



# **Neighborhood Participation Process Policy Manual**



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# Table of Contents

1. Background Information
  - 1.1.NORDC NPP Description
  - 1.2.NORDC NPP Development Timeline
  - 1.3.NORDC NPP Implementation Timeline
2. NORDC NPP Minimum Participation Requirements
  - 2.1.Effective Public Participation Parameters
  - 2.2.Participation Core Values
  - 2.3.Participation Standards of Excellence
3. NORDC Neighborhood Participation Process Overview
  - 3.1.Basic Structure
  - 3.2.Minimum Mandates
  - 3.3.Duties & Responsibilities
  - 3.4.Decision-Making Process
  - 3.5.Future Adaptability
  - 3.6.Relationship to NORDC
4. NORDC CAT Officers
  - 4.1.Number and Title
  - 4.2.Terms
  - 4.3.Duties & Responsibilities
5. NORDC CAT General Members
  - 5.1.Minimum Requirements
  - 5.2.Application Process
  - 5.3.Terms
  - 5.4.Duties & Responsibilities
  - 5.5.Officer Eligibility
6. NORDC CAT Officer Election Process
  - 6.1.Inaugural
  - 6.2.Annual

## 7. NORDC CAT Meetings

- 7.1. Minimum Annual Meetings
- 7.2. Minimum Attendance for Non-Voting Meeting
- 7.3. Minimum Attendance for Voting Meeting
- 7.4. Public Input/Comment Requirement
- 7.5. Item Deliberation Prior to Vote
- 7.6. Documenting Meetings
- 7.7. Submitting Meeting Documentation
- 7.8. Announcing Meetings
- 7.9. Securing Meeting Space
- 7.10. Assistance with Meetings

## 8. NORDC CAT Recommendation Setting Process

- 8.1. Submitting Recommendation for Discussion
- 8.2. Deliberation Process
- 8.3. Approving Recommendation for General Vote

## 9. NORDC CAT Voting Process

- 9.1. Eligible Voters
- 9.2. Eligible Items for Vote
- 9.3. Establishing General Vote
  - 9.3.1. Voting Minimum Requirements
- 9.4. Implementing General Vote
- 9.5. Ratifying Vote Outcomes
- 9.6. Next Step for Items Voted to Move Forward
- 9.7. Next Step for Items Voted to Not Move Forward

## 10. NORDC CAT Recommendation Submission & Approval Process

- 10.1. Eligible Recommendations
- 10.2. Submittal Process
- 10.3. Following the Recommendation
- 10.4. Approval Steps

## 11. Grievances

### 11.1. Recommendation Grievance

11.1.1. At CAT level

11.1.2. At CEO level

### 11.2. Individual Grievance

11.2.1. Member Grievance

11.2.2. Officer Grievance

11.2.3. NORDC Staff Grievance

## 12. CAT Geographic Divisions

### 12.1. Rationale

### 12.2. Maps and Playgrounds by District

## 13. NORDC NPP Adaptability

### 13.1. NORDC NPP Revisions

## 1. Background Information

In September, 2011, Commissioners on the New Orleans Recreation Development Commission (NORDC) requested that the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office develop a Neighborhood Participation Process (NPP) for (NORDC). The Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office conducted research and held conversations with government and community stakeholders from September 2011 to January 2012, and presented an initial recommendation at the February 2012 NORDC Public Meeting. Between February and June 2012, the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office and NORDC held various discussions and invited additional community input prior to the approval of the NPP framework in June 2012. In July 2012, NORDC Commissioners approved an implementation timeline and process developed by the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office.

### 1.1.NORDC NPP Description

The NORDC Neighborhood Participation Process (NORDC NPP) **is a neighborhood-based participation and advisory structure** that creates three location-based Community Advisory Teams (CATs) per district (fifteen total) and one Citywide Advisory Council (CAC). This structure will serve as an authorized platform for vetting ideas/suggestions and building consensus on priority items at the community level before submitting recommendations to NORDC for consideration.

### 1.2.NORDC NPP Development Timeline

At the request of NORDC, the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office initiated the development process in September 2011. From September 2011 to January 2012, Neighborhood Engagement staff conducted research, conversation and listening session. From February to June, additional revisions were made and a final framework was approved in June. The framework served as the guiding document toward the completion of this policy manual. The policy manual is to be reviewed through November and the final version approved December 2012.

### 1.3.NORDC NPP Implementation Timeline

Upon approval of the policy manual in December 2012, the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office will disseminate applications in January 2013 to the general public for all interested parties to apply as participants in their respective Community Advisory Teams (CATs). The application process will remain open for 60 days in order to ensure maximum participation for all inaugural CATs. After the application process closes, the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office and NORDC will organize an orientation for all CATs to go over this policy manual and assist in initiating first meetings for each. All CATs are anticipated to be established no later than May 2013. All initial CAT meetings are anticipated to take place between May and July. Subsequent meetings after the initial

meeting will be established by each CAT. By July 2013, all CATs should be active, should have had their first meeting, and should have established the remaining meeting dates for the remainder of 2013.

## 2. NORDC NPP Minimum Participation Requirements

The following section highlights key requirements articulated in the City Neighborhood Participation Plan (City NPP). The City NPP is a Citywide guide for establishing effective and meaningful public participation processes by City agencies, departments, boards and committees. The Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office developed the City NPP and ensures that any agency-based NPP adheres to the City NPP guidelines. As such, all participating parties in the NORDC NPP will adhere to the guidelines provided below.

### 2.1. Effective Public Participation Parameters

**City NPP:** The City of New Orleans **Neighborhood Participation Plan (City NPP)** is a document that provides a citywide roadmap for instituting clear, meaningful and effective public participation processes and/or policies.

**Effective Public Participation:** a deliberative decision-making process that involves stakeholders from both local government and the general community, both of whom share a mutual responsibility to ensure that the final decision responds to the needs and concerns explored in the deliberative process.

**Deliberative Decision-Making:** a process of decision-making that involves consideration and/or discussion of competing and/or divergent ideas. To deliberate means to weigh options, have robust discussions about alternatives, priorities, choices prior to making a decision, with the intent to arrive at the best decision possible for all.

**Mutual Responsibility:** refers to the responsibilities inherent in the two parties that engage in public participation; the public administrator(s) and the general community. **Each party has a distinct role to carry out and each shares the responsibility to interact respectfully, productively and constructively** in order to make public participation effective. In the same vein, each party must be allowed to carry out its role to the best result possible.

**Public Administrator Role:** the role of the public administrator is to make public decisions that meet government and community priorities while ensuring legal and fiduciary compliance, such as including the general community in the decision-making process.

**General Community Role:** the role of the general community is to participate in the decision-making process productively and constructively in order to help decision-makers achieve the best possible outcome.



## 2.2.Participation Core Values

CATs will fully encompass the CORE VALUES underlying the City of New Orleans Neighborhood Participation Plan:

- **CAREFUL PLANNING AND PREPARATION**  
Through adequate and inclusive planning, ensure that the design, organization, and convening of the process serve both a clearly defined purpose and the needs of the participants.
- **INCLUSION AND DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY**  
Equitably incorporate diverse people, voices, ideas, and information to lay the groundwork for quality outcomes and democratic legitimacy.
- **COLLABORATION AND SHARED PURPOSE**  
Support and encourage participants, government and community institutions, and others to work together to advance the common good.
- **OPENNESS AND LEARNING**  
Help all involved listen to each other, explore new ideas unconstrained by predetermined outcomes, learn and apply information in ways that generate new options, and rigorously evaluate public engagement activities for effectiveness.
- **TRANSPARENCY AND TRUST**  
Be clear and open about the process, and provide a public record of the organizers, sponsors, outcomes, and range of views and ideas expressed, including governmental administrative and legislative decisions.
- **IMPACT AND ACTION**  
Ensure each participatory effort has real potential to make a difference, and that participants are aware of that potential.
- **SUSTAINED ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATORY CULTURE**  
Promote a culture of participation with programs and institutions that support ongoing quality public engagement.

