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# Waterfront development, urban regeneration and local politics in New Orleans and Liverpool

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# WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT,

# URBAN REGENERATION AND

# LOCAL POLITICS

# IN NEW ORLEANS AND LIVERPOOL

By

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# INTRODUCTION

New Orleans and Liverpool were great world ports that declined precipitously in the mid 20th century, but have begun to modernize recently (in the 1970s - 1980s). Both cities have remnant populations that reflect their historical slave trade and unusually large merchant class. Both cities traditionally have had low manufacturing bases, and thus had difficulty absorbing their large pools of unemployed dock workers during port decline and restructuring to meet containerization. Finally, both New Orleans and the Merseyside Development Corporation have largely pursued what has been called the "Corporate Centered Approach" to waterfront development and urban regeneration.

In the early 1980s, Merseyside was an area of economic decline with the social problems associated with high unemployment and low pay. The Port of Liverpool, which had expanded rapidly between 1850 and 1950 to become a major general cargo ports in the United Kingdom, had started to decline in the 1960s. Changes in cargo handling techniques and evolving transport technologies meant that traditional impounded dock systems at Liverpool and Birkenhead became obsolete as deep water access and the availability of large areas of land for modern berths were required. In addition, the U.K.'s general cargo trade became increasingly orientated towards Europe, resulting in the growth of Southern ports at the expense of those further north. In 1972, the entire South Dock system was closed and investment was concentrated in the Royal Seaforth Docks that provided modern deep-sea container berths. The older parts of the docks fell into disrepair, and the dock basins became heavily silted. The decline in port activities brought wider economic decline, since the local economy was dependent on the port and port services. Regional employment policies and local efforts failed to bring about any sustained restructuring of

Merseyside's economic base. The consequent high unemployment and social malaise resulted in a lack of confidence in the City for investment.

New Orleans followed a similar scenario. One only need to change the names of the competing ports to Miami, FL, Mobile, AL, and Galveston, TX. New Orleans was a very wealthy southern city as recently as 1950, boasting the United State's second largest and, by far the busiest port on the Gulf. Today, it lacks strong local banks, its airport is the most underutilized in the nation and, in economic terms, it is rapidly becoming a third rate southern city. Indeed, it occupies third place in the U.S. poverty league of the largest cities, with 31% of the city's population in 1990 living below poverty levels. There is the longstanding problem of "white flight," much of it to neighboring Jefferson Parish. In the 60's, this was fueled by fears of civil rights activism, school desegregation and Jefferson's cheap land. Crime, (the murder rate in New Orleans is the third highest in the U.S.), has hastened "white flight" to Jefferson with its virtuous circle of low service demands, and resulting low taxes on businesses and individuals. Indeed, the city has lost more than 100,000 residents since the late 1970s. Offices and retail have often accompanied this suburbanization. It is a fiscally and socially distressed `frostbelt city' in a largely prosperous, growing "sunbelt" region. National unemployment went from 8.5% (1975) to 7.2% (1985), while in New Orleans it went from 7.2% to 11% in these years. Unemployment was still 10% in New Orleans in 1988, with a further 40% underemployed, mainly in tourism. Thousands have dropped out of the labor force, having lost all hope of finding work. The city's proportion of "discouraged workers" is among the highest in the nation.

There are significant contextual differences in the two cases which might suggest that different development strategies, policies and outcomes are likely. These contextual differences should be obvious to social scientists: different political systems, legal systems, government bureaucracies and position in the world economy. There are also fewer important differences in the physical structure (natural and manufactured) of the port and the built environment of the city. These similarities and dissimilarities suggested the explanatory value of a comparative case study analysis. A survey of the two cities' development strategies, policies, and outcomes and the politics surrounding those strategies was most startling for its similarities: the focus on tourism, physical redevelopment, and the tension between local democracy and political accountability and the assumed proprietary nature of information necessary for economic decision making.

## THE TRANSFER OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT POWERS IN THE UK[1]

Throughout the 1980s, urban policy in the United Kingdom had been heavily influenced by the belief that the private sector should be the principal agent of urban change, and that intervention by the state should be reduced. Central government inner city policies were aimed at creating a climate for self-sustaining growth led by the private sector. Since 1979, about 50 separate Acts were passed, aimed at reducing the independence of local authorities (Riddell 1989). The Local Government Planning and Land Act of 1980 specified the necessary powers to establish Urban Development Corporations (UDC) in urban areas. The object of a UDC is to secure regeneration of its area "*by bringing land and buildings into effective use, encouraging the development of existing and new industry and commerce, creating an attractive environment and ensuring that housing and social facilities are available to encourage people to live and work in the area*" (S136 Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980). In order to carry out this regeneration, UDCs are given broad planning responsibilities, taking over the development control function of local authorities, and are able to acquire public sector land by means of "vesting orders" agreed by the Secretary of State (Adcock 1984:284).

Each urban development area requires parliamentary approval. This procedure allows a petition to be made to a select committee against the confirmation of the order, and so provides a route for public participation. The Secretary of State appoints a Board for each UDC. Further control is exercised through a financial regime, which includes the requirement that UDCs specify their aims of regeneration in corporate plans, and submit individual projects for departmental approval. A key feature is that they should secure private funding for as much as possible of the regeneration of their areas.

**ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY: URBAN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATIONS**

The central government view was that a single agency operating within a defined program and timetable would be able to achieve regeneration and create confidence more quickly than the local authority. A single agency offered political stability, administrative simplicity, and speed of implementation. Local authorities were subject to periodic changes in policy orientation. In Merseyside in particular, political change had been a feature of local government for many years. The single agency would also have an administrative advantage, having a single Board and a few employees, and links between investors and developers would be more easily established. Finally, the agency's ability to deliver results quickly within a defined period was seen as particularly important if the dockland areas were to attract private sector investment. The reclamation and engineering works to be undertaken were extremely complex. Results had to be achieved quickly in order for the private sector to see the dockland areas as development opportunities.

The Merseyside Development Corporation (MDC), typical of the UDCs, is reliant on short-term contract staff, external consultants, and a minimum number of permanent staff. MDC’s decision-making style follows a corporate model: decisions are made by a small number of elites within the corporation, by large private developers and financial institutions based principally on their particular market criteria. This is said to result in a commercially realistic and flexible mode of planning, and it is oriented to the short term needs of their specific private capital. This has both advantages and disadvantages; on the one hand, it can be reactionary and enabling, whereas on the other hand, it can be seen as disjointed. The corporate plan is the annual plan for the Secretary of State and forms the basis of the bid each year to allocate funds within the MDC. The budget is approved by the central government finance department.

**Intergovernmental Relations**

Since UDC's are an arm of the central government, they could, in principle, expect favorable treatment. Batley (1989) argues that the UDCs have a *"privileged"* relationship with central government in that their success will reflect the central government's commitment to urban regeneration (Batley 1989:174). This is borne out in the sense that throughout the 1980s many local authorities, such as Liverpool, were "rate-capped," while the MDC received abundant resources. In addition, since disputes between the two are decided by the Secretary of State, he/she may be expected to rule in the UDC's favor.

