving a property to foreclosure (whether through lien foreclosure

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or tax foreclosure) is time-consuming and requires significant investment of City staff resources. Furthermore, some property owners repeatedly “reset the clock” by paying fines and fees, without addressing the underlying blighting conditions.

There are currently many properties in foreclosure for which the City has not been able to find buyers. Many of these properties carry liens that are greater than the resale value of the property, and that must be paid upon purchase. This discourages potential investors and developers from purchasing these properties.

Convening an advisory board and identifying best practices used in other places will allow the City to better address many of the issues that have prevented it from even more efficiently moving properties through the blight remediation process.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: The City has released limited informational material about blight, and the BlightSTAT website provides significant information regarding blighted properties and their associated code violations. However, the current informational materials, including graphics, are difficult to interpret and understand.

City residents would benefit from having a clear understanding of what blight is, what the City is actively doing to remediate blight, and where they can turn if they need assistance with their property.

Recommendation: Develop a communications strategy to provide residents a better understanding of what blight is, how it is dealt with by the City, what their rights and responsibilities are, the status of blight in their neighborhoods, and what resources they can turn to for further support and information. The strategy should include a suite of explainers and infographics to clarify blight terminology and processes.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Because blight is a highly visible problem, ensuring that residents understand the efforts underway to address the problem should be a priority.

Much of the language of current explanations of blight and the related process are at or above a 12th-grade

reading level, according to the Flesch-Kincaid grade level calculator, which make it difficult for many residents to understand. Developing a communications strategy will ensure that more members of the community can understand what is happening in their areas and how they can engage.

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: Local community members are not being equipped with the tools needed to build intergenerational wealth and participate in the blight remediation efforts in their neighborhood. This is mostly due to the lack of knowledge on what blight is, how they can be a part of the elimination process before a property has reached blight status, and what the next steps are once the City has made the designation. Increased participation by community residents in the process would be beneficial since they would become better equipped with tools that could help support careers in blight remediation and development-related fields.

Recommendation: Develop a program that provides community members with the resources and training needed to address blight and drive development in their area. In addition, conduct neighborhood level assessments of community members’ skill sets and their desired goals and provide tools, programming, and other resources needed to help them bridge the gaps.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Implementation of the program would promote self-agency in communities that often feel excluded from City development, support cultural preservation, and help create a path to intergenerational wealth/ownership.

NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Neighborhoods, historically, were an integral part of the makeup of communities in New Orleans. Residents relied on neighborhood associations and the person next door to ensure safety, be kept abreast of changes that affected their area, and to be a part of grassroots efforts and events that strengthened the power of the citizens right next door. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, neighborhoods were left in a disarray, from residents not returning to their homes, to whole street blocks being washed away. While the City has worked diligently to rebuild, many areas of town have struggled

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to rebuild capacity, and lack the institutional knowledge to create strong neighborhood associations that enable them to have a voice to leverage more opportunities in their community.

The Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office (NEO) has served as the City's permanent mechanism for public participation in government decision-making. They work to create opportunities for dialogue, information sharing, partnership, and action between City government and neighborhood residents and leaders. By providing new tools, updated measures, and additional staff, the capacity of NEO can be ramped up to better serve the City's residents. The process of truly engaging the public to become participants in decision making can not only be attained but strengthen all neighborhoods and empower them to create long-lasting and effective communities.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of the Neighborhood Empowerment subcommittee was to conduct a review of the Office of Neighborhood Engagement, and to redefine its role and function. In addition, it identified ways to use Community Benefit Agreements and Good Neighbor Agreements to promote positive interactions among local businesses, nonprofits, and residents.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Ronald Carrere
Timolynn Sams
Keith Twitchell
Linda Usdin
Suzanne Mobley
Tim Garrett
Roberta Brown

Subcommittee Facilitator/Analyst: Morgan Valerie

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Restructure the current Neighborhood of Engagement Office (NEO) to step-up the capacity to work within the full Community Participation Plan (CPP) serving to connect neighborhoods and government. The NEO would serve as the primary office, along with 3-4 satellite offices, for communications exchange between neighborhoods and the City, creating a two-way street of effective communication and information flow for street-level quality of life issues.
- Prepare a Neighborhood Association Manual or

Handbook to assist neighborhoods in creating new associations or strengthening and building capacity for existing associations.

- Create new and official neighborhood boundary maps for New Orleans, via a process authorized by the City Council and undertaken by the City Planning Commission, Neighborhood Engagement Office, and other community partners.
- Require a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) as standard operating procedure for development projects that require zoning actions, impact neighborhood/community, or are receiving incentives from the City or State. The CBA should prioritize workforce training, professional development support, local hiring, support for community institutions, green infrastructure, minimizing of environmental impact and blight elimination.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: The NEO currently has a lean staff of six, including four liaisons to cover all five council districts. The City of New Orleans is home to 73 neighborhoods. In 2012, the City set out to engage these neighborhoods, utilizing the Neighborhood Participation Plan (NPP), which is also called the Community Participation Plan (CPP). This massive endeavor to interact with neighborhood associations that do exist, neighborhoods that are without a formal structure or leadership, and those residents who have invested in their neighborhoods and would like to see change made, has proven difficult to accomplish without a larger and more accessible staff.

While the NEO does a good job of disseminating information throughout the City, its current structure does not make it effective in retrieving information from the communities and its residents. Information is often trickled down to those neighborhood leaders who are active, and the cycle ends there. There must be a feedback loop where quality of life issues are answered and where residents have a say in the final decision making that affects their neighborhoods.

Increasing the staff size and adding satellite centers for the community to easily access the NEO would be beneficial since there would be a better opportunity to fully implement the much-needed CPP. With a Community

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Participation Plan in effect, communities and residents gain higher capacity for effective engagement and have a permanent structure for providing meaningful input everywhere across the City.

Recommendation: Restructure the current Neighborhood of Engagement Office (NEO) to step-up the capacity to work within the full Community Participation Plan (CPP) serving to connect neighborhoods and government. The NEO would serve as the primary office, along with 3-4 satellite offices, for communications exchange between neighborhoods and the City, creating a two-way street of effective communication and information flow for street-level quality of life issues.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Community input in New Orleans is fragmented, inequitable, and sometimes not acted upon. There is a normalization of top-down decision making without resident input across the City that has caused a lack of investment across all neighborhoods, no institutionalized structure for the input, and subsequently a lack of trust in government.

A number of cities have implemented successful Community Participation Plans, including Birmingham, Portland, Atlanta, and Charlotte, as well as successful Neighborhood Engagement Offices in places like Baltimore, Cleveland, Atlanta, Charlotte, Portland and San Francisco.

Working within the full CPP offers an opportunity for a more transparent and accountable government and equitable neighborhoods. It also addresses the need to increase resources and staffing to deliver more effective programs and services.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: The City of New Orleans functions with a governing body with its own roadmap, rules, and guidelines that ensure structure and success. The same should be possible for neighborhoods and residents who want to feel empowered and involved. Each community is different in its own way, and the structure that they use to build a neighborhood association should reflect their needs and goals.

Recommendation: Develop an updated Neighborhood Association Manual or Handbook to assist neighborhoods in creating new associations or strengthening and building

capacity for existing associations. This easy-to-use guide will ensure all residents have access to information and input opportunities via their neighborhoods.

Rationale/Supporting Data: There is currently no tool or roadmap available for neighborhoods that are growing, need assistance finding a structure for their association, are looking to become more inclusive, or are reevaluating their current structure for more efficiency. This practical guide would help associations at all stages of development become stronger and more effective in serving their residents.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: There has not been an updated and adopted neighborhood physical boundary map in nearly 50 years. Accurate mapping makes for easier data tracking and allocation of needed resources that lead to a more equitable city.

Recommendation: Create new and official neighborhood boundary maps for New Orleans, via a process authorized by the City Council and undertaken by the City Planning Commission, the Neighborhood Engagement Office, and other community partners.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The present neighborhood boundary maps dating from the 1970s are obsolete, hindering the delivery of City services and resources. The methodology for redoing maps has been developed and tested successfully. Creating the new maps would better reflect how residents identify and are organized today.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: While Community Benefits Agreements (CBA) have been brought into the economic development conversation, there have only been a limited number that have been executed or successful in the City. Often, the conversations between developers and City officials quickly stall when both sides struggle to find mutually beneficial agreements. When the CBAs have been implemented, there has been limited community input, and sometimes no revisiting of the requirements later to ensure that the CBAs were truly benefiting the community.

There is an opportunity to implement a standard procedure for future projects that enforces and monitors compliance and creates a chance for communities to be a part of the conversation throughout the process.

NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION COMMITTEE

Recommendation: Require a Community Benefits Agreement (CBA) as standard operating procedure for development projects that require zoning actions, impact neighborhood/community, or are receiving incentives from the City or State. The CBA should prioritize workforce training, professional development support, local hiring, support for community institutions, green infrastructure, minimizing of environmental impact and blight elimination.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The current lack of CBAs and enforcement have led, in some cases, to individuals benefiting at the expense of communities, which can contribute to depressed civic engagement. Requiring CBAs would help build stronger more vibrant communities, where residents, businesses, and other institutions could all thrive and feel represented and engaged.

“ There has been no updated and adopted neighborhood physical boundary map in nearly 50 years.”

HEALTHY FAMILIES COMMITTEE



services, and instead to transition the function to a network of community-based clinics. This change freed the Department to further focus on other areas like behavioral health which would greatly benefit from better coordination. This kind of collaboration will be the key to meeting the needs of all residents and could be applied to other areas like education.

Although the City does not control the K-12 school system, there are tremendous opportunities to partner with charter management operators to share information and connections to services that would benefit the City's children, and at the same time make better use of existing school and City facilities. To be able to deliver benefits other than education to children while they are in school would be a positive outcome for everyone.

COMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

As the City looks across the landscape of issues that impact its families, it will have to be strategic in how it make investments, given the limited resources it has available. With approximately 25 percent of residents living in poverty, the ability to effectively and efficiently deliver City resources will be critical.

One of the most powerful tools the City has to extend the impact it can have is its ability to convene, coordinate, and collaborate with a vast network of community partners. To effectively tackle issues related to health care, education, and inclusion, it will take not only collaboration with external partners but also a deliberate and sustained commitment to working across City departments.

One of the most successful examples of this kind of collaboration came when the New Orleans Health Department (NOHD) made the decision eight years ago to move away from direct provision of health care

Another important aspect of serving residents is that there can be overlap among groups that are impacted, in that many different communities can often benefit from a single small shift in thinking. One example of this is the notion of accessibility. The idea is that it is not enough to simply have services available, it is equally important that they are also accessible. Accessibility is not limited only to physical access to buildings for the disabled but also includes language access for immigrants, employment access for people returning home from incarceration, health care access for members of the LGBTQ community, and access to affordable housing for seniors and veterans.

As the City prepares to head into the next 300 years of its history, it will be important to recognize that ours is a shared future and that the only way we as a City will fully thrive is that we all thrive.

HEALTHY FAMILIES COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of the Healthy Families Committee was to develop recommendations that promote and improve the physical and mental health of all members of our communities. This committee took a broad approach that focused on the resources directly controlled by the City, as well as partnerships with other institutions that serve residents. In particular, this committee examined ways to improve the City's Health Department; addressed issues related to K-12 education and early childhood development; and identified ways to support our City's vulnerable populations.

Committee Co-Chairs: Amanda Aiken and Syrita Steib-Martin

Project Manager: R. Erich Caulfield

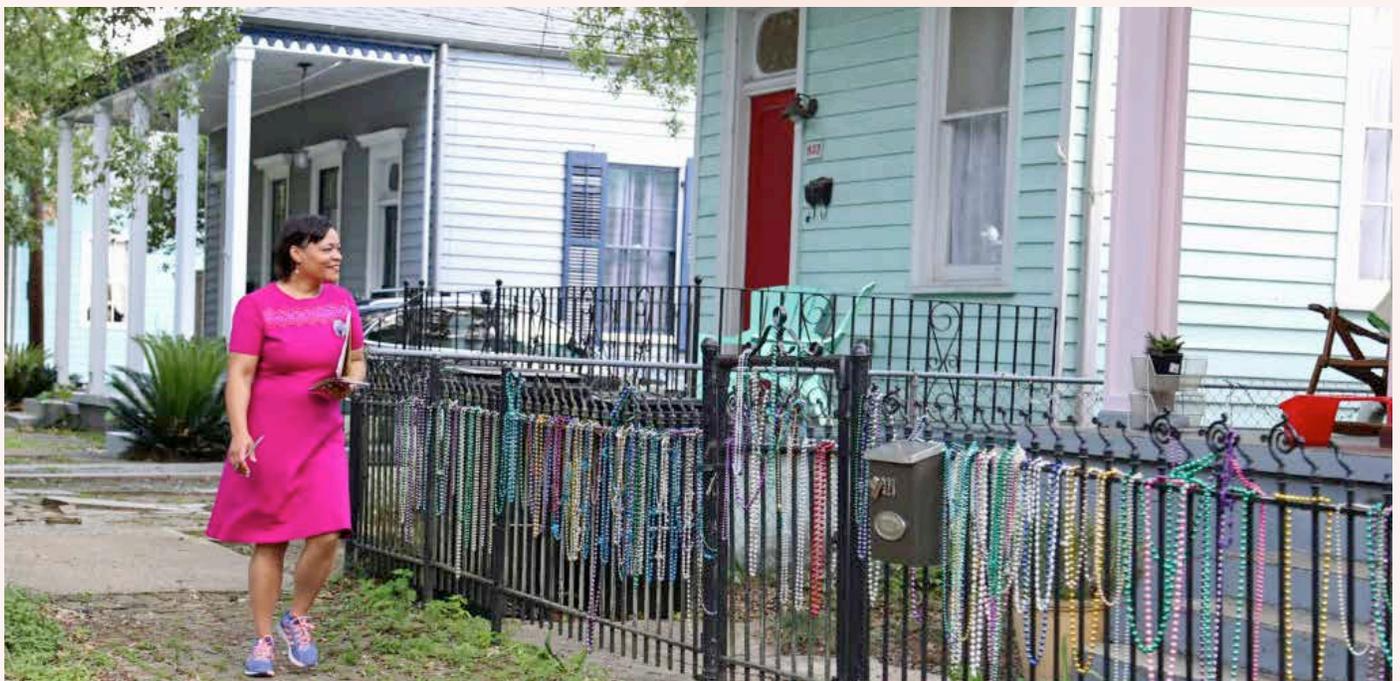
INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

As New Orleans looks to the future and continues to build a more inclusive and equitable city, there are a number of groups that have faced challenges in fully benefiting from gains that have been made, in particular: seniors, people with mental health and/or substance abuse challenges, people returning home from incarceration, disabled residents, members of the LGBTQ community, veterans,

and immigrants. These individuals are often marginalized and can represent some of the most vulnerable members of society. While some of the general problems faced by the groups are similar (e.g., coordination of services among providers), other challenges may be specific to each community. For example, seniors and people returning home from incarceration are in need of affordable and accessible housing options; immigrants and members of the disabled community each face unique challenges in accessing municipal services, programs, and activities; individuals with mental health and/or substance abuse issues, as well as members of the LGBTQ community, have encountered a range of negative interactions with some members of law enforcement; and many veterans have found it difficult to navigate the various services that may be available to them.

There is currently an opportunity to improve the availability and accessibility of information and the coordination of resources and services that could lead to better opportunities and outcomes for many of these residents. Much of this work could and should be led by people in the community who have lived or work in the related areas. By promoting a more inclusive environment, and contributing to the development and social and economic wellbeing of all citizens, we can best position New Orleans to achieve a future that is bright for us all.



HEALTHY FAMILIES COMMITTEE



SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to catalog and assess the resources available to populations with special challenges, and to develop recommendations for how to better coordinate these resources to support them. In particular, it focused on support for the following groups: seniors, those with mental health/substance abuse challenges, people returning home from incarceration, disabled residents, members of the LGBTQ community, veterans, and immigrants.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Debbie Boguille
Kiana Calloway
Wendi Cooper
Octavia Edinburg
Donna Johnigan
Dolfinette Martin
Ronnie Moore
Sebastian Rey
Yannis Kalogirou Valtis*
Gina Womack

**Harvard Research Fellow*

Subcommittee Facilitators/Analysts: Felicia Brown and R. Erich Caulfield

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create within City government an executive order that is modeled on the State executive order that focuses on enhancing the employment and hiring of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- Complete a comprehensive accessibility assessment for the City of New Orleans to ensure universal access.
- Embed an immigrant liaison within the new Office of International Affairs.
- Develop/Implement a language access plan for residents with limited English proficiency for all municipal government services, programs and activities; enhance access to City programs/services by providing information in a multilingual format.
- Determine the extent to which the City's Behavioral Health Plan and/or elements have been fully implemented and update the Plan based on current needs; give particular attention to youth, veterans, and persons returning from incarceration

HEALTHY FAMILIES COMMITTEE

- Identify funding sources/streams that sustain mental health and substance abuse services.
- Expand Naloxone access to prevent opiate overdose deaths.
- Create an Office of Veterans Affairs and designate executive/administrative personnel to address veterans-related issues.
- Foster an environment that celebrates the various branches of the military present within the local community.
- Conduct a needs assessment for the LGBTQ community in partnership with community partners.
- Expand discrimination-related data collection and strengthen enforcement capabilities within the Human Relations Commission (HRC).
- Promote LGBTQ inclusive health care in the City of New Orleans through publishing an LGBTQ health bill of rights and providing LGBTQ inclusivity training to health care providers.
- Designate personnel within the proposed Office of Youth and Families to address issues relevant to seniors.
- Increase the amount of affordable and accessible senior housing.
- Expand transitional and permanent housing for persons returning home from incarceration through rehabilitation of blighted properties.
- Ensure appropriate qualifications, experience, and staffing to serve those returning home from incarceration
- Engage in resource mapping of health, human, and social resources, services, and programs.
- Introduce municipal identification cards that could be used by individuals who might otherwise have difficulty obtaining government-issued IDs (e.g., transgender individuals, undocumented immigrants, and homeless members of the community).

SUMMARY OF ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Design and implement direct health access program for undocumented immigrants in New Orleans.
- Implement the City's HIV strategy with a focus on PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis) and rigorous progress monitoring.
- Expand the City's mobile crisis response teams.
- Pilot dedicated support around mental health and substance use for people of all genders returning home from incarceration.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: Currently, only 33 percent of people with disabilities are participating in the workforce, as compared to 72 percent of people without disabilities. To address this issue in Louisiana, in March of 2018, Governor John Bel Edwards signed an executive order that created the State as a Model Employer Task Force. The goal of the Task Force is to increase the number of opportunities for people with disabilities within state government. The responsibilities of the Task Force are to:

- Develop policies, strategies, and services designed to achieve the seven percent employment target.
- Establish a five-year plan with annual goals that will enable the state workforce to reach parity with the percentage of working-age people with disabilities in Louisiana.
- Provide guidance and other support to agencies and institutions of higher education on recruitment, retention, accommodation, and accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Recommendation: Create within City government an executive order that is modeled on the State executive order that focuses on enhancing the employment and hiring of individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The City of New Orleans is home to a significant number of individuals with disabilities. With approximately 10 percent of all residents being disabled, there is an opportunity to better serve these citizens, while at the same time empowering them to make meaningful contributions to the City through service in government.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: The City provides a variety of services and benefits to residents. To help ensure that residents are able to take advantage of available resources, groups like the Mayor's Advisory Council for Citizens with Disabilities (Council) help to ensure that there is compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Title II. Further supporting physical access, the City has enacted strict penalties for violation of disabilities parking laws.

HEALTHY FAMILIES COMMITTEE

Although the Council and parking laws work to ensure access for those with disabilities, there are other groups that are not covered by Title II, who often face challenges with accessibility. For example, transgender residents often have trouble accessing adequate health care, and those for whom English is a second language have trouble accessing services due to language barriers. In addition, people returning home from incarceration may have trouble accessing housing and other services. To ensure that City services are truly available to all residents, it is important to understand where the barriers are and what is being done to overcome them.

Recommendation: Complete a comprehensive accessibility assessment for the City of New Orleans to ensure universal access.

Rationale/Supporting Data: A comprehensive accessibility assessment will help to shed light on the areas where City services are being blocked by physical and/or policy-related barriers. In making sure that all residents can be supported, we can better ensure that the City is getting the maximum benefit from its investment of resources. Moreover, by better understanding what is preventing residents from being successful, we can know how to make changes that will ultimately help to improve New Orleans' communities. For example, by removing barriers to housing and employment for people returning home from incarceration, we can increase the chances they can remain with their families, successfully reintegrate back into the community, and make positive contributions to society.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: New Orleans has historically been home to residents who have immigrated from countries around the world. Since The City's founding, immigrants have played an important role in defining its unique food, architecture, music, and culture. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, immigrant workers were a critical part of the rebuilding effort.

Unfortunately, many immigrants often miss out on the services and programs that are available, due to language and cultural barriers that the City has, in many cases, not addressed. In addition, in many cases, immigrants may be hesitant to come to City government for help, as there may not be anyone there who understands or can address their concerns.

Recommendation: Embed an immigrant liaison within the new Office of International Affairs.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The creation of the Immigrant Liaison position will allow the City to better meet the needs of this important and growing segment of the community. In addition to providing much needed services and information to residents, the establishment of the position provides an important balance to the notion that government is primarily focused on enforcement-related activities when it comes to immigrant members of the community.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: New Orleans is home to a rich diversity of cultures, whose origins can be traced to countries from all over the world. With these cultures come an array of different languages and dialects. Whether it is Spanish, French, Vietnamese, or Haitian Creole, many New Orleans residents have a first language other than English, which can limit their ability to take advantage of City-related services and opportunities. According to the U.S. Census 2012-16, nearly 1 in 11 New Orleanians lives in a household where a language other than English is spoken.

The implication of this diversity of language is that the City has an opportunity to improve how it communicates with its residents, and in turn to be in a better position to meet their needs.

Recommendation: Develop/Implement a language access plan for residents with limited English proficiency for all municipal government services, programs, and activities; enhance access to City programs/services by providing information in a multilingual format.

Rationale/Supporting Data: By developing a language access plan and having multi-lingual formats for its communication, the City increases the accessibility for a significant number of residents. In addition, as New Orleans continues to expand the number of direct flights to and from international destinations, the City will become increasingly international in its tourist base. By having information at government parks and facilities in multiple languages, the City will also be more welcoming to visitors from other parts of the world.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: In 2012, the City of New Orleans undertook

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the monumental task of developing a comprehensive Behavioral Health Strategic Plan (Plan). The process of developing the Plan involved collaboration with dozens of community partners and staff from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), via the White House Strong Cities Strong Communities Initiative (SC2). The compilation of the Plan was marked by an unprecedented level of collaboration around the topic of behavioral health and resulted in the establishment of the Behavioral Health Council, which continues to convene today.

One of the earliest benefits of the Plan was a drop of 25 percent drop in the number of patients waiting to get psychiatric care in emergency rooms between 2012 and 2013. It has now been six years since the Plan was first released. As the department begins to prepare for the future, an examination of how well the City has done in following the Plan would be beneficial.

Recommendation: Determine the extent to which the City’s Behavioral Health Plan and/or elements have been fully implemented, and update the Plan based on current needs; give particular attention to youth, veterans, and persons returning from incarceration.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Most strategic plans are developed with a five-year implementation horizon to ensure that there is enough time to fully operationalized the plan and see results—but not so much time that there is loss of focus and departure from the original goals. With

the City now six years out, it would benefit from taking a close look to see what has been implemented from the Plan, and which areas have work that remains to be done.

Evaluating the Implementation Plan would, in particular, allow the City to see what progress has been made toward helping some of those who are often impacted the most, directly or indirectly, by behavioral health challenges: youth, veterans, and people returning home from incarceration. Having a solid foundation upon which to build, the City could then update the Plan to address the current, most pressing issues (e.g., the opioid overdose crisis).

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: The New Orleans Health Department plays a critical role in helping to shape public policy around health and healthcare-related issues in the City. It does so through direct services in some cases (e.g., Health Care for the Homeless) and through serving as a convener of service providers in others (e.g., the Behavioral Health Council). Recognizing how pressing the issues of mental/behavioral health and substance abuse have been, historically, and how the urgency around them continues to grow, finding dedicated, stable resources with which to address these challenges is critical. Currently, approximately 95 percent of the New Orleans Health Department’s (NOHD) funding comes from short-term, use-restricted grants, very little of which can be used to address mental health or substance abuse.



HEALTHY FAMILIES COMMITTEE

Recommendation: Identify funding sources/streams that sustain mental health and substance abuse services.

Rationale/Supporting Data: According to the City of New Orleans' 2018 Budget, 0.3 percent of the City's General Fund budget goes toward the NOHD's core functions. Given the importance of the NOHD's mission, the City could do more. To ensure that the NOHD is able to address the pressing issues around mental health and substance abuse, the City needs to find stable, long-term funding sources, which could include a larger allocation from the general fund. Although the City's partner organizations are able to address many of these issues, having additional resources under its direct control would allow the NOHD to do even more to address the problem, and to provide an even stronger complement to the work that its partners are doing.

RECOMMENDATION #7:

Context: Lethal drug overdoses are rising rapidly in New Orleans. In 2016 there were 211 deaths, more than double the number in the prior year. Most of the increase is the result of opioid overdoses. Death from drug overdose has recently surpassed murders as a cause of death in New Orleans for the first time in history. Naloxone is a life-saving medication that is easy to administer and which reverses the action of opiates.

Recommendation: Expand Naloxone access to prevent opiate overdose deaths. In addition:

- Designate an Opioid Response Officer to lead the overdose prevention effort.
- Train all NOPD officers on the use of Naloxone and commit to data transparency on its use and impact.
- Maximize distribution channels of Naloxone by exploring linkages with needle exchange programs, medical opioid prescriptions, and minimizing its cost to the user.
- Commit to rigorous data collection and analysis around overdoses and immediate linkage to care for non-fatal overdoses.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Collecting data on non-fatal overdoses will allow police and support service providers to better deploy resources to areas that need them. Having an officer dedicated to ensuring that all NOPD officers are trained in the use of Naloxone and carry it while on duty will help save lives and help combat this serious public health crisis.

RECOMMENDATION #8:

Context: The City of New Orleans is home to nearly 18,000 veterans, and in the City and surrounding areas, there are three military facilities. Historically, many veterans have faced unique challenges, especially those who have served in theaters where there was combat. Although the City has made important strides in addressing issues like chronic homelessness among veterans, there are still pressing needs around mental health and other issues

Recommendation: Create an Office of Veterans Affairs and designate executive/administrative personnel to address veterans-related issues.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Many veterans have difficulty navigating and accessing services and often find themselves coming to the City for help. Without dedicated staff and resources, many veterans leave without getting connected to the help they need.

In 2016, the City of New Orleans became the first major city to end homelessness among veterans as part of First Lady Michelle Obama's Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness. This was accomplished through effective coordination across a vast array of government and community partners. Creating an Office of Veterans Affairs would allow the City to systematically replicate the results of the model used to end homelessness across a variety of issues faced by veterans.

RECOMMENDATION #9:

Context: The City of New Orleans has a rich military history that spans more than two centuries. From the Battle of New Orleans in the War of 1812 to the American Civil War, to the building of the World War II era "Higgins Boats," New Orleans has been a key part of American military history. The modern-day strategic importance of New Orleans as a port city is evidenced by the housing of three military installations in and around the City.

Although it is home to the National WWII Museum, which is one of the most popular destinations in the City, there are few other places, events, or activities that celebrate the City's military history.

Recommendation: Foster an environment that celebrates the various branches of the military present within the local community.

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Rationale/Supporting Data: Given the City’s long-standing military history and the nearly 18,000 veterans who call New Orleans home, it is important that we celebrate this part of its community. New Orleans hosts dozens of festivals every year. Helping to create an environment that celebrates another important part of the City’s history and culture would be consistent with its festive spirit, while at the same time honoring the sacrifices that service men and women and their families make on a daily basis.

RECOMMENDATION #10:

Context: For too many members of the LGBTQ community, there have been instances of discrimination, harassment, and in some cases, actions that were much worse. As policy makers think carefully about how best to meet the full needs of this community, more information is needed upon which to make informed decisions.

Recommendation: Conduct a needs assessment for the LGBTQ community in partnership with community partners.

Rationale/Supporting Data: To better meet the needs of the LGBTQ community, it is important to understand what the needs are. Conducting a comprehensive needs assessment will provide insight into where barriers exist and what policy solutions might be effective in reducing or removing them. In conducting the assessment, it is important to include local residents and organizations in the process.

It is not uncommon for assessments of this kind to be conducted by highly-trained, very experienced firms that have little direct experience with populations in

“*The City of New Orleans is home to nearly 18,000 veterans.*”

New Orleans. In many cases local expertise is not sought, which limits the amount of insight that could be derived. Furthermore, it prevents opportunities for local organizations/businesses to benefit financially

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from the contracts and contribute to the communities which, in many cases, they have been serving for many years. Including local partners offers a chance for a richer understanding of the issues, while supporting and developing local talent and communities.

RECOMMENDATION #11:

Context: In 1989, the City established the Human Relations Commission. Since its formation, the Commission has worked to end discrimination and promote equal rights. The Commission has citywide authority and accepts complaints from all citizens and visitors to New Orleans who believe they have experienced discrimination. Currently, the Commission

has a small staff, which is responsible for fielding and addressing complaints from citizens. Due to its limited size, the Commission faces constraints on the amount of data it can collect and the enforcement actions it can take.

Recommendation: Expand discrimination-related data collection and strengthen enforcement capabilities within the Human Relations Commission (HRC).

Rationale/Supporting Data: There is an ongoing need to address discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. LGBTQ residents often live in fear and share reports of being targeted by rogue or uninformed members of the community, including law enforcement

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officers. Having sufficient resources to enforce existing regulations would help allay concerns about incidents of this kind and improve residents' perception of those charged with protecting and serving all citizens. The Commission also accepts complaints related to national origin/ancestry, physical condition/disability, and other factors. Because the City is increasing its focus on supporting immigrants and residents with disabilities, ensuring that there is protection from discrimination for these groups is also critical. Increasing the staffing at the Human Relations Commission and improving data collection will help ensure that when discrimination does occur, there are consequences for the perpetrators. Doing so will help deter future incidents and create a more inclusive and welcoming city.

RECOMMENDATION #12:

Context: The passage of the Affordable Care Act has provided health insurance to millions of Americans who otherwise would not have had it. This has made it possible for many more people to seek routine medical care, which has improved their health and their quality of life.

Sadly, even with these improvements to health care access, many members of the community are still routinely prevented from getting quality care. In particular, it is not uncommon for members of the LGBTQ community to face discrimination and/or ignorance from care providers. Improving knowledge and sensitivity among care providers would go a long way toward improving the experiences and ultimately health outcomes of these members of our community.

Recommendation: Promote LGBTQ inclusive health care in the City of New Orleans through publishing an LGBTQ health bill of rights and providing LGBTQ inclusivity training to health care providers.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Nationally, transgendered patients face significant discrimination: 28 percent have faced discrimination in healthcare, 19 percent have been refused healthcare, and 50 percent have faced provider ignorance. The evidence for New Orleans is currently anecdotal, but the needs assessment (also being recommended in this Report) will provide quantitative data. Given the likely widespread nature of this issue, providing training to health care providers would help address these issues and also reduce the stigma that many members of the transgender community feel when seeking medical care.

RECOMMENDATION #13:

Context: The proposed Office of Youth and Families (OYF) will serve as the City's central coordinating entity for policies that impacts families and young people. This includes coordinating with the New Orleans Public Library (NOPL), New Orleans Recreation Development Commission (NORDC), New Orleans Health Department (NOHD), and other government and community organizations that provide services and other benefits to youth and/or families.

Recommendation: Designate personnel within the proposed Office of Youth and Families (OYF) to address issues relevant to seniors.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Making sure that there is staff in the OYF that focus on senior-related issues will ultimately help strengthen families. Because seniors are often grandparents, aunts, and uncles who help to raise young people, they form an important part of many extended families. In many cases, they serve as the family's child care providers, which allows parents to work and avoid having to pay for expensive daycare, which in many cases it would be difficult if not impossible to afford. By dedicating staff time to focusing on senior-related issues, there is a more comprehensive approach to supporting families, which creates the greatest potential for success.

RECOMMENDATION #14:

Context: The City of New Orleans is in the midst of both a housing boom and a housing crisis. Over the last decade, downtown New Orleans has seen significant investment in luxury apartment buildings, restaurants, and other amenities. This growth and investment is also spreading to other neighborhoods like Central City, which has seen significant investment along Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. One of the important by-products of the investment is a rise in property values and the associated increases in rents. While this increase has had a definite impact on the City broadly, with more than a quarter of residents living below the poverty line, it has been especially challenging for those who often have the fewest resources with which to adapt. Many of these individuals are seniors.

Many of those who only few years ago were the teachers, social workers, coaches, and hospitality workers who supported New Orleans' industries and people, are now in their golden years. However, many of the seniors

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throughout the community are on fixed incomes. With rising rents and property taxes in many parts of the City, many neighborhoods that were once affordable, find the residents that have lived there most of their lives being unable to afford to stay in their homes.

Recommendation: Increase the amount of affordable and accessible senior housing.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Access to affordable and accessible housing is key to stability, health, and well-being. Making the long-term commitment and investment in affordable housing for seniors is an important part of protecting some of the most vulnerable members of the community. According to one study, using U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) standards, more than 60 percent of renters currently spend too much of their income on housing. Many of these residents are seniors.

RECOMMENDATION #15:

Context: Two of the biggest challenges facing people returning home from incarceration are finding housing and finding employment. Many of those coming home do not have a stable place to stay or family with whom they can live. Similarly, many people who are re-entering face significant barriers to getting a job, as, in many cases, employers are hesitant to hire someone with a criminal record.

In part, as a result of having limited options for generating income, 43 percent of those who have come home from incarceration in Louisiana will be rearrested within five years. To improve their chances for success, a better alternative is needed.

Recommendation: Expand transitional and permanent housing for persons returning home from incarceration through rehabilitation of blighted properties.

Rationale/Supporting Data: There are currently tens of thousands of blighted properties in New Orleans, with a significant number of them under the control of the City or the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA). Creating a program that would allow people returning home to work on rehabilitating blighted properties would allow them to build valuable masonry, carpentry, electrical, and other skills that could be applied to other jobs in the future. The rehabilitated properties could then

become transitional or permanent housing for others who are returning home. A program of this kind would have the benefit of creating both jobs and additional affordable housing.

RECOMMENDATION #16:

Context: People who are returning home from incarceration face a unique set of challenges. Having paid their debt to society, one would expect that there would be opportunities for those who want to contribute to their communities, to work and support their families. However, many people who have been incarcerated find that the situation upon their release is quite different. In many cases finding employment and housing is difficult. For those who have served lengthy sentences, being able to navigate their way through an increasingly technologically-based society can also be hard. In some cases, people have lost the right to vote and, depending what they served time for, they may be barred from certain kinds of jobs for life.

These factors and others, taken together, create a complex set of circumstances for those who are coming home. To be successful requires not only change to policies that create barriers but also service providers who understand and appreciate the difficulties faced by those who are navigating reentry.

Recommendation: Ensure appropriate qualifications, experience, and staffing to serve those returning home from incarceration.

Rationale/Supporting Data: It is important that staff responsible for helping those who are returning home from incarceration have backgrounds that allow them to identify with the people they are trying to help; this is one of the best ways to improve the chances that they will be successful. Anecdotal evidence suggests that when someone has been incarcerated themselves when someone who has recently been released approaches them for help, they are more likely to be trusted. This sense of empathy is key to providing not only information and guidance but also confidence and hope that they can be successful.

This is not to suggest that those who have not been incarcerated cannot be of service to those coming home. However, it is important that whoever is serving has a deep and meaningful appreciation for the complexity

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of the challenges faced during reentry. Given the many barriers that people returning home face, making their interactions with those who are trying to help them a little easier can go a long way toward coming home and ultimately staying home.

RECOMMENDATION #17:

Context: The United Way and other community organizations currently provide important information on resources related to health and social services, like social security, Medicaid, and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP). VIA NET 211, for example, is a referral service whose staff have access to a central repository of information on services and can connect residents to service providers that can help them. These programs are useful in addressing many of the common issues faced by members of New Orleans communities.

Although there are places that residents can go for many services, there are additional opportunities to broaden the scope of the kinds of information that are available. For example, it would be helpful if also included in the central repository was information on help with filing immigration-related paperwork or expungement of eligible offenses from a person’s record.

Recommendation: Engage in resource mapping of health, human, and social resources, services, and programs.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Having more comprehensive resource mapping will allow service providers to better coordinate the resources they provide to the community. By having a more complete shared resource from which providers who specialize in different areas can draw will help increase the likelihood of helpful referrals and more utilization of existing resources. Including additional categories of resources would also ensure that a larger portion of the population would benefit from the mapping.

