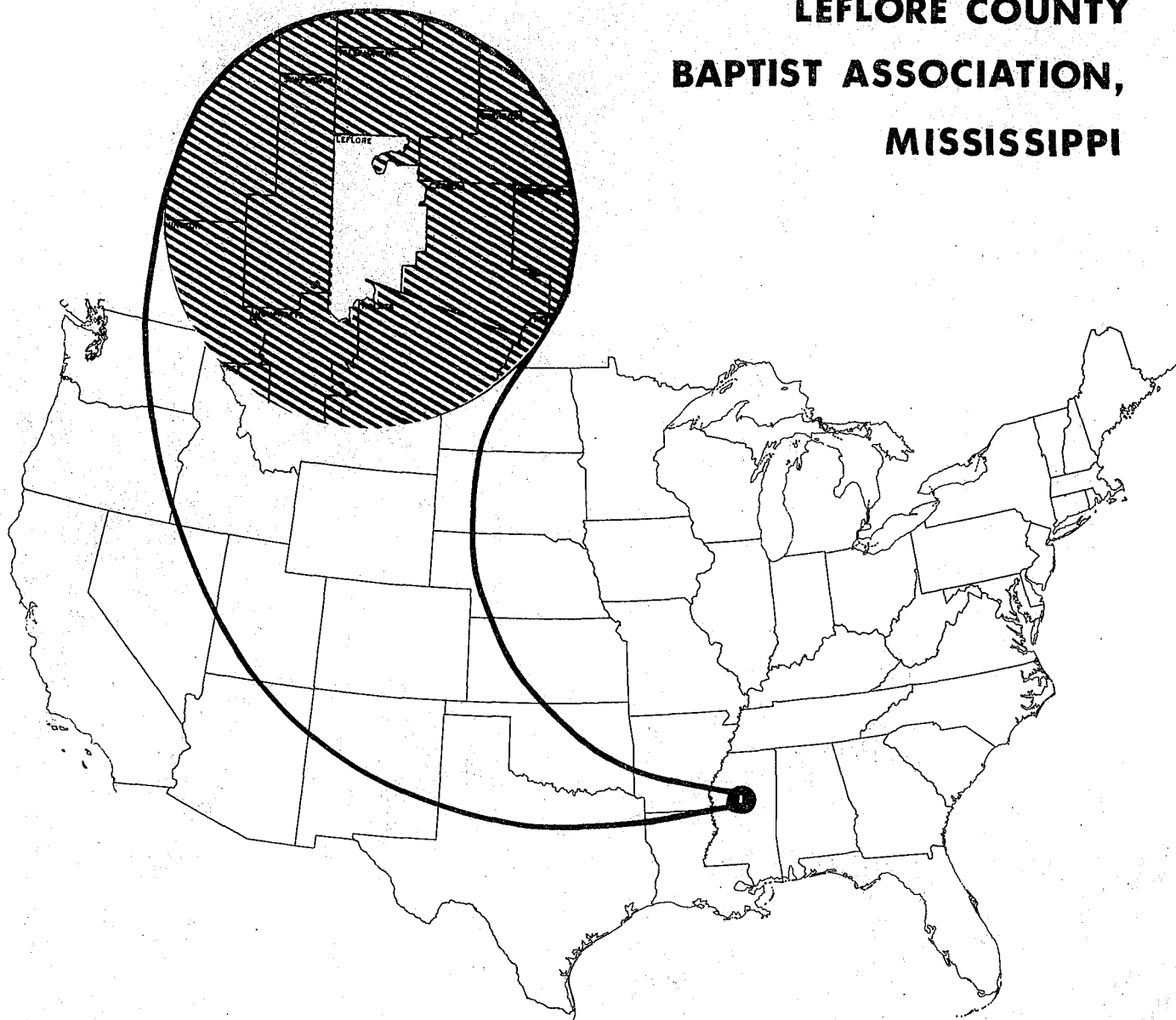


**A SPECIAL STUDY OF
LEFLORE COUNTY
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,
MISSISSIPPI**



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DEPARTMENT OF SURVEY AND SPECIAL STUDIES HOME MISSION BOARD S.B.C.



