

Sankofa CDC

Neighborhood Greenways / Walkable Neighborhoods Project

sankofa
Community Development Corporation
Building healthier communities for generations to come



Sankofa CDC Mission

To build
healthier communities
for generations to come.

The Sankofa Way

Sankofa CDC's Catalytic Activities

Building a platform and framework that supports
Resident-Centered Leadership, Environmental Justice, Intergenerational Learning & Evidence-based Planning and Solutions to implement
Resilient and Equitable Systems

Community Advocacy, Leadership, and Engagement

Resilient Infrastructure Systems
(Equitable, healthy, and environmentally just transformative use of land)

Intergenerational Learning

Evidence-based planning and implementation

System Change in collaboration with Government, Civic, and Private Sectors

Building a Healthier Community

Neighborhood development plan that honors the history and legacy of Lower Ninth Ward and implemented with government resources

Environmentally sound land use that mitigates & increases resilience to climate change.

An environment that supports holistically **healthy living**, including emotional, physical, mental, and social health.

Investment of resources to support justice, fairness, and a healthy quality of life to restore and sustain the Lower Ninth Ward area.

Key Impact Metrics

Neighborhood **growth without displacement**

Increase in number of Black-owned or Black co-led **businesses operating in area**

Visibility and development of **commercial corridors and community gathering spaces**

Increase in **restored properties** that support wealth building and Black home ownerships

Improvements in a **healthy and environmentally just** community

Improved **health** status of residents

Increases in **civic engagement** among residents

Strategic Goals

1. Advance the **sustainable redevelopment of key environmental and economic assets** in the Lower 9th Ward to help achieve a shared vision for community vitality.
2. Engage with residents by creating, implementing, and advocating for a **shared framework for community well-being** that honors historical legacies and respects community voice, wisdom, and expertise.
3. Ensure Sankofa CDC has the resources, including the funding, people, networks, and data for **long-term sustainability and impact**.
4. **Support youth and community-centered education with intergenerational learning** and lift up knowledge, wisdom and equitable access to resources through structured program partnerships and collaborative activities.

