



Riverfront Overlay Study

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS

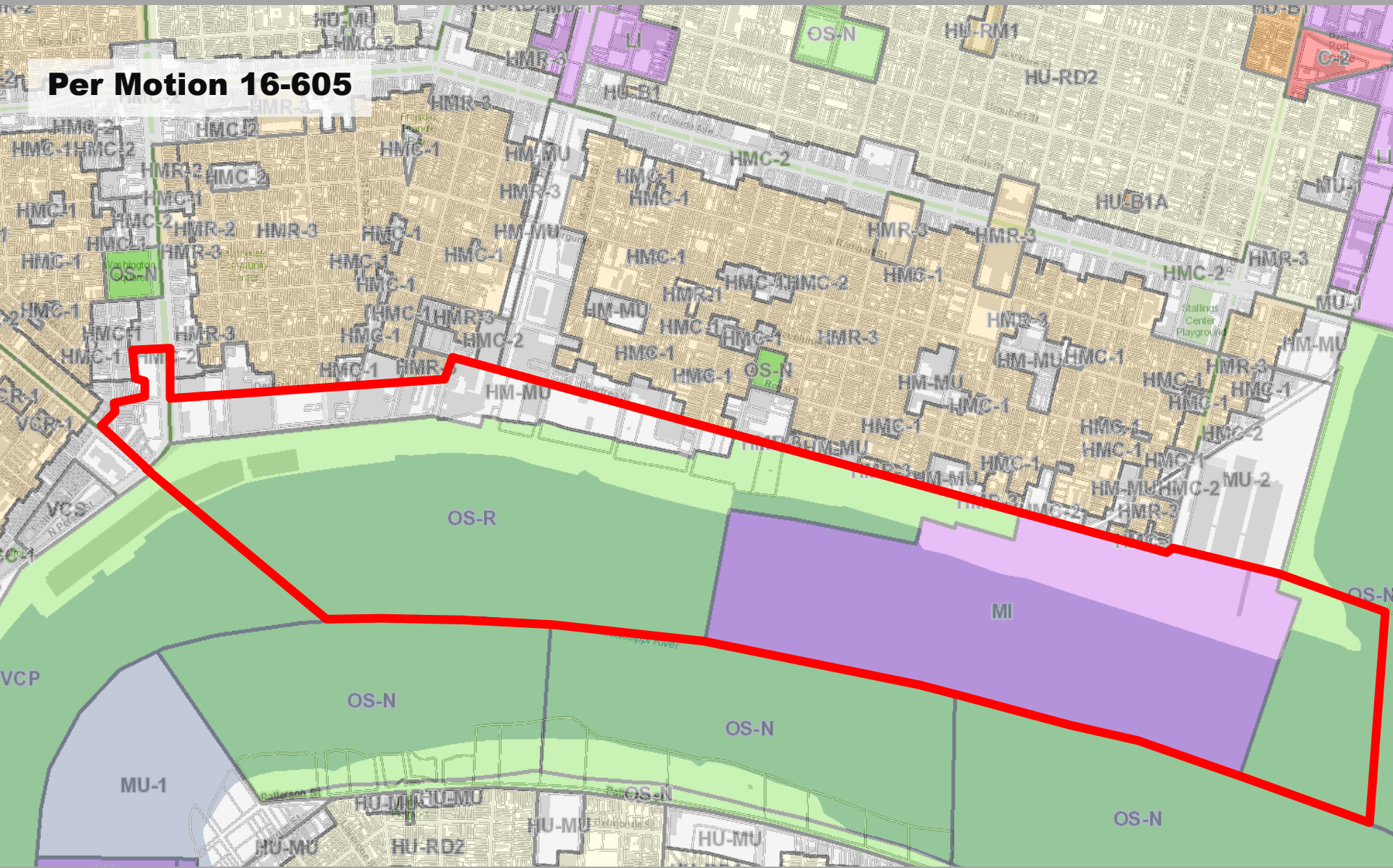
City Planning Commission

May 9, 2017



Study Boundaries

Per Motion 16-605



Riverfront Design Overlay Districts

RIV Overlay District covers properties in the following areas:

- Marigny and Bywater
- Algiers
- Lower Garden District

Legend

- Parcels
- Overlay Districts**
 - RIV Riverfront Design Overlay District
 - RIV Riverfront Design Overlay District (Eligible for Bonus)
- Curblines
- Building Footprint
- Road Centerlines
- Waterbodies



City Council Motion 16-605 directed CPC to include in the study:

- Best practices as they relate to riverfront development and the use of height and density development bonuses;
- A review of the appropriateness of the current language in Section 18.13.G of the CZO which outlines development bonuses;
- A review of the appropriateness of the current bonus criteria and its effectiveness in ensuring quality development along the riverfront; and
- An evaluation of whether or not development bonuses should be granted as a matter of right or via the conditional use process.

