







## **LOWER GARDEN DISTRICT STRATEGIC RENAISSANCE PLAN**

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### **Forward**

The Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan is a long range neighborhood study which addresses land use, transportation and infrastructure concerns. Its recommendations build on the extraordinary efforts by residents, businesses and property owners of the Lower Garden District to produce a common vision for the community's future.

The Renaissance Plan was prepared in accordance with the City Planning Commission's Local Renaissance District Administration policy, a policy which emphasizes community participation. On February 25, 1997, the City Planning Commission unanimously adopted the Plan and forwarded its recommendations to the New Orleans City Council. Councilman Thomas, whose district includes the Lower Garden District, proposed two amendments to the Plan (shown on the following map), to retain the existing C-1A General Commercial zoning on Prytania St., and to extend the RM-2A Multiple-Family zoning on Camp St. to the Pontchartrain Expressway. Following a public hearing at its June 5, 1997 meeting, the City Council adopted the amended Plan by unanimous vote.

The City Planning Commission wishes to thank the community groups, individuals and City government agencies who participated and assisted in the formulation of the Plan. The Commission is also grateful to the Port of New Orleans and Kingsley House for hosting public meetings and hearings in the neighborhood.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Lower Garden District is a historic neighborhood ideally situated along the Mississippi River near to the tourism and shipping opportunities offered by the central riverfront area and the Port of New Orleans. With a large and valuable stock of historic architecture, and significant quantities of prime, riverfront land available for development, the Lower Garden District has ample reason for optimism in the years ahead.

Problems of crime and disinvestment have continued to impede revitalization efforts, however, prompting neighborhood leaders, business owners and residents to join together to formulate a vision for the future. Following two studies completed in December, 1993 and March, 1995, a Master Plan was developed by the neighborhood which articulated a common set of goals and land use policies as a guide for further action. A major focus of the Master Plan was a revitalization program for the St. Thomas development which will include mixed-income housing and a new site design to rejoin St. Thomas with the rest of the community.

The City Planning Commission, in consultation with the neighborhood, has prepared the following Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan to address specific zoning, transportation and capital improvement needs within the neighborhood. The Strategic Plan contains a number of recommendations designed to build on the neighborhood's existing strengths, as well as to maximize future opportunities and serve as a blueprint for further action. The analysis and recommendations contained herein, with the consideration and approval of the City Council, will become a framework for the neighborhood's long-term development and a basis for further consensus-building.

Five major geographic components of the neighborhood are highlighted: the residentially zoned areas, including New St. Thomas, the Magazine and Prytania Street corridors, St. Charles Avenue and Lower Tchoupitoulas. For the residentially zoned areas, the RM-2A Multiple Family district is recommended as a district specifically designed for historic neighborhoods, and one which is particularly well suited to accommodate the site and building dimensions of the Lower Garden District. No overall downzoning is recommended, though a system of Transfer Development Rights is proposed as a means of providing a positive incentive for homeowners to come into compliance with the density regulations. As to New St. Thomas, the zoning should be tailored to fully accommodate its new design and operations once the redevelopment plans are finalized, so as to provide maximum assistance and support in assuring its success.

The B-1A Neighborhood Business district is recommended for a portion of Magazine and Prytania Streets, in order to encourage the smaller scale businesses found along these commercial corridors, while design guidelines and restrictions on traffic generating uses are recommended for St. Charles Avenue. SI-A Special Industrial zoning is recommended for the industrial and commercial areas on the downriver edge of the study area along the Pontchartrain Expressway, and B-1A Neighborhood Business zoning is recommended for the area downriver of the

Schwegmann grocery store on Annunciation Street to encourage its revitalization through small business development. Various zoning recommendations are made to strengthen the residential component along Jackson Avenue, as well as to allow for the re-development of the former New Orleans General Hospital into offices, apartments and various other uses compatible with the adjoining residential areas.

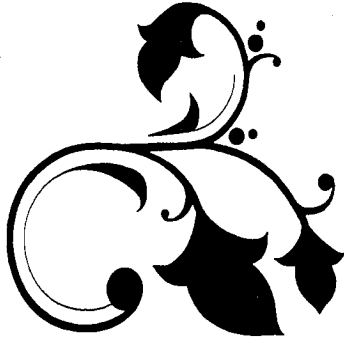
In order to capitalize on the development potential offered both by the Port of New Orleans and the tourist oriented developments along the riverfront, a new SI-A Special Industrial district is recommended for the area bordering Tchoupitoulas Street. This district will allow a broad variety of activities, including light manufacturing, commercial, retail and residential uses, with design review procedures to promote compatibility between new developments and the existing urban fabric. On the lakeside of Tchoupitoulas, downriver of Orange Street, C-1A General Commercial zoning is recommended in order to encourage retail, office, hotel and residential developments in conjunction with the business and tourist activities in the adjoining Central Business District. The C-1A district will also provide a transition between the more intense uses along the waterfront and the quieter residential neighborhoods on Annunciation Street. Finally, a Mixed-Use Planned Community District overlay and demolition guidelines are recommended as specific zoning tools which will help in the long-term development of the area.

In terms of transportation, the Tchoupitoulas Corridor will bring many improvements to the area, not the least of which will be the diversion of truck traffic away from residential streets. Several street openings are recommended, including St. Andrew, St. Mary, Chippewa, Laurel and Adele Streets in the New St. Thomas. Based on feedback obtained during meetings with the neighborhood, directional changes are recommended for some of the small residential connector streets, in order to improve safety and to complete the existing one-way pairings. Street re-surfacing, improved drainage and transit options are also discussed. Various capital improvements are recommended, such as waterfront access and a new St. Andrew Street Wharf promenade, the relocation of utility lines underground, additional street trees and landscaping, and park amenities.

These measures, together with the zoning recommendations, establish a framework which will allow the Lower Garden District to capitalize on its strengths and diversity in the years ahead, and to grow in a way that will benefit its residents and the City as a whole.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Lower Garden District is a 19th century New Orleans neighborhood perched on the threshold of a new era of prosperity. Strategically nestled in a region bounded by the banks of the Mississippi River, the Central Business District's emerging Warehouse District, and the more affluent Garden District, this community is positioned to become a revitalized place to live and work. However, neighborhood leaders, residents, and activists have recognized that ignoring the lingering problems of disinvestment and urban decay in the community will inhibit any meaningful improvements.



Evolution of the Lower Garden District has followed the typical pattern in the city where large plantation holdings were subdivided into residential developments, or faubourgs. Over the years, port activities gave birth to light and heavy industrial uses that isolated the residents from the river, and the subsequent development of the suburbs drew people and commercial enterprises from the neighborhood. Today, the tourism industry holds an opportunity for the Lower Garden District to reap economic benefits. Expansion of the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, the arrival of gaming in the City, and the port infrastructure improvements are indicative of a much larger and continuing shift in the City's economic strategy: a transformation from an oil and gas-based economy to one driven by tourism and by the expansion of its port facilities. Moreover, embracing tourism has led to the long overdue realization of the benefits that access to the river has for the citizens of the City, as well as for its visitors.

For many years the architectural and urban fabric was touted as building blocks that could be the foundation on which to rebuild this community. However, the District's unique architectural and cultural diversities are only two of the precious resources possessed by the community. The most extensive collection of 19th century Greek Revival architectural building stock in the country houses a historically diverse population. The community is home to residents positioned all along the economic spectrum: from the families of the St. Thomas Housing Development, of which more than 86% live below the poverty level, to the families living in newly renovated single family dwellings rivaling those of the adjacent Garden District.

Furthermore, the neighborhood enjoys a distinct range of commercial enterprises, from the small-scale retail uses of Magazine Street to the Convention Center which, once Phase III is complete, is projected to generate a total annual economic impact of \$3.7 billion. In the future, the Tchoupitoulas Corridor will bring about much needed transportation improvements that will facilitate port-related activities. This new piece of infrastructure can only serve to increase economic opportunities along Tchoupitoulas Street.

One common thread already running through the community is an appreciation of the area's diversity and an intent to preserve this diversity both on the residential and economic levels. However, these contrasts naturally lead to dissimilar views and priorities of life. The community must integrate its disparate entities into a unified whole or suffer the consequences of fragmentation. Therein lies the key to the successful revitalization of the Lower Garden District neighborhood.

An enormous step has been taken by the community in meeting this challenge through the formation of the Community Resource Partnership. The area's divergent populations have been brought together to articulate a common vision of the desired future of their neighborhood. A vision has already been articulated in the Partnership's adopted master plan, "*Plan for the Lower Garden District*." The Plan builds on the involvement of The Urban Land Institute's Advisory Services Panel and its report: "*An Evaluation of Revitalization Opportunities and Economic Development Strategies for the Lower Garden District*." Following are the five established goals stated in the Partnership's master plan: Attract new and retain existing residents; Create an area safe from crime; Encourage economic development; Preserve and enhance the housing stock; and Restore life to the St. Thomas Public Housing Development.

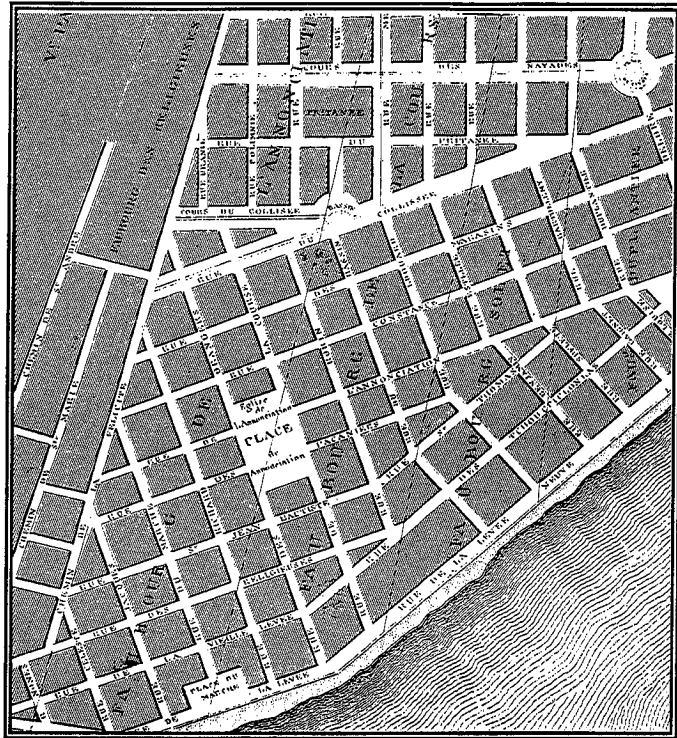
The City Planning Commission is now charged with the responsibility to act as a partner to help the community successfully navigate the next stage of its ongoing journey. As discussed above, the community is subjected to many forces that are, simultaneously, both opportunities and threats to building a cohesive and economically viable neighborhood. The difficulty lies in how to identify its assets and liabilities and harness those forces for positive change. An additional responsibility of the Commission is to ensure that changes in the Lower Garden District are integrated into a citywide context in a harmonious and coherent fashion.

The Commission is conducting the study according to its Local Renaissance District Administration policy, and during 1996 the staff held a series of meetings with individual neighborhood associations, followed by two public meetings. (Minutes of these meetings are contained in the appendix.) In concert with the neighborhood and according to Commission policy, the City Planning Commission staff proposes the following zoning, transportation and capital improvement recommendations for public review and approval by the City Planning Commission and the City Council. Once enacted, a Strategic Plan Implementation Committee, composed of neighborhood representatives, will be established to oversee the implementation of the plan's recommendations. The Strategic Renaissance Plan will embody the articulated proactive vision of the residents and property owners and the steps necessary to realize that growth and development.



## II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The first owner of record in the area now known as the Lower Garden District was Jean Baptiste Sieur de Bienville, who founded the city in 1718 and acted as first colonial governor. In 1726 he sold the land from Canal Street to Felicity Street to the Jesuits. When the Jesuits were banished from the colony, after the French and Indian War, the land was subdivided and sold separately at auction. The first parcel became Faubourg Ste. Marie, the core of American settlement. The next parcel became Faubourg Duplantier, which ran from the current site of the Contemporary Arts Center to the Pontchartrain Expressway, the downriver boundary of the study area. Beyond this were Faubourgs Solet, Rue de la Course and Annunciation.



Map of the Faubourgs de l'Annonciation, de la Course, Solet and Duplantier, 1815.

Bartholeme Lafon, who executed the plans for the Faubourg Marigny, was engaged to design a street plan for the area, "... to serve as an enlargement of the Faubourg St. Mary."<sup>1</sup> He extended the existing streets, Camp, Magazine and Constance. To these he added others paralleling the riverbank, including Tchoupitoulas, which followed the route of the River Road, and New Levee (now South Peters) which ran across the growing batture land. Lafon conceived the plan for the entire area from Julia to Felicity Streets as a single unit.

He chose the nine Muses of Greek mythology for the names of the streets running perpendicular to the river. The single most outstanding feature of his plan was Coliseum Square. The plan included a basin and canals to drain nearby properties, a broad parkway, a *Collesee* and *Pritanee*, a grand classical school. The Coliseum and the classical school exist only in street names, but this area established many of the classical principles that found expression in subsequent street plans for Uptown New Orleans.

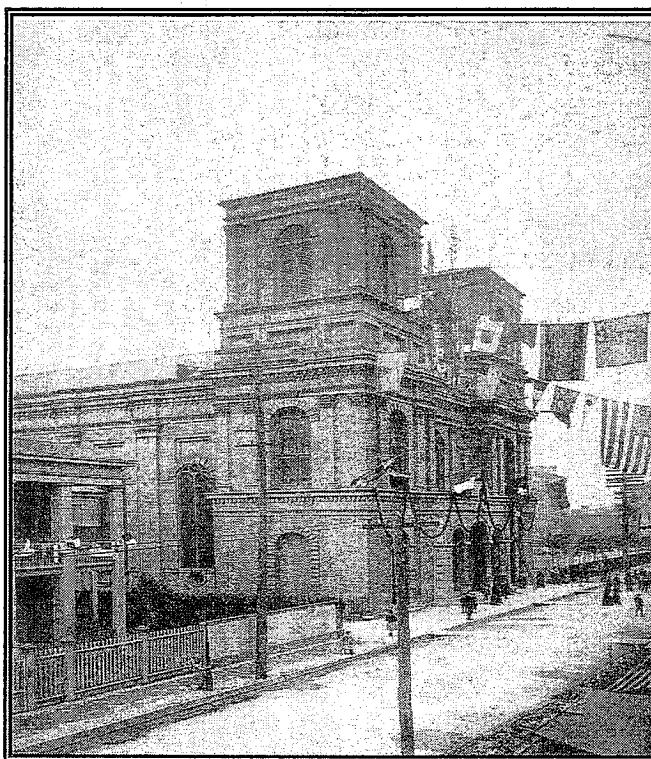
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<sup>1</sup> Wilson, Samuel and Bernard Lemann New Orleans Architecture: Volume I The Lower Garden District Friends of the Cabildo and Pelican Press, Gretna, 1979, at p. 9.

In 1780, the Ursuline Order purchased the property beyond Felicity Street. They had Lafon and F.V. Potier draw up plans based on the expectation of growth in the city. By 1813 these lots were nearly all sold. Marguerite Wiltz Milhet Panis, owner of the next parcel, hired Potier to draw up a plan to subdivide her property. The plan called for a grand *Cours Panis* (now Jackson Avenue) to run down the center of the property, right next to the plantation house. Two streets were added on either side.

The area beyond Felicity became “the American city of Lafayette.” Jefferson Parish was carved out of Orleans Parish in 1825 and Faubourg Lafayette became the parish seat.<sup>2</sup> When the separated parts of the city were reunited in 1852 it was moved out of Jefferson Parish and became the Fourth District of New Orleans. In the years before the Civil War this became the neighborhood of choice for the elite of the American city, a choice evidenced by the magnificent houses they built for themselves around Coliseum Square.

A very different residential population was growing in the areas closer to the river. Between 1820 and 1860 half a million immigrants arrived in New Orleans. Many Irish were among those who came to the city after the Louisiana Purchase. However, after 1830, a flood of Irish famine refugees washed up on American shores. Many came in ships which left New Orleans laden with cotton for Liverpool. On the return trip they would fill their holds with Irish refugees, who paid a small passage but were primarily carried for ballast. Upon arrival they were put to work on the New Basin Canal. At about \$2,000 each, slaves were a far more expensive source of labor than Irishmen. When the Canal was finished, the Irish replaced blacks working on the wharves.<sup>3</sup>



The St. Alphonsus Church, circa 1908.

Some Irish settled in the Third Municipality (Marigny), but the majority found a home above

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<sup>2</sup> Breide, Kathryn C. "A History of the City of Lafayette," in Louisiana Historical Quarterly, No. 4, 1937 pp.904-910, 922.

<sup>3</sup> Niehaus, Earl F. Irish in New Orleans Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1965, p.28.

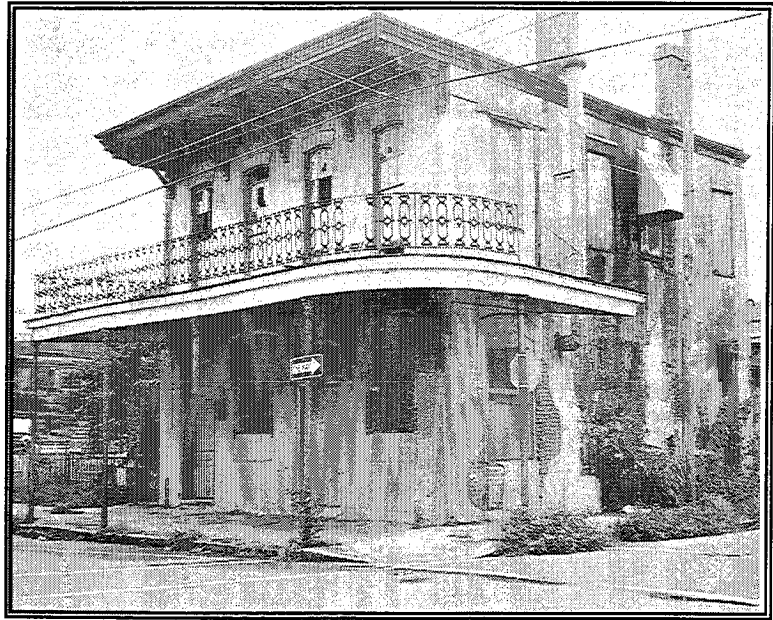
Canal Street. They were especially concentrated around the St. Mary's Market (on Diamond Street), near the turning basin of the Canal and along Julia Street.

"St. Thomas Street, however, was the Irish residential center which enjoyed the reputation for being the roughest Irish quarter . . . In alleys Irish roughs waylaid other Irish roughs . . . (in) the yellow fever epidemic of 1853 . . . the first victims were in Lynch's Row and other blocks and courts in the filthy Irish quarter."<sup>4</sup>

If not for the recurring epidemics, which hit the immigrants particularly hard, New Orleans might have been an American Dublin. The City was the third largest port of entry for the Irish. As the more prosperous Americans moved to houses in the Garden District, the Irish replaced them. In the 1850 census Irish were the majority within the Second District.<sup>5</sup>

Gradually industrial and warehouse uses replaced the residences below Felicite. The return of prosperity late in the 19th century led this area to become largely industrial, causing the Irish to move farther upriver. They especially congregated in the area around Adele and St. Thomas Streets, which became known as the Irish Channel. Among the institutions that grew up to serve the needs of this immigrant community was the Kingsley House, a community center which is now celebrating its 100 year anniversary. Between 1938 and 1941 the Irish Channel was razed and replaced with Louisiana's first public housing development -- St. Thomas.

With the change in standards of industrial architecture and the use patterns within the Port, the industrial and warehousing functions have declined in the area. Without a source of new economic investment and job growth, the Lower Garden District saw a period of disinvestment and decline in both the business and residential sectors. Since 1940, the



Historic mixed-use structure on Magazine Street.

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<sup>4</sup> Pinner, Sylvia The Irish Channel, Tulane masters thesis, 1954, p.20.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, pp. 8, 55.

population of the Lower Garden District has decreased from 12,130 to 7,431.<sup>6</sup> Equally significant is the loss that has taken place in the businesses serving the residents who have remained. The groceries, hardware stores, pharmacies, barber shops and dry cleaners which provided the commercial backbone of the neighborhood have nearly disappeared in the years since World War II. At the same time, other businesses which hardly existed in the neighborhood in 1940, such as antique stores and tourist hotels, have increased.

By examining the Polk Directories for the years 1940 to 1990, a clear picture emerges of how the business make up of the Lower Garden District has changed in the postwar years.<sup>7</sup> Some of this change can be attributed to the national trend toward the concentration of retail businesses in suburban shopping centers. The degree of change, however, speaks to an overall decline which has only recently begun to reverse itself.

<b>Businesses in the Lower Garden District 1940-1990</b>						
	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990
Groceries	34	28	28	13	9	10
Restaurants	0	15	14	12	5	4
Bars	12	22	26	18	12	2
Hardware	7	5	10	4	4	1
Drug Stores	6	7	2	1	0	0
Antique Stores	3	4	3	12	16	23
Hotel/Motel	0	2	2	2	2	6
Freight/ Warehouse	11	13	14	17	12	2
Industrial	10	26	33	42	48	28
Manufacturing	5	5	12	5	5	2

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Census.

<sup>7</sup> Vesey, Catherine M., Tourism as Community Revitalization in the Vieux Carre: Costs and Benefits, College of Urban and Public Affairs, University of New Orleans, Unpublished Doctoral Research, 1996. This paper examines the change in the nature of the businesses located in the Vieux Carre during this period, and assesses the effects of the growth in tourism on the commercial mix. The Lower Garden District is also considered for purposes of comparison.

The loss in the number of neighborhood service businesses can be seen clearly.<sup>8</sup> Some, like groceries, have declined steadily throughout the period. Others, such as bars and hardware stores, increased during the early postwar period before their numbers decreased in recent years. This same pattern is seen among the industrial and warehousing uses, which peaked during the 1970's and dropped off precipitously during the last decade.

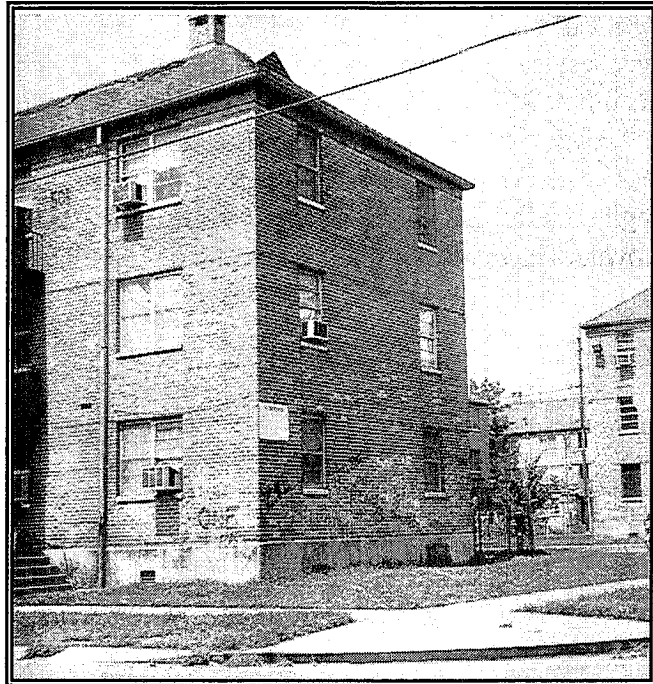
It is also during the decade of the 1980's that the land uses which have taken the place of the missing service businesses, antique stores and tourist hotels, have become a prominent element in the commercial sector of the Lower Garden District. The increase in tourist-oriented businesses and the enterprises which service them points toward a more hopeful future as the Lower Garden District becomes a part of the most dynamic sector of the New Orleans economy. Through the efforts of several local nonprofit organizations, new entrepreneurs as well as homeowners have been attracted into the neighborhood.

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<sup>8</sup> The method of determining land use for the purposes of this study is described by the author as follows: "Maps of the city from 1995 were examined to determine which areas were zoned for industry, commercial, and entertainment businesses. Addresses were classified as either residential or a type of business. The business categories used were those listed in the Standard Industrial Classification Manual for retail trade." (Ibid, p.9) It should be noted that the boundaries of the Lower Garden District do not conform exactly to those utilized by the City Planning Commission, as St. Charles Avenue is not included in Ms. Vesey's study area.

### III. NEW ST. THOMAS

As the oldest public housing development in the City and the State of Louisiana, St. Thomas stands today as the one component of the neighborhood mix which holds the greatest opportunity for rejuvenating the Lower Garden District. At the time of this report, St. Thomas is on the verge of an unprecedented redevelopment effort that will create a mixed-income community with opportunities for home ownership. The revitalization of St. Thomas has been a combination of neighborhood efforts which led to the formulation of the New St. Thomas Plan. In the larger context, the court-ordered receivership of the Housing Authority of New Orleans (HANO) and the subsequent appointment of Ron Mason of Tulane University to the role of executive monitor were significant factors in the charting of a new direction. With encouragement from the Office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the City has renewed motivation and commitment to improve all of its housing developments. The New St. Thomas Resident Council is poised to take advantage of this resultant creativity and energy to bring about large scale and meaningful improvements for the residents and the community at large.



Housing units in St. Thomas at Rousseau and Constance Streets.

#### 1. Physical Attributes

Constructed in two phases, St. Thomas consists of a total of 1,450 units located on 49.3 acres. The first phase encompassed 120 low-rise apartment buildings originally built between 1938 and 1941 within the area bounded by St. Thomas, Josephine, Laurel and Felicity Streets. The design was based on a "garden-city concept," with housing units fronting on either gardens, courtyards, or recreational features. The second phase, constructed between 1951 and 1954, added 52 apartment buildings in the area bounded by St. Thomas, Religious, Rousseau, St. Andrew and Josephine Streets.

The current mission of St. Thomas is far different from the government's original intention to provide transitional housing for an immigrant community. Originally, families were expected to occupy these units for a two-year period. Today, an overwhelming number of residents consider

St. Thomas their home and are determined to rebuild it into a viable and thriving community. Conceived and constructed for a different mission, the physical configuration of the development does not meet the needs of the current population. Small units dominated by many one and two-bedroom apartments, and site planning that serves to both fragment and isolate the development are just two examples. Vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns create sub-communities within the overall development and prevent integration with the surrounding neighborhood. Annunciation, St. Thomas, and Rousseau Streets are the only continuous interior thoroughfares. Physically, economically, and socially St. Thomas is an island, and as such, suffers from the isolation inherent in any island community.

## 2. Demographic Profiles

The population of St. Thomas is in decline. From 1990 to 1995, the total population decreased by 24%, from 3,807 to 2,717 residents. Of the 1,450 apartment units, 812 are occupied, representing an occupancy rate of 56%.<sup>9</sup> Census data shows that from 1980 to 1990, total population decreased by 25%, compared with an 11% decrease city-wide.

Perhaps the most revealing measure of the composition of the St. Thomas population is the widening of the gap between the median age in St. Thomas (11 years) and the entire city (31 years). Moreover, the number of persons per household in St. Thomas has remained stable, whereas it has gone down by 23% for the city as a whole. This shows a population increasingly made up of dependant children with fewer wage-earning adults.

<b>St. Thomas Population Trends (U.S. Census)</b>				
		<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>% Change</b>
Total Population	St. Thomas	5,091	3,807	-25%
	New Orleans	557,927	496,938	-11%
Median Age	St. Thomas	17	11	-32%
	New Orleans	30	31	+ 2%
Persons per Household	St. Thomas	3.46	3.44	0%
	New Orleans	2.69	2.08	- 23%
Mean Household Income Per Annum	St. Thomas	\$5,277	\$5,281	0%
	New Orleans	\$17,122	\$29,285	+71%

<sup>9</sup> Housing Authority of New Orleans, Strategic Plan, May 26, 1996, St. Thomas Viability Report, pp. 1-2.

<b>St. Thomas Population Trends (U.S. Census)</b>				
Families Below Poverty Level	St. Thomas New Orleans	83.4% 26.4%	86.9% 31.6%	-- --
High School Graduates	St. Thomas New Orleans	35.8% 59.2%	46.0% 68.1%	-- --

This change in the make-up of the population is reflected in the income figures. In spite of a 70% rise for the City, the average income in St. Thomas has remained unchanged. In 1980 average income in St. Thomas was 30% of the average income for the City. By 1990 the St. Thomas average was only 18% of the New Orleans average income. Taken together, these figures point to a population increasingly made up of families with more children and fewer wage-earners, falling further behind the rest of the City in terms of income.

### **3. Relationship to the Neighborhood**

Positioned on the upriver boundary of the Lower Garden District, St. Thomas directly affects areas of the community that can bring people and economic development into the neighborhood. Areas such as the Magazine Street business corridor and a proposed redeveloped riverfront are two prime examples. However, in recent years St. Thomas has been unable to provide positive contributions to its neighbors because of the problems internal to the development. The St. Thomas Master Plan states that the development continues to exhibit "increased poverty, social isolation, family destabilization, crime, violence, illegal drug use, soaring teen pregnancy rates, limited education, and a continued sense of cultural confusion and identity."<sup>10</sup> It is no surprise that the confluence of factors, which has prevented St. Thomas from resolving its internal difficulties, has also spilled over and affected the surrounding community.

Although these problems are symptomatic of all of the City's housing developments, St. Thomas perhaps enjoys an advantage that other housing developments do not possess: being a neighbor in the Lower Garden District. As the fate of the revitalization of the Lower Garden District can arguably be tied to the improvement of St. Thomas, the revitalization of St. Thomas will also be realized through a symbiotic relationship with its neighbors in the Lower Garden District.

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<sup>10</sup> Housing Authority of New Orleans, Strategic Plan, May 26, 1995, St. Thomas Viability Report, p. 6.

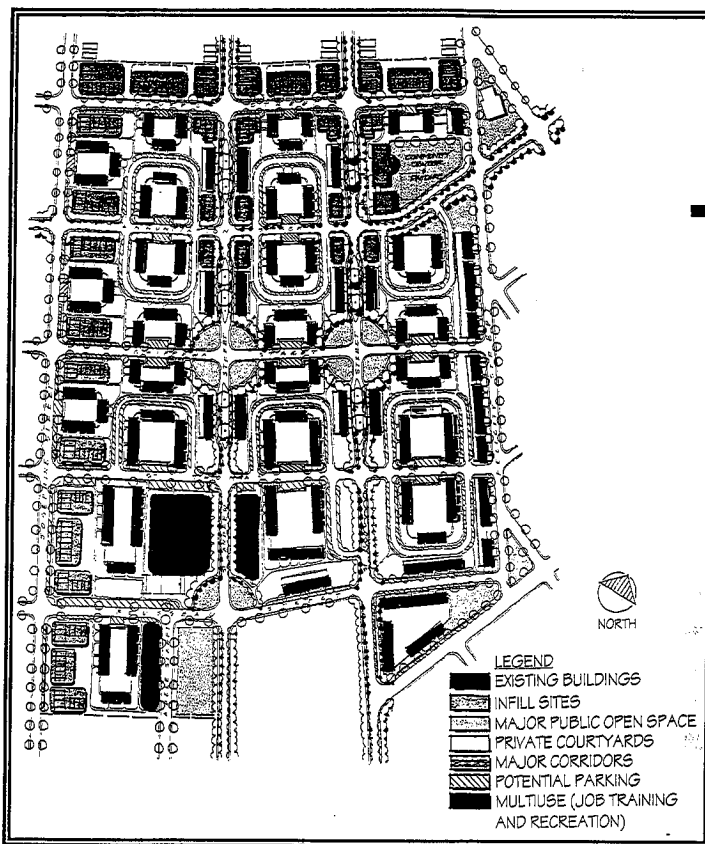


#### 4. Expectations of the New St. Thomas

The road to improvement has not been an easy one. After years of neglect by HANO, St. Thomas entered the Community Resource Partnership to join with its neighbors in generating a new vision for the future. The resulting Urban Land Institute's report proposed a master plan for the New St. Thomas. The Community Resource Partnership has adopted the New St. Thomas Plan into its overall master plan.

Subsequently, the HANO Board of Commissioners commissioned a strategic plan to chart a new course for public housing in the City, and once again, the ULI was invited to help in the formulation of the plan. The recommendations generated by the HANO Strategic Planning Team suggested a radical revision of the institutional structure for providing public and other affordable housing in the City of New Orleans.

A clustering concept was formulated with strategies for each group of developments. The following is a description of St. Thomas and three other housing developments:



The Urban Land Institute's New St. Thomas Master Plan

“These properties have in common an excellent location, good neighborhood context, private funding potential, (as evidenced by expressed private market interest), demonstrated leadership.”

The strategy specific to this group of developments was formulated as follows:

“Divide into discrete development site-based opportunities; contract for rehabilitation by private or public/private entities; convert to mixed income communities by attracting moderate-income tenants to marketable units and offer additional housing choices through the rehabilitation of vacant homes in surrounding neighborhoods; designate opportunities for private management; transition to resident ownership; and pursue the

## ULI panel strategy for 'The New St. Thomas'."

The Urban Land Institute's 1993 report and the 1995 HANO Strategic Plan center on the fundamental need to weave St. Thomas back into the urban fabric of the neighborhood. A crucial premise to achieve this goal is that lasting improvement will not be realized through traditional 'brick and mortar' improvements. Any solution must be holistic in nature, and include, but not be limited to, economic development opportunities, innovative management programs, social services and housing strategies that respond to the needs of the tenants. Furthermore, training programs must be provided to ensure that the residents can successfully assume their new roles as owners and managers of the envisioned mixed-income development. The renovation of the residential areas adjacent to St. Thomas will provide housing alternatives to residents, and help to integrate the New St. Thomas into the Lower Garden District.

HANO has now obtained a \$25 million HOPE VI grant from the Office of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) which will begin the process of bringing about these changes. Based on the principles outlined above, the preliminary plans call for significant reductions in the number of units and new construction that will respond in design and layout to the needs of the New St. Thomas residents and to the surrounding community context.

### **5. The City Planning Commission and New St. Thomas**

The City Planning Commission enthusiastically supports and endorses the holistic approach that the New St. Thomas has chosen to employ. Beyond traditional design and site planning issues, the New St. Thomas Plan clearly seeks alternatives concerning ownership, management, and social services required to address the needs of the changing profile of the residents. While a mixed-income community is the goal, the needs of existing residents to help break the cycle of poverty and its associated effects are not being ignored in the revitalization process.

The Commission's support springs not only from a common sense view of planning, but from its guiding document "*New Century New Orleans Master Policy Plan*." This document delineates Vital, Distinctive Neighborhoods as one of the five Core Goals of the City's new vision. As a neighborhood subsection, Public Housing's supporting goal states:

"Rejuvenate public housing throughout the city, with a commitment to overcoming the isolation and inappropriate concentrations of public housing populations, and a commitment to maintaining and improving the quality of all public housing including conventional, scattered sites and subsidized housing (Section-8)."

Enforcing this goal is the following policy priority:

"In cooperation with the public and private sectors, increase the capacity of public housing residents to influence decisions about their community needs and solutions, and

to achieve economic independence.”

Four additional policy priorities and supporting strategies contained in *New Century New Orleans* reinforce the studies conducted by the Community Resource Partnership, the Urban Land Institute, and the Housing Authority of New Orleans. Furthermore, the concepts embodied in “New Century New Orleans” support the goals of the Housing Authority’s Request for Proposal.

As New St. Thomas begins its enormous task, the City Planning Commission offers its assistance during the planning, implementation and operational phases of the new master plan. The Commission realizes the importance of these efforts and the necessity of success if St. Thomas is to develop into a viable mixed-income community, and the Lower Garden District is to become a vital, distinctive neighborhood.

## IV. ZONING

There are a number of different zoning classifications within the Lower Garden District, ranging from RM-1 Multiple Family Residential to HI Heavy Industrial. As shown on the attached map (see appendix), the residential areas, including New St. Thomas, are almost all zoned RM-2 Multiple Family Residential, while the commercial areas along Magazine and Prytania Streets are C-1A General Commercial. There is LI Light Industrial zoning along the Pontchartrain Expressway and on the riverside of Annunciation Street. Between Tchoupitoulas and the River the zoning is HI Heavy Industrial and P Park.

Field surveys conducted by the CPC staff during the fall of 1995 reveal the following land use patterns in these zoning districts, which are grouped in terms of the RM-2 districts on the lakeside and riverside of Magazine Street, St. Thomas, the RM-1 district on Jackson Avenue, and the small RM-3 district on Prytania Street. The data show a relatively even allocation in terms of types of residential use, with 26% of the dwellings single-family, 34% two-family, and 34% multiple-family.

**Land Use -- Residentially Zoned Areas**

	Single Family	Two Family	Multi-Family	Institutional <sup>11</sup>	Commercial	Mixed Use	Industrial	Total
RM-2 Zone Lake-side	90 (29%)	78 (25%)	130 (42%)	8 (3%)	3 (1%)	4 (1%)	0 (0%)	313 (100%)
RM-2 Zone River-side	56 (23%)	113 (46%)	56 (23%)	7 (3%)	8 (3%)	3 (1%)	0 (0%)	245 (100%)
St. Thomas	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	172 (100%)	2 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	174 (100%)
RM-1 Jackson Ave.	4 (20%)	6 (30%)	6 (30%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	20 (100%)
RM-3 Prytania Street	1 (6%)	3 (19%)	11 (69%)	0 (0%)	1 (6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	16 (100%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>151 (26%)</b>	<b>200 (34%)</b>	<b>203 (34%)</b>	<b>18 (3%)</b>	<b>12 (2%)</b>	<b>7 (1%)</b>	<b>0 (0%)</b>	<b>591 (100%)</b>

<sup>11</sup> Institutional uses include churches, schools and public utilities.

The commercial areas are grouped in terms of the C-1A General Commercial districts along St. Charles, Prytania St. (including the lots fronting on side streets between Prytania and St. Charles), and Magazine Street. The industrial areas are grouped into the LI Light Industrial zone along the Pontchartrain Expressway, and the LI and HI industrial zones on the riverside of Annunciation Street. Here the data show relatively strong residential components along both Prytania and Magazine Streets, and a wide variety of uses in the industrially-zoned areas.

**Land Use -- Commercial/Industrial Areas**

	Single Family	Two Family	Multi-Family	Institutional	Commercial	Mixed Use	Industrial	Total
Lower St. Charles	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (5%)	0 (0%)	36 (84%)	4 (9%)	0 (0%)	43 (100%)
C-1A Along Prytania Street <sup>12</sup>	16 (18%)	19 (21%)	26 (29%)	3 (3%)	20 (22%)	5 (6%)	0 (0%)	89 (100%)
C-1A Along Magazine St.	15 (9%)	21 (13%)	31 (19%)	0 (0%)	50 (31%)	46 (28%)	0 (0%)	163 (100%)
LI Zone At Expressway	1 (8%)	2 (8%)	4 (17%)	0 (0%)	11 (46%)	1 (4%)	4 (17%)	24 (100%)
LI & HI along River	6 (5%)	54 (41%)	10 (8%)	4 (3%)	12 (9%)	1 (1%)	45 (34%)	132 (100%)

Although there have been numerous efforts over the years to re-zone portions of the Lower Garden District, the current zoning designations continue to do a poor job of encouraging new land use which will benefit the neighborhood in the future. Moreover, a number of the zoning requirements are not well suited to the existing built environment, which is particularly historic in nature.

In the residential areas, for example, the Zoning Ordinance specifies off-street parking requirements, building setbacks, and height limitations which are not consistent with the structures and typical lot layout found in the Lower Garden District. In the commercial areas, the

<sup>12</sup> Includes lots fronting on streets between Prytania St. and St. Charles Avenue.

zoning allows an intensity of development which could dramatically change the character of both Magazine and Prytania Streets, and undercut their attractiveness as retail locations to residents and tourists alike. Along St. Charles Avenue, the zoning has allowed the development of fast-food restaurants and other traffic-generating uses that are now beginning to cause chronic traffic congestion. Finally, the existing industrial zoning on the riverside of Annunciation and Tchoupitoulas Streets does little to encourage new development which would provide jobs for residents by capitalizing on the proximity of the area to the convention and tourism business in the Central Business District.

Changes are needed to the current zoning of the Lower Garden District in order to remedy these inadequacies, and to make zoning something which will strengthen the neighborhood's existing assets and encourage positive change in the future. Taking into account suggestions and comments received from the neighborhood, the following discussion recommends specific modifications which can be made to the zoning, both through changes in the classification of certain areas, and by amending the requirements within some of the existing zoning districts.

The philosophy underlying these recommendations recognizes that zoning is intended as a means of promoting stability and continuity. The recommendations therefore aim to bring the zoning requirements back into line with the land uses and structures that already exist, and to create mechanisms which will take advantage of the area's assets and encourage future development compatible with the neighborhood's vision for itself. The recommendations are consistent with and supported by the policies and strategies for neighborhood revitalization contained in the *New Century New Orleans Master Policy Plan*, which was adopted by the City Planning Commission and the City Council in 1992.

The discussion and recommendations are divided into five general geographic areas: 1) the residentially-zoned neighborhoods, 2) Magazine Street, 3) Prytania Street, 4) St. Charles Avenue and 5) Lower Tchoupitoulas -- the industrially-zoned areas on the riverside of Annunciation Street. A sixth section addresses the concept of Transfer Development Rights, a mechanism which will give the Lower Garden District a way of harnessing its own resources to encourage neighborhood revitalization.

## 1. The Residentially-Zoned Neighborhoods

The residentially-zoned areas in the Lower Garden District extend from Jackson Avenue to Erato Street, and from Prytania Street to Religious Street at the edge of New St. Thomas (see attached map). Almost all of the zoning is RM-2 Multiple-Family Residential, a

Jackson Avenue to Erato Street  
and  
Prytania Street to Religious Street

classification which allows, as a permitted use, any permitted use in the RS-1 and RS-2 Single-Family Residential Districts, two-family dwellings, multiple-family dwellings, townhouses, convents, monasteries, and small group homes which meet certain requirements. The RM-2 allows, as a conditional use (which requires a public hearing and City Council approval), educational institutions, bed and breakfasts, storage garages, apartment hotels, fraternities, sororities, private clubs and lodges.

## A. Background

A review of the zoning history of the Lower Garden District shows that the zoning requirements have been substantially amended a number of times since their initial enactment in 1929. At that time, the areas surrounding Coliseum Square and extending to Jackson Avenue were given the most intensive residential zoning classification, one which allowed 75' tall buildings, and required only 400 sq. ft. of lot area per dwelling unit. The residential areas on the riverside of Magazine Street were less intensive in classification, with a 45' height limitation and 600 sq. ft. lot area per dwelling unit requirement.

Subsequent zoning changes in 1953, 1970 and 1984 served to steadily decrease the permitted density of these residential areas, primarily through changes to the lot area per dwelling unit requirements and height limitations. The following chart shows the increase in minimum lot area per dwelling unit from its initial level in 1929 to the present:

<b>Minimum Lot Area Per Dwelling Unit</b>		
	1929	1997 (RM-2 Multi-Family)
One Family	400 sq. ft.	3,125 sq. ft.
Two Family	400 sq. ft.	1,750 sq. ft.
Three Family	400 sq. ft.	1,500 sq. ft.
Four Family	400 sq. ft.	1,200 sq. ft.
5+ Family	400 sq. ft.	1,000 sq. ft.

The height limitations were also decreased, such that currently buildings with 1 - 4 units may only reach 40'.<sup>13</sup> These decreases, particularly with regard to the number of permitted units, mean that overall, 56% of the multiple-family units in the area are currently non-conforming. (See discussion of density regulations in Section B.1, Existing RM-2 Zoning, below.)

<sup>13</sup> Buildings with 5 + units may still reach 75', a provision which is actually more permissive than the more intense RM-3 Multiple Family district. As discussed below, this may have been an oversight in the amendment process, and probably should be corrected.

Although the zoning changes served to decrease the permitted density of the area, they did not specifically take into account the physical characteristics of the Lower Garden District which are typical of historic residential neighborhoods. The discussion below examines the existing RM-2 zoning, and compares it with the RM-2A district, a zoning classification which is designed for historic neighborhoods.

Based on this analysis, the RM-2A is recommended as a zoning classification which would better serve the Lower Garden District. In addition, various amendments to the RM-2A district regulations are recommended, in order to improve the historic features of the district, as well as to correct certain oversights that occurred when the RM-2A district was originally incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance. Finally, the zoning of New St. Thomas, Jackson Ave., an area surrounding the Schwegmann's on Annunciation St., and a small RM-3 district along Prytania St. are also discussed.

## **B. Zoning Options**

### **I. The Existing RM-2 Zoning**

The RM-2 district, which was designed for more modern residential settings, includes a number of features that do not correspond well to the dimensions and layout of the Lower Garden District. In this respect, not only does the zoning fail to strengthen and enhance the historic quality of the neighborhood, it also imposes requirements on property owners which can be difficult, if not impossible, to meet. The following features illustrate the problem.

Off-Street Parking -- The current regulations require 1 off-street parking space per dwelling unit for buildings with 1 to 4 units. However, for buildings with 5 or more units, the Zoning Ordinance requires off-street parking in accordance with the number of bedrooms per unit. This provision, which was added in the mid-1980's, increases the requirement to 1.5 spaces for each one or two bedroom unit, and 2.5 spaces for each unit with 3 or more bedrooms (efficiencies are only required to have 1 space). Thus, for a 5-unit building with three 2-bedroom units and two 3-bedroom units, the required off-street parking is 10 spaces, rather than 5.

While this requirement may be appropriate for large residential developments in suburban settings, it is impractical in older neighborhoods, where large amounts of space for off-street parking is simply not available. More importantly, surface parking lots tend to detract from the historic character of older neighborhoods, where buildings are constructed close to each other and to the sidewalk, thereby visually establishing a built line along the street. Substantial amounts of off-street parking also work to the detriment of the traditional corner businesses, which have been able to survive in older neighborhoods because they can rely on a sizable customer base within walking distance. Off-street residential parking tends to spread a community out, making it less likely that businesses will have a critical mass of nearby



customers.<sup>14</sup>

Although some off-street parking is desirable, the current provision has the unfortunate effect of requiring developers either to meet the required parking by installing smaller units and efficiencies, or to obtain a waiver from the Board of Zoning Adjustments. In comparison, the B-1A Neighborhood Business District, which was designed for older neighborhood commercial areas, has a requirement for residential and mixed-use buildings of one space per dwelling unit, regardless of the number of bedrooms. This requirement would be more fitting for historic residential neighborhoods as well.

Setbacks -- The RM-2 Multiple-Family Residential district requires a 20' minimum front yard setback for all residential structures, regardless of number of units. This requirement, like the off-street parking requirement, is inappropriate in older neighborhoods where, as noted, the buildings tend to be built close to the sidewalk. Indeed, in the Lower Garden District, very few buildings meet the 20' required front yard setback, and most have only a 10' setback.

The effect of this provision is to require owners to apply for a waiver from the Board of Zoning Adjustments if they wish to construct a porch or an addition which extends into the required front yard. This adds both expense and delay to the renovation efforts of homeowners, whose budgets and patience are in most cases already stretched to the limit. The 20' required front yard setback also means that new infill development will not be constructed to maintain the built line established by the existing structures. Substantially different setbacks will tend to exacerbate the contrast between the old and the new, rather than promoting compatibility.



Residential structures on Camp Street.

This problem has been resolved in the B-1A Neighborhood Business and C-1A General Commercial Districts (both of which are designed to be applied to older commercial areas), as well as the RM-2A Multiple-Family Residential district, through a provision which establishes a maximum permitted front yard, and eliminates the minimum front yard requirement altogether.

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<sup>14</sup> See, e.g., Richard Sexton, "New Tricks for an Old Dog: The Suburbanization of New Orleans," in *Preservation in Print* (Preservation Resource Center, New Orleans), November, 1995.

The maximum is determined as the average of the front yards provided by the buildings on the adjacent lots.<sup>15</sup> In contrast to the standard setback requirement, this approach helps to preserve the historic character of older neighborhoods by allowing the existing built line to be maintained.

