

# THE COOPER SQUARE PLAN



REPORT FOR DISCUSSION

OCTOBER 15, 1986



# THE COOPER SQUARE PLAN

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Cover photograph: East Fourth Street

Brian Rose/Ed Fausty



We dedicate this report to Walter Thabit  
whose 1971 Cooper Square Alternate Plan  
continues to serve as an inspiration to us.



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Cooper  
Square  
Committee

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## INTRODUCTION

The Cooper Square Urban Renewal Area is one of the few remaining undeveloped urban renewal sites in New York City. It is a vestige of the sixties' enthusiasm for rebuilding the American city, cleaning the slate and clearing sites for a new utopian vision of the city. However, many of the urban renewal projects of that era that came to fruition were designed to eradicate the slums by removing not only worn-out buildings, but by removing people as well.

The Cooper Square Committee was formed in reaction to just such a design. The Committee proposed, instead, a plan that preserved the ethnic and economic mix of the neighborhood. The Alternate Plan of 1971, although largely unimplemented, articulated values that are still relevant to the neighborhood in 1986.

The Urban Renewal Area today is simultaneously a vital community of creative and industrious people, and a neglected backwater of vacant lots and run-down buildings. There are 22 tenement buildings comprising some 370 units of housing, and 22 commercial buildings containing businesses, artists' lofts and theaters. Several of these buildings are abandoned and all are in relatively poor condition, but few of them are considered expendable by the community. Two subsidized housing projects have been built as part of the original Cooper Square Alternate Plan: a Section 8, federally subsidized, 146-unit apartment building, and 150 units subsidized under Section 202 for the elderly.

Urban renewal status has meant good and bad things for the community. City ownership and strong tenant organizations have kept the rents extremely low in all of the buildings, making housing and commercial spaces affordable for everyone. As a result, the Cooper Square community is essentially the same one that existed fifteen years ago when the Alternate Plan was approved. In fact, most of the residents on the urban renewal site have lived in Cooper Square for over ten years.

On the other hand, the uncertainty of urban renewal status --living on month-to-month leases, not knowing when or if demolition and redevelopment might occur--has had a debilitating effect on the community. The city has invested very little in keeping up the various properties, which continue to decline physically. Several buildings have become uninhabitable over the years because of neglect.

Moreover, private investment has been minimal. Only the tenants themselves have been willing to risk their time and money to fix crumbling buildings, and in some cases, actually save them from demolition. But most of these efforts have been limited by the fact of city ownership. Many people have been willing to improve their individual living and working spaces, banking on five or ten years of low-rent occupancy, but few have been willing or able to make substantial structural repairs to

buildings that may be taken from them at any time.

By the 1980's it became obvious that there was little hope for the implementation of the Cooper Square Alternate Plan. The 1971 plan was made with the expectation of substantial government spending on housing, and the primary focus of the redevelopment outlined in it was on demolition and new construction rather than on preservation.

This report of the new Cooper Square Plan is made in the context of a greatly changed scene. Federal funding for urban renewal projects has essentially disappeared, leaving the task of redevelopment to the private market and to what programs or initiatives are available on the local and state levels. This fundamental shift in government policy is not likely to change in the near future. Therefore, the financing options recommended in this report are made in that context; every attempt has been made to prepare a plan that is realistic and possible to implement now, regardless of the uncertainty of the federal government's role in providing subsidies for low-income housing.

The central goal of the new Cooper Square Plan is to preserve and stabilize the present community, and to invigorate the community with an investment of private and public money. The gentrification already surrounding the Cooper Square Urban Renewal Area threatens to overwhelm the low-income character of the community, but on the other hand, it presents an opportunity that can be taken advantage of. Gentrification cannot be stopped, but on the Lower East Side where urban renewal and other city properties exist, there is hope for controlling it and using it for the benefit of the community.

The basic concept of the plan calls for the financial linkage of vacant undeveloped urban renewal property with occupied urban renewal property, most of which is comprised of low-income households. In other words, it is proposed that the vacant land, which has become very valuable in the present real estate market, be used to generate the money needed to rehabilitate the occupied substandard housing on the urban renewal sites. In addition, the tenants of these buildings would have the option to buy their rehabilitated buildings from the city and maintain them as low-income co-ops. Moreover, the new market-rate buildings constructed on the vacant urban renewal land would include a substantial number of low-income apartments.

The primary engine for the financing of the plan is the private market, but without a major commitment from the city, the linkage proposal will not fly. All of the urban renewal property is owned by the City of New York, and any disposition of public property must be approved by the city. Only with the city's cooperation can the sale of vacant property be used to rehabilitate existing buildings, and only with the city's help can the tenants make a successful transition from renters to owners. Likewise, if new low-income units are to be created within the new construction, the city will have to help the

developer absorb the loss of income from the below-market rentals.

The implementation of the new plan depends on the ability of the community, the city, and a private developer to produce a package that serves all of the various interests involved. This level of cooperation is rare in New York, but it is essential for making a plan of this kind work.

Moving quickly is also important. Too many times in the past, urban renewal plans have floundered because of conflicting interests, bureaucratic red tape and inconsistent public policy. The Cooper Square Plan will not be implemented unless the parties involved keep in mind the overriding goals that transcend shortsighted politics and petty differences.

The climate for cooperation exists now for the first time in many years. This plan is offered, therefore, as a framework for civic partnership and as a mechanism for getting things done with all deliberate speed.



# CURRENT SITUATION





## THE HISTORY OF THE COOPER SQUARE URBAN RENEWAL AREA

The Cooper Square Committee was founded in 1959 in reaction to a Robert Moses/New York City urban renewal plan that, if implemented, would have displaced most of the low-income residents in the area. A community-inspired plan, known as the Cooper Square Alternate Plan, was drawn up by the Committee, and in 1971 was adopted by the Board of Estimate.

The Alternate Plan called for the redevelopment of the Cooper Square Urban Renewal Area, consisting of five sites between Stanton Street and Fifth Street, and between the Bowery and Second Avenue. Over 1,000 units of new housing were proposed, over half of which were to be low- and moderate-income housing, and the rest middle-income housing. Relocation problems were to be minimized by staging the new construction so that vacant sites would be developed first, allowing tenants to move into the new housing, then demolishing and replacing the recently vacated, older buildings.

