New Orleans, LA

Green Infrastructure Finance Feasibility Study

March 2023

Cover photo: TPL Archives

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Introduction

Adequate funding is a challenge for all park and conservation-related activities, including green infrastructure. The Trust for Public Land's (TPL) Conservation Finance program helps communities and agencies identify and raise public funds for parks and land conservation from state and local sources. TPL provides professional, technical assistance services to local governments, special districts, and others that need to research and evaluate the feasibility of park and land conservation finance options. Since 1996, TPL has been involved in more 645 successful ballot measures that have created more than $93 billion in new funding for parks and conservation. Voters have approved 83 percent of the ballot measures supported by TPL.

In May 2019, Orleans Parish, Louisiana voters approved a parks millage by an overwhelming 76 percent. The measure will generate $443 million for parks in New Orleans over twenty years. New Orleans is unique in many respects, including its park system. The City has four separate park providers: the New Orleans Recreation Development Commission (NORDC), the New Orleans Department of Parks and Parkways, the Audubon Commission, and City Park. Dedicated property tax millages for NORDC, the Parks and Parkway Department, and Audubon were expiring in 2021 and 2022. The fourth park agency, City Park, had previously received no dedicated city funding. The proposal renewed the existing millages and redistributed them, reducing Audubon's millage and increasing the millages for NORDC and Parks and Parkways, and providing city funding to City Park for the first time ever, more equitably allocating funding among the park providers. (See bar charts on page 13)

The New Orleans parks millage win is the culmination of over three years of work by TPL to bring this measure to the ballot. Starting in 2016, TPL begin to bring the four park providers, who historically had not worked cooperatively, together and convene regular meetings to discuss funding. In early 2017, we completed both an existing conditions report and a park finance Feasibility Report, which formed the basis for agreement among the park partners for the ballot measure. We conducted two parish-wide polls of New Orleans voters, in May 2017 and November 2018. The proposed ballot measure finally gained traction in 2018, with the election of New Orleans Mayor Latoya Cantrell, who strongly endorsed the measure, and ultimately the unanimous approval of the New Orleans City Council in December 2018. In addition to convening the park partners, providing the Existing Conditions analysis, Feasibility Report, and polling, TPL wrote the ballot language and provide strategic advice to the ballot measure campaign.

Green infrastructure funding is a very tangible step communities take to guide land use, manage growth, provide recreation amenities, and protect natural landscapes and critical ecosystems. Given the substantial investment of time and resources required to develop and implement a public funding strategy, TPL employs our tried-and-true conservation finance methodology of sound research to understand conservation options and voter attitudes followed by strategic campaigns that effectively communicate key messages. TPL provides policy and fiscal analysis, public opinion research, technical assistance, strategic recommendations, and legislative drafting, often followed by legislative or ballot measure campaigns.

The hallmark of TPL's Conservation Finance work is feasibility research. Conservation finance feasibility studies identify and assess the potential for a range of funding strategies that are realistic and that would substantially increase public funding to address the community's conservation and restorations needs. In this case we are looking at funding that would allow scale-up green infrastructure implementation. Typical components of a comprehensive feasibility analysis include: an assessment of existing funding programs; identification of an array of strategies and funding mechanisms to complement existing programs; exploration of the legal and political processes for implementation; and evaluation of the feasibility of various alternatives by analyzing factors such as ballot measure history, constitutional and statutory limitations, and fiscal conditions and forecasts. The reports are based on original research by TPL, as well as a review of existing research and analysis. These reports serve as the foundation for discussions with key stakeholders, policy-makers, partners, and the general public.

TPL proposes to research and analyze a range of public finance options that the City of New Orleans may consider for green infrastructure. For each relevant local funding option, TPL will examine the revenue-raising capacity, the fiscal impact to government budgets and/or taxpayers, and how such options can be implemented. TPL also proposes to provide examples of where and how these mechanisms have been used by other jurisdictions. While implementation procedures vary around the country, many broad-based tax and bond mechanisms require voter approval. As such, TPL also proposes to research election results to examine whether the electorate has supported or opposed spending public funds for parks and open space, or other priorities, in the past, as well as voter turnout trends. This analysis will require the assistance of New Orleans staff to provide financial documents, such as budgets, bond-offering statements, capital spending plans, tax assessment rolls, and relevant comprehensive or open space plans. The research will examine both the most likely funding options which are typically broad-based tax and bond mechanisms capable of generating significant funding.

Specifically research will include:

- a review of city authority to generate revenue for green infrastructure including rates, limits, and pathways for implementation;
- revenue generation capacity estimates (i.e., how much money could be generated from a specific mechanism, who pays, and cost per household/taxpayer);
- analysis of procedures for enactment, including special legislation if needed;
- analysis of election requirements for placing a finance mechanism before city voters; and
- a summary of relevant funding programs implemented by other jurisdictions in the state.

Revenue options could include, but are not limited to

- **General Obligation Bond**
- **Property Tax**
- **Hotel/Motel Tax**
- **Sales Tax**

The City of New Orleans, the Sewerage and Water Board, and partner organizations have conducted considerable research on drainage system funding dating back to the 1980's. The needs of the city's drainage system are well-documented and funding mechanisms from water and sewer fees to millages to drainage fees have been extensively explored. TPL will revisit this research for updated information and include in the final research product.[1]

Currently, the structure of a Stormwater Management Fee is being discussed within the city. Legislators and advocates are hopeful final legislation could be implemented in 2024.

TPL staff will make a presentation of key research findings to city staff and interested partners, as well as elected officials, as needed.

[1] Sewerage and Water Board *Drainage System Funding Feasibility Analysis* conducted by Raftelis Financial Consultants (RFC), June 2016; Sewerage and Water Board Financial Plan and Rate Study 2011-2020, September 2011; Sewerage and Water Board Report on Operations for 2015, October 2016; Bureau of Government Research, *Beneath the Surface, A Primer on Stormwater Fees in New Orleans*, February 2017; Bureau of Government Research *Outlook on Orleans, The Sewerage and Water Board's Fee Proposal, February 1999.*

Executive Summary

Many opportunities exist to fund parks and open space in the City of New Orleans. At the heart of the most successful open space and parks funding programs is a substantial, long-term, dedicated source of local revenue. With a reliable source of funds, local governments can establish meaningful open space and parks priorities that protect the most valuable resources, are geographically distributed, and otherwise meet important goals and values. We would expect the same would be true for green infrastructure funding. Furthermore, local governments with significant funds are much better positioned to secure and leverage funding from the federal government and attract other local and state government or private philanthropic partners. Nationwide, a range of public financing options has been utilized to fund local parks and recreation. These include the property tax and general obligation bonds.

There are several funding options available to local governments in Louisiana for green infrastructure. In general, property tax mill levies have been the most frequently proposed funding mechanism for parks and conservation. This report analyzes several local public funding tools available to the City of New Orleans, including revenue generating capacity, estimated costs to taxpayers, and implementation procedures. These tools are summarized below and in Appendix A.

- General Obligation Bond: The City of New Orleans could issue a general obligation bond. A $75 million bond, for example, would cost roughly $35 per year for the average household. Voter approval is required.
- Property Tax: The City of New Orleans could increase its mill levy. A tax of $2.50 per $1,000 taxable value would generate approximately $12 million per year at a cost of $69 per year for the average homeowner. Voter approval is required.
- Hotel/Motel Tax: New Orleans' hospitality industry is experiencing an unprecedented boom of hotel development. An increase of 0.5 percent above the city's current 2.5 percent hotel/motel tax could generate an additional $5 million per year. Additionally, the city could consider reallocating some of the current revenues to green infrastructure. The Louisiana State Legislature would need to enact new, specific legislation allowing an increase in the hotel/motel tax.
- Sales Tax: The City of New Orleans could increase its sales tax. A tax increase of 0.3 percent would generate approximately $31 million per year at a cost of $40 per year for the average household. Increasing the sales tax would first require passage of new state enabling legislation and then voter approval.

Mayor and City Council

LaToya Cantrell was sworn in as the 62nd Mayor of New Orleans on May 7, 2018. On January 10,2022 Mayor Cantrell was inaugurated to a second term. The mayor serves a four-year term and is limited to two terms. Her term will end in 2026.