Content of Study

- Historic Development Pattern
- Previous Plans & Master Plan Consistency
- Former & Current Regulatory Framework
- Study Area and Adjacent Area Site Analysis
- Best Practices
- Public Input
- Modeling



Existing Regulations

Article 18, Section 18.13.G – Current RIV Riverfront Overlay District Bonuses in CZO

Base Districts	Base Standards	Bonus Criteria	Bonuses
HM-MU District	Min Lot Area: 600 sf/du Max Height: 55 ft. Max FAR: 2.5	1. public open space, plazas, sidewalk cafes with direct visual access to the river 2. energy efficient design 3. affordable housing (10% of units at 80% AMI, with half containing at least 2 bedrooms) 4. substantial contribution to a new floodwall bridge, rail crossing, or other capital improvement which increases public access to riverfront, min. \$250,000	(1) increase in height limit up to 2 stories, max 25 ft. (2) increase in FAR by 1.5 above max (3) elimination of minimum lot area requirement
HMC-2 District	Min Lot Area: 600 sf/du Max Height: 50 ft. Max FAR: 2.2		
MU-2 District (in Algiers only)	Min Lot Area: None Max Height: 85 ft., max 7 stories Max FAR: None		

Background

2005 Riverfront Vision Plan

Purpose of proposed overlay district:

- to support and guide appropriate redevelopment of the riverfront
- to maximize public access and public use of the riverfront
- to ensure “consistency, continuity, and quality design for riverfront development”
- to provide a forum for public input on major riverfront redevelopment projects

Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (2015)

- Successive drafts had varying boundaries for bonus eligibility
- Adopted version extended bonus to the entire overlay district in the Marigny and Bywater



Key Findings

Evaluation of Current Bonus Regime

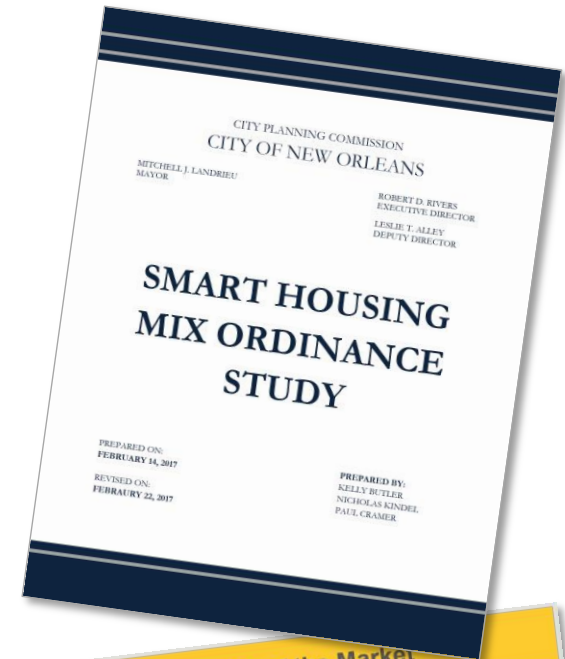
- Access to River & Other Capital Improvement Projects
 - \$30M investment to develop Crescent Park
 - 3 access points: Marigny St., Piety St., and Mazant St.
 - An additional crossing could be constructed with other sources of funding



Key Findings

Evaluation of Current Bonus Regime

- Affordable Housing
 - Smart Housing Mix Ordinance Study
 - Inclusionary housing zoning requirements within a defined target area and voluntary outside of it
 - May negate the need for such a standard in the RIV Overlay District
- Energy Efficiency
 - Energy Efficiency Portfolio Standard
 - The City and Entergy recently adopted energy efficiency standard of 2% annual reductions
 - City Energy Project Benchmarking in Commercial Buildings
 - Energy efficiency goals could also be a part of other means such as amendments to the Building Code.



