

# City of Providence

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

## CHAPTER 1996-23

### No. 245 AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE OFFICIAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN AND THE ATTACHED RESTRICTIONS FOR THE DOUGLAS AVENUE REVITALIZATION PROJECT

Approved May 23, 1996

#### *Be it ordained by the City of Providence:*

WHEREAS, the Providence Redevelopment Agency (PRA), pursuant to the provisions of the Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) Title 45, Ch.32, as amended, has formulated a plan entitled "The Douglas Avenue Redevelopment Project," (Redevelopment Plan) attached and made part of this Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, *Providence 2000, The Comprehensive Plan* has been prepared and adopted by the City Plan Commission and the City Council pursuant to RIGL Section 45-22.2 et seq, and is recognized and used as a guide for the general development of the City of Providence as a whole; and

WHEREAS, the said Redevelopment Plan's Project Boundary encompasses an area which has been designated "Redevelopment Areas" by the City Code of Ordinances, Chapter 20, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the City Plan Commission, which is the duly designated and acting official planning body for the City, has submitted to the City Council its report and recommendations respecting the Douglas Avenue Redevelopment Plan and has certified that said Redevelopment Plan conforms to the said Comprehensive Plan for the City as a whole, and the City Council has duly considered said report, recommendations and certification of the planning body; and

WHEREAS, a structural quality survey, conducted by the City of Providence, Department of Planning and Development, indicated that a number of the structures have deficiencies that included serious deterioration. The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project Area is not restricted to, nor does it consist entirely of lands, buildings, or improvements which of themselves are detrimental, but is an area in which such conditions exist and injuriously affect the entire area.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE:

1. The Project is hereby designated as "The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project." The Project Area will be designated number 35.
2. It is found and declared that the Douglas Avenue Redevelopment Plan Area contains blighted and substandard properties, some of which require demolition and clearance while others require rehabilitation and improvement. These include:
  - A. *Defective or Inadequate Street and/or Lot Layout.* The intersection of Eaton Street at Douglas Avenue is poorly laid out and in need of a redesign. There are also building lots which were platted at a time when open space was not a concern. When possible, it is important to expand the size of the building lots through merging with adjacent properties, while insuring that the dense character of the housing in the neighborhood is not lost.

No.

CHAPTER  
AN ORDINANCE

IN CITY COUNCIL

FEB 15 1996

FIRST READING

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON  
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT  
RENEWAL & PLANNING

*Michael R. Clendinning*  
CLERK

*Councilman Davis*

THE COMMITTEE ON

*U. R. R. P.*

RECOMMENDS

*Richard L. Davis*

*4/2/96 P.H. (Clerk)*

THE COMMITTEE ON

URBAN REDEVELOPMENT  
RENEWAL & PLANNING

APPROVES PASSAGE OF  
THE WITHIN ORDINANCE

*Richard L. Davis*

*4/25/96*  
Clerk

DEPT. OF CITY CLERK  
PROVIDENCE, R.I.

FEB 12 10 59 AM '96

FILED

- B. *Incompatible Uses.* Douglas Avenue was intended to serve as a commercial corridor for the Smith Hill neighborhood of Providence. It was also lined with relatively high density residential uses. Both the vacant lots and vacant buildings are a blighting influence on the neighborhood and do not support the intended use.
  - C. *Obsolete or Aged Buildings, Not Suitable for Improvement for Conversion.* While there are a number of older buildings which have been well maintained over the years, there are also structures which are both aged and in dilapidated condition. Some of these, where the cost of rehabilitation is prohibitive, must be removed.
  - D. *Inadequate Provision for Ventilation, Light, Sanitation, Open Space and Recreation Facilities.* There is a lack of public open space and recreational facilities on Douglas Avenue itself. The vacant lots do have sanitation problems which would be solved through new investment.
  - E. *Defective Design or Unsanitary or Unsafe Character or Condition of Physical Construction.* The vacant buildings help create an unsafe character in parts of Douglas Avenue.
3. It is the intent of the City Council to use powers granted under RIGL 45-32-1 et seq, as amended, to acquire vacant and/or blighted properties, reduce density of housing, facilitate rehabilitation of deteriorated structures, provide site improvements, and provide for the orderly redevelopment of the project area.
4. It is found and declared, pursuant to RIGL 45-32-20, that:
- A. The Douglas Avenue Redevelopment Plan Area is feasible, conforms to the Comprehensive Plan, and if carried out, will promote the public health, safety, morals and welfare of the City of Providence.
  - C. The acquisition of the real property in accordance with the Douglas Avenue Redevelopment Plan Area is in the public interest.
  - D. The Redevelopment Plan shall provide for payment for property which may be acquired by the exercise of eminent domain has been made in the Redevelopment Plan.
  - E. The Redevelopment Plan contains adequate safeguards to assure the carrying out of the work of redevelopment.
  - F. The Redevelopment Plan provides for the retention of controls and the establishment of restrictions and covenants which may run the land.
5. The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project, is hereby approved, adopted and designated as the Official Redevelopment Plan for the Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project Area and is herein incorporated by reference, made a part hereof and designated as "Exhibit A".
6. In order to implement and facilitate the effectuation of the Redevelopment Plan hereby approved, the City Council declares:
- A. That it will provide the cost of the redevelopment of the of the Redelopment Project Area, and hereby allocates \$125,000.00 representing the estimated amount of the Project Cost;
  - B. That the PRA be and hereby is authorized and directed to utilize from time to time, in such sums as may be necessary, not exceeding One Hundred Twenty Five Thousand (\$125,000.00) Dollars and to disburse that amount from the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for Program Year 21. The money thus obtained shall be used exclusively for carrying out the Official Redevelopment Plan for the Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project. Future funding may be allocated from succeeding years of the CDBG Program, as available.

- C. That the street layout deficiency at the intersection Douglas Avenue and Eaton Street be remedied, if funds are available.
  - D. That payment for property to be condemned is permitted.
  - E. That the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds are available to effectuate said Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project.
  - F. That the controls contained within the Redevelopment Plan shall follow the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Providence, as amended.
7. This Ordinance shall take effect on its passage and shall be filed with the City Clerk who is hereby authorized and directed to forward a certified copy of this Ordinance to the Providence Redevelopment Agency.

IN CITY COUNCIL  
MAY 2 1996  
FIRST READING  
READ AND PASSED  
*Michael S. Clement* CLERK

IN CITY COUNCIL  
MAY 16 1996  
FINAL READING  
READ AND PASSED  
*Evelyn V. Fargnoli* PRESIDENT  
*John M. Cangione* CLERK

**APPROVED**  
MAY 23 1996  
*Vincent A. Cianci*  
MAYOR

**JOHN F. PALMIERI**

**Director**



**VINCENT A. CIANCI, JR.**

**Mayor**

## **Department of Planning and Development**

*"Building Pride in Providence"*

February 12, 1996

### **MEMORANDUM**

To : Michael R. Clement, City Clerk

From : Thomas E. Deller, AICP, Deputy Director

Re : Proposed Ordinance for the Adoption of the Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project

---

Attached is an original and twenty-two (22) copies of a proposed ordinance to adopt the Official Redevelopment Plan for the Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project.

This Ordinance is being sponsored by Councilman Thomas Glavin.

OFFICIAL REDEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR  
THE DOUGLAS AVENUE REVITALIZATION PROJECT  
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

---



VINCENT A. CIANCI, JR.  
MAYOR OF PROVIDENCE

JOHN F. PALMIERI, DIRECTOR  
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

MARCH 1996

## **City of Providence, Rhode Island**

Vincent A. Cianci, Jr., Mayor

### **Douglas Avenue Steering Committee**

Stephen W. Burrows-Chair; Arnold Hahn-Vice Chair; Charlotte Watkins-Secretary;  
Martha Aramian; Hagop Garabedian; Doris Gaynor; Millie Goins; Richard T. Goins;  
Bobbie L. Harper; Helen V. Johnson; Anna M. Lackey; Thomas D. Twitchell  
Aime Brissette-Ex Officio; Councilman Thomas M. Glavin-Ex Officio;  
Senator Mary Ellen Goodwin-Ex Officio;  
Representative John J. McCauley, Jr.-Ex Officio

### **Providence Redevelopment Agency**

John Rao - Chair; Leslie A. Gardner - Vice Chair; Albert E. Carrington;  
Robert A. Pitassi; Michael A. Solomon;  
Councilman Ronald W. Allen; Councilman John H. Rollins

### **Providence City Plan Commission**

George Calcagni - Chair; James H. Leach - Vice Chair; Louis Smith - Secretary;  
Steven Durkee; Miguel Luna; Robert Ricci; Paul Campbell - Ex Officio

### **City of Providence, Department of Planning and Development**

John F. Palmieri - Director; Joseph Abbate - Deputy Director;  
Thomas E. Deller, AICP - Deputy Director

### **Planning Division**

Samuel J. Shamoan, Associate Director;  
Kathryn J. Cavanaugh; Joan Fleming; Salvatore Galea;  
Edward Grant; Michael Lepore; S. Jon Özbek; Darlene M. Price; George Turlo

## PREFACE

### The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project

**D**ouglas Avenue is a major arterial road running through the Smith Hill neighborhood, one of several priority neighborhoods in Providence identified by the Mayor and the City Council for a series of improvements that are aimed at revitalizing the commercial corridor and providing amenities for the residents of the area. This plan was developed by the Department of Planning and Development (DPD) working closely with the Douglas Avenue Steering Committee (DASC) which is composed of residents, elected officials, neighborhood leaders and business owners. Since April 12, 1993, the Committee has met once a month and provided direction to the planning staff in the development of this plan. In April 1993, the DPD submitted a draft plan that identified a phased approach to site improvements and acquisition of derelict properties, with several options. An updated version of the plan was presented two years later, in April of 1995. This version is an update and further refinement of the earlier plans.

During the two years since the planning process was initiated, much has been accomplished. Two phases of site improvements have provided new sidewalks and street trees on both sides of Douglas Avenue, from Orms Street to Eaton Street. These improvements were funded through the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

The purpose of this plan is to establish the basis for a Redevelopment Plan pursuant to Rhode Island General Laws Chapter 45-32 as amended that will enable the Providence Redevelopment Agency (PRA) to acquire derelict properties and develop them in accordance with this plan.

The following is the text of the City Council Ordinance that is the instrument that adopts the Douglas Avenue Redevelopment Plan. Following the Ordinance is the Certification of the City Plan Commission indicating that this plan conforms to and will be adopted as an "Area Plan" of *Providence 2000 - The Comprehensive Plan*.



**A** **N ORDINANCE** Approving and Adopting the Official Redevelopment Plan and the Attached Restrictions for the Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project:

WHEREAS, the Providence Redevelopment Agency (PRA), pursuant to the provisions of the Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) Title 45, Ch.32, as amended, has formulated a plan entitled "The Douglas Avenue Redevelopment Project," (Redevelopment Plan) attached and made part of this Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, *Providence 2000, The Comprehensive Plan* has been prepared and adopted by the City Plan Commission and the City Council pursuant to RIGL Section 45-22.2 et seq, and is recognized and used as a guide for the general development of the City of Providence as a whole; and

WHEREAS, the said Redevelopment Plan's Project Boundary encompasses an area which has been designated "Redevelopment Areas" by the City Code of Ordinances, Chapter 20, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the City Plan Commission, which is the duly designated and acting official planning body for the City, has submitted to the City Council its report and recommendations respecting the Douglas Avenue Redevelopment Plan and has certified that said Redevelopment Plan conforms to the said Comprehensive Plan for the City as a whole, and the City Council has duly considered said report, recommendations and certification of the planning body; and

WHEREAS, a structural quality survey, conducted by the City of Providence, Department of Planning and Development, indicated that a number of the structures have deficiencies that included serious deterioration. The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project Area is not restricted to, nor does it consist entirely of lands, buildings, or improvements which of themselves are detrimental, but is an area in which such conditions exist and injuriously affect the entire area.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY OF PROVIDENCE:

1. The Project is hereby designated as "The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project." The Project Area will be designated number 35.
2. It is found and declared that the Douglas Avenue Redevelopment Plan Area contains blighted and substandard properties, some of which require demolition and clearance while others require rehabilitation and improvement. These include:
  - A. *Defective or Inadequate Street and/or Lot Layout.* The intersection of Eaton Street at Douglas Avenue is poorly laid out and in need of a redesign. There are also building lots which were platted at a time when open space was not a concern. When possible, it is important to expand the size of the building lots through

The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project

merging with adjacent properties, while insuring that the dense character of the housing in the neighborhood is not lost.

- B. *Incompatible Uses.* Douglas Avenue was intended to serve as a commercial corridor for the Smith Hill neighborhood of Providence. It was also lined with relatively high density residential uses. Both the vacant lots and vacant buildings are a blighting influence on the neighborhood and do not support the intended use.
  - C. *Obsolete or Aged Buildings, Not Suitable for Improvement for Conversion.* While there are a number of older buildings which have been well maintained over the years, there are also structures which are both aged and in dilapidated condition. Some of these, where the cost of rehabilitation is prohibitive, must be removed.
  - D. *Inadequate Provision for Ventilation, Light, Sanitation, Open Space and Recreation Facilities.* There is a lack of public open space and recreational facilities on Douglas Avenue itself. The vacant lots do have sanitation problems which would be solved through new investment.
  - E. *Defective Design or Unsanitary or Unsafe Character or Condition of Physical Construction.* The vacant buildings help create an unsafe character in parts of Douglas Avenue.
3. It is the intent of the City Council to use powers granted under RIGL 45-32-1 et seq, as amended, to acquire vacant and/or blighted properties, reduce density of housing, facilitate rehabilitation of deteriorated structures, provide site improvements, and provide for the orderly redevelopment of the project area.
4. It is found and declared, pursuant to RIGL 45-32-20, that:
- A. The Douglas Avenue Redevelopment Plan Area is feasible, conforms to the Comprehensive Plan, and if carried out, will promote the public health, safety, morals and welfare of the City of Providence.
  - C. The acquisition of the real property in accordance with the Douglas Avenue Redevelopment Plan Area is in the public interest.
  - D. The Redevelopment Plan shall provide for payment for property which may be acquired by the exercise of eminent domain has been made in the Redevelopment Plan.
  - E. The Redevelopment Plan contains adequate safeguards to assure the carrying out of the work of redevelopment.

The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project

- F. The Redevelopment Plan provides for the retention of controls and the establishment of restrictions and covenants which may run the land.
5. The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project, is hereby approved, adopted and designated as the Official Redevelopment Plan for the Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project Area and is herein incorporated by reference, made a part hereof and designated as "Exhibit A".
6. In order to implement and facilitate the effectuation of the Redevelopment Plan hereby approved, the City Council declares:
- A. That it will provide the cost of the redevelopment of the Redevelopment Project Area, and hereby allocates \$125,000.00 representing the estimated amount of the Project Cost;
- B. That the PRA be and hereby is authorized and directed to utilize from time to time, in such sums as may be necessary, not exceeding One Hundred Twenty Five Thousand (\$125,000.00) Dollars and to disburse that amount from the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for Program Year 21. The money thus obtained shall be used exclusively for carrying out the Official Redevelopment Plan for the Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project. Future funding may be allocated from succeeding years of the CDBG Program, as available.
- C. The properties to be acquired upon adoption of this Ordinance and Redevelopment Plan are restricted only to the five (5) lots listed below. Future phases of this plan will call for additional acquisition. While future phases are described in section 5.4.2 of this Plan, no further acquisition shall be authorized except through an amendment to the attached Plan through the City Council, and funds appropriated therefore.

<i>Address</i>	<i>Assessor's Plat and Lot</i>	
<i>171 Chad Brown Street</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>314</i>
<i>300-302 Douglas Avenue</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>310</i>
<i>304-306 Douglas Avenue</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>311</i>
<i>308-310 Douglas Avenue</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>312</i>
<i>312 Douglas Avenue</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>313</i>

- D. That the street layout deficiency at the intersection Douglas Avenue and Eaton Street be remedied, if funds are available.
- E. That payment for property to be condemned is permitted.
- F. That the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds are available to

*The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project*

effectuate said Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project.

- G. That the controls contained within the Redevelopment Plan shall follow the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Providence, as amended.
- 7. This Ordinance shall take effect on its passage and shall be filed with the City Clerk who is hereby authorized and directed to forward a certified copy of this Ordinance to the Providence Redevelopment Agency.

*The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project*

**Compliance with the Comprehensive Plan**

In accordance with the Providence City Charter, the Providence City Plan Commission has reviewed this plan for compliance with the *Providence 2000, The Comprehensive Plan* and that this plan has been found to be in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan. The City Plan Commission further will adopt this plan as part of the series of "Area Plans" of the Comprehensive Plan.

Attest:

George Calcagni, Chairman  
Providence City Plan Commission

# Table of Contents

Preface .....	i
Redevelopment Ordinance .....	ii
City Plan Commission Certification .....	v
1. Project Approach .....	1
1.1 Where Are We Now? .....	1
1.2 What Have We Done? .....	1
Map Showing Smith Hill in the Context of the City of Providence .....	2
Map Showing Douglas Avenue in the Context of The City of Providence .....	3
1.3 What Is Going On? .....	4
2. The Neighborhood .....	5
2.1 Project Boundaries .....	5
2.2 Natural, Environmental and Urban Design Features .....	5
Project Boundaries Map #1 .....	6
Project Boundaries Map #2 .....	7
2.3 Past Redevelopment Areas .....	8
2.4 Commercial Areas .....	8
2.5 Residential Areas .....	9
2.5.1 Blight .....	9
2.5.2 Tax Delinquent Properties .....	10
2.5.3 Vacant and Abandoned Properties .....	11
2.5.4 Housing Ownership .....	11
2.5.5 Housing Conditions .....	11
2.6 Generalized Land Use .....	12
2.7 Generalized Zoning .....	12
Vacant and Abandoned Properties Map #1 .....	13
Vacant and Abandoned Properties Map #2 .....	14
2.8 The People .....	15
2.8.1 History .....	15
Land Use Map#1 .....	16
Land Use Map #2 .....	17
Existing Zoning Map #1 .....	18
Existing Zoning Map # 2 .....	19
2.8.2 The People of Smith Hill .....	20
2.8.3 Social Analysis .....	21
2.9 Community Facilities, Services and Programs .....	22

2.10	Historic Qualities	22
2.11	Infrastructure Problems	23
2.11.1	Circulation	23
2.11.2	Utilities	23
2.12	The Foxy Lady	24
2.13	Providence College	25
2.13.1	The Elmhurst Plan	25
	Foxy Lady Parcel Ownership Map As of Spring 1995	26
	Foxy Lady Area Land Use Map	27
3.	The Potential - An Analysis of Strengths and Weaknesses	28
3.1	Economic Base	28
3.2	Potential to Reality	29
4.	The Vision	30
4.1	Recommendations	31
4.2	Short Term Goal: Stem the Tide of Disinvestment	32
4.3	Long Term Goal: Begin The Process Of Reinvestment	32
5.	Implementation: Parcels to be Acquired and Proposed Uses	33
5.1	Proposed Improvements	33
5.2	Rezoning	33
5.3	Site Improvements	34
	Proposed Zoning Map #1	35
5.4	Property Redevelopment	37
5.4.1	Phase 1 Residential Stability - Chad Brown Street to Eaton Street	38
5.4.2	Future Phases	39
A.	Future Acquisition and Disposition of Vacant Properties, Chalkstone Avenue to Orms Street	39
B.	Future Acquisition for Commercial Use - AA Civic Club	39
C.	Acquisition for Commercial Use - Chalkstone and Douglas	40
D.	Building Rehabilitation	41
E.	New Housing - Fillmore Street and Vesta Street Area	42
	Map of PRA Owned Parcels As of Spring 1996	44
6.	Appendices	45
A.	Project Description	45
B.	Covenants and Restrictions	48
C.	Relocation	50
D.	Procedure for Changes in Approved Plan	50
E.	Bibliography	50
F.	List of Abbreviations	51

## **1. Project Approach**

The City of Providence is committed to the revitalization of the Douglas Avenue neighborhood and Smith Hill. The City, through the PRA, worked with the neighborhood in redeveloping a portion of Smith Street in the early 1980s. The intent of this project is to similarly encourage significant reinvestment on Douglas Avenue. The hope is to return Douglas Avenue to the days when it was a vital residential, retail and commercial area and provided necessary neighborhood services to all of the nearby residents.

### **1.1 Where Are We Now?**

Douglas Avenue is an integral part of Providence's Smith Hill neighborhood. Located close to the downtown area, the Douglas Avenue area continues to play an important role in connecting this neighborhood with downtown Providence, the interstate highway system and nearby neighborhoods. Built as a residential neighborhood, the Douglas Avenue area is like the remainder of Smith Hill in that it was originally designed to house the workers from the nearby mills. This was never a "fashionable" neighborhood but was always a solid area with a proud populace. The houses and businesses along Douglas Avenue reflect that history.

Douglas Avenue has recently experienced a period of disinvestment. Where there was once a thriving neighborhood retail area, there are now vacant buildings and lots. But the basic nature of the street has not changed. There is still a need for the retail and residential uses along Douglas Avenue to serve the Smith Hill community. This plan was called for by the longtime residents of the Douglas Avenue area and by the local elected officials in order to change the pattern of disinvestment and blight to one of reinvestment and sustainable community development. This project is intended to assist those businesses and residents working and living on Douglas Avenue. It is also designed to improve the infrastructure in such a way as to encourage reinvestment in the neighborhood.

This plan is part of the City's ongoing commitment to Smith Hill and the remainder of Providence's neighborhoods. It is not expected to turn Douglas Avenue around immediately, but rather, to provide a framework for the redevelopment of the street over the next few years. In three or four years, Douglas Avenue will be a better place to live and work.

### **1.2 What Have We Done?**

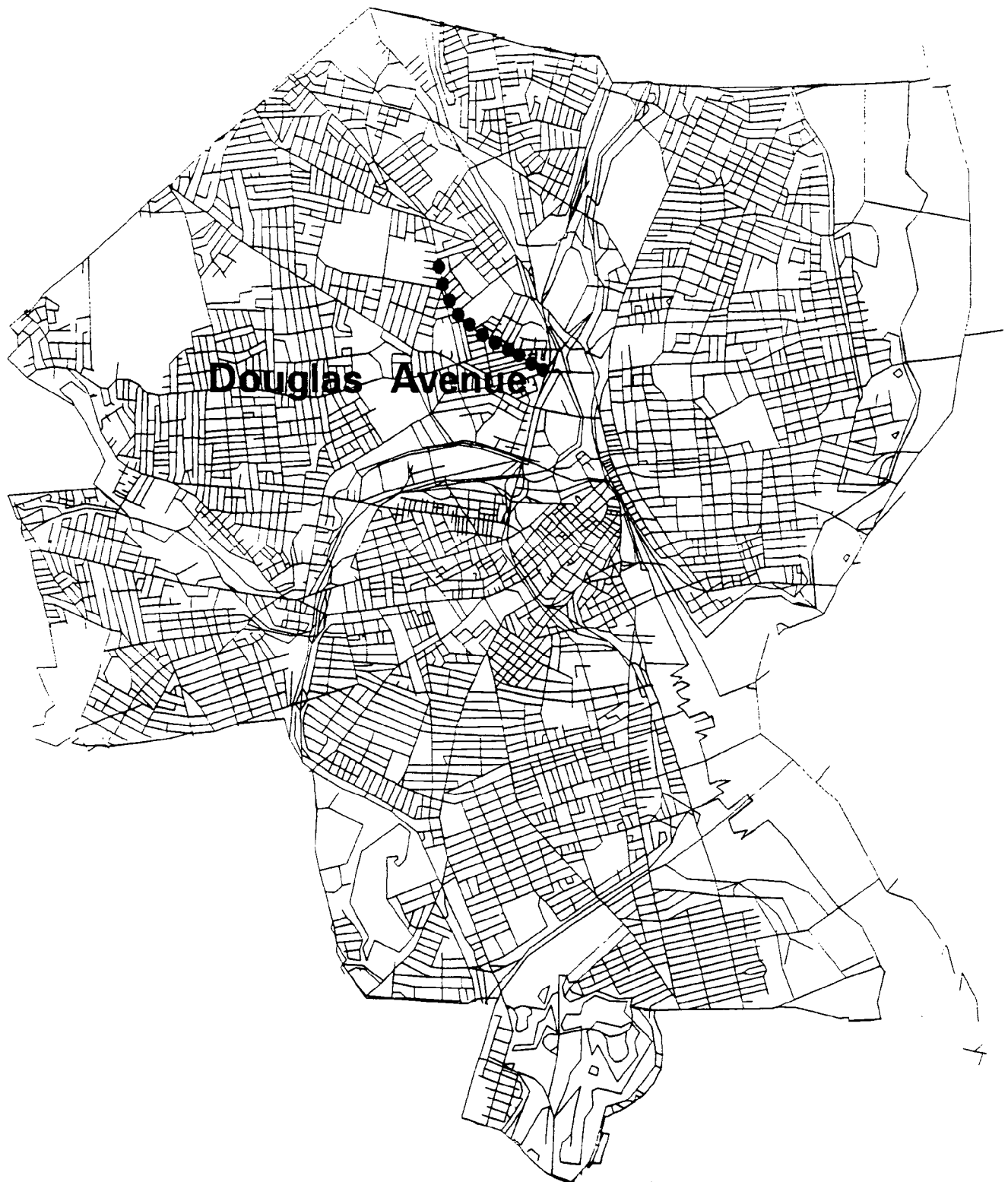
While the Project Area covers the length of Douglas Avenue from Orms Street to August Street (just short of Eagle Park), available funds were used to implement the plan in stages or phases. The first and second phases utilized federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program to pay for replacement sidewalks and the planting of street trees from Orms Street to Chalkstone Avenue and from Chalkstone Avenue to Eaton Street respectively.



# The Smith Hill Neighborhood of Providence, Rhode Island



**The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Plan  
Project Area  
Providence, Rhode Island**



The Douglas Avenue Steering Committee (DASC), which is composed of residents, neighborhood leaders and business owners, was formed by Providence City Councilman Thomas M. Glavin who represents the 12th Ward, where Douglas Avenue is located. This draft plan was developed by the DPD, working closely with the DASC. Since April 12, 1993, the DASC has met approximately once a month and provided direction to the DPD staff in the development of this plan.

### **1.3 What Is Going on?**

While the City is ready to embark upon the remainder of the plan, activity is well underway to take advantage of opportunities to improve the street. In 1994, when a dilapidated building at 312 Douglas Avenue (on the southeast corner of Douglas Avenue and Chad Brown Street) came up for a tax sale, the Department, acting on behalf of the City purchased the tax title of the house. Long an eye-sore and a threat to nearby residents, the Department worked with the Building Inspector to have the structure demolished. That action began the process to gain control of the property for possible demolition or adaptive reuse.

The Providence Housing Authority has recently constructed two new houses just behind the AA Club on Matthew Street, which runs parallel on the north side of Douglas Avenue as part of their Scattered Site Housing Program.

Also, the Trust for Public Land, a nationally recognized nonprofit agency dedicated to preserving open space in both urban and rural environments, working in concert with the Smith Hill Center and the Smith Hill Community Development Corporation, has recently hired Durkee & Brown and Associates, Architects, to study and develop a plan for the triangular area bounded by Candace Street, Orms Street and a significant portion of Douglas Avenue. Cooperation with other governmental agencies and with nonprofit institutions is integral to the success of any urban revitalization plan and is especially important to the Douglas Avenue area.

## **2. The Neighborhood**

Within project area, there is a mixture of residential and commercial uses. While the southwestern side of Douglas Avenue remains mostly residential, the northeastern side and particularly the intersections at Chalkstone Avenue and at Eaton Street / Camden Avenue have become mostly commercial. Among the residential structures on the street, there are a number of deteriorated and dilapidated structures. But for the most part, the buildings are in satisfactory condition.

### **2.1 Project Boundaries**

The project area is one parcel deep on either side of Douglas Avenue between Orms Street and August Street. There are three exceptions:

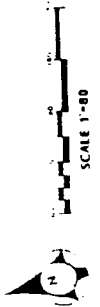
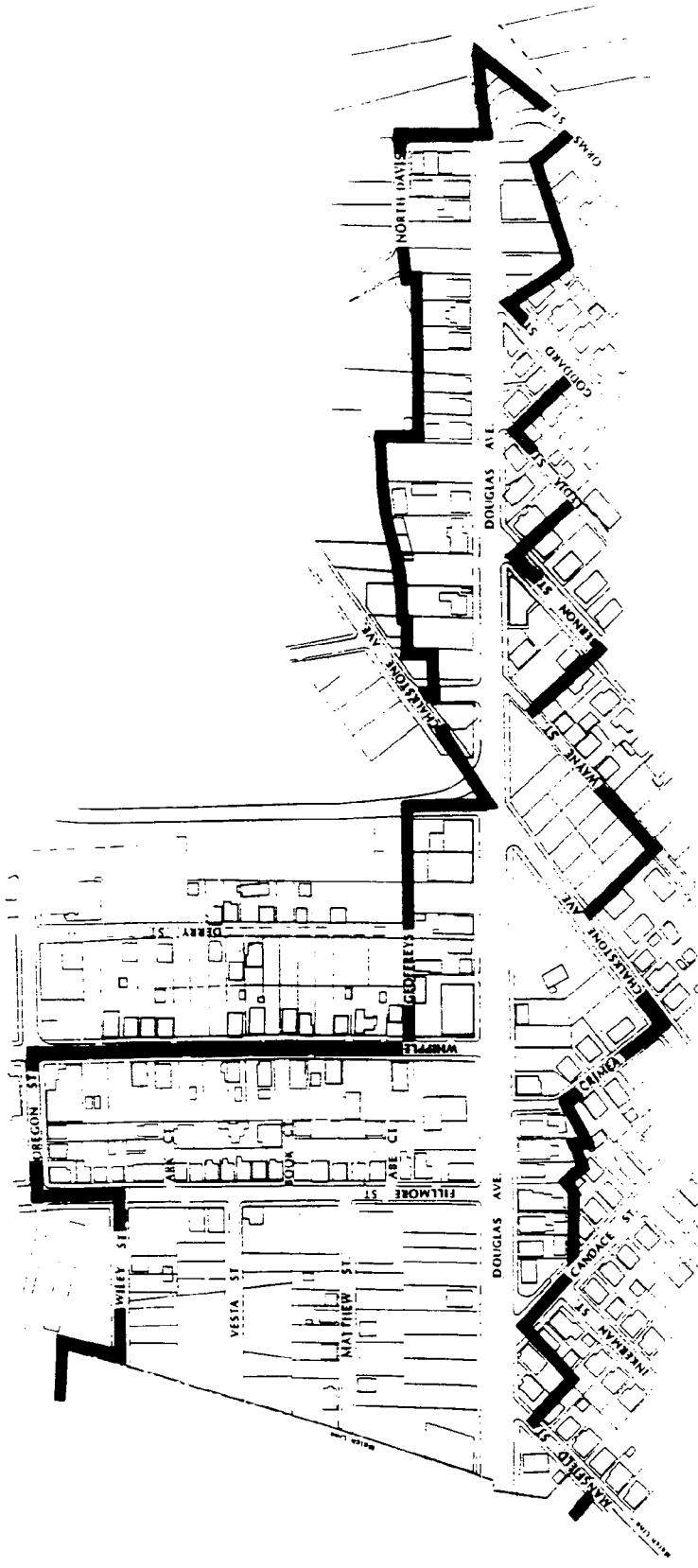
1. The entire block(s) bounded by Douglas and Chalkstone Avenues and Crimea Street is included.
2. The entire block(s) bounded by Douglas and Camden Avenues, Sweet Briar Street and Malbone Street is included.
3. The entire block(s) bounded by Douglas Avenue, St. Patrick's Cemetery, Wiley Street, and one parcel depth along Fillmore Street including those parcels which face Ark Court is included.

The legal description of the Project Area is contained within the Appendices.

### **2.2 Natural, Environmental and Urban Design Features**

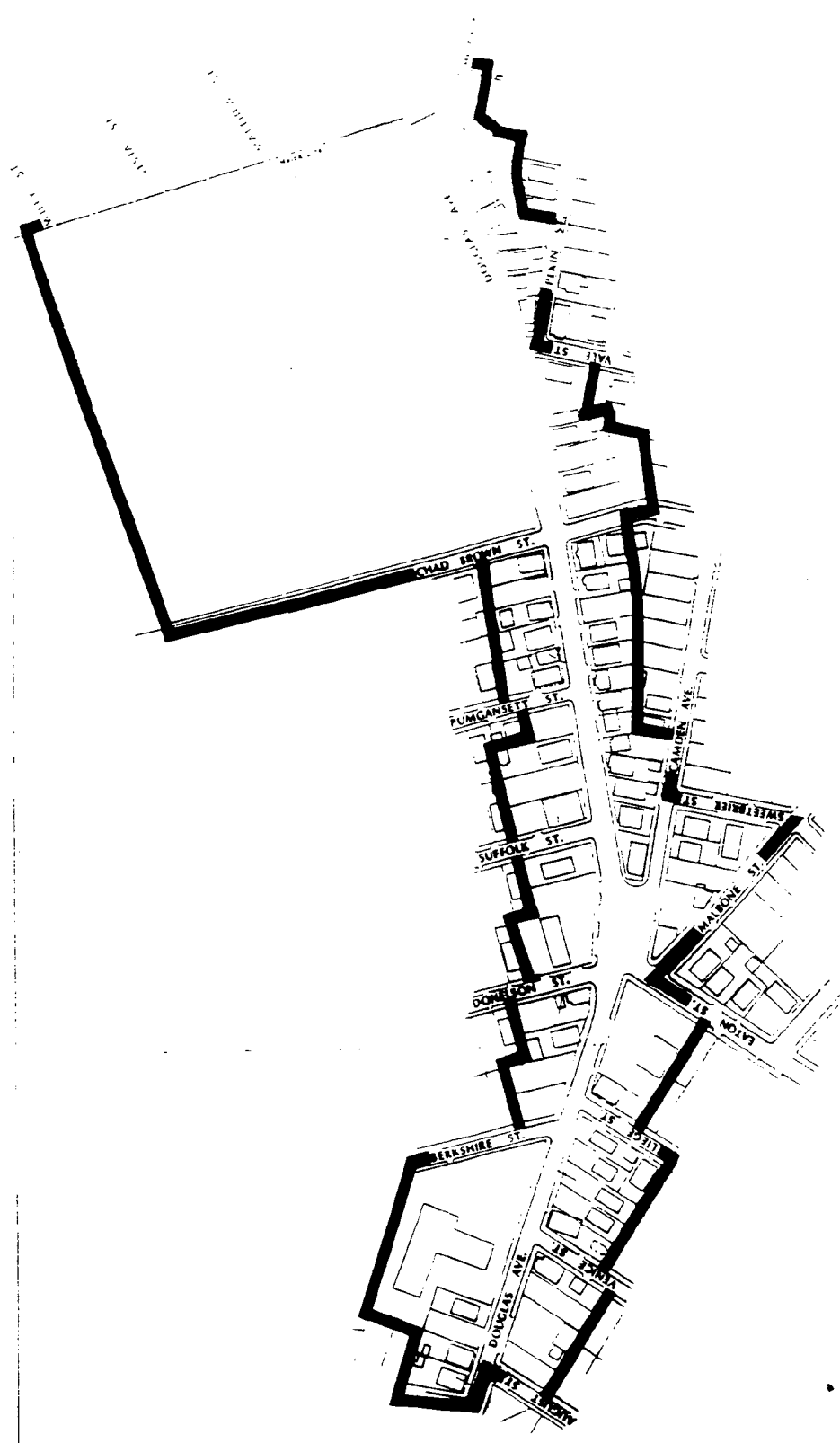
Douglas Avenue runs along the northern edge of Smith Hill and overlooks Interstates 95 and 146. The name of the street is most likely due to the fact that it eventually leads to Douglas, Massachusetts, an old mill town near the intersection of the Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island State borders. The only significant open spaces in the immediate area include the playground at Camden Avenue Elementary School, Saint Patrick's Cemetery located directly on the north side of Douglas Avenue at the corner of Chad Brown Street, and the nearby grounds of the Rhode Island School for the Deaf. Davis Park is located at Chalkstone Avenue and Raymond Street, about a mile away. There are also two small parks at the corner of Chalkstone Avenue and Smith Street, including the Candace Street Playground. There are no parks or designated open spaces located in close proximity to Douglas Avenue itself.

Recently, sidewalks were replaced, street trees were planted, resulting in a small, yet a significant amount of greenery. The street is lined with buildings typical of major arterials that pass through Providence neighborhoods. There are "triple-deckers," single family homes, and one and two story commercial structures in various states of repair.



**The Douglas Avenue  
Revitalization Project**

*City of Providence  
Department of Planning and Development  
400 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903*



**The Douglas Avenue  
Revitalization Project**

City of Providence  
Department of Planning and Development  
400 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02803

Douglas Avenue is a wide, curving street which begins at the visually and historically significant Synagogue at Orms Street. The street is made up of stretches of similar uses separated by grand and often confusing intersections with other arterial streets. The fabric of the street, though beginning to show signs of deterioration, is intact through much of the project area. The Avenue curves in a way that is inviting. Because of the curve, the streetscape opens to the pedestrian or the driver slowly and draws the viewer down the street, in anticipation of the next view. The fact that much of the street has a complete street edge helps that visual clarity and aesthetic appeal. Parts of the edge have been broken with demolition, leaving open areas, like missing teeth.

### **2.3 Past Redevelopment Areas**

This plan represents the first attempt at revitalizing Douglas Avenue. The surrounding area, however, has seen several redevelopment efforts. These include the Smith Street and Eagle Park redevelopment plans in the early 1980s, the nearby Moshassuck Square Apartments on Constitution Hill and the Silver Spring Industrial Park. None of these have overlapped the area that is now part of the Douglas Avenue revitalization effort.