Height Limitations -- In the RM-2 district, buildings with 1 - 4 units, as well as townhouses, may not exceed 40'. However, buildings with 5 or more units may reach up to 75' (7 stories). Since virtually all of the existing buildings in the Lower Garden District are 3 stories or less, the construction of a 7-story building, or the construction of 3 or 4 additional floors on an existing building, would be out of place and would tend to dominate other residential uses. As noted below, the RM-2A height limitations, which allow no more than 4 stories unless the building is on a Major Street, are more appropriate for this area.

Floor to Area Ratio -- The maximum Floor to Area Ratio (FAR) for the RM-2 district is 1.00 (the floor to area ratio is calculated as the total interior floor area of all stories within a structure divided by the lot area). This is higher than the RM-1 Multiple-Family district requirements (.30 for single-family structures and .60 for structures with 2 or more units), but considerably lower than the RM-3 and RM-4 Multiple-Family districts (4.00) as well as the B-1A and C-1A districts (2.0 and 3.5, respectively).

The scale and density of buildings in the Lower Garden District, given its historical character, is somewhat higher than in the newer neighborhoods, but it does not match the density of residential neighborhoods with large apartment complexes. As discussed below, the FAR in the RM-2A Multiple-Family district is 1.50, a level which is better suited than the RM-2's existing 1.00 to accommodate the typical building density in the area. An FAR of 1.50 would help to ensure that new infill construction is consistent with the existing scale of development throughout the Lower Garden District.

Density Regulations -- Density requirements, which control the number of dwelling units that can be put in a building, have long been a controversial topic in the Lower Garden District. The discussion has been complicated by the fact that there are actually two separate issues involved. One has to do with the overall density level which the regulations are designed to achieve. The other has to do with the way the requirements are calculated -- i.e. whether they should be based on lot size or interior floor area. Both of these issues need to be addressed as part of the long term planning of the Lower Garden District, and each are discussed in turn below.

The first of these issues, overall density level in the Lower Garden District, has been the subject of heated debate for many years. Some favor a reduction in permitted density level (i.e. downzoning), arguing that large, multiple-family structures have impeded revitalization efforts. Others oppose reducing density, on the grounds that it fosters diversity which has traditionally

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<sup>15</sup> Each of these districts also provides that no more than 40% of the front yard may be paved with a hard surface.

been one of the Lower Garden District's major strengths.

Overlooked in this discussion is the fact that, as noted above, City-wide text amendments to the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance in 1953, 1970 and 1984 steadily reduced the permitted density levels in the Lower Garden District. As a consequence, a significant portion of the multiple-family structures became non-conforming a number of years ago, and have remained non-conforming since then. In fact, some argue that an unanticipated effect of the repeated density reductions was actually to create a disincentive for owners to upgrade and maintain buildings, due to a fear that any changes would trigger a requirement to reduce the number of units. The following table shows how many of the multiple-family structures are non-conforming under the existing density regulations. The number of dwelling units per structure were determined on the basis of field surveys by CPC staff during the fall of 1995, which included careful observation of the maintenance of entrances, mailboxes, meters and other physical attributes as well as conversations with residents.

<b>Extent of Non-Conformity with Density Regulations -- Multiple-Family Structures in Residential Districts</b>					
	Number of Multiple-Family Structures	Number (%) Non-Conforming	% With 1, 2 or 3+ More Units Than Allowed		
			1	2	3+
RM-2 Zone Lakeside of Magazine	128	72 (56%)	28%	30%	41%
RM-2 Zone Riverside of Magazine	54	24 (44%)	25%	38%	38%
RM-1 Zone Along Jackson Avenue	6	6 (100%)	0%	33%	67%
RM-3 Zone Along Prytania Avenue	10	8 (80%)	13%	25%	63%
<b>Total</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>110 (56%)</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>44%</b>

The law provides that as long as these buildings are at least partially occupied, they retain their legal non-conforming status (even with a change of ownership), and are not required to come into compliance. Nor will renovation work require a reduction in number of units, unless load-bearing walls are moved. However, if a building becomes completely vacant for a period of 6 months or more, the owner will be required to reduce the number of units before the structure may be occupied again.

In view of the failure of these repeated downzoning measures to achieve the goals they sought to foster -- i.e. reduced density levels -- a further tightening of the density requirements is not recommended. A better approach to revitalization, one which will not undercut the area's

diversity, is to create positive incentives for homeowners to come into compliance. What is needed is a way to encourage reinvestment in outdated, non-conforming structures, so as to break the stalemate that has occurred.

The concept of Transfer Development Rights, discussed in Section 6 below, can help to provide this positive incentive. This proposal creates a way for property owners to generate bonus points for improvements that reduce density levels. The bonus points can then be sold to developers in the commercial and industrial areas of the Lower Garden District, who in turn use the points to apply for waivers that allow for extra building square footage. This purely voluntary system, which has been used in the Central Business District as well as other cities around the country, would encourage revitalization in a way that prior efforts have been unable to achieve.

The second issue in the density debate has to do with the methods of calculating density requirements. The existing density regulations in the RM-2 zoning district are based on the square footage of the lot on which the structure is built. Thus, in areas zoned RM-2, buildings on a 30' x 120' lot are allowed no more than two units, regardless of the interior square footage of the building itself. A building of exactly the same size on a larger lot is allowed more units. Conversely, large buildings on small lots are allowed fewer units.

Although this system works well in a more suburban context, where building and lot sizes are relatively consistent, it does not work as well in historic neighborhoods. In these areas, building and lot dimensions were established many years prior to the enactment of zoning requirements, and they tend to differ significantly from property to property. Indeed, as most would agree, these variations are one of the features that give historic neighborhoods a distinctive and attractive quality. At the same time, however, density requirements based on lot size, when combined with these variations, tend to produce widely differing results even within single blocks.

By contrast, density requirements based on the total interior floor area of a building, rather than the lot area, produce more consistent outcomes. With a minimum amount of interior square footage required per unit, the permitted number of units per building will vary only according to building size. In local historic districts, interior square footage and building dimensions are relatively stable, due to the restrictions on demolitions and additions administered by the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC). This attribute makes interior square footage a suitable measure on which to base density regulations.

The adoption of density regulations based on interior floor area need not, however, result in an increase or decrease in overall permitted density levels. Floor area based density regulations can and, as discussed above, should be set to match overall density levels of the existing lot area based regulations. Based on a review of lot areas and building square footages of multiple-family structures in the Lower Garden District, 850 sq. ft. interior floor area per unit is the level which would be equivalent to the existing RM-2 lot area based density regulations. 850 sq. ft. would thus be an appropriate figure on which to base the new interior floor area density

requirements.

However, these square footage based density regulations should apply only to existing multiple-family structures (three or more units), so as not to encourage the conversion of large single and two-family homes into apartment units. Thus, the number of units allowed in a building which is presently multiple-family would be determined according to the building interior floor area, whereas single and two-family structures, as well as new construction, would continue to be regulated under the lot area based system.

## ii. The RM-2A District

The RM-2A Multiple-Family district is a zoning district which is particularly well suited to the Lower Garden District. Unlike the other residential zoning classifications, the RM-2A is specifically tailored to older neighborhoods, and therefore does not have the various drawbacks discussed above.

Together with the B-1A Neighborhood Business and the C-1A General Commercial districts, the RM-2A forms part of a set of districts which were created during the 1980's for the historic areas of the City. The RM-2A's statement of purpose states that it was intended:

"to bring zoning more in harmony with existing residential development in certain **older** [emphasis added] sections of the city, to encourage the retention and maintenance of existing residential structures, to encourage new construction which is compatible with existing development, and to provide residential units near employment areas."

In terms of site requirements, the RM-2A has a number of features which, in the Lower Garden District, are preferable to the existing RM-2 requirements. There are no front yard setback requirements, and, instead, there is a maximum front yard setback calculated according to the average of the setbacks of the adjoining properties.<sup>16</sup> With respect to height limitations, there is a 40' maximum height for all structures, except those fronting on a Major Street (see attached map). These would be allowed to reach 60' subject to conditional use review, which would require a public hearing and City Council approval. The RM-2A Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 1.50, a level which is appropriate in that it is above the low-density FAR's of the more modern neighborhoods, and below the higher FAR's of the more intense multiple-family districts. As to off-street parking, the district, as originally drafted, required only one space per dwelling unit, regardless of the number of bedrooms. During the final stages of approval in 1987, however, this provision was eliminated due to concerns expressed at public hearings. It is recommended that

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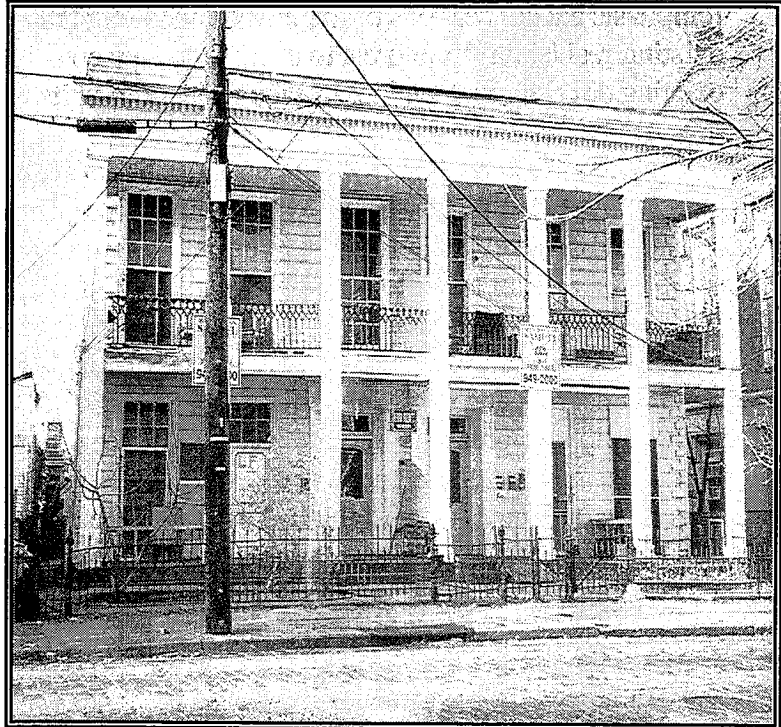
<sup>16</sup> This feature is shared by the B-1A Neighborhood Business as well as the C-1A General Commercial districts. As to rear yard setbacks, the RM-2 and RM-2A Multiple-Family districts require 15' for single and two-family structures, and 20' for buildings with 3 or more units. Nearly all of the buildings appear to be in conformity with this requirement. The required side yard in both districts is 3' for 1 - 4 unit structures, and 5' for buildings with 5 or more units. Here too, most of the buildings appear to be in conformity.

this provision be restored to the district, with, if necessary, an exclusion for specific geographic areas or lots fronting on Major Streets.

The density requirements of the RM-2A are based on lot area, as in the RM-2 district, but these should be converted to an interior floor area based system, as discussed above. A minimum 850 sq. ft. per unit would most closely approximate the overall density levels for multiple-family structures under the RM-2 zoning, and would thus be appropriate for the Lower Garden District. The interior floor area based regulations should apply to all existing residential and mixed use multiple-family structures, whether historic or not. For new infill construction, however, the lot area based density regulations should still apply, in order to eliminate the incentive for developers to build to the maximum height and FAR so as to obtain the most units.

The RM-2A district also has a bonus provision for historic structures which allows 1 dwelling unit per 800 sq. ft. of existing floor area, or 800 sq. ft. of lot area, whichever produces the greater number of units. This bonus was originally intended to discourage the demolition of historic buildings, by allowing the owner more units if the building were retained than if a new building were constructed. With the demolition control provided by the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC), however, the rationale underlying the bonus has lost much of its force, and indeed, the provision appears to have been hardly used. Accordingly, this bonus provision should be deleted from the RM-2A.

In terms of uses, the RM-2A is very similar to the RM-2 district. Retirement homes, nursing homes and orphan homes are conditional, rather than permitted uses, and are required to have a minimum site area of 20,000 sq. ft. Small group homes (which may have no more than 6 residents) are also a conditional, rather than a permitted use. However, this may have been an oversight in the amendment process, since they are allowed as a permitted use in every other residential district (including single and two-family districts). Moreover, large group homes, which may have up to 15 residents, are allowed in the RM-2A district as a permitted use. It is recommended that this inconsistency be corrected by classifying small



Historic residential structure with small front yard setback on Felicity Street.

group homes as permitted uses, and large group homes as conditional uses.

Like the RM-2, the RM-2A allows as a conditional use, any conditional use allowed in the RM-1 district (fraternities, sororities, private clubs and lodges, apartment hotels, and bed & breakfast inns). This too, however, appears to have been an error in the amendment process, since the Ordinance authorizing the amendment specifically referenced the RD Two Family districts, not the RM-1 district. This would have eliminated fraternities, sororities, private clubs and lodges, apartment hotels, and bed & breakfast inns as conditional uses in the RM-2A district, as they were considered too intense for historic neighborhoods. It is recommended that this error also be corrected, so that the RM-2A district's conditional use section reference the RD-2 Two Family conditional uses, not the RM-1 conditional uses.

Another recommended change would be to amend the district's statement of purpose so as to explicitly designate it as the district for historic residential neighborhoods. Although the statement of purpose was originally formulated as quoted above, it was later edited to delete the word "older," due to concerns expressed that other non-historic neighborhoods might also wish to apply for the zoning classification. The RM-2A's statement of purpose should be amended to clarify that it is designed to apply to the older sections of the City, and that it is particularly appropriate for neighborhoods which have been designated as local or national historic districts.

Since there is only one other RM-2A district in the City (fronting on St. Charles Avenue between Jackson and Napoleon Avenues), the recommended changes will not affect many geographic areas of the City. Perhaps part of the reason the district has not been applied to other neighborhoods is that it has never been fully developed as a residential district specifically intended for historic areas. The changes recommended above would allow the district to begin to take on this role, and would encourage its application in other older residential neighborhoods.

The RM-2A district thus appears to be a good solution for the Lower Garden District, as it already incorporates most of the historically-oriented zoning features which the RM-2 is lacking. With the recommended RM-2A amendments regarding off-street parking, floor area based density regulations, conditional uses and the statement of purpose, the RM-2A will be better suited to enhance the historic character of the area and at the same time promote its revitalization.

### **iii. New St. Thomas**

As discussed above, the New St. Thomas will need zoning regulations that are tailored to accommodate its new design, mix of uses and layout. Since the plans for the area are still in the process of being finalized, it is premature to recommend zoning changes. It is important, however, that the zoning be as supportive as possible when the designs are finalized. This can be done either through a text amendment creating a subdistrict regulation which applies specifically to the New St. Thomas, or through the use of a Residential Planned Community overlay district which allows the underlying zoning requirements to be modified in favor of the proposed uses

and design.

#### iv. Jackson Avenue

Jackson Avenue forms the upriver boundary of the Lower Garden District, and has traditionally played an important role in linking the residential neighborhoods on either side. Although the Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan only addresses the downriver side of the street, the zoning recommendations have been based on a land use analysis of both upriver and downriver sides of the street. As with any artery which forms a neighborhood boundary, however, a formal study with public hearings encompassing both sides of the street will need to be completed before the zoning recommendations can be implemented.

Although Jackson Avenue has begun to experience renewed residential investment, much remains to be done to regain its original vitality. In terms of zoning, a widely shared priority is the encouragement of residential uses, particularly along the section between Magazine St. and the River. Within this area, and extending to Josephine St., is a large MS Medical Services district, which was put in place to accommodate the now-bankrupt New Orleans General Hospital. As discussed in the section addressing the Lower Tchoupitoulas area, this district should be re-zoned to encourage the site's redevelopment.



Historic residential structure in the RM-1 district on Jackson Avenue.

However, as the attached map shows, the existing MS zoning includes considerably more area than is occupied by the hospital. One and one-half squares on the lakeside of the hospital site consist nearly entirely of two-family residential structures and contain no medical uses, but are nevertheless included in the MS district. Since the land use and density of this area, which extends from Chippewa St. to mid-way between Annunciation and Laurel Streets, is consistent with the adjoining residential areas, it is recommended that it be re-zoned to RM-2A. This change will serve to extend the existing residential district by one and one-half blocks towards the river, to the hospital site itself. (See Section 5 for a discussion of the remaining portions of



Jackson Avenue zoned MS Medical Service and LI Light Industrial.)

There is also a lot fronting on Jackson Ave. on the riverside of Magazine Street which is included in the existing C-1A district along Magazine, even though the lot is residential. It is recommended that the RM-2A district line be moved closer to Magazine St. so as to include in this lot in the RM-2A district (see attached map).

The section of Jackson Avenue between Magazine St. and St. Charles Avenue was down-zoned from RM-3 to RM-1 in 1981. As part of that re-zoning, the RM-1 district was amended to create a density bonus for historic structures located on Jackson Avenue. The bonus permits 1 dwelling unit per 600 sq. ft. of floor area, and a waiver of the required parking for any additional units achieved under the provision. As with the RM-2A density bonus, the need for this kind of bonus has diminished, due to greater appreciation of the potential value of historic homes, as well as the availability of other incentives such as historic preservation tax credits. In view of this, it is recommended that the bonus be deleted from the RM-1 zoning district.

An overall down-zoning of the area to single or two-family residential, as has been suggested by some residents, is not recommended. Such a measure would make it impossible to bring the existing multiple-family buildings into compliance without demolition or drastic re-configurations that are likely to prove prohibitively costly. Thus, the RM-1 district should be retained as an appropriate zoning classification for this section of Jackson Avenue, with a deletion of the density bonus.

#### **v. The Area Surrounding Schwegmann's on Annunciation St.**

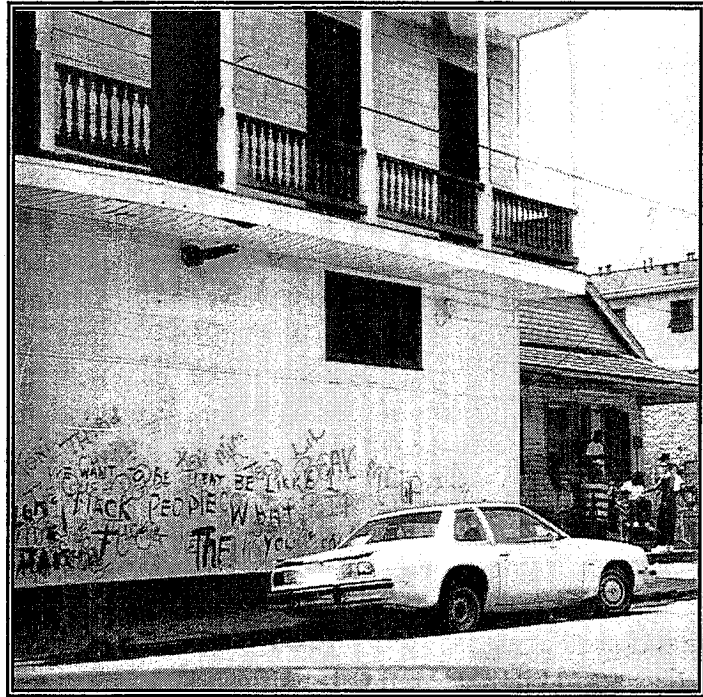
During the past decade, a significant portion of the residential area around the Schwegmann Bros. supermarket on Annunciation St. has suffered from disinvestment. One of the reasons for the decline has been the proximity of intense industrial and commercial uses, whose activities generate noise and heavy delivery vehicle traffic. Sandwiched between the Pontchartrain Expressway, industrial uses along Erato Street, large-scale commercial uses at the end of Magazine, the supermarket itself, and manufacturing uses on Annunciation, few would disagree that the area has become a difficult place to live.

One way to encourage reinvestment in the neighborhood would be to allow residents the opportunity to run small businesses out of their homes, or to rent a portion of their building as office space. Indeed, with the Warehouse District and convention/tourism activities nearby, the area is well situated to experience revitalization in the coming years. Moreover, the steady

customer stream at the Schwegmann market provides an attractive basis for the start-up of small, neighborhood-oriented retail and service businesses. The existing RM-2 zoning prohibits this form of small business development, however,<sup>17</sup> and effectively limits the area to a category of uses which have become the least likely to attract new investment. Given the intensity of the immediately adjacent zoning and land uses, it will be difficult for the neighborhood to rejuvenate itself on the basis of residential uses alone.

A more viable solution would be to re-zone the area to B-1A Neighborhood Business, a zoning classification which would allow small scale businesses, and yet still ensure compatibility with existing residential uses. Since the B-1A district draws upon the RM-2 zoning for its requirements pertaining to

residential uses, there would be no change in terms of overall permitted residential density levels. In addition, both height and signage are relatively restricted in B-1A zones, since the district is intended for areas in which commercial activity is adjacent or near to residential use.<sup>18</sup> The Schwegmann parking lot (which includes rooftop as well as ground level parking on all four sides of the building) tends to be underutilized, which would make shared parking arrangements an option. Even though there are significant structural alterations involved in converting a residential building to commercial use (e.g. building code and disabled access requirements), there appears to be widespread support for the proposal within the neighborhood (see attached petitions).



Graffiti marks a partially vacant structure at Constance and Thalia Streets across from the Schwegmann market.

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<sup>17</sup>Although home occupations are allowed in the RM-2 as a permitted use, they may not occupy more than 15% of the interior floor space, and the owner is not allowed to maintain stock, sell commodities, use mechanical equipment or erect any exterior signage. These restrictions have significantly limited the usefulness of this category.

<sup>18</sup>The B-1A height limit is 45' for both residential and commercial uses, while the RM-2 height limit is 40' for residential structures with 1-4 units, and 75' for structures with 5 or more units. Single-faced signage in the B-1A district is limited to 25 sq. ft. or .75 sq. ft. per lineal foot of street frontage, whichever is greater. CZO Art. 4, Section 4.9.7 and Art. 5, Sections 5.5.6 and 5.5.7.

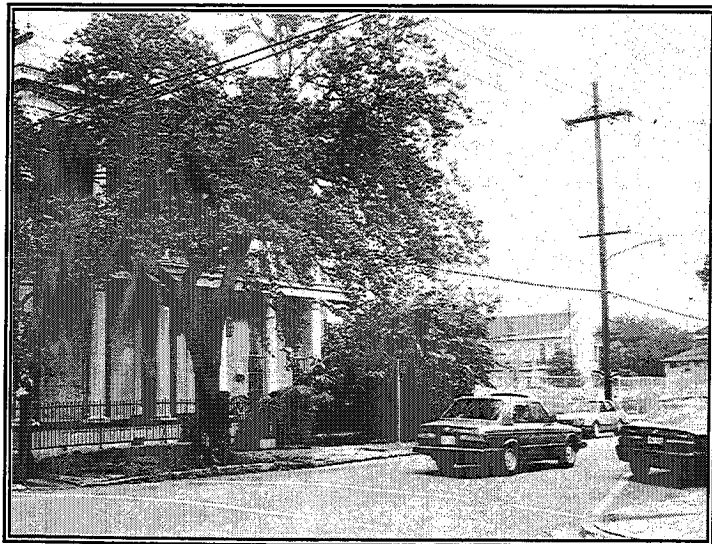
The area recommended for B-1A zoning, shown on the attached map, includes the residential uses on the downriver side of Thalia Street, extending from the C-1A district along Magazine Street to the riverside of Annunciation.

In addition, there is a vacant structure at the intersection of Terpsichore and Constance Streets which was zoned B-2 Neighborhood Business in 1984. The Historic District Landmarks Commission has described the building as a Greek Revival American Townhouse, built sometime in the 1830's or 1840's. A ground-level commercial addition extending to the sidewalk was subsequently constructed. The 1984 re-zoning changed the classification from RM-2 to B-2 in order to accommodate the owner's plans to use the ground floor as office space. The petition was opposed by the neighborhood as well as the City Planning Commission, on the grounds that it would constitute a spot zone. The structure was never restored or used for office space as indicated by the applicant, and it is therefore recommended that the B-2 classification be changed to RM-2A, consistent with the adjoining areas.

#### vi. The RM-3 Multiple Family District

Although the zoning of nearly all of the residential areas in the Lower Garden District was changed from RM-3 to RM-2 in 1984, there remains a 2 ½ block area along Prytania Street between Felicity Street and Jackson Avenue which is still zoned RM-3 (see attached map). There is no indication in the staff reports and public hearing transcripts of why this area was not included in the change to RM-2, and indeed, the fact that it was not separately discussed would suggest that the omission may have been inadvertent. Given the amount of surface parking on these blocks which could see development in the future, it is particularly important that the area have an appropriate zoning classification.

The RM-3 district is significantly more intense than either the RM-2 or RM-2A districts, in that it allows rooming houses as a permitted use,<sup>19</sup>



RM-3 zone on Prytania Street.

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<sup>19</sup> Rooming houses must be located on a site with a minimum of 5,000 sq. ft., and must meet the RM-2 yard and height requirements. Based on the 1984 staff report and hearing transcripts, the rooming house issues appears to have been a major impetus in the decision to re-zone the area to RM-2.

and has a Floor Area Ratio of 4.00. The RM-2A district, which does not allow rooming houses, and has a Floor Area Ratio of 1.50, would constitute a significant improvement over the existing RM-3 zoning. Since nearly all of the multiple-family uses in this RM-3 zone are already non-conforming, a map change to RM-2A would have little effect on their status.

In addition to re-zoning this area to RM-2A, the current zoning district boundary, which runs through the square bounded on either side by St. Mary and Felicity Streets, should be shifted to Felicity Street (see attached map). The lots in this square which front on Felicity St. are now zoned C-1A, together with the rest of St. Charles Avenue. RM-2A zoning would be more appropriate than the C-1A, however, since the uses on these lots are accessory parking and multiple-family residential (both of which are permitted under the RM-2A regulations). A shift of the district boundary to Felicity St. would bring these lots into the proposed RM-2A district.

### **C. Summary of Recommendations**

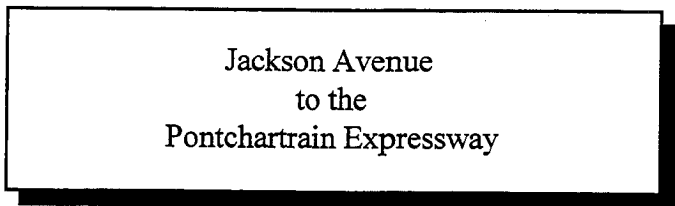
The following changes are recommended for the residentially-zoned neighborhoods in the Lower Garden District:

- \* Re-zone the residential areas currently zoned RM-2 to RM-2A, a zoning district which is specifically tailored to older neighborhoods, and is well suited to the Lower Garden District. As part of this re-zoning, specific changes are recommended to the RM-2A district regulations:
  - \* Amend the district's statement of purpose to make explicit that the district is intended to apply to older sections of the City, particularly those which have been designated as local or national historic districts.
  - \* Require off-street parking for residential structures in the amount of 1 space per dwelling unit, rather than according to the number of bedrooms per unit.
  - \* Base the residential density requirements on floor area rather than lot area, for all existing residential and mixed-use multiple-family structures, whether historic or not. Minimum floor-area per dwelling unit should be set at 850 square feet, in order to match the existing RM-2 lot area based regulations (i.e. no downzoning).
  - \* Transfer Development Rights (discussed in Section 6) should be established to create a positive, voluntary incentive system for property owners to come into compliance with density regulations.
  - \* Eliminate the density bonus for historic structures, a provision which is no longer needed due to demolition protection provided by the HDLC.

- \* Small group homes (up to 6 residents) should be classified as a permitted use, and large group homes (up to 15 residents) should be classified as a conditional use.
- \* RM-2A district regulations for conditional uses should reference the RD-2 Two Family district, rather than the RM-1 Multiple Family district.
- \* The zoning for New St. Thomas should be tailored to fully accommodate its new design, mix of uses and layout, once the development plans are finalized, so as to provide maximum assistance and support in assuring its success.
- \* The existing RM-2 zoning along the downriver side of Jackson Avenue should be re-zoned to RM-2A and expanded to encompass the residential portion of the existing MS Medical Services district. The existing RM-1 zoning on Jackson Avenue should remain, but without a residential density bonus.
- \* The area fronting on the Schwegmann supermarket on the downriver side of Thalia Street should be re-zoned from RM-2 to B-1A Neighborhood Business, as a way of encouraging new investment and revitalization in this neighborhood which is surrounded by intense commercial and industrial uses.
- \* The 2 ½ blocks along Prytania Street between Felicity and Jackson Avenue should be rezoned from RM-3 to RM-2A, consistent with the adjoining areas.

## 2. Magazine Street

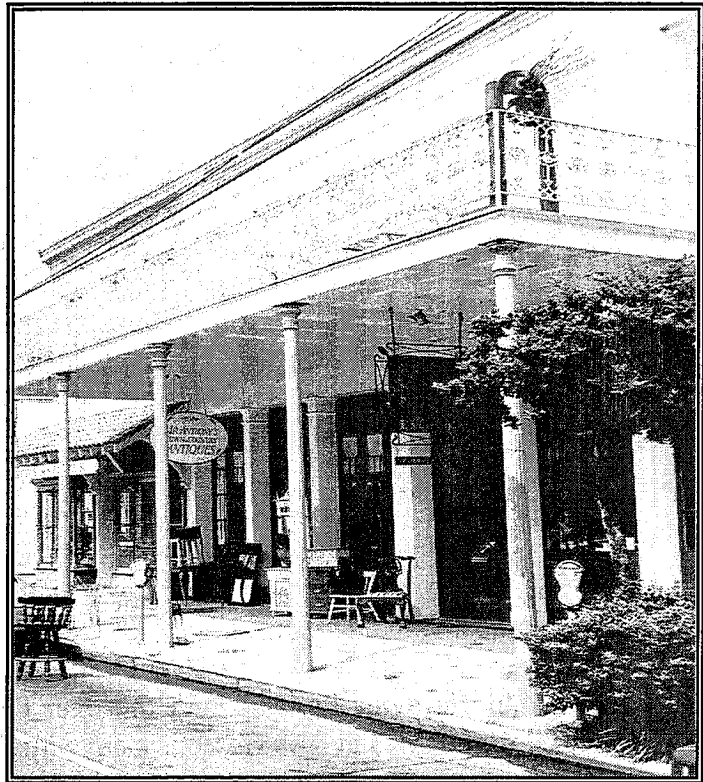
The existing zoning along Magazine Street is nearly entirely C-1A General Commercial, with only a single block at the downriver end zoned LI Light Industrial. Nevertheless, the land uses along the street vary considerably, from small scale retail towards Jackson Avenue, to predominantly residential between Race and Melpomene Streets, larger scale commercial between Melpomene and Erato, and industrial supply uses just before the Pontchartrain Expressway.



As has been done along other stretches of Magazine St., the zoning in this area should be tailored to better reflect the existing scale and variety of land uses and allow future development which will benefit the Lower Garden District as a whole. Specifically, two areas are recommended for

re-zoning. Jackson Avenue to Melpomene Street, including the existing C-1A areas along Sophie Wright Place and St. Mary Street, should be zoned B-1A Neighborhood Business, a zoning classification which was specifically created to apply to Magazine Street. Between Melpomene and Erato St., the zoning should remain C-1A General Commercial. However, the last block of Magazine Street, including the LI Light Industrial area bordering the Pontchartrain Expressway, should be zoned SI-A Special Industrial, a new classification which will allow a broad mix of uses in older industrial/warehousing parts of the City.

The sale of package liquor on Magazine St. is another zoning issue which needs to be addressed. A set of interim regulatory measures have been in place since 1993, but these will expire in 1997. The concerns which led to the enactment of these measures initially -- concerns over the impact of package liquor sales on adjoining residential and commercial uses -- continue to be voiced today. Indeed, during meetings with neighborhood groups, many persons cited alcoholic beverage sales as the single most important issue confronting revitalization efforts in the community. Section D discusses the problem and proposes permanent regulations.



Pedestrian arcades on Magazine Street.

#### **A. Jackson Avenue to Melpomene Street: B-1A Neighborhood Business Zoning**

During the course of the fieldwork, merchants along Magazine Street repeatedly expressed the position that things are gradually improving, and that the City should not make changes that might upset this trend or cause the street to lose its distinctive character. Indeed, the large number of small retail businesses, antiques stores and longstanding trades such as furniture restoration and print shops within these few blocks, together with the pedestrian-oriented architectural style of the buildings, all combine to form a historic "Main Street" atmosphere which constitutes an unusual and valuable asset. The zoning should ensure that this variety and scale of uses continues, and at the same time should encourage new businesses which contribute to the street's distinctive character.

Unfortunately, the existing C-1A General Commercial zoning has a number of features which

run counter to this goal. For one, the C-1A height limitations allow new construction and additions to existing structures of up to 100' (10 stories) for commercial structures, and 125' (12 stories) for structures which have a 50% residential component. Clearly, this scale of development would completely transform the street, which currently has buildings no taller than 3 stories.

The off-street parking requirements of the C-1A General Commercial district are also inappropriate. For retail stores and personal service establishments, the requirement is 1 off-street parking space per 300 sq. ft.

of ground floor area and 1 per 600 sq. ft. of upper floor area, with 3 spaces minimum. This would amount to 15 spaces for a large retail store with 4,500 sq. ft. of floor space. As is readily apparent, however, off-street parking is simply not available along this section of Magazine Street, with the result that a new business would be required to obtain a waiver from the Board of Zoning Adjustments before being allowed to open, an additional hurdle which could deter small entrepreneurs. The C-1A does have a parking bonus applicable to historic buildings, but since the bonus only waives the



Antique stores on Magazine Street near Jackson Avenue.

requirements for the first 1,500 sq. ft. of floor area (or ½ of the structure, whichever is greater) it is of little help where there is no off-street parking available. Similarly, the C-1A district imposes off-street loading requirements (at least 1 space per commercial use, regardless of the type of use) which few, if any, of the businesses on this section of Magazine Street can meet.

In terms of uses, the C-1A allows a number of establishments which are too intense for this section of Magazine Street. For example, the C-1A allows, as a permitted use, electric substations, rehabilitative/recovery care centers and hospitals with up to 10,000 sq. ft. of floor area (beyond this square footage they are allowed as a conditional use). The C-1A allows as a conditional use, and with no size limitation, hotels, motels, timeshares, car washes, nightclubs, and non-accessory parking garages. For residential uses within the district, the C-1A follows the RM-4 Multiple-Family lot area per dwelling unit requirements, which permits the greatest density levels in the City.

The B-1A Neighborhood Business district would be better suited to this section of Magazine

Street in each of these respects. The B-1A has a height limit of 45' for both commercial and residential structures, which would fit well with the predominantly 2-story scale. There is no off-street parking requirement for commercial uses under 5,000 sq. ft. in the B-1A, and indeed, there is an upper limit (1 space per 200 sq. ft. of ground floor retail area) to ensure that surface parking does not begin to undercut the historic and pedestrian-oriented quality of the street. For businesses with over 5,000 sq. ft. (which are classified as conditional uses), off-street parking is required in the amount of 1 space per 200 sq. ft. of ground floor retail area, but this requirement can be modified as part of the conditional use approval in individual cases. In terms of off-street loading spaces, the B-1A does not have any requirement for uses under 5,000 sq. ft., and requires 1 or a maximum of 2 spaces for uses over 5,000 sq. ft.

The B-1A is also more appropriate in that it does not allow any of the above-noted uses which are allowed as permitted and conditional uses in the C-1A district (electric substations, rehabilitative/recovery care centers, hospitals, hotels, motels, timeshares, car washes, nightclubs, and non-accessory parking garages). Finally, the B-1A follows the RM-2 Multiple-Family lot area per dwelling unit requirements, which are more in line with the other residential areas of the Lower Garden District.

Applying the B-1A to Magazine Street -- The history of the C-1A General Commercial district shows that it was actually never designed to apply to Magazine Street, but was created in 1981 for the lower part of St. Charles Avenue. The B-1A Neighborhood Business district was created in 1982, and was recommended by the City Council that same year for application to this section of Magazine Street. The zoning change was never implemented, however, due to concerns expressed at the public hearing regarding the possibility that existing uses would be rendered non-conforming and be forced to close. Contrary to these fears, however, the B-1A would continue to allow each of the uses currently on the street.<sup>20</sup> The only use which would not be conforming is the hotel at the former St. Vincent's Home, which received conditional approval from the City in 1993. Because all three phases of the development have been approved, however, non-conforming status would not adversely impact this use. In fact, non-conforming uses are allowed to continue in business for as long as they wish, and are not, as some apparently thought in 1983, required to cease operations. Also, a new business may operate under the prior business' non-conforming status, as long as the location has not been vacant for over 6 months.

Another issue which raised concern in 1983 was the 5,000 sq. ft. limitation for permitted uses in the B-1A district. The public hearing transcripts show that a number of property owners mistakenly believed they would be affected by this limitation, because they thought the square footage calculation was based on the total size of the building, rather than on each individual use

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<sup>20</sup> Even the more intense of the existing uses, such as the woodworking, re-upholstery and print shops, are allowed in the B-1A district, providing they have some retail component.



within the building.<sup>21</sup> Even for the few uses which are larger than 5,000 sq. ft., however, the B-1A would not pose a constraint unless an expansion of the use beyond its existing square footage was sought, and even here only conditional use approval would be required. The B-1A's classification of uses with 5,000 - 10,000 sq. ft. as conditional uses is appropriate, given the potential impact of a use of this size on adjoining uses and traffic conditions. The conditional use procedure would provide the opportunity for the adjoining commercial uses and residents of the neighborhood to voice any concerns at a public hearing. Based on the staff's land use survey, there do not appear to be any uses which exceed 10,000 sq. ft., the upper limit for conditional uses in the B-1A district, but even if there were, this could be waived by the City Council if appropriate.

At Felicity, the street becomes less retail and pedestrian-oriented. There are a number of residential uses with small front yard setbacks, and business uses tend to be located at the street corners. In recent years, considerable investment has been made in restoring the homes along this section of Magazine Street, which have in turn received widespread recognition for their architectural significance. Although RM-2A Multiple-Family zoning was initially considered for the blocks between Race and Melpomene Streets, B-1A Neighborhood Business is recommended since it would protect the residential uses from intense commercial development, but continue to allow the smaller scale, neighborhood retail and office uses. A significant percentage of the residents of these blocks have indicated that they favor retaining the option to develop retail and office uses on their property in the future (see attached petitions).

In sum, the B-1A Neighborhood Business district is a more appropriate zoning classification for Magazine Street from Jackson Avenue to Melpomene Street than the existing C-1A General Commercial district. The B-1A allows for, and encourages, the existing mix of uses on these blocks, yet will help to ensure that the street maintains its current scale and pedestrian orientation in the future. These features mean that this section of Magazine St. will be able to capitalize on its distinctive character and its ideal location between the Central Business Districts and Uptown as a source of economic regeneration during the years ahead.

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<sup>21</sup> For example, a residential unit upstairs is calculated separately from a commercial space in the same building downstairs, as are two retail businesses in the same building.

## **B. Melpomene to Erato Streets: C-1A General Commercial Zoning**

This section of Magazine Street is predominantly commercial, though the uses are larger and less retail-oriented and the architecture is not as accommodating to pedestrians. There are a number of residential uses on these blocks, as well as vacant lots which are currently used for parking.



Magazine at Thalia Street.

The existing C-1A zoning, which, as discussed above, allows for more intense uses, is appropriate in this area because it provides greater opportunity for the development of wholesale and service businesses oriented towards the Central Business District. Moreover, unlike the other parts of Magazine

Street, there is sufficient space along this part of the street to accommodate the C-1A off-street parking and loading requirements, as well as larger-scale uses. Accordingly, no change in the zoning is recommended for this area.

## **C. The Industrial Area Bordering the Pontchartrain Expressway: SI-A Special Industrial Zoning**

The last block of Magazine Street is part of a band of light industrial, warehousing and heavy commercial uses which border the Lower Garden District along its downriver side. Over the years, the area has been consistently zoned industrial or light industrial. Although there are a number residential uses nearby, the industrial and heavy commercial uses are an important part of the Lower Garden District which provide sources of employment for the community.

While the existing LI Light Industrial zoning allows a wide variety of activities, it has several features which are not well suited for the area. For example, the LI district allows a number of intense and potentially hazardous industrial uses, such as the blending of insecticides and household chemicals, bottling operations, meat processing and canning, and fuels storage, as well as the open storage of equipment, building materials, etc. The LI district also allows non-accessory parking, which many fear could lead in the long run to the development of peripheral parking lots serving the Central Business District and the Warehouse District. The new SI-A Special Industrial district, discussed in detail in Section 5 below, is a zoning classification which would accommodate and encourage the existing industrial and commercial uses in this area, and yet would protect the neighborhood against these other forms of development.

The proposed SI-A district would allow light manufacturing uses (including textile finishing) which do not endanger health and safety in surrounding areas and which do not create offensive noise, vibration, dust, lint, odor, heat or glare. Other permitted uses would include research labs, offices, residential uses, hotels, restaurants, retail uses, auto body shops and wholesale merchandise or storage warehouses (see attached regulations for complete listing). The SI-A allows all of the uses that are currently in business in the area, and only the large hotel laundry supply would be considered non-conforming, due to the intensity of its operations. As with all non-conforming uses, this use would be allowed to continue in business but would not be permitted physically to expand to adjoining lots.

As for new infill construction, the SI-A would allow a Floor to Area Ratio of 4.00, and a height limit of 75' (50' for lots abutting a residential district). On Major Streets such as Magazine St., the height limit would be 100'. To ensure compatibility with adjacent areas, site plans for new developments would be submitted to the City in accordance with the Site Plan Review procedure to ensure compliance with screening, loading, signage and landscaping requirements.

Thus, the SI-A will give this area bordering the Pontchartrain Expressway the ability to develop and prosper in conjunction with the business and tourism related uses in the CBD, while ensuring that it remains integrated as a vital part of the Lower Garden District.

#### **D. Alcoholic Beverage Sales**

On January 6, 1994, an Interim Zoning District (IZD) was enacted to address mounting concern over the impact of alcoholic beverage sales on residential neighborhoods.<sup>22</sup> The adverse effects of these sales were regarded as particularly acute on Magazine St., where many of the commercial uses are directly adjacent to residential uses. Packaged alcohol sales for off-premises consumption were of most concern, due to problems such as loitering, excessive noise, late-night operating hours, public drunkenness and litter.<sup>23</sup> The staff report for the Zoning Docket implementing the IZD noted that these negative impacts tend to occur primarily at small retail outlets (less than 5,000 sq. ft.), where a large percentage of the business derives from the sale of alcoholic beverages. The report explained:

"... smaller outlets (less than 5,000 sq. ft. of retail space) seem to have a greater negative impact on surrounding uses than the larger outlets, which apparently are able to control or absorb some of the adverse impacts of the use because they are part of a larger retail operation, the success of which is dependent upon the control of the negative impacts of

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<sup>22</sup> Ordinance No. 16,279 M.C.S., referred to as the Magazine Street Alcoholic Beverage Permit Prohibition Interim Zoning District. The Ordinance was enacted for an initial term of 18 months, and renewed for an additional 18 months by Ordinance No. 17,220 M.C.S.

<sup>23</sup> Staff report for Zoning Docket 89/93, pp. 1-3.

the package liquor outlet." Staff report at p. 6.

The Interim Zoning District, which was renewed for an additional six months in December, 1996, encompasses all properties located within the existing C-1A General Commercial district on Magazine St. from First to Erato Streets. It prohibits the sale of package liquor (i.e. alcoholic beverages for off-premises consumption) at any location other than a general retail establishment with a gross interior floor area of at least 5,000 square feet. Excluded from the scope of the IZD are 1) retail locations which possessed a valid alcoholic beverage permit at the time the IZD was enacted and 2) locations which offer alcoholic beverages for on-premises consumption (i.e. standard restaurants and bars).<sup>24</sup>

At the time the IZD was implemented in January, 1994, there were 5 retail outlets or grocery/convenience stores selling packaged beer and liquor in the 12 block area between First and Erato Streets, as well as five locations for on-premises consumption. There have been 7 alcoholic beverage permit applications in the two years since the IZD was enacted, of which 4 were renewals and therefore not subject to the IZD. Of the three new permit applications, two were denied. One of these, which was for on-premises alcohol consumption, was denied because the proposed restaurant was located in a residential zoning district. The second, which was for package sales, was denied due to a City Code prohibition on alcoholic beverage sales within 300' of a school. One of the three applications, which was for on-premises consumption at a small pizza restaurant, was approved.



Alcoholic beverage outlet on Magazine Street.

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<sup>24</sup> Standard restaurants and bars were not included within the scope of the IZD because they sell alcohol only for on-premises consumption. One problem which has arisen with these uses has been the practice of de-facto bars claiming to be a restaurant to avoid the conditional use approval procedure. However, this problem was recently addressed through a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance which more clearly defines the characteristics a location must possess to qualify as a restaurant. (Ordinance No. 17,664 M.C.S., approved on July 3, 1996.) In the case of bars, the conditional use review procedures allow for the application of regulatory measures such as spacing requirements, operating hour limitations and anti-loitering and litter abatement programs to mitigate adverse impacts on the neighborhood. (Bars and lounges are classified as a conditional use in the C-1A General Commercial district, as well as the B-1A Neighborhood Business and the proposed SI-A Special Industrial districts.)

The regulations contained in the IZD appear to have worked reasonably well, in that they have curbed only those types of uses which tend to be problematic for the neighborhood. However, since the IZD was limited to zoning, it did not address problems in the areas of licensing, operation and enforcement, issues which are regulated through the City Code. The City Council has proposed that these matters, which are City-wide in dimension, be the subject of a City Planning Commission Task Force composed of representatives of the Department of Finance, Safety and Permits, the City Attorney's Office, Public Advocacy, and the City Business Center.<sup>25</sup> The Task Force's mandate is to prepare recommendations for amendments to the City Code to address these issues.

The City has also recognized the need for more effective zoning regulations for alcoholic beverage outlets, and in December, 1996, the City Planning Commission recommended several City-wide amendments to the Neighborhood Business district zoning requirements. These new regulations would make any retail location that sells packaged alcohol in a B-1A Neighborhood Business district a conditional use, regardless of size. Accordingly, any proposed retail business in a B-1A zone that plans to sell alcohol would be reviewed by the City Planning Commission and the City Council on such issues as spacing, business hours, litter abatement, security personnel, parking etc. as part of the public hearing and conditional use procedure.

As to bars and lounges, which are already classified as a conditional use, the regulations would now require specific consideration of issues such as the interior square footage of the bar, the type and intensity of other uses in the vicinity, and the number of other businesses in the neighborhood which have an alcoholic beverage permit. Also, additional requirements regarding off-street parking, exterior signage and visual screening would be imposed on proposed cocktail lounges or bars within 150 feet of an existing residential use.

Although these amendments will give the neighborhood a greater voice in the decision of whether, and under what circumstances, to allow alcoholic beverage sales at a particular location, even stronger restrictions may be called for in the case of retail alcohol sales. As the IZD has demonstrated, a minimum interior square footage requirement of 5,000 square feet helps to assure the neighborhood that the retail outlet will not become, in effect, a package liquor store, with most of its sales devoted to alcohol.<sup>26</sup> The importance of this issue has been repeatedly

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<sup>25</sup> The Task Force proposal, which is contained in Resolution No. R-96-113, cites the protection of neighborhood integrity and the reduction of alcohol related incidents as underlying goals, and charges the Task Force with "recommending the necessary controls and provisions of enforcement through the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance to reduce high density concentrations of Alcoholic Beverage Outlets in New Orleans neighborhoods."

<sup>26</sup> Package liquor stores are not allowed in the B-1A or C-1A zoning district. They are defined as an outlet where 1) the wholesale cost of liquor exceeds 15% of the cost of other merchandise sold, 2) liquor display constitutes more than 10% of all display area, and 3) advertising for alcoholic beverages is visible from the exterior of the premises. CZO Article 2, Section 2.2.140. These restrictions are relatively difficult for zoning inspectors to enforce, however, due to individual accounting methods and display arrangements.

stressed at neighborhood meetings by residents and business-owners who are concerned that problem outlets will continue to impede revitalization efforts. While minimum square footage requirement would represent a significant change over the status quo, it is a solution that has worked well for Magazine Street, and should be considered for implementation on a permanent basis.

