

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Meeting Notes

Wednesday, 8 July, 2026, 2:00 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 2:02 PM.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS				Approve previous meeting notes
First Name	Last Name	Present	Absent	
Glade	Bilby	X		Yes
Christian	Pendleton		X	-
David	Bilbe		X	-
Joey	DiFatta	X		Yes
Daniel	Hammer	X		Yes
Steve	Caputo		X	-
KC	Guidry	X		Yes

INTRODUCTION OF ATTENDEES:

GUESTS		
First	Last	Role
Michelle	Courseault	FQMD Executive Director
Shelby	Ursu	FQMD Coordinator
Siri	Bird	Resident

2. Public Comment – No written public comments were received.

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

Joey DiFatta made a motion to approve the previous meeting notes. KC Guidry seconded the motion, and it was approved.

4. Discussions

a. 2026 Committee Work Plan*: Check-In

See attached document. The Committee discussed ongoing efforts to support quality of life for French Quarter residents while enhancing the visitor experience, including reference to a recent *The Advocate* article. Executive Director Michelle Courseault encouraged use of the Fulcrum app to report neighborhood concerns, emphasizing the role of community-generated data in informing City response and resource allocation. She provided an update on the current Fulcrum assessment related to unclaimed public infrastructure items, noting the Department of Public Works' (DPW) commitment to addressing reported locations. The Committee reviewed 2027 Work Plan priorities, including improving communication and coordination with City and State officials, as well as with other neighborhood organizations, exploring periodic legislative updates or newsletters, identifying key advocacy priorities, and supporting Committee recruitment.

b. 2027 Budget Proposal(s)

i. FQ Street Lights Maintenance

The Committee discussed a proposed budget initiative to support ongoing maintenance of French Quarter streetlights following completion of the 2025 Streetlight Repairs Project. Discussion focused on developing a sustainable funding strategy for future repairs, replacement inventory, and long-term maintenance while maintaining the City's primary responsibility for the public lighting system. Members expressed the importance of establishing a cost-sharing or reimbursement framework to ensure the FQMD's resources supplement, rather than replace, the City's responsibilities. Staff reported that the City has invited the

FQMD to participate in an upcoming streetlight master planning process aimed at improving repair response times. Additional concepts discussed included pursuing future state funding opportunities, maintaining an inventory of replacement materials, supporting dedicated personnel for French Quarter streetlight maintenance, and improving coordination with planned infrastructure and roadway projects. The Committee agreed that a detailed cost estimate and reimbursement strategy should be developed for consideration as part of the proposed 2027 budget.

5. Updates

a. Mayor's Quality of Life Task Force*

Ms. Courseault provided an update on the interagency Quality of Life Task Force, which meets weekly and includes representatives from Downtown, the French Quarter, and multiple City agencies. The group is focused on addressing priority issues including homelessness, narcotics activity, illegal parking and towing, code enforcement, business compliance, and noise enforcement, with the goal of improving baseline City services through coordinated action. Staff also reported on a recent neighborhood walkthrough that identified numerous infrastructure and maintenance needs, including sidewalk conditions, reinforcing the need for continued interagency collaboration to address quality-of-life concerns.

b. Mayor's Infrastructure Council*

See attached document. The Committee discussed the benefits of the weekly Infrastructure Coordination Council (ICC) meetings, noting that regular collaboration has improved communication among participating organizations and enhanced planning for infrastructure and utility projects. Committee members emphasized the importance of coordinating future construction activities to minimize disruptions and improve project efficiency. Ms. Courseault reported that the next 90-day ICC update will include a new dashboard displaying current and planned infrastructure projects, providing a centralized resource for project information as part of the Mayor's initiative to strengthen coordination. The Committee acknowledged the progress made through these collaborative efforts and emphasized the importance of communicating positive outcomes and improvements that benefit French Quarter residents, businesses, and visitors.

c. French Quarter Task Force App Marketing

Mr. G. Bilby noted that French Quarter Task Force app marketing materials are available to disseminate to residents and businesses.

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

The Committee welcomed resident and guest Siri Bird and thanked them for attending the meeting. Discussion was held regarding ongoing noise concerns, with residents noting that primary concerns relate to amplified speakers from entertainment venues rather than street performers or buskers. The Committee discussed the impact of nighttime noise on residents and businesses, including concerns regarding amplified sound levels during late-night hours. Staff provided an update on current City initiatives through the Office of Nighttime Economy, including efforts to work with businesses on sound mitigation strategies and the use of decibel monitoring tools. The Committee noted that noise concerns continue to be addressed through the mayor's Quality of Life Task Force and other collaborative efforts. Additional discussion included the importance of supporting cultural activities and performers while balancing neighborhood quality-of-life concerns. Committee members also discussed available public budget resources and emphasized the importance of accessible and transparent communication regarding government spending and priorities.

Committee member Daniel Hammer provided the Committee an update on Museum Night, a collaborative event organized by the French Quarter Museum Association. The event featured extended hours at participating museums on July 2nd and was designed to provide a locally focused cultural experience while also engaging visitors arriving early for Essence Fest. The event reported strong attendance, including nearly 1,000 visitors at the Historic New Orleans Collection. Discussion highlighted the value of collaborative cultural programming in supporting local institutions, businesses, and community engagement within the French Quarter.

7. Adjournment

Mr. DiFatta made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Guidry seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 3:05 PM.

The next scheduled meeting date of the Committee is Wednesday, September 9th, 2026, at 3 PM.

2

Elected Officials, Comms Plan

Implement a structured outreach plan—including two engagement events—to guide how FQMD communicates with City and State leaders.

0

Recruitment

Identify priority candidates to strengthen the Government Affairs Committee. Prepare a short, vetted slate of potential nominees for the Mayor's Business-Appointee seat on the FQMD Board.

2

Governance Onboarding

Create a clear onboarding program and materials for (incoming) Board, Officer, and Committee members and provide regular updates to keep the full Board aligned on bylaws, statutory purpose, governance roles, and best-practice standards.

6

Advocate Committee Priorities

Advocate to elected officials on FQMD's top 2–3 priorities identified by SEC and Livability committees.

