

FUNDED BY:



GREATER NEW ORLEANS  
FOUNDATION

THE  
KRESGE  
FOUNDATION



**GREATER TREMÉ CONSORTIUM, INC.**





## **Water Wise Mission**

Water Wise NOLA—Dana Brown & Associates Landscape Architects, Global Green, and Recharge NOLA—is an environmental outreach collaborative devoted to advancing and promoting green infrastructure and its associated benefits through education, events, tours, do-it-yourself workshops, demonstration projects and leadership training.

The mission of Water Wise Gulf South is to empower individuals, neighborhoods, and marginalized communities to manage stormwater, thereby reducing localized flooding and providing many other benefits. We promote community-driven, ecologically-based solutions, known as green infrastructure, to infiltrate, filter, and detain stormwater runoff and improve water quality.

Our approach is to build community leadership and demonstrate green infrastructure systems. We accomplish this by providing technical assistance, educational programming, green infrastructure leadership training, and green infrastructure implementation.



## **Water Wise Goals**

Water Wise NOLA seeks to advance the neighborhood model of community-driven green infrastructure projects, as a way to address flooding, increase water absorption into the soil, and contribute to the successful and equitable implementation of the Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan. The Water Wise model includes building a constituency of local residents, developing leadership, planning green infrastructure projects, implementing green infrastructure plans, and providing ongoing technical assistance and community organizing support to maintain and increase capacity. The engine of the model is trust-building and collaboration among community-based organizations, the Neighborhood Champions, and the Water Wise team. This model was formed out of the success of the 2016 Citywide Neighborhood Champions Training. With seed funding from the Greater New Orleans Foundation, Water Wise has been able to implement this model in Treme and the 7th Ward.



©2017 NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune



## **Water Wise Treme and 7th Ward**

Parts of the Treme and 7th Ward neighborhoods are plagued by severe flooding. In 2014 and 2015, Water Wise conducted flood mapping surveys across the city and found that much of the severe flooding was concentrated in these two neighborhoods. Greater Treme Consortium and Healthy Community Services are community based organizations that represent Treme and 7th Ward, respectively. Water Wise has partnered with these organizations to help advance its goal to implement community-driven green infrastructure projects that reduce flooding in these neighborhoods.

In 2016 and 2017, the Greater New Orleans Foundation provided seed grants to start the process of developing Water Wise Neighborhood Champions in both neighborhoods. Funding from the Kresge Foundation allows Water Wise to fully develop the Neighborhood Champions program and to create a model that can be replicated across other Claiborne Corridor Neighborhoods in New Orleans



## Water Wise Neighborhood Champions

Becoming a Water Wise Neighborhood Champion in a three-step process. It requires attending a Water Wise Neighborhood Workshop, a Green Infrastructure Tour, and a Green Infrastructure “Visioning Workshop.” The neighborhood workshop introduces green infrastructure and demonstrates do-it-yourself green infrastructure projects for personal property. During the green infrastructure tour, participants hop on a bus to view different examples of projects across New Orleans. The visioning workshop encourages participants to identify priority projects within their neighborhood.

Benefits of being a Neighborhood Champion include receiving technical assistance and funding opportunities from Water Wise; being invited to green infrastructure events; having the ability to work collaboratively to advance green infrastructure within your own neighborhood; and being recognized as a citizen expert on green infrastructure in New Orleans.



## Water Wise Treme: NOLA Connects

Water Wise raised additional funding to implement green infrastructure projects in Treme. These projects were selected by the Treme Neighborhood Champions and implemented with the help of volunteers:

- Rain Garden at John and Bertha O’Neal’s home: John and Bertha O’Neal are both Water Wise Treme Neighborhood Champions. Youth Rebuilding New Orleans provided volunteers to help install the rain garden project.
- Stormwater Planter Box at Treme’s Petit Jazz Museum: Treme’s Petit Jazz Museum is a cultural institution located in the Treme neighborhood and is managed by Al Jackson, who was born and raised in the Treme Neighborhood. Volunteers from the UNO Urban Planning Program helped install the planter box.



## Water Wise Treme: Outreach Events

Water Wise NOLA hosted a table at community events to advocate for green infrastructure and promote involvement and the Water Wise mission.

- St Peter Claver Marketplace on February 18, 2018. 14 people signed up to learn more information.
- Hike the Greenway on March 10, 2018. 8 people signed up to learn more information.
- Treme 7th Ward Cultural Festival on May 26 and 27, 2018. Water Wise NOLA set up a green infrastructure demonstration booth. 10 rain barrels were sold and 10 native plants were raffled off. 39 people signed up to learn more information.



## Water Wise Treme: Green Infrastructure Look Book from the Water Wise Treme Visioning Workshop

The Water Wise Treme Look Book is being developed from the priority projects that were identified from the Water Wise Treme Visioning Sessions in late Summer of 2017. The projects were processed using the Climate Adaptation Planning Tool to measure benefits (gallons of stormwater managed) and projected costs.



## Priority Green Infrastructure Projects: Treme Community Center

Neighborhood champions and other residents identified priority projects in their community. The Treme Community Center was identified as a priority in the Water Wise Treme Green Infrastructure Plan. The Water Environment Federation is providing funding for the project; however, it was difficult to get NORDC on board with the project. Water Wise Treme Neighborhood Champions rallied together to sign a letter to the Mayor requesting that the project move forward. The letter is featured on the following pages.



# GREATER TREMÉ CONSORTIUM, INC.

816 N. Robertson Street • New Orleans, LA 70116 • 504-524-7586

Email: [greattreme@aol.com](mailto:greattreme@aol.com)

May 31, 2018

Mayor Latoya Cantrell  
1300 Perdido St  
2nd Floor  
New Orleans, LA 70112

Dear Mayor Cantrell,

Greater Treme Consortium, Inc., (GTC) is a community-based organization, that was formed in 1993 with a mission to increase affordable housing opportunities for low-moderate income families and to support the development of small businesses in the Treme. Over the past twenty years, GTC has worked in all areas of community development to improve living conditions in the Treme neighborhood, including addressing housing, poverty, education, beautification, small business development, health, the environment, and preservation of Treme's unique culture. Recently, GTC has become a collaborator with Water Wise Gulf South on the Water Wise Treme Project. Since its inception, Water Wise Treme has engaged over 110 residents in Treme through green infrastructure trainings and workshops. We have removed 542 square feet of concrete, planted 35 trees, installed 6 rain gardens/planter box and installed 24 rain barrels.

We humbly request that you revisit the recent decision by NORDC staff to pause approval for the green infrastructure project in collaboration with the Water Environment Federation (WEF) at the Treme Community Center. We were informed that the decision has been made based on issues related to the transition of your administration.

The project includes retrofitting the large planter along the northeastern side of the building to receive and manage stormwater runoff from the roof. The project would result in management of a significant amount of stormwater, which would help to reduce flooding in the immediate neighborhood. The Treme Community Center project would build upon our efforts and be the most visible intervention in the neighborhood serving as a significant green infrastructure showcase for Treme and the City.

The Water Environment Federation, an international organization, holds its annual technical conference (WEFTEC) in New Orleans every other year, including this September. During WEFTEC, when over 20,000 water professionals come to the city, a community service project is conducted, funded, and sponsored by WEF. The service project is installed by over 100 emerging professional volunteers that attend the conference each year.

WEFTEC's community service projects in New Orleans have included

*"A Community Divided Will Not Stand"*

- the City Park wetlands in 2012;
- Conrad Park bioretention cell, bioswales, and pervious paving in 2014; and
- the City Hall garage bioswale on Poydras in 2016.

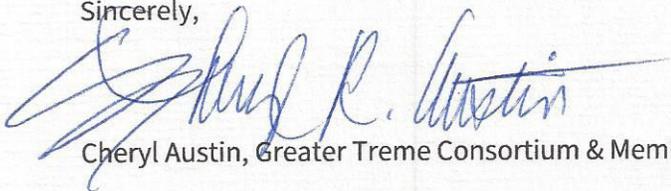
As has been the case in all these projects, Dana Brown & Associates (DBA) serves as the Landscape Architect of record, designing and supervising implementation (pro bono).

While NORDC suggested the project could be revisited at a later time, several facts compel us to ask that it be approved at this time:

1. Treme residents have sought to implement the project for well over three years. GTC met with NORDC about this project on September 28, 2015 and we have e-mailed about this project since then.
2. The Water Environment Federation (WEF) is providing funding for materials and labor for implementation at its WEFTEC conference to be held in New Orleans in September. This is a value up to \$15,000 that WEF will be providing along with 125 volunteers to complete the project.
3. WEF provides ongoing maintenance funding for two years following implementation.
4. A CEA between NORDC and Dana Brown and Associates would need to be written and begin routing for approval as soon as possible.

Please see the additional documents attached to this e-mail that provides more details about the project. We would like to meet with you or a representative at your earliest convenience. Please contact me at (504) 261-0232.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Austin, Greater Treme Consortium & Member of Water Wise Treme



## **Water Wise 7th Ward: Meet and Greet**

The Water Wise 7th Ward Meet and Greet was an opportunity to meet 7th Ward residents and to introduce them to the Water Wise 7th Ward Neighborhood Champions Training. The event was held at the New Orleans Redevelopment Authority stormwater lot in the 7th Ward, which has interpretive signage about water management.



## **Water Wise 7th Ward: Xavier Student Canvassing**

Water Wise 7th Ward partnered with Xavier University to survey residents of the 7th Ward neighborhood to learn about flooding concerns and to poll residents about their interest in attending Water Wise Workshops. 101 residents were surveyed; 58% expressed a high concern (level 4 or 5) of flooding in the neighborhood.



## Water Wise 7th Ward: Workshops

The Water Wise Workshop introduces green infrastructure and demonstrate do-it-yourself green infrastructure techniques for your own property. Over 70 residents in the 7th Ward have participated in a Water Wise Workshop. There were four workshops in the 7th Ward so far this year:

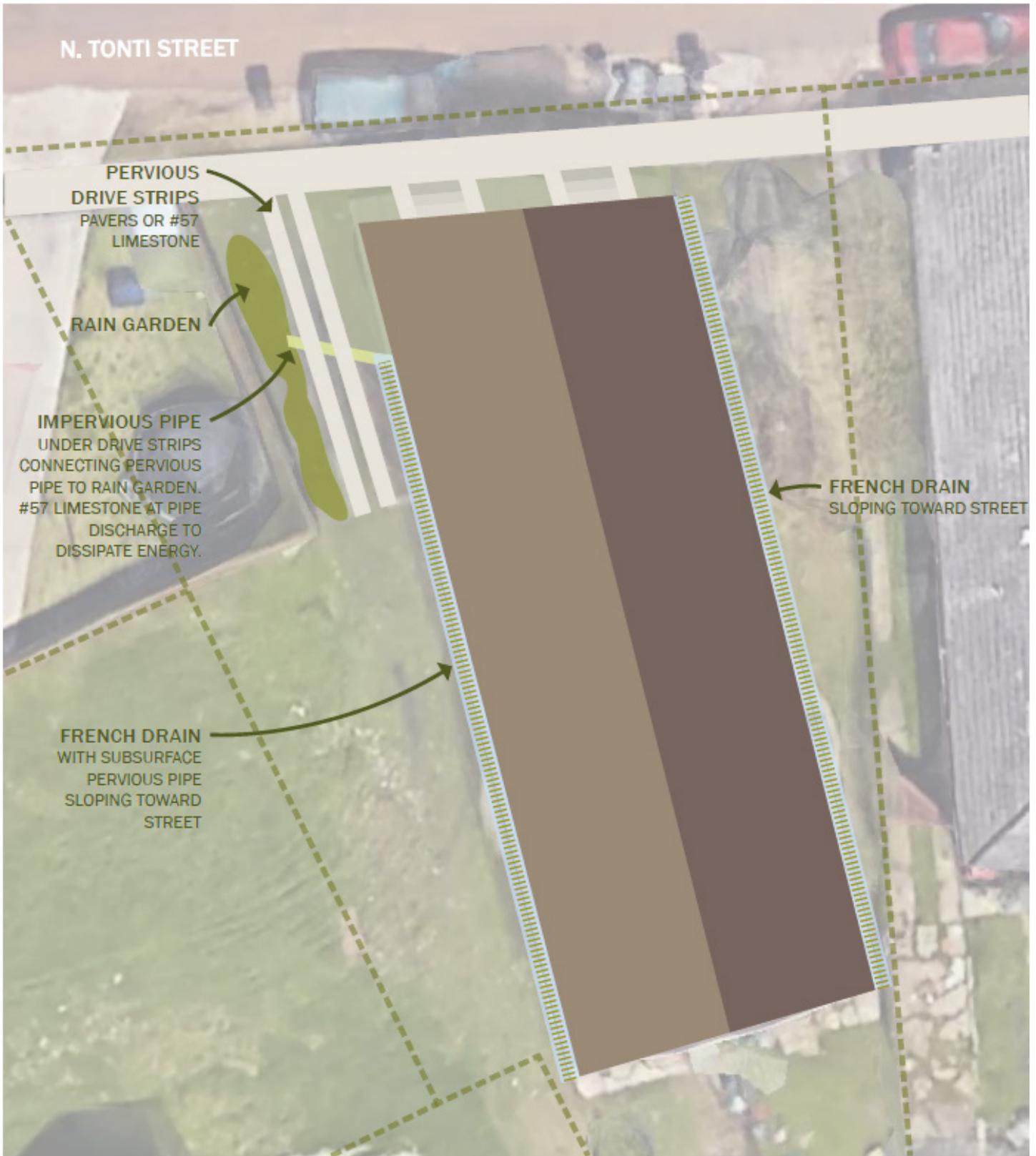
- January 31, 2018: St Augustine High School
- April 7, 2018: St Augustine High School
- April 12, 2018: St Paul's Lutheran Church
- April 16, 2018: St Luke's Episcopal Church



## Water Wise 7th Ward: Home Assessments

At the Water Wise Workshop, one person can be awarded a Water Wise Home Assessment. This is lead by Dana Brown and Associates and the Water Wise team. Invited neighbors and Water Wise Workshop Participants are also encouraged to visit the winner's home to discuss green infrastructure measures that can be implemented on their property. The winner receives a green infrastructure plan (pictured below) that is specific to their property.

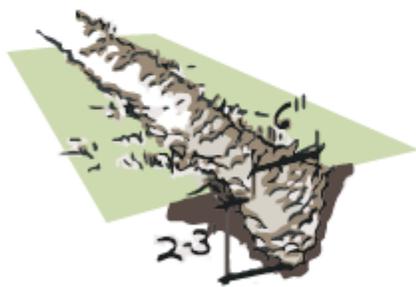




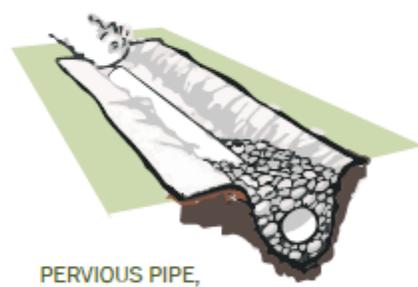


RAIN GARDEN

---



GEOTEXTILE  
FABRIC



PERVIOUS PIPE,  
AGGREGATE

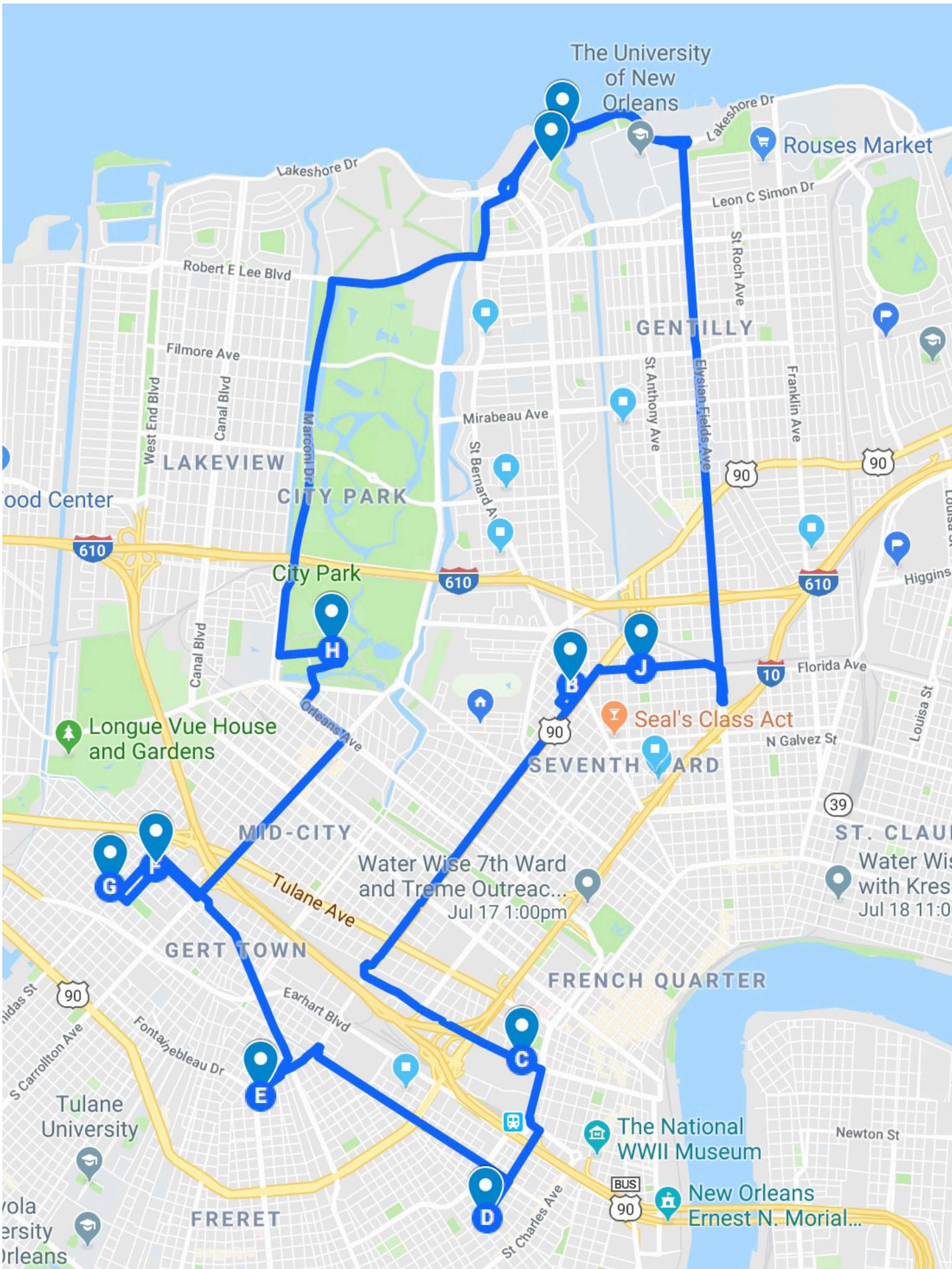
FRENCH DRAIN

---



## **Water Wise 7th Ward: Green Infrastructure Tour**

7th Ward Residents hopped on a bus to view different examples of green infrastructure projects across New Orleans. These projects are meant to be inspiration for the Water Wise Visioning Workshop. The map at right shows the tour route.





## **Water Wise 7th Ward: Rain Barrel Build**

Led by Recharge NOLA, 7th Ward Residents learned how to construct a rain gauge and built their own rain barrel. A guest speaker from the New Orleans Mosquito, Termite and Rodent Control Board presented information about mosquito safety and awareness. 12 rain barrels were built.



## Work 'N' Learn Day

Several 7th Ward cultural institutions received a demonstrative green infrastructure project: Bullet's Sports Bar, Walker's Ave Barbershop and the Autocrat Club. 20 volunteers were involved in implementing the projects. Also, 9 rain barrels were built on the Work and Learn Day at Seal's Class Act, another 7th Ward cultural institution.



## Water Wise 7th Ward: Visioning Workshop

Part 3 of the Water Wise Neighborhood Champions Training is the Visioning Workshop. At this workshop, 7th Ward residents mapped flooding hotspots and identified green infrastructure solutions that they would like to incorporate on public property. This is the first step in the creation of the Water Wise 7th Ward Green Infrastructure Look Book.



UTURE VISIONING SECTION 5 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE VISIONING SEVENTH WARD SECTION 2





## Plans for 2018 and Beyond

Moving forward, the Treme Green Infrastructure Look Book will be completed and the Treme Community Center priority project will be implemented. The Seventh Ward Look Book, a product of the recent Visioning Workshop, will then be completed and project implementation will follow. On the tail of these successful efforts, a third neighborhood on the Claiborne Corridor will be chosen for the Water Wise education, outreach, and implementation process.

Water Wise will continue to participate in and organize events like:

- Rain Barrel Builds and Installations with Recharge NOLA
- A Water Wise Block Party and Neighborhood Champions Celebration
- Water Wise Neighborhood Champions Conference and Design Competition
- Advocacy & Fundraising for Priority Projects in Treme and 7th Ward

---

## Thank You to the Kresge Foundation

The success of Water Wise stems from the generosity of the Kresge Foundation. The foundation's mission to expand opportunities through funding has provided resources that directly support our goal. The partnership between the Kresge Foundation and Water Wise enriches the lives of New Orleans residents through green infrastructure projects that create healthier and safer conditions in underserved neighborhoods. Together, our commitments are enhancing one of America's favorite cities. We deeply appreciate the assistance we have received and remain enthusiastic about the improvements that are to come as we move forward.