



District “C” Annual Report 2013-2014

Neighbors and Friends,

Almost 9 years ago, we saw our city come together after the storm in a way that this country had never seen. For over 3 years after Katrina, I witnessed that coming together first-hand while I worked with thousands of volunteers rebuilding our homes and communities.

The intensity and passion was both consuming and sustaining. I felt that to continue these efforts, change was needed at the governmental level. I was prepared to serve and was honored to be elected in 2010.

In time on the City Council, we have seen reforms occur at every level in the public and private sectors. Projects that were promised years ago have been made a reality throughout the district.

Yet, I learned that all these changes do not and cannot occur due merely to a seat on the City Council. The power of a Council Seat lies in the people behind it. For every project or reform that has occurred, there have been neighborhood, community and business groups working in partnership with the Council Office and the Administration to achieve it. This spirit is the true nature of our civic engagement and what sustains us in rebuilding our city in a way that no one thought possible.

My fourth year in office was a momentous one in which we witnessed progress for a number of priority issues in the District. I am excited to reflect and build on our past accomplishments, while continuing to aggressively tackle the challenges that remain in front of us. I am humbled to work with so many of you who devote your lives to improving our community.

This progress will continue as long as our citizens stay focused and driven. For our city to thrive, all of our citizens must be included. Inclusion means everything from access to jobs and opportunities to parity in infrastructure work throughout our communities.

This year, I opened a satellite office in the Arthur Monday Center in Algiers and joined the community organizations in the center serving our community. I pushed for progress and completed the first phase of Algiers Bike and Pedestrian Path along the levee. We also re-opened the Circle Food Store in the Tremé and continue to have safer and more accessible streets from St. Bernard Avenue to Esplanade.



I was selected to participate in the Aspen Institute Action Forum and continue my work as part of the Smart Growth America Local Leaders Council, an initiative of municipal leaders from across the country committed to exploring smart policies for our cities by incorporating economic development, transportation and housing for everyone in the community. I was also honored to be named Legislator of the Year by the Alliance for Good Government.

It truly has been an honor to serve the people of District “C” and the City of New Orleans. Working with residents from Algiers, Tremé / Esplanade Ridge, the French Quarter, the 7th Ward, Faubourg Marigny, Bywater, St. Roch, and the Upper 9th Ward has been rewarding on so many levels.

My terrific team is grateful to have served the residents of our city and District “C”. Personally, I remain committed to New Orleans and this region to ensure that it is a place where our children and grandchildren will want to live and raise their children.

Looking ahead, I am eager to pursue projects outside of my position on the City Council. I encourage you to go to www.nolacitycouncil.com and www.nola.gov to stay up-to-date on the most recent developments in our city.

Thank you for your support!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kristin Gisleson Palmer', written in a cursive style.

Kristin

Infrastructure Improvements and Capital Projects

Since she took office, Councilmember Gisleson Palmer has closely monitored the progress of capital projects within her district to ensure they are done on time, on budget and that they meet the needs of the surrounding community. Many of these projects have been completed, while others are currently underway.

Below are some of the projects in District “C”:



Councilmember Gisleson Palmer with Council President Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson, elected officials and community leaders celebrate the opening of the Algiers Bicycle and Levee Path



Councilmember Gisleson Palmer, Westbank Redevelopment Corporation, City and community leaders celebrate a new walking path in Brechtel Park

West Bank

- Algiers Bike Path Phase I – *completed*
- Algiers Bike Path Phase II – *seeking funding*
- Algiers Courthouse Structural Restoration – *pre-design phase*
- Aurora Plaza Redevelopment – *in progress*
- Arthur Monday Upgrades including Public Art Installation – *in planning phase*
- Behrman Pool Repairs – *in design phase, construction to begin Fall 2014*
- Behrman Soccer Complex Phase II – *construction to begin in June*
- Brechtel Memorial Park Walking Path Construction – *completed*
- Cita Hubbell Library Renovations – *completed*
- Demolition of the Former Christopher Park Homes – *completed*
- Demolition of the Former Southwood Patio Homes – *completed*
- Demolition of Former Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD) Crescent City Connection (CCC) Gas Station – *completed*
- NORD High Mast Lighting – Bodenger Playground -- *completed*
- Norman Playground Construction – *in design phase; engaging neighborhood groups to determine best use of the playground for the community*



