SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON D.C.

Woon Hyun Jackie Bae
DES3332 Critical Conservation

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON D.C.
URBAN RENEWAL SUMMARIZED HISTORY

1792 - L'ENFANT PLAN

--------*research period*----------

1905 - MCMILLAN PLAN

1950-60 - URBAN RENEWAL

"if those who govern the District of Columbia decide [it] should be beautiful as well as sanitary, there is nothing in the Fifth Amendment that stands in the way"
-William O. Douglas, Berman v. Parker

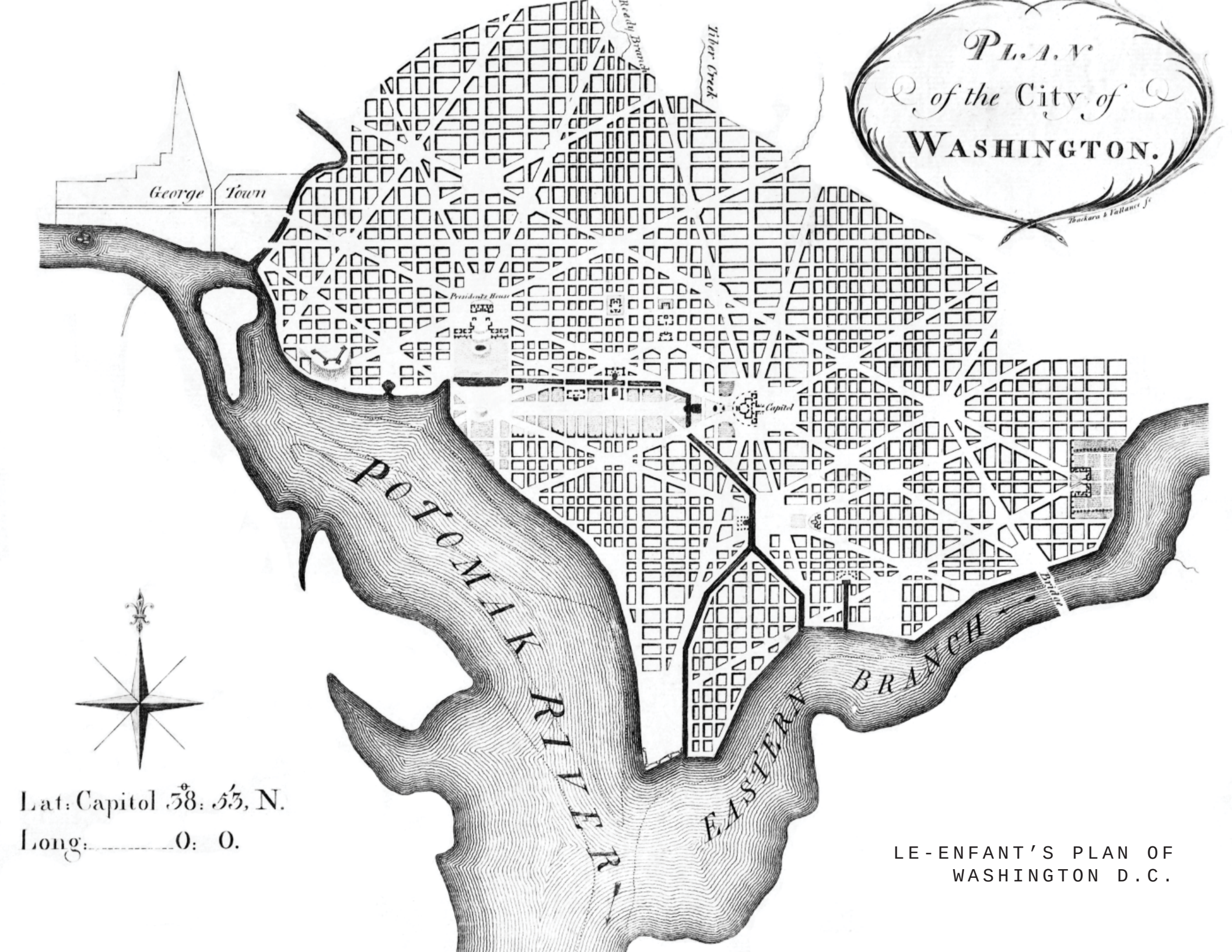
1977 - INTERSTATE HIGHWAY

--------*research period*----------

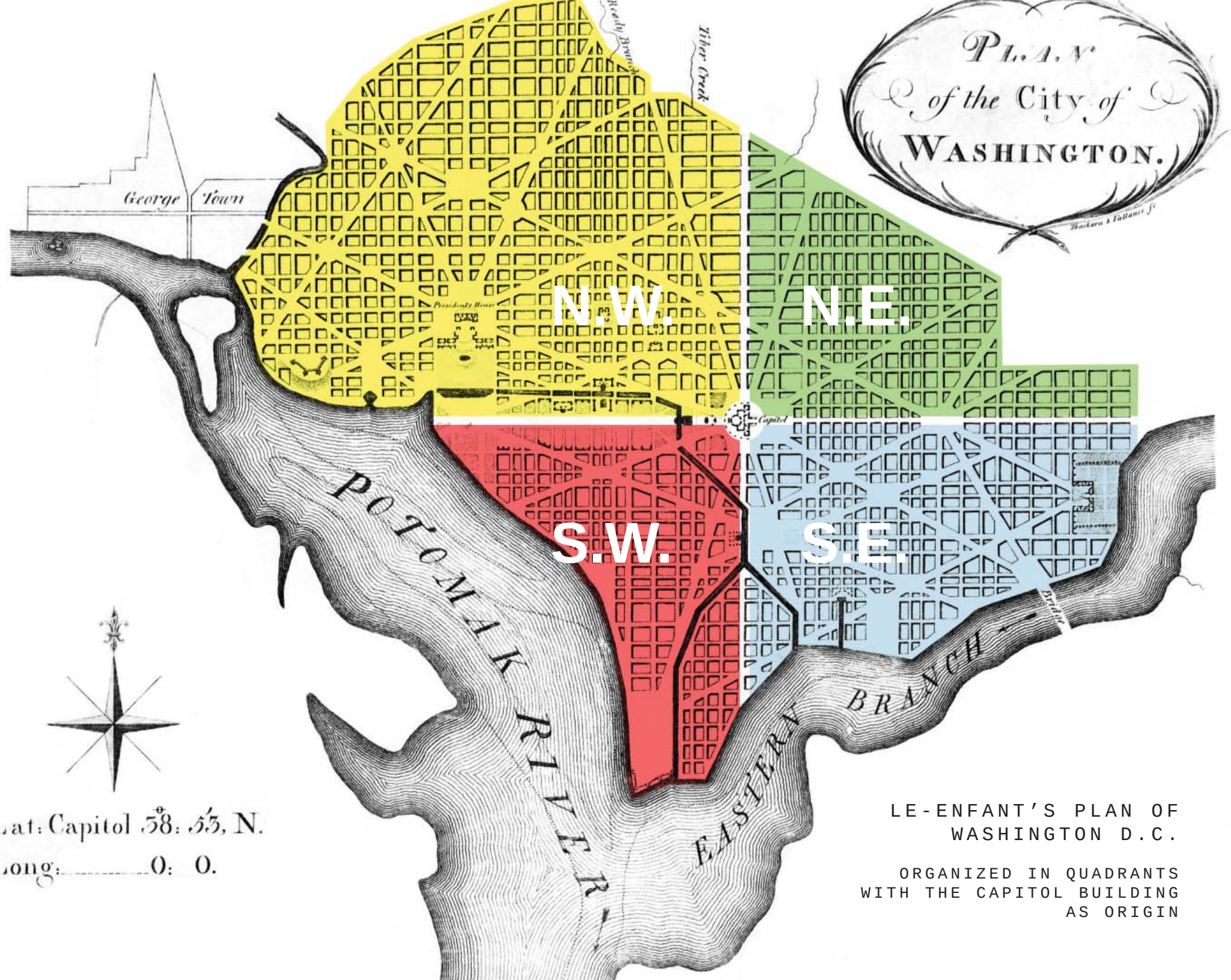
1980-90 - PEAK LOW INCOME
PEAK CRIME RATE

2003 - NOW - REVIVAL ATTEMPTS

(right, top) view of demolition in Southwest
(right, bottom) William Zeckendorf's redevelopment "Area C"

