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REPORT  
ON

# MAJOR STREETS

Officially Adopted :  
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
OF NEW ORLEANS

August 28, 1951

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CHAPTER IV

M A J O R S T R E E T S

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# I N T R O D U C T I O N

Streets are the most important physical facility within urban areas. They accommodate the vehicular movement so necessary for the economic and social life of the modern city.

## Evolution of Major Streets

In the early cities, traffic was light, pavements were few and narrow and the same general use was made of all streets. With the advent of the automobile, traffic began to concentrate upon certain strategically located streets. It was necessary to provide wide and durable pavements thereon and in many instances to widen the right-of-way to accommodate the constantly increasing volumes of vehicular traffic. These routes became known as major streets and are differentiated from the other minor streets which should continue primarily to provide access to adjoining property rather than to carry large volumes of traffic destined for other parts of the urban area. It is the major streets with which this report is concerned, and fortunately, because of the large expenditures needed for improvements and maintenance, they represent only a small portion of the total street mileage - usually less than 20 per cent.

## Benefits to Residential Property

The improvement of the major streets so that large volumes of traffic can concentrate thereon and conveniently move from one section of the city to another also protects residential development, which generally is

adversely affected by proximity to large volumes of fast moving traffic. The diversion of this traffic from the many minor streets is a major factor in improving residential character and values throughout the city. Thus, the development of an adequate major street system will not only facilitate vehicular movement, which is so essential to the economic life of the city, but will also promote and maintain sound residential development.

#### Plan Based on Existing Street System

Much of the area within the New Orleans metropolitan district is now developed and has an established street pattern. This existing street system must be fully recognized in developing an adequate system of major streets, even though new locations may be theoretically desirable. The necessity of immediately securing improved traffic movement throughout the city usually delays large-scale opening and widening of streets in compactly built-up sections.

#### Early Major Street Plans

The City of New Orleans has had the advantage of a major street plan for many years. The first plan was approved in principle by a Resolution of the Commission Council on October 18, 1927. Many important major street improvements have been made in conformity with this early plan.

In accordance with new state legislation, the City Planning and Zoning Commission adopted an official major street plan on December 17, 1947, which was almost identical to the one approved by Resolution in 1927.

### Need for Revision

Many changes have occurred in the character and development of the New Orleans urban area since the preparation of the early plan. Vehicular congestion has become seriously acute within the past few years. New development has occurred which renders impracticable some of the recommendations of the earlier plan, and new types and standards of major streets have evolved within recent years. It is imperative that the major street plan be revised periodically so that it can be more closely related to existing conditions and probable future requirements. Further, it is essential that the major street plan be closely related to other phases of the master plan now being prepared, and especially that it be adjusted to the population pattern proposed in Chapter III.

The accompanying report contains data regarding modern principles and standards of major streets, an analysis of the existing street system and the use made thereof, and a revised system of major streets which can be gradually developed during the next twenty-five years. Consistent adherence to the plan will alleviate the present vehicular congestion, and accommodate the increasing number of movements throughout the entire metropolitan area.



## PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS

### Types of Vehicular Movements

The principal function of major streets is the efficient accommodation of vehicular traffic movement between its origin and destination. In the average urban area, these movements can be grouped into certain general classifications as follows:

1. The large majority of the traffic movement is between residences and places of employment, primarily the central business district and industrial area. In practically all cities, and certainly in New Orleans, the major objective of vehicular traffic is the central business district.

2. The movement of traffic from outside the city to some points within the urban area, and to points beyond the city. Here again the major objective of such traffic is the business and industrial centers, although a considerable volume does travel to other sub-centers.

3. Movement of traffic from one residential section of the city to another and to places of local shopping, recreation, and amusement. This is usually classified as cross-town traffic. A certain portion might also be classified as by-pass traffic since, in going from one section of the city to another, it desires to by-pass the heavily congested districts, such as the central business district.

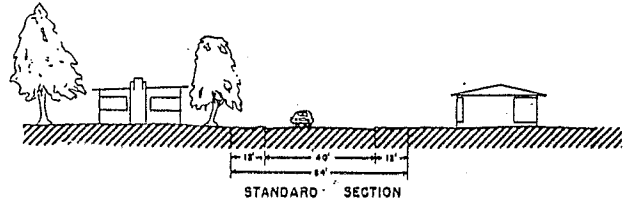
4. The fourth major type of movement is that of truck traffic. While this represents a comparatively small portion of the total volume, trucks are invariably large, slow moving vehicles which seriously impede

# TYPICAL CROSS SECTIONS

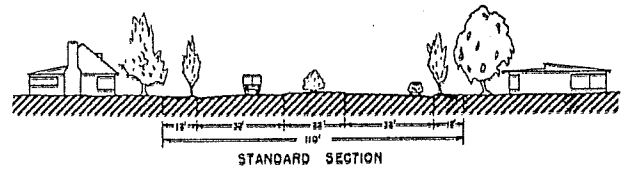
MAJOR STREETS AND EXPRESSWAYS

REVISED 1954

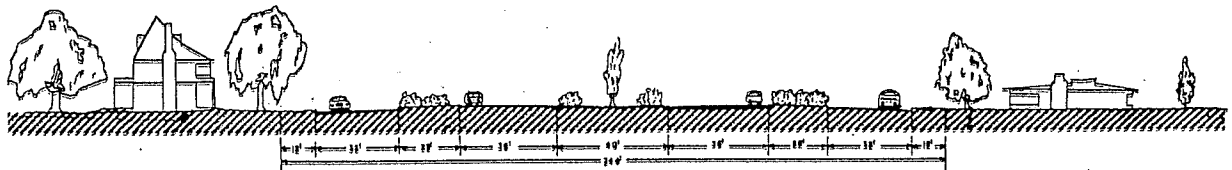
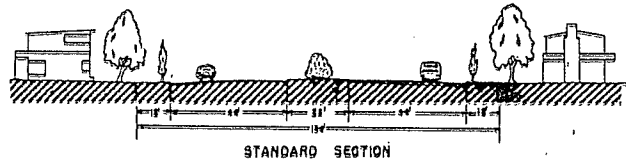
2 TRAVEL LANES



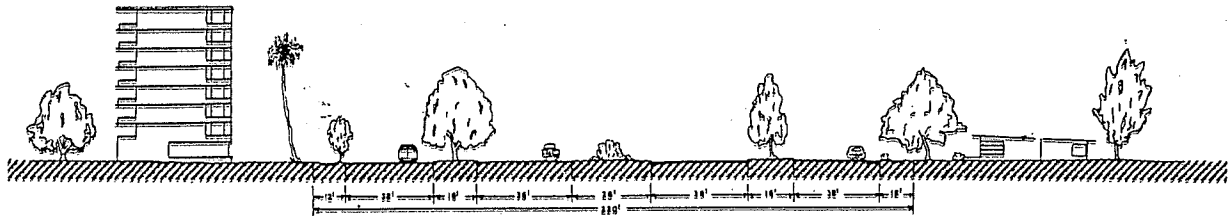
4 TRAVEL LANES



6 TRAVEL LANES



NOT APPLICABLE AT MAJOR STREET INTERSECTION



NOT APPLICABLE AT MAJOR STREET INTERSECTION

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION OF NEW ORLEANS

PUBLIC HEARING: APRIL 28, 1954

ADOPTED: JUNE 22, 1954

*Samuel H. Jones*  
CHAIRMAN CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

REVISED PLATE NO. 1  
CHAPTER NO. 4

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA.



4-18-54

movement of autos. The majority of this truck movement is to and from industrial sections and to the business district. While much of it can be accommodated on the major streets serving other functions, it is important that wide major streets serve the major industrial centers.

In addition to the above types of traffic movement, there are also a substantial number of cars that are used for recreational or pleasure driving. This usually occurs in the evenings or on week-ends and holidays when the major streets are not being used for the other types of movement and thus requires no special facilities. However, in New Orleans, where a large number of people visit the lake and resort areas along the Gulf Coast, this traffic amounts to substantial volumes, and in peak periods results in delays and inconveniences.

#### Types and Standards of Major Streets

Several types of major streets are necessary to satisfactorily accommodate the above types of vehicular traffic movement. In New Orleans, as in other cities of similar size, these required major streets can be classified into five major types.

Plate I shows the desirable cross-section for each of these five types of streets. The desirable is invariably a wide right-of-way that should be provided whenever possible, particularly if a new right-of-way is being acquired or an existing one is being substantially widened. In some instances a narrower right-of-way can give reasonably satisfactory service and should be utilized where any further right-of-way widening

would be unduly expensive, however, such reductions must be kept to a minimum. Following is a summary of the standards for each type of major street and the dominant types of traffic movement that it should accommodate.

1. Express or Interstate Routes

A major defect of virtually all major streets is the delay and hazards to safety encountered by the traffic at the many intersections or crossings. A new type of street has been developed within comparatively recent years to eliminate these disadvantages and defects.

This new street is commonly known as an express highway. It has no intersections at grade, and the cross streets are either carried over or under and reached by ramps. Abutting property has no direct access to the express highway, but instead is serviced by local service streets or by existing streets paralleling the express routes. These local service streets are connected to the express highway at various intervals. The opposing streams of traffic on the express highway are separated by medial strips, which is a further improvement to safety.

Interstate highways are express highways, at least in urban areas, and these are included in a federal system of such routes. In 1941, the President appointed a national interregional highway committee which recommended a system of such highways extending throughout the United States, connecting practically all of the major urban centers containing 100,000 or more population. This system has since been officially

adopted and comprises some 41,000 miles of highway throughout the United States with connections into Canada and Mexico. The Interstate System, as presently approved, will connect 42 state capitals and 90% of all cities of more than 50,000 population. Though it will comprise but 1.2% of all U. S. road mileage when completed, it is expected to carry 20% of the Nation's total traffic load. Some of the existing highways in the New Orleans area are included in this interstate system as will be described later.

The proposed cross-section for the express routes provides a minimum right-of-way width of 220 feet. The Interstate System will provide a right-of-way width varying from 150 feet in rural sections to 300 feet in urban areas. The paving for each express lane of moving traffic should be at least 12 feet. Local service roads should be provided and the local traffic should be separated from traffic using the express lanes by a strip of adequate width for planting and landscape treatment. A shoulder should be available for the storage of stalled automobiles, or else the planting strip should be designed to serve in this capacity as indicated on the cross section.

Within urban areas, such routes are frequently either elevated or depressed so as to facilitate crossing with other major streets. Because of the large expenditures involved in acquiring property for these express highways, as well as making the necessary improvements, including the grade separations, only a minimum amount of such mileage

can be justified in each urban area. They are, however, a most important part of the major street system, and should be located so that they serve the business district and give substantial relief to the heavy volume now using the surface streets.

## 2. Semi-Expressways

Since financial limitations prevent the development of an extensive system of express highways throughout the urban area, it is essential to obtain some of the advantages of express highways at more reasonable costs. In New Orleans, where several existing streets have such wide rights-of-way, usually the result of their having previously been used for storm drainage purposes, it is possible to develop some such streets, which for the purpose of this report, are classified as semi-expressways. Major street systems in other cities also proposed development of similar facilities.

Plate I shows a cross-section of a semi-expressway that is currently being developed within the existing right-of-way of Victory Drive. The major elements of the plan provided for the construction of the existing two-way pavements along each side of the right-of-way which will be used by local traffic and for the future development of four lanes of moving traffic in the present neutral ground. These four inner lanes will have many of the characteristics of expressways in that they will have no contact with the traffic entering and leaving the highway from the adjoining property and can safely be traveled at comparatively high speeds. All

major intersections will be controlled by traffic signals, progressively timed so that traffic moving along the expressways will experience a minimum of stops. Traffic entering along the intervening minor streets can use the service roads until an opening is reached for moving them onto the express routes.

Eventually, as traffic on the semi-expressways and on the cross streets greatly increases in volume, it may be necessary to separate the intersections, but even this will be far less expensive than providing a complete elevated or depressed structure.

### 3. Six-lane Major Streets

Several wide, direct major streets, accommodating at least three lanes of moving traffic in each direction and two lanes for parked vehicles are needed to accommodate traffic volumes in the New Orleans area. The majority of these routes should extend from the residential areas to the central business district and the major industrial centers. A few of these wide routes are also needed to accommodate the heavier cross-town and by-pass traffic movements. Canal Street is an outstanding example of a partially developed six-lane thoroughfare accommodating radial traffic movements between the residential section and the business district.

Substantial numbers of trucks and buses will also use these major streets, and the individual lanes should be 11 or 12 feet in width. A wide neutral ground should separate opposing lanes of traffic, a portion of which could be paved at important intersections to accommodate cars

making left-hand turns. An overall right-of-way of 134 feet is desirable for this type of street; however, since New Orleans already has a number of streets with a right-of-way of 107 to 110 feet in width, these might be improved with a narrower neutral ground to accommodate three moving lanes of traffic rather than to incur large expenditures for widening purposes.

The improvement of these six-lane major streets is far less costly than of express highways and they will carry a large majority of the local vehicular movements.

#### 4. Four-lane Major Streets

Many of the major streets accommodating cross-town traffic movements, as well as some of the streets providing access to the business and industrial centers, should provide for two lanes of travel in each direction and for two lanes of parked cars. These streets will also serve as feeders between the residential sections and the six-lane radial routes.

Where practicable, an overall right-of-way of 110 feet should be provided for this type of street, providing for a wide pavement and a 22-foot neutral ground as shown on Plate 1, the neutral ground being particularly important to improve safety. Where existing streets in compactly developed sections now have a right-of-way of 84 to 88 feet, they can be improved with slightly narrowed pavements or sidewalks and a four-foot minimum neutral strip and still accommodate large volumes of



traffic.

