

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

LATOYA CANTRELL  
MAYOR

ROBERT D. RIVERS  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LARRY W. MASSEY, JR.  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**City Planning Commission**  
**Staff Report**  
**Tuesday, October 28, 2025**

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**Zoning Docket 050-25**

**Prepared by:** Bria Dixon

**Date:** October 29, 2025

**Deadline for CPC action:** 11/22/2025

**CC Deadline:** 60 Days from Receipt

**City Council District:** A - Giarrusso

**Applicant:** City Council Motion No. M-25-396

**Request:** Amendment to the text of **Article 18** of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance to establish the Fairgrounds District overlay, including the area upon which the Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots currently sits, generally bounded by Gentilly Boulevard, Belfort Street/Avenue, Trafalgar Street, Desaix Boulevard, St. Louis Cemetery No. 3, St. Vincent Street, Verna Court, and Fortin Street, to maintain current and historical fairground and racetrack opportunities.

For all lots within the boundaries, the following uses are to be allowable as conditional uses:

- Fairgrounds; and
- Racetrack

**Property Description:** As described in the motion, the application affects properties upon which the Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots currently sits. The properties are:

- 1751 Gentilly Boulevard (includes the race track and the majority of the Fair Grounds site)
- 1649-1651, 1765, 1781-1813 Gentilly Boulevard
- 3347, 3351, 3369-3377, 3407-3441 Belfort Street
- 3400-3456, 3500-3570 Castiglione Street
- 3100-3414 Belfort Street
- 3519 Derby Place and the property immediately to its west
- 3816-3824 and 3898 Trafalgar Street and the unaddressed portion of ground immediately behind and to the east of 3816-3824 Trafalgar Street

- The portion of the Romulus Street right-of-way immediately south of Belfort Street
- All properties on the north side of Fortin Street between the extension of Crete Street and the rear property line of lots facing the eastern side of Verna Street, except the extension of the Mystery Street right-of-way immediately north of Fortin Street, 3121-3123 Fortin Street, and 3025-3027 Fortin Street

### Description

Zoning Docket 050/25 is a text amendment to **Article 18** of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (CZO) to consider creating a new overlay district to be named the “Fairgrounds Overlay District” for the properties generally bounded by Gentilly Boulevard, Belfort Street/Avenue, Trafalgar Street, Desaix Boulevard, St. Louis Cemetery No. 3, St. Vincent Street, Verna Court, and Fortin Street, in the HU-RD1 Historic Urban Two-Family Residential District. The Fairgrounds Overlay District would designate both fairgrounds and racetracks as conditional uses subject to City Council approval, with the intent of preserving the site’s historical use.

The Motion proposes to allow fairgrounds and racetracks as conditional uses in the proposed overlay district. Used as exposition space since before the Civil War, the fairground was first used as a racetrack in 1872. Located in the heart of a large residential area, there exists the possibility of the site’s redevelopment and the potential parsing out of hundreds of parcels to be developed into one of seventy uses. This being the case, the intent of the Fairgrounds Overlay District is to preserve the site’s historic use.

### Reason for Commission Review

The City Planning Commission is required to make a recommendation on all amendments to the text of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance prior to City Council action, in accordance with **Article 4, Section 4.2.D.3, Action by City Planning Commission** of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance.

### Analysis

#### Reason for text amendment

The City Council motion and the City Council’s comments when discussing the motion on July 24, 2025 indicate that this motion is in response to comments made by Churchill Downs, the facility’s operator, that it may seek to redevelop the site. The Council intends to make sure that any future use of the site is consistent with the site’s past use and compatible with nearby residential property.

The area considered for the Fairgrounds Overlay District is comprised of five commonly owned and operated parcels. If the fairgrounds were to cease its operation, the property could potentially be redeveloped with any of 70 permitted and commercial uses. These uses could be inconsistent with what has historically operated at the site and potentially impactful on the surrounding neighborhood.

To address the potential loss of a cultural and historical icon, as well as an increase in the concentration of uses at the subject area, the Council Motion proposes to restrict all other uses except for fairgrounds and racetracks so that the subject area remains dedicated to the site's existing use. The result of the Council Motion however would disallow the site to be used for single-, two- and small multi-family affordable residences; artists communities; small group homes; home based child care; permanent supportive housing; neighborhood commercial establishments; and institutional uses that are commonly and similarly situated within the same and surrounding neighborhood.

#### *Area affected*

The proposed text change would affect the following properties:

- 1751 Gentilly Boulevard (includes the race track and the majority of the Fair Grounds site)
- 1649-1651, 1765, 1781-1813 Gentilly Boulevard
- 3347, 3351, 3369-3377, 3407-3441 Belfort Street
- 3400-3456, 3500-3570 Castiglione Street
- 3100-3414 Belfort Street
- 3519 Derby Place and the property immediately to its west
- 3816-3824 and 3898 Trafalgar Street and the unaddressed portion of ground immediately behind and to the east of 3816-3824 Trafalgar Street
- The portion of the Romulus Street right-of-way immediately south of Belfort Street
- All properties on the north side of Fortin Street between the extension of Crete Street and the rear property line of lots facing the eastern side of Verna Street, except the extension of the Mystery Street right-of-way immediately north of Fortin Street, 3121-3123 Fortin Street, and 3025-3027 Fortin Street



**Figure 1. Proposed Boundary (Map View)**

This boundary area is comprised of a fairground and historical racetrack surrounded by stables, parking lots, and structures that support horseracing and gaming activities. Despite being outside of the boundaries of the amendment, the immediately surrounding residences and businesses will also be impacted as the text proposes to restrict all other uses with the exception of fairgrounds and racetracks within their vicinity.

