

Proposed
REDEVELOPMENT PLAN
SALEM RIVER PORT PROJECT

The Salem City Housing Authority and Community Development Agency, acting as the City's redevelopment agency, has recently proposed that a commercial barge port be constructed along the Salem River to capitalize on the area's potential for waterborne transportation. In recent months, the Authority has been involved in demonstrating the economic viability of the project, pursuing potential tenants and investment funds, and establishing a port management agency.

The purpose of this redevelopment plan is to provide a framework for proposed redevelopment activities along the Salem River related to a barge port facility. Although the Plan will not specify the exact nature and configuration of development projects, it will propose an overall approach to riverfront development and will define areas where public intervention or investment is needed to accomplish an orderly development strategy.

ENABLING STATUTE

The Redevelopment Agencies Law in New Jersey (NJSA 40:55C et. seq.) permits a properly designated redevelopment agency to exercise broad powers in implementing a redevelopment plan which has been formulated to improve the public welfare through redevelopment activities. The Salem City Housing Authority and Community Development Agency has been designated as the redevelopment agency for the City of Salem by ordinance and is therefore capable of proposing and implementing redevelopment projects within the constraints defined by this statute. In particular, the statute specifies that redevelopment powers can only be exercised within an area which has been determined to be 'blighted' (and in need of redevelopment) by the governing body and only after the formulation and adoption of a redevelopment plan by the Planning Board. Earlier this year, the Salem City Council accepted the recommendation of the City Planning Board to designate an area in the western portion of the City (see Figure 1) as a redevelopment area based on the criteria stated in the statute. By this action, the City Council authorized the preparation of a redevelopment plan for this area and its consideration by the Planning Board.

The Salem County Planning Staff was subsequently requested to provide technical assistance in the preparation of a conceptual redevelopment plan by the City Housing Authority and Community Development Agency.

LAND USE

The existing land use within and adjacent to the redevelopment area is generally industrial in nature with a few commercial enterprises interspersed. The area includes the former H.J. Heinz plant which has been vacant since 1977 and the former Foster Glass plant which is being actively converted by Alu-Chem Inc. into a mineral processing plant. The redevelopment area also encompasses a warehouse owned by the Salem Machine Co., an oil storage facility, a few small commercial properties on West Broadway and Front Street, the West Bend Firehouse, the Salem City landfill, and a portion of the Conrail branch line. Immediately adjacent to the defined redevelopment area are a restaurant along the river, the City's sewage treatment plant, and the

