

2026

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# PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE OF NEW ORLEANS



**CITY PLANNING COMMISSION**

# A WORD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This past year reinforced the importance of clear processes and collaborative partnerships as we guided growth, redevelopment, and long-range visioning across New Orleans. In a time defined by evolving housing needs, critical infrastructure investment, and renewed interest in our corridors and historic districts, the CPC remained focused on delivering predictable processes, thoughtful design review, and policy updates that position our city for sustainable and equitable growth.

In 2025, the City saw continued reinvestment in established neighborhoods, strategic infill along key corridors, and meaningful progress on long-range initiatives that will influence development for decades to come. Planning is both technical and deeply human; behind every site plan, comprehensive plan update, and zoning request are individuals with a desire to improve our city's urban fabric.

**Now, we turn toward the future with the development of the Master Plan 2050.**

This effort represents an opportunity to reaffirm our city's values, clarify our growth strategy, and align land use, infrastructure, housing, and economic development policies for the next generation.

This annual report is designed to support the incoming administration and Council during a period of transition, providing context for ongoing initiatives and highlighting the foundation upon which the next chapter of leadership will build.

**The work ahead is significant, but so is the opportunity.**

We are grateful for the engagement, feedback, and partnership with community and City leadership that guides this work. Together, we will continue shaping a New Orleans that is resilient, inclusive, and prepared for the decades to come.



**Robert D. Rivers**  
Executive Director



## LETTER FROM THE COMMISSION CHAIR

On behalf of the New Orleans City Planning Commission, we are pleased to submit our 2025 Annual Report. This year's report not only highlights what the Commission accomplished over the past year but also provides important information about next steps toward implementation in 2026. The upcoming Master Planning process is another major focus of this report and outlines what the City's approach could be over the next several years as this guiding document is developed.

As a new Mayor takes the helm and a new City Council is seated in 2026, the Commission also found it valuable to provide a glimpse of local development trends, as well as highlights of the recently established Brownfields Program and the recently acquired Urban Agriculture Program.

Additionally, the completion of important land use work and regulatory studies, such as the Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning Update, Canal Street Study Progress Report, NSTR Special Exceptions, and the adoption of more than one hundred map amendments to the Future Land Use Map, positions the City's decision-makers for a 2026 that can move many of these initiatives from planning to implementation.

In the first quarter of 2026, I, along with senior staff and one to two Commissioners, met with each District Council office. We wanted to introduce both our work and ourselves to new Councilmembers and reintroduce our work and our team to returning Councilmembers.

The work of the City Planning Commission is vital for the long-term growth and health of the City of New Orleans. We are a small but **VERY** committed staff to the intricacies of planning for New Orleans.

We look forward to working with the new Administration and City Council to solve the challenges facing the city but also plan for the best quality of life for all residents. This is very important work, and we are actively reviewing our workflow and adjusting to new practices to ensure we can be as efficient as possible without sacrificing our quality of work.



**Katie Witry**, Commission Chair

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*Photo Credit: stock.adobe.com*

*Special thank you to all those who worked on this document, including:*

The City Planning Commission

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Cameron Boissiere-Morris, AICP

Jenna D. Burke

ITI Enterprise GIS Team





# OUR SUCCESSSES

# WHO WE ARE.

The City Planning Commission (CPC) is not just a regulatory body – the Commission is a technical and strategic partner in advancing policy through the built environment. The CPC provides the data, analysis, and cross-department coordination needed to turn Administrative priorities into measurable results, from affordable housing and small business corridors to climate resilience and neighborhood physical and social infrastructure. Our joint efforts prime the City to take off in a new direction: streamlined development, improved transparency and efficiency, and ensuring that the city grows in line with shared community values.



## VISION

The City Planning Commission's vision is to be a model planning department composed of a responsive staff which provides superior planning and technical services, and which works cooperatively with all stakeholders.

## MISSION

The Commission strives to provide quality and timely development review, facilitating the preservation of the character of the City's many varied neighborhoods, while guiding developments that are catalysts for positive change. The Commission is committed to providing a public forum for the thorough examination of land use projects and processes, examining developments and their related impacts.

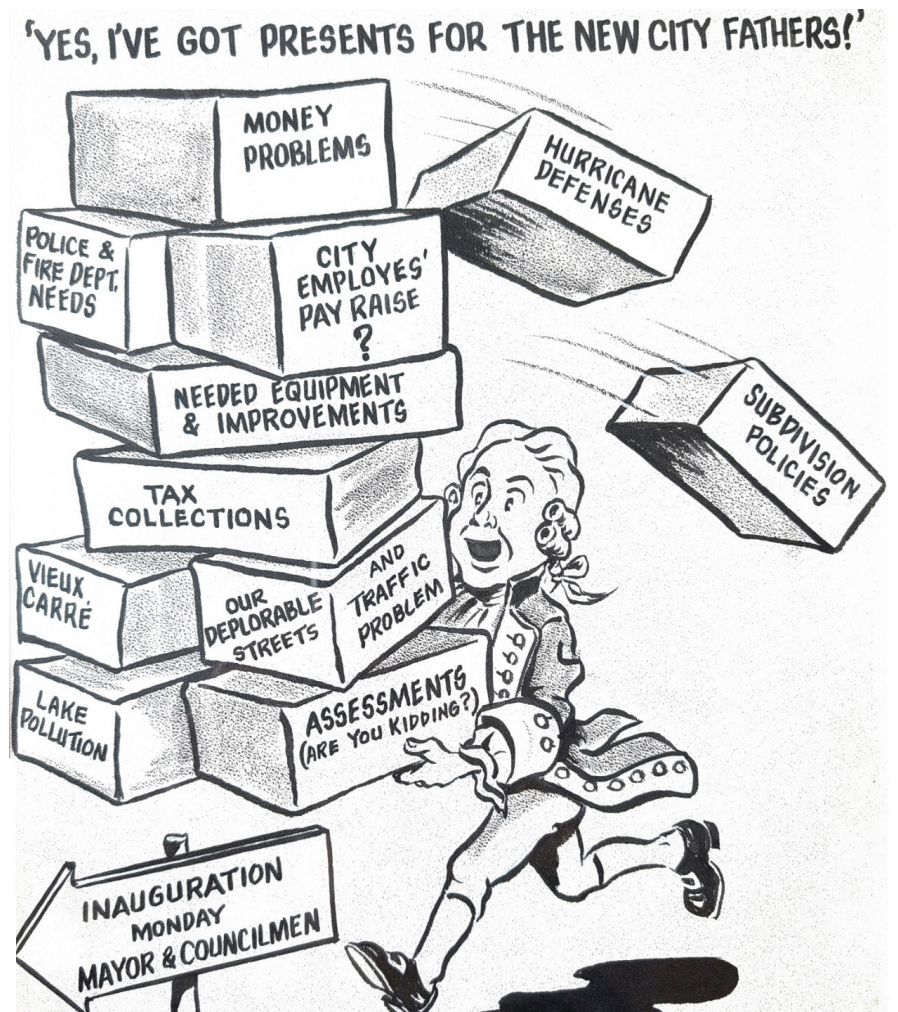




Photo Credit: Carmen K. Sisson - stock.adobe.com

467

**BZA-RELATED CASES**

708

**ZONING-RELATED CASES**

669

**SUBDIVISION CASES**

381

**NSTR SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS**

# OUR SKILLS.



## LAND USE & ZONING EXPERTISE

Expertise in Land Use and Zoning are the most sought information from constituents, City departments, and the City Council. In addition to providing publicly accessible staff reports and online tools, the CPC staff are always available to the public and City colleagues to discuss any current issues or trends.



## NEIGHBORHOOD & CITYWIDE PLANNING

CPC staff are capable of conducting planning initiative for large and small geographies with a focus on achieving a shared vision for the community through meaningful engagement and technical expertise.



## URBAN DESIGN DEVELOPMENT

CPC chairs the Design Advisory Committee which reviews significant redevelopment proposals to provide design related recommendations to improve the quality of development in the city. Its staff is skilled in best practices in building and site design and are driven to make recommendations to achieve the best possible outcomes.



## POLICY ANALYSIS & RESEARCH

CPC staff have expertise in affordable housing, sustainability, transportation, capital improvement planning, and various other topics of significance to the City's operations and clearly present these findings publicly in response to CPC, City Council, or Mayor initiated requests.



## DATA & MAPPING

CPC staff are well versed in data management and production, and GIS mapping. From individual applications for Variances and Conditional Uses, to studies requiring substantial data and mapping needs, the CPC is capable of developing data-driven methods for finding solutions to the issues at hand.



## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

CPC has a dedicated Public Engagement Planner who is charged with liaising with NEO, neighborhood organizations, and developing a vision for enhanced engagement strategies for the department.

# OUR IMPACT.

If the saying “the numbers don’t lie” is a litmus test of an organization’s effectiveness and efficiency, the data from the last four years are gospel to the City Planning Commission’s **impressive ability to process a high volume of regulatory work, despite limited staff capacity.**

From 2022 to 2025, the CPC processed **2,341 cases** over various divisions including Variances, Safety and Permits appeals, Conditional Uses, Zoning Changes, Design Reviews, Major and Minor Subdivisions, Text Amendments, Street Name Changes, Property Dispositions and Acquisitions, NSTR Special Exceptions, and Master Plan Amendments. Land Use assumes the bulk of planning-related cases, with **Conditional Use** and **Design Review** holding the largest volume at **261** and **242 individual projects**, respectively.

These numbers are dwarfed by the second largest application type the CPC processes, Minor Subdivisions, with a **total of 669 subdivisions** handled over four years; this suggests that **incremental land divisions are shaping much of the city’s development pattern.**

Perhaps there is a healthy level of market interest driving the desire to create more land and increase the potential for active infill development. The staggering numbers of subdivisions could also signal that current zoning regulations don’t align with the needs of the community. Whatever the reason, the fact that subdivisions make up over a third of all land use regulatory work highlights **the importance of clear standards and efficient review pathways** to keep pace with the neighborhoods experiencing incremental growth.

