



VISION HOUSE

A Project of Women With a Vision
in collaboration with Tulane City Center





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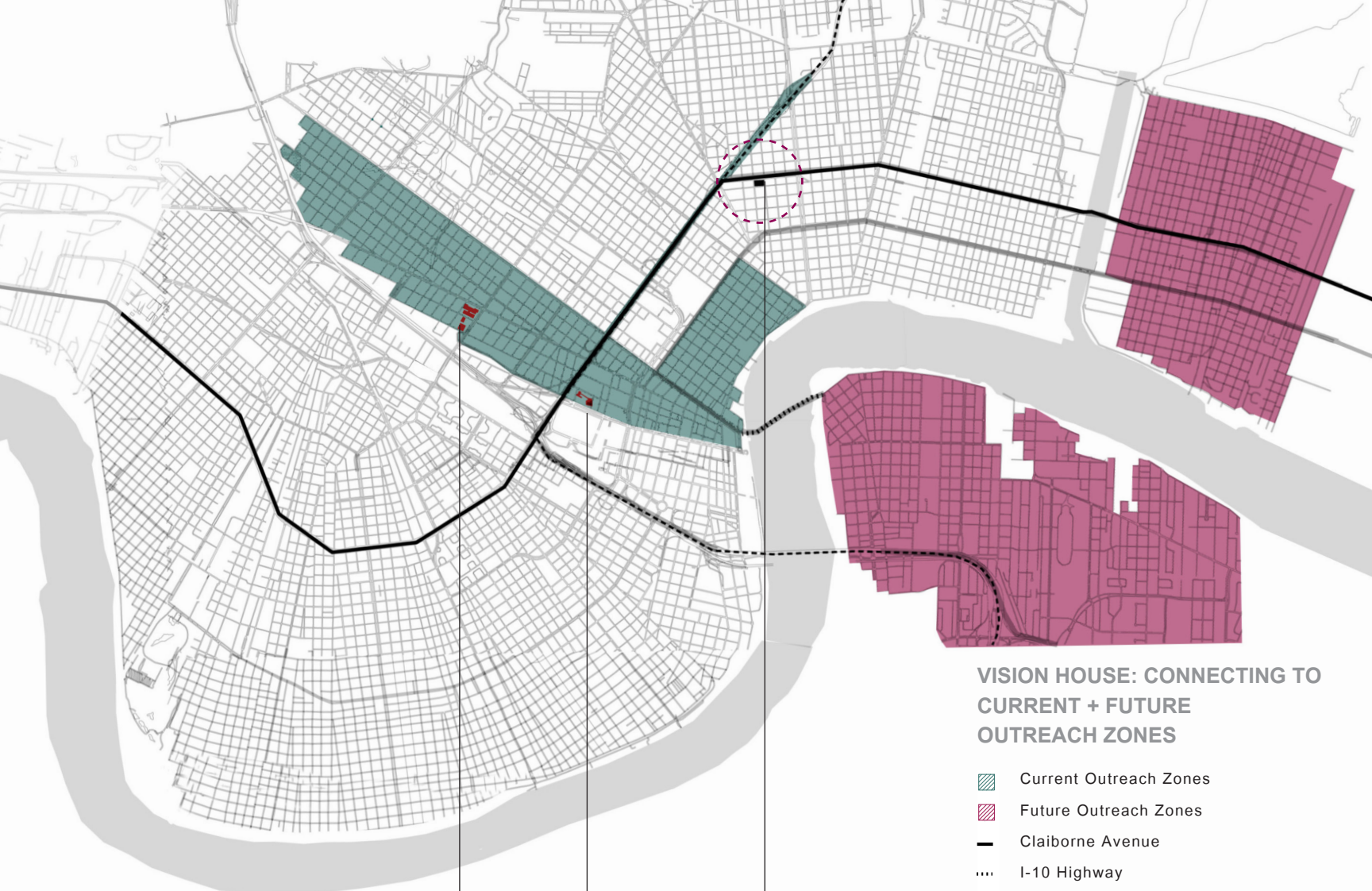
VISION HOUSE

For 26 years, **Women With A Vision** has successfully focused on women's health issues by combining service and advocacy to address the social conditions and injustices that impact our city's most marginalized women. Tantamount to this goal has been the parallel effort on work embedded within the community and work at the policy level. WWAV is impacting individual lives as well as creating opportunities for large groups of under-served citizens.






A VISION FOR PLACE-BASED SERVICE

In 2012, an arsonist destroyed WWAV's location, but not our vision for a strong, healthy community. We need your support to build our **Vision House**, a new home for WWAV and a safe space for those we serve. This project will provide our work with a permanent home connecting the communities we serve with a safe haven. Vision House would support the work WWAV initiated in 1989 and allow continued growth and evolution to serve emerging needs in New Orleans' most marginalized populations. The project will do more than simply provide a safe space for our clients, Vision House will house the WWAV Research Institute, joining local voices with those around the globe.





**VISION HOUSE: CONNECTING TO
CURRENT + FUTURE
OUTREACH ZONES**

-  Current Outreach Zones
-  Future Outreach Zones
-  Claiborne Avenue
-  I-10 Highway
-  Algiers Ferry Line

City Hall
Civil District Court

Vision House

Criminal Court
Municipal Court
Orleans Parish Prison



WOMEN WITH A VISION



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of WWAV is to improve the lives of marginalized women, their families, and communities by addressing the social conditions that hinder their health and well-being. We accomplish this through relentless advocacy, health education, supportive services, and community-based participatory research.

VISION STATEMENT

We envision an environment in which there is no war against women's bodies, in which women have spaces to come together and share their stories, in which women are empowered to make decisions concerning their own bodies and lives, and in which women have the necessary support to realize their hopes, dreams, and full potential.

HISTORY

Women With A Vision was founded in 1989 by a grass roots collective of African-American women in response to the spread of HIV/AIDS in communities of color. Recognizing that the face of HIV/AIDS had changed in the New Orleans area, with heterosexual Black women becoming the fastest growing population of newly diagnosed cases in the city and state, this initial group of women disseminated HIV/AIDS education and substance abuse resources to individuals practicing high-risk behaviors such as injection drug use and unsafe sex practices.

