NEW ORLEANS

GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE

FINAL REPORT

Prepared By:

WALLACE ROBERTS & TODD
Architects, Landscape Architects,
Urban and Environmental Planners
260 South Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102

With:

MARKS WISZNIA ASSOCIATES INC.
Land Use and Development Planning,
Architecture and Urban Planning

BOB TUCKER AND ASSOCIATES, INC.
Management Consultants

HEBERT/SMOLKIN ASSOCIATES, INC.
Real Estate Economics Consultants

GREGORY C. RIGAMER & ASSOCIATES, INC.
Transportation Consultants

SPONSORS

CITY OF NEW ORLEANS
Sidney J. Barthelemy, Mayor

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Darwin C. Fenner, Chairman, 1985
Frederick M. Guice, Chairman, 1986
Donald R. Mintz, Chairman, 1987

CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE

Arthur L. Jung III, Chairman, 1985
Thomas B. Favrot, Chairman, 1986-1987

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Donald R. Mintz, Committee Chairman
Robert W. Becker, Executive Director, City Planning Commission
Jerome P. Dickhaus, Executive Assistant to the Mayor for Economic Development
Frederick M. Guice, Member, Central Area Committee
Christian J. Laborde, Manager, Central Area Committee
Jerry T. Moomau, Executive Director, Downtown Development District
Warren G. Moses, Chairman, 1975 Growth Management Plan

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Donald R. Mintz, Chairman
Coleman E. Adler
Ian Arnof
Alan C. Arnold
Harry Blumenthal
James C. Brandt
Joseph C. Canizaro
Raphael Cassimere, Jr.
James A. Churchill
Fran Cohen-Godchaux
Michael A. Duplantier
Mavis S. Early
John Eckert
Steven Erenyi
Betty Jo Everett
Darwin C. Fenner
Stephen S. Johnson, III
Arthur L. Jung, III
Norman Kerth
Hansen Koch
John LeBourgeois
Saundra Levy
Ray Liuzza
Alden McDonald
Ron Mertens
R. King Milling
Pamela H. Moomau
Glenn Moore
Dana Nottingham
August Perez
John D. Peters
Charles H. Peterson
J. Elliot Prieur
Andre Rubenstein
Marshall Ryals
R. Larry Schmidt
Sharon Sheridan
Paulette Smith
Gil Vorhoff
John C. Williams

UPDATE STAFF

Barbara K. Johnson, Project Director
Barry L. Fosberg
Ellen A. Miller

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE UPDATE

It is twelve years since the City of New Orleans and the Central Area Council of the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce, in joint venture, completed a Growth Management Program for the New Orleans Central Business District. This landmark program was initiated in response to the City's unsatisfactory prior experience with fragmented CBD studies and plans which, lacking the full support of all involved public and private interests, failed to achieve their various goals.

Under the direction of the original GMP Steering Committee, a consultant team headed by Wallace, McHarg, Roberts and Todd completed a CBD Growth Management Program in 1975. The recommendations of this detailed and comprehensive planning effort have guided public and private development actions in the downtown since then and are largely responsible for the form and character of downtown New Orleans today.

Although the recommendations of the 1975 plan have served well over the years of moderately high growth, conditions have changed dramatically with the implementation of some of its proposals and with changes at the regional and national levels. Market projections made in 1975 have been exceeded in some sectors and fallen short in others; the event of the World's Fair in 1984 has produced new development trends and opportunities that need to be addressed; reduced Federal spending is imposing new constraints on local government plans and programs; and growth expectations are being redefined in light of the recent collapse of the oil industry and its impacts on regional growth prospects. While many of the conclusions and recommendations of the 1975 plan remain valid, conditions have changed sufficiently to demand a GMP Update to adjust and refine appropriate action plans for the remaining years of this century.

The growth potential of downtown New Orleans, or any downtown, is a function of a wide range of factors, including:

- regional economic conditions and growth prospects;

- physical conditions in the downtown, such as the availability of suitable sites, vehicular access and public transportation systems, the adequacy of existing utilities;

- the proximity of supporting developments and compatible land use patterns, the availability of affordable housing options, and attractive recreational opportunities;

- City policy with respect to zoning and building controls, taxation structures, financing assistance, subsidies, the efficiency of permitting and approval process; and

- various other less tangible but equally important factors such as the development image of downtown, characteristics of the local construction industry, educational levels of the regional labor pool.

Clearly, not all these factors are under direct control of the downtown administration, but through those that are, the City can influence the pace, development mix, location and form of downtown growth. To attract a higher level of growth, various City policies and capital programs can be designed to increase private investment interest in the downtown.

This report presents the recommendations of the consultant team for updating the Growth Management Plan. The action program for the downtown contained in this Update achieves an appropriate balance among market sectors while meeting City goals. The plan and program therefore include recommended policy changes and capital investments targeted to stimulate particular market segments, and provide incentives where they may be needed to accomplish these goals.

1.2 ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE 1975 PLAN

New Orleans stands a little under half way through the planning period adopted for achievement of the downtown goals established twelve years ago in the 1975 Plan. The clearest indication of the considerable success of this plan is available in a comparison of the downtown as it was in 1974 (Figure 1), the projected form of the area in the year 2000 (Figure 2), and its form as it exists today (Figure 3).

Allowing for graphic differences, the plan of the DDD today looks remarkably like a half finished re-drawing of the projected year 2000 plan, as indeed it should under a realistically based and conscientiously implemented action program. As planned, major development has occurred at the river end of Canal and Poydras in Canal Place, the Hilton Hotel complex and the Riverwalk project. Similarly, office and hotel development is proceeding as planned around the Poydras-Loyola intersection, although development of the three blocks north of LaSalle has occurred earlier than expected. In the mid-town area, density has increased on the west side of St. Charles as predicted, with added growth on the east side further reinforcing intentions for this important corridor.

High intensity development on the riverfront so far has not extended beyond the Hilton and the new condominium tower currently under construction, but site clearance and access improvements carried out for the World's Fair and construction of the Convention Center have prepared this area as the prime opportunity for high rise hotel and/or luxury residential development, as proposed in the 1975 plan. Similarly, residential construction in the St. Charles corridor uptown of Lafayette has not yet occurred but the opportunity is only now arising with the completion of streetscape improvements on St. Charles, recent successful residential activity in the adjacent Warehouse District and the growing demand for downtown housing.

Streetscape and pedestrian system improvements have been carried out systematically by the Downtown Development District and the City according to the 1975 Plan, setting high design standards and an encouraging level of commitment to completing an attractive pedestrian network throughout the downtown. Traffic improvements, however, have not been so methodically pursued, resulting in increasing downtown congestion that is reaching critical

EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS 1974

Figure 1

(Reproduced from the 1975 GMP Technical Report)

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS 2000

Figure 2

(Reproduced from the 1975 GMP Technical Report)

levels at certain intersections. Parking policies of the 1975 Plan have generally been followed but few structures (besides the new public garage opposite the Convention Center) have been built to establish the proposed peripheral and intercept parking systems. With completion of the Greater New Orleans Mississippi River Bridge Number Two, access to the downtown will be dramatically improved, but internal circulation and parking are emerging as critical issues in future growth possibilities.

Sensitivity to the preservation of historic structures and the unique architectural character of New Orleans has been firmly established since the demolition moratorium of 1974. Adoption of a revised CBD zoning ordinance, Historic District designations and informed Design Review processes have upheld, for the most part, the important goals of design distinction in both architecture and landscaping, and of growth within historic continuity. These goals may be threatened, however, if the pace of development increases substantially over the next decades.

Of all the Goals and Objectives adopted in the 1975 Plan the least advanced, besides the development of an integrated transportation system, is the growth of a stable downtown residential community. Besides being an aim in itself, residential development was also seen as a strategic objective in the maintenance of a strong retail core on Canal Street and in expanding the range of downtown activities, neither of which has been solidly achieved in the last ten years. Although Canal Place provides an up-scale retail anchor at the river end of Canal Street, expansion of low-end merchandising further up the street and the recent closing announcements by the Godchaux and Gus Mayer Department Stores leave the retailing future of Canal continuingly tenuous. With respect to expanding the range of activities, office and hotel development have overwhelmingly dominated growth since 1975 and the downtown could be in danger of becoming a sterile 9 to 5 center if residential objectives are not soon achieved. Recent rehabilitation activity in the Warehouse District is heartening in this regard.

Probably the most important achievement of the 1975 Plan, however, is the institution of the Downtown Development District office which provides the essential link between public and private interests in the continuing growth of downtown. The fact that a GMP Update is being conducted by the DDD within ten

EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS 1985

Figure 3

years of the initial plan is the clearest evidence possible of the office's commitment to the principles of Growth Management and its determination that City policy and public investments remain fine-tuned to the exigencies of changing economic and environmental conditions as the future unfolds. Development of the computerized Downtown Data Base, which has been developed for this Update, will further enhance the DDD's ability to monitor and evaluate future growth, as well as provide an unusually attractive service to private investors looking for development opportunities in Downtown New Orleans.

Overall, the 1975 Plan has demonstrated considerable success in directing a difficult decade of growth through the development slump of the 70's and the over-optimism of the early 80's. Despite inadequate achievement, at this time, of certain objectives, such as those relating to transportation and residential growth, the Plan has accomplished a clear advance towards the future depicted in Figure 2. The current plan update has given New Orleans the opportunity to re-evaluate that future in the light of past and current development trends (which have already shown a stronger office and hotel market than was predicted twelve years ago), and to determine what adjustments need to be made to present policies and action programs.

1.3 THE WORK PROGRAM

To incorporate these new conditions in the City's and the DDD's continuing growth management efforts to the year 2000, the planning process established in 1975 has been essentially repeated in the present Update Study. This process involved the following sequential steps:

1. Inventory of current conditions, opportunities for change and probable future developments.

2. Description and evaluation of the likely future under current conditions and present market demands.

3. Description and evaluation of alternate futures under different public policy choices and investment priorities.

4. Selection of a preferred development direction and definition of its corresponding goals and objectives.

5. Development of strategies to achieve the established goals and objectives.

Steps 1 through 4 are summarized in Chapters 3 and 4 in this report. More detailed descriptions of particular topics are documented in technical memoranda and working papers. The inventory data is contained in the DDD's computerized data base, itself one of the key products of the Update. The focus of this report is step 5 in the process. It is documented in Chapters 5 and 6 as the Growth Management Plan and Implementation Program, respectively. These Chapters are summarized in Chapter 2.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2.1 GOALS FOR THE PLAN

During the planning and participation process conducted for the Update a consensus emerged about the goals for the downtown. This consensus has two parts: first, a reaffirmation of the goals from the original GMP and, second, a focus on five specific goals for the Update. The original GMP goals are incorporated directly in the Update. They are the following:

- Strengthen downtown New Orleans as the administrative, office, retail and entertainment center of the region.
- Promote growth while preserving historic continuity.
- Return activity to the riverfront.
- Provide a full range of activities downtown which attract residents as well as visitors.
- Achieve an integrated transportation system, balancing automobile facilities with transit and pedestrian activity.
- Retain a strong retail core.
- Strengthen the bond between the CBD and the Vieux Carre.
- Protect and develop good residential communities within the central area.
- Treat and rehabilitate Skid Row inhabitants and eliminate Skid Row itself.
- Encourage design distinction.
- Forge a public/private partnership to carry out the GMP.

To these goals, which have been carried forward from the original GMP, have been added the following five Update goals:

Goal One: Consolidate the downtown office core between the completed development of Poydras Street and the retail and other uses of Canal Street. Encourage new office development to occur in this area without discouraging it elsewhere.

Goal Two: Protect and reinforce the traditional retail functions of Canal Street.

Goal Three: Increase the range of residential opportunities in rehabilitated, renovated and new buildings in the downtown.

Goal Four: Provide a series of connected, publicly-oriented and accessible activities along the length of the Mississippi River.

Goal Five: Improve access to and movement within the downtown with a balanced transportation system.

2.2 THE PLAN AND PROGRAM

This Growth Management Plan Update is comprised of four plan elements: land use, pedestrian and open space system, transportation, and infrastructure. Implementation of the above plan elements requires three types of actions: development incentives, zoning regulations and design guidelines, and public improvements of the circulation and infrastructure systems. The details of the Plan and Program are contained in Chapters 5 and 6 of this report. The major recommended Plan and Program elements are presented in summary below, as they specifically relate to the Update goals. Following the Update goal-specific recommendations is a summary of District-wide recommended actions.

Goal One: Consolidate the downtown office core between the completed development of Poydras Street and the retail and other uses of Canal Street. Encourage new office development to occur in this area without discouraging it elsewhere.

Land Use:

- Encourage new office development to wrap around the traditional office core on available sites along Poydras and the downtown end of Loyola.

- Encourage high intensity mixed use development around the Canal Street-Elk Place intersection with retail and entertainment uses on the street level and office and hotel/residential uses above.

Pedestrian and Open Space:

- Provide landscape improvements to Poydras, Loyola, and Tulane medians and sidewalks. Loyola, between Poydras and Iberville, is a priority action.

- Provide sidewalk improvements to O'Keefe, Perdido and Tulane east of Loyola. Complete the St. Charles improvements to Iberville as a priority action.

- Convert Union street into a primarily pedestrian way. Develop mini parks at selected locations along its length.

Development Incentives:

- Create a new zone, CBD-1B, with similar provisions to CBD-1 but with no FAR limit, around the Canal Street-Elk Place intersection as a priority action.

- Consider the construction of a public parking garage on either side of Canal Street between Saratoga and South Liberty/Treme to be pubicly or privately operated.

- Consider waiving the standard 50 percent private share for necessary infrastructure improvements in the area.

Inrastructure:

- Complete sanitary sewer replacements on Conti and Canal Streets between Robertson and North Rampart, and on South Rampart between Canal and Tulane Streets as a priority action.

Transportation:

- Develop peripheral parking on Claiborne or North Basin/North Rampart Streets with frequent shuttle service to the downtown Loyola area.

<u>Goal Two:</u> Protect and reinforce the traditional retail functions of Canal Street.

Land Use:

- Encourage a high intensity mixed use development around the Canal Street-Elk Place intersection with retail and entertainment uses on the street level and office and hotel/reisdential uses above.

- Establish a committee with representation of the City of New Orleans, the Housing Authority of New Orleans and the Downtown Development District to investigate ways to improve the Iberville Housing Development.

Pedestrian and Open Space:

- Conduct a study of Iberville Street to improve its accessibility and visual environment.

- Provide sidewalk improvements on cross streets linking the traditional office core and the Vieux Carre to Canal Street, i.e., University Place/Burgundy Street, Carondelet Street/Bourbon Street, St. Charles Street/Royal Street, Magazine Street/Decatur Street and Tchoupitoulas Street/North St. Peters Street. The completion of improvements on St. Charles is a priority action.

- Pursue potential for "gateway" opportunities to the French Quarter and public gathering spaces for Canal Street.

- Revise the existing sign ordinance and implement a sign amoritization program on Canal Street.

Development Incentives:

- Consider the construction of a public parking garage on either side of Canal Street between Saratoga and South Liberty/Treme to be publicly or privately operated.

- Create a new zone, CBD-1B, with similar provisions to CBD-1 but with no FAR limit, around the Canal Street-Elk Place intersection as a priority action.

- Investigate the development of a centralized retail management program for Canal Street to coordinate the functions of marketing, security, promotions, maintenance, physical improvements, parking and leasing.

- Modify the existing CBD-2B zoning west of Loyola to CBD-2 from Perdido to Iberville to provide opportunities for residential development and the expansion of medical facilities and health-related commercial activities.

- Develop a comprehensive plan of the downtown medical center which would identify opportunities for the expansion of existing medical facilities and research activities and create a distinctive campus-like setting for new development.

Transportation:

- Improve the existing CBD Shuttle and its service to the Canal Street area through the adjustment of routes, better publicity and marketing, and fare and headway reductions.

- Improve accessibility to an existing reservoir of parking on Iberville Street and encourage the reduction of short-term parking rates in the Canal Street area.

Goal Three: Increase the range of residential opportunities in rehabilitated, renovated and new buildings in the downtown.

Land Use:

- Support residential growth in the Warehouse Area.

Pedestrian and Open Space:

- Develop a park on North and South Diamond Streets as a priority action.

- Create a pedestrian way on Commerce Street linking the Piazza d'Italia and North and South Diamond Streets.

- Provide median and sidewalk improvements on Convention Center Boulevard and Howard Avenue.

- Implement sidewalk improvements on Julia and South Peters Streets.

- Establish pedestrian ways on Poeyfarre, Constance, and Notre Dame Streets.

Development Incentives:

- Modify existing CBD-7 and CBD-8 zoning provisions to permit increased, but controlled, intensity of development for residential projects in the Warehouse and Lafayette Square areas as a priority action.

- Extend the existing five-year tax abatement program for residential development as a priority action.

Transportation:

- Institute resident permit-parking and the possible use of the Fulton Street garage for residents as a priority action.

- Acquire or master lease strategic parking reservoirs in key development areas for residential development.

- Extend the CBD Shuttle bus service to serve residential development and major downtown employment centers.

Goal Four: Provide a series of connected, publicly-oriented and accessible activities along the length of the Mississippi River.

Land Use:

- Encourage hotel, convention and public entertainment uses on the riverfront with residential development wherever feasible.

Pedestrian and Open Space:

- Complete median and sidewalk improvements along Convention Center Boulevard.

- Establish the extension of Calliope Street through to the riverfront as a major pedestrian way.

- Upgrade the Julia Street entrance to the riverfront with sidewalk/pedestrian amenities.

- Extend and improve the riverfront promenade to connect the Vieux Carre and future development upriver from the G.N.O. bridges.

Development Incentives:

- Extend the higher intensity provisions of the CBD-2 zone the full length of the riverfront east of Convention Center Boulevard.

- Expand the Convention Center upriver from the existing facility.

Infrastructure:

- Enlarge water mains on Calliope Street and Convention Center Boulevard.

Transportation:

- Provide parking subsidies for residential projects through the development of on-site parking structures or off-site facilities with convenient, frequent shuttle service (i.e. MICO area).

- Implement a riverfront transit link to support public retail and entertainment uses along the river as one component of a total downtown transportation system.

Goal Five: Improve access to and movement within the downtown with a balanced transportation system.

- Initiate an update of the regional transportation plan addressing all modes of travel and the impacts of the new G.N.O. bridge as a priority action.

- Complete intersection studies currently underway to identify required traffic engineering improvements such as additional turning lanes, signal re-timing and synchronization, contra-flow lanes, exclusive transit lanes and a traffic monitoring system.

- Create a coordinating entity to develop and manage parking policy in the downtown. The precise mandate and organizational nature of this entity should be the subject of careful study.

- Increase transit ridership through an aggressive marketing campaign, improved line-haul service, and expanded routing to better serve intra-CBD movement and peak hour travel between CBD centers and peripheral parking and suburban locations.

- Improve the existing CBD Shuttle as the focus of downtown transit through reduced headways, better vehicle visibility and routes fine-tuned to serve user demands as they vary throughout the day.

- Consider a traffic reduction zone for the downtown, within which all new development over a specific size will be required to prepare a traffic impact analysis. This analysis will include building-specific actions leading to reductions in private auto use, and proposals for the efficient use of existing parking supplies and increased transit patronage.

District-Wide Land Use Controls:

- Institute a mandatory design review process for all developments of 50,000 square feet or more, the riverfront, the CBD-1B zone, and sites fronting on Howard Avenue and Lafayette Mall as a priority action.

- Prepare a comprehensive manual of design guidelines for the proposed design review districts.

- Extend the Lafayette Square Historic District uptown to Howard Avenue and Camp Street.

- Extend the Warehouse Historic District uptown to the Pontchartrain Expressway and Camp Street.

2.3 ROLE OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The Downtown Development District was created in 1975 as one of the first recommendations of the original GMP to be implemented. The Downtown Development District can, along with the City Planning Commission, take the lion's share of credit for the remarkable record of implementation of the recommendations of the 1975 GMP. As the DDD is itself a creation of the 1975 GMP, it is uniquely positioned to implement many of the recommendations of the GMP Update.

The DDD must continue to fill its unique leadership role as catalyst and coordinator between the public and private sectors for development in the downtown. The DDD has accomplished this in the past through the provision of a number of unique programs and activities which include:

- provision of supplemental police and sanitation services.
- special area maintenance of streetscape improvements constructed by the DDD and others.
- sponsorship of a wide variety of cultural and arts programs and facilities.
- focused promotional and marketing activities.
- historic preservation funding.
- major streetscape projects on Canal Street, St. Charles Street and Lafayette Mall.
- installation of information kiosks and subsidy of street trees and sidewalk improvements.
- subsidy of the CBD Shuttle.
- planning for the coordinated growth and development of the downtown through projects such as this Update.

All of these activities are taken as an essential level of service which the DDD must maintain and adapt to the changing demands of the downtown. Recommendations are made for the DDD in the following areas, all of which represent qualitatively or absolutely new levels of endeavor necessary for the DDD to meet the challenges of the next fifteen years.

Capital Improvements and Funding:

- the DDD must continue to take a leadership role in generating capital improvements including landscape and streetscape, infrastructure, transportation, and others.

- explore additional sources of funding for critical improvements including:

  - use of bonding
  - increase of millage rate
  - tax increment financing
  - participation of other public entities
  - greater private participation in specific projects

Marketing and Promotion:

- make the DDD the coordinating agency for downtown promotion.

- use the Update's computerized data base as a marketing resource and tool.

- complete the development of a focused marketing plan with product, staff, and funding schedules.

Real Estate Activity:

- create a development corporation to help bring key properties into the residential market in the Warehouse Area.

- consider limited joint ventures with the private sector.

District Boundaries:

- expand the District to include the area bounded by the Pontchartrain Expressway, Annunciation, Race and the River to ensure coordinated, cohesive riverfront development.

3. EXISTING CONDITIONS

3.1 LAND USE

The current distribution of land uses in the downtown is illustrated in Figure 4. At a very generalized level, this pattern retains the same elements as were present in 1974, except on the riverfront where working docks and railyards have been replaced with hotel, exhibition and retail functions, and around the Poydras-Loyola intersection where a strong new office core is developing.

Land use trends over the last decade have served to extend and intensify patterns existing in 1974 rather than change them. Development over the last ten years has also tended to segment the downtown into fewer, but more recognizably distinct functional areas than those identified in the 1975 study.

A "functional area" is defined as a functionally cohesive unit which displays generally consistent land use characteristics and/or a strong perceptual integration, irrespective of changes in land use. Existing land use and development trends since 1975 are most easily summarized in reference to the current functional areas, identified in Figure 5.

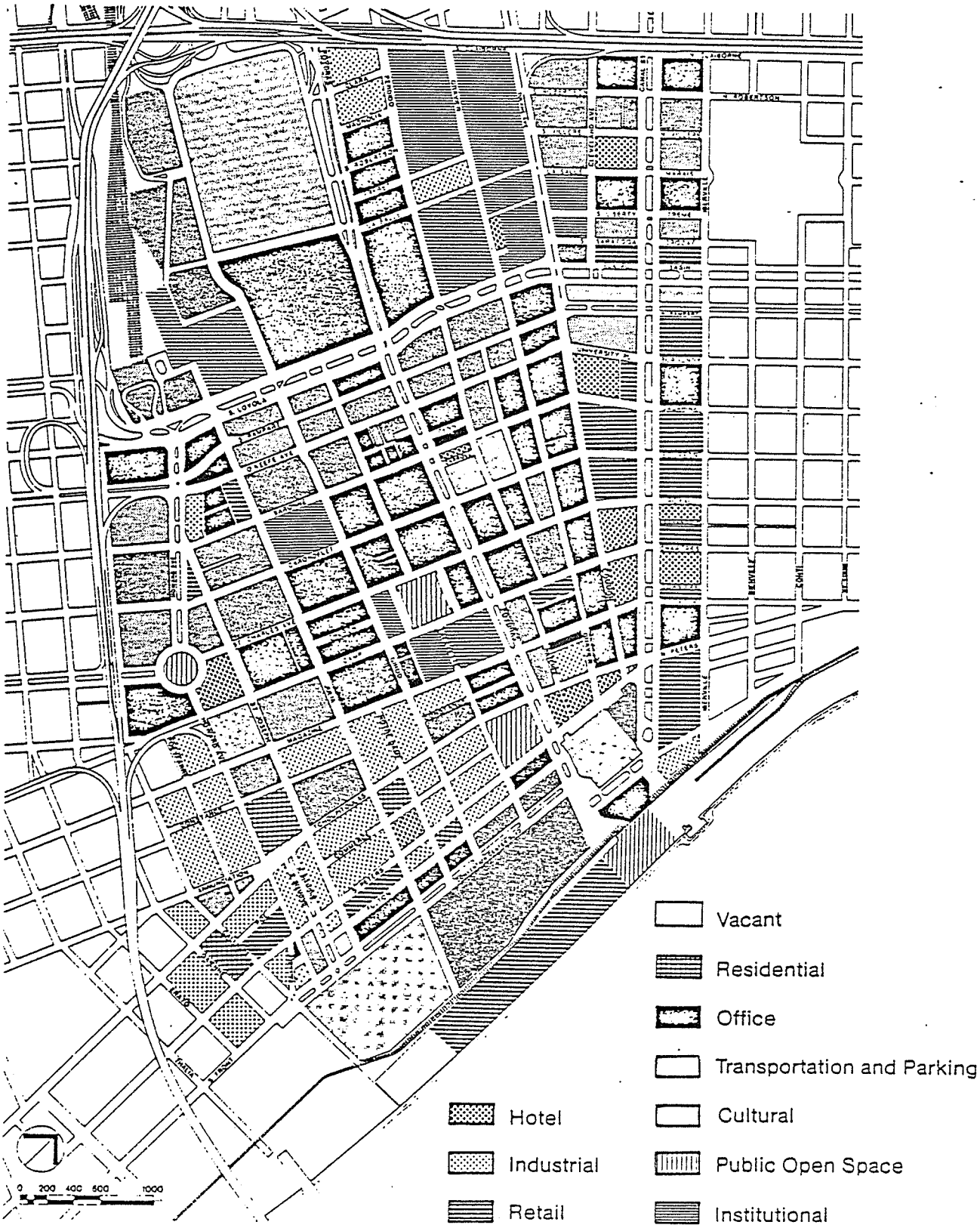
Functional Area A: Canal Street

Development of the lower end of Canal Street has expanded the corridor since 1975 to include the blocks between Camp and Tchoupitoulas on the uptown side, and the major Canal Place development on the downtown side. At the upper end, the corridor sub-divides at about Saratoga where the essentially continuous retail frontage of Canal Street breaks down into more scattered and diverse development including office, hotel and surface parking.

The major development activity in the Upper Canal area since 1975 includes the 200,000 sq. ft. ODECO office building and its associated 330-space garage, and the renovation of the Clarion Hotel and the Fisk office building. New development on Canal Street has increased the overall Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for the functional area from 4.0 in 1975 to 4.4, which is substantially below the allowed maximum FAR of 11 for mixed-use buildings in this zone (CBD-2B). The only presently planned development is the New Orleans Merchandise Mart showrooms, on the block between South Robertson and Villere Streets.

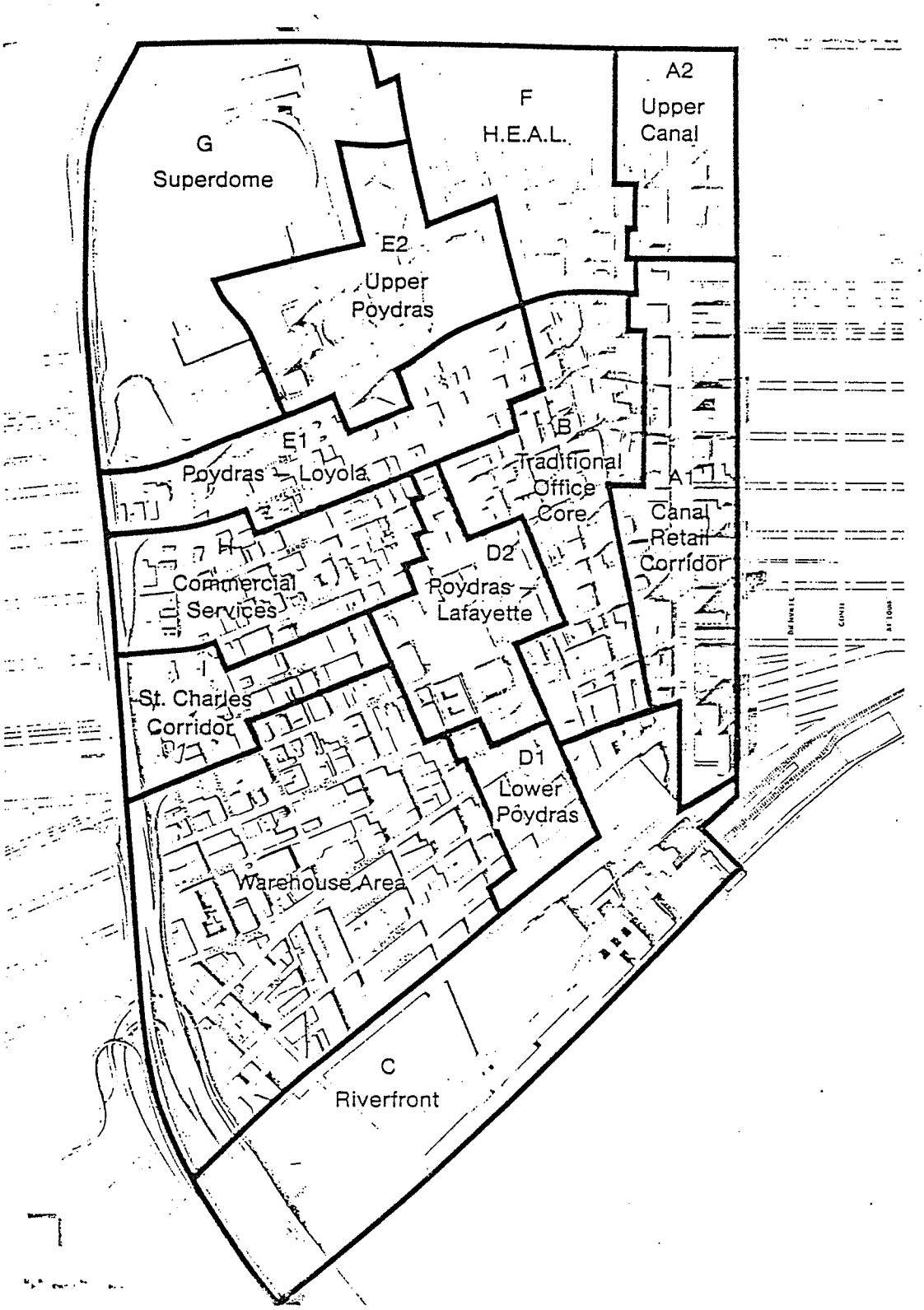
GENERALIZED LAND USE, 1985

Figure 4



FUNCTIONAL AREAS, 1985

Figure 5



The Canal Retail Corridor proper, however, has seen considerable growth since 1975 with the net addition of over 2.5 million sq. ft. of new construction. This development has all occurred below St. Charles, in the Meridien and Sheraton hotel developments and the Canal Place mixed use project. Almost all of this growth is in high-rise hotel and office development which has stabilized the retail function of the lower end of Canal, but has had little effect on the continuing decline of retail uses above Carondelet.

Functional Area B: Traditional Office Core

The Traditional Office Core, which is directly adjacent to the Canal Retail Corridor, has remained fairly stable during the last ten years, maintaining its fine-grained mix of office, retail and service commercial functions.

This area contains the largest inventory of office space of any of the functional areas, accounting for approximately 35 percent of the total office space in the downtown. It also supports a high amount of retail space in comparison to other functional areas, standing second only to the Canal Retail Corridor in terms of total retail inventory... It shows the second highest level of development intensity with an estimated overall FAR of 6.9.

