

**Why are you here?**



**Because you want to make a difference.**



# New Orleans, LA SDAT



# What is an SDAT

The **Sustainable Design Assessment Team** program provides broad **assessments** to help frame future policies and sustainability solutions.



# Sustainability Defined



# Problem Statement

What tools are necessary and sufficient to make a healthy community in Gently.



# Criteria for Success

- Improves economic/ social/environmental potential
- Provides for immediate action
- Addresses short and long-term needs
- Attracts new people and new business
- Leverages existing community assets
- Knits together community
- Builds new community assets and capital
- **Each step catalyzes the next one**



# Assessment

Present conditions

- **S**trengths
- **W**eaknesses

Future conditions

- **O**pportunities
- **T**hreats



# Strengths

- Willingness to participate
- Efforts in progress
  - Dillard CDC, UNO Task Force, Pontchartrain CDC, etc
  - NORA
- Residential & institutional commitment to area
- Institutions
- Great streets
- Strong middle class community
- Diverse community
- Social capital



# Weaknesses

- Lack of communication and coordination
- Uncoordinated Initiatives
- Poor Information Transfer
- Damaged and Unmaintained Infrastructure
- Lack of trust
- Lack of funding
- Residential and Commercial Vacancy
- Overburdened City Government
- Complicated Politics



# Opportunities

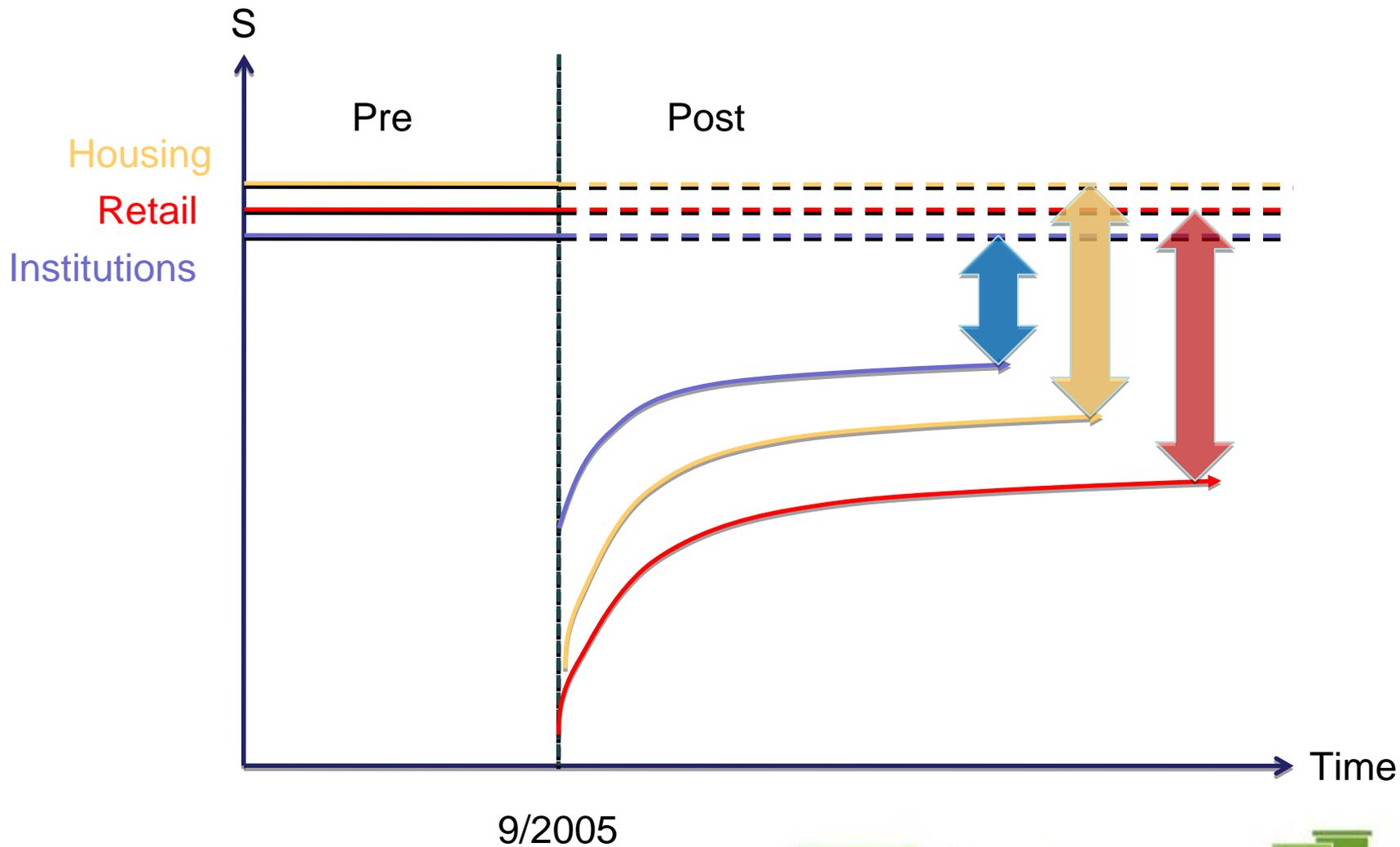
- Vacant land & public land
  - NORA
- Rebuild sustainably
- Build social capital
- Build financial capital
- New open spaces networks and amenities
- Better transportation connections



# Threats

- Flooding
- Infrastructure
- Federal Neglect and Retreat
- Dwindling City resources





# Assessments

In 2005, Gentilly was not realizing its full potential. Now add:

- 8,000 vacant homes and lots
- 250,000 square feet in lost retail potential
- 2,300 fewer local jobs
- Commercial rents of \$10 – 12 per square



# Overall assessment

- Insufficient Population to Sustain Pre-Katrina Levels
- High level of frustration
- Too much planning
- Too few results
- Desire for immediate action



## **Solution must address:**

no magic bullet

government is over loaded

the community is the strongest resource



# Strategy

Create a neighborhood driven and funded project that bypasses need for political or outside funding by using a supped up neighborhood organization with access to a financial, organizational and planning mentors.



# Tactic

Move Toward Community Economic  
Development Using Community Gardens



# Why Community Gardens?

Cultivating community gardens is centrally meant to:

- Build community capacity to plan and execute collaborative efforts at land acquisition which can lay the groundwork for subsequent projects in housing redevelopment and medium scale commercial development and other community economic development projects.
- Improve the quality of life by allowing neighbors to collectively beautify their block or neighborhood.
- Improve the value of surrounding homes and the neighborhood at large.



