

## CHAPTER 4

# *Vision and goals*

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.



*Restoration of St. Roch Market for active public uses—possibly including the sale of fresh, local produce and artisans' crafts—is a key element of the vision.*

**VISION FOR ST. ROCH AND ST. CLAUDE**

St. Roch and St. Claude are vibrant, dynamic neighborhoods that seek to become even stronger in the years to come. In the wake of the storm, residents are eager to re-knit the fabric of their neighborhoods in ways that support all segments of this diverse community: families who seek to restore their homes, their civic infrastructure, and their connections to friends, neighbors and local institutions; elderly and moderate-income residents who play important roles in the community but who may lack the resources to rehabilitate their homes; and the young professionals and artists who—drawn by affordable, historic housing stock and the cultural heritage of the community—contribute to the creative energy and economic health of St. Roch and St. Claude.

*“You can go into any neighborhood and find all of New Orleans.”*

—JAMES SALLIS, writer

Residents of St. Roch and St. Claude hope to build on the community’s assets and seize the opportunity to strengthen these areas as affordable, walkable, transit-rich neighborhoods with community-oriented retail and a multitude of cultural organizations and facilities within easy reach. In the years to come, St. Roch and St. Claude will gain strength from revitalized commercial development along Desire Street and Franklin Avenue, thriving creative industries-oriented retail along St. Claude Avenue, a St. Claude Avenue Streetcar, and a restored St. Roch Market.

These amenities, along with proximity to downtown, will draw a wide range of new residents over the next decade and beyond, further adding to the diversity of the community and mitigating long-standing concerns about abandoned and neglected properties. These new residents will increase the community’s buying power, helping to support neighborhood retail. Yet St. Roch and St. Claude will remain mixed-income, multigenerational neighborhoods, memorable for their richly detailed historic architecture and strong arts presence.

In addition, like residents of every neighborhood across New Orleans, those who have made their homes in St. Roch

and St. Claude seek a new generation of schools, health centers, parks, community centers, and other civic facilities that will strengthen quality of life. Residents look forward to a safer environment community-wide, with ample recreation facilities for children, and robust support services for residents of all ages.

**Goals**

- Support rehabilitation of blighted homes and properties.
- Increase homeownership.
- Preserve St. Roch and St. Claude as mixed-income, multigenerational communities.
- Support growth of the arts and “creative economy.”
- Spur development of neighborhood and regional retail along St. Claude Avenue.

- Spur development of neighborhood retail on Desire Street and Franklin Avenue.
- Preserve historic structures where possible and ensure that new development is compatible with historic neighborhood character.
- Ensure safe, convenient vehicular and transit connections to adjacent neighborhoods and the rest of the city.
- Redevelop key neighborhood landmarks; strengthen neighborhood identities by creating new places for people to come together.
- Build human capital by establishing support services and community development programs.
- Improve the condition of streets and streetscapes, particularly along key corridors; address volume of truck traffic.
- Develop and enhance pedestrian-, bike-, and transitways.
- Enhance existing open spaces and establish new parks where needed; provide neighborhood children with safe, high-quality places to play.



*A new streetcar line on St. Claude Avenue is seen as vital to the vision.*