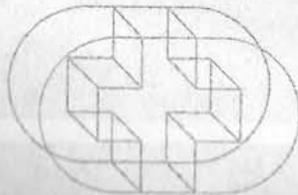




New Orleans Housing and Neighborhood Preservation Study

Summary

Prepared for the City of New Orleans Administration
in cooperation with the Mayor's Housing and
Neighborhood Preservation Study
Advisory Committee
by Curtis and Davis Architects and Planners
111 rue Iberville
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There are two cities within the City of New Orleans, the old and the new. The major elements of the old city are the river, its rail system and early development which depended heavily upon easy access to the port. It is characterized by historic structures, old streets, utilities and facilities, and is scaled to the nineteenth century, an environment for pedestrian, carriage, streetcar. The new city is characterized by development since the early 1900's. It is lake-oriented, without extensive social, economic and housing problems, and geared to the automobile and bus . . . suburban New Orleans within city limits.

The specific problem of New Orleans is that the more historic sections of the city and those suffering from deteriorated housing conditions are, with but a few exceptions, one and the same. Parts I and II of the following report present a list of detailed recommendations for reconciling this housing and preservation problem in the city. These recommendations are derived from a neighborhood study undertaken by Curtis and Davis Architects and Planners in liaison with the Mayor's Office of Urban Development and focus on the following:

Conservation

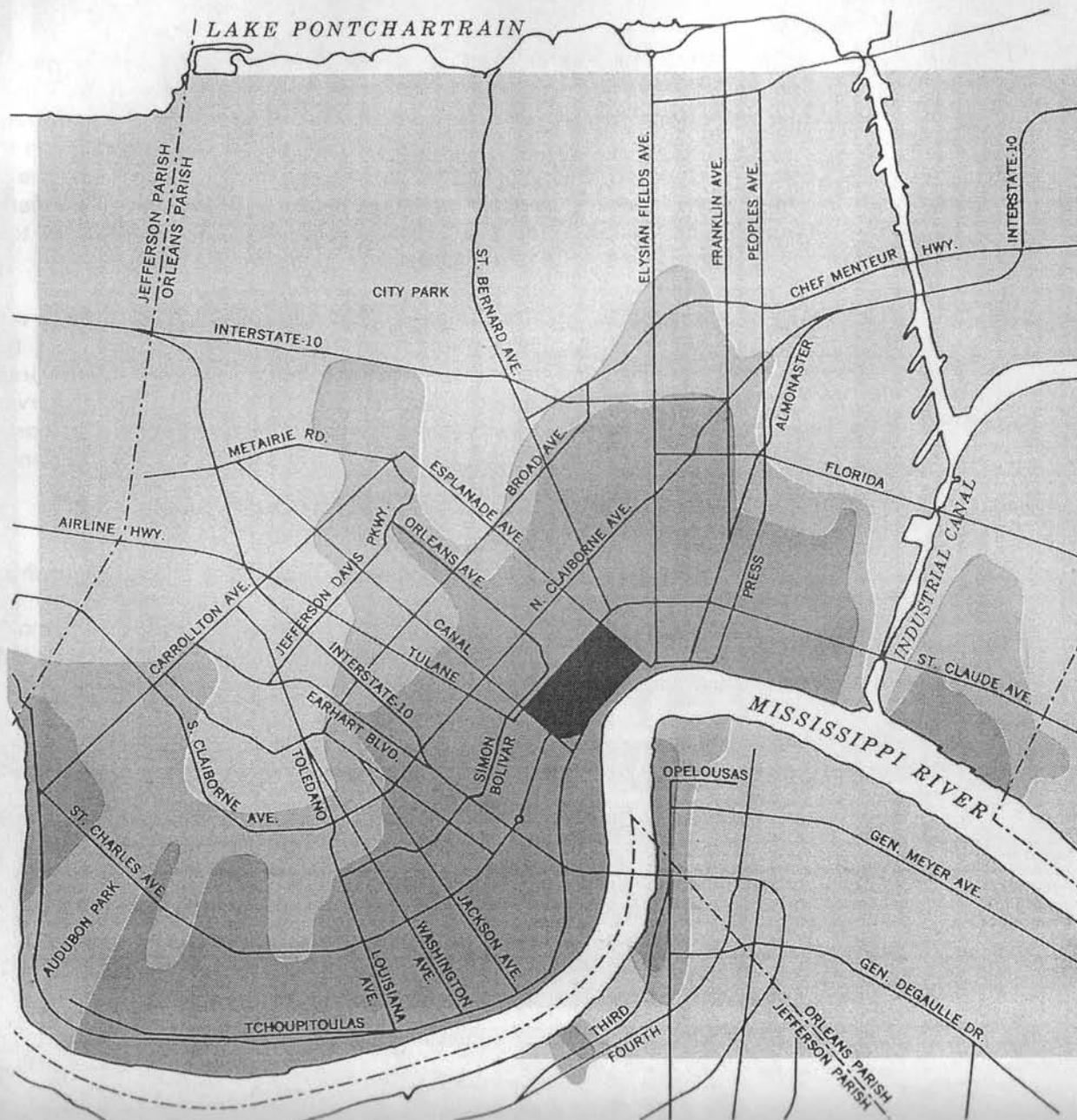
- Implementation of conservation zoning in priority areas as established in the study.
- Introduction of interim controls which would institute a stay on demolition or construction during the period required for consideration of the Urban Conservation Zoning Ordinance.

Legislation

- Amendment of State Act 147 to create an independent citywide landmarks commission.
- Efficient use of landlord/tenant laws.

Rehabilitation

- Rehabilitation along the lines of a concentration of neighborhood resources. Development would be effected in or across neighborhoods according to one of three plans or *Development Units* designed to improve the physical environment and existing housing stock of specific areas.



Historic Development of New Orleans

This figure illustrates the pattern of early development along the Mississippi River while twentieth-century development is more lake oriented. Comparison of this map with the Problem Profile map on page 9 reveals the specific problem of New Orleans: the historic sections of the city and those suffering from deteriorated housing conditions are usually one and the same.

The Old City

- Developed before 1800
- Developed between 1800 and 1851
- Developed between 1851 and 1900

The New City

- Developed since 1900

Financial Resources

- Use of a *Revolving Fund*, involving public and private money, to maintain and conserve housing.
- Introduction of a citywide improvement-loan insurance program.
- Utilization of the Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 23 Public Leased Housing Program.

Because of the city's unusually high cultural and socio-economic heterogeneity and the housing and preservation problems manifested as a result of this, the above recommendations cannot be indiscriminately applied throughout the area. We therefore determined that New Orleans should be effectively divided into a number of small areas, each of which would be analyzed in detail. The process of defining neighborhood boundaries involved the participation of the community so that an abstract planning map might be avoided in favor of one representing *perceived* neighborhoods.

In New Orleans there are two distinct kinds of urban identification to which the inhabitants relate: one, the neighborhoods themselves, and the other, the major arteries and boulevards. With the input of organized groups in the city, who were asked to verify their neighborhood boundaries, the city was divided into 73 named neighborhoods.

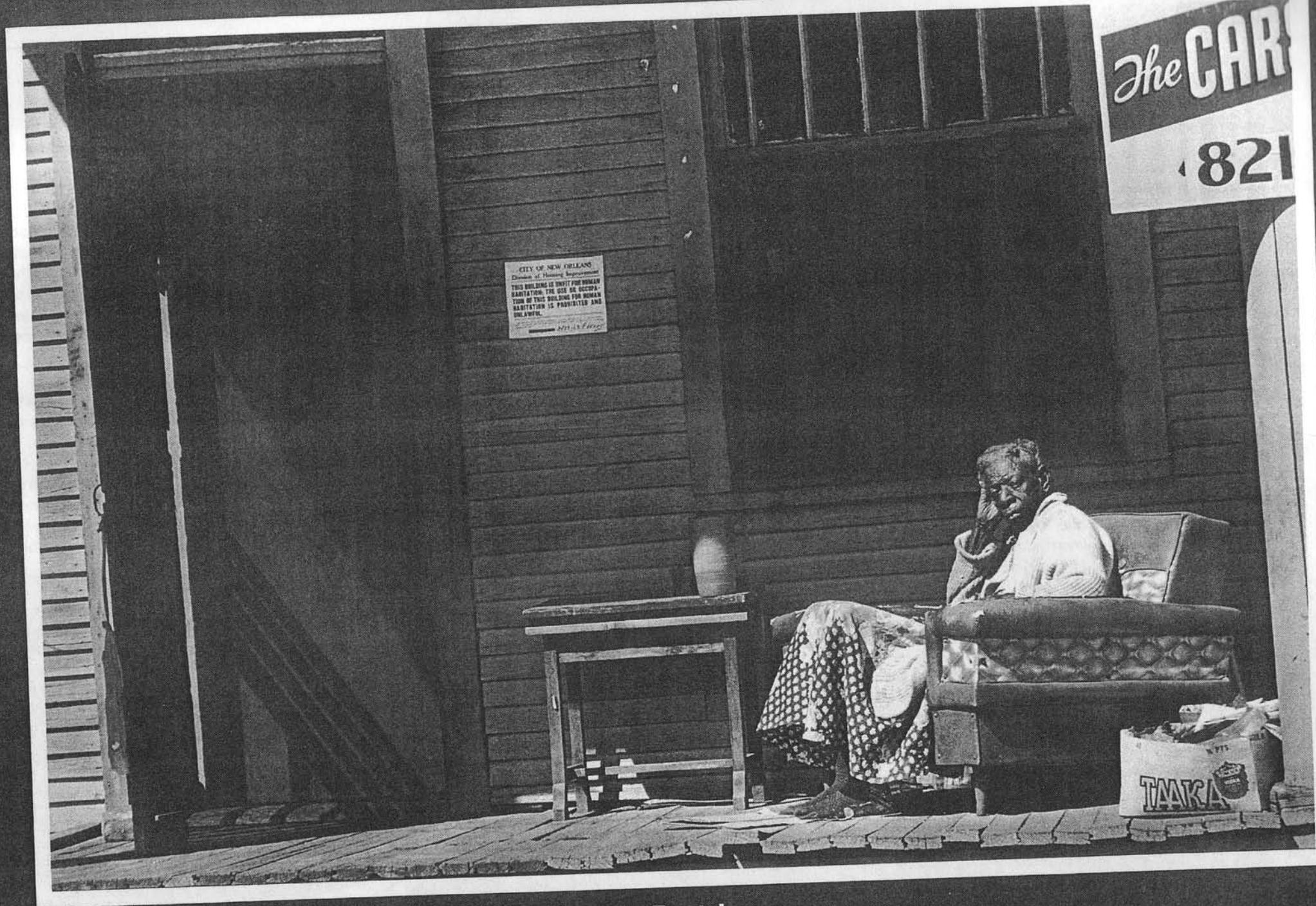
It was further determined that each of these neighborhoods would be assessed in terms of housing and/or preservation needs as conceived by both the planners and the residents. This assessment resulted in the classification of the neighborhoods according to three *Problem Profiles*, the characteristics of which are described in the report. In all stages of the study it is evident that the Problem Pro-

