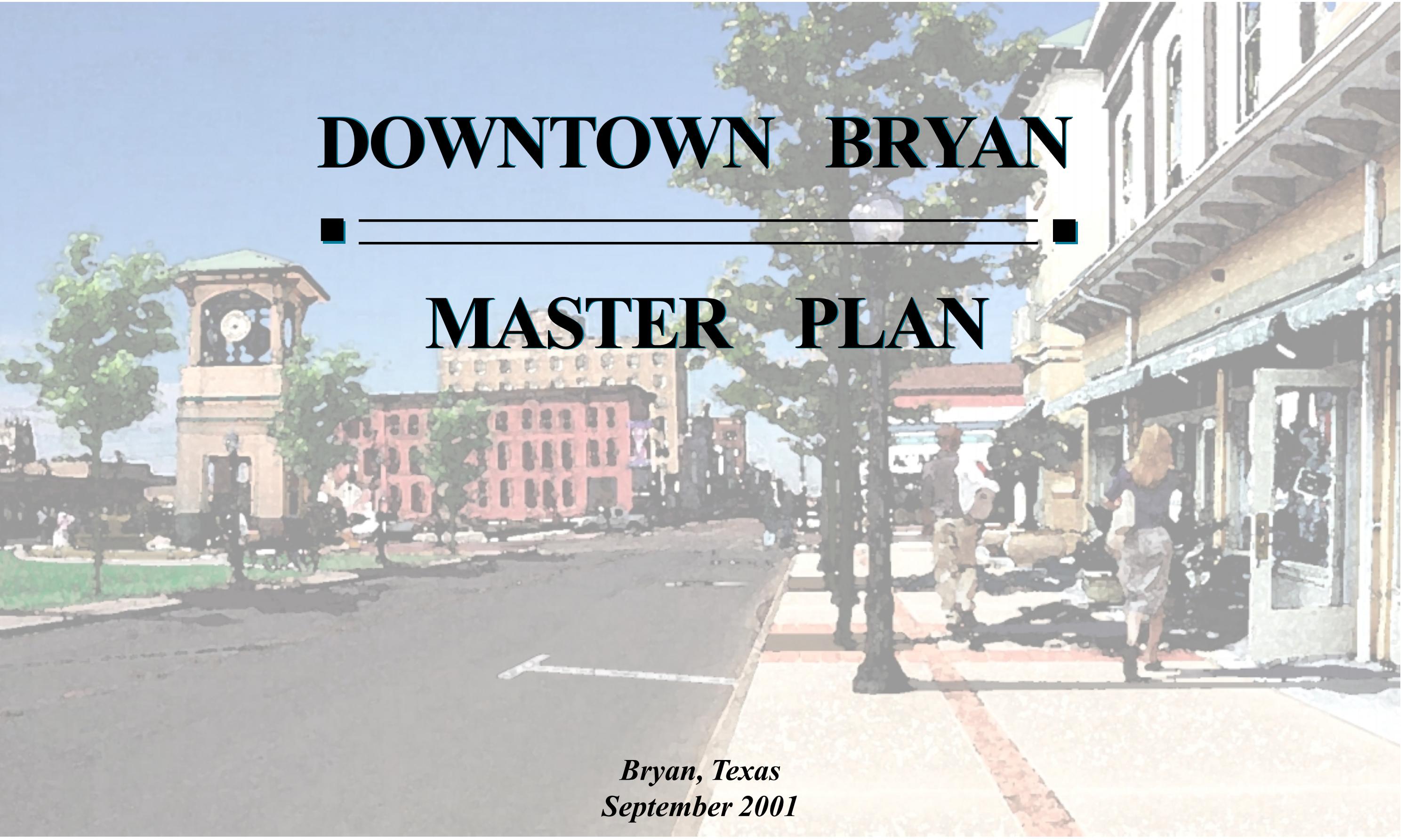


DOWNTOWN BRYAN



MASTER PLAN

*Bryan, Texas
September 2001*

Prepared for

Bryan City Council

Downtown Action Committee • Planning and Zoning Commission



View of Main Street at 25th Street during an unknown parade in approximately 1915.

Source: Carnegie Library

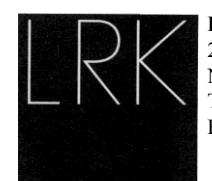
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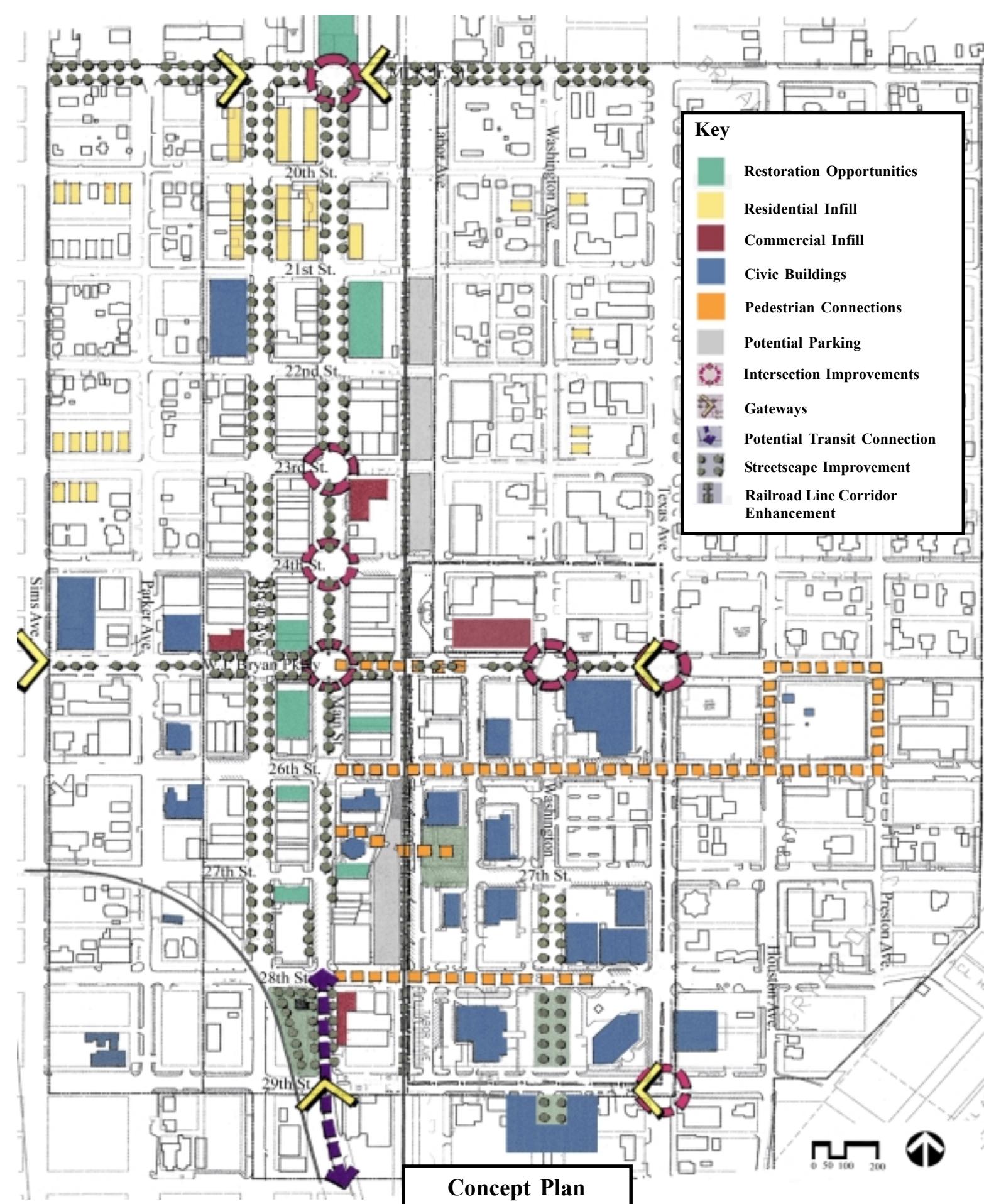
Proposed redevelopment of the South Main Street gateway to downtown.

"Downtown holds together the most varied mix of economic, civic and social functions. It is the place where everyone can meet and interact, where monuments are located, where speeches are made, where parades are held and people are entertained. More than anything else, downtown gives a community its collective identity and thus its pride."

Richard Moe and Carter Wilkie
Changing Places



Proposed transformation of Bryan Avenue into a vibrant and attractive street.



Downtown Bryan Master Plan Executive Summary

Like most historic downtowns, Downtown Bryan has been impacted in past decades by changes in growth patterns, demographics and market demands. Because downtown is a special and unique place for the community, it is critical that extraordinary measures be focused on reviving the greatness that Downtown Bryan once enjoyed. Therefore, a major planning effort, built upon extensive public input, was initiated in December of 2000. The plan results include:

Intersection & Gateway Enhancements

- Intersections will be attractive and pedestrian-friendly.
- Gateways, strategically located at key entry points, will provide a better first and last impression of downtown.

Streetscape Improvements

- New and wider sidewalks will be made of concrete with brick accents, and pedestrian-scaled streetlights and street furniture will feature a historic character.
- Landscaped medians are proposed for some street segments, as well as trees and canopies throughout.

Creation of a Civic District

- A new Civic Commons will align Washington Avenue.
- A new Library Plaza will provide a stronger connection across the railroad tracks between public uses.

Restoration & Infill Opportunities

- Facade restoration renderings have been prepared for roughly 80 historic buildings in the downtown core.
- Commercial buildings are proposed for key lots, as well as townhouses for the north parts of Main Street and Bryan Avenue.

Parking & Transit Initiatives

- Parking improvements will include the redesign of existing lots and better management of on-street spaces.
- The Brazos Transit District will develop a parking and transit facility in the Civic District with a potential trolley.

Economic & Marketing Strategies

- A Main Street organization is needed to market and promote downtown, including retail management.
- Existing development incentives should be improved and promoted, while new ones are recommended in the plan.

Residential Neighborhoods

- For the study area's peripheral residential areas, a three-pronged strategy is recommended: street and sidewalk improvements, code enforcement and housing incentives.

Implementation Steps

- The Downtown Advisory Committee should spearhead plan implementation with City staff support.
- Initial steps should be concentrated on a limited core area.

The challenge for Bryan now is to build upon the excitement and momentum generated by the master planning process, and to embark on an aggressive phase of effective implementation.

Study Area

For the purposes of this planning project, the area of concern has been delineated into two distinct geographic areas, as follows:

General Study Area

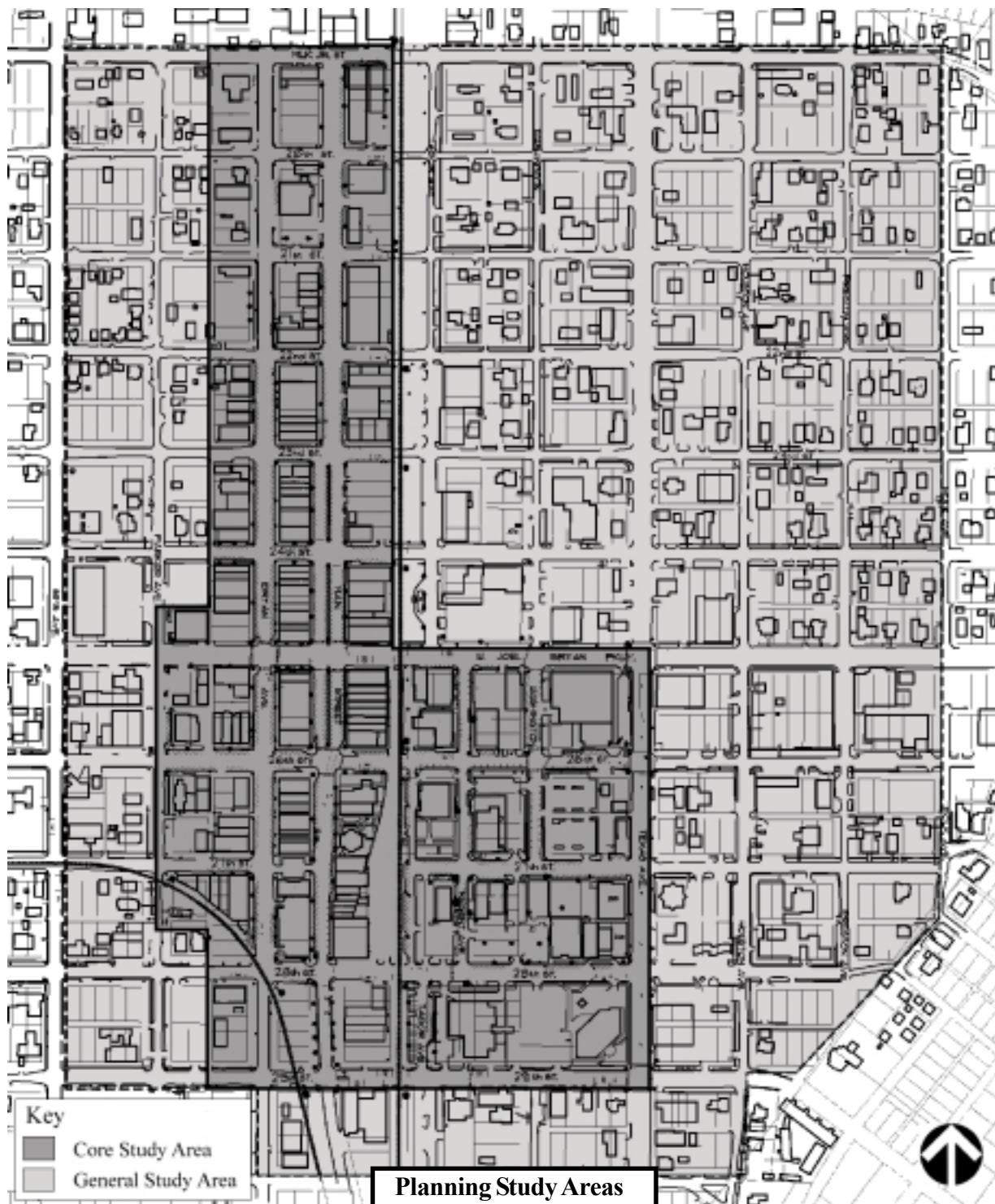
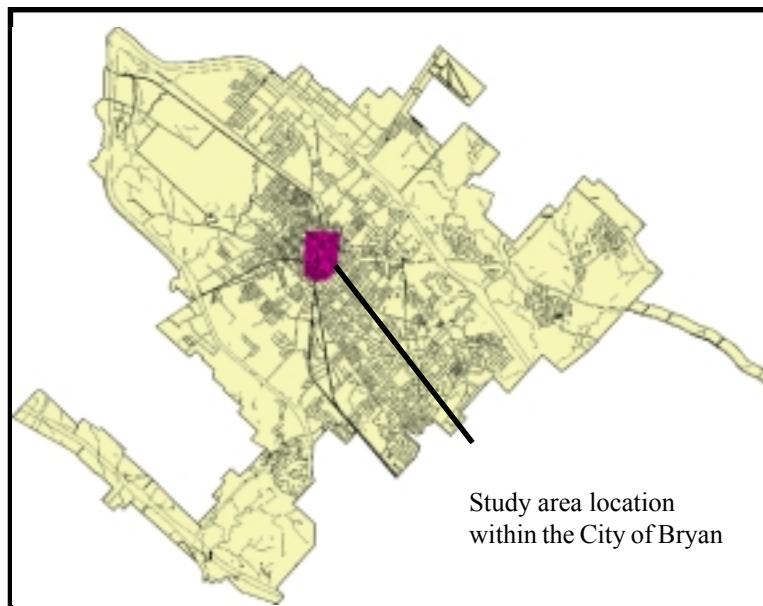
This larger area, illustrated in the map at right, is bounded roughly by:

- MLK, Jr. Street on the north
- 30th Street on the south
- Polk Avenue on the east, and
- Sims Avenue on the west

Core Study Area

This area incorporates the commercial core of Downtown Bryan, and it is bound roughly by:

- North: MLK, Jr. Street
- South: 29th Street
- West: The north-south alley splitting the blocks bound by Parker Avenue on the west and Bryan Avenue on the east to William J. Bryan Parkway, and including the area east of the centerline of Parker Avenue from William J. Bryan Parkway south to 27th Street, then continuing along the north-south alley to 29th Street.
- East: Texas Avenue between 29th Street and William J. Bryan Parkway, then along the rail line to MLK, Jr. Street.



Advisory Committee Meeting



Field Work



Public Workshop

Purpose & Methodology

Purpose

This master plan for Downtown Bryan is an outgrowth of a community-wide comprehensive plan prepared for the City of Bryan in 1999. Among that plan's numerous ideas was the recommendation to more vigorously pursue downtown revitalization efforts, starting with the preparation of a downtown master plan.

The purpose of this plan is to provide a "blue print" for making Downtown Bryan a better place to live, work and play. The goal is for downtown to become more user-friendly, attractive, socially vibrant, and economically sound. This plan has been crafted with an emphasis placed on its ultimate implementation, rather than planning simply "for the sake of planning."

Methodology

The approach taken in preparing the downtown master plan included four main phases, each logically sequenced to build upon the work accomplished in the previous task. By taking an incremental approach, numerous opportunities for public input were provided before proceeding to the next phase. The four-step approach is summarized below:

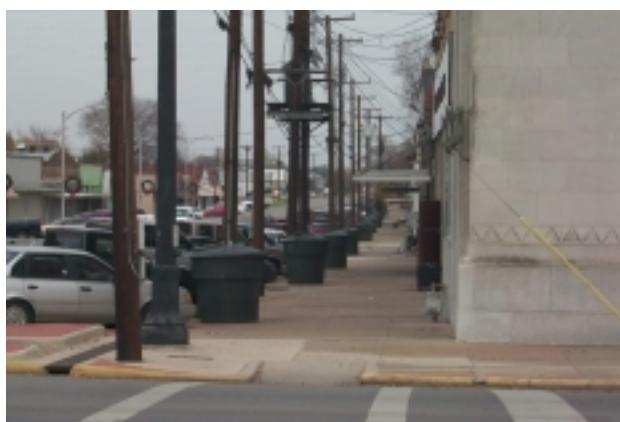
- 1.0 Background Research & Analysis
- 1.1 Advisory Committee Meeting
- 1.2 Physical Analysis
- 1.3 Economic & Market Evaluation
- 1.4 Market Survey
- 1.5 Public Policy Analysis
- 1.6 Stakeholder Group Meetings
- 1.7 Leadership Interviews
- 1.8 Public "Kick-Off" Meeting
- 2.0 Workshop & Concept Plan Development
- 2.1 Follow-Up Field Work
- 2.2 Public Charrette Workshop
- 2.3 Concept Plan Development
- 2.4 Concept Plan Presentation
- 3.0 Draft Plan Preparation & Presentation
- 3.1 Physical Master Plan
- 3.2 Economic & Market Strategy
- 3.3 Implementation Strategy
- 4.0 Plan Revisions & Presentations
- 4.1 Plan Revisions
- 4.2 Public Presentations



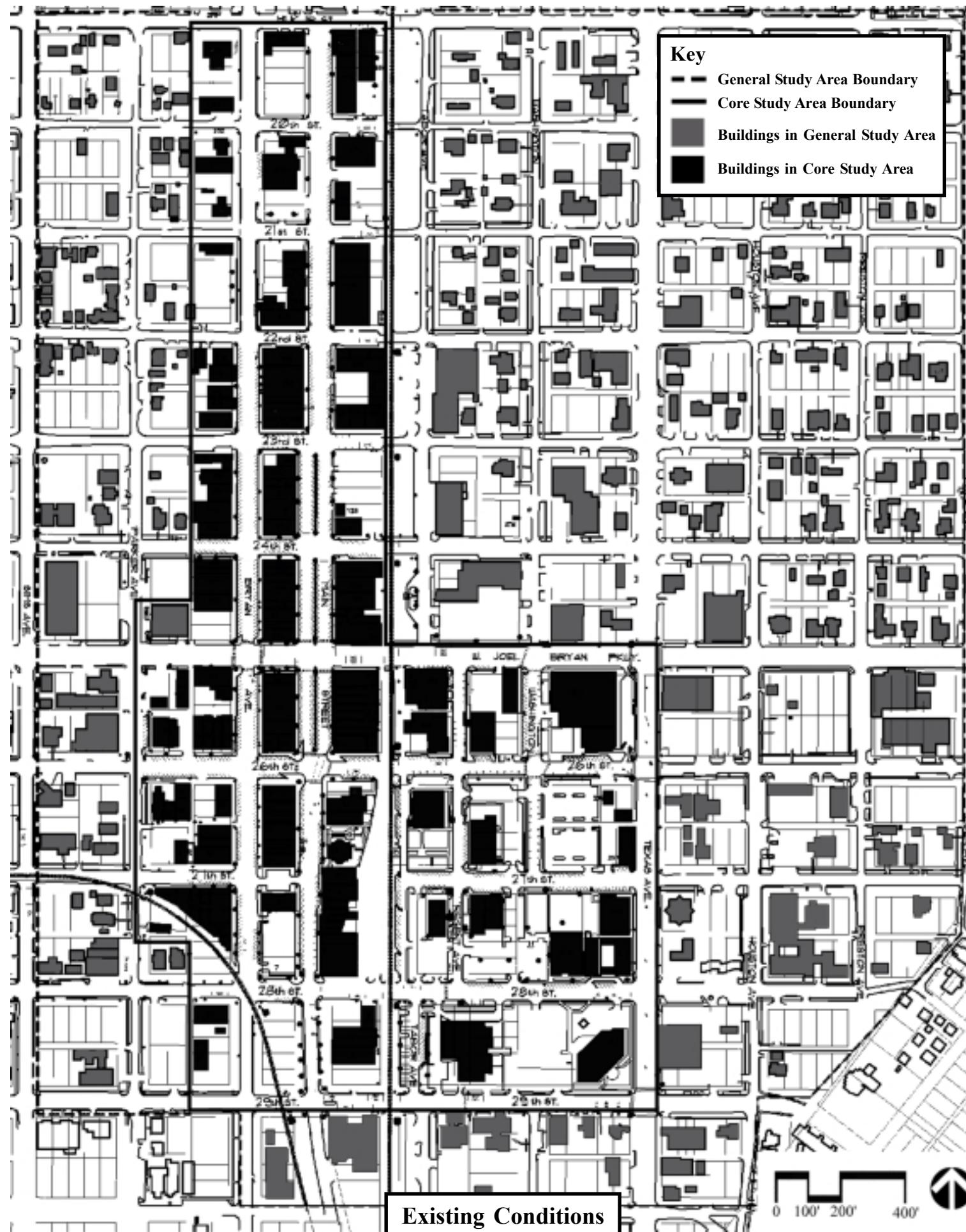
Inappropriate storefront alterations have diminished the character and historic integrity of some existing buildings. Fortunately, many such changes are reversible.



Some sidewalks are poorly maintained, thus detracting from the appearance and pedestrian friendliness of downtown.



As the downtown area redevelops, several utilities may need upgrading or relocation. For example, overhead lines and poles might be relocated underground to improve the aesthetic quality of downtown.



Existing Physical Framework

Buildings

Bryan has a rich stock of historic buildings, most of which have retained some level of architectural integrity. Within the past few years, examples of high-quality building restorations have included the LaSalle Hotel and the Old Bryan Market. On the other hand, several vacant lots exist where buildings have been demolished and not replaced.

The majority of Downtown's historic buildings have been altered over the years, particularly during the 1950s, 60s and early 70s. Large portions of many facades have been concealed by contemporary coverings, hiding the original massing, facade designs, and detailing. While such alterations often are reversible, some facades have been more significantly altered. Many buildings have had original doors, windows and storefronts replaced with incompatible aluminum and glass elements. In addition, because a majority of the historic buildings lack proper door hardware, opening devices and/or proper thresholds from the sidewalk, they are not compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Appendix A provides detailed facade restoration recommendations for the Core Study Area.

Streetscapes & Public Spaces

The "streetscape" is considered the area within the public right-of-way that includes sidewalks, landscaping, street furniture, parking, signage, and vehicular travel lanes. Most existing streetscape segments in Downtown Bryan are functional, but many are in need of physical enhancements. In general, buildings frame the streets, concrete sidewalks and paint-striped crosswalks are present in most areas, canopies on many building facades protect against the elements, and on-street parking provides a separation between pedestrians and moving traffic.

While some of the elements of a successful streetscape are present in Downtown Bryan, much of the existing streetscape lacks well-maintained sidewalks and desirable elements, such as street trees, landscaping, human-scale lighting, and street furniture (benches, trash receptacles, etc.). There are also few parks or plazas designed specifically to function as public spaces within the Downtown area. Such spaces are important as opportunities for people to meet, interact and form social networks, thereby building a stronger sense of community in Downtown Bryan.

Utilities

There are currently numerous utilities located above and below ground within the Downtown study area, including:

- Electrical: Bryan Texas Utilities
- Gas: TXU Electric & Gas
- Cable Television: Cox Cable
- Telephone: Verizon
- Communications (Fiber Optics): Genuity and ITC
- Gas and oil: Mitchell Gas Services
- Water, Wastewater & Storm Drainage: City of Bryan

The City of Bryan currently has a standard utility location plan for areas where a 6-foot sidewalk exists adjacent to the back of the curb. However, the plan only addresses water and sewer lines. With the future rehabilitation of Downtown, it will be critical to establish standardized utility locations.

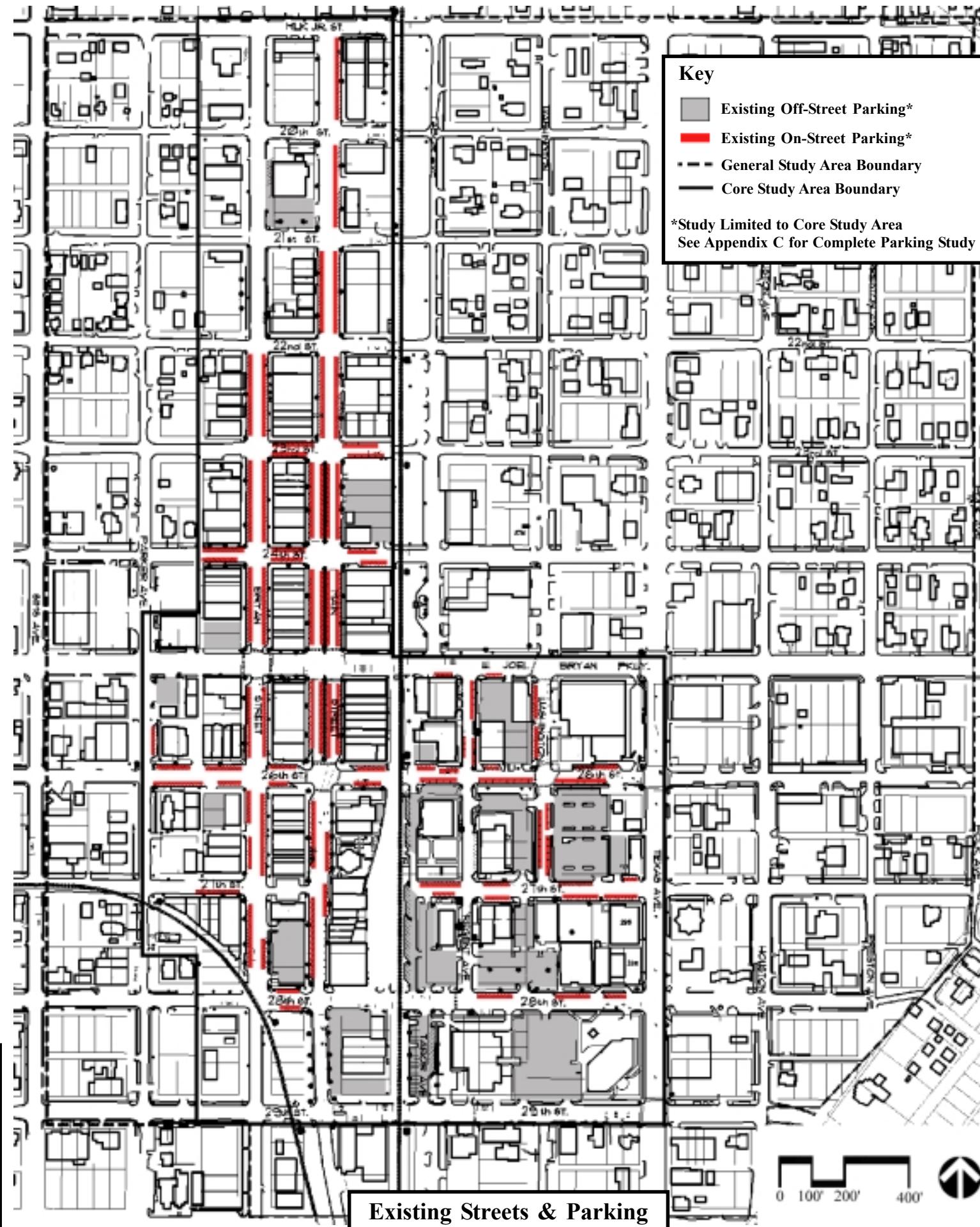


On-street public parking is available throughout downtown, although presently it is not well managed. Instead of reserving on-street parking for downtown customers, much is used by downtown employees.



Study Area Observed Parking Statistics
April 12-13, 2001 (Week-Day Business Hours)

Types of Parking	Total Parking Spaces	Parking Spaces Used	% Used
On-Street	777	349	44.9%
Off-Street	892	452	50.7%
Totals	1669	801	47.9%



Existing Streets & Parking

The primary focus of the transportation issues for this downtown master plan will be to accommodate pedestrian traffic and future parking demands.

Streets

Downtown Bryan is fortunate to have a traditional grid street pattern that provides user-friendly access throughout the study area. All streets, with the exception of a section of Tabor Avenue, between William Joel Bryan Parkway and 26th Street, carry two-way traffic. Current Downtown traffic volumes are well below the available capacity for the existing street system. With the exceptions of William Joel Bryan Parkway and Texas Avenue, none of the existing streets have traffic volumes that create any significant congestion. William Joel Bryan Parkway and Texas Avenue, both state highways, are lined primarily with typical “strip commercial” retail uses. While Downtown’s streets currently accommodate the most essential needs of pedestrians, they are not very pedestrian friendly. Enhancements such as “pedestrian bulbs” to minimize the distance required to cross a street, and crosswalks utilizing special pavers to make drivers more conscious of pedestrians, are examples of features enjoyed by many downtowns, but not currently prevalent in Downtown Bryan.

Parking

Parking is presently not a significant problem in Downtown Bryan (despite public perceptions), although the demands for parking will increase as future redevelopment occurs. Currently, all on-street parking in Downtown Bryan is free. There are no public pay lots in Downtown or free public parking lots that are not associated with a specific use. For example, parking lots exist for the Bryan Municipal Building, the Bryan Public Library, and the Brazos County Courthouse, but they are not intended for general purposes. Existing parking challenges are generally site specific. Near the courthouse, for example, parking can be difficult to find at times, but a parking space within relatively close proximity to the courthouse can usually be found at any time. While the parking demand at the Bryan Municipal Building is high, the current supply accommodates this demand. Parking supplies in this area will be enhanced even more if the Brazos Transit District develops an approximately 1,000-vehicle parking garage and bus terminal, which is planned for the near future. There is little off-street parking currently available outside of the Bryan Municipal Building area and courthouse complex, when considering the overall number of parking spaces in the Downtown area. A new surface lot was recently developed immediately south of the Howell Building (fronting both Main Street and Bryan Avenue), but it is primarily for use by the LaSalle Hotel with some parking to accommodate the Howell Building. It should be noted that the parking statistics chart at left pertains only to the core commercial and civic area as depicted in the map above the chart.

Existing Gateways & Landmarks

Gateways

Gateways are identified based on the current frequency of use, transitional points from suburban to urban development character, the location of key landmarks and the potential to become a significant gateway. According to results from the Downtown Bryan Market Survey, conducted as part of this plan, nearly half of the respondents indicated that they use Texas Avenue most frequently to arrive and depart Downtown. The balance of those surveyed use either South College/South Main Street or William Joel Bryan Parkway (See Appendix B for complete Market Survey results). The City of Bryan's Major Thoroughfare Plan classifies Texas Avenue and William Joel Bryan Parkway as Major Arterials. Major Arterials carry between 20,000 and 60,000 vehicles per day, and Minor Arterials carry between 5,000 and 30,000 vehicles per day. Currently, there are no special treatments to signify the entries into Downtown Bryan, with the exception of some streetscape improvements at the South College Avenue/ South Main Street gateway.

Landmarks Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

Bryan is fortunate to have a large stock of historic buildings that, for the most part, remains intact. The buildings illustrate a rich history and varied architectural styles. The following landmarks are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

- First State Bank and Trust Building - An Art Deco style building constructed in 1930 for the First State Bank.
- First National Bank Building - Built in 1919, the masonry and granite structure originally housed the banking offices in the front portion and a saloon in the rear.
- Astin Building - This four-story masonry building was constructed in 1915. It housed the first telephone exchange and served as the City National Bank until the 1950s.
- James Building - Druggist M.H. James purchased this property in 1907 to construct a building with a drug store on the first floor and offices on the upper level. Currently, there is still a drug store in operation at this location.
- Ice House - This example of Mission Revival style was constructed in 1912 for use as an ice house.
- St. Andrews Episcopal Church - The sanctuary was constructed in 1914 and the parish hall was constructed in 1920. Both are local examples of Gothic Revival style with pointed-arch windows and entrances, and leaded glass windows.
- Temple Freda - A Neo-Classical one-story structure constructed in 1912 to serve the Jewish Community of Bryan. Throughout the years, Temple Freda has allowed small religious groups to meet in the synagogue until they were able to build a place of worship of their own.
- LaSalle Hotel - This historic 55-room hotel was recently renovated and reopened in Fall of 2000 after being vacant for over 20 years.
- Masonic Lodge - Constructed in the Prairie School Style made famous by architect Frank Lloyd Wright and erected for the Brazos Union Lodge #129 in 1910.
- Carnegie Library - Opened in 1903 and funded by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, it served the community as the local public library until 1969 when the Bryan Public Library opened. Today it is a repository of Bryan history.

Existing Landmarks	
Key	
1. Ice House*	
2. Stage Center	
3. Varisco Building	
4. Parker Lumber*	
5. First State Bank and Trust Building*	
6. First National Bank Building*	
7. Astin Building*	
8. James Building*	
9. Federal Building	
10. St. Andrews Episcopal Church*	
11. Temple Freda*	
12. Queen Theater	
13. LaSalle Hotel*	
14. Howell Building	
15. Palace Theater	
16. Masonic Lodge*	
17. Carnegie Public Library*	
18. Bryan Public Library	
19. Future Children's Museum (Old City Hall)	
20. Brazos County Courthouse	
21. First Baptist Church	
22. Bryan Municipal Building	
23. Bryan Police Station	
24. First United Methodist Church	
25. Bryan Visitor's Center	
26. St. Joseph's Catholic Church	
*Properties designated in the National Register of Historic Places	



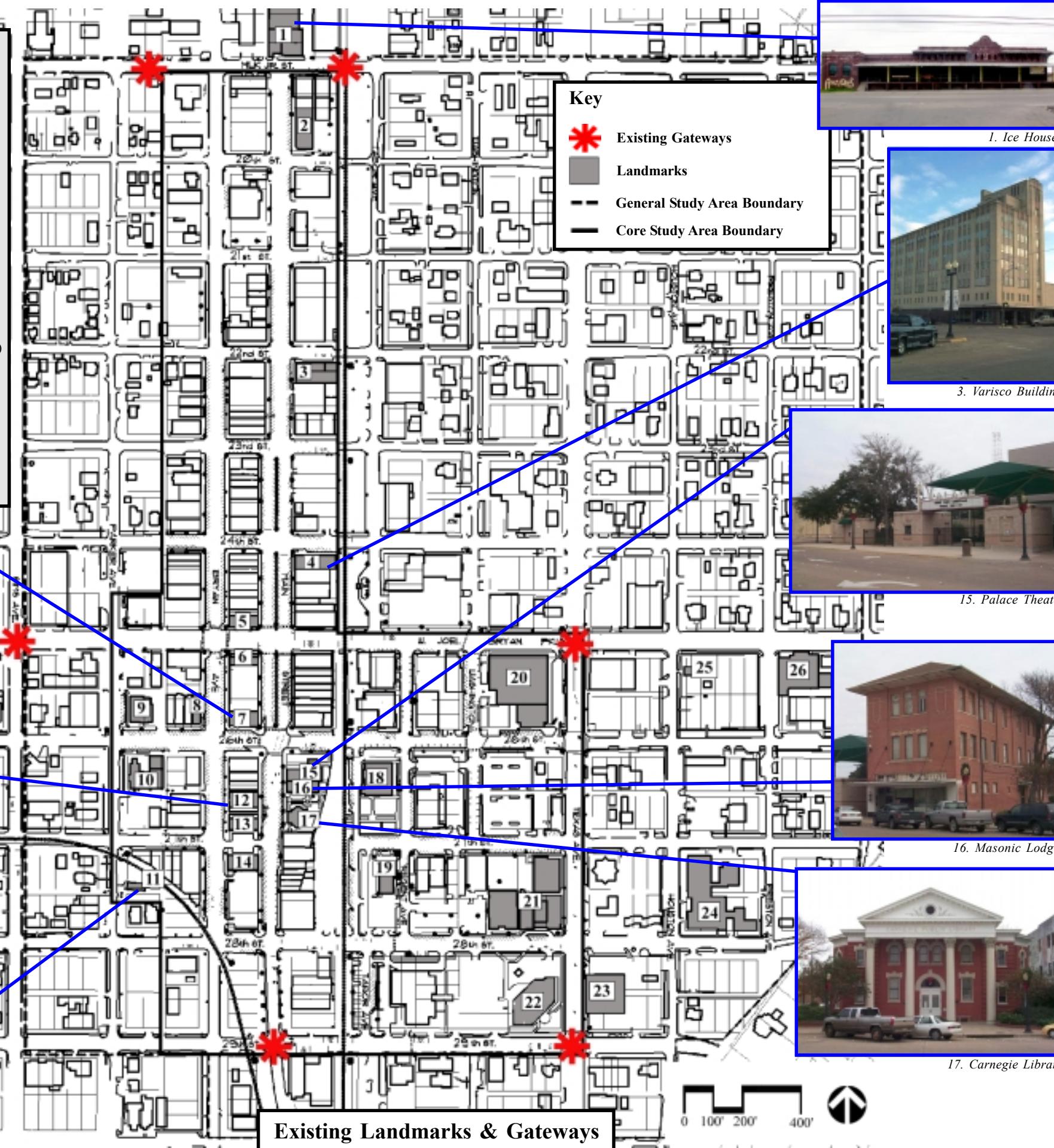
7. Astin Building



12. Queen Theater



11. Temple Freda





Economic Context

Existing Land Use

Downtown Bryan has three geographic clusters of activity:

- Civic/institutional uses located in the area southeast portion of the general study area.
- Commercial core along Bryan Avenue and Main Street from 29th and 23rd Streets.
- Northern corridor along Bryan Avenue and Main Street north of 23rd Street to Martin Luther King, Jr. Street.

Each of these areas has a unique character defined by uses, building types and/or general character. The area east of the Union Pacific rail right-of-way is characterized primarily by suburban type development housing a variety of institutional uses that include government, religious, library, museum, and education. The commercial core is characterized by historic development that includes mid-rise buildings used for offices and hotels, and two and three-story buildings typical of late- 19th Century downtown development. These buildings provide space for a wide variety of commercial uses, including retail, service, entertainment, and office. There are also a few upper floor apartments. The area north of 23rd Street is characterized by low-rise buildings, as well as buildings that were constructed for specific uses, such as the lumber storage building and the ice house. Many of the uses that historically took place in this area can be characterized as industrial, and some of the oldest buildings in the Downtown are located in this area. At present, the largest user of space in the area is the Twin City Mission. The Mission currently owns more than two blocks on Main Street and Bryan Avenue. Other uses in this area continue to be industrial in nature, including a saddlery, furniture refinishing, and storage.

Real Estate Market

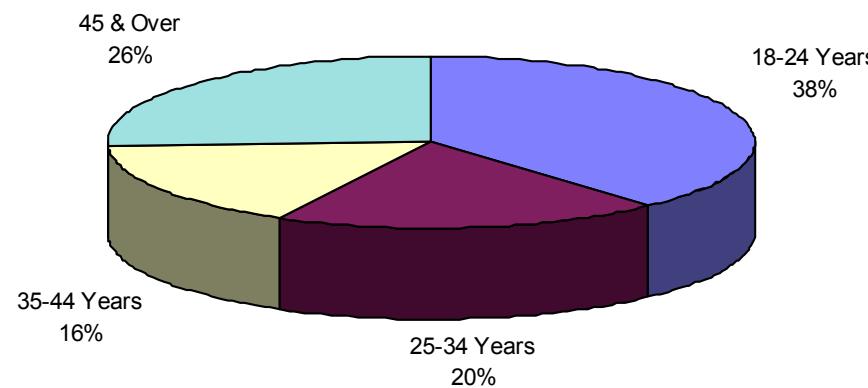
Interviews with owners, users and developers of various types of real estate provided the following information about Downtown Bryan. Annual commercial rents (retail, office, service) range from approximately \$5.00 per square foot to \$8.00 per square foot, though the upper end of the range appears to be difficult to achieve. The landlord typically pays all or a large portion of the expenses related to the leased space, although some "triple net" leases exist in the marketplace. Market-rate residential rents in the downtown range from approximately \$0.80 per square foot per month to approximately \$1.30 per square foot per month. Tenants typically pay gas and electricity. Reportedly, there are about 15 market-rate residential units located in the downtown. These units are characterized by design features such as high ceilings, exposed bricks and mechanical ductwork, and wood floors. They are found on the second and third floors of downtown buildings. According to a 1999 survey of downtown building space contained on the City of Bryan website, there is approximately a 34% vacancy rate within the area bounded by West 28th, Parker, West 24th and Tabor Street.

Population Growth: Bryan, and College Station Population

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

2000 population estimates indicate relatively high growth in the Bryan/College Station region. Bryan-College Station was ranked the fifth fastest growing U.S. city according to Kiplinger's Personal Finance, April 1997.

Percent of Population by Age Group: Bryan-College Station and Brazos County



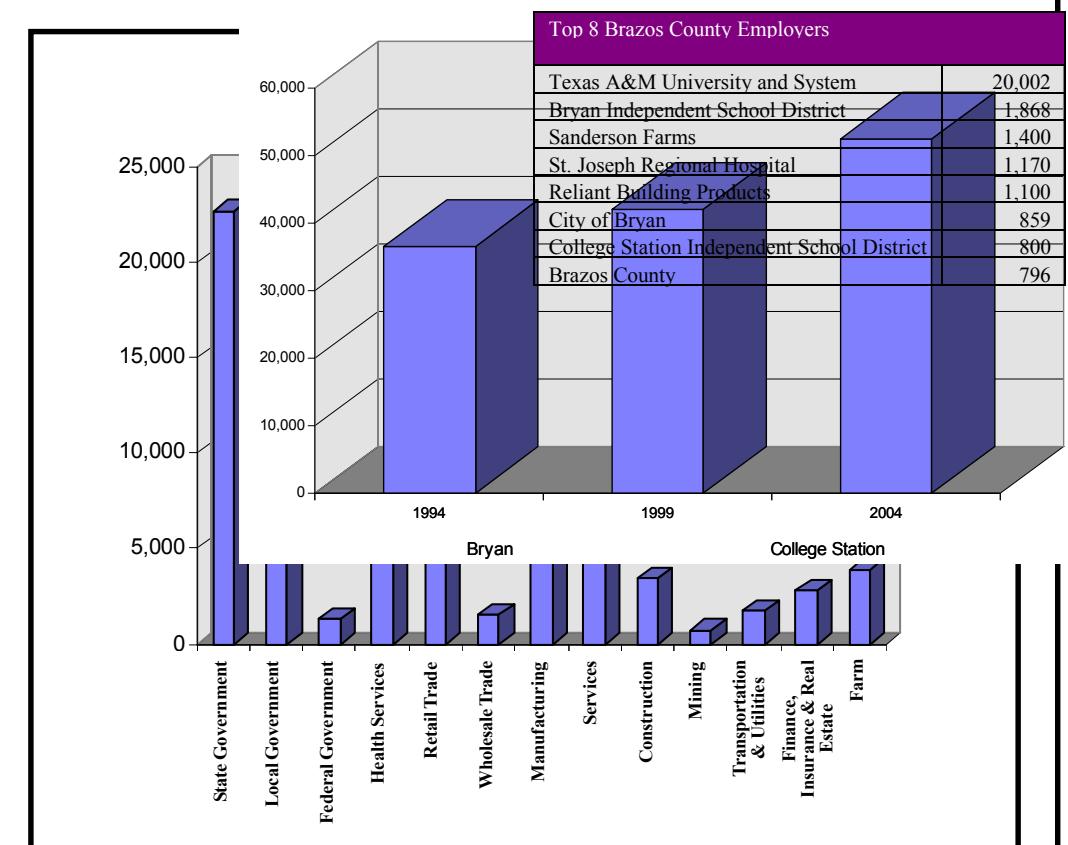
Source: Texas State Data Center

The 18-24 age group represents the largest section of the population in Brazos County for the year 2000.