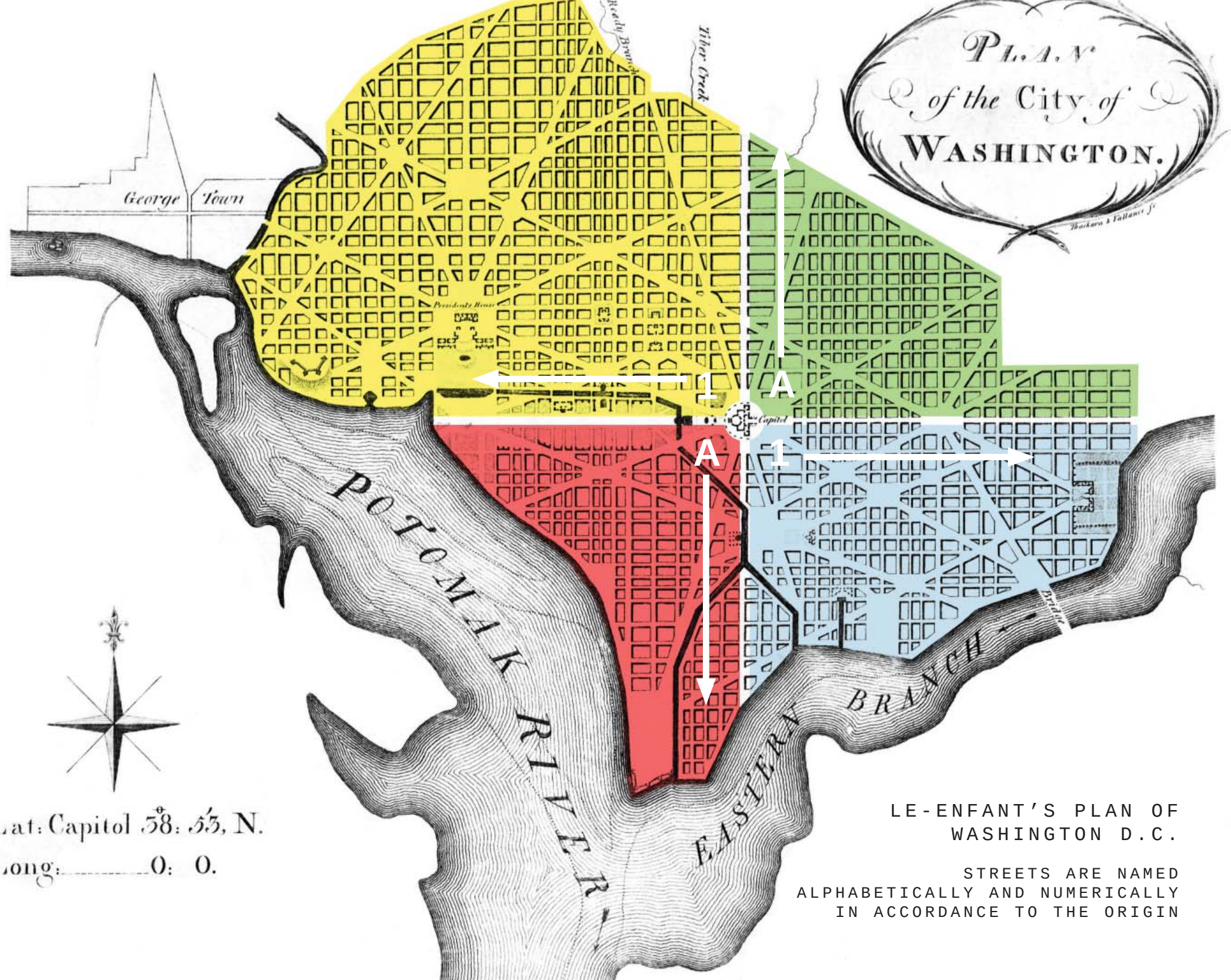


LE-ENFANT'S PLAN OF WASHINGTON D.C.



LE-ENFANT'S PLAN OF WASHINGTON D.C.

ORGANIZED IN QUADRANTS WITH THE CAPITOL BUILDING AS ORIGIN



LE-ENFANT'S PLAN OF WASHINGTON D.C.

STREETS ARE NAMED ALPHABETICALLY AND NUMERICALLY IN ACCORDANCE TO THE ORIGIN

SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON D.C.

1903-1916

Post - McMillan Plan &
City Beautiful Movement

1927-1960

Before & After
1950s Urban Renewal

1980

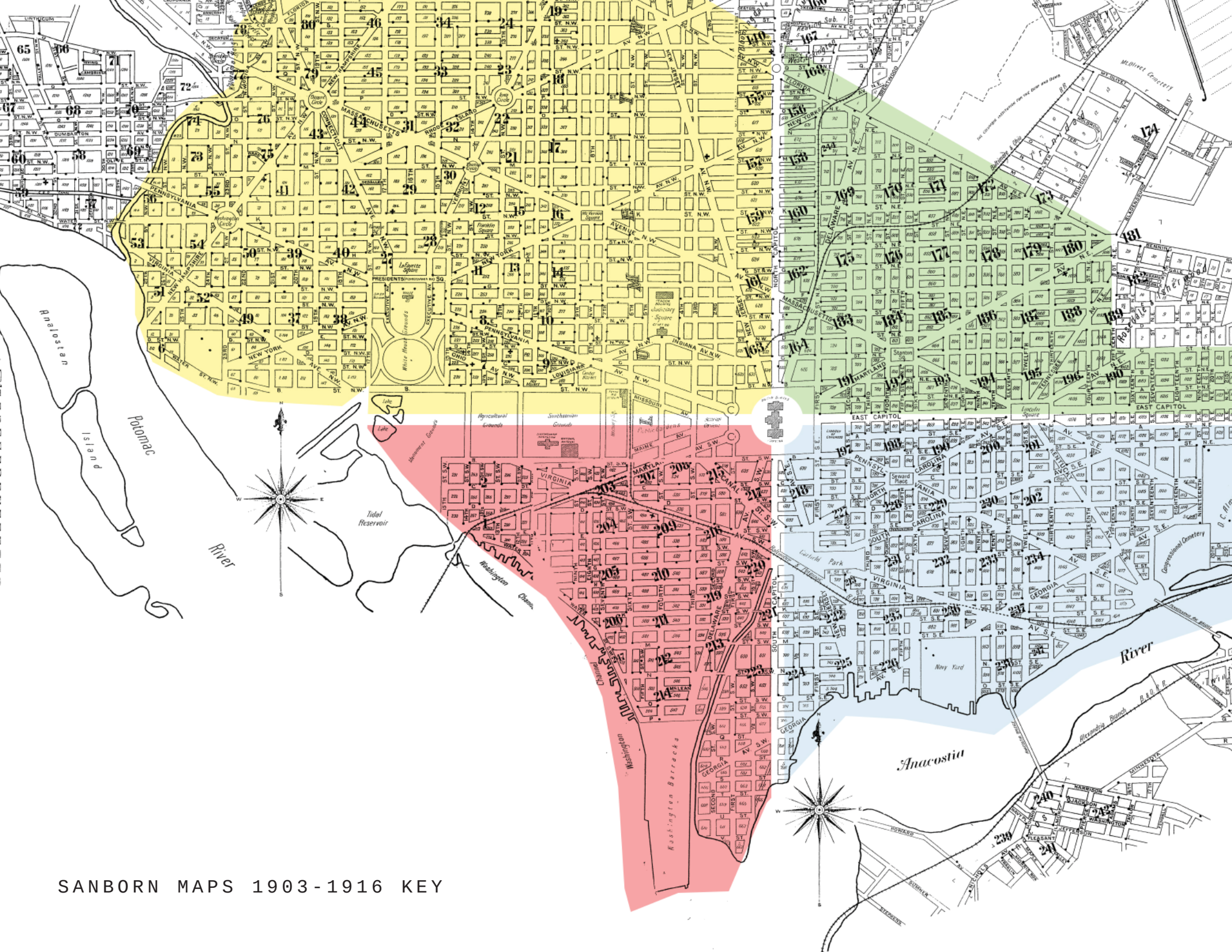
After the construction
of I-395

1903-1916

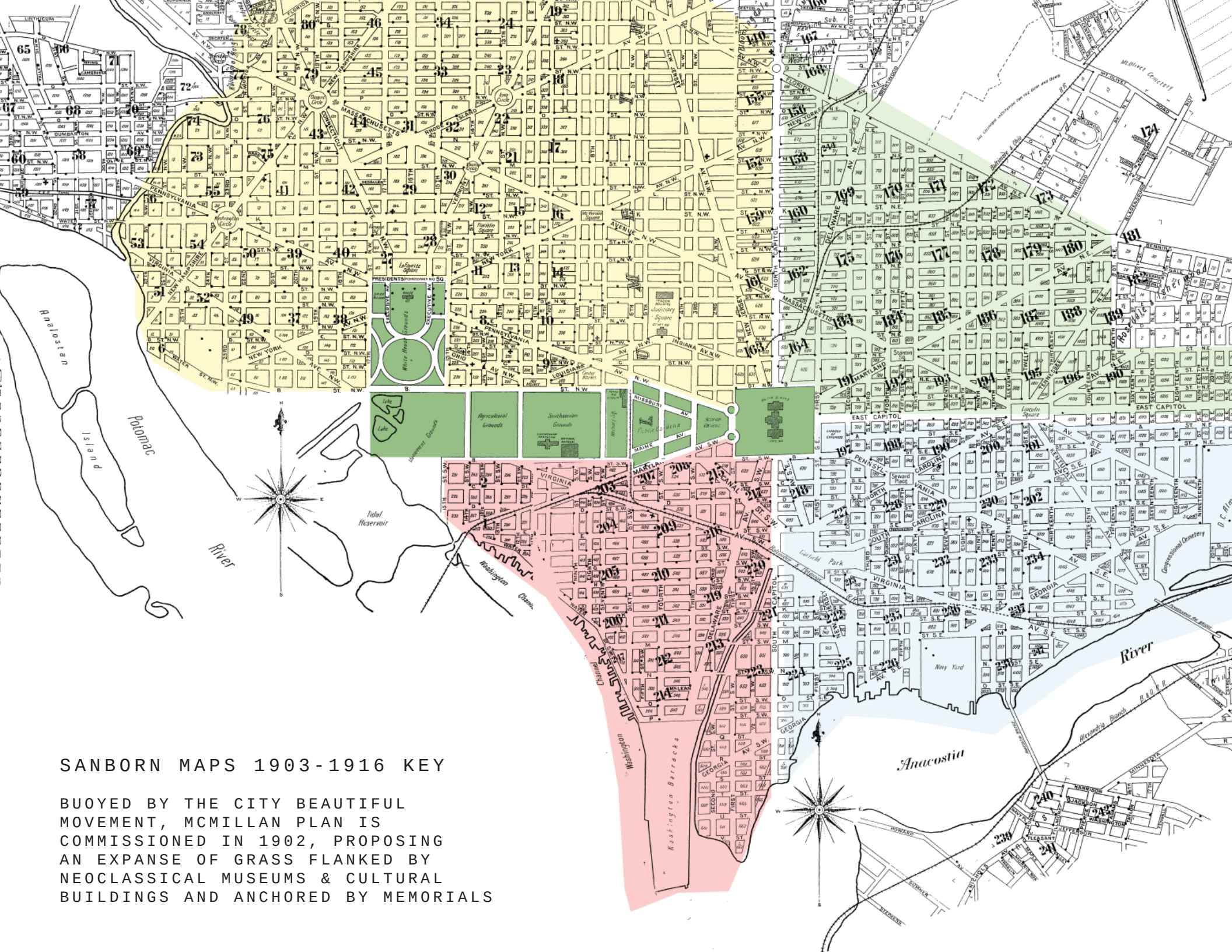
Post - McMillan Plan &
City Beautiful Movement

