



2021 City Council Elections - District C Candidate Interviews

The primary election New Orleans City Council will be held on **November 13, 2021**. A general (run-off) election, if needed, is scheduled for December 11, 2021. VCPORA interviewed all seven City Council District C Candidates in late September and early October of this year. This effort is part of our dedication to good government and to foster civic participation. We asked each candidate a set of questions we feel reflect the major concerns of French Quarter voters. Every effort has been made to capture their responses accurately. Some content has been cut for brevity's sake. As a nonprofit 501(c) 3 organization, VCPORA does not make any endorsement in elections; our purpose is to share information.

Candidates

Stephanie Bridges (D)
 Freddie King III (D)
 Alonzo Knox (D)
 Vincent Milligan Jr. (No party preference)
 Stephen Mosgrove (D)
 Frank Perez (D)
 Barbara Waiters (D)

Opening Remarks

Stephanie Bridges is a lifelong District C resident, nonprofit director since 1995, and community activist for 25 years. As a former city attorney, she worked with the Board of Zoning Adjustments, Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC), City Planning Commission, and the Department of Safety and Permits. Ms. Bridges decided to run out of increasing concern for the direction of the city including trash pickup and care for our senior residents. "I want the government to work for every resident and I will be a council member who will make effective change."

Freddie King III was born and raised in Algiers (District C), attended Southeastern, then Southern University Law Center. From 2014 until 2017, he served as Director of Constituent Services in the District C Council office. After 2017, Mr. King focused on developing his private practice and renovated a blighted property in Algiers for that purpose. "Since I moved in, there are a couple other pieces of property selling on the block that will be a vegan restaurant in addition to the Filipino restaurant. One person moves and then another moves in and as such good things happen. That's kind of my platform: having a better city with more economic development, which in the end, I believe reduces crime because if people have economic opportunities, they don't see black

windows, they see a place of opportunity and promise.” His platform is to focus on blight reduction and illegal dumping to help reduce crime.

Alonzo Knox has been a resident of Tremé for 19 years. He currently serves on the board of Historic Faubourg Tremé Association and has served as its chair of the economic development committee and as co-chair of land use. He has also served on the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC) for six years, as a commissioner for the Tremé neighborhood and as At-Large commissioner. Mr. Knox enlisted in the Marine Corps at 18 where he served in the infantry as a machine gunner and in anti-tank assault. After serving in the first Persian Gulf War, he returned home and returned to complete his education at Southern University earning degrees in political science and law enforcement. He has worked with the New Orleans police and Justice Foundation as the Director of Grants and Community Engagement. In this role he worked with US Attorney Jim Letten, NOPD, Probation and Parole, and other social organizations focusing on workforce development and mental health. “We were able to demonstrate that with a targeted and holistic approach to high crime, you will inevitably see a reduction in crime.” Mr. Knox has interned for US Senator J. Bennett Johnston, worked for US Senator John Breaux in Washington, DC, and for Sharon Weston Broome, former state representative and current mayor of Baton Rouge.

When he returned to New Orleans, he and his wife Jessica Knox opened several businesses, including Backatown Coffee Parlor on Basin Street and renovated a number of blighted properties in District C. “What separates me apart from those other candidates is that I'm someone who is known to be a fighter. Some may say I'm aggressive, some may say I'm passionate, but I believe that in this day and time, the City Council of New Orleans needs someone that's going to kind of nudge a little bit, go against the status quo, and shake things up a little bit.”

Vincent Milligan Jr. - “I feel like if you're not part of the solution, then you're part of the problem. My platform is “Take Our City Back.” Mr. Milligan feels city government is lacking in care for the district and city as a whole. District C looks “poverty-stricken” and is a poor image to reflect to visitors, including visible human waste, the increase of mentally ill and drug addicted vagrants, and excessive mandates that are turning off visitors. The quality of experience has declined because of a loss of public respect for the French Quarter.

Mr. Milligan’s main platform focus is reducing violent crime, particularly the rise in shootings on Bourbon Street. He is very concerned about the reduced manpower of the police due to the loss of police funding in January (Louisiana State Troopers), the decline in police numbers (relocating to other cities), and the Administration’s restrictions of what laws are enforceable. “They’re being held back by the mayor. [They’re] being [given] this long laundry list of people that they can and cannot arrest and what they can and cannot arrest for. These ordinances are made to protect the French Quarter from becoming a circus.” He wants to focus on “polishing the French Quarter” through combatting derelict buildings and the presence of graffiti, which attract criminals.

Additionally, his concerns include the condition of streets and utility repairs, wanting all underground maintenance and repairs to be done simultaneously and in collaboration with the Department of Public Works. Incoming infrastructure money needs to be budgeted out before being allocated to special interest projects. Lastly, he wishes to reduce redundant positions at City Hall to cut budget expenses.

Steven Mosgrove grew up in Algiers, attended Jesuit High School, then Boston College. He returned to New Orleans in 1993. “In those days of the early nineties the city was in significantly

worse shape. The murder rate was double or triple what it is now. While there is absolutely progress to make between city government and citizens now, back then city government was even less aware and less engaged on the needs of people. Being away from New Orleans really helped me to understand and appreciate my hometown a lot more. That's where I kind of evolved into a place of wanting to make a difference in New Orleans.” After pursuing a Master of Business, he entered city government in 2001, working for City Council District E. During Mayor Nagin’s administration, he worked on economic development and transportation. After hurricane Katrina, he worked in disaster recovery with the federal government, the state, in private and non-profit sectors helping applicants through the public assistance process. He then returned to City Hall three years ago and worked in the Mayor’s office of Neighborhood Engagement in District A.

His platform focuses on New Orleans reaching its potential, to be “respected and esteemed,” through a high functionality of city government and improvements in city performance including the related agencies of the New Orleans Police Department, the Sewage and Water Board, and the Regional Transit Authority. Through this, the city can retain and attract new residents. “The main cases in my platform are: reduction in crime, improving city government, strengthening neighborhoods, economic improvement, job creation, economic diversification, beautification of the district, improvement of park culture, and a higher level of engagement from a council member.”

Frank Perez has resided in the French Quarter for 14 years, where he owns a small business (Crescent City Tour Booking Agency) and co-founded the non-profit LGBTQ+ Archives Project of Louisiana, in 2013. As a local historian, he has authored several books on the history of the city, particularly focusing on the LGBTQ+ community and teaches a tour guide series at Loyola University in effort to train guides in professionalism and respect for the neighborhood. Mr. Perez also serves on the Livability Committee for French Quarter Management District (FQMD) and the Membership Committee for the Vieux Carré Commission Foundation. “I am running because I want to make a difference. I am just incredibly frustrated at the failure of city government to provide basic municipal services. Crime's out of control, Sewage and Water Board is completely dysfunctional, trash was an issue for us long before Ida, and I've just gradually seen our quality of life diminished over the years and nothing seems to change.”

Barbara Waiters has been a resident of District C for over 40 years, growing up in Algiers before moving to downtown Canal Street 10 years ago. She has worked for the Downtown Development District as the Public Affairs Director and at the Algiers Economic Development District as their Executive Director. She worked for Councilmember, now Congressman, Troy Carter as his legislative director and chief of staff and has served on several boards and commissions as a mayoral appointee.

“What I think is different about District C and the French Quarter is that it uniquely intersects commerce, culture, and historic neighborhoods; it is the core and the catalyst of growth within this city. Our vote is an act of hiring them our elected officials. When you have a company, you make sure you know all about the CEO when you hire them. You know from their experience that they can do the act of leading, organizing, and doing whatever they need to lead. I feel like I am uniquely that person for this district.”

Please discuss your views of the French Quarter and the role it plays in New Orleans. What would be your specific priority for this neighborhood while in office?

Stephanie Bridges “I'm very familiar with the French Quarter as I served as the attorney for the Vieux Carré Commission. The French Quarter is the driving financial mechanism of the city because people come from all over the world to see it. The French Quarter is vital to the success of New Orleans - so goes the French Quarter, so goes New Orleans. I think it's very important and it's something that I will work very diligently to make certain that it becomes even more successful than what it is right now.”

Freddie King III “My views of the French Quarter have evolved since my 20-year-old days when it was just a place to have a good time. As I got older and a bit more mature, I realized how it's really the economic engine of not only the city, but the state. People from all over the gulf south travel to New Orleans specifically for the French Quarter. I think if you take the French Quarter out of New Orleans, we have Lafayette and Jackson, Mississippi - nothing against those areas, but it's a unique place. I've definitely realized, while working and on the campaign trail, how important the French Quarter is to the entire state of Louisiana.”