Ongoing Activities

Florida Avenue: 40-Acre Sankofa Wetland Park Restores Ecological Resources

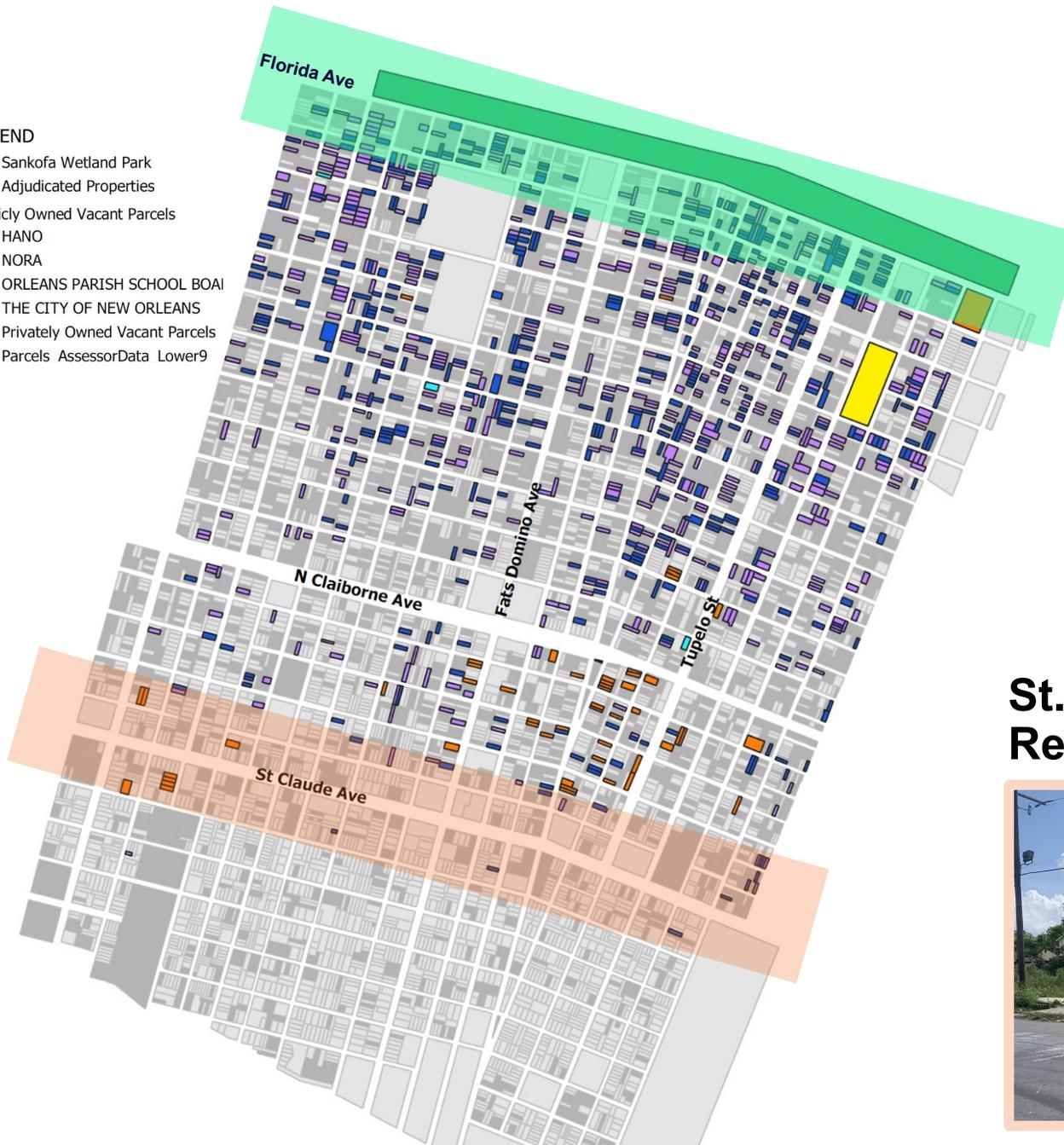


