

The Evaluation of Financial and Physical Feasibility of
Constructing and Rehabilitating Floodplain Residences

CINCINNATI'S NEIGHBORHOOD OF CALIFORNIA



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

JANUARY 1982

The Doepke/Lesniewicz Partnership

Eric Page Doepke, ASLA

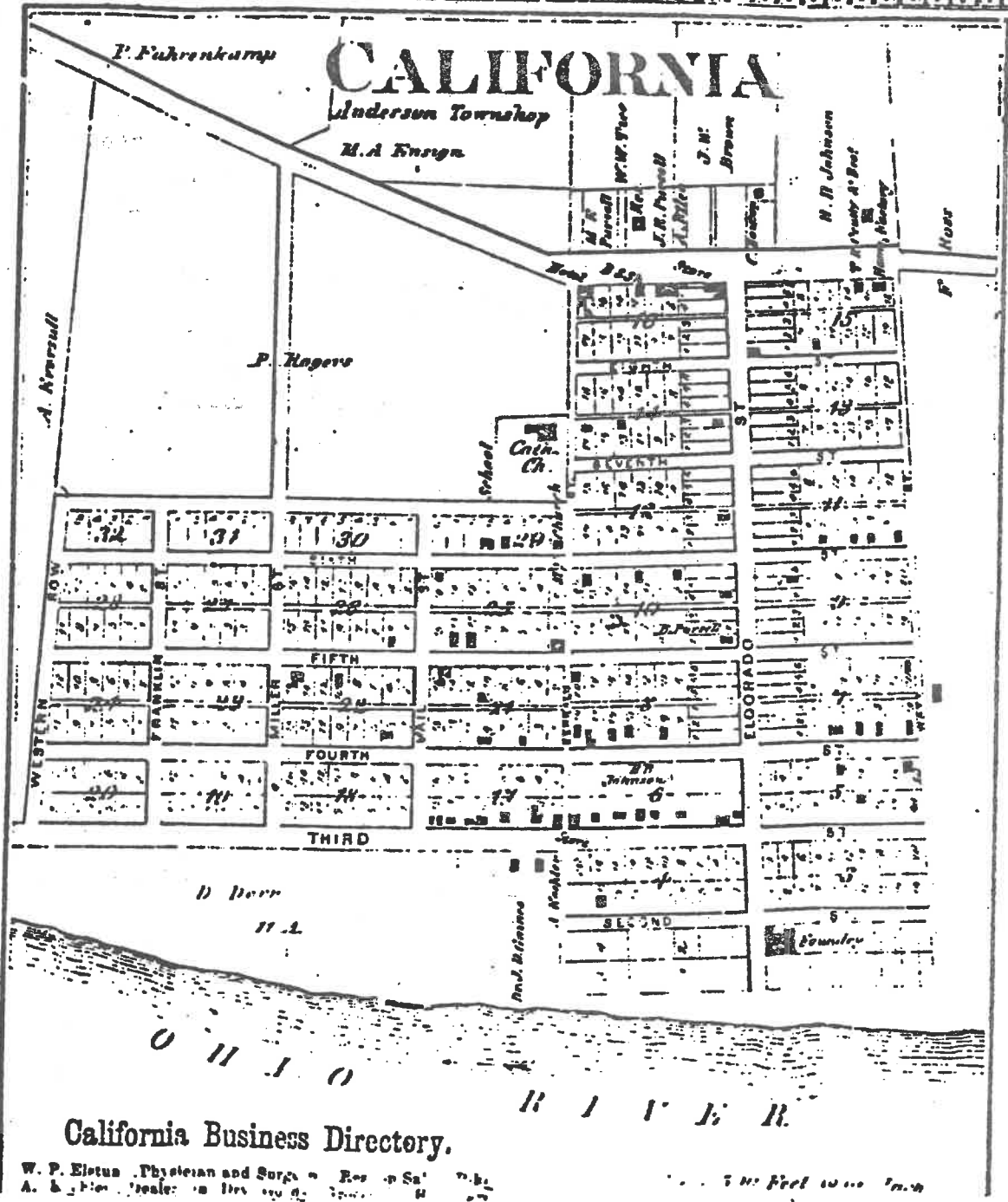
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Prepared for

THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
CINCINNATI, OHIO

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The Doepke / Lesniewicz Partnership

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MEMO

To: Ron Docter
From: The Doepke/Lesniewicz Partnership
Re: California Feasibility Study: Contract Brief
Date: 10 December 1981

SCOPE OF SERVICES / REVIEW

1-A-1 Determination of the condition of existing residences

Given the current and past levels of private investments, the statistics gathered in this study conclude that the residential housing stock of California will continue to gradually decline. Private property maintenance generally can not keep pace with the economic conditions. The residents have adapted a very tolerant attitude toward flood expectation. The reality of flood reduces interest in property improvements.

This determination was based upon numerous field trips, long hours of interviews, data research and community surveys. Although the economic and social characteristics of California may be steady, the physical components of the community are most threatened by the "flood mentality" and general economic trends.

The incentives to invest in site improvement, in building painting or minor rehabilitation are reduced by the knowledge that next March flood waters may cause significant exterior damage. This factor coupled with the Community's desire to avoid property tax increases has lead toward a net loss in private maintenance (public appearance) and investment.

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1-A-2,-3 Evaluation of Flood Protection Measures

~~Flood protection measures that might satisfy both local and federal regulations include the:~~

- a) entire neighborhood - levee
- b) significant portions of the neighborhood
- c) individual properties
- d) retro-fitting of existing structures and floodproofing of new structures

All flood protection measures examined were found to be financially and structurally affordable with respect to flood hazard conditions in California. Examples of the various flood protection measures could be found in practice in most flood-plain regions of the country.

Flood protection measures as evaluated specifically for California included:

- a) levee
- b) small levees, earth berms
- c) protecting mechanical and electrical equipment
- d) flood shields, seals
- e) raising the structure
- f) structural relocation

The feasibility question of these measures lay not in the financial or structural considerations, but in the community acceptance or prudence of these actions. The implementation of the various flood protection measures may do more harm by destroying the historic rivertown gothic image or disrupting the normal building use activities.

1-A-4 Feasibility determination of private and public assisted construction

The feasibility of new residential construction was evaluated for three separate projects within California. Those projects included:

- a) Kellogg Corridor
- b) Village Core
- c) Riverfront Development

All three projects were determined to be appropriate and compatible in their setting. However, the financial considerations of new and/or limited public assisted residential construction was found to be unfeasible because of high interest rates and the general reluctance of lending institutions to invest in a floodplain community that does not appear to be headed for improvement.

Housing types investigated and documented included single family, infill, hillside apartments, condominium townhouses and the relocation of existing residences. Every development option considered could not gain financial backing, due to high interest rates and level of confidence in the market.

1-A-5,6 Determination of the necessity for private or limited public assistance

This study was concluded that both private and limited public assistance measures are necessary to stimulate and attract residential investments. Developments sympathetic to the characteristics of California can not occur without significant incentives.

Private residential incentives might be gained through the establishment of a community based CURC and the aggressive participation in city government processes. Limited public non-residential developments that would attract residential investment include the administrative recognition and support of a California CURC, increased code enforcements, the vigorous maintenance of public owned property and the improvement of appearance and function in public right-of-ways.

Consideration of use of particular public lands that are important to community change should be strongly evaluated. Public land-ownership transferred are identified as limited public actions that might aid in the efficient administration of community reinvestment projects. Reference to the three development options in the final report.

1-A-7 Refer to Section 1-A-8 (not applicable)

1-A-8 Identification of minimal public and private actions

- a) Minimal public and/or private actions are necessary to restrain future residential deterioration. The continuance of California as a result of funding efforts from the past to the present is not going to move in a positive direction of yielding community stability and improvement.

Minimal public actions that would be most effective at deterring deterioration would be the aggressive maintenance of public owned lands and the improvement of public right-of-ways. Specific duties include grass and weed trimming, traffic control signage, sidewalk construction, street repaving and maintenance and effective street lighting.

Minimal private actions to prevent residential deterioration include the maintenance and improvement of private properties. Specific duties include the demolition of dilapidated structures, painting exterior surfaces, removal of abandoned automobiles, property maintenance, and the proper storage of boating and marina facilities.

- b) The market sector advisors as identified in Section 1-B-1-a were unable to fully commit themselves to the full implementation process. The lack of cohesiveness exhibited by the community and the absence of an organized working plan initially limited the complete market sector team from participating in the study.

The market sector advisors' assistance was instrumental in evaluating the financial feasibility of the contractual issues. Implementation of the plans by the market sector team was precluded by the lack of available funding at appropriate rates for the given market and the apparent confusion within the California community council leadership on a continuity of actions.

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1-A-9 Final Recommendations

Final recommendations are addressed to both public and private sectors. The justification of this action was determined by the necessity for coordinated public/private cooperation.