Alonzo Knox “The French Quarter is complicated but it's a good complicated. It is a place of distinction, not just here in the city of New Orleans, but all around the world. It is a top tourist destination that I think everyone wants to visit at least once in their lifetime. However, I think it's important to note that there are actual residents of the French Quarter - it is a real living, breathing neighborhood. As a council person, I want to always keep in mind [that] the residents take on a lot. You pay more for the services that you're getting and you have to put up with more than probably most other communities. If I'm elected as a council person, I would like to focus on those issues that are near and dear to the residents. [These are] issues such as: crime, noise issues, and flooding like the French Quarter has never seen before.”

Vincent Milligan Jr. “I want to focus on polishing the French Quarter and make the French Quarter into the Jewel of the South that it used to be and that it should be because it attracts thousands and thousands of people annually. Forbes named it the number one place to visit two or three years ago because we have so much to offer. We don't have those things to offer right now. We need to focus on rebranding the French Quarter. We have to definitely cut out crime. We have to have it more heavily policed. There are ordinances and laws put in place to stop this from happening so that we can create a safe and fun environment for locals and tourists but it's no longer that way - the locals have taken over and they're pushing the tourists out. Some of these places like Willie's Chicken Shack have to be prevented and there needs to be more opportunity for other places to be put in those shops.”

Stephen Mosgrove “The French Quarter obviously is very important; as the original city and economic engine, it speaks to our culture in so many ways. When New Orleans is healthy, our culture will be healthy. My goals over the last 30 years have been to preserve what's right and correct what's wrong. [What's “right” is] our level of musical creativity, culinary expertise, the way we interact with each other in that special New Orleans way. We know a number of things that are wrong, from crime to education to cleanliness. The French Quarter is dealing with a lot [including] a lot of economic pressures and I know residents in the Quarter and surrounding historic

neighborhoods would love to see the area cleaner and safer. Our entire world sees New Orleans through the French Quarter. If the French Quarter is dirty, New Orleans is dirty. If the French Quarter is unsafe, violent, or prone to mugging and thefts, then New Orleans is violent and crime ridden. It's very important to take care of the French Quarter from an architectural perspective, from a quality of life perspective, from a human perspective, from a residential perspective, and from an economic perspective. “

Frank Perez “I don't think people appreciate how vital, how instrumental, how important, and significant the French Quarter is to the success of the city and the state. I think we need a paradigm shift in how we market the French Quarter. By that, what I mean is let's not just look at hotel occupancy, let's judge tourism by other metrics, like the average daily spend. Let's try to attract genuine culture seekers, people who are going to go to museums, people who are going to spend money in fine dining restaurants, people who are authentically interested in our culture. Bourbon Street is what it is. I don't think that's going away and that's fine, but we don't need any more people who just want to come here and get drunk and go to strip clubs. I think tourism can have a really bright and better future - we just need to do a better job of managing tourism in the French Quarter. My overall vision is to make the French Quarter affordable and easy for people to live in [because] we need more permanent residents. I know that oftentimes, at least historically, there has been a tension between business interests and residential interests. As both, I think I can bridge that gap. I think that the two can coincide, but if the two ever did collide, I'd probably come down on the side of residents because I am one and in the long-term people are not going to want to come to New Orleans if we let the French Quarter completely go.”

Barbara Waiters “I served on the VCC in the early 2000s and the French Quarter is unique in itself because it's less than one square mile and you have over 20 million visitors. You have people who live there, you have people who work there, you have business owners, you have so much activity and diverse interests, and there is one common denominator in all of that: everyone cares and wants to preserve the quality of life and the prosperity in the district but in different ways. My platform for District C, as it relates to the French Quarter, is [based on] quality of life issues and public safety. There must be a two-pronged approach where it's tactical and it's holistic. There's been a lot of crime in the Quarter and while crime rates are up and down, we have to be honest about it. We all know that since Katrina in 2005, our [police] manpower has slowly decreased. I think the morale in the police force is down and it's hard for us to hire people because other parishes and states are competing with us and taking our forces. I think we need to use more holistic approaches when looking at quality of life issues, such as noise, homelessness, cleanliness, lighting, etc. Aging infrastructure is the second element of my quality of life platform. I know in the French Quarter there still needs to be street repairs and lighting is an important element. During the last two years of the pandemic, our tourist economy and small businesses have been compromised. I do think that at this time, we have to look at other ways to approach economic development and diversify the economy, so we don't have all our eggs in one basket.”

Crime & Public Safety: Crime is a major concern in the city and in the French Quarter it is largely specific to visitors and tourism. As people let their guards down, they become targets for crimes of opportunity or alcohol-induced aggression. Shootings, muggings, aggressive solicitation, illegal vending of alcohol, and drug sales are commonplace. What will be your role in making the FQ safer for residents, workers, and visitors? How will you demonstrate support for adequate police presence, training, and motivation for addressing quality of life issues? Do you have a specific view on guns in the French Quarter?

Stephanie Bridges “Crime is a problem for the entire city of New Orleans. We have to tackle crime throughout the entire city because things that were happening outside of the French Quarter are now starting to impact the French Quarter. The first thing that I want to do is create job opportunities [for] non-violent offenders [like] programs that concentrate on respecting the citizens, thereby respecting themselves. The police are key for the entire city of New Orleans. One of the things that we could do for the police is to make certain that they have adequate training, equipment, and even police vehicles so that they can protect us to the fullest extent of their ability.

One of the things that's happening right now is we train these police officers and then, for whatever reason, they leave. There is a stipulation in their contract that they're supposed to stay in the city of New Orleans once they are trained, but we're not enforcing that, so I'm going to make certain that it is reinforced - once we train you, we will hold you to stay in the City of New Orleans. From my understanding of the contract when I was there, they were penalized, and they just couldn't leave. It was a contractual obligation. If we train them and they go somewhere else for whatever purpose, we're losing money. The other thing is that they feel like they don't have the support of the community. I want to make certain to encourage them and thank them for protecting us.” **Guns?** “I do have concerns because when you mix alcohol and firearms, it does not paint a pretty picture. I'm going to listen to the residents of the French Quarter and make certain that your voices are heard. Personally, I don't believe we should have firearms in the French Quarter. “

Freddie King III “There should be a quality of life department in the French Quarter and NOPD. A lot of crime would be deterred if you have just a simple presence. We need to have some people who aren't just following the major criminals but also walk the streets to enforce [quality of life issues.] [There needs to be] more enforcement of [the laws] we already have and definitely have more of a police presence inside and even on the outskirts of the Quarter [that] can prevent those drugs, guns, and bad actors from coming in. Being proactive is also a big part of it because we know it's going to happen, so let's set up mechanisms to make sure that it doesn't.

I had a conversation with Commander Ferguson about a little program that I would like to see in place called ROTC to NOPD. It's where NOPD recruits high school men and women like LSU and Alabama and other schools. Recruiting earlier, like in high school, can start changing people's idea of the police early. I think that would help us recruit more people from the city, from the areas that need police protection. We start training them younger like in the 11th grade and get them in the NOPD system early. Chief Ferguson said that to be an officer, you had to be 21, it's a state rule. If we can't get that reduced throughout our local and state representatives and state senators, then we just put them in the police department working dispatch or helping with paperwork so that we

get them a job and off the streets. I'm all in favor of a pay increase as the price of living continually goes up. It's a very dangerous job. I've rode around trying to find an address at like eight o'clock at night with all the streetlights out and I got nervous. I couldn't imagine running around two o'clock in the morning, knowing somebody is trying to do me harm and only getting paid a meager salary. I think morale will increase when you increase the pay. **Guns?** We can see that in the past couple of years, guns, liquor, other foreign substances, and crowds in the French Quarter don't mix. I put life over political views and over profits. I'm not a fan of guns in the French Quarter.”

Alonzo Knox “My role will be one to ensure that there's an appropriate police presence as a deterrent and to be the one working with the residents in order to determine the best way to fund that presence. From what I understand about having a state police presence is that it can be very expensive. I noticed while working at the New Orleans Police and Justice Foundation that a continuous issue is how we pay our police officers. I want to start paying our police officers a living wage that is commensurate with the Southern region which can help morale. Once we address that and lift the morale, I think we can then begin to train police officers on how to engage in community policing that will address quality of life issues. I take the view that police are trained to solve crime and to mitigate situations that would lead to crime. As a Councilperson, the question around enforcing ordinances needs to be elevated and addressed as quickly as we can.”

Vincent Milligan Jr. “The City Council is who comes up with the budget and they have been decreasing the budget for the police incrementally over the years. Carjackings alone are up 228%. The murder rate is allegedly up 45%. As Councilman, my role would be to increase the budget for the police department. There needs to be one to two horse policemen every block, or at least for the first five or six blocks because that's where the main crime is happening. My target would be to push for more policemen there and to make the city safer because it's gotten to where everybody feels like they're getting a slap on the wrist and that they can go do whatever they want because they're not being arrested.