### **E. Summary of Recommendations**

The following zoning changes are recommended for Magazine Street:

- \* The section of Magazine Street from Jackson Avenue to Melpomene Street, including the existing C-1A areas along Sophie Wright Place and St. Mary Street, should be re-zoned to B-1A Neighborhood Business, a zoning district which provides a better fit both in terms of scale and variety of uses than the C-1A General Commercial district.
- \* Melpomene to Erato Streets should retain the current C-1A zoning.
- \* The existing LI Light Industrial zoned area bordering the Pontchartrain Expressway should be re-zoned SI-A Special Industrial, a new zoning classification which will prevent the development of potentially hazardous industrial uses, but will encourage light manufacturing and a variety of other activities in older industrial areas.
- \* To address the impact of alcoholic beverage sales on adjoining neighborhoods, permanent regulations should be enacted to limit sales of alcohol for off-premises consumption to retail locations with a minimum of 5,000 interior square footage, excepting those locations with a valid ABO permit as of the effective date of the regulations. Businesses such as restaurants and bars which sell alcohol exclusively for on-premises consumption should also be excepted.

### 3. Prytania Street

The zoning of Prytania Street is Multiple-Family Residential (RM-1, 2 and 3) from Jackson Avenue to Felicity Street, and C-1A General Commercial from Felicity to the Pontchartrain Expressway. The C-1A zoning encompasses all of the lots between Prytania and St. Charles Avenue, as well as a portion of the squares on the riverside of the street (see attached map).<sup>27</sup>

Jackson Avenue  
to the  
Pontchartrain Expressway

Although Prytania Street appears to have a quiet, residential character, it carries a considerable volume of traffic which flows between the Central Business District and the Uptown area. There are also a number of tourist accommodations along the C-1A portion of Prytania, most of which are relatively small in scale. These have tended to be successful in part due to the



Neighborhood businesses on Prytania Street.

proximity of the area to downtown and the Vieux Carre, which is easily accessible with the St. Charles Avenue streetcar. In addition to tourist accommodations, there are several retail businesses which cater to the neighborhood. At Erato Street there is a large, 5-story engineering offices building, but other than a 6-story apartment building fronting on St. Charles Avenue, the scale of the street does not exceed 2 ½ stories.

The mix of uses along Prytania Street appears to work fairly well, though the traffic and the

number of commercial uses and tourist accommodations have probably reached the point where any further intensification will begin to deter residential investment.<sup>28</sup> There are also a

<sup>27</sup> See Section 1 above for a discussion of the areas with RM Multiple-Family zoning.

<sup>28</sup> Nearly one-half of the 65 structures on the blocks between Felicity St. and the Pontchartrain Expressway are non-residential in use. Of these non-residential structures, 14 are tourist accommodations, and 18 are commercial or mixed commercial/residential.

significant number of vacant lots between Prytania and St. Charles Avenue which may see development in the coming years, particularly if there is further investment along St. Charles Avenue.

As noted above in the discussion of Magazine Street, the C-1A General Commercial district was originally designed for lower St. Charles Avenue, and many of its features, such as the height limitations, the intensity of uses, and the RM-4 Multiple-Family residential densities, do not fit well on Prytania Street. Historically, the zoning along Prytania was consistently more restrictive than the zoning of St. Charles Avenue, but in 1981 Prytania was included with the new C-1A district that was applied to the St. Charles Avenue corridor. The staff report for



Prytania at Melpomene Street.

that map change acknowledged that the density and scale of Prytania St. was lower than along St. Charles, and suggested that a neighborhood business classification would be more appropriate. It was recommended that the area nevertheless be included in the C-1A district on a temporary basis, until the B-1A district (which was still under study at the time) was enacted.<sup>29</sup>

The B-1A Neighborhood Business district continues to be more appropriate in

terms of both scale and intensity of uses, and is recommended for the section of Prytania between Urania and Erato Streets. B-1A zoning will help to ensure that future infill construction along these blocks is compatible with the existing scale of the street, and will encourage residential investment by giving buyers the assurance that future commercial development will not be allowed to overwhelm the neighborhood. Tourist accommodations are allowed under the B-1A, but with an overall 10,000 sq. ft. limitation which will help to maintain the current scale of uses presently on the street. Also, bed & breakfasts, apartment hotels and rooming houses will continue to be classified as conditional uses (subject to the 10,000 sq. ft. limitation), but hotels (which are defined as having a minimum of 15 guest rooms), guest homes (which are like rooming houses, but with 15 to 50 rooms) motels,

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<sup>29</sup> Staff report for Zoning Docket 96/81, at p. 10.



timeshares and transient vacation rentals would no longer be allowed.

In sum, the smaller tourist accommodations (those with 15 rooms or less) would be allowed under the B-1A, but the large hotels, whose impact on parking and traffic could prove detrimental to adjoining uses, would be limited to adjoining C-1A districts. Of course, existing uses in those categories could continue as non-conforming uses within the existing building square footage. Finally, the B-1A has a spacing requirement for bed & breakfast family homes (defined as having 1 or 2 guest bedrooms) of 1 per block face, and a spacing requirement for bed & breakfast inns (6 to 9 guest rooms) of 1 per 500' radius.

The lots fronting on St. Charles Avenue (including the 6-story apartment building between Urania and Polymnia) should remain C-1A General Commercial, as should the area downriver of Erato (lakeside of Prytania). Here, C-1A zoning is appropriate due to the large scale of the buildings, which in some cases fill nearly an entire square. However, on the riverside of Prytania, downriver of Erato, the scale and intensity of uses is more in keeping with the residential zoning found along Camp Street. Here the uses include Margaret's Place (a small triangular shaped park),<sup>30</sup> a day care center, parking lot, church, rectory and residential uses, all of which are permitted under the RM-2A zoning. Residential zoning would help to limit the height of future development in the adjoining zoning districts, and would therefore protect the uses in this area as well as the residential neighborhoods upriver of Erato. Accordingly, RM-2A zoning is recommended for this section at the end of Prytania Street (see attached map).

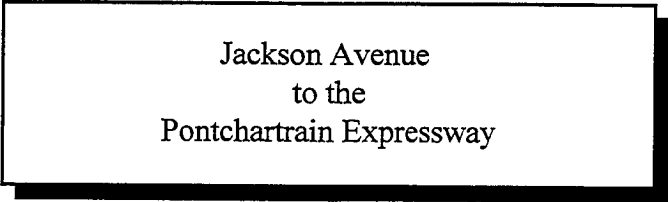
These regulations make sense for Prytania Street because they are tailored to address issues of size and scale. The recommendations are designed to enable the street to retain its existing character, while continuing to allow for development and growth in the coming years.

#### 4. Lower St. Charles Avenue

The existing zoning of St. Charles Avenue from Jackson Avenue to the Pontchartrain Expressway is C-1A General Commercial.

Over the years, St. Charles Avenue has become a highly congested Major Street, collecting trips from various minor and local streets to access residential and commercial uses in the direct vicinity as well as the Central Business District. Currently, commercial establishments found within this

corridor include fast food restaurants, gas stations, retail shops, hotels, bars and lounges, and auto



Jackson Avenue  
to the  
Pontchartrain Expressway

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<sup>30</sup> The park features a statue of Margaret Haughery, an Irish immigrant who was a benefactor and founder of a number of orphanages in New Orleans in the 1800's. The statue was erected in 1884.

repair centers. Many of these commercial uses generate a high volume of automobile traffic and tend not to be pedestrian-oriented. Because of the increase in traffic congestion, concern has been expressed that the existing zoning regulations do not adequately control the land uses within this corridor.

As drive-through banks, fast-food restaurants and gas stations develop within a particular vicinity, new and similar uses tend to cluster in the same area. Because St. Charles Avenue is a historic thoroughfare and has a neutral ground that carries the nationally famous St. Charles Streetcar, the only realistic option for limiting the traffic congestion is through revisions to the



Fast-food restaurants on St. Charles Avenue.

existing land use regulations.

These revisions should address the existing land-use conflicts, as well as future developments.

The C-1A District was originally designed for a balanced mixture of commercial and residential activity. However, this lower section of St. Charles Avenue is predominately commercial, with residential uses mostly limited to large apartment complexes.

While this section of St. Charles Avenue is not considered a part of the local historic district, it provides visitors and residents with a first impression of the street and acts as the gateway to

the adjoining historic residential neighborhoods. Because of the importance of this entranceway, there should be an effort to create a unified visual image which conveys the aesthetic of an historic urban corridor.

In considering options for re-zoning, the B-1A Neighborhood Business district was examined. However, the businesses along this portion of St. Charles Avenue do not cater primarily to the surrounding neighborhoods, but are more regional in character, and do not fit within the smaller scale envisioned for the B-1A district. Furthermore, a zoning change would not necessarily improve the auto congestion problem in that the B-1A permits, albeit as a conditional use, a number of traffic generating uses such as gas stations and drive-through banks. Thus, it is recommended that the C-1A zoning remain in place, but that a text amendment applicable to this portion of St. Charles Avenue be adopted which would prohibit the establishment of any new high traffic generating commercial uses. Specifically, the text amendment should prohibit the establishment of any new fast food and/or drive-through restaurants, gas stations, car care centers and drive-through banks and/or the redevelopment or expansion of existing structures for these

uses on any square fronting on St. Charles Avenue between the Pontchartrain Expressway and Jackson Avenue.

In order to further protect the character of this section of St. Charles Avenue, the creation of a design review overlay district is also recommended. This overlay district would be similar to the existing Downtown Design Review district, in that it would provide special site design regulations to supplement the underlying zoning district. The design guidelines would be intended to enhance the aesthetic and architectural compatibility of land uses along St. Charles Avenue. Under the design review district, site plan review would be required for all new developments and redevelopments. The purpose of the site plan review would be to ensure that building designs are compatible with the scale, mass, building patterns and facade articulation that is prevalent along Lower St. Charles Avenue, and to make the area more inviting to pedestrians.

The proposed Lower St. Charles Avenue Design Review Overlay District (see Appendix) would contain specific guidelines to promote aesthetic and architectural compatibility, coordinated architectural details, materials, colors and landscape treatments in keeping with the scale and character of the surrounding neighborhoods, and the encouragement of appropriate ornamental features. The location and screening of loading docks is also controlled to minimize adverse impacts on adjoining uses.

Finally, a text amendment should be put in place to ensure that demolitions not be allowed without a redevelopment plan approved under the provisions of the design review district. This text amendment would require the submission of a redevelopment plan, and the demolition request would be reviewed by City Planning Commission and the Historic District Landmarks Commission staff, subject to approval or denial by the City Council.

These three recommendations -- a text amendment to limit further development of auto-intensive uses, an amendment to prohibit demolition without an approved redevelopment plan, and design review standards to promote aesthetic and architectural compatibility -- will ensure that this section of one of the City's most prominent thoroughfares will continue to operate as a major asset to the neighborhood and the City as a whole.

## 5. Lower Tchoupitoulas

This 200-acre tract of land presents the Lower Garden District with an exceptional opportunity for economic revitalization. Indeed, few other historic neighborhoods have comparable quantities of prime riverfront land available in close proximity to downtown. These circumstances are the result of the gradual migration of industrial and warehousing activities to outlying areas of the City, due largely to historic changes in Port operations and transportation systems. Vacant land and buildings serve as reminders of the manufacturing and shipping activity that once thrived in the area. The challenge now is to return Lower Tchoupitoulas to its original economic vibrancy through new development and adaptive reuse of existing structures which will link the area with the rest of the Lower Garden District.

Jackson Avenue to the Pontchartrain Expressway  
and  
Annunciation Street to the Mississippi River

Lower Tchoupitoulas, unlike the residential areas and neighborhood business corridors discussed previously, is currently zoned LI-Light Industrial and HI-Heavy Industrial. Light industrial uses are permitted from Jackson Avenue to the Pontchartrain Expressway, between Annunciation and Tchoupitoulas Streets (see attached map). The heavy industrial district spans from Celeste Street to the Pontchartrain Expressway, between Tchoupitoulas Street and the Mississippi River. In 1994, a portion of the district was re-zoned P-Park in order to accommodate the River City Casino project, described below. Warehousing and manufacturing businesses predominate as land uses, with pockets of two and multi-family residential uses found mainly between Felicity and Race Streets. Vacant land and surface level parking become the norm downriver of Race Street.

### A. Current Development

Through the 1980's, Lower Tchoupitoulas would have been accurately described as a static expanse of land. In 1991, a local development consortium, New Orleans 2000 Partnership, purchased a tract of land often called the "MICO site" from the Missouri Pacific Railroad and Upland Industries Corporation. The MICO site is frequently mentioned as a premier development opportunity, due to the amount of vacant land under single ownership and its strategic location between the River, the Central Business District and major transportation corridors. Developers, architects and real estate professionals have espoused mixed use developments for the site, ranging from gaming boat terminals, the convention center expansion, to office buildings and a riverfront amphitheatre and park.<sup>31</sup> The tract of land is no longer under the ownership of a single entity, due to expropriation and sales transactions which carved out

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<sup>31</sup> City Planning Commission, New Orleans Riverfront Strategic Policy Plan, 1992.

significant portions of land for the Phase III expansion of the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center and the ill-fated River City Casino. Combined with the Tchoupitoulas Truck Corridor, these three projects, discussed in further detail below, will significantly alter the planning and ultimate utilization of the former MICO site.

Ernest N. Morial Convention Center -- Beginning at Julia Street in the Warehouse District, the Convention Center extends along the Mississippi River to the boundary of the Lower Garden District at the Pontchartrain Expressway. The Phase III expansion will add 1.3 million square feet to the existing structure, to create the largest convention center with contiguous, ground-level exhibit space in the country. Once completed, the building will extend for an unprecedented 1/2 mile along the Riverfront. The project has generated its share of controversy arising from the Center's stated need to locate its truck marshaling and parking directly adjacent to the facility. Expropriation, court challenges, and aborted compromises with the City and neighborhood all preceded the City Council's reluctant approval of the Convention Center Authority's request to provide truck marshaling on Municipal Squares 29, 30, 44 and 45, directly upriver from the bridge.<sup>32</sup> Approximately 8.77 acres of prime real estate will be used to construct surface level parking lots to hold 1,000 automobiles, buses, taxis, limousines and up to 231 tractor-trailer trucks, all related to the operations of the Convention Center.<sup>33</sup>

✓ While the Phase III expansion has already served to stimulate hotel development in the adjacent Central Business District and will bring about economic gains to the entire City, the siting of the facility is problematic for the neighborhood. More than 30 acres of land in the Lower Garden District are now dedicated to the structure and associated surface level parking lots, and there has already been the hint of a possible Phase IV by Convention authorities. The exhibition hall will sit between Convention Center Boulevard and the floodwall, thereby blocking pedestrian access to the Mississippi River. Although a pedestrian passageway over the building exists at Calliope Street, it has been closed for a number of years due to liability issues.

✓ Another problematic feature is the siting of the parking lots between the Convention Center and the neighborhood. At a time when efforts are directed towards redevelopment of the area, construction of surface level parking will discourage higher and better land uses, and will be difficult to integrate into the urban fabric. Acknowledging these drawbacks, the City Council imposed a \$2.00/night truck parking fee to be channeled into a Neighborhood Fund whose purpose will be to attempt to mitigate adverse effects.<sup>34</sup> Future developments in the adjoining areas should be designed to promote a unified sense of place and integrate the Riverfront area

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<sup>32</sup> Ordinance No. 17,303 M.C.S., adopted by the City Council on December 7, 1995.

<sup>33</sup> City Planning Commission Zoning Docket # 88/95.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

with the rest of the Lower Garden District through linkages with the community rather than the creation of isolated subareas.

River City Casino -- River City represented the new gaming industry's promise of prosperity to the City and the Lower Garden District. The ambitious 22-acre proposal boasted of two gaming boats berthed at the Robin Street Wharf, an 80,000 square foot terminal building complete with restaurants and 'themed areas', a riverfront urban space, and 13.5 acres of surface parking. The reality did bring two boats and the parking, but the terminal building stands unfinished as does the riverfront promenade. After operating for only eight weeks, both the Crescent City Queen and the Grand Palais pulled back their gangplanks and filed for bankruptcy.



The River City complex, seen from Henderson Street.

The River City complex occupies a stretch of land which extends from Annunciation Street to the River. Most of the property on the land side of the floodwall contains surface level parking or vacant lots, except the existing Employee Center and storage warehouse on Euterpe Street between Annunciation and Tchoupitoulas Streets. These 13.5 acres of parking were a source of widespread concern for the neighborhood, and as part of final approval the City required the developer to construct a parking structure at the end of two years to reduce the amount of land dedicated to parking. However, the demise of River City has rendered the final disposition of these parcels uncertain.

Unlike the Convention Center expansion, the terminal building is constructed behind the floodwall. Therefore, openings in the floodwall will dictate access to the River, and two new openings exist as a result of the project. Moreover, in large part due to hard fought efforts by the neighborhood, two pedestrian corridors were designed on either side of the terminal building. Any redevelopment of the River City site should be cognizant of the importance of the floodwall openings and pedestrian corridors to the goal of ensuring public riverfront access.

Tchoupitoulas Corridor -- The Tchoupitoulas truck corridor is a major infrastructure project implemented by a consortium of various city and state agencies to improve access to the Port's uptown wharves. The 5-mile corridor will extend through the Lower Garden District from the Pontchartrain Expressway to the Henry Clay Wharf near Audubon Park. Beginning at Felicity

Street, truck traffic will be channeled on to a new Port roadway presently under construction on the riverside of the floodwall. Regular vehicular traffic will continue along Tchoupitoulas Street, which will also be reconstructed as part of the project. These measures will remove Port-related truck traffic from its prior routing through residential neighborhoods and commercial arteries in the uptown area, thereby alleviating a range of adverse impacts which have included damage to historic structures, noise, exhaust fumes and hazardous traffic congestion.

The Lower Garden District section of the Tchoupitoulas Corridor will provide the gateway to the new Port roadway. Though the project will benefit the City as a whole, it is clearly the Lower Garden District which will bear a significant portion of the burden. Nevertheless, the physical improvements associated with the roadway (see Transportation and Capital Improvements section, below) will have positive effects on the Lower Garden District, in that the trucks will be channeled onto specific streets so as not to intrude on the nearby residential districts and the new roads will be constructed so as to absorb the weight and vibration. Moreover, the most significant impact of the new corridor is the potential it brings for greater economic development in the Lower Tchoupitoulas area.

## **B. Future Development**

Much of the land in the Lower Tchoupitoulas area is vacant or underutilized, and there are a number of structures which are empty and in some cases abandoned. The Tchoupitoulas Corridor has the potential to turn this situation around, by dramatically improving access to the Port facilities and thereby broadening the range of businesses and uses which are likely to prosper in the area. Direct connections to major regional transportation systems -- including both shipping and trucking routes -- will provide the new businesses with an edge over competitors which are less centrally located. Moreover, by orienting their activities to regional and international markets, companies can lower their vulnerability to fluctuations in the local economy.<sup>35</sup>

These new businesses will include shipping and trade related services for the Port of New Orleans, which is currently in the process of completing a large-scale expansion and modernization program following several years of record growth.<sup>36</sup> Other potential uses include primary industries such as light manufacturing, assembly and processing, and warehousing. Historic structures which are no longer suited for manufacturing uses may be eligible for adaptive reuse for business and professional offices and residential dwellings. The new businesses will provide a wide range of employment opportunities for residents in the area,

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<sup>35</sup> Michael E. Porter, "The Competitive Edge of the Inner City," Harvard Business Review, May-June 1995.

<sup>36</sup> Port-wide tonnage increased by 51% over the five year period ending in December, 1994, to a total over 10 million tons per year. "Public Port Facilities Capital Improvements Program," Board of Commissioners of the Port of New Orleans, 1995.

triggering in turn new demand for residential, commercial/retail, and other service-oriented businesses in the Lower Garden District.

The Lower Tchoupitoulas area has the additional benefit of being located adjacent to the tourist-oriented activities along the Riverfront which extend from the Vieux Carre to the Pontchartrain Expressway. With the completion of the Convention Center Phase III expansion, the new Port headquarters and cruise ship docking facilities at the Thalia St. Wharf, the potential for tourist-oriented development in the Lower Garden District will have become a reality. Nevertheless, as the failed River City Casino project amply demonstrates, these developments must be undertaken incrementally and in accordance with demand. Clearly, although the quantity of available land in the Lower Garden District holds enormous promise for developers, it comes with no guarantee of success.



The Ernest N. Morial Convention Center Phase III expansion and the new Dock Board headquarters.

Tourist-oriented development should take place slowly, so as to avoid the boom and bust pattern which is all too familiar in urban settings across the country. These caveats notwithstanding, tourism is sure to provide an important component in the Lower Garden District's long term development, one which will complement Port-oriented business and will help to create balanced growth.

As is true of other parts of the Lower Garden District, the zoning of this area needs to be appropriately designed so as to allow new businesses to develop and prosper, but also to ensure that attention is paid to questions of scale, intensity of use, and compatibility between new development and the existing urban fabric. The following discussion addresses zoning in four geographic areas. Section C looks at the area between Annunciation and Tchoupitoulas Street, which currently has a mixture of manufacturing, warehousing and commercial uses and is zoned LI Light Industrial. This section also addresses the small residential area located downriver of the New St. Thomas, and the former New Orleans General Hospital on Jackson Avenue. Section D addresses the area along the River from Jackson Avenue to the Pontchartrain Expressway. This area includes the Phase III Convention Center expansion and the former River City, and currently has three zoning classifications: LI Light Industrial, HI Heavy Industrial, and P Park. Section E sets forth a proposed overlay district which would avoid some of the problems



involved in piecemeal development of large vacant areas. A final section will address the problem of speculation, recommending regulatory measures that will provide oversight and control over proposed demolitions in the area.

### **C. Zoning Options: Annunciation to Tchoupitoulas Street**

#### **i. Background**

This area represents most of the property zoned LI-Light Industrial in the Lower Tchoupitoulas. Other than four 1 and 2-story warehouse structures, Race Street to the Pontchartrain Expressway consists mainly of vacant land. The majority of the existing buildings are found between Race and Market Streets, with small pockets of residential uses clustered in two areas: two blocks bounded by St. Thomas, Race, Tchoupitoulas and Orange Streets; and the triangular area bounded by Annunciation, Felicity, Tchoupitoulas and Market Streets.

Annunciation to Tchoupitoulas Street  
and  
Jackson Avenue to the Pontchartrain Expressway

The existing Light Industrial zoning is inappropriate for this area because it allows a virtually unlimited range of uses, including many whose intensity would serve to deter other desired forms of development, such as commercial, retail, tourist and residential uses.<sup>37</sup> Moreover, the LI district classifies new residential development as a conditional use, requiring each owner to go through the public hearing process and obtain City Council approval. The LI district also allows open storage of equipment, building materials, etc., without any requirement as to fencing or screening.

#### **ii. Orange Street to the Pontchartrain Expressway**

Much of the land in this section is vacant, and a significant portion consists of large parcels under single ownership. These factors create a desirable context for development, one which will require an appropriate zoning classification as the process moves forward. The business and commercial zoning classifications in the Zoning Ordinance range from MS-Medical Service, RO and RO-1 General Office, B-1, B-1A and B-2 Neighborhood Business and C-1, C-1A and C-2 General Commercial. The MS and RO districts, as suggested by their designation, are too specialized to provide for the variety of development desired. The Neighborhood Business

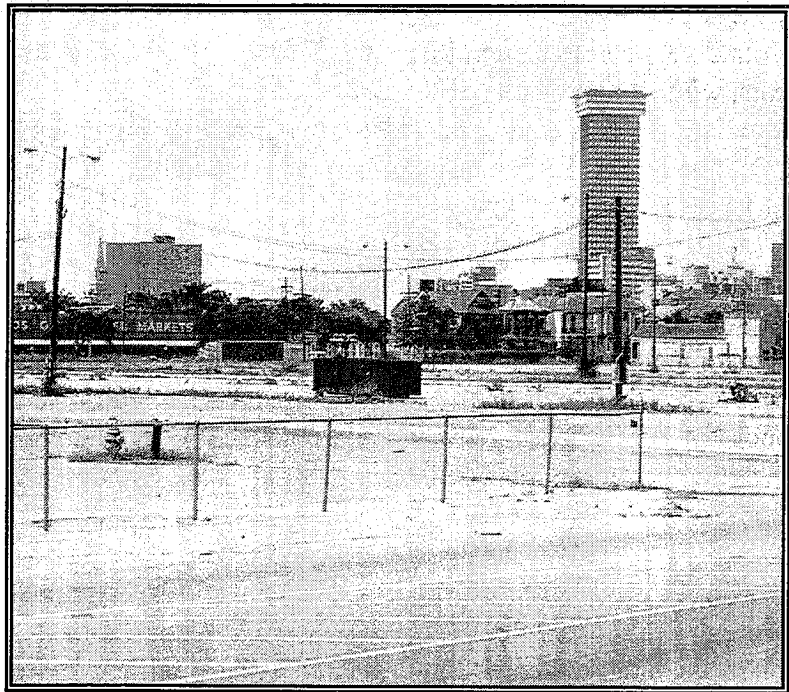
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<sup>37</sup> The Light Industrial district allows, for example, intense industrial uses such as the blending of insecticides, fungicides and household chemicals, bottling operations, commercial livestock, meat processing and canning, and storage of fuels such as coal and coke.

districts are intended for smaller scale development compatible with low and medium density residential uses.

The General Commercial zoning districts provide a better fit with the type of development patterns envisioned by the community. Of the General Commercial districts, the C-1A district is ideally suited for this area. The C-1A allows a wide variety of commercial and residential uses, as well as tourist oriented uses such as hotels and restaurants, general business and professional offices, and neighborhood-oriented services such as repair shops, banks, and general retail establishments (see attached district regulations for complete listing). Large scale uses and the more intense uses such as gas stations, fast food restaurants, cocktail lounges and parking garages are classified as conditional uses to allow the opportunity for public hearing and consideration by the City Planning Commission and the City Council.

The district has a height limitation for structures which is equal to the width of the street on which the building fronts, not to exceed 75' (7 stories). Along Tchoupitoulas St., which is classified as a Major Street, commercial structures may attain a height of 100' (10 stories), and structures which are at least 50% residential may reach 125' (12 stories). However, structures adjoining or across the street from a residential district may not exceed 5 stories, though an additional 1 foot of height can be secured for every 1 foot that the building's facade is set back from all required yard lines.



Undeveloped land between Tchoupitoulas and Annunciation Streets.

These requirements will allow relatively tall structures along Tchoupitoulas, but at the same time ensure that new development will “step-down” toward the residential areas along Annunciation and Market Streets.

The C-1A General Commercial zoning district has the further advantage that it is specifically designed for historic neighborhoods such as the Lower Garden District. The objectives of the district are stated below:

“The purpose of this district is to provide for a wide variety of commercial, miscellaneous service activities and residential uses, generally serving a wide area and located

particularly along certain existing major thoroughfares where a general mix of commercial, service and residential activities now exist. The district is intended for application in older developed areas of the City. The district regulations are designed to encourage a proportionate mixture of commercial and residential activity to encourage the retention of existing historic and architecturally significant structures, and to encourage compatibility with adjacent or nearby land uses and the general character of the area.”<sup>38</sup>

As with the B-1A Neighborhood Business and RM-2A Multiple-Family Residential districts, the C-1A includes a number of features specifically designed to accommodate older neighborhoods, such as special setback and signage requirements, and parking bonuses to encourage the retention of structures (see attached regulations). The regulations also contain design standards for parking lots that address landscaping, maintenance and lighting, as well as screening from adjacent residential uses.

Thus, in contrast to the existing zoning, these provisions of the C-1A district will supply appropriate standards to promote compatibility between future development and existing uses, while encouraging a broad variety of businesses and other uses in the area.

### **iii. Market to Orange Street: Port-Oriented Manufacturing and Warehousing**

This area is occupied by a number of large industrial warehousing structures which have traditionally been linked with Port activities. Currently, the structures are occupied by several businesses which provide services such as ship insulation, machine repair, metal working and coffee storage. Because of the size and site layout of these facilities, as well as their proximity to the Tchoupitoulas Corridor and the Port, the potential for retail and commercial uses is not as pronounced here as it is downriver of Race Street. Accordingly, to encourage the development and retention of these Port-oriented businesses, and the employment opportunities they will bring for nearby residents, this area should be zoned SI-A



Warehousing activities at Religious and Market Streets.

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<sup>38</sup> Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance Article 5, Section 8.

Special Industrial, together with the adjoining areas on the riverside of Tchoupitoulas (see discussion below).

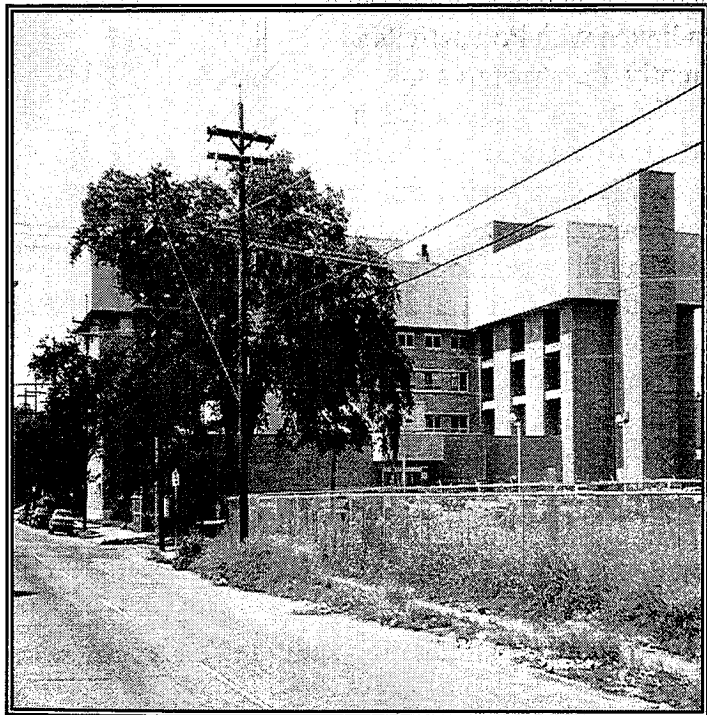
#### **iv. Felicity to Market Street: A Residential Border**

Within a small triangular area bounded by Annunciation, Felicity, Religious and Market Streets, there is a pocket of residential uses which occupy approximately four municipal squares. Most of the dwellings are single-story residences, predominately double shotguns, and many parcels are vacant. The Felicity Street boundary backs up to the New St. Thomas, providing a buffer between the housing development and the industrial uses downriver of Market Street. Most of the structures in the area appear to be occupied but a few are vacant or abandoned.

In order to provide more adequate protection for these uses and to encourage the rehabilitation of vacant structures, the zoning of this area should be changed from industrial to residential. The RM-2A district, discussed in detail above, would be an appropriate zoning classification which, consistent with the adjoining areas, would reflect both the existing land use and the historic nature of this neighborhood.

#### **v. The Former New Orleans General Hospital**

The New Orleans General Hospital, located between Chippewa and St. Thomas Streets on Jackson Avenue, has remained only partially occupied since declaring bankruptcy in 1995. It is zoned MS Medical Services, a district which allows as a permitted use, hospitals, clinics, rehabilitative-recovery/care centers and residential care centers. Although re-use of the facility as a hospital would be an obvious choice, given the design of the building, it is unclear whether this will occur due to the current condition of the medical services market. Alternative uses for the building under the MS zoning, such as the rehabilitative-recovery and residential care centers (which would include halfway houses and homeless shelters), have been opposed by the adjoining residential areas as overly intense. Unfortunately, other uses which might be appropriate for the structure, such as administrative and



The New Orleans General Hospital on Jackson Avenue.

professional offices, are not allowed in the MS district, due to its specialized nature.

A zoning district which would continue to allow use of the building as a hospital, but which would also allow a broader range of non-medical uses, is the RO General Office district. This district permits, in addition to hospitals and medical clinics, such uses as general business and professional offices, multiple-family dwellings, hotels, business schools, banks, data processing centers and health clubs. Rehabilitative-recovery/care centers and residential care centers are not allowed, however. (See attached district regulations.) Retail and service facilities are permitted only on the interior of an office building containing at least 20,000 sq. ft. of floor area devoted to office uses, or in a hotel or multiple-family dwelling with 100 or more dwelling units. In addition, educational or philanthropic institutional uses (including museums, art galleries and libraries), and commercial exposition centers and amusement parks are allowed as a conditional use.

The RO district will thus open up the possibilities for adaptive reuse of the former hospital in ways which can be of most benefit to the neighborhood. The district emphasizes office and residential uses (which may be the most likely candidates for adaptive reuse), but also allows some medical services, educational uses and limited retail.

#### **D. Zoning Options: Tchoupitoulas to the River**

##### **i. Background**

The portion of the Lower Tchoupitoulas closest to the River currently has three zoning classifications. From Jackson to Celeste Street is zoned LI Light Industrial. Celeste to Race is HI

Tchoupitoulas Street to the Mississippi River  
and  
Jackson Avenue to the Pontchartrain Expressway

Heavy Industrial, as is Henderson Street to the Pontchartrain Expressway. In between is a P-Park district, which was created in 1994 to accommodate the proposed River City Casino. These zoning classifications are inappropriate for a number of reasons. Perhaps most importantly, both the HI and the LI districts allow, as permitted uses, a range of intensive activities which could deter other desirable forms of development, such as tourist oriented and retail uses, professional offices and residential uses. Although some industrial and manufacturing uses would be appropriate, and indeed, as discussed above, are likely become an important source of Port-oriented economic growth, design oversight will be needed to ensure compatibility with adjoining uses.

Both the HI and the LI are lacking in such design oversight for the overwhelming majority of intensive uses, and indeed, specifically discourage new residential uses precisely to avoid issues of compatibility. Moreover, a number of permitted uses, such as animal quarantine facilities, poultry packaging and slaughtering, and hazardous industrial uses are simply too intense for an

inner city location. Although there are several other less intensive industrial zoning classifications in the Zoning Ordinance,<sup>39</sup> none are designed for historic areas such as the Lower Garden District. What is needed is a zoning classification which will allow a mixture of uses, including light manufacturing, commercial and office uses, retail, tourist and residential uses, with design requirements appropriate to historic industrial/warehousing areas.

The proposed SI-A Special Industrial district, described below, is a district which would serve these purposes. Based on the SI Special Industrial district, it combines the less intensive of the light industrial uses with a broad range of other commercial, office and residential uses, as well as tourist-oriented uses.

The P-Park district, which encompasses the site of the former River City, has become somewhat of an anomaly, particularly in view of its location sandwiched between two HI Heavy Industrial districts. As explained below, this area should be re-zoned to SI-A, consistent with the adjoining areas, with a provision which would allow tourist/amusement oriented developments as a conditional use.

#### **ii. The New SI-A Special Industrial District**

The proposed SI-A Special Industrial district takes as a starting point the SI Special Industrial district, and adds to it both uses and design features which are appropriate to historic industrial/warehousing areas such as the Lower Tchoupitoulas.<sup>40</sup> As set forth in the proposed district regulations (attached), the district's purpose is:

“to provide for a wide variety of uses in the older industrial and warehousing areas of the City. The district encourages adaptive reuse of large, older structures for mixed-use development, which could include commercial, office, residential and certain light manufacturing uses. Site design review is required to promote compatibility between existing and new developments, and to enhance the historic character of the area. Accessory signs of limited area and application are permitted. Special regulations apply to SI-A districts located on a waterfront.”

In terms of uses, the SI-A district would allow the same light manufacturing uses allowed in the SI Special Industrial district (which excludes the most intensive of the industrial uses found in LI Light Industrial districts), as well as banks, standard and cafeteria restaurants (fast food and drive-in would be a conditional use), hotels, research laboratories, office buildings, motion picture studios, printing and publishing. Unlike the SI, however, the SI-A district would also

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<sup>39</sup> These include the BIP Business Industrial Park district, the RP Research Park district and the SI Special Industrial district.

<sup>40</sup> The “A” of the SI-A district follows the designation for zoning districts tailored to older parts of the City (RM-2A, B-1A and C-1A) and provides a parallel zoning classification for industrial areas in older neighborhoods.

allow the general retail, service and repair establishments classified as permitted uses in the C-1A General Commercial district, in order to allow a range of retailers and service providers for residents, tourists and businesses in the area. Residential uses are specifically included as a permitted use (they are classified as a conditional use in the SI district), as are studios and galleries. In terms of conditional uses, the SI-A would allow a trade exposition center (to accommodate the Phase III convention center expansion), amusement parks, educational and philanthropic institutions, including museums and libraries, hospitals, sports stadiums, storage garages, private clubs and lodges, helistops, cocktail lounges and bars, fast-food and drive-in restaurants, and retirement homes. All storage of products and materials would be required to be within a completely enclosed building, or enclosed by an opaque wall not less than 6' in height. Off-street parking is required in the same quantity as in other high density districts, unless it would necessitate demolition or partial demolition of nearby structures.

As to site requirements, the SI-A would have a number of features specifically adapted to the scale and layout of historic industrial and warehousing areas. There would be no required building setbacks, except for lots abutting a residential district. The Floor to Area Ratio (FAR) would be 4.00, which is well above the 1.50 FAR of the more modern, suburban-style SI district, and comparable to the 4.50 and 4.00 FAR's for non-residential structures in the Historic Warehouse District. There is a 75' (7 story) height limit, though structures which are at least 50% residential in use would be allowed to attain 100' (10 stories). For SI-A districts along a waterfront (such as the Lower Tchoupitoulas), there would be additional provisions requiring building heights to step-down towards the water.<sup>41</sup> This would help to preserve views of the River, and prevent future development from creating a wall-like effect along the waterfront.

Finally, site plan review requirements would ensure that the plans for every new development (including permitted uses) would be reviewed on an administrative level by City Planning Commission staff to ensure compliance with zoning requirements and any applicable design standards. This procedure is used in the SI Special Industrial district as well as in design overlay districts such as the Downtown Design Review district and the Urban Corridor districts. Of course, uses classified as conditional uses would also go through a broader review procedure which would include public hearings and consideration by the City Planning Commission and the City Council.

These provisions, taken as a whole, will provide an appropriate context for the redevelopment of older industrial/warehousing areas of the City. While admitting a considerable variety of uses, additional review procedures help to maximize compatibility and ensure that new development is respectful of the historic character of the area.

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<sup>41</sup> The height limit for structures within 300' of the water's edge (defined as the floodwall), would be 3 stories; within 300 - 500', the height limit would be 5 stories; within 500 to 1,000', 7 stories.

### **iii. Tourist and Entertainment Oriented Uses Along the Waterfront**

Along the City's waterfronts, additional tourist and entertainment uses will be appropriate which might not otherwise fit into an SI-A district. Accordingly, the SI-A district includes a special provision applicable along the Mississippi River and Lake Pontchartrain, which references, as a conditional use, the uses allowed in the new W-1 Waterfront District. This district (see proposed district regulations, attached) is designed to accommodate larger recreational developments and tourist waterfront attractions, such as those that have opened in recent years along the Central Business District and Vieux Carre waterfronts. These waterfront developments seek to take advantage of larger volumes of pedestrian traffic along the water's edge, and to create an environment attractive to tourists and residents alike.

The W-1 Waterfront District will allow as a conditional use developments such as hotels, live entertainment facilities, parks, recreational and health clubs, restaurants, theaters, amusement places and swimming pools, as well as dockside gaming facilities for licensed gaming boats.<sup>42</sup> Although these uses are usually larger scale and more intensive in nature, each will be required to go through the conditional use review procedure in order to allow for consideration of impacts on adjoining uses and the community at large.

These waterfront uses will give the Lower Tchoupitoulas area the opportunity to grow with, as well as to further, the City's tourist and entertainment potential. At the same time, however, the conditional use review procedure will allow detailed review of these developments to address their broader impacts.

### **E. Mixed-Use Planned Community District Overlay**

The quantity of vacant land and structures within the Lower Tchoupitoulas poses a particular challenge for the long-term planning of the area. Piecemeal development of individual lots can lead to awkward contrasts in building dimensions and intensity of uses, as well as in the resulting vehicular and pedestrian circulation patterns. The site plan review and conditional use procedures contained in the SI-A Special Industrial and C-1A General Commercial districts help to minimize these contrasts by addressing compatibility issues and avoiding adverse impacts on existing developments in the vicinity. An additional vehicle for promoting compatibility between developments, particularly ones that will take place over an extended time period, is the Planned Development District.<sup>43</sup> This is an overlay zoning designation which can be applied to a specific area, supplementing the underlying zoning regulations. The purpose of a Planned

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<sup>42</sup> This will allow gaming boat berths to be removed from the P-Park district, so that this district can be reserved for more passive recreational uses as originally intended.

<sup>43</sup> In other cities Planned Community Districts are sometimes referred to as Planned Unit Districts or Planned Unit Developments (PUDs).



Development District overlay is to allow the consideration of several lots or tracts for zoning approval simultaneously, thereby avoiding piecemeal development.

The creation of a Planned Development District overlay is initiated by an application submitted by the owner(s) of the property to be included in the district. Under the procedures for Planned Development Districts contained in the Zoning Ordinance, the owners are required to submit a Concept Plan which shows all of the existing and proposed land uses in the district, building dimensions and heights, and other features such as streets and loading areas. The Concept Plan also indicates the timing of development for each area, if the district is to be developed in phases.

Approval of the Concept Plan requires a public hearing and review by the City Planning Commission and the City Council. The Zoning Ordinance lists a number of Approval Standards that must be considered, including that the “[p]roposed uses and project design are compatible with existing and planned adjoining uses and the character of the neighborhood in which the project is located.” (See appendix, Planned Development District Procedures Section 16.5.3) Once the Concept Plan has been approved by the City Council, the owners submit detailed Development Plans which must be reviewed prior to the issuance of building permits “to assure that the development project proceeds in an orderly fashion consistent with the approved concept plan and to assure that the standards applicable within the district are met for each phase of the project.” (Planned Development District Procedures, Section 16.5.4.1) Both the Concept and Development Plans must be recorded, and any changes must be approved by the City Council as an amendment to the plan.

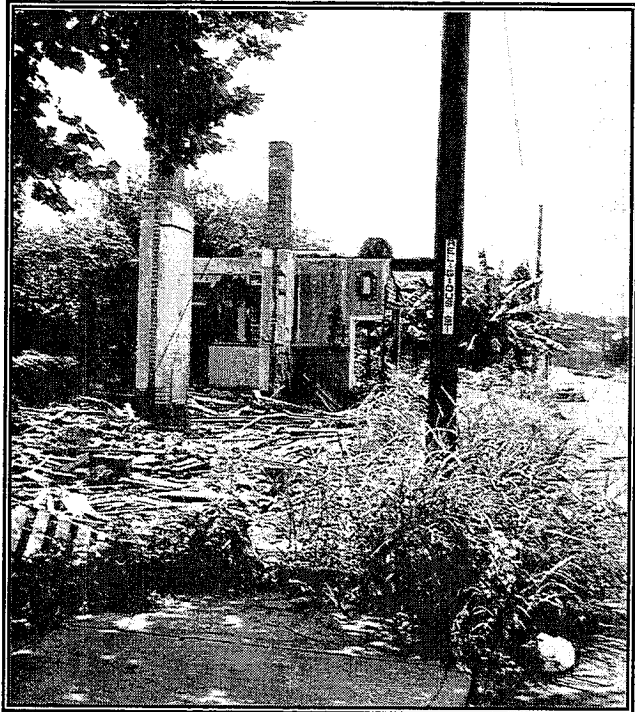
There are currently two types of Planned Development Districts in the Zoning Ordinance, one for the Central Business Districts (the CBD Planned Community District), and one for residential districts (the Residential Planned Community District). Since the older warehousing/industrial areas of the City would also benefit from the comprehensive approach provided by the Planned Development District, a third overlay category should be created to specifically apply to areas such as the Lower Tchoupitoulas. A proposal for such a district, the Mixed-Use Planned Community District (MUPC), is included in the appendix. The purpose of the district would be to encourage the mixed-use development and/or re-development of large parcels of land in the older areas of the City. Adaptive re-use of historic structures, and compatibility between new development and the existing urban fabric are primary goals of the district.

## **F. Demolition Regulations for Lower Tchoupitoulas**

With the development of the Lower Tchoupitoulas area, and specifically the truck corridor on Tchoupitoulas St., speculative pressures -- evidenced already in demolition requests for some of the smaller residential structures -- will gradually increase. Many of the existing industrial facilities are aged and dilapidated, with many warehousing facilities underutilized or vacant. There are also large parcels of vacant land where industrial and warehousing structures once

stood. The area's residential uses are sparsely spread throughout this district, with concentrations found along Race and between Market and Felicity Streets. Most dwelling units are wood frame shotgun doubles that are raised on brick foundations with minimal front yard setbacks. Together with the deteriorating condition of many structures, the demolition of both industrial and residential buildings has contributed to a downgraded appearance of the area.

Cognizant of the growing economic development pressures in the Lower Tchoupitoulas, the City Council in 1995 adopted an Interim Zoning District (IZD) to place additional oversight control on demolitions as well as the design of new developments in the area. This IZD expanded on an earlier IZD, which had required all demolition to be approved by City Council after design review by the City Planning Commission staff.<sup>44</sup> The 1995 IZD expanded on these provisions by requiring all new development (excepting residential development less than 10,000 sq. ft.), all renovations of existing structures (other than residential), and all demolitions to be considered by the City Planning Commission and the City Council in accordance with the conditional use review procedures. It also broadened the geographic scope of the former IZD, encompassing all areas zoned LI Light Industrial and HI Heavy Industrial from Jackson Avenue to the Pontchartrain Expressway.



Illegal demolition of residential structure at Religious and St. James Streets.

With the proposed C-1A General Commercial and SI-A Special Industrial zoning classifications recommended above, an appropriate level of oversight will be provided through the design review requirements for new developments. In terms of demolition, however, neither the Zoning Ordinance nor the City Code contain any standards or review procedure for this area. Moreover, although the Lower Tchoupitoulas is a part of the Lower Garden District National Register Historic District, it is not included in the local historic district (see attached map), and is therefore not within the Historic District Landmarks Commission's jurisdiction. Thus, with

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<sup>44</sup> The original IZD, Ordinance No. 16,449 M.C.S., adopted April 21, 1994, encompassed the areas zoned LI Light Industrial and HI Heavy Industrial from Jackson Avenue to Race Street. The new IZD, Ordinance No. 17,257 M.C.S., was adopted on November 10, 1995.

regard to the historic structures as well as the overall urban fabric of the area, the need for an oversight procedure is particularly acute.

A regulatory framework which has worked relatively well in the Central Business District is a set of measures which requires City Council approval prior to the issuance of a demolition permit. In considering a request the City Council takes into consideration the recommendation of the City Planning Commission, with advice from the Department of Safety and Permits and the Historic District Landmarks Commission. Consideration is given to the architectural, historical and urban design significance of the structure, the applicant's redevelopment plan, and, if a parking lot is proposed as an interim use, the supply of existing parking facilities in the vicinity of the site. This system has worked well because it requires explicit assessment of the site's features, and allows for broad input before the final decision is made. Moreover, the requirement that the applicant's redevelopment plan be reviewed serves to discourage applicants from undertaking speculative demolitions.

This demolition review procedure should be instituted in the Lower Tchoupitoulas as well. Attached are proposed guidelines, which are modeled after the Central Business District demolition review procedure. The Strategic Plan Implementation Committee has been included as one of the organizations responsible for advising the City Planning Commission on such demolition requests, as a way of bringing the community into the decision making process and to take advantage of its familiarity with the neighborhood.