ICC 90-Day Report
Integrated Infrastructure Workplan
Delivered to Mayor Helena Moreno
c/o
Deputy CAO Steve Nelson, Michael Hecht
April 10, 2026

Section I: Preamble and Executive Summary

The Infrastructure Coordinating Council (“ICC”), and the associated Working Group (“ICCWG”), was established by Executive Order HM 26-04 to make recommendations to the Mayor for aligning and coordinating planning, operations, and project delivery among the DPW, SWBNO, the City’s capital projects and capital delivery functions, and relevant other public utilities and infrastructure partners to deliver coordinated, efficient, and high-quality infrastructure service year-round.

Top Recommendations:

- 1. Data Dashboard:** Deploy dashboard with real-time DPW and Sewerage & Water Board data sharing as initial proof of concept. Execute data-sharing agreements with DOTD, RTA, utilities, and telecoms. Explore integration of DOTD project data, but if not viable, link to DOTD's existing project viewer. Build non-public permitting dashboard layer for internal agency coordination, distinct from public view.
- 2. Pavement Cut Policy:** Enact a pavement cut policy in the City of New Orleans to prevent double digging: a pavement restoration policy restricting re-excavation of a block within a defined period (e.g., 3 years) absent emergency necessity
- 3. Engineering Subcommittee:** Create a permanent subcommittee of departmental engineers, formalized by an amendment to Executive Order HM 26-04, with representation from one senior engineer from each major agency (DPW, Sewerage & Water Board, Parkways, RTA, etc.) to meet regularly, review upcoming work, flag conflicts at the design stage, and authorize coordinated scopes. This subcommittee operationalizes the GIS tool once completed.
- 4. Permit Pre-Application:** Develop standardized pre-application checklist in coordination with One Stop, Parks and Parkways, and Safety & Permits; pilot with large capital projects.
- 5. Draft Funding Concepts:** Explore proposed draft funding concepts to secure creative, long-term sources of funding that protect general fund amounts.
- 6. Public Communication:** Develop standardized 'What's Going On Here?' tools for project sites: project name, responsible agency, estimated completion, contact information, and website/311 reference, all with unified City branding.
- 7. External Communications Protocol:** Create an external communications protocol, including community engagement best practices such as planning regular public touchpoints before and during a project and accounting for the needs of any impacted businesses.

ICC membership is comprised of 14 members, representing a strategic combination of infrastructure partners, City Hall operations, and key stakeholders. Membership of the ICC includes:

- Steve Nelson, Chair, Department of Public Works Director, Deputy CAO of Infrastructure
- Jonathan Wisbey, Chief Information Officer
- Randy Hayman, Executive Director, Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans
- Leo John Arnett, Director of Policy and Research, Office of the Mayor
- Mike Karam, Director, Department of Parks and Parkways
- Andy Kopplin, President and CEO, Greater New Orleans Foundation

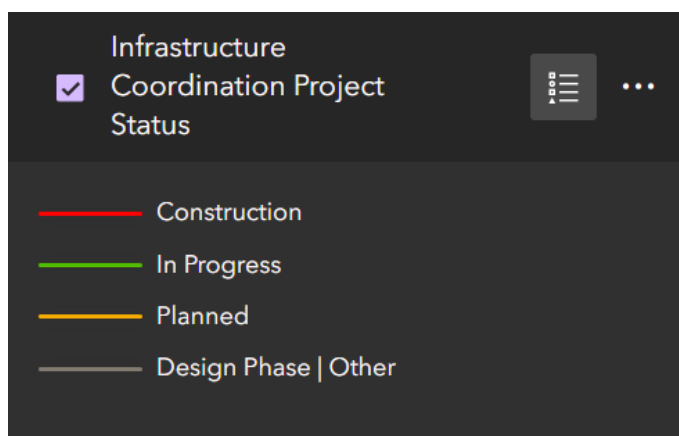
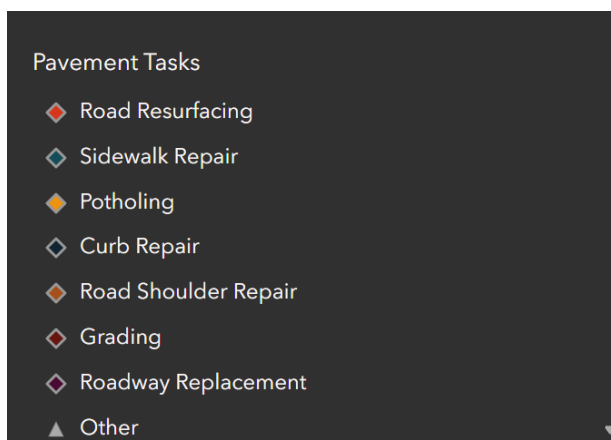
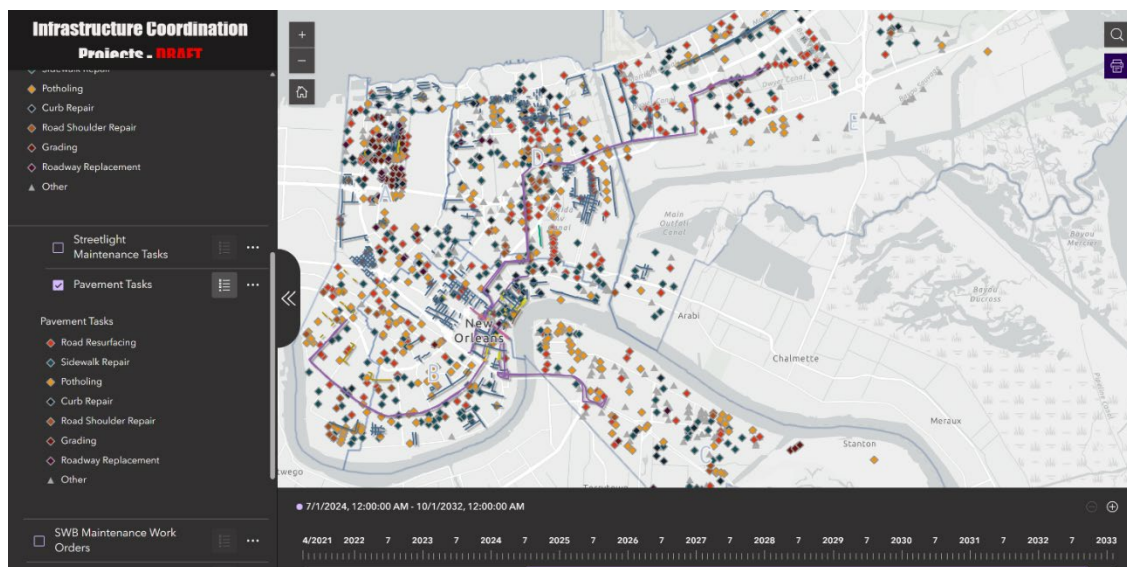
MEMORANDUM