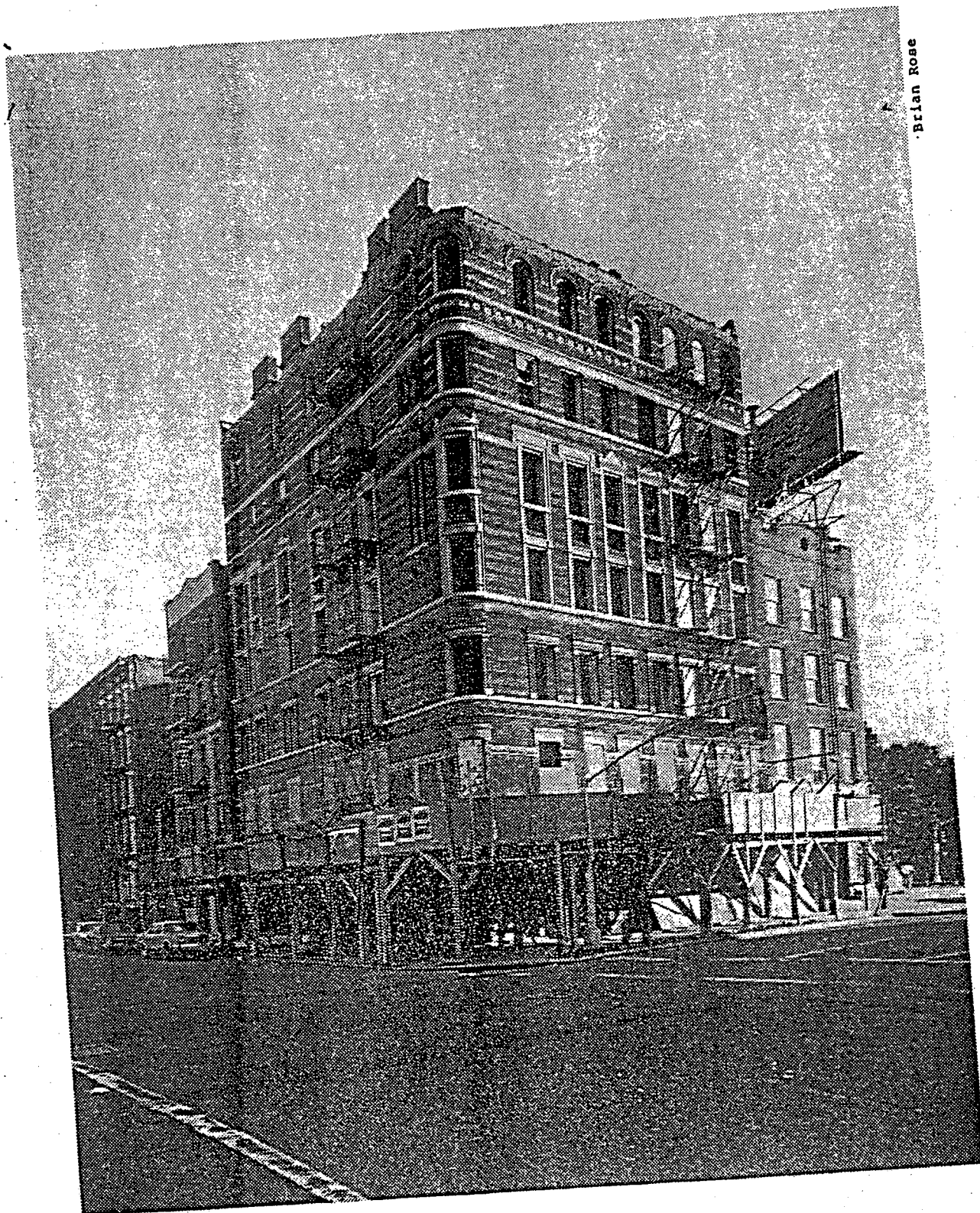
Like the original city plan, the Alternate Plan called for new high-rise construction to replace old-law tenements and small-scale loft buildings. During the sixties and early seventies, such redevelopment was encouraged by the availability of federal money and programs that led to concentrated development in large low-cost buildings. Although the Cooper Square Alternate Plan can be criticized today for the scale of its proposed buildings, the way in which it addressed the needs of the community was unique and still guides the planning activities of the Committee. No residents were excluded from the plan, and almost all relocation of tenants was to be handled within the urban renewal area. Unlike so many other urban renewal projects that destroyed the fabric of neighborhoods, the Cooper Square Alternate Plan was prepared by and for the people, not against them.

During the sixties and early seventies, the Cooper Square Committee persevered in pushing for the implementation of its plan, but politics and the city bureaucracy militated against it. During the Nixon years, federal funding for low-income housing decreased, and the decline in such spending has continued through both Republican and Democratic Administrations since then.

The first phase of the Cooper Square Alternate Plan, 450 units of low- and moderate-income housing to have been built below Houston Street (Sites 1A and 1B), was pursued by the Committee during the seventies. But the city's fiscal crisis coupled with dwindling federal resources prevented the implementation of the full project.

Finally, in the early eighties, financing for the project was secured under the federal Section 8 program, but the number of units was reduced to 146. In 1985, the Thelma Burdick Apartments opened on Site 1B, and on Site 5 the Jewish Association for Services for the Aged (JASA) completed





Brian Rose

The Cube Building, a future cooperative for homeless families.



construction on the Green Residence, a senior citizen's complex containing 150 units.

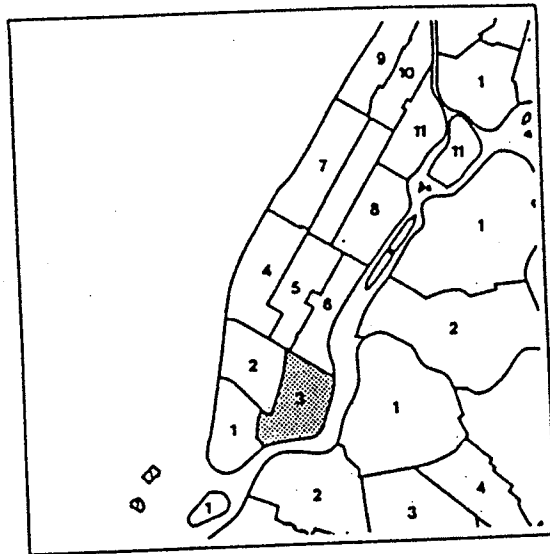
As these two projects were nearing completion, it became increasingly obvious to many members of the Cooper Square Committee that the Alternate Plan would no longer serve as an effective structure for further redevelopment. The Plan simply was not relevant to the changed economic and political climate of New York. Federal housing money had virtually dried up, and market conditions in Manhattan were rapidly strengthening, making every city-owned property a potential real estate boon. Likewise, the cost of construction had risen sharply, making all but the highest-priced apartments impractical for private developers to build.