The bulk of this development is contained in the upper part of the area, above Camp Street where present CBD-1 zoning allows FAR's up to 18 in mixed-use buildings. Major growth in the Traditional Office Core over the last ten years has occurred in this permissive zoning area in two large office projects: Chevron Place in the 900 block of Gravier, which added a little under half a million square feet of office space in 1981, and the 1985 Place St. Charles with 53 stories and just under 1.2 million square feet.

The lower section of the Traditional Office Core, below Camp Street, conforms to the boundaries of the Picayune Place Historic District and contains an interesting assembly of finely scaled and detailed mixed-commercial buildings. Protected by a maximum allowed FAR of 6, little intensification of development has occurred, with recent development activity confined to modest amounts of rehabilitation and conversion of warehouse uses to retail, restaurant and service commercial functions. This area is slowly becoming one of the most attractive pedestrian

environments in the downtown in its consistent scale, variety of architectural detail, network of hidden streets and alleys, and increasing retail and entertainment functions. Important opportunities to expand this special character in new development exist in several remaining surface parking lots within the area.

Functional Area C: Riverfront

Land use changes in the riverfront area over the last decade have been more dramatic than anywhere else in the downtown: from working docks and railyards in the mid 1970's; through the extraordinary event of the World's Fair in the early 1980's and construction of just under 3.4 million sq. ft. of hotel, exhibition and convention space, the recently opened 180,000 sq. ft. Riverwalk, and downtown New Orleans' first luxury condominium tower.

The area presently contains over 20 percent of the total hotel space in the downtown and about three quarters of its total exhibition and convention facilities, all of which (besides the Rivergate) has been constructed since 1975. In addition, the developments currently under construction and proposed expansion of the Convention Center and public recreation and entertainment uses (Louisiana Science Centre, Venture International Project and the New Orleans Aquarium), contribute to the Riverfront area's identity as the primary downtown concentration of tourist related functions.

With approximately 45 percent of the total vacant land in the downtown available in this area (and all City owned), and a further 9.8 acres in surface parking lots, added to the special amenities of a riverfront location, proximity to major retail and entertainment functions and possible on-site service by the proposed riverfront trolley, the development potential of this area for tourist-oriented and/or residential growth is extraordinary.

Functional Area D: Lower Poydras-Lafayette

The Poydras corridor, from Convention Center Boulevard to just above Baronne, presently falls into two closely related but distinct sub-areas: Lower Poydras, which contains a generally low-scale mix of office, retail and warehouse

functions, and Poydras-Lafayette, which is a much more intensely developed area, including high-rise office and hotel uses related to Poydras, and government and smaller office functions surrounding Lafayette Square.

In the Lower Poydras area, a considerable amount of demolition occurred in the early 1980's on Front (now Convention Center Boulevard) and Fulton Streets to clear old warehouse structures for surface parking to serve the World's Fair. The only recent construction activity in the area has been completion of the Texaco Center garage in 1983, which includes ground level retail and entertainment uses, conversion of Lafayette Street into an attractively landscaped pedestrian mall leading to the park, and modest amounts of office, retail and restaurant conversion in the existing warehouses on the mall.

The Poydras-Lafayette area contains the second highest inventory of office space next to the Traditional Office Core, amounting to almost 20 percent of the total downtown office inventory. Most of this space is provided in five major buildings completed since 1975, including over 2.5 million sq. ft. of Class A office space. Next to the Upper Poydras area, Poydras-Lafayette has seen the highest increase in overall FAR of all the downtown functional areas during the last ten years.

Functional Area E: Poydras-Loyola, Upper Poydras

Area E, which covers the emerging new focus of commercial development around the Poydras-Loyola intersection, presently divides into the upper Poydras area, where most of this new development has already taken place, and the Poydras-Loyola corridor where similar development is likely to proceed in the future.

The latter sub-area is presently dominated by surface parking lots, anchored by two office buildings built in the 1960's at the Howard Avenue end of the corridor, and by the Howard Johnson Hotel built in 1963 at the other end. Surviving low scale structures between house a mixture of service and storage functions which achieve only a very low intensity of use in blocks currently zoned for FAR's ranging up to 18. The 36-story Louisiana Land and Exploration tower currently under construction at 901 Poydras gives an indication of the intensity to be expected in future development in this area.

Functional Area F: H.E.A.L.

As its name implies, the H.E.A.L. (Health Education Authority of Louisiana) area is dominated by medical related functions, including Charity Hospital and School of Nursing, the Louisiana State University Medical Center, the Veterans' Administration Medical Center and Tulane University Medical Center. These functions are presently concentrated between Perdido and Tulane Avenue, with further supporting facilities, such as a child care center, consulting and administrative offices, and parking on the downtown side of Tulane.

The present density of medical functions in this area and various planned expansion projects leave little opportunity for private commercial development. In general, the two major institutions, LSU and Tulane, are expanding in opposite directions: LSU to the growing health care area above Claiborne, in close cooperation with the Hotel Dieu Hospital on Gravier and South Prieur; and Tulane towards Canal Street on already owned properties between Tulane and Canal. Although these plans indicate a relatively high level of development activity in the area in the future, its growth is independent of commercial market forecasts and given the present absence of market pressures in the area, medical expansion plans are not in direct competition with any other possible types of development at this time.

Functional Area G: Superdome

Besides the immense Superdome structure which completely dominates the skyline, this area also includes a 14-story Federal office building on Loyola, built in 1960, the train station, main Post Office headquarters, public utilities installations on the downtown side of Poydras and over 13 acres of surface parking lots. These uses have little functional connection but the area is generally perceived as a single unit through the consistently monumental scale of each of the separate developments and their obviously regional, rather than local, function.

Since completion of the Superdome in 1975, there has been little construction activity in this area besides recent development of a municipal heliport on Julia Street. Land use changes in this area are unlikely, although the large surface

parking lots are possible locations for major garages to increase the supply of peripheral parking for future commercial growth.

Functional Area H: Commercial Services

The Commercial Services sub-area is a low-intensity corridor of mixed auto and office services, warehouse and storage uses, limited retail and back-office space and surface parking lots, extending from the Pontchartrain Expressway to the Poydras-Lafayette office area, along Baronne and Carondelet Streets. This area currently provides the important back-up functions essential to a dense commercial core, and it is strategically located adjacent to future commercial growth areas.

There has been no change in total space inventory in this area over the last decade with the only substantial development activity involving rehabilitation of several architecturally interesting masonry buildings on Howard Avenue for professional office space.

Functional Area I: St. Charles Corridor

Like its Commercial Services neighbor, the St. Charles Corridor is a low-scale mixture of office, retail, storage and parking functions, but through completion of an excellent program of streetscape improvements and several recent rehabilitation projects on either side of the Avenue, the corridor has developed an attractive continuity and architectural coherence that is missing in Area H.

As well as the low-scale development on St. Charles, the area contains a variety of functions fronting Lee Circle, including a 10 story YMCA dating from the 1930's, the beautiful ivy-covered Confederate Museum, a 7-story office building completed in 1976, and various auto service functions and gas stations.

Functional Area J: Warehouse Area

This functional area is the largest in the downtown, extending from the St. Charles corridor to the Riverfront area at Convention Center Boulevard, and containing almost 17 percent of the total downtown land area.

Although recent redevelopment activity has introduced significant levels of commercial and residential functions, the area remains predominantly industrial with almost 70 percent of the total area of industrial uses in the downtown. New construction in the last five years includes the Sugar House Hotel (now Radisson) which, at 16 stories, is the only high-rise structure in the area, the Fulton Place parking garage on South Diamond, and a small amount of Fair-related retail space. The majority of development activity, however, is clearly in small office and residential conversion of existing buildings.

Residential conversions predominate and already over 70 percent of the total residential space in the downtown is in the Warehouse Area, with over 600 additional units anticipated in currently planned developments.

3.2 ZONING

The downtown is divided into eleven zoning districts, each designed either to promote a desired type of development or to protect the existing development pattern. Existing zoning regulations have been recently revised to achieve the district boundaries shown in Figure 6 and the general area provisions summarized below.

CBD-1:

This zone permits the highest development densities in the downtown, covering a wide variety of commercial and residential uses. General manufacturing and warehousing, or uses generating heavy truck traffic or requiring storage of materials are prohibited. No off-street parking is required in order to encourage transit use, but it is permitted as an accessory use in garage structures at specified demand levels, including 1 space per 650 sq. ft. of floor area for office uses, 1 space per 2 rooms for hotels, and 1 space per unit for residential development. Allowable FAR varies from 13 to 18 (for mixed-use buildings with bonus additions), and 7 for residential buildings or parts of buildings.

CBD-2:

This zone provides for a similar variety of uses as in CBD-1, but at lower intensities than in the central core. Mixed-use developments are encouraged and off-street parking is required at levels approaching demand. The base FAR is 10, 7 for residential uses and a maximum of 16 for mixed-use projects with bonus additions.

CBD-2B:

Again allowing the same mix of uses as in CBD-1 and 2, this zone imposes a further reduction in densities with a base FAR of 6 for both commercial and residential developments, rising to 11 in mixed-use projects with bonus additions.

ZONING, 1985

Figure 6

CBD-3:

This zoning district corresponds to the traditional Canal Street retail core. The purpose of the district is to preserve and enhance this retail center by requiring lower floor retail and service uses. New development is required to be sympathetic in scale and design to the existing fabric, and the transition and connection to the adjacent Vieux Carre is to be protected and enhanced. The boundaries of this district correspond to the boundaries of the Canal Street Historic District.

CBD-4:

This zoning district corresponds to the boundaries of the Picayune Place Historic District. CBD-4 is a preservation designation designed to allow a wide range of ancillary retail and service uses adjacent to the high density core, while maintaining the physical character and scale of the district. Intensity of development is limited to an FAR of 6, or 4.5 for residential uses.

CBD-5:

This zone provides for commercial and residential developments and parking facilities needed to serve adjacent high density development areas. A wide variety of uses is permitted, with a maximum FAR of 6 for commercial uses and 4.5 for residential developments.

CBD-7:

Covering the uptown entrance streets from O'Keefe to Camp, the CBD-7 zone's purpose is to promote residential development along with entrance corridor facilities and services. Regulations also provide for facade controls on street frontages where the maintenance of historic character and scale are important. The allowable FAR is 4.5 for both residential and non-residential developments, and up to 6 for mixed-use developments.

CBD-8:

This district generally corresponds to the Warehouse Historic District, and provides for an extensive range of commercial, light industrial and residential uses. Maximum allowed FAR for all uses is 4.

CBD-9:

Similar to CBD-8, this zone, which occupies the lower corner of the Warehouse District bordered by Annunciation and Howard Avenue, is especially designed to permit larger new structures in an area where they will not negatively impact the overall scale and character of the Warehouse District. Base FAR in this zone is raised to 6, with an increase to 8 in projects that include housing.

LI and HI:

Remnants of the previously adopted code, these light and heavy industrial zones make up the remainder of the downtown, covering the Superdome blocks and the uptown end of the Riverfront area respectively.

In general, the present zoning code is an excellently drafted ordinance which closely defines the urban design goals adopted for downtown in the 1975 Plan. That the code is finely-tuned to existing development patterns and emerging trends is apparent in the approximate correspondence between present Functional Areas (Figure 5) and the zoning districts (Figure 6).

Base requirements are generally permissive, with additional density bonuses available in the highest intensity districts (CBD-1, 2 and 2B), through provision of certain pedestrian amenities and residential uses, and transfer of development rights from other CBD Districts. Bonus systems are primarily designed to encourage residential development and to enrich the pedestrian environment in high intensity commercial growth areas. So far, One Riverplace condominiums on the riverfront is the only project that has taken advantage of the residential bonus. Amenities bonuses have effectively encouraged retail uses in the lower levels of major new developments but these provisions have tended to scatter small amounts of retail space fairly evenly throughout growth areas and in many

cases, lack of concentration has caused difficulty in renting ground floor retail space and much of it remains vacant.

The Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) system, which is designed to protect architecturally significant buildings and the existing scale and character of areas which generally permit a higher development density, has not so far been used extensively, if at all. This is mainly because allowable densities in CBD-1, 2 and 2B districts (the only areas to which development rights can be transferred) are already sufficiently liberal that there is no incentive to purchase further density allowances.

3.3 URBAN DESIGN RESOURCES

New Orleans' Central Area has the unusual distinction of containing two almost separate "cities within a city": the renowned Vieux Carre and the more contemporary downtown of the CBD, between Iberville and the Pontchartrain Expressway. While this situation creates special problems of its own in terms of making appropriate connections between the two, it gives New Orleans the unique opportunity to develop one of the country's most interesting and diverse city centers, combining the special design qualities of the historic Vieux Carre with an equally imageable and attractive core of continuing commercial growth in the CBD.

While the urban design character of the Vieux Carre is firmly secured and requires only careful protection from the negative impacts of burgeoning tourism, the downtown is still struggling to establish a similarly attractive identity that can complement its famous French neighbor. The framework for such an identity was laid in the 1975 GMP and many important steps towards its realization were achieved over the last 10 years, including development of the Lafayette Mall, major streetscape improvements on Canal Street and St. Charles Avenue, and comprehensive revision of the zoning code. The primary urban design issue facing the downtown now is not so much one of defining a viable design framework (as it was in 1975), but more a question of how future growth pressures can be manipulated to reinforce the emerging urban patterns, and hence, the questions of what? where? and when? for future public improvements to the street level environment.

The present problems and opportunities of the downtown with regard to its urban design character are not much different from those assessed in the 1975 study. After ten years of public and private development that has closely followed the directions prescribed, the differences are ones of degree rather than kind, and for the most part, the general recommendations of the 1975 Plan with respect to design controls and proposed public improvements still hold. With increasing development activity in the Warehouse District, however, and high intensity development anticipated along the Riverfront and in the Loyola corridor, public improvement priorities need to be reassessed and specific design controls in high

growth areas need to be adjusted. This discussion of urban design resources notes the overall trends and current issues in the District to which this Plan responds.

Boundaries and Approaches:

The elevated Interstate 10 and Pontchartrain Expressways form strong visual barriers along the Lakeside and uptown boundaries of the DDD, and even though there is unrestricted access at many points beneath them, the central area appears clearly cut off from its surrounding neighborhoods. Ground level approaches to the downtown from these sides are through an unattractive zone of marginal industrial uses, freeway entry and exit ramps, and open parking lots.

The Lakeside edge is particularly strong, reinforced by heavy volumes of ground level traffic and peak-hour congestion on Claiborne Avenue underneath the interstate; and the uptown edge will become more of a barrier as further access ramps to the new GNO Bridge are completed. Parking demand in both corridors will continue to rise as downtown office development looks for convenient peripheral parking locations. These inevitable developments will isolate the downtown further and make ground level approaches even more visually chaotic unless special design attention is focused on critical entry and exit points, using architectural devices to convert the freeway structures into gateways to the downtown and heavy landscaping treatments to reinforce the major movement corridors and screen unattractive adjacent uses.

Approach views from the freeways themselves are already much more dramatic, dominated on the lakeside by the immense form of the Superdome and on the West Bank approach by the beautiful sweep of the mighty Mississippi. Further downtown development will only heighten these spectacular views as the density of tall buildings increases and the overall structure of the area becomes more apparent.

The other two boundaries of the downtown are among its greatest assets: the Vieux Carre and the Mississippi River. Several of the objectives proposed in the 1975 Plan to strengthen the functional bond between the CBD and the Quarter have been successfully followed, with regard to location of high rise buildings and

new hotel development, but so far no design improvements to the physical connections between the two districts have been completed.

With the phasing out of all port functions on the downtown riverfront except cruise shipping, the river's edge has become a unique urban design resource whose future development is one of the prime issues currently facing the downtown. Although direct views to the river's edge from downtown streets are prohibited by the levee, awareness of its presence is available from the soaring bridge structures and the gondola tower at the foot of Julia Street. While high rise construction is not inappropriate to mark this important city edge, new development should be carefully controlled to preserve critical views to the bridges and to achieve a consistently expressive architectural character that relates to its special location.

Internal Structure of the DDD:

Unlike the Quarter with its extremely regular rectilinear grid, the downtown has an unusually interesting semi-radial pattern with a strong built-in hierarchy of streets defined by scale as well as volume of movement. In the east-west direction, the boulevard rights-of-way of Canal, Tulane, Poydras and Howard are the main traffic arteries and the dominant structural elements of the downtown, each with its particular (or potential, in the case of Howard Avenue) development characteristics. Girod is also a heavily travelled cross-town connection but without any special street treatment or development character, it is less recognizable as an important link in the structure of the area.

In the north-south direction, Loyola Avenue, with its heavy traffic volumes and wide medians, clearly dominates. Although traffic flow is fairly evenly distributed throughout the one-way pairs of streets below Loyola, the special treatments of St. Charles and Convention Center Boulevard distinguish them as important structural components of the downtown street system. The distinctive nature of these primary streets gives the downtown a strong organization which helps to orient newcomers to the City and provides a clear framework for future growth.

The Pedestrian System:

A great deal of attention in the 1975 Plan was given to the definition of a comprehensive pedestrian network throughout the downtown and several of its main components were recently developed in construction of the Lafayette Mall and major streetscape improvements on Canal and St. Charles. The other pedestrian system recommendations of the 1975 Plan remain valid, but with substantial increases in residential development in the Warehouse District and anticipated high intensity development on the riverfront, the system needs to be expanded further into the uptown area beyond Lafayette Mall. This will become especially critical if the City decides to take overt steps to stimulate residential growth in this area.

The existing street pattern of the Warehouse District provides excellent opportunities for the development of a fine-grained network of pedestrian pathways running between major traffic streets. In the Uptown Commercial Services area, recent rehabilitation activity on Carondelet is starting to revive the special architectural character of this street which, combined with its function as the inbound route of the St. Charles trolley, make it a prime candidate for development as a pedestrian-oriented convenience retail and entertainment street similar to St. Charles Avenue.

In the same way, Julia Street is emerging as a particularly attractive east-west street with several important historic resources, such as Julia Row and recent apartment and hotel developments on the blocks below Tchoupitoulas. If the Loyola towers project proceeds as planned, Julia Street could become an important pedestrian and transit connection between intense commercial growth at its upper end and the retail and entertainment functions of the riverfront.

With respect to the pedestrian system on the downtown side of Lafayette Mall, its main deficiency today is that it is simply not yet completed as proposed in the 1975 Plan. Cross-town connections to the retail core on Canal Street, from both the CBD and the Quarter sides, remain particularly important, but the intensity of new office development in the Upper Poydras area is imposing a high priority on pedestrian improvements in this new employment node.

Because Poydras and Loyola are both such wide and heavily travelled vehicular arteries and because development in the area has typically been at the block scale with direct connection to on-site parking structures, there is very little pedestrian movement between buildings and the street environment remains relatively barren and uninviting. As further growth proceeds in the area, particularly with the major retail complex proposed in the DeBartolo project, it will become increasingly more important to develop the type of pedestrian amenities that will promote functional interdependence throughout the area and an active street life. This means heavily sheltered sidewalks, small shaded open spaces protected from the noise and fumes of Poydras and Loyola, and clear, convenient pedestrian street crossings.

In terms of design details, the pedestrian improvements that have already been completed show a great deal of attention to developing a wide range of attractive landscape treatments that are well suited to New Orleans' climate and its special historic heritage. The range of treatments, however, is in danger of becoming too wide and streetscape improvements that were intended to clarify the movement systems of the downtown are losing their impact in too varied a collection of different design details. For example, there are five different types of historic lighting fixtures used in various places throughout the downtown. These special and very memorable street furnishings should be used sparingly to help define only the most important elements of the pedestrian system, such as Canal Street, Lafayette Mall and St. Charles Avenue. Similarly, tree selections should be rationalized to increase the differentiating power of particular planting designs.

Parks and Plazas:

The downtown remains very poorly supplied with public open spaces, despite the recommendations for numerous mini parks in the 1975 Plan. The few that it does have, however, are all excellent examples of the different types of open spaces that a downtown should offer.

Duncan Plaza, which is about to undergo extensive rehabilitation, and Lafayette Square both provide a welcome landscaped retreat from the hard surfaces and often uncomfortable glare and heat of the city sidewalks. They are both big enough to accommodate special cultural events at certain times throughout the

year, such as the "Brown Bag" concert series organized by the Downtown Development District each spring and fall, and when no organized events are scheduled, they provide an attractive, quiet place to eat lunch or just withdraw for a while from the harsh sounds and surfaces of the City.

Spanish Plaza is becoming a constantly active, commercial square on the riverfront now that the Riverwalk development has opened. Its other attractions include river cruise and tour boat docks and clear views of constant shipping activity on the Mississippi. With the development of Bienville Wharf and pedestrian connections to the Moon Walk and Jackson Square, and introduction of the proposed riverfront streetcar service, Spanish Plaza could become the central element of an extensive riverfront open space system.

Piazza d'Italia, on the other hand, offers neither the protective shelter of a soft green space, nor the special attractions of a commercially active riverfront location, and despite its fascinating architectural design, it remains relatively unused. The mixed-use project proposed for this site should be strongly endorsed to bring more activity into the immediate area and to ensure future maintenance of this unique urban space. It should also be strongly connected into an expanded pedestrian network through the Warehouse District.

The only other existing public open space in the DDD is the Board of Trade Plaza on Magazine Street. This delightful little space is an excellent example of the type of mini park that should be developed throughout the office core in relation to primary pedestrian paths, as recommended in the 1975 Plan. Appropriate locations for such mini-parks are shown in Figure 18. Examples of two mini-parks sited to provide contrast and identity in the office core are located behind the Place St. Charles parking helix off Union Street and on the publicly-owned land on the downtown side of Poydras at Camp Street.

Mini parks like this should also be encouraged on developing retail and entertainment streets in the uptown area, such as Carondelet and St. Charles. Soft green spaces should also be developed to serve the outdoor recreation needs of a growing residential population in the Warehouse District. The wide divided way of North and South Diamond Streets provides a perfect opportunity for the first of these new parks.

Character Districts and Activity Places:

An effective pedestrian and open space system, no matter how well developed in itself, has to work in conjunction with the definition of distinct districts and special activity places in a downtown area. The primary goal of urban design is to achieve an imageable urban environment that allows people to comprehend its overall structure and maintain a comfortable sense of orientation as they move from place to place through it. This requires the sub-division of a large area such as the downtown into a series of smaller, more comprehensible districts that are defined by a generally consistent character of development, and the presence of various landmark points, or activity places, that attract and focus movement between districts. Definition of special Historic Districts with particular design controls to preserve and enhance the urban design character, is an important step in this direction (Figure 7).

One of the most basic urban design problems of the downtown today is that the present character districts, or functional areas identified in Figure 5, remain for the most part only loosely defined, and many of them lack clearly recognizable development character at all. In identifying the present functional areas it was often difficult to decide precisely where to draw a particular boundary.

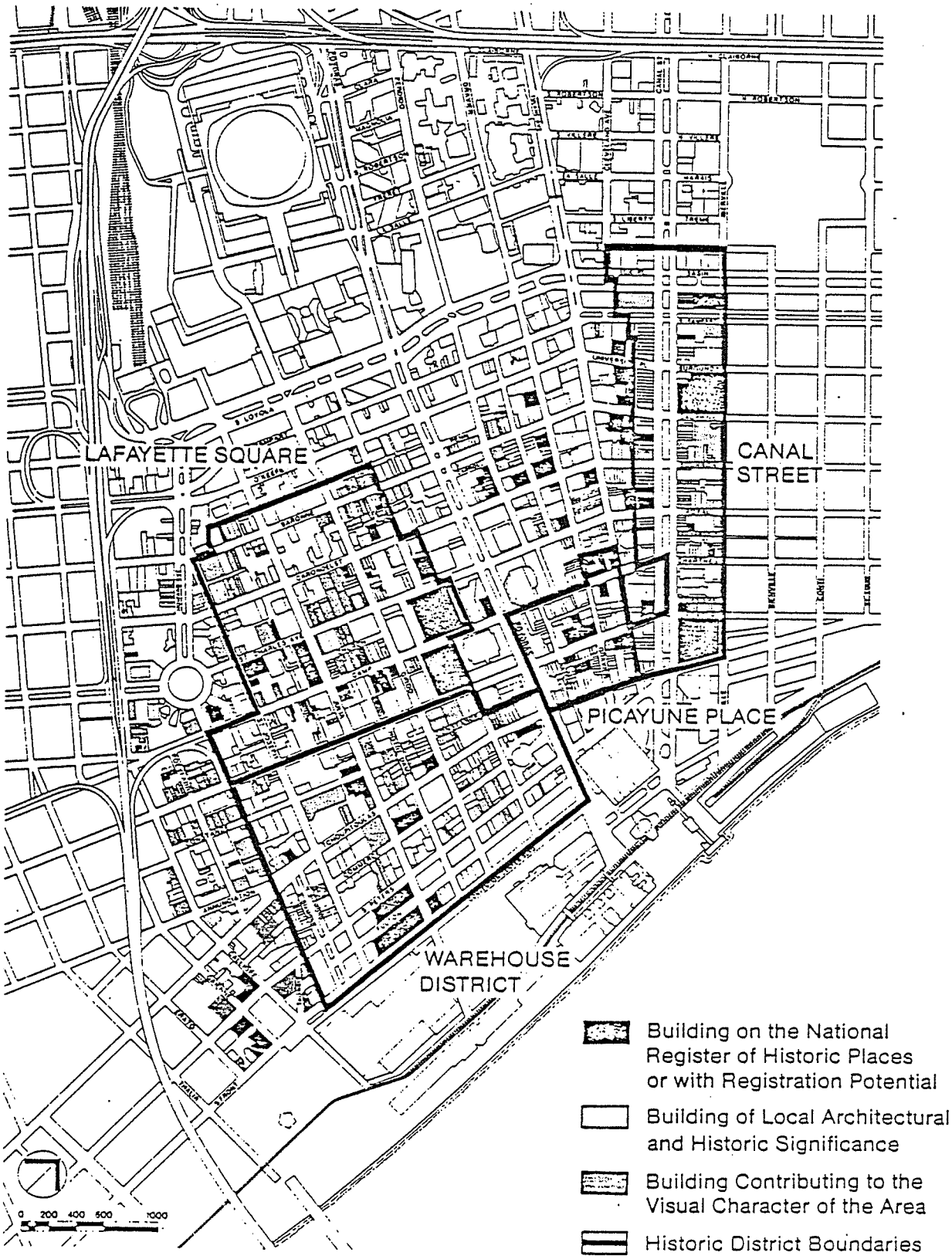
This problem, however, is also an important opportunity, in the sense that district boundaries are still fluid and future development can therefore be manipulated to re-define the functional areas to a certain degree, to more closely approximate a more desirable pattern of districts. Each of the present functional areas is discussed briefly below to indicate some of the issues that are considered in the Plan.

The Canal Retail Corridor: Area A

Except for the upper end of Canal, shown as Area A2 in Figure 5, this is one of the strongest character districts of the downtown, and also its most obvious activity area. This is largely due to careful protection of the historic scale and architectural character of the street facades and the excellent landscaping improvements that help to tie the street together across its unusual width and allow inconsistent building forms, such as Maison Blanche and the Sheraton Hotel,

HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES

Figure 7



to co-exist with the smaller scale buildings without severely disrupting the continuity of the street.

Canal Street has the potential to become one of the "great" shopping streets of urban America if successful strategies can be found to stabilize and intensify its retail function. Canal Place acts as a strong anchor at the river end but there needs to be a similarly high intensity anchor development at the upper end, possibly around the North Rampart or Basin Street intersections. This would tend to shorten the corridor to a more manageable length for a pedestrian shopping excursion and provide a new attraction to office workers in the Poydras-Loyola area. The Upper Canal area, then, which will never achieve the character of the central retail corridor, will be more clearly defined as a separate district, free to develop a special character of its own as suitable functions are found for this area.

The Traditional Office Core: Area B

Like the Canal Retail Corridor, this is a relatively strong character district, defined by a consistent density, function and general architectural flavor. As noted above, however, pedestrian orientation within the upper part of the area is often confused and it needs some central reference marker, such as distinctive landscape development of Common Street and/or a special activity place or open space.

Picayune Place in the lower section of this area is already beginning to develop a recognizably different character, and as density increases above Camp Street, it should become a quite distinct character district. Its consistent architectural scale and network of small streets and alleys are quite unique in the downtown and provide an interesting contrast to the modern high-rise developments surrounding it. Retail, restaurant and particularly evening entertainment uses should be encouraged in this area which could develop as an important source of after-hours activity.

The Riverfront: Area C

Developing an appropriate design character for the riverfront area will be one of the most important challenges facing the City in the next decade. It is presently perceived as a single district because of its generally consistent entertainment, exhibition and hotel function but as development proceeds to introduce new or intensify existing functions in the area, special activity locations or changes in the development character should be introduced to punctuate the length of the strip. It will also be particularly important for development to relate strongly back to the City, as well as to the river.

The Poydras Corridor: Area D

This area at present is more centered on the new Lafayette Mall and its surrounding mixed scale of development than it is on Poydras. Because of the generally scattered location of high rise office development along Poydras at this stage, it has not yet achieved the character of a clear "corridor." Remaining development opportunities on both sides of Poydras should be promoted, along with the projects already proposed for the lower blocks and at Carondelet, to define a new district that is more clearly characterized by high intensity office development along the Poydras spine. The continuing development of Poydras as a premier corporate address should be reinforced with more first-class, high-rise office buildings.

Poydras-Loyola: Area E

Like the Riverfront; the Poydras-Loyola area is subject to dramatic change under current growth pressures. As noted in the discussion of pedestrian systems above, development of a more attractive streetscape and increased pedestrian activity are major design issues in this area, along with establishing a clear structure that will integrate the various existing and proposed developments into a cohesive district.

H.E.A.L.: Area F

This area also suffers from a lack of pedestrian amenities and with the large super-blocks of development on the uptown side of Tulane and facilities scattered amongst surface parking lots on the downtown side, it can be very confusing and disorienting for a visitor. A major open space focus that would serve as a needed outdoor relaxation area for hospital staff as well as an information and convenience retail amenity, may be a viable approach to improving the design character of this area. A comprehensive study of the future of the area and how it impacts Upper Canal needs to be carried out, in cooperation with H.E.A.L. and the involved institutions.

The Superdome: Area G

The functions and movements in this area are almost all auto-related and likely to remain so. Very little needs to be considered here besides the viability of increased peripheral parking between the Superdome and the rail yards, access to downtown from the new heliport and for parking shuttle operations, and improvement and maintenance of an attractively landscaped downtown entrance on Poydras.

The Uptown Districts: Area H, I and J

These districts are discussed together because, although St. Charles is developing as a distinct corridor dividing the area, their general characteristics are very similar, which is the prime problem of this section of the downtown. Except for the special streetscape improvements on St. Charles, there is very little obvious differentiation of any of the streets or blocks in these three areas. They need to be subdivided into smaller units.

With residential development a major goal, particularly in the Warehouse District, a street hierarchy and pedestrian system will be necessary to develop a sense of neighborhoods and special identity areas. Development of neighborhood parks and convenience retail concentrations should be located in relation to the major movement channels, building up a comprehensive network of special activity places and essential services throughout the area.

3.4 TRANSPORTATION

The Central Business District of New Orleans serves as the focal point of business, government and financial activity in the region. It is the employment destination of 24 percent of the Orleans Parish workforce. Work-oriented trips originating in the Parish and the rest of the region are the major factors in the downtown transportation scheme because of their number, concentration in time and need for long-term parking.

While there are aspects of the regional transportation systems in need of attention, the charge of the GMP Update was to examine the transportation systems within the downtown using available data. The major components of transportation studies within the downtown are circulation, parking and transit.