ICC Integrated Infrastructure Workplan

- Jessica Williams, Customer Service Regional Manager, Entergy New Orleans
- David Aubrey, President, AT&T Louisiana
- Bo Murphy, Chief Operating Officer, Delta Utilities
- Michael Hecht, President & CEO, GNO, Inc.
- Erin Spears, Chief of Staff & Counsel, Council Utility Regulatory Office
- Scott Boyle, District Engineer Administrator, LA Department of Transportation & Development
- Paul Flower, Chair, Business Council of New Orleans & the River Region
- Sandra Lombana Linquist, President & CEO, New Orleans Chamber of Commerce

Section II: ICC Dashboard and GIS Development

\$4 Billion in projects and programs and over 200 individual projects/programs



Section III: Subcommittee Reports

For the purposes of this document, **City agencies, utilities, and partners** shall refer to entities with jurisdiction over infrastructure or capital projects. This list does not capture the complete list of stakeholders and partners that make up the Infrastructure Coordinating Council Working Group. The list of agencies is provided below:

MEMORANDUM

ICC Integrated Infrastructure Workplan

- City of New Orleans, Department of Public Works
- City of New Orleans, Capital Projects Administration
- City of New Orleans, Department of Property Management
- City of New Orleans, Department of Parks & Parkways
- City of New Orleans, Office of Community Development
- City of New Orleans, Office of Economic Development
- City of New Orleans, Office of Sustainability
- City of New Orleans, Department of Safety and Permits
- City of New Orleans, NORD
- City of New Orleans, Office of Nighttime Economy
- New Orleans Redevelopment Authority
- New Orleans Building Corporation
- New Orleans Aviation Board
- New Orleans Public Library
- Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (LA DOTD)
- AT&T
- Audubon Institute
- Cox Communications
- Delta Utilities
- Downtown Development District
- Entergy New Orleans
- French Market Corporation
- French Quarter Management District
- Lakefront Airport
- Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport
- New Orleans Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
- Regional Transit Authority
- Sewerage and Water Board New Orleans
- South Louisiana Flood Protection Authority – East
- South Louisiana Flood Protection Authority – West
- Verizon
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

SUBCOMMITTEE 1: GIS / PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

VISION

A unified, layered GIS dashboard that provides real-time visibility into every infrastructure project (capital and maintenance) across all City agencies, utilities, and partners. The dashboard serves dual purposes: an internal coordination tool for agencies and a public-facing transparency tool for residents, differentiated by data sensitivity. The subcommittee will determine and develop tools for each purpose, following the initial release of the dashboard.

PROBLEM

The City is managing approximately \$2.5 billion in upcoming capital investments, more than 150 discrete programs, and thousands of active maintenance work orders, with no single system to visualize where and when work is occurring. Key failures:

MEMORANDUM

ICC Integrated Infrastructure Workplan

- No shared geospatial platform: agencies track projects in siloed systems; many are spreadsheet-based, not GIS-based
- Data sensitivity barriers: utility and telecom companies hesitate to share infrastructure plans due to proprietary and security concerns, creating gaps in the map
- No differentiation between project phases: planning, design, and construction-stage projects are indistinguishable, causing both internal confusion and public misinformation
- Maintenance invisibility: thousands of 311 and utility work orders are not integrated alongside capital projects, preventing holistic sequencing
- Without visibility, multiple agencies excavate the same block within short periods, which wastes resources, damages recently restored pavement, and reduces public trust

SOLUTION

Build a layered, filterable GIS dashboard with distinct internal and public-facing views. Internal view: all project data, phases, agency contacts, schedule notes. Public view: project location, responsible agency, estimated timeline, without sensitive infrastructure plans. Key features:

- Time-slider functionality showing 3-month, 6-month, 12-month, and 18+ month project horizons
- Project status fields: planning, design, construction, with normalized categories across agencies
- Addressed by PermitStat launch, launch a non-public permitting dashboard layer, visible only to agencies, linking permitted work to project locations for internal coordination
- Standard data schema distributed to all agencies for consistent project submission
- Data-sharing agreements (CDA/CEA) executed with utilities, telecoms, and agencies including Regional Transit Authority (RTA) or Sewerage and Water Board (SWBNO) to allow location data sharing without exposing full infrastructure schematics
- GIS Subcommittee should compile agreed protocols for sourcing, validation, and update cadence protocols, as well as appropriate disclaimer language.

ACTION ITEMS

- Immediate: GIS/ITI to finalize standard data schema and distribute to all agencies for project data submission
- Immediate: Deploy internal dashboard with real-time DPW and Sewerage & Water Board data sharing as initial proof of concept. SWBNO's participation in any data exchange beyond the proof of concept is contingent on CEA execution; interim arrangements thus require explicit approval
- Short-Term: Execute data-sharing agreements with DOTD, RTA, utilities, and telecoms; explore integration of DOTD project data, but if not viable, link to DOTD's existing project viewer
- Short-Term: Build non-public permitting dashboard layer for internal agency coordination, distinct from public view
- Short-Term: Add project phase/status, agency contact, and schedule notes fields to dashboard for all projects
- Ongoing: All agencies must submit project data using the standard schema as a condition of dashboard participation; require GIS point-of-contact designation from each agency
- Ongoing: Expand maintenance data integration: connect 311 work orders and Sewerage & Water Board GIS maintenance data to dashboard

SUBCOMMITTEE 2: COORDINATION PROTOCOL

VISION

A formalized, citywide coordination system that eliminates avoidable double excavation, sequences capital projects with routine maintenance, and establishes clear protocols for rapid response to

MEMORANDUM

ICC Integrated Infrastructure Workplan

infrastructure conflicts. Coordination begins with project design, not permitting, and is backed by measurable KPIs. The vision for the Coordination Subcommittee is three-pronged:

1. Establish a formal communication system between all city departments and associated engineers with capital projects and maintenance activities
2. Formalize the two parallel needs for coordination, between capital improvement and maintenance activities
3. Establish a standing subcommittee comprised of project engineers from each participating entity of the Infrastructure Coordinating Council Working Group

