COSCDA 2026 PROGRAM MANAGERS TRAINING CONFERENCE

Deploying AI in Managing CDBG Programs

From fear to a fearless digital workforce

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THE HONEST STARTING POINT

AI is powerful, and it can be intimidating

Both halves of that sentence are true. The useful question is not whether the technology is unsettling. It is whether we can put it to work under the same oversight we already apply to every federal dollar we touch.

The fear is not irrational. It is just early.

Every tool we now treat as ordinary arrived the same way: as something that was going to ruin the work. The pattern is reliable enough to plan around, which is what the next slide is about.

What this session covers

- Real uses in CDBG and disaster recovery
- State agency and private sector experience
- Governance: transparency, data quality, privacy, human oversight

What you leave with

- Concrete examples you can copy
- Efficiency and compliance gains
- Faster, data-informed recovery outcomes

Louisiana has $1.15B disbursed across 177 multi-family projects, five active CDBG-DR grant groups, and a HUD monitoring review every year. That volume is the reason to try.

THE PATTERN

Every essential utility began as a disruptive threat

Calculator

"Students will forget how to think."



Became standard issue in every classroom.

→

Electricity

"It will burn our houses down."



Became invisible infrastructure.

→

The Internet

"It's a passing fad."



Became our global economy.

→

GPS

"Nobody will be able to read a map."



Nobody can read a map. We went anyway.

→

Smartphones

"A toy for the wealthy."



Became our primary connection to the world.

→

AI

"But this one is different."



The next invisible, essential utility.

The pattern is always: Fear → Adoption → Forgetting

None of these were adopted because the fear was disproven. The calculator did not make students stop thinking, and GPS really did cost us the paper map — we went anyway, because the work got easier and the benefit outweighed what we gave up.

THE TOOLBOX

Six tools, and what each one is actually for

You do not need all six. You need to know which one to reach for, and how to hand work from one to the next.

Claude
Writing and long analysis

Best for drafting that has to sound like you wrote it, and for reasoning over long documents. Strong at holding a whole policy manual in view at once.

Gemini Notebook
Research and teaching from YOUR sources

Point it at a defined set of documents and it will not wander outside them. Turns one source into a briefing, an audio overview, an infographic, or flashcards.

Gemini
Everyday drafting, images, and Google files

The generalist. Fastest path when the work already lives in Docs, Sheets, or Drive, and useful for quick visual drafts.

Justinian
FedRAMP Ready

Legal, regulatory, and government data

Purpose-built on the corpus: statutes, regulations, case law, fiscal and permit data, with citations to the actual section. This deck's demos run here.

ChatGPT
General-purpose workhorse

The broadest ecosystem and the most third-party integrations. Paid tiers lift the message limits that throttle free accounts.

Grok
Right-now information and social signal

Wired into the live social feed, so it is the fastest read on what is being said publicly in the last few hours. Verify anything you would print.

HOW TO STACK THEM

1. **Gather** — Gemini Notebook holds the source set
2. → **Verify** — Justinian confirms the law and the numbers
3. → **Draft** — Claude writes it in your voice
4. → **Check** — Grok scans what is being said right now

Model names change every few months, so this slide names platforms instead. One caution worth stating out loud: an AI asked which model it is running will answer confidently and is often wrong. Judge the tool by what it produces against a source you can check, not by what it says about itself.

TERMINOLOGY

Three buckets, and who makes what

Vendors use different jargon for the same handful of things. Learn the structure once and the marketing becomes readable.

WHAT IT IS	**MODEL** The reasoning engine. It changes underneath you.	**ASSISTANT** The conversational layer you type into.	**AGENT** A scoped worker that acts toward a goal and reports back.	
WHAT YOU GIVE IT	**PROMPT** The request, and every constraint you state in it.	**TOOL** A capability it can use: search, compute, write a file.	**SKILL** A repeatable procedure, taught once and reused.	**PROJECT / NOTEBOOK** Persistent context: the documents it works from.	**GROUNDING** It answers only from the sources you supply.
WHAT YOU GET	**ARTIFACT** A document, map, workbook or working app you can hand to someone.			