The price of new construction also coincided with an increased public awareness of the value of preserving older buildings. Not only bona fide landmarks had become worthy of preservation; even tenements were considered worth saving, if not for esthetic reasons, then for economic reasons. Old-law tenements were being renovated throughout Manhattan with and without major layout changes and for people at all levels of the housing market.

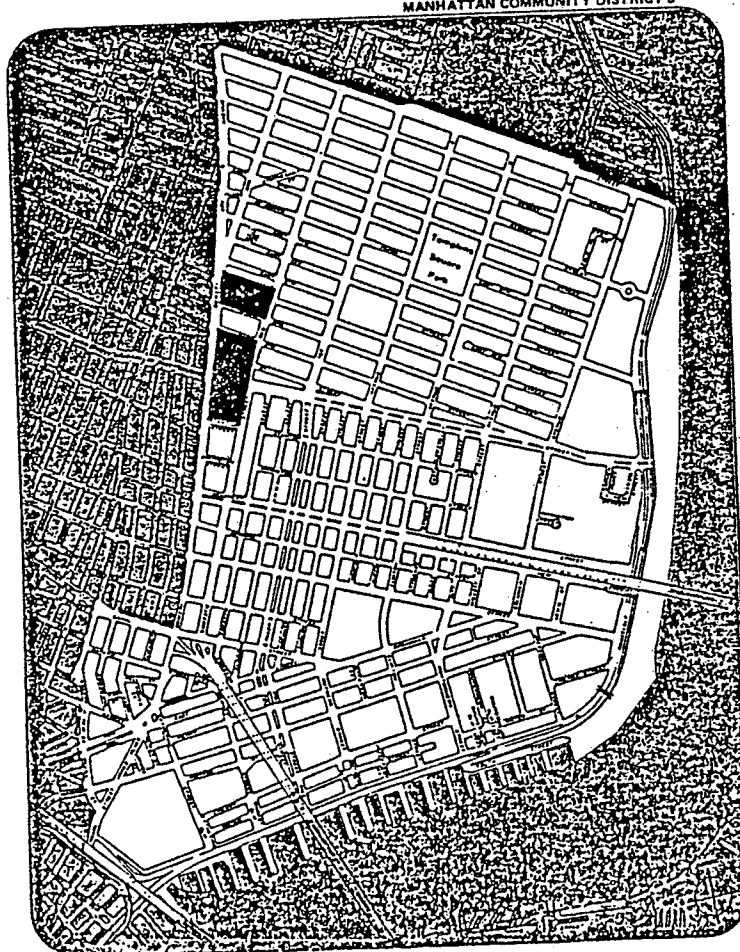
In 1983 the Cooper Square Committee shifted gears by approving an initiative calling for a new plan for the Urban Renewal Area. Although it took almost two years for a consensus to form around what that new plan might entail, the Committee nevertheless moved into a different phase, securing money for the rehabilitation of the Cube building, a vacant in rem building, as permanent housing for homeless families, and entering into more active dialogue and engagement with the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD).

In 1985 Cooper Square, with funding from the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation, began a community planning process. A majority of the Cooper Square residents were involved in an exploration of potential options for the rehabilitation and tenant ownership of the existing buildings. In 1986 the Committee received further funding from the New York Foundation to proceed with the preparation of a comprehensive plan for the Urban Renewal Area. This preliminary report is being made available to the public for study on October 15, 1986.





MANHATTAN COMMUNITY DISTRICT 3



The Cooper Square Urban Renewal Area  
within Manhattan Community Board # 3







The Urban Renewal Sites



## PROFILE OF THE COOPER SQUARE URBAN RENEWAL AREA

The Cooper Square Urban Renewal Area is bounded by Fifth Street on the North, Third Avenue and the Bowery on the West, Stanton Street on the South, and Chrystie Street and Second Avenue on the East.

In 1971, the Board of Estimate approved an Urban Renewal Plan for Cooper Square and acquired the sites listed below.

### Site 1

Boundaries: Stanton Street, the Bowery, Houston Street and Chrystie Street.

The southern part of Site 1 is now occupied by the Thelma J. Burdick Apartments, 146 units of Section 8 housing.

The northern part of Site 1, now named Site 1A, is vacant for the most part, except for the Bowery loft buildings. Six of these buildings are residential/commercial and one is commercial. Two are currently vacant. All of these buildings have restaurant supply stores on the ground floor.

### Site 2

Boundaries: Houston Street, the Bowery, part of Second Street, and Second Avenue.

On this site three buildings are in residential use, with stores on the ground floor, one of these buildings is an SRO (Single Room Occupancy); two buildings are in residential/commercial use. Two buildings are in commercial use. Two buildings are in cultural/commercial use. On this site one building, which was in residential/commercial use, is vacant. Four sites of various sizes are vacant.

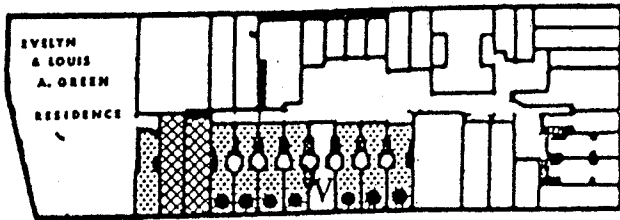
### Site 4

Boundaries: Third Street, the west side of the block, but not including the Bowery buildings, Fourth Street, the east side of this block, but not including the Second Avenue buildings.

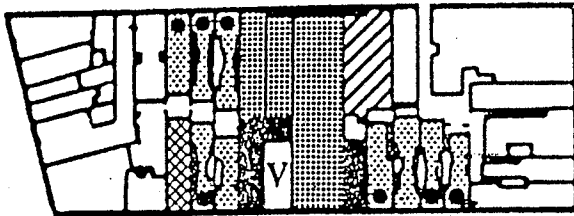
On Third Street, six buildings are in residential use, of which four have stores on the ground floor. One building is in residential/commercial use, and one building is in cultural/commercial use. One building that was previously in residential use is vacant, and two sites are vacant.