### **2.4 Commercial Areas**

The commercial areas along Douglas Avenue have experienced substantial disinvestment. There are many vacant commercial and retail buildings, especially at and around the intersection of Chalkstone and Douglas Avenues. Members of the Douglas Avenue Steering Committee have spoken of numerous bakeries, delis and other retail outlets that were on Douglas Avenue not long ago. These enterprises served the needs of the community. Unfortunately, few businesses remain which serve the needs of the nearby, mostly pedestrian, population.

At the corner of Orms Street, there is a small office building and a check-cashing facility / pawn shop which are followed by a liquor store. These together represent one retail / commercial node along the street. They are at the gateway to the neighborhood and therefore set the tone for the remainder of the street.

As the Avenue progresses westward, there is a long strip of mostly residential buildings which do not change over to commercial use until approaching the intersection of Chalkstone Avenue. This is the major commercial node in the immediate area and this intersection is the central point. There are vacant commercial buildings and lots which have the potential to add to the economic redevelopment of the area. Sticky Fingers restaurant is there as well as a gas station. There is also the potential that the large vacant lot bounded by Douglas Avenue, Chalkstone Avenue and Wayne Street will be developed with retail facilities.

When Douglas Avenue stretches towards Chad Brown Street, there are a few small businesses located in mixed use buildings including a small deli-convenience store. But, aside from the small manufacturing plant adjacent to St. Patrick's Cemetery and the headquarters of a frozen lemonade

manufacturing plant with a retail outlet at the corner of Pekin Street, there exists a steady pattern of multi-family houses.

The intersection with Eaton Street presents the third commercial node on this section of Douglas Avenue. At this intersection are a Laundromat, a 7-11 convenience store, a self-service carwash and a large Mobil Gas Station, which commands the most attention due to its brightness and size. The next major commercial node is at Eagle Square which is out of the Douglas Avenue project area. Currently, a national chain drug store has received a use variance from the Zoning Board Review to clear the land bounded by Douglas Avenue and Admiral Street, including the carwash and a number of houses in good condition, and construct a new retail facility.

## **2.5 Residential Areas**

After the commercial disinvestment took place, the residential areas followed. Some 3 and 4 unit homes on Douglas Avenue were purchased as investments by people who lived outside the neighborhood. Often, these "investors" felt that they were not accountable for the condition of their properties. Therefore, many buildings have fallen into disrepair, some past the point where rehabilitation would be feasible. There is also a core group of concerned residents who have lived on Douglas Avenue for some time. The houses owned by these people are in good condition and serve as a model for the rehabilitation of the remainder of the buildings.

As Douglas Avenue runs from Orms Street to August Street, the residential buildings are mostly multi-family dwellings of 3 or more units a piece. There is a small section of the street on the southern side of Douglas Avenue across from St. Patrick's Cemetery that are one or two family structures.

The size of the buildings and the street frontages give the appearance of a dense residential neighborhood. Upon closer examination, there are more vacant lots and vacant buildings than at first glimpse. The density of the homes along Douglas Avenue is not unlike the density on any other commercial / residential street in the City of Providence.

### **2.5.1 Blight**

There are a significant number of vacant buildings and lots along Douglas Avenue. In fact, one of the first buildings visible from the east approach is a large, vacant house at 5 Goddard Street which has one façade facing Douglas Avenue. This building, located in the gateway to the entire neighborhood, sends a bad signal to potential new investors or residents. The building is located on a corner lot that is very important to the fabric of the street. Psychologically, this area is extremely important to changing the attitude about Douglas Avenue. If the problems here are solved, the rest of the street will benefit.

A large vacant lot on Douglas Avenue at Chalkstone Avenue contains an abandoned gasoline station. The location is very important to the neighborhood because of visibility. Though the lot is fenced and



maintained regularly, it serves as a reminder of the disinvestment in the neighborhood. There is a house next to the gas station lot that has been completely gutted. A similarly dilapidated structure on the abutting lot was demolished by the City in 1993. The remaining building is a cause of concern for all nearby residents because it poses a threat to the neighborhood children. These problems are significant in preventing any significant reinvestment from occurring along Douglas Avenue and keeping current attitudes about the area from changing.

Currently, Douglas Avenue retains many of the buildings extant from the early 20th century. Recent demolition has, however, begun to create abandoned and littered vacant lots. These become holes in the visual, psychological and physical fabric of the street and the surrounding neighborhood. The vacant lot, such as those on either side of the AA Civic Club, also plays a role in the lack of new investment on the street.

Also, there are a number of vacant buildings and lots located on the southern side of Douglas Avenue as it approaches Eaton Street. The situation has deteriorated to a point where Providence College (P.C.), located nearby where Eaton Street meets Huxley Avenue, has begun directing visitors away from the Douglas Avenue approach to a Pleasant Valley Parkway approach. By doing this, P.C. is demonstrating its concern for the welfare of the street. This plan must eliminate these blighting influences through selective demolition and repair to restore P.C.'s confidence.

As noted earlier, the a significant blight in the neighborhood was the house at 312 Douglas Avenue, at the corner of Chad Brown Street. This has been the source of neighborhood complaints for some time. This posed a threat to the many children living nearby and created a blighting influence to one of the major gateways to the Smith Hill neighborhood. The Department of Inspections and Standards demolished the building while the PRA is in the process of taking ownership of the lot.

Clearly, there is a need for the removal of these blighting influences. This removal need not be through demolition alone but can be accomplished through investment. However, it is important that the removal of blight is not done only for those who drive through the area, it must be done for the residents and business owners who remain on Douglas Avenue. Their property values need to be stabilized so they can plan for their futures. At the same time, these are people who would directly benefit from new investment in the area.

### **2.5.2 Tax Delinquent Properties**

At the Tax Sale held by the City of Providence on June 6th, 1995, according to state law, the Providence Redevelopment Agency bought the tax title for Plat 69 Lot 313 (the aforementioned 312 Douglas Avenue). The Department is currently in the process of beginning negotiations with the current owner to speed up the process of taking control of the parcel. In one year from the day of purchase of tax title, the City may begin foreclosure proceedings. At anytime until that date, the owner may pay the City the amount of taxes originally owed plus 12% interest which raises one point for each month past the 6th month of the one year redemption period. However, this may never occur because this plan calls for acquisition of the parcel through condemnation.

### **2.5.3 Vacant and Abandoned Properties**

There are twelve vacant structures on this section of Douglas Avenue. Three of the structures are garages and one is a former ARCO station. Another is a commercial building next to the 95 North On-Ramp and the Sticky Fingers Restaurant. There are large tracts of vacant land and smaller, residential vacant house lots. These properties are shown more clearly on an accompanying map.

### **2.5.4 Housing Ownership**

An analysis of the parcels on Douglas Avenue shows that there is an owner occupancy rate of only twenty-eight percent (28%). This includes, however, both residential and commercial properties and is simply the percentage of persons who have their tax bills delivered to the same address as the building they own. Many of the residential buildings on Douglas Avenue are multi-family dwellings. It is rare that an owner occupant lives in a building with more than two units.

Until a new model for home ownership in three to six family dwellings is found and implemented, areas like Douglas Avenue will remain primarily rental neighborhoods. Owner occupancy is a Citywide goal that can also be applied to Douglas Avenue. Indeed, it should be pursued along with acceptance of the rental nature of the neighborhood. Another goal is to encourage, and even compel all owners to maintain their property to meet the City's Housing Code. If the owners do not maintain their properties and allow them to become blighting influences, they should immediately suffer fines and citations.

### **2.5.5 Housing Conditions**

The owner occupied housing along Douglas Avenue is often in good condition. Unfortunately, the housing problems that have plagued the entire City have made their presence felt on Douglas Avenue. Many investors bought rental housing in the mid-1980s for inflated prices. That, in turn, caused them to charge exorbitant rents to cover their debt service. At the same time, Rhode Island was going through a major banking crisis when nearly every credit union in the state was shut down due to a depositor's insurance problem.

The instability caused by these and other problems wreaked havoc on the Providence real estate market. Eventually, because the properties had many encumbrances and various liens held against them, they became more trouble than they were worth. If the buildings were not caught up in the banking crisis, in many cases the debt loads caused purchasers to reconsider their interest in maintaining the buildings and many structures were abandoned.

Once some buildings become vacant, a cycle of disinvestment begins. Most of the occupied and vacant housing on the street, though in some cases in bad shape, is of good quality. Many of the houses on Douglas Avenue were built in a time when houses were built to last.

## **2.6 Generalized Land Use**

As mentioned above, the continuity of the street edge, though scarred by vacant lots from housing demolition, provides a certain sense of place. The density of the buildings and the lack of open space point to the history of the neighborhood as a working class area which provided housing to those employed by the numerous mills on either side of Smith Hill. As is the case with the Italian heritage of Federal Hill across the Woonasquatucket Valley, clearly this was at one time a concentrated ethnic enclave for early Armenian, Jewish and Irish settlers in Providence. Now, like many other areas in Providence that are now experiencing a second major wave of immigrants, this is a neighborhood in flux.

There are a number of small restaurants on the street including the larger scale "Sticky Fingers" in a former fire station near the I-95 on-ramp. There are also some smaller grocery stores along the street because of the lack of a nearby supermarket. There are also gasoline stations and auto repair facilities in the area.

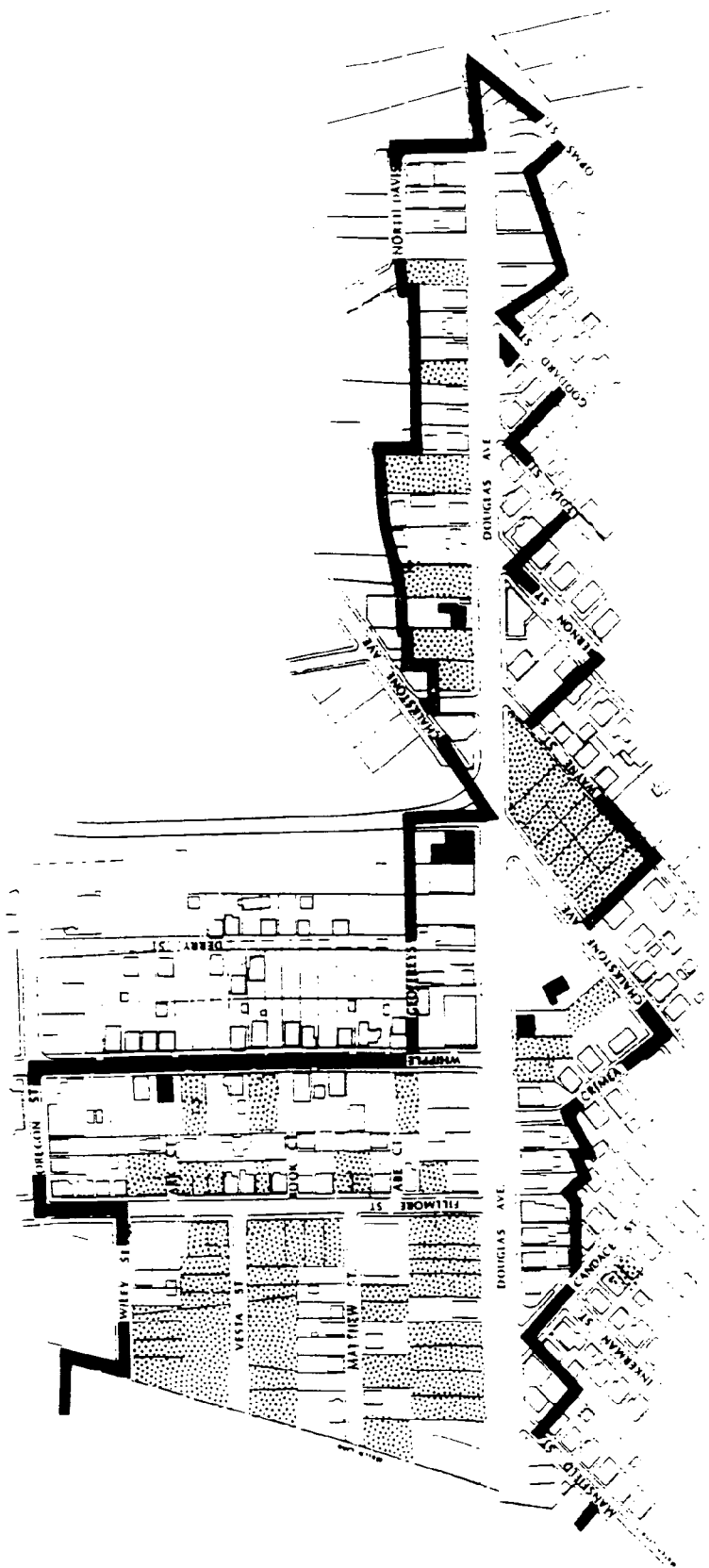
The section of Douglas Avenue being included in this plan includes one small neighborhood commercial node, two major neighborhood commercial nodes, and residential and mixed uses buildings between them. The only land use which makes this part of Douglas Avenue different from other major commercial / residential streets in the City is the proximity of the Chad Brown housing authority developments.

## **2.7 Generalized Zoning**

The generalized zoning along Douglas Avenue is typical of major commercial arteries in Providence. Like many similar thoroughfares, Douglas Avenue is made up of a series of commercial nodes where other major streets intersect and high density residential buildings between these "squares." There are occasionally heavy commercial or manufacturing uses as well as a small amount of open space.

From the point where Douglas Avenue begins at Orms Street to the end of the area of concern for this project at Eaton Street, the zoning is almost consistently R-3 (residential up to 3 units). There is one pocket starting at Chalkstone Avenue, including the large triangular lot with the abandoned gasoline station and covering a one lot depth along the northern side of Douglas Avenue heading west until reaching Eaton Street where the zoning is C-1 (light commercial and retail). At Eaton Street, the zoning is C-2 which permits larger scale commercial development intended to serve citywide retail needs as opposed to only neighborhood based needs.

There is a large area to the North of Douglas Avenue that is zoned M-1 and is occupied by a number of metals recycling yards, manufacturers and the Foxy Lady adult entertainment complex. On the following pages are maps showing the existing zoning on Douglas Avenue.



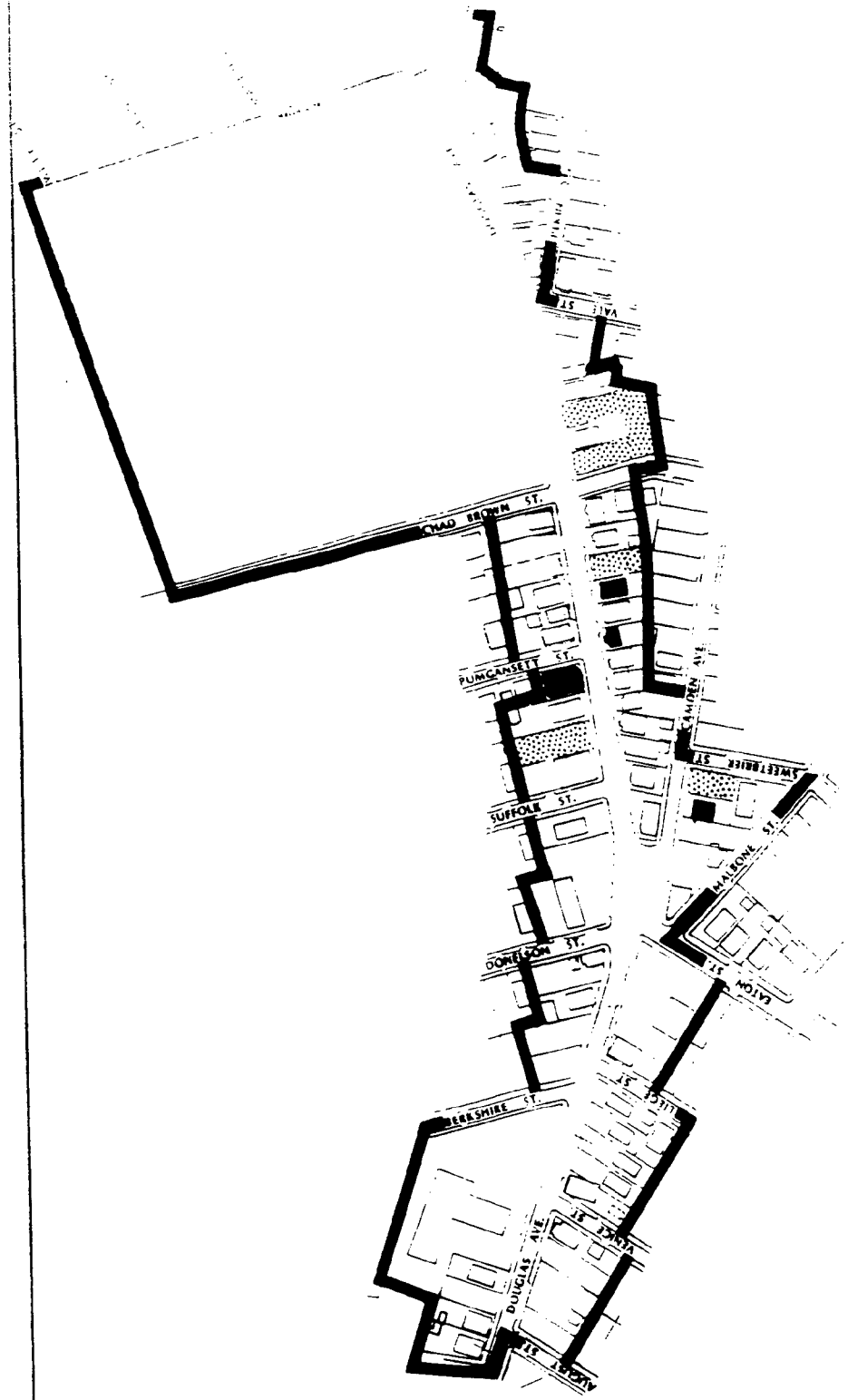
## Vacant and Abandoned Properties

## Vacant Buildings

## Vacant Lots

## The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project

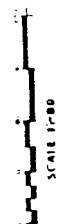
City of Honolulu  
Department of Planning and Development  
400 Washington Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



**Vacant and Abandoned Properties**

 Vacant Buildings

 Vacant Lots



**The Douglas Avenue  
Revitalization Project**

City of Providence  
Department of Planning and Development  
400 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02901

## **2.8 The People**

In general terms, the people of Douglas Avenue and Smith Hill consist of three basic groups:

