



AFFORDABLE TREMÉ

COMPILED BY THE SMALL CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE DESIGN AND THE GREATER TREMÉ CONSORTIUM

HOUSING DENSITY & TREMÉ

Tremé has always been dense. Row houses, shotguns, and cottages are all historic and dense housing conditions traditional to Tremé. Vacant lots and mixed use development along major corridors present additional opportunities to build in scale with Tremé's traditional urban fabric.

New Orleans needs housing. HousingNOLA has projected that New Orleans will need 33,600 units of housing within the next 10 years. What fraction of these could be built or adapted within Tremé, considering its historic density, urban scale, and architectural character?

This can be addressed in part through zoning changes. Even modest changes in zoning regulations might allow for more housing units that fit into the context of historic Tremé.

INTRODUCTION

This report is intended to provide a broad overview of opportunities to develop housing within the Tremé/Lafitte neighborhood as part of a larger, citywide strategy to address New Orleans' affordable housing crisis as identified and outlined by HousingNOLA (housingnola.org).

While the report does not intend to advocate for specific regulatory changes, it uses zoning adjustment scenarios to assess their potential impact on creating additional housing units, and explore their visual impact with regard to urban scale and historic appropriateness.

The report was developed in Spring/Summer 2017 by Graduate Research and Public Interest Design Fellows working at the Albert and Tina Small Center for Collaborative Design.

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR AFFORDABILITY IN TREMÉ

There are more than **230 vacant lots** within the Tremé neighborhood. Under current zoning, there is space for 580 residential units on these lots.

However, most of Tremé is zoned for exclusively 1 or 2-family residences:
HU-RD1, HU-RD2, or HMR-1

Affordable housing is increasingly achievable when incorporated into multi-unit residences, which can look like camelback shotguns or 2-story doubles (2 over 2).

By slightly increasing the allowed neighborhood density, or “upzoning,” new opportunities for affordable housing could be created.

Locating denser housing along transit corridors throughout Tremé could mean affordable housing with access to jobs, resources, and recreation



HOW MUCH SPACE IS THERE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING ?

According to HousingNOLA, New Orleans needs to add **33,600 units of affordable housing** by the year **2027** in order to provide affordable housing for all New Orleans residents.

There is space for all this housing in the core of the city, which was historically much more densely inhabited than it is today.

2015 Tremé population: **4155 people**
2015 Orleans parish population: **389,617 people**

Considering Tremé’s current population, it would need to develop at least **1.2%** of the affordable housing needed citywide, or **396 units**.

Since it’s unreasonable to assume that all vacant infill lots will be replaced with entirely affordable housing, regulatory changes may be necessary to provide incentives for affordability or allow development of more units per lot. Renovation of existing housing can also contribute.

Tremé makes up only **1.2%** of the total Orleans Parish population

But its central location makes it ideal for residential density

HOW DOES ZONING AFFECT THE WAY WE LIVE?

Zoning is used to preserve or establish the feeling of a neighborhood, whether it's a busy commercial corridor like Broad Street or a smaller residential street like Dumaine.

On busier streets, vacant lots are opportunities for mixed-use construction, with businesses on the ground floors and residences above. **These can greatly increase the amount of neighborhood residents with easy access to public transit.**

The city provides incentives to developers who include affordable units within larger developments. In Tremé, current regulations limit height to 3 stories along corridors. HU-MU and HMC-2 zoning can prevent these types of buildings from being economically feasible on typical commercial streetfront lots.

Similarly, in historically dense urban residential neighborhoods, the current zoning laws sometimes allow for less density than the neighborhood originally contained.

Changing economic forces in Tremé, especially near business areas, means that **housing costs are rising rapidly** as homes are renovated, often into single units

In 2015, **73%** of Tremé renters paid more than 30% of their income on housing.

