

D O W N T O W N M A S T E R P L A N : A R E A O N E

C I T Y O F B A Y T O W N

T E X A S

H 3 S T U D I O

A D O P T E D B Y B A Y T O W N C I T Y C O U N C I L
S E P T E M B E R 9 , 2 0 0 4

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

- Background & Purpose
- The Planning Process
- Plan Organization

HISTORY

- Downtown Baytown: Area One

DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN: AREA ONE

- Overview
- Summary of Existing Conditions
- Opportunities and Challenges
- Development Framework Plan
 - Goal
 - Principles
 - Strategy
 - Land Use
- Urban Design Plan
- Texas Avenue Streetscape Plan
 - Pedestrians and the Street
 - Parking
 - Land Use

IMPLEMENTATION

- Overview
- Action Plan
- Organizational Strategies

APPENDICES

- Technical Memorandum of Existing Conditions
- Goals and Principles
- Conceptual Development Strategy and Framework
- Design Options
- Consensus Plan

INTRODUCTION



1920'S OILER THEATER ON COMMERCE



PUBLIC MEETING #1



PUBLIC MEETING #2



PUBLIC MEETING #3

BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to illustrate the overall vision of Downtown Baytown to the community and enable the City, property owners and citizens to make informed decisions about future developments and enhancements. The Downtown Master Plan: Area One was developed to address issues of an aging downtown infrastructure, dilapidated structures and lack of a current market for Downtown. The streetscape improvement plan capitalizes on the existing assets of the area while providing a framework for future development. The plan will use public investment to increase the economic vitality of downtown and create a new image and sense of identity for Downtown Baytown. The changes and improvements outlined in this document will require careful coordination so that the City can invigorate the center of the city and enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors.

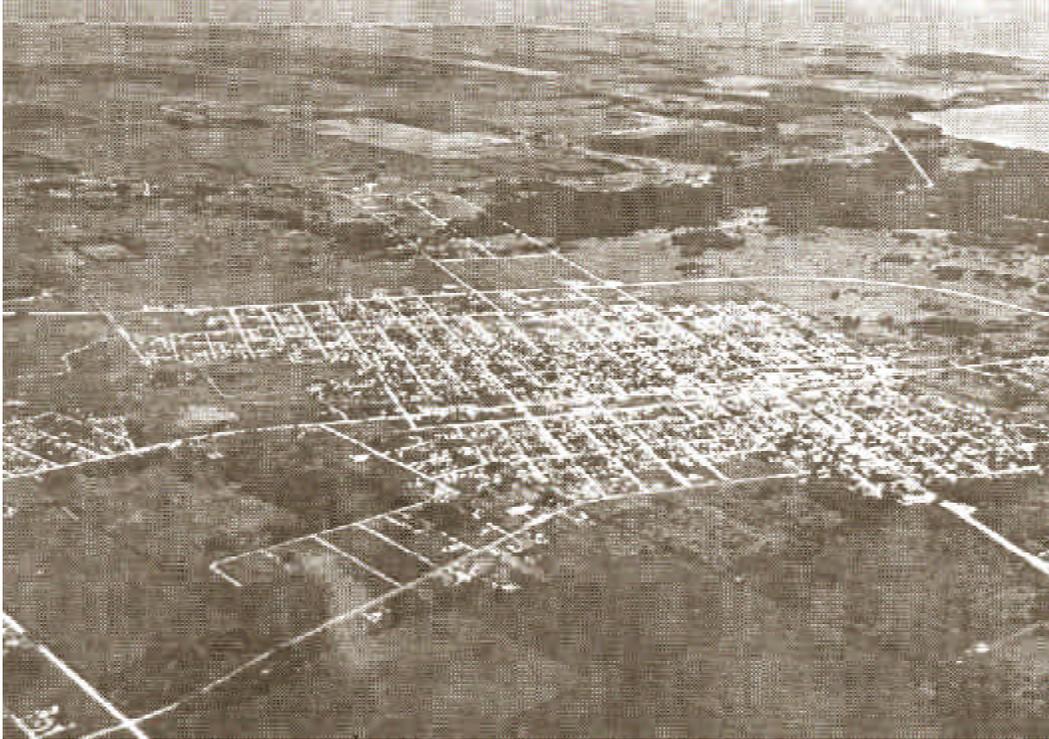
PLANNING PROCESS

Community participation was a key part of the planning process. Three public meetings were held concerning Downtown Baytown and Texas Avenue. Participation by citizens, political leaders, business owners and city staff brought many issues and ideas to the table and helped facilitate involvement in the planning process. In the course of interviews and public meetings, the community shared their perceptions of the opportunities and constraints of the area and their vision for the future of Texas Avenue.

PLAN ORGANIZATION

This document is organized as follows:

- Section I: Introduction (current)
- Section II: History
 - Downtown Baytown
- Section III: Downtown Master Plan: Area One
 - Existing Conditions
 - Opportunities and Challenges
 - Development Framework Plan
 - Urban Design Plan
 - Texas Avenue Streetscape Plan
- Section IV: Implementation
 - Action Plan
 - Organizational Strategies

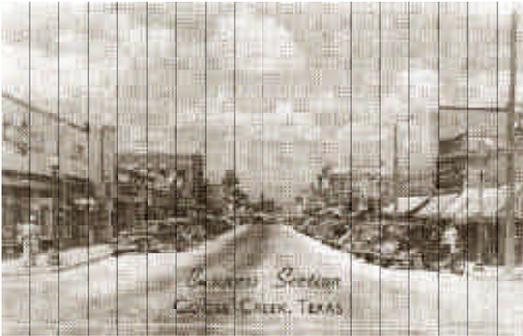


1940 AERIAL OF BAYTOWN



1965 AERIAL OF DOWNTOWN BAYTOWN

HISTORY



POSTCARD - GOOSE CREEK



1940'S TEXAS AVENUE AND THE BRUNSON THEATER



1954 PARADE ON TEXAS AVENUE



1975 CONSTRUCTION OF PLANTERS & SNAKE

DOWNTOWN BAYTOWN

Downtown Baytown was originally the downtown for the Town of Goose Creek. The history of its downtown parallels the development of the two other towns, Pelly and Baytown, with which it would eventually merge. Before the consolidation, this downtown area became the central business district for all three communities with its many stores, the library and the post office. Much of the history originates in the founders of all three cities with the discovery of oil and the companies that developed as a consequence. In the early 1900's housing was built by the oil companies in the Downtown area and streets were named after businesses, companies, as well as early settlers of the town. Many of the street names remain even after the consolidation of the three cities. The first business was built on the street in 1917 and the district concentrated on a three block area. The uses ranged from everyday needs such as banks, drug stores and clothing stores to more specialized jewelry and furniture stores. Movie theaters were also extremely important with Downtown having as many as three at one time. Early in the development of Downtown problems with infrastructure, streets and sidewalks became important issues for many of the early mayors.

Over time as the Downtown grew, the businesses began to expand to the west toward the Oak Tree. In the 1940s and 1950s, vacant lots began to fill with newer buildings and during this time the Brunson Theater and the Citizen's Bank were built. In 1950, Sears opened on Texas Avenue as Downtown's first department store. Texas Avenue was at its height in the 1950s and early 1960s with a continual series of stores and businesses along the street. In the mid 1960s, Texas Avenue began a slow decline as competition for shoppers began as the city expanded. Many of the original business owners with family-owned establishments closed their businesses rather than selling them.

In 1974, the downtown merchant group proposed a renovation plan based on a similar plan in Denison, Texas. The plan included diagonal parking with a serpentine street configuration; and planters and benches on the street corners. This plan with its improvements did not do much to bring new businesses in or provide extra parking on the street. The "Snake", as it came to be called, provided a place for teenagers to cruise in the evenings adding to the changes, including bans on evening parking and consumption of alcohol. Over the next two decades studies have been done and organizations formed to see how to rejuvenate Downtown and Texas Avenue. In the 1990s, after the development of the Enterprise Zone, a number of new businesses moved into the area and events such as the Christmas parade moved back to Texas Avenue.



1928 PANORAMA TEXAS AVENUE



AD FROM THE CENTENNIAL SUN



1955 TEXAS AVENUE



OAK TREE ON TEXAS AVENUE

DOWNTOWN : AREA ONE



1955 AERIAL OF DOWNTOWN BAYTOWN



GOOSE CREEK



LEE COLLEGE - ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY CENTER & LIBRARY



INTERSECTION OF DECKER DRIVE & TEXAS AVENUE

OVERVIEW

ROLE OF DOWNTOWN

As a city is faced with questions about the future character and long-term market success of an area, a community often prepares a master plan. The plan is intended to identify development concerns and opportunities and to ultimately provide a strategy on how the community can meet their redevelopment goals of the area. The City of Baytown is concerned about the redevelopment of the broader Downtown that includes the adjacent residential neighborhoods.