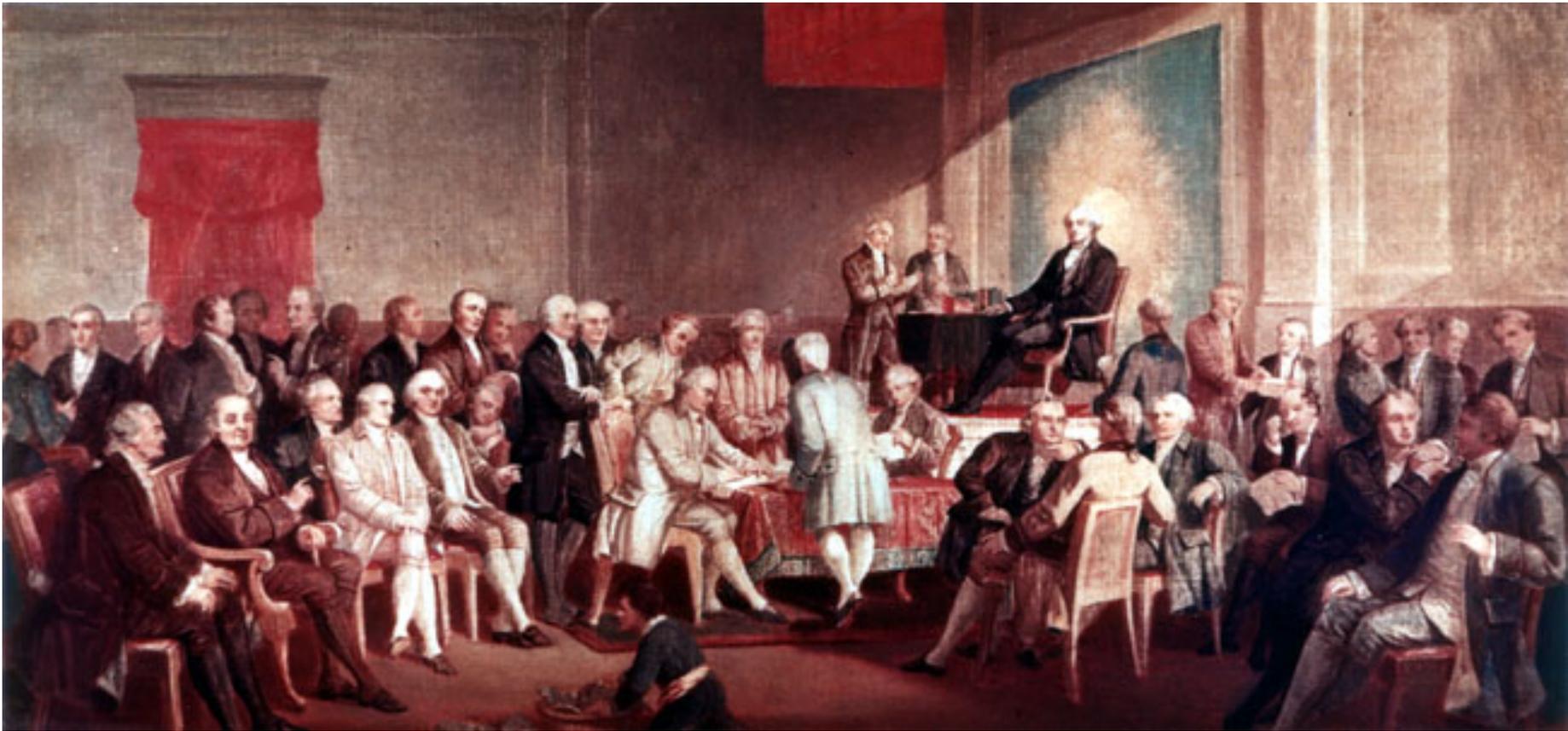
**how to start?**





# Dictatorship





# Constitutional Convention





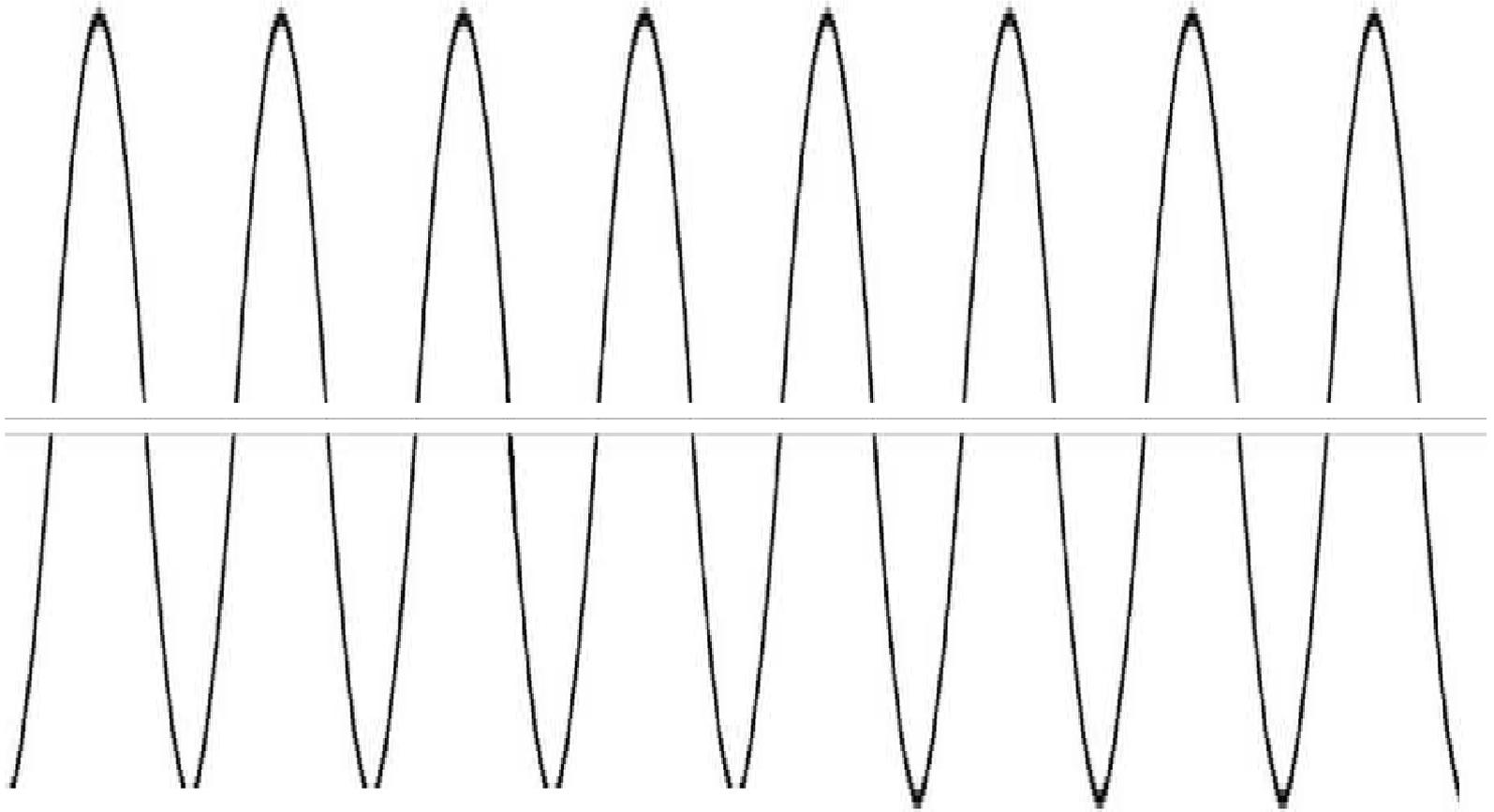
**an individual's energy**





**many individuals' energy uncoordinated: white noise**





**many individuals' energy coordinated: resonance**

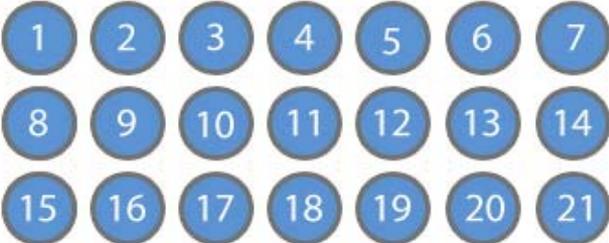


neighborhood

1



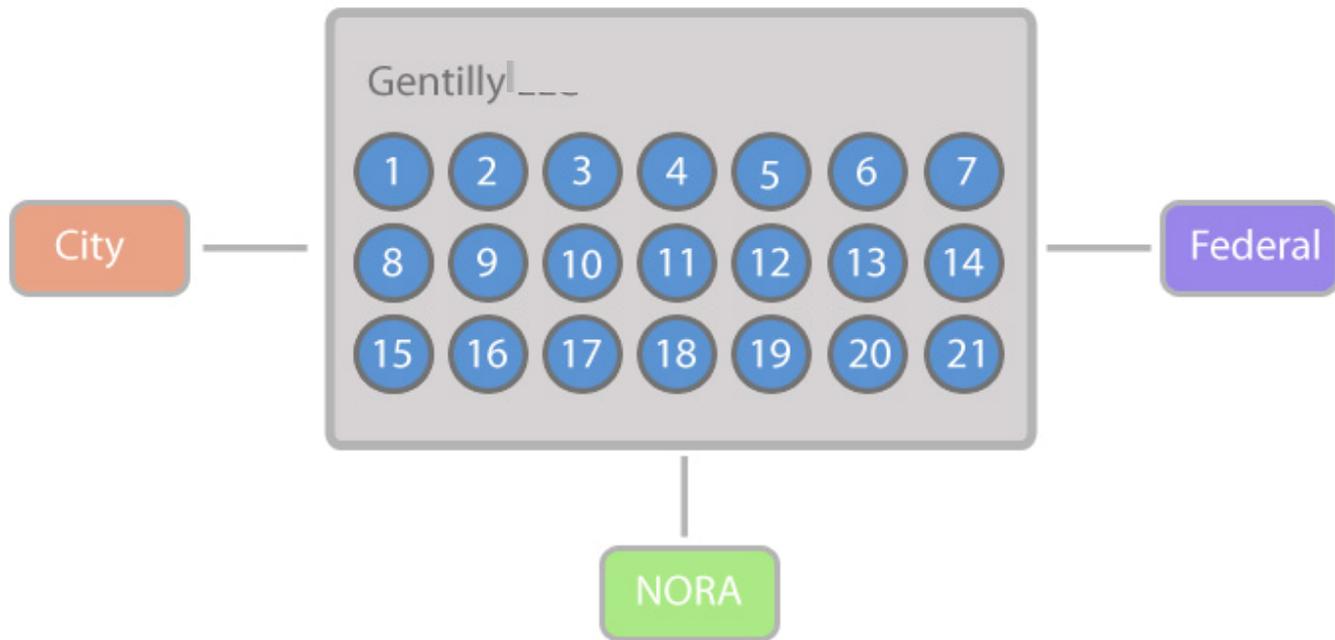
neighborhood

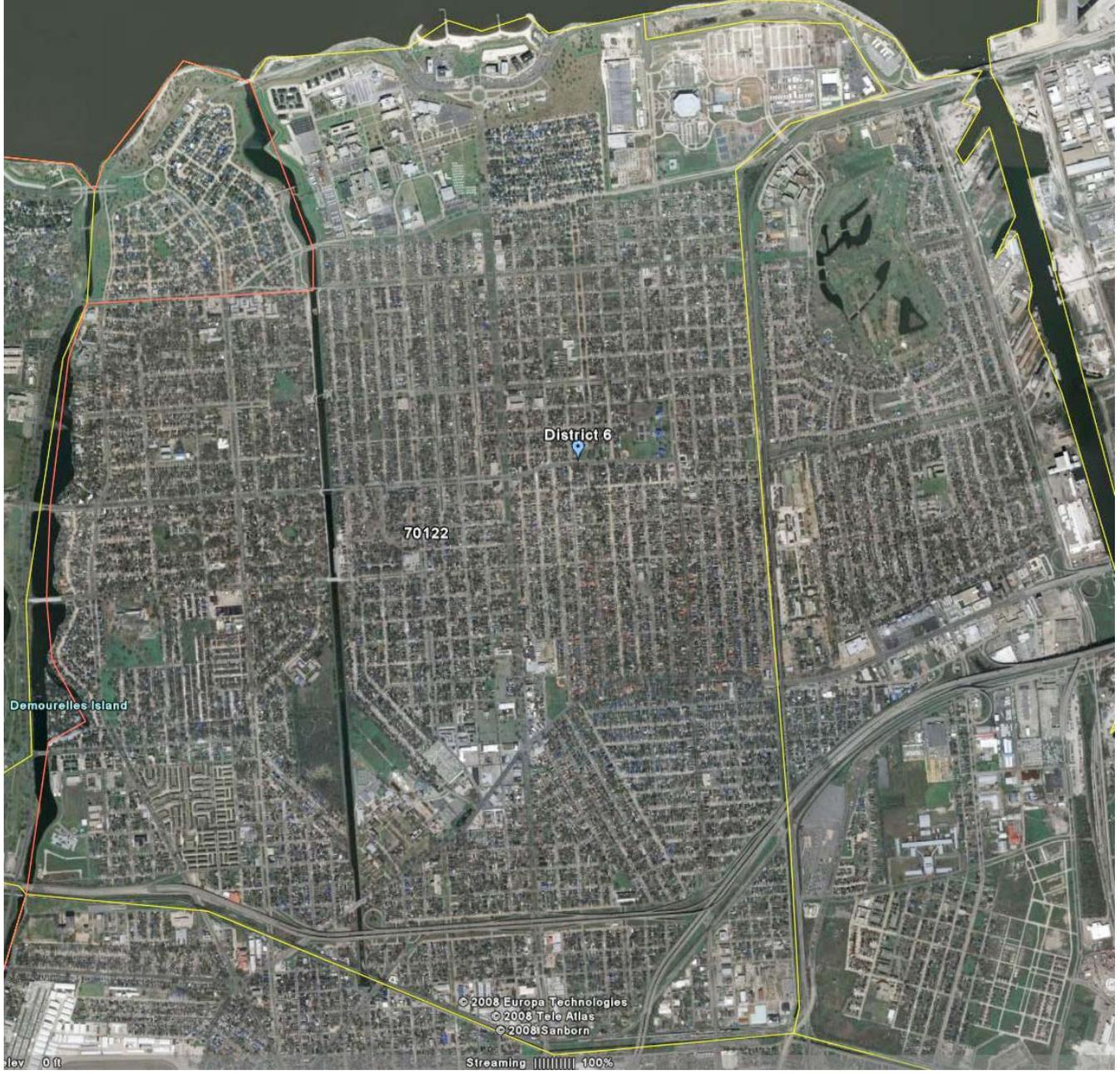