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A SPECIAL STUDY OF LEFLORE COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,
MISSISSIPPI

October, 1968

Jointly prepared by the

DEPARTMENT OF SURVEY AND SPECIAL STUDIES

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A SPECIAL STUDY OF THE LEFLORE COUNTY BAPTIST ASSOCIATION OF MISSISSIPPI

Leflore County, Mississippi lies on the eastern edge of the Delta with the eastern boundary marked by the bluffs from the Central Highlands of the state. The city of Greenwood is located at the junction of the Tallahatchie and Yalobusha rivers as they form the Yazoo River.

City and County Population Characteristics

The County ranks as the seventh most populous county in the state, and the city of Greenwood is the eleventh most populous city in the state.

The population in Leflore County decreased over 4,600 from 1950 to 1960, but since 1960 has regained over 1,000. Table 1 contrasts the population in 1960 and 1965 by race and age groups.

TABLE 1

LEFLORE COUNTY POPULATION ESTIMATES BY RACE AND AGE GROUPS^a

Age Groups	Years and Race					
	1960			1965		
	Both	White	Nonwhite	Both	White	Nonwhite
0 - 5. . . .	8,132	2,107	6,035	8,372	2,318	6,058
6 - 14. . . .	10,470	2,982	7,488	12,718	3,636	9,082
15 - 45. . . .	16,201	6,382	9,819	18,273	7,186	11,087
45 & older . .	12,329	5,228	7,101	13,495	5,956	7,539
Total . .	47,142	16,699	39,443	52,858	19,096	33,762

^aMississippi State University, Agricultural Experiment Station, Sociology and Rural Life Series No. 17, August, 1966.

The population of Greenwood in 1960 was 20,436, of whom 10,618 were nonwhite, represent 52% of the total residents. The Greenwood planning area includes an additional 2,700 persons (1960) living beyond but adjacent to the city limits. Table 2 displays the population projections used in the "Comprehensive City Plan" shortly after the publication of the 1960 U.S. Census.

TABLE 2

ESTIMATED FUTURE POPULATION GREENWOOD PLANNING AREA, (1960-1985)

Year	Assumption No. 1 (Probable Minimum)	Assumption No. 2 (Median)	Assumption No. 3 (Probable High)
1960	23,190	23,190	23,190
1965	23,600	25,500	27,700
1970	24,000	27,700	31,400
1975	24,400	30,800	37,200
1980	24,800	33,100	42,400
1985	25,200	36,800	49,500

The high projection (Assumption No. 3) provides a margin of safety for long range engineering estimates and will be utilized in planning water distribution and supply, sewage treatment, storm drainage and other similar projects. The median projection (Assumption No. 2) will be utilized as a reasonable intermediate figure for estimating land requirements. Recent industrial developments in the Planning Area together with the City's policy of "seeking out industry" undoubtedly already has reversed the declining population growth rate experienced between 1930 and 1960. Thus, the minimum population estimate (Assumption No. 1), which envisions negligible economic growth, should have little chance of materializing.^a

The County is like many other Delta areas with the wealth centered in the cities. Leflore County, outside Greenwood had approximately half its households with incomes under \$2,500 in 1965, according to Sales Management Magazine researchers. In the City, one out of eight families had incomes of

^a"Comprehensive City Plan for Greenwood, Mississippi," 44, prepared by Michael Baker, Jr., Inc., Consulting Engineers, Planners.

\$10,000 and over in 1965 and by 1967, the same source estimated the income levels rose such that one out of five families were in that income bracket. These data underline the dualistic society which not only reflects the Negro-white differences but the low-high income levels which have a tendency to emerge on a rural-urban difference also. Table 3 displays these data for 1961, 1965, and 1967.

TABLE 3

PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS IN EACH CASH INCOME GROUP FOR LEFLORE COUNTY, GREENWOOD AND THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, 1961, 1965, 1967^a

Income Group	State			County			City		
	1961	1965	1967	1961	1965	1967	1961	1965	1967
\$ 0-2,499. . . .	53.5	37.0	b	60.7	42.1	b	48.4	33.8	b
2,500-3,999. . . .	16.0	20.7	b	12.2	20.4	b	14.2	18.7	b
4,000-6,999. . . .	18.9	14.0	b	15.4	20.3	b	20.3	23.8	b
7,000-9,999. . . .	5.6	9.5	b	5.4	8.3	b	7.8	11.0	b
10,000 & over . . .	6.0	8.8	14.7	6.3	8.9	14.9	9.3	12.7	19.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

^aSales Management Magazine.

