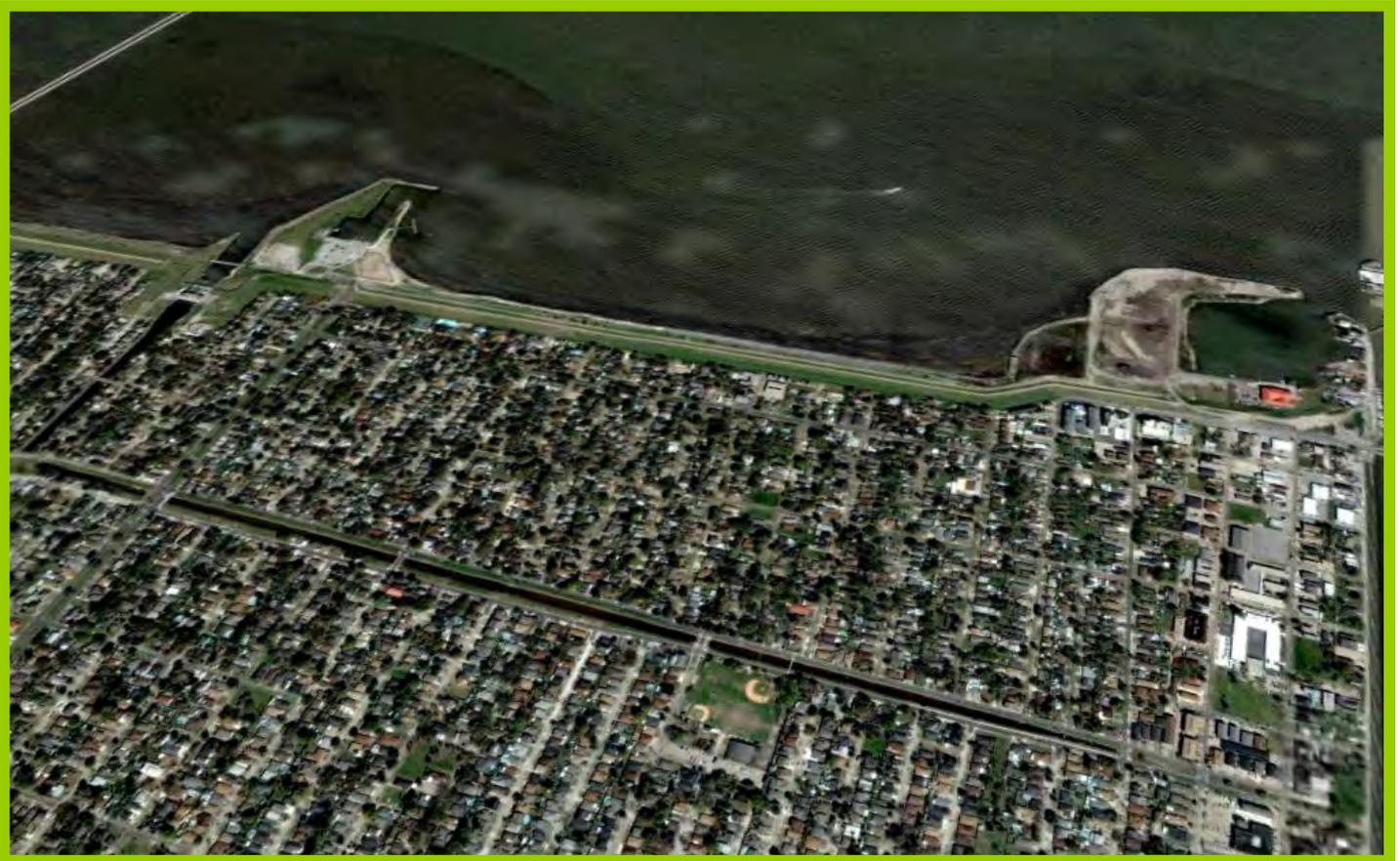


# BUCKTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

## Final Document



Prepared for the  
**Jefferson Parish Council**

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# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **PROJECT OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE**

Bucktown is a neighborhood in the northeastern corner of Jefferson Parish. Situated in a linear fashion along Lake Pontchartrain, the neighborhood is clearly tied to the lake. In fact, the neighborhood had its beginnings as a sleepy fishing village at the junction of the 17th Street Canal and Lake Pontchartrain. During the neighborhood's westward expansion during the 1950s, 60s and 70s, the neighborhood's residential areas became home to many fishermen (both professional and recreational). Maritime businesses, seafood sales and restaurants could be found near the junction of Lake Avenue and Old Hammond Highway. However, by the early part of the 21st century, this area had begun to experience substantial redevelopment. Developers were eyeing the prime lakefront property in Bucktown for high-rise condominiums and other commercial development, including a plan that would have brought a commercial marina to a nine-acre swath of land jutting into the lake on Bucktown's northeast corner. Bucktown residents began to raise concerns that such development could destroy the community. Eventually, parish officials did away with the commercial marina plan, but zoning issues relating to other proposed redevelopment led to additional conflicts.

Due to such unique and complex issues, the Envision Jefferson 2020 Comprehensive Plan targeted the Bucktown area for a future sub-area plan. The idea of a sub-area plan was also backed by the council member representing Bucktown. Specifically, it was felt that Bucktown needed additional study, including specialized sets of goals, objectives, and policies and perhaps individualized zoning to implement those goals, objectives and policies. The guiding principle was that the Parish wanted to allow for redevelopment, but that neighborhood protection as well as the history and uniqueness of Bucktown was to be considered as redevelopment occurred. In November of 2004, the Jefferson Parish Council passed a resolution selecting N-Y Associates, Inc. to prepare a Bucktown Neighborhood Plan, and work was formally begun with a Notice to Proceed issued on February 18, 2005.

The purpose of this report is to identify current conditions and issues, provide a neighborhood plan to address issues regarding future redevelopment (such as land use, traffic and recreation), and to outline an implementation strategy. The Bucktown Neighborhood Plan has been developed over the last year and a half, and is the result of project area research, data received from coordination with local, state, and federal agencies and officials; and most importantly, with cohesive public input and participation, both from the general public and the members of the Bucktown Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), an appointed steering committee for the plan.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA**

One of the first tasks facing the project team was the determination of the study area boundaries. Historically, as mentioned above, Bucktown was centered in the northeastern-most portion of the Parish. However, over time, a “greater Bucktown” has been recognized, containing the area north of West Esplanade, south of Lake Pontchartrain, west of the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal, and east of Bonnabel Blvd. It was this larger definition of Bucktown that the CAC agreed to use as a study area for all efforts within the plan process. The study area is indicated on Figure I-1 on the following page.

It should be noted that while Bucktown generally encompasses the northeastern corner of Jefferson Parish, the study limits for the Bucktown Neighborhood Plan do not include the Jefferson Parish portions of West End, which lie on the other side of the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal. West End, in fact is being examined in a separate study being completed by the Regional Planning Commission (RPC) which will include its own set of plans and recommendations.

## **METHODOLOGY**

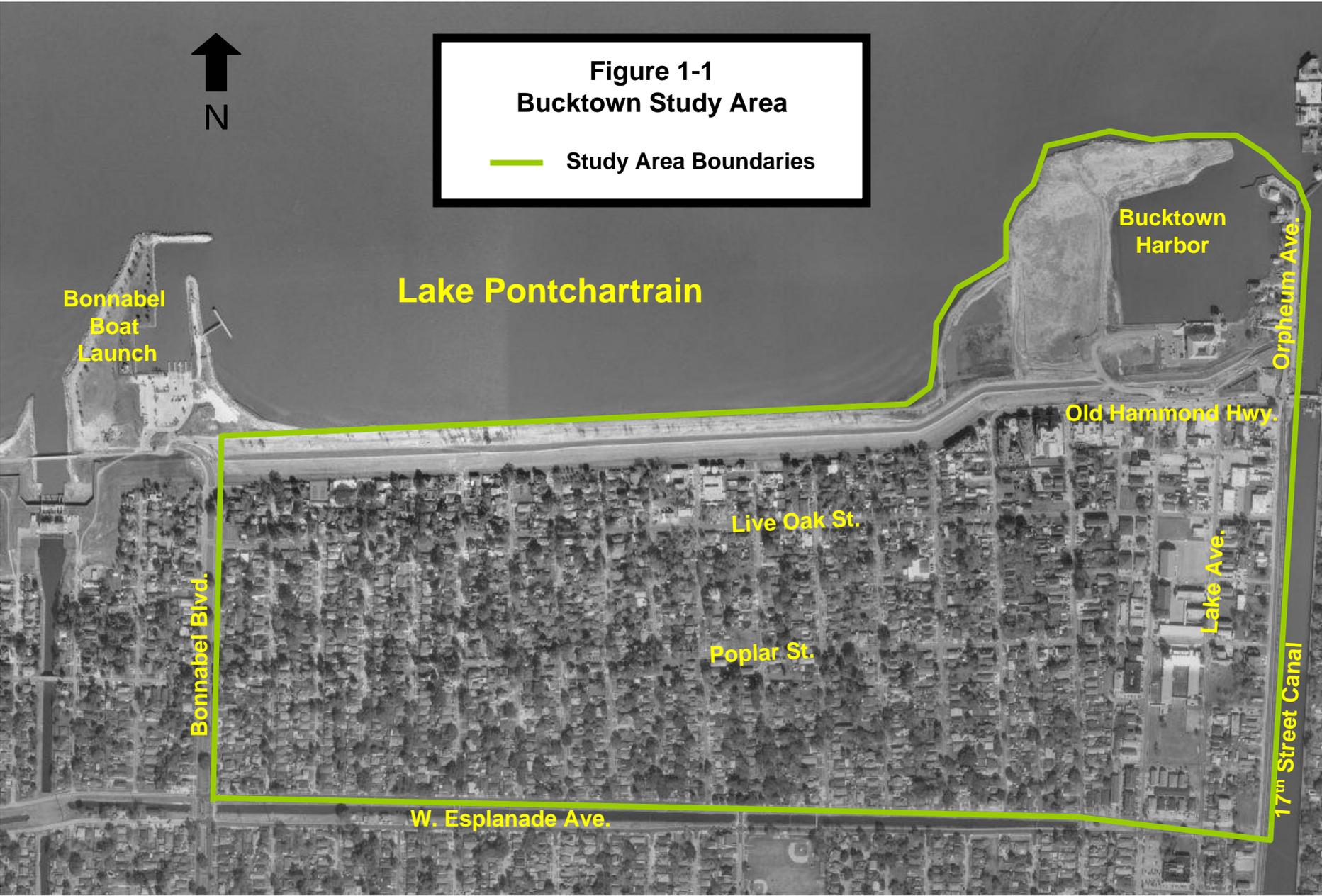
The planning process used for the Bucktown Neighborhood Plan uses a methodology consistent with accepted land-use and community-based planning initiatives:

- The planning team collected demographic information on the study area from the most recent US Census data.
- Zoning information was obtained from the Parish’s planning department, and data on existing land use activities was collected via field surveys, and mapped following the procedures and methods of the American Planning Association’s Land Based Classification System.
- Transportation system data was obtained from previous studies, new traffic counts, and field observations.
- Public input was obtained at as series of four public workshop meetings held at the regular meeting site for the neighborhood’s civic association
- To provide input and oversight to the planning process, a Bucktown Citizen’s Advisory Committee was established. Membership on the Committee was by appointment by the district councilperson, and included neighborhood residents, representatives from neighborhood businesses, the local Planning Advisory Board member, a representative from the Regional Planning Committee, the head of the Neighborhood Civic Association, a representative from the Jefferson Chamber, and a representative from the Jefferson Business Council.



**Figure 1-1**  
**Bucktown Study Area**

— Study Area Boundaries



Bonnabel Boat Launch

Lake Pontchartrain

Bucktown Harbor

Bonnabel Blvd.

Live Oak St.

Old Hammond Hwy.

Poplar St.

Lake Ave.

W. Esplanade Ave.

17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal

Orpheum Ave.

## **REPORT ORGANIZATION**

The report is organized as follows:

### **CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION**

### **CHAPTER II – PROJECT AREA BACKGROUND**

In this chapter, a full background of Bucktown is provided. A summary history of the Bucktown area is described, from its initial beginnings as a recreation center and fishing village in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, through its development as a suburban neighborhood, to a discussion of the area's conditions pre-Katrina and the effects of that hurricane on the area. The chapter then provides a description of key data regarding the project area, including demographics, description and maps of zoning in the neighborhood, and a discussion of both existing land uses in Bucktown and proposed future land use and described in the Envision 2020 plan.

### **CHAPTER III – COMMUNITY INPUT**

This chapter provides a summary of the process and outcomes of the primary public participation portion of the project, including the meetings of the Bucktown Citizen Advisory Committee and a series of four Public Workshop meetings. These meetings were held over the life of the planning process in 2005 and 2006. Other meetings, including meetings with the Bucktown Civic Association and groups working on parallel Parish projects affecting Bucktown are also summarized.

### **CHAPTER IV – GENESIS OF THE PLAN**

The process of the plan's development is tracked in this chapter. The Chapter begins with a discussion of the major issues and concerns identified via the Bucktown CAC and Public Workshop meeting process. The steps taken in developing the Goals, Objectives and Policies through the planning process are then presented. The chapter concludes with an examination of the major action items arising from the plan, and how they came about.

### **CHAPTER V – BUCKTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**

This chapter presents the Bucktown Neighborhood's plan for the future, consisting of several parts. The first part includes the plan's Goals, Objectives and Policies, as developed through the public planning process. Next is the presentation of a revised future land use plan map, with accompanying text, describing where changes are recommended. A discussion of existing and future transportation facilities, along with a description of transportation facilities proposed

for future study is then presented along with accompanying graphics. Existing and future community facilities are then discussed, followed by an in-depth description of the centerpiece of the plan, the Old Bucktown District. The final part of the chapter is an Implementation Strategy to move forward with the recommendations and findings in the Bucktown Neighborhood Plan.

# CHAPTER II

## PROJECT AREA BACKGROUND

In this chapter, a full background of Bucktown is provided. A summary history of the Bucktown area is described, from its initial beginnings as a recreation center and fishing village in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, through its development as a suburban neighborhood, to a discussion of the area's conditions pre-Katrina and the effects of that hurricane on the area. The chapter then provides a description of key data regarding the project area, including demographics, description and maps of zoning in the neighborhood, and a discussion of both existing land uses in Bucktown and proposed future land use and described in the Envision 2020 plan.

### SUMMARY HISTORY OF BUCKTOWN

#### BUCKTOWN'S BEGINNINGS

The beginning of Bucktown goes all the way back to the creation of the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal. According to historical accounts, the canal had its origin at the start of the 1850s as a canal dug through swampy ground to raise a parallel right-of-way where the Jefferson and Lake Pontchartrain Railway was built. The Railway connected the town of Carrollton, Louisiana (along the Mississippi River front) with a shipping port on Lake Pontchartrain located on the eastern side of the canal. The shipping port also became a site for recreation, with a hotel, restaurants, a bowling alley, dance hall, picnic ground, pleasure garden, and bathing facilities. Originally called Lakeport, the place later became famous as West End.

The railway was discontinued in 1864 as competing rail lines between the river and lake (such as the rail line along the New Basin Canal leading to West End and the old "Smoky Mary" leading to Milneberg) were more successful. However, the canal was to have new importance, as the city of New Orleans annexed Carrollton, and the canal subsequently became the boundary line between Orleans Parish and Jefferson Parish. As the canal marked the up-river limit of Orleans Parish, it was originally known as the **Upperline Canal**. A spur canal in the back of Carrollton was beside a projected street numbered "17th Street" and that canal was thus the first to be known as the "17th Street Canal". Over time that name became the more commonly-referred to name of the main canal that eventually became used a drainage canal.<sup>1</sup>

While West End (on the eastern side of the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal) developed as primarily a recreation destination, the western side of the canal in Jefferson Parish developed in a more rustic fashion, with a string of fishing and hunting camps lining the both the 17th Street Canal and Lake Pontchartrain. According to histories of the area, the earliest

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Wikipedia.org

structures were wooden huts raised on stilts, while the canal provided a harbor for fishing boats. The people who lived along the canal and out on the lake were squatters who made their living from fishing, crabbing, hunting and trapping, as well as from the rental of boats, and the sale of tackle and bait.<sup>2</sup>

In due time, Bucktown began to develop further, matching and sometimes surpassing West End as an entertainment venue. By the early 20th century, wooden camps built on stilts with wide galleries covered by shingle or tin roofs lined the canal. The most notable of these was the Bruning House at the end of Orpheum Avenue, a landmark built in 1893 by Captain John C. Bruning that existed until being destroyed by Katrina<sup>3</sup>. There were also stores, a schoolhouse, and a jail, as well as saloons, gambling houses, dance halls and clubhouses for sportsmen. Bucktown's restaurants were notable attractions, serving plentiful seafood from the lake and wildfowl and game from the surrounding swamps and marshes.

## THE NAME “BUCKTOWN”

By the 1920s, Bucktown acquired its current place name. There are several stories about the name's origin. Some say that the village was named for the good deer hunting in the area. Others say that the area was named for a local fisherman, Oliver 'Buck' Wooley. Still others attribute the name to the wild and woolly nature of the area: during the prohibition years, West End was the more genteel cultured recreation spot, while Bucktown was more of a rowdy, wide-open place. One of the primary reasons was that gambling was legal (or at least looked upon with a wink and a nod) in Jefferson Parish, just across the canal from West End. The Jefferson Parish side became known for its speakeasies, houses of prostitution, and gaming dens. With such an incendiary mix, fights and brawls were common. As a result, some historians claim that the area on the west side of the canal is said to have been named for the “young bucks” that came there looking for a rough time. At any rate, the sobriquet “Bucktown” took, and still holds to this day.

During the Prohibition years of the 1920s Bucktown even played a role in the development of jazz music. The speakeasies, bars, and gambling halls needed music and musicians, and many of those who played at West End earlier in the evening would often come and play later for more raucous crowds a short distance west in Bucktown. The area even influenced at least two jazz tunes: 'Bucktown Bounce' by Johnny Wiggs and 'Bucktown Blues' by Jelly Roll Morton.

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<sup>2</sup> Source: *Deanie's Restaurant website*, <http://secure.deanies.com/history2.html>

<sup>3</sup> *Tulanian magazine*, Fall 2004

## BUCKTOWN EXPANDS

As time went on, more and more development began to occur on the land to the south and southwest of the original Bucktown community, spurred on by the development of the original (now, "Old") Hammond Highway along the shore of Lake Pontchartrain. The original Bucktown fishing village was constructed right along the water, as such was vulnerable to hurricanes. The damage from the hurricanes of 1915 and 1947 contributed to the village's picturesque, ramshackle appearance.

Like the rest of Jefferson Parish, Bucktown experienced tremendous growth in the post World War II years. Drainage improvements, installation of levee protection, subdivision of large tracts, and improvements in transportation all led to the areas south and southwest of the original fishing village rapidly developing, such that by the end of the 1970s, areas south to the West Esplanade Canal and west to Bonnabel Boulevard had essentially been built out, primarily with single family residential homes. Along with those homes, schools were also developed: an elementary school for Bucktown-based St. Louis King of France Parish was established in 1953, and not long thereafter, a public elementary school, East End (now Marie B. Riviere) was opened just across Poplar Street from the Catholic school. Notable restaurants also got their start in these post-war baby boom years: Deanie's was opened at its first location in 1961 while Sid-Mar's opened its doors in 1967.

The late seventies began a time of more change for Bucktown. Two major changes began in that time period, both of which were begat in conflicts between Jefferson Parish and Orleans Parish concerning their boundary along the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal. The first of these dealt with linkages to West End. Bucktown had always been closely linked to West End, both literally and figuratively (by a roadway bridge). As a matter of fact, the overwhelming majority of the restaurants in West End were technically located in Jefferson Parish, while restaurant patrons accessed the restaurants via (and usually parked in) Orleans Parish. In 1977, New Orleans officials converted the West End parking lot into a paid parking lot to reap some of the benefits from the restaurants. In conjunction with this measure, and to limit access to the paid parking lot, vehicular access across the Orpheum Avenue Bridge was removed (although the bridge remained open to pedestrians and bicyclists). According to residents and business owners, these moves began the downfall of West End, but concurrently, seemed to spur more restaurant business in Bucktown. After some political negotiation between Jefferson Parish and the City of New Orleans, the pay parking lot was returned to a free lot system in 1989, but the bridge was never reopened for vehicular traffic.

The second inter-parish issue dealt with the fishing fleet and residences along the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal. Although the entirety of the canal is within Jefferson Parish, the maintenance of the canal itself fell under the purview of the New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board, as it is the outfall canal for much of the city's drainage. The Board complained that the structures and fleet blocked the outfall flow, and that the structures and residents there were squatters. The May 3, 1978 rainstorm and flood brought the issue to a head, with the result that while all structures were removed from the 17<sup>th</sup> Street

Canal, the fleet could remain docked there under annual lease agreements with the Sewerage and Water Board. Prior to that time, the 17th Street Canal at Bucktown was home to a fleet of about one hundred fishing boats, but this number has steadily been in decline.

Around the same time, Jefferson Parish began discussions and plans to create a recreational marina where conceivably most of the Bucktown fleet could relocate. The Parish obtaining a lease from the State of Louisiana for the state-owned water bottoms, conducted hydrologic modeling, and obtained a US Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit. Most notably over the last 25 years, the Parish constructed (via the dumping of riprap, construction debris, and dirt fill) an “L” –shaped breakwater near the northeast corner of Bucktown along the lake. This breakwater, along with the Orpheum Avenue peninsula on the east, created a calm basin. At one point in the early 2000s, the Parish completed initial plans to develop the basin as a commercial marina, with a fishing village, large boat storage building, retail shops, and a commercial marina office building. However, this development never came about, and the only maritime development of the basin to date has been the construction of a new US Coast Guard station on the south edge of the basin, completed in 2001. The Coast Guard made some improvements to the basin itself, including the dredging of the basin and a channel leading to the lake, and installation of bulkheads along the basin’s south shore (*see Figure 2-1, below*).



