



MESSAGE FROM DISTRICT A COUNCILMEMBER JOSEPH I. GIARRUSO III



Hello Friends,

I hope you all had a happy, healthy, and safe holiday season. Our top priorities have been and remain improving quality of life and ensuring neighbors are updated on quality-of-life issues affecting them.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns at Joseph.Giarruso@nola.gov or 504-658-1010.

Best,

Joe

Updating Resident Services

Identifying, understanding, and responding to resident issues is prioritized in our office. We can generally see upticks, whether in District A, or citywide by tracking our emails and calls. I wanted, however, a better and easier way for residents to see the issues logged by our office.

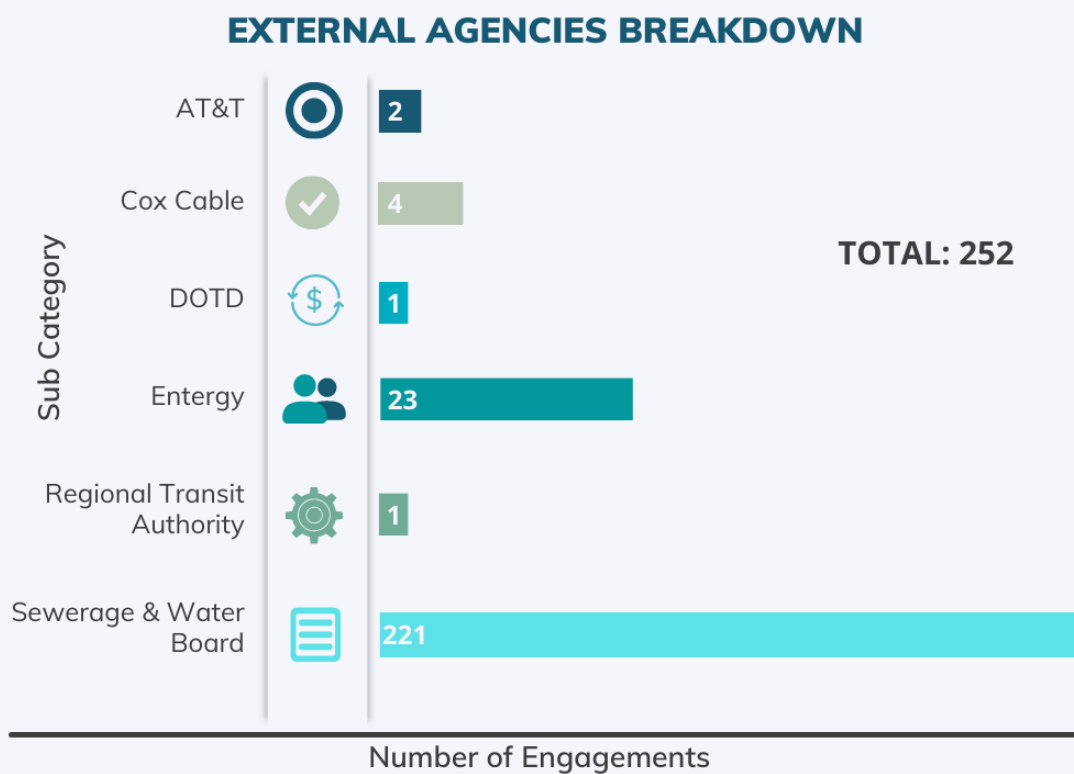
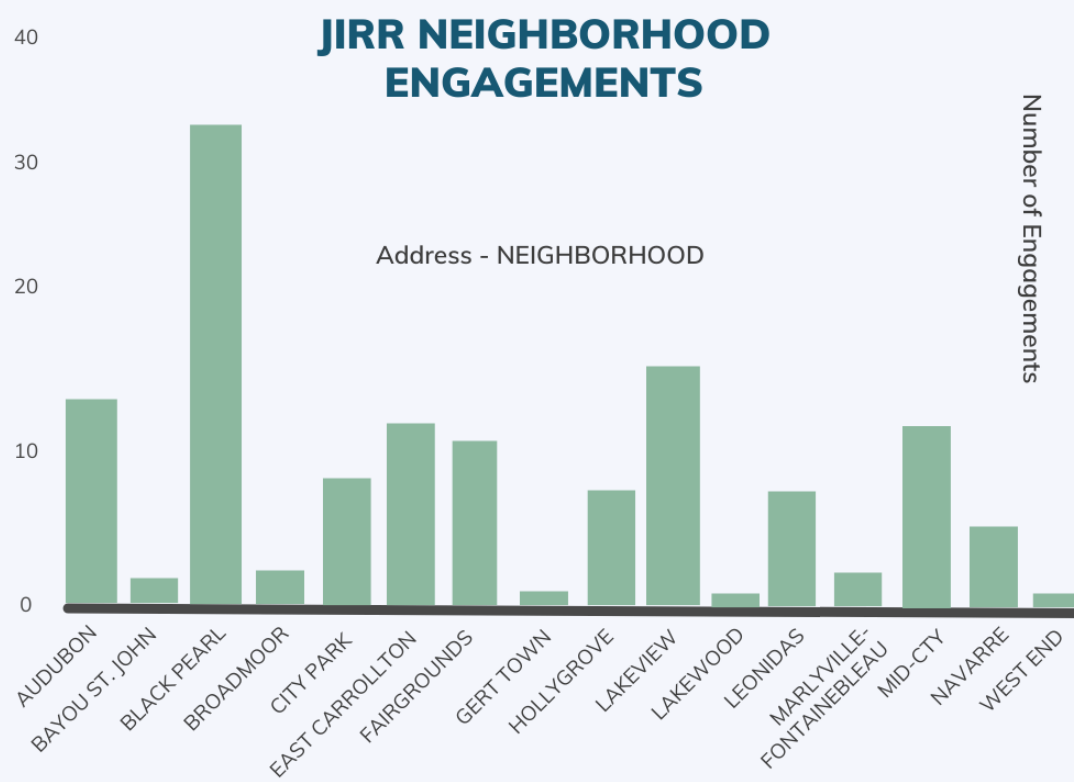
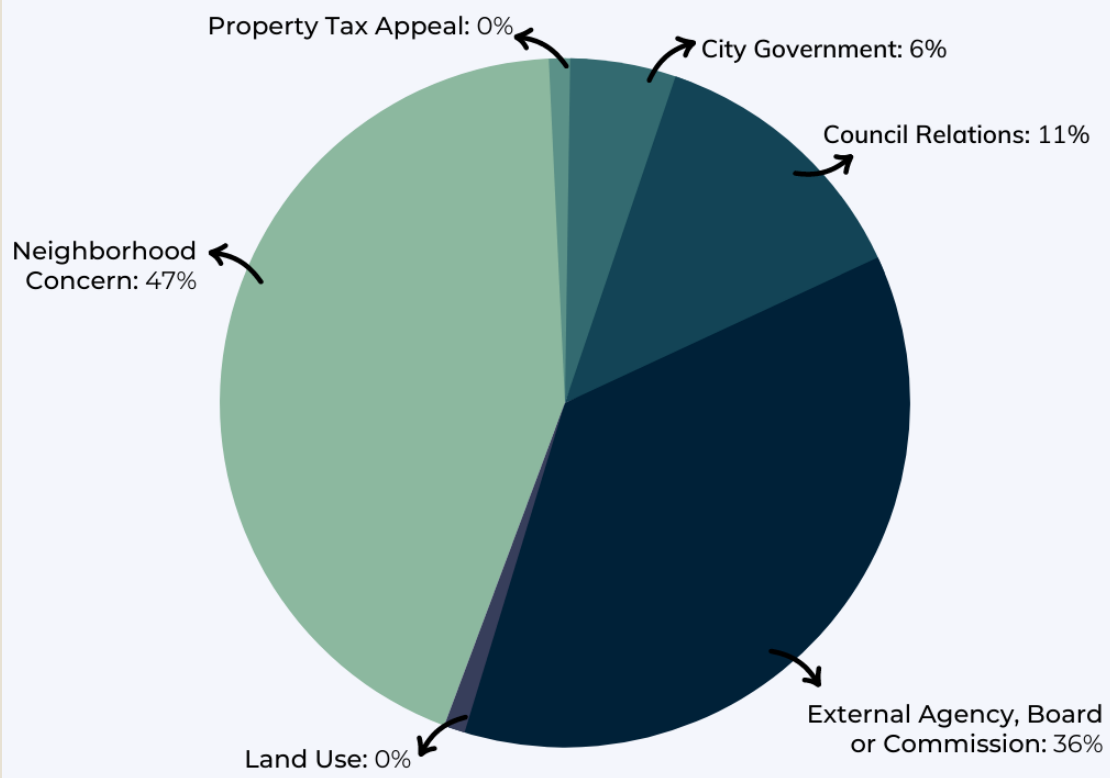
When I first came into office, we could only track constituent complaints through our emails or handwritten notes. That is not an efficient or transparent system. Early in my first term, we received a digital constituent database where we track each complaint until it has been resolved. Now, I'm working to make this data public.

With data starting from November 2021 through the end of December, our existing constituent database will show what type of issues are received, the number of issues, and hopefully the resolution of those. Each resident report is categorized by department or concern. Below we explain each category, show a screenshot of the more than 500 engagements received by our office since November 2021, and other informational charts of those engagements:

- **City Government:** City Department questions such as Safety & Permit issues (including zoning issues decided by S&P), NOPD concerns, parking, and school zone ticket issues, and other general departmental questions;
- **Council Relations:** Comments and questions on Council legislation, zoning change requests, and HDLC appeals;
- **External Relations:** Issues relating to entities outside of City Hall, including SWBNO, Entergy, and telecommunication companies;
- **Neighborhood Concerns:** General quality of life issues including missing or broken streetlights, sanitation issues, traffic and speed zone studies, Joint Infrastructure Recovery (JIRR) roadwork concerns and complaints;
- **Property Tax Appeal:** Appeals and adjustments of property taxes.