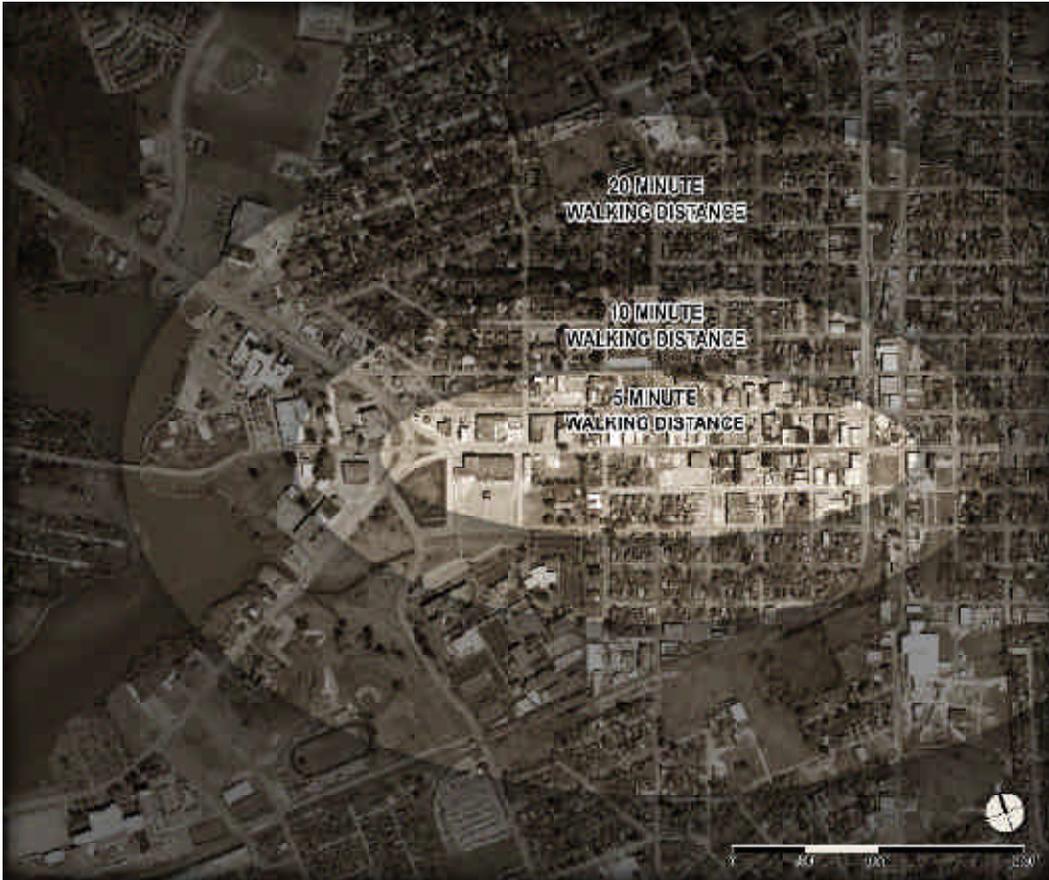
In Baytown there is a question as to where the “Heart of the Community” is within the City. Many citizens have stated that Downtown should be the “Heart of the Community” and needs to play that role. Residents must come to the Downtown to celebrate events, gather for festivals and claim an identity. Factors such as quality of life, character of the environment, convenience of location, access to services and a diversity of people and opportunities will determine where people choose to live and work. The City needs to determine how it wants to move forward to become a successful pedestrian-oriented lifestyle center for shopping, dining, entertainment, working and living.

PROJECT CONTEXT

Downtown Baytown Area One is located in the southeast part of the City and encompasses an area with numerous land uses adjacent to natural and built environments. The area has been characterized by a pattern of decline that is typical of many cities throughout the country. The residential population has tended to shift to the more suburban areas to the north edge of the city. Future population growth will continue to move in that same direction.

Downtown has lost much of its original retail to the strip malls and shopping centers within the city and in adjacent communities. The core of activity that once was along Texas Avenue is no longer concentrated in the original Central Business District. Commercial corridors have been scattered throughout the City with a strong concentration along Garth Road north to the edge of the City.

The core of Downtown is organized on a grid system. This system is broken by the intersection of Decker Drive, Market Street and Texas Avenue. The western edge of Downtown is formed by the Goose Creek Greenway, which winds its way from the south providing open space, parks and amenities to the City. Two neighborhoods form the northern and southern edges of Downtown.



DOWNTOWN BAYTOWN WALKING DISTANCES



CITY OF BAYTOWN MAP



1956 PARADE ON TEXAS AVENUE



TEXAS AVENUE AND BRUNSON THEATER



LEE COLLEGE - SPORTS COMPLEX



TEXAS AVENUE LOOKING EAST

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Downtown is currently in a state of transition. In recent years, interested citizens have worked towards building off the existing assets to develop businesses in the area. While there have been some successes resulting from this work, Downtown still faces a variety of challenges. The region is growing and new outlying commercial areas will be competing with Downtown. Downtown must be more proactive in strengthening its appeal in specialty retail and it must broaden the target markets that it addresses to do so. At the same time, it must also nurture new professional office and residential establishments in existing buildings.

Texas Avenue runs east and west through Downtown Baytown. The area is surrounded by neighborhoods, which are seeing some beginning reinvestment. The existing buildings along Texas Avenue are in fair to poor condition and many have been altered over the years. Existing storefronts open onto Texas Avenue and the street wall along three of the blocks has been kept intact. The Goose Creek Greenway runs perpendicular to Texas Avenue at the western end of the study area and connects to some of the City's parks.

Some key elements are missing, and these deficits need to be addressed. The area though surrounded by neighborhoods does not have a significant residential population. Having a significant number of people living in the Downtown area will help improve the overall business environment of the area. Downtown residents help provide an atmosphere of activity and occupation that will help to overcome perceptions of crime and safety. The lack of a comfortable pedestrian environment for walking within the Downtown area or connecting to adjacent neighborhoods can have a negative effect on bringing people back to the area. The existing development, permitting and regulating process needs to be organized to assure a straight forward process for new building or business owners that follow the development principles for the district.

DEFINING A SUCCESSFUL DOWNTOWN

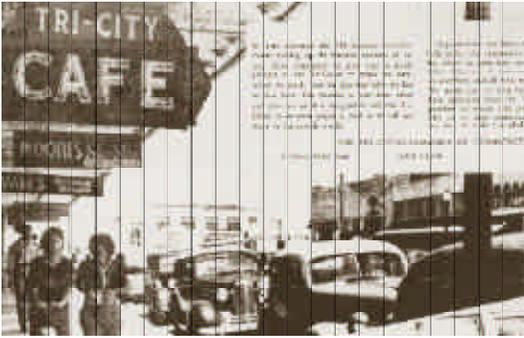
The redevelopment strategy of this plan is intended to focus the Downtown to become the attractor and generator of new economic opportunities. Enhancing the livability of Downtown has become an economic imperative. Physical improvements must be made in combination with business development programs. Programs need to be developed for the Downtown and must be capitalized on to stimulate new investment. Linking the core of Downtown with the natural systems can provide activity and a type of lifestyle that will help further stimulate economic activity and opportunities unlike any other in the area.



DOWNTOWN BAYTOWN STUDY AREA



DOWNTOWN NEIGHBORHOODS



200 BLOCK OF TEXAS



TEXAS AVENUE LOOKING WEST



RENOVATED BUILDING ON TEXAS AVENUE



EXISTING STOREFRONT WINDOW ON DEFEE STREET

EXISTING CONDITIONS

LAND USE/ BUILDING USE

Downtown Baytown has a mix of uses ranging from the educational campus of Lee College to the industrial warehouse uses along the railroad tracks. Retail and commercial uses are scattered throughout the Downtown with many located off secondary streets rather than Texas Avenue. There are very few office uses in the Downtown and a number are located in former residential buildings. Automobile oriented uses are primarily located along Decker Drive and Market Drive with a few along the eastern end of Texas Avenue.

Residential uses are almost exclusively single family in small, one-story structures. A few multi-family uses are located in the area in primarily two-story apartment buildings. There is a high rate of vacancy and absentee ownership in the area along Texas Avenue and the surrounding streets. The vacant structures are clustered along Texas Avenue with some vacant residential units around the area. Vacant land, scattered throughout the Downtown area, ranges from informal parking areas to grass covered open space. The land does not provide multiple contiguous development parcels however, it can provide for small scale infill development sites.

BUILDINGS

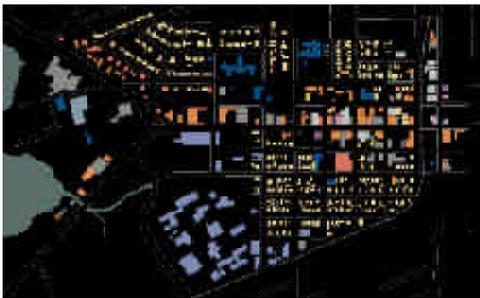
Buildings in the Downtown range from good to poor condition. The mix of building materials and styles varies throughout the Downtown. Along Texas Avenue, the buildings are large scale commercial-style buildings. Most originally had large glass storefront windows, transom windows above and suspended metal awnings between the two window types. Very few of the buildings in the area were two stories with many having large single story footprints.

Many of the structures have been changed over time. Most of the buildings along Texas Avenue have at least one if not two facades placed upon the original brick structure. Remnants of original facades can be seen where the newer facades are coming off the buildings.

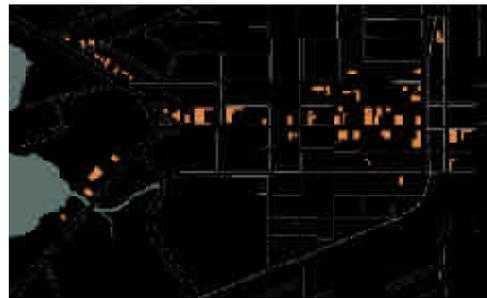
Many of the homes in the residential neighborhoods have had recent improvements. The remaining homes are in need of renovation. Although they are not historic, the style and type of buildings developed in the area echoes the early vernacular company housing. A few of the homes that have been improved have been expanded to larger style homes with second stories and two-car garages. Others have been made façade improvements and small additions.



AERIAL DOWNTOWN BAYTOWN



LAND USE MAP



COMMERCIAL USES



EXISTING STRUCTURES



MULTI-STORY STRUCTURES



1950 GO TEXAN PARADE



DIAGONAL PARKING ALONG TEXAS AVENUE



EXISTING SIDEWALK ALONG TEXAS AVENUE



EXISTING STOREFRONTS NORTH SIDE OF TEXAS AVENUE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

OPEN SPACE

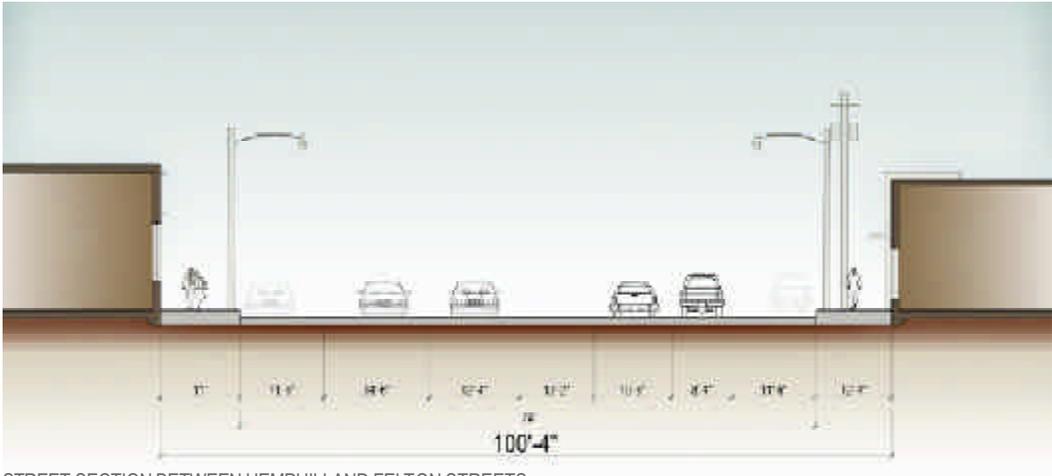
The Downtown is fortunate to be located so close to one of the City's key amenities, Goose Creek. The Creek with its greenway system provides connections to other recreational amenities in the area. Centennial Park, although underutilized, provides a formal park location near the Downtown for events. Goose Creek Park provides an area for families to enjoy a gathering, reunion or other community event. There are also spaces for recreational games, a playground for younger children and picnic areas. This park is highly utilized in the evenings and on weekends. One thing that is lacking is smaller informal spaces for outdoor dining and special events closer to the Downtown.