**Figure 2-1** Bucktown Basin and US Coast Guard Station, 2005

In the latter part of the twentieth century, with its land-mass essentially built out, Bucktown began to experience redevelopment of existing parcels. Throughout the neighborhood, the redevelopment of individual residential lots began to occur, with “tear down” redevelopment of residential properties, mostly of single-family houses but also with some two-family structures replacing older post-war homes. Additionally, there was a concentrated area of larger-scale redevelopment occurring along Old Hammond

Highway, with new multi-story buildings being constructed. Pontchartrain Place Condominiums was the first of these major developments, followed by the Fleur-de-Lac condominiums. Both were multi-story, mid-rise residential complexes. The Brown Foundation Center was the third major redevelopment and featured a multi-story commercial office building. At the time of this study, other major mid- and hi-rise redevelopments were being proposed in the Old Hammond Highway area.

## BUCKTOWN, PRE- AND POST-KATRINA

The Bucktown Neighborhood Plan process was well underway prior to the landfall of Hurricane Katrina in August 2005. Three (3) public workshop meetings and two (2) Citizen's Advisory Committee meetings had been held, and a set of Goals, Policies and Objectives for the neighborhood plan had been drafted.

Of course, all of that changed after August 29<sup>th</sup>, 2005, when Hurricane Katrina hit the area. The original site of Bucktown—Orpheum Avenue along side the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal—was particularly hard hit; all buildings and structures north of the levee/floodwall, with the exception of the new US Coast Guard Station, were completely destroyed. Following that destruction, the US Army Corps of Engineers commandeered the entire Orpheum Avenue peninsula in order to construct a massive new floodgate structure at the mouth of the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal. Local officials and the Corps also announced that they were exploring the possibility of a new pumping station being placed in the same area. Such changes have made it highly unlikely that the “fishing village” of raised homes and working fishing fleet will be returning to the Orpheum Avenue peninsula, the original birthplace of Bucktown.

While the rest of Bucktown was spared the catastrophic flooding due to storm surge and levee and floodwall breaches, many homes in the neighborhood received damage due to high winds and rain, or were affected by floodwaters rising out of the overflowing West Esplanade Canal. At the time of this report, many residents are still repairing their homes and residing in temporary trailers located in their front yards.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### METHODOLOGY

The methodology employed in this section involved research of demographic data for the study area available from the U. S. Census Bureau American FactFinder, specifically *Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF 1)*, *Census 2000 Summary File 3 (SF 3)*, *1990 Summary Tape File (STF -1)* and *1990 Summary Tape File 3 (STF-3)*.

The *Bucktown Neighborhood Plan* study area is located in the northeastern portion of Jefferson Parish being bounded by Lake Pontchartrain to the north, the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal to the east, West Esplanade Avenue to the south and Bonnabel Boulevard to the east.

The *Bucktown Neighborhood Plan* study area as described above consists of Census Tract 201.01, Block Groups 1 and 2 and Census Tract 201.01, Block Group 1<sup>4</sup>.

The demographic analysis examines trends for the following data in the study area:

- Population
- Real Estate
- Housing
- Employment
- Income

## FINDINGS

### General Population

Table 2-1 shows the current general population in the study area at **3,857**. This is a 5% decrease in population from 1990, at which time the population was **4,065**.

**Table 2- 1**  
**General Population in the Bucktown Study Area**

Census 1990	Census 2000	Change from 1990 to 2000	% Change
4,065	3,857	-208	-5%

### Age

Table 2-2 illustrates the how the general population of the study area falls into five age ranges. Most of the existing population is from 21 to 59 years of age, with the 21 to 39 year group almost evenly split with the 40 to 59 year group.

**Table 2-2**  
**Age Range in the Bucktown Study Area**

Range	Age
0 to 20 years	780
21 to 39 years	1008
40 to 59 years	1051
60 to 79 years	852
80+ years	166
<b>Total</b>	<b>3857</b>

<sup>4</sup> Please note that the boundary for Census Tract 201.02, Block Group 2 is the Bonnabel Canal, which extends slightly east of Bonnabel Boulevard.

## Racial Composition

Table 2-3 reveals stable levels of racial composition in the study area between 1990 and 2000. Census 2000 data show the Bucktown study area with 97% white, 2% Asian and 1% some other race. This compares to Census 1990 data with the study area at 98% white, 1% Asian and 1% some other race. The minority population in the study area combines all categories listed under race with the exception of white. The percentage of minority population in the study area increased from 2% in Census 1990 to 3% in Census 2000.

**Table 2-3  
Racial Composition in the Bucktown Study Area**

Race <sup>5</sup>	1990 Census		2000 Census	
	Population	%	Population	%
<b>White</b>	3,981	98%	3,699	97%
<b>Black or African American</b>	2	0%	10	0%
<b>American Indian and Alaska Native</b>	6	0%	7	0%
<b>Asian</b>	45	1%	78	2%
<b>Some other race</b>	31	1%	36	1%
<b>% Minority Population</b>	4,065	2%	3,830	3%

## Housing

Housing data in the Bucktown study area depicts a mixture of owners and renters with a strong occupancy rate. Table 2-4 counts 1928 housing units in the study area, of which only 5% are vacant. The occupied units are 63% owners and 37% renters.

**Table 2-4  
Housing in the Bucktown Study Area**

	Number of Housing Units	Percentage
<b>Occupied:</b>	1835	95%
<i>Owners</i>	1151	63%
<i>Renters</i>	684	37%
<b>Vacant</b>	93	5%
<b>Total in the Study Area</b>	1928	100%

<sup>5</sup> The data for race are derived from the “one race only” category in Census 2000. No population counts in the Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander category were found in either the Census 1990 or Census 2000.

## Real Estate

Using the median value of owner occupied units. Table 2-5 documents that the value of housing in the Bucktown study area has increased by 72% from 1990 to 2000:

**Table 2-5**  
**Median Value of Housing in the Bucktown Study Area**

Census 1990	Census 2000	% Change
\$82,733	\$142,000	72%

## Employment

Table 2-6 notes that 3242 persons in the study area are considered the working population (those in the work force that are 16 years of age or older). The working population in the study area contains 66% in the labor force, 34% not in the labor force and 5% unemployed. Individuals that are not in the labor force are most likely in school.

**Table 2-6**  
**Employment in the Bucktown Study Area**

Employment Category	Population	% Of Working Population
In the Labor Force	2149	66%
<i>In the Armed Forces</i>	15	0%
<i>Civilian Employed</i>	1983	61%
<i>Unemployed</i>	151	5%
Not in the Labor Force	1093	34%
Total Working Population	3242	100%

## Income

Table 2-7 indicates that the per capita income in the Bucktown study area rose 62% from 1990 to 2000.

**Table 2-7**  
**Per Capita Income in the Bucktown Study Area**

Census 1990 <sup>6</sup>	Census 2000 <sup>7</sup>	% Change
\$14,744	\$23,876	62%

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<sup>6</sup> Per capita income in 1989.

<sup>7</sup> Per capita income in 1999.

## ZONING

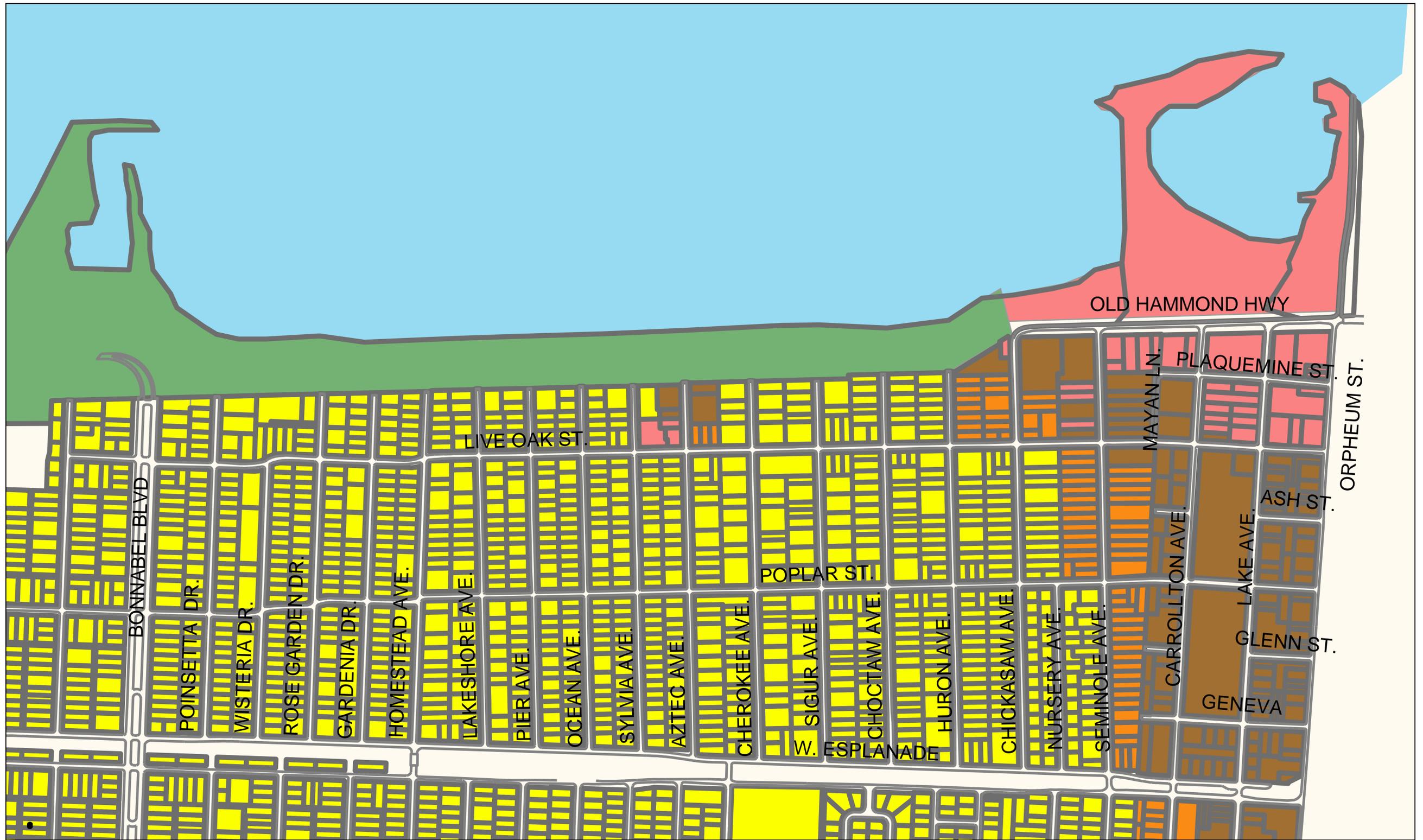
Bucktown contains four (4) different zoning classifications, three of which are residential, and one commercial district. Figure 2-2, on the following page, provides a zoning map for Bucktown. As can be seen on the map, the general trend is of the more restrictive use of R-1A zoning predominating, gradually transitioning towards the northeastern corner of the neighborhood to the less restrictive R-2, then R-3, and finally with the commercial C-1 zoning being present in the extreme northeast corner.

The overwhelming majority of the neighborhood is zoned *R-1A, Single-Family Residential District*. The district is intended for lands and structures having a low-density, single-family residential character. Uses are limited to single-family residences and such non-residential uses intended to provide service to the adjacent neighborhood. The area bounded by Bonnabel Blvd., the Lake Pontchartrain levee, West Esplanade Avenue and Huron Avenue is almost exclusively zoned R-1A (the lone exception is a section in the vicinity of Live Oak Street and Aztec Avenue). All of the parcels fronting on Huron, Chickasaw Avenue and Nursery Avenue south of Live Oak Street are zoned R-1A, as is the west side of Seminole Avenue south of Poplar Street.

The *R-2, Two-Family Residential District* zoning classification in Jefferson Parish is intended to recognize a greater density of residential use by allowing two-family structures, but not permitting multiple dwelling structures. R-2 zoning in Bucktown fulfills this buffer role in a spatial sense as well, covering a narrow strip separating the single-family R-1A section on the west with the multi-family R-3 area on the neighborhood's eastern end. R-2 areas include the eastern side of Seminole Avenue south of Poplar Street, nearly both sides of Seminole Avenue between Poplar and Live Oak, and areas just north of Live Oak along Chickasaw Avenue and the east side of Huron Avenue. A small pocket of R-2 also exists on the northwest corner of Aztec and Live Oak.

*R-3, Multiple Family Residential District* is Jefferson Parish's primary multi-family zoning classification, designed to recognize a higher density of residential use. R-3 zoned areas in Bucktown are located in the eastern section of the neighborhood, primarily along Carrollton, Lake and Orpheum Avenues, on either side of Mayan Lane, up along Old Hammond Highway and the levee between Huron and Seminole Avenues, with several parcels along Seminole Avenue north of Live Oak Street,. A small section of R-3 zoned property is located near the levee at the end of Aztec Street.

The northeast corner of Bucktown is designated as *C-1, Neighborhood Commercial District*. C-1 provides for light retail goods and services serving adjacent residential districts. C-1 zoned areas are generally bounded by Orpheum Avenue, Live Oak Street, Carrollton Avenue, Plaquemine Street, Seminole Avenue, and Old Hammond Highway. The areas north of the Old Hammond Highway between Chickasaw Avenue and the 17<sup>th</sup> street canal, including the Bucktown Harbor area and the original Bucktown along Orpheum drive are also zoned C-1. A small section of C-2 zoned parcels also is present on the north side of Live Oak Street between Sylvia and Aztec Avenues.



**Legend**

- |                                                                                        |                                                                                         |                                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  C1 |  R1A |  R3        |
|  C2 |  R2  |  NOT ZONED |

**BUCKTOWN  
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**

**ZONING**

SOURCE - JEFFERSON PARISH PLANNING DEPT.



**ASSOCIATES, INC.**  
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**FIGURE**

**2-2**

Following an intensive Multiple Family Height Study, the Jefferson Parish Council adopted on July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2006 certain recommended changes to the Parish’s Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. The changes affected permitted uses and height restrictions in various districts that allowed for multi-family housing in the Parish. The Bucktown neighborhood had been one of the neighborhoods with issues that led to the call for the study, and in fact is affected by the changes to the zoning ordinance. The manner in which each of Bucktown’s four zoning districts were affected by the change are presented below:

**Table 2-8  
2006 Zoning Changes Affecting Bucktown**

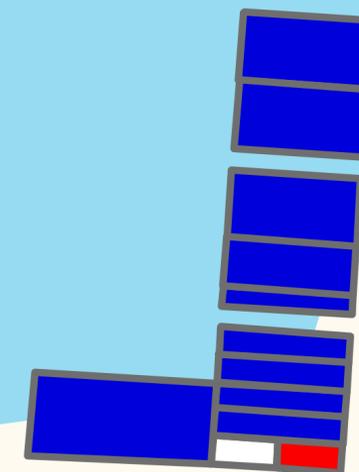
<b>Bucktown Zoning Classification</b>	<b>Previous Height Limit</b>	<b>New Height Limit</b>	<b>Change to permitted use?</b>
R-1 Single Family Residential	35 ft.	35 ft.	no
R-2 Two Family Residential	35 ft.	35 ft.	no
R-3 Multiple-Family Residential	Equal to width of facing street right-of-way (60 ft. max, variances allowed)	Equal to width of facing street right-of-way (60 ft. max allowed by right.). If setbacks and other requirements are met, may equal up to 1.5 times the width of the facing street (up to a 90 ft. max, no variances allowed)	Minor changes to elderly housing and assisted living facility
C-1 Neighborhood Commercial	45 ft. (variances allowed)	45 ft. maximum allowed by right. If setbacks and other requirements are met, may go up to a 70 ft. max (no variances allowed)	Allowed for multiple-family dwellings if 50% of ground floor is occupied by non-residential uses

**LAND USE**

The Bucktown neighborhood contains a mix of land uses, including varying degrees of residential, commercial, recreation, and public sector. These are described in depth below. Figure 2-3, on the following page, provides a map of Bucktown’s existing Land Use, updated in 2006.

LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN

OLD HAMMOND HWY



**Legend**

SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	LEISURE ACTIVITIES
TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	COMMERCIAL
THREE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	COMMERCIAL VACANT
FOUR FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	VACANT
FIVE OR MORE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	
MASS ASSEMBLY OR PEOPLE	
SOCIAL, INSTITUTIONAL OR INFRASTRUCTURE RELATED	

# BUCKTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

## EXISTING LAND USE

SOURCE: 2005/2006 FIELD VERIFICATION



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**FIGURE**

**2-3**

## Residential

As alluded to in the Zoning section, the most prominent land use in the neighborhood is residential. As can be seen on Figure 2-3, most of Bucktown consists of single family homes, stretching from Bonnabel Blvd. to east of Seminole Avenue. Pockets of single-family homes are also located between Lake and Orpheum Avenues in an area zoned for multi-family residential.



**Figure 2-4. Single family homes in Bucktown.** On the left, traditional raised cottages along Orpheum Avenue; on the right, an example of a newly constructed redevelopment parcel home.

Two-family homes are dispersed in the eastern end of the neighborhood, with some clusters along the northernmost block of Huron Avenue, along Seminole Avenue, and scattered between Lake and Orpheum Avenues. Three-and four-family housing is even less prevalent in the neighborhood, with scattered sites in the eastern section of Bucktown.



**Figure 2-5. New two-family homes in Bucktown**

Multifamily housing predominates along the western side of Carrolton Avenue, with some scattered locations between Orpheum and Lake Avenue, in some locations north of Live Oak Street, and in an isolated pocket at the north end of Aztec Avenue. Most of these multifamily developments could be described as smaller “garden” apartment and condominium complexes. Along Old Hammond Highway however, are two (2) mid-rise condominium complexes overlooking the lake.



**Figure 2-6. Multifamily housing in Bucktown.** On the left, a free standing multifamily building; on the right, two newer condominium complexes on Old Hammond Highway

## Commercial

Bucktown has a good deal of commercial development focused on its northeast corner. Several restaurants are allocated in this area (Saia’s, R&O’s, II Tony’s, Deanie’s, etc.). Several maritime and seafood wholesalers are also present in the area reflecting Bucktown’s heritage. Other commercial uses in the area include small shops, convenience stores, and professional services such as doctor and dentist offices. The largest commercial building in the area is the Brown Foundation Center Building, a mid-rise commercial building on Old Hammond Highway.



**Figure 2-7. Commercial Land Uses in Bucktown.** On the left, along Old Hammond Highway; on the right, along Lake Avenue.

Several other commercial establishments are located outside of the northwest corner, mostly along Live Oak Street: these include Sammy's Grocery, Ralph's Barber Shop, Bernard's Car Care and Mr. Ed's Restaurant.

### **Mass Assembly of People**

This land use category covers churches, schools and the like. Bucktown's east end is home to several of these – Marie Riviere Elementary School, St. Louis King of France Church and School (including the Knights of Columbus hall) as well as the St. Mark Lutheran Church on Chickasaw Avenue.

### **Social Institutional or Infrastructure Related**

This category covers public or government-owned facilities. Bucktown is of course home to the US Coast Guard Station just north of Old Hammond Highway. Following Hurricane Katrina, the US Army Corps of Engineers commandeered the Orpheum Avenue peninsula for the large floodgate structure.

It should be noted that the Jefferson Parish Library-Lakeshore Branch is located just south of Bucktown, on the corner of Oaklawn and West Esplanade.

### **Leisure Activities**

Lakeside Country Club at the north end of Rose Garden Drive is the only such land use example in this category within Bucktown itself. However, the entire lakefront levee, which is publicly owned, is used for such activities as bicycling, jogging, strolling and dog-walking, so it could be considered to fit within this category. Similarly, the Bonnabel Boat Launch on Bucktown's northwest corner might be included in this definition.

### **Vacant Properties**

Not surprisingly, given the amount of redevelopment occurring in Bucktown, there is very little vacant land scattered within the neighborhood. Similarly, there are very few vacant commercial buildings in the neighborhood.

## **FUTURE LAND USE**

*Envision Jefferson 2020* is the Comprehensive Plan for unincorporated Jefferson Parish. On August 6, 2003 the Parish Council adopted Ordinance No. 21939, making the Comprehensive Plan part of the Jefferson Parish Code of Ordinances. The initial parts, or elements, of the Plan are the Land Use Element, the Transportation Element, and the

Implementation and Administration Element. The *Land Use Element* establishes the proposed location of types, densities, and intensities of different activities, or land uses, in unincorporated Jefferson Parish. The Future Land Use Map (FLUM) adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan uses future land use categories to illustrate the preferred location of development in Jefferson Parish over the next twenty (20) years. A close-up of the Future Land Use map in the Bucktown area is presented in Figure 2-8 on the following page.