The city council is the legislative branch of New Orleans city government. The council considers and enacts all local laws that govern the City of New Orleans. The council also approves the operating and capital budgets for the city, as recommended by the mayor, and continually monitors revenues and expenditures for local government operations. The city council is also the regulatory body for electric and gas utilities, Cox Cable, and taxi cabs, limousines, and other for-hire vehicles.[2] It reviews and has final say on many land use and zoning matters, as well as considers major economic development projects for the city. As a Board of Review for Orleans Parish, the council examines appeals of property tax assessments for real estate taxes and certifies tax rolls to the Louisiana Tax Commission.

The city council is comprised of five districts and two councilmembers-at-large.[3] One of the councilmembers-at-large is elected by the council as President, and the other councilmember-at-large is elected by the council as Vice-President. In practice, the presidency and vice-presidency rotate between

[2] http://nolacitycouncil.com/docs/resources/Citizens%20Guide%20to%20CC.pdf
[3] http://nolacitycouncil.com/meet/meet.asp

the two councilmembers-at-large annually.[4] Helena Moreno is currently serving as President. The council members are elected to four-year terms using the two-round system, also known as the second ballot or runoff voting system. In this system, if no candidate receives an absolute majority of votes in the first round, then the two candidates with the most votes proceed to a second round. The next municipal elections will be held in the Fall of 2025.

City of New Orleans Mayor and Council				
Name	**Seat**	**Notes**	**Term Ends**	**Party Affiliation**
LaToya Cantrell	Mayor	Elected 2017; re-elected 2021	2026	Democrat
Helena N. Moreno	Councilmember-at-Large	Elected 2017; re-elected 2021	2026	Democrat
Jean Paul “JP” Morell	Councilmember-at-Large	Elected 2021	2026	Democrat
Joseph I. Giarrusso III	District "A"	Elected 2017; re-elected 2021	2026	Democrat
Lesli Harris	District "B"	Elected 2021	2026	Democrat
Freddie King III	District "C"	Elected 2021	2026	Democrat
Eugene J. Green	District "D"	Elected 2021	2026	Democrat
Oliver Thomas	District "E"	Elected 2021	2026	Democrat

[4] http://nolacitycouncil.com/docs/resources/Citizens%20Guide%20to%20CC.pdf

Choosing a Local Funding Strategy

Generally, there are three broad-based types of revenue sources available to local governments to pay for implementing green infrastructure: discretionary annual spending (i.e. budget appropriation), creation of dedicated funding streams such as voter-approved special taxes, and the issuance of bonds. The financing options utilized by a community will depend on a variety of factors such as taxing capacity, budgetary resources, voter preferences, and political will.

In the Trust for Public Land's experience, local governments that create funding via the budget process provide substantially less funding than those that create funding through ballot measures. As elected officials go through the process of making critical budgetary decisions, funding for green infrastructure and other natural climate solutions often lags behind other public purposes and is frequently much less than what voters would support. It is often quite difficult to raise taxes without an indisputable public mandate for the intended purpose.

The power of conservation finance ballot measures is they provide a tangible means to implement a local government's vision. With their own funding, local governments are better positioned to secure scarce funding from state or federal governments or private philanthropic partners. Having a predictable funding source empowers local governments to establish long-term conservation priorities that protect the most valuable resources, are geographically distributed, and otherwise meet important community goals and values.

Nationwide, a range of public financing options has been utilized by local jurisdictions to fund open space and parks, and other green infrastructure, including general obligation bonds, the local sales tax, and the property tax. Less frequently used mechanisms have included real estate transfer taxes, impact fees, and income taxes. The ability of local governments and special districts to establish dedicated funding sources depends upon state enabling authority.

Public funding ballot measures are not right for every local government, or they might not be the best approach at the moment. Budget appropriations and other revenue mechanisms that can be implemented by the local government without a referendum may well serve as short-term funding options while the community develops a strategy and cultivates broader support for longer-term financing options.

Local Green Infrastructure Finance in Louisiana

There are several funding options available to local governments in Louisiana for parks, open space and other green infrastructure. To date, however, there have been few local conservation ballot measures in Louisiana. The major financing options for parishes and cities in Louisiana for parks and open space are the property tax, general obligation bonds, and the sales tax. In general, property tax mill levies have been the most frequently proposed funding mechanism. Article 6, Section 23 of the Louisiana State Constitution authorizes and enables public bodies to acquire land for parks, recreation, and other public purposes.

Currently in New Orleans almost all green infrastructure funding comes from the federal government in the form of grants from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Program ($150M), National Disaster Relief grants ($141M) and Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act grants (GOMESA) ($29M).

Stormwater Fee

As of Spring 2023, a full team of people are working on the implementation of a stormwater fee for green infrastructure. A 10-part workshop series will be held where residents will build and ideate on an equitable, justice-centric fee that benefits both residents and government agencies seeking to expand nature-based solutions to flooding, heat island effects, and quality of life on public and private land. Those will start on March 30th. They will also launch a website landing page in February 2023 for the fee while the public education campaign begins in May.[5] The final legislation is expected to pass in 2024.

This effort is being led by the Stormwater (or Drainage) Fee Advisory Group. The Advisory Group is hosted by The Water Collaborative of Greater New Orleans in partnership with WaterNow Alliance and the Business Council. The purpose of the Group is to create a transparent and open process for learning, sharing, and providing vital feedback to all that are interested in the process of creating and finalizing stormwater fee policy and other related policies to support the long-term success of the fee.[6]

The stormwater fee which has been researched and discussed for several years would be used to add more green space, trees, and parks. They are working with the Prevention Institute on Park Equity. To increase equity, they are exploring the concept of pocket parks in urban areas using blighted properties still left over from Hurricane Katrina. Additionally, they are working with Sustaining Our Urban Landscape (SOUL) on their Reforestation Master Plan. Finally, they want to create a sizable fund for Green Infrastructure on public and private land for programs such as the CAP Program and free rain barrel programs similar to Philadelphia's program.

Benefits

Revenue generated would benefit the city in many ways. Direct impacts include:

- Funding for grey infrastructure improvements
- Funding for green infrastructure on public land and grants for GI retrofitting on residential properties and schools.
- Reduce pluvial flooding from various rain events
- Reduce carbon footprint and carbon emissions
- Increase tree canopy thus reducing heat island impacts
- Funding for GI maintenance
- Support our groundwater table, reduce rapid subsidence

Indirect Impacts Include:

- Fee supports revitalization and investment
- Incentivization to expand green infrastructure across the city
- Incentivize real estate development that consider climate change impacts
- Improve quality of life for residents
- Expanded workforce in GI and expand our economy
- Increase trust and transparency in our antiquated and confusing drainage system

The authority for this fee came in May 2022 when a new law passed by the state legislature authorized any political subdivision to create stormwater utility systems and adopt stormwater utility fees sufficient to plan, construct, acquire, extend, improve, operate, and maintain such systems, either within or without its boundaries. It provides that any such system created pursuant to the new law is a revenue-producing public utility pursuant to existing law and shall have all the rights, powers, and privileges granted to such utilities by existing law.[7]

General Obligation Bond

To raise funds for capital improvements, municipalities in Louisiana may issue bonds. General obligation (GO) bonds may be issued for any purpose, including land acquisition, recreation facilities, and improvements for parks and open space. Subject to approval by the State Bond Commission or its successor, general obligation bonds may be issued only after authorization by a majority of the electors voting on the proposition at an election in the political subdivision issuing the bonds. The full faith and credit of the municipality is pledged to the payment of general obligation bonds. The governing authority of the issuing political subdivision shall levy and collect on all taxable property in the political subdivision

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[5] Personal communication with Jessica Dandridge, Executive Director of the Water Collaborative
[6] https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfhbZY4j4q_XJvLZMHU319D40o6gnKchSbMxDooU8-mFKBP9A/viewform
[7] https://www.legis.la.gov/Legis/BillInfo.aspx?i=242536

ad valorem taxes sufficient to pay principal and interest and redemption premiums, if any, on such bonds as they mature.[8] Bonds must mature within 40 years.[9]

Debt Capacity in the City of New Orleans

Outstanding general obligation bonds at December 2022 totaled $667.2 million, all of which are considered net direct-tax supported debt. The Louisiana Legislature, in Act 1 of 1994, increased the city's GO debt limit to an amount equal to the greater of (i) $500 million or (ii) 35 percent of total assessed valuation of the city. Under Act 1, based on the most recent assessed valuations, the city's debt limit is $1.65 billion. Taking into account the outstanding principal, past and future accretion on outstanding GO bonds, plus fund balance available in the Debt Service Fund to service this debt, the city's legal debt margin is $846 million. See the table on the following page for the computation of the legal debt margin. As of December 2022, Moody's GO bond rating for the city was "A2," Fitch GO bond rating was "A,"and Standard & Poor's GO bond rating was "A+ indicating good credit."[10]