In addition, having a central place that residents can go to get information on a variety of topics that most directly impact them will make it easier to get the help they need. (Note: this recommendation also helps support the recommendation from the Health and Wellness Subcommittee which deals with coordinating the efforts of “Social Navigators” who help residents get connected to resources specifically tailored to their needs.)

RECOMMENDATION #18:

Context: City and State agencies provide a vast array of important services to residents. In order to access them, many agencies require government-issued identification (ID). Unfortunately, many members of the community lack ID and obtaining it is often very difficult. For example, in order to get a State-issued ID, individuals have to have a physical address, which is not possible for members of the community who are homeless or who have recently returned home from incarceration. In other cases, transgender residents have reported difficulties obtaining identification that matches their gender identity, and some immigrants have also faced challenges.

Recommendation: Introduce municipal identification cards that could be used by individuals who might otherwise have difficulty obtaining government-issued IDs (e.g., transgender individuals, undocumented immigrants, and homeless members of the community).

Rationale/Supporting Data: In addition to having limited access to many government services, most banks do not allow residents without IDs to open an account, which can create safety and financial issues for residents who do not have a secure place to store their money. Introducing a municipal ID would help address many of these issues. Cities like Oakland, Chicago, New York, and others have already started issuing them.

EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Public education in New Orleans is currently undergoing a major transition. Already one of the most complex education systems in the nation, the New Orleans public school system is streamlining its decentralized collection of charter schools through a unification process that will bring all public schools back under the auspices of the locally-elected Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB). The unification process presents an opportunity for the City of New Orleans to strengthen coordination among the City, OPSB, and other youth and education-focused entities to improve outcomes for children and youth in the City.

New Orleans’ public schools have experienced significant improvements in student achievement since 2005. However, improvements in achievement outcomes have stalled. Graduation rates have dropped six percentage points since 2012, and student achievement on state

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standardized tests has plateaued. Additionally, nearly 17,000 students are enrolled at “D” and “F”-rated schools, which make up about 40 percent of New Orleans public schools. To improve the situation, it is essential that City-run entities that support positive educational and developmental outcomes for children and youth improve their coordination with New Orleans public schools (e.g., New Orleans Police Department (NOPD), New Orleans Recreation Department Commission (NORDC), and the New Orleans Public Library). Additionally, the City has an opportunity to play a significant role in improving the climate in the City for teachers, namely through: the use of incentives; a focus on home-ownership opportunities and affordable housing; and other strategies that help attract and retain teachers. Likewise, the City has a chance to improve the climate of the City for children and youth through strategies such as: improving youth-police interactions, expanding access to high-quality health care in schools, improving support for children with mental health needs, and increasing investments by key stakeholders (e.g., the philanthropic and business communities) in early childhood care and education.

The children and youth of New Orleans are the City’s greatest asset. Securing their future ensures a brighter future for us all.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to develop recommendations for improving coordination among the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB), Charter Management Organizations (CMOs) and the City government, with the aim of improving educational outcomes for all students. The subcommittee also identified ways that the City could support early childhood development and K-12 education.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Todd Battiste
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Subcommittee Facilitator/Analyst: Dr. Rashida Govan

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase investment in high-quality early childhood development and education to ensure adequate funding to support: universal Pre-K, grade level reading, early grade reading, summer learning, K-3 attendance, and services for children with disabilities.
- Establish incentives to help recruit and retain educators. Incentives could include: soft second mortgages and special real estate incentives; others might be introduced in collaboration with local partners in the form of discounts at local businesses, Arts Council events, the Audubon Zoo, and other local destinations.
- Partner with the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB), Delgado Community College, high schools, and the New Orleans Career Center (Career Center) to ensure that Career and Technical Education (CTE) training and curricula are available and inclusive of all New Orleans public school students. Ensure that the training provides a pathway (e.g., opportunity to



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earn certifications) to jobs in public service and high-wage and high-demand industries. (Note: this is a joint recommendation with the Workforce Development Subcommittee)

- The New Orleans Health Department and OPSB should help facilitate new partnerships between New Orleans public schools and Federally Qualified Health Centers to establish school health clinics in City schools.
- Provide joint training for law enforcement officers and school staff on adolescent mental health, facilitated by the National Association of School Resource Officers, in order to reduce school-based youth arrests.

these programs is the Cecil J. Picard LA 4 Early Childhood Program (LA4), which is a full day program that provides early childhood education to four-year-olds who come from low-income families. Another is the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) which provides financial support for childcare to low-income families while they are attending school or working.

Although programs like CCAP help create a better start for many children, budget pressures have resulted in cuts to the program which have reduced the number of families that have access to early childcare (from 40,000 served to 13,000 served). This has contributed to a drop in the number of available Pre-K seats in the City, which is not consistent with the needs of the community or changes in population.

Recommendation: Increase investment in high-quality early childhood development and education to ensure adequate funding to support: universal Pre-K, grade level reading, early grade reading, summer learning, K-3 attendance, and services for children with disabilities.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Orleans Parish has one of the most expensive home-based childcare costs in the state at \$930 per month. In addition, the number of pre-K seats dropped from 67 seats per 100 kindergartners pre-Katrina to 44 seats per 100 kindergartners (controlled for drop in population). Because access to high-quality early childcare and education has long-term positive impacts on young people and communities, it is critical that the City make additional investments in this area. Moreover, for every \$1 spent on early childhood development and education, \$1.78 is returned to the state's economy.

RECOMMENDATION #2:
Context: In the last 13 years, the City has seen a tremendous influx of new teachers. Many of them relocated to New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina to work at the many charter schools that were being established. During that same time, the City also experienced significant population growth, with many of those who had left the City returning home, and others from around the country moving here for the first time.

“*The children and youth of New Orleans are the City’s greatest asset. Securing their future ensures a brighter future for us all.*”

- Create an electronic resource for schools and families that promotes the New Orleans Recreation Development Commission (NORDC) and the New Orleans Public Library (NOPL) offerings. In addition, support the 3.14 mill Library millage renewal to maintain stable funding for NOPL services and programming.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: Research has shown that children who receive a strong Pre-K education do better in the K-12 school system than those that do not, and they have better life outcomes later on. Unfortunately, for many families, financial constraints limit access to high-quality early childcare and education. Recognizing the importance of providing a strong educational foundation, the state and federal government have made investments in programs that support early childhood education. One example of

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One of the byproducts of this growth has been an increase in the cost of the living, which in many cases has outpaced increases in wages. As a result, many people who started out as educators have subsequently left the field due to their difficulty in making a living as a teacher. Given the progress that has been made in student performance over the last decade, and the improvements that still need to be made, attracting and retaining excellent teachers will continue to be an important priority.

Recommendation: Establish incentives to help recruit and retain educators. Incentives could include: soft second mortgages and special real estate incentives; others might be introduced in collaboration with local partners in the form of discounts at local businesses, Arts Council events, the Audubon Zoo and other local destinations.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Recruiting and retaining excellent teachers is part of the foundation of a strong educational system. Although New Orleans has been able to attract talented individuals from around the country to teach in its schools, many leave the profession after only a few years. Although there are a variety of reasons people might choose to leave and pursue other options outside of teaching, financial considerations can certainly be a factor. For example, teachers in Orleans Parish spend about 27 percent of their salary on housing when renting.

Investments in education that make it easier to stay have long-term benefits. One of these benefits is having more veteran teachers in the classroom. Teachers with more experience are often more effective and able to deal with many of the complex social issues with which students have to contend (e.g., poverty and violence in their communities). In addition, creating incentives directed toward teachers would also be an acknowledgment of the important role that teachers play in our society.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: By 2024, the greater New Orleans area is expected to add 67,000 “middle-skill” jobs that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year degree. Current career and technical education (CTE) programs such as YouthForce NOLA and the State’s JumpStart program are increasing the number of young people earning industry-recognized credentials and engaging in work-based learning. However, there is still a need for more training providers to deliver CTE curricula to students.

Recommendation: Partner with the Orleans Parish School

Board (OPSB), Delgado Community College, high schools, and the New Orleans Career Center (Career Center) to ensure that Career and Technical Education (CTE) training and curricula are available and are inclusive of all New Orleans public school students. Ensure that the training provides a pathway (e.g., opportunity to earn certifications) to jobs in public service and high-wage and high-demand industries. *(Note: this is a joint recommendation with the Workforce Development Subcommittee)*

Rationale/Supporting Data: Currently, many jobs in the region require some postsecondary education or training but less than a four-year college degree. Parts of South Louisiana are experiencing an economic boom, with investments in natural gas and other areas creating thousands of new jobs. Partnering with the Career Center and Delgado Community College will help ensure that more students are aware of these opportunities and can better prepare themselves to take advantage of them.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: There are a variety of factors that impact a child’s ability to be successful in school: family support, financial resources, the quality of the school, and others. One of the most important factors, which is often overlooked, is the health of the students. Many children who have vision or hearing problems, for example, often have trouble performing in school, not because they lack talent, but because they have trouble seeing the board or hearing clearly what the teacher is saying. For children with more serious physical or mental health issues, the challenge is even more daunting.

Access to basic health care and screenings can go a long way toward identifying potential health problems early and keeping children healthy, and in their best shape to learn.

Recommendation: The New Orleans Health Department and OPSB should help facilitate new partnerships between New Orleans public schools and Federally Qualified Health Centers to establish school health clinics in City schools.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Barriers to health care negatively impact children, particularly children of color and children from low-income families. Having health care that is easy to access at schools has been shown to have a positive impact on students, and on their subsequent

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use of public assistance resources. Making it easier for children to get the medical care they need not only benefits their immediate health but also their longer-term prospects for success.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: The ability to effectively engage and/or support someone when they are in crisis is an important skill for employees of any public-facing agency. This is especially true for law enforcement when the decision whether to arrest someone or not can have an impact on the rest of their lives. An important aspect of deciding how to engage someone when a conflict has arisen, especially in a school setting, can be greatly influenced by a person's understanding of mental health.

An important example of this is that many of the children who are teenagers now and have been arrested while at school, may still be carrying the trauma associated with Hurricane Katrina, which they experienced as small children. Having law enforcement officers and other staff that understand the particular needs of this age group, and are equipped to support and engage them when they are in crisis, is critical to keeping children out of the criminal justice system and in the classroom.

Currently, some schools have School Resource Officers (SROs) who have received special training in mental health and dealing with adolescents. However, there are only a small number of them, and there is a pressing need to raise awareness of mental health-related issues among those that routinely interact with young people.

Recommendation: Provide joint training for law enforcement officers and school staff on adolescent mental health, facilitated by the National Association of School Resource Officers, in order to reduce school-

based youth arrests.

In addition, track and publish school-based arrest data and offer continuing education credit for NOPD officers who complete the training.

Rationale/Supporting Data: School resource officers (SROs) are excellent resources for schools and help appropriately respond to issues on campus, many of which are influenced by community incidents. The National Association of School Resource Officers makes training available to police officers and civilians for a relatively small fee of \$200 per person. Training 50 officers could be done for only \$10,000, which could be paid for through philanthropic or corporate sponsorship. For a relatively small investment, the City can take advantage of a great opportunity to help better bridge the divide between the law enforcement community and residents.

Tracking and publishing the data will help the City to measure its progress on reducing arrests, and offering continuing education credit to officers would encourage broader participation in the training.



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RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: There are several major entities in the City that are dedicated to serving children. Among them are the various charter school operators, the New Orleans Recreation Development Commission (NORDC) and the New Orleans Public Library (NOPL). Although each of these entities provides important resources to children and their families, historically there has been little coordination or information sharing among them. This is in part due to the decentralized nature of New Orleans' charter schools model. Although NORDC and NOPL provide a rich array of opportunities for children, many students do not know about them. There is an opportunity through improved coordination among the schools, NOPL, and NORDC to raise awareness and utilization of the services.

A critical part of maintaining these services is stable funding. This is especially true for NOPL, which receives a large portion of its funding from two millages: one 2.5 mills, which was introduced in 2015, and the other 3.14, which is set to expire in 2021. The renewal of the expiring millage, which contributes approximately \$9.5M to the Library's budget, is critical to the long-term sustainability of the system.

Recommendation: Create an electronic resource for schools and families that promotes New Orleans Recreation Development Commission (NORDC) and the New Orleans Public Library (NOPL) offerings. In addition, support the 3.14 mill Library millage renewal to maintain stable funding for NOPL services and programming.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Creating an electronic resource that students and their families can access through their schools has tremendous potential for raising the profile of NORDC and the Library. By making it easier for families to find out about the services available through these City entities, the City can better meet the needs of residents, and improve utilization of existing facilities.

To maintain and improve the services and facilities that are available, it is critical that existing funding levels be maintained. In particular, for the Library, the loss of

approximately \$9.5M through non-renewal of the 3.14 mill millage would be devastating to its ability to serve the public. Representing approximately half of the Library's budget, public support for renewing the millage will be extremely important to the continued functioning and success of the system.

“ Training 50 officers could be done for only \$10,000, which could be paid for through philanthropic or corporate sponsorship.”

HEALTH AND WELLNESS SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Over the past eight years, the City has moved away from the direct provision of health care services and positioned itself as one of the central conveners and coordinators of local health care providers. It is critical to continue to fine tune this strategy, which at its core is data and policy driven, with the primary aim of translating community health needs into shared responsibility, and to develop clear and deliberate actions to improve community health. By becoming the first accredited public health department in Louisiana, the New Orleans Health Department has already demonstrated its commitment to providing quality public health services.

Central to accomplishing this goal is a strong fiscal foundation. Currently, approximately 0.3 percent of the City's general fund budget goes to the Health Department's core functions, with 95 percent of the Department's budget coming from short-term, largely use-restricted grant funding. Critical to any effort to improve the Department's impact on the City's residents is obtaining stable, long-term funding. With an improved funding foundation, the Department could even more effectively adapt to and address the growing needs present in the communities.

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Historically, New Orleans has seen disparities among various populations, with perhaps the most striking being the more than 25-year difference in life expectancy between residents in the wealthiest and the poorest zip codes in the City. In attempting to address this and other pressing health-related issues, the Department has faced challenges, as many community members that might benefit from the Department's programs are unaware they exist. Part of this situation results from limited communication, both from the Department to the community and from the community to the Department.

As the NOHD looks to the future, it will be important that the Department remain in active conversation with the community and makes sure that engaged residents help inform the Department's initiatives, policies, and performance measures so that it can best address the evolving needs of all residents.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to conduct a

detailed review of the City of New Orleans Health Department and make recommendations for how the Department should be organized and function to best meet the health needs of area residents. As part of its work, the subcommittee also focused on identifying opportunities to launch health-related initiatives that could support the Department's mission.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Marsha Broussard
Takeisha Davis
Eric Griggs
Kia Byrd (Youth and Families)*
Michael Griffin
Tonia Moore
Charlotte Parent
Sean Legler*

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HEALTHY FAMILIES COMMITTEE

Subcommittee Facilitators/Analysts:

Corinna Yazbek, Cagney Sanders and Sharita Sims

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a funding and sustainability plan for the Health Department to address, in part, existing and new programs as well as support staff inside and outside the Department.
- Hire an epidemiologist who will establish the New Orleans Health Department (NOHD) as a hub for local public health data, in collaboration with the Louisiana Public Health Institute, the Data Center, and other data collecting agencies.
- Hire a full-time Health Department Communications Director to develop and implement a health communications strategy in coordination with the Mayor's Communications Office, to support robust community outreach and education.
- Create a community-based Health and Wellness Advisory Council to support the Department as a whole; ensure that residents are a part of all working groups including the Domestic Violence Advisory Committee (DVAC) and Behavioral Health Council (BHC); and explore opportunities to participate in or lead additional multi-agency, public health groups throughout the City.
- Develop an emergency response plan that is inclusive of nonessential City departments to assist with emergencies requiring public health and medical services.
- Create a strategy around developing a New Orleans Health and Social Resources Map and using a "Real-time Social Navigators" model that utilizes video portals that residents can access around the City. This strategy would involve assessing and supporting successful community efforts already underway.

SUMMARY OF ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Define a New Orleans Neighborhood Health Action Center, with a focus on the inclusion of resident-patient voices.
- Improve coordination with the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office across all departments.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: One of the most important aspects of the

functioning of any government agency is the stability of its budget. Departments with solid, predictable budgets are better able to conduct long-term, strategic planning and adapt to the changing needs of local residents. In recent years, the New Orleans Health Department (NOHD) has been able to successfully secure external funding to run many of its operations.

However, with 95 percent of its current funding coming from grants (State, federal, and private foundations), the Department finds itself in a potentially vulnerable position, as federal funding priorities shift and the health-related needs of residents increase (e.g., the dramatic recent increase in deaths from opioid overdoses). Within this context, there is a pressing need for the Department to identify stable, long-term funding sources to support its staff and programming. The success of other new initiatives and changes are greatly impacted by the Department's ability to meet this need.

Recommendation: Develop a funding and sustainability plan for the Health Department to address, in part, existing and new programs as well as support staff inside and outside the Department.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Currently, less than one percent of the City's annual budget supports the New Orleans Health Department. Although the NOHD has a relatively healthy amount of grant funding, with a significant portion coming from short-term awards, much of this funding is restricted and can only be used for specific purposes (e.g., Ryan White for HIV/AIDS). As a result, it can be difficult to adapt to the changing conditions in the community (e.g., the opioid crisis) when funding for those needs is uncertain.

Creating a sustainability plan will help stabilize the Department's funding streams and better position the NOHD to act strategically in addressing the needs of the community.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: One of the most important aspects of effective policy development is the availability of reliable and targeted data. The ability to analyze health-related data, and effectively dedicate resources based on it, is critical to making sure that the actual needs of residents are being met. There are a number of organizations that collect health-related data, including the Louisiana Public

HEALTHY FAMILIES COMMITTEE

Health Institute (LPHI) and the Data Center. While these organizations produce and publish important information on health, it is at times of limited use to the NOHD, since it may not be targeted toward getting answers to the questions that are most important to the Department.

The City currently coordinates a variety of health-related councils and working groups (e.g., the Behavioral Health Council). There is an opportunity for the Department to leverage its role as a central convener and position itself as a major resource for health data and information, further strengthening the ability to improve health literacy and outcomes.