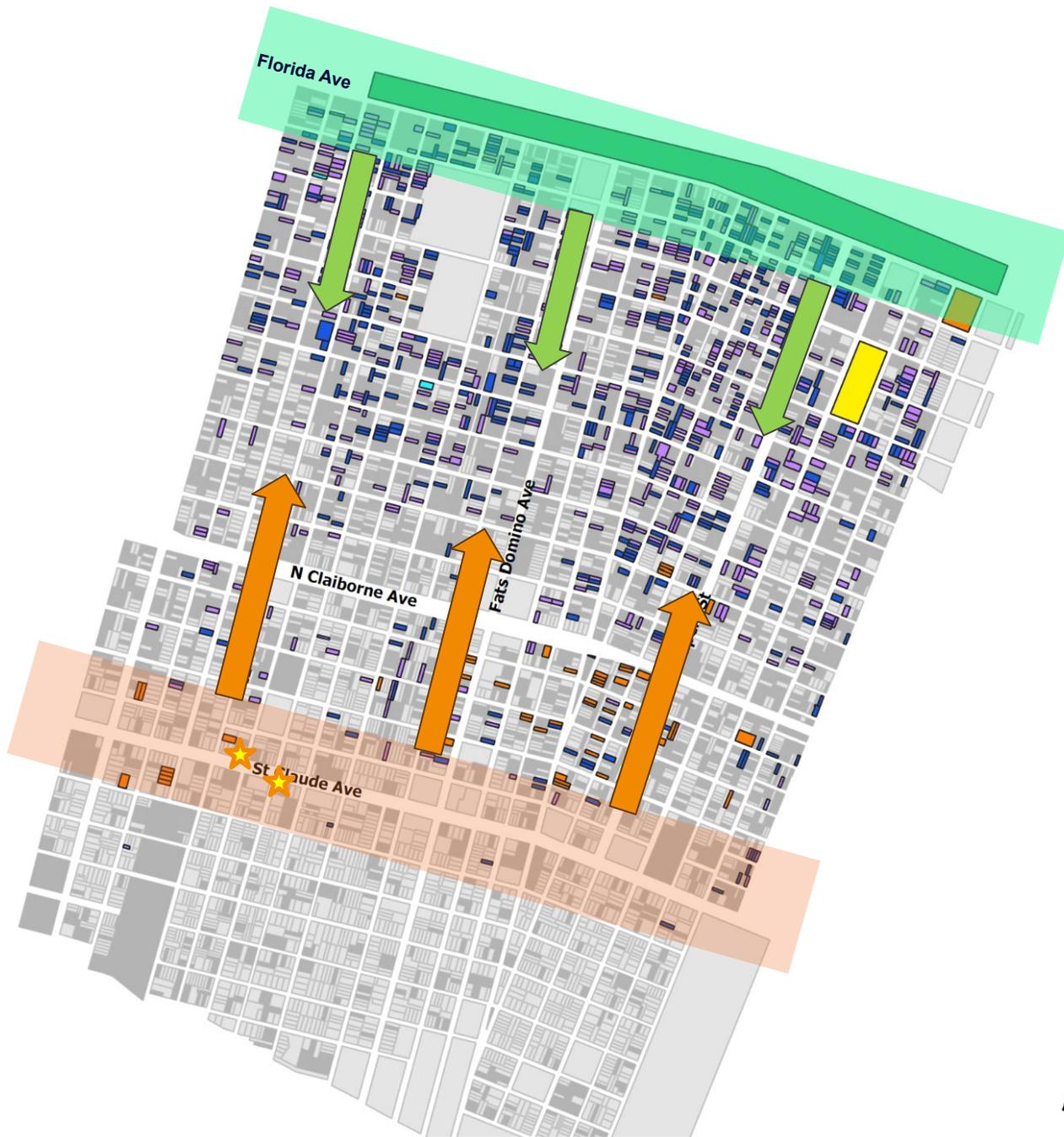
St. Claude Avenue: Main Street Program Restores Local Economies



