

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Meeting Notes

Wednesday, 8 April, 2026, 3:00 PM

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

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Guest Welcome & Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 3:08 PM.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS			
First Name	Last Name	Present	Absent
Glade	Bilby	X	
Christian	Pendleton	X	
David	Bilbe		X
Joey	DiFatta	X	
Daniel	Hammer		X
Steve	Caputo		X
KC	Guidry		X

INTRODUCTION OF ATTENDEES:

GUESTS		
First	Last	Role
Michelle	Courseault	FQMD Executive Director
Shelby	Ursu	FQMD Coordinator
Taylor	Diles	City OHSS

2. Public Comment:

No written public comment was received.

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

No motion was made due to lack of Committee quorum.

4. Discussions

a. French Quarter Economic Impact Study Executive Brief*

See attached document. Committee Chair Glade Bilby reviewed the French Quarter Economic Impact Study brief with the Committee, noting that he and FQMD Executive Director Michelle Courseault are planning to meet with Kevin Ferguson and Walt Leger to discuss the study results and to decipher smaller and more palatable packages to disseminate to different stakeholder audiences. He noted that the French Quarter’s sales tax alone makes up 14% of the Orleans Parish budget. Mr. G. Bilby stated that in 2025 the French Quarter accounted for \$79K in sales tax. Christian Pendleton requested more stats on property tax within the French Quarter compared to the Treme and other New Orleans neighborhoods, asking for the total amount of all tax revenue collected in the district.

b. Unhoused Services Revisit, City Strategic Alternative Proposal*

See attached document. Taylor Diles, the new Director of the Office of Homeless Services & Strategies (OHSS), introduced himself to the Committee and thanked them for allowing him to present the OHSS and City’s alternative unhoused services proposal. The Committee discussed the proposed \$308K initiative, which focuses on increasing Low Barrier Shelter exits to improve bed availability and overall system flow. Mr. Diles noted that the plan projects approximately 27 shelter exits, freeing 27 beds, at a pace of about three exits per month over nine months, adding

that this updated model builds on the prior pilot program, Home for Good, and stays within the approved 2026 French Quarter Economic Development District (FQEDD) budget.

Mr. Diles stated that successful implementation of the pilot program will require coordination across city, state, and federal partners. Operationally, the model relies on coordinated outreach and law enforcement engagement: outreach teams offer shelter placement, and officers enforce ordinances if refused. Joey DiFatta stated that he feels this new approach is a start in the right direction, noting that the residents and businesses of the French Quarter need to give the City's new administration the time and tools to be able to launch this new program. Mr. G. Bilby agreed, adding that the funding request is almost the exact dollar amount of the original approved unhoused services budget. Mr. Pendleton asked Mr. Diles if the budget for this proposal would be prorated, pointing out that it is already April and the program most likely won't be able to launch until the summer. Mr. Diles replied yes, stating that the funds would cover a full year, no matter when the program starts. He added that the program is entirely scalable, which will allow for any flexible modifications to shrink or grow the program in the future. Mr. Pendleton noted that one thing to keep in mind is that this program will take a Supplemental Police Patrol Program officer off of the streets for patrols in order to accompany the OHSS staff, adding that this may lead to frustrations for some residents, Commissioners, and Committee members. Mr. Diles will be in attendance at the Monday, April 13th Security & Enforcement Committee meeting to discuss the proposal in more detail, and will bring any of the Committee's concerns back to the City.

5. Updates

- a. City Council Meetings Participation (All meetings held in City Council Chamber)
 - i. April 16th – (Noon) 2026 Budget Amendment Request & Q1 Presentation

Ms. Courseault reported that the FQEDD Q1 presentation, as well as the NOPD 8th District's budget amendment request, will be held in the City Council Chamber on Thursday, April 16th, 2026 at 12 PM.

- b. *Deferred to May:*
 - i. Committee Governance Requests: Mobility
 - ii. FQMD Bylaws Proposed Addition: Budget Amendments*

6. Motions

- a. Consider a motion to recommend to the Board of Commissioners approval of the FQMD Bylaws Proposed Addition: Budget Amendment.

No motion was made by the Committee at this time.

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

No new business was discussed.

8. Adjournment

Mr. DiFatta made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Pendleton seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 4:05 PM.

The next scheduled meeting date of the Committee is Wednesday, May 6th, 2026 at 3 PM.