^bA new grouping of incomes make comparison impossible except for the \$10,000 and over group.

Table 4 shows the effective buying income per household as reported in the Sales Management Magazine, 1961 through 1967. The per capita EBI are listed only through 1966 and will no longer be a part of the published data in the Magazine. The city-county differences in level of income are again magnified.

TABLE 4

DOLLARS PER CAPITA AND PER HOUSEHOLD EFFECTIVE BUYING INCOME FOR
LEFLORE COUNTY, GREENWOOD, AND THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI, 1961-1967^a

Year	State		County		City	
	Per Capita	Per Household	Per Capita	Per Household	Per Capita	Per Household
1961	1,137	4,357	1,028	3,983	1,433	4,680
1962	1,220	4,675	1,112	4,297	1,526	4,953
1963	1,265	4,839	1,160	4,492	1,584	5,190
1964	1,388	5,314	1,279	4,902	1,740	5,713
1965	1,453	5,536	1,337	5,140	1,825	5,957
1966	1,569	5,961	1,412	5,445	1,990	6,509
1967	b	6,579	b	6,071	b	7,018

^aSales Management Magazine.

^bThese data no longer published.

The Comprehensive Plan has not been followed very closely, but the growth of the area has been dependent primarily on the private sector of the economy with the arrival of several new industries and expansions of payrolls including: Baldwin Piano with 800 to 1,000 employees; National Picture and Framing Company with 150 employees, and promise of 100 more new jobs soon; Medart Lockers, 250 jobs; Supreme Hichcock, 200 or more jobs; Conmar Zipper, 150 to 200 employees; and Barrentine (agricultural field equipment), also 150 to 200 employees.

There are four principal residential developments occurring in the planning area. The largest of these is Country Club Addition with 400 home sites which are being built by Underwood Homes of Jackson. The second largest subdivision is known as River Haven Additions with approximately 100 lots. The other two are the Riverside Heights and Terrace Gardens Additions. Riverside Heights is in the northeast part of the planning area and is being de-

veloped by Henderson Building Company for twenty-five to fifty homes. Terrace Gardens provides for twenty-five or so lots.

Two other significant events give clues to developmental patterns of the City. The first is the transfer of the airport to the old airbase and the development of the former site as an Industrial Park. The second event is the building of the Sewage Disposal Plant out State Highway No. 7 (Grenada Boulevard).

Plate 1 identifies the neighborhoods which are studied in depth in the Comprehensive City Plan. Neighborhood No. 6 contains many very poor residential structures. The Plan indicated that "eighty-nine percent of the dwelling units were considered substandard or critical " (p. 76).

City and County Religious Characteristics

In Table 5, the number of churches and church members by various religious groups are listed from a 1957 national survey by the National Council of Churches. This table shows there are more Methodist churches in Leflore County than Southern Baptist churches. The third largest number of churches are Presbyterian, with only three congregations.

TABLE 5

NUMBER OF CHURCHES AND CHURCH MEMBERS REPORTED BY RELIGIOUS GROUPS
FOR LEFLORE COUNTY^a

Religious Group	Churches	Members
Adventist, Seventh Day	1	18
Assembly of God	1	29
Baptist, Southern	12	5,527
Church of God (Cleveland)	2	91
Church of God in Christ	1	16
Disciples of Christ (Int'l Cons.)	2	353
Jewish Congregation	1	174
Methodist	18	3,270
Presbyterian, U.S.	3	982

TABLE 5--Continued

Religious Group	Churches	Members
Protestant Episcopal	1	568
Roman Catholic	1	875
Pentecostal Church of God of America	1	b
Church of God of Prophecy	1	31

^a"Churches and Church Members in the United States," Series C, No. 44, 1957, Bureau of Research and Survey, National Council of Churches of Christ in the U.S.A."

