



Ideas Youth Committee Meeting 3 Summary

January 15, 2025 | New Orleans, LA
neworleanscitypark.org/ideas-youth-committee



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Crafting a Land & Labor Acknowledgment

The meeting began with a presentation that laid the foundation for the Land and Labor Acknowledgment activity. The presentation defined what a Land & Labor Acknowledgment is and provided guidelines for how to craft one. Youth were asked to consider the following when crafting their acknowledgments:

- Know whose land you're on
- Know why you are doing it
- Ground it in History
- Acknowledge your role
- Include a commitment
- How do you model it?

Youth were also provided with an example acknowledgment and a historical timeline of City Park, that illustrated select events and dates and helped provide context for grounding the acknowledgment in history. The historical timeline highlighted the following points:

- **Indigenous Stewardship:** City Park stands on land originally called “Bulbancha,” or “land of many languages,” inhabited for over 6,000 years by Indigenous nations, including the Chitimacha, Houma, Atakapa-Ishak, and Choctaw amongst others.
- **Enslaved Labor and Plantation Era:** The land was once home to 14 plantations, cultivated through the forced labor of enslaved individuals. Their work transformed the landscape into an economic hub, creating connections to global markets through sugarcane production and infrastructure development.
- **Modern Transformations:** The land was established as a public park since 1854 and its evolution included key milestones like WPA projects during the Great Depression, desegregation in 1958, and more recent community-driven improvements.

This historical context was critical for informing the acknowledgment activity, underscoring the park's ties to systemic injustices and its potential for restorative practices.

City Park Timeline: Land & Labor Acknowledgement



Land & Labor Acknowledgment Results

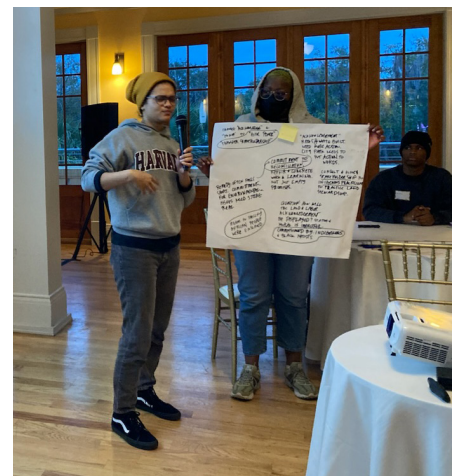
Ideas Youth Committee members reviewed the New Orleans Museum of Art's existing acknowledgment and brainstormed updates to make it more representative, meaningful, and actionable.

Key ideas included:

- **Strengthened Language:** Youth recommended replacing passive phrases like “we acknowledge” and “honor” with empowering and actionable terms such as “protect” and “preserving.”
- **Expanded Representation:** Youth noted the presence of non-federally recognized and unknown Indigenous communities, such as the Pointe-Au-Chien tribe, and suggested recognizing them within the historical narrative. Youth also called for explicit recognition of how the labor of African enslaved people was exploited in cultivating and building on the land.
- **Commitment to Action:** Suggestions emphasized the need for explicit commitments, including partnerships with descendant communities, reparative efforts, and environmental restoration.

Below is the updated version of the Land & Labor Acknowledgment based on the input from the Ideas Youth Committee.

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional land of many indigenous tribes and cultures such as... And those that have been erased. This land's cultivation, financial growth, and ongoing cultural and environmental significance were made possible by the forced labor of enslaved African peoples. We vow to protect the environmental integrity of this land because we know the nature of human impact on climate. We are committing to preserving the cultural roots of City Park and honoring this land's history through continued engagement, stewardship, and cultural sensitivity...



We honor the ancestral land of the Atakapa-Ishak, Caddo, Chitimacha, Choctaw, Houma, Natchez, Tunica, Biloxi, Bayougoula, Washa, Chawasha, Tchoupitoulas, Acolapissa, Pointe-Au-Chien, and other currently unknown Indigenous nations who lived on and cared for this land for over 6,000 years.

