



# ***FORWARD New Orleans***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Forward New Orleans Releases Progress Report on Mayor and City Council Coalition holds leaders accountable for pledge they signed during election**

*New Orleans (September 13, 2010)*– In December of 2009, **Forward New Orleans** brought together more than 30 civic, neighborhood and business organizations, all of which are committed to improving the quality of life in New Orleans. The community based coalition identified seven major issues which are the foundation for recovery and reform: Crime, Blight, City Finance, Economic Development, City Services and Infrastructure, City Contracting and Public Education.

During the 2010 Mayoral and City Council elections, **Forward New Orleans** leaders discussed these seven initiatives with all candidates and gave them the opportunity to sign a written pledge to fulfill each mandate. Almost unanimously, elected candidates signed the pledge. **Forward New Orleans** then publicized a “scorecard” that enabled voters to easily assess each candidate’s position on a particular issue.

Part of **Forward New Orleans’** promise to the people of New Orleans was to hold city leaders accountable. To that end, since the elections, **Forward New Orleans** has monitored the performance to determine whether elected officials are fulfilling their campaign promises to achieve the goals of **Forward New Orleans**. To announce its progress, **Forward New Orleans** has released its first in a series of progress reports the organization will periodically provide. The report revisits each issue presented in **Forward New Orleans** and provides a summary assessment of achievements to date.

Gregory Rusovich, chairman of the Business Council, said, “We commend our city leaders for taking overall positive steps toward meeting their pledge and commitment to the citizens of New Orleans. We have made significant progress and look forward to working together to ensure our good work benefits future generations. We remain vigilant, and optimistic, that our great city is laying a foundation for reform and rejuvenation.”

Below is a brief outline of each mandate’s progress. For the detailed report, visit [www.forwardneworleans.com](http://www.forwardneworleans.com).

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**Issue One: Crime**

**Summary Assessment: Good Progress**

- *National Search for a Police Chief*
- *Strategies Against Violent Crime*
- *Performance Metrics and Public Disclosure*
- *Arrest, Charging and Incarceration Policies*
- *Facilities and Technology*
- *Funding and Transparency*
- *Right-Sizing Jail Facilities*
- *Juvenile Justice Initiatives*

**Issue Two: Blight**

**Summary Assessment: Pending**

- *Strategic Plan*
- *Public Policy*

**Issue Three: City Finance**

**Summary Assessment: Good Progress**

- *Budgeting for Outcomes*
- *Collaboration between Mayor and City Council*
- *Special Revenue Funds*
- *Elimination of Wasteful Spending*
- *Performance Measurements*
- *Accountability and Operations and City Contractors*
- *Peer City Benchmarking and Right-Sizing City Government*

**Issue Four: Economic Development**

**Summary Assessment: Good Progress**

- *Creation and Funding of the NOLA Business Alliance*
- *Disadvantaged and Local Businesses*
- *Financial Incentives and Programs and Permitting and Licensing*
- *Armstrong Airport*
- *Economic Engines*

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**Issue Five: City Services and Infrastructure**

**Summary Assessment: Satisfactory Progress**

- *Financial and Strategic Planning and Street Maintenance and Repair*
- *Fiscal Responsibility and Contract Award Process*
- *Essential Facilities*
- *Sewerage and Water Board*

**Issue Six: City Contracting**

**Summary Assessment: Good Progress**

- *Professional Services Contracts*
- *Bid Packets and Contractor Disclosure*

**Issue Seven: Public Education**

**Summary Assessment: Satisfactory Progress**

- *School Facilities*
- *Charter Schools and Continued Oversight by the Recovery School District*

**Editor's Note:**

Details about FORWARD NEW ORLEANS can be found at [www.forwardneworleans.com](http://www.forwardneworleans.com). To request a full report or schedule an interview, please contact Betsie Gambel at [betsie@gambelcommunications.com](mailto:betsie@gambelcommunications.com).

**FORWARD NEW ORLEANS** is a diverse, issue-focused community initiative led by the Business Council of New Orleans and the River Region in collaboration with more than thirty civic, neighborhood and business organizations, all of which are committed to improving the quality of life in New Orleans.

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