

MOVING NEW ORLEANS

THE ROAD TO EQUITABLE TRANSPORTATION



MAYOR LA TOYA CANTRELL
TRANSPORTATION ACTION PLAN

A street scene in New Orleans featuring a bus with a colorful rainbow stripe, several cars, utility poles, and a building with graffiti. The scene is captured from a low angle, showing the asphalt road and the sky.

“New traffic safety programs, bus lanes, faster street repairs and new sidewalks are just some of the initiatives underway on the streets of New Orleans.”

-Mayor LaToya Cantrell



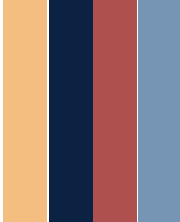
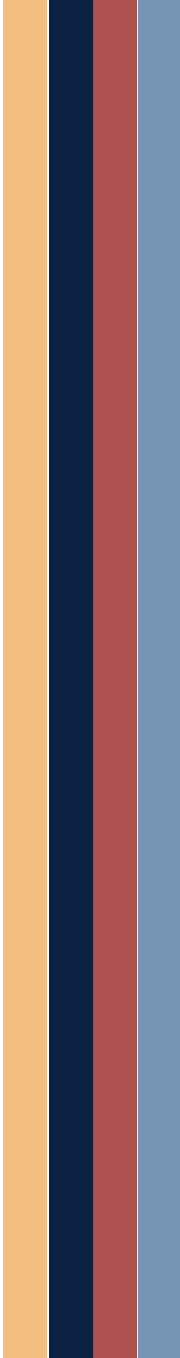


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CONNECTIVITY

EQUITY

EFFICIENCY

SAFETY

LETTER FROM THE MAYOR



Dear Fellow New Orleanians,

We have been fighting for better street infrastructure for a long time. Roads are reconstructed too slowly because of a lack of funding, and when funding does come through, the roads are simply maintained and not improved. I want to change that.

The City of New Orleans has enormous potential to achieve new heights in transportation. As my Forward Together transition report called for, I created an Office of Transportation to make equitable transportation a priority for my administration.

The Office proactively and collaboratively sets transportation goals that inform budget priorities and sets new directions for local and regional mobility. Transportation improvements are integrated into street improvement projects as they take place, ensuring all our networks – automobile, transit, bike and pedestrian – are connected and improved.

To deliver more for our citizens and visitors, I've asked the Office of Transportation to develop an action plan to establish clear short-term transportation goals for my administration.

Drawing from a plethora of previous plans, the Moving New Orleans Action Plan organizes and defines transportation initiatives by four key themes:

Safety – Continuously reduce traffic conflicts by improving networks for each mode – pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and automobiles.

Efficiency – Focus on traffic improvements to reduce travel times and push for better systemization of our existing infrastructure.

Equity – Ensure everyone has sufficient access to multiple high quality transportation networks for utilitarian and recreational trips.

Connectivity – Expand the automobile, bike, transit and pedestrian networks to more seamlessly transfer between modes and access any destination in the tri-parish region.

These themes will be realized by specific policy and programmatic actions that affect our infrastructure, and will require a significant amount of coordination among all our transportation partners and our community as a whole.

I hope you will stand with me as we push for a better network and better access to our system. Even small incremental change today will make a substantial impact on our future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "LaToya Cantrell". The signature is fluid and cursive.

LaToya Cantrell, Mayor



The strategy is a collective effort from multiple partners, especially Department of Public Works and City Planning Commission. The content is derived from a variety of previous plans including: the Master Plan: A Plan for the 21st Century, the New Orleans Regional Transit Authority's Strategic Mobility Plan, Forward Together New Orleans Transition Report, Resilient New Orleans, Climate Action for a Resilient New Orleans, HousingNOLA 10 Year Strategy and Implementation Plan For a More Equitable New Orleans, and others.

INTRODUCTION

Transportation trends are rapidly changing. Technology advancements have unleashed a slew of new mobility options. New policies and major planning efforts are required to ensure that we prepare for the challenges these new technologies will place on our street network.

Walking, biking and transit directly improve personal health and build community. Residents of New Orleans deserve equal access to multiple high-quality transportation networks regardless of where they live, work and play.

Transportation network needs change from neighborhood to neighborhood, and from street to street. Similarly, land-use plans and zoning requirements that accommodate current and future development vary across the City. It is critical, therefore, that neighborhood context is carefully considered as transportation improvements are made, and road construction projects are designed.