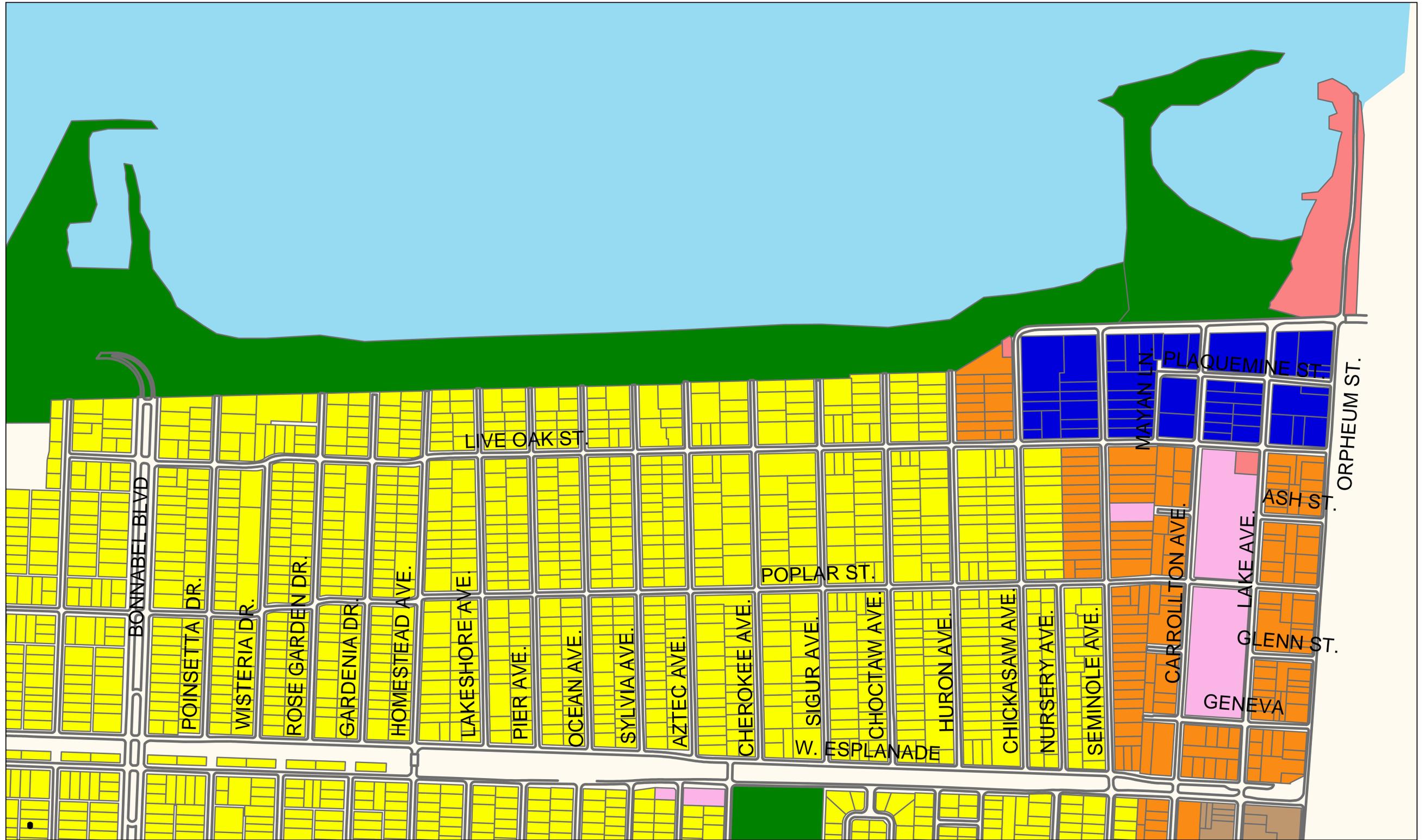
The FLUM in the area of Bucktown is very reflective of current conditions. The existing single-family land use areas are proposed for similar low-medium density residential use in the future. The two-, three-, four- and multi-family areas located on the eastern side of Bucktown (under both current land use and current zoning) are proposed for medium-density residential land use in the future. The two elementary schools are projected as public uses. Finally, the lakefront levee areas, including the linear park and the proposed Bucktown Harbor/Marina, are proposed as recreation areas. The only anomaly exists in the northeast corner of Bucktown, in the area bounded by Old Hammond Highway, Orpheum Avenue, Live Oak Street and Nursery Avenue. On the future Land Use Map, this area is designated as *Neighborhood Mixed Use*, which is defined in the Future land Use Plan as follows:

*The neighborhood mixed-use land use category designates compact, mixed-use development where single-family structures and multi-family residential development are developed with a mixture of smaller, low-intensity retail and professional offices within walking distance and with convenient access to transit. The neighborhood mixed use category will accommodate a land use mix containing a maximum ninety-five (95) percent residential mix with transit stops, commercial, public, recreational, and office uses. The maximum permitted residential density is twelve (12) dwelling units per acre<sup>8</sup>.*

The classification of this area as such reflects its current status of containing a mixture of commercial and residential properties, but it also reflects the vision of the citizens participating in the *Envision 2020* process that this area lends itself to such mixed-use development in the future.

---

<sup>8</sup> Code of Ordinances, Jefferson Parish, Sec.25-262



**Legend**

- |                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  High Dens Res    |  Neighb Mxd Use                           |
|  Low Int Comm     |  Recreation                               |
|  Low Med Dens Res |  Public<br>Quasi Public/<br>Institutional |
|  Med Dens Res     |                                                                                                                              |

**BUCKTOWN  
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**

**PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USE**

SOURCE - ENVISION JEFFERSON 2020 PLAN



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**FIGURE**

**2-8**

# **CHAPTER III**

## **COMMUNITY INPUT**

This chapter provides a summary of the process and outcomes of the primary public participation portion of the project, including the meetings of the Bucktown Citizen Advisory Committee and a series of four Public Workshop meetings. These meetings were held over the life of the planning process in 2005 and 2006. Other meetings, including meetings with the Bucktown Civic Association and groups working on parallel Parish projects affecting Bucktown are also summarized.

### **BUCKTOWN CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Early on in the process, Jefferson Parish Council Member Jennifer Sneed appointed a Bucktown Citizens' Advisory Committee to assist with the development of the Bucktown Neighborhood Plan.

The Citizens Advisory Committee acted as a 'steering committee', providing oversight and guidance. Membership in the committee was intended to be balanced in its make-up, and included Bucktown residents (several neighborhood residents, members and officers of the Bucktown Civic Association), Bucktown business owners (representatives from two area restaurants and a Bucktown-based dentist), representatives of the Jefferson Parish business community (a representative from the Jefferson Chamber and a representative from the Jefferson Business Council), the local fisheries agent for the LSU Agricultural Center (who had extensive experience working with the Bucktown fishing fleet and the proposed marina), the local Planning Advisory Board member, and the head of the Regional Planning Commission.

Meetings were held during the duration of the project. Originally three (3) meetings were planned; however due to the impacts of Katrina five (5) meetings were held. The proceedings of these 5 meetings are summarized below:

#### **BUCKTOWN CAC MEETING # 1 – MAY 3, 2005**

The first meeting was held in the Joe Yenni Building located at 1221 Elmwood Park Boulevard, in Harahan, Louisiana. Ten (10) Members of the 13-member CAC were present.

The first item of business was a decision on the boundaries of the study area, particularly the western boundary. Various members of the CAC discussed what neighborhood boundaries meant to them. The northern boundary is obviously Lake Pontchartrain, the eastern boundary is the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal and the southern boundary is West Esplanade Avenue. The consensus of the group was that the study should extend to Bonabel

Boulevard on the west. Extending the study area west to Bonnabel Boulevard would give the study team the opportunity to examine residential and commercial development patterns and appropriate zoning tools, etc.

A discussion of the format of upcoming public workshops followed. CAC members suggested that the study team utilize the Lakeshore Playground facility located at Oaklawn and West Esplanade Avenues for the public workshops.

The group discussed plans for the Bucktown Marina and showed the group a drawing, depicting greenspace and a park to be developed over the next few years and a future unfunded phase with some boat slips. CAC member Mark Schexnayder gave an overview of the Louisiana Extension Service involvement in assisting the Parish with developing the park at Bucktown marina site, with an emphasis on landscaping and public open space in coordination with the regional bike path along the Lake Pontchartrain levee. Mr. Schexnayder stated that the park plans were fiscally constrained, with the parish looking for grants and benefactors to assist in the development of the park. The CAC noted that there has been poor communication with the parish over the last 25 years concerning the marina. It is hoped that the current study effort will build trust with the community and address concerns voiced in Bucktown with practical solutions.

The meeting then moved to a discussion of other neighborhood issues such as development density and neighborhood character. The consultants gave an overview of the regulatory tools presently existing in the zoning ordinance, like the Mixed Use Corridor District (MUCD), Commercial Parkway Overlay Zone (CPZ) and the Old Metairie Neighborhood Conservation District. The consultant team further stated that neighborhood input would be critical in developing potential architectural and design standards for any kind of new regulatory tool that may be developed during the course of the study.

The relationship of Bucktown to Lake Pontchartrain and the importance of maritime elements in the community were discussed among the group. The CAC talked about the history of Bucktown as a rural fishing village, and the possibility of a fisherman's cove / shrimping village area.

The committee also discussed several neighborhood concerns. The first of these was the height of structures and the proliferation of high-rise developments, particularly along Old Hammond Highway. The second concern was traffic congestion. The CAC members were in consensus that one of the main problems was the volume of traffic in the eastern portion of Bucktown. Traffic from West Esplanade and Old Hammond Highway pass through the area on a daily basis, but those two 4 lane east-west routes are several blocks apart and only connected by a series of a few north-south local streets. With the widening of the Old Hammond Highway Bridge and increased development, the traffic could only worsen. Some suggestions were offered for better handling the traffic: building a new bridge across the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal at West Esplanade, covering the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal and turning it into a four-lane roadway, buying property along one of the

north-south local streets and turning it into a four-lane roadway, etc. The consultant team noted that congestion in the area may have to be reviewed with short-term and long-term solutions in mind.

#### BUCKTOWN CAC MEETING # 2 – JULY 26, 2005

The second meeting of the Bucktown CAC was conducted at R & O's Restaurant, located in the project area. Nine (9) members of the CAC were present for that meeting.

This meeting was held after the first two public workshops, which were well-attended (60 persons at the first, 31 at the second). The consultant team recapped the findings from the comment forms received from workshop attendees, and reviewed the major issues as described by the attendees of the first meeting.

The consultant team then described how at the second workshop, a consensus was reached on 10 very general goals for the project. The meeting then proceeded into the main task for the evening: development of more defined project objectives and policies to implement these goals. The CAC members were presented print copies of an initial draft of project objectives and policies for implementation (based on the workshops and the consultant's own expertise). The consultant emphasized that these would be more concrete, identifiable strategies to pursue in accomplishing these goals, dealing with everything from traffic improvement to dealing with land use and residential density to preserving greenspace.

Using a lap-top computer and projector, the same document that the CAC was reviewing was projected onto a screen and was then edited "on the fly" during the discussion. The CAC and the consultant team went through each of the draft objectives and policies on a line-by-line basis, reviewing each and making changes. While most were mere changes in verbiage, some were more substantial in terms of actions. The key issues discussed included:

- **Lessening of cut-through traffic by creating dead-end features for Seminole and Chickasaw between Old Hammond Highway and Live Oak Street.** Some attendees felt this was a good idea, others felt it was not appropriate. The group agreed that as the policy was for the Parish to *study* the issue, and not to directly implement the dead-ends, it could remain.
- **Rezoning in several locations.** To meet the Housing goals, it was recommended that several properties in the area be rezoned, primarily to make the zoning more consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and to address the wishes of the Bucktown residents. The ideas included zoning some R-3, R-2 and C-1 parcels areas to R1A, and rezoning some R-3 parcels to R-2. There was some discussion as to areas to be rezoned, as well as some discussion as to the nature of how certain existing commercial properties affected (such as Mr. Ed's) would be "grandfathered" in.

- **The creation of a mixed-use district in “Old Bucktown”** At this meeting, the idea was first put forth on the use of a special zoning district for the northeast corner of Bucktown. The district would be for mixed use, hoping to preserve the lively restaurant scene and commercial nature of the area, but enabling some residential development atop restaurants. The entire district would also be tied in visually with design standards and perhaps design review. The CAC members were positive about the approach, and there was some discussion of the use of height and density limits being included in the zoning district language.

Following the discussion and revisions of the draft goals, policies and objectives, the planning team announced they would “clean up” the text changes made during the meeting (as it was done on the fly, there were some misspellings, grammatical, and typographical errors) and have the revised document ready to present at the next public meeting, to be held on August 11, 2006.

### BUCKTOWN CAC MEETING # 3 – FEBRUARY 8, 2006

The third meeting of the Bucktown CAC was at Cleary Playground (temporary home of the Jefferson Parish Planning Department post-Katrina), and was the first major meeting on the project following the hurricane. Nine (9) members of the CAC were present at this meeting.

The meeting began with a report of the status of the project in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, which hit the metro area on August 29<sup>th</sup>. The city and metro area were evacuated for some time and the area is currently in recovery. Mr. Richards noted that as result, the project had been on hold, but as of January, the consultant team had been authorized to renew their efforts and proceed with the study.

The entire group then participated in roundtable discussion of the effects of Katrina on Bucktown and how it might affect the plan and planning process. The most notable physical effect was the complete destruction of residences and businesses along Orpheum Avenue north of the floodwall, and concurrently, the fact that floodgates and eventually a pump station might be constructed in that area. Kent Burgess and his mother Marion Burgess, owners of Sid-Mar’s restaurant in that section of Orpheum, had much information they shared with the CAC. According to them, the entire Orpheum Avenue peninsula north of the flood protection levee was being commandeered by the Corps, ostensibly to provide a workplace to install the new floodgates. Using aerial photographs brought by the consultant, they showed where the new floodgates would be located, and how the levees system was being re-routed to tie into the floodgates. The long-term possibility of a new pumping station being constructed north of (and replacing) the floodgates had been in the news, and all gathered felt it would become a reality. Kent Burgess stated that while the areas on the east side of the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal being used by the Corps may eventually revert to the owners, he doubted that the Orpheum Avenue peninsula would ever do so due to land ownership issues-- the peninsula was reclaimed lake bottom and there was no clear title for previous residents north of his site.

The consultant then discussed Bucktown tie-ins with the ongoing Plans for redevelopment of West End, just across the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal. The Regional Planning Commission had initiated a study looking at redeveloping that area prior to Katrina, which, similar to the Bucktown study had been on hold. With the West End Restaurant area completely destroyed, there was even more impetus to re-develop, albeit upon a blank slate. The most important part of how West End and Bucktown related was to find a synergy, a relationship that enables both of them together to be a prime location. This would include better pedestrian crossings, development of the Bucktown Marina and Park, and improvement of the “Old Bucktown” District.

The group then went into a review and discussion of re-prioritized project objectives and policies for implementation based upon the effects of Hurricane Katrina. A revised and re-prioritized Goals, Objectives & Policies document was then distributed for review and discussion. In this draft, the first goal had become Flood Protection Safety, as this had been relegated to one of the last goals in the pre-Katrina document. The CAC members had several comments on this, such as looking at all methods of flood protection--floodgates at the lake, innovative pumps, and encouraging alternative options such as breakwater construction and creation of wetlands.

The group then went through the goals and objectives and held a general discussion on them. Mark Schexnayder, noting the demise of the Orpheum Avenue peninsula, suggested a statement encouraging uses that were on the peninsula to be relocated across the Marina basin to the marina/park site. However, the State Lands Office and State Attorney General’s determination that commercial use of these filled/reclaimed water bottoms is not legally permissible would preclude such a move.

After some minor revisions, combining some objectives with others and combining some goals with others, the CAC members then ranked them (by goals) into a new priority for presentation within the document:

1. Land Use
2. Housing
3. Design
4. Economic Development
5. Transportation And Traffic
6. Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities
7. Public Infrastructure and Flood Protection
8. Safety and Crime Prevention
9. Citizen Participation

The CAC then held a brief discussion on the attributes of the proposed “Old Bucktown District”. There was some discussion on design considerations, but little comment was made on the district attributes (such as height) as the group wanted to see the results of the Parish’s height study that was underway.

The group then discussed the project timetable and future tasks. The final public meeting that was to be held in September 2005 would be scheduled after Mardi Gras, in early March. The height study should be complete by then. The consultants would then work on formalizing in text and maps those particular items mentioned in the goals, policies and objectives (such as the Old Bucktown District). These would be reviewed by the Parish. While the scope originally only called for three meetings of the CAC, as this meeting functioned as a “re-start” of the project, all agreed that there would be at least one more meeting of the CAC to review the text items and draft of the plan document.

#### BUCKTOWN CAC MEETING # 4 – JUNE 20, 2006

The fourth meeting of the Bucktown CAC was held at R & O’s Restaurant, located in the project area. Eight (8) members of the CAC were present. Lynn Parker, who had replaced Garner Gremillion as Planning Advisory Board member was introduced as a new member, and Tim Coulon, representing the Jefferson Business Council attended in place of CAC member Glenn Gardner.

The meeting began with a recap of the status of the draft text description and map of “Old Bucktown District” including OBM-1, OBM-2, and Parks and Recreation District. These had been e-mailed to the CAC members for their review. The consultant noted that since the time when copies of the draft text were e-mailed, the consultant team had met with the Parish Planning staff and Parish attorney and received their input. Print copies of the text of the district was distributed to the CAC members

Led by the consultant team, the CAC then went through all of the recommended changes from the planning department and parish attorney. For the most part, the CAC members had no comment on the changes. Several key issues did arise, however. Key issues discussed included:

- **Height in OBM-2.** The consultants had originally proposed a straight 60 ft. but without bulk plane restrictions. The Planning Department had suggested making it more in line with the new C-1 recommendations, allowing a maximum of seventy feet but with bulk plane restrictions coming into play at 45 ft. The CAC seemed to agree with the latter proposal.
- **Residential density in OBM-2.** The consultants had originally proposed a minimum unit size of 800 sq. ft. for condominiums in the OBM-2 district. The planning department and Parish attorney had stated a preference for 600 sq. ft. All but one of the CAC members who voiced an opinion stated that 800 was their preferred minimum, while one member said she could see a 600 minimum being acceptable. One reason for the larger minimum was the possibility of a development using that minimum for ALL of its unit sizes, adding to the density in the area.
- **Permitted Uses in OBM1 and OBM-2.** The consultants had originally called for condominiums to be accepted uses in both OBM-1 and OBM-2. With the planning department, they agreed to change condominium to

townhouse/townhome in OBM-1. The planning department and particularly the parish attorney stated that, for various reasons, it would be better in the OBM-2 district to use “multi-family housing as a definition for permitted use rather than condominium. The consultant team felt that condominium represented the wishes of Bucktown residents and the CAC, and argued for its continued use. The CAC members at the meeting preferred the use of condominium as a permitted use rather than “multi-family housing”.

Following the discussion on the two OBM districts, the consultant team noted that the Parks and Recreation District was called for as a parish-wide council study, and would be referenced, but not drafted, under the Bucktown study as it was outside of the consultant’s scope of work.

The consultants also described how the planning department recommended that rather than the Bucktown Tree Preservation District be enacted under its own ordinance, that the Metairie Ridge Tree Preservation district be amended to allow “overlay zones” for tree preservation, with the first district being Metairie Ridge, and the second being Bucktown. This will allow other neighborhoods to follow suit if their residents desire.

The proposed minor zoning changes and future land use map changes that would be in the plan were then described, and the traffic projects recommended for study were also reviewed.

As CAC member Mark Schexnayder was not in attendance, Mr. Richards of the consultant team described recent events relating to the Bucktown crabbing/fishing fleet that was displaced from the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal, and the Bucktown Marina. The Corps of Engineers, which had displaced the boats from the Canal due to its work installing the floodgates, has agreed to fund docks and other such improvements at the Bucktown Marina as part of mitigation. This will not be the construction of the entire Marina, but at least the first phase, and may be a catalyst for future park and marina development. The CAC members were glad to hear this and felt it was a positive step.

Mr. Richards ended the meeting by presenting a rough timetable for report submittal, review and adoption procedures for proposals. He stated that the plan was to produce the draft document, with the proposed new zoning districts, ordinance amendments, zoning changes, etc. as appendices in the document, and that the CAC would be given the chance to review prior to presenting it to the Envision 2020 CAC, planning advisory board, and Council. The CAC appeared to agree with this procedure.

#### BUCKTOWN CAC MEETING # 5 – SEPTEMBER 12, 2006

The fifth meeting of the Bucktown CAC was at the N-Y Associates main conference room. Seven (7) members of the CAC were present at this meeting. Several interested citizens were also in attendance to listen in on this open public meeting. The CAC

members had received a copy of the draft plan document in advance via .pdf attachments to e-mails.

The meeting began with a review and discussion of the draft document. Most of the following discussion focused on the particulars of the proposed OBM-2 district.

One of the changes from the earlier drafts was that the only allowed residential permitted use in this district was changed from “condominium” to “multi-family residential”. Several members of the CAC expressed their preference for keeping the term condominium, while the representatives of the planning department and Parish Attorney’s office explained why condominium was not acceptable and why “multi-family” needed to be the proper term.

Another major issue in the OBM-2 district was that of residential density. At the earlier meeting, there had been some discussion of applying a minimum unit size as a density requirement, and that minimum unit size was discussed. The current draft had no such density requirement. Several CAC members noted that other zoning districts had a form of density requirements done via lot area per family. This was used, in fact, in the OBM-1 district. The Planning Department noted that it was the intent to include the same lot area per family requirements as that in the R-3 residential district, which topped out at a required 700 sq. ft. of lot area per family (for developments of 44 units or more), however, it was left out in error. There was some discussion as to whether or not a lot area per unit/apartment was an appropriate form of measuring density in a multi-story setting. The planners at N-Y agreed to study the matter further, “running the numbers” under various scenarios to see if the R-3 standards would be appropriate to the OBM-2 district.

Another issue discussed was the height limitations in the district. There was some confusion on this issue as to what the limitation was, but moderator Bruce Richards reminded the participants that the original draft had called for a “straight” 60 feet limit without setbacks, but at the previous CAC meeting the attendees had expressed their preference for a limit matching the one recently enacted for the C-1 district (height by right of 45 feet, with set back provisions allowing up to 70 feet.). The CAC agreed this would be the height limitation.

The final major issue discussed was the setback requirements. The draft originally had a setback requirement of 10 feet for the OBM-2 district. Changes made by the planning department to make the district consistent with the recent changes in the zoning ordinance dealing with height changed this so that if a building went over the 45 feet “height by right”, it would need to be set back 20 feet, as opposed to 10 ft. Mr. Richards noted that this change had escaped his attention. He and several attendees noted that this could cause the setbacks to be non-uniform, with some at 10 ft. and some at 20 ft., which could hurt the unified lively streetscape which the district was trying to create. It was also brought up that the 20 ft. setback would provide less of an urban feel, and that a consistent 10 ft. setback may be preferred, though some others argued for a consistent 20

ft. setback. The discussion ended with the planning department and N-Y agreeing to determine first of all if a unified 10 ft. setback would be acceptable.