Context of U.S. Planning

Frederick Law Olmstead completes Central Park in 1873
Burnham and World's Columbian Exposition

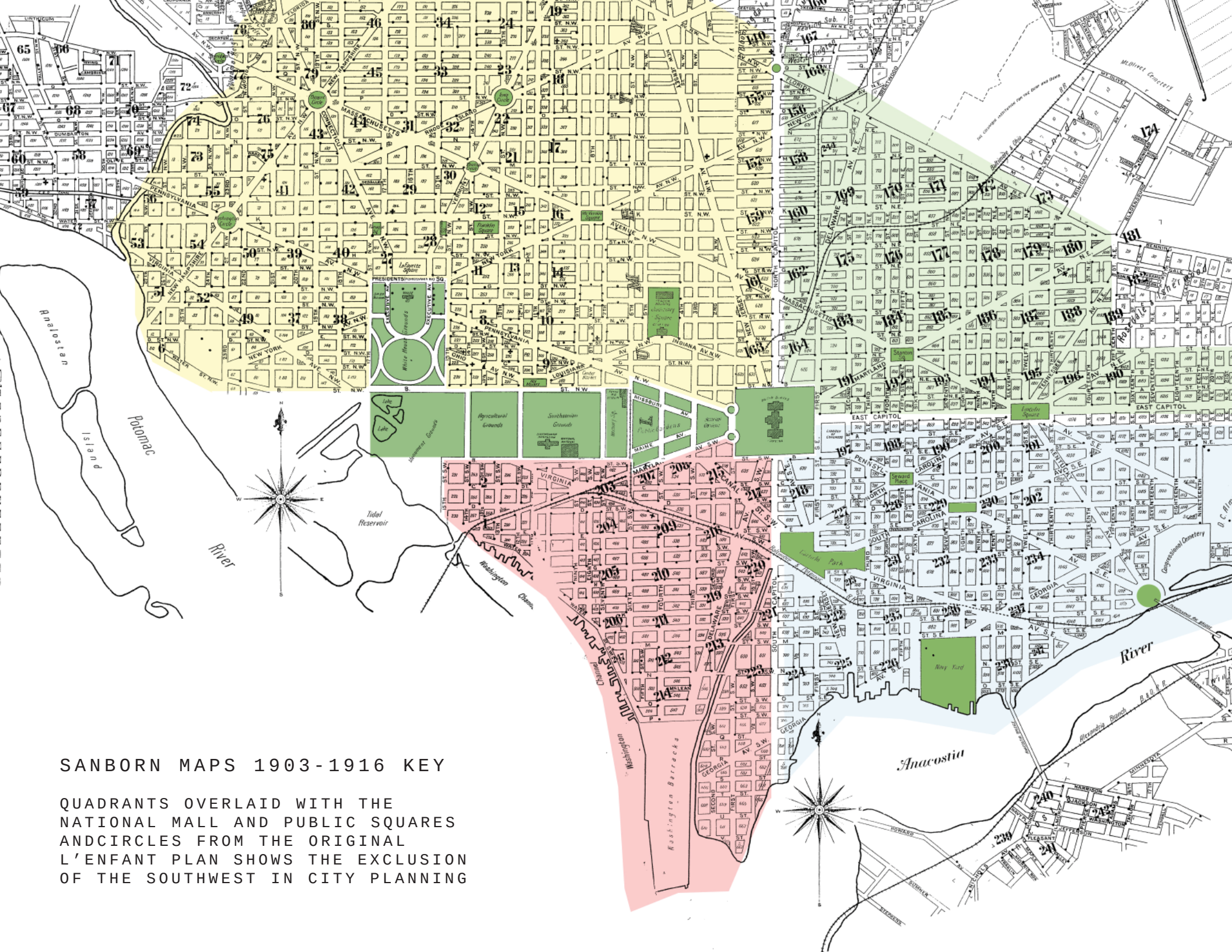


SANBORN MAPS 1903-1916 KEY



SANBORN MAPS 1903-1916 KEY

BUOYED BY THE CITY BEAUTIFUL MOVEMENT, MCMILLAN PLAN IS COMMISSIONED IN 1902, PROPOSING AN EXPANSE OF GRASS FLANKED BY NEOCLASSICAL MUSEUMS & CULTURAL BUILDINGS AND ANCHORED BY MEMORIALS

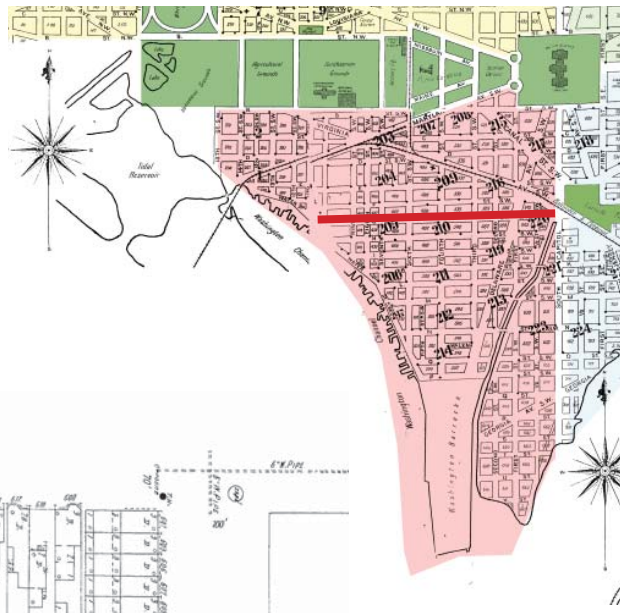


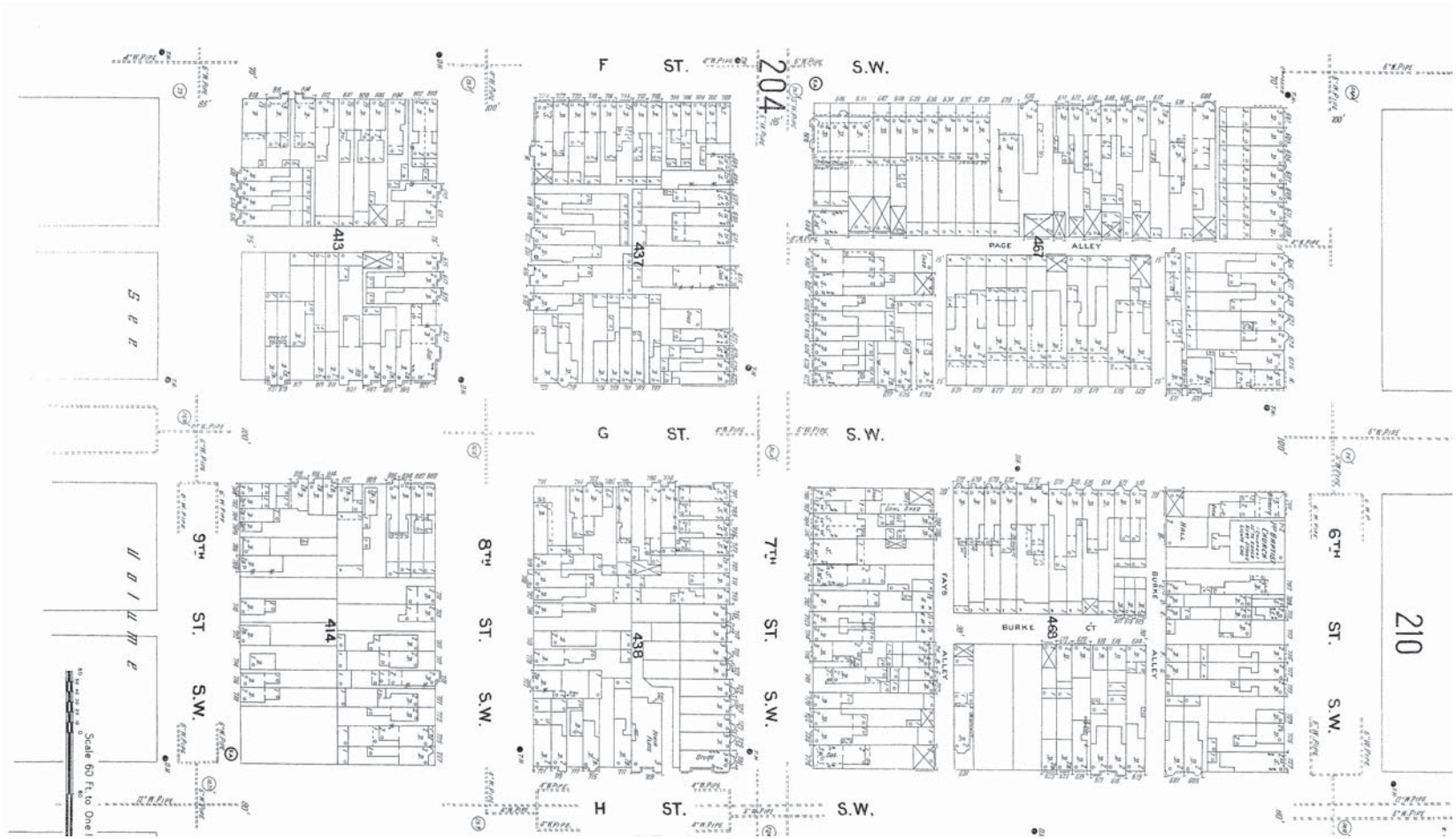
SANBORN MAPS 1903-1916 KEY

QUADRANTS OVERLAID WITH THE NATIONAL MALL AND PUBLIC SQUARES ANDCIRCLES FROM THE ORIGINAL L'ENFANT PLAN SHOWS THE EXCLUSION OF THE SOUTHWEST IN CITY PLANNING

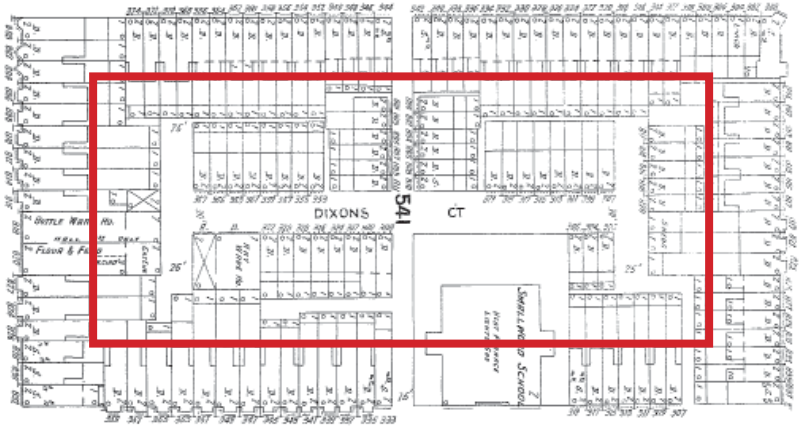
SANBORN MAPS 1903-1916 G-STREET S.W.