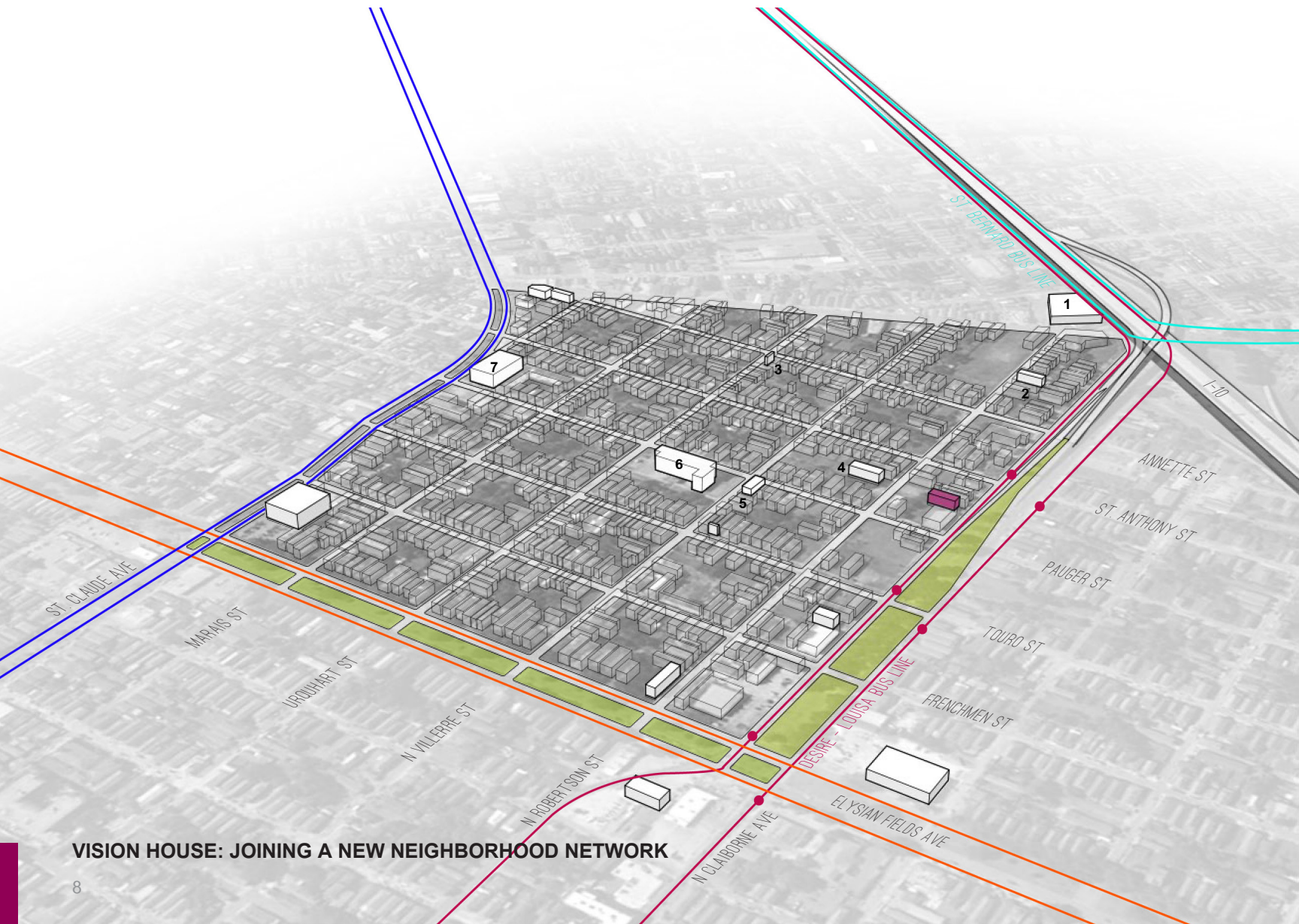
Incorporated in 1991, WWAV began educating the public health sector about the need to increase prevention efforts and expand resources for comprehensive programs to address socioeconomic root causes that increase communities' vulnerability to HIV/AIDS.

"My lowest point, I was a drug addict, I was a sex worker, everybody had given up on me. The person I am today and the things I do..are all because of Women With A Vision."

Zina Mitchel says she has been straight for two years. WWAV serves 250 people like Zina every year."

Nancy Parker, WVUE New Orleans

26 Years Active



ST. CLAUDE AVE

MIRAIS ST

URQUHART ST

N VILLEPRE ST

N ROBERTSON ST

N CLAIRBORNE AVE

ST BERNARD BUS LINE

DESIRE - LOUISA BUS LINE

I-10

ANNETTE ST

ST. ANTHONY ST

PAUGER ST

TOURD ST

FRENCHMEN ST

ELYSIAN FIELDS AVE

7

6

5

3

4

1

2

VISION HOUSE: JOINING A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK

CORE WORK

WOMEN'S HEALTH EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

WWAV conducts street outreach and small group workshops to address women's health issues, including breast and cervical cancer, diabetes, obesity, sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive justice. Our activities include: engaging in health promotion and expanding access to health care and services; developing community and academic partnerships to address community health needs; creating awareness among legislators and the general public concerning the effects of proposed and existing legislation on community health, access, and reproductive justice; and offering grass roots advocacy training workshops and leadership development.

HARM REDUCTION, OVERDOSE PREVENTION, AND DRUG POLICY REFORM

WWAV fights for drug policy grounded in science, compassion, health, and human rights. We work within community through outreach programs concerning safe use and disposal of syringes and access to community medical and psycho-social health referrals. Alongside a regular needle exchange, we offer monthly clinics on overdose prevention with the goal to give people the tools and education they need to take the best care of themselves.

HIV/AIDS AND STD PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

Since our founding, WWAV has been working to make sure that the latest HIV prevention information is in the hands of our community members who need it most. This epidemic can affect anyone, but HIV is particularly hard on women of color and women who are low income. We offer peer-directed groups providing emotional support for women living with HIV/AIDS, their families, and social networks. In 2014 WWAV partnered with the Louisiana Public Health Institute for the Louisiana Re-entry Initiative, a client-centered intervention model for formerly-incarcerated HIV-positive women that provides post-release health navigation and case management.



