

## Design and Development Summary

Quartier Vert creates a vision of a community that operates as an intersection piece between communities, corridors of activity, and a variety of users. Intertwined within each of these strategies exists a neighborhood fabric that suggests the interaction that can and should exist between the site and its neighbors. The neighborhoods occupying and surrounding the site have been shaped and shifted by patterns of development and natural disasters, but in the midst of it all, a sense of pride and rich culture history has been preserved. Capitalizing on the existing locational and socioeconomic advantages of the area, Quartier Vert seeks to revive and enhance the surrounding community.

**Heal** With the construction of two medical campuses adjacent to the site, Treme and Tulane/Gravier, benefit from an influx of residents and employees to the area. Building off of these hospitals, Quartier Vert introduces initial development along Canal Street, pulling employees and visitors from the hospital, while taking advantage of the Canal Street corridor and its access to public transit. Through a mixed-use lifestyle center, development in Quartier Vert can reintroduce commercial activity to the area and begin to heal the community both economically and socially. Fostering increased activity within the neighborhood and between community members as it develops, Quartier Vert becomes a transitive space to redefine the neighborhood.

**Live** Highlighted by public programs such as “Bring New Orleans Back” and the “Road Home Program,” there is an undeniable tone of pride and connection within the City of New Orleans. While the neighborhood has changed over time, and people have moved, the community has always been a home. In developing a lifestyle center and activating the Lafitte Greenway, Quartier Vert seeks to restore “staying power” in the neighborhood.

**Play** At a convergence of numerous communities, Quartier Vert presents a crucial link between the area’s residents. Returning activity and commercial development to the area, the proposal restores interaction between its members through a merging of uses and activities. The strongest asset to any community is its people, and in New Orleans there is no exception. Green landscaping and infrastructure weave through new development to create a variety of interaction spaces for its users. Culminating in active green spaces and plazas, Quartier Vert’s procession of walkable spaces encourages activity at locations such as Le Bloc Cinema, the Urban Ecology Center, and Le Backyard Bloc, where local residents can interact with park-goers and tourists as they embrace the culture of the neighborhood.

**Sustainability** At the heart of development in the Quartier Vert is an emphasis on sustainability. Bioswales and cisterns manage stormwater on the site, while green roofs and a high density of trees aid in the filtration of air pollution. Furthermore, strategic design of stormwater runoff channels and retention ponds begin to address the concerns that surround a site that actively involves the 100 year flood plain. Realizing these opportunities to manage and maintain the environment, Quartier Vert offers a network of green infrastructure that not only opens the area up for activity, but also serves as a key link between the neighborhood and surrounding populations.

## Financial Summary

The transformation of the Treme and Tulane/Gravier area into a thriving urban neighborhood for current and future residents is dependent on the correct land uses, building types, and active public spaces. Treme has a lot of new activity along the greenway and the construction of two major hospital campuses along Canal St. The developers can feasibly purchase parcels A,B,C,H, and I at the onset of the project to take advantage of depressed land values and ensure future ownership. Parcels J and K are also a part of the proposed redevelopment, but have high carrying costs and are not contiguous to the main sites so they will be purchased in Phase III.

The major debt financing of the project is executed through four convertible construction loans that get funded at the beginning of each phase of the development. The construction loans are priced at 75% LTC and after 24 months, their outstanding balance is rolled into a 10-year permanent loan. Refinancing at the construction loan amount will lower both the risk of default (lower LTV) and debt service expenses, freeing up some ordinary cash flow. The only source of equity comes from a multi-family developer in the area who has deep pockets, believes in the vision, and wants to see former residents of the area come back and call this area “home” again. The financial viability of this development was not contingent upon receiving any public subsidies; instead the developers hope that the city will work with them during the entitlement and approvals process.

**Phase I** creates activity along the Canal St. corridor and provides many complementary services to the VA and University Hospital campuses across the street. The repurposing of this desolate area into an outdoor lifestyle community with medical office, apartments, hotel, and dining provides diversified revenue streams and will also be the start of the linkage between Canal and the greenway.

**Phase II** is intended to be the social gathering place that brings neighbors from along the greenway into the “community” for an afternoon drink and conversation. Additionally, it will feature outdoor eating space with food trucks and live entertainment that will hopefully be a catalyst for both daytime and nighttime activity.

**Phase III** brings the neighbors to the neighborhood. After developing the retail, office, and entertainment in Phases I and II, the perception and feel of this area will have changed for the better. At this point demand for housing will have escalated and it will be possible to capture much more attractive rents along the greenway. Additionally, the higher rents will allow for more affordable units to be dispersed throughout each block.

**Phase IV** completes the neighborhood and introduces live/work townhomes to cater to the artists and provides for three medical office users to open clinics and take advantage of the proximity to the hospitals.

After the completion of Phase IV, the owners can sell off all the parcels and yield an unleveraged return of 8.59%. Another option is to sell off the mixed use parcels developed in Phase I to provide equity that the owners can reinvest in the area or diversify elsewhere. Regardless, Quartier Vert will become New Orleans newest “destination,” creating significant value for the area with no reliance on public subsidies.