Circulation

Approximately 120,000 vehicles enter and exit the New Orleans Central Business District during the 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. period every work day. This level of traffic flow is substantial when one considers the limited number of points of access to the CBD. For example, 38 percent of all outbound vehicles travel through three intersections: Poydras at Claiborne, Tulane at Claiborne and Canal at Claiborne. Additionally, almost 40 percent of the inbound vehicles pass through four intersections: Camp Street at the Pontchartrain Expressway, Poydras at Claiborne, Canal at Claiborne and Loyola at Howard Avenue.

The distribution of flow throughout the Central Business District is such that the majority of traffic occurs on a few major corridors. The streets in these corridors have preferential treatment at intersections and enjoy greater green cycle times than crossing streets. Accordingly, the crossing streets have reduced flow because of a long red cycle. This is revealed by the discrepancy between the arterial level of service and the intersection level of service where certain arterials illustrate a high level of service yet their intersections operate at capacity because of inadequate cycle length.

CIRCULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Figure 8

Table I

PEAK HOUR TRAFFIC MOVEMENTS

	Inbound Vehicles 7:00 - 9:00 a.m.		Outbound Vehicles 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.	
CBD Boundary	Number	Percent of Total	Number	Percent of Total
Uptown	9,758	32.0	9,398	27.1
Lakeside	14,307	47.0	18,750	54.1
Downtown	6,386	21.0	6,519	18.8
TOTALS	30,451	100.0%	34,667	100.0%

This situation is shown in the illustration of Circulation Characteristics, Figure 8. Major arterials with levels of service D or lower at peak hour include Claiborne, Poydras and Canal Streets. As shown in the figure, most of the intersections on these three streets, as well as those on O'Keefe and Camp, have levels of service of D or lower at the peak hour. These poor levels of service are a result of a combination of insufficient free-flowing lane capacity, inability to accommodate turning movements and less than optimum signal timing.

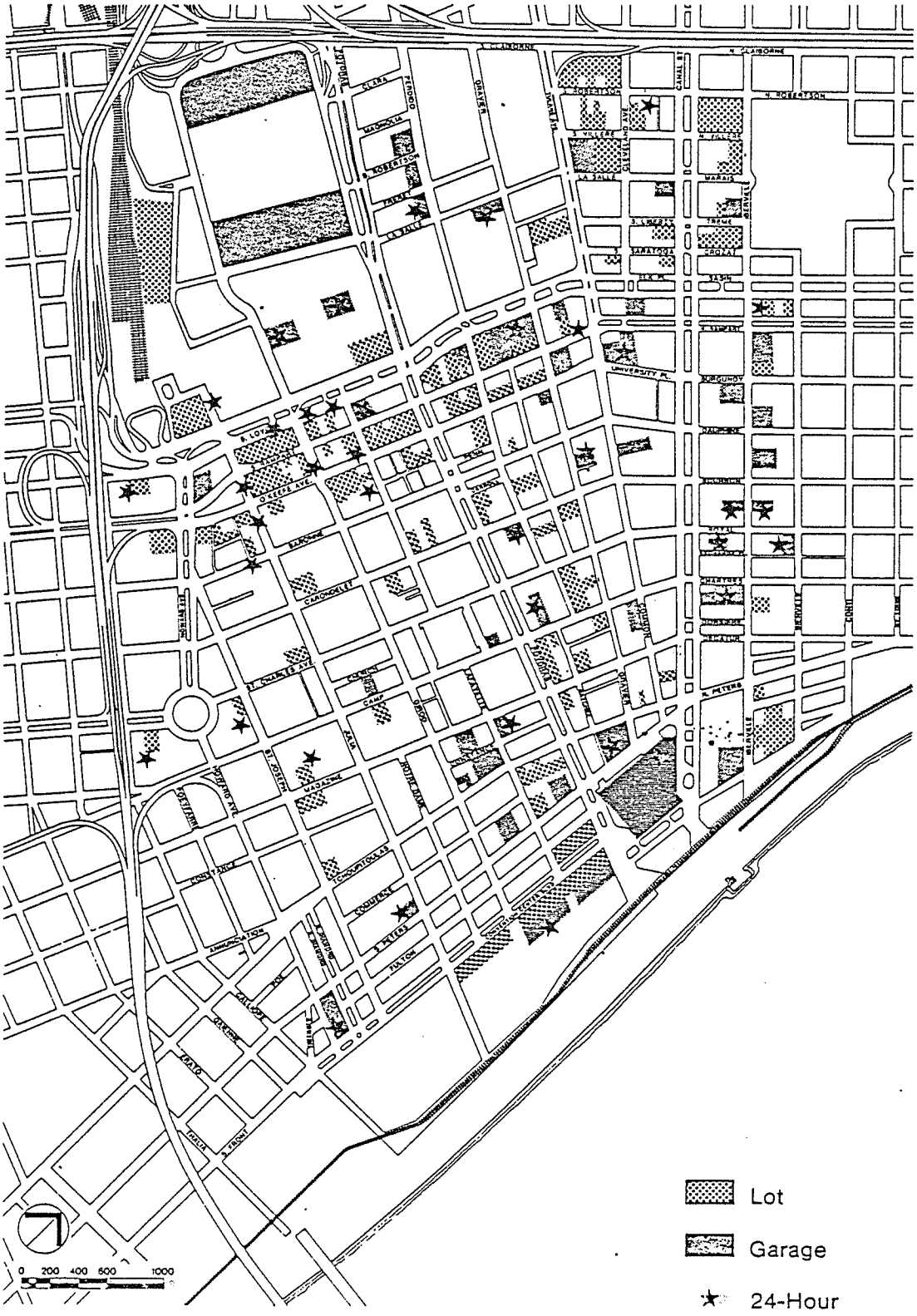
Parking

There are approximately 32,800 legal parking spaces in the CBD, as shown in Figure 9. Of this total 22,290 are in structures, 8,530 are in surface lots and 2,060 are legal on-street spaces. By far the largest single concentration of spaces occurs in the area around the Superdome where there are 6,825 spaces, 6,500 in structures. This parking inventory appears to be adequate to serve the existing level of development—and occupancy—in the District, even with the implementation of the Parking Management Program which has, among other accomplishments, reduced the use of illegal on-street spaces.

Approximately 26 percent of the legal parking space inventory is in surface lots. As these lots are converted to buildings and building occupancy levels rise, the need for more spaces will be amplified.

PARKING CHARACTERISTICS

Figure 9



Transit

The downtown is well served by transit lines, shown in Figure 10, with express service from all directions. Twenty-seven lines plus the CBD Shuttle serve the CBD. The number of lines serving the CBD has not decreased substantially in the last twenty years, however the utilization of these lines has. Mode split has gone from approximately 27 percent transit ten years ago to approximately 24 percent today.

A comparison of available passenger capacity with the experienced rider volume is revealing. Using the RTA standard load factor of 1.33 reveals that there is considerable unused transit capacity serving the District during peak hours. This indicates that transit is not being utilized to its fullest potential and that service may need to be adjusted to more efficiently use the system. There are 10,044 unused spaces available during the morning peak, while 16,097 spaces are available during the evening peak period. Given that there are, on average, 1.40 persons per vehicle, these spaces represent approximately 7,000 vehicles and 11,500 vehicles during the morning and evening peak hours respectively.

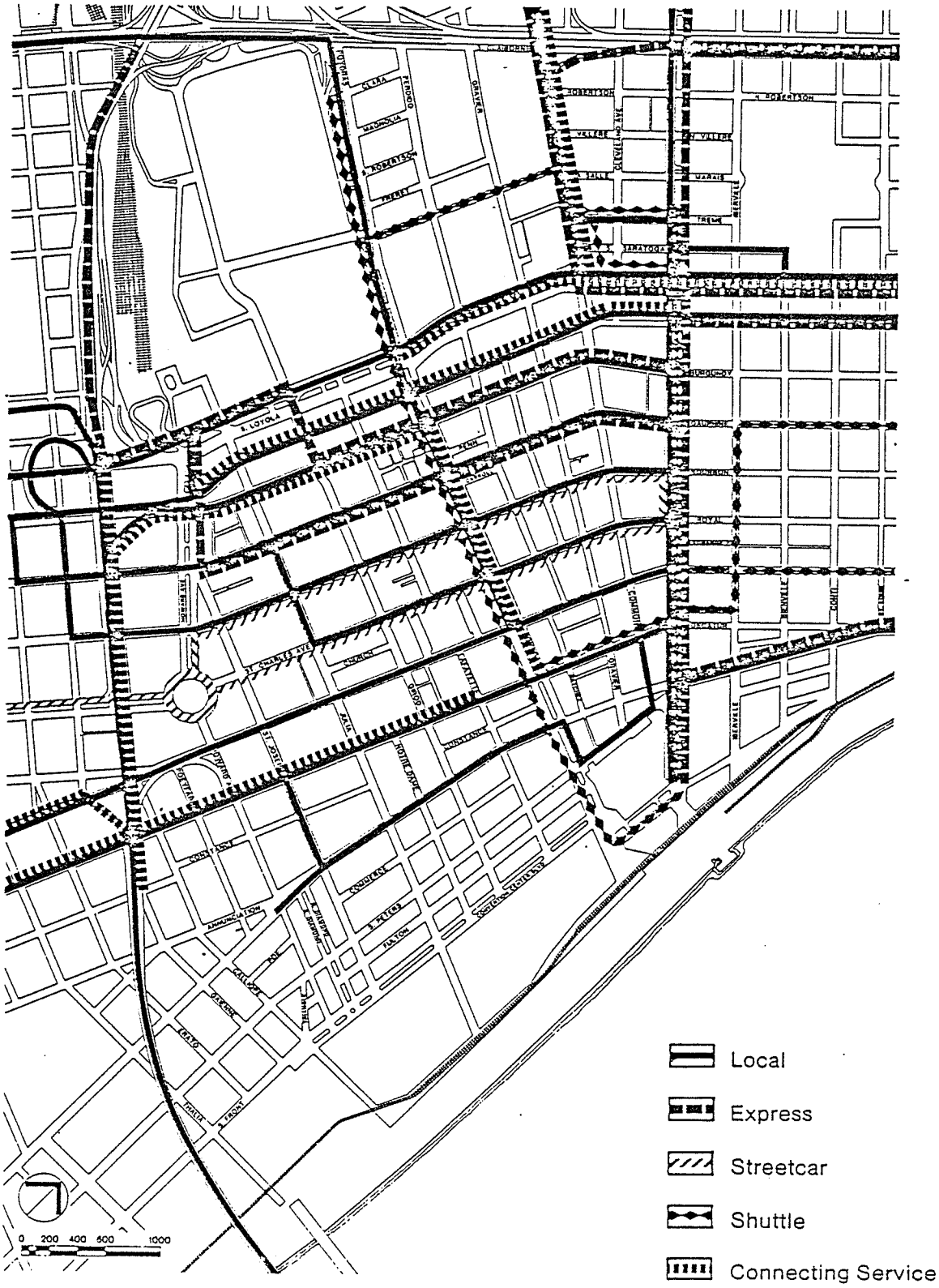
The CBD Shuttle performs a distributive as opposed to a line haul transit function, providing an interface with all the major transit routes, parking facilities and retail locations in the District. Its greatest use occurs during the mid-day, not at the peak hours. The shuttle performs a park-and-ride distributive function during the peak hours as well. Its overall use, however, is well below capacity. The less than full use of capacity, in fact declining ridership, appear to be attributable to increased headways and restriction provisions with regard to fares. Both the shuttle and the other transit lines present an opportunity for easing the intersection level of service problems currently experienced downtown. The systems are present; they need to be adjusted.

GNO Bridge Number Two

When the second GNO Bridge becomes operational in 1991 it will, with the existing bridge, approximately double cross-river vehicular capacity and provide new, exclusive transit lanes accessing the riverfront area and Union Passenger Terminal. These improvements will increase access to and traffic in the

TRANSIT SERVICE

Figure 10



District. The major element of the project directly effecting the District will be the extensive system of access roads and ramps under the bridge structure. These roads are designed to evenly redistribute traffic using the bridge. The net effect is likely to be a large increase in traffic volumes on the Uptown side of the District.

The opening of the GNO Bridge Number Two will be the single most important transportation element in the District. The difficulty of predicting the actual effect of the bridge and access road system is evidenced by the observation that current traffic volume in the District already appears to be exceeding that predicted for the opening of the bridge by its Environmental Impact Statement. The actual impacts of the new bridge and street systems should be closely monitored as they come into service.

3.5 INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure in the downtown is generally adequate to provide for anticipated growth, with existing problem areas illustrated in Figure 11.

Water Supply System:

Downtown New Orleans is well served by an extensive water main system that supplies water from the Carrollton Treatment Plant. The treatment plant processes an average of 130.37 million gallons of finished water per day (MGD), ranging from a high of 166.71 MGD to a low of 113.08 MGD.

Within the downtown, water consumption has been estimated to range between 9 and 12 MGD based on the average per capita consumption of the residents, workers, and visitors who use the area. The nominal capacity of the mains servicing the downtown is 18.5 MGD, so there appears to be no shortage in the capacity of this service. Due to the historic threat of fires in the densely developed downtown and Vieux Carre, the network of water mains in the downtown is of a larger diameter than the downtown systems of most cities.

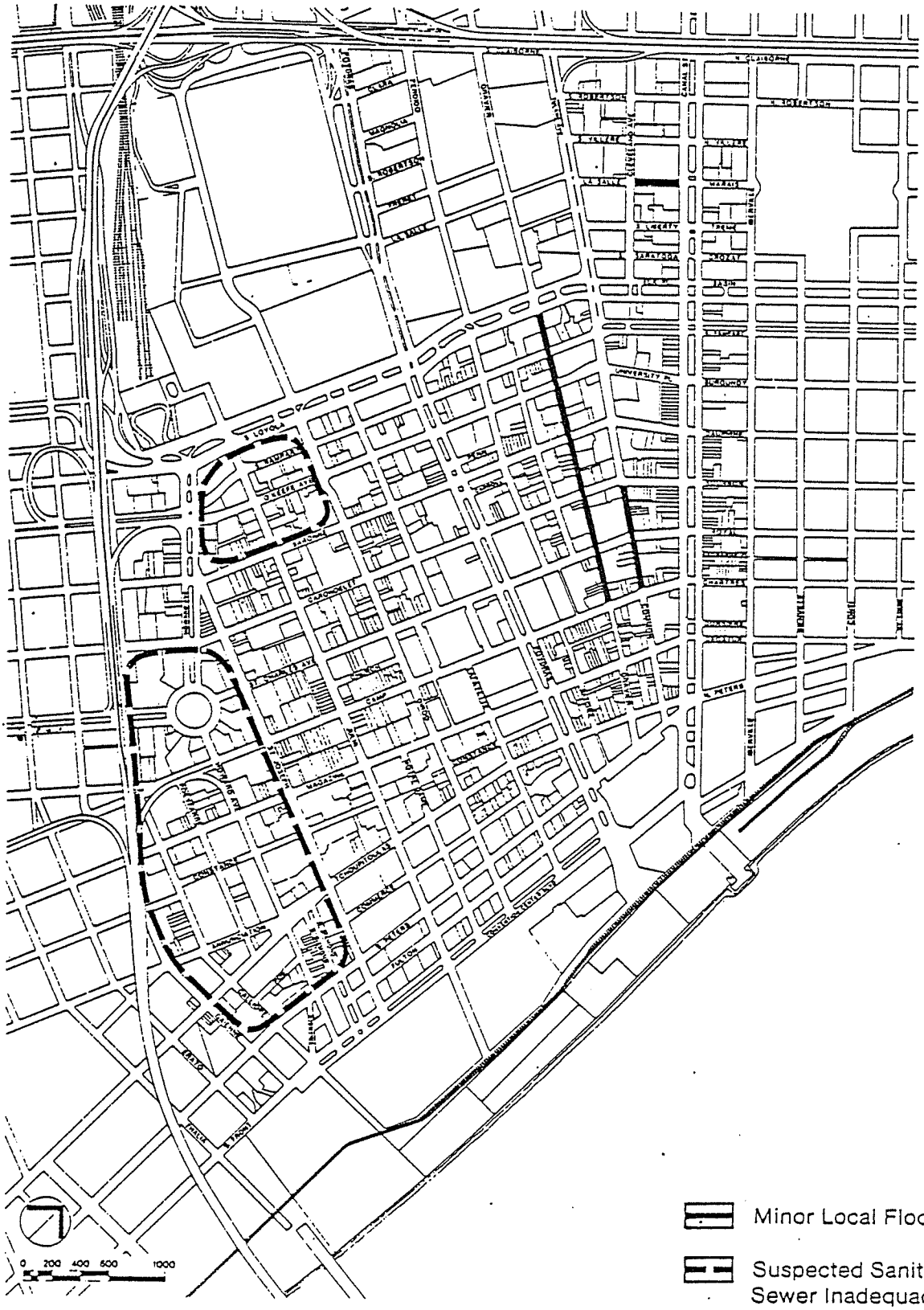
In recent years, however, the downtown has had problems with water pressure. In 1981, it was determined that the static water pressure in some areas of the downtown was 40 pounds per square inch (psi). This compares with the desired range of 50-60 psi. Tests performed in May 1985 showed the water pressure to range between 40 and 50 psi in some areas of the downtown. This situation is expected to be rectified with a series of planned improvements, including increasing the capacity of the feeder main to the downtown and replacing broken and jammed valves in the existing network. Minor improvements may be required to serve new growth on the riverfront.

Sanitary Sewer System:

The downtown area is served by a system of gravity-fed sewer mains, concentrated primarily on the downtown side of the CBD because this is the area of most intensive development.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROBLEM AREAS

Figure 11



Minor Local Flooding

Suspected Sanitary Sewer Inadequacy, 1985 Levels of Development

Due to the high groundwater table in New Orleans, accurate estimates of daily flows and actual wastewater capacity are difficult to determine. The high water table results in high levels of infiltration to the wastewater removal system, decreasing its capacity for sewerage removal.

The nominal capacity of the existing system is 18 MGD. Calculations of the amount of wastewater generated in the downtown based on per capita generation of residents, workers, and visitors is 10 MGD. A peak load factor of 2 has been applied to this to account for seasonal and daily peak period uses. This results in a maximum peak generation of 20 MGD, which is greater than the system capacity. This has not yet posed a problem but development increases, even at moderate levels, will require further sewer system improvements.

Drainage System

New Orleans is drained by an extensive system of underground pipelines and box canals, most of which empty into relief canals. From this system storm water is then pumped into Lake Pontchartrain. Except for some minor local flooding in the downtown, the existing system adequately serves the area.

The existing system of canals and drains is an extension of the system that has been in place since the first settlement of the area. As the downtown becomes more densely built, problems with surface runoff increase. Improvements to the system that serves the downtown area have been budgeted or planned through the end of the century.

The areas that have been identified as being prone to local flooding are LaSalle Street between Cleveland and Canal Streets, Gravier Street from Loyola to Camp, and Common Street between Carondelet and Camp. It is thought that the replacement of the existing lines in these areas with larger diameter pipes will alleviate some of the flooding problems. Another potential problem is with the pressure surges caused by drainage from the roofs of tall buildings in the downtown. These surges can force the covers off manholes and cause short term local flooding. It has been suggested that new buildings be fitted with surge tanks to regulate the rate of runoff, and that manhole covers in affected areas be welded shut where possible.

Electrical System

Officials from NOPSI state that the existing electrical system will be able to handle the potential increased demand of continued downtown growth and that the facilities are suitably located to provide for this increased demand.

Natural Gas System

Officials from NOPSI state that the natural gas system has adequate capacity to supply existing and continued development in the downtown to anticipated levels.

Cable Television

Some cable television conduit has been laid in the downtown during periods of street reconstruction under Cox Cable's original franchise to the City. This franchise agreement required Cox to serve the entire city. At present, only a limited number of buildings are provided with cable television service.

Under the amended franchise agreement (City Ordinance 10531 MCS), Cox Cable is not required to service the downtown with its residential cable television service except where and when Cox finds it feasible.

Cox Cable has been monitoring residential development here, including the Warehouse District. At this time, however, Cox has no immediate or long-term plans to provide residential cable service in the downtown.

3.6 MARKET CONDITIONS

At this writing in late 1986, market conditions in the downtown for different types of real estate development vary considerably from a soft office market to a relatively strong market for good-quality residential units, with retail and hotel uses falling in-between.

Perhaps the most significant factor in current market conditions is the oversupply of office and hotel space, the result of a dramatic building boom in the first five years of the 80's. On the other hand, development of new retail space appears to be just ahead of demand and most retail space has been leased in a timely fashion. The production of rental and for-sale housing has only recently begun in the downtown, finding a strong reception for moderately-priced units and a good reception for more expensive products.

In 1986, after several years of slow growth, the New Orleans economy experienced a sharp decline with substantial job losses, stimulated in large part by a precipitous decline in the oil industry. While the oil industry is not the dominant force in the local economy, as it is in Houston, its health has relatively great impact because virtually all the other sectors of New Orleans' economy have been flat or in some decline. This serious recessionary condition has further softened demand for both retail and office space and is a serious drag on the residential market. Downtown hotels, however, are experiencing increasingly higher occupancies because of a strong and growing tourism/conventions market that is not directly linked to the local economy.

Current Office Conditions

At this writing, there is a large available supply of both old, new and rehabilitated office space in the downtown. It is estimated that aproximately 2.26 million square feet of Class A, newer-quality, office space are available along with about 900,000 square feet of older office buildings, a total of 3.16 million square feet. There is also, under the current declining economy, substantial additional space under lease but unoccupied and available for sublease at concessionary rates.

All of these data indicate that there is about a four-year supply of office space in the downtown. It is a buyer's market with leases being written at below economic levels, discouraging any immediate plans for new office structures.

While economic conditions are currently poor, much of the vacancy problem experienced by current office buildings is the result of overbuilding in the 1980-1985 period, when an average of over 1.3 million square feet of new office space was added in the downtown each year, way in excess of an estimated demand of about 700,000 to 900,000 square feet per year under normal economic conditions.

Hotel Market Conditions

The market conditions for hotels in the downtown are the result of a substantial oversupply created by a World's Fair-stimulated building boom in the 1983-1985 period. Over 3,400 additional rooms were brought on-line, excluding the 1,036-room Ramada Hotel (now Plaza Suite Hotel), which lies just outside the downtown. Occupancies prior to this building boom were, on average, at a healthy 70 percent to 72 percent, but declined to about 55 percent in 1985. Generally speaking, a minimum 65 percent occupancy rate is considered "economic" for a hotel.

On the good side of the ledger, occupied room nights, the best yardstick for growth in demand in the downtown indicates impressive growth in the 1981-1985 period. An estimated 1.62 million room nights in 1981 has grown to about 2.32 million room nights in 1985, a 43 percent growth in demand. Demand is being pumped up by a steadily increasing tourism business and a strongly-growing convention business, neither of which depends heavily on the local area economy.

Supply of rooms in the same period, measured as annual room nights available in the downtown has grown even more impressively from 2.25 million nights to about 4.22 million today, an 87.5 percent increase. Demand is expected to catch up with supply by 1990, when it is reasonable to expect new hotel rooms to come on-line.

Retail Conditions

Downtown retail space has grown steadily in the last five years, with the addition of the 225,000 square-foot Canal Place shopping center, and the 180,000 square-foot Riverwalk being the most significant developments in this period of time. It is estimated at present that there are approximately 2.1 million square feet of retail in the downtown. Canal Street, with about 900,000 square feet of retail is the retail focal point for the downtown, anchored by D. H. Holmes and Maison Blanche department stores, and, now Canal Place.

Recent economic conditions and the highly competitive nature of retailing have caused the closings of Godchaux's, Gus Mayer's and Kreeger's clothing/department stores in their Canal Street locations. This, combined with changes in the mix of goods on the street, has caused some concern that Canal Street my be facing a decline as retail center. At this writing, it is unclear whether the closings of these local operations represent a trend or specific unique cases. In general, poor economic conditions such as the present ones hurt all retailers, and those that find themselves over-extended in a retail downturn usually have to close or scale back operations.

Substantial retail growth is projected for the downtown based on the projected growth in tourism/conventions, office space and in residential growth. It is estimated that about 45 percent of retail spending (including food and drink) comes from hotel guests, about 34 percent from office workers and about 21 percent from downtown residents and day shoppers. Based on this division, retail growth is projected to occur more around office buildings and hotels versus Canal Street. The proposed De Bartolo shopping center between the Hyatt and Superdome is a good example of such retail growth.

Residential Market Conditions

As of the 1980 Census, the downtown has only 378 occupied housing units, with an average of 1.09 persons per household. In the last year, three rental apartment projects in the Historic Warehouse District have added about 325 housing units to the inventory, with about half of these units currently occupied. An additional 300 units in two projects are currently under construction. Further, one 63-unit

ultra-luxury condominium project on the River is currently under construction. While these approximately 700 housing units represent a relatively small addition to the New Orleans inventory of housing, they represent a significant increase in housing opportunities in the downtown. Further; the concentration of these units in the warehouse district is helping to accelerate the transition of that district from warehousing to office, retail, hotel and residential use.

All of the five rental projects were made (marginally) economically feasible by a combination of investment tax credits (ITC's), bond financing and charitable donation deductions (facade donation) that have been seriously diminished in the Tax Reform Act of 1986. Though many of these advantages have been preserved, if somewhat diluted, passive investors (limited partners) can only use them to the extent that the project itself produces taxable income. Three factors are needed to produce taxable income: higher rents, lower costs, and lower debt/more equity. All three requirements work against further rental residential development in the downtown.

On the positive side, it is noted that today there are approximately 100,000 downtown workers, many of whom are renters who now make a long commute from the suburbs. A residential product at the right price and design can appeal to many of these workers with demand estimated at least 7,000 today rising to 11,000 by 2000. However, high land costs and the high costs of rehabilitation preclude a commensurate production to meet this demand. The majority of these residential units will be rental (75% or more) with the rest being for-sale condominiums.

Casino Gambling:

During the course of the GMP Update the possibility has been raised of state legislation legalizing casino gambling. This is a land use which is governed by a different set of rules and has different potential impacts from other land uses currently in the District. Because of this, the impacts of the introduction of this new land use into the Distict should be the subject of detailed study both generically in terms of gambling and specifically in terms of particular sites, programs and impacts. The ill-defined nature of casino gambling as it has been

discussed to date makes it impossible to address any of these issues in the Update with the degree of detail which is necessary.

The District, however, was examined for the best locations for casino gambling should this activity be legalized. Several considerations were critical in this examination. First, recent national experience has demonstrated the enormous power of casinos to distort adjacent land uses and values to the point of creating a zone of devastation around casinos as speculators hold land for anticipated future casino use. The effect of this activity can be, and has been in Atlantic City, to place adjacent land out of the realm of economic possibility for any other use. This observation is the basis for the recommendation that casino locations be specified and not general areas or zones.

This recommendation is supported by the goal which states that casinos should be permitted, if at all, as a conditional use to support current city policies and activities, not to compete with them. From this perspective, casinos are seen as one of a number of attractions which the City has to offer residents and visitors. The cost-effective approach to casinos is to control their number and location so that they are successful and so they reinforce and are reinforced by other existing and planned attractions.

The examination of the District for potential sites was guided by the following assumptions: 1) A casino would be a structure with a minimum of approximately 35,000 square feet, 2) A casino would not be in, or directly connected to, a hotel, 3) A casino would not contain entertainment or eating facilities, and 4) A casino would be approved for a specific site or sites, best able to accommodate its impacts and not to a general area.

One site best addresses all of the factors listed above. This is the existing Rivergate, when and if it becomes available for reuse. This site appears to best meet the considerations above and particularly has the potential to interact in a mutually beneficial manner with other major attractions including: the Convention Center, riverfront cultural, entertainment and retail activities stretching from the Science Centre and Riverwalk through the French Quarter and the tremendous hotel and dining resources of the District and Vieux Carre.

Whatever specific site(s) may ultimately be selected should be subjected to detailed scrutiny and control so that the maximum benefit can be created. One way to begin to accomplish this would be to require that a detailed assessment of community impacts be prepared for each proposal addressing potential impacts and alternative methods to reinforce the beneficial ones and mitigate the detrimental ones.

A Likely Future for the District

Three growth scenarios were developed during the course of the Update to illustrate alternative potential levels of future development given varying assumptions about public policies and market conditions. These scenarios were used to elicit goals for the future of the downtown in a series of public meetings conducted in August 1986. A Likely Future for new development was also estimated by projecting development for the DDD for the next fifteen years to (1) identify the intended and unintended consequences of such development; (2) identify public and private actions and policies that thwart or promote such development; (3) define the best course of development for the DDD, and (4) identify those actions and policies that are likely to lead to optimal development.

Both the scenarios and the Likely Future were developed prior to the dramatic fall in the price of oil which has led to a severe and continued economic downturn in New Orleans and Louisiana, including significant job losses. The current office space inventory of well over 3 million square feet in the DDD has led to significant concessions in leasing that are below economic levels for new development. As long as these poor economic conditions persist, it is likely that demand for new office space will be limited to corporate headquarters buildings.

The estimate of the Likely Future at this writing is probably an optimistic one, especially regarding office development. For planning purposes we have chosen, however, to keep this general level of development as a reference for several reasons. One, we feel that under a slower pattern of economic growth, the trends of development would remain about the same, but be stretched out in time. That is, the portrait that is given by the Likely Future for the DDD in 2000, may actually arrive in 2005 or 2010 instead. This is not of great concern because the purpose of the estimate is to inform long range Growth Management decisions.

The planning challenges, however, remain substantially the same. Two, we believe that it is better to be mistaken in the direction of optimism than pessimism. In other words, it is generally better to be prepared for events that don't occur as planned, than to be caught unprepared by unanticipated events.

The reader is cautioned to treat the Likely Future as a possible (but not necessarily high probable) outcome that clarifies needed policies and actions from the public and private sectors, not as a prediction of the future. Economic conditions are invariably cyclical and the uncertain timing of these cycles with a fifteen-year planning horizon makes the accuracy of such predictions low.

The Likely Future estimate is based upon a consideration of the development history in downtown New Orleans over the last 15 years, a period which includes times of very little and a great deal of development activity, and the range of public and private proposals and plans currently on the table. The Likely Future estimate is one of moderate growth over the next 15-plus years. Office space, for example, is expected to be built at an average level, if one were to make the unlikely assumption that the entire 9.3 million square feet of office were to be built in the next 15 years, of 620,000 square feet per year. This is 70,000 square feet less per year than the average over the preceeding 15 years.

The major elements of the Likely Future estimate of development in the District, those likely to occur around the year 2000 or later, (including a mixed use development of approximately 1.25 million square feet) are as follows:

- New office space: 9,300,000 square feet
- Hotel: 5,085 rooms
- Retail space: 1,200,000 square feet
- Residential, new: 1,000 units
- Residential, rehabilitated: up to 4,000 units
- Aquarium on the riverfront
- Convention Center expansion

The general distribution pattern of a level of development approximating this Likely Future has been ascertained using the techniques described in Chapter Four. These techniques, relying to a great extent upon announced plans and

proposals, are based in the physical realities of those structures which are fixed or given and use the proposed projects to get a glimpse of the outlines of a likely future. Casino gambling does not comprise a part of this Likely Future because it is not now a legal use.

3.7 SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

The following summary of existing conditions is organized in five major categories—development potential, current plans, urban design resources, transportation, and infrastructure—with an abbreviated list of the positive and negative features of each topic.

I. Development Potential of the DDD:

Positive:

- Although not the State capital, New Orleans maintains its role as the traditional center of business, finance and insurance in the region, allowing it to capture a relatively large share of regional office growth.

- The downtown offers ample development sites unconstrained by existing structures and restrictive zoning.

- Most downtown locations have good access to a large selection of hotels and the special restaurant, retail and entertainment attractions of the Vieux Carre.

- Infrastructure improvements and site clearance carried out for the World's Fair has accelerated the development potential of major riverfront sites which are suitable for a variety of commercial and residential uses.