1

Circle Foods Store



2

7th Ward Boys and Girls
Neighborhood Garden



3

Saturday Street Library
ATD Fourth World NOLA



4

Genesis Missionary
Baptist Church



5

Mike and Ike's Grocery



6

Homer A. Plessy
Community School



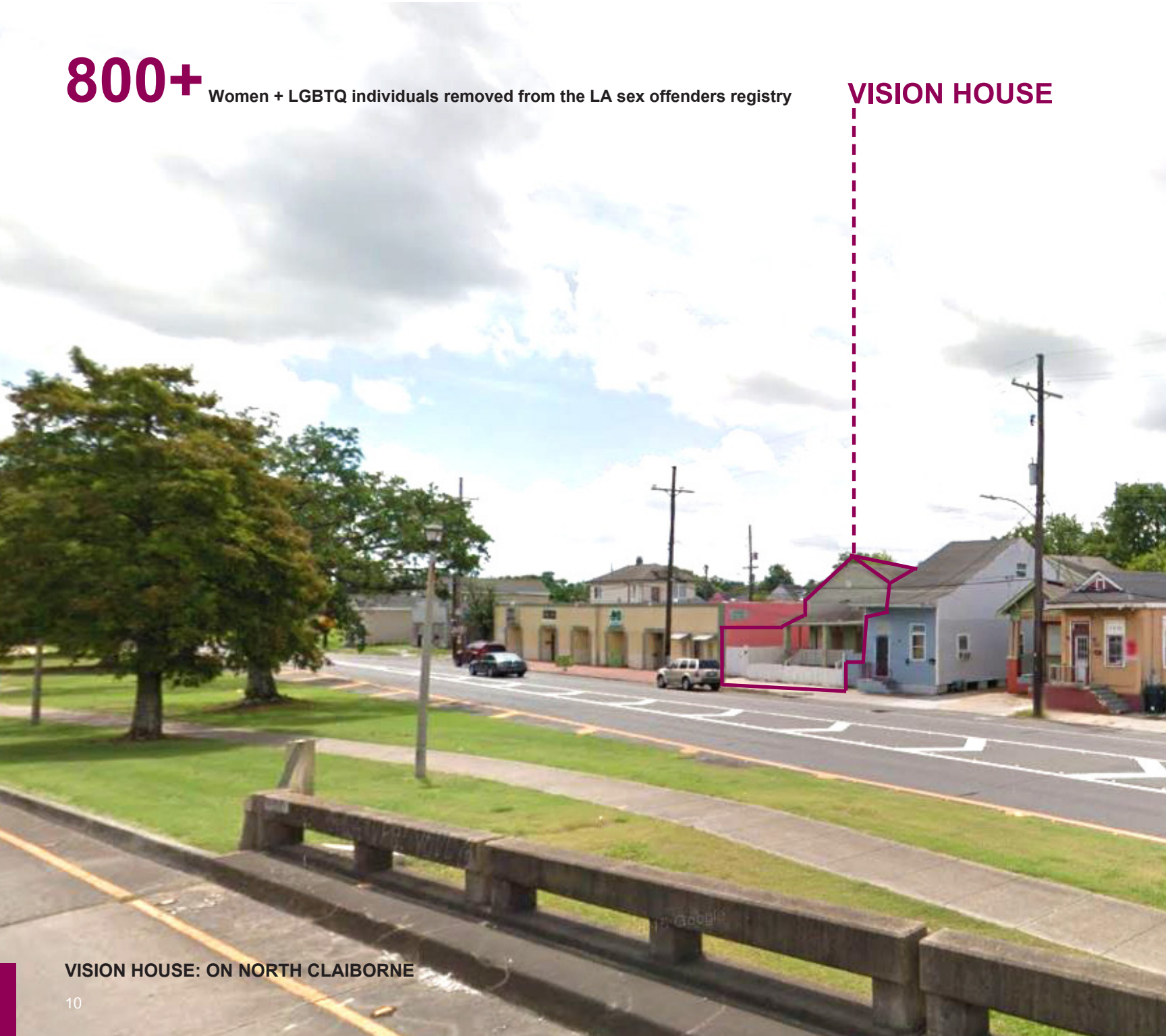
7

McDonogh 16
Home for the Aged

800+

Women + LGBTQ individuals removed from the LA sex offenders registry

VISION HOUSE



VISION HOUSE: ON NORTH CLAIBORNE

"As a black transgender woman from the rural South, she had traversed a rocky path. She endured sexual abuse as a child, and H.I.V.-positive diagnosis and eviction from her family's home as a teenager. She made her living by hustling, went to prison for fraud and theft, and suffered sexual assault by guards. She survived botched black-market medical procedures, suicide attempts and AIDS-related illnesses.

And her experience echoed a harsh reality. The rates of extreme poverty, homelessness, H.I.V. infection, attempted suicide, assault and incarceration, which are high for transgender people as a whole, are extraordinarily high for black transgender women.

"You're talking about some of the most disempowered people in our society," said Randi Ettner, a clinical psychologist in Evanston, Ill., and a board member of the World Professional Association for Transgender Health. "Some of these women have experienced constant, chronic trauma – trauma upon trauma. Yet what I also see in them is the most astounding resilience."

'A Whole New Being' How Cricket Nimmons Seized the Transgender Moment

by Deborah Sontag

The New York Times online edition 12.12.15

CORE WORK

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION

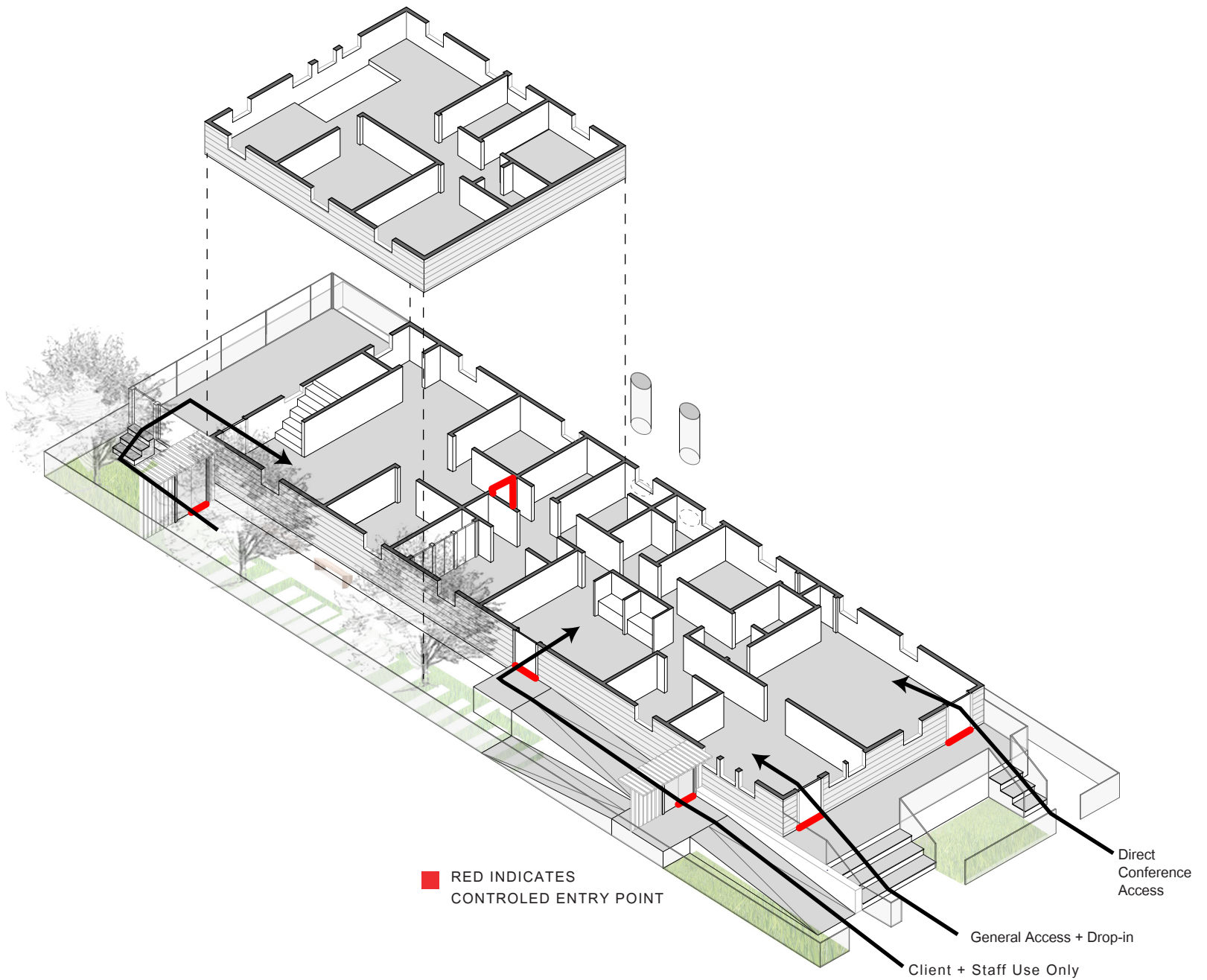
In 2014, WWAV launched a program specifically aimed at African-American and LGBTQ women survivors of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. Through our program, we raise awareness and address the stigma surrounding violence survivors while providing support services and advocating for culturally specific services across the host of violence intervention programs.