On Fourth Street, three buildings are in residential use; all three have stores on the ground floor. Two buildings are in commercial use (the HPD site office). Four buildings are in cultural/commercial use.

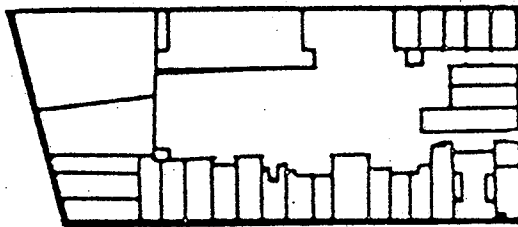




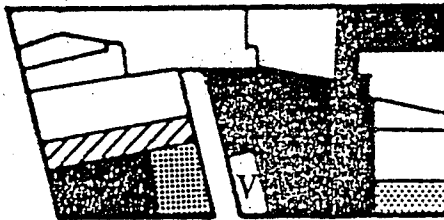
4th ST



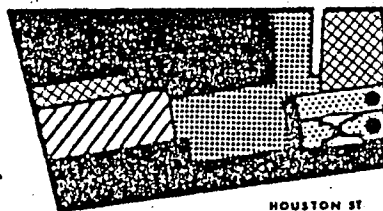
3rd ST



2nd ST



1st ST



HOUSTON ST

BOWERY

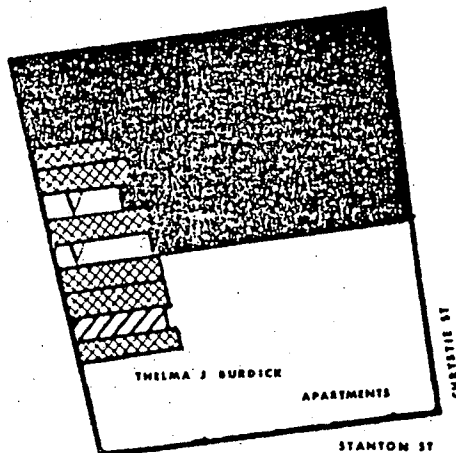
SECOND AVE

X

# Land Use of the Urban Renewal Area

## LEGEND

	RESIDENTIAL
	RESIDENTIAL COMMERCIAL
	CULTURAL COMMERCIAL
	COMMERCIAL
	STORE
	VACANT BUILDING
	VACANT SITE
	CORE BUILDING



STANTON ST

CHRISTIE ST

## Site 5

Boundaries: Two-thirds of the north side of Fourth Street, the corner of Fourth Street and Cooper Square.

The corner of Fourth Street is now occupied by the Evelyn & Louis A. Green Residence, 150 units of Section 202 new construction for the "elderly."

Eight buildings are in residential use, of which seven have stores on the ground floor. Two buildings are in residential/commercial use; the Cooper Square office is on the ground floor of one of these. One building, which was previously an occupied tenement, is vacant.

### RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

Building	Urban Renewal Site number	Block number	Lot number
7 Second Avenue	2	456	8
9 Second Avenue	2	456	7
7 East 3rd Street	4	459	46
9 East 3rd Street	4	459	45
21 East 3rd Street	4	459	39
23 East 3rd Street	4	459	38
25 East 3rd Street	4	459	37
27 East 3rd Street	4	459	36
56 East 4th Street	4	459	14
58 East 4th Street	4	459	15
60 East 4th Street	4	459	16
57 East 4th Street	5	460	58
63 East 4th Street	5	460	55
65 East 4th Street	5	460	54
67 East 4th Street	5	460	53
69 East 4th Street	5	460	52
73 East 4th Street	5	460	50
75 East 4th Street	5	460	49
77 East 4th Street	5	460	48

#### Single Room Occupancy

26 East 1st Street	2	457	28
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#### Vacant residential buildings

13 East 3rd Street	4	459	43
71 East 4th Street	5	460	51

### COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

255 Bowery	1A	427	7
259 Bowery	1A	427	9
261 Bowery	1A	427	10
265 Bowery	1A	427	12
269 Bowery	1A	427	14
271 Bowery	1A	427	15
295 Bowery	2	456	11

11-17 Second Avenue	2	456	5
5 East 3rd Street	4	459	47
59/61 East 4th Street	5	460	56

Vacant residential/commercial buildings

263 Bowery	1A	427	11
267 Bowery	1A	427	13
12 East 1st Street	2	457	28

COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

257 Bowery	1A	427	8
291/293 Bowery	2	456	11
311 Bowery	2	457	20
70/72 East 4th Street	4	459	21/22

CULTURAL/COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

9 Second Avenue *	2	456	7
6-10 East 1st Street	2	457	1
62 East 4th Street	4	459	17
64 East 4th Street	4	459	18
66/68 East 4th Street	4	459	19/20

\* this address is only the entrance to the building.

VACANT SITES WITHIN THE URBAN RENEWAL AREA

Site 1

The Bowery/Houston Street/Chrystie Street

1A	427
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Site 2

287 Bowery	2	456
5 Second Avenue	2	456
297-303 Bowery	2	456
5-19 East 1st Street	2	456
305/309 Bowery	2	457
14-24 East 1st Street	2	457
35 Second Avenue	2	457

Site 4

11 East 3rd Street	4	459
19 East 3rd Street	4	459





## TENEMENT BUILDING TENANT PROFILES

The Cooper Square Urban Renewal Area provides a home to:

1. tenement residents
2. loft residents
3. commercial residents
4. cultural residents

Although these classifications are rough, it suggests the heterogeneous character of the area.

What follows in this section is mainly a tenant profile of the major group: the tenement residents. At this time, we have only a general idea of the tenant profile of the other groups. In the next stage of the planning process, we will gather the same extensive information about all of the remaining groups.

The tenement buildings are concentrated on Fourth Street (11 buildings), Third Street (6 buildings) and Second Avenue (2 buildings), and Single Room Occupancy building on First Street. The following profile is based on a survey carried out door-to-door during July, August and September of 1986. The overall response was 60 percent, or 187 households.