MAP OF THE CITY OF SALEM

SCALE IN FEET
200 0 200 400 600 800 1000

PREPARED BY
SKINNER & COMPTON
CITY ENGINEERS
DECEMBER 1963

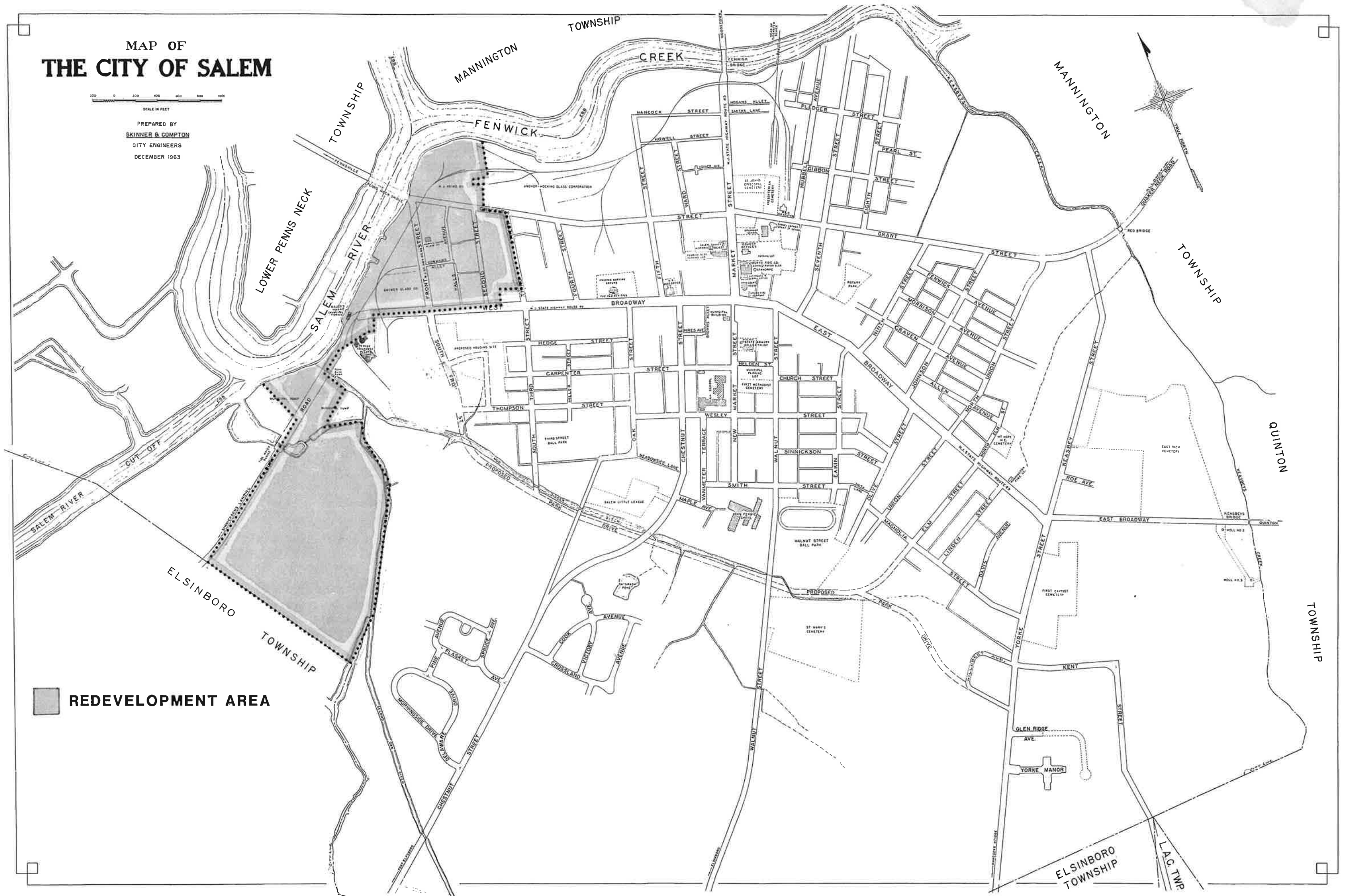


FIGURE 1

industrial plants of the Salem Machine Co., and Wire-Pro Inc. The closest residential development to this redevelopment area is the West Side Court apartments owned by the Salem City Housing Authority on South Front Street.

The purpose of this redevelopment project will not be to alter the prevailing land use in this part of Salem but rather to stimulate new riverfront development related to an active barge port and to strengthen the economic vitality of existing industries. The redevelopment plan will seek to encourage new industrial, wholesaling, and related development near the riverfront which is compatible with the City's basic planning objectives and to organize development in a desirable and efficient manner which will not adversely affect established adjacent land uses.

Figure 2 is the existing zoning map for the City of Salem. As the map indicates, the redevelopment area is zoned M-2 (General Manufacturing) along the riverfront and M-1 (light manufacturing) in more internal areas. During the preparation of the redevelopment plan, consideration has been given to the proper control and arrangement of prospective land uses which may locate in Salem as a result of an active marine terminal. As Figure 5, illustrates, the redevelopment plan includes the following future land use recommendations to the Salem City Planning Board:

1. The residential nature of West Broadway should be protected and enhanced by the strict control of the extent and nature of future commercial development. In particular, vacant land fronting on West Broadway which is part of the H.J. Heinz property is to be reserved for solely residential or limited commercial purposes to a depth of 200 feet from the road. Furthermore, the historical connection between this residential neighborhood of W. Broadway and the Salem River should be strengthened with the application of proper design controls (scale, setback) and streetscape techniques.
2. The area along Front Street should be designated for office development related to the port development area and should be restricted from further active manufacturing use.
3. The section defined by the existing and proposed railroad right-of-way and the water's edge shall be designated as the City's port development area. Within this area, the redevelopment agency of the City of Salem shall have the ability to control future development through public intervention. Under the enabling statute, the agency would be authorized to acquire and redevelop areas in conformance with the redevelopment plan and to restrain or modify proposed development which does not conform to this plan. In addition, any port activities within this area would be under the jurisdiction of the City's port authority.

