

MEMORANDUM

To: All Councilmembers

From: CURO By: Jared Reese

CC: Justyn Hawkins and Anita Curran

Date: March 18, 2026

RE: The Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans Meeting 3/18/2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans (SWBNO) Board of Directors met on Wednesday, March, 2026. The complete packet for the meeting may be found [here](#).

A. Most Urgent Repairs

SWBNO identified eight urgent transmission main repairs and four remaining JIRR transmission main replacement projects for immediate action, contingent on available funding. The utility pursued earmarked federal funding through Washington and allocated IEB funds toward repair and replacement efforts.

B. Assessment Methods

SWBNO initiated an assessment of the oldest mains near the Carrollton Water Treatment Plant, covering 33.8 miles of mains exceeding 100 years old, roughly 33% of the system. SWBNO stated the same percentage of pipes in other systems exceed only 50 years in comparison. The utility estimated the cost of inspecting half of the 33.8 miles using acoustic tools at \$1 million dollars, with funding from IEB resources.

C. RFI

SWBNO planned to advertise a Request for Information (RFI) by end of April 2026 to gather data on emerging technologies for condition assessments, leak detection, predictive technology and pipe pipe repair methods. The utility planned to review results and select an options within three months of report submission.

D. Estimates

SWBNO developed a first draft of projects and preliminary cost estimates targeted for Q4 2026. Full replacement of the 33.8 miles of older transmission mains carried an estimated cost of up to \$680 million. SWBNO identified a smaller subset of priority investments and planned to advertise RFPs for priority replacement designs for work to begin in early 2027.

E. Hydraulic Modelling

SWBNO initiated development of an updated hydraulic model for targeted areas, to remotely assess how changing conditions effect the overall system. The model supported a planned citywide hydraulic assessment to improve system safety and operational planning. SWBNO stated proposals were under review and they anticipated selection in March 2026.

F. Replacement Program

SWBNO established a goal of replacing 60% of water mains over 20 to 30 years through an ongoing water main replacement program at an annual replacement rate of 2% to 3%, exceeding the industry standard of 1% to 2%. The utility planned to advertise an RFP in Q1 2027 for work to begin by end of 2027.

G. Potential Funding

SWBNO tasked its CFO with evaluating parcel fees and fair share agreements as potential mechanisms to support bonding efforts. The utility also engaged the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA) to explore funding systems on a national level for distressed cities facing aging water infrastructure.