Recommendation: Hire an epidemiologist who will establish the New Orleans Health Department (NOHD) as a hub for local public health data, in collaboration with the Louisiana Public Health Institute, the Data Center, and other data collecting agencies.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Health data in the City is currently captured inconsistently, in disparate databases, and at various government agencies and non-government organizations. NOHD currently lacks staff who can merge the data and provide expert analysis. Hiring an epidemiologist would fill this important need and enable the Department to make more informed decisions that are based on targeted data and analysis. This increased expertise within the Department would allow it to identify health and disease trends—specifically in New Orleans—that would provide insight into the actions the Department needs to take to better serve residents.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: In recent years, the New Orleans Health Department has made significant strides in establishing itself as an important resource for the City’s residents. As the first accredited public health department in Louisiana, and one of the few city-level health departments in the region (most health departments operate at the parish or county level), the NOHD is playing a critical role in improving the quality of life of New Orleans’ residents. However, many residents have shared that they do not have a clear sense of what information or health services are available through the Department or its partner organizations.

As with any public-facing agency, communication with the public is an important part of fulfilling its mission.

Recognizing this fact, the NOHD has allocated a staff position for a Communications Director. However, due to budget constraints, the position has remained unfilled. Some of the functions of the Communications Director’s role have been carried out through a centralized process, coordinated through the Mayor’s Office of Communications. Various staff members are usually assigned multiple departments with whom they coordinate on getting information out to the public.

Given the volume of information that needs to be considered for publication on a daily basis, this process can be slow for information that needs to be disseminated quickly and/or frequently (e.g., items that promote health literacy or disease prevention). Given the importance of getting health-related information into the community on an ongoing basis, there is a need and an opportunity to improve how this could be done.

Recommendation: Hire a full-time Health Department Communications Director to develop and implement a health communications strategy in coordination with the Mayor’s Communications Office, to support robust community outreach and education.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Currently, all health-related communications are coordinated through the Mayor’s Communications Office. The process involved can be lengthy and can create a bottleneck effect, that can sometimes slow the dissemination of time-sensitive public health information. By funding the Director of Communications position and developing a health communications strategy, the Department can improve its ability to reach residents and connect them to the information and services they need. In addition, by improving the Department’s outreach capabilities, it can make additional progress toward improving health literacy and building upon its prevention efforts.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: In recent years, the City has served as a central convener for a variety of groups dedicated to addressing important health-related issues in the community. The groups are primarily composed of service providers and those with policy expertise in related areas. The City coordinates the work of these groups to make sure they are working together to achieve better outcomes than they could if they were working independently. Examples of these groups include the Domestic Violence Advisory

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Committee (DVAC), the Behavioral Health Council (BHC), and the Trauma-Informed Schools Working Group. This improved coordination has enabled the City to have an impact in important policy areas, even though it does not directly provide services in those areas. For example, through the formation of the Behavioral Health Council, in one year, the group was able to reduce the number of patients waiting to get psychiatric care in emergency rooms by almost 25 percent.

Although the groups have had some success in addressing community-health issues, they have been limited in their membership. Currently, there is very little citizen, patient, client, or resident engagement or representation on the working groups or councils that NOHD convenes. As a result, these groups miss a critical perspective and source of input, namely those who use or have had difficulty using, the services being provided. By omitting this perspective, the City misses an opportunity to even further support residents because they do not have direct feedback and insight from those they may be trying to help.

Recommendation: Create a community-based Health and Wellness Advisory Council to support the Department as a whole; ensure that residents are a part of all working groups including the Domestic Violence Advisory Committee (DVAC) and Behavioral Health Council (BHC); and explore opportunities to participate in or lead additional multi-agency, public health groups throughout the City.

Rationale/Supporting Data:

By including more community perspectives, the Department can more effectively engage residents. Without those perspectives in influential and decision-making discussions, the NOHD can lose touch with the needs of a diverse community, particularly those systematically marginalized by systems and institutions. For example, the addition of voices of domestic violence survivors and those who have been impacted by mandatory arrest policies would improve both arrest and detention

policies and practices, as well as services provided in the community. The addition of voices of people who have experienced homelessness due to mental illness would provide valuable insight as the Behavioral Health Council assembles resources and identifies gaps in services.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: Whenever there is a major emergency situation, the Health Department establishes and staffs an emergency shelter in the City. During and after Hurricane Isaac, for example, while the power was out in many neighborhoods, residents with medical conditions that did not allow them to stay home without electricity, were able to stay at the shelter until it was safe to return home. Since many NOHD personnel are considered essential employees for emergency purposes, they are often called upon to provide support for these critical services. Due to the limited number of NOHD staff available, those that fill these roles often work long hours since the shelters operate continuously throughout the emergency. Aside from first responders (Police, Fire, Emergency Medical Services (EMS)), few other departments provide staff during emergency situations.

Recommendation: Develop an emergency response plan that is inclusive of nonessential City departments to assist with emergencies requiring public health and medical services.

“Through the formation of the Behavioral Health Council, in one year, the group was able to reduce the number of patients waiting to get psychiatric care in emergency rooms by almost 25 percent.”

Rationale/Supporting Data: Recent emergencies situations (e.g., the February 2017 tornadoes and August 2017 floods) have underscored the need for a robust

HEALTHY FAMILIES COMMITTEE

cadre of staff to be available for supporting residents when the need arises. Due to the constraints imposed by the size of its staff, when events happen, NOHD personnel are often overextended. Including additional departments, whose staff could be trained to serve in various capacities during the events, would greatly reduce the strain on NOHD personnel and increase the resources available to residents during these difficult periods.

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: Currently, there is a vast array of service providers in New Orleans. Whether through federal services offered by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, substance abuse support through local non-profits, or medical services through the City's Health Care for the Homeless, there are a variety of sources of help available to area residents. It is often the case, however, that many residents are unaware of the help that is available to them. In cases where they do know about a particular set of services they can access, they may not be aware of all of the other resources that are available. The same is often true of many clinicians, administrators, and service providers, who do not fully know the scope of resources that are available and that may be helpful for their specific clients and their unique needs.

A central source of information about the health and social resources that are available would be beneficial to providers and residents alike. This already exists to a limited extent and is being used by area groups like Louisiana's VIA NET 211, a referral service whose staff direct residents to service providers that can help them. However, there is a tremendous opportunity to expand the information available and coordinate with this group, and others using the model, to greatly expand the number of residents who can be reached.

Recommendation: Create a strategy around developing a New Orleans Health and Social Resources Map and using a "Real-time Social Navigators" model that utilizes

video portals that residents can access around the City. This strategy would involve assessing and supporting successful community efforts that are already underway.

The Department would:

- Create a comprehensive health and social resource map for New Orleans that includes organizations that are using real-time social navigators (i.e., staff that can help residents identify benefits and services for which they qualify, and also help connect them to those services).
- Identify gaps in services.
- Act as the coordinator of the providers of real-time social navigation (via video portals) and consider how NOHD could fill any gaps in services, either directly or in other ways.

When implemented, this would become a signature City health initiative.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Last year, 67,000 people called for assistance from Louisiana's VIA NET 211, and many citizens found this resource to be valuable. Similar programs in other cities also show promise. For example, health lines such as Boston's Mayor's Health Line have shown the potential to have significant uptake and effectiveness in connecting citizens to resources, including fielding 13,000 calls in 2017. Other resources, however, appear to be less utilized, when they do not involve talking to a live person. For example, the Fit Nola app has not had significant uptake over the original 1,000 downloads.

Creating a comprehensive map of services and using a social navigator model would be an effective way to connect residents to the services they need. Connecting them via video portals that would be located throughout the City, is an inexpensive way to broaden the potential reach of the service providers, and by extension, the impact of the Health Department.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

The pace of economic development in New Orleans has been accelerating over the past few years. However, not all members of the community who contribute to the economy are benefitting from those gains. The tools that the City can use to encourage, support, attract and spur economic development are limited, yet powerful – if used thoughtfully. The City has the opportunity to continue the current momentum of economic growth by ensuring that the people contributing to New Orleans’ cultural and social richness are also benefitting from the wealth generated, and have opportunities to grow, follow their dreams, and thrive.

The City has a portfolio of incentives at its disposal that is managed by several agencies and departments. These incentives range from tax incentives for developers to include affordable housing units in large-scale projects, to workforce development tax credits, to eligibility for additional programs or benefits. Currently, there is no central agency, office, department, or organization that oversees the entire suite of incentives or monitors each incentive to determine if the City is receiving a “return on investment” financially and/or socially. Many of these incentives are also complex, and require expensive, specialized expertise, and are not utilized to maximize the benefit for businesses of all sizes, or the interests of the City. With supervision, oversight, and accountability, the City’s existing incentives can be expanded, developed, and augmented to better serve the needs of both the private and public sectors.

The amount of talent and creativity of the people of New Orleans is virtually unrivaled; however, there is limited representation for the root culture bearers within communities. The vivid and unique culture of New Orleans has brought billions of tourism and hospitality dollars to the region, yet these communities continue to struggle to make ends meet. Incorporating the creative industries into government institutions and within leadership structures, is

the first step towards institutionalizing and formalizing this important sector of economic development.

The wealth of talent currently enjoyed is still only a fraction of New Orleans’ full potential – there are thousands of New Orleanians who would benefit from expanded workforce development programs, including programs specifically for vulnerable populations (such as at-risk youth and people returning from incarceration) but also for people who have stalled in their career tracks. With a small investment in education and training, there is an opportunity for people from all walks of life to grow and thrive.

Over the last ten years, national studies have highlighted the significant economic impact of small businesses, especially for job creation, as a vehicle for innovation, and providing a path for those who are having difficulty in the labor market. However, growing disparities between entrepreneurs of color and their majority counterparts in accessing markets, networks, and capital, continue to limit not only the growth and potential of minority-owned businesses, but also the City’s ability to reach its full economic potential.

New Orleans has also incubated a culture of entrepreneurship, and small businesses represent yet another way New Orleanians can utilize their talents

“*The amount of talent and creativity of the people of New Orleans is virtually unrivaled; however, there is a dearth of representation for the root culture bearers within communities.*”

to build the local economy. Coupled with a growing skilled workforce and the untapped talent of the creative industries, small business expansion, and supporting entrepreneurs would help drive economic development across the region.

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COMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of the Economic Development Committee was to develop actionable strategies to grow new jobs, retain existing jobs, and grow small businesses in New Orleans by preparing our citizens for employment opportunities and professional advancement in positions that are aligned with current industry needs and careers that present the greatest opportunity for growth in this region. Further, this committee presented well thought out recommendations to strengthen the creative industries by creating investment strategies that will facilitate the growth and financial viability of our cultural entrepreneurs. They will assess all of the incentives available to the City and recommend clear guidelines that will level the playing field and provide equitable access to any incentive provided by the City.

Committee Co-Chairs: Vaughn Fauria and Matt Schwartz
Project Manager: Liana Elliott

CITY INCENTIVES SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

The use of the tax abatements and other incentives offered by the City and state have been a critical part of the growth and rebuilding of the City. This has been particularly true in recent years, where the cost for new construction has in some cases outpaced property values. The use of government incentives has allowed many developers to complete projects that otherwise would not have been feasible.

While the use of incentives has played an important role, knowledge about and access to them have often been limited. This has resulted in a lack of use in some cases, and feelings of exclusion in many others.

One of the central challenges for the City has been obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the assets

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available to be leveraged as part of its incentive offerings and then to effectively communicate what the offerings are to those who might use them. Examples of this include limited clarity on which properties the City currently owns and federal funding that appears to be unused and could potentially be leveraged as an incentive mechanism. Additionally, although some improvements have been made in including more small businesses in local opportunities, many small business owners are unaware of what opportunities are available and have difficulties accessing those programs about which they do know. As the City continues to grow, it has an opportunity to more strategically plan and coordinate the use of its incentives to equitably attract, retain, and support new business investments and opportunities.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to conduct a substantial review of all incentives available to the City and recommend clear guidelines that will level the playing field and provide equitable access to any incentive provided by the City. These recommendations include requirements for accessing the incentive, obligations resulting from taking the incentive, and recommended enforcement actions that would result from non-compliance.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Will Bradshaw
Christy Slater
Annie Cambria
Joseph Exnicios
Ramsey Green
Dennis Lauscha
Kathleen Lunn

Subcommittee Facilitator/Analyst: Andrew Doss

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Use incentives to build innovative multi-sector partnerships that help make New Orleans a global water management industry incubator that produces effective water management solutions. Incentivize improved systematic local water management by individual residents, businesses, and developers.
- Operate at the “Speed of Business” and create a front door “concierge” to serve as the shepherd for all economic development and City incentives in New

Orleans. This includes creating a map of all incentives to increase access, transparency, and equity, and to streamline duplicative roles to facilitate dynamic economic diversity. Additionally, ensure that there are clearly defined and measurable accountability markers for all recipients of City incentives, and that compliance is enforced.

- Create a comprehensive land-use strategy that includes an inventory of all City-owned sites and leased building spaces to identify the best use and available incentives for each site. In addition, include other key indicators about property status, such as blight indicators and potential eligible tax credits and incentives. Identify sites and develop appropriate City incentives packages to spur mixed-use/housing development, corporate attraction, large-scale public investments, and large-scale “catalytic” projects working in collaborative clusters. In the package also address blight elimination, including the reinstatement of Sale of Adjudicated Properties (SOAP) and Donation of Adjudicated Properties (DOAP).
- Incentivize greater employment opportunities for hard-to-employ individuals by promoting and advertising Louisiana Workforce Commission’s Work Opportunity Tax Credits (WOTC) and Fidelity Bonds to increase employer awareness of their existence; create matching/parallel City tax credits for usage of state WOTC; implement a benchmark/mandate for 10 percent of the City workforce to be hard-to-employ individuals; and provide ancillary benefits such as RTA passes for work transportation for hard-to-employ individuals.
- Assign a single agency to develop, coordinate, and oversee a best-in-class incentive program to support housing production and preservation (The Finance Authority of New Orleans (FANO) is recommended). Develop permanent affordable housing production and preservation programs and establish priorities for populations served by these programs (e.g., low-income, housing unstable, and people returning home from incarceration). Prioritize projects that incorporate smart growth, universal design, transit-oriented development, mixed-use and/or energy efficiency principles. Replace current tools with more transparent and accessible programs.
- Create a comprehensive, collaborative strategy to specifically incentivize business growth and attraction, including a recurring Business Attraction Fund.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: Globally, use of collaborative partnerships across geography and sectors is a new, emerging approach to incentives. This trend is occurring alongside traditional strategies such as clustering and identifying special economic zones. Partners are keenly interested in strategic incubation space, and are seeking other partners to serve a growing global market of water management.

New Orleans is highly attractive to entrepreneurs and innovators. The City has thriving entrepreneurial support from institutions such as Propeller and Idea Village, and new visionary leadership at the Port of New Orleans, which is eager to collaborate, innovate, and leverage assets to create incentives for turning New Orleans into a global leader in water management.

However, an outdated approach to City incentives and managing stormwater; challenges faced by infrastructure agencies and limited collaboration, has prevented New Orleans from exploring locally applied water management innovations, and growing into an industry world leader.

Recommendation: Use incentives to build innovative, multi-sector partnerships that help make New Orleans a global water management industry incubator that produces effective water management solutions. Incentivize improved systematic local water management by individual residents, businesses, and developers.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The City currently has the right water management plans (Living with Water; 2017 Louisiana Coastal Master Plan, etc.). With the right incentives and strategic partners, the City has the opportunity to position itself as a global leader in this important industry.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: Currently, there is no one place that business, developers, site selectors, and residents can go to understand what opportunities they might be able to take advantage of in order to conduct business in New Orleans. Opportunities are likely missed as the cost of entry is too high given the various processes that must be navigated.

Getting through the Safety and Permits process sometimes acts as a disincentive for business and development. There a need to remove the uncertainty and lack of coordination among entities/agencies that need to sign off on technical aspects of permitting.

Recommendation: New Orleans should operate at the “Speed of Business” and create a front door “concierge” to serve as the shepherd for all economic development and City incentives in New Orleans. This includes creating a map of all incentives to increase access, transparency, and equity, and to streamline duplicative roles to facilitate dynamic economic diversity. Additionally, ensure that there are clearly defined and measurable accountability markers for all recipients of City incentives, and that compliance is enforced.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Economic and real estate development appear ad hoc, with little to no coordination or communication between City and quasi-public boards and commissions; there currently is not a single focus point for entry by the public or for articulating the City’s economic development vision to a wider audience.

The online permitting system for some permits is a good step in the right direction. Moving relevant sign-off agencies inside City government to the One Stop Shop was a vast improvement. There are too many entities each with little power to get any one thing done (e.g., the Industrial Development Board (IDB), the Downtown Development District (DDD), the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA), Finance Authority of New Orleans (FANO), the New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA), the New Orleans Building Corporation), and even those inside City government may not fully understand the relationship map and overlap of these various groups and their responsibilities.

Resources are applied in an ad hoc manner spreading minimal resources too widely and opportunities for synergy are likely missed. With no centralized vision, there is little to no coordination with other public agencies with resources (especially land), such as the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) and the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO).

There is limited transparency into the permitting process, which appears uncoordinated, resulting in delays and additional costs. Often key agencies are missing from

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current planning advisory committee meetings, and there is not a requirement that issues are flagged at the beginning of the process. Creating a map and a front door concierge would help address many of these issues.



RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: Publicly held land is one of the most critical resources for driving new investment in a city, and there is currently no good system for using it. This is, in part, a result of no full understanding of where it is and who owns it. Public land is also one of the most effective resources for creating public benefits such as affordable housing, blight elimination, and stimulating new investment.

Recommendation: Create a comprehensive land-use strategy, that includes an inventory of all City-owned sites and leased building spaces to identify the best use and available incentives for each site. In addition, include other key indicators about property status, such as blight indicators and potential eligible tax credits and incentives. Identify sites and develop appropriate City incentives packages to spur mixed-use/housing development, corporate attraction, large-scale public investments, and large-scale “catalytic” projects working in collaborative clusters. In the package also address blight reduction, including the reinstallation of Sale of Adjudicated Properties (SOAP) and Donation of Adjudicated Properties (DOAP).

Rationale/Supporting Data: A vision for economic development either requires resources or incentives that spur private investment – but these are limited in application, in part, to avoid draining the City’s tax revenue. However, there are a wealth of resources in public land that can be used to incentivize economic development and generate tax revenue.

By inventorying what resources already exist and creating an overarching development plan for public sites, this can be used as one of the most effective incentives. It will

also give the City invaluable new tools for building a new vision for economic development. In addition, it will make it easier for people to invest in the City and leverage its public resources to support new projects that drive value both on those sites and around them.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: There are several programs that exist to incentivize employment opportunities for hard-to-employ individuals, including programs for: people who have returned home from incarceration, veterans, individuals dishonorably discharged from the military, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients, people recovering from substance abuse issues, public assistance recipients, and economically disadvantaged youth and adults who lack work history or have poor financial credit.