Councilmember Gisleson Palmer, the Mayor, Council President Clarkson and Father Nguyen celebrate the demolition of the blighted, former Southwood Patio Homes

East Bank

- Crescent Park, Phase I – *complete; recreation area open to the public*
- Hunter’s Field Play Surface Installation – *completed*
- Jackson Square Pedestrian Repairs – *completed*
- Iberville Redevelopment – *under construction (demolition & redevelopment underway)*
- Louis Armstrong Park Enhancements – *completed*
- Municipal Auditorium remediation – *under construction*
- NOPD Fifth District Police station construction – *completed*
- Nora Navra Library – *in design phase*
- Oscar Medrano Clinic Renovations – *completed*
- St. Roch Market renovations – *completed; seeking an operator*
- St. Roch Neutral Ground Beautification – *completed*
- St. Roch Park renovations – *completed*
- Stallings St. Claude Community Center – *under construction*

Road Repair and Public Works projects

West Bank:

- Algiers Traffic Signal Improvements – *completed*
- Algiers Minor Street Repairs – *ongoing*
- Berkeley Drive Repairs (Kabel Drive to Huntlee Drive) – *in design phase*
- Huntlee Drive (General DeGaulle to Berkeley Drive) – *in design phase*
- General Meyer Avenue Streetscape (Hendee Street to Odeon Avenue) – *in design phase*
- Paths to Progress – Newton Street to Behrman Highway – *bid & award phase*
- Paths to Progress – Pace Boulevard – *bid & award phase*
- Patterson Road extension – *completed*
- Somerset Drive from Berkeley Drive to MacArthur Blvd – *in design phase*
- Whitney Avenue & L.B. Landry Bikeway (Mardi Gras Boulevard to Patterson Drive) – *complete*
- L.B. Landry Street patching from Mardi Gras Boulevard to General DeGaulle Drive - *ongoing*

East Bank:

- Dr. Charles Drew Elementary – Safe Routes to School – *in design phase*
- Paths to Progress St. Bernard Avenue resurfacing and striping – *completed*
- Rampart St. Streetcar Extension – *in design phase*
- St. Roch and St. Claude intersection improvements – *completed*

To receive project status updates from the City of New Orleans, go to www.nola.gov/capital-projects or www.nola.gov/dpw.

Algiers-to-Canal Street Ferry

While in office, Councilmember Gisleson Palmer has stressed the need for improvements, greater accessibility, and more connectivity in New Orleans' transit system. When the Algiers-to-Canal Street ferry service was set to end in June 2013, Councilmember Gisleson Palmer led elected officials and transit advocates in a successful campaign to save the ferry and ensure its sustainability for years to come. In February 2013, the Veolia and the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) announced they would assume operations of the ferries. Though service hours are still not ideal, commuters and visitors, pedestrians and bicyclists without access to a car, and others have access to safe, public transit.



Councilmember Gisleson Palmer, Mayor Landrieu, Council President Clarkson and others celebrate Veolia's taking over the ferries.

Community Participation

For Councilmember Gisleson Palmer, decisions about what happens in a community in District “C” should come from the residents who live in that community. She actively engages community leaders, neighborhood associations and residents in the decision-making processes that involve their neighborhoods.