Approve **X Provide Feedback** Receive & File

Purpose

**Consideration of a City Alternative
Strategic Proposal for “Unhoused Support”
for the French Quarter.**

Background:

- Original 2026 Approval of \$310k for Unhoused Support, approved as follows:
 - Mobile Crisis Unit, 3rd Shift (\$120k)
 - Low Barrier Shelter Beds (\$132k)
 - Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) Manager (\$58k)
- Timeline–
 - December 2025 FQMD Board Approval
 - Jan 2026 KPIs drafted with vendors; Mtgs with City re: contract creation
 - Feb 2026 City meets with FQMD Board Chair & Vice Chair to present Strategic Alternative Proposal; FQMD leadership – decline
 - March 2026 – City revises, presents *Revised* Strategic Alternative Proposal; multiple meetings with FQMD Leadership, ED to review, negotiate parameters.
 - April 2026 Committee & Board presentation, review & consideration.

City Proposed Strategic Alternative, \$308k:

- Office of Homeless Services Outreach Team (\$141k)
- Dedicated FQ Patrols (already exist, no new expense, only training)
- Shelter Beds + Shelter Exits Support (\$166k)

Oversight, KPI's & Safeguards:

- Key Performance Indices (KPIs)– Reported by Office of Homeless Services & NOPD to FQMD (attached)
- Contracts to be operated under Office of Health & Human Services

Fiscal Impact:

- Within original FQEDD 2026 Budget approval for “Unhoused Support”
- Aligned with FQ EDD sales tax intended purpose

Subject Matter Experts:

Dr Jennifer Avegno, Captain Sam Palumbo, Taylor Diles

Reference Materials: OHSS Proposal (attached)

Approve **X Provide Feedback** Receive & File

• **Key Performance Indices**

■ 1. Engagements –

Description: during their shift,

- How many times did the team stop to engage someone who was sleeping in the French Quarter? This is inclusive of repeat stops (e.g., stopping to speak to the someone who relocated elsewhere in the French Quarter).
- Teams will record this data daily, and OHSS will provide FQMD with a compiled weekly report.
- *Engagement Goal: 50% decrease* (from peak weekly average engagements by the end of December 2026).

■ 2. Engagement Outcomes –

Description: When team stopped to engage someone, what was the result?

- # who left area
- # transported to shelter
- # given citation.
- Teams will record this data daily, and OHSS will provide FQMD with a compiled weekly report.
- Outcome Goal: 27 transports to shelter by the end of December 2026.

■ 3. Shelter exits –

- # people have exited shelter and entered housing?
- OHSS and LBS leadership will track this data and report to FQMD monthly.
- Exit Goal: 27 shelter exits by the end of December 2026.



OFFICE OF HOMELESS SERVICES AND STRATEGIES

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

HELENA MORENO
MAYOR

TAYLOR DILES
DIRECTOR

4/1/2026

TO: Michelle Courseault, Executive Director, FQMD
FROM: Taylor Diles, Director, New Orleans Office of Homeless Services & Strategies (OHSS)
RE: French Quarter Closure Maintenance

Background

In the summer of 2025, OHSS piloted a process for enforcing no sleeping in the French Quarter. Collaboration between OHSS staff, NOPD, the supplemental NOPD French Quarter patrol, the French Market Corporation (FMC), the Downtown Development District (DDD), Audubon Nature Institute, and the Low Barrier Shelter (LBS) allowed for consistent engagement of those sleeping in the Quarter to offer available shelter beds with a potential for a rapid shelter exit. Despite initial success in maintaining the French Quarter with supportive shelter exits, available resources dwindled and the conditions in the Quarter have largely returned to status quo.

Need

The French Quarter Management District, along with NOPD leadership, and OHSS identified the following needs to fill gaps in the program model:

- Dedicated outreach staff with detailed knowledge of available resources for unhoused residents
- Regular, consistent options for transportation to shelter
- Available beds at LBS to offer to clients
- Dedicated security staff to maintain consistency in enforcement and provide coverage during special events