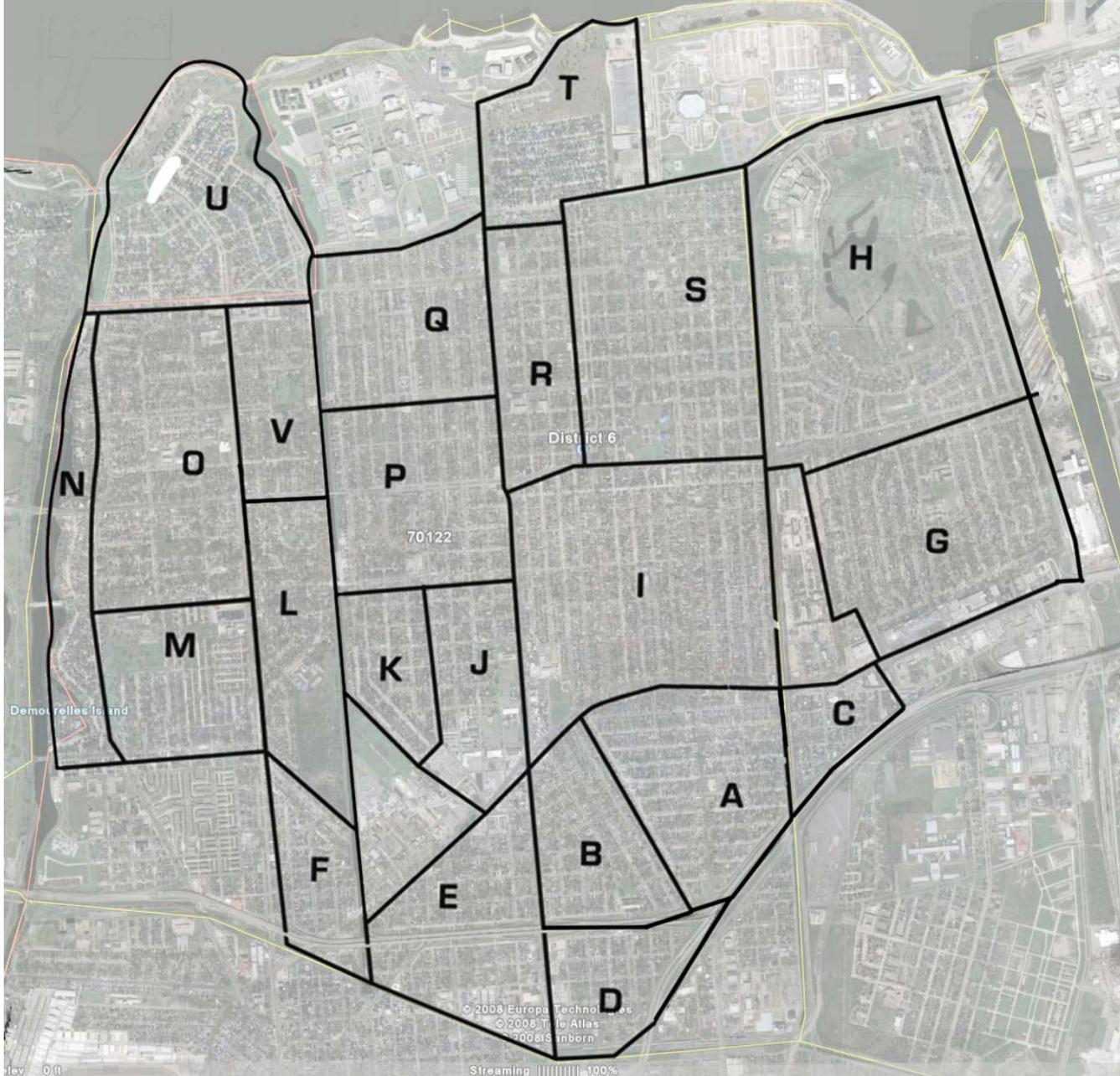
Gentilly

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21



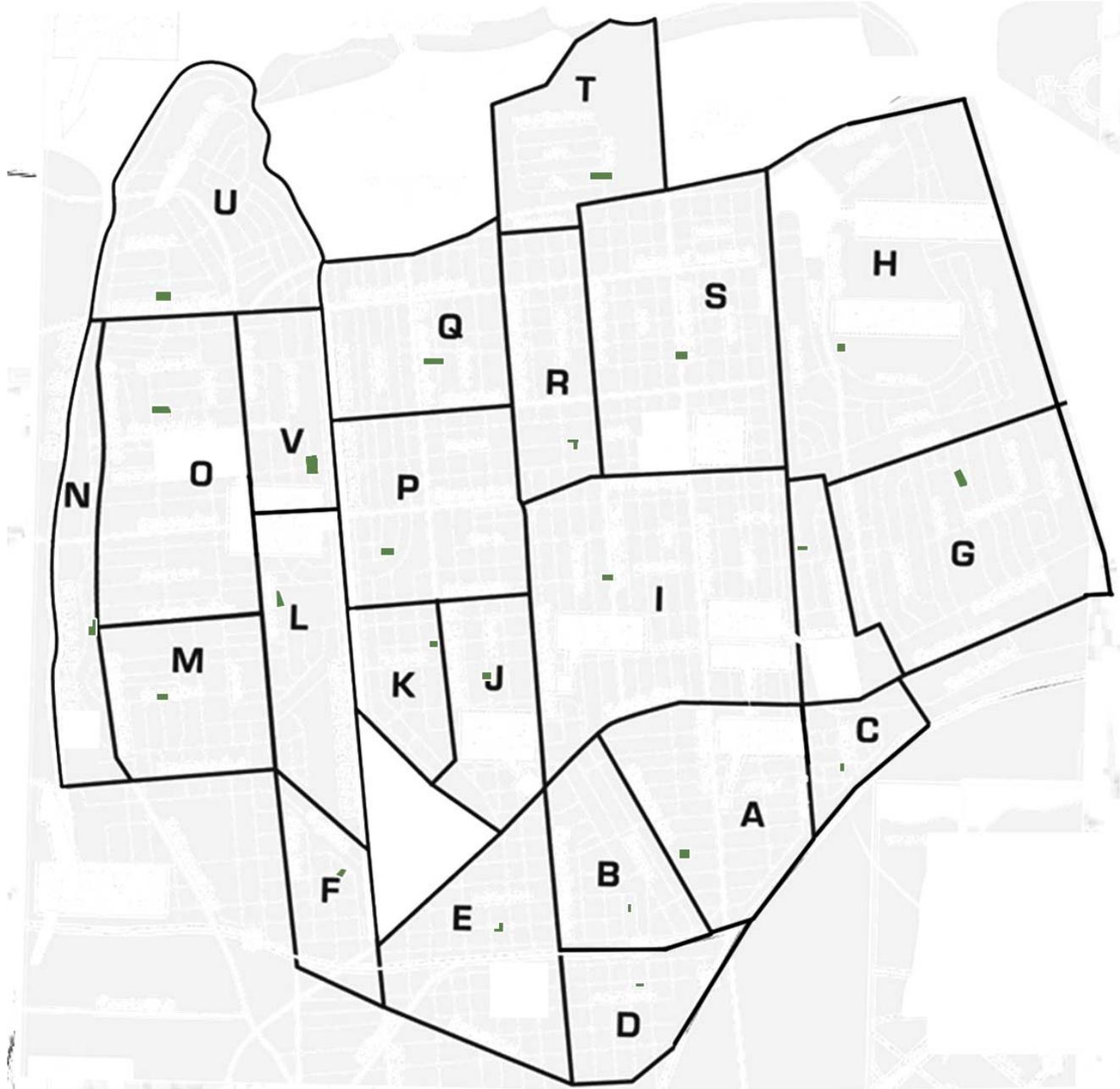




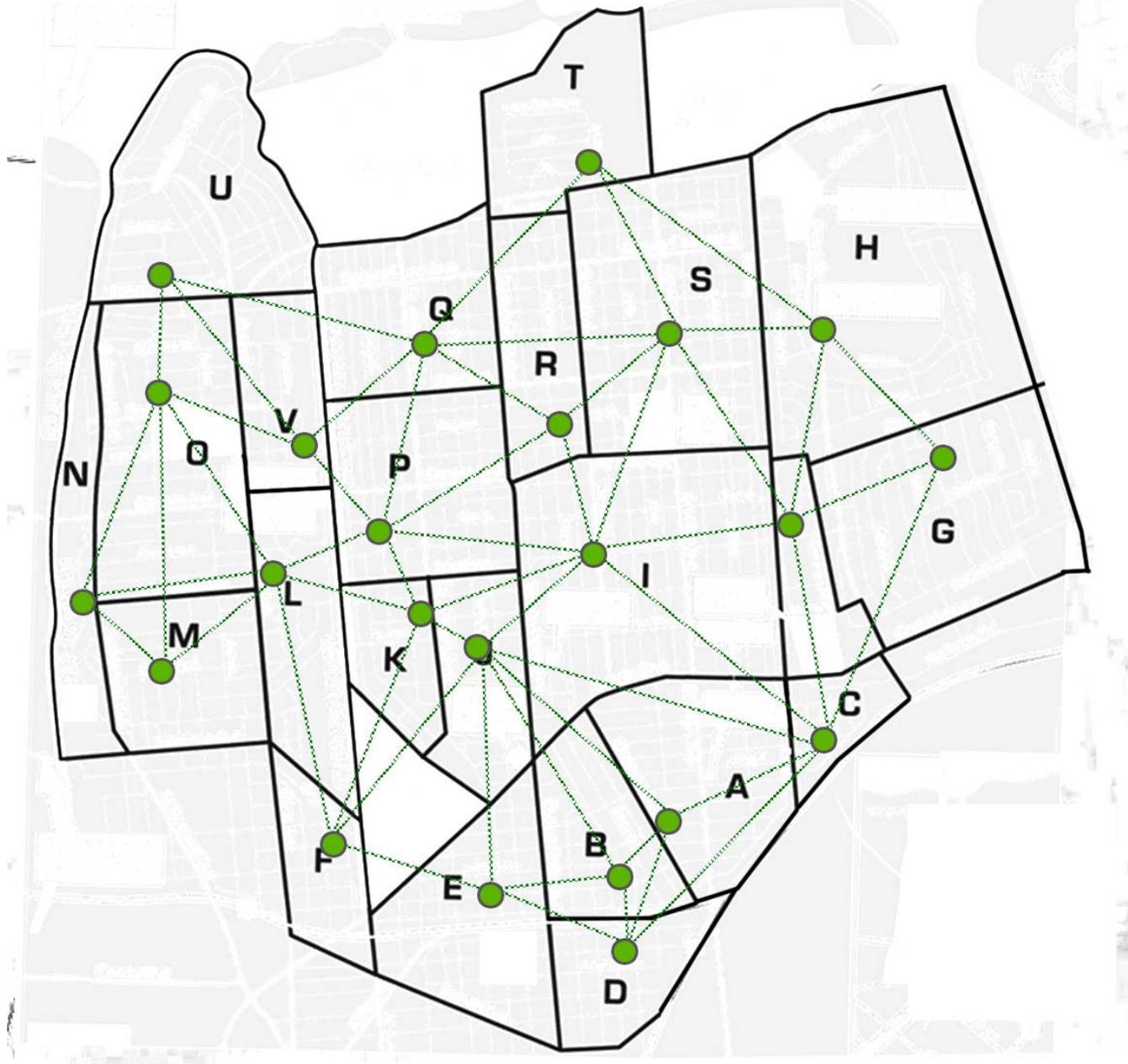












# Toward Community Economic Development Using Community Gardens



# Prospect for Community Economic Development

- Economic Needs
- Presence of Social Capital
- Quality of Life as a Precursor and Supporter of Community Economic Development
- Community Gardens



# The Gentilly Community Garden Compact

- What is it?
- Implementing Organizations
  - Dillard University CDC and UNO
  - City-Works
  - GCIA
- Core Functions of the GCGC
  - Administration of the community gardens process
  - Securing funding and technical assistance for the core efforts of the Gentilly community.
  - Managing the formation and operation of a limited liability corporation (LLC) to receive assets from sponsoring government agencies, private entities.