- 1-A-9.1 Formulate a non-profit development corporation
- 1-A-9.2 Preserve the community life style
- 1-A-9.3 Support additional residential reinvestments
- 1-A-9.4 Advocate for increased public investments
- 1-A-9.5 Redevelop the Kellogg Corridor - 'Front Door'
- 1-A-9.6 Promote Historic character
- 1-A-9.7 Support the study of a flood retention levee

CALIFORNIA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Project Descriptive Summary Statement

A. Existing Conditions

California is a predominantly working class, single family, moderate income community. As of the latest census, the community was experiencing a decline in population due to an out migration of the youth. The residents appreciate the rural life style and enjoy home ownership and the benefits of their location.

California residents are generally involved in blue collar employment. Households are male headed with children. The study area is basically rural residential density with limited public and private community amenities.

Average housing units were 1300 square feet on a 1/2 acre lot. The units are typically in standard condition with some needing minor cosmetic repairs. Average household sizes are three (3) members per unit.

B. Floodproofing Feasibility

The types of flood protection measures considered for California include:

1. flood levee
2. protecting mechanical & electrical equipment
3. flood shield
4. earth berm
5. raise structure
6. structure relocation

Precluding the levee construction, flood damage reduction measures should be a combination of alternatives. The implementation of a singular measure would normally be insufficient for reducing flood damage to the structural components of the unit.

Both developed and undeveloped lands should be protected from floods. Collectively, non-structural flood protection measures provide limited damage reduction. Major structural measures as proposed would immediately flood proof all land with the community.

Individually, non-structural flood damage reduction measures are economically feasible with assistance from local lending institutions. However, due to the recurring flood conditions coupled with the adaptability of the California people to the water, non-structural flood damage reduction measures are not proposed.

Structural flood damage reduction measures are strongly supported as a result of this study. The economic and financial feasibility can only be determined from detailed analysis from the Army Corps of Engineers. Preliminary findings indicate in both of the structural and non-structural solutions, the physical feasibility of flood damage reduction measures is not questioned.

C. Rehabilitating and Constructing New Residences

It is both financially and physically feasible to rehab the existing structures in California. Of the 151 housing units in the study area, seven (7) were dilapidated, 15 had major deficiencies and 43 exhibited minor deficiencies. The remainder were in standard condition.

The question of rehabilitating or constructing residences in floodplain areas is not in the physical or financial feasibility, but in the long term impacts of such actions. Ideally, the deteriorated condition of some units in California is due to annual flooding. The incentive to paint-up and fix-up can easily be destroyed with the discovery of six (6) inches of water in the living room every March.

D. Development Options

Various scenarios for community improvement and investment were proposed that included three complementary projects. The Kellogg Corridor, Village Core and Riverfront Development Proposals were preliminarily costed and designed for analysis.

The first phase, Kellogg Corridor Project, is a mixed use development that is designed to strengthen the community's front door image. The project includes rehab, new construction, streetscape treatment and traffic improvements.

The Village Core Project is a second phase medium range plan also designed to strengthen and improve the community image. The plan involves residential infill, housing-open space redistribution, rehabilitation and some demolition. Additional housing types include townhouses, rowhouses, additions and single family units.

The Riverfront Development plan is a long range multi-phases project designed to capitalize on the riverfront location. This plan contains three supporting development schemes which involve a flood levee, condominium and townhouse construction, and a limited residential/open space buffer zone. The benefit of new housing, recreation and improved river access is essential to community improvement.

E. Improvement Scenarios

There are primarily four (4) scenarios involving public-private sector movements for community improvement. These scenarios represent a range of development action models from simple to complex.

The simplest scenario is the maintenance of the status quo. Individual property owners act on their own behalf with or without regard for an accepted plan for property improvement.

The next model entails business partners (limited, general) combining interests and capital for personal enhancement. California is currently experiencing movements from the individual model to the partner model. This model is most threatening to the community fabric if the partners decide to act against the betterment of the community.

Community based groups of syndicated individuals are able to realize many benefits. Financing ability can be enhanced and implementation efforts can be intensified. Project economies of scale can be reduced through community based support and management and collective action.

The final scenario involves a complex model of public-private cooperation. The California CURC aggressively seeks funding from various sources for community projects. City support and assistance to California is enhanced with the efforts of a CURC. In this scenario the City is very active in supporting projects for the public benefit.

F. Public Initiatives

Public assistance incentives are needed to complement community efforts in stimulating investment in California. These initiatives include the recognition of a California Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation, zoning and code enforcement, and higher levels of City response.

California would develop a stronger bargaining position with the formulation of a local CURC. Services provided by a non-profit development corporation are helpful in maintaining and raising community pride. The CURC will be guided internally and should be used as an instrument to prevent the intervention of outside land speculators.

Controls that can be utilized to meet community objectives include zoning and code enforcements. The retention of residential value is in direct conformance with the 1978 Land Use Plan. Industrial interests should be prevented from capitalizing upon California's waterfront areas.

G. Summary

In brief, feasible actions are economically limited at this time. Tight monetary policies currently discourage developments from both public and private actors, while not necessarily disuading seasonal, second home and service uses, which are from the upper income sources regionally.

The City has informally adopted policies for working with California. Top priority was given to the maintenance of residential land uses. Encroaching industrial interests and public-owned Water Works lands must be interrupted. Protection of community value, i.e., current and new full time community residents.

And finally, the City's position will be responsible to the community desires. Investment speculation will not be stimulated by the City nor will the City take the initiative in securing residential value. The City will only work towards community based goals plainly stated and collectively supported by the community.

The position of the City should be determined and in support of a favorable future for California. If California is left to the market mechanisms, its future will not support the current consensus of aspiration in the community. The people wish revitalization and positive change that will include current residents.

CALIFORNIA FEASIBILITY STUDY: STATISTICAL BASE

A. Study Area Boundary

1. Defined

The study area as defined by this feasibility study is approximately 96+ acres. The study area was measured with the Ohio River at pool stage. The boundaries are described below and on Map 1-1.

a. North

From the Ohio River along Renslar Avenue to the back line of the properties fronting Kellogg Avenue and around the Ebersole Community Center to Kellogg Avenue

b. South

From the Ohio River along Waits Avenue to Kellogg Avenue.

c. East

From the NE property line corner of the Community Center, to the back line of properties facing west on Kellogg Avenue to approximately 200 ft. south of Waits.

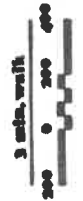
d. West

From Waits Avenue to Panama along the Ohio River

2. Rationale

The existing physical, social and economic conditions of the study area are homogeneous relative to the other districts in California. The study area is physically isolated by the hillsides, the river, the Water Works and the I-275 bridge. These natural and man-made boundaries totally encompass the residential area.

The issues in the California area concentrate in the flood plain target area. The solutions which will have the greatest impact will emerge within the physical boundaries. The potential for revitalization of this southeastern Cincinnati community will be determined by the manageability of development potentials which are abundant in this location.



Study Area
Project Proposal Area

Study Area
California Feasibility Study
 Prepared for the California Floodplain Community City Planning Commission - City of Cincinnati
 Prepared by the Planning Department - Architects, Engineers, Planners and Scientists - Cincinnati, Ohio

Ohio River

B. Project Proposal Area Boundaries

1. Defined

The project area includes lands surrounding the study area. Total project area acreage is approximately 180 acres. Project areas are divided into five (5) districts. (See Map 3-1) relative to particular project related potentials.

<u>Districts</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>
Acreage	9	18	6	20	28
Ownership	public	public	public	private	private
Existing Use	vacant	vacant	vacant	recreation	vacant
Proposed Uses	residential recreational		residential		residential recreational

Districts A and B cover the area from Renslar to the Water Works causeway, and from the Ohio River to the rear property line of those properties fronting Kellogg Avenue.

District C moves eastward up the hillside towards the California Golf Course. The area starts from the base of the eastern edge of the study area.

Districts D and E are from Waits to the I-275 bridge and from Kellogg to the Ohio River. The districts are separated by a few residential units.

2. Rationale

The added acreage is essential to the redevelopment of the community. The proposed levee construction would most dramatically change the market potential. The levee (3600 LF) would extend the length of the project area, from the Water Works causeway to the I-275 bridge embankment to be effective. The advantage of existing north and south boundary perimeter installations can be windfall from past public actions to flood proof the Water Works and the I-275 bridge.

C. Statistical Reference

1. Research Methods

All statistical surveys conducted for the purposes of the Feasibility Study occurred within the study area boundaries. Qualitative research methods and techniques were employed primarily in the Project Proposal Area and in the remaining community. Consistent survey procedures increase the statistical accuracy of the community profile.

The statistical profile of California and the study area was obtained from a variety of sources. Communitywide information was based upon the U.S. Census. Fortunately, California and census tract 45 enjoy the same boundaries. Census updates for California were available for 1981.

2. Financial Analysis

Basic mathematical operations were used to compute the descriptive statistics for California and the study area. The use of averaging as a method of reporting data was consistent with official data sources pertinent to California.