No other major comments on the plan were noted at this meeting. Mr. Richards noted that CAC member Joel Borrello had already discussed with him some minor clarifications in the description of the commercial uses at the proposed Bucktown Harbor Marina site. Timetable and process for draft document review and adoption procedures for proposals were briefly reviewed. Several attendees commented that the draft was a good plan document.

CAC member Mark Schexnayder also described progress in relocating the displaced Bucktown crabbing/fishing fleet to the Bucktown Marina. Using a map as a guide, Mark showed where the new bulkhead would be located, and described how it would be constructed.

#### BUCKTOWN CAC MEETING # 6 – SEPTEMBER 26, 2006

The sixth and final meeting of the Bucktown CAC was held at R & O's Restaurant, located in the project area. Nine (9) members of the CAC were present at this meeting.

Bruce Richards of N-Y Associates, Inc. moderated the meeting, and began by confirming that everyone had received a copy of the revised draft plan document sections via .pdf attachments to the e-mails sent the week before. Mr. Richards noted that the purpose of this meeting, as expressed in the e-mail notification, was to go over the final revisions and to vote on an endorsement of the plan.

The Committee discussed several minor changes in the text of the proposed OBM-2 district and agreed to two changes with the concurrence of the Planning Department and Mr. Richards: changing the front setbacks from a consistent 10 feet to a consistent 20 feet, and "spelling out" or listing the lot area requirements for residential uses in the district, rather than stating that they were to follow the standards of the R-3 zoning district. Several other issues were discussed that did not require any changes or modifications.

Walter Brooks made a motion to endorse the *Draft Bucktown Neighborhood Plan* document. That was passed unanimously. Joel Borrello made a motion to add the following statement to that endorsement:

*"It is the consensus of the Bucktown Citizens Advisory Committee that the OBM-2 District permitted residential use should be limited to condominiums, with a restriction on unit size, but the Committee has been advised by the Parish Attorney's office that this is legally impermissible because it may be discriminatory. Our own legal research leads us to disagree, and we re-affirm our desire for a limitation of condominium use with density restrictions in the OBM-2 District"*

That motion also passed unanimously.

## **PUBLIC WORKSHOPS**

In order to gain public input and disseminate information relating to the Bucktown Neighborhood Plan, a series of four (4) Public workshops were held during the course of the project. The general public was invited to the workshops via newspaper advertisement and via notices in the Bucktown Civic Association's newsletter. The main purpose of the workshop meetings was for participants, including the Bucktown CAC, to be

- 1) apprised of key summary data,
- 2) identify issues, and
- 3) develop and review goals, objectives, policies, and plans.

All meetings were held in Meeting Room 3 of Lakeshore Playground, located just over the southern boundary of the Bucktown neighborhood. A summary of each of the four meetings follows:

### **PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1 - JUNE 9<sup>TH</sup>, 2005**

A very large contingent-- 60 attendees-- attended this first public workshop. The consultant team started the workshop by reviewing the general project information: the purpose of the project, the project team organization (Parish, Consultant Team, and Bucktown Plan CAC), the project area boundaries, and the project timeframe/ future public workshop schedule. The team then discussed the purpose of the first workshop, which was to familiarize the attendees with the project, give them some information, and get their general feelings about the major problems and issues facing Bucktown, and how these could best be addressed.

The consultant team had prepared several exhibits for the attendees to peruse, including:

- Maps of existing zoning, preliminary maps of existing land use, and maps of proposed land use from the Envision 2020 plan,
- Traffic information and previously proposed plans for traffic improvements along Carrollton & Lake Avenues and Old Hammond Highway,
- Preliminary Phase I plans for the Bucktown Marina,
- A photo montage of Bucktown views entitled, "What is Bucktown?"

Each of the display areas was manned by project staff, and for the next 30 minutes or so, attendees were free to come up and meet with the staff, who took notes on the displays. Afterwards, there would be an open discussion / question and answer period.

During the thirty minute period, many notes were taken on the displays, and much discussion was held with the staff members.

The open discussion period followed the display session, and was also very lively. Topics of discussion included Land Use/Zoning, Design, Public Infrastructure, and Transportation & Traffic.

After the open discussion period, the residents were reminded that they could turn in, fax or mail their comment forms, and the meeting was adjourned.

Comment forms had been distributed to all attendees upon entering the meeting. The forms asked each attendee three questions, with response lines for each:

- *What is YOUR major issue of concern for Bucktown's future?*
- *How would you like that issue to be addressed?*
- *Other comments or concerns?*

Several comment forms were turned in at the close of the meeting, while several more were faxed or mailed subsequent to the meeting.

## PUBLIC WORKSHOP #2 - JULY 14, 2005

The second Public Workshop for the Bucktown Neighborhood plan was held a little more than a month after the first workshop. 31 attendees signed in for the meeting.

The consultant team prepared several exhibits for the attendees to peruse, including:

- A map of existing zoning, a preliminary map of existing land use, a revised map of existing land use,
- Traffic count information along Carrollton & Lake Avenues and Old Hammond Highway, new count information along Seminole and Chickasaw, and a list of proposed short, medium, and long-term solutions to address Bucktown's traffic problems.

Attendees upon arriving were asked to sign in and were given an agenda, a copy of the summary report of the first workshop held on June 9<sup>th</sup>, a comment form, a draft list of proposed project goals, and a set of land use maps. They were then allowed to look at the exhibits before the meeting began.

The meeting began with a recap of the first workshop held in June, focusing on the main issues identified by Bucktown residents at that workshop.

The first action item on the agenda, which was the identification of goals based on input from 1st workshop, was then addressed. The workshop facilitator reviewed these along with the audience, who gave their approval of the goals at the conclusion of the presentation.

The agenda order was then altered to allow for a discussion of Land Use/Zoning Issues. The facilitator noted that at the previous meeting, many residents expressed a desire to keep the existing land use in place and to make the zoning and future land use map more representative of existing land use. The facilitator further noted that the previously shown existing land use map was a little misleading, in that ALL residential land uses, from single-family homes to apartment and condo complexes, were indicated by the color yellow on the map, whereas on the other maps yellow was used for either R-1A or low density residential. An initial field survey of the neighborhood had since been completed and the land use map had been updated with new categories. The facilitator then went over the map and compared it to the existing zoning map.

The attendees were then asked to engage in a participatory exercise or ‘homework assignment’ for the participants. They were asked to look at their two-sided color map handout that had smaller representations of the existing land use map and existing zoning map on either side. Participants were then asked to examine the handout maps that had no colors except for those on a legend. These were described as future land use maps. The facilitator asked the attendees to give the process some thought, and based on the current zoning, current land use, and their own ideas for the future, to color in the maps and submit them back to the consultant. He noted that there were some markers and crayons at the back of the room if anyone wanted to complete their assignment before leaving. Other wise, the map had a return address pre-printed n the back, and could be folded over, stamped and mailed.

The meeting next moved to a discussion of traffic issues. Members of the consultant team reviewed the identified problems which were given by attendees at the first workshop, then went over the existing data and new data that the team acquired via traffic counts on Seminole and Chickasaw. Finally, the consultants and attendees reviewed a list of proposed solutions, which were divided into short, medium, and long-term categories.

### **PUBLIC WORKSHOP # 3 – AUGUST 11, 2005**

The third Public Workshop was held after the second CAC meeting in July, and a little less than a month after the previous public workshop. 50 attendees signed in for the workshop. .

The consultant team displayed several exhibits for the attendees to peruse, including:

- A map of existing zoning, a map of existing land use, and a map of proposed future land use as developed under the Envision 2020 process.
- Two marina plan drawings-- a 1960 marina plan for historical reference, and the current Phase I plan for the Bucktown Harbor Marina and Park.
- Traffic and transportation information, including recent count information along Seminole and Chickasaw Avenues, a plan view showing how traffic would flow

upon completion of the Old Hammond Highway project, and a list of proposed short, medium, and long-term solutions to address Bucktown's traffic problems.

Attendees upon arriving were given a copy of the plan's *Draft Goals, Objectives, and Policies*, and a description of the land use categories used in the future land use map. Print copies of the summary reports of the first two workshops held on June 9<sup>th</sup> and July 14<sup>th</sup> were also available for attendees, who were also informed that those summaries were available on the Parish website. Attendees were encouraged to look at the exhibits before the meeting began.

The workshop facilitator began with a recap of the work to date, including the first two workshops and the first two Bucktown Citizen's Advisory Committee Meetings. He also briefly summarized the main issues and concerns expressed by Bucktown residents and the CAC. He then described the major focus of tonight's workshop, which was to review the project's goals, objectives and policies. He noted that while the goals were identified and described in the last public workshop, they were very general in nature. The objectives and policies represented more defined key steps in developing a concrete plan of action for the neighborhood. It was also noted that the goals, objectives and plans were being reviewed by the Parish and the CAC and still subject to some revision.

Each of the goals, objectives and policies were then reviewed in order. Attendees were encouraged to ask questions, and provide comments and discussion as they progressed over their review.

The first goal covered was *Transportation and Traffic*. The facilitator noted that under this goal, a traffic plan was being developed that dealt with short-, medium-, and long-term options. These timeframes matched with the first three (3) objectives. Gregg Soll of project sub-consultant Urban Systems Associates described these options in depth, and the attendees asked several questions and added their comments. Several questions dealt with the Old Hammond Highway improvements, including how the intersection with Orpheum would have less movements (crossing and turning) than there were previously. Attendees offered differing opinions on the dead-end closures suggested for Seminole and Chickasaw Avenues under the medium-term options. One alternative option suggested in place of closure was speed bumps and/or other traffic calming measures. The time frame for improvements was also discussed. The consultant team noted that all options would have to be studied or explored.

Other objectives under *Transportation and Traffic* included completion of the bike path linkages and sidewalks and crosswalks. One policy called for all development and/or redevelopment to include sidewalks. Although one attendee noted that sidewalks are technically required by the Parish for all such construction, it was pointed out that sidewalk waivers are sometimes requested and given, so the policy needs to be in place.

The next goal, *Housing*, was also discussed in depth. Under this goal, some rezoning to reflect the desires expressed in the future land use map was proposed. Using the map displays, these areas were described and discussed. The concept of "grandfathering in"

areas as non-conforming uses was also described. The facilitator noted that the exact rezoning classifications for each area were not completely defined in the eastern sector of Bucktown, but noted that the entire residential area is now zoned R-3, which does not meet the predominant existing use nor the proposed future land use. Many attendees expressed their concern over the height and density allowed in R-3, and the fact that under the current zoning, the east end of Bucktown could be redeveloped at that height and density.

The facilitator also described the idea of making changes to the proposed future land use map as part of the policies. He used this discussion as an opportunity to review the results of the “homework assignment” of the previous public workshop, which involved attendees coloring in their ideas for future land use on a blank map. Some attendees had been confused as to what was allowed under each future land-use category, so the consultant team reviewed the list describing the future land use categories that was distributed at the start of this workshop. The differences between these categories and the actual zoning of the site was also described, and in response to several questions as to zoning classifications, a general discussion about zoning classifications and what was allowed under each of them occurred.

Mixed-use housing options, which had been proposed for the northeast Bucktown area, were also described to the attendees. In addition to describing these uses, the consultant team gave several two reference examples: many French Quarter buildings, and the building at the corner of Freidrichs and Metairie Road. At the request of attendees, the consultants agreed to provide visual examples for the website and have them present at the next workshop.

The housing goal also saw the first mention of the proposed “Old Bucktown District” at this meeting. The district covered the extreme northeastern section of Bucktown, and would be created to address objectives under several goals: mixed-use residential under *housing*, visual identity under *design*, *economic development*, and *land use*.

The *Design* goal (and its objectives and policies) was then discussed. The possibility of a Tree and Greenspace Preservation Ordinance was well-received by the attendees, as were visual improvements to the northeast sector that could be implemented under the Old Bucktown District. The facilitator pointed out that at a minimum, such visual improvements could be done in the public sector with signage, street lighting and landscaping within the right-of-way; at a maximum, design review of redeveloped private property under a “theme” could be implemented. He added that the consultants had met with the firm doing the lighting for Old Hammond Highway and the firm working on the Bucktown Harbor, and they both agreed that a consistent, themed lighting scheme would be implemented under both those projects to help identify Bucktown.

Under the *Economic Development* goal discussion, the use of rezoning and grandfathering was again a major topic, this time in regards to rezoning commercial properties to residential. Attendees noted that Bucktown already had some precedent in this, with Sammy’s Deli being an active grandfathered non-conforming use, and the old

Ball's Hardware and Hobby Shop being a non-conforming use that was about to be redeveloped into its planned residential use. Attendees had no objection to the rezonings discussed for properties under such conditions.

Most of the objectives and policies under the *Land Use* goal were re-iterations of items under previous goals, though the attendees heartily agreed with the policy of discouraging zoning variances and spot zoning changes.

The *Public Infrastructure* goal and its objectives and policies were also well-received from the attendees. Only one attendee noted that he preferred the old-fashioned asphalt paving to curb and guttered streets, and all attendees welcomed the possibility of utility infrastructure improvement. Several attendees noted drainage problems that they faced, and in at least one instance claimed that it was caused by adjacent redevelopment.

Under the *Safety and Crime Prevention* goal, the citizens were also in agreement. Under the policy of encouraging the Sheriff's Office to place a substation in the east Bucktown area, one attendee noted that technically, a substation was present at the Bonnabel Boat launch, though this was essentially for the police boat.

The *Parks and Recreation* and *Community Facilities* goals were reviewed with little comment. The major topic of discussion under these goals was the Bucktown Harbor Marina and Park. The facilitator noted that commercial activities in the new harbor were already limited due to the Parish's agreement with the state limiting activities on the reclaimed water bottoms to recreation. The idea of zoning the new park as a new Park and Open Space category was well-received. Park details were also discussed, including funding and uses to be present in the park

The last goal, *Major Issues*, was briefly reviewed. As one attendee noted, Bucktown needed to "sleep with one eye open". In effect, this means being and staying aware of development changes and plans for the area, and remaining knowledgeable and vocal. Recent progress in this regard, as well as better relations between the Parish government and the Bucktown neighborhood were pointed out, and it was explained that this goal essentially had an objective and policies designed to allow this continue.

Upon completion of this review, the consultant team summarized the major action items coming out of the goals and objectives. These included the three-tier traffic improvement plan, assorted rezonings and future land use map changes, creation of an Old Bucktown District, and a Tree and Greenspace Preservation Ordinance for the single-family areas of Bucktown.

The floor was then opened up for a final period of questions and comments. The only comment was from a resident and attendee who thanked the presenters for their worked and along with the rest of the attendees, offered the team a round of applause.

## PUBLIC WORKSHOP # 4 - MARCH 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2006

The last Public Workshop for the *Bucktown Neighborhood Plan* was held well after the previous one due to the effects of Hurricane Katrina. Although 15 attendees signed in for the workshop meeting, a head count at one point revealed that 24 residents were in attendance.

The consultant team displayed several exhibits for the attendees to peruse, including:

- An aerial photo map of the proposed Old Bucktown District.
- A schematic drawing showing how the proposed Bucktown Tree Preservation Ordinance would affect trees on a typical Bucktown lot.
- Traffic and transportation information.
- Areas proposed for zoning changes under the Bucktown Neighborhood Plan
- Areas proposed for changes to the Future Land Use Map under the Bucktown Neighborhood Plan

Attendees upon arriving were asked to sign in and were given an agenda, a comment form, and a copy of the plan's *Revised Goals, Objectives, and Policies*. Attendees were encouraged to look at the exhibits before the meeting began.

The meeting began with Ed Durabb, Director of the Jefferson Parish Planning Department, giving a PowerPoint presentation on the Parish-wide High-Rise Planning Study. The study had some implications for development in Bucktown. The presentation was often interrupted by comments and questions from the attendees, and as a result lasted for well over an hour.

Once Mr. Durabb's presentation was complete, he took more questions from the attendees, then turned over the meeting to the consultant team, who gave a brief recap of previous work done to date, and discussed the Post-Katrina effects on planning process. The facilitator, using a PowerPoint presentation, then gave a report on the details and description of major action items associated with the plan. These included creation of the Old Bucktown District. The district's boundaries were described, as well as its intents and purpose. The facilitator noted that the while particulars of the district – height limitations, yard requirements, permitted uses, etc. -- were not complete, he gave a general idea of how the district would work. He also showed some visual mixed-use examples, including examples from Florida, Lafayette and even one from Metairie. One attendee did not like the idea of the mixed use district extending to the triangle parcel of land west of Chickasaw adjacent to the levee. The facilitator noted that the area already was a form of mixed use, with a commercial site surrounded by a multi-family residential site.

The facilitator then discussed the proposed rezonings and future land use map changes, describing how commercial uses such as Mr. Ed's would be grandfathered in, but could not be redeveloped as other commercial uses. He noted that there were prior examples of this: Ball's Hardware could not be redeveloped as commercial. He then discussed the transportation/traffic improvements recommended for study noting that with the effects of the recent hurricane, it may be easier at the present time to construct an extension of West

Esplanade and build a bridge over the 17th Street Canal, connecting to Orleans Parish. One attendee noted that she did not think that was a good idea, as it would encourage traffic. A discussion about traffic issues and the reality of traffic demands then occurred.

The facilitator then described the general application of the proposed Bucktown Tree Preservation District/Ordinance, which would essentially mirror the one already in place in Metairie Ridge. Using a schematic drawing, he showed how the proposed ordinance would affect a typical Bucktown lot.

The meeting concluded with an opportunity for questions, answers, and public comments, but likely due to the lateness of the hour, no one had any question or comments.

## **OTHER MEETINGS**

In addition to the CAC meetings and Public Workshops, three other meetings of note were held or attended to obtain additional input and share information.

### **MEETING WITH *ENVISION JEFFERSON 2020* CONSULTANTS**

On August 2, 2005, members of the consultant team met with consultants working on the *Envision Jefferson 2020* Major Thoroughfare Plan Component. The purpose of this meeting was for each project team to discuss their projects and identify mutual areas of concern or overlap.

In general, the discussion identified the general traffic and traffic operational issues which the neighborhood has discussed and Bucktown project team has reviewed. From a land use perspective, the sub area plan identifies no significant departures from the *Envision Jefferson 2020* Land Use map. The community has also identified a need for more pedestrian access, particularly to the Lakefront and between areas.

Implications from the current discussions in Bucktown on the Major Thoroughfare Plan include the following:

- **Street Classifications** – the Major Thoroughfare Plan currently has the following roadways identified on the major street network in the Bucktown Sub area: Live Oak, Hammond Highway, Carrollton Avenue, Lake Avenue, W. Esplanade Avenue and Bonnabel Boulevard. Suggestions to adjust sub-area circulation or access may require subsequent changes in the major thoroughfare plan classifications for these corridors.
- **Street Cross Sections** – the Major Thoroughfare Plan has identified typical sections for all major street definitions (from collector up to expressway). Some modification to the contents of these sections may be required as a result of their application to the specific corridors contained in the sub area planning process, particularly in the 1-way couplet scenario discussed for Lake and Carrollton.

- **Incorporation of Sub-Area Items** – the Major Thoroughfare Plan currently has not identified the process for including sub area transportation plans. Currently available information for Bucktown, along with the Metairie CBD Transportation Plan will be included for information. A process to include the final recommendations coming from the sub-areas needs to be identified by the Major Thoroughfare Plan team. The current suggestion is to have the sub-areas identified, and notes placed into the Major Thoroughfare Plan which identifies the need to make amendments and changes based upon the outcome of the sub-area planning process. Place holders will be put into final documents to accommodate the recommended transportation items from the sub area planning process.

It was also suggested by the Bucktown project team that the Major Thoroughfare Plan team may want to attend their next public meeting on August 11<sup>th</sup> at Lakeshore Playground. At this meeting, sub-area goals, objectives and policies will be finalized. Also, the discussion from this meeting may prove beneficial to the major thoroughfare planning process.

It was also suggested that the Thoroughfare Plan team provide information on roadway standards, designs and classification criteria to the sub area process for their use in the development of the Bucktown Plan. Burk-Kleinpeter and Urban Systems Associates will coordinate as required to share information.

## STREET LIGHTING MEETING

On August 10, 2005, at the request of the Councilwoman Jennifer Sneed representing Bucktown, a representative of the N-Y consultant team met with landscape architect Lester Guarino from Burk-Kleinpeter (who had been involved with the site plans for the Bucktown Harbor Marina and Park), as well as with Mr. Edmund Pepper of Pepper and Associates, who was working with the Parish on lighting for the newly improved Old Hammond Highway. The meeting was held to coordinate the type of street lighting that would be present in the area. The N-Y consultant described the efforts to use a unified, distinctive style of light standards as part of the Old Bucktown District. Mr. Guarino and Mr. Pepper were in agreement, and felt that the lighting along Old Hammond Highway and within the new marina and park would be the proper place to start, as both were ready to begin installation soon. The trio discussed possible lighting styles and examples, with favorite examples being the light standards along Lakeshore Drive near West End, or the traditional style of light standards in place along Orpheum Drive. Further study of available types and specifications (as well as a future meeting to review those) was agreed to; however, Hurricane Katrina hit the area a few weeks later and indefinitely postponed all efforts in this regard.

## BUCKTOWN CIVIC ASSOCIATION

On December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2005, the consultant team attended the regular meeting of the Bucktown Civic Association at Lakeshore Playground, and provided them with status of project. This was the first public dissemination of information following Hurricane Katrina.