WHO MAKES WHAT, AND WHAT SITS INSIDE WHAT

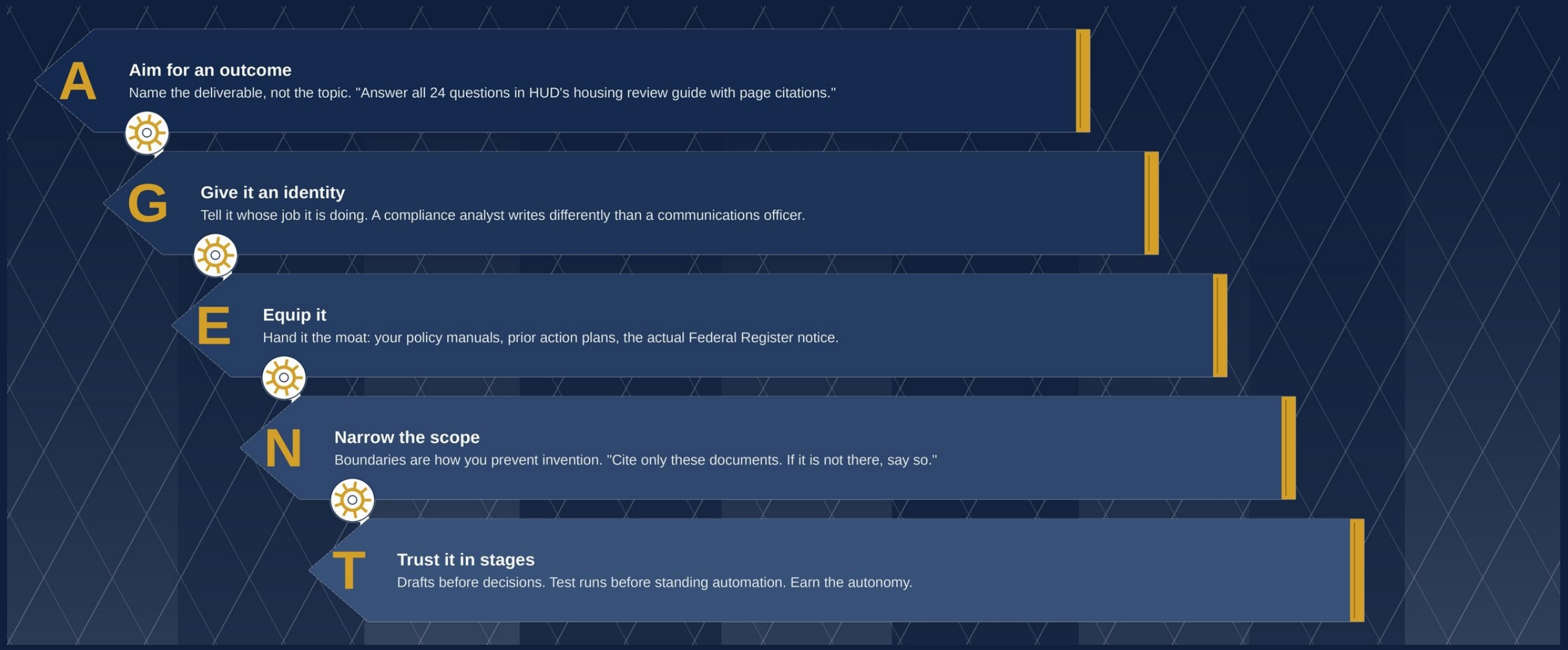
COMPANY	Anthropic	OpenAI	Google	Vulcan Technologies
PLATFORM	Claude	ChatGPT	Gemini · Gemini Notebook	Justinian
MODELS	Opus · Sonnet · Haiku	GPT series	Gemini models	Proprietary orchestration *(not user-selectable)*
WORKSPACE	Projects	Projects	Notebooks	Anvils
OUTPUTS	Artifacts · Skills	Canvas · GPTs	Studio outputs · Gems	Apps · Flows · Skills

> The company is not the platform, and the platform is not the model. **Learn the five levels once and every vendor's marketing becomes readable.**

Justinian is the deliberate exception: you never pick its engine, because the platform picks the right one for the task.

A.G.E.N.T.

How to build a digital teammate



SECTION 01

Seven things you already do, done differently

HUD monitoring · training and action plans · return on investment · application software · reporting · legislative tracking · media sweep



ROADMAP

Seven things you already do, done differently

01	**HUD Monitoring**	Answer a federal monitoring guide before the reviewer asks.	*HUD Francine crosswalk*
02	**Training + Action Plan**	Read the statute, not the summary chart.	*ROAD to Housing Act*
03	**Return on Investment**	Show a funder what a billion dollars actually built.	*CDBG-DR Storybook*
04	**Application Software**	Replace an aging workflow platform without a procurement.	*DRX Check Intake*
05	**Reporting**	Rebuild a licensed dashboard as a file that opens anywhere.	*Power BI replication*
06	**Legislative Tracker**	Track a whole session and know what moved overnight.	*LA 2026 Session*
07	**Media Sweep**	One morning scan, delivered as a brief and an audio overview.	*Daily LOCD sweep*