Although not locally accountable, UDCs are politically accountable to Parliament, administratively to the Department of Environment (DoE) through the Merseyside Task Force, and financially to the Treasury (Dawson and Parkinson 1991:51). This is consistent with the

Government's aim of removing the political uncertainty and constraints of local government and of democracy. A degree of control is exerted through financial limits and through approval of the UDCs' annually-updated Corporate Plan and individual projects. Furthermore, M.P.s have the right to question Ministers in Parliament about UDCs and the Parliamentary Select Committee may examine the UDCs expenditure and interview the Secretary of State, civil servants and UDCs chief executives. The UDCs also undergo scrutiny by the Auditor-General of the National Audit Office and the Public Accounts Committee. The MDC also must submit an Annual Report and Statement of Accounts to Parliament. Thus, accountability to central government is quite extensive.

The Merseyside Task Force (MTF) provides a direct link between the MDC and the DoE. The MTF was established in 1981 following the Toxteth riots, to provide a coordinated central government approach to urban regeneration on Merseyside. After an initially high profile role dominated by the presence of Michael Heseltine—the Minister for Merseyside, the MTF acts more like a conventional DoE Regional Office (Parkinson and Duffy 1984:93). It now operates on an ad hoc basis, bringing together activities appropriate for the regeneration of the local economy (Morison 1987:109-113). The MTF provides a means of integrating the MDC into the network of central government initiatives, such as the Urban Programme, something that contrasts strongly with the more distant approach taken by the LDDC regarding local authorities and community groups (Stoker 1988:166). The MTF is also responsible for the effective allocation of public funds and for making recommendations to Ministers regarding MDC Board appointments (Trewhella 1992; Molineux 1992). However, the MTF only coordinates central government initiatives. Local authority initiatives remain outside its jurisdiction. Thus, while there is a wide range of initiatives in Merseyside, there is no overall body to coordinate them into a more cohesive strategy.

The MDC receives its financing from four main sources: Grant-in-Aid from central government (£32m for 1992); The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), administered through the Merseyside Integrated Development Operations (£5m for 1992); the national loan fund for commercial projects; and capital receipts from land and building sales. This money is administered by the MTF, which produces an annual statement for the MDC outlining how much money will be allocated in the forthcoming year. Furthermore, a series of `vote-heads' are used to allocate money. These are effectively accounting subheadings covering areas of expenditure, such as administration and land acquisition. Each month the MDC meets with the MTF to decide how much they intend to spend against each vote-head. In this way, the MDC is prevented from holding money in a bank, thus gaining interest on public money. The MDC is not allowed to overspend, although it can juggle money between the various vote-heads. Up to and including 1992, ERDF funds were deducted from Grant-in-Aid money, but beginning in 1993 this was no longer the case. The significance of this is somewhat overshadowed by Government expenditure cuts.

The MDC has delegated powers for projects up to £250,000 and for consultancies up to £100,000, while the MTF can approve projects costing up to £3m. Larger-scale projects require higher authority, from the DoE for proposals between £3 and £15m and from the Treasury for over £15m. Further delegation for projects up to £3m is to be given to the MDC as part of new management arrangements. However, in a bid to avoid controversy wherever possible, any projects that are novel, contentious or community-based, require the approval of the MTF.

The MTF is responsible for coordinating the MDC's Corporate Planning process. Corporate planning is central to the relationship between the UDCs and the DoE (National Audit Office 1988: para.1.10). The Corporate Plan details priorities and programs for the year and is annually updated (with a 5-year expenditure summary) according to a DoE timetable. This culminates in the presentation of the final draft to the Minister at the annual meeting in June. It then provides the basis for reviews and for monitoring the MDC's progress. The Plan is not published, as it is described as *"commercially confidential,"* containing financial information and details of sometimes *"delicate"* commercial negotiations (Trewhella 1992). The approval by the Secretary of State is required to ensure that the corporate plan fits central government objectives.

The extent to which the MDC is genuinely accountable locally remains at the discretion of the MDC. Theoretically, it could ignore the local authorities and pay only lip service to them. Furthermore, unlike the local authorities, the MDC is not subject to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act of 1985 and so available information is limited. Monitoring information is not published; annual financial statements, an annual report and strategy documents are the only sources of information available to local authorities other than consultation with the MDC itself. Even council members on the Board are present in an individual capacity and are forbidden to relate any secret meetings to their respective local authorities (Parkinson and Evans 1989:22).

## DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Initial Development Strategy of the MDC published in August 1981 specified the broad aims of the Corporation and provided a flexible framework for public and private investment within its designated area:

- The MDC is charged with securing the regeneration of its area. It is to bring land into effective use, encourage the development of existing and new industry and commerce, and create an attractive environment with houses and social facilities to encourage people to live and work in the area (Merseyside Development Corporation 1981b:2).

The MDC's major function was to attract private investment through an initial outlay of public funding. Its major task was to create the climate of confidence necessary to attract private investment and development into the area. New private investment was to be attracted to supplement the program of physical improvement necessary to deal with the effects of a declining economy and contracting Port. *"The role of MDC is to provide reclaimed and serviced land for other agencies, normally the private sector, to carry out development"* (Adcock 1984:274).

Thus, three interrelated regeneration programs were developed to enable the MDC to fulfil its aims: 1) Physical Regeneration - acquisition of land, assembly of sites, rehabilitation of the docks and buildings, and the provision of roads and services. 2) Economic Regeneration—supporting existing industries, introducing new economic activity, and working closely with the private sector. 3) Social Renewal—to be achieved in direct cooperation with local authorities, community and voluntary bodies—Providing housing, with special emphasis to be placed on programs for the unemployed and in providing training for more varied and better skills (Merseyside Development Corporation 1981b:3).

In the first three years of its life, the MDC implemented an extensive program of land reclamation, physical construction work and servicing within its designated area. The MDC improved the infrastructure in many areas of the Liverpool designated area. Sefton Street was improved in the early 1980s, while Riverside Drive opened in 1986 to provide a continuous link from the inner ring road at Parliament Street to Jericho Lane. Aigburth Road became a major southern link into the city center and also acted as a relief road for South Liverpool. Local access roads were substantially improved in the Bootle area. In addition, St. Michael's railway station was renovated in the mid-1980s; bus service has been improved in the area. Throughout the waterfront, the MDC has constructed a riverside walk and public access to the quaysides.

By 1984, it was realized that the initial aims of the MDC concerning the generation of industrial activity were not being fulfilled. There had been a significant shortfall in the demand for industrial development such that the MDC found it necessary to abandon its original development strategy (see Appendix A for status of MDC projects). In terms of land use, the MDC had initially allocated 55% of its land for industrial activity, 40% for commercial, residential and recreational activities and 5% for port-related activity (Merseyside Development Corporation 1984). The reorientation, in strategy, involved substituting a tourist-and-leisure-based strategy for the original emphasis on industrial development. This period also marked a shift in policy increasingly toward the marketing and promotional aspects of regeneration. During the early years, the Corporation's resources had been concentrated largely on physical regeneration, paying little attention to its marketing strategy. In 1984, however, a new campaign began: one aimed at primarily creating an awareness of the changes taking place as a result of the MDC. This was to promote a positive image of Merseyside and to help stimulate investment within the designated area (see Madsen 1992).