## **G. Summary of Recommendations**

The following zoning changes are recommended for Lower Tchoupitoulas:

- \* The area bounded by Annunciation, Orange and Tchoupitoulas Streets and the Pontchartrain Expressway should be re-zoned from LI Light Industrial to C-1A General Commercial, a zoning classification which will allow a variety of commercial, office, hotel and retail uses to develop and also provide an appropriate transition to the adjoining neighborhoods.
- \* The residential area bounded by Annunciation, Felicity, Religious and Market Streets should be re-zoned RM-2A Multiple-Family Residential, to protect existing uses and provide a transition between the New St. Thomas and the industrial uses further downriver.
- \* Along Jackson Avenue, the site of the former New Orleans General Hospital should be re-zoned from MS Medical Services to RO General Office district, a classification which will permit redevelopment of the building into uses such as business and professional offices, multiple-family dwellings, educational institutions and museums, but still allow a hospital and medical clinics.

- \* The areas on the riverside of Tchoupitoulas Street zoned HI Heavy Industrial and P Park, as well as the LI Light Industrial areas closest to the River and between Market and Orange Streets, should be re-zoned SI-A Special Industrial. This is a new district which takes as its basis the existing SI Special Industrial district, but adapts it to fit the needs of the older industrial and warehousing areas of the City. The SI-A would allow this area to capitalize on its proximity to the Port and the tourism and convention activities in the CBD, by allowing a wide range of light manufacturing, commercial, retail and residential uses, but with sufficient design review to ensure compatibility between new and existing developments.
- \* A Mixed-Use Planned Community District overlay is recommended for both the C-1A and the SI-A districts, in order to allow the consideration of several lots or tracts of land for zoning approval simultaneously. The Planned Community District has the advantage of avoiding piecemeal development, and would be intended in this case to encourage adaptive re-use of historic structures and compatibility between new development and the existing urban fabric.
- \* Demolition guidelines are also recommended, in order to control speculative pressures along the Tchoupitoulas Truck Corridor. The guidelines allow for consideration of the structure's architectural, historical and urban design significance as well as the proposed redevelopment plan.

## **6. Transfer Development Rights**

As discussed above, a number of factors should soon begin to translate into an increased rate of economic development in the Lower Tchoupitoulas waterfront area. These factors include the expanding Convention Center, tourist-oriented riverfront attractions, residential conversion in the adjoining Warehouse District, and the Tchoupitoulas Corridor. This new development will carry with it the potential for a revitalization of the Lower Garden District's residential and commercial areas, as new resources are invested and employment opportunities created. However, the challenge for the Lower Garden District will be to find a way to harness these new resources, so that their benefits can be recycled back into the neighborhood. Transfer Development Rights provide one mechanism for achieving this goal.

### **A. The Concept**

Transfer Development Rights (TDR's) are a development vehicle which allows property owners to buy and sell existing rights under the zoning regulations. TDR's are typically applied in a very narrow fashion, so that they are available only in certain locations and for certain types of development. (In the Lower Garden District, as explained below, they would be available only to residential property owners in the residentially-zoned areas, and to commercial developers in

the C-1A and SI-A districts on the riverside of Annunciation Street.) By defining TDR's to apply under limited circumstances, TDR's can be used to achieve specific goals -- such as for example, giving residential property owners a positive incentive to comply with density regulations.

The following is an illustration of how Transfer Development Rights could work in the Lower Garden District: a residential property owner who renovates his or her multi-family structure in a fashion that produces fewer units would retain the rights to a square footage equivalent of those unbuilt units. The owner would then be able to sell the rights (of the units that he or she was entitled to build or retain) to a developer in the C-1A or SI-A zoning districts in the Lower Tchoupitoulas area. The value of those rights would be determined by what the market would bear, the law of supply and demand. In this way the residential property owner obtains a reward for building fewer units, which can be translated into additional funds for construction or renovation. Similarly, the developer benefits by obtaining the right to build (within certain guidelines) additional square footage into a new development.

Although TDR's must be designed carefully so as to achieve the intended goals, they have the advantage of being an entirely voluntary system. Once the districts and the types of development eligible for TDR's are defined, property owners are free to decide whether to participate. TDR's are thus the "carrot" rather than the "stick" approach to furthering land use goals. Cities around the country have become increasingly creative in their use of TDR's. Not only are they used now to stimulate development in target areas, but they are also used to encourage the creation of open spaces and a variety of other public amenities, as well as to promote historic preservation.

In New Orleans, TDR's have been created in the Central Business Districts to encourage mini-parks and pedestrian plazas in the downtown area, and residential uses in the Warehouse District. For example, in the case of mini-parks and pedestrian plazas, developers in New Orleans are allowed extra square footage in exchange for including the public amenities as part of the development project. In the case of residential uses, the developer is allowed extra square footage at one location in the CBD, in exchange for a restriction on a Warehouse District property which requires that future development include residential uses.<sup>45</sup>

## **B. TDR's as a Vehicle for Revitalization in the Lower Garden District**

In the Lower Garden District, TDR's could be used to give residential property owners a positive incentive to bring their building into compliance with existing zoning requirements. As discussed above, many of the buildings in the residential neighborhoods have fallen behind the current standards, particularly in terms of density requirements.<sup>46</sup> TDR's could be designed to

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<sup>45</sup> These provisions are contained in Article 6, Section 11 of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance .

<sup>46</sup> Density requirements establish the number of dwelling units that can be installed in a building .

give these owners the opportunity to sell bonus points generated by completing building improvements that reduce density levels. The density reductions could serve either to bring a non-conforming building into compliance with the zoning requirements, or to bring a conforming building to a level which exceeds the zoning requirements (i.e. fewer units than would otherwise be allowed). To ensure that the TDR's serve to stimulate new investment, the bonus points would be generated only for work initiated after the enactment of the Ordinance implementing the TDR system.

Bonus points acquired through these building improvements (see below for methods for calculating points) could be sold directly to developers in the C-1A General Commercial and SI-A Special Industrial districts on the riverside of Annunciation Street. These developers would use bonus points acquired from the residential owners to obtain waivers of the Floor to Area Ratio (FAR) under the applicable zoning district regulations,<sup>47</sup> so as to obtain greater interior square footage. Restrictions on the use of TDR's would be established to ensure that the FAR waivers do not result in massive structures that could block views, light and air. These restrictions should be drafted in terms of a formula placing an overall cap on FAR's, so that developers will know in advance how many bonus points they will be able to use. An example would be that the total building FAR, including additional square footage obtained through TDR's, may not exceed 75% of the building envelope formed by the lot lines and the maximum permitted height. At the same time, however, these restrictions would make the approval of the requested FAR waiver a straightforward matter, thereby reducing delay and inconvenience for the developer. Approval could be done in the same way that conditional use administrative amendments are processed, for example, upon certification by City Planning Commission staff that sufficient bonus points had been obtained and the restrictions not exceeded. However, any request for a height limitation waiver in conjunction with the additional FAR would require City Council approval.

The TDR system would apply to any residentially-zoned area within the Lower Garden District, and would be available for historic as well as non-historic residential structures. By including the non-historic structures, TDR's would help to stimulate investment in many of the buildings which have experienced the most neglect in recent years. Although the impact of the TDR system would not be immediate, and would be dependent on the extent of the development along the River, it would provide an investment incentive which has been lacking in the past. The effectiveness of the TDR's in stimulating new investment will depend, of course, on the price of the bonus points, a factor determined by supply and demand. Even a modest financial incentive, however, should help to encourage some property owners, particularly those who might have been considering undertaking the work, but put it off for financial or other reasons. TDR's

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<sup>47</sup> FAR is defined as the total interior floor area of a building divided by the area of the lot on which the building is located. The maximum permitted FAR in the C-1A district is 2.25 for non-residential structures, and 3.50 for structures that are at least 50% residential. In the SI-A district, the FAR would be 4.00.

should thus help to spur residential revitalization in the Lower Garden district, using a purely voluntary system which does not impose cumbersome new regulations.

### **C. Calculating TDR Bonus Points**

TDR bonus points would be calculated in terms of square footage. For non-conforming buildings where the number of units are being reduced to bring the building into compliance, the bonus points would be based on the difference between the old number of units, and the new number of units once the work is completed. The number of units are multiplied by 850 sq. ft. (the minimum square footage per unit) to translate units into square footage. The formula for calculating the bonus points would be:

$$\text{Bonus points} = (\text{old \# units} - \text{new \# units}) \times 850 \text{ sq. ft.}$$

For example, a non-conforming building with 7 units, where the zoning only allows 4, would generate 2,550 bonus points if the units were converted from 7 to 4. (Bonus points =  $(7 - 4) \times 850$  sq. ft.)

For buildings in which the reduction in units will result in fewer units than is allowed under the district regulations, the formula would be as follows:

$$\text{Bonus points} = \text{total interior sq. footage of building} - (\text{new \# units} \times 850 \text{ sq. ft.})$$

An example would be a 3,000 sq. ft. building with 3 units, each with the required minimum 850 sq. ft. A reduction to 2 units would result in 1,300 bonus points. (Bonus points =  $3,000 - (2 \times 850)$  sq. ft.)

From the developer's perspective, each bonus point purchased would allow 2 additional square feet of interior floor area. Thus, for a development with 30,000 square feet allowed under the district FAR and height limitations, the purchase of 5,000 bonus points would allow a 40,000 sq. ft. structure.

As a safeguard to prevent abuses, any agreement to purchase bonus points would be required to be in writing, and would be recorded at the Office of Conveyances. In addition, the original building permit authorizing the reduction in units would be stamped indicating that the bonus points had been sold, and a copy of the permit would be attached to the recorded purchase agreement.

## **7. Conclusion and Recommendations**

There are a number of different zoning classifications in the Lower Garden District, ranging from RM-1 Multiple Family Residential to HI Heavy Industrial. As discussed in the preceding

sections, several of these classifications are in need of modification, either because they fail to take into account the particular strengths and attributes of the area, or because they do not encourage the type of change needed to further the community's long-term goals.

In the residential areas, the existing RM-2 Multiple Family zoning contains a number of provisions, such as building setbacks, height limitations and off-street parking requirements, which are ill-suited to an historic neighborhood. The RM-2A Multiple Family district would be a preferable zoning classification, because it is specifically designed to accommodate the building and site layout patterns which are found in the Lower Garden District. Several amendments to the RM-2A district are also recommended, in order to strengthen its role as a historic residential zoning district and to correct certain oversights which occurred when the district was enacted. The most important of these amendments is a system which bases density regulations for multiple-family structures on interior floor area, in order to avoid the inconsistent outcomes experienced under the existing lot area based regulations. Since over the years there have been a number of reductions in permitted residential density levels -- such that over half of the multiple-family structures are currently non-conforming -- it is recommended that the interior floor area based regulations be calculated so as to match the existing permitted densities, without a downzoning.

As a positive incentive for homeowners to come into compliance with density requirements and to encourage new investment, a system of Transfer Development Rights is proposed. This concept, used by other cities around the country as an innovative means of promoting various goals, would allow homeowners to generate bonus points for reductions in density levels. These points could then be sold to developers who could then "transfer" the density (in the form of additional interior square footage) to new developments in the C-1A General Commercial and SI-A Special Industrial districts along the waterfront.

In addition to these recommendations, changes in the zoning of specific areas are recommended: New St. Thomas will need zoning regulations that accommodate its new design and layout, once the redevelopment plans are finalized. Jackson Avenue should retain its RM-1 zoning but without a density bonus, and the residential zoning on Jackson between Magazine St. and the River should be expanded to encompass a portion of the area currently zoned MS Medical Services. A small triangular area on the downriver side of New St. Thomas should also be zoned RM-2A Multiple Family Residential, in order to protect existing uses and encourage new residential investment. The area downriver of the Schwegmann supermarket on Thalia St. should be zoned B-1A Neighborhood Business, to allow new investment in small scale businesses and services. Finally, the RM-3 district on Prytania St. should be re-zoned RM-2A, a zoning classification which is more consistent with existing uses on Prytania and the adjoining blocks.

Several zoning recommendations are also made for Magazine Street, which varies along its length from small-scale commercial with a pedestrian orientation at the Jackson Avenue end, to residential, and then larger-scale commercial and industrial at the Pontchartrain Expressway. In



keeping with the existing mix and scale of uses at its upriver side, B-1A Neighborhood Business zoning is recommended from Jackson Avenue to Melpomene Street. This classification will allow Magazine Street to retain its distinctive historic main street atmosphere, while continuing to encourage new commercial and residential development. From Melpomene to Erato Street, the existing C-1A General Commercial zoning is appropriate given the size of the existing uses, and their proximity to the Central Business District. At Erato Street, and extending along the Pontchartrain Expressway from Camp to Annunciation Street, is a Light Industrial district which is recommended for re-zoning to SI-A Special Industrial. In addition, regulations limiting the sale of alcoholic beverages to large general retail establishments are recommended in order to make permanent the interim regulations which have worked well for over two years.

Prytania Street, with its residential and tourist accommodation uses, is currently zoned C-1A, together with lower St. Charles Avenue. Although the mix of uses along Prytania appears to work well, a high volume of traffic and parking problems indicate that a further intensification of activity would begin to have adverse impacts. The B-1A Neighborhood Business district is recommended as the appropriate district for this thoroughfare, as it will encourage residential use while continuing to allow new tourist accommodations that are small enough in scale to fit in well with the existing built environment. St. Charles Avenue, which has experienced increasing traffic congestion due to a proliferation of fast-food and other vehicle-oriented businesses, should retain its C-1A zoning, but with a text amendment to prohibit the further development of auto-intensive uses and design review requirements to encourage aesthetic and architectural compatibility with adjoining areas.

Lower Tchoupitoulas, which encompasses the existing LI Light Industrial and HI Heavy Industrial zones from Jackson Avenue to the Pontchartrain Expressway, is an area which has enormous potential for growth and development in the years ahead. The availability of prime riverfront land, convenient access to major transportation systems, and the proximity of both the Port of New Orleans and the convention and tourist-oriented businesses in the Central Business District, all make for a positive outlook. Port-related manufacturing, services and warehousing will do well in this area, as will the retail, commercial and entertainment uses that continue to expand upriver from the Central Business District.

On the lakeside of Tchoupitoulas, the C-1A General Commercial district is recommended, as it will allow a variety of commercial, office, hotel and retail uses that are likely to develop in conjunction with the commercial, tourist and residential uses in the adjoining Warehouse District and downtown area. The C-1A will also serve as an appropriate transition between the industrial and tourist oriented uses along the River, and the quieter, residential neighborhoods bordering Annunciation Street. Demolition guidelines are also recommended in order to provide a measure of oversight during this development period, both for the new C-1A as well as the SI-A district on the riverside of Tchoupitoulas. The zoning of the former New Orleans General Hospital on Jackson Avenue is recommended to be changed from MS Medical Services to RO General Office, in order to encourage redevelopment of the building by allowing office and residential uses.

On the riverside of Tchoupitoulas, the existing HI Heavy Industrial zoning is inappropriate because it allows a virtually unlimited range of uses. These include many hazardous and heavy industrial uses which might deter other desired forms of development, including both Port-related services and tourist-oriented businesses. Zoning regulations are needed for this area which will allow a wide range of light manufacturing, commercial, retail and residential uses, but with sufficient design review to ensure compatibility, both between new developments, and between new developments and the existing urban fabric. With this purpose in mind, a new SI-A Special Industrial district is proposed which takes as its basis the SI district already in the Zoning Ordinance, but adapts it to fit the needs of older industrial and warehousing areas of the City. This SI-A district would run along the waterfront on the riverside of Tchoupitoulas, including an area on the lakeside of Tchoupitoulas between Market and Orange Streets.

## **V. TRANSPORTATION AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

The street system in the Lower Garden District is characterized by several main arteries which run parallel to the River from the Central Business District to Uptown. These are intersected by small, residential connector streets to form a grid pattern which makes a 60 degree turn at Felicity Street. As a result of this crescent grid, many of the streets in the area change names or run for only a few blocks, a feature which has helped neighborhoods to preserve their distinct identities.

A number of factors are presently taking shape which will have a profound impact on the transportation system in the area, and which point to the need for careful long-term planning. The construction of the Tchoupitoulas Corridor, the completed Pontchartrain Expressway service road and access ramps, and future development along the waterfront will each serve to change current traffic patterns and create new transportation needs.

Economic revitalization will also bring its own demand for improved transportation and capital improvements, as new businesses, services, residents and tourists come into the area. The various components of the Strategic Plan thus work in tandem, each one influencing the other and providing the basis for change: zoning focusses land use to spur revitalization efforts, which in turn depend on improved access and infrastructure. Transportation and capital improvements depend on the resources and the demand which development provides.

The following discussion focusses in turn on the last two elements -- transportation and capital improvements -- based in large part on comments and suggestions received during a series of meetings with the community.

### **1. Traffic, Streets and Public Transit**

#### **A. The Tchoupitoulas Corridor**

As discussed above, the new Tchoupitoulas truck corridor will have a significant impact on the Lower Garden District, both in terms of physical layout and economic development. As the gateway to the new Port transit route, the existing right-of-ways within the Lower Garden District will require a series of changes and improvements to accommodate the planned corridor:

1. Tchoupitoulas St. will become a four-lane roadway between the Pontchartrain Expressway and Euterpe Street providing for two-way traffic;
2. Tchoupitoulas St. will be reconstructed between Euterpe and Felicity Streets as a two-lane, one-way (down-river bound) arterial;

3. Religious St. will be reconstructed between Euterpe and Felicity Streets as a two-lane, one-way (up-river bound) arterial. Religious St. must be extended through Municipal Square No. 78 to Euterpe St. to create an intersection with Tchoupitoulas St.;
4. The segment of Felicity Street between Religious Street and the beginning of the new Port roadway will be improved so that vehicles can make a transition to the new arterial; and
5. Two queuing lanes, starting at approximately St. Mary St., will be on the apron of the St. Andrew St. Wharf (riverside of the floodwall) to hold the Jackson Ave. ferry traffic. The existing opening in the floodwall at Jackson Ave. will receive a floodgate and through traffic will be eliminated.

Presently, the portion of the corridor from Felicity St. downriver to the Pontchartrain Expressway has not been funded.<sup>48</sup> Approximately \$10.5 million is required to complete the corridor. If funds cannot be secured from sources such as the State Transportation Trust Fund, federal funding may be pursued, which would require an environmental impact study before construction.

Although the residents of the Lower Garden District have accepted the Tchoupitoulas Corridor as a necessary solution to the problem of truck access to the Port, there continues to be opposition to its proposed route and the corridor's potential negative impacts. Despite its economic development potential, the neighborhood is most concerned about the more immediate impacts such as noise, exhaust and vibrations from the heavy truck trailers in the Lower Tchoupitoulas area. Another drawback is the corridor's "barrier" effect, which could physically divide the area into two segments and separate the neighborhood from the River. Landscaping, pedestrian crossings and public waterfront access (see discussion below) have been suggested as means of mitigating these impacts.

The location of the one-way couplet on Religious Street has also evoked opposition due to the proximity of this street to residential neighborhoods and New St. Thomas. Structures built to the sidewalk on Religious Street, as well as the residential structures in the vicinity, would be most affected. The Religious Street couplet would also require a connecting link on Felicity Street. Although the engineering plans have already been drafted for Religious Street, S. Peter's Street, which is farther from residential areas, is the neighborhood's clear preference for the couplet.

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<sup>48</sup> The project has been funded upriver of Felicity St. from the following sources: \$35 million in State transportation funds; \$10,357,185 in federal funds; \$3,337,000 for drainage (\$1,800,000 which comes from the Port of New Orleans and the remainder from the New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board); \$130,000 from the Port of New Orleans; and \$1,285,300 from other sources.

## **B. Street Re-Openings**

Although the plans for New St. Thomas have not yet been finalized, there is a broad consensus that revitalization of the area should include the re-opening of St. Andrew, St. Mary, Chippewa, Laurel and Adele Streets. The City has come to realize that the closure of these streets as part of the construction of St. Thomas in the late-1930's contributed to the isolation of the residents from the rest of the community, and made access for law enforcement patrol more difficult. Plans for the re-opening of these streets should already be put in place now, so that the street work can begin.

There has also been much discussion over the years regarding the street pattern within the former MICO site, an area generally bounded by Race and Annunciation Streets, the Pontchartrain Expressway, and the River. Residents of the Lower Garden District have consistently voiced concerns that re-development of this area not be undertaken in a manner which might block-off the neighborhood from the Central Business District. Thus, in the 1993 Urban Land Institute revitalization study, and at 1995 public hearings regarding the expansion of the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, members of the community advocated a block pattern that would connect with, and reflect, the urban design structure of the adjoining areas. This position should be supported, and the extension and re-opening of cross-streets such as Melpomene, Thalia and St. Thomas should be considered during the formulation of specific development plans for this area.

## **C. One-way and Two-way Streets**

One of the most frequent comments made by residents during the neighborhood meetings concerned the directional pattern of the streets, particularly the small connector streets. During the time of the World's Fair, the directions on several of the streets were changed to accommodate fair-related traffic. Many of these streets are currently two-way (or are treated as two-way due to missing directional signage), even though the right-of-way is only wide enough to support one-way traffic. Moreover, as the attached map of existing traffic flows shows, the one-way pairing is inconsistent and incomplete.

Modifications to this pattern are needed in order to improve traffic flow and to improve traffic safety, particularly with regard to streets which run perpendicular to the River from Felicity to Erato. The following changes should be made (see attached map):

- \* Polymnia and Euterpe should be made one-way between St. Charles and Coliseum, with traffic flowing towards St. Charles on Polymnia, and towards Coliseum Square on Euterpe.

- \* Melpomene St. should be made two-way between St. Charles Ave. and Camp St., and one-way towards the Lake from Camp to Annunciation Street.

\* Thalia St. from St. Charles to Annunciation St. should be made one-way towards the River.

\* Between Camp and Annunciation, the following streets should be made one-way: Euterpe (towards the Lake), Terpsichore (towards the River), and Melpomene (towards the Lake). The block of Euterpe between Constance and Annunciation Streets should remain two-way, so that traffic associated with industrial uses on Annunciation is not funneled into the neighborhood.

\* The entire length of Orange and Erato Streets should be made one-way towards the Lake.

These changes will result in consistent one-way pairings, and should thus be implemented simultaneously as a system, or at least in pairs. Directional signage should be installed at each intersection with incoming traffic.

Another directional issue, one on which there is substantial disagreement, has to do with the one-way section of Magazine Street from St. Andrew Street to the Pontchartrain Expressway. Many feel that this should be made two-way, on the grounds that it would improve circulation patterns and access to businesses, slow traffic, and ameliorate awkward traffic maneuvers at the point where Magazine St. shifts from one-way to two-way. Others, however, wish to see Magazine St. remain one-way, fearing that the two-way proposal would double the amount of bus traffic, would not slow traffic, and that it would increase traffic congestion generally.

With the opening of the service road and the Pontchartrain Expressway, traffic patterns are sure to change during the next year on many, if not most, of the streets in the vicinity. Although two-way traffic would appear to be the better of the solutions, given that Magazine St. is a vital artery for the area, such a change should be premised on downriver-bound busses remaining on Camp Street. However, since it is difficult to predict with certainty the upcoming changes in traffic patterns, the question of whether Magazine St. should be made two-way should be re-addressed in 6 - 12 months once traffic patterns have adjusted. An initial project of the Strategic Plan Implementation Committee (see discussion in Section VI below) should be to monitor traffic patterns, and to make a recommendation to the neighborhood at a public meeting. If a change is warranted, the proposal could then be brought directly to the Councilmember and the Director of the Department of Public Works.

#### **D. Street Surfacing**

As is common in New Orleans, a number of the streets in the Lower Garden District are in urgent need of repair. As the result of a bond measure approved by the voters in 1995, \$100 million will be allocated over the next several years towards city-wide street improvements. Of this, \$8,575,000 will be devoted to the Tchoupitoulas Corridor, as part of a total \$50 million which was allocated to Major Street repairs. Funding for Minor Streets will be allocated according to

Council district, with each of the 5 districts receiving \$10 million. The attached map indicates the streets in the Lower Garden District which are in most urgent need of repair, based on comments received from the neighborhood.

Cobblestone paving, which exists on Felicity, Erato, Terpsichore, Orange and Celeste Streets (see attached map), is well accepted within the community as a surfacing medium because of its historic quality and its tendency to slow traffic. The cobblestones on these streets should be maintained, and if possible, cobblestones should be restored to Jackson Avenue, Race and Chestnut Streets, which currently have a layer of asphalt over the original cobblestone paving.

### **E. Improvements to Specific Traffic Corridors**

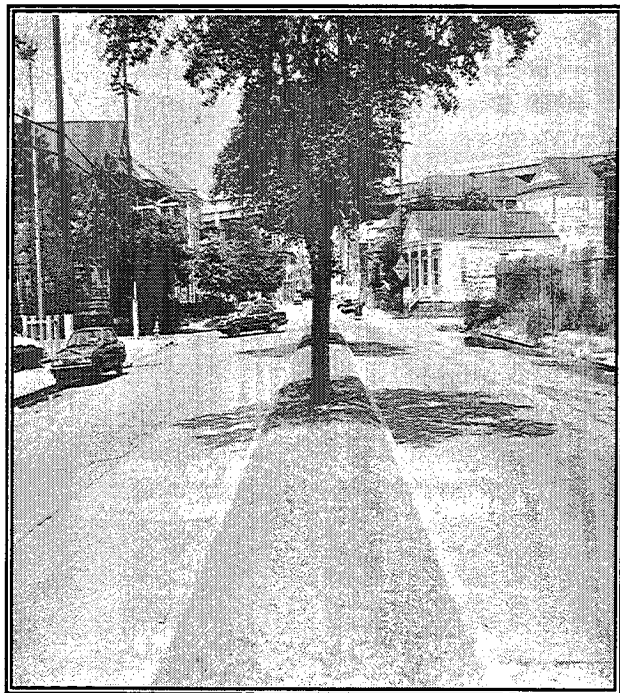
Several of the more heavily traveled streets in the area have particular attributes which over time have become problematic. The following summarizes these issues:

#### **Magazine Street:**

The presence of heavy commercial vehicles on Magazine Street is disruptive for both businesses and residential uses. With the construction of the Tchoupitoulas Corridor, through truck traffic on Magazine Street should be prohibited. Signs to this effect should be posted, and the street should be taken off the City's designated truck route system. There is also considerable speeding on the street, and the existing 25 mph speed limit should be posted in high visibility locations.

#### **Annunciation Street:**

This street experiences traffic problems at the intersection of Thalia Street, where the right-of-way narrows from 80' to 60'. Vehicles traveling upriver from the Central Business District frequently accelerate beyond the 25 mph limit, and those traveling downriver are often caught by surprise at the narrowing of the right-of-way. Since the street is residential in the block between the Pontchartrain Expressway and Thalia Street, and there are many vehicles which make a turn at Thalia to enter the Schwegmann parking lot, the street would benefit from measures that would channel and slow the traffic in this area. These measures should

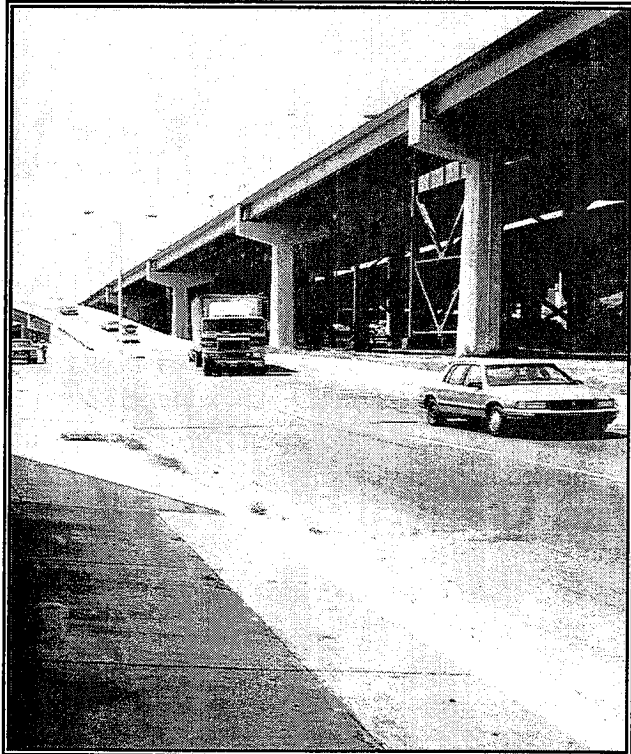


The intersection of Thalia and Annunciation Streets.

include a 4-way stop sign, posted speed limits, and a widening of the median so that the street remains single-lane in each direction. When the property on the riverside of the street is developed, the curb cuts should be re-aligned to better channel the traffic flow. During preliminary discussions of these proposals, the Department of Public Works has expressed concern that a 4-way stop at Thalia could cause traffic to back up to the service road. Accordingly, a traffic impact analysis should be performed to measure any potential adverse impacts of the proposed stop sign.

**Pontchartrain Expressway downramp between Constance and Annunciation Streets:**

This downramp is located very close to the Annunciation St. intersection, with the result that vehicles using the downramp will not be able to safely merge into the service road lane to make a right turn. Solid line striping of the intersection and rubber "flags"<sup>49</sup> should be used to direct traffic and prevent vehicles traveling down the offramp from making a right turn at Annunciation Street. Also, the traffic signal should be adjusted to provide for a few second delay between the shift from red to green, on account of the poor visibility caused by the corner structure which is built to the sidewalk at that intersection.



Vehicles exiting the Pontchartrain Expressway at Annunciation Street.

**Melpomene Street:**

The median should be restored to the stretch of this street between St. Charles Ave. and Prytania St. once it is made two-way in order to improve safety of the street.

**Jackson Avenue:**

As the formal entry to both the Lower Garden District and the Garden District, this avenue should be restored to its former appearance so that it becomes a showcase for the neighborhood and attracts tourist business along Magazine Street. This can be done by

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<sup>49</sup> These flags measure approximately 3 feet by 6 inches and are installed directly on the solid stripe to prevent vehicles from switching lanes. They have been used on Poydras Street (riverbound) for the left-turn entrance to the City Hall parking garage.



widening the median and improving the landscaping, a measure which would also provide for space for streetcar tracks (see discussion below) should this become feasible in the coming years. The changes would involve making the street single lane each way (such as along Jefferson Ave.), which should be adequate given that through truck traffic has been disallowed. A vehicle count of existing traffic flows should be performed to initiate these changes.

## **F. Bus Traffic**

Bus traffic on Magazine St. has been a source of disruption for both residents and businesses, not only within the Lower Garden District, but upriver as well. A number of features of Magazine St. -- heavy traffic throughout the day, on-street parking on both sides of the street with frequent pedestrian crossings, and buildings built to the sidewalk -- make it not well suited to serve as a public transit route. Nevertheless, few doubt the indispensable role that these busses play for both residents and businesses in the community, as is evidenced by the high ridership levels.

The use of smaller busses, combined with schedule adjustments to accommodate rush hour traffic, has been suggested as a solution. Certainly, smaller busses would help to alleviate the noise, fumes and vibrations caused by the existing busses. This option may not prove cost-effective, however, in that the smaller busses are as expensive to operate and maintain as the larger busses, but provide less capacity. The high ridership levels on Magazine St. may make the route a candidate for a streetcar line in the long term (see discussion below). Though streetcars would not relieve the street congestion, and may well further slow the overall traffic flows, they would have a lower impact in terms of vibrations and fumes, and would fit in well with the historic "Main Street" atmosphere described above. Until a streetcar route becomes financially feasible, however, the disruptive impacts of the Magazine busses should be limited by retaining the downriver-bound portion of the line on Camp Street.

## **G. The Streetcar**

Although funding for an extension of the City's streetcar system has been secured only for Canal Street, there has been much discussion regarding a possible loop upriver of the CBD. The streetcar has proven to be an attractive and viable public transit option which enhances the City's image, and helps to revitalize businesses along its routes.

The Lower Garden District is a logical location for such an extension, as it would allow for connections with the Riverfront trolley, the St. Charles line, and the Union Passenger Terminal on Loyola Avenue. A loop would also serve to encourage tourism on Magazine St., one of the few pedestrian-oriented historic retail areas in the City outside of the Vieux Carre.

Although only at the feasibility study stage, the Regional Transit Authority (RTA) has indicated that a possible route for consideration would begin at Canal St., following Tchoupitoulas and S.

Peters Streets to Race St., and from there to Annunciation Square. At Annunciation Square, the streetcar would shift to Orange Street, and continue to Magazine Street. At Magazine, it would loop back to Race St. and travel back towards S. Peters St. (see attached map). Though the plans -- and in particular the funding -- are a long way from being realized, the extension would constitute an immensely positive factor in the long term development of the Lower Garden District.

Alternatives to the Race St. route would include an upriver extension of the existing Riverfront trolley, but this option is fraught with physical constraints (such as the limited space available for tracks and the difficulties involved in crossing the floodwall) which make it logistically problematic. Felicity St. has also been suggested, but its right-of-way is insufficient to accommodate two-way streetcar traffic. The re-opened St. Andrew St. has also been suggested as a streetcar route, an option which would depend on sufficient right-of-way being incorporated into the New St. Thomas master plan.

A streetcar line along Jackson Avenue, connecting to Oretta Castle Haley and then to the UPT and Loyola Avenue, is another possible route. The Jackson Ave. median could be widened to accommodate the tracks, similar to the arrangement on St. Charles Avenue. The RTA has indicated that this option may be pursued as a long range plan, once the ridership levels have reached sufficient levels. Installing a streetcar line on Magazine St. is also an option under consideration by the RTA for the long-term, once the Canal St. line has been completed. The Magazine St. streetcar would replace the existing bus line, and would require that the street be made two-way its entire length in the Lower Garden District.

All of these options are dependent, however, on the availability of funding, and therefore should only be considered as possibilities for the future. Nevertheless, commercial and residential revitalization and strengthened tourism will help to provide the demand needed to make these options a reality. Thus, the long-term planning for the Lower Garden District should take these future options into account, to ensure that they are not precluded by other developments.

## **2. Capital Improvements**

With limited resources at its disposal, capital budgeting is always an endeavor which requires the City to make difficult tradeoffs. Recognizing that funds are never adequate to cover every needed or worthy undertaking, there are nevertheless a number of capital improvements which should receive serious consideration by the City during the years ahead:

### **A. Waterfront Public Access** ✓

Although public access to the River has long been recognized as a crucial part of the City's future development, little public money has been available in the past for the creation of open spaces

and pedestrian access points. With the modernization of the Port facilities upriver of Jackson Ave., a one-time opportunity for the realization of some of these goals may now present itself. Wharves which are outmoded or in disrepair could be re-dedicated to public use so as to create a linear waterfront park.

Of the wharves in the Lower Garden District, the St. Andrew St. Wharf, at the foot of the New St. Thomas, has already been considered as a candidate for the initiation of such an endeavor. Already vacant and in need of repair, the wharf could be converted into a waterfront promenade, thereby creating a much-needed public amenity in the neighborhood. Public access could be provided via the existing pedestrian ferry terminal overpass at Jackson Avenue. Coordination with the Dock Board, the Regional Transit Authority, and the Highway Department must be undertaken immediately so that this opportunity is not lost.

## B. Utilities

As both a local and national historic district, residents and business owners in the Lower Garden District justifiably consider the historic appearance of their neighborhood to be one of its major drawing points. Utility lines and telephone poles, particularly along Magazine St., serve to clutter the view and detract from the architectural appeal of the historic structures. Moving them underground, as has been done in the Vieux Carre and the Historic Warehouse District, would enable Magazine St. to begin to realize its potential as one of the City's historic assets. Given the expense involved in such a project, the consolidation of existing lines onto fewer poles could be an initial step that would greatly ameliorate existing appearances.



Telephone and utility lines along Magazine Street near Jackson Avenue.

Light fixtures in the Lower Garden district, as an important part of the street architecture, should be consistent with the historic quality of the neighborhood. While public funds to finance a

wholesale replacement of existing light standards is not likely to become available, historic fixtures should at least be substituted for existing standards once they are in need of repair or replacement.

### **C. Street Trees and Landscaping**

Street trees and median landscaping, in addition to dramatically improving the appearance of a neighborhood, also encourage pedestrian activity, and help to foster a sense of community. In the Lower Garden District, much of the original landscaping has suffered from neglect over the years, and is now in need of replanting and consistent maintenance. Shade producing street trees adapted to the native climate should be planted on residential streets. Landscaping should be installed on St. Andrew St. through the New St. Thomas, on the new medians on Melpomene and Camp Streets, and along the Tchoupitoulas Corridor



Street trees on Magazine Street.

(particularly at pedestrian crossings). Improvements to existing landscaping should be made to the medians on Jackson Ave. and on Annunciation St. between Thalia and Race.

### **D. Park Improvements**

The Lower Garden District is blessed with a number of parks, both large and small, which are located throughout the neighborhood. These parks have also suffered from neglect during the past years, however, and are now in need of improved maintenance and amenities such as trash receptacles, benches, and play equipment. Annunciation Square, Coliseum Square, Margaret Place Park and the Terpsichore Finger Park all require attention. The fountains at Coliseum Square and in the Terpsichore Finger Park are also in need of repair.

### **E. Street Drainage**

Chronic flooding, with even moderate rainfall, continues to afflict certain areas of the neighborhood, disrupting daily life and adversely affecting property values. Particularly affected are Constance St. between Orange and Race, the 1200 block of Josephine, the streets around Coliseum Square, and the intersection of Race & Magazine Streets. The drainage at these locations should be improved so as to alleviate these problems.

## VI. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC RENAISSANCE PLAN

As is readily apparent, the success of a neighborhood plan depends upon an effective implementation strategy. All too often, the recommendations contained in a planning document "never see the light of day," or if enacted, provisions are not established to monitor the effects of the proposals and to allow for needed changes down the road.

Cognizant of this reality, the City Planning Commission's Local Renaissance District Administration Policy provides a specific framework for the implementation of each strategic plan: Once the City Planning Commission and the City Council have approved the plan, a Strategic Plan Monitoring and Implementation Committee is established. The Committee is composed of representatives from the neighborhood organizations and the City Planning Commission. The Committee is charged with the following duties:<sup>50</sup>

1. Monitor the effectiveness of the Strategic Plan;
2. Recommend changes to the City Planning Commission that will allow the Strategic Plan to evolve and meet the changing needs of the community resulting from the dynamic forces affecting it. All changes to the Strategic Neighborhood Renaissance Plan shall be approved by the City Planning Commission; and
3. Report to the District Councilmember on the results of the Committee's findings regarding No.1 & No.2 above. The Committee shall submit an annual report, but may also present information on an interim basis should circumstances warrant further communication with the District Councilmember.

Although the specific steps to be taken by an Implementation Committee will vary according to the nature of the plan itself, an initial task in this case will be to work with the Councilmember to monitor the zoning map changes and amendments to the Zoning Ordinance recommended by the Plan. Another important duty will be to oversee the objectives contained in the transportation and capital improvements section, a task which will involve working with the Departments of Public Works and Parks and Parkways.

For the street directional changes, the Committee will work with the Department of Public Works to notify property owners who are located on the affected streets, and make specific suggestions regarding the location of directional signage. The Department of Public Works will also be the coordinating agency for improvements to specific traffic corridors, such as new stop signs and signalization adjustments.

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<sup>50</sup> City Planning Commission's Local Renaissance District Administration, adopted September 13, 1994.

With respect to street surfacing, the Committee will work with both the Department of Public Works and the Sewerage and Water Board in identifying streets most in need of repair and improved street drainage. The goal of maintaining and restoring cobblestones on the streets designated in the Plan will be part of this endeavor. Similarly, the moving of utility lines will require coordination between these departments, as well as the Department of Utilities and the private utility companies.

With the implementation of these improvements, as well as longer term goals such as improved waterfront access and a new streetcar line, the Councilmember and the City Planning Commission staff will retain an active role. Though the Committee will take the lead, the Councilmember and the City Planning Commission will serve as important resources, providing information and guidance on specific issues and coordinating inter-departmental efforts within the City government.

Since many of the elements of the plan are necessarily long-term in perspective, the Committee will be required to pursue its task with both patience and vigilance. Moreover, as the neighborhood changes and develops, new needs will invariably surface, requiring new solutions and strategies. The Strategic Plan Implementation Committee, composed of representatives of the entire Lower Garden District, is the appropriate vehicle to carry out this mandate.

## **VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The Lower Garden District is a neighborhood which has unusual potential for growth and development in the years ahead. This potential in turn gives rise to the need for careful long-term planning to take into account the needs of the entire community and avoid piecemeal development.

The above discussion has set forth a number of recommendations regarding zoning, transportation and capital improvements which will enhance the existing strengths of the neighborhood, and serve as a basic framework to guide and encourage future development. These recommendations take as their starting point the community vision expressed in the Master Plans prepared by the neighborhood in December, 1993 and March, 1995, together with comments and suggestions received during meetings with residents and business owners in 1996.

Central to the goals of the Strategic Plan are the revitalization of New St. Thomas, the encouragements of investment in historic residential neighborhoods, and renewed commercial and industrial activity in conjunction with the Port and tourism-related developments along the Riverfront. The recommendations contained in the Strategic Plan are intended not only as a means of facilitating the achievement of these goals, but also as a basis for further neighborhood consensus-building and community-wide decision making.

***APPENDICES***





## **Lower St. Charles Ave. Design Review District [Proposed]**

### *10.11.1. Purpose of the District*

The purpose of the design review district is to provide for a superior environment, compatibility of development, and architectural retention and continuity. The district shall also promote the urban design goals in this area that are pivotal in supporting the Central Business District and the surrounding historic residential neighborhoods. The overlay district regulations are intended to supplement those of the underlying zoning district. These special regulations include site design requirements intended to complement land use development and to establish a positive and unified streetscape along Lower St. Charles Avenue.

### *10.11.2. Regulations of the Underlying Zoning District*

Unless otherwise stated in these Lower St. Charles Avenue Design Review District regulations, the regulations of the underlying zoning shall apply. Nothing herein shall be construed to supersede standards applicable to approved site plans in pre-existing zoning districts, such as the C-1A General Commercial District, Residential Planned Community (RPC), Conditional Use (CU), etc.

### *10.11.3. Boundaries of District*

The regulations of the Lower St. Charles Avenue Design Review District shall apply to all lots and squares fronting on St. Charles Avenue from the Pontchartrain Expressway to Jackson Avenue.

### *10.11.4. Design Review Standards.*

#### **1. Applicability of Regulations**

All new construction and redevelopment projects within the overlay district shall be subject to design review by the City Planning Commission, with the advice of the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC), and shall comply with the design review standards of this section.

#### **2. Design Review Standards**

- A) A strong visual connection should be made between the building's design and the historic character of the area. The overall building design should be compatible with the neighborhood.
- B) Redevelopment and new construction projects within the district shall adhere to the following design criteria where applicable:

- a. Buildings shall be constructed to reflect regional and historical characteristics of St. Charles Avenue and the adjacent historic neighborhoods. Ornamental and decorative elements appropriate to the historical district, such as galleries, balconies, columns, pediments and parapets, shall be integrated into the building design.
  - b. The maximum height for new construction or upper floor/penthouse additions shall be limited to 55 feet.
  - c. Front yard setbacks shall be the average of the existing buildings on the block face with the installation of landscaped front gardens where typical.
  - d. Developments shall provide for a pedestrian environment through the use of visually active ground level treatments.
  - e. The design vernacular and site development shall adhere to the character and scale of the surroundings.
  - f. Architectural details, materials, colors, textures and landscape treatments shall be coordinated to provide visual continuity, quality and consistency. These treatments shall be employed along the Avenue with sufficient diversity to create a lively and interesting streetscape.
  - g. All parking areas shall be landscaped and screened from the street with fencing, hedges or a combination thereof. Parking lot standards as per the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance shall be required with the addition of trees, shrubs and groundcover being required in any residual areas not used for parking or vehicular access. A landscape plan shall be approved by the City Planning Commission staff. This plan shall indicate the species, location, size and other specifications relating to the landscaping, buffering, screening, fencing and lighting of any development.
  - h. Service and loading functions shall be interior to the building(s) or along the building edge that is least visible to the public. When located along an exterior edge, the service area shall be screened from public view.
  - i. Attached and/or projecting signs shall be limited to one (1) square foot per lineal foot of building width or tenant space to a maximum of seventy (70) square feet.
  - j. Monument signs shall be limited to one (1) square foot per lineal foot of building width, or to a maximum of seventy (70) square feet in area, and a maximum of five (5) feet in height.
- C) A litter abatement program shall be established for each development indicating

procedures, pick-up schedule and a contact person.

#### 10.11.5 *Design Review Procedures*

Applications for development, redevelopment or demolition of any structure within the Lower St. Charles Avenue Design Review Overlay District shall be accompanied by a site plan to be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director of the City Planning Commission with the advice of the Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC), subject to appeal to the City Council, in accordance with the following procedures:

##### 1. Site Plan Requirements

The applicant shall submit a site plan to the Executive Director of the City Planning Commission which shall contain either an original or reproduced drawing drawn to no less than one inch equals twenty feet (1 inch: 20 feet) and depicting the following items:

- a. Building elevations.
- b. Site design, including parking, lighting and landscaping, if any.
- c. Signage.
- d. Existing and proposed improvements within the public right-of-way, including but not limited to the following: utilities, light posts, street furniture.
- e. Any other information deemed necessary by the City Planning Commission staff.

##### 2. Decision by the City Planning Commission Staff

The Executive Director of the City Planning Commission shall review and take action on the design review site plan within ninety (90) days from the date the application is deemed complete. Approval of the site plan shall be evidenced by the signature of the Executive Director.

##### 3. Appeal to City Council

Applications for appeal to the decision of the Executive Director of the City Planning Commission shall be submitted to the City Council for action in accordance with the provisions of Article 16, Section 9, of these zoning regulations. This application shall be accompanied by any site plans, drawings, or data, either written or graphic, as deemed necessary by the City Council.



## **SI-A Special Industrial District [Proposed]**

### *7.3.1. Purpose of the District.*

The purpose of this district is to provide for a wide variety of uses in the older industrial and warehousing areas of the City. The district encourages adaptive reuse of large, older structures for mixed-use development, which could include commercial, office, residential and certain light manufacturing uses. Site design review is required to promote compatibility between existing and new developments, and to enhance the historic character of the area. Accessory signs of limited area and application are permitted. Special regulations apply to SI-A districts located on a waterfront.

### *7.3.2. Uses Authorized in the District.*

Only those uses of land listed under Permitted Use, Accessory Use or Conditional Use provisions of this Section 2 of Article 7 (SI-A Special Industrial District) are authorized within this zoning district. Special standards, which are set forth in Article 11, apply to any Permitted, Accessory or Conditional Use designated with an asterisk (\*) in the use lists appearing in this section.

### *7.3.3. Permitted Uses.*

The following uses of land are authorized as permitted uses in the SI-A Special Industrial District subject to the performance standards of Article 7, Section 5:

1. Generally, those light manufacturing uses similar to those listed below which do not create any danger to health and safety in surrounding areas and which do not create any offensive noise, vibration, smoke, dust, lint, odor, heat or glare, than that which is generally associated with light industries of the types specifically permitted below:
  - A. Manufacture or assembly of medical and dental equipment, drafting, optical, and musical instruments, watches, clocks, toys, games, and electrical or electronic apparatus.
  - B. Manufacture, assembly or repair of boats of less than three (3) tons, electrical appliances, sheetmetal products, iron fabrication and other similar Port-related service or repair.
  - C. Beverage blending or bottling, bakery products, candy manufacture, dairy products, and ice cream, but not fruit and vegetable processing and canning, packing and processing of fish, meat, and poultry products, distilling of beverages or slaughtering of poultry or animals.