PROBLEM

New Orleans needs a structured mechanism to prevent agencies from excavating the same block multiple times within short intervals. The city also must implement a mechanism that ensures work being completed by any entity, whether routine, capital, or emergency, if done in accordance with adopted city policies, including the Complete Streets Ordinance and Safety Action Plan. Key failures:

- No defined 'double-dig' standard: no enforceable time threshold exists to prevent one agency from cutting pavement recently restored by another
- Coordination is reactive and informal: relationships and ad hoc communication substitute for formal protocols; conflicts surface at permitting, not design
- No cross-agency engineer-level coordination: technical staff at each department operate independently, missing opportunities to align scopes, share costs, and sequence work efficiently
- Work order fragmentation: DPW, Sewerage & Water Board, and other agencies use different legacy work order platforms with limited interoperability, and 311 integration is inconsistent
- After-hours and emergency response gaps: no unified protocol for after-hours infrastructure incidents across agencies
- No measurable performance framework: coordination success is undefined and untrackable

SOLUTION

Establish a formal coordination protocol with clear triggers, thresholds, and accountability structures:

- Enact a pavement cut policy in the City of New Orleans to prevent double digging: a pavement restoration policy restricting re-excavation of a block within a defined period (e.g., 3 years) absent emergency necessity, which exceptions the Coordination Subcommittee will develop
- Create a 6th subcommittee of departmental engineers, formalized by an amendment to Executive Order HM 26-04: one senior engineer from each major agency (DPW, Sewerage & Water Board, Parkways, RTA, etc.) to meet regularly, review upcoming work, flag conflicts at the design stage, and authorize coordinated scopes, operationalizing the GIS tool once completed
- Assess Capital Improvement Plan processes, capital budget planning, and other formal mechanisms of capital project planning to determine if coordinating protocols can be implemented for increased, up-front collaboration
- Establish upstream coordination trigger: formal notification required when project enters design phase, not permitting phase, to enable coordination and notification, scope adjustment, and cost-sharing before designs are finalized
- Build a KPI framework to track number of double-digs prevented, coordination meetings held, design-phase conflicts resolved, and reduction in repeat block excavations over time
- Review and align work order systems: map DPW work order workflow and 311 integration gaps; pursue interoperability as legacy systems are upgraded
- Develop emergency rapid response protocol: define agency roles, escalation paths, and communication standards for after-hours and emergency infrastructure events

MEMORANDUM

ICC Integrated Infrastructure Workplan

- Establish a protocol to ensure that work being undertaken is carried out in accordance with all adopted city plans and regulations, including the Complete Streets Ordinance, the Safety Action Plan, and others

ACTION ITEMS

1. Define program on limitation for number of time street gets cut
2. Form subcommittee comprised of technical engineers, project managers, arborists, etc. to formalize the coordination (and GIS) committees – Subcommittee will be hosted by DPW
3. Establish a pavement cut policy, define the double-dig time threshold, and provide for exceptions for emergency work
4. Commit to reduction of improvement timelines across the board, to establish KPIs
5. Develop formal upstream coordination trigger process: agencies must flag projects entering design phase to ICC working group
6. Conduct deep review of DPW work order system and 311 integrations to identify interoperability gaps and improvement opportunities
7. Select 3–5 pilot projects across City Council districts, including both capital and routine maintenance, to test coordination protocols before citywide rollout
8. Engineer subcommittee meets regularly to review upcoming project pipeline and resolve conflicts at design stage; report outcomes to ICC working group monthly
9. Establish a protocol to ensure that work being undertaken is carried out in accordance with all adopted city plans and regulations, including the Complete Streets Ordinance, the Safety Action Plan, and others

SUBCOMMITTEE 3: PERMITTING

VISION

A streamlined, coordinated permitting process where the issuance of an excavation or construction permit is an active coordination trigger, ensuring all planned infrastructure work is visible in the GIS dashboard before ground is broken.

PROBLEM

The current permitting process functions in isolation from broader infrastructure coordination, creating systemic gaps:

- Permits are issued without reference to the GIS dashboard: an agency can receive a permit to excavate a block that another agency just paved, with no conflict check
- No pre-application coordination for multi-agency projects: larger capital projects proceed through permitting without interagency alignment meetings, resulting in conflicts discovered at or after construction
- Inconsistent checklist standards: agencies such as Parks and Parkways have developed internal checklists independently; no standardized pre-application checklist exists across One Stop
- Customer-driven and emergency work are insufficiently distinguished from planned capital projects in the permitting record, limiting coordination utility
- No permitting dashboard exists: permit progress, delays, and turnaround times are not tracked or visible to coordinating agencies or the public
- Permitting occurs too late: by the time a permit is filed, designs are finalized and conflicts are costly to resolve

SOLUTION

Transform permitting into a coordination gateway:

MEMORANDUM

ICC Integrated Infrastructure Workplan

- Master calendar concept for distribution, including both moratoriums and street projects
- Require GIS dashboard registration as a condition of permitting: no excavation or construction permit issued unless the project is entered into the ICC GIS dashboard with location, phase, and timeline data
- Build a non-public PermitStat dashboard: a biweekly internal dashboard that tracks permit status, delays, turnaround times, and flagging conflicts with other registered projects
- Standardize pre-application checklists across One Stop: develop a unified checklist that clarifies requirements before submission, reducing incomplete applications and delays
- Establish pre-application coordination meetings for large projects: multi-agency review at the pre-application stage for projects above a defined scope threshold
- Categorize permits explicitly: planned capital, routine maintenance, emergency/customer-driven; apply different coordination requirements by category
- Link PermitStat to the GIS dashboard: when a new permit application is filed, automatically cross-reference the dashboard to flag proximity conflicts with other active or upcoming projects

ACTION ITEMS

- Immediate: Establish policy: inclusion of project in GIS dashboard is a mandatory prerequisite for permit issuance: no dashboard entry, no permit
- Immediate: Stand up non-public PermitStat dashboard for internal use: track permit progress, turnaround time, and delay patterns biweekly
- Short-Term: Develop standardized pre-application checklist in coordination with One Stop, Parks and Parkways, and Safety & Permits; pilot with select large capital projects
- Short-Term: Define scope threshold for required pre-application multi-agency coordination meeting; draft protocol for scheduling and conducting these meetings
- Short-Term: Add Safety & Permits representatives as permanent members of ICC working group to ensure permitting is integrated into coordination process
- Ongoing: PermitStat biweekly review conducted by Permitting Subcommittee; findings reported to ICC working group; systemic delays escalated for operational or policy fix
- Ongoing: Cross-reference all new permit applications against GIS dashboard; flag and route conflicts to Coordination Subcommittee for resolution before permit issuance

SUBCOMMITTEE 4: FUNDING

VISION

Coordinate funding strategies across local, state, and federal sources, including grant alignment, cost-sharing frameworks, and timing of capital investments to maximize leverage and reduce funding gaps.

