A Planning Study for Key West Bight and Bahama Village

Phase 1 Report Documentation of Existing Conditions

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Key West, Florida
A Planning Study for
Key West Bight and
Bahama Village

Phase 1 Report
Documentation of Existing Conditions

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Key West, Florida

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Figure 8
A Planning Study for Key West Bight and Bahama Village, Key West Florida

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1.0 Introduction

The City of Key West has retained the firm of Wallace Roberts & Todd and sub-consultants to prepare a planning study for downtown Key West. The purpose of this study is twofold:

a. To determine whether the Key West Bight and Bahama Village sections of Old Town meet the criteria for designation as a Community Redevelopment Area in accordance with Chapter 163 of Florida Statutes.

b. To prepare a Redevelopment Plan for the Key West Bight area in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 163 of Florida Statutes.

Although this planning study will establish the basis for preparing a Community Redevelopment Plan for the Bahama Village area, the actual preparation of the Bahama Village Plan will be undertaken by the planning staff of the City of Key West.

The following progress report presents the findings of the first phase of work in the overall study. This work included the preparation of the Finding of Necessity for the Key West Bight and Bahama Village areas, the first step required by Florida Statutes Chapter 163, as well as more detailed documentation of existing conditions in the Key West Bight area.

The next step in the planning process will include the identification of plan alternatives, and preparation of the Community Redevelopment Plan for the Key West Bight area. These steps are anticipated to be completed by the end of 1991.
2.0 Executive Summary

The following report describes the results of the documentation of existing conditions in Key West Bight and Bahama Village. Two major conclusions are addressed in the Report:

- The Finding of Necessity, which is required in order to designate a Community Redevelopment Area in accordance with Florida Statutes.

- A description of the issues to be addressed in the Redevelopment Plan for the Key West Bight area.

2.1 Finding of Necessity

As described in detail in the appendix of this report, the Finding of Necessity demonstrates that "After examination of the study area, application of appropriate criteria, and fine-tuning boundaries, both Key West Bight and Bahama Village were found to possess a combination of conditions that indicate a need for redevelopment." Conditions supporting this conclusion include: Building conditions, site deterioration and deficiencies, unsanitary conditions, obsolete land uses, diversity of ownership and age of structures.

Based on this analysis, City Council may now make an official "finding" that a redevelopment area is necessary and declare that a redevelopment area exists. The adoption of the Finding and the designation and description of the Redevelopment Area is the first official step in the redevelopment process.

2.2 Key West Bight Issues and Goals

The following report concludes with a description of several major issues to be addressed in the Redevelopment Plan for Key West Bight. Included among these are:

A. What degree of change in existing activities and structures is appropriate and desirable? What are appropriate future uses?

B. What type of public waterfront open space should be incorporated in the Redevelopment Plan? How big should it be, where should it be located and what should its function be?

C. What is the appropriate design character for new construction?

D. How will public actions and improvements be funded?
Based on the documentation of existing conditions, considerations of the above mentioned issues and interviews conducted during this phase of the planning study, the following preliminary goals for the Key West Bight Redevelopment Plan have been identified. These are:

1. The redevelopment plan should seek to increase the amount of public waterfront open space in the Key West Bight study area.

2. The plan should seek to improve the continuity of public access along the waterfront, to the extent feasible, without precluding the development of water-dependent uses determined to be desirable.

3. The plan should seek to maintain the "Old Key West" character that presently exists in portions of the study area.

4. The plan should attempt to improve traffic circulation and reduce congestion in Old Town. Techniques to investigate to achieve this include the use of satellite parking and provision of mixed use development to allow joint use of parking facilities in the study area.

5. The plan should seek to increase the marina uses in the boat basin to the extent that environmental regulations will permit. Emphasis should be given to providing marina uses which could contribute to the "Old Key West" character desired to be maintained in the study area.

6. The plan should seek to retain those existing structures and activities within the study area which contribute to the "Old Key West" character of the area.
3.0 Existing Conditions Documentation: Key West Bight

The following sections describe the existing conditions in the Key West Bight area. This description is based on existing information received from the City and from a field reconnaissance of the study area undertaken by the consultant team. The study area shown on the illustrations of the data was jointly determined by the City and the consultant team at the outset of the inventory documentation.

3.1 Urban Design Framework

Key West Bight is a unique area within the City of Key West. With a variety of uses including marinas, tour boats, waterfront restaurants, marine-related commercial and residential, the area has a unique quality that many people consider the last example of the "Old Key West" quality. (Figure 1) Historic structures, and buildings considered to be architectural resources are a significant factor in the character of the area. The turtle kraals and adjacent fish house structure are considered to be potential candidates for national register historic designation. Both date from the period 1910 - 1920 and were part of the commercial fish and turtle operations that were active in the Bight area in the early 20th century.

Also of interest from a historic perspective is the pier located at the Trumbo Road entrance to the Naval Station. Although presently used by the Navy, this pier was originally the terminus of Henry Flagler's railroad which was extended to Key West in 1912. At that time the pier became an important sea terminal for both passenger and freight coming from and going to Havana.