In order to define reasonable constraints for development activities within this area, it is recommended that the City establish a new zoning district which would clearly permit appropriate port uses and related activities. The zoning

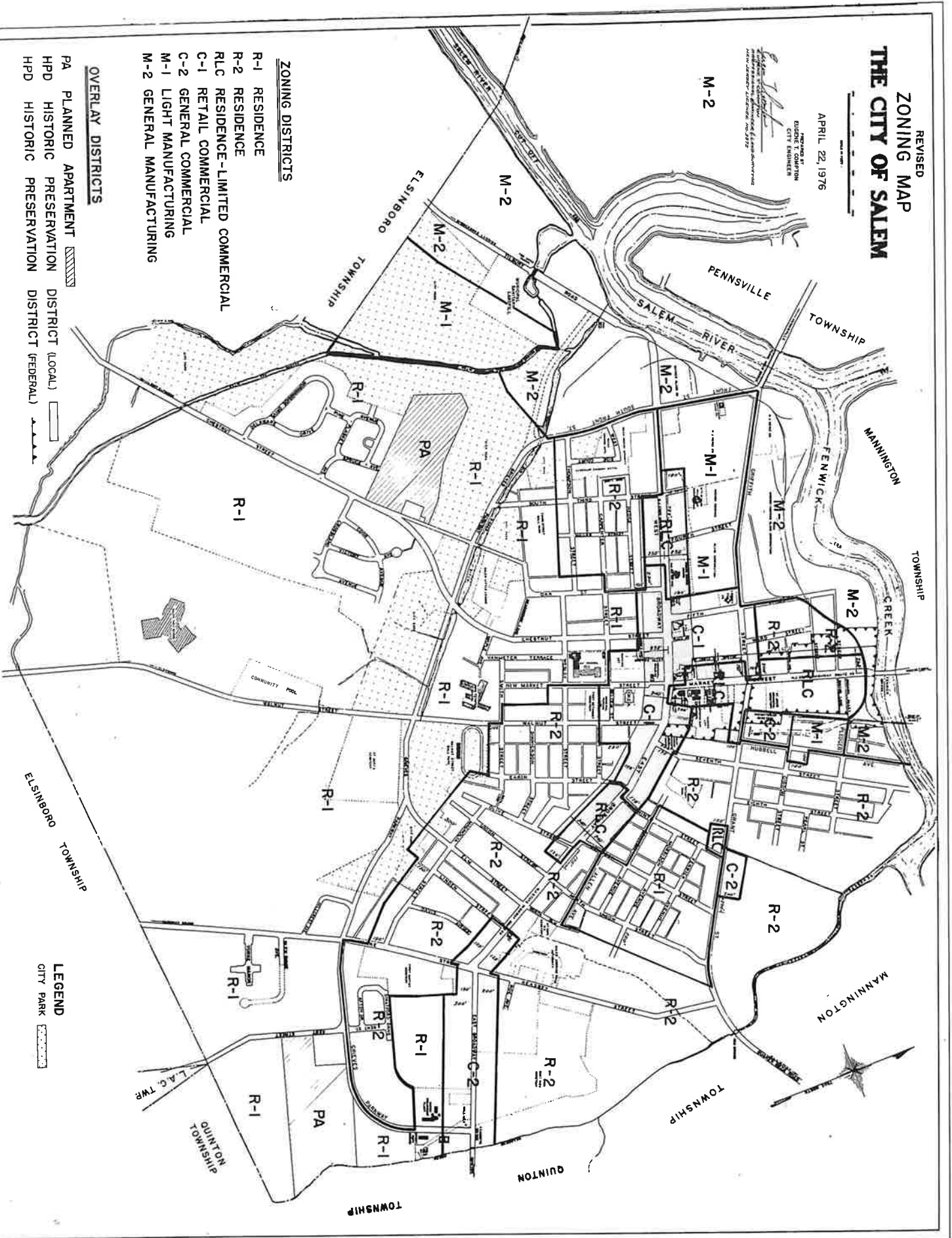


FIGURE 2

district should include specific design constraints to port development (i.e. height, setback) as well as performance and use standards for the area. In this manner, the Planning Board will increase the predictability of local planning approvals while retaining overall development control and ensuring that future port development will be in the interests of the City of Salem.

4. The general manufacturing zoning district should be extended to include most of the former Heinz property. This change would create a contiguous general manufacturing district and would increase the potential uses of that property. However, the provisions for this zoning district should be clearly defined since at the present time all but the most offensive industrial uses are permitted.
5. The existing landfill and all surrounding areas should be defined as light manufacturing/wholesaling development areas.
6. An area should be reserved for public use around the sewage treatment plant for its future expansion and upgrading.
7. The riverfront area southwest of the port development area should be zoned for commercial uses including marina development.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The historic significance of the Salem riverfront should not be overlooked during the redevelopment process. Although the existing land use is industrial in nature and all significant structures have been demolished, the area is historically significant since it was the City's original settlement area and the location of extensive mercantile activity and passenger transportation until the early twentieth century. Therefore, this redevelopment project provides the City with a renewed opportunity to appreciate, interpret, and preserve its maritime heritage.

The most significant structure which existed near the riverfront in Salem was originally known as the "Capital House" and is often incorrectly referred to as the Bradway House. This property was built on the lower end of what is now West Broadway by William Hall in 1691. Hall operated an Inn in the structure where several royal Governors visited and the provincial Congress once met. In later years, it was also referred to as the "Governors' House" because of its prestigious visitors as well as the "Light House" because of a light suspended from its roof used by mariners. The structure was architecturally significant because of its gambrel roof and because it was the earliest known example to bear the date of construction in its easterly wall in New Jersey using vitrified bricks.