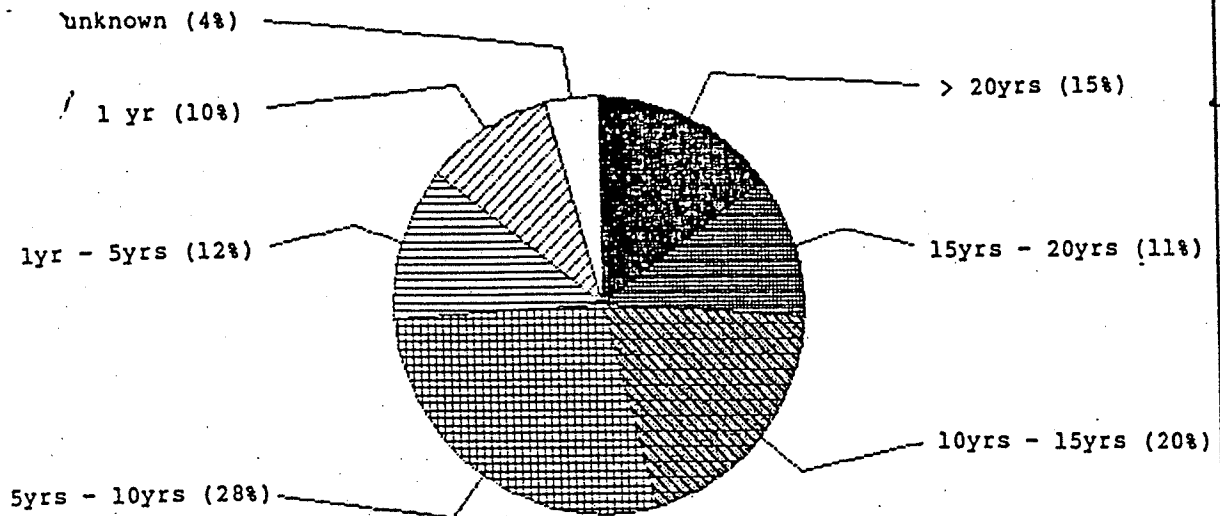
To guarantee the highest level of representation among the whole tenant population, we did the following:

- a. surveys were done in English, Spanish and Chinese
- b. surveys were done on weekdays and weekends, days and evenings
- c. almost the same number of surveys was done in each building

Tenants were assured that all the personal survey information is strictly confidential and will be used only for planning purposes. The summarized results of the survey are described through a number of graphs.



### TIME OF RESIDENCE OF TENEMENT TENANTS



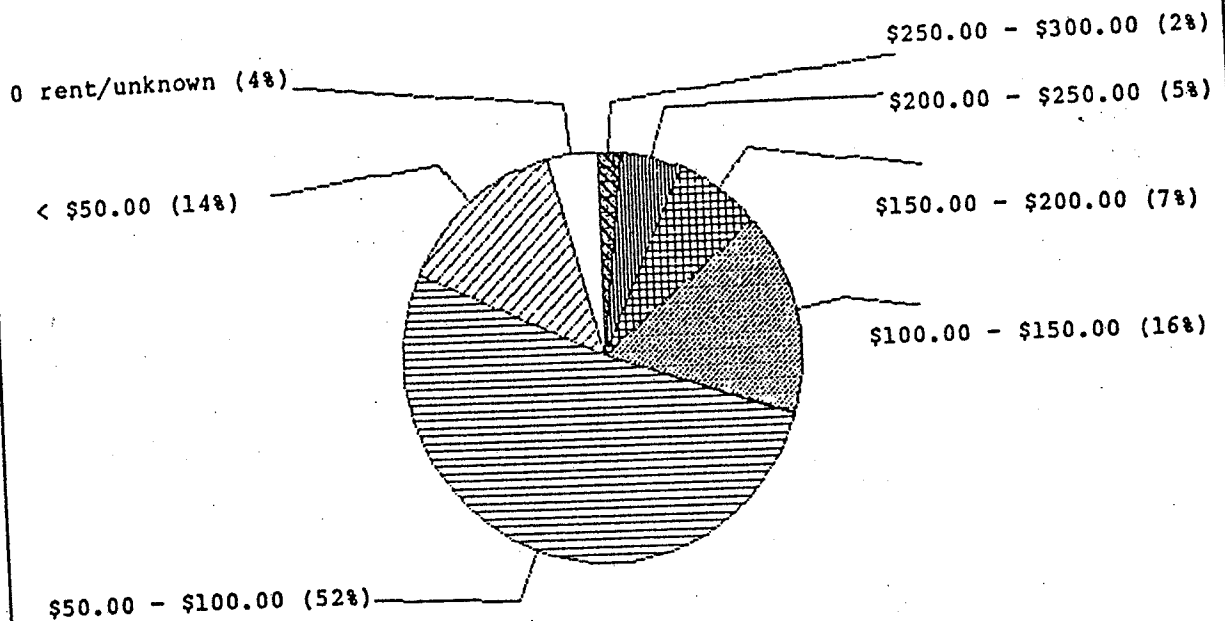
### TIME OF RESIDENCE OF TENEMENT TENANTS

number of years	number of respondents	percentage
Unknown	7	4%
<1	18	10%
1- 5	23	12%
5-10	53	28%
10-15	38	20%
15-20	20	11%
>20	28	15%
	187	100%