**The City Planning Commission is ready to partner with Council on citywide initiatives that support the Administration’s policy agendas. The prospect of major federal funding opportunities and the upcoming Master Plan process create a rare opportunity to modernize our regulatory systems and deliver measurable outcomes.**



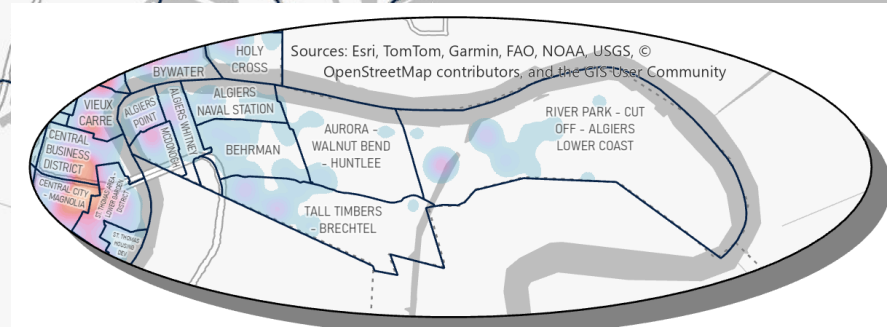
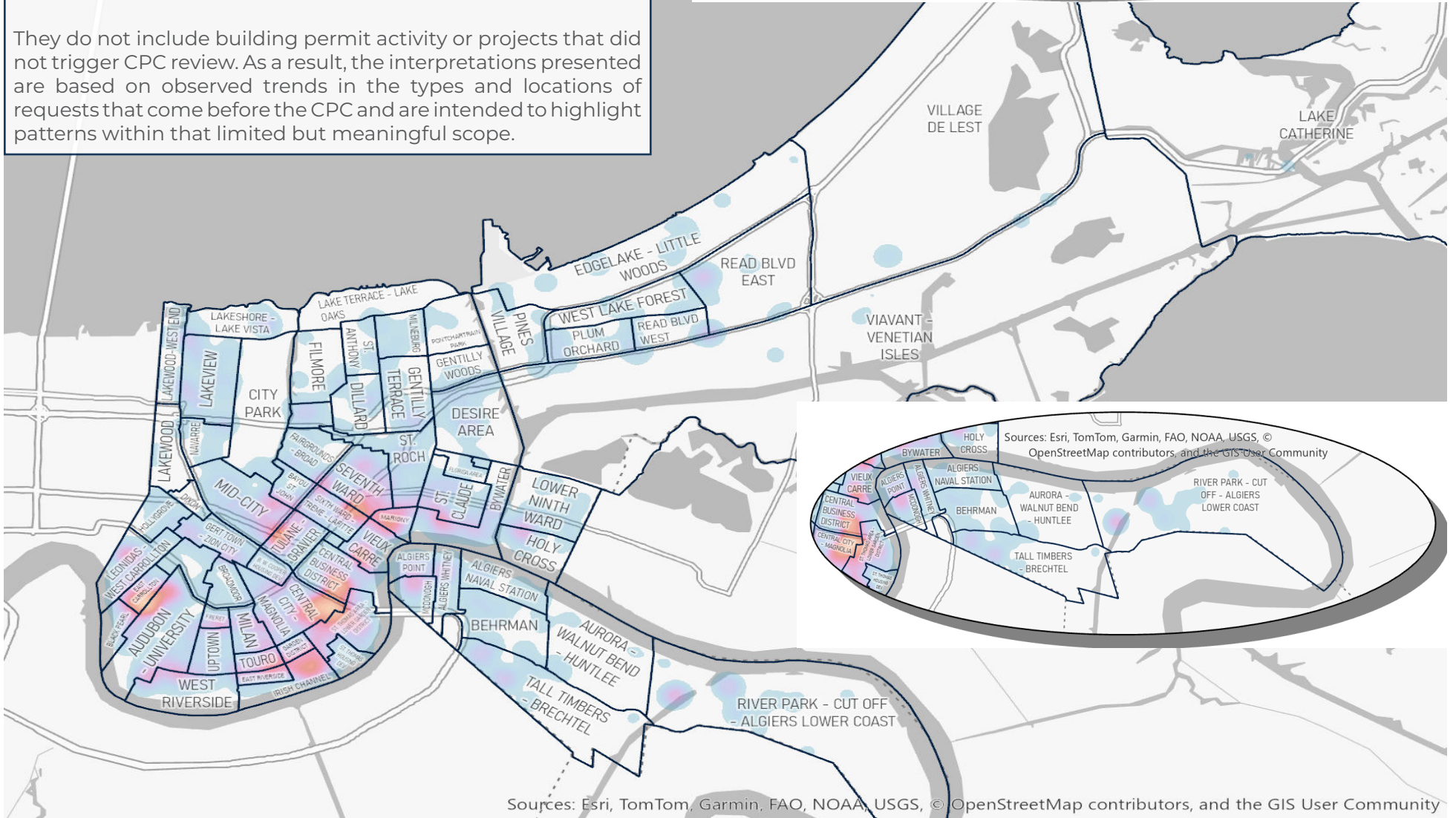
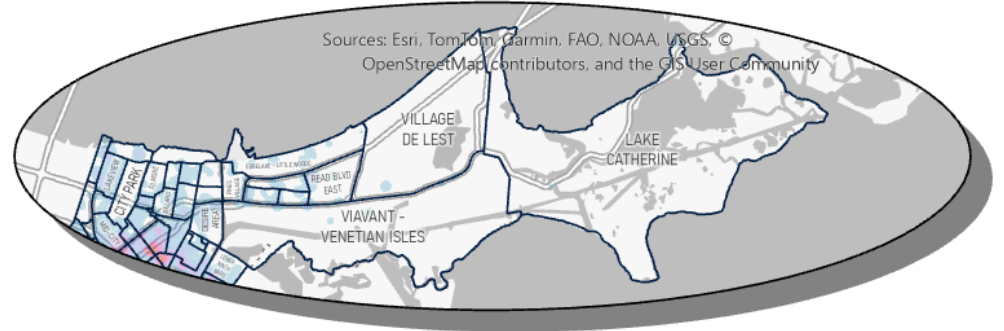
# BREAKDOWN OF CPC PROJECTS BY DISTRICT

DIVISION	TOTAL	District A	District B	District C	District D	District E
<b>BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENTS</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>24</b>
<i>Variances</i>	345	88	108	46	85	18
<i>Safety and Permits Appeals</i>	97	46	28	19	4	0
<i>Reasonable Accommodations</i>	25	7	3	4	5	6
<b>LAND USE REGULATIONS</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>302</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>64</b>
<i>Conditional Use Only</i>	261	35	116	61	24	25
<i>Conditional Use + Zoning Change</i>	97	3	5	2	2	0
<i>Zoning Change Only</i>	25	3	14	19	12	9
<i>Design Review</i>	242	54	78	47	38	25
<i>Text Amendments</i>	78	1	72	5	0	0
<i>Street Name Changes</i>	16	1	3	4	5	3
<i>Property Dispositions</i>	25	3	7	7	7	1
<i>Property Acquisitions</i>	17	0	7	7	2	1
<b>SUBDIVISIONS</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>86</b>
<i>Minor Subdivisions</i>	635	143	174	155	90	73
<i>Major Subdivisions (5+ Lots)</i>	34	1	6	5	9	13
<b>NSTR SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>MASTER PLAN AMENDMENTS</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>TOTAL CASES</b>	<b>2,341</b>	<b>466</b>	<b>743</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>347</b>	<b>209</b>

# CITYWIDE HEAT MAP

The following heatmaps reflect the geographic distribution of projects that required review by the City Planning Commission (CPC) from between 2022 and 2025.

They do not include building permit activity or projects that did not trigger CPC review. As a result, the interpretations presented are based on observed trends in the types and locations of requests that come before the CPC and are intended to highlight patterns within that limited but meaningful scope.





# COUNCIL DISTRICT B.

District B leads the city in planning-related requests, reflecting a mix of residential, commercial, and civic activity. Residential change is primarily incremental, while commercial activity is mostly neighborhood- and corridor-serving, including restaurants, bars, grocery stores, and breweries. Overall, the District illustrates a mosaic of stable neighborhoods, transitional corridors, and strategic growth nodes, each requiring tailored planning and zoning approaches.

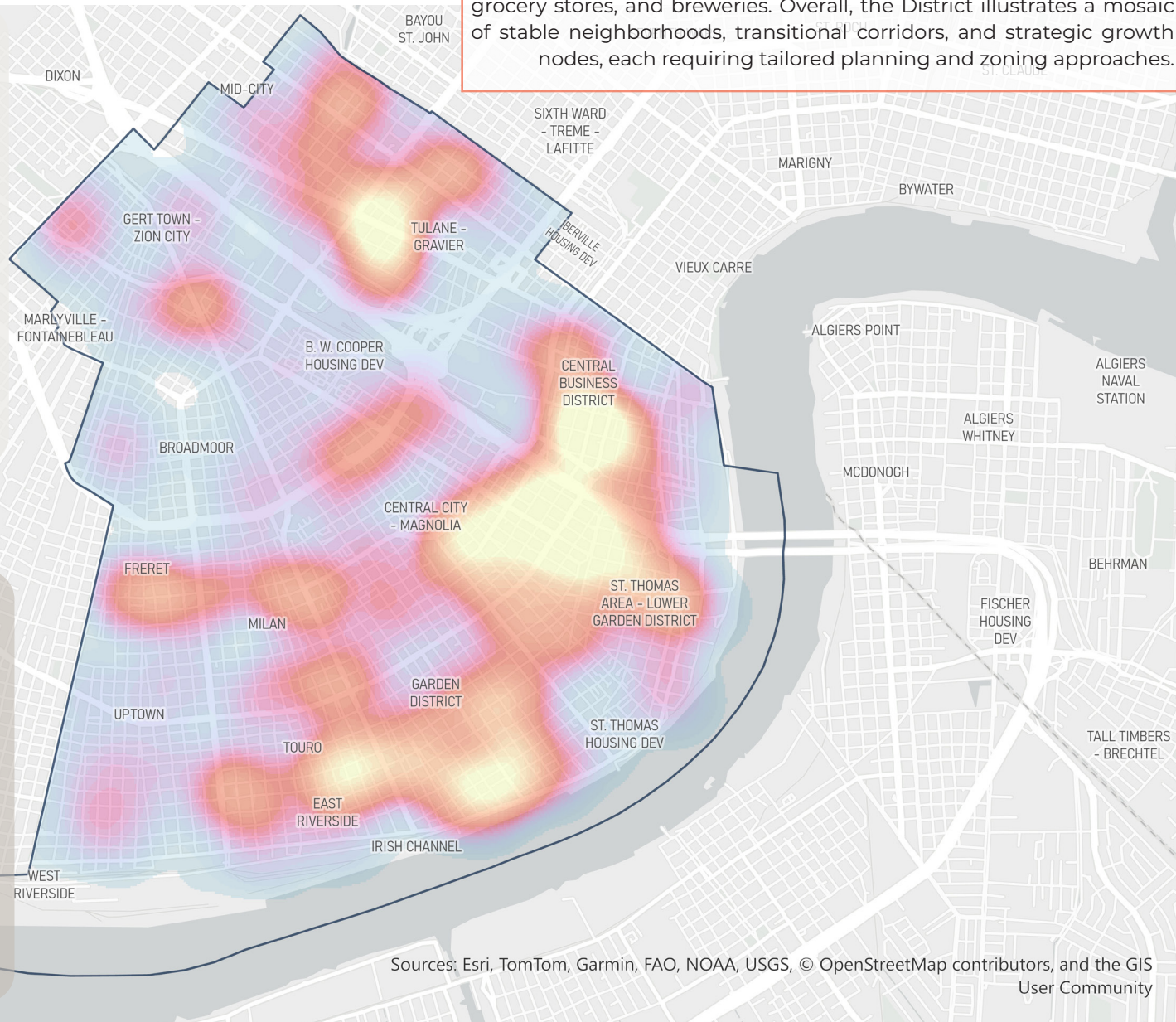
## Dynamic Housing Trends

Targeted multi-family and mixed-use developments, along with city-supported affordable housing projects, concentrate in high-demand nodes like **Central City** and **Tulane/Gravier**, while single- and two-family housing production find stability in primarily residential neighborhoods, like **Broadmoor** and the **Garden District**.