Small upzoning changes allowing for more units per lot area, second stories, and smaller setbacks **can still preserve the historic character of Tremé** while allowing for more residents to remain in place or rent affordably by contributing to overall affordability.

Changes in zoning to allow for smaller units may allow more affordable housing units to be fit into new infill residences.

A slight increase in the possible number of residents may help promote a sense of community, especially with so many units being converted into short-term rentals.



- COMMERCIAL AND MIXED-USE
- RESIDENTIAL

[See the back page guide to zoning districts in Tremé]

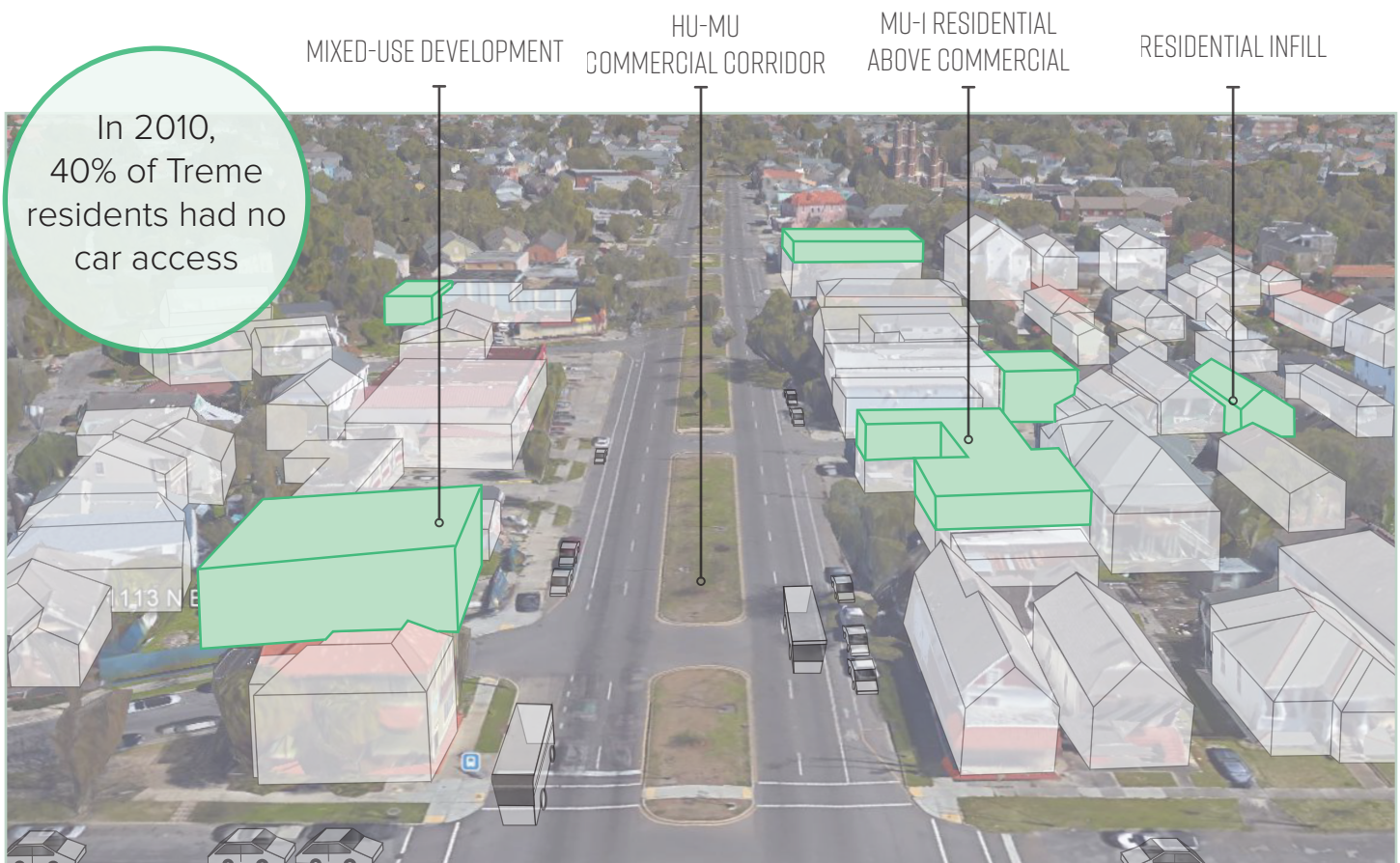
Zoning changes don't change anything immediately! Changes can be small scale and contextually appropriate, and do not affect existing buildings.