Proposal

Staffing

To pilot an improved closure maintenance process, FQMD will fund three dedicated, interdisciplinary teams of one outreach staff and one security staff to patrol the Quarter 16 hours a day, 7 days a week (22 hours of coverage on Saturdays). OHSS would be responsible for hiring appropriate outreach staff, training all team members, and providing project management support. Based on project results, the number of teams, necessary team members, and assigned shifts may be adjusted (as funding allows). Below is an example schedule the three teams could utilize, providing the most coverage on Saturdays.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4:00am - 12:00pm	Team 1	Team 1	Team 3	Team 3	Team 1	Team 1	Team 1
11:00am - 7:00pm	-	-	-	-	-	-	Team 2
6:00pm - 2:00am	Team 2	Team 2	Team 2	Team 2	Team 3	Team 3	Team 3





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Shelter Exits

Availability at LBS requires current residents to exit shelter. LBS will dedicate 5 beds for the French Quarter work and FQMD will fund 60 shelter exits for the year. This means each bed is expected to transition 12 people out of the shelter in the year at an average pace of one person per month. The average rental support will be a security deposit and up to three months at Fair Market Rent (\$1113 for a 1-bedroom unit; established by HUD). Additionally, FQMD will fund move-in support packages to promote a successful transition out of shelter.

- Average Rent: \$1,113
- Exit Support: up to 3 months
- Total Beds: 3
- Exits per Bed: 9
- Total Clients Served: 27
- Total Shelter Exit Cost (\$1113 x 4 x 27): \$120,204
- Move-In Package: \$1,731

Transportation

In 2025, the Mobile Crisis Intervention Unit (MCIU) was the dedicated transportation outside of normal business hours. This was both outside the scope of MCIU’s mission and led to long wait times for transport while they were responding to another call. Moving forward, the team will be assigned a City vehicle to provide transportation immediately after shelter is accepted.

Total Funding Request

Item	Cost	Units	Annual Cost
Outreach FTE	\$43,821	3	\$131,463
Shelter Exits	\$6,183	27	\$166,941
Supplies	\$5,000	1	\$5,000
Coordination	\$5,000	1	\$5,000
TOTAL			\$308,404

Key Performance Indicators

Indicator	Goal	Target Date	Reported
Engagements	50% decrease	December 2026	Weekly
Transports to Shelter	27 total	December 2026	Weekly
Shelter Exits	27 total	December 2026	Monthly

OHSS will record the following metrics:

1. Engagements – during their shift, how many times did the team stop to engage someone who was sleeping in the French Quarter? This is *inclusive* of repeat stops (e.g., stopping to speak to the someone who relocated elsewhere in the French Quarter). Teams will record this data daily, and OHSS will provide FQMD with a compiled weekly report.





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Engagement Goal: 50% decrease from peak weekly average engagements by the end of December 2026.

2. Engagement Outcomes – when the team stopped to engage someone, what was the result? Outcomes include: left area, transported to shelter, and citation. Teams will record this data daily, and OHSS will provide FQMD with a compiled weekly report.

Outcome Goal: 27 transports to shelter by the end of December 2026.

3. Shelter exits – how many people have exited shelter and entered housing? OHSS and LBS leadership will track this data and report to FQMD monthly.

Exit Goal: 27 shelter exits by the end of December 2026.



The French Quarter and the New Orleans Economy

1. **The French Quarter, a historical twenty blocks in downtown New Orleans, provides a historical and unique backdrop for encouraging and promoting people to visit the city, and to attend and enjoy world-famous events such as Mardi Gras, the French Quarter Festival, and the Jazz and Heritage Festival. Major conventions and business meetings, together with the special destinations such as the World War II Museum, and the Audubon Aquarium on our revitalized Riverfront, draw numerous academic and professional conferences, educational groups, sporting events, and families from around the world wanting to enjoy history and excitement of The Big Easy.**

The French Quarter's historical significance is documented; its support for visitors and residents enjoying downtown New Orleans and numerous events in the city is clear; and the FQ contributes economic support for downtown New Orleans and the City of New Orleans.

2. **Since 90% of the 19+ million visitors per year go to the French Quarter, every event every activity, concert or production is essential for the city to remain the #1 tourist destination. Some of our more significant events are:**
 - **Mardi Gras with the focus on traditions, culture, and diversity: in 2023 local spending of estimated \$246 million and tourism spending of \$142 million based on a Tulane study completed in January 2024. Mardi Gras season starts on January 12 and continues thru Fat Tuesday lasting around six weeks. Mardi Gras is a major economic driver as well as a magnet for out-of-town visitors.**
 - **Sporting Events such as Sugar Bowl and Super Bowl: Sugar Bowl, an annual event, in 2024 generating an estimated taxes of \$20 million for the state and local governments**
 - **The 2025 Super Bowl generated within one very eventful week over \$28 million of local taxes and supported employment increases in a study supported by Louisiana Economic Development—this event moves around to different cities and states every year.**
 - **The Jazz & Heritage Festival, according to New Orleans Inc, had a \$400 million impact on the overall New Orleans economy in 2024 and supporting jobs and additional local taxes. The Jazz & Heritage Festival is a recurring event during the last week in April and first week in May.**
 - **The French Quarter Festival attracts close to 1 million attendees, local and out-of-city and state over a four- day period in early April with an economic impact of around \$320 million**