## 2.3.Participation Standards of Excellence

NORDC Staff and Commissioners, as well as CAT Officers will ensure that all participation practices meet the following minimum standards:

1. Ensure input from communities prior to identifying a problem or responding to a perceived problem.
  - i. Naming problems that reflect the things people consider valuable and hold dear and not just what expert information alone provides goes a long way towards creating a culture of sustainable engagement and better-informed decision-making.
2. Frame issues for decision-making in such a way that allows for the inclusive deliberation of practical, viable options that are communicated to all involved in the process.
  - i. Decision-making by public administrators should be framed in such a way that the process not only takes into account what people value but also lays out all the major options for acting fairly, ensuring full recognition and communication of the advantages and disadvantages of each option.

- ii. All governmental (administrative, agency, etc.) decisions should site any applicable policies, charter rules, etc to validate decisions
- 3. Create a deliberative decision-making process.
  - i. Allow for the decision-making process to deliberatively move from early input by various stakeholders with diverse opinions and first impressions to a more shared and reflective judgment.
- 4. Provide space for exploring creative ideas that neighborhoods may have to offer and which may bring other assets to bear on the decision-making process and outcome.
  - i. Provide opportunities for creative solutions, identifying and committing to work with civic resources and assets that may go unrecognized and unused.
- 5. Ensure that the decision-making process explores opportunities to expand and create sustainable partnerships with community stakeholders.
  - i. Organize actions so they complement one another, which makes the whole of people's efforts more than the sum of the parts.
- 6. Ensure a feedback loop is present in the plan and that this process informs both the public administrator and neighborhoods stakeholders.
  - i. Create the opportunity to learn together along the decision-making process to keep up public participation and momentum.

### 3. NORDC Neighborhood Participation Process Overview

The NORDC Neighborhood Participation Process (NORDC NPP) **is a neighborhood-based participation and advisory structure** that creates **three location-based Community Advisory Teams (CATs) per district** (fifteen total) and **one Citywide Advisory Council (CAC)**. This section provides general information that is more specifically addressed in subsequent sections.

#### 3.1. Basic Structure

**Community Advisory Teams (CATs)** are the foundational structure for community participation at the neighborhood level with NORDC. Each CAT is self-sufficient, and independent of other CATs. Each CAT is charged with ensuring inclusive participation of interests pertaining to a set of recreation spaces within a specified geographic boundary. All CATs are represented in the Citywide Advisory Council (CAC). All CATs will require a minimum of three people and have no limitation on membership size. Every CAT will have an Officer and member structure, with a President, Vice-President, and Secretary composing the Officer structure.

CATs facilitate the initial deliberation spaces in which all interested stakeholders come together to deliberate issues and recommend ideas for possible adoption to NORDC.

Following clear processes and guidelines set in this policy manual, CATs create inclusive, broad-based, accessible environments in which communities participate publicly and debate meaningfully on issues they wish considered for NORDC review and/or support.

Possible discussion during CAT meetings can include programming, policy, and facilities.

Example: A pee-wee football team would like to extend practice time at a



particular park for the fall. Currently the park lights are turned off at 7pm but the pee-wee football team would like to extend the hours until 8pm. The pee-wee football coach, players and parents can address this issue and provide a list of evenings they will need the lights on until 8pm. The CAT can prioritize this issue and the CAT President can provide the NORDC CEO with the suggestion that the light be left on an extra hour at that particular park after securing broad-based support from participating CAT members.

**Citywide Advisory Council (CAC)** is a body of CAT presidents. The fifteen CAT presidents comprise the CAC. The CAC does not take the place of CATs, it merely becomes active to deliberate on recommendations that have the potential to affect citywide recreation policies and/or practices. The CAC facilitates deliberation of city-wide issues brought to their attention by CAT, Commissioners or the NORDC CEO. The CAC will meet as needed and always have at least one NORDC or Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office representative present. The CAC will follow the same processes and guidelines required by all CATs.

### 3.2. Minimum Mandates

Each CAT will:

- Ensure inclusive practices—all individuals and organizations are welcomed and encouraged.
- Adhere to defined standards, requirements and practices articulated in this policy manual
- Be accountable to NORDC, its members, and the general community
- Provide timely notice of upcoming meetings
- Record all meeting deliberations and decisions
- Record all votes
- Submit written summaries of previous meetings, decisions and votes within 10 business days
- Accept new CAT applicants year-round
- Work directly with NORDC staff and commissioners and Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office staff
- Share NORDC information back to general community
- Ensure fair, open and accountable meeting, discussion and recommendation practices are adhered
- Refrain from denying any community member opportunity to voice concerns, opinions, provide feedback
- Actively recruit new members
- Actively foster greater participation and collaboration among members
- Ensure adequate representation of diverse voices in neighborhood
- Provide annual opportunities for new Officers

### 3.3.Duties & Responsibilities

Each CAT is responsible for the following duties and responsibilities:

- Setting meeting dates
- Providing agendas
- Securing meeting spaces
- Conducting meetings
- Representing interests articulated and agreed upon by its members
- Ensuring inclusive, open, accountable practices
- Building consensus
- Setting voting agendas
- Reporting to NORDC
- Informing members and general public of CAT actions, NORDC programs, policies, new information
- Promoting NORDC activities
- Encourage increased participation
- Ensuring dialogue between community and NORDC is meaningful and productive
- Understanding NORDC policies, processes, programs, constraints, and concerns

### 3.4.Decision-Making Process

The decision-making process for the NORDC NPP has two components: the CAT/CAC component and the NORDC component:

The CAT/CAC component is a community-based deliberation and voting process that requires the following to take place:

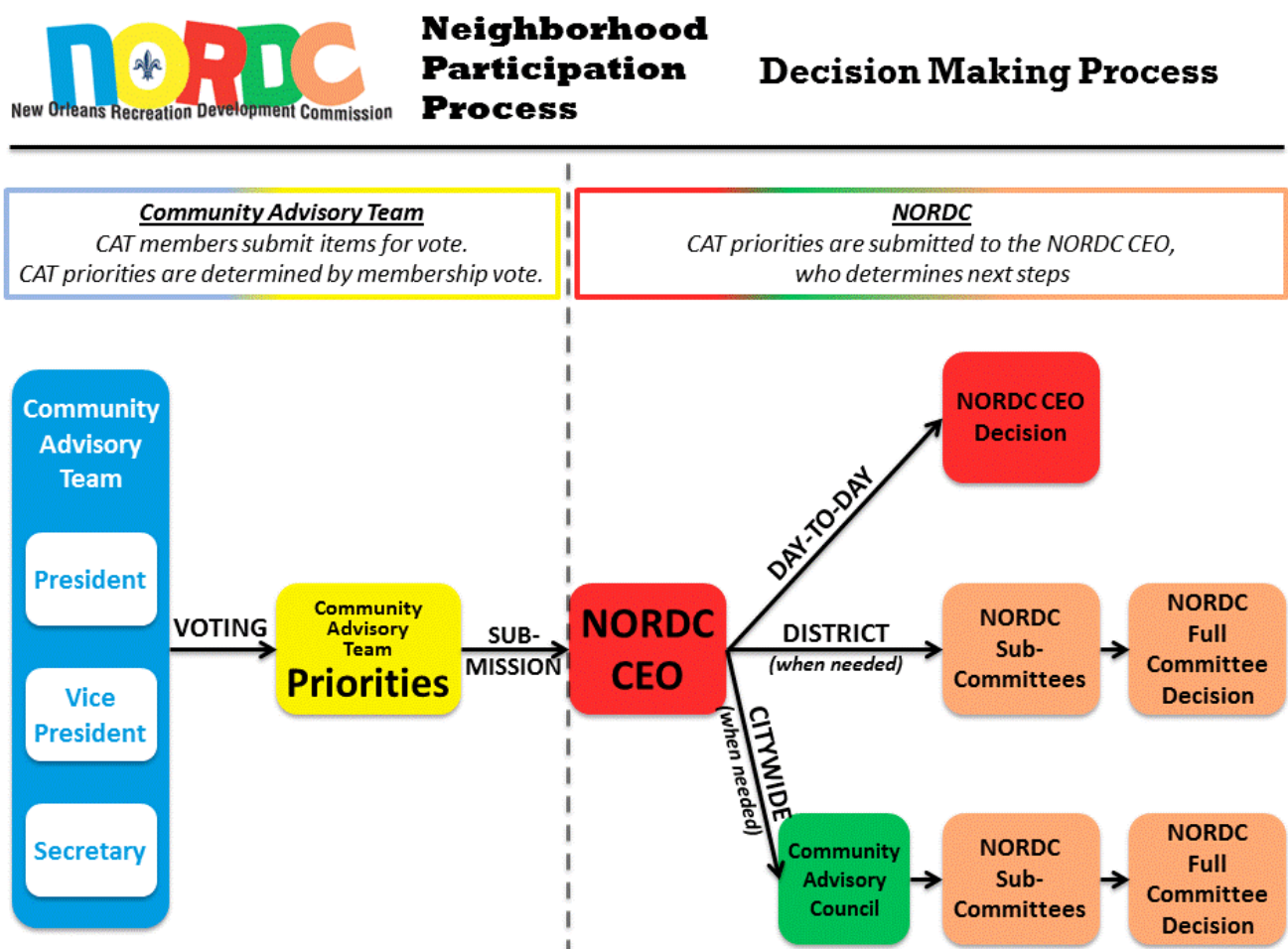
- Open discussion of item and consensus building
- Putting items discussed to a membership vote
- Vote on the item by CAT/CAC members
- Submission of item as recommendation for NORDC to consider

No single Officer of any CAT has the authority to deny a new recommendation/suggestion without putting the item to discussion by the general membership. Through discussion and deliberation, the general membership determines items to move forward for a vote.

The NORDC component is the established decision-making process articulated in the By-Laws of NORDC, in which the CEO has legal and fiduciary authority that is accountable to the NORDC Commissioners. For most recommendations, the NORDC CEO has the legal authority to make an executive decision. If the CEO approves the recommendation, then NORDC will take the needed steps to act on the recommendation. If the NORDC CEO denies the recommendation, a written explanation must be provided explaining the rational for denial.

If the recommendation provided by any CAT or by the CAC falls outside of the CEO's ability to exercise the established legal authority, the CEO will recommend the item be placed on the agenda for the next respective NORDC sub-committee meeting. At such time, the sub-committee, the CEO and CAT/CAC members and Officers will deliberate at the next available NORDC sub-committee meeting. The respective NORDC sub-committee will determine if further deliberation is required, or if that given sub-committee can recommend approval or denial. If the NORDC sub-committee approves a recommendation, it will recommend approval by the full Commission at the next available NORDC public meeting. If the NORDC sub-committee denies the recommendation, it will give the CAC/CAT and the CEO its rationale.

The graphic below demonstrates how the two components interact.



### 3.5.Future Adaptability

The process articulated in this manual is to be considered a dynamic process, and as such the policy manual is to be considered a dynamic document. As such, any specific findings learned from practice in any given year that requires changes to the NORDC NPP processes and structure should be evaluated annually by NORDC staff and commissioners and discussed with the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office and CAC members and Officers. Changes can take place after CATs and NORDC staff and commissioners agree to make revisions.

### 3.6.Relationship to NORDC

Each CAT is directly authorized by NORDC, and as such must adhere to requirements and guidelines established by NORDC. CATs have only an advisory role and are the authorized spaces for establishing community buy-in, consensus and priorities for recreation. Not all recommendations will be supported by NORDC, and it will be NORDC's responsibility to provide adequate rationale for denial of recommendations. CATs cannot set budgets, hire/fire personnel, or set programming, but they can recommend changes and/or improvements on these issues. The CATs are vital participation components that will help NORDC decision-makers (staff, executives and commissioners) make better-informed recreation decisions.

Additionally, NORDC staff **MUST** be notified of any CAT meetings and/or functions being held. The role of the NORDC staff is to assist, to the best of its ability and/or as staffing capacity allows, all CATs whenever help is requested or determined as needed by NORDC. The role of the advisory team is to provide a supportive environment and facilitate the voice of the community for all recreation related issues. CATs should act as a link between the community and NORDC staff in identifying and prioritizing community needs and concerns.

## 4. NORDC CAT Officers

Officers are required in order to better ensure each CAT is operating properly and that there is a direct line of accountable leadership between NORDC and CATs.

### 4.1.Number and Title

Each CAT will have three Officers: a President, a Vice-President, and a Secretary. The Citywide Advisory Council is comprised entirely of Officers, namely CAT Presidents. No CAT member can hold two Officer positions simultaneously

## 4.2. Terms

Each Officer will serve a twelve (12) month term. There is no term limit per office. Each elected Officer will be required to reapply through a CAT vote for their elected position every year. The terms of office for all Officers shall not exceed twelve (12) months. An election of all Officers shall be held every twelve (12) months. NORDC will announce official election periods for all CATs. Special elections for vacated positions will be set by NORDC.

Un-expired terms:

- If remaining term is less than six (6) months: the president, with the approval of the membership, shall appoint a voting member to fulfill the unexpired term.
- If the remaining term is more than six (6) months: A special election of the membership shall be held for the purpose of filling the vacant office.
- If the presidency is vacant, the vice president shall assume the office until the term expires.

Any policy or procedural changes regarding terms in office must be vetted through the Citywide Advisory Council and approved by NORDC CEO and Commission.

## 4.3. Duties & Responsibilities

CAT Officers are duties and responsibilities include the following:

- (President) Setting meeting dates
- (President) Providing agendas
- (Any of 3 Officers) Securing meeting spaces
- (President or Vice-President) Conducting meetings
- (Any of 3 Officers) Representing CATs
- (Any of 3 Officers) Ensuring inclusive, open, accountable practices
- (Any of 3 Officers) Building consensus
- (President) Setting voting agendas
- (President) Reporting to NORDC
- (Secretary) Informing members and general public of CAT actions, NORDC programs, policies, new information
- (Secretary) Keep on file full and complete records meetings, including written summaries, submitted reports, etc.
- (Secretary) Provide copy of written summaries to NORDC staff within five (10) working days of CAT meetings
- (Secretary) Record and certify CAT votes

## 5. NORDC CAT General Members

All CATs should fully include all interested Orleans Parish residents and interested parties serving Orleans Parish residents (such as booster clubs, neighborhood associations, churches, schools, and

other charitable organizations) who are concerned about recreation.