SEX-WORKER ADVOCACY

WWAV's work to address the structural environment of HIV vulnerability in New Orleans has taken us to the streets. We have always worked alongside women in New Orleans' street-based economies, strategizing with them on the everyday and long-term methods for promoting their health and well-being. In 2014, WWAV partnered with the New Orleans Racial Justice Improvement Project on the *Crossroads Diversion Program*, which offers women who are arrested on charges surrounding sex work an alternative to incarceration through classes, workshops, and case-management sessions with WWAV staff.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

WWAV works to educate our community around public policy, exploring the link between marginalized women's lives and the decisions made by policy makers and politicians. We work to 'get out the vote' and to get voting rights restored for women, post-prison. We focus our voter engagement in low-income communities of color, and we poll around issues of women's health and reproductive rights, drug policy, healthcare access, and other policies that impact our city's most marginalized populations.

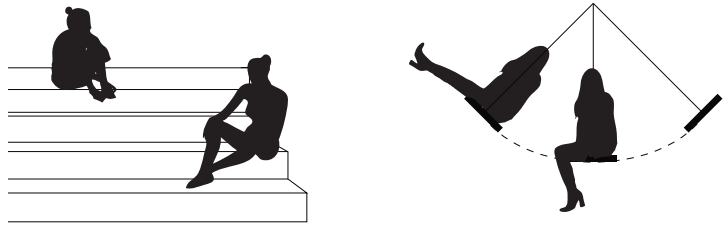


VISION HOUSE: BALANCING SAFETY WITH A WELCOMING ENTRY

DESIGN CONCEPT

ENTRY

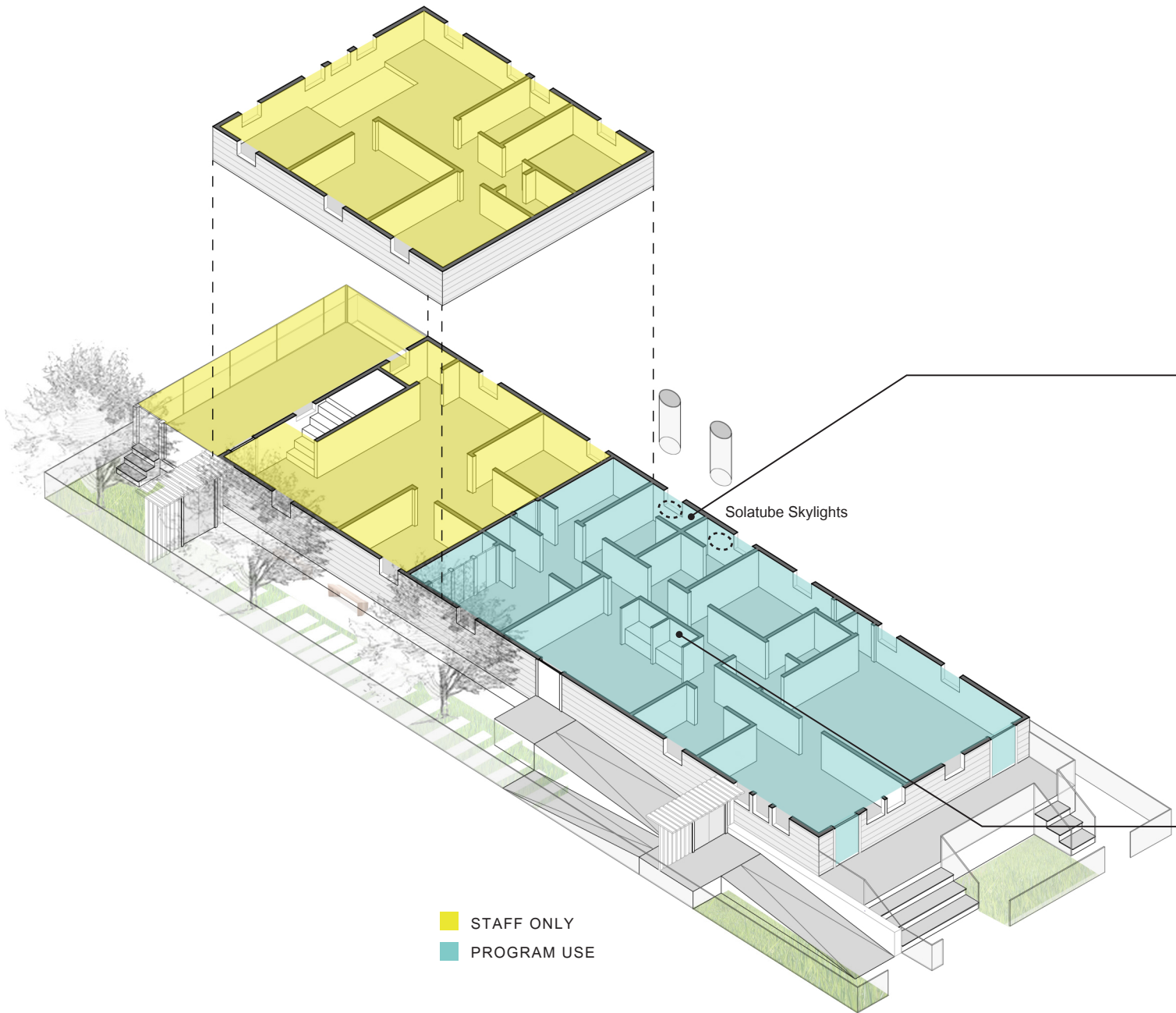
Welcoming and safety are primary in the daily operations of WWAV and therefore determine how the project meets the street. Transitions from Public to Private space first occur through two separate public entries off the porch, one directly into a Conference Room which allows outside organizations to share space without impacting the privacy or security needs of WWAV's client base. Our core work reaches a range of marginalized populations, each with distinct needs. The design for Vision House considers them all. The most vulnerable are provided a separate secure entrance through a side yard garden, augmenting safety with privacy and respite. Staff share this side entry but have a private rear entry through a dedicated Staff Porch.



GARDEN

Access to green space provides healing respite and a safe play-space for children. The side yard comprises a fundamental piece of the Vision House project, providing a beautiful safe space that allows each visitor a sense of belonging and wellbeing.