^bNo data reported.

When these figures are compared to the white population ten years of age and older of approximately 13,400, we note church membership totals fall short by nearly 1,500, plus the fact that these data were on total members. We can assume also that approximately twenty-five percent or 3,000 of the reported members are non-resident, thus giving at least 4,500 persons who were not members of any local church at the time of the N.C.C. report. As will be seen later, Southern Baptists have not made any substantial gains on the number of "unchurched."

A recent religious survey of East Greenwood conducted by Rev. Leon Emery of the Cooperative Missions Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, revealed that only thirty-three percent of the 950 persons interviewed attend church "weekly" and about twenty-three percent attend "monthly." If this is true, then over forty-four percent "seldom" or "never" attend any church. This same survey revealed that thirty-two percent of the white population, nine years of age and older, were not church members anywhere.

Leflore County Baptist Association Churches and Members

In 1957, the association had thirteen churches affiliated with it. By 1960, the number decreased to eleven churches and remained at that number until Immanuel was organized this year, however, since the 1968 data were not available for this study, only eleven churches are included in this report.

The churches of Leflore County Baptist Association are divided into two groups for comparative study. The three churches, Calvary, First, and North Greenwood, constitute the city churches while the remaining eight churches are referred to as "other" churches in the statistical tables that follow.

In Table 6 are listed the number of resident members by church groups for selected years. These data show that the city churches have experienced slight but steady increase in resident members while the other churches show a tendency toward decline but with erratic ups and downs.

TABLE 6
NUMBER OF RESIDENT MEMBERS BY SELECTED YEARS^a

Church Groups	Year					
	1957	1960	1963	1965	1966	1967
City	2,515	2,860	2,972	2,868	2,894	2,946
Other	1,354	1,247	1,330	1,366	1,483	1,238
Total	3,869	4,107	4,302	4,234	4,377	4,185

^aAnnual Minutes of Leflore County Baptist Association.

Leflore County Baptist Association Growth Factors

Baptisms

The number of persons received by baptism for each study group can be observed in Table 7. Two years have had unusually high records for baptism in this Association during the past ten years; they are 1959 and 1965. In 1959, there were a total of 214 in the city churches but only fifty-four in the other churches; the 1965 data are shown in Table 7. Apart from these two years, we note a fairly consistent pattern for both groups.

TABLE 7
NUMBER OF ADDITIONS BY BAPTISM FOR SELECTED YEARS^a

Church Groups	Year					
	1957	1960	1963	1965	1966	1967
City	81	118	78	160	57	111
Other	15	59	70	49	61	80
Total . . .	106	177	148	209	118	191

^aAnnual Minutes of Leflore County Baptist Association.

Letters

The number of persons received by letter or statement can be noted on Table 8. The city churches average over fifty letters per year while the other churches average about ten letters per church per year. These differences reflect the immigration experienced by Greenwood and the very slight mobility of the rural areas.

TABLE 8

NUMBER OF ADDITIONS BY LETTER AND STATEMENT FOR SELECTED YEARS^a

Church Groups	Year					
	1957	1960	1963	1965	1966	1967
City	258	178	166	160	176	165
Other	64	119	53	77	78	82
Total	322	297	219	237	254	247

^aAnnual Minutes of Leflore County Baptist Association.

Losses

Every year churches not only receive new members by baptism, letter, and statement but they lose members by death, erasure to other denominations or by letter to another Baptist church. The deaths are reported in the Annual Minutes of the Association but the number lost to other churches or being transferred from resident to non-resident rolls are not reported. These figures as a group can be calculated by comparing the total additions to the net increase in resident members. The city churches reported a net gain of fifty-two resident members from 1966 to 1967 but reported 276 additions, therefore, it can be concluded that 224 persons were removed from the resident rolls. On the other hand, the "other" churches reported a net decrease of 245 in resident membership while 162 were received by baptism and letter. These "other" churches must have removed a total of 407 members from their resident rolls from 1966 to 1967.

The city churches lost 7.7 persons per 100 resident members during 1967, compared to 27.4 persons per 100 resident members during the same year. These radical differences are not as great when the activities of the three church years, 1965, 1966, and 1967 are averaged. During these three years, the city

churches averaged 7.3 losses per 100 resident members while the other churches lost an average of 12.5 per 100 resident members.