Medians and means while supplying additional useful information, do not accurately present a complete picture. Means can be distorted by extremes, and medians allow for a wide range of interpretation.

3. Survey

The Community (study area) survey was designed to be statistically significant to the entire community. 63% of all the housing units are located in the study area. 42% of the housing units were surveyed in the study area. Response to the survey was 43% of the study area and 28% of the entire community.

CALIFORNIA FEASIBILITY STUDY

A. **Market Potential: Existing Market Factors Commentary**

1. Accessibility Factors

The accessibility of local residents to and from the outer regions of the Tri-State area was increased with the opening of I-275. The approximate 86 mile loop places 450,000 population within 20 minutes of the community; and the community within 20 minutes of center city.

2. Economic Value

Economic activity should increase, particularly around those areas adjacent to the expressway interchange. The increase in traffic should result in new economic opportunities for California. Commercial establishments, housing and public services are favorable attractions which are both desired and needed by California residents.

3. Old Coney

Old Coney's future will have a large impact on the future of the market area. Preliminary redevelopment plans for Old Coney indicate an amphitheater, a surf pool and picnic facilities to attract tourist and entertainment commercial uses.

4. CSO

The amphitheater represents an approximate Six Million Dollar (\$6,000,000) investment by Kings Production/Taft Broadcasting Co. and the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra. The open air structure will be constructed in the floodplain and is scheduled to seat 8000 people. The amphitheater will host a range of musical presentations to help support the facility.

5. Commercial Support

Revitalization plans for Old Coney would stimulate supporting commercial establishments that would respond and benefit from River Downs and Old Coney. Picnic areas, motels, eating facilities and other commercial-recreational projects are potential development possibilities that would be enhanced by the expansion and diversification of Old Coney.

6. Real Estate Market

The existing real estate market in California is very sluggish. Property ownership changes within the study area have been very infrequent. Properties for sale, tend to spend an inordinate amount of time on the market before being bought. Many buyers of those properties have been native residents of California or relatives.

7. Potential

The market potential for development in the California Study Area seems astonishing. Profit incentives for developers increase daily as plans for Old Coney expansion crystallize. Residential development and supportive commercial facilities are particularly attractive in the California study area.

Realtors are very excited about the development potential of California. Financing, with high interest rates is the only real obstacle to aggressive development. The current high interest rates prohibit the funding of initial high risk projects which transform the study area of California. Speculative returns on an investment in the area not sufficient to reduce risks for potential developments.

The Doepke / Lesniewicz Partnership

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CALIFORNIA FEASIBILITY STUDY MEETING

8 December 1981

Project Brief: Housing and Community

Due to the economy, where salaries of the California residents are not rising as sharply as costs of services and materials, there will be a continuing marginal decline in property maintenance. The flood mentality will curb the desire for strong residential improvements. The seasonal flooding will continue to erode market confidence for community supporting growth and will depreciate the community vitality as more speculative sales for seasonal market (vacation houses, marina, etc.) overtake home ownership entrants to the market. The non-community based interest of the seasonal market will reduce the lobbying power of the full-time community participant.

Residents should be aware of the impact of their present course and its particular orientation. The service role of the community to the regional attractions of Old Coney, and the river-front, marinas, and the ballfields will be more sharply apparent.

If the community is to thrive in the full sense, it will require more full term - all season housing commitments in support of community prosperity.

The City has limited the community in gaining ownership of the hillside and hilltops along Kellogg, as well as the properties of the Water Works to the north where formerly plated properties were used for homes.

The new rulings of the government on floodplain residential growth further serve to reduce the potential for community growth and prosperity. The net effect of the floodplain regulations will force a development - housing type that is not characteristically sympathetic to the collection of fine rivertown buildings that comprise the image of California.

The desired use of California is residential. The major forces affecting California do not support and reinforce the community-residential aspiration. Clearly, the variety of futures for California will emerge from competing interests that could cause a vast redirection of the community.

California should take charge of its future. California should make community based decisions that support a better community. Our survey indicates the residents want improvement and revitalization. The community organization can consolidate and make community supported requests to the City, for assistance to make real accomplishments.

The choice is positive change creatively utilizing regional forces directed by the community, or change due to the interest of outsiders.

Eric P. Doepke, A.S.L.A. Urban Designer

Gary R. Lesniewicz, A.L.A. Architect

Urban Design · Architecture · Planning · Landscape Architecture · Graphics

1) Where will change come from?

Various external forces are exerting influence on the future of the California residential community. The assortment in brief:

- a) Zoning regulation, Floodplain regulation
- b) Industrial river use, competing adverse land uses
- c) Old Coney, River Downs, high volume generators
- d) Highway related market, interchange
- e) City services property, Recreation, Water Works
- f) Marina river use, visitors capture the waterfront
- g) Absentee ownership, seasonal recreation and vacation homes
- h) Traffic flow disrupts the community without commercial response
- i) Speculative ownership captures open properties

Interestingly these forces are not representative of the community agenda. In fact, they are happening without genuine community awareness of impact.

2) How may these influences be governed for benefit of the community (or in a different way ... the City)?

The variety of phenomena affecting the reality of California are viewed as either beneficial or as potentially lethal depending on the particular values shared by the community.

The positive market factors auger well for a capitalistic response, investment, speculation, commercial capture and trade. The positive values of one choice can run counter to the aspirations of others in the group. Clearly, the community will have to continue careful examination of the political reality of value conflict and from a resolution of the struggle should emerge a positive set of guiding actions that follow the plans and images for the future shared by the majority.

The various external forces can be allowed to exert random unplanned influence or they may be combined and managed for community based purposes. For example, the following series illustrate the conversion of phenomena of the market area or particular benefits of topographical location into community resources for improvement. The community should realize its positive and unique attributes and manage them to decided ends.

- a) Controls can meet community objectives
 - 1) zoning residential use
 - 2) historical district rivertown character
 - 3) commercial revitalization tourism, services
 - 4) residential growth new construction
 - 5) efficient residential levee flood protection
 - 6) public riverfront levee floodgate
 - 7) marina development levee - harbor

- b) **Conditional Factors - Feasibility of Future Directions**
 - 1) **establish quality of residential community**
 - 2) **establish quality of housing stock**
 - 3) **establish nature of land use and ownership**
 - 4) **establish likely choices, potentials for future**
 - 5) **feasible methods for realizing several options**
 - 6) **short term conditions, actions - operation, dialogue**
 - 7) **long term actions, steering, supporting**
 - 8) **establish frame work and control for community based steering (the choice for future can be in hand).**

CALIFORNIA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Community Interest	Formal Assistance	Method	Result
1) CURC: non-profit community redevelopment corporation	City State	- lending ability - formal urban design plan - promotion	- focus participation - lobby bargaining - stimulate control & change
2) Preserve the Community Life Style	Low Interest loans Maintenance	- zoning - ownership - full community participation	- stronger community base responsibility - stabilization
3) Residential Reinvestment Rehab Improvement & Additions	City (NHC) Lenders	- CURC negotiator - levee dependency - improvement incentives	- secure value - retain residential
4) Public Investment	City process Capital improvements Community grants	- public right-of-way - maintenance & improvement	- stabilization - secure values - reinforce community
5) Front Door	City (NHC) Lenders	- streetscape - hillside housing - commercial presentation	- positive image - growth commercial & residential
6) Promote Historic Character and Commercial Benefit	City (NHC, CPC, HCB) Miami Purchase Assn. Lenders	- NBD town center - historic center - townscape	- retain & enhance community character - positive image - market attraction
7) Levee Floodproof	City (CPC, Public Works) Corps of Engineers	- enhance and control development	- floodproof 96 acres - growth and public space - efficient construction and land use

8 December 1981

CALIFORNIA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Conclusion

A. 1978 California Land Development Use Plan

The implementation of the recommendations presented in the 1978 Plan was contingent upon two conditions which are not resolved:

- a vibrant local economy
- clear public-private interests definition

The proposals and recommendations formulated by the 1978 Plan were couched in the support of a vibrant local economy and a clear sense of public-private dependence.

B. 1981 California Feasibility Study

Unfortunately, the roles of both public and private actors were never clearly defined. The local economy has become even more sluggish in 1981 than 1978. Plans as such that are developed without support and commitment from the responsible actors are doomed to obsolescence.

The recommendations proposed in this study must face the same conditions. Preliminary support was gained from appropriate City sources. Commitment to the purposes and intent of the study was given energetic approval by the community. The implementation process must require the aggressive cooperation of both public and private participants.

Encouragements, enhancements, and supportive actions are mute activities without the commitment of financial benefits to the responsible parties. Economic benefits are clearly the impetus for implementation. California is no exception. The potential for financial gain of related actors is clearly understood and should reflect real community interest held and controlled rather than the capricious acquisition of community potential for regional seasonal benefit.