**The International Garden Festival**

In 1980, the 250-acre Riverside site included the Otterspool domestic refuse tip, still in operation and covering over 80 acres with domestic refuse to a depth of 40 feet, with derelict oil installation depots, underground petroleum tanks and a severely eroded shoreline. In September 1981, this area was selected by the Secretary of State to host the 1984 International Garden Festival (IGF). The reclamation and servicing of the entire area were completed in 18 months, with the major Festival structures on the site were completed soon afterwards. In all, over three million tons of material was on the site, with over 1.7 million tons of silt, rubble and refuse being removed. A further 170,000 tons of domestic refuse had to be removed from the Otterspool Tip and filled with sand before the foundations of the Festival Hall could be laid. By 1984, the former refuse tip was home to the Festival Hall, an arena, water features and several major international gardens. Overall, space was allocated for over 60 “theme gardens”— 40 of which were British and 23 international. Large amounts of earth were moved around to create a varied topography, and 250,000 trees and shrubs, with some trees as high as 30 feet, were planted.

The total Riverside land reclamation cost amounted to over £13 million and was funded as part of the MDC's program for reclamation and servicing of development land. The capital and operational costs of the Festival were an additional £18 million, but these were recouped from admission charges from the 3.5 million visitors (the site needed three million visitors to recoup the capital and operational costs), sponsorship, income from franchises, souvenirs etc. The IGF restored much battered pride to Liverpool, demonstrating that the City could deliver a good product on time and that, given the right sort of event and environment, Liverpool could attract large numbers of visitors. Furthermore, with the restoration of the Garden Festival site, the MDC demonstrated an approach unique in Britain to rapid reclamation and rehabilitation of the most severely degraded and derelict land and structures that merit attention from all relevant urban development authorities and agencies.

In 1990, 88 acres of the IGF site was acquired by Tomorrow's Leisure of Newcastle, on a 125-year lease. Pleasure Island, as the site is now called, retained some gardens and provided a leisure facility, incorporating activities such as roller-skating and bowling in the old Exhibition Hall. The rest of the land the MDC reclaimed in the Riverside area has recently been developed as a major housing scheme. This can be divided into six distinct zones outlined in the table for South Liverpool (See Appendix A). By November 1992, 500 houses had been built out of the 650 or so that were planned for this residential area.

**Albert Dock and Surrounds**

Kings Dock is currently being used as overflow parking for Albert Dock. Development plans were submitted for this site in 1989, which included the construction of an Imax cinema screen, multiplex cinema, theater, sports arena and ice rink. Three-hundred and sixty permanent jobs would be created. There were, however, a number of objections to the scheme (the plans were out of sympathy with the splendid Victorian surroundings, the scheme failed to make the best use of the waterfront, and there were also concerns about the quality of the development), and it was called in by the Secretary of State. New plans were created, resulting in a delay of four years.

Albert Dock, built in the 1840s, is the largest group of Grade I listed buildings in the country. The Docks closed in 1972, and by 1980 dilapidation was already well advanced, with bomb damage exposing the upper floors. Windows were smashed, roof damage had allowed extensive water penetration and the peripheral buildings, quaysides and dock walls had fallen into total disrepair. *"The complex so close to the heart of the city centre became a depressing monument to the decline of the Merseyside economy and the port on which it was based"* (Adcock 1984:280). After a number of proposals for the site had amounted to nothing, the MDC acquired freehold possession of the Albert, Canning and Salthouse Docks in 1982 by agreement with the Docks Company. The Arrowcroft Group came forward with plans to comprehensively restore the quayside buildings, just when Merseyside County Council introduced proposals to convert Block D into a Maritime Museum. Funding arrangements were shared between Arrowcroft and the MDC, with the Corporation meeting the costs of external restoration and structural stabilization of the buildings together with engineering works to the docks, river and quay walls and infrastructure provision. The Arrowcroft Group dealt with the internal conversion of the blocks (except Block D) and quayside works.

By 1988, the five warehouse blocks, which form a rectangle around the dock, had been restored. The complex now houses 68 retail units (66 are let), 36 office units (33 are let), 19 costermonger carts, 130 flats, the Maritime Museum, the Tate Gallery, the Beatles Story, Animation World, the Granada Television Studios and space for 1,500 cars. Nearly 1,000 people are currently employed in the Albert Dock and over six million people visit the complex every year. The Dock is now widely recognized as the symbol of the `new' Liverpool. The MDC believes it had inspired business confidence in the Waterfront and City Center.

The MDC Development Strategy (Merseyside Development Corporation 1990b) outlines the four current principal strategies for the achievement of its aims: i) The creation of a positive perception of Merseyside. ii) The removal of constraints to investment, primarily transport and land, and removing uncertainties affecting local businesses. iii) Improving access to opportunities for local people, in terms of transport, skills, housing, jobs, and amenities. iv) Attracting inward investment from North America and the Far East as a gateway to the EC market and from EC/EFTA countries as a gateway to the UK market. It should be clear that since the MDC's area expansion in 1988, there has been renewed emphasis upon commercial and industrial development, and on the removal of constraints to development within the designated area, although the promotional aspects of strategy have retained their importance.

## LOCAL POLITICS AND THE TRANSFER

One would expect widespread local opposition to the transfer of local planning and development powers from locally accountable councils to a central government appointed corporation board. This was not to be the case for several reasons. First, local opposition was not likely to be widespread because only two UDCs were created: London and Merseyside. In the Merseyside case, the area was severely depressed (80% derelict and unused). The local council had developed many plans for the area, but had been unable to see them to fruition (see Appendix B) primarily because of lack of financing. The UDC legislation promised central government financing. Local MP's enthusiasm for the UDC was overwhelming (Hansard 1981:511-531). The transfer or bypassing of the local council was particularly popular for Labour MPs because the local authorities at the time were controlled by Tory or Liberal-Tory administrations (Meegan 1993:10). Thus, the only local opposition that the establishment of the MDC received was from the Merseyside County Council, abolished by the central government in 1986.

This initial local support was upset by the 1983 election of a radical (Militant Tendency) Labour administration in Liverpool (see Crick 1986). The City Council's critical stance was quickly muffled by other political battles with the central government over rate setting and council housing and internally with sections of the local community (see Meegan 1990). Given the intensity of these battles, the Council ignored the MDC even to the extent of not filling their MDC board position between 1983 and 1989 (Meegan 1993:10). This is not to say that local politics did not effect the MDC's efforts to revitalize the waterfront, for according to Meegan (1993:11), the local council's program of *municipal socialism* (municipal house building and environmental and leisure development) undermined the MDC's industrial efforts by alienating potential private sector investment (see also Parkinson 1990a). Some have argued that this partially explains the MDC's shift in development strategy further in the direction of infrastructure and tourism and leisure. These were the success stories: the International Garden Festival and Tall Ships Race and the Albert Dock complex.