With new trail connections, the Downtown is linked to other areas of the City and parks. This system is currently under construction with new trails being added. An overall system between key areas of the City has not yet been planned. Connections to the water, though currently located in a few places, do not provide a wide range of access to one of the City's key amenities. There is a strong potential for further development of the open space system within and surrounding the Downtown.

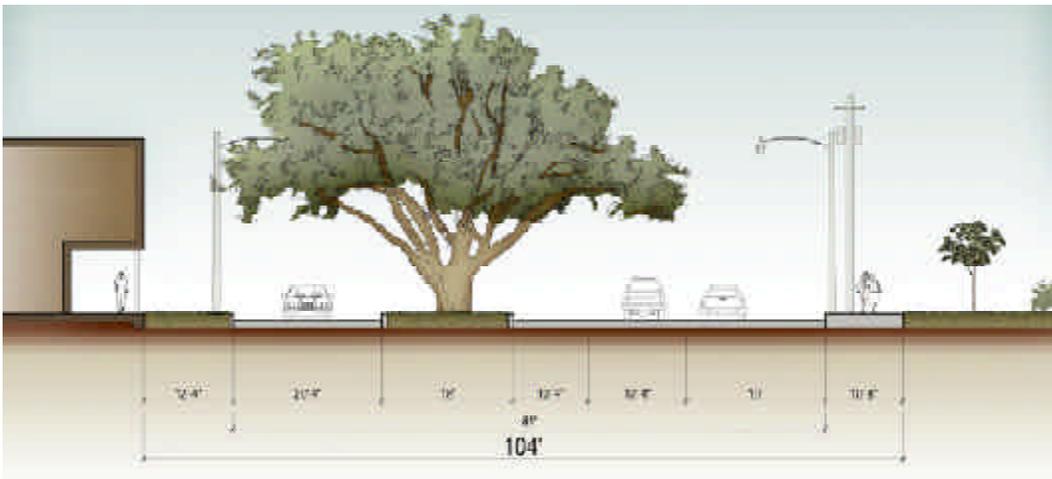
PARKING

There is a perception that there is a lack of parking in Downtown. Lee College and many of the businesses in the greater Downtown area have their own designated parking lots. Businesses along Market and Decker Drive have their own parking lots and no on street parking. Most of the parking lots are located in the front of the buildings giving the area a suburban rather than an urban appearance. The closer into the core of the Downtown, the less formal the parking areas become.

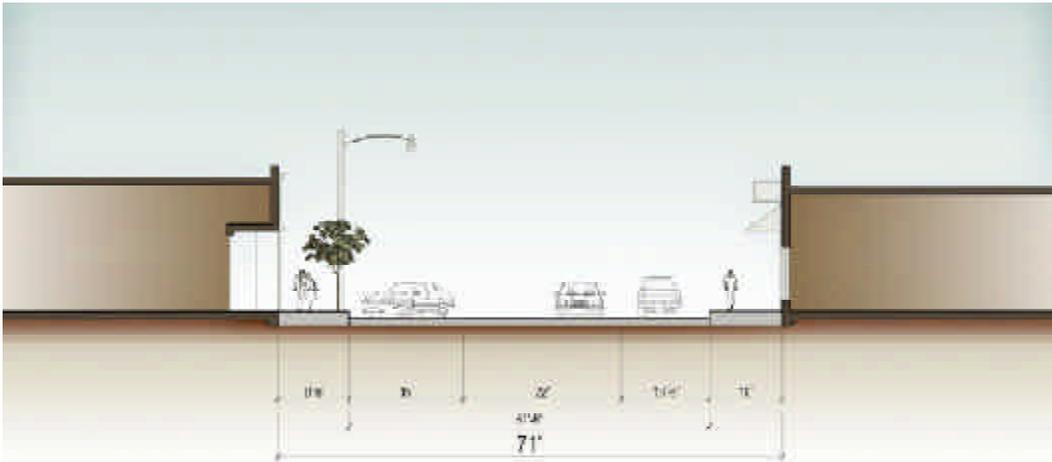
Around Texas Avenue and the adjacent streets, many of the parking lots are very informal with no paving, line spacing or even curb cuts for entrances. This promotes the perception that parking spaces are not available. The high curbs also add to the issue of parking making it hard for people to open car doors when parked in a parallel space on the street. This is a problem that occurs in many cities and towns in Texas and has been recently addressed in many different ways. Side streets currently have multiple curb cuts leading into buildings and lots. This adds to the inability to have cohesive on-street parking on the side streets. Residential streets in the area appear to have ample parking on street with many having small garages for additional parking.



STREET SECTION BETWEEN HEMPHILLAND FELTON STREETS



STREET SECTION BETWEEN FELTON AND WHITING STREETS



STREET SECTION BETWEEN GAILLARD AND DASHBEL STREETS



1955 TEXAS AVENUE



EXISTING OPEN SPACE AT TEXAS AVENUE AND JONES ST.



EXISTING BUILDINGS ON TEXAS AVENUE



BRUNSON THEATER

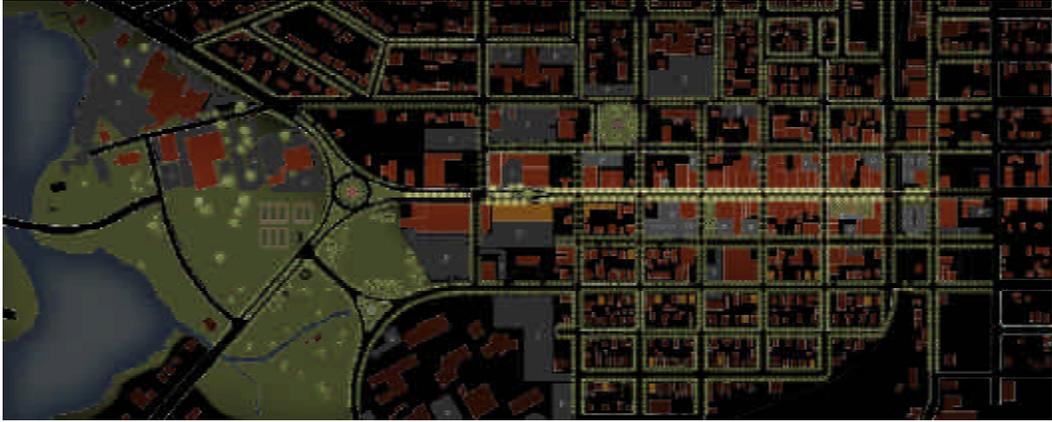
URBAN DESIGN STRATEGY

Downtown must become the “Heart of the Community”, with an even more vigorous economy and diversity of uses. It should be the center for specialty retail, dining and entertainment. In the business sector, it should maintain a key position in professional services and establish itself as the place to be for new innovative start-ups.

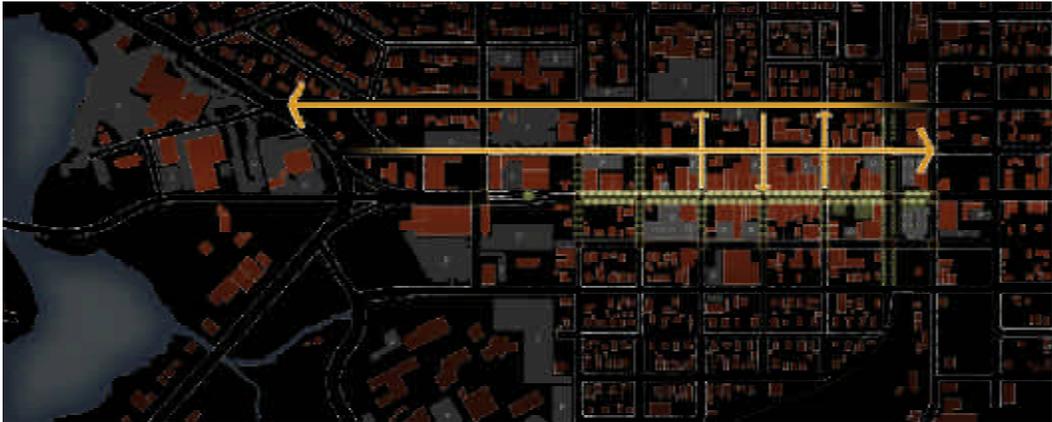
The overall Framework for Downtown Baytown establishes the matrices by which to enhance, develop, integrate and grow the necessary systems to ensure a vital community. The existing anchor of Lee College will begin to establish a destination for drawing students to the area. The business and retail corridors along Texas Avenue, Decker Drive and Market Street and secondarily, the side streets such as Defee and Commerce Street, will provide services, entertainment, dining, and daily business support. The neighborhoods should maintain good housing stock and redevelop empty lots and buildings in poor condition. With the continued support of Lee College, neighborhood improvement programs should be focused in the immediate area.