SCAN TO VOTE

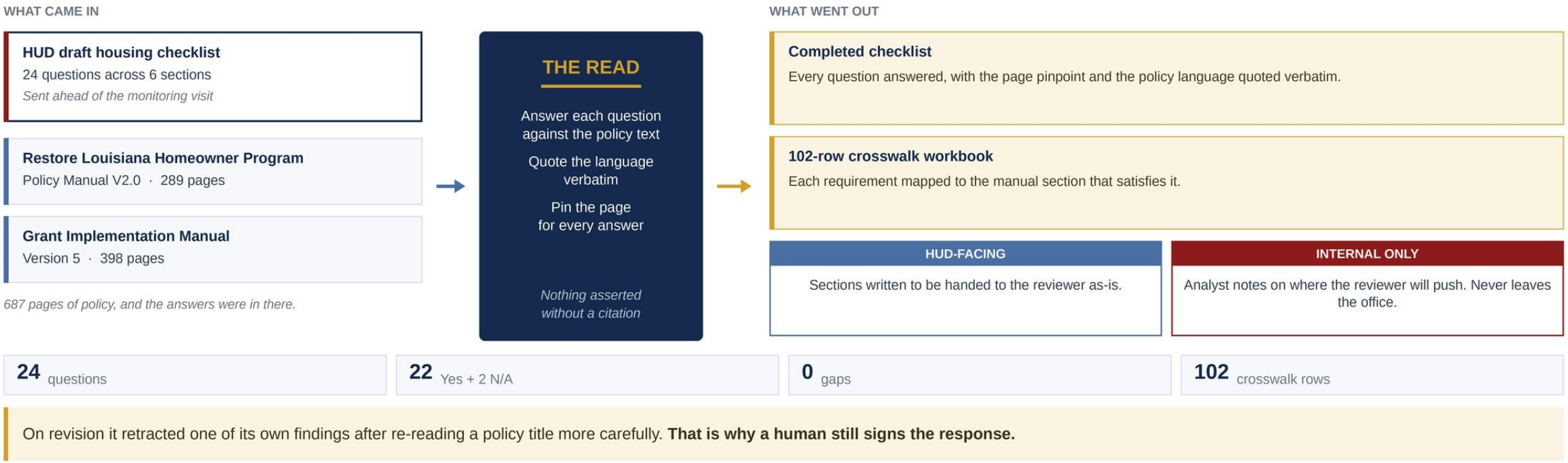
la.vulcan.app/hosted/coscda-live-poll

These are not pilots. Each one produced a document, a dollar figure, or a working tool that went to HUD, to leadership, or to staff.

RESTORE POLICY AGAINST A FEDERAL CHECKLIST

Answer the monitoring guide before the reviewer asks

HUD sent the housing checklist ahead of the visit. The answers were already in our own policy manuals.



Two axes, not one. Compliance is binary and boring: 22 Yes, 2 N/A, 0 gaps. Evidence strength is the useful axis, because it tells you which answers are thin and where to put prep time before the reviewer arrives.

ANY DOCUMENT INTO A TRAINING SUITE

Policy to production, in an afternoon

One upload, five formats, and every claim traceable to the section it came from.

THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

STEP 1



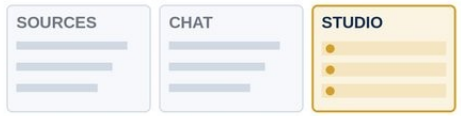
13
chapters
already published in full on the OCD website

Upload any source document
A policy manual, an HR handbook, a procedure, a plan. Mine was the LOCD Grant Implementation Manual.

STEP 2

Gemini Notebook

Grounded in your source
The notebook answers only from the document you gave it, and every artifact cites back to the section it came from.



Studio is the panel on the right.

WHAT STUDIO PRODUCES FROM IT

TRAINING DECKS	INFOGRAPHICS	PODCASTS	VIDEO OVERVIEWS	FLASHCARDS
slides with speaker notes	one-page visual summary	two-host audio overview	narrated walkthrough	self-test, progress saved

All five from the same notebook. Studio no longer limits you to one artifact of each type, so a chapter can have a deck, a podcast and a quiz.