The second way that local politics affected the MDC's development strategy relates to its conflict with the Liverpool Council, its lack of local accountability, and its enlarged area and mission in 1988. The expanded area included the Vauxhall area in north Liverpool. Vauxhall has traditionally been an area with high unemployment and a large population of Irish immigrants. The area has been the focus of several major urban programs, such as the 1930s clearance that swept away many old slums in Vauxhall. Many inhabitants stayed in the area, moving to new walk-up tenement blocks. In the 1960s, bold new clearance programs tore the heart out of Liverpool to make way for the new Mersey tunnel and ring road. Many people from Vauxhall found themselves moved yet again, some to the new overspill estates on the outskirts of Liverpool like Kirby and Cantril Farm. In 1978, LCC disclosed plans to demolish many tenement flats, some of which were in the Vauxhall area. Local rehousing could not be guaranteed.

It was at this point that a group of Vauxhall residents, said enough is enough and organized themselves into the Eldonian Community Association, taking their name from a tenement scheduled for demolition. Their aim was to keep the community together. The Eldonia Community Association conducted a survey of families in Vauxhall, which showed that 80% wished to stay in the area. Prospects were grim since Tate & Lyle, a major local employer, had closed. In 1982, they formed the Portlands Gardens Housing Co-op and drew up plans to build 105 houses on five local sites. The new Militant Labour Council of 1983 municipalized all cooperatives. In response, the Eldonian Housing Co-op was formed and registered with the Housing Corporation; a longstanding conflictual relationship with Liverpool City Council was born. When the Thatcher Government backed Liverpool's co-ops as a way of sniping at the Labour-controlled city council, the Eldonians made the most of the opportunity.

Michael Heseltine secured the transfer of the Tate and Lyle site and its buildings to English Estates, the property development arm of the Department of Trade and Industry. Tate and Lyle had to give £400,000 toward the cost of demolition. The Eldonians were busy meeting English Estates at their Liverpool office to secure their trust. In late 1982, Heseltine announced an ideas competition for the site, run and paid for by English Estates. Liverpool City Architect James Robb won first prize, but only because the Eldonians' submission, with Merseyside Improved Homes, was disqualified, for letting a local Catholic newspaper have their scheme before the assessment. They were to get a reprieve, however, with the council being financially unable to realize their plans.

Despite opposition from the local council, including refusing planning permission for the Eldonian Village in 1985, the Eldonians succeeded. This was due in no small part to friends in high places; not only Central Government, but senior members of the Catholic Church, who had the ear of the Prime Minister. English Estates paid for the planning appeal to get the Liverpool City Council decision overturned, and a derelict land grant was used to reclaim the site. The Eldonians lobbied for the MDC expansion and their inclusion under the expanded area to get out from under the Liverpool City Council's jurisdiction. The Eldonians finally purchased a 12-acre site with Merseyside Task Force money. In 1989, Prince Charles officially opened the Eldonian Village that consisted of 160 properties, built courtesy of Housing Corporation funds. Phase I had cost £6M in all. The MDC were obvious allies for the Eldonians, as they had ideas of expansion.

MDC's area expansion has led to an increased population (from 450 to 7,000) and the subsequent questions of another level of accountability: the neighborhood. The draft Vauxhall Area Strategy was believed to reflect community concerns for affordable housing and at least provide space for community based economic development plans (Parkinson & Dawson 1990:17). The Eldonians had a lot of opportunity for consultation. In fact, the initial boundary of the extended MDC area was moved from the railway line to the Vauxhall Road on the Eldonians request to incorporate their village.

The Eldonian/MDC partnership appears to be a win/win situation. The Eldonians have been allowed to do community-led development in the Vauxhall area. The Liverpool City Council has been thwarted in its attempts to force municipal housing on the Vauxhall residents.

The MDC has gained politically important local support and has met a greater portion of its original charge by including the Eldonian housing projects.

## THE DISLOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT PLANNING IN THE US[2]

In the United State's decentralized federal political system, the central government transfer of local planning and development powers is not permissible. The national government does not have the authority to transfer planning and development powers. These powers belong to state government and in fact, historically many states have relinquished some of these powers to state-chartered local municipalities through home rule provisions. Thus, the national government is dependent upon state enabling legislation even to channel dollars through state and local government to privately led quasi-public development agencies. The buzzword is public-private partnerships. These organizations lead, but do not plan, redevelopment activities in the New Orleans and the U.S. in general. The system is much more competitive and often chaotic. Different private corporations compete to attract public dollars to execute their private or corporate development plans. Here the local city councils maintain planning and development powers, be they what they are in the U.S. (a product of state law). In theory, it is still the local planning agency (with some oversight by state and federal bureaucracies) and the city bureaucracy that is left to coordinate these private corporate development projects to the synergetic benefit of the city, its residents, and private corporations located therein.

New Orleans, unlike many U.S. cities, did not take advantage of urban renewal and other 1960s federal programs because state and local politicians were suspicious of the 'strings' attached to those dollars. After Moon Landrieu became Mayor, New Orleans began to take advantage of federal dollars for downtown redevelopment (Whelan, Young, and Lauria 1994:6). But since the Board of Commissioners for the Port of New Orleans (Dock Board) controlled riverfront land and, at that time, favored maritime use (Young and Whelan 1993:139), these redevelopment activities occurred away from the river (e.g., Armstrong Park just north (lakeside) of the French Quarter, the Piazza D'Italia some four blocks from the river, and the Superdome on the north end of Poydras St., some 15 blocks from the river). It really was not until after the 1984 World's Fair that redevelopment activities began to focus on the riverfront (Lauria, Whelan and Young 1994).

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY: PUBLIC\PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The three principal actors involved in riverfront redevelopment in New Orleans are the Dock Board (a state agency), the Audubon Park Commission (a local, city controlled quasi-public agency), and the City of New Orleans (a state chartered municipality). Secondary actors include, the Vieux Carre Commission, the Downtown Development District Board, the New Orleans Exhibition Hall Authority, the various private corporations interested in development opportunities, small business organizations, and local resident groups. As will unfold later in the local politics section of the paper, since the Dock Board has strategically decided to raise revenue for its modernization efforts by selling or leasing its downtown riverfront property and the City of New Orleans has decided to leave economic development planning to the private sector, the riverfront redevelopment organizational strategy has by default or design fallen into the hand of the quasi-public Audubon Park Commission and its private nonprofit management corporation, the Audubon Institute. Politically, this is a very well-insulated public/private partnership.

