

Committee for a Better New Orleans

Introduction to Blueprint

Mission Statement

The following Mission Statement was adopted by the Board of Directors on March 28, 2000:

The Committee for a Better New Orleans is a diverse group whose mission is to identify the critical issues and opportunities facing the City and to create a Blueprint for the future based on mutual trust and consensus. Our vision is for New Orleans to achieve the brightest economic future for all its citizens and to be THE City in which to live, work and do business.

Principles of Involvement

The following Principles of Involvement were adopted by the Board of Directors on April 25, 2000:

1. The Committee will be accountable for acting in the best interest of the City (not of a particular individual, politician or business);
2. The Committee will promote and practice open and honest disclosure of concerns and intentions;
3. The Committee's decisions will have multi-generational input and consciousness;
4. The Committee will work toward creating an environment where people have a "fair" chance at a decent quality of life; and
5. The Committee's process will respect and acknowledge the diversity of the people in New Orleans.

**A BLUEPRINT FOR A BETTER NEW ORLEANS
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Origins and Founding of the Committee

The Committee for a Better New Orleans (CBNO) is a non-partisan assembly of approximately 140 civic, business and religious leaders, representing virtually every constituency in the City, with an emphasis on achieving a strong multi-racial, multi-generational mix. It was formed for the purpose of exploring critical issues facing New Orleans through honest and creative discussion, and developing a wide-ranging Blueprint of specific objectives to define a great future for our City.

Although it is committedly non-partisan and apolitical, the Committee for a Better New Orleans actually had its genesis in a political setting. The first seeds of what would sprout into CBNO were planted by City Councilman Jim Singleton, who in September 1999 called a meeting of a small group of City leaders. His purpose was to develop a broad-based platform, built on issues of true significance to the community, on which to run a campaign for mayor. Councilman Singleton emphasized the need for a serious look at these issues from an inclusive approach.

Shortly after this meeting, Councilman Singleton approached Joseph C. Canizaro, seeking his assistance in identifying and studying the major problems facing New Orleans. Mr. Canizaro felt the concept had strong merit, but immediately viewed it as something that needed to go beyond a campaign agenda. He urged the inclusion of the most broad and diverse group of people possible, recommended involving the presidents of the local universities, and strongly advised that the process be refocused as an apolitical, citywide initiative. Councilman Singleton agreed to release the process to go forward in this manner, and Mr. Canizaro became the driving force behind the newly invigorated effort.

One of Mr. Canizaro's first actions was to contact Dr. Norman Francis, President of Xavier University. Dr. Francis expressed strong enthusiasm for the nascent project, and with his assistance, in January of 2000, the University Presidents Advisory Council was formed as a key component of CBNO. In addition to bringing the incredible energy and resources of the colleges and universities of New Orleans to the table, this was also an important step in the depoliticizing of the process, which Dr. Francis emphasized from his very first conversations with Mr. Canizaro.

Forming the Committee

The beginning of the new year 2000 produced several other significant steps forward, generating the momentum that made CBNO a reality. Several highly regarded business and community leaders committed to backing the initiative. Joe Canizaro, Barbara Major and Dr. Francis were named as Chairs of the CBNO.

One key decision was to preserve the apolitical nature of the project by including as Committee members only those individuals who were not holding or running for elected office. This was based on broad consensus that the inclusiveness, credibility and openness of the project required that no one actively engaged in the political arena be allowed to serve on the Committee. However, an intense effort was made to include representatives from all aspects of the community, including all political interests and factions; the theory was that the best way to ensure that CBNO would be apolitical was to include the entire political spectrum. City government was represented by the inclusion and active participation of several top non-elected officials.

Achieving the goal of broad community representation also required active participation by a cross-section of business and community leaders. The participation of many business and community leaders in the CBNO process indicates a significant shift in attitudes. Corporate New Orleans and the community as a whole must become true partners in the city's future; the active involvement of many leaders in CBNO is a positive step in this direction.

By March 2000, the CBNO Board of Directors began to take shape. A Mission Statement was adopted, and the Committee structure and strategic planning process it would use began to crystallize. Board members agreed that the hard issues facing New Orleans would be looked at openly, honestly, thoroughly, and without preconceptions. Strong emphasis was placed on equal racial representation on the Committee, as well as multi-generational representation. Nominations for Committee members were provided by the Board members, by the university presidents, by political leaders, and by other civic and religious leaders to whom Board members reached out. Nominees were asked to provide some statement of why they would be interested in participating, and full disclosure of all political and other organizational affiliations was required. Individuals were chosen based on expertise on the key issues, their contribution to the goal of broad community representation, and their ability to get things done in their communities.

As a growing number of important players in each issue area were identified, the Committee grew from an initial target of about fifty members to nearly triple that number. This ensured tremendously broad community representation as well as preventing any individual or faction from dominating any of the issues. As Ms. Major put it in a lighthearted moment, "We have enough people in here who hate each other to make sure this process works." A complete list of CBNO Board and Committee members can be found in the Appendix.

Further representation and input were ensured by the establishment of the Faith Based Advisory Committee, representing a cross-section of the religious denominations and associations in the City.

Even the funding of the Committee affirmed the diversity and inclusiveness of its nature. Contributions have come from a bi-racial mix of individuals, businesses and nonprofit organizations, and the universities have provided substantial assistance and support via research and other services. A list of financial supporters can be found in the Appendix.

According to Mr. Canizaro, CBNO was -- and is -- intended to be "an accountable and inclusive process to get the best thinking, develop consensus, and work to implement a Blueprint which will bring New Orleans to world class recognition." The overarching goal was to move the City from a state of disrepair to one of active reform.

Identifying the Issues

As winter turned to spring, continued discussion led to the identification of six critical issues facing the City of New Orleans:

- City Management
- Economic Development
- Education
- Housing
- Public Safety
- Transportation

In addition, the issues of racism and pervasive poverty in the City were placed at the top of the agenda, with honest dialogue on racial issues expected at every step of the process.

To refine the list and flesh out the definitions of these issues, several important projects were carried out:

- In April 2000, Norton Berman of the Berman Group -- who was retained by CBNO as the project director -- conducted interviews with the Presidents and Chancellors of the eight New Orleans institutions of higher learning to obtain their views on the critical issues, the impact of education on these

issues and the roles of their institutions in both the work of the Committee and the future of the City. Interviewees were: Dr. Joseph Bouie, Jr., Chancellor, Southern University of New Orleans; Rev. Thomas Chambers, President, Our Lady of Holy Cross College; Dr. Scott S. Cowen, President, Tulane University; Dr. Norman C. Francis, President, Xavier University; Dr. J. Terrence Kelly, Chancellor, Delgado Community College; Fr. Bernard P. Knoth, S.J., President, Loyola University; Dr. Michael L. Lomax, President, Dillard University; and Dr. Gregory M. St.L. O'Brien, Chancellor, University of New Orleans.

These distinguished individuals expressed enthusiasm for a non-political, citizen-based effort like CBNO, and pledged their institutions' support for it. They also spoke frankly and openly about the City's problems and the responsibility of the university community to use its resources to address them. The "Report on Interviews With University Presidents" was completed in May 2000.

The presidents were unanimous in linking their institutions' missions to the interests of the city, region and state. In particular, there was intense focus on working with the public education system, for direct educational benefit of the population as well as the system's impact on economic development. Among the specifics cited were teacher training, training for administrators, accelerating the introduction of technology and technology training into the public schools, broad-based professional training, and working in partnership with business and government to influence policy decisions at the local, state and national levels.

The presidents' interest in strengthening New Orleans public schools included considerable emphasis on the need to improve the City's workforce as a vital avenue to economic development. There was strong recognition of the fact that at least three-quarters of high school graduates in New Orleans do not receive any further education; the colleges and universities are very interested in working with the school system to ensure that students get real-world job training and life skills training as part of the curriculum.

An additional aspect of their focus on the public schools was this system's impact on the universities' efforts to recruit faculty. Several presidents cited the poor public education in New Orleans as a frequent impediment to their ability to attract the best professors and researchers to their institutions.

Partnership with City government was another recurring theme in these discussions. While most presidents felt a strong connection with City leadership, they felt under-utilized on a day-to-day working basis. Research, training, systems evaluation, lobbying and more were suggested as opportunities for strengthening these links. The universities view themselves as a major resource and asset for the City; they want to be more involved, make a greater contribution, and be appreciated for what they offer.

One final point of importance arose from these discussions: the issue of regionalism. While CBNO's focus is largely on the City itself, there has always been recognition that New Orleans does not exist in a void. The university presidents urged that this issue be addressed by the Task Forces, and in fact, it evolved into an overarching issue that, like racism and poverty, became an integral item on each Task Force agenda.

- In May 2000 Dr. Silas Lee was commissioned by the CBNO Board to conduct a baseline poll on the issues. A representative sample of the residents of Orleans Parish was polled. Questions were asked about the City's problems, people's satisfaction with life in New Orleans, and their views of the future. People's perceptions about race, trends in the City, and City leadership -- including government, religious, civic, and business leadership -- were compiled. Specific questions relating to each of the critical issues were also asked. Some of the most interesting and important findings of the poll will be highlighted here; the poll itself and Dr. Lee's accompanying analysis were released to the public in July 2000.

The survey indicated that most New Orleanians like their City and are glad they live here. Most plan to stay, and to encourage friends and family to do the same. At the same time, there is widespread uncertainty about economic and environmental factors, as well as doubt about the quality of the opportunities their children will have in the future.

One startling finding was that, by a margin of one percentage point, more people thought that the condition of the streets was a greater problem than crime.

While people see progress in areas such as crime fighting, most think that public education, streets, housing, and city government are not improving. Moreover, while a surprisingly large number feel that their personal income is at least adequate, many people are uncertain about the City's economic future. The very high level of poverty, and lack of real economic opportunity, are major concerns for the City and its leadership.

It should also be noted that in each category, even when a majority of people saw the situation positively, substantial numbers still held the contrary, negative view; and that perceptions in the African-American community were almost universally gloomier than those in the white community. This suggests ongoing racial inequality, the need for encompassing dialogue on racial issues, and some recognition of the fact that in no single category can the City be said to have achieved widespread satisfaction among all its citizens.

Economic development was reviewed in depth, with much valuable information developed. The single most salient point was the link between education and economic development, which virtually every survey respondent saw as inextricable. On top of basic education and workplace skills, workforce development, job training and technology training were seen as essential. **Improving the quality of education in New Orleans was widely viewed as the most important avenue to opportunity and quality of life.** In addition, many people felt that while tourism currently serves as the economic base for the city, strong efforts needed to be made to diversify the economy and build upon other opportunities for growth.

City government is not held in high regard, and there are also some damaging misperceptions, especially relating to revenues. While the City must work to increase its funding, from all sources, citizens are not inclined to dig deeper into their own pockets until they believe that government is being run much more efficiently. Regardless of whether this is a question of reality or perception, it poses a significant challenge to present and future administrations.

Challenges indicate both problems and opportunities. While the Silas Lee study paints a picture of a City facing many problems and risks, it also identifies many opportunities for improvement and growth. It also identifies a base for moving forward: the surprisingly strong commitment of the citizens to their community.

- Also in May, the Berman Group issued a summary of 110 studies relating to the six critical issues, "Planning and Research Studies on Six Critical Issues 1985 - 2000". All works in these areas performed in and/or for the City between 1985 and 2000 that could be located were referenced. The survey grouped past studies by critical issue, and provided brief narrative and research summaries.

- Dr. Tim Ryan, Dean of the College of Business Administration, University of New Orleans, prepared preliminary definitions of each of the critical issues. These definitions were developed as starting points for the Task Forces assigned to address the issues (see next section). Given the scope and complexity of the issues, the definitions are brief and intended to serve as preliminary views and catalysts for further thought.

- A ten to fifteen page Position Paper was prepared on each issue. These explore and expand upon each topic in some depth. Their purpose was to give each Task Force a relatively thorough summary of the issue, as a touchstone and reference as the Task Forces launched their work.

The Task Forces

With the six critical issues -- City Management, Economic Development, Education, Housing, Public Safety, and Transportation -- identified and defined, the Committee for a Better New Orleans divided itself into six Task Forces, each assigned to one of the specific issues. Committee members were assigned to the individual Task Forces based on expertise, the interests of the communities they represented, and the desire to achieve community and racial balance in approaching each issue. A concerted effort was made to identify and involve all community groups actively working on the issues covered by each Task Force. In addition, at least one member of the University Presidents Advisory Council was assigned to each Task Force. Once the initial Task Force rosters were set, two co-chairs, representing each race, were selected for each Task Force. Many Task Forces added one or two new members as the process unfolded, to enhance expertise and diversity.

On the face of it, the charge of each Task Force was deceptively simple, involving the following steps:

- Perform a SWOT (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) analysis of the issue. This comprehensive overview of the issues provided the raw material from which each Task Force worked.

- Select a manageable number of specific aspects of the issue, and develop goal statements for addressing them. Given the many important facets of each issue, this task engendered some of the most impassioned debate of the entire process. There was no illusion among members that many important issues were left on the table for another day. However, the aspects that were selected embody the most critical and immediate elements of the many problems facing our City, and the resulting goal statements are the first steps on the path to solutions.

- Develop concrete objectives for each goal. Representing the details of solving the problems identified in the previous steps, this task involved free-thinking, free-wheeling discussion and a willingness to go far beyond the limits of past and present solutions. Every effort was made to ensure that the totality of the objectives for each goal truly addressed the concerns and needs of every segment of the community, and would have significant and permanent impact on the problems being addressed.

- Develop an implementation plan for each objective, including responsible party, time frame, financial and human resources needed, and possible legislative changes that might be required. As a strategic planning process, CBNO is different from most, in that with few exceptions the Committee and the Task Forces are not the implementers of the objectives. However, for realism and credibility, members felt that it was essential to include implementation in their reports. This very involved process took considerable time, represented a true reality check for the Task Forces, and frequently resulted in further refining of the goals and objectives.

Through this process, each Task Force developed an Action Plan for solving problems and moving the City forward on its issue, to be a key component of this final Blueprint document. The Action Plans are detailed, demanding, realistic, and thorough.

Since the end purpose of the entire process was to develop a comprehensive strategic plan that represented broad community consensus, at each step of the way Task Force members were asked to achieve their results by unanimous mutual agreement rather than by simple majority rule. While extremely challenging, this assignment provoked tremendous creativity, ingenuity and cutting edge thinking on the part of Task Force members.

In part because of the commitment to consensus, each Task Force put in approximately twice as much time as was initially planned. The simple monetary value of the hours donated by the Task Force members is extraordinary; the value of their deliberations, conversations and creative solutions is incalculable.

The Task Force process proved to be daunting, invigorating, frustrating, stimulating, time-consuming, exhaustive, and uplifting and even inspiring. The work of each Task Force, including the Action Plans they developed, is presented in the next major section of this Blueprint.

The Blueprint

This document whose introductory section you are almost finished reading is the result of the work of the Committee for a Better New Orleans and its six Task Forces. What is its purpose, and what makes it different from the innumerable studies, reports and plans that have preceded it?

As mentioned above, CBNO is not the party responsible for implementing most of the objectives. Many of the parties who were assigned these responsibilities were represented on the Task Forces; some were not. In each instance, it was the judgement of the Task Force members that the assigned parties were the most appropriate and capable choices to take responsibility for implementation of the objectives. Regardless of the assignment, CBNO felt that to prepare a lengthy list of goals and objectives without including implementation strategies was not a credible approach.

Taken together, the objectives represent a specific, concrete and realistic vision of a future for New Orleans. Though some may be challenging, even "out of the box", none of the objectives is unrealistic or undoable. These objectives represent a consensus of leaders from all aspects of life in the City, and are fully endorsed by the entire Committee for a Better New Orleans. As such, they represent a remarkable statement of intention from a remarkable group of people, each of whom speaks also for his or her own constituency. In this context, this Blueprint speaks the will of the people of New Orleans like no previous document has ever been able to do.

Much of the implementation of the Blueprint will require its embrace by City political leaders, and their active, practical commitment to follow through on its recommendations. Its release is timed to the start of the campaigns for the Mayoral and City Council elections in February 2002. It is being presented to all candidates for major City office, and they will be asked for a full commitment to its implementation. Those who are elected will be held accountable for their active leadership in its implementation.

Other objectives have been assigned to the private and nonprofit sectors, not infrequently as a cooperative effort. In each case, the specific entity that is called upon will have the objective presented to its leaders. To the fullest degree possible, firm commitments from those leaders will be obtained, and they will be expected to deliver on those commitments.

Although not specifically cited, many of the recommendations made in this Blueprint are congruent with findings and measures being implemented and/or contemplated by public entities in New Orleans. In such cases, the Committee for a Better New Orleans wishes to encourage and reinforce those efforts.

In those cases where public entities have identified different findings and priorities, the Committee asks that its findings be factored in for immediate consideration. Moreover, CBNO offers its work papers and resources, within reason, to any entity with a similar mission, public or private, to advance their findings and to promote coordination and linkage of efforts that further the recommendations of the Committee.

It is notable that the work of the Committee included only limited determination of efforts in progress of any public entity or organization. As such, the Committee wishes to acknowledge that its findings and recommendations are in no way intended to detract from or diminish the work of other organizations.

Some of the Task Forces have indicated a high level of willingness to remain operational and become involved in implementation. Their energy and enthusiasm will help drive the objectives to their enactment.

Implementation of any strategic plan requires a monitoring component, and this Blueprint is no exception. Many of the objectives include a specific monitoring component. For the rest, monitoring will be in part a function of CBNO. While the details of its ongoing operation have not yet been finalized, neither CBNO nor the individuals who comprise it are going away, and they will hold accountable the elected officials, the private sector and other entities as delineated in the Blueprint.

However, a far greater force than even the considerable clout and leadership of the Committee for a Better New Orleans will be the ultimate monitors and enforcers of this Blueprint. That force is the people of the City of New Orleans, those everyday citizens whose unsuspected love of their City was an early surprise of this process and whose commitment to the City's future mandates that no leader, in any sector, can afford to let them down. This document is of the people by a wide spectrum of their community leaders; it is for the people in that it truly describes their future.

The people of New Orleans are invited to take ownership of this Blueprint, to demand of CBNO and all community leaders that it be implemented, and to monitor vigilantly the progress of that implementation. Any citizen who has any comment on or question about the Blueprint or its implementation, at any time, is encouraged and even urged to contact the CBNO, its members and responsible parties. This is for all of us.

City Management and Finance Task Force Report

Dr. Silas Lee's study in July 2000 indicated that the public considers City government in New Orleans as a major contributor to the City's problems. Excluding the police and fire departments, no single aspect of the government is rated as excellent or good by even half of the citizens.

