



TOPAZ NEIGHBORHOODS

What is a topaz neighborhood? “Topaz” neighborhoods are areas which have higher incomes, a higher percentage homeowners and a higher price per square foot/rent.

What are the HousingNOLA plan’s recommendations for preventing displacement, improving fair housing, increasing sustainable design, improving neighborhood quality of life, and increasing accessibility for special needs populations in topaz neighborhoods?

Preventing Displacement:

1. Make better use of publicly owned property (HANO, OPSB, and tax adjudicated) and require that some properties be offered to market for affordable housing only, coordinate release with other funding rounds (LIHTC, HOME, Private)
2. Practice Inclusionary Zoning- require housing developers building multi-family buildings to set aside some portion of the units as affordable in exchange for a bonus (height, density, expedited permitting, permit fee waivers, etc).
3. Freeze tax increases for low income homeowners and property rented to low income families
4. Create first-time homeownership opportunities.
5. Create a loan fund for rehabs (homeownership and rentals w/income restrictions)
6. Prioritize resources (NHIF, CDBG, NOLA Housing Trust Fund)
7. Increase density by building small secondary units on properties with single family homes (i.e. mother-in-law units).
8. Remove barriers for affordable housing, such as parking restrictions, zoning changes, permits, inconsistent tax assessments, inconsistent reviews by boards and commissions. (HDLC, BZA, NCDAC)
9. Attract diverse funding sources
10. Implement basic health and safety standards for occupied housing
11. Encourage anchor institution incentives, such as workforce housing.

Fair Housing:

1. Create a Housing Mobility Program for vouchers
2. HANO implements revisions to Criminal Background policy consistently at all properties (policy currently show all arrests, and it should show only convictions, and factor in time lapsed since and type of crime)
3. Increase access for voucher holders, pass legislation prohibiting denial based on source of rental payments.
4. Prioritize investment in new affordable housing
5. Update the City’s Analysis of Impediments
6. Educate citizens about discrimination against the seven classes:
 - a. Race
 - b. Color
 - c. Religion
 - d. National Origin
 - e. Sex
 - f. Families with children
 - g. People with disabilities



7. Provide education for landlords, realtors and homebuyer counseling agencies on tenants' rights
8. Increase awareness of tenants' rights to receive information about denials, encourage automatic disclosure (current policy will disclose only if requested and within a month)
9. Improve Tenants' Rights by standardizing leases, implementing a Rental Registry, preventing landlord retaliation, and making housing documents available in multiple languages.

Sustainable Design:

1. Advocate for stabilizing insurance rates
2. Implement improved building standards to reduce insurance costs
3. Create a feasible plan for living with water
4. Work with public entities who manage vouchers (LHC and HANO) to provide incentives to developers for increased energy efficiency improvements.
5. Require energy audits
6. Reduce costs of implementing green building techniques with builders coordinating to share those costs
7. Remove barriers to individuals effecting change to create energy efficiency in their own homes
 - a. Develop a one stop center/ website with all information on energy efficiency.
 - b. Create a list of all existing energy programs
8. Stabilize and increase various tax credit programs
 - a. Retain Historic Tax Credits
 - b. Re-implement solar credits
9. Incentivize developers to build green, historic
10. Collect Utility Data to provide additional data to craft policy recommendations that foster energy efficiency.
 - a. Advocate for increased energy efficiency and sustainable utility rates.

Improving Quality of Life:

1. Focus on transit-oriented development overlay in area with high investments like Canal Street @ Bio District, Lafitte Greenway, St. Claude Corridor-
2. Promote alternative land use:
 - a. Encourage land banking
 - b. Reduce blight
 - c. Reduce vacancies
3. Improve health outcomes by zip codes and neighborhood

Access for Special Needs Populations – See Citywide Special Needs Recommendations