The median period of residency is 10 years



### MONTHLY RENT OF TENEMENT TENANTS



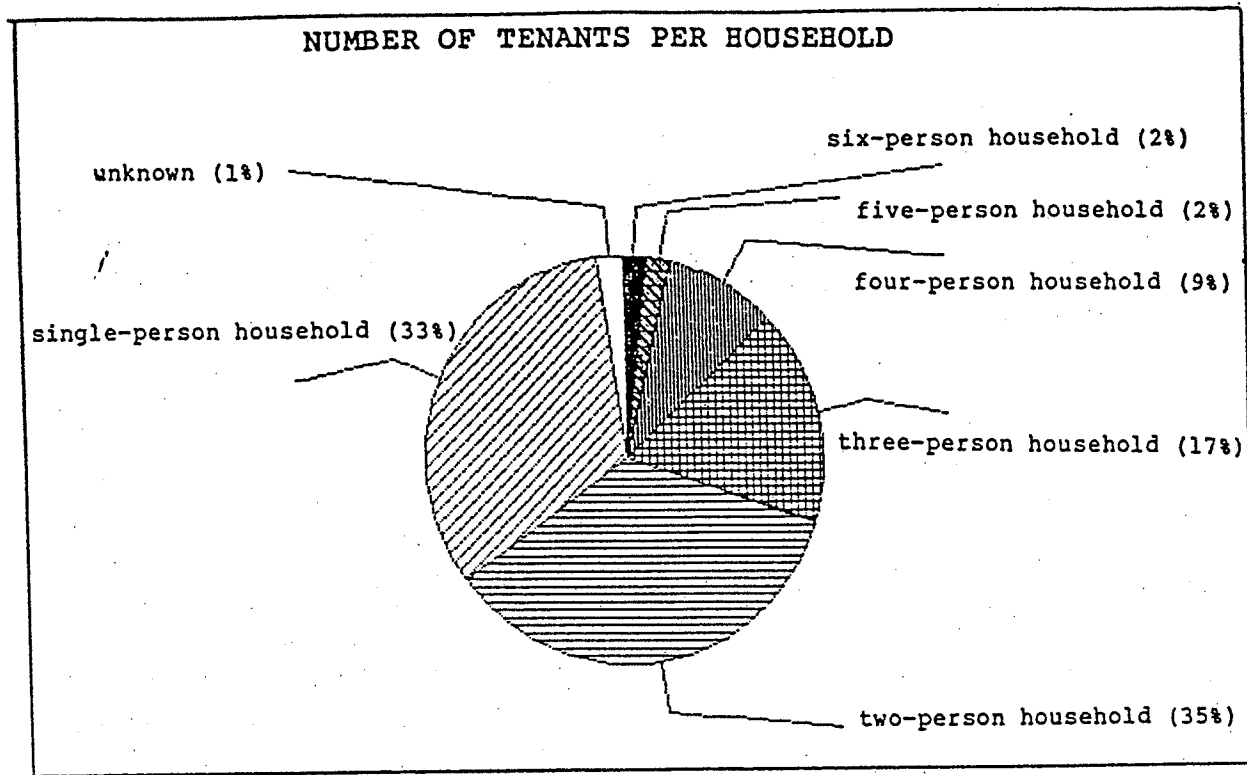
### MONTHLY RENT OF TENEMENT TENANTS

Monthly Rent	number of respondents	percentage
'0' rent or Unknown	7	4%
< \$ 50.00	27	14%
\$ 50.00 - \$100.00	97	52%
\$100.00 - \$150.00	29	16%
\$150.00 - \$200.00	13	7%
\$200.00 - \$250.00	10	5%
\$250.00 - \$300.00	4	2%
> \$300.00	0	0%
	187	100%

The median monthly rent is \$67.50

\* When the monthly rent is '0', either the superintendent is living in the apartment or the information is not available.



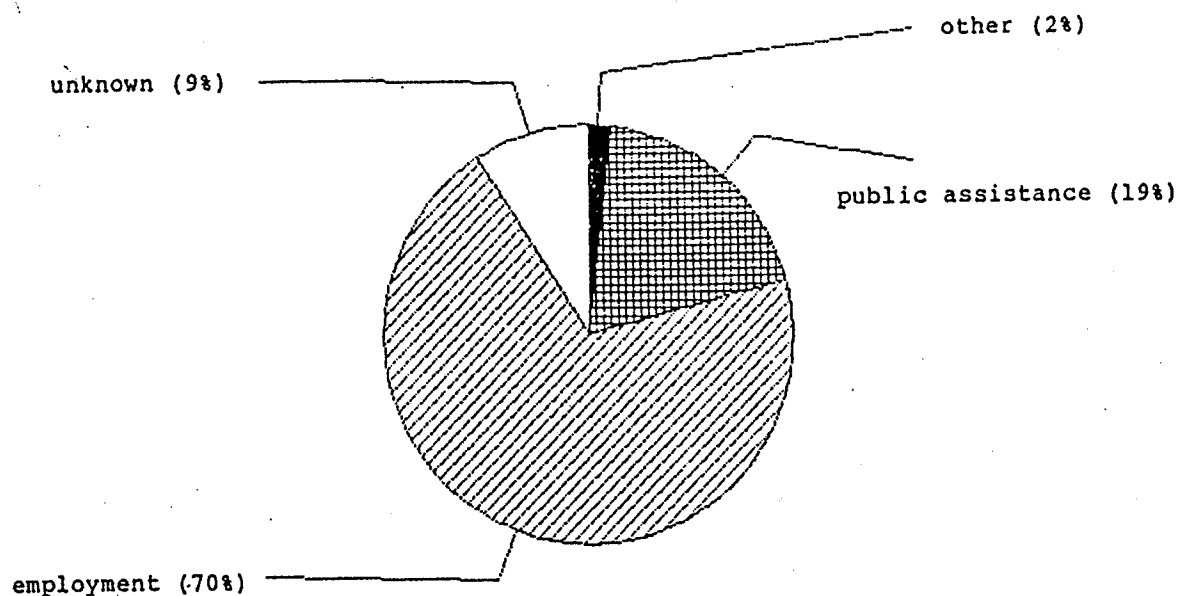


NUMBER OF TENANTS PER HOUSEHOLD		
number of tenants	number of respondents	percentage
Unknown	2	1%
1	62	33%
2	66	35%
3	31	17%
4	17	9%
5	4	2%
6	4	2%
>6	1	1%
	187	100%
The median household size is 2		





# SOURCE OF INCOME OF TENEMENT TENANTS



## SOURCE OF INCOME OF TENEMENT TENANTS

Source	number of respondents	percentage
Unknown	16	9 %
Employment	132	70 %
Public Assistance	35	19 %
Other	4	2 %
	187	100 %