In the normally developed portions of the urban area, these four-lane streets should be located approximately one-half mile apart. In outlying and sparsely settled section they can be spaced at greater intervals, even a mile or more.

#### 5. Secondary Major Streets

These are well-travelled local streets which serve primarily as feeders to the more important major routes. They may also serve as cross-town streets, and in some instances accommodate radial movements especially where the development is so compact that widening could not be economically justified. These streets should have a minimum right-of-way width of 64 feet. They should be improved with a 40-foot pavement. Where they are very heavily used, parking should be prohibited at least during the peak-hour rush periods.

The above standards should be approached as closely as possible in developing the major street system for New Orleans. In some instances, fixed local conditions will require some adjustments and minor variations. However, the city is fortunate in having so many wide rights-of-way, and a very adequate major street system can eventually be provided.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

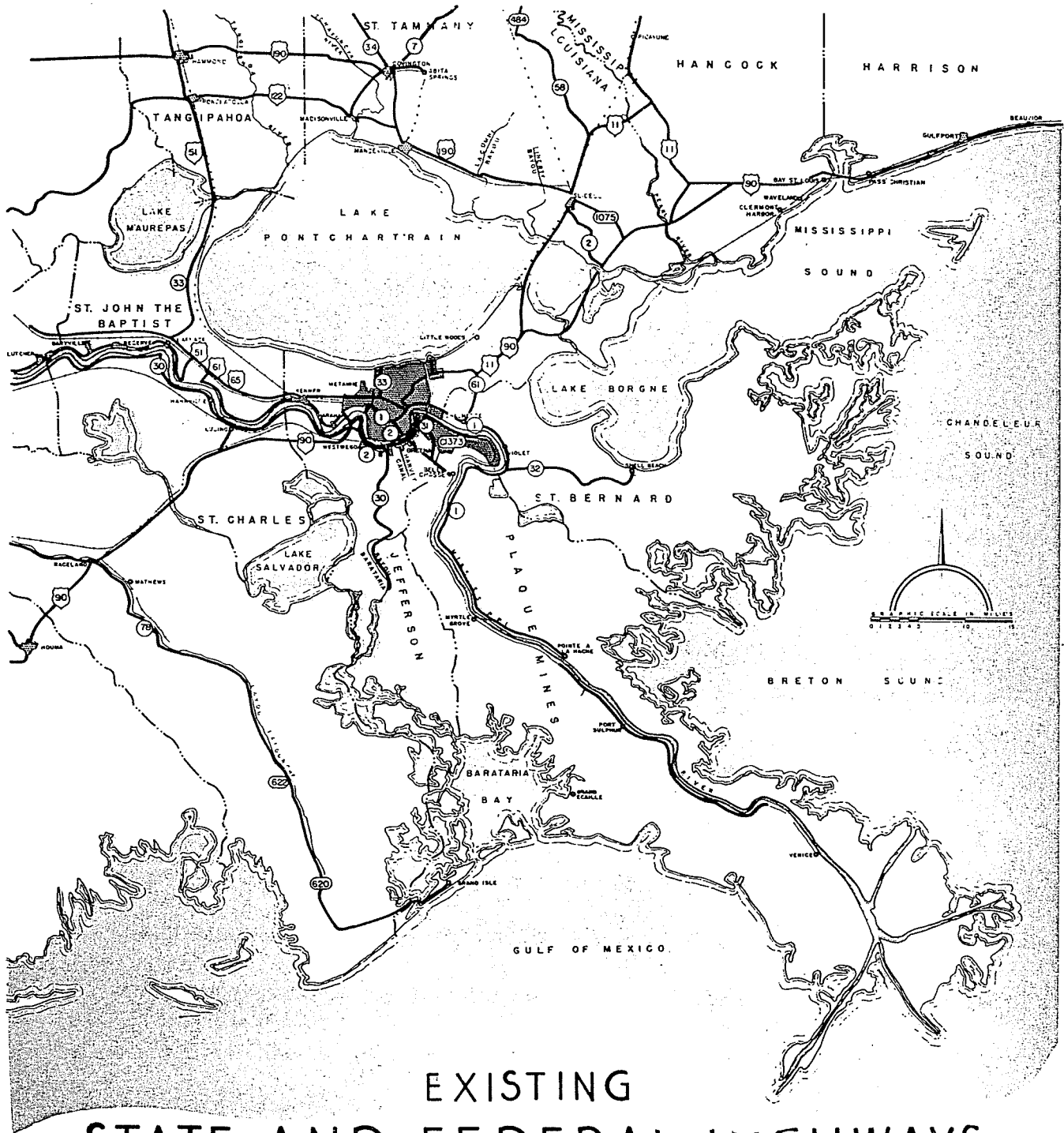
The following section contains data regarding the adequacy and defects of the existing street pattern and the volume of traffic using these streets.

### Existing State and Federal Highways

Plates 2 and 2-A show the location and extent of the existing state and federal highways within the city and region of New Orleans. The large majority of these routes are located in the northern part of the region, and very few are located between the city and the Gulf. This latter area is sparsely settled and only a few highways are needed to serve the population and to accommodate the traffic movements. The majority of these are state rather than federal highways and accommodate recreational and pleasure seekers.

Several federal highways serve the New Orleans area. U. S. 51, 61 and 65 enter the city from the west on the Airline Highway and connect the area with Mississippi on the north and with western Louisiana and Texas on the west. U. S. Routes 11 and 90 enter the city from the east on Gentilly Road. Highway 90 provides direct access eastward along the Gulf Coast while No. 11 extends around Lake Pontchartrain and northward into Alabama. U. S. 90 extends to the southwest over the Huey P. Long Bridge and serves southwestern Louisiana and the oil fields of that region.

# NEW ORLEANS REGION



## EXISTING STATE AND FEDERAL HIGHWAYS

### LEGEND

- (2)— STATE HIGHWAY
- (90)— FEDERAL HIGHWAY
- ▬ URBAN DEVELOPMENT

NOTE: ONLY PAVED ROADS ARE SHOWN.

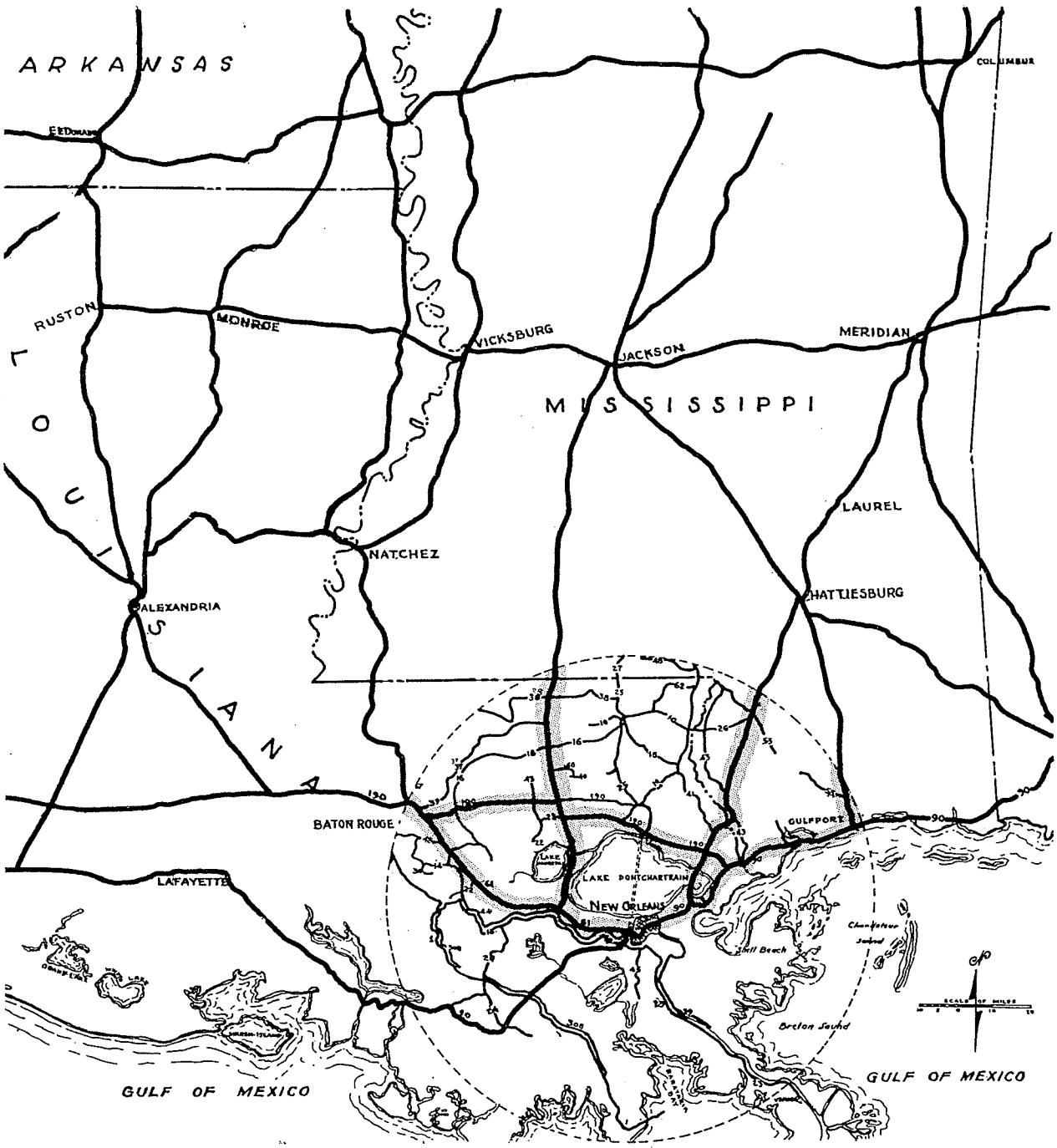
CITY PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION  
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW AND ASSOCIATES  
CITY PLANNING CONSULTANTS  
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

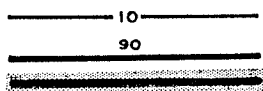
SOURCE: LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS

PLATE NO. 2  
CHAPTER NO. 4

# NEW ORLEANS REGION



## STATE AND FEDERAL HIGHWAYS



STATE HIGHWAYS  
 FEDERAL HIGHWAYS  
 FEDERAL EXPRESSWAY SYSTEM

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

PLATE - 2-A  
 CHAPTER - 4

DECEMBER 1959.  
 FILE - 473-2

The plates clearly show the influence of Lake Pontchartrain upon the location of important state and federal highways entering New Orleans from the north.

Even with the Pontchartrain Causeway, Lake Pontchartrain forms a barrier to the north of the city, however, New Orleans is generally well provided with connections to other sections of the country. Most of these highways now carry and will in the future carry large volumes of traffic, and substantial widening and improvement will be required. Further, the character and location of these highways within the urban area present major problems, for these are the most heavily used of all the major streets.

#### Existing Right-of-Way Widths

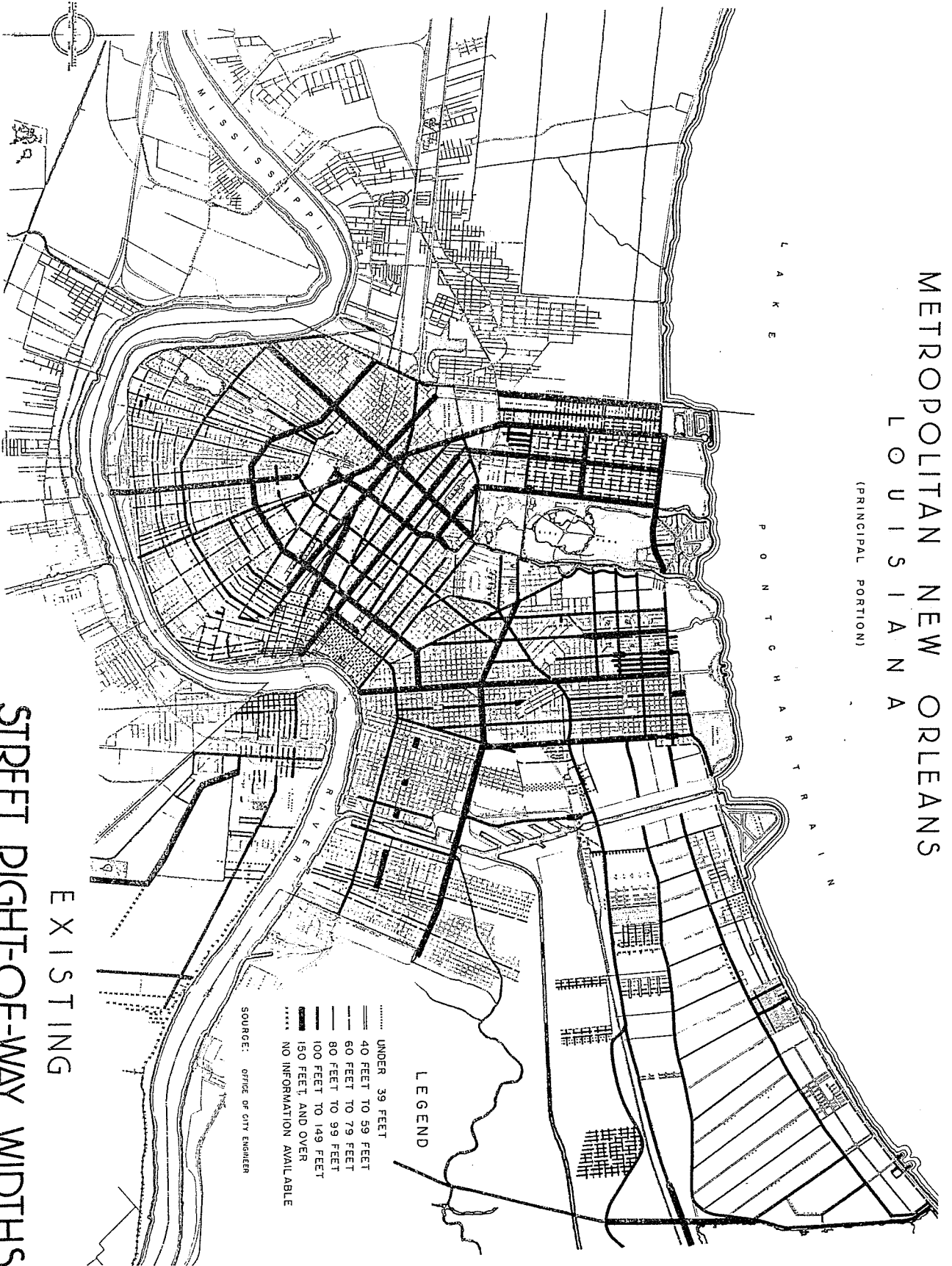
While the provision of a wide, durable pavement involves considerable expenditure, this is actually a minor amount when compared with the cost of acquiring wide rights-of-way, particularly when the adjoining property is improved.