# The Need for a Limited Liability Corporation

- Core Need
  - Aggregating financial resources
  - Limiting risk
- Governing Structure
  - Community and Implementing Organizations
- Possible Providers of Technical Assistance
  - Mentors: financial, real-estate, landscape, etc



## Organizing the 22 neighborhoods and allies for this project

Community organizing tactics will be used to garner support and input to get buy in from all the neighborhoods and allies. This includes individual meetings with the neighborhood associations, and collective meetings with the GCIA.

Once there is buy-in, guiding principles and operating procedures should be established by the group to set up the communications protocols and working relationship to move forward.



## Community Gardens and the Comprehensive Master Plan

**Recommendation:** Include the Community Garden Project in the Comprehensive Master Plan.

**Value** those community efforts that organically arise out of a common desire for identity, neighborliness, healthy lifestyles and high-quality connections between neighborhoods.

These implementation strategy proposals each include a Master Plan Element, a specific Implementation Strategy and a Sustainable Systems Report Card.



## Master Plan Chapter: Arts and culture

### Implementation Strategy: **Build cultural and community Identity through community garden space**

- Community identity is both "people" and "place."
- Community gardens make beautiful community landmarks and focal points for outdoor activities.
- "Placemaking" create a neighborhood's feeling of identity and build "social capital."
- Gardening can also build neighborliness and create social cohesion.
- Outdoor gardens can increase property values, decrease vandalism and make neighbors feel safer.

### **Sustainable Systems Report Card**

Economic equity:

Environmental Equity:

Social equity:



**Master Plan Chapter:** Community Facilities and Infrastructure: maintaining and expanding infrastructure and facilities to serve the whole city

## **Implementation Strategy**

Gardens are both *places* and *people*.

- Community gardens are both public and private open space, that can be connected using different transportation modes.

(Cross-reference to Transportation and Land Use Implementation Strategies #XX and #XY)

Sustainability Systems Report Card:

Economic equity:

Environmental equity:

Social equity:



**Master Plan Chapter:** Transportation: promoting a multifaceted and efficient system of transportation choices

**Implementation Strategy:**

Sustainable pedestrian and bicycle paths can link different neighborhood gardens.

- People can walk from garden to garden along the “neutral ground” spaces, enhanced sidewalks, and dedicated bicycle spaces.
- Well-designed connections are used to reflect the identity of each neighborhood and community garden.

(Cross-reference to Land Use Implementation Strategy #XX)

Sustainability Systems Report Card:

Economic equity

Environmental equity

Social equity



**Master Plan Chapter:** Future Land Use: identifying the general type and density of land uses desired in the future

Implementation Strategy: The Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance will recognize a “community garden” as a preferred use in single family zones.

- Such uses should be prioritized in the zoning ordinance for vacant lots.
- Consider density or height bonuses or LEED credits for adjacent properties that donate land.

Sustainability Systems Report Card:

Economic equity:

Environmental equity:

Social equity:



**Master Plan Chapter:** Environmental Quality and Sustainability (including Natural Hazards and Energy):

**Implementation Strategy:**

Gardening provides physical exercise, community-building and stress relief – to achieve public health targets.

- Gardens can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the “heat island” effect.
- Garden soil reduces polluting “stormwater” run-off and minimizes surface erosion.
- Gardens can clean our air by absorbing carbon dioxide.

Sustainability Systems Report Card:

Economic equity:

Environmental equity:

Social equity:



American cities decay, vacant lot by vacant lot. Youth unemployment and school drop-out rates approach crisis proportions. Older Americans live in physical and social ghettos, cut off from healthy interaction with the larger society. Community organizing around a neutral issue like gardening can help to get to the root of these problems.

Community Gardens have been shown to:

- Bring together neighbors and others of diverse cultures, ethnicities, ages, and abilities to work for change by creating new community resources.
- Serve as a catalyst for neighborhood development, beautification, recreation, therapy, and food production.