Average Household Effective Buying Income: Bryan-College Station

Source: Sales & Marketing Management, 2000 Survey of Buying Power

Effective Buying Income is defined as money income less personal tax and non-tax payment, a number often referred to as "disposable" or "after-tax" income. The Average Household Effective Buying Income for the Bryan-College Station Area is projected to increase 43.6% from 1994 to 2004.



The State, which includes Texas A&M University, was the largest employer in Brazos County for the year 2000.

Socio-Economic Context

Population

The City of Bryan has experienced substantial population increases in the past 10 years. In 1990, Brazos County had a population of 141,862 which increased 7 percent to 152,415 in 2000, according to recently released Census Bureau data. The City of Bryan alone has experienced approximately a 19 percent increase in population since 1990. Some of College Station's growth can be attributed to continued expansion of municipal boundaries to the east and west away from Downtown Bryan and towards the Houston metropolitan area.

The cities of Bryan and College Station are relatively young communities due to the number of students and faculty at Texas A&M University. Bryan is slightly older, with a median age of 29.1, compared with College Station's median age of 22.8.

Economic and Employment Characteristics

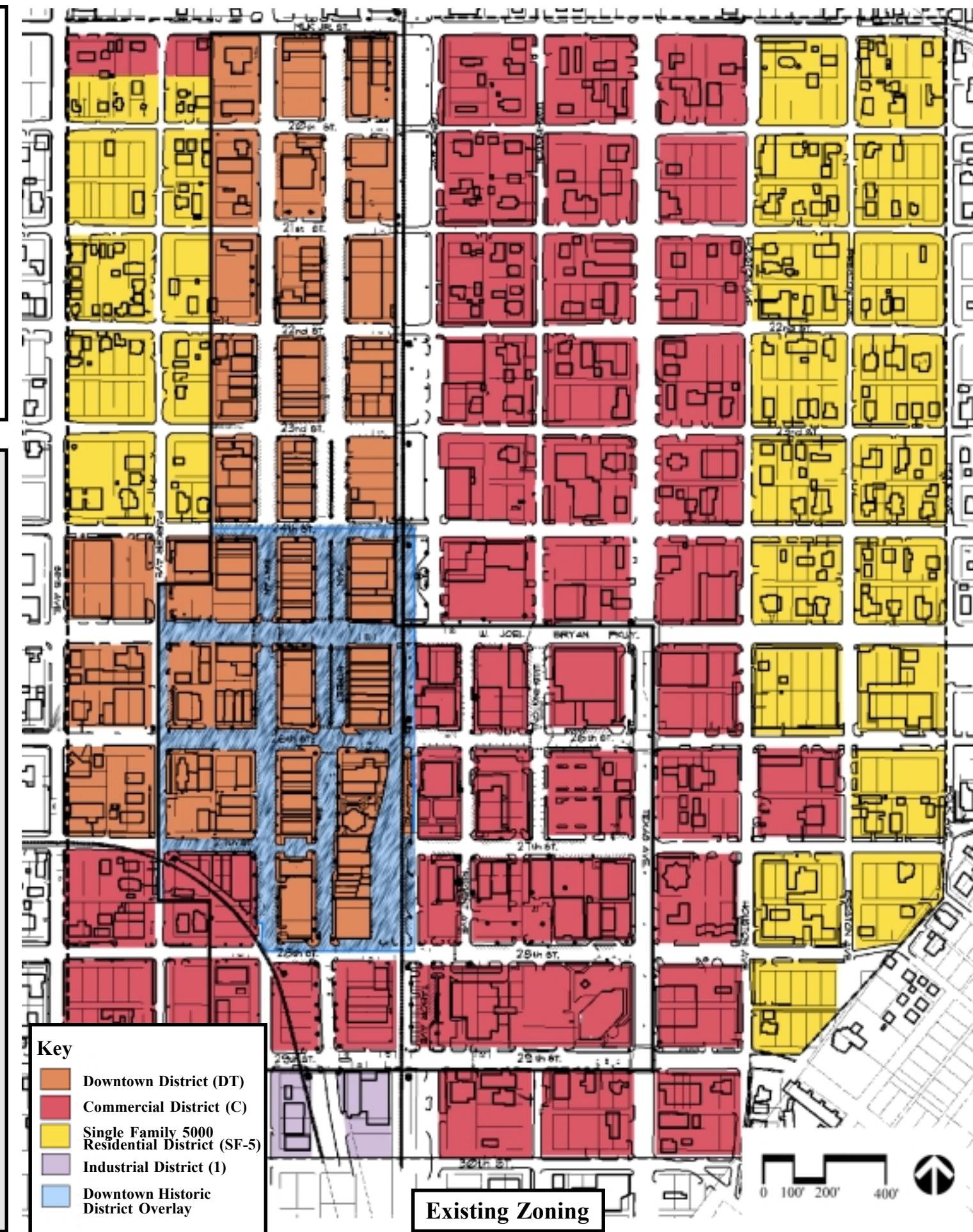
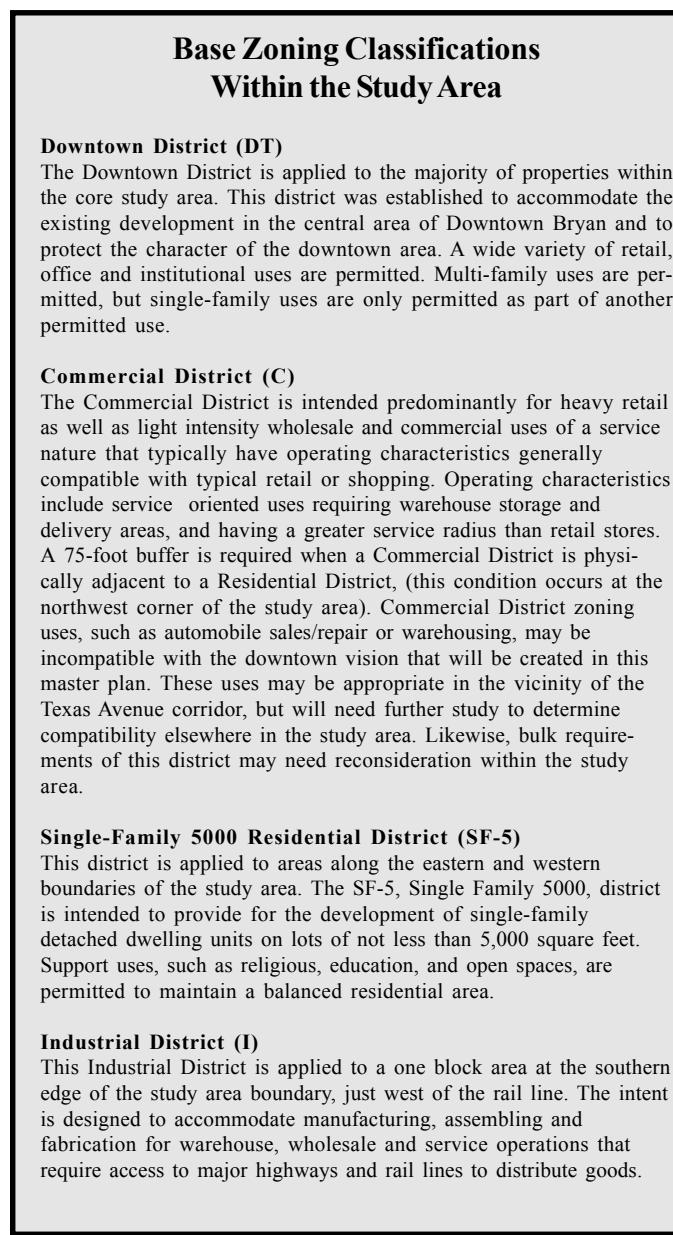
According to the American Chamber of Commerce Researchers Association's cost of living index, the Bryan/College Station area has the second lowest cost of living in the state of Texas, and the 11th lowest in the nation of the 308 cities surveyed. The consumer areas surveyed included grocery items, housing, utilities, transportation, healthcare and miscellaneous goods and services.

Bryan-College Station has one of the state's lowest unemployment rates of 1.6% in 2000. Texas A&M is the largest employer in with over 20,000 employees. Services and retail trade for 30,900 jobs in Brazos County. These sectors will grow as the population increases.

Average Household Effective Buying Income for Bryan-College Station is projected to increase 43.6 percent from \$36,563 in 1994 to 2004. However, it is still less than the Average Household Effective Buying Income for the State of Texas which was \$44,729 in 1994 and is projected to increase to \$58,327 in 2004.

Bulk Requirements by Zoning District				
Requirement	SF-5	DT	C	I
Front Setback	25'	None	25'	25'
Side Setback adjacent to abutting property	7.5'	None	7.5'	7.5'
Side Street Setback adjacent to an arterial street	25'	None	25'	25'
Side Street Setback adjacent to a collector or a local street	15'	None	15'	15'
Rear Setback adjacent to an alley or abutting property	7.5'	None	7.5'	7.5'
Lot Coverage	65%(1)	n/a	90% (1)	90%
Lot Size	5,000 s.f.	n/a	7,000 s.f.	n/a
Lot Width	50'	n/a	50'	50'
Lot Depth	100'	n/a	100'	100'
Maximum Height	35'	None	35'(2)	None (3)

(1.) Does not apply to single family detached homes, mobile homes, duplexes, patio homes, or townhouses.
(2.) Maximum height of two stories or thirty-five feet (35') except cooling towers, roof gables, chimneys, vent stacks, mechanical equipment rooms of wireless communication facilities.
(3.) None, unless adjacent to a residential district, then an additional two feet (2') for every one foot (1') in height shall be observed adjacent to any residential property line.





According to the survey results, 60% of respondents reported that what they like most about Downtown Bryan is the historic character.

Top 10 Businesses/Services

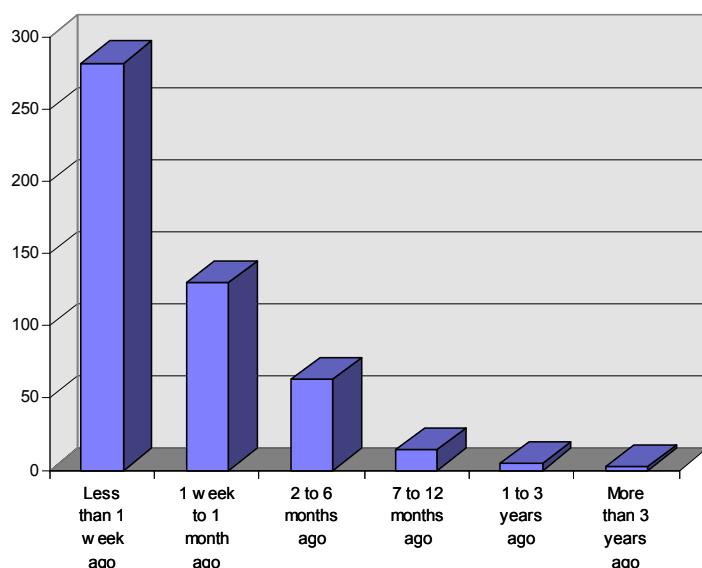
Respondents Would Like to See More of in Downtown Bryan

1. Family Restaurant
2. Bakery
3. Fine Dining Restaurant
4. Bookstore
5. Movie Theater
6. Live Theatre
7. Art Shows
8. Cultural Activities
9. Department Store
10. Gift Shop



Almost half of respondents indicated that they use Texas Avenue most frequently to arrive and depart Downtown Bryan. South College is used by 24 % and William Joel Bryan is used by 22%. Physical improvements should be considered in these gateways.

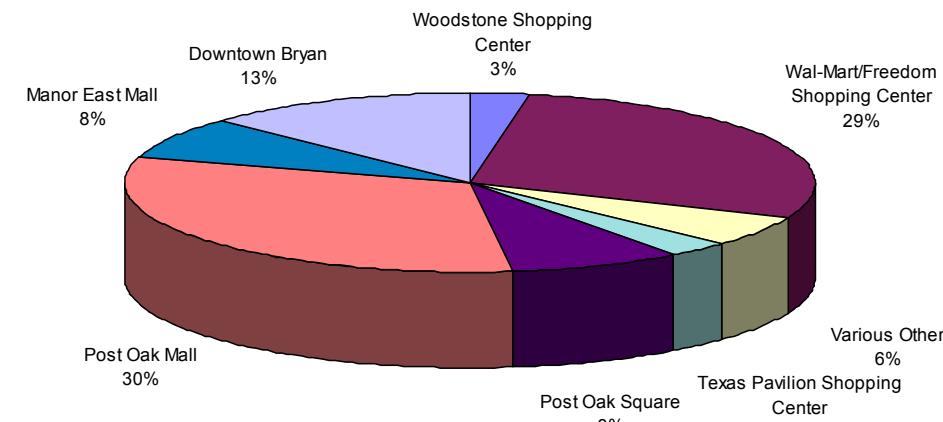
Last Time Respondent Visited Downtown Bryan



Top 10 Reasons People Visit Downtown Bryan

1. Dining
2. Shopping
3. Special Events
4. Work
5. Entertainment
6. Pay Bills
7. Carnegie Library
8. Sight Seeing
9. Professional Services
10. Children's Museum

Locations Respondents Shop Most Often



Downtown Bryan Attributes Rated by Survey Respondents

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Attractiveness	9%	38%	40%	13%
Cleanliness	10%	49%	35%	6%
Safety	12%	50%	32%	5%
Traffic Flow	15%	51%	29%	5%
Pedestrian Friendly	19%	51%	25%	6%
Parking Convenience	20%	40%	29%	11%
Shopping	10%	29%	43%	18%
Dining	22%	47%	25%	6%
Housing	3%	17%	36%	44%
Entertainment	9%	32%	39%	20%

* Most frequent response is shaded

If more Downtown Bryan stores and services were open on Saturdays, 62% of respondents stated that they would frequent them more often. Downtown businesses could capture more business by extending their hours of service.



Market Survey Results

As a supplement to the economic and market evaluation performed in conjunction with this plan, a market survey was prepared to target current and potential users, including employees, downtown area residents, students and citizens in general. The purpose of the survey was to better understand the activities, spending habits, perceptions and preferences of the various target markets.

A total of 503 completed surveys were returned. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents live within 10 miles of downtown based on the zip codes they provided on their surveys. Only four percent of those responding to the survey live in Downtown. Twenty-two percent indicated that they work Downtown. Fifty-six percent of respondents indicated that they had visited Downtown Bryan within the last month. This information confirms that a substantial consumer market is located within a short distance of Downtown.

The survey results indicate that steps should be taken to capture this consumer market by capitalizing on the visits that are currently being made to Downtown for activities such as dining, shopping, special events, and entertainment. Rather than trying to compete with highway commercial locations such as Post Oak Mall and the Wal-mart Freedom Shopping Center, Downtown needs to create its own niche of unique choices. Many of the businesses that survey respondents expressed high interest in unique options that Downtown needs.

was administered to 95 students at Blinn University at a later time. The college students about Downtown were fairlyvious groups. Below are a few of the

surveyed visited Bryan in the last 30 days. 75 students surveyed have shopped in Downtown Bryan in the last month.

frequently cited reason that students frequent Downtown is because of entertainment being second and

is cited most often when students were asked what they liked most about Downtown Bryan.

- Appearance was cited most often when students were asked what they disliked most about Downtown Bryan. They stressed a need for facade improvements and street repairs.
- The top five types of businesses that students would like to see more of Downtown: movie theater, family restaurants, fine-dining restaurants, music store (C.D.'s) and theme restaurants.
- Almost one-third of students shop between the hours of 5 p.m. and 7 p.m., and 68 percent said that they would frequent Downtown businesses more often if they were open on Saturdays.
- Nearly half of the students surveyed said that they would shop in Downtown Bryan more often if businesses accepted Aggie Bucks.

	Inappropriate	NO	Appropriate	YES
Streetscapes	 <p>This streetscape, characterized by poorly maintained sidewalks, a lack of landscaping, and front parking lots, was rated inappropriate by 98% of survey respondents who added that the scene looks "naked" and "sterile."</p>		 <p>On-street parking, street trees, landscaping, wide sidewalks and colorful awnings combine to create a comfortable pedestrian environment, resulting in 98% of survey respondents finding this streetscape appropriate for Downtown Bryan.</p>	
Streetscape Furnishings	 <p>This highway-scaled, "cobra-head" lighting was described as "cold" by a survey respondent. This image was rated inappropriate by 84% of survey respondents.</p>		 <p>Pedestrian-scaled street lighting, designed with a historical character, was rated appropriate by 98% of survey respondents.</p>	 <p>Streetscape furnishings that reflect the historic character of Downtown Bryan were viewed as appropriate. This image of a trash receptacle was rated appropriate by 94% of survey respondents.</p>
Buildings	 <p>This infill building is separated from the street by a parking lot and is incompatible with the adjacent buildings with respect to its scale, massing and facade design. It was considered to be inappropriate by 92% of the respondents, which was the lowest score among buildings.</p>		 <p>This new infill building is compatible with older, adjacent buildings in scale, massing, setback, facade design and materials. It was considered to be appropriate by 92% of the respondents.</p>	 <p>This building was described by respondents as "cozy" and "looks successful." Although decorative elements have been added to reinforce the restaurant's Mexican theme, the building's historic integrity has been retained. It was considered to be appropriate by 92% of the respondents.</p>

Public Input Results

A Vision Survey was conducted as part of an interactive public "kick-off" meeting held on December 6, 2000. The purpose of this survey was to solicit visually-based preferences regarding development and design issues in Downtown Bryan, and to encourage public participation in the planning process. The 51 participants were shown 60 images organized into the following categories.

- Streetscapes
- Streetscape Furnishings
- Buildings
- Parking
- Parks & Plazas
- Signage

While some images were of Downtown Bryan, most images were from various other places. For each image, respondents were asked, "Is this appropriate for Downtown Bryan?" They were asked to rate the image on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most appropriate. An opportunity for comments was also provided on the survey sheets, and an in-depth discussion occurred after the survey as representative images were revisited. A sampling of the results of the survey are illustrated to the left and on the following page. These images represent those scenes determined as being the least appropriate and the most appropriate within each issue category.

Streetscapes

Well maintained streetscapes with wide sidewalks, landscaping and pedestrian activity received the highest scores. Streetscapes characterized by narrow sidewalks, a lack of landscaping and blank building walls or no building walls received the lowest scores.

Streetcape Furnishings

Streetcape furnishings designed in historic styles, such as pedestrian scaled street lighting and trash receptacles, received high scores from survey respondents. Tall street lighting with "cobra-head" lamps received the lowest score, as did plainly designed contemporary trash receptacles.

Buildings

New infill buildings compatible with older, adjacent buildings in scale, facade design and materials were viewed as appropriate. Modern, high-rise buildings wth inappropriate massing, design and materials were viewed as sterile and inappropriate for Downtown Bryan.

Inappropriate	NO
Parking	
<i>This corner parking lot, lacking any elements that define the street corner or screen the perimeter, was rated inappropriate by 75% of survey respondents who added that the scene looks "abandoned" and as if a "building is missing."</i>	
Parks & Plazas	
<i>While some images of parks and plazas were viewed more favorably than others, none rated so low as to constitute an "inappropriate" image.</i>	
Signage	
<i>These facade-mounted signs lack visual cohesiveness, are inappropriately located on the facades, and utilize poor design and low quality materials. This sign image was the lowest rated in the survey, 96% inappropriate.</i>	

Appropriate	YES
<i>Parking lots with perimeter screening, as well as ample interior landscaping, were viewed by 88% of respondents as appropriate.</i>	
<i>A combination of a brick wall and street trees effectively screen this parking lot. 75% of respondents viewed this image as appropriate, adding that the screening was attractive.</i>	
<i>This urban plaza with trees, landscaping, benches, human-scaled lighting and building enclosure was viewed as appropriate by 94% of the survey respondents - the highest score among park and plaza images.</i>	
<i>This small park was viewed by 88% of respondents as appropriate for Downtown Bryan. Characteristics include small lawn areas, hedge enclosures, shade trees and paved pedestrian walkways.</i>	
<i>This image of facade-mounted signs received the highest rating among signs, with a score of 100% appropriate. These signs are located on the facades in a manner that does not obscure the architectural elements or detailing.</i>	
<i>Deemed appropriate by 94% of the survey respondents, this projecting sign is in scale with the building and exhibits a high level of craftsmanship.</i>	

Public Input Results

Parking
Receiving the highest scores were parking lots with perimeter screening elements, such as brick walls and landscaping, that prevent direct views of automobiles from the street. Also, high-rise parking garages with blank exteriors received low scores, while low-rise parking garages attractively designed with retail shops at the street level received high scores.

Parks & Plazas
All images of parks and urban plazas received favorable scores. However, images with extensive landscaping, trees, and other elements, such as fountains and benches, received the highest scores. Also, building enclosure to help define public spaces appeared to be favored.

Signage
Survey respondents preferred relatively small-scale signs that are compatible with the facade of the associated building. Cluttered, large signage lacking consistent design character received low scores.

In addition to the Vision Survey, meeting attendees were asked to help identify opportunities and challenges related to the downtown area. The results were as follows:

Opportunities

- History
- Second floors available for loft space
- Character
- Architecture
- Memories of downtown as a "hometown" environment
- A place to spend the day
- Expanding existing incentives
- Unique opportunities not available in College Station
- Railroad History Museum
- Mixed-use opportunities
- Create a vision for the downtown

Challenges

- Linking Downtown Bryan with Texas A&M and the George Bush Presidential Library
- Railroad
- Secure parking
- Attracting young people with expendable income to downtown
- Need for awnings over sidewalks to provide shade in the summer
- Public safety perception
- Implementation/enforcement of codes
- Day laborer bars
- Twin City Mission
- A clear understanding of the development approval process
- Need for streetscape elements matching the town
- Tax incentives for downtown redevelopment
- Absentee landlords



The charrette brought together a diverse group of people with an interest in the future of Downtown Bryan.



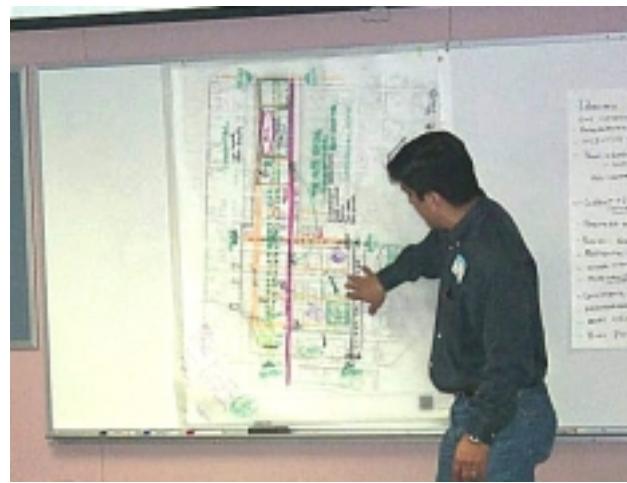
Members of the consulting team facilitated group discussion.



The three stakeholder groups had many similar ideas about how to improve Downtown Bryan.



All group members were encouraged to pick up a pen and actively participate in the creation of a plan for downtown.



At the end of the charrette workshop, each group presented their plan.

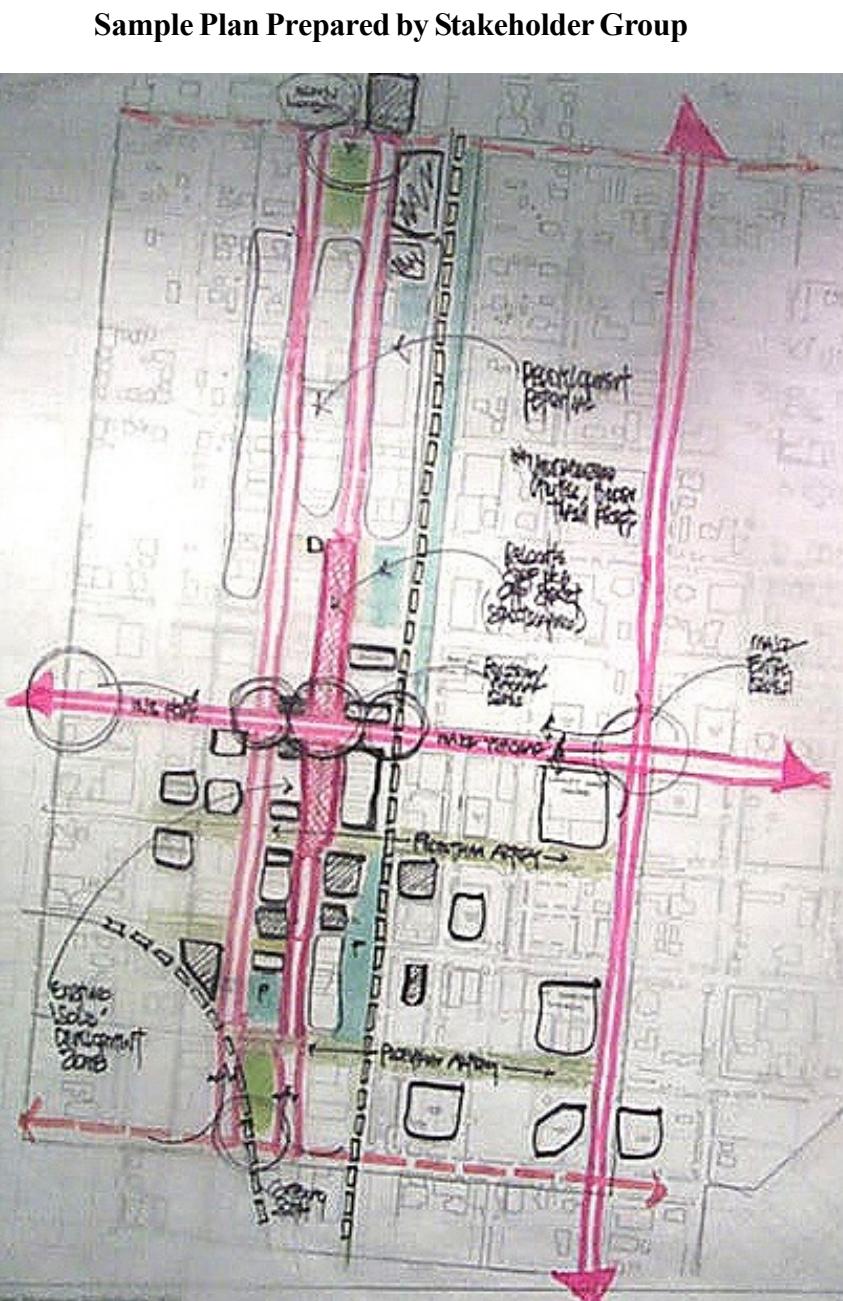
Charrette Workshop

A charrette is an intensive process in which numerous people work together over a limited period of time to develop creative ideas for problem solving. The word "charrette" is French, and means "little cart." It is derived from the Ecole des Beaux Arts, where it was the tradition of architecture students to work on final projects up until the last minute, when instructors would collect the drawings on a small cart they pulled around the studio. Legend has it that some students would climb up on the cart with their pens and erasers, making last-minute additions.

Led by the team of consultants, thirty stakeholder participants were involved in the January 30, 2001 charrette. Participants included the Downtown Advisory Committee, local architects and engineers, Downtown property owners, residents, merchants and City staff. The participants were divided into three teams of approximately ten people and placed at large tables outfitted with various materials: base maps for drawing, tracing paper, markers and a flip chart for notes. Members of the consultant team were assigned to each group as facilitators and to answer any questions. The groups worked for roughly an hour and a half to design their plan for how to make Downtown a better place to live, work and play. Then, everyone was reconvened to present each group's plan.

Following the group presentations, the consultant team identified common denominators between the three plans, and looked at ways to combine and expand the ideas to form the basis for the Concept Plan. The consultant team spent the next two days brainstorming additional ideas and developing the Concept Plan, which was presented at a public meeting held on February 1, 2001, at the Bryan Public Library.

Below is a list of ideas that were common to each group:



Key Public Charrette Ideas

- Expanded police presence in downtown through walking or bike patrol, or substation located on Main Street
- Reduce the impact of railroad traffic
- Consistency of design features in downtown - facades, streetscapes, historic lighting, landscaping
- Develop a light rail/trolley system between Downtown Bryan and Texas A&M
- Bury utilities underground
- Provide incentives to downtown developers
- Install uniform signage at gateways to attract people and identify Downtown Bryan
- Initiate parking management (locate employee parking, provide short and long term parking, centrally located parking garage)
- Focus on residential component
- Allow no large-scale trash receptacles on thoroughfares
- Create public parks and public spaces
- Improve pedestrian circulation
- Start with a small area of high quality redevelopment



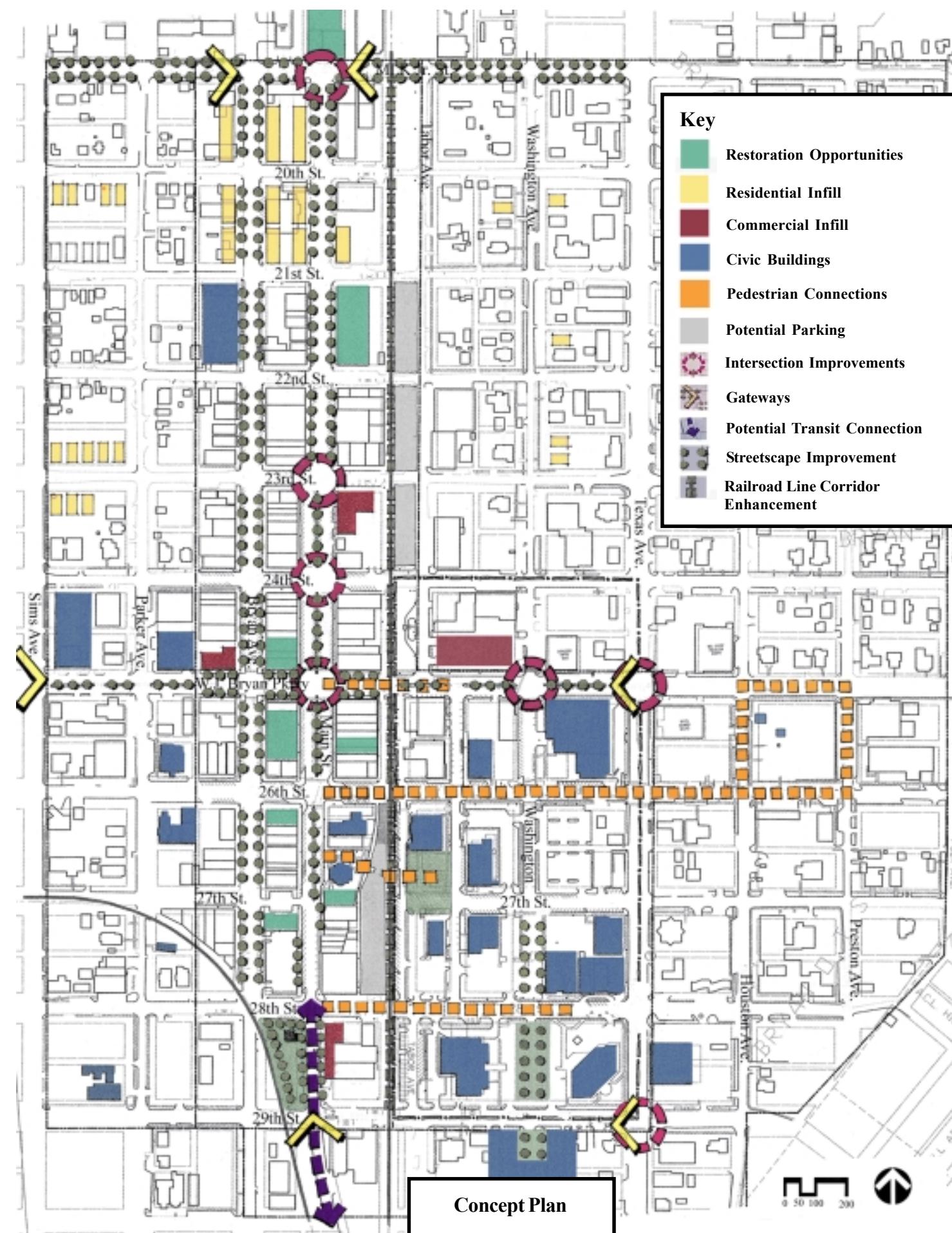
Residential infill is vital for expanding a customer base for downtown businesses and to give downtown a more inhabited atmosphere.



Historic lighting, street trees and sidewalks improvements would enhance the pedestrian experience in Downtown Bryan.



Streetscape improvements, combined with financial incentives, can serve as a catalyst for redevelopment of adjacent properties.



Concept Plan

The Concept Plan, which was initially an outgrowth of the January 30, 2001 public workshop, serves as the “big picture” framework to which the Master Plan details have been applied. The Concept Plan serves essentially as a table of contents for the Master Plan. The key ideas are summarized below, and expanded upon in the balance of the plan.

Intersection Improvements

Intersection Improvements
Target key intersections for improvements that will calm traffic, enhance aesthetics, and provide better pedestrian access, by adding design elements such as “pedestrian bulbs” and paved cross-walks.

Gateway Enhancements

Gateway Enhancements
Use key entrances to Downtown Bryan as gateway statements to create a unique identity and a stronger sense of arrival. One proposed elements is a decorative bollard based upon those that existed in Bryan historically.

Streetscape Improvements

Create better connections by providing streetscape improvements along the two key retail streets (Main Street and Bryan Avenue), as well as linking the east and west portions of the core study area that are bisected by the railroad line. Historic lighting, street trees and sidewalks improvements could encourage pedestrians to walk from the Brazos County Courthouse or Bryan Municipal Building in the Civic District to shopping and dining opportunities available west of the rail line. Streetscape improvements can serve as a catalyst for redevelopment of adjacent properties.

Civic District

Civic District
A potential future public building can serve as an anchor to a transformed Civic District. This area, featuring uses such as the Bryan Municipal Building, County Courthouse, proposed new parking and transit center, and other institutional uses, can be complimented by the transformation of Washington Street into a “mall” type public space.

Restoration & Infill Opportunities

Restoration & Infill Opportunities

Residential infill is vital for expanding a customer base for downtown businesses and to give downtown a more inhabited atmosphere. Commercial infill of vacant parcels in the core study area would enhance the streetscape, generate more activity, and expand the tax base.

Parking & Transit Opportunities

Parking & Transit Opportunities

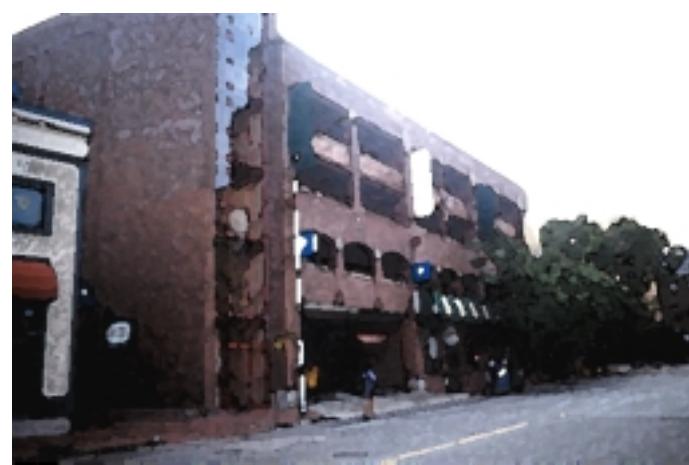
As the downtown develops, additional parking will be needed to accommodate downtown visitors. Additional parking has been targeted along the railroad line, behind buildings that front the east side of Main Street between 26th and 28th Streets. A new parking and transit facility has already been proposed for the Civic District by the Brazos Transit District, and better management of on-street parking is recommended. There is also potential for the development of a trolley system to connect Downtown Bryan with Texas A&M University.



The recommended streetscape plantings will replicate the existing character of this section of Washington Avenue in other locations.



The current pedestrian connection between the Bryan Public Library and Main Street takes pedestrians through a gravel parking lot and an ill-defined railroad crossing.



This parking garage, located in another community, contains characteristics such as retail uses on the ground floor, and an architecturally cladded exterior that would be recommended as design considerations in the proposed Brazos Transit Center.



Civic District Plan

Civic District Plan

Bryan's existing civic uses, as well as planned new ones, offer a unique opportunity to be physically and symbolically linked to create a cohesive district within the broader downtown area.

Brazos Transit Center- Planned

The Brazos Transit Center offers greater parking and transit opportunities for this area of downtown while infilling parking lots to enhance the pedestrian environment. At this time, two different design options are being considered. Both are illustrated at the left. The proposed 1,000 space parking garage will alleviate the current parking challenges in this area. It is recommended that the center be accomplished in two sections which would be physically connected at all levels except the ground level. The ground level would maintain the existing segment of Washington Avenue in order to not disrupt the proposed Washington Avenue Promenade, described below. As planned, the structure will be mixed-use, including offices for Brazos Transit. It is recommended that retail and office uses take place on the lower floors. Although the Texas Avenue frontage clearly has the greatest potential for retail, a tenant such as a coffee shop might attract pedestrians travelling on Washington Avenue. It is important that retail in this area be limited to avoid competition with Main Street and Bryan Avenue.

Public Building - Proposed

The proposed Washington Avenue Promenade terminates at the existing four live oaks in the courtyard of a proposed public building. Among potential future public uses could be a justice center. Plenty of space for parking exists at the rear of the site for police, public officials, city employees and the public. Future development (public or private) could wrap around the corners of the blocks to screen the parking lots and create a street edge.

Library Plaza and Railroad Crossing- Proposed

The area being proposed as the new Library Plaza was historically used as a public garden. Although the area is well maintained, it is not enhanced as it once was. This area serves as the pedestrian connection between the civic uses to the east and the historic retail to the west. The current connection is lost when pedestrians cross over the railroad tracks into an unmarked gravel lot. The recommended enhancements will revive the public garden concept and extend the pedestrian connection through the pocket garden at the Carnegie Library and on through to Main Street.

Washington Avenue Promenade- Proposed

Washington Avenue is the main pedestrian route between the Brazos County Courthouse and Bryan Municipal Building. The proposed promenade will connect the Brazos County Courthouse with the proposed future public building anchoring the proposed Civic Commons. When the Baptist Church moves to a new location, it is recommended that the segment of Washington Avenue between 28th and 29th Streets be reopened. It is currently a parking lot.

Civic Commons - Proposed

It is recommended that a formal green space be created directly west of the Bryan Municipal Building that could be used for special events. This addition would serve as the centerpiece to a cohesive civic district. Enough parking can remain for the current dedicated spaces, but the balance of employee parking would be moved south to the proposed future public building.

Land Use Plan

The recommended uses below correspond with City of Bryan zoning districts for ease in converting recommended land use patterns to appropriate zoning districts.

Downtown District (DT)

The most substantial recommended change is the extension of the Downtown District (DT) to the east. Civic functions such as the Brazos County Courthouse, and Bryan Municipal Building, are a vital part of the downtown community and are currently separated from the historic downtown retail district by the railroad lines and zoning districts. It is the intent of this plan to form a unified downtown district and by rezoning this area to DT, the process of creating a cohesive urban fabric of downtown will be started. As the area redevelops, the character on both sides of the railroad tracks will be compatible. The current zoning allows development that is strip commercial and automobile oriented that would not be appropriate for the downtown. The DT District allows a wide variety of office, retail, institutional and residential uses that are compatible with the traditional development patterns found in the area.

Office District (O)

In reviewing the study area's current land use patterns, it was observed that the properties in the North Washington Avenue corridor are zoned Commercial (C) while they are actually residential in character. Rehabs for office conversions are also occurring, and office uses appear to be the only stimulus for the rehab of these neglected structures. A strictly residential district is not recommended because this area serves as a transition between the DT and C Districts. It is recommended that this area be rezoned to Office (O), which still permits residential uses. However, the zoning district regulations should be amended to require that the single-family character be retained for redevelopment and infill buildings.

Commercial District (C)

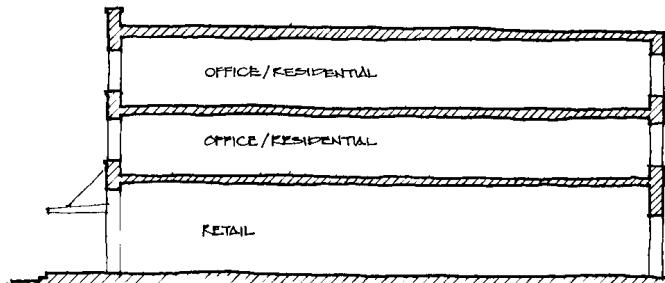
Bryan's Commercial District includes heavy retail and quasi-industrial uses that are only appropriate for the downtown on a limited basis, such as the Texas Avenue Corridor north of W.J. Bryan Parkway. Currently this district includes a three-block area surrounding the Texas Avenue corridor, and runs the entire length of the study area. Because of this zoning's incompatibility with many existing and desired residential and traditional downtown uses, it is recommended that the C District be substantially decreased.

Industrial District (I)

It is recommended that industrial uses remain on a one-block area on the corner of Bryan Avenue and 29th Street. This block directly abuts the railroad tracks and is currently a use that is industrial in nature. The block to the east, at Main Street and 29th Street, should be zoned Commercial because it is not directly abutting the railroad tracks, existing uses are more commercial in nature, and the block should serve as a transition point between the Industrial District and the Downtown District as it is located one block south of the proposed South Main Street Gateway.

Single-Family 5000 Residential District (SF-5000)

It is important to have strong neighborhoods on the periphery of downtown in order to provide market support for retail uses. Architecturally appropriate infill residential development should be a high priority for vacant lots, particularly those on the east and west sides of the study area. Residential zoning should be reestablished in areas that are already dominated by residential uses and lack roads having the capacity for commercial traffic.