In addition, she has facilitated the organization of and/or worked with the following groups:

- Algiers Blight Committee
- Algiers’ Housing Policy Committee
- French Quarter Management District
- Joint Development Committee for Federal City
- Riverfront Park Community Liaison Committee
- Sustainable Transportation Advisory Committee
- Sound Ordinance Task Force

In addition, Councilmember Gisleson Palmer:

- Led the Greening Algiers Initiative in partnership with Hike for KaTREEna in which residents received free trees and many others planted them throughout Algiers in 2013.
- Was instrumental in bringing the only Super Saturday of Service event to the West Bank with Rebuilding Together New Orleans (RTNO). Councilmember Gisleson Palmer joined RTNO staff, volunteers, and NFL players in repairing homes and park facilities at Donsereaux Park.
- Supported Projects with a Purpose and RTNO as they hosted large-scale volunteer projects at Federal City in *August 2013* and in Old Algiers with NBA Cares.
- Held regular community meetings to discuss issues occurring within District “C” neighborhoods.
- Under her leadership as the Chair of the Joint Development Committee, the fee simple transfer of property occurred at Federal City.
- Extended Energy Smart program to Algiers by working with Entergy Louisiana. This free program helps residents make their homes more energy efficient and save money
- Regularly attends neighborhood and community meetings and events.
- Appeared frequently on local television and radio news programs.

Regularly distributed newsletters so all constituents have the most up to date information on events and issues in District “C”. You can request to receive updates via email by registering at the City Council website at www.nolacitycouncil.com or by visiting her Facebook page www.facebook.com/kristingislesonpalmer.

District “C” Satellite Office in Algiers

Arthur Monday Center, 1111 Newton Street



District “C” Satellite Office



Councilmember Gisleson Palmer chats with constituents at the grand opening of the Algiers Office

In September 2013, Councilmember Gisleson Palmer celebrated the opening of a District “C” satellite office in Algiers. The office is open from 9:00 a.m. to noon, Monday through Friday. Having two locations allows Councilmember Gisleson Palmer’s office to better serve residents on both sides of the river.

The office has facilitated partnerships among the agencies collocated at the site. Councilmember Gisleson Palmer has leveraged resources and additional community partnerships to acquire public art for the facility and establish a branch of the Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) on the West Bank at the site. Similarly, she worked with the Louisiana Justice Civil Society (LJCS) to ensure that their free, monthly legal information clinics would be offered in Algiers at the Arthur Monday Center for residents of Algiers.

Community organizations located at the Arthur Monday Community Center:

- Excelth Dental Clinic
- House of Ruth
- New Orleans Council on Aging (NOCOA)
- United Churches of Algiers – a food bank and assistance site
- Women, Infants, and Children Clinic (WIC)

Youth Empowerment Project (YEP)

City Council Committees

Below are summaries of recent accomplishments achieved by the Council committees that Councilmember Gisleson Palmer chairs:

Housing and Human Needs

- Facilitated presentations on the city's blight reduction and code enforcement initiatives to produce better results for residents.
- Facilitated hearings to address revisions to the city's sound ordinance. Extended the work of the Council's sound consultant Dave Woolworth to conduct community engagement sessions and recommendations for improved legislation.
- Passed an ordinance requiring greater oversight and requirements for contractors regarding demolition and construction debris removal.
- Advocated for revisions to FEMA's base flood elevation maps so residents would not be adversely impacted by dramatically increased insurance rates.
- Extended an ordinance requiring better quality construction of multi-family housing units in Algiers.
- Worked with New Orleans Redevelopment Authority (NORA) to establish a pilot rain garden and courtyard at 1338 Nunez in Old Algiers. The rain garden is designed to reduce flooding in the area and clean the water as it moves into the drainage system.