Both the WOTC and Fidelity Bonding programs are currently available through the Louisiana Workforce Commission. The Fidelity Bond can be activated as early as the employee’s first day of work. Both programs incentivize employers to hire hard-to-employ individuals by minimizing the risk to the employer; however, very few employers are taking advantage of these incentives across the State.

Recommendation: Incentivize greater employment opportunities for hard-to-employ individuals by promoting and advertising Louisiana Workforce Commission’s Work Opportunity Tax Credits (WOTC) and Fidelity Bonds to increase employer awareness of their existence; create matching/parallel City tax credits for usage of state WOTC; implement a benchmark/mandate for 10 percent of the City workforce to be hard-to-employ individuals; and provide ancillary benefits such as RTA passes for work transportation for hard-to-employ individuals.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Ideally, employers of all sizes would utilize these existing incentives to hire individuals who are perceived as hard to employ, increasing economic opportunities for both the employer and job seeker. The ultimate vision would be that employers’ experience with the incentives and the success of their employees would be lucrative enough that they would adjust their hiring practices to include targeted approaches to hiring and supporting hard-to-employ individuals. The City could support WOTC credits and Fidelity Bonds by promoting awareness (i.e., speeches,

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media campaigns) and augment these programs with matching or parallel City incentives for participating in these programs and/or providing complementary benefits not covered by existing programs (i.e., providing supplemental trainings, resources, opportunities such as transportation or child care assistance).

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: The current housing development system is decentralized, involving at times the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) Commission, the City Council, the State Board of Commerce and Industry, Louisiana Housing Corporation (LHC), the State Bond Commission, the City's Office of Community Development, NORA, the State Office of Community Development, and FANO. Each of these agencies has limited communication with the others, which makes for an often hard to navigate, duplicative, inefficient process. In addition, it is hard for the City to establish clear priorities because the other groups do not necessarily buy-in, and incentives cannot be used in a targeted way to address specific issues. Having a central coordinating entity would be beneficial in helping to maximize the impact of the existing incentives.

Recommendation: Assign a single agency to develop, coordinate, and oversee a best-in-class incentive program to support housing production and preservation (FANO is recommended). Develop permanent affordable housing production and preservation programs and establish priorities for populations served by these programs (e.g., low-income, housing unstable, and people returning home from incarceration). Prioritize projects that incorporate smart growth, universal design, transit-oriented development, mixed-use, and/or energy efficiency principles. Replace current tools with more transparent and accessible programs.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The existence of multiple, uncoordinated agencies that are actively responsible for housing developments, has resulted in the hodge-podge of projects and incentives that exist today. Without centralized oversight and coordination, the City cannot ensure these incentives are fair, effective, or good investments that meet real needs for the community. In other municipalities, where a single agency manages multiple programs on this front, they are able to effectively and systemically address multiple issues and build private and public value through their planned and rational investments in housing stock.

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: The region has a number of strengths that can serve as the foundation for improved economic growth. There have been recent successes (e.g., the successful recruitment of DXC Technologies to the City) that can be built upon to generate momentum. However, the City currently lacks a well-publicized targeted strategy. There are many different parties involved, often times not working in a coordinated fashion, sometimes at odds. Existing programs lack transparency and are at times difficult to navigate and access.

Recommendation: Create a comprehensive, collaborative strategy to specifically incentivize business growth and attraction, including a recurring Business Attraction Fund.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The City is not using or maximizing all of the tools it has at its disposal. Ideally, the City would have a comprehensive, collaborative strategy for incentive programs that are focused, accessible, and functional to stimulate activity. These would help grow overall prosperity, and improve quality of life for the community and region. They would also grow core sectors of the economy while helping to attract new industries and businesses to the region. Fundamental to the vision is regional collaboration among a diverse group of stakeholders.

The City needs to collaborate with other interested parties (Greater New Orleans, Inc., NOLABA, the Business Council of New Orleans, and others) to create an actionable strategy for business attraction and to expand and sustain the Business Attraction Fund over time (e.g., tax increment financing, millages, etc.). Overall they City would benefit from leveraging existing resources and industries (the Port of New Orleans, medical centers, universities, hospitality industry, etc.) to identify clusters with maximum growth potential, and reworking existing programs to improve efficiency and accessibility (e.g. PILOT, permitting, etc.). Lastly, the strategy could align education and workforce development programs to develop the labor pool necessary for this growth to be sustainable.

JOB GROWTH AND RETENTION SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

This is a pivotal moment for job growth and retention in the City of New Orleans. Internally, there have been structural reforms since Katrina that are setting the stage

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for a new vision. The Prosperity NOLA program has led to a major centralization of economic development through the public-private partnership of the New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA), merging operations with the City's former Network for Economic Opportunity, and collaborating with the New Orleans Workforce Development Board.

There has been a major focus on economic diversification in emerging industries, especially through the biosciences and health innovation and digital media software and technology industries. Strategic land use and incentives have attracted large firms with the potential for creating thousands of quality jobs. This type of industrial and geographic clustering can establish New Orleans' place within the regional, national, and global context.

The Anchor Collaborative of 15 major anchor institution employers, including universities and hospitals, has been established to expand economic opportunity to disadvantaged job seekers and businesses, especially working alongside a number of rising workforce intermediaries such as YouthForce NOLA, StriveNOLA, and Operation Spark. Additionally, there has been a focus on prioritizing DBE firms with greater accountability and place-based programming such as in the Claiborne Corridor.

With these components in place, the City finally has the economic development infrastructure and vision needed for moving forward together into a new era of job growth, expansion, and retention.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to assess current public and private job growth and develop a set of actionable recommendations to create job opportunities that pay average and above average wages, identify and align strategic training opportunities, and develop opportunities to leverage the City's resources and partnerships to grow, scale, and retain business and industry in New Orleans.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Crystal McDonald
Leah Brown
Julio Guichard
Tara Hernandez
Ben Butler
David Darragh
Skipper Bond
William Khan
Merritt Lane
Carol Markowitz
Aaron Miscenich



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Subcommittee Facilitator/Analyst: Andrew Doss

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish an Industrial Innovation District for an advanced manufacturing, logistics, and distribution hub utilizing over 8,000 acres of strategically located underutilized industrial land owned by the Port of New Orleans, the entire New Orleans Regional Business Park, and the Michoud Assembly Center.
- Establish a Mayor’s Office of Global Engagement that will directly attract, grow, and retain quality jobs in global business. (this recommendation supports the City Incentive Subcommittee’s recommendation related to the same theme)
- Create or identify a New Orleans Business Concierge or “New Orleans Front Door” as the first place existing and prospective businesses go for direction to navigate the New Orleans’ business environment. (Note: this recommendation supports the City Incentives Subcommittee’s recommendation related to the same theme)
- Establish New Orleans as a global leader and incubator in the increasingly significant Water Management Industry, providing high-quality jobs, and giving a single person or agency the authority and accountability to develop, oversee, and implement a centralized strategic plan, including the full package of incentives. (Note: this recommendation supports the City Incentives subcommittee’s recommendation related to the same theme)
- Commit to developing high-quality jobs in the growth industry of solar power by creating local sales, installation, and maintenance jobs in the solar industry by requiring that Entergy New Orleans achieve a certain percentage of all their energy generation from renewable energy sources. Recruit solar panel manufacturers, domestic and foreign, to set up a solar panel manufacturing facility in New Orleans, particularly in the wake of the President’s new tariffs to encourage the development of new U.S. manufacturing plants.
- Develop a ten-year food-centric master plan that aims to enhance quality and quantity of jobs that

align with existing community talents and build on the City’s unique assets.

- Set New Orleans on a path to become a “smart city” to stay competitive, boost quality of life for its citizens, improve business functionality, and spur job growth and retention (Smart City Nola). Do this by:
 - Conducting an overall assessment of New Orleans’ past and existing smart city projects and initiatives (plans, departments, staff and vendors involved).
 - Hiring a Chief Technology Officer (CTO) & Chief Data Officer (CDO).
 - Conducting an assessment of New Orleans’ smart city-related needs.
 - Developing a NOLA Smart City Strategy.
 - Conducting an assessment of existing data and how it is managed.
 - Identifying potential big data partners with philanthropic arms to help us (e.g., Amazon, IBM, Google).
 - Develop and present a compelling reason for new partners to invest in New Orleans.
 - Contracting with data experts rather than keeping smart city projects in-house.
 - Tapping local technology companies and universities to help support the process (e.g., Geocent).

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Utilize vacant City properties to provide low-fee building space rental for small business owners/entrepreneurs.
- Assess workforce needs in research, clinical, and business communities to enhance/increase the development of programs to attract high school and college students.

“There are currently 8,000 acres of land that are not developed but located near valuable resources.”

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- Promote a more sustainable type of tourism by targeting family, cultural, and international tourists to grow higher quality businesses and jobs with a focus on Bourbon St.
- Make New Orleans “A City Built from Art” by using City purchasing power to buy all appropriate City materials from local artists.
- 1) Commission a strategic plan for the next generation of New Orleanians to have a strong, equitable economy, with quality job opportunities. 2) Structure a position in the Mayor’s Office: Director of Next Generation Strategic Development a.k.a “Ombudsperson of the Future.”

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: There are currently 8,000 acres of land in the City that are not developed but located near valuable resources. This provides competitive advantages for industry growth and attraction and could serve as a vibrant, catalytic hub/cluster for advanced manufacturing, transportation, and distribution, and various value-added industries.

Recommendation: Establish an Industrial Innovation District for an advanced manufacturing, logistics and distribution hub utilizing over 8,000 acres of strategically located underutilized industrial land owned by the Port of New Orleans, the entire New Orleans Regional Business park, and the Michoud Assembly Center.

Rationale/Supporting Data: This District will assist in redeveloping two priority areas of development for New Orleans East and the Lower Ninth Ward. These areas have been lagging in business development despite the availability of land, and their strategic locations which provide access to water, rail, and truck routes. The manufacturing, transportation, distribution and other value-add industries provide opportunity for job growth in areas with 37 percent higher than average wages across all skill sets. This will create opportunities to expand and increase Louisiana exports, which drive new local businesses and international markets, by activating vacant parcels; this will also provide positive benefits for families, businesses, and communities.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: New Orleans has an opportunity to be a global player by galvanizing the efforts of its many consuls, honorary consuls, and sister cities around the world.



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The significance and influence of cities is growing around the globe, and many competitive cities have established offices of global engagement. The City has yet to establish such an office. China and Argentina are among the delegations actively interested in working with the City of New Orleans.

Recommendation: Establish a Mayor's Office of Global Engagement that will directly attract, grow, and retain quality jobs in global industries.

Create a "one-stop shop" for all activities involving global engagement. It would seek to positively grow New Orleans' global profile in all areas (business, the arts, and the cultural economy, etc.). It would follow the most innovative best practices used by similar offices around the world.

Rationale/Supporting Data: There has been a loss of structural focus on New Orleans' international relations as a "global city." Unfortunately, this has occurred during an emerging era of globalization. While the Port and World Trade Center have taken over some of these responsibilities from the City, it is important to have the City government as a central, active participant in global affairs.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: There are a number of resources for developers and small businesses interested in doing business in the City. However, there currently is not a single "front door" that all businesses know to engage when they are ready to begin. This function is currently being managed by groups like the New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA) and Greater New Orleans Inc., but small business owners are not necessarily directed straight to one or the other based upon their own personal referrals.

There is an opportunity for NOLA Front Door to become a trusted resource for small business owners and developers, and for New Orleans will be viewed as an even more business-friendly city.

Recommendation: Create or identify a New Orleans Business Concierge or "New Orleans Front Door" as the first place existing and prospective businesses go for direction to navigate the New Orleans' business environment. (Note: this recommendation supports the

City Incentives subcommittee's recommendation related to the same theme)

Rationale/Supporting Data: A business concierge service could help solve problems and remove barriers to doing business in the City. It could help further improve coordination among economic development agencies, one of which could serve as the "front door" to which others could link businesses, where appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: Cities and regions around the world are facing water problems similar to New Orleans', and new industries are emerging. If New Orleans takes the lead, it can partner internationally to become a global industry leader, particularly as an incubator for solutions the whole world needs. By providing incentives for international companies to develop solutions here, we benefit from their expertise in helping to address our challenges. They also benefit by having an opportunity to innovate in way that can later be applied in other places around the world.

There is new, visionary leadership at the Port of New Orleans eager to collaborate, innovate, and leverage assets. There are also data and accountability agencies in place such as the Data Center, the Bureau of Governmental Research, and the New Orleans Office of Inspector General. Post-Katrina there have been many additions and local institutions such as the Water Institute of the Gulf and Central Gulf Ocean Observing System (CENGOOS), along with thriving entrepreneurial support (i.e., Propeller, The Idea Village, etc.). With these components in place, New Orleans is in the perfect place to become a global leader in the Water Management Industry.

Recommendation: Establish New Orleans as a global leader and incubator in the increasingly significant Water Management Industry providing high-quality jobs, and give a single person or agency the authority and accountability to develop, oversee, and implement a centralized strategic plan, including the full package of incentives. (this recommendation supports the City Incentive subcommittee's recommendation related to the same theme)

Rationale/Supporting Data: The City currently has a number of solid water management plans, which include Living with Water and the 2017 Louisiana Coastal Master Plan. The City also has an opportunity to use existing

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funding to support these kinds of plans, which presents a rare opportunity to make widespread positive change.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: There is an opportunity to be seized for immediate- and long-term, sustainable job creation in the growth industry of solar power. Thanks to the success of the State tax credit program for 2010-2015, there have already been several well-established local solar companies in New Orleans. However, there is much room for growth.

Currently, Entergy New Orleans sources nearly all of its energy from fossil fuel-based sources, which impacts the environment negatively and exacerbates coastal erosion. Although Entergy New Orleans is regulated by the New Orleans City Council, there are other tools available to the Executive branch to encourage development in the solar industry, such as: adopting policies to convert City-owned facilities to renewable energy, creating a solar renewable energy credits (SRECs) marketplace, and/or developing a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for large utility-scale renewable energy infrastructure. Such initiatives would necessitate local jobs in sales, installation, and maintenance of these renewable energy systems, thereby leading to significant local job creation.

Recent tariffs placed on all solar panels manufactured abroad have foreign manufacturers increasingly interested in establishing manufacturing facilities in the U.S. New Orleans should be a particularly appealing location due to its connectivity (water/rail/interstate) to other markets, low cost of labor, and City incentives.

Recommendation: Commit to developing high-quality jobs in the growth industry of solar power by creating local sales, installation, and maintenance jobs in the solar industry by requiring that Entergy New Orleans achieve a certain percentage of all their energy generation from renewable energy sources. Recruiting solar panel manufacturers, domestic and foreign, to set up a solar panel manufacturing facility in New Orleans, particularly in the wake of the President's new tariffs to encourage the development of new U.S. manufacturing plants.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Enhancing and advancing solar power as a business would help establish New Orleans as a leader in the renewable energy industry, particularly as the City will be affected more immediately

and dramatically than most others by climate change. Local renewable energy jobs will be created as a result.

This is a global growth industry with a growing market. It is naturally suited to be here because of logistics and trade assets (port, rail, airport, and road) that would attract strong companies. Dozens of states and cities around the country already have similar requirements in place for their utilities, which have helped to drive the large-scale adoption of renewable energy sources and an increase in local jobs in the renewable energy industry. New Orleans could review the various programs and come up with the most effective way to create similar successes locally. Once the program is in place, local job creation would ensue to fill the demand created by the requirements.

A Chinese solar panel manufacturer (Jinko Solar) just agreed to build a new solar panel manufacturing facility in Jacksonville, FL, thanks to the incentives offered by their City Council. The facility is projected to create 800 jobs. Hattiesburg, MS provided incentives for a solar panel manufacturing facility years ago which began operation in 2011 and has created and maintained hundreds of local jobs. If Jacksonville, FL, was able to recruit an 800-job solar manufacturing firm, New Orleans could do something similar due to its attractive connectivity and swaths of undeveloped land such as that in New Orleans East.

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: New Orleans owns many keys to success: its rich culinary heritage; geographical connectivity to the global supply chain via the Port; and established entities across education, entrepreneurship, and policy.

There is an assumed concentration of jobs/economic output along the food value chain "on the plate" in New Orleans. However, the City lacks a master plan to develop the "food economy" that will help the City and key stakeholders in the food system/economy to better coordinate efforts and maximize investments of time and resources toward achieving substantive and scalable impact. There is an opportunity for the City to create significant value via effective planning, coordination, and support within the ecosystem.

Recommendation: Develop a ten-year food-centric master plan that aims to enhance quality and quantity of jobs that align with the existing community and build on the City's unique assets.

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Rationale/Supporting Data: There has been a shift towards cooperation and collaboration across key stakeholders in the system such as the EMPLOY collaborative, as well as the New Orleans Food Policy Advisory Committee. In addition, there is greater focus and investment in food and hospitality entrepreneurship like those of Valmiki Capital and Tulane’s AB Freeman School of Business. However, the limited expertise in and access to federal funding, and fractured efforts among groups that are not scalable, have failed to advance the expansion of specific sectors of the food system.

There are multiple case studies detailing specific examples of how cities have been successful with food strategies that leverage their unique assets, including Revolution Foods in Oakland (now a \$50M company that serves more than 120,000 school meals per day and employs 750 people nationally), and New York City’s Green Cart initiative creating entrepreneurial opportunity while promoting healthy food education/consumption. Similarly, commitment to a food economy provides an opportunity to leverage the City’s purchasing power, akin to the Source Detroit procurement initiative that helped move \$16.5M in contracts to Detroit-based businesses including those in the food cluster.

RECOMMENDATION #7:

Context: The push to become a “smart city” is already underway, with the City Council passing a resolution asking its legal and technical advisors to examine what smart city technologies could be deployed and their cost. To be considered, cities must own and have access to 85 percent of their data. The City of New Orleans has existing data that can be mined from City-established websites; data-driven.nola.gov, 311explorer.nola.gov, BlightSTAT, NoticeMe, Roadwork.nola.gov. There have been some successful efforts using data to distribute 18,000 smoke detectors in fire-vulnerable homes around the City. Though the data is available, it is not currently centrally located or managed.