The Dock Board governs the Port of New Orleans that consists of 12 miles along the Mississippi River, facilities along the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet, and the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal. This includes state-owned land that lies in three parishes. The Dock Board consists of seven members appointed by the Governor to represent those parishes: four from Orleans Parish, two from Jefferson, and one from St. Bernard. Since the Dock Board governs the land along the river, any development plans must be approved and the land acquired or leased from the Dock Board. The Dock Board is a large state agency with over 1,000 employees and a $50 million operating budget (Brandt and Whelan 1994:9).

Until 1989, the Port had no dedicated source of revenue or tax base to finance capital improvements. Its revenues came from rents, leases, and fees. In 1989, the Louisiana electorate approved a one cent per gallon increase in gasoline tax to fund infrastructure improvements. The state transportation trustfund provided the Port with $100 million for a five-year port improvement program (Brandt and Whelan 1994:10). The decline of the Port, its lack of a dedicated revenue source, and the recent rise in value of riverfront land for non-maritime uses has convinced the Dock Board to pursue a new development strategy of capitalizing on the non-maritime value of its downtown riverfront land through land leases and sales (although still requiring some maritime use until the late 1980s) to finance capital improvements in port facilities elsewhere (the uptown wharves and the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal).

The City of New Orleans has a strong mayor, council form of government. The Mayor has the power to appoint department heads, initiate the budget process, authorize contracts and veto council actions. The council needs five out of its seven members to vote to override a mayoral veto. The Mayor is elected to a four-year term, but cannot succeed himself after two consecutive terms. The council is also elected to four year terms; five are elected from districts and two from the City as a whole.

The City has an independent Planning Commission (CPC), whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and approved by the council. The Commissioner's terms are staggered and Commissioners cannot be removed without cause. The Commission hires and fires the Director of Planning, who serves at the pleasure of the Commission and has control over the staff, who are civil service employees. The CPC is not an operational agency, but rather an advisory body. Its major responsibility is developing and monitoring a City Comprehensive Plan and conducting site planning reviews. The CPC also serves as the City's Zoning Commission. Therefore, zoning, zoning waivers and special exceptions and its site planning reviews are required by law to be reviewed by the Planning Commission prior to City Council action. Like the mayoral veto, it takes a five-member City Council vote to override any Planning Commission recommendation.

The Audubon Park Commission's (APC) facilities are publicly owned by the citizens of New Orleans. The Commission consists of 24 members appointed by the Mayor of New Orleans and approved by the City Council. It governs Audubon Park, the Audubon Zoo, the Aquarium of the Americas, and Woldenberg Park. It has a five-year management contract with the Audubon Institute (AI), a nonprofit private management company, to manage, operate, and develop those and future facilities governed by the APC. The APC concerns itself with the larger or global planning issues, fundraising, and state and local political relations, not the day-to-day operations of its facilities. It is the land owner and must approve any AI expenditures over $100,000, and the disposal of any APC land or any of its animal collection. The APC has no staff. The AI's staff, as part of its management contract, staffs the APC board. The AI has a board of directors elected from its membership (people who buy yearly passes to the Zoo and/or the Aquarium). Through its management contract with the APC, the AI board of directors supervises the day-to-day operations of the APC facilities. It has the power to hire and fire staff and can approve expenditures of less than $100,000.

The AI is an outgrowth of a national trend to privatize this type of municipal facility. As cities faced fiscal problems in the 1970s, urban zoo and parks developed zoological societies that used user fees to upgrade their facilities and provide more and better services. As these employees grew to be a larger and larger component of the facility's staff, the governing commission began to feel the need to contract out for management services and spin off their staff into a private nonprofit management corporation. In New Orleans, it was viewed important to be able to do this so as to avoid *restrictive* civil service regulations and be able pay the wages to hire the most qualified persons. Thus, in 1989, the state passed enabling legislation and the city passed a city ordinance that allowed the APC to contract out to a private management corporation to run its facilities. Thus, the Friends of the Zoo dissolved and many of its board members became board members of the new corporation: The Audubon Institute. As the APC and the AI have become major riverfront developers, this transformation is a further depoliticizing and privatizing of the redevelopment arm of the City of New Orleans.

## DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

It is almost a cardinal rule that any discussion of redevelopment in New Orleans begin with a discussion of the riverfront expressway controversy (Baumbach and Borah 1980, Smith and Keller 1983, Brooks and Young 1993). Perhaps this is because this project and the nature of the resulting conflict highlights the symbiotic economic and social relationship between New Orleans' central business district and its French Quarter. More importantly, however, this conflict unveiled emerging factions within the New Orleans's historic social-economic-political elite (see Smith and Keller 1983:137-139, Young and Whelan 1993:40), and revealed the moment of decline of the city's longstanding caretaker regime (see Whalen, Young and Lauria 1994). Perhaps most importantly for riverfront redevelopment, the defeat of the riverfront expressway prevented further insulation of the French Quarter and the CBD from the Mississippi River just at a time when the previous insulator (the railroad and its transit sheds) was losing its economic justification (Baumbach, et.al. 1988). Thus, many analysts believe that if the riverfront expressway had been built, the French Quarter would have been severely damaged, and riverfront redevelopment and the concomitant tourism renaissance would have been unlikely (Baumbach and Borah 1980, Baumbach et.al. 1988, Brooks and Young 1993:253).

**The Early Years**

The first redevelopment efforts near the riverfront, located at the foot of Canal Street and the River, were completed in the late 1960s: the International Trade Mart (ITM) in 1968 and the Rivergate Exhibition Facility in 1969. The ITM (now called the World Trade Center) is a 33-story office building with 520,000 square feet of office space. It houses consulates, international business and trade offices, federal agencies dealing with international commerce, shipping and freight companies, international law, banking, and insurance firms, and the Dock Board (Baumbach et.al. 1988). The Rivergate was New Orleans' first major exhibition and convention center.

The riverfront expressway controversy brought potential threats to the viability of the French Quarter to the forefront. The Vieux Carre Demonstration Grant study, and later the Quarterfront study, focused on relieving development pressures on the French Quarter by proposing non-maritime development along the riverfront near the Quarter (Baumbach et.al. 1988). At the same time, the Dock Board commissioned a study (Centroport) to evaluate the feasibility of relocating port facilities from the downtown riverfront to the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal and the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet. The study concluded that such a move would be better suited for new technological developments in cargo handling (containers), freeway access, and expansion while freeing riverfront land for urban development. This study marks the beginning of the Dock Board's strategy of using the increasing land values of riverfront land to capitalize port development elsewhere.

After the defeat of the expressway, Mayor Moon Landrieu began efforts to revitalize the riverside portion of the French Quarter. This included the *Moonwalk*, which is a 410 foot long, 12-foot-wide riverfront boardwalk adjacent to Jackson Square. These efforts also included the rejuvenation of the Jackson Square area, the French Market, and the Washington Artillery Park (Baumbach et.al. 1988:9). Later (in the mid 1980s), the Jackson Brewery would renovate and shore-up the upriver from Jackson Square section of the riverfront with a festival marketplace development (see Brooks, Wilkinson and Young 1984).