### 5.1. Minimum Requirements

Each CAT will be required to adhere to the following minimum membership requirements:

- Members can be ages 8+

- Voting Members must be 18+

- Members are allowed one vote.

- Members can represent an organization, and are allowed one vote per organization.

### 5.2. Application Process

During the inaugural launch of all CATs, applications will be accepted by the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office and NORDC for a period of 60 days. Upon termination of the 60 day period, all applicants will be invited to serve on the inaugural CATs. No applicant will ever be turned away. The application is a simple commitment and contact information form, and NOT AN ELIMINATION OR SELECTION PROCESS.

After the inaugural launch, applications will be received on an ongoing, rolling basis, with new **acceptance into CATs twice per year**. All applications received in a six-month period prior to the acceptance period will be admitted into their respective CATs after participating in an orientation. **Orientations will take place twice per year and are required for CAT membership**. Applicants for CAT membership can participate in CAT meetings, but cannot vote until they have participated in one of the two annual orientation sessions. CATs can receive applications and forward them to both NORDC and the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office, who will compile the applicant pool and coordinate orientation for each new pool. Applications are needed only to demonstrate individual and/or organizational commitment, as well as mark the date of entry into a CAT. **At no time shall the application be used to exclude any interested individual and/or organization.**

### 5.3. Terms

Each CAT member applicant term is valid for 12 months from the time of completing the orientation. There are no term limits. Applicants must file new applications to be considered members of their respective CATs for subsequent 12-month terms upon the completion of their current 12-month term. Renewing applicants do not need to participate in subsequent orientations.

### 5.4. Duties & Responsibilities

CAT members are advocates for improvements in recreational programming, policies and procedures that enhance the lives and activities of NORDC participants.



All members must work within the NORDC NPP framework to help identify and prioritize community recreational needs and concerns.

Members **MUST** respect the right of others to speak, respect differences in point of view, and follow proper procedures when making public comments.

Advisory members are required to complete CAT membership paperwork and update their status annually.

Each member is responsible for the contents in this policy manual and must adhere to requirements, restrictions, and values articulated here.

Each member is responsible for ensuring that each CAT is successful in meeting its duties and responsibilities in an ethical, inclusive, open and accountable manner.

## 5.5. Officer Eligibility

**Members must be 18 years of age or older to serve as Officers.** With the exception of the inaugural Officer selection process, members **must have participated in at least three previous CAT meetings** before being considered for an Officer position. Governmental staff and NORDC staff are not eligible to hold CAT Officer positions. Retired governmental officials and NORDC staff must wait one year from retirement before they are eligible for CAT Officer nomination.

## 6. NORDC CAT Officer Election Process

### 6.1. Inaugural

The inaugural election will take place during the initial CAT orientation session, which will be provided by the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office and NORDC staff. After this event, elections processes will follow the annual process detailed below.

### 6.2. Annual

All CATs will adhere to the election process described below.

- Voting will take place every twelve (12) months.
- During the election month NORDC staff will compile an official list of CAT Officer nominations. This list will be posted at NORDC facilities, online, and will be emailed to all CAT members.
- Challenges to any nomination must be made in writing no later than 3 weeks before the CAT Officer vote takes place.
- Voting will take place at each CAT using individual membership ballots. NORDC staff **is required** to be on hand to observe and collect ballots after voting has taken place.
- **Absentee and Proxy voting is not allowed.**

- In an event of a tie, a run-off election will take place at the following CAT general meeting.
- NORDC will officially tally votes and announce the election winners by posting results at NORDC facilities, online, and through e-mail to each CAT member.
- Winning candidates will assume office immediately upon the completion of the incumbent Officer's term.
- Voting will take place so that there is enough of a transition period before incumbent Officers must vacate their positions.
- Challenges to the election process must abide by the following rules:
  - Challenges must be made in writing and submitted via e-mail, mail or in person to NORDC within 10 days of the announcement.
  - In the event of serious problems or discrepancies, a CAT Officer can appeal to NORDC for a decision. NORDC will make the final decision in discrepancy matters.

## 7. NORDC CAT Meetings

Adhering to proper meeting procedures and documentation will be crucial to achieving CAT success. As such, each CAT is responsible for assuring that meetings meet the following minimum requirements.

1. CAT general meetings **MUST** be open to all community residents.
2. Two (2) Officers must be available to conduct official business during a CAT general meeting.
3. Meetings will be run by CAT Officers.
4. **Every meetings requires the following:**
  - a. Accurate **written summaries** must be kept.
  - b. An **attendance log** must be kept and given to NORDC. The advisory council will keep a copy of the attendance log.
  - c. The **summary of the previous meeting** must be reported and accepted.
5. NORDC (staff, executive, or commissioner) or City representation must participate in at least half of all CAT meetings in a calendar year.
6. Each meeting must maintain proper order and healthy discussion environment. In extreme cases, NORDC representatives may intervene to ensure that meetings are properly conducted.

### 7.1. Minimum Annual Meetings

Each CAT may meet as often as it deems necessary to address pressing issues, but at a minimum, each **CAT must hold at least six meetings per year.**

## 7.2. Minimum Attendance for Non-Voting Meeting

Each CAT meeting in which there is no vote taking place **must have at least one Officer and 25% of its membership in attendance** in order to conduct its regular business.

## 7.3. Minimum Attendance for Voting Meeting

Each CAT meeting in which there is a vote taking place **must have at least two Officers, who count towards a needed 51% of membership in attendance in order to conduct a vote.**

## 7.4. Public Input/Comment Requirement

In order to maintain a safe, effective public space for deliberation, all CAT meetings must adhere to the following requirements for public comment.

- Time for public comment **MUST** be included on every CAT agenda.
- Time for public comment shall be provided at the end of every CAT meeting.
- All CAT members (ages 8 +) have the right to public comment regarding recreational concerns in their community.
- Every CAT member is allowed up to 5 minutes for public comment.

## 7.5. Item Deliberation Prior to Vote

No item recommended either by a CAT member or Officer can be voted upon without open, public deliberation by its members. Deliberation is a simple process of discussing the merits of an item before submitting it for a vote.

## 7.6. Documenting Meetings

All CAT Officers have the responsibility of documenting meetings. Typically this responsibility falls first with the Secretary. When the Secretary is not available, one of the other two Officers will take accurate notes. Officers must document the time and place of their respective CAT meetings, number and name of attendants, copy of the agenda, and summary of discussion.

## 7.7. Submitting Meeting Documentation

All CAT meeting documentation (agenda, sign-in sheets, summaries, votes) must be submitted to NORDC administrative offices within 10 business days of the meeting.

## 7.8. Announcing Meetings

Officers are responsible for announcing their next scheduled CAT meetings at least 48 hours prior the CAT meeting date, but are encouraged to provide up to 10 days of notice, whenever possible. Each CAT can use a variety of outreach methods, including the NORDC and Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office web pages, e-mail blasts, NORDC public meetings, NORDC facilities' bulletin boards, schools, churches, and neighborhood organizations.