## MEETING WITH (AND PRESENTATIONS TO) *ENVISION JEFFERSON 2020* CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

In the months of October, November, and December 2006, the consultant team attended (and made presentations during) the regularly scheduled monthly meetings of the *Envision Jefferson 2020* Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). At the October meeting, a brief PowerPoint presentation was given relating the history of the *Bucktown Neighborhood Plan* and its development, while the Parish's Planning Department reviewed the particulars of the two proposed new OBM zoning districts. At that meeting, the CAC members had several questions relating to height restrictions and building setbacks. They also noted some inconsistencies between the summary of the zoning districts in the neighborhood plan document and the text of the districts themselves. As a result, the consultant team and the planning department staff made some corrections and changes to both the plan and the proposed district text, prior to following meeting (in November 2006). The consultant team also prepared a three-dimensional drawing of both the existing and proposed zoning scenarios at maximum build-out, to help illustrate height restrictions and setbacks. This clearly helped the committee to understand these aspects of the plan. The planning department also presented some comparisons of the proposed zoning districts with the existing zoning districts, as well as a comparison of non-conforming uses under each scenario. The CAC had a few more issues and questions, including issues with the size of signage, so the consultant and planning department returned for December's meeting. At that meeting, all other issues to date were resolved, but the CAC heard the request of a landowner in Bucktown who requested that the boundary line dividing the OBM-1 and OBM-2 districts be moved so that his development would be entirely within the OBM-1 district. The CAC first voted to agree with his request, and then endorsed all aspects of the *Bucktown Neighborhood Plan* and the proposed new OBM-1 and OBM-2 districts, provided that the boundary line was moved as per the request of the developer.

## PRESENTATIONS BEFORE THE JEFFERSON PARISH PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD

In January 2007, the consultant team and planning department made joint PowerPoint presentations to the Jefferson Parish Planning Advisory Board (PAB), both at their general meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup> and at their Public Hearing on January 25<sup>th</sup>. The presentation explained the development of the *Bucktown Neighborhood Plan* and the proposed OBM-1 and OBM-2 districts, as well as the fine-tuning and revision of these documents by the planning department. The *Envision Jefferson 2020* CAC's endorsement of a different

boundary line was also explained. At the public hearing, several persons representing the Bucktown Civic Association, the *Bucktown Neighborhood Plan* CAC, the *Envision Jefferson 2020* CAC, the Jefferson Business Council, and two separate developers all expressed their support for the plan, with the only difference in support being that some groups supported the plan with the original boundary lines between the OBM-1 and OBM-2 districts, while others supported the plan with the relocated boundary lines. The PAB voted to endorse the plan with the original boundary lines, and sent their recommendation on to the Parish Council.

#### PRESENTATION BEFORE THE JEFFERSON PARISH COUNCIL

On February 7, 2007, the consultant team and planning department made a joint PowerPoint presentation to the Jefferson Parish Council at their regularly scheduled Public Hearing/Council Meeting. The presentation was nearly identical to the one given at the PAB almost two weeks earlier.

Several ordinances relating to the *Bucktown Neighborhood Plan* were on the Council's agenda that day:

- Inserting the *Bucktown Neighborhood Plan* into the Parish's Comprehensive Plan;
- Inserting the proposed OBM-1 and OBM-2 districts into the Parish Zoning Ordinance;
- Mapping the OBM districts on the official zoning map; and,
- Amending the Future Land Use Map to be consistent with the newly-created OBM districts.

No one spoke in opposition to the adoptions of these ordinances at the public hearing, and as a result, the ordinances were formally and unanimously adopted by the Council.

# CHAPTER IV

## GENESIS OF THE PLAN

The process of the plan's development is tracked in this chapter. The Chapter begins with a discussion of the major issues and concerns identified via the Bucktown CAC and Public Workshop meeting process. The steps taken in developing the Goals, Objectives and Policies through the planning process are then presented. The chapter concludes with an examination of the major action items arising from the plan, and how they came about.

### SUMMARY OF MAJOR ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Through the first half of community input process (the first CAC meeting and the first two public workshops, described in detail in the previous chapter), many issues and concerns were developed. Distilled down into manageable form, the major issues can be described as follows:

- Control of height, density and land uses, particularly in northeast Bucktown
- Traffic / Transportation
- Preservation of open space along levee and at Bucktown Harbor / Marina / Park
- Tree and greenspace preservation / landscaping
- Relation of physical development to Lake Pontchartrain and Bucktown heritage

Each of these major issues and concerns are discussed in detail below:

### CONTROL OF HEIGHT, DENSITY AND LAND USES IN NORTH AND EAST BUCKTOWN

During the course of the public workshops and CAC meetings, perhaps the biggest issues and concerns relating to land use focused on the areas in the eastern side of Bucktown, particularly the northeast corner. This is not surprising, as the remainder of the neighborhood is generally a uniform single-family neighborhood in nature.

Perhaps the most dominant issue expressed by citizens was related to **residential population density** in the neighborhood. In general, most workshop respondents stated that they did not want the residential population density to increase. Feelings were very strong on the subject, with some noting that the area needed to have more single-family homes and no more multi-family units. Some stated that such increases in multi-family units would lead to increases in traffic, and more problems with parking. Several residents linked increased densities with increased crime, giving as examples the areas of Lake Avenue closer to Veterans Blvd. One resident asked to "stop the condos", and noted that they "ruin the family atmosphere". Several citizens noted that the increased density led to an overtaking of physical infrastructure as well as social systems.

The answers to addressing this problem were common in nature. Workshop attendees wanted to control high-density (and high-rise) development by varying means-- some wished to corral it in to a certain area (between Huron, Lake and Carrollton, or east of Seminole) or accommodate what is already in place, and some wanted to restrict physical size of all residential development (vertical and square footage) for both multi-family and single-family developments. Another idea put forth by several workshop attendees was to curtail, limit or disallow future zoning changes & variances, particularly in regards to items dealing with height, parking, or required greenspace. Another idea put forth was for a neighborhood committee to have some say in zoning changes & permits.

Use of residential property was also a concern, particularly in regards to **rental vs. home ownership**. This was a major sub-text of this issue explored by several citizens and residents at the first few public workshops. The general theme was that while owner-occupied condominiums were acceptable, rental apartments were not. In terms of use, **commercial development** was addressed by two workshop attendees. Public comment generally represented that commercial development should be controlled, and that they wanted Bucktown to remain residential. Several general public comments touched on commercial development tangentially, noting that they favored recreational development (for the marina/lakefront area), not commercial.

**Height of buildings** was also a major issue and concern. Several made known their desire to limit the height of any new structures along Old Hammond Highway, with most aiming for a 45 ft. height limit.

## TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

Traffic and transportation issues were a close second on the minds of workshop attendees and the members of the Bucktown CAC, and were described as an existing problem. They realized that a lot of traffic is flowing through Bucktown, but the problem was that it was going through the residential areas, particularly the single-family residential areas. Traffic coming through Jefferson Parish to Orleans Parish (and vice-versa) was noted as the primary culprit. The consultant team pointed out that Bucktown is essentially a link in an east-west corridor linking West Esplanade to Old Hammond Highway/Robert E. Lee. However, the link in this corridor is ill-defined and does not function well—thus the traffic densities and cut-through traffic problems.

Another problem noted by many was the condition of the roadway infrastructure—for the amount of use the roadways were receiving, they were in terrible condition. A third major issue was pedestrian access, in general along area roadways (lack of sidewalks) and in particular, a better system of pedestrian crossings for Old Hammond Highway was seen as being needed. This is especially true in light of anticipated construction of the Bucktown Harbor Marina & Park, and the new public parking recently installed across from R&O's and Saia's.

CAC members and public workshop attendees had numerous solutions to address these problems and concerns. Most of these were suggested direct improvements to help through traffic flow AND lessen cut-through traffic, such as those listed below:

- Extend West Esplanade across to Orleans Parish
- Utilize the proposed one-way couplet system on Lake and Carrollton Avenues
- Use traffic calming devices (speed bumps, for example) to discourage cut-through traffic on Seminole and Chickasaw
- Make Chickasaw one way going north from West Esplanade
- Make Orpheum Avenue 1 way and 2 lanes wide
- Widen Orpheum and use as a main conduit for traffic between West Esplanade and Old Hammond Highway
- Extend Hammond Hwy. to Bonnabel,
- Remove vehicular crossover at canal (Seminole/Papworth at West Esplanade), or change to left turn at peak times.
- Make streets “local traffic only”,
- Place more stop signs along Poplar, or the placement of stop lights in the area
- Widen Lake Avenue and install a turn lane
- Return a traffic signal to the intersection of Orpheum Avenue and Old Hammond Highway. Utilize a “contra-flow plan” for Lake Avenue (one-way in morning peak, the other way during evening peak)
- Add a vehicular bridge at Pier St. (across West Esplanade canal)

All of these proposed solutions had some merit. It was obvious from the list that these could be divided into three different levels of improvement: short-term, lower-cost solutions; mid-term, medium-cost solutions; and long-term, capital improvement items. Each of these would require different levels of study and funding before implementation.

#### PRESERVATION OF OPEN SPACE ALONG LEVEE AND AT BUCKTOWN HARBOR / MARINA & PARK

During the course of the public workshops and the CAC meetings, the need to preserve and enhance public greenspace was clearly conveyed. Perhaps the best example was from a comment placed on a future land use map, showing the levee as a green recreation area, where one citizen simply wrote “Protect this!!”

Rather than a perceived “existing problem” area that needed to be solved, most residents addressed the lakeside greenspace issue as an asset that needed to be preserved. Almost all respondents agreed that the park-like nature of the inside of the levee, and the linear park with the jogging/bike path on the levee’s lake side were existing assets that they wanted to keep more-or less “as is”. But nearly all workshop attendees and CAC members felt the same way about the future of the Bucktown Harbor Marina & Park--that while they welcomed it as a recreation spot, and even as a new docking space for the Bucktown fishing fleet, they did not want to see commercial or residential components as a part of its development.

## TREE AND GREENSPACE PRESERVATION / LANDSCAPING

Almost as important as the preservation of public greenspace was the desire to preserve the trees and greenspace on private property. In the first few public workshop meetings and in CAC meetings, the community noted that with Bucktown's residential areas undergoing "tear-down" redevelopment, a lot of the neighborhood's tree canopy and greenspace was being lost. Examples given included the clear cutting of trees during home demolition, and conversion of formerly green, landscaped front yards into almost completely paved circular driveways and multi-car parking areas, and back yards being replaced with patios and pools.



**Figure 4-1.** Examples of clear cutting during redevelopment. Note, as a contrast, the full tree canopy over the older homes surrounding both of these two new construction sites.

Residents also inquired as to a way to create a uniform setback along a street, as they noted that older homes were set back further than the newer ones, which are usually at or close to the required setback, further lessening the amount of visible greenspace.

The community suggested ways to address this, including implementing a regulation requiring a certain minimum percentage or amount of greenspace (grass, garden, etc.) to remain on a lot, and to somehow protect trees, especially old oaks. Several members of the community were aware of the recently-enacted Metairie Ridge Tree Preservation Ordinance and suggested a similar type of protection be put in place for Bucktown. However, such protection does not cover lawns.

## RELATION OF PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT TO LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN AND BUCKTOWN HERITAGE

While most residents realized and often lamented the ongoing changes in Bucktown (in response to the display poster, "What is Bucktown/A quaint, historic fishing village?" one workshop attendee wrote "Not anymore!"), nearly all residents expressed a public desire to maintain some connection during redevelopment to Bucktown's presence along the lake and its maritime heritage. One workshop attendee, for example, noted that a

themed style that reflected the maritime heritage of the neighborhood would be more welcomed in terms of condominium development. Others stated a desire for the area to provide a more historical, attractive appearance as it redevelops—several pointed out how much they liked the “old-timey” street light posts along Orpheum Avenue, and would like to continue the same type of feel through the rest of the northeast Bucktown section.

There was also an apparent desire for local control over aesthetics—there were several comments that the northeast Bucktown area had started to become “ugly”, another workshop attendee noted (in response to pictures of cluttered commercial development near lakefront and along Lake Avenue) “We want to have some control over this!!”, and a several others asked about implementing aesthetic controls over residential development.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

In order to address the major issues and concerns identified, a set of goals, objectives and policies were developed as an integral part of the Bucktown Neighborhood Plan. By the end of the second public workshop, a consensus was reached on ten (10) general goals for the project. At the second CAC meeting, more defined project objectives and policies to implement these goals were developed. The CAC members were presented print copies of an initial draft of project objectives and policies for implementation (based on the workshops and the consultant’s own expertise). The consultant emphasized that the objectives and policies would be more concrete, identifiable strategies to pursue in accomplishing these goals, dealing with everything from traffic improvement to land use and residential density to preserving greenspace.

The Bucktown CAC reviewed, commented and edited these, and a short time later, the Draft *Goals, Objectives and Policies* for the Bucktown Neighborhood Plan were presented to the public at the third Public Workshop meeting. The public asked for several comments and clarifications under several goal sections (such as *Transportation and Traffic, Housing, Economic Development, Land Use, Public Infrastructure*) and had virtually no questions or comments on others.

The final iteration of the Goals, Policies and Objectives came following a long hiatus caused by Hurricane Katrina. At the third CAC meeting (held in February 2006), the CAC reviewed the goals and objectives and held a general discussion. After some minor revisions and combining some objectives with others, and combining some goals with others, the CAC members then ranked them (by goals) into a new priority for presentation within the document:

1. Land Use
2. Housing
3. Design
4. Economic Development

5. Transportation And Traffic
6. Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities
7. Public Infrastructure and Flood Protection
8. Safety and Crime Prevention
9. Citizen Participation

The full list of *Goals, Objectives and Policies* are presented in the following chapter.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF MAJOR ACTION ITEMS**

Concurrent with the development of the *Goals, Policies and Objectives* under the project, several action items and details to address the objectives and policies (and to implement the plan) began to coalesce. By the time the Goals, Policies, and Objectives had been finalized, four major action items had come to the forefront:

- Creation of an “Old Bucktown District”
- Recommended Rezoning and Future Land Use Map changes
- Identification of Transportation & Traffic Improvements for Study
- Development of Bucktown Tree and Greenspace Ordinance

The development of each of these major action items in the context of the planning process is explored below:

### **CREATION OF AN “OLD BUCKTOWN DISTRICT”**

The idea of an “Old Bucktown District” came about to address objectives under several goals: mixed-use residential under *housing*, visual identity under *design, economic development*, and *land use*. The district covered the extreme northeastern section of Bucktown, in an area bounded by the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal, Live Oak Street, Chickasaw Avenue and Lake Pontchartrain. All areas north of the hurricane protection levee, including the proposed Bucktown Harbor / Marina/Park area, the US Coast Guard Station, and the Orpheum Avenue peninsula would be included in this district. A small triangular portion at the northern end of the block between Huron and Chickasaw Avenues containing two parcels was also included in this proposed district.

The overall district was intended as an overlay area, which would have particular design standards regarding landscaping, signage, and a unified, common theme in the public realm (such as street signage, street lighting, and sidewalks). The intent was also to have consideration of design review for new development or redevelopment in this area.

Underlying this district would be three (3) different zoning classifications:

- The areas along Old Hammond Highway, and Lake and Orpheum Avenues would be zoned Old Bucktown Mixed Use District -2 (OBM-2), which would allow for a mix of residential and commercial development within each developable lot. The

district would have set height, density, and permitted use limitations different from any current zoning classification.

- The remaining areas south extending to Chickasaw and Live Oak streets and containing parcels fronting on Mayan Lane would be zoned Old Bucktown Mixed Use District - 1 (OBM-1). Like the OBM-2 district, this district would have set height and density limitations, but in an attempt to transition to the residential areas to the southwest of the area, the height limits would be shorter, the density allowed would be less, and the uses more geared toward a primary residential mix.
- The zoning of areas on the north side of the hurricane protection levee were not specifically defined. At the present time, they are zoned C-1, which appears inappropriate. One of two zoning options that are not currently established as zoning district within Jefferson Parish appeared appropriate for the area: the Parish currently has a study called to create a *Parks and Recreation* (PR) zoning district, which, depending on its final definition, may be appropriate, or an entirely new site-specific “Bucktown Marina” or “Bucktown Recreation” zoning district could be developed.

Work on developing the particulars of the Old Bucktown District began in earnest after the March 2006 release of the findings of the parish-wide *Multiple Family Height Study*, which would have some bearing on the particulars of the proposed zoning districts. Language on the district (and in particular, the OBM-1 and OBM-2 zoning districts) proceeded over the summer of 2006, reviewed by the Parish Planning Department, the Parish Attorney’s Office, and the Bucktown CAC. The final particulars of that district are presented in the next chapter.

## RECOMMENDED REZONINGS AND FUTURE LAND USE MAP CHANGES

In the course of developing the Bucktown Neighborhood Plan, there was considerable discussion about proposals for re-zoning certain areas of Bucktown and recommending changes to the future land use map to address the issues and concerns of the citizens attending the public workshops, the CAC members comments, and the intent as shown in the Envision Jefferson 2020 Future Land Use Maps. Also considered in these discussions was the need to not create an inordinate amount of non-conforming uses by re-zoning.

However, once the idea of creating the Old Bucktown District (and imposition of its underlying zoning districts) had been verified and agreed to there was very little in terms of specific recommendations for such changes. As identified in the *Goals, Objectives and Policies*, one of the primary recommendations was to rezone the area north of the intersection of Aztec Avenue and Live Oaks street from its current zoning designation to R-1A. Currently in that area several parcels are zoned R-2, several are zoned C-1, and several are zoned R-3. Rezoning these parcels first of all would reconcile them with the vision of the Future Land Use Map, in which the entire area is slated for Low-Medium Density Residential, but would also protect area residents in the short term from major redevelopment which may negatively affect them. This became even more important

after the Parish Council adopted changes to the Parish's Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance in July 2006, which, for instance may allow the R-3 zoned properties to redevelop much more differently. The rezoning of these parcels should be considered in the future by the Parish.

The only other specific recommended changes were to the Future Land Use Map. Those areas which would be zoned under the new OBM-1 zoning classification would be changed to *community mixed-use*, while those areas zoned OBM-2 would be changed to *regional mixed use* on the Future Land Use Map. This will maintain consistency between the zoning and future land use, as *community mixed-use* entails a density of 20 dwelling units per acre while OBM-2 allows a maximum allowable density of 16 dwelling units per acre, and both the *regional mixed-use* classification and the OBM-2 district allow for a density of 65 dwelling units per acre.

One general, non-parcel-specific recommendation is also included. On the Future Land Use Map, a good deal of eastern Bucktown is proposed as *medium density residential (MDR)*. However, in comparing three different items-- the existing land use of the area, the existing zoning of the area, and the definition of "medium density residential" in the Jefferson Parish Code of Ordinances, there is some level of disconnect between the those three items:

- As defined in the Parish Code, the *medium density residential land use* category includes single-family detached, two-family, three-family, and four-family dwellings, townhouses, and condominiums at a maximum net density of twenty-five (25) dwelling units per acre. Multi-family apartments are not included in this definition, but are included in the definition for *high-density residential*.
- The entire area bounded by West Esplanade, Orpheum Avenue, Live Oak Street and Carrollton Avenue (including those properties on the west side of Carrollton Avenue) is zoned R-3, which allows multi-family apartments and a higher density than is specified under the *medium density residential* definition.
- The area zoned R-3 as described above currently contains a mixture of residential land uses: single family homes, two-, three-, and four-family residential, and also multi-family apartments. The only concentration of multi-family apartment buildings is along the west side of Carrollton Avenue; the remainder of the area is almost equally divided between the various residential uses.

As a result, a general policy recommendation was made in the goals, objectives and policies that to make current zoning consistent with future land use plans, rezoning R-3 properties in this area to lesser residential designations (such as R-2, RR-3, R-TH, or R-1 CO) should be considered wherever appropriate. It is envisioned that this could be considered either on a block basis or on a parcel basis, or possibly as part of a map study done by the Parish.

## IDENTIFICATION OF TRANSPORTATION & TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS FOR STUDY

From the beginning, traffic and transportation was a major issue with the community. The overwhelming focus of the public concerns dealt with discouraging cut-through traffic on single-family residential streets while improving east-west through traffic flows. There was no shortage of suggestions for improvements, but after the series of four public workshops some ideas were eliminated due to strong community opposition (the extension of Old Hammond Highway to Bonabel Blvd., for example) while other began to coalesce themselves into a series of three different levels of improvement—short term, medium term and long term-- which were adapted in to the first three objectives (of five total) under the Traffic and Transportation Goal. Through some initial research including traffic counts and review by a traffic consultant working on the project, these have stayed more-or-less constant throughout the recent planning process. The recommendations are further described in the following chapter, in the *Goals, Objectives and Policies* section, and in more detail in the *Existing and Proposed Transportation Facilities* section.

## DEVELOPMENT OF BUCKTOWN TREE AND GREENSPACE ORDINANCE

During the planning process, the consultant team learned that Bucktown residents were very concerned about their trees and greenspace. The input from the CAC meetings and the public workshops led to the recommendation of a development of a *Bucktown Tree Preservation District*. The ordinance would mirror that of the Metairie Ridge Tree Preservation District (as amended and revised), and cover the areas zoned R-1A in Bucktown. As originally envisioned, the Bucktown district language was to mirror the Metairie Ridge district language completely, with the only differences being the geographical areas covered (Bucktown versus Metairie Ridge). However, over the summer of 2006, the planning department staff noted that the language for a Bucktown district could not mirror the Metairie Ridge one, as it would require a different definition of “significant tree”. Those trees in the list for Metairie Ridge were considered significant for that neighborhood only, and not on a parish-wide basis. The Parish arborist would have to determine which trees were considered significant for the Bucktown neighborhood: some on the Metairie Ridge list may not be present on a list for Bucktown, while some significant trees for Bucktown may not be on the established list for Metairie Ridge.

A second consideration that the Planning Department announced, bearing in mind not only Bucktown’s desire for tree protection but also other neighborhoods’ future desires to implement similar tree protection measures, was that it may be advantageous to amend the Metairie Ridge District language and make it a parish-wide umbrella ordinance in terms of applications, operations, violations and such. This would enable a process for individual neighborhoods to have their own tree preservation districts once their list of significant trees are professionally determined (with Metairie Ridge being the first such district, and Bucktown becoming the second). The consultant team agreed with this finding, and in this

plan document does not submit a draft ordinance but instead makes a recommendation for such an ordinance to be studied and adopted.