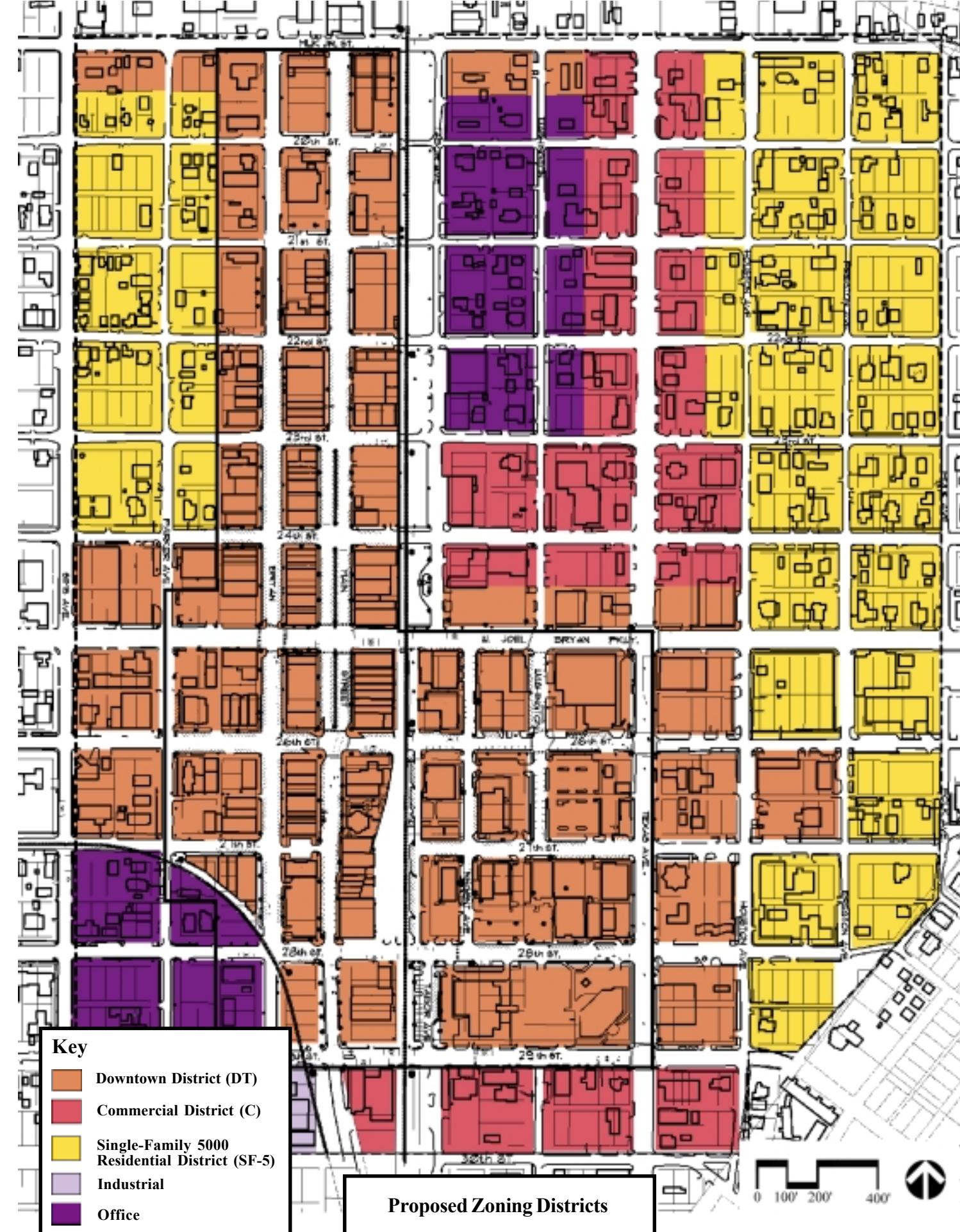
While retail is the recommended ground floor use, office and residential uses are encouraged on the upper floors of building in the Downtown Zoning District.



The Howell Building could easily be adapted to the mixed-use model illustrated above, with a restaurant on the ground floor and office or residential uses located on the upper floors.



Residential infill is necessary in both the Main Street/Bryan Avenue area and the peripheral areas to create market support for the retail uses downtown.





HOWELL BUILDING
Address: 200 South Main Street
Year Built: 1920
Building Size: 26,600 s.f.
Owner: City of Bryan
P.O. Box 1000, Bryan, TX 77805
Status: vacant
Potential Uses: retail (first floor), office or residential (upper floors)



ICE HOUSE
Address: 100 East MLK Jr. Street
Year Built: 1912
Building Size: 10,500 s.f.
Owner: Whitson, Kenneth Ray
9211 Riverstone, College Station, TX 77845
Status: vacant/ for lease
Potential Uses: retail (antiques, farmers market, restaurant, etc.)



INFILL RESIDENTIAL
Address: Main Street and Bryan Avenue (north of 21st Street)
Year Built: N/A
Lot Size: (1) 25,000 s.f. and (2) 31,250 s.f.
Owner: (1) Yazdahni, Bahman & Deborah Crumbaker 3250 Costal, College Station, TX 77845; (2) Henna Enterprises c/o Frank's Food Town 11303 S. Wilcrest Apt. 2202, Houston, TX 77099
Status: Vacant
Potential Uses: residential and commercial



CHARLES HOTEL
Address: 201 South Main Street
Year Built: 1930
Building Size: 13,500 s.f.
Owner: Lazrine, Rick and Randy
Route 1, Box 422-C, Hearne, TX 77859
Status: vacant
Potential Uses: retail (first floor), office or residential (upper floors)



FIRST NATIONAL BANK
Address: 120 North Main Street
Year Built: 1919
Building Size: 10,500 s.f.
Owner: Gloria Sale Estate
2306 E. Briargate, Bryan, TX 77802
Status: vacant/ for sale
Potential Uses: bank, office, retail



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
Address: 200 Texas Avenue
Year Built: Main Building-mid 1980s/Secondary Building-1950s
Building Size: Main Building 40,700 s.f., Secondary Building 10,300 s.f.
Owner: First Baptist Church, PO Drawer 1299, Bryan, TX 77806
Status: Occupied/ For Sale
Potential Uses: office, private school, church or civic



QUEEN THEATER
Address: 110 South Main Street
Year Built: 1915
Building Size: 3,000 s.f.
Owner: Williams, John H. Jr. & Tony Davidson
11219 Greenwillow, Houston, TX 77035
Status: vacant
Potential Uses: community theater, dinner theater, or conference space



PARKER LUMBER COMPANY BUILDING
Address: 419 North Main Street
Year Built: 1912
Building Size: 4,500 square feet
Owner: Brown, Stella
3905 Cheshire Court, Bryan, TX 77802
Status: furniture refinishing
Potential Uses: retail, office



FEDERAL BUILDING
Address: 216 West 26th Street
Building Size: 5,000 s.f.
Owner: City of Bryan, P.O. Box 1000, Bryan TX 77805
Status: Occupied/For sale
Potential Uses: office

* See Appendix A for more detailed recommendations for many of these buildings

Restoration & Infill Opportunities

Although there are numerous potential rehabilitation and redevelopment opportunities within the study area, nine properties with particular promise have been identified. Below is a brief description of each of these opportunities.

Howell Building

There has been interest in renovating this vacant 3-story building into a mix of retail, office and residential uses. Due to its proximity to the LaSalle Hotel, it is recommended that a restaurant be recruited for the ground floor to help activate the streetscape and for a partnership with the LaSalle for the hotel's food service needs.

Charles Hotel

Constructed before the 1930s for a hardware company, the structure was later converted to a hotel. The front facade of the building was originally characterized by ornamental plasterwork, but was replaced with the Art Moderne facade that is currently present. The majority of the building has been empty since the 1980s. The recommended use for this building would be retail on the first floor and office or residential uses on the upper floors.

Queen Theatre

See Sheet 42 for a discussion of the Queen Theatre.

Ice House

The Ice House is located just outside of the project boundary, but it serves as a visual and physical anchor to the northern end of the study area. The building is currently empty. An antique store or other boutique retail has potential for the Ice House.

First National Bank

This building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and would be most appropriate for an office use. Its classical architectural style would extend a strong image to the potential tenant, such as a bank or law firm.

Parker Lumber Company Buildings

This property consists of a one-story brick structure, and the lumber barn one block north. The lumber barn is currently being utilized by Habitat for Humanity, but could possibly be a permanent location for a farmer's market. A retail use would be most beneficial for downtown, but offices are another optional use.

Infill Residential

Currently, an abandoned grocery store exists in this area. This two block site is recommended for high-density housing (townhouses).

Baptist Church on Texas Avenue

Church representatives indicate that the church will likely relocate to another site outside of the downtown area as the congregation grows. The church is currently located on the corner of Texas Avenue and 28th Street.

Federal Building

Since the Federal Building was the former post office, most of the existing partitions could be removed to provide a large amount of unobstructed space. Window wells allow significant natural light into the basement. This building is a good candidate for conservation as a small business incubator in which tenants can share office services, such as a secretarial pool and photo copying.

Truck Routing

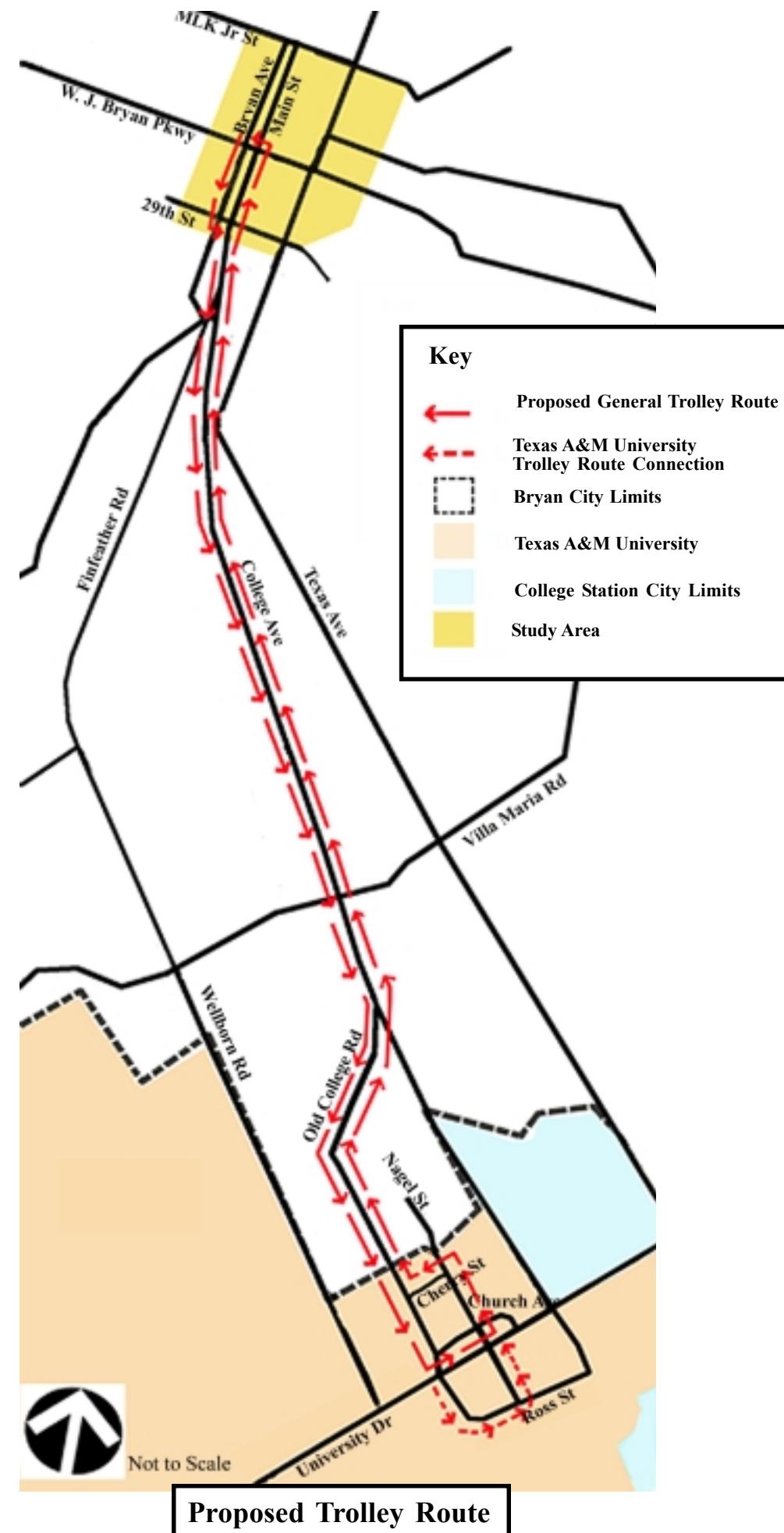
Truck traffic in Bryan is primarily focused on the following routes- East Bypass (State Highway 6), F.M. 2818, and State Highway 21. Truck traffic using the downtown streets (primarily the South College extension or Main Street) originates from south of the Downtown area. Trucks are traveling north on South College into the downtown to access William Joel Bryan Parkway. Signs stating "No Through Trucks" may be useful to inform drivers of truck restrictions. However, it would have to be strictly enforced to be successful, and enforcement would be difficult.

A potentially more effective approach is for the City of Bryan to prepare a map indicating the preferred truck routes toward the downtown area from the south (there have been no observations or complaints of trucks coming from the north). Copies of these maps could be given to businesses that deliver or receive goods transported by those trucks. The businesses could provide copies of the maps to the drivers. The recommended routes are:

1. Travel North on Finfeather Road, which turns into Sims Avenue to William Joel Bryan Parkway.
2. North on South College Avenue, turn right on Carson and continue straight to Texas Avenue, and then left on Texas Avenue to William Joel Bryan Parkway.
3. North on Texas Avenue to William Joel Bryan Parkway.



Whether a vehicle using rails on a fixed route or the "rubber wheeled" variety is pursued, an attractive transit link between Texas A&M and Downtown Bryan is needed.



Access & Parking

Access Recommendations

In general, access to and within Downtown Bryan is currently effective. With the exception of various streetscape improvements addressed elsewhere in this plan, access recommendations focus on transit improvement. Whether a vehicle using rails on a fixed route or the "rubber wheeled" variety is pursued, an attractive transit link between Texas A&M and Downtown Bryan is needed. Prior to this plan's creation, the Brazos Transit District proposed a trolley system to link Texas A&M with Downtown Bryan. The potential trolley route should be along South College Avenue. The route should feed into the Downtown area on Main Street and Bryan Avenue. Once developed, it should also include a stop at the planned Brazos Transit Center. The southern end of the route, near or within the Texas A&M University campus, could follow the route shown on the left. The future reconstruction of South College Avenue should incorporate the use of the trolley with the provision of transit stops. The trolley route could be expanded off of South College Avenue in the future as additional development takes place. Linking the Northgate area with Downtown Bryan should be the initial priority.

Parking Recommendations

On-street parking will quickly become inefficient and insufficient when successful downtown development begins to occur. Currently there is not a parking problem in downtown. Near the courthouse parking is difficult to find at times. The construction of a 1,000 car parking garage near the Brazos County Courthouse (at the corner of W. J. Bryan Parkway and Texas Avenue) would alleviate some of the pressures currently experienced in that area.

In order to reduce the current perception that there is a shortage of parking Downtown, the following strategies are recommended:

- Maximize the available on-street parking by clearly marking curbside spaces.
- Redesign existing lots as necessary to clearly delineate spaces with paint striping and enhance with landscaping and lighting for the purposes of utilization efficiency and aesthetics. See Sheet 17 for a model parking lot redesign.
- Implement a parking management program for both on-street and off-street spaces to:
 - Encourage the sharing of spaces among multiple users, especially for uses having different peak-hour demands, such as office and residential.
 - Encourage turnover in use of on-street spaces. Discourage all day parking by posting signs that limit parking to 2 hours. Encourage employees to use parking lots away from high demand areas. In the future, it may become necessary to require Downtown employees to have identification decals so they will be less inclined to park in high demand areas. If a voluntary program is not effective, enforcement by the local police should be pursued. In any case, parking meters are not recommended.
 - Increase available off-street spaces for public use by formal use agreements and/or ownership.
 - Provide directional signage for public lots, and illustrate their location in future marketing brochures.

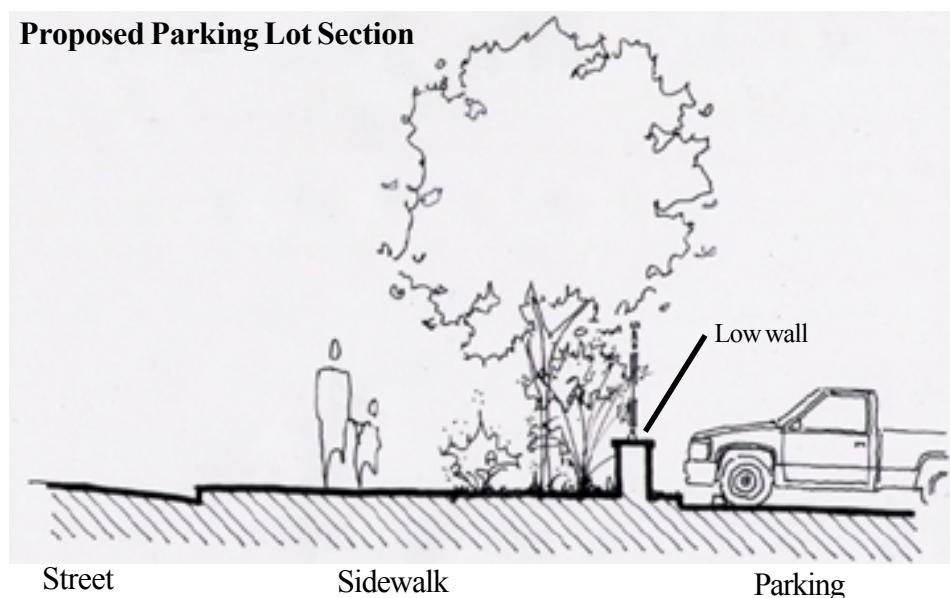


An opaque wall that complements the associated building can be used in place of landscaping, especially where space limitations exist.



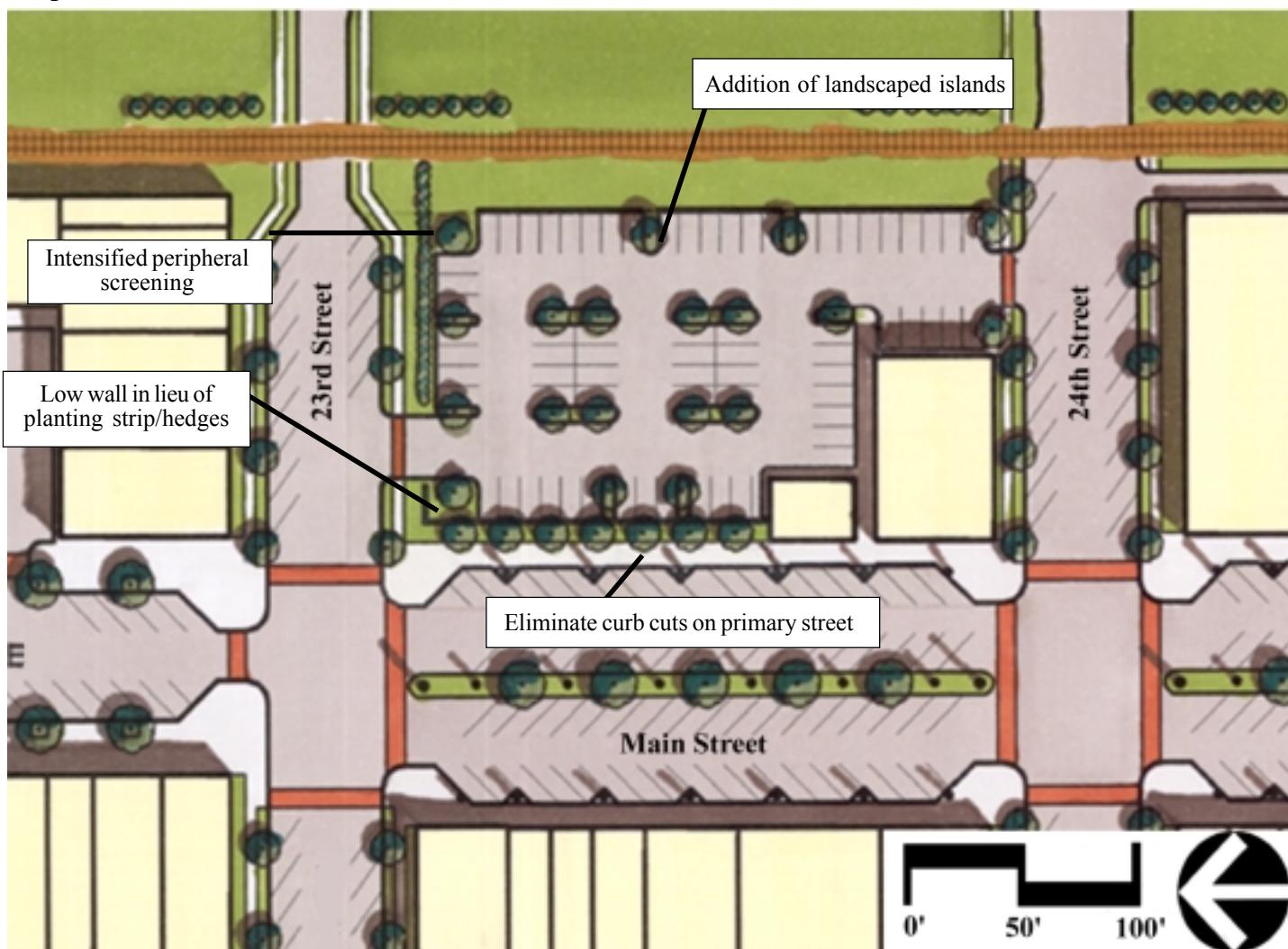
Extensive landscaping creates a "green edge" along the perimeter of this lot that screens views of parked cars.

Proposed Parking Lot Section



© 2001 Looney Ricks Kiss Memphis Nashville Princeton Houston

Proposed Conditions



Existing Conditions



This parking lot lacks perimeter screening to minimize direct views of parked cars.



Extensive curb cuts interrupt the network of sidewalks and landscaping, decrease the safety for pedestrians and challenge vehicular safety.

Model Parking Lot Redesign

Existing Conditions

Parking lots in Downtown Bryan are generally poorly designed and detract from the streetscape and pedestrian environment. Characteristics of many existing parking lots include:

- A lack of perimeter screening to minimize direct views of parked cars.
- A lack of internal landscaping to minimize the pavement, reduce run-off and provide shade.
- Extensive curb cuts that interrupt the network of sidewalks and landscaping, decrease safety for pedestrians, and challenge vehicular safety.

Proposed Conditions

Generally, parking lots should be located behind buildings. Where parking lots front public streets, special attention should be given to screen the lot from view. The following general standards should be used in the design of new parking lots and the redesign of existing lots:

- Parking areas should be organized into a series of small bays delineated by landscaped islands consisting of trees and shrubs separating them. In general, no more than 16 contiguous spaces should be allowed. Landscaped islands should have approximately 90 square feet of unobstructed landscape area for a single parking row and 180 square feet for a double parking row.
- Perimeter screening is needed for all parking lots. A continuous perimeter planting is needed with a minimum width of six (6) feet containing 2 ½ to 3 feet tall evergreen shrubs planted to achieve a solid screen within three years. Shade trees should be planted at a maximum separation of 30 ft. on center in the planting strip. A minimum 3 ft. opaque wall/fence that complements the associated building can be used in place of, or in addition to, landscaping, especially where space limitations prohibit a perimeter planting strip.
- Vehicular access points (driveways) should be minimized in number and should not exceed 24 ft. in width.
- Where possible, vehicular access should be from secondary streets.

The proposed plan at the left illustrates how an existing parking lot at the Varisco Building could be redesigned. This redesign can serve as a model for enhancing other downtown parking lots. The landscape islands shown in the model do not conform to the standards currently required by the City of Bryan's Access and Off-Street Parking Ordinance. The ordinance requires 180 square feet for a single parking row and 360 square feet for a double parking row. In an urban area where parking spaces are at a premium, it is possible to achieve adequate screening with less landscape area. The proposed landscape island requirements are 90 square feet for a single parking row and 180 square feet for a double parking row. The dimensions, roughly 5 ft. by 18 ft. for a single parking row, are adequate to plant a tree. It is recommended that the landscape island standards proposed in the model be adopted as the minimum required standard in the Downtown District.



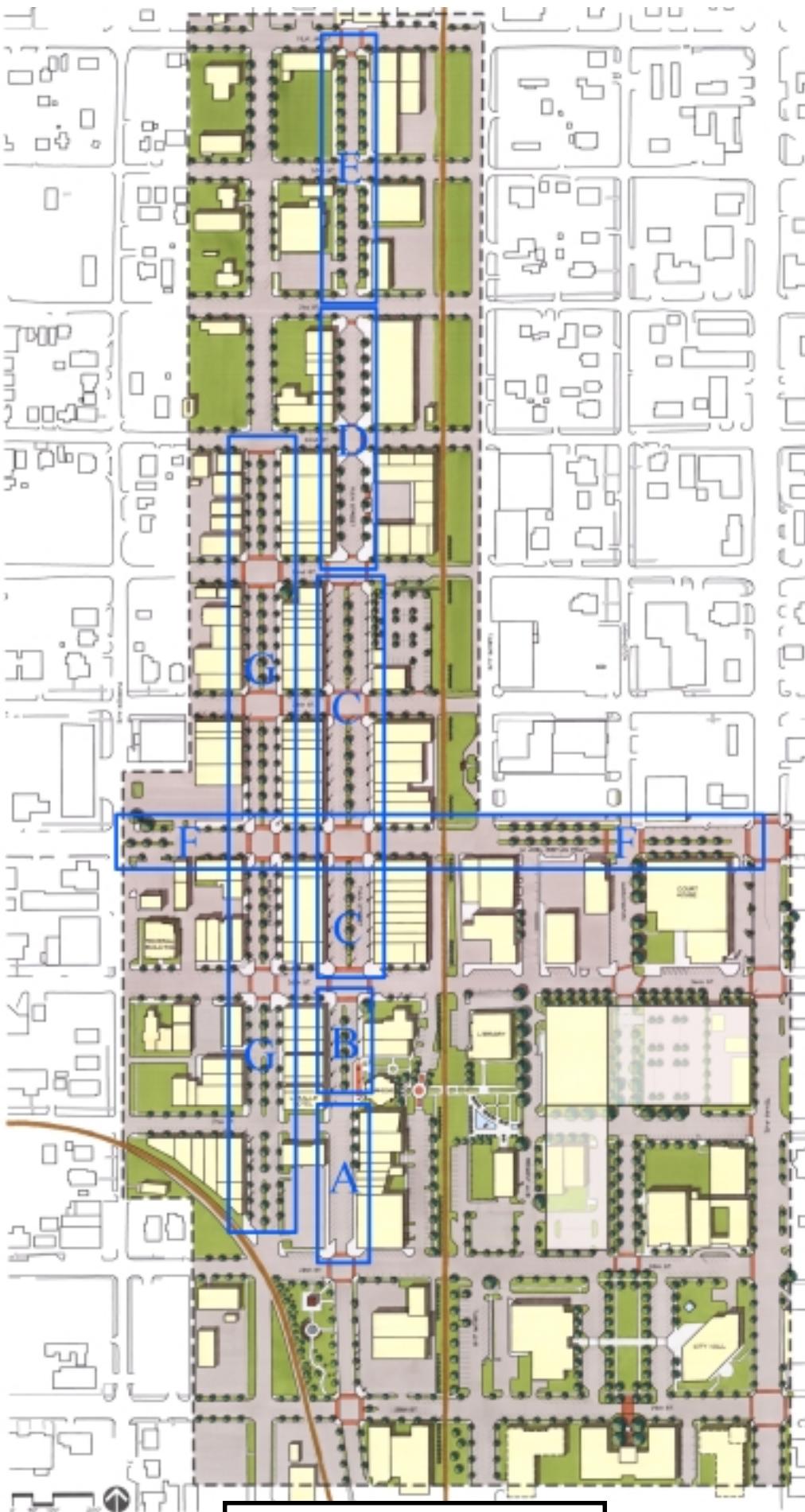
Source: Carnegie Library



The existing streetscape in Downtown Bryan lacks well-maintained sidewalks and desirable elements, such as street trees, landscaping, human-scale lighting, and street furniture (benches, trash receptacles, etc.).



98% of respondents in a Vision Survey conducted as part of the public input process thought this image was appropriate for Downtown Bryan. The streetscape recommendations on the following pages will create an attractive, active, pedestrian friendly environment with some of the attributes shown above.



Streetscape Master Plan

The “streetscape” is considered the area within the public right-of-way that includes sidewalks, landscaping, street furniture, parking, signage, and vehicular travel lanes. As the primary public spaces in urban areas, streetscapes directly influence people’s experience as they walk or drive in a downtown. Consequently, quality streetscape design is critical to creating a place where people want to work, live and play.

The streetscape segments listed below are discussed in detail on the following seven sheets:

- **Segment A:** Main Street: 28th Street to the Carnegie Library
- **Segment B:** Main Street: Carnegie Library to 26th Street
- **Segment C:** Main Street between 23rd and 26th Streets
- **Segment D:** Main Street between 21st and 23rd Streets
- **Segment E:** Main Street between 21st and MLK Jr. Streets
- **Segment F:** William Joel Bryan Parkway
- **Segment G:** Bryan Avenue

While these seven streetscape segments constitute the core area of focus in accordance with the scope of work for this planning project, sheet 26 addresses streetscape improvements for a set of secondary streets, including:

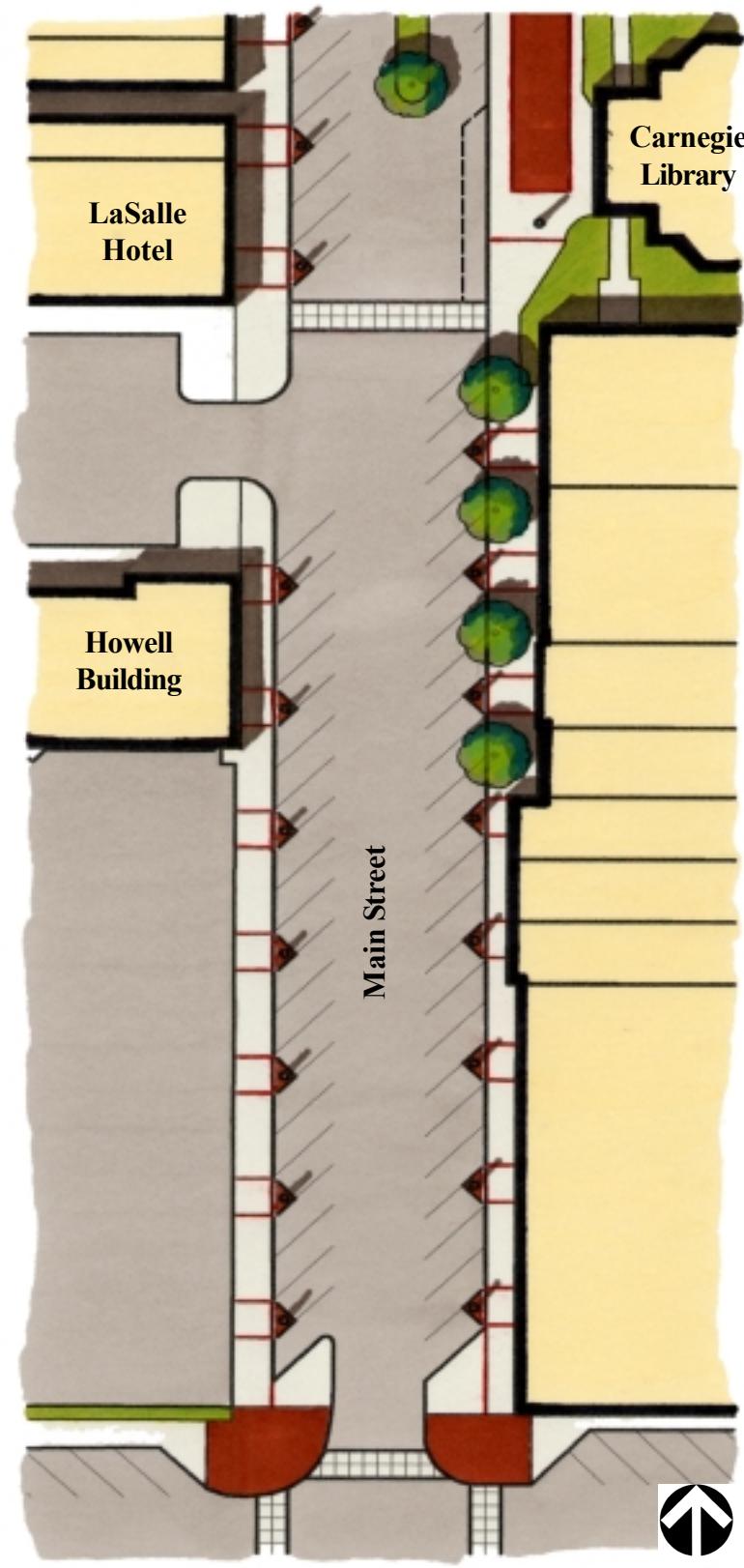
- Typical East-West Streets
- Texas Avenue
- Washington Avenue
- Typical Residential Streets

The parking design shown on the following sheets does not comply with the current City of Bryan Access and Parking Ordinance. It is recommended that the current standard for the width of a parallel parking space be reduced from 9 ft. to 8 ft. The current ordinance requires a bay depth of 19.5 ft. for parking spaces on a 45 degree angle. This should be changed to allow for a bay depth of 17 ft.

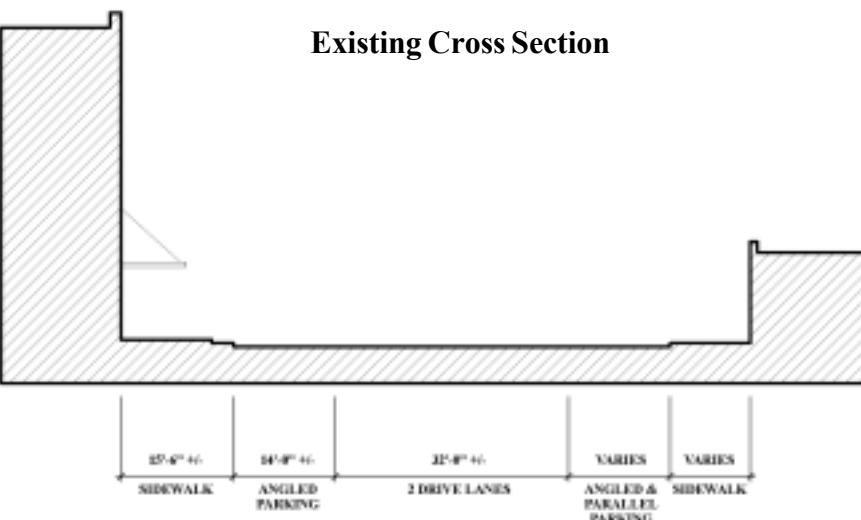
Throughout the downtown area, overhead wiring is unattractive and creates clutter. As streetscape enhancements are made, overhead wiring should be placed underground or in alleys. Please see Sheets 31 and 32 for specific underground utility recommendations.

* Tree spacings shown are approximate. When the design phase of the streetscape enhancement project is undertaken, it is recommended that the tree locations create a cadence with the spacing, but adjust where feasible to not block the view of business signage and storefronts.

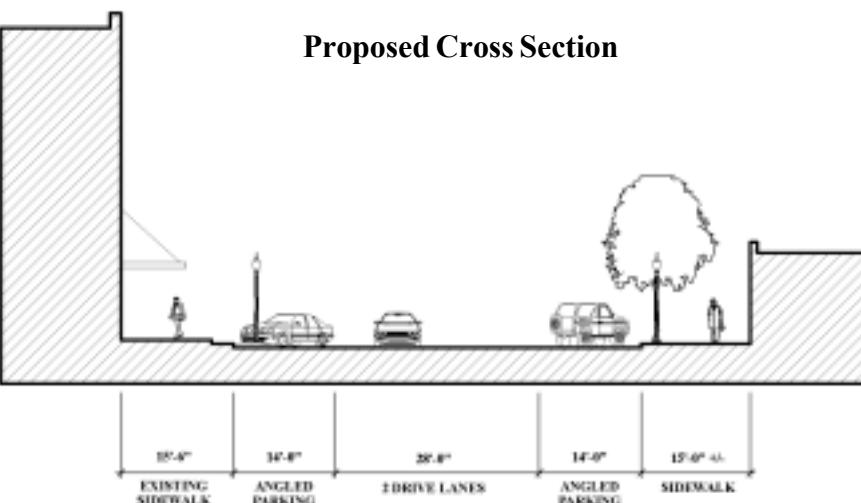
** Streetscape enhancements, such as planters, tend to be more successful if maintained by a downtown management entity rather than depending on individual merchants or the City for routine maintenance. It is recommended that the City of Bryan provide the initial installation and the proposed new downtown management entity take over the responsibility for routine care.



Existing Cross Section



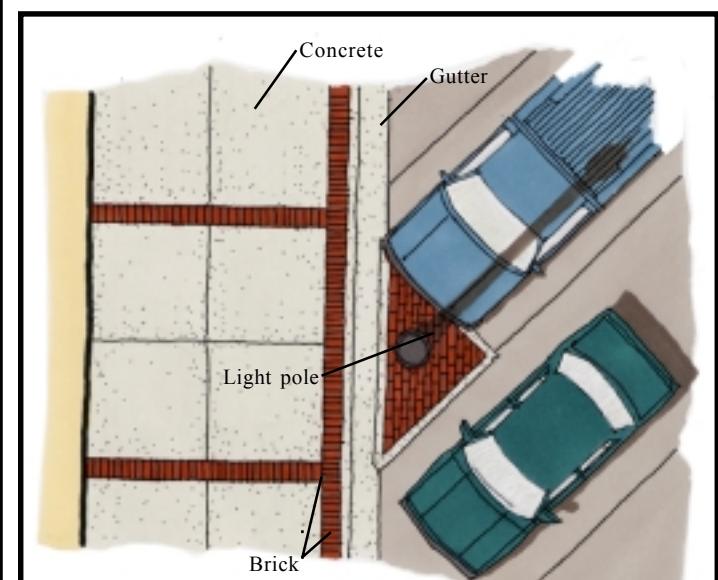
Proposed Cross Section

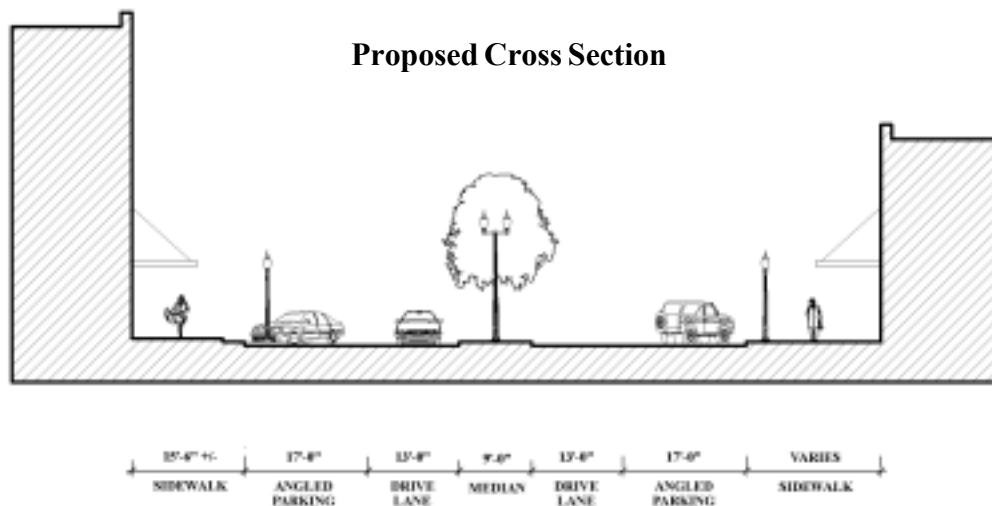
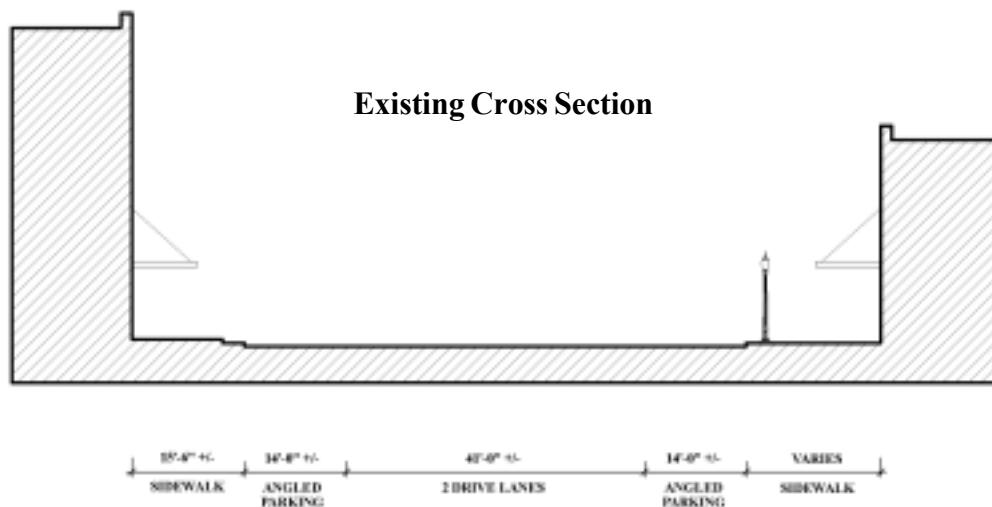
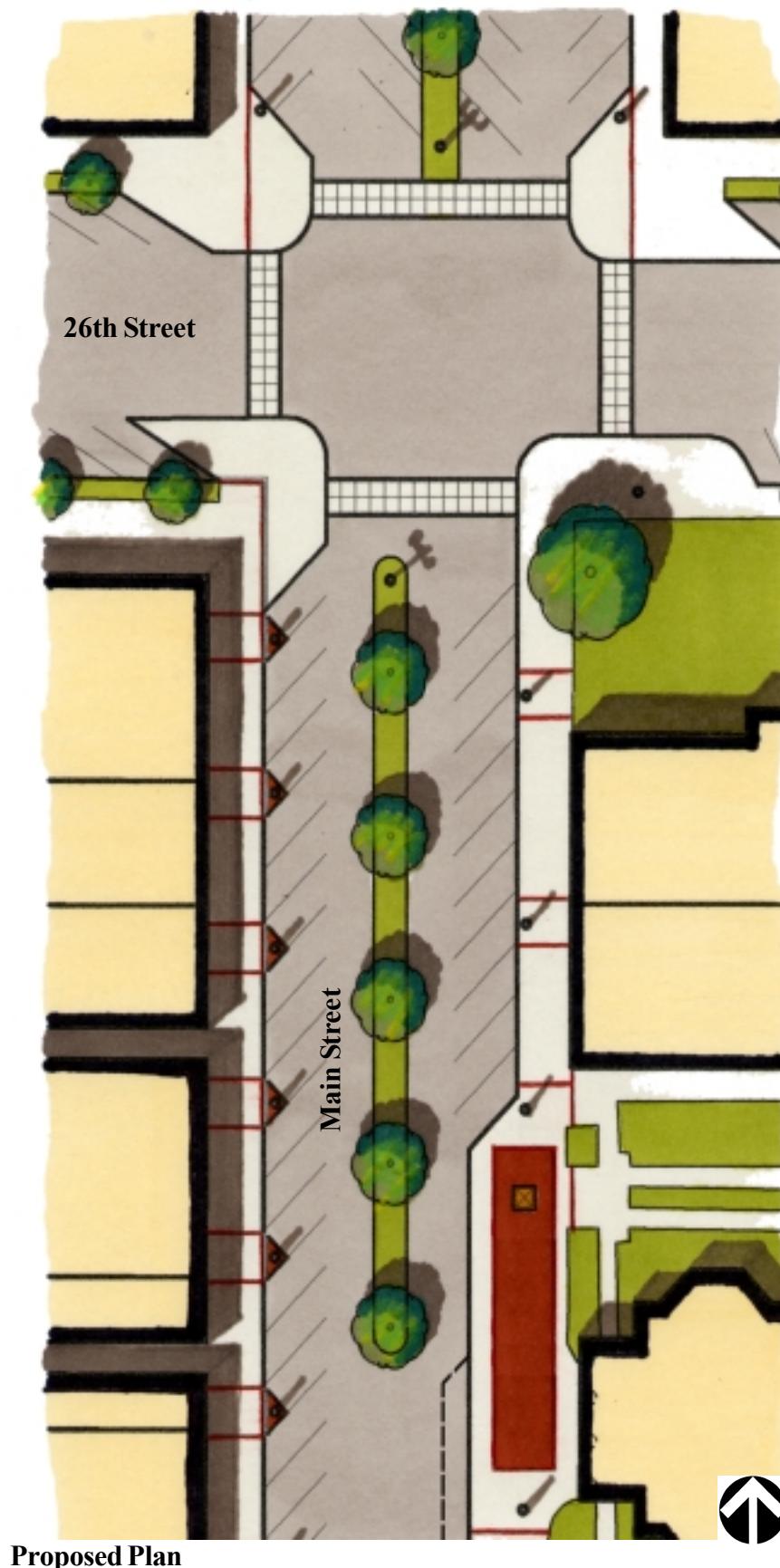


Streetscape Segment A: Main Street: 28th to the Carnegie Library

The proposed scheme for the section of Main Street from 28th Street north to the Carnegie Library, as illustrated on the left, includes the following key elements:

- On the west side, the continuous 14 ft. 25 degree angled parking spaces should remain. The parallel spaces on the east side should be replaced by continuous 14 ft. 25 degree angled parking spaces to mirror the west side of the street. Two 14 ft. drive lanes should be provided.
- Near the Charles Hotel, the curb should be replaced to align with the existing southerly portion and street trees should be added.
- The existing generous sidewalk width provides for comfortable pedestrian movement and a streetscape furnishing zone. Damaged sidewalks should be repaired or replaced with concrete and brick sidewalks (see below).
- Any existing pedestrian scaled decorative light fixtures that reinforce Downtown Bryan's image, should remain. Additional matching light fixtures should replace any other lighting styles in the Downtown. Triangular curb projections should be provided to avoid conflicts between lighting and canopies. See Sheet 29 on Downtown Lighting Recommendations.
- Provide decorative trash receptacles and benches.
- Retain the existing brick-paved "pedestrian bulbs" at the 28th Street Intersections.