Computation of Legal Debt Margin				
Fiscal Year	**Assessed value real estate and personal property**	**Debt Limitation 35% of total assessed value**	**Amount of debt applicable to debt limitation* Outstanding General Obligation Bonds****	**Approx. Legal debt margin**
2022	$4,735,318,730	$1,657,361558	$667,160,000	$990,201,551

Source: City of New Orleans 2022 Bond Statement

**Excludes revenue bonds*

***Excludes the effects of accretion on deep discount bonds*

Issuing Debt for Green Infrastructure

The table below illustrates the annual debt service, required property tax increase, and annual household cost of additional general obligation bond issues. For instance, a $75 million general obligation bond for green infrastructure would require a levy of roughly 1.27 mills to meet the annual debt service. This would cost the average homeowner approximately $35 per year in additional property taxes. Based on the Trust for Public Land's experience working in dozens of communities across the country to pass conservation finance ballot measures, on average, voter support of public spending for parks and recreation tends to drop off when the annual cost for the average taxpayer exceeds the $20 to $30 range. Though bond funding can fulfill green infrastructure capital needs, it cannot be a source of funding for operations and maintenance. If the stormwater fee referenced above is passed, it could leverage green debt financing and bonds, which is far more equitable without putting more economic stress on residents.

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[8] Louisiana Constitution Article 6 Section 33
[9] Louisiana RS 39:827
[10] https://emma.msrb.org/P21629789-P21254930-P21680131.pdf December 2022 Bond Statement

City of New Orleans Bond Financing Costs			
Bond Issue	**Annual Debt Service**	**Mill Increase**	**Annual Cost for Average Homeowner***
$50,000,000	$4,012,129	0.85	$23
$75,000,000	$6,018,194	1.27	$35
$100,000,000	$8,024,259	1.69	$47
$125,000,000	$10,030,323	2.12	$58
$150,000,000	$12,036,388	2.54	$70
Assumes a 20-year bond issue at 5.0% interest rate			
Net assessed value = $4,735,318,730, City of New Orleans 2022 Bond Statement			
**Average taxable value = $27,500, based on median prices for 2022. Accounts for 10% assessment rate and $7,500 homestead*			
Source of sale price data: New Orleans Metropolitan Association of REALTORS			

The Trust for Public Land's bond cost calculations provide an estimate of debt service, tax increase, and cost to the average homeowner in the community of potential bond issuances for land conservation. Assumptions include the following: the entire debt amount is issued in the first year and payments are equal until maturity; 20-year maturity; and a 5 percent interest rate. Property tax estimates assume that the city would raise property taxes to pay the debt service on bonds; however, other revenue streams may be used. The cost per household represents the average annual impact of increased property taxes levied to pay the debt service. The estimates do not take into account growth in the tax base due to new construction and annexation over the life of the bonds. The jurisdiction's officials, financial advisors, bond counsel, and underwriters would establish the actual terms.

Implementation

Subject to the approval of the State Bond Commission, general obligation bonds may be issued by the city if authorized by a majority of the electors. The election must be called by ordinance or resolution adopted by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the council. Prior to the election, the ordinance or resolution of the council ordering and calling the election must be approved by resolution adopted by a majority of the members of the Board of Liquidation.[11,12] Thus, the bond must be approved by both the Board of Liquidation and the State Bond Commission. See the table below for the State Bond Commission's 2023 meeting schedule.

The resolution ordering the election must state the purpose for which the election is called, which is to authorize the issuance of bonds. The resolution and the proposition submitted to the voters must state the purpose for which the bonds are to be issued and, if required by the law pursuant to which the bonds are issued, the estimated millage rate to be levied in the first year of issue, the maximum amount of the bonds to be issued, the number of years for which the bonds are to run, and the maximum rate of interest on the bonds. The proposition on the ballot submitted to the voters must state the kind and source of revenues that are pledged to retire the bonds.

The preparation of the proposition to be submitted to the voters is the responsibility of the governing authority of the political subdivision ordering the

2023 Bond Commission Meetings		
Meeting Date	**Submission Deadline**	**Election Date**
5/18/2023	4/19/2023	10/14/2023
6/15/2023	5/16/2023	
7/20/2023	6/20/2023	
8/17/2023	7/19/2023	
9/21/2023	8/22/2023	11/18/2023
10/19/2023	9/20/2023	
11/16/2023	10/17/2023	
12/21/2023	11/20/2023	
1/18/2024	12/14/2023	
Source: Louisiana Department of the Treasury		

[11] Louisiana RS 39:1034
[12] The Board of Liquidation, City Debt was created by the Louisiana Legislature in 1880, and made a "body corporate," separate and distinct from the City of New Orleans, in 1890. The Board of Liquidation "the Board" has exclusive control and direction of all matters related to the issuance and repayment of the city's general obligation bonds. All ad valorem taxes levied by the city for the payment of its general obligation bonds are transferred to the Board. (http://www.boardofliquidation.com/)

election. The proposition must be worded in simple, unbiased, concise, and easily understood language and be in the form of a question. The proposition cannot exceed two hundred words in length and cannot include words that are struck through, underscored, or in boldface type. The secretary of state is responsible for ensuring that the proposition complies with election code.[13]

Once a majority of voters has approved the proposition, the bond must be issued pursuant to a resolution, which outlines the details of the bond, including its form, terms, security, manner of execution, repayment schedule, and redemption features. The Board of Liquidation must adopt all resolutions issuing general obligation bonds by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of its members. The council must also adopt the resolution by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of its members.[14] All proceeds derived from the sale of bonds must be used solely for the purpose for which the bonds are issued.[15]

The resolution authorizing the issuance of bonds of the city and public entities must be published one time in the official journal of the city. It is not necessary to publish exhibits to such resolutions if the exhibits are made available for public inspection at reasonable times and the times are stated in the publication. For a period of thirty days after the date of publication, any person in interest may contest the legality of the resolution and of any provision made for the security and payment of bonds. If no one contests the validity of the bond issue within the thirty days allowed, the authority to issue the bonds is confirmed.[16]

Bonds issued by any subdivision must be registered by the Secretary of State and shall have endorsed thereon the words: "This bond secured by a tax. Registered on this _ day of _ 20_" and signed by the Secretary of State or by an Assistant Secretary of State, with the great seal of Louisiana affixed without charge.[17]

Property Tax

In Louisiana, property taxes are assessed and levied at the local level. There is no statewide property tax. A property tax increase can be levied for parish purposes, such as the acquisition, construction, and improvement of public works projects. The creation and maintenance of public parks are considered public improvement projects; therefore, a citywide property tax could be used to finance parks and recreation as well as green infrastructure.

Property tax rates established constitutionally, including those that typically support levee districts and core municipal operations, do not require a vote to change unless an increase would make the total rate exceed the legal maximum millage defined by the law. However, voter approval is required to renew taxes originally created by voter approval, as well as to create an entirely new tax levy. The legal maximum millage for general purposes for Orleans Parish is 7 mills, unless an increase is approved by voters.[18] The City of New Orleans does not have a maximum millage and currently levies 13.91 mills for general purposes.[19]

Property subject to taxation is uniformly assessed at ten percent of its fair market value.[20] Louisiana homeowners also receive a homestead exemption of up to $7,500 for a primary residence. This exemption is applied against the assessed value of the home, which is equal to ten percent of fair market value. Consequently, only homes that have a fair market value more than $75,000 are subject to parish property taxes, except for the Police and Fire millage.[21] The Police and Fire millage is exempt to the

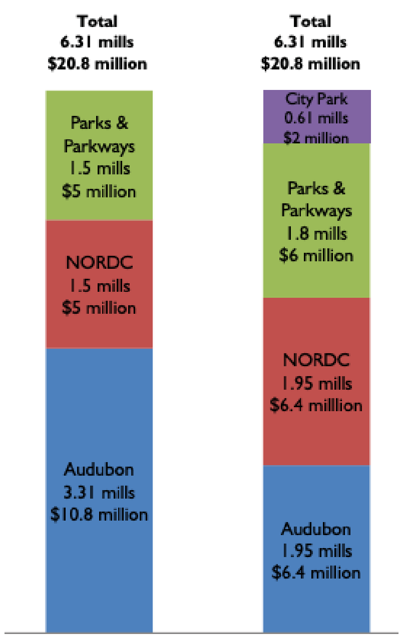
[13] Louisiana RS 18:1284
[14] Louisiana RS 39:1035
[15] Louisiana RS 39:1034
[16] Louisiana RS 39:1041
[17] Louisiana RS 39:911
[18] Louisiana Constitution Article 6 Section 26
[19] Louisiana Constitution Article 6 Section 27
[20] Louisiana Constitution Article 7 Section 18
[21] Louisiana Constitution Article 6 Section 26

homestead exemption.[22] See the table on the following page for an example of calculating the property tax.