--Adapted from the American Community Gardening Association









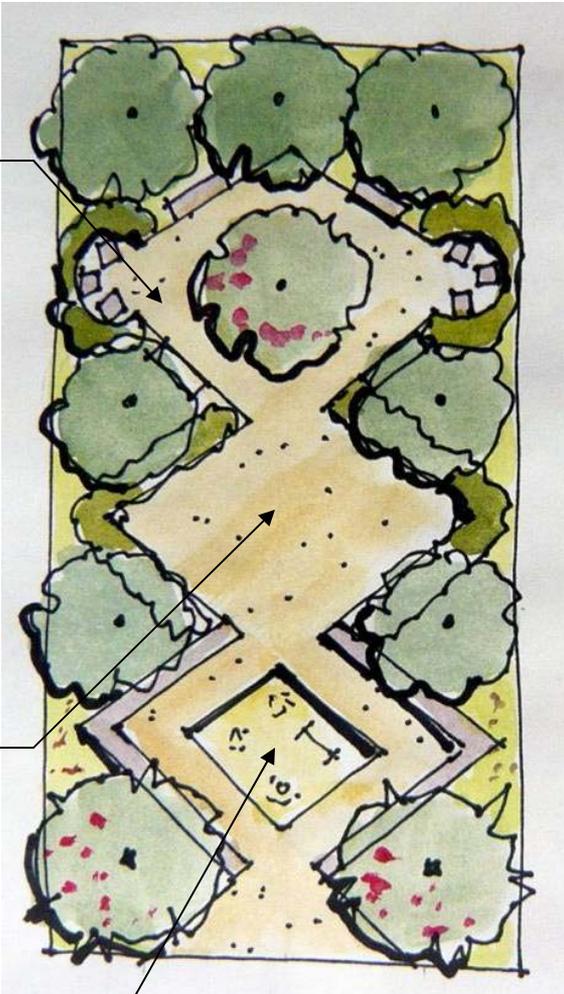
# Conceptual Garden A



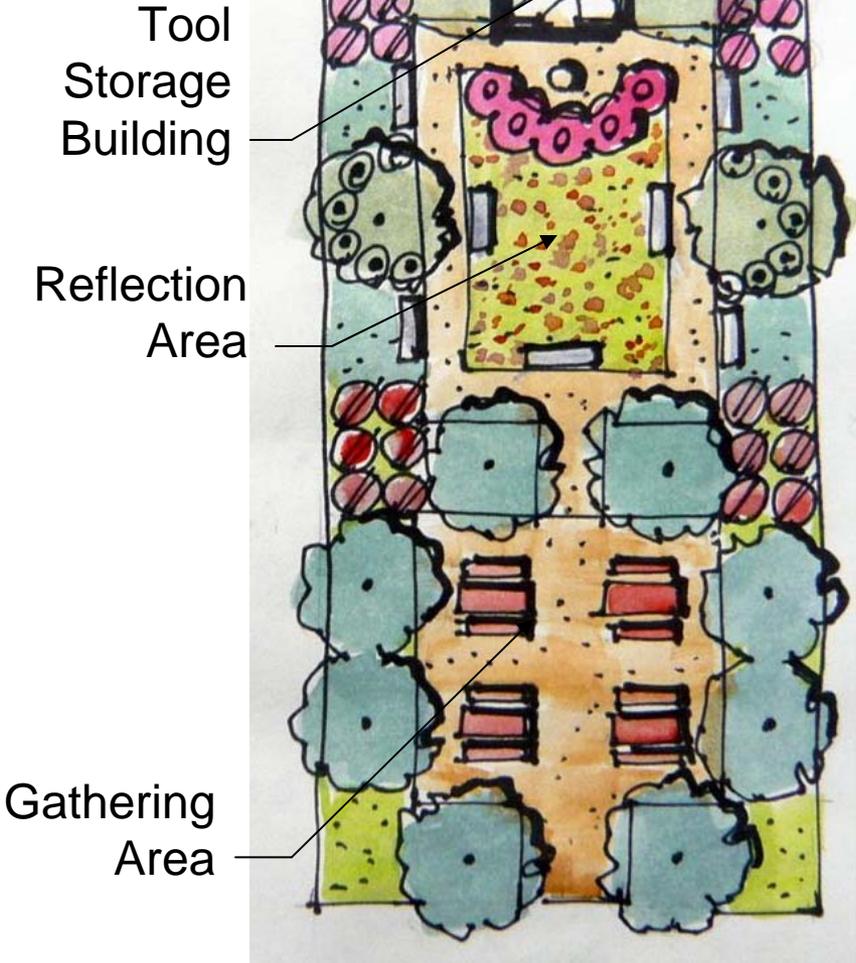
Reflection Area

Gathering Area

Play Area



# Conceptual Garden B



# Conceptual Garden C

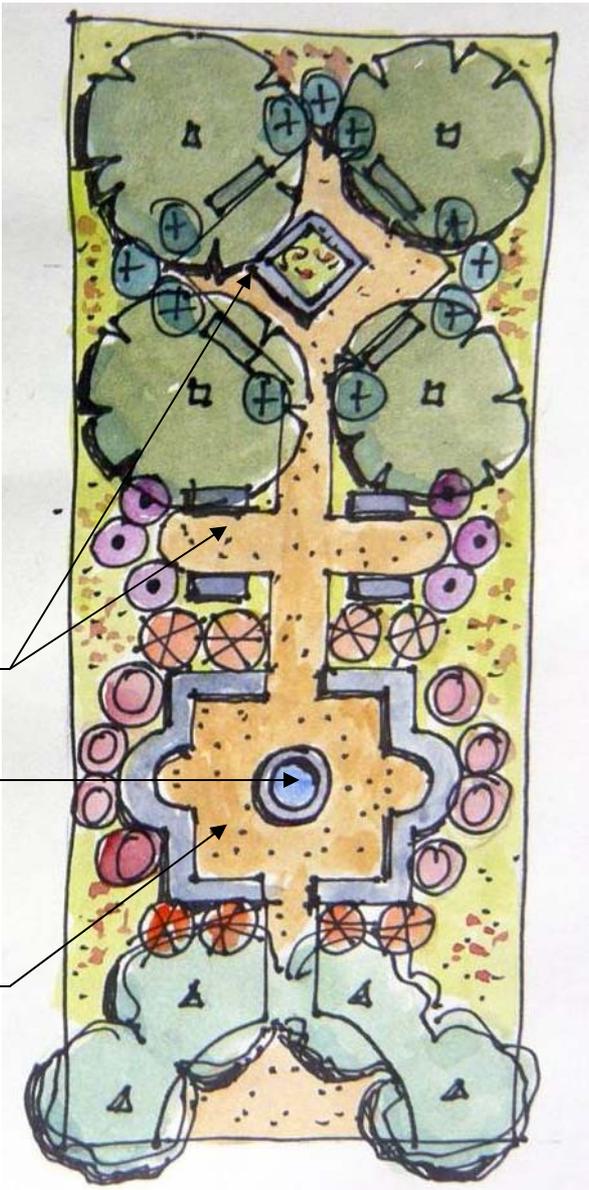