## 7.9. Securing Meeting Space

Officers are responsible for securing adequate meeting spaces for their membership. Officers can work with NORDC or Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement staff to secure meeting spaces.

## 7.10. Assistance with Meetings

All CAT Officers have both the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office and NORDC staff (subject to availability and capacity constraints) available to them for assistance and support.

# 8. NORDC CAT Recommendation Setting Process

All CATs will adhere to the established process outlined below for developing CAT recommendations that are submitted to NORDC.

## 8.1. Submitting Recommendations for Discussion

- Any CAT member or Officer can submit a recommendation for discussion at any CAT meeting.
- The submitting CAT member or Officer must be given opportunity to introduce the recommendation
- Meaningful, productive deliberation must follow the introduction of a recommendation

## 8.2. Deliberation Process

Any recommendation submitted by a CAT member or Officer must be deliberated by at least 25% of that CAT's membership. To provide meaningful, productive deliberation, Officers must ensure that every voice who wants to speak is given the opportunity to speak. Proponent and dissenting voices must be given equitable opportunity to express their points of views. No individual participant in a CAT meeting should be made to feel intimidated for proposing any recommendation. The deliberation process is for CAT members and

Officers, however in the event that non CAT individual or organizational members are present in CAT meetings, these participants must be given public comment opportunity after deliberation has taken place among members and Officers.

The goal of the deliberation process is to arrive at consensus on one of three actions:

1. deliberate further with more members,
2. support an item being placed on a voting agenda, or
3. support non-action on an item.

### 8.3.Approving Recommendation for General Vote

No formal vote is required to move a recommendation to a general vote. However, at least 25% of CAT members must be in attendance and a majority consensus is required for an approval action on any item after it has been considered.

## 9. NORDC CAT Voting Process

All CATs must adhere to the established voting process requirements set forth in the sections below.

### 9.1.Eligible Voters

- All CAT members and Officers must have attended at least three meetings in the previous year and must have an application on file that is current (within 12 months)
- CAT members 18+ years of age are eligible to vote
- All CAT Officers are eligible to vote
- Members must identify as individual voters or as representatives of an organization.

### 9.2.Eligible Items for Vote

***Eligible items for vote include recommendations*** regarding NORDC operations, programming, policies and facilities concerns. Each CAT can provide recommendations for changes or improvements of operations practices, personnel concerns, programming, park policies, facilities maintenance and enhancements.

Items not generally eligible for recommendation are direct line item budget requests for NORDC, hiring/firing suggestions for NORDC, or political position statements for NORDC.

### 9.3.Establishing General Vote

A general vote can be established at any CAT meeting after deliberation has taken place on a recommended item approved for a vote. General votes can take up one or multiple items. General votes on items considered for recommendation can take place on an ongoing basis.

There is no limitation to the number of general votes each CAT holds on items approved by its members for a vote.

### 9.3.1. Voting Minimum Requirements

In order for a general vote to take place, at least 51% of the CAT membership must be in attendance. Eligible voters must be identified. At least two Officers must be present. At least one NORDC or Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office representative must be present.. Voting must be recorded in the meeting summary and certified by the CAT Secretary.

### 9.4.Implementing General Vote

After items that have been deliberated by CAT membership and approved by majority consensus to be considered for a general vote, CAT Officers must provide advanced notice to their members that items have been approved for a general vote. A minimum of 48 hrs of notice is required for any CAT meeting.

### 9.5.Certifying Vote Outcomes

The Secretary is responsible for counting votes and recording them in the meeting summary. In order to certify votes the Secretary will simply reiterate the recorded findings to the members present, ensure that all concerns have been addressed and ensure that everyone is satisfied with the process, and include the results in the meeting summary with a statement that the Secretary has certified the votes.

### 9.6.Next Step for Items Voted to Move Forward

Items ratified by CATs must be prepared for submission to the NORDC CEO. Each recommendation must be accompanied by a record of the deliberation summary (to include when it took place and how many members were present), the voting results, and the meeting summary in which the votes were ratified, as well as any additional information CATs may deem necessary for the NORDC CEO and Commissioners.

### 9.7.Next Step for Items Voted to Not Move Forward

In the event that an item does not secure a majority vote to move forward as a recommendation, the submitting member or Officer can re-introduce the item for further deliberation at the next available CAT meeting, or upon a time of that person's choosing.



## 10. NORDC CAT Recommendation Submission & Approval Process

All CATS will adhere to the process requirements set forth below.

### 10.1. Eligible Recommendations

Eligible items for recommendation to NORDC include operations, programming, policies and facilities concerns. Each CAT can provide recommendations for changes or improvements of operations practices, personnel concerns, programming, park policies, facilities maintenance and enhancements.

Items not generally eligible for recommendation are direct line item budget requests for NORDC, hiring/firing suggestions for NORDC, or political position statements for NORDC.

Recommendations submitted to NORDC will have secured a majority vote of the recommending CAT membership after having undergone a deliberation process.

### 10.2. Submittal Process

Items ratified by CATs must be prepared for submission to the NORDC CEO. Each recommendation must be accompanied by a record of the deliberation summary (to include when it took place and how many members were present), the voting results, and the meeting summary in which the votes were ratified, as well as any additional information CATs may deem necessary for the NORDC CEO and Commissioners.

### 10.3. Following the Recommendation

The NORDC CEO will determine the appropriate response to any recommendation provided by a CAT. It is the responsibility of each CAT, through its Officers or an appointed member, to follow the recommendation as it moves through the NORDC decision-making process, which includes: the NORDC CEO, NORDC sub-committees, and the NORDC full Commission.

If a recommendation requires submission to a NORDC sub-committee, the recommending CAT is required to attend the sub-committee meeting in which its recommendation is heard and deliberated. CATs are required to be ready to present any additional information needed, as well as take questions and provide answers to the general public. Similarly, if a recommendation moves out of sub-committee and is recommended for approval by the NORDC full Commission, the recommended CAT is required to attend the NORDC public meeting in which its recommendation is being considered for approval. Recommending CATs with items on the NORDC full Commission meeting will be required to answer any questions from NORDC Commissioners and the general public.

## 10.4. Approval Steps

All CAT recommendations first go to the NORDC CEO. The NORDC CEO is responsible for determining if he/she has the authority to respond to the recommendation. If the NORDC CEO determines he/she can respond to the recommendation, he/she will either approve or deny the action. The NORDC CEO has the legal authority to exercise such an action. This document requires that the CEO provide a written response within ten business days for an approval or denial.

In the event that a CAT recommendation is approved or denied by the NORDC CEO, the following will take place.

- **If Approved:** if a recommendation is approved, the NORDC CEO will provide a written statement indicating the approval, the actions to be taken, any modifications to the action, when the action will be taken, and any other relevant information that the recommending CATs will need to know and can expect.
- **If Denied:** if a recommendation is denied, the NORDC CEO *will provide a written statement* to the CAT originating the recommendation, indicating a denial, as well as providing rationale for the denial, and any other relevant information the recommending CATs need in order to understand what potential next steps exist.

In the event that a CAT recommendation requires further deliberation by NORDC Commissioners, the NORDC CEO will submit the recommendation to the appropriate NORDC sub-committee and the following will take place.