Economic realities from the 1840's till the present day have helped shape California. Those same economic realities will determine the future course of California. Market forces must be utilized as guidelines for the implementation of community-based and City aided plans. The non-conformance of outside plunderers for profit will destroy even the best of well laid plans. The market potentials raising interest in California are real and can be leveraged for community benefit.

The future of California rests with the people of California, who are sensitized and aware of their plight. The potential and the rigor required for generating a new future for their community.

Material for a Promotional Brochure

The following is a portion of the material required from the consultant, which could later be used as source material for designing and reproducing a brochure to promote improvements in the area. The brochure would be reproduced by the City or the Community to be shown to prospective developers, lenders, occupants, etc. to encourage their participation in improvement projects for the area.

Other material not included here was detailed cost estimates, number of acres required, and number of new and rehab. units involved with the projects.

CALIFORNIA FEASIBILITY STUDY

Promotional Brochure Statement

The California Community has a unique and valuable future in Cincinnati.

The eastern gate to the City; the gate to Kentucky; an important information center to promote the entertainment bound visitor to the special features of the area and downtown.

The development expectations of the eastern sector are comprised of a unique set of entertainment and recreation ventures. River Downs, Old Coney, (Symphony Summer Festival) and the expected support accommodations will bring a new development impetus to the area.

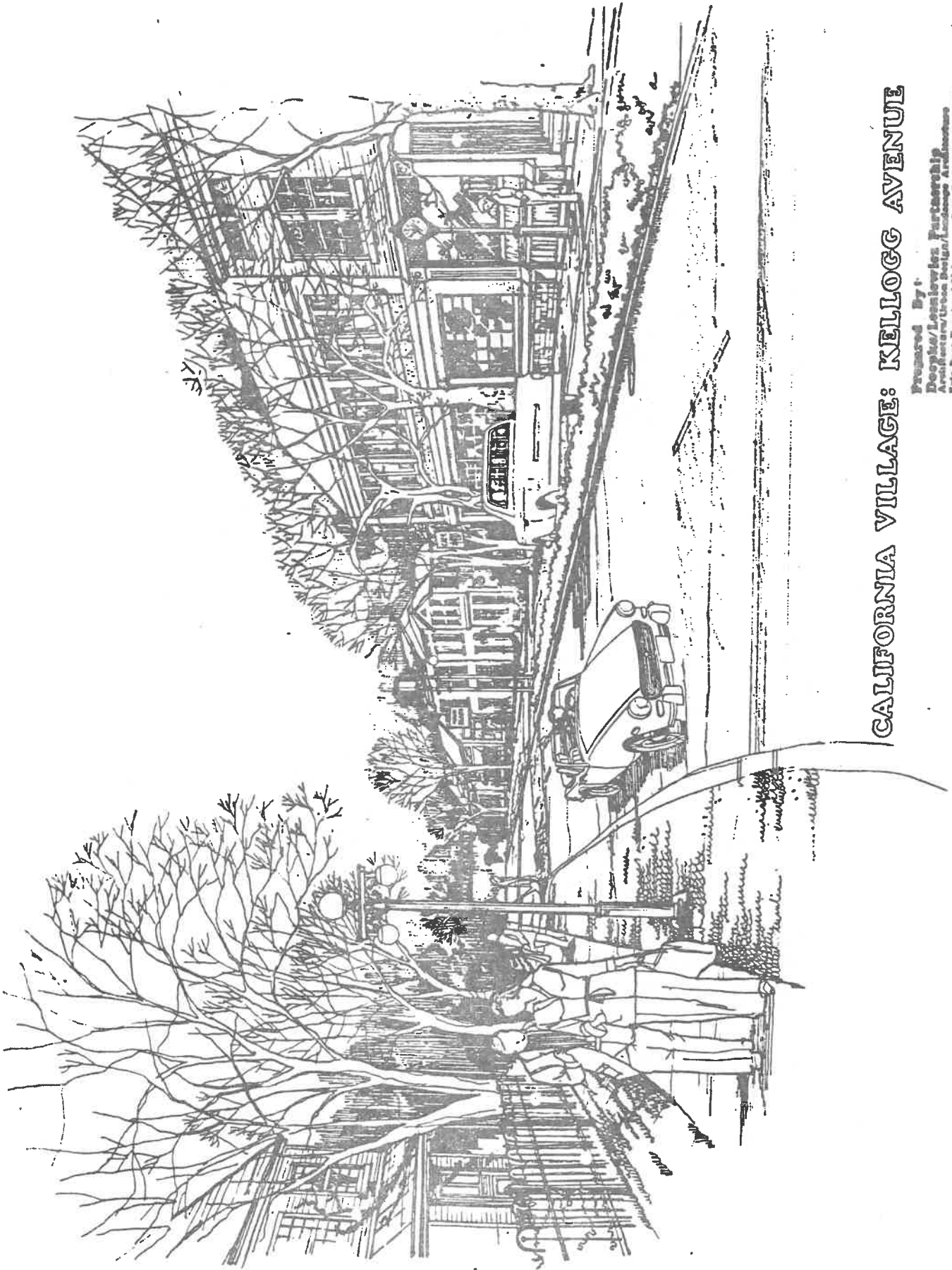
The opportunities for residential growth and commercial enterprise in the California Community are responding to unique river access, location relative to special features and the proximity to downtown.

Where else can you live 10 minutes from town in a riverside landscape, luxury condominium, your own marina, recreation areas providing the backdrop to an exclusive life style adventure center in a rivertown atmosphere? California is a very special case. The exceptional conditions and context require creative responses. These project options represent some key manifestations which would support a full realization of California Community improvements.

The front door seems to be the initial priority for attention. Improving the marketability of property in California will depend on flood control and visual enhancement based on a comprehensive commitment. The Rivertown aesthetic will appeal to the market interest in a small town life style. Quaint architectural styles reminiscent of turn of the century rivertowns can be assembled from existing housing stock and enhanced with period street furnishing and signage. The village idea is appealing as people respond to the neighborly, walking environment where shops, taverns and basic services will be clustered. The heritage village, surrounded by tall trees, and the St. Jerome Church spire enhances the landmark identity from the highway and the river.

New housing in addition to quality rehabilitated historical image housing will add significantly to the population. Hillside housing along Kellogg would be able to proceed in the short run as the flood threat is not a factor. Additional residential in-fill in the village would be dependent on flood proof techniques. The Riverfront housing would be most efficient if developed as a result of a levee flood control device. Luxury condominium units would become the long range high value property for the area.

The development proposals offer an enhancement of the Community housing stock, services and setting conditions. The vitality of the community will present a fine and valuable eastern gate to the City and represent an appropriate development response to the area.



CALIFORNIA VILLAGE: KELLOGG AVENUE

Prepared By:
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CALIFORNIA FEASIBILITY STUDY: OPTIONS

C. Kellogg Corridor: Development Programming Analysis

1. Project Description

The revitalization project for Kellogg Avenue is a hillside - mixed use development that will strengthen the community's 'front door' image. Conceptually the (PUD) project shall include:

- a) streetscape treatment - lights, trees, signage, etc.
- b) new residential hillside construction
- c) new commercial construction
- d) improved traffic control facilities and parking
- e) rehabilitation - residential and commercial units

2. Existing Conditions

The Kellogg Avenue corridor from the Ebersole Community Center to the exit ramp of I-275 is apparently deteriorating. Presently, the local market and passing traffic support only five (5) commercial establishments:

- livebait shop
- tavern
- auto garage
- general store
- roofing company

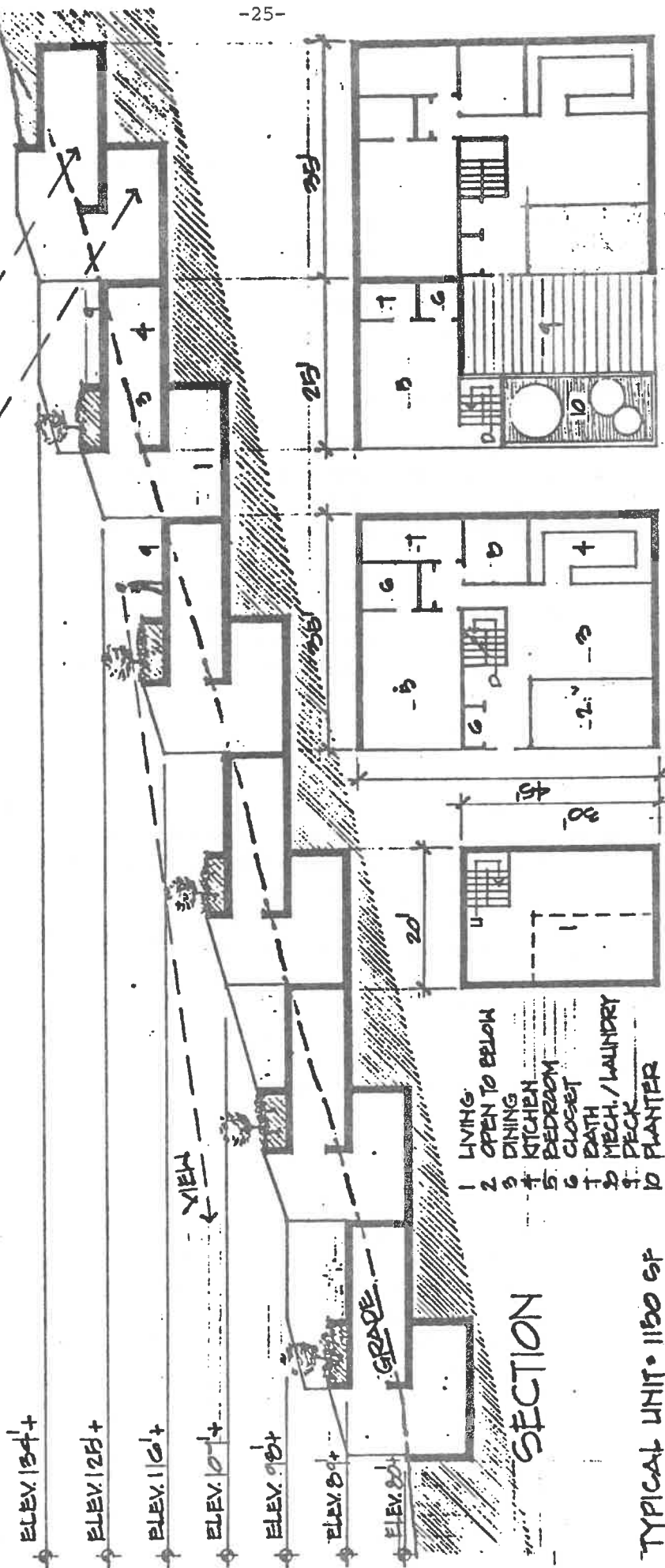
The single family-owner occupied units are in need of minor rehabilitation.

3. Housing Proposed

New residential construction is desirable along the Kellogg Avenue, western slope - city owned hillside. The hillside is city owned, above flood problems and approximately twelve (12) acres. The dwellings are to be a mixture of condominiums and townhouses. The hillside development will include protected parking and open parking off Kellogg and maintain the green continuity.

The existing residential units along Kellogg could be added to with infill housing. The primary rehabbed and relocated units could be clustered and mingled with commercial and new residential construction to retain character.

SUNLIGHT
SUNLIGHT



ADJACENT UNIT
UPPER LEVEL
OPTIONAL

MAIN LEVEL

LOWER LEVEL

- 1 LIVING
- 2 OPEN TO BELOW
- 3 DINING
- 4 KITCHEN
- 5 BEDROOM
- 6 CLOSET
- 7 BATH
- 8 MECH. / LAUNDRY
- 9 DECK
- 10 PLANTER

SECTION

TYPICAL UNIT • 1150 SF

HILLSIDE RESIDENTIAL



4. Commercial

Commercial activity needs to be intensified along Kellogg Avenue. The high traffic volumes could be advantageous for commercial development. There are approximately nine (9) acres available for commercial facilities. The potential gross leasable area is 360,000 sq.ft. Commercial development and parking could be part of a PUD package. The new hillside construction could dramatically change the front door of the community.

Recreation: Open Space

Recreation space is in abundance in California. The riverfront is a fifteen (15) minute walk from Kellogg. Marinas, soccer fields, golf, ball diamonds are all a five (5) minutes drive away. The River Downs' Rack Track and Old Coney are equally as accessible from Kellogg.

Hillside development offers the excellent opportunity to take advantage of the views and the existing country atmosphere of California. Natural amenities include water-related activities, preserved vegetation, and scenic open spaces, the nature center and nearby scenic river areas.

5. Financing

Complex financial arrangements are crucial to the implementation of the project. Commitments must be gained from the community, lending institutions, local and federal governments. The community would have to be supportive of the project from the initial stages. Relocated residents must also be committed to the complete project and they must also be able to perceive or realize economic benefits.

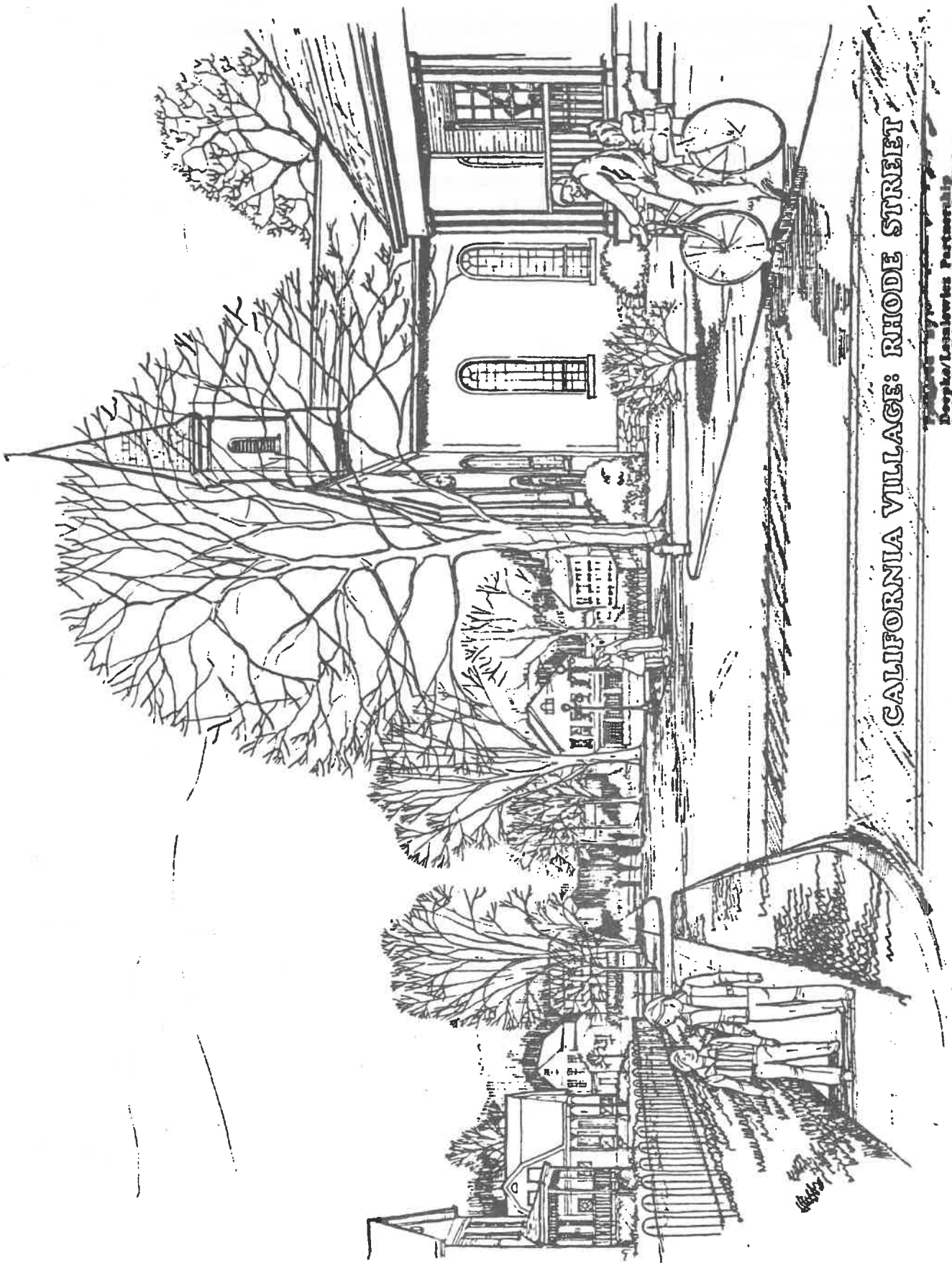
Lending institution support is essential for the project development. Seed money and public commitments are needed to attract additional investors into the venture. The variety of funding sources, while increasing the complexity of the arrangement will also secure the venture.

6. Impacts

The California 'front door' needs attention. The character of the Community, its first impression is an important attractor for investment. The hillside development proposal is a medium range plan and will require strong support from both private and public sectors. The participants involved in developing the hillside, community, city and developers must realize adequate benefit.

The revitalization objectives for the Kellogg Corridor will improve the visual image, and help improve traffic conditions. In the long range, the community image will invigorate the real estate market, and attract appropriate commercial activity to the California area.

The successful completion of the hillside development project will depend in part on the quality of investors attracted by the short range combined revitalization efforts.



CALIFORNIA VILLAGE: RHODE STREET

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CALIFORNIA FEASIBILITY STUDY: OPTIONS

D. Village Project: Development Programming Analysis

1. Project Description

The Village Core project is a medium range plan designed to strengthen the community image. The project involves increasing the proximity and diversity of housing types through a combination of new construction, (infill and block locations), rehabilitation, relocation, and demolition. Added housing types will include townhouses, rowhouses, additions and single family units consolidating a village atmosphere.