Immediately adjacent to the Bight is the Key West Historic District, listed on the national register of historic places. In general this district includes all properties in the study area one block back from the waterfront. Notably none of the waterfront properties between Front Street and the City Electric plant are included within the Historic District. The District is noted for its collection of wood frame, gingerbread - decorated homes dating from the period 1822 - 1920.

From the perspective of visual character and quality, the area has several interesting features. First is the number of public rights-of-way which extend to the waters' edge. Front, Green, William, Margaret and Grinnell Streets all extend to the waters' edge providing varying degrees of views out toward the water. The Green Street view corridor toward the water is presently blocked by the existing sewage treatment pump station building, and the Grinnell Street corridor is partially blocked by the old fuel pump near the waters' edge.
Other notable visual features of the area include the CES power generating plant, which because of its large size and appearance, lends an industrial character to the eastern end of the study area. In addition, the large areas of surface parking and vacant Standard Oil property on Carolina Street are a noticeable “break” in the more continuous pattern of buildings found on the blocks in the study area.

A variety of activities in the Bight area provide an interesting mix of marine-related businesses, tourist-related activities and residential uses. Marine-related activities include the marina-based tour boats, the waterfront market at the foot of William Street and several marine supply businesses along Carolina Street. Tourist-related activities include several waterfront bars and restaurants as well as small restaurant/cafés located on Caroline Street. Residential uses include single-family houses and guest houses in the historic district and a mobile home/campground locates between Elizabeth and William Street. Institutional uses comprise a relatively small amount of the total land use in the study area. Included are the School Board property on Trumbo Road and the old post office on Caroline Street which is presently occupied by court facilities.

3.2 Circulation

The existing patterns of automobile circulation in the study area have been in place for many years. The basic pattern of streets in the area is a continuation of the grid street system that exists throughout Old Town. (Figure 2)

The majority of streets in the study area serve primarily local traffic. Eaton Street however connects the northern end of Old Town with Roosevelt Boulevard via Palm Avenue and the bridge across Garrison Bight. Eaton Street has been identified in the Key West Traffic Circulation Study as a “County Urban Minor Arterial”. Traffic counts recorded by the Florida Department of Transportation in 1987 and reported in the City of Key West Comprehensive Plan dated July 1990 show a daily traffic count of 7,148 on Eaton Street east of Duval, and 16,828 on Palm Avenue “west of US Rte. 1.” This drop-off in traffic from Palm Avenue to Eaton is further indicated by the “Existing Level of Service Analysis” reported in the Comprehensive Plan. This analysis indicates a level of service of F for Palm Avenue between US Rte. 1 and White Street based on a daily traffic count of 16,828 and a design capacity of 15,300 (at Los D). Eaton Street between White and Whitehead Streets is shown to have a level of service A based on a daily traffic count of 5,388 and a design capacity of 15,300.

Pedestrian circulation within the study area occurs in patterns that are less clear than those of automobile movement. Although there may at times be considerable pedestrian movement between parking lots and waterfront restaurants, there is no clearly defined route or routes along which this movement occurs. In addition many
sidewalks in the study area are in poor physical condition and do not therefore encourage pedestrian movement. Although not specifically designated or designed as special pedestrian routes, Front, Green and Caroline Streets provide pedestrian linkages between the Bight area and the Duval Street retail shopping district which is two blocks west of the waterfront at the foot of Front Street.

3.3 Land Ownership and Assembly Patterns

The existing pattern of land ownership within the study area is an important factor to be considered when addressing possible future patterns of land uses and development.

The pattern of ownership in the Bight area is significant (Figure 3) in that much of the waterfront lands are held by a relatively small number of owners. Basically four owners or groups presently own waterfront property. The largest of these in terms of length of waterfront is the Singleton Trust Properties. With the exception of the Standard Oil property on Grinnell Street, the public street ends at the waterfront, and the A & B Lobster House, the Singleton Properties cover the entire water frontage in the study area.

Back from the waterfront the CES property and the School District property on Trumbo Road are the two largest parcels in single ownership. Other blocks in the study area include a number of property owners, but no large single-owners.

Related to the pattern of property ownership in the study area is the issue of riparian rights and ownership of bay bottom lands. Based on information provided by the City of Key West, portions of the submerged lands along the Singleton Trust Property are leased by the State to the “Key west Bight Marina”. This lease provides a five year time period expiring in 1994 and a prescription of permitted uses that may occur on the leased areas. Although other activities occur over submerged lands, the agreements by which these activities are conducted have not been analyzed at this time.

Of significant impact to the Redevelopment Plan is the recent land purchase option secured by the Trust for Public Land (TPL) for the Singleton Trust Properties. The mission of TPL in this type of circumstance is to acquire an interest in lands of “environmental, recreational, historic or cultural significance” until the land can be “sold to public agencies or non-profit conservation groups for permanent protection as parks, community gardens, recreation areas and open space”. In total, the lands included in the option comprise approximately 8.8 acres.
At the present time TPL, having secured the purchase option, is planning to retain consultants to prepare a study to determine the feasibility of the City issuing tax exempt revenue anticipation bonds to finance a portion of the property’s acquisition cost. This study is anticipated to begin in October 1991 and is expected to be completed before the end of the year. The outcome of this study will determine in-part how these properties will be treated in the Redevelopment Plan.