The current citywide property tax for New Orleans is 140.7 mills. Additional taxes within New Orleans include district taxes for schools, levees, drainage district, and other district taxes including transportation, fire, sewage, recreation, and various infrastructure districts. The table below compares millages of Orleans Parish and several other parishes in the state.

Four dedicated millages supported parks and recreation in New Orleans were redistributed following a successful referendum in May 2019. The table below demonstrates the millage rate, description, expiration, and annual revenues for each of these millages. The bar charts below represent the pre (left) and post (right) 2019 redistribution of the dedicated property tax.

Sample Property Tax Calculation			
Fair Market Value (Sale Price)		$100,000	
	x	10%	
Assessed Value	=	$10,000	
Less Homestead Exemption	-	$7,500	
Taxable Value	=	$2,500	
Citywide Millage (minus Police & Fire)		$122.87	per $1,000 taxable value
Taxable Value	x	$2,500	
Base Tax	=	$307.18	
Police and Fire Millage		$10.47	per $1,000 taxable value
Taxable Value	x	$10,000	
Police and Fire Tax	=	$104.70	
Total Property Tax	**=**	**$411.88**	



Parish wide Property Tax Comparison	
Parish	**Parish wide Millage**
St. Tammany	141.2
Orleans	140.7
Caddo	137.7
East Baton Rouge	116.6
Jefferson	119.3
Note: The Orleans Parish figure is for 2023; figures for other parishes are for 2022.	
Source: Louisiana Tax Commission 2022 Annual Report	

[22] Louisiana Constitution Article 7 Section 20

The Audubon zoo millage was approved by voters in 1972 for 50 years. The original millage was 0.2 mills; however, the tax has since been adjusted to its current level of 0.32 mills, according to Article 7, Section 23 of the Louisiana Constitution. The aquarium millage was approved in 1986 for 35 years. Originally levied at 3.8 mills, it has since been decreased to the current 2.99 mills, per Article 7, Section 23 of the Louisiana Constitution. The Parks and Parkways and New Orleans Recreation Development millages were both approved in 1991 for 30 years. The City Park Improvement Association had not received funds from a citywide millage until the passage of this referendum.

City of New Orleans Park Agency Millages and Revenues				
Entity	**Millage Rate**	**Description**	**Expires**	**Estimated Revenue**
Audubon Commission	1.95	Special tax for establishing and maintaining a zoological garden in Audubon Park	2040	$6,418,350
City Park Improvement Association	0.61	City Park	2040	$1,800,000
Parks & Parkways	1.80	Special tax for paying for the operations and improvements by the Parkway and Parks Commission	2040	$6,594,658
NORDC	1.96	Special tax paying for the operations and improvements by the New Orleans Recreation Department	2040	$7,052,857
Total	6.31			$21,865,865
Source: 2021 Audubon Institute Financial, 2023 City of New Orleans Adopted Operating Budget Book				

Revenue Raising Capacity in the City of New Orleans

The table below illustrates the revenue and cost of various property tax rate increases as it affects residential properties in New Orleans. If an increase to the property tax were pursued (i.e. levying a citywide property tax, or creating a recreation district to levy a tax), the City of New Orleans could raise a substantial amount of money on an annual basis to support and expand parks and recreation opportunities. Based on the 2022 taxable assessed value of approximately $4.7 billion, an increase of 2.50 mills would generate more than $12 million annually. This tax increase would cost the average household in New Orleans an additional $69 per year in property taxes.

City of New Orleans Estimated Revenue & Cost of Millage Increase			
Millage Increase	**Net Assessed Value**	**Annual Revenue**	**Annual Cost for Average Homeowner***
1.00	$4,735,318,730	$4,735,319	$28
1.50	$4,735,318,730	$7,102,978	$41
2.00	$4,735,318,730	$9,470,637	$55
2.50	$4,735,318,730	$11,838,297	$69
3.00	$4,735,318,730	$14,205,956	$83
3.50	$4,735,318,730	$16,573,616	$96
4.00	$4,735,318,730	$18,941,275	$110
4.50	$4,735,318,730	$21,308,934	$124
5.00	$4,735,318,730	$23,676,594	$138
5.50	$4,735,318,730	$26,044,253	$151
6.00	$4,735,318,730	$28,411,912	$165
6.50	$4,735,318,730	$30,779,572	$179
Net assessed value = $4,735,318,730, City of New Orleans 2022 Bond Statement			
**Average taxable value = $27,500, based on median prices for 2022. Accounts for 10% assessment rate and $7,500 homestead exemption.* *Source of sale price data: New Orleans Metropolitan Association of REALTORS*			

Implementation

Citywide Millage Increase

In order to increase the citywide millage rates, the city council first needs to submit an application to the State Bond Commission. This application consists of a cover letter and a certified copy of a resolution. The cover letter must state the estimated annual proceeds that the levy would generate if it were to pass. The resolution must be adopted at a council meeting, and is required to outline the rate of the millage to be levied, the duration of the tax, the purpose of the tax, the election date, the proposition, and the name of the governing body that would have authority over the revenues.

The agenda for the State Bond Commission's meetings is set twenty days prior to their monthly meetings. Applications that are received after this deadline date for any monthly meeting will be considered in the following meeting. The application is then reviewed for its compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements. If approved, the Bond Commission would produce a certificate of application to the Louisiana Secretary of State, who is responsible for putting the proposition on the ballot.

The Secretary of State would put the proposition before voters in a parish-wide election (see Appendices C and D for election procedures and filing deadlines).[23] In this election, the tax must receive a majority vote to pass. The ballot language of the proposition must state the specific purpose or purposes for which the tax is levied, and is required to define how long the tax will remain in effect. Generally, property taxes that are voted upon remain in effect for ten years, but the statutes do not limit the length of time that millage increases stay in effect.

There is concern a millage increase will only exacerbate inequity since it's based on property value. With increased gentrification and displacement, a tax for green infrastructure could overburden lower income property owners. As it stands now, the current millages are only for operations and maintenance, not for community benefit or capital projects. Focus groups have shown that residents need to see direct benefits.

Recreation District

Alternatively, according to Article 6, Section 19 of the Louisiana State Constitution, a citywide recreation district (or special district of any type) could be established by the city council. A public vote is not required to establish a district. While there is not currently a recreation district in New Orleans, St. Tammany Parish directly to the north has over a dozen. Special districts in New Orleans are primarily for downtown development, regional business parks, levee maintenance, and neighborhood crime reduction.

According to the Louisiana Constitution, the legislature (through general, local, or special law) is authorized to create districts of every type. The Louisiana Revised Statutes further clarify this position in section 33:4571 and 33:4572, allowing local governmental authorities the power to create recreation districts and appoint a five-member board. The governing authority of the recreation district would be appointed by the New Orleans city council.

In order to levy the property tax for this citywide recreation district, the recreation district would need to submit an application to the State Bond Commission, as discussed above. In order to pass, the proposition must be approved by a majority of voters in the district. The tax is limited to ten mills, and the time limit shall be decided on a yearly basis, unless designated otherwise in the resolution that called the election.

Hotel/Motel Tax

Though still in a recovery phase, New Orleans' economy is markedly improved since the height of the pandemic. 2022 saw the return of landmark festivals like the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival and the Essence Festival, as well as special events like Mardi Gras and the Men's NBA Final Four.

[23] Louisiana Constitution Article 6 Section 26 (A)

Conference bookings, hotel occupancy, and cruise line activity have all increased, though not to pre-pandemic levels. A hotel/motel tax dedicated to green infrastructure would provide a growing source of revenue for the City of New Orleans.

The City of New Orleans currently collects a tax of 17.35 percent on all hotel/motel room sales in the city, of which the city retains 2.5 percent.[24] There are two changes that have occurred in the past several years. First, the City's tax increased from 1.5 percent to 2.5 percent with the restoration of the "lost penny."[25] The other change is the rededication of the New Orleans Tourism and Marketing Corporation's per diem tax to the New Orleans Tourism and Cultural Fund. The overall tax rate increased from 16.35 percent to 17.35 percent. [26]

Nine entities receive a portion of hotel taxes through individual tax levies and a complex web of dedications and revenue sharing agreements. See the table below for a breakdown of allocations and tax rates by entity.