Key Findings

Evaluation of Zoning Standards:

What are the most appropriate and context-sensitive bulk and area regulations for the riverfront properties within the study area?

- Public comment included fears of development “wall effect”
- Ensure consistency with surrounding historic neighborhoods

Rice Mill and NOCCA buildings each have 75 ft. portion of the building in the rear by the flood wall

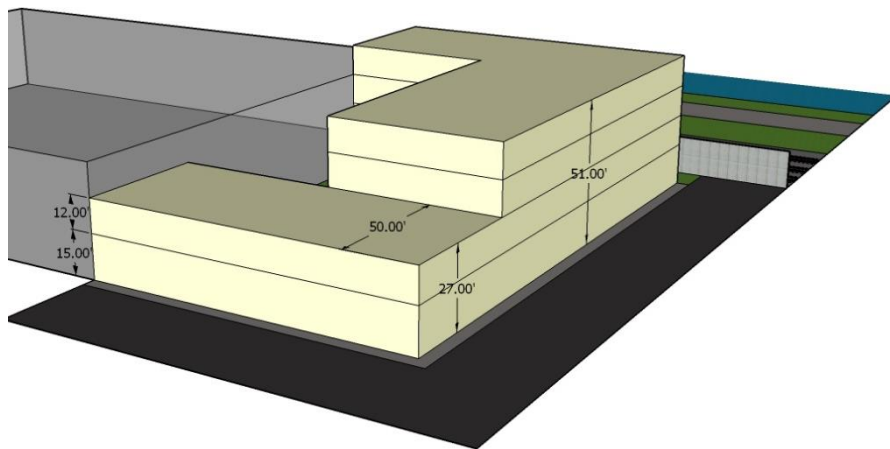


Key Findings

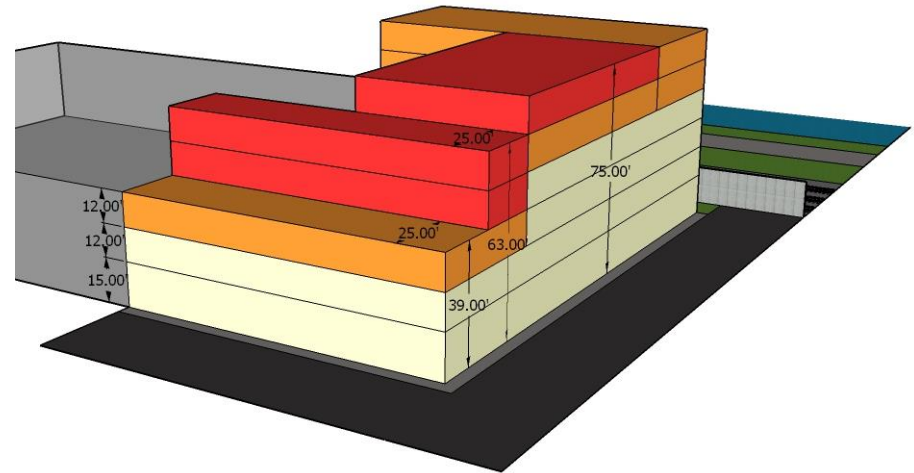
Evaluation of Zoning Standards (cont'd)

- Staff developed 3D models using the bulk requirements of the HM-MU District and using the bonus allowance
- Conclusions:
 - Extra height supportable when concentrated at the rear of the building toward the floodwall
 - Changes to the FAR allowance are desirable to ensure that buildings' mass can be concentrated toward the River

HM-MU District (no bonus)



HM-MU with bonus



Key Findings

Evaluation of Zoning Standards (cont'd)

- Staff researched best practices around the US
- Step-backs to height in Historic Fell's Point, Baltimore