3.4 Utilities

Utility information for the study area has been received from a variety of sources including the City Electric Company and the U.S. Navy. In general, like most urban areas, the Key West Bight area is underlain by numerous utility lines including electric, sanitary sewer, water and telephone lines (Figure 4). In addition to these normal utility lines the Bight also includes an underground fuel line running from the U.S. Naval Station at Trumbo Point to Sunset Island (formerly known as Tank Island). Although these lines have not been used for some time, the Navy has indicated it plans to begin using them again. No date has been specified by the Navy for when this will occur. In addition to the Navy’s underground fuel line there also exists the old marine fuel facility on the Standard Oil property and dock.

Based on information provided in the Comprehensive Plan, there does not appear to be a complete inventory of stormwater drainage facilities in the City. A preliminary study prepared by engineers working on the Comprehensive Plan indicates that a number of different systems provide storm drainage within the city. In addition the Comprehensive Plan data identifies two storm drainage outfalls in the Bight, one located at the foot of Grinnell Street and one at the foot of Green Street.

3.5 Regulatory Framework

The present zoning of land within the study area is shown on Figure 5. Properties fall within one of the following four zoning districts:

A. HP-2: Commercial Historic Preservation District
B. HP-3: Light Commercial Historic Preservation District
C. M-1: Light Industrial and Warehousing District
D. PD: Planned Development District

In general, the HP-2 district is a commercial-oriented district, while the HP-3 is a residential-oriented district. Both are intended to “protect and enhance” the character of the historic areas of the City. In addition to the different list of permitted uses, these two districts are distinguished by small differences in permissible building heights, lot
coverage, etc. The HP-2 district has a maximum height of 35 feet with an additional five feet permitted when the roof is pitched. The HP-3 district has a maximum height of 30 feet. Permitted residential densities are also different for the two districts. Maximum density for two-family and multi-family in the HP-3 district is 16 units per acre and 22 units per acre in the HP-2 district.

The M-1 district is intended to "apply to an area located in close proximity to transportation facilities and which can serve manufacturing, warehousing, distribution, wholesaling, and other industrial functions of the City and region". Principle permitted uses include warehousing, service and repair, light manufacturing, automotive and marine sales and repair and freight handling facilities. Retail sales are permitted as an accessory use as is residential provided it is occupied by the owners or employees of the principal use. Maximum height permitted for structures is 35 feet.

The Planned Development district permits mixed use developments "designed according to comprehensive plans". Developments are limited to a maximum average residential density of 16 units per acre. In addition, the floor area ratio shall not exceed 1.0 in a PD developeement.

Off-street parking and loading requirements for the above described districts are specified in the off-street parking and loading regulations of the zoning ordinance. Under these regulations off-street parking must be provided for all new construction and whenever an existing building is "enlarged or increased in capacity." Parking requirements for major types of uses are as follows:

A. Commercial and Offices: 1 space per 300 gross square feet of area
B. Restaurants: 1 space per 3 seats
C. Transient Lodging: 1 space per sleeping unit plus 1 space for owner/manager.
D. Marinas: 1 space for each live-aboard boat, 1 space per 4 pleasure boats stored on-site and 1 space per 3 passenger capacity of commercial boats.
E. Residential: 1 space per dwelling unit.

Uses for which a parking requirement is not listed are subject to parking ratios to be determined by the City. Existing structures in the Key West Bight area are specifically exempted from off-street parking requirements (along with other portions of Old Town).

The regulation also permits provision of up to 35% of required parking (lots with 5 spaces or more) in compact spaces measuring 7.5 feet x 15 feet.

In addition to zoning of upland properties, marina uses are subject to locational limitations resulting from the existing channel right-of-way and a 300 feet exclusion zone adjacent to the Navy pier. Both of these restrictions are shown in Figure 5.
3.6 Environmental Factors

Several important environmental factors will affect future development within the study area. Foremost among these are the flood hazard areas. As shown in Figure 6 virtually all of the study area, with the exception of the extreme southeastern corner are within the 100 year flood hazard area. The 100 year flood hazard area is subdivided into five zones in the study area. Three of these are AE zones which are areas for which flood hazard elevations have been determined. Flood elevations in these zones range between (el 6) and (el 9) National Geodetic Vertical Datum 1929 (NGVD).

Existing grades in these areas are approximately 3.5 feet, NGVD. Areas immediately adjacent to the shoreline fall in either the VE (el 10) or VE (el 11) zones. These areas are defined as areas of "coastal flood with velocity hazard (wave actions); base flood elevations determined."

In the 100 year flood hazard areas the finished floor area of habitable spaces in new construction must be above the designated flood elevation to qualify for flood insurance. Within the VE zones, finished floor elevations of habitable spaces must be above the designated elevations, and the ground level for such structures must employ break-away construction (except for columns, etc. necessary for structural support) to protect the structure from the added effects of wave action that are projected to occur in these areas.

Another factor related to the flood hazard areas is localized flooding. Based on knowledge of local conditions there are street intersections within the study area that have been identified as locations where some flooding may occur as the result of heavy rainfalls.