Downtown must regain its walkable qualities for livability and future sustainability of the quality of life. Properties along Texas Avenue and two blocks off, both north and south, should become multi-use live/work space with residential on second and third floors providing density and diversity of use. The schools throughout the project area including Lee College, Lee High School and the surrounding elementary schools should be viewed as community assets. They provide the social and educational connections necessary to attract families to the Downtown. As nodes within the system their proximity to the greenway, parks, and Texas Avenue provide a walkable and complimentary relationship integral to the plan. Through connectivity and linking the residents from these areas to the central businesses and schools, Downtown will become the primary core in which residents can maintain a high-level of use and livability within their own community. Visitors and economic sustainability will be drawn and thrive in such an area.

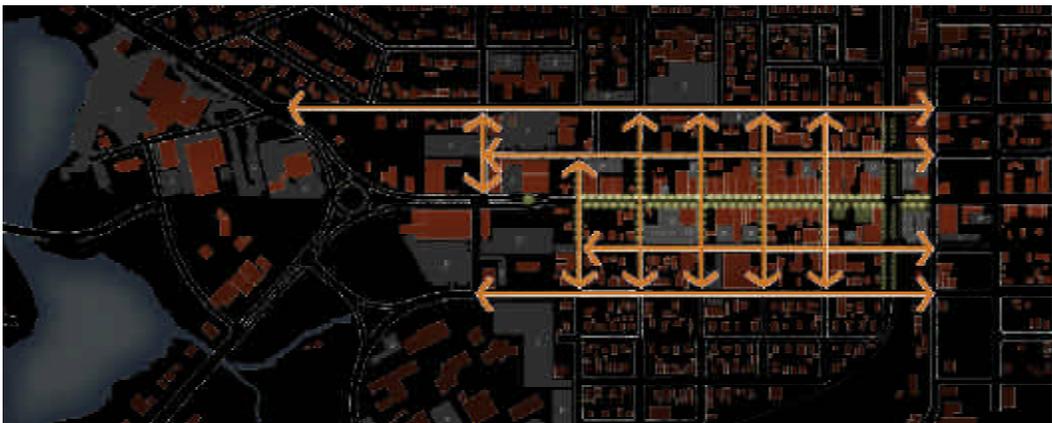
An easily accessible circulation framework is imperative for people and vehicles. Safety must be integrated within a broad movement network to include walking, biking, transit and driving. The importance of making the Downtown easy to navigate will be critical as it develops as a destination for residents and visitors. A two-way street system is imperative to provide easy accessibility to parking locations and businesses located throughout the Downtown. The transportation



DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN



EXISTING ONE-WAY STREET SYSTEM



PROPOSED TWO-WAY STREET SYSTEM



1922 GOOSE CREEK TRAIN DEPOT



INFORMAL SPACE AT JONES STREET AND TEXAS AVENUE



BUILDINGS ALONG TEXAS AVENUE



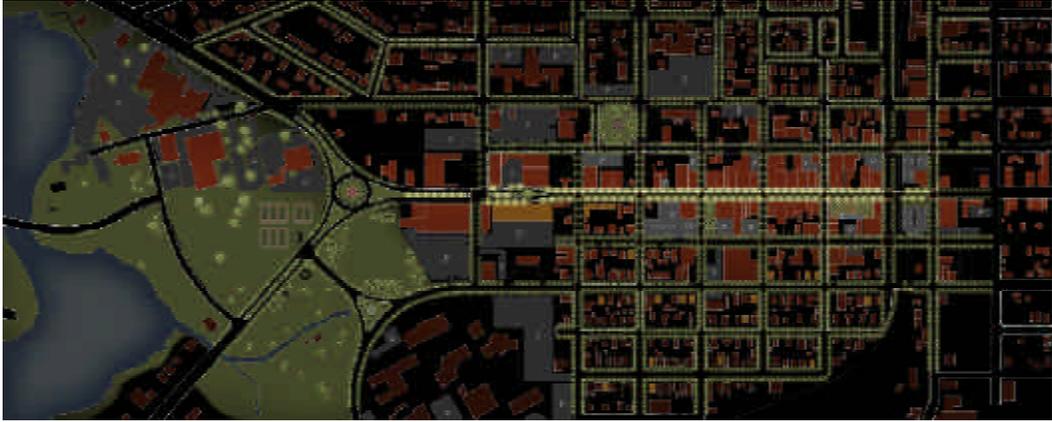
INTERSECTION OF JONES STREET AND TEXAS AVENUE

framework must include the built system as it connects to the open space and greenway systems. The framework must connect not only on a community level, but also to a citywide and regional system.

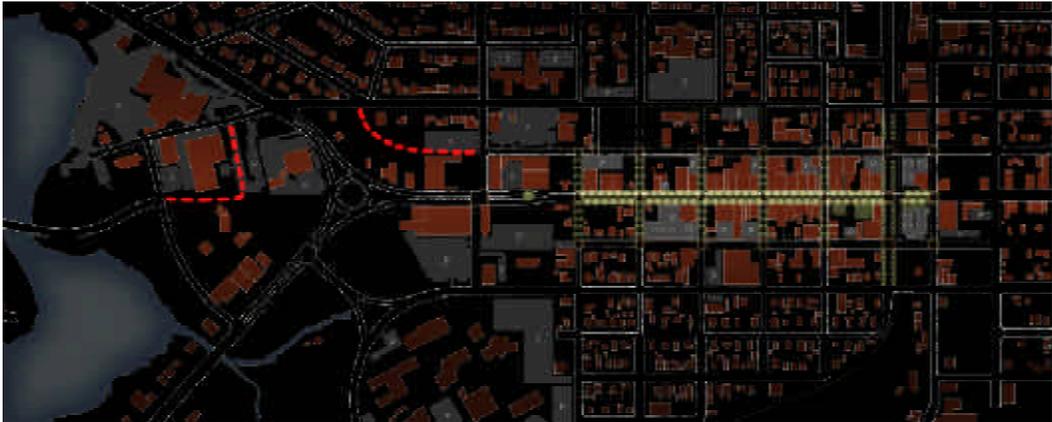
Goose Creek becomes an ever-changing greenway, which can shift from informal open space to formalized boardwalks and recreation stations through the project area. Supported by the findings of the Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Master Plan, the City of Baytown's system is lacking in cohesive neighborhood and community park space. With enhancements, the Greenway and Centennial Park can not only serve the community, anchors and local residents, but become a hub for passive, active and organized recreation for the entire city. The park would interact with the schools programmatically and educationally. This will also provide an additional venue for festivals and open-air events for the city.

The focus of the plan should be to develop and maintain a strong core of businesses in the Downtown that will attract people to the City of Baytown. The framework plan is grounded in the proven premise that livability is imperative to Downtown's economic health. Downtown livability, fostered by new and revitalized residential areas, new attractions, educational facilities, and an attractive coherent physical environment, will drive job and business growth into the future.

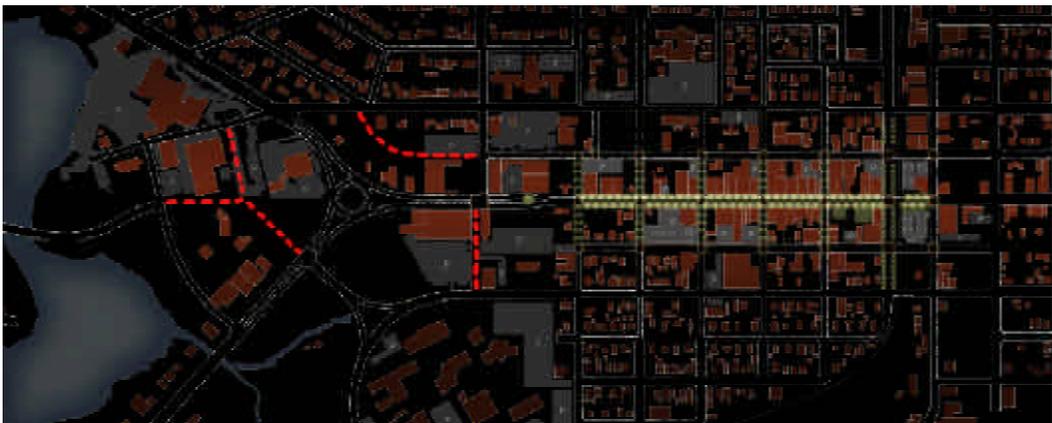
The Downtown will offer a concentration of activities and amenities that will attract people by the vibrancy of the area with choices and a diversity of experiences available to them. This urban core, which is linked to the adjacent neighborhoods will become a magnet drawing innovative start-up businesses, residents and visitors who are attracted to the unique features and quality of life that Downtown Baytown has to offer. As the Downtown becomes more diverse, it will be used over longer periods of the day and provide a better range of attractions, restaurants and stores. This in turn will invite people to get out of their cars and to walk along the streets that are more pedestrian friendly and attractive. The Downtown will provide a strong sense of identity and place that will be unique within the region.



DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN



OPTIONAL STREET CONFIGURATION ONE



OPTIONAL STREET CONFIGURATION TWO



DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN

GOAL

To revitalize Downtown Baytown as the “Heart of the Community”

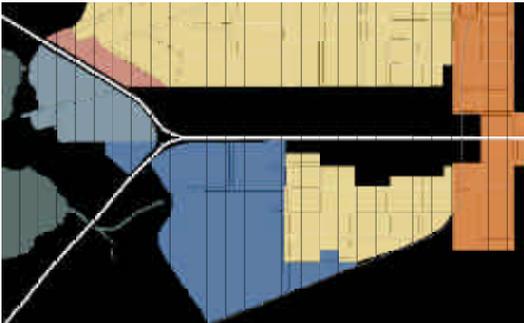
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

To focus initial redevelopment efforts on Texas Avenue between North Main Street and South Whiting Street.

DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

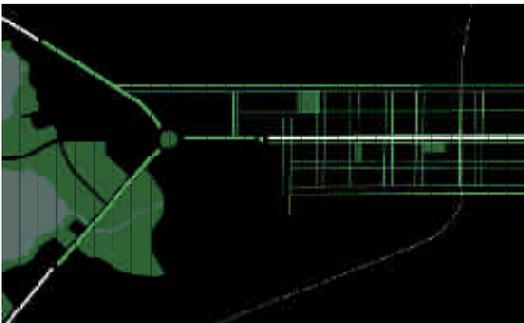
CREATE WELL-DEFINED AND IDENTIFIABLE DOWNTOWN DISTRICTS AND NEIGHBORHOODS

- Support Lee College’s continued redevelopment and expansion
- Over the long-term consider a civic and governmental center at the “head” of Texas Avenue
- Revitalize and redevelop the downtown neighborhoods as great places to live
- Screen industrial areas from the main entrances to downtown and surrounding neighborhoods



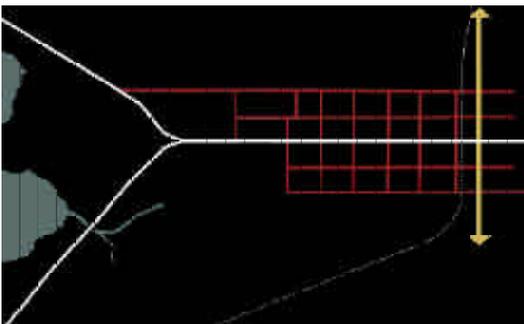
DEVELOP A HIGH-QUALITY INTERCONNECTED PARK AND BOULEVARD SYSTEM LINKING THE DISTRICTS AND NEIGHBORHOODS, AND CREATING A BOULEVARD ENTRANCE TO DOWNTOWN

- Connect Market Street and Decker Drive to Highway 146 as the primary boulevard entrance to Downtown
- Re-instate the historic traffic circle at the intersection of Market Street, Decker Drive and Texas Avenue
- Expand the existing park system along Goose Creek
- Improve the image and accessibility to Texas Avenue from Highway 146 along Decker Drive



CREATE GREAT COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL STREETS

- Remove the “snake” and provide continuous street parking along West Texas Avenue
- Provide strategically located parking lots along West Pearce and West Defee Streets
- Provide a two-way street system within the Downtown district





COMPOSITE FRAMEWORK PLAN



EXISTING OPEN SPACE



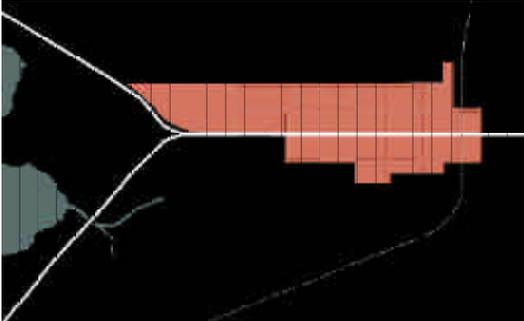
GOOSE CREEK



EXISTING COMMERCIAL STREET

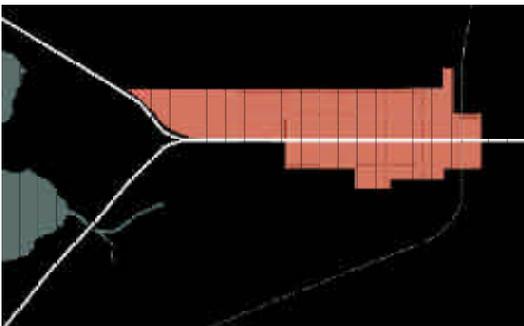


EXISTING RESIDENTIAL STREET



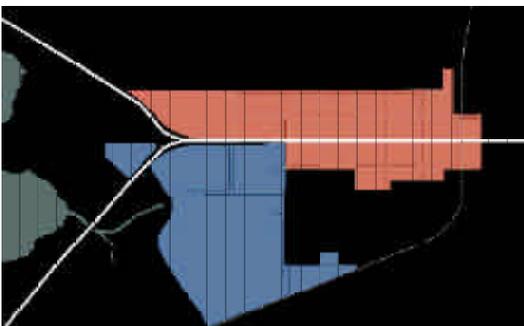
CREATE A VIBRANT WALKABLE MIXED-USE DOWNTOWN DISTRICT

- Encourage and provide incentives for a mix of uses including retail, restaurant, entertainment, residential, and civic uses along Texas Avenue
- Create a walkable pedestrian streetscape throughout the downtown
- Restore the commercial facades with high levels of transparency
- Encourage residential and office uses in the second stories and off rear streets
- Amend land use plan to allow mixed use development



CONTINUE TO DEVELOP A STRONG PUBLIC/PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP TO IMPLEMENT THE MASTER PLAN, AND MANAGE AND MAINTAIN DOWNTOWN

- Support the continued growth of the Baytown Downtown Association
- Create a marketing and promotional theme for Texas Avenue and the greater Downtown
- Increase the number of special events through the year
- Public/Private partnership should have a full time project manager



CREATE A SERIES OF BUSINESS AND REDEVELOPMENT INCENTIVE PROGRAMS

- Establish a 50/50 Façade program
- Create a low-interest revolving loan program for building improvements
- Investigate the possibility of a historic district
- Investigate the opportunity to apply as a Texas Main Street
- Create an overlay district for the rehabilitation code enforcement regulations
- Expand the existing Enterprise Zone
- Develop a small business incentive program and business incubator
- Seek State and Federal funding for public improvements and business development



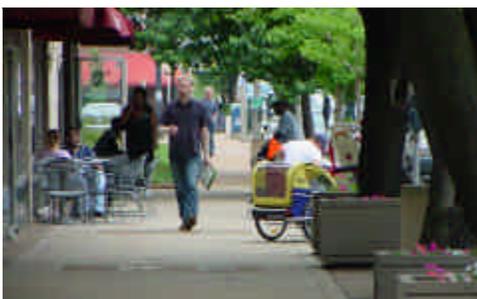
COMPOSITE FRAMEWORK PLAN



EXAMPLE OF WALKABLE PEDESTRIAN STREETScape



EXAMPLE OF WALKABLE PEDESTRIAN STREETScape



EXAMPLE OF WALKABLE PEDESTRIAN STREETScape



EXAMPLE OF WALKABLE PEDESTRIAN STREETScape



1963 INTERSECTION OF TEXAS AVENUE AND JONES ST.



EXISTING SIDEWALK AND STREET TREES



EXISTING SIDEWALK AND DIAGONAL PARKING



EXISTING STOREFRONTS NORTH SIDE OF TEXAS AVENUE

URBAN DESIGN

LAND USE/BUILDING USE

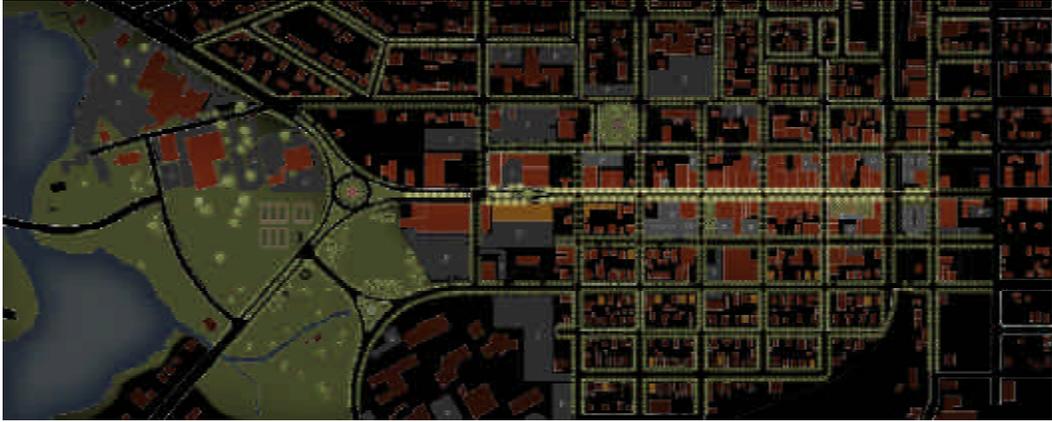
Texas Avenue should become one of Downtown Baytown's destination streets. In developing the street as an active location, the majority of the ground floor uses should be reserved for retail, restaurant or commercial uses. Over the long-term, there should be no office use on the ground floor particularly if that office use is back-office or service functions. Specialty restaurants and shops, art galleries and art stores are targeted to contribute to the ambience of the street life. The ground floor mix must be of the right combination to assure that both day and nighttime activity is promoted along the street. The destination uses should cluster to build off of the existing uses. This will also allow for these uses to be located within a ten minute walk from one venue to another. Ground floor businesses should have daytime, nighttime, and weekend hours to accommodate both local and non-local visitors to the area. Upper floor and rear uses should be a mix of both residential and office use.

BUILDINGS

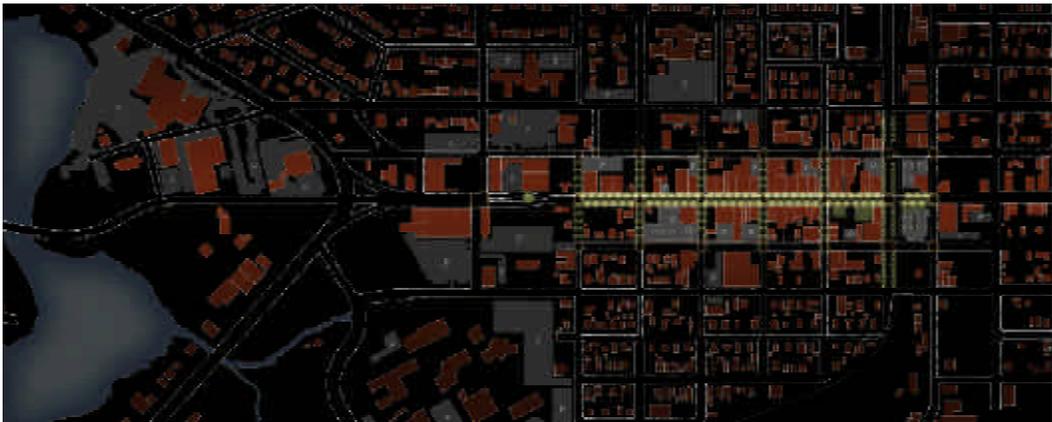
The one quality that helps differentiate a true urban downtown from a typical suburban environment is that the urban downtown environment places an importance on creating a high quality pedestrian environment. This environment can best be described in terms of the quality of the street frontages. This frontage should provide a high level of interaction and interest for the pedestrian. Baytown's Texas Avenue is in the unique position of having much of that frontage existing as a continuous edge along the right-of-way.