TYPICAL HOUSING BLOCKS IN SOUTHWEST D.C.
APPROXIMATELY 40-80 DWELLINGS PER BLOCK

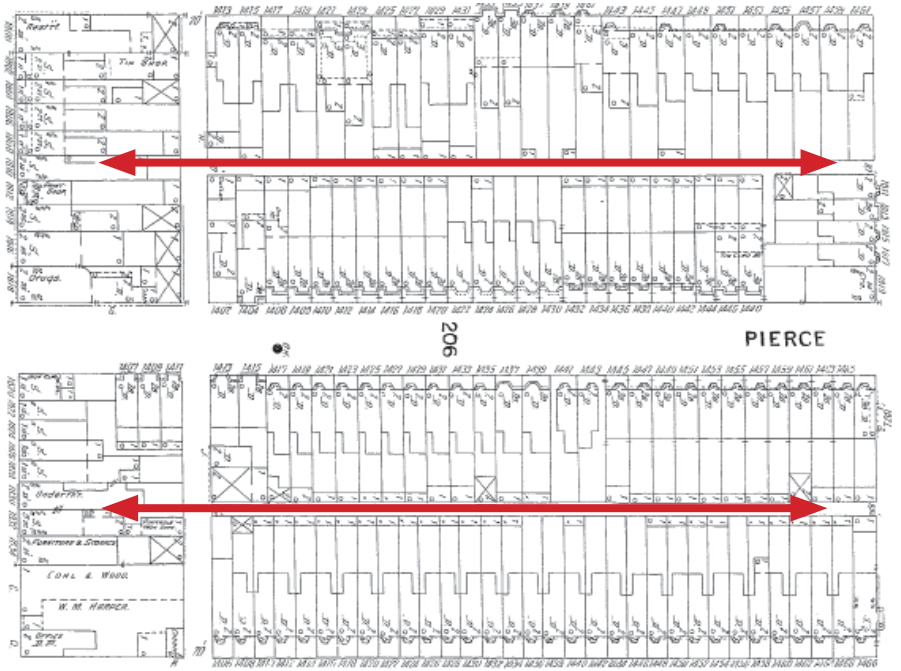




SANBORN MAPS 1903-1916



TYPICAL S.W. BLOCK
O-SHAPED CONFIGURATION
CLOSED ALLEYWAYS



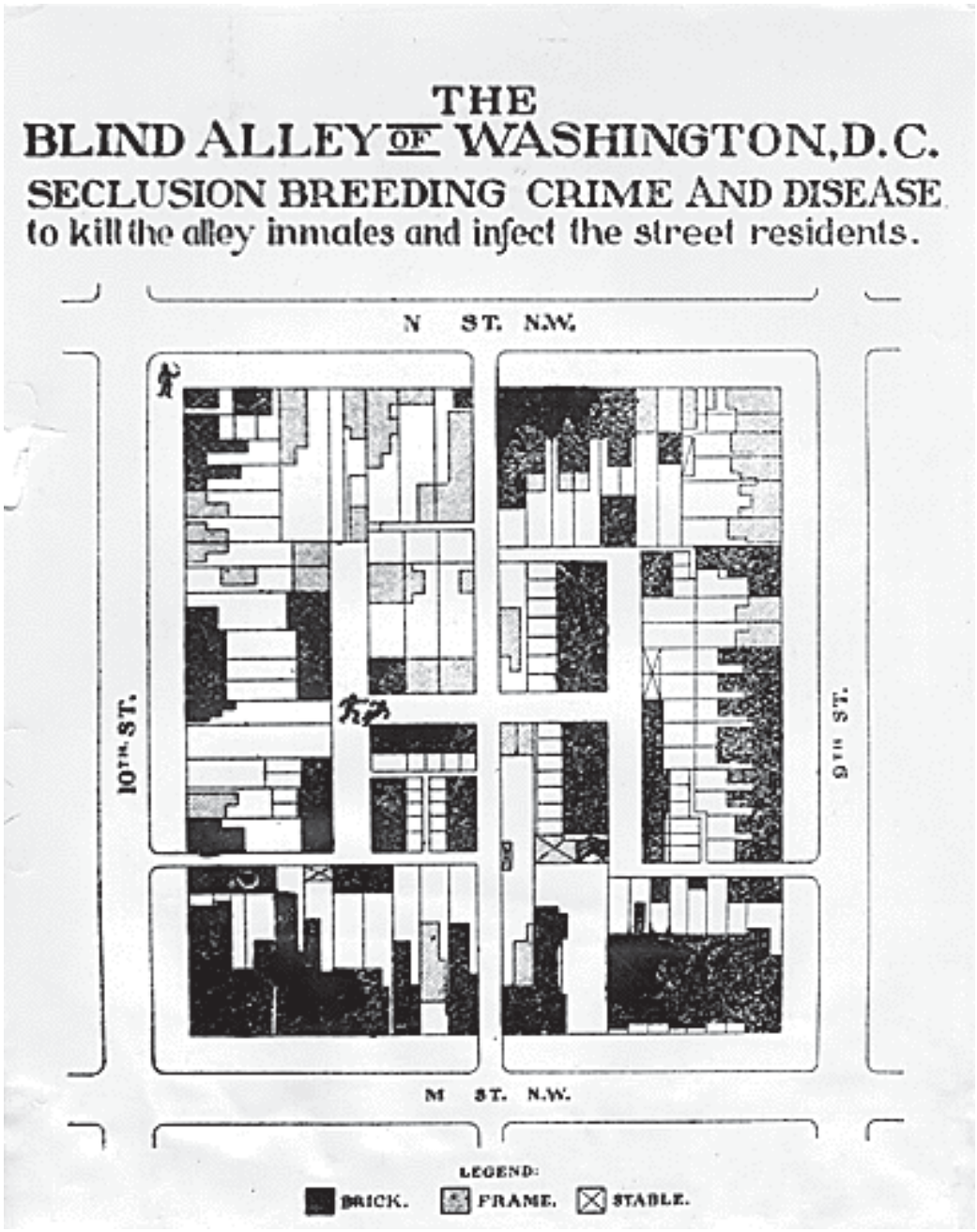
TYPICAL N.W. BLOCK
LINEAR CONFIGURATION WITH
STRAIGHT ALLEYWAYS THAT REACH
LARGE STREETS

1926-1960

Before & After
1950s Urban Renewal

Context of U.S. Planning

Robert Moses and urban development of New York 1930-1970
Housing Act of 1949
Boston's West End Demolished during 1950s
Pittsburgh Urban Renewal 1950s

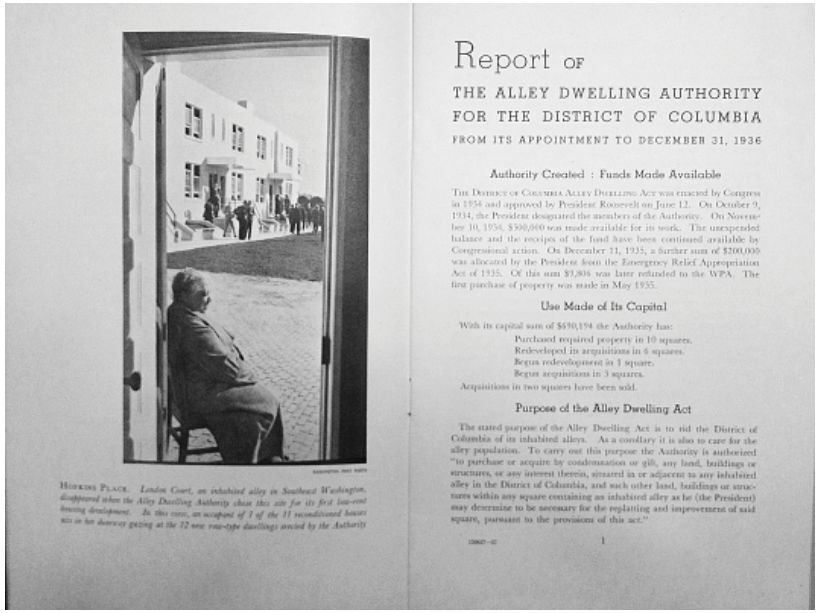


ALLEY DWELLING AUTHORITY

IN AN ATTEMPT TO IMPROVE LIVING CONDITIONS IN WASHINGTON D.C., THE ALLEY DWELLING AUTHORITY STARTS TO DOCUMENT AND EVALUATE HOMES BASED ON WHAT THEY CONSIDERED PROPER LIVING CONDITIONS.

THE DOCUMENTATION WAS SENT TO LEGISLATION FOR APPROVAL TO DEMOLISH ALLEYS AND RENOVATE THEM INTO BETTER HOUSES.