The "Capital House" was gutted by fire in the late 19th century and later converted to office use by the Gayner Glass Company. It was torn down by that company in 1965 to make way for more manufacturing space. Several other architecturally significant structures on this portion of West Broadway were also torn down during the early 1960's. The site of the Capital House is under a manufacturing building now owned by Alu-Chem Inc.

In order to preserve the historic significance of this area of Salem, the following recommendations should be implemented by the City's development agencies:

1. All major new development should be required to conduct archaeological investigations using trenching methods to determine the location and significance of subsurface structures. If significant remains are located, new development should not occur until the area has been thoroughly investigated or should be designed in such a manner as to not disturb any subsurface structures. If used properly, these techniques will permit a better understanding of the area's historical development.
2. The area along the lower end of West Broadway which was originally referred to as "Town Landing" and later as Wharf Street should be sensitively treated in redevelopment plans. No new development should occur until a careful investigation has been made of the area's archaeological significance. In addition, no new development should be permitted which will encroach on the sight lines from West Broadway to the Salem River.
3. In port development plans, consideration should be given to the reconstruction or reproduction of early structures in this area which were related to the maritime heritage of Salem City. In particular, the "Capital House" should be considered for reconstruction or reproduction as part of the port project. While it may not be feasible to locate the structure on its original site, its architecture would establish a character for the port development area and could be used for the offices of the redevelopment and port management agencies.

CIRCULATION

To stimulate new private investment, a redevelopment area must have a safe and well-designed road system. The circulation system in this area of Salem City is generally capable of handling new riverfront development with the exception of the Penns Neck Bridge intersection and the existing alignment of Tilbury Road (County Road #661).