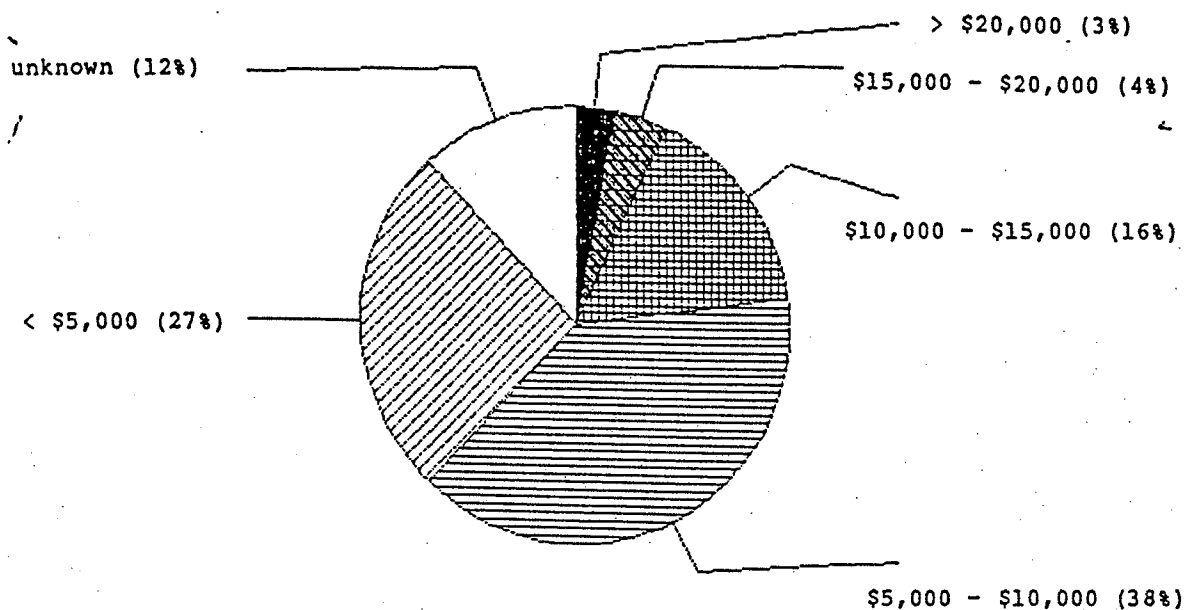
\* Of the employed respondents at least 17 % are self-employed. We estimate from the interviews that the actual number of self-employed is even higher. We identified a number of "typical" self-employed occupations such as musicians, writers, photographers, painters, etc.

The Public Assistance category includes unemployment insurance, social security, welfare and SSI.

We identified a number of respondents with more than one source of income, most of the cases being a combination of employment with welfare.



# ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF TENEMENT TENANTS



## ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME OF TENEMENT TENANTS

Number of dollars per year	number of respondents	percentage
Unknown	23	12%
< \$ 5,000	48	27%
\$ 5,000 - \$10,000	72	38%
\$10,000 - \$15,000	30	16%
\$15,000 - \$20,000	8	4%
> \$20,000	6	3%
	187	100%

The median annual household income is \$7,500



## TENEMENT AND LOFT BUILDING PROFILES

## Tenement Building Profile.

Building	Bl#	L#	URS#	#Fl	#Apts	#St	#Vac
7 Second Av.	456	8	2	5	18	2	0
9 Second Av.	456	7	2	5	8	1	0
7 E 3rd St	459	46	4	5	21	0	0
9 E 3rd St	459	45	4	5	15	0	0
21 E 3rd St	459	39	4	6	15	1	2
23 E 3rd St	459	38	4	5	20	0	0
25 E 3rd St	459	37	4	5	20	0	3
27 E 3rd St	459	36	4	6	16	1	0
56 E 4th St	459	14	4	6	22	2	0
57 E 4th St	460	58	5	6	17	0	1
58 E 4th St	459	15	4	5	22	1	0
60 E 4th St	459	16	4	6	22	1	1
63 E 4th St	460	55	5	6	22	2	0
65 E 4th St	460	54	5	6	22	2	0
67 E 4th St	460	53	5	6	22	2	3
69 E 4th St	460	52	5	6	22	0	2
73 E 4th St	460	50	5	6	22	1	0
75 E 4th St	460	49	5	6	22	2	2
77 E 4th St	460	48	5	6	22	2	0
TOTAL					370	20	14

## Vacant:

13 E 3rd St	459	43	5	4
71 E 4th St	460	51	5	5

See next page for explanation column headings.



**Notes:**

Bl# : Block Number  
 L# : Lot Number  
 URS# : Urban Renewal Site Number  
 #Fl : Number of Floors  
 #Apts : Number of Apartments  
 #St : Number of Stores  
 #Vac : Number of officially registered vacancies as of June 25, 1986. According to the survey information, the number of vacancies in some buildings is higher.

**Bowery Loft Building Profile**

Building	Bl#	L#	URS#	#Fl	#Sq. Ft.	Bld Use
255 Bowery	427	7	1A	4	8,000	comm/res
257 Bowery	427	8	1A	5	11,250	commercial
259 Bowery	427	9	1A	3	6,100	comm/res
261 Bowery	427	10	1A	3	3,600	comm/res
265 Bowery	427	12	1A	3	6,500	comm/res
269 Bowery	427	14	1A	5	10,750	comm/res
271 Bowery	427	15	1A	3	5,300	comm/res

**Vacant:**

263 Bowery	427	11	1A	4	8,600	commercial
267 Bowery	427	13	1A	5	10,750	comm/res

**Notes:**

#Sq.Ft. : Amount of Square Footage  
 Bld Use : Building Use

In the Urban Renewal Area Profile section of this report, a list has been included of all the buildings, with their respective uses, and of vacant sites.

So far, surveys have been carried out in two important types of buildings; the tenement buildings and the commercial/residential buildings on the Bowery between Houston Street and Stanton Street. Information about the physical condition of these buildings, with summarized cost estimates, can be found in the rehabilitation section of this report.





# PROPOSED PRELIMINARY PLAN



## THE GOALS OF THE NEW COOPER SQUARE PLAN

### The Planning Process

At the outset of every formal planning process a good deal of time and effort is always expended on identifying the "goals" of that process, i.e., the somewhat idealized end-state toward which all the participants agree their joint efforts should be directed. All too often, however, this is merely an exercise that planners feel obliged to fulfill. Once it is completed they ignore the goals thus identified in order to pursue more immediately obtainable opportunities, whether or not they contribute to the long-term outcomes desired.

Fortunately, in this instance both the planners and the clients saw from the start that this was too important a step in determining the future of the Cooper Square neighborhood to be treated as a mere exercise. All agreed that once a set of goals was established they would be used as a means of testing the validity of whatever specific proposals were subsequently considered. The authors of this report continue to act according to this commitment and for that reason have set forth below the principal goals of the New Plan so that everyone interested in the future of Cooper Square can judge the results of our efforts by the same criteria that we see for ourselves.

