

# FINANCE & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

## Meeting Notes

Tuesday, 5 August 2025, 3:00 pm

*Bienville House, 320 Decatur Street, New Orleans, LA 70130*

### 1. Call to Order, Reading of the Agenda, and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM and the agenda was read into the record.

| COMMITTEE MEMBERS |           |         |        | VOTES                          |   |   |  |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|--------|--------------------------------|---|---|--|
| First Name        | Last Name | Present | Absent | Approve previous meeting notes | Approve the Spanish Tile Replacement Proposal of \$25K, to be funded through the FQEDD Trust Fund | Approve moving forward with researching retirement plan options for full-time staff | Approve \$2K request for travel expenses for FQMD Executive Director for seminar |
| Frank             | Zumbo     |         | X      | -                              | -   | -   | -  |
| Heidi             | Raines    |         | X      | -                              | -   | -   | -  |
| Sue               | Klein     | X       |        | Yes                            | Yes   | Yes   | Yes  |
| Christine         | Bondio    | X       |        | Yes                            | Yes   | Yes   | Yes  |
| Jane              | Cooper    | X       |        | Yes                            | Yes   | Yes   | Yes  |
| Alex              | Fein      | X       |        | Yes                            | Yes   | Yes   | Yes  |

### INTRODUCTION OF ATTENDEES:

| GUESTS   |            |                                      |
|----------|------------|--------------------------------------|
| First    | Last       | Role                                 |
| Michelle | Courseault | FQMD Executive Director              |
| Shelby   | Ursu       | FQMD Coordinator                     |
| Glade    | Bilby      | FQMD Commissioner                    |
| Jessica  | Dietz      | FQMD SEC Committee Vice-Chair        |
| Erin     | Holmes     | FQMD Livability Committee Vice-Chair |

### 2. Public Comment:

No written public comment was received.

### 3. Motion – Consider a motion to approve the previous meeting notes

**Christine Bondio made a motion to approve the previous meeting notes. Vice-Chair Jane Cooper seconded the motion, and it was approved.**

### 4. Committee Chair's Comments

Chair Alex Fein welcomed the Committee members and guests.

### 5. Presentations / Discussions–

#### a. \*2025-26 State Appropriations Budget, Presented by: Michelle Courseault, ED

See attached documents. Michelle Courseault reviewed the 2025-26 State appropriations budget draft with the Committee, noting that the first page showcases the budget from a broad view, while the following pages provide a more detailed breakdown. Ms. Bondio stated that she was under the impression that staffing could not come out of the State appropriations. Ms. Courseault replied that, while FQMD full-time staff are budgeted out of the French Quarter Economic Development District (FQEDD) administrative fees, the staffing she listed in this draft is targeted to all consultant and professional services. Ms. Bondio pointed out that FQMD accountant John Foard works on more than State appropriations budgets. Sue Klein recommended that Ms. Courseault refer back to the previous year to see what the FQMD staff's average percentage of

# French Quarter MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

tracked time was for State appropriations to compare to this year's ratio. Ms. Courseault will investigate the inquiries presented and bring information back to the Committee.

Ms. Klein stated that last year the majority of the Board did not want to move forward with French Quarter Ambassadors, adding that she questions whether or not this should be included in the budget. Ms. Courseault replied that this is listed under the "TBD" section and is not set in stone. She added that she had a recent conversation with the Lt. Governor who expressed support for the idea. Ms. Courseault noted that the "TBD" section is completely open for recommendations from the Committees. The Committee agreed to revise the section to only state "TBD" and to remove all that is currently listed in this section. Reviewing the Glass Half Full budget, Ms. Cooper stated that this budget was approved last month by the Board and falls under supplemental sanitation. She added that in the future this may be funded through a different source instead of through the State. Ms. Courseault added this Committee could share their interests for what funding source to pay for each proposal presented.