We also recognize that this land's cultivation, financial growth, and ongoing cultural, historical, and environmental significance was achieved through exploitation and systemic oppression of black and indigenous people of color. Enslaved African people were forced to clear cypress swamps, construct canals, and cultivate sugarcane on the 14 plantations that occupied City Park's current boundaries. We acknowledge their uncredited labor, the injustices they endured, and the generational impacts that persist.

As we honor this land's past, we pledge to prioritize cultural sensitivity, environmental stewardship, and equitable partnerships with Indigenous nations and descendants of enslaved communities in all aspects of planning and engagement for City Park's future.

Place-Making Activity

The second half of the meeting focused on place-making ideas, categorized into Improve, Revive, and Add. These categories allowed participants to consider how we could improve existing amenities, revive lost features, and add elements to meet emerging needs.

Ideas Youth Committee members were asked to review over 100 Place-making ideas generated from previous Ideas Youth Committee meetings, the most recent community meeting: *Stirring the Roux*, and survey responses. The Place-Making ideas list differentiated between existing ideas at City Park and future opportunities to be incorporated into the park. Ideas Youth Committee members were asked to pick their favorite idea to discuss with their table. They were also encouraged to pick more than one idea if they felt like they could be combined easily.

Then, Ideas Youth Committee members returned to their groups to discuss and build on the ideas they chose. They placed their selected Place-Making ideas into one of three categories: Improve, Revive, and Add. Then they discussed and added notes to elaborate on each idea.

The following section synthesizes the most common themes and ideas across all groups.



Place-Making Activity Results

Across the three categories, youth participants categorized the most ideas under “Improve”, followed by “Add” and then “Revive”. Across all categories, forty one place-making ideas were selected to discuss. The most commonly selected place-making ideas were Nature Walking Trails, Indoor Skate Rink, Historic/ Indigenous Marker or Area, and Food Forest. Each of those ideas were selected three times. Ice Skate Rink, Drive-In Movie Area, Community Greenhouse, Boat Rental Facilities, and Big Lake were all selected by two Ideas Youth Committee members. Every other place-making idea was selected once.

The most prominent place-making ideas within each category are summarized below.

Improve

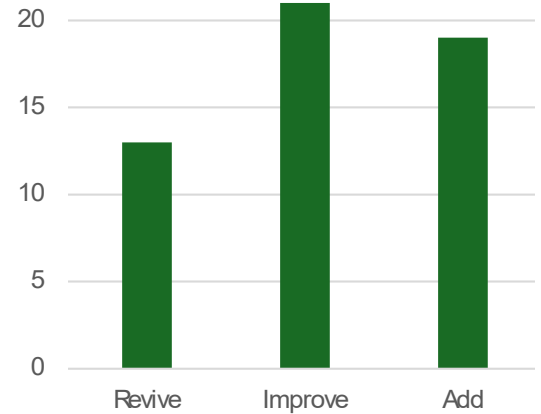
Youth members discussed a diverse set of themes focused on improving infrastructure, natural amenities, and physical facilities, such as athletic facilities. Enhancements to sports and recreation facilities like kayak rentals, baseball fields, and Tad Gormley Stadium were proposed to encourage active lifestyles and recreational diversity. Another major theme included overall infrastructural improvements like signage, A/C, lighting, and restrooms. Participants also highlighted nature-based ideas including expanding farming/community gardens/food forests, improving and expanding nature trails, and expanding bird habitats

Revive

Participants emphasized natural restoration in the park. The Ideas Youth Committee highlighted the waterways, lagoons, and lakes as focal points to be cleaned and made functional for boat usage. They also discussed adding more native plantings around water features.