WHY IT IS A TIME SAVER — THE OLD WAY VERSUS STUDIO

METRIC	TRADITIONAL WORKFLOW	WITH GEMINI NOTEBOOK STUDIO
TIME TO FIRST ARTIFACT	Weeks, and a contract	An afternoon
COST	Contractor or analyst time	No new license, no procurement
SOURCE FIDELITY	Manual cross-referencing	Cites back to the manual

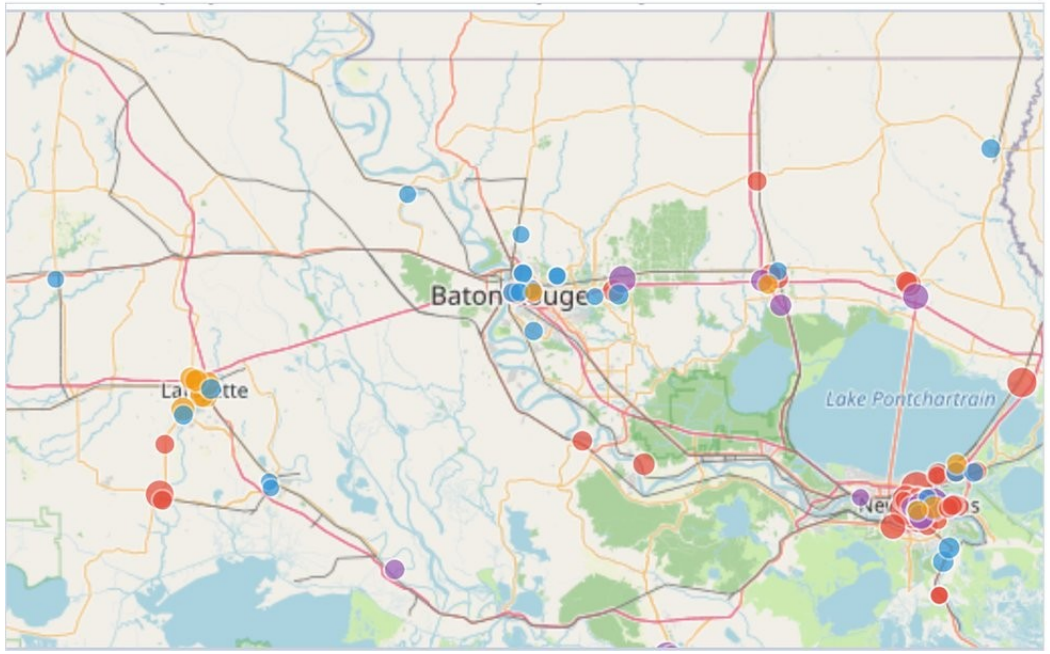
This is the row with the lowest barrier to entry: no procurement, no data build, no analyst time. A document you already publish becomes a deck, an infographic, a podcast, a narrated video and a flashcard set.

LOCD CDBG-DR STORYBOOK

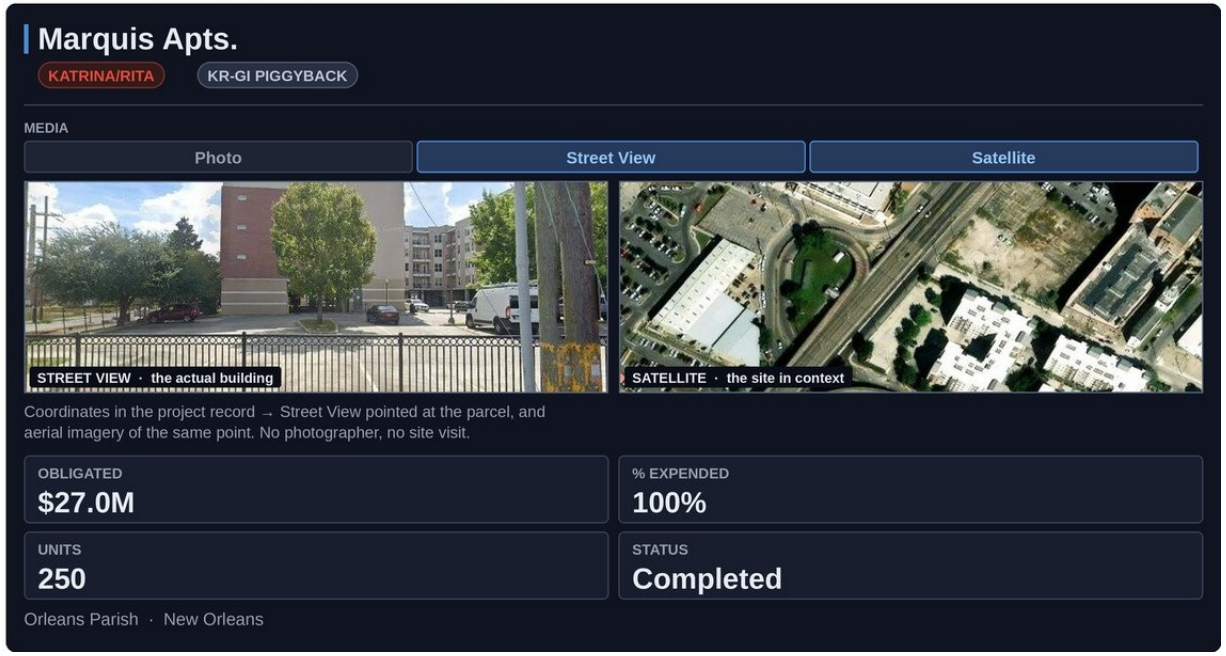
Show a funder what a billion dollars actually built

Four disasters, five programs, seven workbooks — and every project carries its own photographic evidence.