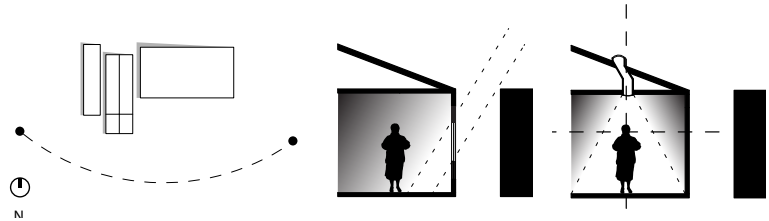


VISION HOUSE: SUPPORTING PROGRAM + STAFF NEEDS

DESIGN CONCEPT

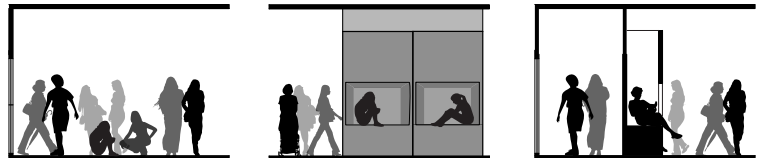
LIGHT + HEALING

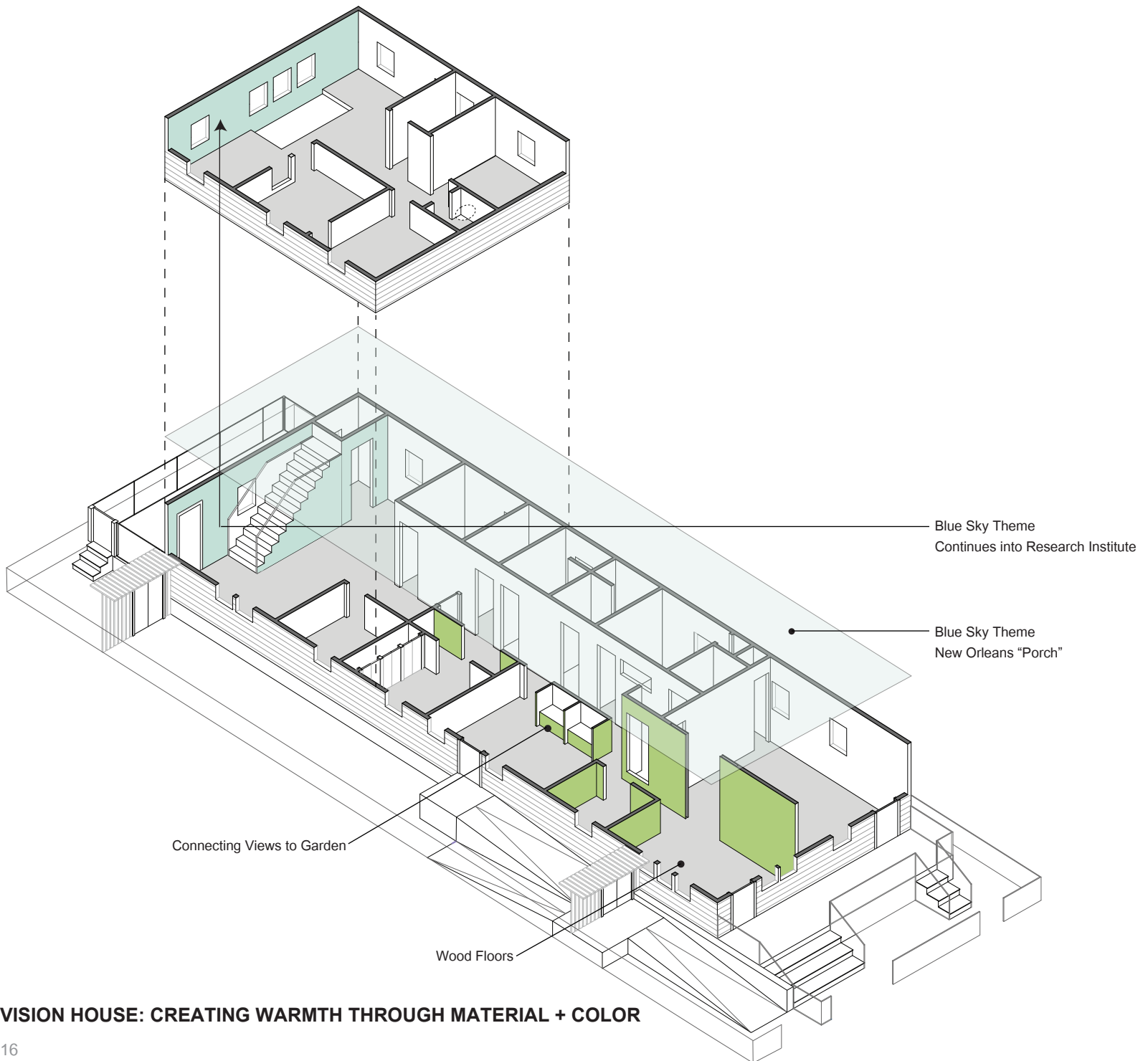
Light impacts human health greatly. Access to natural light can reduce depression, improve sleep, lessen agitation and rebalance body cycles. Adequate and appropriate exposure to light is critical for health and well-being of patients as well as staff in healthcare settings. This design includes Solatube Skylights to provide overhead lights for client service areas.



HOLDING + RESPITE

The fetal position is one of the most comfortable and familiar positions for the human body. It has been observed as a calming position for people suffering from depression, anxiety disorders, and drug addiction. This design includes two dedicated spaces for clients to self sooth and regroup.



