



September 2017 Standing Committee & Initiative Reports

Public Policy Committee

In September, the Public Policy Committee met to discuss the City of New Orleans' 2018 Budget and 2017 policy priorities. The Committee detailed the differences between the 2017 and 2018 budget to determine what changes will impact residents and what policies can be implemented to protect and improve access to affordable housing opportunities for New Orleanians and the GNOHA plans to request an increase in housing funds budget hearing. The Committee reviewed 2017 Policy Priorities: Healthy Homes, Equitable Transit Oriented Development, Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Article 23 and School District Properties.

Homeownership Committee

The Homeownership Committee did not meet in September, however there is a meeting scheduled in October. In the interim, GNOHA will reach out to the Louisiana Housing Corporation (LHC), Finance Authority of New Orleans (FANO) ASI Federal Credit Union, HOPE Federal Credit Union, and Crescent City Community Land Trust to discuss the mortgage alternative program for the special population of culture bearers, musicians, and service industry workers. The Third Line is an initiative to partner with lenders to create a mortgage product designed to help nontraditional workers (musicians, service workers, and culture bearers) achieve homeownership and key to GNOHA's Own the Crescent campaign. The LHC has launched a pilot program based on their original commitment to Third Line, but it is only available in eight parishes that were damaged in the 2016 floods, which excludes Metro New Orleans.

Nonprofit Roundtable

The Nonprofit Roundtable did not meet in September, but will meet in October. A letter regarding the Nonprofit Rebuild Pilot Program (NRPP) was sent to the LHC outlining challenges with the program, what changes can be implemented to improve the program, and what changes can be implemented to help the people whose homes were affected. The Roundtable will also discuss a Shared Solution that tracks client contact, and will help clients in finding the right resource for their needs.

Rental Committee

The full committee did not meet in September month, but efforts continued to schedule a meeting between developers and Entergy's Energy Smart, a program to incentivize energy efficiency in multifamily developments to discuss how the program can be improved. The Energy Efficiency for All (EEFA) Coalition has been meeting regularly and advancing a study around the energy efficiency of rental buildings in New Orleans, which is nearly complete in its data-gathering stage and will soon be formulated into report-form.

Section 8 Subcommittee

The Rental Committee has created a Section 8 subcommittee with HANO to further outreach and advocacy for both renters and landlords. GNOHA began talks with HANO on how to increase the acceptance of vouchers and recruit landlords in high opportunity neighborhoods. GNOHA plans to connect HANO with neighborhood associations to also help recruit potential landlords.

Emergency Preparedness Committee

The Emergency Preparedness Committee did not meet this month, but will soon begin writing letters to representatives from national agencies to gain their support around a disaster housing pipeline. GNOHA has been participating in calls with the National Low Income Housing Coalition to monitor disaster response to Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria.

Capacity Building

The Capacity Building Committee met in September, and began working on building a shared solutions service model. The next phase of the process is a shared solutions survey sent to members for a better understanding of our membership's needs. The primary uses of the shared solutions are for financial needs (bookkeeping, development finance, construction management, IT, software purchases, and client management services). GNOHA will be working with *trepwise*, an impact consulting firm that works to build capacity for organizations and individuals.

The UNO PLUS Development Finance Certificate Program has received the CEA from the City of New Orleans. GNOHA member organizations will be eligible participate, along with the individuals and organizations identified by The Network for Economic Opportunities. The Capacity Building Calendar is complete, and the search for more capacity building opportunities is ongoing.

Louisiana Homebuyer Education Collaborative

The 2018-2019 Collaborative Application Cycle opened on September 5th and will accept applications until 2pm on October 31st.

HUD released the examination schedule for housing counselor certification for 2017; the announcement proclaims the start of the HUD Certified Housing Counselor Examination will be on August 01, 2017. Registration for the Examination will not be open until August 01, 2017. The Collaborative will be creating group to support its members in completing the new certification requirements.

The next Collaborative Quarterly Meeting will be held at the end of October.

Outreach and Advocacy Committee (Put Housing First)

The Put Housing First Campaign is continuing to secure the support of the initial 10,000 registered voters for the upcoming elections. Leading up to the city's municipal elections in October, GNOHA has encouraged all New Orleans City Council, mayoral and state treasurer candidates to acknowledge the affordable housing crisis and the 'Put Housing First' platform.

GNOHA developed a platform for candidates to respond to and pledged to share the results with its supporters. The platform included a candidate questionnaire and policy proposals, like the Healthy

Homes Ordinance, adding more dollars to a Neighborhood Housing Improvement Fund and addressing tax relief for low-income homeowners who face increased property assessments and property owners who wish to create affordable housing units. The platform also calls on candidates to support the efforts of public agencies to rebuild mixed-income housing, help find solutions to keep utility costs affordable and help increase housing stock and availability for renters and homeowners with special needs.