There is no question that New Orleans' City government has substantial room for improvement. At the same time, it faces tremendous obstacles, including a declining City population, an inadequate and highly restricted revenue base, a lack of citizen understanding of what government is and does, and very poor communications with the citizens that lead to widespread misperceptions about the realities of the situation.

There is a fundamental disconnect between City government and the people it serves. Citizens do not well understand the purpose and function of City government, or their own role in it. It is extremely important for government to improve its communications with the citizens, and to make government understandable to the proverbial man on the street.

A key aspect of this is transparency: to the highest appropriate level, keeping all functions and operations of government clear and visible to the citizenry. This includes factors such as budgets, organization and decision-making. One very specific need is for the City to upgrade its web site significantly, and to post as much information as possible.

Another component of the communications effort, as well as of improving government service delivery, is performance review. A qualified outside agency needs to be brought in to establish benchmarks for customer service: responsiveness to citizen inquiries, making doing business with the City a simple rather than byzantine process, and fundamentals like courtesy and cordiality. Once these have been established, regular performance review and reporting is essential. Having an independent third party provide these reports will enhance their credibility with the people as well as with the departments and employees whose performance is being reviewed. Ultimately, this data can be the foundation for justifying needed revenue increases in the future, as well as being the building blocks for an improved relationship between the government and people of New Orleans.

The root cause of a large share of the City's operating problems is revenues, and at the heart of this is a classic Catch 22: **the City needs more money in order to perform better, and the citizens won't provide it unless they see better performance.**

Given this circumstance, the City Management Task Force avoided efforts to directly increase revenues from the people of the City. Indeed, fees per capita in the City are high already compared to similar cities. Instead, several other revenue-generating approaches were discussed, including:

- State-imposed restrictions, both constitutional and legislative, on how the City can raise revenues. The best approach for dealing with this barrier is to form alliances with regional leaders and with other municipalities statewide who face the same difficulties.
- Equitable assessment of existing taxes, and fair and efficient collection of taxes and fees. This includes City review of under-assessed properties and attempts to bring these properties up to fair assessments, an effort that should be made in cooperation with other revenue-receiving entities.
- Thorough review of the fairness and effectiveness of various tax exemptions, including exemptions for nonprofits, businesses and homeowners.

- Pursuit of payments in lieu of ad valorem property taxes.

- Examination of ways to collect revenues from the many non-residents for whom the City provides services.

As might be expected, government efficiency was also a prime topic of conversation. It was noted that the number of City employees has been cut in half, from a high of 12,000 to approximately 6000. Most of these people are hard-working, dedicated and professional; most are seriously underpaid, especially by comparison to salaries for similar skill levels in the private sector. An alarming number of City employees earn wages at or below the federal poverty level.

Raising the pay levels and skill levels of City employees is a key part of the solution. Training must be increased, and flexibility in hiring and compensation is needed. In addition, an overall culture of customer service needs to be created.

A larger problem, however, is that City government contains many structural inefficiencies. New Orleans has more branches, agencies and boards than most cities of similar size, resulting in extensive duplication of services, inefficient use of resources, turf wars, and overall weaker government performance. Many of these anomalous boards and districts have been created by acts of the state legislature, and in many instances, the City provides services to these entities with little or no compensation in return.

To the greatest degree possible, these entities must be consolidated. In addition, the basic structure of City government needs a major overhaul, with focus on streamlining, functionality and performance. Communication between various segments of City government needs to be vastly improved. Privatization and other alternative service delivery methods should be examined, implemented where appropriate, and monitored closely for effectiveness. In a similar vein, services that have at present been outsourced should also be reviewed, and returned to City operations if appropriate. Either way, these services should be included in the performance monitoring process.

Reforming City government and improving its performance is no easy task, especially given the severe financial restraints. Political will must be combined with private sector financial support, public participation, regional cooperation, and significant change at the state level. The City Management and Finance Task Force action plan is a carefully crafted, results-oriented challenge to all parties to make City government work for all the people.

Key crossover issues:

- Reversing population decline (Economic Development, Housing)
- Improving the tax base through business development (Economic Development)
- One-stop shopping (Economic Development, Housing)
- Regional cooperation (Economic Development, Transportation)
- Creation of a City economic development fund (Economic Development)
- Poverty (Economic Development, Education, Housing, Public Safety)
- Lack of a property database (Housing)
- Public bid laws (Economic Development, Housing, Transportation)
- Tax incentives (Economic Development, Housing)
- Homestead exemption (Economic Development, Housing)
- Government structural inefficiency (Transportation)

Action Plan

Critical Issues and Goals

1.0 Accountability in government: communication, transparency and credibility.

The City of New Orleans should build credibility and responsiveness into its operation through openness with its citizenry and willingness to rate itself against its peer group of cities nationally, based on objective criteria and measures.

Build citizens' trust in City government by ensuring transparency in appropriate aspects of City operations, assuring effective communication with the public and accepting impartial monitoring of appropriate performance measures to judge the effectiveness of City government.

Objectives

1.1 Mayor to initiate and maintain an objective, third-party administered system for evaluating and reporting on the performance of City management, including but not limited to financial management, human resources, information technology, capital management, managing for results, and acquisition and disposition of assets.

1.1.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to December 2002

1.1.2 Financing: \$50,000 per year, to be financed by the private sector.
Feasibility: 8

1.1.3 Resources: Mayor and business community/foundations
Resources are available. Feasibility: 10

1.1.4 Legislation: None required

1.2 Mayor to instill a customer service culture throughout the City administration, the effectiveness of which will be measured against benchmarks for delivery of selected services, and the results of which will be reported to the citizens on a regular basis.

1.2.1 Time Frame: May 2002 - Ongoing

1.2.2 Financing: \$250,000 first year; \$100,000 per year thereafter
Feasibility: 5

1.2.3 Resources: Mayor's office does not have resources to implement this objective; will require outside service provider.
Feasibility: 10

1.2.4 Legislation: None required

1.3 Mayor to encourage transparency in all appropriate aspects of governance by ensuring effective and open communication with the citizens, using all new technologies, including the City's web site.

1.3.1 Time Frame: May 2002 - Ongoing

1.3.2 Financing: \$100,000 per year. Feasibility: 7

1.3.3 Resources: Chief Administrative Officer will implement. CAO does not have resources; will require outside service provider.
Feasibility: 7

1.3.4 Legislation: None required

2.0 Revenue and tax base issues; equitable tax administration.

The City should become creative in securing additional funding by forming alliances with Louisiana cities, parishes, school boards, and other entities in similar situations. It should also guarantee that assessments and collections of taxes are complete and accurate.

Provide an equitable, growing tax structure that is equitably administered and is capable of generating adequate revenue to fund necessary City services.

2.1 Mayor to foster effective working relationships with municipal, regional and state political leaders, based upon mutual trust and confidence, which will lead to granting authority to local governments to create adequate revenue bases.

- 2.1.1 Time Frame: May 2002 - Ongoing
- 2.1.2 Financing: None required
- 2.1.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 2.1.4 Legislation: None required

2.2 Mayor and City Council to review diligently the application by State authorities of criteria used for granting ad valorem tax exemptions and abatements, as each application is forwarded to the City for its approval.

- 2.2.1 Time Frame: May 2002 - Ongoing
- 2.2.2 Financing: None required
- 2.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 2.2.4 Legislation: None required

2.3 Mayor to work with other tax recipient bodies to use the tax review process, including the City Council acting as the Board of Review and the State Tax Commission, to ensure accurate tax assessments.

- 2.3.1 Time Frame: May 2002 - Ongoing
- 2.3.2 Financing: \$200,000 per year to be provided on a pro rata basis by tax recipient bodies. Feasibility: 5
- 2.3.3 Resources: Mayor and City Council, sitting as Board of Review, do not have resources to implement this objective; will require outside service provider. Feasibility: 5
- 2.3.4 Legislation: None required

2.4 Mayor and City Council to pursue opportunities to enhance City revenues through negotiation of payments in lieu of ad valorem property taxes, where applicable.

- 2.4.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to May 2006
- 2.4.2 Financing: \$100,000 per year. Feasibility: 6
- 2.4.3 Resources: Mayor, with Law and Finance Departments, do not have resources to implement this objective; will require outside resources. Feasibility: 6
- 2.4.4 Legislation: None required

3.0 Consolidation of management systems and evaluation of privatization activities.

The City should modernize its management structure and make its operation understandable, responsive and user-friendly for its citizens.

Create the most efficient government possible by consolidating management systems, where appropriate, and developing criteria for evaluation of the City's privatization and other alternative service delivery activities.

3.1 Mayor to conduct a comprehensive organizational audit, resulting in development of a City government structure with fewer departments, headed by senior executives, which consolidate related services and are functional in nature.

3.1.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to August 2002

3.1.2 Financing: No additional financing required

3.1.3 Resources: CAO will be responsible. No additional human resources required

3.1.4 Legislation: Will require City Council resolution. Feasibility: 10

3.2 Mayor to conduct a comprehensive review of needed present and future City services, including citizens' expectations, and determine which are best delivered by the City and which are best delivered by alternate means, including privatization, public-private partnerships and managed competition.

3.2.1 Time Frame: May 2002 - Ongoing

3.2.2 Financing: \$450,000. Feasibility: 8

3.2.3 Resources: Will require external consultants. Feasibility: 8

3.2.4 Legislation: None required

3.3 Mayor, in cooperation with City Council, to establish procedures to implement and aggressively monitor such alternative service delivery methods.

3.3.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to November 2002

3.3.2 Financing: \$100,000 per year. Feasibility: 10

3.3.3 Resources: CAO will implement. May require additional training. Will not require additional human resources. Feasibility: 10

3.3.4 Legislation: None required

4.0 Human resource management; civil service system and job efficiency.

The City's management staff and work force should be comparable to New Orleans' private sector in talent, experience, training, competence, and compensation. Compensation should be based on skill levels rather than job titles, with incentives for retention and advancement of technological and managerial skills.

Create an environment that allows City government to attract, train and retain a qualified work force.

4.1 Mayor and City Council to establish flexible compensation, adequate training and suitable working conditions so that the City can hire and retain the best senior professional staff for its unclassified service.

- 4.1.1 Time Frame: March 2002 to June 2002
- 4.1.2 Financing: \$1,100,000. Feasibility: 8
- 4.1.3 Resources: Mayor is responsible; will require external consultants to advise on the compensation plan. Feasibility: 10
- 4.1.4 Legislation: Will require action by City Council and approval by Civil Service Commission. Feasibility: 10

4.2 Civil Service Commission, in cooperation with the Mayor and City Council, to develop continuously new staffing categories for the classified service that are flexible, offer compensation comparable to the private sector for similar skills, provide incentives to encourage retention and are designed to attract well-trained, technologically-skilled employees.

- 4.2.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to May 2006 (phase-in)
- 4.2.2 Financing: \$31,000,000, according to the 1994 Mercer report, to be updated. Feasibility: 8
- 4.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 4.2.4 Legislation: Will require City Council resolution and budget ordinance Feasibility: 10

4.3 Mayor to institute a supervisory staff training program for all classified and unclassified managers, in concert with 4.1 and 4.2 above.

- 4.3.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to May 2004
- 4.3.2 Financing: \$250,000; may be reallocated from existing training budget. Feasibility: 9
- 4.3.3 Resources: Civil Service Commission will implement. No additional human resources required
- 4.3.4 Legislation: None required

5.0 Encouragement of new businesses and expansion of existing businesses.

The City should take a leadership role in using its resources and developing other resources for the retention, expansion and recruitment of businesses.

Encourage new business formation and expansion of existing businesses within the City by creating new, and supporting existing, venture capital resources, equity and debt financing resources.

5.1 City, in cooperation with financial institutions and other private sector organizations, to create professionally managed financing entities to provide venture capital, equity and debt financing for expansion of existing businesses located in the City.

- 5.1.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to December 2003
- 5.1.2 Financing: (1) \$350,000 for organizational expenses;
(2) \$20,000,000 to capitalize the financial entities. Private/public partnership anticipated; ownership percentages and sharing of expenses to be determined. Feasibility: (1) 10; (2) 8

- 5.1.3 Resources: Mayor will implement; will require private sector expertise.
Feasibility: 10
- 5.1.4 Legislation: May require amendment to Art 7, Sec 14 of Louisiana Constitution. Feasibility: 8

- 5.2 City to determine feasibility of creating a professionally managed development fund to implement infrastructure improvements that encourage private investment.
 - 5.2.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to December 2003
 - 5.2.2 Financing: \$500,000, to be shared by City, private sector and federal grants, if available. Feasibility: 10
 - 5.2.3 Resources: Mayor will implement. No additional human resources required
 - 5.2.4 Legislation: None required

Economic and Workforce Development Task Force Report

Of the six issues chosen by CBNO, economic development emerged as the most complicated. Economic development means many things to many people, creating an issue that is broad, complex and difficult to define. The Economic Development Task Force included members from business, labor, public agencies, the nonprofit sector, and education. The diversity of viewpoints and expertise at the table greatly assisted the Task Force in addressing the issues comprehensively and creatively, yet made consensus-building an enormous challenge.

Economic development is a huge weakness of the City of New Orleans. City government spends almost no money on economic development, and the bulk of what it does spend comes from a restricted federal grant. A surprising number of independent entities (i.e. MetroVision, the Chamber, the Technology Council, the Tourism and Marketing Commission, and the New Orleans and Louisiana Offices of Economic Development, among others) focus on various aspects of the issue; cooperation among them -- let alone an overarching vision or strategy -- is lacking. In fact, many are not even aware of each other's existence.

This fragmentation of resources and absence of holistic planning means duplication of effort in some areas and a dearth of effort in others. No coherent message on economic development goes out from the City, and no one is even sure if all aspects of the community are represented in what discussions do take place. All of these factors contribute to the difficulty of doing business here.

The result is a widespread national and local perception that there is a poor business climate in New Orleans, a perception that has an unfortunate amount of truth to it. This perception is only reinforced every time another company leaves the City or moves large portions of its operations elsewhere.

Several basic, deeply-rooted weaknesses were identified by the Task Force. Like every other aspect of the economic development question, these weaknesses are linked to each other in many ways. Chief among them are:

- Poverty. Even though unemployment figures for New Orleans are not bad, tens of thousands of residents without jobs do not show up in the statistics. An even greater number are working for less than livable wages, and many of the working poor are in jobs with no viable career path. Even in the strong service and tourism industries, an unfortunately high percentage of the available jobs pay at or near the minimum wage. Successful economic development for New Orleans means incorporating strategies that include the poor in growth, and provide these people with opportunities for careers, entrepreneurship and asset building (such as home ownership).

- Workforce. The present state of the New Orleans workforce is a major impediment to economic development. The public schools graduate poorly educated individuals who have received no job-related training or even basic job skills and retention training, let alone training on career and life issues that substantially impact on-the-job performance. In many instances, local businesses must enact costly in-house training for some of these basic skills. Hot industries like biomedical and technology cannot begin to find the skill levels they need in the City's workforce. Moreover, there are many decent jobs available for which no training exists at all, even in the vocational institutions. This entire situation has been exacerbated by the City's population loss over the past three decades, which has seen a disproportionate share of the educated, white collar workforce leave. Addressing this problem will require training in a variety of skills, provided by a variety of sources, with emphasis on higher paying jobs that represent the industries of the future. Job diversification is essential to the long-term economic health of the City. Attention must also be paid to training existing low-income workers for better jobs and careers, and to

providing career and life skills training for those seeking to enter the workforce. A variety of jobs initiatives will be needed, as well as jobs incentives, which must be grounded in the concept of providing livable, saleable jobs and benefits, and income levels comparable to those available in other cities.

- Permitting. Opening a business in New Orleans is a nightmare of politics, bureaucracy, conflicting regulations, multiple certifications, hidden pitfalls, and miles of red tape. To the highest degree possible, the City must institute one-stop shopping for operating licenses, construction and zoning permits and compliance. The Task Force has recommended establishing an Economic Development Corporation (EDC) that would coordinate all this and more, as well as serving as a new business incubator and a major source of entrepreneurial support. Though funded at least in part with public monies, the EDC would be managed by an independent board. The EDC would also be charged with gathering and organizing the scattered economic development resources and entities that presently exist, and ensuring that new economic development initiatives complimented and were coordinated with existing ones. Business retention efforts, such as a business-calling program, would also be centered here. Similarly, minority-business certification and women-owned business certification need to be consolidated into a single process and location, in coordination with the State, the City and the private sector.

- Public/private partnership. MBE and WBE certification are just single examples of the widespread need for the public and private sectors to work together to facilitate economic development. Formal partnership, strategies and initiatives must be developed to ensure that economic development reaches all segments of the community.

- Venture capital. More financial resources are needed for business start-ups and expansion, and the public and private sectors must again come together to establish venture capital funds.

- Regional competition. Government entities in the region must come together to plan and implement regional economic development strategies rather than fighting counterproductive turf wars. Urgency in this area is further heightened by the trend at the federal level towards funding regional initiatives.

- Lack of economic diversity. Twenty years ago, New Orleans experienced an economic crisis when the one industry that the city economy was centered around fell into a major slump. Twenty years later the city again finds far too many of its income eggs in one economic basket, the tourism industry. Not only is this industry highly vulnerable to downturns in the national economy, it is currently made even more fragile by the events of September 11, 2001. Moreover, many tourism jobs are low-paying and afford little opportunity for career advancement. True diversity in terms of variety of industries that thrive in the city is imperative for building a strong economic future for New Orleans.

While the problems are many and complex, the New Orleans area is not without its strengths. Geography gives the City a port and other transportation assets, as well as a prime location for international trade. The eight colleges and universities have tremendous potential as economic catalysts, in areas such as job training, research and technology development. They also have a substantial direct economic impact on the City, while turning out large numbers of college graduates who have been exposed to the City's much appreciated culture and character, which are themselves important strengths. Formal linkage between the educational institutions and the economic development process is essential.

Another often-overlooked asset is the significant military presence in and around New Orleans. Not only does the military have a strong direct impact, it also serves the community as a superb training ground for high quality jobs.

In addition to the obvious approach of building on these and other strengths, the Task Force focused on several other essential economic development strategies. Included among these are:

- A neighborhood approach to economic development. Neighborhoods are another significant strength of the City, and these must be preserved and nourished. In general, emphasis was placed on growing and attracting small to medium-sized businesses and many of these can be neighborhood-based and neighborhood-beneficial.

- Entrepreneurism. Often beneath the official radar -- and unfortunately, sometimes spilling over into illegal activities -- there is actually the basis of an entrepreneurial culture in New Orleans. What these people lack are capital, training, support, and infrastructure. Business mentoring and incubation programs must be established, and innovative approaches to creating entrepreneurial opportunities -- such as buying spin-off divisions of existing enterprises -- must be identified and employed.

- Clustering of industries. New Orleans has largely lost its oil and gas cluster, but still benefits from a growing medical cluster. In addition, there are actually more local high-tech businesses than many people would suspect. These clusters must be supported and grown, while viable new clusters, such as biotechnology, must be identified and grown.