PROBLEM

To fix the funding problem the subcommittee needed to identify the root cause. While the JIRR program issues are the most pressing, the overall structure of how the city, federal and state govt fund major infrastructure work must be examined and improved. In other words, JIRR is a bleak example of a flawed system, but it was the focus of the subcommittee for example. Additional challenges are identified below.

- No centralized funding inventory: agencies manage their own funding streams without a shared view of what is funded, where, and on what timeline
- Risk of missed leverage opportunities: federal grants, FEMA recovery funds (~\$300M through 2028), and bond proceeds are managed separately; cross-agency coordination could unlock co-funding and cost-sharing

MEMORANDUM

ICC Integrated Infrastructure Workplan

- Long-term maintenance funding gaps: recurring costs lack identified funding sources, creating deferred maintenance risk
- Funding scope is unclear: the subcommittee has not yet determined whether its mandate covers funding identification, process standardization, or project-specific support—limiting early progress

SOLUTION

Build a structured funding intelligence function to support ICC coordination:

- Compile a comprehensive cross-agency infrastructure funding inventory: bonds, federal grants (including FEMA recovery), local revenue streams, and utility capital budgets, all tied to specific projects and mapped to the GIS dashboard
- Tag all GIS dashboard projects with funding status: funded/active, planned/unfunded, long-term need; enabling the time-slider to filter by funding status and preventing unfunded projects from distorting coordination priorities
- Identify leverage opportunities: where funded projects are geographically proximate, assess opportunities for co-funding, joint procurement, or scope bundling
- Establish a protocol for long-term maintenance funding: for assets without identified recurring funding, the subcommittee will explore public-private partnerships, sponsorship models, and dedicated revenue streams
- Align bond project lists with ICC dashboard: recent bond issuances and their associated project lists serve as the baseline input for the coordination system

ACTION ITEMS

- Immediate: Begin compiling cross-agency infrastructure funding inventory using recent bond issuances as baseline; include FEMA recovery funds (~\$300M through 2028) and local revenue streams
- Short-Term: Integrate funding status tags into GIS dashboard schema: funded/active, planned/unfunded, long-term need—applied to all registered projects
- Short-Term: Identify 3–5 geographically proximate funded projects across agencies where co-funding, joint procurement, or scope bundling is feasible; present findings to ICC working group
- Ongoing: Maintain and update funding inventory quarterly; flag projects approaching construction without confirmed funding for escalation to agency leadership
- Ongoing: Report funding landscape to ICC working group at each meeting; ensure GIS dashboard funding status tags remain current

Case Study: JIRR

The Joint Infrastructure Recovery Request (JIRR) program in New Orleans is primarily funded through federal disaster aid, specifically billions of dollars allocated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) after Hurricane Katrina. The program pools funding between the City of New Orleans and the Sewerage & Water Board to rebuild streets, drainage systems, and underground utilities across hundreds of miles of infrastructure. Estimates place the total program value at roughly \$1.7 billion to \$2 billion in FEMA funding, making it one of the largest public works efforts in the city's history.

Unlike typical grant structures, much of the JIRR funding operates on a reimbursement or advance-payment model. Traditionally, FEMA reimburses local governments only after work is completed, but the Cantrell administration negotiated special arrangements allowing it to receive cash advances to keep construction moving. This worked for the first several years of the program until the Trump administration started raising questions about how FEMA monies were distributed writ large. These questions trickled down to The Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) which

MEMORANDUM

ICC Integrated Infrastructure Workplan

tightened their rules on the cash advances. The Cantrell administration was then faced with a choice: front large amounts of general fund money and borrowing to pay contractors in the interim to keep these major streets projects going or simply stop work and leave gaping holes and projects undone. Mayor Cantrell chose to keep working using city general fund money. One lesson learned from this case study is the importance of communication with the Council: With this decision, the administration should have informed the City Council so overall budgeting could be adjusted and similarly addressed. The decision not to inform the Council created a fragile cash-flow system where the timing of federal payments became just as important as the total funding amount.

JIRR thus began to stall for several financial reasons, most notably delays and uncertainty in receiving FEMA funds. At key points, expected federal advances—such as a \$120 million payment—were delayed or held up, contributing to major city budget shortfalls and even raising concerns about meeting payroll. Additionally, looming federal deadlines for spending the funds created risk: if extensions were not granted, tens of millions of dollars in ongoing work could become ineligible for reimbursement, forcing the city to absorb the costs.

Combined with bureaucratic complexity and shifting federal policies, these problems have slowed progress and left much of the city's infrastructure recovery incomplete years after the program began. How do we prevent this from happening again? To start with, any time the City of New Orleans asks for a federal grant or receives federal funding; the CAO and Deputy Mayor Steve Nelson must be informed, and this information needs to be cataloged. Again, this is a coordination issue, but it seems evident that there was not a central database or repository of federal grant programs, their size and how they were progressing.

Proposed Funding Concepts (Draft)

The subcommittee was also charged with identifying new funding ideas with no limitation on scope or creativity. Here are some of the results:

1. Budget Stabilization Fund

The City should create a Budget Stabilization Fund from the Wisner Trust proceeds to offset revenue shortfalls, with strict rules requiring a 2/3 vote of the council to use up to 1/3 of the balance at a time. The city must work with the state on converting parcels into usable land that can be taxed. The state and its political subdivisions control the Charity Hospital complex, the Convention Center, Port of New Orleans, the Superdome complex, DOTD roadways, and institutions of higher education. The state does not pay the city in taxes. However- if even a small portion of these properties are converted to private use (commercial buildings, hotel, restaurants) then they are paying permitting, construction and property taxes to the city. This could generate millions in new unencumbered revenue.