Reflection  
Areas

Fish Pond

Gathering  
Area

Welcome  
Planting



# Conceptual Garden D

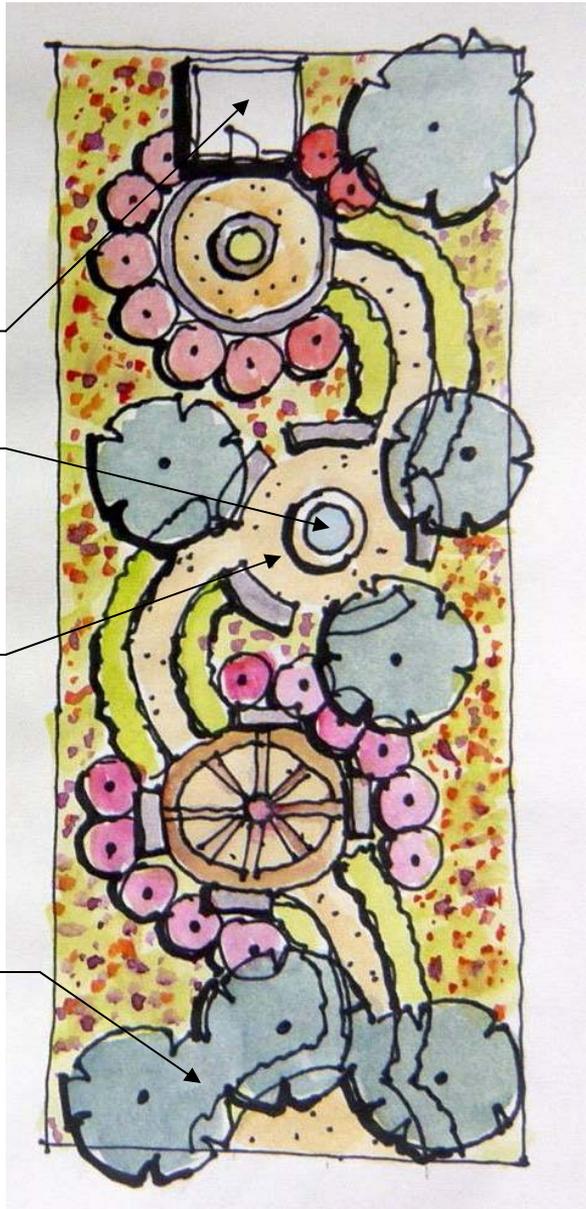


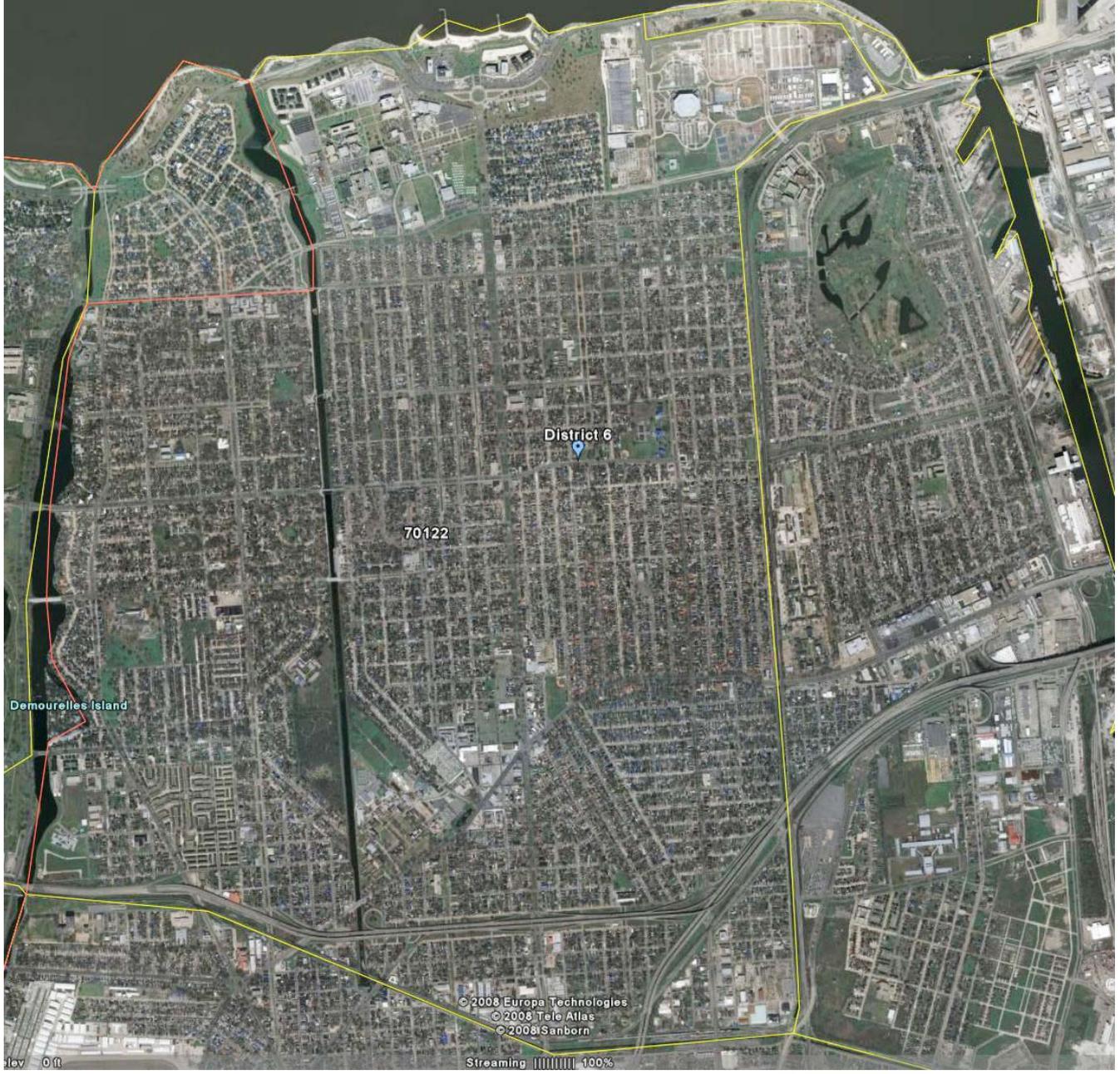
Tool  
Storage  
Building

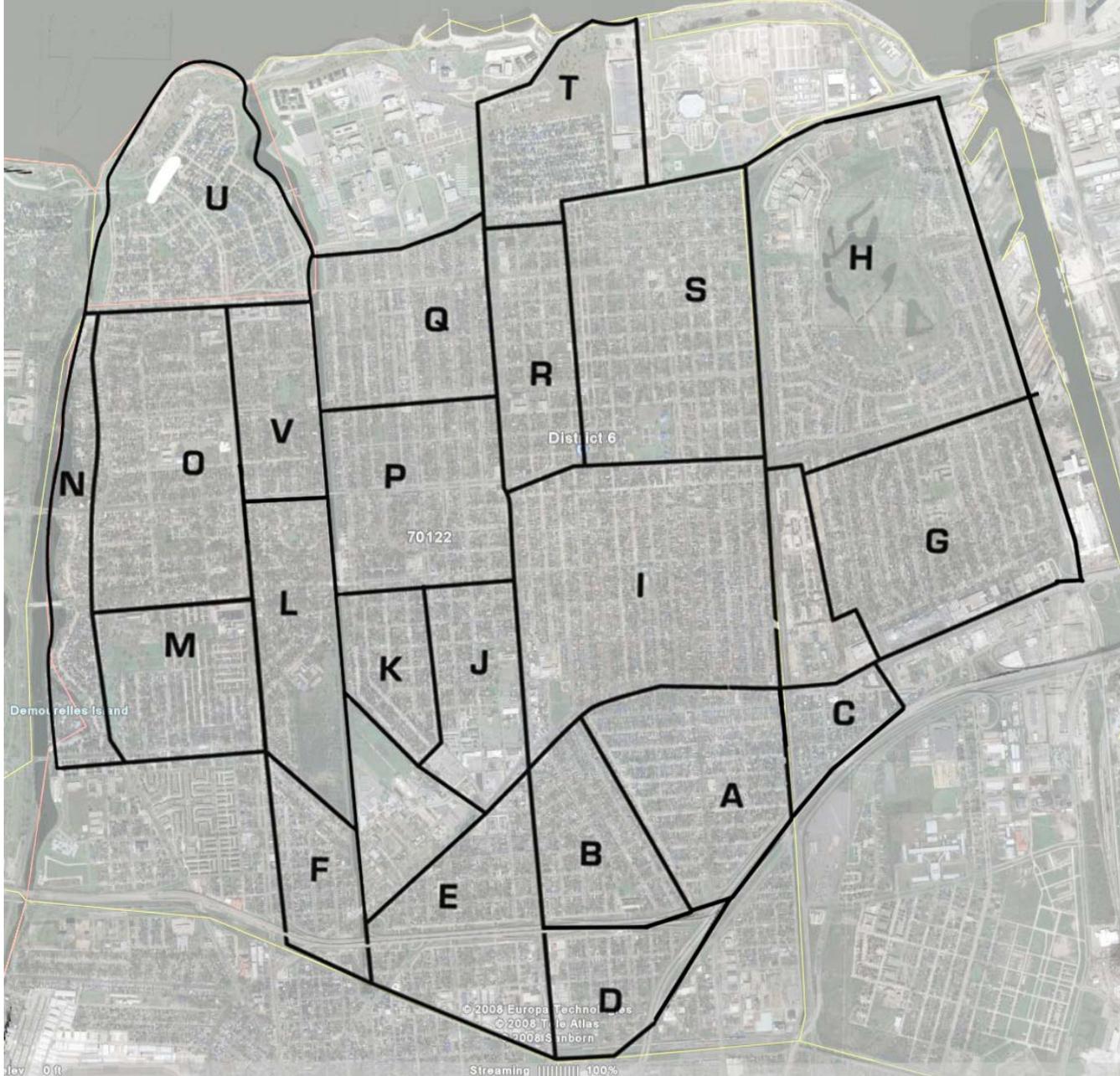
Fish Pond

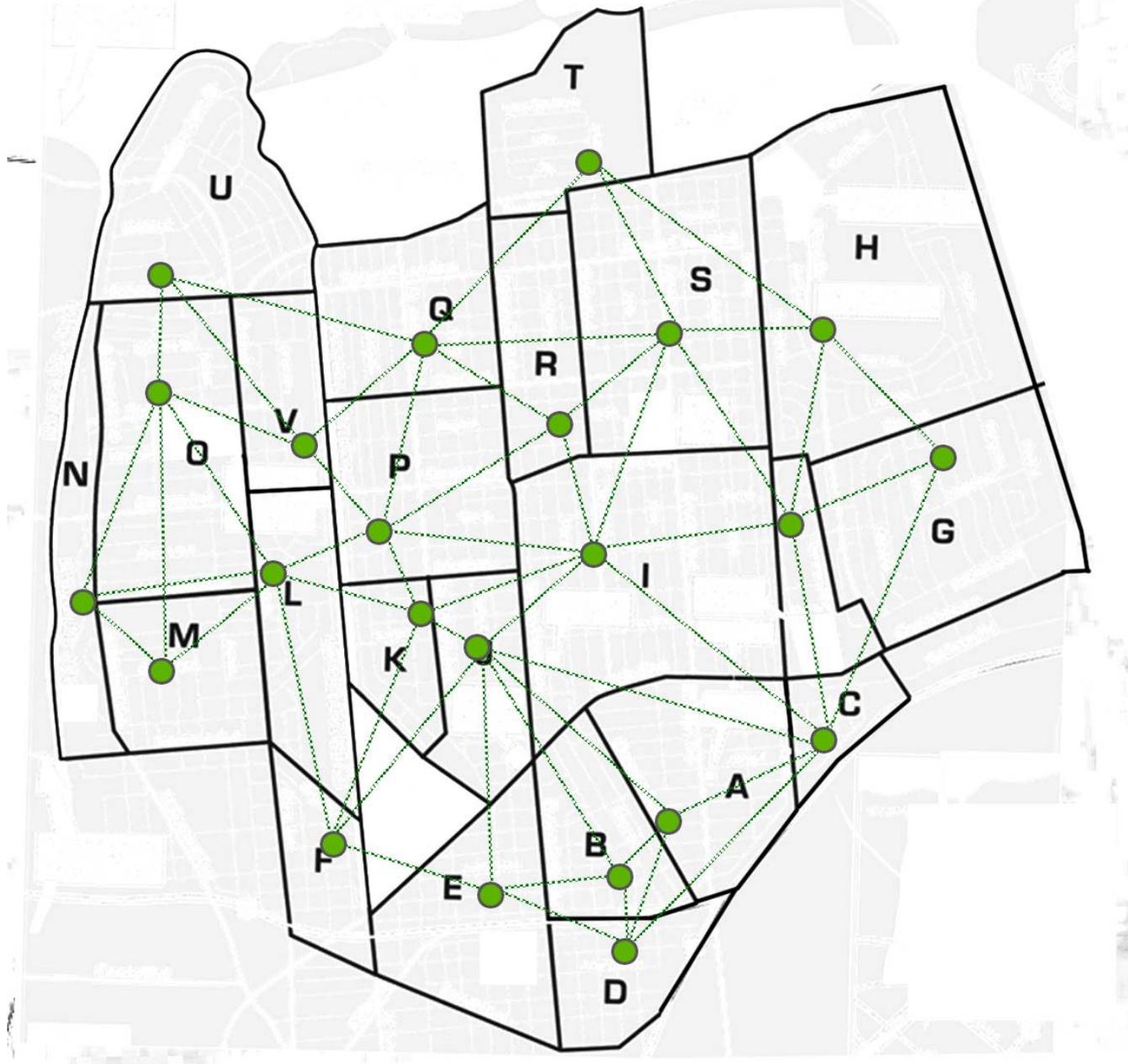