The framework of streets and open space creates a series of development blocks, each of which has its own identity and sense of place. The blocks should be developed with the existing buildings providing an attractive frontage to the public spaces that they help create. Ground floor uses should animate the street.

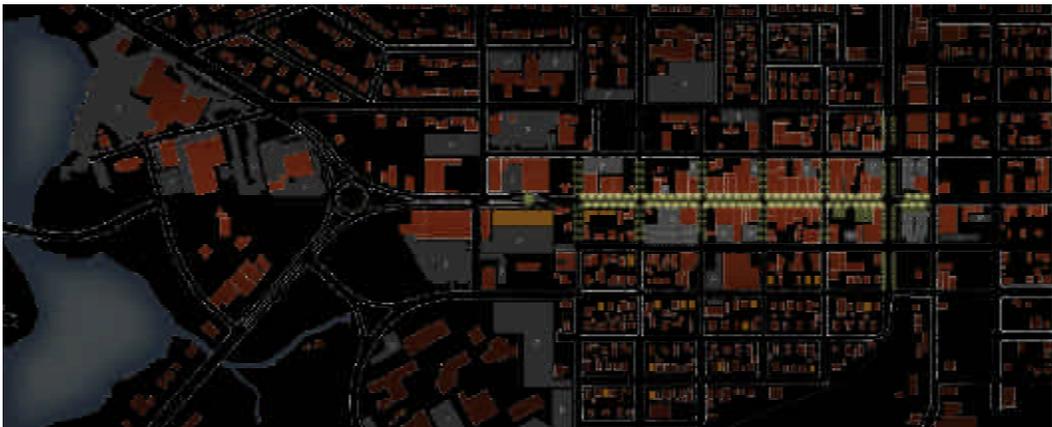
The essence of Texas Avenue is reflected in the existing stock of buildings in the district. These buildings, which are typically one to two stories in height, will remain as the structure of the street. The street wall created by these buildings must be maintained along the length of the street. Wherever possible the historic storefront of the buildings should be restored. The storefronts were originally made up of two parts, the storefront window and the transom windows above. The addition of awnings, signage and façade lighting will further enhance the existing buildings



DOWNTOWN MASTER PLAN



EXISTING BUILDINGS



EXISTING AND PROPOSED INFILL BUILDINGS



PARADE ON TEXAS AVENUE



EXISTING INFORMAL SPACE



LOOKING EAST ON TEXAS AVENUE



EXISTING FACADES ON TEXAS AVENUE

URBAN DESIGN

OPEN SPACE

Parks, plazas, and informal spaces serve a wide range of Downtown users and should provide a diverse selection of venues for activities, events and recreation. The Downtown needs to enhance what it currently has while developing new informal spaces within the district.

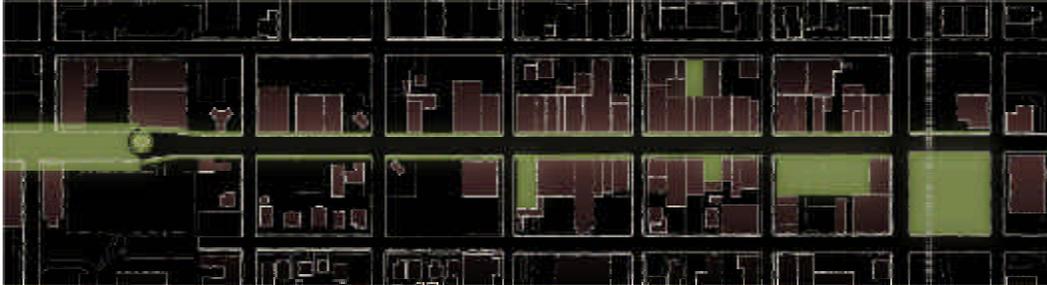
New informal spaces are located at different points along the length of the street. These spaces may or may not currently be developed as a plaza or pocket park. The potential for them to become a key location for outdoor events or for outdoor dining is important to the overall theme of the district. These spaces can also provide pedestrian friendly connections back to parking locations behind Texas Avenue.

Connections to existing open space in the Downtown area are not pedestrian friendly. Wide streets with poor or no crosswalks and very little trees or shade are what people currently face trying to walk from the Downtown to Goose Creek Park and the trails along Goose Creek. With the expansion of Goose Creek Park and connections across the Market Street Boulevard to Centennial Park, the system becomes more pedestrian friendly and provides better access to the Downtown and Texas Avenue.

STOREFRONTS

Storefronts are highly visible components of the city's historic streetscape, with a variety of architectural styles and treatments. The key element to retail streets are active engaging storefronts. The storefront image is critical to advertising the quality and diversity of both the business and the neighborhood district. Local retailers should be actively engaged to promote downtown retail.

The buildings and storefront displays should be the focal points of the street. For the street to come alive, it is important that building facades are illuminated. Storefronts can also provide an ideal street shopping environment through the use of elements on the facade of the building. Awnings, signage and colorful window displays are highly encouraged on storefronts. Awnings offer shelter from the elements, and bring color and pedestrian scale to the street. They can also provide both a uniform and well-designed appearance. Storefronts can also be animated through the use of operable windows, planted window boxes, and maximum transparency from the storefront window.



INFORMAL SPACES



NORTH ELEVATION BETWEEN PRUETT STREET AND JONES STREET



SOUTH ELEVATION BETWEEN PRUETT STREET AND JONES STREET



NORTH ELEVATION BETWEEN JONES STREET AND GAILLARD STREET



SOUTH ELEVATION BETWEEN JONES STREET AND GAILLARD STREET



NORTH ELEVATION BETWEEN GAILLARD STREET AND ASHBEL STREET



SOUTH ELEVATION BETWEEN GAILLARD STREET AND ASHBEL STREET



1938 DRIVE IN ON TEXAS AVENUE



VACANT LOT



EXISTING SIDEWALK ALONG TEXAS AVENUE



EXISTING STOREFRONTS ON TEXAS AVENUE

URBAN DESIGN

PARKING

The parking strategy for Downtown is to support the existing and future businesses while addressing needs of expanded office and future residential uses. There are three components to meeting the parking needs for the Downtown: maximize on-street parking, organize side street parking, and maintain off-street parking.

Additional retail and restaurant development benefits from convenient on-street parking. There are opportunities along Texas Avenue to increase the number of on-street parking spaces by eliminating the snake, adding parallel parking and striping on the street for more formal spacing. Side streets can also gain spaces with the relocation of curb cuts to the streets north and south of Texas Avenue allowing access from the rear of the lot. These would be done in coordination with the businesses to allow for proper loading and access.

Existing lots, both public and private, provide a reservoir of parking within the two blocks immediately adjacent to Texas Avenue. With the proper management and understanding of the users, this area will have the proper amount of parking to serve the needs of the employees as well as visitors to the area. The actual demand for parking may be less than expected with proper management. With the reconfiguration of existing parking, the need for new parking lots will only occur after full build out of all buildings along the street.

Once the street reaches full build out the need for new parking lots will be concentrated at the ends of the street. New lots should be developed on existing vacant sites. The first proposed lot would be on the site across from Rooster's restaurant between North Main Street and the Railroad. The second proposed lot would be off Defee Street between Whiting and Pruett Streets. These two locations will provide for future growth of businesses and help create a walkable pedestrian experience for those visiting the Downtown.

Beyond the core of the Downtown, there is little need for additional parking. Most residences have on street parking or garage locations. Lee College has a series of parking lots and the college will need to expand parking locations in the future as the student population grows. The master plan also proposes a new campus building along Texas Avenue where a parking lot is currently located. The loss of those parking spaces would need to be taken into account when planning for future campus parking.



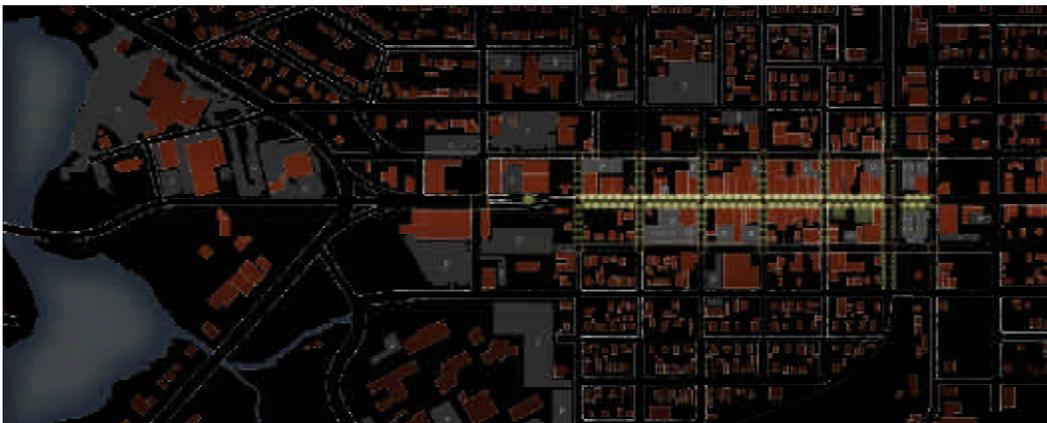
EXISTING ON-STREET PARKING



EXISTING PARKING LOTS



EXISTING COMPOSITE PARKING



PROPOSED COMPOSITE PARKING



1927 TEXAS AVENUE



STREETSCAPE BENCH



HANGING BASKETS



PLANTER POTS

STREETSCAPE: TEXAS AVENUE AMENITIES

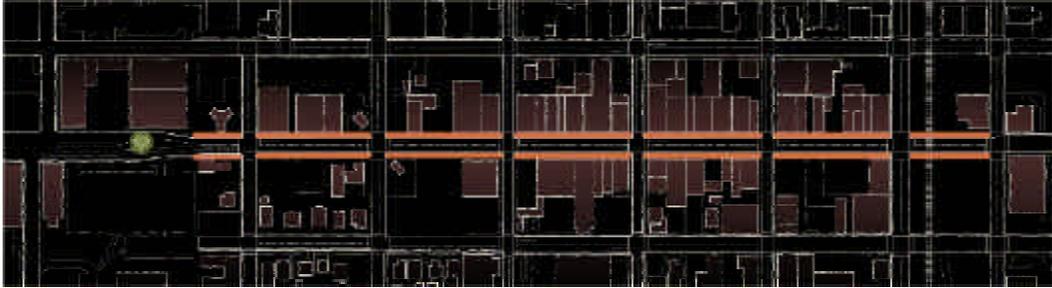
Amenities on the street play a critical role in creating an inviting pedestrian experience in a retail district. These amenities can include seating, bicycle racks, trash receptacles, signage and newspaper racks. Seating expands opportunities for people to use the street, especially in commercial streetscapes. Seating can be in many forms from benches to pieces of public art. Tree grates are an attractive way to protect trees planted in a paved area. Bicycle racks should be provided within the streetscape to encourage bicycle use. Trash receptacles should be easily accessible for pedestrians and trash collection. They must be carefully placed to be unobtrusive yet effective. Newspaper racks and enclosures should serve the public without compromising pedestrian circulation and the appearance of the street. Amenities such as benches, trash receptacles and newspaper racks should be clustered together whenever possible with one grouping per block at the expanded corner of the sidewalk.