### **Existing Regulations and Changes Proposed by Applicant**

#### *Existing regulations*

The Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots fits into two use categories that are within the zoning ordinance. The use of the site for racing falls into the “racetrack” use category, while the use of the site for events, such as Jazz Fest, falls into the “fairgrounds” use categories. The definitions of those uses in **Article 26, Section 26.6** of the zoning ordinance are copied below.

***Fairgrounds.** An area of land used for exhibitions and shows including, but not limited to concerts, animal shows, carnivals, concerts, and other outdoor recreational events. Unless otherwise*

*restricted by this Ordinance, fairgrounds may serve alcoholic beverages as an ancillary use but only when the fairgrounds are open to the public for an event.*

**Racetrack.** *A measured course where animals or motor vehicles are entered in competition against one another or against time including tracks used only in the training of animals.*

The Fair Grounds site is zoned HU-RD1 Historic Urban Two-Family Residential District. This district does not generally allow fairgrounds or racetracks. However, there are several overlapping regulations that allow existing fairgrounds and racetracks to continue to operate and expand.

- The HU-RD1 District contains an exception to the general prohibition of the Fair Grounds site by classifying racetracks that existed prior to the August 12, 2015 effectiveness date of the zoning ordinance as conditional uses subject to use standards contained in **Section 20.3.VV**.
- Non-conforming fairgrounds are regulated by the non-conforming use provisions in **Section 25.3.G.7**, and are permitted to expand within certain parameters, including setback requirements, planting requirements, and site size requirements.
- Non-conforming racetracks are regulated by the non-conforming provisions in **Section 25.3.G.8**, which sets limitations on hours of operation, landscaping, setbacks, lighting, traffic circulation, litter control, and other aspects of facility operation.
- There are several conditional uses ordinances which combine to regulate and allow continued use of the site, including *Ordinance 27,757 MCS* (Zoning Docket 033/21), *Ordinance 22,652 MCS* (Zoning Docket 016/07), *Ordinance 22,390* (Zoning Docket 012/06), *Ordinance 22,053* (Zoning Docket 033/05), *Ordinance 15,667 MCS* (Administrative Amendment to Zoning Docket 076/84), *Ordinance 12,554* (Administrative Amendment to Zoning Docket 76/84), and *Ordinance 10,406* (Zoning Docket 076/84)

*Regulations proposed by the Council motion*

The Council motion proposes the establishment of a new overlay district to be named the Fairgrounds Overlay District, the intent of which is to prohibit the legal establishment of uses other than fairgrounds and racetracks as conditional uses. As the Motion does not provide specific verbiage for the overlay district, the language below suggested by the staff to capture the motion’s intent.

The proposed text additions are indicated by underlined text.

ARTICLE 18 OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICTS

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ARTICLE 18.2 PURPOSE STATEMENTS

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**18.2.BB – Purpose of the Fairgrounds Overlay District**

**The purpose of the Fairgrounds Overlay District is to preserve the historic use of the Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots for the benefit of the neighborhood and for the city at large.**

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**18.33 Fairgrounds Overlay District**

**18.33.A APPLICABILITY**

**The Fairgrounds Overlay District applies to the following areas:**

- Those lots generally bounded by Gentilly Boulevard, Belfort Street/Avenue, Trafalgar Street, Desaix Boulevard, St. Louis Cemetery No. 3, St. Vincent Street, Verna Court, and Fortin Street.**

**18.33.B USES**

**18.33.B.1 PERMITTED AND CONDITIONAL USES**

<b><u>Fairgrounds Overlay District: Permitted and Conditional Uses</u></b>		
	<b><u>FAIRGROUNDS OVERLAY DISTRICT</u></b>	
<b><u>USES</u></b>	<b><u>USES</u></b>	<b><u>USE STANDARDS</u></b>
<b><u>COMMERCIAL USE</u></b>		
<b><u>Fairgrounds</u></b>	<b><u>C</u></b>	<b><u>Section 20.3.CC</u></b>
<b><u>Racetrack</u></b>	<b><u>C</u></b>	<b><u>Section 20.3.VV</u></b>

**Staff Analysis**

The City’s Master Plan, the Plan for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, gives all properties within the city a “future land use” map (FLUM) designation that serves as a basis for its zoning treatment. The Fair Grounds site has a “Residential Low Density Pre-War” FLUM designation. As discussed further below, this designation is primarily oriented toward residential development with limited allowances for non-residential development. The staff takes this to mean that the zoning applied to the Fair Grounds must provide some opportunity for residential development and cannot be limited solely to non-residential development.

Having determined that the FLUM classification requires some allowance for residential development, it is important to determine how the zoning ordinance should establish the allowance. One option is for the zoning applied to this site to allow residential development by-right, which is currently the case under the site’s HU-RD1 zoning. The benefit of this approach is the clear entitlement for a residential use that is contemplated by the Master Plan. On the other hand, a by-right entitlement for residential use would overlook the fact that this site is unusual in its location on the interior of a residential neighborhood and its status as the centerpiece of a neighborhood that has grown up around it.

The staff finds the best way of balancing the need to allow residential development with the responsibility of ensuring that residential development is compatible with the location and character of the neighborhood is by allowing residential development through the planned development process. The purpose of the planned development is to encourage the development of large, multi-acre sites by having flexible zoning regulations that are customizable to the needs of each site. The flexibility of the planned development approach allows for the preservation of historic structures, enhanced site design characteristics, and the inclusion of community amenities, among other benefits.