Transportation

- Held hearings to evaluate the city's implementation of the Complete Streets legislation Councilmember Palmer authored in 2011. The Complete Streets ordinance states that when the City designs a street, it must design it for all users. This includes more bicycle facilities on the streets and pedestrian and ADA compliant facilities on sidewalks throughout the city.
- Led discussions of bike usage and bike path expansion in the city with regional transportation leaders.
- Requested updates on the Regional Transit Authority's (RTA) progress on improving and expanding the number of bus shelters throughout the city.
- Requested updates from the RTA on the city's bus service and plans for improvements.
- Urged public officials to develop smart, cost-effective plans to reduce the operational and maintenance cost of the ferries and keep them in operation.
- Called hearings on the proposed Rampart St. streetcar expansion to ensure the public received updates
- Held a hearing to review bike and pedestrian safety issues and improvements on St. Claude Avenue including the St. Claude Avenue Bridge and N. Rampart St.
- Advocated for greater accountability (sharing of roadways/safety of roadways for all users) for tour buses operating in the city.

- Worked with the Young Leadership Council’s (YLC) Where Ya’Rack program, the French Quarter Business Association (FQBA), resident leaders, and key partners to establish bike corrals in the French Quarter. The corrals provide designated parking for bicycles and are intended to reduce the incidence of bicycles chained to fences and posts.



Councilmember Gisleson Palmer unveils a French Quarter Bike rack with other Councilmembers and members of the French Quarter Business Association (FOBA)

Disaster and Recovery

- Held hearings and community meetings on NOLA Ready hurricane preparedness program and the city assisted evacuation plan to ensure residents were ready for hurricane season.



Councilmember Gisleson Palmer joined WDSU at the Urban League’s hurricane ready event for residents in the Desire community.

Sanitation & Environmental

- Restored recycling service to the French Quarter and Downtown Development District (DDD). Service in these areas was suspended after Hurricane Katrina.
- Held hearings to ensure the research, purchase, and implementation of a solar powered trash bin pilot program for public sites. The bins are designed to compress the garbage inside so it does not overflow onto sidewalks and into streets. Current locations include walkways and a number of transit stops in the City’s center.



Councilmember Gisleson Palmer, the Mayor, Council President Clarkson and City officials announce the return of the City’s recycling program to the French Quarter and Downtown Development District (DDD)

Councilmember Gisleson Palmer is also a member of the Airport, Governmental Affairs and Public Works Committees and is an alternate member of the Competitive Selection, Youth and Recreation and Utility Committees. For committee meeting schedules, agendas and video go to www.nolacitycouncil.com.

Boards and Commissions

Councilmember Gisleson Palmer serves on numerous boards and commissions in her capacity as the Councilmember for District “C”. As public-private entities, the Boards and Commissions assist the City. These boards and her work with them are listed below:

- Algiers Development District (ADD) – *in October 2013, Councilmember Gisleson Palmer appointed CPA James Henderson, Jr. as District “C” designee to ADD*
 - Serves the community of Algiers through projects designed to spur economic development and civic engagement.
 - Responsible for the construction of the extension of the bicycle and walking path on the Algiers levee.
 - As of May 2013, the land owner of the Federal City redevelopment project City Project.
- Louisiana Intrastate Rail Compact Committee (Chairperson) – ***new 2013 appointment***
 - Committee staffed by the Center for Planning Excellence (CPEX)
 - Tasked by the State Legislature in 2010, Act #858 with developing and improving an efficient, safe and well-maintained system of rail and other transit ways
- New Orleans Building Corporation (NOBC)
 - Canal Street Development Corporation (CSDC) was subsumed by NOBC in 2013
 - Manages the Union Passenger Terminal.
 - Manages the City’s partnership with Harrah’s Casino
 - Responsible for the redevelopment of the World Trade Center site
 - Responsible for the renovation of the Sanger Theater
- French Market Corporation (FMC)
 - Manages the French Market, Crescent Park on the riverfront, Pontalba Apartments, the Flea Market & French Market sponsored events including French Quarter Fest and Satchmo Fest
 - Upper Pontalba Building and Redevelopment Corporation was subsumed by FMC in 2013
- Joint Development Committee (JDC – Chairperson)
 - A committee comprised of members of the ADD and the New Orleans Federal Alliance (NOFA) dedicated to redeveloping the Federal City site in Algiers.
 - Supported the renovation and expansion of the New Orleans Military and Maritime Academy. The school celebrated the dedication and opening of its new campus in March 2014
 - Responsible for developing a master plan for Federal City and fostering economic development on the site.
- New Orleans Tourism Marketing Corporation (NOTMC)
 - Responsible for tourism marketing for the City.
 - Researched and developed a new marketing campaign for New Orleans called “Follow your NOLA” which markets our diverse culture and neighborhoods.
- Sewerage and Water Board (SWBNO)
 - Responsible for overseeing the Sewerage and Water Board and holding the organization accountable.
 - Set to undergo a ten-year overhaul to fix the city’s crumbling system of pipes and pumping facilities to mitigate soil subsidence and ensure the quality and safety of our city’s water supply.
 - Voted for reform of the SWBNO board structure in preparation for the upcoming overhaul
- Total Community Action (TCA)
 - Provides services and resources to low income families with the goal of moving individuals and their families out of poverty.
 - Coordinates New Orleans’ Head Start programs.