Another key facet of economic development is marketing the strengths and advantages of the City. A formal business attraction strategy, with a specific marketing plan, must be developed and implemented, and updated regularly as improvements are realized in all aspects of quality of life and quality of business life.

To a certain extent, all the rest of the CBNO Task Forces' work is dependent on the success of future economic development efforts. New Orleans must reinvent itself economically, adjust to changing times and conditions. Examples abound of other cities, such as Pittsburgh and Cleveland, which have dug themselves out of an economic abyss, and many did so without the natural advantages of New Orleans.

At the base of all of this are the people of the City. Despite the City's economic woes, almost 70% of New Orleanians think they have more economic opportunities now than they did five years ago. The people of New Orleans must be the starting point and ending point of all economic development efforts, for growing businesses is always and only a function of growing people.

NOTE: As a footnote to its action plan, the Economic Development Task Force asks that it be understood that inclusiveness is an underlying element of each individual objective. While many of the objectives list a number of specific organizations, the intention is to include all entities operating in the fields addressed by the objectives.

Key crossover issues:

- Population loss (City Management, Housing)
- Workforce education/development (Education, Public Safety)
- Revenue generating by City (City Management)
- Regional cooperation (City Management, Transportation)
- The airport (Transportation)
- Crime (Public Safety)
- Tax incentives (City Management, Housing)
- Home ownership (Housing)
- Neighborhoods (Housing)
- Poverty (City Management, Education, Housing, Safety)
- Homestead exemption (City Management, Education, Housing)

Action Plan

Critical Issues and Goals

1.0 Diversification of the economy; making New Orleans government user-friendly for business.

New Orleans has a reputation as a difficult business environment, and the City has a challenge to build its credibility if its desire to attract new business is sincere. The creation of an open, accessible and widely understood regulatory system is a logical first step.

Create a transparent regulatory system that is predictable, accessible and coordinated. The system, which will include zoning, permitting and licensing, will be equitably administered and strictly enforced, and eliminate political and administrative barriers.

1.1 Mayor to mandate a one-stop licensing and permitting service center (the Center), which will cooperate with the business community, business organizations, Secretary of State, and departments of City government that issue permits. The Center will create a technologically advanced, functional, seamless, and accessible business and zoning permitting office, which will enable a one-stop process for permits.

1.1.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to November 2002

1.1.2 Financing: \$100,000 per year, through reallocation of existing resources.
Feasibility: 10

1.1.3 Resources: No additional human resources required, but will need professional staff training. Feasibility: 10

1.1.4 Legislation: None required

1.2 Mayor, with assistance of Techvision 2020, Louisiana Technology Council and other representatives of the City's technology community, to develop a web-enabled, on-line strategy to access such City services as parking ticket payment, applications for permits and other City services.

1.2.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to November 2002

1.2.2 Financing: \$400,000 per year, self-funded through user fees.
Feasibility: 10

1.2.3 Resources: No additional resources required

1.2.4 Legislation: None required

2.0 Workforce Development

The City should take a leadership role in tightening the relationship between education, training and existing and potential job opportunities.

Create a seamless and coordinated workforce development delivery system that trains workers for (1) entry level jobs that are sustainable and offer definable career paths; and (2) higher level jobs that offer competitive wages, measured against regional and national bases. Rationally determined existing and projected job opportunities will define the scope of job training offered.

Objectives

- 2.1 Workforce Investment Board (WIB), in partnership with the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB), to develop, coordinate and prepare an implementation plan for a training program for junior and senior high school students, which will enable them to pursue existing job opportunities in the New Orleans labor market and receive career path counseling.
 - 2.1.1 Time frame: July 2001 to August 2002
 - 2.1.2 Financing: None additional financing required.
 - 2.1.3 Resources: No additional human resources required.
 - 2.1.4 Legislation: May require changes in curriculum, to be approved by State Board of Education. Feasibility: 10

- 2.2 WIB and Delgado Community College, in cooperation with other relevant educational institutions and the labor and business communities, to identify training requirements to move beyond entry level jobs into higher paying jobs, in order to earn livable wages that will contribute to economic growth and sustainability in this community.
 - 2.2.1 Time frame: July 2001 to September 2002
 - 2.2.2 Financing: No additional financing required.
 - 2.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required.
 - 2.2.4 Legislation: None required.

- 2.3 City to develop workforce incentives, which include training requirements, wage and benefit targets, work force development and similar programs, which are linked to meeting accountability standards and are designed to benefit the workforce and economic development goals of the City, as well as the interests of recipients. The City's RFP process should be utilized in this effort.
 - 2.3.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to June 2003
 - 2.3.2 Financing: \$100,000 per year. Feasibility: 10
 - 2.3.3 Resources: Additional staff will be required for the Office of State and Federal Compliance. Feasibility: 10
 - 2.3.4 Legislation: May require new or amended City ordinance.

- 2.4 City to build upon the successes of the New Orleans Jobs Initiative in designing and adopting new training methodologies, which are innovative and effective and will meet the demands of an expanding labor market.
 - 2.4.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to June 2003
 - 2.4.2 Financing: No additional financing required.
 - 2.4.3 Resources: No additional human resources required.
 - 2.4.4 Legislation: None required.

3.0 Need for effective business attraction and marketing program.

New Orleans should establish consistent and credible marketing strategies to attract new business, taking advantage of the City's unique culture, creative character and physical assets.

Create an effective and innovative business attraction strategy, formally aligning the City's public and private sectors, which encourages private sector job-creating investment. This

strategy will encourage economic growth in neighborhoods, while preserving the City's unique character and benefiting all citizens.

3.1 Mayor, City Council and Economic Development Corporation (EDC), in cooperation with Louisiana Technology Council (LTC), New Orleans Regional Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitors Bureau, New Orleans Regional Medical Complex, colleges and universities, and others, to establish a venture capital and seed capital program, combined with incubator facilities, to develop new cluster businesses related to existing clusters.

- 3.1.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to September 2003
- 3.1.2 Financing: (1) \$600,000 per year for incubator operations; funding from new public/private partnership. Feasibility: 6
(2) \$15 - \$20 million for venture and seed capital funding from private investment sources. Feasibility: 6
- 3.1.3 Resources: LTC responsible for technology incubator. Tulane University responsible for biotechnology incubator. Feasibility: 6
- 3.1.4 Legislation: None required

3.2 EDC to coordinate and contract with regional organizations in their areas of expertise to fully develop a business attraction and diversification strategy, to include the Louisiana Technology Council, New Orleans Regional Chamber of Commerce, New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau, New Orleans Arts Council, MetroVision, New Orleans Regional Medical Complex, and the colleges and universities.

- 3.2.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to January 2003
- 3.2.2 Financing: Additional financing included within EDC budget (refer to 6.1.2) Feasibility: 6
- 3.2.3 Resources: EDC will require professional marketing staff (refer to 6.1.3). Feasibility: 6
- 3.2.4 Legislation: None required

4.0 Inner city business and job base to address problems of poverty, working poor and the underemployed.

The City's greatest potential for meaningful change lies in its ability to improve the lives of the working poor and the underemployed.

Implement a business development strategy in the City, using proven theories, that addresses problems related to poverty, thereby significantly reducing the number of working poor and underemployed.

4.1 Mayor and City Council, in conjunction with business, labor and civic leaders, to officially recognize and embrace the establishment of economic development policies and strategies which specifically address and substantially reduce unemployment, underemployment and poverty.

- 4.1.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to December 2002
- 4.1.2 Financing: Phase 1 - \$70,000 from private sector. Feasibility: 10

- Phase 2 - \$700,000 from private and public sources, depending on Phase 1 results. Feasibility: 8
- 4.1.3 Resources: Will require external consultants. Feasibility: Phase 1 - 10; Phase 2 - 8
- 4.1.4 Legislation: None required

4.2 Mayor to align the business and economic development policies and strategies referred to in 4.1 above, with the strengths and weaknesses of the City and its neighborhoods, using proven, quantifiable standards linked to, and coordinated with, private, public and educational institutions.

- 3.2.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to June 2003
- 3.2.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 3.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 3.2.4 Legislation: None required

5.0 Growing new and existing businesses; business retention and making New Orleans business-friendly.

Foster an environment that encourages and rewards entrepreneurial activity, supports and promotes the growth of existing businesses, and affords opportunities for employees to build assets.

5.1 EDC, in cooperation with MetroVision and the Downtown Development District (DDD), to establish an effective Business Calling Program for existing New Orleans businesses, utilizing EDC staff, business executives and elected officials.

- 5.1.1 Time Frame: January 2003 to April 2003
- 5.1.2 Financing: \$200,000 per year, included within EDC budget (refer to 6.1.2). Feasibility: 10
- 5.1.3 Resources: Additional staff resources will be required (refer to 6.1.3). Feasibility: 10
- 5.1.4 Legislation: None required

5.2 MetroVision, with cooperation of Mayor and EDC, to organize a program to educate public officials on the importance of existing industry to the future economy of the City and the role to be played by these officials.

- 5.2.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to December 2003; and recurring
- 5.2.2 Financing: \$15,000 per year. Feasibility: 10
- 5.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 5.2.4 Legislation: None required

5.3 MetroVision to sponsor an Entrepreneurial Development Task Force, composed of successful local businesspersons, to develop an entrepreneurial strategic plan and create a Center for Entrepreneurial Development in collaboration with the City's colleges and universities.

- 5.3.1 Time Frame: July 2001 to February 2003

- 5.3.2 Financing: \$250,000 per year, to be provided: private sector (60%), foundations (20%), City (20%)
- 5.3.3 Resources: MetroVision will manage strategic planning process. Implementation will require volunteers and university and college in-kind assistance. Feasibility: 10
- 5.3.4 Legislation: None required

5.4 CBNO, in cooperation with MBE/WBE certifying agencies, to identify, evaluate, standardize, and implement best practices of all organizations currently involved in supporting minority economic development in the City and, in cooperation with such agencies, to assess the City's minority business enterprise and women enterprise (MBE/WBE) initiatives.

- 5.4.1 Time Frame: July 2001 to January 2003
- 5.4.2 Financing: \$50,000 provided by City and/or foundations. Feasibility: 8
- 5.4.3 Resources: Will require one additional professional staff. Feasibility: 10
- 5.4.4 Legislation: Mayor Executive Order concerning MBE/WBE may require amendment. If State participates, may require legislative or regulatory changes. Feasibility: 10

5.5 Mayor, in cooperation with The Chamber, to establish a mentoring program for MBE/WBE whereby CEOs of successful companies will serve as mentors to such enterprises.

- 5.5.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to January 2003
- 5.5.2 Financing: \$100,000 per year, from MetroVision allocation to Chamber. Feasibility: 7
- 5.5.3 Resources: Will require one additional professional staff and CEO volunteers. Feasibility: 8
- 5.5.4 Legislation: None required

6.0 Economic development delivery systems; coordination of City, State and colleges and universities with other development organizations.

The City's assets, including its colleges and universities, port and hospitality infrastructure can help strengthen its economic development services.

Strengthen, and where necessary, build New Orleans' capacity to deliver competitive economic development services, in coordination with the State, colleges and universities and other development organizations.

6.1 City to establish and fund an Economic Development Corporation (EDC), governed by an independent authority, to (1) assist business enterprises in dealing with the labyrinth of the City's regulatory processes; and (2) market New Orleans as a competitive place in which to locate, start and/or expand business enterprises.

- 6.1.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to January 2003

- 6.1.2 Financing: \$2,500,000 per year. Feasibility: 6
- 6.1.3 Resources: Will require professional and support staff for new organization.
Feasibility: 6
- 6.1.4 Legislation: Will require City ordinance to create corporation.
Feasibility: 7

6.2 EDC to establish strong working relationships with existing regional marketing organizations, the Louisiana Department of Economic Development and the City's colleges and universities, so that the City can take maximum advantage of potential prospects and job-creating opportunities.

- 6.2.1 Time Frame: January 2003 - Ongoing
- 6.2.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 6.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 6.2.4 Legislation: None required

Education Task Force Report

Public education in New Orleans is in severe disarray, a situation that began with forced desegregation in the 1960s and has continued to decline until very recently. The system has been largely neglected by the community, yet the future of the community is inextricably linked to the quality of education available. That this fact is widely recognized is made perfectly clear in the Silas Lee Baseline Survey, in which **96% of respondents indicated that quality public education was the "inextricable link" to future prosperity in New Orleans.**

At present, however, less than half of the students who enter kindergarten will graduate from high school. Just a few of the consequences of this alarming fact are unemployment or employment in low paying jobs; drug abuse and crime; a poorly qualified workforce which hinders economic development; and substantial drain on the City budget to pay for various social services.

While the school system may be said to be in a state of reform, it faces numerous day to day crises that make any attempt to address systemic change supremely difficult. It is encouraging that the Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) has begun a process for the adoption of a Strategic Plan.

Accountability measures instituted by the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) also pose huge challenges for the local public school system. From high stakes testing like the LEAP tests to ratings of individual schools, measurable standards have been instituted, and consequences set for those schools and students who fail to measure up.

More specifically, students who do not pass the 4th grade and 8th grade LEAP tests do not pass those grade levels. At present, they are being placed in transitional grades, and will be tested again in another year to see if they will be allowed to move on. While this situation is still in flux, in the future more grades will likely be subjected to this type of high stakes testing. In the meantime, school officials are scrambling to incorporate LEAP-focused class work into the school curriculum.

Similarly, schools where too high a percentage of the students fail to achieve adequate scores on reading and math testing are being declared academically unacceptable. Initially, students in these schools will be given school choice options (discussed in more detail further on); eventually, these schools could be subject to comprehensive reconstitution, meaning that they could be completely restaffed and restructured. At present, no clear picture exists of how this might occur, where the resources will come from, what the impact will be on students, parents and the community (not to mention the school staff), and what will happen if such extreme measures still fail to produce to acceptable results.

Should high numbers of students continue to fail the exams, and high numbers of schools fail to elevate their overall performance, BESE could add further mandates, and step into the operating of the school system. Ultimately, the School Board could lose control of the system, or at least be replaced by an appointed rather than elected Board.

In short, **the situation is severe, with schools and students performing miserably and the threat of losing local control of the school system looming in the air.** Yet the average New Orleanian has little or no understanding of these dire circumstances.

Given its focus on a single system, the existence of a strategic plan, and the inevitability of the state requirements, the Education Task Force found itself facing a very different type of challenge than the other Task Forces. Comprised of professionals from within the academic community as well as a variety

of business and civic leaders, the Task Force attempted to focus on issues of community support, system structure and short and long term resource needs rather than internal working details of the school system.

One key topic of discussion was the role of the School Board. OPSB has not functioned well in recent years. While high turnover among elected Board members suggests that the public has exacted some measure of accountability, more is needed. One central issue is the tendency of the Board to micro-manage school system operations, despite its own commitment to being a policy-making rather than a managing type of board. Buying into the CEO concept, adhering to a clearly defined governance model and committing to the Strategic Plan are necessary for the system to thrive.

Among the other core problems addressed by the Task Force were:

- School system facilities. Estimates of the costs of needed repairs by outside consultants reach as high as one billion dollars, money that simply does not exist in the community. The magnitude of the problem must not be allowed to keep incremental improvements from occurring. The first step is to accurately assess the full scope of the problem as well as resources available to apply to it, then prioritize the repairs and begin the work process.

- Accountability. In addition to the OPSB, teachers, administrators, parents, students, and the community itself must be accountable for overall school performance. Resources must come from the community and the Board, so that faculty and administrators can receive the training, supplies and other support they need to perform. This translates directly into improvements in the quality of education in classroom. The business community in particular has a vested interest in the success of the schools, since this is the source of their future workforce; they can provide substantial support in terms of teacher training, mentoring, internships, partnerships with individual schools, and much more.

- Parental involvement. In a similar vein, effective avenues for parental involvement must be developed, largely with an individual school site focus. Successful programs from local and national sources must be introduced system-wide, and schools with high levels of parental involvement should mentor those with lower levels. Parental involvement both increases student performance and decreases school violence and discipline problems. At present, many parents feel disenfranchised and/or overwhelmed by the negativity surrounding the system. In addition, many have low levels of education themselves, many are very young, and many are hard-pressed to devote the time and financial resources to school involvement.

- Violence in the schools. Alternative sites for students with special needs will substantially enhance learning opportunities in the regular classrooms, while giving these students the attention and services they need to overcome their difficulties and, where possible, return to their regular schools. Finding these sites, arranging for them to be staffed and stocked, and bringing together the special resources they need to accomplish their missions are the major challenges.

- Changing roles of the schools. Society now demands that schools be babysitters, disciplinarians, teachers of social skills, and take on many other non-academic roles. Each and every one of these works to the detriment of providing a quality education. A return to academic focus, coupled with increased parental involvement and alternative school sites, will help bring more learning back into the classrooms.

- School choice, meaning that students would be given the option to transfer out of certain schools. Though only just beginning to receive much attention in the community, this issue looms as a consequence of the BESE standards beginning in August of 2001. Nearly fifty New Orleans schools may still be rated academically unacceptable at this time, which could qualify as many as 25,000 students (out of 75,000 in the entire system) for school choice. At this time, very few options exist, with the quantity

of students who might qualify for them vastly outnumbering the quantity of available education options (for example, while 25,000 New Orleans students might qualify for school choice, there are only about 1500 private school and 7000 parochial school seats available). Not surprisingly, no more than five percent of parents who have school choice options nationally actually exercise them. The Task Force gave considerable time to study and discussion of partnering with the Catholic School System to provide a partial answer to this problem, with the primary concerns being the selection process, special education students and the state testing requirements. While no conclusion was reached, this is a relationship that merits further exploration.

Conversations about curriculum also took place. The curriculum must be expanded to include job and career training elements, including career and life skills, workforce skills and technology skills training, along with vo-tech and other career/academic pursuits. Students' experiences within the education system must better match the experiences of real life. Mentoring programs would be of tremendous benefit in this area. In a different vein, the public input phase of the CBNO process identified a strong need to incorporate arts and culture into the curriculum, and to bring the many talented people in the New Orleans artistic community into the schools. While some Task Force members felt that this bordered on micro-managing, and that more useful work could be accomplished by addressing larger issues that provide the framework for learning rather than focusing on specific educational details, the community input strongly supported these types of curriculum enhancements.

From an overall standpoint, the basis for change in all aspects of the situation is public support, from business partners to increased funding, from parental involvement to volunteer tutors. People in all segments of the community need to develop a strong sense of urgency about the entire situation, which can be instilled if they receive enough information about problems and about progress. Most of the publicity surrounding the school system at present is negative; some light must be shone on the positives as well, or hopelessness will set in. Moreover, the consequences of the BESE mandates and the details -- indeed, the existence -- of the Strategic Plan must become public knowledge and the foundations of public involvement.