files correspond significantly to the old parts of New Orleans. The areas of historic value are generally concomitant with low-income neighborhoods, with limited home-ownership, a high percentage of black people, and an unemployment problem. The Community Renewal Program, the 1970 Census statistics, and the Regional Planning Statistics (1966), including Bernard Lemann's historic structures survey, all further verify the relationship of the Problem Profile to areas of historic housing concentrations. Additionally, problem areas follow and border Interstate 10 from the Greater New Orleans Bridge toward Jefferson and St. Bernard Parishes.

Part III is devoted to a summary description of the tools suggested by Curtis and Davis for implementing the recommendations. This includes economic analysis of a rehabilitation project and examples of how conservation works.

The object of this report is to provide a yardstick to determine relative priorities for each area of the city, to uncover problems common to several neighborhoods and, at the same time, to create a citywide pattern for alleviating the housing and preservation problems of New Orleans without unduly altering its neighborhood identity.

It is not within the scope of this publication to provide exhaustive data on the housing and preservation problems of New Orleans. Rather, it is a survey, a condensation of information contained in two comprehensive volumes of the *New Orleans Housing and Neighborhood Preservation Study* published February 8, 1974, by Curtis and Davis. These volumes are available through the New Orleans City Administration.



Part I

The Housing and Preservation Problem of New Orleans
Methodological Approach of the Study

In problem areas of the city, lack of money has inevitably led to the dilapidation of historic buildings, at the same time creating poor living standards. In many areas of historic significance, preservation is viewed as neither financially possible nor of prime importance to residents who seek above all to improve and modernize their dwellings.

As part of this study, opinions were collected from the community to ascertain what the people in various areas did consider to be the priorities concerning housing and preservation. The vast socio-economic differences of the people produced many divergent views, but there is a consensus on certain matters:

- All persons are concerned first with the improvement and/or maintenance of their dwellings.
- The upgrading of the quality of life in the neighborhoods (lower crime rate, police protection in residential areas, especially rental units; code enforcement, good streets, adequate sewerage and garbage collection services) is of vital importance to all.
- Everyone also wished to see open space and recreation areas expanded in the city.

The racial and socio-economic dichotomy of the groups expressing concern for the neighborhood housing problems tends to divide people into preservation-oriented and housing-condition-oriented groups. Through discussion, preservationists recognized that the viability of their own area would be seriously affected if surrounding areas were allowed to deteriorate further. Those with housing interests tended to feel that persons who are financially able should solve their own neighborhood problems.

Preservation-Oriented Groups

Saving and protecting areas, buildings, houses and neighborhoods from demolition is considered essential to the heritage of New Orleans. In order to accomplish this goal, preservationists seek to utilize a number of tools:

- a. The creation of *historic districts* is felt by most of the organizations (St. Charles Avenue, Lower Garden District, Esplanade Improvement, Marigny Association) to be the answer to preserving and protecting their neighborhoods.
- b. *Stringent demolition ordinances* would deter unnecessary demolition of

structures of historic, cultural or aesthetic value.

c. *Zoning changes*, promoted where applicable, would revitalize or stabilize an area.

d. Providing *tax incentives* on the purchase, renovation and restoration of older structures would help make such projects more attractive.

e. *Changes in appraisal policies* of the Central Appraisal Bureau would encourage purchase and repair of older, valuable structures in the city.

f. *Revolving funds*, such as the one now being set up by Unslum, would provide for the purchase and re-sale of older properties.

Among other priorities shared by the preservationists is the preservation of the racial, socio-economic and structural variety of the old neighborhoods. They feel this heterogeneous character is implicit in the cultural uniqueness of New Orleans. They also envisage more areas free from noise, visual and industrial pollution. The removal of blight, such as that caused by I-10 ramps, for example, is considered necessary to alleviate the visual pollution of New Orleans. Creating or re-creating good transportation arteries is also viewed as an important element of stabilization.

Housing-Condition-Oriented Groups

Organizations expressing specific housing concerns tend to be primarily black, comprising people of a lower socio-economic level than the preservationist groups. They feel responsible for those who have in the past been impotent in solving the problems of their blighted neighborhoods, and seek an action project rather than a study, in which their personal knowledge of, and involvement in, the neighborhoods' difficulties could be applied.

During the discussions, citizens expressed a number of queries and opinions on the important issues summarized as follows:

a. *The inequities of appraisals*—Both groups complain of the inequitable appraisal practices of the Central Appraisal Bureau. The only difference is that the structures in question in this case are not as old or as expensive.

b. *Relocation*—Persons in neighborhoods with major problems are apprehensive that upgrading will mean increases in rent and property values and will eventually force their relocation.

c. *Renovation and restoration*—Most feel that people of low and moderate incomes would be unable to afford the rising costs of renovation and restoration unless such work is financed through low-interest loans.

d. *Code enforcement*—The lack of uniform housing code enforcement creates one of the greatest hardships for both tenants and persons interested in purchasing houses. Those with the most severe problems suggest that programs of proven effectiveness, such as the Federally Assisted Code Enforcement program, be broadened to affect more of the city.

e. *Historic and old structures*—People living in areas with many housing problems do not have a great deal of interest in old or historic properties. As far as many of the people are concerned, the buildings could be demolished and new dwellings erected, complete with all modern conveniences (central air conditioning, heating systems, good wiring and plumbing). This stems in many cases from the fact that these people have lived too long in uncomfortable, antiquated dwellings. They therefore feel that the main thrust of housing programs should be aimed at providing low-income people in the community with decent, modern living conditions.

f. *Suburbs*—The ideal of many people living in neighborhood problem areas is to live in a single-family, modern house, with all conveniences (large living and yard areas, open space nearby, shopping areas, schools and churches).

g. *Federal housing programs*—Persons involved in or affected by the Department of Housing and Urban Development 235-236 Subsidized Housing Programs, the Federally Assisted Code Enforcement project, and the Urban Renewal project express pros and cons concerning such programs. The major point of agreement is that such programs should be expanded if possible to affect larger areas of the city.

One of the major tasks of the study has been to provide the public, particularly in areas of the city with housing problems with information, both on zoning (its meaning and the implications of zoning changes) and on financial aspects of repair and purchase of houses. The argot of the financial world is a foreign language to those at low income levels. Believing that the "haves" can be left to solve their own problems, the "have-nots" have expressed the view that they should benefit from the major emphasis of the project. It is, however, a fact that in order for either group to survive in the inner city, both must accept their interdependence.



- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. West End | 37. Hollygrove |
| 2. Lakeshore West | 38. Girt Town |
| 3. Lakeshore East | 39. Gravier |
| 4. Lake Vista | 40. Tulane |
| 5. Lake Terrace | 41. Sixth Ward |
| 6. Lake Oaks | 42. Tremé |
| 7. East New Orleans | 43. Cultural Center |
| 8. Plum Orchard | 44. Central Business District |
| 9. East New Orleans | 45. Central City |
| 10. Pontchartrain Park | 46. Zion City |
| 11. Milneburg | 47. Broadmoor |
| 12. St. Anthony | 48. Fontainebleau |
| 13. Filmore | 49. Carrollton |
| 14. City Park | 50. West Carrollton |
| 15. Lake View | 51. Black Pearl |
| 16. Algiers-Fischer | 52. University |
| 17. Industrial Transportation Zone | 53. Freret |
| 18. Navarre | 54. Uptown |
| 19. Fairgrounds | 55. Riverside |
| 20. St. Bernard | 56. Touro |
| 21. Parkchester | 57. Milan |
| 22. Dillard | 58. Garden District |
| 23. Lower Gentilly Terrace | 59. Irish Channel |
| 24. Upper Gentilly Terrace | 60. Lower Garden District |
| 25. Gentilly Woods | 61. Vieux Carré |
| 26. Desire | 62. Marigny |
| 27. East New Orleans | 63. Bywater |
| 28. Lower Ninth Ward | 64. Holy Cross |
| 29. Florida | 65. Algiers Point |
| 30. St. Claude | 66. McDonogh |
| 31. St. Roch | 67. Algiers-Whitney |
| 32. Seventh Ward | 68. Algiers |
| 33. Broad | 69. Behrman-North |
| 34. Bayou St. John | 70. Behrman-East |
| 35. Mid-City | 71. Aurora |
| 36. New Orleans Country Club | 72. Cutoff |
| | 73. Brechtel |