A third environmental factor to be considered in future development plans is the potential for hazardous materials. Given the previous uses of properties in the Bight area for industrial, warehousing, fish processing and other similar uses, the probability of on-site hazardous materials cannot be overlooked. At this time no evidence of hazardous material on sites within the study area has been presented. However, as shown in Figure 6, there are several existing or former fuel storage facilities in the study area which should be considered in future on-site investigations for hazardous materials.
3.7 Rehabilitation/Development Trends

The rehabilitation and development activity that has occurred in the study area over the past five to eight years is shown on Figure 7. The purpose in reviewing this information is to understand the location and degree of private market interest in development in the study area. Although not illustrated on Figure 7, the departure of the shrimp boat fleet from the Bight area was a substantial change that occurred during the late 1970's and early 1980's. Although no quantifiable evidence has been reviewed regarding why the boats left the Bight, several factors have been mentioned as contributing to their departure. Among those was the decline in the shrimp fishery and the increasing costs of dockage in the Bight area.

In the last five to eight years, the area has not experienced a dramatic change. The largest single development project to have occurred is the construction of the new Hyatt Hotel located on Front Street, adjacent to the study area. New activities have been introduced to the area however, including the waterfront market and restaurants between William and Grinnell Street.

Also shown on Figure 7 are the various "conceptual projects" that have been talked about or studied in recent years. The purpose in documenting these is to understand the range of ideas that have been considered for future use of the Bight area. Among the various concept previously mentioned are the expansion of marina activities, the use of the Grinnell Street end as a ferry dock (auto and passenger), and the possible use of the south side of the Navy pier for a cruise ship berth. Also mentioned have been the possibility of linking Palm Avenue with Caroline Street to improve traffic circulation into and out of Old Town. None of these concepts has received formal approval at this time.

Perhaps of most significance to the Redevelopment Plan are the planned decommissioning of the City Electric Plant in 1992 when the new power plant is completed. The future use of this large property will be a significant issue to be resolved in the Redevelopment Plan.

Also significant is the property purchase option acquired by the Trust for Public Land (TPL) for the Singleton waterfront properties.

3.8 Comprehensive Plan Recommendations for Key West Bight

The following section describes the major land use and traffic circulation recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan that will affect the Redevelopment Plan for Key West Bight.
Land Use

The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Element designates majority of the Key West Bight area as HRCC-2 (Historic Residential Commercial core). The (2) designation is distinguishes this area from the Duval street portion of the HRCC district. The HRCC category is intended to "provide a management framework for preserving the nature, character and historic quality of the Old Town commercial core, including related residential development". The (2) designation has been given to the Bight area because it "requires significantly greater land use controls in order to preserve and protect this unique area". The Comprehensive Plan refers to the Redevelopment Plan resulting from the present study, as providing the basis for establishing those controls.

Additional land use policies related to Key West Bight described in the Comprehensive Plan include:

A. The city will establish land development regulations that assign floor area ratios of less than one in "uplands closest to the mean high water (MHW) line of coastal waters"

B. Land Development Regulations (LDR's) should include provision for open space retention within areas having direct waterfront exposure, "in order to preserve waterfront views and/or to ensure access by the consuming public."

C. LDR's should incorporate "land use restrictions which mandate pedestrian activities within areas closest to the waterfront."

D. "The transitional edges of the Key West Bight area most distant from the waters edge may accommodate higher FAR's than areas closest to the average FAR within Key West Bight should be one (1). However, areas closest to the waterfront would carry FAR's significantly less than one (1) in order to accommodate abundant open space for pedestrians, waterfront views and other open spaces which reinforce the ambiance of the 'last vestiges of the Old Key West maritime culture'."

Traffic Circulation and Parking

The projections of future traffic volumes shown in the Comprehensive Plan indicate that traffic on Palm Avenue, a portion of Eaton, and Caroline Street will exceed the capacity of these roadways. The Comprehensive Plan describes three strategies to address this problem. The first is to increase roadway widths, providing additional
capacity. However the plan does not suggest the need for this type of action on any of the streets in the study area. The second action is to reduce or remove on-street parking to increase the traffic capacity of a road. This strategy is proposed on the entire length of Eaton Street through the study area. The third strategy described is to provide additional off-street parking outside of congested areas. This tactic will reduce the number of vehicles searching for parking and thereby improve traffic capacity. The plan suggests consideration of three sites outside of Old Town for "satellite" parking facilities as well as the CES site when that facility is decommissioned.

Overall, the Future Traffic Circulation System proposed in the Comprehensive Plan retains the same functional classification of roadways as presently exist within the study area.

Non-Vehicular Circulation

The Comprehensive Plan proposed that Eaton Street be developed as a class 3 bicycle facility. This type of facility is "A roadway or sidewalk which is signed as a bikeway and shared with motor vehicles or pedestrian traffic. However, no reserved lanes are provided."
4.0 Summary of Existing Conditions and Trends: Key West Bight

4.1 Assets, Opportunities and Constraints

Figure 8 presents a composite summary of those existing assets, opportunities and constraints existing in the Key West Bight study area. Based on the inventory of existing land uses and activities, areas that are considered to contribute to the character of Key West Bight have been identified. Included in these areas are the water-dependent marina uses, marina-related commercial (boat repair, supply etc.) water-related tourist commercial activities (Half Shell Raw Bar, Turtle Kraals etc.), structures with historic architectural character and guest houses. All of these uses and activities are considered to contribute to the “Old Key West” character that is considered to be the strongest physical asset in the Key West Bight study area.

