

Area residents, business owners and community leaders entered into a dialogue with planning team members about their primary issues and concerns related to the Metairie CBD project area. These elements included a discussion of the area's:

- *Strengths, weaknesses and opportunities*
- *Image within the Parish and region*
- *Need for change*



Brainstorming sessions served as an opportunity for the project team and community to put all items on the table for open discussion and review. Focus group meetings allowed participants to discuss those items that need to be the focus of project team efforts and plan recommendations.

Many of the comments and concerns identified by the community at-large, as well as those individuals who identified themselves as owners of businesses in the area or property (residential or commercial), focused on eight (8) individual categories described by the project team, following a review of all written comments, meeting flip charts and reports:

- **Aesthetics, Image and Quality of Life** – comments or concerns shared with the project team related to the visual reality of the area, its image, and how this relates to the overall livability of the project area;
- **Crime and Safety** – comments or concerns shared with the project team related to the current and/or historic view of crime and civil obedience in the project area.
- **Drainage** – comments or concerns shared with the project team related to the current state of drainage infrastructure in the project area;
- **Incompatible Activities** – comments or concerns shared with the project team related to individual business types, which while permitted by current zoning, were viewed as unsuited to the area;

- **Incompatible Land Uses** – comments or concerns shared with the project team related to the conflict between, or conflicts arising from the location of residential, commercial, and or industrial land uses next to one another somewhere in the project area;
- **Potential for Redevelopment** – comments or concerns shared with the project team related to the perceived and actual barriers to redevelopment of the area based on the current land ownership pattern, market demand for project area real estate, and prices per acre/square-foot.
- **Regulatory Environment** – comments or concerns shared with the project team related to the perceived effectiveness of code enforcement and the lack of ongoing guidance for planning in the project area;
- **Transportation** – comments or concerns shared with the project team related to the current state of the transportation system (roads, transit, pedestrian/bikeways) in the project area;

Table 8 provides a listing of the frequency of comments received by these main categories at the Brainstorming and Focus Group Sessions, along with examples of the comments heard and recorded by the project team. Figure 13 maps comments to specific areas identified by the community during the meeting process.



Table 8
Brainstorming and Focus Group Comment Summary
Metairie CBD Project Area

Comment Area	Community Meetings						Typical Comments
	BR PSC 04/19	BR 1 05/15	BR 2 05/23	FG PSC 07/12	FG 1 07/17	FG 2 07/19	
Aesthetics, Image, Quality of Life	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Blighted buildings in highly visible areas discourage some redevelopment efforts. Greenspace, sidewalks, landscaping required to help make area more walkable/desirable. Signage, on-site landscaping, lighting, etc. need to be uniformly addressed in area. Shadowing by high-rise development of residential areas a concern - lack of transition in some areas. Uniformity in streetscape needed to encourage walking and to improve visual environment. Some land use activities discourage/degrade our quality of life. No place for children to play. No Recreation facilities in area (except linear park).
Crime and Safety	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Where is the crime occurring in the area? Criminal activities in some areas discouraging business and residential development. Police presence welcomed in area.
Drainage	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	18th Street corridor and Fat City in need of drainage upgrade, Drainage (and all utilities) need to be upgraded to support all future development. Should we cover the drainage canals on main streets?
Incompatible Activities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Lounges and Bars in area source of noise, parking problems, all night activities and security problems. Residential/industrial activity mix (ex: multi-family beside industrial) a problem in some areas. Single-family residential in areas need buffers against adjacent commercial/office development.
Incompatible Land Uses	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Mixture of residential/industrial land use in some areas a problem. Going totally high rise, high density a problem - need transitional areas to established neighborhoods outside project area. High density of area makes it attractive for certain types of mixed-use development. Definition for Metairie CBD needs to be established - will compete with similar cores in NO and the Parish (Elmwood, Bucktown, etc.) - what makes this area stand out?
Potential for Redevelopment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Strategically placed redevelopment sites could be catalyst areawide efforts. Creation of a taxing district or similar authority to generate revenue should be considered - finance capital improvements, security, etc. Significant incentives needed to overcome market costs of land acquisition in Fat City and adjacent areas. Remaining areas have larger parcels - may not be as significant a problem.
Regulatory Environment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Parish's Code Enforcement Department can assist in addressing some appearance issues in area. Sales taxes too high - a discouragement to new business in area. Current planning and zoning review process viewed as non-responsive. May need a special new zoning district for portions of area. Taxing District a requirement - where will the money come from otherwise to pay for improvements?
Transportation and Parking	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Congestion found on all major streets during peak and most off-peak periods. Pedestrians not welcome in area - no facilities available - hard to cross major streets. Parking demand in some areas exceeds available supply - should central parking with shuttle be a consideration? Where and when is transit offered in the area? What is the timeline for completion of promised/programmed improvements in area?