Internal communication is also needed, for many within the system are not well-versed in the Strategic Plan, or have not bought into it, or do not believe that the system itself has truly bought into it. Community involvement is more likely, and more effective, if those within the system are in a state of reasonable congruence and working towards common goals using common methodology.

Despite the deplorable condition of the school system and the dire consequences staring it in the face, there is some sense of the tide beginning to turn. Concerned citizens are becoming involved, as exemplified by the Greater New Orleans Education Foundation as well as this Task Force, and community awareness of the importance of the schools to the entire City is growing. This Action Plan seeks to build on these inklings of change, to create real momentum and measurable results, to get the school system off the rocks in the short term and on course to a truly brighter future in the long term. Our young people, and our entire City, deserve nothing less.

Key crossover issues:

- Homestead exemption (City Management, Economic Development, Housing)
- Poverty (City Management, Economic Development, Housing, Public Safety)
- Workforce education/development (Economic Development, Public Safety)
- Alternative schools (Public Safety)

Action Plan

Critical Issues and Goals

1.0 Continuing the reform process of the Orleans Parish School System and resolving school system governance issues that threaten local control.

The Education Task Force prioritized a broad community embrace of the reform effort as fundamental to the improvement of the public schools. While the reform effort and the Strategic Plan have been acknowledged as good road maps, the School Board has not fully embraced reform or the Plan, nor is there general understanding of and commitment to reform among school personnel and the broad community. The matter of clearly defining the School Board as a policy-making body and detailing the responsibilities of the CEO and his staff was identified as a critical first, immediate step in the reform effort.

Provide the CEO with the authority and responsibility to take the actions needed to effect short and long-term reform and mobilize the community to support the reform process and ensure continued local control of the school system.

Objectives

1.1 Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB) to affirm its relationship with the CEO based upon generally accepted principles of school system governance, as set forth in the Carver Governance Model, the *Metropolitan Area Committee Governance Plan* (1997) and the *Declaration of Intent to Reform* (November 18, 1998).

- 1.1.1 Time Frame: June 2001 to August 2001
- 1.1.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 1.1.3 Resources: No additional human resources needed
- 1.1.4 Legislation: None required, but OPSB to adopt resolution reaffirming the Declaration of Intent to Reform and committing itself to a workable governance model

1.2 OPSB and the CEO to enter into a contract of employment, which clearly sets forth the responsibilities of the Board to determine policy and evaluate the performance of the CEO, and the responsibilities of the CEO for all management decisions concerned with the operations of the school system.

- 1.2.1 Time Frame: June 2001 to September 2001
- 1.2.2 Financing: Additional financial resources may be required to assure that the CEO's compensation is comparable to similar urban school systems. Feasibility: 10
- 1.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 1.2.4 Legislation: None required, but OPSB to adopt a resolution confirming that the contract will meet the "best practices" standards and mandates of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE)

1.3 Greater New Orleans Education Foundation (GNOEF) Council, with cooperation of the OPSB and the CEO, to monitor the joint commitment of the Board and the CEO to reform, as set forth in the *New Orleans Public School Five Year Strategic Plan for Reform: 1999 - 2000 through 2003 - 2004* (May 7, 1999), and

to report semi-annually to the public on progress in implementing the reforms contained in the Strategic Plan. (Note: A board retreat was held recently to specifically develop an approach to meet the requirements)

- 1.3.1 Time Frame: July 2001; ongoing
- 1.3.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 1.3.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 1.3.4 Legislation: None required, but OPSB to adopt a resolution reconfirming its commitment to implement the Strategic Plan

1.4 OPSB to accept State Accountability Plan requirements of the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), and restructure Board policy to achieve the accountability standards, including modification of the Strategic Plan, as necessary to ensure compatibility and timely compliance.

- 1.4.1 Time Frame: July 2001 to September 2001
- 1.4.2 Financing: No additional financing required, but may require reallocation of current funds. Feasibility: 10
- 1.4.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 1.4.4 Legislation: None required

1.5 Committee for a Better New Orleans (CBNO) and GNOEF Council to convene appropriate groups immediately to inform and engage the community and mobilize its resources to ensure that the OPSB complies with the State Accountability Plan and thus ensure continued operations of the Orleans Parish School System by Orleans Parish.

- 1.5.1 Time Frame: July 2001; ongoing
- 1.5.2 Financing: Funding for public information campaign (approximately \$200,000) will be required. Feasibility: 7
- 1.5.3 Resources: Additional human resources will be required. Feasibility: 7
- 1.5.4 Legislation: None required

2.0 Improvement of physical infrastructure and human resource environment.

More than 70% of the respondents in the CBNO Baseline Survey acknowledged that the public school system in Orleans Parish is under funded. With an aging stock of school buildings, the projected cost for bringing school infrastructure up to minimum standards is in the neighborhood of one billion dollars. Even with the 1995 bond issue which provided \$175 million for school renovations, the school system faces a severe challenge in maintaining buildings and meeting basic code requirements. Additional needs in the area of human resources (well trained, certified teachers teaching in their fields of expertise) place enormous pressure on the school system to provide its basic necessities.

Create a quality educational environment, including infrastructure, human resources and operational systems.

2.1 OPSB to inform the public concerning the actual physical condition of all schools and related infrastructure, and the cost and time required to repair them, based upon the GNOEF Physical Needs Assessment Report.

- 2.1.1 Time Frame: July 2001 to October 2001

- 2.1.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 2.1.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 2.1.4 Legislation: None required

2.2 OPSB to delegate to the CEO total responsibility for physical renovation of public schools, including generating capital funds, developing and prioritizing project construction schedules, negotiating and awarding contracts, overseeing construction, and debt repayment.

- 2.2.1 Time Frame: July 2001 to; ongoing
- 2.2.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 2.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 2.2.4 Legislation: None required

2.3 CEO and OPSB, with the support of the GNOEF Council and the community, to inform and engage the community in support of infrastructure projects that address short-term and immediate needs.

- 2.3.1 Time Frame: July 2001; ongoing
- 2.3.2 Financing: \$150,000 to enlist public support for bond issue.
Feasibility: 10
- 2.3.3 Resources: Will require external resources, as appropriate.
Feasibility: 10
- 2.3.4 Legislation: None required, but OPSB must enact a resolution to authorize the bond issue. Feasibility: 8

2.4 OPSB to make teacher training and professional development a top priority, and CEO to implement a professional development program which provides consistent and ongoing training for teachers and administrative staff. CBNO also encourages the utilization of community resources to address this pressing need.

- 2.4.1 Time Frame: July 2001; ongoing
- 2.4.2 Financing: \$250,000. Feasibility: 10
- 2.4.3 Resources: Will need additional training staff. Feasibility: 10
- 2.4.4 Legislation: None required

3.0 Parental involvement.

Students and their parents are the primary constituency of the New Orleans Public School System. The involvement of parents in the educational process of their children is a fundamental element of improving the quality of education in the classroom.

Increase student achievement and reduce school disciplinary problems by promoting active parent, family and community involvement in the schools.

3.1 OPSB to support the implementation of State-recommended programs, such as the School, Family and Community Partnerships program of the National Network of Partnership Schools, as a means of enhancing and monitoring parental and community involvement in compliance with OPSB policy 1210. The program includes recognition of the six types of school involvement, inventory of present involvement practices,

development of specific involvement goals, action plans for reaching results, and annual progress evaluations.

- 3.1.1 Time Frame: July 2001 to Ongoing
- 3.1.2 Financing: Undetermined
- 3.1.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 3.1.4 Legislation: None required

3.2 OPSB to include parent and community involvement as a criterion in the assessment of schools, and provide appropriate training and resources for faculties, staff and parents to enhance the capacity to meet this objective.

- 3.2.1 Time Frame: July 2001; ongoing
- 3.2.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 3.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 3.2.4 Legislation: None required

3.3 OPSB to allow schools with high levels of parental involvement to mentor other schools, thus assisting them in increasing parental and community involvement.

- 3.3.1 Time Frame: September 2001; ongoing
- 3.3.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 3.3.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 3.3.4 Legislation: None required

3.4 OPSB to involve parents and the community in appropriate and meaningful decision-making by sharing information, training parent leaders and representatives and creating district level advisory councils and committees.

- 3.4.1 Time Frame: September 2001; ongoing
- 3.4.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 3.4.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 3.4.4 Legislation: None required

4.0 Alternative school settings for children with behavioral problems.

School site personnel cite the disruption and chaos caused by students with behavioral problems as the major impediment to an orderly and effective learning environment. Alternative settings within and outside of traditional school settings must be created to address these students' needs and to preserve order in traditional school settings.

Minimize the classroom disruption and assist children in overcoming behavioral problems so they can return to their regular environment, using off-site and on-site settings and resources.

4.1 CEO to create a single, off-site intake and service delivery system that brings together social services and disciplinary actions in a more child- and family-friendly manner.

- 4.1.1 Time Frame: September 2001 - 2002
- 4.1.2 Financing: No additional financing required. OPSB using existing

- 4.1.3 Resources: funding sources. No additional human resources required.
- 4.1.4 Legislation: None required. However, ongoing dialogue with various City agencies will enhance our ability to do this on a small scale until State funding sources become available.

4.2 CEO to coordinate an off-site alternative education program for secondary students (including middle school) whose behavior and/or academic proficiency seriously impair their ability to perform in education programs at the regular school site. Such alternative education should provide students the opportunity to pursue viable career training opportunities and the possibility of advanced learning, while providing options for returning to the student's base school or completing his/her work at the alternative school, as appropriate.

- 4.2.1 Time Frame: January 2002 to September 2002
- 4.2.2 Financing: \$5,000,000 to \$7,500,000 from external sources.
Feasibility: 5
- 4.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 4.2.4 Legislation: None required to create the center. However, will require State funding similar to that received by Jefferson and St. Bernard parishes. Feasibility: 5

4.3 CEO to coordinate on-site services for recalcitrant elementary students based upon a preventive model in which services are provided at the initial onset of disruptive behavior and include related support services for families of these children.

- 4.3.1 Time Frame: September 2001
- 4.3.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 4.3.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 4.3.4 Legislation: None required

Housing and Neighborhoods Task Force Report

New Orleans faces a crisis with its housing and neighborhoods, the major components of which include 27,000 vacant housing units¹ and thousands more that are blighted; a home ownership rate that is in inverse proportion to that of most other cities; a large number of people who lack the experience, credit history and financial sophistication to qualify for home loans; and a dearth of quality, affordable rental units.

At the same time, the unique architecture of the City and the tremendous character of its neighborhoods are two of New Orleans' greatest strengths. Moreover, **the problem of vacant and blighted properties has the potential to be a substantial part of the solution to the lack of both ownership and rental opportunities.**

In the course of its conversations, the Housing and Neighborhoods Task Force found that many of the obstacles to progress in solving these problems were matters of process: confusing, conflicting and inaccessible permitting requirements; legal impediments to property acquisition; insufficient bonding opportunities, tax credits and other incentives provided for by federal, state and/or local law; and inadequate enforcement of various housing-related codes and regulations. In addition, many existing opportunities are being under-utilized at present. Most of these problems can be resolved with little or no financial costs.

More substantial barriers exist in terms of educational, cultural and racial issues, the last of which is highlighted by the discrepancies in attitudes towards housing in New Orleans expressed by white and African-American residents in Silas Lee's original study for CBNO. In particular, education is needed on how to manage personal finances to qualify for home loans; on the rights of property owners and renters; and on what are the real -- as compared to the perceived -- implications of implementing many of the measures needed to solve New Orleans' housing problems. The fact that home ownership is simply not deeply ingrained in the City's culture must also be considered.

Underlying the entire housing issue is the continuing decline in population in New Orleans, which has dropped from a 1965 high of 650,000 to a present number of about 485,000. In addition to costing the City substantial amounts of federal money due to being under 500,000 in population, the outmigration has contributed greatly to the problems of vacant and blighted housing, since the City is built out for about 660,000 residents. The population loss has also concentrated poverty at higher levels in the City, setting yet another barrier to home ownership.

Conversely, an influx of new residents would increase the rate of home ownership, occupy properties that are currently vacant or blighted, revitalize the housing stock as well as the City's neighborhoods, provide a larger tax base for City government, and generally breathe new life into New Orleans. Some increase in population density should therefore be considered an asset for the City, provided it entails an appropriate economic mix.

Therefore the anticipated result of this Housing and Neighborhood Action Plan is to realize a net immigration of 4000 residents each year, by increasing the number of low to moderate income homeowners in New Orleans by 1500 per year and by increasing the quantity of affordable rental housing units at an annual rate of 1500. Achieving these goals will result in the City's population reaching the benchmark number of 500,000 in five years. At the same time it is anticipated that the ratio of homeowners to renters will change from the present rate of 40/60 to 50/50 by 2006.

This level of change will impact virtually every neighborhood in the City, and care must be taken to ensure that this change is positive. A comprehensive inventory of the City's individual neighborhoods, along with their strengths, weaknesses and assets must be conducted. Citizens must be educated and

empowered to drive strategic planning in each and every neighborhood. In those areas where neighborhood leadership and other people resources, background and knowledge are lacking, residents must get the training and information they need to ensure that quality of life improves for all citizens.

Similarly, a web-based property inventory database that lists every property in the City must be developed. This is essential for planning, redevelopment and expansion of the availability of affordable rental properties and home ownership opportunities.

Neighborhoods must also be nurtured by other concentrated efforts, including the following:

- Code Enforcement. More aggressive housing code enforcement is necessary. Personal liability must be imposed on owners who neglect their properties.

- Zoning. The zoning must reflect present conditions as well as future ambitions for each neighborhood, and zoning requirements must be enforced strictly and uniformly.

- Permitting. The City's permitting system must be made simple, accessible, predictable, and fast. Standards should be set, made understandable and realistic, and applied evenly and fairly. This includes the approvals required from the Historic Districts Landmarks Commission (HDLC), which currently reviews each individual application on a case by case basis. Permitting at present causes frequent delays, adding to pre-construction costs and driving up rental, renovation and purchase prices.

- Land banking. New Orleans has already seen successes from an approach that targets numerous properties within a tightly defined area for renovation, with obvious ripple effects emanating outward from the redeveloped properties. This approach can be expanded by establishing a mechanism for the City to acquire blighted properties within specific neighborhoods and even city blocks, and make them available for redevelopment. This speeds up the process, reduces investor risk, facilitates neighborhood planning, and produces far better results than a scatter-shot approach.

As an additional note, the Task Force discussed in some length the problems of homelessness and housing for the elderly and disabled. While both were acknowledged to be serious issues, the consensus was that they would be significantly, albeit perhaps not fully, addressed in the solutions to the overarching issues listed above. The Task Force urges that these three populations not be forgotten, and that as the measures recommended herein are implemented, care be taken to make sure the homeless, the elderly and the disabled are indeed included in the solutions.

Members of the Housing and Neighborhoods Task Force represented an extraordinary cross-section of community interests, and the spirited, creative, open, and honest discussion during this process was a remarkable display of the widespread community support and will for addressing the City's housing problems. This is one problem that also represents a remarkable opportunity, and it is incumbent on all the citizens of New Orleans to be part of fulfilling this opportunity.

Key crossover issues:

- Poverty (City Management, Economic Development, Education, Public Safety)
- Homestead exemption (City Management, Economic Development, Education)
- Education (Education, Public Safety)

¹ According to the 2000 census.

Action Plan

Critical Issues and Goals

1.0 Vacant and blighted property.

Vacant and blighted properties are public safety hazards, eyesores and barriers to neighborhood revitalization. Eliminating these pervasive problem properties from New Orleans is essential to reclaiming and maintaining the City's unique neighborhoods.

Reclaim neighborhoods by reducing the number of blighted properties (lots and vacant buildings) through renovation or redevelopment, with demolition as a last resort.

1.1 New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA), in cooperation with the Code Enforcement Division of the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development (DHND), to expedite its acquisition of blighted properties through a "quick-take" process, expropriation or purchase and make said properties available for redevelopment by non-profit or for-profit developers as well as individual citizens in order to develop mixed income communities.

- 1.1.1 Time Frame: In process; complete by June 2004
- 1.1.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 1.1.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 1.1.4 Legislation: Amendment to Louisiana Constitution will be required.
Feasibility: 6

1.2 Mayor and City Council to enhance its aggressive, strategic acquisition program through creation of a new Acquisition Fund to acquire blighted properties and create economics of scale for redevelopment. The Fund will be financed by rededication of the Neighborhood Housing Investment Fund and from other reliable, unrestricted sources.

- 1.2.1 Time Frame: March 2001 to March 2011
- 1.2.2 Financing: \$200,000 per year, redirecting existing resources.
Feasibility: 10
- 1.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 1.2.4 Legislation: Ordinance required. Feasibility: 9 - 10

1.3 Chief Administrative Office (CAO) to insure a more aggressive housing code enforcement on blighted and substandard properties, including vacant lots.

- 1.3.1 Time Frame: In Process
- 1.3.2 Financing: \$500,000 from CDBG Funding
- 1.3.3 Resources: Additional inspectors will be required. Feasibility: 10
- 1.3.4 Legislation: None Required

1.4 Mayor to use the authority granted by the 1998 amendment to the Louisiana Constitution, which authorizes the City to waive past due *ad valorem* property taxes, thus encouraging owners to sell blighted properties.

- 1.4.1 Time Frame: In process
- 1.4.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 1.4.3 Resources: Mayor, with assistance from the Finance Department and Legal Department. Feasibility: 10
- 1.4.4 Legislation: None required

2.0 Neighborhood revitalization.

Nothing defines New Orleans' character so much as its rich variety of neighborhoods. To maintain these treasures, the citizens themselves must be in charge of preserving their heritage and charting their future, and must have the information, tools and resources to take on this responsibility.

Strengthen the capacity of our citizens to define, develop and maintain attractive and vibrant neighborhoods.

2.1 Mayor and City Council, with oversight by citizens and neighborhood associations, to redefine neighborhoods by geographic boundaries based on commonality of community focus.

- 2.1.1 Time Frame: March 2001 to December 2003
- 2.1.2 Financing: \$200,000 from foundations and banks. Feasibility: 8
- 2.1.3 Resources: Additional resources will be required from City Hall, neighborhood associations and consultants. Feasibility: 8

2.2 Chief Administrative Office (CAO) to create and maintain a user-friendly, comprehensive automated property inventory system, which includes all public information on every parcel of property within Orleans Parish, to facilitate neighborhood development research and planning as well as the redevelopment of blighted properties.