Also identified on Figure 8 are uses that are not considered to contribute to the “Old Key West” character of the Bight. Included among these are the now-vacant standard Oil property, the large surface parking areas along Caroline Street, the CES and School Board properties and the mobile home park between William and Elizabeth Streets. As shown on Figure 8, these uses occupy a “corridor” extending through the study area parallel to the waterfront.

Since these areas do not contribute to the character of the Bight, they may also be considered as opportunities for change in the future. Also considered an opportunity are the properties included in the Trust for Public Lands purchase option. If these properties ultimately come under city ownership through this purchase, the city would be in a position to control the future uses or the majority of waterfront land in the study area.

The marina area is also considered an opportunity. Expansion of the marina could provide additional activities in the study area, as well as provide additional revenue. Potential additional activities mentioned for the marina include:

- addition of more “character” sailing, fishing or other types of vessels so as to create a “maritime museum” setting.
- re-establishment of a shrimp fishing “fleet”
- creation of a dock facility for an auto ferry that might provide transportation to Mexico, the west coast of Florida, or in the future, Cuba.
- additional rental dockage space for larger vessels. This is made possible by the existing depth of water in the marina basin.
Other opportunities are related to pedestrian and automobile circulation. In terms of auto circulation, re-use of the CES site for a "peripheral" parking facility serving downtown is an opportunity previously identified in the Comprehensive Plan. This facility could be linked to the waterfront and Downtown Streets with improved pedestrian walkways and a tram-type shuttle service. Related to this is the opportunity to improve the pedestrian linkages between the activities in Key West Bight and the Duval Street retail district.

Constraints that may affect future development of these opportunities may include:

- Environmental and legal constraints to further marina expansion.

- Environmental constraints to re-use of sites found to be contaminated with hazardous material.

- Environmental constraints resulting from flood hazard area construction requirements.

- Financial constraints related to the city’s purchase of the Singleton Trust properties.

- Development phasing constraints that may result from factors such as the decommissioning of the CES plant and the acquisition of the Singleton Trust properties.

4.2 Interview Summary

At the beginning of the planning process a series of interviews were conducted by members of the planning team. Individuals interviewed included public officials, property owners and people knowledgeable about the present and past uses within the study area. Many of the major comments, concepts and concerns expressed in these interviews have been reflected in the preceding sections of this report. Comments from the interviews are also reflected in the following discussion of issues.

4.3 Key Planning Issues and Options

The preceding documentation of existing conditions in Key West Bight provides the basis for identifying issues and options to be addressed in the Redevelopment Plan. The following are major issues for further consideration during the planning process, along with a discussion of potential options for addressing them.
Issues:

1. What degree of change in existing activities and structures is appropriate and desirable?

As previously stated in this report certain activities and structures in the study area are considered to contribute to the "Old Key West" character that is one of the area's greatest assets.

An issue to be considered is the degree to which these activities and structures are to be considered as "givens", meaning it would be desirable to keep them as they presently exist. If these present "contributing" activities and structures are not considered to be given, a greater degree of change may be considered.

2. What type of public waterfront open space should be incorporated in the Redevelopment Plan? How big should it be, where should it be located and what should it's function be?

Clearly expressed by most people interviewed at the outset of the planning process was the desire to prevent Key West Bight from becoming another large private development(s) that would preclude public access to the waterfront. Also expressed was the desire to increase public waterfront open space and access.

There may be several options as to how this desire could be implemented, which will depend upon the degree of change in present uses that would be considered acceptable. At present the only vacant unused waterfront property is the standard Oil Property. If totally converted to public open space this would provide a park of approximately 1.7 acres. The provision of open space in addition to this will require some degree of change in the existing activities. For example, while it would be possible to improve public access along the waterfront where it already exists, it would require significant change to expand this type of access along properties such as the Turtle Kraals restaurant or the Half Shell Raw Bar.

The function(s) of the additional public open space that might be provided is also an important question. Options range from passive open space, to a space designed and programmed for specific events. Both of these options will have cost implications for maintenance and operation of the open space.
3. What is the appropriate design character for new construction?

Several design issues will need to be specifically addressed in the Redevelopment Plan. Included are:

A. Location and manner in which parking is provided.

B. Density, scale, height and architectural character desired for new construction.

Based on comments received in the interview process the consensus of opinion appears to be that to the extent possible all new development that might occur should retain the "Old Key West" scale, density and architectural character that presently exists in the Bight.

4. How will public actions and improvements be funded?

The major advantage of creating a community redevelopment area is that it provides a mechanism to dedicate future tax revenues for use in improving the redevelopment area. One factor affecting the use of these funds is the rate at which they accumulate. Generally the optimum circumstance is for a significant development to occur shortly after designation of the redevelopment area. In redevelopment areas where this does not occur, it may take longer to accumulate a tax increase sufficiently large to fund major expenditures for large property acquisition or major construction.

Therefore the phasing or timing of future redevelopment must be addressed in the final Redevelopment Plan.