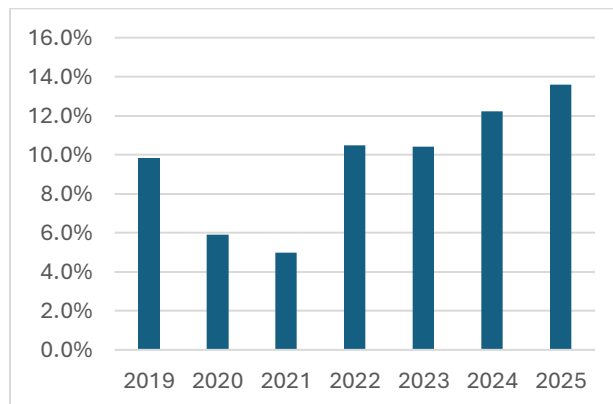
- **Essence Festival of Culture in 2024 supported over 2,600 jobs and contributed almost \$50 million in federal, state, and local taxes—typically occurring around July 4**
- ***The Exhibitor* listed New Orleans as the fifth most favored convention city by exhibit and event planners**
- **Our South Louisiana destination partners attract visitors at scheduled times as the port of embarkation for our growing cruise ships business**
- **Continuous year-round activities such include**
 - **World War II Museum is a year-round event encouraging visits to New Orleans and creating another reason for persons to visit the French Quarter while they are here. Our other nationally recognized museums, ie: Ogden and NOMA contribute to a thriving art visitor market**
 - **Audubon Aquarium, the revitalized Riverfront for All and the Zoo are year-around attractions with appeal to residents and tourists.**

3. Employment and Earning estimates suggest the magnitude of downtown New Orleans’ role in creating a robust New Orleans economy and downtown’s contribution to the tourist market.

Downtown employment is estimated to be 120,290 with 46,557 employees classified in tourist employment, downtown earnings are estimated to be \$8.031 billion; and, downtown’s contribution to New Orleans’ Gross Domestic Product being \$14.662 billion.

Downtown tourist employment represents 53.1% of New Orleans’ tourist employment; 54.3% of tourist earnings; and 54.4% of tourist contribution to New Orleans’ GDP. New Orleans public schools, and the Regional Transit Authority received an estimated \$586 million in sales taxes in 2024. The downtown zip codes (70112, 70116, and 70130 and the French Quarter as part these zip codes) generated almost 25% of total sales tax collections. The French Quarter accounted for 55% of the sales taxes generated in the downtown zip codes or almost 14% of New Orleans’ sales tax collections in 2025.

4. The French Quarter’s sales tax collections ranged from almost 10% of New Orleans sales tax in 2019 to approaching 14% of New Orleans sales taxes in 2025.



6. Summary Statements on French Quarter and New Orleans

- French Quarter is 0.3% of New Orleans land area
- French Quarter population as percent of New Orleans **population is just over 0.75% or less than 1%**
- French Quarter is in three downtown zip codes— 70112, 70116, and 70130
- Downtown Zip Codes-- population is about 7% of the New Orleans population
- New Orleans Sales tax collections in French Quarter is almost 55% of **downtown** sales tax collections
- French Quarter **sales tax collections alone represent around 14% of Orleans Parish Sales Tax Collections** for the entire Parish (not including hotel taxes)
- The FQ provides sales tax support for New Orleans. Sales taxes per person living in Orleans Parish amounts to \$1,542 per year, but sales taxes per person living in the French Quarter amounts to \$26,667. This does not mean that FQ residents pay that much more personally, but economic activity in the FQ leads to significant sales tax collections going to city government, public schools, and transportation support.
- The French Quarter accounted for \$79,880,000 in sales tax for 2025.
- Downtown zip codes (including FQ) accounted for 81% of the taxable City of New Orleans Hotel revenues