

# 1 | SUMMARY STATEMENT

*Peter Trapolin's contributions as advocate, educator, and volunteer in New Orleans' historic districts steered neighborhoods out of dilapidation and helped generate vibrant communities that serve as a model for the historic preservation marketplace nationwide.*

Mr. Trapolin earned his Master of Architecture from Tulane University in New Orleans in 1977, with significant coursework at the University of Liverpool. As a young alumnus he worked briefly with two architects before founding Peter M. Trapolin & Associates in 1981. The firm grew steadily with a commensurate impact on the surrounding Warehouse District neighborhood. Mr. Trapolin added partner Paula M. Peer in 2009, spurring the Trapolin-Peer Architects rebranding efforts.

Throughout his career, Mr. Trapolin has served on numerous boards, appeared in dozens of publications, and won more awards for his historic preservation work than any other local architect. Still, his career can be summed up simply in three words: **advocacy, impact, commitment.**

**Advocacy** - Since the early 1980s, Mr. Trapolin has been one of the most vocal, active proponents for historic renovation and adaptive reuse. He recognized the threatening erosion of New Orleans' historic architectural fabric and realized that without action, the city's architectural heritage might be lost to future generations. Early in his career, he pushed business and government leaders to realize that historic tax credit funding would allow otherwise cost-prohibitive structural repair, shoring, and window replacement and enable proper building preservation. Mr. Trapolin helped pioneer the use of historic tax credit funding, guiding and educating developers and navigating the design approval process. He also served as a board member of the Preservation Resource Center from 1982-1990; stayed active with the organization, and rejoined the board in 2011. Throughout his career he zealously advocated for revitalization of individual buildings, whole blocks, and entire neighborhoods.

**Impact** - Over more than 35 years of practice, Mr. Trapolin's active involvement with boards and commissions has significantly impacted New Orleans architecture. As a first year design professor at Tulane

University School of Architecture and guest lecturer at the University of New Orleans, he has shared deep local knowledge with students from across the country and the globe. His work has taken him to Ireland, Mexico, and China. Furthermore, his work in this city, frequently visited and studied by domestic and international architects and government leaders, has been an example for preservationist, planners, legislators, and designers around the world. During his time in the neighborhood, Trapolin and his firm guided the Warehouse District through economic changes and the decline of manufacturing, adapting its buildings to the emerging service economy and spurring a 1000% increase in rentable units over three decades. Mr. Trapolin was instrumental in post-Hurricane Katrina City Planning efforts, contributing to the Unified New Orleans Plan and serving as a reviewer for the City's Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance. His devotion to historical accuracy in materials and assembly methods uniquely prepares him to safeguard the health of many buildings while ensuring their continued use through renovation and adaptation.

**Commitment** – Perhaps the most compelling aspect of Mr. Trapolin's life and work is his commitment to his neighborhood and his city. In 1980, Trapolin became a founding board member of Operation Comeback, which targeted the revitalization of the historic Lower Garden District neighborhood. His home and office, only three blocks apart, sit in the heart of the Warehouse District that he has tirelessly championed. His rehabilitated 1835 rowhouse home and renovated 1846 broom factory office exemplify the vision and quality of his work. Long before zoning required it, Mr. Trapolin advocated mixed-use and walkable planning to activate the street and enliven the neighborhood at large. While skilled in the language of contemporary design, Mr. Trapolin seeks the challenge of integrating modern building systems with historic construction to ensure the continued and vibrant life of historic buildings.