We need a mental health unit for sure. We qualify for millions of dollars of mental health grants. I would like to set up a grant writing staff to apply to all the grants that we qualify for so that the social and mental health unit could deal with that kind of situation. One thing I want to do is to push for banning panhandling. I would like to put up QR codes around the French Quarter so that people could donate to the shelters and societies or to the mental health/social work department to help those people out. That will cut down crime dramatically because these people [that are mentally ill and/or abusing substances] are creating a lot of issues in the French Quarter and beyond. There needs to be a different unit from the police to deal with that kind of quality of life issue.

Stephen Mosgrove “I would like to see a more robust task force in the French Quarter. We can put together, NOPD, state police, city departments, DEA, and federal agencies to be a part of a task force that deals with human trafficking and a variety of surface level issues that are very important. It really takes a muscular approach of coordinated action and communication among these entities and police presence is a major way to decrease crime in the Quarter. We need to really look at how we recruit but this goes back to functionality and performing better. We need to look at metrics as to how we are successful or not, and then find ways to improve. I'm all for a change in the civil service rules that presently disallow lateral hiring. I would support the allowance of lateral hiring of officers from other agencies at the rank that they are in the agency they're coming from. Retention is also an issue as it relates to strengthening the depleted ranks of our police force and then applying them to the district. Whether it's pay or housing incentives, we need to find ways to make

NOPD attractive so that officers stay, especially our young officers and our more experienced officers. Lastly, I would support proactive policing in the Quarter. I think police officers have been discouraged from doing that in recent years and I think employing their skills and their sixth sense that they develop to proactively engage folks who they see as potential problems. Getting those guns off the hips and those folks off the streets is effective police work.”

Frank Perez “The quality of life issues begin with enforcement. The first thing I would do is try to start/encourage the Eighth District and the French Quarter Task Force to start enforcing little things like littering, noise violations, and things like that. The task force needs to have more authority to deal with issues that are very easy to deal with. We need more police officers in the Quarter; that could be regular NOPD and/or that could be more task force officers. Things like vagrancy, aggressive panhandling, graffiti, urinating, and defecating in public - these are all little things that go unpunished. It's better to be strict and draw a line early on because once you lose ground, you can't regain it and I think we've lost a lot of ground in the French Quarter. One of the challenges the French Quarter faces is that it is such a unique ecosystem; there are multiple layers or multiple agencies/entities that have different jurisdictions. Lastly, I don't think guns and alcohol are a good mix, but I don't know what we do to prevent that. We can't put up metal detectors at every entrance, but I think we could be a little bit more diligent about patrolling Bourbon Street and Decatur Street, the two main arteries of the entertainment districts.”

Barbara Waiters “I would work with the community and our stakeholders on all levels to find out what the problem is and how we can look at unique ways of addressing it through partnerships and collaboration. My role would be as facilitator and to have inclusive leadership and public engagement. I have spoken to a lot of police in the Quarter, and I think a lot of them are very frustrated, especially with the quality of life issues, because we're wearing out the officers with things that could be handled and addressed in different ways. A lot of the police officers, when they pick up someone who may be causing a problem, they take them to central lockup and then they have to wait for three or four hours and it's a revolving door. I worked closely on the initiative for the Downtown Development District and its Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) program that was designed to work with severely mentally ill people that are on the streets because homelessness is a by-product of lack of resources for mental health and addiction disorders in our city. Enforcement is a huge issue and while we have some great laws on the books, it doesn't mean anything if they cannot be enforced. I think that there's been a lot of practice of addressing community issues and neighborhood issues by saying, “oh, let's just pass an ordinance for that.” We're making it more complex than it needs to be when what we need is to go back to the basics and simplify.” **Guns?** “My views on guns in the French Quarter is that I am not a fan of guns.”

Historic Architecture: The Vieux Carré Commission (VCC) oversees all exterior changes to structures in the French Quarter and the design of new structures. It also can site property owners for building negligence. What is your general impression of the role of the VCC? Occasionally, applications are appealed to the City Council. How do you envision your role in these appeals?

Stephanie Bridges “I served as the attorney for the VCC when I was a city attorney. I think that's a critical voice to maintain the overall historic nature of the French Quarter. I know the other council members tend to go with the district council person who is over that particular area, and they tend to go with their suggestion. My role is to make certain that if there is an appeal, I'm going to listen to the residents in the area. I'm not going to say that I'm going to agree with everything that you tell me, but I know we can come to some consensus that is acceptable for both sides. I think that the appeal process role is critical, and I think the Council person who is sitting in that seat should adhere to the wishes of the Vieux Carré residents themselves before making any decisions based on an application.”

Freddie King III “My impression of the VCC is to preserve the historical designs of the French Quarter, to make sure that people are acting within the guidelines and making sure that we don't turn into Veterans Boulevard or just another neighborhood. I think we need to respect the VCCs authority. We asked them to do a job and we have to let them do that job. Once you start having people override someone's authority, that sends the wrong message of an open door policy. I'm not a big fan of overriding authority but I do think you should take things on a case by case basis and be realistic. For instance, if someone wants to add a couple extra floors to a building, I would say no, but if someone wants to change the door from a light red to a softer red, maybe we could work with that. No to anything major that would definitely change the character of the French Quarter, how we operate, and/or mess with traffic. We need to stick with the VCC's opinion.”

Alonzo Knox “The appeal process is a right that every resident has if they're not satisfied at the Commission level. At the Council level, I think there are a number of factors that I would take into place. First and foremost, why did the commission vote in a manner that it did? Secondly, is this issue before me now going to impact the community as we know it? For example, is a structure in imminent danger? Will it create a financial hardship for the owner to correct it? What are the mitigating factors that the commission did not consider? Having served six years on the HDLC, I know for a fact that the commission goes through each case with a fine tooth comb, and we consider all of the things that the council should consider once it gets to their desks. I'm not one to easily rubber stamp, but I will submit to you and everyone here that I do come with my own bias and my own experience from a historic preservation standpoint.”

Vincent Milligan Jr. “I definitely think that people should be cited and brought to court. If they don't comply after so many citations, then they should be heavily fined or whatever it's going to take to make these people make their corrections. It comes down to just a handful of people that own these buildings that are being neglected and those people shouldn't be allowed to continue doing business in the Quarter and buying any buildings at all.” **Your appeal role?** “I would be on the side of what's historically correct.”

Stephen Mosgrove “I’m going to answer in two parts: First, the Vieux Carré Commission obviously has an important role in preserving the look of the Quarter and the historic elements of it. The second part of my answer will be that I hear from residents that the VCC can be difficult to work with. They can be, sometimes, arbitrary in decisions or things of that nature. Balances are oftentimes very important in life and it's important for architecture to be preserved and protected and for everyone to know the rules and that those rules are enforced, but people know as residents, what their limits are, what their allowances are. I think the partnership between the VCC, and residents could improve so that if there are obstacles in the rules, then perhaps the community and VCC need to work those out. Then, the mission of VCC is held up while people who want to do some interesting things at their properties have some opportunity to do that within the very important mission to not make the French Quarter look like other places in America. My leadership style is to always listen to all sides and simply make the right decision and the best decision for the long-term health of a neighborhood and the city as a whole. My decisions would be situational.”

Frank Perez “I will state unequivocally that I think the role of the VCC is vitally important and I support it. In many ways, I wish they would do a little bit more enforcement. If I were elected to the City Council and any kind of variances or appeals come to the City Council, I will always, 100%, unequivocally side with historical preservation. I believe in the VCC, and I believe in its mission.”

Barbara Waiters “I served on the VCC for four years and I think it is a necessary organization to maintain the integrity of and to preserve the French Quarter. I think you have to look at safety and you have to look at what the needs are in the Quarter, what are the issues regarding the protection of the citizens? I do think we need to kind of balance some things out, like the heights of the balconies. I think that the integral role of the VCC is to maintain the historical integrity of the buildings and homes of the French Quarter because if we didn't have that, then what would be unique about the French Quarter? I would guide it on a case by case basis because I don't believe blanket policies for anyone or anybody. I understand the core mission of the VCC, and I would stick to those standards.”

Zoning & land use – Vital to protecting the residential zoning districts is the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (CZO) and Master Plan, which safeguards them from commercial encroachment. It is imperative that we have leaders that hold all parties to the same standards and reject developers and other pressures for special treatment. To that end, property owners have sought to upzone their properties for new uses, like the ability to sell alcohol or introduce commercial activities. What do you see as your role in adherence to the Master Plan & CZO?