Plate 3 graphically shows, according to major classifications, the right-of-way widths of all existing streets within the corporate limits of New Orleans. Incomplete and widely scattered sources made it impractical to secure similar data regarding street widths in the other portions of the metropolitan area.

The city is particularly fortunate in possessing a number of streets having rights-of-way 150 feet or more in width. While these

# METROPOLITAN NEW ORLEANS LOUISIANA

(PRINCIPAL PORTION)



EXISTING

## STREET RIGHT-OF-WAY WIDTHS

- LEGEND
- ..... UNDER 39 FEET
  - 40 FEET TO 59 FEET
  - 60 FEET TO 79 FEET
  - 80 FEET TO 99 FEET
  - 100 FEET TO 149 FEET
  - 150 FEET AND OVER
  - ..... NO INFORMATION AVAILABLE

SOURCE: OFFICE OF CITY ENGINEER

CITY PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION OF NEW ORLEANS  
 BASE MAP APPROVED AUGUST 12, 1948  
 HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW & ASSOCIATES  
 CITY PLANNING CONSULTANTS  
 SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

PLATE NO. 3  
 CHAPTER NO. 4

result from the early necessity of solving the drainage problem rather than from foresight in anticipating modern traffic requirements, the important fact is that they exist.

The location of so many of these wide rights-of-way, extending from the central business district to the northwestern part of the city, is a particularly fortunate circumstance. Here are available wide routes that can economically be improved with wide pavements and accommodate one of the heaviest concentrations of local traffic volumes. The area northeast of the business district is also reasonably well served with wide rights-of-way, although not as extensively as in the area to the northwest.

It is in the uptown area south of Claiborne Avenue that there is a serious lack of wide streets. Here is the most compactly developed portion of the city, and large volumes of automobiles originate here for movement to the central business district and to other sections of the city. However, it contains no street leading to the central business area which has a width of 150 feet, and only one continuous street leading to the central business area that is more than 100 feet in width. There are a few streets that have right-of-way widths of 80 feet or more, but the large majority are less than 60 feet wide. The traffic problems in this section can be relieved with relatively few right-of-way acquisitions.

The developed portions of Algiers also have very few wide

rights-of-way, but a few wide routes do exist in the outlying section which can be well utilized as development expands.

While the majority of the wide streets are located between residential sections and the main business and industrial districts, some wide rights-of-way are also found in the outlying sections where they can be utilized for by-pass routes. In some areas, such as the northern part of Gentilly, there are too many of these wide streets. Only a limited portion of these are needed to accommodate the vehicular movements, and the remainder are too wide for modern residential requirements.

In contrast to the many wide streets found throughout the urban area are the very narrow routes found within and near the central business district. Here is concentrated the largest volume of vehicular traffic, yet the majority of the street rights-of-way within and near the business district, particularly in the Vieux Carre section, are only 39 or less feet in width. This is entirely inadequate, even if completely utilized for pavement. No portion of these narrow streets should be used for parking, and the present system of one-way traffic movement is the only means of accommodating traffic in this congested section.

Another serious defect in the existing street rights-of-way is the absence of any wide routes serving the important industrial and dock area along the riverfront.



### Existing Pavement Widths

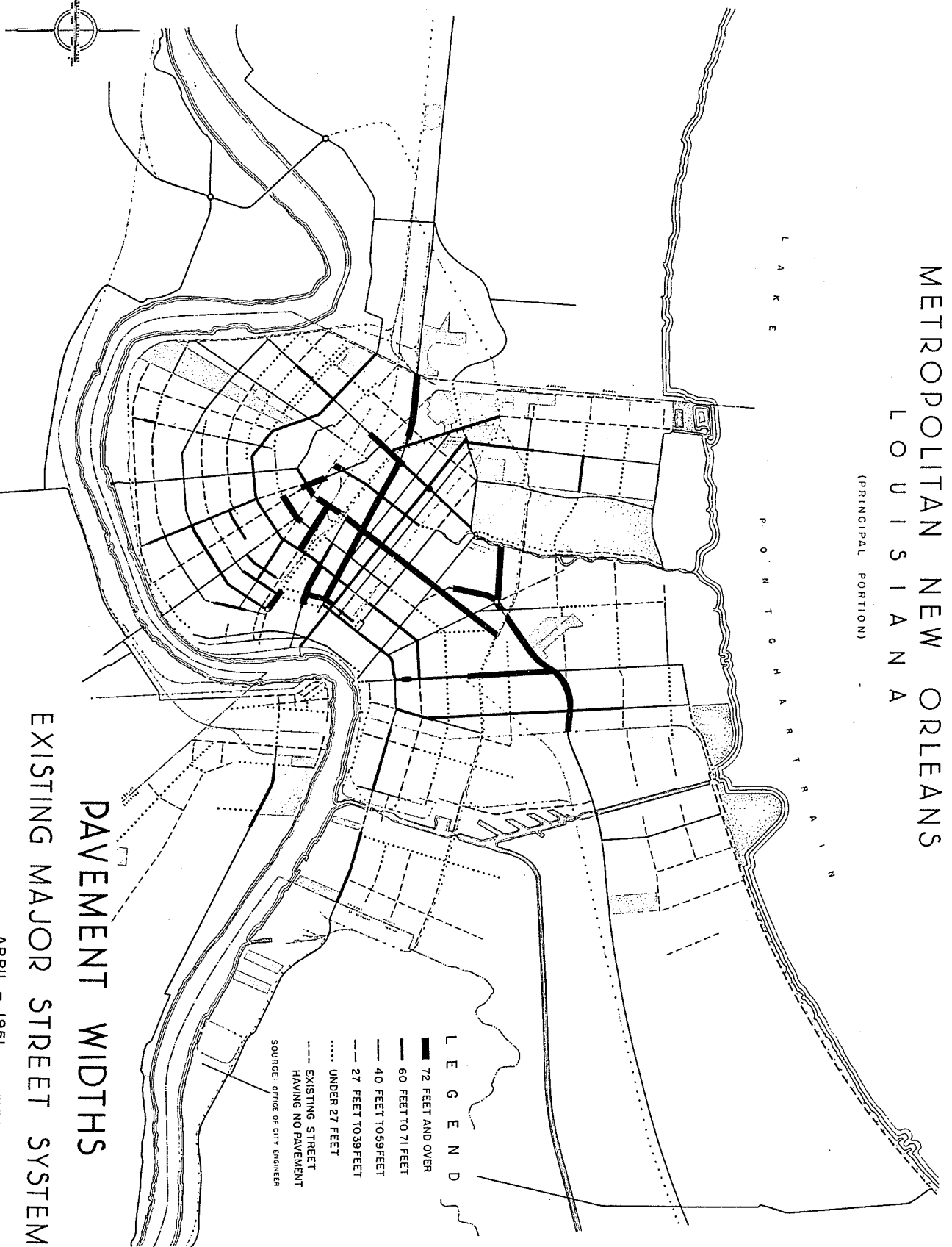
The width of existing pavements largely determine the ability of vehicles to move about the city. Plate 4 shows, according to major classifications, the existing pavement widths on the major streets.

This plate also reveals a concentration of the wide pavements in the area northwest of the main business district, which extends from the shopping center to the residential sections. There are comparatively few such wide streets in the heavily developed uptown area. St. Charles is the only route with a wide pavement, and even this is not as wide as is found on streets northwest of the business district. The other major streets in this area have pavement widths varying from 27 to 39 feet, which is entirely too narrow to accommodate the large volumes of traffic moving in this section of the city.

Within recent years a considerable number of wide pavements have been constructed in the eastern and northeastern sections of the city. (These have occurred since Plate 4 was prepared). Although not all of the wide rights-of-way are fully improved in this section, traffic movement to the central business district has been considerably improved even though it is not as convenient as it should be.

The plate also reveals an entirely inadequate system of wide pavements in the intensively developed industrial sections along the riverfront. Automobile and truck movement in this area is handicapped by inadequate rights-of-way and pavement widths.

METROPOLITAN NEW ORLEANS  
 LOUISIANA  
 (PRINCIPAL PORTION)



EXISTING MAJOR STREET SYSTEM  
 PAVEMENT WIDTHS

APRIL - 1951

CITY PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION OF NEW ORLEANS  
 BASE MAP APPROVED AUGUST 12, 1948  
 HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW & ASSOCIATES CITY PLANNING CONSULTANTS  
 SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

PLATE NO. 4  
 CHAPTER 4

NOTE: STREET WIDTHS SHOWN ON THIS MAP ARE BASED ON THE 1948 CITY ENGINEER'S SURVEY OF STREETS IN ORLEANS PARISH ACCORDING TO THE PLAN OF THE CITY ENGINEER. SOURCE: OFFICE OF CITY ENGINEER

### Pavement Widths in 1927

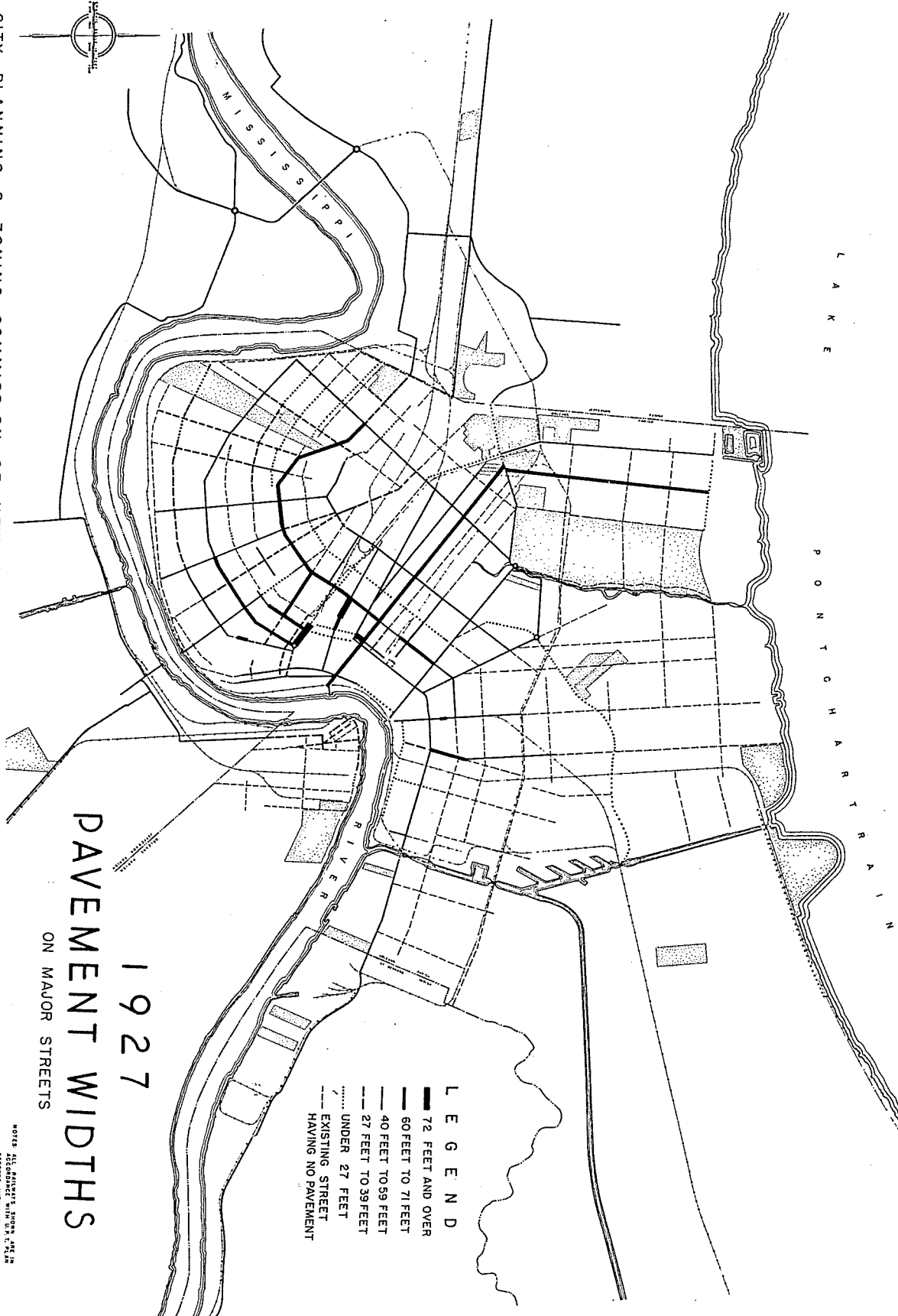
Plate 5 was prepared to show the width of pavements existing on major streets in 1927 when the first major street plan was prepared. A comparison of Plates 4 and 5 reveals the substantial progress that has been made in improving major streets during the past twenty years. The majority of the early wide pavements were then concentrated northwest of the business district, and additional improvements have since been made in this area. It is in the northeastern sections of the city that the major progress has been made. Practically no wide pavements existed in this area in 1927. No substantial improvements were made during the past 20 years in providing wide pavements in the uptown area, yet there has been a tremendous increase in the number of cars traveling through this section.