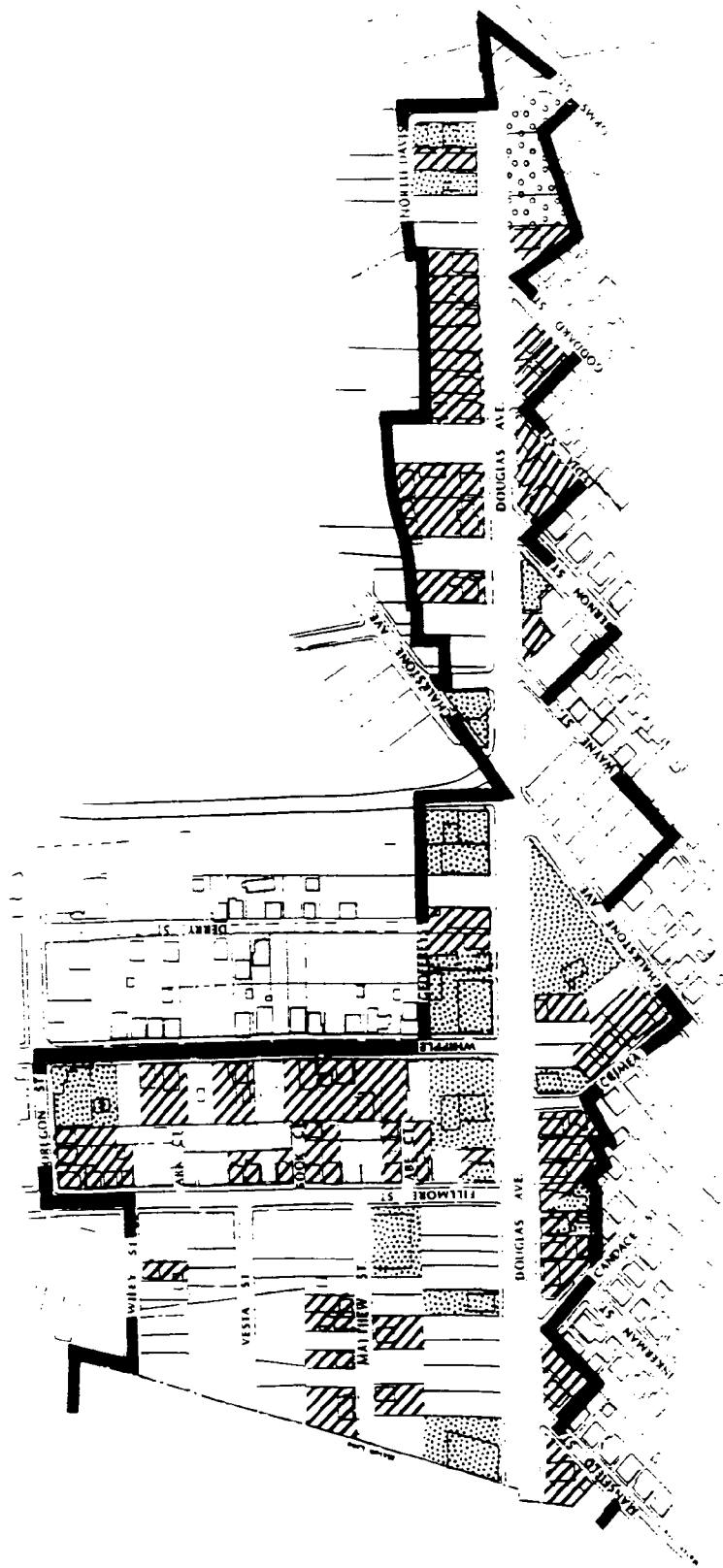
- There are residents who have lived in the area for many years and are the descendants of the first wave of immigration into the neighborhood in the early 20th century. These people are often of Armenian, Irish, Lithuanian or Jewish (Russian, German) descent and have lived in the area for their entire lives, through a number of generations.
- There are other longtime Providence residents who choose to live in Smith Hill for the many amenities in the surrounding area, the proximity to downtown, and the availability of housing. Often, they have lived in the general area for some time.
- There are also residents who have recently arrived in this country and have settled in Smith Hill because of low cost of housing and because of the dense "community" character of the area which serves as a settlement area for new immigrants. In the Smith Hill neighborhood, these people are often of Southeast Asian, or Latino descent.

### **2.8.1 History**


Douglas Avenue and the surrounding area make up the northern edge of the Smith Hill neighborhood of Providence. Historically, Smith Hill has been defined as the area bounded by the Woonasquatucket River to the south near Promenade Street and the Chad Brown public housing complex on the north, and includes the area surrounding the State Capitol between Route 44 (Smith Street), the railroad downtown, the West River, and Interstate 95.


Between 1830 and 1930, Smith Hill became a dense urban neighborhood. Two major factors that contributed to this growth were industrialization and immigration. Although Smith Hill never became a hotbed of industry, the industrial development of neighboring communities in more densely settled areas of Providence, like Olneyville and Valley, did seep in and contributed to Smith Hill's growth.

During the 19th century, industrialization spread from two points, along both the Moshassuck and Woonasquatucket Rivers. Both locations provided the necessary power to run the mills. Industrialization was also supported by the rise in immigration. The first wave of immigrants arrived during the 1820s and was from Ireland. Later immigrants came here from eastern Europe and the Balkan countries. There had also been a small group of Jewish immigrants from Germany who settled along the eastern border of Smith Hill in the 1840s. But the first group of the second wave of immigration to Smith Hill, during a time when Providence was injected with many new cultures and nationalities, was mostly Russian-Jewish. They settled on Smith Hill between 1890 and 1920. By the turn of the century, many Armenian immigrants began forming a substantial community along or close to Douglas Avenue. In addition, a significant group of Swedes settled in Smith Hill during the 1880s. Although the Armenians still maintain a presence in Smith Hill, most remaining near Douglas Avenue, the Swedish and Jewish communities have mostly left.



**Land Use**

 Residential

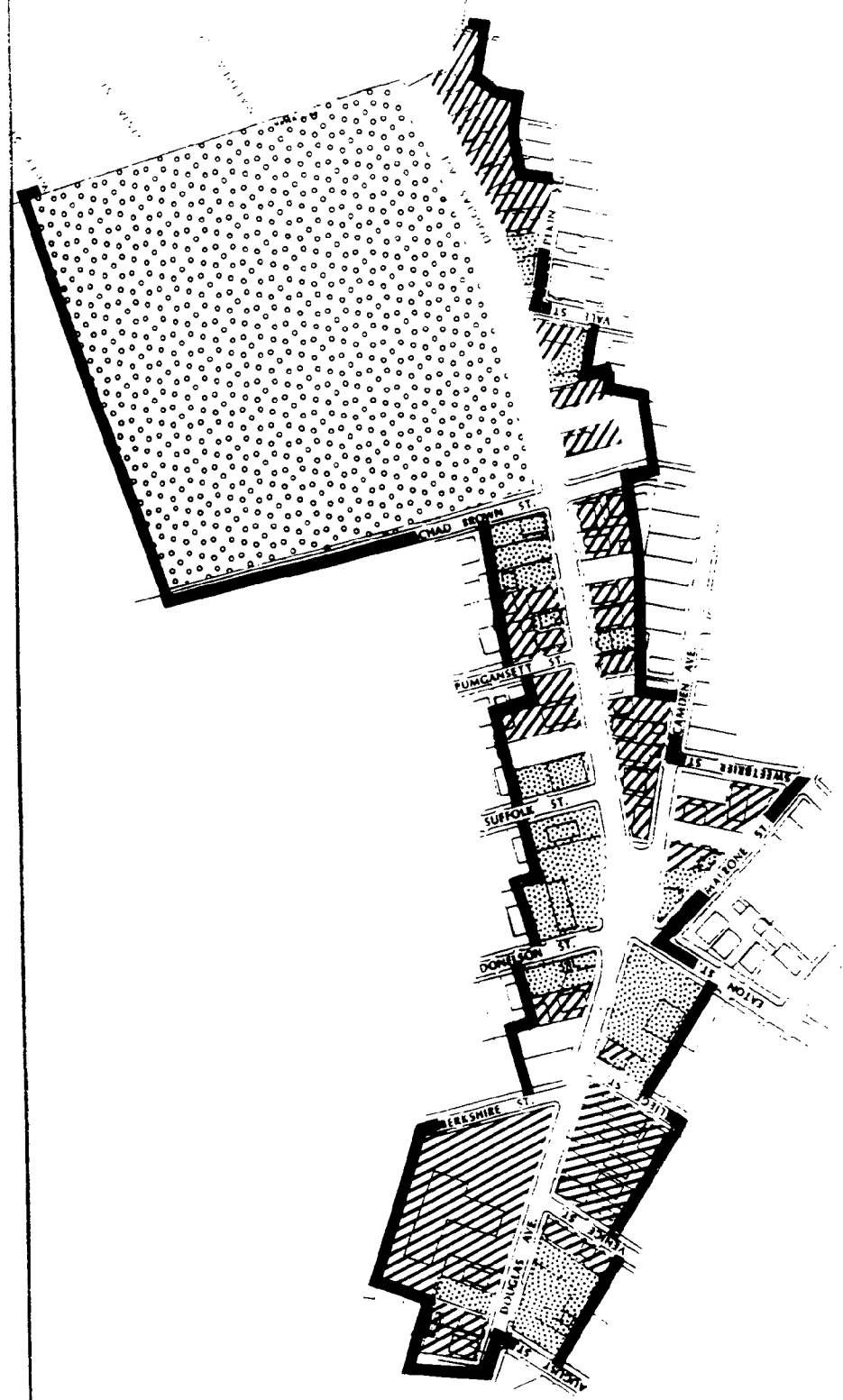
 Commercial

 Institutional / Open Space






**The Douglas Avenue  
Revitalization Project**

City of Providence  
Department of Planning and Development  
400 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903



**Land Use**

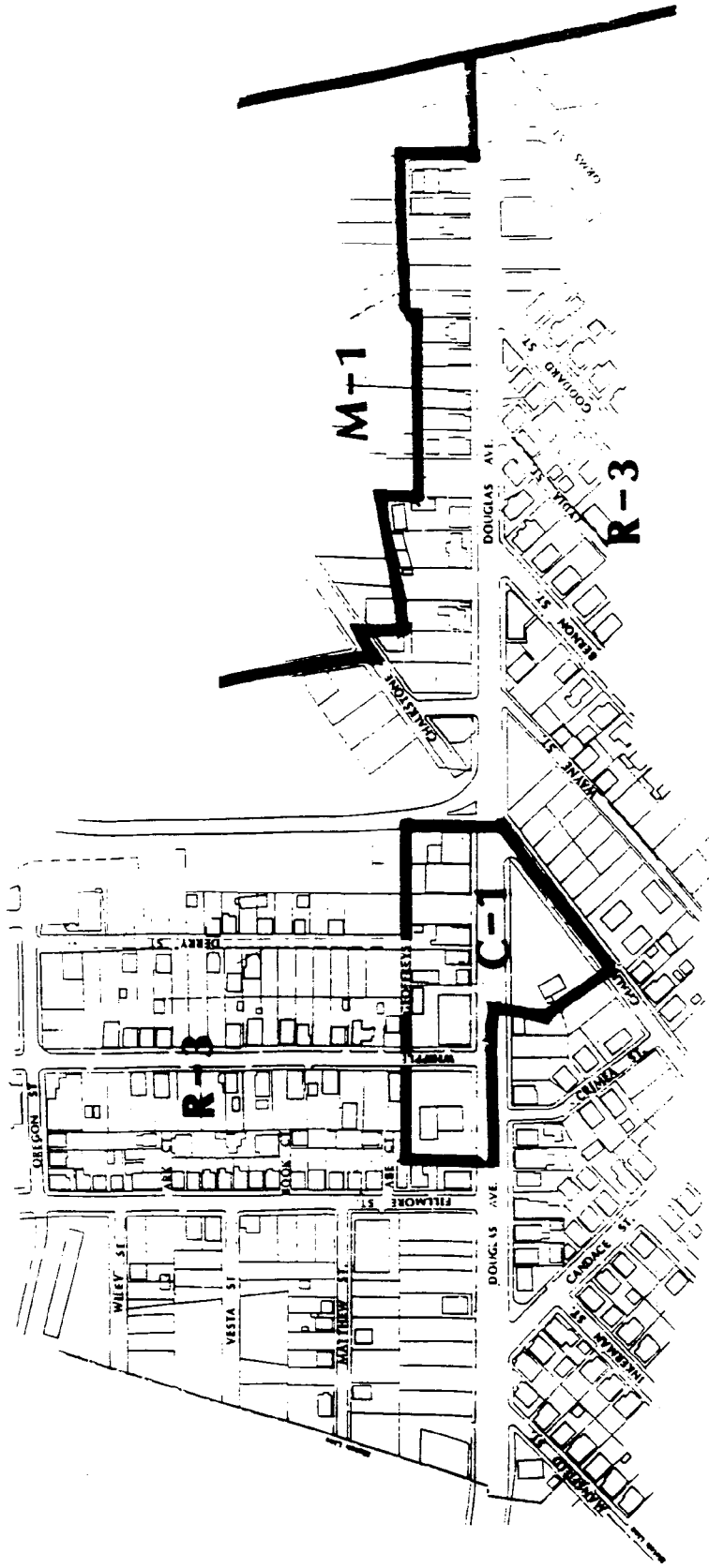
-  Residential
-  Commercial
-  Institutional / Open Space



**The Douglas Avenue  
Revitalization Project**

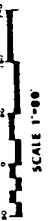
City of Providence  
Department of Planning and Development  
400 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02801





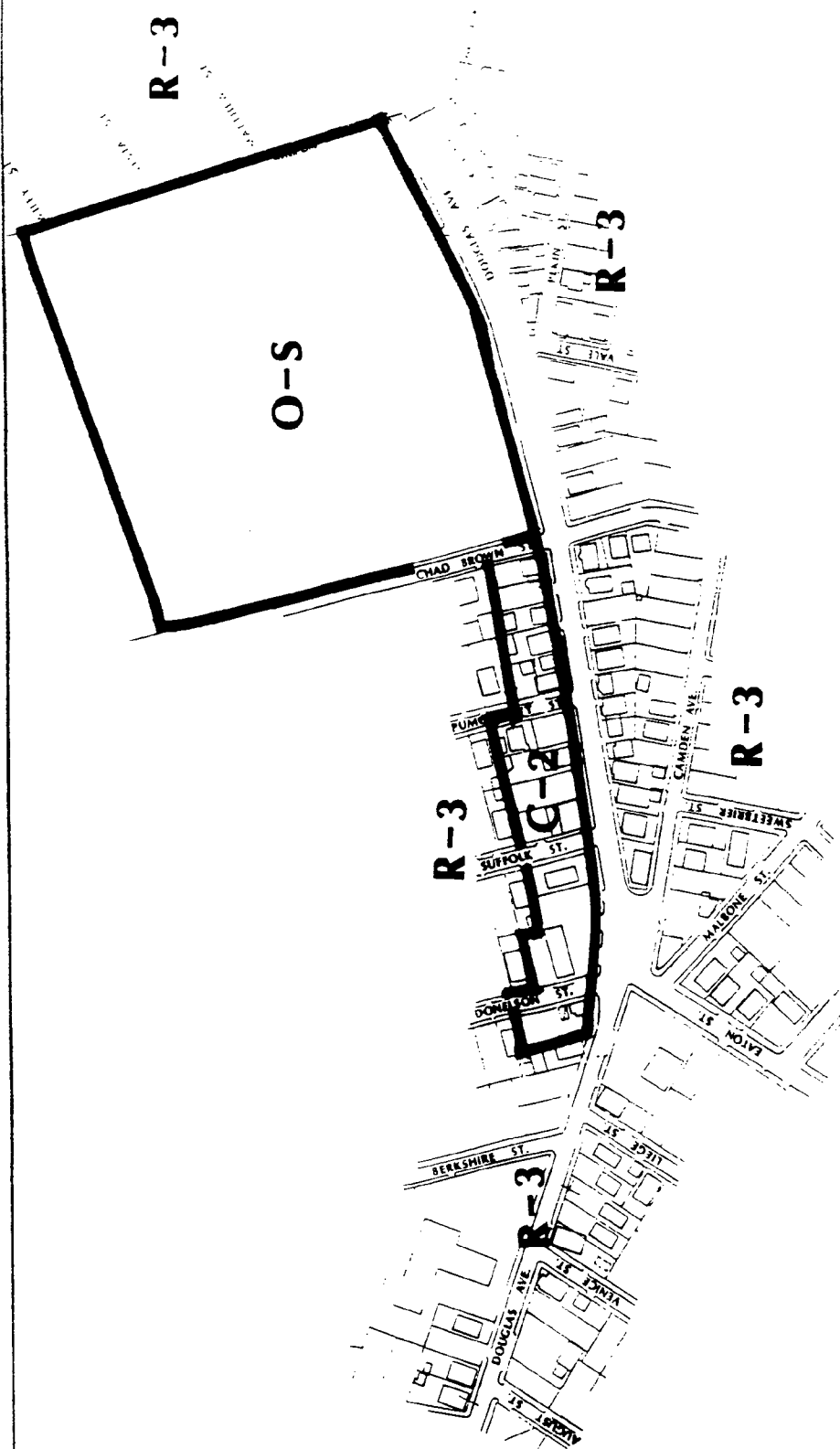
### Existing Zoning

- |     |                                   |
|-----|-----------------------------------|
| R-3 | Three Family Residential District |
| C-1 | Limited Commercial District       |
| C-2 | General Commercial District       |
| M-1 | Industrial District               |
| O-S | Open Space District               |



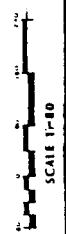
### The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project

City of Providence  
Department of Planning and Development  
400 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903



**Existing Zoning**

- R-3 Three Family Residential District
- C-1 Limited Commercial District
- C-2 General Commercial District
- M-1 Industrial District
- O-S Open Space District



**The Douglas Avenue  
Revitalization Project**

City of Providence  
Department of Planning and Development  
400 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Extensive construction and development changed the look of the neighborhood in the 1870s. Between 1860 and 1890, wide-scale real estate development reflected the growing industry and immigration patterns in the entire Woonasquatuket River valley. Most of the areas were lined with small cottages and multiple-family homes to accommodate the growing population of industrial workers. By the 1920s, Smith Hill had reached its peak. Most of the land was occupied. The community remained heavily Irish with various pockets of other ethnic groups.

By the 1950s and onward, the construction of Interstate Route 95 through the heart of Smith Hill resulted in the demolition of many historic buildings. During this period of apparent stability, signs of urban decay were starting to show. The popularity and the increasing affordability of the automobile promoted mobility and thus, suburban sprawl. Many children of the original immigrants left Smith Hill for the suburbs, leaving an aging Irish, Jewish and Armenian population along side new immigrants into Providence from southeast Asia and from Latin America. The Providence City Plan Commission documented a continual decrease in the population of Smith Hill starting in the 1920s. The Great Depression of the 1930s hit Smith Hill hard due to the numerous factory lay-offs and the many blue collar workers living in the neighborhood left without work. By 1940, nearly 20 percent of homes on Smith Hill were vacant compared with 3 percent for the city at large.

In addition, Interstate 95 also separated institutions such as St. Patrick's Church from much of its parish and further isolated the Smith Hill plat of 1830, an area with the earliest settlement, from the rest of the neighborhood. The latter was an important factor in its eventual abandonment and gradual decline as a residential area. The great move in the 1960s, when many industries relocated to the suburbs, hurt Smith Hill. During this period when several large plants, including Brown and Sharpe, Nicholson File, and the American Screw Company moved to the suburbs, many of their employees moved with them. Many more neighborhood residents lost their jobs during the infamous Brown & Sharpe strike of the early 1980s.

But recently, Smith Hill has begun to revitalize. There are a number of social service providers, nonprofit agencies and city government programs which have contributed to this resurgence. Douglas Avenue is an important part of this resurgence. This plan should continue to help push the neighborhood in the right direction.