- **If Approved:** if a recommendation is approved by a NORDC sub-committee, the recommendation will be forwarded to the NORDC full Commission for a ratification vote. Recommending CATs are required to be in attendance at NORDC sub-committee meetings where their recommendations are being heard. Additionally, CATs are required to attend the NORDC full Commission where their recommendations will be approved.
- **If Denied:** if a recommendation is denied by a NORDC sub-committee, the recommendation will not move forward to the NORDC full Commission. Denials can indicate several next steps, such as further deliberation by the NORDC sub-committee, request for additional information, request for additional input from more CAT members, or a number of other potential concerns. The CAT's responsibility when this happens is to pursue the recommendations provided by the NORDC sub-committee and explore options for re-submittal.

## 11. Grievances

In the event that individual members or entire CATs feel that submitted recommendations were handled unfairly, a simple grievance process will be provided in order to offer a fair, equitable and timely forum for CAT members to resolve any issues of misconduct or unfair practices.

As such, any local CAT or any individual may file a grievance with NORDC against any action or decision of a fellow CAT member or Officer, on the full CAT itself, or on NORDC staff and/or its CEO. Grievances will be filed in writing and submitted to the proper NORDC staff, executive or commissioner whom will indicate in writing that they have received the grievance.

There is no grievance process for a denial given by NORDC Commissioners. Grievances can be placed against fellow CAT members and Officers, NORDC staff and the NORDC CEO. Final decisions by NORDC Commissioners are not eligible for the grievance process, as their decisions are final.

The sections below detail the different types of grievances and how each is initiated.

### 11.1. Recommendation Grievance

A recommendation grievance is a grievance expressed by either an individual or organization submitting a recommendation that is subsequently denied by either a CAT vote or by the NORDC CEO.

#### 11.1.1. At CAT level

If an individual or organization feels that the CAT to which this individual belongs, either as a member or Officer, has reasonable cause to file a complaint, then the individual reserves the right to file a written grievance with NORDC. Written grievances must be delivered directly to NORDC for consideration by the NORDC staff and CEO for resolution. If NORDC finds substantiating cause to support the grievance, it will take the necessary steps to address the concern with the appropriate parties. If the NORDC staff and CEO do not find any substantiating cause to support the grievance, a written response must be provided to the individual who filed the grievance. The grievance response is final.

#### 11.1.2. At CEO level

If a CAT or recommending individual CAT member or Officer feels that the NORDC CEO's denial of that CAT's recommendation is unfair or in any way inadequate, then the CAT or recommending individual CAT member or Officer reserves the right to file a written grievance with NORDC Commissioners. Written grievances must be delivered directly to the NORDC Commissioners for consideration for action. If NORDC Commissioners find substantiating cause to support the grievance, necessary actions must be taken to provide a remedy. If NORDC Commissioners do not find substantiating cause to support the grievance, a written response must be provided to the CAT, or CAT member or Officer who filed the grievance. NORDC Commissioners' responses to grievances are final.

## 11.2. Individual Grievance

An individual grievance is a grievance expressed by either an individual or organization towards another individual involved in the NORDC NPP (CAT members, CAT Officers, and NORDC staff).

### 11.2.1. Member Grievance

Individual CAT members can file grievances against fellow CAT members directly with their CAT Officers. NORDC staff and the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office staff will assist CAT Officers in providing either a resolution or escalating the issue further along the grievance process. Substantiated grievances will require that CAT Officers address issues in a timely and fair manner. Grievances without sufficient substantiation will require written response to this effect.

### 11.2.2. Officer Grievance

Individual CAT members or Officers can file grievances against CAT Officers with NORDC. NORDC staff and the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office staff will assist CAT Officers in providing either a resolution or escalating the issue further along the grievance process. Substantiated grievances will require that NORDC address issues with CAT Officers in a timely and fair manner. Grievances without sufficient substantiation will require written response to this effect. All NORDC responses are final.

### 11.2.3. NORDC Staff Grievance

Individual CAT members or Officers can file grievances against NORDC staff with NORDC. Substantiated grievances will require that NORDC administration and/or commissioners address issues with NORDC staff in a timely and fair manner. Grievances without sufficient substantiation will require written response to this effect. All NORDC responses are final.

## 12. CAT Geographic Divisions

The NORDC NPP structure mandates a Council District division for CATs. Three CATs per district are authorized in this document to serve as spaces for recreation recommendations on facilities, programming, operations and policies. As such, each Council District is divided into three CATs according to geographic proximity.

## 12.1. Rationale

The geographic breakdown of CATs is a work in progress. The preliminary geographic groupings have been established in an attempt to best provide a central meeting location for community members interested in discussing recreation issues.

- As per information gathered from the seven (7) community input meetings conducted by the Mayor's Neighborhood Engagement Office and NORDC, the preliminary geographic grouping of NORDC parks and facilities marks the initial group suggestion, which is subject to change on an annual basis. As such:
  - CATs may petition to add or drop specific NORDC parks and/or facilities within their council district.
  - CATs must communicate their intentions to add a park and/or facility with the CAT members in which the park exists and an agreement must be accomplished.
- The amount of parks and/or facilities per CAT is an attempt to geographically group NORDC parks and/or facilities for the convenience of CAT members. In no way does the amount of parks and/or facilities per CAT reflect the influence or importance of a CAT.

## 12.2. Maps and Playgrounds by District

Refer to the addendum maps for each district provided at the end of this document.

## 13. NORDC NPP Adaptability

This document is to be considered a dynamic document. As such, it is a starting document that can be subject to revisions. Any revisions to this document must adhere to the outlined steps below.