LEGEND

- Sankofa Wetland Park
- Adjudicated Properties
- Publicly Owned Vacant Parcels
 - HANO
 - NORA
 - ORLEANS PARISH SCHOOL BOAI
 - THE CITY OF NEW ORLEANS
- Privately Owned Vacant Parcels
- Parcels AssessorData Lower9





The Sankofa Way: Holistic Community Development

Neighborhood Greenways development and resilience studies to expand the impact of the Wetland Park's ability to protect the community from climate change and redress environmental justice issues.

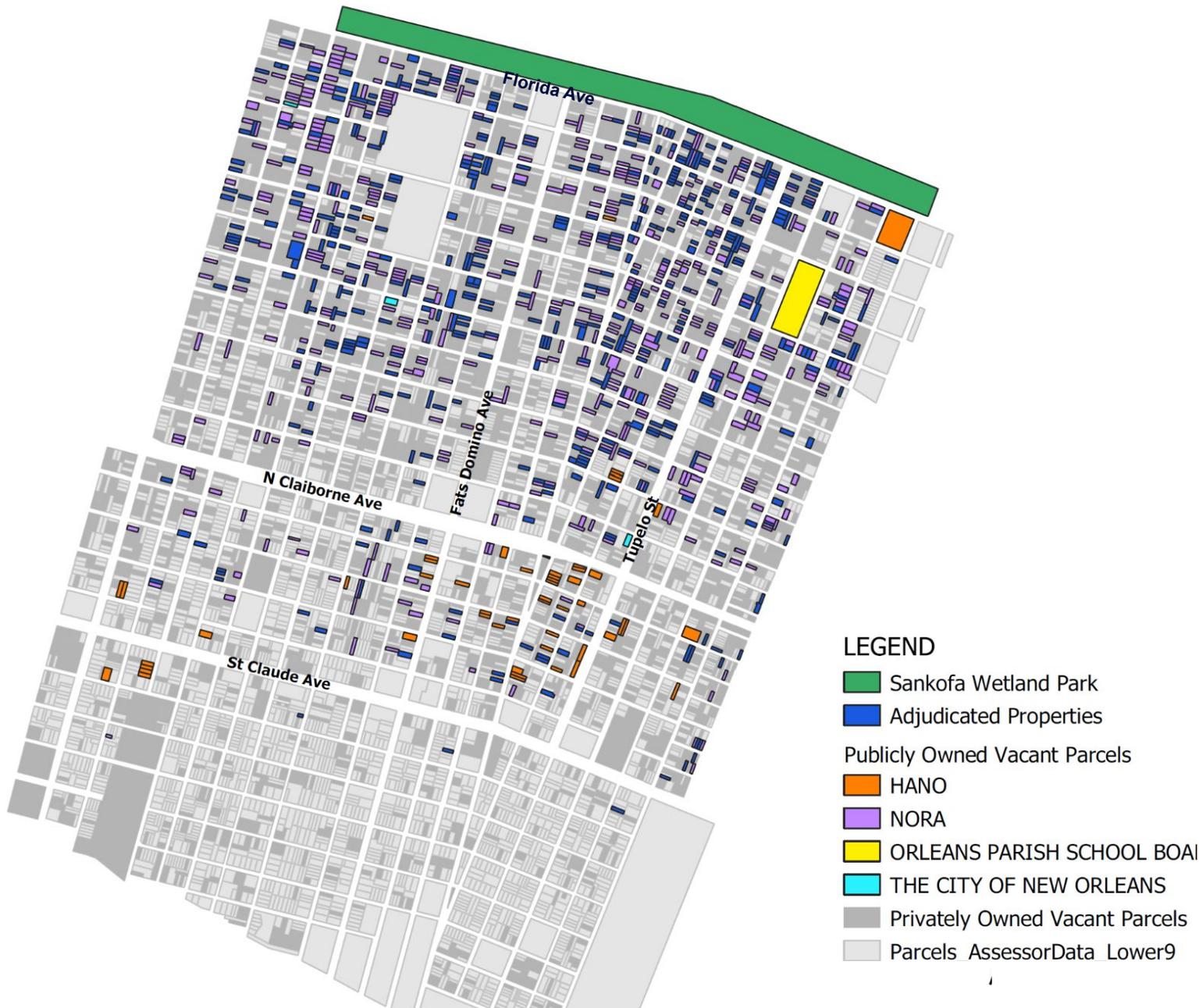
Main Street development acts as an innovation and resilience hub that promotes green technology and green career opportunities to improve resourceful use of blighted land parcels and vacant lots.

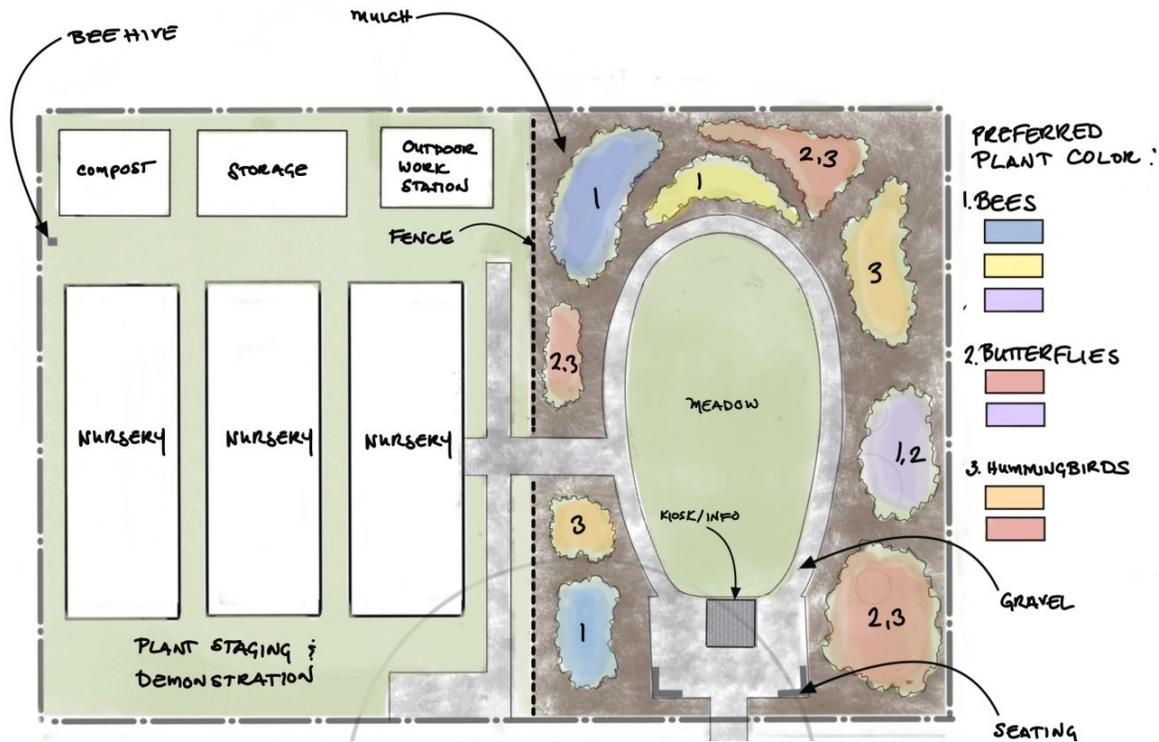
Neighborhood Greenways / Walkable Neighborhood Goals