- 2.2.1 Time Frame: March 2001 to December 2003
- 2.2.2 Financing: \$500,000 from City general fund. Feasibility: 6
- 2.2.3 Resources: Additional resources will be required.
Participants: CAO (capital projects), City Planning Commission, Public Works Department, zoning, assessors, Conveyance Office, Department of Safety and Permits and external experts. Feasibility: 10
- 2.2.4 Legislation: Legislation at State and City levels will be required to ensure participation by assessors. Feasibility: 8

2.3 City Planning Commission (CPC), in partnership with citizens and neighborhood associations, to develop and implement a systemic and integrative planning model with clear outcomes, which will define the characteristics of attractive neighborhoods, and map the assets and needs of each neighborhood.

- 2.3.1 Time Frame: March 2001 to December 2003
- 2.3.2 Financing: \$300,000. Feasibility: 8
- 2.3.3 Resources: CPC, with public/private partnership. Feasibility: 7
- 2.3.4 Legislation: None required

2.4 New Orleans Neighborhood Development Collaborative to promote new public/private partnerships which increase citizens' capacity to effect change and manage their neighborhoods.

2.4.1 Time Frame: March 2001 to December 2003

2.4.2 Financing: Included in 2.2.2. Feasibility: 8

2.4.3 Resources: CPC, with public/private partnership. Feasibility: 8

2.4.4 Legislation: None required

3.0 Increasing the rate of home ownership.

In that it gives people both a much larger stake in the future of their neighborhoods as well as a platform for their own economic advancement, home ownership is widely considered a key to community health and revitalization. New Orleans must increase dramatically its rate of home ownership.

Significantly increase the rate of home ownership for low to middle income residents through a combination of public and private initiatives addressing home finance and education, as well as livable and affordable supply of housing stock.

Objectives

3.1 New Orleans banking community to facilitate increased home ownership for low to middle income residents through development of a consortium of financial institutions and non-profit organizations, which will identify and qualify potential homeowners, train them for effective home ownership and provide a pool of at least \$200,000,000 of affordable mortgage financing, applying underwriting standards more relaxed than those of secondary market affordable loan products, while reflecting appropriate risk/reward standards.

3.1.1 Time Frame: February 2001 to January 2002

3.1.2 Financing: \$200,000,000 primarily through banks.

Feasibility: 10

3.1.3 Resources: Finance Authority of New Orleans. Feasibility: 10

3.1.4 Legislation: Needs federal and state homeowner's task credits

3.2 Mayor to direct the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development (DHND) to provide more affordable home purchase and renovation loan financing by expanding the use of (a) subsidies for down payment assistance, interest buy-downs and loan guarantees, (b) soft-second mortgage gap financing as leverage with standard mortgage financing by public and private lenders, as well as (c) lobbying for tax credits for purchase and renovation of older homes and for revenue bond programs.

3.2.1 Time Frame: In process; ongoing

3.2.2 Financing: 15% increase in Community Development Block Grants, to comply with original intent for using these Federal grants.
Feasibility: 10

3.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required

3.2.4 Legislation: Item (c) will require state and federal legislation

3.3 Mayor to re-engineer the City's permitting and approval process for housing and create a "one-stop" shop for issuance of construction permits and HDLC approvals, so

that the time required to issue permits will not exceed thirty days. (This objective is also essential to accomplishing goals 1 and 4 of this plan.)

- 3.3.1 Time Frame: July 2001 to January 2002
- 3.3.2 Financing: \$100,000 for consultants. Feasibility: 6, subject to political will
- 3.3.3 Resources: CAO is responsible, with assistance from consultants. Feasibility: 7
- 3.3.4 Legislation: May require City ordinance

3.4 Finance Authority of New Orleans and Housing Authority of New Orleans to create home ownership opportunities for renters with low credit scores by utilizing lease-purchase financing, combined with a credit improvement plan, as provided in innovative programs such as HUD's Section 8 voucher program.

- 3.4.1 Time Frame: In process; complete by February 2002
- 3.4.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 3.4.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 3.4.4 Legislation: None required

4.0 Affordable rental housing.

Renters will always be part of the housing equation. As the City aims to reduce residential density in the housing developments, additional rental properties will be needed in neighborhoods throughout New Orleans. A particular pitfall to avoid in this process is clustering of low-income renters. Low to moderate income residents, the elderly and the homeless are specific populations with particular rental housing needs.

Increase the supply of affordable rental housing by increasing resources and removing barriers for low to moderate income housing (including special needs populations) in mixed income areas.

4.1 City's Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development to design a model, which removes barriers and promotes a scattered-site strategy for affordable rental housing, including giving a priority for redevelopment of small complexes (1 - 4 units) located throughout the City.

- 4.1.1 Time Frame: April 2001 to April 2002
- 4.1.2 Financing: \$50,000 for consultant services. Feasibility: 10
- 4.1.3 Resources: Finance Authority of New Orleans to assist. Feasibility: 10
- 4.1.4 Legislation: May require City ordinance

4.2 Mayor, in cooperation with the business community, to lobby U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to increase the value of its Section 8 vouchers so that landlords will be encouraged to use them in connection with the development of scattered small complexes.

- 4.2.1 Time Frame: April 2002; ongoing
- 4.2.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 4.2.3 Resources: Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) to assist.
Feasibility: 10
- 4.2.4 Legislation: Intent is to amend HUD regulations

Public Safety Task Force Report

Although public safety is actually a broad issue, including aspects such as public health, hazardous materials, hurricane protection and planning, domestic violence, and evacuation planning, most people think of public safety first and foremost as relating to crime. This is especially true in a city like New Orleans, which has experienced more than its share of crime problems in recent years.

New Orleans has enjoyed a dramatic decrease in violent crime over the past five years, due in large part to reforms instituted by the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD), increased police manpower, and new techniques and technologies employed by NOPD. Law enforcement officials readily acknowledge that the increased participation of citizens in supporting the reforms (i.e., the Police Foundation) and their active involvement in helping the police to identify and capture violent criminals (i.e., Crimestoppers, Neighborhood Watch and the Metropolitan Crime Commission) have played a critical role in this effort.

The Baseline Survey conducted by Dr. Silas Lee confirms that New Orleanians agree that police services have improved. This reflects the improvements in the department as well as substantially greater communication with the public. However, 73% of respondents are still concerned about their personal safety.

Moreover, year 2000 statistics indicate that the fight against violent crime is far from over. Murders in New Orleans increased from a 30-year low of 162 in 1999 to 205 in 2000. Much of this increase has been attributed to turf battles between drug gangs. While murder rates dropped in the second half of the year, as police instituted measures to mitigate the drug war problems, the continued demand for drugs and the ancillary violence associated with the sale of drugs continues to plague this community. **A comprehensive approach to long-term resolution of the City's drug problem was identified as the top priority of the Public Safety Task Force.**

Drugs are a multi-faceted problem. Among the solutions discussed by the Task Force are:

- Treatment. Drugs are as much a health problem as a crime problem; many drug users are not engaged in other criminal activities. Non-violent drug users must be directed to treatment and education programs, which at present are sorely lacking. To gain community support for this, people must first believe that drug users can be rehabilitated, which requires an educational effort of its own. From this, it is believed that widespread support for investing in affordable drug treatment facilities, both inpatient and outpatient, can be developed.

- Education. As experimentation with drugs begins at an earlier and earlier age, anti-drug education must stay ahead of the age curve. Such education should begin in kindergarten, and continue through every level of schooling. Even as much as a year's gap can have seriously negative consequences on drug usage levels. Many effective in-school programs exist, such as DARE; these need to be identified, expanded and funded, and more programs need to be developed. Complimenting these efforts, drug education in the home is also desperately needed. This requires making parents aware of the scope of the problem, and providing them with the support and resources to be effective anti-drug educators at home.

- Testing. Programs exist now to test most people arrested in Orleans Parish. Testing in the schools is being explored. The Task Force felt strongly that this should be expanded to include every school in the City, although participation in the public school system will be voluntary to a certain extent. To be truly effective, testing must be combined with treatment, including rehabilitation and education for identified drug users as well as a family counseling component.

- Economic alternatives. A large percentage of the people who sell drugs do not use them themselves, and indeed, an entire economic sub-culture has grown up around drug sales. Viable economic alternatives must be provided, including living wage jobs, career counseling and business mentoring.

- After-school activities. The after-school hours are the time of prime susceptibility to the temptations of drug use. The schools, the City and the private sector must work together to provide appealing, safe and ongoing after-school activities as an alternative to idle time.

Though pervasive, drugs do not represent the only challenge to public safety in New Orleans. The City's criminal justice system is fragmented, contains many overlapping and even competing jurisdictions, and communicates poorly within itself. Even with these overlapping jurisdictions, the actual manpower dedicated to fighting crime is lower per capita than many other cities. While NOPD briefly reached its first staffing goal of 1700 officers, recent attrition – sparked by lack of funds to deliver promised promotions and raises – has regenerated the manpower crisis. Funding must be found to reverse this trend, and ultimately to achieve the goal of having 2000 well-trained, highly qualified officers on the force. In addition, officers need better career opportunities within the department, as well as incentives for continuing training and education.

The issue of overlapping police jurisdictions is extraordinarily complicated by itself. To eliminate some of the many police forces (i.e., Levee Board, Dock Board, Mississippi River Bridge) will require complex negotiations, major legislative action and tremendous political will – and a great deal of time. In the interim, the roles of all law enforcement jurisdictions need to be much more clearly defined, and communication among the jurisdictions greatly improved, so that the limited resources are effectively applied, duplication of efforts is reduced and infighting between the entities is eliminated.

Infighting also occurs among the major components of the criminal justice system, including NOPD, the sheriffs, the courts, and the District Attorney. Again, the first step to resolution is substantially improved communication. Having the leaders of the different elements meet regularly is essential. Information-sharing must become mandatory, and communications technology (an issue unto itself) must be upgraded and integrated, with personnel in each component properly trained to maximize usage of the system. Citizen oversight of the cooperation between elements of the system will be needed to make sure it occurs, and the spotlight must be shone on those who fail to participate. If all else fails, there may need to be consideration given to the establishing of a criminal justice system czar.

Two specific components of the criminal justice system received considerable attention from the Task Force. The first was the court system, particularly the criminal district courts. Communication from the courts to other players in the system, and even among the judges themselves, was deemed particularly poor. The courts are under funded, and their facilities in dreadful condition, but many judges are not effectively using the technology and other resources that they do have. A single, strong administrator for these courts is needed. Alternative courts, such as drug courts and teen courts, need to be expanded, and a common database for case management is imperative.

A specific problem facing the judges is mandatory sentencing. Faced with mandatory sentences that many judges feel are unduly harsh, there is a tendency to find defendants guilty of lesser charges to avoid excessive punishment. Dialogue between judges and legislators is needed to find a middle ground that serves society more effectively.

The juvenile justice system and courts are also in need of overhaul, with focus on diversionary programs, juvenile drug courts and other alternatives. A major problem is the complete lack of juvenile facilities in the New Orleans areas, which is a severe impediment to family participation in the

rehabilitation of juvenile offenders. In light of the fact that a startling percentage of adult offenders have juvenile records, much more focus needs to be given to resolving these problems.

The second component that the Task Force examined in detail was the parole and probation systems. Drastically under-funded and under-staffed, these systems still produce remarkably effective results. They cost substantially less than incarceration, in both dollars and costs to society, yet most people are not aware of their effectiveness, and they remain a low priority in both City and State government.

Solutions in this area include much stronger rehabilitation efforts while prisoners are still incarcerated; increasing the number of halfway houses in the New Orleans area; reducing caseloads for parole and probation officers; employer education and job placement programs, possibly including changes in certain laws to make ex-convicts more employable; and ongoing support systems that continue past initial parole or probation periods. The good news is that several very effective programs, such as Project Return, do exist. The bad news is that addressing this problem comprehensively will require substantial funding, although reallocation of funds could defray a sizeable percentage of the costs.

A distinct although not separate issue prioritized by the Task Force was that of domestic violence. Frequently related to drug abuse, this is a widespread problem in New Orleans that often seems to fly below the public radar. As a result, public education about the problem is a key component of solving it. Expanding the use of an integrated approach to combating the problem is also essential, with teamwork among law enforcement agencies and local and state social service entities. Family counseling to prevent domestic violence incidents needs to be widely available. Last but not far from least, victims of domestic violence need protection and access to services that at present are tragically lacking.

Finally, the Task Force asked that strong reference be made to the public safety issues of hurricanes and hazardous materials. With everything else they took on, the Task Force did not feel they had the time to address these issues in their Action Plan. However, City officials and the public at large need to be aware of the dangers. For example, there is little acknowledgement of the substantial quantities of hazardous materials that pass through New Orleans every day, via rail, trucks, river shipping, and pipelines. These materials include extremely toxic substances that in the event of a spill could cause numerous deaths and leave a section of the City uninhabitable for many years. Plans for communicating about a hazardous materials incident, measuring its severity, evacuating as appropriate, and cleaning up afterwards need to be developed and communicated, and implementation resources put in place.

Similarly, response plans for hurricane threats, while more advanced, need continued work and much better communication to the public. Evacuating the City and the region is a unique and difficult challenge, with limited departure avenues, a high percentage of people without vehicles, and the need to transport safely the elderly, the disabled and the incarcerated. In addition, people in the City must be made aware of the severity of the threat of a major hurricane, as many have indicated they would remain even in the face of a Category 4 or 5 storm. Experts suggest that New Orleans could be effectively shut down for up to six months in certain scenarios; in this context, staying home to protect one's property is a futile gesture. In both the hurricane and hazardous materials situations, far more work is needed from the City, the media and the private sector. A more detailed discussion of these issues can be found in the Public Safety Issue Paper.

During the public input phase of the CBNO process, the Public Safety issue of pollution and the environment emerged as an area of serious concern to the citizens of New Orleans. Specific comments were received regarding neighborhoods built on toxic landfills, other forms of pollution in the City's neighborhoods, the need to revitalize brownfield sites, high levels of pollution in the river, and the need to preserve natural assets in the City. In addition, the poor health of a large percentage of New Orleanians was raised as a significant concern.

While the Public Safety Action Plan is largely a very straightforward document, considerable political will and support from local legislators will be required to enact key portions of it. Funding will also be an issue, and public awareness will have to be raised in order to garner widespread support for funding increases. Compounding this is the fact that many public safety initiatives rely on considerable federal funding; yet most of these grants only last for short periods of time. Yet these issues tear at the very fabric of society, and their resolution -- or lack thereof -- will play a significant role in charting the course of the future for New Orleans.

Key crossover issues:

- Poverty (City Management, Economic Development, Education, Housing)
- Education (Economic Development, Education, Housing)
- Brownfields (Economic Development)
- Crime (Economic Development)
- Workforce (Economic Development)
- Alternative schools (Education)
- Brownfields (Public Safety)

Action Plan

Critical Issues and Goals

1.0 The need for education and prevention to address the City's drug problems.

As long as there is a demand for drugs and a market for drug dealers to exploit, no amount of increased law enforcement efforts will have a lasting effect on the City's drug problem. Eliminating the demand for drugs through effective prevention, education, treatment, and rehabilitation is the only permanent solution to the problem.

Eliminate experimentation with the use of drugs among elementary and middle school students through enhanced educational efforts, structured activities and alternative economic opportunities.

Objectives

1.1 Orleans Parish School Board (OPSB), the Office of Catholic Schools and independent private schools, in cooperation with components of the Orleans Parish criminal justice system, to support existing anti-drug education programs and explore opportunities for developing and introducing new programs throughout the entire schools systems.

- 1.1.1 Time Frame: (1) Public schools: July 2001 - Ongoing
(2) Parochial and private schools: current; ongoing
- 1.1.2 Financing: (1) School Resource Officer (SRO) program - \$9 million from federal government committed. Feasibility: 10
(2) Drug Awareness, Resistance and Education (DARE) Program, funded by Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff's Office (OPSCSO); needs additional \$350,000 per year from federal government. Feasibility: 8
- 1.1.3 Resources: (1) 35 additional NOPD officers funded from 1.1.2 above. Feasibility: 10
(2) OPCS will require additional officers. Feasibility: 8
- 1.1.4 Legislation: None required

1.2 City District Attorney, in partnership with OPSB, the Office of Catholic Schools and independent private schools, to develop and secure funding for an integrated approach to drug testing and treatment within the schools, aimed at eliminating experimentation and the use of drugs among elementary and middle school students. The approach will include voluntary drug testing, juvenile drug courts, expanded public treatment facilities, and creating treatment facilities within the school systems.

- 1.2.1 Time Frame: Current - ongoing
- 1.2.2 Financing: Program presently operating at minimal level. \$4,800,000 needed to test all public and private high school students. Funding primarily from federal grants, supplemented by corporate contributions. Feasibility: 8
- 1.2.3 Resources: Will require additional staff for the District Attorney's office. Feasibility: 8
- 1.2.4 Legislation: None required

1.3 CBNO Public Safety Task Force to lobby the Legislature and the State Department of Corrections to increase funding for the juvenile justice component of the criminal justice system, which will provide judges with alternatives to incarceration, including additional group homes in other areas of the State as well as New Orleans and earlier intervention with young drug offenders.

- 1.3.1 Time Frame: July 2001 - Ongoing
- 1.3.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 1.3.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 1.3.4 Legislation: Increased appropriation of Department of Corrections, with possibility of federal support. Feasibility: 5

1.4 CBNO Public Safety Task Force, in cooperation with the Greater New Orleans Education Foundation (GNOEF), to explore opportunities to introduce citizen-based programs to eliminate experimentation with and use of drugs, including drug courts, inclusion of "street law" education programs and conflict resolution workshops in schools.

- 1.4.1 Time Frame: July 2001 - Ongoing
- 1.4.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 1.4.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 1.4.4 Legislation: None required

1.5 University Presidents Advisory Council to conduct periodic cost/benefit reviews and assessments of the effectiveness of school-related drug programs to ensure accountability of those responsible for implementation and coordination of such programs.

- 1.5.1 Time Frame: July 2001 - Ongoing
- 1.5.2 Financing: \$25,000 - \$100,000. Feasibility: 7
- 1.5.3 Resources: External consultants will be required. Feasibility: 7
- 1.5.4 Legislation: None required

1.6 University Presidents Advisory Council, in cooperation with the Orleans Public School System CEO and the parochial and private schools, with support from the New Orleans Recreation Department (NORD) and the community, to support the development of recreational and educational activities and economic opportunities for youth as real alternatives to the drug culture and lives of crime. Such activities and opportunities will include organized recreational programs, career path internships and extra-curricular programs to engage youth in productive endeavors.

- 1.6.1 Time Frame: July 2002 to April 2002
- 1.6.2 Financing: \$250,000 will be needed to develop these programs, to be funded by colleges and universities (through in-kind support) and private sources. Feasibility: 10
- 1.6.3 Resources: College and university faculty will develop the programs. No additional human resources required.
- 1.6.4 Legislation: None required

2.0 Improving the staffing level and qualifications of the New Orleans Police Department.

The dynamic development of NOPD over the last five years has been identified as a major reason for the reduction in violent crime and an increase in citizen confidence in their police department. The gains made in NOPD's development must be nurtured and further enhanced if New Orleans is to continue on a positive road in its fight against crime.