ENGAGEMENTS BY CATEGORY

| Status | Closed | Pending | Totals |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Category | # of Engagements | # of Engagements | # of Engagements |
| City Government | 9 | 32 | 41 |
| Council Relations | 2 | 73 | 75 |
| External Agency, Board or Commission | 31 | 221 | 252 |
| Land Use | - | 1 | 1 |
| Neighborhood Concern | 61 | 272 | 333 |
| Property Tax Appeal | - | 1 | 1 |
| TOTAL (10 GROUPS) | 103 | 600 | 703 |

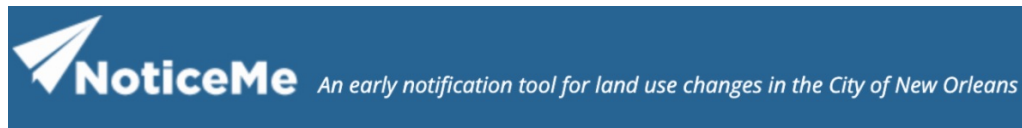


Improving Public Notice for Land Use Requests

The Neighborhood Participation Program (NPP) is a vital tool ensuring certain land use items are handled with neighborhood input and applicant specificity. NPPs are public meetings where applicants present project plans, answer questions and consider neighborhood input. These meetings are required for several major zoning requests before the City Planning Commission (CPC) considers the request. Most NPPs require residents within 300 feet of the proposed project to receive a mailed notice of the meeting. NPP notices are also posted to **NoticeMe**, a digital noticing tool you can receive via email.

Make sure you subscribe to **NoticeMe**, which sends you email notifications of zoning requests and permit applications in any neighborhood, council district, or even citywide. This online platform features alerts about new construction, demolition, zoning variances, HLDC requests, Conditional Use applications, and other zoning changes. You can sign up for NoticeMe [here](#). *Please note:* the City Council does not interact with the Board of Zoning Adjustments (BZA), which hears variance requests. You can subscribe to BZA notices and

agendas [at this link](#).



However, there are significant land use requests that do not require NPP meetings.

I have submitted motions to the City Planning Commission to consider adding a neighborhood engagement process to significant land use requests to further neighbor participation and earlier, public explanation:

- Conditional use amendments
- Development of Institutional Master Plans
- Institutional Master Plan amendments
- Zoning text amendments
- Interim Zoning Districts
- Overlays
- Major subdivisions

Once the City Planning Commission provides its reports, they will come to the Council for a vote. You can receive notices and agendas for City Planning meetings [at this link](#).

I cannot overstate the importance of early public participation and transparency in land-use decisions. Increased engagement on the front-end builds trust with residents and eases efforts to build resolution down the road. Also, NPPs require applicants to have more specifics nailed down in a project early. It is better to work a little harder on the front-end than spend so much time on the back end working through project details. In addition, we will work with neighbors on revising the NPP process over the next several months. Finally, we plan on bringing a Zoning 101 presentation to neighborhood groups to explain this often-confusing process for a better understanding of how zoning works.

Approving the 2022 City Budget

The Council approved the full 2022 City Budget on Dec. 1, 2021. The City's roughly \$1.5 billion budget helps restore departments and agencies to pre-pandemic spending levels. Most departments lost staff and support services over the past two years due to COVID-19. This budget helps fill those gaps. It also beefs up the budget for almost every department, with the goal of better serving residents and improving City services. You can watch the Dec. 1 Council meeting [at this link](#).



Next year's budget also includes a fully-funded New Orleans Public Library with voters approving a rededication of a \$4 million, 20-year millage solely to NOPL. Remember that overall, while assessments have increased, the total number of millages have decreased by about 10 mills since 2020.

Update your Neighborhood Association Information

Did your neighborhood association elect a new president? Establish a new website or social media presence? Or possibly create a new contact email? Please make sure all new information is updated on the City's Neighborhood Engagement Office website.

Neighborhood associations can update their information on the Neighborhood Engagement Office website [by clicking this link](#). If you have any questions or need assistance, please email neighborhoods@nola.gov.

Happy holidays and best wishes for a safe, happy & healthy 2022!

Questions or concerns? Please don't hesitate to contact my office at (504) 658-1010 or email me at Joseph.Giarrusso@nola.gov and continue to follow along on my social media pages below.



New Orleans City Council
Councilmember Joseph I. Giarrusso, District A