Stephanie Bridges “My role is to adhere to it, period. There are certain exceptions, but not exceptions that take away from the overall purpose of the CZO or the Master Plan. If we're trying to maintain the historic presence of the French Quarter, we need to adhere to the CZO. Now, if there are some changes that need to be made, they will not be coming from me - they will be coming from the residents themselves as suggestions. I think we should just adhere to the CZO as it is unless citizens have some type of input that they would want to see changed. My mission is to make certain that everybody is treated the same, period.”

Freddie King III “While on the campaign, I've noticed that a lot of people aren't in favor of spot zones. We want to keep the integrity of the neighborhood. [If there is a situation in which the residents want it,] we can have a dialogue between the residents, business owners, and all the stakeholders involved but just to [approve of a change even though the neighbors aren't in favor of it] is counterproductive as a council member. You should listen to the residents and not make decisions based off what the few powerful or rich have to say.” Mr. King said he would listen to residents and make decisions according to long-term plans. He also said that if he “sides with residents and it doesn't go as planned, at least they made the mistake as a community.”

Alonzo Knox “My role will be to safeguard the CZO and the principles of the CZO. We as a city put a lot of time into drafting this CZO and it took a number of years to get to where we are now. It becomes very frustrating when you see certain developers try to circumvent and/or manipulate the whole process with spot zoning and other methods to get around it. If I'm elected, the experience I have around land use and the perspective that I bring from the HDLC would be to ensure that we adhere to the CZO as it was intended and to the spirit and the principles the way that they are listed currently. I do recognize that there may be times when there may have to be an issue of spot zoning, but I think it should be far in between when those type permissions are granted. I say this from my own experience as a resident of Tremé and from my own experience as a former commissioner with HDLC.” **What would justify a spot zone?** “From my approach, it would be a holistic view in terms of whether or not a spot zone is going to have a positive impact on an area that has been dilapidated for years. For example, if the area has been known to be a crime producing area, is the spot going to contribute to the revitalization of a particular block face, or is it going to improve the totality of the quality of life in that zone? Those questions are some of the things that will weigh on my decision process. If I were to grant a spot zone, again, it is my inclination to do so sparingly.”

Vincent Milligan Jr. “I understand during the COVID lockdown getting a temporary alcohol license or food license, but I don't think that that should be a permanent thing. Maybe in an emergency it is used so that people can make the money that they need to make for their businesses to continue to survive, but that shouldn't be changed permanently. I do not think that anyone should get any preferential treatment. I don't care who they are, and that's the problem that we're having here in New Orleans and in the French Quarter, especially. [He believes that the City Council and the Mayor are responsible for the Hard Rock collapse because...] They changed the height ordinances for that to be built in that spot. People can't take those spaces and use them because now they've turned into dilapidated buildings or restaurant chain when it's not really supposed to be a chain. What we're known for is our food and with these types of restaurants being commercialized, they're not getting the same food. People aren't getting the same experiences that they used to get coming here to New Orleans and all of that needs to be changed. “

Stephen Mosgrove “I've always been a supporter of the spirit of the CZO, because it is meant to provide clarity and stability for land use that benefits residents and business people. In the Quarter, there are areas that are set for commercial activity and there are areas that are not; the CZO is particularly relevant in this context for maintaining our historic neighborhoods as real, true breathing neighborhoods where residents can simply live, work, and play. I would definitely preserve and defend the residential zoning of the French Quarter. The process of hollowing the French Quarter and other historic neighborhoods is counterproductive for the future of New Orleans and it's painful to the residents who at some point, because of decreasing quality of life or economic pressures, decide to leave. I think it hurts the culture of New Orleans, as a whole, when

we get so selfish that we inject commercial interests excessively into the residential side. A small business presence obviously plays an important role for the residents and there's proper zoning for that. I don't see myself being very generous with variances that compromise the neighborhood quality of life. I've been in neighborhood engagement, and I've spent the last few years going to every neighborhood association meeting every month. [On deciding whether to grant a variance if it's supported by residents but goes against the rules.] I think, again, it's relatively situational. If there's a consensus from the neighborhood, I could be open to it. At the end of the day, I'll be very attuned to what residents throughout our historic neighborhoods and throughout the entire district are wanting, needing, and thinking about.”

Frank Perez “After Katrina, there were a lot of people who worked really hard for a really long time on that CZO, and I think it's a good CZO. What alarms me is that, in recent years, everybody seems to have forgotten it. I think variances should be very rare and there should be a good reason for them. My inclination would be to seek input from residents because we're the ones who live here. I believe that residents know what's best for their neighborhoods. My second inclination is to oppose exceptions and variances. We need to enforce the laws we have on the books, and that includes the CZO. We've got to be consistent, whether it's with the CZO or our laws, and we've got to treat people fairly.”

Barbara Waiters “I think my role is really simple: to adhere to the Master Plan and the CZO.”

Tourism: Prior to COVID, the city hosted nearly 20 million people a year, with 97% of those visitors coming to the FQ. What issues do you see these numbers contributing to? What would you do to mitigate the problems that overtourism is causing?

Nighttime tours are routinely violating city regulations on size, hours, and proximity to other tours. What would you do to rein them in?

Currently, only bars and restaurants exist for people needing restroom facilities, leading to people relieving themselves in the public right of way. What do you think about public restrooms?

The sheer number of people visiting the FQ means that sanitation issues are magnified. Do you have ideas for how to keep a cleaner and more visitor-friendly French Quarter?

Stephanie Bridges “I think enforcement is key across the board. If you get those who are really dedicated to doing the job, I think we can come up with a consensus to put an emphasis on enforcement for STRs, for parking, for everything. If we put the emphasis on enforcement, with the Mayor's Office, I know we can at least start to deal with this situation.

We have the police who are operating 24/7, and so why don't we have an enforcement division specifically for the French Quarter that would operate 24/7?

The city should be responsible for maintaining public restrooms. I was thinking about another city that's well known for tourism and they have a 24-hour restroom facility just for tourists. It's a public

restroom but it's designed with the decor of the area, they maintain it 24/7, and make certain that there is somebody present to protect that particular facility. I will talk with you to see if that's something that you would want in the French Quarter and in an area that is accessible, maintained, and where it looks like it fits in with the French Quarter.

[Should the city direct visitors to other areas of the city?] People from outside of New Orleans, all they know is about the French Quarter and so it's not a bad idea to have the city promote other areas that tourists could visit within the city of New Orleans. I have started becoming a tourist in my own city because of certain things that I didn't know. We can advertise [places like] City Park when they have festivals. There are a ton of things that we can advertise throughout the United States for people to come and see New Orleans. We're not just Bourbon Street."

Freddie King III "I think enforcement is the key and more officers on the ground. I think tourists have an 'anything goes' attitude because there's a lack of police presence. If you see law enforcement out and about, then you would think twice about committing a crime. If we get the French Quarter cleaned up a bit, I think that would change people's mindset. If you walk down the street and you smell a putrid smell, you figure "let me just add to it. What's the big deal?" If you have a better looking and smelling environment, that changes people's attitude about what's accepted in that environment. I think it's very important to let tourists know there are rules because if you let one small thing slide, it can escalate into something big.

I personally would not tie up NOPD manpower to enforce those issues. I will use what we already have from Safety and Permits, and I will use Code Enforcement officials to come out. I think every candidate in this race has echoed the idea of nighttime enforcement because we are a city that doesn't sleep, so our enforcement teams should never sleep. I think we should pair some NOPD or Sheriff's officers with Code Enforcement officers to go around at night patrolling the Quarter. Maybe conducting surprise sweeps would make a difference."

He has not thought about the public restroom issue.

When it comes to having a discussion around tourism, if he were to make it to council, he believes that safeguarding the French Quarter pushes bad actors towards the Marigny and Bywater. He said he'd have a dialogue with all residents and would try to talk to all of his constituents to discuss what should happen.

Alonzo Knox "Tourism management" is one of those buzz words that's thrown out there, but to my knowledge, nothing has really been done to effectively manage tourism in the city of New Orleans. In many instances, we put tourism over residents and we're not effectively gauging the positive sides of tourism. Mayor Mitch Landrieu wanted 20 million tourists to be a goal, [but] is that what we as a city view as success and if that is the case, then how is that positively impacting [residents like those in] the French Quarter? [We need to reevaluate] how we gauge the success [of our tourism.] We as a city need to look at how we put residents first. We need to look at how we manage tourism in a neighborhood like the French Quarter. In regard to installing a pedestrian mall, my inclination would be no; I don't think it considers the needs and desires of the residents and so for me, that wouldn't be the appropriate route to go. I don't have a full answer for how we do that, but I would love to engage with the residents of the Quarter to get their feedback and to be more informed about the best approach.

