

Mirabeau Water Garden

Fact Sheet | March 2018



Mirabeau Water Garden, view from above during a 2-year storm event

Site Overview

Located off Mirabeau Avenue between Bayou St. John and the London Avenue Canal in Gentilly, the Mirabeau Water Garden is a public works project that will transform a 25-acre open site into a recreational and educational amenity that reduces flood risk.

The land was donated to the City of New Orleans by the Congregation of St. Joseph on the condition that it be used to enhance and protect the neighborhood.

Vision

The Mirabeau Water Garden is a showcase project of *Resilient New Orleans*, the city's resilience strategy which outlines three key visions for the city's future: adapt to thrive, connect to opportunity, and transform city systems. The water garden vision is based on innovative site design and stormwater management features developed in the Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan. This vision was embraced by the Sisters of St. Joseph as one that, in their own words, "would manifest the holiness and the beauty of this land... and evoke a huge systemic shift in the way humans relate with water and land."

Issues to be Addressed

FLOODING – excess water the drainage system cannot handle

New Orleans receives 60 inches of rainfall per year on average. Flooding occurs during greater rates of rainfall. Our drainage system can handle one inch of rain for the first hour, and one-half inch with each following hour.

SUBSIDENCE – sinking of the land caused by dry organic soils

Low-lying areas of New Orleans, such as Gentilly, are former marshlands with organic (highly porous) soils that need water to remain stable. Pumping drains the soils of water, causing them to shrink like a sponge and swell again when it rains. This shrink-swell effect causes differential movement, which damages streets and building foundations.



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Sustainability**

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