### Goals

The following goals are identified:

1. The comprehensive redevelopment of the Cooper Square Area, according to a community-initiated and officially approved plan which includes the preservation or development of all sites within the Urban Renewal Area and which respects the principles of the 1971 plan.
2. Decent, safe, sanitary and permanently affordable housing for all legal tenants in all residential buildings of all types within the area.
3. A stable and racially, ethnically, culturally and economically integrated and diverse community.
4. A vital and independent community of arts and cultural institutions within the Cooper Square neighborhood.
5. A long-term ownership vehicle that provides permanent protection from displacement for all current residents of the Cooper Square Area.

Each of the development concepts identified within the overall plan, as well as each of the specific proposals put forth should be clearly related to one or more of the above goals. This is not to say that other equally worthwhile outcomes may not also result from the implementation of the plan as set forth herein, but such serendipitous successes should be achieved in addition to, and not instead of, the goals stated above.



### Development Concepts

In order to provide a set of guidelines within which specific proposals should be judged as optimal or less than optimal, a series of overall development concepts have been identified. These are intended to assist in the decision-making process as it focuses on progressively more specific aspects of the area-wide plan. Some of these guidelines pertain more to the planning process, while others apply more particularly to the products of that process. In each case, however, they provide a consistent framework within which the specifics of the overall plan have been developed.

1. The New Plan for the Cooper Square Urban Renewal Area should be arrived at via a cooperative working relationship between the Cooper Square Committee, the residents of the Urban Renewal Area, the city's Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), and a private developer.
2. The plan should include recommended treatment and disposition approaches for all sites and buildings within the area, including rehabilitation and new construction as needed, and profit-making and nonprofit ownership as appropriate.
3. Planning for long-term property disposition should include surveys of those households currently in place in order to ascertain their demographic and socioeconomic characteristics as well as their preferences for ownership models.
4. Selected vacant buildings should be rehabilitated in order to provide additional housing resources for those households requiring temporary or permanent relocation as part of the overall rehabilitation plan.
5. All currently occupied residential buildings (tenements as well as lofts) should be rehabilitated to current code standards with a minimum of temporary tenant relocation during construction.
6. Permanent ownership of the buildings rehabilitated (as per items 4 and 5 above) should be in the form of individual building cooperatives formed on a limited equity, nonprofit basis consistent with long-term affordability and owner-occupant control, including the ability to lease space to commercial tenants within the buildings.
7. The sale and redevelopment of vacant land within the area (particularly sites 1A and 2) should be linked and revenues should be maximized, consistent with the overall renewal plan, in order to underwrite other elements of the plan.
8. New housing to be built on currently vacant sites should be developed as "70/30" housing, i.e., at least 30 percent of the units should be set aside for low-income households.



9. Loft buildings currently occupied by viable arts or cultural organizations should be sold to those organizations at less than appraised value in consideration of their agreeing to permanent restrictions on the use and resale of their buildings.

10. A quasi-independent management organization should be created by the Cooper Square Committee in order to carry out two major functions:

- \*coordination of the rehabilitation component of the redevelopment plan (including, for the most part, tenant-in-place rehabilitation), and

- \*provision of interim building management services (including rent restructuring) and tenant training for long-term self-management.

11. An umbrella organization (e.g., a federated Mutual Housing Association) should be created to provide long-term logistical and managerial support (i.e., direct management and/or technical assistance services or bulk purchasing of goods and services) to the individual limited-equity cooperatives to be formed by the residential buildings within the Cooper Square Area.





## LAND USE PROPOSALS FOR THE COOPER SQUARE URBAN RENEWAL AREA

This part of the report will give the proposed options for the future land use of the Urban Renewal Sites.

### Site 1A

All the buildings in residential/commercial use on the Bowery should be preserved, with the possible exception of one small building (271 Bowery). These loft buildings all need rehabilitation to bring them up to loft building code.

The 65,000-square foot vacant lot on this site should be used for residential development. The Houston Street side of this vacant lot offers potential for retail use on the ground floor

### Site 2

The substantial majority of the buildings should be preserved. The vacant building, 12 East First Street, should be demolished to enlarge the site for new development.

The vacant lots on this site total 76,800 to 91,800 square feet, depending on the option used for development.

The Bowery side offers great potential for the creation of commercial retail space on the ground floor.

First Street and Extra Place Alley should be de-mapped. The then-available 21,400 square feet make more residential construction and public open space possible. The public space should be used for the development of a children's playground and garden.

De-mapping First Street will not cause traffic problems, since this street does not have a direct connection to the west and continues only one more block to the east to the junction of Houston Street. A pedestrian thoroughway is necessary.

Numbers 7 and 9 Second Avenue require rehabilitation. Special arrangements should be made with the tenants of 9 Second Avenue due to the unique nature of their occupancy of the building.

The SKO (Single Room Occupancy) building, 26 East First Street, should be rehabilitated. The need for this type of housing is great and will continue to be so for the indefinite future. It may become part of a Mutual Housing Association.

For the cultural/recreational building (entrance at 9 Second Avenue), different options are possible. A final proposal will depend on the viability of the group now managing the building and the financing of the plan. There is a great need in this area for a day-care center, a girls' club and sports facilities. This



large cultural/recreational building, which once provided such services to the community, ideally should be restored to these uses.

Four options have been proposed for this building:

1. Sell the building to a nonprofit organization or the future developer of the vacant sites. The building should be earmarked for the above-mentioned uses.

2. Use of the building by a nonprofit institution such as a college or university, health service, youth club or some arts-related organization.

3. Convert part of this building into working spaces for artists now living in the tenement buildings. Part of the building should be used for the before-mentioned community facilities.

4. Keep the building under management of the group now in place, and thus in use by different theatre and artist groups. Again, space should be made available for the before-mentioned community facilities.

#### Sites 4 and 5

The tenement buildings on Third Street and Fourth Street should be rehabilitated. The vacant tenement buildings at 13 East Third Street and 71 East Fourth Street should be rehabilitated for residential use

All existing stores in use should be kept at affordable rents. Rents for new commercial spaces in tenement buildings could be closer to market rate rent; the income could be used to supplement the residential co-ops.

The HPD site office could be used by the future Cooper Square Committee construction and management office.

The buildings in cultural use are to continue as self-supporting entities.