Recommendation: Set New Orleans on a path to become a Smart City Model by 2030 to stay competitive, boost

quality of life for its citizens, improve business functionality and spur job growth and retention. Do this by:

- Conducting an overall assessment of New Orleans’ past and existing smart city projects and initiatives (plans, departments, staff and vendors involved).
- Hiring a Chief Technology Officer (CTO) and Chief Data Officer (CDO).
- Conducting an assessment of New Orleans’ smart city-related needs.
- Developing a NOLA Smart City Strategy.
- Conducting an assessment of existing data and how it’s managed.
- Identifying potential big data partners with philanthropic arms to help us (e.g., Amazon, IBM, Google).
 - Develop and present a compelling reason for new partners to invest in New Orleans.
- Contracting with data experts rather than keeping smart city projects in-house.
- Tapping local technology companies and universities to help support the process (e.g., Geocent).

“*There have been some successful efforts using data to distribute 18,000 smoke detectors in fire-vulnerable homes around the City.*”

Rationale/Supporting Data: New Orleans currently finds itself behind other cities in terms of technology infrastructure and data management. Data is not centralized and is spread out among many departments. While the City is trying to support a technology/digital media industry, its efforts are constrained due to its technology infrastructure.

Quality jobs are created by smart city projects. Smart city projects improve quality of life (public safety, public transit, traffic, etc.) and business functionality (city communication, permitting, energy efficiency, etc.), both of which help attract new business investment, talent, and families.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

The City of New Orleans is home to a vast and diverse array of talented residents. Many New Orleanians are eager to contribute to the growth and prosperity of the City and to their own financial well-being but may lack the professional skills they need to advance. Efforts around workforce development have often focused on youth and residents who have historically faced challenges finding employment. This approach has been critical to addressing some of the disparities that have been present for many years. The sobering statistics on African American male employment—though showing improvement in recent years—are a reminder that opportunities still exist for creating a more equitable economic landscape for residents. However, there are also opportunities to create better options for those who are currently employed, and who wish to advance their careers, but who cannot see a path forward.

In addition, there are entities both inside and outside of government that support workforce development. However, these groups have historically coordinated on a limited basis, and the results they have collectively achieved have similarly been limited. The recent integration of the Network for Economic Opportunity into the New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA) was an important move toward improving coordinating efforts. However, additional collaboration between the City, Louisiana Workforce Development Commission, NOLABA, the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB), and the New Orleans Career Center, locally and at the state level, has the potential for even greater successes.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

This subcommittee was tasked to propose comprehensive workforce development solutions that will prepare citizens for a broad range of career/trade/job-readiness pathways that are aligned with current industry needs and careers that present the greatest opportunity for growth in this region. In addition, this subcommittee reviewed the Orleans Parish School Board's Career and Technical Education (CTE) program and developed actionable recommendations to fully integrate this program into the comprehensive solution.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Emily Arata
Arnel Cosey
John Fraboni
Thelma French
Claire Jecklin
Todd McDonald
Margaret Montgomery-Richard
Bryan Moore
Sunae Villavaso
Darian Sly

Subcommittee Facilitator: Lelia Gowland

Subcommittee Analyst: Stephen Harrell, Jr.

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create an inclusive, data-driven messaging campaign that is geared toward employers and employees to promote equitable workforce development, job growth, and stress the importance of creating opportunities for local residents.
- Collaborate with the New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA) to establish the Mayor as the City's primary workforce and economic development ambassador, and to promote and drive a shared vision for improved opportunities for all New Orleanians.
- Lead by example, and establish more robust and long-term careers with the City by collaborating with Civil Service to create a seamless career pathway for all job seekers and existing employees; begin with removing potential barriers and creating "fast-track" entry points for graduates of training or certification programs at multiple junctures to fill chronically under-filled positions.
- Collaborate with the Governor's Office and the Office of Workforce Development to explore releasing federal and state funds designated for workforce development to the City.
- Partner with Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB), Delgado Community College, high schools, and the New Orleans Career Center to ensure that Career and Technical Education training and curriculum is available for New Orleans students to provide a pathway (e.g., opportunity to earn certifications) to jobs in public service and high wage and high demand industries. *(Note: this is a joint recommendation with the Education Subcommittee)*

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: It is critical to develop a culture of workforce development that promotes corporate and private sector inclusion and diverse workforce development pathways that connect employers and employees with resources. There are currently gaps in existing workforce development “pathways” where there are no programs or clear ways to get ahead for many populations. There is an opportunity to better “meet people where they are” and promote role models to give people hope and a vision for their futures.

Recommendation: Create an inclusive, data-driven messaging campaign that is geared toward employers and employees to promote equitable workforce development, job growth, and stress the importance of creating opportunities for local residents.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Few companies have workforce development programs, despite overwhelming evidence supporting the return on these modest investments.

Many individuals are “stuck” and feel like no one cares or that there are not any resources available to help them. Creating a messaging campaign can help better inform residents about opportunities that are available and encourage companies to invest in local residents.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: The New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA) recently merged with the City’s Network for Economic Opportunity, which coordinates the City’s workforce development functions. This integration offers an opportunity to better leverage the workforce development capacity of the NOLABA via the public platform of the Mayor.

Recommendation: Collaborate with the New Orleans Business Alliance (NOLABA) to establish the Mayor as the City’s primary workforce and economic development ambassador, and to promote and drive a shared vision for improved opportunities for all New Orleanians.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The Mayor holds a uniquely powerful position as the primary ambassador for economic development that can be leveraged to support

the variety of efforts needed for a robust, sustainable workforce development plan. The Mayor can leverage the position to build, develop, and grow relationships with other public officials, agencies and private sector organizations around workforce development.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: Current civil services rules have been designed to protect employees from political and frequent changes and ensure the educational qualifications of City personnel. In many cases, in practice, employees and the City encounter difficulties when trying to hire or promote staff from within due to constraints on experience and other factors. Exploring revisions to some civil service requirements could be beneficial in creating seamless pathways for public service jobs.

Recommendation: Lead by example, and establish more robust and long-term careers with the City by collaborating with Civil Service to create a seamless career pathway for all job seekers and existing employees; begin with removing potential barriers and creating “fast-track” entry points for graduates of training or certification programs at multiple junctures to fill chronically under-filled positions.

Rationale/Supporting Data: If the City expects the private sector to expand workforce development initiatives, City government must lead by example. Residents should ideally be able to access the Civil Service pipeline at multiple points and be afforded the opportunity to advance.

The City can also help promote this idea by leveraging its purchasing power, and prioritizing the selection of contractors that have strong local hiring policies (with proven track records) and workforce development programs that include training, career tracks, and supportive services for employees.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: Currently, millions of dollars designated for workforce development are administered by the State. There is potentially an opportunity to leverage part of this funding for local use in New Orleans.

Recommendation: Collaborate with the Governor’s Office and the Office of Workforce Development to

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explore releasing federal and state funds designated for workforce development to the City.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Using additional State funding to fully fund workforce development initiatives helps increase upward mobility, and allows the City to develop appropriate workforce development programs and initiatives for people from various backgrounds and on a variety of career paths.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: By 2024, the greater New Orleans area is expected to add 67,000 “middle-skill” jobs that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year degree. Current career and technical education (CTE) programs such as YouthForce NOLA and the State’s JumpStart program are increasing the number of young people earning industry-recognized credentials and engaging in work-based learning. However, there is still a need for more training providers to deliver CTE curricula to students.

Recommendation: Partner with the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB), Delgado Community College, high schools, and the New Orleans Career Center (Career Center) to ensure that Career and Technical Education (CTE) training and curricula are available and are inclusive of all New Orleans public school students. Ensure that the training provides a pathway (e.g., opportunity to earn certifications) to jobs in public service and high-wage and high-demand industries. *(Note: this is a joint recommendation with the Education Subcommittee)*

Rationale/Supporting Data: Currently, many jobs in the region require some postsecondary education or training but less than a four-year college degree. Parts of South Louisiana are experiencing an economic boom, with investments in natural gas and other areas creating thousands of new jobs. Partnering with the Career Center and Delgado Community College will help ensure that more students are aware of these opportunities and can better prepare themselves to take advantage of them.

CREATIVE INDUSTRIES SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

New Orleans is defined by its root culture and creative industries, which include visual, performing, media, design, literary, and the culinary arts. Together, these

industries employ tens of thousands of New Orleanians and funnel hundreds of millions of dollars into the regional economy. These cultural and creative industries are critical to fostering the unique sense of place that makes New Orleans a world-renowned destination, furthering economic development and job creation opportunities, and driving tourism and neighborhood renewal. Despite this, the cultural and creative ecosystem is fragmented, under-resourced, and under-developed relative to other cities throughout the Gulf South and the United States, and is poorly represented in decision-making bodies across the City. There is an opportunity to put in place significant reforms to address these challenges and ensure the equitable and strategic growth of the cultural and creative industries and New Orleans as a whole.

Coordination and funding for the cultural and creative industries is a function of the Mayor’s Office of Cultural Economy and the Arts Council New Orleans. Despite the value provided by these organizations, the lack of an official City Department empowered by the Mayor and well-funded by the City Council continues to limit the ability of the cultural and creative industries to thrive. A new and unified approach offers a tremendous opportunity to support a broad range of cultural and creative industries and drive New Orleans’ economic growth into the future.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to present a well thought out plan with executable recommendations to enhance, strengthen, and sustain the creative industries; and investment strategies that will facilitate the growth and financial viability of the creative industries by identifying opportunities and resources to support cultural entrepreneurs. In addition, this subcommittee conducted a substantial review of all City-supported entities that are affiliated with the cultural economy (e.g. the Office of Cultural Economy and the Arts Council) and made recommendations for improvements where necessary and identified what worked well.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Shamarr Allen
Ernest Collins
Dow Edwards
Jonathan Ferrara
Ashlye Keaton
Sabrina Mays-Montana
Sherri McConnell
Donny Markowitz
Jeanne Nathan
Cyril Neville
Brandan “Bmike” Odums
Carol Bebelle
Jan Ramsey

Subcommittee Facilitators/Analysts: Geoffrey Hamlyn and Kevin Wilkins

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create and fully fund a Department of Cultural and Creative Industries, headed by a cabinet-level position.
- Fund and develop a Cultural and Creative Industries Master Plan that encompasses all root culture and creative industries in New Orleans, including, but not limited to, music, performing arts, visual arts, media, design, literature, culinary arts, and cultural practices; use best practices and an inclusive process to explore strategies, and identify measurable outcomes and ways to ensure accountability.
- Establish an authorized and funded Cultural and Creative Industries Advisory Body, with executive level reporting/accountability, and appoint its members as representatives across City-supported boards and commissions.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: Given the critical role of the cultural and creative industries in the New Orleans economy, and New Orleans’ status as one of the most significant cultural and creative cities in the world, there is a need to further bolster cultural and creative industries’ role in citywide decision-making.

Recommendation: Create and fully fund a Department of Cultural and Creative Industries, headed by a cabinet-level position.

Rationale/Supporting Data: While models for governing the cultural and creative industries vary across American cities, many of the nation’s largest and most culturally significant cities have departments dedicated to cultural affairs. Specifically, those cities with the most vibrant communities, according to the National Center for Arts Research, are Miami, Boston, Austin, Los Angeles, and New York City; all of these cities have departments governing arts and culture. City departments are able to advocate for funding as individual line items in the City budget, rather than to seek funding as a beneficiary of another office. New Orleans’ Office of Cultural Economy received \$935,838 in funding in the last budget cycle, roughly \$2.39 per capita. This compares unfavorably to Nashville’s Metro Arts Commission, the official department of arts and culture for Nashville, TN, which was funded at \$3.7M in FY17-18, or \$5.46 per capita. Wichita, Kansas’s Division of Arts and Cultural Services, a department-level body, has a total budget of \$8.36M for FY17-18.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: The lack of a coherent master plan has resulted in fragmented and under-resourced cultural and creative industries. Combined, these industries are the second largest industry in New Orleans and one of the most important drivers of tourism. Cities across the country have found value in cultural strategic planning, either through a cultural master plan or as a strategy embedded in a larger city plan. Examples can be found in New York City, Nashville, Los Angeles, Chicago, Tulsa, Birmingham, and Jackson, among many others. There is an opportunity for the City to develop a strategic approach to cultural and creative industries, and better equip it to leverage presently under-utilized resources, (e.g., the Percent for

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Art Ordinance, physical spaces around the city and other tools and assets).

Recommendation: Fund and develop a Cultural and Creative Industries Master Plan that encompasses all root culture and creative industries in New Orleans, including, but not limited to, music, performing arts, visual arts, media, design, literature, culinary arts, and cultural practices; use best practices and an inclusive process to explore strategies, and identify measurable outcomes and ways to ensure accountability. The Master Plan will explore, evaluate and prioritize the implementation of strategies, including, but not limited to those listed below:

- Development of new revenue streams and optimization of existing ones, including but not limited to private foundation funding; fully realizing the allocation of the Percent for Art Ordinance; allocating a percentage of existing levied taxes; leveraging existing taxes on short-term rentals and shared ride services; accessing federal funding; and increasing the Community Arts Fund to a total of at least \$1 million annually.
- Designation of Congo Square and municipal spaces and facilities in Louis Armstrong Park for cultural events. This should be an effort to monetize the cultural economy and to develop a destination for education and investment in the root culture and creative industries.
- A broad marketing strategy for tourism and economic development agencies to present a unified brand, representative of the root culture and creative industries.
- Creation of a cultural and creative industries marketing fund to help cultural presenters and producers to market their talents, venues, programs and products.
- Policies and investments to address gentrification and the lack of affordability, including, but not limited to, development of affordable housing dedicated to creatives and the improvement of public transportation.
- Targeted neighborhood-level investments around grassroots cultural and creative practices.
- Creation of an asset inventory to help quantify the impact of the City's cultural and creative industries.
- Development of a New Orleans festival of music, food, and art, that would export our culture to key markets around the United States and internationally

and increase tourism and business development in New Orleans.

- Regulatory adjustments for the night-time economy, including but not limited to shifting hours on code enforcement officers who address issues like sound, parking, litter, and other matters that often fall to the New Orleans Police Department.
- Development of an arts and cultural education strategy that includes career development in the creative industries.
- Professional development structures for workers in the cultural and creative industries, potentially relating to career pathways, financial planning and business management.
- Strategic and tactical initiatives focused on business development and attraction, job creation, private investment, intellectual property creation, and the value stream of goods and the services that support it.
- Identification and repurposing vacant schools, churches, other public and commercial properties to help promote, support, and invest in the development of the City's root culture and creative industries.
- The identification of opportunities for collaboration with both nonprofit and for-profit entities for the advancement of cultural and creative industries.
- Greater legal support for creatives, including the elimination of potential barriers, regulations, and challenges, and the protection and monetization of intellectual property.

Rationale/Supporting Data: At the heart of the cultural and creative industries of New Orleans are the creators themselves, and the Master Plan needs to set forth strategies that protect and empower them. By developing a plan that is comprehensive and addresses a cross-section of the issues facing our creative industries, we best position the community to thrive, which in turn benefits us all.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: In order to ensure a long-term vision and support for creative industries there needs to be a coordinated effort to provide input and leadership in a variety of areas. Boards and commissions often play an important leadership role in the City's vital areas (e.g., economic development, business, neighborhood revitalization). Currently, there is limited representation by creatives in these important groups.

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Recommendation: Establish an authorized and funded Cultural and Creative Industries Advisory Body, with executive level reporting/accountability, and appoint its members as representatives across City-supported boards and commissions.

Rationale/Supporting

Data: The root culture and creative industries represent a major economic force in New Orleans, but have been routinely excluded from important decision-making bodies. The result is the under-representation of creatives in critical policy conversations, even though the root culture and creative industries are immensely affected by policy decisions ranging from public safety and economic development to neighborhood stabilization. Some of the most culturally rich cities in the United States have established arts and culture advisory councils to shepherd cultural master plans and to advise the Mayor in supporting cultural and creative industries. Examples include New York City, Seattle, Denver, and Los Angeles, among many others.

“*At the heart of the cultural and creative industries of New Orleans are the creators themselves, and the Master Plan needs to set forth strategies that protect and empower them.*”

ENTREPRENEURSHIP & SMALL BUSINESS EXPANSION SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

In the last decade, national studies have increasingly highlighted the significant economic impact of small business. In addition to driving job creation, small businesses act as a vehicle for innovation, provide a path for those struggling in the labor market, and have the potential to influence policy. Post Katrina, New Orleans has been a national leader in small business growth, with a per capita rate of startups 68 percent higher than the



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national average, and small businesses within the city growing at ~5 percent per year (compared to ~3.6 percent for all businesses). However, increasing disparities between entrepreneurs of color and their majority counterparts in accessing markets, networks, and capital, continue to undermine not only the vitality of minority-owned businesses but also the City's ability to fully realize the economic benefits of being one of the fastest growing micro-enterprise communities in the country.

According to reports by The Data Center and Prosperity Now, "minority-owned businesses received less than 2 percent of receipts in 2007" and the average value of a white-owned business was over 13 times that of its black counterpart - \$35,237 compared to \$487,748. These disparities are the result of historical inequities that continue to manifest in systems that are critical to small business growth and development.

A 2017 PolicyLink report found that the New Orleans region sacrificed approximately \$18B in Gross Domestic Product in 2014 due to racial gaps in income. Given the relationship between small business growth and job creation, there is good reason to believe that an increasingly strong black small business community means an increasingly strong New Orleans economy. What is needed is a "2 to 20 task force" to increase African American business receipts from 2 percent to 20 percent.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to develop actionable recommendations that will expand access to capital for local entrepreneurs and small businesses.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Chuck Morse
Russell Kelly
Kelisha Garrett
Steven Kennedy
Mayra Pineda
Sombra Williams
William Prieur
Iam Tucker

Subcommittee Facilitators/Analysts: Andrea Chen and Mary Elizabeth Evans

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create Invest NOLA, a fund facilitated by a quasi-governmental entity such as a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) or Community Development Entity (CDE). The Invest NOLA fund would facilitate investment of capital through multiple funds to disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs) for various projects including green infrastructure, general City projects, and "placemaking" projects. Invest NOLA would also be focused specifically on designing products for minority business needs, such as a bonding and mobilization fund, an emerging markets fund, and New Market Tax Credit allocations.
- Reform City policy to address contractor payments and accountability.
- Exert Executive influence to push economic development entities and officials towards more equitable outcomes.
- Work with banks to more effectively leverage the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) to make investments in disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs) and small businesses.
- Identify alternative sources for debt and equity capital, including Qualified Opportunity Zones.
- Increase inclusion of entrepreneurs of color in the tourism and hospitality industry; create a legislated or incentivized procurement policy for minority small and local business participation in overall contract opportunities conducted by hotel and tourism industry organizations.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: Disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs) and minority-owned companies have problems getting bonded for larger projects and have trouble accessing capital to mobilize for City projects. Anecdotally, some DBEs have been forced by primes to give up large equity stakes in their companies in exchange for access to bonding, and resources such as New Markets Tax Credits have not been equitably allocated to DBEs.