# CHAPTER V

## BUCKTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

This chapter presents the Bucktown Neighborhood’s plan for the future, consisting of several parts. The first part includes the plan’s Goals, Objectives and Policies, as developed through the public planning process. Next is the presentation of a revised future land use plan map, with accompanying text, describing where changes are recommended. A discussion of existing and future transportation facilities, along with a description of transportation facilities proposed for future study is then presented along with accompanying graphics. Existing and future community facilities are then discussed, followed by an in-depth description of the centerpiece of the plan, the Old Bucktown District. The final part of the chapter is an Implementation Strategy to move forward with the recommendations and findings in the Bucktown Neighborhood Plan.

### GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

1. LAND USE GOAL –Provide for the continuing redevelopment of the Bucktown neighborhood in an orderly fashion, sensitive to the needs of existing and long-time residents, while maintaining its unique heritage and balance of residential and commercial uses.

**Objective 1.1:** Provide for orderly redevelopment of Bucktown.

Policy 1.1.1: Guide, monitor and encourage appropriate commercial and mixed use development in the area east of Chickasaw and north of Live Oak via the creation of the *Old Bucktown District*.

Policy 1.1.2: Guide, monitor and encourage appropriate residential redevelopment via policies described under the Design and Housing goals.

Policy 1.1.3: Discourage zoning variances and spot zoning changes once plans and policies are put in place.

2. HOUSING GOAL – Maintain the existing balance of residential uses in Bucktown, with a predominance of single-family homes, and higher density and mixed-use housing located along the far eastern end of the neighborhood.

**Objective 2.1:** Provide in the short term for the continued single-family residential nature of Bucktown west of Chickasaw

Policy 2.1.1: Consider making current zoning consistent with future land use plans by rezoning certain R-3 properties and

R-2 properties in this area to the R-1A designation. This will allow the existing residential properties to remain indefinitely as non-conforming uses (as long as they maintain their current manner of operations), but will allow the neighborhood the certainty that if these properties are redeveloped, they cannot become a different or more intense form of residential development.

**Objective 2.2:** Provide in the short and long term for the continued mixed use and medium-density residential nature of Bucktown east of Chickasaw.

Policy 2.2.1: Consider making current zoning and current land use consistent with future land use plans by rezoning R-3 properties in this area to a lesser residential designations (such as R-2, RR-3, R-TH, or R-1 CO) where appropriate. This will allow the existing multi-family apartments to remain indefinitely as non-conforming uses (as long as they maintain their current manner of operations), but will allow the neighborhood the certainty that if properties are redeveloped, they cannot become a different or more intense form of residential development.

Policy 2.2.2: Enable the development of residential use in conjunction with commercial use (mixed use) in those areas east of Chickasaw Ave. and north of Live Oak St. via the creation of the *Old Bucktown District*.

Policy 2.2.3: Enforce existing and future height and density restrictions and limit the issuance of exceptions and variances within the residential areas east of Chickasaw.

3. DESIGN GOAL – Maintain the existing visual appeal of Bucktown’s residential area as a well-vegetated green neighborhood, and preserve the unique lake-oriented maritime heritage of Bucktown’s older eastern side.

**Objective 3.1:** Maintain Bucktown as a green, well vegetated neighborhood by both regulation and civic encouragement.

Policy 3.1.1: Explore and implement mechanisms to preserve trees and greenspace in the R1A-zoned portions of Bucktown, including a possible *Tree and Greenspace Preservation District* for that area.

Policy 3.1.2: Explore the use of financial incentive programs to encourage the planting of new trees.

Policy 3.13: Encourage citizens' participation in neighborhood beautification by establishment of monthly, bi-monthly or quarterly "Bucktown Garden Award".

**Objective 3.2:** Strengthen northeastern Bucktown's visual identity as a maritime, lake oriented center.

Policy 3.2.1: Develop and maintain a unified form of streetscape to gradually be put in place in northeast Bucktown, with historical/nautical street lighting, street and other signage, and landscaping within public rights-of-way.

Policy 3.2.2: Under the auspices of the *Old Bucktown District*, consider the possibility for design review of new development and redevelopment in order to ensure compatibility with the area's visual identity.

4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOAL – Maintain the unique nature of the northeast corner of Bucktown as an active lake-oriented business hub, while maintaining the residential nature of the rest of the neighborhood.

**Objective 4.1:** Continue the existing patterns of commercial development.

Policy 4.1.1: Maintain the Bucktown area east of Chickasaw and north of Live Oak as commercial and/or mixed use

Policy 4.1.2: Guide, monitor and encourage appropriate commercial development in the area east of Chickasaw and north of Live Oak via the creation of the *Old Bucktown District*.

Policy 4.1.3: Consider making current zoning consistent with future land use plans by rezoning commercial properties along Live Oak west of Chickasaw from C-1 to R-1A. This will allow the existing businesses to remain indefinitely as non-conforming uses (as long as they maintain their current manner of operations), but will allow the neighborhood the certainty that the property cannot become a different or more intense form of commercial development.

**Objective 4.2:** Encourage continued use of northeast Bucktown by maritime-lake oriented uses (working fishing fleet, boat repair or sales facilities, seafood restaurants, seafood wholesalers, dive shops).

Policy 4.2.1: Explore the possibility of using the *Old Bucktown District* as a mechanism for economic redevelopment.

- Policy 4.2.2: Set aside a set number of leasable slips for working fishing vessels (crabbing, shrimping, fishing) as part of any future development of the Bucktown Harbor Marina
- Policy 4.2.3: Explore the possibility of setting up a “fisherman’s market” similar to existing “farmers’ market” programs, where on certain designated days, fishermen can sell their wares at a centralized location.

5. TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC GOAL - Provide a network of streets, walkways and bicycle paths that allow safe and efficient movement both within the Bucktown neighborhood and through the Bucktown neighborhood, including vehicular, bicycling and pedestrian movements.

**Objective 5.1:** In the short term, discourage cut-through traffic on single-family residential streets by low-cost signage and traffic controls.

- Policy 5.1.1: Lessen cut-through traffic on Seminole by hour-restricted left-turn signage controls at Seminole and West Esplanade.
- Policy 5.1.2: As a temporary measure, lessen daily cut-through traffic by converting a portion of Chickasaw to one-way lake bound.

**Objective 5.2:** In the medium term, discourage cut-through traffic on single-family residential streets and improve east-west through traffic flows by signalization, traffic controls and access management.

- Policy 5.2.1: Study the possibility of lessening cut-through traffic on single-family residential streets by considering a spectrum of measures ranging from traffic calming measures (speed bumps, road dimples, raised crosswalks) to creating dead end features for Seminole and Chickasaw Avenues between Old Hammond Highway and Live Oak Street.
- Policy 5.2.2: Coordinate with residents, businesses and schools and study the possibility of improving capacity and east-west through traffic flow by converting Lake and Carrollton Avenues into a “one-way couplet” system with Lake Avenue providing two lanes of service for northbound traffic and Carrollton Avenue handling two lanes of southbound traffic.

**Objective 5.3:** In the long term, explore higher cost options to remove east-west through traffic from the Bucktown neighborhood.

Policy 5.3.1: Explore the feasibility of extending West Esplanade Avenue into Orleans Parish to West End / Pontchartrain Boulevard, aligning it with Filmore Avenue

Policy 5.3.2: Explore the feasibility of using the Orpheum Avenue/17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal corridor as a connection between West Esplanade and Old Hammond Highway, either by purchasing right-of-way along the west side of the Orpheum Street or by enclosing the 17<sup>th</sup> canal and building upon the enclosure.

**Objective 5.4:** Complete bike path linkages along lake & 17th Street Canal

Policy 5.4.1: Work with the East Jefferson Levee District to rebuild the Linear Bike/Jogging Path as planned once construction on Old Hammond Highway is complete.

Policy 5.4.2: Provide for the continued availability of the bicycle and pedestrian connection over the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal leading to West End, regardless of what is constructed by the Army Corps of Engineers along the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal.

Policy 5.4.3: Explore the return of a north-south bike/jogging path (or route) along the Orpheum/17<sup>th</sup> Street corridor.

**Objective 5.5:** Provide for better pedestrian routes via sidewalks and crosswalks at busy streets.

Policy 5.5.1: Ensure that the Parish Public Works Department and other construction entities operating within Bucktown include adequate pedestrian crossing facilities, including sidewalks, crosswalks, ADA compliant ramps, pedestrian notification signage, and where warranted, demand response pedestrian crossing signals at all current and future public construction projects.

Policy 5.5.2: Ensure that all residential development and redevelopment includes adequate sidewalks as part of construction.

Policy 5.5.3: Explore the possibility of a sidewalk construction program in older established areas of Bucktown where sidewalks are not present.

6. PARKS, RECREATION AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOAL – Maintain the northern Lakeshore boundary of Bucktown as a public greenspace for recreation, and enhance recreational opportunities for Bucktown residents and other citizens of the Parish by (a) development of the proposed Bucktown Harbor Park and Marina, and (b) maintaining existing community facilities both within Bucktown and along the edge of Bucktown in a manner compatible with adjacent neighborhood interests.

**Objective 6.1:** Maintain the Linear Park and the Lake Pontchartrain Levee as accessible public greenspace.

- Policy 6.1.1: Provide for additional levee/linear park access for the general public, with parking, at the new Bucktown Harbor Park and Marina.
- Policy 6.1.2: Provide for additional pedestrian/bicyclist access to the levee/linear park in the Chickasaw/Seminole Avenue area.
- Policy 6.1.3: Coordinate with the East Jefferson Levee District and to ensure continued access to the levee along Lake Pontchartrain, as well as its well-vegetated grassy nature.
- Policy 6.1.4: Provide for continued levee/linear park access for the general public, with parking, at the Bonnabel Boat Launch
- Policy 6.1.5: Provide for continued pedestrian/bicyclist access to the levee/linear park at the Homestead Avenue ramps.

**Objective 6.2:** Provide for the orderly development of the proposed Bucktown Harbor Park / Marina

- Policy 6.2.1: Consider zoning the Bucktown Harbor Park/Marina as a new zoning classification, Park and Open Space District. This zoning classification has been proposed for study by the Parish Planning Department, and would enable the zoning of the Bucktown Harbor to be consistent with the future Land Use Map.
- Policy 6.2.2: Continue to obtain funding and develop the Park in a solely recreational manner, including passive recreation facilities such as picnic tables and shelters, a recreated wetland, walking paths, and fields; boat slips; and fishing piers.
- Policy 6.2.3: Disallow any other uses of the Bucktown Park/Marina, including residential, commercial or industrial uses.

**Objective 6.3:** Maintain existing community facilities.

- Policy 6.3.1: Coordinate with the Jefferson Parish Recreation Department to ensure the continued presence of Lakeshore Playground as a vital recreation center and community facility.
- Policy 6.3.2: Coordinate with the Jefferson Parish Library to ensure the continued presence of the Lakeshore Branch Library as an educational center and community facility.
- Policy 6.3.3: Coordinate with the Jefferson Parish Public School System and explore the possibility of shared use with Marie Riviere Elementary School as an additional public facility, via either use of its play fields or classrooms for non-school time activities
- Policy 6.3.4: Ensure the continued use and development of the Bonnabel Boat Launch as public access point for boats, a fishing location, and as a passive recreation site.

7. PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND FLOOD PROTECTION GOAL - Improve the existing public infrastructure in Bucktown by bringing it up to current standards, and ensure that all infrastructure (both existing and improved) is adequate to both protect Bucktown from catastrophic flooding and to meet the demands of future redevelopment.

**Objective 7.1:** Improve substandard streets.

- Policy 7.1.1: Encourage the Parish Public Works Department and other construction entities operating within Bucktown to upgrade all streets to proper curb and gutter standards at all current and future public construction projects.
- Policy 7.1.2: Explore the possibility of a street replacement program in the section of Bucktown east of Homestead Avenue, which currently does not have any curb and guttered streets.

**Objective 7.2:** Improve utility infrastructure.

- Policy 7.2.1: Encourage the Parish Public Works Department and other construction entities operating within Bucktown to upgrade all public utility infrastructure (water, sewerage, drainage) to proper sizes and standards to meet planned redevelopment build-out under the proposed future land use map, during all current and future public construction projects

Policy 7.2.2: Explore the possibility of a public utility upgrade program for water, sewerage and drainage facilities in Bucktown.

**Objective 7.3:** Maintain safety and protection from catastrophic flooding.

Policy 7.3.1: Encourage the coordination of the East Jefferson Levee District and the Army Corps of Engineers to maintain adequate levee heights along Bucktown's northern and eastern edges, and to ensure that flood gates and floodwalls remain in good working condition.

Policy 7.3.2: Encourage the East Jefferson Levee District and the Army Corps of Engineers to explore alternative options of flood protection, such as flood gates at lake entrances, innovative breakwaters and wetlands.

Policy 7.3.3: Encourage the Jefferson Parish Drainage Department to adequately maintain pumping capacity at the Bonnabel Canal Station and to ensure a clear, unobstructed flow of the West Esplanade and Bonnabel Canals.

Policy 7.3.4: Encourage Bucktown residents to ensure that their neighborhood catch basins are free and clear of debris which may block drainage.

8. SAFETY AND CRIME PREVENTION GOAL – Maintain Bucktown's status as safe, low crime neighborhood.

**Objective 8.1:** Ensure that crime rates in Bucktown stay low.

Policy 8.1.1: Encourage active participation by local citizens in Crime Watch and other neighborhood vigilance programs

Policy 8.1.2: Encourage the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's office to have a continued and pronounced presence in the neighborhood via regular patrols.

Policy 8.1.3: Encourage the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's office to place a substation in the eastern Bucktown area.

Policy 8.1.4: Explore the improvement of street lighting in Bucktown by adding lighting or replacement of current lighting to meet current Parish standards for light spacing and luminosity.

**Objective 8.2:** Provide for traffic safety within Bucktown

Policy 8.2.1: Improve traffic safety by implementation of traffic-related policies as described in Transportation and Traffic Goal.

9. CITIZEN PARTICIPATION GOAL – Encourage Bucktown residents to have a voice in large-scale developments that will have neighborhood-wide impacts or that present issues of neighborhood-wide significance.

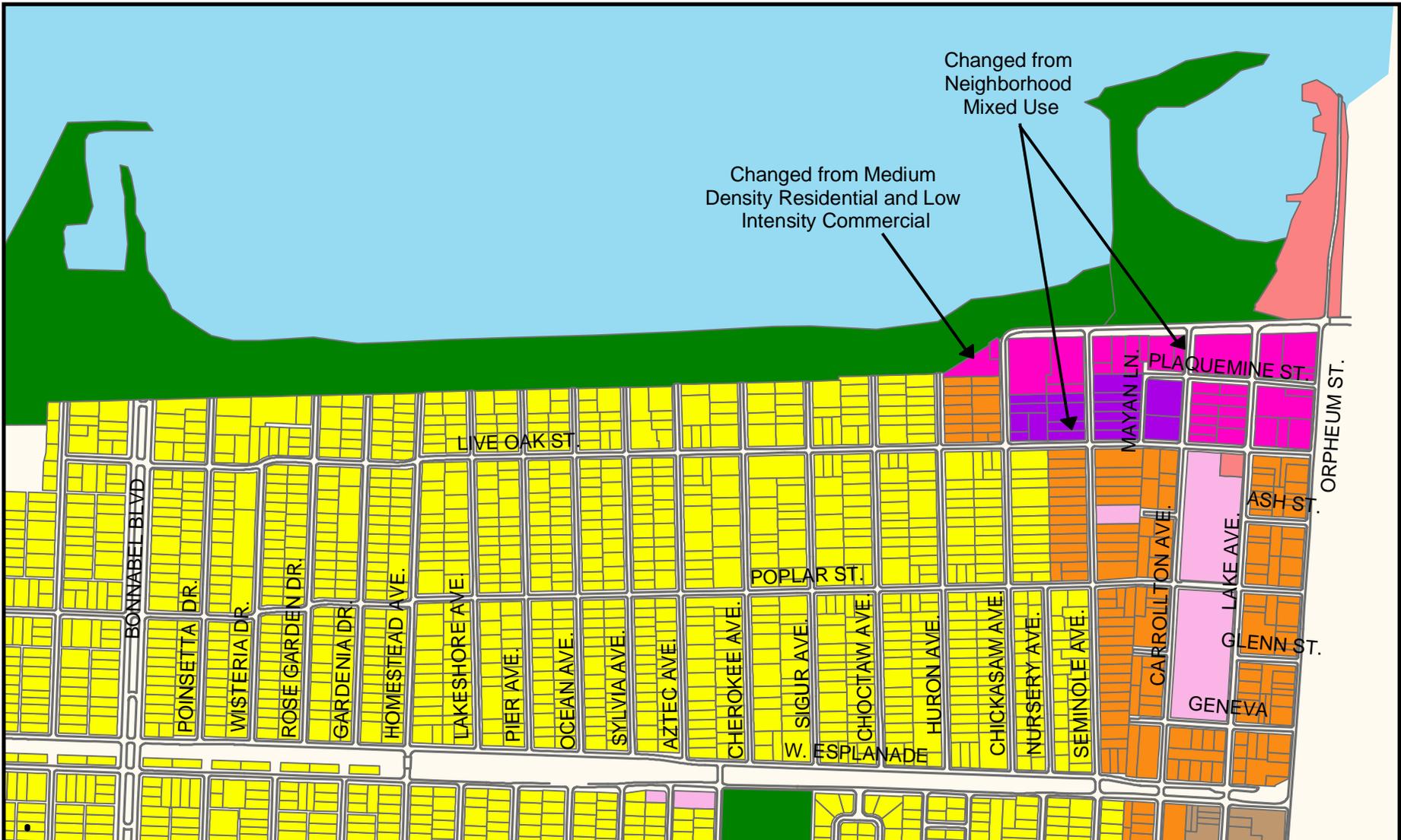
**Objective 9.1:** Higher citizen participation in (and input on) major Bucktown Projects

- Policy 9.1.1: Develop and continue a close working relationship between the neighborhood Civic Association and the Parish Government.
- Policy 9.1.2: Encourage Parish Planning Department and elected officials to ‘reach out’ to neighborhood civic leaders and citizens for input on major issues and developments.
- Policy 9.1.3: Encourage local citizens to take a pro-active role in monitoring changes and developments within their neighborhood, by reading the official Parish Journal for items of neighborhood interest and concern, and also by attending Planning Advisory Board meetings, Board of Zoning Adjustment meetings, and Parish Council meetings.

## **REVISED FUTURE LAND USE PLAN MAP**

A Revised Future Land Use Plan map is shown on Figure 5-1 on the following page.

As touched on in Chapter IV, the revised Future Land Use Plan Map is not much different from the proposed Future Land Use Map developed as part of the *Envision Jefferson 2020* process. There are only two differences. Those areas which would be zoned under the new OBM-1 zoning classification would be changed to *community mixed-use*, while those areas zoned OBM-2 would be changed to *regional mixed use* on the Future Land Use Map. This will maintain consistency between the zoning and future land use.



**Legend**

- High Dens Res
- Low Int Comm
- Low Med Dens Res
- Med Dens Res
- Neighb Mxd Use
- Comm Mxd Use
- Reg Mxd Use
- Recreation
- Public/ Quasi-Public/ Institutional

**BUCKTOWN  
NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN**

**PROPOSED FUTURE LAND USE,  
REVISED**

**NY ASSOCIATES, INC.**  
CONSULTING ENGINEERS  
ARCHITECTS & PLANNERS

2750 LAKE VILLA DR. METAIRIE, LOUISIANA 70002 (504) 885-0500

**FIGURE**

**5-1**

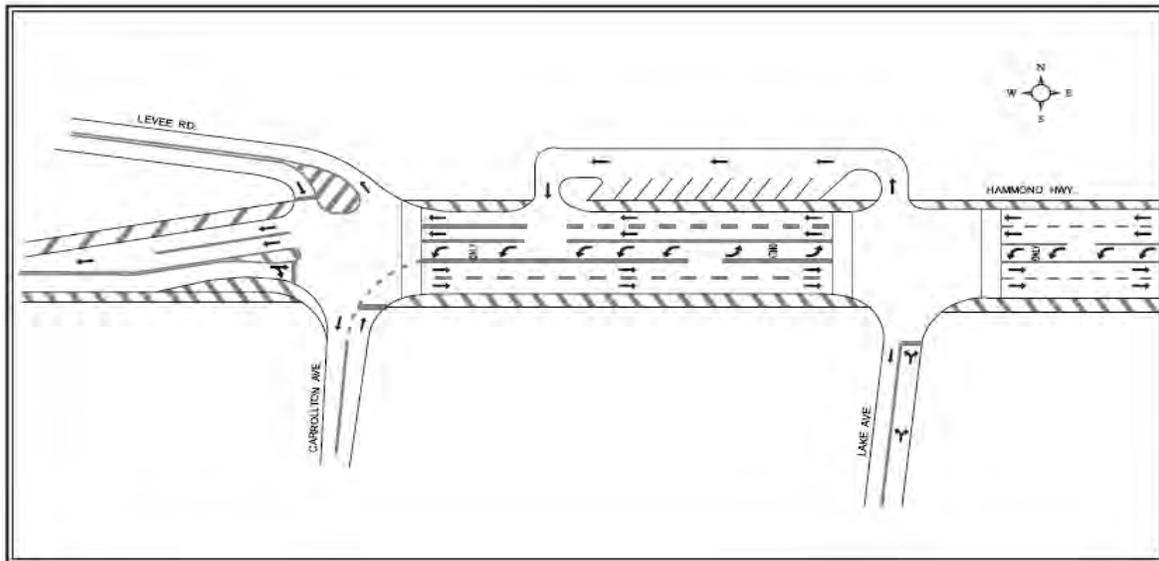
## TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

### EXISTING TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

The Major Thoroughfare Plan, which is still currently in development by the Jefferson Planning Department, has the following roadways identified on the major street network in the Bucktown sub-area: Live Oak, Hammond Highway, Carrollton Avenue, Lake Avenue, W. Esplanade Avenue and Bonnabel Boulevard. Of these, Bonnabel, West Esplanade, Old Hammond Hwy. and Lake Avenue are classified as minor arterials, Live Oak Street is classified as a collector street, and Carrollton is classified as a neighborhood collector. The rest of the roadways in Bucktown are classified as local roads.