Increase staffing of the NOPD and provide incentives to encourage officers to receive additional training and attain higher levels of education.

2.1 City to provide resources necessary to increase staffing levels of NOPD to 2000 officers by 2005.

2.1.1 Time Frame: July 2001 to December 2005

2.1.2 Financing: \$13,000,000 per year. Feasibility: 7

2.1.3 Resources: City Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), New Orleans Police Department and elected state officials.
Feasibility: 7

2.1.4 Legislation: State and City must approve budgets and allocate tax revenues.
Feasibility: 6

2.2 City to provide monetary and non-monetary incentives to reward increased qualifications of NOPD officers resulting from additional training and/or completing undergraduate and graduate college studies.

2.2.1 Time Frame: July 2001 - Ongoing

2.2.2 Financing: \$450,000 annually, based upon bonuses of \$500 for associate's degree, \$1000 for bachelor's degree and \$1500 for advanced degree. Feasibility: 5

2.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required

2.2.4 Legislation: None required other than appropriation of funds

3.0 The need for treatment and rehabilitation to address the City's drug problems.

The absence of drug treatment and rehabilitation facilities severely limits the opportunity to reduce the demand for drugs in the City of New Orleans. Public skepticism of the effectiveness of drug rehabilitation efforts works against providing adequate funding for these efforts.

Reduce the demand for drugs, and thereby improve public health and safety, through effective and widely available drug treatment and rehabilitation efforts, including both inpatient and outpatient facilities and programs.

3.1 Committee for a Better New Orleans (CBNO), in cooperation with the University Presidents Advisory Council, to identify the most effective drug treatment and rehabilitation programs and seek public and private funding for such treatment alternatives, including increased state and federal funding for programs, a public information campaign supporting the value and viability of such programs and private funding for model programs to validate their effectiveness. Securing required funding from state and federal governments should be among the City's highest legislative priorities.

- 3.1.1 Time Frame: July 2001 - Ongoing
- 3.1.2 Financing: \$150,000 - \$200,000. Feasibility: 7
- 3.1.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 3.1.4 Legislation: None required

3.2 Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff's Office (OPCSO) to ensure that persons arrested for municipal and state offenses are drug tested and treatment is provided, to the extent that adequate treatment facilities are available.

- 3.2.1 Time Frame: July 2001 - Ongoing
- 3.2.2 Financing: \$1,000,000 from the City. Feasibility: 8
- 3.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 3.2.4 Legislation: City Ordinance has been enacted authorizing drug testing; funds have not yet been appropriated

4.0 The need for a more coordinated approach and more effective information-sharing among all elements of the criminal justice system.

The criminal justice system in New Orleans is structurally fragmented. City, state and federal agencies share responsibilities for the apprehension, prosecution and incarceration of criminals. This fragmentation hurts efforts to properly track and provide efficient and fair prosecution of persons arrested for crimes. The most immediate need is to ensure that the components of the criminal justice system have access to and accountability for information on persons arrested for crimes and can track those individuals through the prosecution process.

Create a structure to facilitate a more coordinated and improved communication system involving all elements of the local, state and federal adult and juvenile criminal justice systems, resulting in improved coordination, efficiency and accountability.

4.1 District Attorney, in cooperation with the OPCSO and Criminal District Court, to develop a "major offender" classification, which can identify and prioritize dangerous and violent offenders during the criminal justice process for expedited handling.

- 4.1.1 Time Frame: July 2001 - Ongoing
- 4.1.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 4.1.3 Resources: Legal counsel will be required. Feasibility: 10
- 4.1.4 Legislation: None required

4.2 Information Systems Working Group, which includes OPCSO, NOPD, Criminal Courts, and Orleans Parish Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, to enhance and complete the Criminal Justice Information System (CJIS) and ensure that it is properly maintained, monitored and utilized, including necessary statutory and/or constitutional remedies.

- 4.2.1 Time Frame: January 2002 to December 2004
- 4.2.2 Financing: \$2,000,000; \$500,000 committed to Orleans Parish Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. Feasibility: 10
- 4.2.3 Resources: Agencies referred to above and Jefferson Parish, Orleans Parish, Port of New Orleans Police Department and others. Feasibility: 8

4.2.4 Legislation: None required

4.3 CBNO to sponsor a coalition of independent citizen groups, including the Metropolitan Crime Commission, Crimestoppers, Bureau of Governmental Research, the New Orleans Police Foundation, Citizens and Victims Against Crime, and others, to review strategically the criminal justice system on an ongoing basis to make the system more efficient and accountable, while protecting individual rights, including due process. This review should consider the issue of multiple police jurisdictions within Orleans Parish and identify best practices employed by other U.S. cities and counties in addressing similar problems.

4.3.1 Time Frame: July 2001; ongoing

4.3.2 Financing: No additional financing required

4.3.3 Resources: No additional human resources required

4.3.4 Legislation: None required

5.0 The need for educational, worker training and re-entry programs and opportunities for the incarcerated.

Until persons incarcerated are provided effective rehabilitation opportunities which offer meaningful, realistic alternatives to a life of crime, our community will continue to recycle criminals who prey on society, commit new crimes and return to prison. Current statistics indicate that the majority of persons incarcerated for crimes lack education and skills which would allow them to lead productive lives. A focus on providing tools for incarcerated persons to choose alternatives to crime could begin to break the cycle of crime and recidivism which plagues our City.

Mandate the use of state funds to provide comprehensive training for inmates, probationers, parolees, and ex-inmates, including basic education, vocational training, and life and workplace skills training, including support systems and employer participation to enhance the likelihood of re-entry as productive members of society.

5.1 OPCSO, in partnership with the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, to develop functional halfway houses as support for re-entry of ex-offenders into society, including the creation of day reporting centers, which will provide outpatient counseling and aftercare programs funded by the state.

5.1.1 Time Frame: July 2001 - Ongoing

5.1.2 Financing: \$300,000, from U.S. government (70%) and the state (30%).
Feasibility: 6

5.1.3 Resources: OPCSO will require additional human resources.
Feasibility: 6

5.1.4 Legislation: None required

5.2 City's vocational education system and job training programs, such as the New Orleans Jobs Initiative, in cooperation with the OPCSO and the Louisiana Department of Safety and Corrections, to form a strategic alliance with the New Orleans business community to actively mentor and offer vocational training opportunities for juvenile and adult ex-offenders in the OPCSO system.

- 5.2.1 Time Frame: April 2002 to December 2002
- 5.2.2 Financing: \$250,000, from U.S. government (70%) and the state (30%).
Feasibility: 7
- 5.2.3 Resources: OPCSO will require additional human resources.
Feasibility: 7
- 5.2.4 Legislation: None required

5.3 CBNO to inventory current programs offered by non-profit organizations and to assist them in acquiring resources to provide educational programs, substance abuse treatment and job skills training to ex-offenders, parolees and probationers.

- 5.3.1 Time Frame: September 2001 to December 2002
- 5.3.2 Financing: \$35,000 per year from private sources. Feasibility: 10
- 5.3.3 Resources: CBNO will require additional human resources.
Feasibility: 10
- 5.3.4 Legislation: None required

5.4 OPCSO in cooperation with the Louisiana Department of Public Safety to develop family-oriented prevention programs to compliment the substance abuse and/or prevention education offered within the criminal justice system for ex-offenders and probationers, including long-term and multi-family counseling.

- 5.4.1 Time Frame: October 2001 to February 2003
- 5.4.2 Financing: \$300,000, from U.S. government (70%) and the state (30%).
Feasibility: 5
- 5.4.3 Resources: OPCSO will require additional human resources.
Feasibility: 5
- 5.4.4 Legislation: None required

5.5 Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections to provide funding for an increase of probation and parole officers to levels commensurate with the need for such services in Orleans Parish.

- 5.5.1 Time Frame: July 2001 to December 2004
- 5.5.2 Financing: \$1,000,000 from state. Feasibility: 5
- 5.5.3 Resources: Department of Corrections will require additional human resources. Feasibility: 5
- 5.5.4 Legislation: None required

6.0 The need for greater awareness, resources and programs to address the problem of domestic violence.

Next to the violence associated with the traffic of drugs, domestic violence incidents represent the second highest contributor to the murder rate in the City of New Orleans. While many of these problems have their roots in social and economic deficiencies in the broader society, there are numerous tools which can be employed to mitigate the impact of domestic violence in our community.

Improve public health and safety by reducing the incidence of domestic violence.

6.1 The New Orleans Public Relations Society, in cooperation with University Counseling Centers, Loyola Twomey Center, Family Services, and other organizations, with support of CBNO, to complete a public awareness campaign to combat domestic violence.

- 6.1.1 Time Frame: September 2001 - December 2001
- 6.1.2 Financing: \$100,000. Feasibility: 7
- 6.1.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 6.1.4 Legislation: None required

6.2 New Orleans faith-based organizations, in cooperation with University Counseling Centers, Loyola Twomey Center and Family Services, to develop a family counseling program to assist families in resolving domestic issues without violence.

- 6.2.1 Time Frame: September 2001 to December 2002
- 6.2.2 Financing: \$150,000 per year. Feasibility: 7
- 6.2.3 Resources: Volunteers will be needed in addition to above agencies. Feasibility: 7
- 6.2.4 Legislation: None required

6.3 YWCA, Catholic Charities and other agencies to seek public and private funding that will provide additional safe havens for victims of domestic violence.

- 6.3.1 Time Frame: September 2001; ongoing
- 6.3.2 Financing: \$500,000, to be secured from HUD, United Way, City. Feasibility: 7
- 6.3.3 Resources: No additional human resources required to create safe havens. Will require additional personnel to operate new facilities.
- 6.3.4 Legislation: None required

6.4 CBNO Public Safety Task Force, in conjunction with the New Orleans Police Department, to review the application and implementation of existing domestic violence laws and procedures, and to support recommendations to enhance efforts to curtail domestic violence.

- 6.4.1 Time Frame: August 2001 - Ongoing
- 6.4.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 6.4.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 6.4.4 Legislation: New and/or amended legislation may be required. Feasibility: 10

Transportation Task Force Report

The status of transportation in the New Orleans region -- and transportation is a subject permeated by regionalism -- could be summed up thusly: **the resources and facilities are in fairly good shape, but planning and cooperation are poor to nonexistent.**

Regionalism is addressed broadly in the Overarching Issues section of this document, but examples of its importance to transportation abound. With a significant number of our citizens transit dependent, it is absurd that metro area bus service is severely limited in terms of available routes throughout the parishes, hours of operation, transfer points and timeliness. A passenger can travel from downtown New Orleans to Kenner more easily than from downtown to the Lakeside Mall. Regional fighting and distrust surrounding New Orleans International Airport must be resolved. And with the increasing federal focus on funding regional initiatives, area-wide cooperation will be essential to maintaining and increasing the federal transportation dollars flowing into the metro area.

The Regional Transit Authority (RTA), which is regional largely in name only, must live up to its appellation and mandate. This requires equitable leadership from New Orleans and active participation by all surrounding governmental entities. This is a key people issue as well as an economic development issue.

In addition to area-wide bus service, greater emphasis needs to be given to light passenger rail service in the region, including the streetcars in New Orleans. An airport-to-downtown rail line, which has been discussed for many years, must become a reality. The State of Louisiana and the Regional Planning Commission, with the strong support of Mayor Marc Morial and Jefferson Parish President Tim Coulon, have already initiated a two-year multi-modal environmental impact study of the Airport-to-UPT (Union Passenger Terminal) line and the surrounding corridor. Anyone driving on the region's major artery, I-10, on a daily basis will attest to the fact that I-10 has reached capacity despite recent improvements.

With recent funding from the hotel/motel tax as the local match, the streetcar lines are being expanded along Canal Street to Carrollton Avenue and into City Park. And as of March 2001, the Preliminary Engineering/Environmental Impact Statement (PE/EIS) project to determine the feasibility of instituting service in the Desire Corridor from Canal Street to the Industrial Canal and from the Mississippi River to St. Claude Avenue/Rampart Street has been initiated, based on the service route (Locally Preferred Alternative) selected by the public through an intense series of public meetings. While the Task Force had discussed and initially recommended an Elysian Fields spur, the Locally Preferred Alternative should better serve the community and tremendously expand the ability of the citizens to travel through their City. With the high percentage of people who do not own vehicles in New Orleans, this is a critical issue. These lines should have adequate linkage to each other as well as to the airport line and other regional transportation lines. Neighborhood focus, safety issues and overall efficiency should be core considerations in the planning of this light rail network.

While New Orleans recently lost out on the federal MagLev project, the issue should not be allowed to disappear from the table. This is the transportation mode of the future, and in New Orleans, has potential to be a key aspect of hurricane evacuation methods in addition to its many other advantages.

An added benefit of an expanded, efficient passenger rail system will be less congestion on I-10 and less wear and tear on City streets. Within the City, the condition of the streets is a huge concern of the citizens. While financing for street repairs and maintenance is reasonably adequate, manpower and bureaucracy are substantial obstacles. The height of absurdity is the fact that, depending on the depth of a pothole, any of three different entities may be responsible for filling it. All the agencies involved with the streets, including the Department of Public Works, the Sewerage and Water Board and Entergy, among

others, must establish a formal working process to improve efficiency and street quality, while minimizing disruption.

Equally important to better streets is a better system for prioritizing street repairs. A citywide rather than district by district approach is essential. A central inventory of street repair and maintenance needs must be established and kept current, with street work prioritized based on this information.

While streets are on the minds of the people every day, the New Orleans International Airport is equally important to the big picture of the City's future. The major economic force driving the airport is the New Orleans tourism industry, and it cannot be stated strongly enough that no new airport can successfully serve this industry. The Transportation Task Force emphasized that the present airport must be allowed to grow as needed to remain competitive nationally and continue its service to tourism; no alternative airport is truly viable.

New Orleans International Airport is a regional asset, and regional cooperation and support must be developed. While recognizing the complexity of the issue, the questions of governance must be resolved. The City owns the airport, and any compromises on control must be matched by returns to the City.

Competitive expansion of the airport begins with the building of a new north-south runway. Concerns of other airport partners must be resolved on a timely basis, because the window of opportunity for this absolutely vital addition is only so broad. Other possible options for airport growth include increasing its air cargo volume; making it an aircraft maintenance hub; building an industrial park in its immediate vicinity; and looking for ways to reduce landing fees. All of these options and more should be considered as part of a comprehensive, long-term strategic planning process with regional participation. Such an approach is the only way to ensure the long-term viability of New Orleans International Airport -- and to a large degree, the entire region it serves.

Strategic planning is also needed for Lakefront Airport, another important City asset. The benefits of this facility need to be maximized, and its value to corporate air travel enhanced as a significant economic development tool.

Another major transportation asset of the City is the Port. This thriving entity is facing one significant threat, the quality of freight rail service in New Orleans, which at present is rife with disorganization and delays. Six major rail companies plus the public belt line use this system, yet there is little communication and coordination among them. A central point of coordination and control is desperately needed, probably under the auspices of the public belt line. There also needs to be coordination between freight and passenger rail systems.

Safety is a significant issue for the freight rail system. Substantial quantities of hazardous materials are transported through the City on a daily basis; yet cargo manifests are often incomplete and/or inaccessible, emergency planning for a hazardous materials incident is minimal, and responsibility in this area not clearly defined. This situation must be remedied as quickly as possible. Similarly, the safety of railroad crossings in the City needs to be studied and improved, and the impact of freight rail on the quality of life of City residents must be reduced as much as possible without excessively interfering with rail operations.

In many ways, transportation is in better condition than the other five issues discussed by CBNO. This makes it no less critical, as its impact on everyday quality of life as well as the City's -- and region's -- economic future is tremendous. The overriding need in transportation is for comprehensive transportation planning based on regional consensus -- in effect, a master regional transportation plan, leading to a seamless, professionally managed regional transportation system.

Key crossover issues:

- The airport (Economic Development)
- Government structural inefficiency (City Management, Economic Development)
- Hazardous materials (Public Safety)

Action Plan

Critical Issues and Goals

1.0 Ensuring long-term viability and competitiveness of the New Orleans International Airport and Lakefront Airport.

The City must develop the International Airport above all alternatives and take on the issues affecting the airport head-on. The City should take a leadership role regarding the completion of the new north-south runway by resolving governance, noise abatement and relocation issues related to its construction. The City should develop a strategic plan for the airport to maximize its economic impact in generating jobs and secondary economic activity and investment. It may also consider leveraging airport assets for maximum benefit, including but not limited to other regional transportation concessions.

Complete the new north-south runway by resolving governance, noise abatement and relocation issues related to its construction.

1.1 Mayor, in cooperation with the New Orleans Aviation Board (NOAB), to achieve consensus among St. Charles Parish, Jefferson Parish and the City of Kenner for the construction of the north-south runway as being critical to the continued viability and competitiveness of NOIA.

- 1.1.1 Time Frame: Efforts to reach consensus- Ongoing, to be completed by February 2002. Negotiations will take up to ten years
- 1.1.2 Financing: \$450,000,000 to be provided by federal government (80%) and state/local match (20%). Federal Aviation Authority to provide federal share. Feasibility: 7
- 1.1.3 Resources: No additional human resources required to reach consensus
- 1.1.4 Legislation: State appropriation from Capital Outlay Budget for state share

1.2 Mayor to lead efforts to resolve concerns of St. Charles Parish, Jefferson Parish and the City of Kenner related to airport expansion, including governance, noise abatement and relocation issues, to the extent that they are barriers to increasing NOIA's capacity.

- 1.2.1 Time Frame: Discussions are ongoing
- 1.2.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 1.2.3 Resources: No additional human resources required
- 1.2.4 Legislation: None required

1.3 Mayor to be creative in promoting NOIA as an asset of the City of New Orleans, which can and should be leveraged to maximize benefits for the City.

- 1.3.1 Time Frame: July 2001 to January 2002
- 1.3.2 Financing: \$250,000 for NOAB comprehensive strategic plan. NOAB to provide financing
- 1.3.3 Resources: Strategic plan will require external facilitation
- 1.3.4 Legislation: None required

2.0 Functioning, viable regional transportation system.

The City cannot isolate itself from regional transportation issues. Instead, it must become the leader in the creation of a truly effective regional transportation/transit system, providing companies and customers easy and reliable access to products, suppliers and employees.

Create a truly effective regional transportation/transit system.

2.1 Regional Transit Authority (RTA), with support from the New Orleans Aviation Board (NOAB) and Jefferson Parish, to create a light rail link between the New Orleans International Airport and the Union Passenger Terminal, which will substantially reduce traffic congestion on I-10.