The Penns Neck Bridge intersection is considered to be the most dangerous intersection in the County by the County Planning Staff which is documented by the number of accidents which have occurred in this area in recent years. The intersection is deficient because of an inadequate design (narrow bridge) and restricted sight angles. The problem is aggravated by the strong left hand turn movement on to Griffith Street where most of the existing local truck traffic is destined. The port project will tend to exacerbate the problem by increasing local truck movements and potentially by reactivating the rail line which bisects the intersection at grade. Therefore, major improvements are needed for this span and the adjacent intersection to handle significant traffic volumes safely and efficiently. Although the port project will probably only contribute a small percentage to the traffic volume on State Route #49, it will still tend to worsen a serious existing transportation problem.

The existing alignment of Tilbury Road (County Route #661) is also an inadequate element in the existing circulation network because it severely constrains potential port development. The presence of a public road within fifty feet of the existing water's edge (See Figure 3) is directly in conflict with the purpose of the redevelopment plan which is to stimulate industrial land use development related to barge transportation. Recent makeshift barge loading operations at Major's Wharf have clearly demonstrated this problem.

Therefore, this County road needs to be abandoned or relocated to be compatible with the port project. After considering various alternatives, the redevelopment plan recommends that Tilbury Road be relocated in a two step process. First, as an interim solution, the existing road should be realigned to flatten out the severe curve near Major's Wharf and to provide a loading area near the existing wharf. This change in the road's alignment will require the acquisition and demolition of the existing warehouse owned by Salem Machine Company as well as the acquisition of the adjacent Conrail right-of-way.

Once development activities warrant, it is recommended that a new alignment be constructed. Figure 5 indicates a proposed alignment beginning just west of the Salem Machine Co. building and rejoining the existing road along a previous alignment. Except for a portion of the Salem Machine property and vacant land owned privately at the other end, the required right-of-way for this alignment is already under City ownership and could be swapped with the County for the existing right-of-way. Although this alignment is preferred because of its capability of providing access to the riverfront area, its impact on the upgrading plans of the sewage treatment plant must be assessed. An alternate alignment for the relocation of the County road would be along the original Tilbury Road alignment which would intersect Front Street just South of the Salem Machine property.

After the public road is relocated, an internal service road should be established along the existing and proposed rail right-of-way using the existing public road alignment, where possible. This service road would provide access to the port development area, and since it would not be a public road, it would be subjected to the temporary interruptions typical of industrial operations.

The proposed and alternate alignments of Tilbury Road would intersect Grieves Parkway at a point 200 to 300 feet southeast of the present Tilbury Road intersection. Since the parkway is slated for reconstruction in the near future, it is recommended that the limits of the project be reduced after bidding based upon the approved redevelopment plan's road alignment. If it is not possible for the Planning Board to select an alignment prior to the construction project, the portion of Grieves Parkway between the proposed road and the existing alignment could be abandoned at a later date for public use and become part of the internal service road network.

In addition, both of the alignments would provide access to the City landfill. However, in order to construct a road through the present landfill site, a disturbance permit will need to be obtained from NJDEP.



Figure 3

The circulation recommendations of the redevelopment plan can be summarized as follows:

1. The City redevelopment agency should request a detailed engineering analysis of the existing Penns Neck Bridge and intersection by NJDOT to evaluate the adequacy of its surface design. Upon the completion of this analysis, the City and County should petition the Commissioner of the Department of Transportation for the necessary reconstruction or replacement project.
2. The City redevelopment agency, in conjunction with the Planning Board, should establish a proposed right-of-way for the relocation of Tilbury Road and include this alignment on the City Master Plan. Once the right-of-way is defined by the City, discussions should be initiated with the Board of Freeholders to determine the extent of the County's role in the relocation project.
3. An internal service road network should be created for the port development area by the redevelopment agency consisting on a right-of-way adjacent to the existing and proposed rail line and the sections of existing roads (West Broadway, Grieves Parkway) which will be abandoned for public use under the plan. The service road parallel to the riverfront would reconnect with the existing Tilbury Road at County sluiceway and would continue to be a public road from that point to the intersection with the new alignment.