### **2.8.2 The People of Smith Hill**

According to the 1990 census, 6,003 people resided in the Smith Hill neighborhood, an increase of 6.5 percent from 1980. During the past decade, Smith Hill's nonwhite population more than doubled, increasing from 14.4 percent in 1980 to 39.7 percent in 1990. Overall, about one out of five Smith Hill residents was Hispanic, 17.2 percent were Asian (the largest proportion for any neighborhood in Providence), and 12.2 percent were African-American.

The percentage of foreign born residents in Smith Hill doubled over the past decade, rising from 16.5 percent in 1980 to 35.5 percent in 1990, and the proportion of persons with limited English speaking abilities increased four-fold during this same period (from 6.5% to 27.9%). Less than half (48%) of

all persons of age 25 or older in Smith Hill had a high school degree by 1990. Manufacturing and professional services were the leading sectors for employment of Smith Hill residents in 1990, with the former accounting for about one-third and the latter about one-fourth of all jobs. The unemployment rate in Smith Hill in 1990 was 9.9 percent, slightly higher than the citywide rate of 9.2 percent.

The median family income in Smith Hill in 1989 was \$20,707 which is 27 percent lower than the citywide median family income. The incidence of poverty was up across all demographic groups in 1990 and rates in Smith Hill were higher than those for the city as a whole. Overall, almost one in three (30.4%) persons in Smith Hill was poor, 27 percent of families were living below poverty, 45 percent of all children were poor, and one out of four elderly persons had income below the poverty level.

Housing tenure in Smith Hill was stable over the past decade, though the proportion of housing units that was owner-occupied continued to erode, dropping from 24.7 percent in 1980 to 21.2 percent in 1990. More than half of all housing units in Smith Hill were located in three or four-family buildings. Seven out of ten housing units were built more than 40 years ago. The median value of owner-occupied housing units in Smith Hill was \$69,100 in 1990, nearly 40 percent lower than the citywide median. The median rent in Smith Hill was 7 percent lower than the citywide median. More than half of all Smith Hill residents moved into their present housing within the past five years and 21.2 percent had lived in their present unit for more than 20 years.

### **2.8.3 Social Analysis**

The Douglas Avenue area is populated by a diverse group of residents. There are many residents who have chosen to remain in the neighborhood and try to recreate the atmosphere they had once known. There are also many new immigrants to this country who have settled in the area much like the many waves of immigrants that this neighborhood has supported over the past two hundred years. In fact, Smith Hill has the highest percentage of Asian-Americans in the City. There are also two nearby entities which play a significant role in creating the social dynamic of the neighborhood. They are Providence College just off of Eaton Street and the Chad Brown public housing complex near the intersection of Douglas Avenue and Chad Brown Street. Together, these groups make a vibrant community.

The racial and ethnic diversity of Smith Hill, along with the range of age groups represented in the area, makes Smith Hill one of the most diverse neighborhoods in the City of Providence. Douglas Avenue has small Latino-owned grocery stores near an AA Civic Club, for example. Though the age difference causes some stress between the older generation and the young people, most residents get along fairly well.

One dichotomy exists which all residents feel contributes to the social decay of the area; that is the number of properties owned by absentee landlords. Many of these are vacant lots which attract litterers and vandals. There is a sense in Smith Hill, and along Douglas Avenue especially, that there

is lack of pride in the neighborhood; that more than anything is what allows people to dump garbage on vacant lots and get away with it and many other violations.

## **2.9 Community Facilities, Services and Programs**

The Providence Public Library maintains a branch near the corner of Chalkstone Avenue and Candace Street. This is within walking distance from Douglas Avenue. The Providence Police Department maintains a training facility and precinct office at the corner of Douglas Avenue and Chad Brown Street. This, along with the area set aside for the police at the 7-11 store on Douglas Avenue at the intersection with Eaton Street, creates a significant police presence in the neighborhood. The Smith Hill neighborhood is also in the process of seeking an additional Community Police Officer to be stationed within the triangular area bounded by Orms Street, Candace Street and Douglas Avenue.

The Wanskuck Boys and Girls Club is reachable via Hawkins Street into Hopkins Square in the nearby North End neighborhood. Davis Park is not far away on Chalkstone Avenue and contains basketball courts and other facilities. There is also a small park at the corner of Chalkstone Avenue and Smith Street, the Candace Street playground and the grounds of the Camden Avenue Elementary School. The Smith Hill Center on Ruggles Street provides a multitude of neighborhood services from night time GED classes to housing assistance to day care. It is located on Ruggles Street closer to Smith Street than to Douglas Avenue. There are many other services which play a significant role in the Douglas Avenue community. They are as follows:

- The Providence Housing Authority runs a recreation center, a medical center and many other services at the Chad Brown facility.
- The Alan Shawn Feinstein School for Public Service at Providence College and other PC programs. Students can volunteer their time to help the community accomplish a number of goals, in education and in the physical improvement of the neighborhood. The "Christmas in April" Program is also run out of Providence College.
- The Smith Hill Center runs a day care center nearby as well as other necessary services in the neighborhood.

## **2.10 Historic Qualities**

The Sons of Jacob Synagogue at 24 Douglas Avenue is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and maintains a small congregation. The Pekin Street National Register Historic District is bounded by Douglas Avenue to the north, Candace Street (including some of the properties on the eastern side of the street) to the east, Chalkstone Avenue to the south and Pekin Street (both sides) to the west. This designation makes some of the buildings on Douglas Avenue eligible for Federal Tax Incentives. This incentive is a tax credit taken on the owner's income tax equal to 20% of rehabilitation costs. Application for the credit is made through the Rhode Island Historical Preservation and Heritage Commission.

## **2.11 Infrastructure Problems**

There are two major intersections which are purported to be dangerous by the neighborhood residents because they endanger both drivers and pedestrians. They also discourage the use of the retail and commercial facilities in the area. These intersections are where Douglas Avenue meets Eaton Street and where Douglas Avenue meets Chalkstone Avenue. The need to begin improving safety conditions and to promote the use of existing retail uses is growing. Changes in these intersection would also begin promoting the future development of additional commercial and residential establishments.

It is important to note that these two intersections impede pedestrian activity on Douglas Avenue. Improvements to these two intersections would facilitate pedestrian movement and improve vehicular access into the surrounding neighborhoods. A major improvement has been the installation of a traffic signal at the intersection of Douglas Avenue and Chad Brown Street. This was completed in June of 1995.

### **2.11.1 Circulation**

Douglas Avenue is a two way street which serves the northwest quadrant of the City. Many of the major streets in the area, including Chalkstone Avenue, Eaton Street, Admiral Street, River Avenue and Branch Avenue, cross Douglas Avenue before it reaches the town of North Providence and heads towards the northwest corner of Rhode Island.

There are a number of significant traffic generators located on or near Douglas Avenue. These include Providence College, the Foxy Lady Adult Entertainment Complex and the surrounding neighborhoods who view the street as easy access into downtown Providence or to Route 95. Douglas Avenue can easily be reached and be reached from Interstate 95. From I-95, the State Offices exit leads to Orms Street just east of the point where Douglas begins. There is an on-ramp to I-95 from Douglas Avenue near the intersection of Douglas and Chalkstone Avenues. Also, Route 146 runs along the northern edge of Smith Hill and can be reached by accessing Admiral Street from Whipple Street which runs between the two highways. Highway interchanges and traffic generators cause substantial vehicular traffic on the street.

There are few pedestrians who use Douglas Avenue because of the decline of neighborhood based retail and commercial outlets. However, Rhode Island Public Transportation Authority buses serve the entire length of Douglas Avenue.

### **2.11.2 Utilities**

At one time, the street was a bustling array of businesses and residences which used infrastructure services. Therefore, it stands to reason that the existing utilities such as gas, water, electric and sewer facilities could support similar activities again. The Narragansett Electric Company maintains the street lights on Douglas Avenue.

## 2.12 The Foxy Lady

The Foxy Lady is an adult entertainment complex situated just north of Douglas Avenue on Chalkstone Avenue. Though the building is partially hidden from view, the effects on the surrounding neighborhood are profound. The large number of visitors attracted to the club has an enormous impact on the circulation and parking patterns in the area. There is a need to coordinate traffic impacts with the Foxy Lady and the likelihood that it may expand. It is important that the neighborhood have some type of relationship with the Foxy Lady where the community can monitor and attempt to direct growth away from the residential areas. The following table shows the seventeen (17) properties owned by the Solid Gold Properties (The Foxy Lady) as of Spring, 1995.

The parcel "Type" indicates the use of the property. The numbers 13, 14, and 15 indicate some type of vacant lot, either paved and used for parking or overgrown with vegetation an awaiting development. It is important to note that the M-1 zone surrounding the Foxy Lady and between the Foxy Lady and the highway, contains a small print shop, numerous scrap metal recycling and auto repair facilities and even residential dwellings. There are also a number of unoccupied vacant lots which would provide ample parking for any expansion of the Foxy Lady complex. There is no need for the Foxy Lady to move towards Douglas Avenue in that there are sufficient properties available on the other side of their building.

#	Street	Plat	Lot	Current Owner As of Spring 1995	Assessed Value	Type	Acres	Sq.Ft.
12	Dan Street	68	352	Solid Gold Properties	\$1,000	13	0.03	1350
14	Dan Street	68	434	Solid Gold Properties	\$2,100	13	0.07	2919
314	Chalkstone Avenue	68	480	Solid Gold Properties	\$17,100	14	0.13	5706
318	Chalkstone Avenue	68	479	Solid Gold Properties	\$280,700	06	0.16	6795
332	Chalkstone Avenue	68	428	Solid Gold Properties	\$6,400	13	0.06	2526
350	Chalkstone Avenue	68	477	Solid Gold Properties	\$10,400	15	0.06	2657
353	Chalkstone Avenue	68	442	Solid Gold Properties	\$8,600	13	0.10	4269
358	Chalkstone Avenue	68	746	Solid Gold Properties	\$11,200	15	0.07	2875
359	Chalkstone Avenue	68	441	Solid Gold Properties	\$9,200	13	0.12	5140
371	Chalkstone Avenue	68	440	Solid Gold Properties	\$9,200	13	0.12	5140
19	Bernon Street	68	357	Solid Gold Properties	\$7,600	13	0.06	2483
5	Bernon Street	68	530	Solid Gold Properties	\$105,400	06	0.07	3093
24	Delhi Street	68	444	Solid Gold Properties	\$9,700	13	0.13	5489
30	Delhi Street	68	445	Solid Gold Properties	\$9,100	13	0.16	7013
101	Douglas Avenue	68	425	Solid Gold Properties	\$8,200	13	0.09	3833
89	Douglas Avenue	68	499	Solid Gold Properties	\$87,000	02	0.14	6273
97	Douglas Avenue	68	501	Solid Gold Properties	\$49,500	01	0.12	5053
<b>TOTALS</b>					<b>\$632,400</b>		<b>1.67</b>	<b>72615</b>

It is likely that the Foxy Lady owns other properties in the area surrounding the complex which are not listed here. However, the amount of vacant and underutilized land in the area on the opposite side of the Foxy Lady is significant. Therefore, it is possible that the Foxy Lady could expand while doing no further damage to the Douglas Avenue neighborhood.

In order to mitigate the impact of the Foxy Lady, the City, neighborhood residents and owners of the Foxy Lady could agree on some basic principles. These recommendations are as follows:

1. The Foxy Lady could keep the expansion of its facilities, parking and traffic away from Douglas Avenue, towards the highway and further into zoned for manufacturing uses, where such activities are permitted in the Zoning Ordinance.
2. This can be done by installing or creating a new means of egress / ingress at a point closer to Orms Street, possibly along the existing North Davis Street right of way or along the "paper" streets such as Ambrose Street, Rebecca Street or Kane Street. There is already an access point on Douglas Avenue.
3. The advantage for the Foxy Lady would be that patrons could find the entrance more easily from Interstate 95. To the neighbors, this will mean less "through" traffic, particularly tour buses, along the main thoroughfare.
4. The Foxy Lady could install a buffer / green space between their complex and the parcels along Douglas Avenue.

## **2.13 Providence College**

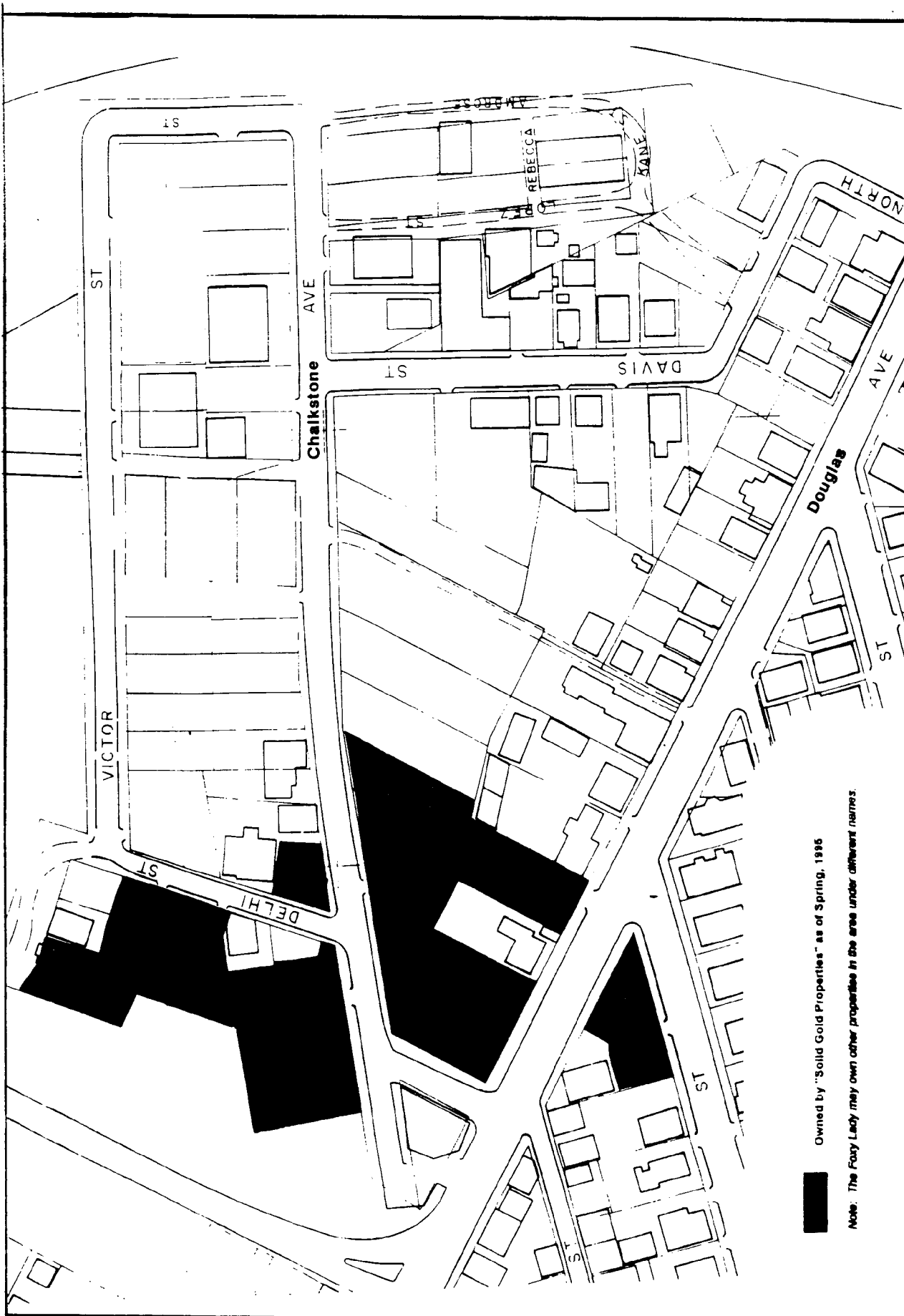
Providence College has had an interest in the development of the Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project. There are many students and professors who would likely shop on Douglas Avenue if the opportunity presented itself. The administration of Providence College has presented some ideas to the Department of Planning and Development concerning the blighted conditions of some of the buildings along Douglas Avenue.


On the other hand, the commercial revitalization of Douglas Avenue could be assisted through an attempt to access the student population. There is discussion elsewhere in this document regarding the idea that Douglas Avenue could become to Providence College what Thayer Street is to Brown University.

### **2.13.1 The Elmhurst Plan**

The DPD is currently in the process of completing a plan to mitigate the housing problems in the area surrounding Providence College, and especially in the area of Eaton Street and Oakland Avenue.

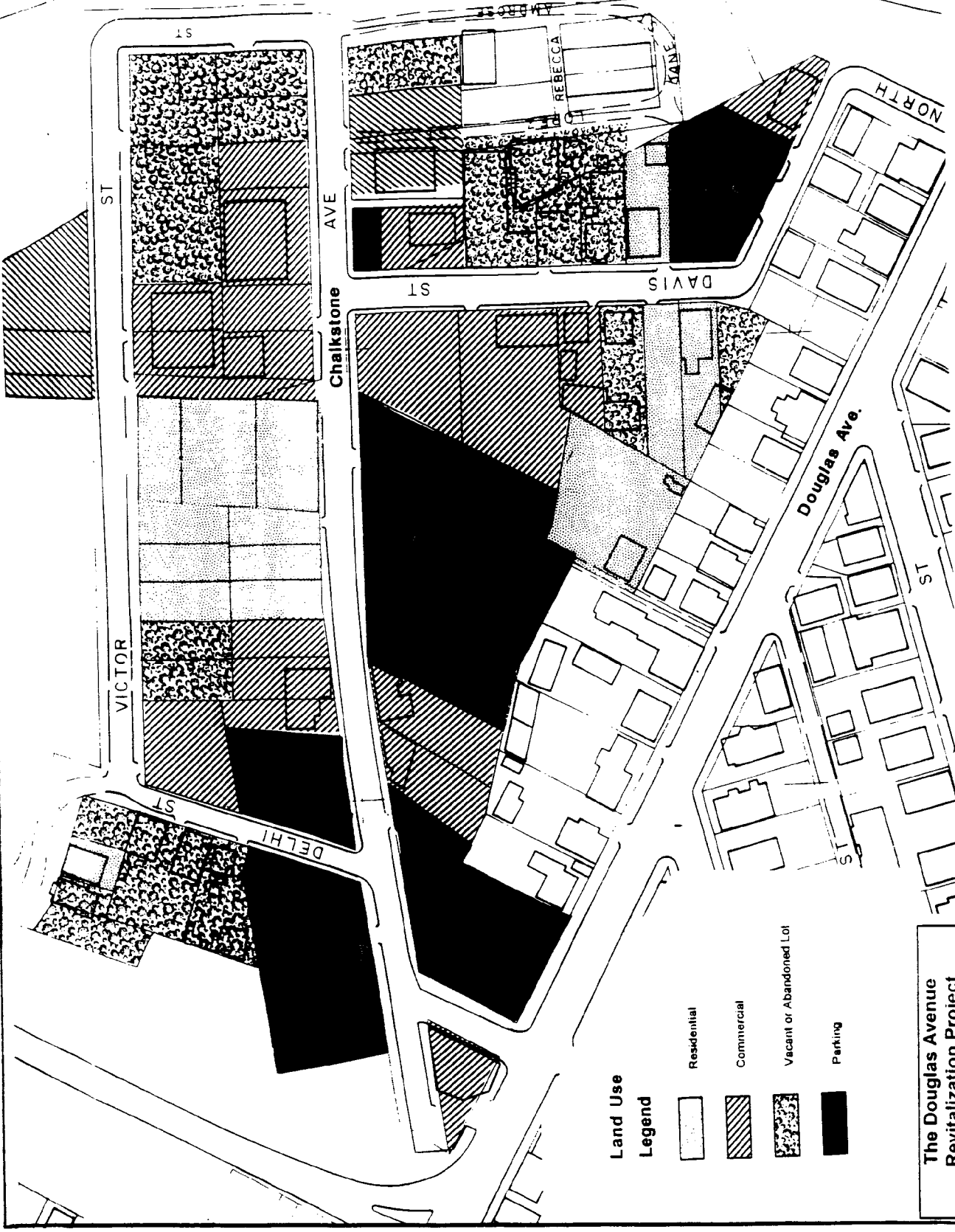









 Owned by "Solid Gold Properties" as of Spring, 1995

Note: The Foxxy Lady may own other properties in the area under different names.