	Ad Valorem Taxes (levied as a percentage of the room charge)						**Hotel Assessment**	**Per Diem Taxes (converted to ad valorem equivalent)**		
SPRING 2019	Louisiana Stadium and Exposition District	New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center	State of Louisiana	City of New Orleans	Orleans Parish School Board	Regional Transit Authority	New Orleans & Company	New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation	New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center	**TOTAL**
	4.00%	3.00%	2.45%	1.50%	1.50%	1.00%	1.75%	0.45%	0.70%	**16.35%**
2023	Louisiana Stadium and Exposition District	New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center	State of Louisiana	City of New Orleans	Orleans Parish School Board	Regional Transit Authority	New Orleans & Company	New Orleans Tourism and Cultural Fund	New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center	**TOTAL**
	4.00%	3.00%	2.45%	2.50%	1.50%	1.00%	1.75%	0.45%	0.70%	**17.35%**

The City of New Orleans is authorized by RS 47:338.4 to levy and collect a tax of 0.5 percent on hotel rooms in the city. The proceeds are to be used only for promoting tourism. Orleans parish (which is geographically and politically coterminous with the City of New Orleans) is authorized by RS 47:338.8 to levy and collect a tax of up to 1 percent on hotel rooms in the parish, subject to voter approval. The proceeds of this tax may be used by the governing authority only for the promotion of tourism and the study and development of public assembly and convention facilities.

It could be argued that green infrastructure projects could enhance tourist activities. However, the current legislation authorizing a local hotel/motel tax in New Orleans restricts the use of revenue to the promotion of tourism. Thus, legislation would be required to include green infrastructure as an intended use of the tax revenues.

[24] 2022 City of New Orleans Proposed Operating Budget Book
[25] When New Orleans received its National Football League franchise in 1966, voters amended the state constitution to impose a tax on hotel rooms in Orleans Parish to fund construction of the Louisiana Superdome. To ease the burden of the new tax, the City of New Orleans agreed to suspend its then-1% sales tax as applied to hotel rooms. This was envisioned as a temporary measure to boost the fledgling tourism industry in New Orleans. "The Lost Penny", New Orleans Bureau of Governmental Research
[26] Personal communication with New Orleans Bureau of Governmental Research

Revenue Raising Capacity in the City of New Orleans

The table to the right demonstrates the potential revenue that could be generated by increasing the city's hotel/motel tax. For example, an increase of 0.5 percent above the current 1.5 percent tax could generate an additional $5 million per year. These revenue estimates are based on 2023 proposed collections from the current 2.5 percent tax as stated in the city's 2023 operating budget. With the current expansion in hotel development, which was to add 40.5 percent more rooms to the city prior to the Pandemic, this would be a growing source of revenue.

Estimated Revenue from Hotel/Motel Tax	
Hotel/Motel Tax Increase	**Annual Revenue***
0.25%	$2,502,544
0.50%	$5,005,087
0.75%	$7,507,631
1.00%	$10,010,174
**Based on collections of $25,025,435 from current 2.5% hotel/motel tax (2023 City of New Orleans Operating Budget)*	

Additionally, the city could consider re-allocating either a proportion or a fixed amount of hotel tax revenues to green infrastructure. Since revenues are expected to grow with the expansion of hotels in the city, directing some of the additional revenue to green infrastructure would provide a stable source of funding while not having a significant impact on other allocations. The decade prior to the pandemic, revenues from the city's hotel/motel tax were growing an average of 8 percent per year.[27]

Implementation

There is no general authorization for cities or parishes to levy a hotel/motel tax. The current levies in place in New Orleans were authorized by specific acts of the state legislature. Increasing the city's hotel/motel tax would require further action on the part of the legislature, either by amending the existing laws or by passing a new law, to allow for an increase to the tax, as well as to dedicate the new portion to parks and recreation. See Appendix B for a graphical representation of how a bill becomes a law.

Similarly, dedicating a portion of existing revenues to green infrastructure would require further action by the state legislature. The current laws would need to be amended to include green infrastructure in the list of approved uses.

Sales Tax

The governing authority of any local governmental subdivision may levy and collect a sales and use tax, if approved by a majority of voters. The tax rate, when combined with the rate of all other sales and use taxes (not including the state's sales and use tax) levied and collected within any local governmental subdivision, may not exceed 3 percent. However, the legislature, by general or by local or special law, may authorize the imposition of additional sales and use taxes by local governmental subdivisions, if approved by a majority of voters.[28] RS 338.54 authorizes the governing authority of any parish or school board to levy and collect an additional sales and use tax if approved by a majority of voters. The rate, when combined with the rate of all other local sales and use taxes, may not exceed 5 percent. However, this does not authorize any parish or school board already levying or authorized to levy an additional sales and use tax which exceeds the 5 percent level to levy an additional sales and use tax which equals or exceeds the 5 percent level. Therefore, even though New Orleans is specifically authorized to levy 0.5 percent for schools (RS 338.107) and 0.5 percent for general purposes (RS 338.108), the city does not have general authority to exceed the 5 percent limit.

[27] 2017 City of New Orleans Proposed Operating Budget Book
[28] Louisiana Constitution Article 6 Section 29

See the table to the right for a comparison of sales taxes in other large cities and parishes in Louisiana. The City of New Orleans currently collects a sales and use tax of 5 percent. The city keeps 2.5 percent for general operations and distributes 1.5 percent and 1 percent to the School Board and the Regional Transit Authority, respectively. Sales tax accounts for 37 percent of general fund revenue in the city's 2023 adopted operating budget, approximately $262 million.[29]

Local Sales Tax Rate Comparison	
Parish/Municipality	**Total Local Rate**
Mandeville (in St. Tammany Parish)	4.75%
Baton Rouge (in East Baton Rouge Parish)	4.45%
New Orleans/Orleans Parish	5.00%
Jefferson Parish	4.75%
Shreveport (in Caddo Parish)	4.45%
Source: Louisiana Association of Tax Administrators	

Revenue Raising Capacity in the City of New Orleans

An increase in the citywide sales tax has the potential to generate substantial funds for parks and recreation in New Orleans. The table below shows the estimated annual cost per household and annual revenue that could be generated by an increase in the sales tax. These cost and revenue estimates are based on sales tax collections of approximately $267 million in the city's 2023 adopted operating budget. For example, an increase of 0.3 percent above the city's current 2.5 percent sales tax would raise an additional $31.45 million annually for green infrastructure at a cost of $40 to the average household. It is estimated that residents would generate approximately 20 percent of the annual revenue, with the remaining revenue coming from visitors and a significant tourist/convention economy.

Estimated Revenue and Cost of Sales Tax Increase					
Sales Tax Increase	**Annual Revenue***	**Household Spending on Taxable Goods****	**Annual Cost/ Household**	**Total Revenue Attributed to Resident Spending*****	**% of Revenue Generated by Residents**
0.2%	$20,937,330	$13,222	$26	$4,140,842	19.8%
0.3%	$31,405,996	$13,222	$40	$6,211,262	19.8%
0.4%	$41,874,661	$13,222	$53	$8,281,683	19.8%
**Revenue estimates based on 2023 collections of $267 million from the existing 2.5% city sales tax.*					
***Assumes 29% of income is spent on taxable goods, including food. Median houshold income = $45,594 (US*					
****156,586 households (US Census QuickFacts)*					

Implementation

The City of New Orleans does not have general authority to increase its sales and use tax. Thus increasing the tax would require further action on the part of the legislature, either by amending the existing laws or by passing a new law, to allow for an increase to the tax, as well as to dedicate the new portion to parks and recreation. See Appendix B for a graphical representation of how a bill becomes a law.

Any political subdivision which is authorized by the constitution and laws of the state of Louisiana to levy and impose a sales and use tax which proposition is approved by a majority of voters shall impose, levy, administer, and collect such tax by local ordinance. The local ordinance must contain the following:

- The rate of such sales and use tax.
- The effective date of such tax.