THE INTENDED PURPOSE OF THE ALLEY DWELLING AUTHORITY WAS, AS SHOWIN THE IMAGE ON THE LEFT, TO REDUCE CRIME AND LOWER DEATH RATES, BUT AS ALLEYWAY DWELLINGS WERE USUALLY OCCUPIED BY AFRICAN AMERICANS, PROJECTS COMPLETED BY THE ADA RESULTED IN THE EXCISING OF THE BLACK POPULATION FROM THESE DWELLINGS.



Report OF

THE ALLEY DWELLING AUTHORITY
FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
FROM ITS APPOINTMENT TO DECEMBER 31, 1936

Authority Created : Funds Made Available

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ALLEY DWELLING Act was enacted by Congress in 1934 and approved by President Roosevelt on June 12. On October 9, 1934, the President designated the members of the Authority. On November 10, 1934, $500,000 was made available for its work. The unexpended balance and the receipts of the fund have been continued available by Congressional action. On December 31, 1935, a further sum of $700,000 was allocated by the President from the Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935. Of this sum $9,806 was later refunded to the WPA. The first purchase of property was made in May 1935.

Use Made of Its Capital

With its capital sum of $690,194 the Authority has:

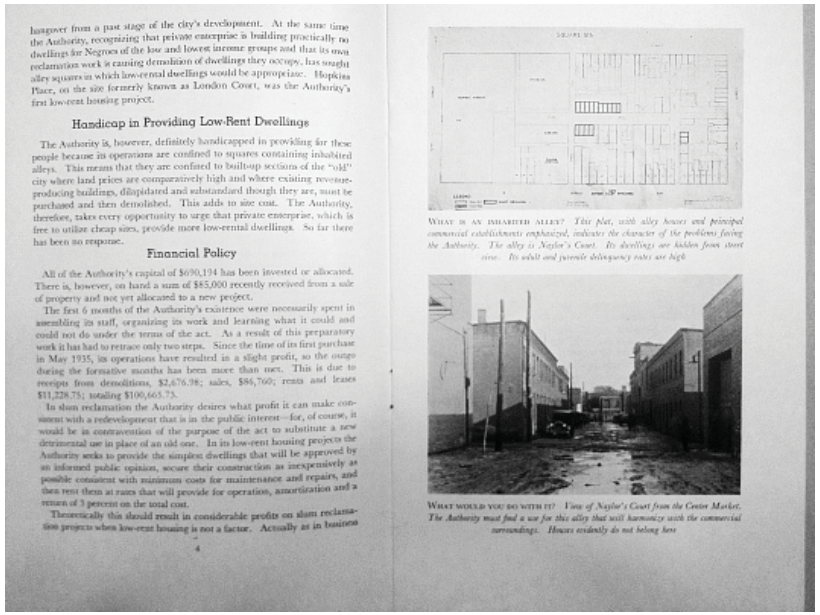
Purchased required property in 10 squares.
Redeveloped its acquisitions in 6 squares.
Begun redevelopment in 1 square.
Begun acquisitions in 3 squares.

Acquisitions in two squares have been sold.

Purpose of the Alley Dwelling Act

The stated purpose of the Alley Dwelling Act is to rid the District of Columbia of its inhabited alleys. As a corollary it is also to care for the alley population. To carry out this purpose the Authority is authorized "to purchase or acquire by condemnation or gift, any land, buildings or structures, or any interest therein, situated in or adjacent to any inhabited alley in the District of Columbia, and such other land, buildings or structures within any square containing an inhabited alley as he (the President) may determine to be necessary for the replatting and improvement of said square, pursuant to the provisions of this act."

HOPKINS PLACE. *London Court, an inhabited alley in Southeast Washington, disappeared when the Alley Dwelling Authority clean this site for its first low-cost housing development. In this view, an occupant of 1 of the 11 reconditioned houses sits in her doorway gazing at the 12 new row-type dwellings erected by the Authority*



hangover from a past stage of the city's development. At the same time the Authority, recognizing that private enterprise is building practically no dwellings for Negroes of the low and lowest income groups and that its own reclamation work is causing demolition of dwellings they occupy, has sought alley squares in which low-rental dwellings would be appropriate. Hopkins Place, on the site formerly known as London Court, was the Authority's first low-rent housing project.

Handicap in Providing Low-Rent Dwellings

The Authority is, however, definitely handicapped in providing for these people because its operations are confined to squares containing inhabited alleys. This means that they are confined to built-up sections of the "old" city where land prices are comparatively high and where existing revenue-producing buildings, dilapidated and substandard though they are, must be purchased and then demolished. This adds to site cost. The Authority, therefore, takes every opportunity to urge that private enterprise, which is free to utilize cheap sites, provide more low-rental dwellings. So far there has been no response.

Financial Policy

All of the Authority's capital of $690,194 has been invested or allocated. There is, however, on hand a sum of $85,000 recently received from a sale of property and not yet allocated to a new project.

The first 6 months of the Authority's existence were necessarily spent in assembling its staff, organizing its work and learning what it could and could not do under the terms of the act. As a result of this preparatory work it has had to retrace only two steps. Since the time of its first purchase in May 1935, its operations have resulted in a slight profit, so the ouzge during the formative months has been more than met. This is due to receipts from demolitions, $2,676.78; sales, $86,760; rents and leases $11,228.75; totaling $100,665.75.

In slum reclamation the Authority desires what profit it can make consistent with a redevelopment that is in the public interest—for, of course, it would be in contravention of the purpose of the act to substitute a new detrimental use in place of an old one. In its low-rent housing projects the Authority seeks to provide the simplest dwellings that will be approved by an informed public opinion, secure their construction as inexpensively as possible consistent with minimum costs for maintenance and repairs, and then rent them at rates that will provide for operation, amortization and a return of 3 percent on the total cost.

Theoretically this should result in considerable profits on slum reclamation projects when low-rent housing is not a factor. Actually as in business

WHAT IS AN INHABITED ALLEY? *This plat, with alley houses and principal commercial establishments emphasized, indicates the character of the problems facing the Authority. The alley is Naylor's Court. Its dwellings are hidden from street view. Its adult and juvenile delinquency rates are high*

WHAT WOULD YOU DO WITH IT? *View of Naylor's Court from the Center Market. The Authority must find a use for this alley that will harmonize with the commercial surroundings. Houses evidently do not belong here*

PURCHASES

The following tabular statement shows the status of the Authority's property acquisitions in projects definitely decided upon to date:

Site acquisition, Alley Dwelling Authority, as of Dec. 31, 1936

Project no.	Name of alley, section, and square no.	Number of alley dwellings	Number of other dwellings	Number of owners	Area of project	Area acquired	Contract price	Assessed value	Percent of contract price to assessment	Cost per square foot
					Sq. ft.	Sq. ft.				
1	Rupperts Court SE., no. 762	5		1	2,358	2,358	$3,795	$3,795	100.00	$1.61
4	Douglas Court NE., no. 785	10		6	7,191	[1] 7,191	[1] 15,380	13,867	110.90	2.21
5	O'Brien Court NW., no. 104	34	19	9	50,640	50,640	117,456	109,813	118.15	2.32
10	Browns Court SE., no. 870	8		5	4,535	4,535	4,464	6,269	71.00	.98
14	Bissels Court NW., no. 56	4	16	12	39,988	39,988	75,431	62,927	120.00	1.89
20	London Court SE., no. 1023	11	2	8	19,946	19,946	13,600	11,369	119.60	.57
22	Stanton Court NW., no. 37	4		1	2,178	2,178	3,350	3,198	105.00	1.54
23	St. Marys Court NW., no. 42	8	11	8	21,838	21,838	39,142	32,013	122.30	1.79
25	Valley Street NW., no. 275	13	3	3	11,937	11,937	17,752	18,898	94.00	1.49
26	Blands Court NW., no. 3070	3	1	4	22,061	22,061	11,918	12,763	93.37	.54
29	Blands Court NW., no. 3072	11	14	10	46,876	17,700	[2] 8,950	10,450	85.60	.51
32	K St. Alley SW., no. 470	8	9	7	30,944					
33	Burdens Court NW., no. 557	2	2	4	7,964	2,550	[1] 1,500	1,785	84.00	.59
		116	77	78	268,456	203,922	313,739	287,148	108.90	1.54

[1] Includes area acquired through condemnation.
[2] Includes amount of condemnation award.
[3] Property under option.

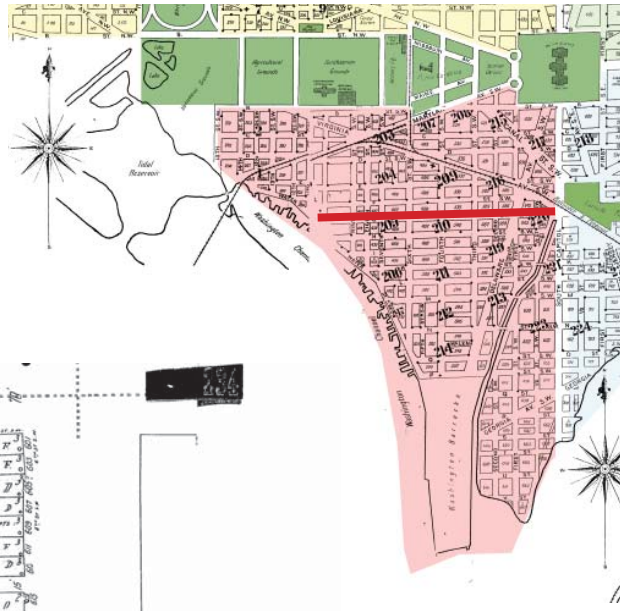
NOTE.—The Alley Dwelling Act, sec. 3 (d) states: "The total amount paid for property or properties acquired in any square shall not exceed 30 per centum over and above the present assessed value of all the property or properties acquired in any square."