These data point toward two conclusions: first, the rural churches are losing members faster than they are adding new members (at the rate of 2.3% fewer per year) and the city churches are increasing at a rate of 2.5% per year; second, the economic "boom" in the city (new industrial jobs) and the diminishing work force in the agricultural sections of the County have a direct bearing on the life of all churches.

Membership Projections

If the trends in additions and losses continue, the Association can anticipate further decreases by the churches outside Greenwood while the gains by the city churches should more than compensate for the rural losses and account for an associational increase of as many as 320 more resident members than reported at the end of 1967. Table 9 displays the membership projections for the total Association for 1970 and 1975.

TABLE 9

NUMBER OF RESIDENT MEMBERS: ACTUAL 1960 & 1965, PROJECTED 1970 & 1975

Range	Year			
	1960	1965	1970	1975
Reported	4,107	4,234		
High			4,303	4,507
Low			4,190	4,200

The high projection for 1970 and 1975 assumes that the rate of increase experienced during the last three years, 1965, 1966, and 1967. The low projection reaches two years further back to 1963 and 1964 to diagnose the five-

year trends.

The average weekly Sunday School attendance is also a good indicator of the support which resident members give to the general program of the churches. In 1967, the average weekly Sunday School attendance represented 46.1 persons per 100 resident members. This is a slight drop from 50.0 in 1957. Closer examination of the church groups show the attendance rate dropping in the city churches and proportionately rising in the other churches. The rise in the "other" churches is probably caused by the heavy losses in the resident membership while the city churches are picking up many more new members, but these new members may not be very active in Sunday School.

TABLE 10

SUNDAY SCHOOL AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE AS A RATE PER 100 RESIDENT MEMBERS
1957, 1962, 1967

Church Group	Year		
	1957	1962	1967
City	53.5	46.6	43.2
Other	43.6	49.1	53.1
Average	50.0	47.4	46.1

Summary of Principal Ministries Needed in the Future

- (1) A strong and continuing evangelistic thrust.
- (2) Continued diversity in ministries to meet specific needs in all areas of the County. The Association is to be commended on the new Chinese ministry that has been recently begun.
- (3) Specialized ministry to the "low income" population throughout the Association.
- (4) A continuation of the interest in church extension to provide a

nearby church-type ministry in the newly developing areas such as the recent organization of Immanuel Church.

(5) Special assistance to churches in the declining rural areas including development of fields of churches when the work is too weak to adequately support a pastor full time.