THE STORYBOOK — 177 PROJECTS, ONE FILE THAT OPENS BY DOUBLE-CLICK



CLICK A PROJECT — THE CARD BUILDS ITS OWN EVIDENCE



177	28	4	14,132	$1.15B
projects	parishes	disaster events	housing units	disbursed

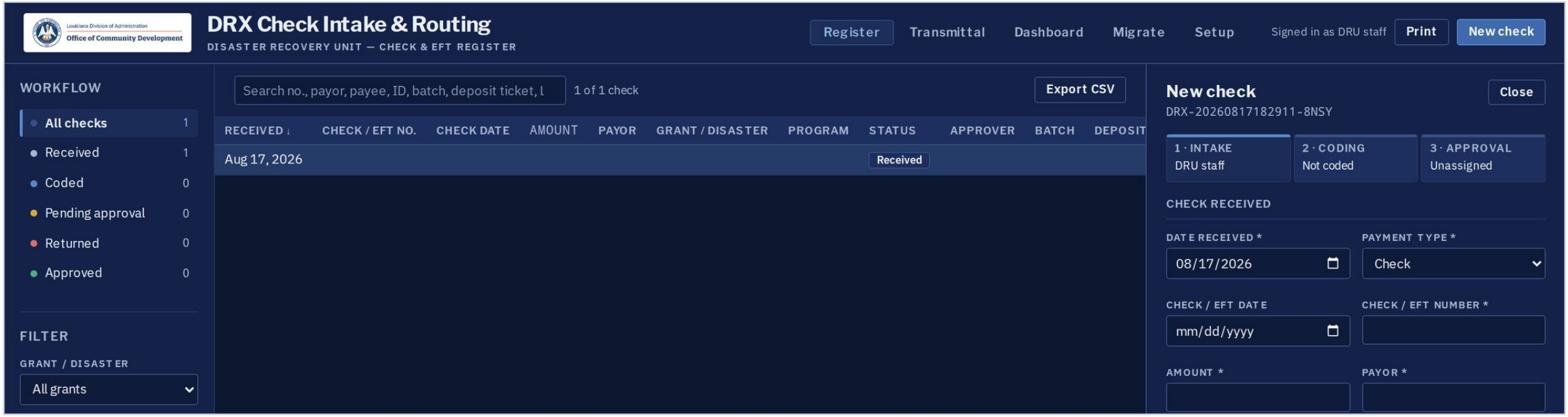
Street View and the aerial come from coordinates already in the project record — no site visit, no photographer, no GIS analyst.

DRX CHECK INTAKE & ROUTING

The project that replaced a workflow platform

Receive, code, approve — with a validating importer and a separate acceptance-test lane.