- D. Manufacture of rugs, mattresses, pillows, quilts, millinery, hosiery, clothing and fabrics, printing, and finishing of textiles and fibers into fabric goods.
  - E. Manufacture of furniture, boxes, cabinets, baskets, and other wood products of similar nature.
  - F. Compounding of cosmetics, toiletries, drugs, and pharmaceutical products.
2. Auditorium or lecture hall.
  3. Banks, drive-in or otherwise.
  4. Standard or cafeteria restaurants, but not fast food or drive-in restaurants.
  5. General retail, service and repair establishments similar to those enumerated in Article 5, Section 5.8.3. (C-1A General Commercial District).
  6. Dwelling for resident watchmen and caretakers employed on the premises.
  7. Townhouses.
  8. Single-Family, Two-Family, and Multiple-Family dwellings.
  9. Hotel, motel, or motor lodge.
  10. Laboratories, research, experimental or testing.
  11. Offices, general business or professional.
  12. Studios and galleries.
  13. Motion picture studio.
  14. Nursery for growing or propagation of plants, trees, and shrubs.
  15. Photographic processing or blueprinting.
  16. Printing and publishing.
  17. Health or athletic clubs, commercial or private but not bath or massage parlors.
  18. Public elementary schools, or private elementary schools having essentially the same curriculum as ordinarily given in public elementary schools, including kindergartens.\* (See Article 11, Section 37)

19. Public junior or senior high schools, or private junior or senior high schools having essentially the same curriculum as ordinarily given in public junior or senior high schools.\* (See Article 11, Section 38)
20. Child Care Facilities.\* (See Article 11, Section 15)
21. Automobile body shops, provided that no vehicles or parts are stored in a manner that they are visible from any public right of way or abutting property.
22. Wholesale merchandise or storage warehouses, with floor area devoted to warehousing and handling of merchandise limited to 50,000 square feet.
23. Gas distribution mains and gas regulator stations.
24. Electric utility distribution lines, meters, service lines, distribution transformers, and related appurtenances and transmission facilities.\* (See Article 11, Section 40).
25. Telephone and communications lines and related facilities.
26. Cable communication system cables, amplifiers, and related facilities but excluding distribution or switching centers and cablecasting studios.
27. Radio, television and microwave relay, transmitting or receiving towers or antennae when set back a minimum of fifty (50) feet from all lot lines.
28. Underground sewerage lift or pumping stations.
29. Above ground sewerage lift or pumping stations.
30. Water distribution systems, meters, sanitary and storm water sewerage systems and related appurtenances but not including lift and pumping stations or water towers.
31. Public water towers and above ground water storage tanks.
32. Water pumping stations.
33. Storm water pumping stations providing at least two (2) off-street parking spaces.
34. Electric substation.\* (See Article 11, Section 40)
35. Telephone exchanges.\* (See Article 11, Section 45)
36. Public telephones (booth or otherwise).\* (See Article 11, Section 41)

37. Public transit waiting stations.\* (See Article 11, Section 31)

#### 7.3.4. *Accessory Uses.*

The following uses of land are authorized as accessory uses in the SI-A Special Industrial District:

1. Storage of goods used in or produced by permitted commercial and industrial uses or related activities, subject to applicable district regulations.
2. Gas distribution mains, service piping, service regulators, meters, gas regulator stations and related appurtenances.
3. Electric utility distribution lines, meters, service lines, distribution transformers and related appurtenances.\* (See Article 11, Section 40)
4. Radio, television and microwave relay, transmitting or receiving towers or antennae when set back a minimum of fifty (50) feet from all lot lines.
5. Small telephone repeater structures when located in a public right-of-way, utility easement or buildable area or required side or rear yard of a lot.
6. Telephone and communication lines and related facilities.
7. Cable communication system cables, amplifiers and related facilities but excluding distribution or switching centers and cablecasting studios.

#### 7.3.5. *Conditional Uses.*

The following uses are authorized as conditional uses within the SI-A Special Industrial District, upon approval of a conditional use permit under the standards and procedures contained in Article 16, Section 5 of these zoning regulations:

1. Any conditional use authorized in the C-1 General Commercial District.
2. In SI-A districts located on a waterfront, any conditional use authorized in the W-1 Waterfront District.
3. Rooming, boarding, and lodging houses.\* (See Article 11, Section 34)
4. Fraternities, sororities, private clubs, and lodges.\* (See Article 11, Sections 12 and 18)
5. Colleges and Universities.\* (See Article 11, Section 36)



6. Convents and Monasteries.
7. Apartment hotels.
8. Homes for the aged, nursing homes, convalescent homes and orphan homes.
9. Trade exposition center, provided that all structures comprising such center are set back a minimum of fifty (50) feet from any property line abutting any Residential District.

*7.3.6. Permitted Signs.*

Subject to the general sign regulations of Article 12, the following illuminated or non-illuminated accessory signs are permitted in the SI-A Special Industrial District:

1. Flat signs limited in area to 100 square feet each, one (1) for each street frontage or one (1) for each industrial building of more than 20,000 square feet of floor area on the premises, whichever is the greater.
2. Detached signs limited in area to 100 square feet each, and limited in height to thirty (30) feet, one (1) for each street frontage.
3. Directional signs of any type, limited in area to ten (10) square feet each in such number and in such locations as required for proper management of the premises. Such signs shall not be included in any computation of sign area.

*7.3.7. Height, Area and Bulk Requirements.*

Minimum requirements for lot area, yards, and maximum height and Floor Area Ratio for non-residential uses in the SI-A Special Industrial District are contained in Table 7.C. Residential uses shall comply with the requirements for the RM-2A Residential District contained in Article 4, Section 10. These standards apply to all permitted uses, unless a variance is granted by the Board of Zoning Adjustments under Article 14, Section 8 and to all conditional uses unless modified by the City Council in conjunction with approval of a conditional use permit under Article 16, Section 6.

**Table 7.B: Area Regulations for the SI-A Special Industrial District**

REQUIREMENTS	STANDARDS
Maximum height	75 ft.(1)(2)
Minimum depth of front yard	none(3)
Minimum rear yard if provided	3 ft.(4)
Minimum side yard if provided	3 ft.(5)
Minimum depth of exterior side yard	none
Transfer of Development Rights	From any residential district in the Lower Garden District(6)
Maximum Floor Area Ratio	4.00

Table 7.B Notes:

- (1) The maximum height of a structure with over fifty (50) percent of its floor area containing residential use shall be 100 feet. Any building or structure which adjoins or abuts or is across the street from a residential district shall not exceed fifty (50) feet unless set back one (1) foot from all required yard lines for each foot of additional height thereof above fifty (50) feet.
- (2) In any SI-A district located along a waterfront, the following additional height limitations apply: From 0 - 300 ft. from the water's edge, the maximum height is 35 ft.; 300 to 500 ft. from water's edge, 55 ft.; 500 to 1,000 ft. from water's edge, 75 ft.; 1,000 or more feet from water's edge, regular SI-A height limitations apply. Along the Mississippi River, the water's edge shall be defined as the floodwall.
- (3) No minimum front yard is required except where a lot abuts a residential district (applies to an interior lot or corner lot) in which instance a front yard shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the residential district or in conformance with the adjacent residential structure, whichever is lesser.
- (4) Any rear yard abutting a residential district must be set back a minimum of 20 feet.
- (5) Any interior side yard abutting a residential district must be set back a minimum of 5 feet.
- (6) The Lower Garden District is bounded by St. Charles and Jackson Avenues, the Crescent City Connection and the Mississippi River.

**7.3.8. Special Regulations.**

The uses authorized in this district shall be subject to the following special requirements:

1. All uses except horticultural nurseries and electric and gas facilities shall be conducted within a completely enclosed building. Where storage is incidental to the approved occupancy of the building, all products and materials used or stored shall be in a completely enclosed building, or enclosed by a masonry wall, screening fence, or hedge, not less than six (6) feet in height. Storage of all materials and equipment shall not exceed the height of the wall. Storage of cars and trucks used in connection with the permitted trade or business is permitted

only within the walled or screened area but not including storage of heavy equipment, such as road building or excavating equipment used in the business permitted on the premises.

2. Notwithstanding the yard regulations for the district, no part of any building, accessory structure, or sign shall be located closer than 100 feet to any residential district boundary.
3. Loading operations shall be conducted at the side or rear of buildings. Service drives or other areas shall be provided for off-street loading, and in such a way that in the process of loading or unloading, no truck will block the passage of other vehicles on the service drive or extend into any other public or private drive or street used for traffic circulation.
4. No parking or storage of materials or products shall be permitted in the required front yard.
5. The front yard, if one is provided, shall be landscaped with trees, grass, shrubs, or pedestrian walks and maintained in a neat and attractive condition.
6. All fencing shall have a uniform and durable character and shall be properly maintained.
7. Any such district must contain a minimum of two (2) acres or one City square, whichever is the lesser.
8. Site Plan Review. Prior to the issuance of any permit within the SI-A Special Industrial District, a site plan shall be submitted to the City Planning Commission staff for approval in accordance with Article 16, Section 7. Said plan shall include site plan, building elevations, landscape plan, signage diagrams and any information deemed necessary by the City Planning Commission staff.
9. Off-street parking shall be provided in the amount set forth in Article 15, Section 15.2 for high density districts. Existing structures which are to be retained or developed with no increase in floor area shall not be required to comply with off-street parking requirements to the extent that such compliance would necessitate demolition or partial demolition of other structures.



## **W-1 Waterfront District [Proposed]**

### *10.6.8. Purpose of the District.*

The purpose of this district is to create an environment that is attuned to preserving and protecting the City's waterfronts while promoting commercial and pedestrian activities along the water's edge. The intent of the Waterfront District is to provide minimum performance standards for diverse redevelopment and new construction projects that would allow visual and physical access to the water's edge. While encouraging new uses in the waterfront areas, the district seeks to establish a framework for new developments and to minimize potential impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. The intent of this framework is to make clear the parameters within which new development would be allowed.

### *10.6.9. Uses Authorized in the District.*

Only those uses of land listed under the Accessory and Conditional Use provisions of this Section 7 of Article 10 (W-1 Waterfront District) are authorized within this zoning district. Supplementary use standards, which are set forth in Article 11, apply to any Permitted, Accessory or Conditional Use designated with an asterisk (\*) in the use lists appearing in this section.

### *10.6.10. Accessory Uses.*

The following uses of land are authorized as accessory uses within the W-1 Waterfront District:

1. Accessory off-street parking.
2. Stores and shops for retail sale when located in a completely enclosed building.

### *10.6.11. Conditional Uses.*

The following uses of land are authorized as conditional uses within the W-1 Waterfront District upon approval of a conditional use permit under the standards and procedures contained in Article 16, Section 6 of these zoning regulations:

1. Amusement places.
2. Amusement rides including merry-go-rounds, roller coasters, ferris wheels, log flume rides.
3. Arenas

4. Art galleries, museums
5. Family entertainment centers
6. Gaming boat berths and related support facilities.
7. General retail sales outlets.
8. Hotels, motels.
9. Live entertainment facilities (Adult live entertainment and sexually oriented businesses are prohibited).
10. Parks, athletic facilities, playgrounds and beaches.
11. Recreational clubs, health clubs, etc. Such uses may include a pro shop, restaurant and bar as appurtenant uses.
12. Restaurants (standard, cafeteria, fast-foods, and specialty food restaurants) and other eating establishments. Fast-foods with drive through are prohibited.
13. Theaters including I-Max and Virtual Reality.
14. Swimming pools and water parks.

*10.7.12. Permitted Signs.*

The following sign regulations shall apply within the W-1 Waterfront District, subject to the general sign regulations in Article 12:

- a) All signage must be an integral part of the building;
- b) Signage must only identify the building or the main use;
- c) No advertisement of products, services or activities within the building;
- d) Signage colors be complementary with the building colors;
- e) No flashing or blinking lighting, or illumination of the sign's background surfaces;
- f) No roof top signs.

10.8.13. *Height, Area and Yard Requirements.*

The minimum requirements for lot area, yards and maximum height in the W-1 Waterfront District are contained in Table 10.A. These standards apply to all permitted and accessory uses, unless a variance is granted by the Board of Zoning Adjustment under Article 14, Section 6, and to all conditional uses unless modified by the City Council in conjunction with approval of a Conditional Use Permit under Article 16, Section 6.

**Table 10.A: Area Regulations for the W-1 Waterfront District**

REQUIREMENTS	STANDARDS
Maximum Height of Buildings <sup>1</sup>	85 ft.
Maximum FAR	6
Minimum front yard set-back	25 ft. with an average of 100 ft.
Minimum rear yard set-back	50 ft. From the street

Table 10.A Notes:

- (1) Height regulations are also subject to the maximum height restrictions in the SI-A Special Industrial District.

10.9.14. *Special Regulations*

Redevelopment and new construction projects within Waterfront District-1 zoning classification should adhere to the following design criteria:

- 1) Development should be designed to maximize waterfront views and be harmonious with and respectful of the established man made and natural environment.
- 2) Buildings and structures should be oriented outward and should provide direct pedestrian access to the water's edge. Developments should provide for a pedestrian environment through the use of a visually active ground level, arcade treatments, balconies, ground level outdoor spaces, and pedestrian crossings. Blank walls, without windows or entrances facing onto pedestrian areas, should be avoided to the extent practicable in building designs.
- 3) Setbacks, corner treatments, and other design details should be used to minimize the sense of bulk of structures. Ornament and decorative elements appropriate to the urban and historical waterfront areas should be used.

- 4) The design vernacular and site development should adhere to the character and scale of its surroundings.
- 5) Architectural details, materials, colors, textures, and landscape treatments should be coordinated to provide a visual connection throughout the development.
- 6) Service and loading functions should be interior to the building(s) or along the building edge that is least visible to the public. When located along an exterior edge, the service area should be screened from public view.
- 7) Buildings on piers or adjacent to the water's edge should not be massed so as to create a continuous wall along the waterfront.
- 8) Development should include exterior open spaces for passive public recreation, for example parks, plazas, and observation areas. Such open spaces should be located at or near the water's edge to the maximum reasonable extent.
- 9) Development should include a pedestrian promenade overlooking the water.
- 10) A series of public access corridors should be established as part of future development projects that extend the public space of the existing street out to the public space of the waterfront. These corridors should generally align with existing streets and could be landscaped corridors providing open space. The intent is to provide continuous public access to the water and to create a link from the existing neighborhoods to the waterfront.

*10.10.16. Special Regulations*

Parking requirements shall adhere to the regulations set forth in Article 15, Section 2 of the CZO.



## **Mixed-Use Planned Community District. [Proposed]**

### **10.10.1. *Purpose of the District.***

The MUPC Mixed-Use Planned Community District is intended to encourage mixed-use re-development of vacant land and buildings in the older areas of the City. The district relies on a carefully designed Concept Plan to ensure compatibility of uses, both within the district and with the adjoining areas. Restrictions in the Concept Plan governing the location, dimension and design of new construction are required in order to ensure compatibility with existing structures and the urban fabric of the area. Adaptive re-use of historic structures is specifically encouraged. The MUPC Mixed-Use Planned Community District is an overlay district in which specially tailored regulations supplement the regulations of the underlying district.

### **10.10.2. *District Combinations.***

The MUPC Mixed-Use Planned Community District may overlay one (1) or more commercial districts established under Article 5 or industrial districts established under Article 7. The MUPC Mixed-Use Planned Community District shall be superimposed on the underlying district and shall be designated by a special symbol for its boundaries on the Zoning District Map. The types of uses authorized, minimum lot requirements, maximum height, minimum yard requirements, and accessory signs shall be determined by the requirements and procedures set forth in this article, which shall prevail over conflicting requirements of these regulations or ordinances governing the subdivision of land.

### **10.10.3. *Uses Authorized.***

Only those permitted, accessory and conditional uses authorized in the underlying commercial or industrial district are authorized in the MUPC Mixed-Use Planned Community District.

### **10.10.4. *Minimum District Area.***

The minimum area for a MUPC Mixed-Use Planned Community District under this article shall be one (1) contiguous acre or one (1) City square, whichever is the lesser. In calculating the minimum area for the MUPC District, the measurement shall not include the area of any dedicated streets or alleys.

### **10.10.5. *Ownership Control.***

In order that the purpose of this district shall be realized, the land and the buildings and appurtenant facilities shall be in a single ownership, or under management or supervision of a central authority, or they shall be subject to such other supervisory lease or ownership control, or agreement as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this Ordinance relating to

## MUPC Mixed-Use Planned Community Districts.

### 10.10.6. *Dwelling Units and Development Intensity Permitted.*

The maximum number of dwelling units permitted in an MUPC District shall be determined by dividing the net development area for residential use by the minimum lot area per dwelling unit required by the district or districts in which the area is located. Net development area for residential use shall be determined by subtracting the area set aside for churches, schools, businesses and other non-residential uses from the gross development area and deducting 25% of the remainder for streets or the actual area of any proposed streets, whichever is the lesser. The area of land set aside for common open space and public recreational use shall be included in determining the number of dwelling units permitted.

The floor area permitted within the Mixed-Use Planned Community District shall be determined by multiplying the net development area by the maximum Floor Area Ratio permitted in the district in which the area is located, and adding thereto any bonus floor area earned by the provision of features for which bonus floor area is allowed in such district. Net development area shall be determined by deducting from the gross development area any area set aside for residential use and an allowance of twenty-five (25) percent of the area for streets or the actual area of any proposed public streets, whichever is the lesser.

### 10.10.7. *Other Development Criteria*

#### 1. General Review Criteria.

The proposed development shall conform with the standards of the Comprehensive Plan and recognized principles of civic design, land use planning, and landscape architecture. Conditions may be imposed regarding the layout, circulation and performance of the proposed development. To achieve such purposes, the City Planning Commission may require that appropriate deed restrictions be filed, which are enforceable by the City of New Orleans for a period of up to twenty (20) years from the date of filing.

#### 2. Minimum Lot and Yard Requirements.

The minimum lot and yard requirements of the zoning district in which the development is located need not apply except that the City Planning Commission shall insure an appropriate relationship between uses of high intensity within the Mixed-Use Planned Community District and uses of low intensity, existing or future, outside the proposed Mixed-Use Planned Community District, and to this end may require that the regulations for minimum lots and yards shall be complied with inside of and near the boundaries of such district.

3. Off-Street Parking.

Off-street parking shall be provided meeting the minimum requirements of the underlying zoning district. Improvements of parking lots and garages shall also conform with these regulations and other applicable regulations in Article 15.

4. Pedestrian Use.

Pedestrian activity within the MUPC District and the adjoining areas shall be encouraged through the use of pedestrian-oriented building and site design and retail business.

5. Subdivision Standards.

The proposed development shall follow all applicable procedures, standards and requirements of the ordinances and regulations governing the subdivision of land. No building permit shall be issued until a final plat of the proposed development, or part thereof, is approved, filed and recorded.

10.10.8. *Signs.*

Subject to the general sign regulations of Article 12, only those accessory signs permitted within the underlying district shall be permitted.

10.10.9. *Procedures.*

An application for establishment of an MUPC District shall be considered an application for a zoning amendment and shall be reviewed in accordance with the procedures for planned development districts in Section 16.5. The application shall be accompanied by a Concept Plan. No building permit for any use shall be issued until a Development Plan consistent with such Concept Plan has been approved in the manner provided in Section 16.5.

10.10.10. *Failure to Begin Development.*

If no construction has begun or no use established in the Mixed-Use Planned Community District within three (3) years from the adoption of the ordinance effectuating the development (which shall include extensions), the City Council, within sixty (60) days of the expiration date of the ordinance, shall authorize the City Planning Commission to hold a public hearing to consider the further extension or termination of said use or development, and to make its recommendation to the City Council in accordance with Section 16.9. Fees for said public hearing and processing shall be borne by the applicant for the development. The City Council shall determine whether to further extend or to rescind the effectuating ordinance.



## **Lower Tchoupitoulas Demolition Guidelines [Proposed]**

- (A) Permits for demolitions of existing structures within any area of the Lower Tchoupitoulas (bounded by the Pontchartrain Expressway, the Mississippi River, Jackson Avenue, Rousseau, Felicity and Annunciation Streets) shall be issued only after a City Council motion has been passed authorizing such a demolition permit to be issued.
  
- (B) The City Council shall consider the recommendation of the City Planning Commission in making such a determination. The City Planning Commission's recommendation shall be made as a result of a meeting between the staff of the City Planning Commission, the Department of Safety & Permits, the Historic District Landmarks Commission and the Neighborhood Strategic Plan Implementation Committee, as well as consideration given, but not limited to the following:
  - (1) The architectural significance of the subject structure.
  - (2) The historical significance of the subject structure.
  - (3) The urban design significance of the subject structure as it relates to:
    - a. Pedestrian perception and movement;
    - b. Height, area and bulk of the structure and how it relates to the street scene, traffic, and to other buildings in the vicinity.
  - (4) The proposed length of time the subject site is anticipated to remain undeveloped.
  - (5) The proposed plan for redevelopment, and its relationship to subsection (B)(3) of this section. Particular attention shall be paid to the impact of the proposed development on traffic circulation.
  - (6) If a parking lot or building is proposed as an interim use then need shall be based on, but not limited to the following:
    - a. A plan of the location of existing and proposed parking facilities within the Lower Tchoupitoulas;
    - b. Effect on traffic circulation both vehicular and pedestrian; and
    - c. Parking inventory of buildings within a nine square block area of the proposed parking facility.

(C) Procedure for application:

- (1) The Department of Safety and Permits shall not issue a demolition permit to an applicant, but shall refer an applicant to the City Planning Commission.
- (2) The City Planning Commission shall obtain necessary information from the applicant to perform an analysis based on criteria contained in subsections (B)(1) through (6) of this section and collect a site plan review fee.
- (3) The City Planning Commission shall recommended an action to City Council within 60 days from the date of the receipt of an application in correct form.
- (4) The City Council shall take action by motion and shall do so only after receiving a recommendation from the City Planning Commission. However, if not received within 60 days of an application in correct form, the Council may act without the City Planning Commission's recommendation.
- (5) Upon City Council approval, the applicant shall apply to the Department of Safety and Permits for demolition permit.

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**THE JACKSON AVENUE FOUNDATION, INC.**

**1204 JACKSON AVENUE  
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70130-5132**

Telephone (504) 581-9569

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*"We Will Be Here For You!"*

February 19, 1996

Joy Robinson  
City Planning Commission  
City of New Orleans  
1300 Perdido Street, Room 9W  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70112

RE: Zoning of Jackson Avenue

Dear Joy:

We have continued to solicit input from additional owners of property on Jackson Avenue on specific properties. Please accept this letter as a formal request for consideration of zoning changes.

UNITY For The Homeless has proposed a transitional housing complex in the New Orleans General Hospital building. As was clear at our zoning meeting, the residents of Jackson Avenue are unanimously opposed to this. Since, as you pointed out, this business activity is allowable in a medical zone district, we propose changing the zoning classification from a medical to a zoning category more appropriate to our goals. We wish to promote lower population density and the return of resident landlords which, in turn, will lead to a comprehensive down zoning and less dense occupancy of the entire area. The location and amount of unused hospital bed space in New Orleans makes it obvious that Jackson Avenue will never again be able to support a hospital or to obtain such a use. Full scale medical zoning is therefore unnecessary and inappropriate to the planned revival of Jackson Avenue. General office use of the building could build a core neighborhood which would anchor lower Jackson Avenue.

Commercial zoning of Magazine Street currently spills down Jackson Avenue. We propose changing the zoning boundary lines to allow only those properties which front or corner Magazine to be zoned commercial. Future zoning should also provide incentives to encourage residential activity above the commercial spaces along Magazine Street. Properties such as the old Uncle Bobs Fried Chicken in the 1000 block of Jackson Avenue have caused serious negative repercussions to the area and should become non-conforming. We understand the current zoning of this building requires a public hearing to approve any new fast food chain or quick stop from opening in this location. This particular block is in the process of renovation and repopulation. 1007 and 943 have started construction. The entire area is quickly becoming safe and respectable once again.

Thank you for your advice and assistance in the revitalization of Jackson Avenue.

Very truly yours,



Brian Bockman  
Executive Director

**Recipients of the 1995 Terry-Parkerson award from the Garden District Association.  
"In recognition of their efforts to protect and preserve the Historic Character of Jackson Avenue."**





## COLISEUM SQUARE ASSOCIATION

A NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT • A NEW ORLEANS HISTORIC DISTRICT  
REPRESENTING THE ENTIRE LOWER GARDEN DISTRICT

January 27, 1996

**Resolution of the Coliseum Square Association Zoning Committee  
Regarding the City Planning Commission's Zoning Recommendations  
Dated December 18, 1995 and from Discussions January 25, 1996  
with the City Planning Commission Staff**

After several years of studying the land use and the zoning code, the Zoning Committee sees a consensus of the membership of the Association supporting a zoning designation that would reflect the trend toward decreased residential density. We strongly recommend the future formulation of a special historic zoning code which will take into consideration that the Lower Garden District has a 19th century design layout and building stock quite unlike the 20th century suburban neighborhoods for which the existing code was written.

In the proposed RM2A zoning, we are opposed to the increased density, the loss of parking restrictions for multi-family housing, and the provision for large group homes. While parking restrictions might be waived for single and two family homes, they must be retained for multi-family dwellings. Less restrictive parking for multi-family should only be allowed for property owners who retain the historic character of the building as described in the bonus provision. We also believe that the historic restoration bonus provision for increased density in multi-family housing should utilize a square footage of at least 1000-1200 per unit rather than 800. We would like to see an amendment to RM2A to address these concerns. Contiguous with the rest of the neighborhood, we support a residential zoning for the three blocks on Magazine Street from Race to Melpomene.

At the Planning Commission's meeting of January 25th, we were asked our view of the future for the Lower Garden District. We see a continuing increase in homeownership, bringing the neighborhood a more stable, less dense residential population, combined with an appropriate level of multi-family housing and neighborhood business. We also see a neighborhood balancing the needs of a 19th century historic district with the goals and needs of the 21st century. We therefore ask that the Planning Commission give future consideration to either an historic zoning designation reflecting this trend or the existing RD category for residential zoning.

We are enthusiastic about the change in the zoning of the commercial sectors on Prytania and Magazine Street from C1A to B1A.

However, we are concerned that the sections on Magazine Street from Melpomene to the bridge and Prytania alongside of Margaret's Place remain C1A. These should be B1A. In looking at the Planning Commission's zoning map, Magazine, from Melpomene uptown to Audubon Park, and the rest of Prytania, in the uptown direction, is either proposed or existing B1A or residential.

We support the change from Light Industrial to Special Industrial District at the bridge corridor and in other areas along the River. We also support the change from Light Industrial to C1A on portions of the old MO-PAC site, and the contiguous area across Race Street to Felicity.

The neighborhood is opposed to the existence of alcohol beverage outlets in either the commercial or residential sectors. We hope that the City will soon address this problem.

#### CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Among the capital improvements that would improve the Lower Garden District are the following items:

The removal of utility and telephone poles and the burying of cables would greatly improve the street scenery.

The sidewalks on Camp Street from Terpsichore to Clio/ Gaiennie Street were narrowed to allow for the now removed Camp Street on ramp to the bridge; restoring these sidewalks to the correct size would enhance the streetscape in front of the houses on Camp.

The Melpomene Street neutral ground and plantings should be restored from St. Charles to Camp Street.

Also, some discussion has ensued with the Streets Department (Elmer Darwin) about the return of Melpomene to a two-way thoroughfare from Prytania to Camp Street. This should be accomplished along with the removal of the traffic light pole and the wires strung across the intersection of Melpomene, Camp and Coliseum. The use of a standing traffic signal pole of smaller more attractive style would be more in keeping with the residential nature of the area. This has been discussed with Mr. Darwin.

More light standards, of the historic Washington post style, are needed in Coliseum Square.

We would support the use of smaller buses in the neighborhood.

We also welcome the streetcar into the neighborhood.

Study should be made of the traffic on the streets, as mentioned above with Melpomene, now that the bridge ramp is gone. The routing of traffic should benefit the residents and business owners rather than commuters accessing the bridge as in the past.

LOWER GARDEN DISTRICT STRATEGIC NEIGHBORHOOD RENAISSANCE PLAN

MAGAZINE STREET FOCUS AREA

Annunciation Square Alliance offers the following recommendations pertaining to the Lower Garden District Strategic Neighborhood Renaissance Plan Zoning Analysis and Recommendations Draft Report:

That the C-1A General Commercial district, except a five-block stretch on Magazine Street between Erato Street and Race Street, should be zoned B-1A Neighborhood Business in order to maintain the existing scale and mix of uses, yet also provide opportunity for growth.

As per the Draft Report recommendation that a three-block stretch on Magazine Street between Melpomene Street and Race Street should be zoned RM-2A, the overwhelming majority of property owners directly impacted not only reject the recommended RM-2A zoning, but also reject B-1A zoning.

Magazine Street property owners between Melpomene Street and Race Street endorse the Urban Land Institute's Advisory Services Panel Report "An Evaluation of Revitalization Opportunities and Economic Development Strategies for the Lower Garden District" finding that: "the panel does not recommend communitywide downzoning. Microareas and certain blocks that contain only single-family dwellings would be appropriate for such action, while other blocks will prosper under current zoning. On Magazine Street, mixed-use zoning should be encouraged so as to take maximum advantage of upper levels for residential housing and to promote a mix of uses within individual buildings."

Therefore, since no block within this three block area on Magazine Street between Melpomene Street and Race Street contains only single-family dwellings, downzoning is not recommended for these three blocks.

Finally, property owners located within the Magazine Street focus area realize the importance of comprehensive zoning, but ask that their recommendations impacting Magazine Street be given priority over recommendations from representatives of contiguous neighborhoods.

LOWER GARDEN DISTRICT STRATEGIC NEIGHBORHOOD RENAISSANCE PLAN

ANNUNCIATION SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD FOCUS AREA

Annunciation Square Alliance offers the following recommendations pertaining to the Lower Garden District Strategic Neighborhood Renaissance Plan Zoning Analysis and Recommendations Draft Report:

That municipal square 116, zoned C-1, occupied primarily by Schwegmann Brothers Giant Supermarket, should be zoned C-1A in order to help prevent future out of scale development.

That the LI Light Industrial district abutting CBD-8 should be zoned SI Special Industrial in order to help prevent severe industrial uses without discouraging economic development.

That the corner lot at the intersection of Constance Street and Terpsichore Street, zoned B-2, should be zoned RM-2A in order to rectify the perception that spot zoning is an acceptable zoning alternative.

That the RM-2 zoned properties fronting on Annunciation Street between Erato Street and Euterpe Street, Constance Street between Erato Street and Melpomene Street, Thalia Street between Magazine Street and Annunciation Street, and Melpomene Street between Constance Street and Annunciation Street, should be zoned B-1A in order to help address the problem of vacant/abandoned/blighted properties. Focus area property owners concur that the Urban Land Institute's Advisory Services Panel Report "An Evaluation of Revitalization Opportunities and Economic Development Strategies for the Lower Garden District" finding that: "the panel does not recommend communitywide downzoning. Microareas and certain blocks that contain only single-family dwellings would be appropriate for such action. Certain sites, such as Schwegmann's grocery store and existing vacant parcels, would benefit from zoning incentives to improve their current physical condition or initiate new construction for rehabilitation and new buildings", is applicable in this instance.

That properties zoned RM-2, not included in the previous recommendations, be zoned RM-2A, in order for the HDLC to continue its cooperative efforts with residents to continue the revitalization process of the Annunciation Square neighborhood.

City Planning Commission  
1300 Perdido Street  
Suite 9W  
New Orleans, LA 70112-2123

PETITION

Dear Commissioners:

After review of the Lower Garden District Strategic Neighborhood Renaissance Zoning Analysis and Recommendations Draft Report, and the Urban Land Institute's Inner-City Community Building Program Advisory Services Panel Report, we, the undersigned, being bona fide property owners within the Annunciation Square neighborhood focus area, hereby petition the City Planning Commission Board of Commissioners to consider the following recommendation regarding the comprehensive zoning of the Lower Garden District:

That the following properties be zoned B-1A:

1. RM-2 properties fronting Annunciation Street between Erato Street and Euterpe Street,
2. RM-2 properties fronting Constance Street between Erato Street and Melpomene Street,
3. RM-2 properties fronting Thalia Street between Magazine Street and Annunciation Street,
4. RM-2 properties fronting Melpomene Street between Constance Street and Annunciation Street.

NAME	ADDRESS
1. <u>William G. Mc...</u>	<u><del>1322</del> 1315 Constance</u>
2. <u>Mr &amp; Mrs James McLaurin</u>	<u>1309 Constance St</u>
3. <u>Jerry Thom</u>	<u>1307 Constance St</u>
4. <u>Patricia Anderson</u>	<u>1327 Constance St. N.O. La.</u>
5. <u>Sharon Shilling</u>	<u>1319-1321 CONSTANCE ST., NOLA</u>
6. <u>Leonard P. Jell</u>	<u>1118 Thalia St</u>
7. <u>Leonard P. Jell</u>	<u>1020 Thalia St</u>

8. Leonard Lella 1119 Melp. st.
9. Isabella ... 915 ...
10. James ... 1216 - 1240 ...
11. James ... 1216 - 1240 ...
12. James ... 1216 - 1240 ...
13. Blair Kemp 931-935 & 927-929 Thalia
14. Sula Smith 524 - 0963
15. David Kanahen 525 - 4887
16. Freddy J. Wagners 525 - 2856 Thalia <sup>1027-74</sup>
17. Walter W. Key 924 Melpomene St.
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City Planning Commission  
1300 Perdido Street  
Suite 9W  
New Orleans, LA 70112-2123

PETITION

Dear Commissioners:

After review of the Lower Garden District Strategic Neighborhood Renaissance Zoning Analysis and Recommendations Draft Report, and the Urban Land Institute's Inner-City Community Building Program Advisory Services Panel Report, we, the undersigned, being bona fide property owners within the Annunciation Square neighborhood focus area, hereby petition the City Planning Commission Board of Commissioners to consider the following recommendation regarding the comprehensive zoning of the Lower Garden District:

That the following properties be zoned B-1A:

1. RM-2 properties fronting Annunciation Street between Erato Street and Euterpe Street,
2. RM-2 properties fronting Constance Street between Erato Street and Melpomene Street,
3. RM-2 properties fronting Thalia Street between Magazine Street and Annunciation Street,
4. RM-2 properties fronting Melpomene Street between Constance Street and Annunciation Street.

NAME	ADDRESS
1. David Baird	1232 ANNUNCIATION ST.
2. Kate Vot	1229 ANNUNCIATION ST
3. Lee Palmer	1227 ANNUNCIATION ST.
4. Mack Carey	1221 Annunciation
5. Jose A. Ramirez	1236 Annunciation
6.	
7.	



Board of Commissioners  
City Planning Commission  
1300 Perdido Street  
Suite 9W  
New Orleans, LA 70112

PETITION

After review of the Lower Garden District Neighborhood Renaissance Plan Zoning Analysis and Recommendations Draft Report, we, the undersigned, being bona fide domiciliaries and/or property owners of the property fronting Magazine Street from Melpomene Street to Race Street, hereby petition the City Planning Commission Board of Commissioners that our designated C-1A zoning be maintained for the following reasons:

1. The three blocks of Magazine Street under consideration are effectively monitored by the HDLC.
2. Residential zoning will negatively impact the ongoing revitalization of our properties zoned for commercial use in a historical Commercial Corridor and will serve to hinder neighborhood stabilization.
3. Comprehensive zoning in the Lower Garden District should not be achieved by our neighborhood acquiescing to the demands of contiguous neighborhood representatives.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>ADDRESS</u>
*1. Debra Dunn	1464 MAGAZINE ST
*2. Tony Rappolo	1464 MAGAZINE ST.
*3. Ramon Guzman	1437 Magazine St.
*4. Anna Guzman	1437 Magazine St.
*5. Greg Lewis	1469 MAGAZINE
6. Tina St. Clair	1469 Magazine Street
7. John Provost	1469 Magazine St.
8. Thomas M. King	1469 MAGAZINE ST.
*9. William R. Hogue	1441 Magazine St.
*10. Georgia Don	1455 Magazine St.
11. Gus Stapp	1455 Magazine St APT 2.
12. Jerry Clifton	1214 Camp St.

- \*13. Joe A. Lini 1451 Magazine St.
14. Ray K. Williams 1451 Magazine St.
- \*15. Linda D. Deffert 1448 Magazine St.
- \*16. Stephen P. Chulato 1454 Magazine St.
- \*17. Sam Richards 1458 Magazine St.
- \*18. Tamar Richards 1458 Magazine St.
- \*19. WMA S. Edmotts 1459 Magazine St.
20. Ellin McHale 1479 Magazine
21. Greg Lewis 1471 Magazine St.
22. Greg Lewis 1382 Magazine St.
23. Babara D. Smith 1414 | 1416 Magazine St.
24. Mary Ann - 1023 Rice St.
25. Mark Annie 1373 Magazine St.
26. Leonard D. Lalla 1323 Magazine St.
27. Leonard D. Lalla 1327 Magazine St.
28. Leonard P. Lalla 1331 Magazine St.
29. Leonard D. Lalla 1335 Magazine St.
30. Leonard P. Lalla 1339 Magazine St.
31. Leonard D. Lalla 1341 Magazine St.
32. Leonard P. Lalla 1329 Magazine St.
33. Leonard P. Lalla 1322 Magazine St.
34. Leonard D. Lalla 1314 Magazine St.
35. Leonard P. Lalla 1310 Magazine St.
36. Leonard D. Lalla 1326 Magazine St.
37. Leonard P. Lalla 1350 Magazine St.
38. Paul Palmer 1378 Magazine St.
39. Lewis W. Palmer 1380 Magazine St.

- 40. Karl Palmer 3120 ~~Whobertson~~ 1380 Magazine St
- 41. ~~1380 Magazine St~~ 1432 Magazine St. N.O. LA. 70130
- 42. Fannie Beatty 1383-8M MAGAZINE ST NO LA 70130
- 43. Fannie Beatty 1352-54 MAGAZINE ST- NO LA 70130
- 44. Claudie Spicher 1347-1357 Magazine N.O. LA 70130
- 45. Mark Camp 1119-21 Terpsichore
- 46. Mark Camp 1119-21 Terpsichore
- 47. Jasper J. Schiro 1476 Magazine St
- 48. Chris Beal 1359 Magazine St NO LA 70130
- 49. \_\_\_\_\_
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# COMMUNITY RESOURCE PARTNERSHIP

A non-profit consortium of community groups formed to maximize existing human, physical and cultural resources in the Lower Garden District

October 9, 1996

**President**  
Joseph C. Canizaro  
N.O. 2000 Partnership

**Vice President/Secretary**  
Barbara Major  
St. Thomas/Irish Channel  
Consortium

**Vice President/Operations**  
Camille Strachan  
Commercial Property Owner

**St. Thomas Economic  
Development Corporation**  
Rev. David Billings

**Riverfront Civic Assn.**  
Brenda Borchardt

**Preservation Resource Center**  
Patricia Gay

**Garden District Assn.**  
Tony Gelderman

**Magazine Street Business Assn.**  
Diana Johnson

**St. Thomas Residents' Council**  
Fannie McKnight

**Coliseum Square Assn.**  
Rockne Moseley

**Young Leadership Council  
Neighborhood Renaissance Partnership**  
Meg Lousteau

**Irish Channel Neighborhood Assn.**  
Deborah West

**Executive Director**  
R. Larry Schmidt

**Members of the City Planning Commission**  
City Hall  
1300 Perdido, Rm. 9 West  
New Orleans, LA 70112-2123

Dear Commission Member:

The Community Resource Partnership wishes to express its concern regarding several of the recommendations proposed in the City Planning Commission Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan. As a general comment, we want to re-enforce that we are viewing this proposal as only an interim adjustment to the zoning problems that are adversely impacting the quality of life in the Lower Garden District. Furthermore, we are expecting a more comprehensive and creative zoning plan to evolve from the comprehensive revision that is presently underway.

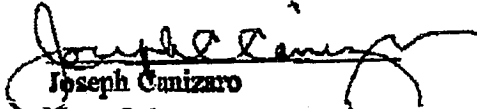
As the CRP has stated from the beginning of the process, we are seeking a new zoning paradigm for a historic neighborhood. The City's zoning should not only protect and encourage residential uses, but also provide opportunities for small commercial interests that have historically been a part of our neighborhoods.

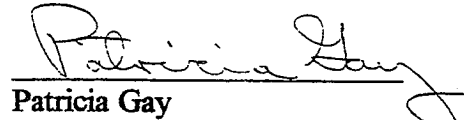
Consequently, it is requested that the City Planning Commission include the following amendments in this proposal:


- The minimum floor area per dwelling unit in the RM-2A district should be more than the 850 square feet as proposed. We recommend that the minimum be changed to 1000 square feet.
- The zoning change on the lake side of Annunciation Street from RM-2 to B-1A is not in keeping with the surrounding residential neighborhood. This is definitely a step in the wrong direction.
- A Planned Unit Development (PUD) process should be applied to the proposed SI-A district on the river side of Tchoupitoulas Street and the C1-A district on the lake side of Tchoupitoulas.

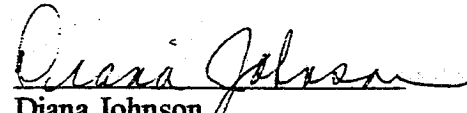
We hope that you will include these amendments in your plan.

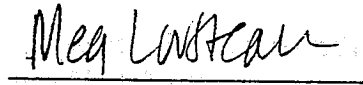
Sincerely,

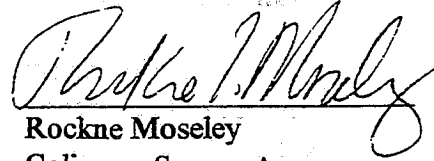
  
Joseph Canizaro  
New Orleans 2000 Partnership

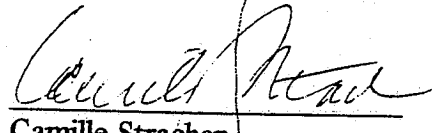
  
Patricia Gay  
Preservation Resource Ctr.

  
Tony Golderman  
The Garden District Assn.

  
Diana Johnson  
Magazine Street Business Assn.

  
Meg Lousteau  
Young Leadership Council

  
Rockne Moseley  
Coliseum Square Assn.

  
Camille Strachan  
Commercial Property Owner



## **COMMUNITY RESOURCE PARTNERSHIP RESOLUTION**

The Board of Directors of Community Resource Partnership, a consortium of neighborhood and business organizations in the Lower Garden District, unanimously approve the following resolution:

**BE IT RESOLVED**, that Community Resource Partnership make a request to the City Planning Commission and/or City Council as appropriate to develop a Special Zoning District for the Lower Garden District, generally defined as the area bounded by the Crescent City Connection, the Mississippi River, Jackson Avenue, and Prytania Street, including the lots fronting Prytania Street on those squares located between Prytania St. and St. Charles Avenue. The Special Zoning District should be tailored to the unique and historic mix of land uses and design standards of the Lower Garden District.

This Special Zoning District should be designed to accomplish the following: (1) evidence and support the historic and economic importance of the Lower Garden District as both a national and local designated historic district, (2) reflect the existence of historic natural and architectural physical boundaries of the area, (3) reflect the crucial location of the Lower Garden District in its proximity to Downtown New Orleans and Mississippi River front developments, and (4) recognize the diversity of the socio-economic fabric of the community. The Special Zoning District is justified by all of the above characteristics, and is also justified by the coherence of the neighborhood organizations and interests represented in the successful collaboration of thirteen neighborhood, business, and social service organizations and interests which comprise the Community Resource Partnership. It is also justified by the tremendous potential impact of major economic and infrastructure projects now underway, including the Tchoupitoulas Corridor and the Riverboat Gambling Industry.

Oct 21, 1996

I, Seraphine Scorsone,  
one of six grandchildren, who  
inherited property located at  
1331 Constance St., N.O., La.  
do support B-1A.

Thank you.

Seraphine Scorsone  
271-5698

2015 Cornine Ave.  
Chalmette, La. 70043

1420 Euterpe Street  
New Orleans LA 70130

October 22, 1996

Ms. Kristina Ford  
Director, City Planning Commission  
City of New Orleans  
Room 9W, City Hall  
1300 Perdido Street  
New Orleans LA 70112

Re: Comments on Draft of Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan

Dear Ms. <sup>Kristina</sup>Ford:

To begin, I wish to compliment you and your staff for proposing a Plan which, in light of the many constraints and conflicting interests, is excellent. This is especially true in regard to the zoning proposals. I have, however, one serious negative comment in regard to V.1.C. One-way and Two-way Streets on pages 64 and 65.

I have attempted for over 20 years to have the 1400 block of Euterpe St. made one-way riverbound like the 1500 block which, by the way, determined the Burger King driveway plan; the 1400 and 1500 blocks of Polymnia St. made one-way lakebound; and one-way signs placed as appropriate at St. Charles Ave. intersections.

Before the Camp St. ramp was demolished, some of my neighbors opposed to the first two proposals because they thought the two-way plan discouraged bridge bound drivers from using these streets. As there is no longer a bridge ramp, perhaps this opposition has ended.

At most intersections, signs were never put up because, supposedly, these streets are needed for U-turns. A sign was placed at Euterpe St. as part of the Burger King traffic plan, but it is routinely ignored as it is not visible to vehicles exiting their driveway. A related issue is that the 1500 block of Terpsichore St. has become two-way as a result of the sign being lost in an accident. Technically, it remains one-way lakebound as evidenced by the No Left Turn sign visible to upbound traffic on St. Charles Ave. As the parallel streets on either side are one-way riverbound, Euterpe St. and the riverbound lanes of Melpomene St., it is reasonable for this street to be one-way lakebound. It follows that alternate streets in an upriver direction should go in alternate directions.

Upon reaching the referenced section of the Plan, I could not believe that your staff was proposing the only thing which could make circulation worse than the current, relatively uncontrolled, conditions.

Ms. Kristina Ford

October 23, 1996

Page 2

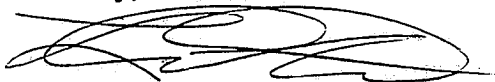
If Euterpe St. becomes lakebound and Polymnia St. becomes riverbound, and as no left turn is permitted at Melpomene St. from St. Charles Ave. which is only reasonable, it will become very difficult to reach the 1400 block of Euterpe St. From upbound St. Charles Ave., a driver would be required to turn riverbound on Thalia St., travel 2 blocks to Coliseum St., and turn upbound 3 blocks to Euterpe St. From downbound St. Charles Ave., a driver would turn riverbound on Felicity St.; travel one block to Prytania St.; turn left 3 blocks to Terpsichore St., passing Euterpe St.; turn 1 block riverbound on Terpsichore St. to Coliseum St., turning upbound 1 block; and, finally, reach the 1400 block of Euterpe St. Alternately, a driver could turn left onto Polymnia St. for 1 block to Prytania St.; turn left on Prytania St. for 2 blocks, passing Euterpe St.; turn right on Terpsichore St. for one block to Coliseum St.; and, finally, reach Euterpe St. To reach the 1700 block of Coliseum St. between Euterpe and Polymnia Sts. (there are two 1700 blocks), a similar circuitous path would be required.

In addition to the inconvenience to neighborhood residents and the general increase in turning movements required to reach a destination within the neighborhood, there will be a new level of congestion at Euterpe St. and St. Charles Ave. All traffic exiting the Burger King will have to enter that intersection rather than having the option of exiting onto Euterpe St.

Without continuing to present examples of future inconveniences and traffic problems foreseen by the referenced proposal, I ask that the streets discussed either be changed as I suggest in the second paragraph of this letter or be allowed to remain as presently operated.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,



Louis Costa

cc: Hon. James Singleton, Hon. Peggy Wilson, Hon. Oliver Thomas, David Ferguson,  
Rockne Moseley

# RIVERPARK

## A NEW ORLEANS 2000 PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

October 8, 1996

Ms. Kristina Ford  
Executive Director  
City Planning Commission  
1300 Perdido, Rm. 9West  
New Orleans, LA 70112-2123

Re: Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan Draft Report

Dear Kristina:

As New Orleans 2000 Partnership prepares to regain ownership in the 52 acre riverfront site in the Lower Garden District, we have reviewed and have concerns regarding the new zoning classification for the site.

As you know, the site is presently zoned Light Industrial, P-Park, and Heavy Industrial. We have noted that the proposed zoning changes show a Special Industrial district (SI-A) for the property on the river side of Tchoupitoulas and a Commercial District (C1-A) on the lake side of Tchoupitoulas.