[29] 2017 City of New Orleans Proposed Operating Budget Book

- The term of the tax.
- The purpose for which the proceeds of the tax shall be used.
- Vendor's compensation.
- Optional exclusions or exemptions allowed by state sales and use tax law, adopted by the local ordinance pursuant to state law.
- Exclusions and exemptions adopted pursuant to legislation enacted under Article VI, Section 29(D)(1) of the Constitution of Louisiana, but not allowed as an exclusion or exemption from state sales and use tax.
- Penalty, interest, or attorney fees due on the sales and use tax. The amount of such penalty, interest, and attorney fees shall be limited as provided by law, including relevant jurisprudence, until such statute or jurisprudence is changed.[30]

The ordinance must also reference the provisions of the Uniform Local Sales Tax Code.[31] The effective date of a new, renewed, or increased sales tax must be the first day of January, April, July, or October. The city must also notify the secretary and the Uniform Electronic Local Return and Remittance Advisory Committee, except in the case of renewing an existing tax.[32] See Appendices C and D for more information on propositions and election schedules.

Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA)[33]

The Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) of 2006 created a revenue-sharing model for oil- and gas-producing gulf states. Under the act, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas receive a portion of the revenue generated from oil and gas production offshore in the Gulf of Mexico. The act also directs a portion of revenue to the Land and Water Conservation Fund. GOMESA funds are to be used for coastal conservation, restoration, and hurricane protection.

There are two phases of GOMESA revenue sharing:

Phase I: Since 2007, 37.5% of all qualified gulf revenues are shared among the four states and their coastal political subdivisions. Revenues are generated from leases in specific geographic areas defined in the act. Additionally, 12.5% of revenues are disbursed to the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Phase II: The second phase of GOMESA revenue sharing started in fiscal year 2017. It expands the areas that qualify for revenue-sharing (PDF) under GOMESA.

Phase II also imposes revenue-sharing caps on states and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Overall state revenue-sharing caps are:

- $375 million for fiscal years 2017–2019
- $487.5 million for fiscal years 2020 and 2021
- $375 million for fiscal years 2022–2055

The cap is lifted beginning in fiscal year 2056.

Orleans Parish was disbursed almost $1.6 million in FY22. Between FY20 and FY22 there were no projected GOMESA expenditures in Orleans Parish.[34]

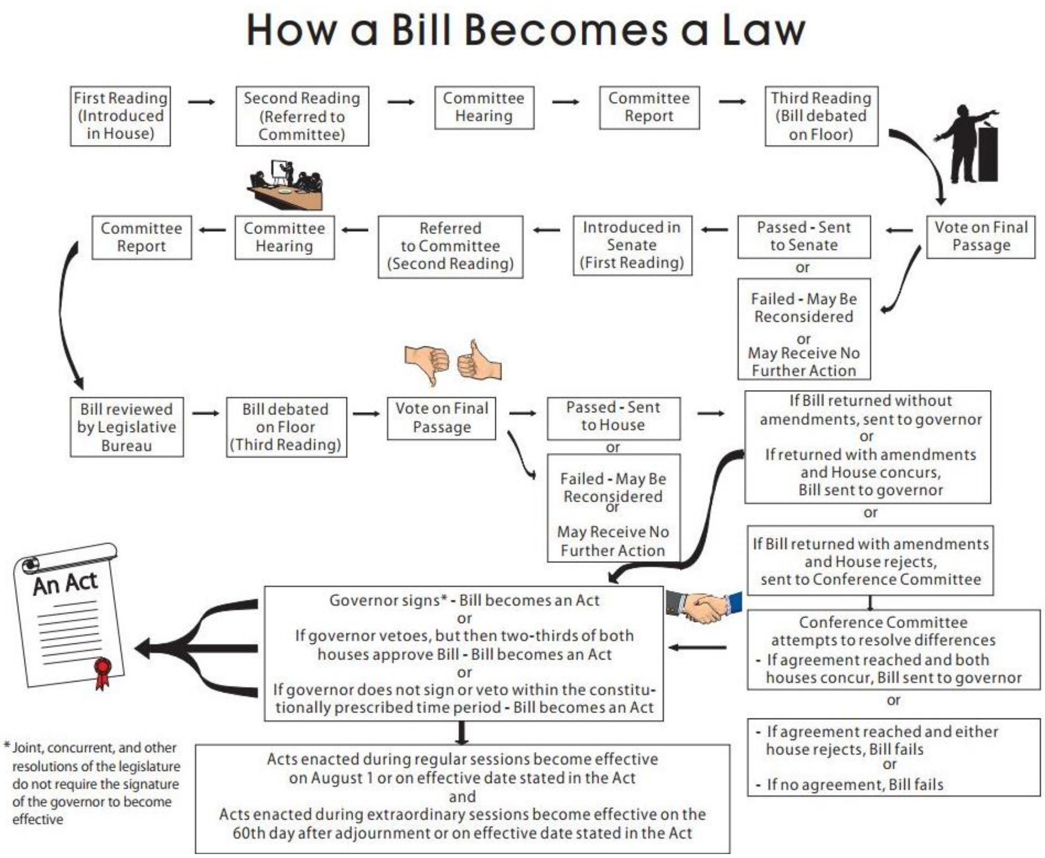
[30] Any political subdivision which is authorized by the constitution and laws of the state of Louisiana to levy and impose a sales and use tax which proposition is approved by a majority of those voting at an election called for the purpose after July 1, 2003, shall impose, levy, administer, and collect such tax by local ordinance in the manner required by this Chapter (RS 47:337.4)
[31] Louisiana RS 47:337.4
[32] Louisiana RS 47:337.5
[33] https://revenuedata.doi.gov/how-revenue-works/gomesa/
[34] https://www.gov.louisiana.gov/assets/docs/Final-GOMESA.pdf

Appendices

Appendix A: Summary of Revenue Options

Summary of Revenue Options			
Funding Mechanism	**Description & Revenue Generating Potential**	**Implementation**	**Comments & Considerations**
General Obligation Bond	The City of New Orleans could issue general obligation bonds to support capital purposes. For example, a general obligation bond for **$75 million** would cost the average household $35 per year.	Voter approval required.	Costs would be spread out over a long-time horizon and are therefore borne by both current and future residents. Bond funds may not be used for operations and maintenance.
Property Tax	The City of New Orleans could increase its mill levy. For example, a tax of $2.50 per $1,000 taxable value would generate approximately **$11.8 million** per year at a cost of $69 per year for the average homeowner.	Voter approval required.	Revenues could be used for capital as well as operations and maintenance purposes.
Sales Tax	The City of New Orleans could increase its sales tax. For example, a tax of 0.3 percent would generate approximately **$31.4 million** per year at a cost of $40 per year for the average household. It is estimated that residents would generate 20 percent of the revenue, with the remaining revenue coming from visitors and a significant tourist/convention economy.	Louisiana State Legislature must pass a bill to allow an increase, and voters must approve.	A small increase would create significant funding for parks and recreation that could be used for capital as well as operations and maintenance. Sales tax rates are already quite high. Revenues can fluctuate with changing economic conditions.
Hotel/Motel Tax	The City of New Orleans could consider increasing the hotel/motel tax, or re-allocating a portion to green infrastructure For example, an increase of 0.5 percent above the city's current 2.5 percent hotel/motel tax could generate an additional **$5 million** per year. Alternatively, a portion of existing revenue could be dedicated to parks and recreation. Revenues tend to grow at a rate of 8% per year.	Louisiana State Legislature must pass a bill. Voter approval not required unless city desires. If re-allocating from other entities, would need their cooperation.	Reasonable nexus between tourism and parks; revenues could be dedicated to parks and recreation. Revenues can fluctuate with changing economic conditions. Prior to the Pandemic revenues had been growing at an average of 8 percent per year since 2009. The city asked the legislature for approval to seek voter approval for an increase in 2014, but the bill failed.