Legislative Accomplishments

Ordinances, Motions, & Resolutions Authored by Councilmember Gisleson Palmer & Adopted in 2013.

Ensuring equitable public transportation

Creation of Multi-Modal and Transit Oriented Development (M-13-169) – directed City Planning Commission to collaborate with Regional Planning Commission, Downtown Development District, University of New Orleans Transportation Institute, and others to create a scope of work for consideration and to establish priorities for implementation in the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance to connect Federal City in Algiers and the Naval Support Activity Base (East Bank) through multi-modal forms of transportation and promote Transit Oriented Development along routes linking the two destinations.

Ferry Fares (M-13-193) - requested that the fares are set to ensure the continued operation without interruption of the New Orleans ferry system and ultimately securing long-term operation of the New Orleans ferry system. On August 22, the City Council approved the fare structure.

LA Swift bus service (R-13-204) supported the continuation of the LA Swift bus service from New Orleans to Baton Rouge.

Union Passenger Terminal's application for TIGER V funding (R-13-185) supported the Union Passenger Terminal's application for TIGER V funding to update the terminal track to current, more efficient and effective layout in order to improve maintenance and overall operations.

Measures to protect disaster recovery resources

Flood Insurance Reform (R-13-167) urged the Federal Legislative Delegation to amend or revise the Biggert – Waters Flood Insurance Reform Act of 2012, to temporarily suspend the release of all new DFIRMS for adoption by communities in order to give communities time to work with FEMA to push enrollment into the NFIP for a special enrolment period, and various other revisions to protect constituents.

GOSEP funding (R-13-119) supported Rep. Bryan Adams' amendment to restore the local allocation of the Emergency Management Program (EMPG) grant monies as allocated in Fiscal Year 2012-2013.

Community Redevelopment

Establishment of the Algiers Economic Development Districts and Redevelopment of Former Schwegmann's (Ordinance Calendar No. 29,621) which creates two economic development districts in Algiers. The two districts, called Midtown Algiers Economic Development District and Algiers South Economic Development District, establish property tax abatement programs within their boundaries for eligible properties that are redeveloped and brought back into commerce in those areas. The assurance of the establishment of these development districts encouraged Event Rental, LLC, currently located in Gretna, to purchase the former Schwegmann's site at 4400 Woodland Highway for their future headquarters. The site at 4400 Woodland has been vacant for over 10 years.

The Midtown Algiers EDD is bounded by General Meyer, General Collins, General De Gaulle Drive, & Shirley Drive.

The South Algiers EDD is bounded by Sullen Place, Woodland Hwy, Tullis Drive, Woodland Drive, & General Meyer Avenue.

Lot Next Door Program- (Ordinance 29,397) extended the Lot Next Door Program making vacant lots available to surrounding neighbors who were not eligible under the original program, developed in partnership with Councilmember Stacy Head. If no expressed interest on a property by August 1 then the property is eligible for public auction. The Program ends January 1st and remaining properties will be available through NORA's other property disposition programs.