The \$1M BuildNOLA pilot program has been successful in mobilizing DBEs who have received City contracts. Prime contractors can receive mobilization funds built into their contracts with the City, and occasionally provide

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bonding for subcontractors, including DBEs. However, the mobilization and bonding needs of DBEs currently exceeds the capacity of the pilot program.

Recommendation: Identify or create a quasi-governmental entity (CDFI/CDE), focused specifically on designing products for minority business needs, such as a bonding and mobilization fund, an emerging markets fund, and New Market Tax Credit allocations.

A quasi-governmental entity that becomes certified as a CDFI/CDE will facilitate the investment of capital from public, private, and philanthropic sources into small business funds focused on expanding access to capital for DBEs. This will be done by creating products to meet the capital needs of DBEs that are currently underserved. Proposed funds include:

- \$10M mobilization fund for DBEs working on green infrastructure projects (i.e., urban water retention sites in the Urban Water Plan) currently in the works.
- \$20M mobilization and bonding fund for general DBEs outside of green infrastructure.
- \$10M “placemaking” fund for socially and economically disadvantaged developers and “place-based” initiatives (i.e., geographically targeted corridors).
- New Markets Tax Credits financing for larger scale real estate projects or businesses.
- Additional products as identified to meet financing needs ranging from \$5,000 to \$5M.

Rationale/Supporting Data: An entity controlled by the City can facilitate the raising and investment of capital in coordinated and equitable ways. In other cities, similar efforts are already underway. Invest Detroit and Invest Atlanta provide examples of entities created to raise capital and facilitate the investment of capital for community growth, DBEs, and other City and community priorities. Capital Impact Partners and Chase recently created a partnership in Detroit to train and grant capital access to 15-20 minority developers, which will allow their DBEs to grow as they contribute to Detroit’s revitalization.

There are existing resources within New Orleans that can be assembled under this quasi-governmental entity, such as \$250,000 in leftover Urban Development Action Grants (UDAG) that could contribute to loan loss reserves, lowering risk for philanthropic and private investors. UDAG funds can be used to focus on all City contracts that include those projects that are not simply infrastructure related.

The Economic Development Fund (EDF) could also contribute over \$250,000 to loan loss reserves, credit enhancement and/or operating support in addition to traditional local and national philanthropic and private investors. The New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA) can potentially provide credit enhancement to an emerging developers fund, and additional resources can be secured through the CDFI fund, including New Market Tax Credits and financial assistance.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: Differing contract management systems among City agencies create a slow payment process that can disincentivizes businesses from contracting with the City. Problems with City payments often get passed onto subcontractors (a large number of which are Disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs) and small businesses).

Anecdotally, contractors have reported significant time lags, and unexplained delays as the City processes payments and contracts. However, a general lack of data or tracking limits the City’s ability to track, troubleshoot the underlying problem, identify potential solutions, or set internal accountability measures for Prime Contractor payments. Without this information, the City is limited in its ability to hold Prime Contractors accountable for proper treatment of subcontractors.

The City is using Business to Government (B2G) Systems to notify subcontractors of Prime Contractor payments and receive confirmation of subcontractor payment. Lack of a centralized contracting/payment system makes it difficult to track status of contract/contract payments across multiple departments. This, in turn, limits the City’s ability to set and monitor internal goals for timely payment to Prime Contractors. It also limits the City’s ability to hold primes accountable for timely payment of subcontractors. The City is currently in the process of implementing a new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system that will centralize some of the contracting and payment systems, but the timelines for these processes and accountability metrics have not been established.

When a subcontractor does have an issue with a prime contractor, there are few avenues for recourse. A data-driven system of accountability would alleviate the need for subcontractors to report poor performance of primes, and avoid potentially contentious reporting and retaliation

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between primes and subcontractors. Whistleblower policies alone cannot guarantee anonymity of those involved (especially if there are only a few subcontractors on a project), and is unclear on the penalties that might be levied against someone who retaliates against the whistleblower. The Office of Supplier Diversity has a process by which vendors may submit complaints online anonymously. However, there remain concerns about the exclusion from future projects of subcontractors that report, complain or seek remedies.

Recommendation: Reform City policy to address contractor payments and accountability.

Rationale/Supporting Data: By establishing payment timing goals and utilizing an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system and Business to Government (B2G) systems across City departments, the City can manage contracts and contract payments in a more effective and efficient manner. B2G systems create a “one-stop-shop” online portal that allows businesses to access the information they need to do business with the City and confirm subcontractor payment.

Implementing this system will also allow the City to capture data on payment processing time and establish reasonable goals for timely payment of all City contracts. Over time, it would also help ensure timely payment to primes and subcontractors. This will send a clear signal to vendors, DBE and non-DBE alike, that the City is working to create and foster a supportive culture of efficiency, transparency, and equity in contractor/subcontractor relationships.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: Disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs) often struggle to access the necessary capital to start/grow their operations. In many cases, this is due to biases among some lenders within the lending system. In others, it is because DBEs do not have the expertise or mechanisms to attract potential investors/lenders. There is an opportunity for the City to play a stronger role in helping to direct capital into low- and moderate-income communities to ensure equitable economic growth.

Recommendation: Exert Executive influence to push economic development entities and officials towards more equitable outcomes.

Use the convening power and influence of the Mayor to incentivize behavior and practices from small business and entrepreneurship stakeholders toward greater equity, and disincentivize practices leading to greater disparity. The goal of this campaign would be a “2 to 20 Taskforce” to drive total receipts of African American-owned businesses through support from the private sector, City procurement, and entities that provide access to capital. The campaign would consist of branding, convening, creating a taskforce or a Council subcommittee, and/or creating “soft incentives” to recognize and award banks with Excellent Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) ratings.

Rationale/Supporting Data: By using the influence of the Mayor’s office, the City can highlight the opportunity to improve outcomes for businesses that have historically faced challenges.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: The Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) is a tool that could be used effectively to encourage banks to support building an ecosystem for small business access to capital in New Orleans. Small businesses and disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs) currently have limited access to capital, but Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) have a track record of lending to small and disadvantaged businesses, have the lending infrastructure in place, and have experience managing public, private and philanthropic funds.

Although the City does not have direct influence over banks, CRAs are a powerful tool to incentivize local, regional, and national banks doing business in New Orleans to lend to disadvantaged businesses and invest in CDFIs and other loans/pools making investments in DBEs.

Recommendation: Work with banks to more effectively leverage the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) to make investments in disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs) and small businesses.

Rationale/Supporting Data: In other cities, banks are making significant community investments. Chase recently established the Chase Invest Detroit Fund to provide matching loans through the CDFI Invest Detroit. Chase calls it part of their “long-term commitment to Detroit.”

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

New Orleans has several large banks engaged in the conversation around expanding small business lending, and many New Orleans banks currently receive CRA ratings of Satisfactory or Excellent, despite the fact that significant disparities still exist. The City should take the lead in shaping policy to use CRA as a tool for raising capital and incentivizing investments in affordable housing and small dollar consumer loans, loan pools, the CFI Collaborative, and participate meaningfully in One Table. When the City is ready to rebid their bank contract, the RFP should, as appropriate, outline expectations for high CRA ratings and contribution to the proposed DBE mobilization and bonding funds.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: Entrepreneurs and disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs) face challenges in accessing the capital markets both on the equity and debt side. City government, which is not profit motivated, can be the convener of capital providers, guiding them on capital needs of DBEs in New Orleans, and exploring avenues for “shared value” strategies (which identify business opportunities in social problems).

Recommendation: Identify alternative sources for debt and equity capital, including Qualified Opportunity Zones.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The solution to many of the issues around small business expansion is simply more money. With increased funding availability, there are myriad financial products and tools that can be implemented quickly. Identifying a sustainable funding source for the Economic Development Fund remains critical.

There are a multitude of creative ways to generate the necessary capital for several of these tools, such as a “fare round up” for taxis and ride-sharing services to contribute to small business debt or equity fund. Additionally, collaborating and convening (One Table and CDFI Collaborative) offer opportunities for DBEs, small businesses, and entrepreneurs to access debt and equity capital.

Finally, the City is poised to take advantage of the Qualified Opportunity Zones program. This program encourages investments in low-income communities through a tax incentive for investors to reinvest unrealized capital gains into Opportunity Funds that invest in designated Opportunity Zones.

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: There is a disproportionately low number of minority-owned businesses within the Hotel and Tourism ecosystem. There are inadequate contractual relationships between hoteliers and small/minority-owned businesses, and no specific incentives (such as contractual requirements like the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program) for other industries such as food, tourism, or hospitality.

Recommendation: Increase inclusion of entrepreneurs of color in the tourism and hospitality industry; create a legislated or incentivized procurement policy for minority small and local business participation in overall contract opportunities conducted by hotel and tourism industry organizations.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The hotel and tourism industry reported that \$7B was spent by visitors in 2015, and that \$7.4B was spent in 2016. Mandating a percentage of this spending to be with certified small, local, and/or minority-owned businesses would create opportunities for the community to share in the wealth generated by one of New Orleans’ largest industries.

Placing measurable spending goals on annual procurement opportunities for goods and services purchased by the proprietor would incentivize the hotel industry to do more business with local, minority, and/or DBE companies. It would also establish a baseline and performance metrics for industries to demonstrate commitment to supporting the growth and expansion of small businesses.

To support the ramp up minority-owned business capacity, the City could leverage underutilized City-owned property. It could do this by giving access to buildings and business lease opportunities to offset brick and mortar start-up costs for housing local wares, trades, and designs that are custom-made by local, minority-owned businesses. Expenses for these facilities would be offset by the Economic Development Fund (EDF) or similar fund (supported by small contributions as a percentage of related transactions). Similarly, a food incubator training facility would allow local chefs a venue for skills development to cultivate more locally owned restaurants.

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Government Operations is the City's collective of systems, policies, and processes used to provide basic services. Efficient, equitable, and effective operations will ensure that the City is poised to grow and innovate and sends a clear message that New Orleans is open for business and serious about providing excellent service to its residents.

Oftentimes there are facets of operations that expose threats and opportunities for municipal governments across the nation. New Orleans is no exception, especially concerning revenue and expenditures. The City is faced with maintaining a healthy fiscal position while making substantial infrastructure and technology investments. Revenue growth is being hindered, in part, by tax collection mechanisms and large numbers of tax exempt properties. The added burden of revenue-sharing with the State and other bodies makes the City's fiscal position challenging, but growth and the ability to provide stronger, more robust services to all citizens is possible.

Transparency and accountability in Government Operations is a critical need, especially as it relates to the role that the City plays as the steward of taxpayer dollars. Responsible and inclusive contracting and procurement policies and practices give the general public confidence that the services being delivered are in line with the taxes being collected. Reforming contracting and procurement practices will eliminate obstacles to growth and address the burden carried by small and disadvantaged businesses that have to maintain their operations while experiencing extended delays in payment from the City.

As New Orleans celebrates the achievements of the past, but looks to the future, it is imperative that even greater progress is made toward utilizing technology to provide more reliable and accessible services. Embracing smart city principles and pressing into the digital age will require the City to develop a strategic technology plan to address issues that currently undermine the City's ability to build, maintain, and fully integrate digital infrastructure. As technology advances, the City has opportunities to keep pace with the private and philanthropic sectors (community, companies, entrepreneurs) by collaborating with private entities and other public agencies to provide better, more efficient services for residents.

New Orleans' successful transition into the 21st century requires a city government that utilizes technology,

transparency, accountability and best practices to improve processes, refine policies, and deliver excellent service to its citizens, vendors, and visitors.

COMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of the Government Operations Committee was to improve the effectiveness of government and to improve the interactions between the City's government and its citizens.

COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS: Lee Isaacson and Julie Quinn

PROJECT MANAGER: Liana Elliott

TECHNOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

Technology is central to the City's daily operations, including email, servers, and project management/software systems. Since 2010, the City of New Orleans has made great strides in securing, developing, and implementing reliable technology platforms.

City has seen substantial progress in implementing technology to provide more reliable and accessible services; however, several unaddressed issues continue to undermine the City's ability to build, maintain, and fully integrate digital infrastructure. With empowered leadership and vision, New Orleans will operate in the 21st century and will be able to address long-standing issues with data accuracy and coordination across agencies and departments. The tools and practices of performance and accountability have been established, but the next iteration requires a focus on meaningful key performance indicators (KPIs) under the direction of executive leadership.

Although the digital and cyber environments have been mostly stabilized, there are additional vulnerabilities that need to be assessed. Current systems must be constantly monitored, maintained, and updated to maintain pace with the constant evolution of threats, technology, data, and digital tools for governance. In recent years, there has not been adequate funding dedicated to securing this critical infrastructure and keeping equipment up to date.

Data-driven leadership decisions and effective government require access to quality information. Although data and technology systems have been implemented, the information being managed can be

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

problematic. Data is not uniform across City agencies, preventing coordination, efficiency and streamlining of services. With centralized, robust data management and governance, meaningful analysis is possible.

As the private and philanthropic sectors (community, companies, entrepreneurs) advance technology and innovation, the City has opportunities to benefit by collaborating with private entities and other public agencies to provide better, more efficient services for residents. Other cities have leveraged public private partnerships to engage local residents and support community efforts.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to assess the current technological capacity of City government and to evaluate potential technology-related solutions to improving City services.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Doug Ahlers
Emanuel Cole
Maychelle Cooper-Rodney
Stephanie Nguyen*
Brian Denzer
Allen Square
John Sterling
Ori Pleban*

**Harvard Research Fellow*

Subcommittee Analyst: Sam Heyman
Subcommittee Facilitator: Liana Elliott

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Create a Chief Technology Officer (CTO) position to establish the vision for the City's next generation of technology, and build executive commitment to technology. The CTO will create a strategic plan and will work in collaboration with the Chief Information Officer (CIO) for implementation.
- Work to fully fund an information technology (IT) infrastructure that acts as a resource to provide services to other departments and citizens; ensure that investments are made in cyber security to protect City assets and resources; and ensure IT has a stable and consistent budget over time so that long-term projects

are sustained during times of budgetary crisis.

- Establish data management architecture to create a centralized, organized data warehouse for all City agencies; develop a universal data policy focused on quality and accuracy, so we can be assured that the City is the steward of high quality, accessible information.
- Develop a near-real-time dashboard to provide departmental and enterprise-wide visibility; build dynamic tools for a diverse range of uses, from leadership and management to community open data.
- Create a customer-centric landing page on NOLA.gov that better facilitates interaction between City government and residents; ensure that all citizen inquiries are directed to the proper department, responded to, and tracked.

“*New Orleans faces a continuing and pressing need to strengthen its financial position*”

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: With empowered leadership and vision, the City has the opportunity to create and maintain long term strategic goals that build technology into the fabric of City government, moving New Orleans into the 21st Century.

Recommendation: Create a Chief Technology Officer (CTO) position to establish the City's vision for the next generation of technology, and build executive commitment to technology. The CTO will create a strategic plan and will work in collaboration with the Chief Information Officer (CIO) for implementation.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Empowered leadership to coordinate technology spending across departments and

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

agencies will improve the City's return on investment for technology. Dedicated, strategic leadership will improve the City's ability to provide services and make the City more competitive in attracting and retaining businesses and residents.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: In moments of budgetary crisis, information technology and innovation (ITI) funding is often the first to get cut. Now, we have an opportunity to safeguard both the security and effectiveness of City government by advocating for ITI designated dollars, and investing in our digital infrastructure security to protect the safety of our City.

Recommendation: Fully fund an information technology (IT) infrastructure that acts as a resource to provide services to other departments and citizens; ensure that investments are made in cyber security to protect City assets and resources; and ensure IT has a stable and consistent budget over time so that long-term projects are sustained during times of budgetary crisis.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Prioritizing an IT budget that both protects City assets and allows the build out of long-term projects will support not only IT-related group in city government, but all City departments which rely on IT infrastructure for their daily operations.

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: The City's data is currently housed in a variety of systems. This configuration does not allow for easy analysis across departments.

Recommendation: Establish data management architecture to create a centralized, organized data warehouse for all City agencies; develop a universal data policy focused on quality and accuracy, so we can be assured that the City is the steward of high quality, accessible information.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Data is available, but currently, there is no framework that allows meaningful, cross-departmental analysis to occur. Centralizing the data would allow additional insight to be drawn about trends affecting multiple departments. This insight could help facilitate better collaboration across departments, leading to better service delivery.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: The City currently has a performance management system that can provide information to departments on a regular basis. However, it does not allow real-time visibility into the City's operations.

Recommendation: Develop a near real-time data dashboard to provide departmental and enterprise-wide visibility; build dynamic tools for a diverse range of uses, from leadership and management to community open data.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Data-driven performance management is often the key to the success of many cities. Through the creation of a more transparent, meaningful, relevant, and all-encompassing performance tracking process, our City agencies can be empowered to make even better and more informed decisions.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: In recent years, the City has made improvements to its website. However, there still remains an opportunity to make it more user-friendly.

Recommendation: Create a customer-centric homepage that better facilitates interaction between City government and residents; ensure that all citizen inquiries are directed to the proper department, responded to, and tracked.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The homepage is often the front door for citizen interaction with City government. Building out a human-centered website with open data will increase community satisfaction and trust with the City, and will ensure that our online portal is accessible to as many members of our community as possible.

PROCUREMENT AND CONTRACTS SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

A relatively small number of firms continue to receive the majority of contracts, despite some having bad reputations around making payments to subcontractors and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), and falling short in other areas. The City lacks a robust performance reporting tracking system, and therefore cannot take these important histories into account. The City monitors and tracks certain parts of prime contractor performance, but still lacks comprehensive performance metrics that the City can meaningfully use when considering a firm's merits in the bidding process.

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

The Request for Proposals (RFP) process is vague: contract approval, monitoring, and payments are sometimes slow and confusing, and overall the process has limited transparency and appears to lack accountability in some cases. The City has been mostly compliant with Federal and State contracting and procurement requirements. However, the City’s current RFP processes are sometimes disjointed: from creation, to selection, to award.

Departments involved in contracting and procurement expect the new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to alleviate many of the current challenges. The City of New Orleans must ensure that employees are well-trained and invested in the success of the new ERP system. Avoiding more issues in the future will depend largely on the rollout and application of this critical system.