WHAT IS “TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT”?

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is the principle of focusing development efforts along transit corridors and exchanges. Transit corridors are streets with many main transit stops, and development is focused near transit so residents will have easy access to public transit, typically within a quarter mile, or five minute walk. Developments may include multiple stories, efficient units, and less space dedicated to parking. TOD also tends to have a mixed-use component such as retail business which can occupy the first floor, while residential units are housed above.

TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT UPZONING POSSIBILITIES

By switching the current zoning ordinance along transit corridors from **HU-MU** and **HMC-2** to **MU-1**, building height and dwelling unit capacity can increase, allowing for a possible increase in affordable housing closer to public transit and public amenities. Residential upzoning from **HMR-1** to **HMR-2** would maintain the residential feel and aesthetic of the neighborhood, while creating more units per lot size, all within walking distance of transit. If all vacant HU-MU lots were upzoned to MU-1, construction of **250 new residential units** would be made possible within Tremé.



BROAD STREET: COMMERCIAL AND TRANSIT CORRIDOR

“ [Rent’s] going up. That’s why [the neighborhood] is changing. People don’t have money, they can’t reconstruct, **then they are forced out.**”

Tremé resident, 2017

“ We need to have some kind of regulation on rent, **make sure to take care of people who have lived here forever.** Before Katrina expenses had definitely gone up, [but they’ve] doubled since Katrina.”