One of the things that I've been putting forth is to work with the administration to implement and appropriately fund an Office of Nightlife and Culture, [which] will continue the business of City Hall

after five o'clock to address the nighttime issues [like] the tour groups and other rules that we have on the book.

My first concern would be where would you place such a public restroom? What would the design of such a public restroom look like? Will it fit within the tout ensemble of the French Quarter? I would want to know where the restrooms would be placed and how they would strategically fit within the fabric of the Quarter, but I wouldn't necessarily be opposed to it.

I think along with the notion of public restrooms it would be wise to add more public trash receptacles that are strategically placed throughout the Quarter and not just on Bourbon Street. The design of the receptacles now looks nice and they fit in but I don't know if the quantity is appropriate."

Vincent Milligan Jr. "We have to stop catering to some of that [budget travelers] by not having cheap hotel rooms and letting people walk around with their own alcohol. We need to have a complete overhaul of the French Quarter now because in the last year it's been allowed to degrade from where it used to be, and we're going to have to rebrand it to get it back to where it was because the city itself and the merchants can't live with the way it is right now.

We need to stretch things out away from the Quarter somewhat for people that want to come and have a party. Amsterdam is starting to stretch some of their districts out to create more of a desire to go to these places versus [just hanging out in a single place like the Quarter.] The Quarter can be for people who want to come and experience the historic district and then we can have other areas for people to be able to experience the 24 hour party atmosphere. New Orleans, not just the French Quarter, is a huge draw to people because of the historical experience and the party experience. [Daytime] is where you have the historic people and in the evening, they want to go and relax at nice restaurants and clubs and stuff. For the hardcore party people, we can have them in the new Riverside entertainment district, or even across the river in Algiers. Something needs to be done to bring Algiers to life.

(Tours) "Some of that is what goes with living in New Orleans in the French Quarter, but it shouldn't be a nuisance to that extent. It should be limited." He further suggested having residents/owners of the Quarter meet with tour group owners to work together.

(Public Bathrooms) "If we can make more public bathrooms, we should, but we shouldn't have those open all night long. They're actually starting to talk about having City Hall open at night to have a special unit to deal with the different legalities at night because the Quarter doesn't shut down at five o'clock, it gets started. We don't want to limit the people that come here, we just have to make new solutions. This city is very antiquated in a lot of the ways that it's run. We have to start thinking ahead, because people are only going to grow in number over the years. So we have to start learning to be able to accommodate that and not try to limit it."

Stephen Mosgrove "Tourism has its place in our economy, but one of the main reasons I argue for diversification is the number of benefits that would come for local residents economically. I absolutely feel that there's too much pressure on the French Quarter and surrounding neighborhoods from tourism. I am extremely open, and I would even say supportive of this notion of moderating the volume of visitors to the Quarter and to surrounding neighborhoods. I've always been a proponent of quality tourism over quantity. [I] can appreciate the industry as an important part of our economy but I would like to see it be more creative and not always [focused on] the

party. I think that cheapens New Orleans and I think that makes other economic development efforts more difficult.

(Public Restrooms) “I am aware that a lot of the public defecation comes from the homeless in the area. I do want to find comprehensive solutions to the homelessness problem. It's my understanding that they often use the facilities at the French Market. As for the tourists, I think that goes back to functionality particularly with the police. I would like to see more police presence and quality of life enforcement. I think that speaks to changing the mentality within the district. I really want our city in general and our police force to value enforcement on the small things.”

Frank Perez “Millions of visitors can create a lot of problems. Some of the few that spring to mind are litter, blocking sidewalks, gawking in windows and gates, and not being respectful of the neighborhood. Over tourism is a real thing. I'm a member of the Sustainable Tourism Task Force and we've been looking at what other cities have done, especially in Europe, and I think there are some lessons to be learned there. I think one small thing we could do is encourage hotels to include a 30-45 second video on the TV so that as soon as the guest turns on the TV, they have to watch this short infomercial showing that the French Quarter is a residential neighborhood. I think there are a lot of ways we [can educate visitors not staying in a hotel] especially with public-private partnerships with all the businesses in the Quarter. We could do a PR campaign. We could get really high tech with an app. We could put up posters. I think involving the businesses of the Quarter would be one way to start. A lot of issues have to do with educating people who come here because a lot of them have this idea, “Oh, it's the French Quarter. We can get away with whatever,” and they do things that they would never do back home. We need to let them know that's not okay. Again, I think enforcement, more boots on the ground, could really help alleviate a lot of these problems.

(Tours) “Number one, I think we need to make it a lot more difficult to become a tour guide, it's too easy. There needs to be a residency requirement to become a tour guide. I think the licensing fees need to be a lot higher and the city needs to do a better job of actually training tour guides. Whenever I do a tour, whether it's two people or more, I say, “Look, we're in a neighborhood. We need to respect it. Don't sit on stoops, don't lean on buildings, don't put your foot on the brick wall, etc.” That kind of stuff needs to be on the tour guide test and currently, it's not on the city test. The other thing is, we could probably reduce the maximum number of people allowed on a tour. Right now, it's 28 and it's an arbitrary number and it's far too high. Another solution may be to require tour guides to use what they call a whisper system. Every tourist on the tour gets a little headset and the tour guide speaks into a microphone, so they don't have to scream at the top of their lungs. That puts a financial burden on the tour companies, but they're putting a burden on us. I would love to convene a meeting or summit, with neighborhood residents and advocacy groups as well as tour company owners and tour guides, to just kind of throw everything out on the table and have an honest discussion.”

(Public Restrooms) “I'm not against it, but it would depend on where they are. I don't think just parking a porta-potty on the corner is a good idea that doesn't exactly compliment the Tout Ensemble, but I think it can be done professionally, cleanly, and integrated into the grand scheme of things. Right now, there are only two; there's one at the French Market and the other one is Edison Park. If we can add more in a way that doesn't obstruct or look tacky, I'm not against it.”

(Cleanliness) “I think we need to get rid of Empire. They are very substandard, and they don't do a very good job. As a member of the Livability Committee for FQMD, I've looked at the sanitation

contract and they are not fulfilling it. Why aren't we holding these contractors accountable? The receptacles - I don't know what else we can do with them. You can't make them too big because they won't be able to fit down certain alleyways. The sanitation contracts are up in December, and I don't know who they're going to get. We've set some standards in the FQMD Livability Committee on what it should be and we need to enforce whatever it is."

Barbara Waiters "As I mentioned earlier, the French Quarter is less than a one square mile. You have over 20 million visitors there and that causes a lot of issues such as: sanitation, traffic, people drinking and fighting, crime, and bathrooms. I do think there's a lot of opportunities to broaden the French Quarter if we look at it from a different framework and approach development in the way of collaborative planning so that we can enhance this culturally rich community."

(Tours) "I would enforce the codes and laws. My number one pet peeve is [when Council passes an ordinance to appease somebody or some organization and then] that ordinance is not enforced. First things first, you have to know the code, review the code, [and enforce the code.] Number two is to have good relationships with the administration as well as the administration's leadership. I still have those relationships with the people that I used to work with at City Council. I don't think a lot of people give credence to the Public Safety Rangers at the DDD in collaboration with the NOPD detail that we pay. The Public Safety Rangers are enforcing the quality of life issues, communicating with the stakeholders and partners around us to establish those relationships. When it comes to quality of life issues, especially when dealing with people who have mental health issues and the people experiencing homelessness, our Public Safety Rangers do a better job of moving and getting resources for those people than NOPD can do. They are the eyes and ears on the ground, and they have relationships with some of the people that are hard and difficult to work with."

Sound Issues – Residents love the unique culture of the neighborhood, including the music and entertainment. But the biggest problem that drives people out of their homes in the French Quarter, and also compromises the quality of experience for visitors, is excessive and chronic sound that permeates buildings late at night (revving engines, cruising vehicles' stereos, commercial speakers, street performers, external speakers). Do you have a position on the current unenforceability of the sound ordinance and how we can move to craft a better one?

Stephanie Bridges "I'm not going to say I was there when they first crafted it, but I was there when they were trying to decide on what the sound decibel looked like, what was tolerable and not tolerable. I know that when they passed the law and they tried to enforce it, the same situation that's occurring now occurred then. This goes back to having an enforcement unit specifically for the French Quarter because that's where most of the tourists go and that's where most of the things are happening at night."

Freddie King III "I think a lot of that comes down to just having more of a police presence. You would think twice before you crank up the speakers or rev your engines at two o'clock in the morning. I would like to talk with the restaurants, business owners, and the residents about how we can all figure out the noise ordinance. I know it's very difficult to enforce but I am not opposed to

taking a look at the sound ordinance and creating something that everyone feels that they can live with. I'm very aware that it appears to be residents versus business owners, but I can tell you from my experience that they have more in common than not."