The pavement improvements on such routes as Claiborne, Washington, Broad, Gentilly, Franklin and Elysian Fields Avenues, have all been in accord with the early major street plan, and are conclusive evidence of the advantages that can be obtained from consistently following a long-range program. Vehicular traffic movement would be much more difficult in New Orleans today if such improvements had not been made in accordance with the early major street plan.

Although not shown graphically, considerable progress has also been made in certain right-of-way acquisitions and widenings. Among these are right-of-way acquisitions for Robert E. Lee, Earhart, DeSaix,

# METROPOLITAN NEW ORLEANS LOUISIANA

(PRINCIPAL PORTION)



## 1927 PAVEMENT WIDTHS ON MAJOR STREETS

- LEGEND**
- 72 FEET AND OVER
  - 60 FEET TO 71 FEET
  - 40 FEET TO 59 FEET
  - - - 27 FEET TO 39 FEET
  - ..... UNDER 27 FEET
  - EXISTING STREET
  - HAVING NO PAVEMENT

CITY PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION OF NEW ORLEANS  
DATE MAP APPROVED AUGUST 12, 1927  
HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW & ASSOCIATES  
CITY PLANNING CONSULTANTS  
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

PLATE NO. 5  
CHAPTER 4

NOTES: 1. ALL DISTRICTS, ZONES, AND AREAS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE.  
2. STREETS WITH VARIABLE WIDTHS ARE SHOWN BY A LINE WITH A WAVE ON ONE SIDE.  
3. STREETS UNDER 27 FEET WIDE ARE SHOWN ONLY ON THE PLAN.  
4. ALL DISTRICTS, ZONES, AND AREAS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE.  
5. SEE CITY PLAN FOR MORE DETAILS.

and MacArthur Boulevards; Marconi, Wisner, Southline, Press and Victory Drives; St. Bernard, General Meyer, Fillmore, Loyola and Simon Bolivar Avenues, France Road, Airline and Veterans Highways, Eastern Expressway and Pontchartrain Expressway, and the right-of-way widenings on Carrollton Avenue, Metairie Road, Basin Street, Dryades Street and Louisa Street. Other important widening projects now in progress are Basin-Orleans Streets, Almonaster Avenue, Union Street and Victory Drive.

#### Existing Traffic Flow

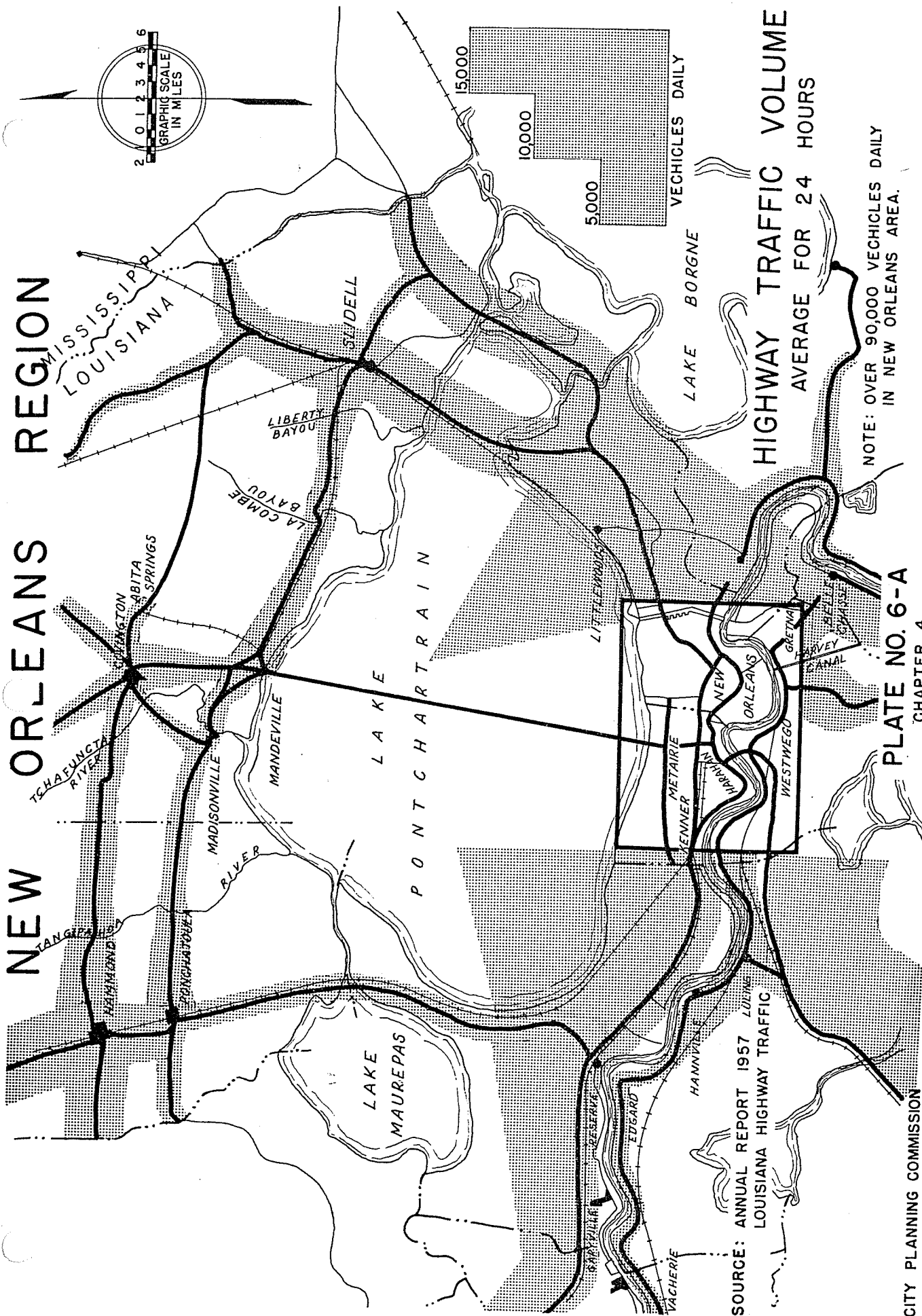
Plates 6 and 6-A graphically show the 24-hour volume of vehicular traffic using the principal streets within the New Orleans Metropolitan Area. This plan (Plate 6) was prepared for the Louisiana Department of Highways by Andrews and Clark, Consulting Engineers, under the direction of Mr. Robert Moses. Plate 6-A generally shows the volume of traffic on the roadways in the Metropolitan Area in 1957.

A major traffic study of the Metropolitan Area is being conducted by the Louisiana Department of Highways with the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Roads.

The concentration of traffic upon a comparatively few streets, such as Gentilly Road, Broad Street, Claiborne Avenue, Canal Street, Tulane Avenue and St. Charles Avenue, clearly reveals the importance of an adequate major street system. While the many other streets also carry a number of automobiles daily, this movement does not even



# NEW ORLEANS REGION



SOURCE: ANNUAL REPORT 1957  
LOUISIANA HIGHWAY TRAFFIC

NOTE: OVER 90,000 VEHICLES DAILY  
IN NEW ORLEANS AREA.

PLATE NO. 6-A  
CHAPTER 4

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

DECEMBER, 1959

approach the volumes using the wide and strategically located routes.

The large volumes of traffic approaching the central business district are particularly evident. For example, in 1958, Canal Street at Claiborne Avenue was carrying approximately 22,500 vehicles during an average day from 7:00 A. M. to 7:00 P. M. The discharge of this large volume of traffic upon the narrow streets within the central district results in serious congestion and delays. Some of this traffic near the business district is also destined for the docks and industrial area upon the nearby river front.

It is only within the central portion of the city that serious congestion now results since in the outlying areas the volumes of traffic are not large. An origin and destination survey conducted by the Louisiana Department of Highways in 1944-45 further revealed that practically all traffic entering the New Orleans area is destined for some point within the city. This study revealed that 85.1 per cent of all automobile trips on the city's streets began and ended their journey within the metropolitan area; that 14.6 per cent either began or ended their trip within the area, and that only 0.3 per cent had both origin and destination outside the New Orleans Metropolitan Area. While the war-time restrictions had some effect upon the number of through movements, there is a much smaller volume of movements through New Orleans than in other cities of similar size because of its location as a terminal city.



Large volumes of cross-town traffic also occur within the city, particularly along Carrollton Avenue and Broad Street, and also along Claiborne Avenue. While part of this volume is the result of traffic moving from certain residential areas to the wide radial routes leading to the business district, a large amount of it is traffic moving from one residential section to another, or from a residential section to an industrial area, and attempting to by-pass the congested business section. This type of traffic must be properly accommodated in a comprehensive system of major thoroughfares.

The concentration of large volumes of traffic traveling to the business district indicates the general location for the express highways. These should be so located that they will accommodate a substantial portion of this movement. The large volume of traffic on St. Charles Avenue also presents a difficult problem. This street is now used practically to capacity during the peak-hour periods.

## THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

In 1946 and 1958 the New Orleans Public Service, Inc. conducted surveys of the number of persons entering the central business district via vehicles during an average business day. For the purpose of the study the district boundaries were Claiborne Avenue on the north, Julia Street on the west, the river, and St. Peter and Lafitte Streets on the east.

The comparative results of the studies are revealed in the following table:

TABLE I

Passengers entering the Central Business District

by

	<u>Mass Trans- portation</u>	<u>Private Automobile</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
1946	139,000	111,000	7,000	257,000
1958	101,000	144,000	13,000	258,000

Two important trends are shown by the table. One, the number of passengers entering the central business district appears to be relatively stable. Secondly, there is a significant increase in passengers entering the central business district by private automobile and a corresponding decrease in the number utilizing mass transportation.

The 1946 data revealed that the New Orleans Business District

was more intensively used than similar districts in other large metropolitan areas. For example, an average of 428 persons per 1000 population in the metropolitan area visited the central business district at least once daily, whereas, in the St. Louis Metropolitan Area this ratio was only 250 persons per 1000, and in Chicago the ratio was only 178 persons per 1000. This extensive use of the local business district partly resulted from the fact that large sub-shopping centers had not as yet been developed in the New Orleans area. Although such centers have developed as the area has grown, their effect cannot adequately be measured until after the 1960 census.

Because of the unusual importance of the local business district it is essential that adequate provision be made for future growth and that the major street system, especially the express highways, be properly related to the probable future boundaries of this area.

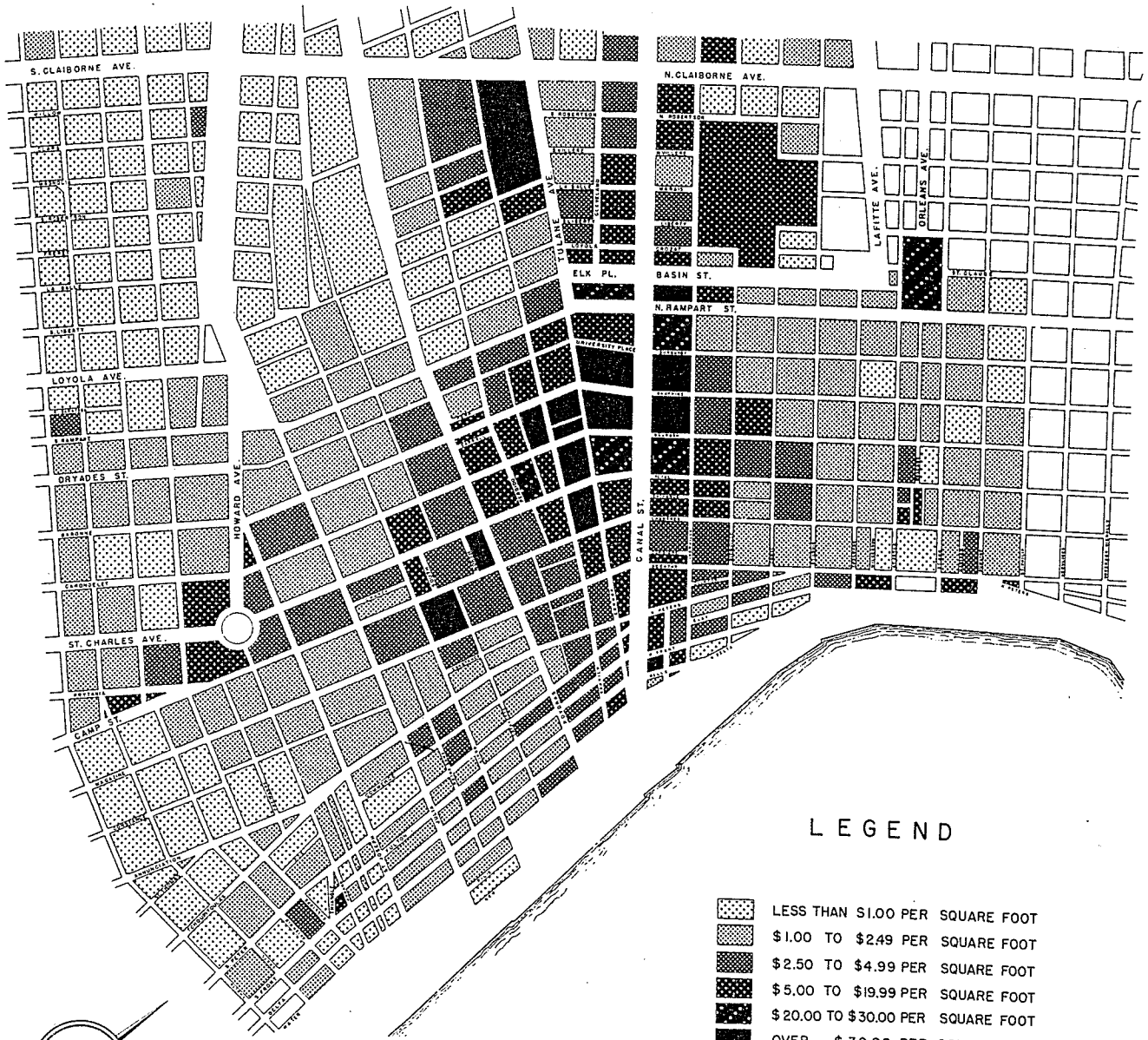
#### Assessed Valuation - 1948 & 1959

Plates 7 and 7-A graphically show the average square foot assessed valuation of land and buildings for each block within and near the central business district. A comparison of the charts reveals little change in the assessed valuation of property in the core area. The assessed valuation represents approximately 30 per cent of the actual normal value.