The next two developments were private developments upriver of the French Quarter, a hotel and a mixed-use commercial development: the Hilton Hotel Complex and Canal Place. The Hilton complex, located just upriver from the ITM, required the consolidation of 23.3 acres of land adjacent to the Poydras Street Wharf and a lease of the Poydras Street Wharf from the Dock

Board. The Dock Board allowed non-maritime use above the wharf, but required maritime use for the wharf itself. This became the pattern of lease developments with the Dock Board through the mid 1980s (Young and Whelan 1993:140). The $250 million project included a 30-story hotel with 1,200 rooms, an attached tennis club, a 1,500-car parking garage, and an international cruiseship passenger terminal (Baumbach et. al. 1988:10). Phase I was completed in 1977, and a four story, 450-room addition with a skywalk to the Poydras Street Wharf was completed in 1984. Later developments at the site include a high rise, residential condominium building (One River Place, the first residential use of riverfront land) and a riverboat casino (Lauria, Whelan and Young 1984:10). Canal Place, located on a 13-acre site on the Quarter side of Canal Street and the River, includes a 439-room hotel, 960,000 square feet of office and retail space, and a 1,500-car garage); Canal Place was completed in 1979. The City and the national government were involved with a $5 million UDAG for infrastructure improvements in the area (see Young 1984 and Lauria, Whelan and Young 1994:10).

**The World's Fair Strategy**

Riverfront redevelopment really did not begin to consolidate until after the 1984 World's Fair Exhibition. The fair's theme, "The World of Rivers: Fresh Walter as a Source of Life", was meant to promote New Orleans as a world-class tourist mecca. As the theme implied, the riverfront was the focal point. With more than five years of planning, the fair ran May through November 1984. The fair's site was chosen to shore-up the already existing but speculative riverfront development around and on the Poydras Street Wharf (Smith and Keller, 1983:143) and to further stimulate non-maritime riverfront development (Baumbach et.al. 1988:11). The site consisted of 82 acres bounded by the river, South Front, Erato and Poydras Streets. This site was chosen because of pedestrian access to the French Quarter and to major hotels in the CBD as well as to take advantage of the already planned New Orleans Convention Center.

The riverfront development interests were strong proponents of the fair. The fair would transform, through public infrastructure improvements, 82 acres of riverfront into a short-term tourist attraction with prospects of long term commercial and residential development (Smith and Keller 1983:143). Sixty-five of the 82 acres were leased and returned to the private and public owners after the fair: $88.3 million to the Exhibition Hall Authority for the 15-acre convention center, $14 million to the Dock Board for the covered wharves needed by the fair, and small property owners in the Warehouse District adjacent to the riverfront property (Baumbach et.al. 1988:12). The fair's sponsors were partially insured against risk by the state government, much of the development costs was paid for with public monies and Governor Treen agreed that the state would absorb the first $5 million of any fair deficits. The fair's sponsors claimed that it would create 14,000 short-term jobs, 39,000 total jobs and $2 billion in economic benefit to the regional economy (Smith and Keller 1983:143).

Although the fair was a financial disaster ($100 million deficit) and many small businesses associated with it went bankrupt, socially, the fair was a spectacular success, and ideologically and symbolically, it paved the way for the success of the existing but speculative developments and future riverfront developments. According to Baumbach et.al. (1988:12),

> ... it was not until the opening of the New Orleans' World's Fair in May 1984 that the city truly reunited with the river. For the first time since the covering of the wharves in 1905, the city was physically visually, and psychologically linked with its riverfront. The 1984 World's Fair dramatized the vast potential of the river's edge.

Also, after the dramatic financial fiasco settled, the fair was credited with many positive residual effects (see Tews 1986, Lauria, Whelan, and Young 1995, McClain 1994).

As indicated, the fair provided the first tenant for the New Orleans Convention Center, the original building on a 15-acre site containing 820,000 square feet of which 381,000 square feet was exhibit space. As with most public developments in the U.S. at this time, it required a complex financial package: $17.8 million in federal dollars, $30 million in state dollars, and $48.5 million in Exhibition Hall Authority revenue bonds supported by a 2% hotel-motel tax. A later addition doubled the exhibit space and added more meeting rooms and a larger ballroom. The Convention Center is slated for another expansion to more than a million square feet in exhibit space in the 1990s. At the same time, the number of hotels almost doubled between 1975 and 1985: 10,686 to 19,500 (Brooks and Young 1993:262). Not surprisingly, it is now claimed the New Orleans can compete with other major U.S. cities in terms of convention and hotel space and can certainly out compete most, in terms of extra convention entertainment activities. The Convention held 104 events that attracted 405,334 participants in 1993. Over 23,000 jobs in the local economy have been attributed to the activities of the Convention Center. The Exhibition Hall Authority estimates that $9.3 billion dollars have circulated in New Orleans due to the activities of the Convention Center (Lauria, Whelan and Young 1994:11).

The second major project to come out of the 1984 World's Fair is Rouse’s $55 million Riverwalk festival marketplace development that opened in the fall of 1986. The City acquired an $8 million low-interest UDAG loan to help Rouse redevelop part of the World’s Fair site. The development extends for approximately a half of a mile between Poydras and Julia Streets. It occupies a portion of three former Dock Board wharves. The Riverwalk has 180,000 square feet of restaurants, shops, small eating places and small boutiques (Baumbach et.al. 1988:16).

Approximately 2,300 people are employed, and an average of 23,000 persons visit the Riverwalk daily (Lauria, Whelan and Young 1994:13). In addition, Rouse used part of the UDAG to restore the Spanish Plaza (a gift from the Spanish government to the people of New Orleans to commemorate Spanish history in the city). The Plaza links Canal and Poydras Streets at the River and is the embarkation point for river cruise vessels: The President, Creole Queen, the Zoo Cruise, and The Queen of New Orleans (now The Flamingo), the first gaming riverboat in the downtown area. The Plaza offers outdoor dinning, a sidewalk cafe, and an outdoor stage that hosts special music events with the River as a backdrop.

The third major impact the fair had on the area was off the river in the Warehouse district. It is clear that the improvements made for the fair helped accelerate the Warehouse district's transformation into a residential neighborhood and cultural area. Since 1984, at least 10 historic buildings have been renovated for residential use: there are approximately 1,036 apartments with over 2,500 residents now (Lauria, Whelan and Young 1984:13). Some of the renovation occurred in buildings used during the fair, and much of it was financed through the tax incentive credits of 1981. The area has also developed into a cultural arts area with 13 galleries and several new restaurants and night clubs. Thus, the area adjacent to what was riverfront wharves, and now is either the Convention Center, the Rouse Riverwalk or the Hilton Complex , was transformed from underutilized warehouses into a thriving inner city residential, cultural, and entertainment enclave, spurred on by the tourist developments along the river and the labor market in the CBD.

