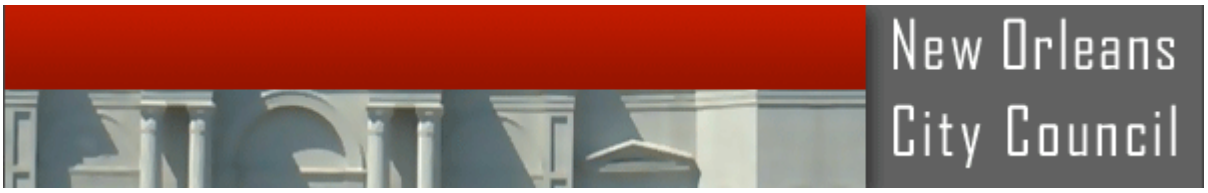

Council Authorizes Retention of Special Counsel, Supports Regional Transportation Plans, Addresses Healthcare Challenges and Receives Cultural Report

News Release **April 17, 2008**

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New Orleans City Council

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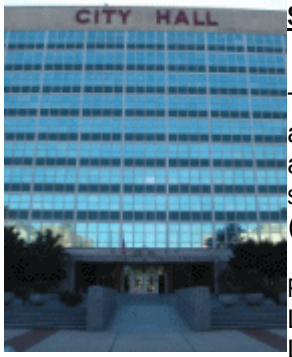
New Orleans, LA - April 17, 2008 - Today the New Orleans City Council passed a motion authorizing retention of Special Counsel for itself, as well as a resolution supporting regional transportation plans. The Council also addressed healthcare challenges in the City and received a cultural report from the New Orleans African American Museum of Art, Culture and History.

Authorizes Retention of Special Counsel for the Council

The Council passed Motion M-08-186, co-authored by Councilmembers Carter, Midura, Willard-Lewis and Hedge-Morrell, authorizing and requesting the Council President to sign a professional services contract to retain Herman, Herman, Katz & Cotlar as Special Counsel to the New Orleans City Council.

Competitive Selection Committee Chair Councilmember James Carter said, "We are excited as a Council to make this announcement and look forward to working together with Herman, Herman, Katz & Cotlar."

The Motion reflects the unanimous recommendation of the firm by the Council's Competitive Selection Committee. The Committee engaged in a thorough evaluation of several firms' proposals and interviewed the selected firm before making the recommendation.



Supports Regional Transportation Plans

The Council passed Resolution R-08-183, co-authored by Councilmember-at-Large Fielkow and Councilmember-at-Large Clarkson, in support of Regional Planning Commission (RPC) Resolution 08-2007.

RPC Resolution 08-2007 calls upon the Louisiana Recovery Authority and the Louisiana Legislature to appropriate up to $20 million for the phased acquisition of approximately 12.0 miles of the East-West Corridor for future transportation purposes, consistent with the approved Metropolitan and Statewide Transportation Plans.

Councilmember-at-Large Fielkow said, "The Council is in full support of the Regional Planning Commission's Metropolitan and Statewide Transportation Plans - we recognize the importance of highway and mass transit improvements and will continue to work to meet the transportation needs in the East-West Corridor."

The East-West Corridor links the River Parishes, Jefferson Parish and Orleans Parish to the New Orleans Central Business District. Various transportation studies conducted over the past thirty years within the East-West Corridor have concluded that highway and mass transit improvements are necessary to meet growing transportation mobility, travel demands, and evacuation needs.

Ben Sachs, Tulane University Medical School Dean

Addresses Healthcare Challenges

The Dean of Tulane University Medical School, Ben Sachs, came before the Council to brief Councilmembers on healthcare challenges in New Orleans.

Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson said, "We as a Council want to ensure that we provide the highest quality of care for our region."

Sachs highlighted healthcare challenges such as shortage of healthcare physicians in the future and hospital funding to name a few. He also presented the benefits of implementing neighborhood health centers in New Orleans.

"Neighborhood health centers become the glue of a community and allow communities to heal themselves," said Sachs.

Receives Cultural Report from New Orleans African American Museum

New Orleans African American Museum Representatives

Representatives from the New Orleans African American Museum of Art, Culture and History came before the Council to give an overview of the museum and introduce the upcoming exhibit "A Celebration of Faith: Henriette Delille and the Sisters of the Holy Family."

"A Celebration of Faith" pays tribute to the Sisters of the Holy Family, the second oldest Catholic religious order for women of color in the United States. The exhibit charts the order's establishment in 1842 in New Orleans and its ongoing charitable endeavors.

District "C" Councilmember James Carter said, "We are very excited and honored to have an exhibit of this caliber featured at the New Orleans African American Museum of Art, Culture and History."

The New Orleans African American Museum is dedicated to protecting, preserving, and promoting through education the history, art and communities of African Americans in New Orleans and the African diaspora.

The exhibit will open on April 30th and remain on view through August 17th. The museum is located at 1418 Governor Nicholls Street.

New Orleans City Council

The New Orleans City Council is the legislative branch of New Orleans City government. The Council considers and enacts all local laws that govern the City of New Orleans. The Council also approves the operating and capital budgets for the City, as recommended by the mayor, and continually monitors revenues and expenditures for local government operations. The City Council is also the regulatory body for public utilities. It also reviews and has final say on many land use and zoning matters, as well as considers major economic development projects for the City. As a Board of Review for Orleans Parish, the Council examines appeals of property tax assessments for real estate taxes, and certifies tax rolls to the Louisiana Tax Commission. Other responsibilities of the Council include overseeing the operation of the public access television in Orleans Parish.

The City Council is comprised of five districts and two councilmembers-at-large. Council President and Councilmember-at-Large Arnie Fielkow; Council Vice-President and Councilmember-at-Large Jacquelyn Brechtel Clarkson; District "A" Councilmember Shelley Midura; District "B" Councilmember Stacy S. Head; District "C" Councilmember James Carter; District "D" Councilmember Cynthia Hedge-Morrell; and District "E" Councilmember Cynthia Willard-Lewis.