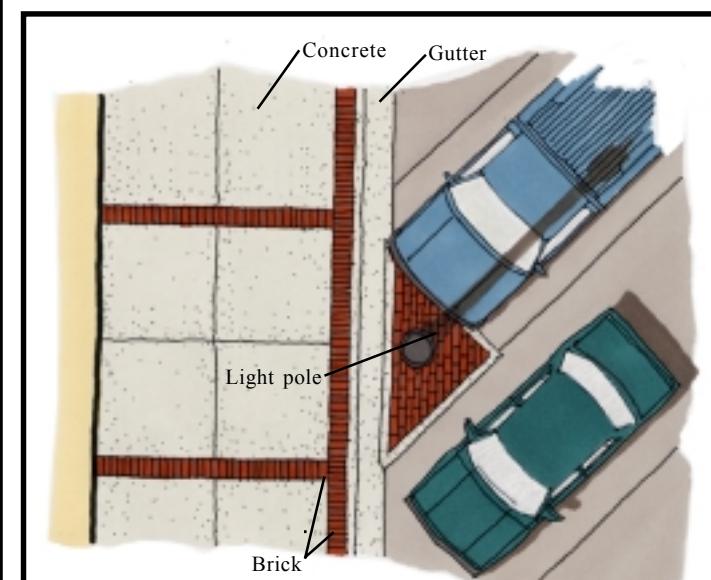


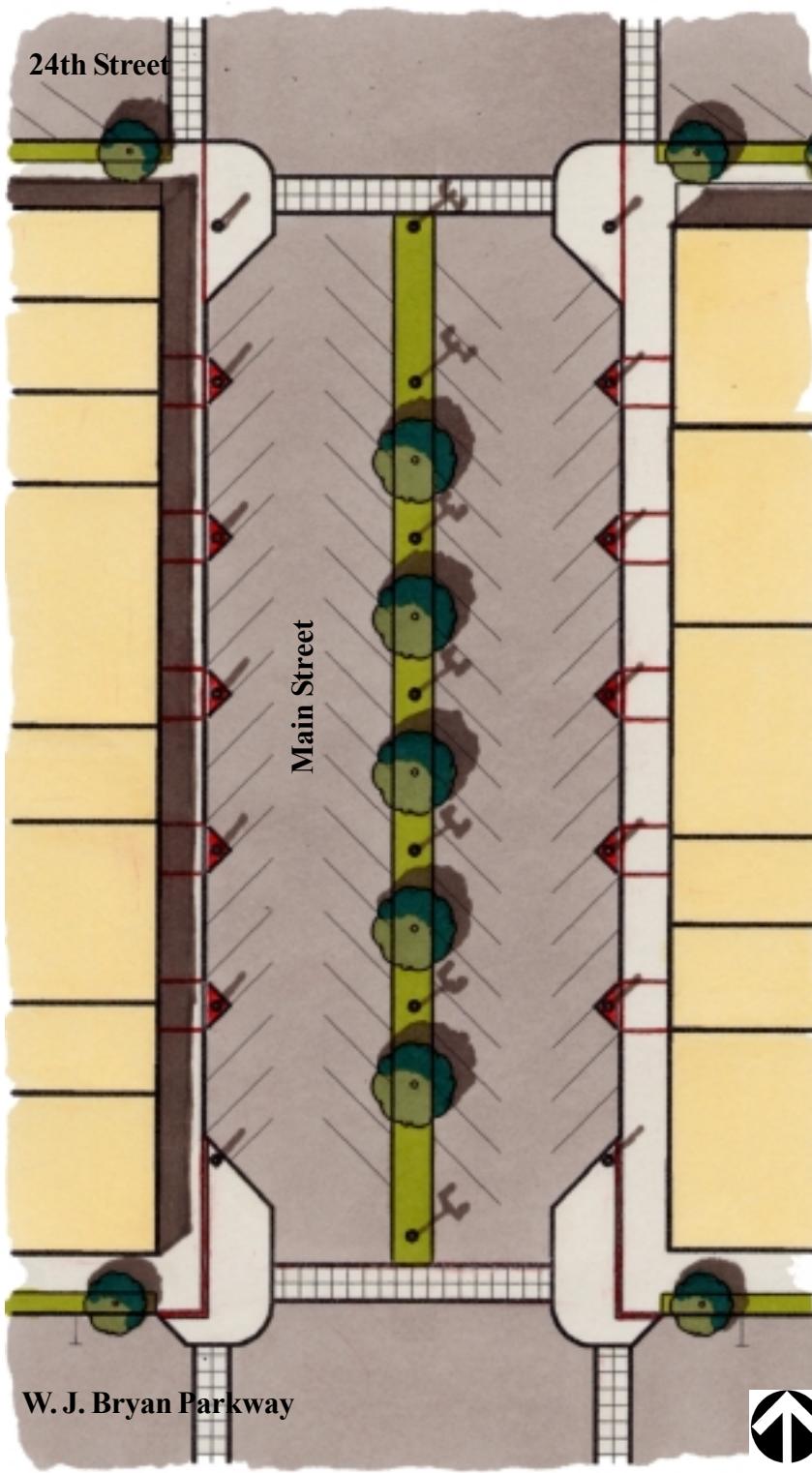
Streetscape Segment B:

Main Street: Carnegie Library to 26th Street

The proposed scheme for this section of Main Street, as illustrated on the left, includes the following elements:

- A 9 ft. wide landscaped median should be provided. Shade trees planted in the median should be pruned to have a minimum 7 ft. high canopy.
- Two 13 ft. wide drive lanes, one lane in each direction, and 17 ft. 45 degree angled parking spaces should be provided.
- The existing sidewalk width provides for comfortable pedestrian movement and a streetscape furnishing zone. Damaged sidewalks should be repaired or replaced with concrete and brick sidewalks (see below).
- Canopies on buildings to provide shade for the sidewalk are encouraged.
- Any existing pedestrian-scaled decorative fixtures that reinforce Downtown Bryan's image, should remain. Additional matching light fixtures should replace any other lighting styles in the downtown. Triangular curb projections should be provided to avoid conflicts between lighting and canopies. See Sheet 29 on Downtown Lighting Recommendations.
- Intersections should include pedestrian bulbs and paved crosswalks.
- Provide decorative trash receptacles and benches.



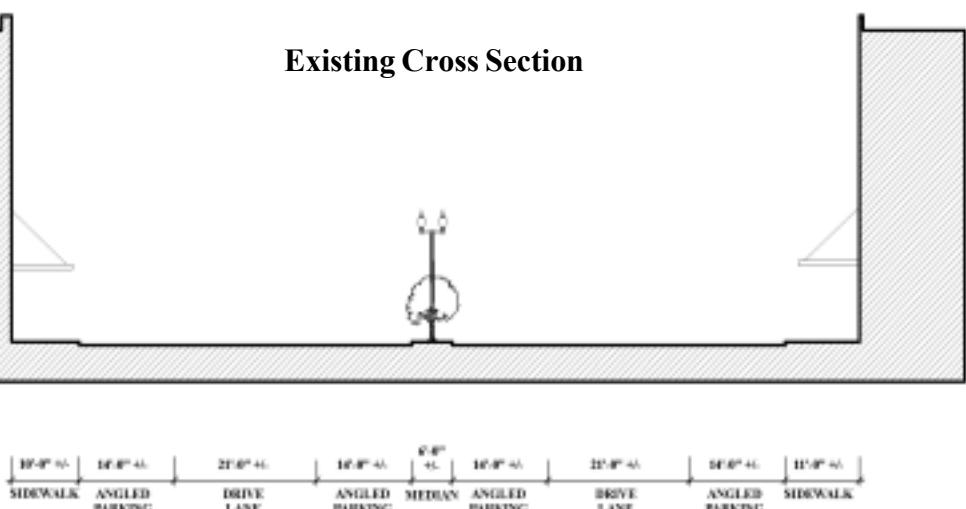


Proposed Plan

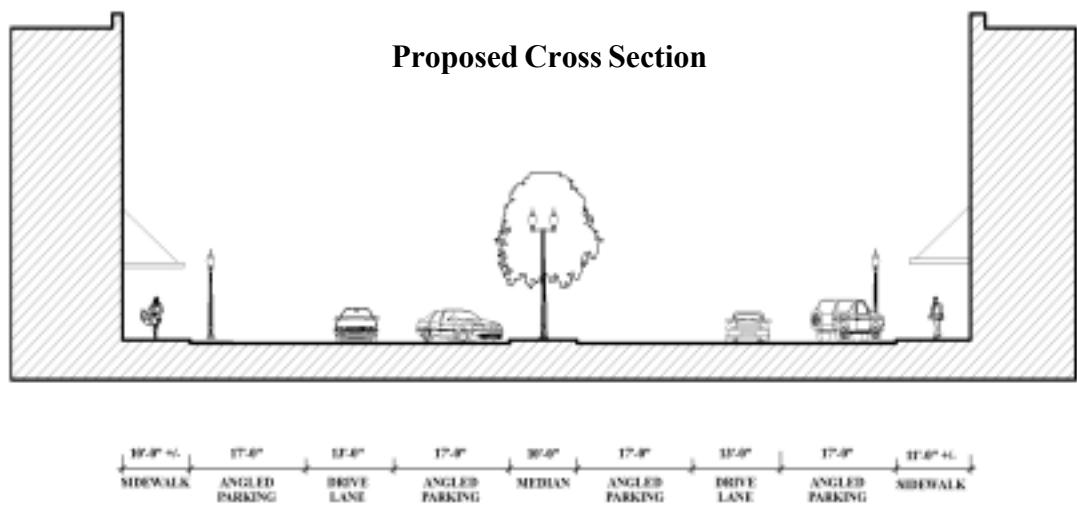
Note: Concepts shown above are consistent from 23rd to 26th Street.



Existing Cross Section



Proposed Cross Section

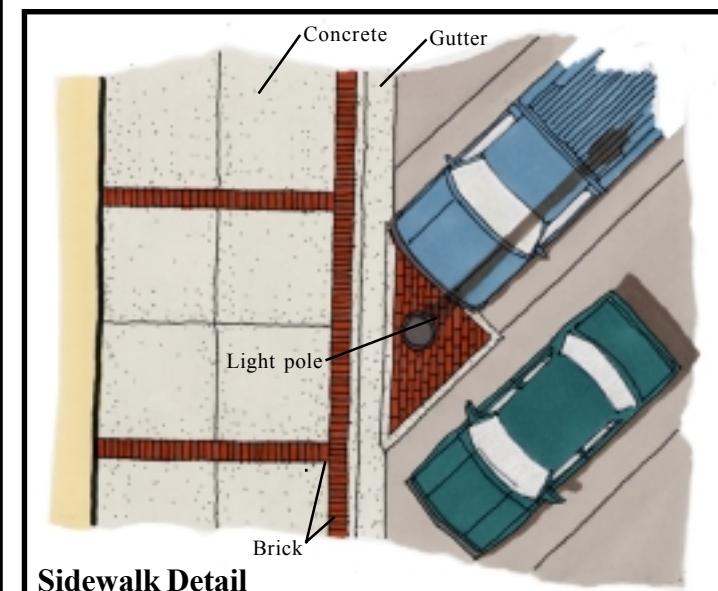


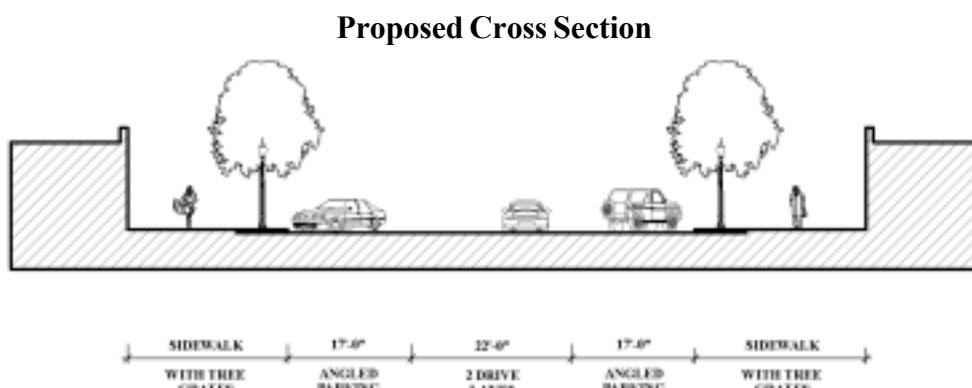
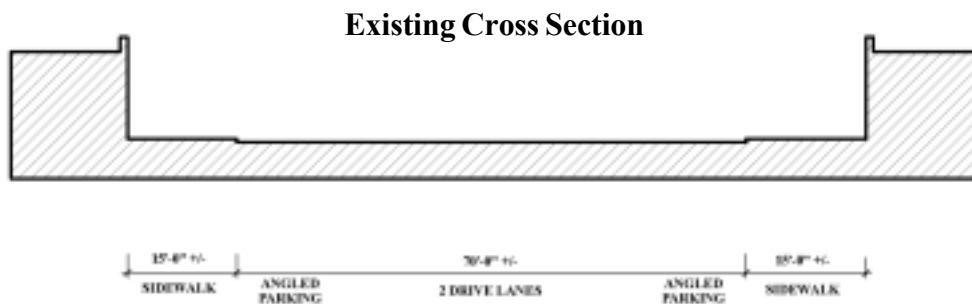
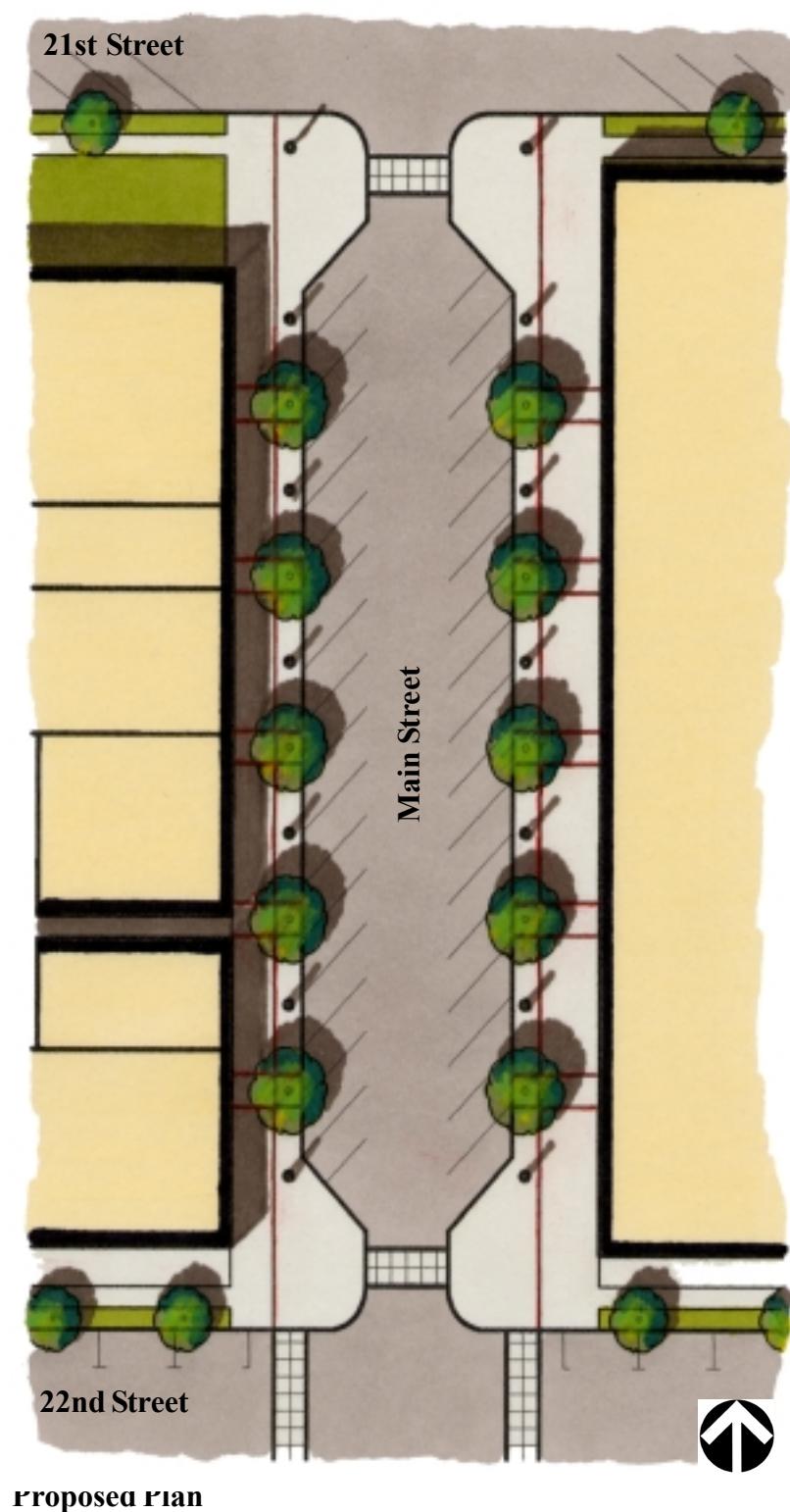
Streetscape Segment C:

Main Street: 23rd to 26th Streets

The segment of Main Street between 23rd and 26th Streets is currently comprised of the primary retail blocks of Main Street. These blocks should be designed to slow traffic, making Main Street safer for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The proposed scheme for this segment of Main Street, as illustrated on the far left, includes the elements below:

- Replace the existing 6 ft. wide concrete median with a 10 ft. wide curbed and landscaped median. The wider median will allow for the planting of large shade trees where smaller ornamental trees planted in grates within concrete exist. Shade trees planted in the median should be pruned to have a minimum 7 ft. high canopy.
- Two 13 ft. wide drive lanes, one lane in each direction, with angled parking spaces on both sides of the travel lane, should be provided.
- 17 ft. angled parking spaces (45 degree) should be provided. Currently, parking spaces in this area are at an approximate 25 degree angle. It is recommended that the spaces be at a 45 degree angle with triangular curb projections for street lighting. (See diagram below.) Triangular curb projections should be provided to avoid conflicts between lighting and building canopies, and to keep the existing sidewalk clear for walking. The existing curb should remain, and the gutter will be located in a "trough" between the projections and the curb.
- Use of the existing 10 ft. wide sidewalk width. Damaged sidewalks should be repaired or replaced with concrete and brick sidewalks.
- "Cobra Head" type street lighting should be removed. Pedestrian scaled decorative fixtures should match the existing 10 ft. fixtures on Main Street to the south and should be located on both sides of the street. The 15 ft. double globe fixtures already existing in the median should be provided as needed elsewhere in the median. See Sheet 29 for Downtown Lighting Recommendations.
- Intersections should include pedestrian bulbs and paved crosswalks.
- Provide decorative trash receptacles and benches.





Note: Concepts shown above are consistent from 21st to 23rd Street

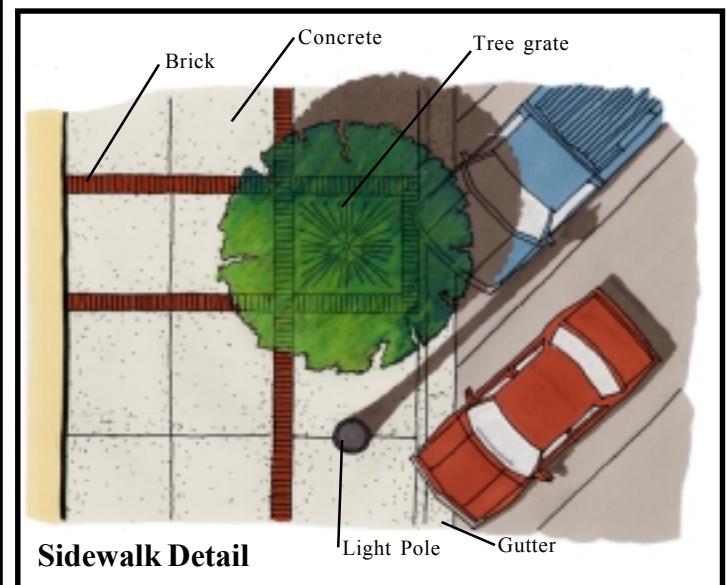
Streetscape Segment D: Main Street: 21st to 23rd Streets

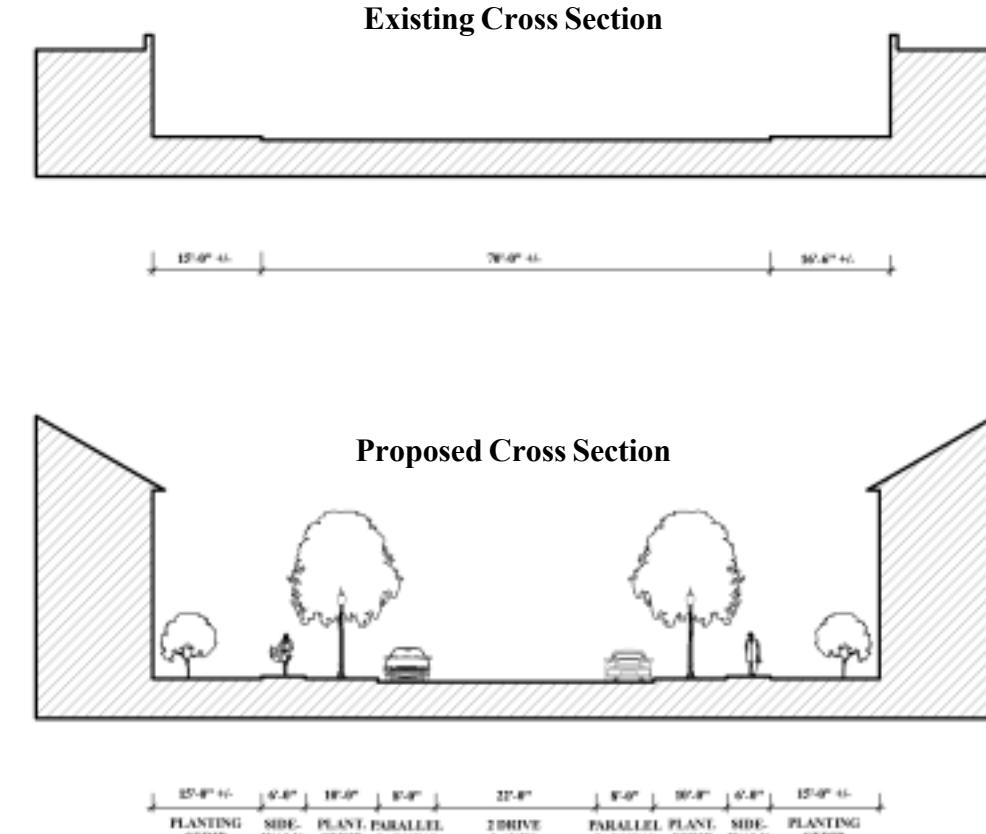
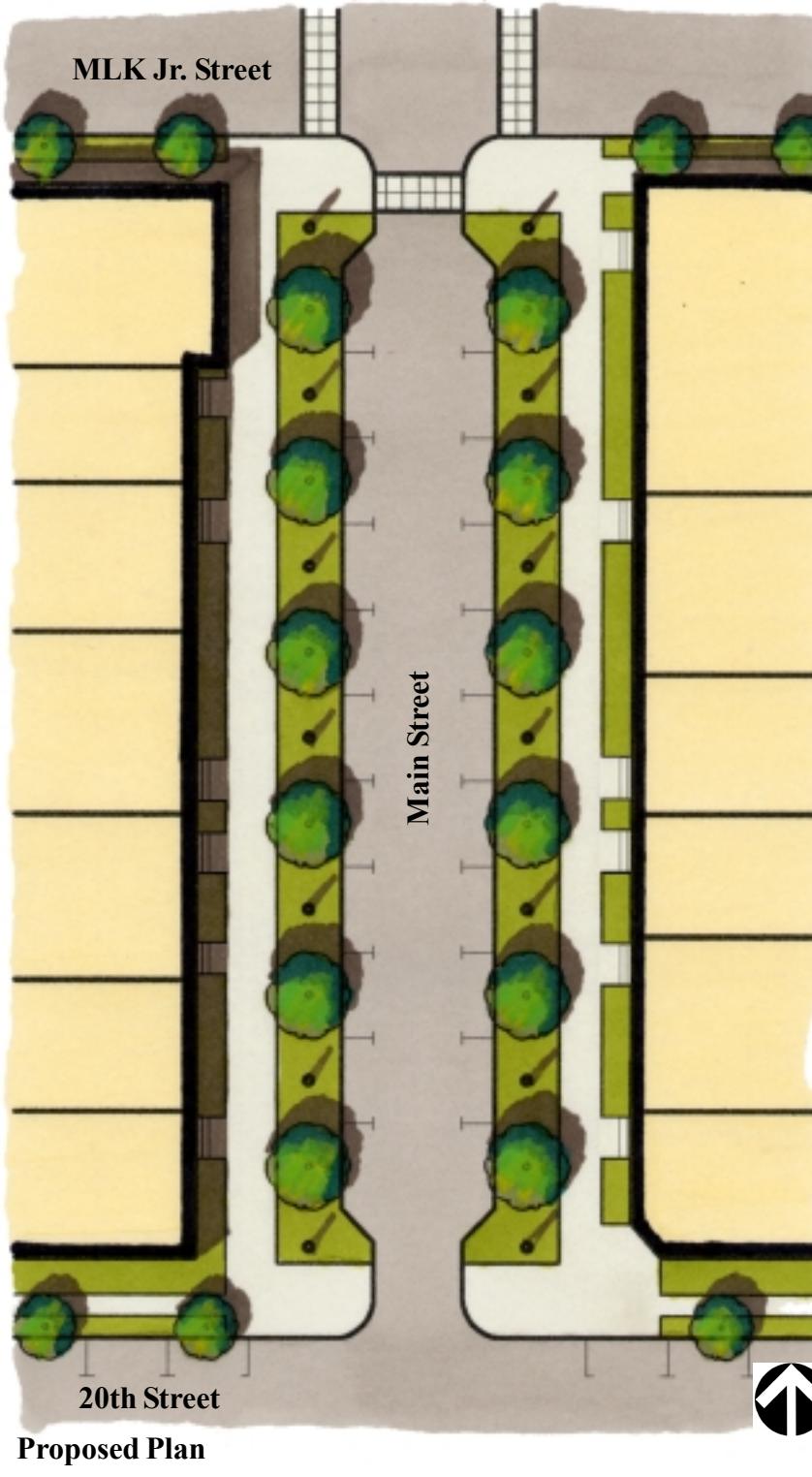
The area north of 23rd Street is characterized by one story historic buildings. Some of the oldest buildings in Bryan are located in this area. The streetscape in this area is in poor condition due to broken sidewalks and neglected buildings. The existing street width of 70 feet is excessive, allowing fast automobile speeds. The proposed scheme for these segments of Main Street between 21st and 23rd Streets, as illustrated here, include the following key elements:

- Two 11 ft. wide drive lanes - one lane in each direction with 17 ft. angled (45 degree) parking spaces between the travel lanes and the sidewalk should be provided.
- Sidewalks should be replaced with new concrete and brick sidewalks and widened by approximately 7 feet to allow for a tree/furnishing zone. Street trees should be provided with tree grates.
- Utilities should be located underground.
- "Cobra Head" type street lighting should be removed. Pedestrian scaled decorative fixtures should match the existing fixtures on Main Street to the south and should be located on both sides of the street in line with street trees.
- Provide decorative trash receptacles.

The visual simulation at the left demonstrates the impact that streetscape and building improvements could have in the block of Main Street between 22nd and 23rd Streets. The key changes illustrated include:

- Widening of sidewalks
- Removal of overhead wiring and unattractive signage
- Addition of cafe-style seating by businesses along the sidewalk
- Installation of shade trees and street furnishings
- Replacement of street lighting





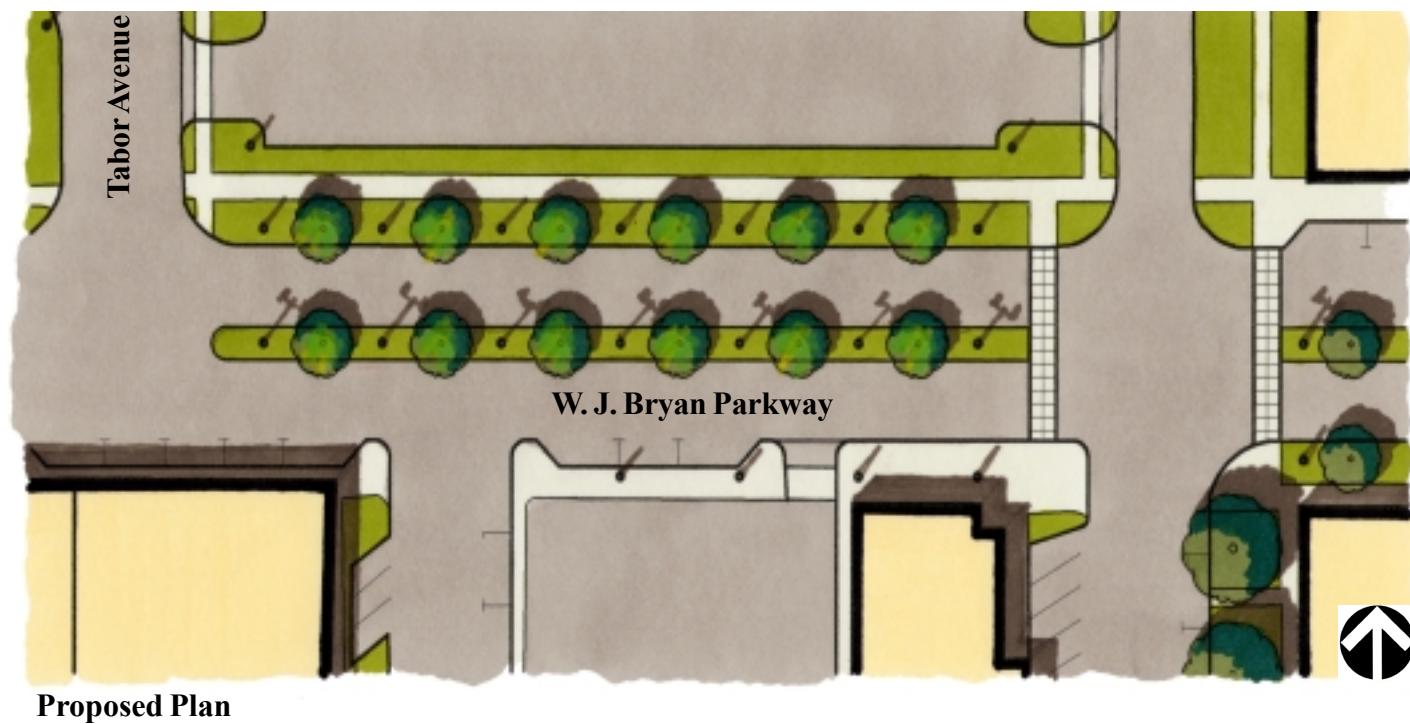
Note: Concepts shown above are consistent on MLK from Bryan Avenue to Tabor Avenue.

Streetscape Segment E:

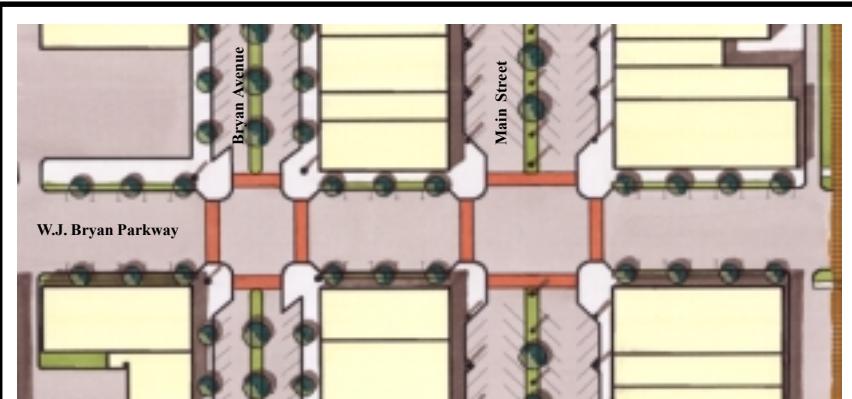
Main Street: 21st Street to MLK JR. Street

These segments of Main Street north of 21st Street contain many vacant or currently underutilized properties. It is recommended that medium density residential infill take place on the west side, and vacant parcels of the east side of Main Street from 21st up to MLK Jr. Street. These blocks should be designed with residential pedestrian and vehicular traffic in mind. The proposed scheme for this segment of Main Street includes the following key elements:

- Two 11 ft. wide drive lanes, one lane in each direction and 8 ft. parallel parking spaces on both sides of the street should be provided.
- An approximate 10 ft. planting strip on both sides of the street, between the parallel parking spaces and the sidewalk, should be provided.
- Continuous 6 ft. (minimum) sidewalks should be provided on both sides of the street. Damaged sidewalks should be repaired or replaced. Additional right of way should be reserved for planting strips.
- Utilities should be located underground.
- "Cobra Head" type street lighting should be removed. Pedestrian scaled decorative fixtures should match the existing fixtures on the southerly portion of Main Street and should be located on both sides of the street.
- Provide decorative trash receptacles and benches.
- Street trees will be important for the aesthetics of the street, as well as to provide shade, since residential structures will not feature canopies.



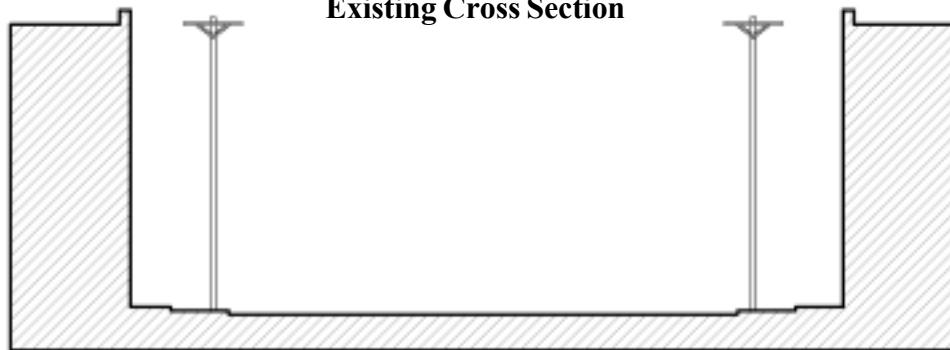
Proposed Plan

W.J. Bryan Parkway Intersections
at Bryan Avenue & Main Street

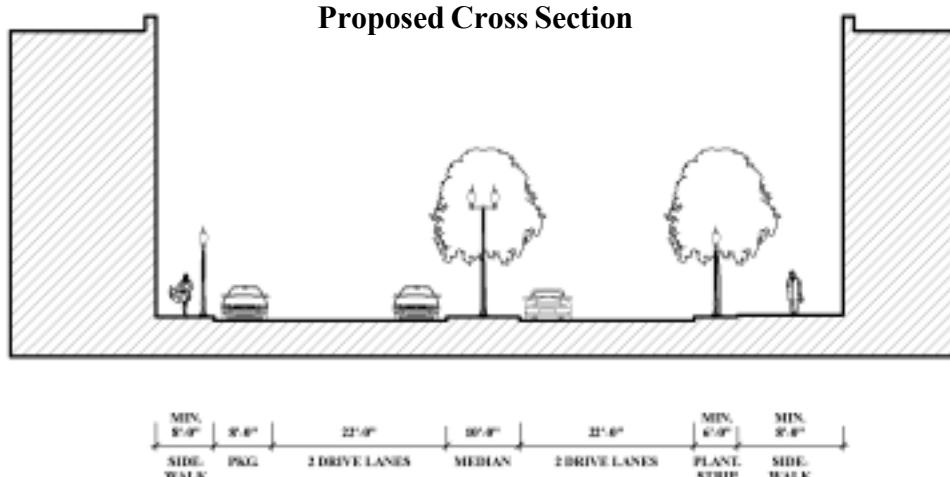
Pedestrians and pedestrian oriented businesses are abundant in the vicinity of these two intersections. It is important that improvements at these intersections calm traffic and enhance the pedestrian experience, as well as announce the entrance into Downtown Bryan.

- Intersections should include paved cross walks and pedestrian bulbs that shorten the distance that a pedestrian must travel to cross W.J. Bryan Parkway, Bryan Avenue and Main Street.
- A 10 ft. center turn lane should remain on W.J. Bryan Parkway in areas where a high volume of turns are being made, such as the intersections of Main Street and Bryan Avenue.
- Include four 11 ft. wide drive lanes, two lanes in each direction. Narrowing drive lanes may also help to calm traffic on W.J. Bryan Parkway.
- Between the railroad line and Parker Avenue, 8 ft. parallel parking and a planting strip or tree grates should be provided on both sides of W.J. Bryan Parkway, if possible. This will help calm traffic, enhance the streetscape, and provide additional parking spaces.
- On W.J. Bryan Parkway, a minimum 8 ft. sidewalk that allows for comfortable pedestrian movement should be provided on both sides.

Existing Cross Section



Proposed Cross Section



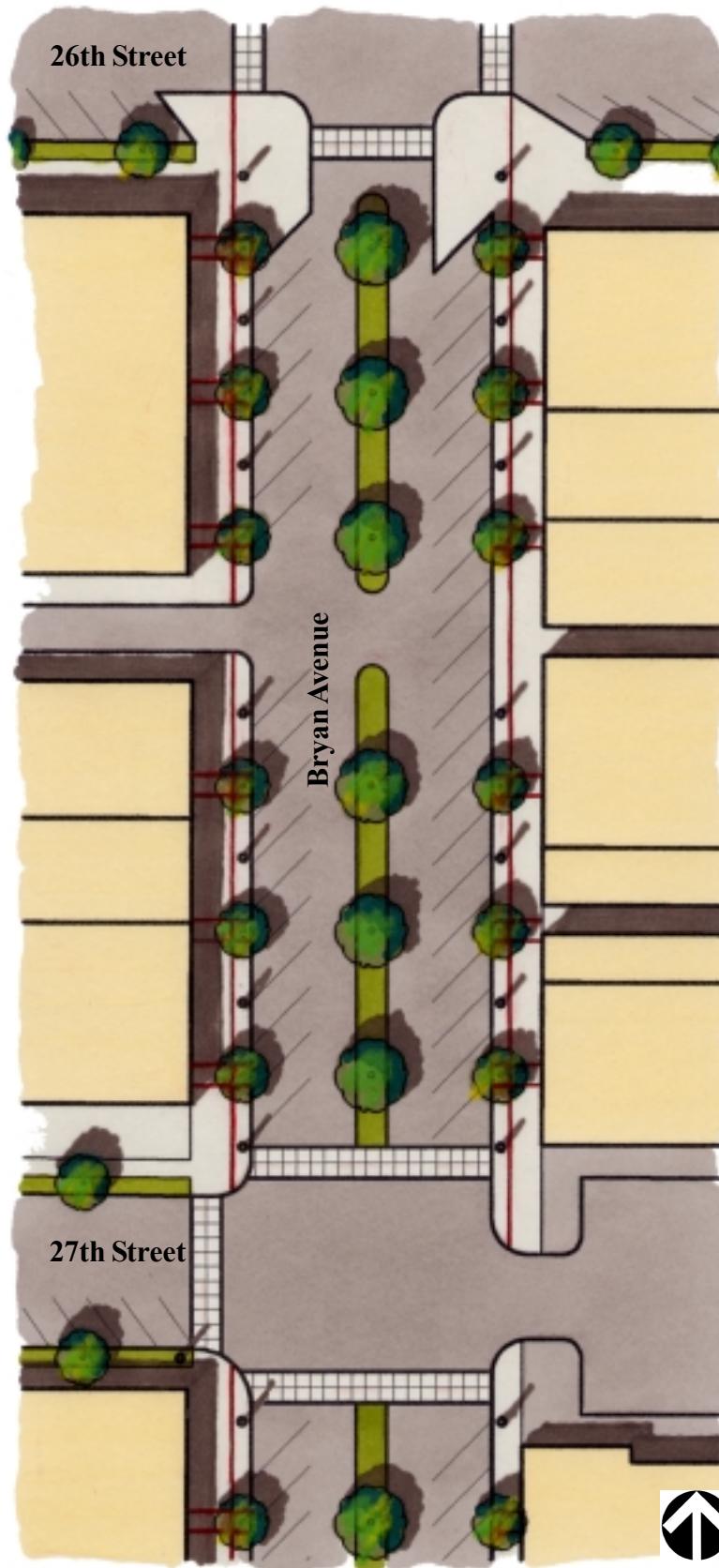
Streetscape Segment F: William Joel Bryan Parkway

The proposed scheme for William Joel Bryan Parkway, includes the following key elements:

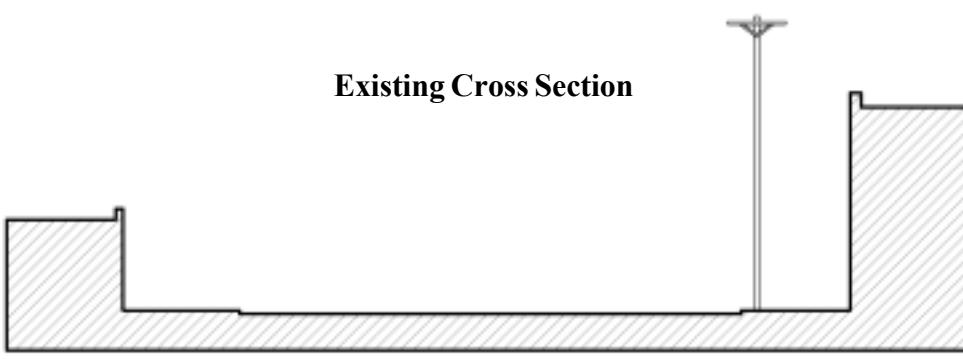
- Replace the continuous center turn lane that runs the length of the core study area with a 10 ft. wide curbed and landscaped median, except in areas where the turn lane is warranted. The turn lane would remain in areas where a high volume of turns are being made, such as the intersections of Texas Avenue, Main Street and Bryan Avenue. The median allows for the planting of shade trees. Shade trees planted in the medians should be pruned to have a minimum 7 ft. high canopy.
- Include four minimum 11 ft. wide drive lanes, two lanes in each direction on each side of the median. The lane widths may be slightly wider than 11 ft. depending upon the location of the existing curb.
- Between the railroad line and Parker Avenue, parallel parking and a planting strip or tree grates should be provided on both sides, if possible.
- Adjacent to the driving lanes is either an 8 ft. parallel parking space or a planting strip with shade trees. This condition is shown on the proposed plan at the left, with the parallel parking on the south side of the street and the planting strip on the north side of street. This condition will alternate from block to block, depending on the location of the existing parking and planting strips. Note: The William Joel Bryan street section will require Texas Department of Transportation approval.
- A minimum 8 ft. sidewalk that allows for comfortable pedestrian movement should be provided on both sides.
- Damaged sidewalks should be repaired or replaced with concrete sidewalks.
- Utilities should be located underground.
- "Cobra Head" type street lighting should be removed. Pedestrian scaled decorative fixtures should match the existing fixtures on the southerly portion of Main Street and should be located on both sides of the street and the median. Poles located on the sidewalk should be 10 ft. in height and poles located in the median should be 15 feet in height with double globes.
- Canopies should be encouraged for facades where street trees are not provided.