THE INTAKE — receive, code, approve, using the state's own coding fields

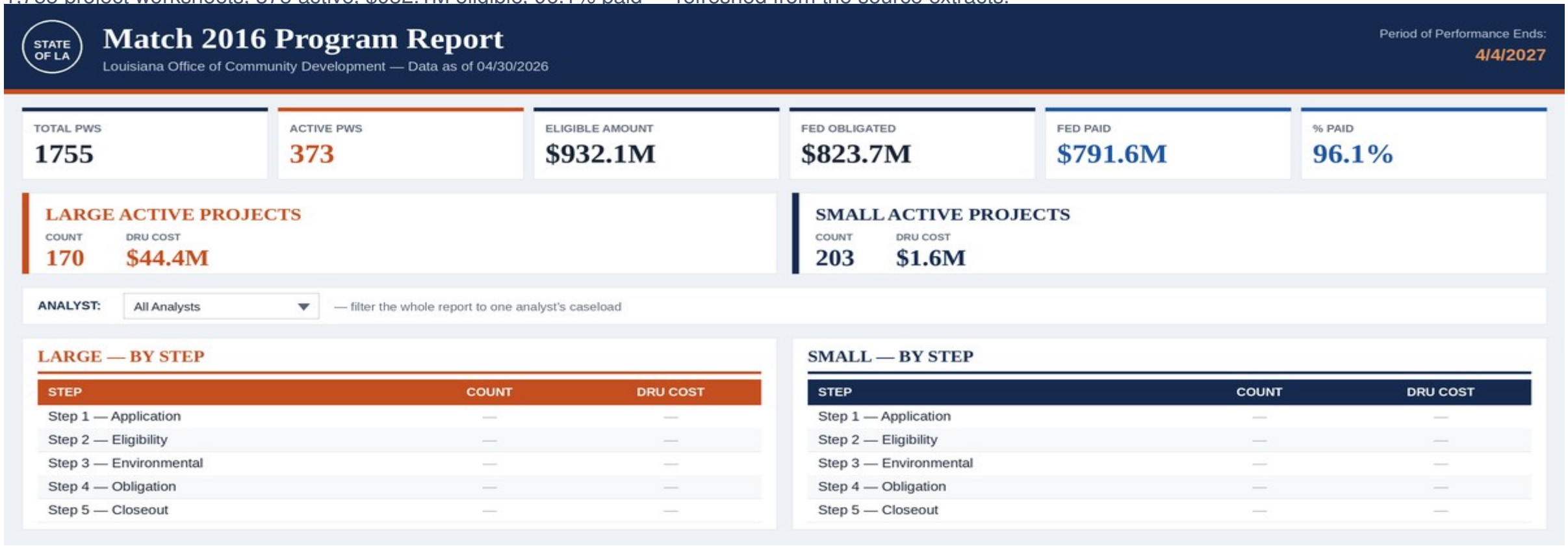


No new procurement, no new licenses, no development contract. The three stages across the top are the actual approval chain, and the coding fields are the state's own: grant and disaster, WBS and program type, cost center, funds, G/L account. That is the difference between a demo and a system someone can be held accountable to.

POWER BI REPLICATION

The same report, without the license

1,755 project worksheets, 373 active, $932.1M eligible, 96.1% paid — refreshed from the source extracts.

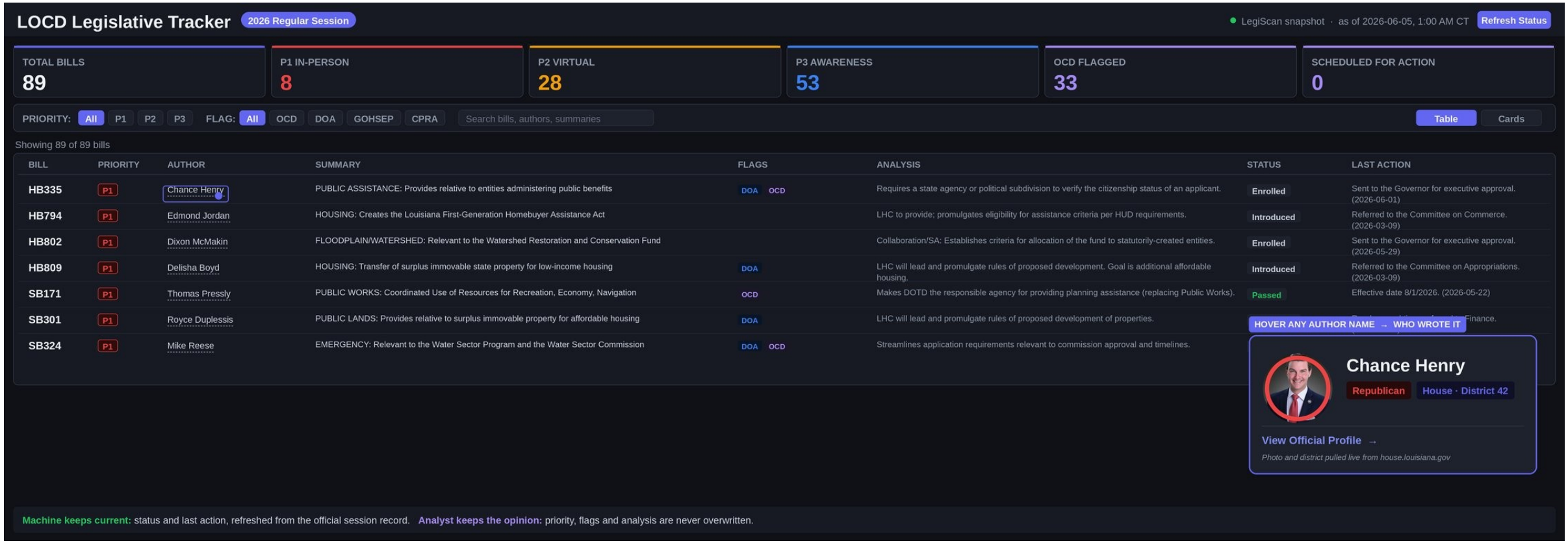


The point is not that it looks like Power BI. The point is who can open it: anyone with a browser, including partners outside the state network and staff who were never issued a license. Same numbers, no seat to buy, no gateway to configure.