2.1.1 Time Frame: January 2002 to January 2010

2.1.2 Financing: Estimated \$160 Million - 50% approximate split, based on recent funding trends, to be provided by federal government and local/state match. Feasibility: 7

2.1.3 Resources: May require RTA to provide new management team.
Feasibility: 8

2.1.4 Legislation: Funding authorizations: Louisiana Capital Outlay Budget; U.S. Federal Railroad Administration, Department of Transportation, Hotel/Motel Tax.

2.2 RTA to continue to give priority to expanding its streetcar service on the Riverfront, on Canal Street to Carrollton Avenue, with a spur linking City Park and the New Orleans Museum of Art, and the Desire Corridor from the Mississippi River to St. Claude/St. Rampart Streets and Canal Street to the Industrial Canal.

2.2.1 Time Frame: In Process to March 2006

2.2.2 Financing: \$70,000,000 + to be provided by federal government and local/state match. Feasibility: 8

2.2.3 Resources: Additional construction, street assemblers, drivers will be needed.

2.2.4 Legislation: Funding authorizations (see 2.1.4 above)

2.3 Mayor to convene a Regional Summit, including the parishes of Jefferson, St. Tammany, St. Charles and other concerned parishes, which will encourage participants to participate proactively with the RTA in expanding its bus services to provide convenient and affordable transportation to all residents within the metropolitan area.

2.3.1 Time Frame: September 2002 - Ongoing

2.3.2 Financing: No additional financing required

2.3.3 Resources: No additional human resources required

2.3.4 Legislation: None required

2.4 City, in cooperation with Regional Planning Commission (RPC), the Greater New Orleans Expressway Commission (Causeway) and NOAB, to advance development of a Magnetic Levitation (MagLev) system, or other viable alternative, to connect St. Tammany Parish and Jefferson Parish with Orleans Parish.

- 2.4.1 Time Frame: In Process to March 2006
- 2.4.2 Financing: \$20,000,000+ to be provided by federal government and state/local match. Feasibility: 3
- 2.4.3 Resources: To Be Determined
- 2.4.4 Legislation: Funding authorizations (see 2.1.4 above)

3.0 Management and improvement of streets based upon an objective analysis of needed street repairs.

Street repair and improvement must be a function of professional management and coordination, not politics. The City should improve streets through aggressive management of all utilities and an objective, centralized system of prioritizing street improvements, beginning with the projects approved by the voters in November 2000.

Improve streets through aggressive management of all utilities and an objective system of prioritizing street repairs.

3.1 Mayor to create an ongoing Interagency Task Force (IATF), composed of the Department of Public Works (DPW), Entergy, BellSouth, Cox Cable, and other public and private utilities, and empower it to assume responsibility for addressing the City's need for adequate, well-maintained and repaired streets, and to make recommendations to the City Council.

- 3.1.1 Time Frame: May 2002 to May 2003
- 3.1.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 3.1.3 Resources: CAO responsible. No additional human resources required
- 3.1.4 Legislation: May require Council ordinance or resolution

3.2 Interagency Task Force, with staff support from DPW, to manage aggressively and assess objectively the conditions of the city's streets, identify those in need of reconstruction or repair on a citywide basis, and recommend projects for implementation to the Mayor and City Council.

- 3.2.1 Time Frame: May 2002 - Ongoing
- 3.2.2 Financing: \$200,000 per year. Feasibility: 9
- 3.2.3 Resources: DPW is responsible, in cooperation with IATF representatives and external consultants. Feasibility: 10
- 3.2.4 Legislation: None required

3.3 Chief Administrative Officer, in cooperation with IATF, to accelerate implementation of the City's currently planned street improvements, as well as planning and implementing new street improvement projects authorized by the transportation bond issue approved in November 2000.

- 3.3.1 Time Frame: In Process - Ongoing
- 3.3.2 Financing: Already funded by 1995 and 2000 transportation bond issues
- 3.3.3 Resources: CAO and IATF responsible. No additional human resources required
- 3.3.4 Legislation: None required

4.0 More efficient freight rail system, emphasizing safety and hazardous materials management.

The City must take a leadership role in improving freight rail efficiency through the New Orleans gateway, with a strong emphasis on safety.

Improve freight rail efficiency through the New Orleans gateway with strong emphasis on safety.

4.1 Mayor to appoint a Freight Railroad Task Force, chaired by the General Manager of the New Orleans Public Belt Railroad, to develop and secure funding for a plan that will enhance rail safety and improve system efficiency, including acquiring of appropriate rights of way that will foster coordination and rationalization and will accommodate high speed passenger and freight rail services.

- 4.1.1 Time Frame: June 2002 to January 2003
- 4.1.2 Financing: \$50,000 to develop the plan. Feasibility: 10
- 4.1.3 Resources: City Planning Commission and Mayor's Office of Economic Development will support project. No additional human resources required
- 4.1.4 Legislation: None required

4.2 RPC, in conjunction with Freight Railroad Task Force, to develop and implement the Regional Rail Gateway Study, which will resolve railroad congestion problems on a regional basis by ensuring that trains move through the area in an expeditious manner and without causing inconvenience or posing safety threats to residential neighborhoods.

- 4.2.1 Time Frame: In process - complete by February 2002
- 4.2.2 Financing: No additional financing required
- 4.2.3 Resources: Implementation will require participation by Mayor, Jefferson Parish President and RPC. Feasibility: 10
- 4.2.4 Legislation: Plans may require legislative action for coordination and implementation among all parties, including railroads, Orleans and Jefferson parishes and Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development. Feasibility: 10

Overarching Issues

In the course of the CBNO process, many issues appeared in the conversations of more than one Task Force; these crossover issues are referenced at the end of the introductions to each Task Force Report. However, three issues arose that infused the discussions of all the Task Forces: Race Relations, Regionalism and Cooperation, and Accountability, Monitoring and Results Reporting. In addition, in the course of public input to the first draft of this Blueprint, Indigenous Culture also emerged as an overarching issue. A look at each of these issues, and the thoughts that surfaced regarding them, follows. The discussions are not so much intended to present solutions as to promote focus and dialogue on the issues.

Race Relations and Poverty

37 years after the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964, race relations is still the most contentious issue in American society. Racial issues and interaction have shaped much of the history of New Orleans, and continue to impact virtually every aspect of the City today.

Despite the considerable ground yet to be covered before legitimate equity based on racial differences is achieved in New Orleans, there are grounds for cautious optimism. The question of racism was on the table during the Task Force process, and while the Committee makes no claim to have solved the City's racial problems, the issue was discussed with extraordinary candor, openness and willingness to listen. In that the Committee for a Better New Orleans represents leadership from a broad cross-section of the City, this is a hopeful sign. The CBNO recognizes that candid discussions are a good beginning, but widespread action is required before equity and balance is achieved among African-Americans, other people of color and whites in New Orleans.

The 1964 Civil Rights Act and the forced desegregation that ensued, especially in the public schools, should be viewed as a watershed event in New Orleans history. While African-Americans gained at least access to education and jobs by law, the fact is that equal access has still not been achieved. In addition, a large segment of the white community responded to desegregation by abandoning the City and its institutions. This has resulted in a huge population loss, with attendant tax base decline. Ripple effects are many, including substantial infrastructure decline, tremendous decay of the City's housing stock, concentrated poverty, under-funded City government, loss of federal funding, and most pervasively damaging of all, a horrific decline in the New Orleans Public Schools.

Among the areas where racial problems are most visible in New Orleans today are:

- Housing. Black renters still have a much more difficult time finding quality, affordable rental housing than white renters. Real estate agencies continue to steer white and black homebuyers into different areas of the City, resulting in de facto segregation in many neighborhoods. Access to home loans is much more difficult for African-American homebuyers.

- Criminal justice. Racial profiling continues; African-Americans continue to be sentenced more harshly for similar crimes than whites; access to competent legal services are severely limited; and the percentage of the African-American population -- particularly males -- that is incarcerated is much higher than the percentage of the white population.

- Economic opportunity. Twice as many black people as white people worry about their ability to survive economically. White people still own and operate most of the largest businesses in the City, and have access to the best paying, most career-oriented jobs. Pay inequities for similar jobs have been greatly reduced but still exist.

- Education. African-Americans suffer disproportionately from a public school system which has been historically under-funded.

- Safety. African-Americans are significantly more likely to be the victims of all types of crime, including violent crimes such as murder. Impoverished conditions make poor, Black neighborhoods vulnerable to the trade in drugs and the culture of violence with which the drug trade is associated.

- Poverty. Although not exclusively a racial issue, there is no question that white flight contributed greatly to the overall poverty in New Orleans, as well as to the concentrations of pockets of poverty in the City. The low income levels and overall financial resources in the City contribute to many of the most substantial problems in the City, including the poor educational system, the decay of the housing stock and general infrastructure, drug sales and criminal and gang activities, under-funding of City government, and the need for a high level of social services. Poverty levels are higher, and income levels lower, for African-Americans than whites; addressing this inequity will go a long way toward resolving other poverty-related problems.

In addition, regional racism cannot be ignored. Many African-Americans who would like to at least consider moving out of New Orleans into surrounding areas feel they are trapped by racial attitudes in the suburban areas. Regional cooperation is in part thwarted by racism. For example, cooperation to build a regional transportation system is hampered by race based perceptions and attitudes.

The Hispanic and Vietnamese populations of the City must also be acknowledged. They were referenced, and their concerns discussed, during the Task Force process. Also important to this discussion is the issue of race-based decisions and racial prejudices directed at white individuals. While understandable in a historical context, and in now comparable to the burden of racism on the black community, negative racial attitudes from and towards anyone dehumanize people, and thwart efforts to bring people together and move in unity towards a better future for all.

One strong advantage New Orleans has in addressing racism is that in this community, African-Americans and whites need each other. Neither population can survive without the other. Interaction between the two races -- as well as the Hispanic and Asian communities -- occurs constantly.

However, simply allowing time to heal wounds is not a viable option. It is imperative that leaders from every aspect of the community -- religious, governmental, business, educational, civic -- make every effort to be inclusive, to avoid the language of racism, to think in terms of inclusion rather than exclusion.

For it is also true that the ideal of a color-blind society has no reality to it. There are cultural differences among all races and within each race; when these differences are viewed as assets rather than feared, racism begins to be less of a divisive issue. For change to occur, continued honest dialogue, government efforts to ensure racial equality, absolute commitment from the business community to avoid racist practices, proactive efforts in the private sector to widen the doors of economic opportunity, emphasis on both racial and economic diversity in housing and neighborhoods, and a citywide commitment to rebuild the schools must take place.

In the matter of race, we have made significant progress over the last generation, but the problem remains disappointingly widespread. Today's leaders may not be able to eliminate racism, but they can and must provide the foundation for tomorrow's society to be respectful of racial and cultural differences.

Regionalism and Cooperation

From the perspective of the average citizen, the lack of cooperation among regional leaders and institutions is incomprehensible, baseless and absurd. Regional thinking, regional dialogue, regional problem-solving, and regional consensus must become the norm.

Every CBNO Task Force addressed regionalism. A brief synopsis of each one's concerns includes:

- City Management: the biggest issue is revenues. The metro area must work together to ensure that all governments have the revenue they need to operate well. The quantity of services New Orleans provides for residents of surrounding areas, without return compensation, needs to be addressed. In addition, New Orleans needs to work with municipalities statewide to expand revenue-generating options. In general, City and Parish leaders must demonstrate an ability to work together, and to put an end to the bickering that hurts the entire area's national image, creates an attitude of conflict and distrust between citizens and impairs federal funding and economic development opportunities.

- Economic Development: while there will always be some competition between the City and its suburbs in this area, it cannot be allowed to overwhelm cooperation. Large companies will bring jobs and the need for local business suppliers to the entire area, regardless of where they specifically locate. Issues that underlay economic development, such as workforce training, transportation, infrastructure, and incentives, must be addressed together and resolved by consensus.

- Education: surrounding areas must come to the realization that they are directly impacted by the quality of education in New Orleans, an impact that may become substantially greater if BESE imposes certain school choice options. Sharing of best practices and resources, mentoring and other cooperative approaches will benefit the entire metro education system.

- Housing: any review of the homestead exemption must be conducted on a regional basis, and consensus must be reached on this difficult issue. In addition, blight cares little for lines drawn on maps; it is in the interest of the neighboring parishes to be involved in efforts to reduce vacant and blighted housing in New Orleans. Finally, given the Housing Task Force's overarching goal of regaining population in the City, discussion should be open on how population movement in either direction impacts not just housing but infrastructure, revenues and any number of other related issues.

- Public Safety: crime and criminals also pay no attention to city borders. Communication and cooperation among regional law enforcement agencies and officials are of paramount importance. Similarly, the courts and the probation and parole systems in all jurisdictions will benefit greatly from information-sharing and other forms of cooperation. In addition, hazardous materials incidents and major storms are threats to the entire geographic region; evacuation and other response planning absolutely must take place on a regional level.

- Transportation: the issue most permeated by the need for a regional approach. From the airport to bus routes, from passenger rail to freight rail, transportation concerns inextricably link the entire metro New Orleans area. As mentioned in the Transportation Task Force report, a regional master plan for transportation, representing consensus and commitment from all area governments and transportation entities, is essential for economic development, public safety and simply improving quality of life for the man on the street -- regardless of in which parish that street is found.

The federal government is taking an increasingly regional approach to local funding, and regional leaders must come together on any number of federal programs and initiatives or face the threat of losing vital federal dollars. More important, the people are demanding civility and cooperation from their leaders, because they know their future depends on it. It is time for the leaders to respond, and commit to a regional approach to resolving the problems and issues they face.

Accountability, Monitoring and Results Reporting

Simply put, accountability is the difference between promises and results. In most instances, accountability only occurs if the people demand it. Part of the overall purpose of the entire Committee for a Better New Orleans process is to serve notice that the people of the City are demanding accountability: accountability from government, from the business community, from nonprofit institutions, from the school system, and from any and all other entities who purport to serve the people.

Two key components of accountability emerged in numerous Task Force discussions:

- "One-stop shopping". This catch-all term refers to the need for severe reductions in the bureaucracy and politics involved with most interactions with City government. In Economic Development, it relates specifically to the permits and related approvals needed to establish, move or expand a business. It also refers to certification as a minority or woman-owned business. It should be taken to mean that the people demand that entrepreneurs be supported, not thwarted, by City Hall. In Housing, one-stop shopping refers also to permitting and approvals, this time related to renovation, construction, zoning, and similar issues. In focusing on these specifics, no one should lose sight of the need to streamline any number of government processes -- while of course retaining necessary safeguards to protect legitimate public interests -- and generally to make the business of doing business with the City a supportive and productive interaction rather than a frustrating, time-consuming and costly misadventure.

- Customer service. Similar to the above, but related to personnel rather than process. Anyone who has done business regularly with the City should recognize that improvements have been made in this regard during the present administration -- but this and future administrations should understand that the people are demanding, and deserve, even better. Performance measurements for workers and for departments should be based on their ability to deliver customer service, and a general customer service culture needs to be installed. This last need is by no means limited to government; businesses large and small throughout the City should focus strongly on customer service at every level of their operations. This will mean both training and empowering employees; it ranges from simple courtesy to far-reaching commitments to meet the needs of the people.

Demanding accountability, and receiving assurances that it will be delivered, are only the first steps. Vigilant monitoring is needed, and CBNO itself has taken on this role in some areas. In others, existing organizations have been called on to expand and/or formalize their watchdog roles; in others, new institutions or coalitions of groups must be formed to provide monitoring. These monitors themselves must be held accountable for thorough, fair and timely performance of their tasks. Such monitoring is desperately needed not just of City Hall but also of the criminal justice system, the school system and many other entities that significantly impact daily life in New Orleans.

The final step in achieving true accountability is public reporting of the results gathered by the monitoring agencies. This should be done with an emphasis on standards and facts rather than analysis; people can make their own evaluations if the results are reported clearly and equitably.

Any institution that is doing its job well, or at the very least putting in an honest effort to improve its performance, should welcome this type of scrutiny. Transparency breeds public confidence, and confidence breeds support. There is a huge lack of trust between the people of New Orleans and the institutions that serve them; implementing an across-the-board system of accountability is the only way to rebuild that trust.

From there, it is up to the people. If they call out those individuals and institutions that fail to deliver what they promise -- and reward those that do -- performance in every aspect of the community will

improve. Ultimately, all government and all institutions are by and of the people, and the people themselves must be accountable.

Indigenous Culture

Culture means many different things to different people in New Orleans, and that very diversity is part of what makes it so integral to life in the city. Our indigenous culture is the attraction that draws most of the visitors to New Orleans, and induces many residents to stay. As such it is one of the city's most valuable assets – and in a few of its forms, a serious liability. Either way, no discussion of the future of New Orleans can be complete without addressing the subject of culture.

Some key points of discussion include:

- What are the threats to New Orleans culture?
- How do we continue to benefit from our culture's tourist appeal without commercializing it to the point where it loses its authenticity?
- How do we ensure that funding of arts and culture includes more of the indigenous expressions, and that culture benefits all segments of our community?
- How do we mesh culture and education? Culture and economic development?
- What are the negatives aspects of New Orleans culture, and how do we attempt to reorient them?

Some of the most obvious aspects of New Orleans culture are music, food, architecture, and Mardi Gras. Yet even these have nuances that are often overlooked and/or misunderstood.

Music may be the most universally recognized aspect of New Orleans culture. The question here is how to nurture our indigenous music and performers; part of the answer may well lie in the area of economic development. So many musicians leave New Orleans in order to “make it big”, in part because musician support services (as well as many other cultural support services) do not exist here. These services represent a superb entrepreneurial opportunity. Education is another part of the answer: music education in the schools, and education of the public – both locals and visitors – about the history and essence of New Orleans music.

Similar issues arise when discussing New Orleans cuisine, where “Creole” and “Cajun” are being used almost interchangeably. “New Orleans Cajun food” is a *non sequiter*, and the distinction between what is truly local food and what is regional, commercialized versions of our cuisine is becoming alarmingly blurred. Another cultural threat is the proliferation of fast food chains, virtually every one of which supplants a neighborhood po'boy or seafood restaurant.

We must also examine, and begin to set parameters for, the ceaseless debate between preservation of historic structures and development of the city. How do we choose which buildings to restore and which to remove? Our historic districts and neighborhoods must likewise be both protected and revitalized. The French Quarter must maintain its vibrancy as a living area, with local services and legitimate attractions instead of an endless array of t-shirt shops. Part of accomplishing this is spreading culture-based tourism throughout the city, without turning these cultural treasures into caricatures.

We must consider how to protect the true, local nature of Mardi Gras, Jazz Fest and other uniquely New Orleans celebrations against the “Spring Break” mentality and commercial greed that is threatening to take them over. We must look at every other facet of what is uniquely New Orleans, from jazz funerals marching to our historic cemeteries to our widely misunderstood Creole heritage, and build our awareness of them so that we may not just save them but retain and enhance their full vibrancy. And we must make sure that the vibrant African-American contributions to New Orleans culture are recognized, documented and rewarded.