The locations of the higher assessed values generally indicate the extent of the central business district. The highest values are

# CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

NEW ORLEANS LOUISIANA



## LEGEND

	LESS THAN \$1.00 PER SQUARE FOOT
	\$1.00 TO \$2.49 PER SQUARE FOOT
	\$2.50 TO \$4.99 PER SQUARE FOOT
	\$5.00 TO \$19.99 PER SQUARE FOOT
	\$20.00 TO \$30.00 PER SQUARE FOOT
	OVER \$30.00 PER SQUARE FOOT

1948

## ASSESSED VALUATION PER SQUARE FOOT

( INCLUDES BOTH LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS )

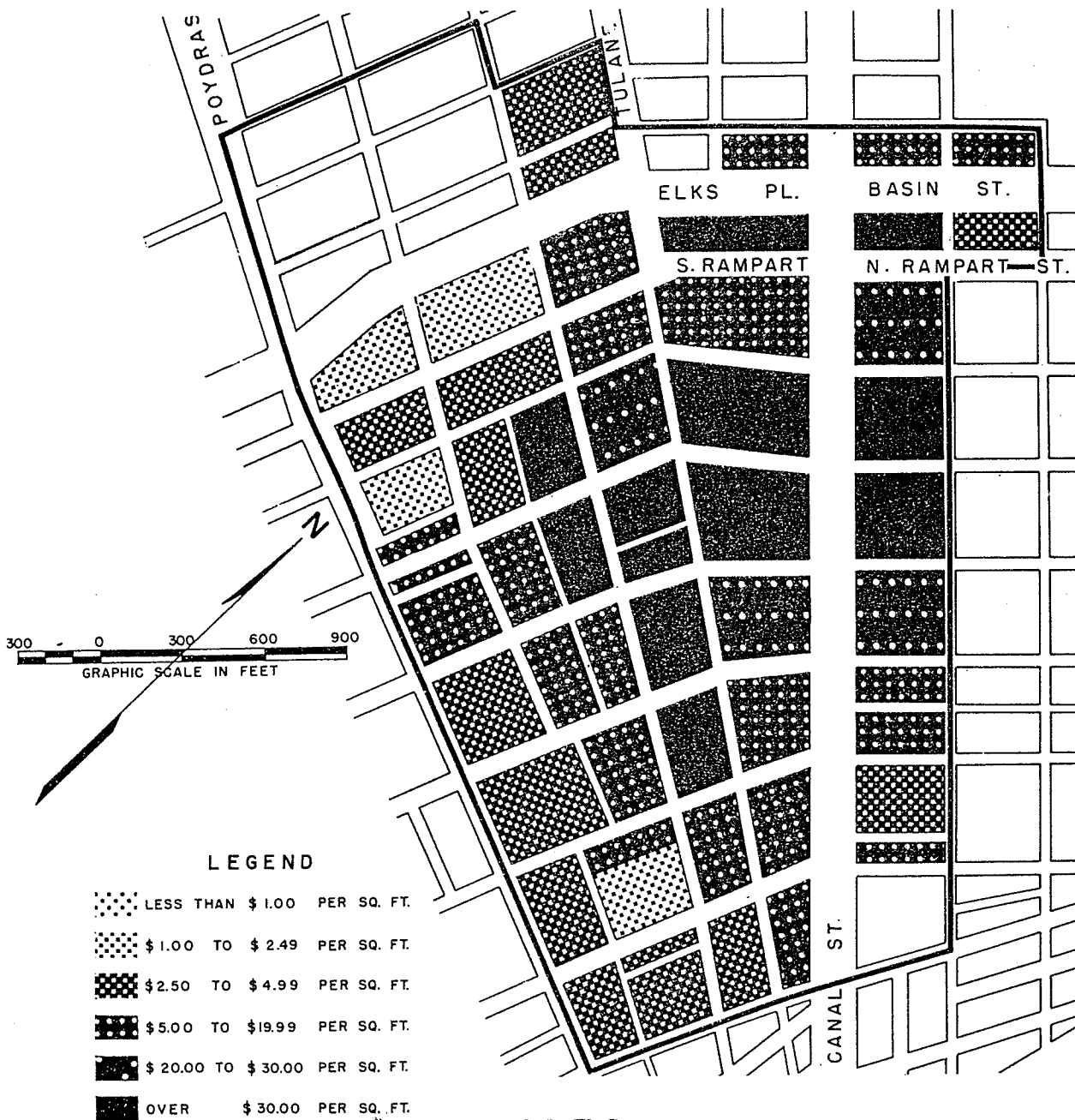
CITY PLANNING AND  
ZONING COMMISSION  
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW  
AND ASSOCIATES  
CITY PLANNING CONSULTANTS  
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

SOURCE: OFFICE OF PARISH ASSESSORS

PLATE NO. 7  
CHAPTER NO. 4

CORE AREA  
**CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT**  
 NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA



1959

**ASSESSED VALUATION PER SQUARE FOOT**

(INCLUDES BOTH LAND AND IMPROVEMENTS)

PLATE NO. 7A  
 CHAPTER NO. 4

along Canal Street and in the second block south of Canal frontage between Camp and Baronne Streets. Here the average assessed valuation of land and buildings is over \$30.00 per square foot. The influence of a wide street carrying large volumes of traffic upon commercial property values is clearly apparent.

The higher values extend in a north and south direction from Bienville to Lafayette. West of Lafayette, blocks containing any comparatively high values are widely scattered except around Lee Circle and along St. Charles Street. There are practically no blocks west of Julia Street that have a high assessed valuation of either land or buildings. Neither do the higher values extend east of Magazine Street, particularly south of Poydras Street. Below Magazine Street the area is primarily used for industry rather than for commercial purposes and the majority of the valuation are less than \$2.50 per square foot.

#### Probable Future Extent of the Business District

A land use study reveals that practically all blocks containing high assessed valuations are utilized for commercial rather than industrial use. More than 187 acres within the central business district are now occupied by commercial development. Although the growth of this area may be much less rapid in the future, it is essential that provisions be made for some expansion. Further, the expansion should be along horizontal rather than vertical lines since the streets are already con-

gested and off-street parking facilities must be provided along with the expansion.

### Direction of Growth

It is the direction of this growth that will affect the location of major streets, particularly the expressways. Little or no expansion can or should occur to the north for this is the Vieux Carre section and is not adaptable for the type of commercial development found in central business districts. Neither is there opportunity for much additional expansion to the west under present conditions. However, certain street improvements have enabled and will continue to encourage more intensive development between Baronne Street and Claiborne Avenue. Some new commercial structures may be located west of the Civic Center between the hospital development and Canal Street but these will be more of a nature relating to the hospitals than to the business district. The new Loyola-Basin Street forms the logical boundary of westward expansion of the central business district core area, especially with the public buildings and railroad uses located west of this street.

Little expansion of the business district is expected to the east because of the river, the extensive industrial uses, and port facilities now located in this area.

As a result of these natural restrictions the major direction for business district expansion is towards the uptown area. This is a very logical location for new commercial growth since the uptown area is densely

populated. Also the present development of this area adjacent to the business district can easily be adapted to the type of uses needed in the business district. Even though the streets are narrow they now accommodate much traffic movement and some pavement widening can be accomplished. As borne out by later data, the express highway is logically related to this area.

Studies indicate that the higher values will probably not extend much beyond Julia Street which is the logical boundary for the future business center. The growth of the business district to this boundary will result in a compact and logically located district containing adequate area to accommodate all anticipated requirements.

#### Twelve-Hour Volume of Traffic Entering and Leaving Business District

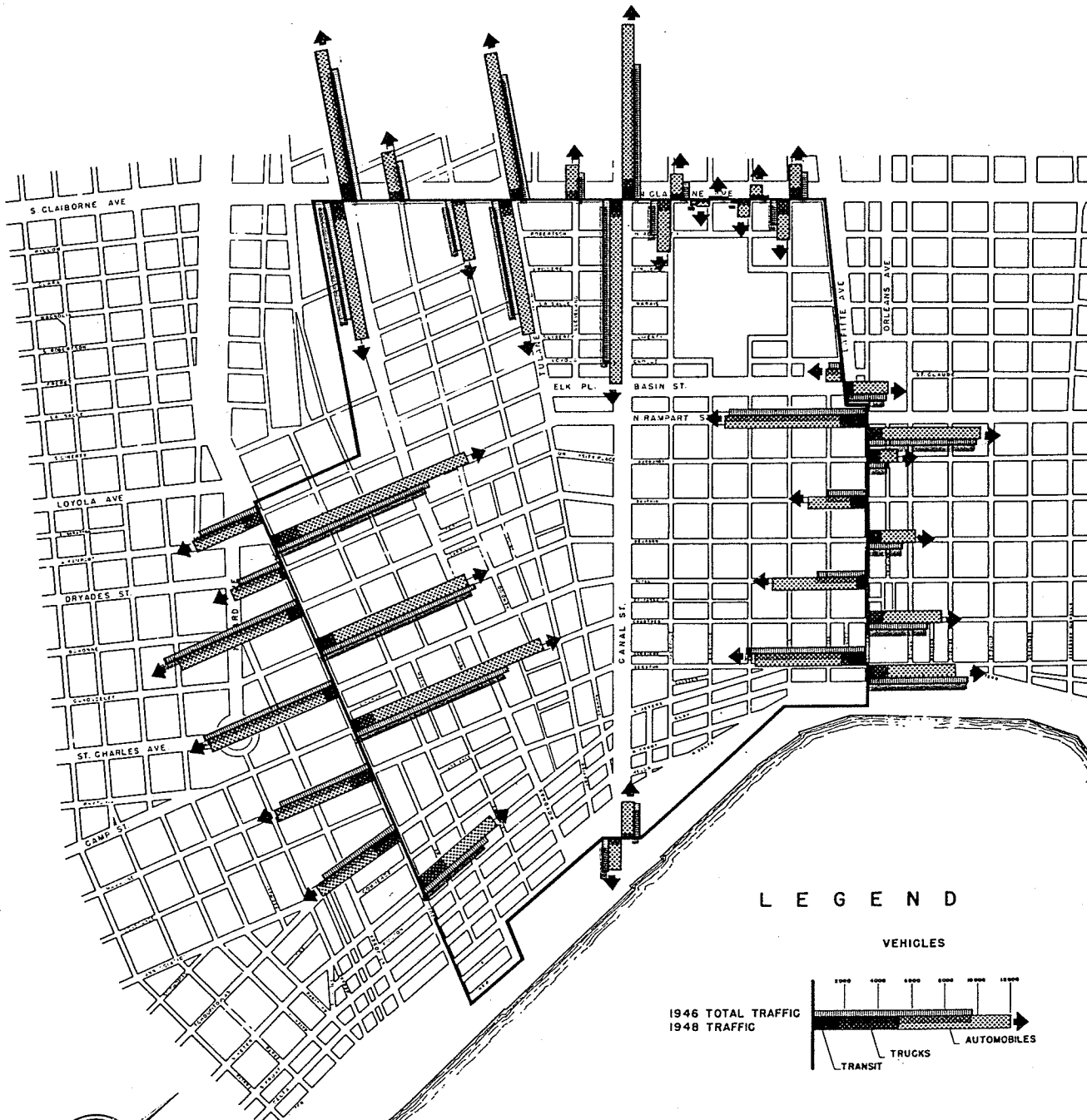
Plates 8 and 8-A graphically show the volume of vehicular traffic entering and leaving the business district on each street during a typical business day in 1946 and 1948, and in 1946 and 1956. Data for the 1946 and 1956 volumes was compiled by the New Orleans Public Service Company and that for 1948 by sample counts which were adjusted to the 1946 data. The 1948 and 1956 volumes are differentiated between passenger automobiles, trucks and transit vehicles while only total volumes are shown for 1946.

Plates 8 and 8-A show the large volumes of traffic entering the business district from the west and south. To the west the volume is primarily concentrated on four streets, namely, Earhart, Poydras, Tulane



# CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

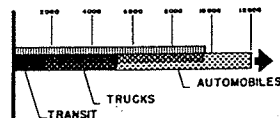
NEW ORLEANS LOUISIANA



## LEGEND

VEHICLES

1946 TOTAL TRAFFIC  
1948 TRAFFIC



NOTES: 1948 FIGURES REPRESENT INTERPOLATION OF 16 HOUR COUNT OF MAY AND APRIL 1946 AND 2 HOUR COUNT OF DECEMBER 1948.