Guest and Livability Committee Vice-Chair, Erin Holmes, presented the Sustainability, Restoration, & Modernization Plan for French Quarter Public Right-of-Way, stating that the Livability Committee is endeavoring to hire a firm that can deliver a consistent set of public right-of-way guidelines that will continue to be used as the set standard in the French Quarter for all future infrastructural projects. She added that there are currently inconsistent specifications in City Code and that by creating a set of homogenized and modernized guidelines, projects for right-of-ways, lighting, signage, wayfinding, recycling, and storm water management can move forward more quickly and efficiently in the district. Ms. Holmes stated that the Livability Committee seeks to have these guidelines incorporated into City Code, and to collaborate with Entergy, the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans, and the Department of Public Works to have these guidelines become the universal standard among these agencies. She noted that part of the proposal is to launch a pilot project with the new guidelines and codes in action in a designated section of the French Quarter. Ms. Cooper stated that working to change City Code could be a lengthy, yearslong process. Ms. Holmes agreed, but pointed out that if enough attention from City Council is on this project, things could potentially move along faster than expected. She added that she can start taking the next logical steps to reach out to councilmembers to discuss the proposal and noted that she has already been in conversation with Brian Block of the Vieux Carre Commission. Ms. Holmes stated that she believes there will be support from both the State and City on this plan. The Committee recommended that Ms. Holmes provide Councilman Freddie King with visuals to accompany the language of the proposal. Ms. Courseault reminded the group that if the proposal comes in under the anticipated \$150K, a Request for Qualifications can be released rather than a Request for Proposals.

The Committee discussed the pros and cons of the Livability Committee's request, noting that some State legislators may not see the project as aligning with public safety and security. Ms. Holmes stated that the proposal does technically align with the State's requirements, noting that things such as sidewalk accessibility and streetlighting directly impact public safety and security. Ms. Bondio suggested that the Committee consider funding this proposal with a different pot of funds, voicing her concern that the language in the proposal could be detrimental to the FQMD receiving State appropriations in the future. Mr. Fein agreed. Ms. Cooper pointed out that she believes that the City would work with the FQMD on funding this through the FQEDD Trust Fund if necessary. Mr. Fein reminded the group that this request does not need to be approved today, and can be further discussed at the September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. Ms. Courseault reiterated this Committee could share their interests for what funding source to pay for each proposal presented. It was decided that no motion be taken at this point in time. In conclusion, the Committee agreed that the Livability Committee should narrow the scope of the proposal, simplify the proposal name to "Public Safety Right-of-Way Guidelines", change "wayfinding" to "signage" so that it is more comprehensible, and to get DPW, VCC and Councilman King endorsement.

Ms. Holmes reviewed the Livability Committee's Spanish Tiles Replacement Project proposal, which requests that funds be allocated toward hiring a professional contractor for the installation of the Spanish tiles, to ensure consistency, quality, and historic integrity. This project is in anticipation of the King and Queen of Spain coming to the French Quarter for the United States' 250<sup>th</sup> birthday next summer. Ms. Cooper agreed with Ms. Bondio that this request should be funded through the FQEDD Trust Fund. **Ms. Cooper made a motion to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval of the Livability Committee's Spanish Tile Replacement Project Proposal, not to exceed \$25,000, which will be funded through the French Quarter Economic Development District Trust Fund. Ms. Klein seconded the motion, and it was approved.**

b. FQMD Operational Budget Requests:

i. Operations, Presented By: Michelle Courseault, ED

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## 1. \*2026- FQMD Staff Retirement Investment

See attached document. Ms. Courseault stated that the IRA plan seems to be the most straightforward way to install a retirement plan for full-time staff members. Ms. Cooper added that this would have to be funded through the FQMD's operational budget and would ideally be implemented on January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026. Ms. Bondio asked if Ms. Courseault is sure that the FQMD will have all of the necessary contributions to maintain an IRA plan, and who will take on the administering of this plan. Ms. Courseault replied that these details have not been ironed yet, but the motion she is requesting today is to approve moving forward with the concept of implementing an IRA retirement plan. She added that, if approved, she will speak with the FQMD's health insurance broker for more details on guidelines and requirements. Ms. Cooper recommended that Ms. Courseault connect with the broker, Denny Eversole, to answer all of the groups' questions, noting that he would be the right point of contact since the funding for retirement plans. Ms. Courseault added she will specifically work with Ms. Bondio on the full logistics of the Retirement Plan to ensure all questions are answered before bringing back to this Committee.