Vacant Properties in the LNW by Ownership

56% of properties in the Lower Ninth Ward are vacant land.

This includes privately owned properties, as well as properties owned by public entities such as NORA, HANO, OPSB, and the City of New Orleans.





Plan drawing from Sankofa Pollinator Garden Project – Lower Ninth Ward



Rendering from City of Los Angeles – Haynes Street Greenway Project

Planning for Neighborhood Greenways

Sankofa CDC believes that Neighborhood Greenways can be **part of a holistic response to the challenge of vacancy in the LNW**. While some vacant land can be used for Neighborhood Greenways, other parcels of land may be used for housing, economic development, or other neighborhood-serving uses.

Sankofa is beginning a study of which lots to prioritize for Neighborhood Greenways by examining:

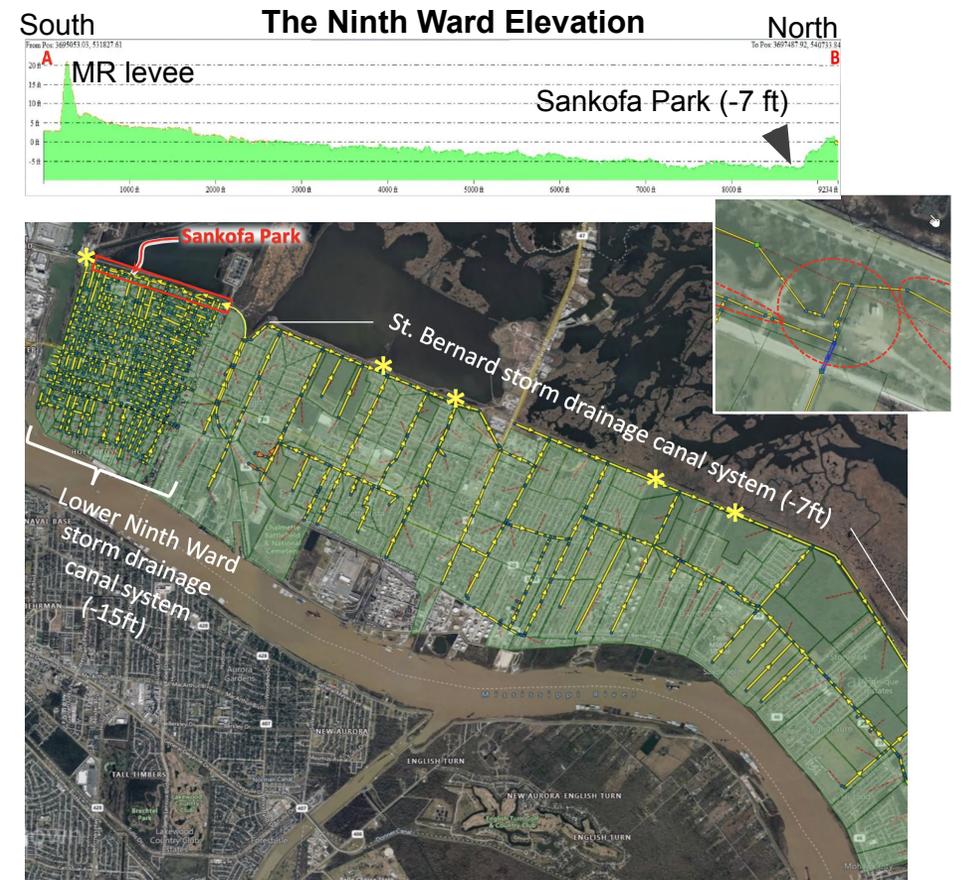
- Areas of vacant land that could effectively help manage **stormwater and land subsidence**
- Adjacent parcels of vacant land that could be assembled into **trails**
- Areas of vacant land that experience frequent dumping and negatively affect **quality of life**
- Vacant land that is **publicly owned** or adjudicated