**The Douglas Avenue  
Revitalization Project**  
 City of Providence  
 Department of Planning and Development  
 400 Westminster Street  
 Providence, Rhode Island 02903



**Land Use Legend**

-  Residential
-  Commercial
-  Vacant or Abandoned Lot
-  Parking

**The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project**

City of Providence  
 Department of Planning and Development  
 400 Washington Street  
 Providence, Rhode Island 02901

### **3. The Potential - An Analysis of Strengths and Weaknesses**

The strengths of Douglas Avenue are the vitality of the nearby residents and the relatively intact and marketable commercial areas. At the same time, the student population of Providence College is a market which has not yet been exploited to its fullest potential. Clearly, there is much potential for Douglas Avenue. There is a large contingent of residents and officials who truly wish to see the revitalization of the street happen and are ready to work towards that goal.

The main weakness of Douglas Avenue is its reputation in the surrounding community and in the neighboring municipalities. Those who grew up in the area and have since moved away continue to disparage Douglas Avenue from afar. This general attitude is what needs to be changed first. It is the perception of disinvestment that needs to be changed. If people who drive through the area from North Providence or elsewhere in Providence see reinvestment occurring, they may begin to change their feelings about the neighborhood and consider stopping to purchase something or a service on Douglas Avenue. The cycle of disinvestment will only be broken when it is clear that new development is occurring in the area. Trees which were snapped by vandals are beginning to grow again. New life is sprouting from what looked only recently to be lifeless stumps.

#### **3.1 Economic Base**

There are only a few large employers left in the area. They often employ workers who live outside the neighborhood and probably outside of Providence. The employers are as follows:

**Auto Body Shops and Scrap Metals Recycling Companies** There are a number of different firms operating these types of businesses between the Foxy Lady, Douglas Avenue and Interstate 95 within the existing M-1 zone.

**Sticky Fingers and Other Restaurants or Bars** Located in old Fire Station directly on Douglas Avenue at Chalkstone Avenue, this is a barbecued chicken and ribs restaurant which serves as one of the major "destinations" on the street. Also, a new bar has opened on the corner of Douglas Avenue and Whipple Street called the Prime Time Cafe.

**Small Grocery Stores, Liquor Stores and Gas Stations** There are also a number of small grocery stores which make up for the lack of a true supermarket nearby. There are two liquor stores including Freeway Liquors near the corner of Orms Street. There is a gas station / auto repair facility near Sticky Fingers and a larger regional-type Mobil Station at the corner of Eaton Street.

Both the Chad Brown area and Providence College make a significant contribution to the daily vehicular and pedestrian activities on Douglas Avenue. Also, the housing in Smith Hill is dense and a great number of people live in a small area. Together, these three populations are the ingredients of a successful retail strip and thus, a successful neighborhood. Clearly, the lack of economic activity is not for a lack of potential customers. What the street needs are destinations where people will go

and then visit other businesses on the same trip. More than anything, there has to be an atmosphere of investment and activity on the street. This does not exist today.

Currently, the traffic which travels up and down Douglas Avenue is an untapped resource. There are many retail opportunities available on this street but which have not been capitalized upon due to the perception of continuing disinvestment in the area. Therefore, there is a weakness in attracting investment to Douglas Avenue. But the potential for commercial development is great because of the number of vehicles which travel the Avenue on a daily basis and also, the amount of available land with frontages on the street. The current land use patterns are conducive to sustainable community development. There are separate and defined commercial nodes with stretches of residential and mixed use structures between them.

### **3.2 Potential to Reality**

There are a number of things which can be done to bring the enormous potential to reality. These are manifested in the central ideas behind the plan itself. These main themes of the revitalization of Douglas Avenue are as follows:

- To invigorate the commercial and retail aspects of the street. Through selective lot acquisition, assembly and subsequent promotion to developers, lots can be filled with commercial enterprises such as restaurants and drug stores. This often results in jobs for neighborhood youth and necessary services for nearby residents.
- To activate the untapped resources existing in the area. These are as follows:
  1. The multitude of Providence College students currently without a major shopping and service provider area.
  2. The community residents who currently shop in other parts of the city due to a lack of sufficient retail outlets nearby.
  3. The large number of people who use Douglas Avenue as a means of accessing the western suburbs or the highways.
- Eliminate blighting influences through rehabilitation and, if necessary, demolition. Often, vacant buildings and vacant lots become more of a blighting influence and cause for disinvestment than any other urban problem. These properties are what shows that a community has been neglected.
- This type of investment also sparks other investment in the area by providing both a pedestrian and vehicular destination which other businesses can utilize. This also has a cyclical effect but needs a push to get started.

#### **4. The Vision**

**...Douglas Avenue as a Vibrant Neighborhood Street...** Douglas Avenue was once a strong neighborhood street where people of diverse ethnic backgrounds lived and worked. Douglas Avenue was the center of the neighborhood. People would meet as they walked from their homes to work or to shop, children would play together, and a closely knit neighborhood was formed. Douglas Avenue can be re-established as the heart of the neighborhood with people living, working and recreating together. Existing commercial areas can be enhanced to promote full reinvestment in the neighborhood.

**...A Street Where People Live...** Many people lived in the immigrant neighborhood around Douglas Avenue. The housing, on and behind the street, were developed as three and four unit dwellings where many generations of a family could live. Today many properties are owned by absentee landlords who don't care and let their property deteriorate. Yet there are many owner occupants who maintain their property and fight the disinvestment. These people will work with to make Douglas Avenue a viable place to live again.

Improvement of the overall condition of housing on the street is necessary. Those buildings which are vacant and are beyond the point where they can be rehabilitated should be removed and the lots either filled with new housing or split and given to adjacent owners as side yards. Also, the needs of seemingly disparate populations which live nearby should be met, in terms of housing, employment and retail service. Those who live in the Chad Brown homes should be able to access the services they require right on Douglas Avenue.

**...Where People Shop...** Vibrant city neighborhoods are centered around neighborhood commercial centers. Douglas Avenue once served as this commercial center. Existing businesses need to create the retail base needed for the neighborhood. Businesses will be sought to create the strong neighborhood retail base that Douglas Avenue had and needs today.

Douglas Avenue has a history of commercial activities which reflect both the needs and the ethnicity of the neighborhood. Recently, that type of retail disappeared from the street. At the same time, there is a need to service the student population at Providence College. The intersection of Chalkstone and Douglas Avenues should be occupied by retail which recaptures the idea of reflecting the ethnic and socio-economic make-up of the area. The intersection of Camden Avenue and Douglas Avenue at Eaton Street should be promoted as a commercial node for the nearby students while also providing jobs and services to the surrounding community.

**...And Where People Work...** An essential part of a strong neighborhood is jobs. To own a house and to maintain it, people must have a good job. Douglas Avenue will not be a center of jobs, but with an expanding commercial base in the neighborhood, there will be jobs for residents of the neighborhood. The new businesses which will locate in the area will likely employ local residents and they, in turn, will spend money at local stores, creating an expanding market.

This vision can be implemented by clearly demonstrating that the cycle of disinvestment is over. That may, in some cases, call for the demolition of severely deteriorated housing, caring for the newly planted street trees, actively seeking new investment, and promoting an atmosphere that is conducive to redevelopment. The untapped resources such as the community itself, the P.C. students and the many potential customers in the vehicles that travel the street daily, will have reason to stop and invigorate the business climate.

**Douglas Avenue will be a street where people walk from their home to shop or work; a street that is safe and attractive; a street that is the economic and social center of a vibrant community, the center of a neighborhood...**

#### **4.1 Recommendations**

In order to achieve this vision, there are a number of steps which can be taken.

##### **Commercial and Economic Activities**

- Facilitate commercial activities in the commercial nodes of Douglas Avenue intersections with: Orms Street, Chalkstone Avenue, and Eaton Street. The intersection with Chalkstone Avenue offers the most promise on two sites: the so-called "Branch" property and the triangular parcel adjacent to the Armenian Heritage Park. The City should encourage the appropriate zoning to allow commercial activity and assist potential developers. If private efforts fail, this Plan leaves open the possibility of public intervention.
- Possibly use the currently vacant 5 Goddard Street as a local Business Development Center, a means to assist new immigrants and other neighborhood residents in making an economic investment in the neighborhood. The building is at the entrance to the community from Interstate 95 and is on a lot which is very small and has little or no provisions for overnight parking. Rehabilitation of the building could be achieved through grants and assistance from community groups. This could serve Douglas Avenue in a similar way that Elmwood Neighborhood Housing Services serves the south side of the City of Providence by applying for grants and helping people open businesses and access funding.
- Make overtures to Providence College to invest in Douglas Avenue in that it is the major access to Interstate 95 and is important to their image. They have a direct stake in the commercial development of the intersection of Eaton Street and Douglas Avenue.

##### **Housing Activities**

- Facilitate new housing and rehabilitated housing where needed. This Plan calls for the acquisition of four (4) residentially zoned parcels at the corner of Douglas Avenue and Chad Brown Street. The goal is place new low density (one and two unit) housing on the site.

- In order to demonstrate the historic qualities of the neighborhood while also preserving housing, promote the use of National Register status for securing low interest loans for those owners who live on Douglas Avenue between Pekin and Candace Streets. Also, contact the congregation of the Sons of Jacob Synagogue, to determine if there was any way to utilize that same National Register Status to rehabilitate the building and grounds because it is so visible and is the true gateway to the community. Also, there is a need to coordinate the PPHC to actively market its housing in the area.

#### **4.2 Short Term Goal: Stem the Tide of Disinvestment**

**Eliminate blighting influences on Douglas Avenue between Orms Street and Eaton Street...** Through the removal of severely deteriorated buildings and the redevelopment of vacant land, this can be efficiently accomplished.

**Assemble small parcels of land into larger development parcels...** Begin to stir reinvestment in the Douglas Avenue area by seeking commercial and retail developers.

**Correct dangerous roadways and encourage pedestrian traffic...** By creating an atmosphere where pedestrians feel safe and able to cross the street at nearly any point, the retail and commercial concerns will benefit as well as the neighborhood "feel."

#### **4.3 Long Term Goal: Begin The Process Of Reinvestment**

**Increase Commercial and Retail Capacity...** Douglas Avenue is a revitalized area which both serves the needs of neighborhood residents and the greater Smith Hill community. There is a new commercial viability on the street and business people are seeking to expand the types of service and retail options.

**Repair the Existing Housing When Possible...** The surrounding residential area also is strengthened and stabilized. This is an important neighborhood street again, the housing values and housing quality in the immediate area are both increasing.

## **5. Implementation: Parcels to be Acquired and Proposed Uses**

In order for these goals to be realized, steps must be taken to change the perception of Douglas Avenue. Strategic actions can be made by the Department of Planning and Development which will create a ripple effect of new investments into the area.

### **5.1 Proposed Improvements**

There are a number of improvements that can be undertaken to revitalize this commercial area. They include rezoning and acquisition of key parcels for redevelopment purposes. There are also a number of improvements that can be undertaken on private property that will enhance the public improvements. Experience has shown that improvements in private properties will make the difference in neighborhood revitalization. Rehabilitation of residential structures, filling in of vacant lots, improving and cleaning up storefronts, landscaping front yards, and landscaping parking lots should be encouraged and linked with the public improvements that have already taken place.

### **5.2 Rezoning**

Most of Douglas Avenue is presently zoned R-3, multi-family residential. Much of the area, particularly the immediate vicinity around the major intersections, are no longer residential. Increase in traffic, the access ramp to I-95 and deteriorated housing conditions have led to several vacant lots, vacant buildings and changes in land use. As a result, consideration should be given to changing the zoning map as follows:

**The Intersection of Douglas Avenue and Chalkstone Avenue...** Part of the intersection is zoned C-1. Other parts include vacant parcels between Wayne Street and Chalkstone Avenue, an automobile repair establishment, and more vacant parcels along the northeastern side of Chalkstone Avenue. These parcels should be rezoned from its present R-3 to C-1. It is not likely that housing will develop on these vacant sites. Consideration should be given to rezoning the C-1 area to C-2.

**Douglas Avenue between Fillmore Street and the edge of Saint Patrick's Cemetery...** This area is largely vacant, except for the AA Civic (Armenian) Club. It is presently zoned R-3. Consideration should be given to rezoning this area to C-1, *but only if and when other commercial areas along Douglas Avenue are occupied with commercial uses*. The intent is to avoid splintering the commercial district to the point where it becomes too thin to be economically viable.

**The Intersection of Douglas Avenue and Eaton Street / Camden Avenue...** There is an existing C-2 zone on the easterly side of the street. It is recommended to extend the C-2 zone to cover the commercial and vacant lots within the intersection, picking up Malbone, Eaton, and Liege Streets.

The current zoning does not promote the commercialization of the part of Douglas Avenue between Chalkstone Avenue and Eaton Street. Many of the above changes represent changes to what is most likely to occur on those lots. In some cases, there are residential vacant lots on land that has been



surrounded by commercial activity for some time. In these situations, there is a need for continuity for the general commercial development that is part of this plan.

One of the major themes of this plan is the commercial redevelopment of the former Gas Station at the corner of Chalkstone Avenue and Douglas Avenue. Another is the enhancement of retail opportunities at Eaton Street. Neither of these areas can become commercial nodes with the current zoning in place. Therefore, the changes mentioned above are integral to the successful completion of this plan.

The intersection of Eaton and Douglas has the potential of becoming an important commercial district for Providence College students in much the same way as Thayer Street is to Brown University. The current zoning and present uses do not lend themselves to this district at this time. A combination of a rezoning effort, selective parcel acquisition and site improvements will help. More importantly, the area must become more safe for both students and residents.

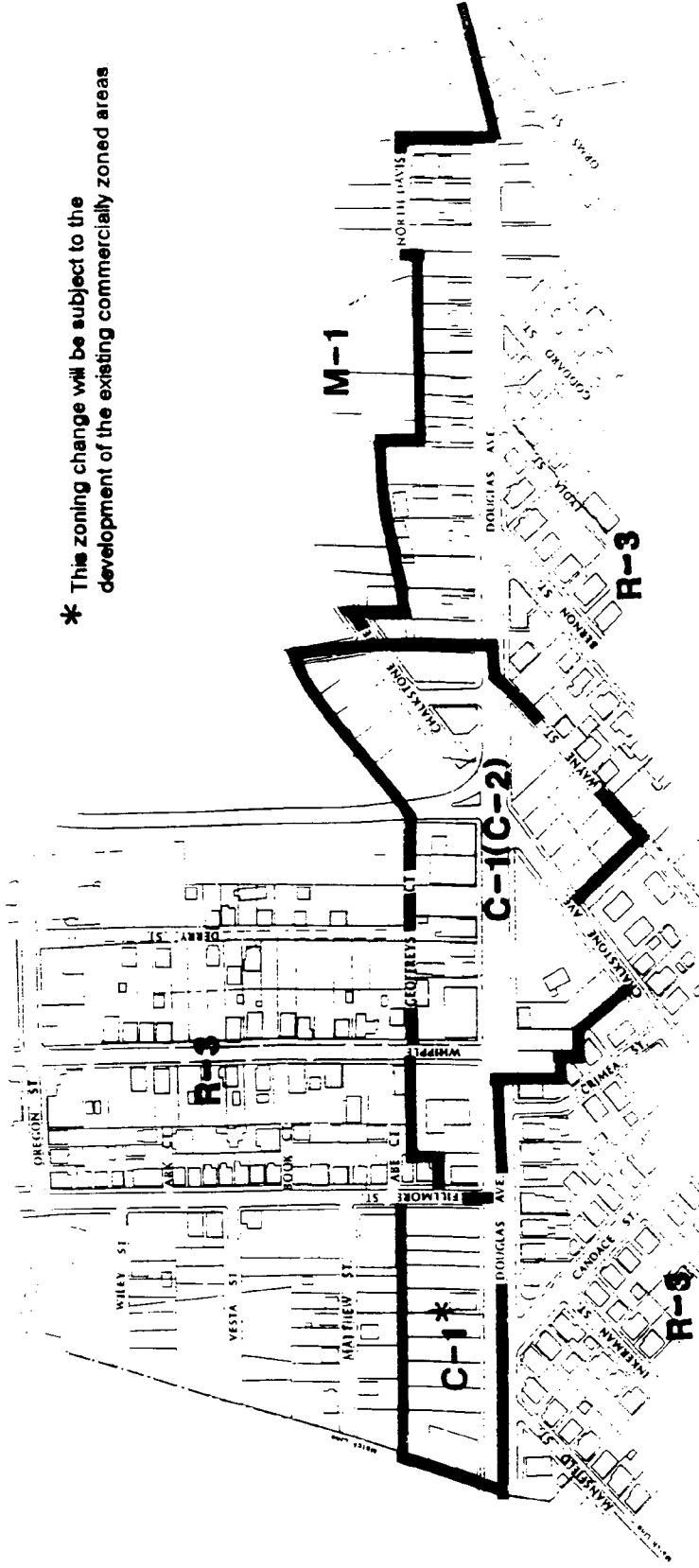
### **5.3 Site Improvements**

**Already Completed: Douglas Avenue - Entire Length** Repaired existing sidewalks as needed. Also, the installation of street trees as deemed appropriate by the Douglas Avenue Steering Committee.

**To Be Completed:** As part of the upgrading of the neighborhood, several specific improvement projects are necessary. While some improvement is evident by the site improvements noted above, much more needs to be done. These items are as follows:

- **Intersection of Douglas Avenue and Eaton Street** As funds become available in the future, the intersection of Douglas Avenue and Eaton Street needs to be upgraded. Presently there are no traffic signals and the intersection is much too wide. The intent is to channelize the traffic and install full traffic signals with pedestrian striping and "walk/don't walk" phasing. Combined with amenities such as trees, this intersection would be greatly improved.
- **The Intersection of Douglas Avenue and Orms Street** Landscaping within the medians and islands has yet to be completed. This is the gateway to the project area from the south and should be improved. Consideration should be given to realigning this intersection to allow direct access to the Foxy Lady to avoid or reduce traffic on Douglas Avenue itself. This would be a major project using both existing and new rights-of-way. As money becomes available for such an undertaking, a design plan will be prepared.
- **The Intersection of Douglas Avenue and the On-Ramp to I-95 South** Some landscaping should occur if the abandonments of portions of Chalkstone Avenue and Geoffrey's II Court are allowed. At the same time, the overall appearance of the intersection should be improved now that the Armenian monument is in place.