**Riverfront 2000 and the Audubon Institute**

The successful riverfront development, the activities associated with the World's fair, and the urban Aquarium as a tourist attraction craze that swept the U.S. (e.g., Boston, Baltimore) gave the Audubon Park Commission the idea that a riverfront aquarium located near the Quarter and the CBD would be very successful in New Orleans. The APC presented the idea to the City and a feasibility study was conducted in 1985 (Baumbach et. al 1988:23). The aquarium was sold to the public based on its success elsewhere in the U.S. and on its contributing to the missing family component of the New Orleans tourism base. The only controversy was that the suggested location was perceived as another threat to the French Quarter. The fear was that the increased tourist pressure (success) would transform the authentic French Quarter into something like another Disney adventure. The location held that the Aquarium of the Americas and Woldenberg Park were built along the riverfront from Canal Street into the Quarter to Jackson Square. The Aquarium was to be built on the Bienville Wharf and the Park would extend for 16 acres toward the square. The city owned part of the land, and the Dock Board agreed for the first time for a completely non-maritime use of a mothballed wharf. In November of 1986, New Orleans voters agreed to provide $25 million bond issue of the $40 million dollar project. The additional $15 million was to be raised privately.

It was the future addition of the Aquarium to the facilities of the APC that led to their request for enabling legislation that would allow them to contract out to a private nonprofit management corporation. Thus, the Audubon Institute was born. The Aquarium was completed on schedule in the fall of 1990, and it has been very successful, exceeding all attendance expectations, while the park has been used often for special events (e.g., the French Quarter Festival, the Tomato Festival, July 4th, to name a few). At the same time, according to many local French Quarter aficionados and the Quarter's resident association, the increased tourist pressure has begun to take its toll.

Shortly after the opening success of the Aquarium, the Audubon Institute presented to the City its Riverfront 2000. Not a comprehensive plan in a sense, but rather a proposal for a series of riverfront projects adjacent to the French Quarter: expansion of Woldenberg Park, an insectarium and a museum. Riverfront 2000 also includes the third phase of the Convention Center expansion and the construction of a new facility for the New Orleans Center for the Creative Arts (NOCCA), a part-time high school for talented artists and musicians, in the Marigny further downriver. The Audubon Institute proposed that this project be funded with another city and state bond issue, a hotel tax, and private contributions (Lauria, Whelan and Young 1994:15). Although the Audubon Institute's proposal was never accepted by the City Council, but the Audubon Institute is proceeding with its preparatory work, the state legislature has approved the financing for the third phase of the Convention Center expansion, NOCCA has acquired the site in Marigny for its new facilities, with ground breaking expected soon. The battle lines are drawn around the Esplanade Avenue anchor: the insectarium and museum. A third party proposed a gaming boat at the Esplanade Wharf, but the Dock Board has recently (1994) ruled it out due to the dangerous curve in the River near the wharf.

The last, but certainly not least, development along or near the riverfront is that of gaming. In 1991, the state legislature authorized riverboat gambling. There are five boats slated for the downtown riverfront. One, as mentioned, is already in place at the Poydras Street Wharf. The other four have been proposed in many places, two along the quarter riverfront at Jax Brewery and the Esplanade Wharf. The others have been moving up and down the uptown side of the Canal Street, from Poydras Street to the Mississippi River Bridge. The major location problem appears to be a combination of some boat companies wanting agglomeration (three boats side by side) and the lack of parking available. It is not clear at this date where these boats will be docked, but there is much pressure to keep them off the Quarter riverfront.

In 1992, the state legislature, under political pressure from Governor Edwards, authorized a land-based casino on the site of the Rivergate convention center at the foot of Canal Street. This is an intriguing story and the intrigue is not over, but it is clear that a land-based casino is to be built by Harrahs on the Rivergate site sometime in the mid 1990s. Already there has been a land grab in the areas upriver of the Rivergate and inland from the riverfront in the Warehouse district. Five separate hotels are in the planning stages with moore than 1,000 additional rooms. The impact of the casino and related uses is of major concern of the Quarter and Warehouse district residents. Already, the land uses in the first two blocks of the French Quarter off Canal Street are changing dramatically: witness the new House of Blues on Decatur Street. At the same time, residents have successfully fought off a proposed Vegas-type entertainment spot near the Convention Center.

**Summary**

If one looks downriver from the Mississippi River Bridge, almost all of the maritime wharves have been transformed into mixed-maritime/tourist or non-maritime/tourist use: The New Orleans Convention Center abuts the Rouse Riverwalk which adjoins the Hilton's International Rivercenter Complex, which is adjacent to the World Trade Center and adjoins the Spanish Plaza which merges with the Ferry Terminal, then the Aquarium of the Americas, Woldenberg Park, Jax Brewery and the Moonwalk, followed by some undeveloped levee and the Esplanade Wharf (both of which are scheduled for redevelopment by the Audubon Institute's Riverfront 2000 plan into a continuation of Woldenberg Park and an Insectarium respectively).

This is all connected by the riverfront trolley line. Next comes the turn in the river that prevents one from seeing the working wharves along the Marigny and the Bywater neighborhoods to the Industrial Canal.

Thus, for over 30 years the riverfront in New Orleans has been transformed from working wharves into a commercial/tourist/recreational riverfront. This began with the decline of the port and its wharves and rail facilities primarily due to a lack of capital financing mechanism for modernization (see Young and Whelan 1993). It was followed by a Dock Board redevelopment strategy that slowly transformed from protecting maritime use only. The rise in potential riverfront land value for non-maritime uses combined with the lack of dollars needed for port modernization convinced the Dock Board to allow negotiated mixed use development. Finally, the Dock Board decided to take advantage of this potential land value differential and lease and sell downtown riverfront land for non-maritime uses to finance port modernization elsewhere: with the provision that suitable maritime wharves and facilities be developed elsewhere and after a community-based master plan has been developed for the riverfront land (Brooks and Young 1993:266-267).

## LOCAL POLITICS AND THE DISLOCATION

Riverfront redevelopment in the U.S. has faced some serious challenges, not the least of which has been the politics associated with jurisdictional fragmentation (see Young and Whelan 1993, Brandt and Whelan 1994). New Orleans has numerous boards, commissions, and special districts that are not directly accountable to its citizens or controlled by their local representatives, the Mayor or the City Council; the important ones for our story are the Dock Board and the

Audubon Park Commission and its contractee, the Audubon Institute. Riverfront redevelopment is also a subset of land-based urban development in general; thus, it is subject to the uncertainties of the locality's governing regime. This is the heart of the dislocation of planning and development powers to be discussed here. Although the story has been told in detail elsewhere (see Whelan 1987, Whelan and Young 1991, Whelan, Young and Lauria 1994, and Cook and Lauria 1995), it is instructive to discuss how it pertains to these riverfront redevelopment efforts.