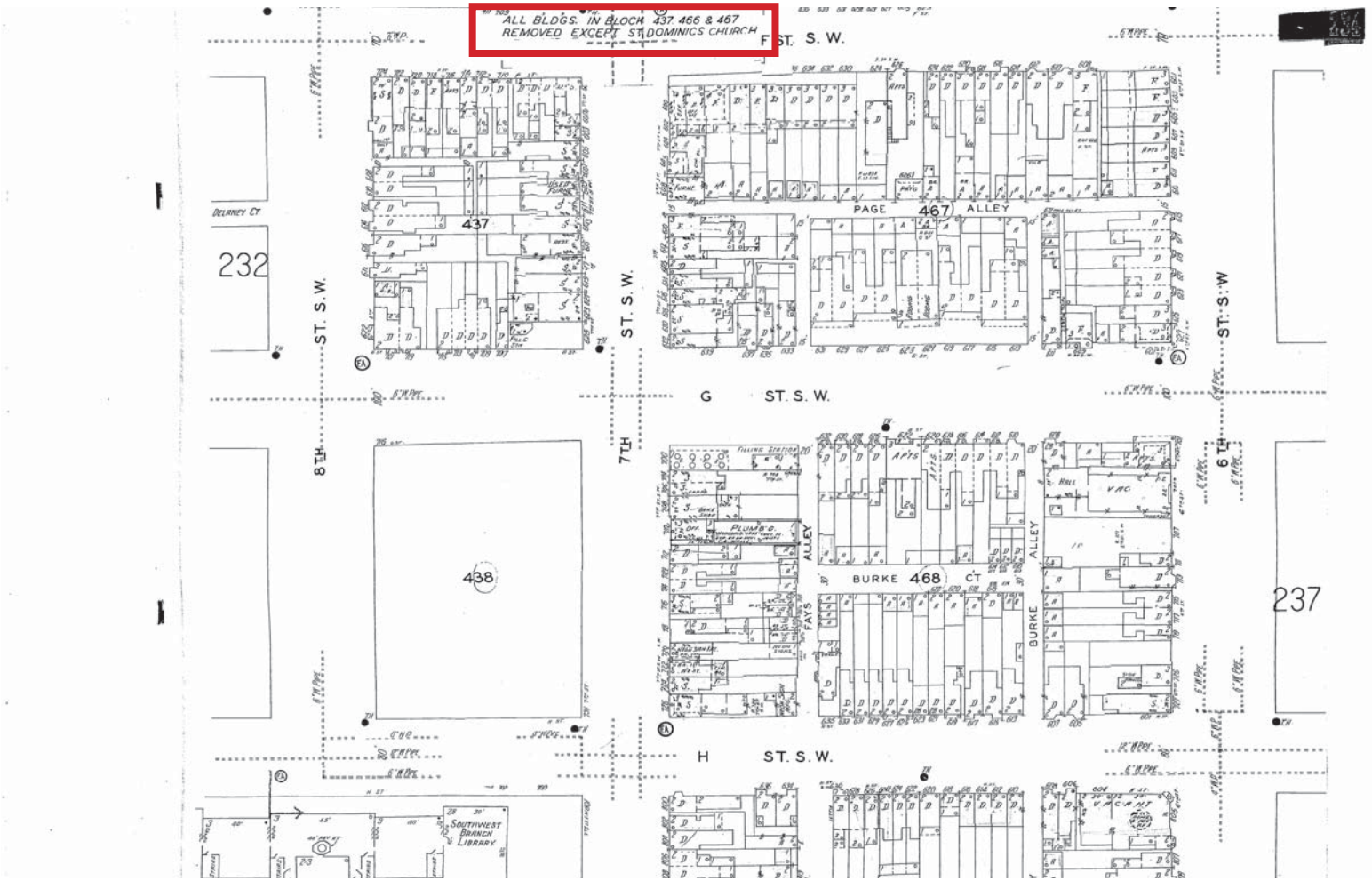
THE TABLE OF ACQUISITIONS MADE BY THE ALLEYWAY DWELLING AUTHORITY SHOWS THAT THERE WERE NO EFFORTS PUT INTO INTERVENTIONS IN THE SOUTHWEST.

ALLEYWAY DWELLING AUTHORITY REPORT 1936

SANBORN MAPS 1928-1959 G-STREET S.W.

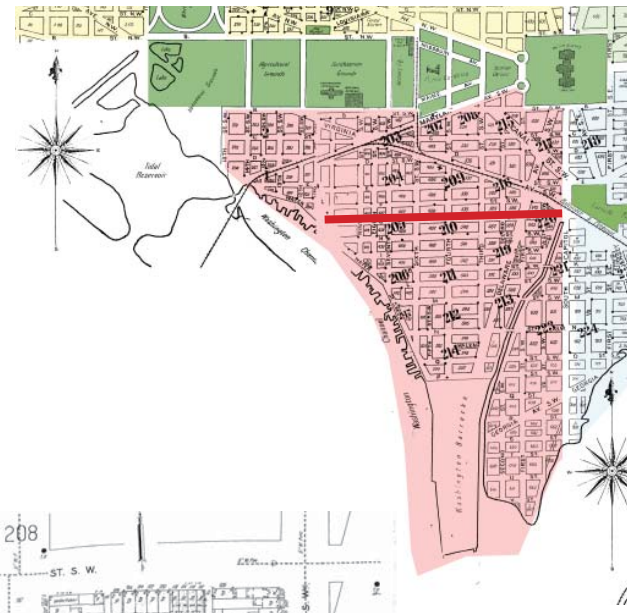
ALL BLDGS ON SHEET REMOVED

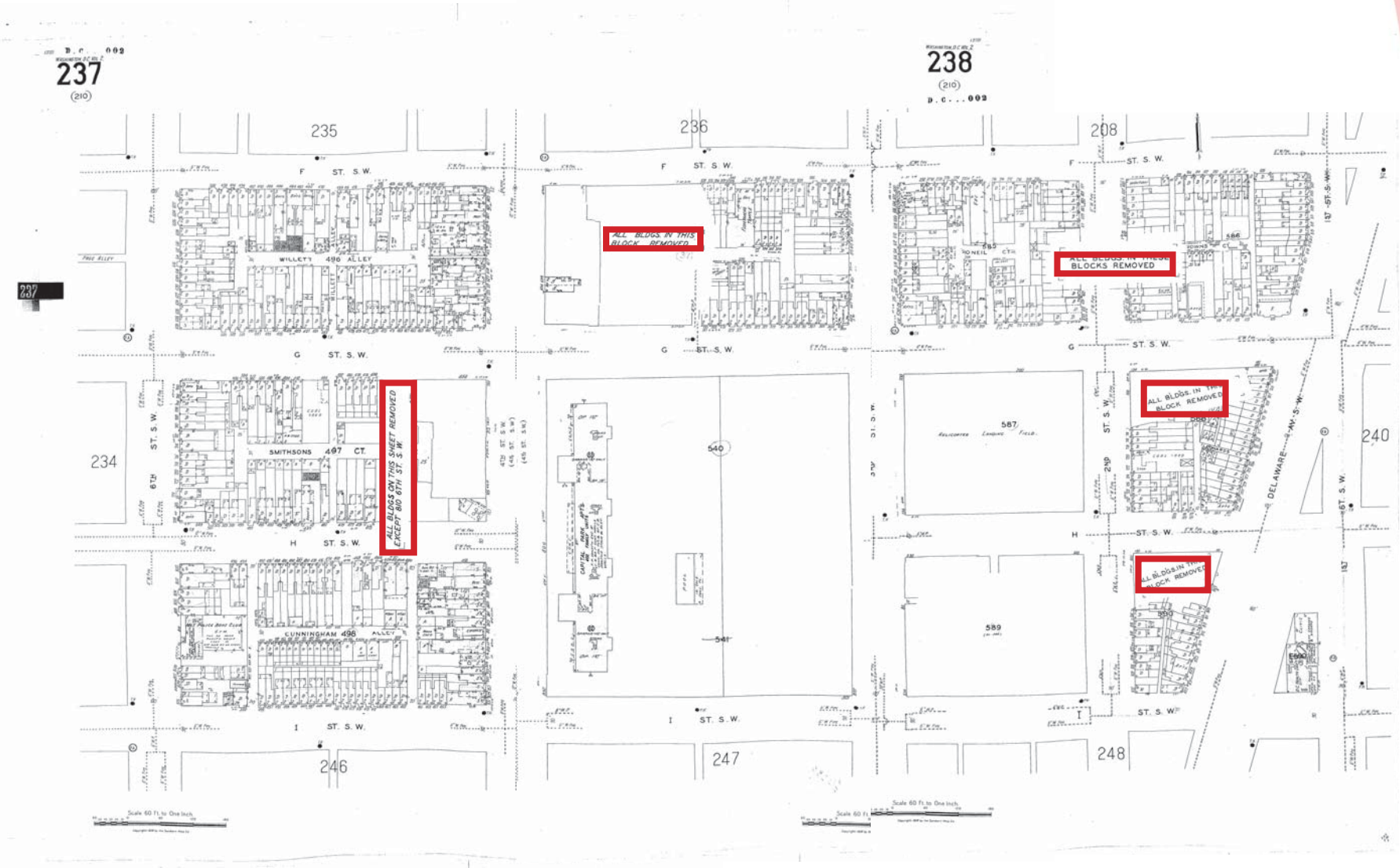




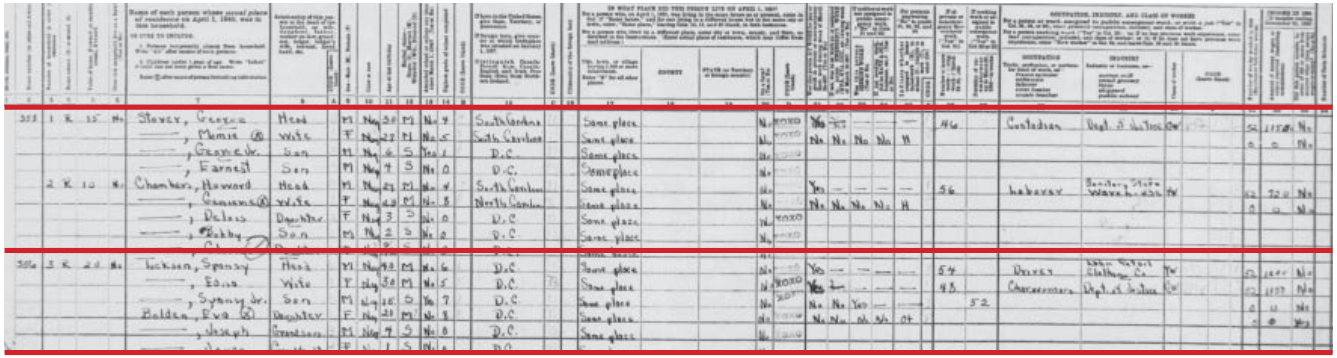
SANBORN MAPS 1928-1959 G-STREET S.W.