2. Existing Residential Conditions

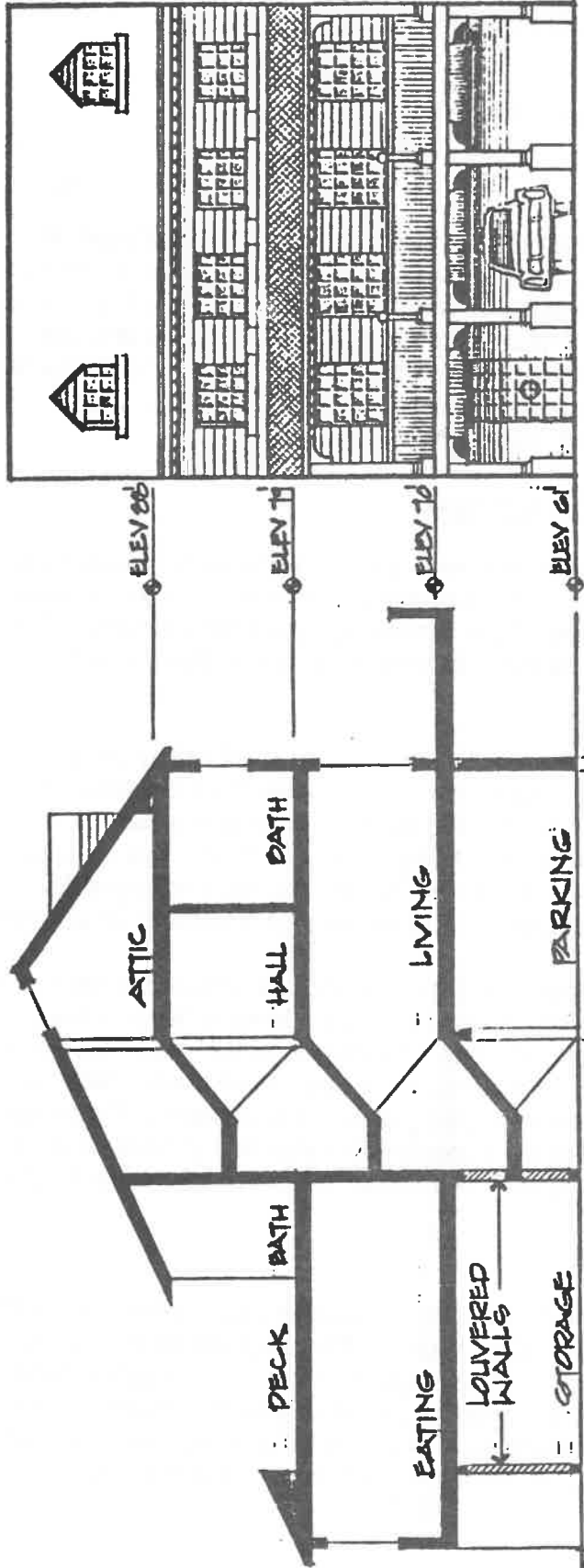
The Village project area is a vacuous, single-family detached residential community. The abundance of scenic open spaces in addition to large open lots create a rural atmosphere. The residential units are nestled in amongst dense floodplain vegetation.

Field surveys reveal the declining condition of many of the residential units. The home owners independent actions, and complacent attitude run counter to the collective idea of strengthening the community image. Those buildings in disrepair continue to function as accepted homes without concern for occupant safety or visual attractiveness or measurable change.

The majority of structures within the village project area are not in danger of severe flooding damage. The lowest level where flood-water might gain entry into the structures is 62' near Bryson and 65' west of Kellogg. The flood frequencies at these heights are seven (7) years and twelve (12) years respectively. Upon flood recession, these units do experience extended problems of water entrapment (ponding) from the interrupted drainage ways to the north.

3. Housing Project

The Village Project is a residential improvement plan that will offer a diverse choice of housing types. The project area covers approximately 35 acres. There are 16 acres of potential new building sites. This acreage is presently undeveloped open space and dense vegetation. The current average residential unit and lot is 1300 sq.ft. of living space on a 1/2 acre lot.



FRONT ELEVATION

MATERIALS: COST:

3 UNITS:

2 UNITS:

1 UNIT:

BRICK
CONCRETE
TILE

5672 SF
212 LF
4842 SF

4284 SF
159 LF
3028 SF

BEARING WALL 2326 SF
FOOTER 106 LF
ROOF 1514 SF
GLAZING 325 SF

BUILDING SECTION

VILLAGE RESIDENTIAL: OPTION 2 "VERNACULAR"



Current population for the village was estimated at 150+. Projected population increases estimates total of 350 additional people. There are 49 existing single family homes. Sixteen (16) garages and tool sheds and an important landmark church in the village project area.

Unit relocation is necessary to utilize the residential spaces more efficiently. The relocated units will require rehabilitation and minor floodproofing. Open space and buffer zones will remain to preserve the park-like atmosphere of the community.

Row housing infill at 5 units per acre is proposed for 8 acres of the Village Core. These units had projected costs of \$60,000.00. Townhouses and single family units should be infilled into the village without disruption to the community fabric. All units must be above the 70' elevation mark if no monolithic flood device is present for the community.

Row housing, single family units and clustered housing at 1500 - 2500 sq.ft. are being proposed for the village area. Unit costs were estimated at \$100,000. Parking decks, building platforms and open space based upon a % land cost/unit equaled \$6,500. Projected total costs per new constructed unit is \$132,500, including fees, licenses, permits and developers' profits.

4. Financing

The public sector can provide funding for the construction and maintenance of the project supporting public infrastructure. Capital Improvement Program funds potentially are sources in financing the Village Core Project, which would complement private funding. The private sector would finance the phased project of this magnitude. Economic incentives to potential investors are necessary at the early phases to implement this project. California resident property owners seem motivated on several levels, economic, political, or social improvements should be considered within a village plan.

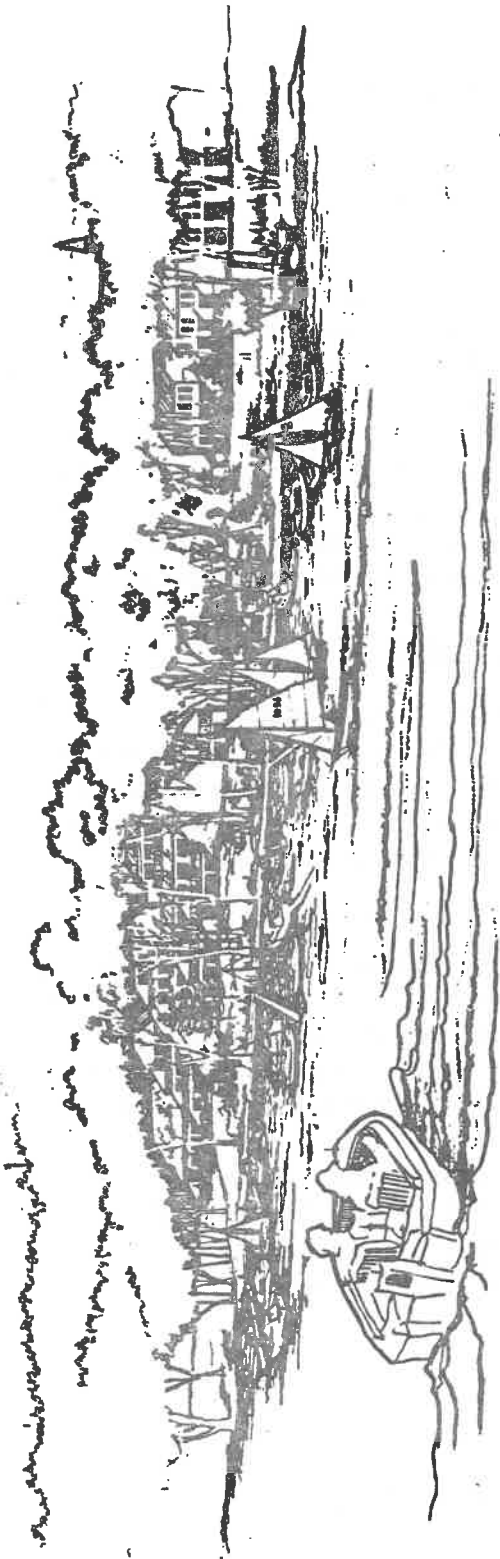
5. Impact

The community image of California has deteriorated considerably. Statistics show a continued loss of youth population, or general decline in families with children, a stagnation of the housing stock and the near non-existence of commercial establishments, all plague California. The lack of housing options and employment opportunities add to devaluation of the community.

The development of the Village Core potentially could offer solutions to improve community image. The range of housing types is necessary to retain and attract young marrieds with or without children and elderly. New population additions would revitalize the community and aid in supporting commercial facilities.