New Orleans is outpacing the country in transit ridership. In 2017 New Orleans was one of only four high-ridership cities with an increase in transit ridership. Providing greater access to transit in every neighborhood will be critical as more households are shifting towards one car, and people are choosing transit over other transportation options. Challenges still remain - only 33 percent of the region's jobs are accessible within one hour by transit and only 11 percent in 30 minutes or less. We need to shift this metric so that at least 50 percent of our regions jobs are accessible by transit within an hour's commute time.

New Orleans's flat terrain is ideal for biking. The City has made tremendous progress in growing its bike network since Katrina. However, bikeway design concepts have continued to advance. Expanding and improving the existing bike network based on new standards will attract more riders and improve safety.

Safety is critical for all transportation modes but especially for vulnerable users like pedestrians and people with disabilities. Accessibility improvements, like smooth sidewalks, curb ramps, accessible pedestrian signals, and others, will benefit residents of all ages and abilities, ensuring that neighborhoods are livable throughout one's lifespan.

Moving New Orleans identifies steps that the Office of Transportation, in collaboration with multiple partners, will execute to improve our transportation network. Reducing barriers to jobs and healthcare and better linking people to any destination will improve the City's economic outlook.





Residents of New Orleans deserve equal access to multiple high-quality transportation networks, regardless of where they live, work and play.

SAFETY





1. Safety: Creating safer street networks for people who walk, ride, and drive

Reducing Traffic Injuries & Fatalities

Death and injury on our city streets can be dramatically reduced or minimized by creating better public spaces. Public safety is a top priority for the Cantrell administration and the Office of Transportation. With this action agenda, New Orleans officially embraces a new commitment to dramatically increase the safety of the City's streets.

Between 2013 and 2017, an average of 50 New Orleanians each year were killed in traffic on city streets, and close to 30 percent were killed while walking. Total fatalities and pedestrian deaths have been declining since 2017, but a deeper study and understanding of the causes of traffic crashes will provide necessary insight to improve conditions and prevent future occurrences.

Fortunately, there are policies to build on. In 2011, the City passed its first Complete Streets ordinance establishing guidelines for better designed roadway infrastructure and use of the public right of way. Mayor Cantrell's transition plan for the administration took a close look at transportation and set an urgency to implement this policy and others.

Together, these establish priorities and an action agenda that includes:

- **new standards for street design guidelines** that ensure accessibility for all ages, abilities and travel modes
- **the creation of an integrated and comprehensive network** for walking, biking and transit that connects people to employment, recreation, education, community centers and more.



ACTIONS:

1. IMPROVE THE SIDEWALK NETWORK FOR PEDESTRIANS

Over the next two years, the City will:

- Conduct a comprehensive sidewalk audit using the City's 311 system of known sidewalk complaints, to provide a baseline for a targeted sidewalk improvement program
- Increase pedestrian safety at intersections by installing additional pedestrian signals
- Establish a new publicly available system for evaluating and prioritizing sidewalk capital improvement projects
- Collaborate with the RTA to prioritize and implement sidewalk improvements around public transit stops, with particular attention and urgency to accommodations for people with disabilities

2. PREVENT CRASHES

Over the next year, the City will:

- Update and implement improved street design guidelines to incorporate proven crash reduction countermeasures such as road diets, changes to intersection geometry, and traffic calming measures
- Conduct a study on high-frequency and high-injury crash locations across the City and use this data to prioritize safety investments
- Establish a safe intersections program, based on the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan framework from 2014, that will aid in the redesign of dangerous intersections for both quick-build and capital projects, and to pilot signal strategies like the use of leading pedestrian intervals
- Utilize funding in the Operations and Capital budgets to ensure that the City can deliver on these strategies

3. FOCUS ON SCHOOL SAFETY CONDITIONS

Focused coordination among Departments of Health, Safety and Permits, and Public Works, and Offices of Transportation and Youth and Families, will enhance school transportation safety conditions.

Over the next three years, the City will:

- Update design guidelines for pedestrian, bike and transit infrastructure around schools to incorporate necessary safety elements such as high visibility crosswalks, flashing beacons, improved pedestrian crossings and signage
- Ensure schools are undergoing safety evaluations and develop review criteria to expand the program
- Expand the number of K-12 schools that use School Travel Safety Plans
- Support the continued collaboration between the New Orleans Health Department, DPW, and Orleans Parish schools on safety programming and infrastructure improvements
- Work with local policymakers to ensure that a portion of any fine-based revenue from school zones gets reinvested into school safety programming and infrastructure improvements
- Work with school transportation providers to ensure proper vehicle inspections are being performed and driver education is regularly offered

4. DEVELOP A TRANSPORTATION SAFETY DASHBOARD

Quality transportation data must be accessible across agencies in order to make safety decisions that are well-informed.