Add

Participants proposed new features to fill gaps in the park’s offerings including multi-generational spaces, cultural programming, and educational opportunities. Movie screening areas and skating rinks were common ideas proposed. Another common idea was food forests where guests could pick food in a pay what you can format. Dedicated spaces for art installations, performances, and cultural festivals were suggested to enrich the park’s community engagement. Finally, educational and art ideas included labeling plants and trees to educate visitors about the park’s natural history and introducing interactive art that celebrates New Orleans’ cultural heritage and acknowledging the historic aspects of the park.



After Action Review

After the activity was completed, each participant was asked to fill out an After Action Review. The summary of their 14 responses are below.

List 1-3 positive outcomes of the meeting.

During the engagement session, participants shared positive outcomes such as gaining a deeper understanding of the park's history and land, discovering areas they had never explored before, and learning about its diverse cultural significance. They also appreciated the opportunity to collaborate on the Land & Labor acknowledgment statement, meet new people, and gain fresh inspiration and perspectives

Do you have any additional concerns, questions, or comments?

Many participants expressed appreciation for the increased involvement of diverse individuals in the process, with several suggesting ways to engage even more youth in future initiatives. Such as sending out emails for future meetings and representatives speaking at schools to encourage participation. Others shared excitement about the ongoing process and looked forward to future meetings to continue contributing and learning.

Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

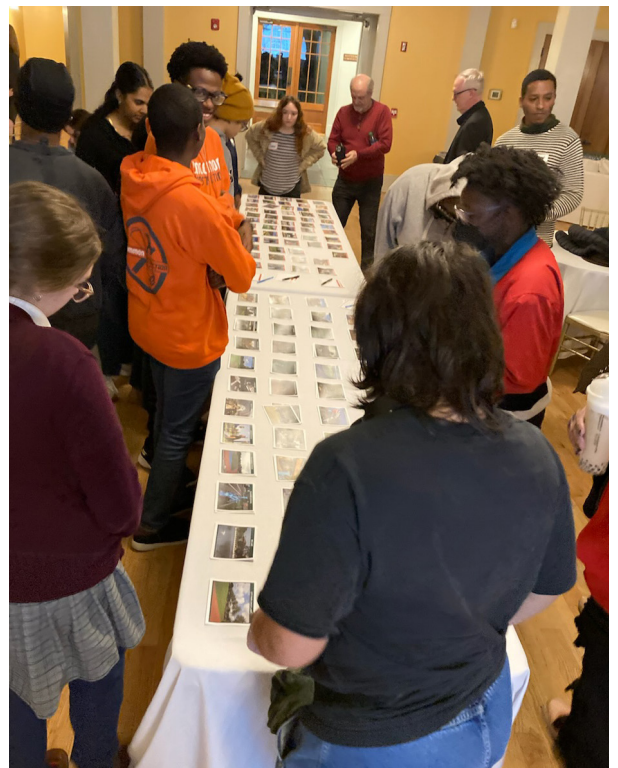
The majority of participants did not suggest significant improvements, expressing that this was their favorite meeting so far. However, some recommended enhancing outreach efforts to better engage youth and gather their input for future meetings.

Next Steps

The Ideas Youth Committee Meeting 3 provided valuable insights into the future of City Park, building on prior discussions and introducing new perspectives.

The results from this meeting will be highlighted and built upon in the upcoming community meeting: *Prepping the Ingredients*. The updated Land & Labor Acknowledgment will also be announced and read at each meeting for the continuation of the project.

The next public meeting is January 29 at the Pavillion of Two Sisters in City Park from 6:00 to 8:00 pm.