Tremé resident, 2017

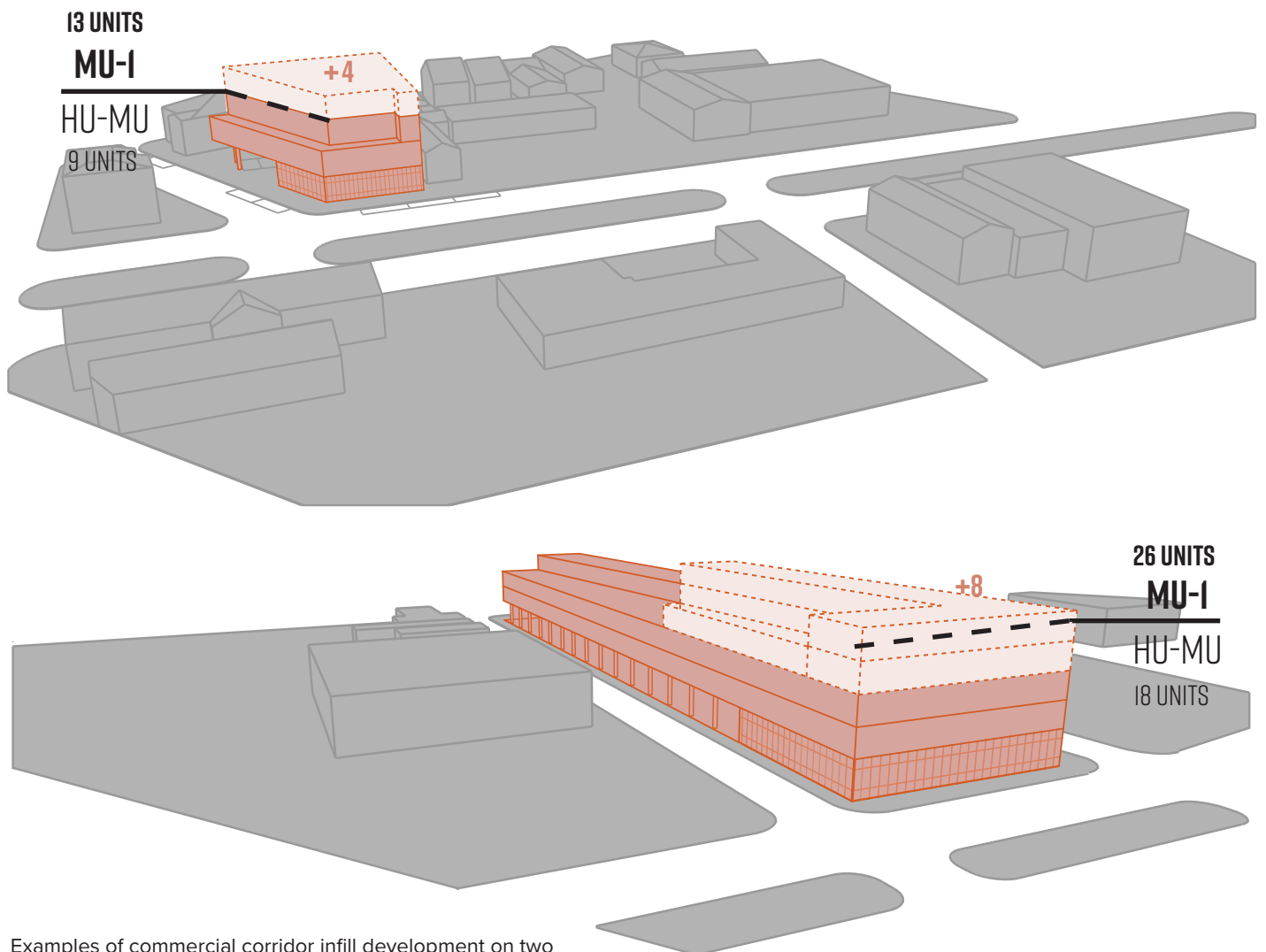
WHAT DOES DENSITY UPZONING LOOK LIKE?

MIXED USE ZONING

Heavily-trafficked transit corridors are ideal locations for new housing given their accessibility to public transport and key services. Increasing the allowable density of zoning generates new opportunities for housing.

Upzoning from HU-MU to MU-1 on currently vacant lots would add **29 more housing units** in Tremé, and many more over time.

Alongside major transit corridors, the current zoning (HU-MU) could be changed to **Medium Intensity Mixed Use (MU-1)**. Upzoning all vacant lots along Broad St. and N. Claiborne to MU-1 allows for more units above ground and greater building heights, adding capacity for least **29 more units** to Treme's two major corridors, and many more as additional buildings are renovated and redeveloped.



Examples of commercial corridor infill development on two large currently vacant lots in Tremé. Possible appearance of mixed-use buildings under current zoning is shaded red, while appearance with upzoning applied is shaded white.