Collaborating with local firms and existing university design programs to develop a collection of pre-approved residential plans can accelerate efficient housing production.

## Zoning Change Review

One trend to watch is the increase in residential-to-mixed-use and residential-to-commercial rezonings in the district. Neighborhoods like **Gert Town** and **Lower Garden District** seem to be transitioning to support a blend of housing, commerce, and services, while **Central City** shows multi-family and mixed-use conversions, highlighting targeted densification along key streets. This indicator presumes an evaluation of current zoning designations to ensure alignment with the burgeoning growth in the district is needed.



Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

# COUNCIL DISTRICT C.

## At a Glance

District C activity is characterized by a strong presence of destination-related uses. Development has been shaped by tourism, cultural, and public uses with citywide impact; most notably, the high repetition of requests involving transient lodging, bars and restaurants, reception facilities, and cultural craft-related uses (Mardi Gras dens and artisan manufacturing) suggests a district that functions as a tourism hub on the East Bank. The Westbank remains dedicated to local interests, demonstrating balanced, community-oriented requests that waiver between residential needs and increasingly commercial or mixed-use demands.

## Public Realm and Open Space

A unique aspect of the data for the district shows a high volume of requests related to public space and park access. Parklets and development along the **Riverfront** and **Spanish Plaza** appeared frequently, positioning an opportunity to align placemaking and park access with the budding development in neighborhoods along the river on the Westbank, like **Algiers Point** and **McDonogh**

## Westbank in Transition

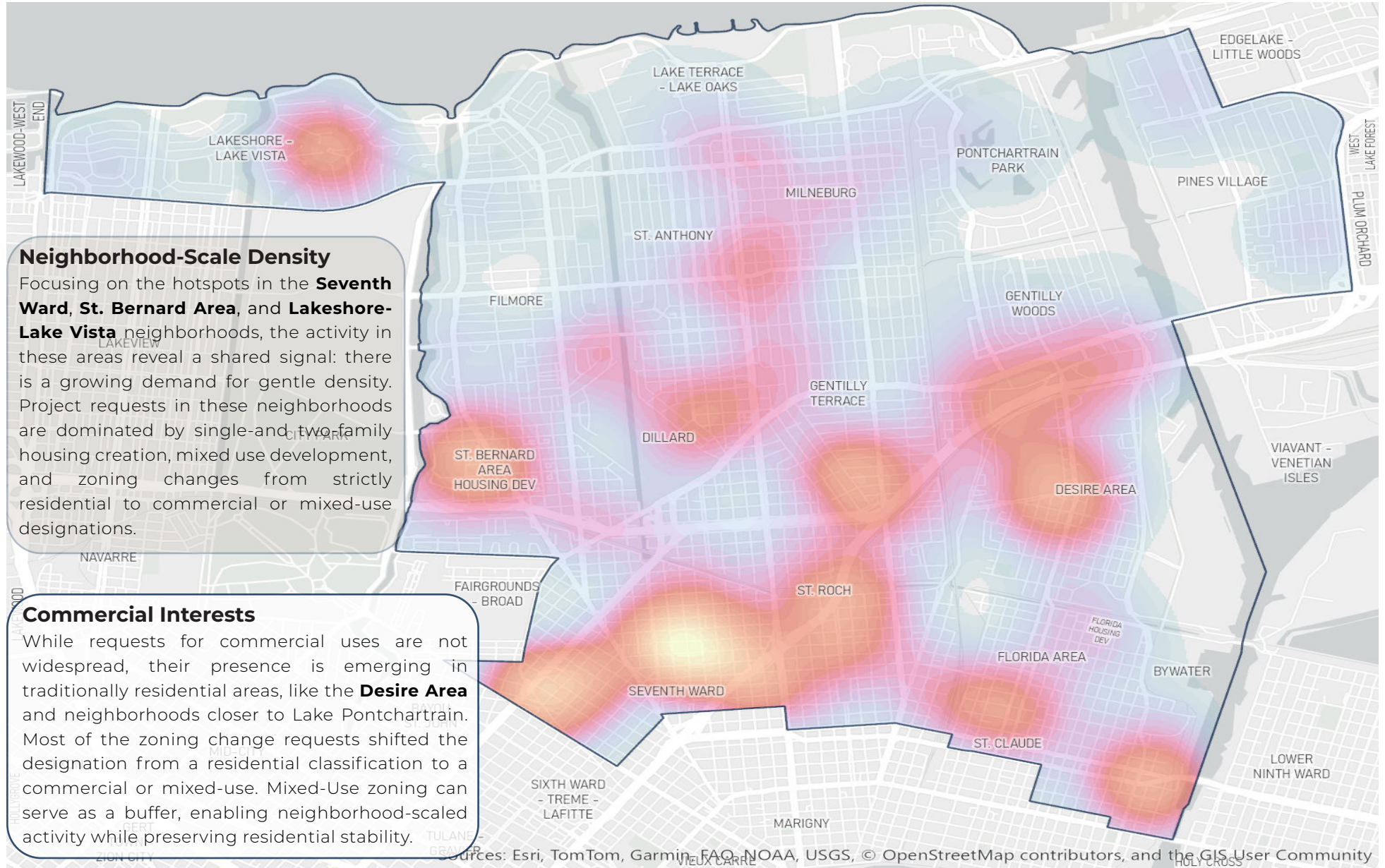
**Tall Timbers, Behrman, and Old Aurora** retain a largely suburban, auto-oriented character, but recent activity shows a shift toward mixed-use development and more diverse housing types. Zoning changes from single-family to multi-family and mixed-use suggest growing demand for flexibility to increase housing capacity or to introduce commercial uses. These trends point to an opportunity to strategically guide growth, supporting increased housing choice, local commerce, and multimodal connections.

## Equitable Tourism

As tourism spills out of the **French Quarter** and into surrounding neighborhoods, preserving the cultures that intrigue visitors without reducing the economic development advantages will require more intentional planning policy that focuses on increasing ethical, sustainable tourism. Overlays, licensing regulations, and modeling "High Value, Low Impact" (HVLI) tourism policies are regulatory tools to bolster sustainable tourism in the district.

# COUNCIL DISTRICT D.

The data for District D tells a very clear housing story, different from the other districts: “missing middle” housing creation is happening, specifically for two-family dwellings, rather than large multi-family projects or purely single-family. While the total number of requests across all application types in the district is fairly balanced, minor subdivisions remain the largest.



## At a Glance

District E is a working, service-oriented district with multiple activity nodes experiencing evolution and incremental reinvestment. The data shows a strong demand for community services that support working families, like child care centers, community spaces, and places of worship. Most commercial requests cluster along major corridors with an emphasis on auto-oriented uses such as drive-throughs, gas stations, and auto-repair businesses.

### Commercial Corridor Connections

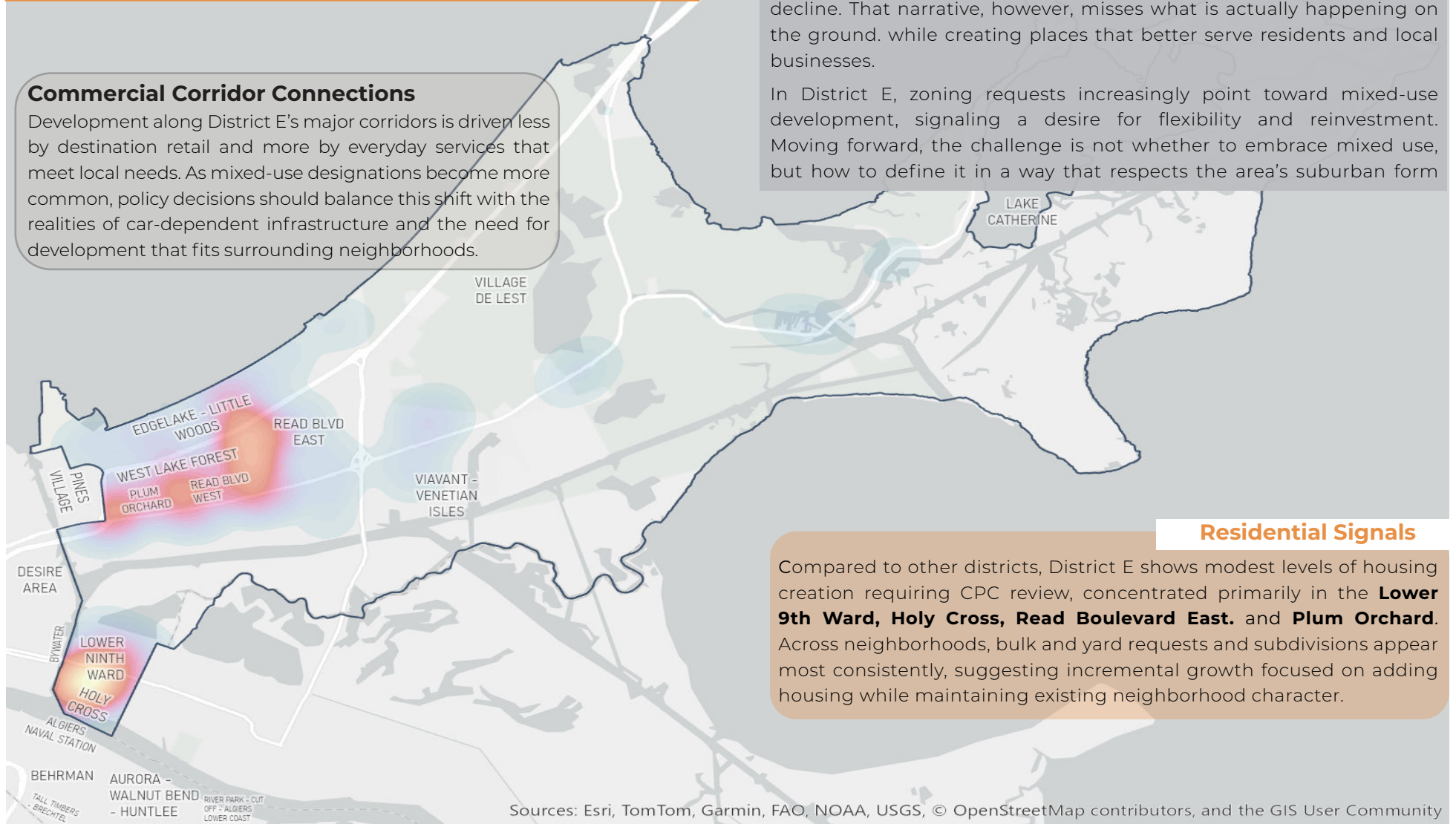
Development along District E's major corridors is driven less by destination retail and more by everyday services that meet local needs. As mixed-use designations become more common, policy decisions should balance this shift with the realities of car-dependent infrastructure and the need for development that fits surrounding neighborhoods.