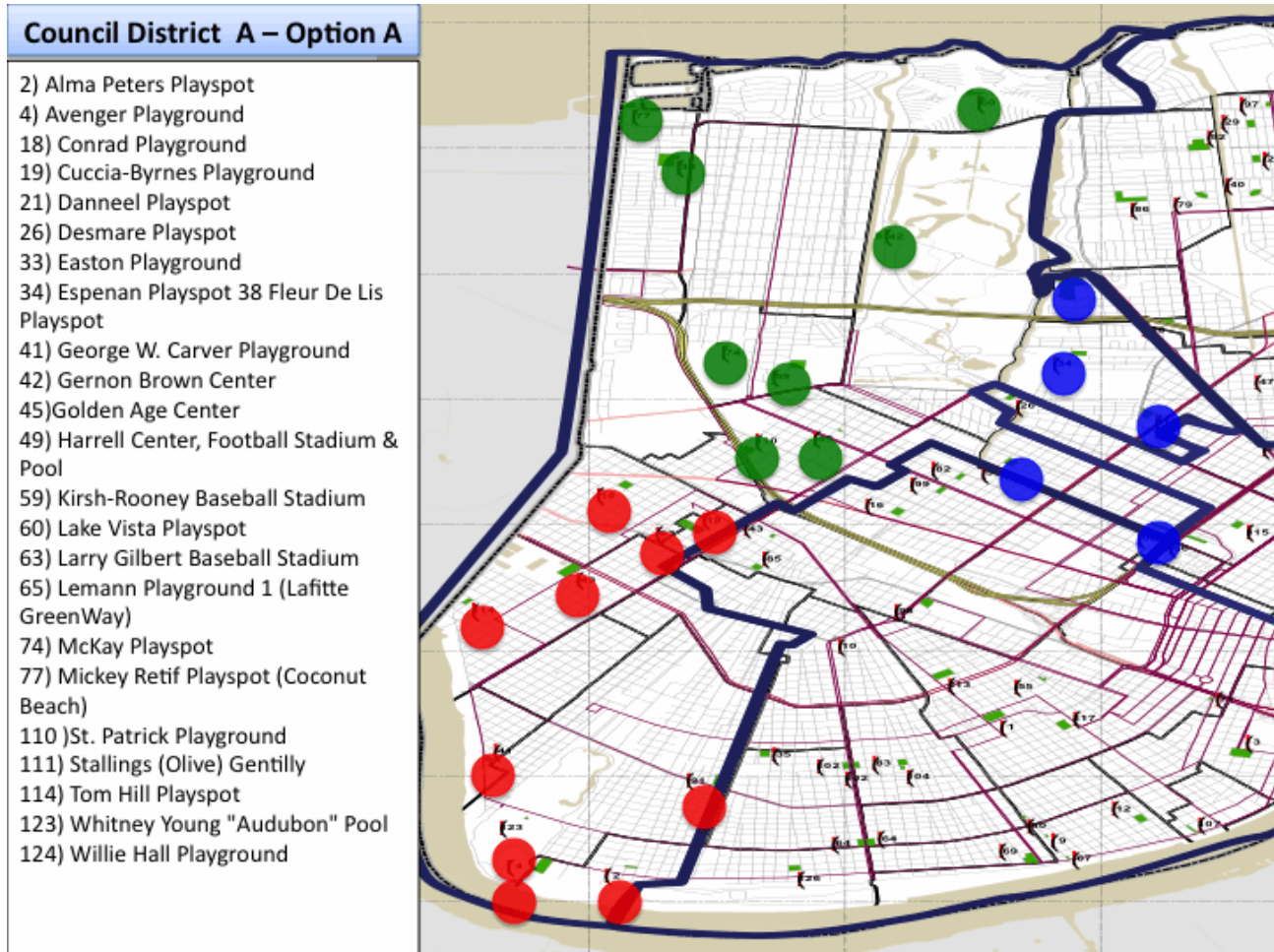
### 13.1. NORDC NPP Revisions

As a dynamic document that will reflect operational, legal, fiduciary, social and even political changes, it is anticipated that revisions will be made on an annual basis to improve the overall goal and purpose of the NORDC NPP. As such, revisions to the NORDC NPP will require the same process utilized for recommendations by CATs. That is, recommended revisions must be vetted at the community level by CATs, vetted city-wide by the CAC, supported by the NORDC CEO, approved by the NORDC Governance sub-committee, and ratified by the NORDC full Commission. It is recommended that any revisions to this document always take place at the end of the calendar year, which enables CATs, NORDC staff, executives and commissioners to evaluate a full year of activities and lessons.

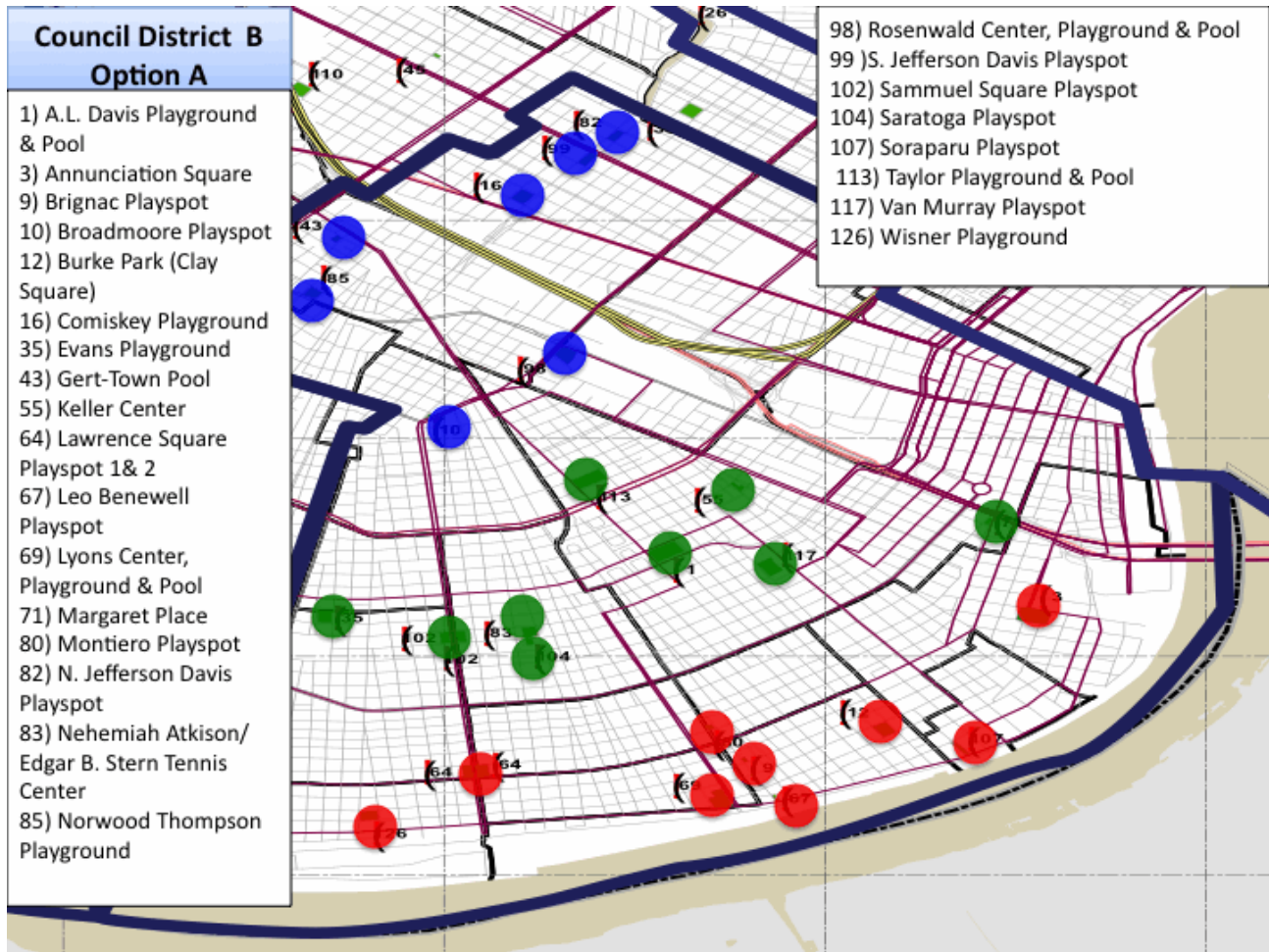
For example: In 2014 Council District boundary changes will take effect. This political reality will require CAT boundary changes. Lessons learned may require creation of additional CATs, requiring a policy revision. Finally, improved practices may align in such a way that may give CATs the opportunity to play a significant role in the Capital Improvement Program relative to recreation. Such examples are possible and would require revisions to this document.