Raw Results

Revive Place-Making Ideas

- Big Lake
- Loop Nola
- City Park Practice Track
- Natural Walking Trails
- McFadden Girl Scout Cabin, Historic/ Indigenous Marker or Area, Birding Sites & Information, Meeting Area
- Boat Rental Facilities
- Lagoons & Waterways, Cane Plant Area
- Big Lake
- Botanical Gardens

Revive Place-Making Notes

- Hot as Hell out there. Just Swamp Boats now. Need more Building Presence on NOMA side. Also Planting Plan. "It's boring over there"
- "I didn't even know this existed" Great for Outdoors People
- Need Renovated Sand Pits, Empty Track in Bad Shape, Soft
- Labeling of the plants/trees & history
- land marks
- maps along route
- Signage
- seating for rest
- existing infrastructure can be used to have : restrooms, meeting/workshop space, birding & historical information
- new life jackets w/ proper sanitizing systems
- safety demonstrations
- Lagoons & waterways need more cane & native plants to aerate water. Could have native edible plants in lieu if food forest
- add more boat launches in underutilized areas
- all ages, smaller kids included, strollers/ wagons
- cleaner water, clearer
- ecologically balanced
- Not Welcoming. Make it clean and welcoming
- Plant displays outside for public access

Improve Place-Making Ideas

- Kayak Rental Facility
- Basketball Court
- Savoie Soccer Complex
- Boat Rental Facilities
- Tad Gormley Stadium
- Fishing Piers
- City Park Great Lawn , Cafe Du Monde,

Community Garden

- Event Space, Community Greenhouse
- Wisner Tract, Softball/Baseball Fields
- New Orleans Museum of Art
- Grow Dat Farm & Facilities
- Natural Walking Trails, Multi-use Trails
- Drone Flying Areas
- Natural Walking Trails, Birding Habitats
- Food Forest & Indigenous Markers

Improve Place-Making Notes

- Kayak Rental Facility in City Park. Loop is not as accessible.
- Indoor & Outdoor for all weather, " We never play in the park"
- More Activities Adj. to Kayak also Promote Fishing
- Need good fishing & preservation practices
- "One of the heartbeats of City Park," not VP to date, rust, RR bad
- More relaxed seating
- Garden beds along driveways walking paths
- near water spigots for irrigation, utilize great lawn irrigation
- community work day
- pay what you can
- working ac
- improved and clean restrooms
- add more lights and bathrooms
- consistent grass/field care
- automatic lighting
- painted foul lines & batter boxes
- Art shows/cultural showcases on movie/ performance lawn
- Add more land to the farm. Amend the current lease agreements between Grow Dat and City Park
- more trees, berry bushes, space for greenhouses, etc that are accessible to public
- Vacant Lot by Pan Am Expansion
- help Developing a catalogue for plants & animals in the park
- History Plaque / Board Interactive!
- more destinations & seating areas along trails
- connecting areas of park vs. isolated
- more animal habitats. Cat, dog, coyote like other animals we tunnels or stuff
- While city park already has a few trails like Couturie Forest, they don't feel safe or long enough. Multi-use trails that are easy to access throughout the park that aren't

sketchy for hiking, running and biking would be great

- Could be near playground/putt putt
- There's opportunity for improving habitat. Large swaths of lawn that can be turned into natural prairie
- Diversify landscape to cater to different species
- Good landscaping near botanical gardens, but could add naturalistic landscaping around
- More informational signage
- Overgrown areas, good for birds but not managed
- Boardwalk, not just a dirt path. Sidewalk is a good accessibility consideration
- Mark how tribes used the plants around them. Could also combine with trails

Add Place-Making Ideas

- Ice Skating
- Indoor Skate Rink
- Observatory
- Historic/Indigenous Marker or Area
- Amphitheater
- Movie/Performance Area
- Drive-In Movie Area
- Food Forest
- Emergency Center
- Community Greenhouse
- Food Forest
- Indoor Skate Rink
- Water Park
- Indoor Skate Rink
- Drive In Movie Theater
- Skate Park/Paths
- Ice Skating Rink
- Rock Climbing Wall

Add Place-Making Notes

- Related to Big Lake. Need more winter Activities.
- Winter - ice skating, summer - no ice
- At top of NOMA or middle of Couerrie Forest. Astronomy Night- open to public. Host by Specialist; Programming
- Related to Labor & Land Recognition, Add Mural/ Art by Indigenous or Black Artists, Accompany by Activities
- What if the metal from the Confederate Statues gets reformed into as recognition art piece
- That are culturally diverse
- An actual statue so another art statue = not just of one person

