

June 17, 2013

Honorable Mitchell J. Landrieu
Office of the Mayor, Suite 2E04
1300 Perdido St.
New Orleans, LA 70112

Dear Mayor Landrieu,

Your Administration wisely believes that living with water – rather than against it – is how we must protect ourselves. Given this, we, the undersigned, diverse community stakeholders from throughout New Orleans, urge you to help improve neighborhood flood protection by investing an effective amount of the several hundred million dollars in federal funding under your Administration's control towards more sustainable storm water management infrastructure and practices. Specifically, the City's \$247 million in federal hazard mitigation funding (HMGP), along with several hundred million in public-right-of-way related funds from FEMA and Southeast Louisiana Drainage Program (SELA) present a unique, significant, and timely opportunity to harness our city's public and private spaces to create reliable and resilient flood protection.

Such an investment builds on the vision for improved flood protection that you have articulated as Mayor. In your *Flood Protection & Coastal Restoration Mayoral Transition Report*, you rightly state that “no matter how robust the City's coastal and perimeter defenses are, water management inside the levees will be an essential part of the City's resilience and protection.” Further, we applaud that one of the major justifications in your February 2011 letter to Governor Jindal for requesting the \$247 million in HMGP funding was so that the City could invest in “a more sustainable storm water management system modeled after the Dutch.”

Looking immediately ahead, your Administration can begin achieving the flood protection goals you established and showcase how American cities in the 21st Century can and must build to become more resilient. The funding presently at your discretion allows you to begin designing our parks, streets, neutral grounds, greenways, and other public spaces, along with incentivizing best practices on private properties, to safely and affordably detain and absorb storm water, providing a crucial assist to our aging and breaking drainage pump and pipe system.

We stand ready to partner with your Administration in this endeavor. As you add storm water protection features to docketed public projects, our organizations will work alongside your Administration to educate our community on the importance of integrating flood protection into our public assets, policies, and private development. We can also help facilitate dialogues with the increasingly more American cities that are investing in innovative storm water management.

We truly appreciate your commitment to a safe and prosperous New Orleans. Inspired by your vision for what we can together achieve, particularly by our City's tricentennial, we respectfully ask that you capitalize on the tremendous resources available to you and begin transforming neighborhood flood protection to assure your noble goal of creating a “city for the ages.”

Sincerely,

[As individuals accept the invitation to sign this letter, their name, organization, and city will be typed in the space below]