Appendix B: How a Bill Becomes a Law



Source

Appendix C: General Information - Propositions

SECRETARY OF STATE
STATE OF LOUISIANA

P.O. BOX 94125
BATON ROUGE, LA 70804-9125
225.922.2880
WWW.SOS.LA.GOV

General Information - Propositions

(Placing Bond, Debt, and Tax Propositions on the Ballot)

1. A proposition or question must be authorized by the state constitution, state law, or by home rule charter. (La R.S. 18:1299)
2. Election dates are set by law. (La R.S. 18:402)
3. Gaming, gambling or wagering referendum elections must be enacted by a bill through the legislature specifically authorizing the election. (La. Const. Art. XII, Sec. 6(C) and La R.S. 1:1300.22)
4. The governing authority calls a bond, debt or tax proposition by resolution. See La R.S. 18:1284 and La R.S. 1285 for specific details.
5. The preparation of a question or proposition is the responsibility of the governing authority or other entity calling the election and is required to be comprised of simple, unbiased, concise and easily understood language and be in the form of a question and not exceed 200 words and cannot include words that are struck through, underscored, or in boldface type. The secretary of state is responsible for ensuring compliance. (La R.S. 18:1299.1)
6. The election is required to be noticed at least once a week for four consecutive weeks in the official journal. Notice shall run not less than 45 days and not more than 90 days prior to the election. (La R.S. 18:1285)
7. For bond, debt and tax propositions and any proposition subject to approval by the Louisiana State Bond Commission, please contact the bond commission at 225.342.0042 for additional information, including requirements for a certificate of approval. The bond commission holds its agenda review on the Monday proceeding the regular months meeting, which is held on the third Thursday of each month. **NOTE:** The following propositions **DO NOT** require bond commission approval:
   A. Alcohol;
   B. Sunday closing;
   C. Stock law; and
   D. Some leasing of public property (certain elections concerning public property have received bond commission approval)
8. Written notice of the election and the certificate of bond commission approval must be received by the secretary of state at least four weeks prior to the opening of the qualifying period for the primary election, and at least 46 days prior to the general election. (La R.S. 18:1285)
9. If a bond, debt or tax proposition fails, the Louisiana Constitution prohibits a political subdivision from submitting "the same tax proposition, or a new tax proposition that includes such a tax proposition, to the electorate more than once within a six month period except in the case of an emergency as determined by the governing authority of the political subdivision". (La. Const. Art. VI, Sec. 30). Approval is required by the bond commission and the governor.
10. The governing authority must file a Proces Verbal (a certified report that includes pertinent information regarding the election) with the secretary of state's office, Publications Division, whether the proposition passes or fails. Process Verbal filing fees are $10 for the certificate and $2 per page. (La R.S. 18:1292, La R.S 18:1293 and La R.S. 1400.2(C)(2))
11. Neighborhood Crime Prevention and Security District elections are governed by La R.S. 18:1300.31.

Appendix D: Original Audubon, NORDC, Parks & Parkways Ballot Language

Audubon Zoo, 1972

"FOR the proposal to authorize the City of New Orleans, beginning on January 1, 1973, and continuing for fifty (50) subsequent calendar years, to levy an additional tax of one-fifth (1/5) of one mill on the dollar, upon all taxable property, real, personal, and mixed, in the City of New Orleans, the proceeds of which tax shall be used for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a zoological garden in Audubon Park in the City of New Orleans.

"AGAINST the proposal to authorize the City of New Orleans, beginning on January 1, 1973, and continuing for fifty (50) subsequent calendar years, to levy an additional tax of one-fifth (1/5) on one mill on the dollar, upon all taxable property, real, personal and mixed, in the City of New Orleans, the proceeds of which tax shall be used for the purpose of establishing and maintaining a zoological garden in Audubon Park in the City of New Orleans."

Audubon Aquarium, 1986

(Aquarium)

PURPOSE G:

Proposition to levy and collect annually a three (3) and four-fifths (4/5) mills tax on all property subject to taxation for a period of 35 years in Orleans Parish to fund an AQUARIUM in said parish.

Shall the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, be authorized to levy and collect annually, in addition to any other authorized tax, a special ad valorem tax authorized by Section 11 of Act 191 of 1914 as amended by Act No. 309 of 1986 not to exceed three (3) and four-fifths (4/5) mills on all property in the City of New Orleans subject to such tax to be levied for a period of thirty-five (35) years, beginning with the year 1987, which shall be collected in the same manner as all other ad valorem taxes? The avails of said special tax shall be dedicated to and used by the Audubon Park Commission of the City of New Orleans for the establishment, acquisition, construction, advertisement and promotion, repair, maintenance, supervision, control, development, and improvement of an aquarium and related facilities in the City of New Orleans. The avails or proceeds of said tax may be funded into bonds for the purposes of establishing, acquiring, constructing, extending, and improving an aquarium and related facilities in the City of New Orleans.

NORDC, Parks and Parkways, 1991

PROPOSITION F

SPECIAL MILLAGE AUTHORIZATION

In the event that Proposition A is approved by the electorate and the City of New Orleans, Louisiana (the "City") issues the refunding bonds described therein, thereby realizing a reduction in millage levied for debt service, shall the City be authorized to levy a special tax of four and nine tenths (4.9) mills on all property subject to taxation in the City, for a period of thirty (30) years, commencing with the year 1992, with the proceeds of said tax to be allocated and used for the following purposes:

(a) 3.0 mills for paying for operations of and improvements by the Parkway and Parks Commission and the New Orleans Recreation Department (NORD); and

(b) 1.9 mills for street and traffic control device maintenance?

Appendix E: Audubon Commission Levy Ballot Language, March 2014

Election: March 15, 2014

Title: PW City Council Audubon Comm -- 4.20 Mills - CC -50 Yrs.

“Shall the City of New Orleans, Louisiana (the "City"), be authorized to levy and collect annually, in addition to any other authorized tax, a special ad valorem tax authorized not to exceed four and two-tenths (4.20) mills on all property subject to taxation within the City (an estimated $11,900,000 reasonably expected at this time to be collected from the levy of the tax for an entire year), for a period of 50 years, beginning with the year 2015 and ending with the year 2064, which tax shall be collected in the same manner as all other ad valorem taxes and which shall be dedicated to and used by the Audubon Commission (the "Commission") for the purpose of acquiring, constructing, improving, maintaining or operating works of public improvement of the Commission, said tax to be levied and collected in lieu of separate ad valorem taxes of 0.40 mills and 3.80 mills previously approved by the electors of the City for the benefit of the Commission?”

Defeated, 35% Yes, 65% No

Source: Louisiana Secretary of State

Appendix F: CITYWIDE PARKS AND RECREATION PROPOSITION (In Lieu Millage) Levy Ballot Language, May 2019

Election: May 4, 2019

CITYWIDE PARKS AND RECREATION PROPOSITION (In Lieu Millage)

In lieu of 3.00 mills currently levied for Parkway and Parks Commission and New Orleans Recreation Department and 0.32 mills and 2.99 mills levied for Audubon Commission ("Prior Taxes"), shall the City of New Orleans ("City") be authorized to levy a special tax of 6.31 mills ("Tax") for twenty years, January 1, 2021 - December 31, 2040 (estimated at $22,150,000 in the first year) with the proceeds of the Tax dedicated first to payment of debt service obligations secured by the Prior Taxes then to improving park safety and accessibility, capturing stormwater to reduce flooding, repairing and upgrading playgrounds and recreation centers, conserving natural areas, and constructing, improving, maintaining, and operating parks and recreational and wildlife conservation facilities in the City, except that a portion of collections shall be remitted to certain state and statewide retirement systems as required by law, allocated pro-rata as follows: 1.95 mills to New Orleans Recreation Development Commission; 1.80 mills to New Orleans Department of Parks and Parkways; 0.61 mills to City Park Improvement Association; and 1.95 mills to

Audubon Commission, supplemental to and not in lieu of City general fund appropriations budgeted for 2020, with all expenditures subject to public disclosure through annual audits?

Approved, 76% Yes, 24% No

Source: Louisiana Secretary of State

Appendix G: Green Infrastructure Funding Case Studies

Newton, Massachusetts Stormwater Utility

A Stormwater Drain Fee was established by the City of Newton, Massachusetts in 2006. The utility enables the city to manage and upgrade stormwater infrastructure, protect the Charles River and Crystal Lake, provide technical assistance and educational programs for residents and schools. User fees are based on a flat rate for residences and a separate flat rate for other properties (a fee structure based on individual lot size would have increased the City's operating costs).

http://www.newtonma.gov/gov/dpw/water/stormwater.asp

Reading, Massachusetts Stormwater Utility

Reading was required by the US EPA to develop a storm water management plan that reduces the discharge of pollutants to our storm water drain system and water ways, so the Town approved a stormwater utility in 2006. Single- and two-family properties are assessed a flat fee (i.e., $10/quarter or $40/year) and other properties are charged fees based on the total amount of impervious cover on their property. Residential and nonresidential properties that install and maintain infiltration systems or other means to reduce runoff are eligible for a fee reduction of up to 50 percent of their total stormwater fee assessment.

https://www.readingma.gov/collector/pages/storm-water-faqs

South Burlington, Vermont Stormwater Utility

South Burlington, Vermont's Stormwater Utility was established in 2005 to help mitigate the increasingly complex issues associated with stormwater management, including failing septic systems in older developments and phosphorus runoff polluting local streams and Lake Champlain - the primary source of drinking water for the Burlington area. User fees are based on a determination that a typical single-family home in South Burlington has 2,700 square feet of impervious surface. The stormwater billing rate is determined by the City Council as part of the City's annual budget process. In 2016, the annual fee was $78.48 for single-family homes, $39.24 for duplexes, and $26.16 for triplexes. Non-residential properties are assessed a fee depending on the amount of impervious surface. The utility funds a comprehensive program bringing in more than $1 million annually.