The need for such flexibility is especially the case here as the site is over 90 acres in size, and under the current HU-RD1 zoning, it could accommodate hundreds of single- and two-family developments. Other causes for the needed flexibility include the site's unusual shape, its location on the neighborhood's interior, and limited street frontage. Should the site be redeveloped, especially for the residential purposes contemplated by the Master Plan, there will need to be extensive efforts to ensure adequate access to the site and to provide the infrastructure, open space, and public facilities needed to support a residential population. This is all the more important given that redevelopment of the site would likely happen gradually over time and possibly be done by multiple developers. Thus, the planned development process exists to serve this type of very large-scale, complicated development effort.

Staff therefore recommend that the overlay district allow for the ongoing use of the site as a racetrack and fairgrounds, as well as for residential redevelopment only through the planned development process.

#### ARTICLE 18 OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICTS

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#### ARTICLE 18.2 PURPOSE STATEMENTS

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#### **18.2.BB – Purpose of the Fairgrounds Overlay District**

**The purpose of the Fairgrounds Overlay District is to preserve the historic use of the Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots for the benefit of the neighborhood and for the city at large and ensure appropriate coordination of any residential development efforts. Residential development is limited to the planned development process to ensure redevelopment efforts are thoughtful consideration of site design, infrastructure improvements, and public facilities.**

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#### **18.33 Fairgrounds Overlay District**

#### **18.33.A APPLICABILITY**

**The Fairgrounds Overlay District applies to the following areas:**

- 1. Those lots generally bounded by Gentilly Boulevard, Belfort Street/Avenue, Trafalgar Street, Desaix Boulevard, St. Louis Cemetery No. 3, St. Vincent Street, Verna Court, and Fortin Street.**

**18.33.B USES**

**18.33.B.1 PERMITTED AND CONDITIONAL USES**

<b><u>Fairgrounds Overlay District: Permitted and Conditional Uses</u></b>		
<b><u>USES</u></b>	<b><u>FAIRGROUNDS OVERLAY DISTRICT</u></b>	
	<b><u>USES</u></b>	<b><u>USE STANDARDS</u></b>
<b><u>RESIDENTIAL USE</u></b>		
<b><u>Dwelling, Single-Family</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>Dwelling, Two-Family</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>Dwelling, Townhouse</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>Dwelling, Multi-Family</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>COMMERCIAL USE</u></b>		
<b><u>Fairgrounds</u></b>	<b><u>C</u></b>	<b><u>Section 20.3.CC</u></b>
<b><u>Racetrack</u></b>	<b><u>C</u></b>	<b><u>Section 20.3.VV</u></b>

**<sup>1</sup> Residential development of any parcel five acres or larger in size is allowed only when approved through the planned development process as outlined in Article 5. Residential development of any parcel under five acres in area is allowed only through the conditional use process.**

**Evaluation of approval standards**

The City Planning Commission recommendation and the City Council decision on any zoning text amendment are matters of legislative discretion. In making their recommendation and decision, the City Planning Commission and the City Council are required to consider the standards in **Table 4-1: Standards for Zoning Amendments** of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. In this section, the staff evaluates the application using those standards.

***The proposed amendment is compatible with the Master Plan and Future Land Use Map.***

This standard is met. The Home Rule Charter of the City of New Orleans requires all land use actions to be consistent with the Master Plan. A land use action is consistent with the Master Plan if it furthers, or at least does not interfere with, the goals, policies, and guidelines in the Chapter 13: Land Use Plan of the Master Plan and is compatible with the uses, densities, and intensities of the designation of its site on the

future land use map. “Chapter 13: Land Use Plan” of the Master Plan designates on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) of the petitioned site as “Residential Low Density Pre-War.” The goal, range of uses, and development character for the designation are copied below:

### **RESIDENTIAL LOW DENSITY PRE-WAR**

**Goal:** Preserve the scale and character of pre-war (WWII) residential neighborhoods of lower density where the predominant use is single and two-family residential and allow for compatible infill development. Discourage the development of additional multifamily housing that is out of scale with existing character.

**Range of Uses:** New development generally limited to single, two-family, and new or existing multi-family dwellings that are compatible with the scale and character of the surrounding residential neighborhood, especially when located in proximity to major transportation corridors. Businesses, traditional corner stores, and mixed use may be allowed where current or former commercial use is verified. Agriculture, storm water management, and supporting recreational and community facilities (e.g. schools and places of worship) also allowed. Conversion to multifamily, neighborhood-serving commercial or mixed-use may be allowed for historical institutional or other non-residential structures.

**Development Character:** New development will fit with the character and scale of surrounding residential neighborhoods where structures are typically located on smaller lots and have minimal front and side setbacks. Allow the adaptive reuse of historic non-residential structures with densities higher than the surrounding neighborhood through the planned development process. Allow higher residential densities when a project is providing significant public benefits such as long-term affordable housing. Incorporate risk reduction and adaptation strategies in the built environment.

This future land use map (FLUM) classification is at the core of staff’s analysis. Any zoning ordinance that affects the Fair Grounds site, be it a base zoning district or overlay district, must be consistent with the FLUM classification. To be consistent, it must further or not interfere with the classification’s development goals.

The FLUM classification’s general intent is to allow residential development. There are allowances for commercial, institutional, and community uses as well, but those allowances are limited and secondary to the classification’s primary orientation toward residential development. The staff is concerned that an overlay district that limits the use of the Fair Grounds site to just racecourse and/or fairgrounds use would interfere with the site’s residential FLUM classification. Given the residential classification, the overlay needs to make some allowance for residential development. The overlay can make additional allowances for a racecourse and/or fairgrounds, as those are arguably community facilities, especially given their importance to this neighborhood’s history, character, and identity.