Benefits: Stormwater and Subsidence

Greenways Can Reduce Neighborhood Subsidence and Better Manage Stormwater.

Sankofa CDC is working on a model with scientific and engineering experts to show how Neighborhood Greenways and the Sankofa Wetland Park can help manage stormwater.

- The Sankofa Wetland Park is located at the lowest elevation in the lower 9th Ward at -7 ft below sea level, and provides much needed stormwater retention
- The park is directly connected to the St. Bernard drainage system kept at -7ft; also connected to 9th Ward drainage kept at -16 ft below sea level
- During storms, water enters from the St. Bernard drainage system and then is slowly released as water is pumped out
- Wetland Park could **manage Lower Ninth Ward stormwater** and **raise levels of the drainage system, slowing subsidence and impacts of climate change**
- Localized modeling efforts are underway with Comite Resources and USACE Silverjackets, but a full neighborhood model is needed as proof of concept



Stormwater and Subsidence Partnerships

Sankofa's existing partnerships and projects include partners and experts who are ideally positioned to model neighborhood-wide impacts of drainage improvements, and implement resulting recommendations once the model is complete.

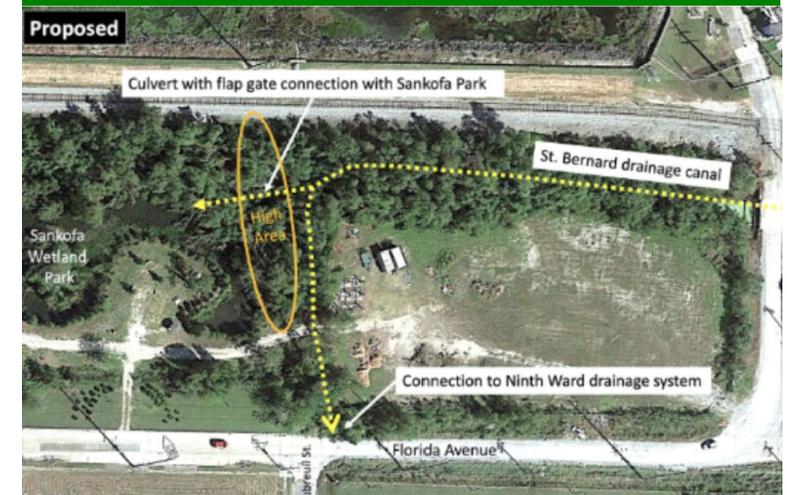
Comite Resources: Sankofa's long-term partnership with scientific experts at Comite Resources for design and ecological monitoring at the Wetland Park ensures environmental quality and will contribute to neighborhood-wide modeling efforts.



Sewerage & Water Board of New Orleans: Sankofa is collaborating with SWBNO to design and install water control structures at the Wetland Park and study the drainage infrastructure systems.



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Silver Jackets Program: Pro-bono technical assistance to develop hydraulic load measurements to ensure stormwater retention capacity and hurricane protection at the Wetland Park.



Benefits: Quality of Life and Environmental Justice

Neighborhood Greenways Can Address Environmental Justice Issues.

Design selected vacant lots to create ecological corridors & walking trails, while reducing visual impacts of neighborhood vacancy remaining after Hurricane Katrina.