# COUNCIL DISTRICT E.

### Changing the Narrative

For decades, **New Orleans East** has been shaped by mischaracterization and disinvestment, often reduced to a simplistic narrative of suburban decline. That narrative, however, misses what is actually happening on the ground, while creating places that better serve residents and local businesses.

In District E, zoning requests increasingly point toward mixed-use development, signaling a desire for flexibility and reinvestment. Moving forward, the challenge is not whether to embrace mixed use, but how to define it in a way that respects the area's suburban form



### Residential Signals

Compared to other districts, District E shows modest levels of housing creation requiring CPC review, concentrated primarily in the **Lower 9th Ward, Holy Cross, Read Boulevard East, and Plum Orchard**. Across neighborhoods, bulk and yard requests and subdivisions appear most consistently, suggesting incremental growth focused on adding housing while maintaining existing neighborhood character.

Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community





# PROACTIVE PLANNING

# LAND USE BARRIERS STUDY.

Zoning reform is an identified priority for the Commission heading into 2026. Over the past four years, CPC staff have worked towards a goal of reducing the regulatory burdens that accompany the volume of applications received, including condensing staff reports, updating subdivision regulations, and restructuring application timelines to allow for more efficient staff review. These changes were implemented in consideration of providing the same level of high-quality work with respect to staff capacity.

The recently completed **Land Use Barriers Study** offers a critical opportunity for the Administration to remove long-standing obstacles that have slowed housing production, delayed permitting, and constrained economic growth in New Orleans. This study responds directly to persistent community concerns about a cumbersome and often opaque permitting and land use system. The recommendations for streamlining processes, increasing staff capacity, and simplifying zoning and code requirements offer realistic, implementable steps with potentially rapid results.



## Ready for Implementation with Minimal Budget Impact

*Many of these recommendations can be implemented immediately through text amendments and updates to existing frameworks.*

Expand administrative approvals for minor variances, small subdivision changes (*especially those that shift lot lines without creating new lots*), and small projects.

Update bulk and yard regulations to better reflect both historic development patterns and contemporary housing needs.

Remove the requirement for CPC review for demolitions within certain areas (as in the CBD).

Remove redundant Institutional Master Plan (IMP) approvals when uses are already permitted under base zoning.

Automate and standardize the existing online permit-tracking and notification system through OneStop.

## Recommendations for Mid-Range Investment

*These recommendations require a slightly longer timeline and cross-coordination between multiple departments, strategic investments to retain staff, improve workflows, and decrease review time for permits.*

Provide all relevant staff with modern review tools (software like Bluebeam for digital plan review, etc.) to speed up reviews.

Improve staff retention via better pay, training, and professional development.

Reform the review process for design-review / design advisory-committee (DAC) triggers.

Reform zoning code to allow more by-right uses to reduce the need for conditional-use hearings that deter development.

# Long-Range Structural Reforms

To ensure the progress and development of the city in alignment with the current needs and values of our communities, there must be long-term review and investment in the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. The City Planning Commission is reactive to requests for zoning and land use policies that impact the growth and development of the city. These reforms would allow for more consistent and intentional follow-through.



## 01 Regular, Periodic Review

Every few years, reviews of permitted uses across all zoning districts will ensure the zoning code remains current and adaptable. An example observed by staff in the work performed is the need for updated use standards and use definitions. Innovative ideas for development often struggle with permitting due to rigid, undefined, or outdated uses allowed within the CZO.



## 02 Text Amendment Review

Giving the CPC authority to submit text amendments on behalf of the Commission would **allow staff the flexibility to draft comprehensive text-amendments** to remove outdated or unnecessary conditional use or variance triggers across multiple districts, updating bulk and yard regulations to reflect contemporary housing and development patterns.

# CANAL STREET STUDY.

Once upon a time, there was a street that was designed to divide two worlds with clashing cultures. This street was ineffective in that intention; instead of separating communities it became a hub of connection, a place of revelry, and the neutral ground where these communities reinvented the city together. After a century of growth and flourishing commercial activity, the sidewalks grew quieter as economic interests shifted elsewhere, leaving behind a landscape rich in history that struggled to meet the needs of a changing city.

**Today, there is an opportunity to write the next chapter in the story of Canal Street.**

Revitalizing Canal Street is essential to restoring the economic and cultural strength of New Orleans' historic core, and the 2024 Canal Street Study provides a clear roadmap for doing so. The recommendations outlined prioritize actions that Mayor Moreno's Administration can realistically advance within current fiscal constraints while signaling a strong commitment to visible progress. These targeted steps position the new Administration to achieve measurable wins early while laying the groundwork for long-term transformation.

## MINIMAL BUDGET IMPACT RECOMMENDATIONS

**01** Through the prioritization of public-realm repairs – including sidewalk and damaged pavement repairs, addressing broken streetlights, and increasing the availability of street-furniture – visual improvements in infrastructure signal to business and property owners a renewed interest in the corridor. With the Department of Public Works' renewed capacity to perform minor repairs, the opportunity is all the more accessible. Enhancing the pedestrian experience and creating a sense of identity along the corridor can be achieved with consistent streetscape elements, wayfinding, improved lighting, and public space amenities.

**Opportunities to collaborate with existing civic or nonprofit partners** (*Celebrate Canal!*, *Downtown Development District*) **are primed to coordinate placemaking events, light installations, art and cultural activations that will attract new business investments and inspire our visitors.**

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## STRATEGIES FOR MID-RANGE INVESTMENT

**02** Along the Canal Street corridor, there is an opportunity to update the CZO to encourage a mix of uses to reduce barriers for adaptive reuse and mixed-used developments. The existing zoning regulations can be supplemented to promote live entertainment venues to activate the Theater District, creating a destination for both visitors and local users.

Another effort that requires a bit more time for implementation is the development of a coordinated revitalization and maintenance strategy involving city agencies, property owners, developers, and civic/nonprofit actors. There are no fewer than eight entities with some level of authority along Canal Street; this confounds the responsibilities over matters of public safety, maintenance, and quality of life concerns, resulting in unaddressed issues. Creating a **governance** or **corridor-management structure** would install a singular entity that bears the responsibility of coordinating elements of quality of life for the corridor.



## HOW TO CREATE A SENSE OF PLACE ON CANAL STREET

One of the most impactful recommendations for Canal Street will require a concerted effort to reestablish the corridor as a destination that is safe, convenient, and representative of the city's culture. A consistent, corridor-wide streetscape design plan would give Canal Street a cohesive identity, improving long-term attractiveness. Opportunities to improve landscaping, public space design, and historic character preservation have long been identified, but require commitment from leadership to come to fruition.

The corridor is also ideal for investments in multimodal, transit-oriented improvements focused on pedestrian safety, streetcar and bus infrastructure, and safer bicycle access. Providing transit access for multiple users around the corridor is only as beneficial as the destination they lead to. While the implementation of an integrated traffic and urban design plan will require significant capital, the benefit of a future Canal Street that is an inviting, prosperous hub of culture and activity justifies the investment.



### Fostering Community Connection on Canal

Land use, housing policies, public spaces, and transit access can either connect people or isolate them, and this is laid bare along Canal Street.

The **Canal Street Study** contains recommendations ready for implementation that will transform underutilized potential to beloved civic assets. Encouraging walkability, supporting multi-modal forms of transit, and creating a consistent strategy for wayfinding, landscaping, and seating will promote the Canal Street corridor as a “third place”, a space that is not dedicated to a specific reason for visiting and is welcoming to pedestrian users.

# CITY PLANNING BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM.

The Brownfields Program was resurrected under the CPC in June of 2022. Since that time CPCBP has coordinated and obtained approximately \$8 million dollars in environmental grants, Targeted Brownfield Assessments (TBA's) and Phase One and Two Environmental Site Assessments (ESA) to benefit the City of New Orleans' infrastructure and development.

These services focus on the **environmental assessment and remediation** of larger, delict, historic sites, that can pose risk to the community. These sites were left stagnant due to the high cost of environmental contamination to progress to renovation and development. The CPC Brownfields Program's **main focus is on legacy City-owned Post Katrina sites**, such as **Sophie Gumble House, Touro Shakspeare** and the **Municipal Auditorium** as well as smaller sites such as the vacant parcels between the **Market Street Power Plant** and the **Convention Center** to be used for the **River District** and **Poydras ROW**.

26

Total Sites Assessed

11

Total Sites Remediated

\$8M

Total Funding Secured



Touro Shakspeare



Sophie Gumble House



Municipal Auditorium



## Naval Support Activity (NSA) East Bank complex

Completed in 1919, the 23-acre former military complex sits at the intersection of the east bank of the Mississippi River and the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal (IHNC). The program was **awarded \$2 million through the EPA Cleanup Grant** to address asbestos, lead and mold throughout the buildings to remediate this blighted property. When fully renovated, this site will provide 294 units of affordable housing, with a retail bottom floor.

# CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN PROCESS.

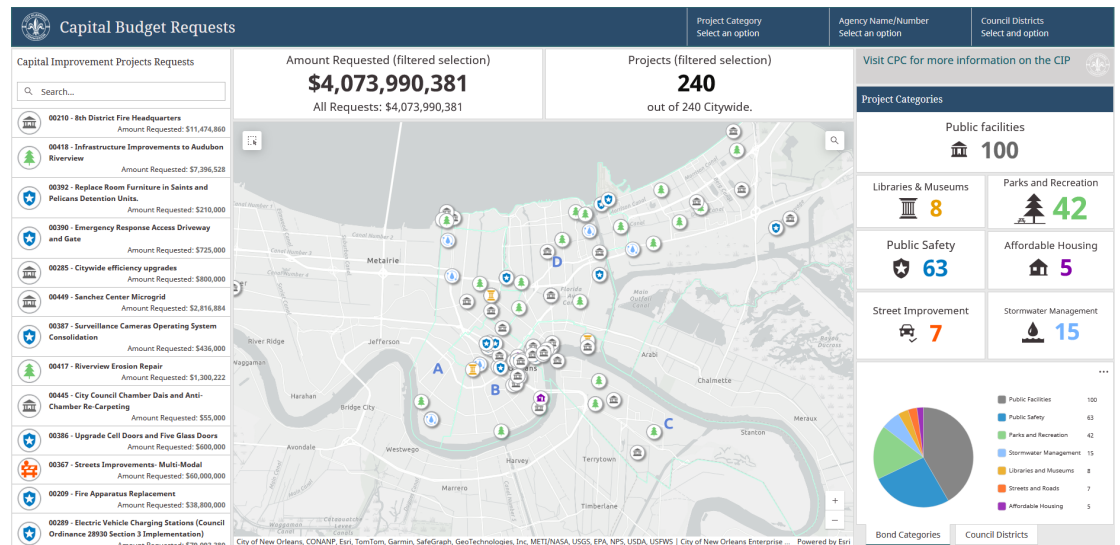
The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a five-year program for expenditures by the City of New Orleans for permanent physical improvements. The City Planning Commission is required under Section 5-402 (4) of the Home Rule Charter of the City of New Orleans to prepare the city's capital improvement plan and to assist the Chief Administrative Officer in the preparation of the annual capital budget. The CIP is prepared and adopted annually by the City Planning Commission and is presented as a recommendation to the Mayor and the City Council.