\* This zoning change will be subject to the development of the existing commercially zoned areas



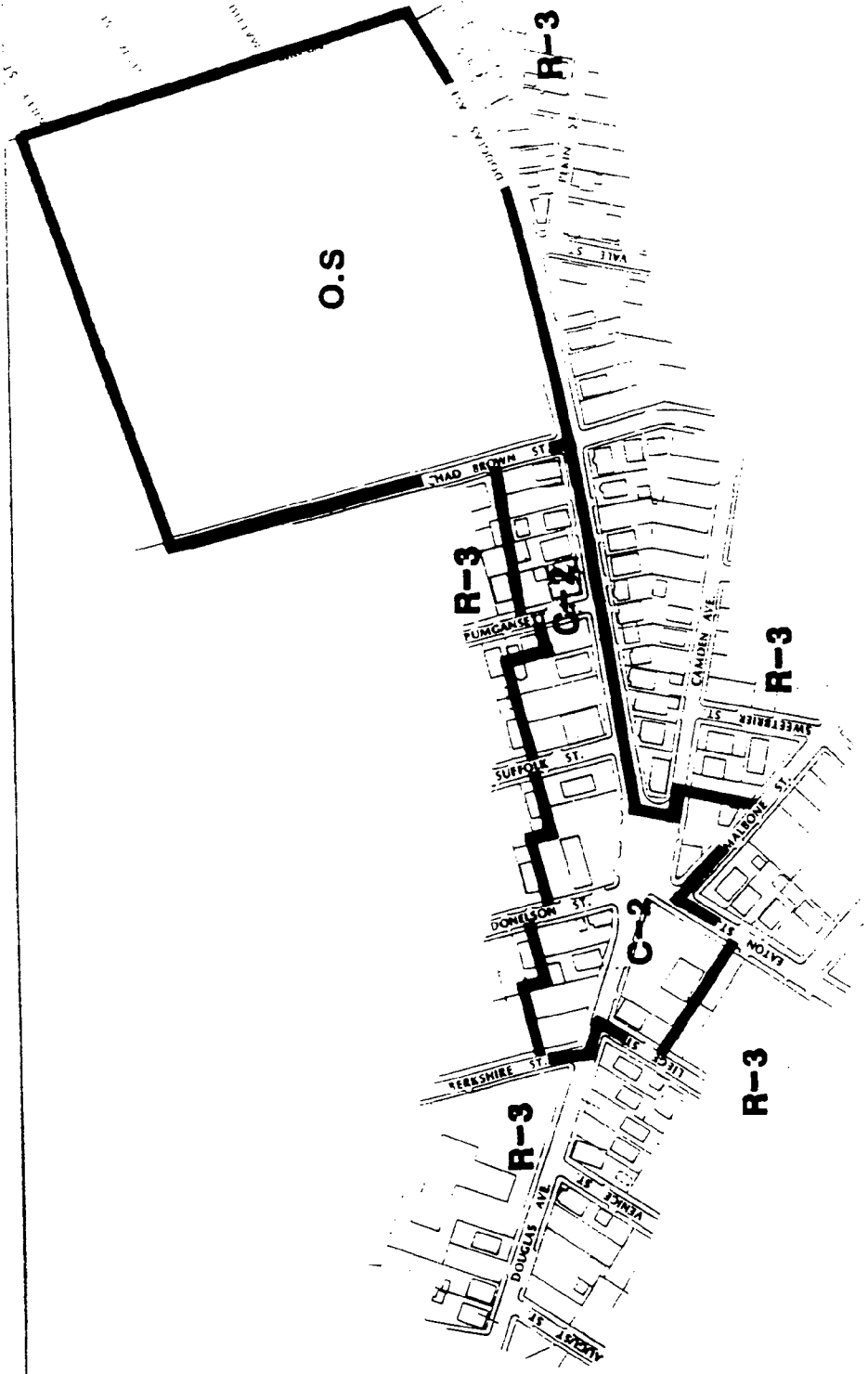
**Proposed Zoning**

- R-3 Three Residential District
- C-1 Limited Commercial District
- C-2 General Commercial District
- (C-2) Possible General Commercial District
- M-1 Industrial District
- O-S Open Space District

**The Douglas Avenue  
Revitalization Project**

City of Providence  
Department of Planning and Development  
400 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

SCALE 1"=80'



**Proposed Zoning**

- R-3 Three Residential District
- C-1 Limited Commercial District
- C-2 General Commercial District
- (C-2) Possible General Commercial District
- M-1 Industrial District
- O-S Open Space District



**The Douglas Avenue  
Revitalization Project**

City of Providence  
Department of Planning and Development  
400 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

- **The Intersection of Douglas Avenue and Chalkstone Avenue** Major intersection improvement. Northwest corner at Chalkstone Avenue. Striping of roadway, traffic signals, appropriate signing and adequate street trees. With the plans for the major commercial revitalization of this intersection being considered, the infrastructure should be improved accordingly. This should also include landscaping to the State highway ramp leading to Rt 146 and I-95 south.
- **Improve the Appearance of St. Patrick's Cemetery** Encourage the Parks Department or the Church to repair the wall surrounding the cemetery, improve the entrance gates and the overall appearance of the area. Encourage the owner to replace toppled grave stones. This will eliminate a gap in the fabric of the street by showing investment on what is a very large parcel and demonstrating a willingness to make an investment in the community.

These proposals are listed here, but to date, are not funded. As funds become available in the future, these projects can be implemented.

## **5.4 Property Redevelopment**

The steps that the City can take for revitalization of neighborhood commercial / residential streets such as Douglas Avenue are simple. The needs of the residents should be met through the elimination of blighting influences, improvement of infrastructure, the softening of hard edges through the planting of street trees, and the creation of development opportunities for private commercial and retail investors.

The strategy to be used on Douglas Avenue is a standard one. The priorities will be centered upon those properties which are both significant blighting influences, which are in prominent locations, which are feasible for redevelopment purposes, and those which are able to be purchased quickly and cost effectively. Many sites may be developed through the private sector. Other sites have been developed through the Providence Redevelopment Agency. The following phases should be carried out in order over the course of the next few years and according to the availability of funding. Other than the first phase, for which funding has been identified, the next phases are not necessarily presented in any priority.

Each year, the DASC and the DPD should evaluate the situation and decide which area or parcels should be acquired next. It may be that parcels identified in this plan may develop without PRA intervention, in which case, the plan should be amended to drop such parcels from future acquisition. It should be noted that, other than Phase 1 acquisition, any future acquisition of land cannot be accomplished without an amendment to this plan that includes the same steps as adopting this plan, i.e., initiation of plan amendment by the DASC, study by the DPD, compliance with the Comprehensive Plan as determined by the City Plan Commission, submission of a plan amendment by the PRA to the City Council, a public hearing before the City Council Committee on Urban Renewal, Redevelopment & Planning (URRP) and adoption of the ordinance to amend the plan.

#### **5.4.1 Phase 1 Residential Stability - Chad Brown Street to Eaton Street**

This phase calls for two separate but integrated activities. The first aspect of this project is to utilize properties already under acquisition procedure and complete the redevelopment of the corner of Douglas Avenue and Chad Brown Street. This will be done through the acquisition of five (5) parcels, including 312 Douglas Avenue. Either the Smith Hill Community Development Corporation (CDC) or another developer will work with the PRA in developing that site. The goal is to have new single family homes constructed on the reshaped lots while rehabilitating the existing three-deckers. The intention of this work is to demonstrate that there is continuing investment occurring on Douglas Avenue. By doing this, there is the likelihood that private sector developers may make similar investments of their own.

The properties to be acquired upon adoption of this Ordinance and Redevelopment Plan are restricted only to the five (5) lots listed below. Future phases of this plan will call for additional acquisition. While future phases are described in section 5.4.2 of this Plan, no further acquisition shall be authorized except through an amendment to this Plan through the City Council, and funds appropriated therefore.

Address	Plat	Lot	Current Owner	Square Feet	Action	Units
171 Chad Brown Street	69	314	Private	4864	New Single Family House	1
300-302 Douglas Avenue	69	310	M. Rivard	3453	Rehabilitation	3
304 Douglas Avenue	69	311	PRA (Pending)	3992	Split to 2 Adjacent 3-Deckers	0
308 Douglas Avenue	69	312	M. Rivard	3992	Rehabilitation	3
312 Douglas Avenue	69	313	PRA (Pending)	3992	New Single Family House	1
<b>TOTALS</b>				20293		8

#### **Intent**

The primary component of this option is the purchase of 312 Douglas Avenue. The building was demolished in 1995 and the reuse of the lot is under consideration along with the purchase of the adjacent vacant lot on Chad Brown Street. The three adjacent parcels plus 300 Douglas Avenue will be acquired to create separate lots for single family and multi family dwellings.

The remainder of this initiative includes the coordination of activities which are occurring along the southern side of Douglas Avenue between Chad Brown Street and the intersection with Eaton Street. Though this stretch of the street has recently seen some rehabilitation efforts, especially those buildings closest to Eaton Street, there are still some areas where the Department of Planning and Development could have some significant impact.

## 5.4.2 Future Phases

### A. Future Acquisition and Disposition of Vacant Properties, Chalkstone Avenue to Orms Street

As funds become available, and amendments to this plan provide authorization, additional sites should be taken. There are two large vacant lots and a vacant building included among these sites. These would be purchased and then disposed of accordingly. The new owners would be encouraged to clean and develop the sites soon after gaining title to the land.

#### Acquisition

Address	Plat	Lot	Area (sq.ft.)	Assessed Value	Acquisition Costs	Demolition Costs
51 Douglas Avenue	68	495	3,136	\$7,300	\$12,000	\$0 (Vacant Lot)
69 Douglas Avenue	68	497	8,041	\$12,700	\$20,000	\$0 (Vacant Lot)
TOTAL			11,177	\$20,000	\$32,000	\$0

#### Disposition

Plat	Lot	Area sq.ft.	Remarks
68	495	3,136	Split land to adjacent lots 355 and 494 <u>OR</u> residential development
68	497	8,041	Split land to adjacent lots 414, 424 and 498 <u>OR</u> residential development
TOTAL		15,169	—

Included in this option is the purchasing and clearing of two vacant lots on the north side of Douglas Avenue near Orms Street. These properties, located at 39-41 and 69 Douglas Avenue, respectively, would either be split to adjacent owners or be developed into new housing with adequate parking and yard space, and thus, improving the streetscape and insuring that the parcels will be maintained. The decision will be made once the funding options are finalized. However, once the parking and open space needs of the adjacent property owners are met, infill housing would be the priority.

### B. Future Acquisition for Commercial Use - AA Civic Club

Option B calls for the purchase of parcels located on both sides of the AA Civic Club on the north side of Douglas Avenue. These currently vacant sites are derelict and overgrown and should be assembled, rezoned and disposed for commercial purposes. Parking and landscaping should be included in the redevelopment strategy and the owners the AA Civic Club should be consulted to determine how new development could assist them as well. Each parcel, after assembly, would be feasible for small scale commercial and / or retail development with ample parking.

Plat	Lot	Area (sq.ft.)	Assessed Value	Acquisition Costs
68	79	6,036	\$11,500	\$16,599
68	80	3,018	\$8,000	\$8,299
68	81	3,018	\$5,100	\$8,299
68	82	4,829	\$10,000	\$13,279
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>16,901</b>	<b>\$34,600</b>	<b>\$46,926</b>
68	84	4,829	\$10,000	\$13,279
68	85	4,829	\$10,000	\$13,279
68	86	4,829	\$10,000	\$13,279
68	87	4,829	\$10,000	\$13,279
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>19,316</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$53,116</b>

These are estimated costs only, but if they are correct, much could be accomplished with little money involved. These parcels would be marketed in a method similar to the one used in Phase 4. However, in this case, the PRA would be the sole beneficiary of the sale of the property.

### **C. Acquisition for Commercial Use - Chalkstone and Douglas**

This phase will should only be considered if private efforts fail to develop the parcels in this area. Phase 4 consists of two major themes. One calls for the demolition by a private owner of the former ARCO gasoline station at the corner of Douglas Avenue and Chalkstone Avenue and the subsequent clearing of the parcel for redevelopment purposes. This lot (Plat 68 Lot 54) includes the site of a monument to the Armenian settlers in this neighborhood which was privately funded.

The second calls for the development of the remainder of the lot for neighborhood commercial reuse through lot assembly with adjacent parcels both owned by the PRA and those lots currently under consideration for purchase by the PRA and together, marketing the site to developers. Parking, landscaping, and lighting should be included. There would be two owners marketing the same parcel. The profits would be split between the two parties of interest in a proportion equal to the number of square feet held by each participant.

Parcels to be included in this option are located on the westerly side of Douglas Avenue, between Crimea Street and Chalkstone Avenue. Both the assessment of these properties and the manner of acquisition and / or disposal have yet to be determined and are, therefore, not presented in tabular form. However, the current ownership and lot sizes are known.

Plat	Lot	Area (sq.ft.)	% of Total Land	Ownership / Disposition
68	54	20,452	59.9%	Private / TBD
68	50	3,627	10.6%	PRA / TBD
68	57	3,605	10.5%	PRA to Acquire / TBD
68	58	3,880	11.4%	PRA to Acquire / TBD
68	59	2,600	7.6%	PRA to Acquire / TBD
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>34,164</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	—

Under the proposed arrangement, the PRA would acquire all land listed except lot 54, clear it of structures, clean the lots, and then seek a joint marketing venture with the owner of lot 54, who would be responsible for preparing the site for redevelopment and responsible for resolving the issue of the proposed monument. The PRA would market the site and assign a developer. The net profits would be split in accordance with the percentage of property owned by each participant. A contract would be prepared which would clearly specify the responsibilities and liabilities of each party of interest.

#### **D. Building Rehabilitation**

The vacant house at 5 Goddard Street is currently in relatively good condition. It is very important that this building be rehabilitated due to the prominence of this corner lot in this gateway area to Douglas Avenue. The site is far too important to the physical integrity and the psychological fabric of the street to be removed. The other two sites also have buildings on them and are unfortunately in bad shape. As with all buildings on the street, these make an important contribution to the fabric of the street. Because of the size of the lots and the nature of the area, it is not likely that housing will be developed on the sites. All efforts should be made to save the existing buildings but if it can not be done, all efforts to insure the continued maintenance of the resulting vacant lots should be made.

Plat	Lot	Address	Assessed Value	Sq.ft.	Proposed Action
68	332	5 Goddard Street	\$61,600	1,706	Rehabilitation
69	332	264 Douglas Ave.	\$82,600	4,460	Rehabilitation
68	67	184 Douglas Ave.	\$120,100	3,670	Rehabilitation
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$264,300</b>	<b>9,736</b>	—

In some of the rehabilitation situations, the owners may be convinced to seek financing and the PRA may be able to avoid an expensive purchase of property. The PRA may simply purchase a vacant lot and sell it to the existing owner of the adjacent property for parking purposes. The following are possibilities and can be changed as conditions on the street change.

Both 342 and 346 Douglas Avenue should be purchased and the subsequent merging of the two lots and the creation of one new building lot for a residential building. Together, these lots would be approximately 4,900 square feet, which is nearly enough for new construction under current zoning.



If a variance is sought, a new house with adequate parking could be constructed here. If a developer is not found, each lot should be offered to the adjacent owner on each side.

The house at 264 Douglas Avenue is in decent condition and is on a large parcel. It is part of an intact street wall opposite St. Patrick's Cemetery, therefore it merits rehabilitation. Number 184 Douglas Avenue, like 264 Douglas Avenue, is surrounded by intact, occupied buildings. Therefore, it makes sense for the DASC to encourage the owner to repair the structure and direct them to loan programs. And, as mentioned above, 5 Goddard Street should be rehabilitated and occupied, if possible, due to the prominence of the site and the quality of the building. The entrance to Douglas Avenue from Orms Street is important in creating an opinion in passers-by. This house, after the Sons of Jacob Synagogue, is perhaps one of the most visually striking structures near that entrance to the neighborhood. Occasionally, other buildings and lots along Douglas Avenue will become vacant. As these situations that fall into this category present themselves, they should be dealt with in similar fashion.