RAIL ACCESS

The existence of a viable rail spur line in close proximity to barge loading areas is an important criteria for certain types of industrial development. Therefore, it is recommended that the existing Conrail spur line to this part of Salem be reactivated, upgraded in design, and extended in length as development prospects warrant. The existing rail right-of-way bisects all Alu-Chem property and needs to be more clearly defined and protected. In addition, the grade crossings near the Penns Neck Bridge will need to be properly designed to permit freight movement in accordance with rail safety standards.

It is further recommended that the existing rail right-of-way be extended from West Broadway to the Tilbury Sluiceway adjacent to the proposed service road. The actual development of a rail line in this area will depend on specific development projects. However, the overall redevelopment plan will seek to ensure the availability of rail service by reserving the right-of-way and by installing an adequate sub-base to accommodate a rail spur. This right-of-way may be swapped for the existing right-of-way owned by Conrail which is needed to realign the existing Tilbury Road.

UTILITIES

As a result of port development activities, a utility service plan will need to be developed for the riverfront area. Because of the proximity to

the City sewage treatment plant and the City water storage tank, the area is well suited for industrial development from a utility standpoint.

However, Salem City is under orders to upgrade its treatment plant to secondary treatment. Upgrading is not only necessary from an environmental compliance standpoint but also is needed as an inducement to attract new industry. It is anticipated that a portion of the existing system will be maintained when the secondary treatment process is added. Although an engineering design has not been prepared for the Salem plant's upgrading, considerable additional property will be needed for the filtration, treatment, and sludge drying operations. It is recommended that discussions be initiated with the design engineers to reserve sufficient area for this improvement. If at all possible, the reserved area should be located as far from the riverfront as possible and designed so as not to constrain development opportunities in the area.

CITY LANDFILL

The existing City landfill represents a large area of high ground near the Salem River which can be used for light industrial and warehousing development provided proper engineering techniques are employed. (i.e. grading, clay caps, venting of methane gas, leachate collection). Because of the limited area available for industrial development in Salem, it is recommended that proper closure procedures be initiated as soon as possible so that the area can be converted to limited industrial activity in the short term future. As shown in Figure 5, a spine access road should be constructed down the center of the landfill to provide access to development parcels. The City should retain ownership of the landfill property (because of liability concerns) and lease parcels of reasonable size (i.e. 3 acres). In addition, the potential for methane gas recovery to heat industrial warehouses should also be evaluated.

PUBLIC ACCESS

One of the unfortunate results of port development projects in many cities is the loss of public access to the waterfront. It is important that Salem avoid this result by setting aside areas for visual and physical access to the riverfront in its redevelopment plans. In fact, one of the requirements of a CAFRA or waterfront development permit for a port is to "provide for maximum open space and physical and visual access to the waterfront" (NJAC 7.7E-7.9 (b)).

Although the Salem riverfront has not been used extensively for recreational purposes in recent years, it remains an important natural asset and amenity which should remain accessible to City residents during and after port development. In the past, Major's Wharf has been used for a variety of public and private purposes. Historically, this area has considerable significance since it is the location of Salem's original settlement and was long its primary link to the rest of the Delaware Valley and Bayshore. Therefore, this area should be developed carefully with respect for its historic significance and recreational potential. At a minimum, the present scenic vista from this area should be preserved and enhanced and should not be obstructed by new structural development. In addition,

provisions should be made by the Port Authority to ensure that the area will be available for private moorings and other recreational activities when it is not being utilized for barge loading operations.

Physical access to the riverfront by the public is proposed for the area adjacent to the cut which includes the Barber's Basin marina. This property is to be developed for active and passive recreational use and be linked by linear open space to Grieves Parkway. This location is selected for public access because it could be a desirable location for such a purpose and would not interfere with the designated port development area. Public recreational use would be compatible with the adjacent restaurant if that remains a viable commercial enterprise.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

The purpose of this Redevelopment Plan is to define a framework for redevelopment activities along the river-front of the City of Salem within the defined redevelopment area, but it is important to recognize the regional impact of the proposed barge port. The surrounding municipalities such as Pennsville Township, should be encouraged to consider port development uses in conjunction with the Salem River Port Project.