A clear, coordinated and exciting wayfinding and signage system for pedestrians in the Texas Avenue area is essential for creating a pedestrian-friendly, distinctive environment. Signs can include maps that identify destinations, public parking locations, or transit. The overall look of the signage should help direct people while also providing an identity for the area.

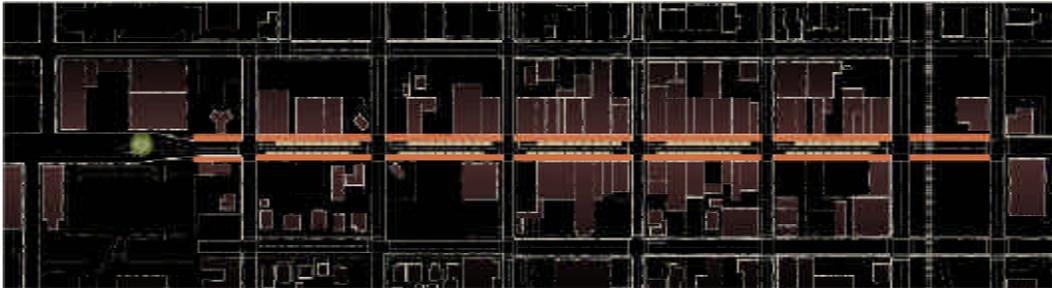
LANDSCAPING

Street trees add color, shade, texture and shadow to the urban environment and will be planted along Texas Avenue. Additional shade and flowering trees can be planted in informal areas and within surface parking lots. Tree types should be planted that are best suited for the urban environment.

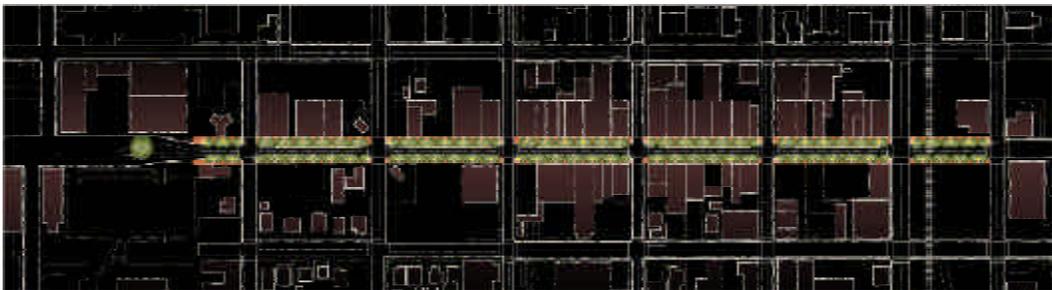
Planting pots and in ground beds provide added dimension and color to streetscape planting. They also direct pedestrian traffic, create focal points and provide pedestrian resting areas. Hanging baskets also can provide landscape color on the street. Hardy plant types should be chosen that will need lower levels of maintenance and care. Individual businesses and groups can adopt key landscape areas along the street.



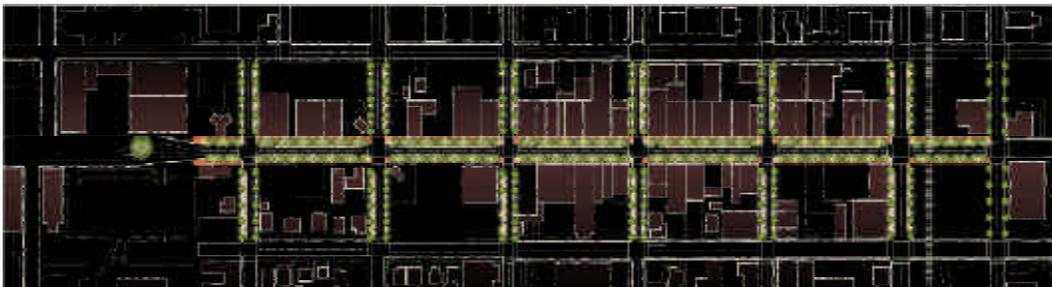
WIDENED SIDEWALKS



ON-STREET PARKING



STREET TREES AND STREET LIGHTS



SIDE STREET CONNECTIONS



1952 PARADE ON TEXAS AVENUE



PUBLIC ART



STREET AND FACADE LIGHTING



OUTDOOR DINING

URBAN DESIGN

PUBLIC ART

Public art can provide a community identity to the area. Expressing this identity celebrates what is unique about the community, transforming the ordinary, honoring and valuing the past as well as expressing the direction of the community's future. Public art should become a critical part of the streetscape and the buildings along Texas Avenue. Art can be incorporated into all aspects of the streetscape in the form of awnings, signage, illumination, sculpture and storefronts.

PEDESTRIANS & THE STREET

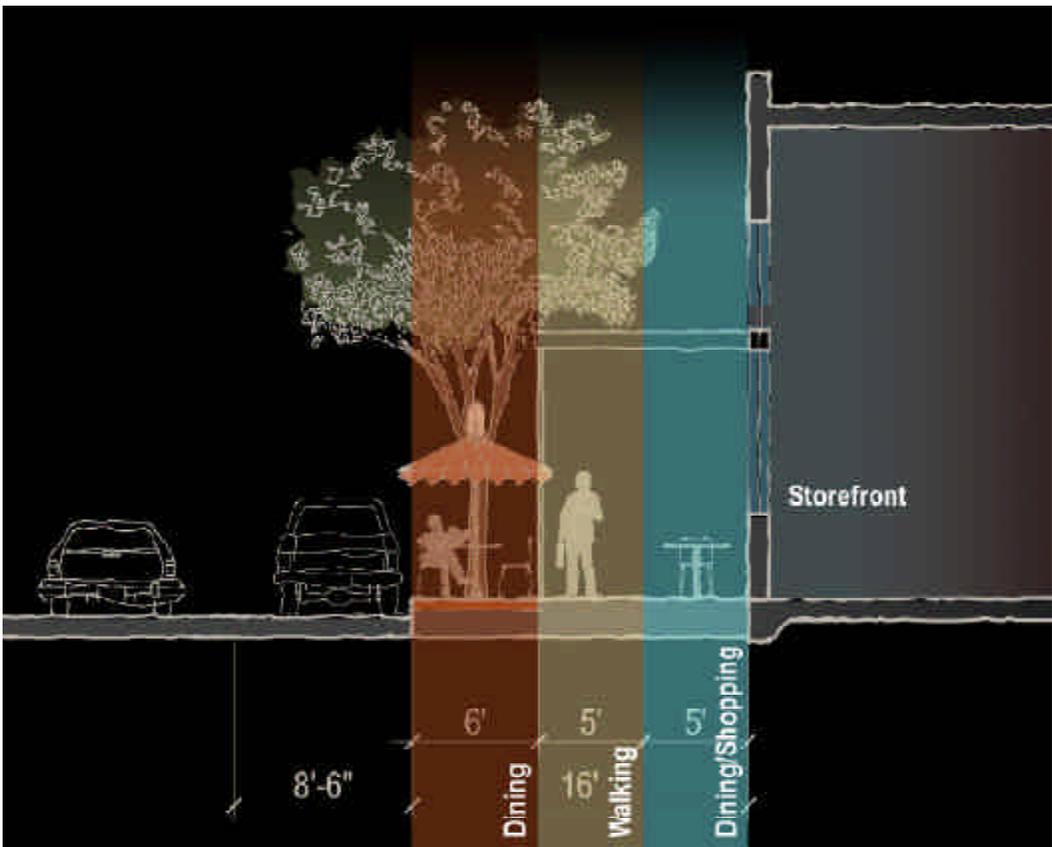
Streets in an urban environment allow for movement, communication and creation of local identity. Streets provide for a variety of types of movement – pedestrian, bicycle, vehicular and transit. Streets are often characterized by uses that abut them, the size of the street, the size of the surrounding buildings, and the design of the individual street environment itself.

DESIGN DETAILS

- Two-way street system
- Parallel parking 8'-6" wide
- Expand sidewalk width to 16' on Texas Avenue
 - 6' Dining / Amenities / Seating / Public Art / Landscaping
 - 5' Walking
 - 5' Shopping / Dining
- Existing sidewalk width on side streets of 10' with trees to connect to neighborhoods
- 25' parking system on Texas Avenue and 22' parking system on side streets
- Lights alternate every 50' on Texas Avenue and every 44' on side streets
- Trees alternate every 25' on Texas Avenue and every 44' on side streets



STREET SECTION TEXAS AVENUE STREETSCAPE



DETAIL SIDEWALK SECTION TEXAS AVENUE STREETSCAPE

IMPLEMENTATION



1955 AERIAL OF TRAFFIC CIRCLE



VOLUNTEERS - CLEAN UP



VOLUNTEERS PLANTING



VOLUNTEERS WATERING

OVERVIEW

The key concept for the area is that the community should be both proactive and responsive in moving the implementation forward. The community should follow the phasing strategy set forth in the document, but should be poised to modify strategies based on projects that might be proposed by the private sector in the future. The City should also coordinate its planned actions with the work of other city departments and be ready to refine its schedule to be responsive to the activities of others. In essence, implementation should proceed in the order recommended in the plan yet the schedule should remain flexible to accommodate changing conditions, especially where the opportunities to share construction costs and administration arise.