Prior to the Landrieu Administration in 1970, the state of Louisiana and the city viewed federal dollars with suspicion. They did not want the federal government meddling in state and local affairs, and they were specifically concerned with what an influx of federal dollars would do to the politics of maintaining the state and local governing coalition. Landrieu realized that the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 had changed the nature and potential of the local caretaker regime's electoral coalition. He realized that he could incorporate blacks into the electoral coalition with federal dollars without antagonizing the traditional caretaker component of the local governing coalition. Although Landrieu primarily used antipoverty funds and funneled them through black political organizations (Whelan, Young, and Lauria 1994:5), he also supported the riverfront expressway and later supported the renovation of the French Market and Jackson Square area and developed the first non-maritime use of the river downtown: the Moonwalk.

It was not until the Dutch Morial Administration that the use of federal funds for economic development became a priority (Whelan, Young, and Lauria 1994:6). It was this shift, the City (Morial) taking a leadership role in economic development, that began to create problems for the caretaker components of the governing coalition, and Morial's support dwindled. He was able to maintain the mayorship because of the black electoral coalition he had consolidated.

It was under the Dutch Morial Administrations (1978-1986) that riverfront development was consolidated. Under Morial, the Hilton Complex was completed, a UDAG was used for the Canal Place mixed-use commercial project, the Spanish Plaza renovation and the World's Fair were completed, the New Orleans Convention Center project was planned and approved, and Rouse's Riverwalk negotiated. The Morial signature here was that the City was involved in all the planning and negotiations often in conflict with the Dock Board.

With the withdrawal of federal dollars and the increased emphasis on private sector leverage of federal economic development dollars, Barthelemy returned the development leadership to the private sector in general, and, in particular, by encouraging the growth and development of quasi-public development organizations (Whelan, Young, and Lauria 1994): the Audubon Park Commission's creation of the Audubon Institute. Caught in the historical conflicts with the Dock Board over the Rivergate among others (see Young and Whelan 1993), Barthelemy retreated and purposively dislocated riverfront redevelopment planning to Audubon Institute. The Audubon Institute produced the magnificent success story of the Aquarium of the Americas/Woldenberg Park and had other grandiose plans for the French Quarter riverfront embodied in Riverfront 2000.

## CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Although their organizational strategies differ, both countries have moved toward privately led redevelopment activities. In the centralized political system of the UK, this took the form of creating national corporations geographically circumscribed in local communities and transferring planning and development powers and responsibilities from the local councils to these corporations. These urban development corporations, although public agencies, were privately led and emphasized the leverage of private dollars with the public subsidies that they channeled. These UDCs planned and implemented the development activities; most central government economic development dollars were exclusively channeled through them. Thus, the UDCs directly supplant the local council politically and its bureaucracy technically.

On the other hand, in the decentralized federal political system in the U.S., the central government transfer was not possible. The national government does not have the authority to transfer planning and development powers. These powers belong to the state level of government and in fact, historically many states have relinquished some of these powers to the local governments through home rule provisions. Thus, the federal government in the U.S. is dependent upon state level enabling legislation even to channel dollars through state and local government to privately led quasi-public development agencies. The buzzword was public-private partnerships. These organizations lead, but do not plan, redevelopment activities in the New Orleans and the U.S. in general. The system is much more competitive and chaotic. Different private corporations compete to attract public dollars to execute their private or corporate development plans. Here the local city councils maintain planning and development powers. In theory, it is still the local planning agency (with some oversight by state and federal bureaucracies) and the city bureaucracy that are left to coordinate these private corporate development projects to the synergetic benefit of the city, its residents, and private corporations located therein. In practice, the local councils find themselves either in a coerced position to accept whatever proposals that come before them or risk the political fallout of doing nothing to help the city develop and of not taking advantage of (attracting) state and federal dollars that promote development. Often they find that they must use or create quasi-public development agencies to promote and/or carry out development in order to avoid the politics of close public scrutiny.

The two localities' development strategies were remarkably similar: tourism and boosterism. Although in Liverpool, the UDC had a more diversified strategy, including small business development, and later housing through the Eldonians. The International Garden Festival, the Albert Dock, and the Tall Ships Race are remarkably similar to the World's Fair, the Riverwalk, the Moonwalk, and the Jackson Brewery.

Finally, although the political implications are also strikingly similar—the isolation of economic development planning and implementation from local public accountability, the policy implications vary greatly. In the U.K., except working politically to regain planning and development powers in their localities, local councils must plan around the local UDC's plans: augment their plans, fill the holes, and do what they are not doing. In the U.S., local politicians and planners either become obstructionists or deal makers: using the planning and development powers that they do possess. The peculiar feeling I have is that things are so remarkably similar. It makes me wonder whether, perhaps, there is more truth to the structuralist position than we like to think (see also Fainstein, Gordon and Harloe 1992, Fainstein 1994, DiGaetano and Klemanski 1993).

## ENDNOTES

1. The case study of the Merseyside Development Corporation was conducted by second year MCD students in the Department of Civic Design, University of Liverpool in Fall 1992. The students were Guy Currey, Steven Daniels, Ruth Farrow, Jonathon Francis, Gareth Griffiths, James Hall, Gareth Jones, Andrea McGuinness, Matt Mulderrig, Gareth Potts, Russell Poulton, and Liz Wood-Griffiths. I supervised the class project during as part of the Department of Civic Design, University of Liverpool - College of Urban and Public Affairs, University of New Orleans Exchange Agreement. The students used a case study research design (see Yin 1984). Following their case study protocols, they systematically evaluated local media sources, the House of Commons Debates and Papers, local authority planning documents, MDC documents where available, and secondary sources. They interviewed MDC employees, local planners, local politicians, and local community organizations.

2. Notwithstanding a few interviews and some local newspaper accounts, this case is constructed from secondary sources (see Baumbach and Borah 1980, Baumbach et.al. 1988, Brandt and Whelan 1994; Brooks and Young 1993, Cook and Lauria 1995, Lauria, Whelan and Young 1995, Smith and Keller 1983, Whelan 1987, Whelan and Dupont 1986, Whelan and Young 1991, Whelan, Young and Lauria 1994, Young 1984, and Young and Whelan 1993).

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## Interviews

Mr F. Bunnie, (2/11/1992) Liverpool City Council.
Ms S. Connelly, (20/11/1992) Vauxhall Neighbourhood Community Council.
Mr B. Bob Davis, (18/8/1992) Assistant Commercial Director, MDC.
Mr T. Jago, (13/11/1992) Liverpool City Council.
Mr G. Jones, (4/12/92) former Planning Assistant, MDC.
Mr S. Marsh, (25/11/1992) Sefton MBC.
Prof. P. Minford, (13/11/1992) former advisor to PM Thatcher.
Ms P. Molineux, (13/11/1991) Merseyside Task Force.
Cllr H. Rimmer, (23.11.92) leader of Liverpool City Council.
Mr B. Roberts, (6.11.92) Sefton MBC.
Mr C. Tremeer, (6.11.92) Eldonian Development Trust.
Mr G. Trewhella, (11.11.92) Merseyside Development Corporation.
Mr A. Wallace, (13.11.92) Wirral MBC.
(15.12.92) Merseyside Tourism Board
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