Bird's-Eye View



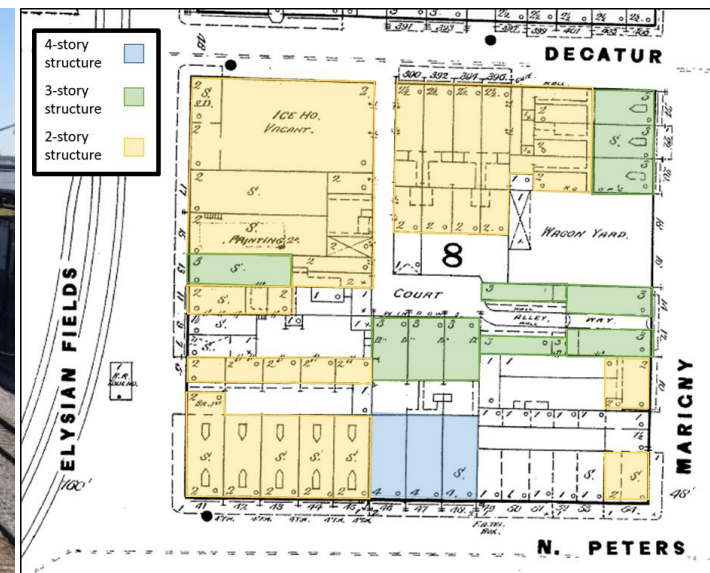
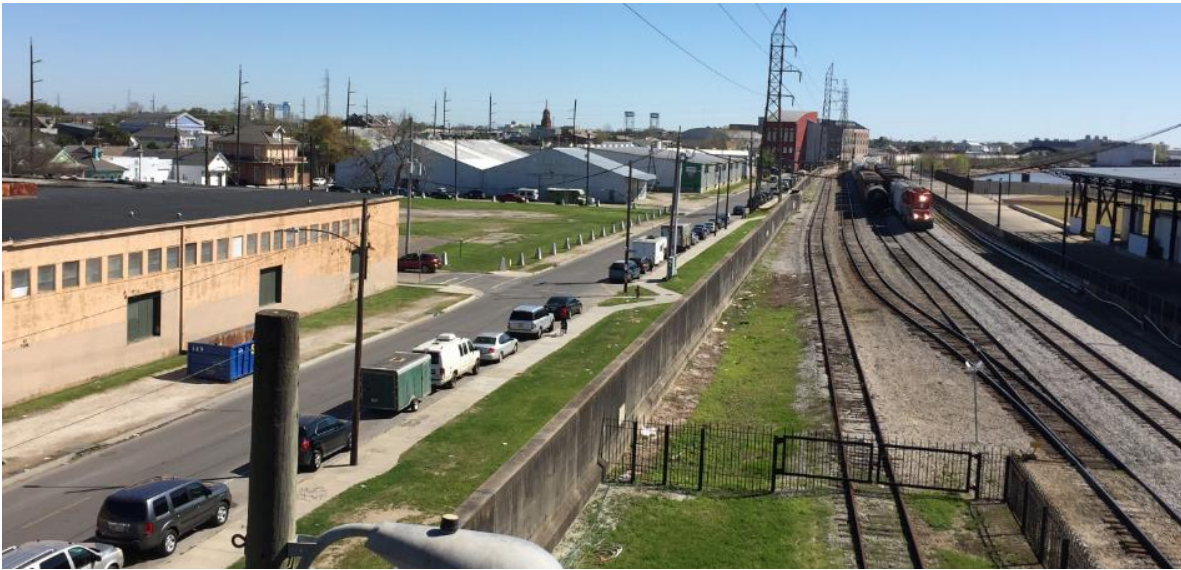
Street-Level View



Key Findings

Evaluation of Zoning Standards (cont'd)

- Modifications to zoning to promote variation in massing would be reflective of historic patterns
- Allowing extra development potential, but limited to the rear of the riverfront sites, would not negatively impact surrounding historic properties
- Would increase housing supply on high ground and generate more affordable housing options in the neighborhood



Recommendations

Recommendations related to Design Standards

- Eliminate bonus provision of Section 18.13.G for the study area.
- Retain general design standards (View Corridors, Active Ground Floors)
- Limit maximum height to 40 ft. (max 3 stories) at street frontage, require stepback, and allow up to 75 ft. (max 6 stories) towards the River with 3.5 max FAR, on the land side of the flood wall.



Recommendations

Recommendations related to Boundaries

- Differing zoning approaches are needed for each distinct RIV District area.
- Recommended additional height and FAR allowances should only apply to landside of floodwall.

Recommendations related to riverfront access

- Explore other funding methods for additional crossings.

Recommendations related to public input in the development process

- Allow maximum height and FAR by right – not through the Conditional Use process
- Public input, in the form of design recommendations, is better addressed in the HDLC process.

NEXT STEPS

- City Planning Commission to forward study to City Council
- Any changes to the CZO require a text amendment which involves a separate public hearing process by the City Planning Commission and City Council