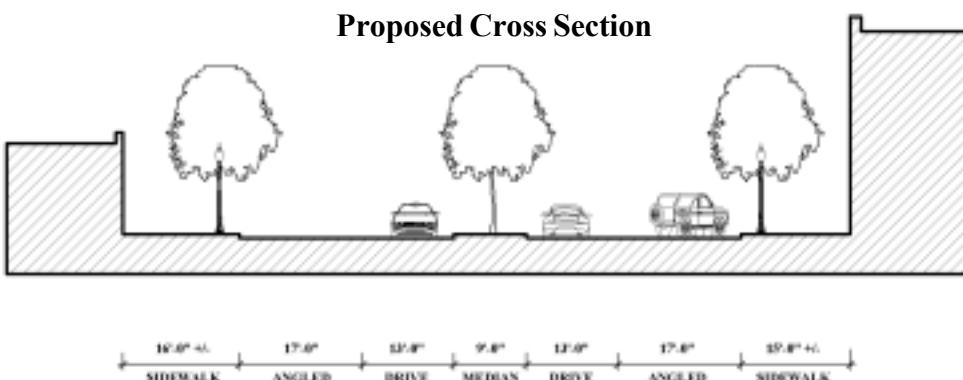
A tree lined boulevard will enhance the downtown gateway that William Joel Bryan Parkway provides.

**Proposed Plan**

Note: Concepts shown above are consistent from 27th Street to MLK JR. Street

**Existing Conditions****Proposed Improvements****Existing Cross Section**

30'-0" +L
SIDEWALK 14'-0" +L
ANGLED PARKING 41'-0" +L
2 DRIVE LANES 14'-0" +L
ANGLED PARKING 15'-0" +L
SIDEWALK

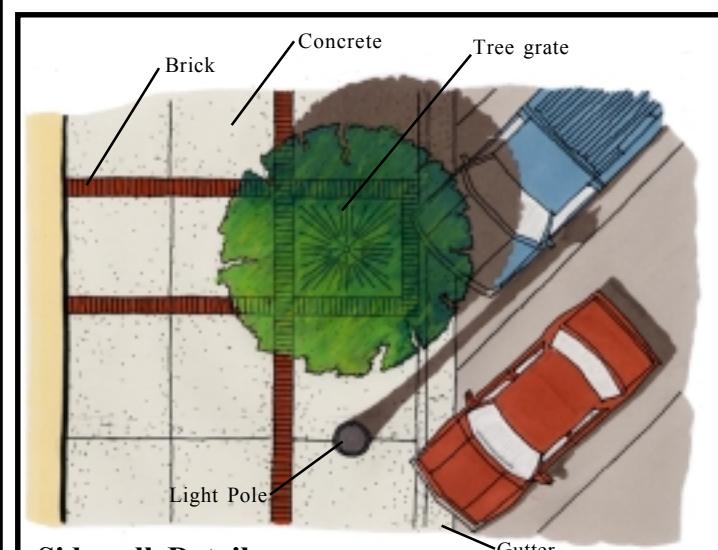
Proposed Cross Section

16'-0" +L
SIDEWALK 17'-0"
ANGLED PARKING 15'-0"
DRIVE LANE 9'-0"
MEDIAN 12'-0"
DRIVE LANE 17'-0"
ANGLED PARKING 15'-0" +L
SIDEWALK

Streetscape Segment G: Bryan Avenue

Serving as a primary retail street in Downtown Bryan, Bryan Avenue should be better designed to better accommodate both pedestrian and vehicular traffic. The preferred scheme for Bryan Avenue, as illustrated on the far left, includes the following key elements:

- An approximate 9 ft. wide curbed and landscaped median with shade trees should be provided. Shade trees planted in the medians should be pruned to have a minimum 7 ft. high canopy.
- Two 13 ft. wide drive lanes, one lane in each direction, and 17 ft. angled (45 degree) parking spaces should be provided.
- Damaged sidewalks should be repaired or replaced with concrete and brick sidewalks. Wide sidewalks provide for comfortable pedestrian movement and a site furnishing zone.
- Pedestrian bulbs and paved crosswalks should be provided.
- Street trees should be provided, with tree grates, on both sides of the street to provide for improved street definition and shade.
- Replace existing dumpsters with smaller trash receptacles that can be stored inside.
- Provide decorative trash receptacles and benches.
- Utilities should be located underground.
- "Cobra Head" type street lighting should be removed. Pedestrian scaled decorative fixtures should match the existing 10 ft. fixtures on Main Street and should be located on both sides of the street.

**Sidewalk Detail**

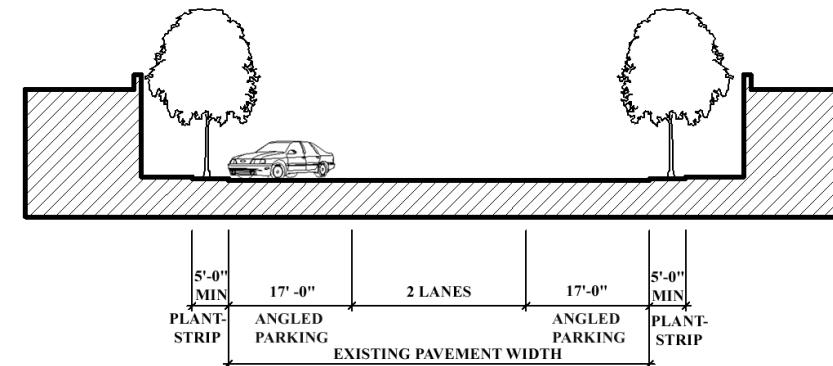
Streetscape Segment: Secondary Streets

Proposed Typical East-West Street Section (20th -24th Streets)

Most of the east-west streets in Downtown Bryan carry very little vehicular traffic. However, pedestrians use these streets to access downtown businesses by foot from adjacent neighborhoods and the Civic District. Therefore, these streets should be designed to be pedestrian friendly and to provide continuous parking for downtown businesses. The following elements should be included:

- Minimum 5 ft. planting strip with street trees.
- Angled or parallel parking.
- Planting strips between curbs and sidewalks.
- Minimum 6 ft. sidewalks.
- Two drive lanes, one in each direction.

Existing Conditions

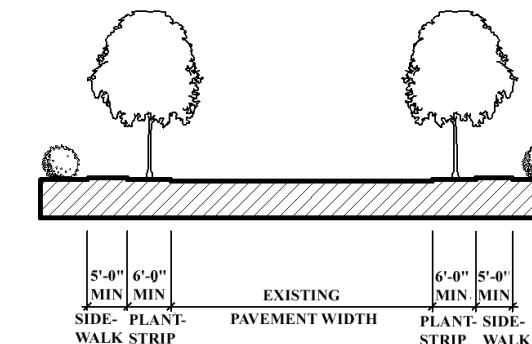


Proposed Texas Avenue Cross Section

Texas Avenue is an auto-oriented environment with less pedestrian traffic than is seen in the core of the Downtown. It is suggested that the streetscape efforts for Texas Avenue focus on aesthetic rather than pedestrian concerns.

- Where possible, a minimum 6 ft. (minimum) planting strip should be provided with shade trees between the curb and sidewalk.
- Where public lots front the street, landscape screening, such as shrubs, should be provided.
- Where missing, minimum 5 ft. sidewalks should be provided.

Existing Conditions

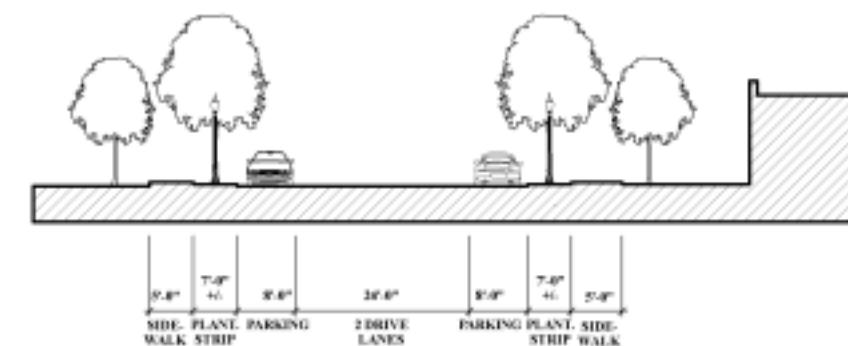


Proposed Washington Street Cross Section (between 26th and 28th Streets)

Washington Avenue between 26th and 27th Streets should be retained and should serve as a model for its extension between 27th and 28th Streets. The following elements should be included:

- Parallel parking on both sides of the street.
- Live Oak street trees.
- A 7 ft. (approximate) planting strip between curb and sidewalk.
- Minimum 5 ft. sidewalks.
- A secondary row of street trees planted outside of the sidewalk.
- Two drive lanes, one in each direction.

Existing Conditions

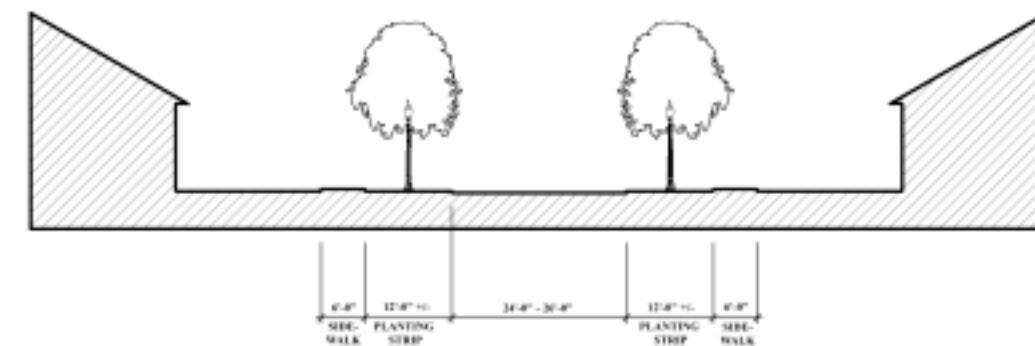


Proposed Typical Residential Street Section

North Washington Avenue serves as the model residential street for Downtown Bryan. The following is recommended for residential streets:

- Curbs.
- Sidewalks.
- Planting strips between curbs and sidewalks.
- Parallel parking, where space allows
- Street trees.
- 24 ft. to 26 ft. curb to curb dimension
- Two way traffic.

Existing Conditions



Streetscape Furnishings



Shown in bronze-on-bronze, 24-gallon capacity.



Available in 4', 6' and 8' lengths. Optional center leg with armrest available.



Proposed

Existing

Trash Can Management Program

The stationary oversized trash cans currently used downtown (pictured in the photo above), and mainly on Bryan Avenue, are very unpopular according to those who participated in the public input sessions of the planning process. Bryan Avenue is difficult to service unobtrusively because the rear of the buildings fronting Main Street front on Bryan Avenue. Because of this double frontage situation, there is not a service alley to screen trash cans from public view. The trash cans currently used are too large to be moved by a single person, so they are an unattractive "semi-permanent" fixture in the streetscape of Bryan Avenue.

While a consensus has not been reached, there are several options that should continue to be explored:

Smaller Cans

The existing dumpsters could be replaced with smaller cans (pictured above), that are picked up more often, preferably

every night. It is estimated that three or four of the smaller cans would be needed to replace one of the existing cans, if trash is picked up at the current intervals. If the cans were serviced every night, not as many would be required, which is the ultimate goal. However, this approach requires businesses to be responsible for bringing the cans out for collection and returning them to a storage space. If businesses are not diligent in removing the emptied cans from the street, this situation could result in a sidewalk more cluttered than it is now. If this approach is pursued, it is recommended that billing be based on a sliding scale according to the type of business and the number of cans used.

Consolidated Facilities

A second solution would be to consolidate collection facilities in one location per block. The City has previously looked into this alternative and prepared preliminary designs. There was concern among the merchants that the consolidated collection would remove valuable parking spaces. However, based on an analysis of current parking and demand, the loss of spaces should not be a legitimate issue anytime within the near future.

Current Approach

Lastly, the use of the existing dumpster can continue. In the Downtown Market Survey that was administered as part of this plan, there was no indication from the community that the existing dumpsters were a problem. However, it is a concern for the merchants with dumpsters in view of their storefronts.

Ultimately, this is a decision that will need to be made jointly between the City Solid Waste Division and the Downtown merchants. It is recommended that a "dumpster charrette" be held with all the affected parties in attendance so that a mutually agreeable solution can be reached.

Shade Trees



Shade trees for Downtown Bryan need to be a tree that provides a good canopy, is easy to keep pruned for the 7 ft. above ground level, and is hardy enough to survive urban conditions. Tree recommendations are based on the premise that the City will properly maintain trees with irrigation, pruning and other needs. There are primarily two streetscape locations for which shade trees have been recommended: along sidewalks and within landscaped medians. Recommendations are as follows:

Sidewalks

It is recommended that the following trees be used along most sidewalk locations:

- Smooth Alder
- Carolina Basswood
- Cedar Elm (Texas Elm)

As the streetscape plan has pointed out, some sidewalk segments are not well suited for shade trees, especially where a sufficient width is lacking. As a result, facade canopies are being emphasized in such locations. The other exception would be a street such as Washington Avenue, in which Live Oaks already dominate and should continue to do so.

Medians

At present, Crepe Myrtles are the dominant tree within the existing concrete medians on portions of Main Street. While this tree provides nice seasonal color, it does not provide a large and substantial canopy that wide streets such as Main Street, Bryan Avenue and W.J. Bryan Parkway warrant. Consequently, it is recommended that Live Oaks be planted in the medians. The fact that the minimum median width being proposed is currently between 8 ft. and 9 ft., this species should work well.

Streetscape Furnishings, Shade Trees & Waste Management

Benches, waste containers, tree grates and other elements of street furniture can contribute greatly to the character of an area, while providing pedestrians without outdoor amenities. These elements should be carefully selected to ensure compatibility with the character of the area and with each other. Because the market survey and Vision Survey both confirmed that the most likable characteristic of Downtown Bryan seemed to be its historic character, recommended streetscape furnishings are those that help to reinforce that historic character. While this plan provides a relatively detailed design scheme for the redevelopment of downtown's streetscape network, the next step will be detailed design work and construction documents. It is recommended that definitive decisions on the exact style and model of streetscape components occur at that time. However, in the meantime, tentative recommendations are provided here, with an overall emphasis on design character, as follows:

Benches

It is recommended that Bryan use a classic shaped bench with contemporary detailing. This style, shown at left, features traditional wooden slats and a cast iron frame in a circular theme that is typically a dark color (black or dark green). While this style is not based on historic authenticity, it is a good choice for reinforcing Downtown Bryan's historic character through a contemporary adaptation.

Trash Receptacles

Although no known information is available on the types of trash receptacles Downtown Bryan had historically, if they even existed, the receptacle shown at left is the type recommended. This style conveys a historic character, and it is very compatible with the recommended bench style. As with the metal portions of the recommended bench, they typically come in a dark color (black or dark green).

It is recommended that the same color be used for the trash receptacles, the benches and the street lights in order to achieve some level of uniformity. Given that the existing historic-style streetlights on the southern part of Main Street are black, that would be a good color to maintain. Also, the images of the bench and the metal trash receptacle shown on this page are from the Victor Stanley, Inc. online catalog, but very similar models can be found in other catalogs.

Street Signs

A lower priority among streetscape improvements is the coordination of special street signage for the Downtown area. Several decorative sign poles that match the recommended street lights have already been placed in the Main Street area as part of earlier streetscape efforts. It is recommended that these poles be used throughout the streetscape. Additionally, it is recommended that brown be used as the background color of the sign face with lettering to be in white.

Existing Downtown Lighting

The existing lighting in Downtown Bryan consists of a wide variety of pole types, lamps, bulb types and sizes. The concerns that have been expressed with the Downtown Bryan lighting are attributable, almost exclusively, to a lack of City standards for lighting throughout the core study area. Lights have been installed on an ad-hoc basis without consistency, uniformity in appearance, light color, or brightness. The varying bulb types and brightness levels have led to some areas being provided with inadequate lighting, leading to dark spots along sidewalks and roadways, while other areas have lighting so bright that it is distracting. In addition to the varying bulb types, there is also a wide variety of pole and lamp types in the study area. There have been attempts, in the recent past, toward some "standard" decorative pole types, as is evidenced by the antique style light poles in front of the Carnegie Library, as well as the more recently installed Victorian-style light poles along Main Street between 28th Street and 29th Street. It is the intent of this plan to help provide a more uniform lighting standard addressing locations, visual appearance, light color, and brightness throughout the entire study area.

To understand the extent of the variety of lighting, field surveys obtained information on the current lighting pole standards, pole heights, bulb types and sizes. In addition to the more recent decorative antique lamps, other lights in the study area include "cobra-head," security, and various "area" lights along the key streets and intersections. In all of these light standards (cobra-head, security, area, decorative), there are three different bulb types with five possible wattage levels installed sporadically throughout the study area, as conveyed by the chart on the right.

There are several decorative Victorian-style light standards within the study area. They mainly consist of 10-foot and 15-foot with a few 20-foot decorative traffic signal poles with



Typical 40-foot "Cobra-Head" Light Standard



Typical Utility Pole with Floodlight

Existing Light Standards and Bulb Types

Cobra-Head (stand alone & utility pole)

- 250w High Pressure Sodium
- 150w High Pressure Sodium
- 100w Metal Halide
- 100w High Pressure Sodium
- 175w Mercury Vapor
- 250w Metal Halide

Decorative

- 100w High Pressure Sodium
- 250w High Pressure Sodium
- 175w Metal Halide
- 250w Metal Halide

Security (short arm & long arm)

- 100w High Pressure Sodium
- 175w Mercury Vapor
- 250w High Pressure Sodium
- 175w High Pressure Sodium
- 150w High Pressure Sodium

Area (box, floodlights, and a rounded parking lot light)

- 175w Metal Halide
- 250w High Pressure Sodium
- 100w High Pressure Sodium
- 250w Metal Halide
- 400w Metal Halide
- 175w High Pressure Sodium

luminaire attachments. Some of these historic-style poles and traffic signals were installed years ago. The recent additions to this pole/luminaire type were added within the last few years in an attempt to improve the aesthetic appearance along the streetscapes, providing a "historic" appeal and a "standard" downtown look. These newly installed historic-style light poles are manufactured by Antique Street Lamps, Inc. and consist of dark bronze cast iron posts and acorn-styled luminaires as seen in the photographs below. In addition to single pole historic-style lights along the sidewalks, there are historic-style double lamps at the medians and traffic signals.

Although these poles and luminaires added to a more "standard" downtown look, the bulb types and sizes did not. The newly added bulbs were metal halide bulbs, while the older similar antique lamps currently use high pressure sodium bulbs. The metal halide and mercury vapor bulbs that currently exist in the downtown study area emit a "white" light, while the high pressure sodium bulbs emit an "orange" light to the surrounding area. Although the change



Typical 10-foot decorative light on Main Street between 28th and 29th



Typical 15-foot decorative double light in the Main Street median

in bulb type may have been justifiable for aesthetics, without a concerted effort to change all of the bulb types within the area, it merely adds to the inconsistent appearance of the downtown lighting. The existing lighting situation poses several problems, of which safety and aesthetics appear to be the biggest concerns to the community. Concerns expressed during the public workshop centered on inadequate lighting that leads to dark spots along the streetscapes. This lack of adequate lighting makes uneven sidewalks and steps a concern in the evening, and it adds to the perceived lack of safety.

The aesthetic concerns go beyond the unattractiveness of the pole type and lamp styles, but also include the height of the pole and the bulb type and size. Among the merchants and interested parties that participated in the public input sessions of the planning process, there were mixed feelings as to the favorite bulb type. Those who preferred the high pressure sodium bulbs (orange glow) stated that they gave a "romantic" feeling to the area. Others, who preferred the metal halide bulbs, did so because of the clear, white light in which colors appear truer. Overall, the main desires expressed were to improve the aesthetics and uniformity of the lighting, as well as to provide adequate illumination for safety.

Another benefit to standardizing the downtown lighting is the reduction in the inventory that Bryan Texas Utilities (BTU) must stock for the downtown area. Given the current inventory list compiled from the field survey, there are over nine different pole types and heights, six different lamp types, and nine different bulb types and sizes that BTU must stock simply for the downtown lighting.

In addition to cataloguing the existing inventory, the field survey also enabled the study of the light levels (photometrics) currently provided in the downtown area. Several references were used to determine the proper lighting level for the pedestrian and vehicular areas within downtown. According to the Illuminating Engineering Society of North America (IESNA) Lighting Handbook, the recommended average maintained illuminance level for pedestrian ways is 1 foot-candle for commercial areas, 0.6 foot-candles for intermediate areas, and 0.2 foot-candles for residential areas. For vehicular areas, this same reference recommends an average illuminance level of 0.8 foot-candles. According to the photometrics provided by Antique Street Lamps, Inc., the average illuminance required for pedestrian facilities should be 0.7 foot-candle. This recommendation falls in line with the 1 foot-candle and 0.6 foot-candles recommended by IESNA. The recommended average illuminance level for the downtown area should fall near the 0.8 foot-candle range.

Specific lighting recommendations are contained on the following page.

Downtown Lighting Recommendations

Pole Type

In looking at the various pole types that exist in Downtown Bryan, the decorative historic-style lights that exist on the southerly part of Main Street lend themselves to the feel of the historic downtown. This pole type blends well with the downtown architecture, and there has already been an effort to adopt this light style as a standard. It is also consistent with the market research findings that the public rates downtown's historic character as its greatest attribute. These decorative poles should be adopted as the standard fixture both in the public and private areas of downtown. Any additional lights that may be added as architectural features on buildings or as small area lighting should be selected to complement or coordinate with these lights. In addition, this same pole type should be utilized for all future traffic signals and replacement of existing traffic signals as capital projects are undertaken in the downtown core study area. See illustrations at the bottom right.

Pole Height

The current pole heights vary from 40-feet to 10-feet within the core study area. The higher poles are typical of the cobra-head streetlights. This taller pole has been used in an effort to increase the light dispersion on the street, while trying to minimize the number of fixtures. In the downtown area, this type of lighting detracts from the overall visual appeal of the streetscape. The height of the lighting within the core study area should be provided at a more "human scale." This will greatly improve the visual appearance of downtown and allow the lighting to actually become part of the streetscape rather than detract from it. The current and proposed decorative poles are:

- 10-foot
- 15-foot
- 20-foot

The 10-foot poles are used along the sidewalks, the 15-foot poles are used in medians and the 20-foot poles are integral with the traffic signals at street intersections. These standards should be adopted for the entire core study area for both public and private facilities. The shorter pole heights will require additional poles to be provided, but the visual appearance will be worthwhile.

Lamp Type

There was a mixed feeling among interested parties regarding the lamp types used in downtown. Although some parties preferred the "orange" high pressure sodium lights, others preferred the "white" metal halide lamps. It is recommended that all mercury vapor and metal halide lamps be replaced with high pressure sodium lamps. The high pressure sodium lamps are more energy efficient to use and provide a warmer feeling.

Bryan Texas Utilities has already adopted high pressure sodium lamps as a standard. The high pressure sodium lamps are already stocked by BTU and replacement of the metal halide bulbs should be easily accomplished with capital projects as they occur.

Lamp Size Recommendation

There are now more than nine different bulb sizes within the downtown core study area. While it should be expected that the lamp wattages would change with the increased pole heights, they should remain somewhat standard. The current metal halide lamps used in the 10-foot decorative lamps on Main Street between 28th and 29th Streets are 175-watts. These existing 10-foot pole lights are extremely bright and should be changed to the high pressure sodium lamp, with the lamp size dependent on the pole spacing and height. The spacing of all future decorative poles should be designed to achieve the average illumination level with the high pressure sodium lamp type in mind. The wattage of the high pressure sodium lamp can change if necessary based upon the available locations for the decorative poles.



Photo courtesy of the Bryan Public Library

The recommended lights are reminiscent of the lighting styles historically found in Bryan.



The existing decorative lights now found on the southerly part of Main Street lend themselves to the feel of the historic downtown, blend well with the downtown architecture, and there has already been an effort to adopt this light style as a standard.



10-foot light to be used along sidewalks

15-foot light to be used in landscaped medians at street center

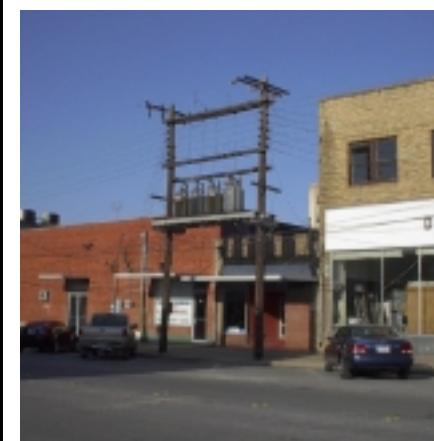
20-foot pole integrated with traffic signals at intersections

Existing Infrastructure

Within the downtown core study area, there are numerous underground and overhead utilities. These utilities include:

- City of Bryan – Water
- City of Bryan – Wastewater
- City of Bryan – Storm Drainage
- Bryan Texas Utilities (BTU) – Electrical
- TXU – Gas
- Cox Cable – Cable TV
- Verizon – Telephone
- Genuity – Communications (Fiber Optic)
- ITC – Communications (Fiber Optic)

The majority of these utilities are located underground, with the exceptions being electrical, telephone and cable, which are located above ground on wooden utility poles. During the downtown master plan Vision Survey conducted in December 2000, one of the most commonly expressed desires was to relocate these utilities underground.



Overhead utilities are currently prevalent within the core study area, especially on Bryan Avenue.

The conversion to underground utilities should be planned to occur with future capital improvement projects to upgrade any existing underground utilities. It will be imperative to assure that coordination occurs between all public and franchised utilities during the planning stages of any capital improvement



This visual simulation illustrates Bryan Avenue without overhead utilities.

project in the downtown area. This coordination will hopefully prevent the future disruption and damage to new street, sidewalk and streetscape facilities from utility upgrades that are ill planned or not considered for inclusion in the original construction project. To assure that all utilities have a location for their facilities underground, standard utility locations should be established throughout the downtown area. This standardization will allow all utilities to be placed where the disruption from future repair or service connections will have minimal impact on future streetscape improvements. See the next two pages for the location recommendations.

Existing Utility Locations

To understand the magnitude and locations of the existing downtown utilities, an overall utility map was produced based upon the best available information from each utility company. This map is on file with the City of Bryan Planning Services Department. In reviewing these locations, there is no apparent standard utility placement that has occurred over time.

Overhead Utilities

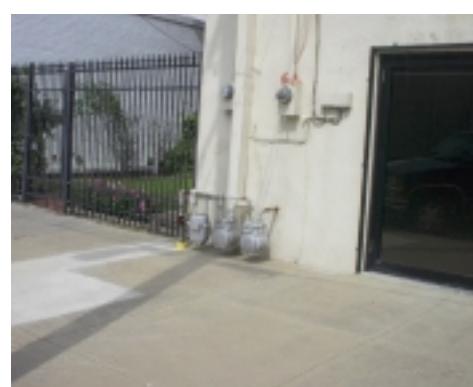
The overhead utilities are concentrated on several streets within the core study area. The streets that contain the majority of the overhead utilities are Bryan Avenue, Tabor Avenue and the Union Pacific railroad right-of-way. Some of the east-west cross streets also contain overhead utilities, although not to the same magnitude. As is the case with most cities, electrical, communications and cable television lines are typically placed overhead. This placement has occurred primarily for economic reasons. In spite of the economic advantages of overhead placement, some cities are beginning to move these facilities underground in an attempt to improve the aesthetics along their streets. This conversion certainly creates challenges for all utilities involved. Some of these challenges include the cost to public utilities and franchised utilities, the coordination and timing of the relocation and the replacement of street lighting located on the utility poles.

Underground Utilities

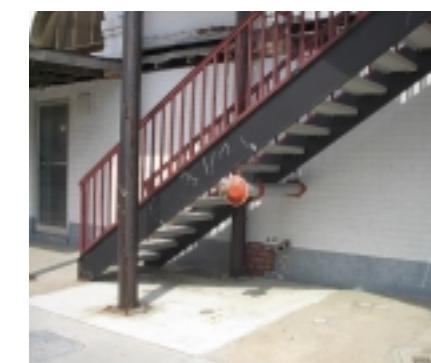
Although the overhead utilities are most noticeable to the aesthetics of downtown, the underground utilities are important as well. The underground utilities in Downtown Bryan include water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer. However, because Downtown Bryan contains several key communications buildings, there are a number of underground fiber optic communication lines as well. These fiber optic communication lines are currently owned by the Genuity and ITC communications companies and are very recent additions to the underground utilities within downtown. As streetscape improvements are made downtown, it will be important to replace all deteriorated and undersized utilities prior to, or concurrent with, that construction. This approach will avoid future disturbance to new streetscapes by subsequent underground utility upgrades.

Utility Appurtenances

With all utilities there are appurtenances that are located in and around each building. These typically consist of water, electrical and gas meters, but also include roof drains, fire department connections (FDCs), electrical transformers and communication and cable television pedestals. Currently, water meters are installed underground and contained in meter boxes that are not extremely noticeable. The existing electrical meter packs are currently mounted on the buildings. Although noticeable, they are not obtrusive to the appearance of the downtown streetscape. Gas meters, however, are quite different. Due to their size and location on the sidewalks, they distract from the overall appearance of the streetscape.



Gas meters distract from the overall appearance of the streetscape due to their size and location.



This Fire Department connection has been wall mounted beneath the stairs to reduce the visual impact on the aesthetics of the streetscape.

As these FDCs are added in the downtown area, they should be wall mounted to the building to reduce their effect on the overall aesthetics of the streetscapes. Communications pedestals and pad mounted electrical transformers are also appurtenances, that although not currently existing within the downtown area, will appear if overhead utilities are placed underground. The electrical transformers are necessary to replace the pole-mounted electrical transformers that would be retired with the underground conversion. The telephone and cable pedestals are used as customer connection points to the underground telephone lines. Placement of these pad-mounted fixtures will need to be carefully planned to occur in areas where they can be screened effectively.



Communications pedestals and pad-mounted electrical transformers will appear as overhead utilities are placed underground. Placement of these pad-mounted fixtures will need to be carefully planned to occur in areas where they can be screened effectively.

Infrastructure Recommendations

Sidewalk Utility Tunnels

In order to greatly enhance the aesthetics of the downtown area, the overhead utilities should be relocated underground and all utility poles removed. This conversion will require tremendous coordination between the City of Bryan, BTU, Verizon and Cox Cable. To aid in easing this conversion, solutions have been explored to provide a shared underground utility duct bank where the majority of these utilities are concentrated. Given the franchise agreements in effect, it will be extremely difficult for the City of Bryan to require the relocation of the existing franchised overhead utilities.

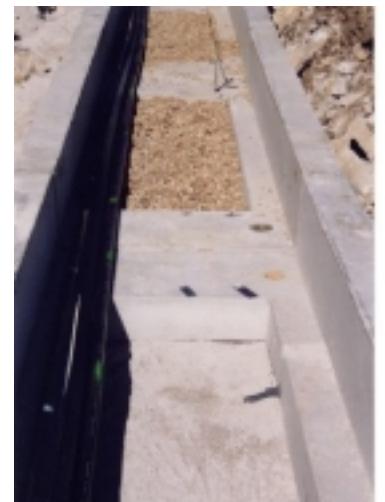
It will be simple to draft ordinance language to require that all new construction be placed underground, but the current franchise rights limit the ability of the City of Bryan to place deadlines for removal of existing overhead utilities. The conversion requires a concerted effort that all parties agree to outside the boundaries of the franchise agreements. The shared duct bank may encourage the immediate conversion or ease future conversions by the franchised utilities. The Empire Utility Company in Branson, Missouri has effectively utilized a "sidewalk utility tunnel" to help them in the placement of their underground electrical and communication facilities. This joint use facility allows the companies to share in the construction cost of a common facility rather than having their own. The advantage of this system is that it also allows for easy repair and replacement of each facility and minimizes street cuts and repairs.



Source: Empire Utility Company of Branson, Missouri

The tunnel consists of precast concrete sections that can be installed within the sidewalk area. The lids are approximately 3,000 lbs., which is heavy enough to prevent removal by hand. This is an excellent safety feature so that individuals cannot open the lids. At the same time, they are light enough to be removed with small construction equipment.

The utility tunnel shown above is 4 feet wide, which is narrower than the existing or proposed sidewalks in downtown. If the tunnel is set within 12 inches of the back of curb and the remainder of the sidewalk is constructed of brick pavers, the removal of the lids and any service connection or repair will be relatively simple. The removal of the bricks will facilitate access



Source: Empire Utility Company of Branson, Missouri

The open bottom of the utility tunnel allows for access to the lines for service connections.

to the lifting holes that are precast within the lid as well as access to the service connections into and out of the tunnel. Brick pavers, although more expensive initially, will be preferable because of the ease and aesthetics of replacement and repair. Given the number of new utility services that may be added in the future with building upgrades, consolidation, etc. it is important to recognize that the underground utilities must be accessed for these improvements, and the utility companies will need to remove portions of the sidewalk to perform this work.

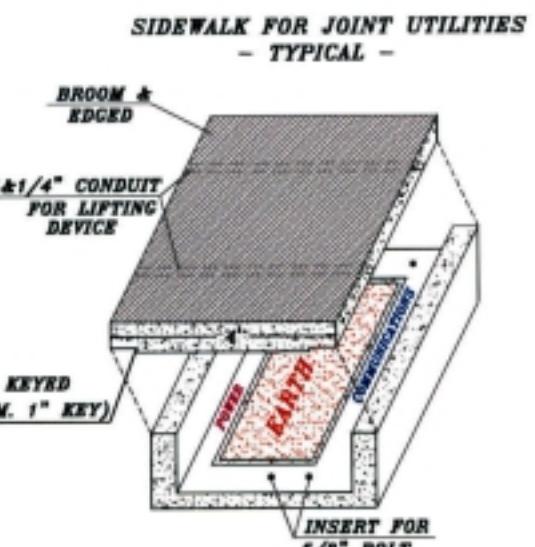
Although the tunnel can provide separation between the electrical and communications lines, it is recommended that the electrical lines be laid within the tunnel inside conduit. This approach would provide an additional level of safety for other utility workers who may be working within the tunnel to repair communications lines, as well as protect the communication lines from possible fire damage. There has been an occasion where overhead electrical, which had been converted to underground, experienced a fire within the electrical duct bank. The fire was severe enough that, had other utility lines been installed within the duct bank, they would have been severely damaged. If the electrical lines were installed in conduit, the electrical fire may have been contained within the conduit.

The utility layout in the sidewalk utility tunnel should place electrical nearest the street, with telecommunications next and cable last. Separation distances between these utilities should be discussed during the design phase.



Source: Empire Utility Company of Branson, Missouri
It is recommended that electrical lines be laid in conduit inside the tunnel.

The cost of the underground utility tunnel and conduit is \$300 per linear foot installed. This cost includes the manhole locations, but not the conductors that would have to be placed in the conduit. Options available place electrical and communications underground in separate or combined trenches in an individual conduit. If these utilities are not located in the tunnel, the next best location is under the center of the pavement as per the Secondary Streetscape standard layout. The additional cost of placing these utilities in separate conduits would be on the order of \$40/linear foot. The benefit of the sidewalk tunnel is the flexibility in adding new telecommunications and service connections without disrupting the streetscape.



Source: Empire Utility Company of Branson, Missouri

Streetscape Utility Appurtenances

Gas Meters

Of all the utility appurtenances that currently exist, gas meters appear to be the most obtrusive. In some locations, options may exist to relocate gas meters to building side areas, or to adjacent side east-west streets. By relocating these gas meters to the building side areas or side streets areas, the aesthetics of the building store fronts will be greatly improved. If the gas meters cannot be relocated and must remain along the sidewalk, they should be screened in some manner. Because the meters are required to be vented to prevent gas fume buildup, the screening cannot be a total enclosure. One option may be to provide a small brick enclosure with an open top and an opening in the brickwork to read the meter.

Roof Drains

Currently, the majority of the roof drains in downtown are located such that they do not discharge on the sidewalk, but rather are piped under the sidewalk and discharged into the gutter line of the street. This practice is one that should be continued and required of any new construction or renovation project. As these building renovations or as capital projects improve streets and sidewalks, any roof drains that currently discharge onto the sidewalks should be retrofitted to discharge into the gutter line of the street. Where

roof drains will cross the sidewalk utility tunnel, they should be taken through the wall of the tunnel and the piping within the utility tunnel required to be seamless to prevent leakage.

Fire Department Connections

With new renovation and remodeling, the presence of building sprinkler systems and fire department connections (FDCs) will become more prevalent. As FDCs are added in the downtown area, they should be required to be wall mounted to the building to reduce their adverse effect on the overall aesthetics of the street and sidewalk area. When carefully planned, these wall mounted FDCs can be located on areas of the building face such that they are not noticeable to the average pedestrian, while at the same time are obvious to emergency personnel. If the wall mounting system is not practical, a stand-alone FDC should be installed adjacent to the building face.

Traffic Signal Controllers

Traffic signal controllers should be placed during any capital improvements project that would reconstruct streets, sidewalks and utilities. Although they must be located near the intersection to allow for safe and effective manual control, they can be located and screened effectively. The use of vegetation or decorative walls would allow for effective screening, however, attention to detail in the design must be considered to allow for full sight of the intersection from the control panel for manual control.

Communication Pedestals & Electrical Transformers

Communication pedestals and pad-mounted electrical transformers are also appurtenances that must be planned within the streetscape areas. Placement of pad-mounted fixtures will need to be carefully planned to occur in areas where they can be screened effectively. Like gas meter, any locations along building sides or side streets would be preferable to the landscaped or island areas. As a last resort, locations within the sidewalk area could be used.

Electrical Outlet

Given the number of street parties and functions that are hosted in the downtown area, it would be wise to plan electrical outlets for these events. These electrical outlets should be sized for large electrical equipment such as band equipment. Outlets could be located in predetermined locations within the utility tunnel accessible with a meter box type lid which is cast into the tunnel lid and then isolated from the overall tunnel, or in pad mounted boxes near each electrical transformer.

Manhole Lids

A possible addition to the streetscape of downtown are decorative manhole lids for both the sanitary sewer and storm sewer. These lids can be decorated with the downtown logo in the center and the words "City of Bryan" – "Sanitary Sewer" or "Storm Sewer" (as applicable) around the ring.

Implementation

It is recommended that all streetscape appurtenances be replaced in conjunction with underground utility placement and/or at the time streetscape enhancements are undertaken. See Sheet 32 for recommendations on primary and secondary streetscapes.



Source: Empire Utility Company of Branson, Missouri

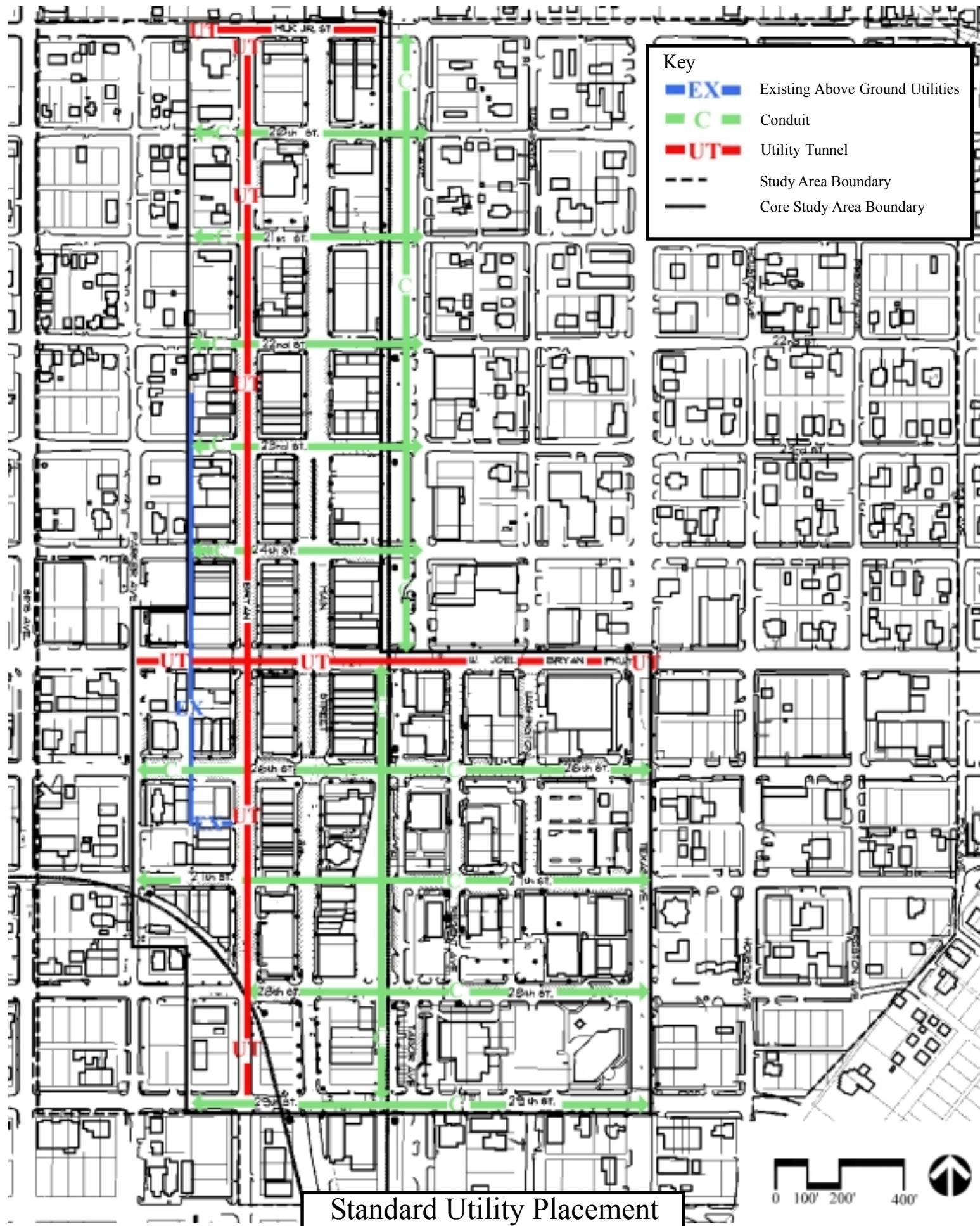
It is proposed that primary streetscapes, such as Bryan Avenue, William Joel Parkway and Martin Luther King Jr. Street, utilize the utility tunnel shown here.



Existing overhead transformers should be replaced with a pad-mounted fixture on the ground, as utilities are placed underground.



Pad-mounted electrical transformers will appear as overhead utilities are placed underground. Placement of these pad-mounted fixtures will need to be carefully planned to occur in areas where they can be screened effectively.



Utility Corridor Locations

Primary Streetscapes for Upgrades

As the downtown area redevelops it will be important to upgrade any utilities that may have deteriorated or have increased capacity needs. To plan for minimal disturbance to pedestrian activities, storefronts, and aesthetics, the following standard utility placement is recommended for those streets targeted as primary streetscape streets. The streets consist of: Bryan Avenue, William Joel Bryan Parkway, and Martin Luther King Jr. Street.

As seen in this diagram, the electrical and communications facilities in these few streets should be placed within the utility tunnel concept. This approach will allow these streets that contain the most concentrated streetscape features to benefit from the shared facility. It is important to recognize that some streets may not currently contain all utilities. The standard utility placements shown do not imply that all utilities must be constructed on each street, rather if these utilities should be rerouted or reconstructed within a street right-of-way that this is the preferred placement.

Main Street is one of the streets that will contain a majority of the streetscape features, but it is not included in the standard utility placement diagram. The recommendations for Main Street are unique because it currently does not contain many utilities, and no overhead lines. The recommendation is that this practice continue and that utilities remain out of this corridor. The only exceptions to this should be the electrical service to serve the street lights and any underground storm sewer system that may be required in the future. Both of these utilities should be contained under the pavement section to avoid disturbance of the sidewalk and greenspace areas. The electrical service to these street lights should be supplemented with electrical outlets located within the greenspace areas to be used for special events and tree lighting for various occasions.

