

\$40 million New Orleans public safety plan calls for new cameras, pedestrian Bourbon Street

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New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu and Gov. John Bel Edwards on Monday (Jan. 23) unveiled a \$40 million citywide public-safety plan that will install security cameras in 20 crime hotspots, making much of Bourbon Street permanently pedestrian-only and requiring all city bars to close their doors at 3 a.m.

Bars won't have to shut down their business at that time, officials said, but close their doors in an effort to shift crowds from the streets to indoors.

Surrounded by other city, state and federal officials, Landrieu also said the plan includes 300 new police cars, a mobile booking unit and remote sensing technology to help detect illegal weapons. New license-plate readers at 100-plus intersections and brighter lighting in the French Quarter are part of the effort, as is more money for NOPD overtime hours and new civilian positions, officials said.

The announcement comes as officials have been working on a plan for weeks, following months of violence that left New Orleans with a rise in murders in 2016 -- including a Nov. 27 mass shooting on Bourbon Street that left a man dead and nine other people wounded.

The costs of the plan are being shared, officials said, with \$16 million provided "from various city sources" and \$23 million funded by the state-owned Ernest N. Morial Convention Center. The city did not detail a breakdown of the money sources for its \$16 million.

During Monday's news conference, officials emphasized that the new public safety plan focuses on the entire city and not just tourism-driven areas.

"It's not just a Convention Center or French Quarter plan," Edwards said, stressing that New Orleans residents need to feel comfortable and safe.

French Quarter to get key elements of plan

Though the plan is not focused on the French Quarter only, some of its key components are specific to the historic neighborhood, such as the call to permanently "pedestrianize" seven blocks of Bourbon Street -- from the 200 to the 800 blocks.

That could take about four to six months to accomplish, Landrieu said, as officials must consider business delivery schedules and other traffic concerns in those blocks. The 100 block of Bourbon will remain open to vehicular traffic until a set time each night, when vehicles will no longer be allowed in that block either, Landrieu said.

Officials also stressed that the requirement for bars to close their doors at 3 a.m. is not a curfew. Bars will still be allowed to remain open for business and patrons can still walk the streets after 3 a.m., Landrieu said. The shut doors are intended to dissuade crowds from staying in the streets. The city's original draft plan called for additional lighting, security cameras, street and sidewalk

repairs, and the closure of Bourbon Street to vehicular traffic for additional hours, according to people involved in the process who discussed details of the proposal.

The estimated cost of that plan was \$30 million.

The process to craft a comprehensive security plan started after a [Thanksgiving weekend shooting](#) on Bourbon Street that left one person dead and nine others wounded.

The mayor convened a series of meetings with French Quarter residents, businesses and representatives of the tourism industry to discuss how to make Bourbon Street safer.

One suggested security measure made in the immediate aftermath of the Thanksgiving weekend shooting was the installation of metal detectors along Bourbon Street.

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