- The last few years have shown an increasing market for downtown housing at prices that make Investment Tax Credit (ITC) advantaged projects an attractive investment proposition.

- The downtown has a large stock of architecturally significant buildings that are suitable for ITC advantaged conversion to new office, retail and residential uses.

Negative:

- The economy is producing no new jobs at this time, with metropolitan area jobs at the level of 1980 today, creating very little demand for new space.

- Real estate tax advantages that drove investment in office buildings in the past five years have been diluted by the new tax act.

- Office and hotel space have been recently overbuilt and it will be three to four years before currently high vacancy rates are reduced.

- The downtown transportation network is at capacity and further development is constrained by existing auto congestion and unsatisfactory transit service.

- Downtown land values, predicated on anticipated high intensity office development, are limiting private investment interest in other types of development.

2. Current Development Plans:

Positive:

- Large proportions of the anticipated market demand (under current conditions) for office and retail space in the downtown are already on the drawing boards in a number of significant proposed projects.

- Several of the announced projects include a high density mix of uses which is consistent with the goals of increasing the range of activities in core office areas.

- Over 160 new luxury condominium units and 250 rehabilitation units are either currently under construction or planned, showing a relatively healthy housing development outlook for the downtown.

- Current development plans also include significant amounts of retail, as well as entertainment functions in the Venture International project on the riverfront, increasing the range of after hours activities planned for the downtown.

- Present development proposals generally conform to the established urban design intentions for future development of the downtown.

- A comprehensive street and public open space improvement program is proceeding under the sponsorship of the Downtown Development District.

Negative

- Despite the large amount of planned residential growth relative to past years, proposed development remains heavily biased towards office projects.

- Most of this office growth is proposed in the Poydras-Loyola area which is already at capacity in terms of the existing transportation system.

- Several announced developments are falling behind schedule and cutting back on published programs.

3. Urban Design Resources:

Positive:

- The downtown has an interesting internal street pattern which is developing a strong urban design structure for the District.

- Recent streetscape improvements have begun to establish an attractive and extensive pedestrian system throughout the core area.

- The adjacent Vieux Carre and the Mississippi River are important design resources that add immeasurably to the urban design potential of the downtown.

- The downtown area retains a rich heritage of historically significant buildings and some of the finest examples of New Orleans' traditional commercial and industrial architecture.

- The unusual mixture of traditional and contemporary architectural forms adds exciting contrasts and special visual effects to many of the views and pedestrian routes through the downtown.

- Historic and architectural resources of the downtown have been fully inventoried and recorded and protective zoning of historic districts has been adopted.

- Provisions of the recently revised zoning code closely reflect the elements of the urban design framework adopted in the 1975 Plan.

Negative:

- The uptown and lakeside boundaries of the downtown form unsightly entrances and tend to isolate the core area from its immediate neighbors on these sides.

- Appropriate connections to the Vieux Carre have not been developed and the transition zone between the downtown and the Quarter is unattractive and occasionally unsafe.

- There are few focal places of pedestrian activity in the downtown and limited entertainment and night time activities contribute to a generally minimal after hours' street life and create a perception of insecurity after dark.

- Present functional areas in the downtown are generally poorly defined and often lacking in a cohesive development character.

- Public open space resources of the downtown are severely limited.

- Pedestrian amenities and public activity generators in the area uptown of Lafayette Mall are currently limited.

- The street environment in the Poydras-Loyola office area is uninviting to pedestrian activity and the area lacks strong connections to other downtown districts.

4. Transportation:

Positive:

- The New Orleans CBD is a strong, well-established business and retail core, and is therefore a powerful attractor of people from throughout the New Orleans metropolitan region. All the elements of an extensive transportation system are already in place.

- The downtown is a compact, visually appealing area, with a climate conducive to pedestrian activity which is provided for in an established system of pedestrian links throughout the downtown.

- A system of peripheral parking areas has been established, including a CBD shuttle service between these lots and the downtown core.

- A Parking Management Policy has already been developed and implemented, resulting in increased turn-around in on-street parking spaces.

- The second GNO bridge and associated improvements will greatly improve access to downtown.

Negative:

- Many intersections are operating near or at capacity during peak hours.

- The quality of service of the public transit system has decreased in recent years. Fares and headway times have increased, resulting in a decrease in the level of use of the system.

- Due to the compact nature of the downtown and the limited street rights-of-way, major intersection improvements in the downtown, such as grade separation of congested intersections, are essentially precluded.

- Many of the available parking spaces are on open surface lots that will be lost as development proceeds.

- The remote parking facilities have met with only limited success.

5. Infrastructure:

Positive:

- Existing stormwater drainage and electrical and natural gas supply systems all have adequate present capacity to serve future growth to the maximum levels permitted under current zoning.

Negative:

- In the Loyola corridor, the riverfront and parts of the Warehouse District, certain sewerage mains will have to be extended or capacity increased to serve new development.

- Improvements in the water supply system will probably be necessary to serve new development in the riverfront area.

- More extensive improvements than predictable from current data may be required in both the sewer and water supply systems as more detailed development plans are made available.

4. THE BASIS FOR CHANGE

4.1 DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

A key feature of Growth Management Planning is establishing a process through which past and current private developments and public programs can be monitored and evaluated with respect to progress towards the achievement of City goals. Such a process was instituted in New Orleans in the original GMP of 1975 and has been repeated in this GMP Update to reflect the changes that have occurred over the last decade.

The GMP method proceeds from an assessment of the past, the present and the remaining opportunities, to an inventory of current growth plans and their probability of completion. This currently planned future is evaluated against the City's goals to determine whether current plans should be adjusted and what new actions should be initiated to more closely approximate those goals.

An important aspect of this method is that it does not ignore current plans and programs but builds upon these proposals as opportunities with more likelihood of realization than those for which no prior planning effort has been expended. The identification of opportunities for change then becomes a three-part analysis, consisting of:

1. An assessment of the physical characteristics of existing structures and open spaces with respect to their potential life expectancy (Susceptibility to Change Analysis);

2. An illustration of the anticipated future under present development plans (Probability Growth Model); and

3. An inventory of the remaining development opportunity sites where additional or alternative development actions can be considered (Remaining Development Opportunities Analysis).

Susceptibility to Change Analysis

The susceptibility to change analysis is a means of classifying buildings and open sites according to their relative permanence, or likelihood of remaining in present

configuration and use. The analytical method approximates property appraisal procedures in the basic assumption that new, large, modern buildings are more resistant to change than old, small, obsolete buildings.

The first step is to remove from the analysis all structures and sites which should be considered as fixed or "given." The four types of givens are:

1. Functional Policy Givens

   These consist of structures and uses which serve an important functional purpose within the downtown.

2. Historical and Architectural Preservation Policy Givens

   These include all buildings and open spaces listed on the National Register of Historic Places or identified by the Historic District Landmarks Commission as historically or architecturally significant or as contributing to the visual character of the "tout ensemble."

3. Housing Policy Givens

   All residential structures are considered as fixed because of the goals of protecting existing neighborhoods and expanding housing supply in the downtown.

4. Retail Policy Givens

   Retail uses on Canal Street are considered as fixed because of the goal of reinforcing a strong retail core in the downtown, concentrated in the traditional retail corridor of Canal Street.

Each of these categories of givens is mapped in Figure 12, titled, "Composite of Givens." The structures and open spaces included in this composite map are adopted as relatively fixed, that is, as areas of least susceptibility to change.

COMPOSITE OF GIVENS

Figure 12

Composite Map of all Givens:

- Functional Givens
- Historical and Architectural Policy Givens
- Housing Policy Givens
- Retail Policy Givens

To further refine the susceptibility analysis, the remaining properties, or "non-givens," were assessed individually, according to an array of physical characteristics including use, building age and condition, floor area, level of maintenance, visual character and percent of development capacity, as defined by current zoning, achieved on the site. As in real property appraisal, structures which rate poorly on these characteristics are considered as short range development opportunities, or properties most susceptible to change. Higher rating structures are designated middle range opportunities, or moderately susceptible to change. The results of this analysis are mapped in Figure 13, "Susceptibility to Change."

The susceptibility to change analysis clearly shows that, all other things being equal, the most immediate opportunities for new development lie in three general areas:

- along South Loyola, centered on the Loyola-Poydras intersection;
- in the riverfront area around the existing Hilton Hotel and the New Orleans Convention Center; and
- in the Upper Canal Street area between Crozat and Claiborne.

Probability Growth Model

The new development opportunities identified in the Susceptibility to Change analysis include several sites currently under construction and areas in various stages of project planning. These projects are shown in the Probability of Planned Developments, Figure 14, and in the following list. They have been assessed according to their likelihood of completion and are classified in three categories:

Probability 1: Projects under construction/renovation, or firmly committed.

Probability 2: Proposed projects with detailed project planning complete or in progress and a good chance of being financed.

SUSCEPTIBILITY TO CHANGE

Figure 13

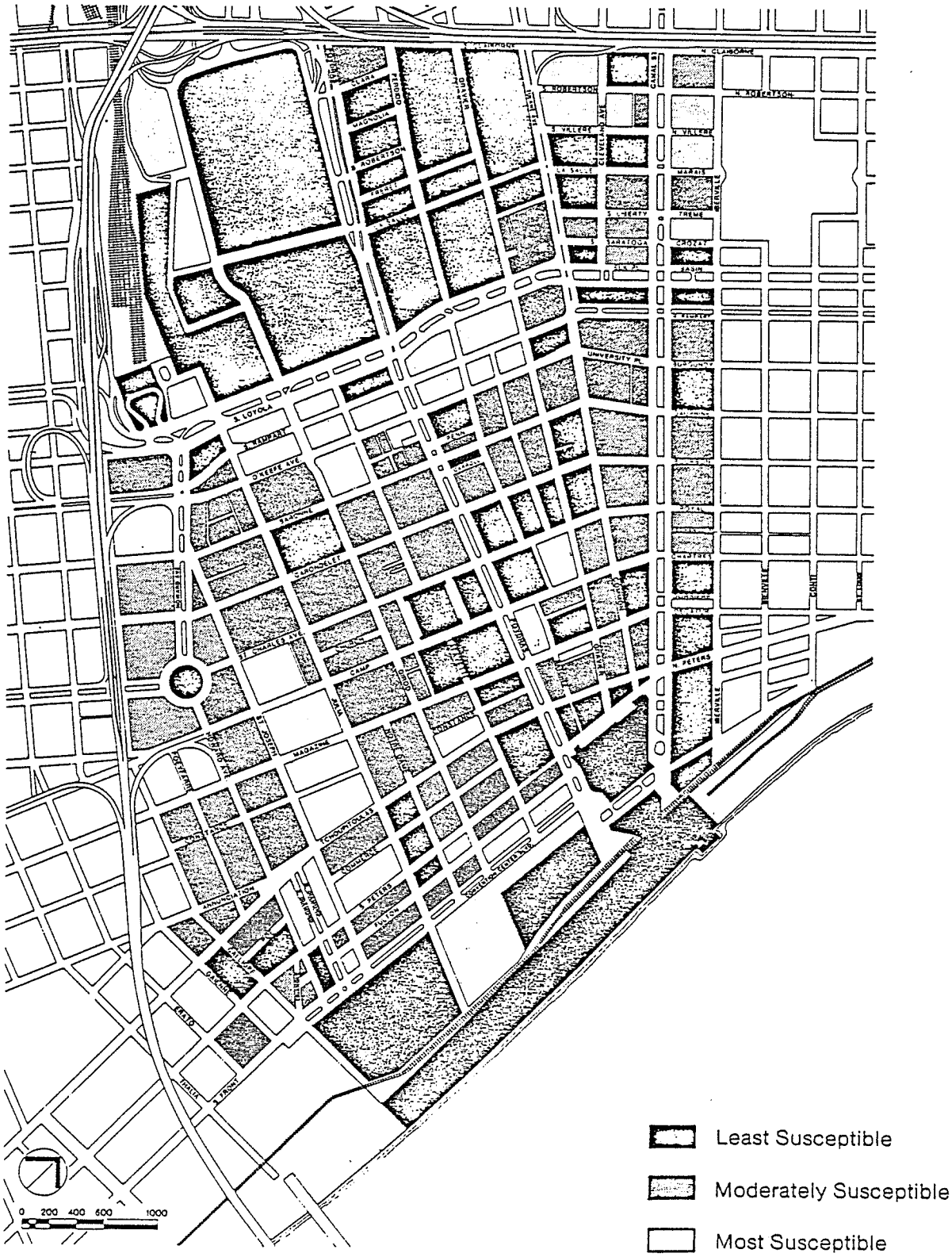


Table 2

PROBABILITY OF CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

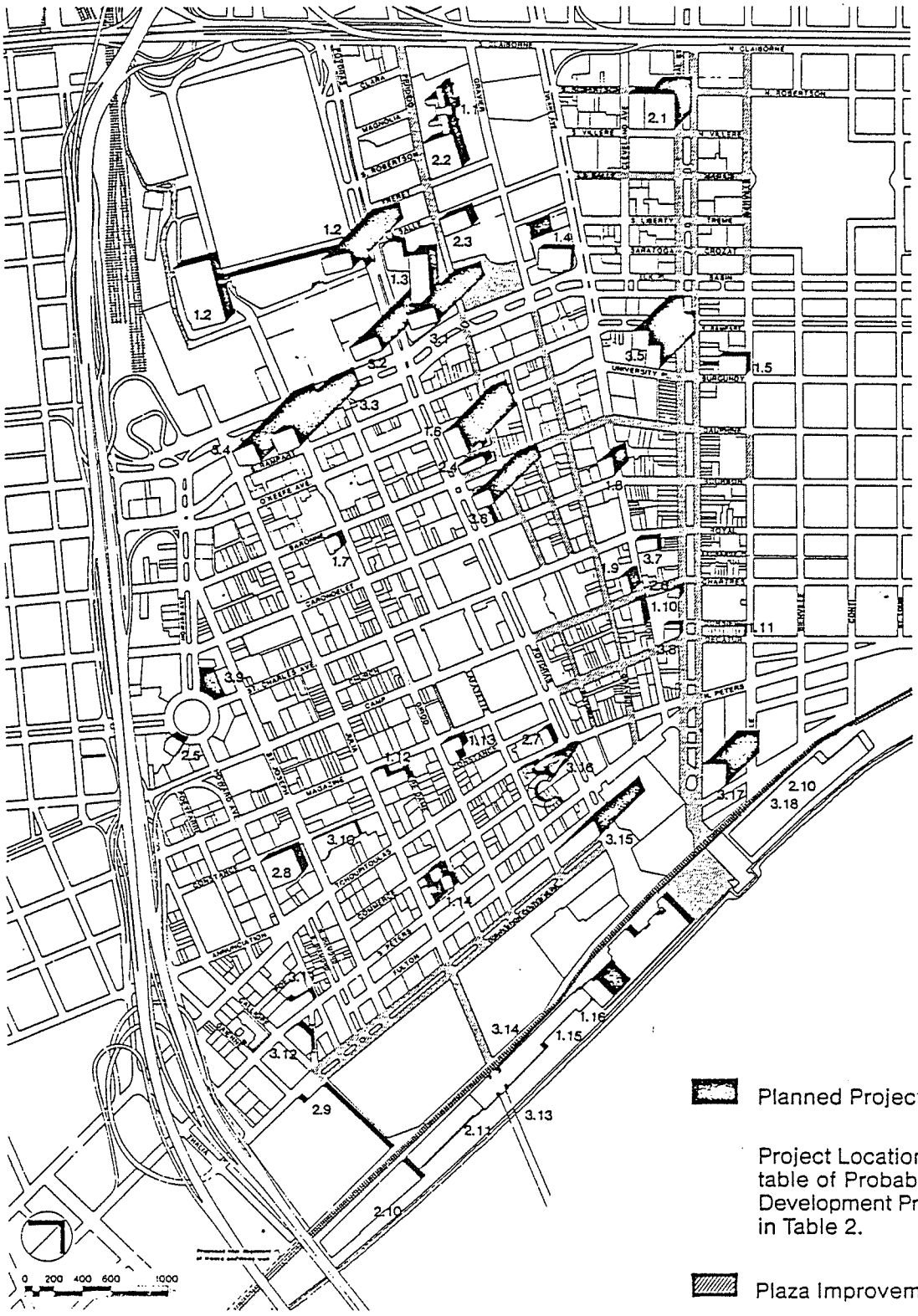
	Office (sq ft)	Retail (sq ft)	Parking (spaces)	Housing (units)	Hotel (rooms)	Expected Completion
PROBABILITY I: Currently under construction or firmly committed						
I.1 Veterans' Administration Bldg Renovation 1601 Perdido						1987
I.2 Poydras Square (DeBartolo Project) 1400 Poydras	750,000	625,000	2,700			1988
I.3 City Hall Renovations 1300 Perdido						1987
I.4 Main Library Renovations and Parking 215 Loyola						1987
I.5 McCrary's Renovations 1001-1005 Canal						1986
I.6 Louisiana Land & Exploration Tower 901 Poydras	538,000		546			1986
I.7 Showroom & Office conversion 704-716 Baronne	19,000					1986
I.8 Maritime Building Renovation 203 Carondelet						1986
I.9 Whitney Bank Renovation/Expansion 211 Camp	45,000					1986
I.10 Sheraton Garage Expansion 200 Camp			250			1986
I.11 Residential Renovation 129-135 Decatur		4,000		18		1986
I.12 Magazine Place Apartments 756-760 Magazine				54		1986
I.13 William B. Riley Office Renovation 640 Magazine						1986
I.14 Radisson Hotel Renovation 311 Julia					16,389 sf (conference)	1986
I.15 Riverwalk/Rouse-New Orleans Spanish Plaza to Julia Street		185,000				1986
I.16 One Riverplace Condominiums Upper Poydras Wharf				63		1986
TOTAL	1,352,000	814,000	3,496	135		

PROBABILITY 2: Project Planning complete or in progress							
2.1	The New Orleans Merchandise Mart 1540-1560 Canal		500,000 (showrooms)	800			1988
2.2	V A Garage & Nursing Facility Freret and Perdido			900			
2.3	HEAL Garage Expansion Perdido and LaSalle			600			1989
2.4	Retail and Office Development 421 Baronne	52,000	13,000				1987
2.5	Lee Circle Office Building 1024 St. Charles	27,000		20			1987
2.6	Sheraton Hotel Convention Expansion 100-108 Camp					25,000 sf (convention)	
2.7	Condominium Project 515 Tchoupitoulas	3,000			11		
2.8	Woodward Wright Residential 451 Howard			193			1986
2.9	Convention Center Expansion Convention Center Boulevard	300,000 (exhibit)					1989
2.10	New Orleans Aquarium Erato or Bienville wharfs						1990
2.11	Louisiana Science Center Julia Street Wharf	82,000 (exhibit)					1986
2.12	Venture International Project Julia Street Wharf		60,000 (entertainment)				
TOTAL		82,000 382,000 (exhibition)	73,000 500,000 (showrooms)	2,513	11	25,000 sf (convention)	
PROBABILITY 3: Proposed in concept only							
3.1	The Morrison Complex Loyola and Poydras						
3.2	Poydras Tower Loyola and Poydras	1,200,000					
3.3	Loyola Pedestrian Skywalk Poydras Plaza to Lafayette Mall						
3.4	Loyola Towers 700 Loyola	920,400	10,200	1,025			
3.5	Orpheum Towers Mixed-use Project 120-140 South Rampart	700,000	25,000	500	100	400	1989
3.6	Citicenter Office Project 800 Poydras	850,000		950			
3.7	Parker Life Building Renovation 130-138 St. Charles	26,850	9,150				
3.8	Sheraton Hotel Expansion (Phase III) 500-510 Canal					600-700	

3.9	Lee Circle Texaco station 919 St. Charles				
3.10	St. Mary's Market 345 St. Joseph		40,000		1987
3.11	Italian Village Renovation South Peters and Howard	50,000 (approx)	24,000 (approx)		
3.12	Federal Fiber Mills Garage South Peters and Calliope				
3.13	Mississippi Aerial River Transit Julia Street Wharf				
3.14	Riverfront Streetcar Existing railroad tracks				
3.15	Mat/New Orleans Venture 100 Poydras	350,000	6,400	440	386
3.16	Piazza d'Italia Mixed-use Project 500 Tchoupitoulas	105,000	21,000	450-580	185
3.17	Canal Place (Phase III) 101 Canal	1,000,000			
3.18	Bienville Wharf Development				

PROBABILITY OF PLANNED DEVELOPMENTS

Figure 14



Planned Projects

Project Locations are keyed to table of Probability of Current Development Projects included in Table 2.

Plaza Improvements, Street Extension and Street Scape Improvements Projects

SOURCE: Downtown Development District, office memorandum dated 4-25-1986

Probability 3: Projects proposed in concept, with only tentative likelihood of realization.

Taken together, the givens and projects of Probability 1, 2 and 3 define a Probability Growth Model, or the future downtown which present proposals will eventually achieve.

The Probability Growth Model, which is a key tool in the growth management process, must be constantly revised as the future unfolds. An important part of growth management administration is constant monitoring of development progress which will be facilitated by the computer based data system established for the DDD as part of the present GMP update.

Development Opportunities Analysis

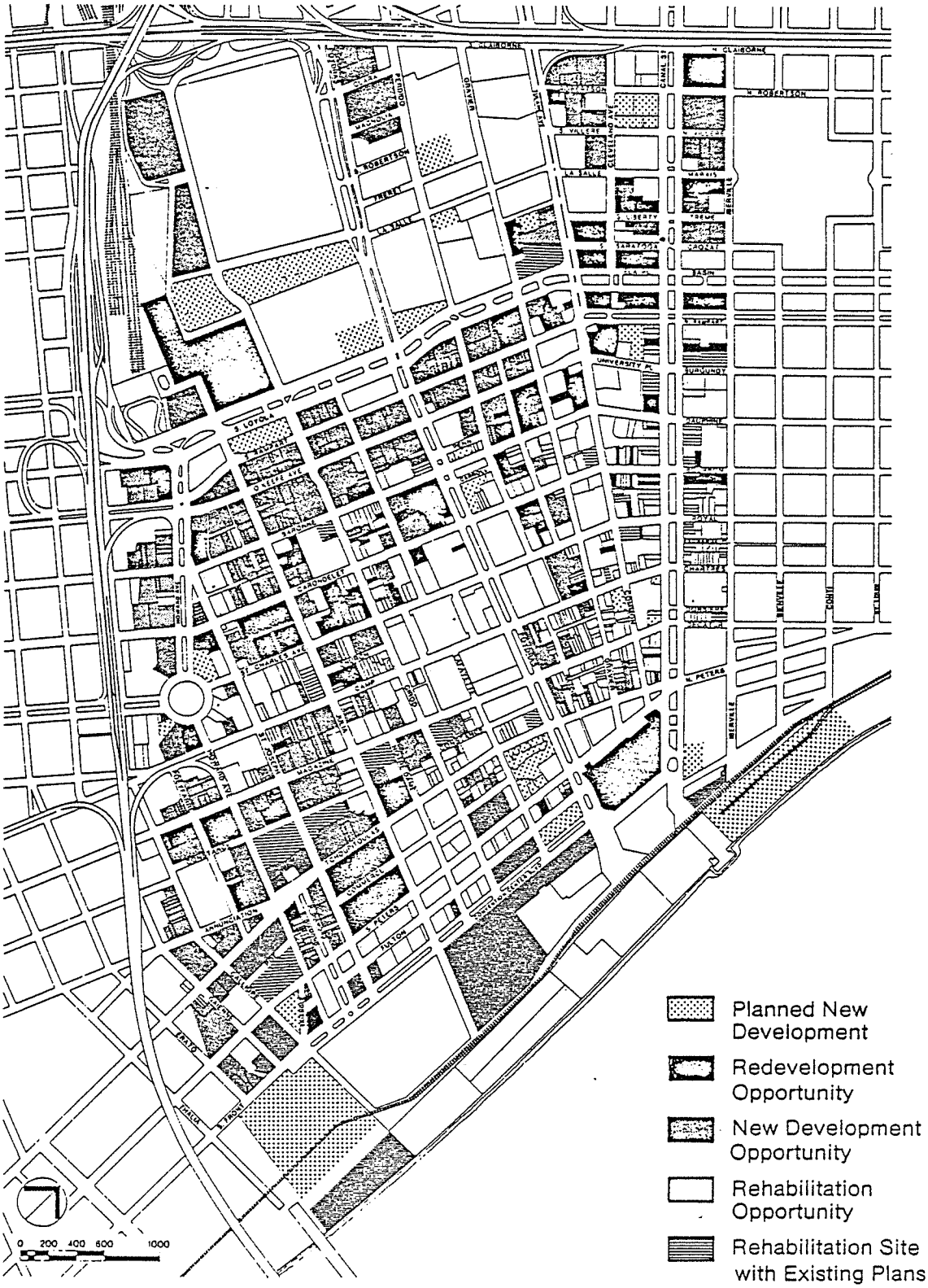
Having identified the currently planned future of downtown, the final step in defining opportunities for change is to analyze the development potential of remaining sites, or unplanned areas. The Susceptibility to Change analysis identifies opportunities for new construction, and the relative time frame of possible new developments, but does not include the large number of historic or architecturally significant sites which have rehabilitation or adaptive reuse potential.

This final analysis considered all sites which are neither fixed (due to the presence of substantial existing structures, essential services or protected uses), nor already planned for change (at some level of probability, from 1 to 3 as defined above). These sites are identified in Figure 15, "Development Opportunities" which distinguishes between new development and rehabilitation opportunities throughout the downtown.

As shown by this map, major new development sites lie in a generally continuous zone extending from the Upper Canal Street area, along South Loyola and east on Howard Avenue into the Warehouse District. This curving zone skirts the core commercial areas of the downtown where new development opportunities are limited to smaller, scattered sites. Rehabilitation opportunities are concentrated primarily in the Warehouse Area and the eastern portion of the Traditional Office Core.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Figure 15



4.2 GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

During the month of August, 1986 a series of public meetings was held to brief all interested parties on the findings and conclusions of the analyses described above and to receive comments and suggestions for goals to be used to guide the continued growth and development of the downtown. The large base of data and findings were presented with a series of 1" = 100' colored maps, summary sheets and an "Opportunities and Constraints" working paper. In addition, three hypothetical future development scenarios were presented as a means of eliciting goal statements about the downtown.

The near unanimous agreement reached at the work sessions held with the GMP Update Management and Advisory Committees and the public was that the overall pattern and intensity of development experienced since and influenced by the 1975 GMP has been beneficial. Five major areas of concern emerged at these work sessions which have been translated into goals for the GMP Update and are listed below. These goals were used to inform the strategies and actions recommended in this Update. They are presented as a reaffirmation of the original GMP goals to direct planning for the remainder of the century.

<u>Goal One:</u> Consolidate the downtown office core between the completed development of Poydras and the retail use of Canal Street. Encourage new office development to occur in this area without discouraging it elsewhere.

<u>Goal Two:</u> Protect and reinforce the traditional retail functions of Canal Street.

<u>Goal Three:</u> Increase the range of residential opportunities in downtown in rehabilitated and new buildings.

<u>Goal Four:</u> Provide a series of connected, publicly-oriented and accessible activities along the length of the Mississippi River.

<u>Goal Five:</u> Improve access to and movement within the downtown with a balanced transportation system.

5. THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN

THE GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN

Based on the goals, development opportunities, and recommendations of the GMP Management and Advisory Committees, additions and revisions to the 1975 Growth Management Plan are recommended. These changes include adjustment of the land use plan, extension of the pedestrian and open space system, and transportation and infrastructure improvements.

This Update plan holds the general principles established in the initial GMP, with appropriate adjustments responding to current conditions and the priority goals identified in the course of the study. Recommended growth patterns to the year 2000 are illustrated in Figure 16, which shows four primary growth areas:

- on Loyola, between Poydras and Iberville,
- in the Riverfront area,
- in the Warehouse area below Tchoupitoulas, and
- on upper Canal Street, between Claiborne and Saratoga.

Although these areas have been targeted for special consideration in this plan, development is expected to proceed concurrently in other parts of the downtown, according to existing zoning controls and design requirements. The priority growth areas are to be the focus of public investment and regulatory action in the next 15 years, but concentration of special incentives in these areas does not imply reduction of support for development elsewhere.

To achieve the physical form of downtown illustrated in Figure 16, the following plan elements should be adopted.

RECOMMENDED GROWTH PATTERNS

Figure 16

5.1 LAND USE PLAN

Development of the priority growth areas identified above does not require significant change to existing land use patterns, as shown in Figure 4. The primary goals of this plan Update are concerned with redirection of office development trends and intensification of residential growth, in areas which, for the most part, are consistent with present zoning and existing land use characteristics. The generalized land use concept informing these recommended growth priorities is illustrated in Figure 17.

The boundaries defining land use patterns in this diagram should not be interpreted as rigid divisions between activities but as approximate locations of where the character of an area changes from one predominant use or intensity of development to another. The characteristics of the eight principal land use areas of the DDD are described below.

1. Office Core

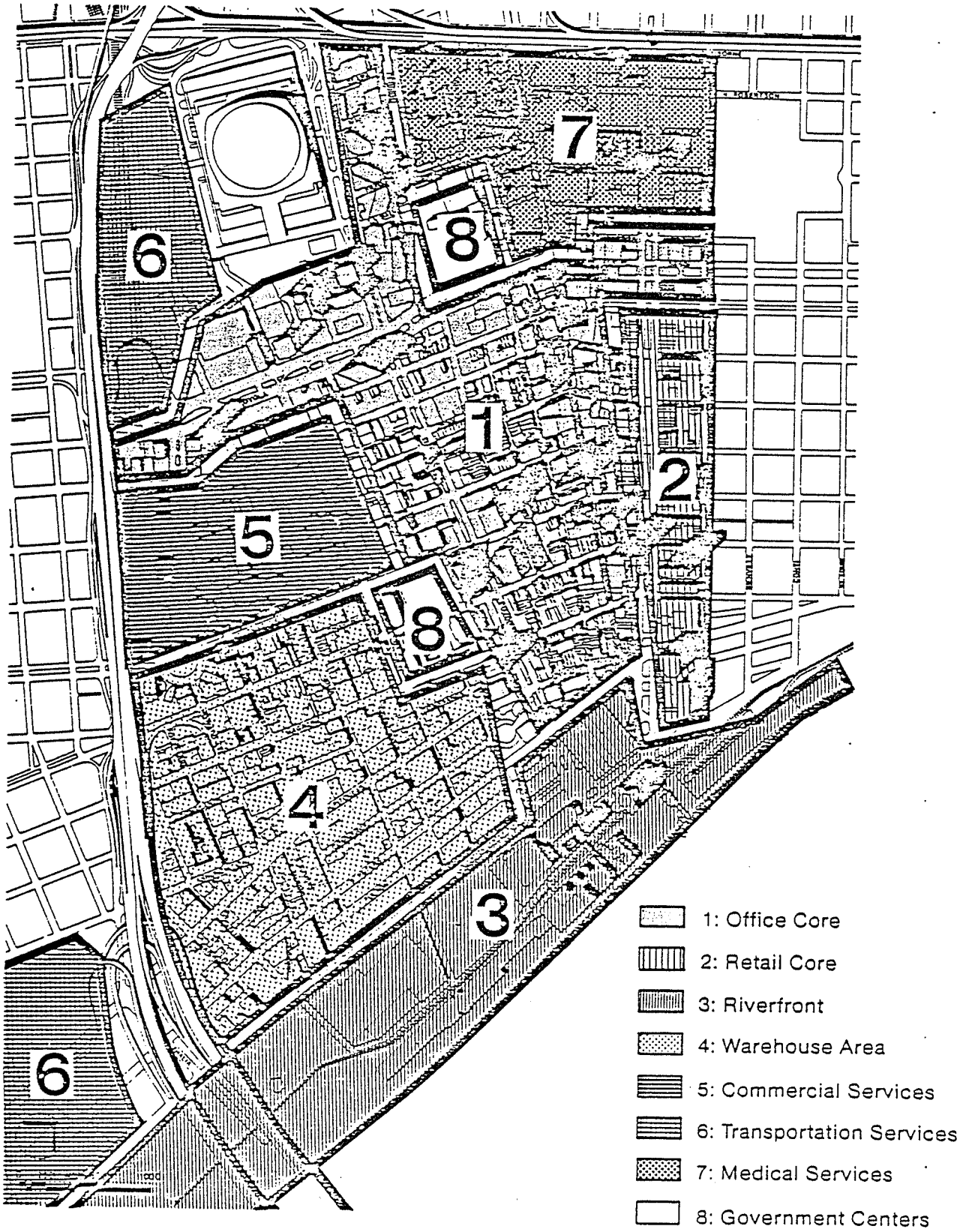
The commercial heart of downtown presently consists of the traditional office core in the wedge between Poydras and Canal east of Loyola, and the more recent high intensity developments along the Poydras spine and adjacent to the Superdome. Major new office developments are planned around the Poydras-Loyola intersection and on the uptown section of Loyola (Figure 14).