# 1946 AND 1948 TWELVE HOUR TRAFFIC VOLUME

ENTERING AND LEAVING CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

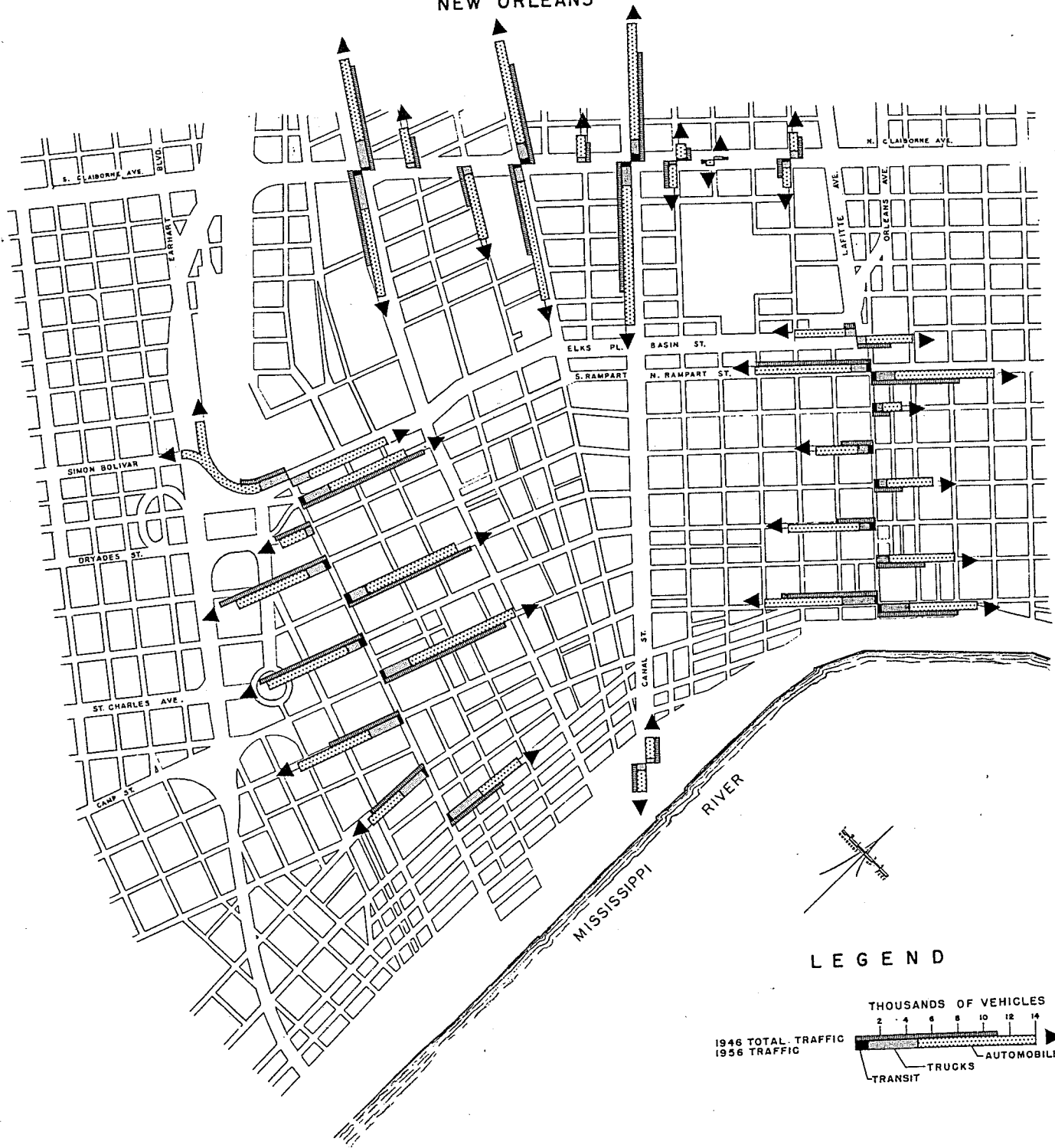
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AND ASSOCIATES  
CITY PLANNING CONSULTANTS  
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

SOURCES: "TRAFFIC SURVEY, CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT, 1946"  
NEW ORLEANS PUBLIC SERVICE INCORPORATED.

PLATE NO. 8  
CHAPTER NO. 4

# CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT NEW ORLEANS



## 1946 AND 1956 TWELVE HOUR TRAFFIC VOLUME ENTERING AND LEAVING CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

SOURCE: NEW ORLEANS PUBLIC SERVICE INCORPORATED

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION OF NEW ORLEANS

PLATE NO. 8-A  
CHAPTER NO. 4

AUGUST 1957

and Canal. All four of these have two-way movements and are among the widest streets in the major street system. Only small volumes of traffic use other streets in this area, primarily because they extend for only short distances. These volumes may be considerably altered with the completion of the Pontchartrain Expressway scheduled for dedication in early 1960.

There are several heavily travelled streets leaving and entering the central business district from the uptown area. However, because of the narrow pavements, the most of these accommodate only one-way movements. Rampart and Camp Streets are particularly heavily travelled streets. It is assumed that Dryades Street will also be heavily travelled as soon as the current widening program is completed. As the river is approached the streets carry a much smaller volume of traffic. Because of the wholesale nature of the development on Magazine, Tchoupitoulas and S. Peters Streets, the traffic capacity of these streets is seriously reduced. If the full width of the travel lanes on these streets could be used for moving traffic, their traffic volumes would be comparable to those of Rampart and Camp Streets.

The majority of streets carried more traffic in 1958 than in 1946. Much of this increase occurred in the entries from the west although there was some increase in all directions. The total 1958 inbound traffic was 125,242\* vehicles, in contrast to an inbound volume of 88,413 in

\*Based on the 1958 Cordon Traffic Study by New Orleans Public Service, Inc.

1946, an increase of nearly 42 per cent.

In 1958 transit vehicles represented only 27 per cent of the total traffic movements. Trucks represented nearly 19 per cent of the total volume, and, because of their size, absorb a much larger proportion of the limited street space.

#### Directional Flow of Traffic Entering Business District

Plates 9 and 9-A graphically show the volume of passenger automobiles entering the central business district during an average twelve-hour day, from each of the four major directions. Truck and transit vehicles are not included on this plan.

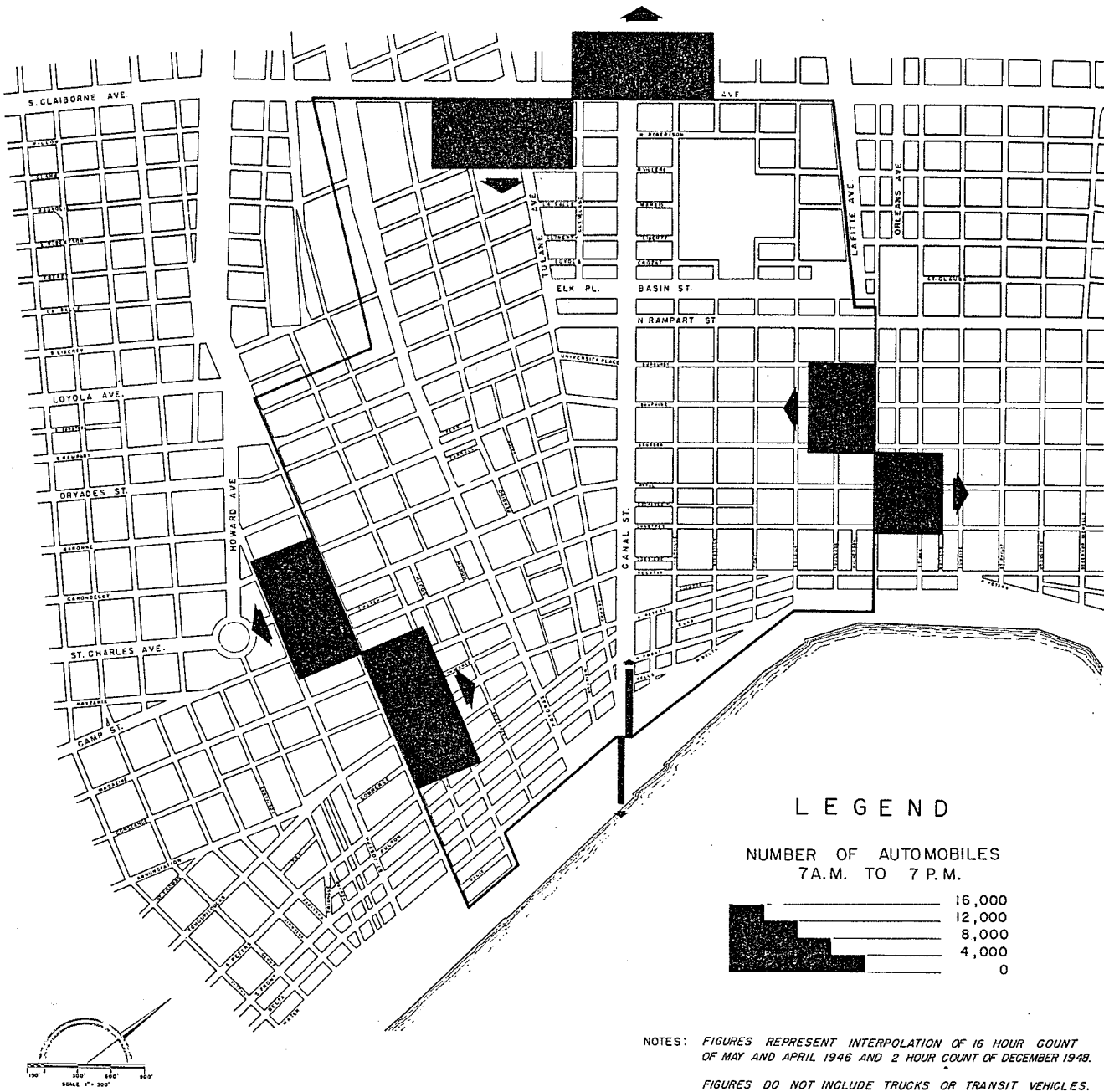
The volumes entering from the lake and uptown side in 1958 were the largest, there being 34,036 cars that entered from the lake side, and 29,081 entering from the uptown area. A total of 25,315 entered the district from the downtown side, whereas only 1,564 entered by the ferries from Algiers. Several of the streets carrying this directional volume of traffic are already congested at peak hours, and completion of the Interstate Expressway system will be necessary to carry the estimated future traffic volumes to and from the Central Business District.

#### Estimated Future Volume of Traffic Entering Business District

Plate 10 graphically shows the estimated volume of traffic that will enter the central business district from each of the four major directions during an average twelve-hour day in 1975. Again, this estimate is based only on the volume of passenger automobiles. If trucks in-

# CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

NEW ORLEANS LOUISIANA



1948

## DIRECTIONAL AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC VOLUMES

ENTERING AND LEAVING CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

CITY PLANNING AND  
ZONING COMMISSION  
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

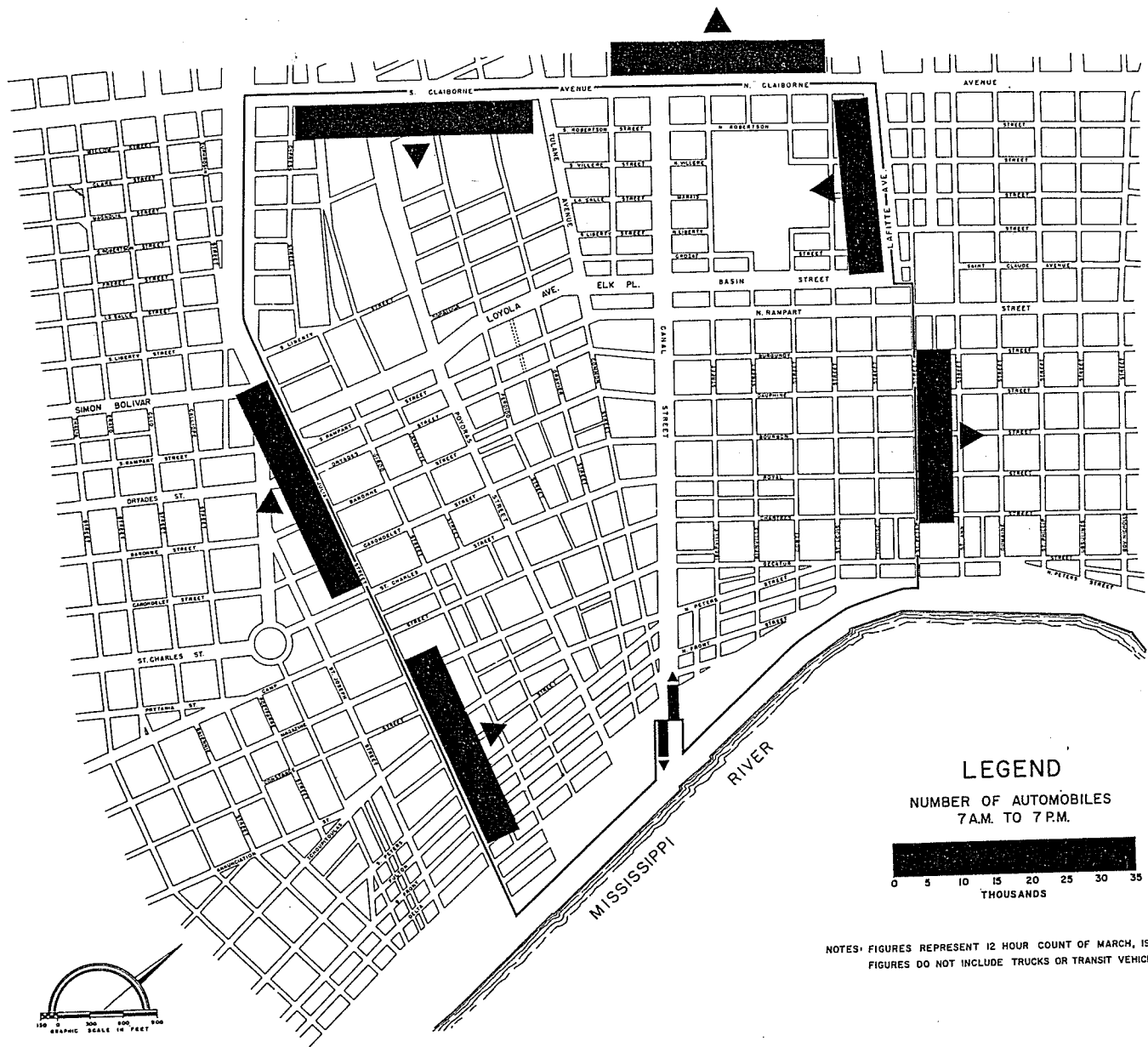
HARLAND BARTHOLOMEW  
AND ASSOCIATES  
CITY PLANNING CONSULTANTS  
SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI

PLATE NO. 9  
CHAPTER NO. 4

Aug 1948

# CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA



## 1958 DIRECTIONAL AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC VOLUMES ENTERING AND LEAVING CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

SOURCE: "CORDON TRAFFIC STUDY, CENTRAL  
BUSINESS DISTRICT, SPRING 1958"  
NEW ORLEANS PUBLIC SERVICE INC.