In the next three years the City will:

- Form a street safety data team to analyze and interpret data
- Create an online dashboard with maps depicting crash locations by mode, injury severity, frequency and other factors
- Ensure that any online dashboard has dedicated staff capacity for timely updates and analysis
- Create procedures for regular pedestrian, bicycle and automobile counts to facilitate informed prioritization of safety investments and other street improvements
- Improve the ability of citizens to report transportation safety issues through 311 and online tools
- Adopt a standard operating procedure to conduct studies before and after roadway safety improvements are made to better analyze outcomes of crash reduction strategies

“We will make
New Orleans
streets into safe,
welcoming places,
especially for our
most vulnerable
users—pedestrians,
seniors and
schoolchildren.”

-Mayor Cantrell



DEFLECTION





2. Efficiency: To make traveling through the city easier and more reliable

The City is committed to improving the ability to travel across the city for all modes by investing in solutions for automobiles, transit, bicycles and pedestrians. This could include signalization improvements, quick delivery of major road resurfacing projects and repair needs, or changes to roadway configurations. The transportation network will be improved so people on the road can reach their destinations quickly and reliably with fewer traffic conflicts.



ACTIONS:

1. IMPROVE TRAFFIC SIGNALS

To ensure that roadways perform better for all users - motorists, transit riders, bicyclists and pedestrians - traffic signalization must be improved.

Over the next three years, the City will:

- Identify points of heavy congestion and bottlenecks within the City's roadway network and improve signalization to mitigate excessive delays
- Develop inspection schedules to minimize traffic signal outages and reduce ensuing expedited replacement costs
- Invest in new software and signal improvements to establish real-time traffic signal monitoring that streamlines timing updates and repairs, and allows better focus of resources

2. EVALUATE PARKING AND CURB-SIDE ACTIVITY

Over the next four years, the City will:

- Study the traffic impact of Transportation Network Companies and transit providers on curb-side activity and develop recommendations for improvements
- Explore an improved parking interface that makes finding available parking spots easier
- Review on-street parking demand and identify places to add or modify metered parking rates to decrease congestion
- Study how the consolidation of loading zones across the city would affect deliveries and other freight movements and develop an improvement plan
- Develop joint design guidelines for transit stops with RTA to ensure safe and comfortable transit journeys for riders
- Evaluate how the City can further improve sidewalk amenities at transit stops

3. ESTABLISH POLICY GUIDELINES FOR NEW MOBILITY

As private transportation services expand, the City of New Orleans needs to establish guidelines for mobility.

Over the next three years, the City will:

- Create a policy framework for new mobility providers interested in the New Orleans market that requires data sharing
- Update vehicle type definitions to accommodate new mobility solutions

4. UPGRADE THE TRANSIT FLEET

An upgraded fleet will be more reliable, more cost effective, and easier to operate and maintain.

Over the next five years, the City will:

- Work with the RTA to establish a vehicle replacement cycle that will reduce the average age of buses and streetcars in the fleet
- Actively explore electric buses as a replacement option



“Movement
of people and
freight through
the City should
be seamless,
as absent of
major delays as
possible.”

-Mayor Cantrell



ATTENTION





3. Equity: To make the roadway accessible for all users and modes

An increased demand for transit, automobile, bike and pedestrian accommodations requires more resources to maintain and improve the transportation network to ensure people can move efficiently across the City.

Those fortunate enough to have access to an automobile can access services and jobs with relative ease. On average, more than 89 percent of the region's jobs are accessible within a 30-minute drive. However, one in five New Orleanians do not own a car and rely on other means for access to jobs, recreation, and amenities. In 2018, the average New Orleanian could reach only 12 percent of the region's jobs in 30 minutes or less through a combination of transit and walking.

Unfortunately, those residents most dependent on public transit are unable to access opportunity as easily as those with an automobile. This lack of transportation access makes getting to school, work, the grocery store, and other destinations more challenging and adds pressure to daily life.

For many, transportation is the second greatest household cost. Improving access across the City for biking, transit and walking will reduce total household costs and leave more dollars for other needs. A renewed focus on delivering accessibility and improving streets in neighborhoods will better serve residents.

ACTIONS:

1. INCREASE ACCESS TO JOBS

In New Orleans the majority of jobs are concentrated in a few areas, particularly downtown and the French Quarter. Providing adequate access to these areas for all modes is critical for job sustainability.