2. Braid OPSB money with DPW

Generally healthy neighborhoods have great schools serving as community anchors. Road and transit systems are not especially designed to make students', parents', and teachers' lives easier. In short, the city road plan has never caught up to the post Katrina schools plan. Half the battle has been fought, as many of the schools are modern buildings with good parking---now it's just a matter of ensuring that roads and traffic support these assets instead of detracting from them. This is especially true in some of the most underserved neighborhoods in the city. Recommendation: through legislative action slice a small portion of money dedicated to OPSB to fix infrastructure in a 6-block radius around the schools.

3. Revolving Capital Fund

Whether sourced from private source, bond funding, or the State Infrastructure Bank (if enacted by the

Louisiana Legislature), establish a fund that provides capital for creative uses of funding for project finance. This revolving fund would be used to reimburse capital projects, alleviating the risk of using the city's General Fund to reimburse projects. This fund would be availed to the City, as well as partners such as SWBNO and RTA.

4. DPW at Mardi Gras

DPW spends essentially all its manpower during carnival on transporting, placing, and picking up barricades. That structurally puts them behind schedule for the year on public works projects. Recommendation is to form a small parade unit to address preparation and clean up but start outsourcing construction of city-controlled parade stands with an emphasis on seating that can be deployed and taken down quickly. We believe there could be significant cost savings by modernizing DPW's approach to Mardi Gras. Transitioning barricade placement to Department of Parks and Parkways will more closely align with core missions and keep Department of Public Works on task.

5. Statutory Dedications Review

Statutory dedications in Louisiana are laws passed by the Legislature that lock in specific revenue sources for designated, long-term purposes, essentially acting as "fenced-off" funds outside the general budget process. There are over 300 such dedications (e.g., film grants, pet population control) which lock away roughly 3 to 4 billion annually statewide. There are dozens of these projects in Orleans Parish. The city should review where and how this money is being spent and ensure that funding tranches fit with the Administration's goals and priorities.

6. Leveraging Alternative Funding for Improvements and Transit

Analyze funding mechanisms, or the opportunity to provide one-time funding, through economic development districts that can perform infrastructure improvements. The City should overlay existing economic development districts, created by statutory authority, with geographic locations ripe for investment, and use the funding mechanism as engines for improvement including transit infrastructure and projects. This path also opens the opportunity to explore more creative financing tools, like Design-Build-Finance-Operate-Maintain (DBFOM) agreements.

7. Recurring Federal Funding Source for Water and Drainage Infrastructure

Like the power that GOMESA funding has to enable coastal investments, assess the possibility of a recurring funding source that could be applied to infrastructure systems on a national level, including the City of New Orleans as a recipient of funding. Existing grant programs like the PROTECT grants provide flexible funds which regions can use to improve built infrastructure and include projects that reduce flooding. Preserving PROTECT grant funding, or exploring the creation of a new funding source, could enable the City and other municipalities that face similar challenges, to access needed capital to invest in needed upgrades and improvements such as addressing aging water systems.

SUBCOMMITTEE 5: COMMUNICATIONS

VISION

A clear, unified communications system (i.e. both internal and public-facing) that tells residents, visitors, and agencies what infrastructure work is occurring, who is responsible, when it will end, and how coordination reduces disruption. Strong two-way communication is established between agencies and the public, creating accessible channels for residents and businesses to ask questions, report concerns, and provide real-time feedback that can inform project delivery. Public trust is built through transparency, consistency, and accessible information at every touchpoint.

PROBLEM

Current infrastructure communication is fragmented, inconsistent, and reactive:

- No standard on-site signage: residents encountering construction have no reliable way to identify what work is happening, which agency is responsible, or how long disruption will last
- Public-facing digital tools are limited: no comprehensive, accessible dashboard exists for residents to view infrastructure activity in their neighborhood
- Internal communication is informal: coordination between agencies relies on personal relationships and ad hoc channels, not standardized protocols; this breaks down during large events, after-hours incidents, and multi-agency conflicts
- There is no standardized expectation for community engagement and method for communication outside of agency-initiated forums
- Visitor and event communication is not integrated: large events (Jazz Fest, French Quarter Fest, Super Bowl) require unique infrastructure coordination and communications, but no standing framework exists
- Digital tools lack security oversight: proposals such as QR codes on project sites require security review before deployment to prevent misuse
- No shared branding or messaging standards across agencies for construction communication

SOLUTION

Build a layered communications system spanning field, digital, and interagency channels:

- Develop standardized 'What's Going On Here?' messaging for appropriate project sites: project name, responsible agency, estimated completion, contact information, and website/311 reference, all with unified City branding
- Develop a public-facing version of the GIS dashboard: high-level project areas and timelines, without sensitive infrastructure data, giving residents visibility into citywide activity
- Create an external communications protocol, including community engagement best practices such as planning regular public touchpoints before and during a project and accounting for the needs of any impacted businesses
- Create an internal communications framework: standardized protocols for interagency notification, escalation, and conflict resolution that do not rely on personal relationships
- Establish an event coordination communications protocol: a standing framework for major events modeled on Super Bowl coordination: designating a communications lead or protocol, agency contacts, and real-time issue resolution channels
- Differentiate resident vs. visitor communications: residents need quality-of-life detail (timelines, contacts, disruption scope); visitors and event organizers need access and disruption summaries

ACTION ITEMS

- Immediate: Draft and circulate 'What's Going On Here?' tools for review; define minimum signage standards applicable to all agency construction sites citywide
- Immediate: Research construction signage best practices from peer cities and present findings to Communications Subcommittee
- Short-Term: Develop public-facing version of GIS dashboard: high-level project areas, responsible agencies, timelines, vetted to exclude sensitive infrastructure data
- Short-Term: Draft external communications framework: standard expectations for community engagement before, during, and after a project
- Short-Term: Draft internal communications framework: standardized interagency notification protocols, escalation paths, and after-hours contact chains

MEMORANDUM

ICC Integrated Infrastructure Workplan

- Short-Term: Develop event coordination communications protocol: designate communications lead, agency contact list, and real-time issue resolution process for major recurring events
- Ongoing: Communications Subcommittee maintains and updates public dashboard content; monitors signage compliance citywide; issues quarterly public report on coordination outcomes aligned with public ICC Council meetings, along with other committees, develops systems for accountability to comply with ICC communications and other expectations

Section IV: Pavement Cut Policy Overview

Goal: Prevent “double digging” in the City of New Orleans and incentivize greater coordination across infrastructure partners for capital projects and maintenance.