#### ***The proposed amendment is compatible with the place designations of this Ordinance.***

This standard is met. The text amendment would not alter the place designation of the zoning district.

#### ***The proposed amendment promotes the public health, safety and welfare of the City.***

This standard is met. The proposed text amendment seeks to ensure the continuance of the existing fairgrounds and racetrack, which has benefited the welfare of the City, residents, and visitors for over 150

years. Staff's modifications also allow for the residential redevelopment of the site, as is allowed under the City's Master Plan, to occur in a coordinated manner through the planned development process. This process, which allows for zoning regulations to be customized to account for the site's location and characteristics, will ensure compatibility of any residential development with the surrounding neighborhood. Thus, it promotes the public health, safety and welfare of the City.

***The proposed amendment is compatible with the intent and general regulations of this Ordinance.***

This standard is met. Motion No. M-25-396 prioritizes the formalization of both fairgrounds and racetrack as recreational facilities at the subject site through the conditional use process, and staff's additions create an avenue for residential redevelopment that is consistent with the intent of the HU-RD1 District by permitting the redevelopment of the area as a planned development.

***The proposed amendment corrects an error or omission, adds clarification to existing requirements, or reflects a change in policy.***

This standard is met. The overlay reflects a policy decision by the Council to ensure the continued operation of the Fair Grounds. The staff recommends that the overlay being used to accomplish this policy and create a pathway for residential development of the site through the planned development process.

***The proposed amendment benefits the citizens of the City as a whole.***

This standard is met. As previously stated, the Council proposed this amendment as a mechanism to preserve the Fair Grounds, which, due to its long history and importance to the surrounding neighborhood and the city at large, is beneficial to the City at large.

***The proposed amendment provides a more workable way to achieve the intent and purposes of this Ordinance and the Master Plan.***

This standard is met. The Ordinance and Master Plan intend for a mix of residential and supporting uses in this area. If in the future the subject area is unable to continue as either a fairground or racetrack, the property under the Master Plan can be developed for residential use. Given the size of the site, any residential redevelopment would be very impactful on the surrounding neighborhood in terms of the additional population it could accommodate and the corresponding needs for infrastructure and community facilities. It would be necessary for the redevelopment to occur in a coordinated, planned manner, so that the new homes, infrastructures, and community facilities could be thoughtfully designed and properly integrated into the surrounding neighborhood. The zoning ordinance provides a tool for doing this in the planned development process.

***The proposed amendment does not create a significant number of nonconformities.***

The standard is met. This overlay district would not create non-conformities as it allows the current land use to continue.

**Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommend **APPROVAL** of Zoning Docket 050/25 with the following zoning text changes. The proposed text additions are indicated by bold, underlined text.

ARTICLE 18 OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICTS

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ARTICLE 18.2 PURPOSE STATEMENTS

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**18.2.BB – Purpose of the Fairgrounds Overlay District**

**The purpose of the Fairgrounds Overlay District is to preserve the historic use of the Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots for the benefit of the neighborhood and for the city at large and ensure appropriate coordination of any residential development efforts. Residential development is limited to the planned development process to ensure redevelopment efforts are thoughtful consideration of site design, infrastructure improvements, and public facilities.**

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**18.33 Fairgrounds Overlay District**

**18.33.A APPLICABILITY**

**The Fairgrounds Overlay District applies to the following areas:**

- 1. Those lots generally bounded by Gentilly Boulevard, Belfort Street/Avenue, Trafalgar Street, Desaix Boulevard, St. Louis Cemetery No. 3, St. Vincent Street, Verna Court, and Fortin Street.**

**18.33.B USES**

**18.33.B.1 PERMITTED AND CONDITIONAL USES**

<b><u>Fairgrounds Overlay District: Permitted and Conditional Uses</u></b>		
	<b><u>FAIRGROUNDS OVERLAY DISTRICT</u></b>	
<b><u>USES</u></b>	<b><u>USES</u></b>	<b><u>USE STANDARDS</u></b>
<b><u>RESIDENTIAL USE</u></b>		
<b><u>Dwelling, Single-Family</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>Dwelling, Two-Family</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>Dwelling, Townhouse</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>

<b><u>Fairgrounds Overlay District: Permitted and Conditional Uses</u></b>		
	<b><u>FAIRGROUNDS OVERLAY DISTRICT</u></b>	
<b><u>USES</u></b>	<b><u>USES</u></b>	<b><u>USE STANDARDS</u></b>
<b><u>Dwelling, Multi-Family</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>COMMERCIAL USE</u></b>		
<b><u>Fairgrounds</u></b>	<b><u>C</u></b>	<b><u>Section 20.3.CC</u></b>
<b><u>Racetrack</u></b>	<b><u>C</u></b>	<b><u>Section 20.3.VV</u></b>

**<sup>1</sup> Residential development of any parcel five acres or larger in size is allowed only when approved through the planned development process as outlined in Article 5. Residential development of any parcel under five acres in area is allowed only through the conditional use process.**

**City Planning Commission Meeting (September 28, 2025)**

Staff summarized the application and presented its recommendation of approval. A member of councilman Giarusso’s staff was present on behalf of the motion. One member of the public spoke in support, and members of the public spoke in opposition of the docket. Commissioner Brown requested clarification on what uses an/or nonconformities, if any, would be impacted by the passing of the motion. A member of the public noted concerns of the site’s existing single-family residence. Staff responded by clarifying the intent of the overlay, notating the premise that the motion addresses redevelopment standards should the stie’s current operations cease. One additional member of the public spoke in opposition, and the property owners’ representative requested a deferral. Commissioner Witry expressed interest in a deferral and requested additional perspective from council staff.