Gathering  
Area

Welcome  
Planting





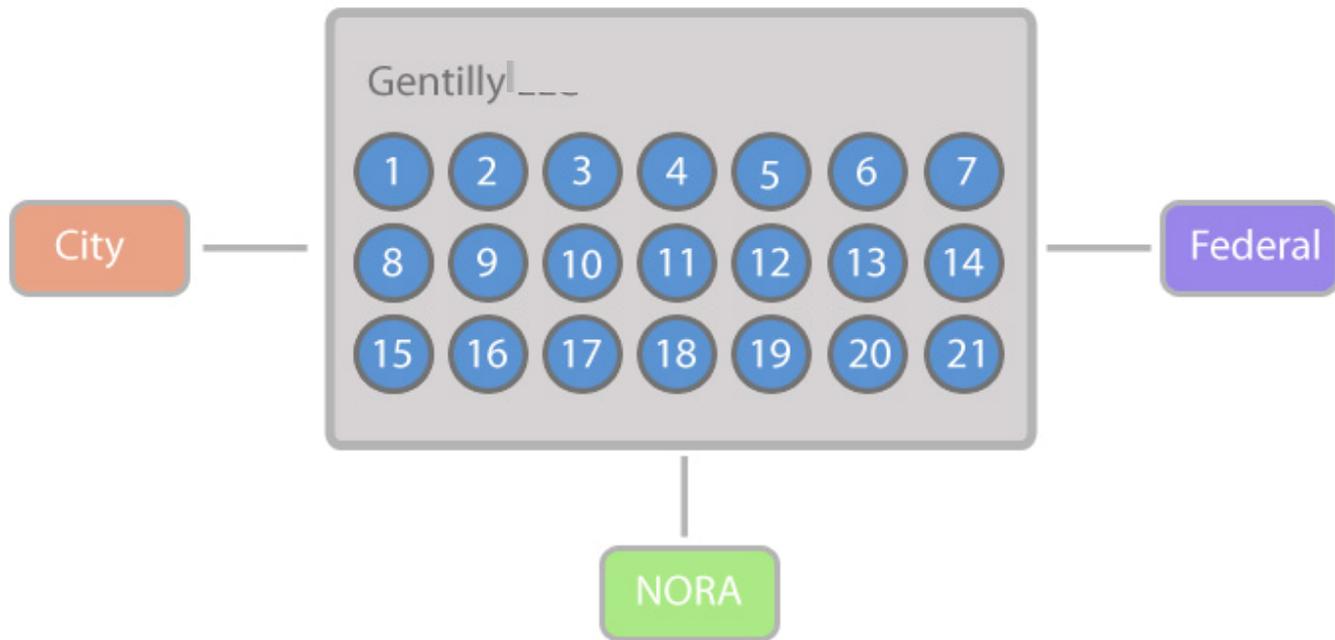


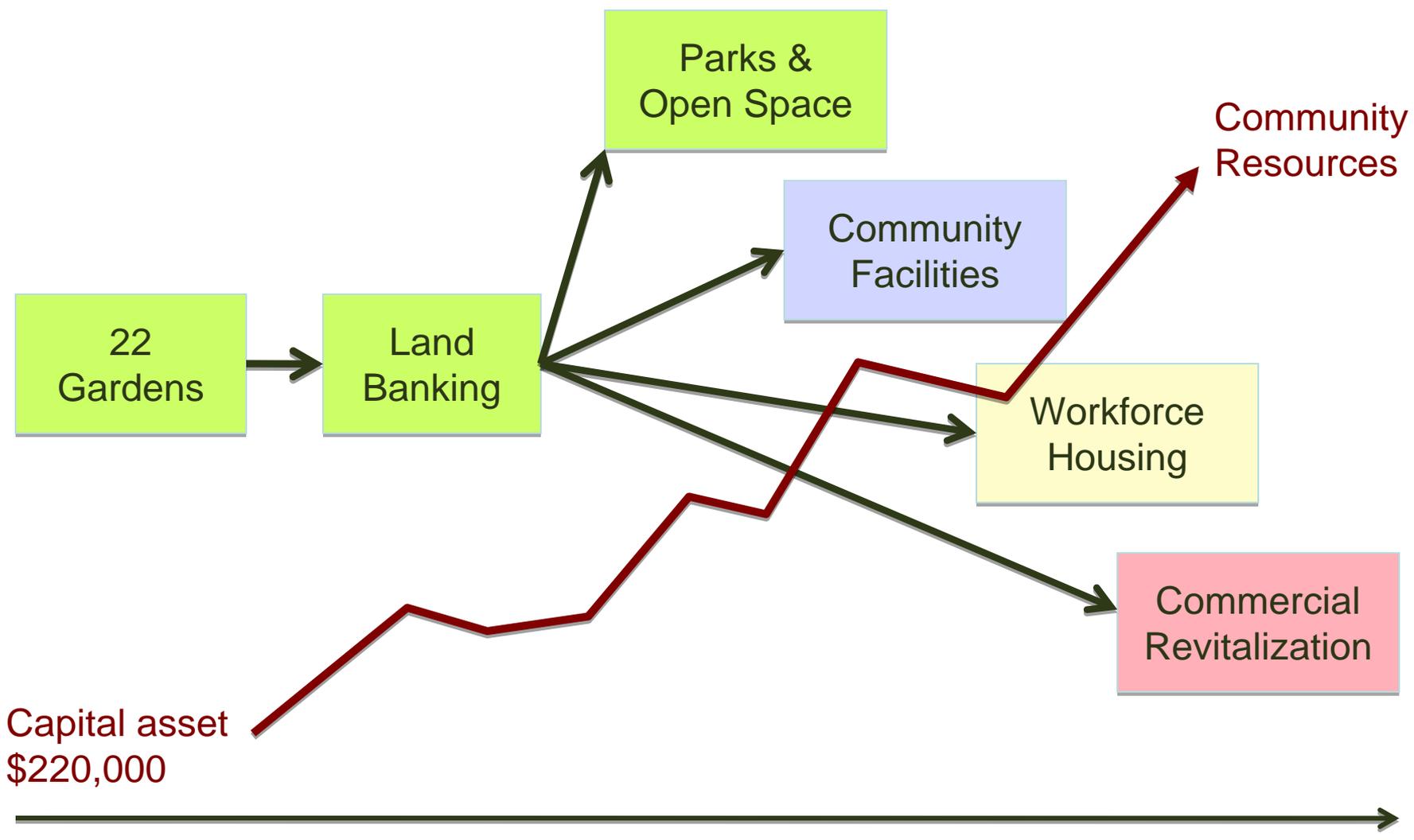


neighborhood

1







Capital asset  
\$220,000

Community  
Resources

Time



# New Orleans SDAT Team

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