This growth is expanding the office core from its original compact center into a more loosely defined area with arms extending out along upper Poydras and along Loyola. The recommended land use concept proposes completing this emerging pattern with expansion of office development in a mixed use setting on either side of Elk Place and Basin Street, through to Iberville in the near term.

High density development at the Elk Place/Basin intersection will reinforce the retail function of the Canal Street corridor and consolidate the central office core area. In the long term, office development will continue to locate on available sites on uptown Loyola and along Poydras, but incentives will clearly favor the downtown section of Loyola, between Poydras and Iberville.

LAND USE PLAN

Figure 17



As throughout the office core, uses in the downtown section of Loyola should be mixed, including hotel, retail, residential and entertainment functions, as well as office space. Design guidelines are recommended to protect the street level pedestrian environment, and public investment in streetscape and open space amenities, as outlined in section 5.2 below.

2. Retail Core

The land use concept protects and reinforces the established retail corridor of Canal Street by maintaining its present characteristics and encouraging an anchoring node of high intensity, mixed use development at the upper end, between Rampart and Saratoga. Major retail developments, such as the Riverwalk and the proposed DeBartolo mall, occur outside this retail core but Canal Street will remain the heart of downtown shopping, building on the character of the "grand retailing boulevard" established in existing design controls and streetscape improvements and reinforced by the recommended retail management program.

3. The Riverfront:

Public entertainment, exhibition, convention and hotel uses are to expand along the riverfront, forming a linear zone of public attractions connecting the downtown to the Vieux Carre along the river. Tourist oriented functions should be balanced by residential development wherever feasible, taking advantage of spectacular river views and adding a stable component of non-transient uses to this special area of concentrated entertainment functions. Potential redevelopment of the Rivergate as a mixed use development is a possibility as well.

4. The Warehouse Area:

The present land use character of this large area, which extends from St. Charles Avenue to Convention Center Boulevard, is in transition from light industrial and service commercial functions, to a very diverse mixture of residential, hotel, retail and low scale office uses. While this emerging functional diversity is to be reinforced, the area provides prime opportunities for increased residential growth, stimulated by a relatively large stock of existing buildings suitable for conversion,

many remaining sites for new construction, and the special ambience of this low scaled historic district.

Residential development will be a clear priority in adjusted zoning provisions and recommended public investment in parking supply, streetscape and open space amenities. Hotel and other development related to the Convention Center and its expansion would be permitted as well.

5. Commercial Services Area:

This area, between St. Charles and South Rampart, is expected to remain a mixture of commercial service, parking and low intensity office uses, much as it is today. Further office and showroom conversions, similar to the office projects on Howard and the Esprit outlet on St. Charles, should be encouraged, but the area is to maintain its important role as support and services for the office core.

6. Transportation Services:

The area from Loyola to Claiborne, between the Expressway and the Superdome, presently provides a variety of transportation related uses, including the Union Passenger Terminal, Municipal Heliport, and extensive surface parking linked to the office core by the CBD shuttle. The transportation function of this area should be intensified, with the possible development of a multimodal terminal at the station to include the Trailways bus terminal and a West Bank bus depot related to the planned transit lane exit from the new GNO bridge. Parking supply in this area should be increased, with improved shuttle service to employment and retail centers.

Peripheral parking and shuttle bus services are also proposed on the M.I.C.O. site as an interim use until its development future is clear. The extent of the area, however, suggests that a large component of parking, serving both the office core and public attractions on the Riverfront, could remain as part of any future development program.

7. Medical Services:

The H.E.A.L. area and Upper Canal are presently two distinct functional areas of downtown (Figure 5), the former a dense concentration of hospitals and related medical services, and the latter a mix of office, retail and hotel uses. With the probable expansion of Tulane Medical Center towards Loyola and Canal Streets, those areas will become more functionally interdependent, and this should be reinforced in the support of further related development, such as research space, offices, and staff and student housing, on both sides of Canal Street.

8. Government Centers:

Government functions in the downtown are split between the area of Federal offices around Lafayette Square and the City administration buildings surrounding Duncan Plaza. Both of these areas should be preserved in their present function, with possible expansion and redevelopment of the latter.

Planned developments include a major office project and reconstruction of the Courts building at the Loyola and Poydras intersection, and renovation and expansion of the main Public Library on Loyola. Library expansion, however, is contingent on City acquisition of the present Trailways terminal immediately behind the existing library. This site is also critical to Tulane Medical Center expansion plans and the City should begin negotiations for its purchase as soon as possible.

5.2 PEDESTRIAN AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

One of New Orleans' most important and memorable qualities is the attractiveness of its downtown pedestrian environment, including many parts of the CBD, as well as the Vieux Carre. Much of the quality of the existing pedestrian environment in the downtown is the result of excellent streetscape improvements carried out over the last decade in accordance with the pedestrian and open space system proposed in the 1975 Plan.

No changes are recommended in the design principles or definition of major elements of this system; but with the increase of development activity on the riverfront and in the Warehouse Area, extension of the system throughout the uptown area is becoming an important priority. Clearly, improvements will have to be phased and completion of the total network will not be for some considerable time.

The overall system proposed is illustrated in Figure 18. Extension of the existing network involves four different categories of treatments, each of which is described below in terms of its general design characteristics. The specific details of each element will vary according to the particular features of its location, but the distinction between categories of elements should remain clear through adherence to the general design principles described for each category.

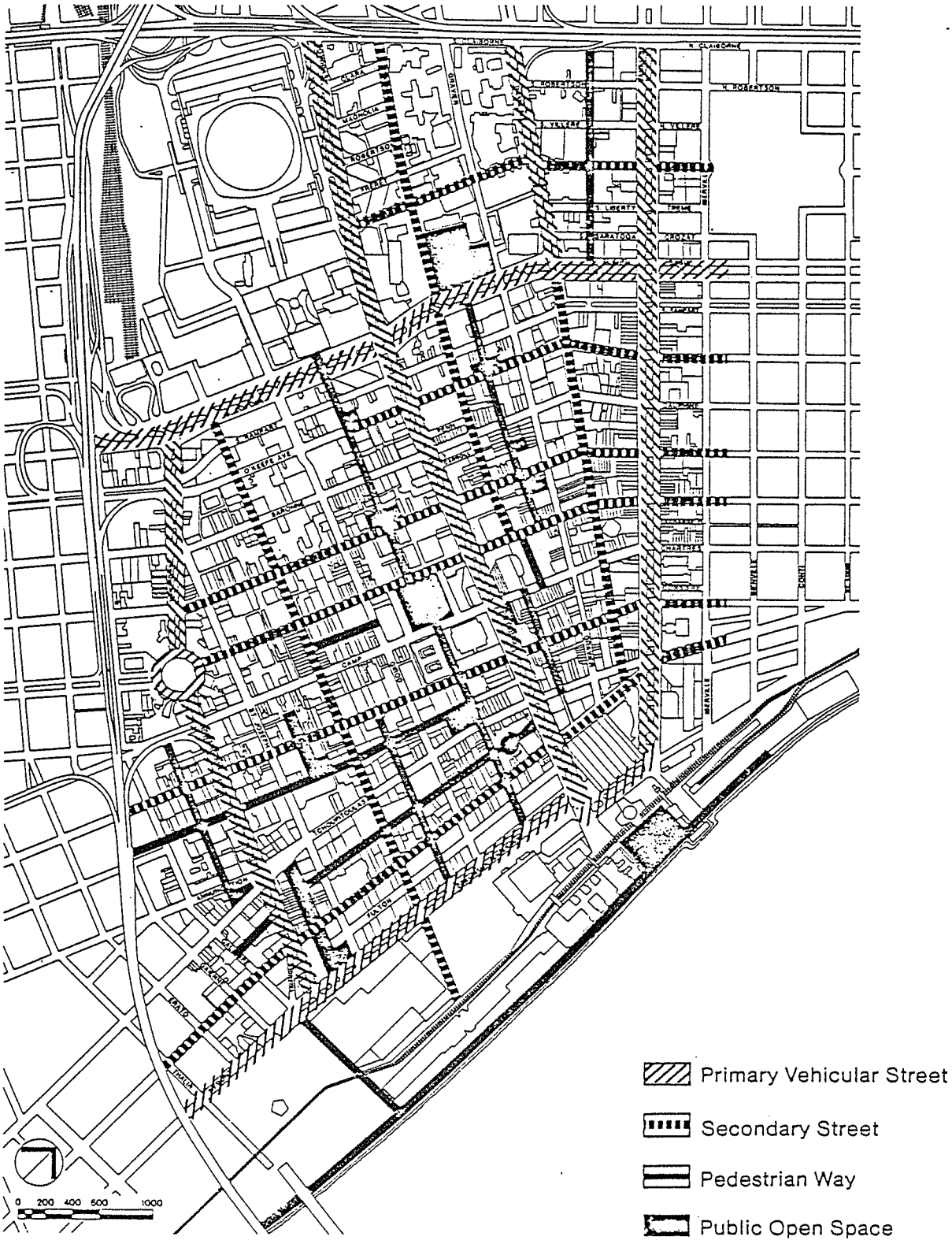
1. Primary Vehicular Arteries:

The complex structure of the downtown street system is contained within a strong framework of major arteries: Canal, Tulane, Poydras and Howard in the east-west direction, and Loyola and Convention Center Boulevard in the north-south direction. All of these arteries, except for the eastern end of Howard, are distinguished by wide cartways and a central median, making them clearly identifiable elements of the overall structure of downtown.

Canal Street has already been improved by the DDD in a highly successful program of quality design treatments for both the median strip and flanking sidewalks. While similarly comprehensive improvements would obviously be

PEDESTRIAN AND OPEN SPACE PLAN

Figure 18



desirable on the other five major boulevards, it is unlikely that public resources alone will be sufficient to achieve the required visual impact.

The design concept for these primary arteries, therefore, combines public development of the median areas with private responsibility for improvements to the sidewalk areas, within a set of specific design requirements for each corridor. Medians could also be adopted for development and maintenance by adjacent property owners, a strategy which has been successfully implemented for a number of neutral grounds in downtown

The median strips should be developed as the most visually powerful elements of the streetscape, including consistent systems of lighting, paving, and vehicular signage, as well as particularly distinctive planting, such as palm trees, live oaks, or flowering trees in combination with bright floral beds, ornamental ground covers and exotic flowering shrubs. Floral color could be the consistent landscaping theme of these important streets.

Loyola Avenue has the potential, and the need, to become a distinctive orienting street with special treatment at its intersections with Howard, Poydras, Tulane and Canal Streets. The Loyola-Poydras intersection presents a particularly dramatic opportunity to encourage new buildings to sculpt the public space and provide art to enliven it. The Energy Center building has begun to do this. Such a physical expression of the importance of the street and intersection should be supported at Howard, Tulane and Canal Streets as well.

With attention primarily focused on the median, the sidewalk areas can be less dramatically treated and improved in phases, site by site, as private development proceeds. The design character of these areas within each corridor should be consistent, but should vary between corridors, according to the scale and architectural qualities of fronting development.

Design details in paving, lighting, and signage should be selected to enhance pedestrian safety and comfort. Planting should be dense and protective, with trees shading the sidewalks and low shrubs or hedges separating pedestrians from traffic lanes. Building entry plazas should be designed as shaded rest areas along

PRIMARY ARTERIAL TREATMENT: Poydras Street

the pedestrian path, amply supplied with sheltered seating places and other street furnishings such as fountains, sculptures and building signage.

In general, the six boulevards of this category of streets should achieve a grand, elegant and highly distinctive appearance, as has been accomplished already on Canal Street. The medians should be developed with continuous strips of vibrant color and consistent vehicular lighting and signage, while the sidewalk areas are more varied, relating to the character of adjacent development and pedestrian movement along the corridor.

2. Secondary Streets:

Within the above framework of primary arteries, a denser system of secondary streets, as shown in Figure 18, form the second category of routes in the pedestrian network. These streets are to be improved with respect to pedestrian amenities, similar to the already completed improvements on the uptown end of St. Charles.

Sidewalks should be widened where possible, with staged replacement of paving, lighting and signage in ordered systems of limited variety throughout the downtown. The pedestrian path should be punctuated regularly with small pocket parks and plazas, appropriately furnished with pedestrian amenities such as shaded seating areas, drinking fountains, telephones and trash receptacles. Planting should be dense and regular and the palette of recommended species should be relatively limited. Pedestrian crossing of the street should be encouraged in frequent, clearly marked, well lit crosswalks.

Parallel parking should be included wherever possible to slow traffic movement during off-peak hours and provide a barrier between the sidewalk and moving lanes. Other traffic slowing techniques to be considered include converting one-way streets to two-way, for example on Julia; and replacing traffic signals with stop signs, flashing caution lights during off-peak hours, or retiming synchronized lights.

The overall goal for this category of streets is to develop an attractive and safe pedestrian environment in the sidewalk areas and impose a pedestrian priority on traffic movement, without reducing the peak-hour traffic capacity.

SECONDARY STREET TREATMENT: South Peters Street

3. Pedestrian Ways:

The third category of system elements includes the existing network of small streets and service alleys that weaves between the major vehicular routes, as shown in Figure 18. These streets are to be developed as clearly pedestrianized paths, similar to the character of Lafayette Mall.

Vehicular access should be limited to service, emergency and drop-off functions, with a maximum speed limit of 5 miles per hour. The cartways should be repaved with a continuous modular surface extending the full width of the right-of-way, and traffic movements should be regulated with bollards, strategically placed planters, drainage strips and other non-traditional signs and barriers.

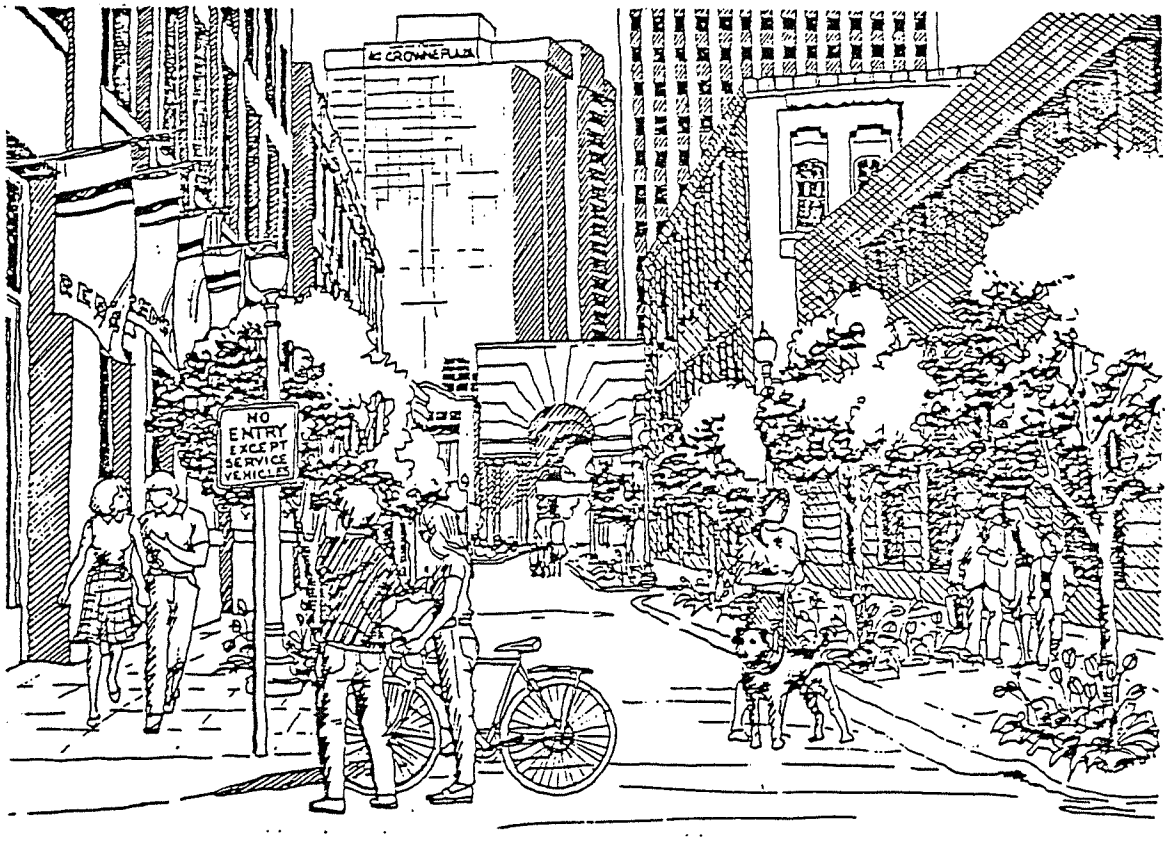
Where possible, these pedestrian ways should connect between major activity nodes, public open spaces, and focal places such as the St. Mary's Village retail development and other neighborhood scale centers. Potential redevelopment locations, such as the Howard Johnsons' block on Loyola, or the blocks on either side of Diamond Street, should be required to provide through-block connections to extend the continuity of this pedestrian network.

It is important to provide a sense of pedestrian access and entrance to the riverfront, through the proposed Convention Center expansion, at Calliope Street. While this is not, strictly speaking, a pedestrian way, it is a critical link between the warehouse area with its residential, retail and ultimately hotel uses with the riverfront.

The detailed design character of each of these pedestrian ways should be different and specifically related to the form, function and architectural details of adjacent development. For example, the Commerce Street way should be designed as a heavily landscaped garden entry court serving proposed residential development on either side; while the Union Street way should be a much more active, urban, retail and resturant oriented type of walk, where commercial signage, lighting, canopies, banners and outdoor cafes and temporary vendors give the street a lively, changing, colorful nature.

One of the most distinctive examples of this category of treatments will be a riverfront promenade extending the length of the downtown waterfront. This promenade should be at least 30 feet wide, publicly accessible at all times, and continuous, from future development attractions on the M.I.C.O. site to Spanish Plaza, past (or through) the proposed aquarium on the Bienville Wharf site, to the Moon Walk and further downriver attractions. It should be designed with an appropriately nautical character, with design details recalling the original industrial importance of the downtown waterfront.

The primary goal of improvements in this category is to erase the sense of a traditional traffic "street", while maintaining essential vehicular access. The system then becomes a highly varied network of linear public open spaces connecting major destinations and other pedestrian routes throughout downtown.



PEDESTRIAN WAY: Commerce Street

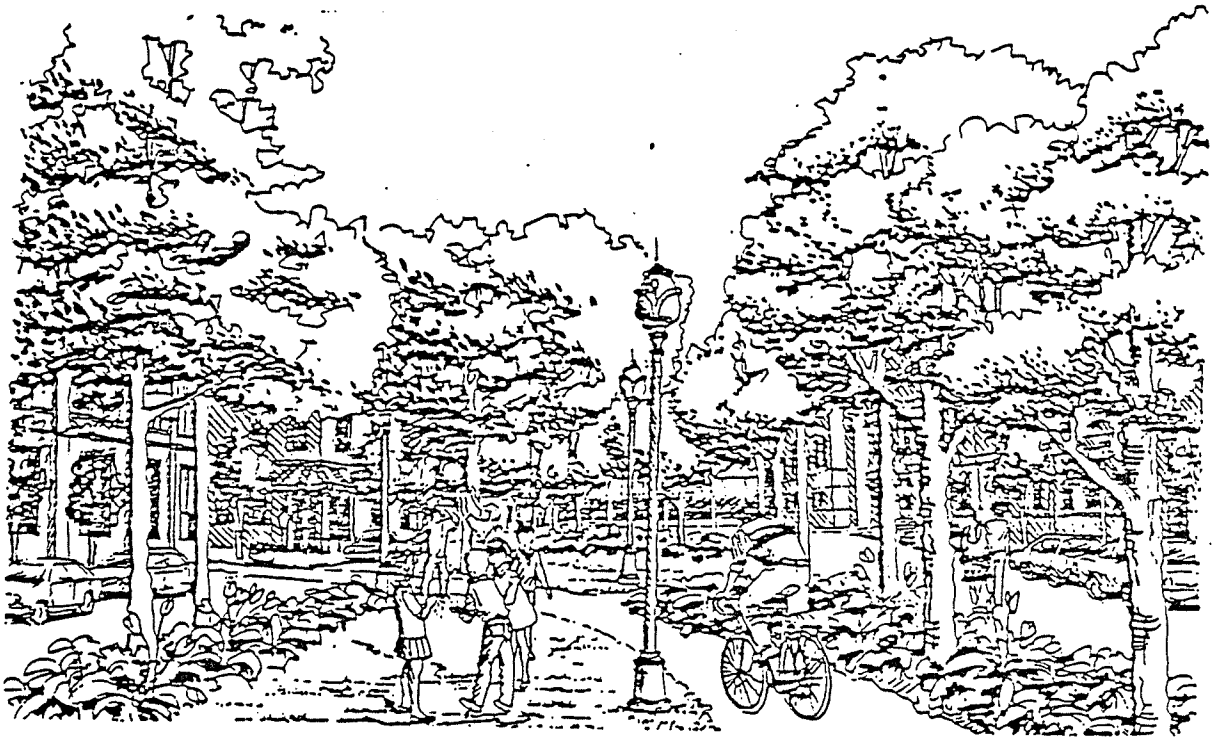
4. Parks and Plazas:

The final element of the pedestrian system is a series of public parks and plazas to supplement the limited supply of public open space in the downtown at present. As shown in Figure 18, it is recommended that these spaces be distributed fairly evenly throughout the downtown, in relation to the proposed network of pedestrian ways.

As with the pedestrian ways, these parks and plazas should vary in design character according to the scale of the available site, the nature of surrounding development and the type of activities to be encouraged. While spaces in the office core will tend to be small, generally hard surfaced plazas providing for

commercial activities, open spaces in the Warehouse Area should be more park-like, providing soft surfaced recreation areas, children's play lots and informal, natural landscaping.

These parks and plazas should be publicly accessible at all times, regularly maintained, adequately lit and offering constant security.



MINI-PARK: Diamond Street

5.3 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The scheduled opening of the GNO Bridge Number Two and its associated ramps and access roads in the early 1990's will have a major impact upon all aspects of transportation in the downtown. Coupled with this diffucult-to-estimate impact will be the impacts of the continued development of the downtown. With the level of development described in the Likely Future map and the changes caused by the new bridge, it is possible that the number of trips into downtown could increase by 50 percent over present levels in the next 15 years. This level of increase will put a tremendous strain on the circulation, parking and transit systems in the downtown and the region.

The greatest concentrations of additional traffic and parking demands are anticipated along the Loyola and Poydras corridors and in the vicinity of the Superdome. As many as 15,000 additional transit trips could be generated with destinations in the CBD. This plan responds to these anticipated order-of-magnitude changes with recommendations for physical, policy and regulatory improvements to the circulation, parking and transit systems.

Overriding the individual recommendations of the Update for circulation, parking and transit improvements is the strong recommendation that the regional transportation plan be updated. The downtown transportation systems are linked with the region's and will become even more so with the opening of the new bridge. The effects of this opening should be carefully monitored and brought into the study leading up to the regional plan. In addition, numerous improvements have been proposed in both the I-10 East and I-10 West corridors which could substantially affect traffic access into the CBD, capacity and circulation on major CBD arteries, and work-trip mode choice. Of particular importance is the proposed exclusive high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes from New Orleans East into the CBD along the I-10 right-of-way. The HOV lanes, proposed light rail system, riverfront trolley and other transit, circulation and parking improvements and policies <u>must</u> be made in a coordinated manner so they can most efficiently serve the transportation needs of the region and the CBD, which is its heart and most important destination.

Circulation

The most important circulation recommendation is that the GMP Update early action program of intersection, traffic movement and volume studies already underway be continued. This program and the maintenance of effort program, which is designed to establish procedures for keeping this data current with regular updating, will make a major contribution to any future transportation planning. They will also correct the most serious problem encountered in the Update transportation study which was a lack of current, accurate data.

This continued monitoring of traffic flow in the downtown will help to provide warning of the time when contra flow lanes may be required. Given the impossibility of providing new traffic lanes in the existing cartways and the recommended prohibition of on-street parking on key arterials during peak hours, it is reasonable to increase capacity by to designating certain arterial lanes for reverse movement during peak hours. It is assumed that signalization and turning improvements will also be made to accommodate peak flows. A complete computerized traffic signal study will assist in this undertaking.

Beyond physical improvements, the options for which are limited, policies must be developed to increase modal split in favor of transit and to increase vehicle occupancy.

An approach which should be considered is a traffic reduction program. This might take the form of an overlay zone covering the District within which developers of all new office buildings over 50,000 square feet, or with more than 100 employees, would be required to exercise one or more of a number of options to reduce the number of auto trips with origins or destinations in their building.

Such an overlay zone should require that the building owner prepare an estimate of the likely transportation impact of the new building. The key element of the impact analysis is the estimation of daily traffic generated by the proposed development. Based upon this estimate, alternatives may be tested to determine the reduced traffic impact attainable through carpooling, vanpooling and associated reduction in parking requirements. For example, free to substantially reduced-rate parking spaces could be evaluated for vanpools and carpools with

four or more passengers. Provision of these spaces would result in a reduction of the total parking requirements under current zoning ordinances. Other options which could be used as part of this program to reduce auto traffic include flexible time for employees, employer bulk purchase of transit passes, dedicated off-site spaces or contributions to a transit fund.

Parking

Great improvements have been made in the control and management of parking in the last three years. The on-street parking management program has made a dramatic difference in terms of reducing illegal parking and freeing up legal, on-street spaces. This program should continue.

The other recent program which has a significant impact on the downtown is the Off-Street Parking Study. Its recommendations should continue to be implemented. The major ones are as follows:

- Publicize information about parking facilities and rules in the downtown.

- Work with operators in areas with spot shortages to set aside spaces for short-term parking.

- Adjust the rate structure to favor short-term parking in high demand areas.

As the demand for parking increases over the next 15 years, in spite of demand reduction strategies such as those resulting from the proposed transportation impact analysis and traffic reduction program and improved transit service, new ways of accommodating this demand will be needed. Peripheral parking lots are recommended as one solution. Experience has demonstrated that they will work when the parking supply at preferred destinations is tight and when they are supported by very convenient transit connections to end destinations. A number of locations should be explored for peripheral parking, including the area around Poydras and Galvez and the riverfront upstream from the GNO bridges. The potential for private park and ride shuttle services should be encouraged in this regard.

There is a particular need in the Warehouse Area for the provision of parking for the residents whose increased numbers are a goal of the Update. Recent changes in the tax laws, particularly the dilution of historic tax benefits, are probably blunting the quickening pace of recent residential development. Parking costs either in land or structure represent a major component of rent. Therefore, a priority should be a strong program for residential parking, with permit parking for residents, even in metered areas. Additionally, acquiring or master leasing strategic parking lots to ensure an affordable supply of spaces in the emerging residential areas should be considered.

Neither of these strategies will have significant impact upon the overall parking supply and demand balance in the downtown for many years. These programs should be monitored, in any case to ensure that they are meeting their joint objectives of supporting and encouraging residential development.

The parking management strategies presented in the Update strongly suggest that some form of overall control would be beneficial. An entity should be created with coordination and oversight authority for the downtown. Such an entity might constitute one or two staff positions in an existing agency (the City or the DDD) or, at the other extreme, it could be a public parking authority. In addition to the obvious need for a coordination and policy responsibility, such an entity could be constituted with a mandate created from a menu of possibilities including simple coordination and publicity, rate-setting, facility leasing, and facility construction and operation.

Transit

One way to reduce the existing and anticipated circulation and parking problems in the downtown is through greater use of transit. Many ways of accomplishing this are available. Most important, of course, is provision of an efficient, convenient, safe transit system which can compete favorably, in the rider's evaluation, with the private auto. To this end, the RTA should propose a comprehensive regional transit plan which addresses in detail the issues of: upgrading line-haul service from outlying areas into the CBD; providing an efficient transit circulation plan within the CBD; integrating these two ystems with each other and with the peripheral parking system.

Among the options to be explored are: transit vouchers which could be provided by building owners, employers or retail establishments; better publicity and marketing stressing the comprehensiveness of the system and the cost differential between transit and the private auto; bulk purchase of transit passes.

Improvements to the system should also be carried out. In addition to operational improvements in headways and routes and possible use of exclusive and/or contra-flow lanes, capital improvements should be implemented. A riverfront transit route should be implemented connecting the major concentration of activities which is continuing to develop along the riverfront. This route will support public, retail and entertainment uses in this corridor. It should be fed by other transit routes in the major employment and hotel areas of downtown.

It is recommended that the construction of an exclusive HOV facility from New Orleans East into the CBD be encouraged, as part of the improvements planned by LADOTD to increase capacity on the I-10 East facility. This HOV facility should be designed in such a manner that it would have the potential of becoming a guideway for a light-rail facility in the future, should this prove desirable. It is also recommended that the potential development of light-rail commuter systems linking outlying areas with the CBD be further examined. Such light-rail systems should be planned in the context of the regional transportation plan proposed elsewhere in the Update.

The most important element of downtown transit is the CBD Shuttle. It should be promoted and reinforced so it better performs that function. A number of actions need to be taken to make it possible for the Shuttle to fill this role. These include:

- Better publicity to familiarize potential patrons with the Shuttle's routes, fares and schedule.

- Increased visibility of the vehicles themselves through creative paint schemes and other decorations to distinguish the Shuttle from other transit vehicles.

- Adjustment of routes, and possibly the subdivision of the Shuttle's coverage, to efficiently serve patrons' desired movements as they change throughout the day. Major activity centers should be connected including peripheral parking, employment and retail concentrations, hotels and the riverfront.

- Headways should be reduced, probably to no more than 3 minutes.

- Fares should be reduced, and their elimination should be studied.

- Transfers should be accepted on the Shuttle.

The Shuttle could be one of the most effective promotional tools for the downtown if it is made to live up to its potential. With increased service and new routes comes the need for more capital and operating funds. Sources for these can include the RTA, DDD, fares, and employer contributions (either direct or through purchase of passes). The possibility of involving the private sector through concessioning should also be examined.

5.4 INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN

The infrastructure plan contains recommended improvements to the utility systems in the downtown necessary to accommodate the level and general locations of office, retail, hotel and other development described in the Land Use Plan. As described in Existing Conditions, four utility systems appear able to meet projected future demands. The electrical and natural gas systems appear able to meet this demand as well. The cable television system can be expanded as residential development warrants. The drainage system provides overall excellent service to the CBD, although areas of localized street flooding exist. These localized problems indicate the need for repairs or improvements to street drains rather than major work on drainage mains, canals, or pumps.

Only the water and sanitary sewer systems are likely to be significantly impacted by CBD development. Recommendations for these systems are indicated in Figure 19 and Table 4 and are presented below, along with suggestions regarding localized street flooding.