Council staff rebutted, noting that opposition resided with employees who would benefit from the continued operations of the site while support was found in the neighbors who would be protected in the event of the site’s closure, which was the basis for the motion. Council staff also found that the intent of the Motion has been met following the property owner’s rescission of their intent to close the site, and was open to consider a two-week deferral.

Council Stewart addressed Council’s staff comments and made a motion for deferral. Commissioner Joshia-Gupta opened a discussion to review current uses. Staff confirmed that no uses would be removed and confirmed that the staff report would be updated for clarity. Director Rivers expressed understanding of the concerns, agreed to update the staff report for clarity, and generally agreed with deferral. Commissioner Brown requested Council’s view on a deferral. Council staff agreed to a deferral. Commissioner Brown motioned for a deferral to the October 14 meeting to allow adequate time for public review and minor adjustments to the staff report. Commissioner Stewart seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION:

**ZD 050/25**

BE IT MOVED BY THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION THAT ZONING DOCKET 050/25 IS HEREBY DEFERRED TO THE OCTOBER 14 CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING.

YEAS: Brown, Flick, Jordan, Joshi-Gupta, Lunn, Stewart and Witry

NAYS: N/A

ABSENT: Steeg

### Further Consideration

The intent of Motion No. M-25-396 and staff's recommendation is to provide a framework by which the Fair Grounds can be developed per the zoning and development standards of the Master Plan and Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. Motion No. M-25-396 and staff's recommendation do not impede or intend to cease or disallow current uses, operations, or related ancillary uses, operations, and developments at the Fair Grounds. Accordingly, the proposed Fair Grounds Overlay does not remove any lawfully existing uses which include but are not limited to fairgrounds, racetracks, a single-family residence, state approved gaming activities, and other ancillary uses and facilities.

Following the referenced deferral, staff and representatives acting on behalf of the property owners met to discuss owners' concerns. Representatives believed there to be future uncertainties. To adequately understand the property owners' concerns, the owners' representatives have requested to meet post October 7, 2025 and defer Zoning Docket 050/25 at the upcoming October 14, 2025 City Planning Commission meeting to be heard at the October 28, 2025 meeting.

### Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend **DEFERRAL** of Zoning Docket 050/25 at the request of the property owner.

### City Planning Commission Meeting (October 14, 2025)

Staff summarized the application and presented its recommendation for deferral. One member of the public spoke in support, and a representative of the property owner spoke in opposition. Commissioner Witry requested confirmation of the deferral. Staff and the property owner's representative confirmed the deferral request. Commissioner Stewart made a motion for deferral. Commissioner Steeg seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION:

BE IT MOVED BY THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION THAT ZONING DOCKET 050/25 IS HEREBY DEFERRED TO THE OCTOBER 28 CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING.

YEAS: Steeg, Stewart, Kepper, Brown, Witry

NAYS: N/A

**ZD 050/25**

13

ABSENT: Flick, Jordan, Joshi-Gupta

### Further Consideration

Following the referenced deferral, staff and representatives acting on behalf of the property owners met to discuss owners' concerns. Representatives expressed concerns regarding the planned development process – specifically the uncertainty surrounding the potential need for additional housing units on the Fair Grounds site for horsemen and others associated with the facility. The staff and owner's representatives reviewed and discussed potential language to be added to the overlay to make clear that the purpose of the overlay is not to deprive the Fair Grounds of existing property rights or the ability to expand through the processes already allowed under Section 4.5.F of the zoning ordinance.

### Staff Recommendation

Staff recommend **APPROVAL** of Zoning Docket 050/25 with the following zoning text changes. The proposed text additions are indicated by bold, underlined text.

#### ARTICLE 18 OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICTS

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#### ARTICLE 18.2 PURPOSE STATEMENTS

\*\*\*

#### **18.2.BB – Purpose of the Fairgrounds Overlay District**

**The purpose of the Fairgrounds Overlay District is to preserve the historic use of the Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots for the benefit of the neighborhood and for the city at large and ensure appropriate coordination of any residential development efforts. The purpose is not to deprive the property of existing property rights or to prevent the expansion of the facility through the processes established by this ordinance.**

**Should the Fair Grounds cease operations and be redeveloped for residential use not associated with racetrack operations, such residential development is generally limited to the planned development process to ensure redevelopment efforts are thoughtful consideration of site design, infrastructure improvements, and public facilities.**

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#### **18.33 Fairgrounds Overlay District**

#### **18.33.A APPLICABILITY**

**The Fairgrounds Overlay District applies to the following areas:**

**ZD 050/25**

1. Those lots generally bounded by Gentilly Boulevard, Belfort Street/Avenue, Trafalgar Street, Desaix Boulevard, St. Louis Cemetery No. 3, St. Vincent Street, Verna Court, and Fortin Street.