ALL BLDGS ON SHEET REMOVED



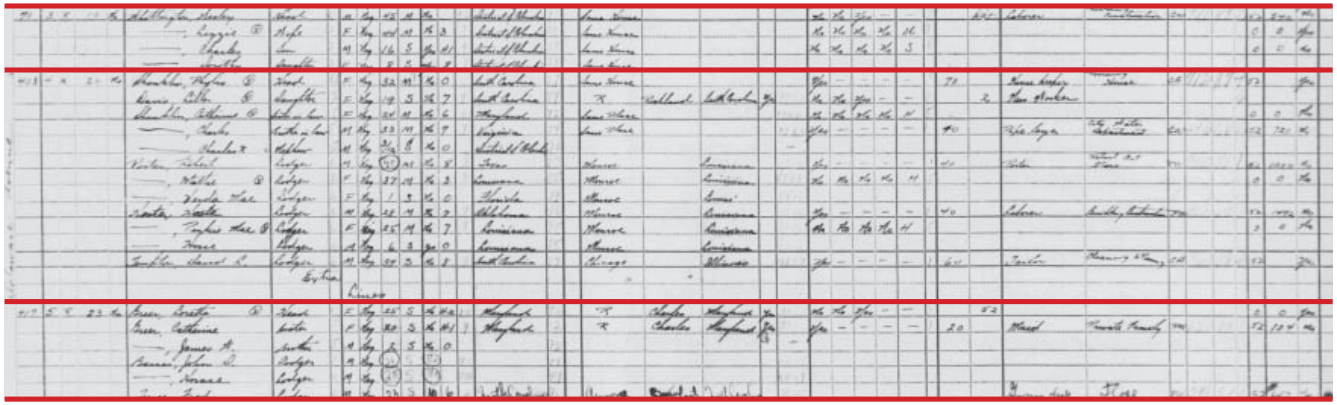


1940S SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON DC CENSUS: G-STREET SOUTHWEST



2 FAMILIES / 8 PEOPLE

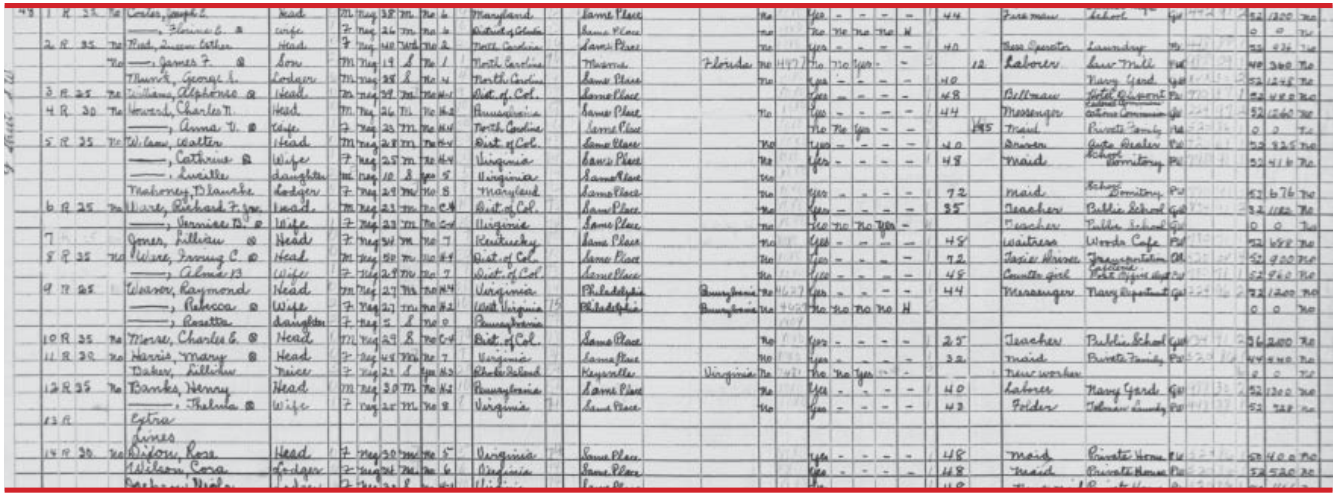
1 FAMILY / 6 PEOPLE



1 FAMILY / 4 PEOPLE

1 FAMILY & 7 LODGERS / 12 PEOPLE

1 FAMILY / 6 PEOPLE

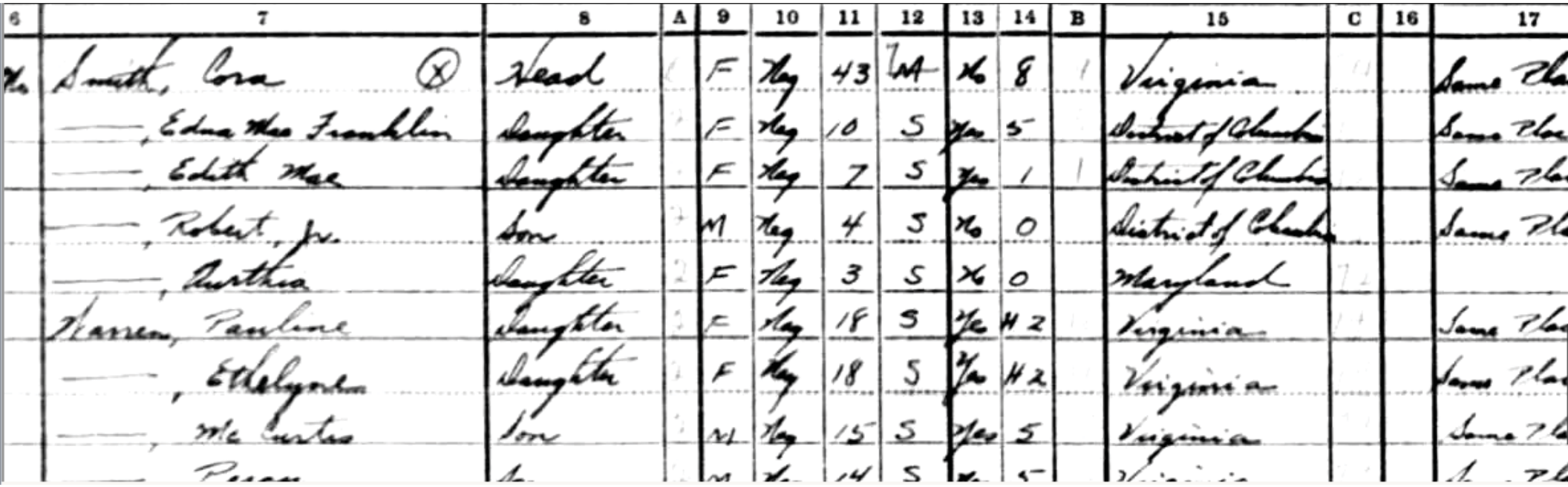


14 FAMILIES / 30 PEOPLE

1940S SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON DC CENSUS
G-STREET SOUTHWEST

TYPICAL FAMILY :

BLACK - THERE IS NO WHITE FAMILY RECORDED FOR 1940S CENSUS OF G-STREET
HEAD OF FAMILY FROM 40 - 60 YRS OF AGE, NO EDUCATION
FEMALE OCCUPATION: HOUSE CLEANER, HOUSE KEEPER, MAID, COOK, WAITRESS
MALE OCCUPATION: CLERK, PORTER, LABORER, MESSENGER, DRIVER, BARBER, TEACHER
3-6 CHILDREN, WITH 1-2 LODGERS
FROM VIRGINIA OR DC & HAS LIVED IN THE SAME PLACE FOR AT LEAST 5 YEARS



6	7	8	A	9	10	11	12	13	14	B	15	C	16	17
No	Smith, Cora ⊗	Head		F	Neg	43	M	No	8		Virginia			Same Pla
	——, Edna Mae Franklin	Daughter		F	Neg	10	S	Yes	5		District of Columbia			Same Pla
	——, Edith Mae	Daughter		F	Neg	7	S	Yes	1		District of Columbia			Same Pla
	——, Robert, Jr.	Son		M	Neg	4	S	No	0		District of Columbia			Same Pla
	——, Aurthia	Daughter		F	Neg	3	S	No	0		Maryland			
	Warren, Pauline	Daughter		F	Neg	18	S	Yes	H 2		Virginia			Same Pla
	——, Ethelyne	Daughter		F	Neg	18	S	Yes	H 2		Virginia			Same Pla
	——, McCurtis	Son		M	Neg	15	S	Yes	5		Virginia			Same Pla
	——, Peggy	[illegible]		M	Neg	14	S	[illegible]	5		Virginia			[illegible]

WITH AVERAGE 8 MEMBER DWELLINGS, THE TYPICAL SOUTHWEST BLOCK WOULD HAVE HOUSED AROUND 600 PEOPLE, PRIMARILY AFRICAN AMERICANS.

DURING THE 1950S URBAN RENEWAL, AROUND 6000-8000 PEOPLE WOULD HAVE BEEN DISPLACED FROM G-STREET S.W. ALONE.