1. Sanitary Sewer System:

Table 3 presents the projected additional wastewater which will be generated in the CBD by the year 2000, based on the likely future amount and location of new development depicted in the Land Use Plan. As the table shows, a total of approximately 10.2 million gallons per day (MDG) of additional wastewater will need to flow through the CBD's sewer network at peak periods.

It is not known precisely how much wastewater flows through the CBD network at present. Based on current estimates of the downtown daytime population, and on average generation rates per person or per spatial unit—e.g., square foot of office space; hotel room; dwelling unit; etc.--the estimated current peak CBD wastewater flow is 20 MDG using a load factor of two. This is a conservative estimate; there may be considerably less flow than is suggested by this estimate.

The current nominal capacity of the CBD sewer network is roughly 18 MDG. It appears from this comparison, and from a general review of the size and number of sewer lines serving the CBD, that the network is currently near or at capacity.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Figure 19

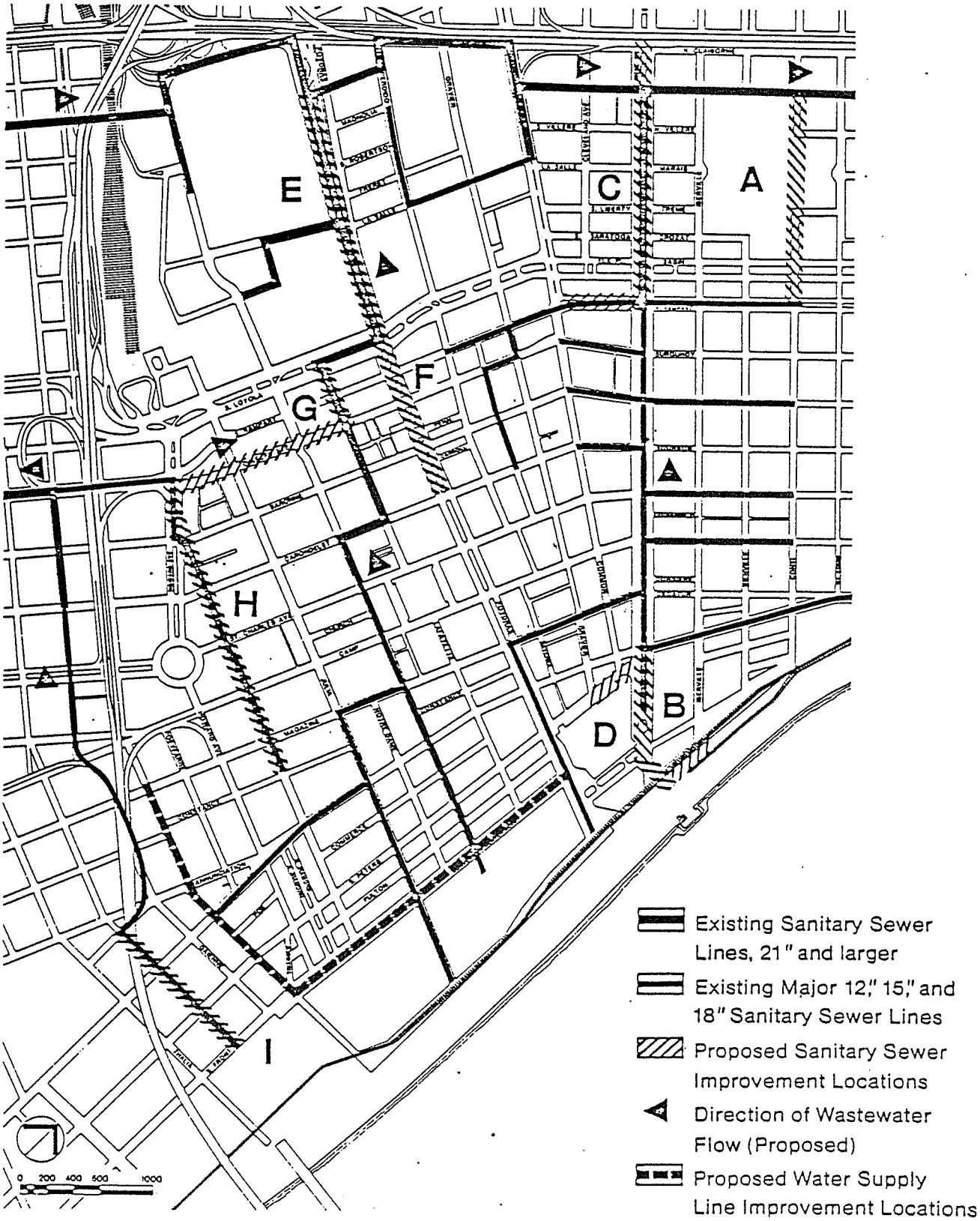


Table 3

WASTEWATER PROJECTIONS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Sub-Area	Office	Retail	Hotel	Residential	Other	Total
Canal E.[a]	250,000	161,000	150,000	0	87,500	1.30
Canal W. [b]	1,062,500	74,750	625,500	0		3.53
Tulane	125,000	0	0	0		0.25
Poydras	1,000,000	155,250	90,000	244,200		2.98
Clio [c]	0	13,800	450,000	352,000	237,500	2.11
CBD TOTALS	2,437,500	404,800	1,315,500	596,200	325,000	10.17

(a) In this sub-area, "retail" includes entertainment and trade mart space. Aquarium is included in "Other."

(b) Estimates shown for Canal West sub-area do not include possible multi-use development on Rivergate site. Such a facility is estimated to add 0.85 MDG to sub-area total.

(c) For Clio sub-area, proposed riverfront entertainment facility is included in "Retail". "Other" includes estimates for NOCEC expansion and for louisiana Science Centre.

Table 4

POTENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

SYSTEM	IMPROVEMENTS	ESTIMATED COST
Water Supply	20" line in Calliope St. and Convention Center Boulevard	$1,300,000
Sanitary Sewer	Canal Street East	
	A) 12" line in Conti Street	496,000
	B) 10" line to aquarium	150,000
	Canal Street West	
	C) 36" line in Canal Street and 24" line in South Rampart Street	1,200,000
	D) 10" line to Rivergate	155,000
	Poydras Street	
	E) 36" line from Loyola to Clara Street	773,000
	F) 18" line from Loyola to Carondelet Street	374,000
	G) 21" line in O'Keefe Street and 24" line in Lafayette Street	656,000
	H) 18" line in St. Joseph Street	651,000
	Clio Street	
	I) 15" line in Erato Street	260,000

Some areas of the network, however, are probably overloaded. For instance, Sewerage and Water Board staff indicate that the Riverfront area is probably over capacity. Portions of the CBD with relatively few large lines, such as the Warehouse area and the Howard Avenue-Loyola Avenue area are also likely to be over capacity.

Lacking detailed information of flow conditions in various parts of the sewer network, this analysis conservatively assumes that the CBD network as a whole is at its capacity now, and that future additions to the wastewater flow must be accommodated by enlarging sewer lines.

Based on current estimates and future projections, the sewer network must be expanded to accommodate an additional 10.2 MDG of wastewater—a 50 percent increase over the current estimated peak level. Without detailed study of the network, and knowledge of exactly where development will take place, it is not possible to say how much development can take place before serious sewer problems occur. If the CBD does grow as projected, however, serious problems will begin to occur before year 2000, although there should be adequate existing capacity to accommodate the relatively low levels of growth anticipated in the next four to five years.

Network Sub-Areas:

The CBD sewer network is divided into five sub-areas, according to its five main lines. Wastewater flows into these five mains, which connect with the very large trunk line underneath Clara Street, S. Claiborne Avenue and S. Robertson. The trunk line carries wastewater from the CBD, Uptown, Central City, and other areas to Pumping Station A.

The five sub-areas and their characteristics are as follows:

1. Canal Street East: Wastewater from east of Canal Street including part of the Vieux Carre and the Aquarium site, flows into a 30-inch main on the east side of Canal Street.

2. Canal Street West: This network serves some of the Medical Center, most of the CBD between Poydras Street and Canal Street, and some property on the uptown side of lower Poydras Street, including the Piazza d'Italia. Wastewater from this area flows into a 24-inch line under the west side of Canal Street.

3. Tulane Avenue: A short 24-inch line under Tulane Avenue collects wastewater from the Civic Center and most of the Medical Center.

4. Poydras Street: This sub-area includes virtually all of the CBD between Poydras Street and Julia Street, including the Superdome. It also includes that portion of the Warehouse area bounded by Julia, Tchoupitoulas, and Calliope Streets and the River, including the New Orleans Convention and Exhibition Center (NOCEC). Several blocks on the downtown side of Poydras are also included. Wastewater from this large area flows into a 24-inch line under Poydras Street.

5. Clio/St. Joseph Streets: 10 and 12-inch lines under these streets collect wastewater from the rest of the CBD uptown of Julia Street, including the Howard Avenue-Loyola Avenue area, much of the Warehouse District, and the NOCEC expansion site. Wastewater in these lines flow into the Thalia Street main, outside CBD, before reaching the Clara Street trunk line. This network is likely to have some excess capacity available.

The size of the overload varies among the subareas. Accommodating the projected increases in wastewater can be accomplished by increasing the size of main lines and by diverting wastewater from one sub-area to another. These measures are described below.

Sewerage Improvements:

The following improvements are based on several important assumptions:

1. The CBD network as a whole is assumed to be currently flowing at its capacity, necessitating expansion in order to accommodate increased flows. Limited excess capacity, however, is suspected to exist in the Clio/St. Joseph system.

2. The Clara-Claiborne-Robertson trunk line is assumed to have adequate capacity to accommodate the increased CBD wastewater flow.

3. Nominal capacities of the various sewer lines have been estimated very conservatively, since detailed investigation of the characteristics of each line—e.g., slope, condition, number and location of small connections, etc.—is beyond the scope of this plan.

4. The suggested improvements are not intended to serve as a basis for detailed engineering analysis, nor as a basis for design. Further work must be done to identify the best pipe sizes, locations, etc.

5. Costs have been estimated conservatively. Detailed engineering analysis is likely to identify opportunities for savings. Costs include materials, construction, design and inspection fees, and roadway repairs and resurfacing.

Canal Street East:

To provide additional capacity in the present network, a new line is suggested to divert Vieux Carre wastewater from the Canal Street East main line. Further study is required to determine its best location; for this analysis a 12-inch line from S. Rampart Street to S. Robertson was chosen. Estimated cost is $496,000. The 8-inch line connecting the Aquarium site with the Canal Street line should be upgraded to 10 inches at an estimated cost of $150,000. Total estimated cost for both is $646,000.

Canal Street West

Two alternatives are suggested to provide additional capacity:

1. Replace the 24-inch Canal Street main with a 36-inch main, and replace the 15-inch S. Rampart Street main with a 24-inch main, or

2. Expand the Tulane Avenue network into a major network, extending the 24-inch line to S. Rampart Street, installing an 18-inch line in Common Street as far as Baronne Street, and diverting various smaller lines from the Canal Street West network to the Tulane network.

Either alternative is estimated to cost $1.2 million; the Canal Street expansion alternative is shown in the figure for sake of simplicity. Further study is required to determine the best approach.

Also suggested for replacement are one or both 8-inch lines serving the Rivergate area with 10-inch lines, at an estimated cost of $155,000. Total estimated cost for both is $1,355,000.

Poydras Street

Several improvements are suggested to increase capacity of this network, and to relieve the load on the Clio/St. Joseph network:

1. Replace the 24-inch main with a 36-inch main from Loyola to Clara Street at an estimated cost of $773,000.

2. Install an 18-inch main in Poydras Street from Loyola to Carondelet Street at an estimated cost of #374,000.

3. Install a 21-inch main in O'Keefe Avenue from Howard Avenue to Lafayette Street, connecting with a new Lafayette 24-inch line. This change will divert wastewater generated by office development in the area from the Clio-St. Joseph network to the Poydras network at an estimated cost of $656,000.

4. Replace the 10-inch St. Joseph Street line with an 18-inch line, connecting with the suggested 21-inch main in O'Keefe Avenue. This change will divert wastewater generated by residential development from the Clio/St. Joseph network to the Poydras network at an estimated cost of $651,000.

Total estimated cost of these improvements is $2,454,000. Various alternatives to these improvements were considered, and should be given further analysis. Estimated costs range from $2.4 million to $3 million. The alternatives include:

- Further expansion of existing mains in the Poydras network.

- Expansion of Poydras mains as described above, coupled with installation of large lines under Julia Street.

- Expansion of Poydras mains as described above, coupled with creation of a new network with mains in Julia and Girod Streets.

Clio Street

As described above, the Clio network's capacity can be increased by diverting large quantities of wastewater to the Poydras system. The 10-inch line under Erato Street should be upgraded to 15 inches, at an estimated cost of $260,000. The suggestion assumes, as noted earlier, that some excess capacity exists in this network.

2. Water Supply System

Current average daily water consumption in the Central Business District is estimated at 12.5 MDG. Based on the projected increases in wastewater generation, future CBD water consumption is likely to grow by 6.35 MDG, for a total future water consumption of almost 19 MDG.

The current nominal capacity of the CBD water supply system is estimated at 18.5 MDG. The planned new feeder main will increase this figure to about 25 MDG, an amount intended to provide a needed pressure increase in the CBD. Based on

these projections, it appears likely that the planned feeder main will satisfy water consumption and pressure requirements.

Because of the looped arrangement of the water supply system, a much more far-ranging study would be required to accurately locate and correct any deficiencies in the system. Nonetheless, considering the anticipated growth in the riverfront area, a reasonable improvement would be expansion of the water mains under Calliope Street and Convention Center Boulevard from the present 16- and 12-inch lines, respectively, to 20-inch lines. This improvement would cost an estimated $1.3 million, including roadway repairs and resurfacing. The need for such an improvement should be established by the pressure test scheduled for early 1987.

3. Drainage System

The CBD's drainage problems are limited to localized street flooding; the overall drainage system gives the CBD excellent service, especially relative to the rest of the city. Three problem areas were identified, although others undoubtedly exist. These areas, as shown on Figure 12, are: Gravier Street, from Camp Street to Loyola Avenue; Common Street from Camp Street to Carondelet; and LaSalle Street from Cleveland to Canal Street. Each of these streets has been resurfaced within the last two years, but major drainage improvements were not included in the work. It is not clear whether flooding continues to be a problem in these streets.

Localized street flooding can be corrected through two approaches:

1. Implement a program of CBD street improvements, coordinated between the Department of Streets and the Sewerage and Water Board, that includes drainage improvements when necessary. Organizational and administrative steps should be taken to ensure continued improvement in coordination between the two agencies.

2. Clean and flush drain lines more frequently. At present, the Sewerage and Water Board maintenance budget does not provide sufficient overtime pay to permit CBD street flushing on weekends, when traffic is reduced. Other

arrangements, whether financial or administrative, such as scheduled closing of certain streets for cleaning on weekdays, should be made to accomplish the necessary drain flushing.

Lastly, excessive pressure from the roof drains of tall buildings unseats manhole covers in the CBD from time to time. Where this is a problem, locking manhold covers should be installed. New buildings should be required to have built-in roof top runoff storage capacity sufficient to let it out at a controlled rate such that it will not overload the system.

6. THE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

THE IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Implementation of the various Plan elements described in Chapter 5 above, demands a series of public actions and private responses which together will achieve the downtown form illustrated in Figure 16. Required public actions include:

- a program of development incentives which will stimulate the desired type of growth in preferred locations;

- corresponding zoning regulations and design guidelines which will control the function, form and urban design quality of development in downtown sub-areas; and

- a program of improvements to the development support systems: the pedestrian and open space network, transportation, and infrastructure systems.

Each of these types of implementation actions is described in the following sections, followed by a summary of immediate actions which should take priority in the next five years.

6.1 DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

As shown in Figure 16, recommended growth patterns to the year 2000 include four primary growth areas which will require special incentives to encourage the type of growth desired:

1. Downtown Loyola:

The goal of incentives in this area is to encourage office growth towards Iberville, rather than on more easily developed sites on the uptown side of Poydras which are likely to develop without incentives. Development of a high density mixed-use node at the Elk Place, Basin and Canal Streets intersection is a specific recommendation to be highlighted in these incentives.

Zoning:

- Given the already liberal FAR allowances of the CBD-1 district, zoning changes in the blocks between Poydras and Cleveland will provide little, if any, increased incentive for office development. As described in the Zoning section below, however, a new unlimited FAR mixed-use zone is recommended on the Canal Street blocks between Rampart and Liberty.

Transportation:

- Available supply of nearby parking is likely to be a more critical factor than zoning incentives to develop in the downtown Loyola corridor. Publicly built parking reservoirs should be considered on the blocks between Saratoga and South Liberty/Treme, on either side of Canal. These structures could remain publicly operated, or alternatively they could be leased to adjacent developers, or sold on long-term transfer agreements, thus reducing the developers' initial capital outlay.

- Peripheral parking development with frequent shuttle service on Claiborne sites or north on Basin and North Rampart Streets would enhance the development opportunities of the downtown end of Loyola.

- Failing either of these more local parking supply incentives, shuttle service from uptown parking locations specifically serving the Loyola/Canal area should be improved, including more frequent service, more convenient routing and improved user amenities in the area.

Financial and Marketing Incentives:

- A five year or longer tax abatement program for rental residential development in this target growth area should be established.

- The standard 50 percent private land owner share of sewerage improvement costs should be publicly borne to upgrade system capacity in this area.

- The DDD should assume a more active role as a development coordinating agency, assisting in site assembly and permitting processes, as well as conducting an aggressive marketing campaign for downtown growth and development opportunities in this area.

Physical Improvements:

- The Canal Street, Elk Place and Basin intersection should be reconfigured, specially landscaped and converted into a monumental setting for high intensity new development.

2. <u>The Riverfront:</u>

Expansion of the Convention Center will be a strong stimulant to the hotel market in this area and no particular incentives are required for further commercial entertainment or retail development. The feasibility of residential development, however, is tenuous without significant support from a special incentives program.

Zoning:

- As described below, zoning incentives include a substantial increase in residential bonuses, as well as a mandatory requirement for residential components in proposed riverfront developments.

Transportation:

- Traffic circulation and parking supply are not in themselves particular problems of this area. The cost of providing on-site structured parking spaces, however, which are essential to luxury waterfront housing development, added to the replacement cost of existing surface parking lots, will prove an intolerable burden on the economics of residential development. Some form of parking subsidy should be provided, either through public development of on-site structures or provision of offsite supply serving existing commercial uses with convenient, frequent shuttle service, for example on the M.I.C.O. site.

- Transit connections from the uptown riverfront area to the Vieux Carre and major employment centers of the downtown should be improved to reduce the relative isolation of this area.

- Parking for the proposed Convention Center expansion should be overbuilt with spaces reserved for adjacent residential use.

Financial Incentives:

- The expansion of the Convention Center should be funded.

- A tax abatement program for rental residential development should be established.

Physical Improvements:

- The riverfront promenade should be extended and improved with 50 percent matching contribution from existing or proposed private developments fronting on each section. The work should be carried out under street design guidelines to ensure design quality and consistency, and to achieve any possible economies of scale in design and construction contracts. Improvements should include landscaping, pedestrian amenities and small, sheltered park areas that will enhance the attractions of the area for residential development.

- Landscaping, lighting and signage improvements to the median of Convention Center Boulevard should be carried out to improve vehicular entry to riverfront sites.

- Calliope should be extended from Convention Center Boulevard as a pedestrian way to the riverfront promenade.

3. The Warehouse Area:

This area represents the prime opportunity for mixed rental housing and condominium growth in the downtown and the development of a strong, stable inner-city neighborhood. The relatively high amount of present residential development activity in the area has been largely the result of substantial tax advantages for income producing rehabilitation projects. Recent reductions in these tax advantages, however, will significantly slow further development unless effective replacement incentives can be offered. Furthermore, the available stock of buildings of sufficient size, suitable for renovation and conversion, is limited. To maintain the momentum of development in the area, therefore requires incentives supporting the less favorable economics of new construction. Recommended actions focus primarily on increasing permitted densities and subsidizing parking costs.

Zoning:

- As described below, residential densities throughout the Warehouse Area should be increased to a maximum FAR of 8, with commercial bonuses granted for on- or off-site residential development.

Transportation:

- Parking costs are a key factor in residential project feasibility. The DDD or the City should acquire or master lease strategic parking reservoirs, such as the Fulton Street garage, to ensure an adequate, affordable supply of spaces in key development areas. New parking may need to be constructed in areas where present supply is at capacity.

- A residential parking permit program, allowing unlimited on-street parking for residents of the Warehouse area, should be instituted.

- Shuttle bus service should be extended between concentrations of residential development and major employment centers of the downtown.

Financial Incentives and Marketing:

- The existing five-year tax abatement program for local rental housing should be extended and promoted in the marketing of Warehouse Area development opportunities.

- The DDD should assume a more active role in promoting Warehouse Area development, assisting in site assembly and permitting, as well as maintaining accurate records of market trends, opportunities, and costs. A detailed handbook on the design review process and development guidelines should be prepared to assist in streamlining the permitting and approvals period.

- Marketing of the Warehouse Area as a desirable residential location will be closely related to the visibility of available amenities, particularly personal and property security services. The DDD Police Detail should maintain a visible presence in the area and new facilities, such as fire and police stations, should be centrally located on high activity streets.

Physical Improvements:

- Increased recreation and open space amenities will be a strong incentive for residential growth. These should take the form of mini-parks and pedestrian priority street improvements, as outlined in the Pedestrian and Open Space Plan above. Location and phasing of these improvements, to be carried out by the DDD, should serve to focus growth in specific areas, encouraging a critical mass of residential development in particular locations which will spin-off related retail, entertainment and residential services development.

- Existing DDD subsidy of sidewalk improvements related to private development projects should be expanded to a 75 percent matching contribution for landscaping and pedestrian amenities. Alternatively, the DDD could offer design and construction management services for sidewalk landscaping, allowing greater control of design quality and consistency, while offering developers a design subsidy and possible economies of scale in construction costs.

4. Canal Street:

This area encompasses the traditional retail corridor, with its ties to the office core, the riverfront and the Vieux Carre, and the upper Canal Street area which is closely associated with the expansion plans of H.E.A.L. and the opportunities for related commercial and residential growth. Development here is also influenced by proximity to the Iberville Housing Development. Primary incentives include modifying existing zoning to allow for more intense development and initiating an aggressive retail management program.

Zoning:

- Extend CBD-2 provisions to Iberville Street west of Loyola, raising maximum permitted FAR's from 11 to 16.

- Create a new zoning district, CBD-1B, with an unlimited FAR to encourage a high density mixed-use development to anchor the intersection of Elk Place/Basin and Canal Street with a unique mix of retail and entertainment functions at the street level and high density office or hotel/residential uses above.

- Revise the existing sign ordinance for Canal Street and implement a sign amoritization program along the street.

Transportation:

- Improve the existing CBD Shuttle and its service to other downtown activity areas through the adjustment of routes, better publicity and marketing, and fare and headway reductions.

Financial Incenties, Marketing and Management:

- Conduct a comprehensive development study of the downtown medical center to identify opportunities for expansion of medical facilities and public/private joint ventures in medical research. This study should also propose a physical development plan for the area to create a distinctive campus-like setting for new development.

- Establish a committee with representation from the City of New Orleans, the Housing Authority of New Orleans and the Downtown Development District to investigate ways to improve the quality of life and the residential environment of the Iberville housing complex. The project seems to be a tremendous missed opportunity for the benefit of the residents and the CBD. Issues which should be examined include the physical configuration of the site, management and potential owner-occupancy, and the long-term future of the project.

- Investigate public assumption of the standard 50 percent private land owner share of sewerage improvement costs.

- Undertake a detailed retail market analysis to determine the existing and potential retail market for Canal Street and to identify gaps in retail merchandising which would better respond to the dynamic retail marketplace. Such a study should also include a structural examination of buildings with unoccupied or poorly utilized upper floors to determine their suitability for conversion to more active uses such as office space, workshops and display rooms, or even loft-type housing.

- Investigate the creation of a comprehensive centralized retail management program for Canal Street to increase its competitiveness and share of the

regional retail market. Similar in approach to the management of an enclosed shopping mall, centralized retail management entails the creation of an entity to coordinate six programmatic functions: transportation/parking, maintenance, security, promotions, streetscape improvements, and tenant mix/leasing.

Physical Improvements:

- Subject to the detailed recommendations of a comprehensive plan for the downtown medical center, initial streetscape improvements should be carried out on Tulane Avenue and LaSalle Street to improve pedestrian comfort and security in the area.

- Conduct a study of the Iberville Street corridor to improve its accessibility and physical environment. Iberville Street provides a large reservoir of underutilized parking for retail and is an important connection to the Vieux Carre and its tourist and residential population.

- Provide sidewalk improvements on cross streets linking the traditional office corridor and the Vieux Carre to Canal Street to encourage and support pedestrian movement toward this retail corridor, i.e., University Place/Burgundy Street, Carondelet Street/Bourbon Street, St. Charles Street/Royal Street, Magazine Street/Decatur Street and Tchoupitoulas Street/North St. Peters Street.

- Pursue potential for gateway opportunities to the Vieux Carre and public gathering spaces for Canal Street.

6.2 ZONING AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

Recommended zoning required to support the recommended development concepts is shown in Figure 20. Only one area, the blocks between Liberty and Rampart on Canal Street, requires the definition of a new zoning designation which will be similar to the provisions of CBD-1 but with unlimited FAR and more stringent design controls. For the purposes of description below, this zone has been called CBD-1B.

Other recommended zoning changes involve the expansion of existing CBD-2 zones, adjustments to the boundaries of the CBD-5 and CBD-7 zones, and various additional design guidelines. If not adopted as part of the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance, these design guidelines should be enforced through a continuing process of design review.

It is recommended that Design Review be established as a mandatory requirement in each of the following cases:

Design Review Zones:

1. For projects of any use involving 50,000 square feet or more of new construction and/or rehabilitation or conversion of existing structures.

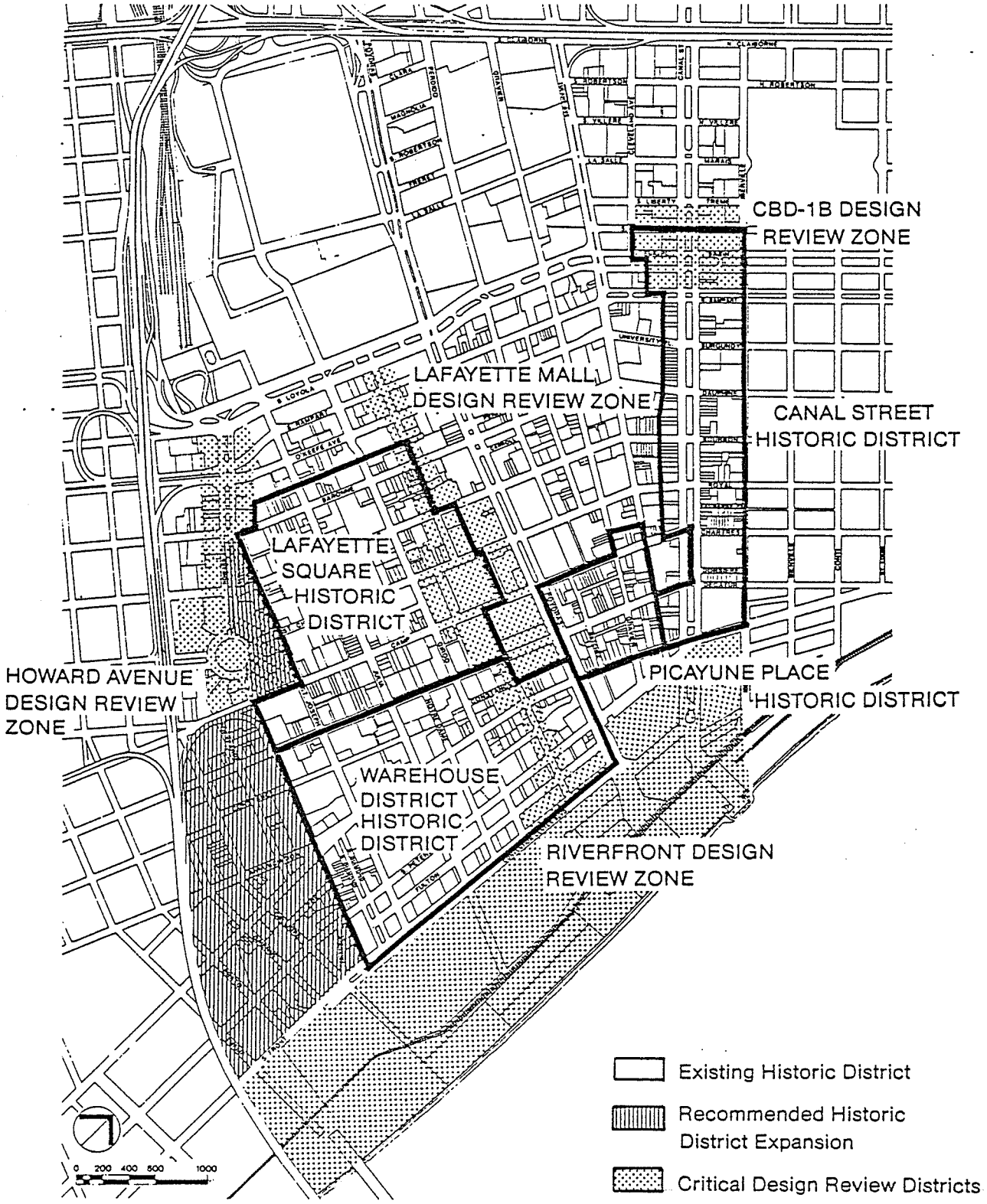
2. For any project proposed on the site of an historic structure, of any level of designation, whether within an existing historic district or not.

3. For any project proposed within any of the following critical design districts:

   - the Riverfront area, from Convention Center Boulevard and extended South Front to the water's edge, including wharves, and from Canal Street to Race Street
   - ~~the recommended CBD-1B~~ zone,
   - the area comprised of all sites with frontage on Lafayette Square and Lafayette Mall, from Loyola Avenue to Convention Center Boulevard, and

RECOMMENDED DESIGN REVIEW ZONES

Figure 21



- the area comprised of all sites with frontage on Howard Avenue between Loyola and Lee Circle.

These recommended Design Review Zones are illustrated in Figure 21.

The purpose of extending the application of current Design Review procedures is to ensure the achievement of urban design goals for each of the downtown development zones. Good urban design does not result from individual developments, no matter how fine their individual design quality, but from the overall characteristics of the tout ensemble to which every development should contribute in an appropriate manner. Zoning provisions can control gross characteristics, such as use, height, bulk and location relative to lot lines, but the more detailed design features, such as facade treatment, materials and color selection, remain largely subjective, often inconsistent, and therefore outside of legislative control beyond a case by case review. In order not to inhibit future design innovation, design guidelines should remain sufficiently general to establish only the essential urban design principles of an area, with a generous allowance for the type of specific design interpretation that adds diversity and visual interest to any district.

Historic Districts

Historic districts within the CBD should remain as they are with the exception of the Warehouse District which should be expanded to the Pontchartrain Expressway and Lafayette Square Historic District which should be expanded uptown to Howard Avenue to include an area of structures quite similar to those already in the historic district. These extensions are recommended to afford these blocks the recognition, protection and tax incentives available with such a designation.

Zoning

Each of the proposed zoning districts is described below, with a list of recommended design guidelines, including adjustments to existing code provisions and general design recommendations.

RECOMMENDED ZONING

Figure 20

CBD-1

The Office Core:

This zone remains unchanged in area and purpose, with adjustments to residential density allowances to increase residential incentives in the core business area.

- Residential incentives should be increased by allowing a residential Floor Area Ratio (FAR) equivalent to the commercial FAR, and by increasing the residential bonus allowance by at least three times its present level. Equivalent contribution to a housing fund may be instituted as satisfying the requirements for a residential bonus.

- New construction should not be discouraged on sites with existing historic structures, providing the existing building, in whole or in part, is sensitively integrated into the development.

- New development or horizontal enlargement of parcels on Union Street should be built to the property line at an above grade height of at least two stories and at most 50 feet (Article 10, Section 5 of the zoning code).

- Ground floor retail and entertainment uses, and special pedestrian amenities, such as arcades, mini parks, gallerias, and public art, should be encouraged on Union street, Common Street, Loyola Avenue, and Lafayette Mall.

- Redevelopment of the Loyola block between Perdido and Gravier should include a through-block arcade, galleria or elevated pedestrian walkway connecting from Union Street to Duncan Plaza. Retail, entertainment or public exhibition functions should be located to enliven the pedestrian experience through this connection.

- Major developments taking advantage of bonus allowances should be required to supply, or contribute to the City implementation of, public art works or programs, such as appropriate sculptures, fountains or special festival events. An amount equivalent to one (1) percent of building cost might be appropriate.

- Siting of new development on blocks surrounding the Poydras-Loyola intersection and tower forms, signage and landscape treatments should be designed to make a clear visual landmark of this pivotal location in the office core. Related treatments should punctuate the Loyola corridor at Howard Avenue, Tulane, and Elk Place in the proposed CBD-1B zone. A special design study of these important intersections should be carried out to develop detailed design guidelines that will achieve an appropriate consistency between these four design "events."

CBD-1B

The Canal Street Anchor:

The purpose of this new district, which is the present CBD-3 area above Rampart Street, is to encourage a high intensity node of mixed commercial and residential development to anchor the upper end of the Canal Street retail corridor. Development is to reinforce, not replace, the existing performance venues in the area, creating a unique complex of mixed retail and entertainment functions at street level and a high density of office, hotel, and residential uses above.

- All uses permitted in the CBD-1 zone should be allowed, subject to the following mandatory use requirements: at least 25 percent of the total floor area of any development should be in residential or hotel use; and at least 50 percent of the net ground floor area should provide an entertainment function, such as drama theater, dinner theater, cinema, or concert hall.

- Floor Area Ratio and building height should be unlimited in the area, except within 20 feet of the Canal Street property line where a 70 feet maximum height should be maintained.

- Existing theaters in the area should be rehabilitated, if necessary and feasible, or replaced with a facility of at least equivalent size. The Saenger Theater should have a priority for preservation.

- All projects within the zone should be submitted for comprehensive design review at appropriate points in the design process.

- Historic facades and entrances on Canal Street must be preserved and intelligently integrated into new construction designs.

- Towers and ground level treatments should be formed and sited to make the Elk Place, Basin and Canal Street intersection a powerful city landmark, clearly visible from downtown approaches as well as at local street level. Details of this landmark node should be developed in conjunction with designs for the Howard, Poydras and Tulane intersections on Loyola.

- Appropriate streetscape improvements and expansion of service commercial functions on Basin Street should be encouraged to establish visual and functional connections between this new entertainment node and Louis Armstrong Park.

- Signage regulations of the CBD-1 zone should be altered in the new CBD-1B zone to encourage an unusual intensity of innovative signs appropriate to a special theater district, including running message boards, temporary banners, over-sized posters and special lighting effects, such as canopy lights, lasers and roving spotlights.

- Parking should be required at levels allowed for CBD-1 in Article 7 of the zoning code, and allowed to a maximum supply of three spaces for every 1,000 gross square feet of development. The blocks on either side of Canal, above Saratoga, are well situated for major parking supply, serving the new entertainment district as well as Canal Street shoppers.

CBD-2

The West Frame Area:

The CBD-2 zone, which currently frames about half of the western boundary of the Office Core area, is designed to provide for similar central business district functions but at lower intensities than are justified in the main core area. Since its creation, the zone has promoted a number of substantial developments, including the Hyatt Hotel complex and three major office buildings on Poydras, above LaSalle.

It is recommended that the CBD-2B zone to the north of this area be eliminated, and CBD-2 provisions expanded to include the entire western frame area, from the Superdome to Iberville Street. The purpose of raising the FAR in the northern part of the frame is to encourage commercial and residential development related to H.E.A.L. activities. The complex of medical institutions in this area provides the downtown with a unique opportunity to generate related employment and residential growth that is independent of traditional commercial market forces. Office, research and development, and residential projects with on-site structured parking, similar in form to the new towers on upper Poydras, will provide an important center of employment on Upper Canal, reinforcing the retail core and the proposed theater district anchor in the CBD-1B zone.

In addition, the Loyola blocks between Girod and Lafayette and from Julia to the Expressway, should also be incorporated into the CBD-2 zone, promoting a continuity of development form along the Loyola corridor. This zoning change, however, should be delayed, to support the more immediate development priority of downtown blocks of Loyola.

- Stronger incentives for residential development should be incorporated in the expanded CBD-2 zone, including increased residential bonus allowances, and a five-year or longer tax abatement period for new construction.

- An updated comprehensive plan for H.E.A.L. should be carried out to determine the future direction of the H.E.A.L. area in terms of program expansion, physical development and organizational requirements. The plan should include a strong urban design component which identifies appropriate public improvements and a design framework for future development in a campus-like setting. Priority streetscape and pedestrian improvements are recommended on LaSalle Street and Tulane Avenue.

- The area should include a focal public open space serving existing H.E.A.L. functions as well as providing an amenity incentive for new development.

- This open space and pedestrian improvements should be located to establish a clear network of pedestrian movement throughout the area, linking major destinations, Duncan Plaza and the new open space.

- Retail, eating and drinking, and general service functions should be located primarily on the pedestrian network, rather than scattered throughout the area. In particular, the integration of these functions in upper Canal Street development should be discouraged, thus promoting more lunch time pedestrian activity on the sidewalks and avoiding competition with the proposed retail and entertainment node at Elk Place.

- The pedestrian environment of Loyola, Poydras and Canal, however, should be improved with sheltered sidewalks, arcades, protective landscaping, small shaded open spaces and clear, convenient street crossings. Upper level pedestrian connections and elevated plazas should be avoided except where they include crossing of these major streets and connection to elements of the pedestrian network, such as Lafayette Mall and the proposed Union Street and LaSalle Street improvements.

- New development siting, building forms, signage and landscape treatments on the Claiborne blocks and intersections with Poydras, Canal and Tulane and at the uptown end of Loyola should be designed to form clear downtown "gateways" at these important entry points.

- Development around the Howard Avenue, Poydras and Tulane intersections on Loyola should conform to the special design requirements to be developed for these intersections, as noted in CBD-1 above.

CBD-2
The Riverfront:

The uptown end of the Riverfront area, from Calliope to the GNO bridges, remains in HI heavy industrial zoning, a remnant of the river related uses in this area before clearance of the World's Fair. The CBD-2 zone, which covers the rest of the riverfront, should be expanded to include this section.
As presently drafted, the CBD-2 zone provides for an appropriate mix of uses at sufficiently liberal intensities to promote a substantial amount of new development in this area. The greater attraction, however, is the potential of spectacular river views and proximity to existing riverfront attractions and the Convention Center. These features are primarily incentives only for hotel and

residential development. While hotel development in the area is virtually assured, particularly with the planned expansion of the Convention Center, residential growth will be slow without substantial economic incentives to improve the feasibility equation.

Residential development on the riverfront is considered an important priority for two critical reasons:

1. The unique qualities of the area offer one of the few downtown locations where high amenity, luxury housing opportunities can be provided; and

2. Residential development in this almost exclusively visitor-oriented area will add a stabilizing program component that will help to maintain a sense of the riverfront as the property of the citizens of New Orleans, rather than of its thousands of annual tourists.

Increasing incentives for residential development, therefore, are the main zoning changes recommended in this area.

- As well as increasing the residential bonus which will encourage mixed office and housing projects, hotel and office developments should be required to include at least 15 percent of their total floor area in condominium or rental apartments, this area being excluded from the maximum FAR permitted for the commercial use.

- All projects in the Riverfront area, from Convention Center Boulevard to the water's edge, should be subject to Design Review.

- A publicly accessible riverfront promenade of at least 30 feet in dimension should be maintained throughout the zone.

- This promenade should be included in future development of the M.I.C.O. area, and through the Bienville wharf site to connect to the Vieux Carre.

- Public access along the length of the waterfront zone should be improved with transit service on the existing rail tracks.

- High-rise development throughout the riverfront area should be sited to maximize river views and to preserve critical view corridors on Lafayette, Girod, Julia and Calliope. Although the river itself is not visible from street level, development frontage on Convention Center Boulevard at these points should provide evidence of penetrability through to riverfront attractions and ample advertising through signage, particular building forms and architectural treatments, of the special activities beyond.

- Direct pedestrian access to the riverfront promenade should be maintained on Julia and Calliope.

- Building forms should step down to the river's edge and should be sculpted to achieve a balanced composition which enhances views to downtown from the South Bank and the GNO Bridges, and dramatizes views towards the river from downtown.

- Architectural details, materials, colors, textures and landscpe treatments should be coordinated to provide visual continuity throughout the zone, with sufficient diversity to create a lively and interesting skyline along this critical city edge.

- The pedestrian environment on Convention Center Boulevard should be improved with sheltered sidewalks, visually active ground level facades in fronting development, possibly a mandatory arcade treatment, protective landscaping, signage and clear, convenient pedestrian crossings.

- Development frontage on the east side of the Boulevard should be built to the property line and maintain a consistent scale, related to the scale of Warehouse Area buildings opposite, with structures taller than those on the inland side of the Boulevard set back a minimum of 40 feet from the property line.

- The median strip should be further developed with signage, denser planting, and a special lighting system to make it a stronger visual element. Low flower beds, brightly colored floral shrubs or flowering trees could make it a unique City artery.

- Similarly, the GNO Bridges should be "decorated" with a unique paint color or special ornamental lighting to make them a more dramatic and memorable feature of the river.

CBD-3
The Retail Core:

Provisions of the CBD-3 zone have demonstrated their effectiveness in the Meridien Hotel which is an excellent example of major new development proceeding in concert with goals of historic continuity and preservation of the retail core. The problems of Canal Street are not related to its zoning provisions, or the design qualities of the pedestrian environment, which the DDD has already developed to an unusually high standard, but rather to factors such as its tenant mix, the lack of an anchor at the upper end, and its poor connections to high activity areas on either side.

The issue of tenant mix should be approached through a detailed inventory of existing uses and their economic health. Such a study should also include the current list of permitted uses with a view to possible expansion of that list as well as a structural examination of buildings with unoccupied or poorly utilized upper floors to determine their suitability for conversion to more active uses such as office space, workshops and display rooms, or even loft-type housing. Establishing an upper end anchor is being approached through the recommended high intensity CBD-1B zone above Rampart Street, and the need to improve cross-Canal connections is recognized in the DDD's programmed and proposed street improvements.

In light of the changing nature of retail activity on Canal Street and the greatly increased competition it will face in the near future, another approach is recommended in addition to zoning. A centralized retail management program should be investigated as a possible method to enhance the competitiveness of Canal Street retail. The essential features of such a program which are additions to the District's current programs of centralized security, maintenance and physical improvements, typically includes the creation of a management association with the ability to act like a shopping center manager. Such an entity should have the ability to select and control tenants and tenant mix and carry out

area-wide marketing and promotions. With such a management approach Canal Street may be able to realize the collective strength of its merchants and compete effectively with the newer retail centers in New Orleans.

Some aspects of the centralized retail management concept have already been partially implemented through the DDD's current programs for centralized security, sidewalk improvements and streetscape maintenance program. Centralized retail management can build upon these programs which are already in place.

For Canal Street, a critical component of centralized retail management is to ensure that there is a mix of stores that responds to a dynamic market. Accordingly, a significant objective is the development of a leasing plan and an agreement among property owners to implement the plan and cooperate in business hours, marketing and promotions. The end result of a successful management program is higher rents and investment returns to existing property owners, increased tax revenues for the City and a more economically viable downtown area.

No further zoning or design actions are recommended for this area, besides reiterating the importance of strengthening pedestrian connections to Canal Street from both sides, and enforcing the signage ordinance already in place. A study of the Iberville corridor should be carried out to determine appropriate operational characteristics of the street and its visual improvement.

CBD-4
Picayune Place:

As for the CBD-3 zone, no changes in existing zoning provisions are recommended in this area.

Picayune Place should be reinforced as a unique pocket of historical preservation in the heart of the downtown core and its present network of narrow streets and alleys should continue to be developed as a delightful contrast to the large commercial scale of surrounding streets.

Further development of this pedestrian network is also recommended in the Pedestrian and Open Space Plan.

CBD-5
Commercial Services and Parking:

The present CBD-5 zone, which covers a narrow 1 to 2 block wide strip along the boundaries of the CBD-1 and 2 zones, is designed to provide for a wide range of commercial and residential uses at approximately 50 percent or less of the densities permitted in the highest intensity areas. A primary purpose of this zone is to provide intercept parking facilities serving the adjacent office core.

It is recommended that this zone be reconfigured as shown in Figure 20 to provide a larger zone of residential and service commercial uses enclosing the uptown boundary of the downtown core. The only recommended change in provisions of the zone is an increase in residential FAR, from 4.5 to 6, as detailed in the comparison chart of existing and proposed zoning district regulations included in Table 5.

Design review will be a mandatory requirement for all projects proposed in the extended Lafayette Square Historic District area, between Howard Avenue and St. Joseph, and in the special Design Review Zone recommended for all properties with frontage on Lee Circle.

CBD-7
Commercial Services:

Revision of the CBD-5 boundaries recommended above requires corresponding adjustments to the adjacent CBD-7 zone boundaries, as shown in Figure 20.

As defined in the zone's description of purpose, residential and related commercial and entertainment development are the special objectives of this zone. These objectives should be further reinforced by a recommended increase in FAR for residential and mixed-use projects from present allowances of 4.5 and 6 respectively to a generalized maximum of 8 (see Table 5).

Table 5

COMPARISON OF EXISTING AND PROPOSED DISTRICT REGULATIONS
IN ZONES CBD - 5, 7, 8 AND 9

	Maximum Floor Area Ratio			Maximum Building Height in Feet	
District	Non-Residential	Residential	Mixed Buildings	Within (x feet) of Street Line	More than (x feet from) Street Line
CBD-5					
Existing	6	4.5	6	No limit	No limit
Proposed	6	6	6	No limit	No limit
CBD-7					
Purpose Existing	4.5	4.5	6	125 ft. (within 20 ft.)	No limit
Proposed	4.5	8 min 50% residential	8*	50 ft. (within 30 ft.)*	125 ft. (over 30 ft.)
CBD-8					
Purpose add res & w. Existing	4	4	4	60 ft. (within 20 ft.)	150 ft. (over 20 ft.)
Proposed	4	8 min 50% residential	8*	50 ft. (within 30 ft.)*	100 ft. (over 30 ft.)
CBD-9					
Existing	6	8	8	85 ft. (within 20 ft.)	No limit
Proposed	6	8	8	85 ft. (within 30 ft.) change	No limit

**Note: Or the average of existing street facade heights on the three closest block faces, whichever is less.

Do we want 15% additional F.A.R if CBDPC

To preserve the existing scale and character of the area under these increased FAR allowances, the following design requirements are also recommended:

- The current height regulations of 125 feet within 20 feet of the street line and unlimited height elsewhere should be changed to allow a maximum of 50 feet within 30 feet of the street line and an overall maximum of 125 feet throughout the zone.

- Design review, ensuring compliance with architectural quality and consistency objectives, should be required for all proposals within the Lafayette Square Historic District and within the recommended special Design Review zone comprised of all properties with frontage on Lafayette Mall and Lafayette Square (see Figure 21).

CBD-8 and CBD-9
The Warehouse Area:

Recent residential, retail and hotel development in the Warehouse Area has occurred closer to the riverfront than was anticipated in the 1975 Plan. The existing CBD-7 District, centered on St. Charles Avenue, was seen as the area with greatest potential for residential growth, hence the emphasis on living accommodations in the description of purpose for CBD-7, and the relatively liberal FAR allowances. The CBD-8 and 9 areas at that time were seen as primarily suitable for mixed commercial, warehousing and light manufacturing uses, with a stringent FAR in CBD-8 where protection of the historic scale of the area was a critical goal, and more generous FAR's in CBD-9 where larger structures already existed.

Residential development was not prohibited in these zones, but no special incentives were included in CBD-8 which has a fixed maximum FAR of 4. In CBD-9, residential development, either on-site or in mixed-use projects earns a maximum increase in FAR from 6 to 8.

The residential potential of the entire Warehouse Area, however, is now clear and the stated purpose of the original CBD-7 zone extends throughout the CBD-8 and 9 Districts. It is therefore recommended that the description of purpose for these zones be revised to emphasize residential growth.

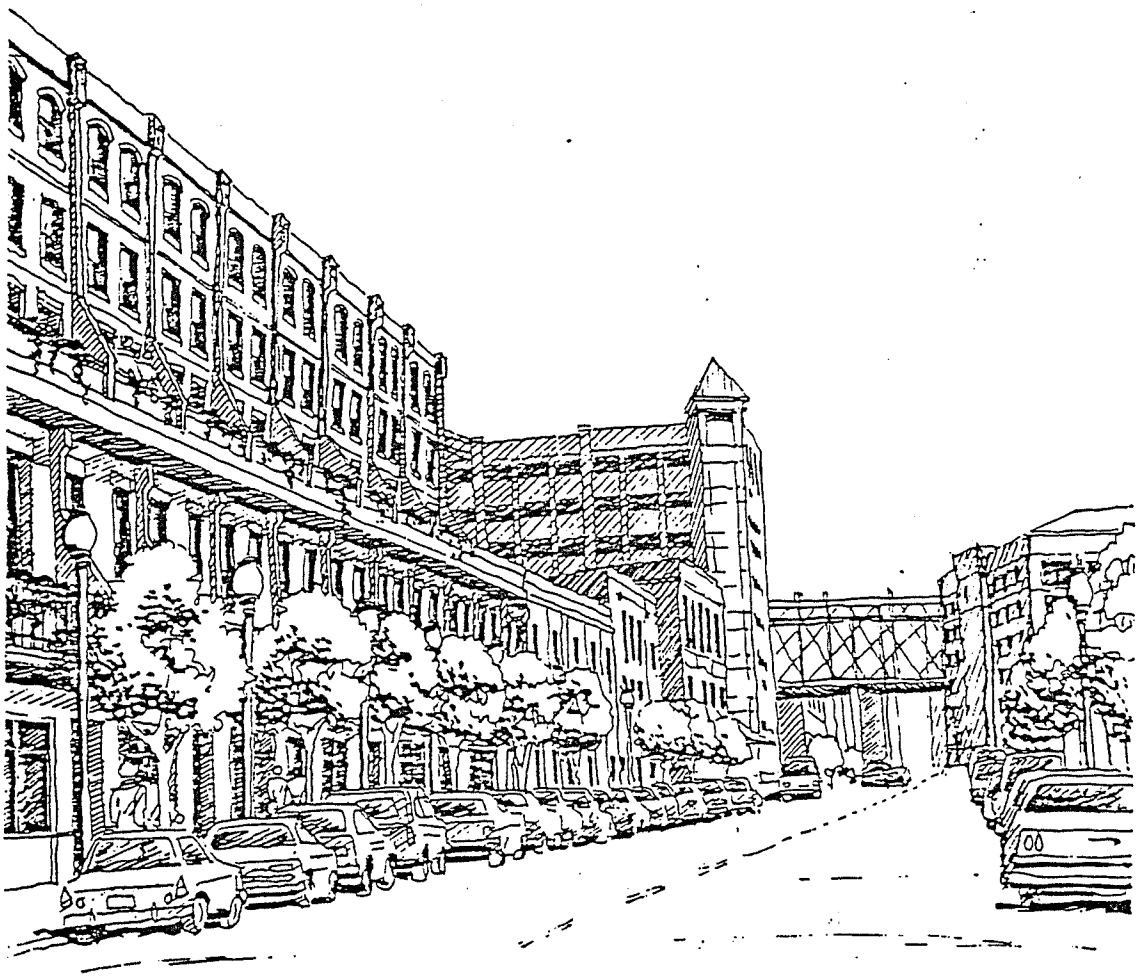
With reduced tax advantages for rehabilitation projects, the potential for residential growth in the Warehouse Area becomes more dependent on new construction. The feasibility of such developments, however, is tenuous at present with maximum FAR's permitted in the CBD-8 zone. Residential projects, therefore, should be favored with substantial increases in permitted densities.

Preservation of the unique scale and architectural character of the area then becomes the primary purpose of design guidelines and informed design review. Guidelines for this special area, however, must remain sufficiently general so as not to inhibit the innovative type of architectural expression that is essential to its variety and visual interest.

- Residential FAR's in the CBD-8 zone should be increased to 8 for both wholly residential projects and mixed-use developments containing over 50 percent of residential space. The base commercial FAR of 4 should be maintained, with a bonus allowance of FAR 6 for proposals including an off-site residential or mixed-use project in the CBD-8 area. Permitted densities of the CBD-9 district should remain unchanged.

- Existing height limits for the CBD-9 district and specified blocks of Lafayette, Girod, Diamond, St. Charles, Camp and Commerce Streets should remain unchanged, but the general CBD-8 height limits should be more stringent. Current allowances of 60 feet within 20 feet of the street line and 150 feet maximum elsewhere should be changed to 50 feet within 30 feet of the street line and 100 feet maximum elsewhere (see Table 5).

- The Warehouse District Historic District should be extended to the Mississippi River Bridges corridor, requiring design review of all projects proposed within the CBD-8 and CBD-9 zones.



WAREHOUSE DISTRICT RESIDENTIAL CONVERSION: South Peters Street

L I

The Superdome Area:

No development is expected in this area other than publicly sponsored, transportation related projects, therefore no zoning changes are necessary.

- Architectural character, materials, colors, textures, proportions of openings, degree of articulation, signage and landscaping should be considered within the context of at least one block to either side of the development block.

- A network of public open spaces and pedestrian pathways through the area should be established (see Section 5.2 above) and development frontages on this system should be required to maintain active ground level functions, including building lobbies, retail, restaurant, gallery and showroom areas, entertainment uses and residential service functions such as day care, branch banks and real estate agencies.

- Length of ground level frontage in a single use should be limited to no more than 20 feet to encourage visual variety in the pedestrian environment.

- Surface parking lots should be adequately screened around their perimeter, with a minimum planting strip of 8 feet on all sides except where the property line coincides with an existing structure. Shade trees should also be included in islands within the lot, to achieve a minimum landscaped area, including perimeter planting, of 10 percent of the total lot area.

6.3 CIRCULATION SYSTEMS AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Systems required to support the growth anticipated under the above incentives and zoning controls include networks of pedestrian circulation, transportation and infrastructure. This section outlines the implementation actions required to achieve the recommended plans for each of these systems, described in Sections 5.2 through 5.4 above.

1. Pedestrian and Open Space Plan Implementation:

Development of the pedestrian network described in Section 5.2 involves four types of improvements, each requiring a different implementation strategy.

Primary Vehicular Arteries:

As identified in Figure 18, these arteries (Canal, Tulane, Poydras, Howard, Loyola and Convention Center Boulevard) are the spines of existing or proposed areas of highest intensity commercial development. The recommended implementation strategy, therefore, is a combination of public improvements to the medians and privately funded redevelopment of the sidewalk areas, subject to corridor specific design controls.

Detailed design studies of each artery should be prepared, defining the landscaping, lighting and signage requirements for the medians, and specific design guidelines for sidewalk treatments, including paving materials and patterns, lighting standards, signage design and location, planting species and distribution, and requirements for special design features such as public art placement, mini-parks and related street furnishings.

These design guidelines are to become the basis for a special landscaping ordinance applicable to all properties with frontage on the primary arteries. This ordinance should have equal weight as the zoning ordinance. The ordinance should be drafted as an overlay zone for the specified streets. The DDD's present program of supplying 50 percent matching funds for sidewalk improvements should be extended to 75 percent as an additional development incentive in the priority growth area of downtown Loyola.

Secondary Streets:

Streetscape improvements on secondary streets identified in Figure 18 are most effectively accomplished under the direction of the DDD, with 50 percent matching funds from private property owners. These improvements should proceed as a continuous responsibility of the DDD, phased to coincide with the patterns of concentration of development activity through time.

Pedestrian Ways and Public Open Space:

In contrast to Secondary Street improvements, development of pedestrian ways and public open spaces is seen as an important incentive to growth in amenity poor areas, particularly with respect to residential and convenience retail development. These improvements, therefore, will frequently precede private development proposals and should be carried out with a speculative intent to attract development interest in specific locations.

Proposed projects, as shown in Figure 18, are primarily concentrated in the Warehouse Area related to the existing network of small scale public rights-of-way between major traffic streets, and the most likely locations for new development. Each of these plan elements should be carried out as a discrete project funded by the public.

The public input to implementation of the pedestrian and open space plan should remain the responsibility of the DDD, given its recent highly successful experience in complex, high quality streetscape projects such as the Canal Street improvements and development of the Lafayette Mall. The work could be carried out under the DDD's current practice of funding each project out of its annual millage, but given the extent and importance of proposed improvements, particularly the residential incentive projects in the Warehouse Area, a faster pace of implementation is recommended and other public participation will be needed.

One possibility is for the DDD to float a bond issue to undertake initial priority projects. The costs of "speculative" pedestrian and open space improvements could be recouped from subsequent development projects and applied to

construction of the next project in the network, thus establishing a revolving fund which is always one project behind capital outlay. However, since the level of finish and design quality of the special incentive projects is expected to be high relative to more typical sidewalk improvements, attempting to recover the full costs of each project from private developers will only remove the incentive value of the strategy. This approach, therefore, is not recommended in favor of devising a source of continuing outside funding.

Notwithstanding the residential tax abatement program, which is an essential incentive counteracting the reductions in rehabilitation investment tax credits, a tax increment financing scheme could be considered. The advantage of such a scheme is that revenues accruing from new commercial development in the high density areas can be more specifically channelled to public improvements in primary residential growth areas, ensuring that these critical incentives for residential growth will maintain priority in competition for public resources.

Irrespective of the funding mechanism developed, implementation of the pedestrian and open space plan should proceed on a separate phasing schedule for each of the different categories of improvements. If possible, projects from each of the categories should proceed concurrently, with priority on those improvements which will have an incentive effect on residential growth.

2. Transportation Plan Implementation:

As noted in the transportation inventory report, there are many problems with the CBD transportation system today. Major streets are operating at capacity while transit is significantly underutilized. This situation, however, should not be viewed negatively, but rather as a major opportunity to begin restructuring the movement system of the CBD into a cohesive unit. This section presents recommendations which can be implemented in the next five (5) years to improve level of service and transit ridership.

Traffic Requirement:

Intersection studies currently underway as an early action strategy of the GMP should be continued. Additional turning lanes, increased traffic signal cycle

lengths, and the development of efficient traffic synchronization plans will help bring the current peak and non-peak traffic flows to more efficient levels. One of the major products of such an effort will be accurate and up-to-date traffic volume data as well as an inventory of the geometric conditions of the street system. These data will allow the development of an on-going traffic management program where data can be updated to measure changes in volume-capacity conditions at selected intersections.

Transit Requirements:

Transit, with its currently underutilized capacity, must focus its efforts to attract additional riders. For the short term the primary goal is the development of a marketing campaign targeted at commuters to and from the CBD. The current configuration of routes serving the CBD is such that additional service is not needed. A key point of the marketing campaign should be the price differential between driving and transit and the comprehensive coverage of the system.

The CBD Shuttle is another element of the transit system which needs to be upgraded. For the short term, it is recommended that the fare be reduced to 25 cents while the operating frequency be increased. Headways of 10 minutes are too long for shuttle service and should be reduced to 3 minutes. The CBD Shuttle route should be divided into smaller, more easily comprehensible routes which reduce total trip times and serve the sub-areas of the CBD more efficiently. Transfers should be accepted on the Shuttle which should be visually distinquishable from line haul buses. Better marketing should emphasize that this service is constant, inexpensive, and capable of efficiently moving people between the various points within the CBD.

The riverfront trolley, planned to parallel the riverfront using existing rail rights-of-way, should be implemented as a short-term improvement. Federal monies have already been made available for this system and local monies are now being raised.

Parking Requirements:

The major immediate consideration for parking is to increase the availability of short-term space in the highest demand area which is bounded approximately by Canal, Magazine, Girod and Carondelet Streets. This may be accomplished through a revision of the price structure for off-street parking. An immediate by-product of reducing the supply of long-term spaces may be a shift of people to transit as the price of driving an automobile increases.

Regulatory Requirements:

It is recommended that a resident permit parking program for the Warehouse Area be instituted as an early action supporting residential development in the area.

Long-Term Recommendations:

As the number of trip destinations in the downtown increases through time, continual monitoring and adjustment of the circulation, transit and parking systems will be required.

By 2000, contra-flow lanes and exclusive trasit lanes may be needed to move people into and out of the CBD given that additional lanes cannot be added to the existing street network. Poydras and Loyola may well become prime candidates for the use of a contra-flow scheme during peak hours. Furthermore, on-street parking along Poydras Street, Canal Street and Loyola Avenue may have to be removed in order to accommodate anticipated traffic flows. The traffic management program should also be fully in place by this time. The major emphasis, however, by 2000 will be the intersections serving the new bridge approaches, as well as the arterials serving the Bridge Corridor.

The Maintenance of Effort Program should continue to supply current information about crucial intersection and circulation characteristics. These data will be necessary to identify ongoing traffic engineering improvements. The future transportation needs for the CBD will require that the existing transit system be more fully utilized and expanded. The transit system will also have to be tailored to serve the needs of various user groups within the CBD itself. The large amount

of residential development expected will create a substantial demand of travel within the distict itself for both work and non-work purposes. For example, as the riverfront continues to develop into a major retail and entertainment area serving CBD residents, access will have to be improved. Another consideration is the role transit will play in alleviating a parking shortage. Transit routes within the CBD should continue to be monitored and adjusted to serve movements to and from peripheral parking and out of the CBD locations during A.M. and P.M. peak hours. Additionally intra-CBD movements should be monitored and transit adjusted to meet changing demands.

An important transit strategy will be the control and mitigation of traffic volumes attributable to new developments. Developers could be required to illustrate how the surrounding street network would be affected by the additional trips attracted to their site and hence, mitigate this impact through a variety of strategies which may include ride-sharing and transit usage for new development.

As travel demand increases, it may become necessary to fund capital improvements for transit between the suburban areas and downtown, possibly to include development of a regional light rail system. The details of such a system should be established in the context of a comprehensive transit plan for the CBD. One option for funding is a transportation fund in addition to the RTA capital improvement program.

The need for parking within the DDD is likely to double over the next 15 years. Elements of a strategy to address this condition may include the following: additional peripheral parking with associated transit; incentives and/or requirements for new development to provide on- or off-site parking; greater participation in a regional ride sharing program and other incentives encouraging higher occupancies per vehicle. In addition, the establishment of a Public Parking Authority which would construct and manage parking facilities for the downtown should be evaluated. The responsibilities of such an authority could range from the management of specific facilities to the administration of districtwide parking policies and regulations.

It is further recommended that the utility of a traffic impact evaluation requirement for major new developments be examined. This evaluation would be focused on devising ways to mitigate traffic and parking impacts of high density growth.

3. Infrastructure Plan Implementation:

As a rule, water and sewer improvements are currently implemented on an as-needed basis with the benefited land owner contributing 50 percent of the cost for new mains, if needed, to tie in a particular site with the system. This is a reactive approach which follows the lead of development and encourages, by the relative size of contributions needed for different sites, the earlier development of locations that are currently well-served by the water and sewerage systems. The GMP implementation plan recommends a proactive approach to the provisions of water and sewer service, one designed to help achieve the GMP's goals.