Secondary Streetscapes for Upgrades

For those streets that will be considered secondary in nature, an alternative standard utility placement is being recommended which does not include the utility tunnel. This is due, in part, because there is not a concentration of overhead utilities to justify the expense of the underground tunnel. On some of these streets, for example, there is only one overhead utility and only for a short length. In the Tabor Road and Union Pacific railroad area there is sufficient right-of-way and easement and no planned sidewalk therefore the tunnel is not practical.

There are some utilities that are currently located in existing alleys throughout downtown. Although scattered, these alleys serve the purpose of containing utilities and their appurtenances. Because these utilities are not visible from the major streets and pedestrian areas in Downtown, there is no justification for removing them from these locations or placing them underground. In these locations the gas lines and overhead utility lines could remain in their existing configuration without being detrimental to the overall appearance of downtown.

Public Spaces, Entry Corridors, & Gateways

South Main/South College Gateway

This gateway anchors the most direct route between Downtown Bryan and College Station. Stakeholders who participated in the public input sessions of the planning process expressed a strong desire to connect more strongly with College Station and Texas A&M University. It is also important from an economic perspective to draw from the consumer base present in College Station and Texas A&M. The proposed gateway enhancements at South Main and 29th Street will create a “postcard location” that people will come to identify with Downtown Bryan.

This series of images illustrates the progression from existing conditions to the full implementation of the South Main/South College Gateway. In the existing conditions *Image 1*, it is evident that some streetscape improvements, such as historic-type lighting and sidewalks, have already taken place in this area. Images 2 and 3 track the progression of the addition of elements that help to create a pedestrian friendly streetscape, such as the addition of street trees and the plaza on the west side of Main Street, which provides a place for people to congregate. *Image 4* illustrates the complete transformation of the gateway into a pedestrian friendly environment with infill buildings, sidewalks and public plaza.

Texas Avenue Corridor

Texas Avenue presents a challenge with respect to the standards that should be applied for future development within the portion of this corridor that traverses the study area. The urban and architectural design recommendations contained on the following page, which apply primarily to commercial development within the core study area, utilize very traditional urban design principles. However, Texas Avenue is clearly a suburban type street dominated by automobile-oriented development and uses. Rather than expending energy on attempting to transform this strip commercial highway into something that it is not, especially given the attention already needed for areas such as Main Street and Bryan Avenue, it is recommended that Texas Avenue be allowed to continue as an auto-oriented corridor, but that it be enhanced. Consequently, the following design principles are recommended for the segment of Texas Avenue within the study area:

- Front parking lots should be limited to no more than a single driving aisle accessing a row of parking on either side of the driving aisle (a single “double loaded” aisle). The balance of all required parking should be located to the side or rear of buildings (particularly employee parking).
- Evergreen hedges should be provided between front parking lots and adjacent sidewalks to minimize the visual impact of parking lots.
- Curb cuts (drive ways) should be limited in both their number and their width to the minimal number and size absolutely necessary. This approach will improve both driving safety and the aesthetics of the streetscape.
- Signage should be minimized in both quantity and size. Billboards should be prohibited within this segment of Texas Avenue.
- Where feasible, street trees should be provided within the public ROW along Texas Avenue. An optional location might be as part of the landscaped screening for front parking lots.

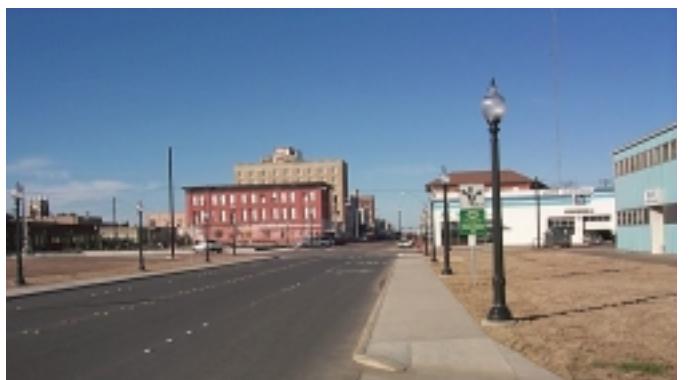


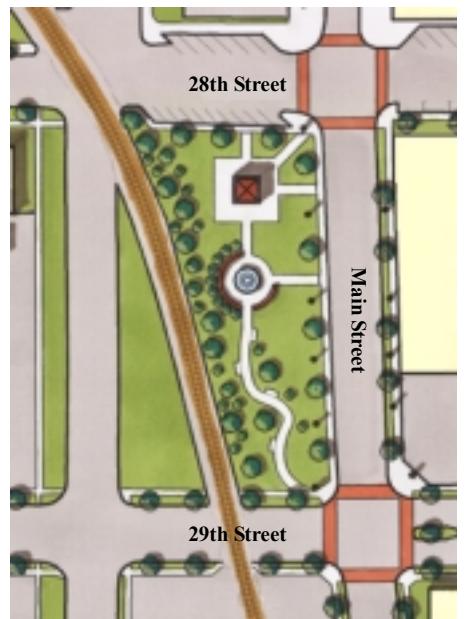
Image 1 - Existing Conditions



Image 2 - Addition of Street Trees



Image 3 - Addition of plaza with clock tower and water feature.



Proposed Gateway Plan

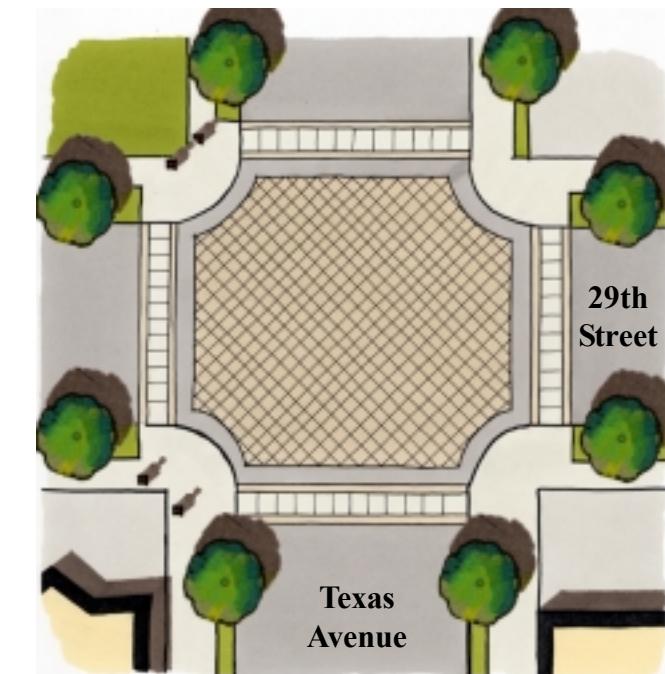


Image 4 - A complete transformation of the South Main/South College Gateway into a pedestrian friendly environment with infill buildings, wide sidewalks, and a plaza, is recommended.

Public Spaces, Entry Corridors & Gateways

Gateway Markers

It is proposed that the gateways into Downtown Bryan, such as the intersection of Texas Avenue and 29th Street (shown below), be marked with decorative monuments. The proposed monuments will be reproductions of those used in Bryan historically, such as the two pictured below in front of the James Drug Store. These monuments were chosen because of their relationship to the history of the City of Bryan. See the Concept Plan on Sheet 12 for gateway locations.



Decorative markers are proposed at the corners of gateway intersections.



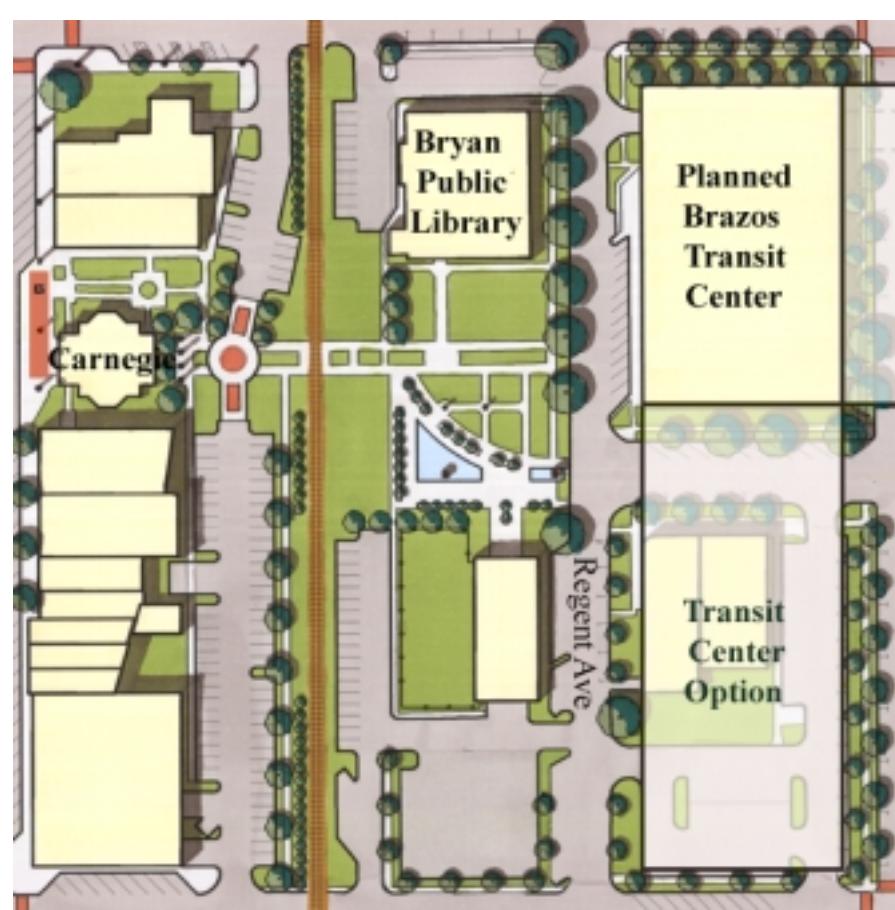
The James Drug Store on Bryan Avenue, approximately 1910.
Photo Courtesy of the Carnegie Library



This existing parking lot adjacent to the Bryan City Hall would become part of the Civic Commons.

Civic Commons

The Civic Commons is part of the Washington Avenue Promenade, discussed previously on Sheet 13. The promenade is a five block pedestrian corridor beginning at the Brazos County Courthouse and ending at a proposed public building. The Civic Commons would be located on the existing Bryan Municipal Building parking lot, and create a green space for civic uses linking the entire Civic District. The civic green space is a formal design that draws pedestrians from Washington Avenue into the entry courtyard of the proposed future public building. The green space could be used for festivals and other special events. The Commons creates a physical link by providing pedestrian connections between civic buildings, as well as a symbolic role as the heart of the Civic District.



The existing plaza in front of the Bryan Public Library would be expanded south toward the new Children's Museum.

Library Plaza

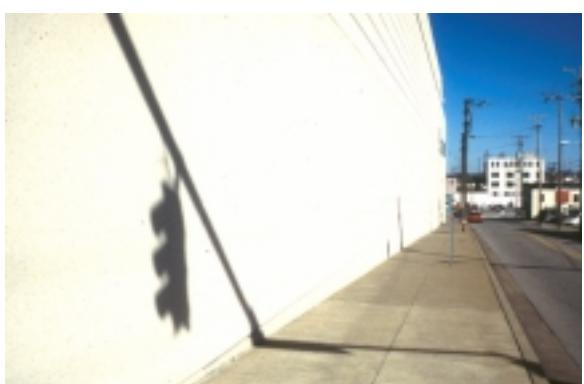
This proposal enhances the existing connection from the Bryan Public Library, across the railroad tracks to the Carnegie Library. The proposed curving walkway within the plaza would direct pedestrians through the plaza, past the existing monuments, and across the railroad tracks. The existing gravel parking lot between the Carnegie Library and the railroad tracks would be paved and landscaped. The pedestrian path would extend through the parking lot, and be articulated with brick pavers. The pavers will serve to slow traffic and emphasize the pedestrian crossing. At the point where the walkway meets the rear of the Carnegie Library property, it is proposed that the four columns found at the Main Street entrance of the library be repeated. Also, it is proposed that approximately nine parking spaces in front of the Carnegie Library on Main Street be eliminated so that a small paved plaza area can be created. This treatment will provide a needed public space and give the library a more prominent presence on the street.

Inappropriate**NO**

Buildings which are detached from the street to allow for front parking disrupt the streetscape. Building heights, within ranges, should also be compatible with their neighbors.



This building fails to address the street and lacks design elements to help create human-scaled vertical bays along the street.



Building facades with no entrances, windows, or similar elements provide little visual interest, discourage pedestrian activity, and create "dead spaces" in the streetscape.

Appropriate**YES**

Cap
↑
Middle
↓
Base

New buildings should employ a horizontal base and cap consistent with the tripartite building articulation historically found in Downtown Bryan. In this example, the base is the first floor of the building. In many examples found in Downtown Bryan, the base is articulated as a kick plate beneath front display windows.



Awnings, pilasters, and vertically-oriented windows are used to create a series of bays that allow this new building to fit comfortably into a historic context.



Transparent storefronts at the street level provide visual interest for pedestrians and help activate the street. Likewise, awnings provide shade, shelter from the rain, color and a human scale.



Characteristic of older commercial buildings, flat roofs with parapet walls should be the dominant roof form in Downtown Bryan.



This building's scale, massing, rhythm and proportion of openings make it appropriate for Downtown Bryan.



The facade of this building possesses many features appropriate for Downtown Bryan, including: vertically-oriented openings; well placed signage, transparency at the street level, clerestory windows and architecturally appropriate canopy.

Urban & Architectural Design Recommendations

The following design principles apply to commercial development within the core study area.

Building Setback, Orientation & Height

- Commercial buildings shall be built to the front property line/sidewalk and have the main entrance facing the primary street.
- Buildings should be oriented towards, and be parallel with, the adjacent primary street, both functionally and visually.
- Building heights should be compatible with surrounding historic buildings, depending upon location.

Building Massing

- The massing of new buildings shall relate to that of neighboring historic buildings.
- Long uninterrupted facade planes should be avoided.
- Building wall offsets (projections or recesses) and/or pilasters shall be used to break up the mass of a single building into distinct vertical bays. Variations in roof line, materials and color, as well as canopies, can also be used to help break up the massing.

Roof Form

- Flat or sloped roofs hidden by parapet walls should be the primary roof form used for commercial buildings.
- Cupolas, steeples, and similar features may be used for civic and institutional buildings, or other buildings located at key sites (significant corners, vista terminations, etc.).

Facades & Materials

- All facades fronting streets shall have an articulated base and cap. The base shall be defined by either the kickplate or sill level of the first story. The cap shall be at the top of the facade and may take the form of a cornice, or some other horizontal expression distinguished through design, materials and/or colors.
- All buildings should have the main entrance facing the primary street. Corner entrances are an acceptable alternative for corner buildings.
- Building facades should emphasize clearly articulated main entrances using awnings, canopies, columns, pilasters and/or recessed entrances.
- Window and door openings should have a vertical orientation and align vertically between floors.
- The ground floor of a building's front facade should be designed as a transparent storefront consistent with historic buildings downtown.
- Canopies should be appropriate to a building's architectural style and should not conceal significant architectural features. Canvas and wood are the recommended materials.
- The materials, textures, details and colors of a new building should be visually compatible with surrounding historic buildings. Brick or stone should be the primary facade materials, with stone being an exception.

Please see Appendix A for building specific recommendations.

Market Repositioning

Target Markets

In a recent survey of visitors to Bryan/College Station, respondents indicated that the third ranked local attraction, behind only the George Bush Presidential Library and Texas A&M University, is Downtown Bryan. This indicates that Downtown Bryan is a significant attraction to the area, and efforts must be made to maintain and enhance it. Based on the current and potential market context for Downtown Bryan, the primary target markets are:

- downtown employees
- local residents
- university students
- tourists

While there are obvious overlaps, each of these markets are somewhat different, thus requiring a wider array of retail, entertainment and service offerings. For example, a bookstore is the type of business that would cross "market boundaries" and be attractive to downtown employees, local residents, and university students. However, a coffee house/bookstore may be more attractive to students and younger local residents. Local residents may require more family dining experiences, while university students are looking for more "hip" dining and entertainment opportunities.

These target markets could be more narrowly defined. For example, local residents could be further categorized into families with children, seniors, young married couples, and other submarkets. Regardless, it is more useful to think of the markets more broadly so as not to unnecessarily narrow the target market. However, it is useful when determining market repositioning and the optimal tenant mix to think about the different categories of each target market.



Restaurants such as Square One may appeal to university students who are looking for more "hip" dining and entertainment options.

Competing Commercial Areas

Downtown Bryan has three local "primary" competing areas, and two regional "secondary" competing areas.

Primary Areas

The primary competitive markets with the Downtown are: 1) the commercial area located along Texas Avenue south to College Station, 2) Northgate, north of the Texas A&M campus, and 3) the Post Oak Mall and its environs. Texas Avenue is characterized primarily by auto-related uses and fast food restaurants in highway commercial and suburban style strip development patterns. Land use patterns change somewhat along Texas Avenue south-bound toward College Station with the inclusion of hotels, motels, banks, and national and local retailers. Northgate, located immediately north of the Texas A&M campus, is characterized by uses that cater to college students, including a photocopy store, bars, and restaurants. Post Oak Mall and its environs are typical of current regional malls; its tenants are national and regional retailers. Nationally known "big box" retailers are located in close proximity to the mall in suburban style strip development.

Secondary Areas

Secondary competition is comprised mainly of Houston and its northwestern suburbs. Houston is a relatively easy drive from the area (especially for those living at the southern edge of College Station) and offers the wide variety of retail and entertainment opportunities of most major cities. Bryan competes with the Houston metropolitan area on two fronts: first, it competes to have residents that live in the Bryan/College Station choose Downtown Bryan rather than the Houston area; second, it competes with the Houston area to attract residents living outside of the Bryan/College Station area to Downtown Bryan.

Downtown Bryan also competes somewhat with Austin. Although Bryan is approximately 100 miles northeast of Austin, many of the consumers living between Bryan and Austin have a choice of whether to choose Bryan or Austin. Therefore, the secondary market area is quickly divided by Austin, Houston, and other communities with historic downtowns and other types of retail and entertainment offerings.

Market Based Principles

- *The length of stay of visitors correlates with the amount of money spent.*
- *It is better to serve multiple markets simultaneously than to have a singular focus on only one segment.*
- *Rent is a function of sales. Landlords should have a strong profit motive to be concerned with their tenants merchandising and operations (business days and hours, marketing approaches, product lines, window display appearances, etc.). Landlords should be willing to accommodate the tenants' needs, as higher sales volume should result in higher revenues for the landlord.*
- *Visitor expenditures will "roll over" at least twice.*
- *To create and reinforce a pleasurable visitor experience, provide something authentic for each of the senses: things to see, touch, smell, hear and taste.*
- *More street activity is better than less — think "sidewalk density."*
- *Downtown residents are an important symbol and should be encouraged, but they are not a large enough market to be the sole support of downtown's retail sector.*
- *People in small downtowns will walk approximately three blocks, but no more.*
- *Clarity is the key to all directional systems (directional signage, tour route markers, tour route brochure maps, etc.). Confusion/frustration diminish the visitor experience.*
- *Dining: focus on local residents first, and visitors will follow. Retail: visitors will support higher priced goods.*
- *Always exceed consumer expectations, whether visitors or local residents.*

Tenant Mix

Existing Downtown Tenants

Downtown Bryan has three geographic clusters of activity:

- The civic/institutional uses located within the area bounded by Texas Avenue on the east, 28th Street on the south, the Union Pacific rail right-of-way on the west, and William J. Bryan Parkway on the north;
- The central commercial core along Bryan Avenue and Main Streets from 29th and 23rd Streets; and
- The corridor along Bryan Avenue and Main Streets north of 23rd Street to Martin Luther King, Jr. Street.

Each of these areas has a unique character defined by uses and/or building types. The area east of the Union Pacific rail line is characterized primarily by suburban style development featuring a variety of institutional uses that include government, religious, library, museum, and education. The central commercial core is characterized by a wide variety of building types that include multiple-story buildings used for offices and a hotel, and two and three story buildings common to late-20th Century downtown development. These buildings provide space for a wide variety of commercial uses, including retail, service, entertainment, office, and residential. The area north of 23rd Street is characterized by low-rise buildings and buildings that were constructed for specific uses, such as the lumber storage building and the ice house. Many of the uses that have historically taken place in this area can be characterized as industrial. Some of the oldest buildings in the Downtown are located in this area. At present, the largest user of space in this area is the Twin City Mission. The Mission currently owns more than two city blocks on Main Street and Bryan Avenue. Other uses in this area continue to be industrial in nature, including, a saddlery, furniture refinishing, and storage.

The chart on the right side of this page is a summary of a visual survey of primarily ground floor uses along the Main Street/Bryan Avenue Corridor from 28th Street north to MLK, Jr. Street. The survey indicates that the major use types in the Main/Bryan corridor can be categorized as retail, office, service, entertainment, and institutional. Reviewing specific uses within these categories indicates the wide diversity of uses and offerings within the Downtown. For example, the Downtown has 11 restaurants, 4 bars/taverns, 2 theater/performance spaces (not including the vacant Queen Theatre), hotel, music store, art gallery/gift store, and professional offices. The Downtown contains some businesses that have become destinations for residents of the region, as well as local residents. These include The String & Horn Shop, Earth Art, Catalena Hatters, and the Big & Tall Men's Clothing Store. Also, many of the Downtown Bryan restaurants are a destination for residents of the region. See Sheet 5 for a more detailed list of specific uses. A successful downtown needs a broad array of attractions to be a regular destination of local and regional residents. The Market Survey constructed for this plan

indicates that, while shopping ranks among the top four reasons why respondents like the downtown, shopping choices are the number one drawback of Downtown Bryan. In spite of the variety of gift and antique stores, Downtown Bryan is not perceived by its residents to be a destination for shopping.

Recommended New Tenants

A comparison of the existing tenant inventory at the far right with the downtown Market Survey results highlights some of the uses that are not currently found downtown, but which would be attractive to add to the existing inventory of uses. Based on this information, as well as discussions with community residents and other stakeholders, a broad spectrum of uses that should be pursued for the downtown have been identified, as follows:

- Small business incubator
- Service businesses (photocopying, business services, lawyers, doctors)
- Family and fine dining restaurants
- Bookstore
- Bakery
- Bank/ATM
- Ice cream parlor
- Children's clothing store
- Toy store
- Regional foods and crafts
- Wine shop
- Art shows
- Coffee house
- Retail florist
- Hobby/craft store
- Women's apparel store
- After Hours Entertainment

Other businesses identified in our market survey as desirable for downtown, but that already exist at some level in the downtown, include a gift shop, live theater, and antique stores. Other businesses that are considered desirable, but will be more difficult to attract, include a movie theater and department store. See Sheet 42 for details or the potential for resurrecting the Queen Theatre.

A version of the market survey was administered to students at Texas A & M University and Blinn College. The results indicated that the uses students desire for Downtown Bryan are similar to those desired by the other group surveyed. The focus was on a variety of dining choices, music and book stores, a movie theater and after hours entertainment.

An existing regional attraction that should be approached to locate a retail store downtown is the Messina Hof Wine Cellars. Such a store would augment their existing facilities (restaurant, lodging, and retail store) located west of Bryan, and provide another destination retailer for Downtown Bryan. A downtown location would expand the market for the Messina Hof products, especially

for those that would otherwise never find out about the winery. A Messina Hof facility could host wine tastings on a regular basis, and perhaps, feature foods from its restaurant. One potential location might be the ground floor of the Howell Building because of its proximity to the LaSalle Hotel.

Based on observations, Downtown Bryan appears to be successfully competing with the Texas Avenue corridor retail/service markets. It is clear that the businesses that have developed on Texas Avenue provide services that are neither available nor desirable in a downtown. However, Downtown Bryan must expand its shopping choices, and to some degree, its restaurant choices, to successfully compete with Northgate, Post Oak, and other regional attractions. Cultural attractions, in addition to the Children's Museum of Brazos County, would help to create a critical mass of attractions for families. A performing arts space would augment existing live theater and likely attract college students, and young singles and married couples. The same type of facility could also feature special films not run at conventional, first-run theaters, including artistic and foreign films. One of the most underserved markets in Downtown Bryan is the college student. The mobility of the current college student makes Downtown Bryan a viable alternative to Northgate for shopping and entertainment. A bookstore, coffee house, and ice cream parlor would be attractive to the college student consumer, as would evening entertainment.

Service businesses are attractive to recruit and retain downtown office tenants. Copy services, secretarial services, and computer services are frequent necessities for office tenants. A downtown bank branch or automatic teller machine is essential for local businesses, office tenants, local residents and visitors to the area. The City must make attracting a bank branch, or automatic teller machine at the very least, a priority of the downtown redevelopment.

In summary, Downtown Bryan needs to convey unique, different but identifiable choices. A better mix of destination retail, service businesses, restaurants, other food service businesses and entertainment must be attracted to the downtown. The businesses must focus on the needs of downtown tenants, such as law firms, insurance agencies, and local, county, and state government, and provide a destination for local and regional residents and other potential visitors to the downtown. The more destinations located in the downtown, the more likely a critical mass of people will regularly visit, shop and work in the downtown.

**Existing Downtown Uses
(Primarily Ground Floor) Along Main Street/ Bryan Avenue Corridor**

Use Category	Use Type	# Of Uses/ Businesses	% By Use/ Business Type	% Of Total Uses/ Businesses By Type
Retail	Antiques	5	21.74%	3.88%
	Thrift Store	6	26.09%	4.65%
	Pharmacy	2	8.70%	1.55%
	Discount Store	1	4.35%	0.78%
	Art Gallery/Gifts	2	8.70%	1.55%
	Hardware Store	1	4.35%	0.78%
	Carpet Store	1	4.35%	0.78%
	Unfinished Furniture	1	4.35%	0.78%
	Men's Clothing	1	4.35%	0.78%
	Hats	1	4.35%	0.78%
	Music Store	1	4.35%	0.78%
	Religious Bookstore	1	4.35%	0.78%
Retail Total		23		17.83%
Office	Professional Office	10	83.33%	7.75%
	Lumber	1	8.33%	0.78%
	Radio Station	1	8.33%	0.78%
Office Total		12		9.30%
Service	Finance Company	10	34.48%	7.75%
	Barber Shop	4	13.79%	3.10%
	Auto Related	4	13.79%	3.10%
	Printing	2	6.90%	1.55%
	T-Shirt Printing	1	3.45%	0.78%
	Furniture Refinishing	1	3.45%	0.78%
	Bail Bonds	2	6.90%	1.55%
	Hotel	1	3.45%	0.78%
	Auction Services	1	3.45%	0.78%
	Trophy Engraving	2	6.90%	1.55%
	Landscaping	1	3.45%	0.78%
Service Total		29		22.48%
Entertainment	Restaurant	11	64.71%	8.53%
	Theater	2	11.76%	1.55%
	Bar/Tavern	4	23.53%	3.10%
Entertainment Total		17		13.18%
Institutional	Church	2	20.00%	1.55%
	Museum	1	10.00%	0.78%
	Library	2	20.00%	1.55%
	School (private)	1	10.00%	0.78%
	Health Center	1	10.00%	0.78%
	Shelter	1	10.00%	0.78%
	Boxing Club	1	10.00%	0.78%
	Masonic Lodge	1	10.00%	0.78%
Institutional Total		10		7.75%
Wholesale	Florist	1	100.00%	0.78%
Wholesale Total		1		0.78%
Industrial	Saddlery	1	33.33%	0.78%
	Woodwork	1	33.33%	0.78%
	Other Industrial	1	33.33%	0.78%
Industrial Total		3		2.33%
Residential	Ground Floor	1	100.00%	0.78%
Residential Total		1		0.78%
Storage	Ground Floor	2	100.00%	1.55%
Storage Total		2		1.55%
Vacant	Ground Floor	31	100.00%	24.03%
Vacant Total		31		24.03%
Overall Total		129	100.00%	100.00%

Downtown Management

Successful downtown revitalization requires organization. Consequently, an organization with revitalization as its sole focus is recommended.

Current Management Structure

At present, management for the revitalization of Downtown Bryan is occurring through two primary entities, as follows:

City of Bryan

In 1992 the Main Street Project was created by the City and formally designated by the state's Main Street program. The Main Street Project utilized its three-year partnership with the state program, and now it is considered a "graduated" community that is no longer formally part of the state program. Instead, the City's Division of Planning & Development Services staffs a single position which is responsible for working with downtown property owners, business owners and operators, and other key downtown stakeholders. However, the focus of the City's assistance is relatively narrow, with an emphasis being placed primarily on physical improvements.

Downtown Merchants Association

The DMA is an organization of downtown businesses that work together to try to bring improvements to downtown. They lack professional staffing, and their focus is primarily on the retail, service and special events facets of Downtown Bryan.

This current management structure is limited by the fact that there is no single entity with adequate human and financial resources to comprehensively plan for, and implement, downtown revitalization in a highly-organized and coordinated fashion. Consequently, a new approach is strongly recommended.

Proposed Management Structure

It is proposed that a new non-profit Main Street entity be created as a 501(c)3 organization that will embark on downtown revitalization using the same comprehensive and multi-dimensional strategy advocated by the state and national Main Street programs. This "Four Point" approach is as follows:

- Organization
- Design
- Economic Restructuring
- Marketing & Promotion

It is also recommended that the Main Street program have a full-time staff person (Main Street Manager), and one part-time or full-time assistant may be needed as well. The program's offices should be located within the commercial core of the downtown, and they should not be part of any governmental offices. Main Street programs in other communities and states that have located in governmental offices have often been perceived by Main Street stakeholders as being regulatory in nature and lacking the kind of entrepreneurial spirit that might otherwise be desired. Despite this recommendation, it is still critical that the organization receive strong political and financial support from the City, but it should not be viewed as a formal arm of the City government. Chamber of Commerce support is also important.

Legal Form & Policies

The Bryan Main Street Project should be reinvigorated, using a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporate structure. The non-profit organization will allow contributions and corporate sponsorships to be tax-deductible. This structure provides advantages to the downtown management program by broadening the scope of potential corporate and individual financial supporters and partners.

Organizations

The Mission Statement, Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws must be carefully drafted to reflect current needs and planned growth and expansion of the program. Sample documents can be obtained from the Texas Historical Commission or the National Main Street Program.

Staffing

A full-time professional "Executive Director" or "Manager" should serve as staff to the Main Street Project, hired by, and reporting directly to, the Board of Directors. As lead staff person, the Director serves as the organization's direct liaison to downtown merchants and property owners, and works with the Board to develop and implement economic development strategies for Downtown Bryan, including the Project's involvement in the implementation of this downtown plan. The Director will develop strong and productive working relationships with appropriate public agencies, particularly with staff and elected officials within the City of Bryan, to ensure that the City and the Main Street Project work in close cooperation to implement all aspects of the downtown management and revitalization program. As noted previously, a part-time or full-time assistant may be needed to support the Director.

Membership Participation

While the Director serves as a convenor, facilitator, mentor and coordinator, the ultimate success of the management, promotion and marketing tasks of the Main Street Project will be dependent on the substantive participation of a broad spectrum of downtown merchants and property owners, as well as interested and committed community participants. Without merchant and property owner participation in working committees and other Project activities, the program is unlikely to succeed in attracting the attention and support of local and regional interests. Membership should include, in addition to merchant and property owners, politically active and influential persons who have the resources to secure private support, such as local bankers. Financial contributors to the non-profit entity, whether foundations or government agencies, corporations or individuals, will look to the level of involvement and active participation of the Project's primary constituency – the downtown businesses – in making decisions about financial support for the Project.

Proposed Funding & Budget

Programs in Other Communities

In formulating recommendations for the funding and budgeting of a new independent Main Street program, several existing programs in other Texas communities were studied. Such communi-

ties included Beaumont, Garland, Harlingen, Irving, Odessa and Tyler. Below are some average numbers related to these programs:

Average Population: 121,666

Average Annual Budget: \$169,379

Average Annual Budget per 1,000 Population: \$1,678

Average Annual Membership Revenues: \$41,281

Average Annual Membership Revenues per 1,000 Pop: \$378

Recommendations for Bryan

Using the considerations outlined above, the following hypothetical budget is offered as a general target for Bryan:

Total Annual Budget:	\$101,00
Goal for Membership Revenues:	\$15,000
Goal for Local Government Assistance:	\$70,000
Other Revenue Sources:	\$16,000

With respect to the necessary financial assistance from the local governments, it is expected that the City would be the key contributor. However, given the fact that Bryan is the County seat and the County Courthouse is located in Downtown Bryan, clearly the County has a significant stake in the future of Downtown Bryan. Consequently, they should also help support the program. Two sources of funding used by the local governments of other Main Street communities include General Funds and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Below is a hypothetical budget for the Bryan Main Street program:

Bryan Main Street Project Sample Budget	
Income	
City of Bryan	\$55,000.00
Brazos County	\$15,000.00
Promotion Sponsorship	\$5,000.00
Promotion Income	\$11,000.00
Membership	\$15,000.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$101,000.00
 Expenses	
Rent	\$8,000.00
Telephone	\$1,500.00
Office Supplies & Equipment	\$2,500.00
Postage	\$1,500.00
Promotion	\$17,000.00
Economic Development	\$5,000.00
Membership Development/Services	\$4,000.00
Travel/Training	\$2,150.00
Dues/Memberships	\$1,000.00
Texas Historical Comm.	\$1,500.00
Taxes	\$350.00
Liability Insurance	\$1,600.00
Payroll*	\$50,000.00
Staff car allowance/miles	\$900.00
FICA Match	\$2,700.00
IRS/TWC	\$100.00
Staff Health Insurance	\$1,200.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$101,000.00

*Based on no or minimal additional staff support

Business Development

Business Retention, Expansion and Recruitment

Business retention, expansion, and recruitment are essential to creating and maintaining a healthy downtown. The Main Street Project, local merchants and downtown residents, as well as appropriate City agencies, must work together to identify the needs of existing businesses and to attract new businesses to the downtown. Businesses mean jobs, and jobs mean economic development.

Each of these steps works to create a climate for business retention, expansion, and recruitment because they are designed to expand and increase the number of shoppers in the downtown and increase interest in the surrounding downtown neighborhoods. Once some of these initiatives are implemented, the product – Downtown Bryan – is greatly enhanced. The most beneficial recruiting efforts focus on businesses identified in the optimal tenant mix (See Sheet 37). Representatives of the Main Street Project, must identify successful local business owners and encourage them to undertake some of their concepts in the downtown. In addition, retailers from other successful communities, among others, must be recruited to expand into the growing market of Bryan. The following key steps should be taken to recruit new businesses:

- Identify existing businesses elsewhere in Bryan or the region which are consistent with the recommended tenant mix, in addition to any others which were not necessarily targeted but might be inadvertently discovered.
- Pull together marketing packages to provide convincing evidence that targeted businesses should open a location in Downtown Bryan. Material might include articles on positive improvements to downtown, excerpts from this plan and previous related plans, real estate information, and other data available through the Chamber of Commerce.
- Emphasize any specific potential incentives that might be made available to help lure them to downtown (façade improvement grants/loans, etc.) See Sheet 45 for more information on existing financial incentives.
- Identify potential buildings or sites based on those listed on Sheet 15, and have general information regarding owner's contacts, rental rates and overhead costs.
- Contact the targeted business owner/operator and schedule an appointment to meet and discuss a possible downtown relocation.
- The Main Street manager should serve as a liaison with key people and entities, such as the City, utility companies, and property owners.
- Add potential businesses to the Main Street Project's correspondence mailing lists if the business may relocate to downtown in the future. The Main Street Project should keep in touch with the business through periodic phone calls, visits and mailings.

While new business recruitment is an important part of business development, efforts to retain and expand existing businesses should not be overlooked. Business retention and expansion can be encouraged by following the balance of the recommendations on this page.

Education

Small business owners and other entrepreneurs seeking to start a business need to be able to perform a variety of tasks, from developing an attractive window display to managing employees. As a result of the wide variety of talents that are necessary to operate a successful business, business owners and others interested in starting a new business are often in need of help in a variety of areas, including accounting, inventory management and control, merchandising, advertising, and personnel management.

The Main Street Project should provide a variety of education opportunities. Consultants and business owners with expertise in different fields necessary to the operation of a business should be assembled to conduct seminars on relevant business topics. These seminars must be held at times that business owners can attend. In addition, there are other organizations and government agencies that can provide education opportunities to business owners. The Main Street Project should act as the clearinghouse for information about programs offered by the Small Business Administration (SBA), Texas A&M University, Texas Retailers Association, Texas Downtown Association, Texas Department of Commerce (including the Tourism Division), and the Texas Historical Commission's Main Street program, among others. The Main Street Project office should be the assistance center for downtown retailers. An excellent example of how this might work is as follows: A store is having trouble expanding to a new product line. Through the Main Street program and fellow retailers participating in the program, the retailer can get advice and contacts concerning expanding the product line. This type of service is offered to tenants in large shopping centers; it must also be offered on Main Street.

Clearinghouse

Real estate developers, property owners, business owners and others looking to expand or relocate downtown are often frustrated by the lack of coordinated information and approval reviews related to plans for rehabilitation and expansion. The Main Street Project should act as the clearinghouse organization that can direct those interested in rehabilitation and expansion to the appropriate City agency and other programs, including financial incentives. The clearinghouse services can be provided in a number of ways. The most efficient method would be to provide the information and forms necessary on the Main Street website. Another method would be to provide books describing all of the necessary information to the library for circulation. It is important that any information provided be updated on a regular basis.

The "Main Street Clearinghouse" should include a wide variety of information, including:

- Summary of Bryan development code and approval process.

- Names and phone numbers of City staff involved in the development process.
- Names and phone numbers of all utilities and all relevant public service providers.
- Design guidelines for the downtown.
- Inventory of available retail and office space and contacts.
- List and summary of available city, state, and federal incentives.

Centralized Retail Management

The Main Street Project must encourage the local merchants to coordinate operations, including operating days and times, service standards, storefront design and displays, and merchandising.

Days and Hours of Operation

It is strongly recommended that, in general, the days and hours of operation be both extended and standardized. This is supported by the responses to the Market Survey and the experience of other communities. With respect to the days of operation, staying open on holidays should be the focus initially. Holidays such as Labor Day and Presidents Day are traditionally important retail days often associated with special sales events. As evidence of the value in staying open on these days begins to materialize, Sundays and other days on which some businesses are currently closed should be targeted. For businesses that elect to continue to operate on a six-day schedule, a specific week day should be selected as the day to close, such as Monday.

Like days of operation, store hours are also in need of expansion and standardization. It is recommended that stores operate until at least 6:00 p.m. Most downtown retail businesses currently operate until 5:00 p.m. However, the extra hour will allow downtown employees to make purchases on their way home from work, while giving tourists and other market segments an additional hour to occupy their time before dining. Unlike retail shops, restaurant hours are dictated more by the meals served and/or emphasized (breakfast, lunch, or dinner).

When implementing extended days and hours of operation, it is critical that as many business owners as possible commit to coordinating with the new program. In addition to having broad participation and promoting the new days and hours of operation, persistence will be crucial. As a general principle, it takes approximately three months for the market to even become aware that days and hours of operation have expanded, and it can take as long as twelve to eighteen months for measurable economic benefits to be realized.

Service Standards

Every retail transaction is an opportunity to sell a product, a store and a community. "Opening day standards" cannot be overemphasized, as even the most market-oriented sales people can lose their enthusiasm or edge if not properly motivated. People who shop downtown businesses often have strong brand loyalties, especially for businesses that they know are locally owned. In particular, sales people who know their customers by name, as well as their

merchandise preferences, can help increase the competitiveness of their particular downtown business.

Storefront and Window Design

As a general principle frequently cited in the retail industry, business operators have approximately 1.5 seconds to catch the attention of a shopper walking by their store. Consequently, the appearance of the storefront design and window displays is crucial. In some cases, storefront alterations made during the past few decades in Downtown Bryan are inappropriate for the character and architectural integrity of older buildings. Signage should be carefully integrated into the façade in appropriate locations that do not obscure significant architectural elements. Stores must share in maintenance of sidewalks, street furniture, security and window displays.

While businesses that rent their space may be at the mercy of their landlords in some respects, they are completely in control of their window displays. Window displays should adhere to the following principles:

Window Display Principles

- *Good lighting* – Illuminate displayed merchandise without glare to the viewer.
- *Evening lighting* – Encourage that windows be lit during evening hours even when stores are closed. Late night drivers and other visitors to the downtown will observe a "lively" retail district even during the hours when stores are closed.
- *Uncluttered displays* – Avoid too many merchandise items that visually compete with each other.
- *Creative displays* – Use themes that somehow tie together merchandise in an interesting, fun or provocative manner.
- *Alternating displays* – Depending upon the business and merchandise, change displays roughly every three weeks, even if some items remain as part of the display.
- *Cross marketing* – Link window displays to local, particularly downtown, events. Link merchant displays. For example, a stationery/card shop might display children's clothing with children's birthday or holiday cards.
- *Emphasize quality* – Merchandise exhibiting a high level of design, styling, sophistication, materials, and similar characteristics should be featured for window displays.

Merchandising

Once potential customers are in the store, merchandising must be crisp, sophisticated and exhibit a high level of design – much like window displays. The customer must be able to understand the focus of the retail store in a very short period of time. According to often-cited retail principles, retailers have 4.5 seconds to keep the attention of shoppers once in the store. Technical input on merchandising should be solicited from organizations such as the Small Business Administration and the Texas Retailers Association. The issue could be the subject of a workshop sponsored by the Main Street Project.

Marketing

Image Development

Once a clear retail strategy has been devised and the product, downtown retail, has been improved, it is time to market and promote this new and improved product. The image to be projected to the market and the mediums for delivering the message must be carefully selected to most effectively reach the intended audience. Just as a particular business or product must be packaged to fit the exact image that it chooses to project, Downtown Bryan must view itself as a product with an identity to market to consumers. The two key factors in formulating the most appropriate image for a downtown include 1) the intrinsic characteristics already embodied by the downtown history, architecture, culture, ethnicity, and other inherent themes, and 2) the preferences of the target markets. Fortunately, Downtown Bryan has identifiable characteristics, as indicated by responses to the Market Survey. The Main Street Project should build on the identifiable characteristics of the downtown to create a strong, positive image. Some of the characteristics identified in the downtown Market Survey were, in order of preference, the following:

1. Historic character
2. Dining/entertainment
3. Special events
4. Shopping
5. Cultural activities

Other characteristics that could be integrated with those already identified in the Market Survey include:

- Urban living
- Center for government services
- Unique architecture
- Eclectic mix of cuisine
- Warm people & weather
- Authenticity
- Railroad history

No matter how these characteristics are packaged, the image should be clearly distinctive from the surrounding area, and it should be consistently promoted to consumers and visitors to the region.

The image should be conveyed through merchandising, marketing and promotion. All promotions should be linked to the image and themes.

Brochures

Brochures or other printed collateral materials are important marketing materials and should include:

- A brochure that highlights the points of architectural and historical interest in and near Downtown Bryan, for both walking and driving visitors.

- A shopping and parking guide that can be easily and inexpensively updated frequently to point visitors to specific business locations, as well as access and parking choices.
- Special event publications that help residents and potential visitors to make advance plans to attend events in the downtown.
- Entertainment guides to dining, music, theater and other entertainment venues in the downtown area.
- Targeted audience publications reaching out-of-town visitors, university students, seniors, and/or children.

Logo

The Bryan Main Street previously established a graphically exciting logo, which should be used again as the program is revitalized. All printed collateral materials, advertising and promotional materials, and street banners should display the logo. The following are examples of opportunities to utilize the downtown logo:

- Shopping bags
- Tour brochures
- Banners
- All promotional materials (for events)
- Joint and individual advertising



The logo developed for the Bryan Main Street should be used in all advertising and promotional materials.

Advertising

Print media should be the primary advertising media for Downtown Bryan. Downtown retailers targeting the local market should be encouraged to participate in joint advertising in the local newspaper. Joint advertising and cross promotion opportunities on a regional basis may also be appropriate to pursue the important heritage tourist market. Specialty audiences, such as coach tourists visiting the George Bush Library in College Station or frequent bed-and-breakfast visitors who are seeking historic destinations, may be reached through advertising in appropriate media, such as local newspapers and the Convention & Visitor Bureau, and partnering with other advertisers in Central Texas. Nearby destinations on the Independence Trail, a heritage tourism

promotional and marketing package of the Texas Historical Commission and Texas Department of Transportation, are also potential cross-promotional partners worth pursuing. These partners might include Washington-on-the-Brazos, Brenham, Burton, and perhaps Round Top and Winedale.