### FUTURE TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

During the course of the development of the Bucktown Neighborhood Plan, the neighborhood only had one proposed transportation facility which was nearing completion: the new Old Hammond Highway Bridge over the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal and improvements to Old Hammond Highway on the northern edge of Bucktown. Figure 5-2, below, shows the planned improvements at this location:



**Figure 5-2.** Planned Improvements along Old Hammond Highway in Bucktown

Although the bridge itself was essentially completed prior to the landfall of Hurricane Katrina, the improvements to the remainder of Old Hammond Highway (re-striping of lanes and installation of traffic signal at Lake Avenue) were not completed by the time the hurricane hit. As the US Army Corps of Engineers has had to use the northern most lanes of the bridge to install temporary sheet-piling floodwalls, final completion of the improvements probably will not occur until the new 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal floodgate structure north of the bridge is completed.

## TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES PROPOSED FOR FUTURE STUDY

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the overwhelming focus of the public concerns dealt with discouraging cut-through traffic on single-family residential streets while improving east-west through traffic flows. Project sub-consultant Urban Systems, using some earlier analysis and completing some new traffic counts and performing some new basic analysis, examined if the concerns were well-founded. Figure 5-3, on the following page, shows the results of traffic counts in area for Lake, Carrollton, Seminole and Chickasaw Streets.

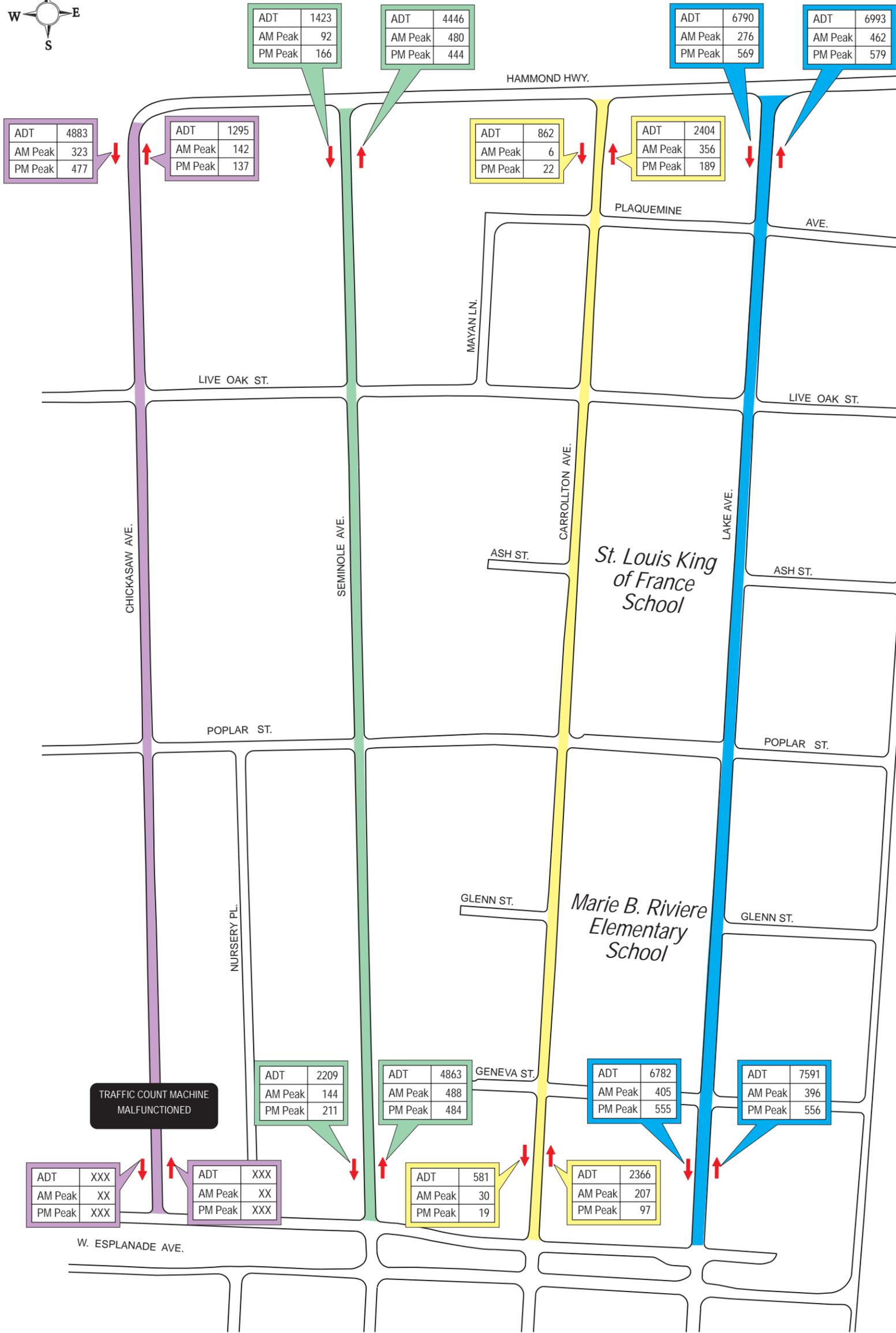
As can be seen on the graphic, Lake Avenue, which is classified as a Minor Arterial and should arguably get most of the traffic volume, does receive the largest amount of Average Daily Traffic (ADT) in either direction (northbound and southbound). However, the second-highest volume of traffic seems to be handled between Chickasaw and Seminole Avenue, which are local streets. Indeed, the northbound volumes on Seminole are about 64% of the volume on Lake Avenue, while the southbound volume on Chickasaw is about 72% of the southbound volume on Lake Avenue.

What these volumes indicate is that the residents' complaints are verified-- there is a definite presence of "cut-through" traffic. The cut-through traffic appears to also occur in a couplet fashion, with northbound traffic utilizing Seminole Avenue, as it the first opportunity for West Esplanade motorists to head north directly to Old Hammond Highway, and southbound motorists using Chickasaw, the last opportunity for Old Hammond Highway motorists to head south directly to West Esplanade. Bearing this observation out is that morning northbound peak hour volume on Seminole is actually higher than the morning northbound peak hour volume on Lake Avenue.

Interestingly enough, Carrollton Avenue (defined in the *Major Thoroughfare Plan* as a neighborhood collector) has the lowest traffic volumes in comparison to any of these four streets. This is odd in that it connects not only to Old Hammond Highway and West Esplanade, but also directly connects to a signalized intersection at Veterans Blvd. This relative lack of traffic is probably best explained by the fact that Carrollton has a one-block one-way stretch (northbound only) between Live Oak and Poplar Streets.

It should be noted however, that the traffic counts shown were all taken prior to Hurricane Katrina, and that traffic patterns have been drastically different all across the metro area since that hurricane. Still, the counts give a good indication of the situation to which the neighborhood is likely to return as Orleans and Jefferson Parish complete their recovery.

A second part of the basic analysis is to look at how Bucktown is handling through traffic by looking at it as a flow system. As the consultants noted, because of the presence of the Old Hammond Highway Bridge, Bucktown lies in what is essentially a major east-west corridor handling traffic flows from Jefferson Parish to Orleans Parish and vice-versa. Over the last twenty-five years or so, the "channel" or "pipeline" handling this flow has been steadily improved on both ends. Prior to the early 1980s, West Esplanade



TRAFFIC COUNT MACHINE MALFUNCTIONED

### Data Collection Information

- Data for Lake Avenue / Carrollton Avenue was collected during April / May of 2003.
- Data for Seminole Avenue / Chickasaw Avenue was collected during June 2005.



## East Bucktown Traffic Volumes

### BUCKTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

had only one lane in each direction between Homestead Avenue and Orpheum Drive. A third lane (eastbound) was added in the early 1980s, and at the turn of the century, a fourth lane (2nd eastbound lane) was added. Similarly, Old Hammond Highway and the its bridge over the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal were two-lane facilities for many years, and were scheduled to open as four lane facilities in 2005. That left the only constrained section (the only portion without an effective four lanes of capacity) as the stretch linking West Esplanade to Old Hammond Highway.

As a result of these basic analyses, the suggested solutions to dealing with the traffic issues were each addressed, with the most promising among these being recommended for further study as short term, medium term and long term options.

### **Short Term Options**

The short term options recommended for study are geared specifically towards cutting down on the amount of cut through traffic that uses the two local streets. They are also very low-cost to install and merely involve signage installation (and enforcement by local police). The first of these is the placement of “No Left Turn” signage for peak hour traffic to access to Seminole Avenue via West Esplanade eastbound. It is felt that this would clearly lower the AM peak and would help disperse AM peak traffic to Carrollton and Lake Avenue.

The second short-term solution was to make Chickasaw Avenue a one-way street (northbound) for one or more segments between West Esplanade and Live Oak Streets. This would put it in a situation similar to Carrollton Avenue, and may help to reduce the large amount of PM peak traffic it experiences. It may, however, simply result in cut-through traffic heading west on Live Oak or Poplar and taking another local street down to West Esplanade.

### **Medium Term Options**

The two medium-term options recommended for study each address a different aspect of the problem: the immediate cut-through traffic problem and the long-term improvement of through traffic flows. Although each does not require any major capital expenditures, each does require more than those which could be implemented in the short term.

The medium-term option for addressing cut-through traffic is to use access management. From the simplest side, it could be basic traffic calming measures (speed bumps, road dimples, raised crosswalks, etc.). On the more extreme side, it could be creating dead-end features for Seminole and Chickasaw Avenues between Old Hammond Highway and Live Oak Street. These dead-end features would be placed mid-block to allow access to the parking garages/parking lots of the buildings fronting Old Hammond Highway, and would still allow pedestrian and bicyclist access.

The medium-term option for addressing improved through traffic flow is via the use of a one-way couplet system. The couplet would have two lanes on Lake Avenue handling northbound traffic, and two lanes of Carrollton Avenue handling southbound traffic. The couplet idea has been studied in the past, most recently in a Jefferson Parish Department of Public Works project: *Lake & Carrollton Avenue Improvements: Traffic Operational Analysis (December 2003)*. Figure 5-4, on the following page, shows how the proposed couplet system (as envisioned in that study) would work.

The study also looked at an alternative which simply added shoulders and curb & gutter to Lake and Carrollton avenues, and another alternative that changed Lake Avenue into a three-lane section (by adding a center turning lane). In the *Recommendations* section of that study, it was stated that “Alternative B (the couplet) has the potential to provide the greatest overall traffic operations improvement to the project area”. However, the report also added that the couplet plan involves a few negative aspects, with the primary impediment being that it might interfere with school unloading/unloading at the two elementary schools<sup>1</sup>.

### **Long Term Options**

The two long term options recommended for study are geared specifically towards improving the through traffic flow in the area. Each would require major capital expenditures, and each may involve some political consideration, as well. The first of these is the idea of extending West Esplanade into Orleans Parish via a new bridge over the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal, and aligning it with Filmore Avenue, a major east-west collector roadway in that Parish that extends across Lakeview and Gentilly.

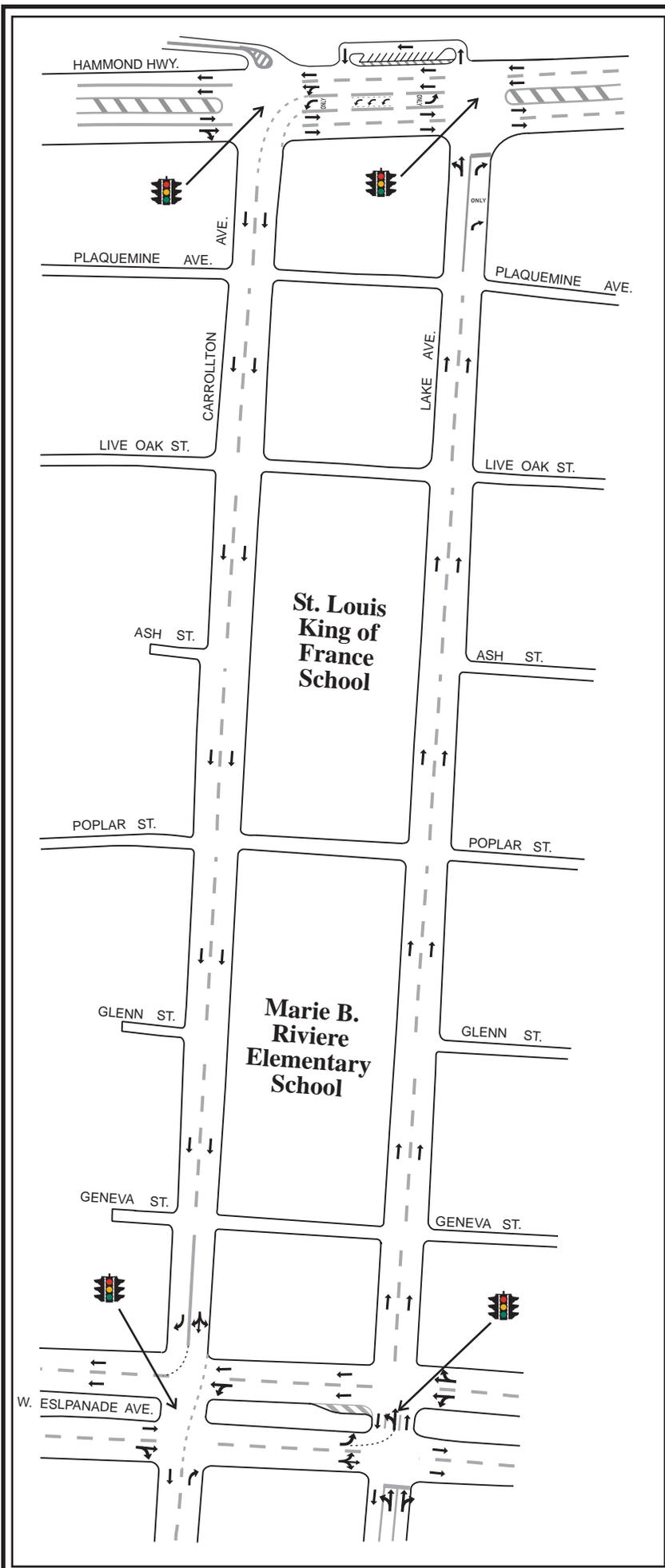
The initial problem with this option is that Filmore Avenue doesn’t extend westward to the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal; it ends at Pontchartrain Blvd. The buildings, houses and streets of Lakewood North form a barrier to linking West Esplanade with Filmore, and any attempt to link the two would require substantial right-of-way acquisition of residential homes and relocations. However, following the hurricane, this idea may be more tenable. There was vast destruction in Lakewood North caused by the nearby floodwall breach, and most properties between the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal levee and Pontchartrain Boulevard are still vacant. If an equitable amount of compensation is made available to those property owners, and if the City of New Orleans and Jefferson Parish wish to jointly pursue such a roadway connection, it may be feasible to acquire the area needed as road right-of-way.

A secondary problem is overall project cost. Between the cost to construct and the cost for right-of-way on the Orleans Parish side, this project would certainly cost in the tens of millions of dollars.

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<sup>1</sup> *Lake & Carrollton Avenue Improvements – Traffic Operational Analysis*, JP DPW Project No. 2002-023-RB, December 2003, page 33.

**FIGURE 5-4**  
**PROPOSED COUPLET**  
**SYSTEM,**  
**LAKE AVENUE AND**  
**CARROLLTON AVENUE**

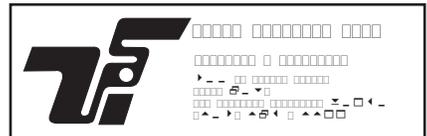


***Planned Improvements:***

- GEOMETRIC IMPROVEMENTS TO HAMMOND HWY.
- SIGNALIZATION OF HAMMOND HWY. / LAKE AVE. AND HAMMOND HWY. / CARROLLTON AVE.
- GEOMETRIC IMPROVEMENTS TO W. ESPLANADE AVE. / LAKE AVE. NORTHBOUND APPROACH
- SIGNALIZATION OF W. ESPLANADE AVE. / LAKE AVE.

***Couplet Improvements:***

- SIGNALIZATION OF W. ESPLANADE AVE. / CARROLLTON AVE.
- ONE-WAY COUPLET OPERATION OF LAKE AVE. AND CARROLLTON AVE. (NORTHBOUND LAKE AVE., SOUTHBOUND CARROLLTON AVE.)



The second option was to use the Orpheum Avenue/17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal Corridor to create a new 4-lane link between Old Hammond Highway and West Esplanade. This option had two subsets: one idea was to purchase the properties along the west side of Orpheum Avenue and widen that existing street; the second was to enclose the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal and build a new 4-lane roadway on top of it. Both of these options would appear to be very problematic—widening Orpheum Avenue would entail acquiring seven (7) half-blocks of residential and commercial property in Bucktown, which would be both expensive and disruptive, while enclosing the canal would be prohibitively expensive and seems all the less likely given the floodwall problems exposed by Hurricane Katrina. Either new roadway would also have problems in connecting with Old Hammond Highway on the north end due to the presence of the floodwall and bridge at right angles to each other, as well as the existing roadway and signal configuration of Old Hammond Highway.

## **EXISTING AND FUTURE COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

### **EXISTING FACILITIES**

The Bucktown neighborhood has very little in terms of existing community facilities within its defined boundaries. Marie Riviere Elementary School on Poplar Street could be characterized as the only true community facility within Bucktown, as its facilities are often used by community groups and public meetings.

Along Bucktown's periphery however, it has several such facilities that, according to the *Goals, Objectives, and Policies*, should be maintained and enhanced:

- The Linear Park along the lakeshore, with its jogging/bike path and lake views, located on the northern edge of Bucktown
- Lakeshore Playground, located off the south edge of Bucktown
- The Lakeshore Branch of the Jefferson Parish Library, located off the south edge of Bucktown
- The Bonnabel Boat Launch, which contains a public access point for boats, a fishing pier, and a passive recreation park, located at the northwest corner of Bucktown.

### **FUTURE FACILITIES**

The biggest and arguably most important future community facility in Bucktown is the Bucktown Harbor Park / Marina, which has been partially physically developed.

As described in the Bucktown History section in Chapter II, the idea of creating a recreational marina at Bucktown dates back to the 1970s. Over time, the Parish obtained a lease from the State of Louisiana for the state-owned water bottoms, conducted hydrologic modeling, and obtained a US Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit. In terms

of physical improvements, over the last 25 years, the Parish constructed an “L” –shaped breakwater near the northeast corner of Bucktown along the lake. This breakwater, along with the Orpheum Avenue peninsula on the east, created a calm basin.

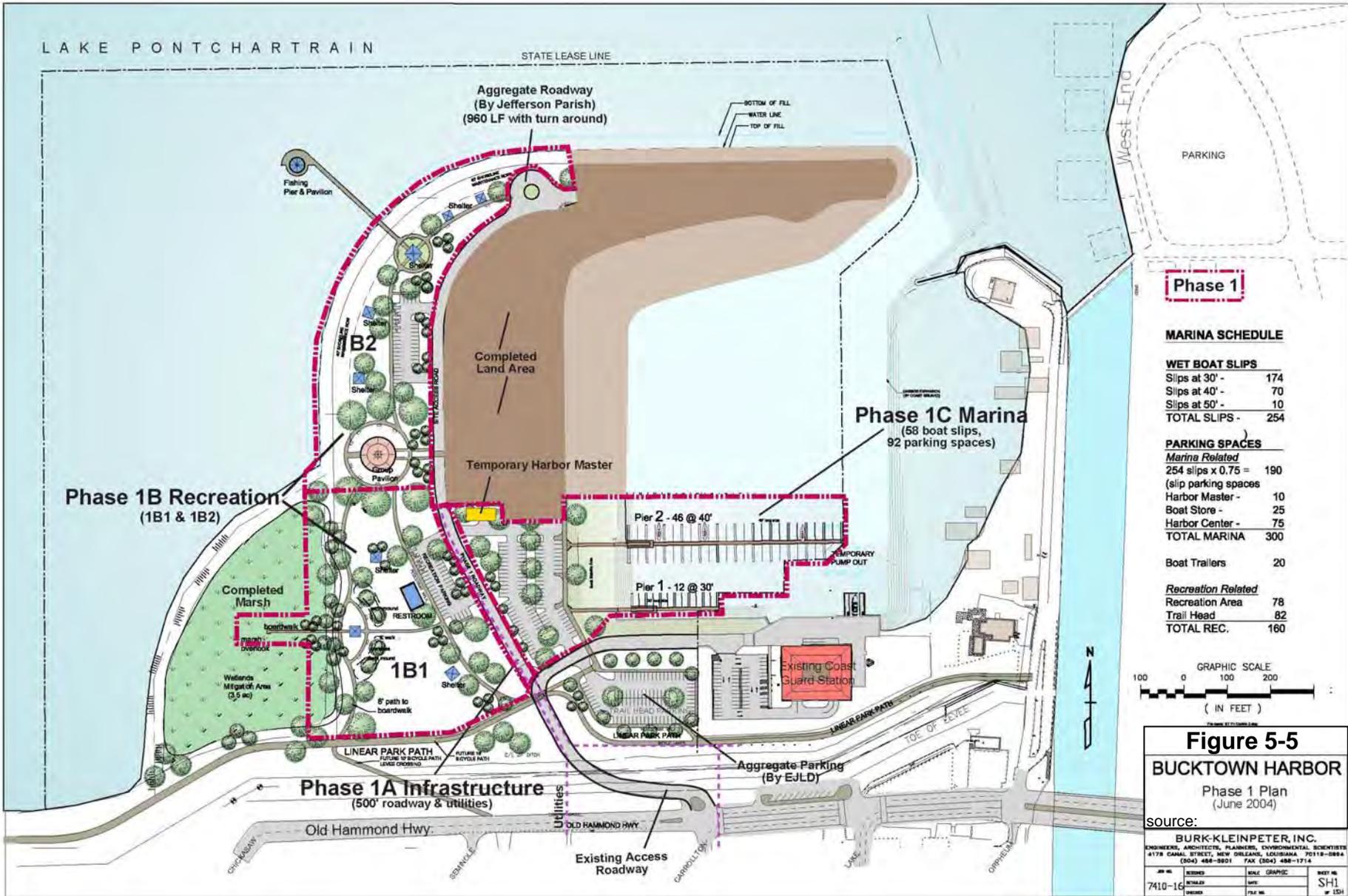
At one point in the early 2000s, the Parish completed initial plans to develop the Basin as a large commercial marina, with a fishing village, large boat storage building, retail shops, and a commercial marina office building. However, this particular development never came about due to protests by Bucktown residents, and because the State Lands Office and the Attorney General's Office determined that commercial use of these filled/reclaimed water bottoms was not legally permissible. The only maritime development of the basin to date has been the construction of a new US Coast Guard station on the south edge of the basin, completed in 2001. The Coast Guard made some improvements to the basin itself, including the dredging of the basin and a channel leading to the lake, and installation of bulkheads along the basin’s south shore.