Pre-Katrina
Building Footprints

Building assessment from windshield survey conducted by design team June, 2006

Post-Katrina
Building Footprints

Source: Lower Ninth Ward Planning District Rebuilding Plan, 2006

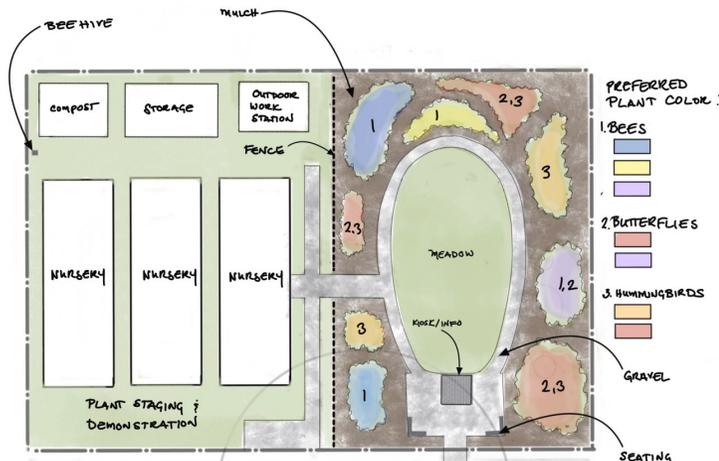
Quality of Life Partnerships

Sankofa's existing partnerships and projects include pro-bono design assistance from the National Park Service – Rivers, Trails, and Conservation program and pilot project support from the Urban Land Institute.

Urban Land Institute: Sankofa has partnered with ULI to develop a neighborhood resilient investment strategy. A follow-up Just, Green, and Ready grant from ULI for implementation is enabling Sankofa to implement a pilot pollinator garden on vacant lots that Sankofa acquired from NORA.

National Park Service - RTCA: Sankofa is working with the National Park Service to develop Phase 2 of the Wetland Park Master Plan, which includes planning for access routes and potential ideas for nearby vacant property.

City of New Orleans: Sankofa is working with the City of New Orleans to examine opportunities to fund improvements to publicly-owned vacant and tax-adjudicated properties.



- Tues 3/26**
Wetland Park Tour
 Time: 10:00 am - 11:30 am
 Location: Sankofa Wetland Park, 6401 Florida Ave
- Tues 3/26**
Community Planning (Evening Option)
 Time: 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
 Location: Sanchez Multi-Service Center, 1616 Fats Domino Ave
 Dinner provided
- Wed 3/27**
Community Planning (Daytime Option)
 Time: 11:30 am - 1:00 pm
 Location: Sanchez Multi-Service Center, 1616 Fats Domino Ave
 Lunch provided



Benefits: Economic Development and Housing

Neighborhood Greenways Can Create the Conditions for Community Development.

Reducing vacancy can help make the LNW a better place to build housing and businesses. Residents and businesses can thrive once blight and dumping are addressed.

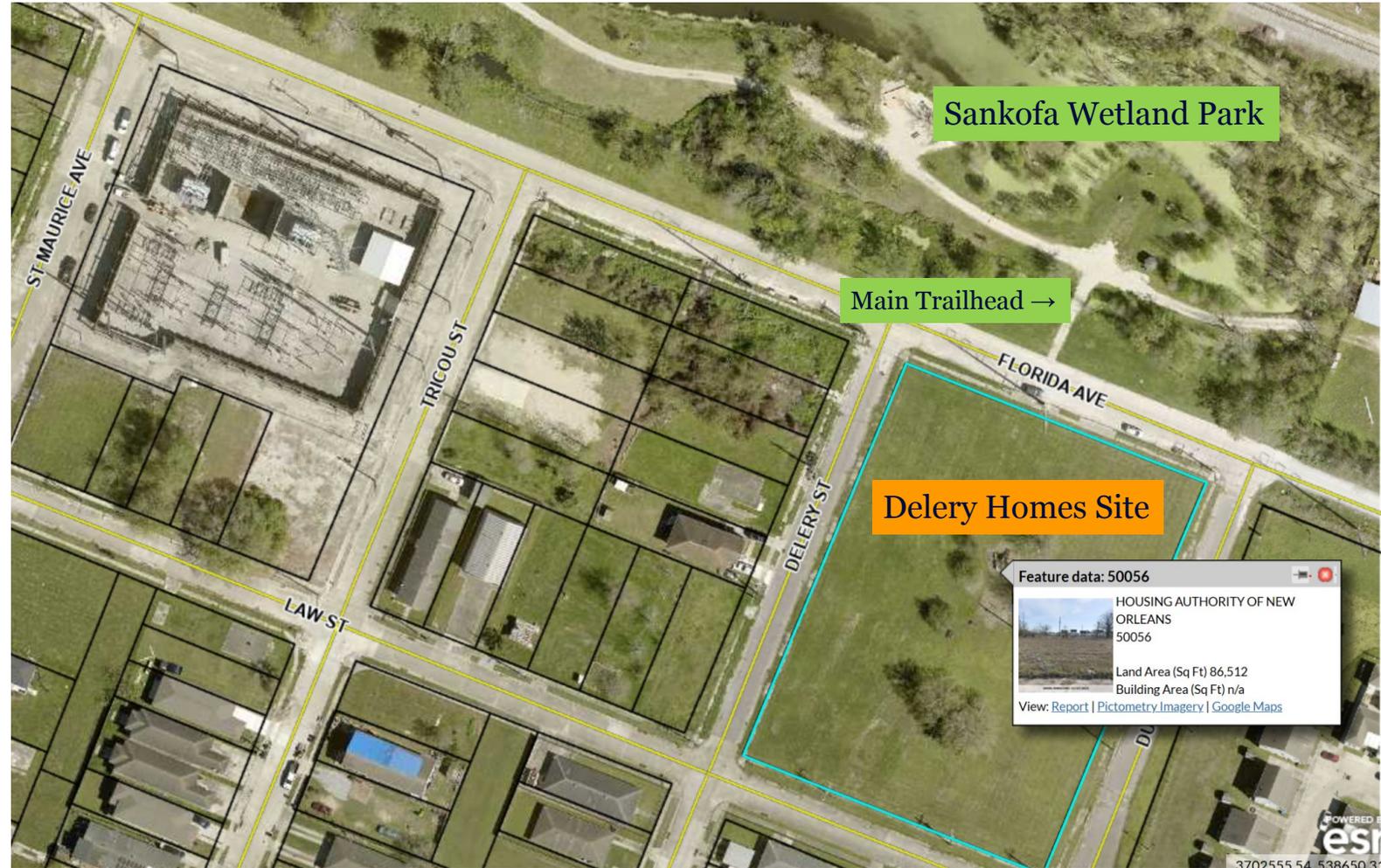
- Sankofa CDC is working to build a Main Street headquarters on St. Claude Avenue. This will include a community business hub that can form the basis for small businesses and “green sector” businesses to establish themselves in the LNW.
- Sankofa CDC is also interested in working with housing partners to promote housing development throughout the LNW, with Neighborhood Greenways serving as a potential asset and anchor for surrounding development.



Potential Housing Partnerships

Sankofa CDC is interested in opportunities to partner with HANO to **support the redevelopment of the vacant Delery Homes site** at Florida Avenue and Delery Street.

This site is directly across from the main trailhead for the Sankofa Wetland Park.



Potential Housing Partnerships

Greenway Elements:

Sankofa CDC could help bring Neighborhood Greenways to vacant properties adjacent to the Delery Homes site, or bring greenway elements onto the site itself together with housing redevelopment. This could help enhance the value and attraction of the site for potential residents.



Rendering from AIA Baltimore Urban Design Committee

Housing Elements:

Sankofa CDC's planning work with ULI Louisiana revealed that Lower Ninth Ward residents are looking for homeownership opportunities. Sankofa has a strong relationship with Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative, whose FORTIFIED New Isle project could provide a model for resilient ownership in the LNW.



Photo from Jericho Road Episcopal Housing Initiative - New Isle Project

What's Next for Neighborhood Greenways?

Next Steps

- **Conduct Initial Stormwater Study.** Sankofa has commissioned a study to evaluate which vacant lots in the LNW could best help manage stormwater and create integrated systems with the Wetland Park “blueway”.
- **Evaluate Additional Factors.** Evaluate stormwater benefits together with pedestrian and quality of life benefits to select potential properties and create initial designs.
- **Keep Stakeholders and Community Informed.** Keep stakeholders like HANO and community members informed about the progress of our studies.
- **Proceed with Implementation.** Work to fundraise and implement the Neighborhood Greenways plans.