- Shows, artists, local talent, rent out for major events, comedy, puppet, cultural events, celebrate culture
- tie back to land recognition
- Old & new films
- Poll to choose movies shown
- \$5 per family
- Free on Fridays
- concessions
- restrooms
- \$5 per car
- restrooms
- concession stands/ can bring your own snacks
- Baskets
- Pay what you can
- year round growings
- community work day
- community commitment : take what you need, don't sell what you take
- emergency centers half a mile radius of each other
- The greenhouse would be free for the public, the people who would produce plants & veggies have an opportunity to have their own plot in greenhouse setting
- Add more nature to every building in the park
- add more trails
- need to consider how to manage "food forest" - take what you need (like @ grow dat)
- each floor of this building will be different (sports floor, basketball courts), floor, history floor at top can be where adults are and under where adults are
- pay for a certain amount of time
- "teen building" where each floor would be different activities for teens. Gym/workout space on ground floor accessible to everyone, 13 floor?
- Building would provide revenue stream for city park. People sign up ahead of time for activities/use of spaces on different floors
- Culture, reading, history floor
- Better for Older kids
- Paths could connect different places

Please list 1-3 Positive outcomes of this meeting

- Youth Involvement was great, All were welcome
- I learned more about things I didn't know the park had! (i.e. Loop Nola, basketball courts), Learned about foundational planning v.s. placemaking, learned names of LA Native

tribes that I never knew

- One of the positive outcomes of this meeting was a new focus on the acknowledgment of the park's history and 'revitalization', 'improvement', and 'adding' as primary objectives for the park's future
- We gave some (in my opinion) good input on how we could help GrowDat, improve running trails, and upgrade the acknowledgment Statement.
- The add/improve/restore thesis
- Engaging with others to ensure change, Learning of new projects/existing opportunities. Land & Labor Acknowledgment engagement.
- The ideas everyone had. The creativity on what we can improve, and listening to how others see the park and how it can be in the future.
- I got to meet a few new people, I learned a lot about City Park land from the land acknowledgment, I am glad I got to take part in making a new acknowledgement.
- We got to form a new land acknowledgement. I got to see previous ideas come to life and discuss them more.
- We were able to see the ideas of everyone, helped improve the land acknowledgement
- Met new people, gained a new perspective, a new inspiration for ideas.

Do you have any additional concerns, questions, and/or comments?

- You did great getting more people involved
- Thank you for including Youth Voices!
- My primary concern whether or not IYC members will be informed of the final project plans for the City Park.
- Field? Well we need stuff for the fields. Playing too much? Water. Need Shade? Trees. More Nature if you make more stuff then more nature. Teen Building? I had an idea of a teen building where each floor or section was something different. Maybe not in city park but it's still a good idea to take in.
- I enjoyed this meeting and look forward to attending future community meetings.
- "Historical and environmental significance," "Acolapissa, Pointe-au-chien, and other unknown indigenous nations..."
- We are committing to conserve the cultural roots and honoring this land's history

Do you have suggestions for improvements

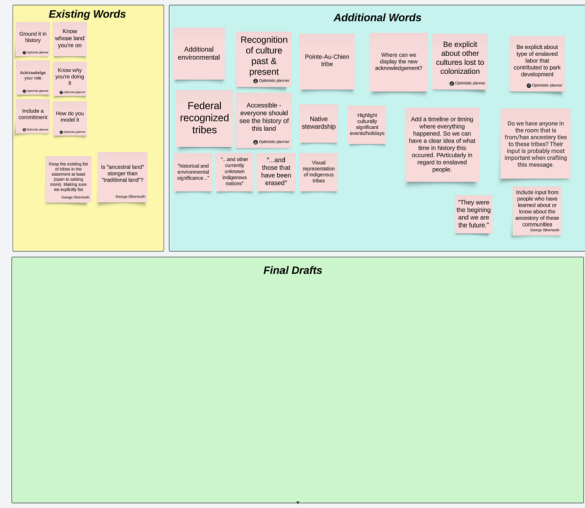
- No improvements but you could have a team go to a few schools and talk with elementary to middle school aged kids who also have great ideas
- No, this was my favorite meeting yet.
- I would simply like to advocate for the revitalization of the practice track, and the installation of markers to the indigenous people of the land.
- All the improvements we went over had been what I had in mind, like resting spots, restrooms, etc..
- In the future, we could have representatives speak at schools to encourage participation.
- Could you still send out emails for the public meetings? Or add me to the emails
- Do bit by bit and tackle the largest/most interesting challenges