In addition, Figure 4 indicates areas which have potential for marina or water-related commercial development. It is important that areas be designated for such development within and outside Salem City since anticipated dredging operations on the Salem River will increase the attractiveness of the area for recreational development and the port development area will reduce the potential for water-oriented recreation within its limits. As the Figure indicates, areas suitable for marina development with limited encroachment on tidal wetlands are along the Salem River cut-off in Salem City and Elsinboro Township, along State Route #49 in Pennsville Township, and a small area in Mannington Township on Fenwick Creek. Water-oriented recreational development in this area should be encouraged provided that they are designed in an environmentally sensitive manner.

PORT DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

This redevelopment plan does not propose to specify the exact nature of port development activities but is more concerned with the establishment of a framework for the industrial land use associated with the proposed barge port. Nonetheless, there are a few important issues which relate to port development that need to be discussed in the redevelopment plan:

1. A constraint to barge port development in Salem is the existing Penns Neck Bridge which is incapable of permitting barge transportation north of its location at the present time.

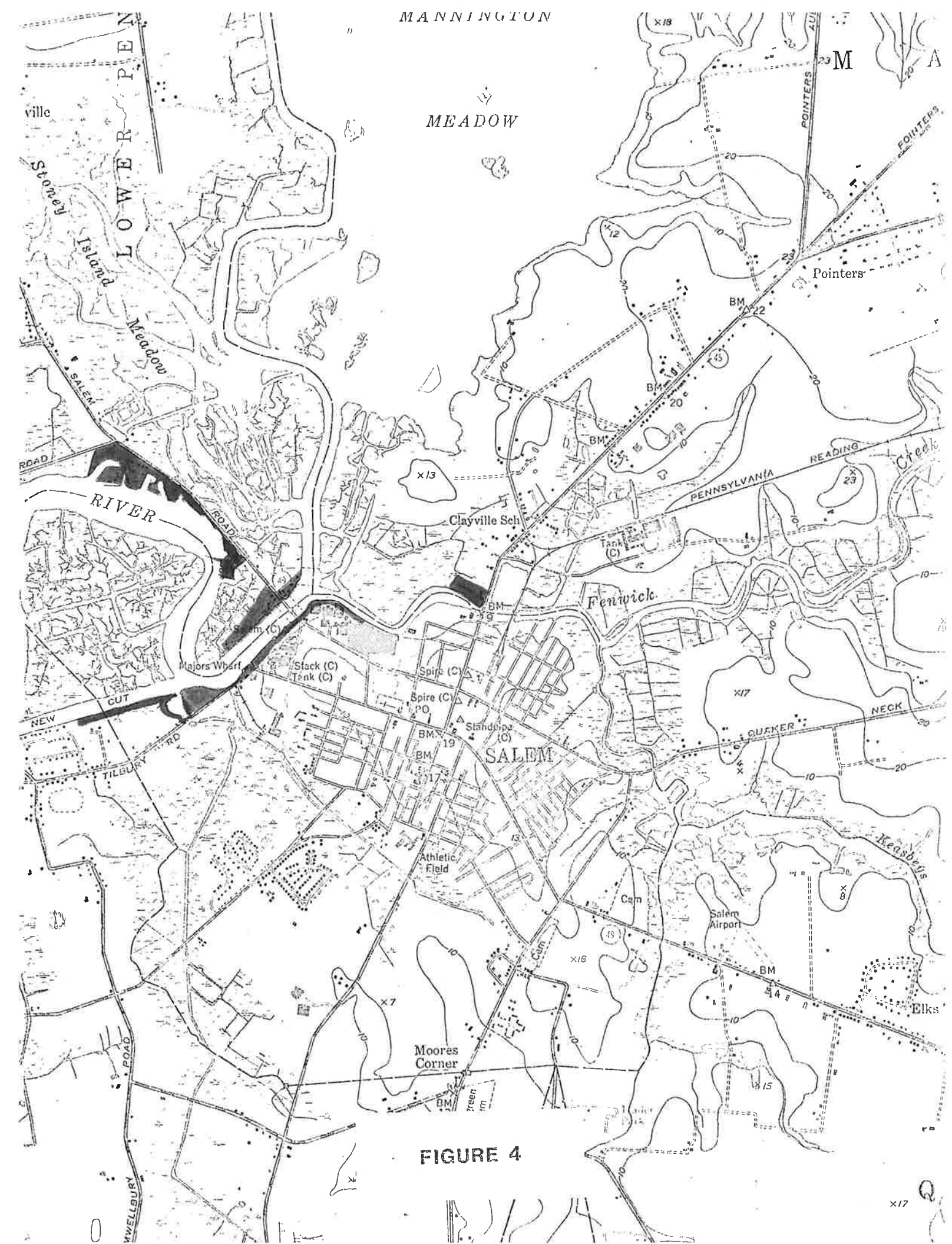


FIGURE 4

The N.J. Department of Transportation has recently authorized the removal of the concrete counterweight and a change in the bridge's status to that of requiring 9 months written notice prior to opening. This action will eliminate an eyesore to the travelling public but will not assist the effort to develop a viable barge port along the full extent of Salem's riverfront.

Therefore, it is recommended that the engineering analysis of the surface design of this bridge be extended to consider the span's overall impact on water-borne transportation on the Salem River. The present bridge not only restricts access to properties above the Span but is also improperly protected to permit active barge operations near the span. A complete analysis of the bridge's structural integrity and its impact on development activities should help define the nature of needed improvements.

2. The port development area is within the defined Coastal Zone for New Jersey and is subject to the permit requirements under the Coastal Zone Management Plan. It is recommended that the City redevelopment agency pursue a CAFRA permit for the entire barge port based on the nature of interested tenants. The pursuit of the necessary permits for the marine terminal will substantially relieve future developers of the delays and submission requirements of the coastal permitting process.