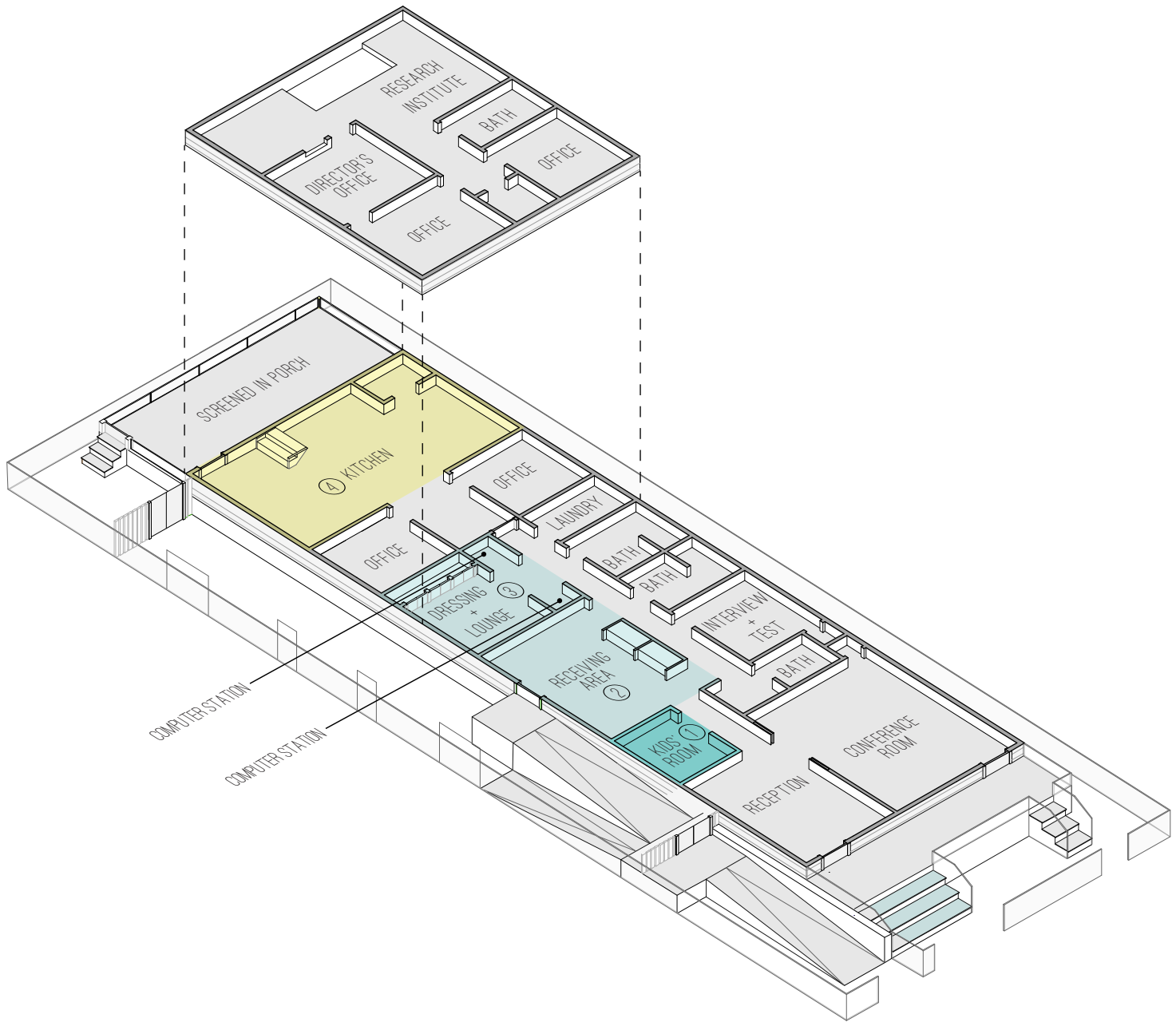


VISION HOUSE: CREATING WARMTH THROUGH MATERIAL + COLOR



2275 Clients supported annually

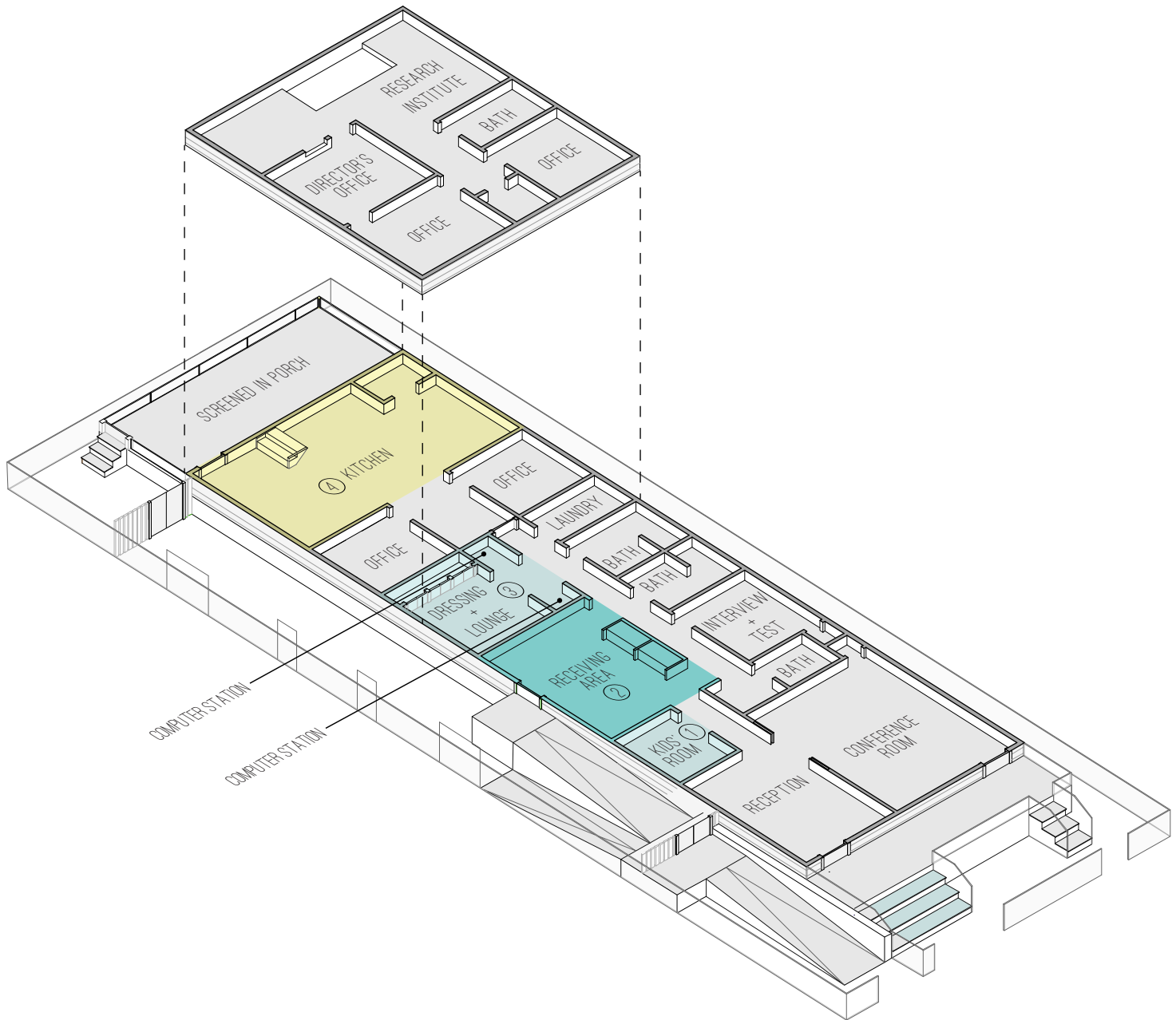




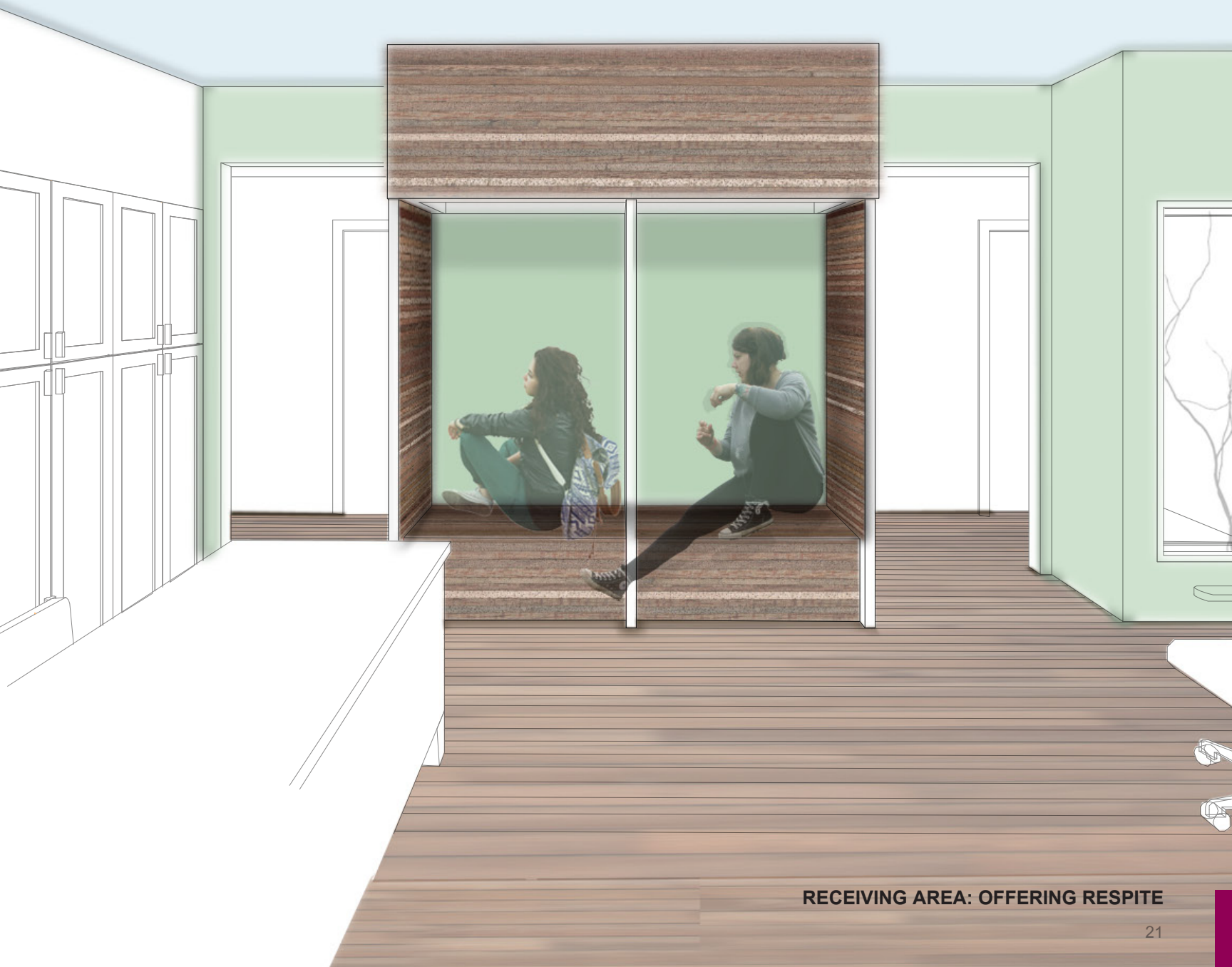
VISION HOUSE: 4 KEY SPACES



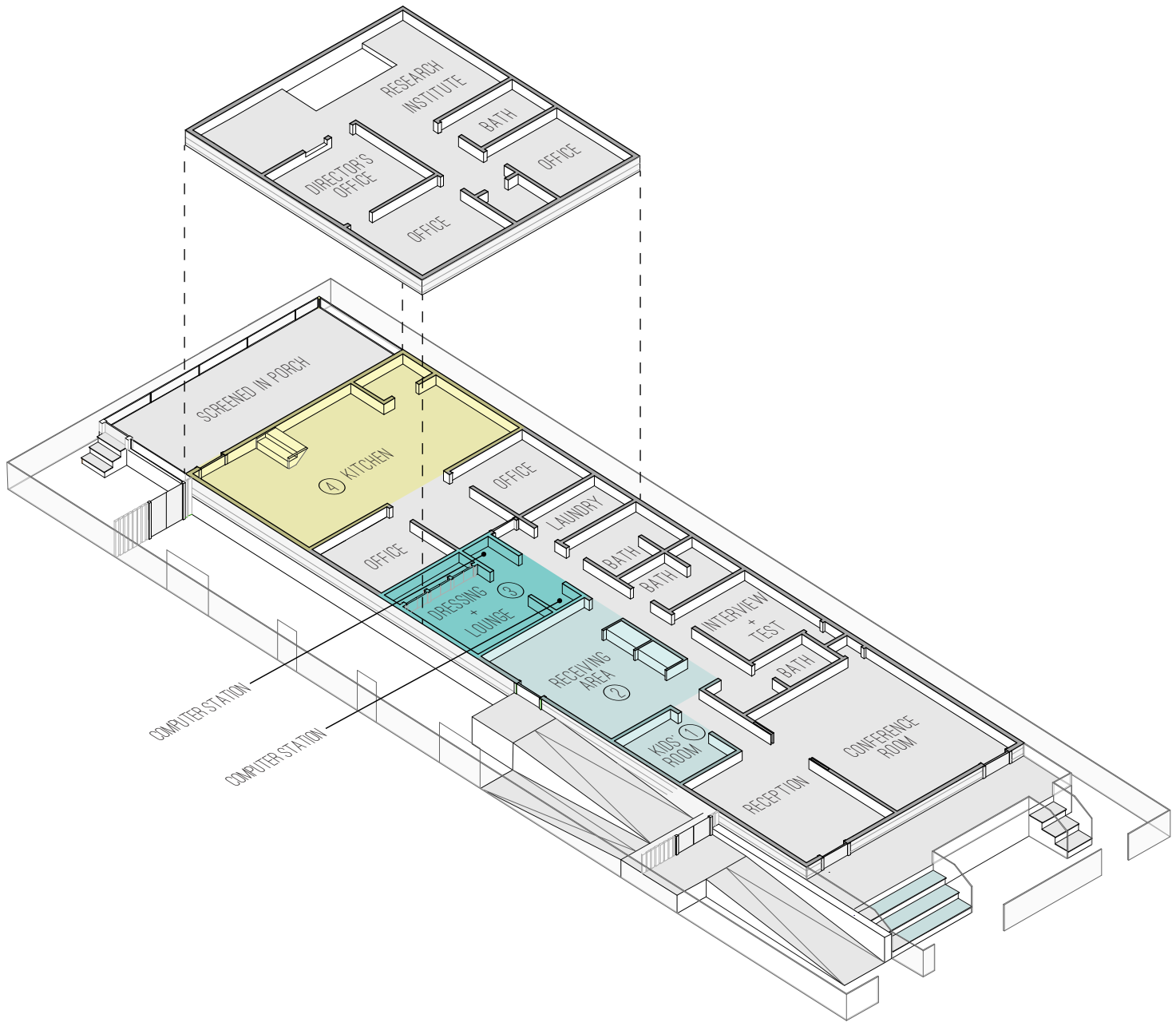
KIDS ROOM: COMFORT FOR CHILDREN



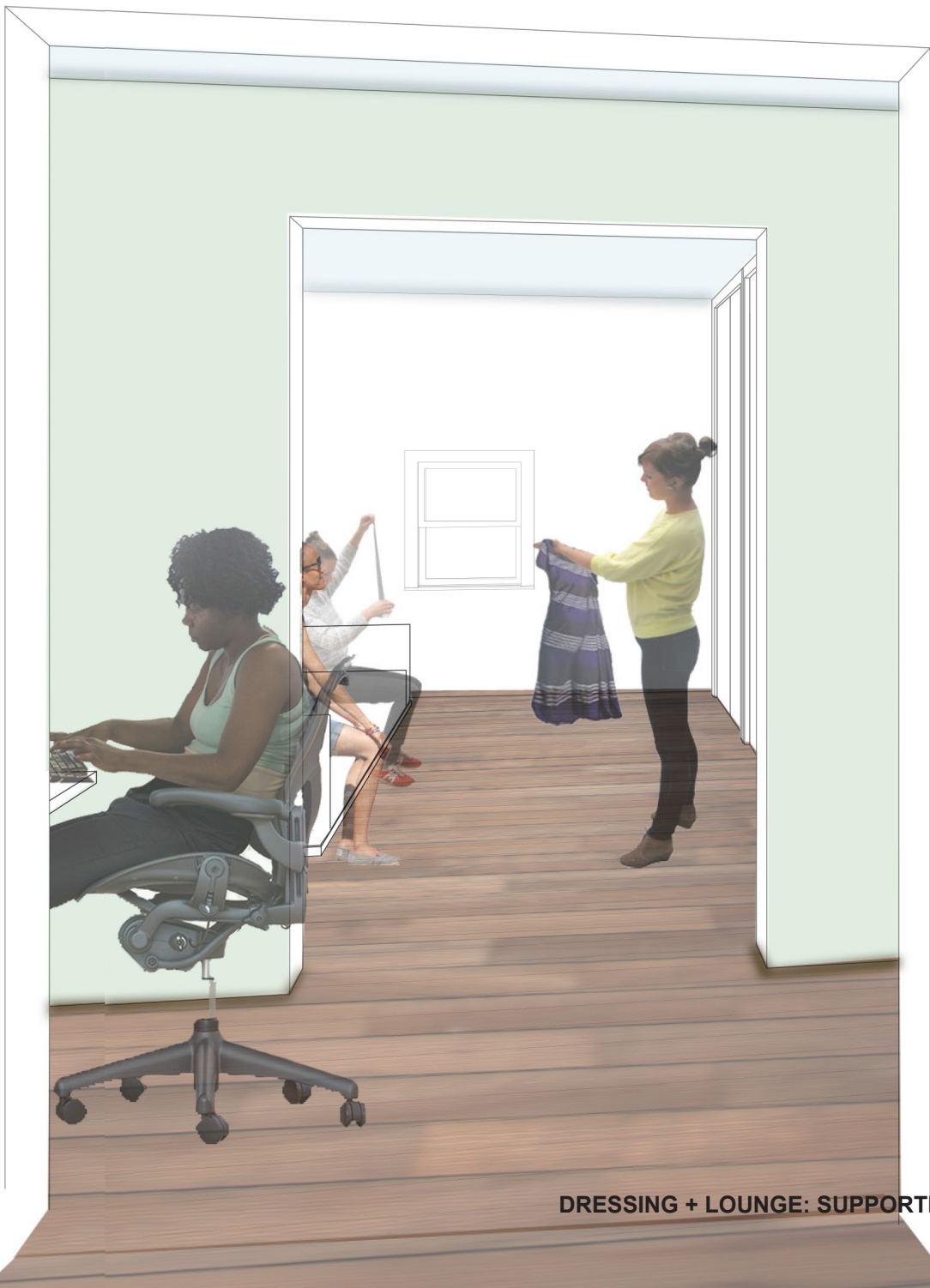
VISION HOUSE: 4 KEY SPACES



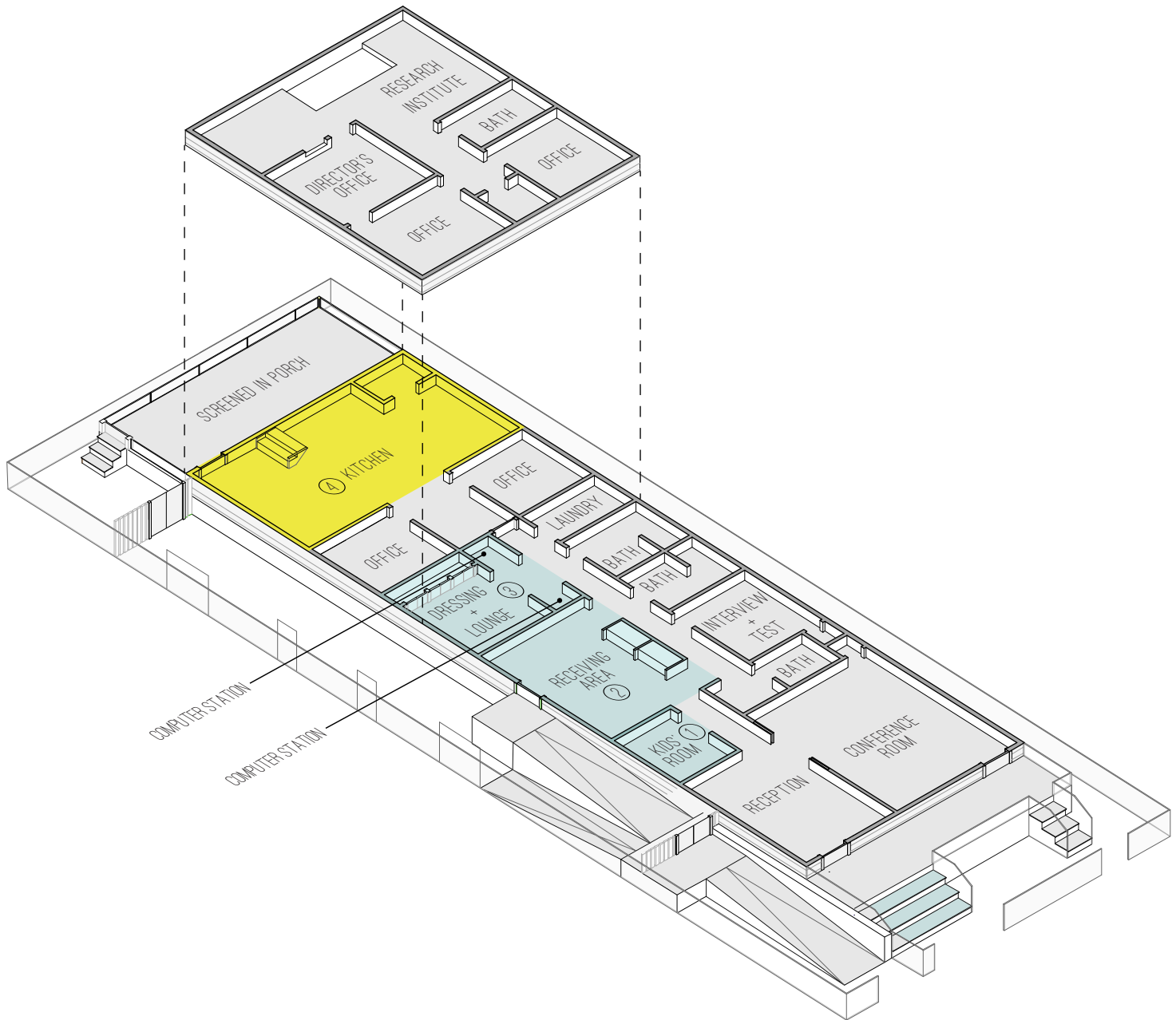
RECEIVING AREA: OFFERING RESPITE



VISION HOUSE: 4 KEY SPACES



DRESSING + LOUNGE: SUPPORTING SELF WORTH



VISION HOUSE: 4 KEY SPACES



KITCHEN: GATHERING A COMMUNITY



GARDEN VIEW



VISION HOUSE ENTRY: NEW ORLEANS PORCH



VISION HOUSE

In May 2012, after three years in a well-equipped center, WWAV suffered an arson attack. This single criminal act destroyed the building and its contents but not WWAV's conviction that **community work must be rooted in place.**