http://www.sburlstormwater.com

Portland, Oregon Clean River Rewards Program

The Portland Clean River Rewards is a stormwater utility discount program through which customers can receive up to a 100 percent discount on their onsite stormwater management charges if they manage stormwater on their properties. Partial credit is also available on a sliding scale for properties that manage any portion of stormwater on their site. Options for management practices include disconnecting downspouts and directing roof drainage to landscaped areas or rain gardens and installing drywells and soakage trenches. Portland's Ecoroof Program offers building owners and developers an incentive of up to $5 per square foot for an approved ecoroof project. Portland's Treebate Program credits residential customers' city sewer/sewer utility bills for half the purchase price per tree (based on tree size) for eligible trees.

https://www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/41976

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Green City, Clean Waters

Philadelphia's Green City, Clean Waters is the city's 25-year plan, developed in 2009, to protect and enhance watersheds by managing stormwater with green infrastructure as required by the US EPA. The city pursued a $1.6 billion green infrastructure strategy, which was determined to be more affordable than gray infrastructure. This approach will keep the first inch of rainfall out of the sewers through investments that help trap and absorb stormwater, including green spaces that absorb runoff, rain barrels, rain gardens, planters, green curb bumpouts and wetlands - in streets, parks, schools and other public spaces. The plan also encourages the private sector to use green infrastructure.

http://www.phillywatersheds.org/what_were_doing/documents_and_data/cso_long_term_control_plan

Washington D.C. Watershed Remediation

The Washington D.C. Department of Energy and Environment used US EPA Section 319 funding to partially fund remediation of the Watts Branch watershed in Northeast D.C. Watts Branch suffered from severe erosion and sediment pollution due to frequent flooding. The agency restored the stream bed and controlled flooding using tree and shrub plantings, regrading of the stream bed, and upstream low-impact development practices to manage impervious surface runoff. The project received over $910 million in Section 319 project implementation funds, which they combined with National Fish and Wildlife Foundation funding and Washington, DC local funds.

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-10/documents/dc_watts.pdf

Washington, D.C. River Smart Homes Program

In 2008, the District Department of the Environment (DOEE) in Washington D.C. kicked off its RiverSmart Homes Program. The citywide program offers incentives to homeowners to reduce stormwater runoff from their properties that harm the District's waterways and the Chesapeake Bay. A DOEE inspector meets with property owners, assesses the property and recommends appropriate landscaping enhancements. All River Smart Homes landscaping enhancements require co-payments, with participating homeowners paying approximately 10 percent of the installation costs, up to $1,200, for one or more low impact development (LID) features. The agency partners with local contractors who have completed its training course on LID to work with homeowners on these enhancements.

https://doee.dc.gov/riversmart

Montgomery County, Maryland RainScapes Rebate Program

The RainScapes Rebate Program is funded by the county's Water Quality Protection Charge. The County issues rebates up to $2,500 for residential projects and $10,000 for commercial, multi-family and institutional projects that meet specific design criteria. RainScapes promotes the use of innovative techniques and practices that soak up or store rainwater, reduce runoff and keep pollutants from entering streams. Projects may include water harvesting, such as rain gardens, rain barrels and conservation landscaping and other approved projects that help control stormwater. The County reports that RainScapes techniques beautify neighborhoods, reduce local flooding and increase habitat, which can increase property values.

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/water/rainscapes/rebates.html

Spokane, Washington Urban Runoff Greenway Ecosystem Program

The Spokane Urban Runoff Greenway Ecosystem program retrofits the existing urban landscape using green infrastructure strategies. Using a $599,000 loan from the Washington State Department of Ecology's Water Pollution Control Revolving Fund (funded by EPA's Clean Water State Revolving Fund), the city installed pervious sidewalk, trees, and plants as part of its stormwater management system. In all, 28 urban storm garden boxes and 386 square yards of porous surfaces have been built to capture, treat, and infiltrate runoff, with 50 percent of the loan in the form of principal forgiveness, and the other 50 percent in the form of a 20-year low-interest loan. The city received an award from EPA for successfully demonstrating innovative stormwater management strategies.

https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-04/documents/innovative_stormwater_management-washington.pdf

Indianapolis Cultural Trail

The Indianapolis Cultural Trail is an eight-mile bike and pedestrian path in downtown Indianapolis, Indiana. The trail, completed in 2013, links the city's six cultural districts, neighborhoods, the city's 40 miles of greenway trails, and other areas of the downtown. In addition to new landscaping, designers installed 25,400 square feet of stormwater planters, reducing stormwater runoff, flow rate, volume and pollutants and recharging groundwater supplies. The trail is the result of efforts by a number of public and private collaborators, including the city of Indianapolis, foundations and several nonprofits. Initial planning for the project took place in 2001–2003, with $4 million raised for initial study and design. The total project cost was $63 million, including a $20.5 million TIGER grant from the US Department of Transportation.

http://indyculturaltrail.org

Mystic River Watershed Association, Massachusetts

In 2015, the Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA) received a $60,000 Urban Waters Small Grant from the US EPA to promote green infrastructure in three environmental justice (EJ) communities bordering the Malden River through education, outreach, planning charrettes, GIS analysis, modeling of pollutant source and loads, development of a low impact development technical document and analysis of zoning/ordinances. A year later, MyRWA received a second $60,000 Urban Waters Small Grant to create a stormwater education campaign to increase awareness of stormwater pollution. Youth from the under-served communities of Chelsea and Somerville worked with MyRWA staff to learn about water quality, urban runoff pollution and their environment. In 2015, at the same time, a nonprofit, Alternatives for Community and Environment, received its own $60,000 grant to partner with the Chelsea Creek Action Group to assist EJ communities in implementing their Chelsea Creek Community Improvement Plan.

https://mysticriver.org/maldenriverurbanwaters

New Orleans Livable Claiborne Communities initiative

New Orleans' drainage network is overburdened because of low elevations, lack of catch basins, impervious surfaces and soil subsidence – which exacerbate flooding, damaging infrastructure, creating potholes and polluting Lake Pontchartrain. In response to a US EPA requirement, New Orleans created a Green Infrastructure Plan, under which they have agreed to dedicate $500,000 per year over five years, to be used for green infrastructure projects and activities. They are focused on stormwater management and the implementation of green infrastructure to meet their goals with a grant from US HUD's Sustainable Communities Initiative.

Lenexa, Kansas Rain to Recreation program

The Lenexa City Council in Kansas adopted a Systems Development Charge to require new development to pay a onetime fee at the time of building permit as a means for recovering costs for capital improvement activities within the Rain to Recreation program so that growth pays for growth. The focus of this fee is to address water quantity needs and to prevent pollution and reduce runoff through the use of green infrastructure.

https://www.lenexa.com/government/departments___divisions/rain_to_recreation

Kansas City 10,000 Rain Gardens

This public initiative in Kansas City, Missouri encouraged the creation of rain gardens and other green strategies to improve water quality between 2005 until 2010. The Sustainable Cities Institute created a document to provide other cities and towns information regarding the initiative, details concerning marketing, outreach and education, and technical information concerning best management practices, green roofs and native plant species.

http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/Documents/SCI/Case_Study/Case_Study_Kansas_City_10000_Rain_Gardens_Initiative.pdf

Washington, DC Environment Impact Bond, Green Infrastructure for Water Quality

The DC Water and Sewer Authority and its investors, Goldman Sachs and Calvert Foundation launched the nation's first Environmental Impact Bond to fund the construction of green infrastructure to manage stormwater runoff and improve the District's water quality. The proceeds will be used to construct green infrastructure practices designed to mimic natural processes to absorb and slow surges of stormwater during periods of heavy rainfall, ultimately reducing the incidence and volume of combined sewer overflows (CSOs) that pollute the District's waterways. The EIB is based on an innovative financing technique whereby the costs of constructing the green infrastructure are paid for by DC Water, but the performance risks of managing stormwater runoff are shared amongst DC Water and the investors. As a result, payments on the EIB may vary based on the proven success of the environmental intervention as measured by a rigorous evaluation. See this link for how DC is quantifying performance measures:

http://www.goldmansachs.com/media-relations/press-releases/current/dc-water-environmental-impact-bond-fact-sheet.pdf

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