

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 198

BY SENATOR HARRIS

A RESOLUTION

To urge and request the New Orleans City Council and the New Orleans City Planning Commission to study and make recommendations updating neighborhood boundaries in New Orleans East.

WHEREAS, the boundaries of the city of New Orleans are coterminous with Orleans Parish, consisting of a wildlife refuge and fishing camps, suburban-style subdivisions, and historic buildings, to modern high-rise buildings; and

WHEREAS, the city of New Orleans is governed by a Home Rule Charter form of government which defines the boundaries of the city under Article I, Section 1-103; and

WHEREAS, the Home Rule Charter also created the city planning commission under Chapter 4, which authorizes the commission, in part, to prepare and recommend to the council, the official map of city and amendments thereto, upon which shall be shown all existing and established streets, recommended street lines, all streets or street lines located on final or recorded plats of subdivisions, and provides that street locations on final or recorded plats of subdivisions shall constitute amendments to the official map and shall be placed thereon; and

WHEREAS, historically, the city of New Orleans is divided into seventeen wards which are used politically in voting in elections, subdivided into precincts; and

WHEREAS, the modern day map of the city of New Orleans' wards has not changed since the late 1800s; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, in order to qualify for a share of Community Development Block Grant funds, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development partnered with the mayor's Office of Policy and Planning and Curtis and Davis Architects to delineate and name "planning areas" throughout the city; and

WHEREAS, the result of the New Orleans Housing and Neighborhood Preservation Study of 1974 carved up the city of New Orleans into seventy-three rigidly defined

neighborhoods and their boundaries by surveying residents on issues of quality of life and needs, as well as the name they used to describe the neighborhood where they lived; and

WHEREAS, today those seventy-three neighborhoods and their boundaries are used by first responders, real estate agents, academia, nonprofits, and media outlets; and

WHEREAS, the area commonly known as "New Orleans East" is the suburban area of the city of New Orleans consisting of the following eight neighborhoods by boundaries: Pines Village, Plum Orchard, West Lake Forest, Read Blvd. West, Read Blvd. East, Little Woods, Village De L'est, and Lake Catherine; and

WHEREAS, New Orleans East is more than sixty percent of the geographical area of the city of New Orleans and the area is patrolled by NOPD's 7th District which encompasses approximately one hundred thirty-three square miles, making it the largest police district in New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, residents of the neighborhoods located in New Orleans East have voiced concerns about how crime statistics and news stories paint their neighborhoods with a broad brush as dangerous or unsafe by generally identifying the entire area as New Orleans East and not by individual neighborhoods and their boundaries; and

WHEREAS, the residents say such generalizations have caused real estate values to suffer in neighborhoods that are located in New Orleans East that are safe, secure, and provide a sound quality of life and investment opportunities for families; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, the City Council and the City Planning Commission adopted the initiative called Plan For The 21st Century, a city charter mandated planning framework for the core systems that shape New Orleans' physical, social, environmental, and economic future; and

WHEREAS, currently the Plan For The 21st Century reflects the values and priorities that emerged through a community participation process as the City Council and the City Planning Commission engaged in a city chartered mandated amendment process from 2016 to 2018; and

WHEREAS, since 1974, the residents of neighborhoods located in New Orleans East have actively created their own identifiable neighborhoods and have incorporated many of them as security and improvement districts or homeowners' associations; and

WHEREAS, since New Orleans East is not a neighborhood, the New Orleans City Council and the New Orleans City Planning Commission are encouraged to find ways to address redrawing the neighborhood boundaries in New Orleans East in an effort to address the residents' vision of the City's Plan For The 21st Century.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby urge and request the New Orleans City Council and the New Orleans City Planning Commission to study and make recommendations updating neighborhood boundaries in New Orleans East.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to New Orleans City Council President Helena Moreno and City Planning Commission Chairman Jonathan Stewart.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE