

December 16, 2022

Mayor Latoya Cantrell  
City of New Orleans  
1300 Perdido St., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
New Orleans, LA 70112

Re: Superintendent of Police Appointment

Dear Mayor Cantrell:

The mission of the Office of Inspector General (OIG) is to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse and promote efficiency and effectiveness in the City of New Orleans (City) programs and operations. The OIG provides an independent and objective assessment of the performance and efficiency of government policies, programs, and operations by conducting audits, evaluations, and investigations. The purpose of this letter is to advise of the risks associated with the selection of the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD) Superintendent without a national search conducted by an independent subject-matter expert. A national search and appointment of the most qualified candidate will protect our most valuable resources, our citizens and guests.

On December 6, 2022, you announced the retirement of Shaun Ferguson as Superintendent of NOPD.<sup>1</sup> The Superintendent of Police is an integral member of the New Orleans Critical Infrastructure, Emergency Services Sector, whose mission is to ensure the safety of the citizens of New Orleans and the many visitors who travel here. The City budget is considerably dependent on the revenue generated from tourism and special events, which require an effective police force in order to thrive.

New Orleans should emulate the actions of Baltimore, Knoxville, Tampa, Atlanta, Rochester, the U.S. Capitol Police, and numerous other cities by conducting a national search with transparency and citizen involvement to identify and select the next New Orleans Superintendent of Police. The selection of the New Orleans Superintendent of Police is paramount to securing the effective protection of people and physical entities within the City of New Orleans. A transparent, national search conducted by a nationally recognized firm with subject matter expertise would foster confidence within the NOPD, as well as the public. It would also facilitate future trust in police services, while affording the best possible opportunity to spot, assess and ultimately mitigate violent crime.

In the absolute best of times, a national search should be considered a best practice. According to the Police Executive Research Forum publication “Critical Issues in Policing,” 59 percent of cities rely upon a national

---

<sup>1</sup> Office of the Mayor. (2022, December 6). *Mayor Cantrell Issues Statement on Retirement of NOPD Superintendent Shaun Ferguson* [Press Release]. Retrieved from <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/LANOLA/bulletins/33bda08>.

search to facilitate the selection of a police chief.<sup>2</sup> Given the recent increase in violent crime, slow police response times, and recruitment and retention issues, it is entirely prudent to conduct a national search by a nationally recognized firm to ensure the legitimacy and success of the selected candidate. A continued increase in violent crimes will likely have a negative impact on our citizens and our vital tourism industry. The issues facing the City call for innovative and qualified leaders with diverse experiences. The NOPD has exceptional leaders, and any leader in good standing should be highly encouraged to apply for this vacancy. However, a national search would identify the most viable candidate, ensuring the safety of our citizens.

A rushed appointment could lead to the loss of public trust and jeopardize the success of your selection. Therefore, it is the position of the OIG that you should refrain from appointing a permanent Superintendent of the NOPD and instead make an interim appointment, pending a national search as outlined in this letter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Edward Michel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot above the 'i' in Michel.

Edward Michel, CIG  
Inspector General

cc: Councilmember Helena Moreno, At-Large  
Councilmember Jean Paul Morell, At- Large  
Councilmember Joseph I. Giarrusso, III, District A  
Councilmember Lesli Harris, District B  
Councilmember Freddie King, III, District C  
Councilmember Eugene J. Green, District D  
Councilmember Oliver Thomas, District E

---

<sup>2</sup> "Transforming Police Recruit Training: 40 Guiding Principles." Critical Issues in Policing Series. Police Executive Research Forum. Accessed December 14, 2022.

<https://www.policeforum.org/assets/TransformingRecruitTraining.pdf>.