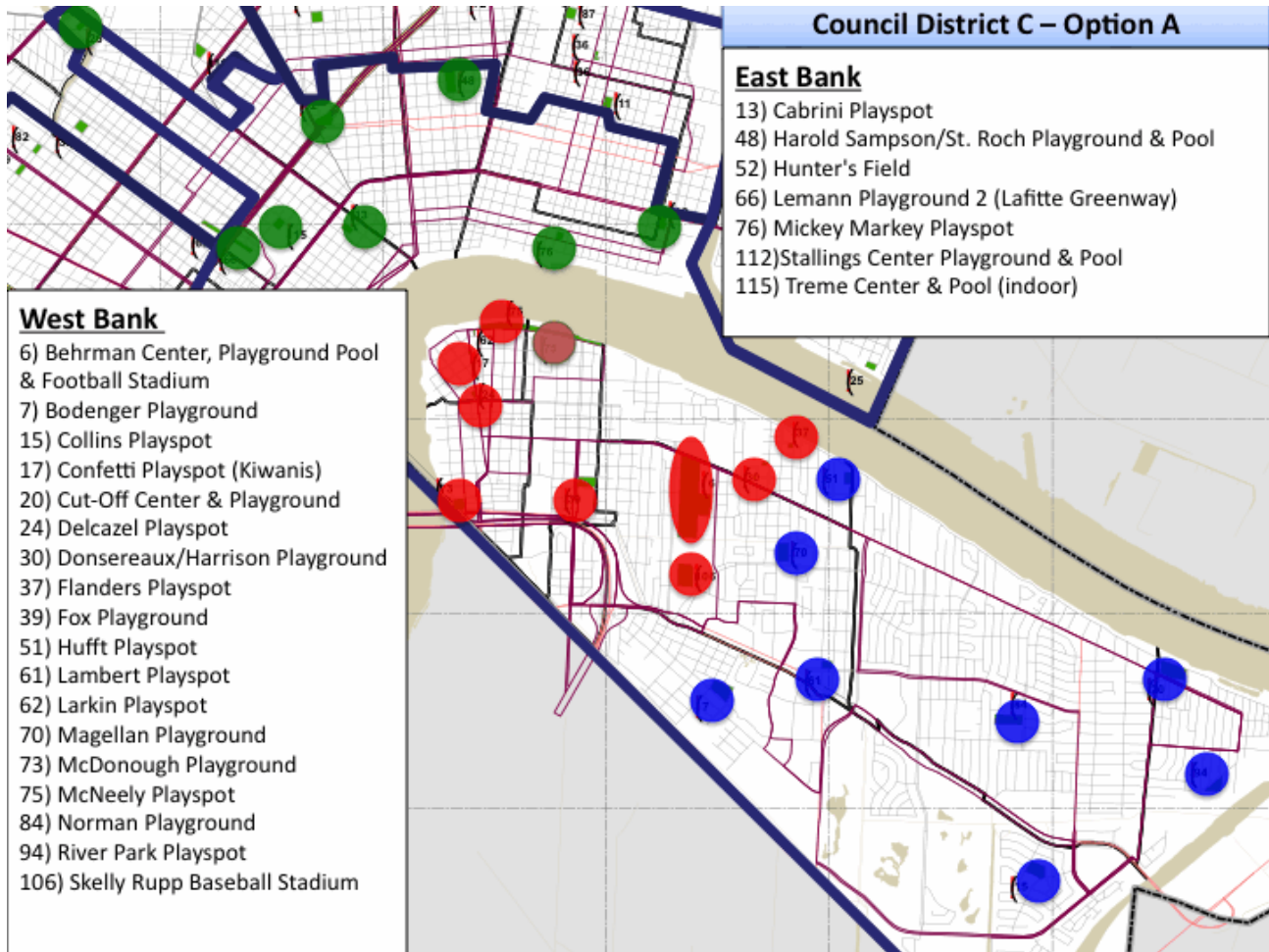
## District A CAT Geographic Division



## District B CAT Geographic Division

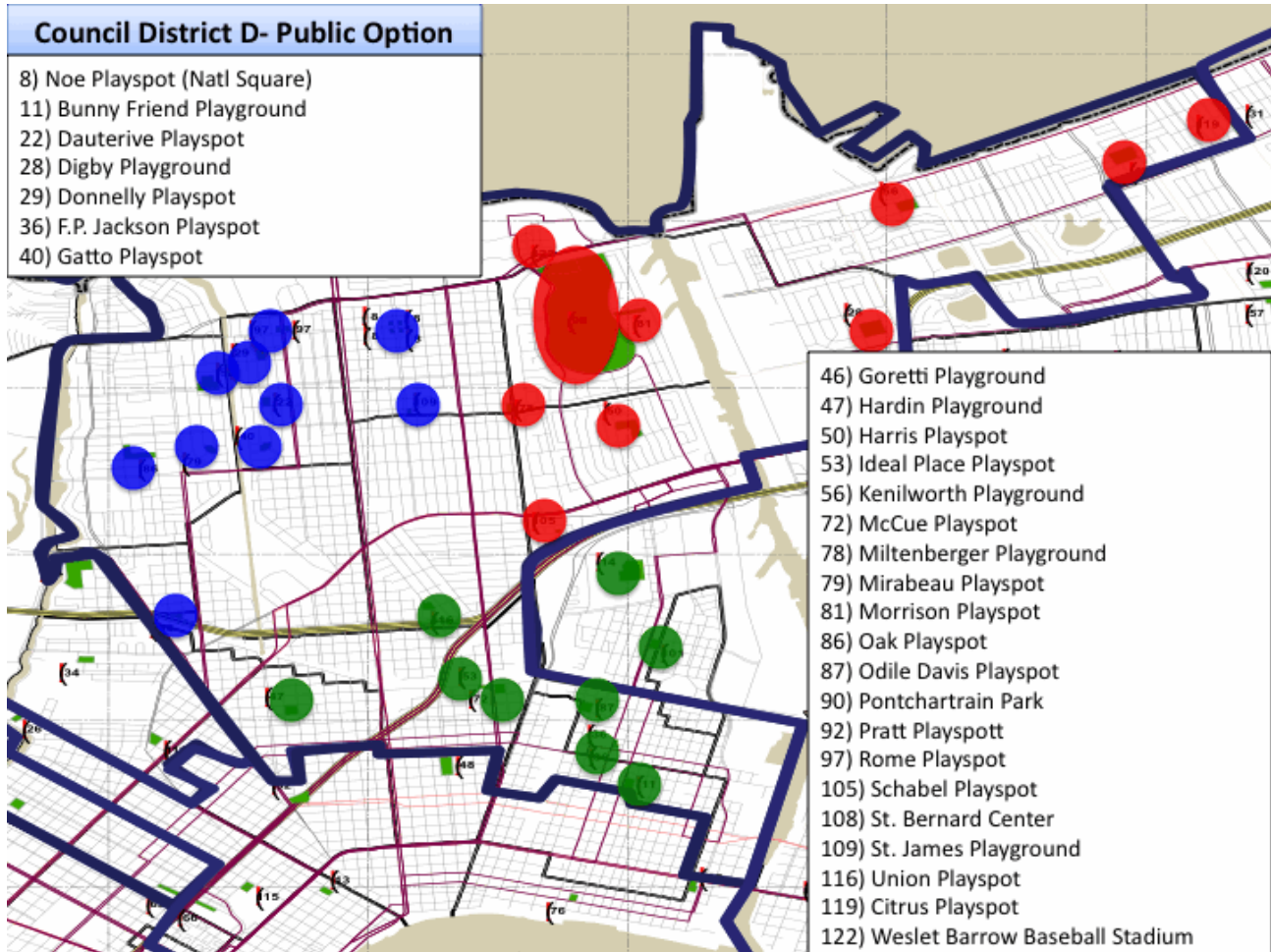


## District C CAT Geographic Division





## District D CAT Geographic Division



## District E CAT Geographic Division