## 6. Motion(s):

- i. Consider a motion for approval of the 2025-26 State Appropriations Budget as presented.

No motion was taken at this point in time. Ms. Courseault will revise the budget draft to reflect the Committee's requested changes, discussed under agenda item 5-A.

- ii. Consider a motion for approval the FQMD Operational Budget Request as presented: 2026 FQMD Retirement Investment Plan.

**Ms. Klein motioned to approve the concept of integrating a 2026 Retirement Investment Plan for full-time staff, with full logistic details to be presented at a later date. Ms. Cooper seconded the motion, and it was approved.**

## 7. New Business– To consider and take action upon any other matters that may properly come before the French Quarter Management District Finance & Development Committee

Guest and Vice-Chair of the Security & Enforcement Committee, Jessica Dietz, reported that Cpt. Sammy Palumbo has expressed interest in creating a drone program for the Eighth District and is working on a formal proposal. She stated that she is requesting that the Finance & Development Committee consider the approval of funding flight accommodations for Ms. Courseault, Cpt. Palumbo, and an Eighth District Lieutenant, to Santa Cruz, California for a drone conference next month. She stated that the request is for \$6K, but noted that the cost per person for the trip is \$2K, should the Committee decide that they would prefer to only fund Ms. Courseault's travel costs. Ms. Dietz stated that this conference would be a great opportunity to learn more about the utilization of drones for public safety, as well as provide one on one time for Ms. Courseault and Cpt. Palumbo. Ms. Dietz noted that local, state, and federal agencies will be in attendance at this seminar, as well as the drone manufacturer who will provide onsite demonstrations. The Committee agreed that Ms. Dietz will cover all travel costs for law enforcement, which the FQMD will reimburse to Cops 8. **Ms. Klein made a motion to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval of a budget request of \$2,000 to fund French Quarter Management District Executive Director Michelle Courseault's travel expenses to attend a drone seminar in California next month, and to facilitate payment to the NOPD of \$4,000. Ms. Bondio seconded the motion, and it was approved.**

Ms. Cooper stated that all FQMD policies are up for renewal on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. She noted that she will be inviting the FQMD's broker of 12 years, Louis Faust, to attend an upcoming Committee meeting to present what premium fees for policies he has researched.

## 8. Next Meeting Date:

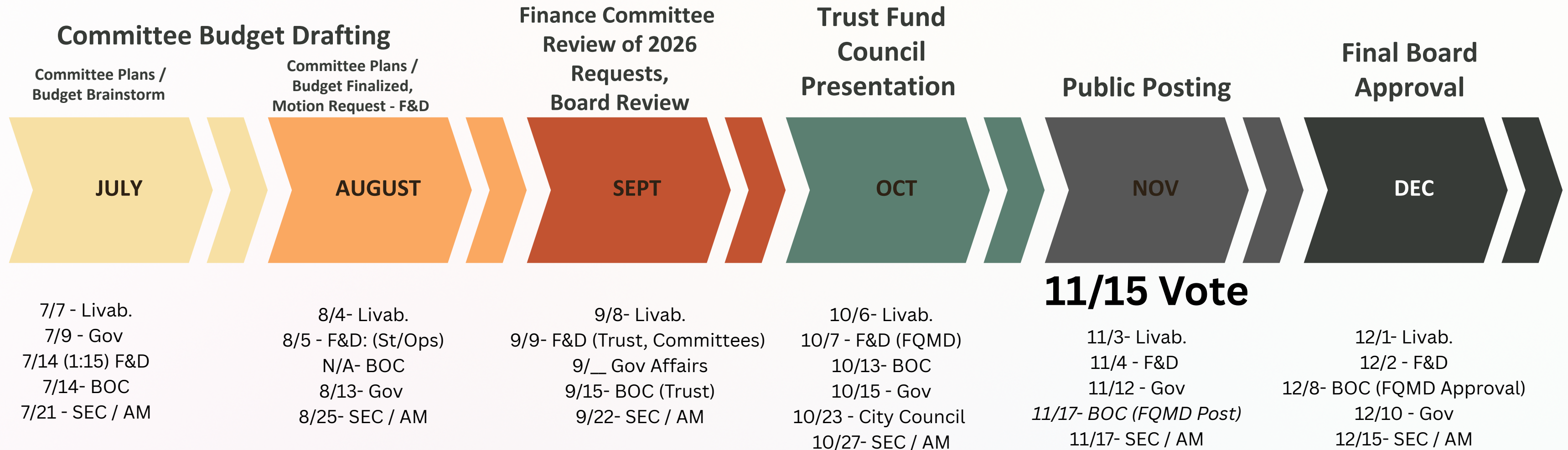
The next scheduled meeting date of the Committee is Tuesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025, at 3:00 PM.