1950S URBAN RENEWAL

OVER 23,000 RESIDENTS DISPLACED

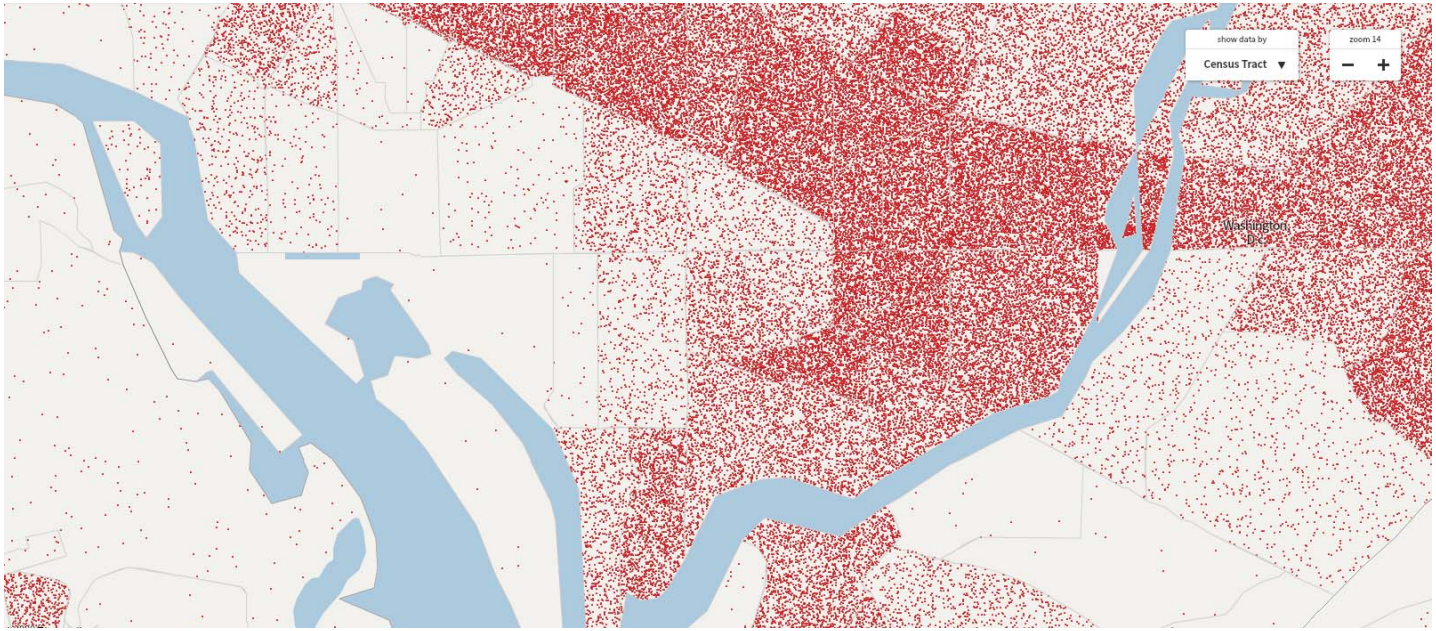
“if those who govern the District of Columbia decide [it] should be beautiful as well as sanitary, there is nothing in the Fifth Amendment that stands in the way”
-William O. Douglas, Berman v. Parker

WILLIAM ZECKENDORF’S REDEVELOPMENT “AREA C” SHOWING THE EXTENT OF URBAN RENEWAL IN THE SOUTHWEST

VIEW OF SOUTHWEST DEMOLITION, LOOKING TOWARDS THE WASHINGTON MONUMENT AND POTOMAC RIVER

DENOUEMENT OF MODERNIST URBAN RENEWAL: BRUTALIST ARCHITECTURE BY I.M.PEI, MORRIS LAPIDUS, AND MORE

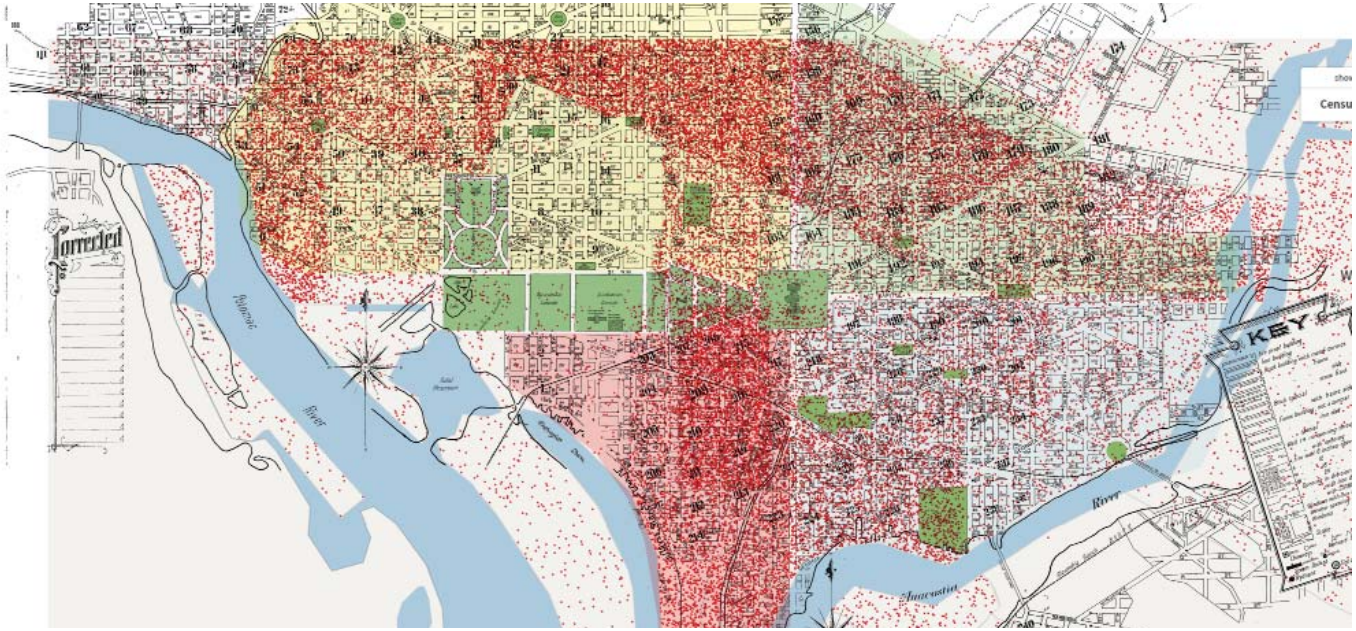
1940S CENSUS TRACT OF BLACK POPULATION, BY 2



1960S CENSUS TRACT OF BLACK POPULATION, BY 2

SOCIAL EXPLORER CENSUS TRACT BEFORE AND AFTER SOUTHWEST URBAN RENEWAL

THE LEFT CENSUS TRACT IN WASHINGTON DC SHOWS THE PUSHING OUT OF THE BLACK POPULATION FROM THE CAPITOL AND NATIONAL MALL



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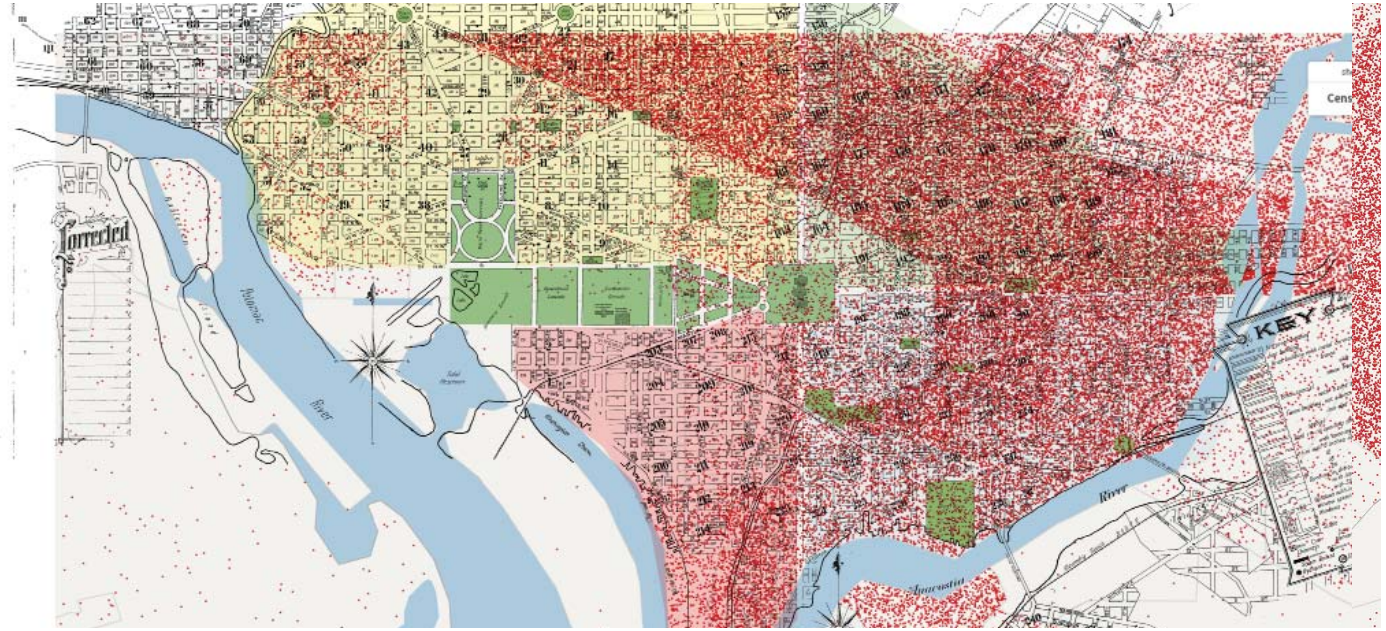

1960S CENSUS TRACT OF BLACK POPULATION, BY 2

SOCIAL EXPLORER CENSUS TRACT BEFORE AND AFTER SOUTHWEST URBAN RENEWAL

THE LEFT CENSUS TRACT IN WASHINGTON DC SHOWS THE PUSHING OUT OF THE BLACK POPULATION FROM THE CAPITOL AND NATIONAL MALL

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District of Columbia [map] 1903-1916. Scale not given. “Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps, 1903-1916 - District of Columbia”.

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Social Explorer

1940s Census Archive