## 2026-2030 CIP PROCESS

The CIP process involves a substantial amount of collaboration and coordination with the Administration's Capital Budget team and various departments to refine a plan for improving the City's public assets. During the 2026-2030 Capital Improvement Plan process, the CPC hosted 33 public meetings attended by department heads, administration officials and the public to provide greater public access to capital requests early in the budgeting process.

The CPC also integrated capital requests into Questica, the City's operating budget software, resulting in significant time-savings in developing the annual CIP, reducing the potential for errors, and placing the City one step closer to having both the operating and capital budget workflows on the same platform.

The 2026-2030 Capital Improvement Plan laid the foundation for what was ultimately presented as a package of projects for the public to consider at the ballot, and shows how the CPC, though an unattached commission, can work jointly with the Administration to combine efforts for the benefit of the city's residents.



2026-2030 Capital Projects dashboard visualizing the locations of proposed projects

## UPCOMING CYCLE

Beginning in April 2026, the upcoming CIP process will consider expanding upon the improvements made during the 2026-2030 cycle, including refining the methodology for prioritizing projects and beginning a public engagement campaign with the intention of increasing understanding and awareness of capital improvements and their impact. While no new sources of funding will be considered, the CIP will still consider capital needs with no funding identified.

# TRANSIENT LODGING STUDY.

The City Planning Commission contracted with consultant firm Desire Line LLC to conduct a comprehensive study of lodging uses in New Orleans. The firm was tasked with developing policy recommendations for Commercial Short Term Rentals and other lodging uses that balance the need to safeguard neighborhoods and permanent housing opportunities; preserve and enhance the tourism industry; create opportunities for business growth; and support business sustainability.

Work began in January 2025 and involved substantial community outreach, including 21 stakeholder meetings and a community survey with 1,261 responses. The result is a community and stakeholder informed recommendation first presented to the City Planning Commission in October 2025 and expected to be adopted by February 2026.

This City Council will be expected to introduce legislation to codify new zoning regulations affecting all lodging uses throughout the city. The City Planning Commission anticipates that Councilmembers will expect a briefing on the study's finding and are ready to assist the Council as they craft a motion to amend the text of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance.



## Key Takeaways

- There is a misalignment in use permissions between similar lodging uses that should be corrected to eliminate potential loopholes that could create unexpected impacts in certain zoning districts.
- Mixed-Use zoning districts are a particular point of conflict due to the allowances for both lodging and residential uses.
- The current zoning code governing Hotels does not provide for low impact, neighborhood scale establishments.
- Enforcement continues to be a chief complaint, though significant improvements in enforcement activities and de-listing occurred during the course of the study.







# MASTER PLAN 2050

# MASTER PLAN PROCESS.

In January 2010, the City adopted the Plan for the 21st Century: New Orleans 2030, commonly known as the Master Plan, following two years of outreach, discussion, and policy formulation. Cities adopt Master Plans to help guide long term growth and development, and these documents reflect a community’s vision for public investment, quality of life, and economic growth.

Master Plans also establish predictability in decision making, as the Plan is a roadmap for achieving a shared vision. The predictability aspect of the Plan was further enshrined into the City Charter in 2008 when voters approved an amendment to require all land use decisions to comply or not interfere with the goals and objectives of the Master Plan. The Plan for the 20th Century will have run its course by 2030, at which point a new Master Plan will need to be in place to set a vision for the future for the city.

## PLAN FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

The Plan for the 21st Century kicked off its development in June 2008 when the City retained Goody, Clancy, & Associates (Goody Clancy) to manage the endeavor. Goody Clancy solicited the assistance of 20 subcontractors to help develop the Plan. The contract totaled \$2 million, and was funded through Disaster Community Development Block Grant funds, with roughly one quarter of the amount funding the writing of a new Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. The total solely for the Plan for the 21st Century was \$1,488,214, which is further broken down below:



### 2010 MASTER PLAN COST BREAKDOWN

	Hours	Average Rate	Cost	Adjusted for Inflation
<b>Master Plan Document Development</b>	5,505	\$146.20	\$804,850.00	\$1,194,686.29
<b>Outreach</b>	5,722	\$119.43	\$683,364.00	\$1,014,357.46
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>11,227</b>	<b>\$132.56</b>	<b>\$1,488,214</b>	<b>\$2,209,043.75</b>

The table also presents the 2010 costs to reflect inflation adjusted dollars which would result in the plan costing roughly \$2.2 million.

We are a bit hesitant to confirm this as a firm estimate, though, because a recent solicitation for the New Orleans East Renaissance plan resulted in bids of nearly \$1 million. Though not an apples-to-apples comparison, it is expected that the development of a Master Plan would cost multiples of a study focusing on one portion of the city.



Public outreach for a citywide plan of this importance must be significant to achieve buy-in from the public and elected officials. The 2010 plan dedicated **nearly half of its budget** and **most of its billable hours towards outreach** including citywide forums, district meetings, neighborhoods meetings, and advertising for those events.

**We expect a similar split in effort and cost for the next Master Plan.**



## ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

Over the course of the last 20 years, CPC staff have identified several areas for improvement over the existing Master Plan, including the overuse of vague aspirational action items, lack of departmental ownership outside of the CPC, and a long, burdensome amendment process.

# 2050

# APPROACH FOR 2050.

Master Plans typically include various elements focusing on topic areas such as transportation, resilience, housing, parks and recreation, and land use. The 2010 plan followed this formula, and within each chapter action items were identified that would help achieve the overall vision. Many of the recommendations in the current document are very conceptual and sometimes difficult to implement directly. The challenge with developing a scope of work for the 2050 plan will be determining the level of specificity with a focus of clear steps toward implementation.



## NEIGHBORHOOD-LEVEL FOCUS

New Orleans is known as a “City of Neighborhoods,” although the boundaries of such are debatable depending on who you ask. Despite the challenge, the CPC recognizes that a city comprised of individual and unique neighborhoods merit future plans that respond to their individual and unique challenges. One potential approach for the new plan could be to focus on neighborhoods, groups of neighborhoods, planning districts, or Council districts. These smaller area plans could all fit under a broader umbrella of citywide policy goals and initiatives that would thread through all the respective geographies. Neighborhood-level plans will ensure that growth reflects the identity, culture, and history of each community in relation to the city as a whole. The CPC believes that focusing on neighborhoods could encourage greater participation and investment, mapping out a guiding document for major policy and infrastructure needs at a micro-level.

## MASTER PLAN APPROACH: NEW ORLEANS EAST AREA

Despite not moving the **New Orleans East Renaissance Plan** forward, if the Master Plan 2050 is approached from a smaller scale, New Orleans East can still be prioritized with a strategic and specific plan committed to furthering the goals the study was meant to address. Place-based economic development tailored to the **Chef Menteur corridor**, **Lake Forest area**, and the **Kenilworth redevelopment site** offers a path to reconnect residents with jobs, services, and neighborhood amenities that have historically bypassed the area.





## TIMELINE

Given the timeframe for the 2010 plan, staff estimates this upcoming process will take 2.5 to 3 years from procurement to adoption, thus the request for the budget to be reflected by 2027.



## BUDGET

The CPC will require that a budget be provided to develop a plan in time for it to be effective in 2030. Staff estimates that the funds will need to be budgeted for 2027 at an estimated cost roughly \$3-\$4 million.



## SUPPORT

CPC will request the support of the Mayor's Offices, City Council, and all departments to provide advice, guidance, and participation at forums and advisory committees.



# MASTER PLAN TENTATIVE TIMELINE.

## IDENTIFY

January 2026 - December 2026

Beginning in 2026, the CPC will begin the process of identifying funding for the Master Plan process. The current estimate of cost is between \$3 and \$4 million.

## REQUEST

January 2027 - March 2027

Requests for Proposals (RFPs) will be advertised.

## CONTRACT

April 2027 - May 2027

The contract for Professional Services will be executed.

2026

2027

## DEVELOP

January 2026 - December 2026

The CPC will develop the scope of the Master Plan and define the approach of the process, whether it is at the neighborhood, councilmanic, or planning district level.

## RESEARCH, OUTREACH, AND PLAN DEVELOPMENT

June 2027 - June 2028

Master Plan work begins! For the next year, the CPC and contracted partners will conduct research and community outreach, in accordance with the development of the plan.

# ADOPTING THE PLAN

The post-adoption implementation should also be a focus of this plan, as far too often planning documents sit on a shelf, become stale, and new City employees and officials are less aware of its guidance. The benefit of formulating recommendations with greater specificity is that implementation becomes easier to determine. This implementation, or lack thereof, should also be subject to reporting requirements and regular coordination among all levels of government to ensure that the residents' shared goals continue to be at the forefront of decision-making and department work plans.

## FIRST PUBLIC REVIEW

*July 2028 - November 2028*

The first draft of the Master Plan will be available for review by the Commission and the public.

## CPC CONSIDERATION OF FINAL DRAFT

*February 2029*

## CITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION OF FINAL DRAFT

*March 2029 - May 2029*

## ADOPTED MASTER PLAN PUBLICATION

*December 2029*

2028

2029

## SECOND PUBLIC REVIEW

*December 2028 - January 2029*

The second draft of the Master Plan will be available for review by the Commission and the public.

## CPC RECONSIDERATION

*June 2029 - August 2029*

## CITY COUNCIL RECONSIDERATION

*September 2029 - November 2029*

# MASTER PLAN POTENTIAL.

Since the last Master Plan adoption in 2010, New Orleans has experienced changes directly and indirectly caused by unpredictable events and modest population decline. Decline, however, is not an entirely negative implication for cities. Rather, the changes between then and now should be viewed as an opportunity for reimagining – a chance to focus on increasing quality of life for existing residents and improve sustainability through growth management and lower resource consumption. The Master Plan offers a chance to reexamine long-term vision and strategic goals to ensure that the future development of New Orleans is aligned with the realities of constituents today.

