



**Joseph I. Giarrusso, III**  
New Orleans City Council  
District A



Friends,

As summer wraps up, I want to update you on the key things this Council is focused on to improve public safety and quality of life. Usually, we send a newsletter every four to six weeks. With so many important updates, we will send four newsletters over the next 7-10 days, starting with this one on crime. Then we will address blight, streets/sanitation, and the series will end with Energy outages.

**After my signature line below, you'll see segments explaining initiatives and actions already taken or in progress. Any segment headlined in red is a link to actual legislation, as described, for more information.**

The current upswing in violent crime – particularly homicides – is unacceptable. As I've said before, the City proposed, and the Council approved a \$215 million budget for NOPD in 2022. For various reasons, a significant portion of those funds remains unspent. The NOPD budget is built for 1250 commissioned officers and 130 recruits. Now, NOPD has fewer than 960 commissioned officers and about 30 recruits. We have identified part of the problem; the question is, how do we solve it?

I am meeting with stakeholders to understand their needs and budget requests. Budget hearings begin in early November, and I expect each department to propose specific improvements to policy, enforcement, or processes that most impact the public. Here is the bottom line: that existing money needs a sound plan, and then the money needs to be used as wisely as possible.

To that end, the Council has made progress by working with criminal justice stakeholders on legislation, policy, and budget matters to tamp down crime both in the short term and long term, which you'll read about below.

As the legislative branch, we are committed to using our chief powers of appropriating funds and legislating to address public safety now and in the future. Remember, too, the Council has had marathon public meetings with NOPD, the DA, the Sheriff, and judges to pinpoint the most critical issues publicly and to discuss improving those. This is a criminal justice system, and we want to ensure all participants in the system are pulling their weight and moving in the same direction to serve all New Orleanians.

Best,

---

#### **NOPD CIVILIZATION**

There are two updates here. First, I have proposed for months that NOPD has a c-suite level position to help with back-office administration. We need to ensure someone can help with HR, create more efficient ordering practices, and understand the needs of the districts.

Second, Civil Service is not only expediting a Council study to create new civilian positions within the NOPD, freeing up officers for violent crime response but has also proposed its own plan to NOPD to create civilian positions. The more civilian help NOPD has with responding to, for example, traffic accidents and other non-violent quality of life issues, the better it can respond to serious calls for service.

---

#### **RECRUITING & RETENTION**

The Council allocated \$900,000 to the New Orleans Police & Justice Foundation in June to recruit new NOPD officers. Making the recruiting process more streamlined – such as allowing applicants to test from home instead of a facility in New Orleans – is important. Additionally, we need to focus on our existing officers and how to pinpoint areas of need, such as detectives for homicide and domestic violence.

---

#### **PUBLIC INTEGRITY BUREAU STAFFING**

The Public Integrity Bureau (PIB) must have sufficient staffing to thoroughly investigate personnel complaints within 135 days. NOPD has until October to promulgate policies and disciplines around this new legislation.

---

#### **AGGREGATING CRIMINAL JUSTICE DATA**

To reduce crime, it's important to look at the whole picture. The Council has contracted the development of several public, digital dashboards that encompass data from multiple city agencies, such as juvenile court, municipal court, NOPD, and others. We expect these dashboards to be live by December 2022.

---

#### **LONGEVITY SALARY INCREASES**

2% increases every year for officers with the Department between 3-23 years (co-authored letter with Administration to move up start date).

---

#### **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION MILLAGE**

In April, voters authorized a special millage dedicated to childcare and educational opportunities for young children. This millage will create 1,500 new seats in early childhood programs citywide.

---

#### **REFORMED JUVENILE PROBATION & PAROLE**

Jefferson Parish spends about \$15 million on juvenile probation, diversion, and parole programs. Orleans Parish, on the other hand, only spends roughly \$1 million annually. I have spoken with the Administration about using ARP funds to pilot this type of program to ensure services are being provided on the front end to reduce crime.

---

#### **QUARTERLY UPDATES**

Seven city-funded law enforcement agencies must present year-to-date budget, operational needs, legislative challenges, or any other matters pertinent to Council oversight.