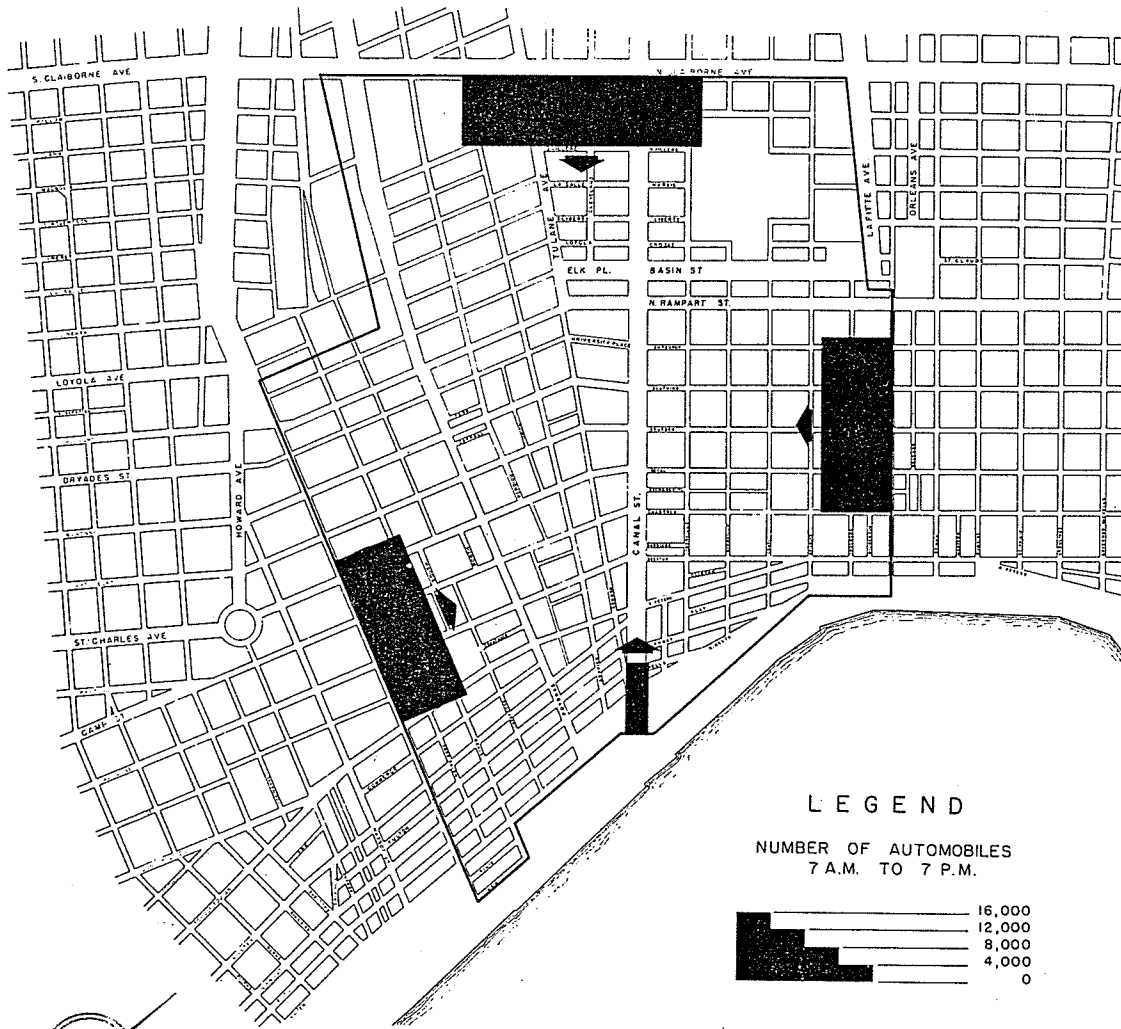
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

DECEMBER, 1959

PLATE NO. 9-A  
CHAPTER NO. 4

# CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

NEW ORLEANS LOUISIANA



NOTES: ESTIMATES ARE BASED UPON VOLUMES ORIGINATING IN MAJOR DIRECTIONAL SECTIONS OF THE METROPOLITAN AREA AND ARE NOT ADJUSTED TO PROPOSED HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS.

## ESTIMATED FUTURE DIRECTIONAL AUTOMOBILE TRAFFIC VOLUMES

ENTERING CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

CITY PLANNING AND  
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NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

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PLATE NO 10  
CHAPTER NO 4

crease in the same ratio, there will be nearly 20,000 additional movements on the streets serving the business district during this period.

The proportion of these cars that will enter the central business district during a typical day, from each of the four major directions, is based upon the normal street pattern, and no attempt has been made to estimate the directional distribution that will result from a system of express highways. The new Mississippi River Bridge has resulted in much more driving from the Algiers, Gretna and other west bank sections and its future effect upon the Canal Street Ferry is undetermined. In preparing the estimates the 1948 directional volumes were expanded and adjusted to the growth on the four sides of the business district, to the decrease in the number of persons per auto, and to general increase in the use of cars, estimated at ten per cent. The estimates for population growth on the four sides of the business district are based upon the future distribution of population discussed in Chapter III. The following table contains data regarding the increases in the number of auto registrations issued through the New Orleans office of the Motor Vehicle Division of the Louisiana Department of Revenue. It is believed that these figures represent the approximate number of registrations within the corporate limits of the city.



TABLE II  
Trend in Automobile Registration  
New Orleans, Louisiana

	<u>Automobile Registrations</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Persons Per Automobile</u>
1920	27,500	387,219	14.
1930	58,000	458,762	7.9
1940	81,618	494,537	6.1
1946	85,800	548,120*	6.41
1958	235,000	602,647	2.6

Substantial increases have occurred in automobile registration in New Orleans during the past three decades. In 1920 there were only 27,500 passenger automobiles while in 1946 there were 85,800. There has also been a substantial decrease in the number of persons per car, although this ratio is still slightly higher in New Orleans than the average for the entire country. The latest estimate for the entire United States indicates an average of 2.5(-) persons per car, whereas the ratio in New Orleans is 2.6. The number of persons per car will undoubtedly continue to follow the average of the entire country.

A comparison of Plates 9 and 10 reveals that the greatest increase will occur on the lake and the downtown side of the business district, for these are the directions in which much new growth will

\*1945 Population

Data from New Orleans Office of Motor Vehicle Division of the Louisiana State Department of Revenue.

occur. These estimated future volumes entering from the lake and downtown sides are 55,000 and 40,000 cars, respectively, in comparison with 33,000 and 21,000 that now enter from these directions. Some 40,000 cars are expected to enter from the uptown side in comparison with the nearly 35,000 that now enter from this direction daily. However, as was indicated in the population report, this area is now almost completely developed and the majority of the increase will result from more automobile registration and the increased use thereof.

There will also be a substantial increase in the number of cars entering from the Algiers area, particularly since much population growth is expected from this section. This estimated future volume might even double with the completion of the new river crossing.

The total 12-hour future volume is estimated at 142,000\* automobiles exclusive of trucks and transit vehicles - an increase of approximately 68 per cent over the 1948 volumes.

Preliminary checks reveal that the local street system can be so improved to accommodate these peak-hour volumes. However, two important requirements are evident. One is that the express highway system must be provided to assist in accommodating traffic volumes, especially to assist in carrying the large volumes entering from the northwest. Secondly, the streets within the central business district are entirely inadequate to accommodate these 142,000 cars, and an adequate

\*See Page 43 for an explanation of how this estimate was obtained.

system of off-street parking arranged around the periphery of the business district is essential. Parking will undoubtedly have to be prohibited upon all local business streets at least during rush hours in order to accommodate the large volume of moving vehicles.

## PROPOSED SYSTEM OF MAJOR STREETS

The location and type of routes that should comprise the future major street system in New Orleans are shown on Plate 11 covering both the west and east banks. The number and width of streets have been related to the population pattern proposed in Chapter III, and are also adjusted to the existing and probable future State and Federal highway system. The plan extends beyond the city limits, since no soundly conceived system of major streets can be cut off arbitrarily at a political boundary. While the Planning Commission and the City Council will have no official control over the routes beyond the corporate limits, it is imperative that the street system in these outlying sections be closely related to the major streets within the city. The Legislative and Administrative bodies responsible for street systems in these outlying areas can readily coordinate their individual improvements with the comprehensive plan.

The plan graphically indicates the type of each major street proposed. The detailed improvement of paving, neutral strips and the sidewalks should conform as closely as possible to the cross-sections shown on Plate 1. The delineations also indicate where new rights-of-way are required and where existing rights-of-way have to be widened or are of sufficient width. A large proportion of the major street system is identical to the proposals of the present major street plan. However, some adjustments have been made, particularly

in respect to express and semi-express routes, as well as a few adjustments in the four and six-lane major streets.

In general, the proposed improvements are self-explanatory, but following is a discussion of some of the more important recommendations.

#### Express or Interstate Highways

The express highway entering the metropolitan area from the west is located north of Airline Highway and near Veterans Highway in the right-of-way of the New Basin Canal, in accordance with the studies prepared by the State Highway Department. This is a very logical location because of available right-of-way relationship to existing development and to the urban development which the project will so conveniently serve. In the vicinity of South Claiborne Avenue the route swings south of the new Union Passenger Terminal and connects with the Mississippi River Bridge.

In order to achieve its major purpose of providing a direct express connection with the central business district, the expressway should be connected with Poydras Street west of Broad Street. Poydras Street should be widened and improved to provide expeditious traffic movement from this point into the central business district. This improvement is described in more detail in a later section dealing with "Proposed Expressway and Major Street Improvements for the Central Business District."

The expressway or interstate route entering from the east is located approximately one (1) mile south of the lake where ground is best suited for construction purposes and where suitable lake fill is available for raising the elevation of this route above tidal overflows which sometimes cut the City of New Orleans from northern approaches. This location is also well adjusted to the probable future population pattern and will have a minimum of interference with any existing development. Before nearing the Industrial Canal the route swings to the southwest and will be located adjacent to the right-of-way of the L & N Railroad which it will follow to Elysian Fields Avenue. The location of an expressway adjacent to a railroad is very sound in that there is a minimum of interference with local streets and of adverse influence upon residential development. At Elysian Fields Avenue the route will continue in a straight line meeting Claiborne Avenue at St. Bernard Avenue and continue along Claiborne Avenue until it joins the western route near Calliope Street.

A cross-town connection between these two expressways is proposed beginning near Florida Avenue and the western expressway and paralleling the Florida Avenue right-of-way to London Canal. From this point it will run parallel to Benefit Street joining the Eastern Expressway at Franklin Avenue.

Elysian Fields Avenue is proposed as an expressway from the Eastern Expressway to the river.

It is recommended that these three expressways and the Mississippi River Bridge Approach be connected by an elevated structure on the river side of the Vieux Carre and the central business district. Only a small volume of traffic desires to travel completely through the central business district and the majority of the traffic using the expressways could bypass the central business district. A wide six-lane surface highway will provide the necessary service on the river side to and from the business district. The general location and character of the expressway and the surface highway are shown on Plate 11.

Plate 11 also shows the suggested location of grade separation and interchange structures along the express highways. These are located at the intersections of important major streets. Although they are costly to construct, they must be provided at fairly close intervals to permit proper use of the expressway. It is the traffic originating within the local urban area, rather than the traffic originating outside thereof, that will make the major use of the expressways.

#### Semi-Expressways

Five semi-expressways are proposed. Poydras Street should be improved as a semi-expressway between LaSalle Street and the Pontchartrain Expressway interchange west of Broad Street. This improvement is very important in order to secure an adequate outlet for traffic using the Expressway to reach the business district. It will require some rearrangement of the railroad tracks now located within the street's

right-of-way.

The Chef Menteur semi-expressway cannot be improved within the street's present right-of-way. This route will provide a very convenient alternate for the Eastern Expressway and will serve as a trunk line to the industrial development anticipated following completion of the Tidewater Ship Channel. It is proposed to build a semi-expressway between Route 90 and the Eastern Expressway. This will provide the future residential and industrial development of the New Orleans East Tract with rapid access to other sections of the city.