## FEDERAL INCENTIVES FOR HOUSING AND ZONING REFORM

While federal housing reform legislation remains under consideration, both the Senate’s **Renewing Opportunity in the American Dream (ROAD) to Housing Act** and the House’s **Housing for the 21st Century Act** signal a clear federal policy direction toward rewarding local governments that modernize housing, zoning, and permitting frameworks. If either is enacted, these proposals would create opportunities for cities to compete for federal funding tied directly to housing production and regulatory reform.

After reviewing these bills, the CPC has considered the impact of the potential legislation and how it can be applied through the Master Plan 2050 process.



### ADVANCING CITYWIDE MOBILITY & EQUITABLE ACCESS

Modifications to the existing zoning ordinance on strategically identified corridors and the development of a stronger biking and micro-mobility network has the potential to create safer, walkable, transit-supportive streets, to reduce household transportation costs, and to improve health and visibility for small businesses along active corridors.



## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES FROM ROAD TO HOUSING ACT

Sec. 211 – Build More Housing Near Transit Act:

*Incentivizes applicants for federal transit project funding to adopt pro-housing policies including by-right zoning and reduced parking minimums.*

Sec. 212 – RESIDE Act:

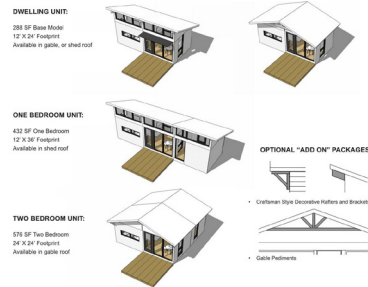
*Local governments are eligible for pilot grants to convert vacant commercial or industrial buildings into affordable housing*

# PERMIT-READY BUILDING DESIGN PROGRAMS

## THE “ADUniverse”

Seattle, WA

The City of Seattle developed a publicly accessible gallery of pre-approved detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) construction plans that offer a faster, easier, and more predictable design and permitting process.



## SITE-SPECIFIC PILOT PROGRAM

Fayetteville, AR

This program uses permit-ready designs for residential construction initiated through an innovative online licensing platform available in two neighborhoods. The pilot program, if successful, would expand to other areas of the City.



New Orleans is specifically renowned for its residential architecture that locals often feel is threatened by new construction. In collaboration with local firms and existing university design programs, the City can ensure future housing production is cohesive and responsive to the existing neighborhood fabric using similar methods.

## HOUSING CHOICES FOR ALL GENERATIONS AND INCOMES



Through the Master Plan, there is a strategic opportunity to align land-use designations with the goal of enabling more mixed-income and multi-generational housing across a wider range of neighborhoods. By implementing tools such as streamlined residential approvals, reduced permit-processing timelines, and a “permitting toolkit” with pre-approved housing designs and clear guidance for applicants, these implementations can support affordable infill development that encourages a variety of missing middle, mixed-income, and multi-generational housing stock.



## POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES FROM ROAD TO HOUSING ACT

Sec. 209 – Innovation Fund:

Creates a \$200 million annual competitive grant program for local governments that modernize zoning, streamline permitting, and expand housing supply.

Sec. 210 – Accelerating Home Building Act:

Provides grants to adopt pre-approved housing designs (ADUs, duplexes, townhomes), reducing construction costs and approval times while supporting gentle density in neighborhoods citywide.

# MASTER PLAN POTENTIAL.



Beyond the potential zoning reforms for housing and permit processing, the CPC envisions the Master Plan as a tool to aid in advancing a broader set of planning and regulatory initiatives that expound and modernize existing Master Plan goals and citywide priorities.

## CLIMATE-CENTERED MASTER PLAN DIRECTIONS

Expanding existing climate priorities ensures that every new project strengthens New Orleans' resilience to heat, storms, and flooding while attracting federal funding and safeguarding neighborhoods for generations. These are a few ideas that can be integrated into the Master Plan that further support climate-focused regulatory standards:

### GREEN CORRIDORS NETWORK

Expanding and **designating walking-priority corridors** and **neutral-ground trail systems** creates cooler, safer routes that connect communities. These green investments boost public health and combat the urban heat island effect when shaded properly.



### PRIORITIZE BIOPHILIC DESIGN

**Green facades, permeable surfaces, native plantings, and shaded building edges** bring nature back into neighborhoods and improve air quality, reduce heat, and create healthier, more attractive streetscapes, as inspired by cities like Barcelona, Spain, and Bogota, Colombia.



### COOLING FEATURES IN PUBLIC SPACES

Including misters, shade structures, and cool seating areas would have positive effects for users of the space that make commercial corridors and civic spaces usable during extreme heat. **Requiring heat-responsive design in the urban realm is cutting-edge best practice.**





## FOSTERING COMMUNITY CONNECTION THROUGH LAND USE AND PUBLIC SPACE

The City contains numerous vacant plots of land, some stemming from post-Katrina abandonment. The Master Plan offers the opportunity to develop a strategy around reactivating these parcels. The urban landscape remains scattered with blighted or undeveloped lots: sites that can be used to foster community building with pocket parks and gardens, improve stormwater management and reforestation, or be returned to commerce for residential or commercial purposes.

**By increasing opportunities for organic public interaction through community input, the upcoming Master Plan process creates a humanistic vision for the future of the city.**

## EQUITY-OVERLAY LAYER FOR CURRENT LAND USE MAP

Through identified target areas focused on affordability, social infrastructure, and cultural preservation, the CPC can create an additional overlay layer for the base land use map that highlights areas of the city for investment where it is most needed.



*Map of Opportunity Zones in Orleans Parish, ArcGIS*

Building off existing opportunity zones, creating a customized layer for the existing zoning map that includes other Administration identified areas of interest can help inform future policy and decisions. Additional data to include could range from environmental vulnerability (heat exposure, flood risk), mobility gaps, public-health indicators, displacement risk, small-business or cultural-economy stabilization areas, and community-identified priorities.

# URBAN AGRICULTURE PROGRAM.

Launched in October 2024 through the advocacy of A Greener New Orleans partners – including **Sprout NOLA**, the **New Orleans Food Policy Council (NOFPC)**, and **Greater New Orleans Growers' Alliance (GNOGA)** – the Urban Agriculture Program provides a vital bridge between local growers and city government. Originally housed in the Office of Resilience and Sustainability, the program moved to the City Planning Commission in January 2026. Led by the Urban Agriculture Liaison and the Urban Agriculture Working Group, the program focuses on reducing systemic barriers to local food production by improving land access, expanding agricultural water meter usage, and resolving zoning and blight citation issues

## MAJOR MILESTONE: THE COVER CROP ORDINANCE

In October 2025 the **Cover Crop Ordinance** passed. Developed in response to grower feedback, this legislation officially exempts cover crops (essential for soil regeneration and stormwater retention) from standard weed height limits. This policy shift directly protects urban farms and gardens from inaccurate blight citations and costly fines.



The UAWG at the September 2025 quarterly meeting, in partnership with the Greater New Orleans Growers' Alliance (GNOGA).



## 2025 BY THE NUMBERS

- 50+ HOURS OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO URBAN FARMS AND GARDENS
- 40+ GROWERS CONVENED FOR QUARTERLY URBAN AGRICULTURE WORKING GROUP MEETINGS
- 40 'REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE IN PROGRESS' YARD SIGNS DISTRIBUTED
- 30+ PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS
- 4 COMMUNITY EVENTS CO-HOSTED
- 4 URBAN AGRICULTURE GUIDES CREATED

In 2026, the Urban Agriculture Program will continue to grow and strengthen in collaboration with urban farmers, City departments and community organizations. Objectives include:

- △ Complete Year 1 of the city's first **Urban Agriculture & Food Plan**
- △ Develop **more user-friendly guides** for urban farmers and community gardeners
- △ Formalize the Urban Agriculture Working Group into a **City Advisory Committee** and convene regularly to ensure program is aligned with current grower needs
- △ Pass **CZO and City Code amendments** that reduce barriers for urban farmers and local food production, including updating the standards for urban animal husbandry and livestock
- △ Develop **educational resources** and **host workshops** to support urban farmers and gardeners

# REINFORCING RESILIENCY IN THE PLAN.

Imagine a version of New Orleans during the height of hurricane season – one where the air feels noticeably cooler due to mature shade trees lining major corridors and residential streets. A former brownfield site has been remediated into a neighborhood park, filled with people walking and cycling on permeable pavements and gathering in shaded areas around a large water-retention feature. Across the street, a mixed-use block brings daily needs within walking distance: a corner store with a single residence above, a small technology library with community workspaces, and apartments stacked above active ground-floor uses. At the end of the block, a solar-powered community center anchors the neighborhood, designed to provide emergency power and shelter during storm events.

These places are not the result of a single project, **but of coordinated planning, updated zoning standards, and targeted public investment that encourage climate-resilient design and adaptive reuse over time.**

## Planning for Everyday Resilience

Extreme heat, flooding, and severe storms are increasingly shaping everyday life in New Orleans, making climate resilience a core land use challenge rather than a standalone policy issue. Urban heat remains one of the most immediate and inequitable risks, particularly in areas with low tree canopy and high impervious cover. While the City's Tree Protection Ordinance strengthens protections for public trees, the CPC's **Tree Preservation Study** underscores that meaningful canopy expansion and heat reduction cannot be achieved without addressing tree preservation and planting on private property. At the same time, rising seas, subsidence, and heavier rainfall are intensifying flood risk, while hurricanes continue to disrupt power, access, and recovery citywide.

**Updates to the Master Plan for 2050 should align with existing climate plans and strategies, expanding goals to account for advances in technology and the urgent need for achieving these outcomes.**



## Critical Resilience Priorities for New Orleans

### Prioritize Sea Level Rise Investments



Projections show that sea level rise and land subsidence are already affecting the performance of New Orleans' flood protection and drainage systems. This is an opportunity to use the planning, land use, and regulatory tools to anticipate climate-driven population shifts, and enable new land uses that support long-term resilience.

### Promote Private Tree Preservation & Planting



Use planning and zoning tools to promote tree preservation and planting on private property, to address gaps in the City's current tree protection framework.

### Accelerate Renewable Energy Deployment



Support renewable energy deployment citywide to reduce emissions and strengthen neighborhood energy autonomy through expansion of community solar on private lots.

### Equity-Focused Reforestation Goals



Climate risk does not affect all neighborhoods equally. Incorporating equity data, such as heat exposure, flood vulnerability, and displacement risk, allows resilience planning to prioritize areas where environmental stress intersects with social need.