Even as we preserve and celebrate our culture, we must also acknowledge those aspects that hold the city back from realizing its true potential and moving forward in the 21st century. These cultural handicaps include problems such as racism (discussed above); our prioritization of entertainment and partying ahead of education and entrepreneurship; and our acceptance of petty corruption and tolerance of litter, which has moved ahead of safety as the number one complaint of visitors to our city. These are neither cute, quaint nor – in most instances – even historically valid parts of New Orleans culture, and it is time to address them openly and effectively, to shed ourselves of this cultural baggage.

It should be noted here that one element of the city’s new Master Plan is Arts and Culture. This is a very positive development, and in its final form, the Master Plan Arts and Culture element must ensure that cultural equity and other issues raised in this Blueprint are addressed comprehensively and aggressively.

Culture is one of those rare elements that is truly of the past, present and future. Without its indigenous culture, New Orleans could be anywhere – and would be nowhere. Concerted, proactive steps must be taken to ensure that our truly magnificent culture, and the people who bring it to life, are nourished and in turn can nourish all of us who live here.

Epilogue: The Future of CBNO

While the Committee for a Better New Orleans has worked very hard to identify those entities best suited to take responsibility for the implementation of most of the objectives in this Blueprint, very few of the objectives are designed to be implemented by CBNO itself. Yet the Committee takes very seriously the importance of seeing this Blueprint implemented; this is a plan for the future of our City, and the members of CBNO are utterly committed to being a part of building that future.

Therefore, the Committee has voted to continue past its initial mission of developing this Blueprint. Its ongoing role is defined in its new Mission Statement, adopted by the Board of Directors in August, 2001:

The Committee for a Better New Orleans/Metropolitan Area Committee (CBNO/MAC) is a racially and culturally diverse group whose mission is to provide leadership and to catalyze change toward achievement of the Blueprint for a Better New Orleans.

CBNO/MAC will accomplish its mission by providing and maintaining an advocacy role that encourages the kinds of partnership, collaboration and candid conversation that reflects the interests of the citizens of New Orleans.

It should be noted that CBNO's Principles of Involvement, as defined at the beginning of this document, remain unchanged.

One major step in establishing the future of the Committee for a Better New Orleans was taken in September 2001: a formal merger with the Metropolitan Area Committee (MAC). This highly-respected organization, formed in the 1960s, shared much of the vision and many of the goals of CBNO. Bringing the two organizations together strengthens their capacity to effect change in our City. The MAC Leadership Forum, so vital to building community leaders, will continue. The combined organization will work to have the Blueprint endorsed by all candidates for office in the February 2002 elections and in future elections. Individually and as a group, members of CBNO/MAC will continue to promote implementation of the Blueprint, by identifying resources, forging coalitions and bringing people and groups together to work on its objectives.

Additionally five "Priority Issues" were adopted and will constitute the focus of the CBNO/MAC efforts through the remainder of 2001 and into the first half of 2002:

Priority Issues

1. To pursue establishment of an Accelerated Learning (alternative school) and Career Development Center, in concert with the Orleans Parish School Board, the school administration, the Education Foundation, the Algiers community, and other organizations as appropriate, as an immediate CBNO/MAC priority. **This priority is related to Education Task Force Goal #4 – minimize the classroom disruption and assist children in overcoming behavioral problems using off-site and on-site settings and resources.**
2. To make communication of the benefits of Earned Income Tax Credits an immediate priority. **This priority related to Object 2.3 in the Economic/Workforce Development Task Force report –“Develop workforce incentives which include wage and benefit targets.” The project builds on the work of Total Community Action to promote utilization of the EITC as a workforce incentive with the potential to produce over \$50 million in economic impact in the New Orleans area annually.**

3. To develop a plan for the New Orleans Jobs Initiative (NOJI) life skills training model to be incorporated into the institutional framework of the state’s workforce development apparatus. **This priority is related to the Economic/Workforce Development Task Force’s Goal # 2 – “Create a seamless and coordinated workforce development system.”**
4. To immediately pursue the implementation of a “one-stop” permitting process as outlined in the Blueprint section on City Government and Finance. **This priority is also related to the Economic Development Task Force’s Goal #1.1 – “Develop a one-stop licensing and permitting service center.” The project builds on the recent investment by the City of New Orleans of \$1 million to develop the One-Stop Business Center located in the Amoco Building and the work of MetroVision to establish standard permitting across parish lines.**
5. To identify resources and secure funding for the implementation of a comprehensive, automated property inventory system available on the City’s website. **This priority is related to the Housing and Neighborhoods Task Force’s Goal #2.2 which is designed to facilitate neighborhood development, research and planning as well as the redevelopment of blighted properties by providing easy access to information to empower citizens to get involved in the revitalization of neighborhoods.**

As an ongoing organization, CBNO/MAC will continue to welcome public input and participation. This Blueprint remains a document of the people; the future described herein is one to be shared among all the citizens of New Orleans. Creating that future requires all segments of the community to engage, to converse, and to work together to implement our shared vision of building a great American city.

COMMITTEE FOR A BETTER NEW ORLEANS

SUMMARY OF COSTS
FOR RECOMMENDED ACTION PLANS

CITY MANAGEMENT & FINANCE

Initial/One-Time Costs	\$ 2,050,000	
Operational Costs (Overhaul of Civil Service System, use of technology)	\$ 32,000,000	
Venture/Capital Outlay	<u>\$ 20,500,000</u>	
TOTAL		<u>\$ 54,550,000</u>

- (3) Objectives/No Additional Cost Involved
- 2.1 Mayor/Effective Working Relationships with Regional/State Leaders
 - 2.2 Review of ad valorem tax exemption criteria, etc.

Legislation Required in (4) of (15) Objective

ECONOMIC/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Initial/one-Time Costs	\$ 820,000	
Operational	\$ 5,065,000*	
Venture/Capital Outlay	\$20,000,000	
*Includes costs that could be covered through self-generating fees such as web-enabled on-line access for paying parking tickets, permits, taxes, etc.		
TOTAL		<u>\$25,885,000</u>

- (2) Objectives/No Additional Cost Involved
- 2.1 & 2.2 Workforce Development/training to match existing jobs and training for upper level jobs at livable wages using existing existing sources.

Legislation Required in (4) of (17) Objectives

EDUCATION

Initial/One-Time Costs	
Teacher/Administrator Training	\$ 250,000
Parental Involvement Campaign	\$ 200,000
Public Campaign/Bonds for Infrastructure	\$ 150,000

Operational \$ To Be Determined

Capital Outlay

Rebuilding School Infrastructure \$ 1,000,000,000
Alternative School Center/Houston Model \$ 7,500,000

TOTAL **\$ 1,008,100,000 +**

Ironically, (12) Objectives/No Additional Cost Involved out of total of (16) which focus on instituting measures consistent with the Reform Plan. Some reallocation of existing funds will be required.

However, the OPSB faces severe crisis in funding for targeted and critical initiatives to bring the system up to quality standards.

No Legislation is Required.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

Initial/One-Time Costs \$ 650,000

A good portion of these funds are for creating a solely needed databank/inventory of all available properties and every parcel in Orleans Parish with \$200,000 being funded by banks and foundations to use in redefining “neighborhoods” by geographic boundaries

Operational \$ 500,000

+15% Increase in Dedicated Community Block Grant Funds

Mortgage Financing \$ 200,000,000

Special terms & financing for low to moderate income families

TOTAL **\$ 201,100,000**

- (3) Objectives/No Additional Cost Involved
 - 1.1 Expedite acquisition of blight properties/In Process
 - 1.4 Waive past due ad valorem taxes/In Process
 - 3.4 Creative financing for those with poor credit records

Legislation Required in (5) of (13) Objectives
City, state and federal authorization may be needed.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Because of the additional analysis needed to research and identify the cost of drug treatment and drug rehabilitation for the large segments of the community affected, the following are minimal dollars needed to make our city safe:

Initial/One-Time Costs	\$ 350,000	
Operational	\$ 22,735,000 +	
Includes \$13,000,000 for NOPD to increase staffing levels and qualifications and \$9,000,000 for School Resource Officers (already secured through federal funding)		
Capital Outlay	\$ 500,000 + To Be Determined	
TOTAL		<u>\$ 23,585,000 +</u>

- (3) Objectives/No Additional Cost Involved
 - 1.3 Joint effort to lobby state legislature
 - 1.4 Introduction of citizen-based programs
 - 3.1 Identification of “major offender classification”

Legislation Required in (4) of (22) Objectives

TRANSPORTATION

Initial/One-Time Costs	\$ 300,000	
Operational	\$ 200,000 +	
Does not include street improvement Bond funds already approved or personnel as services come on line.		
Capital Outlay	\$ <u>700,000,000</u>	
Airport Runway, Streetcar Expansion, Maglev, Light Rail System to Airport		
TOTAL		<u>\$ 700,500,000</u>

- (4) Objectives/No Additional Costs Involved
 - 1.2 Mayor to resolve issues related to airport expansion
 - 2.3 Mayor to convene Regional Summit on RTA
 - 3.1 Mayor to create Ongoing Interagency Task Force on streets
 - 4.2 RPC to develop and implement Regional Rail Gateway Study/In Process

Legislation Required in (5) of (11) Objectives, primarily for funding authorization

APPENDICES TO THE BLUEPRINT

**COMMITTEE FOR A BETTER NEW ORLEANS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Joseph C. Canizaro, Co-Chair; President & CEO, Columbus Properties, L.P.
Barbara Major, Co-Chair; Community Activist & Director, St. Thomas Health Service
Dr. Norman Francis, Co-Chair; President, Xavier University
Herschel Abbott, Jr., President/Louisiana, BellSouth Telecommunications, Inc.
Mike Ballases, President & CEO, Bank One Louisiana
Donald T. Bollinger, Chairman & CEO, Bollinger Machine Shop & Shipyard, Inc.
J. Ron Brinson, President & CEO, Board of Commissioners, Port of New Orleans
Fred Burford, President & CEO, Jazz Casino Holdings
Kenneth M. Carter, Attorney, Carter & Cates, Attorneys at Law
Dr. Edgar Chase, Jr., Dean, Division of Business, Dillard University
David J. Conroy, Attorney, Milling, Benson, Woodward, L.L.P.
Peter Dangerfield, Executive Director, Total Community Action, Inc.
Leslie Jacobs, President, The Rosenthal Agency
Moon Landrieu, Civic Leader & Retired Elected Official
H. Merritt Lane, III, President & CEO, Canal Barge Co., Inc.
Diana Lewis, Chairman, New Orleans Neighborhood Development Collaborative
Alden J. McDonald, President & CEO, Liberty Bank & Trust Company
Anne Milling, Community Leader
R. King Milling, President, Whitney National Bank
Darren Mire, President, Young Leadership Council
C. Ray Nagin, Vice President and General Manager, Cox Cable Louisiana
Daniel Packer, President & CEO, Entergy-New Orleans
Kay G. Priestly, Managing Partner, Arthur Anderson, L.L.P.
Sandra Rhodes-Duncan, Rhodes Funeral Home
Roy Rodney, Senior Partner, Rodney, Bordenave, Boykin, Bennette & Boyle
Willie Spears, Vice President, Hibernia National Bank
Mtumishi St. Julien, Director, The Finance Authority of New Orleans

CONSULTANT TEAM

Norton Berman
Malcolm Ehrhardt
Sandra M. Gunner
Bill Rouselle
Keith G.C. Twitchell

CITY MANAGEMENT & FINANCE TASK FORCE

Mike Ballases, Co-Chair; President & CEO, Bank One Louisiana
Darren Mire, Co-Chair; President, Young Leadership Council
Dr. Norman Francis, University Advisor; President, Xavier University
Dr. Gregory M. O'Brien, University Advisor; Chancellor, University of New Orleans
Donald T. Bollinger, Chairman & CEO, Bollinger Machine Shop & Shipyard, Inc.
Michael Bruno, Paartner, Bruno and Tervalon, CPA's
Kenneth M. Carter, Attorney, Carter & Cates Attorney at Large
David J. Conroy, Attorney, Milling, Benson, Woodward, L.L.P.
George Denegre, Partner, Jones, Walker Waechter, Waechter, Poitevent, Carrere & Denegre, L.L.P.
Patrick DeRouen, Attorney Porteous, Hainkel, Johnson & Sarpy
Mike Early, Owner, Advertising Creative LA
L. Ronald Forman, President & CEO, Audubon Institute
William R. Forrester, Jr., Commissioner, Civil Service Commission
Norma E. Grace, Vice Chancellor, University of New Orleans
Cedric Grant, Chief Administrative Officer (CEO), Office of the Mayor
Freddie Henderson, Reverend, The United Methodist church
Moon Landrieu, Community Leader & Retired Elected Official
Mickey Landry, Attorney, Landry & Swarr
Rodney Lemon, Sr., Chief Financial Officer, The Finance Authority of New Orleans
Anne Milling, Community Leader
Stephen L. Newman, Sr. Vice President of Operations, Tenet Health Systems
Tina Nguyen Owen, Community Leader and Business owner
Roy Rodney, Senior Partner, Rodney, Bordenave, Boykin & Boyle
Timothy P. Ryan, Dean, School of Business Administration, UNO
Gregory M. St. Etienne, Executive Vice President & CEO, Liberty Bank & Trust Co. C
Jimmie Thorns, Thorns Consulting, Inc.
Mary Zervignon, Community Leader & Retired Government Official

ECONOMIC/WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE

Alden J. McDonald, Co-Chair; President & CEO, Liberty Bank & Trust Company
Herschel Abbott, Jr., Co-Chair; President & CEO, Bellsouth Communications
Dr. J. Terrence Kelly, University Advisor; Chancellor, Delgado Community College
Coleman E. Adler, II, Owner & CEO, Coleman E. Adler & Sons, Inc.
Peter Babin, III, Business Manager/Financial Secretary, International Union of Operating Engineers-Local 406
Clarence L. Barney, President, & CEO, C. Lyle Barney Distributors
Tom Benson, Owner, New Orleans Saints Football Team
Fred Burford, President & CEO, Jazz Casino Holdings
Ronald Burns, President & CEO, Quick Courier Services, Inc.
Shirley Trusty Corey, President and CEO, Arts Council of New Orleans
Peter Dangerfield, Executive Director, Total Community Action, Inc..
Patricia Denechaud, President, Crescent City Consultants

ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT (CONT'D)

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Barbara Major, Director, St. Thomas Health Service
William C. Metcalf, CEO, MC Media
Phala Mire, Director, Multicultural Tourism Network
Keith B. Pittman, Intergovernmental Relations, Hilton Hotel
Imam Wali Abdul Raoof, New Orleans Masjid Al-Islam
Wade Rathke, Chief Organizer, Service Employees International Union-Local 100
Sandy S. Shilstone, Executive Vice President, New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation
Frank B. Stewart, Jr., Chairman of the Board, Stewart Enterprises, Inc.
Wilbert Tross, Jr., Westside Missionary Baptist Association
Jean Washington, Director, Training Connection, Inc.
Paul Whelton, Senior Vice President, Tulane University Medical Center
Kimberly Williamson, Executive Director, Downtown Development District

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R. King Milling, Co-Chair; President Whitney National Bank
Fr. Bernard P. Knoth, S.J., University Advisor; President, Loyola University
Michael L. Lomax, University Advisor, President, Dillard University
Dorothy Aramburo, Education Consultant
Sharon Barber, Community Leader
Barbara Brooks, President, Orleans District PTA
Susan Burge, Director, School To Career, Metro Vision
Dr. J. Rene Coman, Superintendent of Catholic Schools, Archdiocese of New Orleans
Colonel Alphonse Davis, CEO, New Orleans Public Schools
Yolanda Estrada, Musica Latina
Joseph Givens, Executive Director, All Congregations Together
Cheryl A. Gray, Attorney, Gray & Gray, APLC
Leslie Jacobs, President, The Rosenthal Agency
Jan Jobe, President & CEO, Pan-American Life Insurance Co.
H. Merritt Lane, III, President & CEO Canal Barge Co., Inc.
Diedre Lebot, Vice President of Academic Affairs, Xavier University
Brenda I. Mitchell, President, United Teachers of New Orleans (UTNO)
C. Ray Nagin, Vice President and General Manager, Cox Cable Louisiana
Paul Pastorek, Attorney, Adams and Reese
Hunter Pierson, President, Pierson Investments

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Norwood Roussell, Vice President, Dillard University
Andre Rubenstein, Owner, Rubenstein Bros.
Ronald Taylor, President, PANOPSI
Shaie-Mei Temple, Community Leader & Business owner
Cathy Vaughn, Program Manager, Baptist Community Ministries
Vera Warren-Williams, Owner, Community Book Center
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Benjamin R. Bell, Interim Executive Director, Housing Authority of New Orleans
Darryl D. Berger, President, Darryl Berger Companies
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Gary Esolen, Chairman, The Media Revolution
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Joseph C. Profit, Jr., Reverend, Ideal Baptist Association
Peg Reese, Executive Director, Unity for the Homeless
Virgin Robinson, Jr., President and CEO Dryades Savings Bank
Ashton J. Ryan, Jr., President and CEO, First Bank and Trust
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Willie Spears, Executive Vice President, Hibernia National Bank
Stacy Seicshnaydre, Greater New Orleans Fair Housing
Camille Jones Strachan, Attorney
Vincent T. Sylvain, Executive Director, Housing and Neighborhood Development, Office of the Mayor
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HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS TASK FORCE (CONT'D)

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Cornelius Tilton, Reverend, Greater New Orleans Federation of Churches
Sarah Todd, Housing Specialist, Volunteers of America
Troylinn Wilson-Henriques, Community Leader

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M.L. Legarde, III, Co-Chair; President, Columbia/HCA Delta Division
Dr. Joseph Bouie, Jr., University Advisor; Chancellor, Southern University at New Orleans
Barbara Avalos, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, Office of the Mayor
Hattie Broussard, Acting First Assistant U.S. Attorneys Office
John Casbon, Regional Vice President, S.E. Region, First American Title Insurance Co. The Rt.
Reverend Cornal Garnett Henning, Presiding Prelate, 8th District, African Methodist Episcopal Church
Terry Ebbert, Executive Director, New Orleans Police Foundation
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Joyce Reaves, Director, Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff's Office
Ed Robinson, Partner, L&R Security
Cyril Saulny, President, NAACP New Orleans Chapter
Ike Spears, Attorney, Spears and Spears
Judge Jerome Winsberg (Retired), Attorney, Winsberg & Winsberg

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Edward Markle, Attorney, Markle and Associates
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Darrell Saizan, Consultant, Saizan & Associates

TRANSPORTATION TASK FORCE (CONT'D)

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