In general, the community should set a high priority on improvements supporting private development that is consistent with the revitalization goals of the Downtown. This provides the first step to encourage private improvements and redevelopment in the Downtown area.

The improvement of Downtown Baytown is never complete - it is ongoing. Improvements need to be made in a proactive manner. Anticipating trends, looking for opportunities, monitoring implementation and development and evaluating and adjusting the vision and plan are all part of taking ownership of Downtown. Continuous improvement requires a feeling of ownership and pride, not just the celebration of success. It does not begin or end with the development of a plan but depends on a vision and a commitment to achieve that vision.

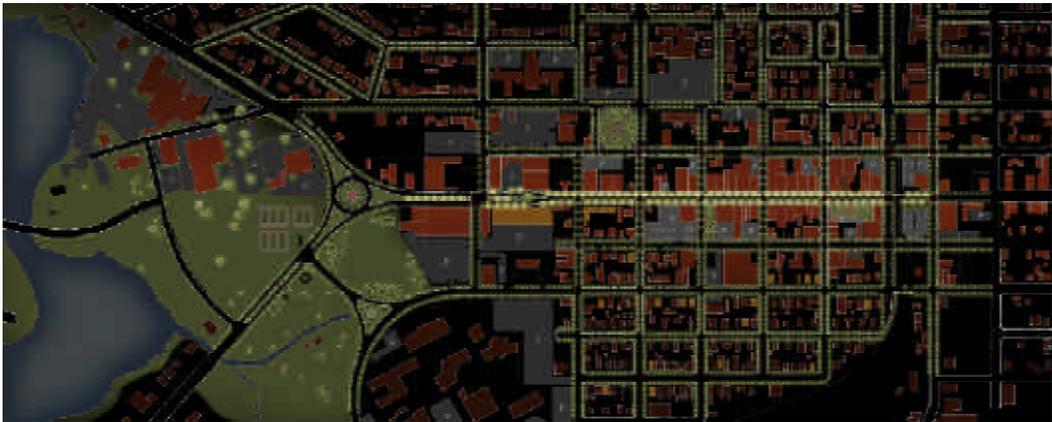
ACTION PLAN

PHASE ONE: ACTION ITEMS

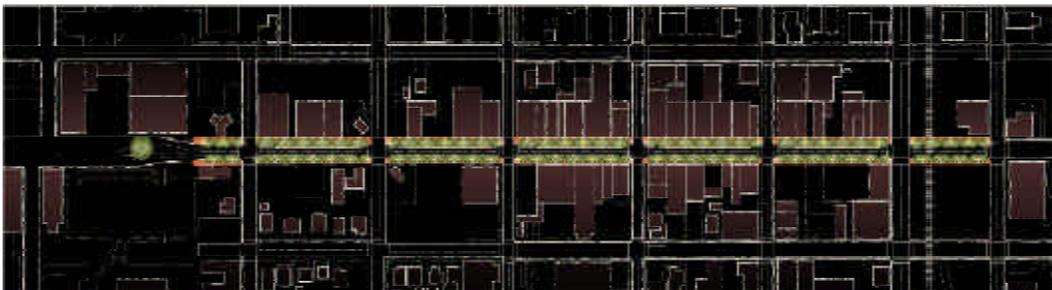
- Formalize the boundaries of the downtown district.
- Begin monthly volunteer clean up and beautification program.
- Increase the number of special events throughout the year.
- Re-sign Decker Drive entrance to acknowledge access to Lee College and Downtown
- Re-stripe Texas Avenue as a two-way single lane with wide parallel parking spaces
- Create a special overlay district that allows the use of the rehabilitation code.
- Create a historic district.
- Create a Downtown business district to allow for a mix of uses appropriate to a downtown
- Create a 50/50 façade program.



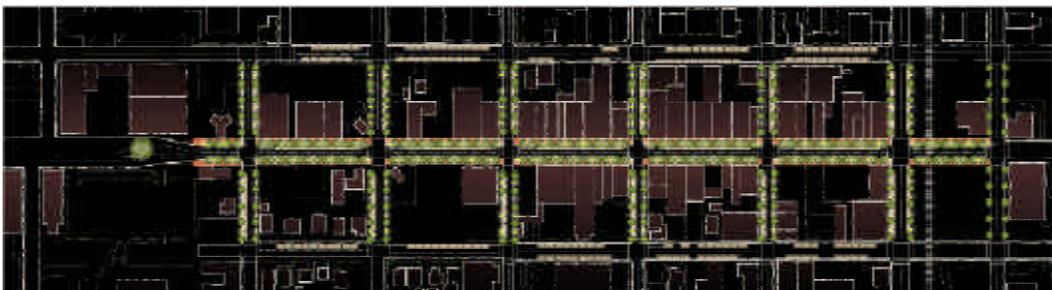
EXISTING CONDITIONS



MASTER PLAN



TEXAS AVENUE STREETSCAPE



SIDE STREET CONNECTIONS



1968 TEXAS AVENUE



TEXAS AVENUE



STOREFRONT ON GAILLARD STREET



SIDE STREET CONDITIONS ON ASHBEL STREET

- Create a low-interest revolving loan program for building improvements.
- Develop a small business incentive program.
- Expand the existing enterprise zone to include all downtown.
- Determine a central coordinating entity/committee/organization for the implementation
- Create Downtown Development Entity to pursue various funding sources, business recruitment, etc.

PHASE TWO: ACTION ITEMS

- Complete the change of all streets from one-way to two-way
- Complete assessment of utilities, schematic design, design development and construction drawings of the phase one streetscape.
- Develop a TIRZ, CID, bond, grants and/or private sector funding strategy.
- Develop and implement a marketing strategy
- Begin a program of providing extended weekend or evening business hours once a month.

PHASE THREE: ACTION ITEMS

- Complete the construction of the phase one streetscape.
- Develop the new park plaza on Texas Avenue between Commerce and Ashbel.
- Develop a staff position for a main street coordinator
- Complete the Texas Main Street application
- Focus on identifying new businesses for the Texas Avenue area that will enhance the mixed-use district.

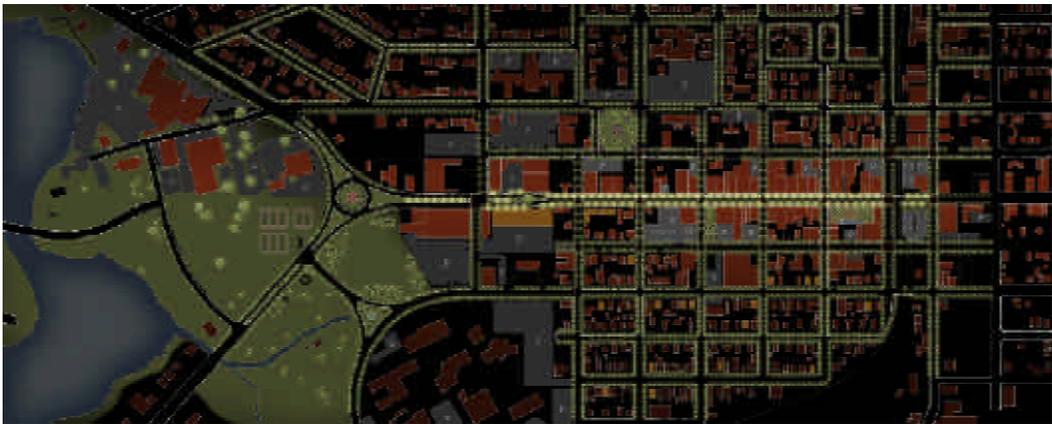
ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES

The leadership of the implementation of the Downtown Master Plan: Area One should occur through a public/ private partnership. The City should work with stakeholders and private developers to move this plan forward. Implementation of the plan will occur through a number of means including:

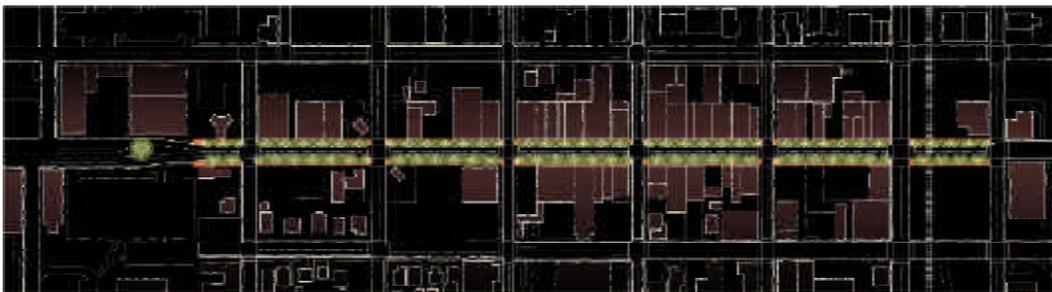
- Marketing, public relations and community outreach for the Master Plan
- Raising funds (from public and private sources)
- Directing implementation of the Master Plan or doing so through other entities
- Managing the Downtown



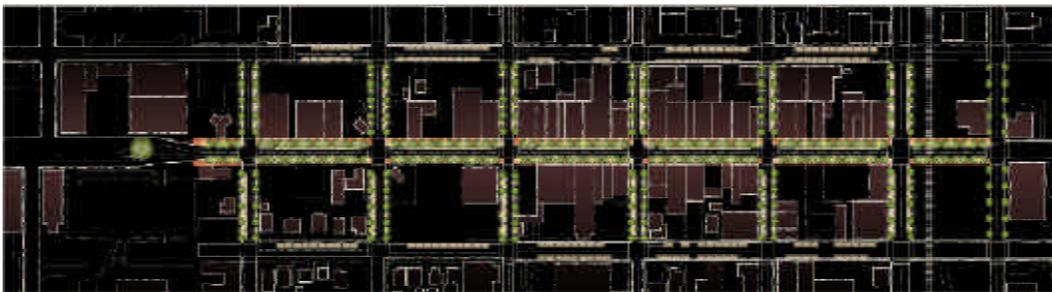
EXISTING CONDITIONS



MASTER PLAN



TEXAS AVENUE STREETSCAPE



SIDE STREET CONNECTIONS