The fourth semi-expressway is located along Florida Avenue in the northern part of the city. It is also proposed to connect this route with the Western Expressway at Pontchartrain Boulevard. The route will be a very important outer bypass. It will carry large volumes of cross-town traffic from residential areas to the industrial district and port facilities planned in the tidal area east of the Industrial Canal. Much of the necessary right-of-way is already available for this route.

The fifth semi-expressway route is Victory Drive in Algiers. This route will be the major traffic artery for Upper and Lower Algiers. It will branch into Tullis Drive which will cross the river and connect with the Paris Road Expressway, thus providing for a north-south bypass of the heavily developed portions of the city. Victory Drive service roads have been completed from the Mississippi



River Bridge Toll Plaza to Holiday Drive.

### Six-Lane Major Streets

The majority of the six-lane major streets will serve as radials and extend between residential sections and the central business district. They include such streets as Claiborne Avenue, Canal Street, Earhart Boulevard, Tulane Avenue, Poydras Street, St. Charles Avenue, Orleans Street and St. Claude Avenue. Fortunately, the majority of these now have an adequate right-of-way and the needed pavement width can be provided by utilizing a part of the existing neutral strip.

The widening of the pavement along St. Charles Avenue is a seriously needed project. It is unfortunate that any of the neutral strip must be disturbed, but previous data have indicated the serious need of improved traffic conditions in the uptown area. It is much more logical and economical to utilize the neutral strip than to acquire additional right-of-way. Pending the pavement widening, it may become necessary to prohibit all parking and stopping along St. Charles Avenue during the peak rush periods.

A trucking route is now seriously needed to serve the industrial development along the river. Four lanes will be adequate on the uptown side of the business district where it would follow the present alignment of Tchoupitoulas Street and would be extended into Jefferson Parish on Leake Avenue. Near the business district six travel lanes

will be needed to accommodate traffic in this heavily congested area. In order to accommodate heavy radial traffic movements and future traffic increases which will be generated by expansion of port and industrial development along the Industrial Canal and the Tidewater Ship Channel, six lanes will be needed on the downtown side of the business district changing to four lanes at Poland Avenue. The route follows the present alignment of Tchoupitoulas, N. Peters, Clay, Decatur, Chartres, Poland, Lesseps, France and Alvar Streets with a future extension eastward on the north side of the proposed Tidewater Ship Channel.

Some of the six-lane routes, such as Napoleon, Carrollton, Broad and Robert E. Lee Avenues will also serve as cross-town routes and connect with important sub-centers.

Although much of the West Bank Expressway between the Huey P. Long Bridge and the new Mississippi River Bridge is beyond the corporate limits of New Orleans, this route is one of the most important improvements. East and west vehicle movement is still seriously restricted within this area, and the completion of this route will not only correct this serious defect, but should encourage much new growth. A large portion of the route is located in undeveloped area, but since new growth is occurring immediately to the north, the remainder of the route should be completed at an early date.

### Four-Lane Major Streets

The plan also proposes a number of four-lane major routes. While the majority of these will accommodate cross-town traffic, they will also serve as feeders to the principal radial streets. In some instances, the four-lane highways extend to the central business district and will afford relief to the heavily travelled radials.

Some of the four-lane highways will require widening of the rights-of-way, but fortunately the majority of the routes that are located in the built-up areas now have an adequate width. Widening should not prove too difficult or expensive where the routes are located in the sparsely settled sections.

### Secondary Major Streets

A few secondary major routes are proposed throughout the city, primarily in locations where extensive widening could not be economically justified. These include such route as Willow, Freret and Magazine Streets in the uptown area.

In a few instances, such as east of Elysian Fields Avenue, it is proposed to establish one-way traffic movements on paralleling streets. North Claiborne Avenue and North Robertson Street, as well as North Miro and North Galvez Streets are examples. The cost of acquiring developed property necessary to provide a width that would accommodate movement in both directions would be unreasonably high.

Many of the necessary street improvements can be accomplished by construction of new and widened pavements. However, new connections and right-of-way widenings will be necessary to effect a completely comprehensive system. These and the express highways will involve large expenditures.

Pending the actual widening of some of the necessary routes, temporary solutions, such as prohibiting parking during peak hour periods, should be effected.

#### Proposed Expressway and Major Street Improvements for the Central Business District

Plate 11 (Central Business District insert) indicates the suggested treatment of the proposed improvements which will be needed to provide better access and circulation of traffic in the business district. The plan shows the relationship of the Pontchartrain or Western Expressway to the business district, the suggested arrangement of connections between the business district and the river front routes and the proposed major distributors on the lake side of the business district.

#### Expressway Approaches

The connections which are provided between the Pontchartrain Expressway and the business district are bound to have a considerable effect upon the traffic pattern within the business district. The streets entering the business district on the uptown and lake sides have nearly reached their traffic capacity. Considerable improvements will be

needed in order to provide satisfactory connections on these streets for traffic entering and leaving the business district by the expressway. It has been estimated that during the next twenty-five years the volume of traffic entering the central business district from the growing western part of the metropolitan area will increase by approximately 67%. This will be the result of the steady growth which is anticipated in Lakeview and the Jefferson Parish communities on the east bank of the Mississippi.

The State Highway Department has selected an alignment for the extension of the Pontchartrain Expressway along Calliope Street. In the first stage of development the expressway will extend from the Airline Highway (Tulane Avenue) at grade and become elevated at Claiborne Avenue and extend east to the bridge crossing the Mississippi. This leg of the expressway will open in February, 1960.

A direct express connection is proposed between this route and the central business district by improving Poydras Street as a semi-expressway and extending it to connect with the Pontchartrain Expressway west of Broad Street. The Interstate Highway proposal recommends that Poydras Street connect with the Pontchartrain Expressway between Claiborne Avenue and Broad Street in the vicinity of N. Galvez Street. This connection would be considerably closer to the central business district than the major street proposal. The exact location of this connection should not be determined until the completion of the current Traffic Survey. Regardless of which connection is selected, this route will carry

traffic very close to the center of the business district with a minimum of interference caused by intersecting streets and the abutting properties.

In accordance with the Major Street Proposal this route is designed as a surface highway throughout its length with limited access northwest of LaSalle Street. Provision is made for grade separations or interchanges with the Pontchartrain Expressway, Claiborne Expressway, and Broad Street. Marginal service roadways would be provided where necessary to accommodate local traffic. Between LaSalle Street and South Front Streets it is proposed that Poydras Street be improved as a six-lane major thoroughfare with parking on both sides and without service roads. Widening will be required east of LaSalle Street to provide a minimum 134 foot right-of-way. The acquisition of the property necessary for this widening will be expensive since nearly all of the land is occupied by buildings. However, this is a very essential part of the plan since the large volume of traffic which will be carried into the business district by the proposed expressway cannot otherwise be accommodated. Moreover, the widening of Poydras Street in the central business district would be a very desirable improvement even if no connection were provided with the Pontchartrain Expressway.

The full benefits of the Poydras Street improvement could not have been realized without some rearrangement of the railroad tracks located within the street's right-of-way. While the improvement has provided adequate service, eventually track removal may become

essential in order to eliminate conflicts with switching movements. Between Broad and Galvez Streets the alignment of Poydras Street lies between the Illinois Central yards and the spur tracks serving industries to the north. These tracks have closed off access to the highway from both sides making the road a free-way in this location. In order to extend Poydras Street as a semi-expressway east of Galvez Street it is proposed that the I. C. tracks be removed from this part of Poydras Street and be located on a parallel alignment to the south. This will allow sufficient width within the street's present right-of-way to accommodate a four-lane semi-expressway with marginal service roads on both sides. It will also eliminate crossings of the route by spur tracks serving abutting industries. It will be possible to serve most of these industries from the relocated track alignment.

In addition to the connection of Poydras Street with the Pontchartrain Expressway other expressway interchanges will be needed to provide supplementary access routes into the business district. The State Highway Department has planned or constructed interchanges at Claiborne Avenue and Simon Bolivar-Loyola Streets. With the expressway opened to the Mississippi River Bridge additional interchanges are provided at St. Charles Avenue and Camp-Magazine Streets for traffic to and from the uptown area. It would be advantageous if ramps could be provided for access and egress of trucks between the highway and the important industrial and dock area along the river front. These would begin at about

Annunciation Street and would extend to and connect with Tchoupitoulas Street. The expressway could carry much truck traffic which would largely be from the riverfront area, and it is important that the local surface streets be freed of these large and slow moving vehicles. While the ramp could also be used by passenger cars, the majority of the cars on the expressway will be destined for the business district and will desire to leave the highway at Dryades Street, Claiborne Avenue, Loyola Avenue, St. Charles Avenue or Camp Street.

While much new development has occurred in the Algiers and west bank areas the volume of peak-hour traffic moving on the river crossing appears to be adequately handled by the Camp and Dryades Streets ramps, and will soon be further aided by the widening and reversal of Dryades Street to Canal Street.

#### Loyola-Basin Street Distributor

Most of the traffic which enters the central business district would prefer to avoid the congested local streets near the retail and office center. At the present time, the six-lane Loyola-Basin Street improvement is designed to serve as an inner distributor for traffic entering and leaving the business district. Traffic is able to move along the distributor until it reaches the street on which it wishes to enter the business district. The improvement has afforded considerable relief for congested conditions on the narrow local streets. If this improvement is to perform its function effectively, it is essential that an easy connection be provided



between Basin and North Rampart Streets on the downtown side of the business district as shown on the plan. The latter connection should be developed as an integral part of a complete redesign of the area in the vicinity of the Municipal Auditorium. In addition to the connection itself, provisions are now being made for the improvement of Orleans Avenue and its connection with Basin Street.

#### Proposed Riverfront Routes

The plan shows the proposed general location and interchanges of the new elevated expressway and the route of the six-lane surface road on the river side of the business district. On the downtown side of Canal Street, N. Peters Street would be widened with connections into Decatur and Clay Streets to form part of the surface roadway. On the uptown side of Canal Street, Tchoupitoulas should be widened and connected with Leake Avenue which would be extended to the western city limits, so that this route will be the main major street serving the important industrial development and port facilities along the east bank of the river.

Immediately northeast of Canal, many adjustments can be made in the railroad facilities, and an adequate street accommodating six moving lanes can be provided. It is in the vicinity of the Jackson Brewery that major difficulties are encountered in developing this new route. One logical solution is to divide the street between Iberville and St. Philip, carry the downtown traffic on the river side of the brewery

in the Clay Street right-of-way and the uptown traffic along Decatur and North Peters Streets. This plan would involve considerable readjustment of the railroad tracks in this general vicinity. Further, sidewalks and planting strips could be eliminated, and thus a comparatively narrow width (certainly not over 44 feet) could be utilized for the short distance where the route passes behind the brewery and joins with North Peters Street.

It must be emphasized that a river front route is so seriously needed, would carry so much truck and passenger traffic, and is so important to the industrial and commercial activities which are essential to the economic welfare of New Orleans, that it must be established within the immediate future.

Northeast of the brewery no serious problems are presented, as here some of the older markets can be eliminated and the street located along the railroad. The expressway or surface road can pass on the river side of the old U. S. Mint just southeast of Esplanade Avenue and then connect with Decatur Street and extend eastward parallel to the industrial development along the riverfront.

In connection with the development of these riverfront routes and the eastern expressway, it is important that an interchange be provided with the Elysian Fields expressway, so that access can be given from the expressway to the important industrial and port area immediately adjacent to the river.

## R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, The City Planning and Zoning Commission, in accord with certain provisions of Act 2 of the Extraordinary Session of 1950, known as the Louisiana Revised Statutes (see Titles 33:101 through 33:119) is authorized to adopt a Major Street Plan covering the geographical sections of the municipality of the City of New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, due notice of a Public Hearing was published in the New Orleans Item, a newspaper of general circulation in the City of New Orleans, on Thursday, July 26, 1951, stating that a hearing would be held on Wednesday, August 8, 1951, concerning the adoption of a Major Street Plan for the City of New Orleans; and

WHEREAS, under date of Wednesday, August 8, 1951 such hearing was held in the Commission Council Chamber of the City Hall in accordance with the above notice:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED That the City Planning and Zoning Commission does hereby approve and officially adopt as a Major Street Plan for the City of New Orleans, covering the geographical sections thereof outlined in the map and descriptive matter as included in the document identified as "The Master Plan for New Orleans, Chapter 4, Major Streets, officially adopted by the City Planning and Zoning Commission of New Orleans at a meeting held on Tuesday, August 28th, 1951", which document containing the official major street plan maps and 47 pages of descriptive matter, number 1 to 47 inclusive, is further identified by the signed initials of the Chairman of this Commission on each page and said maps, showing date of the action herein taken, a certified copy of which said document is attached and made part hereof as though set forth in extenso.

RESOLVED FURTHER that the Chairman of the City Planning and Zoning Commission of the City of New Orleans be and is hereby authorized to record this Resolution, maps, plan and descriptive matter as the official action taken by this City Planning and Zoning Commission; to execute certified copies of said Major Street Plan, and to file certified copies of the said Major Street Plan with the Commission Council of the City of New Orleans and the Clerk of the Civil District Court, Parish of Orleans.

I hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution duly adopted by a duly called meeting of the City Planning

and Zoning Commission of New Orleans, held on Tuesday, August 28, 1951, at the offices of the City Planning and Zoning Commission, located at 535 St. Charles Street, at 4:00 P.M., at which meeting a quorum was present and voted throughout.

(signed) Gervais F. Favrot  
CHAIRMAN

Subsequent Resolutions have been adopted incorporating all revisions of the Major Street Plan through December, 1959.

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

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