Iberville Redevelopment Project (M-13-163)- through her leadership and commitment to oversight of the Iberville Redevelopment project, Councilmember Palmer authored a motion reiterating the Housing Authority of New Orleans' (HANO's) obligation to ensure that all phases of redevelopment, including demolition, infrastructure work, renovation, and new construction, provide meaningful employment and contracting opportunities to residents of Iberville and the surrounding CNI community; and approved the demolition of certain buildings while providing an exemption of buildings that shall remain and preserved for redevelopment.

Demolition of HANO vacant and blighted off-site housing (M-13-120) - approved the issuance of demolition permits, as requested by the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO), for abandoned, structurally unsound, and dilapidated structures in District "C" and throughout the city.

Demolition Debris Regulations Strengthened – (Ordinance Calendar No. 29,361) strengthens demolition and construction debris removal regulations and enforcement thereof, developed in partnership with the city administration.

Redevelopment through zoning- approved zoning requests to allow for the redevelopment of several vacant residential complexes in Bywater.

Expropriation of abandoned Algiers property (R-12-477) Resolution authorizing the Algiers Development District to act on behalf of the City in order to expropriate certain abandoned property within ADD's district for the purpose of rehabilitating economically depressed property by placing it back into the stream of commerce.

Creation of Intergovernmental Policy to provide better services for constituents

Budget Policy (M-13-196) – Crafted and introduced the policy that all budget presentations must, in order to be heard and considered, adopt the templates contained in the document "New Orleans City Council: Budget Submission Guidelines and Templates" and comply with the guidelines.

Directing Departments to Communicate with Council offices on Special Events (M-13-93) – As a measure to avoid future disturbances as a result of amplified outdoor events along the river, Councilmember Palmer authored a motion which directed heads of city departments to instruct their staffs to immediately inform the relevant District Councilperson upon learning of any outdoor live music events that shall be held within four (4) blocks of either side of the Mississippi River levees so that the District Councilperson shall have oversight and collaborate with the event coordinators and pertinent city

departments in order to ensure that the event is successful and has the least negative impact on our neighborhoods prior to the issuance of any permits.

Preservation of our valuable resources and cultural history

St. Claude Avenue Arts and Cultural Overlay Zoning District (from Press to Poland Ave) authored and approved a text amendment to the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance and zoning map change in order to create the St. Claude Avenue Arts and Cultural Overlay Zoning District which allows commercial uses that preserve and promote the arts and culture.

French Market Corporation Board member- led approval by the French Market board for the allocation of funding to create an Environmental Specialist office that will mitigate sound, sanitation, graffiti and other environmental quality of life, in cooperation with the Mayor's administration and Health Department.

Upper Pontalba Building Restoration Corporation (R-12-478) approved the issuance of Taxable Indebtedness of the Upper Pontalba Building Restoration Corporation in order to provide funds for capital improvements, including renovations and roofing, and provide a capital reserve, including reimbursing the Corporation for any capital improvement costs incurred prior to the issuance of the Indebtedness (the "Project"), and pay costs incurred in connection with the issuance of the Indebtedness.

Councilmember Gisleson Palmer Photo Gallery



Councilmember Gisleson Palmer receives the 2013 Alliance for Good Government Legislator of the Year Award



Councilmember Gisleson Palmer with Alvin Jackson, Black Men of Labor Parade, October 2013



Councilmember Gisleson Palmer with members of the Pinettes Brass Band. The band received a proclamation and played the Star Spangled to open a City Council Meeting at Councilmember Gisleson Palmer's request.



Councilmember Gisleson Palmer with Landry-Walker's Principal Mary Laurie and School Administration Manager, Director of Athletics Tarence Davis



Own the Crescent presents before the City Council at Councilmember Gisleson Palmer's request.



Councilmember Gisleson Palmer, the Mayor, and other members of the Council celebrate the re-opening of the Saenger Theatre

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