Alonzo Knox "I have to preface it by saying that I've had my own issues around the noise ordinance in response to a situation in Tremé and directly in front of my home. I know firsthand, beyond the noise, the feeling of disrespect from the lack of enforcement from the city around this issue. If I'm elected, one of the first things I want to do is to settle this issue. I suppose there are some aspects of the noise ordinance that could be challenged around the constitutionality of it. If that is the case, as a council member, I want to settle it and I want us to come to some finality around the legality of this ordinance, and if we can't, then we need to craft a whole new one and we need to do it as quickly as possible. I'm not a confrontational person, but there are some things that the mayor needs to be called out on and this is one of those issues. This is an issue that addresses public health. This is an issue that affects a lot of people's quality of life. I will address that by holding the mayor accountable and all of her officials accountable to do what they need to do to enforce the ordinance."

Vincent Milligan Jr. "We definitely have to craft a better one. Exactly how we're going to deal with that. I don't know how but I'm definitely open to suggestions. I don't know how you can stop somebody from revving up their motorcycle because by the time you call the police, they wouldn't even be able to get to that person. The drummer boys need to stop at a particular time, say 10 o'clock. A new ordinance definitely needs to be made. Maybe post signs such as "no revving engines after a certain time."

Stephen Mosgrove "It goes back to enforcement and then the police always say that the ordinance is essentially unenforceable. I definitely would support improving the noise ordinance so that it is enforceable, and this is not a problem anymore."

Frank Perez "Yes, I do. I think the problem with the sound ordinance, among many problems, is that the only decibel readers in the city are with the Health Department and the Health Department goes home at 5:00 p.m. and most of the sound problems are later at night. I believe we should empower the French Quarter Task Force with decibel readers. Give them the authority to ticket these bicycle clubs that blare their music at extraordinarily loud decibels. All they would have to do is just roll up, pull out the decibel meter, issue a ticket, or shut them down. The noise ordinance should not be difficult to enforce - all you need is a decibel reader and the authority to write a ticket. I would favor a nighttime city government presence because we have a nighttime economy."

Barbara Waiters "I am trying to get more information on some of the sound issues and that's something that I'd like to hear from you all. I believe it was in 2013 that the last sound ordinance was updated. I believe that it's very complex [to enforce] the sound ordinance right now because the French Quarter is divided into three areas, VC entertainment, VC commercial, and VC residential and each one has its own timeframes, which in the residential area, I believe it's 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM. How it's measured seems to be the element that's really complex and very difficult to enforce for several reasons. I don't have an answer, but I would love to work more on that. From a zoning perspective, they should make it a criteria to put up sound barriers and if you don't, you have a \$500 fine. If the penalty is minimal, sometimes people will just accept it and violate the issue because they all write it off as a monthly expense. There's nothing to incentivize people. It has to be something that really incentivizes the offender to change their actions."

Parklets & Pedestrianization - During the summer of 2020, Mayor Cantrell revealed ways to Reimagine the FQ through various pedestrianization efforts, including vehicle free streets, and a “Civic spine.” Some of this has been implemented by the City Council, like the reduced speed limits, and some has been introduced under the Mayor’s emergency decree without public vetting, like the parklets. What are your impressions of these efforts and what would you prioritize?

Stephanie Bridges “Understanding what the residents themselves want to happen differently in the French Quarter is key to me. I've spoken to a lot of people and people told me about the fact that the speed limit was decreased, but it's still the same as far as they're concerned. One of the things I kind of suggested is putting a stop sign at every corner to make certain that they have to stop at every corner and hopefully that will reduce some of the speed. I care about the infrastructure of the French Quarter because if we don't maintain it, that would be disastrous for the city of New Orleans.”

Freddie King III “Less parking in the French Quarter is never a good thing as it is already impossible to park. I know these parklets take up multiple parking spots and, again, a lot of the French Quarter issues come down to enforcement. There seems to be a lack of communication between the Mayor's office, the council's office, the business owners, and the residents. Until everyone gets on the same page, we may not agree on everything. Most of the time you're inherently telling one group “No” and that's just the nature of the job, but there needs to be a conversation so that doesn't always have to be the case.”

Alonzo Knox “First and foremost, you can't reimagine anything, any area in the City of New Orleans, without reimagining it for the residents first. You can't reimagine a whole community without engaging that community first. The mayor had an image where she reimagined Armstrong Park, the Municipal Auditorium, and Congo square and she did so without engaging the residents. As a result, myself, some of my neighbors and like-minded people across the city came together in protest against the whole notion of reimagining and relocating City Hall to the Municipal Auditorium without any regard to the negative impact that it would have on the residents' quality of life. You cannot reimagine anything without first imagining the conversation with the residents and imagining how a resident will feel about a parklet across from their home [and how it would impact] the quiet enjoyment of their home. Those are things that I think the city doesn't do very well at. I think the mayor and her team are well intentioned and I think they have some great concepts. However, I think some of the concepts that they have don't fit within the French Quarter. I think there needs to be some modification to how the city rolls out its plans and there needs to be measures in place that allow enough time for an engagement process to take place before they produce any kind of document.”

“I don't know how you reimagine something that's historic and meant to be preserved. The French Quarter is what it is and it has always been that way. It is the economic engine of this city. It is the historic destination that tourists from around the world come to see. Why fix something that's not broken? Why reimagine something that's already so beautiful? I've not met any residents in the French Quarter, and outside the French Quarter, who have a view or a position that anything in the French Quarter needs re-imagining. Let's talk about speed limits, or re-imagining infrastructure

that will reduce or mitigate this new level of flooding that we see in the French Quarter or redirecting how tourists move about the French Quarter.”

“The French Quarter already has an issue around parking, the movement of people, and noise. How then would it be appropriate to allow, without any limitation, parklets to pop-up sporadically throughout the Quarter and particularly in the residential sections of the Quarter. As a business owner, I definitely see the benefit in it, but that is purely in the interest of a business interest. If I were a resident, that would be a concern to me. As a resident, I would want to know the impact of that parklet on the quiet enjoyment of my home. I would like to know the impact on my ability to park near my home.”

Vincent Milligan Jr. “This has been a disruption for all of New Orleans and especially the French Quarter in their businesses. I'm not in agreement with [it.] People spend a lot of money to live in the French Quarter and we should be able to drive through to our house to be able to get groceries out of the car. If you can't even get to your street or get to your house to bring in groceries, then how are people supposed to deliver to the bars, clubs, and the restaurants?”

Stephen Mosgrove “Well, my impressions thus far, have been [that] most in the neighborhood are against the ideas of pedestrianization and such. It goes back to what's best for the neighborhood and what's best for the community. I don't necessarily see how pedestrianization is going to work in a way that makes the Quarter attractive to residents, but I could be just ignorant on this and not have the full scope. I've looked at a number of the ideas and I just don't see how it enhances livability in the Quarter. Generally, I've heard a desire to see the parklet program cease. Of course, the businesses that are benefiting from the parklet typically appreciate the program and the allowance. We just have to be reasonable and be fair and attentive in decision-making. Parklets were very helpful in some stages of the pandemic. In some neighborhoods, at some point they can become more of a burden [and so] you have to have a leadership that's attentive and engaged and knows how to make decisions.”

Frank Perez “I read the entire proposal and there were seven key concepts. Some of it was good. However, some of the ideas like the Civic Spine on Orleans, I thought were terrible. I don't support increasing the number of pedestrian malls. I don't support rezoning the Upper Quarter. I have very mixed feelings about the Mayor's re-imagining of the French Quarter proposal. I don't think the French Quarter needs to be re-imagined - I think it needs to have its laws enforced and it needs more permanent residents. I am in favor of lowering the speed limit and making N. Rampart safer. I have mixed feelings about the parklets. A lot of residents don't like them because they're very noisy at night when they're trying to sleep. I think there's a compromise to be made somewhere in there with business owners. I would be willing to look at that. Again, I'm going to bring it back to enforcement. You can put all the 15 mph speed limit signs you want in the Quarter. How about buying the Eighth District a radar gun? How about just the signs that tell you how fast you're going? You know, if you enforce the law, it will make a difference. I think if parklets are in a residential area, they probably shouldn't be, and I would maybe see if there was a way to get the input from the residents so that they would have a final say on something like that. I think there's a balance to be made, but I would look at residential zones differently than I would look at entertainment zones.”

Barbara Waiters “Number one, I think a strong public engagement process that's comprehensive is very important before you introduce any detailed plan. Number two, you have to see how it impacts everyone. How does it impact the residents? I do believe from my understanding that the residents of the Vieux Carré were concerned about being able to access their homes because some of the streets were proposed to be closed off for a pedestrian mall. That kind of proposal does require not only public engagement, but an intensive study. I don't really know a lot of the details of the parklet program. I do think that some of the streets in the Quarter have lighter traffic than others and you have to look at the narrowness of the streets and what the uses are on those streets. I think it would have to be more public engagement.”