**18.33.B USES**

**18.33.B.1 PERMITTED AND CONDITIONAL USES**

<b><u>Fairgrounds Overlay District: Permitted and Conditional Uses</u></b>		
	<b><u>FAIRGROUNDS OVERLAY DISTRICT</u></b>	
<b><u>USES</u></b>	<b><u>USES</u></b>	<b><u>USE STANDARDS</u></b>
<b><u>RESIDENTIAL USE</u></b>		
<b><u>Dwelling, Single-Family</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>Dwelling, Two-Family</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>Dwelling, Townhouse</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>Dwelling, Multi-Family</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>COMMERCIAL USE</u></b>		
<b><u>Fairgrounds</u></b>	<b><u>C</u></b>	<b><u>Section 20.3.CC</u></b>
<b><u>Racetrack</u></b>	<b><u>C</u></b>	<b><u>Section 20.3.VV</u></b>

**<sup>1</sup> Residential development of any parcel five acres or larger in size is allowed only when approved through the planned development process as outlined in Article 5. Residential development of any parcel under five acres in area is allowed only through the conditional use process.**

**<sup>2</sup>Expansion of the existing Fair Grounds racetrack may be authorized through the processes set forth by Section 4.F.5 of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. Such expansion may include the expansion or addition of ancillary use that support the racetrack’s operation, including but not limited to storage, gaming, food and beverage service, and housing facilities.**

**City Planning Commission Meeting (October 28, 2025)**

Staff summarized the application and presented its recommendation for approval. A member of councilman Giarrusso’s staff was present on behalf of the motion and spoke in support. The property owner’s representatives spoke in opposition of the docket. The Commission opened the floor for discussion with questions to staff regarding the site’s current uses. Staff confirmed receipt of a list of current uses from the owner’s representatives after posting and public notification deadlines. The

Commission motioned to accept the presentation of the representatives' list of uses. The motion was accepted. After reviewing the list Commissioner Joshi-Gupta made a motion for approval in accordance with staff's recommendation and the addition of the list of uses as provided by the owner's representatives. Commissioner Kepper seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION:

BE IT MOVED BY THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION THAT ZONING DOCKET 050/25 IS HEREBY RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL. BE IT FURTHER MOVED THAT THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR IS HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO NOTIFY THE CITY COUNCIL OF SAID ACTION.

The proposed text additions are indicated by bold, underlined text.

ARTICLE 18 OVERLAY ZONING DISTRICTS

\*\*\*

ARTICLE 18.2 PURPOSE STATEMENTS

\*\*\*

**18.2.BB – Purpose of the Fairgrounds Overlay District**

**The purpose of the Fairgrounds Overlay District is to preserve the historic use of the Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots for the benefit of the neighborhood and for the city at large and ensure appropriate coordination of any residential development efforts. The purpose is not to deprive the property of existing property rights or to prevent the expansion of the facility through the processes established by this ordinance.**

**Should the Fair Grounds cease operations and be redeveloped for residential use not associated with racetrack operations, such residential development is generally limited to the planned development process to ensure redevelopment efforts are thoughtful consideration of site design, infrastructure improvements, and public facilities.**

\*\*\*

**18.33 Fairgrounds Overlay District**

**18.33.A APPLICABILITY**

**The Fairgrounds Overlay District applies to the following areas:**

- 2. Those lots generally bounded by Gentilly Boulevard, Belfort Street/Avenue, Trafalgar Street, Desaix Boulevard, St. Louis Cemetery No. 3, St. Vincent Street, Verna Court, and Fortin Street.**

**18.33.B USES**

**18.33.B.1 PERMITTED AND CONDITIONAL USES**

**ZD 050/25**

<b><u>Fairgrounds Overlay District: Permitted and Conditional Uses</u></b>		
	<b><u>FAIRGROUNDS OVERLAY DISTRICT</u></b>	
<b><u>USES</u></b>	<b><u>USES</u></b>	<b><u>USE STANDARDS</u></b>
<b><u>RESIDENTIAL USE</u></b>		
<b><u>Dwelling, Single-Family</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>Dwelling, Two-Family</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>Dwelling, Townhouse</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>Dwelling, Multi-Family</u></b>	<b><u>C<sup>1</sup></u></b>	<b><u>Article 5</u></b>
<b><u>COMMERCIAL USE</u></b>		
<b><u>Fairgrounds</u></b>	<b><u>C</u></b>	<b><u>Section 20.3.CC</u></b>
<b><u>Racetrack</u></b>	<b><u>C</u></b>	<b><u>Section 20.3.VV</u></b>

**<sup>1</sup> Residential development of any parcel five acres or larger in size is allowed only when approved through the planned development process as outlined in Article 5. Residential development of any parcel under five acres in area is allowed only through the conditional use process.**

**<sup>2</sup>Expansion of the existing Fair Grounds racetrack may be authorized through the processes set forth by Section 4.F.5 of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. Such expansion may include the expansion or addition of ancillary use that support the racetrack’s operation, including but not limited to racetrack, casino, sports book, off track betting parlor, ticketing operations, office/professional workspaces, non-profit offices, governmental offices, group sales/meeting facilities, horse stalling/equine husbandry, equine training, racetrack maintenance, mechanics shop, feed store, museum, retail, tv production, storage, multi-family housing, single family housing, transient lodging, restaurants, concessions/snack bars and bars.**

YEAS: Joshi-Gupta, Kepper, Poche, Steeg, Stewart, Witry

NAYS: N/A

ABSENT: Flick, Jordan

## **Uses at Fair Grounds**

Racetrack

Casino

Sports Book

Off Track Betting Parlor

Ticketing Operations

Office/Professional Workspaces

Non-Profit Offices

Governmental Offices

Group Sales/Meeting Facilities

Horse Stalling/Equine Husbandry

Equine Training

Racetrack Maintenance

Mechanics Shop

Feed Store

Museum

Retail

TV Production

Storage

Multi Family Housing

Single Family Housing

Transient Lodging

Restaurants

Concessions/Snack Bars

Bars

Ancillary and accessory uses not specifically listed

**MOTION  
NO. M-25-396**

**CITY HALL: July 24, 2025**

**BY: COUNCILMEMBERS MORENO, GIARRUSSO AND GREEN**

**WHEREAS**, The Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots, commonly known as the “Fair Grounds”, has been a fundamental part of the fabric of the City of New Orleans and of the Faubourg St. John since its opening in the 1830’s; and