It is our concern that a more progressive tact be undertaken for this pivotal river front site. I know that you understand the importance of the site to the successful extension of river front access and development and the revitalization of the Lower Garden District. I also know that you are familiar with the complexity of this site, from the a 15 story elevated expressway system on one side of the property, a large convention center expansion within the site, a four lane truck route dividing the property, the sensitive edges of the Lower Garden District along Race and Annunciation Streets, the significant demand for adequate parking, internodal transportation, and many others.

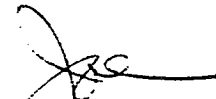
It is for these reasons that we strongly urge that the zoning classifications proposed be reconsidered and that a Planned Unit Development (PUD) process be adopted now for this property. It is our belief that the only way to properly plan for this pivotal site and its impact on the surrounding areas is through a Planned Unit Development process. You and I have previously discussed the City participating in a Master Plan undertaken by New Orleans 2000 Partnership for the development of the site. A Planned Unit Development based on that Master Plan is the direction we would like to pursue. It is also the direction which we believe will most benefit the City of New Orleans, the Lower Garden District community, the Convention Center, the Port of New Orleans, the Delta Queen, the Warehouse District residents and businesses and others impacted by the future use of the site.

**Page 2 - Ms. Kristina Ford - October 8, 1996**

As you prepare to finalize the Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan, New Orleans 2000 Partnership strongly urges you to modify the draft so that a Planned Unit Development process is adopted for the entire land area from Annunciation Street to the river and from Race Street to the Crescent City Connection.

I hope that you will designate the 52 acre riverfront site for the PUD process. I look forward to speaking with you regarding this proposal in the near future.

Sincerely,



**Joseph C. Canizaro**

NW/sjs

cc: Coleman Adler  
Bill Goldring  
Charles Caplinger  
Nathan Watson

*Harriet R. Campbell Young*  
*Attorney at Law*

*1519 Polymnia Street*  
*New Orleans, Louisiana 70130*  
*(504) 586-1994*  
*Fax (504) 586-1921*

February 20, 1997

Mr. Jack Spanola  
Principal Planner  
City of New Orleans  
City Planning Commission  
Suite 9W, City Hall  
1300 Perdido Street  
New Orleans, LA 70112-2123

Re: Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan

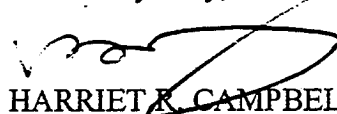
Dear Mr. Spanola:

Thank you for your letter of February 3, 1997 concerning the amendments to the Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan. I noted on the amended Plan that the proposal is to make Polymnia Street one-way toward the lake rather than toward the river. I have no objection to this change, however, you should be aware that there are considerable visual problems for vehicles on Polymnia Street which are trying to cross St. Charles Avenue or turn onto St. Charles Avenue. At the present time, parking is permitted in front of the 1750 St. Charles Apartments. If any vehicle other than a small car parks in the first or second parking space to the left of Polymnia Street (Uptown side), vision is totally blocked for the vehicle on Polymnia Street. It is necessary to actually pull into the travel lane on St. Charles Avenue before you can ascertain whether or not any vehicles are approaching. We have had a considerable number of accidents at this corner because of the visual problems.

If Polymnia is to be made one-way lakebound, at least one (1), if not two (2) parking places should be removed from the riverside, downtown corner of St. Charles Avenue in front of the 1750 St. Charles Apartments. I believe this would help resolve the visual problems and make access to St. Charles Avenue easier.

Many thanks for your consideration in this matter.

Yours very truly,



HARRIET R. CAMPBELL YOUNG

HRCY/kl





---

**ERIC GRANDERSON**  
510 RACE STREET  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130

February 24, 1997

New Orleans City Planning Commission  
9West, City Hall  
1300 Perdido Street  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70112

Re: Lower Garden District Renaissance Study

Dear Commission Members:

I wish to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for your efforts in support of preserving the Lower Garden District. Developments underway and those that can be anticipated, will bring increased pressures on this historic and fragile section of New Orleans. The staff's plan will bring needed planning and coordination to rapidly changing land use in the area immediately adjacent to my neighborhood and I generally support staff recommendations.

My only concerns are to future developments as they may shift the water table that could result in damage the foundation of my home, constructed in 1830. As you may be aware, the foundations of these older structures are constructed of brick and cypress and built below the water table. Foundations and support required for large scale developments in the immediate area bounded by Race, Tchoupitoulas, Religious and Orange Streets could affect the water table and threaten the foundations of existing structures in this area, many of which are residential in use.

Accordingly, I ask that your recommendations include sufficient safeguards to insure that the height and scale of future construction will not have a negative impact upon the foundations upon existing property.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Eric Granderson", written in black ink. The signature is fluid and extends across the width of the page.



**ANNUNCIATION SQUARE ALLIANCE**

Recommendations for the

**Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan Draft Report**

The Lower Garden District is on the verge of undergoing a socio-economic and demographic metamorphosis, the impetus of which is the development of prime riverfront property, including the MICO site. Due to the scare tactic of demonizing Mr. Canizaro, property owners abutting the riverfront development area are being told their properties must remain residential in order to limit the scale of the riverfront development, in essence, utilizing the properties as a buffer zone. This is unfair to both the property owners and to Mr. Canizaro. As per the properties fronting on Constance Street between Thalia and Melpomene, please find that they do not "constitute a solid block of residential use" as stated in the Changes to the September 22, 1996 Draft. An historic corner store occupies the corner lot of Constance Street and Melpomene Street, and is the primary reason for requesting that properties on that street be included in the proposed rezoning to B-1A. After consulting with the property owners in this micro-area, the Annunciation Square Alliance recommends the following revision to the Changes to the September 22, 1996 Draft: That the properties fronting on Constance Street be zoned B-1A in order to encourage neighborhood stabilization. Please refer to the attached map and original petitions. All other recommendations in the Changes to the September 22, 1996 are endorsed as having a positive impact on the future of the Lower Garden District. Finally, the Annunciation Square alliance Board of Directors and its members would like to publicly thank Jack Spanola and Joy Robinson for being extraordinarily patient and for listening, even when we agreed to disagree.

MAP REVISIONS

SI

RM-2A

C-1A

B-1A

CAMP

MAGAZINE

CONSTANCE

ANNUNCIATION

TERPSICHORE

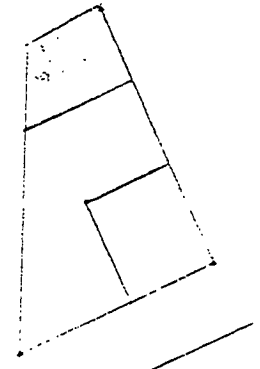
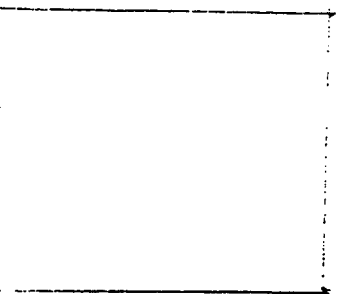
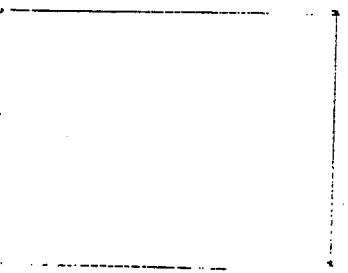
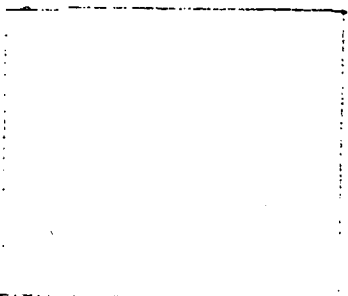
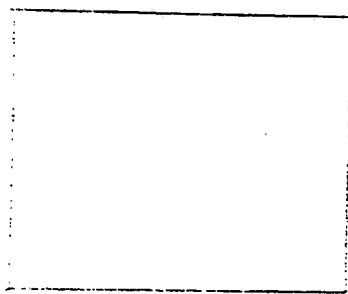
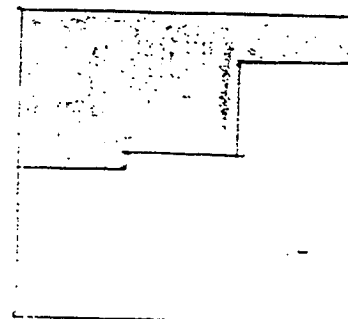
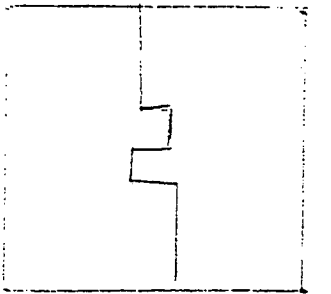
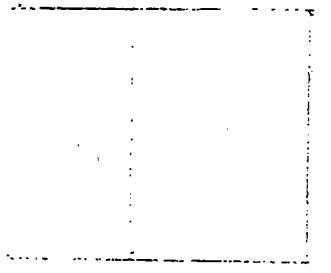
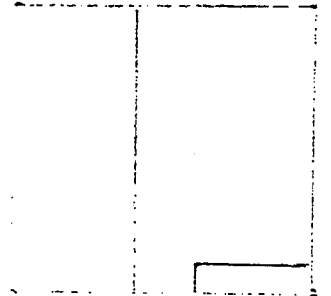
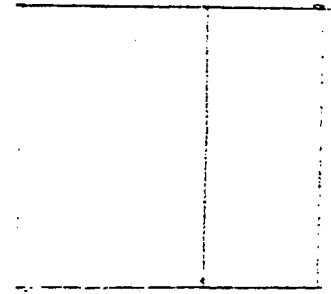
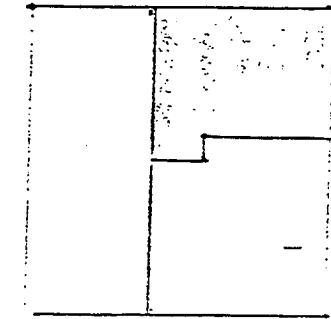
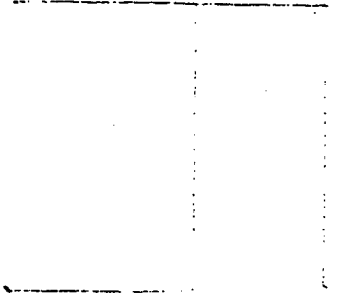
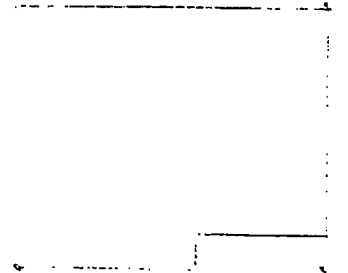
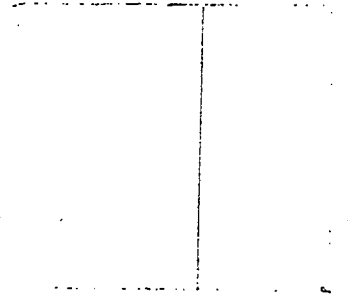
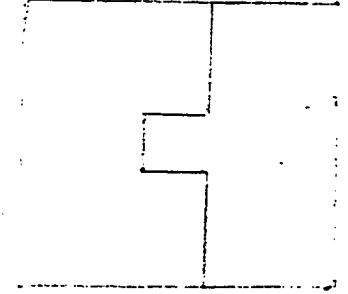
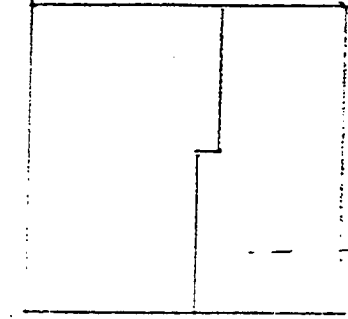
EUTERPE

RACE

ERATO

THALIA

MELPOMENE





Keith Keller  
1229 Annunciation St.  
New Orleans, LA 70130

3/11/96

City Planning Dept.  
attn: Joy Robinson  
City Hall  
New Orleans, LA

I would like to address some aspects of the rezoning of the Lower Garden district, as it effects the extreme lower boundary of this area, of which I am a resident and property owner.

From the vantage point here on the 1200 block of Annunciation Street, which is the block between Schwegmann and the Ponchartrain Expressway, it seems the process of planning the long term zoning of this part of New Orleans is divided into 1) Zoning property of many types, including a "boundry area" between residential, commercial, light industrial and vacant lots, and 2) managing traffic patterns, to maintain a balance between the residences and businesses in the district and the flow through traffic heading parallel to the river heading up and downtown, and perpendicular to the river heading to and from the Ponchartrain Expressway and to/from the Convention Center, Tchopitloulas corridor and Riverwalk.

#### **TRAFFIC**

Because the traffic patterns define the nature of the sub-areas within the Lower Garden district, it makes sense to address this issue first. From my understanding, the nature of designing traffic flow uses the criteria of 1) Safety, 2) Effective traffic flow and 3) Consideration for the character of bordering properties, for example, not routing high traffic levels through narrow residential streets, where pedestrians and residents are likely to be endangered.

The dominant traffic features of this part of New Orleans are the Ponchartrain Expressway, with it's attendant frontage roads, and the traffic corridors of Magazine/Camp streets and Tchopitoulas. These are the areas of high concentration traffic flow, and have been for some time. The greatest impact from traffic occurs at the access points to the Expressway, where these corridors ideally would intersect. Effective intersection providing smooth traffic flow between surface streets and the on/off ramps is going to be very tricky, and has the highest potential for providing the unwanted side effects of traffic cutting through side residential streets as uncontrolled "short cuts" to ramps, rather than using the assigned corridors.

Examples of this type of renegade flow have been common in this district before, as anyone attempting to use the Camp St. on ramp (now torn down) will attest to. The State's chief bridge engineer (Steve Strength) told me these problems were simply not envisioned when the bridge, and its ramps were designed 15 years ago. The interface of surface streets to the bridge between the river and St. Charles Ave. will require some careful thought and a broad overview, along with some sacrifices of residents, if a balance is to be reached, and traffic patterns that make sense are implemented.

Magazine St. is the main residential and business traffic corridor through this area. To gain access to the up-ramp at Camp St., Magazine St. was split from a two way street into two parallel one way streets serving access to downtown and the bridge.

Downtown bound traffic on Magazine St. used to have the choice of 1) heading river bound on the bridge, 2) heading lake bound on the frontage road leading to the ramp at Barone St, or 3) heading downtown on Camp St. This effective design for uptown traffic was sadly hindered by the lack of access to the river bound Expressway from downtown. The lack of access to a ramp caused large amounts of traffic cutting through side streets, with a huge impact on residents.

The State resolved the problem of no riverbound Expressway access from downtown by making a ramp off the lakebound frontage road at Camp St. Unfortunately, in doing so, it provided no access from the downtown bound traffic coming down Camp St. This creates a mirror-image of the previous traffic problem.

In order to reach the riverbound upramp, traffic heading downtown has two choices: 1) Take a right on the riverbound frontage road, go 2 blocks (past Magazine St, which presently is one way the wrong way) to Annunciation St (where there is already an off ramp with a very short (70 feet) merge area, make a "U" turn under the Expressway, head back two blocks (again passing Magazine St) and heading up the ramp at Camp St, or: 2) Cut through neighborhood residential blocks to head up Annunciation St, which becomes a narrow residential street in the block next to the frontage road, go through the already very dangerous intersection of the frontage road, off ramp from the Expressway and Annunciation St. (See variations on the attached maps Figs. 1, 2,3,4&5), make a turn onto the downtown frontage road, go two blocks (past Magazine St) to the up ramp at Camp St.

It seems as though the present surface street routing feeding the new Camp St upramp is about as convoluted and cumbersome as could be designed. It is a relic from the days when the up ramp to the riverbound Expressway was being fed from Camp St..

My suggestion to this problem:

**Extend the two way portion of Magazine St. to the lakebound frontage road, allowing direct access to the upramp. (Figures 3 & 5)**



The second major effect the Expressway will have on the Lower Garden district is the off ramp at Annunciation St. This ramp is already a traffic hazard with a substantial track record of accidents, and the frontage road has yet to be opened.

The problems involved in this complex intersection are: 1) A very, very short merge area for traffic coming down the off ramp into the frontage road at the exact spot where 2) frontage road traffic is maneuvering to make a left turn onto Annunciation St, and 3) preparing to make a **completely blind turn** around a popular neighborhood bar onto Annunciation St, in a spot only 25 feet from the intersection of Annunciation and Eroto St., where Blaine Kern Jr's Mardi Gras Productions has it's warehouse/office and is often blocking the road loading and unloading floats and props. Across the Street is General Brake's entrance, which often has trucks loading and unloading Police cars for maintenance, also partially blocking Annunciation St.

This is a design nightmare. There is simply no room for the complex traffic patterns of frontage road traffic, traffic exiting the Expressway, traffic making "U" turns to get to the riverbound Expressway, and traffic turning right onto Annunciation in a blind turn to maneuver. This intersection is so poorly designed it invites negligence suits. When cross it at a meeting with local business owners, both Elmer Darwin of City Traffic and Steve Strength of State Traffic were nearly hit by vehicles. Allowing traffic to proceed around a blind corner without stopping is a recipe for a pedestrian death.

My suggestion for this problem:

**Do not allow traffic exiting the Expressway to turn right. Install speed bumps to keep traffic from changing lanes on the riverbound frontage road for 100ft prior to the Annunciation St intersection. Have a stop sign/blinking stop light instead of a red/green light for frontage road traffic, especially for traffic turning right around the blind corner onto Annunciation St. (fig #6)**

The traffic considerations for surface streets not directly interfacing the Expressway are related at arm's length to the corridor/Expressway problems. The largest problem is the use of narrow surface streets as "renegade corridors" Designing the traffic patterns to protect the safety of residents is of utmost importance. One of the most confusing and potentially dangerous surface roads is the 1300 and 1200 blocks of Annunciation St.

Annunciation St from Race St. to Thalia is a divided roadway, with no painted lane markers, which is sometimes used as a 4 lane road, and sometimes used as a 2 lane road. It is fed by traffic cutting over from Camp and Tchopitulous on Race St, and by Martin Luther King/ Melpomene feeding down from central city and St. Charles Ave.

Traffic down Annunciation is primarily either 1) flow through commuters heading to/from the Expressway or 2) locals heading to shop at Schweggmann. Additionally, there will be development on Joe Canazaro's 72 acre vacant lot which will greatly impact Annunciation St.

The problems of these traffic patterns are two fold. 1) There are no "cut in lanes" for traffic entering Schwegmann , forcing cars to make a "modified U turn" at the Thalia intersection to enter the parking lot, (fig #7) and 2) At Thalia, Annunciation goes from a divided road to a narrow road. (see Fig. 8)

This is known in fluid dynamics as a venturi. It creates a high pressure/high velocity zone at a point where pedestrian traffic and residents parallel parking in front of their houses is common. There is a constant struggle between commuters attempting to gain quickest access to the Expressway and residents in day to day behavior in front of their properties. It is most unpleasant to try to park in front of ones house with commuters roaring down on you. It is not unusual for cars to do 45-50 mph through this narrow block.

My suggestion for this problem:

**Install turn-in cuts for Schwegmann's parking lot. Paint traffic flow lane lines with road bumps on Annunciation St in the 1300 block. Install a stop sign for downtown bound traffic at the corner of Thalia and Annunciation.** (see fig. 9)

Annunciation St has an additional traffic problem at the corner of Annunciation and Melpomene. This intersection has the out-flow from Schwegmann entering 15 ft upstream from it. It also had traffic from the River City Staff lot entering unregulated from Canazaro's property, Which will inevitably be developed. This is a dangerous intersection.

My suggestion for this problem:

**Install stop signs on Annunciation St (both ways) at Melpomene.** (fig #9)

## **ZONING**

Historically, the extreme Lower Garden district has been a border between residential and commercial properties. It makes sense for Zoning practice to encourage gradual transition from light industry through neighborhood businesses into residential. Unfortunately, in this part of the city, history has not presented such a sensible scenario.

This is an area where property usage normally kept apart are literally next door to each other. The residential character of certain blocks has gradually decreased. The block I reside in (1200 Annunciation, bounded by Constance, Thalia and Eroto) has had fully 50% of it's residential buildings destroyed, primarily by fires set by indigents in the 7 years I have resided here.

There are blocks in this area which are destined to be sustained as residencial.  
There are blocks that have evolved into industry. There are blocks of mixed use.

The area between Melpomene and the frontage road is an example of an area which was once strictly residential, and has evolved away from it. As the warehouse district and the Convention Center demanded support businesses, houses were torn down to make room

for commercial uses. As traffic pressure increases, and the desirability to reside in these blocks decreases, it makes sense to rezone some of the area B1A , starting with the fringe areas between Schwegmann and the frontage road, and perhaps encompassing the parts of Constance and Melpomene fronting Schwegmann and parts of Annunciation fronting Canazaro's property.

As for Canazaro's property, it makes sense to zone it for the heaviest usage's along the Tchopitulous corridor, with housing/neighborhood businesses along Annunciation.

My suggestion for this problem:

**Zone 1200 block of Annunciation through to Magazine (bounded by Thalia and the frontage road) B1A. Additionally zone the parts of Constance, Melpomene and Annunciation fronting Schwegmann and Canazaro's property B1A. Zone Canazaro's property to decrease in density of usage as it approaches Annunciation St. (see Fig. 10)**

Thank you for considering my suggestions. I believe they would lead to an optimal balance of needs for individuals and the city at large from a zoning point of view.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Keith Keller', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Keith Keller







## Special Public Hearing -- Kingsley House, February 24, 1997

On February 24, 1997, the City Planning Commission held an evening public hearing at Kingsley House, 914 Richard Street, to receive public comment on the Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan. Winston Brown, Chairman of the Commission, opened the hearing by welcoming the members of the community and reviewing the procedures governing public hearings. An overview of the Plan recommendations was then presented by City Planning Commission staff member Joy Robinson, and Jack Spanola gave a summary of the steps that will be taken once the public hearings are completed. The following comments were received from the audience:

- ◆ Barbara Spratling spoke first, stating that she had circulated a petition among her neighbors requesting B-1A Neighborhood Business zoning around the Schwegmann grocery store, and expressed her disappointment that it had been recommended only for the area downriver of Thalia Street. She stated that the people who live in that area would like to be able to partake in the economic benefits which development will bring, and the home occupation category in the residential zoning is too restrictive to be of use. Finally, she stated that unlike in the past, the staff had made an effort to reach out to the community to see what they wanted. Even though she hadn't gotten everything she wanted in the final draft, it was not because she hadn't been asked.
- ◆ Steve Ritonia, president of the Annunciation Square Alliance, stated that his group believes the Lower Garden District is on the verge of undergoing socio-economic changes due to the development of the riverfront property. He does not think it fair that property owners abutting the MICO site should be treated as a buffer to limit the scale of future development on the riverside of Annunciation Street. They also feel that the block of Constance between Melpomene and Thalia Streets should be included in the B-1A zoning, in order to encourage neighborhood stabilization. The Alliance endorses the other changes contained in the Plan, and thanks the staff for listening to their views even when there were points of disagreement.
- ◆ Lydia Schmalz spoke next, thanking the staff for their efforts. She agreed with the residential zoning on Annunciation Street, but feels that the B-1A zoning on Magazine Street should extend to the Bridge. She supports the Mixed Use Planned Community District Overlay, and asked for further clarification regarding height limitations. She was informed that on Tchoupitoulas, which is classified as a Major Street, the C-1A would allow 100' buildings, but along Annunciation the limit would be 50' if the properties on the lakeside of the street stay residential. In the SI-A district there would be step-down height limits towards the River. Ms. Schmalz stated that she endorses the RM-2A zoning at Margaret Place, but feels that there still needs to be further downzoning and that building the residential component is the best way toward revitalization. She also stated that the proposed Transfer of Development Rights are not a good idea, though she likes many other aspects of the Plan.
- ◆ Howard Schmalz then presented his view that the proposed B-1A zoning on the

downriver side of Thalia Street is not a redevelopment tool, because it is the residential component that drives redevelopment. The residential component serves the commercial, not the reverse. The City has been losing 1,000 residents per month since 1960, and the neighborhood needs people to move into the Lower Garden District. We should not give up residential areas for commercial, and moreover there is not the demand for additional commercial use. Mr. Schmalz then stated that the B-1A along Magazine St. should continue to at least Erato, because at some point this area could be a nice neighborhood commercial corridor.

- ◆ The next speaker was Anna Guzman, who stated that she has lived at her corner grocery for 40 years, and she has seen many changes. She thanked the staff for their efforts, for their research of the neighborhood, and stated that the Plan was good for the entire neighborhood. She stated that everyone should accept changes that will help individual areas of the community.
- ◆ Louis Koerner, co-chairman of the Jackson Avenue Task Force, indicated that his group is very interested in the re-development of Jackson Avenue, and is pleased with recommendations contained in the Plan. He specifically endorsed the proposals to eliminate the density bonus in the RM-1 district, to retain the granite pavers and to widen the median on Jackson Avenue. He also stated that he favors B-1A zoning on Magazine Street to the Bridge, and thanked the staff and the Planning Commission for their proactive planning.
- ◆ Thomas Diehl spoke to indicate that he favors B-1A zoning on Constance Street between Thalia and Melpomene, to help revitalize the neighborhood.
- ◆ Tom Gault stated that he was one of the first residents from the PRC's Operation Comeback, and that he supports the positions expressed by the Schmalz's. The major change in the neighborhood has been the conversion of houses on Magazine St. to single family residential. The greatest impact has been the change to home ownership, because people have a stake in the neighborhood. He favors B-1A zoning all the way to the Bridge.
- ◆ Josie Brown spoke next, saying that she is a real estate agent, and that in her view, the greater the density of a residential property, the lower the price per square foot.
- ◆ Patrick McCarthy was the next speaker. He indicated that he is opposed to the reduction in zoning from C-1A to B-1A on Magazine Street because in his view downzoning reduces the value of property. He also stated that in his view, both the B-1A and C-1A zones are illegal because they do not clearly state the conditions that are required for conditional uses in the Zoning Ordinance. Finally, he objected to the notification regarding the public hearing, stating that signs were required to be posted on every street corner. Ms. Thibodeaux, the Assistant Director, clarified that this public hearing is only for the adoption of the neighborhood plan. Any map changes or text amendments to the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance resulting from the adoption of the Plan will be



conducted according to the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

- ◆ Larry Schmidt, the director of the Community Resource Partnership, began by thanking the CPC staff for its work. He acknowledged the efforts of the Community Resources Partnership, which brought in the Urban Land Institute, and articulated a common vision for the neighborhood that laid the foundation for this Plan. He indicated that the RM-2A zoning is appropriate for Annunciation Street and Constance Street, and that they support the proposed Mixed Use Planned Community District. They also support residential zoning for Margaret Place, and accept the RM-2A zoning for the Coliseum Square neighborhood, though in their view it does not go as far as they might have liked.
- ◆ Thomas Magne stated that he is in favor of RM-2A zoning around Schwegmann's, and that if the Schwegmann's closes, its zoning should revert to residential. As to the zoning along Annunciation Street, he feels that the height of new development should not be allowed to exceed 3-4 stories, the height of the Convention Center Phase III. Overall, he thinks the Plan is good for the neighborhood. He also added that he opposes TDR's because they would decrease density in one area and increase it in another area that is smaller.
- ◆ Jesse Le Blanc indicated that he strongly favors C-1A zoning between Melpomene and Erato, as recommended in the Plan. He noted that most of the buildings in this stretch are warehouse/commercial structures.
- ◆ Lance Hyatt, Chairman of the Coliseum Square's Zoning Committee said that he would like a statement of purpose in front of the RM-2A, B-1A and C-1A districts stating that the area is trying to rehabilitate existing properties and restore the historic fabric. He sees this as a way of strengthening the role of the Historic District Landmarks Commission, because it would alert out-of-town architects as to what the neighborhood is trying to accomplish.



## Public Hearing -- City Council Chambers, February 25, 1997

On February 25, 1997, the City Planning Commission held a second public hearing to obtain public comment on the Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan. After an overview of the Plan recommendations by staff member Joy Robinson, the following comments were received:

- ◆ Katherine Costanza, representing the Port of New Orleans, stated that the Port supports the recommendations of the Plan.
- ◆ Keith Keller, who lives on Annunciation St. between the Schwegmann and the Pontchartrain Expressway, spoke next. He said he strongly supports the Plan, and noted that his neighborhood has had 5 residential arson fires in the last five years. He explained that the area is squeezed between the Expressway off-ramp and industrial uses, which generate heavy traffic and noise. The area has deteriorated over the years, and he supports the B-1A zoning recommendation because it is hard to attract residential investment. He also endorsed the traffic recommendations regarding the Pontchartrain Expressway off-ramp, because the traffic would be prevented from turning into the neighborhood. However, he noted that there are several agencies which appear to have jurisdiction over this issue. Finally, he stated that his neighborhood is the area that will be most severely affected by future development of the 51 acres of vacant land across Annunciation, and requested that the City consider the quality of life in his neighborhood when deciding what kind of development to allow. In response to a question by Ms. Myers, Mr. Keller stated that the area would be viable for neighborhood business, because there is the convention center/tourist development which is about to expand, and the area is well connected on all sides.
- ◆ Patrick McCarthy was the next speaker, who reiterated the comments he made at the Kingsley House public hearing the evening before. Ms. Ford indicated to him that the public notification requirements for the hearing had been met, because this was a zoning study, and no zoning map changes were being made at this time. In response to a query by Ms. Myers, Mr. McCarthy stated that if the City did not zone the area either B-1A or C-1A, he would prefer that it revert to its previous C-1 zoning. After that, the City could come up with new zoning districts that would comply with state enabling legislation.
- ◆ Barbara Spratling spoke next on behalf of the Annunciation Square Alliance. She noted that in 1993, the City considered re-zoning the area, but her neighborhood was not notified. She then stated that the block of Constance St. between Melpomene and Thalia should be included in the B-1A zone because the area is already surrounded by C-1A zoning on Magazine and the C-1 zone at the Schwegmann where trucks run their motors three hours a day. She commended the Plan for being comprehensive, but indicated that she continued to disagree with the proposed RM-2A zoning designation for this block. She noted that the residential zoning is too restrictive to allow residents to run businesses out of their homes. She noted that the HDLC has authority over signage restrictions in that area, a factor which would limit the commercial impact on residential uses if the B-

1A zoning were approved. Ms. Godchaux then noted that there is a paucity of services in the Warehouse district because it does not have the critical mass to warrant them on its own, and asked whether these would be the businesses Ms. Spratling had in mind. Ms. Spratling answered in the affirmative, stating that her area is ideal for small business development.

- ◆ Thomas Magne indicated that he was opposed to B-1A zoning around the Schwegmann because in his view it is not conducive to restoration of residential use. He also noted the adverse effect commercialization would have on traffic flow.
- ◆ Larry Schmidt, director of the Community Resources Partnership, spoke next. He thanked the City Planning Commission staff for its work, and for the unique partnership which it has entered into with the community. He noted that there are a tremendous number of resources which are now focussed on the Lower Garden District, which include the Community Resources Partnership and the report it commissioned from the Urban Land Institute, Kingsley House, New Orleans 2000 Partnership, New St. Thomas, Coliseum Square Association, and Operation Comeback. He stated that the Plan represents a new approach to zoning for historic neighborhoods, and they are excited to be a part of it.
- ◆ Joanne Hilton spoke on behalf of the St. Charles Guest House, stating that she is opposed to the recommended B-1A zoning on Prytania Street. She indicated that she has a considerable financial investment on the street, and feels that the B-1A would be detrimental to the marketability of her property. She noted that the Norwegian Seamans property could lose its funding in the future, and they face the rear of a large apartment building. She feels that her investment would be compromised by B-1A, and stated that at least the riverside of the street should be included in the C-1A zoning. She asked what the CU designation was at the corner of Josephine and Prytania was, and the staff explained that it was a prior Conditional Use approval. She contended that it was not fair to grant this approval to her competition.
- ◆ Nathan Watson was the final speaker. He indicated that he represents the New Orleans 2000 Partnership, the owners of the former MICO site. He thanked the staff and the Commission for its time and attention, and stated that he supports the planning effort. His concern has to do with the SI-A district, which is intended for adaptive reuse of historic structures, but there are very few structures in that area other than Glazer Steel. The district would have a 7 story height limit, but this would be too low for the river-focussed hospitality industry they envision. He also noted that the FAR is too restrictive, and suggested CBD-2 zoning for the former MICO site. They support the Mixed Use Planned Community District, but stated that they would be willing to commit their use of the property for a period of 20 years in phased development. Along Annunciation Street they plan development which would not exceed 2 or a maximum of 3 stories. He also objected to the TDR's on the grounds that they would be the only market for the TDR points, and they could not afford the economic disincentive.

## **City Planning Commission Meeting -- February 25, 1997**

At the Planning Commission meeting following the public hearing, the staff distributed to the Commissioners copies of the letters and written comments which had been submitted at the public hearings. In response to a query by the Chairman, Mr. Spanola stated that the comments which had been made at the public hearings had already been communicated to the staff, and that the staff had taken these comments into consideration in making its recommendations. He also noted that although there has been a good response to the overall plan, there continues to be disagreement over certain issues, such as whether specific blocks should be zoned residential or commercial.

Ms. Myers then asked whether there should be any P-Park zoning in the Lower Garden District, specifically along the riverfront and in areas where there are already parks. Ms. Robinson indicated that the proposed SI-A district would allow waterfront-oriented uses as conditional uses. These would include pedestrian and tourist-oriented uses such as theaters, restaurants, retail stores, and hotels, as well as more passive recreational uses such as parks and open spaces. The P-Park district is intended to accommodate only passive recreational uses, and has been applied to areas such as City Park and Audubon Park. Smaller neighborhood parks are usually included in the zoning of the surrounding area, a pattern which has not been problematic. In the Lower Garden District Plan, the neighborhood parks are recommended for RM-2A zoning, like the adjoining areas. Ms. Myers then asked for further detail regarding the proposed Mixed-Use overlay district, and Ms. Robinson explained that this is a district which is superimposed on the underlying zoning, and its purpose would be to allow for zoning approval of large areas at one time. This would avoid the disadvantages of piecemeal development which can occur when development proposals are submitted individually over time. A Concept Plan would be reviewed by the City Planning Commission and would be subject to final approval by the City Council. Specific Development Plans would then be submitted when individual areas within the overlay district are ready for development. The overlay district would give the neighborhood the opportunity to review and comment on the entire plan for the area, before development begins.

In response to a request for clarification by Ms. Godchaux, the staff explained that the individual Development Plans are approved by the Executive Director upon a determination that they are in compliance with the standards and limitations set forth in the Concept Plan. If a discrepancy is found, the owner may either amend the Development Plan or request a formal amendment of the Concept Plan.

The Chairman then reported that there had been a fairly good representation of the community at the Kingsley House public hearing. He noted that the speakers had complimented the staff's efforts and had commended the pro-active approach of the Plan. Although there were specific issues of disagreement within the community, the overall response was that the Plan was a good one. He asked the staff to comment regarding the zoning of Magazine Street and the area around Schwegmann. The staff then explained that as to Magazine Street, the zoning should vary to reflect the underlying land uses, and that from Melpomene to Erato Streets, the businesses tend to be wholesale/supply businesses that are less oriented to the immediately adjoining neighborhoods. Also, the structures along this stretch are designed more to accommodate

vehicles than pedestrians. These factors make C-1A zoning appropriate for these blocks, as an area which can develop in conjunction with the CBD and Warehouse District business demand.

B-1A zoning is recommended for the area downriver of the Schwegmann grocery store because this area has suffered from the most disinvestment, and its proximity to industrial uses makes it difficult to attract residential investment. The staff recognizes that residents along the block of Constance facing the Schwegmann have requested B-1A zoning, and that the home occupation category is limited in its usefulness. Although the question as to where to draw the line was a difficult one, Thalia Street was chosen because it is the area downriver of Thalia which has experienced the most blight.

Whereupon, Mr. Robinson moved for adoption of the Plan, which motion was seconded by Ms. Godchaux:

**Motion:**

Be it moved that the Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan is hereby **adopted** by the City Planning Commission.

Be it further moved that the Executive Director is hereby authorized to notify the City Council of said action.

YEAS: Booth, Brown, Godchaux, Mitchell, Myers, Robinson, Saputo, Schwartzman.

NAYS: None.

ABSTENTIONS: None.

RECUSALS: None.

ABSENT: None.

## Minutes of Public Meeting -- Dock Board Headquarters, Oct. 9, 1996

On October 9, 1996, the City Planning Commission staff held a public meeting at the new Dock Board headquarters, located on the Mississippi River underneath the Crescent City Connection. The meeting was the first of two scheduled public meetings which were scheduled in order to obtain comments on the September 22, 1996 draft of the Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan. There were between 80-100 persons from the neighborhood in attendance.

After short introductory comments by Kristina Ford and Jack Spanola regarding the strategic planning process, there was a brief overview by Joy Robinson of the recommendations contained in the Plan. The following comments were then received from the audience:

- ◆ Nathan Watson, representing New Orleans 2000 Partnership, stated that they are in the process of regaining ownership of the 52-acre site of the River City development. He indicated that they would like to preserve public access at that site, and that they favor a progressive approach to zoning which would allow for a Planned Unit Development (PUD). This process would allow for a review of the whole site at one time, to include not only design issues such as density, setback and height, but also proposed uses. Future owners would then also be bound by the requirements of the PUD.
- ◆ Claire Conlan spoke next, stating that she is concerned about the scale of future development in the proposed C-1A and SI-A districts along the waterfront. She stated that she is opposed to buildings that are 7-12 stories tall, because they would cast a shadow over Magazine Street.
- ◆ David Ranglack stated that he too is concerned about building heights, particularly along Annunciation Street. He mentioned traffic problems along Annunciation, and indicated his opposition to the proposed B-1A zoning around Schwegmann. He also stated that the proposed 1-way street direction on Euterpe St. would require the Dixie Graphic trucks to drive into the neighborhood in order to reach the interstate.
- ◆ Larry Schmidt, Executive Director of the Community Resources Partnership, spoke next. He indicated that his organization has three main areas of concern. First, his members feel that the proposed 850 sq. ft. interior floor area per unit for the density regulations is insufficient. They would prefer 1,000 sq. ft. per unit. Second, they oppose the proposed B-1A zoning around Schwegmann, because commercial zoning is not in keeping with the historic, residential character of the neighborhood. Third, they would like to see a PUD process applied to large, vacant areas in the Lower Tchoupitoulas.
- ◆ Lydia Schmalz indicated that she too is concerned about the incursion of B-1A zoning into the residential neighborhood around Schwegmann, but is in favor of the proposed B-1A zoning on Magazine and Prytania Streets. As to the latter, she stated that the B-1A should extend in both cases to the Pontchartrain Expressway. She noted that she has been working with State officials to re-landscape the area around Margaret Place, and in her view C-1A zoning would allow development that would be incompatible with the

residential uses. She is in favor of the change from RM-3 to RM-2A on Prytania Street, but opposes the proposed B-1A zoning for the lot at the corner of Constance and Euterpe Streets.

- ◆ Howard Schmalz then spoke, re-emphasizing his opposition to the commercial zoning for the corner lot at Constance and Euterpe, as well as the proposed B-1A zoning around Schwegmann. He also stated that the squares bounded by Race, St. Thomas, Orange and Tchoupitoulas Streets should be zoned residential, rather than general commercial. He also favors B-1A zoning on Magazine all the way to the Pontchartrain Expressway.
- ◆ Irving Goldstein stated his concern regarding blighted structures in the neighborhood, and queried why the City cannot do more to resolve this problem. He would like to see the buildings re-furbished, rather than torn down. He is also concerned about the lack of safety in the neighborhood, and its negative effects on investment.
- ◆ Lance Hyatt stated that he has been in contact with the San Francisco Planning Department, and has obtained their insights on zoning for historic areas. He offered to give the staff a copy of their proposed regulations. He also stated that he favors 1,000 instead of 850 sq. ft. as a minimum for the proposed density regulations, noting that there are many families who are converting duplexes and fourplexes into single family dwellings.
- ◆ Charles Tonetti, from the Historic District Landmarks Commission, spoke briefly, stating that in terms of design guidelines, much of the area is part of a local historic district and therefore new construction, as well as structural alterations and additions, are reviewed by the HDLC.
- ◆ Susan Gandolpho, who was the last speaker, stated that her main concern is that nothing will happen in the future. She said that she wants very much for change to happen, so that the quality of life improves in the neighborhood.



## Minutes of Public Meeting -- City Council Chambers, Oct. 24, 1996

On October 24, 1996, the City Planning Commission staff held a second public meeting to obtain comments on the Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan. The meeting took place at the City Council Chambers, and was attended by approximately 30 persons. Elrhei Thibodeaux began the meeting with introductory comments, and Joy Robinson then gave an overview of the recommendations contained in the Plan. The following comments were received from the audience:

- ◆ Steven Ritonia, president of the Annunciation Square Alliance, began by commending the comprehensive nature of the Strategic Renaissance Plan, and the opportunity it has afforded for all members of the community to partake in the planning process. His organization endorses TDR's as a revitalization tool, and supports the transportation and capital improvement recommendations, particularly the re-opening of Thalia and St. Thomas Streets and the street-direction changes. The Alliance also supports the proposed B-1A re-zoning for the area surrounding the Schwegmann supermarket, and suggests that the square on which the store itself is located also be zoned B-1A to prevent future out-of-scale development. It also supports the proposed C-1A zoning across Annunciation, and the re-zoning of Magazine St. from C-1A to B-1A, with the exception of Race to Melpomene Streets. Members are concerned, however, about the suggestion for a Planned Unit Development in the area on the riverside of Annunciation, because they see this as a request for a "blank permit" which could circumvent restrictions on scale and use. Finally, Mr. Ritonia suggested that Squares Nos. 185, 186 and 188 (at the end of Prytania St.) be zoned B-1A.
- ◆ Brian Bockman, executive director of the Jackson Avenue Task Force, spoke next. He indicated that his organization is very excited about the Plan, especially the residential zoning recommendations for Jackson Avenue. He also endorsed the recommendations regarding the widening of the median and the restoration of the cobblestones. He also expressed enthusiasm for the TDR proposal, and the New Orleans General Hospital re-zoning.
- ◆ The next speaker was John Lewis, who indicated that the vacant land facing the Schwegmann market should not be developed in a way that would be out of scale with the adjoining neighborhoods. He stated that surveyors have been active in the neighborhood, and that they have been provided with no information regarding development plans. He stated that they do not want 8-10 story buildings across the street. Tall buildings and inadequate landscaping would transform his neighborhood in a way that would undermine the neighborhood's efforts to come back.
- ◆ Marie Lewis echoed Mr. Lewis' comments, and added that she is in favor of B-1A around the Schwegmann market, and C-1A on the riverside of Annunciation Street. She also indicated that she has heard there are plans for a very large hotel in that area, but no one has provided them with any specific information. She cited St. Vincents as an example of a hotel that works well with the surrounding environment.

- ◆ Anna Guzman spoke next, stating that the Andrew Jackson School is interested in a street light at the corner of Euterpe and Magazine. She also expressed concern that there not be allowed two-way bus traffic on Magazine Street.
- ◆ John Wells spoke in favor of B-1A zoning around Schwegmann supermarket, and also stated that he is concerned about the scale of future development on the supermarket site, if it were to close in the future. He also requested that the staff consider extending the proposed B-1A zoning to the end of Sophie Wright Place.
- ◆ Minnie McLauren spoke to indicate her support for B-1A zoning around Schwegmann's.
- ◆ The next speaker was Thomas Magne, who stated that he opposes the proposed B-1A zoning around Schwegmann, and favors residential zoning. He also opposes the proposed C-1A zoning across Annunciation St., because he is opposed to any large-scale development in excess of 4-5 stories. He opposes TDR's because he sees this as decreasing density in the residential areas, but at the cost of increased density in the C-1A, which would mean more traffic and commercialization.
- ◆ Michael Moreau, executive director of Kingsley House, observed that the recommendations contained in the Strategic Plan appeared to be consistent with the two prior master plans prepared by the neighborhood. He was also appreciative of the staff's support for the New St. Thomas redevelopment efforts. He favors two-way traffic on Magazine St., so as to reduce accidents and improve access to Kingsley House. He expressed concern regarding congestion and queuing problems at the intersection of Felicity and the Tchoupitoulas Corridor, and indicated that the crossover should be moved further downriver. Also, S. Peters St. would be a better choice than Religious St. for the Tchoupitoulas Corridor couplet.
- ◆ Frank Cole spoke next, stating that he would like the section of the Plan regarding cobblestone streets to include Chestnut St. from Josephine to Felicity Street. He also asked how the City can guarantee compliance with the demolition guidelines, and whether there is a system of fines.
- ◆ Charles Tonetti stated that he would favor B-1A or RM-2A for the stretch of Magazine between Orange and Melpomene, to encourage residential uses. In addition, he would like to see the structure at the corner of Terpsichore and Constance Streets zoned RM-2A. He would also like to have Magazine St. be made two-way.
- ◆ Blaine Kern, Jr. indicated that he has seen a resurgence of business investment in the Annunciation St. area, and that in his view any business development is good if it is consistent with the historic character of the area. He also indicated that traffic can be helpful in keeping crime down. Finally, in his view, the area is perfect for tourism-oriented investment and small businesses operating out of the home and he is therefore in favor of B-1A.

- ◆ Mitchell Cumbow stated that the parking underneath the Pontchartrain Expressway has become chaotic and that there needs to be striping and meters. He also supports the recommended amendments to the zoning regulations on St. Charles Avenue which will encourage pedestrian activity and establish height limitations.



## **Meeting with Magazine Street Merchants Association**

On January 8, 1996, members of the CPC staff met with representatives of the Magazine Street Business Association in order to discuss the Lower Garden District Strategic Renaissance Plan draft report recommendations and to obtain feedback on zoning as well as capital improvement issues. The meeting took place at Antebellum Antiques, 2108 Magazine Street.

After a summary of the Strategic Renaissance Planning process, and a review of the differences between the C-1A General Commercial and B-1A Neighborhood Business zoning districts, there were a number of questions regarding the effects of non-conforming status, square footage limitations, and retail alcohol beverage sales. As to the latter, the representatives indicated that better enforcement was urgently needed to control, or preferably eliminate, package liquor sales in small retail establishments. There was also a great deal of concern expressed regarding group homes and rooming houses, which it was felt, regularly exceed the permitted occupancy limits. Members also indicated their opposition to use of the former New Orleans General Hospital for a homeless shelter or related facility.

A number of comments were received regarding needed capital improvements:

- the Camp/Sophie Wright Place/Felicity intersection should be improved to prevent illegal right and left turns.
- drainage should be improved to prevent flooding.
- Magazine Street should be taken off the truck route, so that trucks do not use it in connection with the Tchoupitoulas Corridor.
- Existing busses should be replaced with smaller busses.
- A left turn from Jackson onto Magazine St. should be allowed.
- Existing street lights should be replace with vintage/period lights.

- Signage should be allowed which identifies the area as an historic district, in order to bolster the tourism.
- Telephones which attract loitering and drug trafficking should be disallowed.
- Magazine Street should be made two-way in order to slow traffic and improve access.
- There should be regular street sweeping.

## **Meeting with Annunciation Square Alliance**

On January 18, 1996, the CPC staff met with members of the Annunciation Square Alliance at the Jackson Elementary School. The staff provided a brief overview of the Strategic Planning process, as well as the recommended zoning changes in the December 18, 1995 draft report.

There were a number of questions regarding the three block area of Magazine St. from Race to Melpomene Street. Several members expressed opposition to a zoning classification which might limit use of their property in the future, particularly in terms of office or retail uses. The staff explained that RM-2A zoning was recommended because it provided the best fit with the historic, residential land use which is predominant on these three blocks. They also noted that there are various code requirements that must be complied with if a residential structure is converted to commercial use. There were several questions regarding the differences between C-1A and B-1A zoning, including permitted and conditional uses, site requirements, signage and parking. There was also considerable interest in the procedures involved in obtaining permits for various uses, including when a public hearing is required.