LOUISIANA 2026 REGULAR SESSION

Know what moved overnight before the 8 a.m. call

89 bills, priority-tiered and agency-flagged — and every author is one hover from a face and a district.



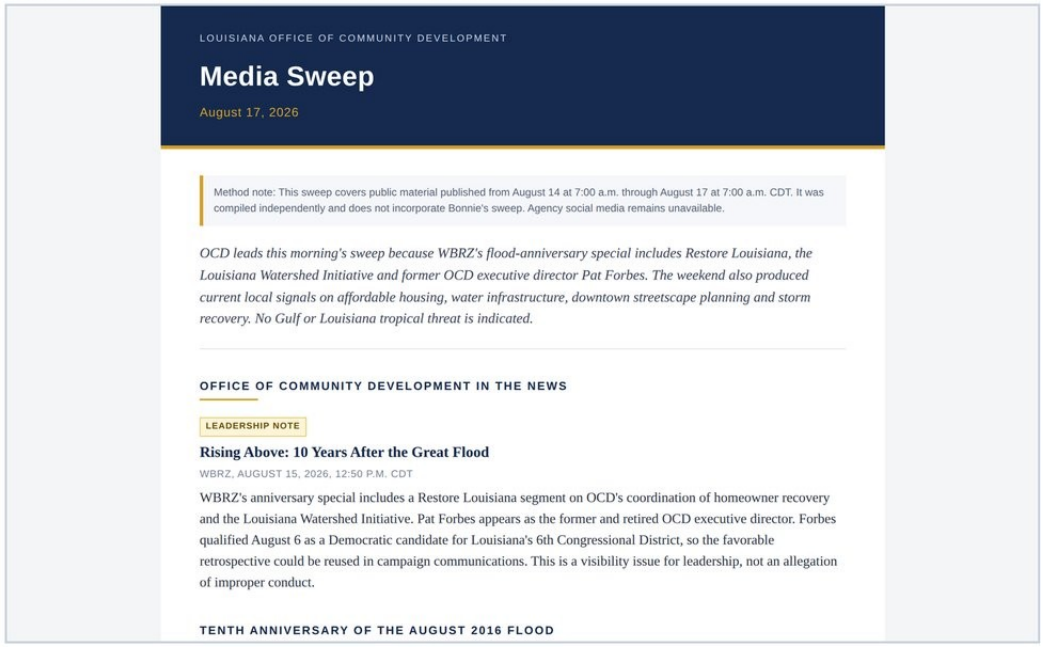
Hovering an author pulls the legislator card: official photo, party, chamber and district, straight from the House and Senate sites.

THE DAILY MEDIA SWEEP

One morning scan, three ways to receive it

What is being said about our programs, gathered before the workday starts.

THE DOCUMENT — produced every morning



LOUISIANA OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Media Sweep

August 17, 2026

Method note: This sweep covers public material published from August 14 at 7:00 a.m. through August 17 at 7:00 a.m. CDT. It was compiled independently and does not incorporate Bonnie's sweep. Agency social media remains unavailable.

OCD leads this morning's sweep because WBRZ's flood-anniversary special includes Restore Louisiana, the Louisiana Watershed Initiative and former OCD executive director Pat Forbes. The weekend also produced current local signals on affordable housing, water infrastructure, downtown streetscape planning and storm recovery. No Gulf or Louisiana tropical threat is indicated.