RESIDENTIAL ZONING

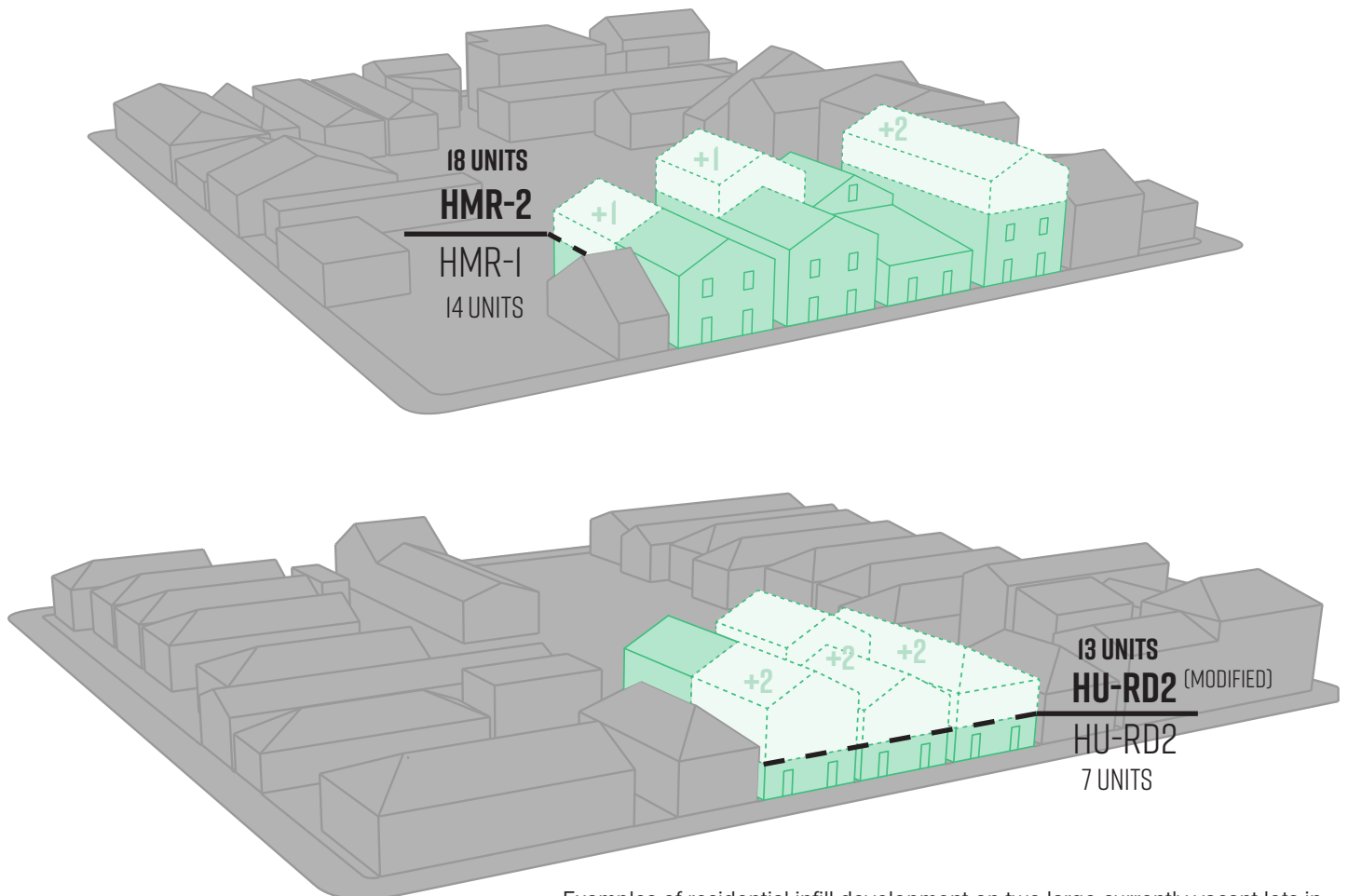
There are **233 vacant lots** on residential blocks of various sizes that can be developed to serve affordable housing that fits in with the scale of other homes in the neighborhood.

Upzoning all vacant lots from **HMR-1 to HMR-2** adds **25 more housing units** in Tremé.

Upzoning the current **Historic Marginy/Treme/Bywater Residential District** to add **25 more units in Tremé** makes little impact on the look of the neighborhood, and provides opportunity for more affordable units.

Using a metric of 1,000 sf per dwelling unit (instead of 2,000) on **HU-RD2** vacant lots would add **135 more housing units** in Tremé.

Current **Historic Urban Two-Family District** zoning can be modified by reducing the required unit size to contain nearly twice as many units, providing the opportunity to build **135 more units in Tremé**.



Examples of residential infill development on two large currently vacant lots in Tremé. Possible appearance of residences at current zoning is shaded green, appearance with upzoning applied is shaded white.



Through small zoning changes, the historically dense nature of Tremé can be restored, allowing for more dwelling units that fit appropriately into the context of the neighborhood, and creating opportunities for increased affordability.

GLOSSARY

MIXED-USE ZONING IN TREMÉ

Current zoning in New Orleans is classified by a series of overarching ordinances where you can find information about your lot and its development capacity. **Dwelling capacity** for a site is characterized by a **dwelling unit ratio (DU)** and organized by **Single Family (SF)**, **Two Family (2F)**, **Multi-Family (MF)** and **Above Ground Housing (AB)**. Each zoning category also has limits on **developable building height (BH)**. Below are definitions and information about the most common zoning categories in Tremé, along with possible future zoning categories.

HU-MU - HISTORIC URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD MIXED-USE DISTRICT

Historic Neighborhood characterized by **highly dense living** and **pedestrian movement**. Businesses convert surrounding vacant lots into parking lots because street parking is limited. Non-residential areas having the building pattern of commercial space on the first floor with residential living above.

SF: 1,500 SF/DU
2F: 1,200 SF/DU
MF: 1,000 SF/DU
AB: 800 SF/DU
BH: 35-40'

MU-I - MEDIUM INTENSITY MIXED-USE DISTRICT

Residential mixed-use buildings meant to be along commercial corridors and institutions, maintaining a combination of **living, commercial, and entertainment**. Building vertically is encouraged though controls are set on the proper scale of the building and its coinciding parking/landscape.

SF: 3,000 SF/DU
2F: 1,700 SF/DU
MF: 1,000 SF/DU
BH: 35-60'

HMC-2 - HISTORIC CORE NEIGHBORHOOD NON-RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

Commercial Neighborhoods that have developed during the city's Colonial Period and the adjacent developing areas. This contains diverse **commercial types**, reflecting the historic building methods and maintaining the mixed-use typology of **residential above and commercial below**.

SF: 1,500 SF/DU
2F: 1,000 SF/DU
MF: 600-800 SF/DU
BH: 50'



HU-MU: N BROAD STREET



HMC-2: N ROBERTSON STREET

GLOSSARY

RESIDENTIAL ZONING IN TREMÉ

HU-RD1 - HISTORIC URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

Historic Neighborhood characterized by **highly dense living** and **pedestrian movement**. Houses are built in traditional historic manner maintaining the neighborhood feel and aesthetic.

SF: 2,250 SF/DU
2F: 2,200 SF/DU
MF: 2,000 SF/DU
BH: 35'

HU-RD2 - HISTORIC URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

Historic Neighborhood characterized by **highly dense living** and **pedestrian movement**. Houses are built in traditional historic manner maintaining the neighborhood feel and aesthetic. HU-RD2 allows for slightly more dwelling units per square foot than HU-RD1

SF: 2,250 SF/DU
2F: 1,800 SF/DU
MF: 2,000 SF/DU
BH: 35'

HMR-1 - HISTORIC CORE NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

Residential neighborhoods that have developed during the city's Colonial Period and the adjacent developing areas. This contains residential types reflecting the historic building methods and **maintaining that era's aesthetic**.

SF: 1,500 SF/DU
2F: 1,200 SF/DU
MF: 900 SF/DU
BH: 40'

HMR-2 - HISTORIC CORE NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTIAL DISTRICT

Residential neighborhoods that have developed during the city's Colonial Period and the adjacent developing areas. This contains residential types, reflecting the historic building methods and maintaining that era's aesthetic. This ordinance enables **slightly higher building height** and **increased density** than HMR-1.

SF: 1,500 SF/DU
2F: 1,000 SF/DU
MF: 600-800 SF/DU
BH: 50'



HU-RD2: ST PHILIP STREET



HMR-1: ST PHILIP STREET