#### **E. New Housing - Fillmore Street and Vesta Street Area**

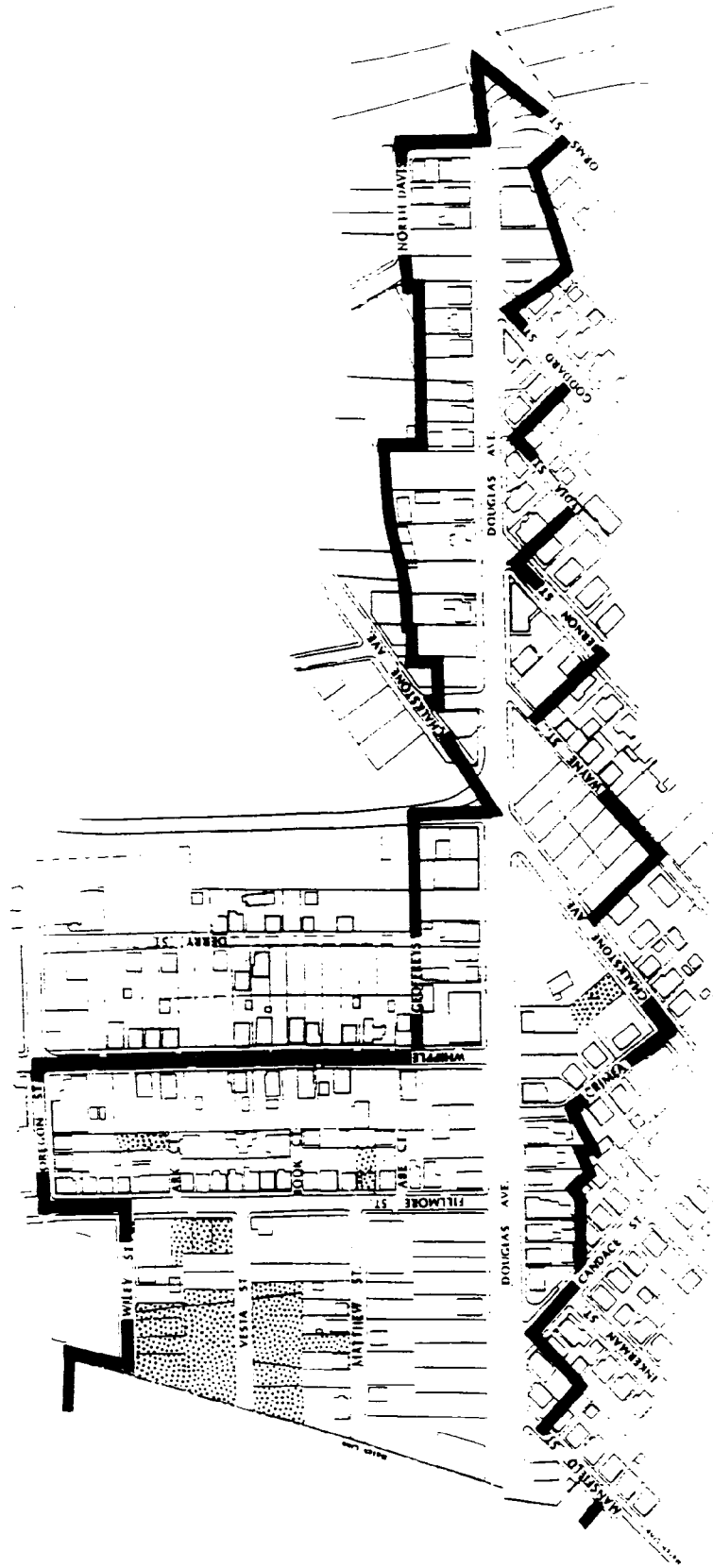
There are parcels which do not lie directly on Douglas Avenue but which have a direct impact on the economic and social well-being of the street. The lots in question are privately held and are located on the streets which run off of Whipple Street and Douglas Avenue. These streets include Vesta Street, Wiley Street and Matthew Street, all of which dead end at St. Patrick's Cemetery. The parcels are as follows:

Plat	Lot	Address	Ownership - As of Fall 1995	Assessed Value
68	79	189 Douglas Avenue	Raymond Woodcock - 10 Fillmore Street	\$11,500
68	90	36 Matthew Street	Peter Marinucci - 178 Wallace Street	\$7,800
68	97	20 Matthew Street	Raymond Woodcock - 10 Fillmore Street	\$5,800
68	98	12 Matthew Street	Raymond Woodcock - 10 Fillmore Street	\$5,800
68	103	30 Fillmore Street	Raymond Woodcock - 10 Fillmore Street	\$4,600
68	104	32 Fillmore Street	Raymond Woodcock - 10 Fillmore Street	\$4,600
68	105	34 Fillmore Street	Raymond Woodcock - 10 Fillmore Street	\$4,600
68	106	7 Matthew Street	Raymond Woodcock - 10 Fillmore Street	\$3,800
68	122	6 Vesta Street	Mary Muskelly - (City has Tax Title)	\$5,500
68	124	46 Fillmore Street	Albert Schlink	\$9,000
68	128	5 Vesta Street	Celia Villegas - 117 Cadorna St. - E.Prov	\$5,500
68	129	7 Vesta Street	Celia Villegas - 117 Cadorna St. - E.Prov	\$5,500
68	812	14 Matthew Street	Angelina & Paul Andrade 79 Colonial Road - Providence	\$7,900

The following page contains a maps of those properties owned by the Providence Redevelopment Agency as of February, 1996. These lots, while many are overgrown and not currently with

vehicular access, are potential development sites. They should be considered as such and sold to developers who are willing to construct housing there. The following table shows those parcels owned by the PRA as of February, 1996. These lots should be reconfigured to appropriately sized house lots and then sold when suitable developers are found and in accordance with the provisions of this plan.

Plat	Lot	Address	Square Feet
68	162	21 Fillmore Street	2182
68	179	8 Ark Court	2700
68	125	50 Fillmore Street	1920
68	126	56 Fillmore Street	1920
68	127	60 Fillmore Street	2240
68	138	18 Wiley Street	2400
68	136	20 Wiley Street	2825
68	137	13 Vesta Street	15977
68	130	9 Vesta Street	1840
68	121	10 Vesta Street	2480
68	119	20 Vesta Street	8650
68	116	28 Vesta Street	2790
68	115	30 Vesta Street	2400
68	110	15 Mathew Street	2400
Total			52724



**Parcels owned by the  
Providence Redevelopment Agency  
as of February, 1996**



## The Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project

City of Honolulu •  
Department of Planning and Development  
400 Westminster Street  
Honolulu • Rhode Island 07011

## **6. Appendices**

### **A. Project Description**

#### *Description for the Boundaries of the Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project Area*

Beginning at a point at the centerline intersection of Orms Street and Douglas Avenue; Thence turning and running southwestly along the northerly side of Orms Street to its intersection with the easterly lot line of Lot 734 on A. P. 68; Thence turning and running northerly along the easterly lot line of Lot 734 to its intersection with the southerly and easterly lot lines of Lot 732 on A. P. 68;

Thence turning and running in a northwesterly direction along the south lot lines of Lots 732 and 573 to its intersection with the easterly lot line of Lot 574 on A. P. 68; Thence turning and running northerly along the easterly lot line of Lot 574 to its intersection with the centerline of Goddard Street; Thence turning and running westerly along said centerline approximately 153 feet; Thence turning and running northerly to its intersection with the southerly and westerly lot lines of Lot 572 of A. P. 68; Thence turning and running northerly along the westerly lot lines of Lots 572 and 333 of A. P. 68 to its intersection with the centerline of Lydia Street; Thence turning and running westerly along said centerline approximately 153 feet; Thence turning and running northerly to its intersection with the southerly and westerly lot lines of Lot 532 of A. P. 68; Thence turning and running northerly along said westerly lot line to its intersection with the centerline of Bernon Street;

Thence turning and running westerly along said centerline approximately 154 feet; Thence turning and running northerly to its intersection with the southerly and westerly lot lines of Lot 773 of A. P. 68; Thence turning and running northerly along the lot lines of Lots 773 and 774 on A. P. 68 to its intersection with the centerline of Wayne Street; Thence turning and running westerly along said centerline approximately 245 feet; Thence turning and running in a northerly direction to its intersection with the southerly and westerly lot lines of Lot 740 on A. P. 68; Thence turning and running in a northerly direction along the westerly lot line of Lot 740 to its intersection with the centerline of Chalkstone Avenue; Thence turning and running westerly along said centerline approximately 185 feet to its intersection with Crimea Street; Thence turning and running northerly along the centerline of Crimea Street to its intersection with the southwestly lot line of Lot 66 on A. P. 68; Thence turning and running southwestly along said lot line to its intersection with the northerly lot line of Lot 66; Thence turning and running easterly along said northerly lot line to its intersection with rear lot line of Lot 67 on A. P. 68; Thence turning and running in a northwesterly direction along the rear lot lines of Lots 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, and 72 of A. P. 68 to its intersection with the centerline of Candace Street; Thence turning and running northerly along the said centerline approximately 80 feet to its intersection with the southerly lot line of Lot 494 on A. P. 69; Thence turning and running westerly along said southerly lot line to its intersection with the westerly lot line of Lot 494; Thence turning and running northerly along the westerly lot lines of Lots 494 and 493 to its intersection with the centerline of Mansfield Street; Thence turning and running westerly along said centerline approximately 160 feet to its intersection with the westerly lot line of Lot 490 on A. P. 69;

Thence turning and running northerly along said lot line to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 489 on A. P. 69; Thence turning and running along the rear lot lines of Lots 489, 483, 482, and 325 to its intersection with southerly lot line of Lot 332; Thence turning and running westerly along said lot line to its intersection with the centerline of Pekin Street; Thence turning and running northerly along said centerline to its intersection with the centerline of Vale Street; Thence turning and running westerly along said centerline to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 647 on A. P. 69; Thence turning and running northerly along the rear lot lines of Lots 647 and 309 to its intersection with the southerly lot line of Lot 310 on A. P. 69; Thence turning and running southwesterly along said lot line to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 310; Thence turning and running along said lot line to its intersection with the southerly lot line of Lot 314 on A. P. 69; Thence turning and running westerly along said lot line to its intersection with the westerly lot line of Lot 314; Thence turning and running northerly along said lot line to its intersection with the centerline of Chad Brown Street; Thence turning and running in a northeasterly direction along said centerline approximately 35 feet to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 9 on A. P. 69; Thence turning and running northerly along the westerly lot line of Lot 9 and the rear lot line of lots 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, and 324 to its intersection with the southerly lot line of Lot 289 on A. P. 69; Thence turning and running westerly along said lot line to its intersection with the centerline of Camden Avenue; Thence turning and running northerly along said centerline to its intersection with the centerline of Sweetbriar Street; Thence turning and running westerly along said centerline to its intersection with the centerline of Malbone Street; Thence turning and running northerly along said centerline to its intersection with Eaton Street; Thence turning and running westerly along said centerline to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 25 on A. P. 119; Thence turning and running northerly along the rear lot line of Lots 25 and 24 to its intersection with the centerline of Liege Street; Thence turning and running westerly along said centerline approximately 40 feet to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 145 on A. P. 119; Thence turning and running northerly along the rear lot line of Lots 145 and 144 to its intersection with the southerly lot line of Lot 143 on A. P. 119; Thence turning and running along said lot line approximately 40 feet to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 143; Thence turning and running along the rear lot line of Lots 143, 142, and 23 to its intersection with the centerline of Venice Street; Thence turning and running westerly along said centerline approximately 40 feet to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 122 on A. P. 119; Thence turning and running northerly along the rear lot line of Lots 122, 121, 119, and 22 on A. P. 119 to its intersection with the centerline of August Street; Thence turning and running easterly along said centerline to its intersection with the centerline of Douglas Avenue; Thence turning and running northerly along said centerline approximately 40 feet; Thence turning and running easterly to its intersection with the centerline of Clym Street; Thence turning and running easterly along said centerline approximately 60 feet to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 321 on A. P. 70; Thence turning and running southerly along the rear lot line of Lots 321 and 322 on A. P. 70 to its intersection with the northerly lot line of Lot 664 on A. P. 70; Thence turning and running easterly along said lot line to its intersection with the easterly lot line of Lot 664; Thence turning and running southerly along said lot line to its intersection with the centerline of Berkshire Street; Thence turning and running westerly along said centerline approximately 200 feet to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 623 on A. P. 70; Thence

turning and running southerly along the rear lot line of Lots 623 and 626 to its intersection with the southerly lot line of Lot 626; Thence turning and running westerly along said lot line to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 634 on A. P. 70; Thence turning and running southerly along the rear lot line of Lots 634 and 635 on A. P. 70 to its intersection with the centerline of Donelson Street; Thence turning and running westerly along said centerline approximately 40 feet to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 60 on A. P. 70; Thence turning and running southerly along the rear lot line of Lots 60 and 627 on A. P. 70 to its intersection with the centerline of Suffolk Street; Thence turning and running southerly from the centerline on Suffolk Street to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 603 on A. P. 70; Thence turning and running southerly along the rear lot line of Lots 603, 628, and 629 to its intersection with the southerly lot line of Lot 629; Thence turning and running westerly along said lot line to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 630 on A. P. 70; Thence turning and running southerly along said lot line to its intersection with the centerline of Pungansett Street; Thence turning and running southerly from the centerline of Pungansett Street to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 604 on A. P. 70; Thence turning and running southerly along the rear lot line of Lots 604, 550, 606, 607 and 605 on A. P. 70 to its intersection with the centerline of Chad Brown Street; Thence turning and running easterly along said centerline approximately 700 feet to the rear lot line of Lot 476 A. P. 69; Thence turning and running southeasterly along the rear lot line of Lot 476 to its intersection with the southerly lot line of Lot 476; Thence turning and running southwesterly along said lot line to the intersection of the centerline of Wiley Street; Thence turning and running southeasterly along the centerline of Wiley Street to its intersection with Fillmore Street; Thence turning and running northeasterly along said centerline to its intersection with the centerline of Oregon Street; Thence turning and running southeasterly along said centerline to its intersection with the centerline of Whipple Street; Thence turning and running southwesterly along said centerline to its intersection with the centerline of Geoffreys II Court; Thence turning and running southerly along said centerline to its intersection with the centerline of the R. I. Interstate Route 95 entrance ramp; Thence turning and running southwesterly to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 476 on A. P. 68; Thence turning and running southeasterly along said rear lot line to its intersection with the northerly lot line of Lot 746 on A. P. 68; Thence turning and running westerly along said lot line to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 425 on A. P. 68; Thence turning and running southerly along the said lot line to its intersection with the northerly lot line of Lot 501 on A. P. 68; Thence turning and running easterly along said lot line to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 501 on A. P. 68; Thence turning and running southerly along the rear lot line of Lots 501, 500, 499, 498, 424, and 497 to its intersection with the centerline of Boulston Lane; Thence turning and running along said centerline approximately 40 feet to its intersection with the rear lot line of Lot 496 on A. P. 68; Thence turning and running southerly along the rear lot line of Lots 496, 415, 355, 495, 494, 493, and 492 to its intersection with the northerly lot line of Lot 157 on A. P. 3; Thence turning and running easterly along said lot line to its intersection with the centerline of North Davis Street; Thence turning and running southerly along said centerline to its intersection with the centerline of Douglas Avenue and to the point and place of beginning.

## **B. Covenants and Restrictions**

### *Conditions, Covenants, Restrictions and Provisions Controlling the Development and the Use of Acquired Land and Improvements*

1. With respect to those provisions of the plan which exceed local law, redevelopers will be required to agree, in the event of any questions regarding the meaning of the standards and controls or other provisions of this plan, that the interpretation of the Agency shall be final and binding.
2. A report concerning the proposed sale or lease of any land acquired by the Agency shall be submitted to the City Council at a regular or special meeting at least ten (10) days prior to the execution of said sale or lease agreement.
3. The following controls of this plan shall obligate and bind all redevelopers and their successors in interest, lessees or assigns. The controls, covenants, and restrictions incorporated in this plan shall be in effect for a period of forty (40) years extending from the date of approval of this plan by the City Council, except that the controls stated in Paragraph "c." below shall run for a perpetual period of time. In addition, the following restrictive covenants or controls running with the land shall be inserted in and made an effective part of all agreements and conveyance for the disposition of any part or parcel of land in the area to require said redevelopers:
  - a. To use and devote such real property only for the purpose and in the manner stated in the Plan;
  - b. To comply with such terms and conditions relating to the use and maintenance of real property as in the opinion of the Agency are necessary to carry out the provisions of this Plan;
  - c. To provide that at no time shall the acquisition, use, disposal or conveyance of land or improvements within the Project Area to or by any persons be denied, restricted or abridged, nor occupancy or possession therefore preferred, segregated or refused because of gender, race, color, creed, ancestry, religion or nationality. Further, all redevelopers shall comply with all Federal State and Local Law, in effect from time to time, prohibiting discrimination or segregation by reason of gender, race, color, creed, ancestry, religion or nationality in the sale, lease or occupancy of any project property;
  - d. To begin and complete the construction of improvements within a period of time deemed by the Agency to be reasonable, subject to any provisions which may be made for the extension of the time limit with the approval of the Agency;

- e. To comply with such terms and conditions specified by the Agency which will prevent holding of land for speculative purposes, and the sale or other disposition of land at a profit until such time as the required improvements have been completed;
- f. To submit to the Agency architectural and landscaping plans and specifications, as well as any other information required by the Agency, for its approval prior to the time of transfer of title to the redeveloper to insure their conformance with the provisions of this plan.

*Miscellaneous Provisions*

- 1. Whenever the controls in this Plan restricting the use and development of areas acquired for redevelopment conflict with provisions of the Zoning Ordinance or any other City Ordinance the higher standards of this Plan, if established, or of the Zoning Ordinance or any other City Ordinance shall govern.
- 2. The Agency may, when it deems it advisable, file a petition with the Zoning Board of Review for variances or exceptions to the Zoning Ordinance.
- 3. Land sold to an adjoining owner shall first be utilized to satisfy the requirements of this Plan with respect to his or her adjoining non-acquired property.
- 4. The purchaser of land from the Agency is obligated to provide the necessary rehabilitation of his or her adjoining non-acquired property to meet the standards established by this Plan. After receipt of notice from the purchaser to the Agency that he or she has complied with the standards established by this Plan and after the Agency has made a finding of such fact, the Agency will tender to the purchaser a Certificate of Completion suitable for with the Recorder of Deeds.
- 5. All buildings and improvements in the Project shall be maintained in good repair and in safe, clean, and sanitary condition.
- 6. All mechanical equipment, whether located on the roof of a structure or on the ground or at any other location on a site shall be totally and effectively screened from view within the limits of safety and good design with respect to any given mechanical system - and said screening shall be integrated with the architectural design, style and fascia of the building(s). The Agency, in its sole and absolute discretion, shall have the final right of approval.
- 7. The Agency in its sole and absolute discretion, shall have the final right of approval and interpretation of all redevelopment proposals.



*Obligations to be Imposed on Developers*

1. The developers, their successors in interest, lessees, or assigns shall be required, as an effective part of all agreements and conveyances for the disposition of any part of land in the Project Area, to observe all provisions of the Plan and to assume constructions of all required and/or necessary improvements in conformity with the Plan within a reasonable length of time, which shall be determined by the Agency, in its sole and absolute discretion.
2. The foregoing regulations and controls contained in this Plan will be binding, effectively by deed or by contract containing restrictive covenants running with the land, upon all purchasers or contractors and their heirs and assigns of the land within the area of the City of Providence, Rhode Island covered by this Plan. The regulations and controls incorporated in this Plan will be effective from the date of approval of this Plan by the City Council for forty (40) years; except that the provisions contained herein with respect to non-discrimination shall run for a perpetual length of time.

**C. Relocation**

Businesses, families and individuals to be displaced by the Agency action within the project area will have the services of the Department of Planning and Development. Relocation shall be carried in accordance with RIGL or federal (HUD) requirements, dependant upon the source of funding for the project.

**D. Procedure for Changes in Approved Plan**

The Providence City Council at its own discretion, or upon recommendation of the Agency, may modify this Plan at any time, and shall, when mandated by law, or may, at its discretion, hold a Public Hearing on such proposed modification, provided that if the Plan is modified after lease or sale by the Agency of real property in the area, such modification shall be subject to such rights of law and in equity as the lessee or purchaser or his or her successor or successors in interest may be entitled to assert.

## **E. Bibliography**

United States Department of Commerce  
Bureau of the Census  
*1990 Census of Population and Housing*  
Washington, DC 1990

The Providence Plan  
*Providence Neighborhood Fact Book*  
City of Providence, 1993

Department of Planning and Urban Development  
*Smith Hill: Neighborhood Analysis*  
City of Providence, 1979

Department of Planning and Urban Development  
*Hartford Avenue Renewal Project*  
Official Redevelopment Plan  
City of Providence, 1981

William McKenzie Woodward and Edward F. Sanderson, Editors  
*Providence: A Citywide Survey of Historic Resources*  
Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, 1986

## **F. List of Abbreviations**

<b>Agency</b>	Providence Redevelopment Agency
<b>City</b>	City of Providence
<b>City Council</b>	City Council of the City of Providence
<b>Community Redevelopment Act</b>	Redevelopment Act of 1956 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, 1956, as amended to date.
<b>Department</b>	City of Providence Department of Planning and Development
<b>Minimum Housing Code Plan</b>	Minimum Standards Housing Ordinance. Redevelopment Plan
<b>Project Area</b>	Douglas Avenue Revitalization Project
<b>Zoning Ordinance</b>	Zoning Ordinance of the City of Providence, approved June 27, 1994, as amended to date.
<b>Zoning Board of Review</b>	Zoning Board of Review of the City of Providence