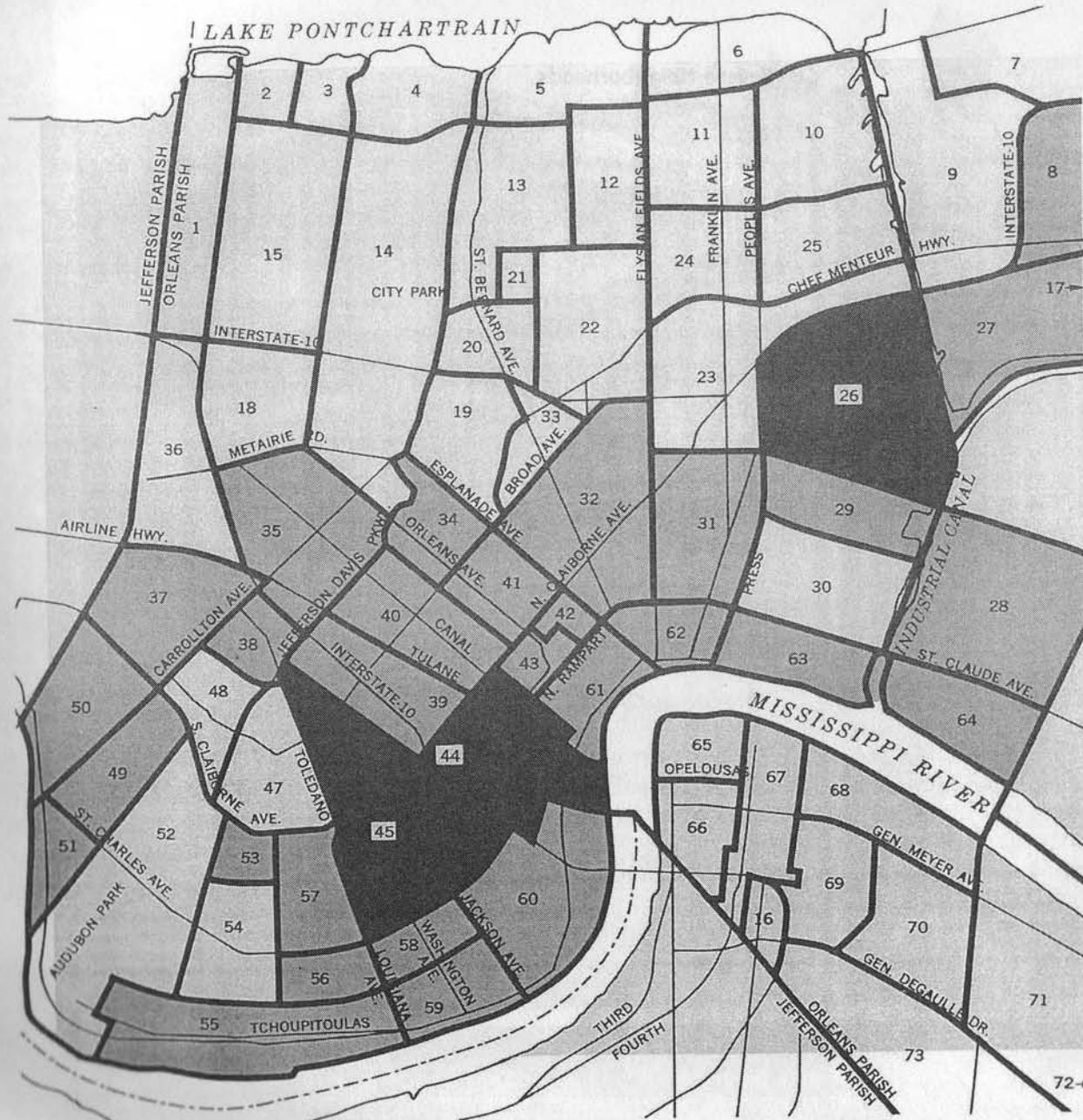
Working with the Mayor's Office of Urban Development, the Curtis and Davis staff began the definition of neighborhoods. The process involved the participation of organized neighborhood groups, who helped identify problems and boundaries. New Orleans comprises many neighborhoods, and the people do in fact relate to smaller areas of the city. As a result of this work, the city has been divided into 73 areas, each with an identity in name and bounded by streets or major natural elements.

It became clear that in New Orleans there are two kinds of urban identification, the neighborhood and the major artery or boulevard. Among the more obvious in the first group are areas such as the *Vieux Carré*, Garden District or Lakefront. And in the second group, people relate strongly to St. Charles Avenue, Esplanade Avenue, Magazine Street, Elysian Fields Avenue, Claiborne Avenue, etc. The major streets and boulevards traverse many of the neighborhoods here described

(for example, St. Charles Avenue ties together a number of areas as it meanders uptown).

Recognizing and documenting that the arterial and neighborhood approaches are both viable ways of studying the city, we then decided to characterize and describe the city in greater detail, in the context of the 73 neighborhoods marked out and named.

We compared neighborhoods with demographic, citywide trends. The neighborhoods fall into three types of Profile: Critical, Severe and Standard, which relate to old and new parts of the city. The condition of the older neighborhoods is generally blighted or Critical, while the condition of the twentieth century neighborhoods is generally acceptable or Standard.



The Neighborhood Problem Profiles

Critical Profile:

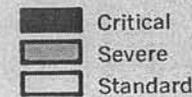
- Percentage of housing lacking some or all plumbing —12-30%
- Average annual family income—\$8,000 and under
- Percentage of housing owner occupied—0-15.9%

Severe Profile:

- Percentage of housing lacking some or all plumbing —2-12%
- Average annual family income—\$8,000 and under
- Percentage of housing owner occupied—16-40.9%

Standard Profile:

- Percentage of housing lacking some or all plumbing —less than 2%
- Average annual family income—\$8,000 and over
- Percentage of housing owner occupied—41% and over



A. Critical Neighborhoods

Profile:

- Percentage of housing lacking some or all plumbing—12-30 percent.
- Average annual family income—\$8,000 and under.
- Percentage of housing owner occupied—0-15.9 percent.

Neighborhoods fitting into the Critical Profile:

- (44) Central Business District
- (45-46) Central City-Zion City
- (26) Desire

The old city contains two of the three Critical areas. Both Central City and the Central Business District fit into the Critical Profile.

This same Critical Profile applies to one area in the new city, the Desire Project and residential neighborhood. This area was built after World War II, and was severely flooded during Hurricane Betsy in 1965. The social and economic ills of the Desire Housing Project contribute heavily to the determination of this area as a Critical neighborhood.

The division of Critical areas between the old and the new cities points to variables, other than age, which relate to physical deterioration of the housing stock. It has become clear that the neighborhoods in the old city built and developed prior to 1910 have a character of scale, proportion, rhythm and use of space consistent with the span of development from 1800 to 1900. In addition to the urban design characteristics of these neighborhoods, there are numbers of structures which actually date back to the original time of development. Therefore, though all three neighborhoods are Critical, Central City and the Central Business District differ from Desire in the architectural significance of the buildings and the historic development of the neighborhoods.

B. Severe Neighborhoods

Profile:

- Percentage of housing lacking some or all plumbing—2-12 percent.
- Average annual family income—\$8,000 and under.
- Percentage of housing owner occupied—16-40.9 percent.

Exceptions:

- University Area—\$10,000 to \$15,000 annual family income.
- Garden District—\$20,000 and over annual family income.
- Vieux Carré—\$10,000 to \$15,000 annual family income.
- Lower Ninth Ward—41-50.9 percent housing owner occupied.
- Hollygrove—41-50.9 percent housing owner occupied.
- Plum Orchard—70 percent housing owner occupied.

Neighborhoods fitting into the Severe Profile:

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| (8) Plum Orchard | (49) Carrollton |
| (27) East New Orleans | (50) West Carrollton |
| (28) Lower Ninth Ward | (51) Black Pearl |
| (29) Florida | (53) Freret |
| (31) St. Roch | (55) Riverside |
| (32) Seventh Ward | (56) Touro |
| (34) Bayou St. John | (57) Milan |
| (35) Mid-City | (58) Garden District |
| (37) Hollygrove | (59) Irish Channel |
| (38) Girt Town | (60) Lower Garden District |
| (39) Gravier | (61) Vieux Carré |
| (40) Tulane | (62) Marigny |
| (41) Sixth Ward | (63) Bywater |
| (42) Treme | (64) Holy Cross |
| (43) Cultural Center | |



The 1700 block of Euterpe Street in Central City, a Critical Neighborhood, suffers from general neglect. However, as this photograph shows, the character of this nineteenth century neighborhood is remarkably intact and deserving of

sensitive maintenance. The old city, with the exception of the University area, falls into the Critical and Severe Neighborhood categories.

Though the Lower Garden District is classified as a Severe neighborhood, recent interest in housing restoration has brought many areas of this neighborhood within the Standard profile. This photograph of the 1500 block of Camp Street is an example of what can be done to maintain the character of the older neighborhoods while providing for a modern standard of living.





C. Standard Neighborhoods

Profile:

- Percentage of housing lacking some or all plumbing—less than 2 percent.
- Average annual family income—\$8,000 and over.
- Percentage of housing owner occupied—41 percent and over.

Exceptions:

- Algiers Point—\$5,000-\$8,000 average annual family income.

Neighborhoods fitting into the Standard Profile:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (1) West End | (22) Dillard |
| (2) Lakeshore West | (23) Lower Gentilly Terrace |
| (3) Lakeshore East | (24) Upper Gentilly Terrace |
| (4) Lake Vista | (25) Gentilly Woods |
| (5) Lake Terrace | (30) St. Claude |
| (6) Lake Oaks | (33) Broad |
| (7) East New Orleans | (36) New Orleans Country Club |
| (9) East New Orleans | (47) Broadmoor |
| (10) Pontchartrain Park | (48) Fontainebleau |
| (11) Milneburg | (52) University |
| (12) St. Anthony | (54) Uptown |
| (13) Filmore | (65) Algiers Point |
| (14) City Park | (66) McDonogh |
| (15) Lake View | (67) Algiers-Whitney |
| (16) Algiers-Fischer | (68) Algiers |
| (17) Industrial Transportation Zone | (69) Behrman North |
| (18) Navarre | (70) Behrman East |
| (19) Fairgrounds | (71) Aurora |
| (20) St. Bernard | (72) Cutoff |
| (21) Parkchester | (73) Brechtel |

The new city comprises the Standard profile. This category does not fit the overall profile of the city, where the mean income is \$7,445, annual income is \$8,000 or less for 54 percent of the population, and 38 percent of housing is owner occupied. The old city, where Critical and Severe problems exist, fits more closely the general city profile.