Oversight and monitoring of the current Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program has been largely successful. However, the lack of DBEs “scaling up” indicates that the current system has neither fully dismantled the obstacles that have prevented participation for smaller and DBE firms, nor provided the necessary incentives or resources for growth. The procurement process for large City contracts is still largely inaccessible. The complexity of securing and negotiating these contracts remains an exclusive process that perpetuates the wealth disparity status quo between a few large firms and smaller businesses looking to enter the market. On the surface, contractors may be meeting DBE utilization requirements, but this does not necessarily create the intended social or economic outcomes. These outcomes include DBEs gaining enough experience to become established as prime contractors.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to evaluate current city contracting policies and to develop recommendations for improving DBE participation in City contracts, evaluating the potential of value-based contracting, and streamlining city payment processes.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Ronald H. Bordelon
Paul T. West
Iam Tucker
Vanessa James
David Williams

Abril Baloney Sutherland
Alcide Tervalon, III

Subcommittee Analyst: Katie Lyon-Hart

Subcommittee Facilitator: Liana Elliott

SUMMARY OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure that the City provides high-quality contract and procurement administration by seeing that the Electronic Resource Planning (ERP) system is high-functioning for, administrators, employees, prime contractors, subcontractors, other end users, and the public.
- Update and enforce all Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) policies and Executive Orders regarding contracting and procurement, including those relating to: clear guidelines and standards for contracts; performance standards; Request for Proposals (RFP) process overhaul; technical and subject matter experts; oversight; and centralization.
- Improve the selection process to ensure that the City receives high-value contracts with qualified contractors in good standing; include objective performance reports, multiple channels for receiving feedback, and policies outlining consequences based on track record.
- Update contractor performance report criteria and the disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) framework to reflect the administration’s policy priorities; update the City’s contract selection criteria to encourage prime contractors to partner with DBE and other firms by better leveraging the purchasing power of contracting/procurement; and add a new category of “Social Impact Firms” (SIFs) to mirror Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) selection criteria.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: With implementation of the new Electronic Resource Planning (ERP) system across departments, the City has the opportunity to dramatically improve contract and procurement administration, recognize significant efficiencies, and produce higher value for the City’s investment.

Recommendation: Ensure that the City provides high-quality contract and procurement administration

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by assuring that the Electronic Resource Planning (ERP) system is high-functioning for administrators, employees, prime contractors, subcontractors, other end users, and the public.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The process for contract approval and payments is sometimes slow, and confusing. In order for the new system to be a success, the City must ensure employees are well trained and invested in a successful rollout.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: The City has an opportunity to fundamentally address the reasons why projects are delayed, including overdue payments (which are very challenging for small firms), and complex and inaccessible contracting processes.

Recommendation: Update and enforce all Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) policies and Executive Orders regarding contracting and procurement, including those relating to: clear guidelines and standards for contracts; performance standards; Request for Proposals (RFP) process overhaul; technical and subject matter experts; oversight; and centralization.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Without clear and improved criteria, the City's current process for RFP development and selection results in a system that can be difficult to navigate. The system is hard to compete with, and smaller firms cannot "scale up."

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: The framework for selection criteria includes consideration of a "performance assessment" that takes into consideration the firm's ability to complete the job satisfactorily. This provides an opportunity for considering meaningful criteria other than just lowest bid, taking into consideration a more robust picture of the firm's history and track record. This could be used strategically in conjunction with other RFP selection process overhauls to achieve policy goals such as equity, transparency, and accessibility.

Recommendation: Improve the selection process to ensure that the City receives high-value contracts with qualified contractors in good standing; include objective performance reports, multi-dimensional feedback loops, and policies outlining consequences based on track record.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The majority of contracts continue to go to a relatively small number of firms, despite poor track records with no meaningful DBE compliance, poor subcontractor payment track records, and other metrics indicating poor performance. Changing selection criteria to take these important histories into account will open new seats at the table for other smaller, newer, and/or DBE firms to compete.

RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: State low bid laws limit the City's ability to take into consideration factors other than the submitted bid amount, which has also had serious implications for smaller businesses.

The City has potential to affect significant social benefit by leveraging the City's purchasing power through existing DBE requirements, monitoring and oversight systems, and the procurement/contracting system. Prioritizing other social benefits in the selection process, in addition to DBE utilization, has potential for far-reaching benefit.

Recommendation: Update contractor performance report criteria and the DBE framework to reflect the



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administration’s policy priorities; update the City’s contract selection criteria to encourage prime contractors to partner with DBE and other firms by better leveraging the purchasing power of contracting/procurement; and add a new category of “Social Impact Firms” (SIFs) to mirror DBE selection criteria.

Rationale/Supporting Data: The City’s recently released Disparity Study also showed that although firms that contract with the City are meeting DBE requirements (and exceeding them), those benefits are not being reflected at the prime contractor level (i.e., there is not a similar increase in diversity in the number of minority-owned firms being awarded large contracts). The current requirements have created many opportunities for DBEs to be included in City contracts; however, the long-term outcomes are not as intended.

MUNICIPAL FINANCES SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE CONTEXT OVERVIEW

In recent years, the City of the New Orleans has seen a dramatic improvement in its fiscal health, as evidenced by the multiple upgrades to the City’s bond rating. However, as with many urban centers across the country, New Orleans faces a continuing and pressing need to strengthen its financial position, as evidenced by a projected multi-million dollar gap between general fund revenues and expenditures in 2018. At the same time, the City has a number of large-scale capital projects, including street and sewerage improvements, which will require significant investment during the coming years.

In examining the current situation, it is important to note that New Orleans’ ability to grow municipal revenue is hindered by a number of key factors. The first factor is that a relatively small portion of tax receipts collected locally is directed to the general fund, with the majority directed to the State and other specialized tax-funded bodies. The second is that the City does not currently possess robust mechanisms for collecting and auditing sales taxes, which are a major source of revenue for the City’s general fund. The third is that, by some measures, more than half of the taxable value of property in Orleans Parish is tax-exempt, limiting the City’s available property tax revenue. Lastly, the City’s ability to enact new taxes and fees is heavily restricted by the Louisiana Constitution, with many proposed changes requiring approval from voters, the legislature, or both. Partially as a result, New Orleans has

had to rely on somewhat controversial revenue sources, such as traffic cameras, to balance the general fund.

By re-examining the collection and allocation of existing tax revenue streams and the potential for new revenue from entities that are currently exempt, the City will be able to strengthen its financial position and better provide for the needs of all residents.

SUBCOMMITTEE CHARGE

The charge of this subcommittee was to evaluate the current state of municipal finances and develop recommendations to further strengthen the City’s financial position and grow its investments.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Jim Singleton
David Williams
Frank Williams
Chadrick Kennedy
Eric Seling

Subcommittee Analyst: Samuel Buckley

Subcommittee Facilitator: Ting-Ting Rivers

PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Reinitiate the City’s performance management system, with a focus on data-driven goals/metrics and hold regular, mandatory meetings. Request that the Finance Department or Chief Financial Officer (CFO) create a five-year forecast for all operating and capital revenues and expenses.
- Improve revenue collection to more efficiently capture revenue from taxes and fees.
- Increase City control of revenues generated in the City that are currently directed to other entities.
- Implement municipal service fees for tax-exempt property owners to help offset the cost of providing the services and related infrastructure.
- Conduct an evaluation of existing tax exemption policies.
- Dedicate revenue from traffic safety cameras in school zones to public safety goals.

DETAILS OF PRIMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION #1:

Context: The City’s budget cycle only looks one year into the future – revenues are projected farther out by the City Economist, but not expenses. The use of data-

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

driven metrics to hold departments accountable for goals appears to have been discontinued.

Recommendation: Reinitiate the City's performance management system, with a focus on data-driven goals/metrics and hold regular, mandatory meetings. Request that the Finance Department or Chief Financial Officer (CFO) create a five-year forecast for all operating and capital revenues and expenses.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Creating a five-year forecast for both revenue and expenditures that will enable the City to have insight into potential problem areas well in advance. Establishing a performance management system will help ensure that departments are meeting their goals and objectives.

RECOMMENDATION #2:

Context: Property and sales taxes together account for more than half of the City's general fund and are the primary sources of revenue for municipal services. Maximizing collection of available revenue should be a priority for the City. The City has taken steps towards better auditing of property tax collections, including the recent hiring of a firm to pursue cases in which fraudulent homestead exemptions are being claimed by property owners, and transitioning to using new software that will allow the City to more efficiently collect and analyze data from tax and fee collection.

These are important steps, but they could be built upon by making them part of a more comprehensive approach to accurately tracking, auditing, and collecting revenues that are owed to the City.

Recommendation: Improve revenue collection to more efficiently capture revenue from taxes and fees.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Developing other strategies and tools to identify and remove obstacles to making or receiving payments will improve overall taxes and fees collections (e.g., satellite locations for receiving payments).

RECOMMENDATION #3:

Context: The City has limited control over a number of local revenue streams, as many are dedicated to specific municipal purposes or to tax-receipt bodies. In some cases, constitutional dedications ensure funding

of key priorities (e.g., property tax for schools), ensuring a minimum threshold of dedication for critical entities and services.

Approximately 25 percent of all local tax revenue goes into the City's general fund. Increasing property and sales taxes over several decades has not alleviated underfunding issues and budget shortfalls. Changing the structure or distribution of sales taxes collected locally would be beneficial to the City, but, would require State legislative action, a ballot measure, and/or City Council action to modify or rededicate revenue.

Recommendation: Increase City control of revenues generated in the City that are currently directed to other entities.

Rationale/Supporting Data: There is a significant disconnect between the tax funding and needs of certain tax-recipient bodies. The most commonly cited example is that of the New Orleans Exhibition Hall Authority (the Convention Center Authority), which has collected a one percent hotel tax and 0.25 percent food/beverage tax since 2002 for the now-cancelled Phase IV expansion of the Convention Center. These tax dedications have allowed the Convention Center to amass a surplus of more than \$200M dollars, and the Convention Center continues to collect more than \$15M annually from these sources while operating at a \$25M annual surplus.

While the Convention Center is the most commonly cited example, other entities are running operating surpluses while collecting a share of local tax revenue. The Orleans Parish Assessor's office, which keeps 2 percent of all property taxes collected in Orleans Parish, frequently runs a multi-million dollar operating surplus.

Legislative action and voter approval are required for changing the structure or distribution of sales taxes, or to amend existing dedicated funds so more of the City's revenue can be put into the general fund.

If successful, the City would have control over sources of revenue that are collected locally, such as sales and property taxes. Generally, the City would have improved fiscal stability and would be free to spend revenue collected locally on projects of local importance as determined by voters and the City Council.

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RECOMMENDATION #4:

Context: The City needs funding for large capital projects such as sewerage system updates, yet these projects are not adequately funded through traditional tax sources due to the significant scale of property and sales tax exemptions enjoyed by large nonprofit organizations.

Properties that are deemed tax-exempt do not contribute to the City's annual revenue, despite using the same services and capital infrastructure as non-exempt properties (e.g., drainage, fire, and police) While the City charges fees for some services, large institutional nonprofit organizations are benefitting from the City's capital investments, without contributing to the funding necessary to deliver critical services and capital projects.

Recommendation:

Implement municipal service fees for tax-exempt property owners to help offset the cost of providing the services and related infrastructure.

Rationale/Supporting

Data: Tax exemptions for nonprofits have a substantial effect on property tax collection – a 2011 report by the Bureau of Governmental Research found that more than 60 percent of the value of New Orleans property was tax-exempt in some form, with more than 20 percent of the taxable value of New Orleans property held by nonprofits.

The Louisiana Constitution specifically exempts nonprofits from property taxes, but not fines and fees. Municipal service fees would allow nonprofits to maintain their constitutional exemptions while still helping to support badly needed capital investments, infrastructure improvements, and other municipal services from which they benefit.

RECOMMENDATION #5:

Context: The City has control over which entities operating within its boundaries are considered tax exempt.

Tax-exempt bodies, including nonprofits, enjoy the benefit of City services (including police and fire protection) but do not pay into these services.

The City of New Orleans should retain control of revenues that are collected locally (from residents and visitors), and in the same way, the City should have the authority to decide for itself which revenues are not collected (exempted). Tax exemptions affect the City's general

“ 2011 report by the Bureau of Governmental Research found that more than 60 percent of the value of New Orleans property was tax-exempt in some form, with more than 20 percent of the taxable value of New Orleans property held by nonprofits.”

fund as well as the funding of critical bodies such as the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB).

Nonprofit tax exemption reform would require action by the state legislature and potentially require changes to the Louisiana Constitution.

Recommendation: Evaluate existing tax exemption policies

Rationale/Supporting Data: Property and sales taxes are two of the City's largest sources of revenue; tax exemptions place a significant fiscal burden on the City. Currently over \$100M in Industrial Tax Exemption Program (ITEP) tax abatements are outstanding (annualized: \$10M+/year), and there is no clear picture of outstanding Industrial Development Board (IDB) Payments In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) (IDB PILOTs) and revenues.

GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Louisiana offers the highest corporate tax subsidy per capita of any state, by a wide margin: more than \$3,500 per capita, nearly twice the second highest (New Mexico, \$1,950 per capita), and more than five times the national average (\$633 per capita).

These exemptions, which include tax incentives for development as well as static exemptions for nonprofits, have a significant effect on the City's financial health. Better oversight of incentives by the City would improve its financial position.

The City could establish an independent body to review ITEP exemptions, as was recently done in Baton Rouge in October 2017. This independent body could coordinate the awarding and oversight of key financial incentives such as ITEP property exemptions, IDB PILOTS, and ensuring IDB PILOT payments are aligned with services.

RECOMMENDATION #6:

Context: There is an increasing reliance on traffic safety devices (i.e., red-light cameras) as a revenue source to plug gaps in the budget rather than for the stated purpose of increasing public safety.

Traffic cameras can be tools for public safety, as areas covered by cameras do not need to be patrolled by NOPD officers, who are needed in other areas for more urgent public safety matters.

Traffic cameras are widely unpopular, but people generally support underlying goals for traffic safety in certain contexts such as in school zones.

Recommendation: Dedicate revenue from traffic safety cameras in school zones to public safety goals.

Rationale/Supporting Data: Traffic camera revenue accounts for nearly 4 percent of the general fund in the adopted 2018 budget. Fees, unlike taxes, are tied to the costs or impacts of specific programs, and (unlike tax revenues) there exists a public policy basis for tying traffic camera revenue to specific road improvement and traffic safety programs. Dedicating traffic camera and traffic safety revenue to related programs would help establish a clear nexus between traffic cameras and road work/safety goals.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS THAT REQUIRE ATTENTION

ADDITIONAL ITEMS THAT REQUIRE ATTENTION

The following are additional important items, outside of the subcommittees' recommendations, that will require attention by the City in the short and longer term. (Note: the information below is taken in part from documents prepared by the Public Financial Management Group (PFM))

- Office of Economic Development
 - **Economic Development Fund:**
 - The Economic Development Fund millage will expire in 2021.
- Office of Community Development (OCD)
 - **Loss of local funding:**
 - The Neighborhood Housing Improvement Fund will expire in 2021; if the fund is not renewed, there will be a loss of at least \$3M annually to support affordable housing development and code enforcement activities in neighborhoods ineligible for Community Development Block Grant funding.
 - **Outstanding audits/paybacks that require ongoing attention:**
 - **Hurricane Isaac:** A repayment of more than \$2M in disaster funds over a two-year period; a repayment agreement was reached with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) using BP settlement funds and one third payment of approximately \$639,000 due on June 30th, 2018.
 - **HUD Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Audit of HOME Program:** Resolution of the audit has not been reached, but the report from the OIG in September 2017 recommended that the City repay \$1.8M from non-federal funds regarding 4 projects for which regulatory agreements that determine the period of affordability and other compliance requirements were not recorded; if repayment is required, one option is to utilize the Neighborhood Housing Improvement Fund (NHIF) resources for non-federal fund repayment and have those funds returned to the City's line of credit.
 - **HUD prior year monitoring findings:** The City has recently submitted information to HUD that cleared 43 outstanding monitoring findings dating back to 1999, and two remaining outstanding findings that are still under HUD review; ideally these would be resolved early in 2018.
- **Department of Justice (DOJ) Settlement Agreement:** The City signed an agreement with the Justice Department in early 2014 for production of 350 permanently supportive housing units; the City has made only modest progress toward meeting the terms of agreement, but has identified its good faith efforts in prioritizing development of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) units in all notices of funding availability; it will be the subject of continued monitoring.
- Office of Criminal Justice Coordination (OCJC):
 - **No re-entry funding after October 2018:**
 - The federal government is not putting any money towards the Second Chance Act in its 2018 budget; the re-entry program will need an alternative funding source.
 - **Connecting Students to Supports Program:**
 - Service Provider funding expires May 2018; Louisiana Public Health Institute (LPHI) (data aggregator to determine risk of violence for each student) funding expires July 2018.
 - **Data Sharing Agreements:**
 - The City entered into a six-year Data Use Agreement with the Research Foundation of New York on behalf of the City University of New York's Institute for State and Local Governance. The Agreement says that the City will provide certain, relevant criminal justice agency data points to the Institute for State and Local Governance for six years. The City then entered into individual agreements with the Criminal District Court, Sheriff's Office, and Orleans Public Defenders to receive said data. These Cooperative Endeavor Agreements are only for a period of one year and need to be amended or re-executed for the remaining five years. The expiration dates vary with each agency. Orleans Public Defenders (OPD) Contract Expires in May 2018; Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office (OPSO) Contract Expires in July 2018.
- Homeland Security
 - **Closeout of 1603/1607 Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) Grants**
 - Hazard Mitigation is working to complete and close out residential mitigation grants funded through the Katrina and Rita HMGP program; there is a current agreement with

ADDITIONAL ITEMS THAT REQUIRE ATTENTION

the Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness and FEMA to complete all construction activities by May 2018. The City will need to conduct closeout activities into the summer and fall of 2018 to reconcile project costs and finalize fiscal obligations/legal documents for the grant.

- Department of Finance
 - **Accounting timelines**
 - Agreed Upon Procedures required by the Louisiana Legislative Auditors will be due by June 2018, along with the Annual Financial Statement. Both will be approximately 80 percent completed by Inauguration.
- Project Delivery Unit
 - **HUD funding for the National Disaster Resilience competition:**
 - This funding must be expended by

September 2022 or the \$141,260,569 awarded could be in jeopardy.

- Parks and Parkways
 - **Park system funding:**
 - New Orleans' park system is at significant risk of deterioration due to the lack of sustainable funding for maintenance, park safety, programming, and capital improvement. As a result, there is great concern that beginning in 2021, all of the millages that provide significant support to the parks begin to expire. A partnership among New Orleans park providers has proposed a solution for a more equitable distribution of park funding: a referendum for renewal and redistribution of these millages as well as permanently maintaining current general fund allocations, which results in no tax increases.

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