The consolidation of the village would lead to the promotion of a rivertown-gothic image consistent with the locale. The architectural interest would be matched with social-economic benefit for the residents. Neighboring would improve, sense of security would increase and pedestrian amenities would lead to a more attractive public environment. There is a unique potential here - that should be capitalized for the benefit of the community.

The continued interest in special facility development in the neighboring sites would be consistent with the village concept as promotion of market interest, increased housing demand, entertainment attractions and visitor appeal.



CALIFORNIA VILLAGE: RIVERFRONT

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CALIFORNIA FEASIBILITY STUDY: OPTIONS

E. Riverfront Development: Development Programming Analysis

1. Project Description

The riverfront re-development project is a multi-phase residential-recreational plan intended to capitalize on the river frontage. There are three (3) alternate and perhaps consecutive schemes designed to improve California. The first major scheme is the construction of a flood retention levee up to the 100 year flood level. The second resulting is a long range plan for luxury condominium and townhouse construction, while the third scheme provides for semi-public open space transition zone between the riverfront and the village project.

2. Existing Riverfront Conditions

Considering the locational value, the riverfront in California is severely underutilized. There are two marinas and one yacht club located on the river. Private property is disproportionately owned by a few California residents. The land uses along the river are all residential except for the boating facilities. There is not enough public benefit.

There are 44 existing residential structures within the riverfront project areas. The housing stock is deteriorating slowly. Average unit per acreage is significantly longer than in the village zone and in the Kellogg Corridor zone. The average improved property values ranged from \$15,000 to \$31,000 by assessment figures.

All of the structures below Panama have flood waters entering the units at 63' or lower. All of the structures from Bryson to the riverfront are below the base flood level of 70'. Structures within the project area require major floodproofing techniques, relocation, or demolition.

3. Flood Levee Scheme # 1

A flood levee approximately 4000 linear feet will be constructed from the I-275 bridge to the Water Works pump house. The base of the levee will be 100', the height will 18' and the top will be a 30' path. The levee will cover the 100 year flood level and protect the community from all floods up to 70'.

Costs to construct the levee were estimated at \$399,000. Approximately 133,000 cubic yards of fill material would be required to construct a levee of this size. Cost estimates were based upon levees built in Dayton and Louisville, Kentucky. Fill material costs were projected at \$1.50 to \$3.00 per cubic yard.

Flood levee construction costs include clearing, stripping for foundation and trenching. The costs also include land purchase and building removal south of Panama. Total costs for the flood levee were projected at \$2.0 million. A flood levee will make unit floodproofing unnecessary and will prevent property damage from flood water.

4. Housing: Scheme # 2

The housing component is a long range project designed to provide luxury condominiums and townhouses along the flood levee. These units will be 3-4 stories high, public and semi-public decks, protected parking, views and direct access to the river. Amenities which are compatible with riverfront development include marinas, boating facilities or other river-related activities.

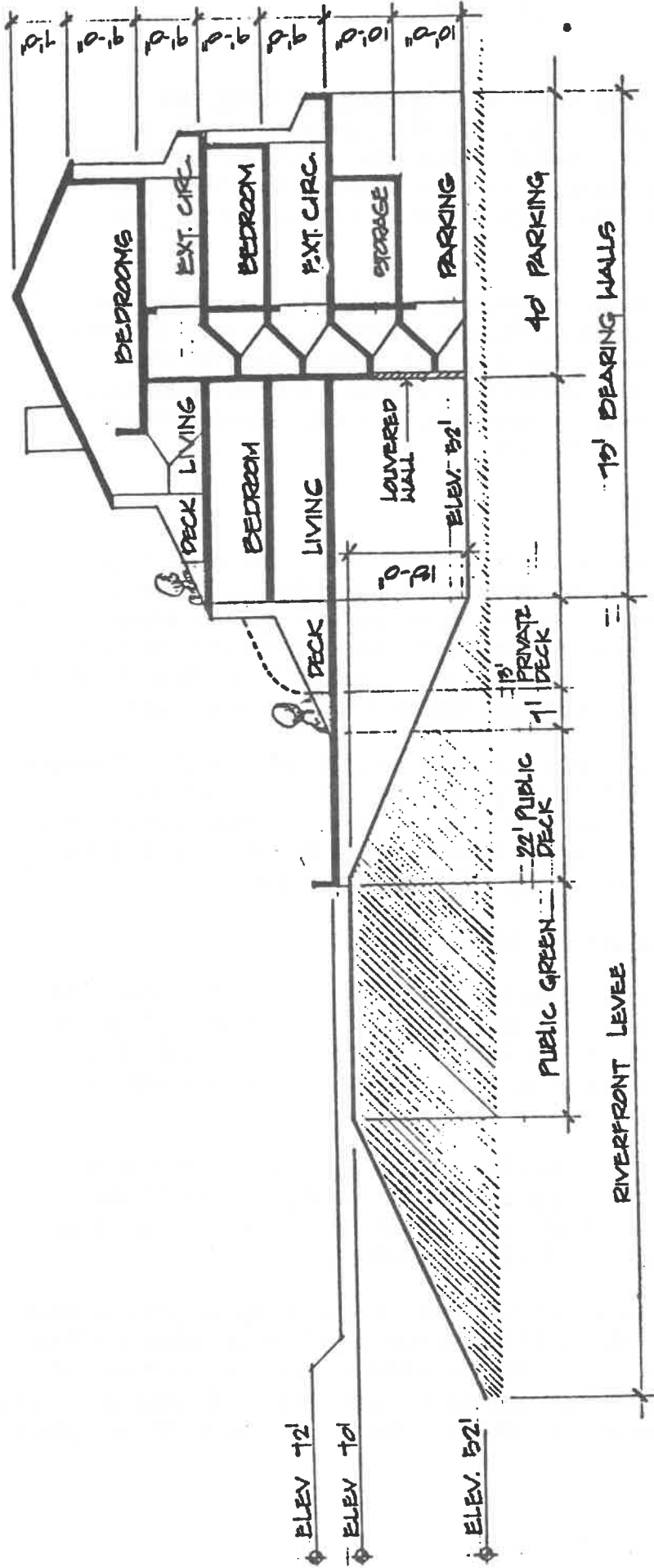
The unit living space was estimated at 1500 -2000 sq.ft. Construction costs were projected at \$80/sq.ft. Building unit costs for development include parking deck, recreation space, marina, and landscaped security space. In addition to the developers' profits, fees, etc., the total cost was \$260,000 per unit.

5. Recreation - Open Space: Scheme # 3

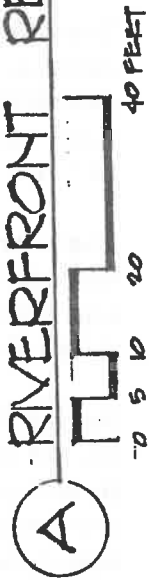
The open space buffer zone is approximately 12 acres. The space is necessary to provide a transition area from the large scale riverfront development to the smaller scale village core areas. The buffer zone could offer forms of passive recreation activity amidst the natural vegetation.

There are 21 existing structures including garages in this zone, bounded by Berte and Bryson on the west and east and Rensler and Waits on the north and south. The total project costs would cover the acquisition of land and buildings.

Recreational amenities related to the project include public access on the riverfront. The 1978 California Land Use Development Plan recommended new housing for the areas adjacent to the river and the maintenance of public access along the river. Boating facilities, boardwalks and water related activities are scheduled for inclusion in this project.



A RIVERFRONT RESIDENTIAL SECTION



6. Financing

The public sector may take a more aggressive role in financing a riverfront development project. The flood levee construction will serve a public purpose by preventing the further deterioration of housing and flood damage to a community. Recreational riverfront public developments will attract and promote commercial market support of California.

The private sector will again provide the impetus for the complex financial arrangements. Once initial support and commitment is secured, profit potentials may be realized by other investors and developers.

7. Impact

The economic-political benefits to be gained by the City of Cincinnati with the successful implementation of this project include:

- a substantial increase in property taxes
- income taxes
- lowering of the community operating budget

The flood levee is economically feasible when compared with the unit floodproofing of the structures in the village. The unit floodproofing techniques protected the structure, but the property was still exposed to floodwater damage. The levee prevents water from reaching the community up to the 100 year flood level. The levee total cost was approximately \$600,000 higher than to totally floodproof the units individually.

A. IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES: THE COMMUNITY

The status of community organization seems to be a strong deterrant to an aggressive coordinated program. It seems essential, given the conditions for funding improvement and the development interest in the area that strong attention to leadership development and community organization should take place soon. If the community continues a laissez faire approach to the future of the neighborhood, the outcome will probably be less than beneficial for the common interest - a default.

Essentially, market factors indicate a demand for improvement. This demand is translated into a leverage factor for the politically impotent community group. The demand for change and interest in improvement by the neighborhood is significant. The increase in value which would result from sensitive change, and the improvement of political base, and soci-economic factors would contribute to a more vital community.