STRs - What are your views on the current short term rental regulations that were passed in 2019? Do you think they need to be revisited and how? Do you support keeping the hotel moratorium (including STR prohibition) in place?

Stephanie Bridges [Regarding] “the short-term rentals situation - right now we don't need to have any more new laws, we need to enforce the laws that are current. Now if we need to tweak it, I would be relying on the residents themselves because they will be able to say what works and what does not work.”

Do you support the prohibition? “Yes

Freddie King III I personally think it was a bit of a knee jerk reaction to get rid of short-term rentals. We want to be recognized as a world class city, competing with the Paris's, the New York's, the alpha cities. Short term rentals in 2021 are state of the art. With technology evolving and with innovation, it might be hard to put that genie back in the bottle. It's going to be hard, like trying to stop rideshare to keep taxi cabs. I think we should have a way that it's enforced, and everyone wins. Knowing that people advertise the short term rentals once city hall shuts down at 5 pm is crazy. It's going to happen legally or illegally. I think we need to control it and if it's going to happen, we need to determine the rules of engagement. If we enforce those rules, then the city makes money, and we use that money to hire more security in the French Quarter. If you want to open up to some commercial areas in the Quarter, then let's be smart on how we enforce it.

Do you support the prohibition? I think it's worth having a look at short-term rentals outside of the Bourbon Street Zone, but, and I'm going to be very specific, not in the residential zones. I think there are plenty of places outside of Bourbon Street that are very heavily commercial and could benefit from it such as abandoned buildings that could benefit from a face lift. Definitely not in those protected residential areas, but I would consider possibly moving French Quarter short-term rentals outside of that Bourbon Street area.

Alonzo Knox “I have personally experienced all of these issues. I understand why someone would want to have a STR in terms of having that additional revenue to cover the mortgage, to pay for a kid's education, to have a safety net in case you have to move. If individuals are operating legal STRs, more power to them. My issue, however, is that there's a lack of enforcement as it relates to STRs throughout District C. There is a lack of staffing to impose the rules we already have on the books. We have allocated funding from the state specifically for enforcement. I think it's time that someone on the council put forward a forensic audit to determine how this administration is really

using these funds. If I were to make a change, I would add a text to the existing ordinance to limit the density of STRs per a block face, similar to what we do with a bed and breakfast. [Also we can] increase the number of code enforcement officers throughout the day and throughout the night to enforce those who are in violation. If we don't do it, we're going to see neighborhoods like Tremé, Bywater, Marigny turn into commercial hotel [zones]. I know the French Quarter has seen a significant decline in the number of residents. [From 10,000 in the fifties or sixties to] now, you may have 3,000 to 3,500 permanent residents. We can't have that happen to our communities. We can't allow something like STRs to take hold and reduce what our neighborhood is all about. The concept of an Office for Nightlife and Culture would be a great way to address that because that would extend operating hours of city government into the late hours of the night. New Orleans is an international city. It is increasingly, without a doubt, a night city and so why aren't we getting like other cities and having city operations go beyond five o'clock?

Do you support the prohibition? I do. In fact, I would love to see an expansion of it into neighborhoods that are highly impacted such as Tremé, Bywater, and Marigny who have similar interests.

Vincent Milligan Jr. “I think that we need to come together and have a cohesive understanding about what's going to go on. We need people to be able to make sure that the regulations are followed, because I had a lot of people contact me about that in the Marigny because they're not being enforced properly and they're having issues. Their community isn't really a neighborhood anymore and it's become commercialized. If you're a resident in an area and you pay the taxes there, you should be enjoying your community. You shouldn't have to be worried about what someone is doing because they're not sticking to the ordinances that were provided for them.”

Do you support the prohibition? Definitely.

Stephen Mosgrove “Enforcement in a variety of areas has to improve and enforcement of non-permitted STRs is very important. A council person is someone who approves the budget. To have expectations of [functional] city departments without the funding, support, and prioritization is not fair, it's ineffective and it's political. I'd like to dive in a little bit to the language of the ordinance. It is my understanding that the language could be improved, like the noise ordinance, to improve enforcement. I'd be open to that [because] they need to be limited where they're allowed. Permitting needs to be honest and fair. I wasn't on the council when the city decided to make the bold move to allow them, but I understood the value of regular people having another source of income, but I really don't like them. I think unless we can enforce better and really mitigate their impact, they are a considerable threat to neighborhood life.”

Do you support the prohibition? “I absolutely support the prohibition in the French Quarter. Any revisions from my perspective would not include flexibility in that regard.”

Frank Perez “I think the laws governing short-term rentals need to be strictly enforced, which they're not doing right now. I think, ultimately STRs are harmful to neighborhoods, but that genie is out of the bottle, and I don't think we can put it back in, but we can limit it. We can enforce the laws we have. People in Tremé and Marigny are very resentful of the fact that [the French Quarter] got a ban and they didn't, which is something we definitely need to look at. I think that we need to have a really sincere sit down meeting with neighborhood advocates from the Marigny and from Tremé and put everything out on the table to figure out what's best. If we need to revisit the ordinance, we'll revisit the ordinance. I think if its owner occupied and you own a double shotgun, live on one

side and rent out the other side, I don't have a problem with that because that's the way it's supposed to be, but that's not what's happening. There are out of town developers coming in, scooping up properties like they're going out of style. It's destroying neighborhoods. I don't blame people in the Marigny or Tremé for being angry. We need to listen to those voices and figure out how to move forward.

Do you support the prohibition? “Yes, I support the moratorium in the French Quarter.”

Barbara Waiters “Yes.”

Audubon was given control over the Esplanade & Governor Nicholls wharves during the Landrieu administration but has put their plans on hold. Do you support a passive park without major attractions or something else?

Stephanie Bridges “That is a very critical space to begin with and we need to bring it into commerce. For instance, connecting Algiers to the city directly like before when we had a second ferry landing. There are a number of things that we could do; I'm just not prepared to say exactly what. I would adhere to what the residents want in that area, but you still can bring it into commerce [without generating too much] outside foot traffic. [Maybe] something for the residents - supermarkets or something that would enhance the quality of life in that area.”

Freddie King III “I like the idea of a passive park, but I don't think it's for me to decide. They both sound good but I'd like to talk to the residents of the surrounding neighborhoods.”

Alonzo Knox “I think the initial concept to have a passive park was something everyone kind of agreed upon. How we manage tourism to such a park is a question that many of us have. I support a passive park.”

Vincent Milligan Jr. “It would have to depend on what the main attraction would be, but I like the idea of having a park and maybe even a dog park because people in the Quarter need more places to bring their dog to.”

Stephen Mosgrove “I'll stick with the passive parks. I believe that in an urban, high density environment, green space is very important. I think [parks affect the] quality of life and neighborhood living for residents. I think attractability and retainability for residents would be enhanced by open green space and passive parks. Before I went back to work for the city, I was on the board of Parks For All and its key mission is to increase the amount of green space throughout the city in an equitable way.”

Frank Perez “I think we should expand and connect Crescent Park with the Moonwalk and the rest of the walkway along the river and the Bywater. You don't want anything too big that's going to disrupt the community. What you want to do is give people an opportunity to enjoy the river, [not] obstruct views of the river with tall buildings and big attractions.”

Barbara Waiters “I think parks in that area is a really good thing and I think we need more parks, especially in highly dense, urban areas. Parks, small cafes, and restaurants but no major developments.”

Would you support: Not granting any variances (like height) or resubdivision (combining of) properties for the Hard Rock Hotel site for future redevelopment?

Stephanie Bridges Yes.

Freddie King III Yes.

Alonzo Knox Yes.

Vincent Milligan Jr. Yes.

Stephen Mosgrove Yes.

Frank Perez Yes.

Barbara Waiters Yes.

Would you support a buskers/Street Performer curfew in the FQ at 10:00 pm – like the ghost tours?

Stephanie Bridges Yes.

Freddie King III Yes.

Alonzo Knox Yes.

Vincent Milligan Jr. Yes.

Stephen Mosgrove Yes.

Frank Perez Yes.

Barbara Waiters Declined an answer until more information was available.

What do you think should happen at the Municipal Auditorium?

Stephanie Bridges “The residents do not want City Hall to be moved to Tremé. A lot of people don't remember that when they built Louis Armstrong Park, they took out numerous houses in that area to build it. [An existing] treasure died as a result of being removed from the area. We can't allow that to happen [again]. I remember a time when the Municipal Auditorium was a money making auditorium; it housed balls, graduations, celebrations and was revenue generating. I don't see why we can't return it to the purpose that it was using the money set aside to refurbish it. If the resident came up with a different idea that they want to see happen there, then we could listen to it.”