Appendix: Land & Labor Acknowledgment Activity

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional land of many indigenous tribes and cultures such as... And those that have been erased. This lands cultivation, financial growth, and ongoing cultural and environmental significance were made possible by the forced labor of enslaved African peoples. We vow to protect the environmental integrity of this land because we know the nature of human impact on climate. We are committing to preserving the cultural roots of City Park and honoring this lands history through continued engagement, stewardship, and cultural sensitivity...

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional land of... Tchoupitoulas, Acapulissa, Pointe-au-Chien, and other ^{currently} unknown indigenous nations... and that this land's cultivation, financial growth, and ongoing cultural significance ~~were~~ ^{was} made possible by the forced labor of the enslaved people of the area. We commit to honoring this land's history through continued engagement, stewardship, and cultural sensitivity as we plan for the City Park's future.

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional land of the Atakapa-Ishak, Caddo, Chitimacha, Choctaw, Houma, Natchez, Tunica, Biloxi, Bayougoula, Washa, Chawasha, Tchoupitoulas, and Acapulissa Nations, and that this land's cultivation, financial growth, and ongoing cultural significance were made possible by the forced labor of enslaved people. We commit to honoring this land's history through continued engagement, stewardship, and cultural sensitivity as we plan for the City Park's future.



CHANGE "ACKNOWLEDGE" & "HONOR" TO "GIVE POWER" & "TRANSFER STAKEHOLDERSHIP"

"ACKNOWLEDGEMENT" REEKS OF WHITE SMILT. NEED MORE ACTION. CITY PARK NEEDS TO PUT ACTION TO WORDS.

COMMITMENT TO RECONCILIATION. REPAIR & CONCRETE WORK & LEARNING. NOT JUST EMPTY PROMISES.

REMEDY: OFTEN FALLS SHORT. COMMITMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES NEED TO BE REAL.
















QUESTION: HOW WILL THE LAND & LABOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BE DISPLAYED? STATUE & MURAL IS IMPACTFUL. COMMISSIONED BY INDIGENOUS & BLACK ARTISTS

CONSULT & GIVE STAKEHOLDER SHIP IN INDIGENOUS PRACTICE TO PRACTICE LAND STEWARDSHIP.

Appendix: Activity Sheets

Revive (what was lost)	Improve (what we have)	Add (what is missing)
 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]
 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]
 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]
 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]
 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]

Revive (what was lost)	Improve (what we have)	Add (what is missing)
 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]
 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]
 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]
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 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]

Restore (what was lost)	Improve (what we have)	Add (what is missing)
 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]
 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]
 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]
 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]
 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]	 Notes: [Handwritten notes]

Revive (what was lost)	Improve (what we have)	Add (what is missing)
Between the park and the museum. Near the botanical gardens	Plant: [Handwritten notes] Certain animals. Birds. Animal accessibility	Identify [Handwritten notes] to cater to different students
Drone Flying Areas	Between playground, Putt Putt Add on to biking area	48 Indoor Skate Rink + 23 Birding Habitat
		48 Indoor Skate Rink + 82 Water Park
		Food Forest + Indigenous Markers
		67 Ice Skating Rink
		60 Drive In Movie + 62 Skate Park/Paths
		Rock Climbing Wall