Development can take place without support of a cohesive-accepted plan, but it will not make as important a force for change on behalf of the community.

1. The community should continue support of the 1978 plan with modifications which can be suggested from the current feasibility study.
2. Promotion of proper development should be supported for growth and enhancement.
3. Negotiations for limited use of public lands and right-of-way improvements should commence.
4. Community based initiatives should come forward to improve the Kellogg Corridor - thus improving the image and market.
5. Political lobbying should be organized within the neighborhood framework to gain appropriate civic attention for the development support required to realize the full potentials of the community.
6. Requests for appropriate zoning to reinforce the community interest would help stabilize and support quality improvement. R-3 zones rather than RF-1 might encourage a more consistent residential context. The request for an E.Q.D. (Environmental Quality District) on Kellogg, or the entire Rivertown Village could be even more demanding on quality of improvement. Much of the village has no direct need for RF-1 zone. It should be determined whether this RF-1 zone benefits the community direction from the '78 plan.

The community should realize that change will occur. They can be in charge or just watch and wish they could have managed the benefits. The opportunity is uncommon in all of Cincinnati. There are unique circumstances prevailing in the eastern extension of the City. To ignore the market factors and the locational advantages will only postpone community improvement.

B. IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES THE CITY

The City must regard the potential of California as an important and unique opportunity. The potential for revenue production is essential considering the revenue demands of the budget. The opportunity to capitalize on recent public infrastructure to wrest the floodplain from its captivity in the flood frequencies, would promote retention of many fine existing buildings; the appropriate and more feasible new structures both in-fill, additions and new area projects. The completion of the I-275 bridge embankment to frame and match the waterworks causeway, on the north. Only 4000 LF of levee embankment are required to secure the village and open new development opportunities.

The City should review the efficacy of retaining the large amounts of undeveloped public land surrounding the village. The abundance of open space and the policy of purchasing additional properties in the village run counter to the community improvement and growth requirements.

The un-used hillsides to the east of Kellogg would obviously become developable in the short range, as no flood threat is deterring access or construction. The fact of City ownership is important in that prototype hillside housing can be developed with city involvement.

The long range development of the eastern sector, especially Coney, River Downs to Four Mile will benefit the California community from an economic standpoint. The overall success of development in the community will likely be determined by the quality of leadership and organization fostered by City and civic attention.

The motives of the City of Cincinnati should be clarified, coordinated and presented to residents and investors in the Community. Logically, the City holds a large portion of the land, almost one-third of the floodplain zone and supports several current policies which freeze the market opportunities (zoning, flood program).

The City through its endowed powers can support an environment of change through grants for homeowner assistance, N.B.D., floodproofing, prototype construction, levee flood device or public land utilization policies which are consistent with community interest and the unusually unique circumstances of this vestigial rivertown gem.

If the City evaluates and targets assistance to communities on net revenue production, then efforts to capitalize on the assets of California should not be spared. The considerable value to revitalization of the community will benefit the residents on a human (social) level as well as economic.

C. IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES: THE MARKET SECTOR

Given a positive market analysis relative to location and demand there is unanimous interest in development for California .

There are serious and important reservations that developers have voiced. Appearance, the obvious lack of industry, in the neighborhood toward home maintenance and the image of the community create a setting that does not support residential development.

The character components, the church's, the rivertown-gothic architecture and the river, the regional location all combine to promote visions of unique marketable environments that can sell in the market. Timing seems, as always, to be the most critical aspect. It is here that the availability of funds for construction and lease will establish the real potential for planned growth in the near future. Nevertheless, it is concurred that something will happen - but when?

The lending institution perspective embraces the financial perspective - the receptivity. The potential interest in large scale "sure thing" development is greater than smaller scatter projects. It is easier to secure large block investments that are well controlled, expertly planned and comprehensively supported by the City, the Community and market sector. Everyone must benefit and the preparations and contingencies must be met with vigor. Is this possible for California? At present one would not think so. Yet a concerted multi-lateral focus on the issues and mode of delivery would promote a positive development circumstance.

The specific perception and attitude of the lending institution is recorded for each of various development or improvement options.

Interest rates are critical to development

- key determinant to project initiation
- apartment construction requires 12% money
- rates make project unaffordable
- construction loans maximum 14%

Marketing the community will need initial broad support

- risk reduction in early phases
- necessary flood levee construction - Riverfront-Village contingency
- necessary Kellogg Avenue revitalization - Hillside contingency

Development Priority Contingencies

1. Flooding - affects risk for wider market
2. Interest Rates - cost of development
3. Public Support - write down land, program improvements
4. Kellogg Front Door - initiate marketable improvements
5. Income Tax Abatement - support early market risk
6. Community Willingness - residents favor change

Investment Capability

Joint ventures relating various forms of equity through syndication or under a master developer who retains rights including responsibility to the community in change for support.

CALIFORNIA FEASIBILITY STUDY
11 December 1981

Final Recommendations: Implementation Strategy

The reasonableness of the final recommendations is intended to conform succinctly with the Action Steps identified in the California Land Development Use Plan of 1978. Following are seven (7) major recommendations and related processes for a continuity of implementation effort.

A. Action Steps

1. Establish a California based Community Urban Redevelopment Corporation (CURC), for the purposes of affording California a stronger lobbying position with the City. This CURC should guide and stimulate change to the benefit of California.
2. Preserve the community life-style. The preservation of the town and country atmosphere would involve arresting the slowly declining condition of the housing stock and improving the appearance of the community.
3. Increase residential reinvestments for the purposes of securing and retaining residential value. The threatening encroachment of non-compatible uses must be prevented to improve the propensity for residential development.
4. Advocate increased levels of public investment to reinforce community pride and values. The maintenance and improvement of public right-of-ways is essential to the well being of California.
5. Revitalize the Kellogg Corridor, specifically between the Water Works property and the I-275 bridge. The following steps were deemed necessary with respect to revitalization:
 - a. Develop formal redevelopment plans outlining the commercial growth potential of the community.
 - b. Prepare urban design plans detailing streetscape treatment, off-street parking and phased implementation strategies.
 - c. Develop structural analysis of Hillside housing construction plans - Kellogg Avenue.
6. Promote the Historic Character of California for commercial and cultural benefit. The promotion of the positive image of California is crucial to the retention and enhancement of community character.

Final Recommendations: Implementation Strategy

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7. Advocate and secure the detailed analysis of a flood retention levee. The immediate impact of a levee would floodproof approximately 96 acres of the community, and would increase the developable options of under utilized lands.

B. Formal Assistance Agents

The responsible actors listed below are numbered to correspond with the actions steps outlined in Section A.

1. Establishment of a CURC
 - Neighborhood Housing and Conservation/Community Assistance Teams
 - City Planning Commission
 - State
2. Community life-style preservation
 - City Planning Commission
 - Neighborhood Housing and Conservation
 - Private Lending Institutions
 - Department of Public Works
3. Residential re-investments
 - California property owners
 - California based CURC
 - Zoning Department
4. Increased public investments
 - Department of Public Works
 - Department of Safety
 - REBBS
 - Neighborhood Housing and Conservation
5. Kellogg Corridor revitalization
 - Neighborhood Housing and Conservation/Community Assistance Teams
 - City Planning Commission
 - California property owners
 - Public Works Department
 - Traffic Engineering Division
6. Promote the historic character
 - City Planning Commission/Historic Planning Division
 - Historic Conservation Board
 - Miami Purchase Association
 - Ohio Historical Society

Final Recommendations: Implementation Strategy

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7. Flood retention levee
 - City Planning Commission/Zoning Division
 - Engineering Department
 - Army Corps of Engineers
 - City Solicitor
 - California property owners

C. Incentives

1. Establishment of a CURC
 - a. to focus community participation
 - b. to increase the lobbying (bargaining) position
 - c. to stimulate controlled change
2. Community life-style preservation
 - a. community stabilization and responsibility
 - b. to strengthen the community base
 - c. to prevent incompatible land uses
3. Residential reinvestment
 - a. to secure and retain residential uses
 - b. to stabilize and increase residential values
 - c. to ensure community control
4. Public investments
 - a. to maintain and improve public owned lands
 - b. to improve public right-of-ways
 - c. to stimulate community reinvestment
5. Kellogg Corridor
 - a. to promote the commercial and residential growth potential
 - b. to promote Kellogg Avenue as the 'front door' to California
 - c. to improve the visual quality
 - d. to support market attraction
 - e. to improve the community appearance
6. Promote historic character
 - a. to strengthen and promote the community character
 - b. to increase the cultural awareness of California
 - c. to enhance the community image
 - d. to promote California as the Eastern Gate to Cincinnati
7. Flood Levee
 - a. to completely floodproof the entire community
 - b. to increase the developable options of vacant lands
 - c. to stimulate community reinvestments
 - d. to increase residential property values

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FROM
CINCINNATI'S
NEIGHBORHOOD
OF CALIFORNIA
-TECHNICAL REPORT

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