**WHEREAS**, the property upon which the Fair Grounds sits is zoned HU-RD1 (Historic Urban Two-Family Residential) in the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (CZO), which permits as a conditional use those Racetracks existing as of the CZO’s effective date; and

**WHEREAS**, CZO section 25.3.G.7 specifically permits “an existing fairground in a residential district” to continue operating; and

**WHEREAS**, given the importance of this facility to the neighborhood and the City at large, the Council desires to ensure its continued operation as a Racetrack and Fairgrounds; and

**WHEREAS**, Councilmembers Moreno and Giarrusso introduced a motion to initiate an Interim Zoning District to preserve the status quo for adoption by this Council; and

**WHEREAS**, the Council wishes for the City Planning Commission to consider the desirability of a permanent zoning change to enact an overlay district to preserve the historic use of this site for the benefit of the neighborhood and for the City at large; **NOW, THEREFORE**

**BE IT MOVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS**, That the City Planning Commission is directed to conduct a public hearing to consider amendments to Ordinance No. 4264 M.C.S., as amended, the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, to create an overlay district to be named the Fairgrounds Overlay District, which shall encompass the area upon which the Fair Grounds Race Course & Slots currently sits, generally bounded by Gentilly

Boulevard, Belfort Street/Avenue, Trafalgar Street, Desaix Boulevard, St. Louis Cemetery No. 3, St. Vincent Street, Verna Court, and Fortin Street, to prohibit all uses except Fairgrounds and Racetracks and to require that Fairgrounds and Racetracks be conditional uses within this Overlay. As part of this zoning docket, the City Planning Commission is directed to review prior conditional uses granted on the site as well as custom and best practices to devise use standards for Fairgrounds and Racetracks which set forth allowable accessory uses.

**BE IT FURTHER MOVED,** That the application fee requirements of Article 4 of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance in the amount of \$1,500 are hereby waived.

**BE IT FURTHER MOVED,** That in the process of reviewing this amendment, the City Planning Commission staff is directed and granted the flexibility to make all appropriate changes to the proposed regulations and any existing corresponding regulations in the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, as amended, to establish consistency and continuity with the format of the existing zoning code, to add references wherever references are customary, needed and/or appropriate, to make the appropriate adjustments to clarify any ambiguities or mistakes, and to make adjustments deemed necessary in light of public testimony resulting from this review.

**THE FOREGOING MOTION WAS READ IN FULL; THE ROLL WAS CALLED ON THE ADOPTION THEREOF, AND RESULTED AS FOLLOWS:**

**YEAS:** Giarrusso, Green, Harris, Moreno, Morrell, Thomas - 6

**NAYS:** 0

**ABSENT:** King - 1

**RECUSED:** 0

**AND THE MOTION WAS ADOPTED.**

THE FOREGOING IS CERTIFIED  
TO BE A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY



ASSISTANT CLERK OF COUNCIL

City Planning Commission Speaker Card

3

Date : 9/23/25

I would like to speak regarding CPC Docket : 05025

**IN OPPOSITION**

Name: Blake Pundey

Address: 329 Baronne / address

- I am the applicant for this docket
- I'd like to cede my time to: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby affirm that the written or oral statements I give before the City Planning Commission will be true and correct. By ascribing my signature below, I acknowledge all information presented is of my own volition and true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Please check if you are a paid representative or receiving any type of compensation or thing of value in exchange for speaking or attending today.

Signature of Speaker: [Signature]

City Planning Commission Speaker Card 3  
Date: 9/23/05

I would like to speak regarding CPC Docket: 050-25

**IN OPPOSITION**

Name: Sandra Hogan-Jones

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I am the applicant for this docket

I'd like to cede my time to: \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of Speaker: Sandra Hogan-Jones

3

City Planning Commission Speaker Card

Date: 9/22/25

I would like to speak regarding CPC Docket: 050/25

**IN OPPOSITION**

Name: Donna Britton

Address: 121 Wimberly Way Hound LA

- I am the applicant for this docket
- I'd like to cede my time to: \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of Speaker: Donna Britton

City Planning Commission Speaker Card

3

Date: 9/23/25

I would like to speak regarding CPC Docket: 050/25

**IN OPPOSITION**

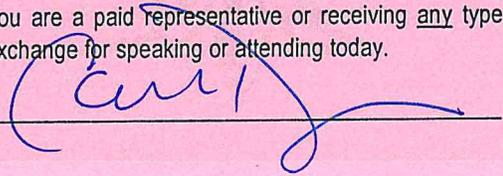
Name: Cathy Beeding

Address: 1629 Washington Ave, New Orleans

- I am the applicant for this docket
- I'd like to cede my time to: \_\_\_\_\_

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Signature of Speaker: 

City Planning Commission Speaker Card

3

Date : 9/23/25

I would like to speak regarding CPC Docket : 050/25

**IN OPPOSITION**

Name: Jason Boulet

Address: 930 Poydras St. NOUA 70112

I am the applicant for this docket

I'd like to cede my time to: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby affirm that the written or oral statements I give before the City Planning Commission will be true and correct. By ascribing my signature below, I acknowledge all information presented is of my own volition and true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Please check if you are a paid representative or receiving any type of compensation or thing of value in exchange for speaking or attending today.