On Friday, August 4, the platform was distributed to candidates with responses due back to GNOHA by Friday, August 18. Throughout the week of Sept. 11 - 15, responsive candidates were asked to participate in an in-depth interview with GNOHA representatives to discuss their survey answers and further explain their positions on the items listed in the platform.

Of the 55 surveys that were distributed to candidates, GNOHA received 31 responses averaging around 70 percent or a "C" letter grade. Average results per race were as follows:

- Candidates for treasurer received an average score of 70 ("C" letter grade)
- Candidates for mayor received an average score of 64 ("D" letter grade)
- Candidates for Council At-Large 1 received an average score of 62 ("D" letter grade)
- Candidates for Council At-Large 2 received an average score of 74 ("C" letter grade)
- Candidates for District "A" received an average score of 71 ("C" letter grade)
- Candidates for District "B" received an average score of 70 ("C" letter grade)
- Candidates for District "C" received an average score of 85 ("B" letter grade)
- Candidates for District "D" received an average score of 0 ("F" letter grade)
- Candidates for District "E" received an average score of 75 ("C" letter grade)

The candidate scorecard was released on Thursday, September 21st. The full candidate score card can be found here: www.gnoha.org/main/put_housing_first.

HousingNOLA Initiatives

HousingNOLA Leadership Board

The HousingNOLA Working Groups & Community Review Team finalized the 2017 Report Card which will be released on Saturday, September 30th at Dillard's 11th Annual Housing, Health and Community Resources Fair. Overall in 2017, HousingNOLA gave its collective effort a "C" letter grade, which dropped from a "B" in 2016. There was a great deal accomplished in HousingNOLA's second year in the second year of implementation, but those were 'hard-fought' victories with other critical issues going unaddressed. At the event, HousingNOLA hosted a panel discussion on the information listed in the report card and why the City of New Orleans is barely passing in terms of creating and prioritizing affordable housing. Panelists included Executive Director of HousingNOLA Andreanecia Morris, Carrollton-Riverbend Neighborhood Association member Betty DiMarco, and co-founder of the New Life Intracoastal Community Development Corporation Rev. Willie Calhoun, Jr.

In September, HousingNOLA began the following research projects:

1. A study towards increasing affordable housing opportunities, creating a synergetic relations between costs, market and policy for affordable housing.
2. A study to improve connections between housing providers and social service agencies.

HousingNOLA's Data Committee calls for the creation of relationship with various Special Needs populations to data Housing NOLA has standing meetings with the following groups: UNITY Service Providers, UNITY LGBTQ+ Task Force and AARP's Aging in Place Task Force. HousingNOLA continues to make new connections with representatives from its Special Needs populations. The following connections were made in September: Individuals with Disabilities, Formerly Incarcerated and At Risk Youth.

Louisiana Housing Trust Fund Initiative

The Trust Fund Steering Committee continues to work on securing a dedicated revenue source for the state's housing trust fund. Committee members are exploring options that could involve escrow interest and legislation in the 2018 session.

Workforce Housing Council

The Workforce Housing Council did not meet in September, but staff are continuing to work on workforce housing issues including NORTA's Strategic Mobility Plan and survey.

Smart Housing Mix Tiger Team

The Smart Housing Mix Tiger Team did not meet in August, and the administration is studying the economics of what the City can require of developers – and in which areas of the city - while still ensuring that development can be profitable and competitive with surrounding jurisdictions.

Assessor Working Group

The full Assessor's Working Group did not meet in September, but is working with the Assessor to explore tax relief for first time homeowners. We are also working to increase awareness of the various tax freezes for homeowners.

Lenders Roundtable

The Lenders Roundtable met in September to discuss the structure and presentation of the data compiled to project the housing development funding gap over the next five years. Data was provided outlining the city's commitment for 7,500 units; it is projected that 10,952 units needed for <80% AMI renters. The Lenders Roundtable also discussed the investment opportunities for projects that currently have some public investment, but still lack the private capital necessary to complete the units.

Insurance Task Force

The Insurance Task Force did not meet in September. GNOHA staff continues to develop a survey that is being created for homeowners and developers, in the hopes that these survey results will give a foundation for policy recommendations that can be brought to the commissioner. HousingNOLA representatives visited Washington, DC in September and were able to discuss Hurricane Harvey impact with key congressional offices and FEMA and HUD officials and were able to raise the issue of the NFIP reauthorization. The proposed NFIP bill would negatively impact New Orleans and we are hopeful that our efforts in partnership with various coalitions will lead to a stable and affordable flood insurance program.