

OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY
CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

HELENA MORENO
MAYOR

MEAGAN WILLIAMS
CHIEF SUSTAINABILITY OFFICER

March 26, 2026

To EPA SWIFR Grant Project Officer, Sean Stanton:

The City of New Orleans is requesting a no-cost time extension to carry out the development of the Solid Waste Master Plan as outlined in the Project Narrative submitted in 2023, as well as the comprehensive education on recycling. At this time, the City cannot pursue the remaining scope of work for cart deployment due to the city's financial issues. Unfortunately, at this time we cannot cover the gap for additional staffing and education resources necessary to ensure successful outcomes of such a significant cart deployment.

Ultimately, we believe that the Master Plan would be very beneficial to New Orleans, but we have experienced delays on several critical tasks, including hiring a full-time project manager and issuing the Solid Waste Master Plan Request for Proposals. While a consultant has now been selected to lead development of the plan and is anticipated to begin work within the next month, the planning process is expected to require a minimum of one year to complete. For this reason, we are requesting a yearlong no-cost time extension to successfully implement these funds for the express purpose of developing a roadmap for our city's waste diversion efforts.

As for the \$468k awarded for education initiatives, this would be a helpful start toward informing the public on proper recycling. Currently only a dismal 2% of recycling debris is accepted due to high levels of contamination. We can begin moving quickly with community partners to begin education efforts over the next year if this extension is granted.

We are also providing a support letter from Congressman Troy Carter who also sees the benefit in moving these two initiatives forward. These funds will provide a positive step for the city of New Orleans to continue to build upon.

Sincerely,



Helena Moreno

Mayor, City of New Orleans

March 26, 2026

The Honorable Lee Zeldin
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20460

**RE: Implementation of City of New Orleans Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) Award
EPA Grant ID: 02F51501**

Dear Administrator Zeldin:

I am writing regarding the Solid Waste Infrastructure for Recycling (SWIFR) grant awarded to the City of New Orleans by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Specifically, I urge EPA to provide the City guidance and flexibility to ensure that the City can move forward on specific portions of this award without delay, even as broader elements of the grant continue to be evaluated at the local level.

In New Orleans, there is strong consensus that public education and strategic planning are essential prerequisites for building a successful, sustainable recycling system. New Orleans faces unique challenges, including historically low participation rates and high contamination in recycling streams. Without sufficient investment in behavior change, public awareness, and long-term planning, infrastructure investments alone may not yield their intended outcomes. Prioritizing education and planning will help ensure that any future capital investments are both effective and sustainable.

Accordingly, I respectfully request that EPA confirm that the City of New Orleans may proceed with the resident education and solid waste master plan components of the SWIFR grant, and that EPA provide any flexibility in implementation timelines or scope to support these priorities while maintaining compliance with federal requirements.

These adjustments will help ensure that federal resources are deployed in ways that reflect local conditions while advancing the shared goals of reducing waste, increasing recycling participation, and improving environmental outcomes.

Thank you for your continued partnership and your attention to this request. My office stands ready to work with EPA and local stakeholders to ensure the success of this investment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Troy A. Carter, Sr.", with a stylized, cursive script.

Troy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress