

NORA GREEN

NEW ORLEANS REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

NORA is committed to the stabilization and stewardship of vacant land in New Orleans as part of its overall redevelopment efforts. NORA Green is a new initiative which includes a series of projects and programs designed to promote the beneficial use of vacant NORA property. The initiative promotes the re-use and repurposing of vacant land in ways that enhance the surrounding neighborhoods, lower maintenance costs, make fresh produce available to underserved populations, create community spaces, reduce flood risk, improve water quality, and provide other ecological benefits.

NORA has sold over 3,000 properties via auction, request for proposals, and the Lot Next Door program since 2006. NORA currently owns, manages and maintains an inventory of approximately 2,500 properties. Many of these remaining properties are located in very weak markets where traditional redevelopment is unlikely to occur in the near-term. Alternative land use strategies promoted through NORA Green are a means of more affordably maintaining the remaining NORA inventory while beautifying and economically stabilizing neighborhoods.

Below are details about the five current programs that are included in the NORA Green initiative.

GROWING GREEN

This program makes vacant NORA properties available for the public to lease for the purposes of greening, gardening, and urban agriculture. Growing Green gives residents the opportunity to develop green spaces that will positively impact their communities. The program is a streamlined version of NORA's previous Alternative Land Use application, and is intended to make it easier for residents to gain access to land and improve vacant spaces in their neighborhoods.



Sankofa CDC teaches students about growing vegetables on a community garden.



LOT STABILIZATION

Through this program, NORA teams with local designers and contractors to enhance selected vacant properties throughout the city in order to beautify neighborhood blocks. This past winter, NORA installed plants native to Southeast Louisiana, bright orange benches, and other improvements on five vacant properties in the Lower Ninth Ward, Gentilly Woods, Filmore, Algiers, and Hollygrove as part of a pilot phase of the program. NORA has plans to install similar improvements on vacant properties in other neighborhoods in the next year. These improvements demonstrate how vacant properties can become assets in stabilizing New Orleans neighborhoods.



Pilot Lot Stabilization project at 1338 Nunez, Algiers

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green infrastructure strategies use vegetation and natural processes to slow, store, and drain water after heavy rainfalls in order to reduce flooding, slow subsidence, and improve water quality. NORA works to identify, develop, and implement green infrastructure projects in partnership with other City agencies and organizations. These strategies include using vacant NORA properties for temporary water storage. NORA's Pontilly Stormwater Management project, funded by a \$15 million FEMA grant, is currently in design phase. Additional green infrastructure projects are currently being scoped and developed.



Demonstration rain garden at 5302-04 Wildair, Filmore

ALTERNATIVE LAND MANAGEMENT

In an effort to reduce long-term maintenance costs while also beautifying neighborhoods, NORA has partnered with landscape architects at LSU's Urban Landscape Lab to research and implement ecologically and economically sustainable designs on vacant land in NORA's inventory. This program explores simple, cost-effective solutions such as flowering lawns, meadows, cypress groves, fencing, and birdhouses that enhance vacant properties while also cutting down on the frequency of maintenance required to keep these lots looking beautiful.



Alternative Land Management Strategies, LSU Urban Landscape Lab

GROWING HOME

As part of NORA's successful Lot Next Door Program, the Growing Home incentive encourages buyers to invest in the greening and enhancement of their Lot Next Door purchase by giving them a discount on the purchase price. The program has provided grants of up to \$10,000, along with personalized design consultation from NORA staff, to assist homeowners in making landscaping improvements such as flower beds, trees, edible gardens, patios and fencing. Growing Home is the longest-running and most successful NORA Green program to date. As of 2014, NORA has completed 880 projects totaling 4.4 million square feet of neighborhood beautification.



The Aguillard's Lot Next Door, Upper Ninth Ward