There was also a discussion of the zoning along Annunciation Street and around the Schwegmann. Residents expressed interest in B-1A zoning in this area, because of the proximity to industrial uses, the Schwegmann itself, and future development across Annunciation Street. It was noted that the area is not positioned in a way that can attract exclusively residential investment, as required under the RM-2 or the proposed RM-2A zoning. It was felt that B-1A is more likely to encourage investment, particularly by those who could only afford to purchase a property if they could run their business on the premises. The staff noted that B-1A zoning in this area would alter the height limitations in the recommended C-1A zone across Annunciation, raising it from 5 stories to 7.

As to capital improvements and traffic issues, the following suggestions were made:

- reduce the speed of the traffic along Annunciation St.
- do not allow right turns from the off-ramp on to Annunciation St.

- replace the lights on Tchoupitoulas which were removed.
- install crossing guards in front of Jackson Elementary School at Magazine St.
- the setback of the scatter-site housing development at Melpomene and Constance St. is only 8' deep. As a result, children play on the sidewalk after school, which is hazardous in view of the volume and speed of traffic on Melpomene. The City should install some barriers or signage to reduce the hazard.
- a number of streets should be made one-way: Thalia, Euterpe and Melpomene were mentioned in particular, though it was also noted that all of the cross streets between Erato and Race should be re-evaluated. Magazine should remain one-way.



## Meeting with Coliseum Square Association

On January 25, 1996, the City Planning Commission staff met with members of the Coliseum Square Association. After a brief presentation of proposed zoning changes, residents expressed the following concerns:

1. Some residents of Coliseum Square are opposed to increased density, the loss of parking restrictions for multi-family housing and the provision for large group homes. While parking restrictions might be waived for single and two family homes, they want them retained for multi-family dwellings. Less restrictive parking for multi-family structures should only be allowed for property owners who retain the historic character of the building as described in the bonus provision. On the theory that strict off-street parking requirements would prevent the subdivision of large homes into apartments, residents want the city to develop new off-street parking guidelines.

They also believe that the historic restoration bonus provision for increased density in multi-family housing should utilize a square footage of at least 1,000 - 1,200 square feet per unit rather than 800 square feet. In requiring the larger square footage, many residents believe you would encourage more single family home ownership.

Members of the Coliseum Square Association see the basic goals and objectives of the Lower Garden District as providing for a stable neighborhood that would attract more home ownership, combined with an appropriate level of multi-family housing and neighborhood businesses. Also, they want the neighborhood to balance the needs of a 19th century historic district with the goals and needs of the 21st century. To achieve this balance, residents want the City Planning Commission to give future consideration to either develop a new historic zoning designation reflecting the above trends or amend the

existing RD-2 Two-Family zoning district classification so that it can accommodate development in the Lower Garden District. They believe that a new zoning district is the only way to protect the neighborhood from intrusive land uses while encouraging family oriented developments.

2. While enthusiastic about the proposed rezoning of the existing LI-Light Industrial Districts along Tchoupitoulas Street to C-1A General Commercial, they would also like to rezone the LI District abutting the Mississippi River Bridge. Specifically, they want the commercial sections on Prytania and Magazine Streets be rezoned to B-1A. However, they want the sections of Magazine Street from Melpomene Street to the bridge and Prytania Street adjacent to Margaret's Place rezoned to B-1A.

The Coliseum Square Association was also enthusiastic about the redevelopment of the riverfront along Tchoupitoulas Street. They agreed with the staff that attracting a mixture of residential and new commerce to the Lower Tchoupitoulas Corridor is important to the revitalization of the area. However, they emphasized that new development should be compatible in size, scale, and intensity with the remainder of the Lower Garden District.

3. Residents also do not want truck traffic on Melpomene Street. They would like for the city to make Melpomene two lanes and create a neutral-ground in the middle of the street. With regards to Magazine Street they were divided as to whether it should be one or two way. But, they were all in agreement that the City should reroute the busses through another area.
4. Regarding the neighborhood's capital project needs, most residents want underground utilities, better lighting, improved drainage, and the repaving of their streets.

## Meeting with Jackson Avenue Task Force

On January 31, 1996, the CPC staff met with members of the Jackson Avenue Foundation/Task Force at the Ramada Plaza Hotel, 2203 St. Charles Avenue. The staff provided a brief overview of the Strategic Planning process, as well as the recommended zoning changes in the December 18, 1995 draft report, with particular focus on Jackson and Magazine Avenues.

There were then a number of questions regarding the existing RM-1 designation and the proposed RM-2A. Following this discussion, a general consensus emerged that for the length of Jackson Avenue between Magazine St. and St. Charles Ave., the RM-1 would be preferable to RM-2A. However, the members felt that RM-1 density bonus should be eliminated, because it is no longer needed for the purpose of deterring demolitions. As to the proposed RM-2A zoning on the riverside of Magazine Street, residents indicated their support of the historic orientation of the zoning classification, but stated that they were concerned that the district listed Large Group Homes as a permitted use. It was felt that this should be amended before the area is changed to RM-2A. Several of the residents indicated that they have had problems with a group home on Jackson Avenue which exceeds the permitted number of residents.

Several commented also on the importance of encouraging residential use along Jackson Avenue. The members were very supportive of the proposal to alter the boundaries of the existing MS district to encompass only the site of the former New Orleans General Hospital. There was also a great deal of concern expressed regarding the plans of UNITY for the Homeless to install a homeless shelter within the hospital facility. It was felt that this would attract loitering and crime, and would run counter to the efforts to revive St. Thomas. Members were particularly concerned to learn that a homeless shelter is classified as a permitted use under the existing MS zoning. They expressed a desire for a zoning classification which would allow other uses (such as offices or other non-medical institutional uses), since with the current medical services market, it may be unlikely that another hospital will be interested in the space.

As to capitol improvements and traffic issues, there is a great deal of interest in having Jackson Avenue returned to a two-lane street, with a widening of the median. They would also be very interested in having the street car on Jackson Avenue, if this becomes feasible. There are cobblestones underneath the existing paving of Jackson Avenue, and they would like to see the

paving removed, since the cobblestones slow the traffic and enhance the historic quality of the street. The group is already requesting the Streets Department to stripe the street to more clearly indicate lanes and parking.







**Section 4.10. RM-2A Multiple-Family Residential District.**

*4.10.1. Purpose of the District.*

The RM-2A Multiple-Family Residential District is intended to maintain a residential environment while permitting a variety of dwelling types. Population density is maintained in the medium range. The district is intended to bring zoning more in harmony with existing residential development in certain sections of the City, to encourage the retention and maintenance of existing residential structures, to encourage new construction which is compatible with existing development, and to provide residential units near employment areas.

*4.10.2. Uses Authorized in the District.*

Only those uses of land listed under permitted use, accessory use or conditional use provisions of this section are authorized within this zoning district. Supplementary use standards, which are set forth in Article 11, apply to any permitted, accessory or conditional use designated with an asterisk (\*) in the use lists appearing in this section. Bonuses for the retention of historic structures are set forth in Section 4.10.8 of this article.

*4.10.3. Permitted Uses.*

The following uses of land are authorized as permitted uses in the RM-2A Multiple-Family Residential District except that time share buildings and transient vacation rentals are prohibited:

1. Any permitted use authorized in RS-1 Single-Family Residential District.
2. Two-family dwellings.\* (See Section 11.33)
3. Town houses.\* (See Section 11.33)
4. Multiple-family dwellings.
5. Convents and monasteries.
6. Large group home.\* (See Section 11.21)

*4.10.4. Accessory Uses.*

The following uses of land are authorized as accessory uses within the RM-2A Multiple-Family Residential District:

1. Any accessory use authorized in RS-1 Single-Family Residential District.
2. An office containing an area of not more than two (2) percent of the gross floor area of the development located in a main building for administration of a multiple-family development.

3. A laundry room for use of occupants of a multiple-family dwelling development.
4. A newsstand within and operated primarily for convenience of occupants of a multiple-family dwelling containing fifty (50) or more dwelling units, such newsstand to have no exterior entrances or exits, in accord with specifications set forth in Section 15.6.3
5. Public telephones inside a main building.
6. Coin-operated vending machines such as for candy, tobacco, ice, soft drinks, and sundries, inside a building with ten (10) or more dwellings units or guest rooms.
7. A dining room within and operated primarily for convenience of occupants of a multiple-family dwelling containing fifty (50) or more dwelling units, such dining room to have no exterior entrances or exits in accordance with specifications set forth in Section 15.6.3, and contain no more than fifty (50) square feet of floor area for each dwelling unit in the building. Alcoholic beverages may be served with meals.

*4.10.5. Conditional Uses.*

The following uses of land are authorized as conditional uses within the RM-2A Multiple-Family Residential District upon approval of a conditional use permit under the standards and procedures contained in Section 16.6 of these zoning regulations:

1. Any conditional use authorized in the RM-1 Multiple-Family Residential District, subject to any special regulations made applicable to such use within such district, unless such special regulations have been expressly modified by provisions of this zoning district.
2. Structures located on a lot fronting on a major street (as identified on the Major Street Plan) attaining a height in excess of forty (40) feet but less than sixty (60) feet.
3. Child care facilities.\* (See Section 11.15)
4. Homes for the aged, nursing homes, convalescent homes, and orphan homes.\* (See Section 11.23)

*4.10.6. Permitted Signs.*

Subject to the general sign regulations of Article 12, any accessory sign authorized in the RM-1 Multiple-Family Residential District is permitted in the RM-2A Multiple-Family Residential District.

*4.10.7. Height, Area, and Bulk Requirements.*

Minimum requirements for lot areas, yards, and maximum height and Floor Area Ratio for the RM-2A Multiple-Family Residential District are contained in Table 4.J. These standards apply to all permitted and accessory uses, unless a variance is granted by the Board of Zoning Adjustments under Section 14.6, and



to all conditional uses unless modified by the City Council in conjunction with approval of a conditional use permit under Section 16.6.

**Table 4.J**  
**Area Regulations for the RM-2A Multiple-Family Residential District**

REQUIREMENTS	STANDARDS						
	TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT						
	One-Family <sup>1</sup>	Two-Family <sup>1,2</sup>	Three-Family	Four-Family <sup>1</sup>	Five+ Family <sup>1</sup>	Town House <sup>2</sup>	Nonresidential
Minimum lot area per dwelling unit or nonresidential site area	3,000 sq. ft.	1,700 sq. ft.	1,400 sq. ft.	1,100 sq. ft.	1,000 sq. ft.	2,000 sq. ft.	20,000 sq. ft.
Minimum lot width	30 ft.	30 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.	18 ft.	100 ft.
Minimum lot depth	75 ft.	75 ft.	90 ft.	90 ft.	90 ft.	90 ft.	100 ft.
Maximum height <sup>3</sup>	40 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.	40 ft.
Maximum Floor Area Ratio	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50
Minimum Open Space Ratio	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30
Minimum depth of front yard	See Note <sup>4</sup>	See Note <sup>4</sup>	See Note <sup>4</sup>	See Note <sup>4</sup>	See Note <sup>4</sup>	See Note <sup>4</sup>	See Note <sup>4</sup>
Minimum aggregate width of side yards (Percent of actual lot width)	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	<sup>2</sup>	20%
Minimum width of each side yard	3 ft.	3 ft.	3 ft.	3 ft.	5 ft.	3 ft.	10 ft.
Maximum required aggregate width of side yards	12 ft.	12 ft.	12 ft.	12 ft.	15 ft.	12 ft.	50 ft.
Minimum depth of rear yard	15 ft.	15 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.

Table 4.J Notes:

- <sup>1</sup> See special regulation for rated historic structures in Section 15.2, low-density districts for the purpose of parking requirements.
- <sup>2</sup> See Article 11 for supplemental regulations governing two-family dwellings and town houses.
- <sup>3</sup> A maximum height of sixty (60) feet may be attained for structures on a lot fronting on a major street, as identified on the Major Street Plan subject to the conditional use provisions of Article 15.
- <sup>4</sup> Where a lot or site (meaning a lot or lots considered as a unit for development purposes) is situated between two (2) developed sites, the maximum front yard permitted shall not exceed the average of the front yards provided by the main buildings on the adjacent developed sites. Where a lot adjoins only one (1) or no developed site, the maximum front yard permitted shall not be more than the average of the nearest front yard lines established by the main building on said lots. For a corner lot, a minimum yard of ten (10) feet shall be

Table 4.J Notes (Continued):

provided on the side street. No more than forty (40) percent of a front yard shall be paved with a hard surface. Said hard surface shall be used for pedestrian access to the building or vehicular access to a parking area. The remaining sixty (60) percent of the front yard shall be maintained as either a lawn or an area containing ornamental landscaping. The supplemental regulations regarding yards and open space of Section 15.5.7 do not apply in the RM-2A Multiple-Family Residential District.

4.10.8. *Special Regulations.*

Bonus for Retention of Historic Structures. Structures shall be eligible for the following bonus provisions if rated worthy of preservation by the New Orleans Historic District Landmarks Commission (HDLC) and have been renovated according to the requirements of the HDLC. A Certificate of Appropriateness and a letter of recommendation shall be obtained from the HDLC prior to the issuance of permits from the Department of Safety and Permits for the application of the following:

When a structure has been designated (rated) worthy of preservation by the HDLC, renovation has been undertaken according to the Commission's requirements, and a Certificate of Appropriateness and a letter of recommendation has been obtained from the Commission, the following bonuses apply:

1. The maximum number of dwelling units allowed shall be one (1) unit per 800 feet of existing floor area, exclusive of floor area located in structures or parts of structures which are not rated, or one (1) dwelling per 800 square feet of lot area, whichever produces the greater number of units.
2. Units achieved under these provisions may be permitted in new structures or additions subject to HDLC approval relative to compatibility with the rated structure or rated portions thereof.
3. The following conditions are applicable to bonuses granted under this section:
  - a. The historic structure shall be retained and remain rated as worthy of preservation.
  - b. No alteration of the structure shall be made after rating and bonuses are granted.
  - c. The structure is maintained in accordance with City standards of construction and safety as provided by the Building Code for the City of New Orleans.
  - d. No waivers, variances or exceptions may be granted pursuant to Article 14.

**Section 5.5. B-1A Neighborhood Business District.**

*5.5.1. Purpose of the District.*

The purpose of this district is to provide primarily for convenient retail uses, selected personal uses, and professional offices to serve the needs of surrounding residential areas. The district is intended for application in the older developed areas where there exists a grouping of commercial uses within the district and where residential areas are in close proximity. The district regulations are designed to encourage compatibility with adjacent or nearby land uses and the general character of the area. In addition to being appropriate for older areas that justifiably possess characteristics of a neighborhood business district, the B-1A District is capable of replacing some of the existing B-1 and B-2 Neighborhood Business Districts in the inner City.

*5.5.2. Uses Authorized in the District.*

Only those uses of land listed under permitted use, accessory use or conditional use provisions of this section are authorized within this zoning district. Supplementary use standards, which are set forth in Article 11, apply to any permitted, accessory or conditional use designated with an asterisk (\*) in the use lists appearing in this section. Special regulations relating to off-street parking and loading, and to corner lots, are set forth in Section 5.5.8 of this article.

*5.5.3. Permitted Uses.*

The following uses of land are authorized as permitted uses within the B-1A Neighborhood Business District subject to the performance standards of Section 7.5, provided that no permitted use shall exceed 5,000 square feet of floor area, and further provided that timeshare buildings and transient vacation rentals are specifically prohibited:

1. Any use permitted in the RM-2 Multiple-Family Residential District except rooming and boarding-houses.
2. Bakeries, provided all bakery products produced on the premises shall be sold at retail on the premises.
3. Custom dressmaking, millinery, tailoring or similar retail trades;
4. Dry cleaning shops.
5. Laundromats.
6. Shoe repair shops.
7. Shops for the repair of electrical, radio and television equipment.
8. Barbershops, beauty shops.

9. Plumbing shops.
10. Hardware stores.
11. Banks, loan companies, or other financial institutions, provided said facilities do not contain drive-up windows.
12. Bicycle and moped sales, service and rental in an enclosed building.
13. Bookstores.
14. Medical or dental offices, clinics and laboratories. Clinics shall be medical or dental for human patients only, shall have less than 2,500 square feet of floor area, and no more than three (3) practitioners. (These requirements are not subject to waiver by the Board of Zoning Adjustments.)
15. Messenger and telegraph service stations.
16. Florist shops.
17. Locksmith shops.
18. Musical instrument sales, service and rental.
19. Offices, general business and professional.
20. Photographers' studios.
21. Meeting halls.
22. Health or athletic club or studio.
23. Printing shops.
24. Dance studios.
25. Standard or cafeteria restaurants.
26. Pet shops.
27. Business machine, retail sales and service.
28. Catering and delicatessen business.
29. Hospital or clinic for small animals provided that such hospitals or clinics and any treatment rooms, cages, pens or kennels be maintained within a completely enclosed soundproofed building,

and that such hospital or clinic be operated in such a way as to produce no objectionable noise or odors outside its walls.

30. Antique stores.
31. General retail, service and repair establishments similar in character to those enumerated in this section, excepting automobile vehicular parts sales/non-service, which is a permitted conditional use, and pawnshops, but occupying not more than 5,000 square feet of floor area.
32. Existing funeral homes.
33. Child care facilities.\* (See Section 11.15)
34. Adult day care centers.\* (See Section 11.14)

*5.5.4. Accessory Uses.*

The following uses of land are authorized as accessory uses within the B-1A Neighborhood Business District:

1. Any accessory use allowed in the RM-2 Multiple-Family Residential District.
2. Storage in connection with a permitted use where storage is incidental to the approved occupancy of the building, provided all products and material used or stored are in a completely enclosed building or enclosed by a masonry wall, screening fence, or hedge, not less than six (6) feet in height. Storage of all materials and equipment shall not exceed the height of the wall. Storage of cars or trucks used in connection with the permitted trade or business is permitted within the walled or screened area, but not including storage of heavy equipment, such as road-building or excavating equipment and provided the aggregate amount of such storage space does not exceed thirty (30) percent of the gross floor area of the main structure.
3. Ice storage machines may be located on the exterior of small convenience stores which occupy not more than 2,500 square feet of floor area. They shall be placed against the building and shall not protrude into any public rights-of-way or into any required front or side yards. The ice storage machines shall be placed so that customers accessing these units shall not have to block the public right-of-way. The following additional conditions apply:
  - a. Such ice storage units shall not exceed seventy-eight (78) inches in height, forty (40) inches in depth and seventy-eight (78) inches in width.
  - b. The only signage to be permitted on these storage units shall be the word "ICE." The size of the sign shall not exceed one (1) foot by one (1) foot or one (1) foot square. The size of this sign shall not be subtracted from the size of the permitted sign for the main use.
  - c. The color of these units shall be unobtrusive. They may be steel gray, or neutral tones only.

5.5.5. *Conditional Uses.*

The following uses of land are authorized as conditional uses within the B-1A Neighborhood Business District upon approval of a conditional use permit under the standards and procedures contained in Section 16.6 of these zoning regulations, provided that no use shall exceed 10,000 square feet of floor area.

1. Any conditional use allowed in the RM-2 Multiple Family Residential District, subject to the height, area and bulk regulations of the B-1A District.
2. With the exception of clinics, any permitted use in the B-1A Neighborhood Business District (see Section 5.5.3) which exceeds 5,000 square feet of floor area, up to 10,000 square feet of floor area.
3. Rooming and boarding houses.
4. Cocktail lounges or bars provided there is no more than one (1) such use per block face.
5. Gasoline service stations provided there is no more than one (1) such use per block face.
6. Banks, loan companies or other financial institutions containing drive-up windows.
7. Nonaccessory parking lots.
8. Fast food or drive-in restaurants.
9. Public and governmental buildings including but not limited to police stations, fire stations, community health centers, neighborhood centers, libraries, branch postal stations and branch administrative offices.
10. Automobile service centers.\* (See Section 11.3)
11. Automobile/vehicular parts sale/non-service.
12. Fraternities, sororities, private clubs and lodges, excepting those the activity of which is a service customarily carried on as a business.\* (See Section 11.18)
13. Bed and breakfast family home.\* (See Section 11.6)
14. Bed and breakfast guest home.\* (See Section 11.7)
15. Bed and breakfast historic home.\* (See Section 11.8)
16. Bed and breakfast inn.\* (See Section 11.9)
17. Flea market.\* (See Section 11.17)

18. Clinics (medical or dental for human patients only) having between 2,500 and 5,000 square feet of floor area, or having four (4) practitioners.
19. Clinics that are licensed as substance abuse treatment centers or psychiatric counseling facilities, regardless of size or number of practitioners, subject to the overall 5,000 square feet of floor area and four (4) practitioner limitations.

5.5.6. *Permitted Signs.*

Subject to the general regulations of Article 12, the following illuminated or nonilluminated accessory signs shall be permitted in the B-1A Neighborhood Business District:

1. One (1) flat sign limited to twenty-five (25) square feet per business or .75 square feet per lineal foot of street frontage, whichever is the greater; or
2. One (1) double-faced projecting sign limited to sixteen (16) square feet per business and not more than fifteen (15) feet to the top of the sign above the ground level; or
3. One (1) canopy sign with sign area limited to three (3) square feet per business;
4. Directional signs;
5. Temporary signs;
6. One (1) flat double-faced general advertising sign on public transit waiting stations. HDLC approval required in Historic Districts;
7. In any commercial center where the commercial uses are linked as a unit, including but not limited to, sharing parking or loading areas, signs shall be unified at a single location in an architecturally integrated and compatible manner.

5.5.7. *Height, Area and Bulk Requirements.*

Minimum requirements for lot area, yards and open space, and maximum height and Floor Area Ratio in the B-1A Neighborhood Business District are contained in Table 5.E. These standards for nonresidential uses and for residential uses apply to all permitted and accessory uses, unless a variance is granted by the Board of Zoning Adjustments under Section 14.6, and to all conditional uses unless modified by the City Council in conjunction with approval of a conditional use permit under Section 16.6.

**Table 5.E  
Area Regulations for the B-1A Neighborhood Business District**

REQUIREMENTS	STANDARDS
Maximum height	45 ft
Minimum depth of front yard	none <sup>1</sup>
Maximum front yard	20 ft. <sup>2</sup>
Maximum front yard paving	40% <sup>3</sup>
Minimum side yard	none <sup>4</sup>
Minimum rear yard	none <sup>5</sup>
Maximum depth of front and side yards on corner lots	5 ft.
Maximum Floor Area Ratio	
- nonresidential	1.5
- residential or mixed use with at least 50% of floor area used for residential	2.0

**Table 5.E Notes:**

- <sup>1</sup> Minimum Front Yard Required. No minimum front yard is required except where a lot abuts a residential district (applies to an interior lot or corner lot) in which instance a front yard shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the residential district or in conformance with the adjacent residential structure, whichever is lesser.
- <sup>2</sup> Maximum Front Yard Permitted. Where a lot or site (meaning a lot or lots considered as a unit for development purposes) is situated between two (2) developed sites, the maximum front yard permitted shall not exceed the average of the front yards provided by the main buildings on the two (2) adjacent sites. Where a lot adjoins only one (1) developed site, the maximum front yard permitted shall not exceed the front yard established by the main building on that adjacent lot. In no instance shall a front yard exceed twenty (20) feet.
- <sup>3</sup> Maximum Front Yard Paving Permitted. Where a front yard is provided, no more than forty (40) percent of the front yard shall be paved with a hard surface. Said hard surface shall be used for pedestrian access to the building or vehicular access to a parking area. The remaining sixty (60) percent of the front yard shall be maintained as either a lawn area or an area containing ornamental landscaping.
- <sup>4</sup> Side Yard. A side yard is not required except on the interior lot abutting on a residential district in which instance there shall be a minimum side yard of five (5) feet. Where a side yard is provided, but not required, such side yard shall not be less than three (3) feet in width.
- <sup>5</sup> Rear Yard. A rear yard is not required except where a lot abuts on a residential district, in which case, there shall be a rear yard of not less than twenty (20) feet in depth. Where a rear yard is provided, but not required, such rear yard shall not be less than three (3) feet in depth.

**5.5.8. Special Regulations.**

- 1. Off-Street Parking Regulations
  - a. No minimum off-street parking is required for commercial uses under 5,000 square feet. Multiple-family uses require one (1) parking space for each dwelling unit.



- b. The maximum number of off-street parking spaces permitted for uses under 5,000 square feet shall not exceed the standards which are required for uses in the low and medium density commercial districts as described in Section 15.2.
- c. For uses greater than 5,000 square feet, parking spaces are required according to the standards of the low and medium density commercial districts as described in Section 15.2. Said standards may be modified under the conditional use process.
- d. Parking in the front yard is prohibited.
- e. All off-street parking shall be subject to the following conditions:
  - (1) *Minimum Area.* For the purpose of these regulations, an off-street parking space is a paved area not in a street or alley, permanently reserved for the temporary storage of one (1) vehicle and connected with a street or alley by a paved driveway which affords ingress and egress for an automobile without requiring another automobile to be moved; provided, however, that the paving requirements shall not apply to a single-family or two-family dwelling. The size of a small car off-street parking space must be a minimum of seven (7) feet six (6) inches in width and a minimum of sixteen (16) feet in length (120 square feet) exclusive of driveways; not more than forty (40) percent of the spaces in any parking facility may be designated and labeled as small car spaces. The size of a large car off-street parking space must be a minimum of eight (8) feet six (6) inches in width and a minimum of eighteen (18) feet in length (153 square feet) exclusive of driveways. The size of a handicapped off-street parking space must be a minimum of ten (10) feet in width and a minimum of eighteen (18) feet in length (180 square feet) exclusive of driveways.
  - (2) *Drainage and Maintenance.* Off-street parking facilities shall be drained to eliminate standing water and prevent damage to abutting property and/or public streets and alleys and surfaced with erosion-resistant material in accordance with applicable City specifications. Off-street parking areas shall be maintained in a clean, orderly and dust-free condition at the expense of the owner or lessee and not used for the sale, repair, or dismantling or servicing of any vehicles, equipment, materials or supplies.
  - (3) *Prohibition of Extended Storage.* All motor vehicles incapable of movement under their own power, other than in cases of emergency, shall not be stored in such off-street parking facilities for a continuous period of time in excess of forty-eight (48) hours.
  - (4) *Landscaping Maintenance.* All planting areas shall be maintained in perpetuity and may be inspected periodically by the Department of Safety and Permits and Park and Parkway Commission for compliance with regulations provided herein.
  - (5) *Separation from Walkways and Streets (Spaces).* Off-street parking spaces shall be separated from walkways, sidewalks, streets, or alleys by a wall, fence, or curbing or

other approved protective device, or by distance so that vehicles cannot protrude over publicly owned areas.

- (6) *Separation from Walkways and Streets (Lots).* Off-street parking areas shall be separated from vacant lots; public walkways, sidewalks, streets, or alleys by an opaque wall, fence, or a continuous opaque evergreen vegetated screen a minimum of four (4) feet in height.
- (7) *Entrances and Exits.* Location and design of entrances and exits shall be in accord with the requirements of applicable City traffic regulations and standards. Landscaping, curbing or approved barriers shall be provided along lot boundaries to control entrance and exit of vehicles or pedestrians.
- (8) *Interior Drives.* Interior drives shall be of adequate width to serve a particular design arrangement of parking spaces.
- (9) *Marking.* Parking spaces in lots of more than ten (10) spaces shall be marked by painted lines or curbs or other means to indicate individual spaces. Signs or markers shall be used as necessary to insure efficient traffic operation of the lot.
- (10) *Lighting.* Adequate lighting shall be provided if off-street parking spaces are to be used at night. The lighting shall be arranged to eliminate glare on residential property by location of light fixtures or uses of fixtures designed to eliminate direct view of luminaries in fixture from residential property.
- (11) *Residential Screening.* When surface off-street parking areas are located adjacent to any lot upon which there is a dwelling as a permitted use under these regulations, there shall be provided along the side lot line a continuous visual screen with a minimum height of six (6) feet. Such screen may consist of a compact evergreen hedge or foliage screening, or an opaque wall or fence.
- (12) *Residential District Screening.* When surface off-street parking areas are located adjacent to a residentially zoned district, there shall be provided along the district line a continuous evergreen hedge and a six (6) foot opaque wall or fence. Curb and wheel stops shall be located a minimum of five (5) feet from the property line.
- (13) *Commercial Screening.* When surface off-street parking areas are located adjacent to a commercial use, no fence is required. There shall be a landscaped border consisting of a continuous, opaque, evergreen hedge a minimum of four (4) feet in height.
- (14) *Sight Triangle.* At all points of ingress and egress, a sight-distance triangle shall be provided. The triangle shall be measured from the points where each side of the driveway intersect the inside of the sidewalk or property line whichever is the greatest distance from the street. At ten (10) feet from the points of intersection along each side of the driveway and the property line, a line shall be drawn to connect the ten (10) foot

distances to form a triangle. No parking, fencing, planting material larger than one (1) foot in height, or other obstructions to the view of the driver entering or exiting the premises shall be allowed.

- (15) *Entrances and Exits.* Entrances and exits shall be required to be of porous material when necessary to protect City-owned trees when deemed necessary by Park and Parkway Commission.
- (16) The Department of Safety and Permits shall adopt plans and outline specifications clearly indicating the acceptable design and minimum construction standards for surface off-street parking facilities. Such standards shall be revised from time to time to be in conformity with acceptable current practices and shall be available for public study and consideration.

2. *Off-Street Loading Regulations.*

- a. No minimum off-street loading is required for uses under 5,000 square feet.
- b. The maximum number of off-street loading spaces for uses under 5,000 square feet are two (2).
- c. One (1) off-street loading space is required for uses greater than 5,000 square feet. Said standards may be modified under the conditional use process.

3. *Special Regulations Applicable to Corner Lots.*

- a. On corner lots, the main building shall be constructed so that two (2) of its perimeter walls are located within five (5) feet of adjacent public rights-of-way.
- b. At least one (1) principal entrance to the building shall open directly to one (1) of the adjacent rights-of-way.



**Section 5.8. C-1A General Commercial District.**

*5.8.1. Purpose of the District.*

The purpose of this district is to provide for a wide variety of commercial, miscellaneous service activities and residential uses, generally serving a wide area and located particularly along certain existing major thoroughfares where a general mixture of commercial, service and residential activities now exist. The district is intended for application in older developed areas of the City. The district regulations are designed to encourage a proportionate mixture of commercial and residential activity, to encourage the retention of existing historic and architecturally significant structures, and to encourage compatibility with adjacent or nearby land uses and the general character of the area.

*5.8.2. Uses Authorized in the District.*

Only those uses of land listed under permitted use, accessory use or conditional use provisions of this section are authorized within this zoning district. Supplementary use standards, which are set forth in Article 11, apply to any permitted, accessory or conditional use designated with an asterisk (\*) in the use lists appearing in this section. Special regulations relating to off-street parking and loading, and to corner lots, are set forth in Section 5.8.8 of this article.

*5.8.3. Permitted Uses.*

The following uses are authorized as permitted uses in the C-1A General Commercial District subject to the performance standards of Section 7.5, provided that the floor area for any permitted use shall be limited to 10,000 square feet, and further provided that timeshare buildings and transient vacation rentals are specifically prohibited:

1. Any use permitted in RM-2 Multiple-Family Residential District, except for timeshare buildings and transient vacation rentals. All structures shall be subject to the height, area, and bulk regulations of the C-1A District. The lot area per dwelling unit specification shall be subject to the RM-4 Multiple-Family District regulations in Article 4, Table 4L.
2. Antique shops.
3. Art studios.
4. Automobile and boat sales and displays (new or used) and corresponding repair and service facilities in conjunction with new automobile and boat sales and display provided that all activity and storage is contained within a completely enclosed soundproof building, and that such use be operated in such a way as to produce no objectionable noise outside its walls;
5. Bakeries, provided that all products produced on the premises shall be sold at retail on the premises.

6. Banks, loan companies, or other financial institutions with or without drive-in windows but not drive-in banks or banks with drive-in windows on separate sites.
7. Bicycle and moped sales, service and retail in an enclosed building.
8. Bookstores.
9. Barbershops, beauty shops.
- 10: Business machines, retail sales and services.
11. Catering and delicatessen business.
12. Custom dressmaking, millinery, tailoring or similar retail sales.
13. Data processing center.
14. Dance studio.
15. Drugstore.
16. Dry cleaning.
17. Florist shop.
18. Funeral homes and mortuaries.
19. Hardware stores.
20. Health or athletic club or studio.
21. Hospitals.
22. Interior decorating; display and sales.
23. Jewelry shop.
24. Laundromat.
25. Lawnmower sales, service and rental.
26. Locksmith shop.
27. Lumber and building materials stores.

28. Medical or dental office, clinic and laboratories.
29. Messenger and telegraph service stations.
30. Musical instruments sales, service and rentals.
31. Office, general business and professional.
32. Pet shop.
33. Photographer's shop.
34. Plumbing shop.
35. Printing shop.
36. Meeting hall.
37. Radio and TV stations.
38. Shoe repair shops.
39. Standard or cafeteria restaurant.
40. Shops for the repair of electrical, radio and television equipment.
41. Tinsmithing shop.
42. Hospital or clinic for small animals provided that such hospital or clinic and any treatment rooms, cages, pens, or kennels be maintained within a completely enclosed soundproof building, and that such hospital or clinic be operated in such a way as to produce no objectionable noise or odor outside of its walls.
43. General retail, service and repair establishments similar in character to those enumerated in this section, except pawnshops.
44. Electric substation.\* (See Section 11.40)
45. Telephone exchanges.\* (See Section 11.45)
46. Child care facilities.\* (See Section 11.15)
47. Rehabilitative-recovery/care center provided that:

- a. There shall be a minimum distance between rehabilitative-recovery/care centers, large group homes and small group homes of a 2,500-foot radius and,
- b. There shall be a minimum distance between rehabilitative-recovery/care centers and any residential zoning district of 500 feet.

48. Adult day care centers.\* (See Section 11.14)

5.8.4. *Accessory Uses.*

The following uses of land are authorized as accessory uses with the C-1A General Commercial District:

1. Any accessory uses permitted in the RM-2 Multiple-Family Residential District.
2. Storage in connection with a permitted use.
3. Ice storage machines may be located on the exterior of small convenience stores which occupy not more than 2,500 square feet of floor area. They shall be placed against the building and shall not protrude into any public rights-of-way or into any required front or side yards. The ice storage machines shall be placed so that customers accessing these units shall not have to block the public right-of-way. The following additional conditions apply:
  - a. Such ice storage units shall not exceed seventy-eight (78) inches in height, forty (40) inches in depth and seventy-eight (78) inches in width.
  - b. The only signage to be permitted on these storage units shall be the word "ICE." The size of the sign shall not exceed one (1) foot by one (1) foot or one (1) foot square. The size of this sign shall not be subtracted from the size of the permitted sign for the main use.
  - c. The color of these units shall be unobtrusive. They may be steel gray, or neutral tones only.

5.8.5. *Conditional Uses.*

The following uses of land are authorized as conditional uses within the C-1A General Commercial District upon approval of a conditional use permit under the standards and procedures contained in Section 16.6 of these zoning regulations:

1. Any permitted use in the C-1A General Commercial District occupying more than 10,000 square feet of floor area.
2. Boarding and lodging houses.
3. Automatic ice distribution station or other drive-in automatic vending machine station.



4. Automobile and boat sales and displays (new and used) and corresponding repair and service facilities in conjunction with new automobile sales and display in the case where vehicles are stored or displayed in unenclosed areas or lots.
5. Car wash.
6. Chiropody, massage or similar personal service shops.
7. Cocktail lounges or bars.
8. Drive-in banks.
9. Fast food or drive-in restaurants.
10. Garage, parking and storage.
11. Gasoline service stations.
12. Hotels, motels, motor lodges and timeshare buildings and transient vacation rentals.
13. Kennels (commercial) for domestic animals provided that if such facilities adjoin any residential district, any structure or area used for the display, boarding, treatment or exercising of pets and other domestic animals shall be located at least fifty (50) feet from any property line abutting any residential district.
14. Miniature golf course, driving range, or pistol range when located within an enclosed structure. Such facility shall be operated in such a way as to produce no noise outside of its walls.
15. Nonaccessory parking lots.
16. Public and governmental buildings limited to police stations, fire stations, community health centers, neighborhood centers, libraries, branch postal stations, and branch administrative offices.
17. One (1) flat, double-faced general advertising sign, illuminated or nonilluminated, limited in area to thirty (30) square feet shall be permitted on public transit waiting stations, and other transit amenities (benches, kiosks, public information signs, etc.), provided that no such advertising sign shall be placed higher than nine (9) feet or to the roofline of the public transit waiting station, whichever is lower, and provided that no advertising signs on bus shelters shall be constructed in any historic district in the City of New Orleans without the prior approval of the appropriate Historic District Commission.
18. Automobile service centers.\* (See Section 11.3)
19. Automobile/vehicular parts sale/non-service.

20. Fraternities, sororities, private clubs and lodges, excepting those the activity of which is a service customarily carried on as a business.\* (See Section 11.18)
21. Business, vocational, and proprietary schools; schools for industrial training, trade or business.
22. Bed and breakfast family home.\* (See Section 11.6)
23. Bed and breakfast guest home.\* (See Section 11.7)
24. Bed and breakfast historic home.\* (See Section 11.8)
25. Bed and breakfast inn.\* (See Section 11.9)
26. Amusement places, limited to theaters or music halls.
27. Leased bingo hall facilities.\* (See Section 11.10)
28. Flea market.\* (See Section 11.17)

5.8.6. *Permitted Signs.*

Subject to the general sign regulations of Article 12, the following illuminated or nonilluminated signs shall be permitted in the C-1A General Commercial District.

1. Accessory flat signs, limited in area to four (4) square feet per lineal foot of street frontage, or twenty (20) percent of the area of the wall on which the business has its main entrance, whichever is the lesser. Illuminated signs inside the show windows and within five (5) feet of such windows shall be included in the computation of aggregate sign area and, in addition, shall be limited to ten (10) percent of the total glass area of the window in which they are placed. Neon tubing outlining a show window shall be included in aggregate sign area and shall be measured by multiplying the length of tubing by six (6) inches.
2. If there are no detached signs, accessory projecting signs, one (1) for each business on the premises with sign area limited to forty (40) square feet each.
3. If there are no projecting signs, accessory detached signs, stationary or rotating, limited in area to one-half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) a square foot for each foot of street frontage to a maximum of 100 square feet, and limited in height to thirty (30) feet.
4. Accessory canopy signs, two (2) for each business on the premises with sign area limited to three (3) square feet each.
5. Temporary, nonilluminated paper signs in the show windows limited to twenty (20) percent of the total glass area of the window in which they are placed.

6. Directional signs limited in area to ten (10) square feet each giving directions to motorists regarding the location of parking areas and access drives, shall be permitted as accessory signs and not included in any computation of sign area.

5.8.7. *Height, Area and Bulk Requirements.*

Minimum requirements for lot area, yards and open space, and maximum height and Floor Area Ratio in the C-1A General Commercial District are contained in Table 5.H. Standards for nonresidential uses and for residential uses apply to all permitted and accessory uses, unless a variance is granted by the Board of Zoning Adjustments under Section 14.6, and to all conditional uses unless modified by the City Council in conjunction with approval of a conditional use permit under Section 16.6.

**Table 5.H  
Area Regulations for the C-1A General Commercial District**

REQUIREMENTS	STANDARDS
Maximum height	See Note <sup>1</sup>
Minimum front yard	none <sup>2</sup>
Maximum front yard	See Note <sup>3</sup>
Maximum front yard on corner lots	5 ft.
Maximum front yard paving	40% <sup>4</sup>
Maximum exterior side yard on corner lots	5 ft.
Minimum interior side yard abutting a residential district	5 ft.
Minimum side yard if provided	3 ft.
Minimum rear yard	none
Minimum rear yard abutting a residential district	20 ft.
Minimum rear yard if provided	3 ft.
Maximum Floor Area Ratio: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nonresidential structures</li> <li>• residential structures</li> <li>• mixed use with at least 50% of floor area used for residential purposes</li> </ul>	2.25 3.50 3.50

Table 5.H Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Height Regulations.

- A. On a major street, listed on the New Orleans Major Street Plan, the maximum height of a nonresidential structure shall be 100 feet. A structure with over fifty (50) percent of its floor area containing residential use shall not exceed 125 feet. On all other streets, except as provided in Note 1.C below, the height of structures shall not exceed the width of the right-of-way, but in no case shall it exceed seventy-five (75) feet.

## Table 5.H Notes (Continued):

- B. In the event that a structure is located on a through lot and has frontage on a street listed on the New Orleans Major Street Plan (hereinafter also referred to as a major street) and also has frontage on a street not listed on the New Orleans Major Street Plan (hereinafter also referred to as a minor street) or which is located within fifty (50) feet of a minor street that does not intersect the major street in the square in which the development takes place, the maximum height of that portion of such structure located within fifty (50) feet of such minor street shall not exceed the width of the right-of-way, but in no case shall it exceed seventy-five (75) feet.
- C. Notwithstanding the provisions of Note 1.A above, the height of a building or structure which adjoins or abuts or is across the street from a residential district shall not exceed fifty (50) feet unless set back one (1) foot from all required yard lines for each foot of additional height thereof above fifty (50) feet.
- <sup>2</sup> Minimum Front Yard Required. No minimum front yard is required except where a lot abuts a residential district (applies to an interior lot or corner lot) in which instance a front yard shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the residential district or in conformance with the adjacent residential structure, whichever is lesser.
- <sup>3</sup> Maximum Front Yard Permitted. Where a lot or site (meaning a lot or lots considered as a unit for development purposes) is situated between two (2) developed sites, the maximum front yard permitted shall not exceed the average of the front yards provided by the main buildings on the two (2) adjacent sites. Where a lot adjoins only one developed site, the maximum front yard permitted shall not exceed the front yard, established by the main building on that adjacent lot.
- <sup>4</sup> Maximum Front Yard Paving Permitted. Where a front yard is provided, no more than forty (40) percent of the front yard shall be paved with a hard surface. Said hard surface shall be used for pedestrian access to the building or vehicular access to a parking area. The remaining sixty (60) percent of the front yard shall be maintained as either a lawn area or an area containing ornamental landscaping. In no instance shall a front yard exceed twenty (20) feet.

5.8.8. *Special Regulations.*1. *Off-Street Parking Regulations.*

- a. The minimum number of off-street parking spaces required shall be in compliance with standards which are required for uses in the high density districts as described in Section 15.2 of these regulations unless specified otherwise.
- b. Parking is prohibited in the front yard and the side yard.
- c. The minimum number of off-street parking spaces required for new construction or increase in floor area shall be in compliance with standards which are required for uses in the high density commercial districts as described in Section 15.2.
- d. Parking Bonuses.
  - (1) When an existing structure is to be retained and converted to residential or mixed use in which greater than fifty (50) percent of the floor area is residential in nature and there is no increase in floor area, no minimum off-street parking shall be required. The granting of this bonus shall be contingent upon the following:
    - (a) The maximum front yard of the structure does not exceed the median front yards provided by main buildings on the block frontage. In the event that the structure

is located adjacent to vacant land on the block frontage, the maximum front yard of the structure does not exceed the median front yards provided by main buildings on the two (2) adjacent block frontages.

- (b) There is no parking or parking area in the front yard.
- (2) When an existing structure is to be retained and developed in whole or in part with commercial uses permitted by the requirements of this district with no increase of the floor area of the existing structure, no additional off-street parking spaces shall be required for the first 1,500 square feet of floor area of the existing structure so utilized or one-half ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ) of the square feet of the existing structure so utilized, whichever is greater. The granting of this bonus shall be contingent upon the following:
    - (a) The maximum front yard of the structure does not exceed the median front yards provided by main buildings on the block frontage. In the event that the structure is located adjacent to vacant land on the block frontage, the maximum front yard of the structure does not exceed the median front yards provided by main buildings on the two (2) adjacent block frontages.
    - (b) There is no parking or parking area in the front yard.
  - (3) The bonus provisions contained herein shall continue to be available as long as existing structures are retained and maintained in accordance with City standards of construction and safety as provided in the Building Code of the City of New Orleans.
  - (4) The bonus provisions contained herein shall not be subject to waivers, variances or exceptions that could be granted under the provisions of Article 13 of this Ordinance.
- e. Parking Lot Design Standards.
- (1) *Minimum Area.* For the purpose of these regulations, an off-street parking space is a paved area not in a street or alley, permanently reserved for the temporary storage of one (1) vehicle and connected with a street or alley by a paved driveway which affords ingress and egress for an automobile without requiring another automobile to be moved; provided, however, that the paving requirements shall not apply to a single-family or two-family dwelling. The size of a small car off-street parking space must be a minimum of seven (7) feet six (6) inches in width and a minimum of sixteen (16) feet in length (120 square feet) exclusive of driveways; not more than forty (40) percent of the spaces in any parking facility may be designated and labeled as small car spaces. The size of a large car off-street parking space must be a minimum of eight (8) feet six (6) inches in width and a minimum of eighteen (18) feet in length (153 square feet) exclusive of driveways. The size of a handicapped off-street parking space must be a minimum of ten (10) feet in width and a minimum of eighteen (18) feet in length (180 square feet) exclusive of driveways.

- (2) *Drainage and Maintenance.* Off-street parking facilities shall be drained to eliminate standing water and prevent damage to abutting property and/or public streets and alleys and surfaced with erosion-resistant material in accordance with applicable City specifications. Off-street parking areas shall be maintained in a clean, orderly and dust-free condition at the expense of the owner or lessee and not used for the sale, repair, or dismantling or servicing of any vehicles, equipment, materials or supplies.
- (3) *Prohibition of Extended Storage.* All motor vehicles incapable of movement under their own power, other than in cases of emergency, shall not be stored in such off-street parking facilities for a continuous period of time in excess of forty-eight (48) hours.
- (4) *Landscaping Maintenance.* All planted areas shall be maintained in perpetuity and may be inspected periodically by the Department of Safety and Permits and Park and Parkway Commission for compliance with regulations provided herein.
- (5) *Separation of Parking Spaces from Walkway and Streets.* Off-street parking spaces shall be separated from walkways, sidewalks, streets, or alleys by a wall, fence, or curbing or other approved protective device, or by distance so that vehicles cannot protrude over publicly owned areas.
- (6) *Separation of Parking Areas from Walkways and Streets.* Off-street parking areas shall be separated from vacant lots, public walkways, sidewalks, streets, or alleys by an opaque wall, fence, or a continuous opaque evergreen vegetation screen a minimum of four (4) feet in height.
- (7) *Entrances and Exits.* Location and design of entrances and exits shall be in accord with the requirements of applicable City traffic regulations and standards. Landscaping, curbing or approved barriers shall be provided along lot boundaries to control entrance and exit of vehicles or pedestrians.
- (8) *Interior Drives.* Interior drives shall be of adequate width to serve a particular design arrangement of parking spaces.
- (9) *Marking.* Parking spaces in lots of more than ten (10) spaces shall be marked by painted lines or curbs or other means to indicate individual spaces. Signs or markers shall be used as necessary to insure efficient traffic operation of the lot.
- (10) *Lighting.* Adequate lighting shall be provided if off-street parking spaces are to be used at night. The lighting shall be arranged to eliminate glare on residential property by location of light fixtures or uses of fixtures designed to eliminate direct view of luminaries in fixtures from residential property.
- (11) *Residential Screening.* When surface off-street parking areas are located adjacent to any lot upon which there is a dwelling as a permitted use under these regulations, there shall be provided along the side lot line a continuous visual screen with a minimum

height of six (6) feet. Such screen may consist of a compact evergreen hedge or foliage screening, or an opaque wall or fence.

