

CHAPTER 4

Vision and goals



Streetcar service could play an important role in revitalizing the district's Main Street, St. Claude Avenue.

The extent and degree of damage inflicted by the storm varied across District 7. Yet the shared reality is that the steps necessary to recover cannot be meaningfully separated from steps necessary to address longstanding opportunities and challenges facing the district as a whole and each of its neighborhoods. In many ways, the storm influenced, clarified, and made more urgent the need to reaffirm a vision for the district and its neighborhoods, as well as to translate this vision into an effective planning framework supported by implementation strategies.

Vision

District 7 residents embrace a shared vision of a series of neighborhoods that celebrate much of what is most revered about New Orleans. Together these neighborhoods will continue to welcome residents of every income, race, age, ethnic background, culture, and other attributes. This eclectic population will come together more than ever along shared, vibrant main streets such as St. Claude Avenue, Franklin Avenue, and Louisa Street as well as in shared civic places such as new and invigorated schools, health centers, and parks. Neighborhoods such as Marigny, Bywater, St. Roch and St. Claude will embody New Orleans's rich architectural heritage, with block after block of historic homes, unique buildings like the St. Roch Market and Holy Angels Convent. Desire and Florida date from a more recent era, but nevertheless embody a traditional neighborhood character that residents value highly and seek to restore. As the district rebuilds its main streets and retail life, many residents hope that these commercial corridors can also include galleries, performance spaces, studios, and other facilities that nurture the district's tradition of housing artists, performers, chefs, and others who contribute to New Orleans's creative industries. By tapping into these industries, the district can promote enhanced economic opportunity for all of its residents.

THE VISION FOR BYWATER AND MARIGNY

Before the storm, Bywater and Marigny were diverse, desirable riverfront neighborhoods known for their thriving arts scenes, excellent restaurants, renowned music venues, and eclectic shops. In many areas, historic architecture lined streets rich in New Orleans character.

Residents of Bywater and Marigny value their community’s assets, and compared to other areas of District 7, these neighborhoods came through the hurricane’s devastation with only moderate damage. Yet in the wake of the storms, Marigny and Bywater are experiencing the pressures of desirability more than other neighborhoods in District 7.

People across America, particularly young professionals and empty nesters, are looking in growing numbers to established urban neighborhoods like Bywater and Marigny for the walkable, conveniently-located, retail-rich living environments they seek. The increase in investment seen in Marigny and Bywater over the past several decades will intensify in the decades to come.

“You can go into any neighborhood and find all of New Orleans.”
—JAMES SALLIS, writer

Moving forward, the critical challenge for Bywater-Marigny will be retaining the characteristics that make this community unlike any other—its rich culture, its historic buildings, its energy and ambience—while welcoming new growth and development, ensuring compatibility, and leveraging all the benefits these changes can provide.

Residents hope to preserve the community’s historic character, “artist culture,” and the diversity evident in the physical realm as well as in the social composition of its neighborhoods. They look forward to carefully designed residential,

commercial, and mixed-use in-fill developments that will make their neighborhoods stronger. St. Claude Avenue—seen as a revitalized retail and cultural corridor supported by streetcar service—will serve both the neighborhood and the district as a bustling Main Street. Enhanced riverfront access, parks, pedestrian paths, and bikeways will further improve the quality of life in Bywater and Marigny, while strengthening connections to other neighborhoods.

In addition, like residents of every neighborhood in New Orleans, those who have made their homes in Bywater and Marigny seek a new generation of schools, health centers, parks, community centers, and other civic infrastructure that will strengthen the neighborhoods’ quality of life.

Though city and regional support will be critical to implementing the Bywater-Marigny vision, a deep and diverse core of active and committed residents stands ready to help guide the community’s course toward a stronger future.

Goals

- Create opportunities for economic development that will generate housing, employment, services, and tax revenues.
- Create new and embellish existing routes for pedestrian movement, particularly the riverfront and corridors, parks, and plazas with connections to neighborhood nodes, and transit lines.
- Preserve and enhance the architectural char-

- acter of the historic neighborhoods, requiring new development to be compatible with old.
- Build an integrated transportation system that balances auto use with transit and pedestrian systems.
- Promote land-use diversification with a primary emphasis on creating opportunities for infill residential/mixed use development.



A new linear park along the landside of the floodwall from Piety to the Industrial Canal would support residents’ strong desire for better access to the riverfront.