# ABOUT THE CPC

# OUR CONTEXT.

Of the total number of projects handled by CPC Staff between 2022 and 2025, 708 cases were either Conditional Uses, Zoning Changes, Text Amendments, Street Name Changes, or Design Reviews. The BZA was responsible for a third of all projects administered by CPC Staff. 345 requests for variance waivers and 97 appeals were heard before the Board between 2022 and 2025. Minor Subdivisions are handled administratively, meaning they do not go before the Commission; however, subdivision activity remains the single largest category of work performed by staff.

**BETWEEN 2022 AND 2025, THE CPC HANDLED A TOTAL OF 2,341 CASES, SHARED BETWEEN A BOARD AND A COMMISSION, WITH THE NUMBER OF DAYS SPENT ON A PROJECT AVERAGING 196.**

## NSTR SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS

The volume of NSTR activity underscores the impact on CPC staff. **70% of all special exception applications received were transmitted to Council.**



## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Between January 2024 and early December 2025, the CPC handled 661 logged requests through Lobby Central, a customer queue software used by the Department of Safety and Permits and City Planning Commission to organize walk-in visits from the public.

The total number of engagements with the public is higher than the data suggests, as email correspondence, phone calls, and in-person transfers from other divisions are not logged through Lobby Central.

## MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

**40**

**AVERAGE NUMBER OF REQUESTS IN LOBBY CENTRAL PER MONTH**

**7**

**AVERAGE WAIT TIME IN MINUTES**

**661**

**TOTAL NUMBER OF REQUESTS IN LOBBY CENTRAL (2024 - 2025)**

**4,871**

**TOTAL NUMBER OF EMAILS RECEIVED IN CPCINFO INBOX IN THE LAST YEAR**

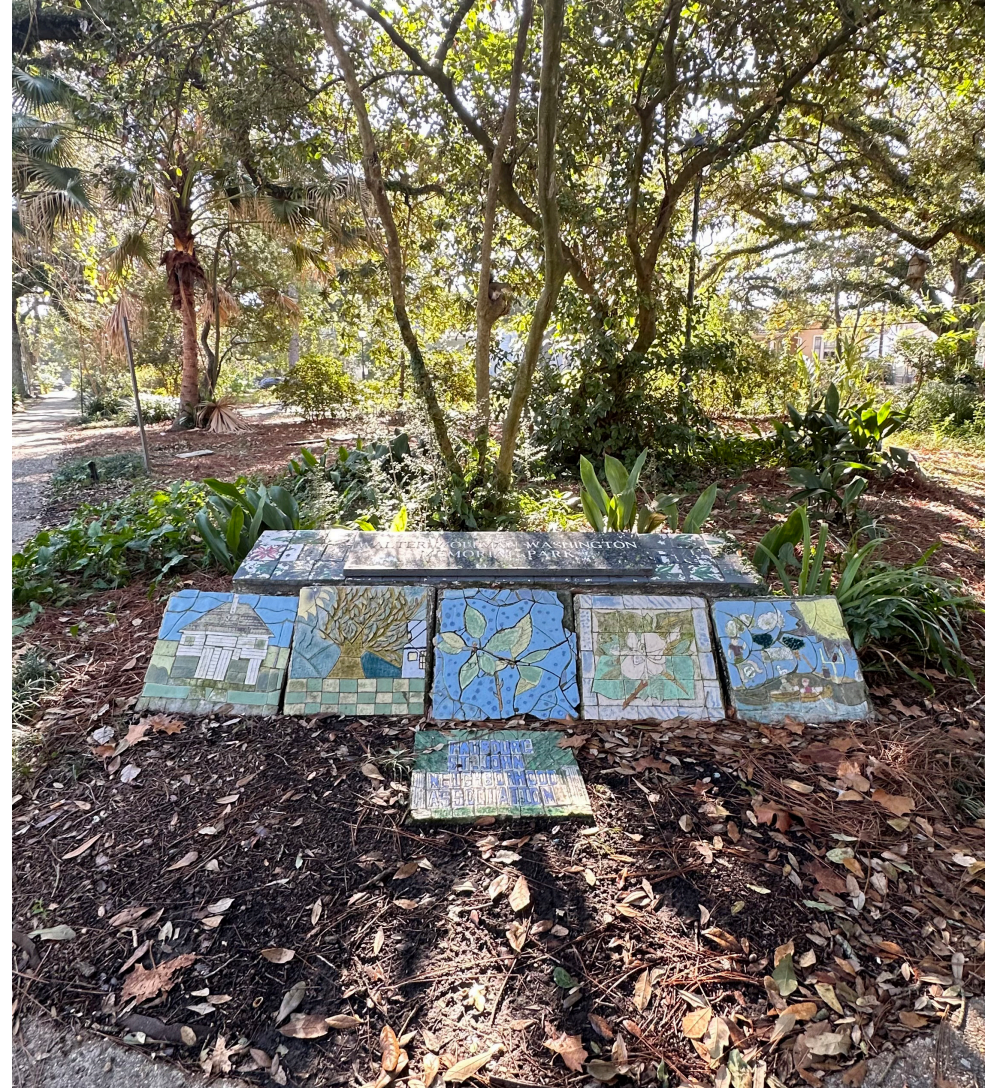
..... **Active Studies** .....

- Transfer of Development Rights Study*
- Housing Opportunities Study*
- Cannabis, Tobacco, and Nicotine Study*



..... **Completed Studies** .....

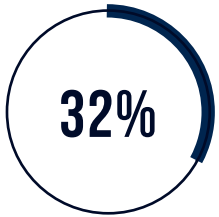
- Land Use Barriers*
- Canal Street Update*
- Transient Lodging Study*
- Retail Goods Establishments*
- 2025 Mandatory Inclusionary Zoning Market Feasibility*



## BREAKDOWN OF CPC PROJECTS BY CASE TYPE (2022-2025)

DIVISION	TOTAL	2022	2023	2024	2025
<b>BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENTS</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>124</b>
<i>Variances</i>	345	82	112	61	90
<i>Safety and Permits Appeals</i>	97	23	26	20	28
<i>Reasonable Accommodations</i>	25	8	6	5	6
<b>Land Use Regulations</b>	<b>708</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>146</b>
<i>Conditional Use Only</i>	261	65	77	66	53
<i>Conditional Use + Zoning Change</i>	12	2	5	3	2
<i>Zoning Change Only</i>	57	14	18	15	10
<i>Design Review</i>	242	68	56	55	63
<i>Text Amendments</i>	78	23	29	14	12
<i>Street Name Changes</i>	16	9	4	1	2
<i>Property Dispositions</i>	25	17	4	3	1
<i>Property Acquisitions</i>	17	5	4	5	3
<b>Subdivisions</b>	<b>669</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>145</b>
<i>Minor Subdivisions</i>	635	168	201	136	130
<i>Major Subdivisions (5+ Lots)</i>	34	8	9	2	15
<b>NSTR Special Exceptions</b>	<b>381</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Master Plan Amendments</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>116</b>
	<b>2,341</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>702</b>	<b>533</b>

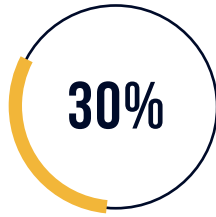
# OUR WORK.



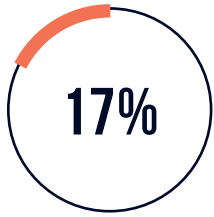
Zoning-Related Cases



BZA-Related Cases

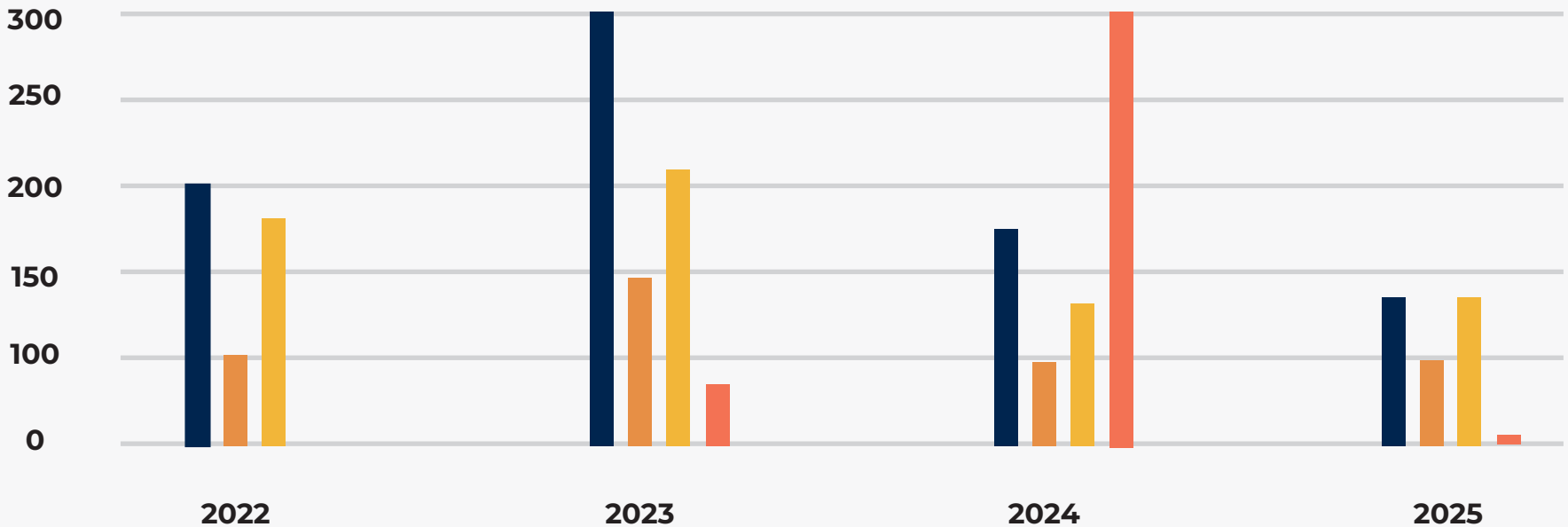


Subdivisions



NSTR Special Exception Requests  
*Total # of Application Forms Received*

## CASELOAD VOLUME 2022 - 2025



# OUR CHALLENGES.

## Strengths

### **Diverse & Mission-Driven Staff**

*The CPC benefits from a highly diverse, mission-driven team of 24 professionals who bring a wide range of lived experiences and perspectives to the work of planning a more equitable and resilient New Orleans. Professional backgrounds span urban planning, law, public policy, landscape architecture, real estate, public health, environmental science, housing, and community engagement.*

### **Comprehensive Regulatory Planning Tools**

*The CPC maintains and advances some of the city's most critical planning instruments (Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (CZO), Future Land Use Map (FLUM), and Capital Improvement Program (CIP)) giving New Orleans an integrated policy framework to guide equitable land use, economic development, infrastructure investment, and neighborhood-scale growth.*