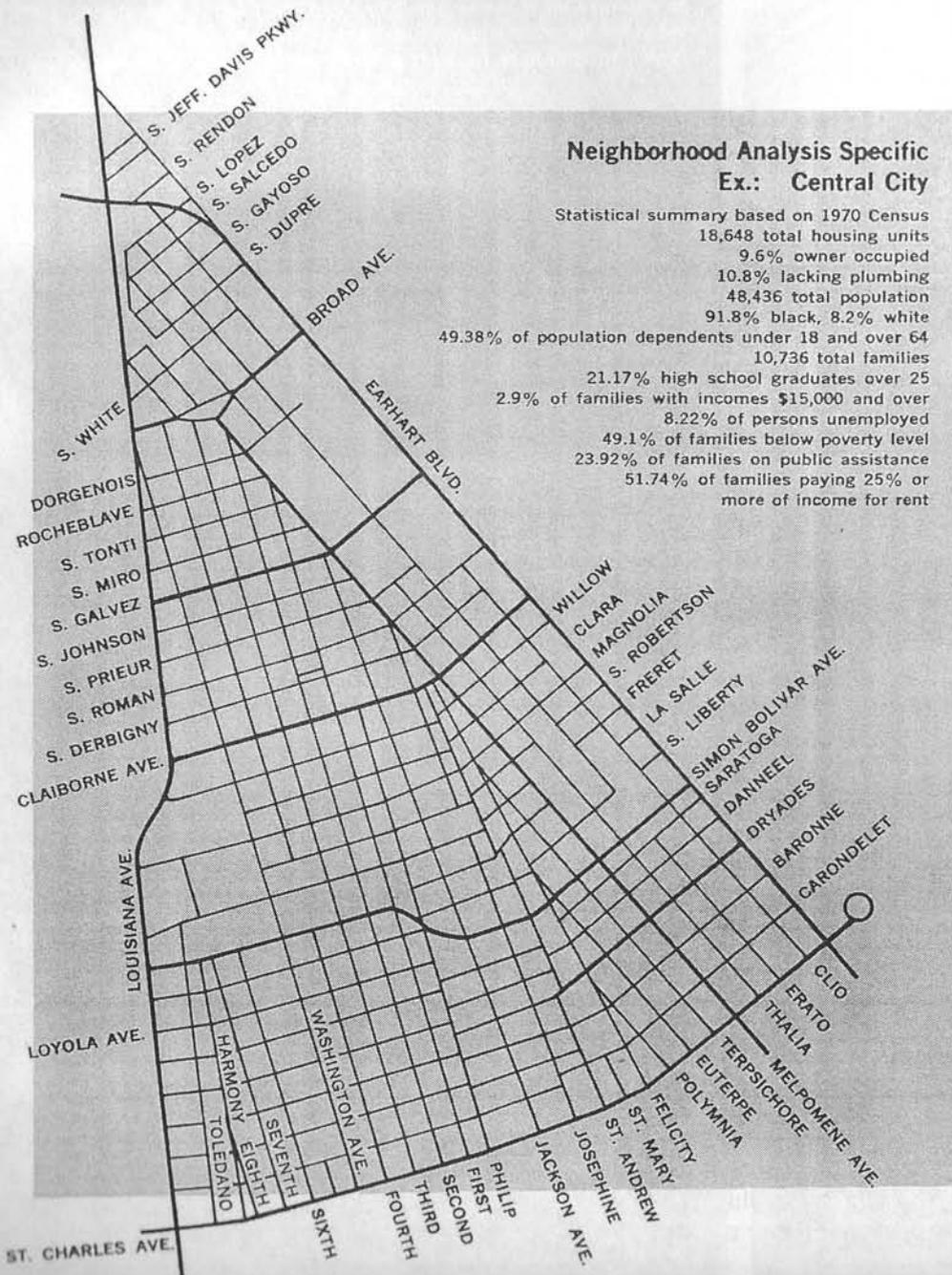
Of the 32 neighborhoods that fell into Critical and Severe Profiles, 15 were selected out for further analysis. As a result, detailed analysis of these selected neighborhoods led to the program alternatives recommended in subsequent parts of this text. It will suffice, within the limited scope of this publication, to present only the following determinations which were involved in the selection process, and to refer to *Volume II* of the comprehensive edition of this study for actual detailed analysis.

1. Did the demographic profile which indicated the problems hold true? For example, the *Vieux Carré* and the Garden District are two neighborhoods which fall into the lower levels of the housing profile in terms of their lacking some or all plumbing. Yet surveys and an understanding of the strong viability of these neighborhoods indicated that no further analysis was necessary. Likewise, the Central Business District, determined a Critical neighborhood, was excluded because there is a study in progress to develop a plan specifically for this area.

Other neighborhoods with housing problems, but excluded based on surveys in the area, are: Milan, Touro, Freret, and Carrollton. These uptown neighborhoods have been holding their own in spite of the deterioration occurring along their edges; that is, they are impacted by the overspill of deterioration in adjacent areas. This same analysis excluded the downtown neighborhoods of St. Roch, Holy Cross, and Bayou St. John, where the overall neighborhood viability is strong. Holy Cross and Bayou St. John are included in the Urban Conservation Zoning plan which specifically relates to the urban design problems in these areas.

2. Should the city consider spreading its resources to include relatively new areas where housing shows signs of deterioration? Plum Orchard and East New Orleans have been described as Severe neighborhoods and are located within the citywide context of neighborhoods in trouble; however, these neighborhoods were excluded from the detailed analysis in preference to inner-city neighborhoods, where the problem has been more severe.

3. Could selection be made between the neighborhoods similar in profile with the understanding that programs developed for one would apply to the other?

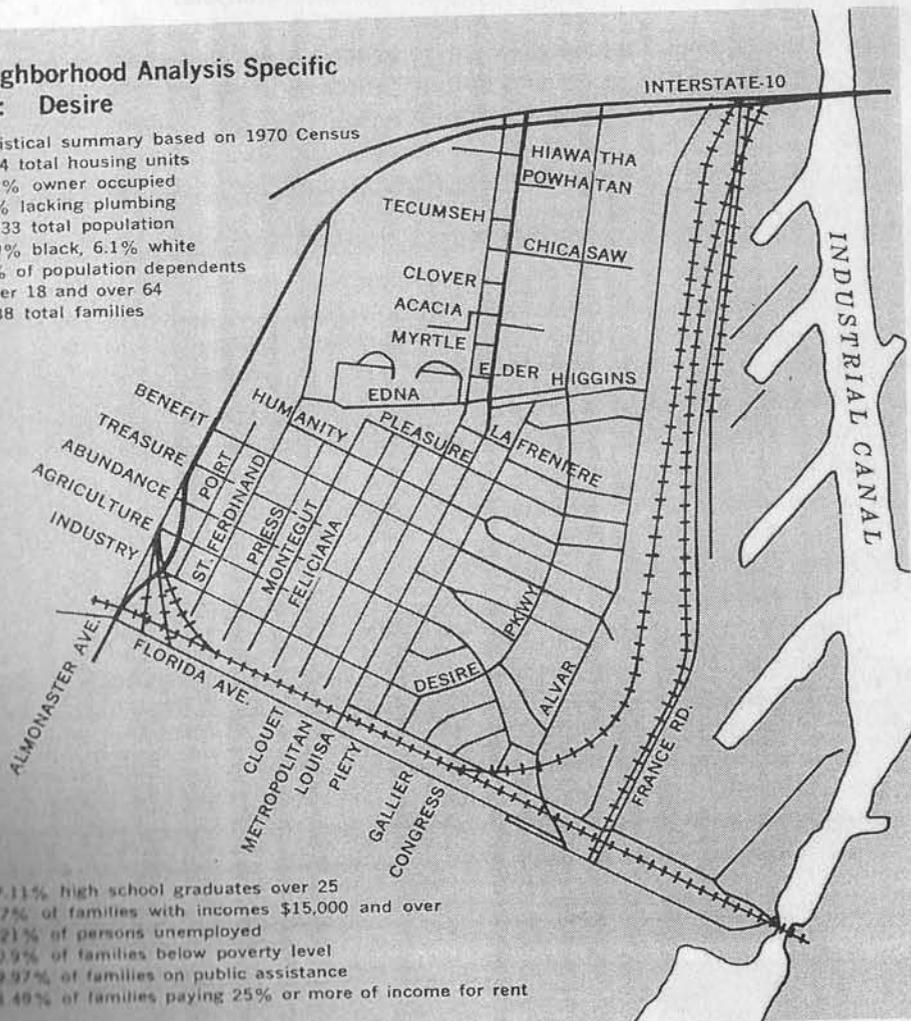


This was accomplished in two areas: Hollygrove and West Carrollton are conterminous and similar in profile. West Carrollton was selected for analysis with the understanding that programs developed there could be implemented in both

**Neighborhood Analysis Specific
Ex.: Desire**

Statistical summary based on 1970 Census
 3,114 total housing units
 23.4% owner occupied
 1.9% lacking plumbing
 15,233 total population
 93.9% black, 6.1% white
 62% of population dependents under 18 and over 64
 2,738 total families