Publicity

Another opportunity for promotion in the print media is to focus on publicity and public relations efforts. This is labor intensive, but has lower direct costs than advertising. The Main Street Project should expand ongoing efforts to identify newsworthy events, promotions, and destinations in the downtown and promote them regionally through public relations.

Student Targeting

An advertisement for Downtown Bryan should be included in the game brochure for every Texas A&M home football, basketball and baseball game. Discounts for those with game tickets or ticket stubs might be provided at local stores. Providing a discount card to students for Downtown Bryan businesses will help attract them to downtown. In addition to providing discount cards for students, merchants should use the Peoples Book, a coupon book offered to students each semester and accept Aggie Bucks, a student debit card program. The Peoples Book contains coupons to various merchants in the area that wish to target the student population. The Aggie Bucks program is administered through the student's campus identification card. Money is deposited in an account that the student can use at their discretion not only on-campus, but at various off-campus locations as well. This card virtually eliminates the need for a student to carry cash. Many College Station and Bryan merchants, such as restaurants, photocopying services, dry cleaners, various retail and personal service establishments are already taking advantage of this program to draw students to their businesses. Merchants should participate in this program to attract the student population to Downtown Bryan.



Downtown retailers should target Texas A&M's approximately 45,000 students and employees by advertising at school sporting events and providing student discount cards.

Source: www.tamu.edu

To capitalize on the market potential of Texas A&M, the local merchants might consider airplane advertising banners promoting Downtown Bryan during football games. It is also important that signage to the downtown is improved and that it provides evidence of the variety of shopping opportunities in the downtown.

Downtown Newspaper

Efforts should also be undertaken to create and enhance the concept of a downtown community. It is recommended that the Main Street Project and the local newspaper collaborate to develop a newspaper focused on downtown. This approach has been effectively used in other communities, and could even come out as infrequently as monthly. Targeting downtown employees and nearby residents, the intent would be to create a feeling of camaraderie among "users" of downtown, and to paint a more positive picture of Downtown Bryan. Financially supported by advertising from downtown businesses, examples of regular features might include:

- *Current News* - relating to downtown redevelopment.
- *Welcome to Downtown* - highlighting new businesses.
- *Personality Profile* - the story of some downtown personality.
- *Property Profile* - owners who maintain and/or enhance their properties should be praised.
- *Calendar of Events* - listing of all events held in the downtown.

A downtown newspaper will help to create an environment that promotes community and makes people want to be downtown to shop, eat, and even to live. Every opportunity for promotion of the downtown should be taken advantage of. For example, ribbon cuttings for any new business should be held. Celebrate both the undertaking and completion of any downtown project.

Special Events & Promotions

Events have a variety of purposes. First, they bring people downtown to have a positive experience in a festive atmosphere; second, they provide an opportunity for people to see what is happening in the Downtown; third, they allow individual retailers to promote themselves; and fourth, they help to create the image of Downtown as a fun, active, and important place to be and shop. Merchants should not necessarily expect an increase in sales during the event. Instead, the event will help to improve the image of Downtown and increase retail activity on a long-term basis. The Main Street Project should seek corporate sponsorship and contributions for events. To help in the promotion effort, Main Street must do the following:

- Create a strong committee structure and help Downtown develop new, and expand existing, promotional efforts.
- Document every stage of an event (including the event itself); this will help with future planning and sponsorship requests.
- Remember the purpose of the event: focus on intended results.
- Make media coverage easy – prepare media packages far in advance.
- Estimate attendance, number of vendors, number of participating retailers; estimate impact of event on retail sales. Maintain these statistics and use them in future promotional efforts and in solicitation for sponsorship support and participation.

In consideration of initiating new events in the future, it should be remembered that the Downtown is better off with a limited number of high-quality events versus numerous mediocre events. Collaboration with appropriate organizations and stakeholders is also necessary to have successful events. The Chamber of Commerce (specifically, the division of the Bryan-College Station Convention and Visitor Bureau) must be called on to help organize and promote existing events. In addition, the Chamber should be part of the development of any new events.

Existing Events and Promotions

A number of promotional event opportunities already exist and need to be optimized. These events include the following:

- Cinco De Mayo Celebration: Celebrated in Mexican-American communities throughout North America, Cinco de Mayo is known to commemorate a major victory by the Mexican Army. Sponsored by the City of Bryan, this event happens off and on downtown on May 5th. Nothing was planned for 2001. In the past, the event has occurred at the Palace. The event is usually coordinated by a local Hispanic organization. This celebration/festival should be targeted to occur annually; the Main Street Project should work with the sponsoring organization and the downtown Mexican restaurants to ensure participation in the event.

• Juneteenth: This event celebrates the ending of slavery in the United States. In the past, there have been informal activities along the MLK corridor. The event is sponsored by the Brazos Valley Juneteenth Committee and occurs the week of June 16. The Committee sponsors a parade along MLK Jr. Street.

• Diez y seis Celebration/ Fiestas Patrias: This date is widely known as Mexican Independence Day. In 2001, this event will be held on September 15 and 16. This usually includes bands and other entertainment and is held at the Palace Theater. This festival, like the Cinco de Mayo Celebration, should occur annually and should be coordinated by the Convention & Visitor Bureau.

• Holiday-on-the-Brazos: This event includes activities in Downtown Bryan, as well as other locations throughout the metropolitan area during the Christmas season. Holiday-on-the-Brazos is coordinated by the Chamber of Commerce. In 2000, the downtown activities included a model train/lighted miniature village exhibit, caroling, a horse drawn carriage, and a local talent show at the Palace Theater. The Bryan lighting ceremony has been incorporated into Holiday on the Brazos. The Main Street Project must plan and coordinate participation by local retailers in the event. Promotions in connection with special events, such as a tree lighting, should be planned and coordinated.

• Noon Tunes Concerts: This event occurs every Friday in April and October. Local bands are invited to play for the lunch hour at the Palace Theater. Sodas are provided. At one time, local restaurants provided food for the event. Local restaurant owners should be approached to again provide "brown bag" or "carry-out" specials for concert days.



In order to generate additional sales and to simply familiarize consumers with retail offerings in downtown, it is important that businesses remain open on holidays and others days on which special events occurs.

Recommended Events & Promotions

Other new events and general opportunities which should be explored include the following:

- Texas A&M Football Weekend: Consider Parents Weekend or the home game with the University of Texas to create a special event related to an annual Texas A&M football game. Parents of students, as well as thousands of alumni, attend Texas A&M football games. Attracting even a small percentage of this market to Downtown Bryan will have a positive impact on the economic health of the downtown. See the previous sheet for additional promotional ideas to promote Downtown Bryan at home games of the all the university's major sports programs.
- Children's Events: The Children's Museum of Brazos County is located in Downtown Bryan and about to relocate to a grander new home in the refurbished Old City Hall. The Main Street Project should seek opportunities for new events that encourage children to come into the downtown to visit the museum and for tours of the downtown. If children have a positive experience in downtown, their parents are likely to follow. Integration of historic preservation elements in the local elementary school curriculum is a particularly effective way of bringing children downtown to learn more about the history of Bryan through its historic buildings. The Main Street Project can create a partnership with the Bryan Historic Landmark Commission, the Bryan Public Library, the Carnegie Library, the Brazos County Historical Commission, the Brazos Heritage Society (a citizen based organization that promotes historic preservation in the community), and other appropriate groups to reach students in the 3rd and 7th grade "community" and "Texas History" curriculum elements, respectively. Teachers and school administrators seeking broader community involvement in local education usually welcome tours of downtown, a presentation in the classroom and other similar activities.
- Palace Theater Events: The Palace Theater is a downtown amenity that should be used to its greatest potential. The canopy expands the opportunities for use because of its ability to mitigate the weather. Evening uses for concerts or other types of performances will increase the potential base of customers for restaurants and other retail businesses that remain open later. Weekend events would have a similar impact.



Evening and weekend events at the Palace Theater will increase the potential base of customers for restaurants and other retail businesses that remain open longer in the evenings and on weekends.

Cross Promotion

Cross promotions with regional attractions outside of Bryan are another effective way to expand visitor stays in the area. The following cross promotion opportunities should be pursued:

- *City of Brenham:* The historic courthouse square town has antiques shopping and is the home of Blue Bell Ice Cream. In addition, Brenham is the home of miniature horses raised by nuns.
- *Washington-on-the-Brazos:* The Texas Declaration of Independence was signed at this location. The Texas Historical Commission is promoting the "Independence Heritage Trail", which includes Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historical Park.
- *Burton:* This farming community has a National Historic Landmark cotton gin museum that is promoted nationally.



Grand Opening of the Queen Theatre in 1939, following its one and only renovation.

Source: Carnegie Library



Today the Queen Theatre stands as a neglected relic begging to be restored to its former grandeur.



Located on North Main, the Stage Center building serves a very basic purpose for community theatre, but it is not an ideal long-term facility for the needs of its users.



Performing Arts

Existing and potential performing arts opportunities for Downtown Bryan include the following:

Queen Theatre

The Queen Theatre, located at 110 South Main, was built in 1914 and remodeled in 1939 with a new Art Deco / Art Moderne facade. Its exterior design, complete with a royal crown capping the roof, makes it an important landmark for downtown. This building's features include 550 seats, an upper floor balcony, and air conditioning. However, the ticket booth has been removed, the inside furnishings are deteriorated, there are spots in the ceiling that are exposed to the elements, some of the stairs are rotting, and the 8 ft. deep stage is insufficient for today's theatrical needs. Regardless, there has been interest in recent years in rehabilitating the structure for uses related to its original use. Although a restoration will be costly and will need to include an expanded stage area, potential future uses might include live theater, a dinner theater, musical performances, and meeting space. Because of the catalyst benefits that the Queen's restoration and reuse could have on adjacent properties, any efforts to restore the building should be strongly supported by the Main Street Project and the City. There are numerous examples around the country of non-profit entities that have been created to successfully restore historic theaters.

Stage Center

The only live theater presently located in Downtown Bryan is found at Stage Center, located at 701 North Main. Stage Center, in existence since 1965, is the oldest live community theater in the Bryan-College Station area. The one-story structure was built during the first half of the 20th century, and its construction consists of brick covered in Carrera glass. It was originally built as a car dealership. While it has been adapted to serve the most fundamental needs of the theater, it is not an ideal long-term facility given the needs of its users. Therefore, other alternatives should be kept in mind as new development and restorations occur throughout Downtown Bryan. Of utmost importance, however, is keeping the theater somewhere in the downtown area, as it provides the sort of evening activity and cultural value that is sorely needed in Downtown Bryan.

Other Opportunities

In addition to Stage Center, another theater group currently exists in Bryan. The Theatre is a larger group and they have space in a 1970s suburban mall. Because of the many benefits that live theater brings to a downtown, as noted above, any future opportunities to encourage them to relocate downtown should be pursued.

Historic District Ordinances & Guidelines

Historic Preservation Ordinance

Chapter 12 of Bryan's codes addresses the City's historic preservation policy, and it was last revised in 1997. It consists of four articles. Article I, entitled "In General," is non-substantive, while the other three articles are critiqued below. It is noteworthy that the State's enabling legislation for historic preservation is extremely general and provides very few limitations regarding Bryan's policies. In general, Bryan's preservation ordinance is well written and includes the key provisions typically found in model preservation ordinances. Below are recommendations for potential minor improvements to the ordinance.

Article II. Historic Landmark Commission

Number of Commission Members

The language currently reads that the commission shall consist of "seven (7) members." It is recommended that this section be amended to clarify that the creation of additional historic districts would trigger an increase in the number of members (one additional member for each newly created district).

Commission Member Composition

The ordinance presently requires that each individual historic district be represented by a resident of that district. Because the existing downtown district is primarily commercial in nature with very little existing housing, it is recommended that the district representative be allowed to be either a resident or a property owner of the district.

Commission Function

Although Section 12-17 describes numerous powers of the Commission, including the preparation of a preservation plan and recommendations for historic landmark designation, it does not provide the authority to review applications for a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). This deficiency should be remedied. It is noteworthy that Section 17 of the Downtown Historical District ordinance does indeed indicate that the Commission has the authority to review applications.

Article III. Historic Landmarks

Administrative Approvals

Neither the City's preservation ordinance nor the design guidelines establish a process for "administrative approvals" for dealing with minor applications. It is recommended that less significant proposed work, such as signs, be approved administratively by the staff preservation planner. Such an approach will still require complete documentation of the approval for the record, and it is best accomplished for those issues for which clear guidelines exist. The benefit is that applicants will not be stalled for very minor work, which will greatly enhance how the public perceives the City and its approval process.

Article IV. Historic Districts

This article consists of multiple "divisions," of which Division 1 ("Generally") and Division 3 ("Downtown Historical District") are relevant to this plan, as follows:

DIVISION 1. GENERALLY

Sec. 12-59. Establishment of Historic Districts

With respect to the various items of information required of all historic sites for district designation under (a)(4), it is recommended that the requirement of information on the "Chain of uses and ownership" be an optional item. Otherwise, the amount of necessary deed research might make future district designations cost-prohibitive.

Under (a)(8) there is a requirement that 75% of property owners within the proposed district indicate their support for designation in writing. Getting 75% of property owners to support in writing even the most beneficial program conceivable would be a major challenge. It is recommended that this threshold be lowered, and rather than it being based on an affirmative writing, it might be based on a certain percentage of owners stating in writing that they do not support designation. While there is no clear "right or wrong" threshold that is appropriate for every community, the threshold used by other communities in Texas with successful preservation programs should be considered.

Sec. 12-61. District Preservation Plan

Among the various design considerations listed in item (5), general urban design issues such as building height, setback, scale and massing should be included.

DIVISION 3. DOWNTOWN HISTORICAL DISTRICT

Design Standards in General

This ordinance includes several pages of detailed design standards addressing issues such as signs, materials, roofs, windows, and canopies. It is recommended that these standards be removed from the ordinance, and the ordinance address only legal and procedural issues. Not only are design standards typically best addressed within a separate set of illustrated design guidelines, but by removing them from the body of the ordinance, they can be interpreted and implemented more flexibly as guidelines that supplement the ordinance. It is noteworthy that, at present, some of the standards found within the ordinance are much more detailed than those found in the City's existing design guidelines document. An example of this is the section on signage. If the City wants to go into the level of detail on such issues as in the signage section of the ordinance, the guidelines would need to be amended to do so. Although the design standards currently contained in the ordinance should be removed, the following comments apply:

Sign Regulations

In general, permitted signage area and signage lettering heights may be too restrictive and should be studied in detail to form more appropriate regulations.

Wall Signs

There is a contradiction in that wall signs are defined as "extending not more than twelve (12) inches from the wall of a building," yet the wall sign standards prohibit wall signs "projecting more than 18 inches from the vertical building surface." This conflicting language leaves a 6-inch "gray area" that is unclear.

Awning Signs

The requirement that text characters be no more than 8 inches

in height is extremely limiting and should be reconsidered for a larger size.

Detached Signs

This type of sign is prohibited but not defined.

Windows

This section fails to require that windows be vertically oriented, in keeping with the historic character of the district.

Exterior Walls

Among the materials permitted are "bevel type wood" and "wood shingle," neither of which are historically appropriate for the district.

Blinds and Shutters

This section lists a variety of permitted shutter types, but shutters are not historically appropriate for Bryan's downtown commercial buildings based upon historic photographs. The Design Guidelines document (1995) also states that their use was "minimal" and they should not be allowed without historical documentation. This provision should be amended accordingly.

Materials: New Construction

This section indicates that wood siding was a "predominant" material used on buildings in the district and one that is allowed. However, there is no evidence of this material's predominant use on the district's existing historic buildings, and the 1995 Design Guidelines state that the "Use of wood as an exterior material on Bryan commercial historic resources is limited." This material should be discouraged or prohibited as an exterior siding.

Elements: New Construction

This section encourages the use of elements such as "Victorian storefronts," but it needs to discourage the use of elements from an inappropriate era or style (i.e., colonial small-paned windows, etc.).

Design Guidelines

The City's existing design guidelines booklet was adopted in 1995. In general, it is an effective set of guidelines, as it is well organized, comprehensive, not so detailed as to prohibit flexibility, based upon federal standards, and well illustrated. The following comments apply:

Introduction

Because the entire guidelines document is based upon federal standards (Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines), as is the City's historic preservation ordinance, this section should make a stronger case for the fact that following those standards can result in a very lucrative investment tax credit for qualified rehabilitation projects for income-producing properties.

Awnings

The photo on the top of page 40 should not be considered a "compatible" design for either the awnings or the building facade.

New Additions & New Construction

The section on new additions to existing historic buildings calls for "using a contemporary design for a new addition in a manner

that makes clear what is historic and what is new." Similarly, the guidelines for new construction state that "new construction should be differentiated from the old as to not confuse what is modern and what is historic." While this approach is based in large part upon the federal guidelines, it is a complex issue which requires a more detailed explanation than the three pages presently dedicated to the subject. This topic would also be best served by the use of more illustrations. As written, it could be easily misinterpreted in a manner that would result in very incompatible additions and new construction. There are many alternative methods for distinguishing new construction from the original historic fabric without having to resort to a clearly "contemporary" design. This one particular area is the single greatest weakness of the City's current design guidelines.

Sidewalk Enhancements

This section of the guidelines would be much more useful if it included actual designs for streetlights, benches, trash receptacles, and other streetscape furnishings.

Illustrations

It is recommended that the location references of the photographs used throughout the guidelines not be included. The vast majority of images are from Colorado. Not only are the historic architectural typologies being used sometimes inconsistent with Bryan's historic downtown, but the degree to which a reader is receptive to certain ideas can be affected by something as seemingly insignificant as the geographic location of the models being used. Also, the illustrations would be more effective if a graphic method (symbol, etc.) was used that clearly distinguishes the positive examples from the negative examples, rather than relying solely on the captions, which are sometimes lengthy.

Certificate of Appropriateness Application

Although this section of the guidelines wisely acknowledges that "Documentation supporting the application will vary depending on the complexity of the project," it then goes on to list the minimal information required for any type of application. This information includes a site plan, a floor plan, a foundation plan and exterior elevations, all of which must include dimension measurements for all features. These requirements are excessive for many types of applications, and should not be required unless absolutely necessary.

Certificate of Appropriateness Process

This section indicates that the "Historic Landmark Commission meets on the second Wednesday of each month." It is recommended that this date not be specified in the guidelines in order to allow for the flexibility to change this date without having to revise the guidelines document.

Also, neither the design guidelines nor the City's preservation ordinance establish a process for "administrative approvals" for dealing with minor applications. It is recommended that less significant proposed work, such as signs, be approved administratively by the staff preservation planner. Such an approach will still require complete documentation of the approval, and it is best accomplished for those issues for which clear guidelines exist. The benefit is that applicants will not be stalled for very minor work, and it will greatly enhance how the public perceives the City and its approval process.

Building Code Compliance

Historic Buildings

Bryan's wealth of historic buildings distinguishes it from many other communities across Texas and the nation. With proper maintenance, preservation, and rehabilitation, Bryan can capitalize on this important resource. However, many of the buildings in Downtown Bryan were constructed in the late 19th and early 20th century and were subject to only the most rudimentary building codes, if they were subject to any codes at all. Today, property owners who want to rehabilitate a historic structure are often faced with the daunting task of bringing an older building up to modern codes. In many cases, the time and money associated with bringing a building into compliance with current codes is cost-prohibitive, resulting in many structures remaining vacant and inhibiting redevelopment efforts.

Buildings in the City of Bryan are subject to the *1994 Standard Existing Building Code*, which is a model code published by the Southern Building Code Congress International, Inc. Chapter 3 of the *Standard Existing Building Code* does have special provisions for buildings classified by either a state or local jurisdiction as historic buildings. Although this issue is beyond the authority of the City of Bryan, this language should be amended to include buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places and buildings included in a National Register Historic District.

The City of Bryan has a designated Downtown Historic District, and qualified buildings within this district are considered designated historic buildings. The City should obtain local historic designations for other eligible buildings so that they can be classified as historic buildings. In particular, the City should work with the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Division of Architecture to obtain National Register (NR) and Recorded Texas Historic Landmarks (RTHL) designations for as many buildings as possible. This designation may afford the building owner more strength in negotiating variances to the technical code, thus potentially making adaptability more affordable. This idea of expanding the historic district has already been recommended within this plan for other purposes, such as to take advantage of the federal investment tax credit for building rehabilitation.

Once a building has a historic designation, the building owner may be able to negotiate provisions of the technical code with the local building official. The local building officials must be educated regarding issues encountered in the rehabilitation of historic buildings. One means of educating local code officials would be for representatives to attend lectures that are occasionally held by the Texas Historical Commission's (THC) Division of Architecture. When appropriate, the THC can also provide letters of support to owners where strict compliance with local codes may threaten or destroy the historic significance of a building or its features. The THC is a valuable resource that should be consulted during the rehabilitation process.

It is very important for property owners seeking to rehabilitate historic buildings to establish a good relationship with building code officials and to get them involved early in the process. Often, issues will arise in the course of a rehabilitation project in which the property owner will not be able to meet the "letter of the law" in terms of satisfying code requirements. However, if a good relationship has been established, code officials may be willing to work with property owners to find alternatives that meet the intent or "spirit" of the code. Furthermore, it is to the property owner's advantage to hire an architect who is knowledgeable with the *1994 Standard Existing Building Code*, and who has worked on the restoration and rehabilitation of several historic buildings. If code problems arise during the rehabilitation process, knowledgeable professionals will likely be able to find alternative solutions that satisfy the intent of the law, and they may know how to more effectively communicate with local officials.

In summary, the rehabilitation of historic buildings in Bryan will take a pro-active effort on the part of the City. An environment must be created in which property owners feel the City is working with them, not against them, in their efforts to rehabilitate historic structures. The City of Bryan Building Services Department policy is to judge buildings on an individual basis in regard to public interest of health, safety and welfare regarding any proposed construction, alteration, repair, enlargement, or restoration. Items that are particular to concern to building services are meeting the requirements for egress, exits and doorways as well as ADA requirements for restrooms. The Building Services Department has suggested that it would be beneficial for the City to develop a supplemental local code for dealing with historic buildings. This supplemental code could be developed by examining similar codes for historic buildings developed by other communities throughout the country. The ultimate goal should be for all parties to work together to promote adaptability of historic buildings within the parameters of health, safety, and welfare.



Bryan's wealth of historic buildings distinguishes it from many other communities across Texas and the nation. With proper maintenance, preservation, and rehabilitation, Bryan can capitalize on this important resource.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Buildings are required to comply with Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS), which are based upon the federal Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG). The Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulations adopted the Texas Accessibility Standards (TAS) on December 17, 1993. TAS applies to subject buildings and facilities constructed on or after April 1, 1994.

Future Renovation, Modifications, or Alterations

Under TAS, if alterations are made to an existing facility, any alterations or new construction must fully comply. Additionally, if alterations are performed within an area containing a primary function, then TAS requires that certain other conditions be brought into compliance.

TAS 4.1.6(1)(a) No alteration shall be undertaken which decreases or has the effect of decreasing accessibility or usability of a building or facility below the requirements for new construction at the time of alteration.

TAS 4.1.6(2) Alterations to an Area Containing a Primary Function: In addition to the requirements of 4.1.6(1), an alteration that affects or could affect the usability of or access to an area containing a primary function shall be made so as to ensure that the accessible route to the altered area and the parking, restrooms, telephones, and drinking fountains serving the altered area, are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, unless such alterations are disproportionate to the overall alterations in terms of cost and scope.

If any office walls are removed, relocated, or added, they would be considered alteration areas containing a primary function. In addition, any non-compliant parking, toilet rooms, drinking fountains, telephones, or accessible route items serving the altered area would be required to be brought into compliance.

Historic Significance

TAS makes provisions for historic preservation projects in Section 4.1.7

*TAS 4.1.7(1)(a) Accessible Buildings: Historic Preservation, Applicability, General Rule. Alterations to a *qualified* historic building or facility shall comply...unless it is determined in accordance with procedures in 4.1.7(2) that compliance with the requirements for accessible routes (exterior and interior), ramps, entrances, or toilets would *threaten or destroy* the historic significance of the building or facility in which case the minimum requirements in 4.1.7(3) may be used for the feature.*

A qualified historic building or facility is a building or facility that is: (1) listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places; or (2) designated as a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark or State Archeological Landmark.

As indicated in the TAS requirements, there is some latitude afforded to compliance with these standards due to the age and historic significance of this structure. Alterations to historic properties must comply to these standards to the maximum extent feasible. Under those provisions, alterations should be done in full compliance with alteration standards for other types of buildings. However, if following the usual standards would threaten or destroy the historic significance of a feature of the building, alternative standards may be utilized which meet the intent of the code. The decision to use alternative standards must be made in consultation with the appropriate advisory board designated in ADAAG. While accessibility components are grouped according to priority, ADA compliance in general should be considered a top priority. An Application for Variance documenting historical significance would be the procedure to provide a request for use of the minimum requirements as called out in TAS 4.1.7(3). Also, historic door hardware does not meet current ADA guidelines. An application for variance should be submitted for historic hardware where preservation is considered vital.

Owners of historic buildings should consult with the Texas Historical Commission on areas of non-compliance that they believe, if modified would threaten or destroy the historic significance of the building or its features. The THC has been very helpful on working with building owners and architects, and either providing Letters of Determination to the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation (TDLR) for elements or features that are significant, or providing letters of support for variances.

Existing Funding & Financial Incentives

A variety of financial tools and programs are already available to stimulate and assist revitalization in Downtown Bryan. These tools and programs include the following:

Federal Incentive Programs

20% Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit: The rehabilitation tax credit is a federal program that provides for a tax credit in the amount of 20% of the total qualified rehabilitation expenditures for certified historic buildings. A certified historic building is a building listed individually on the National Register of Historic Places, a contributing building in a National Register District, or a contributing building in a locally designated historic district. Owner-occupied residential structures (single-family homes and condominiums) do not qualify for the credit. The investment tax credit is promoted in the City's brochure "Business Development Incentives for Historic Downtown Bryan." To make this program available to more building owners, the City should undertake the process of nominating buildings to the National Register. However, even with designation this program is difficult to use for small projects for a variety of reasons. Architects and contractors that are not familiar with the Secretary of Interior's Standards (basis of the criteria for the certification of the rehabilitation) are often frustrated by the requirements. Property owners that are not in the everyday business of real estate are subject to the passive loss rules of the Internal Revenue Code, which can significantly reduce the value of the tax credit. Finally, the Secretary of Interior's Standards can sometimes have a disproportionate impact on smaller projects and significantly reduce the value of the tax credit.

Conservation Easement Donations: A conservation easement (sometimes known as a "facade easement") is an agreement between a not-for-profit or a local government and a property owner to maintain the historic character of a building. The value of the easement donation constitutes a charitable gift deductible by the donor (owner of the building) for federal tax purposes. The value of the charitable gift deduction is the difference between the value of the property before the easement donation and the value of the property after the easement donation. Experience indicates that the value of the easement is typically in the range of 10 percent to 15 percent of the value of the property before the easement donation. A significant education effort must be undertaken for this program to be successful. In addition, an infrastructure for dealing with donations must be developed. For example, a sample easement document must be developed; a local or state organization or the City of Bryan must be willing to accept easement donations; and local expertise must be developed to deal with complex legal and appraisal issues.

Housing Incentives: There are established federal programs, including low-income housing tax credits and HOME investment partnership funds, that are available through the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs (TDHCA) and local municipalities. These programs can be used to promote affordable residential development in the downtown. The low-

income housing tax credit program provides a tax credit of approximately 70% of the eligible basis (construction or rehabilitation costs) of a project. The tax credits are competitively allocated by the TDHCA. The tax credits must be used to make housing available to those at 60% of area median income (AMI). HOME funds can be used in conjunction with the tax credits. In addition, such funds can be used for the development of for-sale housing to those earning 80% to 120% of AMI. Neither program is designed to promote high end residential product. However, both programs allow for the diversification of housing types. Information to help market these programs is available through TDHCA.

Small Business Loans & Grants: Loans, grants and technical assistance are available from the federal Small Business Administration. Bryan is included in the Houston, Texas District office of the SBA. Programs include small business development centers, small business investment companies, preferred and certified lenders, microloan information, and export assistance. The availability of these programs should be promoted by the Main Street Project to businesses in Downtown Bryan. In addition, the Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) is available to provide services to small businesses. A local office is located in Bryan (Brazos Valley SCORE).

TEA-21: The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21) markedly increases the availability of funds for transportation projects, provides Texas and other donor states with a fairer share of federal highway funds, and builds upon ISTEA's emphasis on the need for safer, more efficient management of integrated, multimodal transportation systems. States, local governments, and metropolitan planning organizations are eligible for discretionary grants under the program. The grants may be used for planning and implementing plans that will help achieve the following goals: improve transportation efficiency, reduce the negative effects of transportation on the environment, reduce the need for costly future public infrastructure investments, and give people better access to jobs, services and trade centers. Currently, these funds are being requested for a project to connect the Bryan Visitors Center with Main Street with streetscape improvement.

Local Incentive Programs

Paint Program: The City's paint program provides grants up to \$1,999 (exempt from Davis-Bacon) for painting of facades. The program is administered through the Development Services department of the City. The use of the paint program is restricted to the local downtown historic district. It is recommended that the paint program be expanded so that it can be used throughout the entire downtown area.

Waiver of Fees: To help lower the cost of rehabilitation, the City provides for the waiver of building permit fees. Waiver of building fees is used citywide when the City enters into a development agreement with a developer, or in other cases where incentive programs are used. Fees can be waived up to 100 percent,

however, they are typically not a significant portion of the project costs.

Business Development Loan: This loan program, administered by City of Bryan, is focused on job creation. It provides loans with below market terms to businesses that will be creating new jobs. The interest rate is approximately 4%, the term is typically 7 to 10 years, and the loan is amortized over 15 to 30 years. A drawback of the program is that loan funds come from Community Development Block Grant funds. This requires that any project receiving funds comply with the federal Davis-Bacon prevailing wage rules, thus decreasing the benefit of the below-market terms, particularly on smaller projects.

Building Improvement Loan: This City of Bryan loan program is similar to the Business Development Loan except that it is focused on building improvements. Eligible activities include roof repair, facade improvement, correction of code violations, structural stabilization, handicap accessibility, and abatement of hazardous substances. Loan amounts range from \$1,000 to \$50,000. Properties located within the core study area are eligible to apply for this program. Properties located outside of the core study area, but eligible to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places, may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Façade Grants: The City has recently established a facade matching grant program that provides up to \$50,000 in matching funds to property owners that rehabilitate the façade of their building. Properties located within the core study area are eligible to apply for this program. Properties located outside of the core study area, but eligible to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places, may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Buildings that qualify for this program must be used for commercial or multi-family uses.

Recommendations

The many existing programs must be vigorously promoted to encourage revitalization of the downtown. Listing of buildings on the National Register of Historic Places should be encouraged to increase the number of buildings that are eligible for the 20% Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit. This could be most readily accomplished by a City effort to expand the existing downtown historic district listing or create separate historic districts. The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. The National Park Service administers the National Register, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior, in collaboration with the Texas Historical Commission.

Listing in the National Register contributes to preserving historic properties in a number of ways:

- Recognition that a property is of significance to the Nation, the State, or the community.
- Consideration in the planning for Federal or federally assisted, funded or licensed projects.
- Eligibility for federal tax benefits.
- Qualification for federal assistance for historic preservation, when funds are available.

Under federal law, owners of private property listed in the National Register are free to maintain, manage, or dispose of their property as they choose, provided that there is no federal involvement (licensing, funding, etc.).

The existing City-sponsored programs are limited in their effectiveness because the funds used are federal CDBG funds. Federal rules require compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act. This requires that "prevailing wages" be paid by the contractor working on a rehabilitation project. Prevailing wages typically increase costs for small projects, often making feasibility of the project difficult. A new source of loan funds must be identified for small projects. Some of the programs, such as the Paint Program and the Building Improvement Loans, are limited in scope on a geographic basis to the downtown historic district. These programs must be made available throughout the downtown area.

Despite some of the difficulties involved in using the existing programs, greater efforts must be made to show how the programs can be used to create a successful project. According to the records provided by the City, during fiscal years 1999 and 2000, only five grants or loans were made in the downtown from the City's facade improvement, business development loan, and building improvement loan programs. These are important and very useful programs. The City and an active Main Street Project must promote the use of these funds by showing how projects using the incentives have benefited from the programs.

The City of Bryan should look creatively at existing funding programs to see how they can target Downtown Bryan. To ensure that revitalization occurs throughout the downtown, existing local programs should be expanded to include areas outside of the historic district for purposes of eligibility. Even if some of these incentives are of limited value, combining them for targeted projects will make them more attractive to developers. In addition, private investor equity is often overlooked as a source of funds. Sources of equity include the property owner, and other individuals, and corporations interested in downtown investment.

Proposed Funding & Financial Incentives

In addition to the various federal and local incentives already existing and addressed on the previous page, other new local incentives that should be considered are as follows:

Loan Pools: In many communities, local banks and branch offices of national and regional banks pool funds to establish below market rate loans for downtown rehabilitation and small business development. Bryan/College Station banks should be approached to establish such a loan pool for Downtown Bryan. These loan pools can be credited toward their federal Community Reinvestment Act requirements. If the banks are resistant, large depositors should be identified to help persuade the banks to establish a loan pool. Some communities have found that it is difficult to get banks to participate in such programs because many banks are no longer locally-owned. However, Beaumont, Texas, has been successful in establishing a revolving loan program. Revolving loan programs have a variety of underwriting criteria that are typically tied to sound lending criteria. However, the program should be targeted to a particular geographic area and should have a specific purpose (i.e. promote residential development in the downtown). The lending criteria can be "loosened" somewhat by having the City provide credit enhancement or full or partial guarantee of the loans.

Sales Tax Rebates and Increases: The City portion of the sales tax is 1.5% of total purchases; the total sales tax is 8.25%. Based upon state enabling legislation, all or a portion of the City's share could be rebated to new downtown merchants based on the size, number of jobs created, or sales taxes generated. In addition, the City could target types of businesses for the incentive. If there is sufficient political support for such a rebate in Bryan, it is advised that the recommended tenant mix contained in this plan serve as the basis for targeting business types. All of these considerations would need to be clearly conveyed as criteria included in the ordinance adopting such a rebate.

Another option adopted by Abilene and Harlingen involves implementing a \$0.005 or 0.5% sales tax for economic development. This sales tax could help finance improvements in the Downtown, provide more funds for grants and loans, and help finance the Main Street Project. Such a sales tax must be adopted by a vote of the City's residents.

Property Tax Relief: Section 11.24 of the Texas Tax Code authorizes a tax exemption for a structure and its land that is "(1) designated as a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark by the Texas Historical Commission and by the governing body of the taxing unit; or (2) designated as a historically significant site in need of tax relief to encourage its preservation . . ." The exemption was authorized by a constitutional amendment in the late 1970s. The exemption has been provided in different ways:

Dallas freezes the assessed value at the pre-renovation value and, in some cases, offers 100% abatement of property taxes. The difference is that, in the case of the "freeze," the property owner pays annual property taxes based on the pre-rehabilitation value (the property owner does not pay taxes on the improved value). In contrast, in the case of 100% abatement, the property owner pays no property taxes. According to the Texas Attorney General, property tax values can be "frozen" or taxes can be abated. It is recommended that tax relief be provided in Downtown Bryan for at least the City portion of the property tax for a period of at least 10 years following rehabilitation.

Downtown Property Tax Relief Options for the City of Bryan

- 1) Tie property tax relief to rehabilitation.
- 2) Tie property tax relief to historic status.
- 3) Freeze the assessed value of a property for a period of years.
- 4) Provide up to a 100% abatement for a period of years
- 5) Provide an abatement that begins at 100% and gradually decreases to 0%.

A few years ago the Bryan Historic Landmark Commission drafted an ordinance that provided for freezing the assessed value of buildings within a designated historic district and those listed on the Survey of Historic Resources of Bryan. The draft ordinance proposed that the property owner was eligible for an incentive incentive when the rehabilitation cost exceeded 50 percent of the pre-rehabilitation value of the property. The incentive allowed for full abatement of property taxes in years one through five, and 50 percent abatement of property taxes in years six through ten. It is recommended that the City consider a 100 percent abatement of property taxes for a period of ten years when the property owner's rehabilitation costs exceed 25 percent of the pre-rehabilitation value.

Technical Services: The City and/or the Main Street Project should provide technical services relating to Americans with Disabilities Act and building code compliance, especially for smaller projects that cannot support retaining the expertise necessary to undertake rehabilitation of a building. The services could be limited based on the cost of a project. This may require that the sponsor of these services put a local architect or engineer on retainer to provide the services to property owners. See Sheet 44 regarding building codes.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF): Tax increment financing permits the City, in an established TIF district, to use property tax revenues collected in excess of a base year to fund public infrastructure and other projects beneficial to the public in the TIF district. Bonds are issued, and the increment from the improvement of properties in the district is used to pay off the bonds. The TIF funds could be used for repair of sidewalks, curbs, utilities, landscaping, parking, and perhaps façade improvements, among others. An analysis of the potential increment should be undertaken before establishing a TIF district. Many cities have looked to the TIF program to finance public improvements. Larger cities have been more successful at implementing TIF districts because in smaller cities, the "increment" may not be large enough to support the bond capacity necessary to finance significant public improvements. However, Abilene instituted a TIF in the early 1980s that was successful in helping downtown.

Public Improvement District (PID): This locally administered program (under state authorized legislation) provides for an additional ad valorum property tax assessment to finance public improvements in an identified district. The property owners included in the district must first adopt the assessment through a referendum. The funds collected from the assessment are used for a variety of public improvements. This incentive is not currently being used in Bryan, but it is being used in Harlingen in southern Texas. Their PID has financed a number of street improvements. In Bryan, a PID should be pursued after the City undertakes some visible infrastructure improvements on its own. Until local property owners see that the City is serious about improving local infrastructure, it is doubtful that local property owners will vote to increase their own taxes to pay for improvements beyond those normally expected through the current tax structure. Once adopted, the PID revenues could become an important funding source for the recommended Main Street Project.

Other Incentives

In addition to the various incentives recommended above, there are three additional strategies that the City can employ in order to attract developers to Downtown Bryan. First, relief from certain building code requirements can be a significant incentive to some developers, particularly those dealing with historic structures. Building codes are discussed in detail on Sheet 44 of this plan. Secondly, making city owned property available for parking and enhancing adjacent lots for parking can relieve challenges associated with limited parking for potential users. Lastly, infrastructure improvements should not be overlooked as an important incentive for private sector investment. This plan already includes a schematic design for those streetscape segments within the core study area of Downtown Bryan. Likewise, there are recommendations above regarding the funding of infrastructure improvements through tax increment financing (TIF). If it is concluded that a TIF district is not feasible for Downtown Bryan, other City funding options, such as CDBG funds, should be considered to fund streetscape improvements that will be a valuable incentive for attracting developers to Downtown Bryan.

Downtown Housing

While the incentives discussed on this page are relevant to a wide variety of land uses and development types, housing is a particularly desirable use for Downtown Bryan that should be given a high priority. Not only does housing, to a limited extent, help the retail and service sectors of the Downtown economy, but it also reinforces a more lived-in atmosphere that will, in turn, attract more consumers living outside of Downtown Bryan. Rather than creating additional new incentives specifically for housing, it is recommended that the incentives already recommended here for development in general be packaged together or individually adjusted for housing, as follows:

Loan Pool Program - As noted in the section of this page containing recommendations for starting a loan pool, the loan pool program might be targeted to "a specific purpose." That purpose might be housing, rather than allowing the program to be used for other non-residential projects.

Property Tax Relief - The section of this page addressing property tax relief incentives suggests a wide variety of potential levels of relief in accordance with the state tax code. Levels of relief could range from simply freezing assessed values for a limited number of years to a complete waiver of all property taxes for a limited amount of time. Regardless of what level of relief the City chooses to offer, it is recommended that the most substantial level of relief be reserved exclusively for housing. For example, the City might consider giving a complete waiver of taxes for a limited duration for housing projects, while simply offering a freeze on the assessed value for non-residential uses.

Technical Services - The section of this page recommending the provision of technical services for ADA and codes compliance suggests that such services be limited to small-scale projects that typically cannot afford the luxury of such expertise. In order to encourage housing development, consideration should be given to not limiting this service to any particular scale of development for those cases in which housing is involved.

Other Incentives - The "other" incentives suggested on this page included: 1) building code relief, 2) providing public parking for private projects, and 3) infrastructure improvements. Any of these incentives could be limited in such a way as to give preferential treatment to housing over other uses.

In summary, the challenge in developing an incentive package for housing is to be able to offer enough of an incentive that makes housing a more attractive use to developers than non-residential options. At the same time, however, incentives available for non-residential uses should not be made so insignificant as to not encourage developers to pursue retail and office projects in Downtown Bryan.

Plan Implementation Steps

Step 1

- Begin the establishment of a new downtown organization (hire director, appoint board, find office space, etc.)
- Implement all recommended public policy changes (zoning, historic district expansion, etc.)
- Develop an enhanced parking lot behind the Carnegie Library
- Implement remedial streetscape enhancements to repair/patch sidewalks and related infrastructure throughout the Downtown where critical problems now exist
- Implement the Phase 1 streetscape improvements:
 - Connecting the John William Coulter House, the Bryan Visitor's Center and the Carnegie Library (funded by TXDOT's "STEP" program)
- Begin preparation of design documents for remaining streetscape improvements

Step 2

- Implement Phase 2 streetscape improvements:
 - Main Street: 28th St. to 24th St.
- Initiate marketing to potential investors and business recruitment candidates

Step 3

- Implement Phase 3 streetscape improvements:
 - Bryan Avenue: 28th St. to 24th St.
- Implement the South College Gateway Park and adjacent streetscape:
 - Main Street: 29th St. to 28th St.
- Initiate marketing to the general public

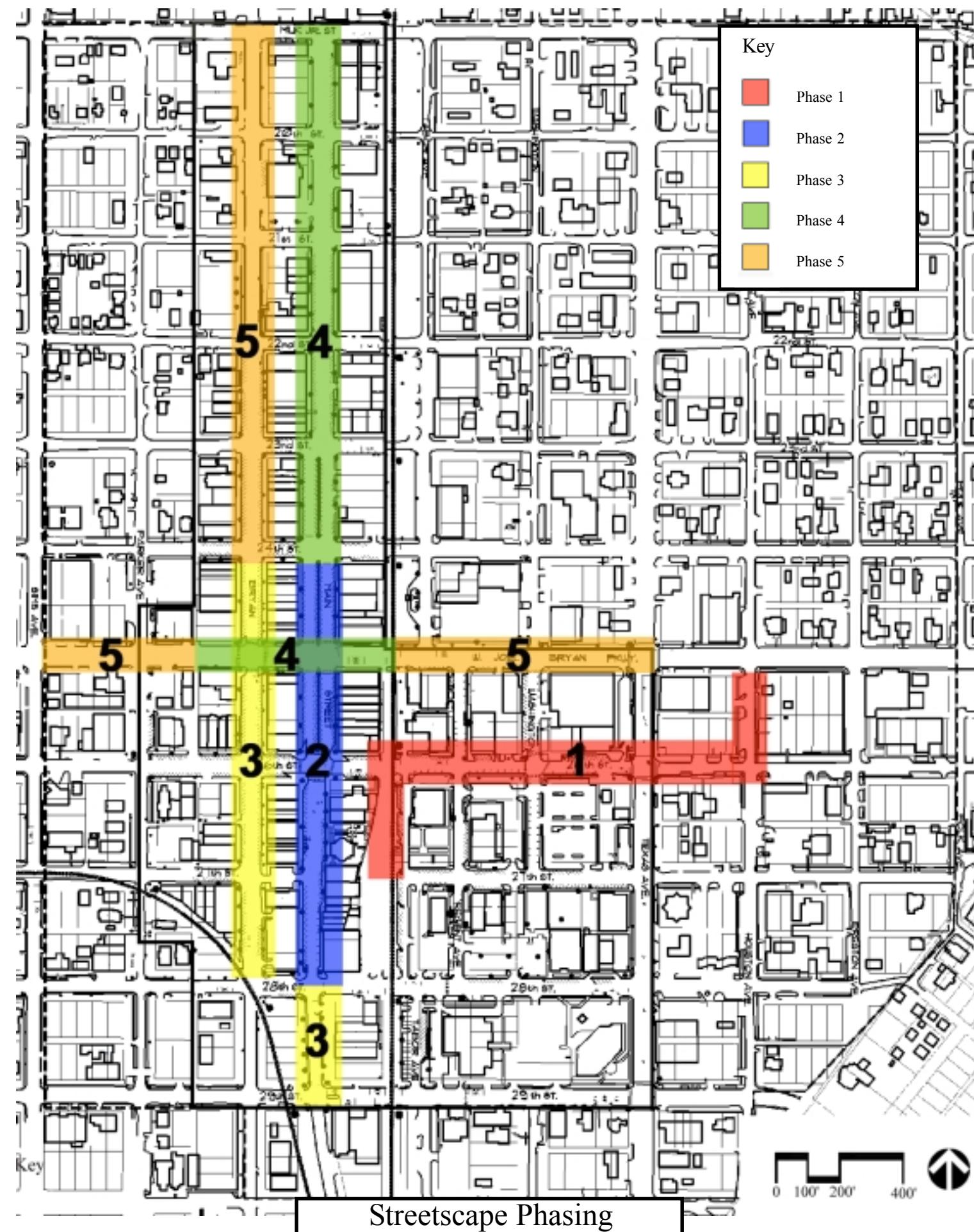
Step 4

- Implement Phase 4 streetscape improvements:
 - Main Street: 24th St. to MLK, Jr. St., including the gateway at MLK
 - WJ Bryan Pkwy.: from alley between Parker & Bryan Aves. to RR tracks

Step 5

- Implement Phase 5 streetscape improvements:
 - WJ Bryan Pkwy.: Sims Ave. to alley between Parker & Bryan Aves. & RR tracks to Texas Ave., including both gateways
 - Bryan Ave.: 24th St. to MLK

When scheduling streetscape work, the winter holiday shopping season should be avoided.