Problem: Disjointed capital project scheduling and reactive maintenance causes multiple agencies to cut and re-pave the same street segment prior to the end of the pavement’s useful life, or in some cases, within weeks or months of installation. This condition disrupts everyday access and transit for residents, businesses, and visitors and decreases the life expectancy of the paving by adding points of failure.

Proposal: Pavement cut policy mirroring those in place by other municipalities, based on a tiered moratorium structure. Other municipalities across the country have adopted similar policies to protect capital and O&M investments by placing a moratorium and/or more stringent restoration requirements on cuts made to paving within a tiered time frame. For example, any cuts to paving less than 3-5 years old would not be allowable or would require extensive replacement.

Implementation / Proposed Next Steps:

- April 2026: Infrastructure Coordinating Council, established by Executive Order HM 26-04, will review the initial framework, and direct the Infrastructure Coordinating Council Working Group to continue development of the policy
- April – June 2026: Infrastructure Coordinating Council Working Group to develop the full policy, informed by department and agency engineers, to create a developed proposal
- July 2026: Pavement Cut Policy will be socialized with impacted stakeholders, including all members of the Working Group, developers, and community groups
- August 2026: Policy could be introduced in the New Orleans City Council

Considerations:

1. How are emergency situations captured / permitted as an exemption (e.g. water main break)
2. How will this policy impact utilities: If costs are front loaded to align with project timelines, could rates be increased? If projects are delayed, will this cause exacerbation of problems?
3. How does this policy impact vertical projects lead by developers?

Section V: ICC Next Steps

- Define desired outcomes for ICC quarterly meetings
- Continue working group meetings
- Develop project tracking tool
- Develop and implement pavement management policy
- Advance working group initiatives
- Pilot projects in each Council District

ICC 90-Day Report
Integrated Infrastructure Workplan
Delivered to Mayor Helena Moreno
c/o
Deputy CAO Steve Nelson, Michael Hecht
April 10, 2026

Section I: Preamble and Executive Summary

The Infrastructure Coordinating Council (“ICC”), and the associated Working Group (“ICCWG”), was established by Executive Order HM 26-04 to make recommendations to the Mayor for aligning and coordinating planning, operations, and project delivery among the DPW, SWBNO, the City’s capital projects and capital delivery functions, and relevant other public utilities and infrastructure partners to deliver coordinated, efficient, and high-quality infrastructure service year-round.

Top Recommendations:

- 1. Data Dashboard:** Deploy dashboard with real-time DPW and Sewerage & Water Board data sharing as initial proof of concept. Execute data-sharing agreements with DOTD, RTA, utilities, and telecoms. Explore integration of DOTD project data, but if not viable, link to DOTD's existing project viewer. Build non-public permitting dashboard layer for internal agency coordination, distinct from public view.
- 2. Pavement Cut Policy:** Enact a pavement cut policy in the City of New Orleans to prevent double digging: a pavement restoration policy restricting re-excavation of a block within a defined period (e.g., 3 years) absent emergency necessity
- 3. Engineering Subcommittee:** Create a permanent subcommittee of departmental engineers, formalized by an amendment to Executive Order HM 26-04, with representation from one senior engineer from each major agency (DPW, Sewerage & Water Board, Parkways, RTA, etc.) to meet regularly, review upcoming work, flag conflicts at the design stage, and authorize coordinated scopes. This subcommittee operationalizes the GIS tool once completed.
- 4. Permit Pre-Application:** Develop standardized pre-application checklist in coordination with One Stop, Parks and Parkways, and Safety & Permits; pilot with large capital projects.
- 5. Draft Funding Concepts:** Explore proposed draft funding concepts to secure creative, long-term sources of funding that protect general fund amounts.
- 6. Public Communication:** Develop standardized 'What's Going On Here?' tools for project sites: project name, responsible agency, estimated completion, contact information, and website/311 reference, all with unified City branding.
- 7. External Communications Protocol:** Create an external communications protocol, including community engagement best practices such as planning regular public touchpoints before and during a project and accounting for the needs of any impacted businesses.

ICC membership is comprised of 14 members, representing a strategic combination of infrastructure partners, City Hall operations, and key stakeholders. Membership of the ICC includes:

- Steve Nelson, Chair, Department of Public Works Director, Deputy CAO of Infrastructure
- Jonathan Wisbey, Chief Information Officer
- Randy Hayman, Executive Director, Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans
- Leo John Arnett, Director of Policy and Research, Office of the Mayor
- Mike Karam, Director, Department of Parks and Parkways
- Andy Kopplin, President and CEO, Greater New Orleans Foundation