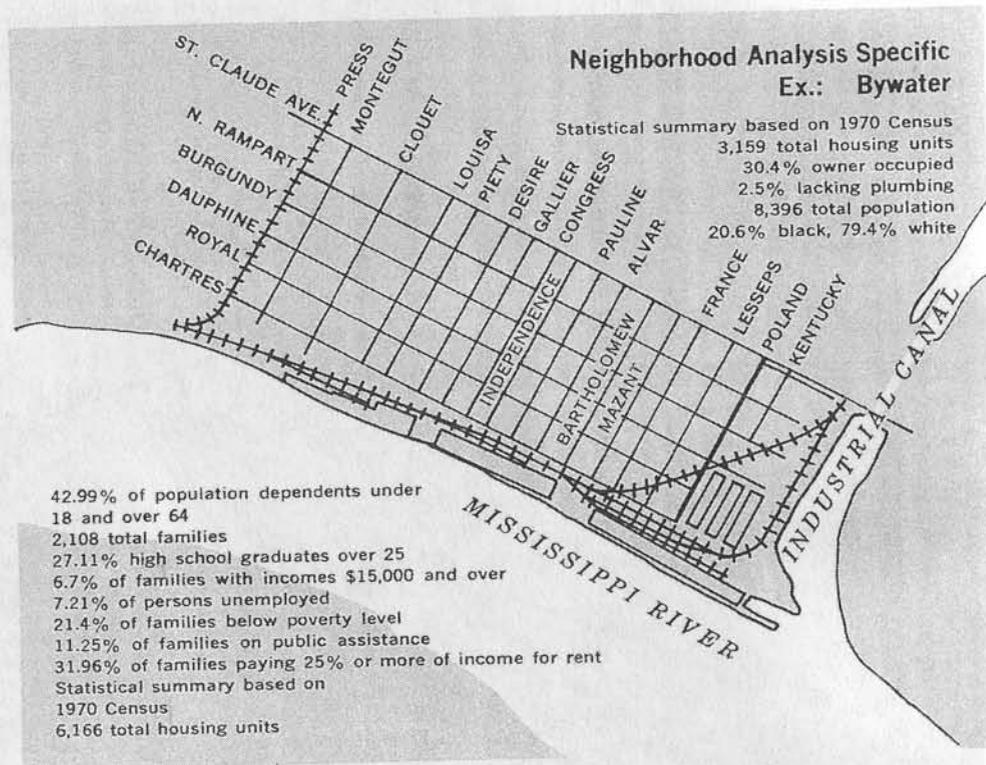
27.11% high school graduates over 25
 1.7% of families with incomes \$15,000 and over
 7.21% of persons unemployed
 60.9% of families below poverty level
 39.97% of families on public assistance
 41.49% of families paying 25% or more of income for rent



**Neighborhood Analysis Specific
Ex.: Bywater**

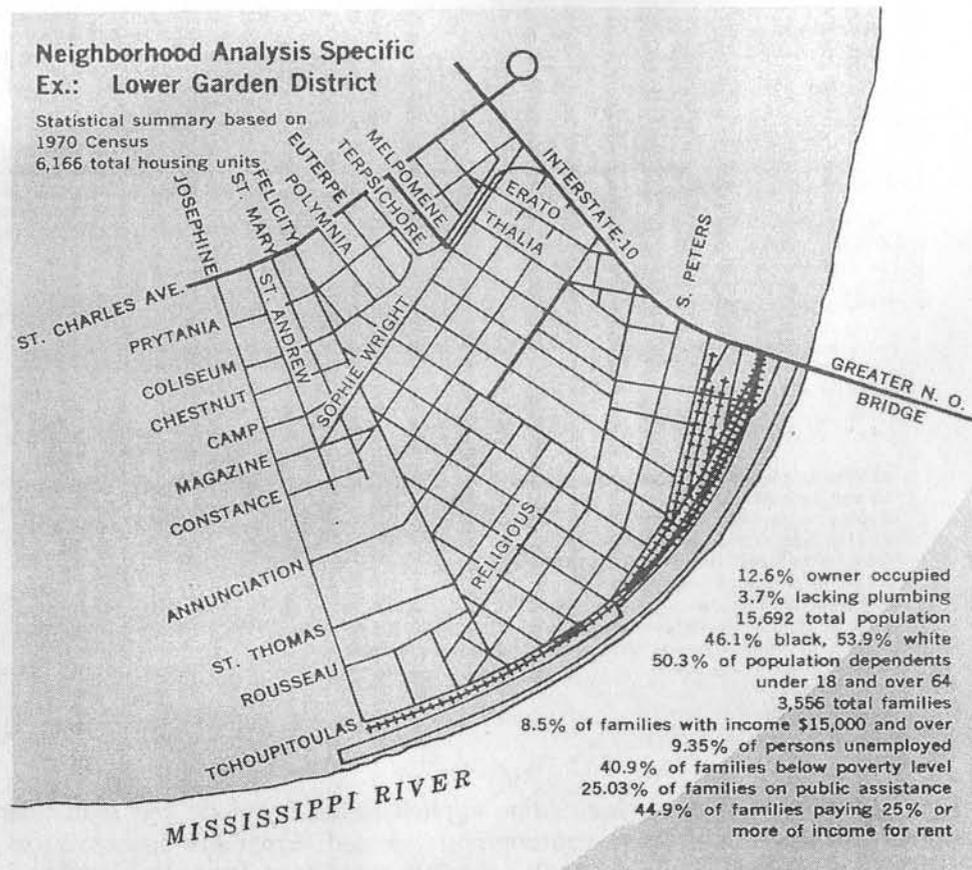
Statistical summary based on 1970 Census
 3,159 total housing units
 30.4% owner occupied
 2.5% lacking plumbing
 8,396 total population
 20.6% black, 79.4% white

42.99% of population dependents under 18 and over 64
 2,108 total families
 27.11% high school graduates over 25
 6.7% of families with incomes \$15,000 and over
 7.21% of persons unemployed
 21.4% of families below poverty level
 11.25% of families on public assistance
 31.96% of families paying 25% or more of income for rent
 Statistical summary based on 1970 Census
 6,166 total housing units



neighborhoods. The same situation applied to the Riverside and Irish Channel neighborhoods, which are conterminous as well. Programs successful in the Irish Channel, the neighborhood selected, could be extended upriver into the Riverside neighborhood.

Finally, two additional neighborhoods were excluded from detailed analysis. The Florida neighborhood has been infused with funds for rehabilitation and public improvements through the Federally Assisted Code Enforcement program, which has rehabilitated approximately eighty structures. The F.A.C.E. program is currently in operation in the Florida neighborhood and is accomplishing its objectives. This neighborhood is approaching the Standard Profile. The



The figures in this chapter are but four examples used here simply to illustrate the kinds of data used in arriving at detailed analyses of the fifteen neighborhoods. These analyses and the recommendations resulting from them are contained in the comprehensive edition of this study.

other exception to a detailed analysis is the Gravier neighborhood, which consists of a concentration of commercial and industrial structures and facilities, including railroad tracks and the Interstate 10. The negligible use of this area for housing led to its exclusion from detailed analysis.

Neighborhoods remaining which demanded a detailed analysis because of the uniqueness or the acuteness of their problems were:

Critical neighborhoods—Desire, Central City, Zion City.

Severe neighborhoods—Lower Ninth Ward, Seventh Ward, Girt Town, Tulane, Sixth Ward, Tremé, West Carrollton, Black Pearl, Irish Channel, Lower Garden District, Marigny, Bywater.

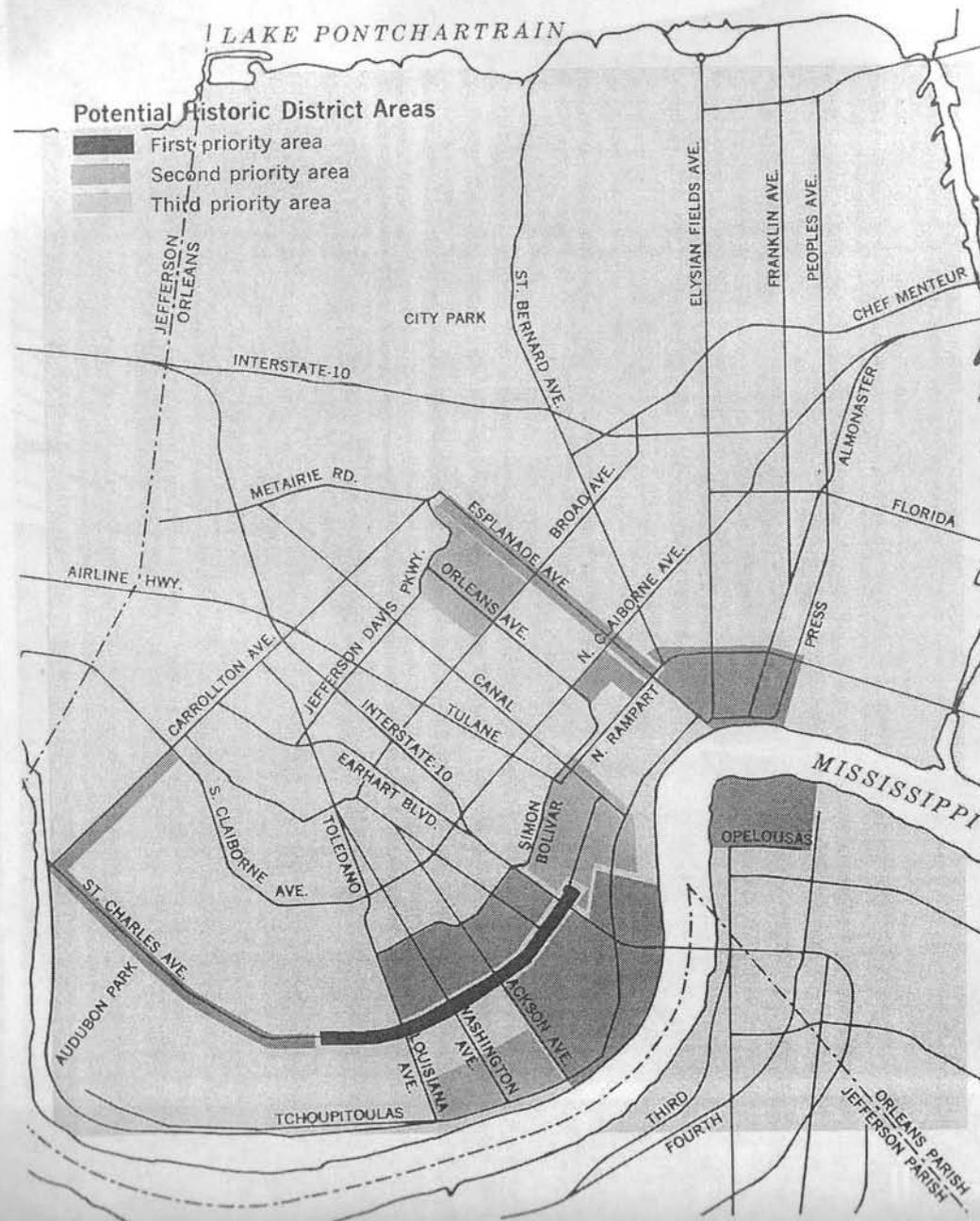
The isolation of these fifteen neighborhoods for detailed analysis was based primarily on what was known from the 1970 Census and what was subsequently learned through surveys and meetings in the neighborhoods. Specific analysis provides an intelligent survey of each area; and, consistent with goals established for each neighborhood, it offers options for programmatic solutions to problems. While implementing programs in all fifteen neighborhoods may not be feasible, we hope to lay ground-work here for further stratification based on this broad survey of the particular problems each area presents.