Freddie King III “We should listen to the community. Personally, I think it should be a black heritage museum. There's one in Mississippi and if Mississippi can have a African-American museum, then I think Tremé, which is known as the oldest black neighborhood in America, should have one.”

Alonzo Knox “I think it should be used for the intended purpose as it's described on the building itself.”

Vincent Milligan Jr. “I'm a big proponent of the Municipal Auditorium being turned into a jazz and heritage museum, along with a gift shop, and event space. That'll bring back whatever it costs to remodel it over a 10 year period easily. It should be a part of the city's use again, but it shouldn't be city hall, that's ridiculous.”

Stephen Mosgrove “I would like to engage [with] the Tremé neighborhood and surrounding neighborhoods. I would like to have that discussion with a variety of stakeholders. I've heard some interest from Tremé residents about a civil rights museum. I hear some interest in dual use of a civil rights museum and some entertainment, and cultural expressions [such as] music recording or small jazz performances, things of that nature.”

Frank Perez “The Municipal Auditorium needs to be restored either to what it was or repurposed for something similar. I don't favor moving City Hall there and I think that would be a terrible idea for a number of reasons. Maybe it could be a site for an African-American museum, a slavery museum, or a music museum. I think it's important whenever we decide what we're going to do with the Municipal Auditorium that we be aware that when the Municipal Auditorium was built originally circa 1930, that was already an encroachment on Congo Square. That was not good at that point, but it's there. I don't think we can tear it down now, but maybe we could use it to honor the legacy of Congo Square.”

Barbara Waiters “I think there's a huge opportunity to use that municipal auditorium as a catalyst for development on the Basin Street corridor. I do think it should be a cultural center as it is a very historical and very sacred site where our ancestors came for worship and congregation. There's so much rich history there that people will come all over the world to see. I think it would be a great anchor for that whole corridor.”

What is your position on the removal of the Claiborne expressway that Biden has mentioned specifically in his Infrastructure Deal?

Stephanie Bridges “My grandfather had a business on Claiborne that was taken away because of the overpass. I know some of the residents want it removed but how, and what, would it look like? I just have to see what the plans are before I can truly address it.”

Freddie King III “It's never too late to do the right thing but I just want people to realize that it would be a huge undertaking. It may cause more temporary issues than it resolves, but I think it's definitely worth having a look at it coming down. If we can afford it, then I say, let's do it but we have to be patient. It will be a very long process, but I'm all for making it happen.”

Alonzo Knox “I support it. My home is located within 10 feet of the structure, and I have no doubt that the structure has negatively impacted not only my personal health and that of my wife and our Cocker Spaniel, but that of my neighbors and the surrounding area. I have no doubt that that structure has negatively impacted my entire community in the worst way that you can think of. We can't get quality businesses to come to Claiborne because of that structure. I've been involved in the matter for the past 10 years and have taken trips all the way to California to study the removal of bridges. I will be in full support of taking the position for it to be removed.”

Vincent Milligan Jr. “I'm not for it, it doesn't make any sense. To me, it sounds like a lot of money being spent that could be spent in other areas of the city that we really need.” [The interview committee explained that the overpass was nearing the end of its usable lifespan] Mr. Milligan acknowledged that his position may change in light of it needing to be removed.

Stephen Mosgrove “I do think of the history of that section of North Claiborne and its role in African-American owned businesses and Tremé. It's an appealing idea. One of the things that is important to me for the district is redevelopment with small business corridors, particularly in Algiers, where there is a lack of investment. There are sections on the East Bank that could benefit from some small business development. I think a plus of the elevated expressway coming down will create a resurgence of small businesses, particularly related to cultural economy expressions.”

Frank Perez “I'm not opposed but again, I would want to seek the input of residents in Tremé and in affected neighborhoods before taking a position. It's hard to disagree with the fact that that expressway really destroyed Tremé and the once thriving economic corridor for African-American businesses. I would love to see that return, but just because we tear the expressway down, it doesn't mean that's going to come back overnight. My inclination is to tear it down, but I would need a lot more input from people who would be directly affected.”

Barbara Waiters “I think that the Claiborne Corridor really separated and dismantled the prosperity of the African-American community that was growing at that time. I would support [removing it.] However, there's going to be a lot of money coming down that Claiborne Corridor and

there has to be community engagement. It has to have engineers. It has to have a very comprehensive process put into place for planning, for community engagement, and any money that goes out for contracting has to have a public process to it.”

Do you have a vision or plan for sustainable energy for the FQ / District / City moving forward on district energy distribution?

Stephanie Bridges “Climate change has had a horrific effect on New Orleans and the citizenry. How many hurricanes have we had this year? The gas plant in New Orleans East was supposed to alleviate our concerns following Katrina and that did not happen. I think we need to invest in solar. I believe we need to take whatever precautions we have so that we can save the city because we are impacted to such an extent that we've had rain now for countless days and the pumps have not been working. If another hurricane comes this way, I don't know what's going to happen to us. I think that if we start really looking at the power of City Council members' role and what they have to do with the quality of life in our city, and if they start to take it seriously, I think we can move mountains to get this done.”

Freddie King III He thinks we definitely need to look at alternative energies and more green energy sources.

Alonzo Knox “I think Entergy is a monopoly and I think New Orleans needs more competition to break up the monopolies that we have in place. Secondly, I think we need to look at other aspects of providing energy such as solar, wind, and use the community to pick certain areas of the city to pilot these programs. How do we use community energy in a way that will be impactful, effective, and will reduce the rate each and every month? I think we also need to look at how we regulate the monopolies that we have in place. There is no reason that we need to be having a conversation about allowing a company that rakes in \$1.4 billion a year to talk about increasing our monthly bills. There's already a fund in place that we, as the residents of New Orleans, pay every month anyway. So why does a company of Entergy's size have to come back and ask for additional money from ratepayers? I will propose new legislation to look at how we bring in more competition and how to take a look at the alternative energy sources. Starting that conversation would be something I would like to begin within my first hundred days. I also would like to look at a study, and I don't know what the outcome may be, on how it would be impactful/beneficial to have Entergy as a publicly run entity similar to how Sewage and Water Board runs. Having said that, I have concerns about the Sewage and Water Board and how it's run.”

Vincent Milligan Jr. “I do. What they're doing in Holland, which our sewer system and drainage system is based on, is that they have water turbines built into the ground and the river comes in and powers them to create energy. That's something that could be looked into, in addition to more solar energy. We could put more solar energy panels into a little solar power field, or we could find someplace like in Algiers where there is a lot of empty land. We have so many resources that are natural to our area and we don't have to rely on all of the carbon fuels to be able to power us.”

Stephen Mosgrove [Regarding Entergy] “I'm interested in their strengthening of the grid and strengthening the assets so that we don't go down and lose power in the first place. I'm a proponent of strong regulation of Entergy and for them to be more customer-friendly. They are too focused on their shareholders and you would think that they would remember that providing

good service to customers is the ultimate way to improve your shareholder standing. I think they need to move more quickly on changing their portfolio into renewables. The City Council, as a regulator, needs to push them more sincerely and intelligently into that direction. One thing that interests me in building efficiency throughout the city and throughout the district is to help residents find those efficiencies and weatherization in their homes block by block, as opposed to house by house. I think there'll be some long-term benefits to neighborhoods where the cost of living decreases.”

Frank Perez “I think we need to break Entergy's monopoly for a variety of reasons. One of which is their stubborn refusal to move towards cleaner, more renewable energy. Helena Moreno and the Public Utilities Commission and City Council adopted the renewable energy portfolio standard, but Entergy has fought it every step of the way. The future is solar and wind - green energy. There are going to be, especially with the infrastructure bill coming down from Congress, thousands of jobs in green energy. There is no reason those jobs can't come to New Orleans. So in addition to mitigating the climate crisis and diversifying our economy, we can have a solid grid. I don't know if you've looked at solar panels recently, but the technology is evolving at such a pace that most of the solar panels during Ida did not blow off roofs. As far as energy in general, we've got to move towards more renewable energy, and I think Entergy needs competition. If elected, I would hope to serve on the Public Utilities Commission and be Entergy's worst nightmare. And I wouldn't make life easier for Cox either.”

Barbara Waiters “I think that we have to really take a look at how we regulate our utilities. Specifically, how Entergy is regulated and made accountable. One of their primary responsibilities of City Council is to regulate utilities and we do pay a lot of money to utility consultants to work closely with the council and advise them. We need to make not only Entergy more accountable, but really look at the office of utilities in the City Council to ensure that we're asking the right questions.”