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE NEWS

LEADERSHIP NOTE

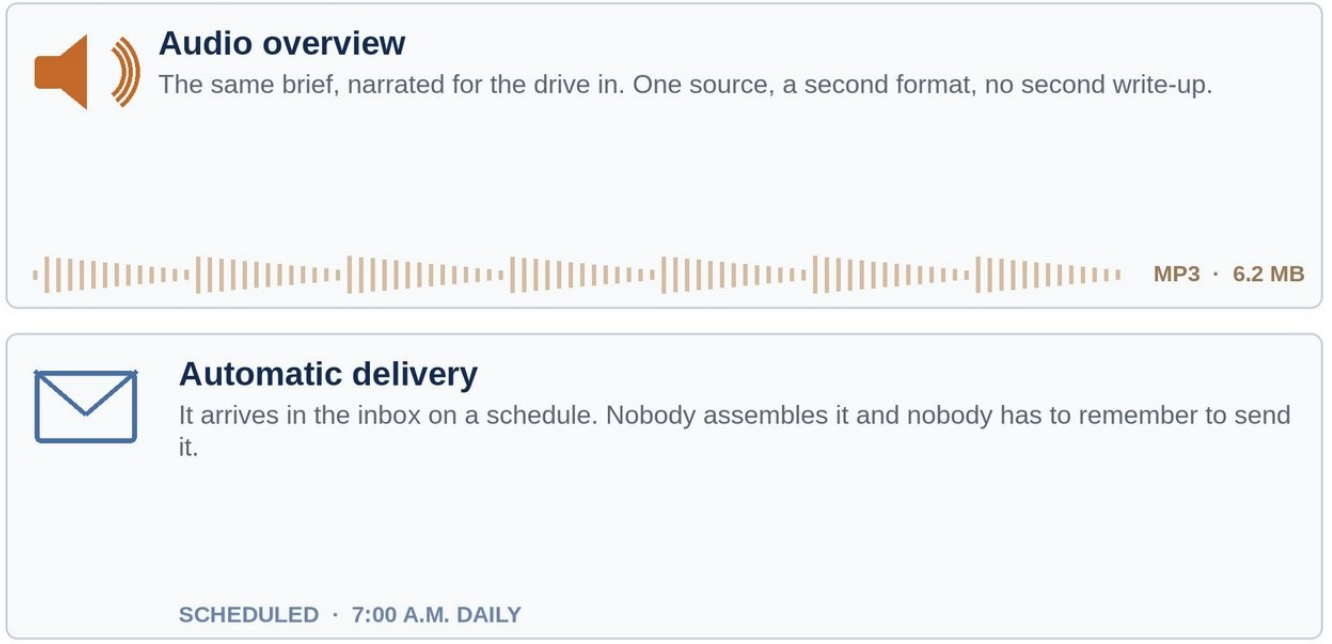
Rising Above: 10 Years After the Great Flood

WBRZ, AUGUST 15, 2026, 12:50 P.M. CDT

WBRZ's anniversary special includes a Restore Louisiana segment on OCD's coordination of homeowner recovery and the Louisiana Watershed Initiative. Pat Forbes appears as the former and retired OCD executive director. Forbes qualified August 6 as a Democratic candidate for Louisiana's 6th Congressional District, so the favorable retrospective could be reused in campaign communications. This is a visibility issue for leadership, not an allegation of improper conduct.

TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AUGUST 2016 FLOOD

THE STEP UP — same content, two more channels



Audio overview

The same brief, narrated for the drive in. One source, a second format, no second write-up.

MP3 · 6.2 MB

Automatic delivery

It arrives in the inbox on a schedule. Nobody assembles it and nobody has to remember to send it.

SCHEDULED · 7:00 A.M. DAILY

The document is the product today. The audio overview and the scheduled send are where it goes next: the same gathered material, re-cut for someone who is driving and for an inbox that should not have to ask. One collection effort, three delivery formats.

SECTION 02

Governance is not optional

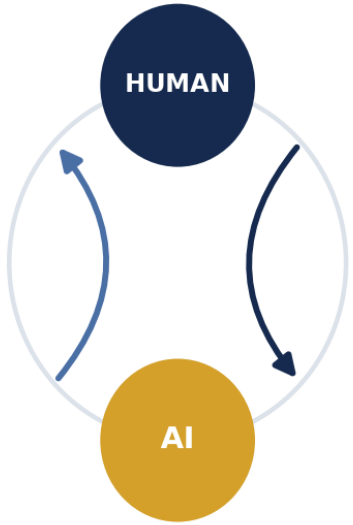
Transparency · data quality · privacy · human oversight

These are not add-ons for federally funded recovery programs. They are the conditions under which any of this is usable at all.



THE FOUR COMMITMENTS

Governance is not optional when the funds are federal



Drafts, evidence, citations

Scope, directives, approvals

Human-on-the-loop

directing and auditing, not typing

Transparency

Every figure traces to a named source document and page.

Data quality

Day-over-day reconciliation catches what a single run hides.

Privacy

Direct identifiers stripped before analysis, not after.

Human oversight

A person owns the number that goes to HUD. Always.

A parser bug flipped 4,090 records

One bad rule moved 4,090 of 5,603 households from "no insurance" to "insured." Nothing looked wrong on screen. Day-over-day reconciliation caught it.

A briefing went out stale

A legislative database lagged floor activity by more than a week. The standing rule now requires reconciling against live official sources on every run.

TAKEAWAYS

Where to start on Monday

1. **Pick one bottleneck**
   Something you already do monthly that eats a week. Not your hardest problem, your most repetitive one.

2. **Declare the outcome**
   Write the sentence you want true when it is done. Then ask the model what it needs from you.

3. **Keep the receipts**
   Every number traces to a source. Reconcile against yesterday. A person signs the final figure.

4. **Ship it small**
   A file that opens by double-click beats a portal you are still procuring.

AI is not about cutting corners. It is about building capacity.

We did not use this to do the same work with fewer people. We used it to do work we could not previously do at all.

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Louisiana Office of Community Development

Built with Justinian
vulcan.ai/justinian