Conclusion

The results of this study indicate that a deteriorated housing stock, persons making an annual income under \$8,000, and low home ownership (0-40.9 percent) are synonymous with pre-1900 neighborhoods and historic structures. In other words the very areas suitable, on cultural and historic grounds, for conservation are those which most require modernization and improvement of housing conditions. This composite profile is the basis for recommending and implementing programs which will attempt to reconcile the dichotomy: improve the housing conditions while conserving the neighborhoods of New Orleans.



Part II
Recommendations



1. Implement the Urban Conservation (U. C.) Zoning proposal¹ within the following first-priority neighborhoods and areas:

St. Charles Avenue	Marigny
Esplanade Avenue	Treme
Central City	Algiers Point
Lower Garden District	

2. Amend the existing State Act 147² and prepare new legislation, if necessary, during the coming legislative session, so that the city may create a landmarks commission immediately independent of an historic preservation district. Then create a citywide landmarks commission which would provide historic-preservation-type controls for landmark structures, and would also prevent demolition of specific landmarks (such as those on St. Charles Avenue) within areas designated for U. C. Zoning.

3. Implement a loan insurance/revolving fund program³ to provide financial resources for rehabilitation and purchase of old housing.

4. Utilize the Department of Housing and Urban Development (H.U.D.) Section 23 Public Leased Housing Program⁴ to finance extensive rehabilitation of existing housing stock, particularly in designated U.C. zoned neighborhoods.

Note: Implicit in the above recommendations for implementing new financial programs (that is, the loan insurance/revolving fund program) or for utilizing existing ones (that is, H.U.D. programs) is the concept of planned rehabilitation concentrated along lines of neighborhood resources. Development should be effected in or across neighborhoods according to one of three Developmental Unit schemes⁵ designed to improve the physical environment and the existing housing stock of specific areas.

5. Further implement proposed landlord/tenant laws⁶ as part of an Orleans Parish legislative package for state-level action.

6. Implement pilot, home-ownership programs of public housing in neighborhoods such as Desire and Central City.

7. We recommend implementation of State Act 147 as presently conceived in the event of failure to secure passage of the proposed amendments to the act (as recommended in No. 2)¹. Implementation would involve creation of an historic district on St. Charles Avenue from Jackson to Napoleon Avenues. Present zoning in this section allows for intense economic development of the land; this encourages demolition, which in turn threatens landmark structures.

Recognizing the limits and constraints such districts might impose on low-income residents within the proposed historic district, we recommend that the city assure that such residents be provided adequate housing within the boundaries of the district; and moreover, that a special assessment be required to cover the costs of administering the district and providing for special services and facilities, including low-cost housing.

8. It is our recommendation that interim controls be placed on demolition and new construction² until the city administration has had sufficient time to implement the landmarks commission and U.C. Zoning proposals and to gauge their effectiveness before entirely removing existing regulatory protections.

Specifically, we recommend that the moratorium on demolition along St. Charles Avenue be extended for six months. If the moratorium is allowed to expire in mid-July as planned, certain elements of this program designed to protect St. Charles Avenue may not yet have been implemented or may not have taken effect, resulting in a rash of demolitions.

9. We recommend that housing code enforcement efforts be given priority status consistent with opportunities for neighborhood conservation and rehabilitation. Basic housing code inspections should include priority and minimal standards so that eligibility for rehabilitation programs can be determined. Income level and funding availability will determine the extent of code enforcement.

10. Implement a program to revitalize the Central Business District (C.B.D.) and to improve housing conditions there in order to relieve pressures exerted on surrounding neighborhoods. Treme, Central City and the Lower Garden Dis-

trict are experiencing inflated zoning followed by deterioration and neglect of the present housing stock. A strategy for the C.B.D. that would not only protect historic structures but also take a dynamic approach to our commercial center would go far to stabilize surrounding neighborhoods and provide for mixed uses in the business district.

In recent years demolition of nineteenth-century office buildings and warehouses in the C.B.D. has seriously altered the historic quality of the district. The C.B.D. Growth Management Program and the Wallace, McHarg, Roberts and Todd study have documented the need for demolition controls in the C.B.D. A citywide landmarks commission, empowered to stay demolition of important structures, could provide one alternative form of protection for the C.B.D.

11. Implement the Federally Assisted Code Enforcement program along with loan insurance/revolving fund programs in the following first-priority areas: Lower Central City, Lower Garden District, Irish Channel.

12. We recommend that federal housing programs, specifically the H.U.D. 236 Subsidized Housing and Section 23 Public Leased Housing programs, be utilized for new housing development in the following areas: Zion City, Upper Central City, Desire.

¹For further discussion, refer to Part III, No. 2. ²*Ibid.*, No. 4. ³*Ibid.*, No. 6. ⁴*Ibid.*, ⁵*Ibid.*, No. 1. ⁶*Ibid.*, No. 5. ⁷*Ibid.*, No. 4. ⁸*Ibid.*, No. 3.

1. Implement U.C. Zoning in second-priority areas. A second-priority zoning program will involve phased implementation of U.C. Zoning according to the *primary* or *secondary* importance of the areas being considered. This proposal affects neighborhoods and areas which are presently viable but which contain enough architecturally/historically important sites to warrant U.C. Zoning as a means of maintaining neighborhood stability and conserving overall neighborhood character. The second-priority areas of the city which contain the highest percentage of buildings of *primary* architectural/historical importance are:

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Bayou St. John | Magazine Street |
| Irish Channel | Jackson Avenue |
| Tulane | Louisiana Avenue |
| Carrollton Avenue | Washington Avenue |

2. Implement Federally Assisted Code Enforcement and revolving fund programs in the following second-priority areas:

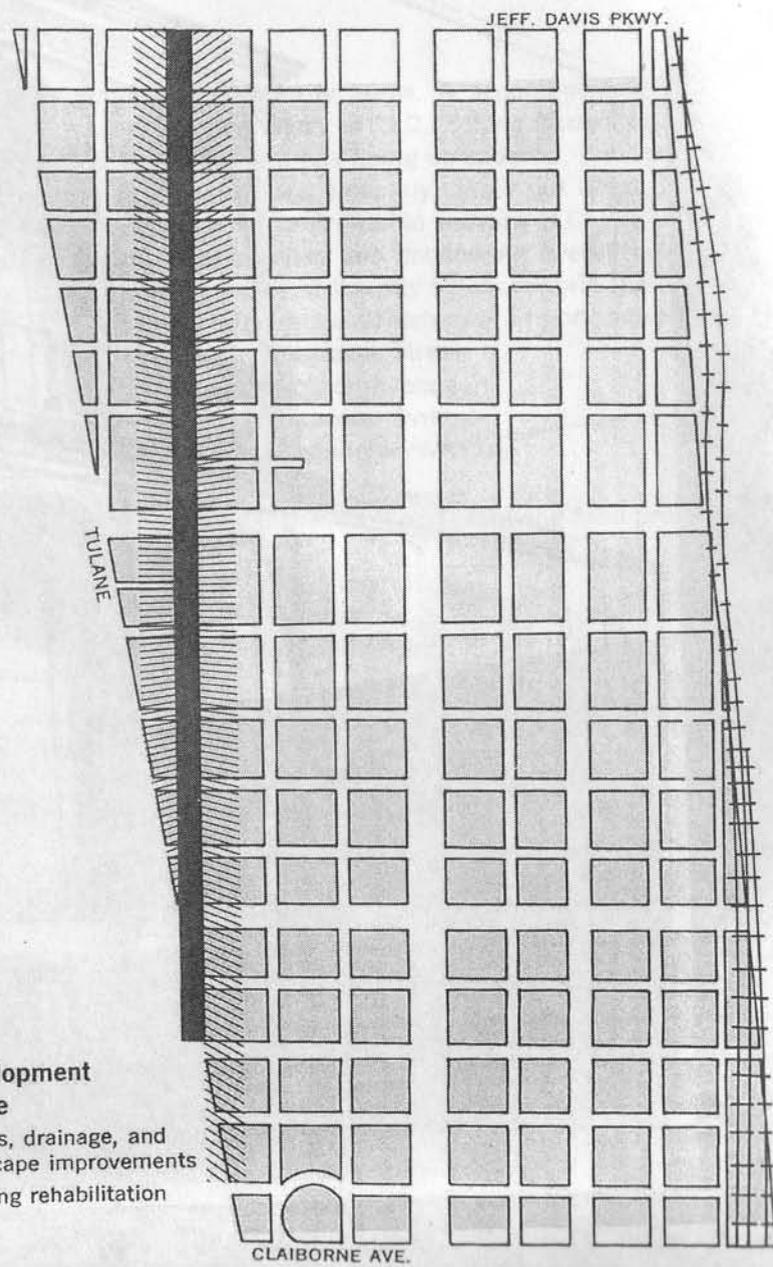
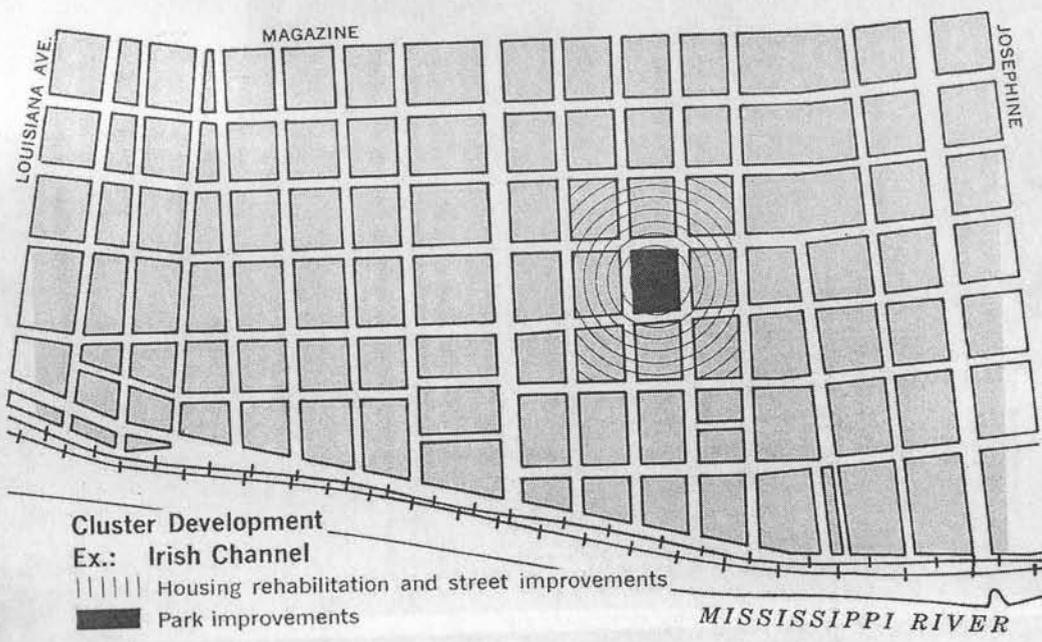
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|------------|-----------------|
| Marigny | West Carrollton |
| Sixth Ward | Bywater |
| Tulane | Seventh Ward |