## 9. Adjournment

**Ms. Bondio made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Klein seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 4:01 PM.**



# 2026 BUDGET TIMELINE



# **ATTACHMENT B**

Page 1

## **PROJECT BUDGET (2025-26)** **Act 1 of the 2025 Regular Legislative Session**

French Quarter Management District

Public Safety and Quality of Life Initiatives

### **Anticipated Income or Revenue**

**Sources:** *(list all sources of revenue)*

|                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 State Appropriation | 1,250,000.00               |
| 2                     | -                          |
| 3                     | -                          |
| Total all sources     | <u><u>1,250,000.00</u></u> |

### **Anticipated Expenses**

| <b><u>Expense Categories</u></b>         | <b><u>Total Amount</u></b><br>(see Footnote 1 below) | <b><u>Amount Line Item</u></b><br><b><u>Appropriation</u></b><br>(see Footnote 2 below) |
|--|--|---|
| Gross Salaries(See Attachment B, Page 2) | 100,000.00   | 71,550.00   |
| Related Benefits (Employer share)        |  | 19,004.00   |
| Travel                                   |  |   |
| Operating Services:                      |  |   |
| Advertising                              | 62,800.00  | 50,000.00   |
| Printing                                 | 2,000.00   | 2,000.00  |
| Insurance                                |  |   |
| Maintenance of Equipment                 |  |   |
| Maintenance of Office and Grounds        |  |   |
| Rentals                                  | 31,716.00  | 17,446.00   |
| Software licensing                       |  | 780.00  |
| Dues and Subscriptions                   | 2,500.00   |   |
| Telephones and Internet Service          | 2,679.00   | 3,000.00  |
| Postage                                  |  |   |
| Utilities                                |  | 1,000.00  |
| Other                                    | 105.00   |   |
| Office Supplies                          | 3,200.00   | 2,000.00  |
| Professional & Contract Services         | 950,000.00   | 984,745.00  |
| (See Attachment B, Page 3)               |  |   |
| Other Charges (See Attachment B, Page 4) | 95,000.00  | 98,475.00   |
| Acquisitions & Major Repairs             |  |   |
| Total Use of the Appropriation           | <u><u>1,250,000.00</u></u>                           | <u><u>1,250,000.00</u></u>  |

(Budget categories listed above reflect a typical budget and may be adjusted by the recipient, with prior agency approval, to reflect actual categories necessary for each individual program. Salaries and Professional & Other Contract Services and Other Charges shall be detailed using Pages 2, 3 and 4 of Attachment B).

Footnote (1) This column represents expenditures by category and MUST equal total sources listed above.

Footnote (2) This column represents the portion of expenditures by category funded by the state appropriation provided by this Cooperative Endeavor Agreement.

## **ATTACHMENT B**

Page 2

### **STAFFING CHART**

2024 Regular Legislative Session

French Quarter Management District

Public Safety and Quality of Life Initiatives

| Name             | Title      | Total Annual Salary | Total Salary Paid by Appropriation |            | Related Benefits | Full-time or Part-time<br># of months |
|------------------|------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|
|                  |            |                     | Amount                             | Percentage |                  |                                       |
| John Ford        | Accountant | 25,000.00           |                                    | 100%       |                  | PT - 12 Months                        |
| Ericksen Krentel | Auditor    | 25,000.00           |                                    | 100%       |                  | PT - 12 Months                        |
| TBD              | QA/QC      | 50,000.00           |                                    | 100%       |                  | PT - 12 Months                        |
|                  |            |                     |                                    |            |                  |                                       |
|                  |            |                     |                                    |            |                  |                                       |
|                  |            |                     |                                    |            |                  |                                       |
|                  |            |                     |                                    |            |                  |                                       |
|                  |            |                     |                                    |            |                  |                                       |
|                  |            |                     |                                    |            |                  |                                       |
|                  |            |                     |                                    |            |                  |                                       |
| <b>Totals</b>    |            | 100,000.00          | -                                  |            | -                |                                       |

## **ATTACHMENT B**

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### **SCHEDULE OF PROFESSIONAL AND OTHER CONTRACT SERVICES**

2024 Regular Legislative Session

French Quarter Management District

Public Safety and Quality of Life Initiatives

| <b>Name and Address of Individual and/or Firm</b>  | <b>Nature of Work Performed and Justification for Services</b> | <b>Total Contract Amount</b> | <b>Total Paid by Appropriation</b> |
|--|--|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| SEC Committee - LSP<br>Louisiana State Police  | Supplemental Security  | \$260,000                    | \$260,000                          |
| Glass Half Full<br>3935 Louisa Street<br>New Orleans, LA 70126   | Supplemental Sanitation  | 150,000.00                   | 150,000.00                         |
| Livability Committee<br>Sustainability, Resilience, Moderniz. Plan<br>Spanish Tiles Installer (up to \$25k)                    | Specific Requests  | 150,000.00                   | 150,000.00                         |
| TBD<br>(Idea suggestions w/ Importance at St:)<br>Litter Abatement, FQ Ambassadors,<br>Museum Wayfinding, St. Repairs (Rubber) | TBD  | 390,000.00                   | 390,000.00                         |

|               |  |                   |                   |
|---------------|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Totals</b> |  | <b>950,000.00</b> | <b>950,000.00</b> |
|---------------|--|-------------------|-------------------|





## 2026 Proposal: Installer for Spanish Tile Replacement Project

### Background

The Livability Committee, in partnership with the Vieux Carré Commission (VCC), is leading efforts to preserve and restore the historic Spanish street name tiles across the French Quarter. These tiles, commemorating the Quarter's Spanish heritage, are being replaced at no cost to property owners thanks to a generous donation from Ángeles Moreno Bau, Ambassador of Spain to the United States.

To ensure consistency, quality, and historic integrity in the installation of these tiles, this proposal to the Livability Committee proposes funding a single professional installer, vetted in coordination with the VCC. This would streamline oversight, maintain preservation standards, and enable greater efficiency in project implementation.

### Proposal

Objective: Fund a qualified, VCC-vetted installer to complete all tile installations associated with the 2025–2026 Spanish Tile Replacement Project.

Scope of Work: Install 80–100 individual tile plaques at 20+ identified locations across the French Quarter. Work closely with the Livability Committee and VCC to ensure proper installation methods and documentation. Coordinate with property owners and navigate any needed site-specific adjustments. Assist in providing scope details for VCC permitting if required.

Implementation Partner: Vieux Carré Commission will advise and participate in the vetting process to ensure compatibility with preservation requirements.

### Budget Recommendation

Requested Amount: Up to \$25,000

Based on prevailing rates for small-scale historic installations and assuming 80–100 placements at ~\$100–\$125 per site with potential contingency

### Rationale & Benefits

- - Ensures consistent, high-quality installation preserving the historic character of the Quarter
- Prevents misalignment, damage, or poor-quality installation from multiple unvetted contractors
- Demonstrates FQMD's leadership in cultural preservation and effective use of public-private partnerships
- Strengthens collaboration with the VCC, building a model for future joint projects

Consider a Motion to recommend to the Finance & Development Committee, a budget allocation up to \$25k to procure a VCC vetted installer for the Spanish Tiles Project



# Proposal: Sustainability, Restoration & Modernization Plan for French Quarter Public Right-of-Way

## Background

The French Quarter's public right of way (ROW) assets—sidewalks, curbs, signage, lighting, trash infrastructure, and stormwater systems—face ongoing degradation from age, overuse, and lack of coordinated reinvestment. Restoration efforts are often piecemeal, and no comprehensive, district-specific standards currently guide ROW rehabilitation or modernization.

## Proposal

### Objectives:

(a) Fund the development of a comprehensive plan focused on the **sustainability**, **restoration**, and historic preservation **modernization** of the French Quarter's public right-of-way (ROW), to establish long-term, preservation-compatible guidelines to govern improvements to infrastructure, signage, streetscapes, and public amenities — ensuring sustainability, historic preservation, and modern functionality.

(b) To fund the **implementation** of a highly visible, multi-element right-of-way **improvement pilot project** at a single French Quarter corner or intersection. This pilot will showcase the design standards, restoration techniques, and modernization strategies recommended in the district-wide SRM Plan, serving as a replicable model for future rollouts.

Scope of Work: The plan may address the following public ROW categories: Sidewalks, curb ramps, and ADA access; Historic signage and modern wayfinding; Street markings, and crosswalks; Street lighting and utility poles; Stormwater management and gutter infrastructure; Trash/recycling infrastructure and public furnishings; Greenspace and tree well integration.

Deliverables: A lasting, adoptable planning tool to guide FQMD's public space and infrastructure initiatives for years to come. (May include: District-wide condition and needs assessment; ROW design guidelines and best practices; Permitting and material standards aligned with VCC/DPW; Prioritized implementation plan (phased, cost-tiered); Maintenance and QA/QC protocols.)

## Budget Recommendation

Requested Amount: \$150,000 (including implementation of a pilot project)

FQMD will coordinate with the City of New Orleans, Department of Public Works, Vieux Carré Commission, and other relevant agencies to steward this plan's development. The plan will serve as a foundational tool for aligning future projects, budgeting capital improvements, and advancing the district's livability and infrastructure goals.

# 2026 Proposal

## SIMPLE IRA Retirement Plan

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This one-page summary outlines the key elements and recommendation for adopting a SIMPLE IRA retirement plan at FQMD for full time staff.

### **Plan Type: SIMPLE IRA**

A SIMPLE IRA (Savings Incentive Match Plan for Employees) is designed for small employers ( $\leq 100$  employees). It offers immediate vesting, easy setup, and minimal administrative burden.

### **Key Features**

- No IRS Form 5500 filing required
- Employer match: 3% of salary (or 2% non-elective)
- Employee limit: \$16,000/year + \$3,500 catch-up (age 50+)
- Immediate 100% vesting for both employee and employer contributions
- Setup deadline: October 1 for next calendar year

### **Cost Estimate (2026)**

Includes 3 staff members:

- Executive Director:  $\$112,000 \times 3\% = \$3,360$
- Office Coordinator:  $\$65,000 \times 3\% = \$1,950$
- Program Coordinator:  $\$59,000 \times 3\% = \$1,500$
- Admin Fees (e.g., Guideline):  $\sim \$1,040/\text{year}$
- \*\*Total Annual Cost:  $\sim \$7,850$ \*\*

### **Recommended Provider Options**

- Fidelity: No admin fees, low-maintenance
- Guideline: \$49/month base + \$8/user, automated
- Human Interest: Compliance support, modern UI

### **Recommendation**

Adopt a SIMPLE IRA plan with a 3% employer match beginning January 1, 2026, using an affordable turnkey provider like Fidelity or Guideline. This aligns with public-sector norms, enhances staff retention, and keeps costs predictable.