## Weaknesses

### **Limited Operational Resources**

*The CPC is tasked with ensuring Master Plan alignment, development review, long-range visioning, and regulatory updates, creating a constrained capacity that limits the ability to fully execute our mission. The limited operational and staff capacity restricts proactive planning capacity, and places significant pressure on staff to balance reactive demands with strategic, forward-looking work.*

### **Workflow Integration Across Departments**

*The CPC staff's work relies on close coordination with partner departments, such as Safety and Permits, Historic Districts Landmarks Commission, and Capital Projects. While this collaborative structure enables comprehensive review of development proposals, the absence of shared process standards can create timing gaps and miscommunication. Establishing clearer cross-department workflows, shared performance expectations, and streamlined communication channels would enhance consistency, reduce delays, and support more predictable experiences for applicants and the public.*

# HARMONY

## Opportunities

### Strategic Partnerships

*There is a recognized untapped potential to deepen partnerships with anchor institutions, nonprofits, philanthropy, universities, and the private sector to expand capacity, leverage expertise, and mobilize resources beyond city budget constraints. By positioning the department as a partner, the CPC can multiply its impact and build coalitions that sustain planning work beyond any single administration.*

### Zoning and Policy Modernization

*Targeted zoning reforms that remove barriers to economic development and affordable housing production, enable mixed-use and transit-oriented development, streamline permitting for small businesses, and protect neighborhood character without stifling growth are achievable through the recommendations offered in the Land Use Barriers Study and other strategic policy updates. Other opportunities include expanding accessory dwelling unit (ADU) provisions, updating parking requirements to reflect transportation shifts, clarifying design standards, and codifying climate-responsive development practices.*

## Threats

### Individual Zoning Decisions and Reactive Planning

*The growing volume of parcel-by-parcel zoning decisions has increasingly diverted staff time and Commission attention from proactive planning and community engagement. By simplifying review pathways, the CPC can significantly reduce unnecessary casework and reclaim capacity for long-range planning. These changes would not only streamline regulatory processes but also strengthen the Commission's ability to lead citywide strategies that reduce the need for reactive decision-making.*

### Federal Funding Instability

*It is not uncommon for cities to become reliant on federal funding streams (FEMA disaster recovery, HUD community development grants, EPA programs, and infrastructure investment funds) to advance planning priorities and capital projects. Federal instability has potential to create uncertainty for planning goals: long-range plans predicated on external funding may become unavailable, and the CPC may struggle to commit to initiatives without confidence in resource availability.*

# MEET THE ADMIN.

While staff are organized into functional sections, all planners are equally trained, assigned, and expected to manage and write reports for every application type.

The breadth of CPC's work requires all planners to maintain a working knowledge of City departments and their respective functions, resulting in a team that routinely interacts with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.

24



TOTAL STAFF

ADMINISTRATIVE 5

PLANNERS 17

SUPPORT 2

## ROBERT RIVERS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



## LARRY MASSEY, JR.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR



## **POLICY FORMULATION & ADMINISTRATION**

The Administrative Division of the CPC provides guidance and oversight to all other divisions. PFA generates the Work Plan, sets priorities, establishes timeframes and facilitates problem-solving across the agency divisions. Coordinating the work of the Planning Commission with that of other agencies and entities is also a function of the Administration. As such, this division works actively with such entities as the Regional Planning Commission, the Downtown Development District, the Mayor's Office of Economic Development and the Department of Safety & Permits. Along with this inter-agency coordination, the PFA section works directly with Commission, the City Council, the Chief Administrative Officer and the Deputy Mayor's Office.

This division also provides administrative support to Land Use, Comprehensive and the Board of Zoning Adjustments. Fiscal management conducted in this division includes budget preparation, purchasing, accounts payable and revenue management. This division generates annual reports detailing the department's overall performance. The Brownfields Program and the Urban Agriculture Program are also housed under this division. Finally, this division provides support to the CPC staff with regards to Geographic Information Systems (GIS) services, including the archiving, safeguarding and display of data.

## **LAND USE REGULATION**

The Land Use Division concentrates on helping the public understand and interact with the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and all other ordinance and/or regulations concerning the use of land. This includes processing and reviewing all applications for design reviews and zoning such as map changes, conditional uses, interim zoning districts and planned developments.

## **COMPREHENSIVE**

The work performed by the Comprehensive Division is proactive planning which sets the City's foundation for its growth and quality of life. This division focuses on long-term planning efforts beyond the immediate horizon of resolving current land use issues. The division initiates neighborhood plans, coordinates community planning efforts with other agencies, and works with citizens to address problems concerning neighborhood quality of life.

## **BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENTS**

The Board of Zoning Adjustments (BZA) is an independent board that considers applications for variances or special exceptions, which allow adjustments to setbacks, height limits, density standards and parking or loading regulations. The BZA also hears appeals of the Department of Safety and Permits for zoning-related concerns.

# ORGANIZATION CHART.

## CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

**KATIE WITRY**

CHAIR

**DASJON JORDAN**

VICE-CHAIR

**LOREY FLICK**

**JONATHAN STEWART**

**NOMITA JOSHI-GUPTA**

**ROBERT STEEG**

**JACKY KEPPEL**

**NICK POCHÉ**

**VACANT**

**ROBERT RIVERS**

Executive DIRECTOR

**LARRY MASSEY JR.**

Deputy DIRECTOR

## COMPREHENSIVE

**RACHAEL BERG**

Planning ADMINISTRATOR

**LAURA BRYAN**

Assistant Planning ADMINISTRATOR

**HALEY WEBB**

Senior City PLANNER

**JULIA NICKLE**

City PLANNER

## POLICY FORMULATION & ADMINISTRATION

**NICOLE JOSEPH**

Office MANAGER

**TERRY HARGRAVE**

Office WORKER

**VALERIE MCMILLAN**

Principal PLANNER

**CAMERON BOISSIERE-MORRIS**

Principal PLANNER

**JENNA BURKE**

Senior City PLANNER

## BROWNFIELDS PROGRAM

**KARI GODCHAUX**

Brownfields DIRECTOR

## URBAN AGRICULTURE PROGRAM

**GRACE TREFFINGER**

Urban Agriculture LIASON

## BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENTS

**EMILY RAMIREZ HERNANDEZ**

Planning ADMINISTRATOR

**VALERIE GOINES**

Principal PLANNER

**CHARLES CRAWFORD ROWE**

City PLANNER

## BOARD OF ZONING ADJUSTMENTS

**CANDACE FOREST**

*CHAIR*

**TODD JAMES**

*VICE-CHAIR*

**JOSE ALVAREZ**

**JAIME RAMIRO DIAZ**

**ALFONSO GONZALEZ II**

**TAMARA AGINS**

**JASON RICHARDS**

## LAND USE REGULATIONS

**STEPHEN KROLL**

Planning ADMINISTRATOR

**ROBIN JONES**

Principal PLANNER

**HALEY DELERY MOLINA**

Principal PLANNER

**SABINE LEBAILLEUX**

Assistant Planning ADMINISTRATOR

**AVA MONET**

Senior City PLANNER

**SARAH KING**

Senior City PLANNER

**ALYSSA WHITE**

Senior City PLANNER

**MITCHELL KOGAN**

City PLANNER

# CONTACT LIST.

## GENERAL

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

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# OUR FINAL THOUGHTS.

Decades from now, when the next generation reflects on their city and wonders **“How did we get here?”** what actions will we have taken in this defining moment that answers their question?

*What **legacy** are we building today?*

The upcoming Master Plan is the City’s next great turning point, and this Administration has the rare chance to lead it. The CPC has the institutional memory, technical expertise, and public trust to lead this work – but it will require the full support of the Administration to secure funding, facilitate engagement, and align departmental priorities. The Master Plan is a chance to imprint a clear vision in our shared pursuit of a new direction for New Orleans.

Every initiative described in this report, from Brownfields remediation to transit-oriented planning to neighborhood-based engagement, advances a single goal: ensuring that every resident, in every neighborhood, benefits from a more resilient, more affordable city. The CPC’s role is to help translate priorities into actionable development policy, backed by technical expertise and transparent public engagement.

At a moment when the City faces tightening budgets and heightened expectations, the CPC offers a model for how strategic investments in improving work processes and interagency coordination can produce results. The department has already streamlined the capital budgeting workflow, conducted high-quality studies, and initiated the improvement of tools and resources for both the public and policymakers. Continued investment in the CPC will yield measurable gains in operational efficiency, customer service, and the quality of land-use decisions.

**With support from the Mayor and Council, even in a difficult financial environment, planning can continue to be one of the City’s strongest tools, reassuring the public that the city can do more with less and maintain the high standards residents expect.**



## HOW WE CAN WORK TOGETHER

**Prioritizing proactive, Commission-initiated studies will generate the clarity and guidance needed to reduce duplicative processes and enhance regulatory efficiency. To make this shift most effective, the following actions outline possibilities for establishing a strong working relationship between our offices:**

01

IDENTIFY STRATEGIC STUDY AREAS WHERE PROACTIVE PLANNING CAN DIRECTLY ADVANCE ADMINISTRATION GOALS.

02

DESIGNATE A POINT OF CONTACT WITHIN THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OFFICES TO COORDINATE PLANNING CONVERSATIONS WITH CPC, DPW, SAFETY & PERMITS, AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS.

03

SCHEDULE REGULAR INTERDEPARTMENTAL MEETINGS WITH COUNCIL/ADMINISTRATION STAFF TO ALIGN CAPITAL INVESTMENTS, REGULATORY DECISIONS, AND DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES.

04

SUPPORT UPDATES TO THE MASTER PLAN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF ADOPTED STUDIES TO STRENGTHEN CLARITY AND RELIEVE AVOIDABLE OPERATIONAL BURDENS.



## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

*Creating Equitable Destinations: Equity Report*  
**Source: The Travel Foundation, (2024)**

*Canal Street Study: Progress Report and Analysis of Current Issues*  
**Source: New Orleans City Planning Commission, (2025)**

*Land Use Barriers Study*  
**Source: New Orleans City Planning Commission, (2025)**

*The ROAD to Housing Act of 2025: Explainer*  
**Source: Bipartisan Policy Center, (2025)**

*The ROAD to Housing Act of 2025: Section-by-Section*  
**Source: U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, (2025)**

*What's in the Housing for the 21st Century Act?*  
**Source: Bipartisan Policy Center, (2025)**

*H.R.6644 - Housing for the 21st Century Act*  
**Source: Congress.gov, (2025)**

*Tree Preservation Study Final Report*  
**Source: New Orleans City Planning Commission, (2020)**

*Orleans Parish 2023 Hazard Mitigation Annual Report*  
**Source: New Orleans Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (NOHSEP), (2023)**

*The New Orleans Reforestation Plan*  
**Source: Sustaining Our Urban Landscape (SOUL), (2022)**



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# THANK YOU

LOOKING FORWARD TO **OUR FUTURE**

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CITY PLANNING COMMISSION