As addressed in previous sections of this report, the sequence of future development will depend to a large extent on the outcome of the TPL land purchase process and the actual time for decommissioning of the CES plant.

4.4 Preliminary Statement of Redevelopment Goals

Based on the preceding discussion of issues and options a preliminary list of goals for the Redevelopment Plan for Key West Bight has been prepared. These are presented for review, discussion and modification as appropriate in the next stage of the planning process.
Preliminary Goals

1. The redevelopment plan should seek to increase the amount of public waterfront open space in the Key West Bight study area.

2. The plan should seek to improve the continuity of public access along the waterfront, to the extent feasible, without precluding the development of water-dependent uses determined to be desirable.

3. The plan should seek to maintain the 'Old Key West' character that presently exists in portions of the study area.

4. The plan should attempt to improve traffic circulation and reduce congestion in Old Town. Techniques to investigate to achieve this include the use of satellite parking and provision of mixed use development to allow joint use of parking facilities is the study area.

5. The plan should seek to increase the marina uses in the boat basin to the extent that environmental regulations will permit. Emphasis should be given to providing marina uses which could contribute to the 'Old Key West' character desired to be maintained in the study area.

6. The plan should seek to retain those existing structure and activities within the study area which contribute to the 'Old Key West' character of the area.
FINDING OF NECESSITY
Downtown Key West

July 1991
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</table>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Establishment of a redevelopment district in Key West, and exercise of redevelopment powers would require an official finding of the necessity for redevelopment. A finding of necessity for redevelopment in Key West Bight and Bahama Village would be based on conditions that relate to standard redevelopment practice, such as building condition, site conditions, usage, ownership, and age.

After examination of the study area, application of appropriate criteria, and fine-tuning of boundaries, both Key West Bight and Bahama Village were found to possess a combination of conditions that indicate a need for redevelopment. Among these conditions were:

- **Building Condition.** A substantial number of deteriorating structures were found to exist, and are dispersed over a substantial part of the study area.
- **Site deterioration and deficiencies.** Site deterioration and deficiencies were found in the form of broken pavements and sidewalks, lack of paving and sidewalks, deteriorated fixtures such as fences, and abandoned foundations.
- **Unsanitary Conditions.** Unsanitary conditions included accumulations of trash, debris, discarded appliances and machinery, and junk cars and trucks found in yards and open lots.
- **Obsolete land uses.** Obsolete land uses included public utilities which have outlived their usefulness, and industrial facilities in locations that are no longer appropriate for that use according to the comprehensive plan.
- **Diversity of Ownership.** Excessive diversity of ownership was found in blocks that had five or more different owners. Such diversity makes it difficult to assemble land for redevelopment.
- **Age of Structures.** Excessive age of structures was identified in blocks where the average age of buildings was 40 years or more.
FINDING OF NECESSITY

Based on the facts presented in this report, the city’s governing body may make an official finding that a redevelopment area is necessary, and declare that a redevelopment area exists. Following that declaration, the city may create a community redevelopment agency (CRA), prepare a redevelopment plan, and exercise redevelopment powers. After adoption of a redevelopment plan, the city may create a redevelopment trust fund to receive contributions representing the growth in city and county tax revenues within the redevelopment area. The tax roll in use at the time when the redevelopment trust fund is created will become the tax "base year" for calculating the future tax increment.
FINDING OF NECESSITY

METHODOLOGY

The initial study area was defined by the City Planning department to include a 13 block area known as Key West Bight, and a 34 block area known as Bahama Village. The boundaries of the initial study area are illustrated in Appendix 1. The study area was examined by the consultant during June and July of 1991.

The consultant examined buildings from the exterior, and when encountering a deteriorated building, completed a building condition work sheet for that building. Work sheets were set up so that buildings could be classified as having minor deterioration, major deterioration, or dilapidation. The format of the work sheets is illustrated in Appendix 2. While in the field, the consultant also examined the study area for other conditions, including: deterioration of site or other improvements, unsanitary or unsafe conditions, and obsolescence.

The data was then reviewed for concentrations of building deterioration. In this review, the consultant calculated the overall rate of building deterioration, and mapped the distribution of blocks showing building deterioration.

The consultant then examined property ownership maps to evaluate diversity of ownership, and examined the city’s comprehensive plan for any other indications of a need for redevelopment. A print-out was obtained from the city’s computer database, which provided information on age of structures in Key West Bight.

Raw data was entered into a computer spreadsheet and aggregated into block data. Block data included the number of buildings, number and percent of deteriorated buildings, number of ownership parcels, number of obsolete uses, average age of buildings, and whether site deterioration or site deficiencies, and unsanitary conditions were also present.

Each block was then evaluated for whether it did or did not meet the following criteria:

1. Building deterioration of 20% or more.
2. Presence of site deterioration or deficiency.
3. Presence of unsanitary conditions.

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1 The final boundaries of the proposed redevelopment area are smaller than the initial study area.

2 Age of structures data was not necessary for Bahama Village due to the higher deterioration rate that was found during field observations.
FINDING OF NECESSITY

5. Five or more ownership parcels.
6. Average age of structures of 40 years or more. (Key West Bight).

A series of maps was then prepared, each showing the distribution of one of the six criteria. These maps could be over-laid to show the degree of blight in the study area.

A test was administered in which the consultant, using the logical functions of the spreadsheet, examined the data for each block, and determined whether it met blight criteria of (a) building or site deterioration, or (b) at least three out of the other four criteria. A map of blocks meeting blight criteria was prepared.

Final boundaries were adjusted to achieve a reasonable overall boundary. Sites on the edge of the district that serve needs for affordable public housing and public open space were included, due to the rational relationship of affordable housing and open space to redevelopment. Marina facilities in Key West Bight were included in the district, if the block to which they were physically connected met blight criteria. Otherwise, blocks on the edge of the district that did not meet blight criteria were eliminated from the proposed district.

Final boundaries are shown in Figure 1 - Proposed Redevelopment Area.
FINDING OF NECESSITY: DOWNTOWN KEY WEST
INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

FIGURE 1
PROPOSED REDEVELOPMENT AREA
FINDING OF NECESSITY

BUILDING CONDITION

An exterior condition survey was conducted by the consultant during June and July 1991. Buildings were classified in four categories:

(1) sound condition,
(2) showing minor deterioration,
(3) showing major deterioration,
(4) dilapidated.

Deterioration rates were 22% in Key West Bight, and 44% in Bahama Village. The overall rate of building deterioration in Key West Bight and Bahama Village combined was 40%.

TABLE 1
BUILDING CONDITION
Key West Downtown Study Area - July 1991

<table>
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<tr>
<th>NO. OF BLDGS.</th>
<th>DETERIORATING</th>
<th>PERCENT DETERIORATING</th>
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<td>MAJOR</td>
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<tr>
<td>KEY WEST BIGHT</td>
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<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>BAHAMA VILLAGE</td>
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<td>141</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Casella & Associates

The dispersal of deteriorating buildings is shown in Figure 2: Building Deterioration by Percentage in Blocks.
FINDING OF NECESSITY: DOWNTOWN KEY WEST
INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

FIGURE 2
BUILDING DETERIORATION BY PERCENTAGE IN BLOCKS
FINDING OF NECESSITY

SITE CONDITIONS

Site deterioration and deficiencies were found in the form of broken pavements and sidewalks, lack of paving and sidewalks, deteriorated fixtures such as fences, and abandoned foundations.

In Key West Bight, site deterioration and deficiencies were found in seven blocks which covered a major portion of the area. In Bahama Village, site deterioration and deficiencies were found in three blocks.

The dispersal of these conditions is shown in Figure 3: Site Deterioration or Deficiency by Block.

UNSANITARY CONDITIONS

Unsanitary conditions included accumulations of trash, debris, discarded appliances and machinery, and junk cars and trucks found in yards and open lots.

In Key West Bight, unsanitary conditions were found in four blocks. In Bahama Village, unsanitary conditions were found in eight blocks.

The dispersal of these conditions is shown in Figure 4: Unsanitary Conditions by Block.

OBsolete LAND USES

Obsolete land uses were identified in buildings that have outlived their usefulness, and in buildings whose use is no longer appropriate according to the comprehensive plan. The city electric facilities in Key West Bight are an example of buildings that have outlived their usefulness. Industrial and storage facilities in locations that designated in the comprehensive plan as "Historic Residential Commercial Core" are an example where the use is no longer appropriate to the comprehensive plan.

Using a standard of at least one obsolete land use, three blocks in Key West Bight and one block in Bahama Village were classified as exhibiting an obsolete land use.

The dispersal of obsolescence is shown in Figure 5: Obsolete Land Uses by Block.
FINDING OF NECESSITY: DOWNTOWN KEY WEST
INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

FIGURE 3
SITE DETERIORATION OR DEFICIENCY BY BLOCK
FINDING OF NECESSITY: DOWNTOWN KEY WEST
INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

FIGURE 4
UNSANITARY CONDITIONS BY BLOCK
FINDING OF NECESSITY: DOWNTOWN KEY WEST
INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

FIGURE 5
OBSELETE LAND USES BY BLOCK
FINDING OF NECESSITY

DIVERSITY OF OWNERSHIP

Excessive diversity of ownership is recognized as a condition which inhibits the assembly of land for development, and makes the use of redevelopment powers necessary in order to facilitate reinvestment. The Florida Redevelopment Act refers to "diversity of ownership ... which prevent(s) the free alienability of land within the deteriorated or hazardous area."

The standard used in this study was that any block having five or more ownership parcels was considered to display excessive diversity of ownership. Using that standard, eight blocks in Key West Bight had excessive diversity, and thirty blocks in Bahama Village had excessive diversity.

The dispersal of ownership diversity is shown in Figure 6: Excessive Diversity of Ownership by Block.

AGE OF STRUCTURES

Blocks where the average age of buildings was 40 years or more, were identified as having aged structures.

In Key West Bight, nine blocks met the criteria of average building age of 40 years or more. Those blocks are shown in Figure 7: Average Age of Structures by Block.