Over the next five years, the City will:

- Study and find solutions for parking and transit challenges faced by hospitality industry workers
- Improve access to the downtown core for bike, transit and automobile commuters
- Work with the State Department of Transportation and Development (LaDOTD) and the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) to study the I-10 corridor and the high-rise bridge for high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) potential to improve transit timeliness and reduce traffic congestion between New Orleans East and the downtown core
- Implement transit priority treatments (i.e. bus lanes, signal priority, bus stop amenities, boarding islands) in highest need corridors across the city, as identified by the Comprehensive Operations Analysis and existing ridership data
- Implement low-stress bike networks that connect residential areas to the downtown core
- Use tactical materials – such as paint, flex posts and rubber boarding islands – to speed implementation of improvements

2. LINK TRANSPORTATION TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Housing is too expensive in much of the City but there are some neighborhoods that offer greater affordability than others: including New Orleans East, Algiers, 7th Ward and portions elsewhere. To reduce overall household costs, transit systems and multi-modal transportation networks need to better link to affordable housing. Providing more direct connection to certain neighborhoods will give people greater opportunity to live and work in the City.

Within the next three years, the City will:

- Work with RTA to establish direct transit connections to New Orleans East, Algiers, Central City, the 7th ward, and other neighborhoods
- Establish financial and zoning incentives to encourage affordable housing in new developments along high-capacity transit lines
- Coordinate with relevant departments to review zoning regulations and establish programs that preserve affordability as transportation investments are implemented
- Focus on areas with low-household income while planning and expanding the bike network



Lemona Playground
The City of
St. Louis
Department of
Parks and Recreation
1000
1000

3. EXPAND THE BIKE SHARE PROGRAM

Blue Bikes is proving to be a real commuting alternative for some workers within its network. Growing the system is mandatory to ensure its accessibility for all residents.

In the next three years, the City will:

- Double the Blue Bikes system to 1,500 bikes
- Co-locate Blue Bikes along RTA transit routes to serve as a first- and last-mile solution
- Explore integrated transportation payment systems for parking, Blue Bikes, and RTA
- Collaborate with civic organizations and other departments to support community events dedicated to encouraging cycling, such as Bike to Work week; Bike Easy Annual Bicycle Secondline; Bike the Big Easy; and Walk and Roll to School Week
- Expand participation in the reduced-fare bike share program

4. MAINTAIN TRANSIT-FARE AFFORDABILITY

Many New Orleanians depend on transit to get to work and school, and to run daily errands. However, transit service is still down from pre-Katrina levels. While the system depends on the fare revenue it receives, those dependent on it should not have to choose between a meal and getting to work.

Over the next two years, the City will:

- Develop a program with RTA that provides discounted transit passes for low-income and youth populations, utilizing the existing seniors program as a model
- Investigate funding mechanisms to support increased transit services, including enabling legislation to vote for transit taxes, or a hotel or tourism industry tax or allocation to support transit
- Work with RTA to study transit-fare costs and fare payment systems to ensure that costs and payment types are sustainable



CAUTION
WATCH
FOR
CARS
EXITING
DRIVEWAY

BLUE
Bikes

Louisiana

BLUE
Bikes

Louisiana

531 AVS

While the system depends on the fare revenue it receives, those dependent on it should not have to choose between a meal and getting to work.



CONNECTIVITY





4. Connectivity: To improve connections locally and regionally for better movement of people and goods

New Orleans and the surrounding region have pieces of a truly multimodal transportation system including public transit and paratransit services, an extensive roadway network, bikeways, sidewalks, transit, bike-share and ferry facilities. However, there is low connectivity among modes.

Connectivity is an indicator of a person's ability to use multiple modes in one transit system for a single trip. Effective connectivity can attract new transit riders – and retain existing riders – by reducing travel times, providing more reliable connections, and ensuring that transfers are easy and safe.

Current transit funding is barely adequate to maintain the existing system, allowing little opportunity to expand transit to all areas in need. Grant opportunities and expansion of existing funding sources may help close financial gaps, but a new source for dedicated revenue would be more beneficial for service expansions and must be explored.

To create a more connected local and regional network, adequate funding must be allocated to support an expansion of services and improve infrastructure across the City and beyond parish lines.

ACTIONS:

1. PLAN AND BUILD A COMPLETE BIKE NETWORK

Of the City's 125 mile bikeway network, only a portion of lanes are protected. To make bicycling accessible for all users, a continuous network of protected bike lanes that connects residents in all neighborhoods with jobs and opportunities throughout the City must be designed.