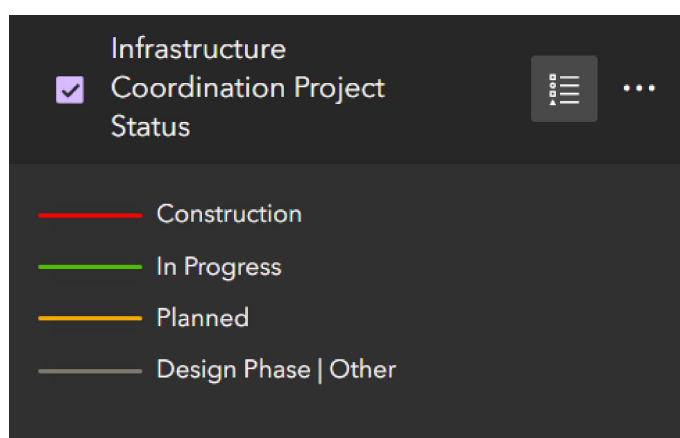
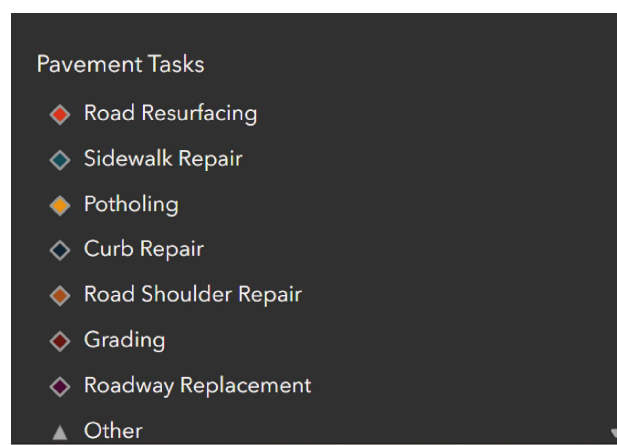
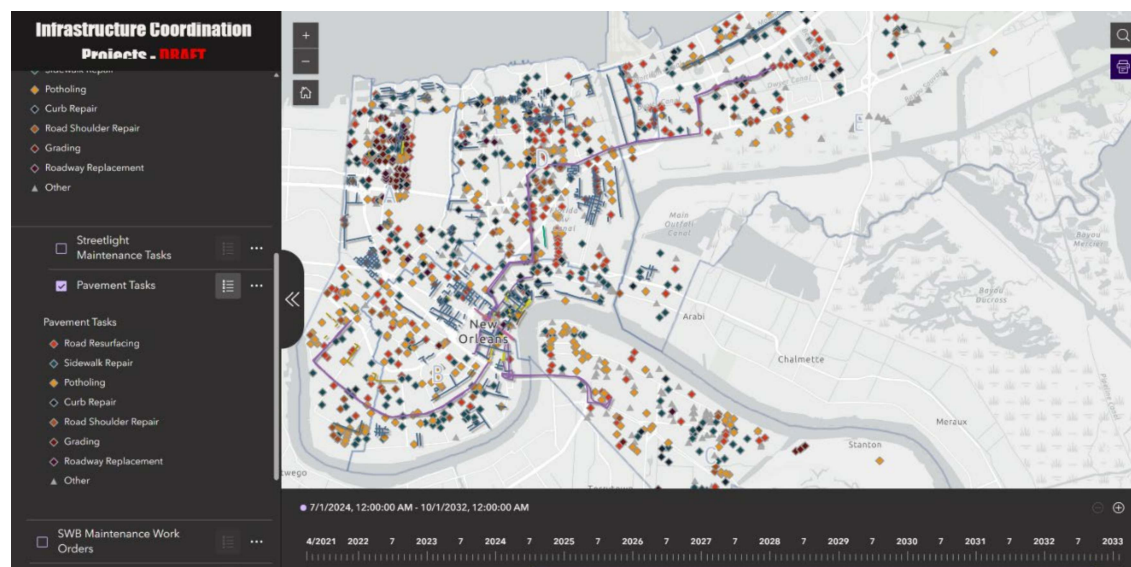
MEMORANDUM

ICC Integrated Infrastructure Workplan

- Jessica Williams, Customer Service Regional Manager, Entergy New Orleans
- David Aubrey, President, AT&T Louisiana
- Bo Murphy, Chief Operating Officer, Delta Utilities
- Michael Hecht, President & CEO, GNO, Inc.
- Erin Spears, Chief of Staff & Counsel, Council Utility Regulatory Office
- Scott Boyle, District Engineer Administrator, LA Department of Transportation & Development
- Paul Flower, Chair, Business Council of New Orleans & the River Region
- Sandra Lombana Linquist, President & CEO, New Orleans Chamber of Commerce

Section II: ICC Dashboard and GIS Development

\$4 Billion in projects and programs and over 200 individual projects/programs



Section III: Subcommittee Reports

For the purposes of this document, **City agencies, utilities, and partners** shall refer to entities with jurisdiction over infrastructure or capital projects. This list does not capture the complete list of stakeholders and partners that make up the Infrastructure Coordinating Council Working Group. The list of agencies is provided below:

The French Quarter in New Orleans is a global and national destination. It's been ranked in the Top 10 of places to visit worldwide. New Orleans ranks among the Top Three attractions of all U.S. cities tourists want to visit. Without dispute, it is the No. 1 place to visit in Louisiana, and the biggest state economic driver. Of the more than 19 million visitors who come to New Orleans every year, officials estimate that 90% of them spend time in the French Quarter.

All of our scores of city neighborhoods are important in different ways. Some of them are economic drivers and places that tourists want to visit while they're here. But, by far, the French Quarter is the neighborhood that draws the most attention, the most visitors and the most money. It stands to reason that the Quarter would get a lot of attention.

Visitors expect and see some things that make them put us on their bucket lists, to help them choose to visit here over cities in California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, etc. Each has nice places to visit, but there's only one New Orleans and only one French Quarter.

Of course, that special neighborhood deserves special attention. Those who live there deserve attention. Those who operate businesses there deserve attention.

And those who visit there deserve attention.

Some things caused some Essence Fest consternation — and it wasn't the fault of Essence.

Whether you live in New Orleans or nearby, you're well aware that there have been some issues with Decatur Street and nearby streets. What was supposed to be a five-month Sewerage & Water Board of New Orleans project to repair 115-year-old water transmission lines, which started in September 2025, was expected to finish in late February. Ten months later, it's still not done.

Locals have been frustrated by delays and a French Quarter runaround caused by barricades, barriers and detours, making it harder to navigate familiar routes and streets. Imagine what that was like for Essence Festival visitors who decided to leave the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center or the Caesars Superdome, where festival events were held, and explore the city's most famous neighborhood. Even tourists who have developed favorite restaurants and watering holes were frustrated and inconvenienced.

Now, imagine those who knew hotel accommodations during Essence Festival are at a premium well before the annual event so they lock down rooms for multiple nights at hotels where they can enjoy what the French Quarter has to offer, including a short walk to the major daytime Essence activities. That includes The Royal Sonesta on Bourbon Street.

The hotel had an emergency evacuation on the Fourth of July. New Orleans Police Department cleared the hotel at Conti Street as Entergy and the New Orleans Fire Department rushed to determine what caused an underground explosion. Essies staying at the hotel had to interrupt their festival plans to move out, mostly to places that weren't expecting them.

At a post-festival news conference Monday, Essence thanked the hotel and New Orleans first responders for quickly taking care of their festival attendees.

Fortunately, so many more Essies from out of town were staying elsewhere.

We are used to inconvenient construction projects that take too long to fix, boil water advisories, street lights that don't operate properly when it rains and regular flooding without serious storms. It's not as though we like things like this, but perhaps we've become numb to these things that are also a part of our culture.

But think about our visitors from places where the streets are fixed in days or weeks, where they don't know what a boil water advisory is, where street lights are updated with the latest technologies regularly and where flooding is something they see on television.

Certainly, we want a better city, and that takes work, sometimes long periods of work.

But as we continue to supply the state of Louisiana with so much economic revenue, let's keep in mind that New Orleans investments aren't only for New Orleanians; all of Louisiana benefits.