Currently, WWAV is located on N. Broad Street in a beautiful but short-term, rented space. With escalating rents in the New Orleans region and the difficulties of adjusting a generic space to our specific needs, it is imperative that WWAV build a permanent and tailored home.

After the fire, in December 2012, with the aid of stalwart supporters and community partners WWAV acquired a property embedded in the fabric of the 7th Ward, centrally located on North Claiborne Avenue in a district with a range of residential and commercial resources. We have begun plans to transform an existing camelback shotgun-double into our **VISION HOUSE**, with a targeted reopening date of January 1, 2017. The new site will offer health and education resources in an open and secure environment that has the scale and feel of a typical New Orleans home.

VISION HOUSE will provide an anchor for WWAV's work with New Orleans' most marginalized communities. It supports a home for our advocacy and policy work, a hub for local and global researchers, and room to grow a stronger, healthier New Orleans.

Please help make our vision a reality.

14 Permanent Staff

17 Community Partners

The whole **>** sum of its parts



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PROJECT LEAD

Marianne Desmarais *R.A., LEED AP BD+C*

PROJECT TEAM

Lindsay Girardeau *Tulane School of Architecture Student*

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Women With A Vision

Deon Haywood *Executive Director*

wwav-no.org

This project was selected by a jury of past partners, design professionals, and TCC staff through an annual Request for Proposals.

Made possible by support from Johnson Controls Incorporated.