By early 2005, revised plans to develop the area primarily as a recreational site were developed. Phase I of this plan is shown on Figure 5-5 on the following page. The new plans for the Bucktown Harbor Park and Marina called for a scaled-back marina, a 3.5 acre marsh with a boardwalk overlook, walking trails, pavilions and shelters, a fishing pier, and access roads and parking. Some progress was made towards development of the park areas in early 2005, with various volunteer groups planting native species in the marsh area and park. The \$1.4 million cost of the remainder of Phase I was to be split between the Parish and the East Jefferson Levee District. However, the funding agreement was never signed, and by March of 2005, the East Jefferson Levee District served notice that they were not able to fund their portion in 2005<sup>2</sup>. Hurricane Katrina’s landfall in August put plans for the park further on hold, as the peninsula was used for staging operations for repair of the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Canal breach and other purposes for several months, and post-disaster items took precedence over local budgets.

Recently, however, there has been a glimmer of hope in progress towards making the Bucktown Harbor Marina and Park become further developed. The US Army Corps of Engineers, which had displaced the Bucktown fishing fleet boats from the Canal due to its work installing the floodgates, has agreed to fund docks and other such improvements at the Bucktown Marina as part of mitigation. This will not be the construction of the entire marina, but appears to at least include some of the docks and slips planned. Completion of these improvements may serve as a catalyst for future marina and park development.

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<sup>2</sup> New Orleans Times-Picayune, p. A-1, March 9, 2005



**Phase 1**

**MARINA SCHEDULE**

**WET BOAT SLIPS**

Slips at 30'	174
Slips at 40'	70
Slips at 50'	10
<b>TOTAL SLIPS</b>	<b>254</b>

**PARKING SPACES**

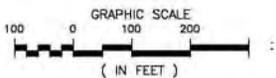
*Marina Related*

254 slips x 0.75 =	190
<i>(slip parking spaces)</i>	
Harbor Master	10
Boat Store	25
Harbor Center	75
<b>TOTAL MARINA</b>	<b>300</b>

Boat Trailers 20

*Recreation Related*

Recreation Area	78
Trail Head	82
<b>TOTAL REC.</b>	<b>160</b>



**Figure 5-5**  
**BUCKTOWN HARBOR**  
 Phase 1 Plan  
 (June 2004)

source:

**BURK-KLEINPETER, INC.**  
 ENGINEERS, ARCHITECTS, PLANNERS, ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTISTS  
 4178 CANAL STREET, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70118-0884  
 (504) 488-9821 FAX (504) 488-1714

DATE	SCALE	GRAPHIC	SHEET NO.
7/10/04	AS SHOWN	AS SHOWN	SH1
DESIGNED	DRAWN	FILE NO.	OF 15/11

## **OLD BUCKTOWN DISTRICT**

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the idea of an “Old Bucktown District” came about to address objectives under several goals: mixed-use residential under *housing*, visual identity under *design*, *economic development*, and *land use*. The district covered the extreme northeastern section of Bucktown, and is shown along with its component zoning districts on Figure 5-6 on the following page.

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR DESIGN STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC SPACE**

The overall district was intended as an overlay area, which would have particular design standards regarding landscaping, signage, and a unified, common theme in the public space realm (such as street signage, street lighting, and sidewalks). These design standards will need to be determined at a later date, perhaps as part of separate conceptual architectural study. However, although the design standards for public space have not been developed, a framework list of guidelines for the design standards has been completed and is presented below:

### **General**

Design standards for public space shall be established to provide greater connectivity between the Bucktown Harbor Marina and Park at Lake Pontchartrain and the other Old Bucktown Zoning Districts (OBM-1 and OBM-2), to provide a unified theme for the Old Bucktown area of the neighborhood, with decorative pedestrian walkways and plantings, promotion of pedestrian mobility, and creation of an inviting, quality streetscape. All of the Old Bucktown District shall be considered comprehensively as one unit relative to design standards.

The design standards shall include but not be limited to the following elements:

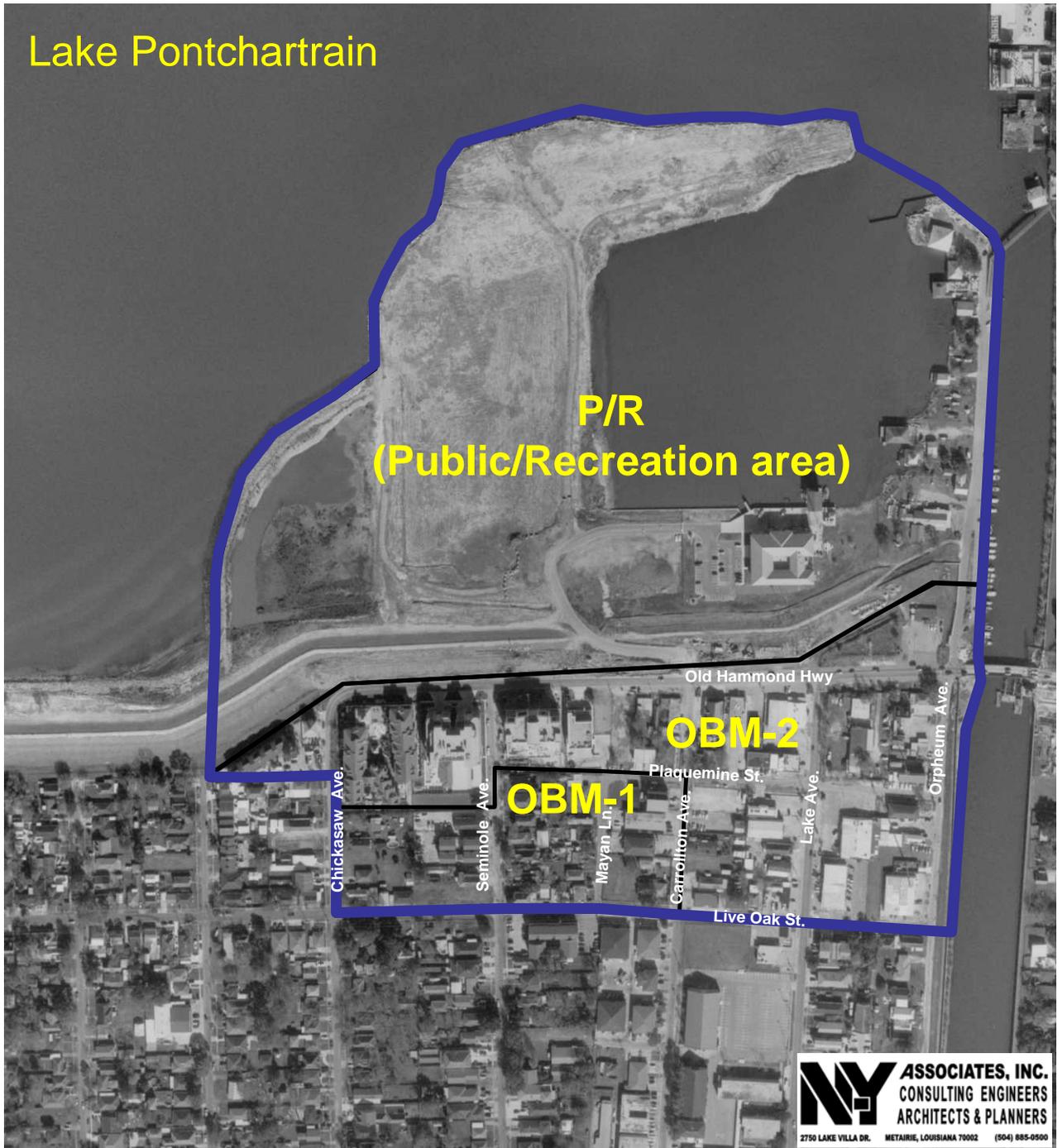
- a conceptual plan of public structures and gathering areas;
- landscaping;
- pedestrian and bicycle access;
- street furniture and lighting;
- public parking; and,
- a maritime ecotourism educational center in conjunction with the relocation of the historic Bucktown Fishing Fleet and a maritime museum emphasizing the contribution of Lake Pontchartrain to the culture and economy of Jefferson Parish.

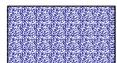
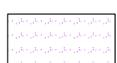
These elements are described individually below:

### **Landscape Element**

The conceptual plan shall present public structures and gathering areas, open space areas and a landscaping element for the Old Bucktown Zoning Districts with decorative pedestrian walkways and plantings within the public rights of way utilizing standardized

**Figure 5-6. Old Bucktown District Concept**



-  Old Bucktown District Boundaries - Design Standards regarding landscaping, signage; common themes in public realm (street lighting, etc.), consideration of design review for new development
-  P/R: to be zoned with as-yet-to be proposed public/recreation district
-  OBM-2: Proposed Old Bucktown Mixed Use District 2 (commercial/residential) w/ new standards for height, density and permitted use.
-  OBM-1: Proposed Old Bucktown Mixed Use District 1 (residential/commercial) w/ new standards for height, density and permitted use.

trees, shrubs and other vegetation to create a unified theme. Implementation of the landscaping elements is recommended in pilot programs on Old Hammond Highway, Carrollton, Lake and Seminole Avenues.

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Access**

The conceptual plan should promote pedestrian and bicycle access including connectivity among the Old Bucktown Zoning Districts as follows:

- A decorative sidewalk of a minimum of 10 feet in width extending from the back of the curb towards the property line shall be installed on both sides of Old Hammond Highway and traverse the highway at the Carrollton and Seminole Avenue intersections to connect the Bucktown Marina Park to Old Hammond Highway and other streets in the area.
- Decorative sidewalks of a minimum of 6 feet in width extending from the back of the curb towards the property line shall be established on streets within the Old Bucktown Zoning Districts situated perpendicular to Old Hammond Highway and extending from Lake Pontchartrain to Live Oak Street.

### **Street Furniture**

The conceptual plan shall include a unified design for street furniture to be utilized in the Old Bucktown Zoning Districts featuring a nautical theme for standardized benches, street lighting, street signage, garbage receptacles, and other types of street furniture.

### **Public Parking**

The conceptual plan should consider a plan for public parking at the Bucktown Marina Park to serve the area. No parking shall be permitted on street frontage except in selected designated areas.

### **Maritime Ecotourism Center, Maritime Museum & Historic Bucktown Fishing Fleet**

The conceptual plan shall consider the development of a maritime ecotourism center and or a maritime museum within the Bucktown Marina Park for the purposes of educating the public on the role of Lake Pontchartrain, fisheries and the maritime industry to the local area, region, state and nation. The portion of the plan should also consider an appropriate site within the Bucktown Marina for the relocation of the historic Bucktown Fishing Fleet.

## **Funding Alternatives**

A special taxing district or other innovative alternative is recommended to establish a dedicated funding source for implementation of the improvements within public rights of way and in public areas within the Old Bucktown Districts

## **OLD BUCKTOWN DISTRICT ZONING CLASSIFICATIONS**

Underlying this district would be three (3) different proposed zoning classifications: OBM-2, OBM-1, and a new, as-yet defined recreation and public-use oriented zoning district covering the area north of the hurricane protection levee. The two proposed OBM Mixed-Use zoning districts areas are summarized below:

### **Old Bucktown Mixed Use District 2 (OBM-2)**

The areas along Old Hammond Highway, and Lake and Orpheum Avenues (see Figure 5-6 for a map showing the particular areas) would be zoned Old Bucktown Mixed Use District-2 (OBM-2). The OBM-2 district is intended as a true mixed use district, promoting a blend of commercial and residential uses not just within the district but within individual properties. It hopes to continue the lively retail and restaurant scene present in northeastern Bucktown while allowing for mid-rise residential development above commercial uses. Finally, the district hopes to improve upon the area by creating an inviting streetscape and encouraging pedestrian activity.

How does the OBM-2 district propose to do this? A summary of its key points is presented below:

- *Permitted Uses* - In OBM-2, permitted uses include those typically found in the area today (multiple dwelling units, offices, restaurants, retail and service establishments), but also included as a permitted use is mixed use, in which upper floors in the structure may be allowed to have residential use while the ground floor is primarily devoted to allow any of the commercial uses allowed.
- *Orientation of Permitted Uses* - The first or ground level floor shall only be allowed to contain restaurants, offices and retail and service establishments. Additionally, residential units shall not be permitted on the first or ground level floor of structures. Finally, no parking structures or lots shall be permitted on the first or ground level floor facing the public right of way. Parking structures or lots may be situated on the *interior* of the development, however.

These two measures were included to create a lively street presence for any new buildings, and prevent a dearth of ground floor activities as the area redevelops. It should be noted that the ground floors of the three most recently developed buildings on Old Hammond Highway consists of parking garage structures.

It should also be noted that although recent changes to the zoning ordinance now allows for more mixed use in certain existing zoning districts (such as C-1 and C-2), this district is more stringent in that it requires a clear commercial presence on the ground floor of any new development.

- *Height, Area, and Setback Requirements* – Height requirements in the OBM-2 are essentially the same as those in the revised C-1 district—45 feet allowed “by right”, with allowances to go up to a maximum of 70 feet if certain qualifications such as setbacks are met. The minimum lot area is set at 10,000 square feet. Building setbacks are also a little different in that while they are set at the same 20 feet as OBM-1, in order to encourage a lively street scene, setback areas may be used for commercial use such as outdoor seating at a restaurant in lieu of being landscaped.
- *Design Standards* – OBM-2 is regulated by several design standards covering such things as exterior finishes, landscaping, doors and windows, and also has more stringent rules on signage (such as no “pole” signs and size and height restrictions on monument signs). These are designed and include promoting a unified, quality appearance within the district.
- *Site Plan Review* - All developments or redevelopments in the district are subject to site plan review. The only variances allowed are for parking and yards.

### **Old Bucktown Mixed Use District 1 (OBM-1)**

The remaining areas south extending to Chickasaw and Live Oak streets and containing parcels fronting on Mayan Lane (see Figure 5-6 for a map showing the particular areas) would be zoned Old Bucktown Mixed Use District- 1 (OBM-1). Like the OBM-2 district, the OBM-1 district is intended as a true mixed use district, promoting a blend of commercial and residential uses not just within the district but within individual properties. OBM-1 is also designed to improve upon the Old Bucktown area by creating an inviting streetscape and encouraging pedestrian activity. However, as this district serves as a buffer or transition between the more intensive use of OBM-2 and the residential areas to the southwest of the area, this district is geared more towards the residential end of the mixed use equation: allowing, for example, residential uses at the ground floor level. Its height limits are shorter than those of OBM-2, and the density allowed is less.

A summary of the key points of the OBM-1 zoning district is presented below:

- *Permitted Uses* - In OBM-1, permitted uses include less-dense residential uses (single, two-, three- and four-family dwellings and townhouses), a very limited list of small retail and service establishments, offices and mixed use, in which in

which at least one floor in the structure is devoted to allow a residential use and at least one floor is devoted to allow any of the commercial uses allowed.

- *Orientation of Permitted Uses* – In contrast to OBM-2, where commercial uses may be present on any floor, in OBM-1 small retail and service establishments are only allowed on the first floor. Residential uses are permitted on any floor of structures.
- *Height, Area, and Setback Requirements* – 45 feet is the maximum height allowed in the OBM-1 district. The minimum lot area is set at 5,000 square feet for a single-family dwelling, and that minimum increases for two-, three- and four-family dwellings. Building setbacks are the traditional 20 feet.
- *Design Standards* – OBM-1, like the OBM-2 District, is also regulated by several design standards covering such things as exterior finishes, landscaping, doors and windows, and signage. Architectural styles and garbage containers are also considered in the OBM-1 District.
- *Site Plan Review* - All developments or redevelopments in the district are subject to site plan review. The only variances allowed are for parking, landscaping and yards.

## IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

To summarize all recommendations and findings present, a list of items is presented as an Implementation Strategy for moving forward with the Bucktown Neighborhood Plan. The Plan is presented in a logical and chronological order below:

- 1. Adopt OBM-1 and OBM-2 zoning districts in northeast Bucktown.** This would be done via Jefferson Parish Council action following public hearing on the recommended zoning changes, and would immediately address redevelopment issues in this most contentious portion of the redeveloping neighborhood.
- 2. Amend Future Land Use Plan.** The Parish Council is recommended to make two (2) minor changes to the Future Land Use Plan. Those areas which would be zoned under the new OBM-1 zoning classification would be changed to *community mixed-use*, while those areas zoned OBM-2 would be changed to *regional mixed use* on the Future Land Use Map. This will maintain consistency between the zoning and future land use, as community mixed-use entails a density of 20 dwelling units per acre while OBM-2 allows a maximum allowable density of 16 dwelling units per acre, and both the regional mixed-use classification and the OBM-2 district allow for a density of 65 dwelling units per acre.

- 3. Complete a conceptual architectural study for design standards in the Old Bucktown District.** One of the key features of the Old Bucktown District was that it would present a distinctive visual look, by using a unified, common theme in the public space realm (such as street signage, street lighting, and sidewalks) and by having design standards for private redevelopment. Some of these standards are written into the OBM-1 and OBM-2 district. However, the design standards for public space have not been developed—only a framework list of guidelines for the design standards are within the scope of this neighborhood plan and included in this document. Completion of such a study would greatly assist in giving a vision for not only any public infrastructure redevelopment, but also would assist in giving guidance and direction to private redevelopment in Old Bucktown.
- 4. Obtain funding for implementation of the improvements within public rights of way and in public areas within the Old Bucktown District.** As mentioned in the *Conceptual Framework for Design Standards* section in this chapter, some form of innovative alternative is recommended to establish a dedicated funding source for such improvements. One suggestion has been a self-assessed special taxing district, similar to the Downtown Development District in New Orleans. The property owners in the Old Bucktown District would need to approve such a measure themselves. Another innovative possibility is through federal Smart Growth grants. As the plans for Old Bucktown is mixed-use and smart-growth in nature, these would be appropriate and helpful and can be applied to infrastructure.
- 5. Perform a zoning study for the Bucktown Area north of the Lake Pontchartrain levee.** As noted in this plan, the current zoning in the Bucktown Harbor Marina is inappropriate at C-1, while the Orpheum Drive peninsula is no longer in private ownership. Furthermore, the areas levee area itself from the Harbor to the Bonnabel Boat Launch is unzoned at present. An appropriate zoning district, which allows for park and recreational uses as well as government-owned facilities (such as the US Coast Guard Station, the US Army Corps of Engineers pumping station) is clearly needed in this area, yet no such classification exists in the Parish today. A new Parks and Recreation District, which has been called for as a study, may turn out to be appropriate classification for this area. In the alternative, a site-specific zoning classification may need to be developed.
- 6. Consider zoning changes outside of Old Bucktown District.** As identified in the *Goals, Objectives and Policies*, one of the primary recommendations is for the Parish Council to rezone the area north of the intersection of Aztec Avenue and Live Oaks street from its current zoning designation to R-1A. Rezoning these parcels first of all would reconcile them with the vision of the Future Land Use Map, in which the entire area is slated for Low-Medium Density Residential, but would also protect area residents in the short term from major redevelopment which may negatively affect them.

- 7. Develop a Bucktown Tree Preservation District.** The consultant has recommended the development of a *Bucktown Tree Preservation District*. The first step in making this district a reality is for the Parish Arborist to determine which trees were considered significant for the Bucktown neighborhood. Once that is complete, the Parish Planning Department, as per their staff recommendation, can forward to the council an amendment to the Metairie Ridge Tree Preservation District language, making it a parish-wide umbrella ordinance in terms of applications, operations, violations and such, and allowing other neighborhoods to be considered as additional districts. Upon Council approval, Bucktown could then become the second such district in the Parish.
- 8. Conduct further studies of proposed short- and medium-term solutions for traffic issues in Bucktown, and act on them.** The short term options recommended are very low-cost to install and merely involve signage installation (and enforcement by local police). Study time for the tow short-term options should be relatively short; alternatively, they could be enacted by Parish Council action without further study. The Medium Term Options appear very promising, in terms of their low costs versus potential benefits, and should be studied further under the direction of the Parish Traffic Engineering and Parish Public Works Departments. The council would need to authorize and fund such studies, and eventually fund such improvements as recommended under the study.
- 9. Pursue all available methods to fund development of Bucktown Harbor Park and Marina.** The Bucktown Harbor area has the potential to become the crown jewel of the neighborhood. Many studies have been done over the past 25 years, and private consultant, (Burk-Kleinpeter, Inc.) has been working for the Parish on ongoing designs for the Bucktown Harbor Facility. The Parish government is urged to find the funds to implement these designs and develop the Bucktown Harbor facility. The first step in funding some development will apparently come from the US Army Corps of Engineers, in creating dock spaces and slips for the Bucktown fishing fleet. This starting point needs to be built on and continued.