3. A combination new housing construction and rehabilitation program is recommended for the following second-priority areas:

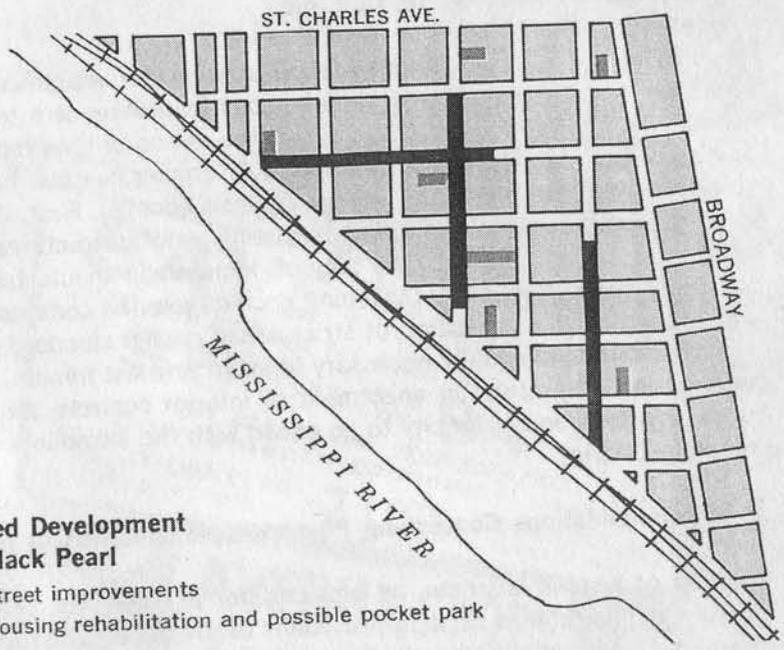
- | | |
|------------------|-------------|
| Girt Town | Black Pearl |
| Lower Ninth Ward | Tulane |

1. Developmental Unit Definitions

Based on the underlying assumption that a concentration of resources is an effective approach in the area of neighborhood rehabilitation, we suggest the use of a Developmental Unit, to be either wholly contained within or crossing the boundaries of, a neighborhood. Three prototype forms of Developmental Unit are proposed: *Cluster* (around a park or recreation facility), *Linear* (along, or on both sides of, a linear strip such as a major avenue), both of which would be selected on the basis of needs and opportunities; *Dispersed* (within a geographic area, where overall neighborhood improvement is warranted, and there is no obvious focal point around which to develop). The Neighborhood Analysis specific will contain for each neighborhood a recommendation on potential use of the concept and feasible unit alternatives. The tools for implementing the unit will be defined, and a cost assessment made.



Linear Development
Ex.: Tulane
 [Thick black line] Streets, drainage, and landscape improvements
 [Hatched pattern] Housing rehabilitation