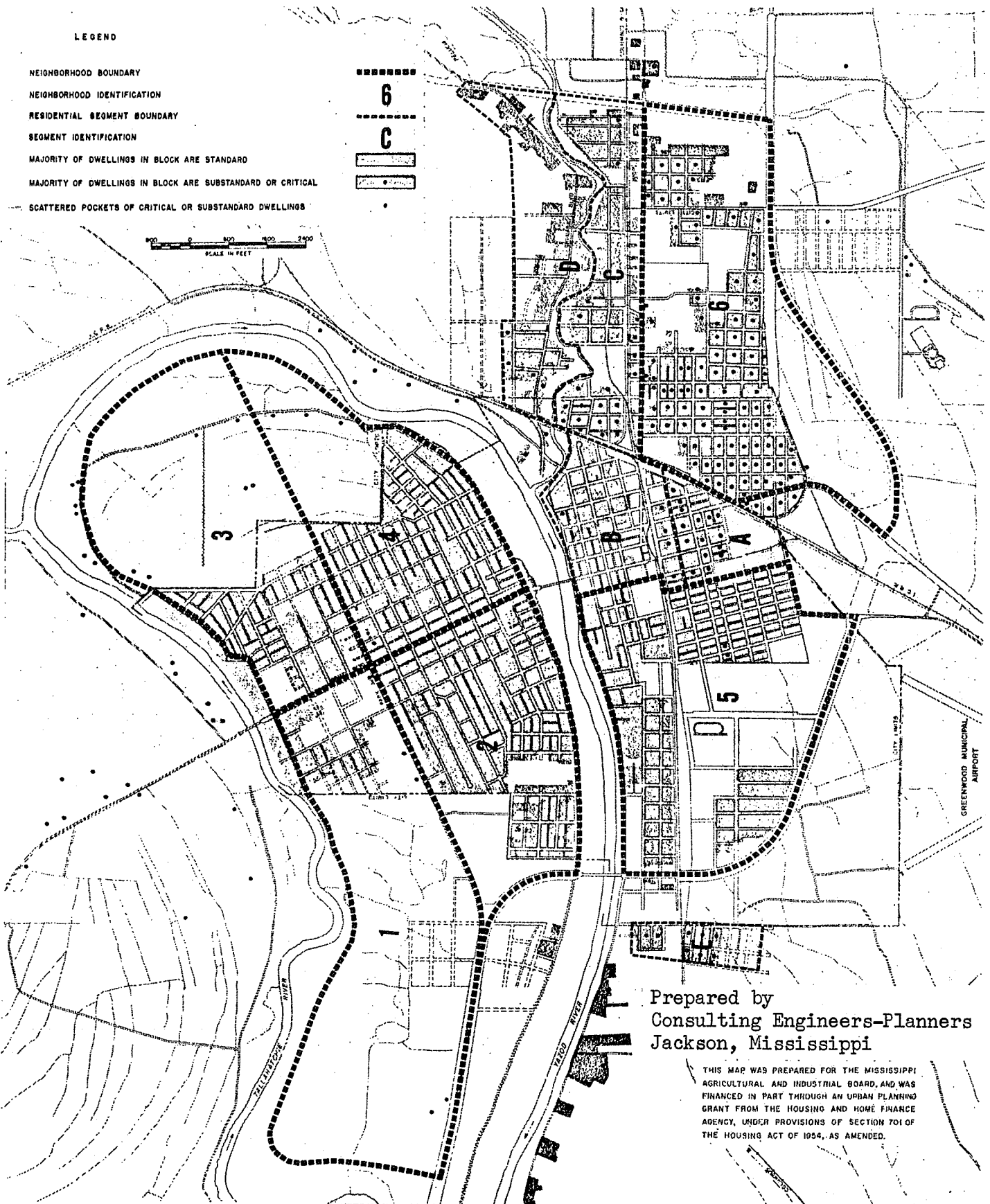
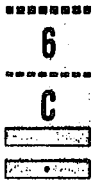
(6) Special study should be made to fully utilize the "foster-missionary" program which should be ultimately expanded to include a resident associational superintendent of missions who is either fully employed by Leflore County Association or in cooperation with a neighboring association.

There is a wide range of needs in this Association. The range in spiritual contrasts are cloaked in the wide socio-economic extremes which are also related to the rural-urban differences in the County. Many of the churches have sufficient resources to offer a wide range of ministries while others are struggling to maintain the simplest of programs. This wide range of needs seem to call for the counsel of a person who can objectively approach all segments of this heterogenous society and the churches representing these elements to inspire creative ministries and programs of outreach. The right man, a qualified superintendent of missions even on a part-time basis, could aid the Association in providing the services which the future seems to demand.

PLATE I

LEGEND

- NEIGHBORHOOD BOUNDARY
- NEIGHBORHOOD IDENTIFICATION
- RESIDENTIAL SEGMENT BOUNDARY
- SEGMENT IDENTIFICATION
- MAJORITY OF DWELLINGS IN BLOCK ARE STANDARD
- MAJORITY OF DWELLINGS IN BLOCK ARE SUBSTANDARD OR CRITICAL
- SCATTERED POCKETS OF CRITICAL OR SUBSTANDARD DWELLINGS



Prepared by
 Consulting Engineers-Planners
 Jackson, Mississippi

THIS MAP WAS PREPARED FOR THE MISSISSIPPI AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL BOARD, AND WAS FINANCED IN PART THROUGH AN URBAN PLANNING GRANT FROM THE HOUSING AND HOME FINANCE AGENCY, UNDER PROVISIONS OF SECTION 701 OF THE HOUSING ACT OF 1954, AS AMENDED.

Housing conditions in residential neighborhoods for Greenwood, Mississippi