- (12) *Residential District Screening.* When surface off-street parking areas are located adjacent to a residentially zoned district, there shall be provided along the district line a continuous evergreen hedge and a six (6) feet opaque wall or fence. Curb and wheel stops shall be located a minimum of five (5) feet from the property line.
- (13) *Commercial Screening.* When surface off-street parking areas are located adjacent to a commercial use, no fence is required. There shall be a landscaped border consisting of a continuous, opaque, evergreen hedge a minimum of four (4) feet in height.
- (14) *Sight Triangle.* At all points of ingress and egress, a sight-distance triangle shall be provided. The triangle shall be measured from the points where each side of the driveway intersects the inside of the sidewalk or property line, whichever is the greatest distance from the street. At ten (10) feet from the points of intersection along each side of the driveway and the property line, a line shall be drawn to connect the ten (10) foot distances to form a triangle. No parking, fencing, planting material larger than one (1) foot in height, or other obstructions to the view of the driver entering or exiting the premises shall be allowed.
- (15) *Entrances and Exits.* Entrances and exits shall be required to be of porous material when necessary to protect City-owned trees when deemed necessary by Park and Parkway Commission.
- (16) The Department of Safety and Permits shall adopt plans and outline specifications clearly indicating the acceptable design and minimum construction standards for surface off-street parking facilities. Such standards shall be revised from time to time to be in conformity with acceptable current practices and shall be available for public study and consideration.

2. *Off-Street Loading Regulations.*

- a. The minimum number of off-street loading spaces for uses under 10,000 square feet is one (1). For uses greater than 10,000 square feet, the minimum number of off-street loading spaces is two (2).

3. *Special Regulations Applicable to Corner Lots.*

- a. On corner lots, the main building shall be constructed so that two (2) of its perimeter walls are located within five (5) feet of the two (2) adjacent public rights-of-way.
- b. At least one (1) principal entrance to the building shall open directly to one (1) of the adjacent rights-of-way.





**Section 5.2. RO General Office District.**

*5.2.1. Purpose of the District.*

The purpose of this district is to create an environment especially suited to a group of professional, general administrative, and general sales offices, together with certain commercial uses primarily to serve employees in the district. The residential alternatives to office use are the same as permitted in the RM-2 Multiple-Family Residential District.

*5.2.2. Uses Authorized in the District.*

Only those uses of land listed under permitted use, accessory use or conditional use provisions of this section are authorized within this zoning district. Supplementary use standards, which are set forth in Article 11, apply to any permitted, accessory or conditional use designated with an asterisk (\*) in the use lists appearing in this section.

*5.2.3. Permitted Uses.*

The following uses of land are authorized as permitted uses within the RO General Office District subject to the performance standards of Section 7.5:

1. Any use permitted in the RM-2 Multiple-Family Residential District.
2. General business offices, including, but not limited to, general administrative offices and sales offices with or without interior or show window display of products incidental to the office use.
3. Professional offices.
4. Banks, drive-in or otherwise, provided driveway space is made available off the street for vehicles waiting for drive-in service.\* (See Section 11.4)
5. Clinics, but not animal clinics, and hospitals.
6. Data processing center.
7. Health or athletic club or studios, bath or massage parlors, commercial or private.
8. Hotels, motels, or motor lodges.
9. Laboratories; medical and dental, research, experimental or testing, but not animal research or testing.
10. Private clubs.
11. Standard or cafeteria restaurants but not drive-in or fast food restaurants.
12. Studios for artists, photographers, teachers, sculptors, musicians, or dance instruction.

13. Parking lots and parking garages.
14. Undertaking business or establishment or funeral home.
15. Retail and service facilities within an office building containing at least 20,000 square feet of floor area devoted to office uses, or in a hotel, motel, motor lodge, or a multiple dwelling with 100 or more rental units or dwelling units, such facilities to have no exterior entrances or exits other than in accordance with the specifications set forth in Section 15.6.3. Retail and service facilities may include barbershops, beauty shops, cocktail lounges, newsstands, valet service and retail stores for sale of books, stationery supplies, gifts, flowers, tobacco, drugs, and sundries. However, in no event shall retail and service facilities include pawnshops.
16. Business schools.
17. Public elementary schools, or private elementary schools having the curriculum essentially the same as ordinarily given in public elementary schools, including kindergartens.\* (See Section 11.37)
18. Public junior high or senior high schools, or private junior or senior high schools having the curriculum essentially the same as ordinarily given in public junior high or senior high schools.\* (See Section 11.38)
19. Child care facilities.\* (See Section 11.15)
20. Adult day care centers.\* (See Section 11.14)

**5.2.4. Accessory Uses.**

The following uses of land are authorized as accessory uses within the RO General Office District:

1. Any accessory use allowed in the RM-2 Multiple-Family Residential District.
2. Storage of office supplies or merchandise normally carried in stock in connection with a permitted office or business use subject to applicable district regulations.

**5.2.5. Conditional Uses.**

The following uses of land are authorized as conditional uses within the RO General Office District upon approval of a conditional use permit under the standards and procedures contained in Section 16.6 of the zoning regulations:

1. Any conditional use allowed in the MS Medical Service District.
2. Prisons and related uses.
3. Fast food and drive-in restaurants.
4. Timeshare buildings and transient vacation rentals.

5.2.6. *Permitted Signs.*

Subject to general sign regulations of Article 12, the following accessory signs shall be permitted in the RO General Office District:

1. Any sign allowed in the RM-4 Multiple-Family Residential District.
2. For a permitted nonresidential use, a flat sign, illuminated or nonilluminated, limited in area to thirty (30) square feet.
3. For each permitted nonresidential structure, a detached or projecting sign, illuminated or nonilluminated, limited in area to ten (10) square feet. If placed on a marquee or canopy, two (2) such signs are permitted for each street frontage.
4. One (1) flat, double-faced general advertising sign illuminated or nonilluminated, limited in area to thirty (30) square feet shall be permitted on public transit waiting stations, provided that no such advertising sign shall be placed higher than nine (9) feet or to the roofline of the public transit waiting station, whichever is lower, and provided that no advertising signs on bus shelters shall be constructed in any historic district in the City of New Orleans without the prior approval of the appropriate Historic District Commission.

5.2.7. *Height, Area and Bulk Requirements.*

Minimum requirements for lot area, yards and open space, and maximum height and Floor Area Ratio for nonresidential uses in the RO General Office District are contained in Table 5.B. Area requirements for residential uses are the same as for the RM-2 Multiple-Family Residential District regulations in Section 4.9. Standards for nonresidential uses and for residential uses apply to all permitted and accessory uses, unless a variance is granted by the Board of Zoning Adjustments under Section 14.6, and to all conditional uses unless modified by the City Council in conjunction with approval of a conditional use permit under Section 16.6.

**Table 5.B  
Area Regulations for the RO General Office District**

REQUIREMENTS	STANDARDS
Maximum height	100 ft.
Minimum depth of front yard	20 ft.
Minimum side yard	10 ft.
Minimum rear yard	10 ft.
Minimum floor area (for a permitted office building, clinic, restaurant or nonaccessory shop)	1,000 sq. ft.
Maximum Floor Area Ratio	4.00



**Section 16.5. Planned Development District Procedures.**

*16.5.1. Applicability and Purpose.*

1. Applicability.

This section governs procedures for adopting zoning text and map amendments for planned development districts, for processing associated concept plans, and for approval of development plans, which are prerequisites for development within a planned development district.

2. Description and Purpose.

A planned development district accommodates or authorizes a limited range of unique uses, which uses are to be developed and/or operated as integral land use units either by a single owner or by a combination of owners. The purposes of the planned development district are to promote high quality development and to authorize establishment of special uses not otherwise permitted in order to serve the unique needs of the community. A planned development district allows flexibility of uses and development standards, but requires an integrated development plan.

*16.5.2. Approval Procedures—Text Amendments.*

The City Council, upon recommendation from the City Planning Commission, may amend the text of the Zoning Ordinance from time to time to provide for new planned development districts. The text of the district shall identify the uses authorized and shall state the standards and regulations applicable to authorized uses.

*16.5.3. Approval Procedures—Map Amendments.*

1. Zoning Map Amendment.

An application to establish a planned development district authorized by this Ordinance may be submitted by the property owner in accordance with requirements for zoning map amendments in Section 16.2 and pursuant to the procedures in this section. The City Council, after notice and public hearing required by Section 16.9.2, and after recommendation from the City Planning Commission in accordance with Section 16.9.5, may authorize the creation of a planned development district. Once approved, the boundaries of the planned development district shall be designated with particularity on the zoning map.

2. Overlay Planned Development Districts.

Where a planned development district is established as an overlay zoning district, authorized uses shall conform to the standards and regulations of the base zoning district. Deviations from underlying district regulations may be authorized by the City Council in establishing the planned development district, provided that all deviations from the standards set forth in the base district are stated in the adopting ordinance. Development within the planned development district shall

conform to all other requirements of these zoning regulations, unless specifically excluded in the adopting ordinance.

3. **Concept Plan Required.**

An application for establishment of a planned development district shall be accompanied by a concept plan which shall be processed simultaneously with the application. The purposes of the concept plan are to provide an opportunity to evaluate a proposed development's major impacts on the City, to ensure that the project complies with the goals and policies embodied in the City's Master Plan and the requirements of these zoning regulations, and that appropriate conditions of approval are identified. If the application is approved, the concept plan shall be incorporated into such approval.

4. **Submittal Requirements for Concept Plan.**

The concept plan shall contain the following information:

a. The concept plan shall be prepared to the following scale:

- (1) For projects containing more than 200 acres, not more than 200 feet to one (1) inch.
- (2) For projects containing fifty (50) acres to 200 acres, not more than 100 feet to one (1) inch.
- (3) For projects containing more than ten (10) but less than fifty (50) acres, not more than sixty (60) feet to one (1) inch.
- (4) For projects containing ten (10) acres or less, not more than fifty (50) feet to one (1) inch.

b. In addition to any specific requirements set forth in the zoning district regulations, the concept plan shall contain the following information:

- (1) Name and address of landowner and date of preparation of the plan;
- (2) Name and address of architect, landscape architect, planner, engineer, surveyor, or other persons responsible for the preparation of the plan;
- (3) Site boundaries and dimensions, site acreage and square footage, and approximate distance to the nearest cross street;
- (4) Location map, north arrow and title block;
- (5) Natural features including tree masses, floodplains, drainageways and bayous;

Article 16, Section 16.5, Planned Development District Procedures

- (6) Proposed and existing land use and zoning classifications on-site and existing land uses on adjacent properties;
- (7) Building envelopes (including maximum building intensity, density, heights and use restrictions as appropriate);
- (8) Public streets and private drives with pavement widths, buffers, right-of-way, median openings, turn lanes (including storage and transitional space), and driveways (including those on adjacent property) with approximate dimensions;
- (9) Proposed dedications and reservations of land for public or common use, including but not limited to: rights-of-way, easements, park land, open space, drainageways, flood-plains, and public facility sites;
- (10) Existing and proposed utilities and easements;
- (11) If the project is to be developed in phases, a proposed phasing plan that identifies the sequence of development and a time schedule for installation of major capital improvements to serve the development, including delineation of areas, building sites, land use and improvements to be constructed in independent phases and the scheduled timing and sequencing of such development;
- (12) Proposed buffers from existing uses;
- (13) A chart depicting the following information by phase:
  - (a) Acreage of each proposed phase;
  - (b) Total number of dwelling units by type and lot size;
  - (c) Dwelling unit sizes;
  - (d) Projected population;
  - (e) Tabulation of the total gross floor area in square feet for each nonresidential use.

5. Approval Standards.

Based upon the concept plan, the City Planning Commission and the City Council shall determine whether the planned development district should be established, taking into account the following criteria:

- a. The proposed land uses, and the density or intensity of each use, are authorized in the base zoning district or in the text of the planned development district;

- b. The plan of development is consistent with the Master Plan;
- c. Proposed uses and project design are compatible with existing and planned adjoining uses and the character of the neighborhood in which the project is located;
- d. Adequate public facilities will be provided in a timely manner to support each phase of the development;
- e. For overlay zoning districts, proposed uses and development standards are consistent with the purposes of the base zoning district; and
- f. The proposed timing of development is consistent with the overall growth and development of the City.

6. Conditions.

The City Planning Commission may recommend and the City Council may impose such conditions on establishment of the planned development district as are reasonably necessary to assure that the approval criteria are met. Such conditions shall be stated in the adopting ordinance.

7. Planning Commission Recommendation.

The City Planning Commission, after notice and public hearing in accordance with the procedures in Section 16.9, shall recommend to the City Council approval, approval subject to modification, or denial of the planned development district.

8. City Council Decision.

Following receipt of the City Planning Commission's recommendation, the City Council shall conduct a public hearing in accordance with the procedures in Section 16.9 of these zoning regulations and shall approve, approve subject to modification, or deny the application for establishment of the planned development district.

9. Adopting Ordinance.

The ordinance establishing a planned development district shall set forth the following provisions. The concept plan shall be incorporated as an exhibit to the ordinance.

- a. For overlay zoning districts, the base zoning district(s) to be overlaid;
- b. A statement as to the purpose and intent of the district established therein;
- c. The permitted or conditional uses authorized in the district, the location of proposed uses, and the densities or intensities of the uses, by phase of the project, in conformance with the approved concept plan;



- d. The standards applicable to development within the district, including but not limited to: uses, density, lot area, lot width, lot depth, yard depths and widths, building height, building elevations, coverage, Floor Area Ratio, parking, access, screening, landscaping, accessory buildings, signs, lighting, project phasing or scheduling, management associations, and such other requirements as the City Council may deem necessary in order to implement the City's Master Plan, and such as are consistent with the purposes of the regulations of the planned development district;
- e. For overlay zoning districts, a specific list of deviations from standards in the base zoning district;
- f. Required dedications or public improvements; and
- g. The timing of performance by the developer in relation to the phasing of development, where applicable.

*16.5.4. Approval Procedure—Development Plans.*

1. Purpose and Applicability.

- a. The purposes of a development plan are to assure that the development project proceeds in an orderly fashion consistent with the approved concept plan and to assure that the standards applicable within the district are met for each phase of the project.
- b. No building permits for development in a planned development district shall be issued until a development plan consistent with the approved concept plan has been approved under the following procedures. The proposed development plan shall set forth the final plans for development within the district.
- c. Development plans may be submitted in phases in accordance with the provisions of the ordinance approving the planned development district.

2. Application and Processing.

- a. Following establishment of the planned development district, the property owner or his designated representative may submit for approval a development plan for all or a portion of the property in the district. The developer may submit a development plan simultaneously with submission of a concept plan in conjunction with an application for establishment of the planned development district. In such a case, approval of the development plan shall be considered following authorization to establish the planned development district. The Executive Director shall process the application in accordance with Section 16.9.4. The Director may waive submittal requirements where the particular information is not necessary to describe the development or to determine if the development meets relevant approval criteria. The City Planning Commission may require modification of the development plan to address specific approval criteria.

b. Submittal Requirements for Development Plan.

- (1) The development plan shall be prepared at a scale of not less than one (1) inch equals 100 feet.
- (2) In addition to any specific requirements set forth in the zoning district regulations, the development plan shall contain the following information:
  - (a) Name and address of landowner and date of preparation of the plan;
  - (b) Name and address of architect, landscape architect, planner, engineer, surveyor, or other persons involved in the preparation of the plan;
  - (c) Site boundaries and dimensions, lot lines, site acreage and square footage, and approximate distance to the nearest cross streets;
  - (d) Location map, north arrow, title block and site data summary table;
  - (e) Topography at two (2) foot intervals or less;
  - (f) Natural features including tree masses and anticipated tree loss, drainageways, creeks, and limits of the 100 year floodplain and floodway as shown on current FEMA mapping, including location and acreage;
  - (g) Proposed and existing land use and zoning classifications on-site and existing land uses on adjacent properties;
  - (h) Building envelopes, locations and footprints including building size, intensity, density, height, setback, use, building materials proposed and location of entrances and exits;
  - (i) Elevations and perspectives to show the relationship of building heights to surrounding topography;
  - (j) Public streets, private drives, alleys and fire lanes with pavement widths, rights-of-way, buffers, median openings, turn lanes (including storage and transition space), and driveways (including those on or planned on adjacent property) with dimensions, radii and surface types;
  - (k) Parking areas and structures, aisles and spaces, handicap spaces, ramps, crosswalks, sidewalks and other facilities for pedestrian circulation, and loading areas with typical dimensions and surface types;
  - (l) Access easements and off-site parking;

Article 16, Section 16.5, Planned Development District Procedures

- (m) Accurate outlines of proposed dedications and reservations of land for public or common use, including but not limited to: rights-of-way, easements, park land, open space, drainageways, floodplains, and facility sites;
- (n) Screening walls, fences, living screens, retaining walls, headlight screens and service area screens;
- (o) Landscaping and open space areas with dimensions and total square footage;
- (p) Existing and proposed topography reflecting proposed handling of on-site surface drainage, proposed improvements and method of maintenance for any drainage channels;
- (q) Existing and proposed gas mains or other underground structures, water and sanitary sewer mains and service lines with sizes, valves, fire hydrants, manholes, and other structures on site or immediately adjacent to the site specified;
- (r) Phases of development, including delineation of areas, building sites, land uses and improvements to be constructed in independent phases and the scheduled timing and sequencing of development; and
- (s) Proposed buffers from existing uses.

3. Approval Standards.

The City Planning Commission, and the City Council on appeal, shall determine whether the development plan meets the specific development standards set forth in the planned development district regulations, and the following general standards:

- a. The development plan is consistent with the approved concept plan and the standards and conditions set forth in the adopting ordinance;
- b. The lot or tract configuration is consistent with subdivision regulations;
- c. The project is adequately buffered from adjoining uses in accordance with the adopting ordinance;
- d. Provision for and design of open space areas meet the recreational needs of the residents of the planned development district;
- e. Landscaping plans, where required, meet Ordinance requirements or standards set forth in the adopting ordinance;
- f. Covenants adequate to assure preservation and maintenance of common open space and natural features of the project have been provided; and

- g. The development plan is consistent with phasing requirements set forth in the adopting ordinance, and roads and other public facilities serving the phase of development under consideration are adequate to serve the project.

4. Conditions.

The City Planning Commission, or the City Council, on appeal, may impose such conditions on approval of the development plan as are reasonably necessary to assure that the plan is consistent with the standards set forth in the adopting ordinance and the approval standards set forth in Section 16.5.4(4).

5. Decision by City Planning Commission.

The City Planning Commission, after proper notice and public hearing, shall approve, approve subject to modifications, or deny the development plan.

6. Appeal to City Council.

The applicant may appeal the decision of the City Planning Commission to the City Council in accordance with the procedures set forth in Section 16.9.9.

*16.5.5. Amendment of Planned Development District Ordinance, Concept Plan or Development Plan.*

Except as provided in Section 16.9.10, the following procedures shall apply to amendment of planned development district ordinances, concept plans and development plans:

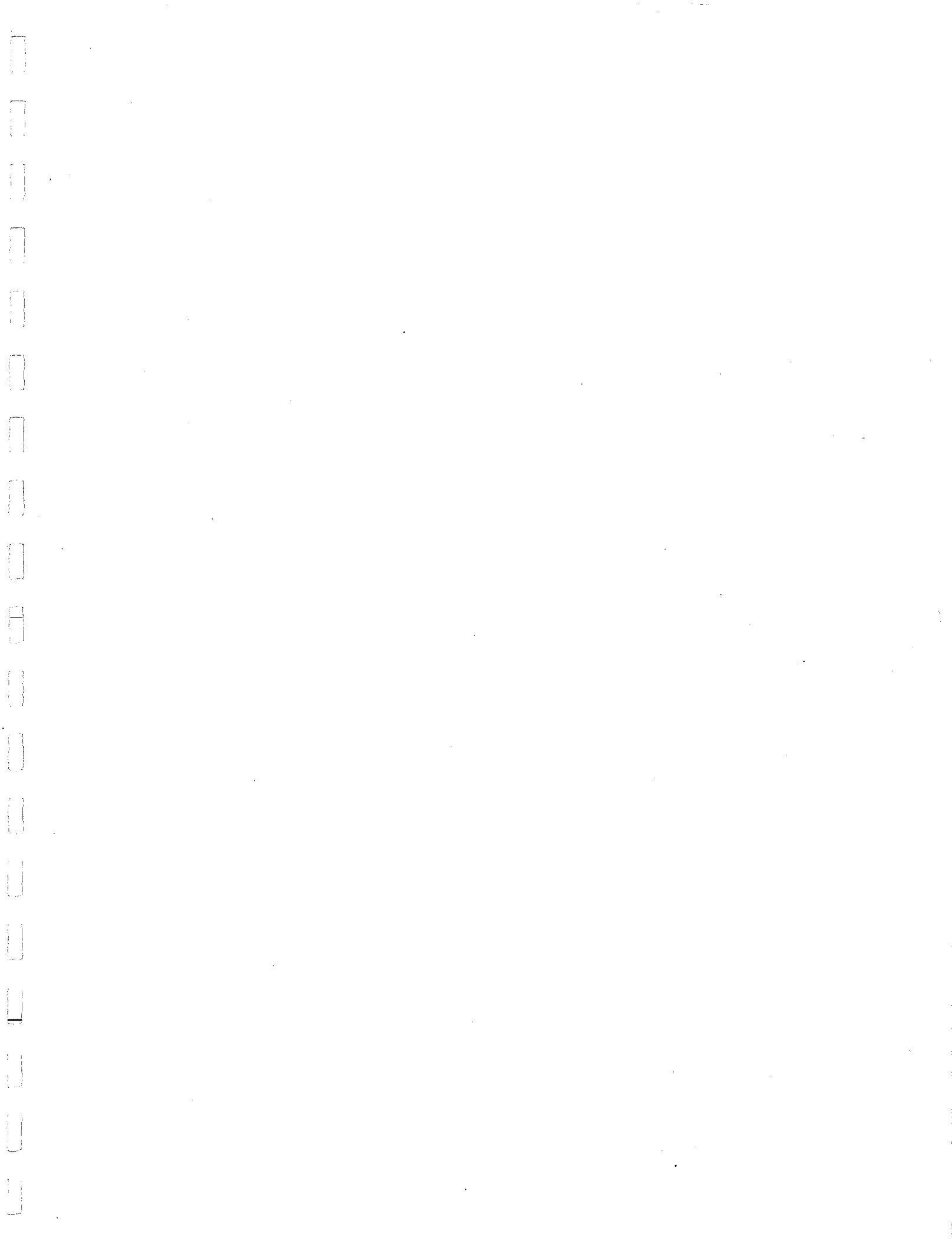
1. The property owner may propose amendments to the planned development ordinance and/or the accompanying concept plan. The request shall be processed in accordance with the standards and procedures for initial approval of a planned development district, as set forth in Section 16.5.
2. The property owner may propose amendment of an approved development plan. The application for amendment of an approved development plan shall be filed with the City Planning Commission and shall be processed in accordance with the standards and procedures for initial approval of the development plan, as set forth in this Section 16.5.

**Section 16.6. Conditional Use Permits.**

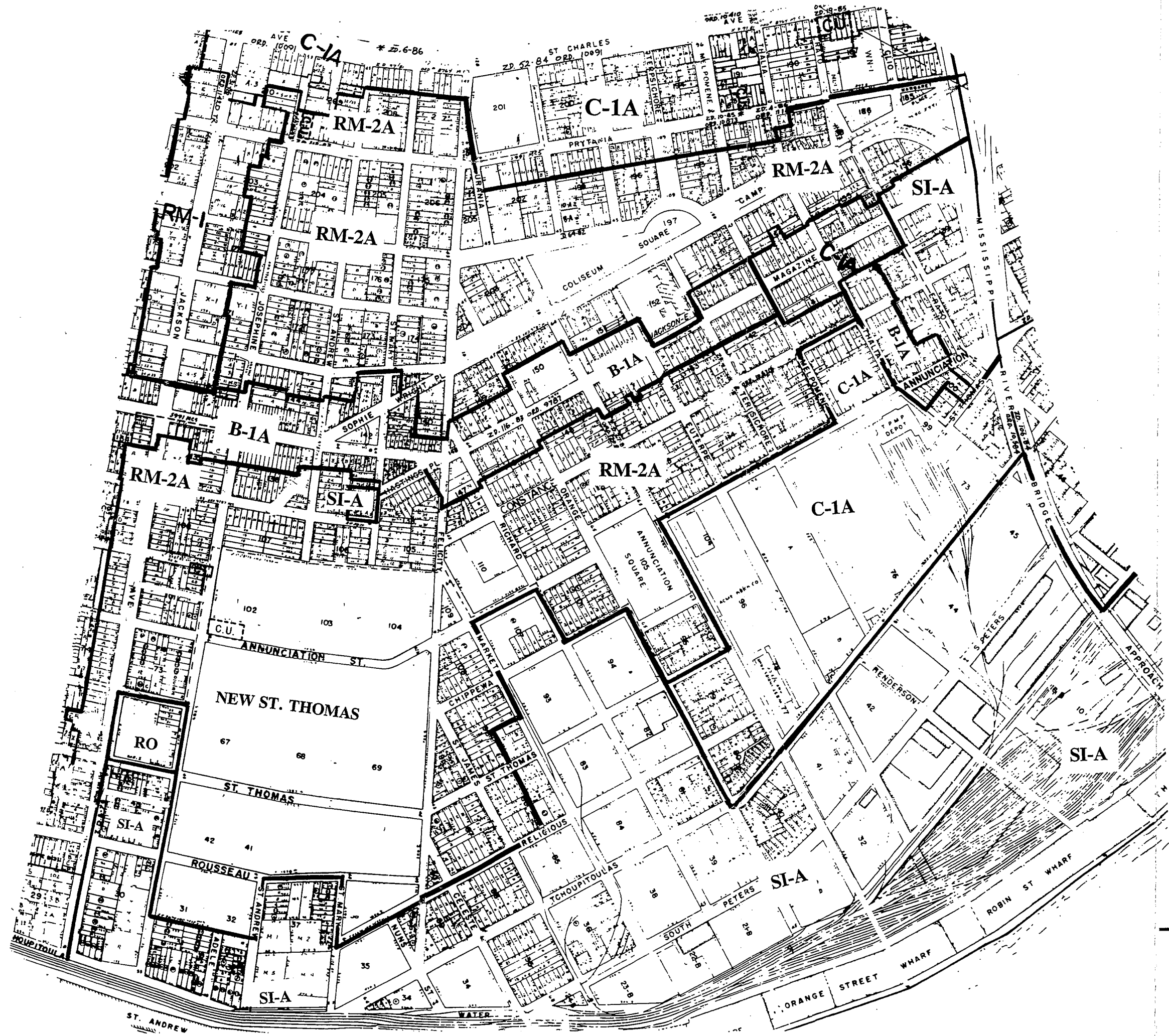
*16.6.1. Purpose and Intent.*

1. Nature of Conditional Use.

A conditional use is a land use which because of its unique nature is compatible with the permitted land uses in a given zoning district only upon a determination that the external effects of the use in relation to the existing and planned uses of adjoining property and the neighborhood can be mitigated through imposition of standards and conditions. This section sets forth the standards used







**COUNCILMAN THOMAS**

**Strategic Renaissance Plan Zoning**

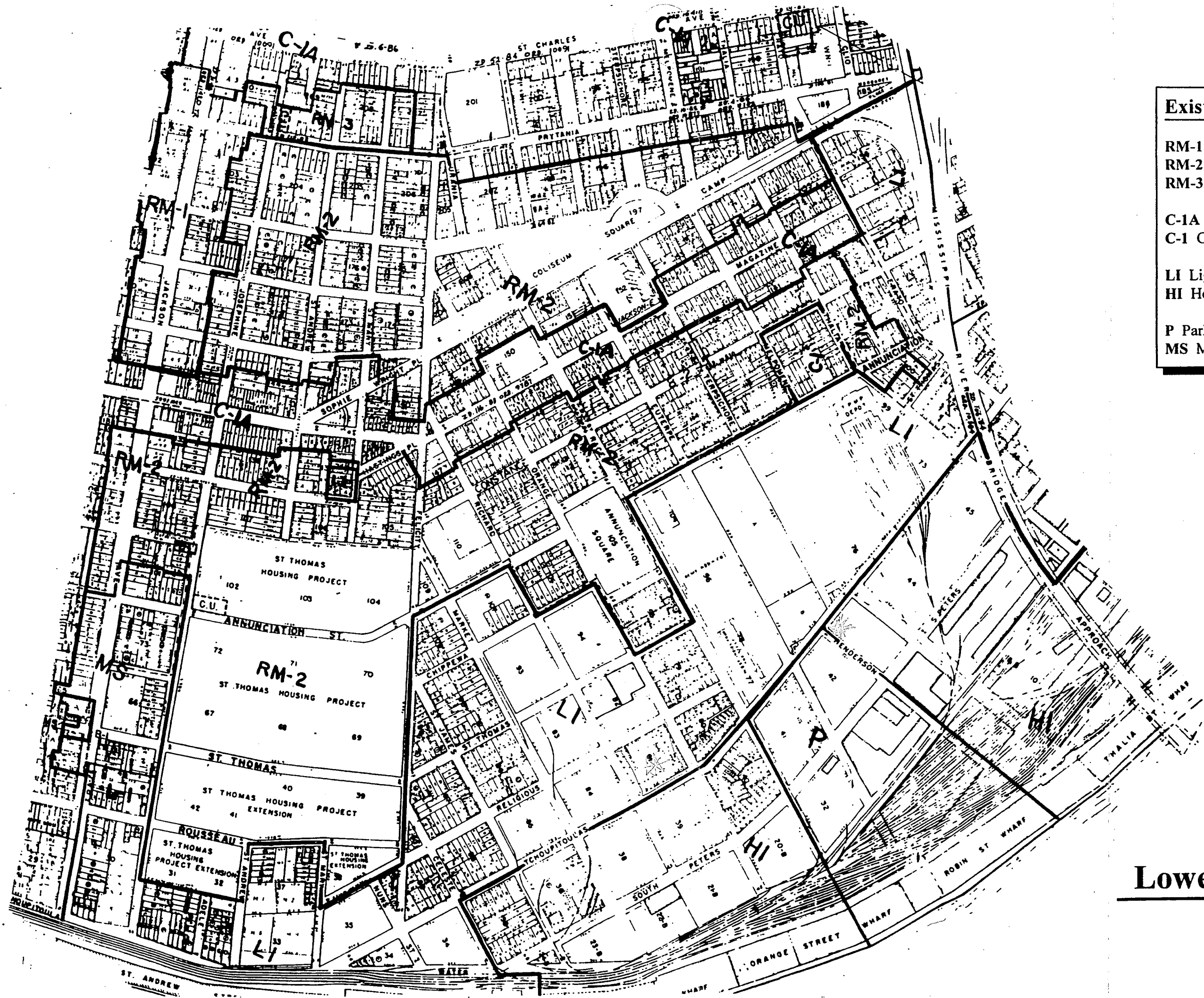
- RM-1 Multiple-Family Residential
- RM-2A Multiple-Family Residential
- B-1A Neighborhood Business
- C-1A General Commercial
- RO General Office
- SI-A Special Industrial
- New St. Thomas

**ADOPTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL  
ON JUNE 5, 1997**

**Lower Garden District**

**Existing Zoning**

- RM-1 Multiple-Family Residential
- RM-2 Multiple-Family Residential
- RM-3 Multiple-Family Residential
  
- C-1A General Commercial
- C-1 General Commercial
  
- LI Light Industrial]
- HI Heavy Industrial
  
- P Park
- MS Medical Services



**Lower Garden District**





**Recommended Zoning**

RM-1 Multiple-Family Residential  
 RM-2A Multiple-Family Residential

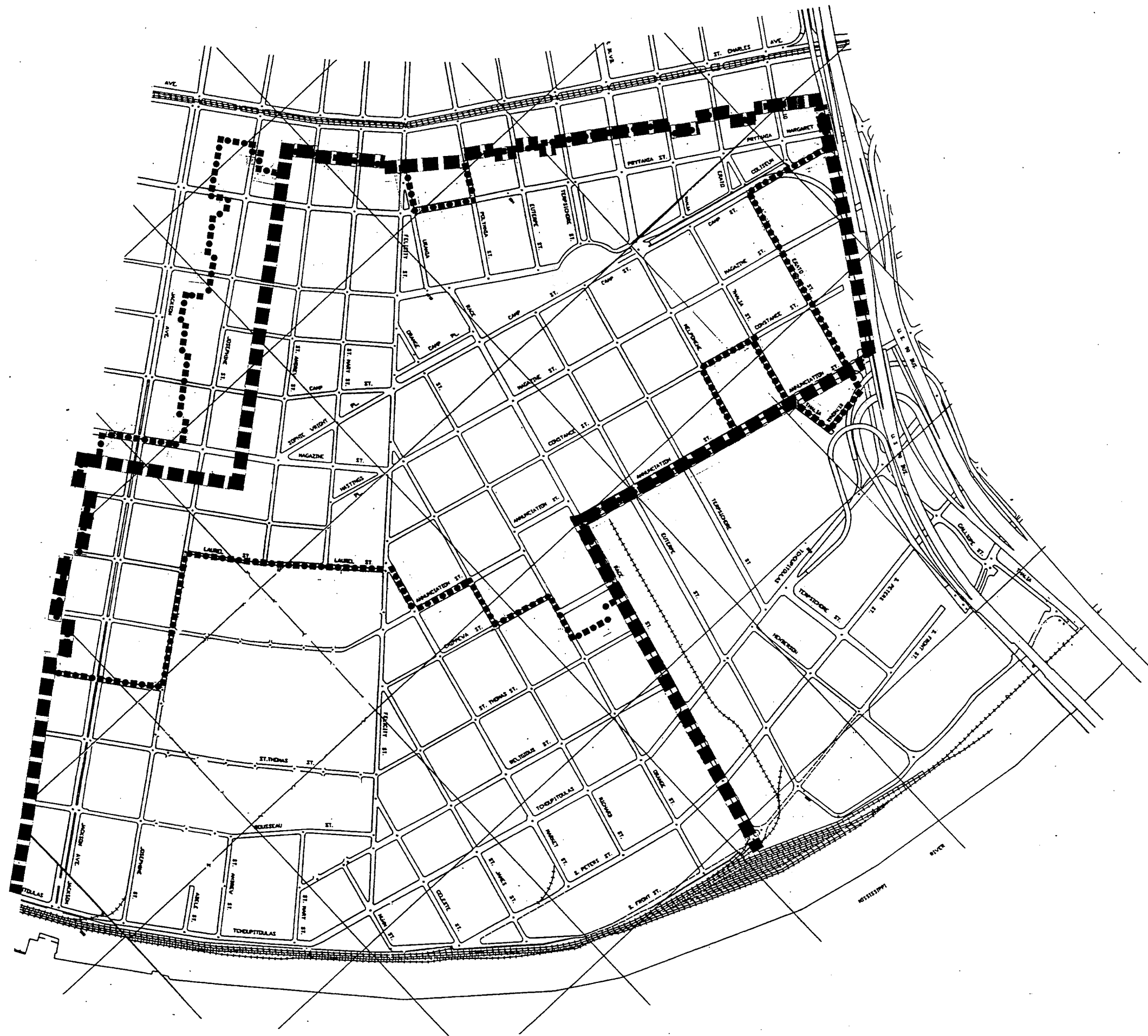
B-1A Neighborhood Business  
 C-1A General Commercial  
 RO General Office

SI-A Special Industrial

New St. Thomas

**Lower Garden District**

# HISTORIC DISTRICTS



## HISTORIC DISTRICTS

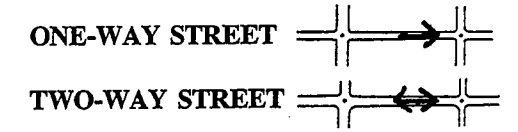
▬▬▬▬▬ NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

●●●●●●● LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT

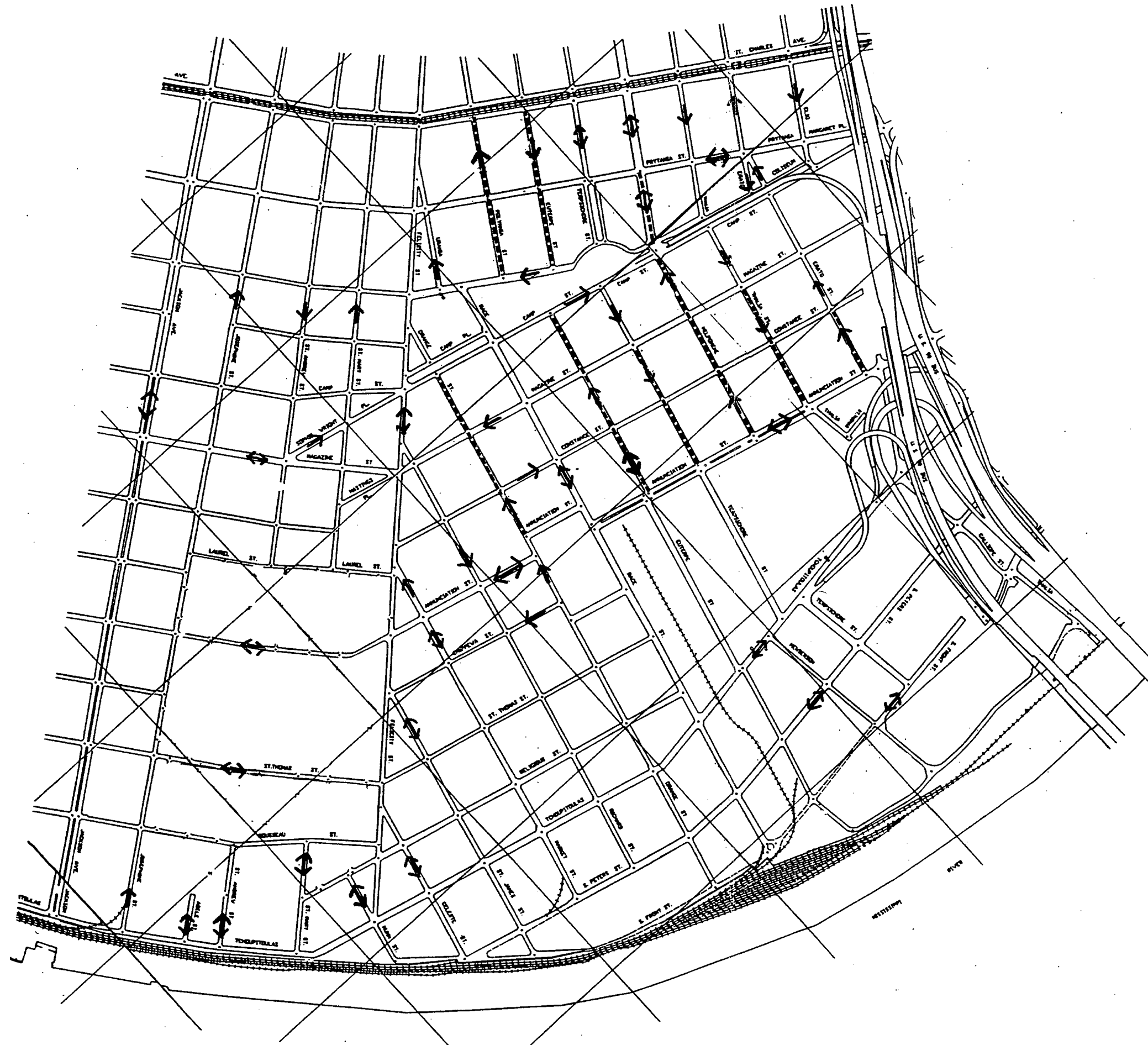
# EXISTING STREET DIRECTIONS



## EXISTING STREET DIRECTIONS



# RECOMMENDED STREET DIRECTIONS

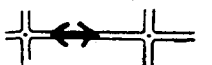


## RECOMMENDED STREET DIRECTIONS

ONE-WAY STREET



TWO-WAY STREET



RECOMMENDED DIRECTIONAL CHANGES



### Recommendations:

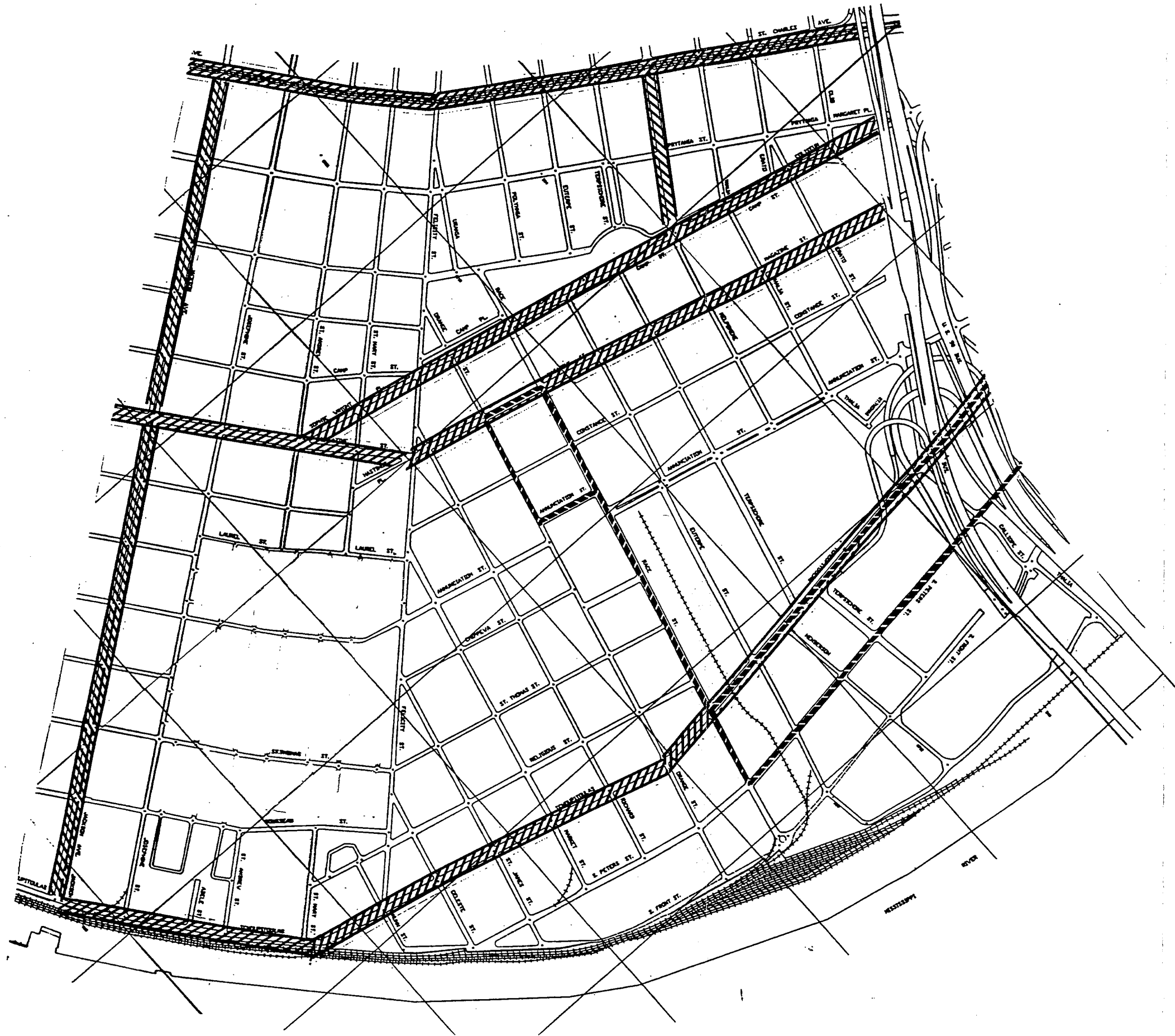
\* **Polymnia and Euterpe Streets between St. Charles and Coliseum:** from two-way to one-way, with traffic flowing towards St. Charles on Polymnia, and towards Coliseum Square on Euterpe.

\* **Melpomene St. between Prytania and Camp St.:** from one-way towards the River, to two-way. **Melpomene between Camp and Annunciation Street:** from one-way towards the River to one-way towards the Lake.




\* **Thalia St. from Magazine to Annunciation St.:** from two-way to one-way towards the River.

\* **Between Camp and Annunciation, the following streets should be made one-way:** Orange (towards the Lake), Euterpe (towards the Lake), Terpsichore (towards the River), Melpomene (towards the Lake), and Erato (towards the Lake). The block of Euterpe between Constance and Annunciation Streets should remain two-way.

# STREETCARS & MAJOR STREETS

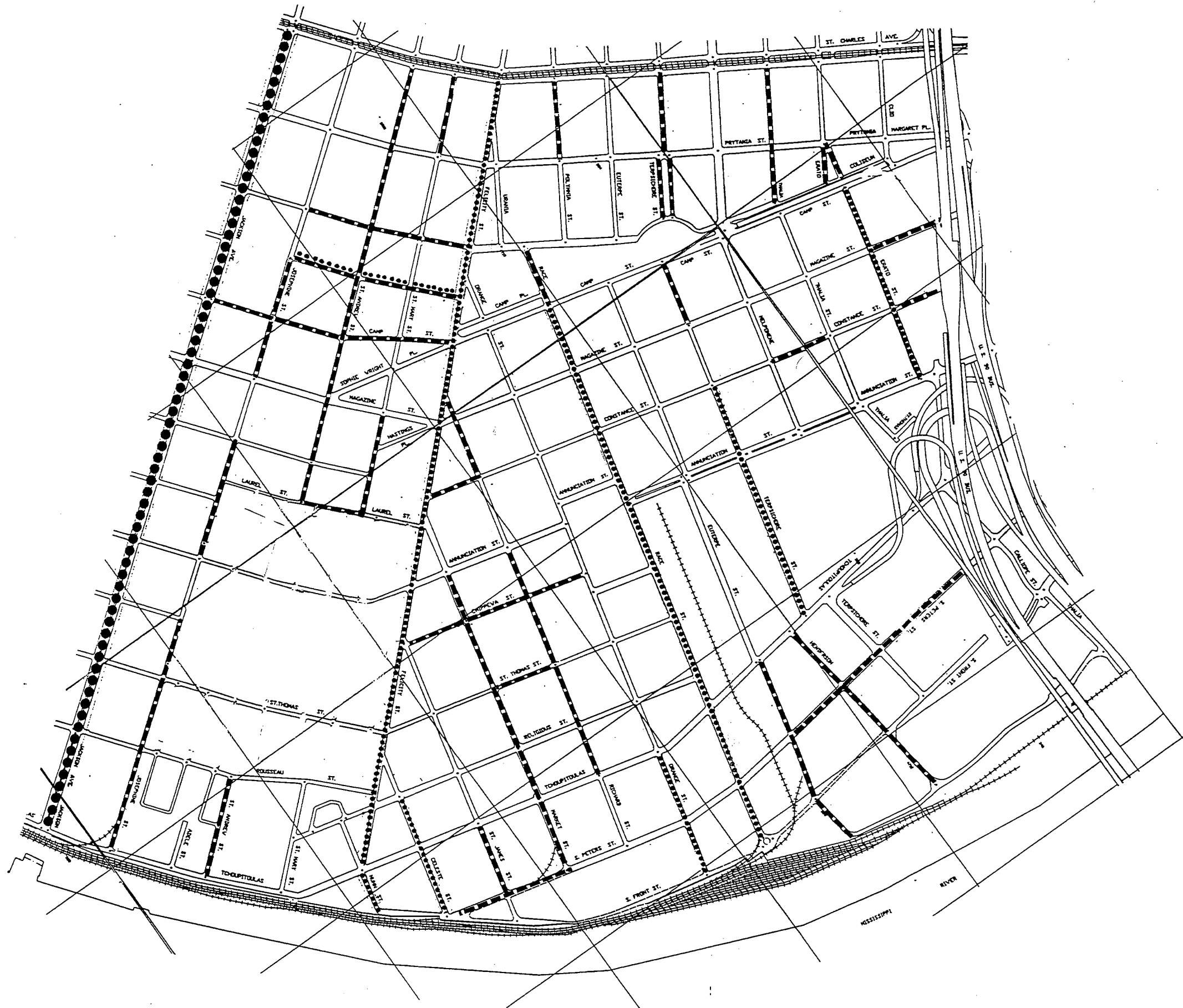


## STREETCARS & MAJOR STREETS

-  MAJOR STREETS
-  STREETCAR LINE
-  UNDER CONSIDERATION BY RTA



# STREET SURFACING



## STREET SURFACING

----- POOR CONDITION

●●● COBBLESTONE