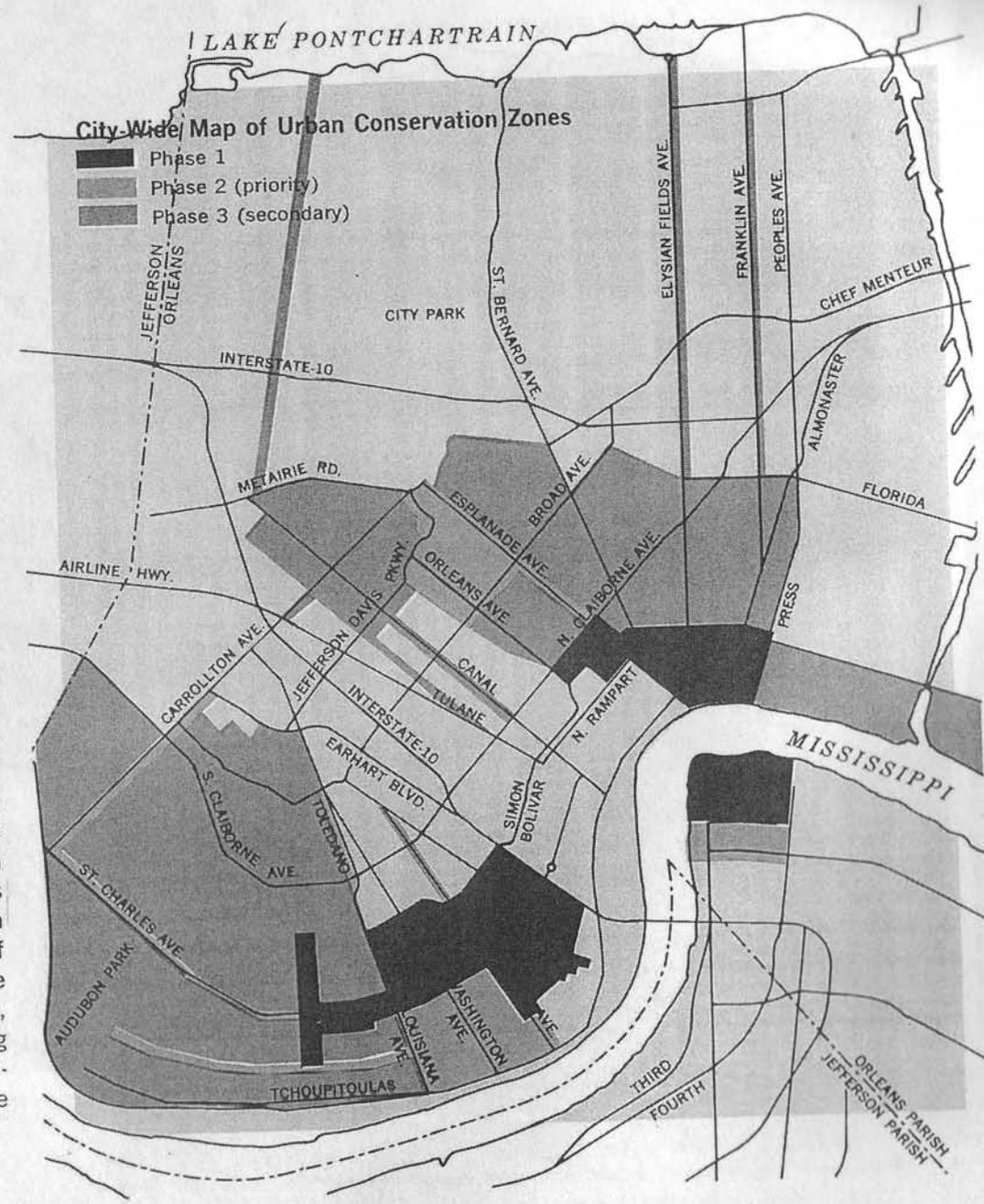


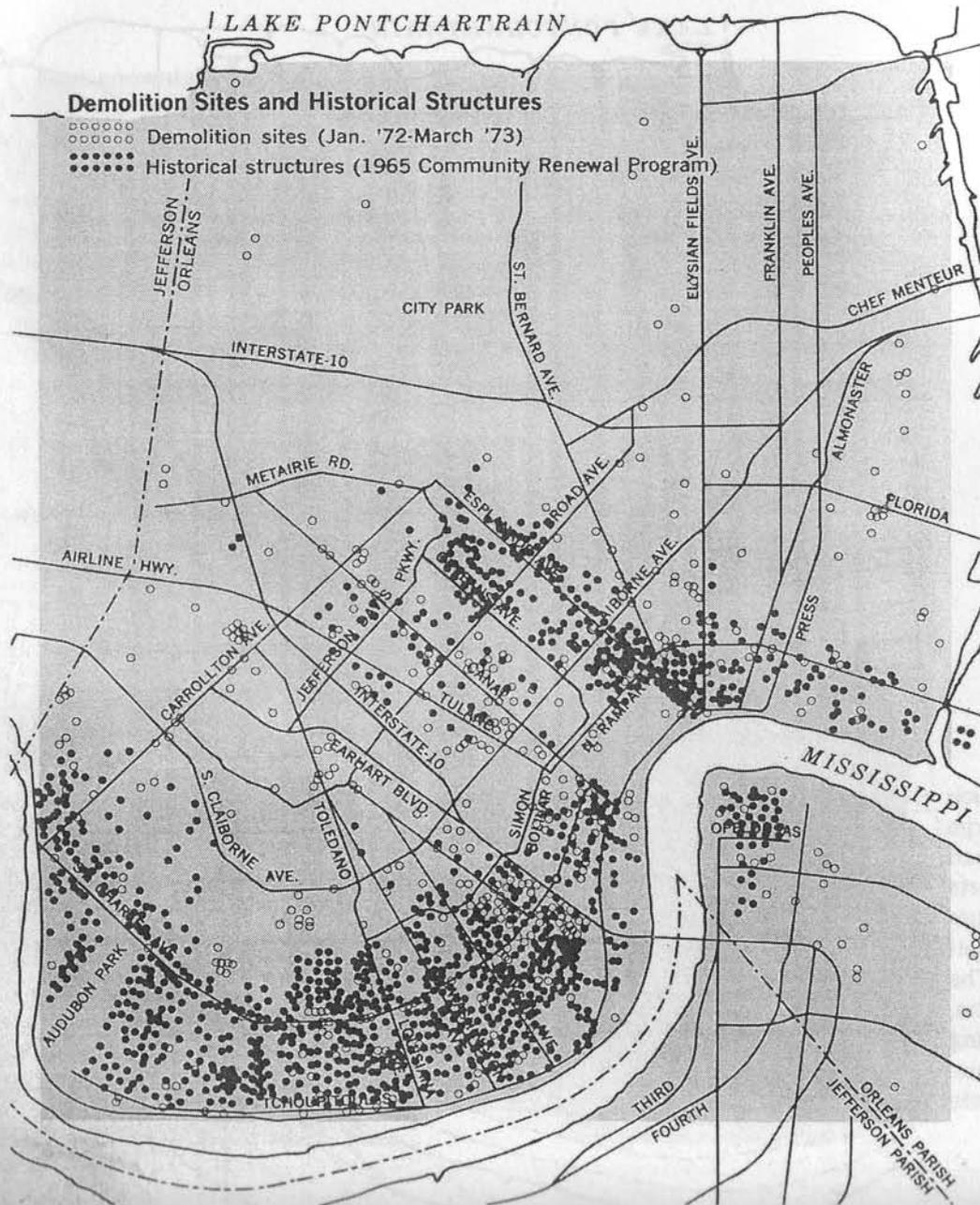
Dispersed Development
 Ex.: Black Pearl

- Street improvements
- Housing rehabilitation and possible pocket park

2. Proposed Urban Conservation Zoning

The word conservation implies that there is something of quality present which deserves both recognition and sensitive maintenance. On these grounds, large areas of New Orleans, some of which require more immediate attention than others, can be zoned for conservation. We propose an amendment to the charts presently used in the Zoning Ordinance, in which the minimum and/or maximum requirements for each Urban Conservation Zone will be listed. The zoning itself will be phased and the requirements for each area may differ accordingly. The requirements will relate to density, yard area, floor area ratio, lot coverage ratio, and height and bulk controls. By imposing such urban design controls to varying degrees in the city, applying them to areas where rehabilitation of older structures and construction of new ones is occurring, we hope to achieve an adequate complementary blend of past, present and future.





3. The Importance of Interim Controls

An integral part of the implementation strategy for enactment of Urban Conservation (U.C.) Zoning is the simultaneous institution of a temporary stay of demolitions and new construction during the period of time required for consideration of the U.C. Zoning Ordinance. U.C. Zoning has two functions, each of which should be served by the interim controls adopted. First, U.C. Zoning seeks to remove pressures for demolition of existing historic structures and encourage renovation, so that a temporary stay of demolitions should be effected by the interim controls. Second, U.C. Zoning encourages new construction compatible with the old by the imposition of strict urban design standards. Thus a stay of building permits is equally necessary to avoid any last minute, out-of-character construction. Therefore an enactment of interim controls should immediately follow any decision by the city to go ahead with the introduction of Urban Conservation Zoning.

4. Recommendations Concerning Phased Implementation of Historic District

Creation of historic districts, as provided for in State Act 147, is not recommended at this time as existing provisions of the act are inadequate for solving the housing and neighborhood preservation problems identified in this study. A key recommendation is that Act 147 be amended at the State Legislature to allow for the City of New Orleans to implement an independent landmarks commission capability, and that such a landmarks commission be empowered to bar demolitions of significant historic structures. Failure to secure passage of the amendment to the act would make necessary the secondary strategy of implementing the act as presently conceived. In the event this becomes necessary, we recommend the formation of an historic district commission with authority limited to that portion of St. Charles Avenue most severely threatened by demolition at this time.

Limiting the commission's scope to the area of St. Charles Avenue between Jackson and Napoleon Avenues is justified for several reasons: first, creation of a district commission will carry with it a landmarks capability, which can be used to great advantage in protecting other historic areas of the city; second,



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 1530 MELPOMENE AVE OPEN 24 HOURS
2 LOTS

AVENUE SHOPS
FREE PARKING
WITH TICKETS OVEN
 WHILE SHOPPING IN THESE STORES
NO PURCHASE NECESSARY

TOWN AND COUNTRY	DRESS CIRCLE
LYLIAN SHOP	SKEFFINGTON'S
PROMENADE	JULIETTE
20 th CENTURY SHOP	BETTY HECKMANN
	PAT TALLEY

Patio Parking
 FREE PARKING
 WITH TICKETS
 35¢ PER HOUR
 1530 MELPOMENE AVE

Each structure on St. Charles Avenue, from Lee Circle to Carrollton Avenue, was surveyed, photographed, and rated according to its local or national importance. The St. Charles Avenue Architectural Survey and Structural Ratings are part of the Housing and Neighborhood Preservation Study. The following two photographs indicate the manner in which the survey was presented. A rating of purple signifies a structure of national importance; blue, of major importance; green, of importance;

and yellow, important as part of the local scene.

Above: Corner Melpomene Avenue and St. Charles Avenue. Green. Late Victorian or Edwardian building. Circa 1900. A striking example, important to this portion of the avenue. Good opportunities to be capitalized for visual and commercial advantages. Very fine trees.



Left: The St. Charles Avenue Streetcar. National Register Status.

Right: 5809 St. Charles Avenue. Green. Circa 1900. Colonial Revival (a free adaptation).

the extraordinary threat to the historic character of the Avenue justifies extraordinary regulation and protection; third, because St. Charles Avenue is characterized by a high percentage of white, upper-income residents, it is less susceptible to the adverse socio-economic consequences often associated with district mechanisms.

Though no further implementation of Act 147 is deemed necessary at this time, second- or third-priority implementation programs may become necessary in the event of unanticipated adverse socio-economic consequences. In order to effect later priority measures, the following minimal adaptations and additions to the basic implementation format are recommended: first, to minimize adverse socio-economic impact, the commission may require the building of public housing units in the area; second, a special assessment for the district may be attached to the Act 147 to pay for administrative costs; third, some portion of the revenue derived from this special assessment should be dedicated to subsidizing rents and low-interest loan insurance for low- and moderate-income residents of the district; fourth, the commission can create a mechanism for local residents to participate in and have some control over policy-making in the district.

In the event that second- and third-priority implementation programs become a reality, determination of the areas of the city to be assigned second- or third-priority status is governed by three factors: first, the character and condition of buildings within the area; second, the receptivity of local residents to district regulations; and third, the severity of the threat to the area.

5. Landlord/Tenant Laws

The proposed landlord/tenant laws would have the effect of creating legal rights and duties of landlords and tenants that each might enforce upon the other, independently of the city's Department of Safety and Permits. Much of the burden for housing code enforcement and for improvement of the city's housing picture can be transferred from the public to the private sector, with a resultant savings in public dollars. One objective should be to develop a balance between the rights and duties of landlords and tenants, which may be enforced by each party

by private right of action. A more efficient development of the landlord/tenant laws would be both economical and efficient.

6. Housing Rehabilitation

Revolving Fund: The use of a Revolving Fund to maintain and conserve housing in New Orleans is considered one of the most effective and comprehensive financial mechanisms. Since it involves the use of both public and private monies, however, it may also be one of the most difficult methods to organize and approve under current municipal practices. On the other hand, it may be a more efficient way of using public funds by virtue of a recycling process of monies which return to the fund from private persons or groups receiving loans. This program would aid residents in the old city in rehabilitating deteriorated dwellings or in purchasing structures which require repair.

There are several applications of Revolving Funds, all of which are an approach for the homeowner, landlord and housing development corporation, but do not confront the renter:

- a. Home improvement loans—a kind of second mortgage, and usually expensive. The city or city agent can finance rehabilitation directly by issuing home improvement loans, or at least can insure low interest loans issued by other lending groups.
- b. Buy, rehab and resale approach—involving the city directly in the real estate market, and necessitating a larger commitment of funds. Program could be geared to resale of rehabilitated structures to low- and moderate-income persons.
- c. Insuring agent—the role played by the city in (a) and (b). We recommend that the city develop a financial model in cooperation with local lending institutions. The city could develop a high-risk fund with these groups, whereby loans for purchase and rehabilitation of homes can be financed.

Advantages and Disadvantages:

A Revolving Fund which insures private investment has the advantage of involving the resources of the conventional financial institutions in a neighborhood conservation program. The demands of the rehabilitation effort are so great

that involvement of conventional sources is imperative to approach neighborhood revitalization realistically. On the other hand it will be difficult obtaining a commitment of private resources in coordination with government funds.

Recommended Strategy:

Citywide loan insurance program—proposes a commitment on the city's behalf to insure one quarter of the investment made by private lending institutions. The goal of the program is to open up money for non-bankable loans to people of modest income.

Section 23 Public Leased Housing: The primary thrust of this program, which is not new, is to induce private involvement in the low-income housing market.

Recent rethinking of the program on the national level involves a possible shift in responsibility for issuing leases with guaranteed five year rents on privately owned structures from the Housing Authority to the private owner himself. The guaranteed rents may also be discontinued and replaced by a proposal to establish rent levels based on market rents, rather than neighborhood levels. This would not effect the low-income person greatly, for Section 23 provides one of the deepest subsidies, and he cannot be forced to pay more than 25 percent of his gross monthly income for the unit. But the advantages in economic inducement of the increased rent levels are substantial. If the program is geared specifically to rehabilitation, a large number of structures in inner-city neighborhoods would be upgraded while maintaining low-cost housing to the city's low-income population.

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Cover

Mural depicting the destruction of Treme culture by Bruce Brice, 1971

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