(Only Key West Bight is shown as building age was not needed for Bahama Village).
FINDING OF NECESSITY: DOWNTOWN KEY WEST
INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

FIGURE 6
EXCESSIVE DIVERSITY OF OWNERSHIP BY BLOCK
FINDING OF NECESSITY: DOWNTOWN KEY WEST
INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

FIGURE 7
AVERAGE AGE OF STRUCTURES BY BLOCK

BUILDING AGE NOT CONSIDERED A FACTOR IN BAHAMA VILLAGE
CONCLUSION

The necessity for redevelopment in downtown Key West is related to building deterioration, site deterioration, unsanitary conditions, obsolete land uses, excessive diversity of ownership, and age of structures. Both portions of the downtown area, Key West Bight and Bahama Village, were subjected to a test in which each block was classified as meeting or not meeting blight criteria. To meet blight criteria, a block had to have either (a) building deterioration or site deterioration, or (b) at least three of the following four: unsanitary conditions, obsolete land uses, excessive diversity of ownership, and excessive age of structures. Figure 8: Blocks Meeting Blight Criteria, shows which blocks met the criteria.

In Bahama Village it was necessary to "fine-tune" the boundary as follows:

(1) Two blocks in Bahama Village (block 51 and block 52 on the key map) were excluded from the proposed redevelopment area because they showed no deterioration, and are located on the outer edges of the district (near Duval Street). As a result of eliminating these two blocks, the deterioration rate in Bahama Village rose from 43% to 44%.

(2) Three blocks in Bahama Village located between Petronia Street and Truman Avenue were included in the proposed redevelopment area because they had varying rates of deterioration (17%, 18%, and 11%), and are either surrounded by blocks meeting blight criteria, or are located at the Petronia Street entrance to the district, and face blocks meeting blight criteria on at least two sides.

(3) Several public housing sites in Bahama Village and the site of Nelson English Park were included within the boundary of the proposed redevelopment area because they are serving a need for housing affordable to low-income persons or a need for open space in the redevelopment area. Expenditure of redevelopment funds for affordable housing and open space would generally be reasonable.
FINDING OF NECESSITY: DOWNTOWN KEY WEST
INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

FIGURE 8
BLOCKS MEETING BLIGHT CRITERIA
FINDING OF NECESSITY

In Key West Bight it was necessary to draw a line across the bay bottom connecting Front Street across the harbor to White Street. The configuration of the line across the harbor is subject to further adjustment in the legal description to be rationally related to riparian rights.

The boundary of the redevelopment area is shown in Figure 1: Proposed Redevelopment Area.
FINDING OF NECESSITY: DOWNTOWN KEY WEST
INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

APPENDIX 1
INITIAL STUDY AREA
FINDING OF NECESSITY: DOWNTOWN KEY WEST
INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

APPENDIX 2
KEY MAP
Appendix 3

Conditions Survey/Summary by Block
<table>
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<th>Block</th>
<th>No. of Bldgs</th>
<th>Bldg Deterioration</th>
<th>Percent Deteriorated</th>
<th>No. of Owner Parcels</th>
<th>No. Obsolete Uses</th>
<th>% Obs</th>
<th>Avg bldg Age in years</th>
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Obsolescence: Electric plant closing. Site was M-1, but will be HRCC-2.
Site deterioration: broken street pavement on Grinnell St.
1 Unsanitary: Trash and debris.
Site deterioration: broken sidewalk on Caroline St., broken pavement on Grinnell St. No sidewalk: Grinnell St., Margaret St.
2 Unsanitary: Debris on rear lot. Site deterioration: missing or broken pavement on parking lots.
No sidewalks: Margaret Street, William Street.
3 Site deterioration: broken sidewalk on Caroline St.
No sidewalk: interior alley. Site deterioration: broken driveway on interior alley.
4 Site deterioration: broken sidewalk on Elizabeth Street.

5 Unsanitary: Debris around ice house and trailers.
Faulty lot layout: Trailers next to ice house.
Site deterioration: around deteriorating trailers.
6 Unsanitary: Trash and debris.

7 Obsolescence: Industrial land use as zoning changes from M-1 to HRCC-2.
Site deterioration: broken sidewalks on Caroline St., James St., Grinnell St. Broken street pavement: Grinnell St.
8 Obsolescence: Building used for storage at 824 Caroline, zoned HP-3.

9
10
11
12

SUBTOTAL
EX 11,12
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<th>Unsanitary Conditions</th>
<th>Average Age of Structures (40 years +)</th>
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Other conditions

Bahama Vil
21 Obsolete sub-station bldgs. at end of block.
22
23 New govt housing.
24 Unsanitary - junk cars and debris.
25 Govt housing.
26 Govt housing.
27 Govt housing.
28
29
30
31 Unsanitary conditions.
32A Unsanitary conditions - debris. Site deterioration - old foundation.
32B
33 Unsanitary conditions.
34 Unsanitary conditions - Trash, debris, overgrown empty lots at 227 Virginia St.
35 Govt housing.
36 Broken down fencing on empty lot (Amelia St.).
37 Unsanitary conditions - Debris in empty lots and yards, washers, dryers, and abandoned trucks.
38 Unsanitary conditions - Lots of bottles and debris around old historic church.
39
40A
40B Includes the Lighthouse.
41A
41B Includes two public housing buildings.
42 Includes six public housing buildings.
43
44
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