It is recommended that the provision of adequate water and sewer service be used as an incentive to encourage new development to locate first in the areas targeted in this plan. A major goal of the GMP Plan is to encourage the early location of development along the Loyola corridor between Poydras and Canal without discouraging it uptown on Loyola between Poydras and Howard. The recommended strategy is to provide the necessary upgrading of the sewer system in this area in advance of development.

This recommended upgrading includes placing a 12-inch line in South Street (improvement "A" in Figure 19 and Table 4) between South Rampart and South Robertson to provide additional capacity by diverting some Vieux Carre flow from the Canal East main and replacing the 24-inch Canal Street main with a 36-inch main between South Robertson and South Rampart and replacing the 15-inch main in South Rampart Between Canal and Tulane with a 24-inch line to provide additional capacity on Canal Street (improvement "C" in Figure 19 and Table 4). The estimated costs for these two improvements are $496,000 and $1,200,000, respectively or approximately $1.7 million together.

The Sewerage and Water Board would routinely have responsibility for 50 percent of this cost, or $850,000, but only when the need for these improvements was

created by a particular development. The strategy is to provide these improvements as an incentive for earlier development where it is most wanted. This approach would require careful coordination and advance planning by the Sewer and Water Board as well as a public contribution of what is traditionally the developers' 50 percent since the improvements would be made as an incentive prior to specific developer investment. There are a number of ways this could be addressed. A public entity such as the City, or an entity such as the DDD, could make the 50 percent contribution and take responsibility for the administrative tasks involved in the undertaking. The 50 percent investment could be considered a sunk cost or be paid back with a variety of schedules in part or in full by the private developers who took advantage of this incentive. To maintain its power as an incentive, however, repayment of this 50 percent contribution is not recommended.

The first step in the implementation of this portion, or any other, of the sewerage plan is to conduct detailed engineering studies of the system. These studies should include physical inspection of selected lines, flow measurement at critical locations, estimates of wastewater generation rates, capacity analysis of the network, and preliminary design of proposed improvements to the level of pipe sizes and locations. Such a study of the downtown network would be able to confirm, or modify, the general assessment conducted for the GMP Update.

The remaining elements of the infrastructure plan do not have the same strategic importance as the two sewerage improvements recommended for special public participation. It is recommended that they take place under current procedures as the new demand created by development creates a need for them. These are longer range improvements which are not likely to be needed until the early 1990's when the pace of development is anticipated to accelerate.

3. Pedestrian and Open Space Plan

Recommended first steps in implementation of the pedestrian circulation system plan include the priority elements of each of the categories of proposed improvements. With respect to the primary vehicular arteries, median improvements on Loyola, from Poydras to Iberville, should be carried out first, including possible redesign of the Canal Street-Elk Place and Poydras-Loyola intersections. Costs will depend on final design details and level of finishes selected, but based on costs for similar work undertaken by the DDD, these improvements are estimated at approximately $2 million.

Priority secondary street type improvements should be completion of the St. Charles treatments, from Poydras to Iberville, including development of a prototype gateway between the Vieux Carre and the CBD. This project is estimated at approximately $2.6 million.

The first pedestrian way type improvements should be carried out on Commerce Street, between Lafayette Mall and St. Joseph Street in the Warehouse Area. Based on costs for Lafayette Mall, this project is estimated at approximately $1.8 million. As a further residential incentive in the Warehouse Area, a soft, park-like open space development should proceed immediately on the Diamond Street rights-of-way, at an estimated cost of approximately $2 million.

All of those projects should ideally be undertaken concurrently, but if choices have to be made amongst them, the Commerce Street pedestrian way and Diamond Street park should take precedence as critical residential incentives.

4. Transportation Plan

Recommended immediate transportation improvements include completion of the current intersections study, upgrading of the CBD shuttle system, and intensive transit marketing compaign, increasing the availability of short-term parking supply in the Office Core Area, development of a resident parking permit program in the Warehouse Area, and implementation of the proposed riverfront trolley. Further details of those short-term actions are included in Section 6.3 above.

6.4 PRIORITY ACTIONS

This section summarizes the priority actions of each of the implementation programs described above.

1. Development Incentives

Initial development incentives should be focused on encouraging residential growth, particularly in the Warehouse Area. The existing tax abatement program for residential development should be reviewed and extended to apply to all types of residential growth, including new construction, in a longer than five year abatement period, if possible. The availability of this significant incentive should be more strongly promoted in DDD marketing materials.

Residential parking incentives in the Warehouse Area should be instituted in acquisition of the Fulton Street garage, with a proportion of existing spaces offered immediately to residential developers on subsidized leases.

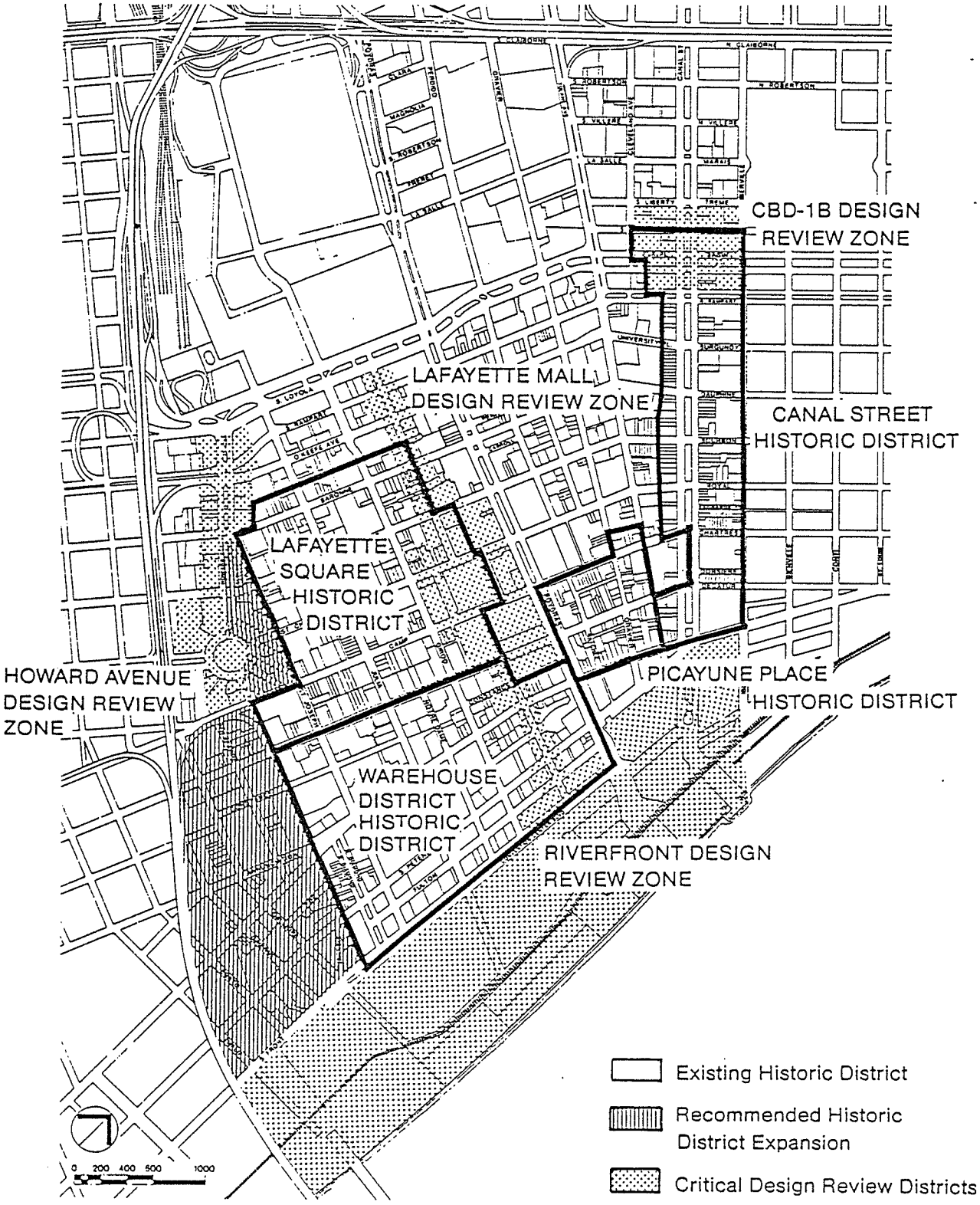
2. Zoning and Design Guidelines

Zoning changes, as suggested in Section 6.2 above, should be reviewed and adopted as soon as possible, with a particular priority on institution of the proposed CBD-1B zone at Canal and Elk Place, and on raising permitted residential densities in the Warehouse Area. If comprehensive revision of the Zoning Code is undertaken right away, all recommended changes should be included except expansion of the CBD-2 zone on uptown blocks east of Loyola. This change should be delayed to encourage early growth on the downtown section of Loyola, north of Poydras.

Formalized procedures and applicability of Design Review should be institutionalized as soon as possible, including appointment of a Design Review panel organized under the Planning Commission, and comprised of urban design professionals from public and non-public agencies. Preparation of a comprehensive Design Review Process and Guidelines Manual should be initiated, to include a block by block description of design requirements for critical areas, with emphasis on the Warehouse Area, Picayune Place, the Poydras-Loyola Corridors, and the Riverfront.

RECOMMENDED DESIGN REVIEW ZONES

Figure 21



CBD-1

The Office Core:

This zone remains unchanged in area and purpose, with adjustments to residential density allowances to increase residential incentives in the core business area.

- Residential incentives should be increased by allowing a residential Floor Area Ratio (FAR) equivalent to the commercial FAR, and by increasing the residential bonus allowance by at least three times its present level. Equivalent contribution to a housing fund may be instituted as satisfying the requirements for a residential bonus.

- New construction should not be discouraged on sites with existing historic structures, providing the existing building, in whole or in part, is sensitively integrated into the development.

- New development or horizontal enlargement of parcels on Union Street should be built to the property line at an above grade height of at least two stories and at most 50 feet (Article 10, Section 5 of the zoning code).

- Ground floor retail and entertainment uses, and special pedestrian amenities, such as arcades, mini parks, gallerias, and public art, should be encouraged on Union street, Common Street, Loyola Avenue, and Lafayette Mall.

- Redevelopment of the Loyola block between Perdido and Gravier should include a through-block arcade, galleria or elevated pedestrian walkway connecting from Union Street to Duncan Plaza. Retail, entertainment or public exhibition functions should be located to enliven the pedestrian experience through this connection.

- Major developments taking advantage of bonus allowances should be required to supply, or contribute to the City implementation of, public art works or programs, such as appropriate sculptures, fountains or special festival events. An amount equivalent to one (1) percent of building cost might be appropriate.

5. Infrastructure Plan

Priority infrastructure improvements are selected as an incentive to high intensity development on the downtown blocks of Loyola. These include completion of sanitary sewer replacement on Conti and Canal Streets, between Robertson and North Rampart, and on South Rampart, between Canal and Tulane. Estimated cost of these improvements is approximately $1.7 million.

6.5 ROLE OF THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

The cornerstone of the 1975 GMP was the recommendation to create a special taxing district which would strengthen the central business district as the administrative, office, retail and entertainment center of the region through the implementation of capital improvements and additional services. The Core Area Development District, later to be renamed the Downtown Development District, was created in 1975 by state legislative act and a city-wide referendum.

The Downtown Development District is governed by a nine-member Board of Commissioners who are appointed by the Mayor and approved by City Council. The primary responsibility of the District Board is to prepare an annual plan specifying the public improvements, facilities and services proposed for the District along with the projected cost and millage required to implement the plan. The funds are generated by a special ad valorem tax on real property in the CBD. Revenues collected through this special property tax have ranged from $975,000 in 1976 to an estimated $3.5 million in 1987.

Subsequent to City Council approval of the plan the District carries out the implementation and monitoring of the improvements and special services in the plan. The Board is assisted in discharging these responsibilities by a six-person staff.

The Downtown Development District can, along with the City Planning Commission, take the lion's share of credit for the remarkable record of implementation of the recommendations of the 1975 GMP. As the DDD is itself a creation of the 1975 GMP, it is uniquely positioned to implement many of the recommendations of the GMP Update.

The 1975 GMP provided the framework within which the District developed its organizational goals, objectives and action strategies. The long-range goals of the District, which should remain very much in force, are as follows:

- To provide leadership in the development of a network for communication, coordination, and advocacy on behalf of downtown

- To supplement city services in the CBD
- To implement capital projects in the downtown area
- To eliminate skid row
- To achieve an integrated transportation system for the CBD
- To encourage urban design distinction in New Orleans' downtown
- To provide activities downtown which attract residents and visitors
- To encourage and guide development of the downtown, especially the area next to the Mississippi River
- To act as a catalyst to encourage residential development in the downtown area
- To act as a catalyst in the partnership of the public and private sectors to achieve development goals.

The District has addressed these goals with a remarkable degree of success in the last twelve years. It has created a number of programs and special services to respond to these goals. Some of these programs are designed to supplement and improve the performance of services already provided by the City. The majority, however, are unique to the District. A brief description of the major activities of the District includes the following:

Police

The DDD provides funds for sixteen fully-equipped patrolmen and a supervising sergeant to supplement City services downtown. The additional police are strategically assigned to increase police visibility and to reduce crime.

Sanitation

The DDD provides twenty-one additional workers in the downtown area to augment the City's sanitation service. As a result of DDD funding, sanitation services (e.g. garbage collection, street sweeping, washing and emptying of litter receptacles) have been increased to six days per week.

Special Area Maintenance Program (SAM)

The SAM program provides a comprehensive cleaning and repair program for the three pedestrian streetscape improvement projects constructed by the District. Maintenance of the Canal Street neutral ground and Lee Circle are also funded by the DDD through a contract with the Parkway and Parks Commission.

Cultural/Arts Program

The DDD has sponsored a wide-range of cultural activities to promote downtown as an attractive and exciting place in which to work, shop, and live. The major cultural programs sponsored by the District include: (1) lunch time brown bag concert series; (2) a matching grants program for art in public spaces; (3) a downtown science center and children's museum (4) and the construction of a performance pavillion in Duncan Plaza.

Promotions and Marketing

Specific tools designed by the District to promote the central business district include: (1) the District's regular publications about its activities; (2) Christmas decorations and sponsorship of a Christmas festival; and (3) the marketing of downtown residential opportunities.

Historic Preservation

The District contracts with the Historic Faubourg St. Mary Corporation (HFSM), a private non-profit organization, for historic preservation activities. The purpose of HFSM is to revitalize the Lafayette Square Area through the renovation and reuse of historic buildings and the elimination of Skid Row.

Capital Projects

The DDD has constructed three major streetscape improvements which are Canal Street, St. Charles Street and Lafayette Mall. As recommended in the 1975 GMP, these capital projects offer pedestrian amenities such as brick sidewalks, benches, street trees, streetlights and water fountains. The District has also installed 33 kiosks at major CBD transit stops. Designed to make downtown more understandable to the pedestrian, the kiosks contain transit and historic walking tour maps.

Urban design distinction is also encouraged by the District through its street tree and sidewalk improvement programs. The DDD provides to CBD property owners 50 percent of the cost of sidewalk construction and 100 percent of the cost of street tree grates and guards.

Transportation

The DDD subsidizes the operation of the CBD Shuttle which provides a transit route through the retail and office core and is linked to parking in the Superdome. The District works closely with transportation agencies to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the CBD transportation system.

Planning

A major responsibility of the DDD, as outlined in the 1975 GMP, is to monitor and influence the orderly growth and development of downtown. The District has coordinated or participated in numerous planning studies

which have targeted specific areas in downtown for more detailed analysis and action.

Recommendations Regarding the District's Role

All of these current activities of the DDD are taken as a given, a level of effort and leadership that can serve as a base from which the DDD should grow to respond to the new demands and opportunities of the next 15 years. It is recommended that the current DDD services and programs be continued with the evolution and changes in specifics which will occur over time. The role of the District should remain the same: that of catalyst, coordinator and implementation in the downtown.

Chapters five and six contain the recommended Plan and Program for the GMP Update. Many of the activities in these chapters are called out as extensions of existing District involvement and historic role of leadership and responsibility. Some of these activities are new or involve such a quantum change that the nature of that role and how it is performed should be examined. The following sections frame the discussion which will need to take place and ultimately be decided by the District Board in a number of areas of DDD activity. All of these represent challenges and opportunities for the District and New Orleans.

Capital Improvements and Funding

A major recommendation of the Update is the large scale expansion of streetscape improvement in the CBD—an evolution of the District's strikingly successful improvement program. The District is deeply involved with streetscape improvements with its sole source capital improvements and matching grants. The primary sources of funds for the District's capital improvements have been DDD tax revenues, federal and state revenues and local capital outlay monies. The magnitude of the recommended extension of these improvements suggests the need for other supporting participation for the higher level of funding required.

Another recommendation of the Update is to use public participation in infrastructure costs (specifically upgrading the capacity of the sanitary sewer system in key areas as a development incentive) to reduce private capital needed

at the critical initial phases of a development. This public participation might include some involvement by the District as well.

Both of these examples illustrate the higher demand for capital which is likely to be generated by the implementation of even a portion of the Update's recommendations. The greater involvement of the DDD in streetscape, open space and other capital improvements will be seriously constrained if it continues its pay-as-you-go approach to capital improvement financing. This approach has been a responsible one, perfectly tailored to the type and size of improvements funded to date. However, it does limit the amount of capital improvements which can be funded in any given year.

To maintain its leadership in this area and enlarge its scope of activity to meet the challenge of keeping downtown New Orleans competitive with other cities it is recommended that the District seriously explore alternative methods of funding a higher level of capital improvement funding. Avenues to be explored should include at least the following:

- Bonding: The District has the legal authority to issue bonds, subject to other limits. The existing and future revenue stream should be examined as a basis for raising a larger amount of capital for key, focused project(s).

- Millage Rate: The District's current millage rate should be examined for a potential future increase. This must be done in the context of real property values in the downtown and their likely change over time.

- Tax Increment: The tax increment provisions of state law should be examined as they apply to the DDD. The long term increase in property values in the CBD is secure and could quite well be tapped for the CBD's, and ultimately the City's, benefit.

- Public Participation: There are a variety of other public entities which have responsibilities for the CBD, not just on an annual basis, but on a long-term basis as well. Entities such as the City government, Sewerage and Water Board and Dock Board should be approached with the goal of translating

their understanding of their long-term investment in the health of the downtown into capital investment in that future.

- Private Participation: Many opportunities will present themselves for private sector involvement in capital projects. One example of such enlightened self-interest could be an "adopt-a-median" program by which adjacent private property owners could take more responsibility for streetscape improvements which clearly benefit them.

These options must be evaluated not only in terms of their capital fund generating potential, but also in the context of local economic and political realities. It should be borne in mind also, however, that the Update's recommendations are made in a local context but with a keen eye to the CBD's competitive position regionally and nationally.

Marketing and Promotion

It is recommended that the DDD become the coordinating agency for downtown promotion and development. There is now no one agency with the single-purpose mandate necessary for the marketing of downtown. Starting with the data base produced for the Update, see Figure 22 for a sample of the output, the DDD should be able to build its resources to the point that potential developers could acquire complete information on trends, zoning, parcel-specific data, and the regulatory and review process from the DDD. With its geographic area of responsibility, data base, and track record, there is no other agency comparably poised to fill this need for focused, downtown-based promotion. The DDD should continue to explore the potential for resource sharing and cooperation with other agencies with an interest in downtown. The District should also study the staffing and budget implications of becoming the primary downtown promotional agency and marketing its resources for such purpose.

Real Estate Activity

The DDD has been involved in real estate activity through its funding of the successful Historic Faubourg St. Mary Corporation which was created in 1977 as a private, non-profit development corporation devoted to the renovation and reuse

of historic buildings and the elimination of skid row. Along with its facade donation program, real estate planning and research and information programs, the HFSM's most effective tool has been its revolving fund.

It is recommended that the DDD again use this organizational model of a separate, private, development corporation funded at least in part, by the District for achievement of other District goals. HFSM should continue on its course and finish in the St. Charles area while one or possibly more organizationally similar corporations are created.

A similar development corporation could be chartered to help achieve residential goals in the CBD. Selected properties in the Warehouse District, for example, could be purchased, renovated and put on the market in the same way that HFSM has so successfully done in the old skid row area. Such leveraging of key buildings in combination with permit parking and zoning incentives could prove very effective in bolstering residential production in that area.

In cases where turnover or movement of real estate are stagnant the use of such a corporation should be considered. Funding for revolving funds should come from a variety of sources having a stake in the achievement of the targeted public goals. Limited joint ventures with the private sector and such a development corporation might also be used in the proper circumstances.

District Boundaries

The Downtown Development District, while it encompases the heart of New Orleans, does not exist in isolation. Bounded on one side by the Mississippi River, the District has underutilized industrial areas and the Lower Garden District on its uptown side; a mixture of highway, industrial, residential and medical facilities on its lake side; its neighbors on the downtown side are the Iberville Housing Development and the Vieux Carre.

As the area within the District experiencing active development has increased since 1975 to include the length of the riverfront and the warehouse area, so it is expected to increase in the next fifteen years. In fact, in addition to continued activity in the District, it is anticipated that such activity will expand the area of

SAMPLE DATA SYSTEM OUTPUT

Figure 22

GMP DATABASE
DATE ENTERED: 05/21/86 LAST UPDATE: / / BY: BJM SHEET 1 SCREEN 1

DATA DISTRICT NO: J MUNICIPAL SQUARE: 48 SITE NUMBER: 3

PARCEL NUMBER(S):

MUNICIPAL ADDRESS: STREET NO. 1107 STREET NAME S. PETERS ZIP CODE 70130

BUILDING NAME: FEDERAL FIBRE MILLS CENSUS TRACT: 77

1. BUILDING HEIGHT (NO. OF STORIES): 6
2. CONSTRUCTION STATUS: EX (EX/UR/UC/PR)
   YEAR BUILT/START(ED): 1904 YEAR RENOVATED/COMPLETE: 1986

GMP DATABASE J -48 -3 1107 S. PETERS

3.

PRIN.	LAND USE:	Y	UNITS	NET SF
(MU)	MIXED USE:			0.0
(AP)	AUTO PARKING:		0	0.0
(AS)	AUTO SLS/SERV:			0.0
(DW)	DWELLING:	Y	136	119.9
(HL)	HOTEL:		0	0.0
(OG)	OFFICE/GOVMT:			0.0
(OM)	OFFICE/MULTI:			0.0
(MJ)	OFFICE/MAJOR:			0.0

SHEET 1 SCREEN 2

		Y	NET SF	
(MF)	MANUFACTNG:		0.0	(NRST K)
(PK)	PARK:		0.0	(NRST K)
(RT)	RETAIL:		0.0	(NRST K)
(CR)	CUL/ENT/REC:		0.0	(NRST K)
(WW)	WHSNG/WHLSL:		0.0	(NRST K)
(VA)	VACANT:		0.0	(NRST K)
(MD)	MEDICAL:		0.0	(NRST K)
(XX)	OTHER:		0.0	(NRST K)

4. AREA OF SITE: 48.5 (NEAREST K)
5. AREA OF BUILDING, TOTAL GROSS: 141.0 (NEAREST K)
6. AREA OF GROUND FLOOR: 28.2 (NEAREST K)
7. AREA OF BUILDING, TOTAL NET: 119.9 (NEAREST K)
8. A. ALLOWABLE FAR: 6.0
   B. ACTUAL FAR: 2.9
9. NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 0

GMP DATABASE J -48 -3 1107 S. PETERS SHEET 2 SCREEN 1

10. MAJOR PROPERTY OWNERS:
    NAME
    GERALD R. DERKS'S FEDERAL FIBRE MILLS '85
    ADDRESS

11. FIBERPROOF CHARACTERISTICS: C2
    (C1/C2/C3/UN) REF: FIELD
12. MAINTENANCE CHARACTR: EX
    (EX/SO/DE/DP)
13. HISTORIC DISTRICT STATUS: NH
    (NH/CS/PP/LS/WD)
14. BLDG ARCHITECTRL RTNG: GE
    (UR/YE/RE/GE/BL/PU)
15. CONTRIBUTION TO TOUT ENSEMBLE: CO
    (NO/CO)
16. VALUE INCLUDING IMPROVEMENTS: 0
17. DATE BLDG LAST SOLD: 01/11/86
21. TYPEPKNG(GA/SL): (PI/PB):
22. MGMT OF PKNG:
23. PARKING RATES: 0.00 PER HR 0.00 PER DAY 0.00 PER MONTH

GMP DATABASE J -48 -3 1107 S. PETERS SHEET 3 SCREEN 1

24. MAJOR BUILDING TENANTS AND BUSINESSES:
    NAME
    ADDRESS (IF DIFFERENT FROM SHEET 1)

GMP DATABASE J -48 -3 1107 S. PETERS SHEET 3 SCREEN 2

25. ZONING CLASSIFICATION: CBD9

	TYPICAL	HIGHEST	
26. RENTAL RATES: MAJOR TENANT OFFICE SPACE:	0.00	0.00	(PER SQ FT)
27. RENTAL RATES: MULTI-TENANT OFFICE SPACE:	0.00	0.00	(PER SQ FT)
28. RENTAL RATES: RETAIL:	0.00	0.00	(PER SQ FT)
29. OCCUPANCY RATES: MAJOR TENANT OFF SPACE:	0.0	0.0	
MULTI TENANT OFF SPACE:	0.0	0.0	

30. HOTEL/MOTEL OCCUPANCY: 0.0 PCT
31. COMMENTS:
    SITE INCLUDES A POOL, COURTYARD AND CABANA, APROX 20300 SQUARE FOOT.

the downtown upstream from the GNO bridges into the Missouri Improvement Company (MICO) area. This is a natural and to-be-hoped-for extension of the extraordinary and almost unbroken progression of public and semi-public riverfront activities now stretching from the Mint in the Vieux Carre through the Convention Center. It is critical that the future uses under the two GNO bridges be re-examined with the goal of making the most of the opportunity to link the MICO area with the Warehouse area and riverfront in the District.

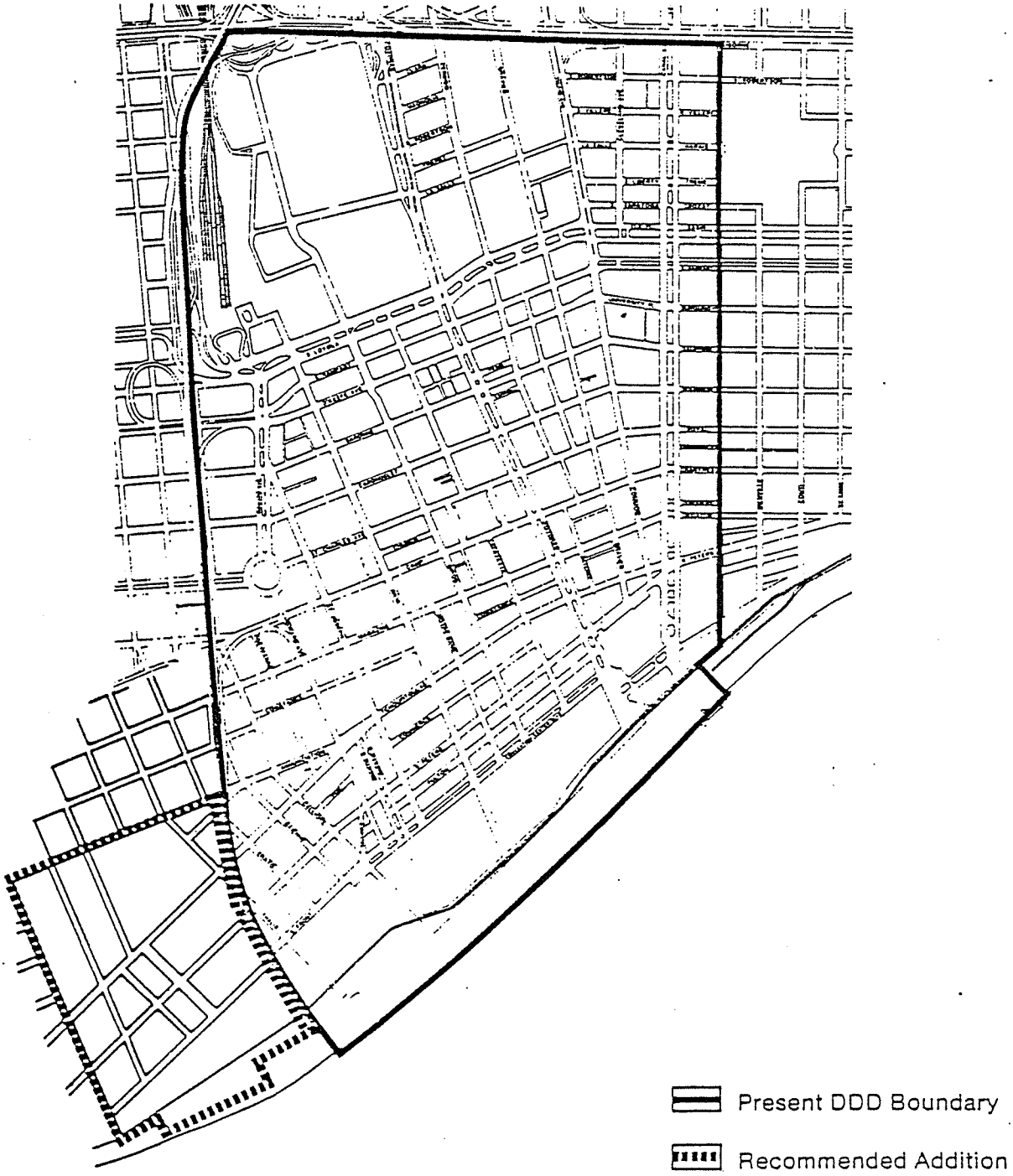
It is recommended that the MICO area be incorporated into the District as illustrated in Figure 23. This action is recommended to acknowledge the future of this area as a part of the downtown, to encourage compatible development in it, and to bring the resources and expertise of the DDD to bear in helping this transformation to take place in a manner which is consistent with the overall goals for the downtown.

The H.E.A.L. area on the lake side of South Claiborne presents a different situation. The authority and responsibility already exists in H.E.A.L. to plan for its orderly future development. The physical evidence in this area indicates that this has not taken place. Rather than inclusion in the Downtown Development District, it is recommended that an updated comprehensive plan for the area be prepared to determine a rationalized program for expansion, physcial development and organization requirements. The plan should contain a strong urban design component to identify appropriate public improvements and a design framework for future development in a campus-like setting for the H.E.A.L. member institutions.

The District has two neighbors on its downtown side across Iberville Street: the Iberville housing project and the Vieux Carre. The Iberville housing project, while once a model, has experienced serious problems in recent years as have many housing projects across the nation. The project seems to be a tremendous missed opportunity for the benefit of its residents and the CBD. It is recommended that a joint effort be undertaken by the District, the City and the Housing Authority of New Orleans to examine ways to improve the lives of the residents. Issues which should be examined include the physical configuration of the site, management and potential owner-occupancy, and the long term future of the project.

ADDITIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT

Figure 23



The Vieux Carre is the District's other neighbor downtown. During the 1975 GMP discussions took place concerning the appropriateness of its inclusion in the District. The Vieux Carre's decision then was to remain separate. Whatever the wisdom of that decision, it is clear that there are now opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation between the District and the Quarter. Retail activity in the Quarter, to cite but one example, has encountered increasing competition in recent years from a large number of new establishments. And yet the obvious opportunity for joint promotion and celebration of the connections between the District and the Quarter has not been seized. Bourbon, Royal and Decatur Streets should be taken as design opportunities to make the statement "you've only seen half of it; there's more over here." The opportunity exists for gateways between the two areas on these streets. Both sides of the gateway will benefit from the increased activity.