One of the more important issues that must be discussed with NJDEP is the treatment of the water's edge. It is obvious that the existing water's edge must be extended in some area to increase the area suitable for port operations. Although Figure 5 indicates an extended water's edge in a linear pattern, there are a variety of alternatives available to the City (including wharf construction, barge cranes, staggered loading areas). The specific nature of the loading and storage areas should remain flexible since it will largely be determined by the position of the Bureau of Coastal Review of NJDEP. A tideland conveyance may be needed in addition to the CAFRA and waterfront development permits from NJDEP. Figure 5 shows an expanded water's edge to permit barge loading operations adjacent to the existing warehouse structure on the river.

3. The barge port project should be developed under the auspices of the City redevelopment agency and operated by the newly created Port Authority. Since it is essential that the two entities coordinate their activities and that full advantage be taken of their relevant enabling statutes, it is recommended that a memorandum of understanding be prepared, reviewed and approved by the City Planning Board, and made an addendum to this redevelopment plan. In this manner, the responsibilities obligations, and liabilities of each entity will be clarified.
4. The redevelopment plan authorizes the use of eminent domain powers by the designated redevelopment agency for its implementation. It is intended that these powers be comprehensive and broad within the port development area to ensure that the

redevelopment agency has the ability to directly control development and to remove existing structures or restrain private development which is in conflict with the redevelopment plans. In other parts of the redevelopment area, the redevelopment agency would also have the authority to intervene for industries related to the port facility provided that the existing property is vacant or underutilized.

5. In order to control development and to maximize public investment, it is recommended that the City redevelopment agency and Port authority act as the developer of the riverfront and then lease waterfront properties to interested tenants. In this manner, the nature and manner of port development can be effectively controlled and stimulated.

As an initial development effort, it is recommended that the existing warehouse along the river owned by Alu-Chem Inc. be purchased by the redevelopment agency. This warehouse has considerable development potential because of its proximity to existing and proposed docking/loading areas and is not believed to be essential to Alu-Chem's operation.

Future development activities will require local, and where appropriate, County Site Plan approval. Through this process, the City Planning Board will retain overall control of proposed development in the riverfront area.

RELOCATION

No residential relocation will be necessary as a result of the implementation of this redevelopment plan. However, minor commercial relocation may be necessary to realign existing roads in the area and to establish areas for riverfront industrial development.