Phasing Recommendations

Any realistic downtown master plan must recognize limited public resources in terms of both money and manpower. Consequently, this plan suggests a phasing scheme for its numerous recommendations.

Overall Phasing Approach

The phasing recommendations will be based upon the following approach:

- Implement first all recommendations that require no funds, limited funds, or are already funded, such as public policy amendments (zoning, historic district expansion, parking management, etc.), and the Phase 1 streetscape work.
- In order to implement this master plan, an entity charged with that task as its primary mission must be established.
- Physical improvements should initially be concentrated within a highly focused area, and then expanded to adjacent areas as funds become available and as market forces generate momentum.
- Marketing and promotion efforts should initially be targeted toward investors and candidates for business recruitment, and later targeted toward the broader consumer market following an initial "product enhancement" phase.

Streetscape Phasing

The map and text at left illustrate the recommended phasing order for streetscape improvements. This phasing is based upon the principle of concentrating limited financial resources within a targeted area having the greatest potential to become physically enhanced and economically vibrant. The exception to this rule is Phase 1, which is already funded. As additional public funds become available they should be invested in those adjacent areas holding the greatest promise for the future. Once detailed streetscape design and cost estimates are prepared, the recommended phasing may require slight adjustments based upon available funding. Also, it is premature to suggest a specific schedule for each step listed at the left. However, it is currently envisioned that Step 1 will occur over roughly the next six (6) months, while Step 2 will occur during approximately the six (6) month period following Step 1.

With respect to the masterplan's proposed Civic District improvements, these initiatives will have to be timed in accordance with the other planned projects within that area. For example, the ultimate site selection and design of the planned Brazos Transit Center will impact the design of the proposed Library Plaza and the Washington Avenue corridor leading to the proposed Civic Commons. Likewise, the Civic Commons' design will need to be correlated with the design of the planned public building that will anchor the southern end of the commons (potentially the new Justice Center). While the Civic District's design and improvements should be coordinated with these other planned structures, those projects should not stall or compromise the overall concept and intent of the Civic District as proposed in this master plan. It is recommended that the detailed design of the Civic District's public spaces and streetscapes occur as soon as is practical in order to insure a cohesive design.

Appendix A: Facade Recommendations

As part of this plan, an exterior conditions facade survey of all buildings along Main Street and Bryan Avenue, between Martin Luther King Jr. Street and East 29th Street, as well as selected buildings elsewhere within the Core Study Area was conducted. The survey documentation includes text and photographs, and information addressing existing conditions, historic/architectural significance, potential physical enhancements, and costs. Recommendations for facade improvements are provided in both graphic and text form. The recommendations include “sketch overs” of photographs of individual buildings to compare “before” and “after” scenarios. Approximate cost range estimates for facade improvements are also provided. These recommendations take into consideration both the City’s existing design guidelines and any amendments or additions recommended per this plan.

Methodology

In order to provide services for historic research, building survey, and budget estimating for the numerous buildings within the project limits, an approach was developed that would be efficient as well as effective. First, research was conducted to collect archival photographic documentation of exterior streetscape facades, and other resources were available for buildings within the project limits. This research assisted the team in the analysis of historic building facade elements and features in relation to their existing conditions. A standard form was then developed in order to streamline and create a consistent assessment of the buildings’ exterior envelope. The facades of each building in the project limits were studied for material identification, conditions of existing historic and contemporary materials, and building Code and ADA deficiencies. Digital photographs documenting the exterior streetscape facades in the project limits were taken. A survey profile of each streetscape facade within the project limits was composed and includes the following information:

- Photograph of exterior streetscape facade in its current condition.
- Historic photograph if available.
- Address of property.
- Style of building.
- Date of construction if known.
- Written narrative describing existing materials and conditions.
- Written narrative describing recommendations for restoration or repair. These recommendations were based upon guidelines established by the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Reporting and Reconstructing Historic Buildings* and by the criteria established in the downtown historic district Design Guidelines.
- Description of building and ADA deficiencies.
- Annotated drawing sketch-over or photograph describing structural or cosmetic repairs needed.
- Budget estimate that indicates a range of price to restore or rehabilitate the exterior streetscape facade(s).

A budget estimate was then prepared for each exterior streetscape facade of the buildings in the project limits. The cost estimates were based on the recommendations in each profile and indicated a range of price to restore or rehabilitate the exterior facade. The estimates included materials, labor, general conditions, overhead and profit, and bonds.



Photo courtesy of the Bryan Public Library.



Photo courtesy of the Bryan Public Library.



Photo courtesy of the Bryan Public Library.

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A-28	117 North Main Street	A-79	201 West 26 th Street
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Appendix B: Downtown Bryan Market Survey Results

Number of surveys completed: 503

(*) Row percentages are calculated based on this total # of survey respondents

Which best describes where you live?		
	#	%
Downtown Bryan	19	3.8
Near Downtown Bryan	90	17.9
Elsewhere in Bryan or the Region	386	76.7

Do you work in Downtown Bryan?		
	#	%
Yes	110	21.9
No	387	76.9

When was the last time you visited Downtown Bryan?		
	#	%
Less than 1 week ago	282	56.1
1 week to 1 month ago	130	25.8
2 to 6 months ago	63	12.5
7 to 12 months ago	14	2.8
1 to 3 years ago	5	1.0
More than 3 years ago	3	0.6

How would you rate Downtown Bryan for each of the following?								
	Excellent (1)		Good (2)		Fair (3)		Poor (4)	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Dining	105	20.9	218	43.3	117	23.3	27	5.4
Parking Convenience	93	18.5	190	37.8	138	27.4	51	10.1
Pedestrian Friendly	86	17.1	231	45.9	113	22.5	27	5.4
Traffic Flow	69	13.7	241	47.9	136	27	22	4.4
Safety	57	11.3	231	45.9	148	29.4	25	5
Cleanliness	50	9.9	232	46.1	165	32.8	30	6
Shopping	45	8.9	136	27	200	39.8	85	16.9
Attractiveness	43	8.5	183	36.4	190	37.8	62	12.3
Entertainment	41	8.2	143	28.4	178	35.4	89	17.7
Housing	13	2.6	70	13.9	146	29	179	35.6

What are the top three (3) reasons you most frequently visit Downtown Bryan?									
	1		2		3		Un-numbered		Total
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
Dining	109	21.7	83	16.5	36	7.2	125	24.9	353 70.2
Work	75	14.9	5	1	9	1.8	43	8.5	132 26.2
Shopping	37	7.4	44	8.7	60	11.9	88	17.5	229 45.5
Carnegie Library	15	3	18	3.6	16	3.2	24	4.8	73 14.5
Special Events**	14	2.8	39	7.8	52	10.3	44	8.7	149 29.6
Pay Bills	14	2.8	26	5.2	10	2	45	8.9	95 18.9
Professional Services	11	2.2	10	2	9	1.8	23	4.6	53 10.5
Entertainment	8	1.6	25	5	22	4.4	22	4.4	77 15.3
Sightseeing	7	1.4	8	1.6	27	5.4	17	3.4	59 11.7
Children's Museum	6	1.2	13	2.6	7	1.4	26	5.2	52 10.3
Personal Services	4	0.8	5	1	6	1.2	7	1.4	22 4.4
Other (Please specify):									
Residence in Downtown	4	0.8	1	0.2	0	0	0	0	5 1
Library	4	0.8	9	1.8	3	0.6	7	1.4	23 4.6
Worship/Church	3	0.6	3	0.6	1	0.2	10	2	17 3.4
Volunteering	2	0.4	1	0.2	0	0	1	0.2	4 0.8
Visit friends	1	0.2	1	0.2	2	0.4	2	0.4	6 1.2
Check on Property	1	0.2	0	0	0	0	1	0.2	2 0.4
Collect Rent	1	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 0.2
Art District	1	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1 0.2
Post Office	1	0.2	0	0	0	0	2	0.4	3 0.6
Medical Center Pharmacy	1	0.2	1	0.2	1	0.2	0	0	3 0.6
Sheriff & Police Dept	0	0	1	0.2	0	0	0	0	1 0.2
County Courthouse	0	0	2	0.4	1	0.2	1	0.2	4 0.8
HLC Meetings	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.2	1 0.2
Meetings	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.2	1 0.2
City Hall	0	0	1	0.2	0	0	0	0	1 0.2

What street do you most frequently use to arrive and depart Downtown?		
	#	%
Texas Avenue	235	46.7
South College/South Main Street	122	24.3
William Joel Bryan Parkway	108	21.5
Bryan Avenue	51	10.1
Martin Luther King Jr. Street	31	6.2
Parker Avenue	7	1.4
Other: 29th St	2	0.4
West 28th St	1	0.2
East 26th St	1	0.2

When you drive, where do you most often park?		
	#	%
On the street	383	76.1
Parking lot of the business visited	96	19.1
Other: Varisco parking	1	0.2
Library	1	0.2
St. Andrews	1	0.2
Behind the Carnegie	1	0.2
Courthouse Parking	1	0.2
Don't drive to downtown	1	0.2

What do you like most about Downtown Bryan?

	#	%
Historic Character	297	59
Dining/Entertainment	147	29.2
Special Events	59	11.7
Shopping	49	9.7
Cultural Activities	17	3.4
Social Interaction	5	1
Library	2	0.4
Other:		
Central location	1	0.2
Churches	1	0.2
Children's Museum	1	0.2
Parking islands with historic lighting	1	0.2
Parker Astin	1	0.2
"My money stays in hometown!"	1	0.2
"Work here"	1	0.2
"It is not suburban sprawl"	1	0.2
"Train — gives atmosphere"	1	0.2

What do you like least about Downtown Bryan?

	#	%
Shopping Choices	160	31.8
Appearance	128	25.4
Safety Concerns	83	16.5
Parking Challenges	80	15.9
Panhandlers	74	14.7
Traffic	28	5.6
Other:		
Empty shops/lack of business	6	1.2
Railroad tracks - getting stopped by trains	3	0.6
Lack of action/lack of people	3	0.6
Number of unused buildings	3	0.6
Road conditions/South College Avenue	3	0.6
Gangsters/bums/drunks	2	0.4
Boot Camp	1	0.2
Streets & neighborhoods nearby are very run down	1	0.2
Street alignment	1	0.2
Twin City Mission	1	0.2
Deterioration of landmarks	1	0.2
Nothing	1	0.2

Where do you shop most often?

Please rank them as "1", "2" or "3" in order of frequency, with "1" being the most frequent.

	1	2	3	Un-numbered	TOTAL			
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Post Oak Mall	156	31	118	23.5	39	7.8	58	11.5
Wal-Mart/ Freedom Shooping Center	158	31.4	100	19.9	27	5.4	53	10.5
Downtown Bryan	22	4.4	42	8.3	69	13.7	19	3.8
Post Oak Square	6	1.2	28	5.6	54	10.7	6	1.2
Manor East Mall	7	1.4	25	5	52	10.3	8	1.6
Texas Pavilion Shopping Center	2	0.4	7	1.4	27	5.4	1	0.2
Woodstone Shopping Center	2	0.4	3	0.6	27	5.4	0	0
Other:							32	6.4
Target Center	4	0.8	0	0	2	0.4	12	2.4
Grocery Store/Kroger/HEB	4	0.8	1	0.2	4	0.8	5	1
Out of Town (Houston, Austin...)	2	0.4	0	0	3	0.6	5	1
College Station	2	0.4	2	0.4	0	0	4	0.8
Lowe's	0	0	0	0	1	0.2	2	0.4
Online	1	0.2	1	0.2	0	0	0	0
Culpepper Plaza	0	0	0	0	1	0.2	1	0.2
Individual Stores	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0.4
Catalogues/mail order	0	0	0	0	1	0.2	0	0
Texas Avenue	1	0.2	0	0	0	0	0	0
T J Max	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.2
Dollar Store	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.2
29th Street	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.2
St Joe's Gift Shop	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.2
Garden District	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0.2
Redmond Terrace	0	0	1	0.2	0	0	0	0
Old Town Spring	0	0	0	0	1	0.2	0	0

How would you rate Downtown Retail Stores according to the following?

	Excellent		Good		Fair	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Courtesy of Clerks	88	17.5	225	44.7	93	18.5
Parking Convenience	54	10.7	192	38.2	138	27.4
Window displays	49	9.7	203	40.4	131	26
Quality of Merchandise	45	8.9	218	43.3	128	25.4
Display of Merchandise	42	8.3	199	39.6	145	28.8
Cleanliness	40	8	221	43.9	149	29.6
Variety of Merchandise	35	7	150	29.8	161	32
Price of Merchandise	33	6.6	220	43.7	147	29.2
Days/Hours of Operation	28	5.6	175	34.8	180	35.8
Special Promotions	23	4.6	139	27.6	153	30.4

What kind of businesses would you like to see more of downtown?

Please circle your interest, High, Medium, or Low.

	High		Medium		Low		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Restaurant - Family	293	58.3	96	19.1	13	2.6	402	79.9
Bakery	284	56.5	100	19.9	16	3.2	400	79.5
Restaurant - Fine Dining	254	50.5	86	17.1	30	6	370	73.6
Bookstore	243	48.3	106	21.1	28	5.6	377	75
Movie Theatre	231	45.9	75	14.9	57	11.3	363	72.2
Department Store	203	40.4	114	22.7	59	11.7	376	74.8
Gift Shop	202	40.2	123	24.5	35	7	360	71.6
Hobby/Craft Store	185	36.8	121	24.1	55	10.9	361	71.8
Women's Apparel	182	36.2	117	23.3	56	11.1	355	70.6
Antiques	181	36	99	19.7	91	18.1	371	73.8
Florist	157	31.2	139	27.6	53	10.5	349	69.4
Restaurant - Theme	156	31	105	20.9	36	7.2	297	59
Night Club/Entertainment	154	30.6	87	17.3	97	19.3	338	67.2
Coffee House	134	26.6	98	19.5	46	9.1	278	55.3
Discount Store	134	26.6	124	24.7	100	19.9	358	71.2
Music Store (CD's)	130	25.8	126	25	81	16.1	337	67
Restaurant - Fast Food	130	25.8	96	19.1	117	23.3	343	68.2
Grocery Store	126	25	111	22.1	112	22.3	349	69.4
Shoe Store	123	24.5	153	30.4	71	14.1	347	69
Furniture Store	122	24.3	148	29.4	78	15.5	348	69.2
Drug Store	116	23.1	142	28.2	85	16.9	343	68.2
Children's Clothing	113	22.5	126	25	102	20.3	341	67.8
Jewelry Store	111	22.1	142	28.2	82	16.3	335	66.6
Fabric Store	108	21.5	134	26.6	108	21.5	350	69.6
Men's Clothing Store	100	19.9	136	27	95	18.9	331	65.8
Toy Store	96	19.1	113	22.5	128	25.4	337	67
Hardware Store	89	17.7	152	30.2	92	18.3	333	66.2
Video Rental Store	88	17.5	91	18.1	142	28.2	321	63.8
Convenience Store	86	17.1	121	24.1	138	27.4	345	68.6
Office Supply Store	85	16.9	137	27.2	121	24.1	343	68.2
Sports Bar	81	16.1	72	14.3	172	34.2	325	64.6
Camera/Photo Store	78	15.5	153	30.4	100	19.9	331	65.8
Sporting Goods Store	78	15.5	126	25	126	25	330	65.6
Electronics Store	75	14.9	133	26.4	125	24.9	333	66.2
Pet Store	68	13.5	124	24.7	143	28.4	335	66.6
Luggage Store	23	4.6	95	18.9	204	40.6	322	64
Auto Parts	21	4.2	67	13.3	234	46.5	322	64
Liquor Store	17	3.4	55	10.9	250	49.7	322	64

What other kinds of businesses/services would you like to see more of downtown?

Please circle your interest, High, Medium, or Low.

	High		Medium		Low		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Live Theatre	231	45.9	80	15.9	40	8	351	69.8
Art Shows	223	44.3	69	13.7	44	8.7	336	66.8
Misc. Cultural Activities	216	42.9	73	14.5	40	8	329	65.4
Educational Courses	119	23.7	120	23.9	79	15.7	318	63.2
Gym/Exercise Classes	102	20.3	111	22.1	107	21.3	320	63.6
Dry Cleaners	101	20.1	121	24.1	101	20.1	323	64.2
Hair Stylist	101	20.1	122	24.3	99	19.7	322	64
Photocopy Service	101	20.1	105	20.9	111	22.1	317	63
Doctor	95	18.9	118	23.5	112	22.3	325	64.6
Dentist	93	18.5	115	22.9	110	21.9	318	63.2
Legal Services	62	12.3	133	26.4	114	22.7	309	61.4
Accounting Services	60	11.9	126	25	123	24.5	309	61.4
Catering	59	11.7	102	20.3	144	28.6	305	60.6
Child Care	56	11.1	92	18.3	155	30.8	303	60.2
Delivery Service	48	9.5	100	19.9	152	30.2	300	59.6

What do you think is the best way that Downtown Bryan Businesses can let you know about their products and services?

	#	%
Newspaper Ads	238	47.3
Radio Ads	194	38.6
Television Ads	164	32.6
Direct Mail	78	15.5
Through your Employer	13	2.6
Other:		
Billboards	3	0.6
Gatherings	2	0.4
Word of mouth	1	0.2
Banners/visual displays	1	0.2

When was the last time you shopped in Downtown Bryan?		
	#	%
Less than 1 week ago	127	25.2
1 week to 1 month ago	132	26.2
2 to 6 months ago	111	22.1
7 to 12 months ago	29	5.8
1 to 3 years ago	37	7.4
More than 3 years ago	38	7.6

What time of day do you typically shop in Downtown Bryan?		
	#	%
8:00 am to 10:59 am	50	9.9
11:00 am to 12:59 pm	114	22.7
1:00 pm to 2:59 pm	137	27.2
3:00 pm to 4:59 pm	101	20.1
5:00 pm to 7:00 pm	69	13.7
Never	51	10.1

Would you be interested in living in Downtown Bryan, or in a neighborhood near Downtown?		
	#	%
Yes	95	18.9
No	297	59
I already live in or near Downtown	80	15.9

If "yes", what type of housing would most interest you?		
	#	%
Single Family Home	88	17.5
Townhouse	53	10.5
Apartment/Condominium	46	9.1
Other:		
Lofts	3	0.6
Studio Apartments/flats above shops	1	0.2

What time of day do you typically shop elsewhere in Bryan?		
	#	%
8:00 am to 10:59 am	55	10.9
11:00 am to 12:59 pm	66	13.1
1:00 pm to 2:59 pm	90	17.9
3:00 pm to 4:59 pm	100	19.9
5:00 pm to 7:00 pm	235	46.7
Never	16	3.2

If more Downtown Bryan stores and services were open on Saturdays would you frequent them more often?		
	#	%
Yes	293	58.3
No	56	11.1
Don't Know	122	24.3

If you rented a residence in or near Downtown Bryan, what rental range the highest that you would be willing to pay?		
	#	%
\$300 - \$499/month	91	18.1
\$500 - \$699/month	122	24.3
\$700 - \$899/month	49	9.7
\$900 - \$1099/month	26	5.2
\$1100 - \$1299/month	8	1.6
Other:		
"I pay \$250"	1	0.2
"Higher \$1500"	1	0.2

If you purchased a residence in or near Downtown Bryan, what price range represents the highest that you would be willing to pay?		
	#	%
Under \$75,000**	44	8.7
\$75,001 - \$100,000	145	28.8
\$100,001 - \$125,000	67	13.3
\$125,001 - \$150,000	36	7.2
\$150,001 - \$200,000	26	5.2
\$200,001 - \$250,000	4	0.8
Over \$250,000	5	1

If more Downtown Bryan stores and services were open on Sundays would you frequent them more often?		
	#	%
Yes	184	36.6
No	156	31
Don't Know	134	26.6

If more Downtown Bryan stores and services were open in the Evenings would you frequent them more often?		
	#	%
Yes	226	44.9
No	122	24.3
Don't Know	134	26.6

How old are you?		
	#	%
Under 25	25	5
25-29	42	8.3
30-39	96	19.1
40-49	104	20.7
50-59	124	24.7
60 or older	93	18.5

What is the highest level of education you completed?		
	#	%
1st through 11th grade	10	2
Completed High School	156	31
College Graduate	211	41.9
Post Graduate	102	20.3

How many people are in your household, including yourself?

	#	%
1	62	12.3
2	218	43.3
3	97	19.3
4	64	12.7
5	28	5.6
6 or more	8	1.6

Are you:

	#	%
male	165	32.8
female	309	61.4

What ethnic group identifies you?

	#	%
White	391	77.7
African American	20	4
Hispanic	39	7.8
Asian	4	0.8
American Indian	2	0.4
Other:		
Pacific Islander	1	0.2
Italian	3	0.6
Czech	1	0.2
Jewish	1	0.2
Portuguese	1	0.2
European	1	0.2

What is the 1999 estimated combined income (before taxes) of all persons in your household?

	#	%
Less than \$10,000	10	2
\$10,001 to \$20,000	19	3.8
\$20,001 to \$30,000	31	6.2
\$30,001 to \$40,000	47	9.3
\$40,001 to \$50,000	45	8.9
\$50,001 to \$60,000	65	12.9
\$60,001 to \$70,000	48	9.5
\$70,001 to \$80,000	30	6
\$80,001 to \$90,000	28	5.6
\$90,001 to \$100,000	25	5
\$100,001 to \$125,000	38	7.6
Over \$125,000	38	7.6
Other:		
Retired	1	0.2

What is your residence zip code?

Zip Code	City	#	#
77830	Anderson	1	0.2
77831	Bedias	1	0.2
77418	Bellville	1	0.2
77801	Bryan	26	5.2
77802	Bryan	130	25.8
77803	Bryan	75	14.9
77805	Bryan	2	0.4
77806	Bryan	1	0.2
77807	Bryan	22	4.4
77808	Bryan	40	8
77836	Caldwell	6	1.2
77840	College Station	31	6.2
77845	College Station	59	11.7
77856	Franklin	6	1.2
77859	Hearne	2	0.4
77447	Hockley	2	0.4
77006	Houston	1	0.2
77018	Houston	1	0.2
77035	Houston	1	0.2
77320	Huntsville	1	0.2
77861	Iola	6	1.2
77864	Madisonville	1	0.2
77865	Marquez	3	0.6
75852	Midway	1	0.2
77866	Millican	2	0.4
77868	Navasota	2	0.4
77872	North Zulch	3	0.6
81428	Pavonia (Colorado)	1	0.2
77873	Richards	2	0.4
77878	Snook	3	0.6
77388	Spring	1	0.2
75860	Teague	1	0.2
75862	Trinity	1	0.2
77882	Wheelock	1	0.2

Downtown Bryan Market Survey Results - College Students

Number of surveys completed: 95

(*) Row percentages are calculated based on this total # of survey respondents

Which best describes you?		
	#	%
Undergraduate Student	76	80
Graduate or Doctoral Student	16	16.8
Faculty	0	0
Administrative	0	0

With which school are you affiliated?		
	#	%
Texas A&M University	52	54.7
Blinn College	43	45.3

Do you work in Downtown Bryan?		
	#	%*
Yes	5	5.3
No	90	94.7

What street do you most frequently use to arrive and depart Downtown?		
	#	%*
Texas Avenue	46	48.4
William Joel Bryan Parkway	20	21.1
South College/South Main Street	19	20
Martin Luther King Jr. Street	4	4.2
Bryan Avenue	3	3.2
Parker Avenue	0	0
Other: 29th St	1	1.1
West 28th St	0	0
East 26th St	0	0

Which best describes where you live?		
	#	%*
Downtown Bryan	1	1.1
Near Downtown Bryan	14	14.7
On Campus	13	13.7
Near Campus	28	29.5
Elsewhere in Bryan or the Region	39	41.1

When was the last time you visited Downtown Bryan?		
	#	%*
Less than 1 week ago	51	53.7
1 week to 1 month ago	24	25.3
2 to 6 months ago	13	13.7
7 to 12 months ago	3	3.2
1 to 3 years ago	0	0
More than 3 years ago	4	4.2

What are the top three (3) reasons you most frequently visit Downtown Bryan?								
Please rank them as "1", "2" or "3" in order of frequency, with "1" being most frequent:								
	1 #	%*	2 #	%*	3 #	%*	TOTAL #	%*
Dining	37	38.9	14	14.7	3	3.2	54	56.8
Entertainment	9	9.5	19	20	9	9.5	37	38.9
Shopping	9	9.5	12	12.6	10	10.5	31	32.6
Personal Services	2	2.1	5	5.3	6	6.3	13	13.7
Special Events	1	1.1	2	2.1	10	10.5	13	13.7
Professional Services	4	4.2	2	2.1	6	6.3	12	12.6
Pay Bills	6	6.3	4	4.2	2	2.1	12	12.6
Work	9	9.5	0	0	1	1.1	10	10.5
Sightseeing	3	3.2	4	4.2	1	1.1	8	8.4
Carnegie Library	2	2.1	2	2.1	1	1.1	5	5.3
Children's Museum	1	1.1	1	1.1	3	3.2	5	5.3
Children's School	1	1.1	0	0	0	0	0	1.1
Lasalle Hotel	1	1.1	0	0	0	0	0	1.1
Other (Please specify):								
Visit friends/family	1	1.1	2	2.1	2	2.1	5	5.3
Library	1	1.1	1	1.1	1	1.1	3	3.2
Worship/Church	1	1.1	0	0	0	0	1	1.1

When you drive, where do you most often park?		
	#	%*
On the street	57	60
Parking lot of the business visited	34	35.8
Don't drive to downtown (take bus)	1	1.1

How would you rate Downtown Bryan for each of the following?								
	Excellent (1) #	%*	Good (2) #	%*	Fair (3) #	%*	Poor (4) #	%*
Dining	19	20	44	46.3	23	24.2	9	9.5
Traffic Flow	18	18.9	40	42.1	26	27.4	11	11.6
Parking Convenience	14	14.7	41	43.2	28	29.5	12	12.6
Shopping	11	11.6	36	37.9	33	34.7	15	15.8
Safety	9	9.5	18	18.9	27	28.4	14	14.7
Pedestrian Friendly	8	8.4	50	52.6	20	21.1	6	6.3
Housing	8	8.4	19	20	37	38.9	23	24.2
Entertainment	8	8.4	43	45.3	26	27.4	18	18.9
Attractiveness	7	7.4	40	42.1	35	36.8	13	13.7
Cleanliness	6	6.3	43	45.3	36	37.9	10	10.5

What do you like most about Downtown Bryan?

	#	%*
Historic Character	35	36.8
Dining/Entertainment	32	33.7
Cultural Activities	3	3.2
Social Interaction	4	4.2
Special Events	4	4.2
Shopping	11	11.6
School	1	1.1

What do you like least about Downtown Bryan?

	#	%*
Appearance	27	28.4
Parking Challenges	21	22.1
Safety Concerns	12	12.6
Shopping Choices	8	8.4
Panhandlers	7	7.4
Traffic	7	7.4
Dining	4	4.2
Other:	0	0
Road conditions/South College Ave	3	3.2
Empty shops/lack of business	1	1.1

Where do you shop most often?

Please rank them as “1”, “2” or “3” in order of frequency, with “1” being the most frequent.

	1	2	3	TOTAL				
	#	%*	#	%*	#	%*	#	%*
Post Oak Mall	49	51.6	23	24.2	3	3.2	75	78.9
Wal-Mart/	31	32.6	32	33.7	4	4.2	67	70.5
Manor East Mall	4	4.2	4	4.2	6	6.3	14	14.7
Downtown Bryan	2	2.1	4	4.2	10	10.5	16	16.8
Post Oak Square	1	1.1	3	3.2	13	13.7	17	17.9
Woodstone Shopping Center	0	0	0	0	9	9.5	9	9.5
Texas Pavilion Shopping Center	0	0	0	0	4	4.2	4	4.2
Freedom Shopping Center								
Other:								
Target Center	0	0	1	1.1	2	2.1	3	3.2
Grocery Store/Krogers/	0	0	1	1.1	0	0	1	1.1
Lowe's	1	1.1	0	0	0	0	1	1.1
Culpepper Plaza	0	0	0	0	1	1.1	1	1.1
Out of Town (Houston, Austin...)	0	0	0	0	1	1.1	1	1.1
HEB	0	0	0	0	1	1.1	1	1.1
Internet	0	0	0	0	1	1.1	1	1.1

How would you rate Downtown Retail Stores according to the following?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
	#	%*	#	%*	#	%*
Courtesy of Clerks	16	16.8	43	45.3	23	24.2
Quality of Merchandise	16	16.8	45	47.4	21	22.1
Window displays	13	13.7	43	45.3	24	25.3
Parking Convenience	11	11.6	32	33.7	35	36.8
Variety of Merchandise	10	10.5	34	35.8	35	36.8
Display of Merchandise	9	9.5	44	46.3	30	31.6
Special Promotions	9	9.5	32	33.7	38	40
Cleanliness	7	7.4	46	48.4	27	28.4
Price of Merchandise	7	7.4	44	46.3	33	34.7
Days/Hours of Operation	4	4.2	38	40	40	42.1

What kind of businesses would you like to see more of downtown?

Please circle your interest, High, Medium, or Low.

	High		Medium		Low		TOTAL	
	#	%*	#	%*	#	%*	#	%*
Movie Theatre	62	65.3	20	21.1	6	6.3	88	92.6
Restaurant - Family	59	62.1	27	28.4	2	2.1	88	92.6
Restaurant - Fine Dining	55	57.9	24	25.3	8	8.4	87	91.6
Music Store (CD's)	51	53.7	24	25.3	11	11.6	86	90.5
Restaurant - Theme	49	51.6	33	34.7	6	6.3	88	92.6
Bookstore	43	45.3	26	27.4	14	14.7	83	87.4
Night Club/Entertainment	43	45.3	25	26.3	14	14.7	82	86.3
Coffee House	42	44.2	29	30.5	13	13.7	84	88.4
Department Store	38	40	35	36.8	12	12.6	85	89.5
Restaurant - Fast Food	38	40	28	29.5	21	22.1	87	91.6
Bakery	37	38.9	35	36.8	10	10.5	82	86.3
Discount Store	37	38.9	29	30.5	17	17.9	83	87.4
Gift Shop	37	38.9	32	33.7	18	18.9	87	91.6
Video Rental Store	36	37.9	30	31.6	18	18.9	84	88.4
Convenience Store	35	36.8	38	40	20	21.1	93	97.9
Florist	34	35.8	33	34.7	18	18.9	85	89.5
Hobby/Craft Store	32	33.7	39	41.1	13	13.7	84	88.4
Sports Bar	32	33.7	32	33.7	17	17.9	81	85.3
Pet Store	31	32.6	30	31.6	22	23.2	83	87.4
Electronics Store	30	31.6	31	32.6	22	23.2	83	87.4
Grocery Store	29	30.5	34	35.8	20	21.1	83	87.4
Women's Apparel	29	30.5	35	36.8	19	20	83	87.4
Shoe Store	28	29.5	37	38.9	19	20	84	88.4
Sporting Goods Store	27	28.4	37	38.9	15	15.8	79	83.2
Jewelry Store	24	25.3	35	36.8	24	25.3	83	87.4
Men's Clothing Store	24	25.3	29	30.5	31	32.6	84	88.4
Camera/Photo Store	23	24.2	41	43.2	19	20	83	87.4
Drug Store	22	23.2	49	51.6	11	11.6	82	86.3
Toy Store	22	23.2	43	45.3	18	18.9	83	87.4
Antiques	21	22.1	30	31.6	36	37.9	87	91.6
Children's Clothing	21	22.1	23	24.2	41	43.2	85	89.5
Fabric Store	21	22.1	32	33.7	30	31.6	83	87.4
Furniture Store	16	16.8	40	42.1	25	26.3	81	85.3
Hardware Store	16	16.8	36	37.9	28	29.5	80	84.2
Liquor Store	14	14.7	31	32.6	39	41.1	84	88.4
Office Supply Store	14	14.7	43	45.3	24	25.3	81	85.3
Luggage Store	11	11.6	36	37.9	41	43.2	88	92.6
Auto Parts	9	9.5	29	30.5	11	11.6	49	51.6

Other (please specify): Flea Market, Farmers Forumn, Horse and Buggy Rides, Corner Market, Scrapbook Store, Auto Dealer Shops

What other kinds of businesses/services would you like to see more of downtown?

Please circle your interest, High, Medium, or Low.

	High		Medium		Low	
	#	%*	#	%*	#	%*
Live Theatre	49	51.6	20	21.1	14	14.7
Art Shows	40	42.1	24	25.3	17	17.9
Educational Courses	35	36.8	27	28.4	20	21.1
Gym/Exercise Classes	33	34.7	29	30.5	23	24.2
Misc. Cultural Activities	33	34.7	31	32.6	17	17.9
Doctor	31	32.6	32	33.7	21	22.1
Hair Stylist	30	31.6	35	36.8	18	18.9
Dentist	29	30.5	32	33.7	22	23.2
Dry Cleaners	21	22.1	28	29.5	31	32.6
Photocopy Service	20	21.1	37	38.9	23	24.2
Catering	19	20	30	31.6	30	31.6
Delivery Service	19	20	35	36.8	26	27.4
Child Care	18	18.9	26	27.4	38	40
Legal Services	14	14.7	37	38.9	37	38.9
Accounting Services	10	10.5	35	36.8	34	35.8
Other (please specify): Ice Cream, Street Vendors						

What do you think is the best way that Downtown Bryan Businesses can let you know about their products and services?

	#	%*
Radio Ads	47	34.3
Battalion	31	22.6
Television Ads	28	20.4
Eagle	19	13.9
Direct Mail	8	5.8
Through your Employer	3	2.2
Other:	1	0.7

If more Downtown Bryan businesses accepted Aggie Bucks, would you frequent them more often?

	#	%*
Yes	42	44.2
No	26	27.4
Don't Know	27	28.4

When was the last time you shopped in Downtown Bryan?		
	#	%*
Less than 1 week ago	19	20
1 week to 1 month ago	29	30.5
2 to 6 months ago	15	15.8
7 to 12 months ago	6	6.3
1 to 3 years ago	2	2.1
More than 3 years ago	21	22.1
Never	2	2.1

What time of day do you typically shop in Downtown Bryan?		
	#	%*
8:00 am to 10:59 am	3	3.2
11:00 am to 12:59 pm	10	10.5
1:00 pm to 2:59 pm	18	18.9
3:00 pm to 4:59 pm	17	17.9
5:00 pm to 7:00 pm	23	24.2
Never	24	25.3

Would you be interested in living in Downtown Bryan, or in a neighborhood near Downtown?		
	#	%*
Yes	34	35.8
No	53	55.8
I already live in or near Downtown	5	5.3

If "yes", what type of housing would most interest you?		
	#	%*
Apartment/Condominium	32	33.7
Single Family Home	12	12.6
Townhouse	11	11.6
Other: Loft	3	3.2

What time of day do you typically shop elsewhere in Bryan?		
	#	%*
8:00 am to 10:59 am	2	2.1
11:00 am to 12:59 pm	10	10.5
1:00 pm to 2:59 pm	13	13.7
3:00 pm to 4:59 pm	14	14.7
5:00 pm to 7:00 pm	29	30.5
After 7	13	13.7
Never	9	9.5

If more Downtown Bryan stores and services were open on Saturdays would you frequent them more often?		
	#	%*
Yes	65	68.4
No	9	9.5
Don't Know	18	18.9

If you rented a residence in or near Downtown Bryan, what rental range the highest that you would be willing to pay?		
	#	%*
\$300 - \$499/month	40	42.1
\$500 - \$699/month	33	34.7
\$700 - \$899/month	4	4.2
\$900 - \$1099/month	3	3.2
\$1100 - \$1299/month	0	0

If you purchased a residence in or near Downtown Bryan, what price range represents the highest that you would be willing to pay?		
	#	%*
Under \$75,000**	33	34.7
\$75,001 - \$100,000	25	26.3
\$100,001 - \$125,000	11	11.6
\$125,001 - \$150,000	5	5.3
\$150,001 - \$200,000	3	3.2
\$200,001 - \$250,000	0	0
Over \$250,000	1	1.1

If more Downtown Bryan stores and services were open on Sundays would you frequent them more often?		
	#	%*
Yes	53	55.8
No	23	24.2
Don't Know	19	20

If more Downtown Bryan stores and services were open in the Evenings would you frequent them more often?		
	#	%*
Yes	66	69.5
No	15	15.8
Don't Know	14	14.7

How old are you?		
	#	%*
Under 18	2	2.1
18-21	53	55.8
22-24	13	13.7
25-29	13	13.7
30-39	9	9.5
40-49	4	4.2
50-59	0	0
60 or older	0	0

What is the highest level of education you completed?		
	#	%*
1st through 11th grade	3	3.2
Completed High School	66	69.5
College Graduate	19	20
Post Graduate	6	6.3

What ethnic group identifies you?

	#	%*
White/Anglo Saxon	66	69.5
African American	5	5.3
Hispanic	13	13.7
Asian	8	8.4
American Indian	2	2.1
Other: Pacific Islander	0	0

What is your residence zip code?

Zip	City	#	%*
77840	College Station	24	25.3
77802	Bryan	13	13.7
77845	College Station	12	12.6
77801	Bryan	8	8.4
77807	Bryan	4	4.2
77804	Bryan	4	4.2
77859	Hearne	3	3.2
77803	Bryan	2	2.1
77808	Bryan	2	2.1
77831	Bedias	2	2.1
77843	College Station	2	2.1
77836	Caldwell	1	1.1
77844	College Station	1	1.1
77833	Brenham	1	1.1
77850	Concord	1	1.1
77857	Gause	1	1.1
78942	Giddings	1	1.1
76520	Cameron	1	1.1
77841	College Station	1	1.1
76629	Bremond	1	1.1

Appendix C: Parking Study

On-Street Parking

Block	Mark	Used	% Used	Not Mark	Used	% Used	Block	Mark	Used	% Used	Not Mark	Used	% Used
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	173	134	77.5	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	24	21	87.5	43	9	20.9
3	0	0	0	5	2	40	3	0	0	0	37	0	0
4	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	19	10	52.6
5	28	12	42.9	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
6+14	66	25	37.9	0	0	0	6+14	56	7	12.5	0	0	0
7	24	11	45.8	0	0	0	7	8	3	37.5	121	20	16.5
8	5	2	40	0	0	0	8	92	16	174	0	0	0
9+10	32	30	93.8	0	0	0	9+10	65	22	33.8	0	0	0
11	21	9	42.9	0	0	0	11	126	76	60.3	0	0	0
12	24	14	58.3	0	0	0	12	63	53	84.1	0	0	0
13	21	17	80.9	0	0	0	13	16	12	75	0	0	0
15	23	6	26.1	0	0	0	15	22	0	0	13	2	15.4
16	28	12	42.9	0	0	0	16	0	0	0	0	0	0
17	33	24	72.7	0	0	0	17	6	3	50	0	0	0
Btwn 17& 18	28	14	50	0	0	0	Btwn 17& 18	0	0	0	0	0	0
18	16	10	62.5	0	0	0	18	6	5	83.3	10	1	10
19	9	3	33.3	0	0	0	19	11	7	63.6	0	0	0
20	8	6	75	0	0	0	20	69	52	75.4	0	0	0
21	9	13	144.4	0	0	0	21	39	27	69.2	0	0	0
22	21	16	76.2	0	0	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
Btwn 22 & 23	31	29	93.5	0	0	0	Btwn 22 & 23	0	0	0	0	0	0
23	40	27	67.5				23						
24	30	8	26.7	0	0	0	24	28	9	32.1	0	0	0
25	28	5	17.9	6	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	0
26	46	16	34.8	0	0	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	0
Btwn 26 & 27	29	6	20.7	0	0	0	Btwn 26 & 27	0	0	0	0	0	0
27	14	7	50	0	0	0	27	36	5	13.9	21	6	28.6
28	20	3	15	6	0	0	28	0	0	0	23	15	65.2
29	44	5	11.4	8	7	87.5	29	0	0	0	0	0	0
30	16	7	43.8	3	0	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	0
31	0	0	0	29	2	6.9	31	0	0	0	3	0	0
32	21	2	9.5	26	4	15.4	32	0	0	0	0	0	0
33	19	3	15.8	5	0	0	33	0	0	0	0	0	0
34	14	1	7.1	0	0	0	34	0	0	0	40	0	0
35	0	0	0	7	1	14.3	35	52	0	0	3	0	0
36	0	0	0	6	1	0	36	0	0	0	5	1	20
37	0	0	0	7	1	14.3	37	0	0	0	0	0	0
38	14	3	21.4	28	0	0	38	0	0	0	0	0	0
39	15	3	20	6	0	0	39	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	777	349	44.9	147	18	12.2	Total	892	452	50.7	338	64	18.9

Off-Street Parking



The block numbers in the first column of the chart at the left correspond with the numbers on the map. The study was limited to the Core Study Area boundaries. The chart summarizes the number of parking spaces within a block and the utilization of those spaces.

- On-street parking spaces within a block are those spaces adjacent to the interior of the block. Main Street median parking spaces were counted separately.
 - Off-street parking spaces were those spaces within parking lots and spaces adjacent to the street but located off the street, or outside of the curbs where a vehicle could travel.
 - When the street was too narrow for parking, it was assumed that there were no on-street parking spaces.
 - Unmarked off-street spaces were estimated based on the amount of space that could be used for parking.
 - If a block had vacant land that has not been developed, it was assumed that no off-street parking was available.

See Sheet 3 for the locations of on and off-street parking, as well as a graphic of blocks with 60% and above utilization rates.

In general, locations of high demand on and off-street use are concentrated east of the railroad around the Brazos County Courthouse, Bryan Public Library and the Bryan Municipal Building.

In blocks 17, 18, 22 and 23 the high utilization of on-street parking is due to the fact that employees of the businesses located on Main Street and Bryan Avenue park in these spaces instead of parking a few blocks away. To alleviate immediate parking pressures in these areas, it is recommended that employees of businesses in this area park one or two blocks north of these highly utilized areas (blocks 17,18, 22 and 23) to reserve these spaces for patrons of their stores.

In addition, this study found many areas in downtown in which on and off-street parking is not marked, but is available for use. The majority of these spaces are located in the northern portion of the core study area. However, an area that should be paved, marked and signed for public parking is the area between the Carnegie Center and the railroad tracks. The study found room for 121 parking spaces.