Source: Burk-Klempeter, Inc., 2001.

Legend:

BRPSC - Brainstorming Session - Project Steering Committee (April 19, 2001); BR 1 - Brainstorming Session #1 - General Public (May 15, 2001); BR 2 - Brainstorming Session #2 - General Public (May 23, 2001).
 FG PSC - Focus Group - Project Steering Committee (July 12, 2001); FG 1 - Focus Group #1 - General Public (July 17, 2001); FG 2 - Focus Group #2 - General Public (July 19, 2001).



North Causeway

Definition:

Causeway North of Vets
btw Ridgelake & N. Hullen

Area of Frequent Comment:
Causeway - West Esplanade
to Veterans Memorial

Typical Comments:

*Pedestrian access across Causeway
Boulevard dangerous
High congestion corridor - especially
at peak commuting periods
Parking at some office buildings in
area insufficient
Potential location for highest rise/
scale of development due to existing
patterns - need transition to
adjacent low density residential areas
Need sensitivity in design to protecting
views of Lake Pontchartrain*



South Causeway

Definition:

Causeway South of Vets
btw Ridgelake & N. Hullen

Area of Frequent Comment:
Causeway I-10 Interchange

Typical Comments:

*Pedestrian access across Causeway
Boulevard dangerous
High congestion corridor - especially
at peak commuting periods
Residential areas remain in area -
some are in transition to commercial
or hotel use
Incompatibility issues between new
development and existing uses
I-10 a barrier to pedestrian access
north-south
Confluence of Service Roads
inefficient in moving traffic through
area - one-way an option?
Timeline for I-10 and Causeway
Interchange improvements*

Galleria Boulevard

Definition:

Galleria Boulevard
Service Road to Galleria Dr.

Area of Frequent Comment:
First Bank Center Complex

Typical Comments:

*Favorable mixed-use development
area
Aesthetically pleasing - landscape,
signage, lighting, etc. all work
well with area
Pedestrians provided with
sidewalks and good walking area
but leaving this area on-foot to
go to other portions of CBD
impossible*

Fat City

Definition:

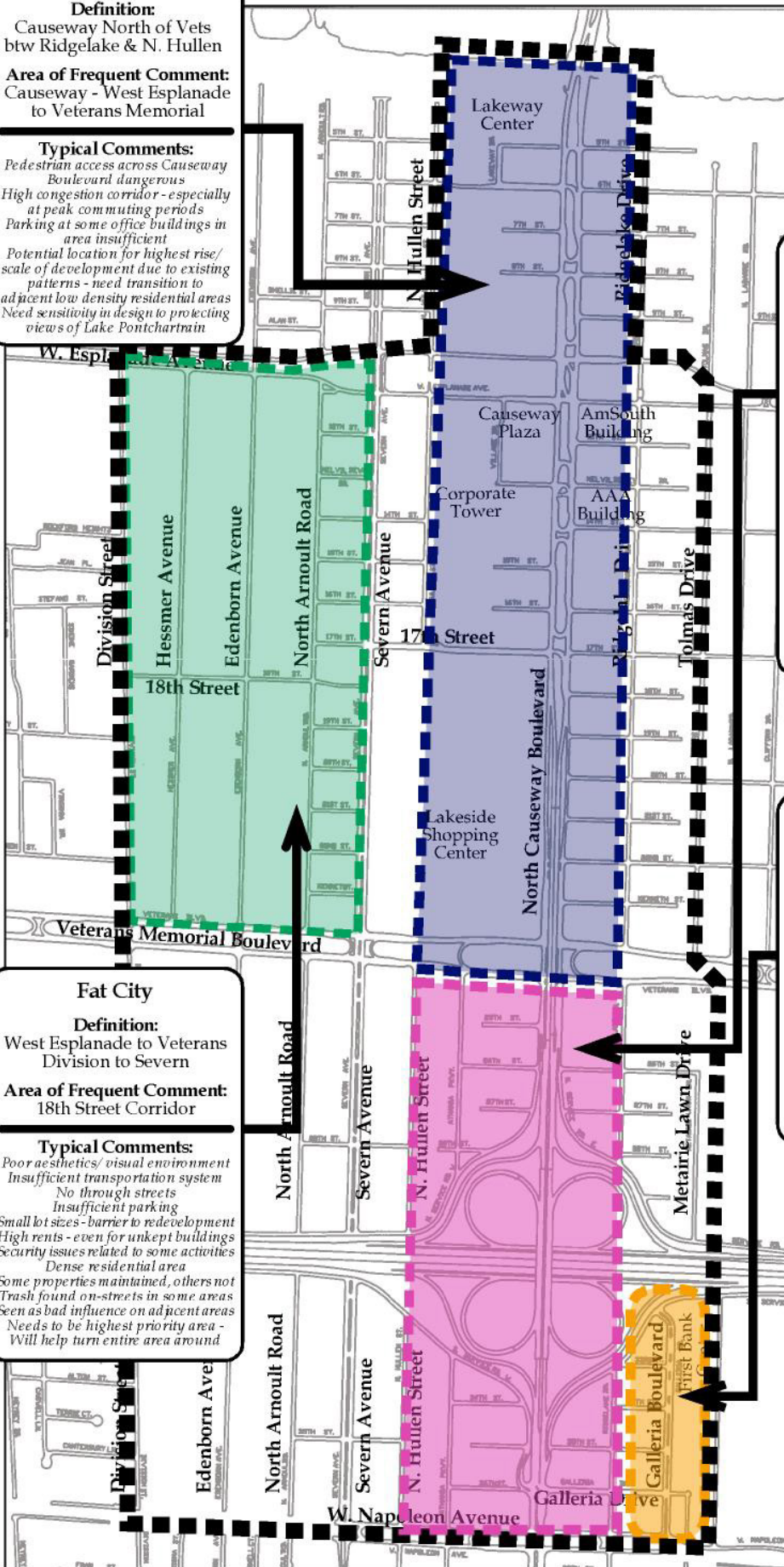
West Esplanade to Veterans
Division to Severn

Area of Frequent Comment:
18th Street Corridor

Typical Comments:

*Poor aesthetics/ visual environment
Insufficient transportation system
No through streets
Insufficient parking
Small lot sizes - barrier to redevelopment
High rents - even for unkept buildings
Security issues related to some activities
Dense residential area
Some properties maintained, others not
Trash found on streets in some areas
Seen as bad influence on adjacent areas
Needs to be highest priority area -
Will help turn entire area around*

Base Map Source: Jefferson Parish GIS Base Map, 1998.



For Planning Purposes Only
Not To Any Scale

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Jefferson Parish
Government



Regional Planning
Commission

Comprehensive Area Planning Pilot Program
Metairie CBD Land Use and Transportation Planning Study
RPC Task A(1)

BKJ Job 10012-01
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BURK-KLEINPETER, INC.
in association with URS Corporation, College of Urban and
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Figure 13

Community Comment Areas
Metairie CBD Project Area