Over the next four years, the City will:

- Create a citywide plan for a low-stress bike network that connects all neighborhoods in the city to major employment centers, cultural institutions, and activity nodes
- Develop, in conjunction with community service providers and other community based organizations, prioritization criteria to ensure equitable delivery of improvements, taking into account factors like income, race, ethnicity, car-ownership, employment and job access, and environmental burdens
- Create a metric for bike-lane connectivity to evaluate new infrastructure, identify missing links and hold itself to a high transportation utility standard
- Adopt legislation to require bike parking in private buildings when possible, prioritizing investments that connect low income neighborhoods with job centers

2. IMPROVE AND EXPAND THE TRANSIT NETWORK

A sustainable transit network is impossible without better regional cooperation – especially between Jefferson and Orleans Parishes.

This year, the City will:

- Establish quarterly meetings with a dedicated working group of City officials representing Orleans, Jefferson, St. Bernard, and St. Tammany parishes to discuss regional connectivity and possibility for improvements to roadway and transit infrastructure to better link the parishes
- Study existing transit network and connection to other parishes for improvements; and develop a plan for implementation
- Take a more visible role in helping to shape transit policy by working closely with the Regional Planning Commission to assist the work of the Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA), utilize city agencies to communicate progress and encourage public participation in the process
- Work with Greater New Orleans, Inc. to further their Southeastern Louisiana Super Region (SoLA) initiatives

3. CONNECT TO THE AIRPORT

A world-class airport terminal will be open for service in 2019.

Over the next five years, the City will:

- Work with the RTA to create a limited-stop or express service to the airport
- Develop a working group to study options for a more frequent and direct link to the airport that may include rail or Bus Rapid Transit
- Establish a team to define a path forward and secure federal funding for the direct link
- Explore viable options for bicycle connectivity as part of a regional bike system

4. SUPPORT MOVEMENT OF FREIGHT AND CARGO

As freight traffic increases, it is important to ensure our network supports the movement of goods.

Over the next five years, the City will:

- Work with LaDOTD and RPC to ensure the City's interstate system supports the increasing movement of freight
- Work with similar partners to ensure the City's local roadway system supports freight and cargo activity
- Collaborate with The Port of New Orleans to further initiatives that support growth and economic development
- Provide support to the railroad networks by more stringently enforcing parking and collaborating on other initiatives



“Better regional connectivity will drive greater economic investment.”

-Mayor Cantrell



GETTING IT DONE





5. Getting it Done: Institutionalizing Urgency

With this agenda, we begin to reorient New Orleans around delivering a better transportation network today, and in the long-term. To ensure we implement this plan, the Mayor's Office of Transportation will take a new role to organize, streamline, and coordinate decision-making and communication between other planning and implementing departments. Now is the time to start making changes to city streets.



ACTIONS:

1. BUILDING THE OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION

In order for it to fulfill its mission of ensuring safety, equity, efficiency, and connectivity for both people and goods, the Office of Transportation must grow.

Within the next two years, the City will:

- Dedicate staff positions and time to project management, design, and implementation in order to improve street improvement project delivery
- Develop a project delivery team composed of staff from the LaDOTD, RTA, CPC, DPW and the Mayor’s Office to regularly plan and implement projects
- Work with leadership in DPW to streamline processes within the department to enhance project delivery
- Evaluate the benefit of making the Office of Transportation a Department of Transportation

2. MOVING QUICKLY

Urgency is critical to improving systems and processes.

Within the next year, the City will:

- Ensure implementation of a Complete Streets program to incorporate transportation improvements for all modes in all road reconstructions
- Create a road construction database of projects to better coordinate improvement projects among various departments
- Streamline inter-departmental processes to speed-up permitting, public outreach and implementation of projects
- Utilize existing and new City contracts to help efficiently and effectively deliver quick-build projects

3. IMPROVING PUBLIC INFORMATION & COMMUNICATIONS

Achieving equitable transportation networks requires a significant amount of public input. There are new and better ways to connect with the communities, especially those that have been neglected by the public process in the past. The City will work to ensure that the voices of all New Orleanians are represented and considered.

Over the next two years, the City will:

- Develop a strategy and create a dedicated team within the Office of Transportation and related departments to handle regular outreach and public engagement on transportation specific initiatives
- Establish a website dedicated to the Office of Transportation with regularly updated information
- Partner with the Office of Neighborhood Engagement and the RoadWork NOLA Team to engage community leadership and grassroots organizations to inform transportation decision making, especially in low-income and communities of color that have been historically disinvested
- Formalize a joint communications program with the RTA to improve public information about transit at bus and streetcar stops
- Create up-to-date, user-friendly digital and physical



“Now is the time
to start making
changes on city
streets.”

-Mayor Cantrell



MOVING **NEW ORLEANS**



MAYOR LATOYA CANTRELL
TRANSPORTATION ACTION PLAN