Signature of Speaker: Jason Boulet

3

# City Planning Commission Speaker Card

Date : 9/23/25

I would like to speak regarding CPC Docket : OSD - 25

## IN OPPOSITION

Name: CHERIE TEAMER

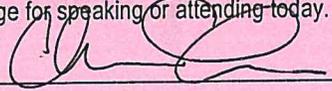
Address: 3201 Canal St

I am the applicant for this docket

I'd like to cede my time to: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby affirm that the written or oral statements I give before the City Planning Commission will be true and correct. By ascribing my signature below, I acknowledge all information presented is of my own volition and true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

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Signature of Speaker: 

(MORE INFORMATION)

City Planning Commission Speaker Card

3

Date: 9/23/25

I would like to speak regarding CPC Docket: 050125

~~IN OPPOSITION~~

A

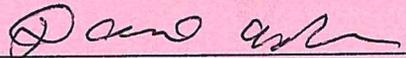
Name: MATT RYAN

Address: 1017 INDUSTRIAL ST.

- I am the applicant for this docket
- I'd like to cede my time to: information only

I hereby affirm that the written or oral statements I give before the City Planning Commission will be true and correct. By ascribing my signature below, I acknowledge all information presented is of my own volition and true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Please check if you are a paid representative or receiving any type of compensation or thing of value in exchange for speaking or attending today.

Signature of Speaker: 

City Planning Commission Speaker Card

4

Date: 10/14/25

I would like to speak regarding CPC Docket: 2D 050-25

IN SUPPORT

Name: Susan Johnson FSSNA

Address: 2822 Depue St 70119

I am the applicant for this docket

I'd like to cede my time to:

I hereby affirm that the written or oral statements I give before the City Planning Commission will be true and correct. By ascribing my signature below, I acknowledge all information presented is of my own volition and true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Please check if you are a paid representative or receiving any type of compensation or thing of value in exchange for speaking or attending today.

Signature of Speaker: Susan Johnson not paid

City Planning Commission Speaker Card

4

Date: 10/14/25

I would like to speak regarding CPC Docket: M-25-396

IN OPPOSITION

Name: CHARLE TANNER

Address: 3201 Canal St

I am the applicant for this docket

I'd like to cede my time to:

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Please check if you are a paid representative or receiving any type of compensation or thing of value in exchange for speaking or attending today.

Signature of Speaker: [Signature]

---

**Fw: SUPPORT ZD 050-25—by the Faubourg St. John Neighborhood Association**

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**From** CPCINFO <CPCINFO@nola.gov>  
**Date** Tue 10/21/2025 12:06 PM  
**To** Stephen K. Kroll <skroll@nola.gov>

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**From:** Susan P. Johnson <susanpjohnson@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 20, 2025 4:14 PM  
**To:** CPCINFO <CPCINFO@nola.gov>  
**Subject:** SUPPORT ZD 050-25—by the Faubourg St. John Neighborhood Association

## **ZD 050-25—proposed Fairgrounds Overlay District**

FSJNA supports the creation of the Fairgrounds Overlay District to prohibit all uses except fairgrounds and racetracks and to require that fairgrounds and racetracks be conditional uses with this overlay.

We also support the consideration of prior conditional uses granted on this site in the development of the text amendment.

Susan Johnson  
For the FSJNA Board  
2822 Lepage Street  
New Orleans, La. 70119

---

**Fw: SUPPORT ZD 050-25—by the Faubourg St. John Neighborhood Association**

---

**From** CPCINFO <CPCINFO@nola.gov>

**Date** Tue 10/21/2025 9:05 AM

**To** Julia I Nickle <Julia.Nickle@nola.gov>

---

**From:** Susan P. Johnson <susanpjohnson@hotmail.com>

**Sent:** Monday, October 20, 2025 4:14 PM

**To:** CPCINFO <CPCINFO@nola.gov>

**Subject:** SUPPORT ZD 050-25—by the Faubourg St. John Neighborhood Association

## **ZD 050-25—proposed Fairgrounds Overlay District**

FSJNA supports the creation of the Fairgrounds Overlay District to prohibit all uses except fairgrounds and racetracks and to require that fairgrounds and racetracks be conditional uses with this overlay.

We also support the consideration of prior conditional uses granted on this site in the development of the text amendment.

Susan Johnson  
For the FSJNA Board  
2822 Lepage Street  
New Orleans, La. 70119

City Planning Commission Speaker Card

Date : 10/28/25

I would like to speak regarding CPC Docket : 049/25 50/25

**IN OPPOSITION**

Name: Cathy Peedins

Address: 1757 Genhilly Blvd.

I am the applicant for this docket

I'd like to cede my time to: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby affirm that the written or oral statements I give before the City Planning Commission will be true and correct. By ascribing my signature below, I acknowledge all information presented is of my own volition and true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Please check if you are a paid representative or receiving any type of compensation or thing of value in exchange for speaking or attending today.

Signature of Speaker: [Signature]

City Planning Commission Speaker Card

Date : 10/28/25

I would like to speak regarding CPC Docket : 000/25

**IN OPPOSITION**

Name: CHAZZ TEAMER

Address: 3201 Canal St. #200

I am the applicant for this docket

I'd like to cede my time to: \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby affirm that the written or oral statements I give before the City Planning Commission will be true and correct. By ascribing my signature below, I acknowledge all information presented is of my own volition and true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Please check if you are a paid representative or receiving any type of compensation or thing of value in exchange for speaking or attending today.

Signature of Speaker: [Signature]